The blasom poétique and allied poetry of the French renaissance

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the development of the blason poétique in the sixteenth century. We have focussed our attention on the blason anatomique - a subsection of this main genre - and have tried to demonstrate that the blason anatomique does fit in with the blason poétique, which itself forms part of a French literary tradition with roots stretching back to the fourteenth century, and which continues into the seventeenth century and beyond. The key to the genre lies in its descriptive, interpretative character, inherited from its heraldic ancestry.

The first section of the thesis examines the early blason poétique. Chapter I investigates its heraldic origins, and the importance of its etymological meaning, denoting the description and interpretation of a painted shield. Chapters II and III examine the twin influences of medieval French poetry, and Italian petrarchism upon the blasons anatomiques.

The central section (Chapters IV - VI) discusses the anatomical blasons and contreblasons, reassessing in particular the chronology of individual poems on the evidence afforded by recently rediscovered editions which have upset the previous opinion that these poems were produced only slowly, over a period of years. Chapter VI underlines the argument that the
blason is not an isolated genre, discussing the importance of the iconography of the blason anat-
omique, and its kinship with similar illustrated poetry of the mid-century - emblems, bestiaries or calendriers.

The third section (Chapters VII - IX) traces the later development of the genre, after the anatomical blasons. In the later half of the sixteenth century two distinct branches of the blason emerge - the sonnet-blason perpetuates the characteristics of the anatomical blason, while the longer hymne-blason reverts to the universality of subject of the pre-
anatomical blason.

In conclusion we have emphasised that far from dying out, the genre continues to flourish - in such modified guises - throughout the early seventeenth century.
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THE BLASON POÉTIQUE AND ALLIED POETRY OF THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE

by

Alison M. Saunders, B.A.

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INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this thesis is to study the anatomical blason of the 1530s and 1540s in France. In order, however, to obtain a balanced picture, and to avoid the danger of regarding the anatomical blason as an isolated phenomenon, without roots, springing suddenly into existence in 1536, we have felt obliged to devote considerable attention to its pre-history. For the same reason we have attempted to follow its subsequent development through the sixteenth century. Realising that 'natural' stopping places rarely exist, we have been obliged to make an arbitrary and, it might be argued, a somewhat vague choice. In our final chapter therefore we have indicated the continuity of the genre into the seventeenth century, but since our major preoccupation must remain with the poetry of the earlier period, our discussion of the Pléiade and post Pléiade treatment of the blason must be regarded as a conclusion, intended not to be exhaustive, but simply to indicate that contrary to the opinion of certain critics (1) the genre does not die out completely in the latter part of the sixteenth century.

This thesis falls into three sections: 1) the early development of the blason, prior to Marot's Beau tetin; 2) the anatomical blasons and contreblasons; 3) the

(1) Cf. below, chapter IX, p. 351
subsequent development of the genre. It must be emphasised, however, that the weight of the thesis is placed upon the anatomical blasons. Indeed, the first section looks forward to these anatomical blasons, while the third looks back to them. Of the three appendices two deal specifically with the anatomical blasons, while the third provides a check list of individual blasons and their location.

* * *

Recognising that any wide generalisation must inevitably bring with it a certain number of exceptions, we have nevertheless attempted to suggest a possible leitmotiv running through and governing the development of the genre of the blason. This theme, curiously neglected by critics, stems from the etymological meaning of the word blason. We have tried to demonstrate that description and interpretation of the significance inherent in a given object (usually depicted visually in the form of an illustration or woodcut) might be regarded as a key characteristic of the blason poétique.

One of the main difficulties encountered in any study of the blason is the lack of precision and consistency in the use of the word throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Not infrequently we may find a poem entitled blason in one edition or manuscript while in another text this same poem may well not be given this title. Guillaume Coquillart's Blason des armes et des dames of 1484 is a notable example of a poem which could be entitled indifferently either blason
or débat (2). Similarly Marot's own Beau tetin enjoyed a variety of titles in the sixteenth century. In all three editions of the _Hecatomphile_ (3) and in the Angelier editions of the _Blasons anatomiques_ (4) it is entitled a blason, but in the Gryphius edition of Marot's collected _Oeuvres_ (5) it is simply called _Du beau tetin_ (6). In the later _blasons_ also, this same vagueness in terminology is equally common. The _Blason du bonnet carré_ for example (which appeared more frequently in manuscripts than in printed texts) is to be found under a variety of titles (7). Because of this vagueness in terminology we

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(2) Cf. below, chapter I, p.41

(3) Np, 1536, 16°, Bodley Douce p 36 *
Np, 1537, 16°, Strasbourg R 102 895 (Title page to the _Blasons_ dated 1536)
Paris, Sergent, 1539, 16°, BN Picot 803
For fuller details, cf. below, appendix III

(4) Paris, Angelier, 1543, 8°. (Only two copies of this edition are known to exist - both in the hands of private collectors in Paris and America.)
Paris, Angelier, 1550, 8°, BN Picot 810 and Arsenal 8°B 8516 rés

(5) Lyons, Gryphius, nd (1538), 8°, BN Res Ye 1461-1464

(6) Yet another variant is provided by a manuscript in Soissons (no.202) in which this poem is described as the _Devise du beau tetin desgerie_ (Cf. Marot, _Oeuvres_, ed. Mayer, London, 1958 -, 8°, 5 vols, vol.V, p.156)

(7) In BN Ms.fr. 22565 it is described as _Description du bonnet carré et les proprieties composition & vertus dicelluy_ (f.46 r°), whereas in BN Ms.fr. 884 it is entitled simply _Bonnet de cour_ (f.71 r°) and in BN Ms. fr. 22560 it is once again given the fuller descriptive title _La composition et vertus du bonnet cornu_ (f.35 r°)
have not felt justified in restricting our study to poems bearing the title blason, and have preferred to include many poems which — although not given this title — seem to us relevant to the subject we are studying.

Not only is the title blason used vaguely in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but also the very word itself has only a very broadly defined range of meaning. In addition to its obvious heraldic sense it can also possess a wide range of ancillary meanings. At worst, taken in its most general sense it can mean something as vague as 'a speech':

'Or mettez la, sans long blason,
Pour éviter de me grever,
Qu'il vous faudra toujours lever
Premier pour faire la besongne' (8)

'L'espouseee, sans long blason,
Ne mist pas cela en oubly' (9)

Coming closer to the heraldic origins of the word, it frequently designates a particular attribute or characteristic of a given object:

'Comme ung pourceau est gourmant, par blasons,
Se veult nourrir de plusieurs venaisons
Et prend plaisir quant bons vins on luy donne' (10)

or - derived from this - it can have the more general meaning of 'a reputation':


Antiochus contre droit et raison
A bons deniers voulut vendre à Jazon
La dignité d'évesque souverain,
Mal lui en print, non obstant son blazon' (11)

It can also mean an argument or persuasion, either a true one, or more commonly a false one:

'Princes, oyez des saiges les raisons,
Et des flateurs évitez les blasons' (12)

It can mean at one and the same time praise or blame, and indeed Marot himself gives a clear example of this paradoxical use in one of his épîtres:

'Aussi n'est il blason, tant soit infame,
Qui sceust changer le bruyt d'honneste femme:
Et n'est blason, tant soit plein de louange,
Qui le renom de folle femme change' (13)

In the context of the anatomical blason, however, the word is generally taken to have the sense of 'praise' (when it is used in the title to a poem), the word contreblason being coined to designate the opposite meaning of 'blame'. But even here such a distinction is not always faithfully observed; the second of La Hueterie's two Contreblasons du corps, for example, is in fact a poem of praise rather than of vituperation, describing and extolling as it does the divine body of Christ, in contrast to the vile human body (14).

* * *

(11) Gringore, Oeuvres, vol.1, p.92
(12) Gringore, Oeuvres, vol.1, p.26
(14) Cf. below, chapter V, p. 208
Because of the ambiguity of the term blason, and because of the wide range of disparate poems all entitled blasons, attempts at finding a suitable definition of the blason poétique which will cover all possibilities are fraught with difficulties. Of the sixteenth century writers on poetic theory only three discuss the blason. (Du Bellay, perhaps not surprisingly, disdains to mention the genre). Sebillet's definition dating from 1548 (15) is both the fullest and the earliest, and it would appear to have served as model for that produced six years later by Claude de Boissière (16), and even for that of Pierre Delaudun Daigaliers, produced as late as 1598 (17). It is perhaps worth reproducing in full two of these early definitions - firstly that of Sebillet, and then that of Delaudun Daigaliers.

SEBILLET:

'Le Blason est une perpetuele louenge ou continu vitupere de ce qu'on s'est propose blasonner. Pour ce serviront bien a celuy qui le voudra faire, tous les lieus de demonstration escris par les rheteurs Grecz & Latins. Je dy en l'une & en l'autre partie de louenge & de vitupere. Car autant bien se blasonne le laid comme le beau, & le mauvais comme le bon: tesmoin Marot en ses Blasons du beau & du laid Tetin: & sortent les

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(15) Art poetique françois, Paris, Corrozet, 1548, 8°, BN Res Ye 1213, ff.65 v° - 66 r


DELAUDUN DAIGALIERS:

'Le Blason est une louange continue, ou vitupère, de quelque chose que l'on veut louer ou blasoner. Il est semblable à l'Elegie, pource qu'il y a une longue suite & long fil. Au Blason est compris la description & definition, pource que coustumierement quand on veut parler de quelque chose en bonne ou mauvaise part, on n'y oublie rien soit à bien descrire & proprement le vice ou la vertu d'icelle chose, ou à bien esplucher ce que c'est. Le Blason coustumierement se fait en rime plate de vers de huit syllabes et quelquefois de dix'

Sebillet then suggests the heraldic origins of the poetic blason, proposing as its original source the Blason des couleurs en armes (referring here presumably to Sicile's prose treatise (18) set in verse by d'Adonville: L'honneur des nobles, blason et propriete de leurs armes en general (19). He also draws attention to the important association - surprisingly neglected subsequently - between the illustration and the accompanying poem. Delaudun Daigaliers follows on the whole the general definition established by Sebillet. He does, however, lay more stress

(18) Cf. below, chapter I, p.20 et seq.
(19) Mnd, 8°, BN Res Ye 3788
than Sebillet upon the significance of the blason as a poem of analysis and definition, as well as of mere description. It is on these three points established by Sebillet and Delaudun Daigaliers that we have largely concentrated in the composition of this thesis.

These two sixteenth century definitions of the blason are intended basically to cover only the blasons anatomiques. Modern critics, however, have found some difficulty in fitting into this framework all the assorted non-anatomical blasons which the reader of minor sixteenth century poetry cannot fail to come across in collected works or anthologies. They have resolved this difficulty of definition in a variety of ways. Some - as for example Henry Guy - have attempted a global definition. That of Guy, although complicated at first sight, resolves itself on closer examination to little more than the assertion that the blason is a descriptive poem - a definition which is too general to be particularly illuminating:

'On entend par ce mot une peinture détaillée, soit de l'une des parties du corps, soit d'un être animé ou même d'un objet quelconque, pourvu que la chose, vivante ou non, sur quoi porte la description, soit menue de taille, et - suivant que l'on se propose une caricature ou un portrait - ridicule ou gracieuse' (20)

Among other critics, A-M. Schmidt provides an interesting and highly perceptive definition, but one which can be applied only to the anatomical blason, and which takes no account of any other type of blason. Despite its limited

This definition of the anatomical blason is a highly perceptive one certainly; it has, however, one major shortcoming in that it takes no account of the woodcut element of the blason anatomique - an element which constitutes and integral and - as we shall see - a significant part of the blason anatomique.

The most painstaking attempt at evolving a single definition of the blason in all its various forms is made by Saulnier in his study on Maurice Scève (22). Here Saulnier distinguishes two types of blason, describing


the one as the *blason médaillon* and the other as the *blason satirique*. The fifteenth and early sixteenth century *blasons* Saulnier would place in this second category, while the anatomical *blasons* would fall into the first:

"Le même nom désigne deux réalités différentes: le *Blason des fausses amours* n'appartient pas au même genre que le *Blason du Sourcil*; tandis que, en revanche, des pièces du même genre portent des titres différents: ce qu'on appelle ici *louenge*, ou dit, ailleurs description, ou dicton, ou epithétion, d'une ville par exemple, est ailleurs appelé *blason*...

"Nous appelons 'blason satirique' le genre du *Blason des fausses amours*, dont tout l'objet est (ici accidentellement, sous forme de dialogue) de faire une critique (comme celle de l'amour profane). Et 'blason médaillon' le genre du *Blason du Sourcil* qui veut décrire brièvement un seul objet...

"Le *Blason médaillon* est une pièce épigrammatique...relativement courte...

"Le *Blason satirique*...est évidemment l'héritier lointain de la satire latine" (23)

The so-called *blason médaillon* Saulnier sees as being the product of a cross between the fifteenth century *catalogue* and the satirical *blason*:

"C'est de ce goût prononcé pour le catalogue, utilisant la formule monographique du *blason satirique*, que naît le *blason-médaillon*.  

Enfin du *blason-médaillon* on connaîtra deux variétés: tandis que la glose des figures fleurit plus que jamais avec les *Emblèmes* d'Alciat...réciproquement, des poèmes à illustrer (qui pourraient inspirer une série organique de médaillons peints), sans intention symbolique, l'exemple typique serait précisément dans les *blasons anatomiques*" (24)

Certainly this is a valiant - and an extremely ingenious attempt by Saulnier at a global definition;

(23) Saulnier, *Scève*, vol. I, pp. 73-74
(24) Saulnier, *Scève*, vol. I, p. 76
yet nevertheless we feel dubious about accepting it totally. The sixteenth century is not one which lends itself easily to the neat definition, and we feel that if - as is the case here - certain poems evidently do not fit easily into a contrived pattern, then they should not be forced into it artificially, but rather should be regarded as exceptions to a rule which can be neither exact nor comprehensive. The very fact that we find poems entitled at one and the same time blason and épigramme, or blason and débat demonstrates how essentially vague are the terms employed.

Given the difficulties involved in finding a single all-embracing definition, it is perhaps not surprising that many critics, as for example Pike (25) or Kinch (26) should be content to summarise the development of the genre, thereby avoiding the problems of formulating too simplified a definition. In this matter we have elected to follow the example of such critics. We have noted the various attempts at definition, but we have not ourselves tried to formulate one single global definition. Instead we have concentrated on tracing common themes, parallels and sources in the fifteenth century, and following the subsequent progress of these themes through the development of the blason in the sixteenth century.

* * *


(26) La poésie satirique de Clément Marot, Paris, 1940, 4e, pp. 109-129
The first three chapters of this thesis form the first section, devoted to a study of the background to the blason poétique. In this section we shall examine early manuscript treatises on heraldry, attempting to trace early examples in which the word blason is associated with a descriptive and interpretative poem, for we must emphasise that it is this interpretative value which seems to have an important bearing upon the development of the genre, a bearing which has hitherto been unduly neglected.

In this first section we shall also examine poems dating from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries which are entitled blasons, attempting to trace links backwards to heraldry, and forwards to the anatomical blason. Here we shall be primarily concerned with two criteria. On the one hand we shall be looking at poems whose actual form appears to have some relevance to the sixteenth century blason, while on the other hand we shall also look at poems in which the content rather than the actual form is interesting to this study. We shall examine firstly the evidence supporting the view that the blason is basically a poetic development within the French tradition. We shall look at the suggestion that its curious form arises from a combination of the medieval catalogue (whence it could have derived its repetitive technique), and the bestiary (from whence its illustrative aspect), and that its content derives from a traditional medieval and fifteenth century French
preoccupation with detailed description of the various elements constituting beauty in a woman. We shall then examine the opposing view that the anatomical blason is not rooted in a native French tradition, but that it is rather a product of Marot's stay in Ferrara, inspired by and imitated from the strambotti d'amore and capitoli of such Italian poets as Olympe de Sassoferato.

The second section of this thesis will consist of two chapters dealing with the anatomical blasons and contreblasons themselves, followed by a third discussing the connections between blasons anatomiques and other allied illustrated poetry of the same period - emblems bestiaries and volucrarians. The first of these three chapters, that treating the blasons, will look afresh at the supposed chronology of the individual poems in the new light of hitherto 'lost' early editions, and this will be followed by a literary study of the different styles adopted by the various blasonneurs while contriving nevertheless to remain within the framework of the conventions of the anatomical blason. The second chapter will deal with the contreblasons, discussing firstly those of Marot, Peletier du Mans and Jean Rus, and secondly those composed by Charles de la Hueterie in direct opposition to those of Marot and his fellow blasonneurs. Finally, the third chapter will leave the purely literary field and consider the iconographic interest of the blasons anatomiques.

In the final section of this thesis we shall examine
the way in which the genre of the blason becomes fragmented in the latter half of the sixteenth century, and comes to deal with a large number of extremely varied topics. We have chosen to divide these into two categories, the satirical and the non-satirical. An attempt will be made to show that despite this fragmentation clearly discernible threads are still to be found connecting these later works back to the anatomical blasons, and - looking further back - to the earlier heraldic tradition. Finally the thesis will conclude with a brief indication of the development and dissipation of the genre of the blason in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, in the form of sonnet-blasons and hymne-blasons, either satirical or non-satirical.

Since to a large extent the poets treated here are minor ones, it has seemed useful to include an appendix containing brief biographical and bibliographical notes on the anatomical blasonneurs (with the exception, of course, of those who are obviously better known).

In preparing this thesis a considerable amount of time was spent simply working through the collection of manuscript and printed anthologies of sixteenth century poetry in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and through sixteenth century editions of the collected works of as many poets as possible, in search of hitherto unknown, or at least unrecorded and forgotten blasons. At the same time, much care was taken in examining certain sixteenth century collections of blasons which have come to light
only recently (27). Thus perhaps the most valuable part of this thesis is its bibliographical emphasis. Many of the poems mentioned here are relatively inaccessible, hidden away as they are in the collected *Oeuvres* of a minor poet, or in one of the many sixteenth century anthologies of *fleurs de poésie*, either printed or in manuscript form. In view of this, therefore, in addition to a conventional bibliography of works referred to in the course of this thesis, we have added two further appendices. The first of these consists of a check list of all those *blasons* which do not appear in the sixteenth century anthologies of *blasons anatomiques*. Many of these are, in fact, to be found in Méon's anthology (28), but several are not. Since Méon is so vague about his sources, even in the case of the *blasons* he does include, we have listed whenever possible the sixteenth century text in which these originally appear. The third appendix consists of a detailed bibliography of the various sixteenth century editions of *blasons anatomiques*. This is followed by a list of subsequent anthologies of *blasons anatomiques* produced in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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In selecting a master text for the anatomical *blasons* and *contreblasons* we have adopted the policy of

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(27) Cf. below, appendix III
(28) *Blasons, poésies anciennes*, Paris, 1807, 8°
choosing the earliest complete text. Thus for the blasons we have used the Strasbourg Hecatomphile (Only for those blasons not included in this edition have we used the 1543 Angelier edition). For the contreblasons of Charles de la Hueterie we have used the text of his Protologies francoyses of 1536, using the unique copy in the Bibliothèque municipale de Niort (29), while for that of Marot we have used the text of the 1543 Angelier edition.

For other works quoted, we have endeavoured to make a general rule of using a sixteenth century text whenever possible. However, in the case of such authors as Marot or Ronsard, of whose works a competent modern critical edition exists, we have made an exception to this. We have also quoted on several occasions from editions in the nineteenth century Bibliothèque Elzévirienne series. The reason for this has usually been the relative inaccessibility of the original text (often available only in one single extant copy in the Rothschild collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale, or in a French provincial library). In such cases, however, we have also given a reference to a sixteenth century edition whenever this has been possible.

As far as possible we have quoted from copies in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Only where there is no copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale, or where it is incomplete have we quoted from copies in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal or in the British Museum. Other libraries in

(29) Paris, Olivier Mallard, 1536, 8°
Paris whose collections we have examined are the Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève, the Bibliothèque Mazarine and the Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne. Outside Paris, we have also used works from the Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg, the Bibliothèque Municipale de Niort and the Bibliothèque Méjanes at Aix. In this country we have used the British Museum and the Bodleian.

* * *

In quoting from sixteenth century texts the following conventions have been observed:

i) The letters u/v and i/j have been resolved to accord with modern usage.

ii) Contractions (other than the ampersand) have been resolved.

iii) The use of upper and lower case letters, and punctuation in the titles of books have been resolved to accord with modern usage.

iv) In the spelling of the names of authors and printers accents have been added.

In all other respects the spelling and punctuation of the original text has been respected.

In our bibliography a full description is given of all books printed prior to 1650. For works printed after this date only the place of printing (but not the name of the printer) is given. Similarly for works printed after 1650 no location and shelf mark is given (30).

(30) In certain cases where the original text has been lost and only a reprint is available, considered rare enough to be housed in the Réserve of the Bibliothèque Nationale, we have made an exception, and listed the shelf mark of the reprint.
The index is simply an index nominum; only in the case of anonymous blasons have we included names of works. It includes only the text, and not the appendices.

In quoting from periodicals, we have used the following abbreviations:

**BHR:** Bibliotheque d'Humanisme et Renaissance

**BSHPT:** Bulletin de la societe d'histoire du protestantisme francais

**RHLF:** Revue d'histoire litteraire de la France
CHAPTER I The early blason poétique

In one of the few pieces of criticism devoted specifically to the blason poétique Pike begins with a summary review of the motley group of late fifteenth and early sixteenth century poems entitled blasons, and passes on to a more searching study of the later and better known blasons. He and other writers on the subject have chosen to see these mainly anatomical blasons of the mid 1530s as a sudden emergence, having little in common with previous attempts at the genre. It is, of course, true that the term blason (like many other poetic genres of the late fifteenth century) can only be defined in a vague fashion, and that often enough there is little difference between, for example, a blason and a débat. Nevertheless we have sought to establish some recognisable pattern of development in the genre in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

With this in mind, we have begun our study of the blason poétique rather earlier than is normally the case, looking back first of all to early treatises on heraldry, for here it would appear that we find the origins of certain characteristics of the blason poétique of the late fifteenth century – characteristics which also recur (although with a slightly different bias) in the sixteenth century anatomical blason. Two characteristics of these early treatises would seem to have a bearing on the poetic blason. Firstly they are preoccupied with detailed description
and interpretation of the symbolic meaning inherent in the various features of a given coat of arms. Secondly — and this second preoccupation is indeed an offshoot of the first — they are preoccupied with the symbolic meaning attached to the very colours in which these features are depicted. Concentrating, therefore, on these two aspects, we have begun this study of the pre-1530s blasons with a brief review of certain aspects of the art of heraldry.

* * *

Originally used as a means of identification in battle, the heraldic blason had in its primitive form few of the peculiar characteristics and conventions with which it later became associated. During the Middle Ages the heraldic blason gradually became adopted into general use as a symbol of possession, either embodied in a seal or carved on buildings to indicate the identity of the owner. As the popularity of the blason increased, so the conventions governing its use became more complex, and the duties of the héraut d'armes became more arduous, for it was his function to record and control the various heraldic devices in use (1).

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(1) According to Sicile's Blason des couleurs en armes livrees et devises (ed. Cocheris, Paris, 1860, 8°, p.19), one of the best known treatises on heraldry, the héraut d'armes had to be an educated man, for: 'nul ne le peult estre s'il n'est clerc, car il doibt faire livres de droictz d'armes, des blasons, des batailles et besongnes là ou il aura esté.'
During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries we find numerous manuscript collections of blasons of kings, dukes and princes. Usually these take the form of a painted miniature of a particular shield, followed by a technical description and interpretation of this shield. There developed also during this period the practice of including with these collections a short prose treatise on the art and theory of heraldry. Probably the best known of these — and one of the few to be printed — is that of Sicile, héraut d'armes of Alfonso V of Aragon (2), despite the fact that much of what he says is not original, but simply culled from the late fourteenth century treatise by Honoré Bonet, L'arbre des batailles (3). We have chosen to look at

(2) It was traditional for the herald to adopt as his pseudonym the name of one of the provinces owned by his lord. Here the author (unknown other than by this pseudonym) took the name of Sicily, at that period under the jurisdiction of Alfonso. Well into the sixteenth century heralds are still found following this practice. Cf. L'ordre tenir & garde a l'entree de tressault...prince Charles Empereur...en la ville de Paris.(Paris, Corrozet & Du Pré, 1539, 8°, BN Res S Lb-84) is signed at the end by the authors: 'Normandie Champagne Roys Darmes' (C4 v°)

(3) Honoré Bonet, L'arbre des batailles, ed. Nys, Brussels, 1883, 8°
Sicile acknowledges this source:
'Or pourra demander celluy poursuyvant:
Comme apprendray-je le droit d'armes?
Et je respons: en ung livre intitulé
l'Arbre des batailles' (Sicile, ed. Cocheris, p.19)

Although primarily a treatise on warfare based on Vegetius's De re militari, this book does contain a section at the end dealing with heraldry and the significance of the colours (Bonet, ed. Nys, p.242)
Sicile's treatise since it is both the most comprehensive and the most accessible of the early works on heraldry.

For the purpose of this thesis it is the significance attributed to the various colours by Sicile which is particularly interesting, for here we have - in germ - the symbolic values associated with particular colours which we are to find taken up again as the subject of the sixteenth century poetic Blasons des couleurs. In these early treatises we do not find the distinction which is later made between the two metals, gold and silver, and the remaining colours, although gold is invariably considered as the most noble, and representing always heavenly glory (4), while silver (or white) signifies purity (5).

In the first part of his treatise Sicile restricts his study to the basic colours of heraldry - gold and silver, azur (blue), gueulles (red), sinople (green) and sable (black), together with the composite colour pourpre, and the two stylised furs, vair and hermine. In the second part of the Blason des couleurs en armes,

- (4) 'Pour le dernier blason et excellente louenge de l'or, le souverain Roy éterne a voulu que la gloire du ciel infinie des bien heurez soit par l'or signifiée, comme ne la scavant à plus grant chose comparer et parifier' (Sicile, ed. Coch-eris, p.28)

- (5) 'Car il est le plus prochain des corps luysans. Et avec ce, il signifie Pureté et Innocence' (Sicile, ed. Cocheris, p.29)
however, the author (6) moves into a much wider field, treating the significance of colours in general terms, as opposed to analysing their function merely in the realm of heraldry. He analyses the significance not only of each individual colour (7), but also of the various permutations of colours in conjunction with each other (8). It is almost certainly the more generally applicable colour symbolism found in such basically heraldic treatises which is the ancestor of the sixteenth century vogue for poems written on this subject (9). The series of *Blasons des couleurs* and allied poems by Brodeau and other court poets of François Ier (10) appear to draw much of their material from the treatises of Sicile and his fellow heralds. It is from the *Blason des couleurs en armes*, for example, that we learn that black may signify *constance* as well as the more obvious *douleur* (11) which is

(6) Cocheris suggests that this section - interesting for its wider range of application of the symbolism of colours - is not by Sicile, but rather by another unknown author (*Sicile, ed. Cocheris*, p.10 et seq.)

(7) *Sicile, ed. Cocheris*, p.77: *Des couleurs en especial et de leur blason*

(8) *Sicile, ed. Cocheris*, p.97: *Des couleurs composées et de leurs devises*

(9) Cocheris suggests some date between 1435 and 1458 for the composition of the *Blason des couleurs en armes* (*Sicile, ed. Cocheris*, p.17 et seq.)

(10) Cf. below, chapter VII, p.273

(11) *Sicile, ed. Cocheris*, p.86
recorded in all the early treatises (12). Both these
two significances listed here are seized upon by the
court poets of the sixteenth century in the *incipit* of
their *Blasons des couleurs* which (like the *Concours de
Blois* poems beginning 'Je meurs de soif auprès de la
fontaine') is invariably 'Pour fermeté et deuil le noir
est pris' (13). Similarly, according to the *Blason des
couleurs en armes* violet commonly denotes melancholy,
loyalty or *amitié*, but can also be taken - by certain
misinformed persons - to mean treachery (14). This
latter meaning is reiterated by one of the many sixteenth
century manuscript poems on the subject of colours,
*Exposition des couleurs*:

*VIOLE:*
Je suis de noir et rouge composee
Coulleur violée ainsi mappelle Ion
Vestu en fut le traistre garnellon
Dont par le monde encore suis diffamee' (15)

Grey according to the *Blason des couleurs en armes*
signifies *esperance* and *patience* when dark, but poverty
and despair when light (16). Again both these symbolic

noire laquelle represente la terre et si
signifie douleur, car plus s'eslongne du
clairté que toutes les aultres, mais
s'approche des tenebres'

(13) Cf. below, chapter VII, p.273

(14) 'et selon aulcuns, trahyson, mais c'est
faulceté' (Sicile, ed. Cocheris, p.90)

(15) BN Ms.fr.24461 res, f.111 r°

(16) 'les obscurs signifient esperance, patience
confort...Les blanchastres...povreté, inim-
-itié et desespoir' (Sicile, ed. Cocheris,
pp.90-91)
meanings are taken up in the sixteenth century. The Interpretation des couleurs par M Jehan Robertet (17) contains the line:

'Je qui suis gris signifie Esperance'

while Les colleurs deschiffrees du temps du Roy Francoys de France premier de ce nom refers to the second meaning:

'Gris, Travail' (18)

This very simple colour symbolism used in early heraldry, then, has a strong connection with that of the sixteenth century blasons and allied poems on the same subject. Looking at this from a wider point of view, we might also trace further connections between this early use of symbolism and its later use in the sixteenth century. It is in particular the moralising element common to both early and late colour symbolism which seems significant. The first section of the Blason des couleurs en armes is limited in application, dealing primarily with colours in heraldry. In the second part, however, a more generally applicable moralising becomes apparent. Going beyond a study of the significance of the colours in their own right, the author proceeds to analyse the significance of the colours when used in particular contexts. He studies the significance of the colours of the various species of birds (19), and – even

(17) BN Ms.fr. n.a.10262, f.118 v°
(18) BN Ms.fr.24315, f.1 r°
(19) Sicile, ed. Cocheris, p.92: Blason des couleurs sur les bestes et oyseaulx et d'aulcunes mutat-
    ions d'icelles
more apposite to this study - he then analyses the type and colour of clothing which should be worn by a particular type of man or woman. A list of articles of clothing is composed, describing the ideal colour for each garment in order best to reflect the particular characteristics and virtues of the wearer (20). Here the subject is treated fairly briefly, and in prose; the same subject, however, is taken up and treated in considerably more detail in verse form by Olivier de la Marche in the late fifteenth century in his Parement des dames (21). Here the parallel with the blason poétique as we know it in the sixteenth century is a clear one: each article of feminine attire is illustrated by a miniature (or woodcut in the printed texts). This is then followed by one or more stanzas describing the article of clothing in question, its particular colour, and interpreting its particular significance. Almost every garment tallies - both in description and in significance - with those described in the Blason des couleurs en armes, from the

(20) Sicile, ed. Cocheris, p.99 & p.101: Habit moral de l'homme selon les couleurs; De l'habit moral d'une dame selon les couleurs

(21) Le parement & triumphe des dames, Paris, Petit & le Noir, 1510, 8°, BN Res Ye 1253. Cf. also the same work under a different title: La source d'honneur pour maintenir la corporelle élégance des dames, Lyons, Morin, 1532, 8°, Arsenal 8° B 8751 res.

Both these editions contain a revised text, added to by the commentator Pierre Desray (Cf. H. Steig, Étude sur Olivier de la Marche, Paris, 1885, 8°, for details of Olivier de la Marche.) The original version by De la Marche, Traicté de l'amour des dames avec figures d'enluminure (BN Ms.fr.25431) contained none of the linking prose passages of the revised printed texts.
pantouffles ou souliers de couleur noire, qui denote simplicité (22) even to the curious red flannel piece de devant soy to be worn on the chest, signifying religious fervour (23), which reappears in Olivier de la Marche's work as:

'Une piece fault a madame avoir
De cramoisy le plus ardant quon face'

signifying bonne pensee (24).

Here we would seem to have a direct line of descent from the purely heraldic treatise on colour to the later fifteenth century moralising poem, interpreting the traditional significance of the colours in a wider field - that of human morality. In actual presentation of material also, Olivier de la Marche's Parement des dames, with its pattern of illustrative miniature (or woodcut) followed by description and interpretation in the form of a poem seems to owe a direct debt to the original presentation - consisting of illustrative shield plus explanation - of the heraldic treatise. Again, looking forward to the sixteenth century, this would also seem not dissimilar to the pattern adopted by the printed collections of anatomical blasons in the 1530s, in which the object in question is first depicted in the shape of a woodcut, and

(22) Sicile, ed. Cocheris, p.101
(23) 'Item doibt la piece de devant soy de couleur rouge ou de cramoisy, qui sera appellee la piece de bonne pensee ardante et eschauffee envers Dieu, laquelle doibt avoir toujours en son cueur' (Sicile, ed. Cocheris, p.102)
(24) Parement, C5 r°
subsequently described and interpreted in the poem itself.

* * *

A problem which has always worried critics is the origin of the word *blason* to designate a particular type of poem. As we have seen, when used loosely the word denotes the coat of arms or device by which a particular person or institution may be identified. Used more technically in treatises on heraldry it signifies the description and explanation of the shield (or *escu*). For the most part the treatises on heraldry with which we have been concerned deal with real coats of arms actually in use during the period. Not infrequently however among these we encounter 'imagined' coats of arms belonging to mythical and legendary characters, and it is in these, perhaps, that we find the link with the sixteenth century *blason poétique*.

A legendary group of knights whose imagined coats of arms appear particularly frequently in manuscript treatises are the Knights of the Round Table (25). BN Ms.fr. 1435 in particular is an extremely ambitious piece of work, describing in considerable detail first the physical appearance of each knight, then his particular coat of arms, finally concluding with a painted shield depicting visually the arms previously described. (In

(25) BN Ms.fr.1435: Ce sont les noms armes et blasons des chevalliers et compagnons de la Table ronde au temps que ils jurerent la queste du saint graal à camaloth

Arsenal Ms.5024: Ce sunt les noms armes & blasons des chevaliers companions de la table ronde au temps du roy artus
layout, therefore, this is – in reverse order – exactly what we find in the later anatomical blasons).

The herald does not limit his gifts of imagination to creating coats of arms only for legendary characters from history. The moral attributes of the code of chivalry and those of the Church are closely allied in the art of heraldry, and not infrequently we find occupying the place of honour at the head of a manuscript collection of coats of arms of real people an allegorical depiction of the coat of arms of leglise (26). Similarly a collection of coats of arms of real princes and kings may open with the imagined coat of arms of the mythical martyr king Prester John (27).

Even more interesting, we find in more than one of these collections allegorical coats of arms of Jesus Christ (28). Most frequently these depict Jesus on the Cross, surrounded by the Instruments of the Passion (29), although variants on this theme are to be found. Another

(26) BN Ms.fr.5937, f.l v°: armes de leglise: de gueulles a deux clefs dor passaes en saultouer. liees en pie de mesmes

(27) Arsenal Ms.5025, f.2 r°: Le prestre jehan, desur a ung crucifix dont la ✠ est dor et les cloux de sable et deux cordes de nesmes sus les deux bras de la croix (Cf. also BN Ms.fr.5930, f.56 r°)

This blason also appears in the printed collection of blasons: Le blason des armes, avec les armes des princes et seigneurs de France, Lyons, Nourry, nd, 8°, BN Res V 3199, C6 r°, under the title Prestre jehan empeureur des indes

(28) BN Ms.fr.5937, f.l v°
BN Ms.fr.5939, f.l r°

(29) This same theme appears also in Church iconography. Cf. a bench end in the Eglise de la Trinité in Vendôme, in which these same Instruments of the Passion appear.
manuscript (30) represents Christ crowned and bearing a sceptre and orb, above a shield supported on either side by two angels. With him is the Virgin Mary, and above them hovers a dove, representing the Holy Spirit. Within the shield is depicted the Cross, in the centre of which is painted the heart of Christ, surrounded by the crown of thorns.

It is these imagined blasons of the arms of Jesus Christ which provide the earliest link with the poetic blasons of the sixteenth century, for although the treatises themselves are nearly always in prose, we have come across two cases in which the painted arms of Jesus Christ are accompanied by a legend describing and interpreting them in verse, which might be seen as being the earliest blasons poétiques. In one instance the poem is not given any specific title; it features merely as part of the whole - painted arms plus interpretation - under the overall title Blazon des armes de nostre redemption (31). In the second case, however, the arms are followed by two introductory quatrains - one in French and one in Latin - urging the reader to look in anguish and pity upon the portrayal of Christ on the Cross (32). Then follows a title: telles armes a Jhesus ton redempteur vray homme & createur tout puissant. Finally appears the poem proper, explaining

(30) BN Ms.fr.2366, ff.12 v°- 13 r°
(31) BN Ms.fr.5939, f.1 r°
    Cf. also Arsenal Ms.4613, f.1 r°
(32) BN Ms.fr. 2366, ff.12 v°-13 r°
Ms.fr.5939, f.1 r°: Cy commence le blason des armes de notre redemption
BN Ms.fr. 2366, ff.12 v°- 13 r°: Telles armes a Jhesus ton redempteur vray homme & createur tout puissant
the significance of the various features of the shield, and it is to this explanatory poem that the title Le blazon is given. (Its Latin counterpart is entitled Distinctio) This, the earliest blason poétique which we have encountered, consists of three four-line stanzas describing the various features of the shield. The traditional symbolic values attributed to the colours emerge once again in the first stanza of the poem, gold and silver being taken to represent the majesty of Christ and the purity of the Virgin:

'Sa deitte est prinse en la haulteur
De cest escu au chief dor tout reluisant
Au corps humain quil prit sans defleur
De la vierge en largent bien duisant'

In the ballade accompanying the arms of Jesus Christ in BN Ms.fr.5939, the form is rather different from that of the blason of Ms.fr.2366. Here God is addressing his people, using military terminology and referring to them as soldiers of Christ. The original purpose of the coat of arms in its primitive form as a means of identification in battle is alluded to here, as God incites his soldiers to memorise carefully these arms against the approaching Judgement Day:

'Besoing sera quen ayez la memoire
Au derrain Jour que vouldrez retraire
Dessus le val de Josaphat chose est voyre
Pour condamner lancien adversaire
La montrerons ces armes sans nuance
Pour notre gent remectre en ordonnance
Et la vouldrons souldoiens delivrer
Lors commendra le plus hardi trembler
Car ny vauldront espees ne guysarmes
Mais quant orrez noz trompettes sonner
Loyaulx amans recongnoissez ces armes' (33)

(33) BN Ms.fr.5939, f.1 r°, stanza 3
The first and second stanzas describe the various parts of the escu and the significance of the colours in which they are painted. As in the previous blason in Ms.fr. 2366, attention is drawn to the significance of gold, representing divinity, and silver, representing innocence. Both these are in accordance with the significance attributed to these colours by Sicile and the other authors of treatises on heraldry:

'Plusieurs soudars par peu de congoissance
De noz armes font au diable alience
Si nous faisons pour votre bien mander
Lescu dargent au chief dor luysant cler
A cinq playes que quant preschans & carmes
Com vraiz hairaulz les vouldront blasonner
Loyaulx amans recongnoissez ces armes.

Divinite du chief dor povez croire
Pure Innocence est largent ou pourtraire
Vouldrent Juifz les playes' (34)

It is tempting to try to draw parallels between the sixteenth century blason of Jesus Christ by Eustorg de Beaulieu (35), written to atone for his earlier 'sept blasons lubriques', and these much earlier heraldic blasons of the arms of Christ. Gone here are the

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(34) BN Ms.fr.5939, f.1 r°, stanzas 1-2
This poem appears anonymously in the printed Lòuenses a nostre seigneur a nostre dame et aux benoîtz sains et saintes de paradis, Paris, Vérard, nd, 8°, BN Res Ye 851, under the title: Cy ensuit tresdeyst blason des armes de nostre redempteur (gg4 r°). It appears again under the title: Craison par maniere de ballade in Molinet's Faitz et ditz, Paris, Longis, 1531, in-folio, BN Res Ye 41, I r

(35) Le souverain blason d'honneur à la louange du tres-digne corps de Jesus Christ...extrait d'un sien livre intitulé Chrestienne Resjoyssance, npnd (1550?), 8°. Only two copies of this edition are extant (Zurich Zentralbibliothek VI 236/6 & Vienna Nationalbibliothek 79 Be 174). It was first printed as part of the Chrestiennne resjoyssance, np (Geneva ?), 1546, 8°, Chantilly IV.J 36. Cf. Pegg ed. Divers rapportz, Geneva,1964,8°, p.31 & p.71. The text reproduced here is provided by Dr. Pegg.
heraldic trappings and the Instruments of the Passion; instead we find a startlingly sensual preoccupation with the physical beauty of the body of Christ on the Cross (36). Yet even here, the military tone of the dizain which introduces the blason proper does suggest a conscious parallel with the more purely heraldic arms of Christ:

'Tous blasons d'armes & d'amours
Retirez vous pour faire place
Aux belliqueux & nobles tours
De Jesus que tous vous efface.
Ostez vous de devant sa face
Car vostre los tasche à l'honneur
A cause de ses defaillances.
Cachez vous donc, blasons d'erreur,
Ou louez Christ & ses vaillances'

Not surprisingly, the Virgin Mary is frequently found in these early combinations of heraldic shield and poem. A manuscript collection of didactic poetry entitled Rithme morale de latin et de francais tout ensemble escussons garnys de letres (37) concludes with a series of oraisons to the Virgin which are worthy of note for the particular way in which they are laid out. At the end of the volume appear four magnificent full-page painted shields of the regions of France, and it is across the length of these shields that the poems are written, in such a manner that the actual calligraphy forms part of the design, thus accentuating the closely interknit structure of heraldic shield and accompanying poem.

(36) 'tes beaulx et nobles membres...tes yeux rians...& tant remplis de grace...ton nez, ta bouche & belles joues...ta pure langue & ton ventre & poictrine... tes piedz aussi, tes mains & ton costé...tes bras'

(37) BN Ms.fr.147
From this survey of heraldry two clear links with the sixteenth century blason are seen to have emerged. Firstly the preoccupation with the symbolic interpretation of the colours, which we find reappearing in certain sixteenth century blasons and allied poems, has a very obvious source in the earlier treatises on heraldry (38). Secondly - and even more important as an original source for the use of the word blason to signify a poem - we would stress the influence of the imagined heraldic depictions of the coats of arms of legendary characters such as the Knights of the Round Table and Prester John. In this connection the best example seems to be that of the arms of Jesus Christ, in which the descriptive, interpretative passage which accompanies the shield takes the form of a poem. These are the earliest known examples of descriptive poems bearing the title blason, in which the term yet retains all its original purely heraldic sense.

* * *

In the latter part of the fifteenth century and in the early sixteenth century the term blason denoting a poem becomes much more common. The word also takes on a wider and less clearly definable field of meaning.

(38) It is interesting to note that this connection with heraldry is further stressed in a manuscript poem (BN Ms.fr.24461 res, f.108 r) : Lexposition des couleurs. Here the symbolic association of each colour is described in a poem. Together with this, however, illustrating the poem is a series of miniatures depicting ladies wearing dresses of the appropriate colour, and, furthermore, bearing shields in which the name of the colour is inscribed.
Critics tend to regard the group of blasons written in the fifty years or so preceding the anatomical blasons of the 1530s as a jumble of more or less disparate poems. There are, however, certain distinguishing threads running through these poems, some of which seem to show a clear line of development from the purely heraldic blason.

The heraldic origins of the blason die very slowly. A short and somewhat neglected blason by Lemaire de Belges shows the continuing association of the term with heraldry. His Blason des armes des Venitiens (39) retains the original sense of the word blason as a description and interpretation of a particular set of arms — in this case the Venetian lion (40). In this poem,


(40) Stecher places this poem at the end of the prose Legende des Venitiens, dating it as 1509. In fact it appears in neither of the earliest editions of the Legende des Venitiens which I have consulted (Lyons, 2nd ed. (priv. July, 1509), 8°, BN 8 Res Lb^27 & Paris, Marnef, nd (priv. July, 1509), 4°, BN Res La^3). The earliest edition of Lemaire in which I have found this poem is the Illustrations de Gaule & singularitez de Troye (Paris, Marnef, 1512-1513, 4°, BN Res La^4), which also contains Le traict intitule de la difference des scismes & des conciles de lerlise...Avec le blason des armes des Venitiens 1511. The blason appears at the end of the volume (K3 r - v°), after the Conclusion de toute leuvre:

'Icy clorrons nous ce present labeur, Mais que par maniere de recreation, soit mis le blason des armes des Venitiens, qui sont cause de tous ces maux'

When the works of Lemaire were published again in 1524 by Philippe le Noir (Paris, 1524, 4°, BN Res La^8) the Legende des Venitiens was not included, although the Blason des armes des Venitiens appears once again (EE5 v - EE6 r°) at the
however, Lemaire gives a new twist to the genre by introducing a satirical element. The proud heraldic lion of St. Mark described in the opening lines as a:

'Lyon nageant, Lyon trotant,
Lyon yssant, Lyon passant,
Lyon mordant et ravissant' (41)

is at the end of the poem transformed at the hands of the aunt of the future Charles V, who:

'T'ha rendu mat, povre et tremblant:
Si qu'on dira dorenavant,
Que tu n'es pas Lyon croupant,
Lyon couchant, Lyon fuyant,
Mais pis qu'un Chien ord et puant' (42)

In this poem by Lemaire we see - perhaps for the first time - an element of real poetic skill in a blason. Here certainly, as in the heraldic blasons on the arms of Jesus Christ, the symbols of the coat of arms are described and interpreted. But Lemaire is not content with merely describing an inanimate symbol. Instead he invests his heraldic lion with a life and character of its own. The result is a poem which is no longer simply an interpretative passage which happens to be in verse, but a poem which is aesthetically pleasing, and valid as such.

end of Lhystoire moderne du prince Syach ysmail.
It is only in the much later edition of the Illustrations de Gaule et singularitez de Troye 'reveues, corrigees & augmentees par Antoine du Moulin' (Lyons, Tournes, 1549, in-folio, BN Res La13) that we find the Blason des armes des Venitiens placed at the end of the Legende des Venitiens (Ii6 v°), with no acknowledgement by Du Moulin that he has altered the original order.

(42) Stecher, vol.III, p.408
The satirical intent is in itself unusual. I have found only one other example of a satirical blason describing a coat of arms—an English poem dating from 1528, describing and explaining the significance of a burlesque version of the arms of Cardinal Wolsey. Following the tradition of the heraldic treatise, the shield is first depicted; this is then followed by the description of the armes in which the various features are interpreted (43).

However blasons describing a particular coat of arms, but without this satirical intent are not uncommon, continuing into the sixteenth century. Gilles Corrozet's

(43) 'Of the prowde Cardinall this is the sheld
Borne up betwene two angels off Sathan.
The sise blouddy axes in a bare feld
Sheweth the crueltie of the red man,
whiche hathe devoured the beautifull swan,
Mortall enmy unto the whyte Lion,
Carter of Yorcke, the vyle butchers sonne.

The sise bulles heddes in a feld blacke
Betokeneth pys sturdy furiousnes
Wherfore the godly lyght to put abacke
He bryngeth in his dyvllishe darcknes.
The handog in the middes doth expresse
The mastif Curre bred in Ypswitch towne
Gnawynge v/ith his teth a kynges crowne.

The cloubbe signifieth playne pys tiranny
Covered over with a Cardinals hatt
Wherin shalbe fulfilled the prophecy
Aryse up Jacke and put on thy salatt
For the tyme is come of bagge and walatt
The temporell chevalry thus thrown downe
Wherfor prest, take hede and beware thy crowne'

(William Roy & Jerome Barlow,
Reide me and be nott wrgthe,
npnd (London, 1528), 8°; BM C 21 a 27, title page and verso of title page)
Antiquitez, histoires croniques et singularitez de la grande & excellente cite de Paris (44) is prefaced by a Blason des armes de la ville de Paris without the name of the author, but signed with Corrozet's device Plus que Moins. Beginning 'Le chef d'azur de fleurs de lys semé', it is a straightforward interpretation of the heraldic significance of the arms of Paris in the traditional manner, the only difference being that here again it takes the form of a poem (45).

The royal marriage of Madeleine of France and James V of Scotland provided material for more than one heraldic poem. Jean Leblond produced a Blazon de la Gosse, contenant troys grains dont saillent et naissent troys fleurs, cestassavoir le lys la rose et lancholie (46), describing and analysing the heraldic significance of the two flowers he associates with Scotland, the rose and the columbine, together with the lily of France. The appearance of the columbine seems to be an error. We can only assume that Leblond mistook the crossed rose and thistle of the Stewart coat of arms (47) for a rose and columbine. The

(44) Paris, Bonfons, 1576, 8°, BN 8° Lk'5985
(45) This poem does not appear in the earlier editions of the Antiquitez (Paris, Janot, 1532, 8°, BN Res Lk'5982 & Paris, Corrozet, 1550, 8°, BN Lk'5983)
(46) Nuptiaulx virelayz du mariage du roy descoc e et de madame Magdaleine, Paris, Angelier, nd (priv. 1536), 8°, BN Res Ye 3620, A4 v
columbine is taken to signify constancy while the rose signifies love and purity:

'Cest la rose odorante amyable et jolye
Et de lautre coste lazuree ancolye
Lancolye cest foy constance & loyaulte
Et la Rose est amour, humblesse & purite
Des quelles deux vertus nation Escocoyse
A tousjours bien use vers noblesse Francroyse
Tout cecy cler voyant largesse lilialle
A doue leur beau roy dune fille royalle' (48)

Another unlisted heraldic blason, written most probably by Hugues Salel, better known for his love blasons, is to be found in the supplement to the Palais des nobles dames which we find in the Rothschild copy of this work (49), but not in that in the Bibliotheque Nationale itself. Although the main work is attributed to Jean du Pré, each individual section is signed with the device of Salel, Honneur me guyde, together with his habitual anagram Lelas. The Rothschild copy contains a supplement with a separate title page: Dyalogue non moins utile que delectable, auquel sont introduitz les dieux Jupiter et Cupido disputans de leurs puissances (50). This is introduced by a dedicatory epitre by Salel to Brandelis de Gironde, dated 1534, which is followed immediately by a Rondeau enigmatique de la maison de Montclera, en Quercy, blasonnant les armes de ladicte maison (51). The first stanza of the rondeau simply plays with the name Montclera, but the

(48) Nuptiaulx virelayz, A4 r°
(49) Le palais des nobles dames...compose par...Jehan du Pré, npnd (Lyons, c.1534), 8°, BN Picot 2862
(50) Palais des nobles dames, Q r°
(51) Palais des nobles dames, Q3 r°
second stanza is far more precise, making allusion to the hirondelle of the family coat of arms (52):

'Ung beau lyon (53), jadis y repaira
Prenant plaisir, ouyr chanter laronde
Dedans Quercy'

With the exception of Lemaire's Blason des armes des Venitiens these works have little poetic merit. They are, however, extremely interesting from the point of view of this thesis, in that they show the link between the heraldic prose blason interpreting the significance of a coat of arms and the later blason poétique.

* * *

Coquillart's Blason des armes et des dames (54), composed for the coronation of Charles VIII at Rheims in 1484, is usually regarded as the earliest of the pre-Marot blasons. Often dismissed by critics as 'nothing more or less than a débat' (55), it does nevertheless provide a nice example of an extension of the hitherto heraldic cliché blason des armes into a wider field, with Coquillart discussing the vexed

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   'Gironde marquis de Montclera-Guyenne. Ec: aux I et 4 d'or à 3 hirondelles de sa., bq. et m. de gu., 2 et I; aux 2 et 3 d'azur à une croix treflée d'or'

(53) I would venture to suggest that the beau lyon is possibly a reference to the coat of arms of the wife of Brandelis de Gironde. I have, however, been unable to find any mention of this particular member of the family.


(55) Cf. Pike, p.224
problem of whether the chivalrous prince should prefer courtly love or feats of arms (56). We see this poem as illustrating the relatively vague use of the title blason. Certainly it does retain heraldic associations— as we see from the phrase blason des armes, but it is equally a débat in which two opposing views are expressed, and the merits of each are described and praised in a manner very like that of many other late fifteenth century poems in which the descriptive and eulogistic technique seems to anticipate that of the anatomical blasons of the 1530s.

The poem takes the form of a dramatic dialogue between les Armes and les Dames, the one advocating feats of arms as a fitting pastime for the young prince, while the other upholds the cause of courtly love. The prologue

(56) Too much attention, however, should not be paid to the use of the word blason in the title of this poem, as reproduced by d'Héricault. In the earliest printed version of this poem in the Droitz nouveaulx (Sensuyvent les droitz nouveaulx, avec le débat des dames, et des armes, Paris, Trepperel, nd, 4°, BN Res Ye 229) the work is described on both title page and colophon as a débat, and the poem itself concludes with the line:

'Cy finissent le débat des dames et des armes' (I r°)

In fact, only in the title to the poem itself does the word blason appear:

'Cy finissent l'enquête dentre la simple, et la rusee. Et commence le blason des armes et des dames' (H2 r°)

Later editions of the Droitz nouveaulx by Janot (Paris, nd, 4°, BN Res Ye 232) and Lotrian (Paris, nd, 4°, BN Res Ye 226) follow this usage. Even Galiot du Pré, in his much later edition of the Œuvres maistre Guillaume Coquillart...nouvelle-ment reveues (Paris, Du Pré, 1532, 8°, BN Res Ye 1266) continues to follow this convention:

'Si commence le blason des armes, & des dames' (f.112 v°)

and:

'Fin du débat des dames & des armes' (f.125 v°)
in which the author speaks directly, would suggest that the dialogue was probably acted before the young Charles VIII at Rheims:

'En ce parc, vous en povez veoir
Les signes, et apparence
Les demonstrances et les games:
 Là sont les Armes; là les Dames;
L'une se plaint, et l'autre ryt;
L'une si donne à l'autre blasme
Pour avoir, ou temps qui court, bruit' (57)

and the Conclusion of the poem ends with the poet addressing the prince directly:

'Sire, par vous soit pardonné
Au rude engin et simple sens
Du povre Honneste Fortune,
Qui a leu les deux passe temps' (58)

The imagery put into the mouths of the two protagonists by Coquillart is ingenious. The advocate of feats of arms employs a protracted metaphor of the monastery:

'Mes moynes portent haulberjon
En leur grant messe, en lieu de froc.
Leur cloistre, c'est quelque donjon
De pierre, juchie sur ung roch.
Tirer, luitre, jouter au crocq,
Sont les cerimonies et signes.
Ung coup d'espee taille ou d'estoc,
C'est la beneisson des matines.
Leurs orgues, se sont serpentines' (59)

while in contrast, the advocate of courtly love employs the vocabulary of the very soldier whose arguments he is refuting:

'La haulte piece, c'est ung tetin
Dur, joint, poly, selon le cas;
Armures, pourpoint de satin,
Ou quelque corset de damas;

(59) Coquillart, vol.II, p.170 (The italicisation of the monastic terms is d'Héricault's)
Les salades des corgias,  
Cheveuix longz, perruques de pris...  
...Yeulx affeictiez sont mes heraulx  
Portans, pour doubte d'estre pris,  
Bastons à feu roydes et chaulx.  
\textit{J'ay souldars fiefvés et yassaulx} \footnote{Coquillart, vol.II, pp.182-183} (60)

The conclusion, after all the 'divers pointz, divers argumens' \footnote{Coquillart, vol.II, p.193} have been given, is foreseeable, for the poet simply advocates a balanced mean between the two:

'Que ung Prince de noble renom  
Doit scavor utrumque tempus:  
L'ung et l'autre tems, sans abbus;  
Avoir le costé destre armé,  
Le senestre et tout le surplus  
Aux Dames doit estre donné' \footnote{Coquillart, vol.II, p.195} (62)

Certainly this poem does take the outward form of a débat in which the two protagonists each put their own point of view. But this does not necessarily exclude it from the genre of the blason, as Pike would seem to suggest \footnote{Pike, p.224}. On the contrary, the poem is -- as the title indicates -- a two-fold blason with each protagonist itemising and praising its own particular virtues and characteristics. Armes, for example, describes itself thus:

'Armes font croistre cuesurs joyeulx  
Et multiplier en liesse,  
Aux robustes et vertueux  
Augmentant force et hardiesse  
Aux magnanimes, la proesse,  
Aux confèderes, l'alliance,  
A courages haulx, gentillesse,  
A gens resolus, assurence,  
Aux constans la perseverance,  
\footnote{Armes}'}
Aux larges, liberalité,
Aux rudes, prompt intelligence' (64)
while Dames takes up the cudgels in reply, employing
at times the repetitive technique which is so charac-
teristic of the late fifteenth century descriptive poem,
and which develops into a major feature of the six-
teenth century anatomical blason:

'Dames font croistre honnesteté;
Dames font les cuesrs resjoyr;
Dames font aymer loyaulté;
Dames font cruaulté fouyr.
Veiller, oreiller, taire, ouyir,
Estre prompt, prest, prudent et saige,
Cela fait des Dames jouyr
Ung noble et vertueux couraige' (65)

Certainly in the case of this blason there is no
illustration to form a visual basis for the description,
such as we found in the early more purely heraldic
blasons, and which we are to find in the later blason
of the sixteenth century. But we should not forget that
this poem was most probably originally intended to be
acted, and thus the visual aspect of the blason would
in fact be present, not in the usual form of illus-
tration, but rather in the form of actual dramatised
character and costume.

Roger de Collerye's Blason des dames en dialogue
(66) appears to have been inspired by Coquillart's blason,
making a natural progression from the title Blason des
armes et des dames to simply Blason des dames, thus

(64) Coquillart, vol.II, p.176
(66) Colllerye, Oeuvres, ed. d'Héricault, Paris, 1855,
16°, pp.123-139
incidentally eliminating the original associations present in Coquillart's poem. It is difficult to date this poem with any precision since Collerye's works were not printed until 1536 (67), and there is little internal evidence in the poem to help us. The only clue given in the text is a reference to Charles VIII in the past tense, suggesting that the poem dates from after his death in 1498 (68). In style, this blason differs little from the other dialogues of Collerye, all of which appear together with the so-called blason in the Roffet edition (69), and the only explanation we can find for the title Blason...en dialogue is the analogy with the earlier blason by Coquillart using the title Blason...des dames.

The poem in fact consists of a dialogue between Recueil gracieulx and Beau parler on the subject of the respect due to the female sex, drawing in the traditional examples of virtuous women culled from the Bible and from legend and mythology, which appear in so many fifteenth and early sixteenth century works

(67) Les œuvres de maistre Roger de Collerye... lesquelles il composa en sa jeunesse, Paris, Roffet, 1536, 8°, BN Res Ye 1411 (Blason on F7 r)

(68) 'Charles huytiesme, belliqueur, Les a fort aymées, prisées' (Collerye, ed. d'Héricault, p.137)

(69) Dyalogue des abusez du temps passé, faict lan mil cens douze pour jeunes enfans (E8 r)

Sensuyt ung petit dialogue de monsieur de dela & de monsieur de deca, compose lan mil cens trente troys (G5 r)
devoted to the subject of woman (70). Admittedly some justification for the title blason in the sense of encomium is given by the poet in the concluding lines of the dialogue:

'Recueil gracieulx:
Beau Parler, pour fouyr soulcy,
Nous concluons et là et cy,
D'ung franc vouloir, non vicieulx,
Que les dames jusques aux cieulx
Avons exaulsees par bons termes.

Beau parler:
Noz cueurs ne sont falacieux

Recueil gracieulx:
Ce traicte court, solacieux,
Nommerons le Blazon des Dames' (71)

*    *    *

It is an interesting exercise, and also a profitable one to examine the use made of the word blason by one particular poet. Throughout his work, Pierre Gringore uses the term blason and its allied forms (blasonner etc.) repeatedly, and often not very clearly. Three examples picked at random from the Menus propos (72) might serve to illustrate this:

'Lesquelz vouldront dessus toy entreprendre
Plusieurs blasons te cuidant espanter
Qui est couart es cours ne doit hanter' (73)

'Car ceulx qui nont aucun bien merite
Fors blasonner on croit leur menterie
Le vent de court est muable et varie' (74)

(70) Cf., for example, Jean du Pré's Palais des nobles dames
(71) Collerye, ed. d'Héricault, p.139
(72) Les menus propos, Paris, Couteau, 1521, 4°, BN Res Ye 293
(73) Menus propos de la maniere de soy gouverner es cours des princes, b2 r°
(74) Menus propos, b4 r°
Not infrequently, however, he does use the term in a more precise manner (and particularly when it appears in the title to a poem, rather than merely in the poem itself). The works of Gringore illustrate well the meaning of the word as designating a poem which defines, describes or gives a meaning to the attributes of a particular person or thing, which may sometimes be actually illustrated in the form of a woodcut, or sometimes merely alluded to in the course of the poem. Here Gringore's verse would seem to show a clear development from the original heraldic sense of the word blason meaning a 'reading' of the significance of a given coat of arms. This sense emerges particularly clearly from an examination of Gringore's best known blason, the Blazon des heretiques (76). At the head of

(75) Menus propos, b8 v°

(76) Paris, Philippe le Noir, 1524, 4°. This edition, described by Brunet as 'fort rare' (Manuel du libraire, Paris, 1860-1865, 4°, 6 vols, vol. II, col.1757) seems to be now completely lost, although it was reprinted in the nineteenth century by Techener (Paris, 1832, 4°), and the text (without the introductory woodcut of the heretic) is also included in the Elzévirienne edition of Gringore's Œuvres (ed. Montaiglon & d'Héricault, vol. I, pp.289-339).

The only available sixteenth century text of this poem is in a much later, revised version produced in 1572 by the Paris printer Guillaume Nyverd: La chronique des lutheriens & outrécuissance d'iceux, de puis Simon Magus, jusques à Calvin & ses complices & fauteurs Huguenots, (Paris, Nyverd, 1572, 8°, BN Res Ye 4105). Here the name of the original author is omitted.
this poem, on the title page appears a grimly realistic woodcut depicting the heretic, ascribed tentatively to Geoffroy Tory, on the evidence of the cross of Lorraine and the initials G.S. (Geoffroy sculpsit ?) which appear in the woodcut (77). This is followed by La description figure ou effigie de lhereticque (78) in which Gringore describes the features of the illustration of the heretic, explaining the significance of each of these:

'En gibeciere on luy voit ratz avoir
Qui sont rongeans et serpens detestables
En son giron faisant mords diffamables
De son sain sort ung aspre feu vollant
Qui cueur et corps et livres est bruslant' (79)

The remainder of the work consists merely of a list of the major heretics from Simon the Mage to Luther. It is perhaps significant that when - as in the later version of the Chronique - this woodcut and accompanying explanatory poem are omitted, the title blason is also dropped. It would seem that here Gringore is using the term blason quite specifically - to define a poem which is both descriptive and interpretative of the particular features which characterise the heretic.

We find a similar instance of this use of the word in a passage in the Menus propos of 1521 (80). Gringore

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the title changed and the work brought up to date, making the Huguenots represent the culmination of all heresy, whereas in Gringore's version the climax had been reached with Luther.

(78) Blazon des heretiques, p.1
(79) Blazon des heretiques, p.1
(80) Menus propos, a4 r°
narrates how Aristotle is frequently depicted with a naked woman perched on his shoulders, and states that he wishes to refute this implied defamation of the character of Aristotle:

'Veu que ung tel homme en science parfaict
Ne permist onc commettre ung lasche faict
Philosophie avoit en soy morale
En exposant aussi la naturelle
Parquoy Ion doit mettre sur luy raison
Comme voyez car cest son droict blason' (81)

Then follows, under the title Raison dessus la figure de Aristote, a woodcut depicting Aristotle with the aforementioned naked woman on his shoulders, who is now armed with geometrical instruments, and represents no longer:

'une femme sotte
Sur icelluy faignant le chevalcher' (82)

but rather the allegorical figure of Raison. This woodcut is followed by a dizain without a specific title, but which might well be regarded as a Blason de Raison:

'Raison suis subtile et argute
Qui du faulx et du vray dispute
Affin de bien et clere ment
Explicuer tout predicament
Et determiner des secretz
De droictz mundiaux et decretz
Et reprimer toutes injures
Les faulx poix et faulces mesures
Quietement prosperera
Qui par moy se gouvernera' (83)

Thus we have here basically the same pattern of woodcut accompanied by descriptive and explanatory poem that we find in the Blazon des heretiques.

(81) Menus propos, a4 r°- v°
(82) Menus propos, a4 r°
(83) Menus propos, a4 v°- a5 r°
Yet again, in the *Description de proces et de sa figure* with the accompanying *Blason de pratique* (84) Gringore follows this same pattern. Firstly he provides a woodcut — the figure mentioned in the title — depicting the fearsome allegorical beast *proces*. This is followed by the description of the physical characteristics of this *beste inique*:

'Portant face de cinge ou de cingesse, 
Dens de lion et oreilles d'anesse, 
Cornes agues en façon de toreau, 
Cuisses trappes, enflées comme ung porceau' 

Finally follows the *Blason de pratique* itself, in which, faithful to the traditional heraldic sense of the word, Gringore evokes one by one and interprets the significance of the various physical attributes of the beast which he has already described in the previous description. The asses' ears are intended to symbolise his lust for gold, akin to that of Midas:

'Comme Midas portant d'asnes oreilles' (86) and, Gringore continues:

'Son poil de bouc, trop long oultre mesure, 
Signifie que par folle luxure 
Il obeyt aux dames, en tel sorte 
Que a leur plaisir justice n'est plus forte' 

*Pratique*, Gringore explains, resembles the pig, whose characteristic, or *blason* is greed:

(84) *Les folles entreprisgs, Paris*, Le Dru, 1505, 8°, BN Res Ye 1321, b8 r- c2 r°

(85) Gringore, *Oeuvres*, vol.I, p.47

(86) Gringore, *Oeuvres*, vol.I, p.48

(87) Gringore, *Oeuvres*, vol.I, p.49
'Comme ung pourceau est gourmant, par blasons,
Se veut nourrir de plusieurs venaisons,
Et prend plaisir quant bons vins on luy donne'

Here again we have a clear parallel both with the earlier heraldic blason, and with the later sixteenth century blason where the heraldic sense has been largely lost, but the interpretative element which derived originally from heraldry remains. Like the sixteenth century blason poétique and allied illustrated poetry (bestiary, emblem book etc.) poem and woodcut are mutually illustrative and interpretative, and the two cannot effectively be separated, or considered independently.

Henry Guy (89) refers to a further blason by Gringore, the so-called Blason de la paix included in the Menus propos sur le different des hommes et bestes (90). This title is in fact deceptive, for the poem in question is not a complete poem in its own right, but merely a fragment of a larger work, in which mention is made of the word blason, but only in its vaguest sense of 'description':

'Or est requis faire comparaison
Par eloquent & vertueux blason
Du beau tresor que on dit de paix heureuse'

Gringore then is perhaps one of the most important of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century writers

(88) Gringore, Oeuvres, vol.I, p.49
(90) Menus propos, n7 v° - q5 r°
(91) Menus propos, p4 r°
of blasons, since he reflects so clearly this transition period during which the word becomes generalised, and from blason meaning a strictly heraldic interpretation, we come to blason meaning description, praise and interpretation of the symbolic or allegorical meaning of any given object. The importance of the woodcuts in Gringore's blasons likewise looks back to the painted shields of the purely heraldic blason, but at the same time points forward clearly to the woodcuts accompanying the anatomical blasons of the sixteenth century. Gringore's blasons then seem to pave the way for the sixteenth century blason as a descriptive and interpretative poem accompanied by a woodcut. Indeed it may not be an exaggeration to look at them even as a source also for the allied sixteenth century genres of the emblem book and the bestiary, both closely associated with the blason.

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The poems we have discussed so far have all been chosen to illustrate the development of the blason poétique from its heraldic origins towards the form in which we recognise it in the first half of the sixteenth century. To this end we have selected poems in which the links with heraldry seem to be particularly close. However, when discussing the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries we must bear in mind that too precise definitions are dangerous things, and that very frequently a term may be used very vaguely indeed. Thus many of the poems of this period which are entitled
Blasons can only, in fact, be loosely described as descriptive poems. In many of these the features which we would regard as characteristic of the blason are in fact present - the poems are eulogistic, descriptive, and they list the attributes associated with the particular object in question. Often also they are repetitive in construction. In other cases, however (and notably in such poems as the Blason and Contre-blason de fausses amours (92) ) the term blason seems to have virtually no real significance, and these poems show little of the descriptive character normally associated with the genre.

Perhaps the best example of the repetitive blason, listing and praising the features which characterise a chosen object, is Gilles Corrozet's Blason du moys de may (93). Although it was written at a date well into the sixteenth century, it retains all the trappings of a late fifteenth century work. (Not surprisingly, perhaps, it is printed in Gothic type, and the title page consists simply of a woodcut accompanied by the title of the poem - a style belonging to the late fifteenth or very early sixteenth century rather than to the 1530s). In a manner not unlike that of Coquillart's Blason des armes et des dames, this poem by Corrozet takes the form of a débat - between a chevalier and a damoyeselle. Like Coquillart's blason again, this poem

(92) Cf. below, chapter I, p.72
(93) npnd (c.1530), 8°, BN Res p Ye 338
could also be seen almost as a simple dramatic dialogue between the two protagonists on the subject of the various advantages of the month of May, with the final stanza spoken by the damoyselle and addressed to the audience direct, drawing the poem to a close:

'Vous dictes vray doncq puis que no' avons
Meu ce propos par maniere joyeuse
Et quainsy soit comme tresbien savons
Quaproche ja la nuyct fort tenebreuse
Laissons les champs lherbette precieuze
Et retournons sans targuer en noz lieux
Dicte sera loeuvre facetieuse
Du moys de may le blason gracieulx' (94)

Again, like Coquillart's poem, the character of this blason is that of an overall descriptive poem, evoking the various activities of the merry month of May, ranging from the delights of hunting and courting to the superior medicinal qualities of butter made in May:

'Beurre de May vault contre rongne & galle
Pour les seicher & guerir plainement
Quant il est mis au soleil chault non pasle
Pour fondre lors sert il pour onglement' (95)

At times this description takes an unremarkable narrative form, but at others it reflects the repetitive technique described by A-M Schmidt as one of the characteristics of the blason anatomique (96):

'Le moys de May est sus tous gracieulx
Le moys de May est sus tous delectable
Le moys de May n'est jamais soucieulx
Le moys de May est doulx & amyable
Le moys de May est begnin & traictable
Le moys de May est de verd florissant

(94) Blason du moys de may, A4 v°
(95) Blason du moys de may, A4 r°
(96) Poètes du XVIe siècle, p.293
Le moys de May sus aultre inestimable
Le moys de May faict gens esjouyssant' (97)

Schmidt, of course, is referring to the repetitive technique employed by the anatomical blasonneur to apostrophise the object which he wishes to praise. In this poem by Corrozet the repetition is in the third person, as opposed to the second person as used by the anatomical blasonneur, and the variety of tone, and verve which characterise the more dramatic repetitions of many of the blasonneurs is absent here. Nevertheless, there would seem to be a certain connection between such techniques used in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and those adopted by the anatomical blasonneurs.

This type of technique is not limited solely to poems entitled blasons. On the contrary, it is very common at the end of the fifteenth century, and continues into the sixteenth. Jean Bouchet uses it in his Louanges de paix (98) to praise Peace, listing her various attributes. This poem might equally well have been entitled Blason de la Paix:

'Paix est sa fille en son humanite
Paix vint des cieux et de la trinite
Paix est sur tout par luy recommandee
Et par ce paix doit estre demandee
Sur tout par vous, si chrestiens vous estes
Paix assorbist de debatz les tempestes
Paix donne joye et de biens uberte,
Paix enrichist les membres piedz et testes,
Par paix avons franchise et liberte' (99)

(97) Blason du moys de may, A4 r°- v°
(98) In the Deploration de leglise militante, in the Opuscules du Traverseur des voyes perilleuses, npnd, 8°, BN Res Ye 358, Q4 r°
(99) Opuscules du Traverseur, Q4 r°
A type of poem in which this repetitive technique is used to the full is that belonging to the pro- and anti-woman controversy which raged throughout the Middle Ages and on into the sixteenth century. There would seem little difference in the use of repetition between Corrozet's *Blason du moys de may* and, for example, an anonymous anti-woman poem taken from Ms. Harleian 2253, included in Jubinal's anthology of medieval poetry (100):

'Femme engendre en poi de houre
Dount tote la contrée em ploure;
Femme est jolyf per ly démostrer,
Femme est lyoun pur dévorar,
Femme est gopil per gent déceyvre
Femme est ourse per cous reveyvre,
Femme est fotere por tous prendre
Femme est ostour per preie atteindre
Femme est hobel per haut mounter' (101)

The same repetitive technique can equally be used in praise of woman or in vituperation against her. Martin le Franc's *Champion des dames* (102) shows, indeed, both these two aspects. Taking once again the form of a débat between the champion and the adversaire, the poem discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the female sex. In reply to the adversaire's attack on woman and her rapidly fading beauty:

'Tost vient tost est ridee & pale
Tost devient flache & escolee...

(100) *Nouveau recueil de contes, dits, fabliaux et autres pièces inédites des XIII, XIV et XVe siècles*, Paris, 1839-1842, 8°, 2 vols

(101) Jubinal, vol.II, p.331

(102) *Le champion des dames*, Paris, Du Pré, 1530, 8°, BN Res Ye 4028-4030. This poem is dated by A. Piaget (*Martin le Franc, prévot de Lausanne*, Lausanne, 1888, 8°) as 1440-1442.
"Beaute de femme est tost alee
Fies vous y foulz estourdis" (103)

the champion replies in terms of praise of the female body:

'Corps florissant comme rosier
Corps plus que fin basme odorant
Corps envoie pour nous aisier
Et sauver tout le demeurant.
Corps de femme, corps de deesse
Corps de toute beaulté lumiere
Il doit estre bien par rudesse
Preserve en toute maniere' (104)

In this context of description of feminine beauty Pierre Danché's (105) Blason d'une belle fille (106) might well be mentioned. Here, although the repetitive technique is not so apparent, the other characteristic of the blason - its analytical aspect - emerges clearly, as indeed it does from Danché's other two blasons, the Blason des vins and the Blason d'un bon cheval (107). All these poems are in fact ballades, and their content remains firmly entrenched in a fifteenth century tradition. Although the Belle fille

(103) Champion des dames, f.88 v°
(104) Champion des dames, f.95 r°
(105) Of Danché we know virtually nothing; his name appears in various forms in different texts (Danthe in BN Ms.fr.1721, f.60 v°; Danchie in BN Ms.fr.25458 res, f.537 r°). Piaget and Droz give brief details of his life and of other poems by him which appear in other mss. (Jardin de plaisance, Paris, Vérand, 1501, in-folio, BN Res Ye 168, reprinted Piaget & Droz, Paris, 1924, 4°, 2 vols, vol.II, p.254)
(106) Jardin de plaisance, vol.I, f.124 v°
(107) In the Jardin de plaisance only the Belle fille and the Bon cheval are included (vol.I, ff.124 v°-125 r°). All three blasons are printed together
might at first glance seem to be taking us nearer to
the anatomical **blasons**, closer investigation of the
content of the poem shows that this is not the case.
This is not a love poem; the ideal female body described
here by Danché is examined objectively, and throughout
the poem there is no suggestion of personal involve-
ment on the part of the poet. A considerable gulf
separates this dispassionate analysis of what constit-
utes a female body worthy to honour the bed of a prince
with its far from courtly **envoi**:

'Gentil prince par vostre esbatement
Si trouvez ung tel appointment
Au petit pied, jambe gresle et ronde
Montez dessus et picquez hardiment
Parfaicte en biens sera la plus du monde'

(108)

from the far more sensual and subjective love poetry of
the anatomical **blasonneurs** in which each feature
described is seen through the poet's own eyes, and
coloured by his own involvement and emotions:

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in *Les trois blasons composés par M.P.d'A.*
Cestassavoir le blason des bons vins, le blason
de la belle fille, le blason d'ung bon cheval.
Poitiers, Marnef, nd, 8°, Chantilly IV D 127.
'Tchemerzine (Bibliographie d'éditions origin-
-ales et rares, Paris, 1930, 4°, p.29) also
describes an edition of Coquillart containing a
supplement of the three blasons by Danché:
'Les Oeuvres de Maistre Guillaume Coquillart,
En son vivant...A Paris,1546.De l'Imprimerie
de Jeanne de Marnef, In-16. 112 ff. sig a-o.
A la suite on a imprimé "les trois blasons
de Pierre Danche"
I have not, however, been able to locate a copy
of this edition.
The three blasons also appear in manuscript
form in BN Ms.fr. n.a. 10262 (ff.138 v°- 143 r°)
and in BN Ms.fr.1721 (ff.60 v°- 62 v°)

(108) *Jardin de plaisance*, vol.I, f.124 v°
'O belle gorge, o blancheur tant unie,
O dur tetin de quoy jay tant denvie,
O battement de cueur, & de poictreine,
Quand fort amour anticipe lalaine,
O douce main, molle, blanche, & charnue
Quand tu me prens, tout le sang si me mue.
Jambes legiere a marcher promptement,
La ou tu scais quest venu ton amant' (109)

The actual terminology used by the fifteenth century poet is little different from that of the sixteenth century blasonneur, but the slant which it is given is very different. Danche's attitude of the dispassionate onlooker is made even more clear by a comparison of his two blasons, the Belle fille and the Bon cheval. Indeed the poet does not appear to regard the criteria of feminine beauty as being on a different aesthetic plane from those determining equine beauty, and the fine points required in a woman worthy of a prince are described in much the same manner as the corresponding points required in a horse fit for the same prince. The one must have:

'Le col gresle vers le hault seulement
Bon pied & creux, joincte emmolee
Jambes plate, large mesurement' (110)

and the other:

'Oeil verdelet, et de fronc largement
Cler de viz, coulleree proprement
Menton fourche, et cheveleure blonde
Humble regard & aller doulcement' (111)

(109) Blason du corps (anon), Hecatomphile (1537) with Blasons (1536), np, 16°, Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg R 102 895, (x2)°

(110) Jardin de plaisance, vol.I, f.124 v° (horse)

(111) Jardin de plaisance, vol.I, f.124 v° (woman)

(1) We might note in passing an anonymous early seventeenth century sonnet from the Cabinet...
Danche remains firmly rooted in the medieval tradition; his criteria for feminine beauty reflect those of Guillaume de Lorris, whose Oyseuse provides a prototype for the numerous descriptions of feminine beauty throughout the Middle Ages. Almost all of Oyseuse's features reappear in Danche's poem, even down to the green eyes and cleft chin which, although so important in descriptions of beautiful women in the fifteenth century, suddenly disappear around the third

satyrique (Paris, jouxte la coppie imprimee à Rotten, 1632, 8°, BN Res Ye 2759, p.315) pointing out even more directly the similarities between horse and woman:

'La femme et le cheval doivent estre semblables,
Tous deux petite teste, oeil gros, & large front,
L'oreille courte & droite, le col haut & long,
Les crains espois & beaux les gestes amiables.

L'estomach relevé, les espaules capables
Le flanc un peu longuet le ventre droit en front
Les reins fors,croupe large, & le maniment prompt
La cuisse ferme & grosse, & les pieds amiables.

Tous deux se doivent rendre à l'homme obeyssans,
Façonnez à l'espron,& fiers en ornement,
Avoir le montoir doux la descente benigne.

L'emboucheure gaillarde avec un brusque pas,
Somme estre tous pareils, horsmis en ce seul cas
Qu'un porte sur le ventre & l'autre sur l'eschine'

2) It is interesting to note that Jean Bouchet included in his Genealogies, effigies et epitaphes (Poitiers, Bouchet, 1545, in-folio, BN F 273, f.83 r') an Epitaphe contenant le blason d'un bon cheval consisting of some thirty lines of detailed description of the features of an obviously much loved horse, described by Bouchet as his 'amy fidelle'(1.34). This poem contains a passage of description very similar to that of Danche's blason:

'Petite teste il portoit comme ung foul,
Et par le hault il avoit gresle coul
Noyret ung peu, joincte courte, emmolee,
Bon pied & creux, la queue longue & lee'

(11.11-14)
decade of the sixteenth century:

'Cheveulx eut bloncz comme ung bassin
La chair plus tendre qu'ung poussin
Front reluyant, sourcilz voultiz
Large entroeil, et les piedz petis
Tétin poignant blanc de nature
Et le nez bien fait a droicteure
Comme ung faulcon les yeulx eut vers
Jectans oeilades de travers
La face blanche et coulourée
L'alaine douce et savouree
La bouche petite et grossette
Et au menton une fossette' (112)

Danché is officially recognised as being the author of three blasons (the third being the Blason des vins). It is curious that his ballade on the subject of money which follows the three blasons in BN Ms.fr.1721 (f.63 r°) and which is printed in the Fleur de toutes joyeusetez (113) is not given this title, since in form it differs little from the other three — a further indication of the vagueness with which the term blason could be used. The theme of this poem — the power enjoyed by the possessor of money — is a common one. The Contreditz de Songecreux (114), for example, contains a long passage in the section De lestat de court (115) describing the efficacy of money:

'Qui argent a, la guerre il entretient
Qui argent a, gentil homme devient
Qui argent a, chacun luy fait honneur
C'est monseigneur

(113) npnd, 8°, BH Res Ye 2713, G r°
(114) Paris, Du Pré, 1530, 8°, BN Res Ye 1326
(115) Contreditz, ff.129 r°- 198 v°
This same theme is exploited by Danche in his ballade listing all the material advantages which can be procured by money:

'Argent fait avoir gras morceaulx
Bons vins, mols lictz, pour la personne...
...Argent fait evesques nouveauaulx
Tous prelatz a large courone
Cardinaulx aux rouges chappeaulx
Abbesse dune jeune nonne
Argent sould pechiez & pardonne' (117)

The moralising refrain, however, distinguishes Danche's poem from that of Songecreux:

'Reste sans plus que argent ne done
Sante, jeunesse, & paradis' (118)

Danche's last blason on the wines of France, although undistinguished as poetry is nevertheless interesting as a detailed catalogue of the various wine growing areas of France, their particular merits and demerits, concluding with the refrain that:

'Beaune a le bruit surtout pour excellence' (119)

This blason by Danche should not be confused with another anonymous manuscript poem on the same subject, and likewise entitled Le blazon du bon vin (120). This latter poem, like the Blason en maniere de rebus ('Ung

(116) Contreditz, f.170 r°
(117) Fleur de toutes joyeusetez, G r°
(118) Fleur de toutes joyeusetez, G r°
(119) BN Ms.fr.1721, f.60 v°
(120) BN Ms.fr. 17527, f.111 v°
grand souffleur de sa gueulle a soufflé') (121), is a puzzle poem describing the qualities required in a good wine:

'A ung bon vin fault qu'il y ait xxii biens Cestass bbb ccc nnn vvv sssss ffffff
Par les bbb Il est bel bon buvable Par les nnn Il est Nect nouvel naturel. Par les vvv Il est vermeil Vineulx vertueulx Par les sssss Il est sain Sec sade savoureux Par les ffffff Il est Fin froyt franc friant fleurant et fouteulx'

In these latter poems the repetitive aspect is somewhat lost, but they do nevertheless have one very important point in common - their analytical descriptive character. In this last poem, even under the guise of a rebus this aspect of the blason is still very apparent.

* * *

Pierre Grosnet's collection of geographical blasons dealing with the towns of France reflects a further offshoot of the analytical descriptive blason. Rather more diffuse than the repetitive blasons which we have been looking at, they nevertheless fit into the pattern of analysis of the various features which characterise a given object - which we have seen to be the most consistent aspect of the blason in its development from the purely heraldic to the later anatomical blason.

Printed in 1530, the first edition of the Motz dorés de Cathon...avecques bons et tresutiles enseigne-mens (122) by Grosnet already contained an Epitheton

(121) BN Ms.fr.9225, f.39 r°. Attributed by Kathleen Ches'ney to Jean Marot (Cf. Fleurs de Rhétorique, Oxford, 1950, 8°, p.46)
(122) Paris, Longis, 1530, 8°, BN Res p Yc 906
de la ville de Sens (123), a Dicton de la ville de Clamecy (124), (both only four lines long) and a six-line Blason de Paris (125). Three years later, the considerably augmented Second volume des motz dorez du grand & saige Cathon (126) appeared, containing twenty-one poems on the various towns of France, under the collective title La louenge & description de plusieurs bonnes villes & citez du noble royaulme de France (127). The individual poems are described apparently indiscriminately as description, louange or blason, or indeed by any permutation of the three (128), and there seems to be no appreciable difference between those poems entitled blason and those entitled louange or description (129).

In addition to praising the town in question, each poem gives detailed information about its geographical situation, its principal churches and abbeys, its

(123) Motz dorez, G5 v°
(124) Motz dorez, K8 r°
(125) Motz dorez, K8 r°
(126) Paris, Longis, 1533, 8°, BN Vélins 2092
(127) Second volume des motz dorez, ff.42 v°- 64 r°
(128) Description & louenge de la noble cite de Nevers (f.48 r°)
Blason & louenge de la noble ville & cite de Lyon (f.49 v°)
Louenge & description de la noble ville & cite de Poictiers (f.45 r°)
(129) Those entitled blason are rather more accessible than the others, since Méon reproduces these in his anthology (pp.346-368). Other
particular type of agriculture and industries, its regional specialities etcetera. The Blason et louange de la noble ville de Dijon (130) is one of the longest of these poems, consisting of some 128 lines. Here considerable attention is devoted to the public buildings of the town. The combined orphanage and plague hospital outside the city bounds is described by Grosnet:

'& hors la ville
Est l'hostel Dieu, lieu tresutille
Ou sont nourris gros & menus
Orphelins, & entretenus
Tous les malades de la peste' (131)

as is the town hall:

'A Dijon est maison de ville
Pour traicter laffaire civile' (132)

and the fortifications of the town, the 'six belles portes', and where each is situated. The gastronomic advantages of Dijon are not neglected; we are informed of the convenient proximity of Beaune:

than by Méon, only two of these poems have been reprinted since the sixteenth century, in both cases limited editions being produced by the towns in question: Blason et louenge des excellences de la bonne ville de Dieppe (ed. A. Taillandier, Paris, 1866, 8°) and Description et louenge des excellences de la noble cite de Rouen (In Les eloges de la ville de Rouen en vers latins et francais par Antoine de Lamare de Chesnevarin, Pierre de Lamare de Durescu, son fils, et Pierre Grognet, ed. E. Frere, Rouen, 1872, 8°, pp.3-6)

(130) Second volume des motz dorez, f.55 v°
(131) Second volume des motz dorez, f.57 v°
(132) Second volume des motz dorez, f.57 v°
'Car on dit, Vinum belnanse
Super omnia recense' (133)

and, naturally enough, the poem concludes on a happy
note with a reminder of the mustard for which Dijon
was already justly famous in the sixteenth century:

'Se jay oublie la moustarde
Neanmoins aux bancquetz ne tarde
On l'appelle par excellence
Meilleure moustarde de France' (134)

Another geographical blason by Antoine du Saix
might be mentioned here. Entitled Le blason de Brou,
temple nouvellement edifie au pays de Bresse par tres-
illustre dame Marguerite d'Austrie (135), it consists
of a long, rambling and extremely dull account of the
building of the church at Brou, under the aegis of
Marguerite d'Austrie, including lengthy digressions
into accounts of the construction by the Greeks and
Romans of similarly laudable buildings. As a poem it
has little literary merit, and there seems little
significance in the use by Du Saix of the title blason,
other than as denoting in the most general sense a
descriptive, eulogistic poem.

* * *

The first two decades of the sixteenth century
produced a series of political blasons praising the

(133) Second volume des motz dorez, f.58 v°
(134) Second volume des motz dorez, f.58 v°
(135) Bourg-en-Bresse, 1876, 8°. Reprinted from the
original edition (of which I have been unable to locate a copy), Lyons, Nourry, nd (c.1531), 8°.
(Cf. Brunet, vol.II, cols 918-919)
French king and denigrating his enemies - primarily the Pope and the Venetians. A glance at the work of André de la Vigne, for example, reveals the importance of the poet as political propagandist at this period (136). In addition to the blason of Lemaire de Belges which is dealt with above, three of these politically inspired poems are also called blasons. All three have one feature in common which might be taken to suggest a further extension in the development of the genre.

We have seen that the word blason used in isolation can mean indifferently praise or blame (137), although in the poems we have discussed so far it has invariably had the sense of praise. In these political blasons, however, we find the term being used to denote a poem which no longer praises, but which most definitely blames its subject.

(136) 'L'Atollite portas' de Gennes Et quis est iste rex glorie en ballades, avec certains rondeaux sur la prinse & conqueste dudict lieu, npnd, 4°, BN Res Ye 1038

Les ballades de bryut commun sur les alliances des roys des princes & provinces: avec le treulement de Venyse, np, c.1508, 4°, BN Res p Ye 385

Le libelle des cinq villes dytallie contre Venise, npnd, 4°, BN Res Ye 1039

La louenge des roys de France, Paris, De Brie, 1507, 8°, BN Res Lb 11

Le vergier d'honneur...de l'entreprise et voyage de Napples. Auquel est compris comment le roy Charles huitiesme de ce nom...passa...depuis Lyon jusques a Napples...Par...monseigneur Oct-avien de Saint-Gelais...et par maistre Andry de la Vigne, npnd (Paris, 1500), in-folio, BN Res Lb 15 A

(137) Cf. above, Introduction, p.5
The first of these poems we know only from its title on the colophon of a fragment in the Bibliothèque Nationale: 'Cy fine le blason de foy faulsee avec plusieurs ballades' (138). This fragment contains fifteen leaves (139), bearing the overall title Les excellentes vaillances, batailles & conquestes du roy dela les mons composees par plusieurs orateurs et facteurs. The last four leaves contain a series of six poems addressed to the various protagonists in the Italian wars (140). It may be assumed (given the context) that the foy faulsee of the blason (which must have been contained in the missing gathering A) is that of Julius II. The resentment felt by the French at the duplicity of Julius is clearly reflected in a stanza from the

Ballade de le guerere du pape:

'Le siege saint fut lors desaigmente
Par les payens abatu tormente
Et desmue de souverain ministre
Mais leur ost fut a force agravante

(138) BN Res Ye 1383
(139) Gatherings B and C of an octavo book, with the last leaf of gathering C missing
(140) Invective contre les veniciens (C4 r°)
Exhortation au pape (C4 v°)
A lempereur dalemaigne (C5 v°)
Au roy treschrestien (C6 r°)
Au roy catholic (C6 v°)
Rondeau: 'De mon conseil seigneurs veniciens'
(C7 r°)

These poems form the text of a work entitled La mauvaistie & obstinacion des veniciens contre le roy (npnd, 8°, BN Picot 2847) in which a letter at the end dates the work as 1509.
Par les bons roys de france et remonte  
Le pape en chaire, ou les voulut benistre  
Sur tous les roys et enrichir du tiltre  
Treschrestien par ung divin octroy  
Mais au rebours se tourne son charroy  
Sur les croysez dont les met en lestrape  
Lautre en prison cest merveilleux effroy  
Veoir guerroyer les chrestiens au pape'  

(141)

The same theme is treated in a manuscript group of  
six ballades entitled collectively Le blason de la  
guerre du pape ses aliez prelatz gens de glise et les  
veniciens ensemble contre le roy treschrestien (142).  
These ballades (143) have been attributed tentatively  
to André de la Vigne on the evidence provided by Grosnet  
in his De la louange et excellence des bons facteurs,  
in which he states that:  

'André de la Vigne sans erre  
'A fait le blason de la guerre' (144)  

Rather later than these, but following the same  
pattern of politically inspired blason, in which the  
title has the sense of blame rather than of praise, is  
the Blason de le In exitu Israel de France, contre  
celluy des Bourguignons (145) describing the defection  

(141) Blason de foy faulsee, B7 v°  
(142) BM Ms.fr.2248  
(143) Ballade sur lerreur de la foy qui court (f.1 v°)  
Ballade sur la souffrance du pape (f.2 v°)  
Ballade sur le peril des ames (f.4 r°)  
Ballade pour les gens de glise qui dela les mons  
font la guerre dont grans maulx sensuyvent (f.5 v°)  
Ballade des Veniciens (f.7 r°)  
Ballade sur le fait de la guerre (f.8 v°)  
(144) Second volume des motz dorez, f.23 v°  
(145) Lyons, nd, 8°, Chantilly III F 52
of Charles de Bourbon to the Emperor in 1523, and the overwhelming defeat of François Ier at Pavia in 1525. Extremely intricate in construction, it consists of a number of stanzas each of which begins or ends with a fragment in Latin. Taken out of their context of the French poem these Latin phrases form a coherent text in their own right — that of Psalms 115-116. Apart from its curiosity value, however, this poem has little to recommend it, and the only reason for mentioning it here is the fact that in content at least it reflects this same further dimension for the blason, whereby it becomes a poem of blame.

* * *

To attempt to see a progression from the heraldic blason through the intermediate late fifteenth and early sixteenth century blasons to the anatomical blasons of the 1530s and beyond is a fascinating process, and, indeed, we hope we have demonstrated this progression with some success. Inevitably, however, not every poem which is called a blason fits into the pattern we have sought to establish. The title blason is a relatively free one, and poems such as Grosnet's may be called indiscriminately blason, louenge or description, while Danché's poems may be called either blason or simply ballade, and that of Coquillart either blason or débat. We must not therefore be surprised to find a poem like Guillaume Alexis's Blason de faules amours (146), and its rather later counterpart, the

(146) Paris, Levet, 1486, 4°, BN Res Ye 254
Contreblason de fausles amours (147), both of which were extremely popular (148), but neither of which seems to have much in common with the other blasons we have discussed.

Like Coquillart's Blason des armes et des dames, composed two years earlier, Alexis's Blason de fausles amours takes the form of a débat between Alexis himself and a 'gentilhomme de sa congnoissance', deprecating fausles amours. In this poem again, as in the political blasons, the word blason is used with the sense

(147) Paris, Trepperel, nd (1512), 8°, BN Res Ye 3013

(148) The Bibliothèque Nationale alone possesses eight fifteenth and early sixteenth century editions of the Blason de fausles amours:

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<td>Lyons, Arnoulet, 1538, 8°</td>
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In addition to these, Piaget and Picot list in their edition of Alexis's Œuvres poétiques (Paris, 1896, 8°) twenty-two other editions dating from the period 1486-1600, stating furthermore that this list is not exhaustive. Curiously, there are virtually no manuscript texts of Alexis. All appear to have been lost, except for a meagre three stanzas copied onto the boards of a manuscript in the Arsenal (Ms. 3059).

Less popular than the Blason, the Contreblason de fausles amours nevertheless went through several editions, of which the Bibliothèque Nationale possesses three:

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<td>Paris, Trepperel, nd (1512), 8°</td>
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<td>Paris, Vostre, nd (1512), 8°</td>
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<td>npnd, 8°, Res Ye 2950</td>
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of blame rather than of praise. Somewhat unjustly Alexis has gained from this poem a reputation for anti-feminism in the manner of Matheolus. He does, in fact, state clearly that it is not all forms of love to which he objects, but only to *folles amours* which, he says, can lead only to:

'Doeiul jalousie
Puis frenaisie
Puis souspessons
Merencolie
Tours de follie
Regretz tenssons
Pleurs et chansons
Sont les fassons
Damoureuse chevalerie' (149)

He has no objection to conjugal love; on the contrary, he advocates this to his companion:

'Bon party prent
Cil qui aprent
Soy contenir
Mais saulcun sent
Soy indecent
De y parvenir
Pour prevenir
Mal advenir
Marier se peut justement
Aultrement femme maintenir
De droit ne se peut soutenir
Lescripture dieu le defend' (150)

Despite its overall descriptive aspect and unity of subject, this *blason* is nevertheless only remotely connected with the *blasons* we have hitherto been discussing.

Contrary to what we might expect from the title, the *Contreblason de faules amours* does not take the opposite view to that expressed in the *Blason*. Instead

---

(149) *Blason de faules amours*, Paris, Levet, 1486, A4 r°

(150) *Blason de faules amours*, B6 r°
it takes the same subject and amplifies it, again in the form of a dialogue, but here between two female protagonists, a courtisienne and a religieuse who upholds and develops the arguments expressed in the previous poem. Again, like the earlier blason of Alexis, this poem has little connection with the blasons discussed above. Despite the pretentious claims by the author (151) it is little more than a long list of biblical or mythological names (152) cited in support of the general argument in favour of spiritual love.

(151) 'je vouldray icy moralement, parabolically, hystoricquement methaforicquement: et allegoricquement commencer sans delay le contreblason des faulses amours' (A4 v°)

Later in the same passage he describes the poem as being:
'en forme de satire comedie: tragedie: inventive & dyalogique controverse alternative'

(152) To a long list of famous women from mythology cited by the courtisienne:
'Dame medee
Seyramis
Morgue la fee
Ceres Thetis
Panthasilee
Avec thisbee
Et galatee
Phales: themis
Proserpine, dyane, ysis
Helayne doulce que rousee
Et genievre chere espousee
Dartus toutes eurent amy' (C4 r°)

the religieuse replies with an equally impressive list of biblical characters who devoted themselves to love of God rather than to love of man:
'Adam abel
Enoc: sabe
Malaleel
Jareth. noe
Mananeel
Septh: sen: jahel
Matheusale
The Vergier dhonneur (153) contains a blason which has until now passed unnoticed, the Articles damour par maniere de blason (154). Its only interest, however, resides in the fact that it is a hitherto uncatalogued poem bearing the title blason. As far as subject matter and style of writing are concerned, it has little which would justify this title. It is simply a long narrative poem (ten stanzas of eleven lines) recounting the affairs of the anonymous poet, how he fell in love, and how quickly his initial bliss gave way to disillusion—ment when he realised the eternal inconstancy of women (155).

Another hitherto uncatalogued manuscript blason entitled Blason faict en motz resoluz dune fille qui par son sens a rescu des escuz troys cens et ny a preste quun carolus (156) shows once again, as do the Articles damour par maniere de blason, the vagueness

Abram: thare
Isaac: jacob: job: ozibel
Melchisedech: loth: manasse
Joseph: moyse: aaron: jesse
Ont ayme (qui) dieu: de israel' (C4 r°)

(153) npnd (Paris, 1500), in-folio, BN Res Lb 15 A
(154) Vergier dhonneur, *4 r°
(155) Initially, he narrates, all went well:
'Aux premiers jours tant je moultrecuidoie
Que plus heureux que les dieux me cuidoie'
(*4 r°)
but too quickly the idyll disintegrated:
'ainsi comme sa volunte
De femme fresle souvent change et rechange
La bonne dame a fait nouvel eschange'
(*4 r°)

(156) BN Ms.fr.4967, f.218 r°
with which the term blason might be used. The title alone suggests the narrative nature of the poem - further confirmed by a glance at the first few lines:

"Une fille de ceste ville
amoureuse dun escollier
tendant de maniere subtille
par mariage le lier
Mays luy pretendant sallier
en lieu ou myeulx soit bien dispouse
La fille lattend' (157)

* * *

This chapter has been, of necessity, fragmented. Not only have we been obliged to deal with a large range of poems, stretching from the earliest heraldic blasons poétiques to the rather unwieldy mass of poems written under this title throughout the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, but we had also to bear in mind continually that the title blason may often be used very loosely, as in the last few poems we have mentioned. Even so we have sought to show a discernible pattern of development from the purely heraldic sense of the word blason as the reading and interpreting of a given coat of arms, to the sense in which it is used in the later poems. It is in our next chapters that we shall study the modification undergone by the genre as it develops into the anatomical love poem.

The two main characteristics which we have tried to emphasise are firstly the continued association of the word blason with description and interpretation, and the analysis of the significance of the various

(157) BN Ms.fr.4967, f.218 r°
features of a given object, and secondly the rather more
genralised use of the word to denote a poem again
consisting of detailed description, but in this instance
dominated by the repetitive technique used by the poet.
Both these characteristics are to be found in the poems
we have looked at in this chapter, and both receive
renewed emphasis in the anatomical blasons of the 1530s.
CHAPTER II  Medieval French influence on the anatomical blason and contreblason

In the first chapter of this thesis we looked at the development of the early blason poétique throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. We devoted this chapter mainly to poems which used the word blason in their title, and which helped to form the poetic style to be found in the blason anatomique as it appeared in France in the mid 1530s. In this second chapter we shall extend our field of reference and examine poems which are not specifically entitled blasons, but which, despite this, appear to have been equally influential in the creation of the style of the genre of the anatomical blason with which this thesis is chiefly concerned. In all the poems we shall consider in this second chapter we shall hope to find the type of descriptive vocabulary, the attitude to morality, the repetitious style and the desire to list and classify associated with the bestiary, the lapidary, and with poetic catalogues of various sorts. Here in fact are the bare bones of a type of poetry which was gradually to become more involved and sophisticated as the age progressed.

Sometime during the year 1535, while in exile in Italy, Marot produced his Beau tetin (1) which very quickly inspired his fellow French poets to emulate him.

(1) First published in the 1537 Hecatomphile, followed by Blasons (1536) (Strasbourg), K4 r
with further anatomical blasons (2). Critics have found themselves compelled to ask why Marot should – at this particular moment – have produced such a poem, envisaged furthermore (as he makes clear in the épître A ceulx qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'autres) not as an isolated poem, but rather as one of a corpus of blasons anatomiques (3). Two schools of thought exist on this question, one represented by Vianey (4) and the other by Saulnier (5). For Vianey, the key to the problem lies in Marot's period of exile in Italy, where he could hardly have avoided coming into contact with the neo-Petrarchan works of such poets as Nocturno, Cei, and above all Sassoferrato (6). According to

(2) The Strasbourg Hecatomphile, for example, contains thirty-two blasons dated 1536

(3) 'Or, chers amys, par maniere de rire
Il m'est venu voulenté de descrire
A contre poil ung Tetin que j'envoye
Vers vous, affin que suiviez ceste voye'
and:
'Graces vous rendz, dont avez imité
Non ung Tetin beau par extremité
Mais ung Blason que je feis de bon zelle
Sur le Tetin d'une humble Damoiselle.
En me suivant vous avez blasonné
Dont hautement je me sens guerdonné,
L'un de sa part, la Cheveleure blonde,
L'autre le Cueur, l'autre la Cuisse ronde'
(Marot, Oeuvres, ed. Mayer, vol.1, p.213)

(4) Le pétrarquisme en France au XVIe siècle, Montpellier, 1909, 8°, Série III (littéraire)

(5) Le prince de la Renaissance lyonnaise, initiateur de la Pleiade, Maurice Scève

(6) Opera nova amorosa de Nocturno napolitano, Milan, Da Ponte, 1518, 8°, BN Res Yd 1188
Sonecti capituli canzone sextine stanze et strambocchi composti per lo excellentissimo
Vianey Marot found his inspiration for the Beau tetin in the mass of capitoli, stanze and strambotti d'amore composed by these three poets in particular on the beauties of their respective ladies (7):

'Pour moi, il n'y a aucun doute: les Blasons anatomiques du corps féminin, composés par Marot, Scève, Heroët, Eustorfe de Beaulieu, etc., ont été provoqués par les strambotti d'Olympe' (8)

While he does not entirely deny the influence of Italy, Saulnier upholds a different view, namely that the anatomical blasons of the 1530s are situated firmly and fundamentally within the medieval French tradition:

'Les Blasons de 1536 ne sont donc pas nés d'un simple caprice de Marot, dans le sillage des Strambottistes. Ils suivent une tradition médiévale: celle du cat-alogue; une tradition littéraire, morale et décorative, celle des Emblèmes' (9)

In this chapter we shall consider the view that the

Francesco Cei... in laude de Clitia, Florence, Giunta, 1514, 8°, BN Res Yd 1138

Olympe de Sassoferrato, Parthenia, Pegasea, Olimpia, Nova Phenice, Gloria d'amore, Linguaccio Aurora, Ardelia. All printed Venice, Florence, or np, 1538 or 1539, 8°, and bound together and stamped with the arms of François 1er, BN Res Yd 1210-1217. This collection was produced by Bindoni.

(7) We might cite as one random example forty-five stanzas by Sassoferrato entitled Comparation de laude a la signora mia incominciando al capo per insino a li piedi, in which each eight-line stanza is devoted to one particular feature of the lady: delle aurate chiome, della spatiosa fronte, delli arcati ciglia, delli vaghi occhi, del profilato naso, delle benigne orecchie etc. (Gloria d'amore, Venice, Bindoni, 1539, 8°, BN Res Yd 1214, 4A r et seq.)

(8) Vianey, Pétrarquisme, p.50, note

(9) Saulnier, Scève, vol.I, p.77
blason anatomique belongs to a medieval French tradition. It is in our next chapter that we shall assess the Italian influence claimed by Vianey.

* * *

We must accept the view that it was Marot's Beau tetin which launched the fashion for anatomical blasons; similarly it is Marot's Laid tetin which opened the field for the contreblason. We must, therefore, begin this study with an examination of the connections between these two poems by Marot and earlier poetry dealing with the same subject, before moving on to a more general consideration of the other features described by the blasonneurs, and their possible connections with earlier French anatomical description.

Marot is by no means the first French poet to be fascinated by the female breast (10), and to compose verse in its honour. It is quite common to find the breast featuring incidentally in longer passages of descriptive poetry, and even before Marot's blason it was not unknown for a short poem to take the breast as its principal theme. A rondeau by Roger de Collerye, for example, treats this subject:

'Petit tetin, mammelle ronde
Est bien seant à la mignonne
Qui a blanche et joyeuse tronçonne,
Et à la brunette et la blonde.
Mais doux maintien, belle façonée,
Begnin recueil vault, qui qu'en gronçne,
Petit tetin' (11)

(10) Despite La Hueterie's comment in his Contreblason du tetin (Protologies, f.7 v):
'Et le tetin demeurera il la
Ce fut Clement qui premier en parla'

(11) Collerye, Oeuvres, ed. d'Héricault, p.222
In contrast to its overall tone of vituperation against women, a passage in Gratien du Pont's *Controverses des sexes masculin et femenin* (12) is devoted to a description of the beauties which the author expects in a woman, including the breast:

'Tes tetins sont: blancz, rondz comme une pomme
Sy durs et fermes: que jamays en veit homme
Loing lung de laultre: je diz a brief langaige
Certes ung palm: encorez dadvantaige' (13)

Looking further back to Guillaume de Lorris's description of Dame Oyseuse we find, once again, this same preoccupation with the whiteness of the breast, compared here with snow:

'Et la gorge avoit aussi blanche
Comme la neige sur la branche
Quant il a freschement neige' (14)

When we look at Marot's *Beau tetin* we find much the same criteria reappearing. As in the earlier poems, we find in the blason the same terminology: petit, blanc, dur and loing:

'Tetin reffaict plus blanc quung oeuf,
Tetin de satin blanc tout neuf...
...Tetin dor (15), non pas Tetin voyre
Mais petite boulle divoyre...
...Tetin gauche, Tetin mignon,
Tetin loing de son compaignon' (16)

In Marot's contreblason describing the Laid tetin the imagery used by the poet is - even more than in the blason we have just quoted - very similar to that used

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(12) Toulouse, Colomies, 1534, 4°, BN Res Ye 48
(13) *Controverses*, f.87 r°
(15) In BN Ms.fr.2370, f.35 r°, for dor read dur
(16) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K4 r°–v°
in the fifteenth century. Marot uses the traditional epithets of abuse used by poets since Villon to evoke the decay of feminine beauty. The Belle heaulmiere's pathetic picture of her shrivelled breast:

'Mamelles, quoy ? toutes retraictes;
Telles les hanches que les tetes' (17)

is reiterated and developed by Marot in his opening lines:

'Tetin qui n'as rien que la peau,
Tetin flat, Tetin de drappeau' (18)

He continues:

'Grande tetine, longue tetasse,
Tetin, doy je dire bezasse' (19)

using an image which, although vivid, is not original, but rather borrowed from his father Jean Marot, who, in his Epistre des dames de Paris aux courtisans de France contrasts unfavourably the Italian ladies with those of France, describing among other things this particular feature:

'Tetons avons, elles tetasses
Pendant comme vieilles bezaces
Dessus leurs jambes de herons' (20)

In Coquillart's Droitx nouveauilx (21) we find a passage which might seem almost to provide a prototype.

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(17) Villon, Oeuvres, ed. Longnon, Paris, 1964, 8°, p.28
(18) Sensuivent les blasons anatomiques, Paris, Angelier, 1543, 8°, f.66 r° (Copy belonging to M.Heilbrun)
(19) 1543 Blasons, f.66 r° - v°
(20) Recueil Jehan Marot, Paris, nd, 8° (reprinted Menston, 1971, 8°), p.28
(21) Coquillart, ed. d'Héricault, vol.I, p.27
for both Marot's blason and his contreblason. In the section entitled De jure naturali Coquillart undertakes the defence of the young woman who does not wish to breast-feed her child (22). He describes first her present beauty, and then its inevitable ruin if, through her husband's meanness in not wishing to pay a wet nurse, she is forced to breast-feed her child herself:

'Elle a le beau petit teton,  
Cul troussé pour faire virade,  
Le sain poignant, tendre, mignon;  
Il n'est rien au monde plus sade,  
S'elle est nourrisse elle sera fade,  
Avalée, pleine de lambeaux:  
Faisandes deviennent becasses,  
Les culz troussiez deviennent peaux,  
Les tetons deviennent tetasses.  
Nourrices aux grandes pendaces,  
Gros sains ouvers remplis de lais,  
Sont pensues comme Chiches-Faces  
Qu'on vent tous les jours au Palays.  
Tetins rebondis, Rondeletz,  
Durs, picquans, bien gettez au moule,  
Tendus comme un arc à jaletz,  
Deviennent lasches comme soule' (23)

Within this one poem reappears the terminology used by Marot both in his Beau tetin and in his Laid tetin.

As far as actual terminology is concerned, therefore, in both his descriptions of the tetin Marot follows closely a French tradition stretching back to Villon or even to the Roman de la rose. Simple terminology, however, is only one criterion whereby Marot's debt to his predecessors can be assessed. If we look beyond the vocabulary to the ideas which it is conveying then we soon see that in both the blason and the contre-

(22) Coquillart, vol.I, p.56 et seq.  
-blason the preoccupations of Marot are very different from those of the earlier poets. In the Beau tetin gone is the dispassionate analysis of the medieval poem. The tone is far more directly participatory than that of the earlier poems. Marot is no longer evoking 'the breast' in general terms, but rather a very particular breast - that of his lady, seen through the eyes of the aspiring lover. The actual terms of the description may well be the same, but the personal involvement of the poet in the subject of his blason is an element not to be found in earlier anatomical poetry in France.

Again, in the case of the Laid tetin, the terminology used by Marot is that of his predecessors, but the actual intention behind the poem is different. On the whole, earlier poets of the fifteenth century in France described the decay of the female body with a specific purpose - usually to indicate the transitory nature of life, and the ever present threat of approaching old age and death. This certainly is the theme of Villon's Belle heaulmiere lamenting the passing of her youth and beauty. In Coquillart's poem the intention is rather different, but nevertheless it is a firmly moralising one. With Marot's contreblason this is not the case; here there is no didactic intent behind the depiction of the decaying female body. Instead Marot is simply rejoicing in a display of poetic virtuosity. As he explains to the other blasonneurs in the épitre A ceulx qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'aultres, the poet must be versatile:
'Et est le Painctre indigne de louange
Qui ne spait paindre aussi bien Diable qu'Ange.
Apres la course, il fault tirer la Barre,
Apres Bemol fault chanter en Becarre' (24)

Thus, remembering the tenets of rhetoric, having described the beautiful breast, it is only logical that the poet should try his hand at depicting the reverse. Possessing no didactic intent, the poet need not worry about restraint and moderation in order to give maximum impact to his moral lesson. He is free to pile image upon picturesque image, evoking to the full the ugliness and degradation of the breast in old age, simply for the pleasure derived from the juxtaposition of such a series of grotesquely revolting images:

Tetin grillé tetin pendant
Tetin flaitry, tetin rendant
Villaine bourbe en lieu de laict,
Le diable te feit bien si laid.
Tetin pour trippe repute...
...Tetin boyau long d'une gaule
Tetasse à jecter sur l'espaule,
Pour faire, tout bien compasé,
Un chapperon du temps passé' (25)

For Marot, then, the actual vocabulary of the Beau tetin and the Laid tetin seems to reflect a close parallel with that of the earlier French poets. In theme, however, both poems are very different from their predecessors. The blason, essentially a love poem, shows a degree of personal involvement which was not present in the earlier poets, while the contreblason is simply a rhetorical exercise (albeit a very good one) demonstrating poetic versatility, in contrast to the essentially didactic

(25) 1543 Blasons, f.66 v°
verse of the fifteenth century, treating the decay of the human frame not as an end in itself, but rather for the moral edification of mankind.

* * *

Set passages describing feminine beauty are a common-place theme throughout the courtly literature of the Middle Ages, whether in prose or in verse. It is interesting to look at some of these, and compare them with the descriptions produced by the anatomical blasonneurs. We have already mentioned the well known description of Dame Oyseuse by Guillaume de Lorris (26). The fourteenth century prose romance Arthus de Bretaigne affords us a rather later descriptive passage in which, nevertheless, the same terminology recurs once again:

'Si estoit cele ymage jone et gentil a un front plain blanc si avoit chevaus recer-celez contremont lor de la couronne qu'il sambloient estre dune coulor: si se couchoient li chevel sus la couronne et sus les pierres precieuses. Si ot l'ymage sourcilz menus traitis & trayans un petit sus le brunet & ot le visage plain et hautet entre le roont & le longuet droitement de coulor de la rose assise sus le lis et l'ot fin, fier & couloré le nez longuet & traitis la bouche petite et vermeillette' (27)

Moving nearer to the period of the blasonneurs, we find two poets, Jean du Pré and Gratien du Pont, both producing descriptions of feminine beauty, and in both of which this same terminology recurs. Jean du Pré's Palais des nobles dames contains among Les dames

(26) Cf. above, chapter I, p. 61
(27) BN Ms.fr. 761, f. 41 r°, cols 2-3
renommées en beauté naturelle a description of St. Anne (28), in which the poet addresses the saint directly, singing the praises of her great beauty in all its individual manifestations:

'O dame de noblesse
Ta belle forme mon douloureux cœur blessé
Tes beaux yeux vers comme la marjolaine
Ta belle bouche ta savoureuse alaïne
Tes blonds cheveux, tes joues vermeillettes
Tes rouges levres, & tes dens tant blanchettes
Ton fronc poly, tes gracieux sourcils
Ton nez tant beau, tes narines sans sy
Tes blanches mains, tes doigts longs & tretiz
Tes droittes jambes, tes pieds plusque gentilz'

In a passage entitled La beaulte que femme doibt avoir in the Controverses des sexes masculin et femenin (29), Gratien du Pont makes a list of the beautiful features necessary in a woman. In the space of thirty lines he analyses the criteria which he considers to be essential - criteria which re-echo those of the earlier medieval descriptions, and which coincide to a large extent with those to be used by the anatomical blasonneurs. Following the medieval convention (as does also the later anonymous author of the Blason du corps (30)), Gratien du Pont begins at the head and works down to the feet:

'Premierement: tes cheveux sont dorez
Sy tresbien painctz: et sy bien coulorez
Sy desliez: dont te peulx tenir forte
Que de les veoir: ung chascun reconforte' (31)

He then passes on to a consideration of the eyes:

'Tes yeulx sont vairs: rians penetratifz

(28) Palais des nobles dames, T3 v°
(29) Controverses, f.86 v°
(30) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, (*2) r°
(31) Controverses, f.86 v°
Sy tresplaisans: et sy tresattractifz
Quil nest point cueur: (tant soit rude compris)
Que (syl attend: ung regard) ne soit pris' (32)

and the nose, mouth and cheeks:

'Touchant ton nez: il est gresle et bien fait
Long par raison: sy parfait en effect
Que nen fit oncq (sy belle pourtraicture
A corps mortel: en ce monde) nature,
Quant a ta bouche: grand louange merite
Elle est fort doulce: et certes bien petite
Tes lyevres fresches: sy vermeilles que Guygne
Sy sont tes joues: de couleur coralline' (33)

Since Gratien du Pont is intent on analysing the
whole body in the space of thirty lines, it is inevi-
able that his descriptions are more restrained than
those of the blasonneurs who are able to devote an
entire poem to one single feature. Nevertheless, the
basic criteria remain the same. The long golden hair
hanging loose is described in the same terms by Mellin
de Saint-Gelais in his blason, and its therapeutic
effect upon the poet, described by Gratien du Pont is
also reiterated in the opening lines of the blason:

'Cheveux, seul remede & confort
De mon mal violent & fort,
Cheveux longs, beaux & deslies' (34)

Gratien du Pont's description of the lady's green eyes
(a misapprehension of the word vair) is a hangover
from the fifteenth century, as is his later description
of her cleft chin (35). This is not taken up by the

(32) Controverses, f.86 v°
(33) Controverses, f.86 v°
(34) Saint-Gelais, Oeuvres poétiques, Lyons, Harsy,
1547, 8°, BN Res Ye 1702, p.27
(35) 'Forchu menton: le col bien long et gresle'
(Controverses, f.87 r°)
anatomical blasonneurs. The:

'Sy tresplaisans: et sy tresattractifz'

is, however, re-echoed in the Blason du corps:

'Yeulx doulx, riantz, plaisantz en apparence'

(36)

Saint-Gelais and Héroet, the two poets who deal specifically with the eyes are both more intent on evoking the effect upon the poet of the eye of the lady, than upon actually describing it in plastic terms. Saint-Gelais uses a protracted metaphor in which the eye is depicted throughout as the soleil de mon ame (37), affecting by its presence or absence the humour of the poet (seen as the earth, dependent upon the effect of the sun). Héroet likewise sees the eye as the sun, governing his moods:

'Oeil non pas oeil, mais ung soleil dore' (38) but in his blason the image is not so protracted, and periodically he apostrophises the eye in a manner not dissimilar to that of Gratien du Pont. As described by Héroet, the eye is once again riant (albeit heartlessly) and once again it possesses the power to move the heart of man, however recalcitrant:

'Oeil bel & nect comme ciel azure
Oeil repose constant & asseure...
...Oeil qui pour rendre ung cuer de marbre uny
Ne daigneroit se montrer qua demy,
Oeil saccordant au ris de la fossette' (39)

(36) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, (*2) v°
(37) Saint-Gelais, Oeuvres poétiques, 1574, p.29
(38) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I4 r°
(39) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I4 r°- v°
When we compare the more generalised description of the nose, mouth and cheeks by Gratien du Pont with that of the *Blason du corps* we find once again that in terminology the two passages are not dissimilar:

'Nez droict & beau, bouche ronde & vermeille Espaisses, & molle, a nulle aultre pareille...
...O blanche Joue, o sang qui en vous monte'

Thus the case of Marot's description of the *tetin* is not an isolated one. In general the terminology of the *blasonneurs* is based on that of the earlier French poets, and little has changed from the fifteenth to the sixteenth century in the way of actual vocabulary. The ideas behind the poems, however, are very different. The poet is no longer the dispassionate outside observer; instead the poet and the lover are one and the same, and the preoccupation throughout the *blasons* is no longer with description of a particular feature for its own sake, but rather with description of that particular feature as a prelude to the more important aspect - the analysis of the effect it exercises upon the poet. Thus where Gratien du Pont simply describes the individual features of an ideal lady, the anatomical *blasonneur* stops after each feature in order to analyse its effect upon himself. The *bouche*, for example, merely described in plastic terms by Gratien du Pont, becomes for the anatomical *blasonneur*:

'bouche ronde & vermeille Espaisses, & molle, a nulle aultre pareille, Alayne chaude o comme tu mes doulce Lors que ta langue a la mienne repoulse' (41)

(40) Strasbourg *Hecatompile*, (*2) \(v^0\)
(41) Strasbourg *Hecatompile*, (*2) \(v^0\)
and similarly the effect of the blushing cheek is described:

'O blanche Joue, o sang qui en vous monte
En declairant de douce amour la honte,
Comme tu es aux amanz agreable,
Et a moy plus plaisante, & proufitable'

The anatomical blasonneur, then, describes feminine beauty no longer in dispassionate analytical terms, but rather as he, the lover is affected by it, and it is this subjectivity which markedly distinguishes him from his predecessors.

* * *

As there is no shortage of description of feminine beauty in the medieval period, so also there is no shortage of description of feminine ugliness. The fifteenth century in particular abounds in possible source material for the contreblasons, much of this deriving from the traditional controversy for and against woman. The anti-woman poems fall into two categories. First we have those dealing with the fickleness, treachery and general iniquities of women, citing as examples characters from legend, history or the Bible. One of the best examples of this is Gratien du Pont's Controverses des sexes masculin et femenin whose three books are devoted for the greater part to the shortcomings of woman. The second type of work is that which concentrates on the physical rather than the moral aspect of feminine ugliness. Woman may well be beautiful in her

(42) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, (*2) v°
youth, but she will not remain so for long; like all things earthly she will quickly grow old and ugly. Villon's Regretz de la belle heaulmiere provides an obvious example of such verse, where the various features are systematically described as they were in her youth, and compared with their present ugliness in old age. A similar example is found in Martin le Franc's Champion des dames in which the ephemeral nature of feminine beauty is heavily stressed:

'Tost vient a male destinee
Come la glace dune nuyt...
...Tost vient tost est ridee & pale
Tost devient flache & escolee
Tost pert sa coleur principale
Tost a la mammelle avalee
Tost ny pert ne mont ne valee
Tost est neant pis que ne dis
Beaulte de femme est tost alee
Fies vous y foulz estourdis' (43)

Closely associated with these are those poems - so common in the fifteenth century - preoccupied with the theme of death, and treating with a morbid relish the decay of the human body which is temporal, in order to glorify the spirit which is eternal. The various danses macabres are well known. Other poems concentrate less on the gruesome figure of Death, and more on the actual decay of the human frame after death. Such a poem is Jean Castel's Mirouer des dames & damoiselles a lexemple de tout sexe femenin (44), in which the decay of the various parts of the female body is described

(43) Champion des dames, f.88 v°

(44) Included in Le mirouer des pecheurs et pecheresses, Paris, Vérand, 1495, 4°, BN Velins 2229, 86 v°
in a series of quatrains under such headings as La fin de la beaute de la face, la fin du beau col, la fin de la beaute de la poitrine in order to make clear the moral lesson that earthly preoccupations are worthless, and that the only thing worth striving for is eternal spiritual life. The conclusion reached is:

'quon doit si bien vivre sur terre quon puisse acquérir vie éternelle es lieux' (45)

When we compare these poems with the contreblasons of the 1530s, we find that they have a great deal in common. Although Marot encouraged the blasonneurs to show their versatility by composing contreblasons expressing the reverse side of the coin, in fact only two poets, Peletier du Mans and Jean Rus took him up on this. The bulk of the contreblasons were in fact composed by Charles de la Hueterie, an enemy of Marot, rather than a colleague, and the motive inspiring them is very different from that of Marot. It is in fact much nearer to the medieval didactic intent than to Marot's display of poetic and rhetorical virtuosity. Like the fifteenth century poet La Hueterie's intention is to vilify the flesh by depicting it in all its most revolt- ing and smelly aspects, in order to glorify the spirit. Of this intention there can be little doubt, for La Hueterie states it explicitly in his Epistre de Charles de la Hueterie a Francoys Sagon (46), deploring the work of the blasonneurs:

(45) Mirouer, F3 v°
(46) Protologies, F3 v°
'Exaulcee ont l'humaine creature
Et nostre corps qui n'est que pourriture,
Plus luy donnant d'honneur & de haulteur
Que n'ont pas fait a nostre createur,
Cest a luy seul si avons la memoire
Auquel est deu honneur, louenge & gloire,
Non pas a nous: car de nous ce n'est rien,
Fors que charongne & vaisseau terrien,
Dedans lequel une ame precieuse...
...
Noz membres sont bien peu de cas & chose
Dedans lesquelz la divine ame enclose' (47)

Thus, whereas Marot, Peletier and Rus describe the ugly female body for mere amusement, La Hueterie's intentions are every bit as serious, and his moralities every bit as conscious as those of his fifteenth century counterpart.

Aware of how quickly her beauty will fade, woman strives to preserve artificially the last remaining shreds by all the wiles at her disposal. La Hueterie expresses his disgust at these attempts to disguise a decaying beauty. In _la joue, le front & cheveulx_ he describes the way in which she paints her face, and uses hot irons on her hair:

'Ou les petitz cheveulx recoquillez
Et d'ung fer chault crespes entortillez
Vont volletant pour avoir bonne grace...
...
Gardez vous bien de la chambre sortir
Que vostre fard ne se puisse amortir.
Si daventure aller voulez au vent
Fault que tenez ung mouchoier devant' (48)

while in the _Tetin_ he describes the lotions which woman will use in order to restore a sagging figure:

'Tetin ou sont tes eaues & medecines
Pour estroicir tes mamelles poupines' (49)

(47) Protologies, F4 r°
(48) Protologies, F7 r°
(49) Protologies, F7 v°
Much of this criticism of the artificial remedies and cosmetics used by woman in order to preserve her beauty we find already in Martin le Franc's *Champion des dames*. In a manner reminiscent of Ovid, the adversaire attacks the wiles of women:

'Va sercher toutes leurs aumaires
Et dieu scet que tu y verras
Et semble estre apoticquaires
Tant de boites y trouveras...

...Ne voy tu comment leurs frons tendent
Visaiges et poitrines oingent
Dressent leurs mamelles qui pendent
Drappeaulx entour elles estraïdent...

...Il nest rien que femme neschie
Ne voy tu comme de lessyve
Ses cheveulx noirs comme corneille
Blondist, & sa couleur nayve
En oste, & nous semble merveille' (50)

Despite all her artifices, however, woman will inevitably grow old, and her physical body will become food for worms:

'Ung peu apres quil conviendra mourir
Vers l'on verra sur la face courir.
Le myrouer (si l'esprit vous remort)
Deveroit estre une teste de mort' (51)

Nothing could be more purely fifteenth century than this preoccupation with death and decay. The similarity between this contreblason of *La Hueterie* and the dances of Death is obvious. Following the same theme of decay, the *Contreblason du ventre* evokes in realistic terms the swift putrefaction of the well fed belly after death:

'O ventre plain de lye & de matiere
Ventre premier pourry au cymetiere' (52)

(50) *Champion des dames*, f.116 r° - v°
(51) *Protolories*, F7 r° - v°
(52) *Protolories*, G2 r°
This again is reminiscent of Villon's description of the well fed bodies in the Cimetièvre des Innocents:

'Or sont ilz morz, Dieu ait leurs ames!
Quant est des corps ilz sont pourris.
Aient esté seigneurs ou dames,
Souef et tendrement nourris
De cresme, fromentee ou riz,
Leurs os sont declinez en pouldre
Auxquelz ne chault d'esbatz ne ris
Plaise au doulx Jhesus les absouldre' (53)

As Villon had described the dead bodies hanging from the gibbet, ravaged by crows:

'Pies, corbeaulx, nous ont les yeux cavez,
Et arrachie la barbe et les sourcis...
...Puis ça, puis la, comme le vent varie,
A son plaisir sans cesser nous charie,
Plus becquetez d'oiseaulx que dez a couldre' (54)

so La Hueterie reproduces the same picture at the end of his Contreblason des yeulx:

'Oultre les yeulx, tant noirs, vers que les roux
Incontinent que lame est separee
Corbeaulx cryans sur la maison paree,
Dessus les murs & tectz ou le corps est
Pour les avoir chacun deulx est tout prest' (55)

After death, then, the body quickly becomes worm-ridden and ravaged by carrion birds. But even before death the body is made up of a collection of unpleasant and imperfect organs. Throughout all the contreblasons La Hueterie stresses the dirtiness and the smelliness of the human body. The nose runs and the mouth is continually spitting:

(53) Villon, Oeuvres, p.69
(54) Villon, Oeuvres, p.96
(55) Protologies, F5 v°
'Et puis le nez morveux de l'autre part
Qu'il faut moucher quant le morveau despart
Et qu'il descend du cerveau froit humide,
Il n'est jamais de crotte ou morve vuyde' (56)

'La bouche aussi ne peult avoir repos:
Car du crachat el gecte a tous propos...
...Et estre autour de la bouche blancheurs
Qui sentent mal procedans des humeurs
Et des chaleurs de la bouche baveuse' (57)

Once again this reminds us of a not dissimilar passage
in Villon, where, feeling premature old age approaching,
the poet describes his coughing thus:

'Je congnois aprocher ma seuf;
Je crache blanc comme coton,
Jaccopins gros comme ung estuef' (58)

Descending to the more basic aspects of human
existence, La Hueterie describes in poem after poem the
sordid smelly aspects of the physical body in contrast
to the purity of the soul. The hand, for example, is
not responsible just for feeding the mouth with susten-
ance for the body; it is also responsible for less
pleasant tasks:

'Quant il a faict la main le vient moucher
Dung blanc papier sa grant roye torcher.
Si quelque galle au corps humain se renge,
La main le gratte alors qu'elle demenge,
Et la sueur qui par les porres sort
Pour le'ssuyer la main en a le sort' (59)

Nothing is spared the reader:

'Le con est chault et souvent peult suer
Lequel convient maintesfoys ressuer,
Et si diray cestuy mot d'avantaige
Que le con sent ung peu le vieil frommaige' (60)

(56) Contreblason du nez, Protologies, F6 v°
(57) Contreblason de la bouche, Protologies, F6 v°
(58) Villon, Oeuvres, p.35
(59) Protologies, G r°
(60) Protologies, G4 r°
Yet this sort of description, striking though it may be here, simply because there is such a lot of it, is by no means uncommon in the fifteenth century. The *Jardin de plaisance*, for example, usually cited for its courtly poetry, contains one or two pieces of this nature. One rondeau in particular deals with this sort of subject, beginning with the lines:

'Pour un trou puant plain dordure
Ou maint vit a gecte sa cure' (61)

La Hueterie's inspiration, then, both in theme and terminology is purely medieval. Incensed by the glorification of the flesh by the anatomical blasonneurs, he undertakes to do the reverse, vilifying the flesh in an attempt to glorify the spirit. This intention he shows clearly in the second *Contreblason du corps* (62) which is not so much a vituperative contreblason as a blason glorifying the body of Christ:

'Corps tresparfaict, corps noble, corps gentil,
Corps reluisant, corps entier, En est il
Qui feust jamais corps si obeissant,
Corps que jamais autre ne fut blessant,
Corps qui jeuna tout entier le caresme
Agneau pascal qui s'offrit de soy mesme,
Corps qui voullut non pas pour luy mourir
Ains par sa mort les mortelz secourir,
Corps couronne de couronne d'espines
Corps flagelle de foiz soubz les courtines' (63)

It is only in the *Continuation du corps humain* that we find the contreblason proper, with its vilification of the human body:

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(61) *Jardin de plaisance*, vol.I, f.73 v°
(62) *Protolories*, G6 r°
(63) *Protolories*, G6 v°
'Corps corrompu, corps chair orde & infecte
Chair par dessus de vile peau couverte...
...Corps seulement de lame es la maison
Et gouverner te doys par sa raison' (64)

Here is brought out most forcibly the contrast between
the immortal body of Christ and the terrestrial body of
man:

'Veoys tu le corps, comme ce riche corps
Fut flagelle, perse, batu a lors,
Et glorieux apres ressuscita.
Mais tout soudain que terre couvert t'a,
Tu te pourris, & te mangent les vers
Estant couche sur la terre a l'envers,
Et si retourne en terrestre matiere' (65)

The moralising intent behind La Hueterie's contre-
blasons is very clear. Although inspired by Marot's
laid tetin and given the title contreblason as Marot
had advocated, these poems are in fact written in a
very different style from that of Marot. Indeed they
are written in protest against the fashion begun by
Marot for composing blasons in praise of the human body.
Even when Marot changes his style and begins to vilify
the body, this is not for the right reason, according
to La Hueterie. Demonstration of poetic virtuosity is
the only reason for Marot's contreblason, whereas those
of La Hueterie all have a moral lesson which is closely
parallel to that of the fifteenth century poet depicting
death and decay.

The only other poets to compose contreblasons
were Jacques Peletier du Mans and Jean Rus. Why so
many court poets should have hastened to imitate
Marot's Beau tetin whereas so few should have taken

(64) Protologies, 08 r°
(65) Protologies, 07 v°
up the theme of the laid tetin remains a mystery. Nor do these three poets all have the same intent, and a comparison between La Hueterie and his attitude (which is anti-Marot) and Peletier and Rus (who do in fact follow the prescription for the contreblason provided by their master Clément Marot) cannot fail to be illuminating. We shall make this comparison in Chapter V which is specifically devoted to the contreblasons.

Suffice it to say here that whereas Peletier regards the heart as a seat of fickle femininity, for La Hueterie it is a far more significant organ which should remain attached to virtue and to things of the spirit, for on the heart depends man's salvation. Peletier's poem in fact follows Marot's in its systematic negation of what had previously been said in his blason (66), and the virtuosity implied in this attitude to the contreblason, and the comparatively flippant tone of Peletier's contreblason, introduced in the last few lines indicate clearly that Peletier is following in Marot's footsteps and wishes - perhaps rather casually - to obtain the approbation of the master (67).

The Contreblason du nez, written by Jean Rus, an obscure Normandy poet writing mainly for the Jeux floraux of Toulouse, whose works survive only in a late nineteenth century edition (68), again fits clearly into the framework proposed by Marot. Rus concentrates on the

(66) Cf. below, chapter V, p.192 et seq.
(67) Cf. below, chapter V, p.190
(68) Œuvres de Jean Rus, ed. Tamizey de Larroque, Paris, 1875, 8°. According to the editor the original sixteenth century edition on which this edition is based is to be found in the Bibliothèque d'Auch.
catarrhal aspect of the nose, with its morve blanche reminiscent of Villon, and shows a marked talent for singling out the picturesquely revolting detail:

'O nez morveux, nez qui degoutte
Incessamment, non goutte a goutte,
Mais qui rend toujours demye aulne
De morve blanche, verte et jaulne,
Laquelle souvent on voit choiir
A table et dessus le tranchoir,
Au plat, au verre et en la couppe,
Voire mesler avec la souppe' (69)

Thus, whereas all these contreblasons demonstrate clearly in their terminology and in the more revolting aspects of the description in which they indulge a decided debt to their French predecessors, there is some difference between La Hueterie's contributions which are essentially didactic poems following in a strongly fifteenth century tradition and those of Marot, Peletier and Rus, whose contreblasons are intended as a diversion and as a demonstration of that desire for poetic virtuosity which of course does not merely herald the advent of the Pléiade, but is a further aspect of late medieval writing. Although these last three poets owe a considerable debt to their French predecessors in matters of vocabulary and terminology, their poems break with the medieval tradition in their wish to divert the reader. La Hueterie on the contrary not only reproduces the terminology of the later Middle Ages, he also shares their preoccupations with moralising, and writes in a

Enquiries to the Librarian have, however, elicited no information as to whether this copy still exists.

(69) Rus, Oeuvres, p.26
didactic vein which is strikingly similar to that of the French fifteenth century.

* * *

Schmidt, in his definition of the *blason* (70), lays considerable emphasis on the characteristic repetitive device used so frequently in the *blasons* to apostrophise the chosen object. In the hands of a good poet this device may be used to excellent effect. Marot, of course, achieves a pleasing juxtaposition of deliberate monotony with the repetition of the word *tetin* at the head of each line, and variety in the different images, each involving the *tetin*, which appear in each successive line:

'Tetin reffait plus blanc (71) quung oeuf,  
Tetin de satin blanc tout neuf,  
Tetin qui faitz honte a la rose,  
Tetin plus beau que nulle chose' (72)

In the hands of a less adept poet, however, the device easily loses its pleasing character. Used by Sagon, for example, it becomes clumsy, and far from contributing to the lightness of the poem, it renders the rather empty content of the poem still more ponderous:

'Pied de façon a la main comparable,  
Pied ferme, & seur en assiette honorable,  
Pied quon regarde avant cuisse & tetin  
Pied faisant petit de soir & de matin,  
Pied necessaire avec loeil pour conduire,  
Pied convenable a chasser ou a fuire' (73)

(70) *Poètes du XVIe siècle*, p.293
(71) beau in BN Ms.fr. 2370, f.35 r°
(72) Strasbourg *Hecatomphile*, K4 r°
(73) Strasbourg *Hecatomphile*, N6 r°
Indeed, in this blason by Sagon every single one of the forty-four lines begins with the word pied.

This repetitive technique is by no means a discovery on the part of the anatomical blasonneurs. On the contrary, it is particularly well liked by the poets of the fifteenth century. Usually such passages of repetitive description do not constitute complete poems in their own right, but rather form sections of a longer work. An obvious example of such a repetitive passage is one taken from André de la Vigne's Louenge des roys de France, in which forty-four lines of the section dealing with Louis XI are devoted to a description of the 'noble maison de France'. In this passage virtually every line reiterates the words 'C'est la maison...' or 'C'est l'hostel...':

'C'est l'hostel des misteres solacieux
C'est celluy qui monstre les esperitz courageux
C'est la maison de tous royaulmes le chief
C'est la maison de exploitz curieux
C'est l'hostel des seculiers et religieux
C'est l'hostel de preexcellence relief
C'est la maison pour mener ses ennemys a chief'

(74)

Louenge des roys de France, E4 r⁰
Grosnet's Second volume des motz dorez du grand et saige Cathon contains a poem entitled Excellente louenge & honneur de la noble maison de France, which appears to be an adaptation of the version by André de la Vigne, in which, however, the repetitive character has been rather lost:
'Ceust ung hostel des metiers soulageux
Celluy ou sont les espritz courageux
C'est la maison des royaumes le chief
C'est la maison des pouvres langoureux
Des seculiers & des religieux
C'est bon hostel dung excellent relief
Lieu pour mener ses ennemys a chief'

(f.98 v⁰)
This technique can be used to treat any subject matter. Most apposite to this study of the anatomical blasons and contreblasons, however, are those poems in which it is used in the pro- and anti-woman controversy. In criticism of women we find the following passage in the Contreditz de Songecreux:

'Femme si est larcin de vie
Femme est de lhomme doulce mort
Femme est venin, cresme denvie
Femme est diniquite le port
Femme est du dyable le support
Femme nous perdit paradis
Femme est de mauvaistie rapport
Femme est lenfer des gens maulditz'

(75)

while the opposing view is expressed in the Jardin de plaisir by the Advocat des dames:

'Dame est le chief dhonnorable entreprise
Dame est le bast de toute villenye
Dame tousjours les vaillans auctorise
Dame par droict deshonneur si desprise
Dame hait trop les ensuivans envye
Dame tient chiers les notables preux
Dame enrichist les cheurs chevalereux'

(76)

Both in subject matter and in treatment the blasons and contreblasons have much in common with such passages. Both are descriptive, and both are repetitive. The great feature, however, which distinguishes the anatomical blason and contreblason from such fifteenth and early sixteenth century predecessors is their almost invariable second person invocative form of address (77). This

(75) Contreditz de Songecreux, G2 r° v°
(76) Jardin de plaisir, vol.I, f.194 v°
(77) Only rarely do the anatomical blasoneurs not use the second person. Charles de la Hueterie uses the third person in his Bouche (Protologies, F6 v°)
preference for the second person by the anatomical blasonneurs would seem to be closely linked with the subjective element which characterises their poetry. The fifteenth century poet is not directly involved with his subject matter; Danche may describe a beautiful female body, but his description is dispassionate. The anatomical blasonneur, in contrast, is deeply involved; the body described is that of his own lady, and the poem — unlike earlier ones — is envisaged essentially as a love poem. It extols the beauty of the chosen lady, and more important — it analyses the effect of this beauty upon the poet. Indeed the great original feature of the anatomical blasons, and one which distinguishes them from their predecessors, is the element of personal involvement on the part of the poet, implicit in the second person form of address.

* * *

Looking at possible medieval sources and parallels for the blason poétique we cannot omit the fifteenth century catalogue poem. Extremely popular throughout the later medieval period is the scientific compendium — the list of birds, flowers, animals, precious stones, in which an attempt is made to describe and classify

and in La joue le front & cheveulx (Protologies, F7 r°), but more frequently he uses the second person. In certain blasons also the bulk of the poem may be in the third person, and only the last few lines in the second person. Albert le Grand's Cueur, for example is composed throughout in the third person:

'Cueur begnin, cueur courtoys, cueur doulx,
Cueur qui ne peut souffrir courroux' (Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K5 v°)

Only in the last ten lines is the heart addressed directly: 'Tu me feras demeurer tien' (K6 v°)
each item according to its physical appearance, peculiar characteristics and attributes, and its importance to mankind, either in purely symbolic terms or else in more utilitarian terms connected with its medicinal or other similar virtues and properties. The immense popularity of these medieval encyclopedias is shown by a glance at the first two chapters of Hélène Naïs's study of animals in literature of the French Renaissance (78). Many of these works are in prose (79), but those which are in verse do provide a marked parallel with, if not a direct influence upon the descriptive blason of the sixteenth century, with their detailed description and analysis of the significance of a given object. As early as the twelfth century we find an Anglo-Norman poet Philippe de Thaun adapting and translating into French the Greek Physiologus (80). Here each animal is described in detail in a poem of some fifty lines, and its symbolism explained. The lion, for example, which opens the collection is described thus:

(78) Les animaux dans la poésie française de la Renaissance, Paris, 1961, 8°, pp.23-140

(79) Le lapidaire en francoys compose par messire Jehan de Mandeville, Paris, Lotrian, nd, 16°, BN Res S 1102
Richard de Fournival, Bestiaire d'amour, ed. C.Hippeau, Paris, 1860, 8°

(80) Le bestiaire de Philippe de Thaun, ed. E.Wolberg, Lund, 1900, 8°
Here we have once again, as with the heraldic blason, a monographic poem describing in detail all the aspects, physical, moral and symbolic of one particular object, in order to explain its significance to mankind.

The eleventh century Latin lapidary of Marbodius (82) provides an example of much the same thing; it consists of a series of poems of varying length (from four to thirty lines) in which each stone is described, together with its place of origin, particular attributes and medicinal qualities. One of the shorter poems devoted to the cornelian provides a typical example of this lapidary:

"Je ne manquerai pas de parler, à coup sûr
De ces pierres au teint sombre, à l'aspect obscur,
Les cornalines, dont les vertus sont vantées.
En bagues, en colliers, au doigt, au col, portées,
De la discussion elles calment l'ardeur.
Celle qui de la chair lavée a la couleur,
Arrête un flux de sang, le tarit en sa source.
Pour les femmes elle est d'une utile ressource'

(81) Thaun, pp.2-3
(82) Poèmes de Marbode, Evêque de Rennes au XIe siècle, trans. S. Ropartz, Rennes, 1873, 8
Certainly such medieval compilations seem to be the direct ancestors of the similar mid sixteenth century bestiaries and lapidaries which are occasionally given the title *blason* (84).

Allied to the medieval bestiary is the calendrier listing the various months and seasons, describing their characteristic features and the particular works to be done in each. In form the *Compost et kalendrier des bergeres...nouvellement compose sans contredire a celluy des bergiers* (85) closely resembles the early *blason*, with its woodcut illustration followed by a description and an interpretation of the meaning of what has been described. The four seasons describe and extol their respective virtues in the style of a self-addressed *blason*:

'Printemps suis qui de ma nature  
Ayme les fleurs et la verdure  
Atrempe doit estre par droit  
Mon temps, ne trop chault ne trop froit  
De mon chapeau sont naturelles  
Les fleurs' (86)

Each month describes itself in a two-stanza poem. Janvier for example describes in the first stanza the cold weather and the snow, explaining that what she requires is a warm fire and plenty of food. This is simply a

(84) Barthélemy Aneau, *Decades de la description, forme et verty naturelle des animaulx*, Lyons, Arnouillet, 1549, 8°, BN Res Ye 3468

Guillaume Guérout, *Second livre de la description des animaux, contenant le blason des cyseaux*, Lyons, Arnouillet, 1550, 8°, BN Res Ye 3468 (2)

(85) Paris, Marchant, 1499, in-folio, BN Res V 1266

(86) *Compost et kalendrier*, G4 v°
poetic development of what is depicted in the woodcut
(the conventional representation of January seated by
the fire). The second stanza, however, describes the
virtues and significance attributed to this month:

'Je me faiz janvier appeller
Le plus froit de toute lannee
Mais si me puis je bien vanter
Que ma saison fut approuvee
La foy de dieu y fut ordonnee
Car en mon temps fut circonsis
Jhesus, et si fut demonstrree
Aux trois roys lestoiile de pris' (87)

Another variation of the catalogue poem is that
dealing with long lists of famous men and women, each
containing a short anecdote narrating or explaining the
particular virtue or significance attributed to each
individual. Jean du Pré's Palais des nobles dames is an
obvious example of such a work. The careful arrangement
of the material into different sections is explained in
the full title to the work:

'Le Palais des nobles Dames, auquel a treze
parcelles ou chambres principales: en
chascune desquelles sont declarees plusieurs
histoires, tant grecques, hebraiques,
latines que francoyses. Ensemble fictions
& couleurs poetiques, concernans les vertus
& louanges des Dames'

One salle, for example, is devoted to:

'Les dames jadis renommees pour avoir este
exercitees en toutes sciences, tant
liberales que mecaniques, et estre
inventeresses de partie d'icelles' (88)

while another contains:

'Dames souveraines en chastete & virginite,
comme celles qui ont ayme mieulx mourir ou
souffrir incomparables perilz, que denigrer
leur renommee par villenye & ordure' (89)

(87) Compost et kalendrier, B4 v°
(88) Palais des nobles dames, D3 r°
(89) Palais des nobles dames, E2 v°
In this room is to be found the virtuous Lucretia. Yet
another room is devoted to women who proved their loyalty
to their husbands, including — curiously — Iseult, and
yet another to women renowned for their extraordinary
beauty.

Allied to this is a further type of catalogue dis­
cussing the virtues of women in more general terms, rather
than with the historical approach of Jean du Pré. Such a
poem is the anonymous Louenge et beaulte des dames (90),
in which an eight-line stanza describes and praises each
particular aspect of feminine virtue, which taken all
together represent a great blessing to mankind:

'Dames sont le jardin de fertille
Racine dhumaine nature
Larbre convenable et utile
De terrienne nourriture
Dames sont la douce pasture
Ou il convient tout homme paistre
Et toute humaine creature
Loger fructifier et naistre' (91)

In this category might be placed Olivier de la Marche's
Parement & triumphe des dames, in which each particular
piece of feminine attire is listed together with the
particular virtue with which it is associated. Several
of the stanzas praising the virtues of one particular
garment resemble in themselves short 'blasons' praising,
describing and interpreting as they do the virtues of
the garment. The shoe, for example, symbol of diligence,
is described thus in the second of the two stanzas
devoted to the subject:

(90), Npnd, 16°, BN Res Ye 2983
(91) Louenge et beaulte des dames, A v°
This same device of associating a particular virtue with a particular garment is taken up by at least one of the blasonneurs. Vauzelles, in his *Blason de la mort*, lists a series of garments together with their particular symbolic meaning, together with certain colours and their symbolic values:

'Ainsi quand viend de mort le souvenir,
Appareillhons celle chemise blanche
Dune innocence, & simplicité franche,
Le manteau bleu, de ferme loyaulte,
Ung cierge ardant de vraye charite,
Ung chapperon dune sainte esperance,
Cotte de foy, ung bissac de science' (93)

* * *

At the end of this investigation of possible French sources and influences in the fifteenth century, we find that the medieval tradition running through the *blasons poétiques* is a strong one. The terminology used by the anatomical *blasonneurs* frequently owes a considerable debt to that of the traditional medieval description of female beauty. The debt is even clearer in the case of the *contreblasons* of La Hueterie, where not only the terminology but also the moralising intent are direct descendants of the many medieval poems which are obsessed with death and decay. The feature, however, which

(92) Parement, B5 v°
(93) Strasbourg *Hecatomphile*, N10 r°
distinguishes the anatomical blason of the sixteenth century from its medieval counterpart is the involvement of the poet with his subject. No longer is he the dis-passionate observer; in the anatomical blasons the poet is the lover also, and the features described are highly coloured and affected by his own personal involvement. Thus even so slight a matter as the second person form of address adopted by the blasonneurs points the way to a poetic future remote from fifteenth century anatomical poetry. Again, when we look at the outward construction of the blasons, we see that their characteristic repetitive and analytical nature may well have originated in an earlier French tradition of the later Middle Ages.
CHAPTER III  Italian influence on the anatomical blason and contreblason

Marot's Beau tetin was composed during his short exile in Italy after the Affaire des placards. Inevitably, therefore, the suggestion has been made that he derived his inspiration for this poem from the works of those Italian poets he encountered during this period. Marot's stay in Italy was, in fact, quite a short one; fleeing from possible reprisals after the Affaire des placards on 17th-18th October 1534, he did not immediately seek refuge in Italy. Instead he went south to the court of Marguerite de Navarre, and most probably spent the winter there (1), before being compelled to move to greater safety in Italy some time in 1535. Staying first in Ferrara, and subsequently in Venice, he was back in France before the end of 1537. The actual date of his arrival in Ferrara is uncertain. Villey and Jourda both suggest June 1535 (2), basing this upon the evidence of the épître addressed to Renée of Ferrara, written on his arrival in that country (3). Mayer, however, pushes this date back to April (4), on the evidence of a court register for this month in which

(2) Villey, Marot et Rabelais, Paris, 1923, 8°, p.79
Jourda, Marot, l'homme et l'oeuvre, Paris, 1950, 8°, p.26
(3) Marot, Oeuvres, ed. Mayer, vol.I, p.188
(4) 'Le départ de Marot de Ferrare', BHR, vol.XVIII, 1956, p.198
Marot's name already appears (5). By July 1536 Marot had left Ferrara for Venice, and been there for mainctz jours, according to the épître written from Venice to Renée of Ferrara (6).

Marot's actual stay in Ferrara then was a short one—hardly longer than a year, from late spring or early summer of 1535 to early summer of 1536. It coincided, however, with a particularly eventful period in Ferrara. A state traditionally hostile to the Pope, and receptive to protestant ideas, fostered largely by Renée, younger daughter of Louis XII, Ferrara had long been regarded as a refuge for exiled protestants fleeing from more troubled areas. Renée herself established around herself a largely protestant entourage, among the most notable of whom were Madame de Soubise and her three daughters Anne de Parthenay (married to Antoine de Pons just before the arrival of Marot), Charlotte and Renée, and her son Jean de Parthenay. Marot's early protector Lyon Jamet was likewise among the recently arrived protestant refugees, and during Marot's stay in Ferrara, Calvin himself made a fleeting visit (7).

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(5) 'Le départ de Marot de Ferrare', p.198, note 2: 'Le registre no.61 (année 1535) de la cour de Ferrare contient la note suivante: A Maistre Clement Marot...la somme de 150 livres tourno. auquel Madame l'a donné et ordonnée pour s'entretenir en son service durant troys quart-iers commençant au premier jour d'avril MVeXXXV'


Marot's stay in Ferrara, however, also coincided with Ercole d'Este's efforts to reverse the traditional policy of his state, and seek a closer alliance with the Pope. Such an aggressively protestant atmosphere in Ferrara could only be an embarrassment to Ercole, and the beginning of 1536 marks the end of religious toleration as it had been known in Ferrara. In March Madame de Soubise was ordered to leave, and the following month another scandal (involving a monk walking out of a church at the elevation of the cross (8) ) enabled Ercole to bring in the Inquisition, and implicate many other protestants (9). Marot, one of the most eminent of the French protestants exiled in Ferrara, was inevitably involved (10), and by the summer of 1536 he had decided to escape from Ferrara where the atmosphere was no longer conducive to those whose religious views were not strictly orthodox. It must be said, however, that the

(8) Cf. 'Le départ de Marot de Ferrare', p.202

(9) For further details of the persecutions in Ferrara see Bonnet, 'Les premières persécutions à la cour de Ferrare, 1535-1536', BSHPP, vol. XXXIX, 1890, p.169 et seq., and p.289 et seq.
See also Rodocanachi, Une protectrice de la réforme en Italie et en France: Renée de France, duchesse de Ferrare, Paris, 1895, 8°

(10) Mayer (art. cit., p.207) refers to a letter from Ercole to his ambassador requesting information about Marot. Bonnet ('Les premières persécutions à la cour de Ferrare, 1535-1536') describes a letter, again from Ercole, dated 18 July 1536, referring to an escaped prisoner from whom they had hoped to extract information. It is suggested that this prisoner might well be Marot. Certainly by the summer of 1536 Marot had escaped to Venice.
reasons he gives for his escape in an épître to Renée
written from Ferrara (11) are probably not strictly
accurate:

'Penses tu que l'outraige
Que Ferraroys mal nobles de couraige
M'ont fait de nuyct, armez couardement,
Ne soit a. moy ung admonestement
Du seigneur Dieu pour desloger d'icy?'

Short and turbulent (at least from the religious
point of view) though Marot's stay in Ferrara may have
been, little of this emerges from the poetry he wrote
while he was there. Apart from two relatively serious
épitres addressed to Madame de Soubise and her daughter
Renée on their banishment from Ferrara (12), most of the
poetry written in Ferrara reflects a light hearted imp-
ression of the polite sophisticated court with which
Renée surrounded herself. On the whole he chose to write
short, rather precious epigrams, with the occasional
longer poem (13). Perhaps the best example of the soph-
isticated style of these poems is the epigram De son
feu et de celluy qui se print au bosquet de Ferrare (14),
built up on an antithesis worthy of any native Italian
poet:

(13) Cf. Epistre perdue au jeu contre Madame de Ponts
(Oeuvres, ed. Mayer, vol.I, p.211) and the eclogue
Avant-naisance du troizieyme enfant de madame
Renée, duchesse de Ferrare (Oeuvres, ed. Mayer,
vol.III, p.338)
'Puis qu'au millieu de l'Eau d'un puissant fleuve
Le vert Bosquet par Feu est consumé,
Pourquoy mon Cueur en Cendre ne se treuve
Au Feu sans eau que tu m'as alumé ?
Le Cueur est sec, le Feu bien enflamé;
Mais la rigueur (Anne) dont tu es pleine
Le veoir souffrir a tousjours mieulx ayme
Que par la Mort mettre fin à sa peine.'

Despite the atmosphere of religious controversy, the cultivated sophistication of life at court does not appear to have suffered, and Marot praises the literary preoccupations of Renée and her circle in his épître to Madame de Soubise:

'Mais pour autant que d'instinct de nature
Toy et les tiens ayme litterature,
Savoir exquis, vertus qui le ciel percent,
Arts liberaux, et ceulx qui s'y exercent;
Cela (pour vray) fait que tresgrandement
Je te reverve en mon entendement' (15)

In such a small state, Marot could hardly have failed to come into contact with the various scholars who were there at this time. He does not mention by name the two Giraldis (16), but he does write to François ler, expressing his eagerness to study under the philosopher, poet and scholar, Calcagnini:

'O Sire, donq renverse leurs langaiges;
Vueilles permettre (en despit d'eulx) mes gaiges
Passer les montz et jusque icy venir,
Pour a. l'estude ung temps m'entretenir
Soubz Celsiu, de qui tant on aprent.
Et si desir apres cela te prent
De m'appeller en la terre gallique,
Tu trouveras ceste langue italique

(16) Lilio Gregorio Giraldi, the ill fated poet and archaeologist who lost his library during the Sack of Rome in 1527, and his younger brother Cinthio Giraldi.
Passablement dessus la mienne entée,  
Et la latine en moy plus augmentée' (17)

It is difficult to assess the influence upon Marot of these scholars. Jourda (18) suggests that his greater use of the *Tristia* and *Libri de ponto* of Ovid in the *épitres*, and his imitations of the epigrams of Martial are a direct outcome of all this. It is, however, with the *blasons anatomiques* that we are concerned, and there can be little question of Marot obtaining his inspiration for the *Beau tetin* from Calcagnini. But as Marot points out in the passage quoted above, both his Latin and his Italian improved considerably, and all things considered it is perhaps to works written in this latter language that we should look for possible influences on the *blasons anatomiques*.

* * *

In the early sixteenth century Italy there existed already a flourishing tradition of anatomical love poetry - and this was not the case in France. From Petrarch onwards we find occasional sonnets written in praise of one particular feature of the lady's beauty, using highly precious imagery and hyperbole in order to convey the effect upon the poet of this single feature. One such sonnet by Petrarch describes the beauty of Laura's hand, with its finger nails resembling pearls, and at


(18) Marot, *l'homme et l'oeuvre*, p.29
the same time stressing heavily the cruelty of such a hand, for it holds captive the poet's heart:

'O bella man, che mi distringi'1 core,  
En poco spatio la mia vita chiudi;  
Man ov' ogni arte et tutti loro studi  
Poser natura e'l ciel per farsi honore;  
Di cinque perle oriental colore,  
Et sol ne le mie piaghe acerbi et crudi  
Diti schietti soavi; a tempo ignudi  
Consente hor voi per arricchirmi amore' (19)

The eyes are treated frequently in these sonnets; indeed they are considered to be of prime importance, since it is they which initially inspire love and subsequently hold the lover inflamed and ensnared. Politian is responsible for a sonnet on this subject:

'Occhi leggiadri, grazioso sguardo,  
Che fuste i primi che m'innamoraro;  
Occhi sereni, donde uscì quel dardo  
Che passò il core, e non valse riparo;  
Occhi cagion del fuoco in cui sempre ardo,  
Senza li quali il viver non m'è caro,  
A voi ne vengo a dimandar se mai  
Sperar debbo mercè di tanti guai' (20)

Giusto de Conti (born some five years after the death of Petrarch) composed a series of sonnets on the hand and the eyes of his lady, under the title La bella mano (21). Here again the lady's hand is seen as dispenser of life and death to the poet/lover:

'O Bella, e bianca Mano, o Man soave,  
Che armata, contra me sei volta a torto.  
O Man gentil, che lusingando, scorto  
Appoco appoco in pena m'hai sì grave,  
De i miei pensieri e l'una, e l'altra chiave  
T'ha dato l'error mio; da te conforto  
Aspetta il cor, che disiando è morto;  
Per te convien che Amor sua piaghe lave.

(19) Le cose volgari, Venice, Aldus, 1501, 8°, BN Velins, 2142, K7 v
(20) Poesie italiane di Messer Angelo Poliziano, Milan 1825, 8°, p.124
(21) Florence, 1715, 8°
Poiché ogni mia salute, ogni mia spene
Da voi sola ad ognor convien ch'io spera,
E da voi attenda vita, e da voi morte,
Lasso, perché; perché, contra al devere,
Perché di me pietà non vi ritene?
Perché sete ver me, crudel, sì forte? (22)

At this stage little stress is placed on the actual physical description of these features. Far more important is the analysis of the effect they have upon the poet. As we move into the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries we find rather more attention being paid to the actual description of one particular feature. In general, however, it is described in terms so precious, or with an accumulation of hyperbolic epithets so vague as to be meaningless. Sannazar, for example, is content to devote a whole line to a string of adjectives which, despite their number, add little to our concrete impression of the eyes of his lady:

'Vaghi, soavi, altieri, honesti, & cari Occhi' (23)

Again in his praise of the hand, Sannazar’s imagery is so precious that it loses any real descriptive force:

'O man leggiadra, o terso avorio bianco
O latte, o perle, o pura & calda neve' (24)

It must be clear by now that there is a considerable difference between anatomical poetry in France prior to 1530 and similar poetry in Italy. In France, description

(22) La bella mano, p.14
(23) Le rime, Venice, Zioe, 1538, 8°, BN 8°Yd 395, f.15 v
(24) Sannazar, f.18 r°
from the *Roman de la rose*, although equally conventional and limited in its terminology, is basically objective and almost entirely factual. The beauty of woman is described in an attempt to provide a plastic – albeit somewhat stylised – picture of her. In Italy the poet is less interested in the depiction of the woman herself, as an object. He is interested rather in the effect which her beauty has upon himself, the lover and the poet. Thus he describes the lady's beauty in general terms, in a series of deliberately contrived images, carefully tying up each feature with the effect it has upon himself. For Naugerius the eyes of his lady are like two stars, but the interest lies not so much in this image as in its corollary – the further conceit that by these same stars the poet – seen as a ship – can be safely guided to port:

'Serene stelle, a cui sovente sole
Volgersi la mia stanca navicella,
Verrà mai di condurla in porto l'ora?' (25)

Similarly for Nocturno his lady's hair is more brilliant than gold. But the poet is not content with this relatively simple image – he pushes the conceit one stage further, and the gold is associated with the golden chains with which love has enthralled him:

'O chiome relucente piu che lo avaro
di che mi fece amor al collo un laccio' (26)

(25) Opera omnia, Padua, 1718, 4°, p.275
(26) Nocturno, M1l r°
Her gaze is more splendid than the sun; it is pleasant, but it holds the poet captive:

'O suguardo che dil sol tanto piu splende
chel mondo empie di luce, & io de ardore
O sguardo ameno che mi lega, e prende
& tommi al tuo commando il tristo core' (27)

One Italian poet in particular, Olympe de Sassoferrato, specialised in anatomical love poetry, composing a number of strambotti and capitoli d'amore in honour of the beauty of a series of ladies (28). It is above all his Capitolo del bianco petto de madonna Pegasea and Capitolo delle poppe, tette de pegasea (29), two of a series of capitoli on the beauties of Pegasea, which are often cited as a possible source for Marot's Beau tetin (30). But in addition to these long poems, Sassoferrato's shorter eight-line strambotti are also mentioned as possible sources. This latter form was particularly popular with Sassoferrato, and in the Gloria d'amore we find a collection of forty-five strambotti devoted to the various features of the lady under the general title Comparation de laude a la signora mia incominciando al capo per insino a li piedi (31). Again in the Aurora there is a collection of strambotti treating the same subject: Cominciano li tersi strambotti de Caio Balth.

(27) Nocturno, M11 v°
(28) Cf. above, chapter II, footnote 6
(29) Pegasea, B5 r° and B5 v°
(31) Gloria d'amore, A4 r°
Olympe da Sassoferrato lodando madonna (32) and both the Camilla (33) and the Olimpia (34) contain similar passages of anatomical description.

* * *

'Tetin reffaict plus blanc quung oeuf,
Tetin de satin blanc tout neuf,
Tetin qui faitz honte a la rose,
Tetin plus beau que nulle chose
Tetin dor, non pas Tetin, voyre
Mais petite boulle d'ivoyre
Au millieu de qui est assise
Une Fraise ou une Serisse' (35)

'Si bella e la celeste alma aurora
Del chiaro giorno principio e radice
Piu vago e il petto della mia signora.
Si Helena bella fo come se dice
Dogni altro riportando la corona
Piu bello e il petto della mia phenice
Si de Lucretia se parla & ragiona
Delli honesti costumi & leggiadria
Piu bello e il petto della mia patrona' (36)

A glance at the opening lines of these two poems by Marot and Sassoferrato shows the obvious difference between them. Marot comes to the point immediately in the opening line with a straightforward comparison—a comparison which gains much of its effect from the very homeliness of the parallel drawn between the whiteness of the breast and that of an egg. His second metaphor

(32) _Aurora_, 05 r°
(33) The Camilla is not included in the Bindoni collection. Cf. Camilla, Rome, Doricho, 1542, 8°, BN Yd 5860, B4 r°—B5 r°
(34) _Stramboti in laude de Olimpo_, A3 r°
(35) Marot, _Beau tetin_, Strasbourg _Hecatomphile_, K4 r°
(36) Sassoferrato, _Capitolo del bianco petto de madonna Pegasea_, Pegasea, B5 r°
is equally uncomplicated, associating the smoothness of the breast with that of satin. In comparing the breast to a rose in the third line, Marot moves slightly away from the day to day tone of the first two, but the fourth line brings us quickly back to reality with the statement - banal if taken out of context, but acceptable here as the natural conclusion to three such disparate images:

'Tetin plus beau que nulle chose'

Thus immediately in the first four lines of the poem Marot begins to establish a plastic image of the object which he is describing.

Sassoferrato's approach is very different. His poem is in terza rima, the lines are longer than those of Marot's poem, and the pace is slower. Indeed, Sassoferrato seems to make deliberate use of this construction in order to slow the pace of his poem: in each tercet he devotes the first two lines to a description of one particular phenomenon renowned for its beauty. The third line then concludes with the assertion that the beauty of his lady's breast far surpasses the beauty of the phenomenon evoked in the first part of the tercet. Where Marot works from the starting point of the tetin, describing only this, Sassoferrato seems basically intent not on describing the breast as such, but rather on evoking a series of disconnected images whose only link is provided by the reference in the third line of each to the bianco petto of his lady, whose beauty surpasses all these. Thus while Marot builds up a picture of the breast by a series of vivid images which actually
serve to develop and add to the central picture, this is not the case with Sassoferrato whose conceits, despite their subtlety, do not (and are not intended to) convey any plastic representation of the breast of Pegasea. In the first stanza the poet evokes the beauty of the dawn, in the second the physical beauty of Helen of Troy, and in the third the moral beauty of Lucretia. All these three manifestations of beauty are - in the eyes of the poet - eclipsed by the far superior beauty of the breast of Pegasea. Unfortunately, however, the emphasis of the poem is such that the reader's interest is diverted from the apparent central theme which is conveyed so indirectly that it tends to disappear and lose its force. The accompanying images, varied and subtle as they are, instead of reinforcing the anatomical description as they do in the poem of Marot, actually stop us from concentrating upon it, and the picture becomes blurred and diffuse, and disappears into its background. Thus, in his Beau tetin Marot gradually builds up a very real impression of the breast, whereas Sassoferrato gives us very little visual idea of the beauty of the breast itself, which is described throughout in the vaguest of terms: *piu vago, piu bello, piu duro, piu dolce, molta gente, piu biancho*.

Again in Marot's poem there is a discernible progression from simple description at the beginning to hints of forbidden pleasures in touching this delightful object:

'Quant on te voit il vient a maintz
Une envye dedans les mains
De te taster, de te tenyr,
Mais il se fault bien contenir
Den approcher bon gre ma vie,
Car il en viendroit une autre envye'

and ultimately to a curiously domestic and even moral conclusion:

'A bon droit heureux on dira
Celluy qui de laict templira
Faisant dung tetin de puCELle,
Tetin de femme entiere & belle'

In contrast to this, there is no progression in the poem by Sassoferrato, for whom the *bianco petto* remains as untouchable at the end as it is at the beginning of the poem. For Sassoferrato the poem is a static structure, displaying in a series of images a number of disparate manifestations of beauty, the whole being linked by what is almost a refrain — for the beauty of Pegasea far surpasses all other beauties.

The second capitolo by Sassoferrato — *Delle poppe, tette de pegasea* — appears at first sight to have as little in common with Marot's *blason* as the *Bianco petto*. It is in terza rima and begins with a learned allusion to the Atalanta legend:

'Nel florido giardino dathlante
poma non formo mai viste piu belle
Come quella della mia cara amante'

After the introduction, however, the second part of the poem does deal with a more concrete description of, and invocation to the breast, and in form, if not in content, the poem is not dissimilar to Marot's, although the term-*inology* of Sassoferrato is far more hyperbolic than that of Marot:

'Tette formate con grande arte & cura
Aquali in mezzo e posto un rubinetto
Ch'ogni altro lume con sua luce obscura
Tette locate nel piu bianco petto
C'havesse donna mai creata in terra
Da tuor larco a cupido al suo dispetto'

and the description is again heavily charged with imagery.

The lines:

'Lucide piu che le serene stelle
Peoma gioconde, poma gloriose'

and:

'Tette colme di fiori e gentilezza:
De gigli de maranci e de viole'

seem to have little in common with Marot's far more basic description:

'Tetin gauche, Tetin mignon,
Tetin loing de ton compaignon...
...O tetin ne grant ne petit,
Tetin meur, tetin dappetit'

Similarly his:

'Tetin donc au petit bout rouge,
Tetin qui jamais ne se bouge
Soit pour venir, soit pour aller,
Soit pour courir, soit pour baller'

can hardly have found any direct inspiration in Sasso-ferrato's far more elevated:

'Tette formate con grande arte & cura
Aquali in mezzo e posto un rubinetto
Ch'ogni altro lume con sua luce obscura'

Nevertheless, despite the difference in tone, like Marot's Sassoferato's poem is an invocative one, apostrophising the breast in seven out of nine stanzas, and with the exception of the introductory first two stanzas each is introduced by the word poma or tette. Thus, in this repetitive and invocative aspect there is a parallel to be drawn between the two poems, although the actual terminology and imagery of the two poems is very different.

More common than capitoli on the subject of the breast are the shorter strambotti d'amore by various
authors. Sassoferrato himself treats the subject frequently in his various cycles of strambotti. It appears in the Gloria d'amore (first published in 1529) (37), in the Camilla (first published in 1522) (38) and also in the Aurora (39). Nocturno also devotes one strambotto to the subject in the cycle Laude di Madonna (40). The tone of Sassoferrato's strambotti is much the same as that of his capitoli. We find recurring in all three the same images which were used in the capitoli. The: 'Tette chexesuscitar ferieno un morto' (41) of the Capitolo delle poppe, tette de pegasea is a reiteration of the same theme used by the poet two years earlier in the strambotto in the Camilla:

'Quella che po far viva un alma morte' (42) and the image of the:

'Tette colme de fiori e gentilezza
De gigli, de naranci e de viole'

of the same capitolo (43) is to be found again in the Aurora:

'Il petto vostro e pien de lieti fiori
pieno de bianche rose e de viole
Il petto colmo de soavi odori' (44)

(37) Gloria d'amore, A6 v°- A7 r°
(38) Camilla, B4 v°
(39) Aurora, C6 v°
(40) Nocturno, M11 v°
(41) Pegasea, B5 v°
(42) Camilla, B5 r°
(43) Pegasea, B6 r°
(44) Cominciano li tersi strambotti...lodando Madonna, Aurora, C6 v°
Less precious in imagery than the strambotti of Sassoferrato, that of Nocturno is nevertheless very far removed from the Beau tetin of Marot. In contrast to the very apparent sensual preoccupation of Marot, Nocturno stresses the purity of the breast, repeating in the space of eight lines over and again the phrase 'o bianco e casto petto':

'O bianco e casto petto in cui si serra quanta gratia, e valor trovasi in ciello O bianco, e casto petto, ad che piu guerra mi fai comprender te de un bianco velo O bianco, e casto petto che mi aterra e vol chio canzia in breve il corso, e il pelo O bianco, e casto petto, aprire alquanto & poni fine al mio luttuoso pianto' (45)

It must by now be evident that as regards actual content Marot's Beau tetin owes little to Sassoferrato or Nocturno. In the imagery used, Marot's poem is quite unlike those of the two Italian poets. His picture is a perfectly straightforward one, depending on realistic simile and factual description to convey a vivid and convincing image of the female breast. In contrast to this, the Italian poets give very little actual description of the breast. Their imagery is decorative in its own right, but adds little to the overall picture of the breast. Neither in imagery nor vocabulary then does Marot seem to owe any debt to the Italian poets. Certain of his expressions, as we have seen, are reminiscent of earlier French poets; the rest is simply Marot himself.

(45) Nocturno, M11 v° - M12 r°
The question of form is more difficult to resolve. Even though there is undoubtedly a great deal in common between the anatomical **blason** and certain types of French descriptive poetry of the fifteenth century, we cannot dismiss altogether the influence of Sassoferrato. It would seem too much of a coincidence that the very year in which Marot must first have come into contact with the work of Sassoferrato he should compose so distinctive a type of anatomical love poem, and that furthermore he should have seen it as forming part of a fuller cycle of anatomical love poems. It would seem probable that after reading the poetry of Sassoferrato Marot was inspired to follow suit, making use of what was a popular idiom in Italy, but transforming it in accordance with his own style, indeed gallicising it. Thus only in basic concept does the **Beau tetin** show any similarity to an Italian model. The precious Italian imagery of Sassoferrato, for example, is largely ignored by Marot, although the repetitive invocation to the **tette** of his second capitolo:

'Tette formate con grande arte & cura...
...Tette locate nel piu bianco petto...
...Tette so certo chel mio dir non erra...
...Tette colme de fiori e gentilezza' (46)

is re-echoed in Marot's invocative beginning to his poem:

'Tetin reffait plus blanc quung oeuf,
Tetin de satin blanc tout neuf,
Tetin qui faitz honte a la rose,
Tetin plus beau que nulle chose' (47)

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(46) Pegasea, B5 v° - B6 r°
(47) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K4 r°
Unlike the Italian poets we have been considering, Marot wrote only one anatomical love poem, but it is clear from the épître A ceulx qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'autres (48) that he hoped that other French poets would imitate the master not by composing poems on the same subject, but rather by supplementing Marot's blason with a corpus of similar anatomical poetry in the manner which he himself had created, adapting to French usage a fashion which was already flourishing in Italy:

'Graces vous rendz, dont avez imité
Non ung Tetin beau par extremité,
Mais ung Blason, que je feis de bon zelle
Sur le Tetin d'une humble Damoiselle.
En me suivant vous avez blasonné,
Dont haultement je me sens guerdonné,
L'un de sa part, la Cheveleure blonde,
L'autre le Cueur, l'autre la Cuisse ronde' (49)

As Giudici points out (50) despite the considerable differences in style and language, the main characteristics of the French anatomical blasons are already present in the work of Sassoferrato: the objective description followed by a subjective reference to the poet/lover, and the characteristic repetitive invocation to the object in question.

Sassoferrato's poetry was published some years before Marot went to Ferrara (Camilla in 1522, Pegasea in 1524, Gloria d'amore in 1529). It seems unlikely,

(50) Giudici, Le opere minori di Maurice Scève, Rome, 1958, 8°, p.101
however, that Marot was familiar with these anatomical poems before he went to Ferrara. It is true that the Bibliothèque Nationale possesses the collected works of Sassoferrato in a binding bearing the arms of François Ier (51), but this particular edition dates from 1538-1539, after Marot's return from Italy. It seems far more probable that Marot should have been introduced to the poetry of Sassoferrato during his stay in Ferrara, and that, impressed by the anatomical capitoli and strambotti d'amore, he should have attempted to do the same thing, but in French, and using a more traditional French idiom. A tempting hypothesis — but one which it is impossible to prove — is that Marot himself, newly returned from Italy, was responsible for the interest of François Ier in the poetry of Sassoferrato — an interest which led to the inclusion of his collected works in the royal library.

* * *

As we have seen, in actual treatment of his subject and in the imagery used, Marot's debt to his Italian predecessors is relatively slight. This may well not be the case with the other writers of blasons, for we should not fall into the trap of supposing that all anatomical blasons are written in the same style, as might be the case if they were all the work of one author (as with the Italian cycles of anatomical love poetry). Each of the blasonneurs has his own highly individual style and attitude. Even so, we may be permitted to classify to some extent, and to draw certain

(51) BN Res Yd 1210-1217 (Cf. above, chapter II, footnote 6)
general conclusions. The court poets of François Ier and Marguerite de Navarre, or the Lyonnese poets are thoroughly imbued with Italian conceits which are eschewed by the worthy provincials of, for example, Rouen. In a Saint-Gelais, an Héroet, a Scève or a Vauzelle, we can expect to find a precious idiom which we do not find in the works of a Sagon or a Le Lieur, where the imagery used is more straightforward, not to say pedestrian.

Héroet's well worked device of retracting and qualifying by a negative his initial epithet:

'Oeil non pas oeil, mais ung soleil dore' (52) is an imitation of an equivalent Italian conceit. Francesco Cei, for example, in his description of the eye uses much the same terms as Héroet:

'Delle dua stelle anz i dua soli ncn occhi' (53) while in the Camilla Sassoferrato uses the same device in his description of the teeth:

'I denti di costei non son piu denti' (54)

The petrarchan conceit of the lover enchained by his lady's hair:

'O chiome bionde, di che'l cor m'annoda
Amor, e cosi preso il mena à morte' (55)

is a common one, becoming increasingly popular as the century progresses (56). In both French blasons on the

(52) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K4 r°
(53) Cei, f.53 v°
(54) Camilla, B4 v°
(55) Petrarch, Oeuvres amoureuses, Paris, 1875, 8° p.172
(56) Already before 1535 it was common enough for Berni
subject of the hair (that by Saint-Gelais and that by Vauzelles) we find this image:

'Je vous supplye en voz tresses dorees
Par mille noudz hautement decorees
Tenir lye ce mien cuer desporeve
Avec les yeulx de ceulx qui vous ont veu' (57)

'Cheveux longs, beaux & deslies,
Qui mon coeur tant plus fort liez' (58)

Here the parallel between this image of Saint-Gelais and a similar one by Nocturno is very evident:

'O chiome relucente piu che lo avoro
di che mi fece amor al collo un laccio' (59)

Maurice Scève in his Sourcil describes the similarities between the arch of his lady's eyebrow and Cupid's bow:

'Sourcil sus qui amour print le portraict
Et le patron de son arc, qui attrait
Hommes & dieux a son obeissance' (60)

using an image which is reminiscent of a similar conceit in Francesco Cei's description of his lady's eyebrow:

'Sopra loro nasce dua affiliate ciglia
Dequale distantia, & e si curva ognuna
Che larcho di Cupido rassomiglia' (61)

The French blason is a longer poem than the Italian
to have produced a satirical version of the conceits of anatomical description, beginning:

'Chiome d'argento fine, irte, ed attorte
Senz'arte, intorno ad' un bel viso d'org'
(Poesie burlesche, Amsterdam, 1770, 8°, p.135)

(57) Vauzelles, Strasbourg HecatompHile, I2 v°
(58) Saint-Gelais, Oeuvres poétiques, 1574, p.27
(59) Nocturno, Mll r°
(60) Strasbourg HecatompHile, I3 v°
(61) Cei, f.53 v°
strambotto. The **blasonneur** consequently has more room to spread himself. This has the effect of lessening in the French poem the impact of a series of conceits which in the mere eight lines of the Italian poem are necessarily far more condensed. If, for example, we examine Héroet's *Oeil* (62), we find that in the course of the poem most of the Italian conceits do appear. The eye is brilliant as the sun; it is serene and azure blue as the sky; it is virtuous and honest, and beautiful above all things. It is an object of adoration for the poet, dictating his well-being or his suffering. All these conceits, Italian in origin, are to be found in one or other of the strambotti or sonnets devoted to the eye (63). The great difference between the effect produced by these conceits in the Italian and the French poems lies in the relative length of the poems; where the author of a strambotto must compress all his extravagant imagery into the space of eight lines, Héroet's *Oeil* contains fifty three lines in which this same imagery is considerably more spread out.

In the hands, then, of a Lyonnese or a court poet, the **blason** reflects considerable influence from the Italian anatomical conceits. If, however, we turn our attention to more obviously provincial poets — for

(62) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I4 r°

example Jacques le Lieur or François Sagon—we find no trace of such conceits. The description given by Sagon of the foot is a ponderous one, singularly lacking in any form of imagery. The poet concentrates on the severely utilitarian aspects of the foot rather than on its more decorative aspects:

'Pied necessaire avec loeil pour conduire,  
Pied convenable a chasser ou a fuire...  
...Pied pour asseoir le camp en toute place  
Pied pour casser, rompre ou fendre la glace...  
...Pied fondement soutenant tout le corps' (64)

There is even an element of doubt as to whether the foot in question is in fact that of a lady. At times, when Sagon describes such masculine pastimes as hunting or smashing ice, or when he refers to the:

'Pied qui nous sert pour la muraille abatre' (65) we wonder if this really is a love poem at all, addressed like the other blasons to the poet's lady. Certainly the habitual references to love are in this poem very rare, and certainly incidental to the main theme of the poem which is the utility of the foot. There can be little connection between a poem which never approaches sensuality and preciosity more nearly than in the following descriptive lines with their ponderous conclusion:

'Pied gentilet, pied voultre, sec & net,  
Pied soubstnent larche du cabinet,  
Pied delicat, pied sensitif, pied tendre,  
Pied qui nous fait lamour par signe entendre.  
Pied compasse de long & de traveres,  
Pied enrichy de cinq orteilz divers' (66)

and Sassoferrato's hyperbole filled love poem devoted

(64) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N6 r° - v°  
(65) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N6 r°  
(66) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N6 v°
to the foot:

'El pede qual damor dimonstra lorma
me carpe el miser.cor quando si move
El pede adorno de leggiadra forma
me fa che remirar no posso altrove
El pede dogni pede exemplio & norma
impressor de belitate excelse & nove
El pede bianco piu che neve o marmo
mirandol sol di doglia me disarmo'  (67)

Although Jacques le Lieur's Cuisse — unlike Sagon's Pied — is unambiguously a love poem, it is nevertheless as totally different from the work of the Italian strambottisti as Sagon's poem. For Le Lieur the thigh is simply one step towards a greater pleasure:

'Cuysse qui na ridde me fronce
Mais bien couvoyteuse semonce
Qui vient saisir le poursuyvant
De mettre la main plus avant...
...Cuysse qui garde & tient la porte
Au fort chasteau de jouyssance'  (68)

This military bluntness of Le Lieur has little in common with the equally amatory, but infinitely more subtle and allusive strambotto of Sassoferrato:

'Le belle gambe qual sol una volta
vidde passando un fium corrente & chiaro
Le gambe de colei, che mai si volta
in terra de belta, non trovan paro
Le gambe che mha el spirto & lalma tolta
& de morir per lor me dolce & caro
Le gambe al mio gran mal soave impiastro
simiglian doe colonne dalabastro'  (69)

Awareness and imitation of the new Italian style of writing varied considerably in France from poet to poet, and indeed from area to area. The Rouen poets, most of whom continued to be preoccupied with their Puy de l'Immaculée Conception, had little desire to

(67) Gloria d'amore, A8 v^o
(68) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L2 r^o & v^o
(69) Gloria d'amore, A8 v^o
introduce into their rather lumbering poetic style Italian conceits. On the other hand, many of the poets of Paris, and certainly those of Lyons (for both cities were constantly in contact with Italian culture) were familiar with, and eager to imitate in their own work the sophisticated style of the Italians.

In discussing the possible influence of Sassoferrato on Marot's Beau tetin, which was the first French anatomical blason, we have assumed that Marot could hardly have failed to encounter the works of this poet while in Ferrara. Yet chronological considerations make it seem highly unlikely that the subsequent blasons written by other French poets were modelled directly upon Sassoferrato. Guillaume de la Tayssonnière, in his Amoureuses occupations of 1555 (70), lists Sassoferrato's name together with those of other poets whose work had been translated into French by this date:

"Tu ne trouveras étrange (lecteur) si ayant imité une espece de rime Itallienne, je l'ay nommée de nom propre en notre langue, comme le même Italien. Ce que n'ont encor fait tous ceus qui en ont traduit de l'Arioste, Bembo, Petrarque, A.F.Rinieri, Olimpo da Sasso Ferràto & autres: ne les trouvant differer à nos huitains, ou épigrarmmes, que en la seule enlaceure de la rime."

Yet, although they were almost certainly known before 1555 (François ler's copy must have appeared in the royal library before 1547, the year of his death), it is unlikely that they were known in time for the anatomical blasonneurs to imitate them. As we have

(70) Lyons, Roville, 1555, 8°, BN Res Ye 1668, p.8 (Avertissement)
already pointed out, the François Ier copy dates from 1538-1539, and could not therefore have entered the library in 1536 when most of the **blasons anatomiques** were written. It would be quite possible to explain apparent echoes of Sassoferrato in the work of subsequent French **blasonneurs** by suggesting that, having read Marot's **Beau tetin** they assimilated from this poem certain basic notions derived originally by Marot from his contact with Sassoferrato's poetry in Ferrara. However, one must also stress the fact that many of the conceits used by Sassoferrato in his anatomical poetry are no different from those used incidentally by many other Italian poets more readily accessible in France from an earlier date. Thus those French poets who were already imbued with Italian preciosity were able to incorporate this into their **blasons** whereas poets such as Sagon or Le Lieur could not (71).

Thus it would seem that it is only the initial **Beau tetin** of Marot which really owes any debt at all to the poetry of Sassoferrato, and that the debt involved is a slight one. It is in fact merely the initial concept of a cycle of anatomical love poems in

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which each separate feature is alternately invoked and eulogised, together with the marked subjective preoccupation with the analysis of the effect of this beauty on the poet himself. However, although this may well have been, and probably was taken by Marot from Sassoferrato, the genre itself as practised by Marot remains purely French, and in content and treatment it owes little to Sassoferrato. Subsequently other blasonneurs composed their own variants on the same theme, basing these simply upon the model provided by Marot in his Beau tetin, and in these poems the degree of Italianism varies according to the interest of the individual poets in this particular mode of writing.

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It has been suggested by certain critics that an Italian source for the contreblasons can be found in the satirical capitoli of Berni and his imitators (72). Even Sassoferrato, specialising for the most part in anatomical love poetry, produced a collection of vituperative poems addressed to the evil tongue. The Linguaccio, for example, contains the following strambotto, in which the insistent apostrophe is used not for praise but for blame, in a manner not unlike that of the later French contreblason:

'Lingue piu false che la falsitade
Lingue piu triste assai che la tristezza
Lingue piu crude che la crudeltade
Lingue piu dure assai che la durezza

Lingue piu inique che la iniquitade
Lingue piu brutte assai che la bruttezza
Lingue il vostro dire acerbo & fello
Che' buon frutto racoglie un parlar bella' (73)

In considering the possible influence of such Italian poetry on the contreblasons we must distinguish between the contreblasons of Marot (and Peletier and Rus) and those of La Hueterie, since their motivation and preoccupations are so very different. As we shall see in our chapter on the contreblasons (74) Marot defines his reasons for writing the Laid tetin in the épître A celux qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'autres (75). It is plain from this épître that he considers versatility essential to the work of the poet, and he urges the composition of such contreblasons on his fellows as a means of displaying their own versatility by showing the other side of the picture. Having painted the beautiful aspect of the breast, Marot then turns his attention to the unpleasant aspects of this same feature. There seems to be little connection between this and the satirical capitoli of Berni which are not on the whole anatomical, and which do not set out to negate an earlier laudatory poem on the same subject. A few lines from the opening of Berni's poem on the gudgeon, Capitolo in lode de Ghiozzi, show the lack of connection between these poems and the contreblason of Marot:

(73) Linguaccio, A6 v
(74) Cf. below, chapter V
(75) Cf. below, chapter V, p.188 et seq.
'O sacri, ecclesi, e gloriosi Ghiozzi,
O sopra gli altri Pesci, egregi tanto,
Quanto degli altri più goffi e più rozzi,
Datemi grazia, ch'io vi lodi alquanto,
Alzando al ciel la vostra leggiadria,
Di cui per tutto il mondo havete il vanto.
Voi siete il mio piacer, la vita mia,
Per voi, quand'io vi veggo, ogni mia pena
Cessa, ed ogni fastidio passa via' (76)

Ludovico Dolce wrote a satirical capitolo on the subject of the nose (77), and a further anonymous
Capitolo del naso is to be found in the collection
Capitoli dei signori di Messer Pietro Aretino, di messer
Lodovico Dolce, di M. Francesco Sansovino et di altri
(78). There is, however, little connection between them and the blasons and contreblasons on the same subject.
The satire in both is built up of a series of anecdotes on the theme of noses - Ovid and Scipio were both called Naso, curious happenings in India concerning noses, animals with strange types of noses - all this reminding us not of the French anatomical blasons and contreblasons of the 1530s, but rather of the mid sixteenth century satirical poems dealing with this type of subject. In particular Bérenger de la Tour d'Albenas treated this subject in a manner very similar in his Naseide dediee au grand Roy Alcofribas Nazier (79)

It is highly unlikely that Marot should have drawn-

(76) Berni, Poesie burlesche, p.26
(77) Le terze rime del Molza, del Varchi, del Dolce et d'altri, np. 1542, 8°, BN Res Yd 1278, f.17 r°
(78) Np, 1540, 8°, BN Yd 7024, f.49 v°
(79) Included in Choretde, aultrement louenge du bal: aus dames, Lyons, Tournes, 1556, 8°, BN Res p Ye 232, f.65 r°
his inspiration from these poems. As we have seen, there existed already a medieval tradition for praising woman on the one hand and vilifying her on the other. We have already looked at fifteenth century French poetry describing the ugliness of woman in old age. Sassoferrato's Male lingue, Berni's collection of satirical capitoli and Dolce's Naso do not seem to have any great bearing on Marot's Laid tetin whose inspiration seems more medieval and gaulois than Italian. In fact when Marot says in his épître A ceulx qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'autres that he has composed his contreblason simply in order to contradict his blason, adding furthermore that no poet is worthy of the title if he is unable to paint both sides of the picture (80) there is no reason for us to doubt his word and seek for further possible Italian sources.

We have already noted the difference in motivation between Marot and La Hueterie (81). His aim in vilifying the flesh is a didactic one, and not merely a demonstration of poetic versatility. Wishing to vilify the flesh in order to glorify the spirit La Hueterie is inspired with righteous disgust at the series of blasons composed in honour of the female body and sets out systematically to negate all that has been said in the blasons. He refers back constantly to the blasons, calling into question the delights attributed to each

(80) Cf. above, chapter II, p.85
(81) Cf. above, chapter II, p.93
part of the anatomy. In the first Contreblason du Corps he expresses this intention:

'Or ca le corps nommez moy voz aucteurs
Qui chacun membre en triumphe & haulteurs
Exaulce ont, je desire scavoir,
Si vous devez telle louenge avoir' (82)

and in several of the individual contreblasons he refers back specifically to the original blason on the same subject, querying the praise accorded to each particular feature:

'La main qu'on dict estre si belle & gente
De tout le corps: car elle est la regente' (83)

'La cuisse blanche est elle tant heureuse
Comme l'on dict' (84)

With ponderous sarcasm he refers back to Marot's Beau tetin:

'Et le tetin demeurera il la
Ce fut Clement qui premier en parla.
J'ay veu cerise au soir & au matin,
Oncques n'en veiz croistre dessus tetin' (85)

Indeed La Hueterie states so repeatedly that his sole aim is to negate what the earlier blasonneurs had said in praise of the female body that we can surely dismiss any suggestion of a connection between his contre-
blasons and the Italian satirical capitoli. It is rather in the latter half of the sixteenth century that we find influence from Italian satirical poets on French poets (86).

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(82) Protologies, F5 r°
(83) Protologies, G r°
(84) Protologies, G4 v°
(85) Protologies, F7 v°
(86) Cf. below, chapter VIII, p.324 et seq.
Brief mention must be made of certain neo-Latin poets in whose work we find not dissimilar anatomical love poetry. Often cited as a parallel to the blasons is Nicolas Bourbon's series of couplets describing an ideal lady, *Ad Richerium amicum, qualem sibi amicam velit* (87). In these couplets however we do not find any great concentration on any single physical feature. Instead they deal rather with generalities:

'Et iuvenem, & facilem Venerem volo: delige tamen, 
Nec nimium pinguem, nec nimium gracilem; 
Aliud. 

Hanc volo, quae facileis nobis indulget ultrò 
Amplexus, & cui sit iuvenile femur'

Perhaps a rather better example than this, taken from the works of Nicolas Bourbon, is another poem on the same subject, but dealing with the actual physical appearance of the lady, *Idem ad D. Rubellam Nicolai Borbonii amicam* (88). In this poem we find once again many of the commonplaces of feminine beauty so beloved of the blasonneurs:

'Aurea caesaries, ô rosida labra, & ocelli 
Blandi, ô frons hilaris, purpureaeque genae, 
Ô niveum ut cygni collum, strictaeque, mamillae, 
À calce ad summum ô bella Rubella pilum'

Etienne Dolet also contributed to this fashion for describing in Latin verse an ideal mistress with his poem, *Ad Joannem Vulteium. Qualem velit amicam* (89).

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(87) *Nugarum libri octo*, Lyons, Gryphius, 1538, 8°, BN Res p Yc 1035, p.117
(88) *Nugarum libri octo*, p.13
(89) *Carminum libri quatuor*, Lyons, Dolet, 1538, 4°, BN Res m Yc 772, p.28
Again, much of the sensual description indulged in by the *blasonneurs* finds a parallel in the neo-Latin poets. Jean Second's *Basium VIII* (90) contains, after its well known beginning, a passage evoking his lady's lips, eyes and cheeks:

'Centum basia centies,
Centum basia millies,
Mille & basia centies,
Et tot millia millies,
Quot guttae Siculo mari,
Quot sunt sidera coelo,
Istis purpureis genis,
Istis turgidulis labris,
Ocellisque loquaculis,
Darem continuo impetu

O formosa Neaera,
Se dum totus inhaereo
Conchatim roseis genis,
Conchatim rutilis labris,
Ocellisque loquaculis,
Non datur tua cernere
Labra, non roseas genas,
Ocellosque loquaculos'

while in another epigram to Gellia Second once again describes the beauty of his lady (91):

'Olim cum roseas prima iuventula
Pinxissetque genas tibi,
Pinxissetque simul labra corollina,
Nata ad dulcia basia,
Atque instructa suis lumina spiculis
Ornasset ciliis nigris'

In addition to his sonnet in Italian in praise of his lady's eyes (92), Naugerius also composed a similar poem in Latin on the same subject, *In Hyellae ocellos* (93).

(90) Joannis Secundi Hagiensis Basia, Lyons, Gryphius, 1539, 4°, BN Res Y° 900, p.12 et seq.
(92) Naugerius, p.275
(93) Naugerius, p.211
Here we find once again the same hyperbolic praise which we saw in the Italian version:

'Fulgentes tamen illi, amabilesque
Illi, sideribus pares ocelli
Nostri maxima causa sunt furoris,
O cari nimis, o benigni ocelli,
O dulci mihi melle dulciorem,
Quando vos misero mihi licebit
Usque ad millia millies trecenta,
Aut ultra haec etiam, suaviari?'

Among the French neo-Latin poets, it is only Théodore de Bèze who comes really close to the anatomical blason in Latin, in certain of his earlier poems which were later condemned as youthful indiscretions. The undated 'death's head' edition of the Juvenilia (94) contains three poems which might be considered neo-Latin blasons, addressed to his lady, Candida: Ad pedem Candidae (95), Ad fibulam Candidae (96) and De coma Candidae, ad Zephyrum (97).

None of these neo-Latin poems can, however, be regarded as a possible source for the French anatomical blason. They are interesting simply in so far as they reflect a parallel interest in anatomical love poetry.

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At the end of this survey we are forced to conclude that the direct Italian influence on the French blason is slight. Marot himself may well have derived his

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(94) Theodori Bezae Vezelii poemata juvenilia, npnd, 16°, BN Res p Yc 1029
(95) Juvenilia, f.54 r°
(96) Juvenilia, f.52 r°
(97) Juvenilia, f.60 v°
initial idea from the work of Sassoferrato. Again it seems probable that from Sassoferrato came the idea of writing a poem which was to be at one and the same time objective in its description of feminine beauty and subjective in its analysis of the effect of this beauty on the poet's sensibilities. This, however, is the extent of the influence of Sassoferrato. In content and style of treatment Marot retains his own individuality, and subsequently French blasonneurs appear to derive their inspiration from Marot himself, rather than from Sassoferrato - a poet with whom they were unlikely to have been familiar until after 1537. Italian conceits in the work of the more sophisticated blasonneurs would thus come not specifically from any one Italian poet, but rather from a general Italian influence spreading through France about this period.

The contreblason seems to be a genre invented by Marot himself, inspired simply by the desire to paint the other side of the picture. There seems no case for suggesting any inspiration from the Italian satirical capitoli. The contreblasons of La Hueterie, although very different from that of Marot in their didactic intent, are equally independent of any Italian influence. Both in subject matter and treatment the contreblasons are thoroughly French.
CHAPTER IV  The anatomical blason

Studies of the blasons anatomiques have always been hindered by the inaccessibility of contemporary editions. Many of the early editions have now been lost, and even those which are still extant survive in one, or at most two copies only. The earliest editions of the blasons were printed from 1536 onwards as an appendix to Alberti's Hecatomphile (1), and not until 1543 was a separate edition of blasons alone produced (2), in which were also included the contreblasons.

Until recently the earliest available edition of the Hecatomphile containing this supplement was the 1539 edition, of which only one copy is known, in the Rothschild collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale (3), and the earliest version available of the Blasons was the second of the two editions produced by Charles Angelier, that of 1550 (4). Critics have therefore been obliged to work from later editions, and have been forced to resort to speculation on the possible contents of the earlier lost editions. Recently, however, copies of certain of these lost editions have reappeared, casting new light upon much that has been said about

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(1) For details of early editions of blasons anatomiques see Appendix III

(2) Paris, Angelier, 1543, 8°. Only two copies of this edition are extant - both in the hands of private collectors in Paris and in America.

(3) Paris, Sergent, 1539, 16°, BN Picot 803

(4) Paris, Angelier, 1550, 8°, BN Picot 810; Arsenal 8°B 8516 rés
the blasons, and in particular about the order of their composition. An incomplete fragment of the Hecatomphile was found in the Bodleian, dating from 1536 and containing eleven complete blasons and a part of a twelfth, two of which (a second Blason de la bouche and the incomplete poem beginning 'Ung Orateur blasonne le Tetin') were hitherto unknown, since they appear in none of the subsequent editions (5). Even more important, a complete edition of the Hecatomphile (1537) and blasons (1536) has been found in the Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg (6). The considerable interest of this edition lies in the fact that it contains a large number of blasons – many more than the later edition of 1539 (7).

Previous theorists about the order of composition of the blasons anatomiques and their popularity in France in the mid 1530s have been led astray by the lack of printed evidence. The traditional view, as set out by Saulnier (8) is based upon what Marot himself said (9), and upon the very small number of blasons

(5) Bodley Douce p 36 *. Although the title page is missing, this edition would seem to correspond to the Np, 1536 edition listed in the La Roche Lacarelle catalogue of 1888 (page 82, no.230). This particular copy contains only gatherings B-K, of which I and K contain the text of the blasons

(6) Np, 1537, 16°, Strasbourg R 102 895 (The separate title page to the blasons is dated 1536)

(7) This 1536 edition contains thirty-two blasons as opposed to a mere twenty one in the 1539 edition

(8) Saulnier, Scève, vol.I, pp.77-31

contained in the 1539 edition in contrast with the much larger number in Angelier's 1543 edition of the Blasons. The suggestion is that the blasons were slow to develop and that only gradually did the genre become a popular one. It is generally assumed that Marot's Beau tetin sent from Ferrara to France either at the end of 1535 or at the beginning of 1536 inspired other French poets to imitate this particular type of love poem (10). In the épître A ceulx qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'aультres Marot acknowledges these imitations and mentions ten of them specifically:

'En me suivant vous avez blasonné
Dont hautement je me sens guerdonné,
L'un de sa part, la Chevelure blonde,
L'autre le Cœur, l'autre la Cuisse ronde,
L'autre la Main descripte proprement,
L'autre ung bel Oeil deschiffre doctement;
L'autre ung Esprit, cherchant les Cieux ouvers;
L'autre la Bouche, où sont plusieurs beaux Vers;
L'autre une Larme, & l'autre a fait l'Oreille;
L'autre ung Sourcil, de baulté non pareille' (11)

concluding his list with the words:

'C'est tout cela qu'en ay peu recouvrer' (12)

These ten poems are seen by Saulnier as being the first anatomical blasons to be composed in 1536. He then sees a second wave of later blasons composed between 1536 and 1539 in answer to this épître from Marot. These are

(10) Marot suggests in this épître that these blasons were sent to him in Ferrara where they were judged as a concours by Renée, the prize being given to Scève for his Sourcil. Whether there was in fact such a concours or whether Marot is merely speaking figuratively we cannot tell. Certainly there is no other evidence or mention of such a concours.


the poems included in the 1539 *Hecatomphele* which are not mentioned in Marot's list (13). In this group he would also include Eustorg de Beaulieu's 'sept blasons lubricques' (14) which, although not included in the 1539 *Hecatomphele*, were printed in 1537 in Eustorg's own *Divers rapportz* (15). Finally Saulnier traces a third wave of *blasons* composed even later (between 1539 and 1543) - those which did not appear until the 1543 edition of *Blasons* produced by Angelier (16).

The whole point of this theory of Saulnier's is to demonstrate the slowness of the initial development of the *blason*. According to Saulnier French poets turned their hands only gradually to writing anatomical *blasons* in imitation of Marot's *Beau tetin*. Unfortunately for Saulnier's theory the newly discovered editions of the *Hecatomphele* in Strasbourg and in the Bodleian demonstrate conclusively that this cannot be the case. Far from being slow in gaining popularity as Saulnier would suggest, the anatomical *blason* became extremely popular very quickly. Whereas Saulnier concluded that Maurice Scève's *Front, Gorge* and *Souspir* were composed at a later date than his *Sourcil* and *Larme* (17), the

(13) Scève's *Front, Gorge* and *Souspir*, Carle's *Genou*, the *Pied, Honneur* and *Grace* (all attributed tentatively to Carle), Chappuys' (?) *Ventre* and *Con*, and Bouvret's (?) *Cul*

(14) *Joue, Langue, Nez, Dent, Cul, Pet* and *Voix*

(15) Lyons, *Sainte Lucie*, 1537, 8°, BM G 17886

(16) Michel d'Amboise's *Dent*, Bochetel's *Con*, Sagon's *Pied* and *Grace*, Vauzelles' *Mort*, Chappuys' (?) *Con de la pucelle*, the anonymous *Corps* and Jomet Garai d'Apt's *Bres*

(17) Only the *Sourcil* and *Larme* are mentioned in Marot's *épître*
collection of blasons in the Strasbourg Hecatomphile dating from 1536 already contains all five. Similarly all the other seven blasons which according to Saulnier were first published in 1539 (18) are also present in the Strasbourg Hecatomphile published three years earlier. In fact, in the 1539 Hecatomphile there are no new blasons at all, and indeed, far from being augmented, this edition represents a heavily tailored version of the 1536 edition. Even the edition of Blasons of 1543 contains only five new blasons (19). All the others listed by Saulnier as having been composed at a late date were in fact included in the earliest edition of 1536, only to be dropped subsequently in 1539.

It is clear from all this that the anatomical blasons were not in fact composed over a period of several years, during which the genre gradually became more and more popular. On the contrary, all but four of the poems printed in the 1543 Angelier edition (the model for most subsequent editions) were in fact written and printed within a year of Marot's Beau tetin (20).

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(18) Genou, Pied, Honneur, Grace, Ventre, Con, Cul
(19) Sagon's Grace, Bochetel's Con, Michel d'Amboise's Dent, Chappuy's (?) Con de la pucelle and Jomet Garai d'Apt's Bras
(20) Even among these four it is quite possible that some were written considerably earlier than 1543. Certainly Sagon's Grace, which for some unknown reason was not published until 1543, was composed by 1537. This is shown by one of the poems in the Disciples et amys de Marot contre Sagon, la Huet-erie & leurs adherents (Paris, no printer, nd (1537), 8°, Arsenal 8° B 8736 rés) which refers to this: Dizain sur la Grace de Sagon (E2 v')
Although the majority of *blasons anatomiques* find their way into one or other of the collected editions, there are one or two surprising exceptions. Saint Gelais, for example, was not one of the first poets to compose a *blason*. Indeed Marot singles him out for comment and reproach in the épître *A ceulx qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'aultres*:

'O sainct Gelais, creature gentile, 
Dont le scavoir, dont l'Esprit, dont le stile, 
Et dont le tout rend la France honorée, 
A quoy tient il, que ta plume dorée 
N'a fait le sien' *(21)*

Although Saint Gelais remedied this, composing two *blasons* (the *Cheveulx* and the *Oeil*) neither of these - surprisingly enough - appeared in any of the collections of *blasons anatomiques* *(22)*. Similarly Peletier du Mans composed both a *blason* and a *contreblason* on the heart in imitation of Marot's two models *(23)*, neither of which was printed in the collections of *blasons* *(24)*. Likewise Bonaventure des Periers composed a *Nombril*, and Gilles d'Aurigny an *Ongle*, neither of which was


*(22) Both are printed in the 1574 *Oeuvres poetiques* (p.27 and p.29). The *Cheveulx* (but not the *Oeil*) is printed considerably earlier in the 1544 *Janot Recueil de poesie francoyse* (Paris, Janot, 1544, 8°, Arsenal 8°B 9905 rés, B4 r*)

*(23) In the *contreblason* at least Peletier acknowledges Marot as his model: 'Te plaist il bien,Marot,en ceste forme? 
Pourrois tu bien faire un cueur plus enorme?' *(Oeuvres poetiques* Paris, Vascosan, 1547, 8°, BN Res Ye 1853, f.89 r°)*

*(24) Both are to be found in the 1547 *Oeuvres poetiques*, f.96 v° and f.88 v°*
included in the collections of **blasons** (25).

All in all, although the authorship of some **blasons anatomiques** remains unknown (26), a remarkably large number of known poets seem to have contributed to the **vogue** (27). Although all the editions of the **Hecatomphile** contain only the woodcuts followed by the poems, omitting the names of the individual poets, perhaps with a view to giving the collection a greater appearance of unity, in the later collections published by Angelier and his imitators most of the individual poets are named. In the 1543 edition only eight **blasons** are not attributed (28). With these poems, critics and bibliographers from Du Verdier onwards have followed the perhaps dubious policy of attributing these unsigned **blasons** to the last named author. Thus the unfortunate Claude Chappuys is invariably held responsible for the somewhat scurrilous unsigned **Con** and **Con de la pucelle** as well as for the

(25) Des Periers' **Nombril** does not seem to have been printed at all until the posthumous edition of his works produced by his friend Antoine du Moulin: *Recueil des oeuvres de feu Bonaventure des Periers* (Lyons, Tournes, 1544, 8°, BN Res Ye 1445, p.79)

(26) For example the **Corps** of the Strasbourg Hecatomphile or the **Cueur** (*'Cueur assiége d'infinite d'amys'* which seems never to have been printed, but which appears in an inserted vellum gathering (ff.30-35) containing also the **Oeil**, **Tetin** and **Esprit** in a manuscript of the **Hystoire de Anne Boullant Royne dangleterre** by Lancelot Carle (BN Ms.fr.2370)

(27) Sixteen poets are named in the 1543 edition

(28) **Ventre**, **Con**, **Con de la pucelle**, **Cul**, **Pied**, **Honneur**, **Grace** and **Corps**
Ventre, simply on the grounds that these three poems follow his signed and perfectly respectable Main in the 1543 edition (f.23 v° et seq.) (29). It still seems impossible to attribute these poems with any certainty, and we have, in fact, compromised by placing a question mark after the name of the author suggested by previous bibliographers.

In the first instance the French anatomical blasons were presented as a collection, and the reader would naturally expect to find a unity within such a collection. Marot urged his fellow poets to compose love poems devoted to the individual parts of the female anatomy, and the poets who followed his advice were aware of the efforts of their fellow blasonneurs (30), and conscious that their individual poems were to form part of a larger collection. Indeed, in several cases the blasons of the lesser poets (who never produced collected

(29) Du Verdier is delightfully delicate in his description of these four blasons in his bibliography (Les bibliothèques francaises de La Croix du Maine et de Du Verdier, Paris, 1772-1773, 4°, 6 vols, vol.III, p.327):

'Claude Chappuis...a écrit en rime Française, le Blason de la main, le Blason du ventre, le Blason de la partie secrette & honteuse de la femme, le Blason de celle de la pucelle, imprimé avec les Blasons Anatomiques'

(30) Not infrequently the blasonneurs refer briefly to other anatomical blasons at the beginning of their own poems. Cf. for example Carle's Pied:

'Ceuilx qui ont fait de Loeil,Bouche & Oreille, Du noble Cueur, du Tetin grant merveille'
(Strasbourg Hecatomphile,13 v°)

Cf. also Eustorg de Beaulieu's Cul (1543 Blasons, f.30 v°) and Gilles d'Augnigny's Ongle (Tuteur d'amour, Paris, Angelier, 1546, 8°, BN Res Ye 1615, f.67 v°)
editions of their works) were never published other than in these collections of *blasons anatomiques*. The *blasons* were, therefore, written with the conscious intention of forming a corpus of anatomical poetry (31). The collections are given further unity in that practically all the *blasons* in them are love poems basically, dealing specifically with the female anatomy (32). The title of the collections from the earliest Hecatophile onwards is *Blasons du corps femenin* or *Blasons anatomiques du corps femenin*. It is only in the later Veuve Bonfons edition that the title is - inexplicably - given as *Blasons anatomiques du corps masculin*, & femenin. Thus, as in the collections of *strambotti d'amore* written by Sassoferrato and company an overall unity of theme runs through these French collections of anatomical *blasons*. However we must not go too far in this direction and allow ourselves to be so convinced of the apparently essential unity of these French collections that we cease to consider the *blasons* in them as separate poems composed by a number of different writers. They do indeed follow roughly the same pattern - apostrophe of the selected part of the anatomy, repetitive praise of

(31) In the 1543 Blasons only five poems are not directly concerned with some aspect of the human anatomy. (Vauzelles' *Mort* (f.57 r°), Sagon's *Grace* (f.51 r°), Carle's *Esprit* (f.44 v), Carle's (?) *Honneur* (f.46 v) and *Grace* (f.48 v°))

(32) Only five poems are not basically love poems, dealing specifically with the female anatomy (Darles' *Nez* (f.10 r°), Eustorg's *Pet* (f.37 r°), the anonymous *Cul* (f.28 v°), and Sagon's *Pied* (f.40 v°))
its charms and virtues, and analysis of its effect upon
the poet's own sensibilities, but within the limits of
this pattern each poem reflects its own particular
preoccupations and characteristics. It seems, therefore,
worthwhile to analyse certain blasons in order to
establish and emphasise the variety of approach that can
be found within these apparently homogeneous collections.

The blasons were not all written by poets frequent­
ing the two main literary centres of France - the court
and Lyons. On the contrary, they were written by many
poets living in different parts of France, some of whom
were more aware than others of the new currents and
fashions in poetic style. Let us take the example of Le
Lieur and Sagon, two poets writing in Rouen, very much
outside the more central and more fashionable poetic
circles. These poets inevitably wrote mainly in the old
fashioned genres - the ballade, the rondeau, the chant
royal or the oraison, which were, and which continued to
be the forms considered suitable for presentation at
the Rouen Puy de l'Immaculée Conception. In their
anatomical blasons neither of these poets comes near
the lightness of touch practised by the Lyonnese and
court poets, and essential for success in such a genre
as the blason, for this is essentially a repetitive
genre, and one which falls easily into ponderousness
if the poet lacks the necessary sensitivity. Schmidt
describes the blason anatomique as 'un charme...une
litanie...une kyrielle...une incantation', defining it
as 'une suite d'apostrophes savamment variées et
volontairement monotones' (33). Certainly in the hands of a good poet the blason does indeed consist of 'une suite d'apostrophes savamment variées'. But in the hands of a less skilled poet this repetitive device becomes something of a blunt instrument, and the poem degenerates into a monotony which - despite the generosity of Schmidt - is almost certainly not 'volontaire'.

Neither Le Lieur nor Sagon possessed any grasp of the art of playing lightly with a given subject - a skill certainly possessed by Marot, and also (at least as far as his short poems are concerned) by Chappuys, likewise a resident poet at the court of François Ier. This difference in quality is easily demonstrated by a comparison of Chappuys' Main and Marot's Tetin with Sagon's Pied and Le Lieur's Cuysse (34). In his Blason de la main Chappuys uses the technique of repetitive invocation which is used likewise by Sagon and Le Lieur, but although line after line begins with the word main (twenty-three lines out of a total of forty-two), there is no sense of dullness as the poet flits from one aspect to another of the charms of the hand with a lightness of touch which obviates any possible danger of monotony. The purely sensual delights of the hand are followed and backed up with more literary or erudite references associated with the hand:

(33) Poètes du XVIe siècle, p.293
(34) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K7 r°, K4 r°, N6 r°, L v°
'Main qui peult seule & le soir & matin, 
Laisser la mienne approcher du Tetin. 
Main qui perment sil est besoing quon puisse 
En se jouant scavoir quelle est la Cuysse. 
Main qui souffre par foys outre passer, 
Mais ce seroit assez pour trespasser... 
...Main que Venus veult pour sienne advouer, 
Main qui du Luz doulcement scais jouer, 
Main quant Orpheus mesmes lesscouteroit, 
Comme vaincu sa harpe laisseroit, 
Main que Palas choysiroit pour escrire, 
Main qui autant que la bouche peulx dire' (35) 

Similarly Marot uses the word *tetin* repeatedly in his blason. Indeed within the space of the thirty-four lines of this short poem the word *tetin* appears nineteen times (and on fifteen of these occasions it appears at the head of a line). In this poem it is the repeated stress on the word which - far from leading to monotony - contributes considerably to the slightly syncopated rhythm which constitutes a major part of the attraction of the poem:

'Tetin donc au petit bout rouge, 
Tetin qui jamais ne se bouge 
Soit pour venir, soit pour aller, 
Soit pour courir, soit pour baller. 
Tetin gauche, Tetin mignon, 
Tetin loing de son compaignon, 
Tetin qui portes tesmoignage 
Du demeurant du personnage' (36) 

When Sagon describes and praises the foot, and Le Lieur the thigh, the effect is very different from that achieved by Chappuys or Marot. In Sagon's Blason du pied the repetitive aspect is heavily overstressed: every one of the forty-four lines of the poem begins

(35) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K7 r° - v°
(36) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K4 r° - v°
with an invocation to the pied without any particular gain to the poem. There seems to have been no attempt made at composition and arrangement of material. Instead the poem seems to consist simply of a jumble of attributes and descriptions of the foot put together apparently quite arbitrarily, with the only unifying feature being the word pied itself, appearing at the head of each line. No clear overall image of the foot emerges, despite - or even perhaps because of - this indigestible mass of description. Indeed at times the foot seems to change its character quite alarmingly. Sometimes it appears to be a vigorous masculine foot indulging in energetic pastimes:

'Pied qui nous sert pour la muraille abatre...
...Pied pour asseoir le camp en toute place
Pied pour casser, rompre ou fendre la glace' (37)

while at others it would seem rather a feminine foot:

'Pied qu'on regarde avant cuisse, & tetin
Pied faisant guet de soir & de matin' (38)

In contrast to the vivid images depicted by Marot:

'O tetin ne grant ne petit,
Tetin meur, tetin dappetit,
Tetin qui nuyct & jour criez
Mariez moy tost mariez.
Tetin qui tant tenfles, & repoulses
Ton gorgias de deux bons poulices,
A bon droict heureux on dira
Celluy qui de laict templira,
Faisant dung tetin de pucelle,
Tetin de femme entiere & belle' (39)

much of Sagon's description contributes little or nothing to the overall picture:

(37) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N° r°
(38) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N° r°
(39) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K4 v°
'Pied demonstrant quelque bon tour par signe,  
Pied ou le geste & maintien se consigne,  
Pied fondement soutenant tout le corps,  
Pied propre a ceulx qui ne sont les plus fortz'

and not infrequently the poet degenerates into platitude, stating the only too obvious:

'Pied compasse de long & de travers,  
Pied enrichy de cinq orteilz divers...  
...Pied mesure pied reigle en son pas,  
Pied qui suit laultre en ordre & par compas  
Pied sans lequel un corps captif demeure  
Pied dont le corps a besoing a toute heure'

Le Lieur also experiences some difficulty in finding effective praise for his chosen subject, the thigh. When he has exhausted the obvious possibilities of the sexual associations of the cuisse:

'Cuisse qui soustient la pelotte  
Je n'oseroy dire la motte  
Qui par nature est decorée  
Dautre toison que la doree,  
Ce nest or, velours ne satin,  
Mais dung petit Poil argentin  
Plus deslie que fine soye'

and described in conventional terms the smoothness and whiteness of the thigh:

'Cuisse parfaictement taillée  
Dung fin Esmail blanc esmaillee.  
Cuisse qui na ridde ne fronce,  
Mais bien couvoyteuse semonce  
Qui vient saisir le poursuyvant  
De mettre la main plus avant'

there remains little more to say, and a considerable proportion of the latter part of the poem is taken up

(40) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N6 v°  
(41) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N6 v° - N7 r°  
(42) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L v°  
(43) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L2 r°
with description of peripheral associations of the thigh which are only marginally relevant, and suggest clearly that the poet is running short of inspiration:

'\textit{Cuisse qui faitz Loeil esmouvoir,}
\textit{Cuisse qui faitz Tetin mouvoir,}
\textit{Cuisse qui faitz parler la Bouche,}
\textit{Ung temps avant que lon te touche.}
\textit{Cuisse qui faitz la main servir,}
\textit{Cuisse qui te fais poursuyvir}' \text{(44)}

and with rather unfruitful negative platitudes of the type:

'\textit{Cuisse refaicte & bien planiere,}
\textit{Cuisse qui nest point heronniere...}
\textit{Cuisse en beaulte la plus faconde,}
\textit{Cuisse qui nas point de seconde,}
\textit{Cuisse de belle creature,}
\textit{Cuisse chef doeuvre de nature}' \text{(45)}

It is very evident from the above that the \textit{blasons} of Le Lieur and Sagon are ponderous and clumsy, as we might expect from the work of two such provincial poets. Among their Lyonnese and court contemporaries we should expect to find a more fashionable note, and in the work of Maurice Scève we shall expect to discover reflections of the neo-platonic and neo-petrarchan influences which were beginning to become popular at this time. And indeed, although the five \textit{blasons} composed by Scève fit into the same framework of the corpus of anatomical \textit{blasons} \text{(46)}, they remain nevertheless unmistakably and characteristically the work of Scève and bear

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{(44)} Strasbourg \textit{Hecatomphile, L2 r°- v°}
\item \textit{(45)} Strasbourg \textit{Hecatomphile, L2 r°- v°}
\item \textit{(46)} The Bodley fragment contains only the \textit{Sourcil} and the \textit{Larme} (I3 r° and I5 r°), but subsequently in the Strasbourg \textit{Hecatomphile} and all other editions all five are included (\textit{Sourcil, Larme, Souspir Gorge and Front})
\end{itemize}
all the signs of his own particular form of neo-platonism. Where Le Lieur is crudely obvious in his allusions to the physical attractions of his lady, this type of sensuality is not present in the blasons of Scève. Here the lady is elevated and idealised to such an extent that physical presence is virtually sublimated. (This aspiration to an ideal unencumbered by physical presence Scève explains more fully in the Délie (47).) Unlike the other blasons anatomiques, the blasons of Scève do not confront the reader with a barrage of physical description. Instead the subject of these poems is elevated beyond the particular towards a more universal significance; worship of individual beauty is transcended in the manner advocated to Socrates by the wise woman Diotima (48) towards a religious adoration of an ideal


'Je m'en esloingne, & souvent m'en absente, Non que je soys en si sainct lieu suspect: Mais pour autant, que la raison presente S'esblouissant a son plaisant aspect Ne peut avoir tant soit peu, de respect A modestie, & moins d'elle jouir. Car mon parler, toucher, veoir, & ouir Sont imparfaictz, comme homme qui songe, Et pleure alors, qu'il se deust resjouir D'une si vaine, & plaisante mensonge Ainsi absent la memoire posée, Et plus tranquille, & apte a concevoir, Par la raison estant interposée, Comme clarté a l'object, qu'on veult veoir: Rumine en soy, & sans se decevoir Gouste trop mieulx sa vertu, & sa grace Que ne faisoient presentez a sa face Les sentementz de leur joye enyvrez, Qui maintenant par plus grand' efficace Sentent leur bien de leur mal delivrez'

of spiritual beauty, of which physical beauty is no more than a minor outward manifestation. In marked contrast to Marot's *Tetin* with its detailed description, Scève's *Blason de la gorge* describes only in the sketchiest of terms the physical appearance of the *gorge*:

'Continua la beaulte de la face
Par une gorge yvoirine & tresblanche
Ronde, & unie, en forme dune branche,
Ou dung pilier qui soustient ce spectacle
Qui est damour le tescertain oracle' (49)

before passing on to the aspect which interests him far more. After this cursory description of the appearance of the *gorge* - a description which is wholly conventional - Scève then turns his attention to a more interesting aspect, and here, immediately, his own particular pre-occupations emerge. The *gorge* is a mere starting point, a symbol of his own worship of the lady, who is herself also elevated into an idealised figure:

'La ou jay faict par grand devotion
Maint sacrifice, & maint oblation
De ce mien cuer, qui ard sus son autel
De feu qui est a jamais immortel
Lequel jarrouse, & asperge de pleurs
Je voys semant gemissementz & plaings
De chantz mortelz environnez & plains
En lieu dencens, de souspirs parfumez
Chaultz & ardentz pour en estre allumez' (50)

Certainly the imagery used by Scève in his *blasons* is that of the petrarchan poets, with all the characteristic inflated eulogy and metaphor. The passage quoted above from the *Gorge* shows this clearly, as do also the opening lines of the *Sourcil*:

(49) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K2 v°
(50) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K2 v°
Sourcil traictif en vouste flechissant  
Trop plus qu'hebene, ouJayet noircissant  
Hault forgette pour umbrager les yeulx  
Quant ilz font signe, ou de mort, ou de mieulx.  
Sourcil qui rend paoureux les plus hardis,  
Et courageux les plus accourdis, 
Sourcil qui fait lair clair, obscur soudain  
Quand il froncist par Ire, ou par desdain,  
Et puis le rend serain, clair, & joyeulx  
Quand il est doux, plaisant & gracieux.  
Sourcil qui chasse & provoque les nues  
Selon que sont ses archees tenues  

It is however used to a specific end. The imagery of  
Scève is not merely a basically empty collection of  
Italian conceits, but it rather represents, in a briefer  
form, the same aspirations to a purely spiritual neo-  
platonic relationship with his lady which are expounded  
at greater length in the Délie (52).  

Like those of Scève, the blason of Bonaventure des  
Periers is also heavily charged with neo-platonism -  
hardly surprising perhaps in a protégé of Marguerite  
de Navarre. Allusions to the better known commonplace  
of Plato recur throughout the Nombril. We find references  
to the Androgyne legend:  

(51) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I3 r°  
(52) An obvious parallel can be drawn, for example,  
between the opening lines of the Sourcil quoted  
above and a similar meteorological dizain from  
the Délie:  

'Quand l'oeil aux champs est d'esclairs esblouy,  
Luy semble nuict quelque part, qu'il regarde:  
Puis peu a peu de clarté resjouy,  
Des soudains feuz du Ciel se contregarde.  
Mais moy conduict dessoubz la sauvegarde  
De ceste tienne, & unique lumiere,  
Qui m'offusca ma lyesse premiere  
Par tes doux rayz aigement suyviz,  
Ne me pers plus en vie coustumiere.  
Car seulement pour t'adorer je vis'  
(Délie, p.132, dizain 24)  
The play on spiritual light/darkness and brightness/  
cloud in the mind of the poet, dictated by the eye  
of his lady (seen as the sun) is basic to both  
these passages.
'O l'ancienne Cicatrice
De la rongneure doloreuse,
Que Deité trop rigoreuse
Feit jadis au povre Homfenin,
Animal sans fiel, ne venin!
Lequel, contre toute pitié,
Fut divisé par la mytié,
Et faict d'un Entier tant heureux
Deux demys Corps trop langoreux,
Qui depuis sont tousjours errans,
Et l'un l'autre par tout querans' (53)

and to the Chain of Being linking the soul of fallen
man to his original spiritual home:

'Duquel tu es l'achevement,
Et le bout, auquel proprement
Celle grand'Chaine d'or des Dieux
Tenant au hault Nombril des Cieulx
Fut puis par iceulx attachee,
Et petit à petit laschée' (54)

The physical union with his lady desired by the poet is
expressed in neo-platonic terms of the union of the two
halves of the Androgyne:

'O Nombril ! dont l'aise parfaicte
Gist au Demy qui te souhaite,
Lequel jamais ne sera aise
Que franchement il ne te baise,
En remembrance singulicre
De l'union, jadis Entiere
Ou se peut trouver justement
L'heureux poinct de Contentement' (55)

Yet at the same time this spiritual guise is off-set by
a more straightforward sensuality. Unlike Scève, we
feel that Des Periers is merely using the theories of
neo-platonism to give poetic colour to his blason, since
these happen to fit in neatly with his chosen theme.
Thus we find in such lines as:

(53) Des Periers, Recueil des oeuvres, p.81
(54) Des Periers, pp.79-80
(55) Des Periers, p.83
'O Nombril! dont l'aise parfaicte  
Gist au Demy qui te souhaite' (56)

and:

'Petit Quignet, retrait, & place  
De souveraine Volupté,  
Ou se musse la voulenté  
De chatouilleuse jouyssance' (57)

a juxtaposition of neo-platonic idealism with a more
obviously sensual approach which clearly shows the
difference in approach between these two poets.

*  *  *

The blasonneurs quickly realised that the female
anatomy is made up of a relatively limited number of
component parts, and experienced considerable difficulty
in finding suitable subjects which had not already been
treated. Gilles d'Aurigny resumes this difficulty at the
beginning of his Ongle (possibly one of the later blasons
since we do not find it in any of the collections, and
the earliest date at which we find it printed is 1546,
in his own Tuteur d'amour (58)):

'Il n'y a si gentil esprit  
Qui n'aient inventé ou escript  
Quelque chose a l'honneur du corps:  
J'entends des membres de dehors,  
Tant que plusieurs qui s'y sont mis,  
Pensent que rien n'y soit omis.  
Chascun a fait blason honnest,  
Depuis le pied jusqu'à la teste:  
L'un la gorge, la main, la bouche,  
L'autre, le lieu ou nul ne touche,  
L'oreille, le front, les cheveulx.  
Il n'est pas le poil des deux yeulx,

(56) Des Periers, p.83
(57) Des Periers, p.81
(58) Tuteur d'amour, f.67 v°
Some poets - like d'Aurigny - devote considerable ingenuity to finding unlikely parts of the female anatomy which have not already been treated by an earlier poet. Others, less concerned with the originality of their subject, are content to treat again a part of the anatomy already dealt with. Thus we find a series of pairs of blasons dealing with the same subject. Vauzelles and Saint Gelais both treat the cheveulx, Héroet and Saint Gelais the œil, Darles and Eustorg de Beaulieu the dent, Albert le Grand and Peletier the cœur, Bochetel and Chappuys (?) the con (together with Chappuys' (?) Con de la pucelle), Eustorg de Beaulieu and an anonymous poet the cul, and finally Sagon and Carle the pied.

For the most part it is not possible to deduce which in these pairs of blasons was the first to be composed, although in certain cases internal evidence does suggest that one blason is earlier than the other. At the beginning of his Dens, for example, Eustorg de Beaulieu suggests that this is a subject which has hitherto been neglected by blasonneurs:

'Point ne me semble estre chose congrue
Que ce qui pile, & met en forme deue
La droguerie, en quoy vit tout le corps
Doibve passer sans en faire recordz' (60)

This would seem to indicate that Michel d'Amboise's blason on the same subject had not yet been composed (61).

(59) Tuteur d'amour, f.67 v°
(60) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N5 r°
(61) It is in fact one of the few blasons which were not (as far as we know) printed until 1543
On the other hand, in his Cul, Eustorg would seem to suggest the reverse - that his poem is not the first blason to be composed on this subject, since he alludes to earlier poets treating the same subject whose work he does not wish to disparage:

'Sans desroger aux premiers blasonneurs
Du trou du cul, & sauve leurs honneurs,
Et de tous ceulx qui ont sçavoir condigne,
Pour blasonner une chose tant digne' (62)

Supporting this, the anonymous author of the other Cul would seem to suggest that it is he who is the first to treat the subject. He lists at length the blasons already written, even making a synopsis of their contents, before describing how the particular part of the anatomy he has himself chosen is also worthy of praise:

'Vous meritez que de vous lon escrive' (63)

Similarly Carle's Pied might be considered slightly earlier than Sagon's although both appear for the first time in the Strasbourg Hecatomphile, since in his introduction Carle also lists the parts of the anatomy already treated by other authors, concluding with the lines:

'Mais toutesfoys ilz en ont laisse ung
Qui est parfaict & digne destre mis
Au ranc ou sont les principaulx amys...
...Cest le gent Pied' (64)

These, however, are the only pairs of blasons in which it is possible to suggest which of the two came first. In the remaining pairs this cannot be done.

(62) 1543 Blasons, ff.30 v°- 31 r°
(63) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, M7 v°
(64) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L4 r°
It is interesting to take a number of these pairs of *blasons* and compare the treatment of the same subject by two *blasonneurs*. Of the two poems on the cheveulx that of Vauzelles appeared consistently from the very earliest editions of the *Hecatomphile* (65), whereas that of Saint Gelais was never printed in any of the collections. Both poems are written by poets well schooled in the niceties of Italian preciosity. Vauzelles, writing in Lyons, was versed in Italian literature (66), while Saint Gelais was equally well acquainted with Italian styles of composition, having spent his university years in Italy deliberately saturating himself with Italianism.

The two poets take slightly different aspects of the hair as their subject. Vauzelles deals with the conventional subject of his mistress's hair in general, whereas Saint Gelais shows a certain original note in his choice of theme. Instead of merely describing his lady's hair in general, he prefers to take a less commonplace theme, and considers a single lock of her hair which he has in his possession. Such a choice of subject gives him a slightly different field to explore, and one which he exploits to full advantage.

Despite the slightly different emphasis of the two *blasons*, much of the technique and much of the actual

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(65) Bodley *Hecatomphile*, I r°; Strasbourg *Hecat-*

(66) In addition to his own poetry, he was also responsible for translating some of the work of Aretino (Cf. Appendix I)
imagery used by Vauzelles and Saint Gelais is very similar. In neither case does the poet permit too frequent repetition of the key word cheveulx to lead to monotony. (In Vauzelles' poem the word appears at the head of only twelve out of ninety lines, and in Saint Gelais' at the head of even fewer – six lines out of a total of sixty-eight.) Neither poem, therefore, belongs to the heavily repetitive type of blason of which the best example is Sagon's Pied, in which virtually every line begins with an invocation to the foot.

Far from opening his poem with an invocation to the hair, Vauzelles begins with an anecdote involving the god Apollo, in a manner reminiscent of the Italian style. Only after some twelve lines of introductory anecdote do we come to the first passage of invocation to the hair:

'Cheveulx dorez rayans sur le soleil' (67)

In the space of ninety lines, Vauzelles covers an impressive range of aspects of the hair, in which all the conventional description and imagery associated with the hair is present. It is golden in colour, rivalling even the sun in brilliance, and dazzling to the eye of the beholder:

'Cheveulx dorez rayans sur le soleil,
Si tresluysantz quilz font esblouir loeil' (68)

It is long and curly (curling naturally, without need of artificial aid):

(67) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I rº
(68) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I rº
"Car ce sont crins non point escharpillez,
Mais jolyment sans art entortillez:
Lesquelz separe une voye lactee
Parmy le chef droictement dilatee...
...Cheveulx folletz undcyantz sur la joue
Ou mainte grace, & maint amour se joue...
...Cheveulx espars sur le col volletantz,
Et par nature en contour floquetantz' (69)

It holds the lover's heart ensnared in the best petrar-chan tradition:

"Dont beaulx cheveulx plus reluisantz qu'or fin,
Desquelz ne puis ne pourrois faire fin,
Je vous supplye en voz tresses dorees
Par mille noudz haultement decoores
Tenir lye ce mien cieur desporveu
Avec les yeulx de cefulx qui vous ont veu' (70)

But Vauzelles does not dwell only on the precious commonplace. Erudite references also are frequent, both biblical and classical. A parallel is drawn with the hair of Absalom, and with that of Mary Magdalene; allusions are made to Dido, to Nero, to the Columns of Mercury and to Medusa:

"Cheveulx qui font tout ainsi que Meduse
Transformer cil qua les veoir trop samuse' (71)

Imagery leaps from the openly extravagant:

"Cheveulx sacrez si quelcun de vous tombe
En vous peignant, deu vous est une tombe
Tresmagnifique, & plus quung mauseole' (72)

to the deliberately bizarre in, for example, the image of the upside down tree:

"Cheveulx frangez par gent chevellure
Racine, & chief de belle creature,
Sussantz du ciel par tuyaulx delyes,
Nourrissement dont sont multiplies

(69) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I v°
(70) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I2 v°
(71) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I v°
(72) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I2 r°
Corps, & espritz respirantz par sante,
Arbre pour vray tout a rebours plante' (73)

Many of these same characteristics emerge again in Saint Gelais' blason, equally influenced by Italian conceits. The commonplace imagery of the hair used by Vauzelles is used again by Saint Gelais in his introductory invocation. Once again the hair is long, golden and captivating, in the Italian manner:

'Cheveulx seul remede & confort
De mon mal violent & fort,
Cheveulx longs, beaux, & desliés,
Qui mon coeur tant plus fort liez,
Que plus il veut tendre & tacher
A se distraire & destacher,
Plus il est pris et mieulx estrainct,
Plus est de demourer contrainct' (74)

The image of Medusa seen in Vauzelles' poem, reappears in that of Saint Gelais:

'Cheveulx qui sceustes estranger
Moy de moy mesme, & me changer
Tellement que je vous accuse
De l'effect de ceux de Meduse,
M'ayant rendu un corps sans ame,
Ou plustost une vive flamme' (75)

Saint Gelais' use of exaggerated emphasis and paradox in the Italian manner puts his blason - like that of Vauzelles - into a very different class from the much more pedestrian work of many of the provincial poets:

'Celle qui en peut ordonner
A moy vous a voulu donner
Pour appuy de ma foible vie,
Dont vous n'auriez deuil ny envie,

(73) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I2 r°
(74) Oeuvres poétiques, 1574, p.27
(75) Oeuvres poétiques, 1574, p.27
Si vous saviez, ô blondz cheveux,
Quel est le bien que je vous veux.
Le moindre de vous m'est plus cher
Qu'autre amie entiere toucher,
Ne que les thresors assemblés
Du fin or que vous ressemblez.
Et toutesfois pour estre miens,
N'ayez peur de n'estre plus siens:
Elle ne congoist rien à soy
Plus sien, que ce qui est à moy' (76)

His particular choice of subject - a lock of hair cut
from his lady's head - allows him to draw from a wider
range of allusion than Vauzelles. He can, for example,
draw a parallel between the pain inflicted by the scis-
sors cutting the hair and that inflicted upon himself
by the arrow with which he, the lover-poet has been
smitten:

'Si un ciseau vous fait outrage,
Un dard m'en fait bien d'avantage.
Il y perd à mon oeil estaint,
Et vous n'en changez point de teint' (77)

Again another parallel can be drawn between the transitory
life of the hair still growing on the lady's head,
compared with the severed lock which will remain forever
golden. The one remains eternal while the other will be
subject to the ravages of old age:

'Ceux dont vous estes separes
Sont peut estre ores mieux parés,
Mais si sont ils en ce danger
De se voir par le temps changer.
Et d'or en argent convertis,
De quoy vous estes garentis,
Car temps ne vous y peut contraindre' (78)

Both these poems are representative of the French

(76) Oeuvres poétiques, 1574, p.28
(77) Oeuvres poétiques, 1574, p.28
(78) Oeuvres poétiques, 1574, p.28
anatomical blason as written by poets influenced by Italian style, and these analyses which we have just made testify further to the variety of approach employed by the different blasonneurs. It is this type of imagery, ingenious, artificial and contrived, which marks so vividly the contrast between the Italianate blasons such as these we have just analysed and the far more pedestrian efforts of the provincial poets, untouched by the conceits of neo-petrarchism. Where the blasons of a Sagon or a Le Lieur, for example, rarely progress beyond the banal commonplace description, the ingenuity of a Vauzelles or a Saint Gelais (no less ingenious for being modelled upon Italian sources) in creating an additional gamut of associated images, gives variety and colour to their work, raising their blasons to a far higher plane.

François Sagon and Lancelot Carle also composed blasons on the same subject — in this case the foot. Both these poems were included in the Strasbourg Hecat—omphile, although Sagon's was subsequently omitted from the 1539 edition (for no apparent reason). Sagon's poem is quite straightforwardly bad; from the point of view of its subject matter that of Carle is rather better, showing more breadth and originality than that of Sagon, but from the point of view of its literary merit it is hardly better. Sagon's blason consists simply of a series of invocations to the foot, all unconnected, and all apparently quite arbitrarily strung together to form a haphazard jumble. One short passage
towards the end of the poem contains a detailed examination of the foot, conveying, however, little impression other than that of a singularly undistinguished part of the anatomy:

'Pied dune grefve assez longue honnore,
Pied de longueur moyenne decore,
Pied par ses nerfz rendu dessus agile,
Pied par dessoubz garde destre fragile,
Pied gentilet, pied voulte, sec & net,
Pied soubstenant larche du cabinet' (79)

The bulk of the poem, however, deals with the virtues and uses of the foot, rather than with its actual physical appearance. Certain of these virtues are so self evident as to seem scarcely worthy of mention by the poet:

'Pied qui sarreste au besoing, ou qui court...
...Pied fondement soustenant tout le corps...
:::Pied mesure pied reigle en son pas,
  Pied qui suit lautre en ordre & par compas' (80)

Carle's blason (81) is very different from that of Sagon. It is one of the few poems to be written practically throughout in the third person. Only in one passage towards the end of the poem does Carle revert to the more characteristic technique of direct invocation, addressing the foot in the second person. Yet even here the word pied does not appear regularly at the head of each line as it does in Sagon's blason.

In content also, Carle's blason is different from that of Sagon. Where Sagon describes the physical

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(79) Strasbourg Hécatomphile, N6 v°
(80) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, N6 v°
(81) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L3 v°
appearance of the foot in some detail, Carle is not interested in this aspect, and instead he concentrates on the usefulness of the foot and its various functions and activities. According to Carle it is the foot which governs all human activity:

"Que des cinq sens chacun luy doit hommage,
Et sans mentir, aussi vray comme ung Dieu
Sans luy euxx tous ne partiront dung lieu.
Cest le gent pied messagier de lesprit,
Cest luy par qui est porte tout escript" (82)

He proceeds to list its various functions, dealing principally - as is to be expected in an anatomical blason - with its amatory aspects:

"O digne Pied qui tous autres sens passe,
Sens que sans toy le pouvre amant trespasse
Si tu ne viens luy apporter lassurance
De lamytie, ceste perseverance,
Et quant il te oyt marcher dedans sa chambre
Il na sur luy nerf ne veyne ne membre
Qui ne se dresse affin de recepvoir
La joye au cure que tu luy fais scavoir.
Nest ce pas toy qui porte tout le corps
Et de Venus les amoureux recors" (83)

and with the scatological:

"Car si le Cul, ou le Con, veuulent faire
En quelque lieu en secret leur affaire
De sencyner le Genoil est tenu
Tantost couvert, aucunesfois tout nud.
Et puis le Cuer qui est ncble de soy
Qui de tous tient enserree la foy.
Et tous ceux cy le Pied par tout les porte,
Quil soit ainsi au Cul je men rapporte.
Demandez luy qui le porte au retrait.
Sil veult pisser ou faire autre mystere
Nest ce le Pied qui porte tout laffaire?" (84)

The differences between these two Blasons du pied are clear - Sagon's is repetitive in its invocation,

(82) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L4 r°
(83) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L4 v°
(84) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L5 r°
whereas Carle's for the most part is not. Sagon's is muddled in the picture it presents of the foot, but on the whole the tone is vaguely moralistic, whereas that of Carle's is openly scatological. (It was not until 1550, according to Colletet (85), that Carle became Bishop of Riez.) What they do both have in common is a ponderousness and pedantry of expression which contrasts markedly with the far lighter blasons of the Italian influenced poets. Indeed one might be tempted, following these examples, to see the blasons in these French collections as being divided into italianate and non-italianate. Yet within the italianate there are the widely different approaches of Saint Gelais and Vauzelles, and within the non-italianate there are the differences we have noted between the poems of Sagon and Carle. There is further variety to be found when we approach the works of other blasonneurs.

* * *

On the whole the blasonneurs limited themselves to one blason only. Scève is exceptional in that he composed five anatomical blasons (Front, Gorge, Larme, Sourcil, Souspir). Even more remarkable is Eustorg de Beaulieu who produced seven. All these were first published in his own collection of poetry, the Divers rapportz of 1537, but only the five 'decent' ones, the Nez, Joue, Langue, Voix and Dent, were included in the Strasbourg Hecatomphile (86). The remaining pair, the Cul and the

(85) *Vies des poètes bordelais et périgourdins*, ed. Tamizey de Barroque, Paris, 1873, 8°, p.6
(86) All five were omitted from the next edition of the *Hecatomphile* in 1539
Pet, were not published in a collection of blasons until the 1543 edition. It is only in this 1543 edition that all seven appear together in a collection of blasons.

These latter two poems, the Cul and the Pet, are less interesting than the first five. Satirical in tone, unlike the others, they are rather less successful. There is perhaps a certain piquant charm when the poet so obviously tries deliberately to revolt his reader in a manner which is nevertheless amusing. The mock heroic introduction to the Pet is reminiscent of the Italian satirical capitolo:

"Pet furieux, & vous la vesse antique, Qui bataillez pour la chose publique Du trou du cul alencontre du nez Je sens mes doigts tremblans & estonez En commençant d'escrire voz louenges" (87)

But on the whole it is the five non-satirical blasons which are the most successful. In none of these does the poet fall into the danger ever present for the blasonneur of excessive emphasis of his subject, leading to dullness through the over-repetition of the particular feature described and praised. In the Blason de la voix, for example, the shortest of all these (containing only thirty-two lines), Eustorg begins with a brief invocation to the voice, in which the first four lines all begin with the word voix:

"Voix doulce & tresamoureuse, Voix monstrant mamye joyeuse Voix tu merites le vanter. Voix de laquelle le chanter A la vertu quand elle chante Que tous les escoutans enchante" (88)

(87) 1543 Blasons, f.37 r°
(88) 1543 Blasons, f.52 r°
After this the word appears less frequently, although in one particular passage in the middle of the poem Eustorg varies the rhythm by beginning a series of couplets with the word:

'Voix de femme gresle, & delivre,
Chantant, son party sur le livre,
Voix dont on dit, sans flater rien,
C'est elle, O qu'elle chante bien.
Voix bien remettant les parties
Qu'aux assistant sont departies,
Voix ravissant le cueur au corps
De ceulx qui oyent les doux accords' (89)

As is clear from this fragment, it is above all the musical qualities of the voice which charm Eustorg—perhaps not surprisingly in a poet who was, in the course of his highly chequered career both church organist and teacher of music.

If we except the two satirical blasons, there is little in these seven poems to offend. Yet perhaps curiously, Eustorg himself in later years regarded these poems as sinful manifestations of a sensuality for which he felt compelled to atone (90). This he explains in the later long poem which he composed, also under the title blason, describing and praising the body of Christ. In the introduction to this poem he explains how he

(89) 1543 Blasons, f.52 v°

(90) It has been suggested by Saulnier (Scève, vol.1, p.81) that Vauzelles also did the same thing, atoning for his too worldly Chevoulx by the more elevated subject of the Blason de la mort. This argument is based on the fact that only the Chevoulx was included in the 1539 Hecatomphile, whereas both blasons appear in the 1543 Blasons. The argument, tempting though it may be, is however disproved by the earlier Strasbourg Hecatomphile of 1536/1537, in which both poems already appear.
deliberately undertook this latter poem in order to atone for his youthful follies, and in particular for these 'sept blasons lubriques':

'Quand me souvient de sept blasons lubriques
Qu'au livre dict: Blasons anathomiques
Je mis jadis, en louant grandement
Les feminins membres imprudemment,
J'ay advisé & pensé en moy mesme
Qu'il seroit bon faire un blason huictiesme
Pour honnorer un homme que je scay
Qui m'ayme bien, car j'en ay fait l'essay' (91)

* * *

We have tried to demonstrate that although the blasons anatomiques were from the very beginning regarded as a corpus of poetry rather than as individual poems (In all the editions of the Hecatomphile, for example, the names of the individual authors of the blasons are not deemed worthy of mention) they are nevertheless all very different from each other, reflecting as they do the particular interests and preoccupations of a considerable number of poets. In style and quality they vary enormously, and even in length there is a considerable range. Sebillet suggests that 'le plus bref est le meilleur' (92), and indeed the supposedly prize winning Sourcil of Maurice Scève is one of the shortest (thirty-two lines). Even Scève's longest blasons, the Souspir and Gorge (93) are little more than half the length of such poems as Albert

(91) Introduction to the Souverain blason d'honneur (Text supplied by Dr. Michael Pegg. Cf. above, chapter I, footnote 35)
(92) Sebillet, Art poetique francçois, f.65 v°
(93) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, M5 v° and K2 v°; Souspir: fifty-two lines Gorge: fifty-eight lines
le Grand's Oreille and Cœur (94) - notable examples, both, of how in the hands of a mediocre poet the blason can easily degenerate into dullness and monotony.

What all these anatomical blasons do have in common, however, is their basic attitude to their material. As one might expect, the blasons anatomiques set out in the first place to be objective poems. The blasonneur describes and analyses - as his medieval predecessor had done - the various parts of the female anatomy. However, the great difference between the sixteenth century anatomical blason and its medieval predecessors lies in the way in which the blasonneur analyses his material. Here he is tightly involved in his subject, whether at a purely physical level, as is the case in the majority of these poems, or whether the subject be sublimated, and the poet involved in a more idealised neo-platonic attitude as is the case of Maurice Scève. The individual feature is examined and described minutely, but the interest lies not in the details of the feature itself, but rather in the effect which this feature exercises upon the poet. Scève's blasons, and in particular his Sourcil, provide the most obvious examples of this, and here straightforward physical description is largely eclipsed by subjective analysis of its effect upon the poet. It is, however, also very apparent in other blasons. Héroet for example

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(94): Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I6 v° and K5 r°; Oreille: eighty-two lines Cœur: ninety-two lines
describes the eye, but immediately relates it to himself:

'Oeil bel & nect comme ciel azure
Oeil repose constant & asseure.
Oeil qui ryoit en me faisant mourir
Qui pleureroit ne me osant secourir...
'Oeil saccordant au ris de la fossette
Qui fait Amour en joye vermellette,
Oeil ou mon cueur sestoit devant rendu
Que luy eussiez le logis deffendu' (95)

Similarly Michel d'Amboise describes the tooth:

'Dent qui te monstre en riant
Comme un dyamant d'orient...
'Dent blanche comme cristal, voire
Ainsi que neige, ou blanc yvoire' (96)

only to follow this with an explanation of how he himself is affected by it:

'Je te prometz quand je te voy
Comme au premier que je te vey
Je suis tout transy & ravy.
Et cuide au vray te regardant
Que ce soit un Soleil ardant
Qui se descouvre des nuée' (97)

Chappuy does the same with his Main:

'O doulce main, main belle main pollye
Main qui les cueurs faict lier & deslie
Main qui le mien a pris sans y toucher
Main qui embrasse & semond dapprocher
Main qui a moy doibs ouvrir (o main forte)
Qui fors a moy, a tous ferme la porte' (98)

How then, we must ask, do these essentially subjective love poems come to be given the title blason? What possible connection can they have with the more conventional sense of the word? This is a question which critics have, on the whole, tended to avoid asking,

(95) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I4 r°- v°
(96) 1543 Blasons, f.15 r°
(97) 1543 Blasons, f.15 v°
(98) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K6 v°
preferring to regard the corpus of blasons anatomiques as a slightly eccentric form of mid sixteenth century love poem, interesting in itself, but essentially isolated. In their concentration upon the poem itself and its text, recent critics of the blason have tended to forget one of its essential aspects. Indeed, often enough it does not seem even to be realised by critics that every edition of the blasons was in fact a decorative book. In both the Hecatomphile and editions of Blasons from that of Angelier onwards nearly every poem was accompanied by a woodcut depicting the part of the anatomy in question. In the editions of the Hecatomphile this was a fairly straightforward woodcut encased in a simple rectangular frame. In the Angelier editions, however, these woodcuts became considerably more decorative, each being encased in a different ornate framework.

We would suggest that these woodcut illustrations which accompany each individual poem might well provide the link with the earlier blasons which we have discussed. The earliest blasons poétiques were, we found, heraldic, describing and explaining the significance of the various features depicted on a painted shield. In the treatises on heraldry, first the shield was depicted, followed by its description and interpretation in the form of a poem. Moving from the purely heraldic, we saw poets such as Gringore using this same term blason to denote a poem describing and explaining the meaning of a given object previously illustrated in the form of a
woodcut. In form at least this is precisely what we find in the sixteenth century anatomical blason. As with the purely heraldic blason and with the blasons of Gringore the pattern in the anatomical blason is just the same - illustrative woodcut followed by descriptive and analytical poem.

In content, certainly, the blasons anatomiques must at first sight seem very different from any earlier form of blason. They are without question love poems, whereas the earlier blasons were interpretative, explanatory poems. Yet if we consider the question more closely we see that this difference is less fundamental than it seems at first sight. Despite its amatory character, it is not impossible to see the blason anatomique as an interpretative poem also, a variant of the earlier blason. In the early blasons the object depicted was first described and then analysed, the significance of each feature being explained. Despite the different slant which he gives his poem, the anatomical blasonneur is in fact doing much the same thing. He describes the particular feature which he has selected, and then explains its significance in terms of the effect which it exercises upon himself. Certainly the significance which the anatomical blasonneur draws from his poem is considerably narrower than that drawn by his predecessors. Where the earlier blason explained a message of universal significance which might be derived from the chosen object, the anatomical blason deals only with the significance of this object to the poet-lover.
himself. Yet essentially the blason anatomique is just as much an interpretative poem as its predecessors, describing and explaining in the form of a poem the significance of a particular object which is also depicted visually in the form of an accompanying woodcut. We would therefore suggest that the blason anatomique, far from being an isolated phenomenon with an inexplicable title, does in fact form part of a continuous tradition stretching back to the earliest heraldic blason. This is an element which we shall consider in more detail in our sixth chapter on the illustrated book in the mid sixteenth century in France.
CHAPTER V  The anatomical contreblason

Considering the undoubted popularity of the anatomical blason in the 1530s, the lack of interest shown in the contreblason seems curious. Marot composed his Blason du beau tetin in 1535/1536 while in Ferrara. It was printed in 1536 in the Hecatomphile together with a cluster of blasons composed by other poets, and in the following few years a succession of volumes appeared containing anatomical blasons (1). Few are the poets active in the 1530s who did not try their hand at composing at least one blason. Following hard upon the Blason du beau tetin, as far as we can ascertain, Marot also composed a second poem on the same subject, simply reversing all that he had said in the blason (2). This satirical Contreblason du tetin (which was not published until 1538 in Marot's collected Oeuvres (3)) was written, as Marot explains in the épître A ceulx qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'aultres, simply to demonstrate the versatility which the poet should possess:

'Mais voulentiers, qui l'Esprit exercite,
Ores le Blanc, ores le Noir recite,
Et est le Painctre indigne de louange,
Qui ne scait paindre aussi bien Diable qu'Ange

(1) Cf. Appendix III

'Or chers Amys, par maniere de rire
Il m'est venu voulenté de descrire
A contre poil ung Tetin'

(3) Lyons, Dolet, 1538, 8°, BN Res Ye 1457-1460, Epigrammes, f.17 r
Apres la course il faut tirer la Barre, 
Apres Bemol fault chanter en Becarre' (4)

In this same épître Marot urges his fellow poets to model themselves upon himself once again by throwing themselves into the compositions of contreblasons, negating all that they had previously praised in their blasons:

'La doncq, la doncq, poulsez, faictes merveilles, 
A beaux Cheveux & à belles Oreilles, 
Faictes les moy les plus laiz que l'on puisse: 
Pochez cest Oeil, fessez moy ceste Cuisse!
Descrivez moy en stile espoventable 
Ung Sourcil gris, une Main detesstable, 
Sus à ce Cueur; qu'il ne soit pelude; 
Mieulx que ne fut le premier collaudé' (5)

Mayer accompanies his text of the contreblason of Marot with a footnote to the effect that:

'Le poème eut un succès presque égal à celui du blason du beau tétin. Un grand nombre de 'contreblasons' furent composés entre les années 1535 et 1545' (6)

It is difficult to reconcile this statement with the evidence which we have found. Indeed, rather the reverse would seem to be true, for only one single poet appears to have followed Marot's instructions closely and directly, composing a contreblason designed to blame what he had already praised in his blason. This is Peletier du Mans who followed his Blason du cueur by a corresponding Contreblason du cueur. This latter poem we know to have been composed in accordance with Marot's advice since Peletier himself acknowledges this source,

concluding his own poem with the lines:

'Te plaist il bien, Marot, en ceste forme?
Pourrois tu bien faire un cueur plus enorme?' (7)

(It is curious to note that - like his blason - Peletier's contreblason also was never printed in a sixteenth century collection of blasons. Both blason and contreblason appear only in the 1547 edition of his own Oeuvres poétiques (8).) The way in which the contreblason was intended to oppose what had already been said in the blason is shown clearly by a comparison between Marot's two poems on the subject of the tetin. In both Marot begins with a static description of the outward appearance of the breast. The smooth pink and white flesh of the youthful breast described at the beginning of the blason is replaced at the beginning of the contreblason by the shrivelled breast of old age:

'Tetin qui n'as rien que la peau,
Tetin flat, Tetin de drappeau,
Grande tetine, longue tetasse,
Tetin, doy je dire bezasse' (9)

The firmness of the youthful breast:

'Tetin done au petit bout rouge,
Tetin qui jamais ne se bouge
Soit pour venir, soit pour aller,
Soit pour courir, soit pour baller,
Tetin gauche, Tetin mignon,
Tetin loing de son compagnon' (10)

is contrasted to the floppy shapeless breast of old age:

'Tetin qui brimballa à tout coups
Sans estre esbranslé ne secoux
Bien se peut vanter qui te taste
D'avoir mis la main a la paste
Tetin grille tetin pendant' (11)

(7) Peletier, Oeuvres poétiques, f. 89 r°
(8) Peletier, f. 86 v° and f. 88 v°
(9) 1543 Blasons, f. 66 r° - v°
(10) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K4 r° - v°
(11) 1543 Blasons, f. 66 v°
In both poems his attention turns from static description to a preoccupation with movement. He then proceeds to describe the effect upon himself of the sight of the ugly breast, and here Marot actually reproduces in the contreblason the introductory couplet which he had already used in the blason, thus underlining further the deliberate contrast which he hopes to bring out between the two poems. Where the beau tetin inspired desire:

'Quant on te voit il vient a maintz
Une envie dedans les mains
De te taster, de te tenyr' (12)

the laid tetin merely inspires revulsion:

'Quant on te voit il vient a maintz
Une envie dedans les mainz
De te prendre avec gands doubles
Pour en donner cinq ou six couples
De souffletz sur le nez de celle
Qui te cache soubz son esselle' (13)

Finally the concluding description of the blason of the breast attaining maturity and fulfilment:

'O tetin ne grant ne petit,
Tetin meur, tetin dappetit,
Tetin qui nuyct & jour criez
Mariez moy tost mariez.
Tetin qui tant tenfles, & repoulses
Ton gorgias de deux bons poulces.
A bon droit heureux on dira
Celluy qui de laict templira,
Faisant dung tetin de pucelle,
Tetin de femme entiere & belle' (14)

finds a contrast in the unlovely breast of old age, the promise of fruitful milk being replaced by a description of the decayed and permanently oozing breast - a description in which Marot's preoccupation with smell is

(12) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K4 v°
(13) 1543 Blasons, f.66 v°
(14) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, K4 v°
very apparent:

'Va grand vilain tetin puant
Tu fournirois bien en suant
De civettes & de parfuns
Pour faire cent mille defunctz.
Tetin de laideur despiteuse.
Tetin dont nature est honteuse.
Tetin des villains le plus brave.
Tetin dont le bout toujours bave.
Tetin faict de poix & de glus
Brief ma plume n'en parle plus,
Laissez le la, ventre saint georges,
Vous me feriez rendre ma gorge' (15)

Peletier du Mans, in his blason and contreblason, does not follow so strictly parallel a construction as that of Marot. Carried away by his own eloquence, in a fury of vituperation at the end of the contreblason he abandons the plan of the blason which he had hitherto been following. The first part of the contreblason, however, shows clearly a common plan with the blason. The blason begins by praising the gracious, faithful heart of the lady:

'Cueur gracieux, cueur loyal & benin
Sis au milieu du gent corps feminin' (16)

describing its benevolent attitude towards the lover-poet:

'Cueur amoureux ennemy de rigueur,
Cueur qui maintiens le mien en sa vigueur:
Cueur qui voulez à mon bien consentir,
Cueur qui gardas la langue de mentir,
Quand elle dit, o amy languissant,
Du bien d'Amours tu seras jouissant' (17)

(15) 1543 Blasons, ff.66 v°-67 r°
(16) Peletier, f.86 v°
(17) Peletier, f.86 v°
In the contreblason Peletier describes the reverse, carefully and systematically choosing epithets which contrast with those already used in the blason. Loyal in the blason becomes desloyal, while langue de miel is opposed in the contreblason by langue de mentir and tout le fiel:

'Cueur desloyal, ennemy de pitié,
Cueur qui dedens nourriz inimitié,
Cueur qui transmetz a la langue le miel,
Et qui retiens pour ta part tout le fiel.
Cueur reforgé sur l'infernalle enclume,
Et retrempé en stygialle escume.
Cueur traistre & feint, qui guettes & deçoiz
Celuy duquel plus de bien tu reçoiz' (18)

The benevolent heart described in the blason:

'Cueur qui saiz bien guerdonner quand il faut,
Et ton Amour donner à qui le vaut:
Cueur qui ne peux departir l'amitié,
Sans empirer le tout & la moitié' (19)

is replaced in the contreblason by a correspondingly malevolent heart:

'Cueur qui d'envie & chagrin te repais,
Et qui ne peux souffrir qu'on vive en paix,
Cueur malheureux qui de joye sautelles
Quand tu peux mettre a effet tes cautelles' (20)

Only at the end of the two poems does the close parallel between blason and contreblason break down. Peletier ends his blason with a somewhat contrived declaration of his love:

'Cueur par lequel le feu en moy s'allume
Tant qu'il me fait de la main choir la plume,
Puisque tu m'as a toy si fort lié,
Jamais de moy ne seras oublié' (21)

(18) Peletier, f.88 v°
(19) Peletier, f.87 r°
(20) Peletier, f.88 v°
(21) Peletier, f.87 r°
while the *contreblason* ends with a passage of violent vituperation, culminating in a recommendation of his poem by Peletier to his master, Marot:

'Mais tu es cœur villain & infame,
Que tu n'es point, ce croy je, d'une femme,
Ainçois le cœur d'une enragée Louve,
Propre & tout fait pour celle là qui couve
Souz son aisselle une pleine pochee
De tetins pris d'une Chevre escorchee.
Te plaist il bien, Marot, en ceste forme?
Pourrois tu bien faire un cœur plus enorme?' (22)

Jean Rus, the rather obscure Normandy poet, also composed a *contreblason* on the subject of the nose (23). Certainly, as we have seen (24), this poem fulfils all Marot's demands to paint as revolting a picture as possible. The general aims of the poem also fit in clearly with the type established by Marot and Peletier, rather than with the type which is introduced by *la Hueterie*. As Rus explains, his sole motive in composing the *contreblason* was to make a contrast with the earlier *blason* on the same subject:

'Seigneurs, qui le nez blasonnez,
Et tant de beaulte luy donnez,
Ne vous desplaise, si je prens
Le contraire, et si j'entreprens
D'en montrer un dix fois plus laid
Que beau le vostre n'avez fait' (25)

Even so we cannot completely identify this poem with the Marot/Peletier tradition, since Rus himself did not compose a corresponding earlier *blason du nez*.

(22) Peletier, f.89 r°
(23) Oeuvres de Jean Rus, p.23; Cf. above, chapter II, Footnote 68
(24) Cf. above, chapter II, p.101
(25) Oeuvres de Jean Rus, p.23
Apart from these poems, however, the only contreblasons we have come across are the series composed by Charles de la Hueterie. These certainly have nothing in common with Marot's own contreblason (despite the fact that Méon absent-mindedly runs together Marot's and La Hueterie's two separate Contreblasons du tétin, making them into one single poem which he attributes to Marot (26)). The intent of La Hueterie is very different from that of Marot, Peletier and Rus who all wished simply to divert and to demonstrate that poetic versatility advocated by Marot. Indeed, far from trying to emulate Marot's contreblason, La Hueterie is doing the very opposite. As we have seen already (27) his main aim is to vilify the flesh in order to glorify the spirit, and this intention he makes very clear in the correspondence with his friend François Sagon as well as in the incidental verse which accompanies the contreblasons in the Protologies francoyses. In the Dizain de Charles de la Hueterie s'excusant envers les dames qui ont le corps gentil (28) he says:

"Il est tout seur qu'avez le corps subtil,  
Bien fait, bien prins, bien forme par nature,  
Mais dedans gist plus belle creature  
Ame coeleste, estant plus a priser,  
Lame est divine, & le corps pourriture;  
Parquoy chacun doit le corps mespriser."

Disgusted by what he considers to be obscene in the blasons, La Hueterie criticises in an épître to Sagon

(26) Méon, pp.136-138
(27) Cf. above, chapter II, p.94
(28) Protologies, H7 v°
those blasonneurs who have ventured to praise the human body to the detriment of the spirit (29). He then expresses his intention to compose a series of contre-blasons in which the flesh will be the centre of attack. Sagon thoroughly approved this venture, writing to La Hueterie to express his admiration for these contreblasons. Interestingly he bears witness to the popularity of the already established blasons, and expresses some doubt as to whether La Hueterie's new type of contreblason will in fact be able to shake this popularity:

Amy, vela comme par noz accordz
Suyvant l'esprit nous blasonnons ce corps,
Je le blasonne & si nen dy grant chose,
Tu las mieulx faict, & si dire ne l'aose,
Je le scay bien, & ne scay bonnement
Si je te doy donner consentement
D'avoir bien faict ou mal faict en l'affaire,
Ou tout ce corps tu as voulu refaire,
Je doubte ung point, voire ung point bien certain
Dont je m'assure en ton esprit haultain,
Ce que je crainctz, cest que la chose antique
Est renommee en chacune boutique,
Et qu'on la faict desja tant publier
Qu'on ne la peult desormais oublyer' (30)

In fact La Hueterie began to compose his series of contreblasons in direct opposition to the work of Marot and his followers, and this perhaps explains why these poems did not appear together with the blasons in any of the editions of the Hecatomphile. Indeed, although they were actually written and printed by 1536 (31), they did not appear in a collection of blasons until the 1543 Angelier edition. Subsequently they became incorporated into, and regarded - somewhat ironically - as an integral

(29) Protologies, F3 v°; Cf. above, chapter I I, p.94
(30) Protologies, H5 v°- H6 r°
(31) They appeared in print for the first time in the Protologies
part of the very collection of blasons which they had been intended to oppose. However, even in the Angelier edition they are regarded as being distinct from the blasons, forming as they do a sort of appendix to the main collection of blasons, complete with their own title page, and separated from the rest of the work by the Imprimeur aux lecteurs, which would normally be taken to indicate the end of a work (32).

* * *

Of Charles de la Hueterie himself we know virtually nothing other than that he was a native of Amboise, that he was a friend of François Sagon, and that he wrote for the Puy of Rouen (33). His poetic output was very small; apart from the Protologies francoyses (which only went into one edition - that produced by Olivier Mallard in 1536 (34) ), the only known works by La Hueterie are the poems he composed in the course of the Marot/Sagon quarrel which was at its height at about the same period in which the blasons and contreblasons were being written (35).

(32) 1543 Blasons, f.60 r°

(33) Cf. Protologies, C7 r°, Chant royal de Charles de la Hueterie pour le pallinod de Rouen

(34) Of this edition only one copy is known - that in the Bibliotheque municipale de Niort

(35) Brunet (Manuel du libraire, vol.III, cols 772-773) cites another work by La Hueterie - presumably an official piece composed on the occasion of the royal marriage between Madeleine of France and James V of Scotland - Le concile des dieux sur les tresheureuses, & tresmagnificques nopces de tres-hault & trespuissant prince, James, par la grace de dieu roy descoce & de trershaulte dame & princesse
In this controversy - not surprisingly - La Hueterie came out strongly on the side of his friend François Sagon. He was of course an interested party in the dispute if we are to believe the allegations of the Valet de Marot contre Sagon cum commento (36):

'Lautre ung Huet de sotte grace
Lequel voulut voler la place
De labsent: mais le demandeur
Eust affaire a ung entendeur.
O le Huet, en bel arroy
Pour entrer en chambre de Roy
Ce Huet & Sagon se jouent
Par escript l'un lautre se louent
Et semblent, tant ilz 'sentreflatent,
Deux vieux Asnes qui 'sentregratent'

Of the many pieces written in the course of the quarrel the scurrilous Grande genealogie de Frippelippes (37) and the Responce a Marot, dict Fripelippes et a son maistre Clement (38) are both generally attributed to Charles de la Hueterie.

The Protologies francoyses, apart from the collection of contreblasons and the correspondence between La Hueterie and Sagon, consist of one or two long and rather dull poems and a cluster of lengthy épîtres and short poems addressed to François 1er and to various other influential people, requesting a position in the king's service, together with one or two Latin pieces. The poems

madame magdalene fille aisnee du Roy faict par Charles de la Hueterie (Paris, Mallard, 1536, 8°). I have not, however, been able to locate a copy of this particular work.

(36) Querelle de Marot et Sagon, pièces réunies par Émile Picot & Paul Lacombe, Rouen, 1920, 8°, Item 22, A3 r

(37) Querelle de Marot et Sagon, item 14

(38) Querelle de Marot et Sagon, item 21
which really interest us in this collection, however, are to be found in the Contreblason de la beaúté des membres du corps humain. Envoyé a Francoys de Sagon secretaire (39). This is one single work by one author, and in consequence it possesses a unity of composition which is absent in the collections of blasons. It is perhaps for this reason that La Hueterie should have put his title in the singular, calling the work Contreblason rather than Contreblasons as in the collections of blasons anatomiques in which the title is invariably expressed in the plural. Only in the 1543 edition do the blasons and contreblasons - printed together for the first time - both become expressed in the plural: Sensuivent les blasons anatomiques du corps femenin, ensemble les contreblasons de nouveau composez & additionez (40).

La Hueterie's collection of contreblasons follows the conventional order already established in the collections of blasons; he begins with a general contreblason addressed to the body as a whole, following this by a series of more detailed poems working downwards from the head to the foot, rounding the collection off finally with another Contreblason du corps. In the Protologies francócyes the individual poems are not given the title contreblason as they are in the 1543 Angelier edition. Instead the overall title Contreblason de la beaúté des membres du corps humain is used to cover all the individual

(39) Title page to the contreblasons in the Protologies (F2 r°)
(40) Title page to 1543 Blasons
poems. Consequently these are each entitled quite simply Les yeulx, Le cerveau, Loreille etcetera. (41)

The illustrative woodcuts which characterise all the editions of the blasons are not a feature of the Protologies francoyse. In the Angelier edition and in all subsequent editions the woodcuts which illustrated the blasons are used once again to illustrate the appropriate contreblason. Here, however, as with the collective title Contreblason, there is also one single woodcut of the human figure at the head of the collection, accompanied by the simple legend Le corps humain (42). Unlike the collections of blasons we have examined the Protologies francoyse is not really a decorative work. It presents, in fact, a curious amalgam of austere, unadorned printing together with the very occasional woodcut of extremely high quality and the equally occasional decorative initial letter (43).

La Hueterie's contreblasons follow a different pattern from the blasons. The latter are love poems, whereas the contreblasons are not. Indeed the body they describe is no longer specifically that of the poet's lady. Despite

(41) The first of the two Contreblasons du corps is not given a title at all in the Protologies (F5 r°)

(42) Protologies, F v°

(43) Protologies, A v°, C6 v°, D v°. Olivier Mallard inherited the printing house of Geoffroy Tory, and certainly the block on C6 v° is very similar to that of Tory's Horae in laude beatissimae Virginis (Paris, Tory, 1529, 16°, BN Velins 2914, D7 v°). The woodcut representing the naked figure of a man used by Mallard to preface the contreblasons was originally used by Tory in the Champ fleury (f.XVIII r°), where it represented L'homme en contemplation a le chief au ciel & les pieds a terre
the dizain accompanying the contreblasons, s'excusant envers les dames qui ont le corps gentil (44), little of La Hueterie's vituperation is directed specifically at the female rather than at the male body. *La joue, le front & cheveux* criticises feminine preoccupations with make-up and hair dressing in the manner of Ovid:

'La joue aussi & le front large & ample  
Qui d'ung coste & d'autre a une temple  
Ou les petitz cheveux recoquillez  
Et d'ung fer chault crespes entortillez  
Vont volletant pour avoir bonne grace  
Estans espars ung peu dessus la face,  
Gardez vous bien de la chambre sortir  
Que vostre fard ne se puisse amortir.  
Si daventure aller voulez au vent  
Fault que tenez ung mouchouer devant.  
Cela je laisse aux dames de facon,  
Il ne fault point recorder leur lecon,  
Un peu apres quil conviendra mourir  
Vers lon verra sur la face courir' (45)

but in general, the parts of the anatomy described are neither specifically male nor specifically female, but belong rather to the human body in general.

From the point of view of composition, likewise, the contreblasons are different from the blasons. Most obvious of all, they are considerably shorter. Of the nineteen contreblasons by La Hueterie eleven are under twenty-five lines long, and the *Cueur*, which - relative to the rest - is exceptionally long is nevertheless only sixty-two lines long. The reason for this brevity is not difficult to find. In none of these poems do we find any sign of gratuitous decoration such as is to be found in the blasons, decoration which is included not because it is essential to the

(44) *Protologies*, H7 v°  
(45) *Protologies*, F7 r°
treatment of the subject, but simply in order to make the poem more pleasing to the reader. These contreblasons, unlike those of Marot, Peletier and Rus, are not intended to be decorative pieces of poetry, but rather didactic works, and we have the impression that La Hueterie's choice of the contreblason as a vehicle for conveying his views is a purely circumstantial one, brought about by the very obvious popularity and publicity enjoyed by the anatomical blasons. Rather in the manner of the Salvation Army, La Hueterie took an already established popular model and turned it to his own didactic ends. Borrowing from his models a skeleton framework only, La Hueterie directs his attention to conveying a didactic message as clearly and as graphically as possible. Indeed he uses an almost bludgeon-like technique, with little concession to imagery or to any other form of decoration, and leaves little to the imagination of the reader. Even the rare passage of vivid description such as the last four lines of the Contreblason des yeulx is based on what must have been a not uncommon sight:

'Incontinent que lame est separee
Corbeaulx cryans sur la maison paree,
Dessus les murs & tectz ou le corps est
Pour les avoir chacun deulx est tout pres' (46)

Indeed, descriptive technique throughout the contre-blasons is - as in the above passage - very fifteenth century in character. To achieve his effect of revulsion against the human body in order to glorify the spirit, La Hueterie employs the full battery of fifteenth century

(46) Protologies, F5 v°
vocabulary describing the decay and stench to which the human frame is susceptible. His description of the well filled belly which is the first to rot after the moment of death:

'O ventre plain de lye & de matiere
Ventre premier pourry au cymetiere' (47)

is reminiscent of Villon (48), as is his description of phlegm in the Contreblason de la bouche (49):

'La bouche aussi ne peult avoir repos:
Car du crachat el gecte a tous propos,
Si daventure (o corps) veulx reposer,
Le repos fait on pourra veoir poser
Et estre autour de la bouche blancheurs
Qui sentent mal procedans des humeurs
Et des chaleurs de la bouche baveuse.
Brief d'en parler seroit chose hydeuse,
Aussi l'on veoit des glacons fleumaticques
Sortir par bouche & amas reumaticques' (50)

La Hueterie is preoccupied throughout the contreblasons with smell - regarded as an obvious outward manifestation of the impurity of the body. The ventre is described in the concluding couplet as:

'Ventre puant, ventre infect & greve,
Ventre pendu qui premier fut creve' (51)

and this theme recurs throughout the other contreblasons. In some cases such as the Pied or the Con La Hueterie simply describes the smell of an unclean body:

(47) Protologies, G2 r°
(48) Cf. Testament, CLXIV
(49) Cf. Testament, LXXII
(50) Protologies, F6 v°
(51) Protologies, G2 v°
'O pied s'entant plus que l'ail ou l'oignon,  
Plus que semelle ou vieil escaffignon' (52)

'Le con est chault et souvent peult suer  
Lequel convient maintesfoys ressuer,  
Et si diray cestuy mot d'avantaige  
Que le con sent ung peu le vieil frommaige' (53)

while in other cases the smell is the result of infection and consequent putrefaction. At times La Hueterie uses the word infect without any particular significance (54), but frequently he uses it to describe various parts of the human frame which have become diseased. The mouth, for example, smells because of infection in the stomach (55), while the nose is catarrhal because of a cold in the head (56), and even the ear is depicted as subject to infection and decay:

'Dedans toy gist une villaine ordure,  
Jaulne & amere, & s'il vient pourriture  
Ou quelque mal au cerveau d'accident  
Il t'envoyera comme au plus evident  
Quelque apostume & son infection' (57)

Worms figure largely in La Hueterie's contreblasons - again an obviously fifteenth century manifestation of further decay and rottenness. The overfed stomach, for example is described as being full of worms:

'AU ventre ya des vers en habundance  
Le ventre est plain de villaine substance,

(52) Protologies, G6 r°
(53) Protologies, G4 r°
(54) As for example in the Contreblason du pied (G6 r°) or the Contreblason du ventre (G2 v°)
(55) Protologies, F6 v°
(56) Protologies, F6 v°
(57) Protologies, F6 r°
Quand l'estomac a fait digestion
Le ventre prend son ordre infection' (58)
as is the brain:

'Et le cerveau que tu veux devant mettre
Lame laissant les vers s'y vont accroistre
Et si demeure infect & plus puant
Pour le premier que nest ton demeurant' (59)

and the face:

'Ung peu apres quil conviendra mourir
Vers l'on verra sur la face courir' (60)

As we see from the above passages, there is in the
ccontreblasons of La Hueterie a certain paucity of vocab-
ulary. Having chosen as his theme the putrefaction of the
human body, he tends to repeat this, using the same terms
in poem after poem, and even within such a short poem as
the Nez La Hueterie shows a marked lack of variety in
vocabulary. In this poem of only four lines, the word
morve (or morveau), for example, appears in three of these:

'Et puis le nez morveux de l'autre part
Qu'il fault moucher quant le morveau despart
Et qu'il descends du cerveau froit humide,
Il n'est jamais de crotte ou morve vuye' (61)

Although his purpose is primarily didactic, La Huet-
erie obviously delights in describing the revolting aspects
of the human body. He makes little pretence at avoiding
the obscene, and dwells with evident relish upon the sub-
ject of the con and the cul (62), although he makes it

(58) Protologies, G2 r°
(59) Protologies, F6 r°
(60) Protologies, F7 r°
(61) Protologies, F6 v°
(62) Protologies, G2 v° et seq.
clear at the beginning of the Con (perhaps thinking back to the blason on the con de la pucelle (63)) that he is referring to the woman of the world rather than to the young girl:

'Comme j'ay dict les membres je ne touche
De la pucelle & vierge, ne sa couche,
Mais seulement les mondains que je hante,
Desquelz le corps en beaute tant se vante!' (64)

In the Contreblason du cul La Hueterie makes full use of the descriptive possibilities of smell, treating the subject in such detail that it is difficult to believe in the apology for and denial of responsibility for any incidental obscenity with which he concludes the Epistre aux lecteurs en laquelle est contenu le debat du corps & de lame (65):

'En outre (amys) si indiscretement
Sur aulcun membre ay faict quelque comment
Cest le subject qui n'est pas honnorable,
Que si voyez qu'il ne soit convenable,
Laissez le la comme subject tresord.
Amys pour fin je feray mon effort
De mon couste lame contregarde
Que dieu la vueille & les vostres garder' (66)

Biblical references are common throughout the contre-blasons. Most of these are to Christ and the Virgin Mary, although some refer back to the Old Testament. The Bouche, for example, alludes to the kiss of Judas, but follows

(63) Not in the editions of the Hecatomphile, but included in the 1543 Blasons
(64) Protologies, G3 r°
(65) Protologies, G8 v°
(66) Protologies, H3 v°
this immediately with a reference to the temptation of Eve:

'La malle bouche elle a este si traistre
Qu'elle a baise & vendu nostre maistre.
La malle bouche elle mangea la pomme
Dont fut seduit Adam le premier homme' (67)

Judas is again referred to in the Ventre, betraying Jesus through greed:

'Ventre mauldit qui Judas as contrainct
Que pour deniers du cordeau feust estrainct' (68)

It is however through his references to the Virgin Mary and to Jesus Christ that La Hueterie achieves the contrast he is seeking between the transience of all things human and the ideal of the divine and eternal. Before describing the human stomach in the Ventre he evokes briefly that of the Virgin Mary, in order to bring out the more clearly the desired contrast with what follows:

'Devant ung peu que suyvre mon propos
Je parleray du tresheureulx repoz,
Qui pleut a dieu dedans le ventre prendre
Quant en la vierge auroit voulu descendre,
Cest heureulx ventre en mes escriptz ne touche
Ains seulement le mortel par reproche' (69)

In the Contreblason de la main he refers to the betrayal by the hand of man of the Saviour of the world:

'Main qui toucha le saulveur de nature
Main qui tua l'humaine creature' (70)

concluding with heavily charged rhetoric:

'O malle main meschante & malheureuse
Qui main cloua de cloux en croix heureuse' (71)
The collection begins and ends with a **Contreblason du corps**. The first of these is—as we might expect—a denigration of the body in general, setting the tone for the subsequent series of more detailed poems. The second, however, is very different in inspiration. It could indeed be almost termed a **blason** rather than a **contreblason**, since it is concerned throughout with praise rather than with criticism, treating as it does the body of Jesus Christ. In contrast to the human body, so heavily praised by the **blasoneurs**, La Hueterie cites the body of Christ which—divinely conceived—can alone be considered as truly beautiful:

> Vienca le corps qui te dictz precieulx
> Je te diray que le seigneur des cieulx
> Est descendu miraculeusement.
> Dedans la vierge & sans attouchement
> Ell' a conceu de parolle & esprit
> Et dedans elle ung noble corps comprit
> Mais cestuy corps estoit douix & humain
> Humble endurant chault, froit, soif & la fain' (72)

This **contreblason** describes in detail the passion of Christ, but the most interesting section of the poem is in the middle where La Hueterie comes very close to Schmidt's definition of the **blason** as 'une kyrielle...une litanie' (73). Here he praises and apostrophises the body in a series of lines all beginning with the dominant word **corps**:

> Corps tresparfaict, corps noble, corps gentil,
> Corps reluisant, corps entier, En est il
> Qui feust jamais corps si obeissant,
> Corps que jamais autre ne fut blessant
> Corps qui jeuna tout entier le caresme
> Agneau pascal qui s'offrit de soy mesme,

(72) Protologies, G6 r° - v°

(73) Poètes du XVIe siècle, p.293
Corps qui voullut non pas pour luy mourir
Ains par sa mort les mortelz secourir
Corps couronne de couronne d'espines
Corps flagelle de foiz soubz les courtines' (74)

The Continuation du corps humain takes up once again the contrast between the human body and the body of Christ with which the poem began. The theme - often repeated in the contreblasons - of the decay of the human body in contrast to the divine body of Christ is once again reiterated here:

'Veoys tu le corps, comme ce riche corps
Fut flagelle, perse, batu a lors,
Et glorieux apres ressuscita.
Mais tout soudain que terre couvert t'a,
Tu te pourris, & te mangent les vers
Estant couche sur la terre a l'envers,
Et si retourne en terrestre matiere
Dont toy le corps prins escence premiere
En actendant le juste jugement
Du dieu puissant & son allegement' (75)

and - yet again - La Hueterie attacks the work of the anatomical blasonneurs:

'Orca le corps tu n'es que pourriture
Pourquoy as tu loue a l'adventure,
Chacun ton membre...
...Car seulement tu ne te faiz vendre louer
Et publier' (76)

La Hueterie never allows himself to forget that the starting point for his contreblasons is the blasons anatomiques themselves. In several instances he begins his poem by taking a particular point made by the blasonneur and calling this into question. Thus, since both Carle and Sagon had described the proportions of the foot,

(74) Protologies, G6 v°
(75) Protologies, G7 v°
(76) Protologies, G7 v° - G8 r°
using the word *compas* or *compassé* (77), La Hueterie takes up this point in order to refute it:

'Le pied cave qu' on dict bien compasse
En lieux loingtains as porte & passe,
Le corps & cueur couard paoureux craintif
Quant souhaictoit d'un lieu estre fuitif' (78)

In the same way, in his *Cueur* La Hueterie picks out and refutes the two adjectives *gentil* and *noble*, both used by Albert le Grand in his *blason* on the same subject (79):

'Il est nomme gentil & noble cueur' (80)

while in the *Con* he refers back to Chappuys' (?) *blasons* (81):

'On t'a escript con mygnon con mouflard
Mais tu es con & ribault & paillard' (82)

It is, however, in the *Tetin* that he attacks most heavily and systematically the corresponding *blason* — not surprisingly perhaps since it is Marot, whom he regarded as the arch villain responsible for all the *blasons*, who wrote this particular poem. His criticism of Marot is singularly pedantic, based on what La Hueterie considers a bad choice of image in the *Beau tetin*. His *Contreblason du tetin* opens abruptly, launching without preamble its attack on Marot:

'Et le tetin demeurera il la,
Ce fut Clement qui premier en parla.

(77) Strasbourg *Hecatomphile*, L5 r° and N6 v°  
(78) Protologies, G5 v°  
(79) Strasbourg *Hecatomphile*, K5 r°  
(80) Protologies, F7 v°  
(81) Strasbourg *Hecatomphile*, M6 v°:  
'Petit mouflard, petit con rebondy'  
1543 *Blasons*, f.26 v°:  
'Con, mon petit mignon, ma petite fossette'  
(82) Protologies, G3 v°
J'ay veu cerise au soir & au matin,
Oncques n'en veiz croistre dessus tetin' (83)

* •* *

The contreblasons then take their form and inspiration from the blasons. Yet it is only that of Peletier which follows strictly the pattern advocated by Marot. We cannot know why more poets did not take up Marot's suggestion and try their hands at composing contreblasons in deliberate contrast to the blasons they had already written, especially in view of the popularity of the blasons. The fact remains, however, that they did not, and with the exception of Marot's Tetin and Peletier's Cueur the only contreblasons composed were those of La Hueterie. As we have seen, in these the outward form and key themes of the corresponding blasons are taken up not in the manner of a poet anxious to demonstrate rhetorical virtuosity, but purely in order that La Hueterie might condemn them in the manner of a didactic poet wishing to moralise. Far from wishing to praise the beauties of the flesh, La Hueterie in his contreblasons wished above all to blame it, seeing it purely in contrast to the far more worthy and durable beauties of the spirit.

(83) Protologies, F7 v°
CHAPTER VI  The illustrated book:— Blasons, emblems, bestiaries and lapidaries.

When in our third chapter we discussed the Italian anatomical strambotto and capitolo, comparing these to the French anatomical blason, we considered only textual parallels, and did not touch on the question of the actual printed lay-out of the poems. It is here that we find a basic difference between the Italian collections of anatomical love poetry and the French collections of blasons, for the Italian collections consist simply of a printed text, whereas an important feature of the French blasons is the combination throughout all the editions of woodcut and poem, mutually illustrative (1). In the editions of the Hecatomphile of 1536, 1537 and 1539 (2) the decorative aspect of the blason was relatively restrained, the woodcut being simple in outline and framed in a plain rectangle. In the later editions printed in

(1) The only exceptions to this are the odd blasons in manuscript collections (BN Ms.fr.4967, f.235 v and f.278 v'; BN Ms.fr.2370, ff.50r r - 35 v') where the scribe makes no attempt to reproduce the woodcut of the printed edition, and also those isolated blasons which appear in anthologies (e.g. Recueil de poesie francoyse, (Paris, Janot, 1544, 8) which includes Saint Gerais' Cheveulx (B4 r°)) or in the collected works of a particular poet (e.g. Des Periers' Nombril appears only in the Recueil des oeuvres (p.79)). In these cases the printer would quite simply not possess the necessary blocks to illustrate these anatomical features. In the Recueil de poesie francoyse Janot realised that an illustration for the Cheveulx was desirable, but not possessing the appropriate block, he used as a substitute another block of the cupidesque variety.

(2) Npnd (1536), 16°, Bodley Douce p 36 * Np, 1537 (Blasons 1536), 16°, Strasbourg R 102 895 Paris, Sergent, 1539, 16°, BN Picot 803
1543 and 1550 in the workshop of the Angeliers, these rather primitive woodcuts are modified, becoming more sophisticated and more decorative. In particular the frame containing the woodcut is transformed from a simple rectangle to an ornate border which itself contributes to the decorative effect of the work. It is these two characteristics of the French anatomical blasons — their decorative and illustrative aspects — which distinguish them from the Italian poems. At the same time it is these very aspects which associate the blason anatomique with the bestiary and emblem book, both so popular in French literature at this period, all going back, in their turn, to the heraldic blason with its combination of illustration and interpretative poem.

The blason, as we have seen, was originally a description and an interpretation — either in prose or in verse — of the significance of an object depicted. Thus the heraldic blason described and explained the various features of a painted shield, while its eventual descendant the anatomical blason describes and explains the significance of the feature depicted in the accompanying woodcut. This blason tradition, moreover, is by no means an isolated one, and we need look no further than the medieval bestiary to see a similar pattern of illustration plus explanatory moralistic verse.

That illustrated works such as these should suddenly come into favour during the mid sixteenth century in France is due not only to a purely literary cause, but also to a large degree to the development of printing.
While such works as these had existed throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it is only in the 1530s to 1550s that we find the great blossoming of blasons, emblem books and bestiaries. This of course corresponds precisely to the period in which French printing reached perhaps its highest degree of sophistication. While many printing houses continued to produce serious works (3), certain others turned their hands to producing books of a different type. Such printers as Janot in Paris (4) or Macé Bonhomme in Lyons (to take two notable examples), specialised in producing cheap books in the vernacular for popular audiences. As well as being basically didactic, these works were intended also to be entertaining and easy to read. To this end they are made as pleasing to the eye as possible by the inclusion of numerous woodcut illustrations which not only clarify the text but are also decorative in their own right (5). It is to this development in printing that we owe the sudden flourishing of the printed emblem and bestiary in the mid sixteenth century in France. It is to this same fashion that we owe the sudden appearance of printed

(3) Cf. for example that of the Estienne family, or that of the Badius family, both in Paris

(4) Cf. R. Brun, Le livre illustré en France au XVIe siècle, Paris, 1930, 8°, p.64 et seq.

(5) Thus in Gilles Corrozet’s Hecatomgraphie (Cf. below, chapter VI, footnote 29) each woodcut is framed in an ornate border, while in La Perrière’s Theatre des bons engins (Cf. below, chapter VI, footnote 28) both poem and woodcut are framed in such decorative borders. Strictly speaking, such borders are not essential, but their function is an important one – to render the work still more pleasing to the eye.
anthologies of blasons anatomiques with their invariable combination of woodcut and poem. Although the emblem and bestiary are didactic, whereas the anatomical blason (unlike the earlier heraldic blason) is not, all these three types of work are essentially decorative pieces of printing, produced in workshops specialising in this sort of output (6).

* * *

Considered to be descended from the Egyptian hiero-glyph, the emblem in the sixteenth century was regarded as a symbolic representation which could nevertheless remain incomprehensible to the reader unless he were in possession of the key to its hidden meaning (7). Thus the mid century emblem book consists invariably of a woodcut depicting a particular object or scene, followed by an explanatory poem describing the various elements contained in the woodcut and explaining what they are intended to represent and how they should be interpreted.

(6) We might equally mention here Gilles Corrozett's Blasons domestiques (Paris, Corrozet, 1539, 8°, BN Res Ye 1380) which, like the emblem and bestiary, is both didactic and decorative, comprising a series of woodcuts of the various parts of the house, and the furniture contained therein, each accompanied by a descriptive and explanatory poem pointing out the moral lesson to be derived from each.

(7) For the purpose of this thesis we are considering only the 'symbolic' emblem - the most common in fact. The smaller group of emblems which merely reproduce or illustrate an adage or proverb (taken mainly from such sources as Cato's moral Disticha or Erasmus's Adagia) is largely irrelevant to this present study.
To take an example, the dolphin coiled round an anchor (used by Aldus as his device) is depicted in Alciati’s emblem book. The woodcut is followed by the interpretation: traditionally, we are told, the dolphin is considered the friend of the sailor, and in troubled weather the sailor will put out an anchor which will be towed to safety by the friendly dolphin. This emblem, therefore, should be taken as a symbol of the benevolent prince looking after the welfare of his people:

'Quand de la iner les ve'nts troublent le cours, Povres Pillotz hont a l'anchre recours, Que les d'aulphins amys des hommes font (En la prenant) ancrer en plus seur fond: O que les Roys doibvent ce signe aimer, Qui sont au peuple ainsi que l'anchre en mer' (8)

This somewhat cryptic moral lesson is further explained in the prose commentary which accompanies the emblems in the 1549 edition:

'Le daulphin aime l'homme, luy praesigne la tourmente avenir, & en icelle luy ayde à ancrer seurement, procurant le salut de l'homme à son povoir. A l'exemple duquel le bon Prince doibt aimer ses hommes, en tribulation les secourir, & estre curieux de leur bien' (9)

In the same manner, a woodcut depicting the two headed Janus is explained as symbolising wisdom:

'Ian a deux chefz, temps passé, & suyvant Voyant derriere, ainsi comme devant. Pourquoy has tu quatre yeulx, double visage? Est ce pourtant que tu fuz homme sage?

(8) Emblemes d'Alciat, trans. Barthélémy Aneau, Lyons, Bonhomme, 1549, 8°, BN Res Z 2527, pp.174-175
(9) 1549 Alciati, p.175
La Sapience est au chef, & pource l'homme a deux testes, represente le sage: qui ha memoire du passe, & providence de l'advenir' (10)

The parallel between such interpretative emblems and the equally interpretative heraldic blason is a clear one. Indeed in certain of these emblems it is an actual shield which is depicted in the woodcut, its significance being explained in the accompanying verse. In form at least emblem and heraldic blason are virtually indistinguishable in such cases as these. Alciati's Armoiries des poëtes (11) for example consists of a woodcut shield on which is depicted a swan, the significance of which is explained in the accompanying poem:

'En leurs escuz aulcuns x>ortent grandz bestes Aigles, Lyons, Serpens, Mais des Poëtes Les armes. n'hont de telz animaulx signe. Mais en ung champ coeleste, le blanc cygne. Oyseau Phoebus. & à nous domesticque Roy fut, & garde encor' son tiltre antique'

The commentary clarifies this further:

'Le cygne fut jëdis Roy: frere de Phaëton, Oyseau fluvial, chantant tresdoulcement, & de trespgrade blancheur, consacré à Phoebus Prince des Muses & des Poëtes: Lesquelz le portent en leurs enseignes: car ilz sunt de laurier coronnez comme Roys: usent de telle liberté à escrirical, que les Roys, à faire, font les guerres par carmes, comme les Roys par armes. aiment les rivieres & lieux plaisans, sont purs & candides: & chantent tres-doulcement en leurs vers bien sonnans' (12)

Indeed it is only the relative clarity of the heraldic blason which distinguishes it from Alciati's poem whose

(10) 1549 Alciati, p.40
(11) 1549 Alciati, p.224
(12) 1549 Alciati, pp.224-225
The semi-hermetic nature makes necessary a prose commentary to explain the cryptic verse.

The 1549 edition of Alciati's *Emblemata* begins with a dedication to Maximilian of Milan (13) in which the distinction between emblem and heraldic blason is completely lost. The title:

'Dedication des emblemes. A tresillustre prince Maximilian Duc de Mylan, sur le blason des armes mylanoises'

is followed by a woodcut of a shield representing the arms of Milan: a coiled snake with a child issuing from its mouth. This is commented upon and explained in the following verse and prose passages:

'L'enfant naissant d'ung serpent par la bouche, De ton clair sang les nobles armes touche, Nous avons veu Alexandre Monarque (Pour s'anoblir) monnoye a telle marque, Quand filz d'Hammon subz forme serpentine, Se dist conceu par semence Divine. On dict serpent par bouche serpentier: Née est Pallas du chief de Jupiter.

Les Armes de Mylan portent d'or a ung enfant de gueulles naissant par la bouche d'ung serpent d'azur, qui denote divine noblesse d'origine, & extraction. Par ce que aulcuns des plus grandz personnages du monde hont este estimez, engendrez de daimons ou espritz, comme Alexandre le grand, & Scipion l'Aphricain, & les vaillans & merveilleux enfans de Araxe, & Melusine Serpentes, d'ond encore aujourd'hui on dict estre descenduz les Nobles de Luxem-bourg & Lusignan. Or aulcuns serpens, (comme l'Amphisbaine) produisent leurs oeufz, ou serpenteaulx par la teste. Et le serpent es hieroglyphiques signifie Sapience, qui s'engendre au chef. On fainct semblablement Minerve dicte Pallas estre née du chef de Jupiter. Parquoy l'enfant naissant du chef serpentin peut signifier divinité, & noblesse de lignage, & Sapience de bon cerveau' (14)

(13) 1549 Alciati, p.15
(14) 1549 Alciati, pp.15-16
Emblems of this type are by no means rare, (15) and in all of them we see the very close connections between the emblem and the blason.

With each successive edition the Emblemata of Alciati grew larger, being supplemented by further individual emblems, and also by the addition of specialised groups of emblems. Thus the 1549 edition, for example, in which the emblems are translated into French by Barthélémy Aneau, is augmented by a supplement of emblems on the subject of trees (16), underlining thereby the connection between emblem and bestiary/lapidary types of poetry. The technique adopted in these emblems is in no way different from that of the emblems depicting shields. In each case the woodcut depicts the particular tree, while the accompanying poem describes its appearance and individual characteristics and qualities. Finally the prose passage develops more clearly the meaning of the verse passage in which the ideas are so condensed as to be virtually incomprehensible without further explanation. A typical example of such an emblem is that of the box tree:

'Buix tousjours verd, crespe au faist de ses fustes, Eest bois, duquel on faict sonnantes flustes. Propre aulx amours: mais de palle couleur: Palles amans sont, par douce douleur' (17)

This cryptic verse is amplified and clarified by the prose

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(15) Cf. also Plus sage que Eloquent (p.41) and Follie (p.80) in both of which the emblem takes the form of a shield

(16) 1549 Alciati, p.249 et seq.

(17) 1549 Alciati, p.255
commentary (including incidentally, but rather picture-esquely an advertisement for a Lyons flute maker):

'Le Buyx garde sa vive verdure, & ha bois de jaune palleur, duquel on fait flutes harmonieuses (mesmement chez Rafy Lyonnois, excellent ouvrier) pour sonner amoureuses chansons, & aubades. Ainsi les amoureux sont en leur vive chaleur, quelque froid qu'il face, hont palle jaunisse de fivre transie, & en parolle, sont doulx & plaisans.'

In emblems of this type associations with the 'scientific' compilation of the bestiary type are evident. Indeed many emblems are in fact taken from bestiary sources. The chameleon which changes its colour according to its circumstances is taken as a basis for the emblem Contre les flateurs (18), and the beaver to demonstrate that Par argent quelque fois fault rachepter sa vie (19), and several other examples of this type might be cited (20).

The emblem book, then, is didactic. Like the heraldic blason it makes clear by its combination of woodcut illustration and explanatory poem certain moral lessons for the edification of society. This utilitarian aspect however is only one side of the picture. It is also a highly decorative genre, and the illustration is there to divert and to please the eye as much as to instruct. It is this second, more purely decorative aspect which provides the link with the blason anatomique as opposed to the heraldic blason.

(18) 1549 Alciati, p.77
(19) 1549 Alciati, p.185
(20) Cf. also Les plus petitz sont aussi à craindre (p.205), Vengeance juste (pp.208-209), and Reverence estre requise en mariage (p.238)
Alciati's is not only the earliest emblem book, it is also by far the most popular if we can judge by the innumerable editions it went through in the course of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Looking through the various editions of the Emblemata in Latin and subsequently in French we see clearly a developing preoccupation with printing that is decorative for its own sake. As a piece of printing the Emblemata becomes more and more ambitious, more and more ornate, in keeping with the developing fashion of the 1530s to 1550s. The first (supposedly pirated) edition produced by an obscure Augsburg printer Henri Steyner in 1531 (21) is a very plain affair; the woodcuts themselves are crude and encased only in simple borders (22). However the subsequent editions produced by the Paris printer Chrestien Wechel are considerably more sophisticated. Wechel first produced a Latin edition in 1534 (23), following this two years later by a translation into French (24). A few years later, in 1549, in the hands of the Lyonnese printer Macé Bonhomme, whose workshop specialised in the production of emblem books and

(21) Viri clarissimi D. Andree Alciati...emblematum liber, Augsburg, Steyner, 1531, 8°, BN Res Z 2514

(22) In this edition there is practically no decoration in the borders

(23) Andreae Alciati emblematum libellus, Paris, Wechel, 1534, 8°, BN Res Z 2511

(24) Livret des emblemes de maistre Andre Alciat, Paris, Wechel, 1536, 8°, BN Res Z 2521
similar illustrated books (25), the Emblemata (translated anew by the Lyonnese poet Barthélemy Aneau) became even more decorative. The woodcuts themselves are highly detailed, and both woodcut and accompanying text are encased in ornate woodcut borders. It is this increasingly picturesque aspect of the emblem book throughout this period which corresponds so neatly with the similar increasingly picturesque aspect of the successive editions of blasons anatomiques during this same period. If we follow the development in printing of the blasons anatomiques from edition to edition, we find much the same progress takes place as in the development of the printing of the emblem book. The earliest edition of blasons anatomiques dates from 1536 (26). This, like the Steyner edition of the Emblemata is a fairly simple piece of printing. Certainly the woodcut illustrations are there, but they are very basic, and there is little extraneous decoration in the form of ornate borders etcetera. But seven years later when, in 1543, Angelier produced the first of his two editions of the blasons the situation is rather different, and this later edition reflects the development of the decorative woodcut since the earlier date. Just as the plain borders of the Steyner Emblemata were replaced in the later Wechel editions by more ornate borders (and again in 1549 both woodcut and border became even more decorative),

(26) Bodley Hecatomphile
so the relatively plain woodcuts of the *Hecatomphile* editions were transformed by Angelier into something far more ambitious and decorative. Not only are the blocks made more complicated (27), but even more important, the plain rectangular borders are replaced by a series of different decorative borders. There does seem, therefore, to be a close connection between the development of the printing in both these two types of illustrated literature in the mid sixteenth century.

Alciati's emblem book served in itself to create a fashion, and it was quickly emulated in works by other French poets and printers. In particular two French printers specialised in producing such illustrated books - Macé Bonhomme in Lyons and Denis Janot in Paris. In 1539 Janot produced the first French emblem book (as distinct from a mere translation from the Latin of Alciati), Guillaume de la Perrière's *Theatre des bons engins* (28), followed the next year by Gilles Corrozet's *Hecatomgraphie*, (29), the woodcuts of which are tentatively ascribed to Jean Cousin (30). In addition to Aneau's translation of

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(27) Cf. for example the Blason des cheveulx (Bodley Hecatomphile, I r° and 1543 Blasons, A2 r°)


(29) Gilles Corrozet, *Hecatomgraphie c'est a dire les descriptions de cent figures & hystoires, contenant plusieurs apophtegmes proverbes, sentences & dictz tant des anciens que des modernes*, Paris, Janot, 1540, 8°, BN Res Z 2598

L es paroisse Appolo cheueulx.
Voyez les gés yprop adustieux,
A colander tous les membres
du corps,
Sa n'ostent des beaux cheueulx
ou d'ouy.
Voyez sur tous l'en diroict Dieu paré,
A tant etbien fes Mufes préparé
et en formor louegé à eux codignes,
Et s'en la qui luy les corps pl'digne,
Quoique qu'il aye, car sans cheueulx la
Dame
A bon etroit une forest sans rame;
Auec mette pour la Dame honorer,
On en sa counece ainsi à décorer,
Cheueulx dotez rayans sur le Soleil,
D'ambuyans qu'ils font et blouy loeill.
A il
Alciati, Macé Bonhomme also produced in 1553 Guillaume de la Perrière's second emblem book, the *Morosophie* (31), and two years later the curiously named *Pegme* of Pierre Cousteau (32).

All these emblem books follow more or less the pattern established by Alciati (33). As in Alciati's *Emblemata* there is a variety of intent behind the different types of emblems in the French collections. Some are purely decorative — an epigram illustrated by a woodcut (34) — while others, based on the hieroglyphic tradition, consist

(31) Guillaume de la Perrière, *La morosophie...contenant cent embleèmes moraux, illustrez de cent tetrastiques latins, reduitz en autant de quatrains francoys*, Lyons, Bonhomme, 1553, 8°, BN Res p Yc 1652

(32) *Le pegme de Pierre Cousteau*, Lyons, Bonhomme, 1555, 8°, BN Res Ye 1749. The title (derived from *pegma*: a theatrical staging device) is presumably created on an analogy with La Perrière's *Theatre des bons engins*.

(33) Indeed in several cases emblems are taken direct from Alciati. La Perrière's *Theatre des bons engins*, for example, includes Alciati's emblem of the virtuous woman standing near her house, her finger raised to her lips, a key in her other hand, and her foot resting on a tortoise (1531 Alciati, F v°):

'Mais remonstroit aux bien honnestes dames,
Ce que garder leur seroit de besoing.
La tortue dit, que femme n'aille loing,
Le doigt leve, qu'à parler ne s'avance,
La clef en main denote qu'avoir soing
Doibt sur les biens du mary par prudence' 

(Theatre, emblem 18, C7 v° – C8 r°)

(34) For example *Les choses doulces quelque fois deviennent ameres* (1549 Alciati, p.136), or the following emblem *
Presque le semblable. Extraict de Theocrit* (1549 Alciati, p.137) in which the anecdote of Cupid being stung by a bee, and complaining to Venus is narrated.
of an obscure symbolic woodcut representation followed by a descriptive and explanatory poem (35). Similarly the overlap between emblem and bestiary is considerable. La Perrière, for example, includes an emblem in which is depicted the monkey embracing its young, and squashing it to death in an excess of affection (36). In the accompanying verse the moral lesson is explained that parents should not be over indulgent toward their children:

'Si fort le Singe embrasse ses petitz,
Qu'en embrassant il leur livre la mort:
A leurs enfans, que grand malheur en sort.
Par leur cherir de folle amour, trop fort
Dissimuler, souffrir leur insolence,
Advient que quand ilz sont sortis d'enfance
Se font punir de maulx incorrigibles:
Lors n'est pas temps que l'on leur crie & tence
Quand ilz sont cheutz en accidens terribles'

In this same emblem book we find also the eagle, the lark, the camel, the bear cub (37), all of which figure invariably in the bestiary.

In the course of the mid 1550s the emblem book begins to take on a rather different form. Whereas the earlier emblem books covered a wide variety of themes, the later ones tend to deal with more specialised subjects, although the basic technique of illustration plus interpretative verse remains unchanged. The Lyons printer Jean de Tournes, for example, who began to produce emblem books in the 1550s is responsible for two Biblical emblem books, one

(35) Of such a type is La Perrière's emblem of the virtuous woman (Cf. above, chapter VI, footnote 33)

(36) Theatre des bons engins, emblem 47 (G4 v°- G5 r°)

(37) Theatre des bons engins, emblems 32, 34, 69, 98
by Claude Paradin dealing with the Old Testament, (38), and the other by Charles Fontaine dealing with the New Testament (39). The intention in both of these is - like that of the earlier emblem book and the heraldic blason - basically didactic, conveying a moral lesson which can be easily assimilated, and which will make a deeper impression if it is depicted visually as well as intellectually. At the same time the combination of illustration and verse is intended also to be decorative and pleasing to the eye (40), and thus establishes a link between these emblems and the anatomical blason (descendant of the heraldic blason) in which the didactic preoccupation has been wholly superseded by the decorative.

Much the same is true of another emblem book produced rather later, in 1560, by Tournes, Guillaume Guérout's

(38) Claude Paradin, Quadrins historiques de la Bible, Lyons, Tournes, 1558, 8°, BN Res A 7632

(39) Charles Fontaine, Figures du Nouveau Testament, Lyons, Tournes, 1556, 8°, BN Res A 7632 (2)

(40) Fontaine explains the intention behind his emblem book in his preface:
'Les choses d'instruccion qui sont representees a la vue, & par icelle ont entree en l'apprehension, & de là en avant en l'entendement, & puis en la memoire, esmeuvent & inciinent davantage, & demeurent plus fermes & stables, que celles qui ont leur seule entree par l'oreille. À cause de quoy vous ay fait dresser ce present Livret de figures...concernans les principaus articles, mysteres, & points de notre salut... en petis vers, mise brievement au dessouz de chacune d'icelles. Recevez le done, Lecteurs, pour recreacion a l'oeil, ayde a la memoire, & contentement a l'esprit'

(Figures du Nouveau Testament, A2 r° - v°)
Hymnes du Temps & de ses parties (41). Despite the different subject matter (42), the pattern followed is basically the same, although (as we might realise from the title which uses the word *hymnes*) these poems pretend to a greater degree of sophistication and erudition than we have seen hitherto (43). Each aspect of Time is represented by an engraving accompanied by a prose enarration describing the month and its particular characteristics.

The *Hymnes du Temps & de ses parties* is thus at one and the same time both erudite and decorative. The enarration contains the erudite and didactic element (44), while the decorative element is contained in the illustration and in the *hymne* proper. Thus the verse passage on the month of

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(41) Lyons, Tournes, 1560, 4°, BN Res Ye 1152

(42) This is a philosophical emblem book. Illustrated by Bernard Salomon, it consists of a survey of Time in its widest sense. Divided into sections, it deals with Time, Day, Night and the twelve months constituting the cycle of time.

(43) With their altogether elevated and erudite character, although considerably shorter, they reflect perhaps an affinity with the *hymnes-blasons* being produced by Rémy Belleau and Ronsard at about this period (Ronsard's *Bocage* and *Meslanges* appeared in 1554 and 1555 respectively. Cf. below, chapter IX)

(44) The month of November, for example, is described thus:

'En ce mois les Romains souloyent solemniser certaines allegresses appelles Meditrinalia, en la facon que aujourd'hui on celebre les Martinalles, pour le tastement des vins. Ce moys rigoureux & qui nous menace du prochain advenement de l'hyver, clost les ports & navigations, pour estre trop perilleuses. On l'ha consacre à Diane, luy attribuant pour signe le Sagittaire' (p.79)
April, for example, is stripped of any didactic element. It is in fact simply a poem analysing and praising the various features which characterise this month, written in a manner very reminiscent of the later blason:

'O Avril nous te devons
Ce plaisir que recevons
De voir les herbes naissantes,
Et les plantes florissantes
Dont nous journaliers vivons.
Tu fais esjouir les champs
Et reveilles les doux chants
De la gente colombelle.
Cependant que Philomele
Fredonne ses cris trenchans.
Tu espars (d'amour espris
Envers le monde pourpris)
Dessus la terre alteree
Une pluye temperpee,
Qui ne s'egale à nul pris' (45)

In certain of these hymnes we find even the repetitive invocation which characterises the anatomical blason. In the poem on the subject of Time itself, for example, Guérout describes and analyses the characteristics of his subject, following this with an apostrophe in the manner of the anatomical blason:

'Le temps chenu sans plus sera mon argument,
Il le convient chanter, je le veux voirement:
Car par son mouvement & roule & se demeine
Le sort, le destin, l'heure de ceste vie humaine.
O Temps glouton mangeur de l'humaine excellence,
Temps qui l'orgueil abbas d'une grand' violence,
Temps qui peux suffoquer une gloire naissante,
Temps duquel la force est sur toute autre puissante,
Temps qui du haut-tonnant la foudre vengeresse
Dardes (helas) dessus la race pecheresse' (46)

The parallels, then, between emblem and blason would

(45) Hymnes du Temps & de ses parties, pp.46-47
(46) Hymnes du Temps & de ses parties, p.8
seem to be two-fold. Firstly there would seem to be if not a common ancestry, then at least a comparable one. As we have seen, the blason poétique in its heraldic origins was a didactic poem in which the verse passage described and explained the significance of the features depicted in the shield. In the same way the emblem consists of a combination of often hermetic illustration followed by explanatory verse from which society may derive a moral lesson. When we consider the anatomical blason as we know it in the 1530s, we see that although it is plainly descended from the heraldic blason the didactic element has been lost. What does remain, however, is the established form of presentation of decorative woodcut followed by explanatory and interpretative verse. During the period 1530-1550 each successive edition of blasons anatomiques becomes more and more decorative, as does likewise each successive edition of emblems. Both types of literature are moulded by the developing vogue for popular illustrated literature during this period.

* * *

Turning our attention from the emblem to the poetic bestiary, we find much the same characteristics. Pierre Belon is perhaps the most 'scientific' of the sixteenth century writers of treatises on natural science. His treatise on the nature of fish (47) is in prose, but his

(47) La nature & diversite des poissons avec leurs pour-
-traits representez au plus pres du naturel, Paris,
Estienne, 1555, 8°, BN Res S 1004
longer compendium of birds, animals, plants etcetera is written in verse (48). In this treatise the animals are carefully divided into different categories (49), and the illustration (particularly in the case of the birds) is remarkably realistic. Many of the verse descriptions are purely factual. The owl, for example, is described in technical terms:

'La Cheveche a les deux jambes pattues,  
Les piedz peluz, & les doigts my-partiz,  
La queuè courte: au reste mal bastiz  
Sont yeux, & teste & ses pattes pointuës' (50)

and in neither woodcuts nor verse passages is there any concession to gratuitous decoration. The verse passages are brief and to the point, and the woodcuts are there not to make the book more pleasing to the eye, but simply as an aid to provide a more accurate picture than could be conveyed by the printed word alone.

This work is however exceptional, and other sixteenth century bestiaries are on the whole (despite some of their claims) less preoccupied with scientific exactitude, and more interested in achieving that same combination of decorativeness and didacticism which we have already seen in the emblem book. More interesting therefore to this thesis than Belon's treatise on birds and animals is another slightly earlier work by two writers, Barthélémy

(48) Portraits d'oyseaux, animaux, serpens, herbes, arbres, hommes et femmes d'Arable & Egypte, observez par P. Belon du Mans, Paris, Cavellat, 1557, 4°, BN S 5475

(49) For example Des oyseaux de rapine (f.8 r°), Des oyseaux au pied plat (f.29 r°), Des oyseaux au pied fendu (f.40 v°)

(50) Portraits d'oyseaux, f.27 r°
Aneau and Guillaume Guérout, both also authors of emblem books (51). The first part of this work, *Decades de la description, forme et vertu naturelle des animaux, tant raisonnables, que brutz* was produced by Aneau in 1549 (52), and the second part which deals with birds, written by Guillaume Guérout, son-in-law of the printer of the work, Arnoullet, appeared the following year. It is interesting that this second part, written by Guérout, was actually given the title *blason: Second livre de la description des animaux, contenant le blason des oyseaux* (53). Even more didactic than the emblem, these works are intended to describe in the manner of the medieval bestiary the supposed traditional habits of the animal world in order to provide a moral lesson for the edification of mankind. As Guérout explains:

'Suyvant mon desseing, j'ay pris la hardiesse de blasonner & descrire en vers francoys la nature & propriete d'iceux, louant d'aucuns la generosite, & blasmant les imperfections, & vices des autres: pour exciter les hommes a embrasser le mal, & abhorrer le mal' (54)

Once again, therefore, we have in this work the same basic pattern which we have seen in the emblem and in the heraldic *blason* - that of illustration plus poem used to put across a moral lesson. Both sections of this work are

(51) Aneau, *Picta poesis*, Lyons, Bonhomme, 1552, 8°, BN Res p Yc 1234 (9)
Guérout, *Premier livre des emblemes*, Lyons, Arnoullet, 1550, 8°, Arsenal 8° B 33017

(52) Lyons, Arnoullet, 1549, 8°, BN Res Ye 3468

(53) Lyons, Arnoullet, 1550, 8°, BN Res Ye 3468 (2)

(54) *Blason des oyseaux*, A3 r°
resolutely didactic. Indeed in Aneau's section the moral lesson to be derived is given extra stress by being printed in roman while the rest of the verse is in italic. Aneau's work is on the whole more straightforward and less adorned than that of Guérroult, and his verse passages consist largely of straightforward scientific description of each animal, its habits, vices and virtues, and the lesson to be derived from these. There is in all this little extraneous imagery. A typical example is provided by the hedgehog:

'Le herisson n'est si grant, ne si beau
Qu'un Porc espic: mais d'espine poignante
Il ha ainsi herissée la peau,
Que nulle main d'homme n'est empoignante,
Sans recevoir mainte playe saignante' (55)

Only rarely does Aneau depart from this plain style of composition. In his description of the frog he for once allows himself the unusual luxury of onomatopoeia:

'Son cry frequent la pluye prognostique,
Bra ke ke coax crie la nuit!' (56)

and in the pig that of both onomatopoeia and alliteration:

'Le Porc gourmant goulument tout mange,
Et tous jours groigne en sa gorge saoulant' (57)

Compared with that of Aneau, Guillaume Guérroult's treatise on birds, although equally didactic, is far more decorative, both in the woodcuts and in the actual text. The woodcuts, unlike those of Aneau, are encased in decorative borders - again very reminiscent of those of

(55) Decades, C7 v°
(56) Decades, E2 r°
(57) Decades, D2 r°
the emblem and the anatomical blason. The text also is more ornamental than Aneau's; it makes more use of imagery, and there are passages of gratuitous description which although not strictly essential nevertheless add considerably to the charm of the work. The swan, for example, is not simply described as being white in colour, as might have been the case in the work of a more scientifically preoccupied poet such as Aneau. Instead, this bald statement of fact is adorned by a comparison - commonplace certainly, but even so an adornment:

'De beau plumage est le Cigne vestu
Qui en blancheur blanche neige outrepasse' (58)

The Passereau likewise is introduced in a decorative manner, far removed from the straightforwardly scientific:

'Passereau joly, & petit,
Vrayement il me prend appetit
De dire quelle est ta nature' (59)

although in actual content this poem omits none of the usual information about the bird and its habits of building a nest at the top of the tree in order to escape the snares of the birdcatcher, concluding with the conventional moral lesson to be derived from the example of this bird:

'Heureux est qui est sur sa garde' (60)

In this case, however, the distinctly personal, involved slant which Guérout gives to the poem and its overall

(58) Blason des oyseaux, p.7
(59) Blason des oyseaux, p.3
(60) Blason des oyseaux, p.3
decorative character bring it close to the *blason anatomique*. This same consciously decorative tone occurs again in the *Coulombe*, the *Mousche* (61) and the *Perroquet*:

'Sus Perroquet mignon & gracieux
Sortez aux champs: Madame vous demande,
Vous estes verd, vous delectez ses yeux,
Bon bec avez: la langue friande.
Venez mignon, Madame le commande' (62)

and above all in the *Sauterelle*:

'Or sus Sauterelle jolye,
Verdoyante, douce, & polye,
Puis que si bien sauter savez:
Ores ce blason recevez.
Bouche petite, & assez belle,
Qui deux blanches dants dans soy cele' (63)

Hélène Naïs in her thesis on the theme of animals in poetry of the French Renaissance (64), suggests that the use of the word *blason* in the title of Guérout's book is not without significance. She puts forward the theory — a very possible one — that Guérout deliberately chose this title with the express intention of allying these poems with the vogue of equally decorative *blasons anatomiques* rather than with the more purely scientific volucracy of the type produced by Pierre Belon. There is indeed evidence to suggest that this might be the case. References to Madame in the *Perroquet* and certain other poems suggest that this work is not totally devoid of amatory intent, and the overall *mignard* style of the poems

(61) *Blason des oyseaux*, pp.8 and 50
(62) *Blason des oyseaux*, p.37
(63) *Blason des oyseaux*, p.46
(64) Naïs, pp.332-333
quoted above does indeed suggest a considerable affinity with the decorative anatomical blason.

*   *   *

While emblems and bestiaries are popular in France in the 1530s to 1550s, lapidaries date from rather later in the century, and do not really come into vogue before the mid 1570s (65) with the publication of Rémy Belleau's Amours et nouveaux échanges des pierres précieuses (66). Dating from much the same period, but rather different in style is another collection of lapidary verse, Jean de la Taille's Blason des pierres précieuses (67). The first part of this work is a prose treatise on the 'vertuz & proprietez' of various stones. This is followed by a long poem, the Blason de la Marguerite et des autres pierres précieuses (68), which is in fact a synopsis of the prose work. One eight-line stanza is devoted to each stone, describing in each case its colour, the planet to which it is attached and its own particular virtues. The turquoise for example is described thus:

(65) Although Tamizey de Larroque refers to a single lapidary poem, a Blason de la perle by a certain Pierre Merchadier de Bresse, which he found bound together with the works of Jean Rus in the Bibliothèque d'Auch. This poem, dated 1541, would be an exceptionally early lapidary blason.

(66) Paris, Patisson, 1576, 4°, BN Res Ye 583

(67) Included at the end of the Geomance abbréegée... pour savoir les choses passées, présentes & futures, Paris, Breyer, 1574, 4°, BN V 3841

(68) Geomance, f.12 v°
'La Turquoise à l'azur celeste
Rend sans mal nostre cheute, au reste
Phoebus encore, & Juppiter
Fait au Jacinthe ce don de rendre
L'homme aymé, s'il touche à la chair
De l'ejouir, & le deffendre
Du tonnerre à l'éclattant son
De foudre, de peste, & poyson' (69)

The final section of the poem is devoted to the Marguerite or pearl, and in this last part Jean de la Taille makes the association between the virtues and beauties of the stone and those of the princess of that name to whom the whole work is dedicated, Marguerite de Valois. Both precious stone and princess are seen as being supreme among their like:

'Mais sur toutes pierres d'élite
Je veux chanter la Marguerite,
C'est une perle, & une fleur,
Qui en beauté, qui en valeur
Les perles d'Orient efface
Tant soient elles à nos Esprits
De grand' merveille, & de grand prix
De ce Nom j'honore une Royne
En grace, & beauté souveraine
Qui a plus de force, & d'effort
Que tant de pierres qu'on admire,
Qui tous cueurs par sa grace attrait,
Comme à joy la Pantaure attire,
Toutes pierres' (70)

Somewhat startlingly at the very end of the poem, Jean de la Taille suddenly introduces a shift of emphasis, transforming the poem from a neo-scientific compilation into a love poem, by the abrupt introduction of yet another Marguerite - the poet's own mistress. Scientific considerations are thrown to the winds; stones, says the

(69) Geomance, f.14 r°
(70) Geomance, ff.14 v°- 15 r°
poet, are all very well, but the beauty of his own lady can eclipse that of any stone:

'De ce Non j'aime aussi quelqu'une,  
Qui rend par sa beauté clair-brune  
Le clair taint des pierres deffait,  
Qui me fait, & douloir & rire  
Qui range mon cœur & l'attraüt  
Comme l'Ambre, & l'Aimant attire  
A soy l'acier, & le festu,  
N'a elle pas donc grande vertu?' (71)

Here again, then, the ostensibly scientific blason turns out to be nothing of the kind, but reverts once again to being a love poem.

Perhaps the most important difference between this Blason des pierres précieuses and the poems we have been considering earlier is that here there is neither accompanying woodcut nor any decorative border which might contribute to the ornamental aspect of the work. It is possible that the practical difficulties involved in depicting convincingly by a woodcut the various stones is the reason for this lack of illustration. However it seems more probable that this is simply a question of date. By the 1570s the fashion is no longer for literature in which an important role is played by the woodcut illustration of the text. We would suggest rather that this poem reflects the change in emphasis between the 1550s and 1570s in French printing techniques, and in particular in the printing of French poetry. Certainly poetry is still highly decorative at this later period, but by the 1570s this decoration has become internal and erudite, rather than purely graphic. Instead of woodcut

(71) Geomance, f.15 r°
illustration, the poem depends largely upon the use of complicated imagery, and in particular upon erudite anecdote for its decoration. Certainly this is what we see in the hymnes-blasons of the Pléiade. This change of emphasis between the 1550s and the 1570s would seem to be well illustrated in this poem of Jean de la Taille. It is even more apparent in another neo-scientific blason by this same author, his Blason de l'aymant, translated from the Latin poem Magnes by Claudian (72), and also included in the Geomance together with the Blason des pierres précieuses (73). Longer and more involved in construction, it intertwines the theme of the mutual attraction of the magnet with other metals with the obvious parallel of the mutual attraction between man and woman. From the starting point of a lengthy anecdote about two statues of Mars and Venus, the one a magnet and the other made of iron, being drawn together as if by magic (74), the poet develops the theme of the power of love to overcome all things,

(72) Claudii Claudiani opera, quae extant, omnia, Amsterdam, 1760, 4°, p.673
(73) Geomance, f.15 r°
(74) 'Or il y a un Temple auquel Mars, & Venus
Sur un autel dore luysent portraits tous nus
Non d'un mesmes metail: Mars est de fer massif
Et Venus dans l'Aymant est entailleee au vif...
...Quand soudain vous voyez un miracle apparent,
Venus va son mary de soy mesme attirant...
...Et ceignant son armet de sa dextre lascive
Elle l'estraint par tout d'une acollade vive,
Luy donques anime par la force divine
De l'inspiration de sa femme aymantine,
Avec elle se joint d'un larcin amoureux'
(Geomance, f.15 v°)
concluding with a eulogy of love:

'Quelle puissance, Amour, dy moy, t'est deffendue?
Tu surmontes des cieux la foudre descendue,
Tu as le Dieu des Dieux tellement aveuglé
Qu'au milieu de la Mer il à par toy muglé,
Tu fais les pierres mesme, & les rocs échauffer
Et fais regner ton feu dans le marbre, & le fer'

(75) In the case of this poem, certainly, the decoration is internal, derived from the anecdote and from the allusive imagery, and no reliance is placed upon external woodcut illustration as a decorative element.

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The sixteenth century is a period in which any attempt at generalisation is fraught with danger. Certainly we can talk of literary trends in general, but it is only too easy to confound these by citing a retardé poet composing in a style more characteristic of a considerably earlier period (76). Much the same is true of sixteenth century printing. While it is true to say - speaking in general terms - that woodcut illustration largely fell from favour by the 1570s, mention must still be made of such a notoriously old fashioned printing house as that of the Bonfons family. Although this family did print some modern works (77), the bulk of their output took the form of old fashioned works belonging more properly to the first

(75) Geomance, f.16 r°

(76) Jean Bouchet is an obvious example of such a poet who continued to write in a rhétoriqueur style well into the sixteenth century, long after this type of poetry had ceased to be fashionable.

(77) For example the anthology Les fleurs des plus excellents poëtes de ce temps (Paris, Nicolas Bonfons, 1599, 5°, Arsenal 8°B 9916 rés) is a collection of the work of such poets as Sponde, Pibrac and Desportes.
half of the century (78).

It is the Veuve Jean Bonfons who is responsible for the last sixteenth century edition of the blasons anat-
номiques (79). It is again the Bonfons family who were responsible for a series of editions of a curiously old fashioned collection of love casuistry in the form of ventes and demandes d'amour, most of which seem to date from the first half of the century (80). The title of the work as it appears in the Rothschild collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale is La recreation, devis et mignardise amoureuse, contenant plusieurs blasons, menues pensees, verger, ventes, & demandes de l'amant à l'amye, & autres propos amoureux (81). Although the work as a whole is extremely interesting, for the purpose of this thesis it is the 'plusieurs blasons' which are of

(78) For example le recueil de tout soulas et plaisir et parangon de poesie (Paris, Jean Bonfons, 1562, 8°, Arsenal 8° B 9909 rés), or the fourteenth century prose romance Artus de Bretaigne (Paris, Jean Bon-
fons, nd, 8°, BN Res Y°550) etcetera

(79) Les blasons et contreblasons du corps masculin, & feminin, Paris, Veuve Jean Bonfons, nd, 16°, BN Enfer 600


(81) Paris, Veuve Jean Bonfons, nd, 16°, BN Picot 812. This would appear to be the earliest edition, which was followed by three subsequent editions produced in 1575, 1579 and 1581 by her son Nicolas Bonfons (Cf. Lachèvre, Bibliographie des recueils collectifs du XVie siecle, Paris, 4°, 1922, pp.102-104), and by a further three even later editions produced in Lyons (Cf. Lachèvre, pp.102-104).
particular interest. These are firstly the Blason des herbes, arbres & fleurs selon l'ordre alphabétique (82) and secondly the Blason de la ligature du bouquet which follows it (83). More interesting than either of these, however, is the collection of poems entitled in this particular edition Le jardinet ou plaisant verger d'amours (84) but in other editions given the title Blason des fleurs ou sont contenus plusieurs secrets de medecine (85). Similarly, although in the Rothschild edition this Blason is not illustrated by woodcuts, in most of the other editions each individual poem is accompanied by its own woodcut depicting the appropriate flower (86) in a manner reminiscent of Guérout's Blason des oyseaux.

(82) Recreation, devis, F5 r°
(83) Recreation, devis, G5 r°
(84) Recreation, devis, H8 r°
(85) Included in the Recreation, devis (Paris, Nicolas Bonfons, 1575, 16°). I have not been able to locate a copy of this edition cited by Lachèvre (p.102). Two later editions of the work under this title exist in Paris libraries, however: Rouen, Lescuyer, nd, 16°, BN Res p Ye 264 Paris (no printer), 1614, 16°, Arsenal 8° B 11119 rés A copy of yet another edition of the Blason des fleurs (Paris, Nicolas Bonfons, 1580, 16°) has recently come into the possession of M. Georges Heilbrun. This copy (from the recent Esmerillon sale) formed at one time part of the Rahir collection.

(86) According to Lachèvre the 1575 Nicolas Bonfons edition is fig.s bois (p.102). Certainly the 1580 Nicolas Bonfons edition in the collection of M. Heilbrun is illustrated. The Paris, 1614 edition in the Arsenal is illustrated, although the Rouen, nd, edition is not. Reputed to be the finest of all the copies of this work is that in the collection of the late Mlle. Maus of Geneva. Unfortunately I was able to obtain only the vaguest of information about this book from Mlle. Maus before her recent death.
The first Blason des herbes, arbres & fleurs selon l'ordre alphabetique of the Rothschild copy (87) is in fact simply an alphabetical list of flowers, together with the particular significance attributed to each. (Indeed it follows exactly the same pattern as the Exposition des couleurs or Les couleurs deschiffrees du temps du Roy Francoys de France premier de ce nom (88)). An apricot tree, for example, is listed as symbolising disloyalty, while an almond tree means 'noyse & tançon' (89). Over three hundred different significances to be read into the various flowers and fruits are listed in this little work. We might select at random the first few entries under the letter B in order to illustrate the style of this little treatise:

'Basilic, regret.
Basme vous croyez trop de leger.
Bette blanche, le temps se pert.
Bette rouge, n'y pensez plus.
Bouton de rose blanche, je vous ayme.
Bouton seul de rose rouge, angoisse.
Bouton double de rose rouge, occasion' (90)

In the prose treatise entitled the Blason de la ligature du bouquet this theme is taken one stage further, with the author interpreting the symbolic meaning of the

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(87) We have used this copy since it is the earliest and best of the editions which are accessible in Paris libraries. Its major disadvantage is the absence of the woodcuts for the Blason des fleurs, which add considerably to the charm of other editions.

(88) Cf. below, chapter VII, p.274

(89) Recreation, devis, F5 r°

(90) Recreation, devis, F5 v°
various threads which can be used to bind together a bouquet. A red thread, for example, would suggest that the sender is not optimistic about the outcome, but other than this it exercises no particular influence upon the significance of the flowers contained in the bouquet:

'Fil rouge, denote qu'on espere mauvaise responçe, & laisse les blasons en leur valeur' (91)

while a yellow thread, although having no particular significance in its own right, nevertheless serves to underline the symbolic meaning contained in the flowers themselves, if this should be necessary:

'Fil jaune, augmente les blasons, & asseure l'effect & intelligence d'iceux' (92)

Here again we find the word blason being used virtually in its original sense of an interpretation of the significance of a given object.

It is however the Blason des fleurs ou sont contenus plusieurs secrets de medecine which is most interesting, providing as it does a further example of the parallels between poetic blason, emblem, bestiary and calendrier. As in the earlier works we have described, the purpose of the woodcuts is here both decorative and practical. They are at one and the same time pretty - adding to the visual attraction of the book - and also useful, providing a tangible illustration of what is being described in the

(91) Recreation, devis, G6 r°
(92) Recreation, devis, G6 r°
following poem. In the manner of the calendrier (93) each individual fruit or flower is described in the first person, its peculiar characteristics and its particular symbolic value. The lily, for example, describes itself thus:

'Je suis le Lys fleur souveraine,  
Signifiant virginité,  
Remplie de vertu hautaine,  
Ma blancheur n'est que pureté,  
Je n'ayme que sincerité,  
Filles contemplez ce fueillage,  
Si garderez intégrité,  
Ne faisons à Venus hommage' (94)

In this single blason we see the characteristics of many of the poems in this collection - the flower is described, its characteristics (vertu and pureté), its symbolic meaning (virginité), and finally the poem concludes with the moral lesson to be derived from it:

'Filles contemplez ce fueillage,  
Si garderez intégrité,  
Ne faisons à Venus hommage'

Although certain of these blasons resemble rather the epigrammatic emblem (95), and others concentrate on

(93) Cf. for example the Compost et kalendrier des bergères, B4 v:
'Janvier je suis fier et dyvers  
Car en moy est le cœur dyvers  
De neger pluvoir geler fort  
En moy fait yvers son effort'

(94) Recreation, devis, I r°

(95) The Rose rouge, for example, simply narrates the old anecdote of the origin of this flower:
'Autrefois blanche j'ay esté,  
Maintenant rouge devenue,  
Ce fut par un gay este  
Que j'euze ceste desconvenue,  
Scachez qu'Adonis en chair nue,  
Par Venus d'amour folle attainte,  
Pourchassé fut par Ronce dure,  
Dont de son sang ainsi m'a teinte' (I r°)
virtues more medicinal than symbolic (96), the bulk are of the type of the Lys. It is characteristics such as those displayed here which show the affinities of this late collection of blasons with the sixteenth century bestiary and calendrier, and - looking further back - with the earlier heraldic blason interpreting and explaining to mankind the moral lesson to be derived from a coat of arms of Jesus Christ. At the same time, it is the more purely decorative epigrammatic poems in the collection, in which the particular flower is simply praised without any great stress on its actual significance, which show the closest parallel with the equally decorative anatomical blason.

We have attempted to demonstrate in the course of this chapter that the anatomical blasons were not an isolated phenomenon in the sixteenth century. As we have

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(96) Bugloss, for example, is excellent for palpitations of the heart:

'Si tu as tremblement de cueur,
Prenez moy de l'eau de la Buglose,
Et me boy de ceste liqueur,
Tu guariras, affermer l'ose:
Car il n'y a meilleur chose
Pour mauvais sang mundifier,
Si tu en uses seras cause
De ton cerveau rectifier' (I3 r°)

while the periwinkle is good for both stomach and teeth:

'Pervenche en un lieu delectable
Et gay, pres de terre provient,
De figure, & couleur semblable
Au Laurier, si bien m'en souvient:
Vertu de desseicher contient,
Douleur de ventre met arriere,
Et des dents, si le mal vous tient,
Contre venin fort singuliere' (I2 r°)
endeavoured to show, they do, on the contrary, form part of a fashion for illustrated poetry which was particularly rife in France in the mid sixteenth century, and they have close affinities with other branches of illustrated poetry equally popular at this period. There is a very apparent common ground between the descriptive and interpretative emblem and the equally interpretative traditional blason. In both cases the poem serves to explain the lesson to be derived from the woodcut illustration, and indeed the connection between emblem and heraldic blason is, as we have seen, further emphasised by those emblems of Alciati which are incorporated into a heraldic framework. The blasons anatomiques, descendants of the earlier, more purely interpretative blasons, are likewise closely connected to the emblem not so much through their content, but rather by virtue of their particular form of construction, since both must be regarded as manifestations of a mid century preoccupation with decorative, illustrative printing in which woodcut and verse are mutually complementary. Similarly Guillaume Guérout's Blason des oyseaux underlines the connection between bestiary and blason, combining as it does the scientific preoccupation of the one with the decorative preoccupation of the other. Intended as a sequel to Aneau's bestiary, it examines and analyses the behaviour of the birds, drawing from this a moral for the improvement of mankind. Both as a piece of printing and as a piece of poetry it is, however, far more gratuitously decorative than Aneau's bestiary. The woodcuts
are there to provide decoration as much as insight into
the physical appearance of the bird, while this decor-
-ative element is further increased by the woodcut borders
which surround each illustration. In theme also the blasons
of Guéroult are more decorative than the austere verse of
Aneau, and some indeed are unblushingly amatory in
inspiration.

We would therefore suggest that the blason anatomique
is not the isolated phenomenon that critics would have it
be. Not only does it have its own pre-history, but it also
fits into a wider category of illustrated poetry as
epitomised by the emblem, the bestiary, the calendrier
etcetera, all enjoying a wave of popularity in the mid
sixteenth century in France.
CHAPTER VII Development of the blason poétique in the mid sixteenth century

After the sudden burst of popularity for the blason anatomique in the mid 1530s, the blason gradually returned from this very narrowly defined field of reference to what it had been earlier - a descriptive poem analysing and explaining a particular subject which could be taken from any field the author cared to choose. No longer is the blason a love poem; instead it can - and indeed does - range over a wide variety of subjects, describing and illustrating many aspects of sixteenth century life. Perhaps, indeed, this is one of the major charms of these mid century blasons, giving as they do an insight into such social questions as ladies' clothes, gentlemen's hairdressing, styles of furniture, as well as embracing the more serious topic of religious controversy.

In certain of these blasons the material is presented in a straightforward manner, whereas in others the intention of the poet is clearly satirical. Thus, for example, Jacques du Pouilloux describes and analyses the life and habits of the huntsman in his Blason du veneur (1) without any satirical overtones, whereas the anonymous manuscript Blason de la putain (2) similarly analyses the life and habits of the prostitute, but this time with a clearly satirical slant. Similarly a religious theme can

(1) Jacques du Fouilloux, La venerie, Poitiers, Marnef, 1561, in-folio, BN Res S 156, p.54
(2) BN Ms.fr.22565, p.109; BN Ms.fr. 22560, f.141 r°
be treated seriously by Eustorg de Beaulieu in his Souverain blason d'honneur à la louange du tresdigne corps de Jesus Christ (3), but also in a satirical manner in three anonymous poems, the Blason du bonnet carré (4), the Blason du gobellet (5) and the Blason du platellet (6). For convenience, therefore, we shall discuss the non-satirical mid century blasons in this chapter, before dealing with the satirical blasons in the chapter which follows.

* * *

Although the blason in general returns to treating a wider range of subject matter, the anatomical blason is not in fact completely eclipsed. We mentioned in an earlier chapter the difficulties encountered by the anatomical blasonneurs in finding a fresh part of the female anatomy to praise (7). Gilles d'Aurigny, for example, solved the problem by selecting such an obscure part of the anatomy as the finger nail as the subject of his blason. Other poets resolved the difficulty by broadening their terms of reference and describing not an actual part of the anatomy, but instead a particular object closely associated with the lady. Thus, for example,

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(3) Cf. above, chapter I, footnote 35
(4) Montaiglon, vol.I, p.265
(5) Np (Lyons), 1562, 8°, BN Picot 2952
(6) Np (Lyons), 1562, 8°, Bibliothèque Méjanes (Aix) no.27392 (Reprinted in Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.351)
(7) Cf. above, chapter IV, p.168
the Espingle and the Anneau (8) or Bérenger de la Tour's Miroir (9) reflect the natural extension of the blason anatomique. As Salel explains in the Anneau, he could not presume to describe and praise a part of his lady's anatomy, since this had already been done abundantly by earlier blasonneurs:

'Je n'oseroys apres tant bons espritz,
Mettre en avant mes imperfectz escriptz
Pour blasonner quelque membre ou partie
Du femenin' (10)

Instead he elects to examine a piece of jewelry which is closely associated with her:

'Tant seulement pour le commencement.
M'essaieray, a louer lornement
Le plus petit mais le plus precieux,
Joignant de pres au corps tant gracieux
De ma maistresse' (11)

The ring is of course little more than a pretext, and the poem develops into an alternating description of the beauties of the ring and - more important to the poet - the beauties of its owner, with whom the ring enjoys a familiarity denied to the lover-poet. Thus Salel describes the beauty of the richly ornate ring worn by his lady:

'Aneau dor fin en forme rondelet,
Sur qui lorfevre a mainct jour travaillé.
Aneau bien faict, & trop myeulx esmaillé,
Et enrichy de perle orientalle,
D'une turquoyse, esmeraulde royalle' (12)

(8) Oeuvres, Paris, Roffet, 1539, 8°, BN Res Ye 1666, ff. 58 r°- 60 r°
(9) Le siécle d'or, et autres vers divers, Lyons, Tournes and Gazeau, 1551, 8°, BN Res Ye 1653, p. 211
(10) Salel, f.58 r°
(11) Salel, f.58 r°
(12) Salel, f.58 r°- v°
and at the same time - as it were incidentally - the delights of the lady herself:

'Aneau tu as privilège & franchise
Du corps toucher si près de la chemise,
Et bien souvent sans penser mallefice
Daller taster la dure & ronde cuisse,
Le blanc tetin, le stomac, & le ventre,
Et approcher de ce beau corps le centre,
Ou gist lespoir des amans affligez' (13)

In Salel's second blason, the Espingle, this convention whereby the poet envies the lot of the chosen object more favoured than himself is even more apparent. As the poet remarks:

'Tu es au lever & coucher
De ma maistresse, ou approcher
Je n'ose qu'une foys l'année' (14)

Despite the title Blason de l'espingle, only the first four lines are devoted to a description of the actual pin, after which the poet is free to enumerate and describe the considerably more interesting delights of the lady herself:

'Premier le front ample & poly
Quand tu le serres d'une toille,
Se monstre plus clair que le stoille.
Apres tu tiens le chaperon,
Et la doreure d'envyron,
Qui donne lustre & doux umbraige
A cest angelique visage' (15)

Very similar in tone, although rather later in date is the Blason du miroir of Bérenger de la Tour d'Albenas, first printed in 1551, twelve years after the poems of Salel. Here again the poet envies the familiarity

(13) Salel, f.58 v°
(14) Salel, f.59 r°
(15) Salel, f.59 r°- v°
with his mistress enjoyed by the object in question—in this case her mirror. As in the poems of Salel, praise of the mirror simply provides a starting point for praise of the poet's lady, as seen reflected in the face of the mirror:

'Heureux miroir, ô miroir bienheureux,
Representant le visage amoureux
De ma maistresse: oseray je entreprendre
A l'Univers faire lire & entendre
Combien de loz, & de faveur as tu?
Combien aussi est grande ta vertu?
Certes ouy: car aux louenges tiennes,
Celle que j'ayme y pourra voir les siennes' (16)

The Miroir is considerably longer than the two blasons by Salel or than the average anatomical blason. (In this it reflects a general tendency of the later blasons composed in the 1550s to be longer than those of the 1530s.) Thus although it is primarily a love poem, Bérenger de la Tour can afford to spend more time on his description of the actual mirror itself. Not only is the mirror seen as a useful object, enabling the lady to see more clearly her outward appearance:

'Miroir mignon, des dames renommees,
En est il une au monde sage & belle
Qui au matin doucement ne t'appelle
Pour assister quand se pigne, ou s'habilie?
Par ton conseil plus bel lustre se donne:
Et avec eaux les macules efface,
Enlaidissants sa venerique face:
Par ton conseil se farde & espoussette,
Et ses sourcilz reforme à la pincette:
Puis mainte espingle accoustre: & ne fait chose
Que ton conseil premier ne le dispose' (17)

but in addition to this it has other less tangible qualities which permit her to see beyond the purely

(16) Siècle d'or, p.211
(17) Siècle d'or, p.213
physical. By contemplating herself in her mirror, says the poet, the lady can learn to know herself inwardly as well as outwardly:

Divin miroir des vices repreneur, 
Reformateur, unique entrepreneur 
Sus les plus grans...

...Miroir muet qui mieux dits & harangues, 
Que ceux qui ont multitude de langues: 
Tu es aveugle, & si y vois trop mieux, 
Que ceux qui ont grand multitude d'yeux 
O haut miroir, miroir haut & supreme, 
Oeuvre inventé pour connoître soymesme' (18)

Thus we find introduced into this essentially amatory blason an almost didactic note reminiscent of the type of poem discussed in the previous chapter.

It is interesting to note that Bérenger de la Tour describes the details of how a lady goes about her toilet straightforwardly, and without any visible signs of the distaste and disgust characteristic of most poets of this period who take their lead from the attitude expressed by Ovid. Unlike Ovid, Bérenger de la Tour is quite happy to see his mistress crimping her hair and plucking her eyebrows, and using cosmetics to enhance her beauty.

Less skilful a poet than Salel, Bérenger de la Tour fails to achieve in his Miroir the lightness of touch or the delicate charm of Salel's two blasons. At times, indeed, the poet relapses into a heavy handed pedantry reminiscent of the occasional clumsinesses of certain of the anatomical blasonneurs. We think inevitably of a Sagon or a Le Lieur when we read the somewhat uninspired

(18) Siècle d'or, pp.215-216
On the other hand, Bérenger de la Tour is equally susceptible to falling into the opposite snare, losing himself — and the reader — in a tangle of would-be petrarchan conceits:

'Miroir loué: miroir de froide glace
Que ne crains tu fondre en la same flamme
Ou mon coeur ard, non mon coeur seul, mais l'ame?
Certes miroir, elle est froide & toy froid,
Car sans cela ta matiere fondroit
Comme la neige au feu: mais toujours vient
Que le glacon, de glacon s'entretient:
O quel malheur! Madame se congele
En ma grand flamme, & je brule au glas d'elle' (20)

In an appendix to his *Opere minori di Maurice Scève* (21) Giudici reproduces an anonymous poem which he found in a manuscript in Valence (22), in a collection of poetry entitled *Sonnetz chrestiens de l'évêque de Riez* (Lancelot de Carles) à la Royne, mère du Roy, which includes also works by Magny and Ronsard among others. This poem is entitled *Blason d'une chemise en gran vertu merité*, and the only key to its authorship is the device *Ainsi ou non*. This same device appears in the similarly entitled *Petit oeuvre d'amour, et gaije d'amytie* (23). Both the

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(19) *Siecle d'or*, p.216
(20) *Siecle d'or*, p.215
(21) Giudici, pp.689-691
(22) *Bibliothèque de Valence Ms.9 (C 4)*
(23) Paris, Longis and Barbedorge, 1537, 16° (Reprinted Lyons, 1927, *BN Res p Ye 695*)
Petit oeuvre and the blason Giudici hesitates to ascribe to Scève - for the blason at least is very different from the five known blasons by Scève, being more obviously sensual and licentious. Instead he suggests tentatively that both the Petit oeuvre and the blason might rather be the work of Lancelot Carle. Indeed the Blason d'une chemise is not unlike the other two blasons which are attributed to Carle, the Genoïl and the Pied (24). The tortuously verbose introduction of the Chemise, for example:

'S'il est ainsi qu'un corps pour sa vertu,  
Rende l'habit duquel il s'est vestu  
Digne d'honneur et louange immortelle,  
Qu'en dirons nous, voyant que tu es telle.  
Que le haut Dieu a ta creation  
Te delaissa, pour ta perfection,  
Toutes vertus comme chose promise?' (25)

is reminiscent of the similarly circumlocutory introduction to the Pied in which the poet does not mention the vital word until the seventeenth line.

There is a further slight change in emphasis in this blason from those of Salel and Bérenger de la Tour. Usually in the amatory blason the object being praised by the poet is either an actual part of the lady or something which is closely associated with her. Here, however, the object is no longer in the possession of the lady. Instead it is a chemise which has been given to the poet by the lady. This granting of a favour by the lady is unusual in a blason; the only other instance of this is

(24) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, L3 r₀ and L3 v₀
(25) Giudici, p.689
in Saint Gelais' Cheveulx in which the subject of the poem is a single lock of hair which the poet has received from his lady.

The Blason d'une chemise is an extremely sensual poem. It dwells with obvious pleasure upon the vision of the lady in her bed, her body hidden only by the chemise in question:

'Tu as souvent, la nuit estant venue,
   Veu ceste dame en son lict tout nue
   Et bien souvent sa tendre chair touoee
   Quand tu estoys auprez d'elle couchee
Tu as aussi veu souvent au matin
Dessus ce corps un tant joly tettin
Qu'il n'est vivant en ce monde mortel
Qui ne voulsist avoir un bonheur tel.
Puis que plus est, ce corps tant descouvert
En se levant de toy las c'est couvert.
Qui est un cas tropz mieux a moy duysant' (26)

The poet then turns his attention to describing the intense joy he feels when in his turn he can take the chemise to bed with him:

'Ne me peult-on a bon droict maintenir
   Bien fort heureux, dont je te puis tenir
   Et dont je puis au soir, quand je me couche
Auprez de moy te mettre dans ma couche?' (27)

concluding with the inevitable wish!

'Que pleust a Dieu que chemise je feusse
  A celle fin que telz biens je receusse
  Pour en ton lieu servir de corps et d'ame.
  Je te promectz, ma maistresse madame,
  D'avant qu'il feust cinq ou six jours passez
  Que celluy-la que tu cognois assez,
  Lequel pour toy a icy la main mise,
  Te porroit plus servir que la chemise.
  Ainsi ou non!' (28)

(26) Giudici, p.690
(27) Giudici, p.690
(28) Giudici, p.691
Although considerably more sensual than most of the anatomical blasons - the poet makes hardly a token reference even to the intrinsic merits of the chemise, being interested only in the description of the physical contact it has had with his lady - it does nevertheless follow the basic pattern present in all the anatomical blasons, that of minute description and adulation of one particular object as representative of all the charms of the poet's mistress.

All these poems, then, show a common theme, developing as they do from the rather earlier conventional blasons anatomiques. Equally written as love poems, they analyse and praise the beauties of the chosen lady no longer directly, as had been the case with the blasons anatomiques, but rather indirectly, taking as their pretext an object closely associated with the particular lady, and through praise of the beauties of the object expressing also their praise of the beauty of the lady.

* * *

A further development from the conventional blason anatomique is reflected in Maclou de la Haye's Cinq blasons des cinq contentemens en amour which, like Bérenger de la Tour's Blason du miroir, dates from the 1550s (29). In these five poems the poet describes and praises the senses, being intent on depicting a much more idealised, neo-platonic attitude to love than that of

(29) Maclou de la Haye, Œuvres, Paris, Groulleau, 1553, 8°, BN Res p Ye 379, ff.27 v-30 v
the anatomical blasonneurs (30), although at times he does
descend to a purely physical love, as for example in the
last of the five, the Embrassement:

'Embrassement de beaux longs dois polys
Et de la main plus blanche que le lys,
Qui fretillant dans la neige et l'ivoyre
Le cœur chatouille à sa future gloire,
Lequel pressé doucement se débat
Impatient de la fin du combat' (31)

Pike, in his article on the blason in the Romanic Review
(32) is perhaps needlessly damning on the subject of these
five poems. 'The first four' he says 'are in the worst
style of the Italian concetti manufacturers', although
he does reluctantly concede that the last one, the
Embrassement, 'contains some quite gracious comparisons
and figures' (33). They are of course, as Pike says, insp-
-ired by the Italian style. However, they are not, as he
would suggest, made up simply of a series of common-
-places devoid of any depth of meaning. The analogy
between the lady's eye and the sun is a traditional
petrarchan theme, but Maclou de la Haye uses it in a
manner more meaningful than Pike would lead us to expect,
with the light of the sun/eye penetrating through the
darkest depths of the universe:

(30) Although certain parallels could be suggested
between these five blasons and the equally
unusual blasons of Maurice Scève
(31) Maclou de la Haye, Oeuvres, f.30 r°
(32) Pike, Blasons, pp.223-242
(33) Pike, Blasons, p.234
"Regard aygu à la force asseurée  
Contre les rais de la torche étherée,  
Et qui descend par sa vivacité  
Au fond plus creux du val précipité,  
Perçant l'espace du corps de l'univers  
De part en part non lucide au travers"  (34)

Similarly, although the terms used in the image of the ear in the second contentement, the Ouye, are petrarchan, the effect is more convincing than that of the usual Italian conceit:

"Ouye assise au chef de la beauté  
Dedans le clos d'honneste privauté,  
Et située en deux fosses petites  
Sous un silence à costé des Charites,  
Que les rameaux d'un boys mouvant tout d'or  
Vont ombrageant & le blanc marbre encor'  
En la façon que le fleuve ondoyant  
Orne le flanc de son bort tournoyant"  (35)

All five blasons are imbued with a delicate melancholy - that of the faithful lover who realises that the aim which he is seeking is an unattainable one. The first four all end on a pleading but essentially hopeless note:

Regard:

"Regarde moy, seiche mes tristes larmes  
Contre le mal, foibles & vaines armes,  
Oste l’ardeur qui m’esblout, a fin  
Que de mon deuil je puisse voir la fin"  (36)

Ouye:

"Escoute un peu le torment de mon ame  
Souffrant passer les souspirs de ma flame,  
Escoute moy je te pry' par pitié  
Pour conforter l'atente d'amytié"  (37)

(34) Maclou de la Haye, Oeuvres, f.27 v°  
(35) Maclou de la Haye, Oeuvres, f.28 r°  
(36) Maclou de la Haye, Oeuvres, f.28 r°  
(37) Maclou de la Haye, Oeuvres, f.28 v°
Ris:
'Ris ouvre moy ton celeste sejour
Descouvre moy le serain de ton jour
Parmy l'obscur de mon dolent esmoy
Lequel ne soit entendu que de moy' (38)

Voix:
'Apelle moy reconfortante voix,
Apelle moy seulement une foys,
Ou responds moy & tempere ta flame
Flame qui mord jusque au centre de l'ame' (39)

This melancholy note is very different from the cheerfully licentious note of the majority of the anatomical blasons, and in particular of the Blason d'une chemise. The fifth contentement, the Embrassement, is different once again from the preceding four; infused throughout with neo-platonic ideas, it contains a masterly description of the climax to which the first four have been leading:

'Embrassement ou heureuse acollée,
D'une moytié à sa moytié collée,
Qu'un bras vainqueur & vaincu va pressant
Deux blancs coustaux d'un effort repressant,
Et qui estraingt l'albastre & le porphire
Sous le souspir d'un languissant Zephire...

...Embrassement de roses separées,
Ou vont errant deux ames esgarees
De corps en corps sur les flammes d'Amour
Estant souvent tardives du retour' (40)

A further blason which might be mentioned here briefly belongs only marginally to this group of amatory blasons by virtue of its title, Blason d'amour faict en vers alexandrins. Printed only in Charles de la Hueterie's Protologies francaises (41) it was not included in any of the sixteenth century collections of blasons, and has

(38) Maclou de la Haye, Oeuvres, f.29 r°
(39) Maclou de la Haye, Oeuvres, f.29 v°
(40) Maclou de la Haye, Oeuvres, ff.29 v°- 30 r°
(41) Protologies, C5 r°- C6 r°
subsequently escaped the notice of all critics with the exception of Lachevre, who reproduced it in his Bibliographie des recueils collectifs de poésies du XVIe siècle (42). Despite its title, it is not a love poem in the manner of the anatomical blasons. Instead it treats in a ponderous manner, which is in no way helped by the Alexandrines in which it is written (43), the already well worked theme of the helplessness of man against the onslaught of Cupid's arrows. After the initial prick, deceptively pleasant at first, the poison gradually permeates through the whole body, so that eventually man is held powerless in the grip of Cupid. This La Hueterie laboriously expounds:

'Le subtil coup mortel ung peu apres sentu
Commence son effort & monstre sa vertu:
Car par loeil messager de desiree chose
Envenyme le sang ou lame s'est enclose,
Tant que lentendement de ses sens delaisse
Demeure sans raison presque tout insensé...
...Il fault qu'amour soit maistre & n'est subject a rien
En langueur consumant hors & dedans tout bien
Perdre Ion vouldroit tout pour avoir seullement
Ce qu'on cuyde bien estre ung grant contentement
Registrar on ne peult a sa grant violence,
Mais de plus en plus fort son secret feu accense'

(44)

It is a curious fact - and apparently an inexplicable one - that La Hueterie should have used the terms blason and contreblason to denote his anatomical poetry, while at the same time using it here in the loosest sense of a

(42) Lachèvre, p.46

(43) The very length of the lines serves to distinguish this poem from the conventional love blason which is invariably written in octosyllabics or decasyllabics

(44) Protologies, C5 v0
vaguely descriptive poem. Certainly this poem has little in common — other than its rather ambiguous title — with the more conventional amatory blasons.

With the exception of this last poem, all the blasons we have discussed in this chapter show a close affinity with the anatomical blason. Essentially love poems, they are in fact an extension of the blason anatomique, describing and praising no longer a part of the chosen lady, but instead an object closely associated with her. From this initial pretext the poet is able to pass almost imperceptibly to description and praise of the lady herself, in the manner of the original anatomical blason. In the mid sixteenth century, however, these purely amatory blasons developing from the blason anatomique become rather more rare, and they are superseded by blasons dealing with more general subjects.

* * *

Even in the amatory blasons of Salel or Bérenger de la Tour d'Albenas we find emerging — albeit incidentally — a fairly clear picture of certain aspects of sixteenth century life. Salel, for example, describes in his Anneau the various types of rings which a lady might possibly wear on her finger, while Bérenger de la Tour describes the different types of mirror which she might use. But it is from those blasons which are not essentially love poems that a picture of sixteenth century social habits emerges most clearly. No longer incidental, it becomes fundamental to the poem. Perhaps the best example of such poems is
provided by Gilles Corrozet's *Blasons domestiques* (45) describing piece by piece in a series of short poems the various rooms of the house and the furniture contained in each. In the traditional manner common to the emblem, the bestiary and the *blason* these poems follow the pattern of illustrative woodcut followed by a descriptive and explanatory poem. (It is in fact the interest and charm of these woodcuts rather than anything else which inspired the Société des Bibliophiles français to reprint this work in 1865 (46).)

Corrozet says in his preface to the work that it is intended merely to amuse the reader, and to enable him to see what a well ordered and well appointed house can be like, even if he is not fortunate enough to possess one
himself:

"Vous avez icy, Lecteurs, pour recreer vos gentilz esperitz, les blasons du mesnage & aultres utilitez servantes à la chose domestique & familiere, lesquelz je vous dedie par obligation de vous donner passetemps. Et combien que l'invention soit petite, toutesfoys plaisante & recreative...Ostez doncque toute detraction, & recevez ce traicté joyeusement, affin que si vous n'estes bien emmesnagez par effect, vous le soyez par escript, non moïns digne d'estre leu, que l'auttre digne d'estre possédé" (47)

Despite the suggestion of entertainment and amusement, these poems are also essentially didactic in content. They are conceived very much in the manner of the earlier heraldic blason or the bestiary, in which the object is depicted, described, and finally its moral significance explained. In this case Corrozet simply substitutes rooms and furniture for the more traditional shield or animal, but the principle followed is the same. A singularly puritanical writer, Corrozet disapproved of the popularity of the anatomical blasons and the Blasons domestiques include at the end a poem entitled Contre les blasonneurs des membres (48) which is a direct attack on these poems whose licentious tone he deplores:

"On le congnoist je ne scay quelz Rithmeurs, Tous corrumpuz de parolle & de meurs, Ne font escriptz que de choses trop vaines, En corrumpant toutes vertus humaines: L'ung sentremect de d'escrire ung Tetin, Et l'auttre ung ventre aussi blanc que satin L'ung painct les yeulx l'auttre les cheveulx blondz, L'auttre le nez, l'auttre les genoulx rondz" (48)

(47) Blasons domestiques, A2 v°- A3 v°
(48) Blasons domestiques, f° 38 r°
Mais plus cela tend à concupiscence
Qu'a demontrer de beaulte l'excellence...
...Les noms sont beaulx qu'appropria Nature,
Aux membres bas de toute creature,
Mais blasonner ces membres veneriques,
Les exaltant ainsi que deiffiques,
C'est une erreur & une yolalrie,
Dequoy la terre à dieu vengeance crie! (49)

It seems possible, therefore, that like La Hueterie's
blasons, the Blasons domestiques were also intended to
serve as an antidote to the supposedly immoral blasons
anatomiques.

The form of presentation of Corrozet's blasons is not
original; they follow the traditional lay-out of illustr-
ation followed by descriptive and explanatory verse pass-
age. The subject matter likewise is not original;
illustrations and descriptions of the house and its various
parts are not uncommon in the sixteenth century. The
external view of a house figures frequently in treatises
on architecture - although here they are generally more
grandiose in scale than Corrozet's relatively modest little
house depicted in the woodcut accompanying the Blason de
la maison and the Honneur de la maison (50). We are
reminded of Charles Estienne's Maison rustique (51) in
which much space is devoted to details of the actual
construction of the house, the type of soil on which it
should be situated, the direction it should face, and so
on. The importance of such geographical considerations

(49) Blasons domestiques, f.39 r°- v°
(50) Blasons domestiques, f.4 r° and f.37 r°
(51) L'agriculture et maison rustique...en laquelle est
contenu tout ce qui peut estre requis pour bastir
maison champestre, Paris, Du Puis, 1564, 4°, BN
S 4430
is not overlooked by Corrozet:

'Maison bastie & faicte fortement,
Sur ung tresbon & ferme fondement.
Maison construite en ung aer de plaisance,
Ou maulvais ventz ne font jamais nuisance.
Maison ayant sa veue & son regard
Vers Orient, & quand le soleil part
De son lever, il enlumine & lustre
Ceste maison tant insigne & illustre.
'Maison de pris, bien paincte à l'antiquaille,
Maison construite avec pierre de taille.
Pierre de lyes, de marbre, & d'autre sorte,
Ayant d'entree une assez large porte' (52)

Estienne's treatise dates from some years after Corrozet's work, the French edition appearing only in 1564, and even the original Latin text dating from only ten years earlier (53). But Columella's very similar treatise, on which much of Estienne's is based, was already well known in France in the 1530s (54). Both these works are certainly very different from that of Corrozet in intent; both are highly technical prose treatises on the mechanics of living in the country. But in the woodcut illustrations of the house, and in the detailed description of the site, the building materials, and the actual house itself, there are certain parallels between them.

Similarly detailed woodcut illustrations of the interior of a house are not unknown at this period. Viator includes in his treatise on perspective (55) a view of the

(52) _Blasons domestiques_, ff.4 v° - 5 r°
(53) _Praedium rusticum_, Paris, Estienne, 1554, 8°, BN Res S 1069
(54) The Latin text was printed in Paris in 1529 (De re rustica, Paris, Badius, 1529, in-folio, BN Res S 279), although the French translation (Les douze livres de... Columella des choses rustiques, Paris, Kerver, 1552, 4°, BN S 4400) did not appear until 1552
(55) _De artificiali perspectiva_, Toulouse (no printer), 1509, in-folio, BN Res V 167
interior of a bedroom in which are depicted already much
the same pieces of furniture as we find later in Corrozet's
woodcut and description of the bedroom. In Viator's bed­
room we see the heavy table, the banc, and the large
open fireplace as described by Corrozet all depicted in
one large woodcut, and resumed in the couplet at the foot
of the page:

'Ci voit on la propre figure
Dune chambre et sa garniture' (56)

Neither in form, therefore, nor in subject matter is
Corrozet original. The technique of woodcut plus illus­
-rative poem is that of the bestiary and the traditional
blason while the subject matter is that of a Columella,
an Estienne or a Viator. Corrozet does, however, show
considerable ingenuity and originality in the blending
together of these two elements in the Blasons domestiques,
in which detailed woodcut illustration of the house and
its component parts is allied with a didactic poem desc­
-ribing these and interpreting their significance in
moral terms.

The poems follow the pattern of the anatomical
blason, with the illustration of the particular object
being followed by description and enthusiastic praise for
its particular qualities and virtues. But for Corrozet
the beauties of the object he is praising reside for the
most part in its practical, utilitarian aspect rather
than in the more purely decorative and non-productive

(56) Viator, B3 r°
aspects. The chair, for example, is praised for its usefulness:

'Chaire belle, Chaire gentile, Chaire de façon tressutile' (57)

while the table is pleasing to the eye not so much for its polished appearance as for the diligent housework which this reflects:

'Table clere, table luysante, Table à la chambre bien duysante, Table tous les jours bien frotée, Table sur deux treteaux portée' (58)

The chambre also is pleasing and beautiful to the eye of the poet not for itself but because of the hard work and good housekeeping it shows:

'Chambre natée en toute place. O Chambre de tant bonne grace' (59)

Underlining this theme, a whole blason is devoted to the virtues of a good verge a nectoier, of prime importance to the upkeep of a good clean house:

'Verge de flexible briere Verge qui ne laisses derriere, Le duvet, la pouldre & l'ordure, Tant que chascun de tes brins dure' (60)

The Blasons domestiques are highly moral in tone - deliberately so, in answer to the licentious tone of the blasons anatomiques. Corrozet does, however, allow himself to describe the delights of a comfortable bed in tones rather less puritanical than is normal for the collection.

(57) Blasons domestiques, f.18 v°
(58) Blasons domestiques, f.20 r°
(59) Blasons domestiques, f.15 r°
(60) Blasons domestiques, f.26 v°
as a whole:

'Lict delicat, doulx & mollet
Lict de duvet si tredouillet,
Lict de plume tant bonne & fine,
Lict d'un coustil blanc comme ung Cigne,
Lict dont ce blanc coustil incite
De dormir quand il est licite...

...Lict dont les draps (comme on demande)
Sentent la rose & la lavende.
Lict dont la riche couverture
Registre contre la froidure,
Et musse les corporelz membres.
O lict le parement des chambres' (61)

But even this poem ends on a firmly virtuous note. The bed which in the anatomical blason had been a symbol of forbidden pleasure (62) becomes here the symbol of marital love:

'Lict tresgentil tant qu'il peut estre,
Lict beneist de la main du prebstre,
Lict separé de tout delict
O lict pudique, O chaste lict
Ou la femme & le mary cher
Sont joinctz de Dieu en une chair,
Lict d'amour sainct, lict honorabile,
Lict somnolent, lict venerable,
Gardez vostre pudicité
Et evitez lascivite,
Affin que vostre honneur pulule
Sans recepvoir nulle macule' (63)

In the Blason du placet the attitude of the poet is closer to that of the anatomical blasonneurs. The placet is apostrophised with a reference to the poet's lady:

'Je te supplye que m'amye
Ung jour sur toy trouve endormie
Affin que la puisse baisser,
Pour mon mal d'amour appaiser' (64)

(61) Blasons domestiques, ff.16 v° - 17 r°
(62) Cf. for exemple Bérenger de la Tour's Miroir or the anonymous Blason d'une chemise
(63) Blasons domestiques, f.17 v°
(64) Blasons domestiques, f.26 r°
In the *Blason de la cuysine* (65) also, Corrozet allows himself to dwell on the variety of rich foods to be found there, listing first the different meats:

'...en ce lieu on embroche
Lievres, Connilz, Oisons, Perdrix, Faisantz,
Pigeons, Bizetz (ce sont oyseaulx plaisantz)
La sont rostiz Sarcelles & Plouviers
Paons & Herons (o quelz beaulx espreviers)
Mieulx vault cela que racines d'hermites' (66)

and then the various kinds of fish:

'La peult on veoir l'anguille & la Lamproye
Dequoy la bouche & le ventre font proye
Le Saulmon frais, la Carpe camusette
Le gros Brochet, la Soille fringalette
Le Marsoin gras, l'Alose savoureuse
Puis l'Esturgeon & la Truite amoureuse
Les uns bouillis & les aultres rostis
Pour aguiser les humains appetis' (67)

It is with obvious epicurean pleasure that Corrozet lists all these succulent foods, curiously at odds with the overall puritanical vein. Yet even here he does not neglect the moral lesson which is the object of these *blasons*, and after working up to a bacchic climax:

'Ceres fournit de pain, & blanc & bis.
Le dieu Bacchus au nez plein de rubis
Verse le vin, quand il en a gouste,
Car sans cela tout le reste est gasté' (68)

the poem concludes with an abrupt return to earth as Corrozet urges the reader to be content with his lot:

'Pour fin de compte (ung chascun j'en veulx croire)
Si maintes gentz avoient tel ordinaire
Sy plantureux, que nous avons icy
Ilz ne vivroient (comme ilz font) en soucy' (69)

(65) *Blasons domestiques*, f.10 v°
(66) *Blasons domestiques*, f.12 r°
(67) *Blasons domestiques*, ff.12 v°- 13 r°
(68) *Blasons domestiques*, f.13 r°
(69) *Blasons domestiques*, f.13 r°
The Blasons domestiques give a comprehensive picture of the French country house in the early sixteenth century, starting at the outside and working towards the inside. First we are shown the house itself with its paved court-yard adorned with statues and medallions, and with a fountain playing in it (70). Then we are shown the various parts of the formal garden (71), and the cellar well stocked with barrels of good wine (72):

>'Qui rendent la place embasmeé
De leur odeur & grand fumée,
Voire si forte & violente,
Qu'elle estainct la chandelle ardente,
Et sans bouger hors du tonneau
Enyvrent ung foible cerveau' (73)

In the kitchen (74) we see the buffet on which the vaisselle is arranged - nothing but copper and pewter, for there is no mention of pottery, and as Corrozet prudently remarks, gold and silver must not be left out on open display:

>'...car celle
Qui est d'argent ou d'or, en Garderobe
La fault serrer de peur qu'or la desrobe' (75)

Corrozet leads his reader through every room in the house, describing the particular virtues and attributes of each, neglecting not even the Chambre secrete, ou retrait (76) which he treats, however, only briefly, in a mere fourteen

(70) Blason de la court de la maison, f. 6 r°
(71) Blason du jardin, f. 7 r°
(72) Blason de la cave, f. 9 r°
(73) Blasons domestiques, f. 9 v°
(74) Blason de la cuysine, f. 10 v°
(75) Blasons domestiques, f. 11 v°
(76) Blasons domestiques, f. 36 v°
lines since, as he says:

'Retraict ou l'on se met à laise,  
Il vault bien mieulx que je me taise,  
Qu'empuinter de tes senteurs  
Les Lecteurs & les auditeurs'  (77)

The Recueil de poesie francoyse, prinse de plusieurs poetes les plus excellentz dc ce regne contains a short anonymous poem entitled D'une girouette (78), which might be mentioned in connection with the Blasons domestiques. Describing the functions of the weather vane, it covers virtually the only feature which Corrozet omits to mention. In the manner of the calendrier or bestiary the girouette describes itself and its chief attributes, all in the first person:

'Par mon droict nom, m'appelle Girouette,  
Qui au plus haut de la maison suis mise,  
Tournant au vent comme une pirouette,  
A tous propos: car telle en est ma guise'  (79)

In these poems we see yet a further development from the anatomical blason. Corrozet has taken the traditional form of the moralising bestiary with its woodcut and explanatory poem, given it a completely different range of subject matter, and, using the title blason to underline his intention, has produced the whole work as a deliberate

(77) Blasons domestiques, f.36 v°

(78) Paris, Veuve François Regnault, 1555, 16°, BN Res Ye 1211 bis, E5 r°. This anonymous poem does not appear to have been printed in the collected works of any author, and I have found it in only one other sixteenth century anthology, again without name of author (Recueil de poesie francoyse, Paris, Janot, 1544, 8°, F6 r°). Lachevre also is unable to cast any light upon its authorship.

(79) Regnault Recueil de poesie francoyse, E5 r°
antidote to the **blasons anatomiques** which, like La Hueterie, he considers to be:

'...une erreur & une ydolatrie
Dequoy la terre à dieu vengeance crie' (80)

* * *

In our first chapter we discussed the importance of the symbolism of colours in the development of the heraldic **blason**. The theme is an ever popular one, and we find it recurring in the sixteenth century **blason poétique**. A poem which we find appearing frequently in manuscripts sometimes under the title **Blason des couleurs**, and sometimes without any title, consists of an analysis of the colours and their traditional significance. It appears in its longest form (fourteen lines) in BN Ms. fr. 2335 under the title **Blason des couleurs** and signed **Bro** (81). A shorter version omitting the last four lines and without the name of the author is also included in BN Ms. fr. 4967 (f. 235 r°) (82). In BN Ms. fr. 12489 this **blason** is immediately followed by another similar poem taking the same first line:

'Pour fermeté et ducil le noir est pris'

and continuing to develop the subject in a manner similar to that of Brodeau. In much the same tone as these two poems we find a cluster of short poems all expressing

(80) **Blasons domestiques**, f. 39 v°

(81) BN Ms. fr. 2335, f. 103 r° (**Bro** refers to the poet Victor Brodeau)

(82) It is also to be found in BN Ms. fr. 12489, f. 103 v°, and in a manuscript in the Rothschild collection (Picot 2964, f. 38 v°). The shorter version also appears in a printed text in the supplement to Estienne Forcadel's **Chant des seraines** (Paris, Corrèze, 1548, 16°, BN Res Ye 40241, T. 71 v°)
the significance of the various colours, based to a large extent on the traditional meanings handed down from the early treatises on the subject (83). In certain cases these works consist simply of a list of colours and their significance, in the manner of the *Blason des herbes arbres & fleurs selon l'ordre alphabetique* (84). In *Lexposition des couleurs*, for example, the name of each colour is linked to its significance by a horizontal stroke of the appropriate colour:

'Verd (green stroke) Esperance
Violet (purple stroke) Amour' (85)

Again the subject is treated in a similar manner in *Les couleurs deschiffrees du temps du Roy Francoys de France premier de ce nom*:

'Jaulne, descharge
Le jaulne doré desespoir,
Viollet Amour' (86)

Perhaps the fullest treatment of the theme is given by Jean Leblond in his *Blason des couleurs pour une damoyselle* (87). This poem, of admittedly small literary merit, which the poet claims to have written to please his lady (88), consists of a list of the colours and their

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(83) Cf. above, chapter I, p.22 et seq.
(84) Cf. above, chapter VI, p.242
(85) BN Ms.fr. n.a. 10443, f.3 r°
(86) BN Ms.fr.24315, f.1 r°
(87) *Le printemps de l'humble esperant*, Paris, Angelier, 1537, 8°, BN Res Ye 1652, C5 v°
(88) 'Lhumble esperant vostre loyal amy
Pour complaire du tout a vostre guyse
Ne sest monstre pesant ny endormy
Car des couleurs vous descript la devise' (C5 v°)
symbolic meanings. The first stanza after the introduction deals with the seven basic colours which recur most frequently in all the poems:

'Blanc purite humilite sagesse  
Noir fermete ennuy melencolie  
Rouge valeur, pouvoir haultain, noblesse  
Le vert gayte chyere joyeuse & lye  
Et le tenne de desplaisir se allye  
Le violet cest pure trahyson  
Et faintize selon notre blazon' (89)

after which Leblond continues to develop (in the manner of Sicile's treatise) the significance of the various colours in juxtaposition with each other:

'Gris & rouge est esperance en valeur  
De violet ne veult gris laliance  
Bleu signifie avec blanche couleur  
Humble & loyal sans quelque difference' (90)

More interesting than any of these, however, for the purpose of this study is a poem in BN Ms.fr.24461 (rés) (91) entitled Lexposition des couleurs. Here we have a continuation of the illustration plus descriptive poem technique of the earlier blason. Each colour is dealt with in a quatraine which is then followed by an illustration of a lady wearing a dress of the appropriate colour, bearing a shield in which the significance of that colour is inscribed. White, for example, the first colour, is described and interpreted thus:

(89) _Printemps_, C5 v°
(90) _Printemps_, C5 v°
(91) BN Ms.fr.24461 (rés), f.108 r°

This poem, anonymous here, reappears attributed to Jean Robertet in BN Ms.fr. n.a. 10262, f.118 v° (Interpretation des couleurs par M Jehan Robertet)
Je porte en moi une consistance pure
La couleur d'oiseau avec ma prunelle lue
Dans en fait le miroir acquise
De foin et donc, que douceur ne manque pas
Dure par le miroir en ce finissime.
Je suis changere c'est le son du drame.

VIOLE

TANNE

BN Ms, fr. 24461 (rés), f. 111 r° : L'exposition des couleurs
'Le blanc:
Entre toutes couleurs suis la premiere
Humilité signifie et simplesse
Dont le lys blanc est des fleurs la maistresse
Saincte escriture en donne foy planiere' (92)

Closely associated with these poems is another similar blason following the same pattern of poem plus illustration, the Blason des dames, selon le pays (93). In BN Ms.fr.24461 (rés) where this poem (without title) immediately precedes the Exposition des couleurs (94), the arrangement of the two poems is very similar. A series of stanzas are each devoted to a lady of different nationality, and as in the Exposition des couleurs each stanza is accompanied by a large illustration of the lady in question, dressed according to the description in the verse section. This poem is particularly interesting in that it represents an early attempt to distinguish national characteristics in women. The text of the poem as reproduced at the end of Forcadel's Chant des seraines contains six stanzas dealing with the German, Genevan, Spanish, Lombard, Florentine, Venetian, Roman and French woman, although fuller versions of the text also include the Neapolitan woman and the Duchesse de Bar (95). Not

(92) BN Ms.fr.24461 (rés), f.108 r°
(93) In the supplement at the end of Forcadel's Chant des seraines, for example, the Blason des couleurs is printed immediately after the Blason des dames, selon le pays (f.71 r° - v°)
(94) BN Ms.fr.24461 (rés), f.98 r°
This poem is also to be found frequently in other manuscripts (Cf.BN Ms.fr.1717, f.81 v°; BN Ms.fr. n.a. 10262, f.117 r°)
(95) Cf. BN Ms.fr. 1717, f.81 v°; BN Ms.fr. n.a. 10262, f.117 r°; BN Ms.fr.24461 (rés), f.107 r°
only character is analysed, but also such details as differences in styles of dress, or behaviour between the different nations. Modesty requires that the Venetian lady hide her face, but this is all that is asked of her:

'Crainte nous fait porter face couverte
Mais la poitrine est nue & descouverte' (96)

In contrast to this, the Roman lady is required to be modestly clad, yet beneath this her character is that of any other woman:

'Si ma vesture ainsi qu'on void & note,
Tend à façon solitaire & devote
Pas ne s'ensuyt que je ne sois humaine' (97)

The Milanese lady has all the characteristics of the traditional Sunday's child:

'Si femme au monde a le cuer franc & gay
Je Milannoise en ce cas le bruict ay' (98)

whereas the Swiss lady has a reputation for ponderousness:

'Langage lourd: mais assez belle alleure,
Habit peu beau: mais riche cheveleure' (99)

and the German lady is both arrogant and bold:

'Tudesque suis haultaine, audacieuse,
Franchise en amour, liberalle & joyeuse' (100)

The authorship of both the Blason des couleurs and the Blason des dames, selon le pays is uncertain. (In BN Ms.fr.2335 the Blason des couleurs is attributed to

(96) Chant des seraines, f.71 v°
(97) Chant des seraines, f.72 r°
(98) Chant des seraines, f.71 v°
(99) Chant des seraines, f.71 r°
(100) Chant des seraines, f.71 r°
Victor Brodeau (101), but in other cases it is anonymous.) Pike attributes the Blason des dames, selon le pays to Forcadel (102) on the grounds that it is printed with the Chant des seraines. This attribution, however, seems highly dubious, since the section in which the two poems appear is not part of the main work, but merely a supplement added on at the end of Forcadel's own poetry (clearly indicated on f.63 v° by the word fin, followed by Forcadel's own device Espoir sans espoir.) The remainder of the book after this is taken up by a treatise entitled Extraict d'un petit traicte, contenant soixante troys articles, sur le faict de la reformation de la superfluité des habitz des dames de Paris...composé par un nommé Alphonce de Beser, followed immediately by the two blasons and by eleven other assorted poems, huitains, dizains, ballades, chansons, odes etcetera. There seems therefore little justification for the attribution of these two blasons to Forcadel, particularly since they are not included in any subsequent edition of his works (103).

The dubiousness of this attribution is confirmed by a comparison of these two blasons with another blason which also appears in the Chant des seraines among the first section of authentic work by Forcadel, and which is a very different thing from these two traditional

(101) Cf. above, chapter VII, footnote 81
(102) Pike, Blasons, p.234
(103) Poesie d'Estienne Forcadel, Lyons, Tournes, 1551, 8°, BN Res Ye 1824 Oeuvres poetiques, Paris, Chaudière, 1579, 8°, BN Res p Ye 375
interpretative blasons. Forcadel's Blason de la nuit appears among the Opuscules in the Chant des seraines (104), and already in this edition dating from 1548 it shows a tendency away from the blason of the 1530s and towards the style of the later hymne-blason of the poets of the Pléiade. Already the preoccupation is with Night as a philosophic concept and as a manifestation of the workings of Nature rather than with the more obvious theme of the amorous exploits which take place at night - the aspect more usually treated by the earlier poets in the style of Clément Marot. François le r's poem Douce plaisante heureuse et agréable nuit is typical of the treatment of the subject in the 1530s:

'Douce plaisante heureuse et agréable nuit
Plus belle que le Jour pour mon heureux desduit,
Tant plus chère Je tay que moins tay estimée
Estoilles au larcin damour si bien aprise
Qui cachant la clairté servis a lentreprise,
Tant que l'obscurité lors ne nous fust ostée' (105)

Very different from this is Forcadel's blason with its elevated tone and its twin images of Phoebus and Vesper, both far removed from the more familiar tone and imagery of the poetry of the school of Marot:

'Et puis quand il vouldra dissoudre
Les Elemens, par feu & foudre,
Viendra sur l'extreme des Noits,
Pour aux bons oster les ennuyes,
Maugré Phebus, qui nous moleste,
Des raidz de sa torche celeste,
Qui cause travail sans sejour,
Causant la naissance du Jour.
Aux artisans je m'en rapporte,
Si le Jour n'est l'huys & la porte,
De labeur, angoysse, & soucy

(104) Chant des seraines, f.36 v°
(105) BN Ms.fr.3940, f.38 v°
Et aux bouviers des champs aussi,
Jusques que Vesper leur annonce,
Le beau soir, qui à sa semonce,
Un grand troupeau d'estoilles meine
Paistre parmy celle grand pleine,
Du ciel estincellant & large,
Et comme les ayans en charge,
Au point du Jour laborieux,
Des remet au parc des hauts Dieux' (106)

as is his image of a star speckled night:

'O doncques Nuict, ta robe noire,
Puis preferer au blanc yvoire.
J'entens ceste robe tissue
A goutes d'or, qui ont yssue
Quand tu nais, & a ta naissance
Prometz aux amans assurance,
D'entrer en l'amoureux Verger' (107)

which casts the reader's thoughts forward in the
direction of a Pléiade poet, rather than to a poet of the
school of Marot.

It is interesting to look at the Poésie d'Estienne
Forcadel printed three years after the Chant des seraines
to see the change which has taken place in this blason.
Most striking of all, it no longer figures in the coll-
lection of assorted opuscules, and is no longer entitled
blason. Instead it has taken its place, renamed, among
a group of six encomies (108). This, we must suppose, is
a more elevated title than the original word blason with
its perhaps undesirable associations with the school of
Marot. Figuring among such varied encomies as de la Mort,
de la Pome, de la Croix, du Corbeau and de l'Oeil à

(106) Chant des seraines, ff.36 v° - 37 r°
(107) Chant des seraines, ff.37 v° - 38 r°
(108) Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel, pp.88 - 104
façon d'énigme, the *Encomie de la nuit* (109) also presents considerable textual modifications which suggest that Forcadel was deliberately attempting to refine this poem, bringing it further into line with the increasingly fashionable style of the Pléiade by the addition of extra erudition and ornament. The poem itself is lengthened in this later edition by fourteen lines, and the two images quoted above are also modified. In this later version the passage beginning 'Et puis quand il vouldra dissoudre' becomes:

'Et puis de nuit verrons mander
Une Trompette, pour commander,
Qu'on vienne tost en jugement,
Devant l'auteur du Firmament,
Qui les malins voudra tencer,
Et les meilleurs recompenser' (110)

Similarly the passage describing Vesper with her flock is modified and made less awkward in construction:

'L'ennuy entre par ceste porte,
Aux Artisans je m'en rapporte:
Et les Bouviers des champs aussi
Le nomment faiseur de soucy.
Cessant a l'Aube de la Nuict,
Quand pour Vesper la clarté fuit,
Qui un troupeau d'estoilles meine
Paistre parmi celle grande plaine
Du Ciel estincellant & large' (111)

This *Blason/Encomie de la nuit* shows then a marked contrast with the other two *blasons* of the *Chant des seraines*. In its two different forms it represents well the swing away from the simple description of the *blasons* of the 1530s towards a longer and far more ornate type of description as seen in the *hymne-blason*, enriched with

(109) Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel, p.101
(110) Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel, p.101
(111) Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel, p.102
fable and anecdote, and adaptable to description of any phenomenon, whether serious or superficial. Thus even in its early state before the modifications it underwent in the 1551 edition, and its new title in this later edition it seems to be a forerunner of the Pléiade style of writing. It fits into the collection of encomies without embarrassment after the Encomie de l'oeil. It is interesting also to note that the Pome is followed by the Croix without any sense of the incongruous. This versatility and willingness to juxtapose poems on the most varied themes, regardless of their content - or perhaps in order to accentuate this very variety - is again a characteristic which we find later in the cycles of hymnes-blasons by Ronsard and Belleau.

This discussion of the Encomie de la nuit has been something of a digression, since this poem does not fit into any category of post anatomical blasons describing aspects of sixteenth century life and society. It does in fact stand on its own, distinct from the blasons of its own period, and anticipating the hymnes-blasons of Belleau and Ronsard. We have, however, deliberately included this poem here together with the two other blasons of the Chant des seraines in order to demonstrate the great difference in style between the poem actually written by Porcadel and the Blason des dames, selon le pays and the Blason des couleurs, both of which, unlike the encomie follow in the blason tradition with their combination of illustration and poem, both mutually explanatory.

* * *
The Blason du veneur by Jacques du Fouilloux, included in his well known treatise on hunting, the Venerie de Jacques du Fouilloux escuyer (112) appears to have escaped the notice of bibliographers. I have found no reference to this poem (which is not included in Méon's anthology or in any other anthology I have consulted) in the discussion of blasons by critics. This poem, like the Blason des couleurs and the Blason des dames, selon le pays is a blason in the traditional sense of the word, following the conventional pattern of woodcut plus description and explanation in verse. Certainly the literary value of this blason is slight, its interest lying in the description it gives of the life and duties of the huntsman rather than in its intrinsic merits as a poem. It describes the principal occupations of the huntsman and the particular characteristics to be found in a typical huntsman. He is described as a serious drinker - this indeed is the first thing he mentions at the beginning of the poem, it being the first thing he thinks of on getting up in the morning. Not for the sixteenth century huntsman the false notion that one's animals should be cared for and fed before oneself. On the contrary, the huntsman's first thought when he gets up is to have a drink in order to give himself 'plus grande assuranc' for his work. Only after this does he occupy himself with his hounds:

(112) Venerie, p.54
'Je suis Veneur, qui me leve matin,
Prens ma bouteille, & l'emplis de bon vin,
Beuvant deux coups en toute diligence,
Pour cheminer en plus grande asseurance' (113)

The large half-page woodcut which heads the poem depicts this scene, with the huntsman and his flask of wine, together with the two other principal attributes of his profession - his horn and his hound.

The poem is very short (only twenty-six lines long), but in it Du Fouilloux sketches briefly most of the activities which make up a typical day in the life of the huntsman. The finer details of the huntsman's art are given fully in the main part of the treatise (which is in fact a highly technical manual of hunting lore), but all are however also mentioned briefly in the course of the blason which serves as a résumé of the considerably longer prose treatise in the manner of Jean de la Taille's Blason de la Marguerite (114). The huntsman's morning, we are told, is devoted to hackwork, going out early with his hound to search out stags, and mark the track. He then returns to his master, describes where the stag is to be found, its size and age. He also produces for his master's inspection the fumées which he has collected, from which he can deduce the age of the stag (115). For this service the huntsman is rewarded by his master with

(113) Venerie, p.54
(114) Geomance, f.12 v°
(115) One section of the treatise is devoted to this particular aspect of the huntsman's art: Du jugement & connoissance des fumées des cerfs de dix cors (chapter 23, p.59)
further stocks of wine:

'Lors de bon vin soudain on me presente,
Car c'est le droit de l'art qui le commande' (116)

After dinner he returns to the hunt proper with his master, returning over the track he has already prepared, to take his master to the stag. The poem ends on an arrogant note with the huntsman boasting of the superiority of his own particular brand of hunting over any other type, and notably over falconry:

'Dont ne desplaise aux Fauconniers verreurs
Leur estat n'est approchant des 'eneurs' (117)

The poem maintains a severely practical tone throughout, describing straightforwardly the activities of the huntsman. Only twice does the poet allow himself to move away from his primary subject in order to describe other pleasures of a different nature which are incidental to the profession of the huntsman. On occasions he alludes briefly to the song of the birds which he hears as he is out hunting:

'Et en questant aux cernes des gaignages
Souvent entens des oyseaux les ramages' (118)

and later he mentions a rather different type of pleasure also to be enjoyed incidentally in the execution of his duties:

'Et puis trouvant la fillette en l'enceinte
Mon art permet la besongner sans feincte' (119)

(116) Venerie, p.55
(117) Venerie, p.53
(118) Venerie, p.54
(119) Venerie, p.55
This blason then is interesting on more than one count. Certainly as poetry it is, on the whole, uninspired; its primary interest resides rather in the content, providing as it does a detailed and accurate account of the life and demands of this particular profession in the mid sixteenth century. Secondly, and more directly interesting from the point of view of this thesis, it shows how even in 1561, despite the advent of the hymne-blason, the more traditional blason form of poem and woodcut was still being produced.

* * *

The last of the blasons which we shall discuss in this chapter takes us into the field of religious poetry and anti-Catholic vituperation. This is the expiatory Souverain blason d'honneur à la louange du tresdigne corps de Jesuchrist (120) in which the repentant Eustorg de Beaulieu 'jadis Prestre, Musicien et Organiste en la faulce Eglise Papistique et despuis par la Misericorde de Dieu, Ministre Evangelique' as he describes himself on the title page of the Chrestienne resjouissance of 1546 atones for his earlier 'sept blasons lubriques' (as he describes them in the introduction to this poem) on the delights of the female body (the Nez, Joue, Langue, Voix, Dent, Pet and Cul). In this later poem Eustorg concentrates instead upon the body of Christ, and upon the tortures inflicted upon it:

(120) Cf. above, chapter I, footnote 35
'Tes yeux rians & tant remplis de grace
N'ont pas este sans plorer long espace,
Et mesmement lors que tout desole
Suas d'angoisse eau & sang tout mesle.

Voir, tcn nez, ta bouche & belles joues
N'ont guere esté sans qu'on leur feist des
Et sans sentir maintz souffletz & crachatz
Lors qu'à t'occire on faisoit le pourchas'  (121)

He dwells with masochistic pleasure on the ravaged body of Christ:

'Tes bras encor, tant elegantz & beaulx,
Pour moy, pecheur, ont eu maintz grandz travaux;
Si ont aussi tes geambes mainte entorse
Des fiers bourreauz qui les tiroient à force
Tant qu'on eust bien peu compter tous les os
Sur la grand croix que portas sur ton dos
Que des la plante aux piedz jusqu'au cerveau
N'avois rien sain en ta chair n'en ta peau?
Donct l'escripture autentique propose
Que tu semblois plus lepreux qu'aultre chose?' (122)

The sight of the tortured body of Christ broken on the Cross is for the poet an object of the greatest joy, since it is for him an enduring sign of the overwhelming love of Christ for mankind:

'Et pourtant donc, tu doibz estre nommé
Le vray amant & l'amy renommé
Qui l'art d'aymer a perfaict (& plus oultre),
Comme la preuve evidente le monstre.

Pourquoyn, amy, je pense jour & nuyct
Qu'il n'est que toy pour prendre mon deduit,
Et ne sçay joye ou volupté parsieille
A celle là que ta croix m'appareille,
Car elle passe & surmonte soubdain
Tout sens charnel & jugement mondain' (123)

(121) 1550 edition of the Souverain blason d'honneur, 11.335-342 (Text supplied by Dr. Michael Pegg)
(122) Souverain blason d'honneur, 11.353-358 and 361-364
(123) Souverain blason d'honneur, 11.393-402
In his earlier blasons Eustorg had dwelt upon the delights of the body as an end in itself. In this later blason he stresses the physical beauty of the features of Christ in much the same terms ('yeux rians & tant remplis de grace...bouche & belles joues...pure langue...bras encor, tant elegantz & beaulx') but here they are used deliberately in order to underline the suffering endured by Christ on the Cross, through his love for mankind. On the whole this blason concentrates on straightforward praise of the body of Christ, and little direct religious propaganda creeps in. There are however occasional attacks on the Pope, as in the following unfavourable comparison between Christ and the Pope:

'Tes belles mains & doigtz recreatifz
Ont bien touché plusieurs enfans petis,
Ce que le traistre, inique & meschant Pape
Ne feroit ja (tant est rude satrape)
Et ne donroit de sa robe le bord
A manier, tant fust il sale & ord,
Comme tu feis jadis ta robe honneste
A une paovre & simple femelette' (124)

The protestant background to this poem is clear from such attacks; it is further confirmed by the numerous citations from the Psalms with which the poem abounds, and by the highly personal relationship expressed between the poet and Christ.

This is an exceptionally long blason taking the form of a description and adoration of the body of Christ, changing repeatedly from invocation in the manner of the anatomical blason:

(124) Souverain blason d'honneur, 11,283-290
"O le bon veoir qu'il faict tes monarchies
Tant hault que bas de ta gloire enrichies;
Et que tes cieulx sont beaulx & bien tournez.
Et d'infinis corps lumineux aornez.
O que la terre est large & comblée & pleine
D'arbres,fleurs,fruictz,bestes,foin,herbe & graine...
...O que ton air bien purgé fort console...
...O que tu as par l'hyver & esté,
Ans,moys,jours,nuictz,lunes,momentz & heures
Rien demonstré l'ordre de tes loix seures.
O que ta pluye & rosée en leur temps
M'est delectable & rend mainctz fruictz contentz...
...O que ta gresle est monstrant ta grandeur" (125)

to simple narrative and description, and including one passage which amounts virtually to incantation, in which the poet describes the solace afforded by his contemplation of the body of Christ:

'Si de mon corps je me trouve mal aise,
Lors ton corps las pour toy j'acolle & baise.
Si mon ame est triste jusqu'à la mort,
Lors ta triste ame adoulcit mon remord,
Si les larrons ou meurtriers me destruisent,
J'en voy sur toy plusieurs qui te meurtrisent.
Si je receoy quelques playes sur moy,
J'en voy pour une un million sur toy" (126)

The introductory dizain to this blason is particularly interesting to this study in that it shows an awareness on the part of Eustorg de Beaulieu of the development of meaning of the word blason and its various connotations. In this dizain he alludes to the two traditional types of blason - firstly the heraldic, and secondly its successor, the blason d'amour, before referring to this last type of blason dealing with the arms of Jesus Christ:

'Tous blasons d'armes & d'amours
Retirez vous pour faire place
Aux belligieux & nobles tours
De Jesus que tous vous efface'

(125) Souverain blason d'honneur, 1.81 et seg.
(126) Souverain blason d'honneur, 1.403 et seg.
The whole poem indeed is reminiscent of the early blason of the arms of Jesus Christ in BN Ms.fr.5939 (127) in which the soldier of Christ was exhorted to note and remember the arms by which Christ can be recognised, in order that at the Last Judgement he may recognise the true colours of his lord and saviour and thus be delivered from his enemies.

* * *

All the blasons which we have seen in this chapter are - by the loosest of definitions - descriptive poems. They treat a variety of subjects in a variety of manners. Many of them, as for example Corrozet's Blasons domestiques or the Blason des dames, selon le pays or again the Blason des couleurs show how the basic concept of the blason as an interpretative poem, in which the accompanying illustration is extremely important, continues throughout the later period, even up to 1561, the date of Jacques du Fouilloux's Blason du veneur.

Forcadel's Blason de la nuict, however, is a very different type of poem. Anticipating the Pléiade hymne-blason it ignores the traditional meaning of the word blason, but instead progresses one stage further from the more superficially descriptive type of blason as composed by Marot and his imitators. Abandoning the woodcut characteristic of the blason of the 1530s, and abandoning likewise the too restricted field of the female anatomy, it takes a more universal theme. The praise it bestows is

(127) Cf. above, chapter I, p.29 et seq.
of a different nature, and the poem becomes longer and more diffuse, enriched and ornamented with anecdote and decorative digression.

Thus we see already how the closely unified pattern characteristic of the anatomical blason becomes fragmented and gradually breaks up. Not only are widely differing subjects chosen for description, but also different aspects of the original sense of the word blason are retained in different poems. A descriptive, an interpretative, an invocative poem may all bear the title blason. However, what the group of poems we have looked at in this chapter do all have in common is their urge to describe various aspects of sixteenth century life, embracing such diverse topics as furniture, religion and professions. We shall find the same wide range of material in the next chapter; indeed the only difference between the poems of these two chapters is the satirical element which is to be found in all the poems treated in this next chapter — an element which is indeed already present in some slight degree in the last of the poems we have discussed in this chapter — the Souverain blason d'honneur.
CHAPTER VIII  Development of the blason poétique in the mid sixteenth century II

In this chapter we shall examine the very large number of satirical blasons which were produced in France in the mid sixteenth century. As in the non-satirical blasons of the previous chapter, the subject matter covered by these blasons comes from a wide field, ranging from religion to fashion and human maladies, and including inevitably the perennial anti-woman campaign which recurs throughout the century. In certain of these poems the original sense of the word blason as denoting a descriptive, interpretative poem is still clearly apparent, but in many others this sense has been rather lost and the title appears to suggest in effect little more than a vaguely descriptive poem. In certain cases again, the poet seems to have seized upon the repetitive technique of the anatomical blason, regarding this as constituting the essence of the genre.

The one feature, however, which is common to all the poems we shall treat in this chapter, a feature which distinguishes them clearly from their predecessors is their marked satirical intent. In some cases - as for example the group of poems on the subject of the flea - the satirical attack is a fairly general one, with the poet poking gentle fun at the vagaries of human society. In others, however, the satire is intended as a serious attack on particular institutions. Such is the case of the mid century blasons dealing with religious topics, in which the satire provides a scarcely veiled attack on
various aspects of Catholic practices. In all these poems in fact the blason has developed from the purely decorative anatomical poem of the 1530s into a poème à thèse, and its particular descriptive technique is put to use as a vehicle not only against such practices as the Catholic Mass, but also in more general terms against the dissension rife in France in the mid sixteenth century consequent upon the religious upheaval.

* * *

In the field of religious satire we find three blasons, two of which are specifically anti-Catholic while the third, rather later in date, the Blason du bonnet carré (1) consists of an attack upon the state of lawlessness throughout France during the reign of Henri III, consequent upon the religious and civil wars. A highly ebullient poem, it contains an enthusiastic allegorical account of the evils of the world and the way in which they were amassed by Lucifer, crammed together into a bonnet carré and cast down to earth for the confusion of mankind.

An introductory section narrates Lucifer's fall from Heaven and his consequent desire to avenge himself by making earth and mankind as evil as possible. With this intention he employs his minions in hell to fashion a bonnet in which all the evils he can imagine are to be enclosed. The bonnet is described in detail, together with the individual vices enveloped in each part of it:

(1) The original printed edition of 1576 of the Blason legende et description du bonnet carre et les
After the bonnet is completed, Lucifer harangues it with a long stream of curses and vituperation, and it is this central part of the poem, the invocation proper, which would seem to be the basis for the title Blason du bonnet carré. Here indeed the anonymous poet is seizing upon the technique of repetitive invocation characteristic of the anatomical blason and putting it to his own rather different purpose:

'Bonnet qu'avec horreur je monstre,
O bonnet! pestiféré monstre,
Bonnet infernal et damné,
Sur la terre bien fortune,
Bonnet infidèle et inique,
Bonnet qui ne sent que pratique,
Bonnet horreur de tout le monde,
Bonnet en qui tout mal abonde' (3)

proprietez, composition et vertus d'icelluy (reprinted by Techener in his Joyeusetez, facecies et folastres imaginacions, Paris, 1833, 8°, BN Vélins 2929) is apparently lost. The poem does, however, appear quite frequently in sixteenth century manuscript collections of verse, in varying degrees of completeness. In its fullest form the blason consists of three sections: a narrative introduction, the blason proper consisting of an invocation to the bonnet carré by Lucifer, and finally a conclusion. BN Ms.fr.22565 (f.46 r°) contains the blason without the introduction. BN Ms.fr.22560 contains the complete poem (f.35 r°), as does also BN Ms.fr. 884 (f.71 r°) under the variant title Bonnet de cour. Montaiglon also includes the blason in his Anciennes poésies (vol.1, p.265)

(2) Montaiglon, vol.I, p.267
(3) Montaiglon, vol.I, p.269
The satirical meaning of the author is made clear in the final section of the poem where, returning to a narrative form, the poet describes how Lucifer casts down to earth in a turmoil of thunder and lightning the bonnet he has fabricated, thereby causing such havoc that the world would appear to have returned to its primitive state of chaos - a transparent allusion to the state of civil war during the reign of Henri III.

None of the manuscripts provides any indication as to the identity of the poet (and Techener in his re-edition of the 1576 edition, subsequently lost, does not mention any reference to the name of the author in the printed text). Whoever he is, his skill as a poet is undeniable. Here there is no suggestion of long winded polemic; instead we have a vivid and picturesque poem which amuses the reader as well as conveying to him the intended message. The minor details selected by the poet for description add considerably to the charm of the blason as a whole. The description, for example, of the various minions of hell gathered round to fabricate the bonnet is delightfully realistic:

'...sans aultre response,
Chascun des infernaux vint à ceste semonce.
Satan bailla soubdain le drap, fin au possible;
Belial print l'esguille et poignante et nuisible,
Et les filles d'Erebe et de la Nuict obscure
D'aprester tost le fil prindrent toute la cure' (4)

Even the humblest devil - the guard dog - is singled out for mention:

'Tous les esprits malins, jusques au chien portier,
Exercèrent ce jour l'estat de bonnetier' (5)

In this blason we find a new variant on the genre. Only the central section seems to form in itself the actual blason with its repetitive invocation to the bonnet, imitated from the similar technique of the earlier blason anatomique. Indeed this central blason (or perhaps more properly contreblason, since the tone is of vituperation), in which the narrative form of the poem is abandoned in favour of a long apostrophe of the bonnet, is further distinguished from the main body of the poem by the length of its lines. Where the narrative beginning and end are in lines of twelve syllables, the central blason stands out by virtue of its shorter octosyllabic lines. The beginning does in fact serve very largely to prepare the ground for the blason, just as the narrative conclusion is there in order to round off this long central passage of direct invocation. It is perhaps significant that it is these narrative sections which are omitted in the truncated manuscript versions, while the central blason proper invariably stands complete.

The other two blasons dealing with religious subjects are rather different - both in form and content - from the Blason du bonnet carré. The Blason du gobellet (6) and the Blason du platellet (7) both date from 1562 - rather

(6) Reprinted Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.345
(7) Reprinted Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.351
earlier than the Bonnet carré—and both are committed to the protestant cause, intent on attacking the Catholic Mass, and in particular the belief in transubstantiation. In neither case is there an introductory narrative as there is in the Bonnet carré. The two poems are anonymous but in view of the similarity in intent and subject matter it is perhaps not unreasonable to suppose that both are the work of the same poet.

In neither case is the satirical intent immediately apparent; both poems begin by apostrophising the virtues of the chalice and the plate in the conventional manner of the anatomical blason, extolling first their beauty and artistic merit:

'Gentil Gobellet argente,
Doré, façonné' (8)

and secondly their far greater worth as holy objects consecrated by their function in the ceremony of the Mass as vessels containing the body and blood of Christ:

'Gobellet mystique et divin,
Quand tu es remply de bon vin,
Alors tu mets en la cervelle
Une chanson toute nouvelle
Et descouvres les (h)aux secrets
Aux prestres' (9)

'Platellet, la sainte relique
Prochain de la couppe angelique' (10)

In the first part of both blasons only a hint is given of the satirical tone which is to become dominant in the

(8) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.346
(9) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.346
(10) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.351
second part. In the Platellet, for example, while praising
the virtues of the plate, the poet alludes briefly to a
rather less laudable feature of its attractions. The plate
is to be praised not only for its intrinsic beauty but
also for the money which it receives:

'Car tu reçois chasque matin
Des prestres le riche butin;
Tu reçois toutes les offrandes
Tant les petites que les grandes' (11)

Similarly the opening couplet of the Gobellet continues,
after describing its beauty and richness, with a suggestion
of censure:

'Doré, façonné et ranté
De rentes que le peuple donne
Des offertes et de l'aumosne' (12)

As the two poems progress, the tone, originally eulogistic,
becomes gradually transformed into a more intense form of
satire. After their conventional opening in which both
objects are praised, the two blasons rapidly show themselves
to be something rather different from the blasons we have
seen hitherto. From initial praise the poet passes through
veiled satire to outright abuse at the end, vilifying the
chalice and the plate, and destroying the image he has
built up, denying their spiritual aura, and reducing both
to the status of mere kitchen vessels. The goblet is no
longer:

'... le gobellet mystique,
Où trempe la divine relique
Pourtant l'image de la croix' (13)

(12) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.346
but simply a common goblet:

'Gobellet, tu ne seras plus
Qu'un gobellet' (14)

and:

'Quoy que tu sois d'argent doré
Plustost que tu sois adoré,
Meschant gobellet, Dieu te fasse
Estre le cul de quelque tasse
Pour servir en cuisine' (15)

In the same way the platellet is also roundly condemned. Certainly, says the poet, it may well have a use as a simple dish, but it can possess no intrinsic mystic significance:

'Et quoy, platellet, penses-tu
Avoir en toy quelque vertu
Plus qu'un plat fait pour le service
De table, non pour sacrifice?
Tu n'es qu'un petit plat d'argent,
Ainsi fait pour tromper la gent,
Et n'es qu'une fausse platine
Et une escuelle prestrine,
Et toutes fois on te tient tel
Que si tu estois immortel' (16)

Both blasons conclude with a violent attack on the superstitions of the Catholic faith. All that has the faintest suggestion of magic is condemned:

'Mais ces sorciers et ces sorcières
Tiennent les ames prisonnières
Et charment le corps icy-bas
Et pensent tenir en leur bras
Et clorre dedans leur reliques
Les choses hautes et mystiques
Et cependant ce n'est tout rien
Que fiante ou que merde de chien
Qu'ils nous font adorer' (17)

(14) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.348
(15) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.348
(17) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.349
No longer, says the poet, will the vulgar people be deceived by the mysterious aura created around these objects:

'Et les portrais et les images
Et tous les mystiques ombrages
Et tout ce riche parement,
Qui ne servoit que d'ornement' (18)

Instead, freed from superstition they will worship nothing but the true God:

'...mais ore
Chascun le Dieu du ciel adore' (19)

The Blason du platellet moves in its conclusion from the purely theoretical vituperation against the plate in general terms as representing popish idolatry to a more specific deliberate incitement to revolt against such abuses, taking on an alarmingly factual note with a description of the sacking of churches actually observed by the poet in Lyons in 1562:

'Tout cela sera mis par terre;
Et sera faite grosse guerre,
Et les peuples se benderont,
Et les images tumberont,
Les encensoirs et les medailles
Et la peincture des murailles,
Comme j'ay veu dedans Lion
D'images faux un million
Par les temples et par les places
Brusler au feu avec les tasses
Des prestres, qui trottoient dedans
Leur cuisine, pour passe-temps
Aus soldatz, qui ne font qu'en rire,
Pendant que le Pape a du pire' (20)

Thus, in all three of these blasons - the Gobellet, the Platellet and the Bonnet carré - we see the extension

(18) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.353
(19) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.349
(20) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.354
of the *blason* as a purely decorative *genre*. In all three
the descriptive apostrophe, intended in the anatomical
*blason* and *contreblason* to praise or blame, is turned to
a specific purpose as the *genre* becomes used as a vehicle
for religious satire.

* * *

The serious satire of these three religious *blasons*
is, however, the exception rather than the general rule.
on the whole the satirical *blasons* of the mid century are
basically frivolous, intended to amuse rather than to attack,
poking gentle fun at various quirks of social life. A group
of poems, for example, deals with the vagaries of fashion,
both masculine (dealing with the advantages and disadvant-
ages of beards (21)) and feminine (dealing with hair
styles (22) and bustles and corsets (23)). In varying
degrees, in all of these we see how the *genre* has become
gradually much less precise. The interpretative, analytical
character of the original *blason* is almost entirely absent,
and even the invocative technique which characterised the
anatomical *blason* is to a large extent lost. Instead the

(21) *Le blason des barbes de maintenent*, Paris, Briere,
*nd* (1551), 8°, BN Picot 775 (The text reprinted in
Méon (p.163) and in Montaignon (vol.II, p.210) is
taken from the later editions: Paris (no printer),
*nd*, 8°, BN Res Ye 2943, and Rouen, Costé, 1602, 8°,
BN Res Ye 2732)

(22) *Le plaisant blason de la teste de boys*, npnd (Lyons,
1555 ?), 16°, Bibliothèque Méjanes (Aix) no.30047
(reprinted Montaignon, vol.XIII, p.53)

(23) *Le blason des basquines et vertugalles*, Lyons, Rigaud,
1563, 8°, Catalogue Lignierolles, no.1102 (This copy,
which I have not seen, was reprinted Paris, 1830, 8°,
BN Res Ye 3594). This is not, however, the first
That the *Blason des barbes de maintenant* is intended to amuse is made clear in the full title, in which the work is described as 'chose tresjoyeuse & recreative', while in the introductory quatrain on the same title page the poet further underlines this theme:

> 'Amy Lecteur je ne veulx attenter 
> Que ce blason vienne offenser tes yeulx:
> Je ne l'ay fait pour mal te contenter,
> Mais seulement pour passetemps joyeulx'

The theme is not an uncommon one. Marot himself had already devoted one poem at least to the subject of beards and barbers as early as 1515 (24). Annet Briere, the printer of the *Blason des barbes de maintenant* produced in the same year a *Response & contredict d'un barbu contre le blasonneur des barbes de maintenant* (25). Both the *Blason* and its *Response* are interesting for the light they cast on the habits of the mid sixteenth century. The printed edition of this poem. An earlier version appeared in François Grandin’s *Destruction de l’orgueil mondain*, Paris, Frémy, 1558, 8° (Cf. Baudrier, vol. III, p. 113)


(25) Paris, Briere, 1551, 8°, BN Picot 776

Dating from a later date, we find also a plaquette printed in Paris in 1576 entitled *La louange des barbes rouges contre les mesdisans qui les ont en horreur* (Paris, Houtc, 1576, 8°, Bibliothèque Mazarine 21657 rés (4th piece)
blason, for example, contains an impressive list of possible types of beards which a gentleman might care to sport:

'Il fait bon voir à la renée
Ces barbes de diverses sortes:
L'une est desliée, l'autre forte,
L'autre comme saffran est jaune,
L'autre de la longueur d'une aulne,
Barbe mouchetée, barbe grise,
Barbe comme cotton de Frise,
Barbe blonde, barbe meslée,
Barbe à moustache cordelée,
Barbe blanche, barbe florée,
Barbe d'Aaron ou Zacharie,
Barbe qui monstre à son semblant
Estre cousue de fil blanc;
Barbe fourchue bravement,
Barbe à pointe de diamant,
Barbe noire, barbe moirée,
Barbe rousse, barbe dorée,
Barbe qui ne tient qu'à la lèvre,
Barbe saultant comme une chèvre'  (26)

The relative hygiene of the bearded or clean-shaven chin is discussed in both Blason and Response. Where the Blason criticises the all too frequently dirty beard:

'Sa barbe (est) plaine de vermine,
De morpions, de poux et lentes
Sans repos, et puces groulantes'  (27)

the Response maintains that it is nevertheless more prudent to retain a beard than to undergo the hazards of being 'clean'-shaven by a barber. According to the poet the sixteenth century barber is inevitably clumsy - he will cut both beard and chin with equal inefficiency, and - far worse - he should be regarded as a dangerous source of infection:

'Puis des ciseaux va toucher, ou du peigne
Un verolé, ou un qui a la teigne,
Et de cela après il touchera
Un autre humain, qui de ce net sera'  (28)

He is, according to the poet, quite indifferent to the most basic rules of hygiene:

'Et bien souvent de sa main toute infecte
De vil unguent, ou d'eau qui n'est pas nette,
A maintes gens il lave le visage,
Soit a marchant, à idiot ou sage.
Puis d'un linseul tout ord est essuyé
Chascun humain, dont souvent ennuyé
Se part de là, desirant que couste
Luy eust beaucoup, & point n'y eust esté'  (29)

Although it is strongly condemnatory, the Response is not exaggeratedly vituperative. Indeed its very moderation suggests that the criticisms levelled against the barbering fraternity are indeed based on reality, and that we might learn from this poem something of sixteenth century barbering methods.

It is, however, with the blason that we are primarily concerned. The poet shows considerable ingenuity in the amount of ground he manages to cover - all under the general heading of beards. He describes the discomfort caused to its owner by a badly kept beard:

'Tout premier il tient de la lune,
Estant triste et melancolique;
Sa barbe le pointet et le pique,
Et le rend tout pasle et deffaict'  (30)

Full of insects, it becomes a source of constant irritation:

(28) Response, f.3 r°
(29) Response, f.2 v°
Mais sans cesser sa barbe frotte;
Il la demesle, il la descrotte;
Il la secoue, puis il la tire;
Il la retord, puis il la tire;
Il la resserre, et puis l'espart;
Chascune main en tient sa part' (31)

He deplores the current fashion for all and sundry –
even peasants – to sport trimmed beards:

'On void maintenant un Colin,
Un planteux d'aulx, un sabottier,
Porter barbe de savettier' (32)

expressing horror at the thought that even churchmen
might follow this fashion:

'Est-ce aussi le fait d'un abbé
Comme un soldat estre embarbé.
Ne qu'un evesque, portant mitre,
Avec sa barbe entre en chapitre' (33)

The author of the Blason takes every opportunity to
juggle with the word barbe and its various compound forms.
Not only does it appear at the head of every line in a

(33) Montaiglon, vol.II, p.216

Although unusual, this was not in fact unheard of.
Sauval refers, in his Histoire et recherches des
antiquités de Paris, (Paris, 1724, 4r-folio, 3 vols,
vol.III, p.80) to permission being granted to Pierre
Lescot to retain his beard after his appointment as

'Permission faite par le Chapitre à Reverend Pere en Dieu, Maître Pierre Lescot, Seigneur de Clagni, Conseiller & Aumonier ordinaire du Roi, Abbé de Clermont, & Chanoine de Notre Dame, d'être reçu Chanoine de ladite Eglise avec sa barbe, par protestation que ladite permission qui s'ensuivra, soit sans aucune-
ment innover, déroger ni préjudicier aux Statuts, Privileges, & Coutumes de l'Eglise.
Le Mercredi douzième Août, 1556'
long passage of invocation (34), but it also crops up repeatedly in the middle of lines throughout the poem as a very noticeable leitmotiv. The poet plays with the word in a series of puns both in French:

'Tout premier ilz ont condamné
Tous barbuz à estre esbarbez,
Barbariquement desbarbez,
Sans que nul s'ose rebarber' (35)

and in Latin:

'Aucun qui telle barbe aura
Un syllogisme en barbar;
Ils sont tous clercz barba tenus' (36)

It is very apparent why the Blason should have been thus entitled, while the Response was not. The Response is basically a narrative, descriptive poem, whereas the Blason retains much of the invocative style characteristic of the anatomical blason. The Blason likewise adheres more closely to its chosen subject than does the Response which allows itself to digress, and lacks the single focal point which, characteristic of the anatomical blason, is still present in this later satirical Blason des barbes de maintenant.

Dealing again with the subject of hairdressing is another poem, the Plaisant blason de la teste de boys (a blason which apparently escaped Meon's notice, since no reference is made to it in his anthology). Unsigned and undated, this poem was probably written around the

(34) Cf. above, chapter VIII, p. 303
mid 1550s if we can judge from the references to other contemporary poets cited by the author (37). Essentially a rather diffuse narrative poem composed throughout in the third person, with no passages of invocation to the teste de hoys, it is interesting more for the light it casts on social history than for its purely poetic merits. In it the poet describes and sings the praises of the newly invented hairdressing device - the wooden head, or wigstand enabling all hairdressing to be done off the head. The advantages of this, says the poet, are legion, not the least of them being the reduced risk to ladies of permanent colds and catarrh as a result of their wigs being continually wetted in order to be set while actually in situ on the head. The poet evokes the unpleasantness of the old method of hairdressing, prior to the advent of the teste de hoys:

'Cy devant, quand le couvrechief
Estoit tissu dessus le chief,
On le mouilloit et empesoit
Parce que mieulx il se dressoit,

(37) From among several poets, Ronsard in particular is singled out and urged to compose a poem in honour of this wonderful new invention, since Cassandre must obviously owe much of her beauty to the use of such a teste de hoys:

'En cest endroit, Monsieur Ronsard,
Qui composez d'un si grand art...
...Je vous pry d'escrire le pris
Et la commodité urgente
De ceste coifure excellante,
Et que par le moien d'icelle
Vontre Cassandre en est plus belle,
En qui seule gist vostre espoir'  
(Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.64)
The reference to Cassandre suggests that this poem must have been written not much later than 1555, since after this date Ronsard switched his attention to Marie.
Et lors seichoit ceste mouillewre
Dessus le chief et cheveleure,
Qui causoit mile et mile rumes,
Caterres soudains, apostumes,
Excremens (et) larmes aux yeux,
Tant qu'ilz estoient tous chassieux' (38)

Not only is the old method of hairdressing uncomfortable; it is also largely unsuccessful. In what amounts virtually to a contreblason the poet describes the ugliness of his lady before she used a wigstand, due entirely to her lopsided, ill-arranged hair:

'...en la voyant en ceste forme
Semboit estre toute diforme;
Son couvrechief cachoit son front;
Quelques fois, pour n'estre assez rond,
Ne plié, comme ores on fait,
Trouvois son regard contrefait;
Son couvrechief balloit souvent,
Comme font les fueilles au vent,
Pour n'estre tissu et presse
Comme à presant il est dressé;
Ses oreilles si fort pendoient
Que grande laideur luy rendoient
Et ses cheveux, tant bien tressez,
Estoient du tout desentassez
Et sur son chief estoient pendans
Debifez dehors et dedans' (39)

This blason is particularly interesting for the light it casts on sixteenth century hairdressing methods. Norm-ally the conventional petrarchan love poem describes the beauty of the lady's hair in terms so artificial and extravagant as to preclude any semblance of reality. It is, therefore, highly salutary to read this far more realistic description of the shaky, precariously balanced head of hair which must have been a far more common sight in sixteenth century France than we are generally led

(38) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.63
(39) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, pp.55-56
to believe.

In a manner deplorably rambling for a blason the poet switches his attention midway from ladies' hair styles to a more general study of the overall improvement in female costume in the course of the century, criticising the bulky and unflattering garments which had been worn by women of an earlier period:

'...ces grands chapprons
Rouges, carrez, fourrez et ronds,
Ces couvrechiefz d'aune de large,
Noirs et foupiz, à double estage,
Ces grandes robes mal plaisantes,
Croteuses, sur le corps balantes,
Sans art, toutes d'une largeur
Comme la botte d'un taneur,
Les souliers grands à la poulaine
Avecques les chausses de layne,
Dont le tout, mys sur un corps beau,
Estoit plus hideux qu'un corbeau' (40)

Instead of these voluminous, ill-fitting and dirty garments, ladies are now wearing corsets, and their clothes - more cunningly designed - are fashioned to fit more closely to the body:

'Habitz et autres ornemens
Sont si bien faitz et s'entretiennent
Par tel art que bien ilz conviennent
Depuis le chief jusques aux piedz;
Ilz sont tant bien apropriez
Qu'on diroit dedans et dehors
Qu'ilz sont produitz comme le cors,
Ou bien collez sur la personne
Par une ordre et grace mignonne.
Ceste coifure si descente;
Ce busq' d'une façon si gent;
Ces vertugalles bien ouvertes.
D'un rouge cramoyssi couvertes
Par le dessouz, le pellisson
Serré d'une bonne façon' (41)

(41) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.59
The manner in which the poet manages to digress from his principal subject shows how loosely he is using the term blason. This results in an altogether less closely unified poem than any of those we have previously discussed. Where the other blasons discussed in this chapter have contained at least one passage of direct address to the object in question, the Teste de boys is written throughout in the third person, showing how very loose a meaning the term blason can possess in the mid century.

With its enthusiastic praise for modern fashions in ladies' dress, this particular blason fits into a group of poems dating from the mid century, dealing with this particular topic - a topic which seems to have been the centre of a quite fierce dispute. Poets such as this anonymous blasonneur express the more worldly view, thoroughly approving the new fashions, while others, more puritanical in outlook, roundly condemn the immodesty of modern fashions. Of such a type is the Extraict d'un petit traicté contenant soixante & troys articles, sur le faict de la reformation de la superfluite des habitz des dames de Paris printed at the end of Forcadel's Chant des seraines (42). Likewise another blason, the Blason des basquines et vertugalles is another example of the fiercely puritanical attack upon the exaggeration of women's clothing. Heavily annotated with scriptural references in the margins, it roundly condemns the

(42) Cf. above, chapter VII, p.278
indecency of any form of frivolousness in dress. The first twenty lines alone are supported by sixteen marginal references, and deplore the ornate style of dress favoured by women, prophesying damnation as the inevitable outcome of such immodesty. The poem opens with a curiously medieval introductory harangue:

'A Vous dames et damoyelles,
Qui demontrez qu'estes rebelles
A Dieu, vostre Pere et Seigneur,
Oyez, oyez par grand'ferveur:' (43)

before going on to treat the theme proper:

'Iceluy vous fait à savoir
(Qui a entierement pouvoir
Sus vostre corps et sus vostre ame) Mat.28
Qu'il se vengera du diffame
Que journellement commettez
Par vos grands impudicitez,
Leu 5

Par voz habitz et chevelures,
Anneaux, affiquetz et dorures:
Qui donne suffisante preuve,

Qu'en vous nulle vertu se trouve,

Et qu'avez vouloir de desplaire
A ce Pere tant debonnaire.
Que vous servent ces vertugalles,

Sinon engendrer des scandalles?
Quel bien apportent vos basquines
Fors de lubricité les signes?
Quel fruit vient de vos paremens,
Sinon pertes et dampnemens?' (44)

Basquines and vertugalles are in fact incidental themes in this poem, touched on only occasionally. The real theme of the poem is rather more general, preaching as it does the desirability of a simple life if one is

(43) Blason des basquines et vertugalles, A2 r°
(44) Blason des basquines et vertugalles, A2 r°−v°
to hope for salvation. Indeed the Blason des basquines et vertugalles resembles throughout a popular sermon, with its direct address to an imagined audience, as if from the pulpit. The very form of the harangue alternates between exhortation to the audience to aspire to higher things and outspoken criticism and abuse of this same audience in a manner again reminiscent of the popular sermon. On the one hand the audience is subjected to solemn warnings:

'S. Jaq. 4.  Qui veult estre du Monde amy,
Se rend du Seigneur ennemy.
Rom. 8.  Qui suit la prudence charnelle,
Ira en la mort eternelle.
2 Cor. 15  Qui la chair maudite ensuivra,
Torment eternel recevra:
Mais qui ceste chair mortifie
Dieu le benit et justifie.
Pour rendre Dieu misericords,  Galat 5.
Convient mortifier le corps.
Par croix, ennuit, deuil et moleste, Mat 10
Irons en la gloire celeste' (45)

and on the other hand to abuse in which the tone becomes progressively more coarse:

'Parquoy quittez ces vanitez
Ces lascives mondanitez,
Rejettez ces grands vertugalles
Qui vous causent rongnes et galles.
Laissez ces vilaines basquines
Qui vous font laides comme quines
Vestez-vous comme preudes femmes
Sans plus porter ces busqs infames.
Laissez ces cheveux tortillez,
Et simplement vous habillez,
Ne portez aucunes dorures,
Qui sont du Diable les armures' (46)

Again, as in the Teste de boyg there is no note of invocation, no note of direct praise or blame addressed to the basquine and vertugalle. Indeed there is no single unifying theme, since these two garments are in fact no
more than a starting point, and in the course of a poem of some two hundred and seventy lines the two words appear only three times. The poet chooses, in fact, to attack worldliness in general rather than its narrower aspect as represented by the much debated basquines and vertugalles. One is tempted to wonder whether these were not put at the head of the work simply in order to provide an interesting and topical title.

Certainly the subject of fashion in costume is a topical one in the mid century, arousing horror in the more puritanical, shocked as they are at the immodesty of such garments, and at the same time providing material for the more gaulois type of poem in which the protagonist is usually Monsieur le cul. Of the moralistic variety is the Blason des basquines et vertugalles, as is also a short work entitled the Triumphe des vestementz, selon le temps qui court, faictz au buz (47). This latter poem is a satire directed against the corset or busc, in which various characters express their opinion in a series of huitains (48). The corset describes itself in a manner reminiscent of the bestiary or calendrier type of blason:

'Difforme suis au dire de plusieurs;
Je suis le Buz, renommé maintenant,
Gay, florissant en diverses couleurs:

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(47) Npnd (c.1545), 8°, BN Picot 591 (Reprinted Mont-aiglon, vol.III, p.45)

(48) Invention, Abus, Le buz, Le temps qui court, Necessite, Maladie, Monie, etcetera
(trainant velour le jaune jaunissant) (49) Hommes et femmes ay soubz moy plus de cent. Fors que du Buz n'est maintenant memoire; Je suis requis, à ung chascun plaisant; Au temps qui court le Buz porte la gloire' (50)

In the manner of the débat the pros and cons of the situation are discussed. Le temps qui court, backed up by Folle-despense (51) support the current craze for corsets, while this is deplored by Temps passé (52) who praises the good sense of our ancestors who were far too sensible to waste their money on such needless frivolity. Necessite, Maladie and Honte add their arguments to that of Temps passé, and the whole thing is summed up by the Autheur aux lecteurs in which the reader is urged to renounce all vanity as symbolised by the worldly busc, and meditate instead upon the imminence of death:

'Laissons Bobance et toute gloire vaine; Pensons à Dieu, car la Mort nous menasse; En grandissant viendra l'heure soudaine; Tel rit au main, au soir fault qu'il trespasse; Gloire mondaine en ung moment se passe; Qu'essee de nous que cendre et pourriture? De s'amender chacun son devoir fasse; Il faut mourir, et si ne scavons l'heure. Vivit post funera virtus' (53)

As for the other type of poem, the best known of the gaulois poems on the subject of corsets and hooped skirts

(49) This line, missing in Montaiglon, is taken from the Rothschild copy (Cf. above, chapter VIII, footnote 47) A2 r
(50) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.49
(51) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, pp.49-50
(52) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.50
(53) Montaiglon, vol.XIII, p.52
are the Complainte de monsieur le cul, contre les inventeurs des vertugalles which dates from 1552 (54), rather earlier than the Blason des basquines et vertugalles, and its companion Response de la vertugalle au cul en forme d'invective (55). As might be expected, the Complainte de monsieur le cul takes the form of an extremely crude attack on the fashion for wide hooped skirts, although in contrast to the rest of the poem, the prose introduction (56) repeats the familiar moralising attack on the essential immodesty of the basquine and vertugalle which are condemned as 'des vestemens superfluz dissoluz & si j'ose dire Luciabelistes'.

In all the satirical poems on current fashions in the mid sixteenth century the term blason in the title seems to have little real significance. The Blason des barbes de maintenant remains closest to the conventional blason form with its overall unity of theme of the beard in all its aspects, and with its long passage of direct repetitive invocation to the beard:

'Barbe mouchetée, barbe grise,
Barbe comme cotton de Frise,
Barbe blonde, barbe meslée

(54) Sens, Girault, 1552, 8°, BN Res Ye 1660

(55) Cf. Catalogue des livres de feu M.le Duc de la Vallière, Paris, 1783, 8°, 6 vols, vol.III, p.366. The text of this poem is reproduced by Mœn (p.70) who does not, however, give his source. Brunet also mentions a further work on the same subject, the Debats et complaints des meuniers et meunieres a l'encontre des vertugalles en forme de dialogues dating from 1556 (vol.II, col.198). I have not, however, found a copy of this work.

(56) Monsieur le cul aux lecteurs, A2 r°
Barbe à moustache cordelée
Barbe blanche, barbe florie,
Barbe d'Aaron ou Zacharie' (57)

With its long digression into the field of female clothes in general, the Teste de boys is much more meandering in theme, and has little direct connection with hair dressing, the ostensible subject of the blason. Lastly the Blason des basquines et vertugalles takes the subject of the corset and the bustle as a mere pretext for the much wider theme of a generalised attack on the immorality and frivolity of women in the mid sixteenth century in France. All three poems demonstrate clearly therefore how general a meaning the word blason has taken on, and the way in which the term can be used to denote practically any kind of vaguely descriptive poem.

* * *

It would be surprising if the anti-woman movement, so virulent throughout the century, did not produce a number of blasons, since in the later period at least this genre was being used as a vehicle for most forms of satire. In fact we find only two actual blasons (and a reference to one which I have been unable to locate). The first of the two poems is the scurrilous Blason de la femme which appeared in Jean de Tournes' collected edition of anti-feminine poetry, the Louenge des femmes (58), while the second is a much shorter manuscript poem, the Blason de

(57) Montaiglon, vol.II, p.214
(58) Lyons, Tournes, 1551, 8°, Arsenal 8°B 12934, p.10
la putain (59).

The third poem - to which I have found only a reference - is mentioned in Michel d'Amboise's Secret d'amours (60) in a poem among the Épigrammes entitled Contre celluy qui feist les blasons des cocuz, pource qu'il y meist une tresholdonne & chaste dame nommée Barbe (61). This poem (or possibly group of poems, since the title is given in the plural here) must have appeared anonymously since Michel d'Amboise does not know the identity of the author (62). His wrath is aroused since it is his own lady Barbe, to whom he himself addresses verse (63) whose virtue is called into question in this apparently

(59) I have not found a printed text of this poem, although it appears in two manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale, both forming part of the Rasse des Noeus collection of manuscripts dating from the period of the civil wars. In BN Ms.fr.22565 (f.109 r°) it is described as the Blason de la putain, while in BN Ms.fr.22560 (f.141 r°) a fuller version is given under the title La vie & estat d'une putain. Although in both cases the poem is unsigned and undated, we would suggest that it dates from around the 1560s (Ms.fr.22565 consists mainly of late sixteenth century poetry from the reign of Charles IX and Henri III, while the dated poems of Ms.fr.22560 are mainly from the 1550s and 1560s)

(60) Secret d'amours, Paris, Angelier, 1542, 8°, BN Res Ye 1623

(61) Secret d'amours, K3 v°

(62) "Mais qui est il le vilain blasonneur
Qui presuma de faire deshonneur
A celle la qui ne merite blasme?
Mais qui est il ce malheureux infame
Qui a ose en ses escriptz coucher
Le mesme honneur, & mal luy reprocher" (K3 v°)
scurrilous blason:

'Quel poil à il? est il homme de barbe?
Ce fascheux la, qui oza mettre Barbe
En ses blasons, des cocuz composez
Il à sa main & sa plume posez
Sur le gent corps d'une qui est sans tache' (64)

Preoccupied with his vituperation against the anonymous blasonneur and with his defence of his mistress, Michel d'Amboise unfortunately has little information to give us on the blason itself. In fact all we can deduce is that such a Blason des cocuz must have existed either in printed or in manuscript form. It is just possible that Michel d'Amboise is using the word blason to denote the more general meaning of 'criticism' rather than to signify a specific poem (as it was in fact frequently used at this period). However the very frequency with which he reiterates the word suggests that here he is alluding to an actual poem of this title.

To return to our two actual blasons, the first of these, the Blason de la putain, belongs to the same category of poem as the Blason du veneur of Jacques du Fouilloux, describing as it does the essential characteristics which make up one particular profession. The only difference between these two poems is the heavily satirical intent of this blason compared with the more straightforward rendering in verse form of what had already been said in prose of the Blason du veneur. In the space of six lines (expanded to twelve in the Vie & estat d'une putain) the Blason de la putain summarises the various features which characterise the putain from the age of

(64) Secret d'amours, K3 v₀
fifteen years to fifty (65). In this sense, therefore, the blason retains a close affinity with those earlier blasons in which the chief characteristics of an object were analysed, described and interpreted (66). In its conciseness and close adherence to its central theme, also, this poem stands close to the earlier blasons. All but the final line of the poem - which sums up the whole - begin in the same way ('A quinze ans...a vingt ans...a trente ans...'), and the constant repetitive technique with the word putain, although no longer invocative here, is nevertheless not unlike that of the anatomical blasonneurs (67):

'A quinze ans petite putelette
A vingt ans putain parfaicte
A trente ans putain ruzee
A quarente ans putain passee
A cinquante ans le baston au poing
Voila le train de la putain' (68)

It is interesting to note that the expanded version of this poem - in which the conciseness and the force of repetition of the previous version is somewhat dissipated because of the extra lines - is not given the title blason. The difference in construction is apparent from the first four lines of this latter version:

(65) Extended in the Vie & estat d'une putain to cover the range ten to sixty years
(66) Cf. for example Gringore's Blazon des heretiques or Leblond's Blazon de la Cosse
(67) The only variant to this occurs in the first line where the fifteen year old is described as a putelette. Only when she becomes twenty years old is she described as a fully fledged putain
(68) BN Ks.fr.22565, f.109 r°
"A dix ans on la veoid pucelle
A quinze ans assez puterelle
Mais a vingt ans putain parfaite
Du corps, de l'ame toute infecte' (69)

In this second version the force of the repetition of the word putain is almost entirely lost. The next two lines describing the putain at thirty and forty years are the same as in the blason, but for the remainder of the poem the key word putain occurs only once in the last line.
The poet cannot resist expanding his material, adding extra little bits and consequently rendering it less concise and thus less apt to be called a blason:

'A quarante cinq harangere
Ou à tout le moins chandelier
A cinquante ans est maquerelle
Pour cuyder courrir sa querelle
A soixante ans querant son pain
Voila l'estat d'une putain' (70)

The last poem in this section, the Blason de la femme is considerably longer than the Blason de la putain. Despite its length, however, it retains a conciseness and unity of theme which we did not find present in the majority of the earlier satirical blasons discussed.
It is the first poem of the Tournes collection, the Louenge des femmes, invention extraite du commentaire de Pantagruel, sur l'Androgyne de Platon, and serves admirably to set the tone for the rest of the work, consisting as it does of a concentrated attack on the various shortcomings of woman, both physical and moral. The poem begins with a twenty-six line introduction in which the poet (who remains anonymous)

(69) BN Ms.fr.22560, f.141 r°
(70) BN Ms.fr.22560, f.141 r°
describes in general terms the iniquities of woman, and announces his intention to compose a blason which will demonstrate clearly all her faults:

'...or sus, ma plume
Mouillez vous d'encre d'amertume,
Et m'escrivez en ai^res Vers
Un Blason des autres divers,
Qui monstre à ces Amants pensifs,
En extase Amoureux transis,
Que la femme, object de leur vice,
N'est rien qu'un sac, plein de malice
Du haut au bas: & aux costez
Parcy de maux & povrezez,
Tant qu'il n'est possible qu'on nie
Qu'elle est la mesme Vilenie' (71)

After this general introduction, however, the poem takes on more closely the appearance of a blason, and goes on to a prolonged apostrophe of woman in a series of quatrains. The poem is in fact a contreblason rather than a blason. Each quatrain deals with one particular aspect of the physical disagreeableness of woman, and each reminds us of the similar treatment of ugliness in the female body in the contreblasons of both Marot and La Hueterie. Much of this is, of course, traditional, and its origins are to be found in the work of countless medieval and fifteenth century French poets. An example of this is the emphasis the poet places on the physical decay to which woman is subject in old age, while the other main preoccupation of the poem - the wiles to which woman will resort in order to dissimulate the ravages of time - is equally a French commonplace, presumably inspired originally from Ovid:

(71) Louenge des femmes, pp.9-10
'Pemme, qui pour garder de pendre
Ta grande peau, flestrie, & tendre,
Et cacher ton tetin mollet,
Porte tousjours un haut collet.
Pemme qui as ventre ridé,
Toutesfois, de sangles bridé,
Afin que ta pance de vache
Jusques aux genoux ne se lasche' (72)

Again we find once more in this poem the preoccupation
with the smell of the human body which had characterised
the contreblasons of La Hueterie:

'Pemme, fy, femme, fy de toy:
Tant tu sens, ton je ne scay quoy' (73)

Similarly an echo of La Hueterie's description of the
dripping nose is found in the corresponding quatraine in
the blason:

'Pemme, de qui le camus nez
Ord, puant, morveux, & punais
Distille plus de gros morveaux
Qu'un Allembic de fines eaux' (74)

Woman, says the poet, is the root of all evil:

'Pemme, fy, tant tu es immonde:
De ton ordure vint au monde
La malencontreuse VEROLE,
Qui tant d'honnestes gens affolle.
Pemme, venimeux animal,
De toy sort un poison plus mal,
Et plus pernicieux à l'oeuvre
Que de serpentin, ne de coleuvre' (75)

She is little more than a painted shell covering a mass
of internal putrefaction:

'Pemme de qui le corps fardé,
Souz ombre qu'il est regardé,
Couche souz belle couverture
Toute puante & ordure' (76)

(72) Louenge des femmes, p.12
(73) Louenge des femmes, p.10
(74) Louenge des femmes, p.11
(75) Louenge des femmes, p.13
(76) Louenge des femmes, p.10
A bestial creature, woman follows the reputation established for her by the Middle Ages. She is utterly obsessed with sex, and all her actions are motivated by this obsession. The wiles she employs to preserve her fading beauty are practised with the sole aim of remaining attractive to the opposite sex:

'Femme de qui les cheveux blonds,
Soient troussez court, ou pendant longs,
Servent à l'amoureuse ruse
Comme les serpents à Meduse...

...Femme, de qui les noirs sourcils
Servent à Venus, & son filz' (77)

As we see from these extracts, the Blason de la femme manages to condense into a single poem most of the usual anti-woman propaganda put out in the sixteenth century. In the manner of the anatomical blasons and contreblasons it deals systematically with the various parts of the female anatomy, one in each quatrain. Similarly the repetitive technique characteristic of the anatomical blason is also used by this blasonneur, with each quatrain opening with the same word femme. In both these features, then, this mid century blason would seem to have been directly influenced by the anatomical blasons.

Another edition of the Louenge des femmes was produced the following year, in 1552, in Rouen (78). This second edition contains some interesting variants on the earlier version by Jean de Tournes. It is considerably longer, and it contains also a table of contents on the

(77) Louenge des femmes, p.10
(78) Rouen, Lignant, 1552, 8°, BM C 22a 20
verso of the title page. It is this table of contents which is particularly interesting for the purpose of this thesis, since here the enigma which closes the Tournes anthology (79) is entitled Enigme ou blason du con (80). Surprisingly this is the only instance I have found of an enigma being given the title blason. Indeed the two types of poem are in essence very alike. The enigma sets out to describe in the most concise terms possible the principal characteristics and attributes by which a particular object can be recognised. This is — in effect— what the blason also sets out to do. The puzzle element, certainly, distinguishes the enigma from the blason (81) as does also its lack of accompanying woodcut, but the basic technique of analysis is a technique common to both types of poem.

* * * *

The next group of satirical blasons which we shall discuss in this chapter are on the face of it a somewhat disparate collection, dealing with gout, honour and the

(79) In this later edition this poem is followed by another piece, the Response sur la question...duquant & parqui on esté faites les premières femmes (p.71)

(80) Louenge des femmes (Lignant edition), p.63

(81) Although we have found at least one puzzle poem given the title blason: the Blason du bon vin of BN Ms.fr. 17527, f.111 v
quartan ague (82), and other illnesses. There is, however, a certain unity to be observed, since all are in fact imitations of an Italian model. Although we should deny the influence of Berni and his imitators upon the anatomical blason and contreblason (83), it cannot be denied in the case of these later poems, in which there seems to be a considerable debt to the Italian satirical capitolo.

The three blasons of the Tournes collection never seem to have been printed except in this anthology. Although in none the name of the author is given, we might assume that all three are the work of the same poet, since there are sundry cross references from one poem to another. The Blason de honneur, for example, refers back to the Fievre quarte and the Goutte, associating honour with these two illnesses (84), while in the opening lines to the Fievre quarte the poet alludes to his two earlier poems on the subject of honour and gout (85).

(82) Blasons de la goutte. De honneur. Et de la quarte, Lyons, Tournes, 1547, 8 , BN Res Ye 1617
(83) Cf. above, chapter III, p.140 et seq.
(84) Honour is described as being ephemeral: 'Comme invisible, & autant impalpable, Que Fievre ou Goutte, & trop plus dommageable' (p.12)
(85) 'Pour avoir fait au deshonneur d'Honneur Blasonnements, aussi en la faveur De la grand' Goutte à tort dit incurable Je veux aussi à l'exemple notable Des plus sgavans Modernes, & antiques, Canonizer par raisons autentiques La Quarte icy' (p.18)
The entry in Du Verdier's Bibliothèque for this collection of blasons includes a note by La Monnoye to the effect that these three poems are most probably imitations of Italian works by Aretino, Mauro and Francesi (86). The two capitoli by Mauro on the subject of honour are not difficult to locate, since both appear in his collected works of 1542 (87), as well as in an anthology dating from the end of the century (88). Similarly a poem on gout by Francesi is to be found in the collected works of Berni (89), but the poem by Aretino on the quartan ague is less easily found. I have not found any poem on this subject in the collected works of Aretino, nor in any of the sixteenth century anthologies of Italian verse I have consulted. The earliest edition in which I have

(86) 'Matteo Francesi a fait un Capitolo à la louange de la goute; le Mauro deux contre l'honneur, à l'Aretin un contre la fièvre-quarte. Les trois Blasons François, ici rapportés, pourroient bien être des imitations de ces Blasons Italiens' (vol. III, p. 273)

(87) Tutte le terze rime del Mauro nuovamente raccolte, et stampate, np. 1542, 8°, BN Res Yd 1277: Capitolo in dishonor dell'honor al Prior di Jesi (f. 83 r°) and Capitolo secondo del disonor al medesimo (f. 87 v°)

(88) Rime piacevoli di Cesare Caporali, del Mauro, et d'altri auttori, Venice, Vincenzi, 1588, 16°, BN Yd 6843, p. 139 and p. 148

(89) Il secondo libro dell' opere burlesche, di M. Francesco Berni, Florence, Giunta, 1555, 8°, BM 239 c 18: Capitolo in lode delle gotte, à M. Benedetto Buontempi (f. 47 r°). It also appears anonymously in the collection of Capitoli burlesche d'incerto autore, npnd, 8°, BN Res Yd 1290, p. 6
found such a poem is an eighteenth century anthology of *poesie burlesche* printed in London (90).

It is difficult to assess the influence exercised upon the French *blasonneur* by these poems. Burlesque poetry of this type was particularly popular in Italy in the 1540s (91), but it does not seem to have been much imitated in France at this period. All these Italian *capitoli* are considerably longer than the French *blasons* (92), and contain long digressions which have little connection with the primary subject. Mauro's *capitolo* on honour, for example, begins with a long preamble of sixty-six lines discussing the subjects he is not going to describe, before finally coming to the point, whereas the French *blasonneur* comes straight to the point in the very first line:

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(90) Opere burlesche di M. Francesco Berni, di M. Gio della Casa, del Varchi, del Mauro, di M. Bino, del Molza, del Dolce, e del Firenzola, London, 1723, 8°, 3 vols. The two poems by Mauro appear in vol.I (pp. 81-96), while Aretino's *Della quartana* and Francesi's *Delle gotte* are in vol.III (pp.29-35 and pp.90-95).

(91) Among the various illnesses described we find venereal disease (*Capitolo del mal francese di Messer Bino*, in *Le terze rime de messer Giovanni dalla Casa, di Messer Bino et d'altri*, np, 1542, 8°, BN Res Yd 1277, p.44), the plague (*Delle peste a maestro Piero Buffetto* in *Poesie burlesche di Messer Francesco Berni*, p.11), the cough (*In lode della tossa* by Francesi in *Il terzo libro dell' opere burlesche*, London, 1723, 8°, p.103) and phlegm (*Capitolo dello sputo...del Dolce in Capitoli burlesche d'incerto autore*, p.60).

(92) The first *capitolo* on honour by Mauro, for example, contains two hundred and eighty lines as opposed to a mere one hundred and seventy in the French *Blason de honneur*.
'Poëtisant d'Honneur, ce grand Chimere' (93)

In content however, there are parallels between the Italian and the French poems on the subject of honour. Certain themes used by Mauro reappear in the French blason. The description of the Age of Gold, for example, in which love was simple and idyllic, uncomplicated and uncorrupted by false concepts of honour is common to both (94), as is the condemnation as false of the concept of a glorious and noble death in battle (95). Most striking of all, however, is the comparison between honour and fever and gout which appears in both poems. The Italian version:

'Quest' honor invisibile mi pare,  
Ed intoccabil, come febbre e gotta' (96)

is reiterated in the French blason:

'A cest Honneur, que nul n'ha peu congnoistre,  
Comme invisible, & autant impalpable,  
Que Fievre, ou Goutte, & trop plus dommageable' (97)

In the French trilogy of blasons this somewhat unusual simile would seem to have been inspired by an allusion to the other two poems of the trilogy. But in the case of Mauro this cannot be so since he did not write any capitoli on the subject of gout or fever which could account for such a comparison. His choice of this simile would appear to be entirely fortuitous, and indeed we might suggest

(93) Tournes ed., p.11
(96) Opere burlesche, vol.I, p.87
(97) Tournes ed., p.12
that despite the coincidence by which the two *blasons* on gout and fever accompany the *blason* on honour, the simile here is equally fortuitous, being based upon the Italian model rather than upon any association with the other two *blasons*. This suggestion is in fact supported by a similar poem composed later by Amadis Jamyn in imitation of that of Mauro, for in this poem also the same simile occurs once again:

'Certe il est invisible, intouchable, et s'il point: 
Une fièvre ou la goute aussi n'apparaoist point,
Toutefois nous destruit: j'ose en verité dire
Que la perte d'Honneur est cent mille fois pire
Que n'est la Jalousie ou tout autre malheur' (98)

The main argument of the French *blason* as of the Italian *capitolo* is that of the essentially ephemeral nature of honour. This theme, made clear at the beginning of the poem:

'Poëtisant d'Honneur, ce grand Chimere,
N'ayant corps, n'estre...
...Qui tant l'Honneur (qui n'est que vanité
Ne consistant en rien fors en parole
Et pour autant chose plus que frivole)' (99)

dominates the entire work as the poet lists the various evils of society for which it is responsible. Despite its title, the *Blason de honneur* is in fact a *contreblason*, criticising as it does the falseness of the notion of honour, rather than praising it. Little use is made of the repetitive technique (although the word *honneur* or one of its forms appears on average every sixth line — unlike the Italian *capitolo* in which the word *honour* appears only once in every forty lines) nor is the


(99) Tournes ed., p.11
second person form of address characteristic of the anatomical blason used here. This poem cannot therefore be considered to be of the invocative, repetitive type of blason, although certainly its unity of theme, in contrast to the rambling Italian version with its long circumlocutory preamble lends more justification to the use of the title.

The other two blasons of the trilogy deal with medical topics, praising on the one hand the quartan ague, and on the other hand the affliction of gout. La Monnoye suggested Aretino's capitolo as a possible source for the Blason de la quarte (100). The most cursory examination of the two poems shows, however, that there is no connection between them (101). Where Aretino discusses the unpleasantness of the quartan ague and various remedies he has tried, the French blasonneur concentrates on the apparently paradoxical subject of the beneficial aspects of the

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(100) Cf. above, chapter VIII, footnote 86

(101) Indeed the blasonneur mentions other writers who had treated the subject already, and the name of Aretino is conspicuously absent from among these: 'Je veux aussi à l'exemple notable Des plus savans Modernes & antiques, Canonizer par raisons autentiques La Quarte icy, l'engin exercitant. Car Phavorin jadis en feit autant: Puis Menapie, Encomiaste exquis, En dit maints loz: & duquel ay enquis Maints argumens pour former son louange' (p.18)

The work referred to by 'Menapie' is a prose work by Guillaume de l'Isle, the Encomium febris quartanae, Gulielmo Menapio Grayibrugensis autore (Basle, Opfin, 1542, 8°, Bl. Td?) The work referred to by 'Phavorin' (Guarino) I have been unable to locate.
illness. Unlike the Blason de honneur which basically
criticised the subject of honour, the Blason de la quarte
does actually praise its subject in the manner of the
conventional blason. To praise the quartan ague is, however,
not as paradoxical as it might at first sight appear, since
unpleasant though it may be in itself, the illness does
nevertheless bring with it certain very important advant­
ages to the scholar-poet. Fievre quarte and humeur noire
are as Picino explains (102) closely connected, and humeur
noire, although unpleasant is also a source of inspiration
(103). Thus Ronsard may complain in his Salade of his
affliction, but he realises nevertheless that such suffering
is necessary for poetic inspiration, and as such should be
welcomed (104). This same argument is reiterated by the

(102) Picino, Les trois livres de la vie, trans. Guy
Lefèvre de la Boderie, Paris, Angelier, 1581, 8°,
BN 8° Tc 116:
'Si l'humeur noire simple, ou meslee
Se pourrit elle engendre la fievre quarte'
(Book I, f.7 v°)

(103) 'Donques estant remplie de divines influences
& des oracles d'enhaul, elle (the soul) invente
tousjours quelque chose de nouveau, & non usité,
& predit les choses futures... ceste noire, ainçois
cesto blanche humeur doibt estre autant cherchee
& nourrie, ainsi que tresbonne, comme celle qui
luy est contraire... doibt estre evitee ainsi que
tresmauvaise & dommageable'
(Book I, f.10 v°)

(104) 'Voila, Jamyn, voilà mon souv'rain bien,
En attendant que de mes veines parte
Cette execrable horrible fievre quarte
Qui me consomme & le corps & le coeur
Et me fait vivre en extreme langueur.
Tu me diras que la fievre m'abuse
Que je suis fol, ma salade & ma Muse:
Tu diras vray: je le veux estre aussy,
Telle fureur me guarist mon soucy'
(Ronsard, Œuvres, ed. Laumonier, Paris,
1914 - , 8°, 18 vols, vol.XV, p.78)
blasonneur:

'Mais qui plus est, l'humeur melancolique,
Dont cause est, rend l'homme politique,
Doct, & prudent, en tout ingenieux' (105)

Fievre quarte, says the poet, is not a serious illness for it imposes no particular restrictions upon the person suffering from it (106). No particular medicines are necessary; on the contrary, it is itself beneficial in curing other illnesses from which one might be suffering (107). Concluding on an optimistic note, the poet suggests that far from being an illness to be deplored, the quartan ague should be a thing to be desired as generally ben­eficial:

'Donc je concluz au loz de la Quartaine
N'estre une fievre, ains une lente et saine
Purgation, qui la scait gouverner.
Et qui pourroit quelque fois la donner
Sur certains maux, que lon dit incurables,
Ilz deviendroyent soudains remediables' (108)

Unlike the Blason de honneur, the Blason de la fievre quarte is a eulogistic poem, praising rather than blaming

(105) Tournes ed., p.24

(106) 'Un autre loz d'elle ne fault que tais:
C'est qu'il ne fault par Quarte s'abstenir
De rien, qui soit d'aller, ou de venir:
Mais bon dit on luy estre l'exercice.
Bref tout luy est salutaire & propice,
Et sans danger'

(Tournes ed., p.23)

(107) 'Toute diette, ou drogues, ou exces
Ha en horreur: ne Quarte en ces acces
Ne infecte point, & n'est contagieuse:
Mais à aucuns est tant solacieuse,
Que tresjoyeux ilz sont un peu l'avoir,
Comme à purrer faisant meilleur devoir
Que nul bolus, ou pillule, ou breuvage,
N'ayant en soy trop de douleur, ne rage'

(Tournes ed., p.26)

its subject. There is little lapse into digression, and the poet, although not using a strictly repetitive technique in the manner of the anatomical blasons, nevertheless repeats the words quarte or quartaine frequently (on average every seventh line, in contrast to the Italian capitolo by Aretino in which the word quartana appears only three times in the entire poem of one hundred and eighty-seven lines.)

The third blason of this trilogy deals with a subject not uncommon in poetry at this period. The poet refers back in the Blason de la goutte to Lucian's dialogue on the subject, suggesting that it is his aim to emulate or even surpass Lucian:

'...mon zele,  
De reciter plus de louange d'elle,  
Que Lucian en ce beau dialogue,  
Ou il la met au ranc, & catalogue  
Des Dieux trescraintz' (109)

One of the Rasse des Noeus manuscripts contains a sonnet addressed to the surgeon by one of his friends afflicted with gout, together with a further poem in Latin on the same subject (110). Just as the fievre quarte had been praised as a source of inspiration, so gout is praised in the Blason de la goutte for its 'dons divins' :

'Conclusion: Je vous dis d'abondant,  
Qu'en Goutte n'ha ne mal, ne maladie:  
Mais dons divins, quo qu'on murmure, ou die' (111)

(109) Tournes ed., p.3. Rather later in the century, Filber Bretin translated into French this Tragedie de Podagre (Les oeuvres de Lucaa de Samosate...traduites du Grec, par Filbert Bretin, Paris, Angelier, 1583, in-folio, BN Z 555, Book II, p.685

(110) BN Ms.fr.22563, part II, f.11 v°

(111) Tournes ed., p.10
This same theme is reiterated in the sonnet in the Rasse des Noeus manuscript, Ennius being quoted here as the source of this theory (112).

La Monnoye suggested that this *Blason de la goutte* was modelled upon Matteo Francesi's *Capitolo delle gotte* (113). Certainly there are striking similarities between the two poems. The passage, for example, in which the French *blasonneur* describes the three essential types of human well-being, none of which can ever be jeopardised by gout, seems to owe a considerable debt to Francesi:

'Et jamais mal aussi elle ne feit
A ces trois biens, ditz par communs accordz
Biens de l'esprit, de fortune, & de corps:
Dont le premier consiste en la sagesse,
L'autre en santé, & l'autre en la richesse.
Quant au premier, n'est dit la personne,
Qui est Goutteux, plus qu'un, qui ne l'est, sage.
Elle ne vient qu'aux fortunez aussi,
Tant qu'on les dit riches: & pour cecy
L'araigne feit des povres gens l'eslite
Lors que la Goutte eut des riches la suitte.
Quant à santé, qui est le bien du corps,
Si elle y nuyt, ce n'est que par dehors,
Qu'il semble à voir qu'elle fasche ou tormente:
Mais ce ne vient que d'une humeur peccante,
Dont elle fait saine purgation
Au seul recueil d'un peu d'inflation.
Donques la Goutte en son petit mesaise
Donne à celuy, qui l'ha, sante & ayse,
Rendant les siens pleins de tous biens heureux' (114)

The essence of this passage is already contained in the earlier Italian version:

'Ogni filosofaccio astratto ed unto
Divide i beni in tre parti, non ch'una,
E spesso di nessun gli tocca punto:

(112) 'Le vieil Ennie aultrefois souloit dire
Quand sa Podavre au lict le retenoit
Que lors sa Muse a chanter se prenoit,
Et hautement faisoit bruyer sa lyre'
(BN Ms.fr.22563, part II, f.11 v°)

(113) Cf. above, chapter VIII, footnote 86

(114) Tourn-s ed., pp.5-6
Ben d'animo, di corpo, e di fortuna:
Il primo e l'esser savio, e l'altro sano,
L'altro ricco e piantato a buono luna:
Pare a ciascun d'averne 'buono in mano
In quanto si primo, e tiensi un Salamone,
Bench'egli abbia un cervel piu che balzano:
La gotta almen si tien savia a ragione,
Però ch' ella s'impaccia colla gente
Di gran cervello e di reputazione:
Gli altri due ben, se voi ponete mente,
Stanno con essolei, e lei con loro
Da fratel, da sorella, e da parente:
Non può star questa senza argento, e oro,
Ne senza questa star possono i ricchi,
Che stanno ammassicciati nel tesoro:
La sanità par proprio se l'appicchi
Addosso, e che la vita per un tempo
Nella gotta s'inchiodi, e si conficchi;
Chi l'ha sta vivo e sano un longo tempo:
Dunque ell' e savia, ed è un segno espresso
Di sanità, ricchezze, e di buon tempo' (115)

Similarly two other passages from the blason:

'Mesmes alors, quand dens la chaire à bras.
Portés en Ducz, faisans des Fierabras,
Il fault qu'honneur chacun aux goutteux face,
Soit en l'église, en maison, ou en place,
Les reputans, quand on les voit goutteux,
autant rassis, constans, & pondereux,
En tous leurs faitz, comme est leur corpulence
Grave au marcher'

and:

'O comme au lict ses possesseurs esgayé,
Tresexcusés, pour affaire, qu'on aye,
De n'en bouger' (116)

seem to be based on similar passages in the Italian

capitolo (117). Both poems, finally, end on the same note -

(115) Opere burlesche, vol.III, pp.92-93
(116) Tournes ed., p.6 and p.7
(117) 'Guardate se la gotta ha del galante,
Che'n ogni luogo l'è fatto onoranza
E detto ch'ella segga in uno instante;
Perchè questi signor, ch'entrare in danza,
E pizzicare aspettano ogni giorno,
La fan porre a seder per buon'u sanza.
Chi ha la gotta vadia pure attorno,
with the advice that gout should not be considered an illness, since there is no remedy for it, and all illnesses must have a remedy. All those who suffer from gout should therefore accept it for what it is — not an illness, but a gift from God:

'Godete dunque il ben, che Dio vi manda'

'Garde la donc, & guerir n'en demande Celuy, à qui par grace Dieu la mande' (118)

The French poet, however, is not content to end his poem here; instead he adds on a singularly rhetoriqueur little quatrain to finish off the poem, which has no parallel in the Italian version:

'Fin des goustz goustés de la Goutte, Qui, quand en degouttant degoutte, De gousté un trop meilleur gouster, Que Goutte au vin me fait gouster' (119)

Despite these similarities, the French blason is, however, not a mere translation of the Italian capitolo, and there are large sections of the blason which owe nothing to the

O portato, o da se, che fia tenuto
Un uom grave e pesato d'ogn'intorno'

(Opere burlesche, vol.III, p.93)

and:

'Un omaccin che se le sia saputo,
E che abbi mangiato il suo panetto,
E del tondo e leggiadro abbi bevuto,
Ch'altra requie maggior che star nel letto? Donde ti fa partire il negoziare, Questa non vi ti tiene a tuo dispetto? Che quando tu volessi pure andare, La non ti lascia'

(Opere burlesche, vol.III, p.93)

(118) Opere burlesche, vol.III, p.95, and Tournes ed.,p.10

(119) Tournes ed., p.10
Italian poem. A long passage describing the various note-worthy Romans who suffered from gout (120) has no source in Francesi's poem. In fact the blasonneur refers in this passage to Pliny as a rich source of anecdote on the subject, in the same way as he referred earlier to Lucian:

'Pline en descrit plusieurs autres secours, Que pourrez voir' (121)

whereas the Italian poem contains no reference to either of these two sources.

This last blason contains more digression into anecdote than do the other two blasons of the trilogy. Yet it still retains an overall unity of theme, since the anecdotes - of Abraham and of the Roman emperors - are closely related to the general subject of gout. The total length of the poem is one hundred and ninety-two lines, and the words goutte or goutteux appear twenty-eight times (plus one instance of the form borrowed from Latin -empodagrés). In addition to this, the final quatrain consists of a prolonged play on the word goutte. All in all therefore, the word appears on average once every seven lines, as was also the case in the Fievre quarte. For the most part this blason is written - like the other two - in the third person. It does, however, include one short passage in which the invocative second person is used:

'O caractere indelebile & cher! 
O sainte Goutte indigne d'attoucher 
Fors delicatz, & qu'on doit dorlotter 
Sus coussinetz, & en douceur frotter 
Et dyaprer, comme un reliquaire' (122)

(120) Tournes ed., p.9
(121) Tournes ed., p.9
(122) Tournes ed., p.4
Considerably more unified in theme than the Italian capitoli, all three of these French poems concentrate far more heavily than do their Italian counterparts on describing the particular object which they have taken as their theme. The invocative style, characteristic of the anatomical blason is, however, scarcely present in any of them, and is completely absent in the Blason de la quarte. Although used occasionally in the other two blasons, in neither is it given any undue stress. But this invocative tone, although it may be characteristic of the anatomical blason is certainly not essential to the original heraldic blason. Indeed, all three poems follow the pattern of the analytical blason, summing up the chief characteristics and peculiarities of a chosen object. Their originality lies in their satirical intent, which is almost certainly based on the model afforded by the capitoli piacevoli so popular in sixteenth century Italy. They are not, however, mere imitations of an Italian model, and the use of the title blason in all three suggests that the author wished rather to associate himself with a distinctively French type of descriptive poem. It is the grafting of Italian burlesque onto the French blason technique which makes this Tournes anthology so interesting.

Another poem devoted to illness and the satirical praise thereof which might be mentioned here in connection with this collection of blasons by Tournes is a somewhat earlier work produced by another Lyons printer, François Juste. This work is a mixture of prose and verse entitled Le triumphe de treshaulte et puissante dame Verolle, royne
du puy d'amours (123). It consists of a short prose treatise on verolle followed by a verse account by Lemaire de Belges of the origins of the disease. It is the last part of the work, the Triomphe proper, which is relevant to this particular study. This latter poem, although not entitled a blason, does nevertheless contain certain elements of the genre. A parody of Petrarch's Trionfi, each page is devoted to one member of Verolle's cortège. In form it resembles the calendrier or bestiary, the top half of each page containing a woodcut of the appropriate figure, and the lower half a verse passage in which the figure depicted above describes himself, his physical appearance, and the inevitable conclusion to be derived from this - that he has taken part in the puy d'amours, and consequently ranks now as a member of Dame Verolle's train of disfigured followers. The first rank of followers describe themselves thus:

Pourroit on veoir meilleurs souldartz  
Pour au puy damours honneur faire,  
Que nous troys qui sommes soulz darcz  
Pour tirer lamoureux affaire?  
Noz corps ne voullons contrefaire  
A teste,bras,ou jambes pert:  
C'est le bien quamour nous confere,  
Quant lun y gaigne, lautre y pert! (124)

while the Cappitaine des gens de pied who precedes these soldiers explains that however much he may try to disguise his illness, this affliction is immediately recognisable by the state of his face:

(123) Lyons, Juste, 1539, 8°, BN Res Ye 5077
(124) Triumphe de dame Verolle, D v°
Altogether the procession contains some thirty different characters, representing the universal hold of Dame Verolle. All walks of life are represented as suffering from this disease (126), and even the goats pulling Venus's chariot are not omitted. A separate woodcut is devoted solely to them, and the accompanying verse explains the particular significance of these animals:

'Les boucz a qui voyez trayner
Le char de triumphant guise,
Luxure veulent designer
Qui est du puy d'amours devise:
Jamais des boucz la puissance
Ne fut si infecte en tout lieu,
Que le feu que luxure atise
Est infect, et puant a dieu' (127)

Like the emblems and bestiaries we have seen in an earlier chapter, this work is meant to be both amusing and instructive. The reader is invited to take pleasure in the images, but at the same time to learn the lesson taught by the short explanatory verse passages accompanying each image. This didactic aim is made clear in the Epilogue au lecteur (128), in which the author explains that the book

(125) Triumphe de dame Verolle, D v°
(126) They range from the Seigneur (E4 r°) to the Larrons clandestins (E3 v°), from the Laques (D6 v°) to the Chancelier (D7 v°)
(127) Triumphe de dame Verolle, E v°
(128) Triumphe de dame Verolle, E7 r°
should combine pleasure and utility, the pleasure lying in the pictures and the utility in the moral lesson to be derived.

*   *   *

The final group of poems which we shall discuss in this chapter all treat the subject of the flea. The earliest in date is the anonymous Blason de la puce faict sur le parve pulex included in the collection of poems entitled Le joyeulx devis de lesperit trouble (129). As the title suggests, this is if not precisely a translation then a very close imitation of Ovid's poem on the flea (130). Although dealing with a subject very different from those we have seen earlier, this blason is in fact a love poem of the same type as Salel's Espingle and Anneau, Bérenger de la Tour's Miroir or the anonymous Blason d'une chemise (131), in which the object is praised not for its own intrinsic merits, but rather for the associations it has with the poet's lady. Thus the anonymous poet is not interested in describing the flea itself, but rather in describing the freedom which it enjoys to wander over his mistress's body (132). Little time is wasted on the flea.

(129) Lyons, Arnoullet, nd (c.1537), 8°, BN Picot 2963, 15 v

(130) Publli Ovidii Kasonis opuscula: & moralia carmina: scilicet de nuce, de philomena, & de pulice, Paris, Philippe, nd, 8°, BN Res p Yc 1727, A7 r

(131) Cf. above, chapter VII, p.250 et seq.

(132) 'De jour tu va (continuant propos) Te promener entre blanches mamelles Non demandant pource conge a elles Du seurement entre deux rondes tours Prens tes esbatz faisant cent mille tours' (Joyeulx devis, I6 r')
itself; two lines of introductory invocation to the flea suffice:

'Petite Puce ennemye aux pucelles
Petite Puce amere peste a celles' (133)

after which the puce is never again addressed directly at the head of a line, although the poem is composed throughout in the second person form of address.

It is interesting to note that this same poem of Ovid's is again imitated rather later in the century by Guy de Tours in his **Premieres oeuvres poetiques et souspirs amoureux** (134), although here, unlike the anonymous blason-neur, Guy de Tours does not acknowledge his source, and the unspecified lady of Ovid's poem is here identified with Ente, the lady to whom all the love poetry in this volume is addressed. (135). Considerably more consciously sensual and more fully developed than the earlier blason (as we would expect in a poem dating from this later period) Guy de Tours' version dwells with delight and at length upon the description of the lady's body:

'Subtillement j'entrasse dans sa couche
Pour luy baiser les roses de sa bouche.
Pour manier & taster a souhait
De son beau sein les deux gazons de laict,
Pour librement sur sa cuisse arrondie,
Et sur sa fesse amplement rebondie
Me promener & faire mille bonds,
Bref pour le voir du chef jusqu'au talons' (136)

---

(133) **Joyeulx devis**, 15 v°
(134) **Paris, Carroy, 1598, 8°, BN Res Ye 7467, f.26 v°**
(135) '...& puis, Dieu sçait comment
Voyant mon Ente en mes bras detenue,
Pleine d'Amour, courtoise & tant rude'
(Premieres oeuvres poetiques, f.27 v°)
(136) **Premieres oeuvres poetiques, f.27 r°**
Even more swiftly than the blason this later version abandons the subject of the flea - a mere pretext for the poet - to turn itself into a love poem in which the poet concentrates his praise upon the delights of the various parts of his lady's anatomy.

We might mention at this point in the thesis a curious collection of poems on the subject of the flea which by its subject matter belongs here, although by its style of writing it belongs rather to the hymne-blason tradition of the Pléiade. This is the anthology La puce de Madame Des-Roches (137). As Estienne Pasquier explains in his introduction (138), this collection of poems by various authors was a result of an incident during the Grands jours of 1579 in which a flea was seen on the breast of Catherine des Roches. In the first instance only she and Pasquier exchanged poems on the subject (139), but subsequently the theme was taken up by a number of poets including Scaliger (140), Jacques Courtin de Cissé (141) and Claude Binet (142).

(137) 'qui est un recueil de divers poèmes grecs, latins, & français, composés par plusieurs doctes personnages aux Grands Jours tenus à Poitiers l'An M.D.LXXIX' (Paris, Anselier, 1584, 4°, BN RES 524)

(138) La puce, A3 r°

(139) La puce de Catherine des Roches (f.1 r°); La puce de E. Pasquier (f.3 r°)

(140) Josephi Scaligeri pulex (f.14 r°)

(141) Imitation des vers de Joseph de l'Escale par Jaq. Courtin de Cissé (f.15 r°)

(142) La puce de Claude Binet (f.22 v°). In this poem Binet lists further writers who composed poems on this subject (ff.34 v° - 35 v°)
Most of the poems in this collection concentrate on the traditional theme of the special privileges enjoyed by the flea:

'Ainsi petite Pucette
Ainsi Puce pucelette,
Tu volettes à taton
Sur l'un & l'autre teton:
Puis tout à coup te recelles
Sous l'abri de ses aisselles,
Or panchée sur son flanc
Humes à longs traits son sang
Or ayant pris ta pasture
Tu t'en viens à l'aventure
Soudain après-heberger
Au milieu d'un beau verger,
Ains d'un paradis terrestre,
D'un paradis qui fit naître
Mille fleurs en mes espris' (143)

Not surprisingly perhaps, Catherine des Roches does not treat her subject in this way, although she begins conventionally enough with the flea biting the breast (144). But unlike the others she does not develop away from the subject of the flea into a discussion of the beauties of the lady, but continues to praise the qualities and virtues of the flea itself, its agility and ingenuity in avoiding capture, its alertness and gaiety due to its single and unvarying diet of blood:

'Ce repas seulement est pris
Du sang le siege des espris.
Car désirant estre subtile
Vive, gaye, prompte & agile
Vous prenez d'un seul aliment
Nourriture & enseignement.
On le voit par votre allégresse
Et voz petits tours de finesse

(143) La puce de E. Pasquier, f.3 r°- v°
(144) 'Petite Puce fretillarde,
Qui d'une bouchette mignarde
Sucçotes le sang incarnat
Qui colore un sein delicat'
    (La puce de Catherine des Roches, f.1 r°)
Quand vous sautelez en un sein
Fuyant la rigueur de la main' (145)

As in the hymne-blason a considerable section of the poem is devoted to mythological anecdote with an account of the legendary origins of the flea, metamorphosed at the hands of Diana. The beauty of the flea before her transformation is described:

'De moy je veux seulement dire
Voz beautez, & le grand martire
Que Pan souffrit en vous aymant,
Avant qu'on vit ce changement
Et que vostre face divine
Prit cette couleur ebenine,
Et que vos blancs pieds de Thetis
Fussent si gresles & petis
Puce quand vous estiez pucelle,
Gentille, sage, douce & belle,
Vous mouvant d'un pied si leger,
A sauter & a voltiger' (146)

Less precious than many of the poems in this collection, Catherine des Roches' poem stands in marked contrast to the more mignard type of poem of Jacques Courtin de Cissé (147). Characterised by the heavily worked use of the diminutive, this is a love poem describing in short seven-syllable lines the privileges enjoyed by the flea and denied to the poet, interspersed with the recurrent refrain:

'Pucelette noirelette
Noirelette pucelette'

At the other extreme, a highly pedantic and scientific note is set by Raoul Cailler (148). Here the poet

(145) La puce de Catherine des Roches, f.1 r°
(146) La puce de Catherine des Roches, f.2 r°
(147) Imitation des vers de Joseph de l'Escale, f.15 r°
(148) La puce de Raoul Cailler, f.41 r°
concentrates his praise upon the subject of the conception and birth of the flea. Superior to other animals in its methods of conception (149), its incubation period is shorter than that of inferior beasts, since the flea is in such haste to see the light of day, and cannot bear to delay its birth:

'Toy te hastant de veoir le jour
Tu ne veux faire long sejour
Dedans ta bourbeuse matiere:
Aussi t'est aisément acquis,
Puce, tout ce qui est requis,
A te faire voir la lumiere' (150)

Yet nevertheless, despite all this neo-science, Raoul Cailler's poem ends on the same note as the other poems of this collection. Certainly, says the poet, the birth of the flea is blessed, but even more is its way of life blessed:

'O Puce qu'heureuse tu es
De naistre ainsi comme tu nais!
Mais encor es tu plus heureuse
De vivre ainsi comme tu vis' (151)

his poem finally concludes with a thoroughly conventional evocation of the beauties of his lady:

'T'accrochart sus un marbre blanc
Tu en fais decouler le sang.
Dont tes levres sont envyrees:
'Ou bien tu baises quand tu veux
La bouche, le nez & les yeux

(149) 'Et si n'es sujette à la loy,
Des autres bestes: car en toy
La semence du masle n'entre,
Comme sans l'aide de Cypris,
Ton premier estre tu as pris'

(La puce de Raoul Cailler, f.42 v°)

(150) La puce de Raoul Cailler, f.42 r°

(151) La puce de Raoul Cailler, f.43 r°
Des pucelettes empourprées.
Tu mors & remors le beau sein
Les blanches mains & le tetin
De la pucelle' (152)

The collection ends with a rather more down to earth
poem by Nicolas Rapin. Entitled La contre-puce de N.Rapin
(153), it might well be considered a contreblason, setting
out as it does to reduce to more reasonable proportions
the outrageous praise bestowed upon the flea (154). In
opposition to the idealised accounts of the birth of the
flea, Rapin narrates his version of the tale in a tone of
conscious crudity characteristic of the contreblason:

'Ceux qui t'ont fait par fiction
Estre la fille d'Orion
Ont bien trouve ton origine:
Car Orion est un pisseur,
Et tu nais de l'ordre espesseur,
Qui se detrampe avec l'urine.
Puis ce qu'on faict que Pan t'ayma
Quand Jupiter te transforma
En cette petitesse noire,
Si Pan n'estoit qu'un vieil bouquin
Salle & ord, puant & faquin
Cela n'est pas fascheux à croire' (155)

Only in this poem is there any allusion to hygiene, as
Rapin smugly remarks that he himself is in no danger of
being pestered by fleas, since he makes a determined effort
at cleanliness:

(152) La puce de Raoul Cailler, f.43 r°
(153) La puce, f.53 r°
(154) 'Puce que tant de bons espris
Pour sujet de leurs vers ont pris,
Qui t'ont trouvée si habile
Que la Muse les échauffant,
Ils t'ont fait un grand Elefant
Par leur invention gentille' (f.53 r°)
(155) La contre-puce, f.55 r° - v°
'Quant à moy je ne te crains rien:
Car Dieu mercy j'ay le moyen
D'éviter ta salle morsure:
Je scay tenir nettement
Au linge & en l'accoustrement,
C'est la recepte la plus seure.
La chambre souvent balloyer,
Le haut & le bas nettoyer,
S'esloigner de tous lieux infames,
Est le moyen de s'exempter
De toy, qui ne veut adjouter.
Ne coucher point avec les femmes' (156)

This suggestion that fleas are the result of a lack of personal cleanliness, and that they can be avoided is not made by any other poet. In this Rapin stands alone. Yet in the last resort Rapin's Contre-puce is no more serious a poem than the rest of the collection. Despite its smugly moralistic beginning, the poet changes the tone to one of light satire at the end, producing the ultimate solution to the problem of flea bites:

'Et quand cela je n'aurois point,
Encore scay-je un autre point
Pour brider ta gueule alteree:
Dés le soir je m'enyvreray,
Et toute la nuit dormiray
Sans sentir ta pointe aceree' (157)

Interesting in its own right as a literary curiosity this collection of late sixteenth century poems shows how the tradition of the flea continues from the considerably earlier Blason de la puce of the 1530s. Although these poems say much the same thing as the earlier blason they say it in rather a different manner. The style has become more precious and more consciously literary, with erudite or decorative anecdote playing a more important

(156) La contre-puce, f.55 v°
(157) La contre-puce, f.55 v°
part than in the earlier poem, reflecting the development from the style of the 1530s blason to the later and more complicated hymne-blason.

* * *

This chapter has covered a wide field, drawing together satirical blasons from a period of some sixty years from the 1530s to the 1590s, written in a variety of styles, and covering a variety of topics. The only obvious factor which they all have in common is their title blason, but this title, as we have tried to point out, does not always suggest the same thing. In such works as the Blason de la putain or the Blason de la femme the title retains its original sense of a poem describing the particular features which serve to characterise a given object. Such poems as these are direct descendants of the early heraldic blasons. On the other hand, poems of the type of the Blason du bonnet carré seem to reflect a more recent ancestry, being simply an extension of the eulogistic and invocative blason anatomique. The repetitive 'Bonnet...bonnet...bonnet' seems to be the reason for this poem being called a blason. In the same way a eulogistic mignard love poem on the subject of the flea is also called a blason on an analogy with the love blason. We have already seen the extension of the purely anatomical blason in which it is no longer an actual part of the lady's body which is praised, but rather an object closely associated with her, such as her mirror or ring. This object is then eulogised for the intimacy which it enjoys with the lady - an intimacy denied to the poet himself. It is in this manner that the flea is
praised for its familiarity with the lady's body.

The poems on the various fashions – such as beards, corsets, hair fashions – all testify likewise to the extension in the mid sixteenth century of the term blason to embrace at will any overall descriptive poem in which the description is limited to one relatively restricted field. The Blason des barbes de maintenant, for example, is an encyclopedic poem, covering a wide range of types of beard, but outside the chosen subject – the beard – the poet never strays. Even in this broader sense, the blason remains a poem concentrating on the exhaustive treatment of one single, particular object.

Thus after the unity of theme enjoyed by the anatomical blasons of the 1530s, the genre becomes very apparently indiscriminate and all embracing in the range of its subject matter. Similarly – as these poems show – in form likewise there can no longer be any very precise definition of what must constitute a blason. Long or short, serious or flippant, narrative or repetitive, they can be defined in only the loosest terms as descriptive poems. It is really only their basic satirical intent – common to all these poems discussed – which provides their overall unity.
CHAPTER IX Development and dissipation of the blason in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

In his work on Marot's satirical poetry Kinch draws attention to the fact that from among the many writers of arts poétiques in the sixteenth century, virtually only Sebillet mentions the blason. From this he concludes:

'Si ce genre a joui d'une popularité réelle mais passagère entre 1536 et la venue de la Pléiade, elle est due presque entièrement aux efforts de Marot, et les deux pages que le théoricien de l'école marotique a consacrées à ces poèmes sont le reflet de leur vogue parmi les contemporains du poète. On ne s'étonne pas non plus que Du Bellay ait passé ce genre sous silence, car lui, et sa bande, férus de l'antiquité, ne daignent pas considérer ces compositions qui sentent trop le Moyen Age. S'il n'en a soufflé mot, c'est que le blason avait connu son plus vif succès dans les années précédentes et que Du Bellay l'avait relégué mentalement parmi toutes ces "episseries qui corrumpent le goust de nostre Langue et ne servent si non a porter témoignage de notre ignorance" (Deff.II,4)' (1)

While admitting that the genre does not completely die out, Kinch nevertheless suggests that after 1540 it was of negligible importance:

'Il est incontestable que les beaux jours du genre étaient entre 1536 et 1540. A partir de cette époque le genre alla s'épuisant et après la venue de la Pléiade avec sa nouvelle conception de la poésie, le blason était plus ou moins moribond. Il disparut complètement à la fin du siècle' (2)

The date 1540 is a singularly curious one to choose as marking the end of the popularity of the blasons, for it is not until 1543 - three years after this date - that

(1) Kinch, pp.126-127
(2) Kinch, p.127
the first collected edition of *blasons anatomiques* appeared—an edition which stands in its own right, and in which the *blasons* are not accompanied by Alberti's *Hecatomphile*, a reasonable indication, one might feel, of the continuing popularity of these poems at this date.

In this edition are included five new *blasons* which had not appeared in any of the editions of the *Hecatomphile* (3). In addition to these, we can trace a further six anatomical *blasons* (all included in Méon) which were not included in the Angelier editions of 1543 and 1550, but which all date from after 1540 (4). Still in Méon, we find a further seventeen assorted *blasons* dating from the period 1540 – 1570 (5). Lastly, in addition to these later *blasons* collected together by Méon, we could add a further list of fifteen *blasons* printed after 1540 which

(3) Michel d'Amboise's *Dent*, Jomet Garai d'Apt's *Bras*, Bochetel's *Con*, Chappuys' (?) *Con de la pucelle* and Sagon's *Grace*

(4) Saint Gelais' *Cheveulx* (1544 Janot Recueil de poésie francoyse) and *Œil* (Oeuvres poétiques, 1574), Peletier's *Cœur* and *Contreblason du coeur* (Oeuvres poétiques, 1547), Gilles d'Aurigny's *Ongle* (Tuteur d'amour, 1546) Des Periers' *Nombril* (Oeuvres, 1544)

(5) *Blasons de la goutte*. De honneur. Et de la quarte (1547), Forcadel's (?) *Blason des couleurs* and his *Blason de la nuit* (Chant des seraines, 1548), Guéroult's *Blason des oiseaux* (1550), *Blason de la femme* (Louenge des femmes, 1551), *Blason des barbes de maintenant* (1551), Bérenger de la Tour's *Blason du miroir* (Siecle d'or, 1551), Maclou de la Haye's Cinq *blasons des cinq contentemens en amour* (Oeuvres, 1553), Jean de la Taille's *Blason de la Marruerite* and *Blason de l'aymant* (Geomance, 1574), *Blason des fieurs* (nd)
are not included in his anthology (6). Thus we have found as many as thirty-eight poems printed after 1540 bearing the title blason which do not appear in the obvious collections. To say, therefore, as Kinch does, that the genre was dying out by 1540 is to ignore this considerable weight of evidence. It is however true to say that the use of the word blason in the title of a love poem has - for the most part - died out by the time the Pléiade poets are established. It is rare to find the term blason used in the title of a love poem in the latter part of the sixteenth century. Even so, it is not completely unheard of; Olivier de Magny, for example, includes in the Amours of 1553 (7) a poem addressed to his lady, Castianire, entitled Blason d'un bouquet que luy donna sa Castianire. In its opening lines Magny firmly

(6) Jean Rus' Blason de la rose and Blason du puy (Oeuvres dictées, c.1540), Bouchet's Epitaphe contenant le blason d'un bon cheval (Genealogies, 1545), Eustorg de Beaulieu's Souverain blason d'honneur (Christiennे resjouyssance, 1546), Forcadel's (?) Blason des dames selon le pays (Chant des seraines, 1548), Olivier de Magny's Blason d'un bouquet (Amours, 1553), Blason de la teste de bois (1554), "Rabelais" Blazon and Contre-blazon de la vieille (Œuvres, 1558), Jacques du Fouilloux' Blason du veneur (Venerie, 1561) Blason du gobellet and Blason du platellet (1562), Blason des basquines et vertugalles (1563), Blason du bonnet caré (1576), Corrozet's Blason des armes de la ville de Paris (Antiquitez, 1576)

(7) Les amours d'Olivier de Magny quercinois, Paris, Grouilleau, 1553, 8°, BN Res Ye 1667, f.56 r
associates his poem with other love blasons:

'Divers blasons, maints bons espritz
Nous ont fait voir par leurs escritz,
Mais d'un bouquet j'ayme l'honneur,
Et en veux estre blasonneur,
J'en veux rithmer, j'en veux escrire
Et tant à sa louange dire
Qu'apres le temps soit encor'
Aussi verdoyant qu'il est or'  (8)

This is a descriptive poem, and a eulogistic one, in the style of the traditional love blason. Each stanza begins with an invocation to the bouquet, and at times Magny even follows the repetitive technique characteristic of the anatomical blason:

'Bouquet digne d'estre chanté,
Bouquet digne d'estre vanté
Soit sur le luth, ou sur la lyre,
Bouquet digne surêt d'eslire
Non seulement de moy, ainçois
De ce grand Pindare françois,
Bouquet mignard, sade bouquet,
Bouquet plus verd qu'un perroquet'  (9)

In the same way in which Salel had sung the praises of the Espingle and the Anneau, and the anonymous poet the praises of the Chemise, so Magny here describes in great detail the beauties and charms of the bouquet, rendered even more delightful in his eyes by the fact that it is his mistress who has presented it to him. The attraction of Magny's bouquet lies - as in the anatomical blasons - not so much in the particular object itself, as in the lady to whom it belongs:

'Bouquet compasse proprement,
Voire presque divinemment,
Par les doigtz albastrins de celle
Qui toutes les Dames excelle:

(8) Magny, Amours, f.56 r°
(9) Magny, Amours, f.56 v°
Ét qui des fois demy douzaine
L'a parfumé de son aleine
Pour le rendre plus odorant...
...Bouquet que je baisotte, & taste,
Que j'amadoue, que je flate,
Que je rebaise, & que je touche,
Au lieu de celle dans ma couche,
Laquelle a peu tant dessus moy,
Qu'elle a gaigné moy & ma foy' (10)

Considerably later than Magny's blason, and later than any of the blasons mentioned hitherto is a curious poem buried in the middle of a prose work dating from 1581 (although the blason itself cannot be accurately dated). The work itself is called Le cabinet du Roy de France, dans lequel il y a trois perles précieuses d'inestimable valeur: par le moyen desquelles sa majesté s'en va le premier monarque du monde, & ses sujets du tout soulagez (11). As the title suggests, it is a didactic work. No author's name is given on the title page, but Brunet suggests tentatively the names of Nicolas Proumenteau or N. Barnaud as possible authors (12). The three pearls in question are the Church, the nobility and the third estate, and it is in the second book dealing with the nobility that the blason appears, preceded by another poem, Les indignitez de la cour (13). Neither of these poems seems to be by the author of the main work. As the author of the Cabinet explains, he is simply transcribing poems which he has come across, which serve to illustrate his

(10) Magny, Amours, ff. 57 r°- 58 r°
(11) Paris (no printer), 1581, 8°, BN Lb 34197
(12) Brunet, vol. I, col. 1441
(13) Cabinet, p. 297
point (14). Firstly he introduces the Indignitez:

'Je voy un placard des long temps publie des
indignitez de la Cour, duquel la teneur sensuit' (15)

and then - lest the reader be left with a too damning
picture of the courtier – a second poem, the Blasons de
la cour is included, to tone down the violence of the
first:

'A ceste occasion j'ay bien voulu icy transcrire
les blasons de la Cour pour restraindre ce qui
 estoit un peu trop universellement dit aux
indignitez, & contenter messieurs les courtisans
qui eussent pu se formaliser si je n'eusse
repare la grande bresche dont l'indigne de la
Cour les avoit interesse' (16)

The blason itself attempts to justify the existence
of the court and courtiers, excusing even their excessive
prettiness and preoccupation with niceties of fashion in
an ingenious metaphor of the seasonal transition from the
greyness of January to spring time when all the flowers
come out again – the pretty flowers being the courtiers
of Henri III. These beautiful young men are described by
the poet:

'Quoy? quand d'un courtisan la perruque est frisee,
Quand son corps est guinde par poids, par contrepas,
Quand son poil est tendu par façon, par compas,
S'il a un beau colet, sa chemise empoisee
Plus blanche que cristal: si son poil il herisse,
Ou par gomme retire ses plis par artifice:
S'il le fait tenir droit, lever, verser en bas,'

(14) Hence the impossibility of dating the poems accurately
by the date of the prose work

(15) Cabinet, p.297

(16) Cabinet, p.301
En arrière, à costé, n'est-il pas plus honneste,
Plus gaillard, plus gentil & mieux portant sa teste
Que le lourdaut Janvier sans plaisir sans esbats?'

It cannot be said therefore - despite Du Bellay's silence on the subject of the blason - that the genre died out in the latter part of the sixteenth century, since in this poem we find the term being used as late as 1581 (18). Despite these examples it must be admitted that for the most part the use of the word blason in the title of a poem does in fact fall into disuse. However it would certainly be a grave error to assume from this that the genre itself dies out. Yet while the genre flourishes as much as ever, its nature changes slightly in that it seems to branch out in two different directions in the hands of the so called Pléiade poets and in those of the early seventeenth century satirical poets.

On the one hand it develops in the direction of the longer descriptive poem devoted to the praise of one single object. Since Eckhardt's work on Rémy Belleau (19), this type of poem has generally been described as the hymne-blason. On the other hand, the amatory and anatomical preoccupations of the blason which are for the most part lost in the hymne-blason are retained and perpetuated in the numerous sonnets praising and worshipping various

(17) Cabinet, p. 303
(18) Indeed all the episseries against which Du Bellay fulminates continue throughout the century in the provincial puys
(19) Rémy Belleau, sa vie - sa "Bergerie", Budapest, 1917, 8°
parts of the female anatomy, produced both by the major poets of the Pléiade and by their lesser successors. Far from dying out at the end of the century both these types of poem are taken up and developed in a particular manner by the satirical poets of the early seventeenth century.

* * *

It is not our intention to study in detail the hymne-blason of the Pléiade. Our aim is simply to draw attention to it, for it is here that the genre which we are studying continues to flourish. The best known of the hymnes-blasons of the Pléiade poets are those of Ronsard and Belleau, the first of which appeared in 1554, in Ronsard's Bocage. After this date they appear regularly in the course of the next couple of years, and thereafter spasmodically in the following order:

I. Le bocage de P. de Ronsard (20), containing Ronsard's Grenouille, Freslion and Fourmy, all addressed to Belleau, and Belleau's own Papillon addressed to Ronsard (21).

II. Continuation des amours de P. de Ronsard Vandomois (22), containing three more hymnes-blasons of Belleau, again addressed to Ronsard: L'heure, La cerise, Lescargot, together with Aubert's Ciron addressed to Belleau and Ronsard jointly (23).

III. Les meslanges de P. de Ronsard (24), containing a further four hymnes-blasons of Ronsard addressed to Jean Brinon: Le houx, Elezie du verre, Des armes and La chasse (25).

(20) Paris, Veuve Maurice de la Porte, 1554, 8°, BN Res p Ye 124
(21) Bocage, ff.27 v°, 29 v°, 31 r°, 33 r°
(22) Paris, Sertenas, 1555, 8°, BN Res Ye 4758
(23) Continuation des amours, pp.66,70,81,76
(24) Paris, Corrozet, 1555, 8°, BN Res p Ye 123
(25) Meslanges, ff.2 v°, 14 r°, 28 r°, 38 r°
IV. Odes d'Anacreon Teien traduites de Grec en Françoys par Rémi Belleau...ensemble quelques petites hymnes de son invention (26), containing several hymnes-blasons (27)

V. Le septiesme livre des poemes de Pierre de Ronsard (28), containing Le soucy du jardin, Le pin, Rossignol (29)

VI. Belleau's Amours et nouveaux échanges des pierres precieuses (30), containing twenty-one hymnes-blasons on various precious and semi-precious stones. This work was augmented in the 1585 Oeuvres by a further ten poems (31)

The hymnes-blasons of the 1554 Bocage (Ronsard's Grenouille, Freslon and Fourmy) are generally considered to be the first manifestations of this particular genre, although Marcel Raymond suggests in his Influence de Ronsard sur la poésie française (32) that Baif's Laurier, although not printed until later in the Euvres en rime (33) does in fact date from considerably earlier, and that it might well antedate the hymnes-blasons of Ronsard and Belleau. Having once been popularised by these three poets, the genre is quickly seized upon by a host of minor imitators, and the blason becomes - in this new form - one

(26) Paris, Wechel, 1556, 8°, BN Res X 2536
(27) At least one of the translations from Anacreon (Les louanges de la rose. Ode, p.57) is indistinguishable from Belleau's own hymnes-blasons
(28) Paris, Dallier, 1569, 4°, BN Res Ye 508
(29) Septiesme livre des poèmes, ff.4 r°, 6 r°, 8 v°
(30) Paris, Patisson, 1576, 4°, BN Res Ye 583
(31) Paris, Patisson, 1585, 12°, BN Res Ye 1829-1830
(33) Paris, Breyer, 1573, 8°, BN Res Ye 1984, f.25 r°
of the most fashionable poetic commonplaces of the last decades of the century (34)

Where, one wonders, do Ronsard, Belleau and Baff derive their original idea? On this point critics are divided. According to Raymond the source is basically the blason as derived from Marot and the so called Bernesque blason, elevated and adapted to a more fitting vehicle by the inclusion of erudition and fable:

'Un genre nouveau, du moins sous sa forme savante l'hymne-blason, s'offre alors à la curiosité de Ronsard, qui s'efforce de l'ennoblir et dédie à Belleau son Frelon, puis sa Grenouille et sa Fourmi... Un discipline de Dorat, bien entendu, prétend s'inspirer des Hymnes d'Homère et de Callimaque lorsqu'il décrit un objet et s'amuse à détailler ses vertus. En fait, Ronsard, aidé peut-être par les recherches voisines de Baff se contente de hausser jusqu'au lyrisme le blason bernesque et marotique; il interpelle les Muses et les dieux, il mêle des vocables savants aux mots du terroir, enfin, après la dédicace, où le nom du blasonné est dix fois martelé, il introduit au centre du poème un mythe, une fable qui ont pour mission de voiler des vérités de la poésie' (35)

To see the hymne-blason thus straightforwardly as an elevated form of the anatomical or Bernesque blason is perhaps to oversimplify the problem. In Belleau's case at least we might suggest that a considerable influence was exercised upon the poet by his study of the work of Anacreon. There is indeed little to distinguish Belleau's own hymnes-blasons in the Petites hymnes de son invention which were included with the translation of the odes of Anacreon

from certain of the actual translations. In particular
Anacreon's ode Les louanges de la rose (36) might be
cited as a case in point, beginning as it does:

'Amy je veus chanter l'honneur,
L'honneur de ceste heureuse fleur,
De ceste Rose printaniere,
De ceste Rose familiere,
Et compagnie du tens fleuri,
Si de toi je suis favori,
0 Rose a qui la feuille pourpree,
Rose qui la bouche sacrée
Et la douce aleine des Dieux
Combles d'un parfun gracieux' (37)

and with its references to Venus, to Bacchus, Pallas and
the 'neuf Sœurs', and the passage:

'L'Aurore a des Roses les dois,
Les Nymphes des eaux & des bois
En ont les bras, & la Cyprine
En porte la couleur pourprine' (38)

This poem could well serve as a model for certain of the
Pléiade hymnes-blasons. It is a poem of praise, addressed
to one single object, and it contains already all the
necessary erudition and mythology typical of the hymnes-
blasons of Ronsard or Belleau.

Saulnier is less categorical than Raymond in his
conclusions on the sources of the hymnes-blasons, admitting
the influence of many more sources than merely those of
Marot and Berni:

'De l'influence du genre, on reconnaîtra d'abord
la trace dans l'Hymne-Blason, largement cultivé
par la Pléiade. Odelette anacréontique, épig-
ramme descriptive de l'Anthologie Grecque,
strambotto italien, hymnes plaisants de Berni et
des Bernesques sont, avec le Blason-médaillon,
a l'origine de l'Hymne-blason' (39)

(36) Odes d'Anacreon Teien, p.57
(37) Odes d'Anacreon Teien, p.57
(38) Odes d'Anacreon Teien, p.58
(39) Saulnier, Scève, vol.1, p.82
Whatever we think of the validity of Saulnier's term *blason-médaillon*, we cannot deny the influence of the various sources which he cites. The original influence of the *blason marotique*, concentrating attention and praise upon one single object, cannot be denied. To refute the undoubted influence of the *capitolo* and *strambotto* is impossible. Vianey (40) claims that three at least of Ronsard's *hymnes-blasons* are based on Italian sources. His *Verre* (41) is, according to Vianey, based on Bino's *Capitolo in lode del Bicchiere* (42), and his *Salade* (43) Vianey associates with Molza's *Capitolo dell'Insalata* (44). Lastly, Vianey claims, Ronsard's *plaquette Les nues* (45) is based upon Matteo Francesi's *Capitolo sopra le Nuove* (46).

In addition to these sources (47), we might suggest a further French influence which has for the most part been neglected by critics. A poem such as Jean Rus's *Blason de la rose* (48) is a worthy precursor of the Pléiade

(40) 'Bruscambille et les poètes bernesques', *Revue d'histoire littéraire*, vol.VIII, 1901, p.569
(41) *Meslanges*, f.14 r°
(42) *Opere burlesche*, vol.II, p.214
(43) *Sixiesme livre des poemes*, Paris, Dallier, 1569, 8°, BN Res Ye 507
(44) *Opere burlesche*, vol.I, p.223
(45) Np, 1565, 8°, BN Res p Ye 511
(46) *Opere burlesche*, vol.II, p.97
(47) The influence of Ausonius also should not be neglected. Cf. his poem *Rosae* (*D.Magni Ausonii opera*, Amsterdam, 1671, 8°, p.520)
(48) Rus, *Œuvres*, p.12
hymne-blason which has been largely overlooked. Although at the period it was composed (49) Rus could not have been familiar with the work of Anacreon, there is nevertheless a decided similarity in style, and this poem comes closer to the Pléiade hymne-blason than to the anatomical blason with which it is contemporary. Basically a love poem, and using the subject of praise of the flower as a pretext for praise of the lady of that name, it is, however, considerably longer than the average love blason of the 1540s. With its leisurely three hundred lines it anticipates rather the hymne-blason. Similarly in the manner of the hymne-blason again, it recounts the anecdote of the legendary origin of the red rose, stained thus by the blood of Venus. References to the gods and goddesses of Olympus abound, in anticipation of the preoccupation with mythology of the Pléiade hymnes-blasons (50):

'Rose jadis des anciens
Tant cherie et tant honorée,
Voire comme un Dieu adorée;
De qui les Nymphes tant propices
Et les Deesses font delices:

(49) Tamizey de Larroque's edition of Rus is based on Les oeuvres dictées par Jehan Rus, Bourdeloys ez jeux floraux A Tholoze (Toulouse, Boudeville, nd, 8°) which he dates as c. 1540

(50) Mention must also be made of yet another Blason de la rose, rather later in date, by Jean de la Taille, included together with a second Blason de la Marguerite in La famine ou les Gabeonites...ensemble plusieurs autres œuvres poétiques (Paris, Morel, 1573, 8°, BR Res Ye 1818, ff. 160 v° and 159 r°). Both poems, like that of Rus, are lightly veiled love poems, the interest of the Blason de la rose lying not so much in the significance of the rose itself, but rather in the interplay of meanings between Rose the woman and rose the flower.
and the delightfully precious description of the differing
appearance of the rose each day is again reminiscent of
the style of a Belleau:

'L'un coup, vostre pied est lié
D'ung cheveul blond et delié,
Blond, et de couleur plus dorée
Que caulx de Venus Cytherée.
Laultrefois, est lié d'un fil
D'or de Chypre fin et subtil,
Subtil, et bien affaconné
De la main dont il est donné,
Après, il est ung aultre jour
Garny de perles tout autour,
De perles belles et luisantes
Qu'elle y meet de ses mains plaisantes,
Et quelque foys je teuve enceor
Dessus la feuille, en lettre d'or,
Escript le surnom de mamye' (52)

We might also mention the group of French poems dating
from the 1540s whose titles are in effect synonyms for the
word blason. Such a poem is Victor Brodeau's Louanges de
Jesus nostre saulveur (53). Such also are Forcadel's

(51) Rus, Oeuvres, p.14
(52) Rus, Oeuvres, p.18
(53) Ms. 1540, 8°, Bibliothèque Mazarine 21652 (2nd piece)
encomies printed in the 1551 collection of *Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel*. One of these poems had already appeared in the earlier *Chant des seraines* under the title *Blason de la nuit* (54). But in 1551 this title is modified and the poem joins the ranks of the *encomies* (55). In all these poems the basic amatory preoccupation of the *blason marotique* is lost. These poems are in fact *hymnes*, praising the object in question at far greater length than had been the case with the anatomical *blasonneurs*. In the *encomie* we find in addition to the straightforward description and praise of the *blason marotique* the mythological and erudite allusions characteristic of the *Pléiade*. In some cases the starting point of the poem is love; in the *Encomie de la pome*, for example, the pretext for the poem is an apple presented to the poet by his lady:

'...la Pome bien flairante
Que ma Clitie me presente,
Pource que sus la verde branche
L'ha cueillie de sa main blanche' (56)

but *Forcadel* soon develops his poem away from Clitie to a consideration of the apple itself, seen as an object interesting in its own right, but more important as a prop on which to hang all the allusions with which an apple can be associated. *Forcadel* does not fail, for example, to draw the inevitable parallel between his particular apple and that of *Paris*:

(54) Cf. above, chapter VII, p.279 et seq.
(55) Other *encomies* are the *Mort* (p.88), the *Croix* (p.93), the *Pome* (p.92), the *Corbeau* (p.97) and the *Oeil* (p.100)
(56) *Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel*, p.92
'Certes la Pome a moy donnéne  
Ha plus heureuse destinee.  
Pour elle ne viendroit en proye  
La fameuse cite de Troye,  
Comme pour la Pome doree  
De trois Deesses desiree' (57)

He then proceeds in a manner echoing that of Ronsard to associate the roundness of the apple with that of the universe, contriving to blend together the sensuality of the reference to the 'tetons demipomes' and the 'deux joues pomelees' with science:

'O que je t'ayme Pome ronde,  
Qui as la forme de ce monde.  
J'ayme ses tetons demipomes,  
Faits au gre des Dieux & des hommes.  
Et ses deux joues pomelees  
Avecques Rose entremesleees' (58)

Another of the encomies, that of the Corbeau (59) is reminiscent of the bernesque paradoxical blason, praising as it does a traditionally unlovely bird, describing the beauty of its black plumage and its 'voix de bassecontre' (60), and narrating the mythological origins of its colouring. It equally anticipates, however, the similarly paradoxical hymnes-blasons of the Pléiade such as Ronsard's Houx (61) or Grenouille (62). Forcadel praises the bird for its gentle nature, its beauty, and in particular for its voice:

(57) Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel, pp.92-93  
(58) Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel, p.93  
(59) Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel, p.97  
(60) Poésie d'Estienne Forcadel, p.97  
(61) Meslances, (1555) f.2 v°  
(62) Bocage, (1554) f.27 v°
'Celle voix, dy je, qui sait rendre
Ce que l'homme luy veult apprendre' (63)

He lists the various uses to which the feathers can be put:

'Bien say' je qu'Amour ha coustume
D'empenner de si noire plume
Son trait heureux & surdore,
Qui soudain rend enamoure.
Et pour venir à l'harmonie,
Que les Muses y ont unie,
Chacun sait que les Espinettes
Sans ceste plume sont muettes' (64)

The account of the fabulous origins of the bird - an essential feature of the later hymne-blason - is already present here. In this particular case, however, the origins are biblical rather than mythological:

'Nostre oiseau fut au temps passé
Teint de blancheur, qui ha passé
Le plus naif de la Colombe
Avant que l'eau fut seule tombe
De tous humains, quand le grand Juge
Du Ciel envoya le Deluge,
Et quand Noé le Patriarche
La fait sortir hors de son Arche,
Pour esprés s'il verroit point' (65)

The legend continues to narrate how the bird's originally white plumage became black as a sign of his sadness.

We would, then, consider the hymne-blason as it is produced by the Pléiade, to be a natural development within the French tradition - and that despite the claims of Du Bellay that poets should in future renounce all preceding vernacular poetry, which he considers to be nothing better than 'episseries, qui corrumpent le goust de nostre

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(63) Poésie d'Estienne Forcade, p.97
(64) Poésie d'Estienne Forcade, pp.97-98
(65) Poésie d'Estienne Forcade, p.98
Langue' (66), the hymnes-blasons of the Pléiade are in fact a continuation and development of a basically French genre. Certainly the hymnes-blasons are raised to a more elevated plane than that of the blason marotique; no longer are they intended simply as ingenious love poems. Instead they are more serious in intent. Rémy Belleau's Pierres précieuses are decorative hymnes-blasons, but they are also intended as a serious work. In the introductory Discours Belleau stresses the erudite aspect of the work:

'Escrivant ce petit discours des Pierres précieuses j'ai bien voulu suyvre, avec toute religion, l'opinion des anciens auteurs qui nous ont laissé par leurs doctes & divins escrits, les vertus & proprietez particulières d'icelles, comme prov-enantes des Planetes, & de l'influs celeste des Estoiles' (67)

But he has also taken care to adorn and decorate this basic information in order to make it more palatable to the reader:

'Je ne doute point qu'aucuns ne trouvent estrange la façon dont j'ay usé en la description d'icelles, m'asseurant toutesfois qu'en les lisant, ceux là mesmes y prendront plus de plaisir, que si je les eusse simplement descriptes, sans autre grace & sans autre enrichissement de quelque nouvelle invention' (68)

These poems are intended each to praise one particular manifestation of the workings of God:

'Mais pour tousjours admirer les oeuvres de ce grand Dieu, qui a divinement reclos tant de beautez & de perfections en ces petites creatures' (69)


(67) Amours et nouveaux echanges des pierres precieuses, x5 v

(68) Amours et nouveaux echanges des pierres precieuses, x5 v

(69) Amours et nouveaux echanges des pierres precieuses, x5 v
Eckhardt considers that these poems are spoilt by the excess of pedantry, inadequately disguised by Belleau (70), but this is not a normally accepted opinion, and is certainly not one held by Belleau's contemporaries. The sonnet by Scévole de Sainte Marthe introducing the Pierres précieuses praises highly the art of Belleau (71), and Dorat himself is equally enthusiastic (72). The success of

(70) 'Il avait bien commencé par le blason-hymne où il avait cru trouver le genre convenant à ses facultés poétiques, mais ce genre laissant le champ ouvert à la dissertation et à un vain étalage d'érudition aboutit finalement aux Pierres précieuses qui, en dépit des efforts du poète, n'ont guère une valeur poétique beaucoup plus considérable que les lapidaires du moyen-âge. Belleau ne réussit que trop à devenir l'"Orphée" de son pays' (Eckhardt, p.21)

(71) 'Voyez BELLEAU, l'honneur des bandes Aonides, Qui ses thresors desploye en cent mille façons, Vous bienheurent ici de tous les riches dons Que l'Orient descouvre à ses rides humides. Si celle on prise tant, dont la prodigue main D'un joyau distilé festoye son Romain: Que merite cestuy qui fait largesse telle Non d'une Perle seule, ains de joyaux divers, Qu'il ne consomme pas en vinaigre, comme elle, Mais au miel savoureux qui coule de ses vers?'

(72) 'Pendant que mon BELLEAU d'un vers doux & facile Va chantant les amours de Venus la gentile, Elle de ses faveurs le voulant caresser Pour ne paroistre ingrate a le recompenser, L'embarque dans sa longue, & de viste carriere, Comme est le char des Dieux, le porte mariniere Sur le rivage Indois, où le flot precieux Des pierres se retrouve en l'Ocean perleus: Luy commande piller la richesse Indienne, Puis porter à son Roy toute la proye sienne, Et le rare butin de ce larcin nouveau. Luy de songneuse recueille dessous l'eau Du rougissant profond, les Pierres recelees Dedans le sein fecond des ondes emperlees: Dont laissant la mer, de mer non ignorante, Les noms, & les vertus, & la couleur brillante Que chasque Pierre fine a naturelle en soy.
these poems in the sixteenth century is further attested by the fact that the original twenty-one precious stones of the 1576 edition are augmented by a further ten poems in the *Oeuvres poetiques* of 1585.

It is curious to note that both in the *Pierres précieuses* and in his other *hymnes-blasons*, although there is much purely classical mythology, there is also a considerable amount which is in fact pure fiction, invented presumably by Belleau himself. The account of the war of the Titans against Jupiter narrated in the *Escargot* (73) is taken from myth, but their subsequent transformation into snails is pure fantasy. The same is true of the ingenious fable of Amethyst transformed into stone by the gods in order to protect her from the unwanted attentions of Bacchus (74), and then turned by Bacchus into a wine-coloured stone, and given the virtue of being able to keep sober any man carrying this stone on his person:

'Je veux à l'advenir que ceste pierre fine,
Nourrissant dedans soy ma colere divine,
Teinte de mes couleurs, engarde son porteur
De jamais s'enyrver de ma douce liqueur,
Attrant les vapeurs qui d'haleines fumeuses
Vont troublant le cerveau de passions vineuses.
Puis je veueil qu'elle rende agreable & gentil,
Sobre, honeste, courtois, d'espirit promt & subtil
Celuy qui dans le sein la portera celee,
Ou dessus le nombril estroittement colee' (75)

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Est-il pas donc heureux ce Poète, mon Roy,
Aytant sous la faveur de Venus la doree
Butiné le thresor de la rive Erythree?' (*3 v°-- *4 r°*)

(73) *Oeuvres poetiques*, 1585, f.36 v°

(74) *L'amethyste in Amours et nouveaux echanges des pierres precieuses*, f.1 r°

(75) *Amours et nouveaux echanges des pierres precieuses*, ff.5 v°-- 6 r°
By such fabulous additions giving a further dimension to the basic descriptive material of their poems, Belleau and Ronsard endeavoured to produce in the French language something resembling more closely the work of Callimachus or even of Homer.

* * *

Curiously, Du Bellay does not, on the whole, practise the hymne-blason. Possibly the nearest he comes to the blason marotique in form at least is in his Epitaphe d'un flambeau (76) in which his invective against the flambeau takes the familiar form of repetitive vituperation characteristic of the contreblason:

"Flambeau puant, flambeau fumeux,
Flambeau petillant, & gommeux
Flambeau oingt de poix, & de souffre
Emprunté de stygieux souffre,
Flambeau secret, flambeau mutin,
Flambeau plus ardent au butin,
Qu'une fière & cruelle armée
Au sac d'une ville entamée" (77)

His Hymne de la surdité addressed to Ronsard (78) is long and diffuse, but - once it comes to the point - it does follow the pattern of the paradoxical Italian capitolo which seems to have influenced certain of the French satirical blasons (79), although as Toldo suggests (80)

(76) Oeuvres, Paris, Morel, 1573, 8°, BN Ye 7354, f.455 r°
(77) Du Bellay, Oeuvres, f.455 v°
(78) Du Bellay, Oeuvres, f.478 v°
(79) Cf. above, chapter VIII, p.324 et seq.
(80) 'Poésie burlesque française de la Renaissance', Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie, vol.XXV, 1901, p.273
despite the clear general influence of these Italian paradoxical capitoli there is no one single poem which might have served as source for Du Bellay's hymne.

It is however for his satirical poems on the well worked theme of the vieille that Du Bellay is usually associated with the blasonneurs, his Contre une vieille (81) and Anterotique de la vieille & de la jeune amie (82). Both these two poems fit into the traditional mould of vituperation against old women. Even Rabelais composed two blasons on the subject, neither of which is particularly well known - the Blazon de la vieille and Contreblazon (83). In these two poems the traditional role of blason and contreblason is reversed. The Blazon is vituperative, beginning:

'Vieille edentee, infame & malheureuse:
Vieille sans grace, aux vertus rigoureuse:
Vieille en qui gist trahison et querelle:
Vieille truande, inicque macquerelle:
Vieille qui vends les pucelles d'honneur:
Vieille qui n'eus jamais aucun honneur' (84)

and continuing in this vein for some seventy lines, of which the greater number begin with an invocation to the Vieille. Where the Blazon scorns and vilifies the figure of the old woman, the Contreblazon provides the other side of the picture:

(81) Du Bellay, Oeuvres, f.456 v°
(82) Du Bellay, Oeuvres, f.458 v°
(83) Rabelais, Oeuvres, Lyons, Martin, 1558, 8°, BN Res Y° 2176-2178, Vv9 v° [This date is incorrect. Cf. P.P. Plan, p.193, para. 95]
(84) Rabelais, Oeuvres, Vv9 v°
It is the more common vituperative tradition which Du Bellay follows in both his poems on the subject. The Contre une vieille begins:

"Vieille plus vieille que le monde,
Vieille plus que l'ordure immunde,
Vieille plus que la Fievre blesme,
Et plus morte que la Mort mesme,
Plus que la Fureur furieuse,
Et plus que l'Envie envieuse,
Tu es une attise-querelle,
Tu es sorciere, & maquerelle,
Tu es hypocrite, & bigotte,
Et toujours ta bouche marmotte
Je ne sçay quoy' (86)

This same theme continues, and indeed becomes even more popular than before among the satirical writers of the early seventeenth century. Poems of this sort describing and vituperating against the old woman are so numerous that it serves no purpose to try to enumerate them. One of the most notable examples of these late anti-old woman blasons is the poem Contre une vieille sempiternelle by the Cadet d'Angoulevent, which closely resembles Rabelais' Blazon (87). In this poem every one of the seventy-two lines begins with an invocation to the old woman:

(85) Rabelais, Oeuvres, Vv10 v°
(86) Du Bellay, Oeuvres, f.456 v°
(87) Les satyres bastardes et autres oeuvres folastres, Paris (no printer), 1615, 16°, BN Res Ye 3469, f.52 v°
'Vieille ha ha, vieille hou hou,
Vieille chouette, vieille hibou,
Vieille grimace de marotte,
Vieille gibeciere de Juif,
Vieille chandelier noircy de suif,
Vieille robe pleine de crotte' (88)

The various collections of early seventeenth century satirical poetry all abound in this type of vituperative poetry, showing the perpetuation of the traditional theme of vilification of old women from the fifteenth century through the blasons and the Pléiade, and into the early seventeenth century, becoming progressively nastier as it evolves and grows more sophisticated.

* * *

The hymne-blason in both its satirical and non-satirical forms is adopted avidly by the successors of Ronsard. Amadis Jamyn revives the old Italian anti-honour theme of Mauro which had already been imitated by the anonymous blasonneur, author of the trilogy on goutte, honneur and fiévre quarte (89). In his version, entitled simply Contre l'honneur (90), Jamyn adheres closely to the Italian model; even the curious comparison with gout and fever, common to both Mauro and the anonymous blason is faithfully reproduced by Jamyn (91). The minor imitators of Ronsard also produce numerous hymnes-blasons based upon the original model afforded by the master.

(89) Cf. above, chapter VIII, p.325
(90) Oeuvres poétiques, vol.II, p.203
(91) Cf. above, chapter VIII, p.329
The cénacle at Poitiers headed by Catherine des Roches were avid practitioners of the blason. We have already discussed the series of blasons on the flea by this group of poets, but these are not the only interesting works they produced. Madame des Roches, mère composed for the most part odes and sonnets which have little in common with the hymne-blason, but her daughter produced several hymnes-blasons. Her anacreontic Rose a Charite (92) would seem to be based upon Ronsard's own anacreontic ode La rose (93), while her Hymne de l'eau a la Roine (94) is a much more solemn poem whose dignity is further enhanced by the long drawn out Alexandrines:

'Source qui ruisellant vostre onde cristaline
Tirez d'un double Roc vostre antique origine,
De grace excusez moy si j'ose vous chanter
Je crain fort en chantant de vous mal-contenter
Et d'accroistre ma honte au lieu de vostre gloire:
Je crain fort d'offencer les filles de Memoire
Qui ne se plaisent pas, ains tiennent a mespris,
De se voir louanger par de faibles escrits'

In 1579 Catherine des Roches' flea inspired this cénacle to compose a series of blasons on the subject (96). Four years later, in 1583 another similar wave of poems was inspired by the incident of a portrait being painted of Etienne Pasquier in which the hands were omitted (97).

(92) Les oeuvres de mes dames des Roches, Paris, Angelier, 1578, 4°, BN Res Ye 521, p.115
(93) Continuation des amours, p.44 (Cf. Raymond, vol.II, p.208 et seq.)
(94) Oeuvres de mes dames des Roches, p.138
(95) Oeuvres de mes dames des Roches, p.138
(96) Cf. above, chapter VIII, p.343
(97) La main ou oeuvres poetiques faits sur la main de Estienne Pasquier, Paris, Gadouleau, 1584, 4°, BN Res Ye 525
These, however, unlike the *puce* poems, take for the most part the form of epigrams, many of which are in Latin rather than French. Despite the promising title, therefore, which would suggest a further collection of *blasons* in the style of the *Puce*, Pasquier's *Main* proves disappointing.

In a similarly facetious vein, and certainly apposite to an examination of the *hymne-blason* is a collection of three works, *Rien*, *Quelquechose* and *Tout*, the first of which is by Passerat and the second two by unnamed authors (98). All three poems consist of a protracted play on the three words. With considerable ingenuity the poet treats the subject of *Rien*:

'Touche *RIEN*, tu diras que *RIEN* se peut toucher
Sans corps, regarde *RIEN*, & *RIEN* à l'approcher
Tu verras sans couleur, aussi *RIEN* parle & ot
Sans le son de la voix, & *RIEN* vole bien tost
Par le vuide de l'air sans ales, immobile,
N'occupant aulcun lieu, & sans os-marche agile' (99)

concluding neatly:

'Icy nous mettrons fin a ces subtils discours
De peur que si j'employe maints fueillets & maints
A discourir de *RIEN*, qui n'est chose creee, (jours
Mes vers comme de *RIEN* s'en aillent en fumee'

(100)

The third of the poems, *Tout au tout puissant* comes even closer than the first two to the invocative, repetitive *blason*. A long passage of forty-five lines of antitheses


(99) *Rien*, p.5

(100) *Rien*, p.6
in the middle of the poem contains the word TOUT twice in each line, at the head of each opposing statement, referring firstly to time present and secondly to time past, concluding:

'TOUT ne vient qu'en sueurs, TOUT venoit sans main mettre TOUT promet sans donner, TOUT donnoit sans promettre. TOUT raportoit ses fruits, & TOUT est infertil, TOUT profitoit à tous, & TOUT est inutil. TOUT tire à la grandeur, TOUT vivoit en simplesse: TOUT n'est que vanité, TOUT n'estoit que sagesse. TOUT estoit immortel, TOUT n'a plus de demain: Aussi TOUT est perdu, si Dieu n'y met la main' (101)

Although these three poems certainly show the continuation of the repetitive aspect of the blason through the latter part of the century, certain other poems remain closer in style to the hymne-blason of the Pléiade. Examples of these include poems in Vauquelin de la Fresnai's Foresteries (102). In the twelfth Foresterie the poet describes and praises the oak tree (103), intending this as an antidote to the more serious subjects he has already treated earlier:

'Apres avoir disputé
Aujourd'hui de gravité,
Ores il fault qu'on s'essaie
A quelque douceur plus gaie:
C'est assès leu d'Ulpian,
De Marcel, et Juliän,
Nous avons trop prins de peine
Apres Celse, et 'abolene,
Labeon, et Modestin,
Paul, Pomponie, et Sabin,
Aussi apres tout le reste
Des donne-lois du Digeste' (104)

(101) Rien, pp.29-30
(102) Les foresteries de Jean Vauquelin sieur de la Fresnai, ed. Blanchemain, Paris, 1869, 8
(103) Le chêne creux de Ferrin, Foresteries, f.32 v°
(104) Foresteries, f.32 v°
When he finally comes to grips with his subject, the tone adopted by Vauquelin de la Fresnaie is extremely reminiscent of the hymne-blason as it is treated by Ronsard:

'Vien donc, mon Grimoult, vien ten,
Ici bas où je taten,
Je te dirai l'excellence
D'un creus chêne et sa puissance.
L'heureus chêne, o chêne heureus,
L'Arbre à Perrin plantureus,
Ainsi creus qu'une caverne
Qui semble d'une lanterne' (105)

Likewise the long legend of Venus and Adonis, inserted in the middle of the poem (describing Adonis in flight from Venus, seeking refuge in a hollow oak) again follows the conventions of the Pléiade hymne-blason.

Similar also to the hymne-blason of Ronsard or Belleau, and obviously modelled upon them is a poem by Jacques Béreau, the Poupon (106), in which the poet describes the appearance, legendary origins and medicinal virtues of the fruit in the traditional manner as adopted by his masters Ronsard and Belleau. In the same way another minor imitator of the Pléiade, Antoine de Cotel, follows the vogue for the hymne-blason celebrating an insignificant animal (a vogue established by Ronsard and Belleau with such poems as the Fourmy, the Freslon or the Papillon) with his Cigale (107). In the conventional manner this very small animal is elevated at the hands of Cotel into a far more important and worthy object than it

(105) Foresteries, ff.32 v° - 33 r°
(106) Oeuvres poétiques, Paris, 1884, 8°, p.106, ode V.
(107) Le premier livre des mignardes et gaies poesies de A.D.C., Paris, Robinot, 1578, 4°, BN Res Ye 596, f.21 v°
had hitherto been considered. This the poet achieves—as had Ronsard and Belleau—by means of extravagant and grandiloquent praise. In this case the Cigale is praised for its particular form of conception, raising it above the common run of animals:

"...j'essayray de rendre le bref cours De vostre tresle vie, immortelle à tousjours. Vous le meritez bien, soit pour vostre origine, Vostre bonne nature approchant la divine, Ou vostre heureuse fin: car vous ne naissez pas Comme tous animaux qui groulent icy bas, D'un germe humide & chaudt, qui dedans la femelle S'enfant & animant, son genre renouvelle, Ou de corruption: mais le Ciel (languissant) Eschauffé d'un beau feu, & puis refreschissant En la brunnette nuit son ardeur amoureuse, Repare l'estre esteint de vostre race heureuse, Renaissans tous les ans, non pas d'oz ny de chair, Mais de je ne scay quoy, qui se pouvant toucher, Faict un corps tout d'esprit" (108)

The Cigale also contains the inevitable myth in the middle of the poem, typical of the hymne-blason, and recounting the fabulous origins of the insect. In this case not one myth but two are given (109). One is very briefly alluded to, but the second is treated at considerable length. Indeed the whole poem is long, containing approximately two hundred and fifty lines. Once again this poem provides further evidence of the continuation into the 1570s and 1580s of the hymne-blason by the minor imitators of Ronsard.

Continuing in the animal tradition, but moving into the field of the burlesque and mock heroic, we find two

(108) Cotel, f.22 r°
(109) Cotel, f.23 r° et seq.
even longer hymnes-blasons - Simon Bullandre's *Lievre* (110) and Claude de Pontoux's *Elegie sur la mort d'un cochon nomme Grongnet* (111). After a long preamble describing his own grief, Claude de Pontoux eventually comes to the point with a description of the beauties of the pig. The long and rambling introduction is typical of the Italian burl-esque capitolo from which these poems are originally inspired. The praise lavished upon the pig is heavily exaggerated and hyperbolic:

'Grongnet fut le plus beau Couchon
Qui naquit jamais dans Branchon
Dans Porlan, dans Bay, dans Baudreire
Dans Chenaune, ni dans Plombeire
Dans Colonge ne Genoilly
Dans Estiveau ni Santilly' (112)

continuing in this vein for sixteen lines. The actual description of the pig's appearance is equally mock heroic:

'Ses yeux n'estoyent trop enfonceez
Aussi n'estoyent ils avancez,
N'ayans point un regard severe,
Mais tels que les descrit Homere
Estre à Pallas ou à Cypris:
Bref il n'y manquoit que le ris.
Il avoit longue un peu l'oreille
Mais d'une façon nompareille
Lise comme le satinnet.
Douillette comme un tetinnet,
Et par le travers de laquelle
On eut peu voir l'Aurore belle' (113)

Even more mock heroic is the opening of Bullandre's *Lievre*:


(111) *Les oeuvres de Claude de Pontoux*, Lyons, Rigaud, 1579, 8°, BN Res Ye 1845, p.315

(112) Pontoux, p.317

(113) Pontoux, p.319
'Quitez vostre sejour, O neuvaine Sacrée, Desja l'Aurore poind, sus tost, resveillez vous, Et ce qu'avez appris songeant sur Thitoree, Pour le Lievre anoblir en bref contez le nous: Tout ce que l'Ascrean sous la grotte relante A fredonné jadis, en paissant son troupeau, Ce que le Mantouan sur sa flute plaisante Doulcement à chanté sous l'ombre d'un fouteau, Vienne animer mes sens' (114)

* * *

The hymne-blason then, either in its burlesque and mock heroic form as in these last poems, or in its straight form as in the Rose a Charite of Catherine des Roches continues to the end of the century. So also does the second type of poem which also descends directly from the blason marotique - the anatomical sonnet. This also, like the hymne-blason takes two forms, the satirical and the non-satirical. Ronsard himself provides once again the model for the anatomical sonnet with such poems as the Nombril (115) or the Flots jumeaux (116), and the even better known pair of sonnets from the Folastries, 'Lance au bout d'or' and 'Je te salue o vermeillette fente' (117).

The sonnet-blason is a genre practised frequently by Philippe Desportes, Ronsard's rival. In his love sonnets addressed to Diane we find themes which had been treated by the anatomical blasonneurs some forty or fifty years

(114) Bullandre, A r°

(115) 'Petit nombril que mon penser adore' (Amours, 1552), Ronsard, Œuvres, ed. Laumonier, vol.IV, p.68

(116) 'Ces flotz jumeaulx de laict bien espoissi' (Amours, 1552), Laumonier, vol.IV, p.152

(117) Laumonier, vol.V, pp.92-93
earlier, now treated anew and pushed to the extreme
limits of Italian preciosity. A typical example of
Desportes' Italianate treatment of an anatomical theme is
provided by his sonnet in praise of his lady's eyes (118):

"Yeux, qui guidez mon âme en l'amoureux voyage,
Mes cœlestes flambeaux, benins & gracieux,
C'est vous qui fournissez de traits victorieux
Amour le juste Archer, seul dieu de mon courage.
C'est vous qui me rendez contant en mon servage:
C'est vous qui m'enseignez le beau chemin des cieux:
Vous purguez mon esprit de pensers vicieux,
Et retenez mon cœur autrefois si volage.

Vous pouvez d'un clin d'œil faire vivre & mourir,
Faire au mois de Janvier un doux printemps fleurir,
Voire au fort de la nuit la lumière nous rendre.

Vous estes le Soleil qui me donnez le jour,
Et je suis le Phénix qui se brusle à l'entour,
Puis quand je suis bruslé, je renay de ma cendre.'

The similarity between this sonnet and Saint Gelais'
Blason de l'œil (119) is striking. Both follow the
Italian conceit of associating the eye of their respective
ladies with the sun (as does also Héroet in his Oeil (120))
Desportes' 'Vous estes le Soleil qui me donnez le jour'
re-echoes Saint Gelais' 'Oeil, le seul soleil de mon âme',
and his description of the power of his lady's eye to
give him life or death and to change winter to spring is
also an echo of a similar theme in Saint Gelais' Blason:

'Oeil, le seul soleil de mon âme,
De qui la non visible flamme
En moy fait tous les changemens
Qu'un soleil fait aux elemens,

(118) Les premières oeuvres de Philippe des Portes, Paris,
Estienne, 1573, 4°, BN Res Ye 580, f.43 v
(119) Saint Gelais, Oeuvres poetiques, 1574, p.29
(120) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I4 r°
Disposant le monde par eux,
A temps froid ou à chaleureux,
A temps pluvieux ou serain,
Selon qu'il est proche ou lointain" (121)

Saint Gelais reiterates this theme later in the poem, using this time the specific terms of winter and spring which we find in this sonnet of Desportes:

'Et puis nommer avec raison
Mon triste hyver celle saison,
Mais quand il vous plait qu'il advienne
Que mon soleil à moy revienne,
Il n'est pas si tost apparu,
Que tout mon froid est disparu,
Et qu'il n'ameine un beau printemps
Qui rend mes esprits tous contents' (122)

The subject of these anatomical sonnets of Desportes is the same as that of the earlier blasons anatomiques. Their style and their treatment of their material, however, resembles far more closely the Italian capitolo and strambotto than the French blason anatomique. In fact, except in the case of poets like Héroet and Saint Gelais in particular, both of whom are thoroughly imbued with Italianisms, the French blasonneurs of the 1530s and 1540s did not adopt the highly sophisticated and precious style so characteristic of the much later poet Desportes. Thus not only does the form - that of the sonnet - differ, but the increasingly precious mode of expression is also different. Apart from this, however, the basic material of the blason anatomique is perpetuated in these later anatomical poems.

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(121) Saint Gelais, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 1574, p.27
(122) Saint Gelais, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 1574, p.27
We have seen how the minor imitators of Ronsard followed the model of the long hymne-blason. In the same way they also followed him in the genre of the anatomical sonnet-blason. In the 1570s we find a host of these anatomical sonnets becoming ever more precious, but still reflecting very vividly their earlier ancestor, the anatomical blason. Jacques de Courtin de Cissé, for example, composed two such sonnets, one on the Gorge and the other on the Yeux (123), of which the latter is particularly reminiscent of the style of Maurice Scève:

'Yeux non pas yeux, mais deux astres jumeaux,
Yeux qui toujours faites à mon cœur guerre,
Yeux dans lesquels l'Archer volant enserre
Son arc, ses traits, ses lacs, & ses flambeaux.

Yeux qui n'avez, & n'aurez point d'egaux
La haut au Ciel, ny ça bas en la terre.
Yeux dont l'ardeur me retient, & me serre,
Et me fait perdre en l'erreur de mes maux.

Yeux retournez votre belle lumière,
Las il est tems, que douce elle m'eclaire,
Retournez donc, & chassez mes regrez,
Depuis le jour que serf je vous adore,
Je n'ay trouvé aucun remède encore
Pour me guarir, que bruler a voz rais' (124)

From among the many other minor poets producing such sonnets-blasons in the 1570s and 1580s we might also pick out the names of Clovis Hesteau (125) and Flaminio de Birague (126). Most notable of these late imitators of

(123) Euvres poetiques de Jaques de Courtin de Cissé, Paris, Beys, 1581, 12°, BN Res Ye 1919, ff.26 v°- 27 r°

(124) Courtin de Cissé, f.27 r°

(125) Les oeuvres poetiques, Paris, Angelier, 1578, 4°, BN Res Ye 612, p.35, sonnet IX (the eye)

(126) Les premières oeuvres poetiques, Paris, Perier, 1585, 12°, BN Res Ye 1926, f.28 v° (sonnet on the hand)
Ronsard, however, is Jean Edouard du Monin who composed an entire cycle of thirty-six poems (thirty-four conventional sonnets, one sonnet en prose and one madrigal) under the general heading Anatomie des beautes d'une damoiselle d'Orleans, dont l'anagram porte, Que son oeil m'a dardé ses chermes (127), dealing with all the parts of the lady in question, ranging - in the traditional manner of the blason anatomique - from the head to the foot. One of the sonnets devoted to the eyes provides a typical example of these sonnets. It also shows how very similar is the style of Du Monin to that of Desportes and Jacques de Courtin de Cissé. Du Monin employs the same precious conceits as those to be found in the two sonnets already cited:

'Yeus, non yeus, ains soleils, flambeaus de mon martire
Yeus, canons, qui lancez cent bales dans mon coeur
Yeus, qui logeans chés vous un Archerot vainqueur,
Faites de vos éclairs fondre mon coeur de cire:
Pourquoi me sommés vous à vos beautés decrīre?
Puisque jamais mon oeil n'eut de vous la faveur
De vous voir a plain jour? Car yeus, votre lueur
De vos feus me foudroie, alors que je m'y mire.
Ha! que dis je? beaus yeus, je ne vous vois à jour?
Mon prisonnier esprit n'a que vous pour sejour,
Qui me cuit de trop près de votre alme lumiere,
Donc ou me dispensés de tirer vos beaus traits,
Ou que votre arc besson ne darde tant de traits,
Qui cendroient dans vous mon ame prisonniere' (128)

In all these three sonnets on the eyes - by Desportes, by Cissé and by Du Monin - the same italianate themes

(127) In the section entitled Juvenilium catastrophe in Le phoenix de Jan Edouard du Monin, Paris, Bichon, 1585, 12°, BN Res Ye 1926, f.140 v

(128) Le phoenix, f.142 v°
and conceits recur. In each case the soul of the poet is dominated and held captive by the eyes of his lady which are automatically likened to two *flambeaux* - either sun or stars. In each case also the poet draws a parallel between the eyes and Cupid's bow and arrows. Finally all three poems conclude with the same image of the poet consumed in the flames issuing forth from his lady's eyes.

The number of poets composing this type of anatomical sonnet is legion. In addition to Du Monin, Guy de Tours also published a full cycle of such sonnets, as well as several single ones in the *Premieres oeuvres poetiques et soupirs amoureux*. In the collection entitled *Sonnets en faveur de son Ente* (129) Guy de Tours provides — under the general title *Pourtraict de son Ente* (130) — a cycle of twenty-six sonnets ranging once again from the *Cheveux* to the *Pieds*. It is interesting to compare Guy de Tours' *Cheveux* with the earlier *blasons* on the same subject. The immediately striking difference lies in Guy de Tours' predilection for intricate hairdressing and for artificial and contrived curliness, following in the wake of Ronsard — a predilection not really shared by the earlier *blasonneurs*, Vauzelles and Saint Gelais. For Vauzelles the criterion is naturally curly hair in which art plays no part:

'Car ce sont crins, non point escharpillez,
Mais jolyment sans art entortillez...
...Cheveuxx espars sur le col volletantz,
Et par nature en contour flocquetantz' (131)

(129) *Premieres oeuvres poetiques*, f.28 r° et seq.
(130) *Premieres oeuvres poetiques*, f.31 r°
(131) Strasbourg Hecatomphile, I r°
On the other hand, the hair described by Guy de Tours is tightly curled, and carefully arranged:

'Cheveux frizez en mille crespillons  
Et mignotez d'une tant bonne grace  
Qu'Amour n'a point une plus belle nasse  
Ny les Zephirs plus beaux éventillons.  
Ainsi qu'on void les cornus papillons  
Voler joyeux sur quelque verde place  
Ainsi ce Dieu d'une joyeuse face  
Vole dessus vos crespes tortillons.  
O beaux Cheveux, ô Perruque menuë,  
Où est mon ame en prison detenuë  
Et mille coeurs attachez & liez  
Si vous voulez que par toute la terre  
On vous louange au son de ma guiterre  
Encordez là de vos brins déliez' (132)

The Col and Gorge however are treated in a less ornate and complicated manner (133), and the sonnet in which they appear resembles more closely the style of the blason marotique:

'Col blanc et rond, Gorge grasse & douillette  
Qui soustenez ce petit Univers,  
Ce Chef des Chefs dont les effets divers  
M'ont mis au coeur l'amoureuse sagette' (134)

Likewise the Front begins in the traditional manner, with the terms poly and yvoirin:

'Front bien poly, trosne de mageste,  
Front yvoirin, où la vertu se place' (135)

finding parallels going back beyond the blasonneurs of the 1530s right into the Middle Ages. We might select from among many possible examples a passage from a

(132) Premieres oeuvres poetiques, f.31 v°
(133) Premieres oeuvres poetiques, f.34 v°
(134) Premieres oeuvres poetiques, f.34 v°
(135) Premieres oeuvres poetiques, f.32 r°
thirteenth century poem reproduced by Jubinal in his

Nouveau recueil de contes, dits fabliaux:

'En ses deux iex qui tant sont cler,
Qui sont assis
En son front qui tant est ounis
Plus c'uns biaus yvoires polis' (136)

However this sonnet quickly takes on a more elevated and richer tone with its references to the goddess Diana:

'Front, ou Diane ainsi qu'en une glace
Mire l'honneur de sa virginité.
Front, marbre aînçois, où la divinité
La gaillardise & la plus belle grace,
Le jeu, le Ris, Idaliènne race,
Ont buriné toute leur Deité' (137)

and it continues with a homage to Ronsard and Belleau:

'Qu'un Vendomois, qu'un Belleau ne suis-je ore
Pour peindre au vif ta beauté que j'adore
Et l'Orient de ton lustre vermeil!
Sur toy, beau front, si proprement s'assemble
Le lyz au teint de la rose, qu'il semble
Qu'en toy toujours se leve le Soleil' (138)

Catherine des Roches, in addition to composing hymnes-blasons, also contributed to the vogue for sonnets-blasons. Showing a certain degree of originality, she composed a sonnet to the Bâiller (139), and also — more conventionally — one to the Main (140) which she treats in the usual manner, with little originality. Indeed

(136) Jubinal, vol.II, p.258
(137) Premiers œuvres poétiques, f.32 r°
(138) Premiers œuvres poétiques, f.32 r°
(139) Les secondes œuvres de Mesdames des Roches, Poitiers, Courtoys, 1583, 4°, BN Res p Ye 410, f.85 v°
(140) Seconde œuvres, f.85 v°
she heaps together all the time honoured images with which the hand is traditionally associated to such an extent that any individual force these images might have possessed is lost in the sheer bulk of the list:

'O excellente Main de Roses & de Lys, De nege, yvoire, argent, de perles precieuses. O Main de quy les doys delicatz & polys Maintiennent de Venus les pompes glorieuses' (141)

The actual subject of the poem, however, does show an element of originality, even if its treatment does not. The hand in question is not the conventional hand of the lady, and Catherine des Roches overcomes the difficulty confronting the woman poet writing a poem about what would normally be the hand of a lady, by making this particular hand into the hand of Cupid, thereby giving a decidedly new slant to the traditional theme:

'O belle Main qui l'arc & les fléches ordonne, Et les flambeaux ardans de mon cruel Seigneur Belle Main dont il prend aide, force, & valleur, Pour garder son pouvoir, son Sceptre & sa Couronne. O delicate Main qui a toute personne Dérobes doucement l'Esprit, l'Ame, & le Cœur, Belle Main qui conduis le Char du Dieu vainqueur Range ses ailes d'Or & sa trousse lui donne' (142)

* * *

The way had early been paved for the satirical sonnet-blason by Ronsard's *Vermeillette fente* and *Lance au bout d'or* (143). In the early seventeenth century the satirical writers Sigogne, Berthelot, Motin, Guy de Tours and others change the emphasis of the anatomical

(141) Secondes oeuvres, f.85 v°
(142) Secondes oeuvres, f.85 v°
(143) Laumonier, vol.V, pp.92-93
blason from the precious to the satirical. We shall not deal with these poems at any length, since our aim is merely to indicate the continuation of the genre of the blason at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. The various anthologies of satirical poetry produced by Fleuret and Perceau in particular, culled from Cabinets satiriques and from manuscript sources contain a large number of these poems (144). Fleuret's *Amoureux passetemps* (145) includes, in addition to Ronsard's three sonnets (*Lance au bout d'or, Vermeillette fente* and *Petit nombril* (146)) a sonnet by Berthelot in similar vein beginning 'O con rebondi' (147), an ode by Motin 'Doux antre ou mon ame guidee' (148), and a *Ventre* by Guy de Tours (149), in which the theme of roundness beloved of Ronsard is once again singled out for particular attention:

'Si le parfait consiste en chose ronde
Comme il est vray, petit ventre refait,
Ventre poupin, tu es du tout parfait,
Car rien plus rond ne se trouve en ce monde'


(145) Paris, nd, 8°

(146) *Amoureux passetemps*, pp.26-28

(147) *Amoureux passetemps*, p.211

(148) *Amoureux passetemps*, p.233

(149) *Amoureux passetemps*, p.83
Likewise Fleuret's edition of the works of Sigogne (150) shows how the longer hymne-blason is also perpetuated in satirical form. The poem directed against the nose, Satyre contre le nez d'un courtizan (151) revives the traditional burlesque anti-nose theme whose best manifestation in the sixteenth century in France was probably in Bérenger de la Tour's long poem, the Naséide (152). In Sigogne's poem an occasional stanza at least is reminiscent of the repetitive invective of the contreblason:

'Nez plus long que tout le visage,
Nez qui fait un aspect d'ombrage,
Nez, Roy de tous les autres Nez,
Nez que cent mille couleurs fardent' (153)

Similarly his Barbe (154) reiterates the mock heroic tone of the earlier Blason des barbes de maintenant:

'Barbe des Barbes la merveille,
Barbe qui n'a point de pareille,
Reine des barbes en effect,
Je veux que ma Muse feconde
Passe cognostre à tout le monde
Le bien que ton maistre te fait' (155)

This edition also contains Sigogne's contribution to the Petit V/Grand C poetic controversy between himself and Motin (156). (Motin's side appears in the 1632 Cabinet

(150) Les oeuvres satyriques du Sieur de Sigogne, Paris, 1920, 4º
(151) Sigogne, ed. Fleuret, p.98
(152) Choréde, autrement louenge du bal, aus dames, p.65
(153) Sigogne, ed. Fleuret, p.98
(154) Sigogne, ed. Fleuret, p.106
(155) Sigogne, ed. Fleuret, p.107
(156) Stances: 'Ces petits V desquels l'enfleure' and 'Ces grands C dont vous faictes feste' (Sigogne, ed. Fleuret, p.158 and p.160)
To say therefore, with Kinch, that the **blason** disappears completely at the end of the sixteenth century is to falsify the picture. Certainly the title itself virtually disappears from usage, but the actual poetic form is perpetuated either in satirical or non-satirical guise, either in the shape of a long **hymne-blason** treating a subject not usually associated with the theme of love, or in the short **sonnet-blason** which in its non-satirical form is most often a love poem, treating some particular part of the lady's anatomy in the manner of the anatomical **blasons** of the 1530s and 1540s.

We have already mentioned two cases in which the title **blason** is retained in poems of this later period - Magny's **Blason d'un bouquet** and the anonymous **Blasons de la cour**. The title likewise survives in sundry other cases, but in none of these is there any real connection

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(157) 'Paris, jouxte la coppie imprimée à Rouen', 1632, 8°, BN Res Ye 2759, p.49. (Cf. also BN Ms.fr.22560, f.64 v°)

This edition of 1632 is the main source of these satirical **blasons**. It contains Ronsard's **Vermeillette fente** and **Lance au bout d'or** (p.44), Motin's 'Doux antre' (p.45), the Sigogne/Motin controversy (pp.39-40) and three satires by Sigogne: **Sur le manteau d'un courtisan** (p.426), **Sur le pourpoint d'un courtisan** (p.432) and **Contre le nez d'un courtisan** (p.468).

Cf. also **Le parnasse des poetes satyriques**, np, 1625, 8°, BN Res Ye 2766, in which is contained the sonnet 'O Boccage à fils d'or' (p.33) as well as a **Gausserie à une dame sur la perte de son conin** (p.118) containing in the middle a long repetitive passage with each line beginning with the words: 'Ce conin estoit...ce conin estoit...'
with the blason anatomique which is the principal subject of this thesis. Since, however, these appear in Méon's anthology of blasons it is perhaps worth mentioning them briefly. The earliest in date of these works is Jean Chartier's Blasons vertueux (158). These are, in fact, a collection of engravings printed in Orleans, dating from 1574, a copy of which exists in the Réserve of the Estampes in the Bibliothèque Nationale (159). Fédéric Morel's Blason d'Ulysse (160) is a prose translation of a Greek work by Libanius, and lastly Claude de Mons' Blazons anagrammatiques très-chrestiens et religieux du Hierapolitain d'Amiens CDM sur diverses fleurs personelles de pieté, de noblesse, de justice & de literature, signalans en Dieu la contrée (161) are, as the title would suggest, simply a series of anagrams, followed in most cases by a brief poem either in Latin or in French (162). Lastly, the title blason is also used once again, very much later, in 1773 by d'Auteuil in his Blason de l'Hymen, epithalame, dédié et présenté à Madame la Comtesse d'Artois. A son passage à Lyon, par un ancien officier (163).

(158) Cf. Méon, p.259
(159) AA 1 rés
(160) Paris, Morel, 1602, 8°, BN J 23249 (Cf. Méon, p.369)
(161) Amiens, Musnier, 1662, 8°, BN 7950 (Cf. Méon, p.288)
(162) Although this work is partly in verse, it has nothing in common with the normal blason poétique
(163) Np (Lyons), 1773, 8°
It is interesting to note the recurrence among the Pléiade and post Pléiade poets of so many of the old themes of the earlier blasonneurs. The anatomical sonnets re-echo the blasons anatomiques themselves, and even the satirical sonnets might be considered to re-echo the contreblasons. The earlier blasons on the subject of the various colours with which this thesis began are revived again at the end of the century, firstly in the work of Amadis Jamyn and secondly in the work of Antoine de Cotel. Jamyn composed a series of four sonnets on the colours, Du gris, Du noir, Du bleu et de l'orangé and Du jaune doré (164) as well as a pair of hymnes-blasons, La louange du blanc and La louange de l'incarnat (165).

The sonnet Du bleu et de l'orangé - A ma lumiere does not really fit in with the pattern of other colour blasons. It is written in praise of the colours of the poet's lady, his Lumiere, and Jamyn is primarily concerned with praising the:

'...beau manteau de bleu luizant et precieux, Plein d'infinis rayons d'orangée aparence!' (166) of his lady. The sonnet Du gris - au Roy, however, comes closer to the blason tradition, listing as it does the characteristics associated with the colour grey:

'Si vous aimez le gris, vous aimez patience Conjointe aux bonnes moeurs et à l'humilité, Au travail esperant, à la fidelité, Qui mettent soubz le pied toute folle arrogance!' (167)

(164) Jamyn, Oeuvres poétiques, vol.I, pp.128-131
(165) Jamyn, Oeuvres poétiques, vol.II, pp.284-289
(166) Jamyn, Oeuvres poétiques, vol.I, p.130
(167) Jamyn, Oeuvres poétiques, vol.I, p.128
The two long louanges develop at greater length than is permitted in the fourteen lines of a sonnet the properties and associations of the colours white and scarlet, devoting considerable attention to the erudite aspect of the subject. The Louange du blanc, for example, contains references to Egyptian religious practices:

'Les Pontifes d'Egypte, hommes d'entendement, Habilloient Osiris d'un blanc habillement Pareil à la lumiere, exempt de tout ombrage Et de variete de teinture ou nuage, Montrant que le grand Dieu, cause et commencement Des choses de ce monde, est simple entierement, Sans meslange quelconque, et comme seul principe' (168)

Yet despite this learned and exotic element, Jamyn does not fail to reproduce the traditional significance of the colour white:

'La foy, qui tient le monde en toute seureté, En signe de sa grace et de sa pureté, Porte une robe blanche, et m'avertist de croire Que le blanc doit avoir sur les autres la gloire, Tout ainsi que la foy doit tenir parmi nous De principal honneur estant l'apuy de tous' (169)

In the same way the Louange de l'incarnat refers to the fable of Venus staining the originally white rose red with her blood (170) and describes the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites (171), but nevertheless concludes with the more obvious, traditional symbolic meaning of the colour:

(169) Jamyn, *Oeuvres poétiques*, vol.II, p.287
(170) Jamyn, *Oeuvres poétiques*, vol.II, p.290
'Ceux qui font les blazons sur toutes les couleurs
Disent qu'il sigifie endurer des douleurs' (172)

Cotel's two sonnets treat the colours grey and green:
Sur les couleurs verd & gris (173) and Sur le gris (174).
These, like Jamyn's blue and orange, are the colours of
his lady. Neither of these sonnets, however, corresponds
as closely to the traditional colour blason as did those
of Jamyn, since both are basically love poems. The second,
however, Sur le gris, is more concerned with pure description
of the colour grey than is the first:

'De toutes•les couleurs, lagris est plus parfaicte,
La plus propre, plus belle, & pleine de bons heurs:
Aussi n'est-ce merveille (extrait de des couleurs
Parfaictes) s'elles l'ont plus excellente faicte,
Rien ne la peult tacher: elle se monstre nette.
Tousjours, beau gris: ouy beau, & si beau que j'en meur
Las! le gris porte l'air d'un oeil,qui en doulceurs
Et en beauté fait honte à l'Aurore blondette' (175)

In the same way as the colours, the question of
flowers and their particular virtues, significances and
symbolic meanings which we have seen treated at length in
the Blason des fleurs (176) is also revived at the end of
the century by Catherine des Roches (177) in her series of
quatrain entitled collectively Les fleurs. This work
consists for the most part of a list of the various flowers
which she herself likes particularly:

(173) Cotel, f.3 v°
(174) Cotel, f.4 r°
(175) Cotel, f.4 r°
(176) Cf. above, chapter VI, p.243
(177) Secondes oeuvres, f.55 v°
'Je suis ô gracieuses Fleurs
Tant éprise de vos valeurs,
Fleurs des Jardins, et Fleurs des Chams,
Vueillez donner Grace a mes Chans

J'ayme les Roses du matin,
Le Bâme, la Mente & le Thyn,
L'Avande, le barbu Mastic,
Et le parfumé Basilic.

J'ayme le Damas empourpré,
Le palissant, le diapré,
La Pansee au frond violet,
Et le coulombin Serpoulet' (178)

In certain stanzas, however, Catherine des Roches does
describe the particular virtues and properties ascribed
to the various flowers, in the manner of the blason:

'J'ayme le Lunaire argenté
Et la Mauve garde-santé,
Et l'Asphodille, dont le pain
Maitrisoit si long tans la fain...

...J'ayme le Pavot sommeillard,
Que lon souloit cueillir le Guy
Qui chasse tout mal & ennuy' (179)

Among the satirical blasons we have already mentioned
Jamyn's treatment of the Italian capitolo on honour by
Mauro which provided also the basis for the anonymous
Blason de honneur (180). The subject of gout - which also
formed the basis of one of the three Tournes blasons -
reappears again in poetry of the early seventeenth century.
Sarasin composed a ballade on the subject, Balade du
gouteux sans pareil (181), which is followed in this
edition by another work on the same subject, Response de

(178) Seconde œuvres, f.55 v°
(179) Seconde œuvres, ff.56 r°- 57 r°
(180) Cf. above, chapter VIII, p.327 et seq.
(181) Les œuvres de Monsieur Sarasin, Paris, 1656, 4°, p.63
Mr. Conrart, Balade de la misere des gouteux (182). Motin also composed three sonnets on the subject of gout (183) (although the inspiration for these is rather different, since all three are based on a play of words on the name of a lady called La Goutte Bernard).

Turning to another topic treated by the early blasonneurs and revived at the end of the century, we find that Corrozet's Blasons domestiques extolling the virtues of various objects in the house finds a considerably later, and more fully developed parallel in Claude Mermet's Description et propriete du rechaud de terre que lon fait aupres de Limoges (184). This is in fact a hymne-blason describing an earthenware réchaud and its practical uses:

> Fabriqué simplement d'une terre azuree,  
> Et si bien compassé en rondeur mesuree,  
> Que vous diriez quasi que le maistre Gnidois,  
> Parrasse, Zeuxe, Apelle, y auroyent mis les doigts  
> Quand il est eschauffé, & que sa pance est pleine  
> De charbons alumez, & que la douce haleine  
> De Zephire se guide & par bas, & par haut,  
> Par plusieurs petis trouz dans le creux du rechaud  
> Il rend de tous costez une chaleur si grande  
> Qu'il fait en un moment cuire toute viande' (185)

In a manner reminiscent of Corrozet's Cuisine the poet describes with evident relish the various dishes which can be prepared with this réchaud:

(182) Sarasin, p.67
(183) Motin, Œuvres inédites, ed. Paul d'Estree, Paris, 1882, 8°, pp.29-32
(184) Le temps passe de Claude Mermet, Lyons, Bouquet, 1585, 8°, BN Res Ye 1641, p.18
(185) Le temps passe, p.19
'Pour au beurre noyer la belle ombre, & la truite,
Et les plus delicats des nageurs d'Amphitrite,
Pour le ton qui friand, piqué de clous Indois,
Contraint le cuisinier à se lescher les doigts,
Et pour autres poissons qui se peuvent escrire
Couchez entre deux plats, & à loisir s'y cuire,
S'y rostir, s'y bouillir, s'y baigner, s'y vire,
Pour en faire l'apprest que l'on peut désirer'

Thus, far from dying out as Kinch would suggest, the
genre of the blason flourishes at the end of the sixteenth
and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. The actual
genre continues, developing into two very different forms,
the sonnet-blason and the hymne-blason. The actual
subjects of the earlier blasons also are taken up again
and treated anew by the poets of the turn of the century,
in poems which may or may not follow the style of the
blason. The title blason admittedly becomes more rare after
the middle years of the sixteenth century, but - as we
have seen - it does not fall completely into disuse. The
title continues to crop up in the seventeenth century
(with Claude de Mons' Blazons anagrammatiques), in the
eighteenth century (with d'Autheuil's Blason de l'hymen),
and even in the twentieth century with works by Luc
Bérimont and Paul Eluard (187).

(186) Le temps passe, p.20
CONCLUSION

Critics in general have tended to regard the blason anatomique as an isolated and even somewhat eccentric phenomenon standing outside the main poetic trends of the sixteenth century. Our main aim in this thesis has been to show that this is far from being the case, and to demonstrate the way in which it forms part of a continuous development within the French literary tradition. Although our study is centred on the blason anatomique, this is of course a part of the wider genre of the blason poétique, and whereas former critics have evidently been puzzled as to the origins of the blason we have tried to show in our opening chapter the way in which this genre derives from the conventional heraldic blason whose function is the description and interpretation of the particular features of a given shield.

Not only does the interpretative character of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century blason poétique reflect certain characteristics of medieval heraldry, but its repetitive character and its urge to define and to classify are also typical of much late medieval poetry. Again, as we have seen, the very themes and vocabulary employed by the blasons anatomiques in their description of feminine beauty have much in common with those which appear in the work of medieval French poets.

However, although there are many things in common between the blasons anatomiques and earlier descriptive
poetry there is one way at least in which the *blason anatomique* strikes out in a new direction. These later poems are essentially love poems, whereas on the whole their predecessors were not. The *blason anatomique* no longer describes the female body in dispassionate terms in the manner of Pierre Danché for example. Instead he describes, praises and reacts with some fondness and fervour to the body of his own mistress. Thus the *blasonneur* is involved with his subject, and his treatment becomes inevitably more subjective than that of his fifteenth century predecessor. It is perhaps significant that this growing subjectivity corresponds to the growing interest among French poets in Italian styles of writing. While we should reject the theory that the French *blason anatomique* is a simple rendering into French of the Italian *capitolo d'amore*, we must acknowledge that the precious and subjective approach of many of the *blasonneurs* owes a considerable debt to the Italian poets.

The *blasons anatomiques* remain popular as a group throughout the middle part of the century. As we have seen, although the various anthologies which appear between the 1530s and the 1570s vary slightly in their content, they contain a large nucleus of poems which remain the same. However, the genre of the *blason* itself does not become static and ossified. It continues to develop, and in the latter half of the sixteenth century we can trace two distinct branches. The short sonnet-
blason retains the essential characteristics of the anatomical blason whereas in the considerably longer hymne-blason the genre reverts to a more general type of subject matter while retaining the descriptive and interpretative characteristics which remain typical of the genre. It is, in fact, in the form of the sonnet-blason and the hymne-blason (either in satirical or non-satirical form) that the genre is continued through the latter part of the sixteenth century and into the early seventeenth century. (Indeed, its development could be traced further, but to do so would be to go beyond the chosen limits of this thesis.)

* * *

So much for the purely literary aspects of the blason. As we have pointed out, however, the collections of blasons anatomiques fit in also with the way in which printing was developing at the time. This particular period is, as we have shown, characterised by the high degree of skill with which certain specialist printers devoted themselves to the production of illustrated popular literature. Emblem books, bestiaries, volucrarias— all form part of the same fashion for a combination of the art of the woodcutter, the poet, and ultimately the printer, responsible for the blending and harmonising of the two. The blasons anatomiques are just one more aspect of this vogue.

Thus—and this may well be seen as our very brief conclusion— the blason anatomique does in fact form part
of a continuous tradition in France. The key to its origins lies in its descriptive and interpretative character, inherited from a clearly discernible heraldic source (albeit modified by later accretions), and the genre of the blason itself is neither a sudden nor an eccentric phenomenon. Closely associated with both literary and iconographic fashions during the Renaissance in France it does not disappear in the 1540s, but rather continues throughout the later sixteenth century and well into the seventeenth century.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Only works referred to in the course of the thesis are listed in this bibliography. Works consulted, but not actually cited in the thesis are not included here.

I MANUSCRIPTS

Since these are for the most part collections of verse with no specific title, we have simply listed them by their library shelf numbers. Precise references to the relevant poems in each manuscript are to be found in the text of the thesis.

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ii) Manuscripts in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal

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II CONTEMPORARY WORKS IN FRENCH

In this section are included all works dating from the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This section is divided into three parts. In the first part works are listed alphabetically according to author. In the second part anonymous works are listed alphabetically according to the first significant word of the title. The third part contains a list of nineteenth and twentieth century anthologies of verse arranged alphabetically according to the name of the editor.

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ibid., np, 1537 (Blasons 1536), 16°, Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg R 102 895

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OVID: Publii Ovidii Nasonis opuscula, & moralia carmina, scilicet de Nuce, de Philomena, & de Pulice, Paris, Philippe, nd, 8°, BN Res p Yc 1727

SECOND, Jean: Opera omnia, ed. Bosscha, Leyden, 1821

Joannis Secundi Hagiensis basia, Lyons, Gryphius, 1539, 4°, BN Res Y 900

VIATOR: De artificiali perspectiva, Toulouse (no printer), 1509, in-folio, BN Res V 167

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V WORKS IN ENGLISH


ROY, W. & BARLOW, J.: Rede me and be nott wrothe, npnd (London, 1528), 8°, BM C 21 a 27

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'Les Italiens en France au XVIe siècle', Bulletin Italien, Bordeaux, 1901-1918, 8°


RIETSTAP, J.B. : Armorial général, Gouda, 1884, 4°, 2 vols


RODOCANACHI, E. : Une protectrice de la réforme en Italie et en France: Renée de France, duchesse de Ferrare, Paris, 1895, 8°
(1) I have not, in fact, referred directly to this book in the course of this thesis, since it was thought preferable not to do so, although it must go without saying that the work of my supervisor, Dr. D. B. Wilson, on the subject of descriptive poetry has helped me considerably.
APPENDIX I  The anatomical blasonneurs

Although fourteen poets are named in the 1543 edition of the Blasons anatomiques, we intend to discuss only ten of these. Clément Marot and Maurice Scève are too well known for any biographical or bibliographical notes to be necessary. On the other side of the picture, Darles, author of the Nez, remains so obscure that we have been unable to find any information about him, and the pseudonym Albert le Grand still to this day successfully masks the identity of the author of the Oreille and the Cœur. The authors whom we shall discuss here are therefore:

Michel d'Amboise  Claude Chappuys
Eustorg de Beaulieu  Antoine Héroet
Guillaume Bochetel  Jacques le Lieur
Victor Brodeau  François Sagon
Lancelot Carle  Jean de Vauzelles

Wishing to be as brief as possible in this appendix, we have limited ourselves to short notes on the author's life, a list of his works, and a bibliography of further works of reference.

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1) Michel d'Amboise

Most of our biographical information about Michel d'Amboise is derived basically from what the poet tells us in his not inconsiderable literary output. Many of
his works contain fragments of autobiography. Born sometime between 1503 and 1507, the illegitimate son of Charles d'Amboise, Lieutenant général du Roi in Naples, he seem to have spent most of his life dependent upon the patronage of one or other member of the d'Amboise family (1). Having risked his family's wrath by marrying a girl who - although of noble birth like himself - was also, again like himself, not possessed of any fortune, his happiness in marriage was short lived, since he lost both wife and first child in child birth (2). Coming to Paris to forget his sorrow the poet was still pursued by ill fortune. In the Cent epigrammes he describes how he was imprisoned in the Châtelet for six months for debt (3), and the Babilon contains several poems written while in prison (4).

At some stage in his career Michel d'Amboise took up the study of law, but this he abandoned before acquiring any useful qualifications (5). The poet must also have had some experience of warfare, since he is responsible for a treatise on the art of war, Le guidon des gens de guerre, produced in 1543, in the course of

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(1) Cf. Les cent epigrammes, f.4 r°; Les epistres veneriennes, f.5 r°
(2) Cf. Le babilon, f.15 v°
(3) Cent epigrammes, f.5 v°
(4) Babilon, f.58 r°, f.62 r°, f.65 r°
(5) Cf. Les complaintes de l'esclave fortune, f.23 r°
which he describes his practical experience on the battlefield (6).

The precise date of Michel d'Amboise's death is unknown. Colletet claims that he was still alive in 1548 (7), but his last published work, a translation of Pregoso's Le ris de Democrite et le pleur de Heraclite dates from 1547, and on this basis most biographers from La Monnoye and Niceron onwards have suggested that this must be the date of his death.

The extent of Michel d'Amboise's education is difficult to assess. Educated in a colliege where only Latin was spoken, he was obliged to learn the French language after he left, since his mother tongue was Italian (8). Indeed, a substantial part of his work does take the form of translation and adaptation into French of Italian texts.

Other than these translations, Michel d'Amboise's remaining poetry takes the form predominantly of épîtres either in prose or in verse. Many of these are little more than begging letters, although some belong to the genre of the gallant love épître. Poems of this latter type appeared first in the Complaintes de l'esclave fortune of 1529, but subsequently they continue to reappear in the Epistres veneriennes of 1532

(6) Guidon, p.11
(7) Colletet, f.15 v°
(8) Cf. the dedication of his translation of the eleventh satire of Juvenal in the Quatre satires de Juvenal, G2 v°
and even as late as 1542 in the *Secret d'amours*.

Despite his large poetic output, Michel d'Amboise does not seem to have been particularly well thought of by his fellow poets. Charles de Sainte Marthe, for example, does not include him in his list of eminent French poets in his *Elegie du Tempé de France* (9).

Michel d'Amboise's pseudonym *l'esclave fortuné* appears repeatedly throughout his works - more often, indeed, than his actual name. The significance of the name is explained in one of the *Cent epigrammes*:

> 'Si je me ditz lesclave fortune
>  Ce nest a tort car depuis que nature
>  A mon esperit du corps environne
>  Je ne fuz oncq sans avoir adventure
>  Maintenant riche, & soudain souffreteux
>  A present gay, tost apres gemissable
>  Ores encor je ritz et si me deulx
>  Mis a lazart; comme troys detz sur tablé (10)

This pseudonym is one of those singled out by Du Bellay for attack in the *Deffence et illustration*:

> 'Que ces Depourveuz, ces humbles Esperans, ces
>  Banniz de lyesse, ces Esclaves, ces Traverseurs
>  soient renvoyés à la Table ronde' (11)

The poetry produced by Michel d'Amboise, although impressive in its sheer quantity, tends to be somewhat tedious. It is on the whole ponderous and old-fashioned compared with the work of many of his contemporaries and fellow *blasonneurs*, and his predilection for allegory, for acrostic and for such fixed forms as the

(9) *La poesie francoise de Charles de Sainte Marthe*, Lyons, Le Prince, 1540, 8°, AN Res p Ye 193, p.203
(10) *Cent epigrammes*, f.51 r°
(11) *Deffence*, Book II, chapter X
rondeau or the ballade suggest a poet looking back nostalgically to a rhétoriqueur style rather than forward to the style of the latter half of the sixteenth century.

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Works by Michel d'Amboise

Les épistres veneriennes de lesclave fortune prive de la court damours, Paris, Janot & Lotrian, nd, 8°, BN Res Ye 1662

La deploration de la mort de Francoys de Valloys jadis dauphin de France, npnd, 8°, BN Res Ye 3817

Les complaintes de lesclave fortune, aavccues vingt epistres et trente rondeaulx damours, Paris, Saint Denys, 1529, 8°, BN Res Ye 1627

Les bucoliques de Frere Baptiste Mantuan, nouvellement traduictes de Latin en rîrne francoyse, Paris, Janot & Lotrian, 1530, 4°, BN Res m Ye 699

Les cent epigrammes avecques la vision, la complainte de vertu traduyte de frere Baptiste Mantuan en son livre des calamitez des temps, et la fable de lamourcuse Biblis et de Gaumnis traduyte dovide, Paris, Longis & Lotrian, 1532, 8°, BN Res Ye 1621

Le babilon, aultrement la confusion de lesclave fortune... ou sont contenges plusieurs lettres recreatives et joyeuses, Lyons, Arnouillet, 1535, 8°, BN Res Ye 1336

Le secret damours, Paris, Angelier, 1542, 8°, BN Res Ye 1623

Le guidon des gens de guerre ouquel est contenu l'art de scavoir mener et conduytre gens de cheval, et de pied, assieger viles, les assaillir, Paris, Du Pre, 1543, 8° (Reprinted Paris, 1878, 8°)

Quatre satyres de Juvenal translatees de latin en francoys, Paris, Sertenas, 1544, 8°, BN Ye 7222
BN Res p Yc 721 (2)

Le ris de Democrite et le pleur de Heraclite, philo-
sophes, sur les folies & miseres de ce monde.
Invention de M Fregoso...interpretee en ryme
francoys par...Michel d'Amboyse, Paris,
Corrozet, 1547, 8°, BN Yd 5815

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12°, 18 vols, vol.X, pp.327-358

NICERON: Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes
illustres dans la république des lettres, Paris,
1727-1745, 12°, 44 vols, vol.XXXIII, pp. 328-
339

Eustorg de Beaulieu

For information about Eustorg de Beaulieu's early
life we are largely dependent upon what the poet tells
us in an épître in the Divers rapportz (12). This
épitre, however, gives only general information about
the family dispute and law suit over an inheritance

(12) Divers rapportz, ed. Pegg, p.247
which blighted the poet's early years, after the premature death of his father. It does not even give any indication of the date of the poet's birth which we can only suppose to be around the period 1495-1500 (13). Indeed the first date which can be fixed with precision is the year 1522 when we find him employed as organist in the cathedral church of Lectoure (14).

At some point before 1529 he was ordained priest, as is shown by the subtitle to the Gestes des sollicit-eurs of this date, in which he is described as 'Eustorg de Beaulieu prestre'. Colletet, who thoroughly disapproves of the poet, suggests that his motive for this was financial necessity rather than vocation (15).

During the next few years Eustorg de Beaulieu moved to Tulle (c.1529) and thence to Lyons (c.1534). In both of these towns he seems to have been employed as a private music tutor to a series of young pupils, to several of whom he addresses short poems in the Divers rapportz (16). He does not, however, seem to have been admitted into the literary circles of Lyons. Despite his fulsome poems addressed to other poets - and in particular to Clément Marot (17) - none of them

(13) Cf. Harvitt, p.3
(14) Cf. Divers rapportz, ed. Pegg, p.11
(15) Colletet, p.9
(16) Cf. rondeaux 55,70,88 etc.
(17) Cf. Divers rapportz, ed. Pegg, p.196
seems to have replied in kind. The only eulogistic poem we have found addressed to Eustorg de Beaulieu is a humble anonymous quatrains included in the preliminaries to the 1546 edition of the *Chrestienne resjouyssance* (18). Similarly, apart from his *blasons* which appear in the 1537 (Strasbourg) *Hecatomphile*, we do not find poetry by Eustorg de Beaulieu included in the collected works of other poets or in sixteenth century anthologies of verse.

By the mid 1530s Eustorg de Beaulieu was composing openly anti-Catholic pieces (19), and by 1537 he found it preferable to leave France for the more protestant atmosphere of Switzerland. Within three years of leaving Lyons, the one time Catholic priest was nominated pastor of a protestant community by the Council of Berne.

Even in Switzerland, however, life became no easier for Eustorg de Beaulieu. During the 1540s he was beset with matrimonial problems. 1540 found him suing his wife for desertion, 1541 found him accused by a second wife of pederasty (based on rumours spread by the first wife), and finally 1547 saw him ordered by the Consistory of Berne to desist from beating his wife and to feed her adequately (20).

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(18) Cf. Harvitt, p.51
(19) Cf. the *Chrestienne resjouyssance*
About this period Eustorg de Beaulieu was exiled from Bernese territory, and the last years of his life, from 1548 until his death in 1552, seem to have been spent in Basle, more or less continually harassed by lack of money.

Eustorg de Beaulieu's two most important literary projects were both doomed to failure. Early in his stay in Switzerland he embarked upon a translation of the psalms (21), but his insistence that the musical setting be printed together with the text seems to have caused such difficulties that the project never came to fruition (22). Similarly his projected paraphrase of the epistles of St. Paul, which he had hoped to publish with Oporin in 1550 was opposed by both Calvin and Bèze with the result that Oporin would not undertake to publish the work. Like his translation of the psalms, this work also never got beyond the manuscript stage.

In marked contrast to the profane verse of his youth (23), the works which Eustorg de Beaulieu produced in the latter part of his life are all of a moralistic or anti-Catholic nature - partly, indeed, in order to atone for the earlier profane poetry (24). The Chrestienne resjouyssance (in which the author is

(22) Cf. Divers rapportz, ed. Pegg, p.25
(23) Cf. the Divers rapportz
(24) Cf. the preface to the Chrestienne resjouyssance, ff.6 v° - 7 r°
described as 'jadis prestre musicien et organiste en la faulce eglise papistique, et despuis par la misericorde de Dieu, ministre evangelique') contains, for example, a series of adaptations from popular songs, directed mainly against the Pope and against various Catholic practices. The second half contains the earliest printed text of the Souverain blason d'honneur written to atone for the earlier 'sept blasons lubriques' published in the Divers rapportz of 1537. His other main work written in this later period is a dull little moralistic work, L'espinglier des filles, the first edition of which dates from 1548. Containing a series of receptes spirituelles for the care of the various parts of the body, it seems to have been remarkably popular, being twice reprinted (in 1550 and again in 1565).

A highly picturesque character, Eustorg de Beaulieu is perhaps rather unfairly condemned by Colletet both as a poet and as a man:

'Ses vers bas et populaires, sans doctrine et sans ornemens ne temoignent que trop qu'il avoit un peu plus de nature que d'art, et que sa moindre perfection estoit celle de rimeur' (25)

'Ce n'est pas d'aujourdhuy que l'on dict que la musique estoit fort dangereux en ce qu'elle amollissoit les esprits, qu'elle mettoit les sens en desordre, qu'elle esteignoit les sentimens de la vertu et

(25) Colletet, p.8
resveilloit les passions. Mais si elle est si dangereuse en la personne de celluy qui l'escoute, elle l'est certes bien plus en la personne de celluy qui l'anime. Et de la vient que ceux qui en font profession particulière, s'ils ne prennent un soin nonpareil de resister à la force de ses tentations charmantes par le principe d'une haute vertu, passent aisément des sensualitez au libertinage et après avoir laissé corrompre leur entendement et leur volonté tombent dans une horrible dépravation de moeurs. C'est ce qui se justifie en la personne de celluy-cy' (26)

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Works by Eustorg de Beaulieu

Les gestes des solliciteurs ou les lisans pourront connoistre quest ce de solliciteur estre et qui sont leurs reformateurs, Bordeaux, Guyart, 1529, 4°, BM C 40 c 49

Les divers rapportz contenant plusieurs rondeaulx, dizains, Lyons, Sainte Lucie, 1537, 8°, BM G 17886

ibid., Paris, Lotrian, 1544, 8°, BM Res Ye 1603

La chrestienne resjouyssance, np (Geneva), 1546, 8°, Chantilly IV D 36

Le souverain blason d'honneur à la louange du tres-digne corps de Jesuchrist, npnd (1550? acc. Pegg), Vienna Nationalbibliothek 79 Be 174

L'espinglier des filles...revue & augmenté, Basle, (no printer), 1550, 8°, BR Res D° 12796

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(26) Colletet, pp. 5-6
III Guillaume Bochetel

Guillaume Bochetel was primarily a statesman, and only secondarily a poet. Of his early life we know nothing, and only after 1518 when his first official appointment (as 'clerc et notaire du Roi') is recorded in the Catalogue des actes de François Ier (27) can we trace the successive stages of his official career through the volumes of the Catalogue des actes. He belonged to an eminent Bourges family, several members of which held royal appointments (28) and despite his connections with the court, his home remained in Bourges.

From 1518 onwards, Bochetel received numerous royal appointments, most of which are recorded in the Catalogue des actes (29), and he was evidently regarded

(28) Cf. Mémoires de Castelnau, end of vol.II
(29) Cf. Sturel, Essai, p.283 and p.287
by François Ier as a trustworthy servant. In 1528, for example, he was sent to Italy as intendant to the French army (30), and the following year he was among those sent to accompany the royal children back from exile in Spain (31). On the occasion of the royal wedding of François Ier and Eleanor of Austria it was Bochetel who was entrusted with the task of recording for posterity the celebrations which took place at the official entry into Paris and the coronation. His accounts of these were printed in two works, both published by the royal printer Geoffroy Tory, Le sacre & coronement de la royne and L'entree de la royne en sa ville et cite de Paris.

These are the only two printed works definitely written by Bochetel. Both La Croix du Maine and Du Verdier refer to a translation of Euripides by Bochetel, and Du Verdier in particular gives precise details of this translation:


(30) Cf. Sturel, Essai, p.284
(32) La Croix du Maine & Du Verdier, vol.IV, p.70
François Habert also refers to this translation in his *Deploration sur le trespas de feu Monsieur Jean Bouchetel* (33). This work had been thought to have been lost until at the turn of the last century René Sturel drew attention in his article 'A propos d'un manuscrit du Musée Condé' to an anonymous translation of the Hecuba which had hitherto been attributed to Lazare de Baiff, but which Sturel suggests is actually the lost Bouchetel translation: *La tragedie d'Euripide nommée Hecuba* (34). In 1542 Bochetel had appointed Jacques Amyot as tutor to his four sons and we may wonder whether this translation of Euripides into French is based not upon the original Greek, but rather upon a Latin version produced by Amyot (35).

The small collection of épigrammes and assorted short poems which follow the Hecuba are virtually all the works we possess of Bochetel other than the *Sacre & coronement* and Entree and the *Blason du con*. His poetic output is indeed very small, and he seems to have been regarded primarily as a civil servant rather than as a poet. François Habert - who appears to have admired him greatly - seems to have been torn

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(33) *Les divins oracles de Zoroastre*, Paris, Danfrie, 1558, 8°, BN Res Ye 1696, f.40 v°

(34) Paris, Estienne, 1550, 8°, BN Res X 2535

between these two aspects, finally resolving the problem by praising both together in one single breath:

'Et pource que ces Seurs avoient tousjours prise Ce noble Secretaire, et fort favorise A ses doctes Escrits a sa plume doree Et a sa poesie aux Gaules adoree' (36)

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Works by Guillaume Bochetel

Le sacre & coronement de la royne, Paris, Tory, 1530, 4°, BN Res Lb^58

Lentree de la royne en sa ville et cite de Paris, Paris, Tory, 1531, 4°, BN Res Lb^59

La tragedie d'Euripide nommee Hecuba, traducite de Grec en rhythmme francoise dediee au Roy, Paris, Estienne, 1544, 8°, BN Picot 1060

ibid., Paris, Estienne, 1550, 8°, BN Res X 2535

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(36) Divins oracles, f.40 r°
IV Victor Brodeau

Details of Victor Brodeau's early life prior to his entry into the service of Marguerite de Navarre are scarce. He was born in Tours, the son of a marchant pelletier (37), but the actual date of his birth is uncertain, although Jourda would suggest c.1502 (38). In 1524 the name Brodeau appears for the first time in the account books of Marguerite de Navarre, in the list of valets de chambre. Jourda, however, suggests that he may well have been installed at the court earlier than this date, basing this view on letters written to Montmorency keeping him in touch with court affairs, one of which dates from 1523 (39).

In 1528 Brodeau was promoted from mere valet de chambre to secretary to Marguerite de Navarre. By this date he had raised his private status from that of a worthy bourgeois to that of a gentleman by the simple expedient of buying up two estates and thereby gaining the right to use the title Seigneur de... (40). A marriage certificate of 1536 shows Brodeau as being at this time in the service of François Ier himself, as well as in that of his mother and his sister. (It would

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(37) Cf. the dedication to Marguerite de Navarre of the 1540 edition of the Louanges, A2 r
(38) Cf. 'Un disciple de Marot', pp.31-32
(39) Cf. Jourda, 'Lettres inédites', p.155
(40) Cf. 'Un disciple de Marot', p.41
seem, however, that Brodeau's offices in the service of the king and Louise de Savoie were mainly titular, and that it was only for Marguerite de Navarre herself that Brodeau actually fulfilled his duties as secretary. It is possible to trace Brodeau accompanying Marguerite on her journeys by means of the correspondence signed by him on her behalf, and addressed from such places as Blois, Nérac, Fontainebleau or Alençon (41).

He was, however, entrusted by François Ier in 1528 with at least one secret mission of some delicacy — that of transmitting a sum of money to 'certain personnage de Flandre dont il (the king) veut taire le nom' (42). The sum of 205 livres tournois was given to Brodeau ostensibly for the purchase of paintings in Flanders (43). Unfortunately the Chambre des comptes was tactless enough to ask Brodeau for an account of the spending of this money, and the affair was only settled by a warning by the king to the Chambre des comptes to enquire no further into this obviously confidential matter (44).

The last few years of Brodeau's life until his death in 1540 are surprisingly undocumented. Although

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(41) Cf. 'Un disciple de Marot', p.49
his signature appears frequently in documents of
Marguerite de Navarre prior to this period, after 1537
we find no more. This might, however, be explained by
his promotion in 1538 to the position of 'secrétaire
et contrôleur général des finances d'Alençon et
d'Angoulême' (45), a post which would relieve him of
such purely secretarial duties. The date of Brodeau's
death is attested in the 1540 Louanges de Jesus nostre
sauveur. The Au lecteur, written by an unknown author,
alludes to the death of Brodeau in September 1540 (46).

The Louanges de Jesus nostre sauveur, which was
actually printed posthumously, is the only work which
Brodeau himself considered worth having printed. Ded-
icated to Marguerite de Navarre, it reflects many of
her own preoccupations and convictions. Although
Brodeau appears never to have been harassed by the
Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris during
his lifetime, after his death the Epistre dung pescheur
(printed in the later editions of the Louanges) was
condemned by the Faculty.

The rest of Brodeau's work is scattered in various
manuscript or printed anthologies (47), and in the

(45) Cf. 'Un disciple de Marot', pp.48-49
(46) Louanges, E2 v°
(47) Cf. BN Ms.fr.1667, f.48 v°, f.78 v°, f.198 r°,
f.217 r°; BN Ms.fr.2335, f.103 r°
collected works of other authors. Only rarely are these poems signed (usually by the initials VB or brod or bro). More often, however, this light court verse is anonymous, and it is difficult to assess Brodeau's actual contribution (48). He seems to have been well thought of by his fellow poets - a rondeau written by Brodeau in reply to Marot's De l'amour au siecle antique (49) was printed together with Marot's poem in all the editions of Marot's works which appeared in his lifetime. Among Marot's rondeaux we find also one containing the acrostic VICTOR BRODEAU (50). Likewise, Hugues Salel made Brodeau one of the protagonists in his Eglogue marine sur le trespas de feu Monsieur Francoys de Valois...en laquelle sont introduitctz deux mariniers Merlin et Brodeau (51). Even the neo-Latin poets approved of Brodeau, both Salmon Macrin and Nicolas Bourbon addressing verse to him (52).

Charles de Sainte Marthe includes Brodeau in his list of distinguished French poets in the Elegie du Tempé de France (53), singling him out for the honour

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(48) Cf. for example the problems of attribution of the Blasons des couleurs in BN Ms.fr.2335, f.103 r°

(49) OEUVRES, ed. Mayer, vol.II, p.129

(50) OEUVRES, ed. Mayer, vol.II, p.86

(51) OEUVRES, ed. Bergounioux, Paris, 1921, 4°, p.202


(53) La poesie francoise, Lyons, 1540, 8°, BN Res p Ye 193, p.203
of standing together with Terpsichore herself:

'Terpsicoré, à pres de soy Brodeau, 
Lequel tousjours invente chant nouveau, 
Et de son chant, il fait si grand' merveille 
Qu'il n'y a Cuer que soudain ne reveille'

* * *

Works by Victor Brodeau

Les louanges de Jesus nostre sauleur, Paris (no printer), 1540, 8°, Bibliothèque Mazarine 21652 rés

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V Lancelot Carle

We know that Carle was born in Bordeaux, where his father was president of the Parlement, but the
precise date of his birth remains unknown, although around 1500 is the suggested date (54). Of his youth nothing is known, although it might be assumed that at least part of his formative years were spent in Italy, as this was the customary practice for a youth destined - as was Carle - for a diplomatic career. Likewise the exact date of Carle's arrival at the court is also unknown, although here again we can take it that he was already there by 1536, since he is one of the earliest poets to compose *blasons* (55).

In 1536 Carle made a brief visit to England in his role of secretary to Antoine de Castelnau, Bishop of Tarbes. It is doubtful whether he was actually an eye witness to the execution of Anne Boleyn during his stay in London, since foreigners were - theoretically at least - excluded from this ceremony, but certainly he produced what purports to be a personal account of the execution (56).

In 1547 Carle was sent to Rome on another diplomatic mission, charged with the task of reconciling France with the Pope on the accession of Henri II. (57). Again in 1552-1553 he was sent on a second mission to Italy,

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(55) His work appeared in both the Bodley Hecatomphile of 1536 and the Strasbourg Hecatomphile of 1536-37

(56) BN Ms.fr.2370 and BN Ms.fr.10194

(57) Cf. Picot, vol.II, p.239
the details of which remain unclear (58).

By the mid 1540s Carle was well established in the royal favour and patronage which he was to continue to enjoy until his death in 1568. The title page to the printed edition of 1545 of the Hystoire de Anne Boullant describes him as 'aumosnier de Monsieur le Daulphin' (59). Five years later, in 1550, he was appointed Bishop of Riez.

In contrast to his earlier work, and perhaps more in keeping with his ecclesiastical status, Carle's literary output in the 1550s reflects an increasing interest in translation and paraphrase of biblical texts. So different indeed did these latter works seem to Du Verdier from the earlier blasons anatomiques that he attributed them to two distinct authors, the first listed as 'Carles' author of the blasons (60), and the second as 'Lancelot de Carle, Evêque de Riez', author of the religious works, the account of the death of Guise and the Eloge de Henry II (61).

It is probably for his scholarship that Carle was best known among his contemporaries. La Croix du Maine describes him as an excellent poet in Latin and French, and skilled in Greek (62). In his dedication to Carle of

(59) Presumably the future Henri II
(60) La Croix du Maine & Du Verdier, vol.III, p.283
(61) La Croix du Maine & Du Verdier, vol.IV, p.570
the Hymne des daimons (63), Ronsard alludes to his translation of Homer, while Du Bellay praises him for his facility for writing indifferently in French, Latin or Italian (64). None of his Italian or Latin works have survived, and most of his translations also have been lost. Only his translation of the first book of Heliодorus (an early work dating from around 1538) has survived in manuscript.

Carle was highly respected by his contemporaries as a scholar and a man of letters. Among the fellow poets who lavish praise on Carle, the most notable are Ronsard in his Hymne des daimons, Pontus de Tyard in his Erreurs amoureuses, Olivier de Magny in his Hymne sur la naissance de Madame Marguerite de France, and Du Bellay in the Musagnoeomachie and also in the Regrets. Indeed from a very early date Carle was associated with the poets of the Pléiade in their studies of the classics, and Binet lists him as being among those inspired by Dorat's early teaching at Coqueret:

'Baif aussi comme luy y prit appetit et à l'exemple de ces deux jeunes hommes plusieurs beaux esprits se réveillèrent et vindrent boire en cette fonteine dorée, comme M Antoine de Muret qui avoit ja

(63) Oeuvres, ed. Laumonier, vol. VIII, p. 115
(64) Ode sur la naissance du petit duc de Beaumont, Paris, Morel, 1561, 4°, BN Res Ye 396, C4 r°
grand avancement de l'Eloquence Latine, Lancelot Carles, et quelques autres, qui tous ensemble a l'envy faisoient tous les jours sortir des fruictz nouveaux, et non encore veus en nostre contrée' (65)

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Works by Lancelot Carle

Lhystoire de Anne Boullant, royne dangleterre, BN
Ms.fr.2370

ibid., Lyons (no -printer), 1545, 8°, BN Res Ye 3668

Le premier livre d'Heliodore de lhistoire daetiopie translate de grec en francois par Carle, BN
Ms.fr.2143

Lanceloti Carlaei Rhegiensium Pontificis, ad Janum Carlaeum fratris filium sermo, Paris,
Vascosan, 1560, 4°, BN Res p Z 399

Eloge de Henry II roi de France traduit en francoys,
Paris, Vascosan, 1560, 8°, BN Res Lb° 103

Les Cantiques de la Bible mis en vers francois, Paris,
Le Roy, 1560, 8° (Not in BN or BM)

L'Ecclesiaste de Salomon, paraphrase en vers francois
...avec quelques sonnets chrestiens, Paris,
Edoard, 1561, 8°, Bibliotheque Mazarine 26139

Traicte de Stanislaus Hosius, Evesque de Varme, de
l'expresse parole de Dieu, Paris, Vascosan,
1561, 8°, BN D 21891

Chanson faicte par Lancelot Carles...contre les
docteurs et ministres assembles a Poissy 1561.
Ronsard et Baif y ont aussi besogne, BN Ms.fr.
1662, t.27 v°

Recueil des derniers propos que dit et feint feu tres-
 illustre prince, Messire Francois de Lorraine,
Duc de Guyse...prononcez par luy peu devant son
trespas, Paris, Kerver, 1563, 8°, BN Lb°° 102

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(65) Vie de Ronsard, ed. Laumonier, Paris, 1910, 8°, p.13
VI Claude Chappuys

The early life of Claude Chappuys is full of confusion. The date of his birth is unknown, and biographers vary as to the place of his birth. La Croix du Maine, for example, states that he was born in Rouen, whereas the more generally held opinion is that he was born in the Loire valley (66). Little is known of Chappuys' early life at the court of François Ier. His allegorical Discours de la court is a long and dull poem, but it does contain a brief passage evoking the brilliance and confusion of the court before the eyes of the dazzled newcomer. His description of the cheeky

(66) Cf. the interchange of dizains in BN Ms.fr.1667, f.193 r°, in which Brodeau refers to Chappuys as the poet of the Loire
young pages he first encountered on his arrival provides one of the most lively passages of the poem. It also gives some notion of what the court must have been like at this early period in Chappuys' life.

Chappuys' name first appears on the rolls in 1524 where he is described as 'sommelier de la chapelle ordinaire' (67). In 1532 we find the first record of his much more important appointment - that of royal librarian (68), and this office he seems to have retained for the greater part of his life, throughout the reigns of François Ier, Henri II and the two sons who succeeded him so briefly, François II and Charles IX. Judging by the accounts in the Catalogue des actes, Chappuys seems to have been responsible for supervising the transport of books to and from the various royal libraries, for arranging repairs and bindings, and for the general administration of the library (69).

In 1530 Chappuys accompanied the court to Bordeaux to welcome back to France the royal children returning from exile in Spain. Four years later, in 1534, he accompanied Jean du Bellay as secretary on his diplomatic mission to Rome. François Rabelais also accompanied Du Bellay on this expedition, and he,

(67) Cf. Best, 'Additional documents', p.135, note 4
Chappuys and a third secretary, Nicolas le Roy all cooperated in the projected study of the topography of ancient Rome. Throughout 1534 and 1535 Chappuys seems to have been entrusted with the task of keeping Jean du Bellay informed of events in Rome, after the Bishop's return to France, and subsequently of events in Paris, after the Bishop had returned to Rome to receive his cardinal's hat. (70).

From 1536 onwards we find an increasing number of long semi-official poems written by Chappuys to celebrate national events. The detail given in these poems suggests that despite his commitments to Jean du Bellay, he must nevertheless have spent a considerable amount of time at court. The Complaincte de Mars sur la venue de lempereur en France, for example, dating from 1539, suggests that Chappuys was a witness of the triumphal arrival of the emperor in France.

While these long poems of Chappuys are each printed independently, his shorter poems were not on the whole printed in his lifetime (with the exception of the blasons). The short pieces appear for the most part in manuscript anthologies (71), and they have now been made available for the first time in a modern edition of Poesies intimes, produced in 1967 by Miss Best.

(70) Cf. Poesies intimes, ed. Best, p.18

(71) Cf. BN Ms.fr. 1667, Ms.fr.2335, Ms.fr.20025; Musée Condé Ms.523; Bibliothèque de Soissons Ms.200)
One of the more interesting of the shorter works by Chappuys is the *Trente huitains pour la tapisserie faicte de la fable de Cupido & Psiche* (72). Of this poem the first part was written by Chappuys, the second by Héroet and the third by Saint Gelais. Originally intended to form the basis for a tapestry, these ultimately were used in 1542-1544 as the model for a series of stained glass windows at the Montmorency château of Écouen. On the whole, however, as he grew older, Chappuys gradually abandoned this lighter type of court poetry in favour of the longer and duller political and official poetry which characterises the latter part of his life.

By the end of the 1530s Chappuys was engaged in collecting benefices in the provinces, and although he retained his court connections he spent more and more time in Rouen, where he gradually established himself as an influential citizen. Despite occasional brushes with the Chapter of Rouen, he acquired a number of local benefices (73), and on several occasions acted as the town representative at court.

For the triumphal entry of Henri II into Rouen an important role was allotted to Chappuys. According to one of the accounts of the entry (74), Chappuys was

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(72) BN Ms.fr.2334, f.113 v


(74) *Les pourtres et figures du sumptueux ordre, plais-antz spectacles & magnifiques theatres*, Rouen, Dugort, 1557, 4°; BN Res Lib XV 26, 02 v
entrusted with the task of welcoming the king on behalf of the Chapter. The Rouen municipal archives record also that it was Chappuys who was entrusted with the task of organising the celebrations (75).

In his role of worthy provincial citizen of Rouen Chappuys outlived most of his contemporaries by many years, and it was not until 17 November 1575 that he died, still in Rouen.

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Works by Claude Chappuys

Panegyrique recite au tresillustre, tresmagnanime, tresvertueux & treschrestien Roy Franciscoy premier de ce nom en sgn retour de Provence, Paris, Roffet, 1558, 8°, BN Res Ye 2969

La complaincte de Mars sur la venue de lempereur en France, Paris, Roffet, 1559, 8°, BN Res Ye 3706

Discours de la court, Paris, Roffet, 1543, 8°, BN Res Ye 1334

L'aigle qui a faict la poule devant le coq à Landrecy, Lyons, Le Prince, nd (1544), 8°, BN Res Ye 3704

La reduction du Havre de grace par le Roy Charles neufvie me de ce nom, Paris, Le Mesgissier, 1563, 4°, BN Res Ye 947

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VII Antoine Héroet

1492 is generally accepted as the date of Héroet's birth, although this is by no means certain. La Croix du Maine describes Héroet as 'natif de Paris', and certainly he seems to have spent the greater part of his life there in proximity to the court, only abandoning the capital in 1552 to spend the last years of his life as Bishop of Digne. A surprising amount is known about Héroet's family (76). More than one of them enjoyed royal patronage, and indeed one of his sisters is immortalised in the twenty-second conte of the *Heptaméron*. The title *La Maison neuve* which Héroet habitually adopted in preference to his family name was taken from the family estate of that name. However, although he only became official owner of

(76) Cf. Lucien Grou's two articles on the subject
the property in 1543, he took the title before this date (77).

Colletet informs us that Héroet studied at the University of Paris (78), and certainly, whether this is true or not, he was regarded by his contemporaries as an érudit, and the adjective docte is frequently applied to him. In his épître A ceulx qui apres l'epigramme du beau tetin en feirent d'aultres (79), Marot refers to Héroet's Oeil:

'L'autre un bel Oeil deschiffre doctement'

while Chappuys also praises his scholarship in the Discours de la court:

'La Maison Neufve en son stile heroqve
Philosophie a joingt a la rethorique
Ou le tresor de son bon sens desploye' (80)

How learned he was, however, is difficult to judge. Certainly it is clear from the title page to the Androgyne that he used a Latin translation rather than an original text:

'L'androgyne de Platon, nouvellement traduict de Latin en Francois'

Héroet's name appears in the accounts of Marguerite de Navarre for the first time in 1524 (81)

(77) Cf. the title page to the 1542 edition of the Parfaicte amye

(78) Cf. Gohin appendix, p.153


(80) Discours de la court, f.27 r°

(81) Cf. Gohin, p.ix
and in 1529 it appears also in the books of Louise de Savoie under the title 'pensionnaire extraordinaire' — a source of income which he retained until 1539 (82). It is not known at what date he received his first church benefice, but by 1543 he was abbé of Notre Dame de Cercanceaux (83), and in 1552 he received the bishopric of Digne, a see which he retained until his death in 1568.

Whether or not Héroet continued to write during this latter part of his life, we cannot tell. Certainly, however, with the exception of an epitaph composed on the death of Marguerite de Navarre and published in 1550, all his printed works date from the 1530s and early 1540s. Gohin suggests that after receiving his first benefice Héroet renounced poetry (84).

Héroet's works are surprisingly few in number, although he was regarded by his contemporaries as an important poet, and extravagantly praised by them, even before the publication in 1542 of his most important work, the Parfaicte amye. In the translation of his own Genethliacon Dolet describes how much better fitted Héroet would be for such a task. It is in this work that Dolet uses the phrase — often used subsequently to describe Héroet: 'heureux illustrateur du

(82) Cf. Comptes de Louise de Savoie & de Marguerite de Navarre, p.80 & p.86
(83) Cf. Grou, 'Nouveaux documents', p.89
(84) Cf. Gohin, p.41
haut sens de Platon (85).

Most of Héroet's early work dating from the 1530s is to be found in manuscript form (86). These are mainly short poems typical of the facile and amusing verse characteristic of the period. A handsome vellum manuscript in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal (87) contains a collection of one hundred and twenty rondeaux attributed to Héroet. Probably the earliest printed works are two epitaphs for Louise de Savoie signed LMN in the collection In Lodoicae Regis Matris mortem epitaphia latina & gallica (88).

The Androgyne, Héroet's first major work, was not published until 1542, in the Dolet edition of the Parfaicte amye (of which a copy exists in the Christie collection in Manchester University Library). It was, however, written some years earlier. The Epistre au Roy Francois touchant l'Androgyne de Platon which introduces the poem appears in Ms.523 in Chantilly (89) under the date 1536.

Based upon Plato, although not a mere translation,

(85) L'avant naissance de Claude Dolet, Lyons. Dolet, 1539, 8°, (re-ed. Techenier, Paris, nd, 8°, BN Res Z 4015, p.4)
(86) Cf. BN Ms.fr.842, Ms.fr.2334, Ms.fr.2335, Ms.fr.4967, Ms.fr.1700
(87) Arsenal ms.5110
(88) Paris, Tory, 1531, 4°, BN Res m Yc.117, B r° & B3 r°
(89) Chantilly ms.523, f.146 r°
is the long poem *Douleur & volupté* which appeared first in the Janot *Recueil de vraye poesie françoys* of 1544 (90). The subject of this poem — that of the inseparable nature of *douleur* and *volupté* — is treated by Plato in the *Phaedrus*.

Much the longest and the most important of Héroet's works, however, is the *Parfaicte amye*. Abel Lefranc considered this poem to be the initiator of the *Querelle des amies* (91), but this seems to have been convincingly disproved, and in fact Bertrand de la Borderie's *Amie de court* was the first to be written (92). The most important poems belonging to this controversy were gathered together by Jean de Tournois into one single anthology, the *Opuscules d'amour*.

One of the last works Héroet wrote is the *Trente huictains pour la tapisserie faicte de la fable de Cupido & Psiche* (93), the central section of which was composed by Héroet (the first by Chappuys and the last by Saint Gelais). The stained glass windows at Écouen in which these verses are incorporated were put in in the early 1540s, and it is assumed that the verses date from approximately the same period.

(90) Paris, Janot, 1544, 8°, Arsenal 8°B 9905 rés, C6 v°
(91) Cf. *Grands écrivains*, p. 95 et seq.
(92) Cf. Gohin, p.xx
(93) BN Ms.fr.2334, f.113 v°
The last printed poem by Héroet is an epitaph for his patroness Marguerite de Navarre included in the collection of epitaphs, *Oraison funèbre de l'incomparable Marguerite, royne de Navarre...compose en Latin par Charles de Saincte Marthe...plus epitaphes de ladicte dame par aulcuns poetes francois* (94).

Héroet, as might be expected, was one of Marguerite de Navarre's favourite poets; his neo-platonic ideas matched admirably her own particular religious mysticism, blending human and spiritual love. Inevitably he did not escape the stigma of heresy which was attached to so many of Marguerite's circle, and this despite the fact that he held the bishopric of Digne for sixteen years. In his note on La Croix du Maine's biography of Héroet, La Monnoye alludes to the suspicion of Calvinism which surrounded him even in Digne (95). Unlike so many of his friends, however, Héroet seems to have successfully avoided any direct clash with authority. Whereas Dolet was burned for his religious views in 1546, Héroet occupied his see peacefully until his death of old age in 1568.

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**Works by Antoine Héroet**

*La parfaicte amye nouvellement composee par Antoine Héroet, dict la Maison neuve. Avec plusieurs*

(94) Paris, Chauldiere, 1550, 4°, BN 4°Lk 1150, p.126

autres compositions dudit auteur, Lyons, Tours, 1542, 8°, BN Res Ye 1612

Opuscules d'amour par Heroet, La Borderie et autres divins poètes, Lyons, Tours, 1547, 8°, BN Res Ye 1611

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VIII  Jacques le Lieur

Born in Rouen around 1475, and very markedly a provincial poet, Jacques le Lieur belonged to a generation earlier than that of most of his fellow blasonneurs, both as regards the actual date of his birth and his poetic style. Indeed his work seems in many ways nearer to that of Jean Marot than to that of his son Clément. For the most part it takes the form of chants royaux, ballades, rondeaux and oraisons composed for the Puy de l'Immaculée Conception of Rouen. There is no printed edition of his works, and we are forced to search in manuscript collections for short poems signed with his name (96), with his acrostic (97), or with his device (98).

Le Lieur belonged to an eminent Rouen family whose ancestry can be traced back to the fourteenth century (99). He himself played an important role in the local government of Rouen (100). The work for which he is perhaps best known, the Livre des fontaines (or Livre enchainé) consists of a detailed plan of the three sources of Rouen's water supply, the Fontaine Gaalor, the Fontaine de Carville and the Fontaine d'Yonville.

(96) Cf. BN Ms.fr.379, f.1 r°; f.2 r°; f.3 r° etc.
(97) Cf. BN Ms.fr. n.a.1816, f.7 r°
(98) Cf. Bn Ms.fr.24315, ff.99 v°– 100 v°
(99) Cf. Picot, Notice, pp.8-34
(100) Cf. Picot, Notice, p.36 and p.73
The manuscript (which is still housed in the Bibliothèque municipale de Rouen) consists of a minute plan of the town, with little drawings of windmills, fields, churches and houses, all of which are labelled (including Le Lieur's own house.), accompanied by a written account of the course taken by the three water supplies. Three reproductions of this work exist, of which only the most recent, produced by Sanson in 1911, is at all satisfactory, giving a complete reproduction of the manuscript.

Le Lieur played an important part in the yearly Palinod of Rouen. He was crowned at least twice, in 1518 and 1522, and finally in 1544 he received the honour of being elected Prince des palinods. Not only did Le Lieur take part himself in the Palinod, but he also encouraged other poets to participate. The Epistres morales et familières du Traverseur (101) contain an épître by Bouchet to Le Lieur thanking him for three chants royaux and declining an invitation to submit one himself to the Palinod:

'Parquoy seigneur te plaira m'excuser
Si je ne veulx en ton pays user
De chants royaux, car ce n'est ma pratique
Rien je n'entends en celle theorique' (102)

Le Lieur seems to have patronised an atelier in Rouen, and the manuscripts produced for him are

(101) Poitiers, Marnef, 1545, in-folio, BN Res Ye 55 bis
(102) Epistres morales et familières, f.65 v°
remarkable for the high quality of execution - and in particular, the illumination (103). The Bibliothèque Nationale possesses a manuscript collection of poems submitted at the Puy between 1519 and 1528 which contains numerous superb full page illuminations (104). Also in the Bibliothèque Nationale is a rather later manuscript containing the Histoire d'Hester, histoire du Nouveau Testament et de la Passion de Jesus Christ (105).

It is somewhat startling to find Le Lieur suddenly turning his hand to anatomical love poetry at the age of sixty, with his Blason de la cuisse, after a lifetime spent in producing devotional or moralistic verse. This is - as far as we know - the only non-devotional poem he wrote, after which momentary lapse he reverted to his more normal style to compose the Passion de Jesus Christ which Picot attributes to the last years of his life (106).

Le Lieur was not, of course, the only Rouen poet to turn his hand to the anatomical blason. Both François Sagon and Charles de la Hueterie contributed to the vogue - Picot suggests that it is in imitation of these two that Le Lieur succumbed to composing such poems.

(103) Certain of these have been reproduced in facsimile by the Société des bibliophiles normands.

(104) BN Ms.fr.1537 (rés). Cf. a chant royal by Le Lieur on f.48 v

(105) BN Ms.fr. n.a. 1816

(106) Picot, Notice, p.72)
a licentious poem (107). However it is indisputable
that Le Lieur's Cuisse was one of the earliest blasons
(108). Indeed, no satisfactory explanation can be found
as to why Le Lieur should suddenly have composed an
anatomical love poem. Yet as Picot reluctantly points
out:

'Malgré la singularité du sujet traité, ce
fut malgré tout un honneur pour Le Lieur
de voir son nom réuni à ceux de tous les
poètes renommés de ce temps' (109)

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Works by Jacques le Lieur

Les principaux édifices de la ville de Rouen en 1525.
Dessins à cette époque sur les plans d'un
manuscrit conservé aux Archives de la ville,
appelé le Livre des Fontaines, ed. T. de
Jolimont, Rouen, 1845, in-folio

Rouen au XVIe siècle d'après le manuscrit de Jacques
le Lieur (1525), ed. J. Adeline, Rouen, 1892,
in-folio

Le livre enchâiné ou Livre des fontaines de Rouen 1524-
1525 par Jacques le Lieur, ed. V. Sanson, Rouen,
1911, in-folio, 2 vols.

Heures de l'Immaculée Conception exécutée par Jacques
le Lieur, ed. E. Picot, Rouen, Société des
bibliophiles normands, no. 75, 1913, 8°.

La Passion de Nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ par Jacques
le Lieur, ed. E. Picot, Rouen, Société des
bibliophiles normands, no. 76, 1915, 8°

Histoire d'Hester, histoire du Nouveau Testament et
de la Passion de Jesus Christ, BN Ms. fr. n.a. 1816

(107) Picot, Notice, p. 69
(108) It appears in both the Bodley and the Strasbourg
Hecatomphile
(109) Picot, Notice, p. 71
Francois Sagon's background is an extremely hazy one. Although it is generally supposed that he was born in Rouen at the end of the fifteenth century, there is no definite proof of this, nor indeed is there any definite proof that he was even born in France at all. Certainly his father Jean Sagon was of Spanish origin, and was not naturalised until 1501 (110). Frippelippes describes Sagon as a 'vieulx resveur normand' (111) which might suggest that Sagon was rather older than Marot, (who was born in 1486), but this is mere speculation. Goujet suggests that Sagon was still alive in 1559 (112), but Bouquet rejects this, placing his death some fifteen years earlier, in 1544, on the basis of a

(112) Goujet, vol.XI, p.102
document from the municipal archives of Rouen (113).

Like so many blasonneurs, Sagon entered the Church, and the earliest reference we have to him dates from the year 1529-1530, during which he was paid one hundred sous for preaching the annual sermon for the Synode d'été (114). His name continues to feature on this register at intervals throughout his life.

At some point Sagon was appointed secretary to Felix de Brie (115). The degree of familiarity which he enjoyed with François Ier and Marguerite de Navarre at this stage is difficult to assess. Several of the poems of the Coup d'essay are dedicated to members of the court (116), but it is impossible to say whether these are simply tokens of Sagon's optimism, or whether he actually was associated with the court circle. Certainly by 1534 he was familiar enough with Marguerite de Navarre to be present at the wedding celebrations held at Alençon for the marriage of Isabeau d'Albret and René de Rohan, arranged under her auspices.

It is in the course of this ceremony that the celebrated quarrel between Marot and Sagon first broke

(113) Cf. Bouquet, p.36
(114) Cf. Bouquet, p.4
(115) He describes himself thus on the title page to the Coup d'essay of this year
(116) Cf. Coup d'essay, E3 v° and E4 v°
out. According to Sagon's account in the *Defence de Sagon par luy adressee a Clement Marot* of 1537 it was due to Marot's attempts to convert him to Lutheranism. The following year, after Marot was obliged to seek refuge in Ferrara, Sagon apparently revived the quarrel with the publication of his *Coup d'essay* in which he attacked Marot. The quarrel rapidly became a literary vogue to which most of the poets of the period contributed. Despite the great volume of work produced on both sides of this quarrel (in which the picturesque woodcuts with which the collections abound are much more interesting than the rather mediocre poetry), this was in fact a very one sided quarrel. Sagon's supporters were few in number, and low in the poetic hierarchy.

As Prippelippes says:

'Je ne voy poinct qu'un Sainct Gelais
Ung Heroet, ung Rabelais,
Ung Brodeau, ung Seve, ung Chappuy
Voysent escrivant contre luy...

...Mais bien ung tas de jeunes Veaux
Ung tas de Rymasseurs nouveaux,
Qui cuydent eslever leur nom,
Blasment les hommes de renom' (117)

Sagon's support came in fact primarily from Jean Leblont and Charles de la Hueterie. He had hoped to enlist Jean Bouchet on his side, but Bouchet carefully avoided committing himself to either side:

'Quant est de moy j'en quitte la partie,
Je suis amy de tous en charite' (118)


(118) Epistres morales et familiieres du Traverseur, Poitiers, Marnef, 1545, in-folio, BN Res Ye 55 bis, f. 73 v
It is for this quarrel with Marot that Sagon is best known. He did in fact publish a considerable number of works other than the anti-Marot poetry, particularly in the latter part of his life. In the early 1530s he began his poetic career by composing works for the Rouen Puy. The Triomphe de grace et prerogative d'innocence originelle is a collection of pieces by Sagon submitted to this Puy, several of which are indicated as having won prizes. It is interesting to note the considerable success of Sagon here, in contrast to the failure of his rival, Clément Marot, to win anything. In 1521, while Jean Marot won the crown for his chant royal 'Lhumanite joince a la divinite', Clément Marot's own chant royal 'La digne couche ou le Roy reposa' was not awarded any prize.

Much of Sagon's work takes the form of epitaphs composed in honour of friends or patrons. In 1539 he published a long and extremely dull Discours de la vie et mort accidentelle de noble homme Guy Morin, divided formally according to the rules of rhetoric into distinct sections under the headings Proposition (119), Invocation (120), and Narration (121). This is followed five years later, in 1544, by another epitaph, La complaine de troys gentilshommes Francoys, occiz & mortz

(119) Discours, f.101 v°
(120) Discours, f.102 v°
(121) Discours, f.104 v°
au voyage de Carrignan, bataille & journée de Cirrizolles.

For the De Brie family, his benefactors, Sagon also composed a series of eleven epitaphs to be carved in marble in the family chapel at Serrant. A printed text of these is to be found in the *Vitae Petri Aerodii...et Guillelmi Menagii...scriptore Aegidio Menagio* (122). The epitaphs appear under the heading *Sommaire de la généalogie de la maison de Brie* (123).

A manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale (124) contains a long epitaph by Sagon on Françoise de Foix, countess of Chateaubriant, *Le regret dhonneur foeminin*. It is interesting to note that one passage of this poem is in fact virtually a *blason* in itself:

'Miroir, sans macule ou diffame,
Miroir, du sexe foeminin,
Miroir exempt du venin
Et d'imbécilite humaine
Rendant clarte de miroir vaine,
Miroir antique et souverain,
D'estain, entremesle d'airain,
Miroir de matiere argente
De façon nouvelle inventée,
Miroir plus beau a l'oeil de clerç ou lays
Que le miroir que feit praxiteles
Graveur expert, au temps du grant pompee,
Miroir d'acier, ou face nest trompee
Miroir ardant que sydon inventa.
Miroir, qui onc son lustre n'esventa
Pour le regard de personne envieuse,
Miroir, remply de grace gracieuse,
Miroir d'amour, tant chaste et bien reigle
Qu'ung seul amant ne s'y est aveugle.

(122) Paris, Journel, 1675, 4°
(123) *Vitae*, p.307
(124) BN Ms.fr.2373
Doy je finir (amour) de me complaîndre
De ceste mort, qui a voulu estaindre,
Rompre, et briser par accident maling
Ce beau miroir de luysant cristallin' (125)

Sagon's last work, the Chant de la paix de France chanté par les troys estatz, dates from 1544, and seems to have enjoyed a certain measure of success, since it was considered worth reprinting five years later in 1549.

Like Michel d'Amboise, Sagon was a prolific writer, although not a particularly talented one. It is curious to reflect that at the very time of the beginning of his great quarrel with Clément Marot— a quarrel which set him at odds with the majority of French poets of the period — he should nevertheless, have contributed his own efforts to the collection of blasons anatomiques instigated by his arch enemy.

* * *

Works by François Sagon

Le coup d'essay de Francoys de Sagon...contenant la réponse a deux epistres de Clément Marot retire à Ferrare, Paris, Hallard, 1537, 8°, Arsenal 8° B 8736 rés

La défence de Sagon par luy adressée a Clément Marot, disciples d'icelluy, appointeurs et aux juge prudents, Paris (no printer), nd (1537), 8°, Arsenal 8° B 8737

Le discours de la vie et mort accidentelle de noble homme Guy Morin, Paris, Longris, 1539, 8°, BN Res D 80206

(125) BN Ms.fr.2373, ff.10 v° - 11 r°
Apologie en defense pour le roy, fondee sur texte d'evangile, contre ses ennemys & calumnieuteurs, Paris, Janot, 1544, 8°, BN Res Ye 1448

La complaincte de troys gentilzhommes Francoys, occiz & mortz au voyage de Carrinnamon, bataille & journes de Cirizziolles, Paris, Janot, 1544, 8°, BN Res Ye 1446

Le triumphe de grace et prerogative d'innocence orig-inelle. Sur la conception & trespas de la vierge esleue mere de Dieu, Paris, Andre, 1544, 8°, Arsenal 8° B.10713

Le chant de la paix de France chanté par les troys estatz, Paris, Andre, 1544, 8°, BN Res Ye 3701

ibid., Paris, Buffet, 1549, 8°, BN Res p Ye 337

Le regret dhonneur foeminin et des troys graces sur le trespas de noble dame Francoys de Foix danse de Chasteaubriant, et miroer de noblesse foeminine, BN Ms.fr.2373

ibid., ed. F.Bouquet, Rouen, 1880, 4°

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PICOT, E. & LACOMBE, P. (ed.): La querelle de Marot et Sagon, pieces reunies, Rouen, 1920, 8°, 2 vols

* * *
Jean de Vauzelles

Most of our information about Jean de Vauzelles is derived from the researches of his descendant Ludovic de Vauzelles. Born in Lyons around 1495, he was one of a large family of brothers and sisters, the oldest of whom married the sister of Maurice Scève. Like many of the blasonneurs he made a career for himself in the Church. In 1521 he was made 'Chevalier de l'église métropolitaine de Lyon', and six years later, in 1527, he was appointed prieur of Montrottier (126). In the dedication to François 1er of his translation of the Genese of Aretino, he is given the title aumonier to the king.

Not only was Vauzelles under the patronage of François 1er, but he was also closely connected with Marguerite de Navarre. As early as 1526, his first published work, a translation of the Hystoire evangelique des quatre evangelistes, was dedicated to Marguerite de Navarre. A devoted admirer of Aretino, Vauzelles was responsible for several translations into French of his more moralistic works (127), several of which are dedicated to Marguerite de Navarre or to her daughter Jeanne d'Albret.

More interesting, however, than his translations of Aretino is Vauzelles' own work, the Simulachres et

(126) Cf. Ludovic de Vauzelles, Notice, p.52
(127) Cf. the list of works by Vauzelles
historiees faces de la Mort, printed in 1538. This work - a blend of prose and poetry - is in fact a Dance of Death, each woodcut being accompanied by an explanatory quatrain, and the whole thing being followed by a prose treatise on death.

The Vauzelles family - and notably Jean de Vauzelles - played an important part in the social welfare of Lyons in the first half of the sixteenth century (128). They were notably benefactors of the Hôtel-Dieu at the time when Rabelais was working there, in 1532.

The precise date of Vauzelles' death is unknown. He was still alive in 1552, since there is a record of a legal dispute in which he was involved at this date (129), but he was dead by 1559, since by this date Montrottier had passed under the control of Jean Scève (130).

* * *

Works by Jean de Vauzelles

L'hystoire evangelique des quatre evangelistes en ung fidelement abregee, Lyons, Villiers, 1526, 8°, BM C III aa 11.

Les simulachres et historiees faces de la Mort autant elegamment pourtrictes que artificiellement imaginees, Lyons, Trechsel, 1538, 4°, BN Res Z 1990

(128) Cf. Picot, p.120
(129) Cf. Vauzelles, Notice, p.25
(130) Cf. Picot, p.159
Trois livres de l'humanite de Jesu Christ divinement descripte...par Pierre Are tin, Lyons, Trechsel, 1539, 8°, BN D 11892

La Passion de Jesuchrist vifvement descripte par le divin engin de Pierre Are tin, Lyons, Trechsel, 1539, 8°, (Not in BN or BM)

Les sept pseanmes de la penitence de David par P.Aretin, Paris, Janot, 1541, 8°, (Not in BN or BM)

La genese de M.Pierre Aretino. Avec la vision de Noe, Lyons, Gryphius, 1542, 8°, BN Res A 6710

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VAUZELLES, L.de (ed.): Poésies de Mathieu et de Jean de Vauzelles, Lyons, 1877, 8°

APPENDIX II  A check list of blasons other than
those included in the Necatophilie
or the Blasons anatomiques

I  COLLECTIONS OF BLASONS

BN Ms.fr. 2370, ff. 30°- 35 v°
This is an inserted gathering of five leaves
of vellum in a manuscript which otherwise is
of paper. It contains Carle's Esprit, Héroet's
Oeil and Marot's Teet, together with an
unsigned Cueur ('Cueur assiégé d'infini d'amys)
which I have not found in any other manuscript
or printed work.

Charles de la Huetetrie: Les protologies francoysses,
Paris, Mallard, 1536, 8°, Bibliothèque munici-
palde de Niort.
This is the earliest printed text in which the
contreblasons of Charles de la Huetetrie appear
(F.2 r° et seq.). These poems were not printed
together with the blasons anatomiques until
1543, in the first of the two editions produced
by Angelier.

Pierre Grosnet: Le second volume des motz dorez du
grand & saije Cathon, Paris, Longis, 1539,
8°, BN Velins 2092.
In this is contained Grosnet's collection of
twenty-one poems in praise of the various towns
of France, several of which are given the title
blason: La louange & description de plusieurs
bonnes villes & citez du noble royaume de
France (ff. 42 v°- 64 r°)

Gilles Corrozot: Les blasons domestiques contenentz
la decoration d'une maison bonneste, & du
mesnare estant en icelle, Paris, Corrozot,
1539, 16°, BN Res Ye 1380

Guillaume Guéroult: Le second livre de la description
des animaux contenant le blason des oyseaux,
Lyons, Arnoullet, 1550, 8°, BN Res Ye 3468 (2)
Le blason des fleurs ou sont contenens plusieurs secrets
de medecine, Rouen, Lescuyer, nd, 16°, BN Res
p Ye 264

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II  INDIVIDUAL BLASONS

i) Authors

ADONVILLE, Jacques d': L'honneur des nobles, blason et propriété de leurs armes en général, npnd, 8°, BN Res Ye 3788

ALEXIS, Guillaume: Le blason de fausses amours, compiled par frère Guillaume Alexis, prieur de Bury, Paris, Levet, 1486, 4°, BN Res Ye 254

AURIGNY, Gilles d': Le blason de l'ongle in Le tuteur d'amour, Paris, Angelier, 1546, 8°, BN Res Ye 1615, f.67 v°

AUTHUEIL d': Le blason de l'hymen, epithalame, dédié et présenté à Madame la Comtesse d'Artois. À son passage à Lyon, Par un ancien officier, np (Lyons ?), 1773, 8°

BEAULIEU, Eustorg de: Le souverain blason d'honneur à la louange du tresdigne corps de Jesus Christ. Composé par Eustorg, autrement dit Hector de Beaulieu...et extraict d'un sien livre intitulé: Christiennne resjouyssance, npnd (1550 ?), Zurich Zentralbibliothek VI 23676; Vienna Nationalbibliothek 79 Be 174

BOUCHET, Jean: Epitaphe contenant le blason d'un bon cheval in Les genealogies, effigies et epitaphes des roys de France, Poitiers, Bouchet, 1545, in-folio, BN L° 77 3 (f.83 r°)

BRODEAU, Victor: (?) Le blason des couleurs in BN Ms.fr.4967, f.235 r°. (Cf. also BN Ms.fr. 2335, f.103 r°; BN Ms.Picot 2964, f.38 v°)

CHARTIER, Jean: Les blasons vertueux, Orléans, 1574, 4°, BN Estampes AA 1 rés

COLLERYE, Roger de: Le blason des dames en dialogue in Les oeuvres de maistre Roger de Collerye homme tressavant natif de Paris...lesquelles il composa en sa jeunesse, Paris, Roffet, 1536, 8°, BN Res Ye 1411, (F7 r°)

COQUILLART, Guillaume: Le blason des armes et des dames in Sensuyvent les droits nouveaux, avec le débat des dames, et des armes, Paris, Trepperel, nd, 4°, BN Res Ye 229 (H2 r°)
CORROZET, Gilles: *Le blason des armes de la ville de Paris*, in *Les antiquitez, histoires croniques et singularitez de la grande & excellente cite de Paris*, Paris, Bonfons, 1576, 8°, BN 8° Lk 5985 (preface)

*Le blason du mois de may*, npnd (c.1530), 8°, BN Res p Ye 338

DANCHE, Pierre: *Les trois blasons composes par M.P.d'A. Cestassavoir le blason des bons vins, le blason de la belle fille, le blason d'ung bon cheval*, Poitiers, Marnef, nd, 8°, Chantilly IV D 127 (Cf. also BN Ms.fr.1721, f.60 v° et seq., and BN Ms.fr. n.a. 10262, f.138 v° et seq.. Cf. also *Le jardin de plaisance*, Paris, Vérard, 1501, in-folio, BN Res Ye 168, f.124 et seq., for the Belle fille and the Bon cheval)

DES PÉRIERS, Bonaventure: *Le blason du nombril in Le recueil des oeuvres de feu Bonaventure des Periers*, Lyons, Tournes, 1544, 8°, BN Res Ye 1445, p.79

DU FOUILLOUX, Jacques: *Le blason du veneur in La venerie*, Poitiers, Marnef, 1561, in-folio, BN Res S 156 (p.54)

DU SAIX, Antoine: *Le blason de Brou, temple nouvelles-ment edifie au pays de Bresse par tresillustre ... Dame Marguerite d'Austrice*, Bourg-en-Bresse, 1856, 8°

FORCADEL, Étienne: *Le blason de la nuict in Le chant des seraines*, Paris, Corrozet, 1548, 16°, BN Res Ye 4021 (f.36 v°)

GRINGORE, Pierre: *Le blazon des heretiques*, Paris, 1532, 8°


LA HUETERIE, Charles de: *Le blason d'amour faict en vers alexandrins in Les protologies francoyes*, Paris, Mallard, 1536, 8°, Bibliothèque Municip-ale de Niort (C5 r°)

LA MOTHE, Jacques de: *Le blason des celestes & tres-chrestiennes armes de la France*, Rouen, Dugort, 1549, 8°, BN Res Li 31
LA TAILLE, Jean de: Le blason de la Marguerite and
Le blason de la Rose both in La famine ou
Les Gabeonites...ensemble plusieurs autres
oeuvres poétiques,
Paris, Morel, 1573, 8°, BN Res Ye 1818 (f.159 r°
et seq.)
Le blason des pierres précieuses in La geomance
abrégeé...pour scavor les choses passées,
presentes & futures, Paris, Breyer, 1574, 4°,
BN V 8841 (f.12 v°)

LA TOUR D'ALBENAS, Bérenger de: Le blason du miroir
in Le siecle d'or, et autres vers divers,
Lyons, Tournes & Gazeau, 1551, 8°, BN Res Ye
1653 (p.211)

LEBLOND, Jean: Le blason de la Cosse, contenant troys
grains dont saillent et naissent troys fleurs,
cestassavoir le lys la rose et lancolie in Les
nuptiaux virelayz du mariage du roy descoce,
et de madame Magdaleine, Paris, Angelier, nd
(1536), 8°, BN Res Ye 3620 (A4 v°)

Le blason des couleurs pour une damoyeselle in
Le printemps de l'humble esperant, Paris,
Angelier, 1537, 8°, BN Res Ye 1652 (C5 v°)

LEMAIRE DE BELGES, Jean: Le blason des armes des
Venitiens in Les illustrations de Gaule &
singularitez de Troye, Paris, Marnef, 1512-1513,
4°, BN Res La 4 U3 r°

MAGNY, Olivier de: Le blason d'un bouquet que luy
donna sa Castianire in Les amours...et quelques
odes de luy, Paris, Groulleau, 1553, 8°, BN
Res Ye 1667 (f.56 r°)

MAROT, Clément: Le blason des statues de Barbe & de
Jaquette, eslevées a saincte Croix d'Orleans;
Blason de la Rose envoyée pour estreines; Le
blason du Pin, transmis a celle qui en porte
le nom; Le blason de la Chapelle envoyée a celle
qui en porte le nom; Blason a la louange du Roy
translate de Latin en Francoys, all in L'Adol­
escence clementine, Paris, Roffet, 1532, 8°,
BN Res Ye 1532 (f.76 r° et seq.)

MONS, Claude de: Les blazons anagrammatiques tres-
christiens et religieux du hierapolitain
d'Amiens CDM sur diverses fleurs personelles
de piété, de noblesse, de justice & de liter­
ature, signalaings en Dieu la contree, Amiens,
Musnier, 1662, 8°
PARADIN, Guillaume: Le blason des danses, Beaujeu, Garils, 1556, 8°, reprinted Techener, Paris, 1830, 8°, BN Y 2536

PELETIER DU MANS, Jacques: Le blason du cœur and Le contrefaisant du cœur in Les œuvres poétiques, Paris, Vascosan, 1547, 8°, BN Res Ye 1853. (f. 86 v° and f. 88 v°)

RUS, Jean: Le blason de la rose, Le blason tant du Puy que d'une damoyeselle ainsi nommée, Le contrefaisant du nez, all in Les œuvres de Jean Rus, ed. Tanizey de Larroque, Paris, 1875, 8°. (p. 12, p. 21, and p. 23)

"RABELAIS, François": Le blason de la vieille and Le contrefaisant in Les œuvres, Lyons, Martin, 1558, 8°, BN Res Y 2176-2178 (Vv9 v°)

SAINT GELAIS, Mellin de: Le blason d'un oeil and Le blason des cheveux in Les œuvres poétiques, Lyons, Harsy, 1574, 8°, BN Res Ye 1702 (p. 27 and p. 29) (Cf. also Le recueil de poésie française, Paris, Janot, 1544, 8°, Arsenal 8° B 9905 rés (B4 r°) for the Cheveux)

SALEL, Hugues: Le blason de l'espingle and Le blason de l'anneau in Les œuvres, Paris, Roffet, 1539, 8°, BN Res Ye 1666 (f. 58 r° et seq.)

SICILE: Le blason des couleurs en armes livrées et devises, ed. Cocheris, Paris, 1860, 8°

ii) Anonymous

Articles damour par maniere de blason in Le vergier d'honneur, ndpnd (Paris, 1500), in-folio, BN Res Lb° 15 A (X4 r°)

Cy fine le blason de foy faulsee avec plusieurs blasons, ndpnd, 8°, BN Res Ye 1383.

Les blasons de la cour in Le cabinet du roy de France, dans lequel il y a trois perles precioses d'inestimable valeur: par le moyen desquelles sa majesté s'en va le premier monarque du monde, & ses sujets du tout soulaizes, Paris (no printer) 1581, 8°, BN Lb° 197, p. 301
Le blason de la femme in La louenge des femmes, Lyons, Tournes, 1551, 8°, Arsenal 8° B 12934 (p.10)

Blasons de la goutte, de honneur, et de la quarte, Lyons, Tournes, 1547, 8°, BN Res Ye 1617

Le blason de la guerre du pape, BN Ms.fr.2248

Le blason de la ligature du bouquet in La recreation, devis et mignardise amoureuse, contenant plusieurs blasons, menues pensees, verger, ventes, & demandes de l'amant à l'amy, & autres propos amoureux, Paris, Veuve Jean Bonfons, nd, 16°, BN Picot 812 (G5 r°)

Le blason de la puce fait sur le parve pulex in Le joyeulx devis de lesperit trouble, contenant plusieurs ballades epistres chansons complainctes rescriptz dizajns huynctains, Lyons, Arnoullet, nd (c.1537), 8°, BN Picot 2963 (15 v°)

Le blason de la putain in BN Ms.fr.22560 (f.141 r°)
(Cf. also BN Ms.fr.22565 (f.109 r°) )

Le blason des barbes de maintenant, Paris, Briere, nd (1551), 8°, BN Picot 775

Le blason des basquines et vertugalles, Lyons, Rigaud, 1563, 8°, Catalogue Lignerolles 1102 (reprinted Paris, 1830, 8°)

Le blason des couleurs ('Pour fermeté et duéil le noir est pris') in BN Ms.fr.2335 (f.103 r°) (attributed here to Brodeau). Cf. also BN Ms.fr. 4967 (f.235 r°) and BN Ms.Picot 2964 (f.38 v°). In BN Ms.fr. 12489 (f.103 v°) this blason is accompanied by a variant poem with the same incipit.

Le blason des dames, selon le pays in BN Ms.fr.24461 (rés) (f.98 r°) and BN Ms.fr.n.a.10262 (f.117 r°). This poem also appears in printed form in the supplement to Forcadel's Chant des seraines, Paris, Corrozet, 1548, 16°, BN Res Ye 4021 (f.71 v°)

Le blason des herbes, arbres & fleurs selon l'ordre alphabetique in La recreation, devis et mignardise amoureuse, contenant plusieurs blasons, menues pensees, verger, ventes & demandes de l'amant à l'amy, & autres propos amoureux, Paris, Veuve Jean Bonfons, nd, 16°, BN Picot 812 (F5 r°)
Le blason du bonnet carré in BN Ms.fr 884 (f.71 r°), BN Ms.fr.22560 (f.35 r°) and BN Ms.fr.22565 (f.46 r°).
The sixteenth century printed edition has been lost since it was reprinted by Techener in his Joyeusetez facettes et folastres imaginacions, Paris, 1833, 8°.

Le blason du bon vin in BN Ms.fr.17527 (f.111 v°) and BN Ms.fr.2206 (f.179 r°)

Le blason du gobellet, np (Lyons), 1562, 8°, BN Picot 2952

Blason d'une chemise en gran vertu merite in Valence Ms.9 (C 4)

Blason d'un oeil ('Oeil beau, oeil doux, oeil gratieux') in BN Ms. Picot 2965 (f.106 r°)

Le blason du platellet, np (Lyons), 1562, 8°, Biblio-\-thèque M éjanes (Aix) 27392

Blason en maniere de rebus in BN Ms.fr.9225 (f.39 r°) 
Cf. also Fleurs de rhétorique, ed. Chesney, Oxford, 1950, 8°, p.46

Blason fait en motz resoluz dune fille qui par son sens a rescu des escuz troys cens et ny a preste quan carolus in BN Ms.fr.4967 (f.218 r°)

Le contreblason de fausses amours. Intitule le grant blason damours spirituelles et divines. Avec certain epigramme et servantoys dhonneur, Paris, Trepperel, nd (c. 1512), 8°, BN Res Ye 3013

Enigme ou blason du con in La louenge des femmes, Rouen, Lignant, 1552, 8°, BM C 22 a 20 (p.63)

Le plaisant blason de la teste de boys, npnd (Lyons, c.1555), 16°, Bibliothèque M éjanes (Aix) C 3064

Rondeau enigmatique de la maison de Montclera, en Quercy, blasonnant les armes de ladicte maison in Le palais des nobles dames, auquel a treze parcelles ou chambres principales, en chacune desquelles sont declarees plusieurs histoires... concernans les vertus & louanges des dames, npnd (Lyons, c.1534), 8°, BN Picot 2862 (Q3 r°)
III REFERENCES TO UNLOCATED BLASONS


MERCHADIER DE BRESSE, P.: Le blason de la perle Cf. Oeuvres de Jean Rus, ed. Tamizey de Larroque, Paris, 1875, 8°. According to Tamizey de Larroque, this poem is bound together with the Oeuvres dictees of Rus in the Bibliotheque d'Auch (cat.no.4644)

Le blason de la bourre de la Caussas, Toulouse, 1565, Cf. Méon, p.288

Le blason de la verole, Toulouse, Boudeville, 1553, Cf. Méon, p.124

Le blason des blasonneurs, Cf. Méon, p.53

Le blason des cocuz, Cf. Michel d'Amboise, Le secret d'amours...ou sont contenus plusieurs lettres tant en rithme qu'en prose, fort recreatives a tous amans, Paris, Angelier, 1542, 8°., BN Res Ye 1623 (K3 v°)

Le blason du glaive de sainct Pelhot, Toulouse, Boudeville, 1553, Cf. Méon, p.124

* * *
In the course of the sixteenth century the blasons anatomiques went through numerous editions. Unfortunately, many of these editions have been completely lost. Of the seven recorded editions of Alberti's Hecatomphile containing the supplement of Fleurs de poesie and blasons only three are still extant, all in only one single copy. In the case of editions of Blasons anatomiques (published independently of the Hecatomphile), the situation is rather happier. Of these only one edition (whose existence is attested to only by Du Verdier and Draudius, and which may indeed never have existed) remains missing. This is the edition supposedly produced in Lyons in 1536 by François Juste. All copies of the 1543 Angelier edition had until recently disappeared from view, but two have now come to light, both in the hands of private collectors. Of the second Angelier edition, produced in 1550, we know two copies - one in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal and the other in the Rothschild collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale. The edition produced in 1554 by Nicolas Chrestien was also lost until recently, when - due to re-cataloguing - it emerged that the Bibliothèque Nationale had in fact possessed a copy for some time. Finally the rather later edition published sometime between 1568 and 1572 by the Veuve Jean Bonfons exists.
in only one copy in the Enfer collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

Because of the rarity of these editions and because there has so far been no thorough bibliographical description of these newly discovered editions and their contents, it has been considered worthwhile to provide in this appendix a detailed description of each successive edition of the Hecatomphile and the Blasons anatomiques, listing the poems contained in each, and giving references to what earlier critics have said about each.

* * *

I Extant editions of the Hecatomphile containing the supplement of Fleurs de poesie and blasons

i) Hecatomphile, ce sont deux dictons grecques composees, signifiant centiesme amour, sciemment appropriees a la dame ayant en elle autant damours que cert autres dames en pourroient comprendre, dont a present est faicte mention. Tournee de vulgaire italien en langage francoys. Ensemble les fleurs de poesie francoyse, et aultres choses solatieuses. Reveues nouvellement

np, 1536, 16°

References: Lachèvre, p.40
Guégan, p.xiv
Michel, VI, 18
Best, p.89

Provenance: This edition figures in the La Roche Lacarelle catalogue (Paris, 1884, 4°, no.230), in

**Location:** Bodleian Library, Oxford, Douce p 36 *

**Description:** This particular copy is only a fragment, in which the first gathering (including the title page) is missing, together with the last gatherings. The fragment consists of gatherings B - K of which I - K contain the blasons.

On the evidence of the initials and the woodcuts it has been suggested that this edition might well have been produced in Paris by the printer Denis Janot (Cf. Best, pp.89-90):

'les majuscules ornées de cette édition sont de style parisien...ces majuscules, de même que certains bois gravés, mais plus usés, ont été utilisés par Estienne Groulleau, en 1551, pour une édition du recueil Les diverses fantaisies...composées par Meré Sotte. Or Groulleau avait acheté en 1545 l'enseigne et le matériel d'imprimerie de Denis Janot; il se peut donc que cette édition de l'Hecatomphile ait paru chez ce dernier.'

This edition contains eleven blasons, all of which are unsigned, together with a fragment of a twelfth poem 'Ung Orateur blasonne le tetin':

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blason des cheveulx</th>
<th>I r°</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blason du sourcil</td>
<td>I3 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blason de loeil</td>
<td>I4 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blason de la larme</td>
<td>I5 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blason de loreille</td>
<td>I6 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blason de la bouche</td>
<td>I8 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autre blason de la bouche</td>
<td>K v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blason du tetin</td>
<td>K3 v°</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Blason de la main K4 v°
Blason de la cuysse K5 v°
Blason de lesperit K6 v°
'Ung Orateur blasonne le tetin' K7 r°

Of these poems, the Autre blason de la bouche and 'Ung Orateur blasonne le tetin' are omitted in all subsequent editions.

ii) Hecatomphile...
np, 1537 (Blasons, np, 1536), 16°

Reference: Best, p.90 (This edition is mentioned by no other bibliographer)

Location: Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg R 102 895

Description: This edition contains a complete text comprising gatherings A - N, with the addition of an inserted gathering of four leaves (signed *) between gatherings H and I. This inserted gathering contains the title page to the Blasons together with the first three blasons (Corps, Joue and Col). With the exception of this inserted gathering the layout corresponds (as far as gathering K) to that of the Bodley Hecatomphile.

Although the inserted gathering containing the title page to the Blasons seems on the face of it highly suspect - in no other edition of the Hecatomphile containing the supplement of Fleurs de poesie and Blasons is there a separate title page for the
Title page to the Strasbourg Hecatophile, dated 1537

Title page to the Blasons in the Strasbourg Hecatophile, dated 1537
Blasons, and in no other edition of the Hecatomphile or Blasons anatomiques does the collection of blasons begin with any other poem than Vauzelles' Cheveulx—it can, in fact, be proved that this gathering was indeed printed together with the rest of the book (and not at some later date, as might have been thought). Thus the date must be presumed to be valid.

In this particular copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg, the inserted gathering shows clear traces of set-off from two other gatherings of the same work (gatherings I and L). This proves that the inserted gathering must have been printed and stacked between sheets I and L while the ink with which these had been printed was not yet dry, thus producing a 'ghost' impression on the sheet between them. This rather curious piece of evidence suggests, therefore, that we must accept the validity of the date 1536 for this collection of blasons.

The title page to the Blasons on (*) r° consists of a woodcut of a lady accompanied by Cupid, standing by a large vase of flowers, together with the title Blasons du corps femenin and the date 1536. This is in fact merely a repeated use of the woodblock used on the title page to the Hecatomphile itself.

This edition contains thirty-two blasons together with the Description de grace:

- Blason du corps (*2 r°)
- Blason de la joue * 3 v°
- Blason du col * 4 r°
Of these poems ten blasons (marked with an *)
reappear from the Bodley Hecatomphile, but the
remaining twenty-two are new. After this edition the
Col and the Aultre blason de la langue ('Qui est celluy
qui scauroit sans replique') never appear in any subsequent edition, while the Corps, Joue, Nes and Aultre blason du nes, Langue ('O doulce langue, o langue inchoative'), Dens, second Pied ('Pied de façon a la main comparable'), Voix and Mort are omitted from the 1539 Hecatomphile only to reappear in the 1543 Angelier edition of Blasons anatomiques. This means, in effect, that Pierre Sergent, when he came to print his edition of the Hecatomphile in 1539, omitted all the poems of the inserted gathering and also those of the last gathering of the 1537/1536 (Strasbourg) edition.

iii) Hecatomphile...

Paris, Sergent, 1539, 16°

References: Lachèvre, p.40
Brunet, vol. I, col. 132
Michel, VI, 20
Guégan, p. xvii
Best, p.90

Location: Rothschild collection, Bibliothèque Nationale, Picot 803

Description: This edition contains twenty-one blasons together with the Description de grace:

| Blason des cheveux | G6 v° |
| Blason du sourcil | G8 r° |
| Blason de l'oeil | H r° |
| Blason de la larme | H2 r° |
| Blason de la oreille | H3 r° |
| Blason de la bouche | H4 v° |
Blason du front  H6 r°
Blason de la gorge  H6 r°
Blason du tetin  H7 v°
Blason du cuer  H8 v°
Blason de la main  I2 r°
Blason du ventre  I2 v°
Blason de la cuysse  I4 v°
Blason du genoil  I5 r°
Blason du pied  I5 v°
Blason de lesperit  I8 r°
Blason de lhoneur  K2 r°
Description de grace  K3 v°
Blason de grace  K3 v°
Blason du souspir  K5 v°
Blason du con  K6 v°
Blason du cul  K7 r°

In this edition no new poems are included. On the contrary, it is a far smaller edition than the Strasbourg Hecatomphile of 1537/1536, since here eleven poems are omitted (Corps, Col, Nes, Nes, Langue Langue, Dens, Sagon's Pied, Voix and Mort).

* * * *

II Lost editions of the Hecatomphile
1) Hecatomphile... (verso: 'Hecatompie, ce sont deux dictions...!)


References: Lachèvre, p.40
Brunet, vol.I, col.132
Michel, VI, 17
Guégan, p.xvi
Best, p.90
This is apparently the only edition in which a gothic font is used. It would seem probable, therefore, that to this edition belongs a copy of the *Hecatomphile* in the La Vallière catalogue (Paris, 1783, 8°, 6 vols, vol.IV, no.4254) described as 'Hecatomphile, sl, 1536. in-8. goth.'

ii) *Hecatomphile*...

Lyons, François Juste, 1536, 16°

References: Draudius, p.207
Lachèvre, p.40
Michel, VI, 15
Best, p.90

iii) *Hecatomphile*...

Lyons, François Juste, 1537, 16°

References: Lachèvre, p.40
Brunet, vol.I, cols 132 and 970
Michel, VI, 19
Guégan, p.xvii
Best, p.90

iv) *Hecatomphile*...

Paris, Lotrian, 1540, 16°

References: Lachèvre, pp.40-41
Brunet, vol.I, col.132
Michel, VI, 21
Guégan, p.xvii
Best, p.90

Provenance and location: Guégan traces a copy of this work through the Bourdillon sale (1838), the Catalogue de Ruble (no.519), and the Rahir catalogue,
III Extant editions of the Blasons anatomiques

1) Sensuivent les blasons anatomiques du corps femenin, ensemble les contreblasons de nouveau composez, & additionnez, avec les figures, le tout mis par ordre: composez par plusieurs poetes contemporains. Avec la table desdictz blasons & contræ-blasons. Imprimee en ceste annee.

Paris, Angelier, 1543, 8°

References: Lachevre, p.47
Brunet, vol.1, col.970
Guégan, p.xix
Best, p.91

Provenance and location: Two copies of this edition are still extant - one in America and the other in France, both in the hands of private collectors.

The first copy figures in i) the White Knights sale (1819, catalogue no.469); ii) the Turner sale (London, 1888, catalogue no. I, 375); iii) the Pichon sale (1897, catalogue no.892. This book finally appeared in the possession of the bookseller Claudin, and is now in the private collection of Mr.Douglas Gordon of Baltimore USA.

The second copy figures in i) the Bulletin Morgand (November, 1891, no.19446); ii) the Guyot de Villeneuve sale, where it was bought by the bookseller Rahir, who
then sold it to M. de Montgermont; iii) in the Montgermont sale (1914, catalogue no.275). iv) Finally it appeared in the Rahir sale (catalogue, vol.II, no. 405). This copy is now in the private collection of the Paris bookseller, M. Georges Heilbrun.

**Description:** This edition contains thirty-seven **blasons** (A2 r° - H4 r°), and twenty **contreblasons** (H4 v° - K5 r°), and an additional cluster of poems at the end including Jomet Garai d'Apt's Bras, and a table of contents occupying the last gatherings (K5 v° - L8 v°). For the first time most of these **blasons** are attributed to an author, in contrast to the earlier editions of the Hecatomphile in which all the **blasons** were unsigned. The **blasons** and **contreblasons** in this edition are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blason</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheveulx</td>
<td>(Vauzelles)</td>
<td>A2 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front</td>
<td>(Scève)</td>
<td>A4 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sourcil</td>
<td>(Scève)</td>
<td>A4 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oeil</td>
<td>(Héroet)</td>
<td>A5 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larme</td>
<td>(Scève)</td>
<td>A7 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oreille</td>
<td>(Albert le Grand)</td>
<td>A8 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nez</td>
<td>(Darles)</td>
<td>B2 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joue</td>
<td>(Beaulieu)</td>
<td>B3 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouche</td>
<td>(Brodeau)</td>
<td>B4 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langue</td>
<td>(Beaulieu)</td>
<td>B5 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dent</td>
<td>(Michel d'Amboise)</td>
<td>B6 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nez</td>
<td>(Beaulieu)</td>
<td>B7 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dent</td>
<td>(Beaulieu)</td>
<td>B8 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souspir</td>
<td>(Scève)</td>
<td>C2 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorge</td>
<td>(Scève)</td>
<td>C3 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetin</td>
<td>(Marot)</td>
<td>C4 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Element</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Line1</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cœur</td>
<td>(Albert le Grand)</td>
<td>C5 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main</td>
<td>(Chappuys)</td>
<td>C7 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ventre</td>
<td>( - )</td>
<td>C8 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>( - )</td>
<td>D2 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con de la puc.</td>
<td>( - )</td>
<td>D2 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con de la -elle</td>
<td>(Bochetel)</td>
<td>D3 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cul</td>
<td>( - )</td>
<td>D4 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cul</td>
<td>(Beaulieu)</td>
<td>D6 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Réponse du</td>
<td></td>
<td>E v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blasonneur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pet</td>
<td>(Beaulieu)</td>
<td>E5 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gysse</td>
<td>(Le Lieur)</td>
<td>E6 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genou</td>
<td>(Carle)</td>
<td>E7 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pied</td>
<td>( - )</td>
<td>E8 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pied</td>
<td>(Sagon)</td>
<td>F3 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esprit</td>
<td>(Carle)</td>
<td>F4 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horneur</td>
<td>( - )</td>
<td>F6 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description de</td>
<td></td>
<td>F8 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>( - )</td>
<td>F8 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>(Sagon)</td>
<td>G3 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voix</td>
<td>(Beaulieu)</td>
<td>G4 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corps</td>
<td>( - )</td>
<td>G5 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excuse du corps</td>
<td></td>
<td>G6 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pudique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mort</td>
<td>(Vauzelles)</td>
<td>H r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistre de Charles de la Hueterie</td>
<td></td>
<td>H5 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>à François Sagon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason du</td>
<td>corps</td>
<td>H6 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason des</td>
<td>yeux</td>
<td>H7 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yeux</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason de</td>
<td>l'oreille</td>
<td>H8 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l'oreille</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason du</td>
<td>nez</td>
<td>H8 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nez</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason de</td>
<td>la bouche</td>
<td>I r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la bouche</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason de</td>
<td>la langue</td>
<td>I v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la langue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La joue le front</td>
<td>&amp; les cheveux</td>
<td>I v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason du</td>
<td>tetin (Marot)</td>
<td>I2 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tetin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason du</td>
<td>tetin</td>
<td>I3 r°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tetin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contreblason du</td>
<td>cœur</td>
<td>I3 v°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cœur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contreblason de la main 14
Contreblason du ventre 15
Contreblason du cul 16
Contreblason du con 17
Contreblason de la cuisse 18
Contreblason du genou 19
Contreblason de la jambe 20
Contreblason du pied 21
Contreblason du corps 22
Continuation du corps humain 23
Blason du bras (Jomet Garai d'Apt) 24
Debat du corps & de l'ame 25
Epistre de François de Sagon 26
Dizain de Charles de la Hueterie 27
Aucunes epigrammes composez par Jomet Garai d'Apt 28
Table 29

Of these poems, Michel d'Amboise's Dent, Bochetel's Con, Sagon's Grace and the Con de la pucelle are all new, as is the added Bras of Jomet Garai d'Apt. Likewise Eustorg de Beaulieu's Joue, Langue, Nez, Dent, Cul and Pet & vesse appear here for the first time in a collected edition of blasons, although they had already been printed some years earlier in 1537 in the first edition of the Divers rapportz of Beaulieu (Lyons, Sainte Lucie, 1537, 8°, BM G 17886).

ii) Sensuivent les blasons anatomiques...

Paris, Angelier, 1550, 8°

References: Lachêvre, p.48
Brunet, vol.I, col.970
Guégan, p.xx
Best, p.91

Location: Rothschild collection, Bibliothèque Nationale, Picot 810; Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 8°B 8516 rés
Description: This edition is simply reprinted from the 1543 edition, but with a different title page. It is in all respects inferior to the first edition of 1543, the text in both extant copies being muddled and incorrectly foliated, and at times completely missing.

iii) Les blasons anatomiques du corps feminin

Paris, Chrestien, 1554, 16°

References: Lachèvre, p.49
Brunet, vol.I, col.970
Guégan, p.xx
Best, p.910

Provenance: A copy of this work appears in
i) the Potier catalogue (1859, no.178); ii) the Lignerolles catalogue (vol.II, no.1407); iii) the Rahir catalogue (vol.II, no.406).

Location: Bibliothèque Nationale BN Res p Ye 749

Description: This edition is usually described and dismissed as simply a reprint from the 1543 Angelier edition. In fact this is not the case. The text of this edition seems to be taken from the faulty 1550 Angelier edition rather than from that of 1543 (The Contreblason du nez which is missing in the 1550 edition, together with the last seven lines of the Oreille, is similarly missing in this edition of 1554,
although the poem is listed in the table of contents).

The illustrative woodcuts of this edition are particularly interesting, and confirm further that here is no mere reprinting of the 1543 Angelier edition. Indeed they have very little in common with the Angelier woodcuts, but seem rather to be modelled upon those of the earlier edition of the *Hecatomphile* of 1537/1536. The woodcut depicting the lady with Cupid and a vase of flowers which was used for the title page to both the *Hecatomphile* itself and to the *Blasons* in the 1537/1536 edition is crudely - but unmistakably - copied on the title page to this Chrestien edition of 1554. Similarly (with the exception only of two poems, the *Cueur* and the *Esprit*) the woodcuts used to illustrate each individual poem correspond perfectly to those used in the 1537/1536 edition of the *Hecatomphile* in the Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg, rather than with those of the two Angelier editions.

The poems contained in this edition are the same as those of the 1550 Angelier edition.

iv) *Les blasons et contreblasons du corps masculin, et feminin Composez par plusieurs poetes avec les figures au plus pres du naturel*,

Paris, Veuve Jean Bonfons, nd (1568-1572), 16°

*Location*: Enfer collection, Bibliothèque Nationale, Enfer 600
Description: The text of this edition is based upon the 1550 Angelier edition. (Again, as in the 1554 Chrestien edition, part of the Oreille and the whole of the Contreblason du nez are omitted). The only significant textual variant between the 1550 Angelier edition and this later Bonfons edition is that here the Bras and épigrammes of Jomet Garai d'Apt are omitted.

This is without doubt the most carelessly printed and bound of all the editions. Woodcuts are printed upside down, and the order of the text is practically impossible to follow, so muddled is both the printing and the binding.

* * *

IV Lost editions of the Blasons anatomiques
i) Blasons anatomiques des parties du corps feminin, invention de plusieurs poëtes François con-
temporains, imprimes à Lyon, in-16. par
François Juste, 1536' (cit. Du Verdier,
vol.III, p.272, and repeated by Draudius,
p.201)

References: Lachèvre, p.45
Brunet, vol.I, col.970
Guégan, p.xvi
Best, p.91

Critics are divided as to whether this edition ever existed at all. Brunet, for example, denies its existence, suggesting that Du Verdier was in fact
referring not to an independent edition of blasons but rather to an edition of the Hecatomphile containing the supplement of blasons:

'Plusieurs bibliographes citent du même recueil les éditions de Lyon, Fr. Juste, 1536 et 1537, in-16.; mais il est évident qu'ils ont voulu parler de l'Hecatomphile de Léon-Baptiste Alberti, édité de 1536, sl. et de Lyon, 1537, in-16. recueil dans lequel se trouve effectivement une partie des Blasons du corps féminin'.

Lachèvre, on the other hand, believes that such an edition did exist.

François Sagon provides some curious information which might be regarded as casting light on this 'lost' edition — information which has been overlooked by critics. In his Epistre par Francoys de Sagon secrète-aire de labbe de sainte Ebvroul responsive a une epistre de Charles de la Hueterie, printed in the Protologies francoyses of 1536, he refers to his own Blason de grace of which the earliest printed text we possess is that of 1543:

'Et si tu dis que ce corps qu'on a fait
N'eust pas esté sans mon oeuvre parfaict,
Et qu'en faisant la grace tant jolye
J'ay ensuyvy des autres la follie,
Je te respondz qu'il ny a que tout bien
A deschiffrer la grace et le maintien
Qui proprement n'est au corps, mais en l'ame,
Ou en l'esprit de toute honneste dame,
T'advertissant que d'ung royal esprit
Vint le conseil de la mettre en escript,
Non pas ainsi comme un francoys l'imprime:
Car il n'y a mot de grace en la rythme,
Dont par mon nom me veult donner renom,
Mais tost apres ma grace vient sans nom
Fort incorrecte, imparfaict & domye
Suyvant du corps la sotte anathomye,'
Semblablement il a mon pied change
Pour de moy estre en certain cas venge,
Mais je pretendz quelque jour le remettre
En tel estat qu'izl sont sortiz du maistre,
Sans plus m'attendre au plus juste imprimeur,
Puisqu'au besoing faut au juste rimeur,
Jacoit qu'il n'eust de moy aucune charge
De composer mon oeuvre sur sa marge'

(Protologies, H5 r°)

This passage states in effect that Sagon's Grace was already written by 1536 (the date of the Protologies), and that it had been included in a collected edition of blasons with its text badly massacred, and without the name of the author being given:

'...ma grace vient sans nom
Fort incorrecte, imparfaicte'& domye'

It is further suggested that the printer had wrongly attributed to Sagon the preceding poem, the Blason du corps, which is always anonymous in subsequent editions:

'Car il n'y a mot de grace en la rythme,
Dont par mon nom me veult donner renom,
Mais tost apres ma grace vient sans nom...
...Suyvant du corps la sotte anathomye'

Several interesting points emerge from an analysis of this. Firstly, since neither the 1536 (Bodley) nor the 1537/1536 (Strasbourg) Hecatomphile contains Sagon's Grace, it can only be to one of the lost editions that he is referring. Secondly, since in all the earliest collections of blasons we know, forming a supplement to the Hecatomphile, the individual poems are unsigned, and only in the independent editions of Blasons anatomiques are the names of authors given, it would
seem unlikely that Sagon can be referring here to an unknown edition of the *Hecatomphile* (since he refers specifically to one poem - the *Corps* - as having been wrongly attributed to him, whereas his own *Grace* had not been attributed to him). He could hardly have made such a point if all the poems in the collection had been unsigned). We would suggest, therefore, that Sagon must be referring here to a very early edition of the *Blasons anatomiques* published independently of the *Hecatomphile*. Indeed this edition must have been published before the end of 1536, since Sagon also refers in this same poem to his enemy Marot as still being in exile in Italy:

'De francoys feit le corps ferrarien
Et maintenant le fait venicien'

(*Protologies* H7 v°)

Since by the end of 1536 Marot had received his royal pardon and was thus able to return to France, this poem must consequently date from before the return of Marot to France in December 1536.

Deploring the faultiness of this edition, Sagon describes the initial version of the *Grace* (inspired, he claims, by a 'royal esprit' - presumably that of Marguerite de Navarre) as being far superior to the massacred version which appeared in print:

'...ainsi comme un francoys l'imprime'

Since all the editions were printed by Frenchmen, it would seem hardly necessary for Sagon to mention this
fact, unless he had other reasons for so doing. A few lines later, still talking of printers, he uses - apparently rather meaninglessly - the adjective *juste* in two consecutive lines:

'Sans plus m'attendre au plus juste imprimeur
Puis qu'au besoin faut au juste rimeur'

We might suggest that Sagon is alluding here indirectly to the name of the printer responsible for this 1536 edition of *blasons* in which his own poem had suffered so badly. The insistence which he places on the words *francoys* and *juste* suggest that this might be an indirect allusion to the name of the printer, and that the edition of *blasons* described here might well be that referred to by Du Verdier as having been printed in 1536 by the Lyons printer François Juste.

* * *

V  Comparison of the various editions of the *Hecatomphile and Blasons anatomiques*

The various editions of *blasons anatomiques* differ greatly in quality - both in skill of presentation and in degree of accuracy with which the text is assembled. Some editions are particularly bad in both respects. The fragment in the Bodleian presents a coherent text in which there are no serious errors, and the woodcuts, although simple, are nevertheless pleasing to the eye. (Curiously, three of the blocks used in this edition appear to have been used again in
the Veuve Jean Bonfons edition of 1568-1572 - the blocks of the Main, the Bouche and the Oeil). In this edition in the Bodleian, the cuts are presented simply, with a plain rectangular frame around the object depicted.

(The only exception to this is the Larme (I5 r°) which for no apparent reason is framed in a triptych, with the teardrop occupying the centre panel while the two lateral panels remain empty. This eccentricity is likewise observed in the 1537/1536 (Strasbourg) Hecatomphile (I5 r°), although not in the 1539 edition in the Rothschild collection, where the teardrop is framed in a rectangular border (H2 r°) as are all the other illustrations.

The Strasbourg Hecatomphile contains considerably more printers' and binders' errors than does the Bodley copy. (In particular gathering L is very faulty). The woodcuts are still very simple, and are again enclosed in plain rectangular frames, and several blasons have no accompanying woodcut. (All three blasons of the inserted gathering - the Corps, Joue and Col - and the Front (K2 r°), the Gorge (K2 v°), the Ventre (K8 r°), the Genoil (L3 r°), the Con (M6 v°), the Cul (M7 r°), the Nes (N r°), the Nes (N v°), the Langue (N2 v°) and the Dens (N5 r°).)

The text of the 1539 edition of the Hecatomphile in the Rothschild collection is good, and there are no serious printers' or binders' errors. The woodcuts
in this edition are simple, as in the two earlier editions, but the whole thing is much more cramped, and rendered less attractive by the fact that the rectangular frames enclosing the woodcuts have been considerably reduced in size. In the earlier editions these frames were rectangular, whereas here the long sides are reduced to the size of the short sides, thus making smaller square frames.

In all the editions of the Hecatomphile a certain degree of modesty is observed. In none of them does there appear a woodcut of such parts of the anatomy as the Gorge, the Con or the Cul, all of which appear in the later editions produced by Angelier. Even for the relatively decent Ventre a veil of modesty is drawn over the subject.

The editions of Blasons anatomiques produced by Angelier in 1543 and 1550 are considerably more grandiose affairs. Although the woodcuts themselves remain fairly simple, they are rendered considerably more decorative than those of the Hecatomphile by the ornate border which replaces the plain rectangular framework of the Hecatomphile blasons. It is in these editions that woodcuts of the Con (1543, f.26 r°) and the Cul (1543, f.28 v°) first appear. Unfortunately, however, in the 1550 edition at least, the text itself is far from perfect.

In both the 1550 and the 1543 editions, the two extant copies of each represent - in certain gatherings
at least - different printings. Textually the 1543 edition is infinitely superior to that of 1550, in which, after the first few gatherings the text degen-
erates into a hopeless jumble, whereas the 1543 edition presents a coherent and muddle-free text. The first few gatherings of the two copies of the 1543 edition which we have been able to consult present minor variants, showing that they are of a different printing, but the remaining gatherings are identical. (Mr. Gordon's copy, for example, is neither foliated nor signed in gatherings A and B, whereas that of M. Heilbrun is both foliated and signed throughout.)

The 1550 edition is messy and difficult to read. Of the two copies we have been able to consult the Bibliotheque Nationale copy is slightly less confusing than that in the Arsenal. In the Arsenal copy the muddle begins in gathering D, whereas in the Biblio-
thèque Nationale copy it does not begin until gathering E. In this latter copy the difficulty begins when the printer omits twenty-two lines of the Blason du cul (E r°), thus making his spacing incorrect in relation to the earlier text of 1543. From here to the end of gathering H both spacing and arrangement of woodcuts are different from that of the 1543 edition. In addition to the muddled text, several of the blocks are inserted upside down, with the result that the printed woodcut illustration appears upside down
(including the ornate border). This occurs in the case of the **Ventre** (1550, f.64 v°), and the **Cuisse** (1550, f.73 r°). In the case of the two **Pieds** the 1550 edition illustrates the second of the two **blasons** with a woodcut of the foot, leaving the first poem blank. More logically, the reverse had been the case in the 1543 edition in which the woodcut was used to illustrate the first poem while the second simply had a plain title (1543 and 1550, f.40 v° and f.43 v°).

More significant than these details, however, is the passage of twenty-two lines from the **Blason du cul** which is omitted from the 1550 edition (1550, f.33 r°), and the **Contreblason du nez**, which, together with seven lines of the **Contreblason de l'oreille**, is completely omitted from the 1550 edition (1550, f.64 v°). This omission constitutes one full page of text, and by its omission at the end of gathering H, the printer was able to catch up with the setting of the earlier edition, with the result that henceforth subsequent gatherings (I - L) correspond to those of the 1543 edition.

The latest of the editions, that produced in 1568-1572 by the Veuve Bonfons is the least attractive of them all. The printing is both messy and careless, and the text presents a hopeless jumble, despite the well intentioned efforts of an earlier librarian in providing in the **Enfer** copy a manuscript 'Avis sur la
marche à suivre dans la Lecture de ce volume'. The cuts themselves are inferior to those of earlier editions, and they revert to the plain frame used in the Hecatomphile instead of the more ornate borders used by Angelier. Here, however, the frame is indiscriminately rectangular or square, varying considerably in size from woodcut to woodcut. Indeed, one of the cuts - the Oeil (p.10 and p.130) - is not even enclosed in a frame at all, and several of the cuts are printed upside down (Main and Contreblason de la main (p.48 and p.142), Tetin (p.42), Contreblason du pied (p.154) ), and the Ventre is so crudely depicted as to be scarcely recognisable.

The actual woodcuts, although not repeated exactly from edition to edition (except, of course, in the two Angelier editions, and for the three blocks from the Bodley Hecatomphile which seem to have been used again by the Veuve Bonfons), are, for the most part closely imitated from one edition to another. The Main, for example, in both the Bodley and the Strasbourg Hecatomphile is practically indistinguishable, although close inspection shows that the two are not quite identical. One is very evidently imitated from the other, however. Even in the 1539 edition of the Hecatomphile the position of the hand follows that of the two earlier editions - the right hand stretched forward with the palm facing, and the thumb pointing upwards. Only the decorative cuff of the two earlier
editions is missing in 1539. Angelier shows some slight originality in his two editions by reversing the illustration. His block depicts a left hand. But even here the conventional position of the outstretched hand, palm forward and thumb uppermost, is observed. Angelier revives also the ornate cuff edging of the Bodley and Strasbourg Hecatomphile, producing, however, a considerably more complicated sleeve in this later edition than had his predecessors. In the Veuve Bonfons edition, as we have seen, the ornateness of Angelier's woodcut is again lost, and the woodcut of the original Bodley Hecatomphile is once again revived.

Certainly, of all these editions, that produced in 1543 by Angelier is by far the fullest and the best, both from the point of view of the text and the standard of the printing in general.

* * *

VI Modern editions of the Blasons anatomiques


ii) Blasons, poésies anciennes, ed. Méon, Paris, 1807, 8°

iii) S'ensuivent les blasons anatomiques du corps féminin, ensemble les contre-blasons... pour Charles l'Angelier, ed. Gay, Amsterdam, 1866, 12°
iv) **Blasons anatomiques du corps féminin**, ed. Van Bever, Paris, 1907, 8° (This edition is based upon the 1550 Angelier edition, but it does not contain the contreblasons)

v) **Blasons anatomiques**, ed. Guégan, Paris, 1931, 8° (This edition is based on the 1543 Angelier edition, referring also to those of 1536, 1539 and 1550)


vii) **Blasons du corps féminin**, ed. Lambert, Paris, 1967, 8° (This edition is based on Mignon and the 1550 Angelier edition. It omits the contreblasons)
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