

THE SUBVERSION OF NEOPLATONIC THEORY IN CLAUDE LE JEUNE'S
OCTONAIRES DE LA VANITÉ ET INCONSTANCE DU MONDE

by

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Dedication

To Eric and Katherine

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The Subversion of Neoplatonic Theory in Claude Le Jeune's
Octonaires de la vanité et inconstance du monde

Abstract

by

BRIAN MACGILVRAY

Claude Le Jeune's *Octonaires de la vanité et inconstance du monde* (1606), a collection of thirty-six Calvinist *chansons spirituelles*, are a neglected source of evidence relevant to his compromised position as a Huguenot in a French academic milieu controlled by Catholic royalists. Le Jeune is best known for his association with the Neoplatonic *Académie de poésie et de musique* (est. 1570) as a composer of *musique mesurée à l'antique*, a homophonic style strictly governed by poetic meter. In the *Octonaires*, he creates metric disorder by vacillating continually between *musique mesurée* and the imitative style that it was meant to replace. He also appears to select *musique mesurée* in a targeted way for verses that undermine its cosmological purpose, which was to represent and facilitate the Neoplatonic doctrines of universal harmonic movement (*harmonia mundi*) and divine reunion. Along with the circumstances of Le Jeune's career, the work's broader theological and philosophical context gives it the appearance of a retrospective critique, begun at the end of his life and after the Academy had been disbanded.

This study draws new attention to the musical ramifications of a shift in ontological thought during the Renaissance: away from Platonic dualism and toward a

Neoplatonic theory of cosmic unity and divine extension into matter, which became exposed thereby to the indictment of vanity. The study also identifies a hitherto overlooked connection between the poetic genre of “*octonaires*” on vanity and a contrary use of that term in sixteenth-century Neoplatonic and Hermetic literature. Both contexts relate the term to Psalm 119 (the *psaume octonaire*); in the latter context, the *octonaire* describes metaphysical passage through the octave and, by analogy, the philosopher’s ascent from the terrestrial to the eighth sphere – a vain affront to Calvinist sensibilities.

Introduction

The Subversion of Neoplatonic Theory in Claude Le Jeune's *Octonaires de la vanité et inconstance du monde*

In English contexts, the Latin word *vanitas* designates a category of early-modern visual art that warned against excessive attachment to the world, because life is fleeting. Unlike its cognate, vanity, which usually refers to excessive self-regard, *vanitas* means in the first place “emptiness.” It was used in a cosmological sense to describe a universal absence of value in the absence of material stability, under the assumption that our moral bearings should be determined by the hostile conditions we are born into. One antonym of *vanitas* would be *veritas* or truth, which cannot be embodied in a world of ephemeral representations. For a visual artist, to represent emptiness as such would be short work, and rhetorically ineffective; the choice instead was to sport with paradox by creating lasting reminders of impermanence. In painting, the preferred techniques were the still-life and the *trompe l’oeil* – the falsely “realistic” depiction of a nonexistent stability.¹

For those acquainted with early-modern history, the older word *vanitas* should also evoke a perspective toward the future that cannot be recaptured: the reaction of religious conservatives, or of anyone opposed to change and fearful of uncertainty, against the paradigm shift into the modern era; the self-consciously ambivalent worldview of the well-educated, after Copernicus but before the surrender to Kepler and

¹ See Appendix 2 for a discussion of these techniques in *vanitas* still-lives.

Galileo, during the decline of Aristotle but before the arrival of Newton, whose physics put heliocentrism on a solid footing. The new cosmological doubt of the sixteenth century arrived inopportunistically during an unprecedented schism that had divided opinions on the correct path to salvation from the world. While airy speculations on “what kind of a world” had pervaded philosophical discourse since the Middle Ages, in the mid-sixteenth century the debate intensified as it was swept into the political and military arenas. Amid this upheaval, the old Biblical and Greek warnings against the vanity of the world could assume greater urgency: for many, to see the medieval worldview unravel was to know that the end was near. References to the “*vanitas* tradition,” here and elsewhere, are meant to include both the artistic genre and the apocalyptic frame of mind.

In these terms, the apprehension of vanity that informed its artistic treatment can be understood, but not, from our distance, re-experienced through the art, which appeared during the first confrontation with new epistemic uncertainty. If many questions then raised have never been satisfactorily resolved, they are at least by now much older and more familiar. For a better historical understanding, we should look beyond the theme’s visual treatment to its extensive documentation in writing. Yet in most cases, to write about vanity was to reach for symbolic imagery, and to view such imagery was perhaps to get nearer to the idea than words could. But whatever the medium, the specter of vanity was raised for a didactic purpose prior to the sensual: to remind sinners of their mortality and subjection to original sin, to guide their thoughts away from an inconstant and deceptive earthly existence and toward eternity.

Vanitas art has attracted some musicologists with its frequent allusions to music, a morally suspect pastime and a conventional metaphor of death and transience.² This still-life by Simon Renard, for example, is one of countless paintings where a musical instrument jostles with other symbolic artifacts in the presence of a *memento mori*:



Figure I.1: Simon Renard de Saint-André, *Vanitas Still-Life* (mid-17th c.)

But little attention has yet been paid to the theme of vanity *in* music. To begin with, because vanity was considered an existential fact, much like God or original sin, it must

² On musical iconography in *vanitas* art, see for example Linda P. Austern, “‘All things in this world is but the musick of inconstancie’: Music, Sensuality and the Sublime in Seventeenth-Century *Vanitas* Imagery,” in *Art and Music in the Early Modern Period: Essays in Honor of Franca Trinchieri Camiz*, ed. Katherine A. McIver (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2003), 287-332. The notion of music as a symbol of death and transience long predates the sixteenth century. In the seventh century, before the widespread use of music notation, Isidore of Seville wrote that “unless sounds are remembered by man, they perish, for they cannot be written down”; quoted from the *Etymologiarum* in Oliver Strunk (ed.), *Source Readings in Music History: From Classical Antiquity through the Romantic Era* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950), 93. Notation provided a new means of remembering but did not disprove Isidore’s point. Similarly, in the *Ars novae musicae* (1319), Jean de Muris observes that “while [sound] exists when it is made, it no longer exists once it has been made”; quoted in *op. cit.*, 172.

have entered musical practice subliminally. Many artworks represent God, while many more do not but proceed from an intuition of God. In this sense, the truest musical representation or experience of vanity would perhaps be confined to live performance and thus unrecoverable. Nevertheless, we might ask what deliberate procedures were brought to bear, in parallel with *vanitas* imagery of skulls and hourglasses raining on the parade of worldly pleasures. Such artworks typically display a virtuosic illusionism, which aided the religious reception of the message along with the critical reception of the medium. Was *vanitas* music similarly conceived?

Music's ambiguous reputation as both a vain pastime and a reminder of cosmic harmony could explain what appears to be an overall scarcity of examples in this subgenre. On the premise that music is vain, music about vanity could seem redundant, although this was not an irony to deter painters from exposing the vanity of their own craft. The present study grew out of an interest in the contradiction raised by the second premise: that a musical representation of vanity could be heard to challenge the ancient belief in *harmonia mundi*. This would seem to be an unusual path for a musician to take, since the belief in *harmonia mundi* bore directly – not indirectly, as many assume – on music as craft. Did the Biblical pre-condition of vanity also negate the universal harmony? Did the collapsing medieval worldview make this negation more apparent? If so, would music be suitable for representing the collapse? An unusual and little-studied work by Claude Le Jeune, the *Octonaires de la vanité et inconstance du monde*, suggests an affirmative answer to each of these questions.

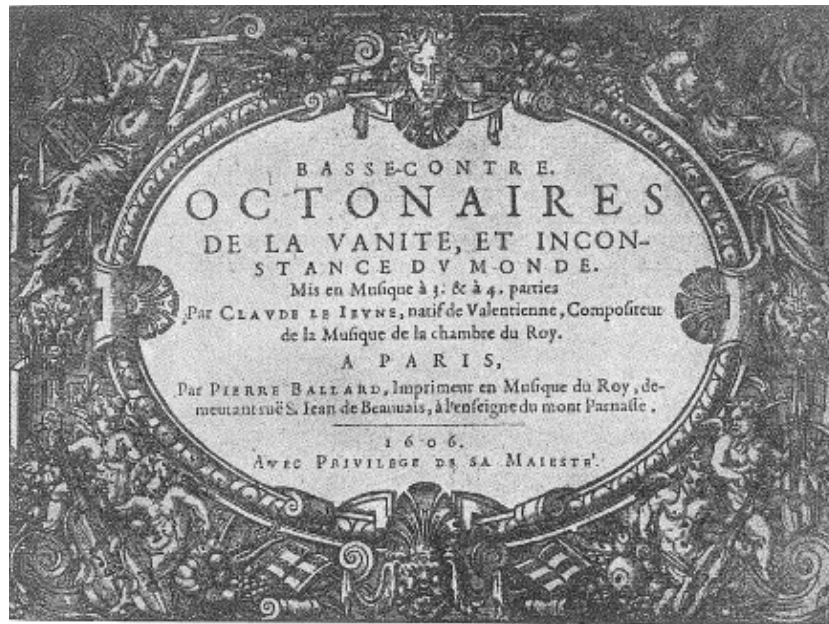


Figure 1.2: part-book frontispiece from the original 1606 edition of Le Jeune's *Octonaires*

The *Octonaires* are a collection of thirty-six *chansons spirituelles* that were first published by Pierre Ballard in 1606, having been brought to light by Le Jeune's sister, Cécile, only after his death in 1600.³ Each chanson sets an eight-line verse or *huitain* (whence the name *Octonaires*) by one of three Huguenot poets, and the whole collection is arranged as a twelve-part modal cycle in the system of Gioseffo Zarlino.⁴ For each

³ Claude Le Jeune, *Octonaires de la vanité, et inconstance du monde* (Paris: Pierre Ballard, 1606). On the Protestant *chanson spirituelle*, see Anne Ullberg, *Au Chemin de salvation: La Chanson spirituelle réformée (1533-1678)* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2008).

⁴ The poets are Antoine de la Roche Chandieu (1534-1591), a theologian, diplomat, and author of the majority of the settings; Simon Goulart (1543-1628), also a theologian and one of the most prolific writers of the age; and Joseph Du Chesne (ca. 1544-1609), a Paracelsian alchemist who became *physicien ordinaire du roi* to Henri IV in 1598. Cf. Antoine de Chandieu, *Méditations sur le Psalme XXXII* (Geneva: Guillaume Laimarie, 1583), which includes the fifty *Octonaires* as an appendix; Simon Goulart, *Treize octonaires de la Vanité du monde*, published as an appendix to Pierre Poupo's *La Muse chrestienne* (Geneva, 1585); Joseph Du Chesne, *La Marocosmie, ou, De la folie, vanité, et inconstance du monde, avec deux chants doriques de l'amour céleste et du souverain bien* (Lyon: Jean de Tournes, 1583); see also the modern edition by Lucile Gibert (Geneva: Droz, 2009). Gibert explains Du Chesne's invention of the title *Morocosmie*: "forgé sur les mots grecs *moria* ('folie') et *cosmos* ('monde')" (33).

Le Jeune's *Octonaires* begin with C (Ionian) and not A (Aeolian) as in Glarean's system. Le Jeune abandoned Greek nomenclature in favor of numeric; see Isabelle His, "Das *Dodecacorde* von Claude Le Jeune (1598) im Kontext der französischen Rezeption der Traktate von Glarean und Zarlino," in *Heinrich*

mode, Le Jeune composed two chansons for four voices and one for three voices; but in a prefatory letter to the first edition, Cécile Le Jeune writes that five- and six-voice settings had also been planned, which presumably would have doubled the collection's size to seventy-two chansons.⁵ A dearth of published analyses of the *Octonaires* mirrors the fact that Henry Expert's edition for the *Monuments de la musique française au temps de la Renaissance*, now nearly a century old, is still the only complete modern transcription in

Glarean oder, die Rettung der Musik aus dem Geist der Antike?, ed. Nicole Schwindt (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2006), 237-62.

⁵ See Isabelle His, *Claude Le Jeune (v. 1530-1600): Un Compositeur entre Renaissance et baroque* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2000), 97-98. In an appendix (463), His quotes Cécile Le Jeune's letter of dedication to Jacques de Constans ("A Monsieur, Monsieur Constans, Gouverneur pour le Roy en l'Isle et Chasteau de Marans"):

MONSIEUR,

L'intention de feu mon frere ayant esté de dedier ses œuvres à ses plus affidez amis, et sachant, tant par l'obligation qu'il vous avoit, que par l'amitié que vous luy portiez, combien il faisoit d'estat de vous: je ne puis attendre plus long temps à m'acquiter de ce devoir: et partant mets au jour sous vostre nom les Octonaires de la vanité et inconstance du monde, qu'il avoit mises en Musique peu au paravant sa mort: œuvre petit en aparence, mais grand en effect. Il y a seulement trois pieces de chaque mode, à trois et à quatre parties, esquelles il a non seulement amassé tout ce que la science et l'industrie precedente ont fait cognoistre de beau et de rare; mais y a adjousté tant et tant de traicts, si nouveaux, si excellens, j'ose dire si inimitables (ce mot me soit pardonné) qu'on jugera par cest eschantillon, combien, s'il eust vescu, la piece entiere eust esté pleine de perfection. Car son intention n'estoit pas de s'arrester là, mais d'y joindre encore trois pieces de chacun Mode à cinq et à six parties, dont il avoit projecté les desseins si hauts, qu'il asseuroit, que tout ce qu'il avoit fait au paravant de plus beau, ne paroistroit rien au prix. Il n'a pas pleu à Dieu qu'il en soit venu à bout. Ce pendant, puis que vous ne pouvez plus l'aymer vivant, continuez, je vous supplie, à aymer et sa memoire et ses œuvres: et aidez à defendre l'un et l'autre de la calomnie des ignorants, lesquels (quoy qu'ils puissent dire) y trouveront toujours plus à apprendre, qu'à reprendre: et moy, honorez moy de la continuation de vos bonnes graces, et me tenez

MONSIEUR, pour
Vostre tres-humble servante,

CECILE LE JEUNE

print.⁶ Yet despite this neglect, the *Octonaires* have been recognized as the most noteworthy achievement of the composer in his prime.⁷

Le Jeune, widely regarded during his life as the leading composer in France, is remembered today primarily for his collaboration with the Academy of Poetry and Music (*Académie de poésie et de musique*). This was the first of the French royal academies, established in 1570 by Charles IX at the instigation of the queen mother, Catherine de' Medici, later reconstituted at the Louvre as the Palace Academy (*Académie du palais*) under Charles's younger brother Henri III (r. 1574-1589), and prematurely disbanded in the late 1580s amid the outbreak of the War of the Three Henrys.⁸ The appearance of Le Jeune's *Octonaires* nearly two decades later was still well within the term of the

⁶ Claude Le Jeune, *Octonaires de la vanité et inconstance du monde*, ed. Henry Expert, *Monuments de la musique française au temps de la Renaissance*, vols. 1 and 8 (New York: Broude Brothers, n.d./Paris: Maurice Senart, 1924 [vol. 1, modes I-VIII] and 1928 [vol. 8, modes IX-XII]). Expert bases his edition on the original 1606 publication (cited in note 3). A more recent partial edition of the *Octonaires* (modes I-IX) includes English translations: Claude Le Jeune, *Reflections on the vanity and inconstancy of the world*, ed. Albert Seay ([New York]: MCA Music, 1967-69).

⁷ Kenneth J. Levy, "The Chansons of Claude Le Jeune" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1955), 247: "[t]he *Octonaires* are, in a way, Le Jeune's most perfect works." Levy does not discuss them in detail as they "fall outside the principal scope of this discussion." Walter Blankenburg, "Church Music in Reformed Europe," trans. Hans Heinsheimer, in Friedrich Blume, *Protestant Church Music: A History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974), 545, calls the *Octonaires* Le Jeune's "most mature and most beautiful creation"; cf. His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 316: "les *Octonaires*...représentent avec certitude l'aboutissement du style de Le Jeune juste avant sa mort."

⁸ On the history of the early French Academy, see Frances A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Warburg, 1947); Édouard Frey, *Origines de l'Académie française: L'Académie des derniers Valois, Académie de poésie et de musique 1570-1576, Académie du palais 1576-1585, d'après des documents nouveaux et inédits* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1969); D. P. Walker, "The Aims of Baïf's *Académie de poésie et de musique*," *Journal of Renaissance and Baroque Music* [*Musica Disciplina*] 1 (1946-47): 91-100; Robert J. Sealy, *The Palace Academy of Henri III* (Geneva: Droz, 1981). I follow Yates's view of three distinct entities in a single continuous academic movement after ca. 1550: the group of poets and disciples of Jean Daurat known as the *Pléiade*, the *Académie de poésie et de musique* founded by Baïf and Courville, and the *Académie du palais* under the stewardship of Guy du Faur de Pibrac. On Baïf, see also Mathieu Augé-Chiquet, *La Vie, les idées et l'œuvre de Jean-Antoine de Baïf* (Paris: Hachette, 1909). A number of academicians lived and retained their influence into the seventeenth century, but the official institution was defunct by Henri III's death in 1589, and was not reinstated until 1635 (in significantly altered form) as the *Académie française* under Cardinal Richelieu.

Academy's strongest musical influence, which extended into the 1610s through a series of publications held in check by civil war. It will be my argument here that as representations of universal vanity, the *Octonaires* responded to and subverted the musical and religious philosophy of the Academy, which rested on a Neoplatonic conception of universal harmony.

The co-directors of the first Academy, the poet Jean-Antoine de Baïf and the musician Joachim Thibault de Courville, wanted a new safe haven for open-minded inquiry and collegial debate amid the great unraveling of the French wars of religion, and so they welcomed the participation of Calvinist Huguenots such as Le Jeune. But Baïf, the Academy's leading spokesperson, also had a polemical desire to reform French music according to Neoplatonic ideals and under the close supervision of the Catholic monarchy. In Baïf's vision, the Academy would be the incubator of a new homophonic vocal genre called *musique mesurée à l'antique*: a revival of the ancient Greek practice of uniting music to poetry by allowing the poetic meter to determine the musical rhythm.⁹ Along with homophony, *musique mesurée* is defined by the elongation of accented syllables to twice the length of short syllables – a consciously artificial departure from spoken French, which, unlike Greek, uses stress accents rather than durational accents. Despite what its name might suggest, *musique mesurée* also excluded the possibility of consistent regular meter, because accented syllables typically fall in different places from

⁹ On *musique mesurée*, see Yates, *The French Academies*, chapters 3-4; D. P. Walker, "Some Aspects and Problems of 'musique mesurée à l'antique': The Rhythm and Notation of *musique mesurée*," *Musica Disciplina* 4/2-4 (1950): 163-86; André Verchaly, "Le Tempo dans la *musique mesurée à l'antique*," *Fontes artis musicae* 12/2-3 (1965): 202-04; Jacques Chailley, "La Scansion des vers français dans la *musique 'mesurée à l'antique'*," in *Histoire, humanisme et hymnologie: Mélanges offerts au professeur Édith Weber*, ed. Pierre Guillot and Louis Janbou (Paris: Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1997), 233-39.

one line of verse to the next. An example of the unmetered quality of *musique mesurée* will be given at the beginning of Chapter 1.

Under a spell of humanist idealism, Baïf invested *musique mesurée* with extra-musical significance, in the belief that its ritual performance would create the spiritual conditions for overcoming religious disagreements and re-establishing the peace. The Academy's leading music philosopher, Pontus de Tyard, articulated the preceding cosmic rationale, that only properly "measured" music would bring the soul into harmony with a macrocosm in perfect equilibrium.¹⁰ Communal stability thus began with the spiritual improvement of the individual, and *musique mesurée* served not only to represent but also to channel the universal harmony through composition and into performance, and from there into the mind and heart of the listener.

As a prominent composer of *musique mesurée*, Le Jeune has always been linked by professional association to the Neoplatonic philosophy of the Academy, while the Academy itself has been viewed (correctly) as a middle ground between two ideological extremes: on one side the more militant Huguenots, and on the other side the ultra-

¹⁰ Tyard advocates a union or marriage of music and poetry in his Neoplatonic dialogue, *Solitaire second* (1555); see the modern edition by Cathy M. Yandell (Geneva: Droz, 1980), 214: "si l'intention de Musique semble estre de donner tel air à la parole que tout escoutant se sente passionné, et se laisse tirer à l'affection du Poëte, celui qui scet proprement accommoder une voix seule me semble mieux atteindre à sa fin aspirée, vu que la Musique figurée le plus souvent ne rapporte aux oreilles autre chose qu'un grand bruit, duquel vous ne sentez aucune vive efficace. Mais la simple et unique voix, coulée doucement, et continuée selon le devoir de sa Mode choisie pour le merite des vers, vous ravit la part qu'elle veut. Aussi consistoit en ce seul moyen la plus ravissante energie des anciens Poëtes Lyriques qui, mariant la Musique à la Poésie (comme ils estoient nez à l'une et à l'autre) chantoient leurs vers, et rencontroient souvent l'effect de leur desir, tant la simplicité bien observée aux Modes de chanter est doüée d'une secrette et admirable puissance." Tyard uses much of the rest of the dialogue to explain music and poetry in cosmological terms as facilitators of spiritual ascent. On the origins of the academic goal of uniting music and poetry, see D. P. Walker, "Musical Humanism in the 16th and Early 17th Centuries," *Music Review* 2/1-3 (1941): 1-14, 111-21, 220-27, 288-308, and 3/1 (1942): 55-71; John McClelland, "Measuring Poetry, Measuring Music: From the *rhétoriqueurs* to the *Pléiade*," in *Poetry and Music in the French Renaissance*, ed. Jeanice Brooks et al (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge French Colloquia, 2001), 17-32.

Catholics, who were organized into a Holy League in 1576 by Henri I de Lorraine, the Duke of Guise. François Lesure and D. P. Walker write that “[i]n general it may be supposed that Le Jeune accepted the main tenets of the Academy, since he wrote a great quantity of *musique mesurée*.”¹¹ Without disputing the conventional view of Le Jeune as a political and religious moderate, I would emphasize here the ideological rift that was papered over by the academic desire for compromise, and Le Jeune’s own harrowing experience – he nearly fell victim to political murder – as a member of an increasingly persecuted and marginalized group.¹² The circumstances of his career and the demands of his Calvinist faith lend plausibility to the musical and poetic evidence of subversion that I have found in the *Octonaires*. So too does the widening cosmological debate to which the work belonged. The Copernican theory of 1543 and the collapse of Aristotelian physics after new astronomical discoveries in the 1570s both had potentially fatal consequences for Neoplatonic metaphysics, which rested on the assumptions of geocentrism,

¹¹ D. P. Walker and François Lesure, “Claude Le Jeune and *musique mesurée*,” *Musica Disciplina* 3 (1949): 167-68. On Le Jeune and *musique mesurée*, see also Yates, *The French Academies*, 54ff.; idem, “Poésie et musique dans les ‘Magnificences’ au mariage du duc de Joyeuse, Paris, 1581,” in *Musique et poésie au XVI^e siècle*, ed. Jean Jacquot (Paris: CNRS, 1954), 241-64; Pierre Bonniffet, *Un Ballet démasqué: L’Union de la musique au verbe dans le Printemps de Jean Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1988); idem, “La Musique mesurée profane de Claude Le Jeune,” in *Claude Le Jeune et son temps en France et dans les Etats de Savoie, 1530-1600*, ed. Marie-Thérèse Bouquet-Boyer and Pierre Bonniffet (Bern: Peter Lang, 1996), 46-63; Iain Fenlon, “Claude Le Jeune and the Greeks,” in the same volume, 5-15; Donat R. Lamothe, “Claude Le Jeune: Les Pseaumes en vers mesurez,” in the same volume, 64-69; Isabelle His, “Claude Le Jeune et le rythme prosodique: la mutation des années 1570,” *Revue musicologie* 79/2 (1993): 201-26; idem, “Claude Le Jeune et la publication de ses airs mesurés,” in Brooks et al (eds.), *Poetry and Music in the French Renaissance*, 241-80; Jean Vignes, “Jean-Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune: Histoire et enjeux d’une collaboration,” *Revue de musicologie* 89/2 (2003): 267-95.

¹² Vignes, “Jean-Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune,” 269, refers to cooperation in spite of disagreement: “Quant à l’opposition confessionnelle qui pourrait ils [Baïf et Le Jeune] séparer, elle ne semble pas un obstacle insurmontable...” Cf. Michel Jeanneret, *Poésie et tradition biblique au XVI^e siècle: Recherches stylistiques sur les paraphrases des “Psaumes”, de Marot à Malherbe* (Paris: José Corti, 1969), 307: “Claude Le Jeune surtout occupe une place importante, qui, collaborateur de Baïf en même temps qu’auteur de mélodies pour le psautier huguenot, protégé par des protestants et des catholiques, comptant la plupart de ses amis parmi les ‘politiques’, représente bien l’orientation d’un milieu où l’antagonisme confessionnel, malgré la rigueur du temps, est singulièrement atténué.”

anthropocentrism, and an incorruptible superlunary region. The *Octonaires* provide, in my view, a musical and poetic register of the decay of these assumptions.¹³ Their Calvinist poetry contradicts the increasingly vulnerable Neoplatonic worldview in plain language, while the music does the same in the abstract manner appropriate to it.

Le Jeune's musical approach to subversion can be summarized briefly as follows.

Neoplatonist philosophers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries characterized the doctrine of *harmonia mundi* in such a way that its musical representation would fall logically into the domain of rhythm and meter, and *musique mesurée* was just such a means of representation. By aligning the individual voice parts through poetic and rhythmic unison, the style was thought to mirror the control of the material elements by the divine Word or *logos*. The genre was conceived, in other words, as a reflection of

¹³ The question of when and how the belief in *harmonia mundi* began to unravel in artistic representations has been applied to early-modern literature more satisfactorily than to music. For example, C. S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1964), defines the "Medieval Model of the Universe" as a virtual work of literature to which innumerable authors contributed (mainly by dint of their subscribing to it), and which "was not totally and confidently abandoned until the end of the seventeenth century" (13). Lewis contends that the Model remained consistent despite the evolution of ideas – that it "ignores even the great changes from a predominantly Platonic to a predominantly Aristotelian outlook and the direct conflict between Nominalists and Realists. It does so because these things, however important for the historian of thought, have hardly any effect on the literary level. The Model, as regards those elements in it which poets and artists could utilise, remained stable" (13). Yet the model, as a cosmography, did not require one to choose between Plato and Aristotle. And it *was* eventually discarded – an outcome in some ways determined by new facts, particularly, in Lewis's view, in astronomy and biology. Once discarded, or fundamentally destabilized, literary representations of it would begin to seem old-fashioned. But Lewis still holds that "[t]here is no question...of the old Model's being shattered by the inrush of new phenomena. The truth would seem to be the reverse; that when changes in the human mind produce a sufficient disrelish of the old Model and a sufficient hankering for some new one, phenomena to support that new one will obediently turn up" (221).

Along with the new astronomy, which "triumphed not because the case for the old became desperate, but because the new was a better tool," Lewis cites a change in biology "arguably more important – from a devolutionary to an evolutionary scheme; from a cosmology in which it was axiomatic that 'all perfect things precede all imperfect things' to one in which it is axiomatic that 'the starting point (*Entwicklungsgrund*) is always lower than what is developed'" (220). The devolutionary scheme could of course describe either the Neoplatonic or Biblical viewpoint, between which a tension is apparent on the question of return to a prior perfect state. To deny the possibility of human agency in this return is, in effect, to accept a different and lower starting point, and thus to anticipate the evolutionary scheme, which Lewis notices as far back as Leibniz.

harmonia mundi, and in particular as a superior reflection to the conventional imitative style that it was meant to replace. In the *Octonaires*, Le Jeune introduces the metric irregularity of *musique mesurée* into a primarily imitative context, with the result that neither style sounds secure. Listeners accustomed to hearing symmetrical points of imitation governed by a regular underlying meter would have had this expectation repeatedly thwarted, as Le Jeune allows the asymmetrical prosody of *musique mesurée* to determine both the homophonic passages and, in many cases, the individual lines of imitation as well. Furthermore, a close look at the verses that he has singled out for treatment in *musique mesurée* reveals a consistently ironic stance toward the style's philosophical rationale.

By Le Jeune's death in 1600, it had long been a common practice to alternate between homophonic and imitative textures for rhetorical effect, while some genres, such as the Parisian chanson that emerged in the 1520s, were predominantly homophonic. Especially after the Council of Trent (1545-63), a growing concern for rescuing music's poetic content from densely contrapuntal writing prompted a number of different reactions. Whereas composers such as Palestrina, Lassus, Victoria, and Byrd pursued a synthesis of imitative skill and homophonic clarity, and whereas the Florentine Camerata settled on monody, the French Academy under Baïf moved to preserve the aesthetic appeal of multi-part harmony while placing it under the strict control of poetic meter. Because Baïf wanted *musique mesurée* to replace imitative polyphony altogether, Le Jeune's decision to mingle the two styles in the *Octonaires* assumes an ideological significance. That he meant to invoke *musique mesurée* in particular, rather than to utilize homophony in a more anonymous way, is betrayed by his consistent adherence to the

style's distinctive prosodic character, as the many examples cited here will illustrate. Le Jeune's biographer Isabelle His has shown that *musique mesurée* provided a "formidable stimulus" to his compositional approach after 1570: as a standalone genre according to Baïf's prescription, as a homophonic contrast to imitative polyphony, and as a prosodic technique applied to individual voice parts.¹⁴ In other words, he both upheld pure *musique mesurée* and used it freely to variegate or enliven his polyphonic textures elsewhere, in disregard of the academic rule of exclusivity. But despite the style's broad influence on his later music, I have found nothing comparable to his manipulation of it in the *Octonaires*, nor in any other French music of the time.

In Chapter 1, I will begin by providing several examples of Le Jeune's unusual treatment of *musique mesurée*, then address the work's musical, political, and literary

¹⁴ Isabelle His, "Claude Le Jeune: Le Bilingue," *Revue de musicologie* 89/2 (2003): 249-52: "En dehors de ses pièces sur vers mesurés, Le Jeune continue bien évidemment à composer 'normalement', sur vers rimés, mais avec une toute autre approche. Motets, chansons, éventuellement même sa *Missa ad placitum*, se trouvent 'contaminés' par une lecture d'un type nouveau: la lecture prosodique"; idem, "Claude Le Jeune et le rythme prosodique," 213: "Le Jeune transfère dans un cadre contrapuntique et sur des vers non-mesurés...une scansion issue des recherches de l'Académie de Baïf. Il semble que l'attention portée à la longueur des syllabes soit devenue, au moment où il écrit ces chansons à quatre voix, un réflexe: il ne peut plus faire autrement"; idem, *Claude Le Jeune*, 316: "on retrouve bien [dans l'*Octonaires*] l'écriture claire et rythmique déjà relevée dès les chansons à quatre voix des *Melanges* de 1585 puis dans les psaumes du *Dodecacorde*, synthèse unique entre contrepoint traditionnel et scansion de type 'mesuré à l'antique', bien qu'appliquée à des vers rimés tout à fait ordinaires." Cf. Anne Harrington Heider (ed.), preface to Claude Le Jeune, *Dodecacorde: Comprising Twelve Psalms of David Set to Music According to the Twelve Modes*, Recent Researches in Music of the Renaissance, vols. 74-76 (Madison: A-R Editions, 1989), 1:xi: "The homophonic passages in the *Dodecacorde*...are audibly distinct from typical homophonic writing because of the irregularity of the scansion and the absence of suspensions. For these reasons it is fairly accurate, and certainly simpler, to refer to the homophonic writing in the *Dodecacorde* as *musique mesurée*." Lamothe, "Claude Le Jeune, le psautier Huguenot et la musique religieuse à la cour pendant les règnes de Charles IX, Henri III et Henri IV" (PhD diss., Université de Strasbourg, 1980), 286, argues that in the *Octonaires*, "[l]e choix de l'une ou l'autre forme d'écriture musicale [i.e., homophony or imitative polyphony] nous paraît dicté par une certaine rhétorique musicale calquée sur les figures de rhétorique impliquées dans les textes...en confiant, par exemple, à la polyphonie imitative ce qui correspond au premier pendant d'un parallélisme: apostrophe, interrogation, comparaison, et en laissant au contrepoint note contre note le soin d'exprimer le deuxième pendant: conclusion, apophtegme, affirmation de doctrine ou de prière." He does not connect the homophonic passages to *musique mesurée* or draw any contrast with Neoplatonic thought. One could also point to instances where the juxtaposition of styles does not appear to reflect his rhetorical model.

contexts, which in my view corroborate a subversive reading. In Chapters 2 through 4, I will seek to clarify the early-modern evolution of both the *vanitas* tradition and the Neoplatonic doctrine of *harmonia mundi*, in order to show how unacceptably dissonant the latter should have become to Calvinist ears. In these chapters there will be more occasions for citing music examples that echo the controversies at stake. The doctrine of *harmonia mundi* in particular, while familiar to historians, requires further clarification as it wends its way through the upheavals of the Renaissance and Reformation. Because of the doctrine's staying power over two millennia, it provides a convenient touchstone for establishing links between ancient and early-modern thought, but this continuity also makes it easy to overlook or misconstrue its transformation in response to new scientific theories. Most disruptively at first, but also perhaps most deceptively, it needed to adjust to the reintroduction of Aristotelian natural philosophy in the thirteenth century. A general musicological assumption has been that notwithstanding Aristotle's denial of planetary sphere music, the doctrine of *harmonia mundi* remained conventional wisdom until the end of the Renaissance, but that in part because of this denial, it began to matter increasingly less to music theorists and composers. In fact, the literary evidence shows that *harmonia mundi* became not less relevant but rather more anthropocentric, with a progressively more unitary conception of the cosmic order. This evolution made the doctrine an open target for Protestant critique, and Le Jeune's *Octonaires* provide a good opportunity for reexamining it, in as much as they are opposed to its anthropocentric and salvific premises, and in as much as these premises had recently been applied directly to composition through *musique mesurée*. Against the Neoplatonic philosophy to be elaborated in the chapters to follow, the *Octonaires* uphold three central Calvinist tenets:

the limited purview of human reason, the determinative influence of original sin on human nature and the natural order, and (as a consequence) the denial of human agency in salvation. All three tenets are violated by the rationale behind *musique mesurée*, and Le Jeune may be shown to reinforce all three at the expense of *musique mesurée*.

Along with their subversive musical stance toward the Academy, these chansons may also be connected to a hitherto overlooked and contrary use of the word *octonaire*, which was a rarely used French cognate noun (that is, not only an adjective as its suffix suggests) of the Latin *octonarius*. In Neoplatonic and Hermetic texts that were newly translated into French in the late 1570s, *octonaire* is used as a symbol of *harmonia mundi* – more specifically, as a symbol of cyclical time and the musical link between the universe and eternity, which left open the door to autonomous spiritual ascent. Anyone who noticed this connection – the poetic *Octonaires* on vanity likewise appeared in the 1570s – would have recognized the contradictory signals. At the conclusion of this study in Chapter 5, I will describe the relationship of both kinds of *octonaire* to the French religious wars, and its musical dimension in the contest between Huguenots and Catholics over French vernacular psalmody.

I intend to show how Le Jeune represented vanity through music per se, that is, apart from the use of words. While he obviously depends on verbal content in the *Octonaires*, the assumption will be that he crafted a special musical vocabulary to reinforce the content. In my view, his overall stylistic approach betrays a greater concern for representing a fundamental viewpoint, which I would define as a cosmological viewpoint, than for illustrating specific poetic images. This is not to say that instances of tone-painting are not present: at times unmistakably, modal inflections, rhythmic figures,

meter changes, and textural contrasts may be related to the poetic imagery. But the emphasis here will be on a basic structural orientation.

Musical structure-as-rhetoric befits a topic like vanity, which addresses the nature of reality and the purpose and limitations of human existence. In the same structural light, the *Octonaires* may be understood as a rhetorical comment on the fractured state of polyphonic composition in late-Renaissance France. Or, a number of them may be interpreted as formal reactions to an increasingly uncertain apprehension of time – the abstract structure imposed onto the seamless continuity of experience, which philosophers continued to define in Aristotelian terms as the byproduct and measurement of movement, and which the discourse on vanity made one of its central preoccupations. References to horology are common in *vanitas* paintings, where an emphasis on time's inexorable passage mingles with a desire to undermine its precise measurement by ingenious instruments. The erratic rhythms or metric distortions typically associated with early "Baroque" music should be weighed against the new, scientific conception of time as a series of minute, evenly spaced intervals. While this conception may be seen to complement the longstanding priority of a musical tactus, it may also have caused the duration of the individual's lifespan to feel arbitrary or meaningless. Artistic expressions of vanity need to represent the phenomena that they would subvert, and from which they must therefore maintain an ironic distance. Music may accomplish this with respect to time by manipulating or disrupting our rational sense of it as it flows.

The early seventeenth century saw a French movement to correlate regular metric units with musical enjoyment: Nicolas Bergier devoted an entire treatise to rhythm conceived geometrically (*De la musique speculative*, ca. 1608), and René Descartes

raised the same idea to a first principle (*Compendium musicae*, 1618).¹⁵ This essentially classical ideal was to have significant ramifications for the coming age. In the late sixteenth century, music, time, and movement formed the core topics of an epochal cosmological debate, to which Le Jeune's *Octonaires* are implicitly respondent.

This study will be primarily an examination of conflicting ideas – musical, theological, and cosmological – as they manifested during Le Jeune's lifetime, and as they can be followed into his music and applied to what little we know of his musical and religious convictions, which doubtless would have evolved over time. Documentation of the latter, unfortunately, is very scarce; the historian can only regret, for example, the loss of a book on poetic meter that Marin Mersenne attributes to him.¹⁶ One could also wish for a clearer sense of the political dimension of Le Jeune's career choices, in as much as the Academy was enmeshed in politics along with philosophy and theology, and in as much as the *Octonaires* would have been politically received. I believe, however, that a subversive meaning could have been apprehended by listening to Le Jeune's innovative means of representing temporal doubt – a rationale that is basic to the *vanitas* tradition,

¹⁵ René Descartes, *Compendium of Music*, trans. Walter Robert, ed. Charles Kent ([Bloomington]: American Institute of Musicology, 1961), 13: "Time in sound must consist of equal parts, for these are perceived most easily...or it must consist of parts which are in a proportion of 1:2 or 1:3; this progression cannot be extended, for only these relations can be easily distinguished by the ear.... If time values were of greater inequality, the ear would not be able to recognize their differences without great effort." Descartes was not alone in prioritizing musical rhythm at this time; see also Bertrand Augst, "Descartes' Compendium of Music," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 26/1 (1965): 119-32; Wilhelm Seidel, "Descartes' Bemerkungen zur musikalische Zeit," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 27/4 (1970): 287-303. On Bergier's treatise, see Kate van Orden, *Music, Discipline, and Arms in Early Modern France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 83-87; and see the edition by Ekkehard Jost (Cologne: Arno Volk, 1970).

¹⁶ See Walker, "The Aims of Baïf's Académie," 91 n5. The citation is in Marin Mersenne, *Quaestiones celeberrimae in Genesim* (Paris: Sebastian Cramoisy, 1623), Qu. LVII.13 (col. 1632): "Alia exempla Claudius Iunior libro de versibus metricis suggerit, quem consulere poteris."

inimical to the Neoplatonic tradition, and ironically proximate to the metric tendencies of *musique mesurée*.

The interdisciplinary scope of projects like this one creates the significant challenge of providing necessary context and documentary support for readers from different backgrounds. The disciplines bearing on my research were thoroughly intertwined during the sixteenth-century age of syncretism, and I do not avoid digressing on certain matters that in my judgment were more central to the outlook of Le Jeune and his academic contemporaries than they might appear. In an effort to be comprehensive, I have also included at the end of this document two prose appendices (or, if one prefers, supplementary chapters). Appendix 1 gives a more detailed account of Neoplatonism – a conventional yet imprecise and potentially misleading label for an extremely broad range of ideas and beliefs – and of the diffuse influence of Neoplatonism among sixteenth-century Protestants, which some readers could reasonably view as a complicating factor to my argument. Appendix 2 examines the conceptual relationship between early-modern *vanitas* art and music, in response to the fact that present-day awareness of the tradition has been strongly determined by art historians. Specifically, I discuss the role of ambiguity, paradox, illusion, and deception, in order to argue that Le Jeune's techniques in the *Octonaires* and those found in *vanitas* art proceeded from a common ontological and epistemological viewpoint, one that demanded certainty about what is uncertain rather than a surrender to fundamental uncertainty. This important qualification can help us to discern polemical intent in artworks that appear to undermine themselves by representing vanity.

Chapter 1

Le Jeune's Musical *Vanitas*: Representing Inconstancy through *musique mesurée*

The full title of the *Octonaires* indicates a correlation between *vanité* and *inconstance*, which in turn suggests the appropriate manner of representation: to disrupt normal expectations with regard to either pitch or rhythm and meter, dispelling the means through which music creates the illusion of stability, balance, and orderly progression. Where we could expect a composer like Gesualdo to transgress modal boundaries, in the *Octonaires* Le Jeune concentrates instead on disorienting temporal effects, chiefly by exploiting the contrary metric tendencies of regular imitative counterpoint and irregular *musique mesurée*. In his traversal of the modes, he betrays no real interest in destabilizing any of them; rather, each mode provides a suitable platform for representing the indiscriminate nature of vanity in a universal disequilibrium.¹

As a basis for contextual analysis, I will begin here by examining how Le Jeune represents inconstancy – the material, temporal manifestation of vanity – through stylistic

¹ Elsewhere, Le Jeune demonstrates his skill at modal experimentation in the Italian humanist manner. See in particular the chansons, “Qu’est devenu ce bel œil” and “Povre cœur entourné,” which were meant to represent the ancient Greek chromatic genus (as distinct from the diatonic and enharmonic). On the Greek genera, see Walker, “Musical Humanism,” 114-21. Walker writes that “there is evidence that the composers of *musique mesurée* wrote and performed chromatic and enharmonic music, in which the precepts of the humanists were ruthlessly followed, so ruthlessly that one historian [Gilberti Genebrardi, d. 1584] attributes the failure of Baïf’s Academy to these experiments” (120). Le Jeune’s avoidance of extreme chromatic effects in the *Octonaires* could be explained by a desire to keep the focus on musical movement, rather than sully the work with a technique that had recently been discredited. The twelve diatonic modes were a suitably universal platform; see Richard Freedman, “Le Jeune’s *Dodecacorde* as a Site for Spiritual Meanings,” *Revue de musicologie* 89/2 (2003): 297-309.

ambivalence and the metric uncertainty that results. These immediate effects are easily demonstrated, whereas their ideological significance depends on a nuanced and, from our perspective, esoteric understanding of early-modern cosmological beliefs, alongside more mundane factors of the literary, musical, and political sort. In the second half of this chapter I will address the latter, which lead inevitably to the deeper metaphysical questions that preoccupied the leading intellectuals in Le Jeune's orbit. A concluding set of musical examples will highlight the composer's awareness of this essential connection between the mundane and the spiritual – a problem, that is, of how to maintain escapist transcendental hopes in a state of worldly material subjection – before I turn in the remaining chapters to the opposing viewpoints through which this problem was addressed. If *vanitas* music and art, as the products of human endeavor, were themselves automatically a part of the problem, composers and artists could still choose between moral alternatives in response, which they would convey through a particular manner of representation. A close look at the intellectual context of the *Octonaires* points to a desire not only to represent vanity and inconstancy but to subvert a particular moral alternative, using the language of *musique mesurée* to undermine its own spiritual rationale.

I. Inconstancy and *musique mesurée*

The prerequisite 2:1 ratio between accented longs and unaccented shorts in *musique mesurée* hinders the establishment of a regular duple meter. Neither can the style suggest triple meter for long, as the accent rule does not also dictate a repeating pattern of 2:1 or 1:2. In the following typical example from Le Jeune's *Printemps* (1603), the time

signature (C) only indicates a hierarchy of durational values and not a consistent beat hierarchy, which the shifting accent patterns do not allow:

Example 1.1: “Voicy le verd et beau May” from *Le Printemps*²

The image displays two systems of a musical score. The first system features four vocal staves: *Dessus* (Soprano), *Cinquieme (Second Dessus)* (Alto), *Haute-Contre* (Tenor), and *Sixieme (Taille)* (Bass). Each vocal line is in a different clef and key signature, all with a common time signature 'C'. The lyrics 'Voi - cy le verd et beau May' are written below each vocal staff. The piano accompaniment is shown in grand staff notation (treble and bass clefs) below the vocal staves. The second system continues the vocal parts with the lyrics 'Gon - vi - ant à tout sou - las,' and the piano accompaniment. The score illustrates how the common time signature 'C' can be used in various ways, leading to different interpretations of the beat hierarchy.

² Claude Le Jeune, *Le Printemps (1^{er} Fascicule)*, ed. Henry Expert, Monuments de la musique française au temps de la Renaissance, vol. 12 (Paris: Maurice Senart, n.d. [1913?]), 69.

The image displays two systems of musical notation, likely from a 16th-century manuscript. Each system consists of four staves. The first system's lyrics are "Tout est ri - ant, tout est gay," and the second system's lyrics are "Rô - zes et Lys vont flo - rir." The notation is in a single melodic line per voice part, with a keyboard accompaniment part at the bottom of each system. The lyrics are written below the staves, with hyphens indicating syllables spanning across notes.

In a modern transcription, adding bar lines (which Le Jeune did not use) at semibreve intervals would only serve to confuse, as the poetry determines a series of asymmetrical phrase lengths. Textual clarity is achieved at the expense of metric clarity.

To inject the prosodic rule of *musique mesurée* into a more conventional polyphonic setting was therefore to create a problem, if the desire was to maintain a regular meter. For example, in the *Dodecacorde*, a collection of polyphonic psalm-motets

published in 1598, Le Jeune exhibits an academic concern for lengthening accented syllables – not always in a 2:1 ratio with unaccented syllables, but still with the frequent result that individual voice parts are heavily syncopated. Against that tendency, he avoids applying the same prosodic rule to the *cantus firmi*, which are based on the psalm tones of the Genevan Psalter and which always proceed in unsyncopated duple meter. The syncopations in the other voices are thus disciplined by the psalm tones:

**Example 1.2: “De tes habits les plis ne sentent qu’ambre” from the
Dodecacorde, Psalm 45 (mode 3, part 4), mm. 1-7³**

Quatriemesme partie

De tes ha-bits les plis ne sen- tent qu'am- bre, les plis ne sen-
De tes ha- bits les plis ne sen- tent, les plis ne sen-
De tes ha- bits les plis ne sen- tent, ne sen- tent qu'am-
De tes ha-

- tent qu'am- bre, les plis ne sen- tent, ne sen- tent qu'am- bre, Et musc, et
- tent qu'am- bre, les plis ne sen- tent, ne sen- tent qu'am- bre, Et musc, et myrrh',
- bre, De tes ha- bits les plis ne sen- tent qu'ambr', Et musc, et myrrh', en al-
- bits les plis ne sen- tent qu'am- bre,

³ Le Jeune, *Dodecacorde* (ed. Heider), 1:68.

Example 1.3: “Escoute fill’ en beauté nom pareille” from the
Dodecacorde, Psalm 45 (mode 3, part 5), mm. 1-7⁴

Cinquiemesme partie

Es-cou- te fill' en beau- té nom- pa-reil- le, nom- pa-reil- le,
 Es-cou- te fill', (es- cou- te fill') en beau- té nom- pa- reil-
 Es- cou- te fill' en
 en beau- té nom- pa- reil- le, En- tens à moi, (en- tens à moi,) -
 le, en beau- té nom- pa-reil', En- tens à moi, en- tens
 beau- té nom- pa- reil- le, En- tens à moi, et

Despite their complex rhythmic textures, and despite occasional transitions from duple to triple meter and back, the motets of the *Dodecacorde* remain metrically stable throughout, thanks to the striding regularity of the psalm tones. One could speculate that by placing the academic style under this exterior control, Le Jeune wanted to represent the priority and surety of his Calvinist faith, while preserving the benefit of the lively rhythmic textures that the style could generate.

⁴ Le Jeune, *Dodecacorde* (ed. Heider), 1:69-70.

In the *Octonaires*, where no such anchor lends itself, the sense of meter is often doubly obscured: by layers of syncopation in the imitative sections and by fleeting interruptions of two-, three-, or four-part homophony, either in triple meter or syncopated duple meter.⁵ More often than not, Le Jeune seems to move into triple meter with an ear for the metric uncertainty that it will cause. The passages in homophonic duple meter, meanwhile, often produce through syncopations a momentary feeling of triple meter – an alternative way of obscuring the tactus. At times, passages like these abruptly follow passages in triple meter governed by a different rhythmic proportion, so that the listener is unable to reorient or adjust. The intention to imitate the unpredictable vicissitudes of life and the world would seem plain.

A revealing instance of awkward juxtaposition occurs in the second chanson of mode 3 (Dorian):

L'eau va vite en s'écoulant
 Plus vite le trait volant
 Et plus vite encore passe
 Le vent qui les nuës chasse.
 Mais de la joye mondaine
 La course est si tres soudaine,
 Qu'elle passe encor' devant
 L'eau, et le trait, et le vent.⁶

⁵ Le Jeune indicates triple meter with a "3" and with blackened semibreves that imply tactus equivalence and hence a slight lengthening of rhythmic values (semibreve = dotted semibreve). On proportional notation at this moment in history, see Denise Launay, "Les Rapports de tempo entre mesures binaires et mesures ternaires dans la musique française (1600-1650)," *Fontes artis musicae* 12/2-3 (1965): 166-94. Launay writes that "[l]a période de tâtonnements qui s'étend depuis le milieu du XVIème siècle jusqu'à la fin du XVIIème est un réalité, de ce point de vue, une période d'anarchie" (166). For wider consideration of the problem, see Carl Dahlhaus, "Zur Entstehung des modernen Taktsystems im 17. Jahrhundert," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 18/3-4 (1961): 223-40; Albert Seay, "The Setting of Tempo by Proportions in the Sixteenth Century," *The Consort* 37 (1981): 394-98; Gordon Paine, "Tactus, Tempo, and Praetorius," in *Five Centuries of Choral Music: Essays in Honor of Howard Swan*, ed. Gordon Paine (Stuyvesant, N.Y.: Pendragon, 1988), 167-215; Paul Brainard, "Proportional Notation in the Music of Schütz and his Contemporaries," *Current Musicology* 50 (1991): 21-46.

⁶ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:31-34.

*Water flows quickly,
 More quickly the flying dart,
 And quicker still goes
 The wind that chases the clouds.
 But for the joys of the world,
 The race is so very sudden
 That it passes even before
 The water, the dart, and the wind.*

In this chanson, transitions into and out of homophony are made very abruptly, as are the metric changes within homophony, where Le Jeune plays with the same dotted rhythm in different mensural proportions (duple against triple, as in mm. 18-21):⁷

Example 1.4: “L’eau va vite en s’écoulant” (III.2), mm. 1-25

Soprane
*

Contraltie
**

Tenor haute-contre

Baryton

L'eau va vi te en s'écoulant,
 L'eau va vi - te en s'écoulant, Plus vite

⁷ Barlines in the examples presented here are editorial and not Le Jeune's. My analyses would not be changed by removing them, whereas their presence (not to mention the view of the music in full score) serves to illustrate the metric effects under consideration.

Plus vi - te le trait vo - lant, le trait vo - lant, le trait volant

- te le trait vo - lant, le trait vo - lant, le trait vo - lant, le trait volant

Plus vi - te le trait vo - lant, le trait volant

Et plus

Et plus vi - te en - co - re pas - se Le vent, Le

Et plus vi - te en - co - re pas - se Le vent, Le

Et plus vi - te en - co - re pas - se Le vent, Le vent, Le

vi - te en - co - re passe, en - co - re pas - se Le vent, Le

vent qui les nu - ès chas - se, Le vent qui les nu -

vent qui les nu - ès chas - se, Le vent qui les nu

vent qui les nu - ès chas - se, Le vent qui les nu -

vent qui les nu - ès chas - se, Le vent qui les nu -

-ès chas - se. Mais de la joy - e mon-dai - ne La cour - se est si
 -ès chas - se. Mais de la joy - e mon-dai - ne La cour - se est si
 -ès chas - se. Mais de la joy - e mon-dai - ne La cour - se est si
 -es chas - se. Mais de la joy - e mon-dai - ne La cour - se est si

tres.soudai - ne,est si tres.soudai - ne, Qu'el - le pas - se en-cor' devant L'eau, et
 tres.soudai - ne,est si tres.soudai - ne, Qu'el - le pas - se en - cor' devant L'eau,
 tres.soudai - ne,est si tres.soudai - ne,
 tres.soudai - ne,est si tres.soudai - ne,

Le Jeune uses *musique mesurée* subversively here to represent “la joye mondaine,” which the poem characterizes as even less stable than the elemental world – the world, that is, that the style was meant to imitate. Note that slight rhythmic adjustments to the style here – the eighth-note pickup for “Le vent” in mm. 14-15, the eighth note of “de” in m. 18, and the eighth-note second syllable of “joye” – help to speed the music along, but that the 2:1 rule remains operative overall (i.e., “JOY’ mon-DAINE = 2 : 1 : 2).

The duple-triple juxtaposition in “L’eau va vite en s’écoulant” is a recurring strategy in the *Octonaires*. In this case, the imitative counterpoint at the beginning of the chanson is suddenly interrupted by triple meter homophony. This maximizes the sense of

contrast between the two styles even as it responds appropriately to the verse, which describes the escalating speed of the wind and the brevity of “la joye mondaine.” Le Jeune then reverts to duple time clandestinely in m. 18, by starting on an upbeat (on “Mais”) and repeating the same dotted rhythmic pattern in triple meter in mm. 19-20. The listener cannot really process what has happened here before discovering that we are back in duple meter in m. 21. Then at the end of m. 23, Le Jeune launches into a passage of sustained syncopation, so that the duple meter, which felt stable and regular at the beginning of the chanson, is now itself at sea.

A similar destabilizing effect is produced in the opening phrases of the third chanson in mode 7 (Lydian). The words, by Joseph Du Chesne, have been modified for the chanson into *vers hétérométrique*:

Du Chesne

Plustost les yeux du firmament
Seront sans reiglé mouvement
Et plustost jamais vagabonde
De l’occean ne sera l’onde,
Que l’on puisse voir desplacee
De tant & tant de vains appasts
Que l’on trouve en ce monde bas
Du mondain la folle pensée.

Le Jeune

Plustost les yeux du firmament
Seront sans réglé mouvement
Et vagabonde
Ne sera l’onde.
Plustost qu’on voye déplacée
Des vains apas
De ces lieux bas
Du Mondain la folle pensée.⁸

*Sooner would the stars
Be moved without rule,
Sooner would the waves
Never stray from the ocean
Than we could see dislodged
From the warped mind of man*

⁸ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:81-83. Cf. *Octonaire XXX* in Joseph Du Chesne, *La Morocosmie, ou de la folie, vanité, et inconstance du monde* (Rouen: A. Cousturier, 1601 [1583]), 15-16.

*The many vain lures
Of this base world.*

Example 1.5: “Plustost les yeux du firmament” (VII.3), mm. 1-23

Soprane
*

Contralto
**

Tenor haute-contre

Plus - tost les yeux du fir - mament, du

Plus -tost les yeux, Plus -tost les yeux du

Plus -tost les yeux, du

fir - ma - ment Se - ront sans ré - glé mou - ve - ment: Et va - ga -

fir - ma - ment Se - ront sans ré - glé mou - ve - ment: Et va - ga -

fir - ma - ment Se - ront sans ré - glé mou - ve - ment: Et va - ga -

_ bon - de Ne se - ra l'on - de, Et va - ga - bon - de Ne se -

_ bon - de Ne se - ra l'on - de, Et va - ga - bon - de Ne se - ra

_ bon - de Ne se - ra l'on - de, Et va - ga - bon - de Ne se -

- ra l'on - de Plus -tost qu'on voy - e dé - pla - cé - e Des

- ra l'on - de Plus -tost qu'on voy - e, qu'on voy - e, dé - pla - cé - e

- ra l'on - de Plus -tost qu'on voy - e dé - pla - cé - e

In mm. 1-4, Le Jeune imparts a feeling of triple meter to music notated in duple (C) time, with a prosodic and tonic accent falling on the the second syllable of “plustost” and an agogic accent on “yeux.” The contralto’s first note, therefore, will sound like a pickup. That the note falls on beat 1 is incidental: it is not that Le Jeune puts a weak prosodic beat on a strong metrical beat here, it is that he suggests triple meter in the context of a duple time signature.

The switch to actual triple meter in m. 5 poses an interesting performance dilemma. If we assume tactus equivalence (minim = dotted minim, C to 3/2 *sesquialtera*, associated with older genres such as the chanson), we must conclude that Le Jeune has created a notationally false impression of triple meter in mm. 1-4 in order to undermine it in m. 5 in favor of a new and slower triple meter.⁹ If, instead, we assume durational equivalence (minim = minim, C to 3/4, associated increasingly with newer music), then the “true” triple meter of m. 5 would inaudibly replace the “false” meter of before. Yet either way, the triple meter is immediately unsettled by hemiola in mm. 7-8. With no firm conclusion as to Le Jeune’s precise metrical stratagem here, we can nevertheless identify its source of inspiration in Du Chesne’s verse, which raises the specter of the stars (“les yeux du firmament”) straying from their well-regulated course (“Seront sans réglé mouvement”).¹⁰

⁹ Cf. Launay, “Les Rapports de tempo,” 175-77.

¹⁰ Cf. Simon Goulart, *Commentaires sur la Sepmaine de la creation du monde, de Guillaume de Saluste, sieur Du Bartas* (Rouen: R. du Petit Val, 1589), 161v: “Ce mot [firmament] est quelquefois prins pour toute la machine celeste, comprenant les dix Cercles, & specialement les huit d’embas, où sont les Estoilles fixes & errantes, & semble que le Poëte le prenne ainsi. Par fois il se prend plus particulièrement pour le ciel des Estoilles fixes. Il est appellé des Grecs APLANES, à cause que les Estoilles qui y sont demeurent fermes & arrestees, & est opposé aux sept des Planettes. Les septante, qu’on dit auoir tourné d’Hebrieu en Grec les liures du vieil Testament, ont tourné le mot RAKIA (dont vse Moyse, & qui signifie estendue) *Stereoma*, qu’on a interpreté Firmament. En quoy ils ont eu esgard (comme aucuns estiment) à la fermeté & assuré mouuement du Ciel, qui à la verité est ferme, si on le compare avecq’ le reste des autres creatures

With the arrival of homophonic *musique mesurée* in m. 5, the scansion of Du Chesne's verse (line 2) becomes weirdly distorted by hemiola, where a continuation of the iambic pattern of line 1 (established, ironically, in duple time) might have seemed more suitable. Baïf's method is applied correctly here in a perverse way, with the meter indications chosen as though to highlight the contradiction. Turning to lines 3-4 of the quatrain, we find that the adaptation into *vers hétérométrique* provides a second occasion to subvert the implied meter. The half-length verse must be repeated to offset symmetrically lines 1-2; the poetic content – the notion of waves never spilling out of the ocean (“Et vagabonde / Ne sera l’onde”) – apparently inspired the decision to displace this repetition awkwardly with an oddly placed rest (m. 15, beat 1). In m. 19, before we have had time to process or recover from the further deception of mm. 15-18, Le Jeune reverts to C time and proceeds with an ordinary duple pulse.

The third chanson of mode 2 (Hypoionian) exhibits a similar approach to even more startling effect. The poem is by Chandieu:

Le beau du monde s'éface
 Soudain comme un vent qui passe
 Soudain comme on void la fleur
 Sans sa premiere couleur.
 Soudain comme une onde fuit
 Devant l'autre qui la suit.
 Qu'est-ce doncques que du monde?
 Un vent, une fleur, une onde.¹¹

The world's beauty fades

qu'on pourroit estimer tresfermes, comme la terre, qui est esbranlee & eslochee par tremblemens & autres tels accidens.”

¹¹ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:23-25. The penultimate line of Chandieu's original reads “Qu'est-ce que doncques que le Monde?”; cf. *Octonaire XXXVIII* (appended to the *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*).

*Suddenly, as a passing wind,
 Suddenly, as we see the flower
 Without its original color.
 Suddenly, as one wave flees
 Before the other that follows it.
 What then is the world?
 A wind, a flower, a wave.*

Example 1.6: “Le beau du monde s’éface” (II.3), mm. 1-18

The musical score is for three voices: Soprane grave, Tenor haute-contre, and Tenor grave. The lyrics are in French and describe a sudden change in the world, comparing it to a passing wind, a flower losing its color, and a wave fleeing before another.

System 1 (mm. 1-4):

- Soprane grave:** Le beau du mon - de s'é - fa - ce, Le beau du mon -
- Tenor haute-contre:** Le beau du mon - de s'é - fa - ce, Le beau du mon -
- Tenor grave:** Le beau du mon - de s'é -

System 2 (mm. 5-8):

- Soprane grave:** - de s'é - fa - ce Soudain comme un vent qui pas - se, Soudain comme un
- Tenor haute-contre:** - de s'é - fa - ce Soudain comme un vent qui pas - se, Soudain comme un
- Tenor grave:** - fa ce, s'é - fa - ce Soudain comme un vent qui pas - se, Soudain comme un

System 3 (mm. 9-12):

- Soprane grave:** vent qui pas - se: Soudain comme on void la fleur sans sa pre - mie - re cou -
- Tenor haute-contre:** vent qui pas - se: Soudain comme on void la fleur sans sa pre - mie - re cou -
- Tenor grave:** vent qui pas - se: Soudain comme on void la fleur sans sa pre - mie - re cou -



Like the previous example, this chanson begins with a brief snatch of imitative counterpoint, with the first downbeat in the soprano voice heard as an unaccented upbeat (“Le beau”). By itself, this might have created an impression of triple meter, at least initially, but the countertenor follows on the third beat with the same rhythmic pattern, so that the meter is obscured through syncopation.

The soprano’s opening phrase, “Le beau du monde s’éface,” which in spoken French could fall naturally into three iambs (nine semiminims), is stretched into an asymmetrical length of five minims (nine semiminims with one left over), because the unaccented *muet* syllables of “monde” and “éface” both receive semiminim values. The soprano then repeats this line and its rhythmic pattern without a break:

Le	beau	du	mon - de	s' é - fa - ce	Le	beau	du	mon - de	s' é - fa - ce				
	>		>	>		>		>	>				
1	//	2	1	//	2	1	//	2	1	//	1	1	1

The bass voice enters in exact imitation of the soprano on the ninth beat (downbeat of m. 3). Had the soprano line been designed symmetrically in duple meter, as the time

signature indicates but as the verse itself discourages, this would have been a natural place to follow in imitation. Instead, it creates another offsetting pattern:

Le	beau	du	mon - de	s'é - fa - ce	Le	beau	du	mon - de	s'é - fa-ce
	>		>	>		>		>	>
1 // 2		1 // 2	1 // 1	1 1	1 // 2		1 // 2	1 // 1	1 1

				Le	beau	du	mon -	de	s'é - fa - ce	s'é-fa-ce
					>		>		>	>
				1 // 2		1 // 2		1 // 1	1	.5 .5 // 1 1

The three voices combined produce total metric confusion. The bass is not given time to repeat the first line, in order to allow all three voices to begin the second line together on “Soudain” – a word that appropriately brings a sudden pivot to a new meter and a homophonic texture.

As with the meter change in “Plustost les yeux du firmament” (VII.3), this one occurs in a context where the preceding duple meter has been disguised. But where the first example created the initial impression of triple meter, here there is an apparent absence of regular meter. Ironically though, the triple meter beginning in m. 6 also disguises itself by changing to a 6/8-type pattern – duple time/perfect prolation rather than triple time/imperfect prolation. This use of triple meter would not be remarkable had Le Jeune intended to sustain it, as it suits the text well enough. Instead, he throws the listener off again in m. 11, where “void la fleur” is easier to hear as a 3/4 pattern (1...and 3) than as a 6/8 pattern (1, 2-and). Having put this brake on the 6/8 flow, he then switches just as abruptly back to C time for “sans sa premiere couleur.”

Assuming again tactus equivalence for these meter changes (semibreve to dotted semibreve), and following the rule of blackened notes, the printed semiminims in the

triple meter section should be read as blackened minims, and are therefore equivalent to two-thirds of a minim in C time. It is difficult to make these transitions correctly proportional, and the difficulty would seem to be by design. The switch from a minim pulse to a dotted minim pulse of equal value (mm. 5-6) occurs after the original pulse has been obscured through syncopation. The 6/8 pattern of the section in triple meter makes a duple pulse explicit (in modern parlance, compound duple meter), but because the pulse is divided into three rather than two, one might feel more confused in retrospect by the pulse that had preceded it. Then, as though to complicate the transition back to C time (m. 12), Le Jeune changes to a 3/4 pattern just prior (“void la fleur”), briefly removing the feeling of duple pulse before restoring it for “sans sa premiere couleur.”

For the line, “Soudain comme une onde fuit” (mm. 15-22), Le Jeune disrupts the meter in yet a new way, by shifting from a 6/8 pattern to a 3/2 hemiola for the melismas on “onde.”

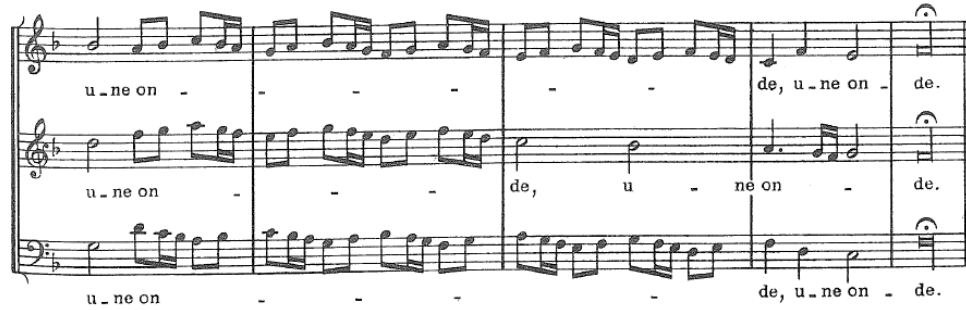
Example 1.7: “Le beau du monde s’efface” (II.3), mm. 14-23

The musical score for Example 1.7 consists of three staves: treble, alto, and bass. The lyrics are in French and are written below the staves. The score is in 3/4 time. The first measure is a whole rest. The second measure is a half note. The third measure is a half note. The fourth measure is a half note. The fifth measure is a half note. The sixth measure is a half note. The seventh measure is a half note. The eighth measure is a half note. The ninth measure is a half note. The tenth measure is a half note. The eleventh measure is a half note. The twelfth measure is a half note. The thirteenth measure is a half note. The fourteenth measure is a half note. The fifteenth measure is a half note. The sixteenth measure is a half note. The seventeenth measure is a half note. The eighteenth measure is a half note. The nineteenth measure is a half note. The twentieth measure is a half note. The twenty-first measure is a half note. The twenty-second measure is a half note. The twenty-third measure is a half note. The twenty-fourth measure is a half note. The twenty-fifth measure is a half note. The twenty-sixth measure is a half note. The twenty-seventh measure is a half note. The twenty-eighth measure is a half note. The twenty-ninth measure is a half note. The thirtieth measure is a half note. The thirty-first measure is a half note. The thirty-second measure is a half note. The thirty-third measure is a half note. The thirty-fourth measure is a half note. The thirty-fifth measure is a half note. The thirty-sixth measure is a half note. The thirty-seventh measure is a half note. The thirty-eighth measure is a half note. The thirty-ninth measure is a half note. The fortieth measure is a half note. The forty-first measure is a half note. The forty-second measure is a half note. The forty-third measure is a half note. The forty-fourth measure is a half note. The forty-fifth measure is a half note. The forty-sixth measure is a half note. The forty-seventh measure is a half note. The forty-eighth measure is a half note. The forty-ninth measure is a half note. The fiftieth measure is a half note. The fifty-first measure is a half note. The fifty-second measure is a half note. The fifty-third measure is a half note. The fifty-fourth measure is a half note. The fifty-fifth measure is a half note. The fifty-sixth measure is a half note. The fifty-seventh measure is a half note. The fifty-eighth measure is a half note. The fifty-ninth measure is a half note. The sixtieth measure is a half note. The sixty-first measure is a half note. The sixty-second measure is a half note. The sixty-third measure is a half note. The sixty-fourth measure is a half note. The sixty-fifth measure is a half note. The sixty-sixth measure is a half note. The sixty-seventh measure is a half note. The sixty-eighth measure is a half note. The sixty-ninth measure is a half note. The seventieth measure is a half note. The seventy-first measure is a half note. The seventy-second measure is a half note. The seventy-third measure is a half note. The seventy-fourth measure is a half note. The seventy-fifth measure is a half note. The seventy-sixth measure is a half note. The seventy-seventh measure is a half note. The seventy-eighth measure is a half note. The seventy-ninth measure is a half note. The eightieth measure is a half note. The eighty-first measure is a half note. The eighty-second measure is a half note. The eighty-third measure is a half note. The eighty-fourth measure is a half note. The eighty-fifth measure is a half note. The eighty-sixth measure is a half note. The eighty-seventh measure is a half note. The eighty-eighth measure is a half note. The eighty-ninth measure is a half note. The ninetieth measure is a half note. The ninety-first measure is a half note. The ninety-second measure is a half note. The ninety-third measure is a half note. The ninety-fourth measure is a half note. The ninety-fifth measure is a half note. The ninety-sixth measure is a half note. The ninety-seventh measure is a half note. The ninety-eighth measure is a half note. The ninety-ninth measure is a half note. The hundredth measure is a half note.



The hemiola (mm. 16-17 and 20-21) is effectively another meter change, with a pulse a third longer than the original minim in duple time (i.e., two blackened minims, $2/3 + 2/3 = 4/3$). Later in the chanson, Le Jeune reprises these melisma patterns – again on the word “onde” – in C time, so that they move by at a quicker pace (mm. 34-36, 45-47).

Example 1.8: “Le beau du monde s’éface” (II.3), mm. 34-49



The use of tone painting here will not escape notice, but more interesting are the deliberate efforts to unsettle the meter, which the interplay of homophony and imitative polyphony again facilitates. The arrival of homophony in m. 6 stands out largely because of the syncopated soup preceding it. The perceived advantage of homophony – textual clarity – is achieved here, but m. 6 does not bring a metrical resolution. I am inclined to hear in this gesture a rhetorical comment on the irregular distribution of metric accents that occurs routinely in *musique mesurée*. Notably, the momentary return to C time in mm. 12-14 remains homophonic, so that from m. 6 to m. 22 Le Jeune has used homophony to cycle through four different metric patterns (6/8, 3/4, C, and 3/2). The notion of *inconstance*, of sudden change, emerges ironically from the style best suited for textual clarity.

The second chanson of mode 2 (the chanson preceding the one I have just discussed) exhibits a quite different treatment of the *musique mesurée* style.

Y a il rien si fort si rude et indomtable
 Que le flot de la mer par les vens tourmenté?
 Y a il rien qui soit si foible que la sable?
 Le flot est toutefois par le sable aresté.
 O mondain de combien la tempeste est plus forte
 Du vent de tes desirs qui ton ame transporte!
 Veu que rien n'est si fort au monde qui retienne

Le flot tempestueux de la passion tienne.¹²

*Is there anything so forceful, rough and dauntless
As the surge of the sea harried by the wind?
Is there anything so feeble as the sand?
Yet the surge is stopped by the sand.
How much stronger, Mondain, is the storm-wind
Of your desires, carrying away your soul!
Since nothing in the world can restrain
The tempestuous surge of your passion.*

Le Jeune begins with a straightforward duple pattern, stated first by the top two voices in rhythmic unison (mm. 1-2), and imitated exactly an octave lower by the bottom two (mm. 3-4), while the top two rejoin to create a four-part texture. By m. 6, all four parts have coalesced in rhythmic unison on the words “si fort.”

Example 1.9: “Y a il rien si fort, si rude et indomtable” (II.2), mm. 1-18

The musical score is for four voices: Soprane grave, Tenor haute-contre, Tenor grave, and Basse. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The Soprane and Tenor haute-contre parts begin in measure 1 with a half note G4, while the Tenor grave and Basse parts enter in measure 3 with a half note G2. The lyrics are: 'Y a il rien si fort, Y a il rien si fort, fort, rien'.

¹² Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:19-23. The poem is by Chandieu.

si fort, Si rude et in - dom - ta - ble Que le flot de la mer

si fort, Si rude et in - dom - ta - ble Que le flot de la mer

si fort, Si rude et in - dom - ta - ble Que le flot de la mer

si fort, Si rude et in - dom - ta - ble Que le flot de la mer

par les vens tour - men - té ? Y a il rien qui soit si foi - ble, si

par les vens tour - men - té ? Y a il rien qui soit si foi - ble, si

par les vens tour - men - té ? Y a il rien qui soit si

par les vens tour - men - té ? Y a il rien qui soit si

The opening may thus be described as imitative split homophony (where two voices in rhythmic unison are echoed by the other two) merging into four-part homophony in an unambiguous duple meter. The split homophony has a symmetrical shape, a square 2+2 call-and-response pattern, but this proves fleeting: it is cut short with the merger of all four voices, such that the opening period lasts for six semibreves (4+2) rather than eight (4+4). Having joined together, all voices proceed in the *musique mesurée* style, and the meter immediately turns asymmetrical and syncopated (“si rude et indomtable / Que le flot de la mer par les vens tourmenté?”).

A similar process occurs in abbreviated fashion in mm. 15- 20. The top two voices are echoed by the bottom two in a square 1+1 pattern (mm. 15-17). After “Y a il

rien,” both voice pairs proceed separately in rhythmic unison (mezzo with countertenor, tenor with bass), but by the end of m. 18, all four voices have again merged into four-part homophony for “si foible que le sable,” which, as in the first instance, proceeds in asymmetrical meter.

Example 1.10: “Y a il rien si fort, si rude et indomtable” (II.2), mm. 12-30

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a four-part vocal setting. Each system consists of four staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass) with lyrics written below them. The first system (measures 12-18) shows the lyrics: "par les vens tour-men-té? Y a il rien qui soit si foible, si". The second system (measures 19-24) shows the lyrics: "foible que le sa-ble? Le flot est tou-te-fois, Le". The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, key signatures, and note values, indicating a complex rhythmic structure.



The same process unfolds once again for “Le flot est toutefois par le sable aresté” (mm. 21-29). While the split homophony is again symmetrically conceived in regular duple meter (mm. 21-24, 2+2 call-and-response), the syncopation preceding it (mm. 19-20, “qui soit si foible que le sable”) obscures the fact momentarily: initially, “Le flot” in m. 21 feels like further syncopation. *Musique mesurée* juxtaposed with imitative polyphony again disrupts the regularity of the latter. It is as though Le Jeune wished to pull apart the four-part homophonic texture into two strands to demonstrate a metric equilibrium, then re-combine them to disrupt it. This formal juxtaposition mirrors the juxtaposition of images in the poem, where indomitable waves (which echo one another) break against shifting sands.

A brief spell of a four-part imitative texture (“O mondain,” mm. 29-33) is followed by another hint of split homophony (“de combien la tempeste,” mm. 33-35), which again leads to four-part homophony for “est plus forte / Du vent de tes desirs qui ton ame transporte!” (mm. 37-46).

Example 1.11: “Y a il rien si fort, si rude et indomtable” (II.2), mm. 31-47

mon - dain, O mon - dain, de com - bien

O mon - dain, mon - dain de com - bien

- - dain, O mon - dain, de com - bien la

O mon - dain mon - dain, de com - bien la

la tem - pe - ste est plus for - te Du vent de tes de - sirs, Du

la tem - pe - ste est plus for - te Du vent de tes de - sirs, Du

tem - pe - ste est plus for - te Du vent de tes de - sirs, Du

tem - pe - ste est plus for - te Du vent de tes de - sirs, Du

vent de tes de - sirs qui ton a - me tran - spor - te! Veu que rien

vent de tes de - sirs qui ton a - me tran - spor - te! Veu que rien

vent de tes de - sirs qui ton a - me tran - spor - te!

vent de tes de - sirs qui ton a - me tran - spor - te!

The effect here is of bringing a camera into focus: the top two voices sing “la tempeste” out of synch with the bottom two, then all four voices merge into rhythmic unison for

“plus forte.” But at this point, Le Jeune shifts abruptly, and seemingly arbitrarily, into a signed triple meter (“Du vent de tes desirs”), and just as abruptly back out again, without interrupting the homophonic texture. Metric instability again undermines homophonic clarity.

The return to duple meter in m. 44 leads to more syncopation (“ton ame transporte,” mm. 44-46). This then carries over into the split homophony of “Veu que rien n’est si fort” (mm. 47-51). Thus, unlike in previous instances, the imitative split homophony is now syncopated, as though corrupted by the previous interventions of *musique mesurée*:

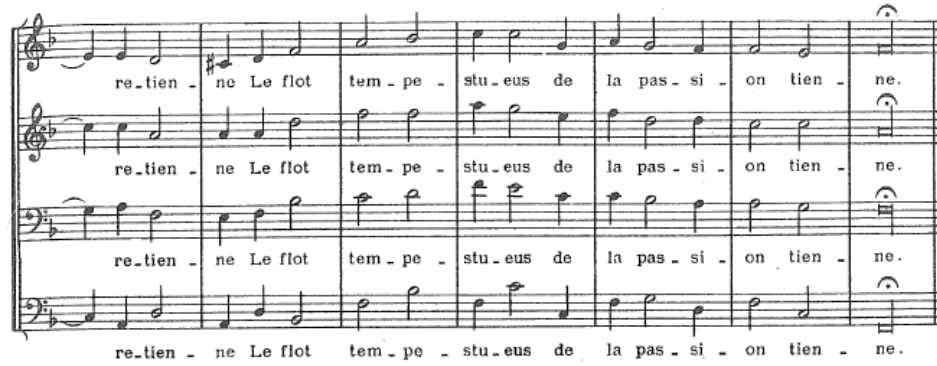
Example 1.12: “Y a il rien si fort, si rude et indomtable” (II.2), mm. 42-73

The image shows a musical score for four staves, likely representing four voices. The notation is in a 16th-century style, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the staves. The first staff has the lyrics: "vent de tes desirs qui ton ame transporte! Veu que rien". The second staff has the lyrics: "vent de tes desirs qui ton ame transporte! Veu que rien". The third staff has the lyrics: "vent de tes desirs qui ton ame transporte!". The fourth staff has the lyrics: "vent de tes desirs qui ton ame transporte!". The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. There are some musical symbols like a 'C' in a box and a sharp sign (#) in the second staff.

n'est si fort, si fort, Veu que rien n'est si fort au mon-de
 n'est si fort, que rien n'est si fort, n'est si fort au mon-de
 Veu que rien n'est si fort, n'est si fort au mon-de
 Veu que rien n'est si fort, n'est si fort au mon-de

qui re-tien - ne Le flot tem - pe - stu - eus de la pas - si - on tien -
 qui re-tien - ne Le flot tem - pe - stu - eus de la pas - si - on tien -
 qui re-tien - ne Le flot tem - pe - stu - eus de la pas - si - on tien -
 qui re-tien - ne Le flot tem - pe - stu - eus de la pas - si - on tien -

- ne. Veu que rien n'est si fort, que rien n'est si fort au mon-de qui
 - ne. Veu que rien n'est si fort, que rien n'est si fort au mon-de qui
 - ne. Veu que rien n'est si fort au mon-de qui
 - ne. Veu que rien n'est si fort au mon-de qui



The syncopation continues in the four-part homophony of “n’est si fort au monde qui retienne / Le flot tempestueux de la passion tienne” (mm. 51-60). These lines are then repeated with some harmonic modifications in mm. 61-73. The syncopation of *musique mesurée* has prevailed over the symmetry first established by imitative polyphony. This progression supports the poetic theme of a *monde* unable to restrain the tempestuous passions of the *mondain*.

More examples will be given in the chapters to follow, but we have by now a clear enough musical picture to begin contextual analysis. How do the striking techniques on display in the *Octonaires* relate to the intellectual environment from which they emerged? To approach that question, it will be worth starting in the recent past with some musicological perspectives on the time and place in question, which, in their efforts to present a coherent narrative on the evolution of style, do not address what is unusual here.

II. Musical, literary, and political context

The scholarly neglect to date of the *Octonaires*, a major work by one of the leading composers of the French Renaissance, may be explained in part by an overriding interest in positive applications of music theory to composition – in the present case, the French Academy’s powerful and relatively well-documented influence. Music historians have underemphasized the contentious philosophical climate, as distinct from the theological and political climate, surrounding the Academy’s establishment, when writers on vanity and skeptical antiphilosophers were undermining humanist research and conventional epistemology, and, most importantly, when traditional cosmology was in the process of being overturned. Further, a much greater general interest in the *Grand Siècle* of Louis XIV and his successors appears to have encouraged a teleological view of its prehistory, such that earlier developments are prioritized according to their continuity with later outcomes regarded as more artistically significant. Along the trajectory toward classicism and royal absolutism, the early French Academy and its “union of poetry and music” take on particular significance in hindsight, while *vanitas* music or music based on older contrapuntal techniques assumes a more marginal role.

Howard Mayer Brown has argued that the study of French music of the late Renaissance must begin with an understanding of “music’s place in the minds of the intellectuals of the time.”¹³ These intellectuals, as Frances Yates recounts, enjoyed direct royal support within a long-term trajectory toward “academism” and absolutism, whose

¹³ Howard Mayer Brown, “*Ut musica poesis*: Music and Poetry in France in the Late Sixteenth Century,” *Early Music History* 13 (1994): 3.

impact on musical life in the seventeenth century has been surveyed by James Anthony and Robert Isherwood.¹⁴ Though the intellectuals in question were almost without exception not composers, Brown is right that knowledge of their motivations should be prerequisite, given their political and cultural influence. Here I am highlighting an important specific instance that may be seen to have challenged those motivations.

It is noteworthy that Le Jeune receives only passing mention in Anthony's *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeulx to Rameau*, a chronology to which he plainly belongs but which the label "Baroque" qualifies at his expense: his death in 1600 would seem to have sealed his reputation as a Renaissance composer. Isabelle His redresses the oversight in her biography of Le Jeune, which labels him "a composer between Renaissance and Baroque." In any case, though Le Jeune died in 1600, the *Octonaires* belong in a literal sense to the seventeenth century: first published posthumously in 1606, they were reprinted in 1611, 1631, and 1641.¹⁵ This fact serves to remind that attention had not shifted entirely away from the polyphonic chanson to the *air de cour*. In the early eighteenth century at the high point of French classicism, Sébastien de Brossard singled out the *Octonaires* as models of old-school counterpoint – in other words, of purely musical laws that had been prior to the academicians' musical-poetic doctrine.¹⁶

¹⁴ Yates, *The French Academies*, chapters 1-2; James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeulx to Rameau*, 2nd ed. (Portland: Amadeus, 1997); Robert M. Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King: France in the Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973).

¹⁵ See His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 367-68. Levy, "The Chansons of Claude Le Jeune," 247, singles out the *Octonaires* as the works by Le Jeune "that most look forward to the styles of the seventeenth century," but he does not elaborate on this point.

¹⁶ Sébastien de Brossard, *Catalogue de musique théorique et pratique* (1724): "C'est ici sans contredit le meilleur et le plus sçavant des Ouvrages de Claudin le Jeune, et j'ai été tenté bien des fois de la mettre au rang des Theoriciens, quoi qu'il soit imprimé en parties séparées, et s'il avoit été imprimé en partition, je n'aurois pas hésité: Car en fin c'est le modelle le plus exact que nous ayons de l'observation des regles de l'ancien Contrepoint"; quoted in His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 387.

A striking aspect of Isherwood's *Music in the Service of the King* is its application of pre-modern philosophy to seventeenth-century French music, which risks creating the impression of continued universal acceptance and obscures the impact of the recent tectonic shift in cosmology. The book begins,

The seventeenth century held a lofty conception of the meaning and power of musical experience. Music, it was believed, reflected the harmonious universe and linked the cosmos and finite man. Musical harmonies were analogous to the harmony of the spheres. Thus, in making music, man was touching the universe itself; he was reaching toward a divine realm through the most sublime means of self expression.¹⁷

Isherwood sets the stage for the music of the Louis XIV era by positing an essential continuity with ideas formulated during the Catherine de' Medici era a century before. He devotes his first chapter to a summary of the Neoplatonic roots of French classical music.¹⁸ In fact, the tail end of Valois rule marked the ephemeral shining moment of Neoplatonic idealism in France, extinguished by the religious wars, the assassinations of Henri III, the Holy League, and the religiously compromised Bourbon succession. The leading poet-thinkers of the late sixteenth century characterized music as not only important but as the literal gateway to a higher moral and metaphysical plane, and they appear to have convinced their heads of state (Catherine de' Medici, Charles IX, and Henri III) that this was not only true but essential to good worldly governance. It was an idealism the revival of which Mersenne could only wish for in the 1620s and 30s.¹⁹

¹⁷ Isherwood, *Music in the Service*, 1.

¹⁸ Isherwood, *Music in the Service*, 1-54. Isherwood draws from earlier Renaissance scholars, particularly Walker, Yates, Erwin Panofsky, and P. O. Kristeller. Cf. Walker, "Musical Humanism"; idem, "Le Chant orphique de Marsile Ficin," in *Musique et poésie au XVIe siècle* (Paris: CNRS, 1954), 17-33.

¹⁹ See Yates, *The French Academies*, chapter 12. Isherwood, *Music in the Service*, 53-54, appears to understate the departure, by the time of Louis XIV, from the early Academy's musical-poetic philosophy: "Under Charles IX a royal academy of music was founded, and once a week the king and his court attended its concerts. Musical activity in France reached its zenith in the seventeenth century, according to [Jacques]

Contrary to Isherwood, Georgia Cowart describes the replacement in the seventeenth century of the medieval doctrine of *harmonia mundi* with the Aristotelian doctrine of *imitatio* or *mimesis*:

According to Aristotle, art and music represented a direct imitation of nature, specifically human nature, rather than a secondhand reflection of a divine distant truth.... 'Imitation' became the catchword and common thread for a complex fabric of critical thought, and just as the term *harmonia mundi* had echoed from the fifth century to the sixteenth, so *mimesis* would ring through the baroque and classic eras.²⁰

Bonnet [a contemporary historian of the ballet], when the monarchy introduced it into every phase of national life. Thus, present was linked to past, and a musical history of antiquity was joined to the musical philosophy of antiquity. France's picture of itself as the descendant of ancient Greece and Rome was complete. The musical mania of the French court was justified by the example of revered peoples and civilizations and by the belief in the moral effects of music, which was transformed into a doctrine of social and political utility. The union of poetry and music was realized fully in the opera, and music was secure under the laws of Louis XIV's absolutist state." A "doctrine of social and political utility" has strayed from the original doctrine of intellectual and moral perfectability, while the union of poetry and music in French classical opera must have looked and sounded (as Isherwood would surely agree) nothing like what its late-Renaissance originators could have anticipated. A nearly unspoken message in his book is the way that the French court distorted, undermined, or ignored the early academic ideal over the course of the seventeenth century. He stipulates that "[w]hether the widely held assumptions about music of writers such as Mersenne actually influenced the musical policies of the Bourbon kings and their ministers is not very important. Probably the assumptions of the savants were more of a justification of, than an influence on, royal policy." But he concludes, "The musical philosophy of the age was, however, a substantial intellectual underpinning of the extravagant musical productions, entertainments, and ceremonies sponsored by the rulers of France, and it provided an intellectual climate sustained in large part by clerics, notably Jesuits, in which music could be bent to the purposes of kings" (3). The book's main thesis, that music provided an essential backdrop for the monarchical display of power, tends to imply that such a priority controlled the evolution in France of music composition itself by relegating the internal processes of that evolution – autonomous innovations by individual composers – to secondary consideration. See also Van Orden, *Music, Discipline, and Arms*, which focuses on music's role in social and political transformation.

²⁰ Georgia Cowart (ed.), *French Musical Thought, 1600-1800* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), 1. Cf. Isherwood, *Music in the Service*, 3. On the new and widespread popularity of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* during the Renaissance, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 39-41.

A useful collection of primary source material on *harmonia mundi* is Joscelyn Godwin (ed.), *The Harmony of the Spheres: A Sourcebook of the Pythagorean Tradition in Music* (Rochester, Vt.: Inner Traditions International, 1993). The belief is examined within a variety of contexts in Marta Cristiani et al (eds.), *Harmonia mundi: Musica mundana e musica celeste fra antichità e Medioevo* (Florence: SISMEL, 2007). See also James Haar, "Musica mundana: Variations on a Pythagorean Theme" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1960); Kathi Meyer-Baer, *Music of the Spheres and the Dance of Death: Studies in Musical Iconology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970); Giorgi Stabile, "Musica e cosmologia: L'armonia delle sfere," in *La musica nel pensiero medievale*, ed. Letterio Mauro (Ravenna: Longo, 2001), 11-29; Gabriela Ilitchi, "Musica mundana, Aristotelian Natural Philosophy and Ptolemaic Astronomy," *Early Music History* 21 (2002): 37-74; Susan Rankin, "De la lune à la terre: Musique des sphères, musique des hommes," trans. Monique Goulet, in *Les représentations de la musique au Moyen Âge*, ed. Martine Clouzot and Martine Laloue (Paris: Musée de la musique, 2005), 10-21; idem, "Naturalis concordia vocum

But academic philosophers connected human nature to universal nature, and few have yet analyzed how the new fashion for imitation might have been applied to the receding doctrine of *harmonia mundi*, which comprehended not only “divine distant truth” but the human soul.²¹ Beaujoyeux’s landmark *Balet comique de la Royne* (1581), presided over by the astrologically obsessed Catherine de’ Medici, indicates an interest in France in the performative invocation of celestial influences. Margaret McGowan has described the imitative purpose of French dance in the late Renaissance, and, along with Yates, the importance for the origins of the ballet of invoking universal harmony for political ends.²² Baïf’s *musique mesurée*, though it was often put in the service of love poetry, proceeds from the same cosmological and imitative orientation. The subversive musical imitation of universal vanity in Le Jeune’s *Octonaires* may be found consistent with the Neoplatonic doctrine’s historical retreat.²³

cum planetis: Conceptualizing the Harmony of the Spheres in the Early Middle Ages,” in *Citation and Authority in Medieval and Renaissance Musical Culture: Learning from the Learned*, ed. Suzannah Clark and Elizabeth Eva Leach (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 2005), 3-19; Gilles Rico, “‘Auctoritas cereum habet nasum’: Boethius, Aristotle, and the Music of the Spheres in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries,” in the same volume, 20-28.

²¹ Exception can be made for a recent dissertation by Nicholas Johnson on Hermeticist composers at the Hapsburg court of Rudolf II (r. 1576-1612): “*Musica Caelestia*: Hermetic Philosophy, Astronomy, and Music at the Court of Rudolf II” (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2012). Johnson explores how composers in Prague translated Hermetic and Neoplatonic astrological beliefs into music.

²² Yates, *The French Academies*, chapter 11; Margaret McGowan, *L’Art du ballet de cour en France, 1581-1643* (Paris: CNRS, 1978), 34-47. McGowan quotes from Beaujoyeux’s “preface au Roy”: “l’auteur de toutes choses, [de] ces belles harmonies du monde que nous voyons, [des] belles variations que nous produisent les saisons, et bref [de] tout l’heur et contentement qu’en ceste basse demeure nous respirons” (43).

²³ It should be noted, though, that while Cowart is right to point to the abeyance of *harmonia mundi*, this happened more gradually than she implies, and that Isherwood is right to emphasize the continuing Platonic legacy of music guided to a significant extent by poetic priorities.

A comprehensive account of the early Academy's influence on later French music would need to acknowledge that the basic goal of subordinating contrapuntal music to the word, however it was to be pursued in practice, could not have impressed everyone equally.²⁴ From the beginning the Academy met with institutional resistance, particularly from the University of Paris,²⁵ and the momentary hardening of the poets' ideal into *musique mesurée* bespoke a tendency, already underway in Italy, to move away from encyclopedic free inquiry and toward "academism", in the bad sense of the judgment of ideas or of literary and artistic productions in accordance with certain rigidly fixed standards."²⁶ In that respect, and despite universalist pretensions to knowledge and spiritual transcendence, *musique mesurée* could not have appealed to more flexible or skeptical thinkers.²⁷ Further, the dictum that music should serve the text – the component that poets and philosophers could best understand, and that the powerful could best monitor – plainly downgrades music composition as an independent craft, and there is little reason to assume that composers found this development especially congenial. Most importantly, with the understandable musicological focus on the strictly musical discourse of this period has come a general failure to acknowledge the contemporaneous

²⁴ In her preface to Tyard's *Solitaire second*, 25-26, Yandell objects to Walker's view that the "union of poetry and music" was understood to limit the composer's musical range: "Pour Pontus la poésie et la musique atteignent toutes deux leur sommet quand elles s'allient (mais encore, l'union idéale est théorique)." Cf. Walker, "Musical Humanism," 8.

²⁵ Yates, *The French Academies*, 26-27.

²⁶ Yates, *The French Academies*, 8.

²⁷ On the negative reception of *musique mesurée*, see Bonniffet, *Un Ballet démasqué*, 38-55. The pedantic regression from universalism to academism may be observed again in the first half of the seventeenth century, when, around two decades after an abortive attempt by David de Flurance Rivault to revive the Valois academy under Marie de' Medici, Cardinal Richelieu in 1635 founded the *Académie française*, which narrowly cultivated grammar and rhetoric and neglected the music that had been centrally important to earlier academicians. See Yates, *The French Academies*, 275ff.

drift of academic discourse as a whole into scientific matters that challenged its own core philosophy, running parallel to a flourishing discourse on vanity and underway even well before the founding of the Academy. One of my chief aims in Chapters 2 through 5 will be to demonstrate the uncomfortable proximity of these two discourses. In the second half of the sixteenth century, Neoplatonism was a vital yet contestable tradition, a fact that its residual influence on seventeenth-century music should not be allowed to obscure, and that Le Jeune's *Octonaires* arguably illustrate.

With regard to Le Jeune's approach to mode – another humanist and Neoplatonic preoccupation – this topic has mainly provoked discussion of which theoretical system he adhered to and why. Richard Freedman has convincingly suggested that Le Jeune's arrangement of the *Octonaires* into a comprehensive modal cycle (a feature that they share with the *Dodecacorde*) reflects a “self-consciousness about organizational schemes as backdrops for spiritual concerns.”²⁸ The late-Renaissance obsession with modal effects belongs to any discussion of these two works, and it leads Freedman to consider briefly the approach to mode in the *Octonaires*, though he does not present musical examples. In light of Le Jeune's own expressed doubts about any effects peculiar to individual modes, Freedman suggests that “[m]odality in this context is not a means to ‘express’ an emotional condition, but is instead a constellation of ideal forms against which a process of spiritual reflection is staged.”²⁹ Having characterized the *Dodecacorde* as an affirmation of Zarlino's modal system, Freedman seems here to imply the same with respect to the *Octonaires*, whereas in the latter case, the spiritual concern in question – a

²⁸ Freedman, “Le Jeune's *Dodecacorde*,” 305.

²⁹ Freedman, “Le Jeune's *Dodecacorde*,” 306. Cf. His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 287.

meditation on the vanity and inconstancy of everything worldly – unavoidably subverts such an ideal. Freedman addresses “three related ‘histories’” that serve to contextualize the *Dodecacorde*: that of the Genevan Psalter, that of Zarlino, and that of “an extensive Protestant tradition of inscribing new meanings in familiar forms.”³⁰ He does not address Le Jeune’s association with the idea that the effects known to antiquity depended on the coordination of mode and measured verse. How, then, might Le Jeune’s “constellation of ideal forms” relate to his techniques for setting poetry within it? Since modal effects are of little significance for a composer who doubted them, and since they constitute only a part of the academic viewpoint, which fixated on measured poetry, we should ask how Freedman’s “process of spiritual reflection” applies to Le Jeune’s manner of setting the words rhythmically. The spiritual backdrop, in sum, may be to imply that any mode will do for representing vanity, and that every mode must do for representing universal vanity.

As symbolic representations, the *Octonaires* are analogous in some ways to visual treatments of the *vanitas* theme, while they are more idiomatically suited in other ways.³¹

I discuss that comparison in Appendix 2, but would turn here to the poetry, which

Terence Cave has situated within the broader French devotional genre.³² Cave conducts

³⁰ Freedman, “Le Jeune’s *Dodecacorde*,” 297. His, “Das *Dodecacorde* von Claude Le Jeune,” speculates that Le Jeune’s Protestantism led him to adopt Zarlino’s more “modern” position, as Glarean’s system was an extension of the ecclesiastical modes. Zarlino became well-known among French academicians. See His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 191, 259, 285-87. See also Jessica Herdman, “Zarlinian Modality in Claude Le Jeune’s *Dodecacorde*,” *Musicological Explorations* 10 (2009): 33-72.

³¹ On links between Chandieu’s *Octonaires* and visual art, see Françoise Bonali-Fiquet, “Engagement spirituel et procédés stylistiques dans les *Octonaires sur l’inconstance et vanité du monde* d’Antoine de La Roche Chandieu,” in *Amour sacré, amour mondain: Poésie 1574-1610*, Cahier V. L. Saulnier, no. 12 (Paris: Presses de l’École Normale Supérieure, 1995), 25-36; Florence Mauger, “Antoine de Chandieu et Etienne Delaune: Les *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde*: Un Recueil d’emblèmes?,” *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance* 58/3 (1996): 611-29.

³² Terence Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France, 1570-1613* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1969), esp. 146-83. See also Terence Cave and Michel Jeanneret (eds.), *Métamorphoses spirituelles: Anthologie de la poésie religieuse française, 1570-1630* (Paris: José Corti, 1972), 9-32, 35-53; John E.

his survey from an ecumenical point of view, grouping Protestant and Catholic poets together as co-participants in a broad-based “devotional revival”: in essence, a move by the Counter-Reformation “to meet the Calvinist challenge, with its direct, vernacular appeal.”³³ The revival began in prose (sermons, handbooks) and then migrated into religious poetry in the 1570s – the decade when Antoine de Chandieu, one of the most prominent Calvinist theologians of the day, began writing his *Octonaires*.³⁴

Cave interprets the bi-confessional aspect of the devotional revival as evidence that *vanitas* poetry, like the visual genre, conveyed a general sentiment and was not inherently divisive. French Calvinists beset by the Counter-Reformation could take solace in Chandieu’s penitential missives, but Catholics also could read them sympathetically. Here is Cave’s argument in brief:

In theology, there is a wide chasm between the Calvinist and the Catholic view of sin and redemption; but the demands of poetry tend to minimise the gap. The tendency to identify sin and sickness, which is one of the most important points of departure for penitential poetry [and an example of which occurs in the *Octonaires*], is perfectly valid for both faiths; likewise the themes of death and God’s mercy (‘grace’ need have no partisan colouring in a poem) and the contrast between God and the sinner. Both can use Biblical material, with only a slight shift of emphasis. In the Maisonfleur anthology [a book that contains numerous

Clark, *Elégie: The Fortunes of a Classical Genre in Sixteenth-Century France* (The Hague: Mouton, 1975); Nadia Cernogora, “L’Écriture de la vanité chez les poètes français de l’automne de la Renaissance: Du *memento mori* aux vertiges d’une poétique du vain,” in “Discours et enjeux de la Vanité,” ed. Anne-Élisabeth Spica, special issue, *Littératures classiques* 56/1 (2005): 201-17.

³³ Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France*, 7. The devotional revival is the subject of his first chapter. On French Protestant poetry in the late sixteenth century, see Jacques Pineaux, *La Poésie des protestants de langue française, du premier synode national jusqu’à la proclamation de l’Edit de Nantes (1559-1598)* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971).

³⁴ On the composition and publication history of Chandieu’s *Octonaires*, see Françoise Bonali-Fiquet’s introduction to Antoine de Chandieu, *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde* (Geneva: Droz, 1979), 7-37; François Rouget, “Manuscrits, éditions et transformations: Les *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde* d’Antoine de Chandieu,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 152 (2006): 565-82. On Chandieu’s theological and literary career, see Sara K. Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest: The Vernacular Writings of Antoine de Chandieu, c. 1534-1591* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009). See also Chapter 5, section II.

poems on vanity, including Chandieu's *Octonaires*], Catholic and Calvinist poets stand shoulder to shoulder. Du Bartas [a Huguenot], whose religious attitude was moderate and conciliatory, influenced poets in both camps; and Sponde's *Stances et sonnets de la mort* bear no clear mark of Calvinism. [Sponde also converted to Catholicism.] For these reasons I shall make no attempt to draw *a priori* distinctions between poetry of one and the other confession....³⁵

The intellectual context of Le Jeune's work, however, extends beyond the poetry to a medium whose airy and abstract nature invested it with more mysterious powers over the soul, and therefore with greater moral hazard. Music created a more urgent need to establish theological control over it.

Music also, unlike poetry, had direct cosmic significance, a fact that explains the desire among French poets to enlist music in the service of their Neoplatonic worldview. Music about the *vanité du monde* should therefore have alerted its audience to the all-inclusive sense of the word *monde* – the entire cosmos – and to the tension between the presence of vanity in the world and the special redemptive powers that were attributed to music, by virtue of the world's harmonious disposition. Jacques Pineaux argues to the contrary that for “la poésie anti-mondaine,” a more restricted meaning of *monde* should apply, namely the corrupt world of human societies. At first glance, he puts himself on solid ground by quoting Joseph Du Chesne, an imitator of Chandieu who indicates that “sous le nom du monde” he meant to address the worldly life per se and not the material

³⁵ Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France*, 23. Cf. the first *octonaire* of mode 4 in Le Jeune's cycle (MMRF, 1:38-42):

C'est un grand mal que l'extreme avarice
C'est un grand mal que folle ambition:
Mais quand on a veu l'un ou l'autre vice,
Un chacun sent sa propre passion.
O combien donc grand'est la maladie
qui fait languir l'incensé amoureux!
Veux qu'un mal mesm'en fait malade deux,
Et deux sont fols d'une mesme folie.

elements of which the world is composed. To introduce his *Morocosmie* (1583), a collection of *octonaires* on vanity, Du Chesne writes,

I do not mean to speak of that material composed of the four Elements, which of their nature are bereft of all malice and deceitfulness.... But under the name of “monde” I treat the perverse, unhappy, and detestable worldly life [*vie des mondaines*].... I speak of the *mondains* of this world who have no other fire than their lust, no other air than their levity and folly, no other earth than their damnable avarice, and no other watery element than their great inconstancy.

The four created elements, by contrast, contain “that which was ordained in the beginning by their creator”; they fulfill their assigned role without any vice.³⁶ From this, Pineaux concludes that the “created world” was not the real target of these poems.

But it cannot have been as straightforward as that. First, Du Chesne’s philosophical and scientific views were fairly heterodox and should not be equated to the strict Calvinism of Chandieu, the originator of the genre of *octonaires* on vanity.³⁷ Du Chesne exhibits far greater sympathy than Chandieu for Neoplatonic thought, largely because of his devotion as a physician to Hermetic alchemy.³⁸ Second, Du Chesne’s own verses appear to contradict the statement quoted above, suggesting that he *did* impute vanity to the material world. Here are two *octonaires* from the *Morocosmie*:

³⁶ Pineaux, *La Poésie des protestants*, 404: “Comme l’écrit Joseph Du Chesne, ‘sous le nom du monde je traite de la perverse, malheureuse, et detestable vie des mondaines.... Je parle des mondains de ce monde qui n’ont autre feu que leur convoitise, autre air que leur legereté et follie, autre terre que leur maudite avarice, ny autre element d’eau que leur grande inconstance’. Ainsi s’opposent le monde créé, dans lequel chaque élément ‘se contient en son devoir et fait l’office qui luy a esté premierement ordonné par son createur.’ The quote is from the premier edition of *La Morocosmie* (1583), in a dedication to “Madame la comtesse d’Antremons, admirale de France” (the widow of the admiral Coligny).

³⁷ My use here of the label “Calvinist” will be based on citations from the theological writings of Jean Calvin and prominent sixteenth-century followers of his, but will not mean to imply universal agreement among Calvinists with respect to any particular belief. I discuss Calvinism in more detail in Chapter 4, and Calvinist Neoplatonists, a group to which Le Jeune plausibly belongs, in Appendix 1, section II.

³⁸ See Appendix 1, section II.

Peintre, si tu tires le monde,
 Ne le peint pas de forme ronde,
 Car ce qui en rond est pourtrait
 Est estimé du tout parfait,
 Et le monde ne le peut estre,
 Où défaut le souverain bien,
 Et où tant seulement le rien
 Et l'inconstance prennent estre.³⁹

*Painter, if you draw the world,
 Do not paint it round,
 For things portrayed as round
 Are esteemed the most perfect of all,
 And the world cannot be thus
 Where the sovereign good is lacking,
 And where only nothingness
 And inconstancy shall be.*

De ce monde inconstant tesmoins de l'inconstance
 Sont du poile estoilé les divers mouvements,
 Et le train incertain de tous les elements
 Demonstrent de leur tout l'incertaine assurance.
 On roule icy tousjours: rien de ferme n'y dure,
 Bref, ce tout est un tout de tous poincts variable.
 Mais d'où vient donc cela, qu'un monde si muable
 Ne peut changer pourtant de perverse nature?⁴⁰

*The world's inconstancy is witnessed
 In the diverse movements of the starry canopy,
 And the uncertain train of the elements
 Shows the uncertain assurance of the whole.
 Here we constantly roll; nothing firm endures,
 The whole, in brief, is wholly variable.
 But whence comes it that a world so mutable
 Cannot yet change its evil nature?*

Since the time of Plato, the sphericity of the world and the incorruptible circular movements of the planets had been treated as physical proofs of a perfect design; here

³⁹ Du Chesne, *La Morocosmie* (ed.. Gibert), 141.

⁴⁰ Du Chesne, *La Morocosmie* (ed. Gibert), 171.

those assumptions are under attack. The inconstancy rather than the perfection of the heavens is emphasized still more strongly, as we will see, by Chandieu.

I have already mentioned in the introduction to this study an overlooked Neoplatonic use of the word *octonaire*, which I will relate to its Calvinist use in Chapter 5. The important thing to establish here is that in both the Calvinist and Neoplatonic contexts, the word is connected to Psalm 119, known as the *psaume octonaire*, and from there to the enlistment of musical psalm settings in the French religious conflict. Because of this connection, Le Jeune's *Octonaires* should be situated within the frame of the partisan contest over psalmody, which in turn should alert us to the partisan way in which they could have been received. Frances Yates, Michel Jeanneret, and Édith Weber, among others, have described the central symbolic importance of psalmody, which, along with being contested terrain between Catholics and Protestants (more on which in Chapter 5), also suggested to the French Academy a potential avenue for reconciliation, by virtue of the common heritage that the Psalms invoked.⁴¹ As the civil war worsened, the devout and frequently penitential content of the Psalms was deemed a more appropriate vehicle for a union of poetry and music than the secular genres (love poetry and pagan epics) that had initially inspired the *Pléiade*.⁴²

Yates writes that "after about 1565 the translation of the Psalms must have been the principal occupation of Baïf's life."⁴³ But the hope that his psalms in *vers mesurés*

⁴¹ Yates, *The French Academies*, esp. 62-76; Jeanneret, *Poésie et tradition biblique*, 297-354; Édith Weber, *La Musique protestante de langue française* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1979), esp. 61-148. On the political dimension of psalmody in seventeenth-century France, see Peter Bennett, "Hearing King David in Early Modern France: Politics, Prayer, and Louis XIII's Musique de la Chambre," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 69/1 (2016): 47-109.

⁴² Jeanneret, *Poésie et tradition biblique*, 307.

⁴³ Yates, *The French Academies*, 65. Cf. Augé-Chiquet, *La Vie de Baïf*, 376.

would instill a spirit of unity or toleration was dashed by the cratering political landscape of the 1570s and 80s: the rise of the Catholic Holy League and escalation of the war, the disbandment of the Academy, and the assassination of Henri III in 1589. With respect to the academic pursuit of a middle way, Yates is equivocal on the unifying potential of psalmody:

We thus find in the Academy a certain sympathy with the religious poetry and music of the Reformers – with those psalms of Marot which expressed the devotion of the early French reformed circle of Marguerite de Navarre, with its intense cult of Ficinian mysticism. On the other hand there is definitely a Counter Reformation note in Baïf’s attempt to provide Catholic measured psalms which should drive out the psalms of the Reformers.⁴⁴

Early on, Baïf can be found referring to “les psalmes des haeretiques.”⁴⁵ In Yates’s view, the academic ethos allowed the competition to remain civil, yet she also provides documentation that Baïf viewed his measured psalm project, which he pursued in spite of the Church’s interdiction, as a Catholic call to arms. His sustained and ultimately failed effort to establish a vernacular Catholic psalmody proceeded from a belief that French music had been corrupted by heretics.⁴⁶

Jean Vignes reasons that psalms in French would have had obvious appeal for Le Jeune, but he acknowledges that the polemical and divisive terms in which Baïf made his

⁴⁴ Yates, *The French Academies*, 76. His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 300-01, emphasizes the unifying appeal of the Psalms over their use for partisan ends.

⁴⁵ Yates, *The French Academies*, 70-71, quotes Baïf’s epigraph to a 1569 set of psalms in *vers mesurés*: “Psautier / commencé en intention de servir / aux bons Catholiques / contre / les psalmes des haeretiques”; along with his supplication to the pope on behalf of Catholic vernacular psalms to “drive out the metrical psalms which the Huguenots sing every day.”

⁴⁶ Yates, *The French Academies*, 70-71.

appeal are impossible to overlook.⁴⁷ Kenneth Levy likewise notes the “curious pairing” of Le Jeune and the “violently Catholic Baïf,” and observes that

[o]nly during Le Jeune’s final decade, during the bitterest phase of the religious wars and the first phase of the peace that followed, did he turn wholly away from the secular and Catholic areas to the psalms, prayers and spiritual songs of the Huguenots. In this he paralleled Lassus’ ultimate retreat into Catholic mysticism.⁴⁸

In sum, while Le Jeune contributed to Baïf’s project (more on which presently), he cannot have been flattered by the poet’s undisguised partisan motivations, and he did not neglect to set the Calvinist psalm translations of Clément Marot and Théodore de Bèze in their entirety.⁴⁹

Leaving aside the Academy’s noble failure to influence external events toward compromise, how might the years after the institution’s demise have affected a composer such as Le Jeune, when the conversion of Henri de Navarre became the lightning rod for conciliators and extremists of both faiths? We should first take note of an incident reported by Mersenne, namely the dramatic rescue of Le Jeune and his music by Jacques Mauduit, a fellow academic composer and a Catholic, from League combatants during the 1590 siege of Paris.⁵⁰ This anecdote, if true, reaffirms the historical view of Le Jeune

⁴⁷ Vignes, “Jean-Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune,” 287. Vignes speculates, “Observant pour ma part que Le Jeune semble avoir envisagé de mettre en musique tout le psautier de Baïf, avant de s’arrêter en chemin, j’incline à attribuer cet abandon à une évolution de la position religieuse de musicien” – an evolution doubtless impelled by the St. Bartholomew’s Day massacres of 1572.

⁴⁸ Levy, “The Chansons of Claude Le Jeune,” 3.

⁴⁹ The *Cent cinquante pseumes* (1601) are simple harmonizations of the Genevan melodies; the three *Livres des pseumes* (1602, 1608, 1610) comprise three-voice polyphonic settings of all but eight of the Psalms.

⁵⁰ In *Harmonie universelle*, VII.31, Mersenne relates Mauduit’s testimony of having saved the *Dodecacorde* manuscript among other works that were about to be destroyed by Catholic extremists, as well as negotiating the release of Le Jeune himself. The full account is quoted in Walker and Lesure, “Claude Le Jeune and *musique mesurée*,” 160-61.

as a political moderate: by negotiating his release, Mauduit saved him from certain execution, since among his papers could be found a written denunciation of the League's extremism. As further evidence of his moderation, in 1596 Le Jeune was appointed *maistre compositeur ordinaire* of the recently converted Henri IV's *musique de chambre*. But in 1598 at La Rochelle, with peace newly established, the first dedicated collection of his own music that he chose to make public (the first since the *Livre de melanges* of 1585) was the *Dodecacorde*, which uses the Marot/de Bèze verse translations and (as mentioned above) the psalm tones of the Genevan Psalter as *cantus firmi*.⁵¹ This work's importance to Le Jeune is corroborated by Mersenne's account of Mauduit's rescue, in which he sees fit to mention it by name. Le Jeune's first move, then, to reestablish his reputation after the war was to publish the *Dodecacorde* and assert his Calvinist faith.

While there is not room here to survey the political history of the 1590s, it may suffice to say that the Edict of Nantes, which was issued shortly before the *Dodecacorde*, pleased neither side apart from ending the war (Pope Clement VIII called it "the worst edict imaginable"; there were around twenty murder plots against Henri IV before the one that succeeded in 1610).⁵² In an environment where partisan rancor had not subsided, the Calvinist stamp of the *Dodecacorde* would have been noticed; indeed, twenty years later, the publisher Pierre Ballard decided to release two separate versions of the work, one with the original Huguenot psalm verses and another with devotional texts amenable

⁵¹ See Heider's edition; Freedman, "Le Jeune's *Dodecacorde*"; His, "Das *Dodecacorde* von Claude Le Jeune"; John B. MacMillan, "The Calvinistic Psalmody of Claude Le Jeune with Special Reference to the 'Dodecacorde' of 1598" (PhD diss., New York University, 1966).

⁵² Colin Jones, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of France* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 142-43.

to Catholics.⁵³ With the *Dodecacorde*, Le Jeune may have given the appearance in 1598 of distancing himself from his own earlier association with Baïf's measured psalms. His settings of the latter, of which only seventeen are extant, were never published during his life and did not appear until 1606 as the *Pseaumes en vers mezurez*.⁵⁴ In this collection, moreover, Baïf's original unrhymed verses have been changed into rhymed verses by Odet de la Noue, while two additional psalms are versified by Agrippa d'Aubigné – both Huguenot patrons and friends of Le Jeune. Both men admired *vers mesurés* on the condition that they be rhymed, and d'Aubigné, famously militant in his views, disparaged what he saw as the pagan tendencies of the Paris Academy.⁵⁵

The preface to the 1606 *Pseaumes* contains some allusion to the effects that Baïf and his colleagues ascribed to *musique mesurée*, realized here in a way that should have gratified Protestants as well as Catholics – a bit of the spirit of the 1570s and 80s revived in the 1610s.⁵⁶ Along with the *Printemps* of 1603 and the *Airs* of 1608 – the bulk of Le

⁵³ See Isabelle His, “‘Sous lesquels ont esté mises des paroles morales’: Un Cas de contrafactum de psaumes entre 1598 et 1618,” *Revue de musicologie* 85/2 (1999): 189-225. Fenlon, “Claude Le Jeune and the Greeks,” 9, suggests that “[a]ntipathy toward [the *Dodecacorde*] was presumably caused not by the musical style but by the verses set which, being psalms in the translations of Marot and Bèze, could hardly have carried a more overtly Huguenot resonance.”

⁵⁴ Yates, *The French Academies*, 66-67; His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 300-06; Vignes, “Jean-Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune,” 283. See the modern edition, *Pseaumes en vers mezurez: 1606*, ed. Isabelle His (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007).

⁵⁵ See Yates, *The French Academies*, 214-16. See also Appendix 1, section II. Although Baïf intended for *musique mesurée* to be applied only to unrhymed verse, Protestant admirers of the technique such as d'Aubigné, La Noue, and Nicolas Rapin did not follow suit for their own *vers mesurés*. Homophonic writing in the *Octonaires* could therefore have recalled the genre despite being set to rhymed verse. See Walker and Lesure, “Claude Le Jeune and *musique mesurée*,” 168. For d'Aubigné's views on *vers mesurés*, see Lamothe, “Claude Le Jeune: Les Pseaumes,” 66-67.

⁵⁶ A liminary poem by Odet de la Noue, “Sur les Pseaumes en musique mezuree de Claudin Le Jeune,” reads:

Par ces Psaumes mezurés,
Les esprits sont attirés
D'une si forte puissance

Jeune's *musique mesurée*, published only after his death⁵⁷ – the *Pseaumes en vers mezurez* demonstrate that influential Huguenots close to Le Jeune still attested to the genre's spiritual efficacy. But it is nonetheless striking that for religious purposes, Baïf's psalm verses required Huguenot alteration at the apparent expense of Le Jeune's original work, and apparently with his prior consent.⁵⁸ The music could be preserved and its effects promoted in honor of the composer's talent, but Baïf's verses had to be jettisoned. This substitution provoked Mersenne to call the work heretical and best avoided in favor of Mauduit's settings.⁵⁹ La Noue in fact gave the same treatment to the secular *Airs* of 1608.⁶⁰ It is likely that for many Huguenots, Baïf's reputation never recovered from his early jubilation over the massacres of St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572.⁶¹

Que, soit docte ou ignorant,
 (S'il n'est tout plein d'impudence
 Ou du tout sans jugement)
 Doit avoüer sans repliche
 Parfaicte nostre Musique:
 Et que LE JEUNE est celuy
 Qui la rendit si exquise,
 Et qui, si haut l'ayant mize
 Tira l'échelle apres luy.

Quoted in His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 462. It seems noteworthy that La Noue stipulates "soit docte ou ignorant" – not an academic principle, but expressive of the academic desire to influence society at large.

⁵⁷ On the *musique mesurée* published during Le Jeune's life, see Vignes, "Jean-Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune." Vignes notes the absence of documentary evidence concerning relations between Le Jeune and Baïf after 1585.

⁵⁸ His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 302-03, speculates: "Le Jeune a-t-il supervisé et approuvé ce remaniement? Si l'on en croit d'Aubigné, c'est le compositeur qui aurait 'voulu' mettre son épigramme à la tête du volume de 1606. Cette publication, comme celle des airs, aurait donc été préparée par ses soins avant sa mort." Cf. Vignes, "Jean-Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune," 287.

⁵⁹ Yates, *The French Academies*, 67. Cf. Mersenne, *Quæstiones celeberrimæ in Genesim*, Qu. LVII.8 (col. 1604). Yates notes, however, that Mersenne "was a friend of many Reformers and was called by them 'the Huguenot monk'" (75 n4). She also calls him one of two "theorists of the Academy" (the other being Tyard).

⁶⁰ See Vignes, "Jean-Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune," 283-84.

⁶¹ His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 265, doubts the sincerity of Baïf's ode to Catherine de' Medici in praise of the massacre, in light of a later verse admitting to hypocrisy: "J'ay pensé l'un, j'ay l'autre dit."

None of the posthumous collections of Le Jeune's *musique mesurée* impart the verbal testimony of the composer himself, whose life ended during work on a collection that is at least as Calvinist in tone as the *Dodecacorde*. Le Jeune did not live to write a dedication for the *Octonaires*, but his statement preceding the *Dodecacorde*, which alludes to the Edict of Nantes, offers the most substantial insight we have on his attitude, late in life, toward *musique mesurée*:

I thought it appropriate, in a time when so many discords have been reconciled, to give to the French something to unify [musical] tones like thoughts, and voices as well as hearts. If this music is weighty and solemn, I have reckoned that we ought to be weary of both our airy modulations and our light mutations.... And for the future, I would not wish such power for music as the ancients attributed to it. Likewise, I would not dare to say of it what one says of the stars, that is, that if it does not compel at least it predisposes. I will content myself with remarking that the appetites of peoples, in the choice of modes and measures, are sure templates of the emotion dominant in them. And since affect begets effect, these same indications are portents. Therefore I will dare to invite my companions to honor our music of serious rationales, of serious notes and measures, in order to convince the most prudent of neighboring nations that our flightiness and changes [*nos legeretez & mutations*] have run their course; that a firm harmony is established in our hearts; and that the peace that is supported on our constancies is a lasting tranquility, not a temporary calm.⁶²

It would appear significant, first, that Le Jeune offers the work as a gesture of unity, in keeping with the academic spirit, yet on behalf of a densely imitative contrapuntal style at odds with academic principles; and second, that he expresses his views on academic music in retrospective and dismissive terms. He washes his hands of the power that Baïf and other Neoplatonists had attributed to ancient music – the hoped-for utility of *musique mesurée*. If there were musical “effects,” rather, they derived in the first place from the

⁶² Claude Le Jeune, “A Monseigneur le Duc de Bouillon, Vicomte de Turenne....,” prefatory letter to *Dodecacorde, contenant douze pseumes de David, mis en musique selon les douze modes* (La Rochelle: Jerome Haultin, 1598), n.p.; quoted and translated in Le Jeune, *Dodecacorde* (ed. Heider), 1:xvi-xvii.

listener's own moral and emotional disposition, and not from the composer's noetic manipulation of the listener through particular rhythms and modes. Isabelle His finds it "paradoxical" that this preface, the only document that "allows us to know Le Jeune's general opinions on the power of music," does not belong to a work featuring *musique mesurée*.⁶³ But the tenor of Le Jeune's remarks here could explain why this turned out to be the case.

On the assumption that they post-date the *Dodecacorde*, the *Octonaires* may plausibly be interpreted in the light of the above-quoted preface: as a retrospective critique with a suitably pensive and unstable approach to "modulations and mutations."⁶⁴ They did not, however, ask listeners to remember as far back as the 1570s and 80s. As François Rouget notes, Chandieu's *Octonaires* began to enjoy their first real success only in the 1590s, thanks in part to Jean Jacquemot's Latin translation of 1591 (the year of Chandieu's death).⁶⁵ Moreover, as we have seen, *musique mesurée* was poised for a brief renaissance in the early decades of the seventeenth century, and we might assume (though we lack proof) that the posthumous release of Le Jeune's works in this genre was carried out according to his wishes shortly before his death.⁶⁶ If such was his intention, it need not be read to contradict his own denial of mystical effects or his call for a more serious kind of music. In the preface to the *Dodecacorde*, Le Jeune also casts doubt on

⁶³ His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 286.

⁶⁴ His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 420, tentatively dates work on the *Octonaires* to 1599.

⁶⁵ Rouget, "Manuscrits, éditions et transformations," 567. Bonali-Fiquet has counted thirty editions of Chandieu's *Octonaires*, ten of them complete. This figure does not include translations into Latin.

⁶⁶ See His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 302-03; D. P. Walker, "The Influence of *musique mesurée à l'antique*, Particularly on the *airs de cour* of the Early Seventeenth Century," *Musica Disciplina* 2/1-2 (1948): 141-63.

the significance of modal nomenclature and effects, but this did not prevent him from organizing that work (and the *Octonaires*) by mode.⁶⁷ He would have had little reason to disown his *airs mesurés* as skillful and imaginative responses to a self-limiting prosodic rule, or as lucid and pleasing secular music that might increase his popularity and income. It is hard to imagine that *musique mesurée* would have interested him more than the contrapuntal virtuosity and emotional nuance of the *Dodecacorde* and the *Octonaires* – the direction in which his music was evolving late in life. In any case, the delayed public release of his *musique mesurée* increases the likelihood that the *Octonaires* would have been heard to invoke that style.

⁶⁷ Le Jeune writes that the “magnanimity [of Henri IV] has not needed the modes which Timotheus awoke in the heart of Alexander. His patience and probity were natural, without his spirits having been kindled by Dorian measures.” To conclude the preface, he writes, “To touch on one particular aspect of my work, two reasons prevented me from cloaking all the modes with their names. First, I wanted to eschew the ostentation of abstruse words; next, the dissension of the ancients and the diversity of their opinions on such names require a more curious spirit than I, who would rather be their disciple than their judge. I will say in passing that the diversities of opinions on the Ionian are reconciled by distinguishing the first Ionian and the last, the first being praiseworthy, before the passage of the Ionians into Asia, the which have since sung as they have lived, with indolence and lightness of morals. As for the Lydian, it has been divided into Mixolydian, to pacify the difference of Olympus and Pindar. The first and most ancient of these [modes] was used for funeral songs, the second, newer, for nuptial songs”; quoted in Le Jeune, *Dodecacorde* (ed. Heider), 1:xvi-xvii. Le Jeune then promises to write a separate treatise on the matter. The preface gives an excellent idea of his classical education, and the promise, which his death prevented him from carrying out, attests to his close involvement in the academic discourse of the time. Heider notes that Le Jeune’s allusion to “the difference of Olympus and Pindar” is “obscure.” He must be referring to Olympus the musician from Asia Minor, who was believed to have introduced music to ancient Greece. According to Aristoxenus, Olympus wrote the first composition in the Lydian mode to commemorate the death of Python. Pindar, a citizen of Thebes, had a different story, which was that the first Lydian piece was performed at the marriage of Niobe to Amphion, one of the twin founders of Thebes. See Ian Rutherford, *Pindar’s Paeans: A Reading of the Fragments with a Survey of the Genre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 360.

His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 287, observes of the *Dodecacorde* preface, “Le Jeune revient vite sur ces lieux communs, immédiatement relativisés, teintés d’un scepticisme en partie justifié par l’expérience récente des guerres de Religion: il faut parfois user d’autres moyens que la musique (la vertu, la magnanimité, la patience, la probité) si l’on veut être sûr d’‘esteindre les phrigiennes fureurs des François’, ce qu’a d’après lui parfaitement compris le roi Henri IV. Dans ces réticences, on peut trouver une preuve supplémentaire de l’adhésion aux options de Zarlino: l’‘harmonie’ seule est incapable d’effets. Cette préface est postérieure aux expériences de musique mesurée à l’antique, et le propos du *Dodecacorde* n’est pas de déclencher des effets merveilleux (les vers du Psautier sont d’ailleurs des vers ordinaires), mais de construire, dans une synthèse magistrale, un monument organisé par le moyen des douze modes modernes.”

As musical representations, then, it is my view that the *Octonaires* would not be best understood as non-partisan, or as a minimizer of theological differences such as Cave discerns in penitential poetry. The theme of vanity, notwithstanding its ecumenical appeal in poetry and prose, can always still be applied to what Cave calls the “wide chasm between the Calvinist and the Catholic view of sin and redemption,” and this chasm was more plainly exposed by music, which the *Pléiade* regarded as a mystical cosmic ingredient to be added to their measured verses.⁶⁸ Among his educated contemporaries, Le Jeune’s temporal approach to representation would have invoked a well-understood link between musical movement, universal movement, and the time dimension that measures both; and this link was itself understood to bear directly on the existence of sin and the need for redemption. The scientific truism that matter is inconstant lends itself to the religious postulate of universal vanity, and to the musical imitation thereof through unstable movements.

On the other hand, many who were beholden to ancient Greek philosophical ideals preferred to characterize universal movement as a harmony – a “constant inconstancy” or “accordant discord” – that human music (*musica practica*) could be made to reflect or instantiate. This latter belief invested human beings with a certain degree of agency in linking themselves to the divine, while it also appeared to distance the universe itself from the theological constant of vanity. In *Le institutioni harmoniche* (1558), Zarlino compares polyphonic music to “that opposition and agreement from which Empedocles proposed all things were generated; it is a concord of discords,

⁶⁸ On the distinction made by members of the *Pléiade* between verses measured *à la lyre* and *à l’antique*, see John McClelland, “Measuring Poetry, Measuring Music.”

meaning a concord of diverse things that can be joined together.”⁶⁹ In Claude Palisca’s paraphrase, “[t]he universal music or *musica mundana* coordinates the spheres of the heavens, holds together the four elements – fire, air, water, and earth – and organizes time and the seasons.”⁷⁰ The same analogy between music and the elements can be found in the poetry of Du Bartas, Le Jeune’s Huguenot contemporary,⁷¹ and in one of the *Octonaires* (the first of mode 2), which represents the vertical positions of the four elements – in descending order, fire, air, water, and earth:

⁶⁹ Claude V. Palisca, introduction to Gioseffo Zarlino, *The Art of Counterpoint*, trans. Guy A. Marco (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), xviii.

⁷⁰ Palisca, introduction to Zarlino, *The Art of Counterpoint*, xviii-xix.

⁷¹ Guillaume de Saluste du Bartas, *La Sepmaine, ou Création du monde* (Paris: Jean Feurier, 1578), 35:

Donques puis que le nœu du sacré mariage
 Qui joint les Elemens enfante d’âge en âge
 Les fis de l’Univers, & puis qu’ils font mourir
 D’un divorce cruel tout ce qu’on voit perir:
 Et changeant seulement & de rang & de place,
 Produisent, inconstans, les formes dont la face
 Du Monde s’embellit, come quatre ou cinq tons,
 Qui, diversement joints, font cent genres de sons,
 Qui par le charme dous de leur douce merveille
 Emblent aus écoutans les ames par l’oreille.

Example 1.13: “Le feu, l’air, l’eau, la terre, ont toujours changement” (II.1), mm. 1-14⁷²

The musical score is written for four voices: Soprane grave, Tenor haute-contre, Tenor grave, and Basse. The lyrics are: "Le feu, l'air, l'eau, la terre, ont toujours changement, Tour nant et re - tour - nant, et re - tour - nant l'un à l'autr' é - lé - ment." The score is in a medieval style, with a polyphonic setting of a French song. The lyrics are: "Le feu, l'air, l'eau, la terre, ont toujours changement, Tour nant et re - tour - nant, et re - tour - nant l'un à l'autr' é - lé - ment."

Baïf’s *musique mesurée*, along with being a revival of ancient Greek musical ideals, is one such example of the polyphonic and rhythmic imitation of *harmonia*

⁷² Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:14-15. I discuss this chanson further in Chapter 3, section III.

mundi.⁷³ In the above excerpt, Le Jeune uses *musique mesurée* explicitly to illustrate the joining and coordination of the four elements. But he does so in a poetic context that undermines the “concord of discords” ideal of *harmonia mundi*:

Le feu, l'air, l'eau, la terre, ont toujours changement,
Tournant et retournant l'un à l'autr'élément.
L'Eternel a voulu ce bas mond'ainsi faire
Par l'accordant discord de l'élément contraire,
Pour montrer que tu dois ta félicité querre
Ailleurs qu'au feu, qu'en l'air, qu'en l'eau et qu'en la terre;
Et que le vray repos est en un plus haut lieu
Que la terre, que l'eau, que l'air et que le feu.⁷⁴

*Fire, air, water, and earth are always changing,
Turning and returning, one element to the other.
The Eternal wanted to make the world thus,
By the accordant discord of contrary elements,
To show that you must gain your happiness
Elsewhere than in fire, air, water, or earth;
And that true repose is in a higher place
Than earth, than water, air, or fire.*

The message is clear, that spiritual repose cannot be gained (as Baïf hoped) by channeling the “accordant discord” of the elements, that the latter can at best serve to remind of a superior realm beyond matter.

Le Jeune breaks the 2:1 prosodic rule of *musique mesurée* by stretching the syllables of “L'Eternel” to twice the normal length:

⁷³ I discuss the link between *harmonia mundi* and *musique mesurée* in Chapter 3.

⁷⁴ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), I:14-18.

Example 1.14: “Le feu, l’air, l’eau, la terre, ont toujours changement” (II.1), mm. 15-19

Example 1.14 shows a musical score for measures 15-19. It consists of four staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) with lyrics in French. The lyrics are: "L'E - ter - nel a vou - lu ce bas mond' ain - si". The music is in a common time signature and features a mix of whole, half, and quarter notes, with some rests.

And he then breaks *musique mesurée* apart to show that *felicité* and *vray repose* must be gained elsewhere:

Example 1.15: “Le feu, l’air, l’eau, la terre, ont toujours changement” (II.1), mm. 30-50

Example 1.15 shows a musical score for measures 30-50. It consists of four staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) with lyrics in French. The lyrics are: "Pour mon - trer que tu dois", "ment con - trai - re: Pour mon - trer que tu dois, que tu", "ment con - trai - re: Pour mon - trer que tu dois ta", "ment con - trai - re: Pour mon - trer que tu dois". The music is in a common time signature and features a mix of whole, half, and quarter notes, with some rests.

ta fe - li - ci - té quer - re Ail - leurs qu'au feu, Ail -
dols ta fe - li - ci - té quer - re Ail - leurs qu'au
fe - li - ci - té; ta fe - li - ci - té quer - re Ail - leurs
ta fe - li - ci - té quer - re Ail - leurs

leurs qu'au feu, qu'en l'air, qu'en l'eau, et qu'en la
feu, qu'en l'air qu'en l'eau, et qu'en la
qu'au feu, qu'en l'eau, et qu'en la
et qu'en la

ter - re: Et que le vray re - pos, le vray re - pos est
ter - re: Et que le vray re - pos, le vray re - pos est
ter - re: Et que le vray re - pos est
ter - re: Et que le vray re - pos est

The same polarity between the elemental and spiritual worlds is illustrated in the first chanson of mode 8 (Hypolydian), which equates the desire to elevate oneself to the base pursuit of material wealth:

L'ambitieux veut toujours en haut tendre,
 Et adjouter honneur dessus honneur:
 L'avare fend la terre pour y prendre
 Le metal riche où il fonde son heur.
 L'un tend en haut, et l'autre tend en bas,
 L'un est contraire à l'autre ce nous semble:
 Mais pour cela contraires ne sont pas,
 Car à la fin ils se treuvent ensemble.⁷⁵

*The ambitious strive ever upward,
 Piling honor on top of honor;
 The miser digs the earth in search of
 Precious metals to build his fortune.
 One tends upward, the other downward,
 One is contrary, it seems, to the other;
 And yet they are not contrary,
 For in the end they wind up together.*

Le Jeune uses *musique mesurée* to connect the “upward” orientation to the “downward”:

Example 1.16: “L’ambitieux veut toujours en haut tendre” (VIII.1), mm. 1-19

The musical score is written for four voices: Soprane grave (*), Tenor haute-contre (**), Tenor grave (***), and Basse (****). The lyrics are: L'am - bi - ti - eux veut toujours en haut ten - L'am - bi - ti - eux veut tou - jours en haut L'am - bi - ti - L'am -

⁷⁵ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:84-87.

- dre, veut tou-jours en haut ten - dre, Et ad-jou -
 ten - dre, veut tou-jours en haut ten - dre, Et ad-jou -
 - eux veut toujours, tou-jours en haut tendre, Et ad-jou -
 - bi - ti - eux veut toujours en haut tendre, Et ad-jou -

- ter hon - neur des - sus hon - neur: L'a - va - re fend la
 - ter hon - neur des - sus hon - neur: L'a - va - re fend la
 - ter hon - neur des - sus hon - neur: L'a - va - re fend la
 - ter hon - neur des - sus hon - neur: L'a - va - re fend la

ter - re pour y pren - dre Le me - tai' ri - che où il
 ter - re pour y pren - dre Le me - tail ri - che où il
 ter - re pour y pren - dre Le me - tail ri - che où il
 ter - re pour y pren - dre Le me - tail ri - che où il

And again to make the final point, that both orientations are in fact the same and will lead to perdition:

Example 1.17: “L’ambitieux veut toujours en haut tendre” (VIII.1), mm. 35-53

con - trai - res ne sont pas, Car à la fin ils

se treu - vent en - sem - ble. Mais pour ce - la con - trai - res ne sont

se treu - vent en - sem - ble. Mais pour ce - la con - trai - res

se treu - vent en - sem - ble.

pas Car à la fin ils se treu - vent en - sem - ble.

ne sont pas, Car à la fin ils se treu - vent en - sem - ble.

Car à la fin ils se treu - vent en - sem - ble.

Car à la fin ils se treu - vent en - sem - ble

Both of these chansons reflect the ideological polarity to which the remainder of this study will be devoted. In the chapters to follow, I will have more occasions for citing Le Jeune’s repeated use of *musique mesurée* to highlight verses that subvert its rationale.

Chapter 2

Vanitas Cosmology: The *Octonaires* at the Nexus of Greek and Biblical Discourse on Vanity

Le Jeune's service to Baïf's Academy of Poetry and Music, his rescue from extremists by Jacques Mauduit, and his conciliatory language in the *Dodecacorde* together suggest a moderate political and religious temperament.¹ As I discussed in Chapter 1, his decision to write a collection of songs about vanity could be regarded in the same light, given the theme's broad-based appeal. From this point of view, his use of a Neoplatonic musical style in the *Octonaires* could have struck his academic contemporaries as unremarkable or even appropriate: the passages in *musique mesurée* could be heard as compromised gestures toward the circumvention of vanity, or as glimpses of constancy and truth amid polyphonic inconstancy and deception.

Against that notion, I have suggested that a tolerant disposition would not have precluded an awareness of irreconcilable beliefs, and that the poetic and musical evidence in the *Octonaires* points to such an awareness. Le Jeune's non-exclusive treatment of *musique mesurée* was implicitly subversive, while his use of the style to represent vanity

¹ Freedman, "Le Jeune's *Dodecacorde*," 305, sees evidence as well in Le Jeune's undifferentiated approach to mode: "Directing his readers away from the emotional or musical characteristics of the individual modes as fixed essences, Le Jeune stresses the spiritual, even socially restorative effects of the system as a whole, which will serve to demonstrate that French society can manage a kind of moderation distinctly absent from the religious and political strife of the second half of the 16th century." A hermeneutic analysis of Le Jeune's use of *musique mesurée* against the Genevan psalm tones in the *Dodecacorde* might also suggest reconciliation, but not, in my view, without an unmistakable sense of hierarchy: the psalm tones rule the proceedings.

was inherently contradictory. The use of academic musical language to undermine an academic viewpoint aligns the *Octonaires* with painted representations of vanity, which employ the artificial refinements of the craft at their own rhetorical expense.²

Furthermore, an ideological critique delivered through subtle musical gestures may have been the safest path for Le Jeune to take in such dangerous times; but even then, by doing so he associated himself with Antoine de Chandieu, a militant theologian who did not live to see the royal apostasy of their mutual employer, Henri de Navarre.³

The case for a subversive reading of the *Octonaires* appears still more likely when we look beyond the work's sensitive political context to its place within the broader cosmological crisis at the turn of the seventeenth century.⁴ The crisis encompassed many diverse reactions to a barrage of new religious doctrine and scientific data, but through the lens of Le Jeune's music, it takes the more definite shape of a conflict between the Greek devotion to universal harmony and the Protestant apprehension of universal vanity. From our perspective, this conflict is easily obscured by what was still a widespread and presumably reflexive sympathy for both ideas – harmony and vanity – despite the fact that they had drifted, as I will show, into fundamental opposition, and despite the fact that one of them (harmony) had itself become fundamentally unstable. The French Academy can even be understood as an attempt to reconcile the two ideas: there is room in

² See Appendix 2.

³ On Chandieu's employment by Henri de Navarre, see Chapter 5, section II.

⁴ The new cosmic paradigm initiated by Nicolaus Copernicus is a central theme of Thomas S. Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (4th ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); see also idem, *The Copernican Revolution: Planetary Astronomy in the Development of Western Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003 [1957]). I rely on the latter work for matters of basic historical and scientific fact; see Chapter 4. For a critique of Kuhn's hermeneutic approach, see Robert S. Westman, "Two Cultures or One?: A Second Look at Kuhn's *The Copernican Revolution*," *Isis* 85/1 (1994): 79-115.

Neoplatonism for the condition of material vanity, and there is room in Christianity for the perception or promise of universal harmony. Self-evidently, harmony would be fully realized only by transcending vanity, and would gain in psychological appeal to the extent that vanity was contrasted with it. One could believe in this reconciliation and see it fail, or one could deny the wisdom of pursuing it. Catholic Neoplatonists believed in it. Their acknowledgement of vanity is offset by their advocacy of a semi-autonomous transcendental path, the details of which I will relate in Chapter 3, and the Calvinist objections to which I will relate in Chapter 4.⁵

To explain the failure from a Calvinist perspective of the French Academy's theological and musical response to the problem of vanity, it is first necessary to untangle some of the roots of the early-modern *vanitas* tradition, which, because it can be linked to a wide array of influences stretching back to antiquity, acquires in most historical discussions a misleading aura of sameness. Because the problem of vanity was basic to Christian theology and to much of Greek philosophy, it could appear that a Protestant composer need not have strayed from the Neoplatonic tradition to address it. But during Le Jeune's lifetime, basic Christian theology was under violent dispute, particularly with respect to its dependency on Greek thought. The schisms of the Reformation grew in large part from a rejection of medieval attempts to synthesize Christian theology with Greek, especially Aristotelian, natural philosophy, which had undermined the authority of

⁵ E.g., Pontus de Tyard, *Solitaire premier, ou Dialogue de de la fureur poetique*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Galiot du Pré, 1575), 2, decries the "grand nombre d'hommes, qui, trop viuement piquez du corporel, se sont en lui entierement arrestez, & diffinissans la douleur, la volupté, l'indolence, & les poignantes affections corporelles, ont osé (les miserables) loger en si vil lieu la fin, & le terme du souuerain bien, & derniere felicité, rendans par trop delicate sensibilité du corps leurs ames estourdies, comme d'une paralisie stupide, & insensee."

Biblical scripture.⁶ A growing apprehension of vanity – in particular, the vanity of the enemy side – lies at the Reformation’s epicenter, stoked by a reaction against cynical papal indulgences and corruption. Vanity is woven through the interdependent doctrines over which Protestant theologians disagreed most vehemently with the Catholic Church: the relationship between creation and original sin, the resultant need for and means to justification (the remission of original sin through Christ), and the open questions of eschatology (the end of creation) and soteriology (salvation). Each of these doctrines rested on Biblical revelation and therefore belonged to theology, but each also intersected with cosmology: the branch of natural philosophy concerned with the physical origin, composition, and fate of the universe, pursuant to establishing a cosmic purpose – a natural theology – for human beings. Despite universal agreement that vanity was bad, opinions diverged on universal conditions and on the human ability to escape vanity. By defining the *vanitas* theme (and *vanitas* music) in cosmological rather than narrow moral terms, by cross-examining the theme’s ecumenical appeal, and by focusing on the

⁶ On the Reformation’s medieval roots, see Heiko A. Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992). On the general continuity of thought from the Middle Ages through the Renaissance, see Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*; idem, *Renaissance Concepts of Man and Other Essays* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), esp. chapter 6; Anthony Levi, *Renaissance and Reformation: The Intellectual Genesis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002). Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 3, write that “[t]he customary divide between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is particularly artificial for intellectual history, including the history of those ideas and thinkers called ‘philosophy’ and ‘philosophers’”. Much of the most admired, most discussed, and most characteristic philosophy of the Renaissance was indeed ‘medieval’ philosophy, which flourished in the sixteenth century and whose weaker effects were felt still later.” In the authors’ judgment, “one may identify the hallmark of Renaissance philosophy as an accelerated and enlarged interest, stimulated by newly available texts, in primary sources of Greek and Roman thought that were previously unknown or partially known or little read” (4). Levi’s thesis is that the Protestant reformations (they were multiple) do not represent a significant intellectual departure from the “renaissance” that preceded them, which had itself been spurred by the failure of Christian theologians to accommodate philosophy; and that the catalysts of schism were more socio-political than theological. Be that as it may, the primary texts used here and in other chapters communicate doctrine with evident sincerity, and differences between them carry significant ethical and artistic implications regardless of ulterior motives.

Biblical, Platonic, and Hermetic channels by which it was carried into the sixteenth century, I aim here to situate the *Octonaires* at the intersection of two opposing viewpoints, that of academic Neoplatonism and that of Calvinism, which I will address in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively. A number of music examples will serve here to illustrate the cosmological principles at stake, while leaving little doubt, I feel, of Le Jeune's own perspective.

The main point that I would convey across this chapter and the next is that with respect to both the affliction of vanity and the allure of harmony, the viewpoint of Renaissance Neoplatonism – in particular but not exclusively, the viewpoint of the French Academy – should not be seen as equivalent to that of the ancient traditions that fed into it. The reasons for this departure may be found in the centuries of thought that intervened between ancient Neoplatonism and its Renaissance revival, which was not simply a reboot of the original. Especially, efforts during the Middle Ages to fuse Aristotelian natural philosophy with Christian theology had a significant impact on Renaissance Neoplatonists, who developed in response a new epistemological view of the lower material world – traditionally, the vain world of appearances. With this new perspective, they articulated a new idea of universal harmony that was also a departure from their distant Greek ancestors. They strayed from the dualist separation of matter and spirit upheld by Plato, and toward the ideal of a unitary synthesis of the two. In keeping with Greek tradition, they continued to predicate salvation on human agency, in particular on the attainment of wisdom. But the path to wisdom had been reconfigured. Given the historical scope of these developments, I can only aim for a synopsis here and in Chapter 3, which I hope will succeed at drawing a sharp contrast between the traditional Christian

conception of vanity, still insisted upon by Protestants, and the unitary conception of harmony espoused by Catholic Neoplatonists.

I. *Vanitas* cosmology

As a blemish that was considered innate to being human, vanity was not only a moral problem: then as now, understanding human nature and morality required knowing (to the extent possible) the universal laws to which humans are subject. Because these laws routinely invoked musical concepts, *vanitas* music should be regarded as cosmologically subversive by definition, and allusions to music in *vanitas* art should likewise be considered from both a moral and a cosmological point of view.⁷ The phrase *du monde* in Chandieu's title reminds the reader of this essential correlation. So, too, does the first *Octonaire* of his and Le Jeune's cycle:

Quand on arrestera la course coustumiere
Du grand courrier des Cieux qui porte la lumiere,
Quand on arrestera l'an qui roule toujours,
Sur un char attelé de mois, d'heures, de jours:
Quand on arrestera l'armée vagabonde
Qui va courant la nuict par le vuide des Cieux,
Décochant contre nous les longs traits de ses yeux,
Lors on arrestera l'inconstance du monde.⁸

When you stop the customary race

⁷ My discussions of the pre-modern and early-modern science of cosmology are based on Edward Grant, *Planets, Stars, and Orbs: The Medieval Cosmos, 1200-1687* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), especially chapter 1. Grant proceeds from the definition of "cosmos" in the *Oxford English Dictionary* – "the world or universe as an ordered system" (7) – and defines cosmology as the description thereof. He identifies Aristotle's *De caelo* as "the primary cosmological treatise available during the Middle Ages" (9) and focuses on the importance of that treatise up to the time of Newton's *Principia*.

⁸ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:1-5.

*Of the great, light-bearing heavenly courier,
When you stop the ever-rolling year,
Borne on a chariot yoked to months, hours, and days;
When you stop the wandering army
Running through the nighttime heavenly void,
Shooting long darts at us from its eyes,
Then will you stop the inconstancy of the world.*

The Bible provided Chandieu and every other Christian with an explanation for vanity: the way to hold universal conditions accountable was to blame ourselves for them. In Genesis 3, the *vanité de l'homme* brings an end to Paradise and the beginning of the *vanité du monde*. The sacrificial mission of Christ was supposed to have righted the wrong, but as that event receded into history while the vain world continued to turn, Christians were forced to come to terms with what the immediate promise of salvation – Jesus' pronouncement that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2) – really meant.⁹ The inconstancy of the physical universe remained in force, while millenarian predictions of the apocalypse came and went. Christ's remission of original sin, the cause of vanity, had not made the world any less vain, and although conditions could change and doubtless would change at any moment, until then salvation must be understood as an escape from the world, which must be regarded as perennially suspect.

On the other hand, the Bible was not the only place to look for answers. The science of cosmology originated in ancient Greece and, as is well known, its leading Greek practitioners, especially Plato and Aristotle, had a dominant influence on Western

⁹ Unless otherwise noted, all Biblical citations in English are from the Douay-Rheims Bible, a translation of the Latin Vulgate published in 1582 (New Testament) and 1609-10 (Old Testament); accessed at www.drbo.org. I take the occasional liberty of altering punctuation for clarity. On the origins of Christian apocalyptic, see Bernard McGinn, "The End of the World and the Beginning of Christendom," in *Apocalypse Theory and the Ends of the World*, ed. Malcolm Bull (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 58-89.

thought until the seventeenth century. Christians admired Plato for his belief in a benevolent creator, the immortality of souls, and the clear distinction he made between ephemeral matter and eternal spirit. The cosmography and physics of Aristotle, the “master of those who know,” were universally taught and debated.¹⁰ The ancient Greek cosmologists generally shared an assumption that the universe, once created, could not be subject to fundamental alteration or decay, as this would negate their starting premise of a cosmos or world order.¹¹ The point of having a cosmological viewpoint was that it allowed one to posit stable truths, even if those truths had to be located beyond the cosmos – whence for example the Pythagorean reverence for immutable, preexisting harmonic ratios. The need to associate such truths with a supreme, transcendental creator receives its earliest definitive expression with Plato.¹²

¹⁰ The complementarity of the Platonic and Christian conceptions of divinity is well known. Aristotelian cosmology was largely adopted by Christians following the reintroduction of his natural philosophy into western Europe in the thirteenth century. For an overview, see Edward Grant, “Medieval Cosmology,” in *Cosmology: Historical, Literary, Philosophical, Religious, and Scientific Perspectives*, ed. Norriss S. Hetherington (New York: Garland, 1993), 181-99. The chief differences between Christian and Aristotelian cosmology relate to the questions of eternity and infinity. Catholic orthodoxy also diverged from Plato in the belief in creation *ex nihilo*, which, though not unambiguously founded on Biblical scripture, was also accepted on faith by Protestants; see Grant, *op. cit.*, 185-86. In sixteenth-century France, lay readers could learn about cosmography from works such as Petrus Apianus’s *Cosmographicus liber* (1524), translated by Gemma Frisius as *La Cosmographie de Pierre Apian* (Paris: Vivant Gaultherot, 1553); François de Belleforest, *La Cosmographie universelle de tout le monde* (Paris: Michael Sonnius, 1575); and Darinel (pastor of Amadis), *La Sphere des deux mondes* (Antwerp: Jean Richart, 1555). I discuss the onset of Copernicanism in Chapter 4.

¹¹ E.g., Plato, *Gorgias*, 507e-508a: “wise men claim that partnership and friendship, orderliness, self-control, and justice hold together heaven and earth, and gods and men, and that is why they call the universe a *world order*...and not an undisciplined world-disorder”; trans. Donald J. Zeyl, in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 852 (original italics). See also Appendix I, section I.

¹² See David Conway, *The Rediscovery of Wisdom: From Here to Antiquity in Quest of Sophia* (New York: St. Martin’s, 2000), 36. Conway points out that among Greek philosophers, Plato did not originate the idea of monotheism, quoting two fragments of Xenophanes (ca. 570-ca. 475 BCE) that suggest a comparable notion of a single transcendental *nous*. He also points out that monotheism does not preclude belief in other, lesser gods – for the Greeks, including for Plato, typically in the animistic sense.

This view of cosmic autonomy and stability is difficult to reconcile with the Christian belief in a God who intervenes punitively in response to freely made human decisions – namely, to the choice of vanity by Adam and Eve, which fundamentally changed the universal order. For those who shared Plato’s belief in a universe created out of chaos to be perpetually stable and immortal, how did the observable fact of vanity and the Biblical account of its origin fit in? During the Renaissance, widespread acceptance of Plato’s harmonious universe, designed according to Pythagorean ratios and governed by Aristotle’s physical laws, coexisted with the Christian acceptance of Biblical revelation and divine providence in ways that are too complex to summarize here. But in any case, music in the Renaissance continued to invoke the ancient belief in a stable world order set in motion by the divine *logos*, the Word of God. A musical representation of vanity, if analyzed in cosmological terms, stands that idea on its head and deserves recognition as a new response to scientific and religious upheaval.

The indictment of vanity proceeds from the dualist view of a reality divided into matter and spirit, where matter is transcended by spirit. In Platonic language, we gain an imperfect awareness of unchanging spiritual truths via their reflections or echoes in matter, the instability of which cannot provide a basis for truth.¹³ A pictorial representation of vanity thus devalues itself by allowing an appearance to broadcast the falsity of appearances. *Vanitas* music, as I have said, poses an interesting case because of music’s traditional association with cosmic harmony. As sounding number, music

¹³ In the *Phaedo*, Plato differentiates between physical objects and the eternal forms that make the physical universe both possible and intelligible. As purely intelligible entities divorced from matter, the forms can be grasped only by the mind. The dualism at issue here therefore pertains to the philosophy of mind and has traditionally been called mind-body dualism. For an overview, see Howard Robinson, “Dualism,” in *The Blackwell Guide to Philosophy of Mind*, ed. Stephen P. Stich and Ted A. Warfield (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2003), 85-101.

reflected Pythagorean principles. But as sound per se, music was thought to occupy or move through space without displacing matter, which, according to Aristotle, filled space entirely.¹⁴ These factors encouraged the belief in music as a conduit and expression of spirit, and the use of music as a grand metaphor of a rational, harmonious universe determined and governed by intellect. For Plato, music constituted the invisible half of our sensory link to the eternal, next to the visual observation of the heavens: “as the eyes fasten on astronomical motions, so the ears fasten on harmonic ones, and the sciences of astronomy and harmonics are closely akin.”¹⁵

But as a participant in matter, as becoming rather than being, music had to move in time and space, the existence of which, according to Aristotle, “would not have been thought of, if there had not been a special kind of motion, namely that with respect to place.”¹⁶ Neither physical place nor performed music, in other words, could be understood apart from the time elapsed in moving from one place to another; hence, neither could be understood in isolation from change and instability. St. Augustine acknowledges the central importance of this correlation between time and movement to

¹⁴ Cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, IV.213b32-214a17. Jacques Handschin, “The ‘Timaeus’ Scale,” *Musica Disciplina* 4/1 (1950): 5, writes that “in accordance with the conceptions of late Plato, mathematics and music necessarily assume – or they reassume – a great importance in philosophical thought: *number* being by itself symbol of order and *sound* connecting in an unique way the outer world with the inner, the physical with the perceptual, the rational with the sensuous.” The idea of music as sounding number remained commonplace in the late sixteenth century. For example, Jacques Davy Du Perron, in a *Discours de l’ame* delivered for Henri III’s Palace Academy, states, “Si c’est de nombres, ou c’est de nombres considérez selon soy et la science s’en appelle *Arithmétique*, ou selon leurs effets et la science s’en appelle *Musique*”; quoted in Fremy, *Origines de l’Académie française*, 345. Du Perron is describing here the acquired and innate components of the human soul. See also Kate van Orden, “An Erotic Metaphysics of Hearing in Early Modern France,” *The Musical Quarterly* 82/3-4 (1998): 678-91.

¹⁵ Plato, *Republic*, VII.530d, trans. G. M. A. Grube, rev. C. D. C. Reeve, in Cooper (ed.), *Plato*, 1146.

¹⁶ Aristotle, *Physics*, IV.211a10, trans. R. P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 275.

his views on creation vis-à-vis eternity.¹⁷ The creation, as a spherical body occupying a finite amount of space, had to be conceived in terms of the finite movements comprising it, which generated the very notion of time. A harmonious universe would therefore constitute a harmony not of statically generated pitches but of the movements generating them, through space and in time. Pre-modern and early-modern music theorists refer to music's time component – its rhythm – as movement, i.e., change of place, from a recognition that universal harmony derives from a consonance of movements, of which consonant sounds are an artifact.¹⁸ If musical change (embodied by rhythm) is to express universal harmony, it would likewise have to move in harmonious time.

The recognition of a harmonious universal design entailed a mathematician's ability to see through or hear beyond the illusions of becoming generated by unstable matter.¹⁹ But human-made music could offer an imperfect yet pleasantly immediate imitation. A rational premise for *vanitas* music would be to pursue the opposite aim of metric disorientation or negation, as a means of reaffirming the sensory illusion of

¹⁷ Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods (New York: Modern Library, 1993), 350: "For if eternity and time are rightly distinguished by this, that time does not exist without some movement and transition, while in eternity there is no change, who does not see that there could have been no time had not some creature been made, which by some motion could give birth to change – the various parts of which motion and change, as they cannot be simultaneous, succeed one another – and thus, in these shorter or longer intervals of duration, time would begin?" (*De civitate Dei*, XI.6). Cf. Augustine, *Confessions*, XI.

¹⁸ E.g., Jean de Muris, *Ars novae musicae*, II: "sound is generated by motion, since it belongs to the class of successive things.... Succession does not exist without motion. Time inseparably unites motion. Therefore it follows necessarily that time is the measure of sound. Time is also the measure of motion. But for us time is the measure of sound prolonged in one continuous motion, and this same definition of time we also give to the single time interval"; quoted in Strunk (ed.), *Source Readings*, 172.

¹⁹ Pontus de Tyard, *L'Univers, ou, Discours des parties, et de la nature du monde* (Lyon: Jean de Tournes, 1557), 8: "les Mathematiques sont le vray moyen (s'il s'en peut trouver un) pour former quelque certitude aus speculations Theologiques, & Naturelles: incertaines pour la continuelle mutacion, & variable inconstance des matieres de cestes: & pour la difficulté, voire incomprehensibilité des autres."

material becoming. That is, it would seek in a way to be less immediately pleasing – a daring idea.

The problem of vanity can be introduced to the belief in universal harmony by way of Boethius's familiar distinction between *musica mundana* and *musica humana*, which was based on the ancient Greek "two world" dichotomy of macrocosm and microcosm, as described by Plato in the *Philebus* and *Timaeus*.²⁰ Both worlds comprise an admixture of matter and spirit, and a manifold of appearances leading either toward or away from the truth, according to one's perceptive abilities. The microcosm, however, also involves human volition and hence the potential for human error. For Neoplatonists such as Boethius, the ability to align oneself with macrocosmic harmony was predicated

²⁰ Plato, *Philebus*, 28d-30d; *Timaeus*, 29d-47e; cf. Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, trans. Calvin M. Bower, ed. Claude V. Palisca (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 10: "Whoever penetrates into his own self perceives human music. For what unites the incorporeal nature of reason with the body if not a certain harmony and, as it were, a careful tuning of low and high pitches as though producing one consonance? What other than this unites the parts of the soul, which, according to Aristotle, is composed of the rational and the irrational?" (*De institutione musica*, I.2). Boethius's system was reiterated in sixteenth-century France by Tyard; cf. *Solitaire second*, 234ff., where he laments music's fall from its ancient standing among the sciences. Marsilio Ficino dedicates much of the third book of *De triplica vita* (1489) to correspondences between microcosm and macrosom; cf. the French translation by Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie, *Les Trois livres de la vie* (Paris: Abel l'Angelier, 1581), 95v ff., "De la Concorde du Monde, & de la nature de l'homme selon les Estoilles." The microcosm is also the subject of the third *Cantica* of Francesco Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi* (1525). In France, Giorgi's treatise was first published in Latin as *Francisci Georgii Veneti, Minoritanæ familiæ, de harmonia Mundi totius Cantica tria* (Paris: André Berthelin, 1545); then in French as *L'Harmonie du monde, divisee en trois cantiques*, trans. Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie (Paris: Jean Macé, 1578). In this study I quote extensively from La Boderie's translation, which was reissued by the same publisher in 1579. See also François Secret, *L'Esotérisme de Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie* (Geneva: Droz, 1969), 113-22. On Giorgi's life and works, see Cesare Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione: Studi sulla cultura del Cinquecento e del Seicento* (Naples: Morano, 1974), 129-403; idem, "Il tema musicale e architettonico della *Harmonia mundi* da Francesco Giorgi Veneto all'Accademia degli Uranici e a Gioseffo Zarlino," *Musica e storia* 6/1 (1998): 193-210.

For a historical survey of the microcosm idea, see Rudolf Allers, "Microcosmos from Anaximander to Paracelsus," *Traditio* 2 (1944): 319-407. See also Don Parry Norford, "Microcosm and Macrocosm in Seventeenth-Century Literature," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 38/3 (1977): 409-28; Rémi Brague, "Deux versions du microcosme: Être le monde en petit ou devenir le monde en grand," in *Perspectives arabes et médiévales sur la tradition scientifique et philosophique grecque*, ed. Ahmad Hasnawi (Louvain: Peeters, 1997), 523-34; Joseph Cropsey, "The Whole as Setting for Man: On Plato's *Timaeus*," *Interpretation* 17 (1989-90): 165-91.

on choice, which is to say on knowledge or informed choice.²¹ Marsilio Ficino writes of this voluntary alignment in *Five Questions Concerning the Mind*:

And what does the will strive to do if not to transform itself into all things by enjoying all things according to the nature of each? The former strives to bring it about that the universe, in a certain manner, should become intellect; the latter, that the will should become the universe. In both respects, therefore, with regard to the intellect and with regard to the will, the effort of the soul is directed... toward this end: that the soul in its own way will become the whole universe.²²

In a musical context especially, an indictment of vanity leveled against the microcosm should have implicated the macrocosm, and with it one of the most enduring of pre-modern cosmological beliefs. It could suggest that vanity had irrevocably separated humans from the well-ordered macrocosm, and that one tried to know and imitate the macrocosm in vain. Or it could suggest that the macrocosm, as a reflection or extension of the microcosm, itself lacked stability and was vain.

The indictment of *universal* vanity may thus appear unequivocally to negate the premise of universal harmony, yet it would be wrong to assume that it posited a universe

²¹ An important classical source for this idea of imitation is Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* (*De republica*, VI), which was well-known during the Middle Ages through a fifth-century quotation by Macrobius. Scipio Africanus Minor is told that the "celestial harmony has been imitated by learned musicians, both on stringed instruments and with the voice, whereby they have opened to themselves a way to return to the celestial regions, as have likewise many others who have employed their sublime genius while on earth cultivating the divine sciences"; quoted in Yates, *The French Academies*, 39-40. Yates traces the idea forward to the writings of Ficino, then to Tyard and other French academicians. See also Alison Peden, "Music in Medieval Commentaries on Macrobius," in *Musik, und die Geschichte der Philosophie und Naturwissenschaften im Mittelalter: Fragen zur Wechselwirkung von musica und philosophia im Mittelalter*, ed. Frank Hentschel (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 151-61; Leonard M. Koff, "Dreaming the Dream of Scipio," in *Cicero Refused to Die: Ciceronian Influence through the Centuries*, ed. Nancy van Deusen (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 65-84.

The idea of imitating the macrocosm also raises the question of free will, on which Giovanni Pico della Mirandola discourses in the *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (1486). Ernst Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*, trans. Mario Domandi (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1964), 109, summarizes: "[man] embraces nature within himself, without being completely absorbed by it; he contains all its powers, and also adds a specifically new one, the power of 'consciousness.'" Pico's *Oration* was translated into French by Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie in 1578.

²² Trans. Josephine L. Burroughs, quoted in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, ed. Ernst Cassirer, Paul O. Kristeller, and John H. Randall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 200-01.

created without system or meaning. The Christian belief, inherited from both Judaism and Plato, in an all-powerful and benevolent creator made such a proposition untenable, and the indictment should therefore be understood as partial or qualified. As such, it should apply most obviously to human beings, who are innately subject to vain temptations and morally obligated to shun them. Yet this would seem inadequate for explaining the viewpoint of the first *Octonaire* (“Quand on arrestera la course coustumiere,” quoted above). By itself, the poem could be read as a neutral comment on our involuntary subjection to a world in constant flux. It takes an implicitly Aristotelian view of celestial influence, where heavenly movements are the efficient causes of sublunary movements.²³ But it also directly undermines Aristotle’s view of the heavens, paraphrased by Pontus de

²³ Cf. Aristotle, *De generatione et corruptione*, II.10. Cf. Louis Le Roy, *De la vicissitude ou variete des choses en l’univers, et concurrence des armes et des lettres par les premieres et plus illustres nations du monde, depuis le temps où à commencé la civilité, & memoire humaine iusques à present* (Paris: Pierre l’Huillier, 1575), 2r: “Ainsi les causes des mutations cottidiannes, menstruelles, annuelles, & plus rares aduenantes cy bas sont attribuees aux mouuemens celestes, & aux qualitez des matieres subiettes. Attendu qu’en l’vniuers les Elemens & leurs mixtions sont comme matiere, les corps celestes & intelligences superieures comme causes efficientes, qui donnent par leur chaleur & lumiere en procedant, mouuement à toutes choses inferieures.” Cf. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 105, 327-28. Citing Pseudo-Dionysius, Giorgi adduces Aristotle’s principle of efficient causation as evidence of universal harmony: “il me semble qu’il faut encor traicter ce poinct c’est que les Anges mesmes sont meuz du Pere qui est la fontaine & l’origine & le premier moteur de toutes choses. C’est pourquoy S. Denis dict: Le Pere mouuant ils s’éioüissent tous. Eux donc meuz de Dieu meuuent les Cieux, & ceux-cy disposent nos corps & les choses d’audessous à la consonance que commande le premier moteur de toutes choses.... Et combien que les inferieurs soient agitez de plusieurs mouuemens, toutesfois il viennent en mesme consonance par la force du premier, vnique & vniforme mouuement meuz du mesme & vnique moteur” (327-28). Du Bartas, *La Sepmaine*, 38, states the same principle in verse:

Puis qu’aussi d’autre-part l’harmonieuse course
Des clers brandons du Ciel, est l’immortele source
De la vie terrestre: & que tous changemens
Ne sont causés d’ailleurs que de leurs mouuemens,
L’Eternel ne pouuoit en plus commode place
Asseoir le Rond fleuri d’une si belle Masse.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola relies on this principle in the *Heptaplus* (1489), a commentary on Genesis 1. Cf. the French translation by Nicolas le Fèvre de la Boderie, *L’Heptaple de Jean Picus, Comte de la Mirande*, which is appended to Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 862: “le Ciel n’est pas adherent & collé à la terre, comme la forme ou accident à la chose qu’il parfaict, ains luy est ioinct comme l’agent au passif, & la cause changeante au corps qui est changé.” I discuss the *Heptaplus* in Chapter 3.

Tyard as “éternelles, & exemptes de tout inconstant changement.”²⁴ Where is the system or order – the *kosmos* – in inconstancy? This was an epistemological problem: not without a final answer, but beyond human understanding.

Le Jeune’s chanson setting features a good deal of irregular syncopated counterpoint, as though to represent the confusing Ptolemaic ballet of epicycles and eccentrics. The listener is set immediately adrift by the soprano and contralto voices intertwining in free polyphony, giving no clear idea of a regular meter. Only when the tenor enters on the soprano’s opening theme (m. 10) do we perceive an overarching imitative structure – inconstancy of the orderly sort, perhaps, reminiscent of the artificial Platonic need to “save the phenomena”:²⁵

²⁴ Pontus de Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde, & de ses parties* (Paris: Mamert Patisson, 1578), 69r. Cf. Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie, “Chant en forme d’épître dedicatoire,” preface to *L’Encyclie des secrets de l’éternité* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, n.d. [1570]), 17:

Mais quoy que vous voyez du Monde la grand Arche
Sans cesse se mouvoir d’un ordre tant réglé,
Inconstans vous pensez qu’inconstamment il marche,
Ee [sic] l’oeil de la Pensée auez tant aueuglé,
Que vous n’auisez point le Patron & Monarche
Qui tourne comme il veut son vaisseau égallé:
Et ne pensez oyans les esclats du tonnerre,
Bon ne mauuais Esprit au ciel ni en la terre.

Chandieu’s first *Octonaire* may be read as a rebuttal to these verses.

²⁵ Norriss S. Hetherington, “To Save the Phenomena,” in Hetherington (ed.), *Cosmology*, 71: “to explain apparently irregular [planetary] motions detected by the senses as a combination of uniform circular motions, the real motions or forms ascertained by reason and thought.”

Example 2.1: “Quand on arrestera la course coustumiere” (I.1), mm. 1-12

Soprane
*
Quand on ar-re-ste-ra la cour-se coustu-mie-re

Contralte
**
Quand on ar-re-ste-ra la cour-se coustu-mie-re

Tenor haute-contre

-

Baryton

-

Du grand cour-rier des Cieux qui por-te la lu-

Du grand cour-rier des Cieux qui por-te

-mie-re, Quand on ar-re-ste-ra l'an qui rou-le

la lu-mie-re, Quand on ar-re-ste-ra l'an qui

Quand on ar-re-ste-ra l'an qui rou-le tou-

Two departures occur in the chanson from imitative polyphony to homophony, and both may be heard as gestures toward *musique mesurée*. The first instance is for the line, “Qui va courant la nuit par le vuide des Cieux”:

Example 2.2: “Quand on arrêtera la course coutumière” (I.1), mm. 21-32

re-ste-ra l'ar-mée va-gabon-de, l'ar-mée vaga-bon-de Qui
 ar-re-ste-ra l'ar-mée va-gabon-de, l'ar-mée vaga-bon-de Qui
 re-ste-ra l'ar-mée va-gabon-de, l'ar-mée vaga-bon-de Qui
 ar-re-ste-ra l'ar-mée va-gabon-de, l'ar-mée vaga-bon-de Qui

va cou-rant la nuit par le vui-de des
 va cou-rant la nuit par le vui-de des
 va cou-rant la nuit par le vui-de des
 va cou-rant la nuit par le vui-de des

Cieux, Décochant, Décochant, Décochant con-tre nous, con-
 Cieux, Décochant, Décochant, Décochant, Décochant, Décochant, Décochant
 Cieux Décochant con-tre nous, Décochant con-tre nous, Décochant
 Cieux, Décochant con-tre nous, Décochant, Décochant

The allusion to a heavenly void is striking: Aristotle ruled out the physical possibility of a void because he derived his laws of motion and his definitions of space and place from the principle of plenitude. I will return to this subject and its implications for the *vanitas* tradition in Chapter 4. The second instance of homophony occurs at the end of the chanson with the second iteration of the line, “Lors on arrestera l’inconstance du monde.” The line is first heard in syncopated imitation, after which Le Jeune restates it in rhythmic unison:

Example 2.3: “Quand on arrestera la course coustumiere” (I.1), mm. 37-51

The musical score is written for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "yeux, Lors on ar - re - ste - ra, Lors on ar - re - ste - ra, on ar - re - ste - ra l'in - con - stan - ce du monde." The score illustrates a syncopated imitation of the line "Lors on ar - re - ste - ra" followed by a rhythmic unison restatement.

The image displays two systems of musical notation, each consisting of four staves (three vocal parts and one bass line). The lyrics are in French. The first system contains the lyrics: "ce du monde. Lors on ar - re - ste -". The second system contains the lyrics: "-ra l'in - con - stan - ce du monde." The music is written in a style that suggests a 16th-century French lute song. The first system shows irregular syncopation and metric ambiguity, while the second system features a more regular, even duple pulse.

The poem asserts that universal inconstancy will end only with the cessation of heavenly movement, and the music represents inconstancy in large part through irregular syncopation and metric ambiguity. By restating the final line of verse homophonically with an even duple pulse, Le Jeune connects *musique mesurée* to the hypothetical attainment of repose, after having connected it to inconstant movement through a void. But for Neoplatonists, the attainment of repose was predicated on the belief that the heavens move in a stable and harmonious equilibrium, whereas the poem contradicts that belief by describing the heavens as merely inconstant. The homophonic restatement of “Lors on arrêtera l’inconstance du monde” therefore connects *musique mesurée* to a subversive characterization of heavenly movement.

The second *Octonaire* of mode 1 (Ionian) groups earthly movement together with celestial in order to differentiate both from the constancy of God:

Qui ne s'esbahira levant en haut les yeux
Voyant l'ordr'aresté de la course des Cieux
Et regardant en bas la terre ferm'et stable
N'avoir rien qui ne soit inconstant et muable?
Ce qui vit sur la terr'et tout ce qui en est
Est caduc et mortel, sans repos, sans arrest:
Les Cieux roulent toujours, et sur les Cieux demeure
Le repos aresté d'une vie meilleure.²⁶

*Who should not be amazed, on lifting his eyes
And seeing the fixed order of the heavens,
And on looking down to the earth, firm and stable,
To find nothing but change and inconstancy?
Those living on earth, and all things in it
Are fragile and mortal, restless and ceaseless;
The heavens forever turn, and above them abides
The final repose of a better life.*

Unlike the first chanson, this one begins in homophony (“Qui ne s’esbahira levant en haut ses yeux”) which then unravels into imitative polyphony (“Voyant l’ordre aresté de la course des Cieux”):

²⁶ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:6-10.

Example 2.4: “Qui ne s’esbahira, levant en haut les yeux” (I.2), mm. 1-20

Soprane
*
Qui ne s'es - ba - hi - ra, Qui ne s'es - ba - hi - ra

Contralto
**
Qui ne s'es - ba - hi - ra, Qui ne s'es - ba - hi - ra

Tenor haute-contre

Qui ne s'es - ba - hi - ra, Qui ne s'es - ba - hi - ra

Baryton

Qui ne s'es - ba - hi - ra

le - vant en haut les yeux, le - vant en haut

le - vant en haut les yeux, le - vant en haut

le - vant en haut les yeux, le - vant en haut

le - vant en haut les yeux, le - vant en haut

les yeux Voy - ant l'ordr' a - re - sté, Voy - ant l'ordr' a - re - sté

les yeux Voy - ant l'ordr' a - re - sté, Voy - ant l'ordr' a - re - sté

les yeux Voy - ant l'ordr' a - re - sté, Voy - ant l'ordr' a - re - sté

les yeux Voy - ant l'ordr' a - re - sté de

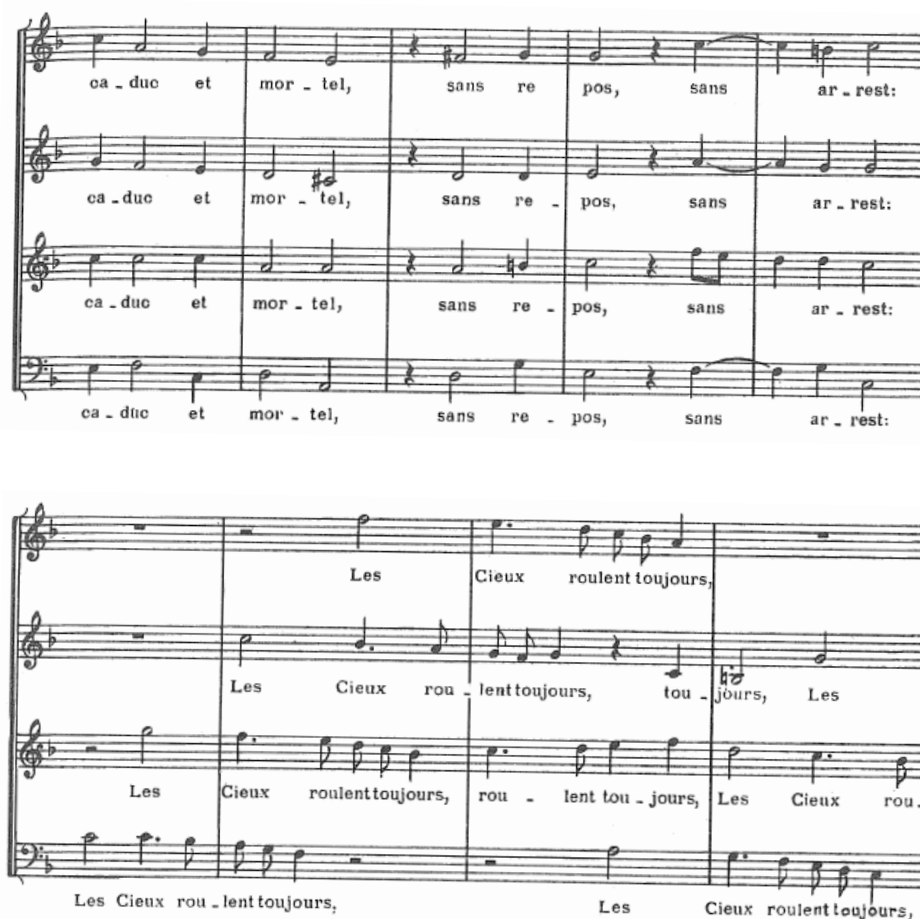


Celestial and terrestrial inconstancy are thus linked by the same procedure of disrupting rhythmic unison, which again suggests the inherent instability of *musique mesurée*.

To underscore the idea that everything on earth is fragile and mortal, without rest or pause (“sur la terre, tout ce qui en est / Est caduc et mortel, sans repos, sans arrest”), Le Jeune returns to homophony, and then back again to imitative polyphony for “Les Cieux roulent toujours”:

Example 2.6: “Qui ne s’esbahira, levant en haut les yeux” (I.2), mm. 39-53

sur la terr' et tout ce qui en est, et tout ce qui en est Est
 sur la terr' et tout ce qui en est, et tout ce qui en est Est
 sur la terr' et tout ce qui en est, et tout ce qui en est Est
 sur la terr' et tout ce qui en est, et tout ce qui en est Est



As though in spite of the cosmological rationale of a “union of poetry and music,” which was the first stage of the soul’s escape from “discords and disorders” and ascent toward divinity, *musique mesurée* is used here to represent worldly unrest, fragility, and mortality.²⁷

²⁷ Yates, *The French Academies*, 79-80, describes the four stages of this re-ascent. The word *caduc* (or *caduque*) today means null, void, or obsolete; in the *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694) it is defined as “Vieux, cassé, qui a desja perdu de ses forces, & qui en perd tous les jours davantage.” Cf. the *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, ed. Alain Rey (Paris: Le Robert, 2012), s.v. “caduc, caduque”: “au latin *caducus*, adjectif dérivé du radical de *cadere* ‘tomber’. Le mot qualifie proprement ce qui tombe ou est près de sa chute, surtout en parlant d’une feuille, d’un fruit, d’où, au figuré, ce qui est fragile, périssable.... Le sens concret, qualifiant ce qui tombe, est près de sa chute (1543), est devenu littéraire et archaïque.” An alternative translation would therefore be “fallen.”

The poem ends by declaring that true repose can only be attained beyond the universe: “sur les Cieux demeure / Le repos aresté d’une vie meilleure.” As with the first poem, Le Jeune again chooses homophony to state the final line:

Example 2.7: “Qui ne s’esbahira, levant en haut les yeux” (I.2), mm. 63-71

The image displays two systems of musical notation, each consisting of four staves (three treble and one bass). The first system contains the lyrics: "- re, et sur les Cieux de - meu - re". The second system contains the lyrics: "Le re - pos a - re - sté d'u - ne vi - e meil - leu - re." The music is written in a homophonic style, with a common meter. The first system shows a melodic line in the treble clef and a supporting line in the bass clef. The second system shows a similar structure, with the lyrics "Le re - pos a - re - sté d'u - ne vi - e meil - leu - re." written below the staves.

As at the end of the first chanson, Le Jeune’s use of *musique mesurée* for a verse about repose highlights the same contradiction between the poem’s moral and the technique’s rationale. The latter is described by Tyard as a means of awakening the soul with a

“poetic furor” (*fureur poétique*) – an idea taken from Plato. Tyard writes in *Solitaire premier* that the soul

would seem to be incompatible with all just action, were not the horrible discord transmuted by some means into a sweet symphony, and the impertinent disorder reduced to an equal measure, well-ordered and divided. And the poetic furor is particularly charged with doing this, awakening the sleeping part of the soul with musical tones, and comforting the perturbed part with the suavity and sweetness of harmony, driving out discord with the diversity of musical accords, and finally reducing the disorder to a certain proportionate and well-measured equality, apportioned by the graceful and serious facility of verses that are exactly composed with a studious observance of number and measure.²⁸

The spiritual elevation that would follow is a state of being that Chandieu’s poem reserves for the afterlife, whereas it would be difficult to interpret Tyard’s theory, and Baïf’s method, as anything other than worldly in their application. Frances Yates identifies the *fureur poétique* as “the first of the four steps of divine enthusiasm by which the soul begins to mount back towards its home.”²⁹ Tyard characterizes three of these steps as taking place on earth; all four depend to some extent on human agency.³⁰

²⁸ Tyard, *Solitaire premier*, 16-17: “Incompatible par ce point semble estre en elle toute iuste action, si par quelque moyen cest horrible discord, n’est transmué en douce simphonie, & ce desordre impertinent reduit en egalité mesurée, bien ordonnée, & compartie. Et de ce faire est pour son peculier deuoir la fureur Poetique chargée resueillant par les tons de Musique l’ame en ce, qu’elle est endormie, & confortant par la suauité & douceur de la harmonie la partie perturbée: puis par la diuersité bien accordée des Musiciens accords chassant la dissonante discorde, & en fin reduisant le desordre en certaine egalité bien & proportionnement mesurée, & compartie par la gracieuse & graue facilité des vers compassez en curieuse obseruance de nombres & de mesures.” In modern French, *compassé* means prim or stuffy; in Tyard’s day it meant precision or exactitude to the point of affectation. Cf. the *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694), s.v. “compassé”: “On dit, d’Un homme, qu’il est bien compassé en ses moeurs, en ses actions, qu’il est compassé, extremement compassé, pour dire, qu’il est exact & réglé jusqu’à l’affectation.”

²⁹ Yates, *The French Academies*, 80.

³⁰ Yates, *The French Academies*, 80, quotes and translates the following on the third and fourth stages of enthusiasm from Tyard’s *Discours philosophiques* (1587): “When by these means the diuers powers of the soul, formerly dissipated here and there in various exercises, are drawn up and gathered together in the unique intention of the reasonable Understanding, the third enthusiasm is necessary to set aside these intellectual ratiocinations concerning principles and conclusions and to reduce the Understanding to union with the Soul: which comes about through the ravishment of prophecies and divinations. Whoever is moved by divining or prophetic enthusiasm, ravished in interior contemplation he joins his Soul and all his senses together, rising high above all apprehensions of human and natural reason to draw from the most intimate, remote, and profound secrets of divinity the prediction of those things which must come to pass.

Tyard's philosophical predecessor Francesco Giorgi invokes Hermes

Trismegistus to make the same worldly point, that "man accords his song with the Angels whom he contains":

Man is more excellent than the heavens, or at least he rejoices in an equal condition. For each heavenly thing that descends to earth forsakes the bounds of heaven, but man climbs to heaven and measures it.... [A]nd what is more marvelous, he climbs to heaven without abandoning the earth, so great is the human power. Wherefore we should be emboldened to say that man is a mortal, terrestrial God, and God an immortal, celestial man.³¹

Yates characterizes the latter three of Tyard's *fureurs* as "higher stages of insight into reality" – presumably, therefore, insight acquired while alive on earth.³² I will return in Chapter 3 to the worldly understanding of ascent that this quotation from Giorgi reveals.

Finally, when all that is in the essence and in the nature of the Soul is made One, she must (in order to return to her source and origin) suddenly withdraw herself into the sovereign One, who is above all essences, and this the great and celestial Venus accomplishes by Love, that is to say by the fervent and incomparable desire which the Soul, when so elevated, has of enjoying the divine and eternal beauty."

³¹ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 222: "Que l'homme accorde son chant avec les Anges qu'il contient.... C'est pourquoy a dict Mercure Trismegiste: L'homme est plus excellent que les celestes, ou pour le moins il iouït d'égale condition. Car chacun des celestes qui descend en terre, delaisse les bornes du Ciel, mais l'homme monte au Ciel & le mesure.... & ce qui est plus émerueillable, il monte au Ciel sans abandonner la terre, tant est grande la puissance humaine. Parquoy il se faut enhardir de dire que l'homme est vn terrestre Dieu mortel, & Dieu vn homme celeste, immortel."

Tyard borrowed extensively from the first Paris edition of Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi* (cited in note 20); see Kathleen M. Hall, *Pontus de Tyard and his Discours philosophiques* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 88, 94-96, 107-08. Jean-Antoine de Baïf is certain to have had prior knowledge of Giorgi through his father, Lazare de Baïf, who as François I's ambassador to Venice was charged with monitoring Italian and Greek cultural developments there; see Yates, *The French Academies*, 6, 15-17. On Giorgi's influence in France, see Frances A. Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1999), 85-91; D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (London: Warburg, 1958), 112-25; Jean-François Maillard, "Le 'De Harmonia Mundi' de Georges de Venise: Aperçus sur la genèse et la structure de l'œuvre," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 179/2 (1971): 181-203. Giorgi's enduring influence in France is perhaps best illustrated by the 1622 re-edition of his Cabalistic treatise, *In Scripturam Sacram et philosophos tria millia problemata* (Paris: J. Bessin & G. Alliot), which provoked a 450-page rebuttal from Marin Mersenne: *Observationes et Emendationes ad Francisci Georgii Veneti Problemata: in hoc opere Cabala evertitur, editio vulgata, et inquisitores sanctæ fidei Catholicæ ab Hæreticorum, atque Politicorum calumnijs accuratè vindicantur* (Paris: Sebastien Cramoisy, 1623), which was published as an appendix to the *Questiones celeberrimæ in Genesim*. Giorgi's *Problemata* had already been published in Paris in 1574 and 1575; see Maillard, op. cit., 182.

³² Yates, *The French Academies*, 81.

For now, it may be observed that in the present chanson, Le Jeune uses *musique mesurée* to underline two ideas: first, that inconstancy obtains at all levels of temporal existence no matter what; and second, that repose can be attained only outside of the world. The poem contains a hint of the Neoplatonic belief in material equilibrium: the *ordre arrêté* (fixed order) of the heavens. But whereas Neoplatonists attributed this order to universal harmony and stability, Chaudieu links it only to fragility and mortality.

The two chansons just examined are preoccupied with material change – an uncontroversial fact about the universe, whatever conclusions one chose to draw from it. The third chanson of mode 11 (Aeolian) links the human subjection to change to the vanity of seeking pleasure or wisdom in it:

C'est folie et vanité
 D'estre en ce monde aresté.
 Le plaisir de ceste vie
 N'est qu'ennuy et fascherie.
 O Dieu, seul sage et constant,
 Fais-moy pour vivre content
 Recevoir de ta largesse
 Ma fermeté et sagesse.³³

*It is folly and vanity
 To be detained in this world.
 The pleasures of this life
 Are only boredom and vexation.
 O God, who alone is wise and constant,
 Make me so that I may live content
 To receive from your bounty
 My wisdom and strength.*

³³ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 8:31-33.

Le Jeune sets the first four lines of verse in imitative polyphony, with the exception of a brief coalescence on the word “fascherie” (vexation) in mm. 24-25. With “O Dieu” he uses regular points of imitation in contrast with the syncopated homophony of “seul sage et constant”:

Example 2.8: “C’est folie et vanité” (XI.3), mm. 19-59

et fas - che-rie, et fas - che-ri - e, N'est qu'en - nuy, qu'en nuy et fas -
 - nuy et fas - che-ri - - - e, N'est qu'en - nuy et fas -
 qu'en - nuy et fas - che-ri - - e, N'est qu'en - nuy et fas -

- che-ri - e. O Dieu, seul sa - ge et con -
 - che-ri - e. O Dieu, O Dieu, seul sa - ge et con -
 - che-ri - e. O Dieu, seul sa - ge et con -

- stant, Fais - moy pour vi - vre con - tent Re - ce - voir de ta
 - stant, Fais - moy pour vi - vre con - tent Re - ce - voir de ta
 - stant, Fais - moy pour vi - vre con - tent Re - ce - voir de ta

lar - ges - se Ma fer - me - té et sa - ges - se. O

Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu,

O Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu,

Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu, O Dieu,

seul sa - ge et con - stant, Fais - moy pour vi - vre con -

seul sa - ge et con - stant, Fais - moy pour vi - vre con -

seul sa - ge et con - stant, Fais - moy pour vi - vre con -

tent Re-ce-voir de ta lar-ges - se Ma fer - me-té et sa-ges - se.
 tent Re-ce-voir de ta lar-ges - se Ma fer - me-té et sa-ges - se.
 tent Re-ce-voir de ta lar-ges - se Ma fer - me-té et sa-ges - se.

On the word “constant,” he chooses to break the 2:1 rule of *musique mesurée*: the first syllable receives double emphasis. He also adds a slight ripple to the homophony; note

that the middle voice in mm. 30 and 48 is briefly out of sync with the other two. This is in fact the only occurrence in the thirty-six poems of the antonym of *inconstant*, and coincidentally or not, Le Jeune avoids setting it in strict *musique mesurée*.

Heavily syncopated homophony then returns with the lines, “Fait-moy pour vivre content / Recevoir de ta largesse / Ma fermeté et sagesse.” It could again be supposed that Le Jeune chose *musique mesurée* for these concluding verses because the style was best suited for representing strength and wisdom (“fermeté et sagesse”). But the rhythms do not suggest *fermeté*, and once again the poem’s moral contradicts the self-acquired wisdom that *musique mesurée* represents: wisdom depends on God’s largess. An academician could have objected that the *fureur poétique* also comes from God, that it is divine inspiration. Giorgi acknowledges God as the source of all good, and only of good.³⁴ But the academic promotion of human agency, divinely inspired or not, goes against the Protestant injunction to be content with receiving from God rather than aspiring toward him.³⁵ The verses in syncopated *musique mesurée* here deliver a human petition, which is made to sound off-kilter next to the preceding “O Dieu” in straightforward duple meter.

To the extent that it valorized human wisdom, *musique mesurée* could be implicated in Augustine’s rebuke of philosophy as an inadequate substitute for revelation,

³⁴ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 87-88: “Combien que par témoignage des hommes sages toutes influences soient bonnes, toutesfois aucuns le croient moins qu’ils debroient: lesquels s’ils ne sont dignes d’hellebore cederont aux raisons inuincibles, que nous amenerons. Que ceux qui afferment les influences mauuaises me disent ie les en pry, d’où vient ceste malice? Est-ce de Dieu commandant, ou de l’Intelligence mouuante, ou du Ciel tournoyant? Certainement ce n’est pas de Dieu, qui est la premiere regle de toutes choses. Et celà est mal ou peché, qui se faict contre la volonté du Prince, ou qui decline de sa balance. Et ne peut en la nature le mal prouenir de la source de bonté.”

³⁵ I discuss Protestant views on human agency in Chapter 4.

which led him to abandon his initial Neoplatonic orientation.³⁶ The idea of the vanity of philosophy itself demands consideration, given that many schools of thought offered rational responses to the problem. How do philosophy and revelation (divine wisdom) intersect with the *vanitas* tradition, and what can this tell us about Le Jeune's participation in the latter?

II. The *vanitas* tradition to which everyone belonged

All Christians could heed the words of St. Paul in Romans 8:20, that “the creature [creation] was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope” – an allusion to the corrosive impact of Adam's original sin. Plato, who devalues the material world as a source of the good, beautiful, or true, is an equally important parallel influence on the *vanitas* tradition. Antoine de Chandieu, the principal poet of the *Octonaires*, echoes Plato when he writes that “since we are ordinarily entranced by earthly affections, and since the pleasures of this world...are all dreams and vain illusions that deceive us, it is imperative that we awaken ourselves in good faith.”³⁷ The Platonic conception of vanity likewise informs the *Corpus Hermeticum*, which has long been recognized as an important literary component of the Neoplatonic tradition.³⁸

³⁶ Etienne Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Augustine* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1949), 311: “la doctrine d'Augustin proclame à chaque page l'insuffisance de la philosophie”; cf. Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation*, 93ff.

³⁷ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 200: “puis que nous sommes ordinairement endormis ez affections de la terre, & que les plaisirs de ce monde (comme disoit Nazianzene) sont autant de songes & vaines illusions qui nous trompent, il est bien de besoin qu'on nous resueille à bon escient.”

³⁸ See Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), chapters 1-10.

The *Hermetica* puts great emphasis on the vanity and evil inherent in matter, and on the consequent need for spiritual transcendence. It too should be regarded as a primary influence, and as another plausible reason to narrow the distance between the *Octonaires* and the tradition I hold them to be subverting.³⁹ A visible Neoplatonic influence among many sixteenth-century Protestants (see Appendix 1, section II) may also be invoked in support of this view. But whereas vanity emerges as a common moral pitfall in many distinct traditions, we do not find a shared cosmological or soteriological doctrine between them, nor could we rule out the possibility of subversion from “within the fold” of a particular tradition.

The diverse complexion of the *vanitas* tradition is reflected in the geographic distribution of visual treatments, which appeared throughout early-modern Europe in both Catholic and Protestant areas. To introduce an essay on the *vanitas* theme in seventeenth-century Italian music, Maya Suemi Lemos refers indiscriminately to “painters of vanity,” who depicted “a world devalued and emptied of its sense by the Neoplatonic ontological separation, of a reality perceived as wavering and fleeting, of successive metamorphoses and appearances of being.”⁴⁰ In ascribing a specifically Neoplatonic perspective to all *vanitas* art, she nonetheless characterizes the theme as a “fundamental sentiment underlying the entire episteme of the seventeenth century, exceeding the scope of its philosophical, religious and moral inscription, and coming to

³⁹ The Hermetic *octonaire*, which I discuss in Chapter 5, is an important indicator of this proximity.

⁴⁰ Maya Suemi Lemos, “La Musique et la méditation: L’Exemple des vanités,” in *La Méditation au XVII^e siècle: Rhétorique, art, spiritualité*, ed. Christian Belin (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2006), 235: “les peintures de vanité parlent d’un monde dévalué et vidé de son sens par la séparation ontologique néo-platonicienne, d’une réalité aperçue en état de chancellement et fuite, des successives métamorphoses et apparences de l’être.” See also idem, “Du Discours moral au discours musical: Le Thème de la vanité dans la musique italienne post-tridentine” (PhD diss., Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2006).

affect all forms of expression: literature, visual art, and music.”⁴¹ She then narrows her focus to the theme’s Catholic heritage:

Rooted in the long medieval tradition of the doctrine of the “contempt of the world” [*contemptus mundi*], and updated by the transformations of the modern era along with religious reforms, the vanity *topos* is a fundamental theme in the preaching of the post-Tridentine Church. In this context, the emergence of music on vanity could be considered an extension of the apostolic sphere of activity.⁴²

This narrowing also serves to highlight the tradition’s broader historical import, which long predates the Protestant Reformation. In late sixteenth-century France, we find important contributions to the vanity discourse on the Catholic side, for example from Rémi Belleau (one of the *Pléiade*), Diego de Estella (translated by Gabriel Chappuys in 1587), and Michel de Montaigne.⁴³ The *Hermetica* was first translated into French by Gabriel Du Préau in 1557 and again by François de Foix-Candale in 1574.⁴⁴ Both

⁴¹ Lemos, “La Musique et la méditation,” 235: “Dérivant d’un sentiment fondamental, sous-jacent à toute l’épistémè du XVII^e siècle, il dépasse le cadre de son inscription philosophique, religieuse et morale, et vient affecter toutes les formes d’expression: la littérature, les arts plastiques et la musique.”

⁴² Lemos, “La Musique et la méditation,” 237: “Enraciné dans la longue tradition médiévale de la doctrine du ‘mépris du monde’ et mis à jour par les transformations de l’ère moderne ainsi que par les réformes religieuses, le *topos* de la vanité est un thème fondamental dans la prédication de l’Église post-tridentine. Dans ce contexte, l’apparition des vanités en musique peut être envisagée comme un élargissement de la sphère de l’action apostolique.”

⁴³ Rémi Belleau, *Discours de la vanité, pris de l’Ecclesiaste de Salomon* (Paris: Mamert Patisson, 1576); Diego de Estella, *Livre de la vanité du monde, divisé en trois parties*, trans. Gabriel Chappuys (Paris: Robert Le Fizelier, 1587); Michel de Montaigne, *Apology for Raymond Sebond*, in *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), 318-457. Montaigne remained a Catholic while many in his family converted to Protestantism.

⁴⁴ *Deux livres de Mercure Trismegiste Hermès tres ancien Theologien, & excellent Philozophe, L’un de la puissance & sapience de Dieu. L’autre de la volonté de Dieu*, trans. Gabriel du Préau (Paris: Estienne Groulleau, 1557); *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste nouvellement traduit de l’exemplaire grec restitué en langue françoise*, trans. François de Foix-Candale (Bordeaux: Simon Millanges, 1574). Foix-Candale re-issued his translation with commentaries in 1579: *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste de la philosophie chrestienne, cognoissance du verbe divin, & de l’excellence des oeuvres de Dieu* (Bordeaux: Simon Millanges, 1579). All citations here are from the 1579 edition. See Jean Dagens, “Le Commentaire du Pimandre de François de Candale,” in *Mélanges d’histoire littéraire offerts à Daniel Mornet... par ses anciens collègues et ses disciples français* (Paris: Nizet, 1951), 21-26; idem, “Hermétisme et cabale en France de Lefèvre d’Etaples à Bossuet,” *Revue de littérature comparée* 35 (1961): 5-16; D. P. Walker, “The *Prisca Theologia* in France,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 17/3-4 (1954): 204-59; Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, 170ff.; Jeanne Harrie, “François Foix de Candale and the Hermetic Tradition

translators were Catholic. Since, therefore, vanity was a universal preoccupation, it is important to ask how Protestants and Catholics differed with respect to the factors mentioned by Lemos – Neoplatonism, the “apostolic sphere of activity,” and the “transformations of the modern era” – and whether this could have led to different artistic outcomes.

The art historian Jacques Foucart would appear to reject this line of inquiry when he states that “one would search in vain...for an explanation for the presence of so many vanities in northern painting,” because “the approach would necessarily remain on the surface of things,” and because “a social condition can never account for the moral and religious provisions of a given stylistic form.”⁴⁵ He therefore downplays Dutch Protestant culture as an explanatory influence, in light of the *vanitas* tradition’s international footprint. He points to the strong residual presence of Catholicism in the United Provinces, asserts that Dutch society “did not evolve differently from other European societies” with respect to its preoccupation with vanity, and is content to remark on the particular stylistic aptitude for the theme in the northern school of painting.⁴⁶ The

in Sixteenth-Century France” (PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 1975); idem, “Duplessis-Mornay, Foix-Candale and the Hermetic Religion of the World,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 31/4 (1978): 499-514; Violaine Giacomotto-Charra, “Le Commentaire au *Pimandre* de François de Foix-Candale: L’Image d’une reine-philosophie en question,” in “La Cour de Nérac au temps de Henri de Navarre et de Marguerite de Valois,” ed. Véronique Ferrer et al, special issue, *Albineana* 24/1 (2012): 207-24.

⁴⁵ Jacques Foucart, “La Peinture hollandaise et flamande de vanité: une réussite dans la diversité,” in Tapié (ed.), *Les Vanités*, 68: “On cherchera vainement..., car la démarche resterait forcément en surface des choses, une explication à la présence de tant de Vanités dans la peinture nordique. Des dispositions morales, religieuses, un état social ne sauraient jamais rendre compte d’une mise en forme stylistique donnée.”

⁴⁶ Foucart, “La Peinture hollandaise et flamande,” 68: “La société hollandaise toute protestante qu’elle soit...n’évolue pas ici différemment des autres sociétés européennes.”

question I would rather ask first, however, is not what explains the genre's broad popularity as such, but how its content was shaped by particular circumstances.

Hans Van Miegroet's article on "Vanitas" in the *Grove Dictionary of Art* gives a sketch of ancient precedents, which the author then applies to the origins of the *vanitas* still-life. Noting the genre's proliferation in both Protestant and Catholic areas, he writes:

Many theories have been advanced to explain the origins and the sudden rise of the *vanitas* still-life. Some scholars have seen its source in the Counter-Reformation (Mâle and Knipping), others in 16th-century symbolism and Calvinism (Bergström), and still others in the then new conception of the importance of painting as an art form, a direct development of the Italian Renaissance (Sterling). In fact, these theories are more complementary than opposed.⁴⁷

Alain Tapié, the editor of a frequently cited anthology on *vanitas* art (in which Foucart's essay also appears), elaborates on this perspective by offering a "petite archéologie du vain" that links the theme to a number of ancient traditions. After mentioning several Biblical and Greek literary influences (Ecclesiastes, Job, Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus), he turns to Greek philosophy, beginning with Plato:

the philosophical current irrigating spiritual meditation on the end of all things and the relativity of earthly goods should be attributed to the diffusion of Platonic thought. Does not Plato go as far as gauging the efficiency of knowledge according to the capacity to forget, in order to grasp truth-perception [*saisir la connaissance*] as an active state of consciousness, without attachment to what has been lost, nor to what will be acquired by way of possession? Is it not also a model of intellectual comportment followed by the Christian hermits, so often called philosophers?⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *Grove Art Online*, s.v. "Vanitas," by Hans J. Van Miegroet. The authors cited are Emile Mâle, *L'Art religieux après le Concile de Trente: Étude sur l'iconographie de la fin du XVI^e siècle, du XVII^e, du XVIII^e siècle, Italie – France – Espagne – Flandres* (Paris: A. Colin, 1932); John B. Knipping, *De Iconografie van de Contra-Reformatie in de Nederlanden*, vol. 1 (Hilversum: P. Brand, 1939-40); Bergström, *Dutch Still-Life Painting*; Charles Sterling, *La Nature-morte de l'antiquité à nos jours* (Paris: P. Tisné, 1959).

⁴⁸ Alain Tapié, "Petite archéologie du vain et de la destinée," in *Les Vanités dans la peinture au XVII^e siècle*, ed. Alain Tapié et al (Caen: Albin Michel, 1990), 71: "Il faudrait alors attribuer à la diffusion de la pensée platonicienne, la permanence du souffle philosophique qui irrigue les méditations spirituelles sur la fin de toutes choses et la relativité des biens terrestres. Platon ne va-t-il pas jusqu'à évaluer l'efficiencia du savoir à la mesure de la capacité d'oubli, afin de saisir la connaissance comme un état actif de la

Tapié reiterates here the well-known influence of Platonism on Christianity, which Augustine makes explicit in his *Confessions*.⁴⁹ By “what has been lost,” he means that which is substantive but transitory. The Christian hermits who fled into the desert, away from the vanity and illusory permanence of Roman civilization, may be regarded as participants in the same tradition. As the forerunners of the monastic orders, they helped to ensure that the Platonic notion of worldly denial would remain near the core of Christianity.

Tapié also mentions two other Greek schools of thought, Stoicism and Epicureanism.⁵⁰ He characterizes Stoicism as “centered on the principle of detachment from worldly goods,”⁵¹ and he cites a number of thematically relevant quotations from Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius on how to cope with uncertain fortune and prepare for death. Of Epicureanism, he writes, “Although opposed to Stoicism and Platonism as a materialist doctrine that excludes the principle of the soul’s immortality,

conscience, sans attache à ce qui est perdu ni à ce qui sera acquis dans l’ordre de la possession? N’est-ce pas là encore un modèle de comportement intellectuel que suivront les ermites de la Chrétienté appelés si souvent philosophes?” Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France*, 56, similarly observes that “[t]he *vanitas* meditation and its equivalents elsewhere frequently develop their themes along lines which coincide with pagan thought, consciously exploiting the ground they share with apologetic humanism.”

⁴⁹ Tapié heads his essay with a quote from Augustine’s *Confessions*, VII.20: “C’est alors qu’ayant lu ces livres platoniciens et appris d’eux à chercher la vérité incorporelle, je vis ‘se manifester à mon intelligence à travers vos œuvres, vos perfections invisibles’. Réjeté loin de Vous, je compris en quoi consistait cette vérité que les ténèbres de mon âme m’empêchaient de contempler.... Mais Vous avez voulu, je crois, les faire tomber entre mes mains, avant que j’eusse médité vos écritures” (69). On Augustine’s influence on Renaissance Neoplatonism, see Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 85-86.

⁵⁰ Cf. Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France*, 47: “The theme of change and instability in the material world coincides broadly with a number of pagan philosophical approaches – Stoic, Sceptic, Epicurean – all of which were current in the later sixteenth century.” Among Protestants with “avowed leanings toward Stoicism,” Cave mentions Duplessis-Mornay, Goulart, and Sponde.

⁵¹ Tapié, “Petite archéologie du vain,” 70: “...le stoïcisme, centré sur le principe du détachement des biens de ce monde.”

Epicureanism advocates a serene conduct before death and the hereafter that requires the attainment of balance in the soul.”⁵² But while the morality of both schools can be found relevant to *vanitas* art (and, as Tapié notes, the bust of Seneca sometimes appears in northern still-lives), one could hardly infer the desire, in a Christian context, to underwrite the cosmology of either school.⁵³ With regard to Epicureanism, this goes without saying: the philosophy rejects divine providence along with Plato’s theories of universal forms and the immortality of the soul. Stoicism, while pious and monotheistic, contradicts Platonism and Christianity in its pantheism, defining God as a corporeal being immanent throughout the entire universe;⁵⁴ and in its materialism, holding that the forms are only imaginary, such that only material bodies acting on other bodies exist.⁵⁵ The third *Octonaire* of mode 1, which rejects the notion of “conjoining God with the world,” effectively nullifies this cosmology, while no Christian could accept the well-known Stoic axiom of “nothing incorporeal.”⁵⁶ Complications such as these led Terence Cave to

⁵² Tapié, “Petite archéologie du vain,” 73: “Bien qu’opposé au stoïcisme et au platonisme en tant que doctrine matérialiste, qui exclut le principe de l’immortalité de l’âme, l’épicurisme propose devant la mort et l’au-delà une conduite sereine qui invite à instaurer dans l’âme humaine un équilibre.” Tapié incorrectly opposes Epicureanism in its materialism to Stoicism; the latter was also thoroughly materialist.

⁵³ A bust of Seneca appears, for example, in a 1621 *Vanitas* by Jacques de Gheyn; see David O. Merrill, “The ‘Vanitas’ of Jacques de Gheyn,” *Yale Art Gallery Bulletin* 25/3 (1960), 9-10.

⁵⁴ Cf. the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. “Stoicism,” by Dirk Baltzly, Spring 2014 Edition, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/stoicism/>. On the cross-pollination between Platonist and Stoic philosophy, see Gretchen Reydam-Schils, *Demiurge and Providence: Stoic and Platonist Readings of Plato’s Timaeus* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999).

⁵⁵ The rejection of real universals also applies to the nominalist *via moderna* pursued in the fourteenth century by William of Ockham. Ockham’s nominalism departed from both Augustinian and Thomist realism (the *via antiqua*) but ran parallel to the nominalist *schola Augustiniana moderna*. For a summary, see Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, 39-41. Luther’s break from the *via moderna* and *schola Augustiniana*, which occurred around 1517-19, was propelled by disagreements over soteriology, not over nominalism: he “objected to Ockham’s theology in so far as it preserved a false moral freedom” (39) – that is, an anti-Pelagian objection (see below).

⁵⁶ The third *Octonaire* of mode 1 is analyzed in Chapter 3, section III. Alan Chong, “Contained under the Name of Still Life: The Associations of Still-Life Painting,” in *Still-Life Paintings from the Netherlands*

observe that “a thorough-going reconciliation of Christian and pagan philosophy was not the primary aim of the devotional writer,” for whom there was “a general tendency... away from complex thought, a tendency towards commonplace formulation and facile paradoxes; thus the *vanitas* themes, like their accompanying images, tend to move into an area of anonymity, a no-man’s-land in which humanism and devotion can overlap without the need for reasoned justification.”⁵⁷ My thesis highlights what I believe to be an important exception to Cave’s general observation here.

Two other Greeks with special relevance to the *vanitas* tradition are the pre-Socratic philosophers Democritus and Heraclitus. According to a popular legend, the spectacle of human folly provoked scornful laughter from Democritus and sorrow from Heraclitus, and the two appear frequently together in *vanitas* art (including in Jacques de Gheyn’s *Humana vana*, which I discuss in Chapter 4).⁵⁸ Tapié writes that by the first half of the seventeenth century, the two had come to emblemize a “morality of deprivation,” which Democritus had bequeathed to the Epicureans.⁵⁹ Tapié does not mention Democritus’s theory of atomism, which became the cosmological basis of Epicurean morality, and which posits the heretical notion (from a Christian standpoint) of divine indifference to universal inconstancy. Of Heraclitus, Tapié writes that he “prefigures

1550-1720, ed. Alan Chong and Walter Zwoek (Zwolle: Waanders, 1999), 16, cites a “neo-Stoic exhortation.” in a 1621 *Allegorical Still Life* by Jacques de Gheyn: an inscription that reads, “Observe moderation, be mindful of the final goal, and follow nature.”

⁵⁷ Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France*, 47.

⁵⁸ For a historical summary of this tradition, see Cora E. Lutz, “Democritus and Heraclitus,” *The Classical Journal* 49/7 (1954): 309-14.

⁵⁹ Tapié, “Petite archéologie du vain,” 73: “La morale chrétienne a mis à contribution ces maximes morales qui exhortent à la tempérance, à l’éloignement des extrêmes. Cette philosophie de la modération trouve ses origines chez Démocrite qui déjà avait formulé une éthique de l’équilibre qui conclut à la nécessité de l’ascèse, tranquille et sereine, aussi éloignée des plaisirs excessifs que de la douleur.”

Stoic fatalism” – again a reference to an ethical stance that neglects its preceding cosmological rationale. I will return to Heraclitean cosmology and atomism in Chapters 3 and 4, as both are relevant to *harmonia mundi* and to my interpretation of the *Octonaires*.

In essence, therefore, Tapié sketches the literary and philosophical heritage of a few basic human concerns – how to understand and deal with change and uncertainty, the correct moral response to human frailty and mortality, the mystery of what comes after death – that no systematic philosophy could ignore, and to which various artistic genres have long responded in kind. In this light, *vanitas* art could be seen to provide a shapeless container for such concerns, and in fairness, this function could satisfy most observers. The Socratic adage that to philosophize is to prepare for death and the eschatological message of Christ can together be regarded as twin founts of the tradition, such that it practically stands for all of pre-modern intellectual history. But needless to say, a Protestant could admire the Stoic adage to “direct the conscience” away from vanity without also admiring Stoic views on cosmology, divinity, or the afterlife.⁶⁰

I will turn now to the Biblical, Platonic, and Hermetic accounts of vanity, all of which tie the theme to human knowledge or wisdom. The Hermetic viewpoint is essentially the same as Plato’s, whose ontology – the valorization of spirit over matter, being over becoming – provides a common thread by virtue of its appeal to Christians generally. The Biblical urtext of the *vanitas* tradition, the wisdom book of Ecclesiastes, exhibits a similar ontological perspective to Plato’s, though it serves a different moral agenda. A rudimentary grasp of these influences is necessary if we are to appreciate how

⁶⁰ Tapié, “Petite archéologie du vain,” 72: “Le philosophe stoïcien...dirige les consciences par un enseignement qui s’adresse à son entourage immédiat pour se propager ensuite au-delà. Sa démarche se rapproche en cela de celle adoptée par les prosélytes de la Réforme.”

Renaissance Neoplatonists departed from them in their effort to transcend vanity. This effort, which I discuss in the next chapter, entailed a new epistemological approach to the problem, one that sought to bridge the gap between matter and divinity.

III. Vanity in relation to wisdom: Solomonic, Platonic, Hermetic, and Neoplatonic

Renaissance Neoplatonism comprises a much broader range of thought than its label suggests. It was a synthesis of Plato and Pythagoras, Aristotle, Plotinus and his disciples, Orphic, Chaldean, and Hermetic writings, the whole of Judeo-Christian theology from Moses to the current papacy, and a long line of Christian mystics from Pseudo-Dionysius to Ficino.⁶¹ Along with these sources, writers in the tradition could draw in humanist fashion from any ancient or medieval authority who might serve to bolster a particular argument. Because of this encyclopedic heritage, neither the Biblical, Platonic, nor Hermetic perspectives on vanity should be treated as equivalent to the Neoplatonic perspective of the Renaissance. In itself, this diversity speaks to an overriding concern for maximal knowledge – scientific and revelatory, of the world and of salvation from the world. To know was to be wise, to be wise was to prepare for the afterlife, and the chief obstacle to wisdom and salvation was vanity.

Ecclesiastes (Hebrew *Qoheleth*) is putatively narrated by King Solomon (ca. 10th century BCE) but was almost certainly written centuries later during the Hellenistic period.⁶² After the famous opening declaration of verse 2 – “Vanity of vanities, saith the

⁶¹ See Appendix 1, section I.

⁶² Ecclesiastes 1:1 identifies the narrator as “the son of David, king in Jerusalem,” i.e. Solomon. On the book’s Hellenistic dating, see *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Books of the Bible*, s.v. “Ecclesiastes” by

Preacher, vanity of vanities, and all is vanity” – the narrator dwells momentarily on the idea of perpetual, cyclical change: “Nothing under the sun is new, neither is any man able to say: Behold, this is new: for it hath already gone before in the ages that were before us” (1:10). He then states his purpose in verses 12-14:

I, Ecclesiastes, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I proposed in my mind to seek and search out wisely concerning all things that are done under the sun. This painful occupation hath God given to the children of men, to be exercised therein. I have seen all things that are done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity, and vexation of spirit.

The first chapter concludes by depreciating the acquisition of knowledge: “Because in much wisdom there is much indignation: and he that addeth knowledge, addeth also labour” (1:18). This pronouncement does not deny the possibility of knowledge; rather, ultimate knowledge of first causes eludes the wise along with the ignorant, so that the wise man is he who realizes this. On one hand, “learning and wisdom excel in this, that they give life to him that possesseth them” (7:13), and “Wisdom hath strengthened the wise more than ten princes of the city” (7:20). But on the other:

I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to understand the distraction that is upon earth: for there are some that day and night take no sleep with their eyes. And I understood that man can find no reason of all those works of God that are done under the sun: and the more he shall labour to seek, so much the less shall he find: yea, though the wise man shall say, that he knoweth it, he shall not be able to find it. (8:16-17)

Stephen Garfinkel; Elias Bickerman, “Koheleth,” in *Four Strange Books of the Bible* (New York: Schocken, 1967), 139-67. For a contrary view, see Richard J. Clifford, *The Wisdom Literature* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 99-100, for whom the linguistic evidence “suggests the Persian period, more specifically a date between 450-350 B.C.E.” Of the book’s putative Greek influences, Garfinkel writes, “Exegetes often situate Qoheleth among at least one or another of the classical streams of ancient Hellenistic philosophical thought such as Stoicism, Sophism (including Skepticism), Epicureanism, or hedonism, or portray it as influenced by some aspect of Egyptian thought,” but that “whatever the purported place of Qoheleth among such intellectual traditions, astute commentators recognize that Qoheleth is to be distinguished from abstract philosophers, and that while his writing employs some syllogistic forms, his purpose is ultimately neither purely philosophical nor abstract. Qoheleth embodies the practical applications that typify both ‘strands’ of wisdom literature throughout much of the ancient Near East including the Hebrew Bible. Both the so-called conventional wisdom traditions and the so-called skeptical wisdom traditions operate at the ground level, rather than as purely speculative and abstract philosophies.”

“To know wisdom” refers to wisdom per se, to the “reason for all those works of God,” and not to the portion of wisdom that earns one the label “wise among men.” The similarity to Platonic epistemology seems clear: the earth is a material “distraction” from spiritual truth.⁶³

Ecclesiastes belongs with other wisdom texts to the convergence of Semitic and Hellenistic philosophy that informed the scholarly orientation of the earliest Christian theologians.⁶⁴ Epistemology was a Greek tradition, pursued by Greek-speaking Jews such as Philo of Alexandria and Flavius Josephus, and by early Christians such as Clement of Alexandria and Origen.⁶⁵ For Christians, the pessimistic worldview of Ecclesiastes received its answer in Christ’s offer of deliverance from the world. Some modern scholars have portrayed Jesus as a sage drawing directly from the Hebrew wisdom

⁶³ The Douay-Rheims Bible is exceptional for using the word “distraction.” The King James Version refers to “the business that is done upon the earth”; the *Sainte Bible* by Lefèvre d’Étaples (1530; cited in note 67) to “l’occupation qui converse en la terre”; the Nouvelle Edition de Genève to “les choses qui se passent sur la terre.” The Vulgate Latin phrase reads “et intelligerem distentionem quae versatur in terra.” *Distensio* literally means a bodily distension, distortion, spasm, or sprain. Applied figuratively to events on earth, “distraction” would seem the better translation.

⁶⁴ See Clifford, *The Wisdom Literature*, chapters 5 and 9; see also Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom Literature: A Theological History* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), chapter 6.

⁶⁵ Kristeller, *Renaissance Concepts of Man*, 28, states that “the writers of the Bible were no professional philosophers and had a very slight, if any, acquaintance with Greek philosophy and its terminology.” Philo of Alexandria had a Platonic conception of God’s gift to Abraham, as the bestowal of a “wisdom which cannot be received by sense, but is apprehended by a wholly pure and clear mind.” He also asserted the Socratic priority of self-knowledge: “quit, then, your meddling with heavenly concerns, and take up your abode...in yourselves.... For by observing the conditions prevailing in your own household, the element that is master in it, and that which is in subjection, the living and the lifeless element, the rational and the irrational, the immortal and the mortal, the better and the worse, you will gain *forthwith*...a sure knowledge of God and of his works”; quoted in Rémi Brague, *The Wisdom of the World: The Human Experience of the Universe in Western Thought*, trans. Teresa L. Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 81. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 252, cites Philo’s belief in the Platonic Forms; elsewhere Giorgi states that the Wisdom of Solomon (Sirach, one of the deuterocanonical books) betrays a secret knowledge of “universal Egyptian doctrine” (829). Giorgi invokes Philo among others in support of the Platonic theory of a perfect creation: “Il est nécessaire que ce monde vniuers soit le parfaitement bel ouurage de Dieu.... Parquoy non le seul Platon engendre le Monde, mais luy-mesme avecques plusieurs autres tesmoigne qu’il a esté engendré” (22).

tradition.⁶⁶ It should be noted, though, that Ecclesiastes denigrates human achievement in the world but not the world itself. Because of original sin, this was a problematic distinction for Christians, which I will return to below.

The first printed Bible in French is a translation of St. Jerome's Latin Vulgate by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, published in 1530.⁶⁷ It gives *vanité* for *vanitas*, which Jerome had chosen to translate the Hebrew word *hebel*, meaning breath or vapor rather than emptiness or worthlessness. Jerome carried some of the sense of *hebel* into the term *afflictio spiritus* ("vexation of spirit"). *Spiritus* means breath, and in Biblical contexts typically divine breath. In French, *esprit* may connote both spirit or soul and intelligence or mind. Jean Nicot gives numerous examples pertaining to *ingenium* (genius or wit) or *animus* (mind), and the word may thus be understood as the animating intelligence of the soul (*âme*).⁶⁸

Though not great liberties, these Latin and French word choices are theologically significant. In Qoheleth, *hebel* serves as a neutral metaphor of transience. In Jerome's translation, the substitute word *vanitas* invokes the moral implications of transience.

⁶⁶ See Clifford, *The Wisdom Literature*, 166.

⁶⁷ *La Sainte Bible: en françoys, translâtée selon la pure et entière traduction de Saint Hierome, conférée et entièrement revisitée selon les plus anciens et plus correctz exemplaires...* (Antwerp: Martin Lempereur, 1530).

⁶⁸ Jean Nicot, *Thresor de la langue françoise tant ancienne que moderne* (1606), s.v. "esperit." The *Thresor* is a reworking of Robert Estienne's *Dictionnaire françois-latin* (first publ. 1539). Cf. the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1694), s.v. "esprit," where one definition is "Vertu, puissance surnaturelle qui remue l'ame, qui opere dans l'ame," and another is "se prend quelquefois pour les facultez de l'ame raisonnable." As with the latter source, all citations of Nicot's *Thresor* have been accessed via the ARTFL Project, *Dictionnaires d'autrefois*, University of Chicago, <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois>. Cf. also the *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (ed. Rey), s.v. "esprit": "Au début du XII^e s., *esprit* reprend le sens latin de 'souffle, vent, air', qui a disparu, et, dans le vocabulaire biblique, celui de 'souffle envoyé par Dieu' (*l'esprit souffle où il veut*) et, plus généralement, de 'principe de la vie psychique, conscience'. C'est aussi au XII^e s. (v. 1155) que *esprit* désigne le principe de la vie intellectuelle, l'intelligence, opposé à l'objet de la pensée."

Without this coloring, the book need not be read to say more than “seize the day, you can’t take anything with you” – a message that breaks through momentarily in 2:24: “Is it not better to eat and drink, and to shew his soul good things of his labours? and this is from the hand of God.”⁶⁹ Jerome, who needed to make Old Testament scripture compatible with the New, saw the fact of transience in light of the need for salvation through Christ.⁷⁰ With *afflictio spiritus*, the original Hebrew idea of “chasing after wind” takes on the more inward and personal tinge of mental corruption: spiritual affliction implies an absence of the Holy Spirit and a separation from God, which is the condition of original sin. Given the book’s concern for epistemology, it therefore becomes a different matter to suggest that the pursuit of worldly knowledge is not merely idle and unrewarding, but the path of original sin, as it is in Genesis 3.

Ecclesiastes, in its aim to temper worldly expectations, bears perhaps the closest affinity to Stoicism. As Ernest Rubinstein shows, Ecclesiastes differs from Plato on the question of how humans should respond to the fact of material transience.⁷¹ Rubinstein writes that unlike Ecclesiastes, Plato holds “that there is indeed a *path* to the good which

⁶⁹ Similarly, in Ecclesiastes 8:15: “Therefore I commended mirth, because there was no good for a man under the sun, but to eat, and drink, and be merry, and that he should take nothing else with him of his labour in the days of his life, which God hath given him under the sun.” Cf. the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Books of the Bible*, s.v. “Ecclesiastes”: “The most common translation of the phrase, ‘all is vanity,’ while not incorrect, is misleading. Many readers accept the term ‘vanity’ as implying a sense of worthlessness.... Nearly all appearances of the term *hebel* in the book, despite the term being widely debated and variously translated, emphasize the temporary nature of life, not its worth or worthlessness. For Qoheleth, life, relatively speaking, is fleeting and short-lived, which well suits the primary meaning of the word *hebel*.... The point is thus not that life is meaningless because it has no substance, or even that it is ‘absurd,’ as *hebel* is often translated. This may well be true, although it is not part of Qoheleth’s calculation. Instead, the point is rather that life is finite.”

⁷⁰ On the early development of Christian eschatology, see Christopher Rowland, “The Eschatology of the New Testament Church,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, ed. Jerry L. Walls, *Oxford Handbooks Online*, accessed June 15, 2016, <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/>.

⁷¹ Ernest Rubinstein, *From Ecclesiastes to Simone Weil: Varieties of Philosophical Spirituality* (Lanham, Md.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2014), chapter 3.

lies concealed by the ordinary attractions of life.” The ephemeral nature of these attractions leads Solomon to resignation, whereas Plato advocates a more proactive rationale for despising them: “What allows human beings a healing handle on their sufferings is that, contra Ecclesiastes, they do indeed follow a predictable pattern.”⁷² Although Christians were to find the right path in the Gospels and not in Plato or Ecclesiastes, Neoplatonists conceived of this “predictable pattern” as a means of leverage toward salvation (more on which in Chapter 3).

Le Jeune’s *Octonaires* address both *vanité* and *inconstance*. The latter noun is conceptually closer to *hebel* than is *vanité*, which is a corollary: it is material inconstancy that leads to the axiological conclusion of vanity.⁷³ But whereas *hebel* connotes material transience, *inconstance* applies equally to thoughts and behaviors, and hence to the intellectual and physical compromises associated with sin. This conflation of vanity, inconstancy, and sin is made explicit in Pierre de l’Ancre’s 1610 treatise on *Inconstance*. L’Ancre equates both *inconstance* and *vanité* to falsehood:

the Royal prophet [David], accusing every man of being a liar, or subject to lies, vanity, or change, sang this verse:

*I have said, in the sudden turmoil
That forced me to depart,
That all the human race is false
And does nothing but lie.*

What will become of anyone who denies falsehood to be falsehood, vanity to be vanity, and change to be change? Inconstancy in general is a species of lying, as

⁷² Rubinstein, *From Ecclesiastes to Simone Weil*, 27.

⁷³ The same corollary does not apply in Qoheleth, which in emphasizing material transience does not conclude on an absence of material value. For Qoheleth, though it would be delusional to expect anything to last, our earthly efforts are not therefore vain by definition; they are simply *hebel*. The conclusion of vanity in the Christian sense should be attributed to Jerome and not to Qoheleth.

also is vanity, because the one and the other serve to disprove and to demonstrate the contrary of what is, or should be.⁷⁴

Here the antonym of *vanité* is *vérité*. All that moves is to some degree false by definition.

Plato would agree, and he also equated truth with the good.

But the question again arises of how this Platonic understanding of vanity should guide behavior. For Neoplatonists, the question demanded consideration of Aristotle, whose philosophy they sought to reconcile with Plato's. The following passage from Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi* invokes Solomon in response to an often rehearsed epistemological conflict between Plato and Aristotle, which is applied here to the question of whether it could be scientifically established that God had created the universe:

For the creation of the universe ought not to be numbered among natural speculations, as when we have a divine creator who, in creating or causing movement, remains stable: for anything that causes movement without being moved (as your Aristotle says) surpasses philosophic consideration and belongs to divine science, which (as Plato says) must be obtained by prayers and oracles, whereas natural things are discovered by reason, and morals acquired by usage. And Solomon the wisest of all men says, "I have found that the more a man inquires into these things, the less he will find. For man cannot find any reason for the works of God, and in this enterprise the Philosophers have spent their time, labor, and industry for nothing."⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Pierre de l'Ancre, *Tableau de l'Inconstance et instabilité de toutes choses*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Abel l'Angelier, 1610), 1v: "le prophete Royal accusant chaque homme d'estre menteur, ou subiect à mensonge, vanité, ou changement, a chanté ces vers, *I'ay dict en l'esmeute soudaine, / Qui me fait departir, / Faulse est toute la race humaine, / Et ne fait que mentir: / Que sera-ce de celui qui niera le mensonge estre mensonge, la vanité vanité, & le changement changement? L'Inconstance prinse generalement, est vne espece de mensonge, comme est aussi la vanité; puis que l'une & l'autre viennent à dementir & monstrent le contraire de ce qui est, ou deuroit estre.*" The words of David are from Psalm 116:11 (Vulgate Psalm 115), which the Douay-Rheims Bible renders more succinctly as "I said in my excess: Every man is a liar" (cf. the Nouvelle Edition de Genève: "Je disais dans mon angoisse: Tout homme est trompeur").

⁷⁵ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 25: "Et tout ce qui mouuant n'est point meu (dict vostre Aristote) surpasse la consideration Filosofique, & appartient à la science diuine laquelle doibt estre impetree par prieres & Oracles (dict Platon) & les choses naturelles recherchées par raison, & les morales acquises par vsage. Et Salomon le plussage de tous les hommes: I'ay trouué dict-il, que tant plus vn homme recherchera ces choses, tant moins il les trouuera: car l'homme ne peult trouuer aucune raison des œuvres de Dieu. Pource les Filosofes en telle entreprinse ont consommé pour neant leur temps, labeur, & industrie...." Many theologians included Solomon among the wisest philosophers for the ironic reason that,

Giorgi invokes Ecclesiastes 8:17 here in response to the notional paradox of a divine creator who could move (create) without himself being moved, which Aristotle used to falsify the hypothesis of a universe created at a specific moment in time.⁷⁶ Solomon is assumed to value, like Plato, the *a priori* intuition of first principles above rational induction from sensory data; he rejects the possibility of learning the “reason for the works of God” through natural research. Aristotelian “inquiry” (*recherche*), by which Giorgi would have understood the *philosophia naturalis* pursued by scholastics since the thirteenth century, refers to sensory knowledge and recalls the disparaging references to “labor” in Ecclesiastes.⁷⁷

Crucially, however, whereas Plato denies the purview of reason in natural research, Giorgi does not. Here is how Plato frames the epistemological question in the *Timaeus*:

[Timaeus:] As I see it, then, we must begin by making the following distinction: What is *that which always is* and has no becoming, and what is *that which becomes* but never is? The former is grasped by understanding, which involves a reasoned account. It is unchanging. The latter is grasped by opinion, which

as an author of canonical scripture, he had endorsed himself: “I have spoken in my heart, saying: Behold, I am become great, and have gone beyond all in wisdom, that were before me in Jerusalem: and my mind hath contemplated many things wisely, and I have learned. And I have given my heart to know prudence, and learning, and errors, and folly: and I have perceived that in these also there was labour, and vexation of spirit” (Ecclesiastes 1:16-17).

⁷⁶ In the *Physics*, VIII.6.258b26–259a9, Aristotle finds the chain of universal movements to be infinite and eternal – a conclusion that Christian Neoplatonists needed to refute. Aristotle addresses the same subject in *De caelo*, II.

⁷⁷ See for example Grant, *Planets, Stars, and Orbs*, 19-23. On the use of Ecclesiastes in the sixteenth-century French religious wars, see Jean Vignes, “Paraphrases et appropriation: Les Avatars poétiques de l’*Ecclésiaste* au temps des guerres de religion,” *Bibliothèque d’humanisme et Renaissance* 55/3 (1993): 503-26.

involves unreasoning sense perception. It comes to be and passes away, but never really is.⁷⁸

Giorgi, on the other hand, allows that “natural things are discovered by reason” – not by “unreasoning sense perception.” This divergence reflects the Neoplatonic incorporation of Aristotle’s natural philosophy, which, as I will elaborate in Chapter 3, offered an alternative path to divine knowledge that undermined the traditional Platonic notion of material vanity.

Plato and Aristotle held similar ontological premises. For Plato, particular things contained only transient reflections of stable, universal archetypes or forms.⁷⁹ Aristotle likewise distinguished between things that come to be and pass away – the “natural” world of *physis* – and things that always are. He addresses change in the *Physics*, defining it as change of place (movement) and defining time as the measure of movement with respect to before and after.⁸⁰ He addresses unchanging realities in the *Metaphysics*, where being (*ousia*) is refined into the concept of actuality (*entelecheia*) and becoming

⁷⁸ Plato, *Timaeus*, 27d-28a, in Cooper (ed.), *Plato*, 1234. The editor notes that “‘Becoming’ and ‘coming to be’ ...translate the same Greek word, *genesis*, and its cognates; the Greek word does not say, as English ‘comes to be’ does, that once a thing has come to be, it now *is*, or has *being*” (1234, n8).

⁷⁹ Scholars have debated whether or not Plato abandoned this theory in the later dialogues, among which the *Timaeus* is generally thought to belong. For the alternative view that the *Timaeus* belongs to Plato’s middle period, see G. E. L. Owen, “The Place of the *Timaeus* in Plato’s Dialogues,” *The Classical Quarterly* (New Series) 3/1-2 (1965): 79-95. Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, trans. Gilbert Highet III (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), 260, notes the absence of the theory of forms in the later dialogues, but states that “this should not be interpreted as agreement with the well known modern hypothesis that Plato abandoned it in his old age.” On Plato’s theory of forms, see F. M. Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1939); Samuel Rickless, *Plato’s Forms in Transition: A Reading of the Parmenides* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁸⁰ Aristotle, *Physics*, IV.10-14, V.1-6.

into the concept of potentiality (*dynamis*).⁸¹ These concepts will also be addressed in Chapter 3, as they too became essential to the Neoplatonic attempt to transcend vanity.

The material world's illusory nature, routinely mentioned in discussions of *vanitas* art, is the product of change caused by movement and not of a figment of the imagination or demonic trick (a possibility considered by Descartes).⁸² The Platonic injunction to turn away from matter, as opposed to Solomon's demotion of worldly achievement, can be read as a determination that matter has no value, is vain, or even evil. In the King James Version of Ecclesiastes, Solomon can be read to suggest as much when he asks, "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he has made crooked?" (7:13). This is an accurate translation of the Hebrew.⁸³ But Jerome's phrase is "Considera opera Dei, quod nemo possit corrigere quem ille despexerit," which means "Consider the works of God, that no man can correct, whom he hath despised." Lefèvre d'Étaples follows Jerome closely: "que nul ne peult corrigier celuy qu'il a delaisse." *Corrigier* means to correct or set right, but can also mean to improve or amend. Jerome "corrects" the Hebrew to indicate that man has no power over God's will, rather than that his designs should be second-guessed. It was sin that had vitiated creation.

But in as much as eastern currents of thought migrated into Alexandrian Neoplatonism and Hermeticism, the belief in matter as inherently evil – that one should, as the Chaldean Oracles instruct, purify oneself entirely of it – became an important

⁸¹ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Z. Along with the *Metaphysics*, the *Categories* are another important source on Aristotle's understanding of being.

⁸² René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, I.

⁸³ Cf. the Orthodox Jewish Bible: "for who can make straight what Hashem [God] hath made crooked?"

consideration with a long historical reach.⁸⁴ The *Hermetica*, a popular source among ancient and early-modern Neoplatonists, characterizes material imperfection as the root of all evil and as that which tempted Adam and Eve into sin.⁸⁵ The world-denial that is present in Christianity from the beginning, the notion of a vain world from which souls were to escape, may easily be linked to the popular Christian notion of evil, personified by Satan, the “prince of this world” (John 12:31, 2 Corinthians 4:4) and the tempter of Eve.⁸⁶ Yet both Plotinus and Augustine defined evil as non-being – that is, as uncreated. Stephen MacKenna summarizes the viewpoint of Plotinus:

all that exists, in a half-existence, is the last effort of The Good, the point at which The Good ceases because, so to speak, endlessness has all but faded out to an

⁸⁴ Cf. Julianus (the Theurgist), *The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, trans. and ed. Ruth Majercik (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 18-19, 31-32, 181. Majercik writes that the Chaldean view of the soul’s potential enslavement to matter led both Plotinus and his student Porphyry to argue “that the higher soul never actually descended into matter, but remained eternally above in the intelligible order. Therefore, one need only exercise the power of his intellect via philosophical contemplation to revert back to his true nature” (32). According to Porphyry, theurgic ritual “could elevate the soul only to a position within the material world. It could never lead the soul back to the One.” The contrary position of Iamblichus was that because “the soul, in its entirety, was implicated in matter, the corresponding use of theurgy – at every level of the soul – could therefore elevate the soul beyond the material to the intelligible world and ultimately back to the One” (32).

⁸⁵ To give an example from Foix-Candale’s translation: “Le Bien est donc au seul Dieu: ou Dieu mesme est le bien. Parquoy, ô Æsculape, le seul nom du Bien est aux hommes: mais l’effect nullement: car il est impossible. De tant que le corps materiel contrainct de toutes parts de malice, peines, douleurs, conuaitises, affections, deceptions, opinions mal saines, ne le peut contenir. Et ce, qui est le pire du tout, ô Æsculape, c’est qu’il est tenu certain icy chacune des choses susdictes estre vn tres-grand bien” (*C.H.* VI.3; *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 229-30). Foix-Candale identifies three kinds of evil: “Par lesquels Mal, est prins pour punition ou desplaisir seruant de punition. Secondement Mal est prins pour imperfection.... Tiercement, Mal est prins pour peché: & de celuy n’en faut tesmoignage. Car il est trop commun en nostre misere. Cest toutesfois, que Dieu parle du Mal, que l’homme faict, par ses escriptures & seruiteurs annonçantz au peuple le voye de salut.” He then identifies the second of these, the imperfection of matter, as the primary source of evil: “Ces trois maux prenent tous leur naissance du second, que nous auons exposé estre l’imperfection du subiect vniuersel, sur lequel a esté bastye toute creature. Et ce Mal est le seul, duquel sont tachées toutes creatures materielles en general, & en particulier. Les brutz & autres plus basses creatures elementaires sont subiectes a ce mal, qui est l’imperfection acquise de leur matiere” (236).

⁸⁶ John 12:31: “Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast ou.”; 2 Corinthians 4:4: “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine unto them.” Cf. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 80: “C’est pourquoy souuentefois du vray Prince il est nommé le Prince de ce Monde, c’est à dire des choses separées de Dieu: ainsi qu’en l’Euangile selon S. Iehan, Le Prince de ce Monde, dit-il, est venu, mais il n’a rien en moy.”

end....[I]t is the almost desperate effort to express a combined idea that seems to be instinctive in the mind of man, the idea that Good is all-reaching and yet that it has degrees, that an infinitely powerful wisdom exists and operates and casts an infinite splendour on all its works while we ourselves can see, or think we see, its failures or the last and feeblest rays of its light.⁸⁷

In Book VII of the *Confessions*, Augustine asks,

Where then does [evil] come from since the good God made everything good? Certainly the greatest and supreme Good made lesser goods; yet the Creator and all that he created are good. What then is the origin of evil? Is it that the matter from which he made things was somehow evil? He gave it form and order, but did he leave in it an element which he could not transform into good? If so, why?⁸⁸

Augustine's Plotinian solution, given in *De civitate Dei*, is to define evil in negative terms as the privation of good: "Evil has no positive nature; but the loss of good has received the name 'evil.'"⁸⁹ Evil or sinful actions are therefore diversions from greater to lesser goods, invariably caused by desiring the world (or knowledge of the world) too much and God too little. The essential goodness of God's original creation remained intact for early Christians as for pagan Neoplatonists, safe from the Manichaean idea of good spirit opposed to evil matter – the extreme of dualism.⁹⁰

Chandieu reprises Augustine's struggle with the existence of evil in the following *Octonaire*, which Le Jeune did not set to music:

⁸⁷ Stephen MacKenna, "Extracts from the Explanatory Matter in the First Edition," in Plotinus, *The Enneads*, xxxviii. Cf. *Ennead* I.8. Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, 150, summarize Plotinus's view: "The One and Good transcends being; Not-being and Evil, as mere negations of the good that exists, have no being. Everything between these extremes must be good and existent in some degree, but in some measure must also admit differences of being and not-being, filling up a hierarchy graded according to such principles as the superiority of one to many, of cause to effect, of rest to motion, and of whole to part."

⁸⁸ Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 116 (VII.5.7).

⁸⁹ Augustine, *The City of God*, 354 (XI.9). Cf. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 459.

⁹⁰ Cf. Augustine, *Writings in Connection with the Manichaean Heresy*, trans. Richard Stothert (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1872); J. Kevin Coyel, *Manichaeism and its Legacy* (Boston: Brill, 2009), 209-328.

Mondain, si tu le sais, di moy, quel est le monde?
 S'il est bon, pourquoy donc tant de mal y abonde?
 S'il est mauvais, pourquoy le vas tu tant cerchant?
 S'il est doux, comment donc a il tant d'amertume?
 S'il est amer, comment te va il allechant?
 S'il est ami, pourquoy a-il ceste coustume
 De tuer l'homme vain, sous ses pieds abatu?
 Et s'il est ennemi, pourquoy t'y fies tu?⁹¹

*Mondain, if you know, tell me, what is the world?
 If it is good, why then does evil there abound?
 If it is bad, why do you seek it so much?
 If it is sweet, how does it have so much bitterness?
 If it is bitter, how does it keep on enticing you?
 If it is a friend, why does it have this habit
 Of killing the vain man, trampling him under its feet?
 And if it is an enemy, why do you put your faith there?*

Chandieu would appear to blame the world itself for harboring evil and sowing destruction, but he would have attributed the evil to original sin. Another *Octonaire*, set by Le Jeune as the second chanson in mode 4 (Hypodorian), reflects the Augustinian conception of evil as the lesser of goods:

Qu'as tu? pauvr'amoureux, dont l'ame demy morte
 Soupire des sanglos au vent qui les emporte?
 N'acuse rien que toy, ton mal est ton desir,
 Et ce dont tu te plains est ton propre plaisir:
 Tu n'as autre repos que ce qui te tourmente,
 Et t'éjoüis au mal dont tu vas soupirant,
 Beuvant ce doux amer qui t'enyvre, et qui rend
 Ton plaisir douloureux, et ta douleur plaisante.⁹²

*What have you? poor lover, whose sighing sobs
 From a half-dead soul are carried off by the wind?
 Blame no one but yourself: your evil is your desire,*

⁹¹ Chandieu, *Octonaire XXVII*, appended to *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, n.p.

⁹² Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:43-48.

*And that which you lament is your own pleasure.
 You have refuge only in what torments you,
 And you enjoy the evil that you sigh after,
 Drunk on the sweet bile that turns your pleasure
 Into pain, and your pain into pleasure.*

The *pauvre amoureux* has sought fulfillment through worldly love rather than divine – in other words, through the wrong sort of good intention. Le Jeune’s setting is exceptional for its length (ninety-one measures in modern transcription and around a minute longer in performance than most of the other chansons) and its harmonic expressiveness. Along with the usual pivots from imitative polyphony to homophony, which also bring sudden changes from duple to triple meter, Le Jeune twice uses an awkward harmonic progression to illustrate the poem’s most striking metaphor, the “doux amer” or bittersweet draught of pleasure turning to pain.

Le Jeune first switches from duple meter imitation to triple meter homophony for the line “N’acuse rien que toy, ton mal est ton desir”:

Example 2.9: “Qu’as tu? pauvr’amoureux” (IV.2), mm. 11-26

Sou-pi - re des san - glos au vent qui les em - por -

Sou-pi - re des san - glos au vent qui les em - por -

Sou-pi - re des san - glos au vent qui les em - por -

Sou-pi - re des san - glos au vent qui les em - por -

_te? N'a - cu - se rien que toy, ton mal est
 _te? N'a - cu - se rien que toy, ton mal est
 _te? N'a - cu - se rien que toy, ton mal est
 _te? N'a - cu - se rien que toy, ton mal est

ton de - sir, Et ce dont tu te plains, tu
 ton de - sir, Et ce dont tu te plains,
 ton de - sir, Et ce dont tu te plains, Et ce dont
 ton de - sir, Et ce dont tu te

The triple meter is fleeting; for the second half of the line (“ton mal est ton desir”) Le Jeune reverts to syncopated duple meter. Disoriented by the initial meter change, the listener will likely have trouble hearing this antecedent phrase as syncopated until the cadence on B-flat in m. 23. Since “ton mal est ton desir” is meant to come as a revelation, or a belated realization, the momentary feint is rhetorically effective. The A major chord on “ton” also jars the ear somewhat, with C-sharp abruptly canceling the C-natural of the previous measure and E-natural giving way to E-flat a measure later.

The next interruption of triple meter occurs at “Et t’éjoüis au mal dont tu vas soupirant, / Beuvant ce doux amer.” The verse preceding it, “Tu n’as autre repos, que ce

qui te tourmente,” pulls the tonal center away from G to the fifth degree (D), where it will stay for several measures.

Example 2.10: “Qu’as tu? pauvr’amoureux” (IV.2), mm. 33-42

_sir: Tu n'as au - tre re - pos,
 Tu n'as au - tre re - pos
 _sir: Tu n'as au - tre re - pos,
 Tu n'as au - tre re - pos
 _sir: Tu n'as au - tre re - pos,
 au - tre re - pos que ce qui te
 _sir: Tu n'as au - tre, n'as au - tre re - pos que ce
 que ce qui te tour - men - te,
 que ce qui te tour - men - te, que ce qui te tour - men - te,
 tour - men - te, que ce qui te tour - men - te,
 qui te tour - men - te, te tour - men - te,

Susan McClary identifies as one the “principal strategies” of G Hypodorian mode “the potential division of the octave at A [rather than at G], such that the heavily weighted fifth degree becomes a rival final”:

whereas arrivals on the fifth degree in Dorian engage the upper part of the modal range, those in Hypodorian involve a descent into the lower part of the octave. A

floor seems to open up beneath the final, and we are drawn down into another realm. Reestablishing the final then requires an increase of energy and the reconquest of the upper region.⁹³

She then suggests a rhetorical purpose that this modulation could often serve:

The trapdoor dimension of Hypodorian proves especially useful for the presentation of inside and outside so crucial to the cultural task of the madrigal. If the diapente [G to D] continues to function as the public voice, the lower part of the Hypodorian diapasen [D to G or A] can be made to sound like a hidden aspect of the Self.⁹⁴

Le Jeune's mature works are never far from the Italian aesthetic with which McClary is concerned, which began to infiltrate French courtly music around 1560.⁹⁵ The present chanson is about love and revels in the same sort of paradoxical dichotomies that animate so many madrigals of the period. The move here to the alternate final D, which involves abruptly canceling E-flat (the flattened sixth) with E-natural (the second of D), may strike the listener as one such "trapdoor" moment, used to expose the lover's hidden torments. The triple meter also seems to participate in representing interiority: we first heard it for

⁹³ Susan McClary, *Modal Subjectivities: Self-Fashioning in the Italian Madrigal* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 205.

⁹⁴ McClary, *Modal Subjectivities*, 206.

⁹⁵ Isabelle His characterizes Le Jeune's mature style as a synthesis of "l'écriture madrigalisante" and the demands (or constraints) of academic prosody. See her articles, "Les Modèles italiens de Claude Le Jeune," *Revue de musicologie* 77/1 (1991): 25-58; "Claude Le Jeune et le rythme prosodique"; and "Claude Le Jeune: Le Bilingue"; "Italianism and Claude Le Jeune," *Early Music History* 13 (1994): 149-70. See also Richard Freedman, "Claude Le Jeune, Adrian Willaert and the Art of Musical Translation," *Early Music History* 13 (1994): 123-48. Freedman analyzes *Amour quand fus-tu né?* from *Le Printemps* (1603), which Le Jeune adapted from Willaert. Levy, "The Chansons of Claude Le Jeune," 191-92, writes: "The madrigal style appeared as a major force in France shortly before 1560, establishing a strong hold on progressive avenues of chanson production by around 1570, and then declining rapidly in importance. This last stage was accelerated by the new homophonic airs which rose, as if in the name of traditional French reserve and clarity, to supplant a chanson style that had become submerged in foreign excess. The general reaction against the later stages of French madrigalism had three results in Le Jeune's activity during the 1570's: he turned some of his attention away from the chanson toward the new musique mesurée and air style; his late chanson settings, in C measure [i.e., C time], of Italianate texts were comparatively reserved in their use of madrigalisms; and he tended not to publish the earlier chansons that represented the rampant madrigalism of the later 1560's and early 1570's."

the words “N’acuse rien que toy,” and now it is applied to “Et t’éjouïs au mal dont tu vas soupirant, / Beuvant ce doux amer” – the private longing for immoral pleasure and the spiritual inebriation that results.

Example 2.11: “Qu’as tu? pauvr’amoureux” (IV.2), mm. 43-62

The musical score is written for four staves. The first two staves are for the vocal parts, and the last two are for the piano accompaniment. The time signature is 3/8. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are in French and describe a state of longing and inebriation.

Lyrics for the first system (mm. 43-46):

Et t'é-jouï - is au mal, Et t'é-jouï - is au mal, Et t'é-jouï -
 Et t'é-jouï - is au mal, Et t'é-jouï - is au mal, Et t'é-jouï -
 Et t'é-jouï - is au mal, Et t'é-jouï -
 Et t'é-jouï - is au mal, Et t'é-jouï -

Lyrics for the second system (mm. 47-50):

-is au mal dont tu
 -is au mal dont tu
 -is au mal dont tu vas sou-pi - rant, tu
 -is au mal dont tu vas sou-pi - rant, tu

vas sou - pi - rant, Beau - vant ce doux a - mer qui t'en -

vas sou - pi - rant, Beau - vant ce doux a - mer qui t'en -

vas sou - pi - rant, Beau - vant ce doux a - mer

vas sou - pi - rant, Beau - vant ce doux a - mer

- y - vre, qui t'en - y - vre, t'en - y - vre, et qui rend ton

- y - vre, qui t'en - y - vre, qui t'en - y - vre, et qui rend

qui t'en - y - vre, qui t'en - y - vre, et qui rend

qui t'en - y - vre, qui t'en - y - vre, et qui rend

As can be seen, Le Jeune again uses what I have termed imitative split homophony as a kind of preparation for merging into four-part rhythmic unison.⁹⁶ The phrase “Et t’éjouïs au mal” is thereby stated three times, the first two in a straightforward, 3/4-type pattern and the third (in *musique mesurée*) in a disruptive 6/8-type pattern. The ensuing wobbly fluctuation between triple and duple meter for “dont tu vas soupirant / Beuvant ce doux amer” and the clipped phrasing of “qui t’enyvre” give a good impression of drunkenness. Le Jeune’s use of split homophony for “qui t’enyvre” after

⁹⁶ See Example 1.9 (Chapter 1, section I).

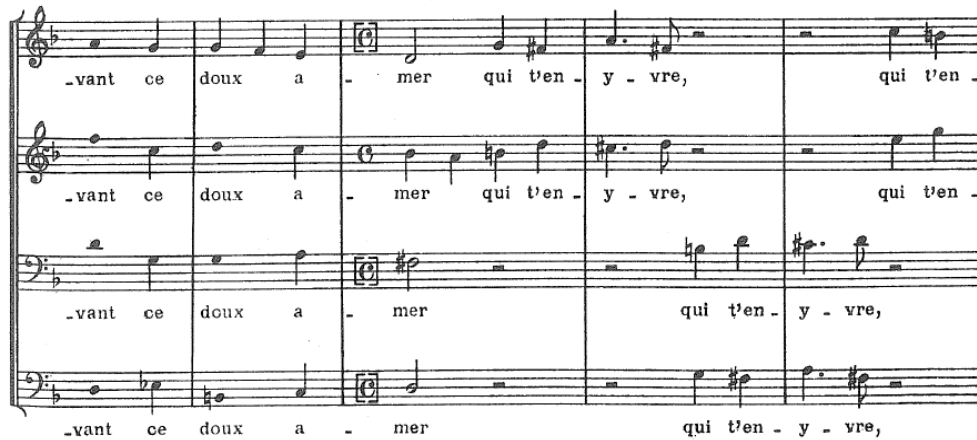
the four-part homophony of “Beuvant ce doux amer” suggests a literal disintegration of *musique mesurée*.

The chord progression of “Beuvant ce doux amer” is also quite jarring: after a B-flat cadence on “soupirant,” the countertenor and bass lines outline a tritone from F to B-natural. Note especially the countertenor’s *trompe l’oreille* resolution from C-sharp down to B rather than up to D. The arrival on a G6 chord in m. 57, with the countertenor’s B doubled in the bass, feels out of place in G Hypodorian – a sort of anti-cadence, after which the voices have to grope their way back to the final.

After restoring G as the final on the concluding line of verse (“Ton plaisir douloureux et ta douleur plaisante”), Le Jeune chooses to repeat “Beuvant ce doux amer, et t’enyvre.” He pivots back to D, which again requires canceling E-flat with E-natural:

Example 2.12: “Qu’as tu? pauvr’amoureux” (IV.2), mm. 73-82

The musical score for Example 2.12 consists of four staves, each with a different vocal part. The lyrics are in French and are written below the staves. The music is in G Hypodorian mode, which is a mixolydian mode with a B-flat. The score shows a tritone resolution from F to B-natural in the countertenor and bass lines. The lyrics are: "sir dou - lou - reux, et ta dou - leur plai - san - te. Beu - dou - lou - reux. et ta dou - leur, ta dou - leur plai san - te. Beu - reux, dou - lou - reux, et ta dou - leur plai san - te. Beu - et ta dou - leur plai - san - te Beu -".



A diminished fourth leap in the bass (E-flat to B-natural) lands on another G6 chord, and leads to a strange progression through a6 to D. The countertenor's passing tone B-flat on the second syllable of "amer" discolours the cadence on D by producing a vertical diminished fourth against the tenor's F-sharp.

"Qu'as tu? pauvr'amoureux" inverts the popular saying, "ce qui est amer à la bouche est doux au cœur": instead, an eagerly imbibed pleasure leads to drunkenness, sorrow, and regret. Both of the harmonic disturbances examined above occur on the words "doux amer." In Middle French as in modern, *amer* can be an adjective meaning bitter or a noun substitute for bile (*bile*) or gall (*fiel*).⁹⁷ It could therefore allude here to the bodily humor causing either sadness and spiritual pain (black bile or melancholy) or aggressive ambition (yellow bile or cholera), or a mixture of both temperaments, as the poem allows us to think.⁹⁸ Both kinds of bile could arise paradoxically from experiences

⁹⁷ Nicot, *Thresor de la langue françoise*, s.v. "amer": "Amarus. L'amer ou fiel, Bilis, huius bilis."

⁹⁸ Cf. the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1694), s.v. "amer": "Se dit figurement de ce qui cause de la tristesse, de la peine d'esprit." The association of bile with ambition may be inferred in the present context from the preceding chanson (the first in mode 4), which begins, "C'est un grand mal que l'extreme avarice, / C'est un grand mal que folle ambition"; as well as from the lover's implicit ambition to experience the wrong kind of pleasure.

that were initially pleasurable. In ancient and medieval humorism, as is well known, the four humors were seen to correspond to the four sublunary elements, and the definition of good health was to achieve the same balance internally as obtained in nature. *Musique mesurée* reflected elemental balance by aligning the four polyphonic voices into rhythmic unison. Destabilized as ever in this chanson, the technique helps instead to convey spiritual drunkenness through its awkward juxtaposition with imitative polyphony.

In his *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, published in 1583 along with the fifty *Octonaires* in a single volume, Chandieu writes that the only source of balance is God, whose reason abides outside of a natural order corrupted by sin. God is the answer to internal affliction, to an excess of bitterness or bile:

The more we are afflicted, the more God reveals to us his power, justice, wisdom, goodness, and the infinite riches of his providence, the exercise of which tempers our concupiscence, strengthens our faith, and rewards our patience. And the more bitter the affliction, the sweeter will God's relief seem to us.⁹⁹

This comment belongs to a lengthy reflection on the psalm's seventh verse (out of eleven), which Chandieu treats as centrally important: "You are my retreat; you guard me against tribulation and surround me with canticles of deliverance."¹⁰⁰ Psalm 32 is the second of the penitential psalms (all seven of which were famously set by Lassus in 1584)¹⁰¹ and it has the subtitle *Maskil*, meaning teacher or scholar – an epistemological

⁹⁹ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 155-56: "Car Dieu fait mieux reluire sa puissance, iustice, sagesse, bonté, & les richesses infinies de sa providence, alors que nous sommes plus affligez: outre ce que par tels exercices nos concupiscences sont domptees, nostre foy est exercee, de nostre patience, couronnee. Ioinct que le secours de Dieu nous semble d'autant plus doux que l'affliction a esté amere...." For a critical reading of the *Meditations*, see Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 247ff.

¹⁰⁰ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 134: "Tu es ma cachette, tu me garderas de tribulation, & m'environneras de cantiques de deliurance."

¹⁰¹ Orlande de Lassus, *Psalmi Davidis poenitentiales* (Munich, 1584).

heading that ties it to the present discussion. Chandieu considered the psalm's main purpose to be teaching the doctrine of the remission of sins, which he calls a "true science" to which no other science should be compared.¹⁰² Its opening verse reads "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered."¹⁰³

Verse 7 allows Chandieu to connect the sweetness of God's restitution to music: "if my soul is in pain and bitterness, you will change my weeping into canticles of thanksgiving for the deliverance I receive from you."¹⁰⁴ But it also moves him to condemn the immoral secular music of the present day, contrasting David's *cantiques* with immoral *chants* and *chansons*:

See how we must apply to our own time and to ourselves the words of David, and be sustained by a firm constancy and patience. For David says that God will surround us with canticles of deliverance, speaking of times to come so that we should await the help of our God, when it pleases him and without his ordaining the time, as ordinarily we would be defeated by our cowardice and impatience. Be assured, therefore, that he delays changing the tears of God's children into canticles of deliverance, turning instead the songs and overabundant pleasures of the children of this age into wailing and gnashing of teeth, of which the Evangelist speaks. For we could well say in passing that the true purpose of songs and music must be to glorify God, so that we do not follow the *mondains* who take pleasure only in wicked and dissolute songs. What then? God gave you a mouth and tongue that you might sully them with such villainy and infamy?¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 7-8: "Le Psalme donc a le tiltre de Maskil, c'est à dire, enseignant, pour nous donner à cognoistre qu'il y a en ce Psalme d'excellens enseignemens & doctrines qui nous sont entierement necessaires, afin que cela nous rende plus diligens & attentifs à la meditation d'icelles. Or puis qu'ainsi est que la doctrine de la remission des pechez est principalement enseignee en ce Psalme (comme nous le verrons cy apres) il s'ensuit que ceste doctrine est vne vraye science, en laquelle nous deuons singulierement tascher d'estre enseignez, comme estant telle que toutes les sciences du monde ne luy peuuent estre accomparees."

¹⁰³ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 18: "Bien heureux est celuy duquel la transgression est pardonnee, & duquel le peché est couuert."

¹⁰⁴ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 138: "si mon ame est en douleur & amertume, tu changeras mes larmes en cantiques d'actions de graces pour la deliurance que ie receuray de toy."

¹⁰⁵ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 159-60: "Voila comment nous deuons appliquer à nostre temps & à nous-mesmes les paroles de Daud: & estre soustenus d'une ferme constance & patience, veu que Daud dit que Dieu nous enuironnera de cantiques de deliurance, parlant au temps à venir, afin que nous attendions le secours de nostre Dieu quand il luy plaira, sans luy en prescrire le temps, ainsi que nous

He extends his critique to dancing, which would have included the growing popularity of courtly dance and ballet. He berates the *mondain* for an evil that originates in the head and “descends to the tongue, which resonates profane and immodest songs, and that falls at last to the legs and feet.”¹⁰⁶ This view of musical descent from corrupt mind to unruly limbs may be contrasted with Ficino’s alternative view of the same progression:

Music consists first in calculation, second in fancy, third in words: melody follows this, the movement of fingers in sound follows melody, the motions of the whole body in gymnastics or dance follows sound. We therefore see music to be led by degrees from the soul to all the members of the body.¹⁰⁷

I will return to this connection in Chapter 3, as it applies to the invention of *musique mesurée* and the *ballet de cour*.

Chandieu also remembers to include fellow Protestants in the general guilt:

But let us leave aside the *mondains*, who are the most unruly, and groan in due recognition that there are those who profess the Reformed religion who are addicted to dirty songs and dances, as much as or more than the others. Alas! Great is their need to be surrounded with canticles of deliverance, of which David speaks, here where they are in the midst of a worldly and lascivious music, of dances and songs that make them captive slaves to the world and its concupiscences. Basil said it well, that Christians should not suffer among

faisons ordinairement estans vaincus de nostre lascheté & impatience. Asseurons nous donc quoy qu’il tarde que les larmes des enfans de Dieu seront changees en cantiques de deluirance, comme au contraire les chants & les ioyes desbordees des enfans de ce siecle se tourneront en pleurs & grincement de dents, comme l’Euangile en parle. Or nous pouuons aussi bien dire en passant que le vray vsage du chant & de la musique doit estre employé à glorifier Dieu afin que nous n’ensuiuions pas les mondains qui ne se plaisent qu’en chansons villaines & dissolues. Et quoy? Dieu t’a il donné vne bouche & vne langue afin que tu la souilles par telles villenies & infametez?”

¹⁰⁶ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 161-62: “Car ton mal a son origine & commencement en la teste, n’ayant l’entendement réglé selon la parole de Dieu, & descend sur ta langue qui resonance de chansons profanes & impudiques & tombe finalement sur tes iambes & sur tes pieds....” As is well known, the first *ballet de cour*, the *Balet comique de la Royne* in honor of Catherine de’ Medici at the wedding of the Duc de Joyeuse, took place in 1581, and Le Jeune contributed music for the surrounding festivities. See Yates, “Poésie et musique dans les ‘Magnificences’.”

¹⁰⁷ Marsilio Ficino, *Epistola de Musica Antonio Canigiano viro docto, atque prudenti*, quoted in Haar, “*Musica mundana*,” 349. On the Neoplatonic significance of French dance rhythms, see Van Orden, “An Erotic Metaphysics of Hearing.”

themselves any songs apart from those that can make them better and more fond of service to God. From which we can easily judge how we must throw away all the songs, dances, and other worldly dissolutions that cool our hearts to the love of God, even as they enflame them with love of the world.¹⁰⁸

It is reasonable to assume that Le Jeune read Chandieu's psalm commentary along with the *Octonaires*. Sara Barker calls the latter the "poetical twin" of the *Meditations*.¹⁰⁹ "Qu'as tu? pauvr' amoureux?" does appear to draw directly from Chandieu's remark that the "bitterness of the affliction" will be met by the "sweetness of God's relief," which is conveyed through *cantiques de delivrance*. Le Jeune, as a participant in the emerging late-century popularity of amorous songs and ballet, which by his death were becoming the preferred genres of aristocrats, could well have felt his conscience tweaked by Chandieu's disapproval.

The Neoplatonic view of human or worldly love and its musical-poetic embodiment were altogether more cosmic and affirmative than the view taken by Chandieu, who regarded worldly love as the embrace of vanity.¹¹⁰ Ficino, who

¹⁰⁸ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 162-63: "Mais laissons là les mondains qui sont les plus desreiglez, & gémissons à bon escient de voir qu'il y en ait de ceux qui se disent de la religion Reformee, qui sont adonnees aux salles chansons, & aux danses, autant ou plus que les autres. Helas! il s'en faut beaucoup qu'ils soient enuironnez des cantiques de deliurance, dont parle ici Daudid, lors qu'ils sont au milieu d'une musique mondaine & lasciuue, & des danses & chansons qui les rendent serfs & captifs du monde & de ces concupiscences. Basile a tresbien dit, que les Chrestiens ne doiuent souffrir entre eux aucuns chants, sinon ceux qui les peuuent rendre meilleurs & plus affectionnez au seruice de Dieu, dont nous pouuons aiseement iuger combien nous deuons reietter au loin toutes les chansons, danses, & autres dissolutions mondaines, qui refroidissent autant en nos cœurs l'amour de Dieu, comme elles y enflambent l'amour du monde." Chandieu's mention of those "qui sont adonnees aux salles chansons, & aux danses" probably refers to singing and dancing in aristocratic or upper-class milieux, though it could also intend the more common or vulgar sort. Many courtly songs of the day had lewd or lascivious texts.

¹⁰⁹ Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 230: "Although not specifically based on a particular psalm, the *Octonaires* addressed the same issues as meditation literature and would prove to be popular with the reading public."

¹¹⁰ A *locus classicus* for the cosmic or divine idea of carnal love is the *Symposium*, 180b: "In truth, the gods honor virtue most highly when it belongs to Love.... A lover is more godlike than his boy, you see, since he is inspired by a god.... Therefore I say Love is the most ancient of the gods, the most honored, and the most powerful in helping men gain virtue and blessedness, whether they are alive or have passed away"; trans. A. Nehamas and P. Woodruff, in Cooper (ed.), *Plato*, 465.

proclaimed that “Love is the Teacher and Ruler of the Arts,” regarded profane love as preparatory to divine love.¹¹¹ Both views, however, proceed from an ultimate distrust of and need to escape from the body. In Tyard’s treatise on poetically inspired love, *Solitaire premier*, the reader is entreated to “elevate the will and vision, in spite of the dark and narrow confines of the bodily prison, in order to discover, admire, aspire toward, and finally attain the joy of eternal light and true happiness.”¹¹² Until then, the soul remains trapped in the body and divided between operations: “in this division and separation of its unity, its superior part is asleep, mired in laziness and lethargy, ceding its entire government to the inferior things affected by ceaseless perturbations.”¹¹³

Chandieu’s characterization of dancing, of legs and feet that “quiver and agitate your whole body with a constant restlessness, until the fever has passed,” demands a similar, purely intellectual remedy.¹¹⁴ Against that, however, should be weighed Ficino’s view (quoted above) of an essential connection between *musica mundana* and *musica instrumentalis*, such that the latter extends to “all the members of the body.” The Neoplatonic goal of divine ascent and reunion clearly entails the avoidance of vanity, especially the vanity of the flesh, but by extension the vanity of all material distraction or

¹¹¹ Marsilio Ficino, *In convivium*, III.3, quoted in Yates, *The French Academies*, 5.

¹¹² Tyard, *Solitaire premier*, 2: “guidez par plus fideles esprits, hausseront le vol, & la veüe, pour (nonobstant l’estroite restraite du cloz tenebreux de la corporelle prison) discourir, admirer, aspirer, & en fin atteindre à la iouissance de la lumiere eternelle, & vraye felicité....”

¹¹³ Tyard, *Solitaire premier*, 11: “Les Philosophes Platoniques tiennent que l’Ame descendant en ce corps distribuée en diuerses operations perd l’vnité tant estimée, qui la rendoit cognoissante, et iouissante du souuerain VN, qui est Dieu: tellement qu’en ceste diuision, et separation de son vnitè, ses parties superieures endormies, et enseuelies en vne lente paresse, cedent l’entier gouuernement aux inferieures touchées sans cesse des perturbations....”

¹¹⁴ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 162: “tes pieds, qui dancent, fretillent, & agitent tout ton corps d’une continuele inquietude, iusques à ce que ton acces est passé.”

deception.¹¹⁵ But the problem of vanity, which stems from a material problem of movement, could be ameliorated through music, a spiritually infused material solution of harmonic movement.

The cosmological ideal of harmonic balance surfaces in Ecclesiastes 3 (“All things have their season...”) and is stated most clearly in verse 11, where, however, the Preacher places the ideal beyond the ken of human understanding: “He hath made all things good in their time, and hath delivered the world to their consideration, so that man cannot find out the work which God hath made from the beginning to the end.” Thus, in 3:18-22, the Preacher concludes,

I said in my heart concerning the sons of man, that God would prove them, and shew them to be like beasts. Therefore the death of man, and of beasts is one, and the condition of them both is equal: as man dieth, so they also die: all things breathe alike, and man hath nothing more than beast: all things are subject to vanity. And all things go to one place: of earth they were made, and into earth they return together. Who knoweth if the spirit of the children of Adam ascend upward, and if the spirit of the beasts descend downward? And I have found that nothing is better than for a man to rejoice in his work, and that this is his portion. For who shall bring him to know the things that shall be after him?

The *Hermetica* insists on man’s intellectual capacity to avoid this benighted outcome, but it characterizes universal harmony as an impediment to true knowledge. In the *Hermetica*, harmony belongs to the superlunary world of the “seven governors” (the seven planets), and because they determine every non-human action in the lower world, their powers can be harnessed by man only for vain material ends, for worldly knowledge

¹¹⁵ Cf. Pontus de Tyard, *Homilies, ou discours sur l’Oraison Dominicale* (Paris: Mamert Patisson, 1585), 21: “Aussi le faut il chercher en lieu conditionné de plus pure substance et qualité, que celui qui est logis du corporel. Il faut bien se hausser plus haut, il faut abandonner intellectuellement la terre, monter à tire d’aile spirituelle outre les estages de l’air, passer toute la region elementaire, s’avancer outre les sieges des planettes, et des autres estoiles superieures, pour arriver à ceste sublime substance, infinie, qui est le siege de l’Eternité.” As ever, the goal is to elevate oneself to pure spirituality. As I will discuss in Chapter 3, the harmony of the universe – between the “region elementaire” and the “siege des planettes, et des autres estoiles superieures” – was what made such elevation conceivable and possible.

rather than spiritual.¹¹⁶ In his Hermetic commentary, Foix-Candale articulates a Boethian view of universal harmony binding all things together, but he understands it as a mere material reflection of pure divine essence, useful only in so far as it reminds us of the need to renounce all material attachments.¹¹⁷ The Hermetic view is that universal harmony governs involuntary nature and fate but should not govern man, who alone among God's creatures has been given the responsibility of free will and therefore the choice between spiritual divinity and material perdition.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ E.g., Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 42 (C.H. I.14): "Et celuy, qui auoit eu arbitre, & toute puissance sur les animaux du monde, bruts & mortels, s'esleua par l'harmonie, rompant la puissance des cercles, & monstra à nature, qui aloit en bas, vne belle forme de Dieu. Lequelle elle voyant d'une insatiable beauté, ayant en soy les effectz des sept gouuerneurs & la forme de Dieu, luy sous-rist d'amour, de tant qu'elle consideroit la figure de l'humaine beauté en l'eau, & l'ombre sur la terre. Et luy cognoissant que la semblable forme de celle, qu'il voyoit en l'eau, estoit en luy, il l'ayma, & voulut habiter en ce lieu: & ensemble avec la volonté fut produit l'effect, & habita en la forme priuée de raison." In Foix-Candale's interpretation, "s'estant rendu par l'abus de ses sens subiect a l'action des gouuerneurs & creatures celestes, & s'estant incliné sous leurs puissances, [l'homme] s'estoit senty si empiré de sa premiere liberté, que facilement il desiroit de despit & raige, rompre & briser ceux, qui lui auoient donné ce malheur, estant si aueuglé de sa faute (comme il auient communement) qu'il ne cognoissoit qu'elle lui estoit auenue par son deffaut, & abandon qu'il auoit fait, de la contemplation des œuvres diuines, pour a la persuasion des sens adherer aux choses materieles" (45).

¹¹⁷ E.g., Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 269: "En ceste partie deffailloit de cest exemplaire la semblance de ceste image, & ce affin que dans ceste multiplication de creatures remplissant le monde, chascune faisant l'estat de sa nature, & loy ordonnée de Dieu, fust reluisante & aparust l'harmonie, accord, & consonance. Et d'auantage ceste plenitude d'action & operation conduite par ceste harmonie, & commun accord secours & compatibilité que toutes creatures ont entre elles, selon l'ordre de leur nature & institution. Par lesquelles choses ce grand animal monde doit retirer en soy l'ymage de ce tresparfait animal: qui ne peut estre veu, entendu, ny comprins, que de pensée en ce, que par son harmonie il opere tousiours par tout & toutes choses."

¹¹⁸ E.g., Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 30: "Il consideroit aussi les actions & puissances des creatures celestes, employées par vn si grand ordre de l'armonie obseruée en leurs actions & influences, sur tant de diuerses mutations, generations, renouvellements, croissances & autres effaicts, produits par les actions de ces tant belles creatures, qu'il n'est aulcun doute qu'il ne luy passast plusieurs & diuers arguments en son intelligence, & claire pensée, mesme que ayant considéré toutes les œuvres du saint Esprit, dressées pour la conduite du monde, & ses parties, tant intelligibles, que sensibles, ou materielles, il estoit a mesme de considerer ceste grand court celestie, armee d'un si grand nombre d'esprits, ordonnés par leurs hierarchies, tous deputes, faicts, & créés pour l'execution du service & ministere de ceste infinie lumiere & pensée, estant tout a par soy, en trois subiects, contenus en vne mesme essence de diuinité & pour la contemplation desquelles l'homme auoit principalement esté fait & formé, comme nous le trouuerons quelques fois Dieu aidant, cy apres.... L'homme donc ayant premierement considéré le ciel & les vertus de son operateur, & secondement considéré la structure & operation, imprimée, & appliquée sur la matiere, s'est tant delecté en ceste matiere, qu'il a choisie pour son contentement, obliant sa premiere principale, & plus digne operation, totalement distraicte & separee des sens & de matiere, comme quelquefois nous dirons avec Mercure, que la premiere maladie de l'ame c'est

The writers to be discussed in the next chapter, while they cherished the Hermetic doctrine of intellectual transcendence and divine ascent, had begun to view the material world differently from their ancient predecessors. Embedded in the theory of *harmonia mundi* is the paradox of a unifying order behind a manifestly imperfect and unstable world – the mirror image of the paradox of vanity.¹¹⁹ Ironic though it might seem given his own denial of celestial music, it was Aristotle’s epistemological stance, filtered through Thomas Aquinas, that Ficino and others used to counteract the Platonic and Hermetic renunciation of matter, regarding it instead as the medium of divine re-ascent. In France, *musique mesurée* forged a material link between *musica mundana* and *musica instrumentalis*, in the recognition that matter – the body, the vehicle of song and dance – could and should be used for a spiritual end.

obly, duquel Moïse en faict continuelles animaduersions au peuple, & tout le reste de l’escripture le blasme grandement, & le reproche a tous propos. Ce que l’homme a donc oblié, c’estoyent les contemplations, admirations, graces, & louanges continuelles, deuës aux vertus de Dieu, & s’arrestant plus a la matiere.”

¹¹⁹ On vanity and paradox, see Appendix 2.

Chapter 3

Unity in Answer to Vanity: *Harmonia mundi*, Accordant Discord, and *musique mesurée*

The doctrine of *harmonia mundi* seeks to answer what the historian of philosophy Heinz Heimsoeth has called the “most primordial” of questions: whether “the hidden unity of the totality of being” can be established inductively on behalf of a world that “always shows itself to us only in multiplicity and division, in the manifold-motley character of experiences.”¹ I am focusing on how the doctrine was articulated by fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Neoplatonists, and on a Calvinist worldview out of step with it, but it would be simplistic to discern a new school of thought opposed to an old one, or to suggest the outdated, stark dichotomy of Renaissance and Reformation as concurrent and antithetical movements.² While in a broad sense, the early-modern Neoplatonic view of *harmonia mundi* belongs to the restorative classical orientation of humanism, it stems more directly from medieval thought, in particular from a mystical tradition that straddled philosophy and theology.³ Sixteenth-century Protestants were similarly oriented, in

¹ Heinz Heimsoeth, *The Six Great Themes of Western Metaphysics and the End of the Middle Ages*, trans. Ramon J. Betanzos (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 38.

² For example, Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation* (New York: Scribner, 1964), characterizes the Protestant reformation in opposition to Renaissance humanism – a tendency that can be traced to Jacob Burckhardt and that is now widely considered misleading. The terms renaissance and reformation were used in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Levi, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 1 n1, argues that “‘reformation’ has even less content [than ‘Protestant’] and refers to so many different things that it needs to be defined every time it is used.”

³ Yates, *The French Academies*, 2: “as is now generally recognised, the Platonism of the Florentine Academy was not only of Renaissance origin, but derived a great deal of its motive force, both on the philosophical and the religious side, from the mediaeval traditions onto which it was grafted.” Paul Henry,

reaction against a scholastic failure to reconcile Catholic theology with Greek philosophy, especially Aristotle. For Protestants, it was necessary to remove much of the clutter of scholasticism and to re-emphasize knowledge that had been established all along. Neoplatonist philosophers in the Ficinian tradition, meanwhile, applied newly rediscovered texts to a cosmological premise that had not changed nominally since early antiquity, but that had evolved substantively over time. The premise – that the universal “problem of change” required a universal solution, that a visibly flawed and inconstant world needed somehow to be reconciled with an intuitive awareness of perfection, beauty, truth, and divinity – was addressed by these Neoplatonists in a manner that diverged not only from mainstream Protestantism, but also from their ancient predecessors who are grouped under the same Neoplatonic label. This latter divergence from earlier Greek thought has yet to be clarified sufficiently in any musicological context that I am aware of, and will be the main subject of the present chapter, in view of its relevance to a musical representation of universal vanity from out of the same tradition.

In both the Platonic and Christian traditions, the perception of cosmic unity entails a belief in God as the original unifying principle, while the concealment of unity in multiplicity demands a means of discovery and circumvention that is at once intellectual and religious. The assumption of unity or harmony creates an intellectual

“The Place of Plotinus in the History of Thought,” in Plotinus, *The Enneads*, trans. Stephen MacKenna, ed. John Dillon (London: Penguin, 1991), xlii, writes that Plotinus “is in the West the founder of that speculative mysticism which expresses in intellectual or rather supra-intellectual and ‘negative’ categories the stages and states of union with the Absolute. It is a mysticism wholly philosophical, transposed into a new key which is specifically Plotinian; and it differs very greatly from the mysticism of St Paul or St John with which through the centuries it runs parallel or combines, often almost unconsciously, though at times also it is in conflict with the Gospel mysticism.”

tension, in as much as an all-powerful source of truths that cannot be seen must be exonerated for the untruth of appearances. The essence of *harmonia mundi* in its early-modern Neoplatonic guise is to dispel or at least mitigate the tension by adducing the material mirage itself as evidence of a spiritual oasis beyond the world, and as a means of access to it. Through a paradoxical law of accordant discord or *constante inconstance*, of perpetual change in perfect equilibrium, the universe reveals the omnipresence of God as both maximum and minimum, center and circumference. This idea of a cosmic unity of opposites was already promulgated in antiquity. But Renaissance Neoplatonists, in their effort to transcend the metaphysical polarity of spirit and matter, mind and body, invoked the unity of opposites to assert that God's potency and presence are undiminished in even the lowest devolutions of matter. They used another old idea in aid of this vision, namely the human soul as metaphysical link between matter and spirit. But they described the soul in terms that served more to unite than to divide the two extremes.

The medieval debate over the existence of celestial harmony (the "music of the spheres") continued into the seventeenth century amid a string of upheavals in astronomy; and Pythagorean numerology was still applied to the macrocosm and microcosm by Neoplatonists such as Marsilio Ficino, Francesco Giorgi, Pontus de Tyard, Johannes Kepler, and Robert Fludd.⁴ But the Pythagorean influence should now be viewed in the light of a divine extension into matter rather than a material regression

⁴ Yates, *The Occult Philosophy*, 36, writes that Fludd was "heavily influenced by Giorgi." Kepler presents a Neoplatonic vision of universal harmony in the *Harmonices mundi* (1619). See the modern edition, *The Harmony of the World*, trans. and ed. E. J. Aiton, A. M. Duncan, and J. V. Field (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1997). In the preface, the editors note that the treatise had little influence due to the seventeenth-century priority of "mechanical natural philosophy" over "metaphysical speculation" (viii). See also Penelope Gouk, "The Role of Harmonics in the Scientific Revolution," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 223-45.

from divinity – a reversal of perspective that justified human ascent to divinity through matter rather than in spite of it. The traditional discourse on vanity, meanwhile, increasingly appropriated by Protestant theologians, provides an important foil to this more world-affirming outlook by continuing to insist on the fundamental separation and incompatibility of matter and spirit.

The historical survey of music philosophy in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* gives no indication of this early-modern development in unitary cosmological thought.⁵ With regard to musical practice, the article gives more or less the opposite impression, by reducing the belief in *harmonia mundi* or *musica mundana* to its abstract mathematical underpinnings:

The advances of late medieval logic thus prepare the way for the conclusion that mathematical considerations have no essential bearing on music. In the later 15th century, the view of music as the branch of mathematics that pertains to sounds tends to give way to a humanist view of music as a sonorous art, to which mathematics is relevant only as calculating or explaining means to musical ends otherwise determined.

By the end of the sixteenth century, according to this narrative, a unifying cosmological rationale based in number, which belongs to the preceding age, has been supplanted by an earthbound concern for human expressivity. The Renaissance fashion for “Greek humanism, now the acknowledged ideal,” determined that the “arcane and autonomous pattern-making” of late-medieval polyphony, linked by earlier theorists to the universal order, would be “replaced by the expressive voice of a natural man”:

And what is expressed is merely sentiment and speech, not (as in Plato’s fantasy) character and thought [i.e., the immaterial domain of the intellect]. Significantly, this polemic is launched [by the Florentine Camerata] in the name of Boethius’s second level [*musica humana*, represented by the solo voice] against his third

⁵ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Philosophy of music. II. Historical survey, antiquity-1750” by Lydia Goehr et al.

[*musica instrumentalis*, i.e., polyphony]; the revival of Neoplatonism might have encouraged the opposition to take the yet higher ground of Boethius's first level [*musica mundana*], but the unfashionableness of logic and mathematics seems to have discouraged them from doing so.

The Florentine Camerata's disinterest in *musica mundana*, rather than being new and forward-thinking, had been foreshadowed centuries before:

Johannes de Grocheo [Jean de Grouchy] had already made the essential point around 1300, urging that the mathematical *science* of music was not the same as the *art* of music, which was the application of such theory to singing. This art was not a branch of mathematics, and neither *musica mundana* nor *musica humana* had any place in it. His cool Aristotelian pragmatism made little headway in that age of numerological hermeticism.

Boethius's Neoplatonism, against which Grocheo could make little headway, had placed the music theorist above the practitioner: "Man, according to Neoplatonism, can and should associate himself with the higher, intelligible level of reality, but turns in his weakness to the lower, sensuous level."⁶ The *New Grove* authors thus imply that by the end of the Renaissance, the Neoplatonic hierarchy has been overturned: *musica humana* has been reoriented as the governor of *musica instrumentalis*, while *musica mundana* has become an abstract irrelevance, at least as far as musical practice is concerned.

The musical priorities of late sixteenth-century Italy (the focus of the article in question) should not be applied without qualification to France during the same period, where the Neoplatonic revival was more recently underway.⁷ Howard Mayer Brown observes the following about Tyard's Neoplatonic dialogues on music and poetry:

⁶ On Johannes de Grocheo's rejection of the Boethian musical categories, see Carol Janice Williams, "Johannes de Grocheo's *De musica*: Theory and Practice, or Authority and Empirical Observation," in *Aesthetics and Experience in Music Performance*, ed. Elizabeth Mackinlay et al (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2005), 21-38. On the medieval reception of Boethius's distinction between *musicus* and *cantor*, see Erich Reimer, "*Musicus* und *Cantor*: Zur Sozialgeschichte eines musikalischen Lehrstücks," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 35/1 (1978): 1-32.

⁷ See Appendix 1, section II.

the two *Solitaires* seem to outline two poles of French thought about music in the late sixteenth century, poles that we can conveniently label the cosmic and the rhetorical. Music obeys cosmic laws, but ultimately in the service of a persuasive rhetoric that moves people at the same time as it relates them directly to a universal world order.⁸

The suggestion that cosmology was invoked “in the service of a persuasive rhetoric” both accurately describes the rationale of *musique mesurée* and implicitly demotes cosmology from its earlier priority. “Poles” are typically to be understood as equal and opposing influences. Brown does suggest that the two poles (cosmic and rhetorical) were complementary, but he leaves the impression that a new interest in rhetoric had dictated new terms to the old cosmological viewpoint, rather than, as I will argue here, that a new cosmological viewpoint had informed the creation of a new musical rhetoric. “Music obeys cosmic laws, but...” fails to acknowledge that cosmology had evolved since the ancient beginnings of Neoplatonism.

The musicological narrative in which abstract “late medieval logic” gives way to a rhetorically contingent, “natural” outlook that valorized the passions, complements a familiar historical view of the Renaissance as a whole. Anthony Levi, for example, has recently summarized the epoch as “the endeavor by western Christendom to achieve the acceptance of a new and elevated vision of human nature.” He finds that this endeavor successfully overcame the medieval “suppression of natural human instinct,” and the suppression of “aspirations to interior moral fulfilment in pursuit of salvation.”⁹ Such aspirations certainly fueled the fifteenth-century Neoplatonic revival, which the *New*

⁸ Brown, “*Ut musica poesis*,” 6.

⁹ Levi, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 2. Levi argues that “[o]nly in the seventeenth century was instinctive activity, considered since the thirteenth century to be driven by the ‘passions’ widely to be regarded again by moral theologians and spiritual directors as compatible with virtue.”

Grove authors mention only by way of associating *musica mundana* with “the unfashionableness of logic and mathematics.” Their survey, like Brown’s, overlooks the musical implications of the cosmological shift in that tradition away from its ancient dualist orientation and toward unity. In this new doctrine, which was no less mystically determined than its antecedents, man’s central metaphysical position served to bring the *musica mundana* closer rather than push it away. As a consequence, *musica instrumentalis* (rhetorical music) could be used to represent, embody, and affirm the proximity of *musica mundana* (cosmic music). The fact that this shift culminated in Florentine Neoplatonism precludes attributing it to a “medieval” paradigm and raises all of the familiar questions of how Renaissance periodization should be applied to music.¹⁰ If the Florentine Camerata disdained the “higher ground of Boethius’s first level,” their immediate predecessors did not: *musica mundana* served as the theological and musical platform for Ficino, Pico, Giorgi, and their French imitators in the *Pléiade* and the Academy of Poetry and Music.¹¹

¹⁰ See Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, vol. 1, *The Earliest Notations to the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 380-85; Paul Oskar Kristeller, “Music and Learning in the Early Italian Renaissance,” in *Renaissance Thought and the Arts: Collected Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 142-62; Leo Schrade, “Renaissance: The Historical Conception of an Epoch,” in *International Society for Musical Research, Fifth Congress* (Amsterdam: Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, 1953), 19-32; Edward E. Lowinsky, *Music in the Culture of the Renaissance and Other Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 19-39; Heinrich Besseler, “Das Renaissanceproblem in der Musik,” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 23 (1966): 1-10; Claude V. Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); Jessie Ann Owens, “Music Historiography and the Definition of ‘Renaissance,’” *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 47/2 (1990-91): 305-30; Reinhard Strohm, *The Rise of European Music, 1380-1500* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993); idem, “Music, Humanism, and the Idea of a ‘Rebirth,’” in *The New Oxford History of Music, III.i: Music as Concept and Practice in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Reinhard Strohm and Bonnie J. Blackburn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 346-88.

¹¹ On Neoplatonism in the Bardi circle, see however Alessandro Magini and Stéphane Toussaint (eds.), *Il teatro del cielo: Giovanni Bardi e il neoplatonismo tra Firenze e Parigi* (Paris: Société Marsile Ficini, 2001), a volume that mainly addresses the Medicean connection between Florence and Paris in relation to ceremonial and theatrical events inspired by Neoplatonic cosmology (e.g. the 1581 *Balet comique de la Royne* and the 1589 *Intermedi*). Yates, *The French Academies*, 1-2, identifies a shift in emphasis in Italian

Ficino made an important departure from Boethius, not by abandoning the higher ground of *musica mundana* but by describing all three levels – *mundana*, *humana*, and *instrumentalis* – as seamlessly interconnected.¹² Whereas Boethius regarded sensuous music as a diversion from heavenly music, Ficino saw an essential continuity. But just as importantly, he and his followers perceived no more of an impasse between Platonic theology and Aristotelian natural philosophy than had Boethius himself. The *New Grove* authors repeat a common trope by opposing Aristotelianism to Neoplatonism (Grocheo's "cool Aristotelian pragmatism" versus the macrocosm-microcosm ideal), in reference to the medieval controversy over the literal existence of sphere music (more on which below). The original purpose of Neoplatonism as a reconciliation of Aristotle and Plato, to which Boethius also subscribed, should therefore be kept in mind here. The early-modern evolution in unitary thought would not have progressed in the way it did without Aristotle's influence, which helped Renaissance Neoplatonists to articulate a more intimate and thoroughgoing link between the material and spiritual worlds.

academic culture from the fifteenth to the sixteenth centuries: "In the early academies the range of interests is encyclopaedic yet unified.... In the later academies specialisation seems to set in, and different academies are assigned to different subjects.... The institutions also become more formalised, and set schemes and regulations for their guidance are drawn up. These changes within the academic atmosphere correspond to changes in the whole spiritual climate of Europe; the freedom and universalism of the High Renaissance was breaking down, under stress of the religious wars, into the rigidities of Reformation and Counter Reformation." However, a widespread belief in universal harmony persisted through this transition and into the seventeenth century.

¹² William R. Bowen, "Ficino's Analysis of Musical *harmonia*," in *Ficino and Renaissance Neoplatonism*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler and Olga Zorzi Pugliese (Ottawa: Dovehouse, 1986), 17-27, discusses Ficino's *De rationibus musicae* and *De divino furore* on the cosmological significance of *musica instrumentalis*. On the Neoplatonic orientation of Boethius's *De institutione musica*, see Anja Heilmann, "Anagogik in Boethius' Musiktheorie und in der neuplatonischen Kunstphilosophie," *Musiktheorie: Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 23/1 (2008): 5-21. See also Calvin M. Bower, "Boethius' *De institutione musica* and the Latin Reception of Greek Musical Theory," in *Atti del XIV congresso della Società Internazionale di Musicologia, Bologna, 1987*, ed. Angelo Pompilio (Turin: EDT, 1990), 2:155-57.

Likewise the success of the French innovation of *musique mesurée* – the union of poetry and music, which, as Frances Yates describes it,

is the result of the combination of [Aristotle's] rational and ethical measures with the descending grace of divine inspiration.... The poetic enthusiasm of the Platonist must complete the intellectual and moral integrity of the Aristotelian. The Aristotelian 'disciplines,' physical and moral, must be the preparation for the higher wisdom of Plato. These two sides, or different levels, of man's nature must work together, not in opposition.¹³

Opposite sides working together is another way to allude to the cosmic unity of opposites or "accordant discord" to be examined below, and is a premise that applied equally to political and religious accord, to the individual's physical and moral integrity, and to polyphonic music. The idealized purpose of *musique mesurée* as a facilitator of social cohesion and spiritual advancement is well understood. Here I will focus on its underemphasized purpose as a representation of the new unitary view of the cosmos, pursuant to salvation – namely, the view most difficult to reconcile with the Protestant focus on the universal condition of vanity and on human responsibility for that condition. The Neoplatonic tradition had always upheld the soteriological agency of man, but its Renaissance revival coincides and is in tension with the push toward religious reform, for which it provided a conspicuous target. Protestant theologians could find more reasons

¹³ Yates, *The French Academies*, 115. She further remarks that "[i]t is in no way surprising that the Neo-Platonic French academies should have this Aristotelian side, for the 'conciliation of Plato with Aristotle,' one of the cardinal points of Alexandrian Neo-Platonic doctrine and never entirely lost sight of in the Middle Ages, was strongly insisted upon by the Florentine Neo-Platonists." Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 33-34, writes that the "Aristotelian tradition, though exposed to attacks and subject to transformations, continued strongly and vigorously to the end of the sixteenth century and even later," and that "Renaissance Platonism, which many historians have been inclined to oppose to medieval Aristotelianism, was not as persistently anti-Aristotelian as we might expect. Its most influential representatives were either impressed by the Neoplatonic synthesis of Plato and Aristotle, or even directly affected by medieval Aristotelianism" (43-44). Pico della Mirandola is one such example; see below.

than their medieval predecessors to denounce a new and inordinate love of the world and an anthropocentric view of salvation.

Both viewpoints – harmony and vanity – were predicated on movement, the observational constant on which everyone could agree. Musicological discussions of *harmonia mundi* or *musica mundana*, however, often neglect this most basic fact by focusing on the question of planetary sphere music, in the literal and pitch-oriented sense of either static consonances or inert modal species. While such music was self-evidently the byproduct of movement, it was the very distance of the planets from human ears that made the question increasingly less important to Renaissance philosophers, who wanted to regard universal harmony as something less mathematical and more palpable, that is, as directly applicable to earthly music. To quote François de Foix-Candale from his 1579 commentary on the *Hermetica*, “There are those who have thought...that the heavens, forged with such polish and precision...and having neither air nor void between them, made a sound or accordant noise, which they have called the celestial harmony – not recognizing that harmony is an accord of actions and not of sounds.”¹⁴ For academicians, the importance of such an accord was its penetration to every level of existence. The upward mobility of the soul that *musique mesurée* was intended to promote could easily be misconstrued as spiritual escapism – as the old dualist disengagement from matter, rather than a unitary embrace of the “accord of actions.” But *musique mesurée* viewed in a purely dualist light would be just another acknowledgement of *omnia vanitas*, whereas

¹⁴ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 137: “Il y en a qui ont pensé par dessus la region elementaire, n’y auoir point d’air, ny lieu vuide, mais que les cieux des planettes estoient forgez si iustes & polis, que la superficie conuexe de l’interieur, ioignoit à la concaue du superieur, & faisoient leurs diuers mouuements l’un frotant si bien contre l’autre, qu’il n’y auoit air ny aucun vuide entre deux, & faisoient vn son ou bruit accordant, qu’ils ont nommé l’harmonie celeste, ne cognoissans que l’harmonie est l’accord des actions, & non des sons....”

the doctrine of *harmonia mundi* had traveled elsewhere by the time of the technique's invention.

I. Accordant discord, God as center and circumference, matter as potentiality

The cosmological premise of a unity of opposites or “accordant discord” can be traced to the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus (ca. 535-ca. 475 BCE), who, as I will discuss in Chapter 4, also had a visible and somewhat curious role in the vanitas tradition.¹⁵ James Haar, in his dissertation on *musica mundana*, quotes the relevant fragment of Heraclitus – “Men do not know what is at variance agrees with itself. It is an attunement of opposite tensions, like that of the bow and the lyre” – along with Plato's interpretation in the *Symposium*: “What [Heraclitus] probably meant was that harmony is composed of differing notes of higher or lower pitch which disagreed once, but are now reconciled by the art of music.”¹⁶ Haar writes,

It is indeed easy to apply this reconciliation of opposing forces to World harmony, whether the latter be Plato's mixing of the Same and the Other [in the *Timaeus*], the contrary movements of planets and the firmament, or the joining of

¹⁵ Leo Spitzer, “Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony: Prolegomena to an Interpretation of the Word ‘Stimmung’: Part I,” *Traditio* 2 (1944): 415: “according to Heraclitus, [the world] was thought to be built on integrated contrasts: [...] harmony dominates, but, a harmony which comprehends strife and antagonism as a synthesis is beyond thesis and antithesis.... The Greek mind has been able to see harmony in discord, to see the triumph of ‘symphony’ over the discordant voices.” Heimsoeth, *The Six Great Themes*, 40, writes of Heraclitus: “The ‘Obscure One’ from Ephesus conceived the great idea of a unity that did not hover over oppositions, smoothing them out and obliterating the struggle [as the Pythagoreans had attempted], but rather lived and functioned in the very tension of those opposites itself. Just as in the case of a bow or a lyre, an alliance of opposing forces is the law of things, the unity of the world. This is not a unity above or below the opposites, but a unity of the opposites themselves.” Heimsoeth states that Heraclitus's cosmology was long misunderstood and “remained without effect; this was not the initiative that determined the worldview of the classical systems.” For an analysis of the surviving fragments of Heraclitus, see Richard G. Geldard, *Remembering Heraclitus* (Hudson, N.Y.: Lindisfarne, 2000). See also Grant, *Planets, Stars, and Orbs*, 148-50.

¹⁶ Haar, “*Musica mundana*,” 77.

tetrachords in an octave. Heraclitus' apophthegm, whatever he may have meant by it, took a definite place in the developing doctrine of the harmony of the cosmos.¹⁷

The philologist Leo Spitzer cites the use of *concordia discors* by various Roman authors (Pliny, Ovid, Horace, Quintilian).¹⁸ Boethius echoes the idea when he writes of *musica mundana* that it is "discernible especially in those things which are observed in heaven itself or in the combination of elements or the diversity of seasons."¹⁹ Early Renaissance theorists under the influence of a Neoplatonic revival, such as Giorgio Anselmi and Franchino Gaffurio, breathed new life into Boethius's musical cosmology.²⁰ Giovanni Pico della Mirandola viewed *concordia discors* as the definition of created beauty.²¹

¹⁷ Haar, "Musica mundana," 78. Gregory Vlastos, *Plato's Universe* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 7, writes of Heraclitean cosmology: "Fire, water, and earth are in deadly opposition. They are at war. They are annihilating each other. But the dynamic symmetries of their intertransformations harmonize the warring opposites, make them perpetuate each other through their very strife and thus compose a world which is everlasting because all through it life is perpetually renewed by death. If you believe that 'from discord [comes] the fairest harmony,' what could be fairer than this? And why should it be 'just'?"

¹⁸ Spitzer, "Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony," 415-16.

¹⁹ Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, 9 (*De institutione musica*, I.2).

²⁰ Anselmi states in his *Dialoghi* that the elements are "joined to the harmonic motions of the heavenly bodies in an admirable composition, as if the opposing constituents...produce one body, are related to each other and repose for a by no means negligible time, freely exchanging their proper places in order to unite, excited by nothing other than the law of harmony"; quoted in Haar, "Musica mundana," 336. Gaffurio paraphrases the same description in the second chapter of the *Theorica musice* (1480/92); see Haar, "Musica mundana," 368. Haar also notes (375-76) "the Heraclitean-Empedoclean dictum 'Harmonia est discordia concors'" in Gaffurio's later *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum* (1518). See also Walter Kreyszig, "Franchino Gaffurio als Vermittler der Musiklehre des Altertums und des Mittelalters: Zur Identifizierung griechischer und lateinischer Quellen in der *Theorica musice* (1492)," *Acta musicologica* 65/2 (1993): 134-50.

Boethius's influence during the sixteenth century owes considerably to Heinrich Glarean's editions of *De institutione musica* and *De institutione arithmetica*. See Inga Mai Groote, "Heinrich Glarean Reading and Editing Boethius," *Acta Musicologica* 80/2 (2008): 215-29; Iain Fenlon and Inga Mai Groote, "Heinrich Glarean's Books," in *Heinrich Glarean's Books: The Intellectual World of a Sixteenth-Century Musical Humanist*, ed. Iain Fenlon and Inga Mai Groote (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 303-34. See also Claude V. Palisca, "Boethius in the Renaissance," in *Music Theory and its Sources: Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. André Barbera (South Bend: University of Notre Dame, 1990), 259-80; and Reimer, "Musicus und Cantor." On Glarean's influence on Claude Le Jeune, see His, "Das Dodecacorde von Claude Le Jeune."

²¹ Michael J. B. Allen, "The Birth Day of Venus: Pico as Platonic Exegete in the *Commento* and the *Heptaplus*," in *Pico della Mirandola: New Essays*, ed. M. V. Dougherty (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge

Michael J. Allen characterizes the idea in universal terms as “the Renaissance choric ideal of harmony, which is at the same time the personal, the political, and the cosmic ideal of the entire European age.”²²

The idea of accordant discord received particular emphasis from Nicholas of Cusa (1401-64), a widely read German theologian and mystic who accounted for infinite multiplicity with a doctrine of “learned ignorance” (*docta ignorantia*).²³ For Cusa, the infinite variety of temporal existence, which no human intellect could hope to grasp, nevertheless demonstrated conclusively the possibility of infinite knowledge, of a supervising intellect linked to every instance of material change.²⁴ A *coincidentia*

University Press, 2008), 97: “since Mind is the first one-and-many and exists both as the first angel and as the plenitude of Ideas, it is the first unitary composite and therefore the first beautiful thing: not so much the absolute, exemplary unique Idea of Beauty as the composite, manifold, universal beauty, the splendor, Ficino would consistently call it, of all the Ideas, the attractiveness or grace (*quello decore e grazia*), says Pico, which results from their diversity. But such beauty, he argues...is the result of both discord and concord, of unity and of contrariety, of Venus’s companionship with Mars: ‘This can be taken as a true definition of such beauty: it is nothing other than a friendly enmity, or a harmonious discord.’ In addition, he cites Heraclitus on strife as the father of all things and Empedocles on the ever-during alteration of love and strife. Only God is without contrariety or discord, whereas Angel and Beauty alike are composed of potency and act, of discord and concord.” Allen is quoting from the *Commento*, “an unfinished series of notes Pico first compiled in the autumn of 1486” (83). The idea of *concordia discors* also appears in the *Heptaplus* (1489), to be discussed below and in Chapter 4.

²² Allen, “The Birth Day of Venus,” 97.

²³ The philosophy of Cusa eludes definite categorization, but as an early exponent of Renaissance humanism, he was strongly influenced by Neoplatonism, in particular by Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius. See Dermot Moran, “Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464): Platonism at the Dawn of Modernity,” in *Platonism at the Origins of Modernity: Studies on Platonism and Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Douglas Hedley and Sarah Hutton (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 9-29.

²⁴ Cf. Nicholas of Cusa, *On Learned Ignorance*, trans. Jasper Hopkins (Minneapolis: Banning, 1981), 8 (*De docta ignorantia*, I.3): “Hence, regarding truth, it is evident that we do not know anything other than the following: viz., that we know truth not to be precisely comprehensible as it is. For truth may be likened unto the most absolute necessity (which cannot be either something more or something less than it is), and our intellect may be likened unto possibility. Therefore, the quiddity of things, which is the truth of beings, is unattainable in its purity; though it is sought by all philosophers, it is found by no one as it is. And the more deeply we are instructed in this ignorance, the closer we approach to truth.” On Cusa’s influence on Ficino and Pico, see Pauline Moffitt Watts, “Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and Three Renaissance Neoplatonists: Cusanus, Ficino & Pico on Mind and Cosmos,” in *Supplementum Festivum: Studies in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. James Hankins et al (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1987), 279-98.

oppositorum throughout creation should reassure the intellect of God's eternal and immediate presence. Cusa describes the universe as an "unfolding of God" (*explicatio Dei*) as well as a "contraction" of God, yet he denies the overtones of pantheism (a Christian heresy).²⁵ In Frederick Copleston's summary,

In the *explicatio Dei* or creation of the world unity is 'contracted' into plurality, infinity into finitude, simplicity into composition, eternity into succession, necessity into possibility. On the plane of creation the divine infinity expresses or reveals itself in the multiplicity of finite things, while the divine eternity expresses or reveals itself in temporal succession.²⁶

²⁵ Hints of pantheism can also be detected in Giorgi and Tyard. For example, Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 302:

Cestuy Dieu meilleur que tout nom, cestuy caché, cestuy derechef plus manifeste que tous, cestuy spectable à la pensée, cestuy present aux yeux, cestuy incorporel, & cestuy (pour dire ainsi) qui a plusieurs corps. Car il y a rien au corps que luy-mesme ne soit. Car luy seul il est tout: comme encor enseignoit Parmenide, qu'Aristote iniustement s'efforce de reprendre.

Giorgi also cites Pseudo-Dionysius on God's omnipresence:

Et conclurray avecques saint Denis, lequel a recueilly presque en vn seul conclusion tout ce qu'ils ont baillé & prouué par plusieurs raisons. Ils disent que Dieu est aux Pensées & Intelligences, & aux animaux, & aux corps, & au Ciel, & en la terre, & ensemble en vn mesme, luy-mesme est mondain, entour-mondain, sur-celeste, sur-substanciel, Soleil, Astre, Feu, Eau, Esprit, rousées, nuée, pierre & roche, le tout de ce qui est, & le rien de ce qui est. (302)

Elsewhere, Giorgi airs the Stoic view of pantheism, in order to relate it to the teaching of Hermes Trismegistus and from there to St. John the Evangelist:

Les Stoiques (au rapport d'Eusebe et de Plutarque) disent que Dieu est vn esprit penetrant par tout l'Vniuers appellé de diuers noms selon la diuersité des choses par où il passe.... Zenon prouue que le Monde est animé, & qu'il reçoit estre de celui qui de soy engendre les animaux. Et Trismegiste au liure qu'il a intitulé que Dieu est ensemblément caché & manifeste, dit sagement: il n'y a aussi rien és corps qui ne soit Dieu mesme. Car luy seul est toutes choses, mettant au iour celles qui sont, & cachant en soy-mesme celles qui ne sont point. Cestuy est caché, cestuy est le plus manifeste de tous. Cestuy est spectacle à la pensée, cestuy est present aux yeulx. Cestuy est incorporel, cestuy (afin que ie parle ainsi) a plusieurs corps. Et au liure de Commun discours il dit: Et n'y a rien en tout qui ne soit le mesme Dieu, qui est la vie de tous. Mais voyons comme il s'accord bien avec nostre S. Iean. Car il dit: Ce qui a esté faict estoit en luy la vie & la vie estoit la lumiere, toutes choses ont esté faict par luy, & sans luy rien n'a esté faict. (362)

Cf. Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 113r: "I'adiousteray l'opinion de Pythagore rapportee par Cyrille & Eusebe: Dieu (disoit-il) est vn, non comme quelques vns ont pensé, dehors la fabrique mondaine: mais en icelle tout, en tout, circulairement, considerant & prenant esgard à toutes les generations: il est la temperature de tous les siecles, la lumiere de toutes les puissances, l'effet de toutes les oeuvres, le premier de tout: la clarté du Ciel, pere, ame, & mouuement de toute chose."

²⁶ Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Volume III. Late Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 240.

In Cusa's words, the universe is a circular continuum incorporating everything from Minimum to Maximum, from the smallest finite particular to the infinite deity:

because the center is infinite, the whole of the Maximum is present most perfectly within everything as the Simple and the Indivisible; moreover, it is outside of every being – surrounding all things, because the circumference is infinite, and penetrating all things, because the diameter is infinite. It is the Beginning of all things, because it is the center; it is the End of all things, because it is the circumference; it is the Middle of all things, because it is the diameter. It is the efficient Cause, since it is the center; it is the formal Cause, since it is the diameter; it is the final Cause, since it is the circumference. It bestows being, for it is the center; it regulates being, for it is the diameter; it conserves being, for it is the circumference.²⁷

The French academician Nicolas le Fèvre de la Boderie (1550-1613), who read Cusa, refers to God as center and circumference in his introduction to the French translation of Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi*, and he ties the concept to the anagogical method of divine ascent.²⁸

Giorgi attributes the idea of God as center and circumference to Hermes

Trismegistus (citing also Ecclesiasticus, one of the wisdom books)²⁹ and elsewhere states

²⁷ Cusa, *On Learned Ignorance*, 35-36 (I.21).

²⁸ Nicolas le Fèvre de la Boderie, "Discours fort utile pour entendre et exposer les saintes Escriptions," introduction to Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, n.p.: "Les Peres, qui ont quelquefois déployé les voiles en ceste mer calme & bonace, nous enseignent que l'unique voye pour y nautiger, pendant que nous flottons en ce fraile & tendre vaisseau de nostre corps, est l'Anagogie, par laquelle nous reportons comme du centre & point qui est en vertu & puissance par tout, à la Circonference qui n'est en nulle part, tout ce que nous touchons, goustons, flairons, oyons, voyons, entendons, aymons, despouillez de leurs accidents & teintures, à celui qui pere des choses eternelles & sensibles, est toutefois au dessus de tout sentiment, cognoissance & desir habitant solitaire en son Eternité."

²⁹ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 78: "Laquelle Trinité Hermes aussi enseigne sous l'enigme de la Sfe, quand il dit: Dieu est vne Sfe, de laquelle le centre (c'est à dire, le Pere) est par tout par sa puissance: mais la circonference (qui est la Sagesse & le Fils de Dieu) n'en est en aucun lieu: par ce qu'elle ne peult estre comprinse, & qu'elle embrasse toutes choses: comme nous lisons au mesme Ecclesiastique: Seule i'ay tournoyé le rond du Ciel, & ay penetré au profond de l'Abisme. Mais le mutuel rapport de l'un & de l'autre, à sçavoir de centre & de la circonference designe l'Esprit & Amour reciproque." Ibid., 302: "Et Mercure Troisfois-grand la splendeur des Filosofes au liure qu'il a intitulé, Que Dieu est ensemblement caché & manifesté, dict ainsi: Il est impossible que Dieu soit tousiours, si tousiours

that “the Universe that we inhabit contains the simulacrum of God.”³⁰ Yates traces the idea to a twelfth-century Hermetic text, from which Cusa quoted it,³¹ and describes its influence on Giordano Bruno, “for whom the innumerable worlds are all divine centres of the unbounded universe.”³² Michael Allen and James Hankins observe a similar development in Ficino, whose *Theologia Platonica* (1482) “devises more complex ways of reconceiving hierarchy itself as a unitary plurality, apprehensible through musicological, mathematical, and magical images; as an ordered song that is both inside and outside the soul both as unitary self and as all things – a part becoming the whole, a whole of parts and in parts, in the world and yet in God as God.”³³ Summarizing this early-modern development, Heimsoeth writes that “one must no longer understand the world in which opposites split off from one another as foreign to God; on the contrary, one can understand it as a resolution of what God in his abundance already contains within himself.”³⁴

It would perhaps be more accurate to say that Platonic dualism denies the absolute truth of matter rather than its absolute value – not the truth of its existence per se, but

il n’agit toutes choses, sçauoir est au ciel, en l’air, en la terre, en la mer, en tout le monde, en chacune totale parcelle du monde, tant en ce qui est, qu’en ce qui n’est point.”

³⁰ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 182: “Car le Monde que nous habitons contient le simulachre de Dieu: & l’homme porte l’image du Monde & de l’Archetype.”

³¹ Yates, *The Occult Philosophy*, 32 n14-15.

³² Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, 246ff. Bruno accepted Lucretius’s atomistic belief in multiple universes, but from a theistic and Hermetic rather than atheistic position.

³³ Introduction to Marsilio Ficino, *Platonic Theology: Volume I, Books I-IV*, trans. Michael J. B. Allen with John Warden, ed. James Hankins with William Bowen (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), x.

³⁴ Heimsoeth, *The Six Great Themes*, 60.

rather its capacity to embody or reflect stable intellectual truths. This distinction between value and truth is important because early-modern Neoplatonists regarded sensory intelligence as distinct but not entirely separate from divine intelligence. According to this view, the material world provides an impure yet essential medium – the medium that we have no choice but to live in – for apprehending divinity. Matter can therefore be called deceptive but not altogether false or altogether evil. The path was one of degrees from accepting this qualification to embracing the world as a unbroken continuum from base matter to God.³⁵ For Giorgi, “the sovereign perfection is in no way eclipsed in the lowest degrees, nor its simple unity at all destroyed by the multiplicity in which, by an infinite virtue, it contains all things.”³⁶

Aristotle, who denied the music of the spheres but who was no less of a dualist than Plato, ironically paved the way for the unitary conception of *harmonia mundi* by defining matter as potentiality (*dynamis*).³⁷ As I will discuss below, the French

³⁵ Gordon H. Clark, “The Theory of Time in Plotinus,” *The Philosophical Review* 53/4 (1944): 349, argues that “however much Plotinus in some of his moods may condemn affairs mundane, and despite the apparently radical separation between the higher and the lower worlds, his system has in reality but one universe, continuous from top to bottom, from inside out. And while the phrase ‘to save appearances’ may not be sufficiently elevated in tone, it remains true that the first principles of Plotinus, who is as anxious to persuade as to prove, will be convincing only if they can produce plausible accounts of lower things. Conversely, a criticism of a subsidiary theory, drawn directly from phenomena, is a consideration by which to judge even the ineffable One.” The argument below will be that by the Renaissance period, Neoplatonists had shifted to an emphasis on a “plausible account of lower things” and away from a “radical separation between the higher and lower worlds.”

³⁶ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 35: “Et la souverain perfection ne deffaut point aux plus bas degrez ny sa simple vñité n’est point destruite en plusieurs en laquelle par vertu infinie il contient toutes choses.” Giorgi’s use of “perfection” echoes Thomas Aquinas, who applies the term exclusively to creation and not to God: “It should be known that perfection (*perfectio*) cannot fittingly be attributed to God if we attend to the meaning of the word in relation to its origin: for it seems that what has not been made (*factum*) cannot be said to be perfect (*perfectum*)”; *Liber de Veritate Catholicae Fidei contra errores Infidelium seu ‘Summa contra Gentiles’*, I, quoted in Olivia Blanchette, *The Perfection of the Universe According to Aquinas: A Teleological Cosmology* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 42.

³⁷ Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Θ.6.1048a25. For an overview of Aristotle’s position on celestial harmony and of its reception, see Haar, “*Musica mundana*,” 84-89, 299-312. Haar writes that “Aristotle, who does not accept the Pythagorean World symphony, is nonetheless the earliest writer we know of to give a full

innovation of *musique mesurée* depended on Aristotle's materialist perspective along with Plato's spiritual idea of the divine *furores*. Aristotle differentiates between two meanings of *dynamis*: one, the ability to change something else (power), and two, the capacity to be changed into something else (potentiality); and he applies the latter sense to matter. This may appear unremarkable, but by defining matter in this way, Aristotle connected it not simply to the act of change (*kinesis*) but to teleological change into something more representative of actuality (*entelecheia* or *energeia*) – that is, into a more complete state of being. Also significant, in *De anima* Aristotle applies the concept to sound production: objects have various sonorous potentialities before they are acted upon in ways that make them sound.³⁸

The dichotomy of potentiality-actuality recalls Plato's ontological separation of becoming (*genesis*) and being (*ousia*), of changing sensible objects and unchanging intellectual forms or universals. But whereas for Plato, forms exist separately from and prior to objects (a theory usually called Platonic realism), for Aristotle they exist only in objects.³⁹ Aristotle thus uses the term *ousiai* to designate substantial beings, which are

description of it; again Aristotle, who will not hear of the music of the spheres, is the man who firmly established in a cosmology which was to last some 2000 years the crystalline spheres themselves" (87-88).

³⁸ Aristotle, *De anima*, II.8.

³⁹ Medieval disputes over the existence and nature of real universals were generally more concerned with theological than with strictly logical questions. Universals defined as pre-existing, eternal necessities appeared to violate the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* and raised the question of whether God could have chosen to create the universe otherwise than he did. In answer to this problem, Aquinas located universals in the mind of God, where they are accessible to human apprehension via sensible particulars – consistent with Aristotelian epistemology, but by the same token, ontologically necessary as such. The nominalist *via moderna* of the fourteenth century rejected speculative epistemology predicated on higher levels of being rather than on direct empirical observation, and therefore denied that the existence of universals could be demonstrated. Ironically, because Thomist realism tied universals to sensory perception, and because sensory perception would end with the death of the body, it undermined belief in the soul's immortality. Nominalists recognized two facets of divine power: *potentia ordinata*, meaning that which God has ordained and which has therefore come to pass, and *potentia absoluta*, meaning anything that God might choose to ordain. The latter power is infinite with the exception of logical contradictions. In this view, there could be no pre-existing necessities, as this would impose a limitation on *potentia absoluta*. Oberman, *The*

compounds of matter and form (a theory now known as hylomorphism, where “matter” designates any material of which something else is made, as a table is made of wood).⁴⁰ For Aristotle, the essence of a substance is its form, and a substantial form is synonymous with his definition of species.⁴¹ Therefore, while Plato defines form as a preexisting, intellectually conceived entity that cannot be tainted by becoming, Aristotle holds that forms are realized only through becoming. This view naturally required him to give an account of how substantial forms could be said to retain their identities through material change.⁴² But for present purposes, the important thing is that Aristotle gave matter a participatory role in being by defining it as potentiality tending toward actuality, and he gave form a participatory role in becoming by tying it directly to matter.

In light of the Platonic association of forms with divinity and matter with the antithesis of divinity, Aristotle’s theory of form *in* matter carried profound theological

Dawn of the Reformation, 27, writes that in the *via moderna*, “[t]he contingency of creation and salvation means simply that they are not ontologically necessary. The point is that in the vertical dimension our reality is not the lowest emanation and level in a hierarchy of being which ascends in ever more real steps to the highest reality, God.” Rather, the world of particulars is itself fully real.

⁴⁰ Aristotle, *Categories*, 1-5; *Physics*, I.7. In the *Categories*, Aristotle defines individuals in the category of substance as primary substances (*protai ousiai*), without which nothing else would exist (2a35-2b7). In the *Metaphysics*, Z, he differentiates between primary substance, or primary being, and other kinds of being such as quantity, quality, etc., which have being only in relation to primary being. Aristotle indicates that substantial forms are universals: “And when we have the whole, such and such form in this flesh and in these bones, this is Callias or Socrates; and they are different in virtue of their matter (for that is different), but the same in form; for their form is indivisible”; trans. W. D. Ross, in McKeon (ed.), *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, 795 (Z.8.1034a5-8). However, in Z.13 he argues that no universal is a substance. This apparent contradiction has produced a great deal of scholarly debate; for two contrasting views, see for example Charlotte Witt, “Aristotelian Essentialism Revisted,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 27 (1989): 285-98; Michael J. Loux, *Primary Ousia: An Essay on Aristotle’s Metaphysics Z and H* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

⁴¹ Cf. Aristotle, *Categories*, 2a12-14.

⁴² In the *Physics*, I.7, Aristotle posits two kinds of change, substantial and accidental. Substantial changes do not pose an ontological problem with respect to form: a substance comes into existence or ceases to exist. With accidental changes, the underlying substance remains constant while acquiring some new “accidental” property, as when a man gains weight or loses his hair (190a13-191a22).

implications, particularly with respect to the problem of vanity, of which only a brief sketch can be given here. Thomas Aquinas followed Aristotle in viewing matter as the deprivation of form and as potentiality. For Aquinas, although matter could not be considered good in itself, it carried a teleological orientation toward the good:

“Everything that is ordered to something as to its good somehow has that present to itself and united according to some similitude, at least one of proportion, as the form is somehow in matter insofar as matter has an aptitude and an order to it.”⁴³ Olivia Blanchette writes that “[i]t is precisely this positive conception of matter as potency that set Aristotle off from Plato and that Saint Thomas found most congenial,” because for him it suggested “a certain desire for form in matter, or at least an ordination to form that defines matter precisely as such.”⁴⁴

The Thomist-Aristotelian view of matter became essential to the subsequent evolution of the doctrine of *harmonia mundi*, and by extension to *musique mesurée*. On Cusa’s understanding of it, Heimsoeth writes,

For [Cusa], following Aristotle, the distinctive note of matter was its moment of potentiality for being. But – as he expressly argues against the “the ancients” and their “perverse thinking,” their “ignorance” in this area – one must not understand possibility as the imperfect, flawed, and purely passive. If there is an absolute possibility, this is God himself, from whom after all everything real derives and attains its existence. The ground of all matter and of all actuality based on it exists in God; he is both possibility and existence for everything.... Here God is no longer merely form as in Aristotelian dualism, excluding matter and having nothing to do with it!⁴⁵

⁴³ Thomas Aquinas, *In librum Beati Dionysii de divinis nominibus*, IV.9; quoted in Blanchette, *The Perfection of the Universe*, 68.

⁴⁴ Blanchette, *The Perfection of the Universe*, 69.

⁴⁵ Heimsoeth, *The Six Great Themes*, 65-66.

Giorgi advances essentially the same argument near the beginning of *De harmonia mundi*.⁴⁶

Heimsoeth's remark that "everything real derives and attains its existence" from God points to another important facet of the early-modern shift toward cosmic unity. This was Aquinas's view, against Plato but accepted by Pico, that God and creation differ with respect to their participation in existence rather than essence.⁴⁷ According to Plato, the extent to which something *is* depends on the extent of its participation in essence (that is, in the forms or preexistent universals, located in the pre-cosmic realm of being). According to Aquinas, the extent to which something *is* refers to its existence *per se*. That is, Aquinas defines true being as existence (*esse*) rather than essence (*ousia*), which is only a manner of existing; and he defines God as the endpoint or ultimate realization of existence (*ipsum esse*). When God created the universe, he gave creatures a part of his being *qua* existence, in other words, a part of being itself and not of some essence or essences. Being for Aquinas is therefore synonymous with God rather than, as Plotinus held, beneath God (the ineffable One that transcends being).⁴⁸ Paul Miller points out that Pico "adopts the solution of Thomas, even to the terminology."⁴⁹ By equating God with

⁴⁶ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 34-35. For a summary of Giorgi's argument here, see note 75.

⁴⁷ For a comprehensive presentation of Aquinas's views on being, see John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: from Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2000).

⁴⁸ For the argument that Aquinas did not entirely or consistently eradicate Platonism from his theology, see Enrico Berti, *Aristotelismo e neoplatonismo nella dottrina tomistica di Dio come 'ipsum esse,'* in *Studi Aristotelici* (L'Aquila: J. U. Japadre, 1975), 347-52; Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas on Being* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁴⁹ Paul J. W. Miller, introduction to Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man; On Being and the One; Heptaplus*, trans. Charles Glenn Wallis, Paul J. W. Miller, and Dougals Carmichael (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), xxii. Cf. Pico, *Heptaplus*, III.1; *On Being and the One*, III.

being rather than holding him above being, his distinctness from creation becomes one of degree rather than of kind. The link from *harmonia mundi* to God becomes seamless.

Against the Thomist view and in support of the earlier Platonic view of being, we might take note of the third *Octonaire* in mode 10 (Hypomixolydian), with verses by Chandieu):

Celuy qui pense pouvoir
Au Monde repos avoir,
Et assied son esperance
Dessus un tel fondement,
Que pense un tel homme?
Il pense Estre assis bien seurement
Dessus une boule ronde
Flotant au milieu de l'onde.⁵⁰

*He who thinks that repose
Can be had in this world,
And who places his hopes
On such a foundation:
What does such a man think?
That Being is securely seated
Atop a floating ball
In the middle of the sea.*

“Estre” – the cognate of Aquinas’s *esse*. The words that Le Jeune singles out for *musique mesurée* are “pouvoir / Au Monde repose avoir,” “Dessus un tel fondement,” and “bien seurement.” The connection he makes between the musical style and its shaky foundations would seem clear.

In support of their theory of cosmic unity, Catholic Neoplatonists could appeal to Biblical revelation as well as to a select group of pagan thinkers whom God had favored

⁵⁰ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), VIII:19-22.

with divine wisdom (*prisci theologi*). Both source traditions required a mystic's ability to find hidden or allegorical meanings; but at the same time, the Greek epistemological tradition imposed a certain empirical or scientific standard of knowledge. How, in the first place, could a philosopher be sure to have gained awareness of the route to spiritual repose from a position of material instability? It was not enough to invoke accordant discord, which, taken by itself, might only consign humans along with all other creatures to a permanent material stasis. Moreover, the aspiration to know in both a material and mystical sense exposed the philosopher to a central Protestant complaint: that such a pursuit begged the questions of the limits of the intellect, of free will versus predestination, and of the role of human agency in salvation. I will return to that complaint in Chapter 4, but it remains here to discuss the vehicle for the knowledge of universal harmony, namely the soul, by virtue of which spiritual-intellectual transcendence was attainable, and for the benefit of which the "union of poetry and music" was conceived. While all Christians could agree on the soul's existence, its immortality, and its temporal involvement in matter, the Neoplatonic conception of it invested humans with the power to overcome vanity – a power that Protestants ascribed to God alone.

II. Soul and microcosm

Heimsoeth observes that "it happens extremely rarely that anyone conceives of absolute dualism that decisively renounces any comprehensive, reconciling unity, or of triumph of opposition over unity undiluted by any final transformation; and in principle it has never

really happened that absolute dualism has matured into a philosophical system.”⁵¹ But by the same token, while an epistemological theory of unity always tries to break through, it typically fails to deal satisfactorily with the real experience of change. Plato’s theistic solution to the problem of change was to subordinate the traditional Greek pantheon of fickle gods and goddesses to a transcendental, unchanging “form of the good,” more or less equivalent to the creator-being whom he calls the demiurge (craftsman), and whom early Christians and Jewish Platonists identified with their creator.⁵² But Plato realized that his theory of forms created an epistemological problem, a dualist problem, of how to reconcile the direct knowledge of unstable particulars with the indirect apprehension of stable universals, while maintaining that the latter were no less real.⁵³ Could the universal

⁵¹ Heimsoeth, *The Six Great Themes*, 39. Heimsoeth acknowledges that “[i]n their time religious doctrines of Zoroaster and mythological speculations of the Manichaeans and other Gnostics amounted to such radical dualism of good and evil, God and the devil,” but he argues that “this always remained an isolated experience and idea, and no one ever erected a metaphysical edifice on such a disunited basis.”

⁵² See Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 95-96. Aristotle denied that Plato had intended his expression “form of the good” (which he introduces in the *Republic*) to refer to the demiurge (whom he describes in the *Timaeus*), and the question remains controversial today. See Conway, *The Rediscovery of Wisdom*, 34-52. Conway defends the equation *contra* Aristotle and several modern scholars.

⁵³ In the *Parmenides*, the title character poses a series of challenges to the theory of forms advanced by Socrates. The historical Parmenides, a pre-Socratic monist, denied the existence of change by defining it as the phenomenon of something coming from nothing, which could be exposed through dialectic as a logical fallacy; all appearance of change must therefore be only appearance, i.e. illusion. Whether or not Parmenides successfully invalidates the theory of forms in Plato’s dialogue, his own theory still produces a dualist outcome, namely a reality that contradicts the sensory experience of change. Unity that cannot be apprehended as such by the senses, but only through logical deduction, is no real unity. Plato therefore accepted change as a universal material fact and sought to transcend it spiritually. On Parmenides’s rejection of the possibility of change, see W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, II: *The Presocratic Tradition from Parmenides to Democritus* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 3-79. Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), 49, summarizes Parmenides’s view thus: “When you think, you think *of* something; when you use a name, it must be the name *of* something. Therefore both thought and language require objects outside themselves. And since you can think of a thing or speak of it at one time as well as another, whatever can be thought of or spoken of must exist at all times. Consequently there can be no change, since change consists in things coming into being or ceasing to be.”

X be said to be *in* the particular Y, either as a whole or in part, or is the relationship only one of similarity? To bridge the gap between changing matter and changeless form, Plato posited the existence of incorporeal souls as intermediaries – a crucial step in linking the lower world to the higher and a very influential step for Christianity.⁵⁴ The belief in souls made the question of salvation a question also of higher knowledge. Souls, close to but not the same as intellectual essences (forms), are capable of knowing the latter by virtue of this similarity, while they are also drawn into material bodies. Souls are immortal and may rejoin (assuming preexistence) or escape to the intellectual realm after death. The intellectual participation and affinity of souls ameliorates the dualist worldview without necessarily overcoming it, and therefore leaves room for the conclusion of vanity.⁵⁵

Aristotle, while he accepted the soul-body dichotomy, regarded the two as codependent and inseparable – again, as form joined to matter, consistent with his hylomorphic view of all individual substances.⁵⁶ Plotinus and Ficino both subscribed in their individual ways to Plato's doctrine of participation and affinity, with the soul as intermediary and immortal.⁵⁷ Ficino believed in a World Soul in between body and intellect:

⁵⁴ Cf. *Phaedo*, 76d-77a.

⁵⁵ See F. La Touche Godfrey, "Plato's Doctrine of Participation," *Hermathena* 59 (1942): 6-19 and 63 (1944): 1-10.

⁵⁶ Aristotle, *De Anima*, 412b5-7, 413a1-4, 413a20-21, 414a15-20. Aristotle defines the soul as the form that invests a living thing with life. He does, however, believe that the highest state of reason (the "active intellect") is separable from and continues to exist after the death of the body (ibid., 430a17). Kristeller, *Renaissance Concepts of Man*, 27, writes that Aristotle's "attitude towards immortality is, at least, ambiguous," and that "[s]ome of his most important ancient commentators...explicitly placed the active intellect outside the individual human soul and thus tended to consider the latter as mortal."

⁵⁷ Cf. Plotinus, *Enneads*, IV.8.7; Ficino, *Theologia Platonica de immortalitate animorum*, I. For a summary of beliefs during the Renaissance about the immortality of the soul, see Kristeller, *Renaissance Concepts of Man*, 22-42. The Christian belief in souls is most famously elaborated by Augustine in *De immortalitate animae*, which derives almost entirely from Plato and Neoplatonism and not from Biblical scripture.

If there were only these two things in the universe, namely the intellect on the one hand and the body on the other, and if there were no soul at all, then the intellect could not be drawn from the body, for [the intellect] is entirely immobile and without affection – a principle of movement – and hence far removed from the body; nor could the body be drawn from the intellect, being by itself without efficacy and aptitude in movement, and hence far removed from the intellect.⁵⁸

Here I am using Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie's 1581 translation of Ficino's *De triplici vita* (1489).⁵⁹ The soul's function as intermediary between mobile falsehood and immobile truth supported Tyard's rationale (followed by Baïf) for a union of poetry and music. By stimulating a *furor poëticus*, the union would lead the soul away from the body and toward the intellect.⁶⁰

Ficino writes in *Theologia Platonica* that "those who have discovered something important in any of the more noble arts have principally done so when they have abandoned the body and taken refuge in the citadel of the soul."⁶¹ This frequently quoted statement should not be read as simple world-denial, as a Boethian denigration of the physical process of making art or the sensory experience of it, which for Ficino could

⁵⁸ Ficino/La Boderie, *Les Trois livres de la vie*, 90v-91r: "S'il n'y auoit que ces deux choses au monde à sçauoir l'entendement d'une part, & le corps de l'autre, & que l'ame n'y fut point, alors l'entendement ne seroit tiré au corps, (car il est du tout immobile, & est priué d'affection, principe de de [sic] mouuement, comme estant fort éloigné du corps) ny le corps ne seroit tiré à l'entendement, comme estant par soy sans efficace & aptitude au mouuement, & fort esloigné de l'entendement."

⁵⁹ Belief in a world soul can be traced to the *Timaeus*, which lacks the clear hierarchical distinctions made by later Neoplatonists; see Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, 150-51. Plato considered the world soul and human souls to be of the same substance, and both to be immortal – a concept necessarily equated to the Good. Plotinus held the world soul to be equivalent to Plato's demiurge, whom Christians could identify with the Biblical God.

⁶⁰ See below, section III.

⁶¹ Marsilio Ficino, *Platonic Theology: Volume 4, Books XII-XIV*, trans. Michael J. B. Allen, ed. James Hankins with William Bowen (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 123 (XIII.2).

stimulate the soul's escape from the body. Ficino goes on to cite Augustine's story of a priest of Calama,

who was accustomed to withdrawing himself from his body of his own free will, especially when he was soothed by a plaintive harmony. The priest used to lie there, Augustine says, like a corpse without breathing and felt nothing when he was burned or cut, but after he revived, he used to declare he had heard nothing in his abstraction but the melody and voices of those talking.⁶²

Ficino is speaking of discovery or invention by the higher part of the soul (the mind), which governs the will and the body in need of subordination to intellectual ideals. Later, he makes clear his unitary conception of the mind's place in a seamless cosmic chain, using corporeal analogies to demonstrate that lower and higher things are mutually respondent:

All minds, whether sublime and above souls, or lower and introduced into souls, are so mutually bound that, beginning from God as their head, they proceed in a long continuous succession; and those that are more eminent distribute their rays to those that are less so.

Let us look at the consequences. When someone taps with his finger the end of a straight stick lying on the ground, the pulsation, even the lightest, resonates to the other end of the stick. The same happens with a taut musical string: if its top is plucked the whole vibrates and sounds. If you take two equally tuned strings in a lyre, when the one is plucked, the other vibrates. If you take two lyres and attune the strings to the same pitch, when the one lyre sounds, the other will resound. What is the goal of this argument? That we might understand that from the mutual and mutually tempered connection of all minds issues the same result, namely that the sparks of the first minds are refulgent in the middle minds, and the sparks of the middle in the lowest; and that they are reflected back in turn from the lowest through the middle to the highest.

After discussing the mind in this way, he makes the same point with respect to the *idolum* (the part of the soul that animates the body), and the body.⁶³

⁶² Ficino, *Platonic Theology: Volume 4*, 129 (XIII.2).

⁶³ Ficino, *Platonic Theology: Volume 4*, 137-49 (XIII.2). See also Paul Oskar Kristeller, *The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino*, trans. Virginia Conant (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), 313ff.

Ficino connects this threefold division within humans to three cosmic levels, providence, fate, and nature: “the mind is above fate in providence; the idolum is in fate above nature; the nature is under fate above the body.” By dividing the human faculties in this way, Ficino attributes a salvific power to the soul, by virtue of its power of reason:

Thus the soul is positioned with regard to the laws of providence, fate, and nature, not just as a passive subject, but as an active agent.... Since in terms of the trio of the mind, the idolum, and the nature we are partly bound and partly not bound to the universal order, it is mainly in terms of a fourth part that we are freed and become entirely our own masters. This part is the reason that we locate as a mean between the mind (the soul’s head) and the idolum (the soul’s foot).⁶⁴

Therefore, the division of the soul is in fact an expression of cosmic unity, linking humans to God through his creation: “Thus we are bound to the whole machine [of the world] by these three ropes as it were: by our mind to minds, by our idolum to idola, by our nature to natures.”⁶⁵

In *De harmonia mundi*, Giorgi describes a tripartite division of the universe into elemental, celestial, and supercelestial (archetypal or intellectual) worlds, with man as a little world containing qualities of each of these three. The same four-world cosmology informs Pico’s *Heptaplus* (1489), an allegorical commentary on the six days of creation (followed by a seventh day of rest) described in Genesis 1.⁶⁶ A French translation of the

⁶⁴ Ficino, *Platonic Theology*: Volume 4, 139 (XIII.2).

⁶⁵ Ficino, *Platonic Theology*: Volume 4, 139 (XIII.2).

⁶⁶ See Kristeller, *Renaissance Concepts of Man*, 15-16; Yates, *The Occult Philosophy*, 66. On Pico’s *Heptaplus*, see Crofton Black, *Pico’s Heptaplus and Biblical Hermeneutics* (Leiden: Brill, 2006). See also Allen, “The Birth Day of Venus,” 104-13; Watts, “Pseudo-Dionysius,” 285, 289-91. Watts identifies an illustration in Cusa’s *De coniecturis* (1440) as a likely direct source for Pico, of a “figure of the universe” which seems to represent the monadic-triadic structure of the pseudo-Dionysian cosmos” (285). Cusa’s illustration shows a ninefold division of the three worlds inside a tenth representing the seat of God. It is reproduced by Nicolas le Fèvre de la Boderie in his introduction (“Discours fort utile”) to the French translation of Giorgi – not, as Watts indicates, in his translation of the *Heptaplus*, which is appended to that work. Watts notes that “[t]he cosmogram of the *De coniecturis* has a curious *fortuna* which remains to be thoroughly worked out and explained, as does the nature of the Dionysian influence that it transmits” (285).

Heptaplus by Nicolas le Fèvre de la Boderie is appended to his brother Guy le Fèvre's 1578 translation of Giorgi. Pico invokes the Biblical authority of Moses in support of his theory of metaphysical continuity between man, the macrocosm, and the archetypal world of the angels or intellect (the seat of God). If man could be likened to the universe, so also could the universe be likened to man:

First, therefore, it should be understood that Moses called the universe the great man [*Grand homme*]. For if man is the little universe [*petit monde*], by the same token, the universe is the great man.⁶⁷

He then equates the tripartite division of the *grand monde/grand homme* to that of the human body into head, chest, and abdomen, and concludes,

You see how neatly each of these parts of man and the universe mutually agree.... Moses added that they were created to be in accordance, as by the order of divine wisdom there was established between them a peaceful and friendly alliance, predicated on the affinity and mutual agreement of their natures.⁶⁸

Humans were created in harmonious alignment with the universe, and therefore with God:

Even so is this alliance and confederation [between man and the universe] good, because it is so disposed and ordered toward God who is the same good, as all the universe is one in him, and must finally become one with its author. For our part, we also imitate this most holy union of the universe, that by such mutual charity we may become one with each other, and that we all together, as it pleases God, may happily become one with him.⁶⁹

Beyond La Boderie, she locates the cosmogram in Robert Fludd's *Cosmi maioris scilicet et minoris metaphysica* (1617) and Athanasius Kircher's *Musurgia universalis* (1650).

⁶⁷ Pico/La Boderie, *L'Heptaple*, 877: "Premierement doncques il conuient entendre que le monde est nommé par Moyse Grand homme. Car si l'homme est le petit monde, en cas pareil le monde est le grand homme." The context here is Pico's unnumbered "Exposition de la premiere diction du Genese," which follows the seventh exposition or book and concludes the work.

⁶⁸ Pico/La Boderie, *L'Heptaple*, 878: "Vous voyez combien proprement toutes ces parties de l'homme et du monde conuiennent entre elles.... [Moyse] a subioinct qu'il les auoit créées par bon accord, d'autant que par l'ordonnance de la sagesse diuine a esté établie entre elles alliance de paix & amitié pratiquée de l'affinité & mutuelle conuenance de leurs natures."

⁶⁹ Pico/La Boderie, *L'Heptaple*, 878: "Laquelle alliance & confederation est pourtant bonne, pource qu'elle est tellement dressée & ordonnée vers Dieu qui est le mesme Bien, que comme tout le monde en soy est vn,

As mentioned in Chapter 2, this allegorical equation of *petite monde* and *grande monde* had a clear implication for attacks on the vanity of the *mondaine*, the worldly man.

Pico invokes the idea of *concordia discors* in the second of two proems or prefaces to his work: “because there is no multiplicity that is not a unity, [the worlds] are connected by a certain discordant concord, as though bound together by chains of many and diverse links.”⁷⁰ Allen observes:

By implication at least, Nature must also be riven by discord: countering every hidden alliance and affinity must be ruptures and oppositions. To every attraction of like to like...there must be the corresponding repulsion of unlike from unlike. But such an Empedoclean vision seems to be foreign to Pico, perhaps because it is too dualistic. However divided our fallen world may be by the discord caused by a Helen or a Clytemnestra, the intelligible realm is governed by the concord of a Castor and Pollux, and in between are the conjunctions and oppositions that constitute the dance of the stars.⁷¹

The fourth world, man, is for Pico the central cosmic link: “To man earthly things are subject, and in man heavenly things are favored, for he is the knot and liaison of the one and the other; and they cannot both have peace with him, unless he, who creates in himself their peace and alliance, is at peace with himself.”⁷² Allen discerns something new in this conception of the microcosm: “No longer just a mirror that simply reflects the world’s ontological levels or a Proteus that can swim or slither through them, man is not

ainsi finalement il doit estre vn avecques son auteur. Imitons aussi de nostre part la tressaincte alliance du monde, à celle fin que par mutuelle charité nous soyons vn les vns vers les autres, & qu’ensemble tous par la vraye dilection de Dieu nous soyons faicts heureusement vn avecques luy.”

⁷⁰ Pico/La Boderie, *L’Heptaple*, 835: “par ce toutesfois qu’il n’y a nulle multitude qui ne soit vne, elles sont attachees entre elles par vne certaine desaccordante concorde & comme estraintes de chaines à plusieurs & diuers chainons.”

⁷¹ Allen, “The Birth Day of Venus,” 107.

⁷² Pico/La Boderie, *L’Heptaple*, 860 (V.7): “A l’homme sont asseruis les terrestres, à l’homme fauorisent les celestes, car il est neud & liaison des vns & des autres, & ne peuuent n’auoir paix avecques luy, pourueu que luy, qui faict en soy leur paix & alliance, soit d’accord en soy-mesme.”

even a fourth world but ‘the bond and union of the other three,’ and his substance ‘encompasses by its very essence the substance of all natures and the fullness of the whole universe.’” He quotes Pico’s formulation: “if ‘God contains all things in Himself as their origin, man contains all things in himself as their center.’”⁷³

Whether construed in this thoroughgoing unitary way or in the “Protean” way, the link between microcosm and macrocosm, facilitated by the soul, allowed Neoplatonists to speak of an autonomous path to divinity – a Protestant heresy. Giorgi, who was as interested as Pico in reconciling Plato with Aristotle, begins *De harmonia mundi* by connecting the upward path to the viewpoints of both philosophers. First, he states the Platonic principle that “we should accustom the understanding to the study of beautiful things, purifying it little by little.” Beyond scientific research in the Aristotelian manner, he has in mind a program “more beautiful and much more unified.”⁷⁴ But a unified approach means acknowledging and compensating for our initial, benighted intellectual condition, out of which we may need to be drawn by sensible things – the orientation associated with Aristotle, yet, in Giorgi’s view, widely misconstrued by his followers (with the important exception of Pseudo-Dionysius).⁷⁵

⁷³ Allen, “The Birth Day of Venus,” 110-11. Cf. Pico, *Heptaplus*, V.6.

⁷⁴ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 2: “Il faut donc acoustumer l’entendement à l’estude des choses belles, & peu à peu le purifier.... Et d’auantage (comme dit Procule) conioigne la lumiere à la lumiere, non pas telle qu’on dict estre celle des sciences, mais vne autre plus belle & beaucoup plus vnne.”

⁷⁵ See Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 34-35. Citing the maxim from Aristotle’s *De caelo* that “Dieu est du tout elongné de la maniere des Creatures, puis qu’ils le separent de la maniere des Creatures,” Giorgi acknowledges that it is small wonder the Peripatetics would try to hold God entirely separate from his creation. But he accuses them of wanting it both ways: “Et certes c’est merueille attendu que d’un part ils separent du tout Dieu de la maniere des Creatures, que de l’autre part par-ce qu’ils considerent aux choses d’icy bas, ils vueillent reseruer la toute puissance & vertu de Dieu.” He tells them to heed St. Denis (Pseudo-Dionysius), who is “premierement enseigné en leur doctrine”:

Dieu, dict-il, est toute chose par excellence. Car tout ce que nous voyons de bien en ces choses domestiques, nous le devons dedier & approprier à Dieu: de la plus excellente façon que nous

pouuons: car tout ce qui paroist beau en l'artifice, doit viure beaucoup plus beau en l'artisan. Et tout ce qui aux plus bas, & moyens degrez est recommandé: il est bien-seant qu'il soit trouué au plus haut & meilleur de tous: Car le bien dans le meilleur est tousiours meilleur.... Puis doncques que la fécondité, la puissance, la vigueur, la pieté, la beauté, la magnificence, & telles autres vertus reluisent aux choses d'icy bas, elles doiuent bien en la Pensée diuine darder leurs rayons en souueraine splendeur.

Cf. Watts, "Pseudo-Dionysius," 287-88, who quotes Cusa's invocation of Pseudo-Dionysius to the same effect in the *Apologia doctae ignorantiae*. Giorgi then allows the Peripatetics to object:

Ils me diront paraenture, nous separons de Dieu non seulement tout ce qui sent son imperfection, mais tout ce qui est manque de quelque perfection. De là vient, que nous luy osons la fécondité qui seroit hors de luy, de peur que rien de nouveau ny aucun changement ne soit attribué à l'éternel & immobile. Nous luy osons aussi la liberté de contingence [sic]: de peur que comme imparfait il ne semble agir sous espoir de recompense: & nous ne luy denions pas la liberté par laquelle il agit ainsi qu'il luy est conuenable.

Giorgi's rebuttal invokes the Platonic and Catholic view of a universe that reflects its creator, but also that of Aristotle in *De anima*, which Averroes has perverted. In other words, "toutes les escholes" are in agreement:

n'enseignent elles pas, que les choses d'icy bas s'efforcent à leur pouuoir de rapporter la semblance de Dieu? Les Platoniques à tout propos, & les Catholiques aussi d'un bon accord le resonnent. Voires mesmes les Peripatetiques conuiennent au mesme point: ainsi que leur maistre au traicté second de l'ame dict mot pour mot. C'est le plus naturel de tous les œuvres des choses viuantes, autant qu'il y en a de parfaites, non manques, & qui ont generation volontaire, de faire un autre semblable à soy. Comme l'animant un animant, la plante une plante en ce qu'ils participient de l'Estre diuin & immortel autant qu'ils peuuent. Car toutes choses le desirent, & toutes choses qui agissent selon Nature, agissent pour l'amour de luy: mais elles ne le peuuent imiter continuellement & d'une perpetuelle raison, par-ce qu'il n'arriue à quelconque chose corruptible de demeurer une & mesme en nombre: doncques ainsi qu'elle peut participer d'une chacune, ainsi elle la communique cecy plus, & cela moins. Iusques icy Aristote. Lequel en somme ne veut dire autre chose, sinon que d'autant que chasque membre de ce corps mondain est plus parfait, d'autant plus aussi il s'efforce d'imiter comme à l'enuy le Createur, combien que le mescreant Arabe [Averrois] interprete cela du Ciel. Et comment est-ce, ô desloyal, que le Ciel est cest éternel que toutes choses imitent comme à l'enuy? attendu que cela sans plus est éternel, en faueur duquel les Elemens, le Ciel mesme, & toutes choses agissent? Ne resonance pas en tout endroict la doctrine d'Aristote, Que Dieu est la fin de toutes choses, en faueur duquel comme de l'aimé & désiré toutes choses sont meuës? Mais cecy n'est que le moins de plusieurs autres sentences que ce chien mescreant abbayant contre la verité de son maistre tord & destruit, en quoy plustost il merite qu'on luy donne le nom de destructeur que de commentateur.

Giorgi concludes by arguing that to deny the unity and harmony of the lower and higher worlds with God would be to deny his omnipotence:

Par quelle temerité oses-tu mesurer la puissance du Tout-puissant? Pourquoi n'a il peu donner à l'Homme, & autres choses d'icy bas une permanence, qu'il a bien donné à Saturne, & à toutes les Planettes & Estoilles, comme tu affirmes? Comment est deuenu impuissant aux choses d'icy bas, celui qui est tant puissant aux plus hautes? Quelle dignité d'un Dieu souuerain, qui ne pouuant elargir un bien faict à ses plus basses Creatures, a eu soing d'y pouruoir par autre moyen?

Using terms similar to Pico's, Giorgi characterizes the upward path from visible to invisible things in terms of a musical correspondence between worlds:

But although the number of those who can receive such enlightenment is quite small, I nonetheless believe it is necessary to lead those who wish to be taught by the paths on which they can most easily be made willing to perceive this supreme light. And doubtless such pathways proceed from visible to invisible divine things, by virtue of a most sonorous and well-tuned Harmonic alliance that they have between them. It has therefore seemed good to us to treat of the consonance of the one world and the other with the formal and Archetype, and of the state and condition of universal things – namely of those which the one and the other world embrace in a grand Harmony, having received this from the Archetype, in order that we may progress more easily.⁷⁶

Elsewhere, he states that “by domestic things, which we have between our hands, we are able to comprehend this most divine fecundity,” citing in support the revelation of Hermes Trismegistus that “there is nothing in the nature of things that does not represent in itself an image of the divinity,” and observing that “the formations of elements and the things so composed are the smallest likenesses of the sovereign Good.”⁷⁷ Because the material world cannot be comprehended or profitably discussed in disregard of the

⁷⁶ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 2: “Mais d'autant que fort petit est le nombre des illustrez, qui puissent receuoir telle lumiere, pourtant ie suis d'aduis qu'il faut mener ceux qui desirent y estre instruits & enseignez, par les sentiers ausquels ils puissent plus aisément estre disposez à perceuoir ceste lumiere supreme. Or sans doute tels sentiers se sont procedant de ces choses visibles aux inuisibles de Dieu par vn Harmonique alliance qu'elles ont entre elles fort sonoreuse & bien accordee. Il nous a donc semblé bon de traicter de la consonance de l'vn & l'autre monde avec le formel & Archetype: & de l'estat & condition des choses vniuerselles, mesmement de celles que l'vn & l'autre monde, (selon qu'il reçoit de l'Archetype) embrasse en tresgrande Harmonie, afin de plus aisément s'y acheminer.”

⁷⁷ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 16: “Afin que par les choses domestiques que nous auons entre les mains nous puissions comprendre ceste tresdiuine fecondité, qui ombrageusement se trouue en tout son edifice, pour le moins nous fault tirer comme les ombres & premiers traicts de chascue chose: parce que selon le tesmoignage de Mercure il n'y a rien en la nature des choses, qui ne represente en soy vne image de la diuinité”; 21: “Car les formes des elemens & choses composees sont les plus petites semblances du souuerain Bien.” Cf. Augustine, *Confessions*, 246 (XII.2.2): “For this physical totality, which is not in its entirety present in every part of it, has received a beautiful form in its very lowest things, and at the bottom is our earth.” Cf. Plotinus, *Enneads*, III.2.7.

archetype from which it emanates, knowledge of the world reflexively leads to knowledge of God.⁷⁸

To locate this idea among French academicians, we may turn again to Nicolas le Fèvre de la Boderie's introduction to Giorgi. La Boderie invokes a system described by the first Neoplatonists of two complementary approaches to divine understanding: two "theologies," one Platonic and "affirmative," proceeding from divine unity and simplicity to universal multiplicity, the other Aristotelian and "negative," proceeding the other way from multiplicity to unity.⁷⁹ This distinction was made not in order to devalue or dismiss the negative theology, rather to assert the validity of both and their mutual compatibility.

⁷⁸ Cf. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 46-47: "Et veu que Dieu est vn miroir où toutes choses luisent, comment est-ce qu'ils l'ont peu cognoistre sans auoir cogneu les images qui resplendissent en luy? Pourtant ils ne penseroient pas que ceux-là eussent conneu l'Archetype, sans auoir conneu ce qui est en luy, s'ils auoient conceu la liaison & correspondance de l'Archetype avecques ceste mondaine machine, & le Petit-monde humain. Chascun desquels rapporte la semblance & image de l'autre: & par la cognoissance de l'un on cognoist aisément l'autre. De là vient que par l'Oracle diuin, & par plusieurs hommes sages, Mercure, Platon, Socrate, Zoroaste, & par Aristote mesme est merueilleusement recommandée la cognoissance de soy: d'autant que par icelle on paruiet plus aisément en plus parfaicte cognoissance de Dieu & de ceste machine, que non pas par la doctrine d'Aristote. Car il estoit necessaire à ces Profetes de contempler les choses diuines, les humaines & leurs correspondances, eux qui parler de mysteres diuins par enigmes & voyles des choses d'icy bas, afin que les sacremens de Dieu fussent cachez au populace & aux yeux de hibou." The *yeux de hibou* alludes to Minerva as the goddess of wisdom, symbolized by the owl. Giorgi extends the need to "speak of divine mysteries by enigmas" to include Jesus' manner of teaching through parables: "A quoy par dessus toute merueille se trouue bien accorder la doctrine de celeste & Diuin messenger Iesus vray Messie, oinct des diuines graces plus que tous ses compagnons. Lequel aprouuant & receuant les enseignes de Moysse, ouurit & reuela beaucoup de secrets qu'il tenoit de Dieu son Pere: lesquels il proposa au peuple en paraboles, de peur que la chose sainte ne fust donnée aux chiens" (25).

⁷⁹ The affirmative theology is also known as cataphatic (from *καταφασις*) and the negative theology apophatic (from *ἀπόφασις*). The former seeks to define God in positive terms (by what he is), the latter in negative terms (by what he is not). The categories were formally established by Plotinus and were utilized by early Christians such as St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom. Foremost in La Boderie's mind here would likely have been the *De coelesti hierarchia* by Pseudo-Dionysius, whom he cites along with Cusa, and for whom, according to Watts, "*Apophatike* leads the soul to a final stage [beyond the cataphatic *gnosis*] wherein it experiences *agnôsia*, the revelation that God is unknowable, and *henôsis*, in which it takes leave of the celestial hierarchy and of itself and becomes lost in God" ("Pseudo-Dionysius," 283). Pseudo-Dionysius, a Christian Neoplatonist of the late fifth and early sixth centuries, exerted a strong influence on Cusa, Ficino, Pico, and Giorgi, as well as on numerous medieval thinkers before them. Before the fifteenth century, he was assumed to be as he had falsely identified himself, namely the Areopagite mentioned in Acts 17:16-34, an Athenian convert of St. Paul. Watts writes that Cusa "shared with his friend Lorenzo Valla some serious doubts as to whether the pseudo-Dionysius was indeed a contemporary of St. Paul," but that "this did not diminish [his] life-long interest in the writings of the Areopagite" (284).

La Boderie calls the negative theology “more domestic and familiar to us, in so far as, because of our impotence, we cannot merely imagine simple and intelligible natures without the aid of sensible and composite things.”⁸⁰ By “simple and intelligible natures,” he means archetypal natures, a reference to Plato’s forms. But the negative theology, “which marches by foot contrary to the affirmative,” is “nonetheless more excellent and true according to the great Areopagite [Pseudo-Dionysius], and with him the learned de Cusa.”⁸¹ La Boderie then asserts that the negative theology does not really contradict Plato, nor the affirmative Aristotle.⁸²

⁸⁰ La Boderie, “Discours fort utile,” n.p.: “Il y a au nombre double progres & maniere de proceder: l’vn naturel & compositif qui partant de l’vnité & des nombres simples descend infiniment s’alterant & diuisant: Cestuy-cy propre des Anges ressemble à la methode Platonique & encores à la Theologie affirmative, entant qu’il s’achemine des choses plus parfaites & excellentes au moins nobles & rabbaissées. L’autre au contraire rebours & resolutif grauit & remonte des plus grands & multiples nombres aux plus simples, iusques à ce qu’il se ferme & arreste en l’vnité, & nous est plus domestique & familier, d’autant qu’à raison de nostre impuissance, nous ne pouuons pas seulement imaginer les natures simples & intelligibles sans l’aide des sensibles & composées.”

⁸¹ La Boderie, “Discours fort utile,” n.p.: “Tel est l’ordre d’Aristote anatomiste demon de la nature en ses disputes: Tel aussi celuy de la Theologie negatiue: qui marche de pied contraire à l’affirmatiue, & est toutefois plus excellent & veritable comme conclud le grand Areopagite & avecques luy le docte De Cusa.” Cf. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 34-35, 73-74.

⁸² La Boderie, “Discours fort utile,” n.p.: “Car autrement l’affirmatiue qui afferme essence & verité es choses basses & corporelles, conuiet mieux à l’Aristote, qui n’ose rien asseurer que ce qu’il a perceu & flairé premierement par les sens: comme il nous arriue aussi, lors que nous cuidons que deux ou vn est compris du trois & du quatre, combien que l’vnité est plus que tout nombre, attendu qu’elle les produit & mesure: & le deux que le quatre, comme ainsi soit que tant plus que les choses sont elongnées de leur principe & vnion, tant plus aussi s’estrecissant tombent elles en diuision & particularité. Mais la negatiue conuiet & s’accorde en partie avec Platon, qui suiuant les enseignements d’Heraclite despouille de vraye essence & raison les natures inferieures, & les rapporte par l’Anagogie à leurs Idées: En differe d’autrepart, par ce que ces mesmes Idées que Platon laisse en Dieu, & les noms & tiltres que les Theologiens luy attribuent, se perdent & euanouissent aussi tost que par negation nous sommes enseignez de veritablement confesser que Dieu n’est rien de tout ce que nous disons & pourpensons.”

Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, 172-73, points out a significant departure from the Neoplatonic unitary conception of the cosmos in Jean Bodin (1530-96), whose philosophy’s “break in the continuity of the chain of being between God and the created world is made as complete as possible.” Bodin “attack[ed] the Neoplatonists, ancient and modern, with particular vehemence, since their magic or theurgy is based on the theory that one can reach God by ascending a continuous chain of being, which leads up from the sensible world, through the stars and their *daimones*, to the higher emanations of the divinity. They are a far more dangerous threat to the purity of monotheism than ordinary sorcerers, who, by employing bad demons show how plainly they have turned away from God.”

The same basic distinction informs Thomist theology, in the *doctrina philosophiae* and *doctrina fidei*, which derive, respectively, from the Aristotelian and Platonic epistemologies as they were traditionally understood. Blanchette defines the *doctrina philosophiae* as “a way of investigation going from creatures to their creator” and the *doctrina fidei* as “starting from God and embracing creatures as they are in relation to God.”⁸³ The *doctrina philosophiae* concerns material knowledge acquired by ordinary empirical means, and is encapsulated by the well-known dictum that “there is nothing in the intellect which was not previously in the senses.”⁸⁴ The *doctrina fidei* enabled Aquinas to write that “just as the wall and the roof are held up from the foundation and the roof covers the wall and the foundation, similarly in the universe the higher beings give perfection to the lower and the higher power (*virtus*) is made manifest in the lower.”⁸⁵ Given that Aquinas has in mind here the Aristotelian universe, his *doctrina fidei* indirectly affirms that in some respects Aristotle was also a Platonist. And the metaphor of roof over foundation, whereby “the higher power is made manifest in the lower,” again indicates that Aquinas, like the Neoplatonists under consideration here, perceived an inherent value in matter, for all that it lacked self-actualizing goodness.

To summarize, the early-modern unitary doctrine of *harmonia mundi* constitutes a departure or change of emphasis from the worldview of early Christians under the

⁸³ Blanchette, *The Perfection of the Universe*, 8.

⁸⁴ Quoted in Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, 40. The authors clarify that “[a]lthough Aristotelian Thomists trusted the senses more than Augustinian Platonists, Aquinas agreed with Augustine in denying the mind any direct knowledge of sense objects. Thomists required an elaborate psychological apparatus to process sense data and produce an entity intermediate between the sensory and the ideal, called a *species* in Latin, which required further processing before the highest mental faculties could derive from it their knowledge of the universal.”

⁸⁵ Aquinas, *In librum Beati Dionysii*, IV.6; quoted in Blanchette, *The Perfection of the Universe*, 13.

influence of Alexandrian Neoplatonism, who recognized a balance of contraries in nature, but for whom the universe was remote from and alien to a deity who transcended being rather than completing it. For example, the fourth-century Church Father Gregory of Nyssa writes,

The earth is stable without being immutable, while the heaven [the region of the stars and planets], on the contrary, as it has no mutability, so it has no stability either. Thus the divine power, by interweaving change in the stable nature and interweaving motion with that which is not subject to change, can, by the interchange of attributes, at once join them both closely to each other – and at the same time make both of them alien from the conception of deity.⁸⁶

The second and third *Octonaires* in Le Jeune's cycle (mode 1) echo Gregory's viewpoint:

Qui ne s'esbahira levant en haut les yeux
Voyant l'ordr'aresté de la course des Cieux
Et regardant en bas la terre ferm'et stable
N'avoir rien qui ne soit inconstant et muable?
Ce qui vit sur la terr'et tout ce qui en est
Est caduc et mortel, sans repos, sans arrest:
Les Cieux roulent toujours, et sur les Cieux demeure
Le repos aresté d'une vie meilleure.⁸⁷

*Who should not be amazed at lifting his eyes
To see the fixed course of the heavens,
And at looking down to the earth, firm and stable,
To find nothing but change and inconstancy?
Those living on earth, and all things in it
Are fragile and mortal, restless and ceaseless;
The heavens forever turn, and above them abides
The final repose of a better life.*

Plustost on pourra faire
le jour qui luit,
N'avoir plus pour contraire
l'obscur nuit,
Et marier le feu

⁸⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio*, I; quoted in Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 259.

⁸⁷ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), I:6-10. See Examples 2.4-2.7 (Chapter 2, section I).

avecque l'onde:
Que de conjoindre Dieu
avec le monde.⁸⁸

*Sooner could you make
The brightness of day
And darkness of night
Lose their contrariety,
Or marry the fire
To the wave,
Than join the world
Together with God.*

In the Plotinian doctrine of emanation from the One, spirit-matter dualism still pervades despite the non-being of evil. To quote Heimsoeth: “Everything that is in Pythagoras and Plato by way of world-escaping motifs returns in heightened measure [in Plotinus] in the world of emanation – which is in fact a fallen world.”⁸⁹ The imperative to escape the world, which the *Hermetica* also teaches, could leave one to draw the awkward conclusion that God had made the world evil or imperfect. The human ability to ascend or return from a lower state to a higher does not in itself answer the question of why material discord exists.⁹⁰ But if lower things could be described as not fundamentally divorced from higher, if material discord could be found paradoxically accordant, and if the metaphysical position of human beings could serve as the linchpin of universal harmony, the problem dissipates.

⁸⁸ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), I:11-13.

⁸⁹ Heimsoeth, *The Six Great Themes*, 43-44.

⁹⁰ For a review of medieval debates over whether God had created a perfect world, or might have created a more perfect world (which became subsumed into the necessitarian argument between realists and nominalists), and on the theoretical limits of divine power, see Grant, *Planets, Stars, and Orbs*, chapter 7.

The “fallen” state of the world in Plotinian Neoplatonism differs from that of Christianity by having preceded the soul’s voluntary descent into matter, and was therefore the reason for humanity’s material existence.⁹¹ Christians, on the other hand, assign responsibility for the fall and the resulting discord to the first humans, Adam and Eve, who began as immortals in the Garden of Eden and, because of their free choice to acquire divine knowledge, were condemned to die in the world.⁹² A tendency among Christian Neoplatonists to underemphasize original sin proceeds in the first place from their Catholic orientation, according to which Christ took the burden of sin on himself and made salvation dependent on the personal choice of accepting his sacrifice (not on predestination). Additionally, their Greek orientation connected salvation to the pursuit of universal knowledge – that which had led to the expulsion of Adam and Eve and to the condition of universal vanity. I will return to differing views on original sin in Chapter 4, as they bore upon the present concern of vanity and as they are treated rhetorically in Le Jeune’s music. For the remainder of this chapter, I will describe the essential link between the Neoplatonists’ harmonic answer to universal vanity and the French academic pursuit of a union of poetry and music.

⁹¹ Cf. Plotinus, *Enneads*, V.1.1-10. Plotinus does not refer to sin as such, but uses the term *τολμή* (audacity) to describe the voluntary descent of the soul from the One, out of a misguided love for material beauty.

⁹² Augustine’s conversion from Neoplatonism to Christianity depended significantly on his embrace of the Biblical account of original sin over Plotinus’s belief in the initial descent of preexistent souls. For an overview, see for example William Mallard, *Language and Love: Introducing Augustine’s Religious Thought through the Confessions Story* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 73ff.

III. A universal harmony of movement: from accordant discord to *musique mesurée*

The line from Ficino to the Academy of Poetry and Music is clear and well understood.

Ficino describes music as a conjunction of spirit and matter, of the intellectual and the physical – a union that is made perceptible by tying *musica instrumentalis* to language:

Music consists first in calculation, second in fancy, third in words: melody follows this, the movement of fingers in sound follows melody, the motions of the whole body in gymnastics or dance follows sound. We therefore see music to be led by degrees from the soul to all the members of the body.⁹³

I have already quoted this passage in Chapter 2, where it offsets Chandieu's distrust of the easy progression from immoral thoughts to immoral dancing. Ficino's more optimistic view, which links the purity of abstract number to melodies carried by words and communicated through coordinated physical movement, influenced Baïf and the rest of the *Pléiade* and became manifest in both *musique mesurée* and the prototypical *ballets de cour*.⁹⁴ *Musica instrumentalis*, rather than a sensual and therefore compromised echo of *musica mundana*, becomes the material means of access to it, and *musique mesurée* constitutes one such means put into practice.⁹⁵

⁹³ Marsilio Ficino, *Epistola de Musica Antonio Canigiano viro docto, atque prudenti*, quoted in Haar, "Musica mundana," 349. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, 25, observes that Ficino "is the earliest Renaissance writer I know of to treat the effects of music seriously and practically," and that he "is not content to point out possible analogies between macrocosm and microcosm, between musical and celestial harmonies, but gives practical directions for making music which may usefully exploit these analogies."

⁹⁴ See Yates, *The French Academies*, chapter 3, esp. 60ff. Haar, "Musica mundana," 443, observes that La Boderie's poem *La Galliade* (1578) "may have had some influence on the 'celestial' dances of the *Balet comique de la Royne* [1581]...and upon later planetary dances staged as part of the court fetes."

⁹⁵ The idea of vocal music in particular as a conduit to spiritual truth is already present in Greek antiquity and manifests in the early medieval development of Christian chant. In early Neoplatonism, the human voice is linked directly to intelligence (*logos*) whereas musical instruments are not. But for Boethius, the theorist (*musicus*) who knows remains superior to the singer (*cantor*) who merely follows.

The connection that Ficino draws from quadrivial music (“music exists first as calculation”) to real music produced through bodily movement indicates a kinetic, materialist view of *musica mundana*. James Haar, in tracing medieval and Renaissance views on *musica mundana*, gives primary emphasis to pitch rather than movement – specifically, to the controversy between adherents of Boethius and Aristotle on the existence of celestial music, which was precipitated by the Latin translation of Aristotle’s *De caelo* in the late twelfth century.⁹⁶ Dependent though Boethius was on Pythagorean harmonic principles, his theory of *musica mundana* should not be reduced to the question of sphere music, typically construed as either static consonances or modal species. As noted above, Boethius grounded his theory on the phenomenon of movement and change at all levels – that of the elements and seasons as well as the planets.⁹⁷ While Haar was well aware of this fact, some of his commentaries tend to obscure it.⁹⁸ The same tendency

⁹⁶ See also Rico, “Boethius, Aristotle, and the Music of the Spheres.”

⁹⁷ Again, that *musica mundana* is “discernible especially in those things which are observed [i.e., not necessarily heard] in heaven itself or in the combination of elements or the diversity of seasons” (*De institutione musica*, I.2, cited in note 19).

⁹⁸ Haar makes the important distinction between “cosmic harmony on the one side, celestial music on the other” at the beginning of his dissertation (“*Musica mundana*,” 3). In his discussion of Vincent of Beauvais, however, he quotes Vincent’s “perfunctory synopsis” of Boethius (which Vincent is quoting “almost verbatim” from Richard of St. Victor), that *musica mundana* “is found partly in the elements, partly in the planets, partly in time” (304-05); then, observing that Vincent does not say whether he finds this division credible (though why else would he have transmitted it without comment?), Haar cites Vincent’s Aristotelian denial of the “false opinion concerning the heavenly harmony” (305). This elision, which Haar makes repeatedly, could suggest that someone who denied *musica mundana* as literal sounding music also denied Boethius’s conceptual view of the elements, planets, seasons, and time *moving* in harmony. As Haar concludes of Vincent, “*musica mundana*, exalted to the position of a minor article of faith in the earlier Middle Ages...is here all but labeled a heresy, one arising from the Jewish bent for over-literal reading of the Bible” (306). This reduces *musica mundana* to sphere music. To be sure, the same elision was made by some medieval philosophers; Haar quotes Roger Bacon among others on this account (307-08). But it leads Haar to the potentially misleading statement that “[t]he Aristotelian refutation found its way into thirteenth- and fourteenth-century treatises devoted wholly to music, *despite* their traditional dependence on Boethius” (309, my italics). The contradiction that applies to the question of sphere music does not also apply to the concept of universal harmony *tout court*.

To give another example, Haar writes that Ugolino of Orvieto “repeats Boethian statements about the spheres and the elements without comment...but he does not try to reconcile Aristotle with Boethius” (331). This again reduces *musica mundana* to sphere music. Haar also quotes Tyard’s *Solitaire*, that the

appears in a more recent article on a thirteenth-century Italian treatise on *musica mundana*, in which the author equates that term to *musica spherarum* and misleadingly sets Neoplatonism in diametrical opposition to Aristotelianism.⁹⁹ Leo Schrade, whom Haar does not cite in this context, clarifies Boethius's debt to Aristotle, his intention to reconcile Aristotle with Plato, the Aristotelian view of mathematics that Boethius adopted after *De institutione musica*, and the later medieval use of that treatise as an integral part of scholastic education.¹⁰⁰

"musique mondaine & musique humaine" are "plus curieuses que necessaires" (430). With this dismissal, the Solitaire is clearly referring to literal or sensible music, yet in context he means to suggest that *musica mundana* should be regarded abstractly rather than concretely – not that the concept should be excluded altogether. The Curieux disagrees, following Boethius's opinion that celestial music exists beyond our ability to hear it; but both stances accommodate the belief (as Haar puts it) in a "firm and constant order of the universe, demonstrated in the mathematical relations of musical consonances" (431). Haar recognizes that in the "anti-Boethian" position, "[m]athematical proportion binds the universe; it is harmonious but not in the literal [i.e., musical] sense," and he calls this the "'modern' view, acceptable in broad terms even to a Newton" (it was expressed by Giorgi, Heinrich Glarean, and Francisco Salinas as well as Tyard's Solitaire) and "not the traditional interpretation of *musica mundana*" (311). But the non-literal sense is nonetheless implicit, as these early-modern philosophers recognized, in Boethius's original description. Haar discusses the Renaissance reception of the Boethius in chapter 6 of his dissertation (328ff.).

⁹⁹ Ilntichi, "*Musica mundana*." Ilntichi calls the treatise in question "unusual" because, a "firm adherence to a Neoplatonic sounding universe notwithstanding, the bishop is dependent on Aristotelian natural philosophy" (40). The treatise approaches the three Boethian musical categories as "an epistemological continuum, a journey that takes us from *musica instrumentalis* to *musica mundana* – which teach us how to obtain agreeable (instrumental) sounds and concordant (vocal) pitches, respectively" (40). This orientation bears a striking resemblance to Ficino's and thus provides further evidence of continuity between medieval and Renaissance views on universal harmony. Ilntichi misleadingly equates *musica mundana* to *musica spherarum* in a précis of Aristotle's opinion: "the impossibility of being experienced by the senses renders the notion of *musica mundana* preposterous and its investigation foolish" (43). She concludes that the bishop's "intellectual strategy...consistently helps him elegantly to circumvent and rather conveniently to overlook any dialectical friction that might emerge between a Neoplatonic conceptual framework and Aristotelian rationales" (48). On Boethius's own reconciliation with Aristotle, see the following note.

¹⁰⁰ Leo Schrade, "Music in the Philosophy of Boethius," *The Musical Quarterly* 33/2 (1947): 188-200. Schrade begins by quoting Boethius's statement of purpose in his commentary on Aristotle's *De interpretatione*: "To resolve, in some measure, the ideas of Aristotle and Plato into harmony" (188). He points out that medieval thinkers regarded the *De institutione musica* as "clearly a product of the Aristotelian doctrine; hence, they placed it into Aristotle's system of learning" (189); that at the time Boethius wrote his books on the quadrivium, "he had no intention – and no need – of reconciling the Aristotelian and Platonic schools of thought" (193); but that his orientation later changed: "Beginning with his commentary on Porphyry's *Introduction* [the *Isagoge* to Aristotle's *Categories*] and continuing for the rest of his life, Boethius maintained the Aristotelian point of view in regard to the position of mathematics. In the system of Aristotle, mathematics became part of philosophy and ceased to function merely as an 'instrument'.... Mathematics is a part of an objective system in which the purely ethical or preparatory functions have no longer the exclusive importance given to the *Quadrivium* in Boethius' earlier work"

But aside from the question of celestial music, it needs to be stressed that Boethius derived his theory of *musica mundana* from the fact of universal movement and not from a belief in planetary sounds (a corollary of movement), and that a musical critique of the theory would therefore logically be waged in the domain of rhythm. It is also clear that Ficino's departure from Boethius was the result of different metaphysical

(194-95). Schrade concludes that Boethius's medieval followers completed the task of reconciliation that he had begun: "They, in fact, combined the ethical function which was derived from the Platonic music as an instrument, with the objective, systematic order which came from the Aristotelian music as an actual part of philosophy. Thus the interpretation medieval musicians cast upon the *Musica* of Boethius achieved one of his chief aims: to reconcile Plato with Aristotle" (198). Ilnitchi, "*Musica mundana*," 44, notices the same reconciliation (or confrontation) and states that it has "yet to be adequately examined." But by reducing *musica mundana* to the un-Aristotelian belief in celestial music, one is encouraged to see the reconciliation taking place in spite of fundamental disagreement rather than in virtue of fundamental compatibility. See also Leo Schrade, "Das propädeutische Ethos in der Musikanschauung des Boethius," in *De scientia musicae studia atque orationes*, ed. Ernst Lichtenhahn (Bern: Paul Haupt, 1967), 35-75; idem, "Die Stellung der Musik in der Philosophie des Boethius als Grundlage der ontologischen Musikerziehung," in the same volume, 76-112.

On Boethius's influence in medieval France on the Neoplatonic School of Chartres and the Augustinian School of St. Victor, see Marcin Konik, "A Reception of the Idea of the Music of the Spheres in the Music Theory of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," *Musica Iagellonica* 6 (2012): 5-49. Joseph Dyer, "Speculative *musica* and the Medieval University of Paris," *Music & Letters* 90/2 (2009): 177-204, finds, contrary to numerous scholarly claims, no solid evidence that Boethius's *De institutione musica* was taught at the Université de Paris during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries – part of a general neglect of the traditional *artes liberales* in preference to Aristotelian logic and natural philosophy. But as Dyer acknowledges, the reduced presence of the *artes* in the university curriculum does not itself demonstrate a general lack of knowledge in or commitment to them; rather, they were "reduced mainly to a propaedeutic role on a lower level than heretofore" (182). See also Jeremy Yudkin, "The Influence of Aristotle on French University Music Texts," in Barbera (ed.), *Music Theory and its Sources*, 173-89. It is worth noting that Johannes de Muris wrote the *Musica speculativa* (1323-25) in response to the neglect of Boethius and quadrivial studies at the university; see the edition by Susan Fast (Ottawa: Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1994).

On the medieval reception of Boethius's music theory, see Michael Bernhard and Calvin M. Bower (eds.), *Glossa maior in Institutionem musicam Boethii*, 4 vols. (Munich: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1993-2011); Calvin Bower, "Die Wechselwirkung von *philosophia*, *mathematica* und *musica* in der Karolingischen Rezeption der *Institutio musica* von Boethius," in *Musik, und die Geschichte der Philosophie und Naturwissenschaften im Mittelalter: Fragen zur Wechselwirkung von musica und philosophia im Mittelalter*, ed. Frank Hentschel (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 163-83; Michael Bernhard, "Il *De institutione musica* di Boezio nell'alto Medioevo," in Cristiani et al (eds.), *Harmonia mundi*, 77-93. Since Ilnitchi's article, there have been a number of studies on the late-medieval reception of Boethius, after the reintroduction of Aristotle's *De caelo*. See Alexander Rausch, "Der Boethius-Kommentar in der Handschrift St. Florian XI 282," *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft: Beihefte der Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich* 48 (2002): 7-83; Matthias Hochadel, *Commentum Oxoniense in musicam Boethii: Eine Quelle zur Musiktheorie an der spätmittelalterlichen Universität* (Munich: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2002); Nicolas J. Bell, "Readings and Interpretations of Boethius's *De institutione musica* in the Later Middle Ages," in *Sapientia et Eloquentia: Meaning and Function in Liturgical Poetry, Music, Drama and Biblical Commentary in the Middle Ages*, ed. Gunilla Iversen and Nicolas J. Bell (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 365-80.

priorities and not of a different physical conception of harmony. Haar refers to movement in his paraphrase of Ficino's view on the existence of celestial music:

Like the soul, the body of the universe, a 'celestial cithara,' pulsates in musical proportion, its low tones produced by slower motion, the higher notes coming from faster movement. From his reading Ficino must have known that these higher and lower tones were thought to form a scale.¹⁰¹

But Haar only obliquely touches on the notion of musical movement (rhythm and meter) as a useful allegorical representation of universal movement. In response to the above quotation, he is content to observe that "the celestial music is polyphony of a sort, not a single scale"; but that "[i]t is quite clear that Ficino regards the Pythagorean consonances as simultaneously sounding intervals"; and that "[i]t seems probable that Ficino refrained from speaking in detail of a celestial scale, not because he did not take heavenly music seriously or literally, but rather because he imagined it...to be a harmony of simultaneous sounds."¹⁰² Whatever Ficino intended, his thinking logically points to the idea of composing the music of the spheres, of bringing it down to earth and thus involving it in the problem of artistic representation, which is to say in the problem of finite linear movement rather than perpetual cyclical movement. This implication is also evident in his writing on astrology, where planetary influences on earth are said to express themselves musically.¹⁰³ Haar quotes D. P. Walker's view that "the musical

¹⁰¹ Haar, "*Musica mundana*," 352. He goes on to discuss the same interest by Gaffurio (365ff.).

¹⁰² Haar, "*Musica mundana*," 352-53, 355. In his preceding discussion of Anselmi, Haar points out the same view of pitches generated by planetary motions: "the polyphonic sound of each planet is a kind of celestial motet, one combining all three genera" (337). In light of Anselmi's "use of planetary aspects, epicycles, and diurnal motion points," Haar points out his apparent debt to Ptolemy's *Harmonics*, which "seems not to have been known to the medieval West" (338).

¹⁰³ See Haar, "*Musica mundana*," 357ff. In keeping with Catholic orthodoxy, Ficino denied astral determinism.

representation of any given state of the heavens would provide only one chord and would suggest no particular melody or mode.”¹⁰⁴ Calling this assumption “unfair,” Haar speculates that Ficino intended to refer to “specific musical scales,” i.e., modes, through which a piece of music could transmit various planetary attributes.¹⁰⁵ Both views, however, reflect a general inclination to consider only the static pitch content of the Pythagorean-Boethian music.¹⁰⁶ Gabriela Ilnitchi similarly observes, “[s]tandard Neoplatonism stipulates a never-changing planetary music, either by having each planet generate a continuous sound of invariable pitch or by assigning a fixed interval between two successive planets.”¹⁰⁷

This scholarly focus on the question of planetary pitches has a very solid basis in the ancient musical texts on which medieval theorists were so reliant, but for that reason, it can obscure the more intimate conceptual link being made during the Renaissance between *musica mundana* and *musica instrumentalis* – between universal harmony and musical rhythm and meter. On Ficino’s understanding of a direct relationship between celestial music and composed music, Haar writes that this was “not just a decorative

¹⁰⁴ Haar, “*Musica mundana*,” 359-60; cf. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, 81.

¹⁰⁵ Haar, “*Musica mundana*,” 360. This view was shared by Gaffurio, who took it unattributed from Ramis de Pareia; see *ibid.*, 395-99.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Ilnitchi, “*Musica mundana*,” 55: “If planets make sound in their various celestial motions, any Neoplatonist would ask, what are the exact pitches that produce the harmony of the spheres? The often-favored solutions feature a combination of planetary pitches or intervals that produce a well-defined musical scale, albeit one that could be configured in any of several possible ways.” Along with Boethius (who followed Nicomachus and Cicero), she cites the views of Pliny, Hyginus, Censorinus, Favonius, and Martianus Capella.

¹⁰⁷ Ilnitchi, “*Musica mundana*,” 62-63. The thirteenth-century treatise with which Ilnitchi is concerned seeks to modify the “standard” Neoplatonic view by taking into account the recently rediscovered astronomical model of Ptolemy, whose dynamic system of epicyclical and eccentric motions seemed to require that planetary pitches should change as planets changed their directions. According to Ilnitchi, Giorgio Anselmi was the next theorist we know of to take up this idea, some two centuries later.

analogy but one meant to have both musical and cosmic results.” Haar raises but does not pursue the question of how this view might have influenced music composition during the Renaissance.¹⁰⁸

Aside from the astrological properties of mode, the way toward an imitative representation of *harmonia mundi* through rhythm and meter is more clearly apparent in Ficino’s view of the relationship between music (cosmic and human) and poetry. Following Plato’s recommendation in the *Republic* that melody and rhythm should follow speech,¹⁰⁹ Ficino writes that “poetry is superior to music, since through the words it speaks not only to the ear but also directly to the mind. Therefore its origin is not in the harmony of the spheres, but rather in the music of the divine mind itself, and through its effect it can lead the listener directly to God Himself.”¹¹⁰ Music’s intercosmic significance is actually subordinate to poetry’s direct link to the pre-cosmic divine Intellect or *logos*, which has ordained the universe. But Ficino still characterizes the divine mind as musical, and harmony still provides the metaphor of human connection to God, as it would continue to do into the seventeenth century. Because humans are an integral part of the universal harmony, they naturally benefit from a musical accompaniment to *logos* in order to propel their ascent toward God. The poetic *logos* likewise relates to musical rhythm rather than pitch.

¹⁰⁸ Haar, “*Musica mundana*,” 362.

¹⁰⁹ *Republic* III.398c-d: “a song [μελωδία] consists of three elements – words, harmonic mode, and rhythm” and that “the mode and rhythm must fit the words”; Cooper (ed.), *Plato*, 1035. There is an obvious irony in that Socrates recommends banning most poets from the city.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Yates, *The French Academies*, 40.

Giorgi describes the Pythagorean sphere music expressly in terms of distance and movement: “all the Pythagoreans affirm the consonance of the heavens to be most sweet and harmonious not only in distance, but also in their movements.”¹¹¹ He further cites Ptolemy and Cicero:

And Ptolemy, principal balancer of heavenly bodies, writes in his book on Harmony: the Sun and Moon, primary moderators of our birth and life, concur in certain sonorous numbers with the other [bodies] not only in movement but also in effect.¹¹²

On which Cicero agrees in his book on the nature of the gods, saying: So great is the consonance of the Heavens in their unequal movements, that as the supreme star of Saturn cools, and that of Mars burns fiercely, the star of Jupiter which is set between the two enlightens and tempers. He pursues many such discourses on the virtuous accord of the Heavens and stars, not only in quality but also in their consonant actions, which appertain to the world’s maintenance and duration, and to the increase or stability of things.¹¹³

Here we find more of an interest in “consonant actions,” which evince the kinetic “stability of things,” than in consonant pitches. We may recall Foix-Candale’s similar understanding of celestial harmony, which I quoted in the introduction to this chapter, as

¹¹¹ Giorgio/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 323: “tous les Pythagoriens afferment la consonance des Cieux estre tres-doulce & harmonieuse non seulement en distance, mais aussi au mouuement d’iceux. Et Platon a dict que pour conduire ceste harmonie sur chasque Sfere y a vne Seraine assise, par là signifiant...que les mouuemens des Sferes rendent des chants aux dieux.”

¹¹² Giorgio/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 323: “Et Ptolemée principal balanceur des corps celestes dict en son liure de l’Harmonie: Le Soleil & la Lune premiers moderateurs de nostre naissance & vie en certains nombres sonoreux conuiennent avecques les autres non seulement en mouuement mais aussi en effect.”

¹¹³ Giorgio/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 323: “Auquel s’accorde Ciceron en son liure de la nature des dieux, disant: Si grande est la consonance des Cieux pour leurs impareils mouuemens, que d’autant que la supreme estoille de Saturne refroidit, & celle de Mars ard & brusle, l’estoille de Iupiter qui est mise entre les deux, illustre & tempere. Il poursuit beaucoup de tels discours de la conuenance non seulement de la vertu de la qualité des Cieux & estoilles, mais aussi de leurs actions consonantes qui appartiennent à l’entretien & durée du monde, & à l’acroissement ou estat des choses pour le moins par entresuite.”

an “accord of actions” and not of sounds. Similar descriptions of *harmonia mundi* are given by Zarlino and Tyard.¹¹⁴

After the passage just quoted, Giorgi goes on to preach the virtue of representing the universal harmony – between macrocosm and microcosm, and between both of these and God – through the measured language of adulatory sacred verse:

And in order that [Daniel and David] and the other Prophets might express the divine Canticles in a fitting style and language, they have brought their spirits to light in many sorts of verse, as testified by Jerome, Eusebius, and the others who know. Job, according to the same Jerome, begins in prose and proceeds in verse of six measures or feet running in dactyls and the spondee, and often receiving other feet as the language requires, not of the same syllables but in the same time. And sometimes the sweet and harmonious rhythm is carried by numbers and feet that are liberal and unconstrained, which the Poets understand better than the simple reader.... Solomon, beloved by the Lord, sings the Epithalamium or nuptial song of the holy marriage of man with God, of Christ with the Church, of the Old with the New Testament, of the letter with its mystical sense; and through beautiful verses, makes the consonance of the one *monde* and the other resound with the Archetype, in the little work that for good reason he names the Song of Songs.... Jeremiah also speaks in verse in his tragic Lamentations, and, as some affirm, Isaiah himself proceeds by an orderly measure. *But all of the holy scriptures, whether in verse or in prayers unconstrained by measure, reflect with great mystery by their accents the movements of the heavens and their consonance.* Out of envy, therefore, of these divine Poets and writers of sacred letters, the old Gentile theologians – Orpheus, Aglaopheme, Empedocles,

¹¹⁴ Zarlino defines *musica mundana* in terms of motion: “It is, I say, seen and known in the heavens from the revolutions, distances, and placements of the heavenly spheres, as well as from the aspects, nature, and position of the seven planets”; *Le istitutioni harmoniche*, I.6, quoted in Godwin (ed.), *The Harmony of the Spheres*, 206. Zarlino further writes that “the heavens are turned around by their intelligences with harmony, as one can see from their revolutions which are proportionately slower or faster with regard to each other. Again, this harmony is known from the distances of the celestial spheres, since the distances between them (as many believe) are in harmonic proportion: not measurable by the senses, but nonetheless measurable by reasoning” (208). Tyard’s *Discours du tems* (1556) addresses the direct correspondence between time and heavenly movement: “j’estime le Ciel et le Tems devoir estre ainsi jointz: tant pource que je pense le Tems estre la durée du Monde et de son mouvement, duquel la plus illustre et belle partie est le Ciel: que pource que les variacions et les effets du Tems ne nous sont connuz, que par le tournoyement du Ciel, et principalement des astres et lumieres en lui roulantes, ou ficees. En quoy divisons-nous le Tems, sinon en Ans, Moys, Semeines, Iours et Heures? Mais d’ou est le retour des Saisons, la difference de Iour et de Nuit, sinon du Ciel et des astres? Cette dispute s’eschaufoyt entre nous, quand pour quelque raisons qu’il me dist à l’oreille... nous entrâmes en propos de la diversité des Ans”; quoted in Eva Kushner, “Dialogues et vérité: Réflexions autour de Pontus de Tyard,” in *Langage et vérité: Études offertes à Jean-Claude Margolin*, ed. Jean Céard (Geneva: Droz, 1993), 106. In the dialogue, Tyard assigns these words to the poet Maurice Scève.

Parmenides, Heraclitus, Lucretius, and the others – imitating them albeit from afar, have tried to express the natural and divine accords in numbered verse, so that the style would agree with the subject.¹¹⁵

Since Giorgi has described heavenly movement as an accordant discord (“the consonance of the heavens in their unequal movements”), the connection is clear between the latter and measured verses, which show “by their accents the movements of the heavens.”

These accents were, of course, also unequal.

As Giorgi relates in the second part of his treatise, “all harmony proceeds from the [divine] Word,” which governs the accordant discord of creation, and which the above-mentioned prophets and philosophers have consciously imitated through their verses:

For as much as the words we speak manifest the thoughts we have conceived in our understanding, so does the creation manifest, as though in speech, that which God has conceived in his thoughts.... [From] the Word arises the entire multitude, in which, because we find similarity and dissimilarity, odd and even, the

¹¹⁵ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 326-27 (my italics): “Et afin qu'en propre stile & langage ils exprimassent les Cantiques diuins, mondains, & celestes, eux & les autres Profetes ont mis au iour leurs esprits en diuerses sortes de vers, comme tesmoignent S. Hierome, Eusebe, & les autres qui s'y cognoissent. Iob, selon l'aduis du mesme S. Hierome, commence en prose, procede en vers de six mesures ou pieds courans par dactyles & spondée, & pour la propriété de la langue receuant souuentesfois autres pieds non pas de mesmes syllabes, mais bien de mesmes temps. Et quelquefois le rythme doulx & harmonieuse est porté de nombres & pieds libres & non contraincts, ce que les Poëtes entendent mieux que le simple lecteur.... Salomon le bien-aymé du Seigneur chante l'Epithalame ou chant nuptial du saint mariage de l'homme avecques Dieu, de Christ avec l'Eglise, du vieil & du nouveau Testament, de la lettre avecques le sens mystique, & faict en beaux vers retentir la consonance qui resulte de l'vn & de l'autre monde avecques l'Archetype en ce petit œuvre, qu'à bon droict il nomme le Cantique des Cantiques.... Ieremie aussi discourt en vers tragique ses lamentations. Et comme aucuns afferment Esaye mesme procede par quelque ordre mesuré. Mais toute la sainte écriture soit en vers, soit en oraison non contraincte de mesures, par ses accens, comme nous auons dict, remerque avec grand mystere les mouuemens des Cieux & leur consonance. A l'enuy donc de ces diuins Poetes & escriuains des lettres sacrées les vieux Theologiens des Gentils Orfee, Aglaofeme, Empedocle, Parmenide, Heraclite, Lucrece & les autres les imitans bien que de loing, se sont essayez d'exprimer en vers nombreux les naturels & diuins accords, afin que le style conuint avec le subiect.” Yates, *The French Academies*, 44, quotes La Boderie's *Galliade* to demonstrate that he conceived of David's verses as “‘measured’ in the classical sense.... The Psalms, therefore, are also an ‘ancient music,’ capable of producing ‘effects.’” It seems clear that La Boderie took his cue from Giorgi here.

Harmony results thereby, which (according to Boethius and Nicomachus) is a concord of odds and evens, or of similar and dissimilar voices reduced to one.¹¹⁶

Baïf's idea of shoehorning the fluid and variable prosody of French into a rigid classical system of unequal longs and shorts has correctly been seen as a humanist initiative for ensuring textual clarity and for re-creating music's spiritual effects.¹¹⁷ But along with these concerns, *musique mesurée* would appear to represent Giorgi's unitary cosmic principle of "similar and dissimilar voices reduced to one." The 2:1 rhythmic proportion of *musique mesurée* should also be understood in relation to the Pythagorean definition of harmony ($\alpha\rho\mu\omicron\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$) as the octave interval, which, for Giorgi, was consummated via stepwise movement through the *octonaire*.¹¹⁸

We therefore find in *musique mesurée* an answer to the problem of representing universal harmony through "real" music. For Walker and Yates, however, it would appear that the technique's chief significance lies in its utilitarian purpose of creating musical "effects" in listeners. *Harmonia mundi* is invoked in a general way to valorize

¹¹⁶ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 354: "Car tout ainsi que la parole que nous proferons de voix manifeste la pensée que nous auons conceue en l'entendement: ainsi la creature produite, quasi comme quelque parole manifeste ce que Dieu en sa pensée auoit conceu.... [Et] par le Verbe decoule toute multitude. En laquelle par ce qu'il y a semblance & dissemblance, pair & impair, de là resulte l'Harmonie, qui est (selon Boece & Nicomache) vne concorde de pairs & d'impairs, ou de semblables & dissemblables voix reduictes en vn. Voyla doncques comme toute Harmonie procede du Verbe."

¹¹⁷ Walker, "The Aims of Baïf's *Académie*," 91: "'Vers mesurés' were French verses written in classical metres. Their metre was meant to be quantitative, but owing to the nature of the French language this was impossible. They did, however, come near to achieving an accentual version of the metrical patterns of Greek and Latin verse." Walker, "Musical Humanism," 303-04: "All that [humanists] could advise was that the natural pronunciation of the text should not be unduly distorted. This advice was usually given in terms of quantity, but only because writers of this period tended to use classical terminology when dealing with modern phonetics."

¹¹⁸ See Chapter 5. Haar, "*Musica mundana*," 381, points out that the idea of following a classical meter of long and short syllables in setting poems to music appears in the writing of Gaffurio nearly a century before the French Academy: "In Gaffurius' opinion the ancient lyric poets sang odes of this kind, observing carefully the length of syllables; in a modern musical setting these may be expressed, he says, by breves and semibreves."

the art of music before turning to the pragmatic humanist question of how to set poetry to music (or subordinate music to poetry). This point of view emerges, for example, in Yates's brief comparison of Baïf's endeavors to its "closest Italian equivalent," the Florentine Camerata. She first quotes from the opening of Giovanni de Bardi's *Discorso sopra la musica antiqua* – "Harmony is a general term for that of which Pythagoras, and after him Plato, said that the world was composed" – and then comments:

As in the preamble to the statutes of Baïf's Academy, "music" is here understood in the widest sense. [Bardi] then comes from the general to his particular aim of wedding music to verses in classical measures. "Rhythm in music is nothing but fitting the time to the words.... Practical music is the accommodating (of musical time) to the words of the poet written in verses of long and short (feet)." This was also the preoccupation of Baïf and Courville, namely, the fitting of "measured verses" to "measured music." Bardi, like the French school, also makes the close connection between music and morals and emphasises the psychological power of good music.¹¹⁹

But if "music" should be understood in the widest sense of universal music, it remains to point out (which Yates does not) that fitting measured verses to measured music should first be understood as cosmological representation: that is, not simply as a generator of effects but as an affirmation of the recently evolved unitary conception of universal harmony, which had made the materialist representation of it (through *musica practica*) conceivable in the first place.¹²⁰ I would emphasize this understanding of *musique*

¹¹⁹ Yates, *The French Academies*, 9-10.

¹²⁰ Cf. Yates, *The French Academies*, 38: "The doctrine of the 'effects' is in fact closely allied to that Pythagorean philosophy which sought to explain the physical universe in terms of harmony and number, and which believed in a connection between the harmony of the universe and the soul of man. Late antiquity saw a revival of this philosophy in the Neo-Pythagoreanism of the Alexandrians, who emphasised the importance of the 'effects' of music." By describing the French Academy's musical program as a revival of ancient thought (as its proponents believed it to be), Yates obscures recognition of the early-modern shift away from Neo-Pythagorean dualism, which opened the way for representing *harmonia mundi* through *musica practica*. Yates writes that "'syllabic homophony' produced what was in effect a new kind of music having a marked *rythme d'ensemble* such as is not found in ordinary homophony"; she attributes this outcome to a "determination to preserve the metre in the ensemble which made it so necessary that each voice should sing each syllable at the same time"; and she adds that "[t]his also conduced to the audibility of the text – a point of major importance in musical humanism, for it was the

mesurée because it is in this respect that it contradicts the dualist premise of universal vanity. Yates does describe *musique mesurée* as an acknowledgement of the cosmic priority of *logos*, but she focuses on the technique's purpose of reviving classical poetic meter in order to recreate the ethical effects known to ancient musicians and thereby mitigate the religious conflict in France. Above all, she stresses (following Walker) the technique's historical, humanistic orientation: "perhaps the most thorough-going attempt ever made to translate into practice the precepts of musical humanism, and so to produce in modern times songs which should be 'spells for souls.'"¹²¹

From a sectarian point of view, if the "spells for souls" were intended only to foster good morals and social cohesion, such an aim could seem moderate and innocuous. The new genre begins to look more controversial when advanced as a mystical inducer of "a state of mind, the first degree of return to the One under the influence of the *furor poëticus*."¹²² Profane and sacred songs alike, if composed in measured verse, are "expressions of a divinely inspired enthusiasm."¹²³ The heretical implications for Protestants will be discussed in the next chapter, but here I would note that Yates's description of the *furor poëticus* does not manage to convey the unitary cosmology on which it depended. Using Tyard's *Solitaire premier* as her source, she points out that the

strict alliance of the influence of the *words* with the influence of the *music* which, it was hoped, would produce powerful effects" (57, original italics). Her description leaves out the understood metaphorical relationship between rhythmic unison and the *constante inconstance* of universal harmony: again, quoting Giorgi, that "from the Word arises the entire multitude, in which, because we find similarity and dissimilarity, odd and even, the Harmony results thereby, which...is a concord of odds and evens, or of similar and dissimilar voices reduced to one." Bonniffet, "La musique mesurée profane de Claude Le Jeune," gives due attention to the significance of *musique mesurée* as cosmological representation.

¹²¹ Yates, *The French Academies*, 42.

¹²² Yates, *The French Academies*, 94. Cf. Walker, "Musical Humanism," 9.

¹²³ Yates, *The French Academies*, 94.

furor poëticus (the first stage of divine re-ascent) equates to “nature,” which is the fourth and last stage of the soul’s original descent from the One: “the two are on the same level and ‘nature’ may be used as the equivalent of the *furor poëticus*.”¹²⁴ She then gives the following paraphrase of Tyard’s conception of nature (which he has taken from Plato and Cicero):

“Nature” is the beginning of the imaginative life, full of confused forms, shapes and fancies, which are as yet very closely in contact with the bodily senses and require to be reduced to order and harmony by the first *furor*. Understood in this way, there is no contradiction between the insistence of the Pléiade on the acquisition by the poet of all the disciplines of “art,” and their equally firm insistence that the inspiration of the poet comes from “nature.” The upward striving of human effort is met by the outpoured gift of the gods and the two are fused in *furor poëticus*.¹²⁵

It would be easy to misconstrue “nature” here as that which is external to the soul – elemental nature, on the view that the poet must draw his inspiration from the outside, and that the “gift of the gods” flows in from the outside. It is therefore important to understand that in Tyard, “confused forms...closely in contact with the bodily senses” refers specifically to the soul’s untutored response to the elemental world, not to that world itself. As the Curieux makes clear in *Solitaire second*, elemental nature already demonstrates the same harmonic equilibrium as the heavenly bodies: “it seems rather impertinent to deny that these heavens, turning by so certain an order and spaced by such just proportions, these elements, so fittingly joined together, and the seasons rotating in

¹²⁴ Yates, *The French Academies*, 82. Cf. Tyard, *Solitaire premier*, 23-24. As Yates notes, Tyard is borrowing his concept of “nature” from Cicero’s *Pro Archia*. But the influence of Giorgi is also clear. Yates observes that “the general arrangement of Tyard’s work, also certain details of his exposition, suggest that Giorgi may have been one of his sources. Tyard’s dialogues are a kind of abridgement of some much fuller exposition, such as that of Giorgi. Or one might put it that the relationship is very nearly that of artist to theorist” (88).

¹²⁵ Yates, *The French Academies*, 82.

such constant inconstancy should not be composed and brought into rapport, one with the other, by the measure of some just and reasonable proportion.”¹²⁶ Elemental harmony is pre-existent, and it is virtuous to align one’s soul with it by means of the *furor poëticus*. The need for a *furor poëticus*, therefore, assumes the presence of vanity in unimproved human nature but its prior resolution in the macrocosm, whence the human ability to replace vanity with harmony.

In keeping with the need that the *musique elementaire* be locatable in humans, the four elements are linked to the four bodily humors. La Boderie calls the humors the “human tetrachord,” whose alternately consonant and dissonant interactions determine and describe one’s temporal state of health.¹²⁷ The human soul wants to aspire toward the divine intellect but is weighed down by the body, caught between a lower and higher state of being. Pierre de la Primaudaye writes in *Académie françoise*,

¹²⁶ Tyard, *Solitaire second*, 217: “il semble estre assez impertinent de nier, que ces Cieux, tournans d’un ordre tant certain, eslongnez en tant justes proportions, ces Elemens, conjoins ensemble tant convenamment, et les Saisons rechangées par une tant constante inconstance, ne soient composez et rapportez l’un à l’autre en mesure de quelque juste & raisonnable proportion.”

¹²⁷ La Boderie, “A Monsieur de Vaumesnil conseiller & maistre d’hostel de Monseigneur, fils de France unique frere du Roy,” prefatory letter to Ficino/La Boderie, *Les Trois livres de la vie*, n.p.: “il est de besoin que par bonnes mœurs, patience, humilité, esperance, & charité, & imitation de sa bonne vie & esquises vertus, telle Consonance & Harmonie se maintienne & conserue: aussi pour maintenir nostre corps ou homme exterieur qui se corrompt de iour en iour, & pour l’vnir & harmoniser avecques le grand Monde, il est besoin de tenir en parfaits accords les quatre humeurs, ou pour dire ainsi, les quatre cords & nerfs de l’humain Tetrachorde, pour conseruer en bonne & deüe temperature, & ramener comme à vnison la parfaite consonance & harmonie de la Santé.” The alternative: “si les susdites chordes de l’Humain Instrument, par deuë proportion & conuenance ne se respondent entre elles, il s’en ensuit vne distemperie & confusion d’humeurs, qui est la vraye dissonance & discorde de la Santé, que nous appellons Maladie.” Here La Boderie is echoing Ficino, who sought to connect musical and medicinal principles, in the view that the body and soul should be in harmony: “It happens that the soul and the body harmonize together in a certain natural proportion: each to each the parts of the soul, and the parts of the body. Which consonance indeed the movements and pulse of the body and the harmonious circuit of the fevers and humors seem to imitate. Grave music, as Plato and Aristotle claim, and as we have often found by experience, serves and restores the harmony of the parts of the soul. Medicine indeed does the same for the consonance of bodily parts. Since the body and soul, as we have said, harmonize, it can easily be that a harmony is present [between] parts of the body and parts of the soul” (*Epistola de Musica*, quoted in Haar, “*Musica mundana*,” 348). Haar writes, “The theory that music affects, through the medium of the bodiless *spiritus*, body as well as soul appears to be a favorite of Ficino’s.”

This liaison and conjunction of the soul and the body is certainly very admirable in nature. And as many Philosophers say, it seems to be contrary to nature, in that the soul, which is light, is detained within the body, which is heavy: that which is of the celestial fire in that which is cold and earthly, the invisible in the palpable, the immortal in the mortal.¹²⁸

But this dichotomy of opposites within the individual again recalls the equilibrium of the elements, and furnishes thereby its own cosmological justification. The soul joined to the body is another manifestation of accordant discord:

as all that moves within the universal globe is maintained by accordant discords, so is there also between the body and the soul such a harmony, that with the aid of one the other subsists, and that with their continuous fighting, either one or the other will be obeyed in the end.¹²⁹

He acknowledges how “enormously strange” it can appear to speak of “that which is spiritual and immortal in some way *obeying* that which is mortal and made of corruptible stuff”; but this is only due to “our imperfect and imbecile nature.”¹³⁰ The notion of “the invisible in the palpable” can be traced to Cusa’s *De docta ignorantia*, and a hint of it occurs in Romans 1:20: “For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world,

¹²⁸ Pierre de la Primaudaye, *Academie françoise, en laquelle est traité de l’institution des Moeurs, & de ce qui concerne le bien et hereusement vivre en tous Estats & conditions: Par les preceptes de la doctrine, & les exemples de la vie des anciens sages et hommes Illustres* ([Geneva]: Jacques Chouët, 1593 [repr. 1577]), 9v: “Ceste liaison & conionction du corps & de l’ame est certes tres-admirable en nature: &, comme disent plusieurs Philosophes, semble estre contre nature: en ce que l’ame, qui est legere, est detenue dedans le corps qui est pesant, elle qui est de feu celeste, dans ce qui est froid & terrestre, inuisible dans le palpable, immortelle dans ce qui est mortel.”

¹²⁹ La Primaudaye, *Academie françoise*, 10r: “...que tout ce qui a mouuement au globe vniuersel, est maintenu par accordans discords, il y ait aussi entre le corps & l’ame vne telle harmonie, que de l’aide de l’un, l’autre subsiste, & qu’auec leurs combats continuels, l’un, puis l’autre, soit en fin obeï.”

¹³⁰ La Primaudaye, *Academie françoise*, 10r: “Tu nous dis ici chose grandement estrange, que ce qui est spirituel & immortel, obeisse quelquefois à ce qui est mortel, & de masse corruptible: mais i’enten bien. Cela procede de l’imperfection & imbecillité de nostre nature.”

are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity: so that they are inexcusable.”¹³¹

La Primaudaye was a Huguenot, and so we encounter here the cross-confessional appeal of *harmonia mundi*. The accordant discord principle can be found as well in the poetry of Du Bartas and, more notably, in an *octonaire* by Chandieu, the first chanson of mode 2 in Le Jeune’s collection (see Example 1.13).¹³² Chandieu does not, however, appear to endorse the idea unequivocally. Here is the poem again:

Le feu, l’air, l’eau, la terre, ont toujours changement,
Tournant et retournant l’un à l’autr’élément.
L’Eternel a voulu ce bas mond’ainsi faire
Par l’accordant discord de l’élément contraire,
Pour montrer que tu dois ta felicité querre
Ailleurs qu’au feu, qu’en l’air, qu’en l’eau et qu’en la terre;
Et que le vray repos est en un plus haut lieu
Que la terre, que l’eau, que l’air et que le feu.¹³³

*Fire, air, water, and earth are always changing,
Turning and returning, one element to the other.
The Eternal wanted to make the world thus,
By the accordant discord of contrary elements,
To show that you must gain your happiness
Elsewhere than in fire, air, water, or earth;
And that true repose is in a higher place
Than earth, than water, air, or fire.*

¹³¹ Cf. Cusa, *On Learned Ignorance*, 18 (I.11): “All our wisest and most divine teachers agree that visible things are truly images of invisible things and that from created things the Creator can be knowably seen as in a mirror and a symbolism.”

¹³² Guillaume de Saluste du Bartas, *La Seconde Semaine* (1584), ed. Yvonne Bellenger et al (Paris: Klincksieck, 1991), 39: “Ce fruit eust maintenu à jamais dans son cours / Des contraires humeurs les plus parfaict accors.” Goulart, *Commentaires sur la Sepmaine*, 163r, relates the idea to planetary movement: “les sept Planettes font leurs cours naturels & particuliers avec vne fermeté fort diuerse, & vne harmonieuse inconstance.”

¹³³ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), I:14-18.

The theological context here is overtly Protestant, whereas La Primaudaye's treatise is more latently so. Chandieu's poem answers the implied question, Why has God allowed the world to be a place of constant change? In reply, a Neoplatonist would have invoked the cosmic necessity of accordant discord, since the only other reasonable option would have been no creation at all – no devolution from unity. One might wonder why Chandieu bothered to point out the inconstancy of the elements, as that was common knowledge. But it was the Neoplatonic view of the elemental sphere, in seamless harmony with the outer spheres and with the soul, that should have prompted his rebuttal. He could have agreed that accordant discord was not a final goal, but rather carried the revelation of it, namely, complete accord in unity with God, whose image (*imago Dei*) was implanted in human souls.¹³⁴ But the means of access to unity had come under dispute. French academicians saw a material path: the physical performance of *musique mesurée*, the alignment of the soul to the elements through the *logos*. Chandieu acknowledges the same goal of divine repose in a more negative, world-denying way. The notion of a *plus-bas monde* corrupted by vanity loses much of its abhorrence in a universe where matter and form coincide in God.

For a philosopher, enlightenment or intellectual unity with God was an outcome to be sought, if not attained, in the present life. Whether or not Chandieu or Le Jeune accepted the Neoplatonic view of accordant discord, the *Octonaires* neglect at any rate to promote the *harmonie du monde*. At best, such harmony only reinforced one's sense of a

¹³⁴ Cf. Tyard, *Solitaire premier*, 11.

more perfect harmony elsewhere – a notion agreeable to Neoplatonists, but which elicited from them a more proactive response than Calvinists could feel was justified.

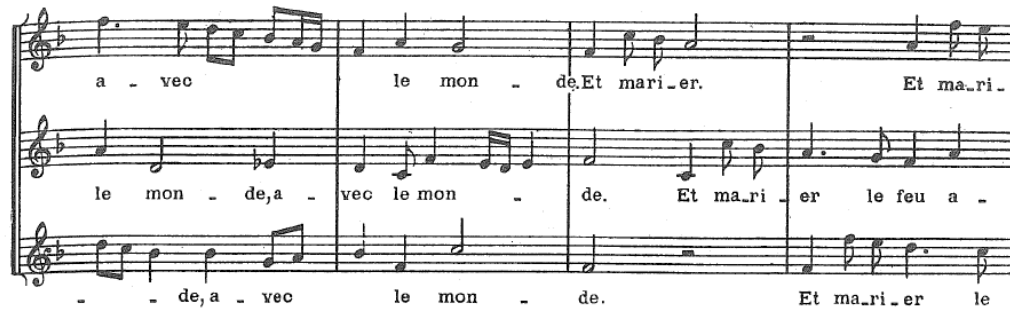
To conclude with a music example, the third chanson of mode 1 (Ionian), “Plustost on pourra faire,” whose poem is quoted above in section II, unambiguously contradicts the Hermetic precept of God as center and circumference, or to use Cusa’s terminology, of a maximum to which the minimum is not opposed. The chanson proceeds almost entirely in imitative polyphony, but Le Jeune makes exception for the line, “Que de conjoindre Dieu avec le monde”:

Example 3.1: “Plustost on pourra faire” (I.3), mm. 21-33

Et mari - er le feu a - vec - que l'on

de, Que de con - join - dre Dieu a - vec le mon - de,

de, Que de con - join - dre Dieu a - vec le mon -



The implication would seem clear: against the notion that *musique mesurée* connected one to God, Le Jeune invokes the style here to affirm the opposite.

Wherever Christians might have fallen on the continuum of beliefs from militant Calvinism to syncretic Neoplatonism, they could agree that unenlightened faith in the material world and in sensory impressions led one astray. The essential difference between the two poles is the response demanded by such awareness: for a Neoplatonist, greater intelligence; for a Calvinist, greater humility and penitence. At the beginning of this chapter, I quoted Howard Mayer Brown's allusion to the "cosmic laws" that music was thought to obey, and I have since emphasized the fact that these laws did not begin and end with the Pythagorean consonances. In keeping with Boethius's holistic and kinetic idea of universal harmony, Baïf's innovations applied to musical movement and not to harmony. The lost effects of the ancient modes were to be newly experienced, but this did not require creating a new set of harmonic rules: the modal theory taught by Glarean and Zarlino (in other words, current harmonic practice) would suffice. Neither did the cosmic laws begin and end with music, which was ultimately a metaphor of the soul's connection to God, being, and truth. It would seem easy to slip from the correct assumption that musical laws were universally accepted to the incorrect assumption that cosmic laws were as well. *Musique mesurée* elevated poetry in the name of rhetoric, but

it also carried more abstract ramifications, as it allowed poetry to destabilize existing metric norms – to destabilize the rhythmic harmony of *musica practica*. The style was intended as a material means of promoting spiritual movement away from the corporeal and toward the divine. But from the standpoint of *musical* movement, its asymmetry could be found less than harmonious, and therefore suitable for representing vanity.

In the next chapter, I will consider Le Jeune's subversion of *harmonia mundi* from the Protestant point of view. Whereas Calvin also expressed sympathy for the idea of a harmony of opposites, there could have been no question of using it to confound God with the world, nor as a vehicle for ascent. Original sin had barred the way by altering the original design.

Chapter 4

Songs for a Fallen World: The *Octonaires* as Protestant Commentaries on Sin, Reason, and Cosmic Uncertainty

Martin Luther and Jean Calvin, the two most prominent leaders of the Protestant Reformation, took an uncompromising view of original sin by viewing its outcome – corruption, death, vanity – as a blight not only on humankind but on the whole of creation: a moral lapse with material consequences that had been answered for but not finally removed by Christ’s sacrificial offering. By contrast, Renaissance Neoplatonists in the Ficinian tradition, in their commitment to universal harmony and to a progressive synthesis of Christian and pagan ideas, were motivated by a deeper concern for the blight of ongoing ignorance than of original sin. To *know* Christ, and to understand the universal harmony in the light of Christ, was to see one’s way around the vanity caused by Adam and Eve in their own premature desire to know – as the serpent had promised them, “to be as Gods, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5).

These different orientations reflect basic disagreement over the role of either faith or reason in the knowledge of revelation, and the role of either divine grace or human agency in the promise of salvation. Given those well-known polarities, I would highlight three factors that are important for the present study. First, all Christians acknowledged the priority of divine reason or *logos*, as announced at the beginning of the gospel of John, and therefore the dispute between Catholics and Protestants centered on the limits

of human reason.¹ Second, the French academic “union of poetry and music” was based on a Platonic view of divination, but equally on Aristotelian reasoning from the ground up, with *logos* as the divinely bestowed means of elevating oneself, through an encyclopedic command of worldly knowledge, to a higher metaphysical plane.² Third, this program – a Neoplatonic synthesis of Platonic religion and Aristotelian natural philosophy – ran immediately afoul of a core Protestant tenet: that centuries of scholastic argument over the nature and extent of divine power, and on human access to divinity, had begged the question of original sin. The musical and poetic examples given below have been chosen for the ways that they highlight the Protestant view of the undiminished weight of sin and the subordinate position of human reason – again through a subversive approach to rhythm, meter, and *musique mesurée*.

Contrary to the doctrine of *harmonia mundi*, the preoccupation with vanity and universal instability encouraged a more linear view of history and eschatology, which Le Jeune’s settings of the *Octonaires* may also be heard to reflect in their asymmetrical rhythms and periods. History and eschatology have an obvious mutual relationship, in that perspectives on the end time will be informed by what has come before, or by prior revelation. In Le Jeune’s France, as I am the first to point out, these two subjects were

¹ John 1:1: “In the beginning was the Word [*Logos*], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” See section I below. In Romans 1:20, Paul holds that even before Christ’s revelation, God had revealed himself to anyone who made the effort to observe and study his creation: “For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity; so that they [the Gentiles] are inexcusable” (1:20). In order to deny an excuse to anyone who had lived before Christ, Paul appeals to natural reason and asserts the validity of natural theology. However, Paul appears to contradict himself in 1 Corinthians 2:14, arguing that God reveals himself to those of spiritual faith rather than reason: “But the sensual man perceiveth not these things that are of the Spirit of God; for it is foolishness to him: and he cannot understand, because it is spiritually examined.” With respect to revelation, therefore, Paul left the question of faith versus reason open to debate.

² See Yates, *The French Academies*, chapters 3-6.

also related to the concept of the *octonaire*, which, contrary to what has been suggested elsewhere, originated in the Neoplatonic tradition and not with Chantieu. Many sixteenth-century Christians assumed that historical time, the moving canvas of human civilizations, bore a necessary relationship to cosmological first principles: the chain of universal movements, the passage of time, and the sequence of historical events should be regarded as one and the same process. One's view of perpetual movement and change complemented one's view of history, and of present purpose and future salvation in view of history. Neoplatonists committed to *harmonia mundi* regarded history as a fundamentally cyclical process; and in fact, the term that Francesco Giorgi employs for the cyclical view is *octonaire*, which symbolizes man's devolution from and return to divinity, as well as the *constante inconstance* of the elements and celestial revolutions. By viewing history as a repeating cycle, the philosopher could take comfort in his role within a comprehensible and predictable system. Protestant theologians focused instead on the rebellious, "accidental" embrace of human reason (original sin), which had put everyone on an unpredictable linear path of vanity, which only the incomprehensible grace of God could remedy.³ A few of these theologians wrote *octonaires* to advance their linear point of view, which raises the possibility that they had borrowed the term ironically from Neoplatonic discourse.

These two historical and anthropological perspectives, one cyclical and the other linear, will be considered more fully in Chapter 5, as they relate to the different

³ Calvin distinguishes between two Aristotelian categories of human limitation, essential and accidental. Edward A. Dowey, Jr., *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), 4, writes that "Calvin always recognizes that man was at creation and essentially remains a finite creature and that in addition he is accidentally a sinful creature."

Neoplatonic and Calvinist uses of the *octonaire*. But it will be worth having them in mind here for the concluding discussion of how Antoine de Chandieu's poetry might have responded to swiftly evolving contemporary views on the physical scope, stability, and duration of the cosmos, which had begun to shift public opinion toward the linear view of history – toward the conclusion of *vanité et inconstance*. These issues will also invite another look at Democritus and Heraclitus, two early cosmologists with a popular role in the *vanitas* tradition, who could be found rhetorically useful for undermining Neoplatonic principles.

I. Reason, faith, the word, and original sin

In some of the *Octonaires*, Le Jeune appears to subvert the Neoplatonic embrace of human reason by using *musique mesurée* to represent sin, the permanent condition originally caused by an error of reason. To frame discussion of the music below in section II, it will first be worth comparing some Neoplatonic statements on reason with contrary statements by Luther, Calvin, and Chandieu on the priority of faith before reason. Again, the latter position was determined by looking at human nature through the prism of original sin. But for both sides, the role of the word – of *logos*, which is synonymous with reason – had to be acknowledged as the essential medium of religious truth, and indeed any truth.⁴ This is another reason why Le Jeune's selective use of

⁴ John Y. Campbell, *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, ed. Alan Richardson (New York: Macmillan, 1951), 284-85, writes that "[t]he word *logos* meant both 'word' and the thought or reason which is expressed in words. Greek philosophers, believing that the universe is essentially rational, used the term *logos* to denote the rational principle by which it is sustained. Jewish thinkers (probably influenced by Greek philosophy) reached a very similar conception of the divine 'Wisdom,' cf. Proverbs 8, especially verses 22-31, where the personification of Wisdom is more than merely a literary device. Later, Jewish thinkers writing in Greek combined the two conceptions, using by preference the term *logos*. Paul calls

homophony may be found significant, given the seamless way that academicians moved from *logos* to poetic meter to rhythmic unison, which I elaborated in Chapter 3.

First, we may take note of Marsilio Ficino's summary of the philosopher's purpose in his introduction to book III of *De triplica vita*. Ficino sought to understand the universe not only in order to know God, but also to improve his earthly condition:

The ancient philosophers...having very diligently sounded and investigated the powers of celestial bodies and the natures of inferior bodies, as though estimating the man who was not knowledgeable on his own behalf to be knowledgeable for naught, appear with good reason to have oriented their study toward the life that is principally acquired from heaven, judging (as I believe) that the elements and the things so composed would be understood for no reason, and the movements and influences of celestial bodies would be observed too recklessly, if the recognition that they [the microcosm and macrocosm] were conjoined did not somehow benefit his life and happiness. For it seems to me that it was primarily to benefit the present life.⁵

One could add to Ficino's thought here the Hermetic commandment to "know yourself and our father intellectually."⁶

Second, Giorgi, whose *De harmonia mundi* characterizes religion as a state of intellectual enlightenment, offers the following in defense of human reason as a means to semi-autonomous ascent:

Christ 'the wisdom of God' (1 Corinthians 1:24; cf. 1:30, Colossians 2:2f.) and 'the first-born of all creation,' in whom 'all things were created.' (Colossians 1:15ff.); it was therefore easy for the fourth evangelist to take the further step of identifying him with the Logos of contemporary Greek and Jewish thought."

⁵ Ficino/La Boderie, *Les Trois livres de la vie*, 87v-88r: "Les anciens Philosophes...ayans tres-diligemment sondé & recherché les puissances des corps celestes, & les natures des inferieurs, comme ils estimassent que l'homme estoit pour neant sçauant qui n'estoit sçauant pour soy-mesme, semblent à bon droit auoir rapporté tout leur recherche à ce que principalement ils s'aquissent du Ciel la vie, iugeans (comme ie croy) que pour neant les elemens & les choses qui en sont composees leur seroient cogneues, & que les mouuemens des corps celestes & leurs influences par trop temerairement auroient esté obseruez, si les vns & les autres à eux cogneus & ensemble conioints ne leur proffitoient quelquesfois à la vie & felicité. Or leur proffita cela (comme il me semble) premierement à la vie presente."

⁶ *Corpus Hermeticum*, XIII.22; quoted from *Hermetica: The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius*, trans. and ed. Brian P. Copenhaver (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 54.

But they mock the divine things that are hidden from them and that are more elevated [than sensory things], as though man is presumptuous to believe that he can lift himself with a haughty courage, whereas sacred things are revealed solely by the divine light. They hate every contention, demand silence, reject the excellent sages of the world, embrace and revel in the small and humble matters of the heart, and mock above all syllogisms and human reasoning, because the divinity has no beginning and nothing precedes him by which anything else could be proved. Against that, St. Denis the Areopagite [Pseudo-Dionysius] testifies that we are permitted to ascend to divine things, as the ray of divine discourse, which disposes itself and communicates only to pure thoughts and minds, will want to insinuate itself in us. Therefore if neophytes [*les estrangers*], having perceived the smallest spark of divine things, are compelled with all care and diligence to put aside whatever could obscure their understanding, with how much more effort and study must those entrusted with divine oracles and secret mysteries of the most elevated things seek to purify their minds?⁷

Both of these passages implicate the conflict between reason and faith, and both reinforce the Catholic view that salvation depended in part on individual agency (salvation through works). One would require faith to sustain one's drive toward the divine reunion that Giorgi describes, but just as clearly, one apprehended and pursued it through intellectual reasoning and autonomous effort. Divine reunion was made possible by the fact that the microcosm and macrocosm were bound together by divine reason, which God wanted humans to perceive. La Boderie expresses the same idea in verse near the beginning of his *Encyclic des secrets de l'éternité* (1570):

⁷ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 1-2: "Mais ceux cy se moquent des choses diuines qui leur sont cachees, lesquelles sont d'autant plus eleuées, comme l'homme cuide presomptueusement monter, & s'eleuer à vn courage hautain attendu que ces choses sacrees par la seule lumiere diuine demonstrees, ont en haine toute contention, desirent le silence, reiettent les superbes & sages du monde, embrassent & repaissent les petits & humbles de cœur, & se moquent du tout les sillogismes, & raisonnemens humains: par ce que la diuinité n'a point de commencement, & que rien ne la deuance, par quoy quelque autre chose peust estre prouuee. Delà vient que Sainct Denis Areopagite témoigne, qu'il nous est autant permis de monter aux choses diuines, comme le rayon des diuins discours se voudra insinuer en nous, qui se depart & communique seulement aux pensees & entendemens repurgez. Doncques si les estrangers à fin de percevoir la plus petite estincelle des choses diuines, auèques tout soin & diligence se sont parforcez de mettre en arriere ce qui peut offusquer l'entendement, combien plus de tout leur pouuoir & estude doiuent pourchasser le repurgement de l'esprit ceux en la garde & fiance desquels ont esté mis les diuins oracles & les secrets mysteres des choses treshautes?"

Mais où as-tu trouvé, en quel lieu as-tu pris
La Pensée & Raison, qui est de plus haut pris?
Si en toy Petit-monde, elle regne & abonde,
Regn' elle point plus grande en la grandeur du Monde?
Quoi? dedans l'univers tout sera-il trouvé
Excepté ce seul point par qui tout est prouvé?⁸

*But where did you find, in what place did you take
Reasoned thought, which is taken from on high?
If in you, little world, it reigns and abounds,
Does it not reign in the great world more grandly?
What? will you find in the universe everything
But this one point by which everything is proved?*

The Delphic precept of knowing oneself entailed knowing the rest of creation as well.

Against this notion, Calvin asserted that “the more useful the precept is, the more careful we must be not to use it preposterously, as we see certain philosophers have done”:

For they, when exhorting man to know himself, state the motive to be, that he may not be ignorant of his own excellence and dignity. They wish him to see nothing in himself but what will fill him with vain confidence, and inflate him with pride.⁹

Calvin speaks in similar fashion to Giorgi of a “seed of religion divinely sown in all,” which might then be nurtured, but he laments that “scarcely one in a hundred is found who cherishes [the seed] in his heart, and not one in whom it grows to maturity, so far is it from yielding fruit in its season.” He goes on to observe that “some lose themselves in

⁸ La Boderie, *L'Encyclie des secrets de l'éternité*, 32.

⁹ Jean Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2008), 12 (I.4.1).

superstitious observances” (Giorgi’s “secret mysteries” would certainly qualify) and he calls this vanity.¹⁰

The philosophers, according to Calvin and Luther, understood human vanity but had ignored the implications of original sin. Luther’s *De servo arbitrio* (1525) argues against the human ability to do good because of our subjection to sin and Satan. In the *Fourteen Consolations* (1519) he writes,

Nothing but vanity is every living man. To be a liar and a vanity [*mendacem et vanum*] is to be without truth and reality [*vacuum veritate et re*]. And to be without truth and reality is to be without God and to be nothing. This condition in turn is to be in hell and to be damned.¹¹

Calvin writes in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* that the philosophers, “being unacquainted with the corruption of nature, which is the punishment of revolt, erroneously confound two states of man which are very different from each other” – meaning their division of the soul into intellect and will, with the intellect able to know

¹⁰ Calvin, *Institutes*, 12 (I.4.1): “In saying that some fall away into superstition, I mean not to insinuate that their excessive absurdity frees them from guilt: for the blindness under which they labor is almost invariably accompanied with vain pride and stubbornness. Mingled vanity and pride appear in this, that when miserable men do seek after God, instead of ascending higher than themselves as they ought to do, they measure him by their own carnal stupidity, and neglecting solid inquiry, fly off to indulge their curiosity in vain speculation. Hence, they do not conceive of him in the character in which he is manifested, but imagine him to be whatever their own rashness has devised. This abyss standing open, they cannot move one footstep without rushing headlong to destruction.... Hence it is that their folly, the result not only of vain curiosity, but of licentious desire and overweening confidence in the pursuit of forbidden knowledge, cannot be excused.”

¹¹ Quoted in Neil Leroux, *Martin Luther as Comforter: Writings on Death* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 10 n19-20. Luther believed that God reveals only a part of man’s evil to him, because if he knew the whole he would collapse. E. P. Meijering, *Melanchthon and Patristic Thought: The Doctrines of Christ and Grace, the Trinity and the Creation* (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 6-7, writes that for Melanchthon (a theologian noted for his humanist orientation), “[t]he most important aspect of God’s will is that God wants to justify the sinner through Christ. It is constantly stressed by Melanchthon that here we find the difference between philosophy, which teaches that man can be just through his virtues, and the gospel which teaches that man is justified by God through His grace in Christ.” Further, “Melanchthon criticizes the Scholastics for focusing their attention on something which is at best a mere preparation for Christian faith, viz., the philosophical knowledge of God’s being and of moral virtues. The core condition of Christian faith is not, however, found by philosophical speculations, but is found in the revelation given in scripture.”

good and evil and the will able to choose between them.¹² Sin had robbed human nature of its prior “excellence” and “integrity,” and the philosophers had missed this fact entirely:

Hence the great darkness of philosophers who have looked for a complete building in a ruin, and fit arrangement in disorder. The principle they set out with was, that man could not be a rational animal unless he had a free choice of good and evil. They also imagined that the distinction between virtue and vice was destroyed, if man did not of his own counsel arrange his life. So far well, had there been no change in man. This being unknown to them, it is not surprising that they throw every thing into confusion. But those who, while they profess to be the disciples of Christ, still seek for free will in man, notwithstanding his being lost and drowned in spiritual destruction, labor under manifold delusion, making a heterogeneous mixture of inspired doctrine and philosophical opinions, and so erring as to both.¹³

This criticism could of course easily be applied to the Neoplatonic viewpoint under consideration here.

While they did not dismiss the utility of reason or the importance of moral choice, Luther and Calvin tethered their principles assiduously to Biblical scripture, rejecting metaphysical claims that could not be accommodated to their literal readings. They began at the beginning, with a literal rather than allegorical interpretation of Genesis – contrary to the approach taken by Augustine.¹⁴ It is therefore easy to ascertain the neutralizing effect of *musique mesurée* – a rational representation of *harmonia mundi* and a means

¹² Calvin, *Institutes*, 110 (I.15.7).

¹³ Calvin, *Institutes*, 111 (I.15.8).

¹⁴ Stephen Toulmin and June Goodfield, *The Discovery of Time* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 75, write that “[t]hroughout the high Middle Ages, the literal text of the Bible was only one of two unquestioned authorities, both of which were equally important. The second was the tradition of the Church, and a thousand years of Catholic teaching and allegorical interpretation had weakened any temptation to treat the words of Scripture in too literal-minded a way. But, in the eyes of the Protestant reformers, this Church tradition was thoroughly corrupted, and their ambition was to revive an older and supposedly purer Christian tradition. As a result, they were thrown back on the words of the Bible itself far more forcibly than Catholics had ever been. So Luther and his successors began to treat the early books of the Bible as an authoritative historical record to an extent scarcely contemplated in earlier centuries.”

thereby to divine ascent – on what Protestants saw as the permanent stain of original sin, both on the human condition and on the world, as Genesis 3 had made plain. Whereas Christians of every denomination could accept the Biblical and Augustinian accounts of original sin from a moral perspective, those committed to the Neoplatonic doctrine of ascent felt emboldened to take a more optimistic or settled cosmological view of it. They could appeal to St. Paul in support: “And as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22), a doctrine that entails the freely chosen acceptance of a divine gift. In *De harmonia mundi*, Giorgi announces that the universal harmony “has been restored by Christ to all things made broken and discordant by sin.” The task, therefore, is to bring “Man, the nexus and link of all things perfectly sonorous,” back into harmony “with everything that is connected within him, and, having the innate ability to consent to it, to be united with the Creator himself.”¹⁵ Ignorance of this task put one on the road to perdition.

Salvation entails purification, and both are meaningless constructs without the automatic condition of sin.¹⁶ Luther and Calvin agreed, against the Catholic Church, that

¹⁵ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 6: “Au second [Cantique] nous traicterons de la convenance de toutes choses avecques le Messie leur chef: & de l'accord qui par le mesme Christ a esté restitué en toutes choses par le peché brisees & discordantes. Au tiers, de l'Homme neud & lien de toutes choses parfaitement sonoreux, & du moyen de le ramener en Harmonie avecques toutes choses qui sont liées en luy, & avecques le Createur mesme, comme ayant puissance ennée pour conuenir ainçois pour estre vny avec luy.”

¹⁶ Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation*, 34-35, calls justification “the central theme of late medieval [i.e., Catholic] theology,” and points out that “in the medieval exegetical tradition the individual soul and the Church are interchangeable; therefore, individual and corporate purification (reformation) were one and the same concern.” For a detailed explanation of Protestant views on justification, see Berndt Hamm, *The Reformation of Faith in the Context of Late Medieval Theology and Piety*, ed. Robert J. Bast (Leiden: Brill, 2004), chapter 6.

salvation was to be gained by justification through grace alone and not through works.¹⁷

Far from a new idea, the need for justification through grace was one of Augustine's most important tenets, formulated in his attack against Pelagianism (a school that preached rigid moral autonomy and that rejected the doctrine of original sin).¹⁸ For Luther and Calvin, Pelagian impulses continued to thrive in the sixteenth century and had always corrupted pagan efforts in theology. The suspicion that they shared of Greco-Roman natural philosophy and cosmology mingled with their dislike of Thomist scholasticism, through which much of this knowledge had been transmitted.¹⁹

¹⁷ Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation*, 36-37: "The profound misery of the Church, the allegorical counterpart to the misery of the soul, is not to be purged as a precondition in order to restore the Church without spot or wrinkle."

¹⁸ For a summary of Augustine's anti-Pelagian crusade and its Reformation influence, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation* (New York: Viking, 2003), 103-11.

¹⁹ Luther's rejection of Thomism and participation in the Wittenberg movement to replace scholastic lectures, including instruction in the canonical *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, are well known; cf. the *Disputation against Scholastic Theology* (1517). Calvin attacks the Lombardian view of grace "offered equally and promiscuously to all" (*Institutes*, 161 [II.2.4]) and refutes the "sophistry of Thomas" on the doctrine of predestination (621 [III.22.9]). The problem with Aquinas centered on the dispute over justification, on which Reformers generally took the older Augustinian view. Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, 38-39, summarize the difference thus: "Augustine, who saw fallen humanity as powerless to save itself, argued that the grace needed for salvation was God's free and unearned gift, but Aquinas, influenced by Aristotelian notions of acquired virtue and other considerations, believed that God would save those people whose moral effort co-operated with an original infusion of divine grace. Because the major variations on the scholastic theology of grace left some place for human effort, Luther rejected them all in his doctrine of justification."

Their anti-scholastic stance puts Luther and Calvin in seemingly awkward intellectual company with certain humanists, such as Petrarch and Bruni, who were also outspoken critics of scholasticism. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 78-79, writes that "[i]n his rejection of scholastic theology and his emphasis on the authority of Scripture and the Fathers, even Luther...is in agreement with the humanists, whereas the attempt to combine the study of theology with an elegant Latin style and a thorough knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics characterizes not only many Italian humanists and Erasmus, but also Melanchthon, Calvin, Hooker, and the early Jesuits." Kristeller numbers Calvin and Melanchthon among the "Christian humanists," while "Luther presupposes certain scholarly achievements of humanism" – an allusion to his German translation of the Bible from the Hebrew and Greek (86-87). Kristeller also observes that "the attempt to interpret the epistles of Paul without the context and superstructure of scholastic theology was made by scholars like Ficino, Colet, and Erasmus before it had such powerful and decisive results in the works of Luther" (82). This reinforces Anthony Levi's argument on the relationship between Renaissance and Reformation; see Chapter 2, note 6. Kristeller warns against a "tendency...to exaggerate the opposition of the humanists to scholasticism" (100), noting that in Italy, "scholasticism originated toward the end of the thirteenth century, that is, about the same time as did Italian humanism, and both traditions developed side by side throughout the period of the Renaissance and even thereafter." The key

Both Calvin and Chandieu hold that the attempt to acquire knowledge must be conditioned by an awareness of original sin. Chandieu makes this point the centerpiece of his *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, to which his fifty *Octonaires* on vanity were originally appended.²⁰ For Chandieu, the “doctrine of the remission of sins” is a “true science” to which “all the sciences of the world cannot be compared”; indeed, “all of the human sciences are unlearned and ignorant if they are separated from this true science.”²¹ The “questions and subtleties of the philosophers” are mostly “spider webs, slender and constructed with seemingly marvelous artifice, but which are nevertheless so fragile that only a little wind is needed to carry them away.”²²

distinction, he finds, is “their locus and center in two different sectors of learning: humanism in the field of grammar, rhetoric, and poetry and to some extent in moral philosophy, scholasticism in the fields of logic and of natural philosophy” (113).

²⁰ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 11-12: “Vray est que le principal d’entreux pour la plus grande excellence de son sçavoir auoit accoustumé de dire qu’il ne sçauoit qu’une chose, c’est qu’il ne sçauoit rien [Socrates]: & toutesfois il faut confesser qu’encores ne sçauoit-il pas bien cela: veu qu’il ne cognoissoit pas quelle est la cause de l’ignorance & aueuglement des hommes: car les philosophes n’ont iamais cognu que c’est que le peché: quelle a esté son origine, quels sont ses effects, & combien espaisées sont les tenebres par lesquelles il a aueuglé l’entendement des hommes, & a amené sur eux ceste grande & horrible corruption en laquelle ils sont. Et mesmes tant s’en faut qu’ils ayent entendu ces choses, qu’au contraire ils ont pensé que la vraye sapience de l’homme estoit de chercher en soy mesme tout ce qui peut appartenir à la vraye felicité. Il ne se faut donques esbahir s’ils n’ont sçeu que c’est de la remission des pechez veu que le peché mesmes a esté plustost senti d’eux que bien cognu: comme aussi la vertu a esté cerchee par eux: mais non pas trouuee. Ce qui a fait que debattans tousiours entre eux par longues & infinies disputes pour sçavoir que c’est de bien & heureusement viure, ils n’ont iamais ni bien ni heureusement vescu.” Cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, 147 (II.1.1): “But self-knowledge consists in this, first, When reflecting on what God gave us at our creation, and still continues graciously to give, we perceive how great the excellence of our nature would have been had its integrity remained, and, at the same time, remember that we have nothing of our own, but depend entirely on God, from whom we hold at pleasure whatever he has seen it meet to bestow; secondly, When viewing our miserable condition since Adam’s fall, all confidence and boasting are overthrown, we blush for shame, and feel truly humble.”

²¹ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 7-8: “Or puis qu’ainsi est que la doctrine de la remission des pechez est principalement enseignee en ce Psalme (comme nous le verrons cy apres) il s’ensuit que ceste doctrine est une vraye science, en laquelle nous deuons singulierement tascher d’estre enseignez, comme estant telle que toutes les sciences du monde ne luy peuuent estre accomparees.”

²² Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 8-9: “la pluspart des questions & subtilitez des philosophes à des toilles d’araignes bien desliees, & qui semblent estre faictes d’un merueilleux artifice: & toutesfois sont tellement legeres, qu’il ne faut qu’un peu de vent pour les emporter.”

Calvin and Luther both rejected the possibility of absorbing religious truths absent faith, which is a gift from God and not a self-determined virtue.²³ Giorgi and La Boderie, despite their constant appeals to the intellect, could have agreed on principle as men of faith.²⁴ But Protestants were more concerned with limiting the purview of reason, which could not supersede predestination, let alone effect a spiritual reunion with God in the present life. The reason contained in Biblical scripture was necessary but not sufficient; ultimately, human purpose was sustained by faith, which in a fallen world was present only by the grace of God. It would be fair to say that the doctrine of *harmonia mundi* depends on reason more than faith – that is, on reconciling the observed universe with an *a priori* conception of divinity. While scientific or empirical observations were frequently distorted by the natural philosopher’s desire to align them with Platonic ideals (“For the creation demonstrates the design of the Creator”²⁵), this does not alter the fact that observation of the natural world was considered essential. The representation of

²³ In the treatise *On Christian Liberty* (1520), Luther writes that faith “unites the soul with Christ, as a bride is united with her bridegroom. By this mystery, as the Apostle teaches, Christ and the soul become one flesh.... Christ is full of grace, life and salvation. The soul is full of sins, death and damnation. Now let faith come between them: then sins, death and damnation will be Christ’s, while grace, life and salvation will be the soul’s; for if Christ is the bridegroom, he must take upon himself the things which are his bride’s and bestow upon her the things that are his”; quoted in Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation*, 36. For a comprehensive statement of Calvin’s views on faith, see his *Instruction in Faith* (1537), trans. and ed. Paul T. Fuhrmann (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992).

²⁴ E.g., Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 312: “Au premier iour la lumiere fut faict: & nous retournans à Dieu il est necessaire que ceste lumiere apparaisse, qui illumine tout homme venant en ce Monde: & encor la lumiere de la foy, qui eft le commencement pour paruenir à Dieu.” The mention here of faith only after the notion of enlightenment gives it the character of an afterthought.

²⁵ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 16: “Or l’ouurage demonstre le desseing de l’Ouurier”; cf. La Boderie, “Advertissement” for *L’Encyclic des secrets de l’eternité*, 4: “Deslors ie fus eguillonné d’embrasser estroitement & autant que mon aage pouuoit porter, l’estude de la philosophie; ne me proposant autre fin presque en tout le discours des disciplines que gloutement ie deuorois, sinon de rechercher tout ce qui faisoit à la preuue naturelle des Articles de nostre Foy, & de reconnoistre de plus en plus la Toute-puissance, Sagesse, & Bonté de l’Estant eternel par la consideration de ses Oeuures admirables.”

harmonia mundi through *musique mesurée* likewise depended on reason: as I discussed in Chapter 3, ascent to the *fureur poétique* and higher mysteries began from a rational, Aristotelian basis.

Calvin linked the very possibility of faith to the communication of the divine word. In his Commentary on Acts, he writes that “faith is not conceived by the bare observation of heaven and earth, but by the hearing of the word. It follows from this that men cannot be brought to the saving knowledge of God except by the direction of the word.”²⁶ In the *Institutes*, he refers to “an inseparable relation between faith and the word, [which] can no more be disconnected from each other than rays of light from the sun”:

Wherefore, if faith declines in the least degree from the mark at which it ought to aim, it does not retain its nature, but becomes uncertain credulity and vague wandering of mind. The same word is the basis on which it rests and is sustained. Declining from it, it falls. Take away the word, therefore, and no faith will remain.²⁷

Faith is instilled along with the word by the Holy Spirit.²⁸ An essential aspect of Calvin’s theology, then, was the access to a divinely bestowed truth beyond the reach of language, yet communicated by necessity through language. In a similar way, Plato accepted on

²⁶ Quoted in Charles Partee, *Calvin and Classical Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 17; cf. Calvin, Com. Acts, 14.17.

²⁷ Calvin, *Institutes*, 358 (III.2.6).

²⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, 33 (I.7.4): “For as God alone can properly bear witness to his own words, so these words will not obtain full credit in the hearts of men, until they are sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who spoke by the mouth of the prophets, must penetrate our hearts, in order to convince us that they faithfully delivered the message with which they were divinely entrusted.”

faith the existence of eternal, unchanging forms, which he believed were accessible only through *logos*.²⁹

The best-known Christian use of *logos* occurs at the beginning of St. John's gospel, an originally Greek text with a Hellenistic orientation:

In the beginning was the Word [*logos*], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3)

In his Hermetic commentaries, Francois de Foix-Candale translates this verse using *raison* for *logos*. He defines reason as "la grande vertu divine," which preceded original sin and which Christ had restored to humanity.³⁰ Giorgi, in his usual syncretic manner, links the Christian appropriation of *logos* to Pythagorean harmony:

Because in the Word all things are numbered and balanced, and because [universal] Harmony depends on number and weight, we may readily conclude that all things acquire their harmony by the same Word, by which the concurring degrees of things are numbered and distinguished.³¹

As already noted, Giorgi viewed Christ's redemption of original sin through the same lens of universal harmony.

²⁹ Plato's forms were to be contemplated by a purified intellect – not located beyond the domain of intellect but synonymous with it. See Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Volume I. Greece and Rome* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 163-206.

³⁰ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 50: "En ceste façon l'effect estant imprimé en l'homme, suiuant la volonté, l'homme s'est trouué habiter en la forme materiele, corruptible, pleine de labeur, & priuée de la grande vertu diuine, raison: laquelle raison luy a esté randue par Iesus Christ, Fils eternel de Dieu le Pere, nommé par saint Iean de ce mesme nom, disant, Au commencement estoit raison, & raison deuers Dieu, & Dieu estoit raison. C'est la vraye raison eternele, sapience de Dieu, conseruant toutes choses par mesmes vertus, que le saint verbe."

³¹ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 353: "Puisque dans le Verbe toutes choses sont nombrées & balancées, & que l'Harmonie deppend du nombre & du poids, nous pouuons aisément conclurre que toutes choses acquierent leur harmonie par le mesme Verbe, dans lequel les degrez concordans des choses sont nombrez & distinguez."

Giorgi makes only a handful of references to original sin in a treatise running over eight hundred pages. His perspective on sin is characteristic of his Neoplatonic orientation: he regards it primarily as an intellectual disruption, an abettor of ignorance.³² He nowhere raises the subject for scholastic inquiry, or devotes to it one of the hundreds of subheadings that divide his work. His numerological interpretation of human history, which I will discuss in Chapter 5, neglects to acknowledge the impact on this trajectory of original sin. Giorgi holds that the wise have an “innate ability” to bring themselves “back into Harmony with everything,” even “with the Creator himself.”

Foix-Candale in his Hermetic commentaries has much more to say than Giorgi about sin, but he too makes a clear distinction between the material condition of humanity before and after the redemption of Christ, who restored access to spiritual perfection:

Behold therefore the difference that we find between the man reborn and glorified by Jesus Christ and the first man and his descendants. It is that the regenerated man no longer has, by virtue of his materiality, any temptation or inclination toward the sin that could pervert or perturb his decisions: as we see that the first man had in his materiality, due to the imperfection that had been brought into matter by his separation from God...which led to the perturbation of his judgment and free will, and which could not befall the regenerated man glorified by resurrection.... The good Lord has given us a rebirth, which his son – God and man – brought to us *in this life* in order to lead us to the perfection of which Hermes sometimes speaks.³³ (my italics)

³² E.g. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 487: “Mais d’autant que nous somme plustost freres de Pere que de mere, & que sans doubte nous sommes sortis d’iceluy mesme, mais non pas en mesme perfection & degré: Ce que toutesfois nous ne cognoissons gueres, parce que le peché des premiers parens nous a obscurcy l’entendement de si epaisses tenebres, que nous en sommes tombez en la peine de l’ignorance & de l’oubly.”

³³ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 50: “Voila donc la difference, qui se trouuera entre l’homme rené, & glorifié par Jesus Christ, & l’homme premier, & sa suite. C’est que le regeneré n’aura par sa matiere, aucune tentation, ou inclination à peché, qui puisse peruertir, ou perturber son arbitre: comme nous voyons que l’homme premier auoit en sa matiere, à cause de l’imperfection qu’elle auoit trouué en la separation de Dieu, la laissant aler à bass, sans raison, ou essence, demeurant en luy: dont luy est venu la perturbation de son iugement, & election d’arbitre, qui ne pourra aduenir à l’homme regeneré & glorifié par resurrection.... [L]e bon Seigneur nous a accordé vne re-naissance, que son Filz, Dieu & homme, nous a apporté en ceste vie, pour nous conduire à la perfection, de laquelle Mercure parlera quelque fois....”

Jeanne Harrie observes that for Foix-Candale, “the salvific act was not redemption in the sense of an atonement for sin but a spiritual rebirth or restoration.”³⁴ Foix-Candale predicates the attainment of divine perfection on faith that is self-actuated through charity, and hence on the “liberal arbitre” or “franc vouloir” of believers – in other words, on salvation through works.³⁵ His account of the *octonaire* is, like Giorgi’s, central to his idea of salvation, and will be discussed as well in the next chapter.

II. Using *musique mesurée* to represent sin

The three *Octonaires* in mode 6 (Hypophrygian) together form a commentary on the wages of sin. The first, addressed to the *Mondain* or worldly man, speaks to the intellectual error – portrayed as a state of darkness and blindness – that results from ignoring the light of God’s word. The word is symbolized by the *flambeau* (torch or lantern) that illuminates the conscience:

³⁴ Harrie, “François Foix de Candale,” 111. Cf. Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 50.

³⁵ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 49: “Car Iesus Christ ne prie pas pour tous ceux à qui il a presanté salut, qu’ils le reçoient, combien que Dieu luy aye acordé le salut, pour tout l’humain lignage, c’est à dire luy à acordé, qu’il puisse donner salut à tout l’humain lignage, mais Iesus Christ ne voulant prier aucun, ny l’empescher de son liberal arbitre, prie seulement pour les siens, qui sont veritablement ceux, qui de franc vouloir croiront en luy, comme le bon seigneur le tesmoigne en sa dernière transaction, qu’il fist avecques Dieu son Pere, concluant la principale fin, & occasion de son aduenement, Je ne prie pas pour le monde, ains pour ceux que tu m’as acordé, de tant qu’ilz sont tiens, c’estoient ses Apostres, & disciples: disant peu apres, Je ne prie seulement pour eux, ains pour ceux, qui par leur parole, croiront en moy.” Harrie, “François Foix de Candale,” 111, writes that “[u]nlike Protestant theologians who placed salvation or justification in the realm of divine action, Foix-Candale reaffirmed the Catholic position in which the individual was granted a real and substantial role in the salvific process. Yet he diverged radically from Catholic tradition in his understanding of the redemptive method. The central act of redemption for both Catholic and Protestant was the historically unique event of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection. No parallel for the Christian drama can be found in the *Pimander*. Reflecting this, Foix-Candale’s commentaries offered an explanation of the redemption in which the sacrificial act of the incarnate God is largely ignored.”

Quand la face noire des Cieux
 Dérobe le jour à nos yeux:
 Je représente à ma mémoire
 Une autre nuit beaucoup plus noire:
 C'est quand ne voulant estre instruit,
 Mondain tu redoubles ta nuit,
 Et d'un aveuglement extreme
 Tu esteins ton flambeau toy-mesme.³⁶

*When heaven's dark face
 Steals the day from our eyes,
 I represent in my memory
 Another much blacker night:
 When you, Mondain, redouble your night
 By not wanting to be taught,
 And from an extreme blindness
 Extinguish your own flame.*

Françoise Bonali-Fiquet notes that this *octonaire* recalls the frequent use of the lamp metaphor in the Psalms, including one of the best known instances in Psalm 119, the *psaume octonaire*: “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (verse 105). She also links the metaphor to Chandieu’s *Meditations* on Psalm 32.³⁷ I will address the theological link between Chandieu’s *Octonaires* and Psalm 119 in Chapter 5.

³⁶ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:62-64.

³⁷ Chandieu, *Octonaires* (ed. Bonali-Fiquet), 47: “Dans cet octonaire (tout particulièrement aux vers 5-8) nous retrouvons les mêmes métaphores que dans les *Méditations sur le psalme XXXII*: ‘Mais hélas! tant s’en faut que nous cerchions Dieu, que lors mesme que Dieu nous cherche, nous nous enfuions de l’autre costé. Voyci Dieu qui ayant *allumé* au milieu de nous le flambeau de sa parole, nous cherche, nous appelle, et nous presente nostre salut: cependant nous faisons les *sourds*, et nous tenons comme cachez dans les *tenebres de notre ignorance*, et de nos affections terriennes’.... La métaphore de la lampe pour indiquer la parole de Dieu est fréquente dans les Psaumes. Relisons par exemple le Psaume XVIII, 20: ‘C’est toi, Yahvé, ma lampe, mon Dieu éclaire ma ténèbre’; et le Psaume CXIX, 105, où la parole de Dieu est ainsi définie: ‘Une lampe sur mes pas, ta parole. Une lumière sur ma route’.”

The second poem is likewise addressed to the *Mondain*, whose embrace of sin leads to eternal death and suffering:

Mondain qui vis et meurs au Monde perissable,
Miserable est ta vie, et ta mort miserable:
Car ta vie te tue et te tient attaché
Des liens de la mort, salaire du péché.
Et du mourant pecheur la mort est immortelle:
D'autant plus perissant qu'il perit sans perir,
Ainsi vivant, mourant, Mondain ta peine est telle
Que ta vie est sans vivre, et ta mort sans mourir.³⁸

*Mondain, who lives and dies in the perishable world,
Miserable is your life, and miserable your death;
For your life kills you, and attaches you
To the bonds of death, the wages of sin.
And to the dying sinner, death is immortal,
Dying so much that he dies without dying.
Dying by living thus, Mondain, your pain is such
That your life is lifeless, and your death deathless.*

In light of the preceding poem, we may infer that the sin at issue here constitutes an error of reason.

The third *octonaire* in mode 6 attains an exceptional degree of melancholy. The poem is by Simon Goulart:

As-tu mis en oubliance,
Homme ta brutalle enfance?
Riant, ose-tu chanter
Les erreurs de ta jeunesse?
Et courant vers ta vieillesse,
Voudrois-tu bien plaisanter?
Pleure donc, puisque ta vie

³⁸ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:65-68.

Est à tous maux asservie.³⁹

*Have you forgotten,
Man, your brutal childhood?
Laughing, do you dare to sing
Of the errors of youth?
And racing toward old age,
Does it please you to jest?
Weep then, for your life
Was the servant of every ill.*

This poem lends itself to a metaphorical reading along with the literal. The literal reading, that we are ill-advised to greet old age cheerfully after a sinful life, may be reinterpreted in a historical sense as an allusion to original sin, the error of humanity's youth, which led to a *brutalle enfance* and which the faithful are taught to see as a present burden.

In all three chansons, the verses singled out for homophonic treatment suggest that the style is being used to represent the fallibility of human reason. As a union of poetry and music, homophony gives priority to the word, which here denotes the medium of proper instruction while supporting a message against the rationale of *musique mesurée*. In the first chanson, Le Jeune proceeds in imitative counterpoint until the phrase, "Et d'un aveuglement extreme":

³⁹ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:69-71.

Example 4.1: “Quand la face noire des Cieux” (VI.1), mm. 18-53

plus noi - re. C'est quand ne voulant estre in - struit, quand ne voulant
plus noi - re. C'est quand ne vou - lant estre in - struit, ne vou -
plus noi - re. C'est quand ne voulant
plus noi - re. C'est quand ne vou -

estre in - struit, Mon - dain tu re - dou - bles ta nuit, Mon - dain tu re -
_lant estre in - struit, Mon - dain tu re - dou - bles ta nuit, Mon - dain tu re -
estre in - struit, Mon - dain tu re -
_lant estre in - struit, Mon - dain tu re -

_dou - bles ta nuit, Et d'un a - veu - glement ex - tre - me Tu e -
_dou - bles ta nuit, Et d'un a - veu - glement ex - tre - me Tu e -
_dou - bles ta nuit, Et d'un a - veu - glement ex - tre - me Tu e -
_blesta nuit, Et d'un a - veu - gle - ment ex - tre - me Tu e -

The image displays a musical score for a chanson in the *musique mesurée* style. It consists of two systems, each with four staves. The lyrics are in French and are written below the staves. The first system's lyrics are:
 _steinston flam _ beau toy_mes me, Et d'un a _ veu _ gle _ ment
 _steins ton flam _ beau toy_mes me, Et d'un a _ veu _ gle _ ment
 _steinston flam _ beau toy _ mes _ me, Et d'un a _ veu _ gle _ ment
 _steins ton flam _ beau toy_mes me, Et d'un a _ veu _ gle _ ment
 The second system's lyrics are:
 ex _ tre _ me Tu e _ steinston flambeau toy_mes me.
 ex _ tre _ me Tu e _ steins ton flam _ beau toy_mes me.
 ex _ tre _ me Tu e _ steinston flambeau toy _ mes _ me.
 ex _ tre _ me Tu e _ steins ton flam _ beau toy_mes me.
 The notation includes various note values (minims, crotchets, quavers) and rests, characteristic of the *musique mesurée* style.

The *musique mesurée* style with its didactic premise is attached to the “extreme blindness” that results from a failure to receive the proper instruction (“C’est quand ne voulant estre instruit”).

Periodic asymmetry can be found throughout the *Octonaires*, and the emphasis in this chanson on units of three, five, and seven is therefore typical. At the beginning, which is set in what I have termed imitative split homophony,⁴⁰ the lower two voices enter after five minims and the entire phrase lasts for seven semibreves:

⁴⁰ See Example 1.9 (Chapter 1, section I).

Example 4.2: “Quand la face noire des Cieux” (VI.1), mm. 1-11

Contralto
 *

Tenor grave
 **

Baryton

Basse profonde

Quand la fa - ce noi - re, la fa - ce noi - re
 Quand la fa - ce noi re, Quand la fa - ce noi -
 Quand la fa - ce noi -
 Quand la fa - ce noi -

des Cieux Dé - ro - be le jour à nos yeux à nos yeux:
 - re des Cieux Dé - ro - be le jour à nos yeux, à nos yeux:
 - re des Cieux Dé - ro - be le jour à nos yeux:
 - re des Cieux Dé - ro - be le jour à nos yeux:

The phrase that follows, “Dérobe le jour à nos yeux,” will probably be heard as a group of three minims followed by a group of five, rather than an even divide of four plus four. Le Jeune then disrupts the listener’s sense of a minim pulse on “Je représente,” which begins on an upbeat and is imitated after three semi-minims:

Example 4.3: “Quand la face noire des Cieux” (VI.1), mm. 12-24

Je re-pre-sente à ma memoire Une au-tre nuit beau-coup

Je re-presen-te à ma me-moire Une au-tre nuit beau-coup

Je re-pre-sen-te à ma memoi-re Une au-tre nuit beau-coup

Je re-presen-te à ma me-moire Une au-tre nuit beau-coup

plus noi-re. C'est quand ne voulant estre in-struit, quand ne voulant

plus noi-re. C'est quand ne vou-lant estre in-struit, ne vou-

plus noi-re. C'est quand ne voulant

plus noi-re. C'est quand ne vou-

Though the dotted minim pulse here (mm. 12-13) is fleeting, the return to a minim pulse is unsettled by syncopation. The eight semibreves of “Je represente à ma memoire / Une autre nuit beaucoup plus noire” thus avoid a sense of regular periodicity. Like many other phrases in the cycle, this one seems to extrude itself aimlessly, with the cadence arrival on “plus noire” feeling arbitrarily placed. The clarity afforded by homophony is textual rather than metric, as Le Jeune seldom forgoes syncopation.

In the second chanson, Le Jeune turns to homophony for “Car ta vie te tue et te tient ataché / Des liens de la mort, salaire du peché.” Periodic asymmetry elsewhere in

the chanson is again pervasive, and the sense of pulse is again obscured by layered syncopations. The opening contralto-tenor duet leads to an awkward, offbeat Phrygian cadence after seven semibreves (on “perissable”). The subsequent phrase, “Miserable est ta vie, et ta mort miserable,” also lasts for seven semibreves:

Example 4.4: “Mondain qui vis et meurs au Monde perissable” (VI.2), mm. 1-37

Contralto
*

Tenor grave
**

Baryton

Basse profonde

Mon - dain qui vis et meurs au Mon -

Mon - dain qui vis et meurs au Mon - de pe -

- de pe - ris - sa - ble, Mi - se - rable est ta vi - e,

- ris - sa - ble, Mi - se - ra - ble est ta vi - e, Et ta mort

Mi - se - ra - ble est ta vi - e, Et ta mort mi -

Et ta mort

Et ta mort mi - se - ra - ble Car ta vi - e te tue et te

mi - se - ra - ble, mi - se - ra - ble: Car ta vi - e te tue et te

- se - ra ble, mi - se - ra - ble: Car ta vi - e te tue et te

mi - se - ra - ble: Car ta vi - e te tue et te

tient a - ta - ché Des li - ens de la mort, sa - lai - re
 tient a - ta - ché Des li - ens de la mort, sa - lai - re
 tient a - ta - ché Des li - ens de la mort, sa - lai - re
 tient a - ta - ché Des li - ens de la mort, sa - lai - re

du pe - che. Et du mou - rant pe - cheur la
 du pe - ché. Et du mourant pe - cheur la
 du pe - ché. Et du mou - rant pe - cheur la mort, la
 du pe - ché. Et du mou - rant pe - cheur la mort est im -

mort est im - mor - tel - le: D'au - tant plus pe - ris - sant
 mort est im - mor - tel - le: D'au - tant plus pe - ris - sant
 mort est im - mor - tel - le: D'au - tant plus pe - ris - sant
 - mor - tel - le D'au - tant plus pe - ris - sant



Following the homophonic interlude (“Car ta vie...”), we hear another group of seven (“Et du mourant pecheur la mort est immortele”), then another brief switch back to homophony (“D’autant plus perissable qu’il perit sans perir”). The persistent syncopation continues with “Ainsi vivant, mourant.”

In this poem, Chandieu links the “Monde perissable” to the unrepentant sinner’s death, which, in a literal translation, is “so much of a perishing that he perishes without perishing.” The phrase is typically Calvinist in its paradoxical view of death – a punishment for the damned but a reward for the saved.⁴¹ The third chanson plays in similar fashion with perspectives on youth and old age. To outlive a state of immaturity is no reason to celebrate or forget; false pleasure gives way to true remorse.

⁴¹ In a poem on the death of his daughter Marie, Chandieu expresses himself similarly:

Mais la vie est proffitable
A qui congnoist, comme il faut
Que la vie est miserable,
A fin d’aspirer plus haut:
Et qui, nageant, void le port
D’une bienheureuse mort,
Qui de la mort le deliure
Pour eternellement vivre.

Quoted in Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 223.

Example 4.5: "As-tu mis en oubliance" (VI.3), mm. 1-25

Contralto
*

Tenor haute-contre
**

Baryton

As - tu mis en ou_bli - ance, en ou_bli - ance, As - tu mis en

As - tu mis en ou_bli - an - ce, As - tu

As - tu mis

ou - bli - an - ce, Hom - me ta

mis en ou - bli - an - ce, Hom - me ta bru -

en ou_bli - ance, en ou - bli - an - ce, Hom - me ta bru - talle

bru - talle en - fan - ce? Ri - ant,

tal - le, brutalle en - fan - ce? Ri - ant, o - se - tu

en - fan - ce, bru - talle en - fan - ce? Ri - ant, o -

o - se - tu chan - ter Les er - reurs de ta jeu -

chan - ter, chan ter Les er - reurs de ta jeu -

- se - tu chan - ter Les er - reurs de ta jeu -



Le Jeune represents the “errors of youth” with one of the cycle’s most striking changes from imitative polyphony to homophony. He uses a markedly slower rhythm and sees fit to restate the verse a fifth higher. The chromatic voice leading also bears mentioning. The raised second scale degree (F-sharp) could be gesture toward escaping the Phrygian parameter of a semitone between the first and second degrees, which may be heard to exert a kind of downward pressure. Susan McClary has suggested that in late sixteenth-century madrigals in the Phrygian mode, the raised second degree occurs “with increasing frequency, but it always qualifies as a gesture outside the bounds of rational discourse.”⁴² The case at hand would appear to support this view, as Le Jeune avoids F-sharp for the remainder of the chanson. Its isolated occurrence here reinforces the connection between youthful error, the failure to escape original sin – supported by the Phrygian mode’s tendency to remain “paralyzed on its species boundaries”⁴³ – and the *musique mesurée* style, which is rhetorically discarded after this statement, and on which Le Jeune might have gained a certain moral perspective in his old age.

⁴² McClary, *Modal Subjectivities*, 210.

⁴³ McClary, *Modal Subjectivities*, 209.

Along with these poems' fixation on individual mortality, we may note occasional references to cosmic mortality – for example, to the *monde perissable* in the second chanson in mode 6. Both the sinner's life and that of the universe itself run on borrowed time. Another such reference occurs in the second *octonaire* in mode 5 (Phrygian):

Quand le Jour, fils du Soleil
 Nous découvre à son resveil
 La montagne coulourée
 D'une lumiere dorée,
 Je remés en ma pensée
 Le beau jour d'Eternité,
 Quand la nuit sera passée,
 Et ce monde aura esté.⁴⁴

*When the day, child of the sun,
 Reveals to us at his waking
 The mountains colored
 By a golden light,
 I recall to my mind
 The beautiful day of Eternity,
 When the night will be over,
 And this world will have passed.*

The paradoxical contrast here of day and night recalls that of youth and old age in “As-tu mis en oubliance.” The daylight uncovers the world's beauty, but the golden image we see is as night compared to the beauty of eternity. After beginning in duple meter, Le Jeune switches abruptly to homophonic triple meter for the line, “Nous découvre à son resveil” – the act, that is, of revealing the world's natural beauty to us.

⁴⁴ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:56-59.

Example 4.6: “Quand le jour, fils du Soleil” (V.2), mm. 1-14

Soprane grave *

Tenor haute-contre **

Tenor grave ***

Basse ****

Quand le jour, fils du So-leil, Quand le jour, fils du So-leil, Nous dé-couvre à son res-veil. La mon-ta-gne cou-lou-ré-e.

Le Jeune’s setting of the words “Le beau jour d’Eternité” is perhaps rhetorically significant for coming close to but avoiding pure homophony:

Example 4.7: “Quand le jour, fils du Soleil” (V.2), mm. 20-30

-mie-re do-ré-e Ie re-mes en ma pen - sé-e, ma pen -
 -re do - ré-e Ie re-més en ma pen - - sé-e, en ma
 -re do - ré-e Ie re-més, Ie re - més en ma
 -re do - ré-e Ie re-més en ma pen -

- sé-e Le beau jour d'E - ter - - ni - té, Quand
 pen-sé-e, Le beau jour d'E - ter - - ni - té,
 pen - sé-e Le beau jour d'E - ter - - ni - té,
 - sé-e Le beau jour d'E - ter - - ni te,

The elongation of “Eternité” is clearly meant to be illustrative, but Le Jeune would appear careful to put the second tenor’s words out of sync with the other voices. The rhythm, moreover, does not follow the typical 2:1 convention of *musique mesurée*.

The chanson has one other homophonic passage, for “Et ce monde aura esté”:

Example 4.8: “Quand le jour, fils du Soleil” (V.2), mm. 31-40

la nuit se - ra pas - sé - e, se - ra pas - sé - e, pas -

Quand la nuit se - ra pas - sé - e, se - ra pas - sé - e, pas -

Quand la nuit se - ra pas - sé -

Quand la nuit se - ra pas -

- sé - e, Et ce monde au - ra e - sté.

- sé - e, Et ce mon - de au - ra e - sté. Quand la nuit

- e, Et ce mon - de au - ra e - sté. Quand la

- se - e, Et ce monde au - ra e - sté.

Note that the homophony begins to disintegrate even before the phrase is over: the words “aura esté” are not exactly aligned in all four voices. Le Jeune then repeats these two lines (“Quand la nuit sera passée / Et ce monde aura esté”) but chooses to treat the second half differently by revisiting triple meter, again making the transition abruptly (on the second syllable of “passée”). But unlike in the first instance of triple meter (Example 4.6), here he avoids pure homophony:

Example 4.9: “Quand le jour, fils du Soleil” (V.2), mm. 41-51

The musical score consists of two systems, each with four staves. The first system (mm. 41-51) is in 3/4 time. The lyrics are: "Quand la nuit se - ra pas - sé e, se - ra pas - sé e, Quand la nuit se - ra pas - sé e, nuit se - ra pas - sé e, se - ra pas sé e, Quand la nuit se - ra pas - sé e,". The second system (mm. 52-57) is in 3/4 time. The lyrics are: "Et ce monde au - ra e - sté. Et ce monde au - ra e - sté. Et ce monde au - ra e - sté, au - ra e - sté. Et ce monde au - ra e - sté." The score uses a variety of note values, including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, and rests, to create a rhythmic pattern that emphasizes the homophony of the lyrics.

Homophony has thus been used to highlight two phrases, the first in triple meter and the second in syncopated duple meter. The first instance – “Nous decouvre à son resveil” – represents our awareness of natural beauty in daylight, which the poem goes on to characterize as a mere shadow of eternal beauty. The light given by the sun, a symbol of Apollo the god of reason, may be likened to human or worldly reason, which provides only a glimmer of divine reason (“Le beau jour d’Eternité”). The second instance of homophony – the initial statement of “Et ce monde aura esté” – represents the end of the world. The two phrases are thus rhetorically linked by homophony but differentiated by

meter. Without the second iteration of “Et ce monde aura esté,” there would be little to make of this metric contrast. But the restatement of this line in triple meter, yet without resorting again to homophony, could mean to suggest the latter style’s inability to link the natural world to the eternal. A Christian could feel certain that a blessed eternal day (the *septenaire* or Sabbath age) would follow after the world’s end, yet it was not a day that everyone would be allowed to enjoy. The notion that “ce monde aura esté,” that this world will have passed, should evoke two very different possible outcomes for the hopeful sinner. Perhaps Le Jeune has alluded to one outcome by using homophony and the other by abandoning it. Because time only moves in one direction, the second outcome necessarily replaces the first, which remains tied to the error of mistaking human reason for divine.

III. *Le monde perissable, le vuide des cieux, and two problematic pre-Socratics*

Catholics and Protestants alike shared an expectation that the universe, however perfect, must either come to an end or be made anew. An *octonaire* by Joseph Du Chesne (not set by Le Jeune) contains the verse, “O Monde, que tu dois toymesme te destruire” (O world, that you must destroy yourself);⁴⁵ a *cantique* by Joachim du Bellay (a Catholic member of the *Pléiade*) laments, “Et toutesfois ces grands œuvres parfaicts, / Que ta main sainte heureusement a faicts, / Doivent perir...” (And nonetheless, these great and perfect works / That your holy hand has happily made / Must perish...).⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Du Chesne, *Octonaire XI*, in *La Morocosmie* (ed. Gibert), 144.

⁴⁶ Joachim du Bellay, “Deux Hymnes chrestiens,” in *Les Cantiques du S^r de Maisonne fleur Gentil-homme François* ([Paris]: Antoine Chuppin, 1581), 151. Simon Goulart, *Commentaires sur la Sepmaine*, 88v-89r,

Jacques de Gheyn's *Humana vana* gives an immediate sense of the *monde perissable* invoked by Chandieu. Its soap bubble, while palpable in its realism, appears unnaturally large and weirdly stationary, ready to burst at any second from brushing against the walls of the alcove:



Figure 4.1: Jacques de Gheyn II, *Humana vana* (1603)

indicates an ongoing debate about the perishability of the universe: “Au reste, quant au definement des cieux, mis en auant par l’auteur, pour refuter l’erreur de ceux qui ont estimé que les cieux n’ont eu ne commencement ni fin, i’adiousteray ici ce qu’a escrit vn excellent Theologien de nostre temps, du changement & ruine des cieux. Au Pseau. 102. il est dit que les cieux periront. Les expositeurs (dit-il) interpretent cela en diuers sens. Aucuns le prennent pour vn simple changement, à sçauoir encor que les cieux ne soyent du tout aneantis, que toutesfois l’alteration de leur naturel consumera ce qu’il y a de corruptible en eux, tellement qu’ils deuiendront cieux nouveaux. Les autres y suppleent ceste condition, s’il plaist ainsi à Dieu: estimans absurde de dire que les cieux soyent suiets à corruption: mais il n’est pas besoin de mettre en auant ceste condition qui obscurcit le sens du texte au lieu de l’esclaircir. Dauantage, ils s’abusent en attribuant vn estat immortel aux cieux, veu que S. Paul aux Rom. 8. 22. dit que toutes creatures (& par consequent les cieux) gemissent & trauaillent iusques au iour de la redemption, pource qu’elles sont suiettes à corruption, non pas volontairement ni de leur nature, mais par le peché de l’homme qui a tiré tout le monde en ruine quant & soy. Il faut donc remarquer ici deux choses: l’vne, que maintenant à la verité les cieux sont suiets à corruption à cause de la cheute de l’homme: l’autre qu’ils seront tellement renouuellez, qu’à bon droit le prophete dit que ils periront, pource que lors ils seront autres qu’ils ne sont à present. Voyez le 24. chap. de saint Matth. verset 29. & la 2. epistre de S. Pierre, chap. 3. verset 10.”

No other *vanitas* painting better illustrates the genre's cosmological dimension. Ingvar Bergström calls the bubble de Gheyn's "personal iconographic contribution" to the allegory of Democritus and Heraclitus, who are perched at the top two corners, and who were often depicted with a globe, as in this painting by Rubens:



Figure 4.2: Peter Paul Rubens, *Heraclitus and Democritus* (1603)⁴⁷

As representatives of the pre-Socratic *kosmologoi*, these two philosophers extend the metaphor of *homo bulla* to include the universe itself, which was assumed by nearly everyone to be spherical.⁴⁸ As Bergström has shown, this was an artistic novelty, but it was not a conceptual stretch, since every pre-modern cosmological belief system regards humankind and the universe as interdependent. Giorgi, who devotes a chapter to the belief that “tous les Cieux aussi, sont contenus en l’homme,” would have recognized the implication here that human vanity also signifies universal vanity.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Bergström, “De Gheyn as a *Vanitas* Painter,” 153.

⁴⁸ See Appendix 1, section I.

⁴⁹ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 200.

De Gheyn's painting would have raised two important questions. First, if the universe is a bubble, what does it contain? And second, what will be left after it bursts? Both of these questions involve change, and hence movement or change of place. Movement in turn implicates universal harmony, since movement is the temporal phenomenon through which harmony is manifest. Democritus developed a physical explanation for change that Aristotle later rejected, namely the theory of atomism, which constituted a rebuttal of the definition of change promoted by the monist philosopher Parmenides: of "something coming from nothing," an apparent logical impossibility.⁵⁰ Atomism predicates an infinite void as a shapeless container for atoms, which are the smallest units of matter and which are in constant motion. The theory solves the problem of "something coming from nothing" by holding that atoms are indestructible – that nothingness exists only as a container for an eternal succession of universes, which form, dissolve, and reform. The atoms themselves are the only permanent entities, occurring in "infinitely many sizes and in every conceivable shape, the vast majority of them being irregular, a motley multitude, totally destitute of periodicity in their design, incapable of fitting any single combinatorial formula."⁵¹ Atomism did not address the converse of Parmenides's view, that something could be replaced by nothingness, that the universe could burst like a bubble, leaving only a void. De Gheyn therefore appears to subvert atomism in spite of depicting its inventor, and he appears to subvert Aristotle by

⁵⁰ Parmenides is best known through Plato's dialogue of that name. See Chapter 3, note 53.

⁵¹ Vlastos, *Plato's Universe*, 93-94.

representing the universe as a void rather than a plenum. As for Heraclitus, I will return shortly to the question of his cosmological significance in this context.

De Gheyn's bubble thus recalls another subversion of Aristotle, namely Chandieu's first *octonaire* with its allusion to the *vuide des cieux* (heavenly void). *Vuide* (modern *vide*) could be read as a substitute for the etymologically related *vanité*.⁵² Both words connote emptiness or a vacuum; *vuide* pertains more directly to physical space and the theoretical absence of matter. Pontus de Tyard defines void as nothingness without effect, a phenomenon that, by physical necessity, could occur only outside of the universe.⁵³ In the late sixteenth century, the possibility of a void or vacuum *within* the cosmos was still only hypothetical, as well as inimical to Aristotelian physics (whence the axiom *horror vacui*). In Book IV of the *Physics*, Aristotle defines void as a privation of being – as nothingness or nonexistence. In a plenary universe, everything exists by definition, and void should therefore be a meaningless concept.⁵⁴

For Aristotle, the concept of void could not be reconciled with his laws of motion, and this fact reflects intriguingly on the word's occurrence in Le Jeune's first *octonaire*, where it is tied to celestial movements as the keepers of time – and, as was pointed out in

⁵² Cf. the *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (ed. Rey), s.v. “vide,” which shows the common Indo-European origin of *vide*, *vacance*, *vague*, *évacuer*, *vain*, *vanité*, *évanescent*, *vaste*, *dévaster*, and *gâter*, through the Latin *vocare/vacare* (“être vide; libre”), *vanus* (“vide”), and *vastus* (“ravagé, dépeuplé”).

⁵³ Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 116r: “Car [le Monde] est Tout, outre lequel aucune chose n'est: & s'il y a quelque chose outre & dehors le Monde, c'est par nécessité rien, ou ce qu'ils ont nommé, *Vacuum* & *Inane*, que nous appellons *Vuide*, qui ne peut estre cause d'aucun effet.”

⁵⁴ Aristotle reasons that a void would have to exist as a three-dimensional body, which would render impossible the notion of void space as a container of matter, since two bodies cannot coexist in the same place; or, supposing that they could, then a body defined as empty space, coextensive with a material body occupying that space, would serve no conceptual purpose. See Edward Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing: Theories of Space and Vacuum from the Middle Ages to the Scientific Revolution* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 5-8. Cf. Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 86-90.

Chapter 3, tied subversively as well to musical-poetic movement via *musique mesurée*. Aristotle, like most other Greek philosophers, defined movement and time interdependently.⁵⁵ Precisely how the two things were understood to relate varies from one philosopher to another; for Aristotle, movement generates time, measures time, and is likewise measured by time.⁵⁶ All movements are connected in an unbroken generative chain. Discrete movements can be measured in segments of time, but time and movement are by all appearances constant, unbreakable, and inseparable.⁵⁷ But if a void were introduced, a number of problems would ensue. For Aristotle, the fundamental condition for movement in time was the material plenum itself, because matter provided the necessary medium of resistance to every movement, and therefore caused (or required) movements to happen in time. It was in answer to an apparent physical inconsistency – how to explain the regularity of planetary revolutions, categorically different from the irregular sublunary flux – that Aristotle posited a fifth element or quintessence called ether: a super-subtle, resistance-free material medium.⁵⁸ Aristotle takes the hypothesis of movement in a void in order to illustrate a choice between several absurdities: either

⁵⁵ Clark, “The Theory of Time in Plotinus,” begins by categorizing the various Greek theories of time. Clark states that “[a]ll the non-aristotelian theories of time agree in relating time to motion” (337).

⁵⁶ Aristotle, *Physics*, IV.12.220b15. Cf. Clark, “The Theory of Time in Plotinus,” 345: “Aristotle admitted that we measure motion by time and time by motion, because they define each other.” Clark is mainly concerned with how Plotinus departed (in some confusing ways) from Aristotle’s reciprocal definition. Lawrence W. Fagg, *The Becoming of Time: Integrating Physical and Religious Time* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 17, writes that “Plotinus’ subjective perception of time as well as his mysticism is apparent in his definition of time: ‘Time is the Life of the Soul in movement as it passes from one stage or act of experience to another.’ He disagreed with Aristotle that time was the measure of motion, and effected a fundamental reversal of Aristotle’s thought by elevating time to a higher order of reality and claiming that things were just the reverse: motion or change is the measure of time.” This was not in fact a reversal, rather the exclusion of one half of Aristotle’s definition. Cf. Plotinus, *Enneads*, III.7.

⁵⁷ Christians awaiting the Apocalypse were obliged to reject Aristotle’s belief in a universe of infinite duration in its present condition.

⁵⁸ In the *Timaeus*, 58d, Plato describes ether as the “brightest kind” of air; cf. Cooper (ed.), *Plato*, 1261.

infinite inertia,⁵⁹ or movement in every direction at once,⁶⁰ or instantaneous movement,⁶¹ or bodies of different weights falling, impossibly, at the same rate.⁶²

Could Chandieu's invocation of a void be significant? It seems noteworthy that he ties the word to the planetary movements: "l'armée vagabonde / Qui va courant la nuit par le vuide des Cieux."⁶³ While scholastics continued to follow Aristotelian cosmology and physics, some philosophers had departed from Aristotle's categorical rejection of a void, and some new or newly reintroduced theories had made its existence seem more admissible.⁶⁴ The Copernican "opinion" that the earth moves was known among French

⁵⁹ *Physics*, IV.8.215a: "for why should [an object] stop *here* rather than *here*? So that a thing will either be at rest or must be moved *ad infinitum*, unless something more powerful get in its way"; quoted in Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 7.

⁶⁰ *Physics*, IV.8.215a. Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 7: "Without resistance, void would yield equally in every direction, so that a body would tend to move in any direction, presumably in whatever direction it was pushed by some motive force; or perhaps it would move in all directions simultaneously."

⁶¹ *Physics*, IV.8.215a-216a: "there is no ratio in which the void is exceeded by body, as there is no ratio of 0 to a number," therefore it follows that "the void can bear no ratio to the full, and therefore neither can movement through the one to movement through the other, but if a thing moves through the thickest medium such and such a distance in such and such a time, it moves through the void with a speed beyond any ratio"; quoted in Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 7.

⁶² *Physics*, IV.8.216a. Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 7: "...even if motion in a void were finite, rather than instantaneous, bodies of different weights would fall in a void with equal velocities, when they ought to fall with speeds that are directly proportional to their respective weights. For in a plenum one body moves faster than another by virtue of its greater weight, which enables it to cleave through the resisting medium more easily. Because there is no medium to cleave to in a void, no plausible reason or cause can be offered to explain why one body should move with greater speed than another."

⁶³ "Cieux" includes both the seven planets and the outer stars; cf. the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1694), s.v. "ciel": "La partie superieure du monde, qui environne tous les Elements, & dans laquelle se meuvent les astres. Les estoiles du Ciel. les influences du Ciel. le Ciel de la Lune. le Ciel de Mars. les Cieux des Planetes. le Ciel empyrée. le Ciel cristallin. le Ciel est bien estoillé. la voute des Cieux. ce qui est sous le Ciel. lever les yeux au Ciel. lever les mains au Ciel. il eut en naissant le Ciel favorable."

⁶⁴ For example, the theory of void *contra* Aristotle by the sixth-century philosopher John Philoponus; see Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, 70-71: "After Philoponus' commentary on the *Physics* was published in 1535, his clever criticisms added fuel to the fire that eventually consumed Peripatetic natural philosophy." Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 19, writes, "Although Philoponus' conception of a void space as the container of all bodies, and indeed of the whole material world, gained little support during the Middle Ages, it fared well in the sixteenth century, when the works of Philoponus became available in the original Greek as well as in Latin translations. The Italian natural philosophers – [Giovanni Francesco] Pico della Mirandola, Telesio, Patrizi, Bruno, and Campanella – would assume the existence of

intellectuals by the 1550s,⁶⁵ and one of its problematic implications was that it dramatically extended the computational distance between Saturn (the seventh, outermost planet) and the eighth sphere of “fixed” stars. Thomas Kuhn writes,

by giving the earth an orbital motion, he made necessary a vast increase in the size of the sphere. Copernicus’ cosmology thus took away from interplanetary matter many of its essential Aristotelian functions and simultaneously demanded that there be vastly more of it. His successors soon fractured the now functionless sphere, scattered the stars through all of space, admitted a vacuum or something very like it between them, and dreamed of other worlds inhabited by other men in the vast expanses beyond our solar system.⁶⁶

Giorgi, whose *De harmonia mundi* (1525) predates Copernicus’ *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (1543), refers to Saturn as the *septenaire* (*septenarius*), “from which place comes repose and the remission of sins.”⁶⁷ He characterizes Saturn in Hermetic terms as the immediate gateway to the *octonaire* of divine reunion. As I will elaborate in

a separate void filled with some kind of matter.” Cf. *ibid.*, 192-99. The assumption remained, however, that a void absent matter did not and could not exist within a plenary cosmos. A number of early-modern philosophers also considered the possibility of God’s existence in an infinite extracosmic void (cf. *ibid.*, 148-81).

⁶⁵ See Tyard, *L’Univers*, 96-99; Guy de Bruès, *Les Dialogues de Guy de Brues, contre les nouveaux Academicians, que tout ne consiste point en opinion*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Marnef & Cavellat, 1587), 92. See also Yates, *The French Academies*, chapter 5.

⁶⁶ Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 89. Kuhn adds that “[e]ven the terrestrial principle of the *horror vacui* did not survive for long.”

⁶⁷ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 112; see Chapter 5, section III. Copernicus saw himself working in the scientific tradition of Aristotle and Ptolemy, but no less in the spiritual tradition of Plato. Ptolemy’s *Almagest*, the culmination of ancient Greek astronomy, is built on the Platonic goal of “saving the phenomena” – of sufficiently reconciling observed planetary motions with the theoretical requirement that they be uniformly circular – which Copernicus also pursued. Hetherington, “To Save the Phenomena,” 76, notes that Copernicus was “generally satisfied that Ptolemy had saved the phenomena,” but he disliked the geometrical complexity of Ptolemy’s solutions. Copernicus’s theory proceeded, in other words, from an interest in improving rather than overthrowing the old system. Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 83, states that “Copernicus tried to design an essentially Aristotelian universe around a moving earth, and failed. His followers saw the full consequences of his innovation, and the entire Aristotelian structure crumbled. The concept of a central and stable earth was one of the few major constitutive concepts in a closely knit and coherent world view.”

Chapter 5, the eighth, octave position was represented by the firmament, which, as Aristotle and Aquinas taught, was “not susceptible to generation or corruption.”⁶⁸

If the Copernican theory were admitted, what could then fill the enormous new gap between Saturn and the stars, where ether would seem unnecessary for enabling regular planetary movement?⁶⁹ In the 1570s, moreover, new astronomical observations delivered a serious blow to the presumed inalterability of the heavens. Tycho Brahe discovered a new “fixed” star in 1572 – as we now know, a supernova in Cassiopeia, with no detectable parallax and therefore located beyond the inner spheres. Tycho also determined that the Great Comet of 1577 was superlunary.⁷⁰ While we have no reason to

⁶⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Commentaria in libros Aristotelis De caelo et mundo*, quoted in Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 109. Cf. Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 68v-69r: “par consentement presque vniuersel des Philosophes, tout ce qui est dessus la Lune, est eternal, non perissable, ou sujet au dommage d’aucune mutation, & au contraire ce qui est en la souslunaire & basse partie de l’Vniuers appert tout caduque, perissable, & trauaille par continuels changemens, qui signifie que la haut tout est constant & sans mouuement, & çà bas tout est muable & inconstant.... Possible (dy-ie) est-ce l’aduis de Platon, asseurant qu’aucunes choses se font tousiours, & si ne sont iamais: c’est à dire, les inferieures & Elementaires, fraisles, caduques, inconstantes, & continuellement poussees en euidente mutation. Il y a d’autres choses qui iamais ne se font, & si sont tousiours, c’est à sçauoir, les celestes, eternelles, & exemptes de tout inconstant changement.” Note again the contradiction of this viewpoint in Chandieu’s first *Octonaire*.

⁶⁹ Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 89, notes that Copernicus rejected both the existence of a void and an infinite universe: “he tried to preserve most of the central features of Aristotelian and Ptolemaic cosmology.” Kuhn clarifies the Neoplatonic position from which Copernicus was able to make a profound scientific advance, noting in particular Chapter 10 of *De revolutionibus* (“On the Order of the Heavenly Bodies”) for its “emphasis...upon the ‘admirable symmetry’ and the ‘clear bond of harmony in the motion and magnitude of the Spheres’ that a sun-centered geometry imparts to the appearance of the heavens. Each argument cites an aspect of the appearances that can be explained by *either* the Ptolemaic *or* the Copernican system, and each then proceeds to point out how much more harmonious, coherent, and natural the Copernican explanation is. There are a great many such arguments” (180).

⁷⁰ See Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 206-09. See also C. Doris Hellman, *The Comet of 1577: Its Place in the History of Astronomy* (New York: AMS, 1971). Tycho published his observations on the 1572 supernova in *De nova et nullius aevi memoria prius visa stella* (Copenhagen, 1573). On political and religious reactions, see J. R. Christianson, “Tycho Brahe’s German Treatise on the Comet of 1577: A Study in Science and Politics,” *Isis* 70/1 (1979): 110-40. Christianson describes the cryptic astrological predictions made by Tycho in *De nova stella*: “the star would induce great and unusual effects...bringing serious tumults, spreading throughout Europe, followed by a ‘new condition in kingdoms, different from the earlier, and likewise a different order of religious conditions and laws.’” The comet of 1577 induced similar apocalyptic anxieties; see note 74. Another supernova appeared in 1604 and was observed by Galileo, who determined its location in the celestial region. See Stillman Drake, “Galileo and the Inquisition,” in Hetherington (ed.), *Cosmology*, 575-80.

think that Chandieu took Copernicus seriously, against the grain of mainstream Protestant rejection of heliocentrism (in fact, Tycho himself rejected the theory), he would certainly have been aware of the 1572 supernova and the Great Comet, which was observed all over Europe.⁷¹ Shortly before these events sounded the death knell of Aristotelian cosmology, Pierre de la Ramée (Petrus Ramus) published his *Scholae mathematicae* (Paris, 1569), which rejects Ptolemy's concentric sphere system with its epicycles and eccentrics, and in the introduction to which Ramus offers his Royal Chair to anyone who could devise a new astronomy with accurate predictive power.⁷² Ramus, a Huguenot academician, was a vocal critic of scholasticism, whereas Chandieu found the Aristotelian dialectical style congenial to his theology. But both men wrote in a climate

⁷¹ As an astronomer, Tycho hoped to reconcile the geometrical advances of Copernicus with the geocentrism of Ptolemy, which he favored over heliocentrism for *a priori* philosophical reasons. On the tradition known as geostatic Copernicanism, see J. R. Christianson, "Copernicus and the Lutherans," *Sixteenth-Century Journal* 4/2 (1973): 1-10. On the general Protestant rejection of heliocentrism, see Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 191ff.; Robert S. Westman, "The Wittenberg Interpretation of the Copernican Theory," in *The Nature of Scientific Discovery*, ed. Owen Gingerich (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1975), 393-429. The Copernican theory has often been mischaracterized as an affront to a Christian anxiety that it would relegate human beings to an inferior cosmic position. See Ernan McMullin, "Cosmology and Religion," in Hetherington (ed.), *Cosmology*, 581-606, who cites Bertolt Brecht's *Leben des Galilei* (prem. 1945) as a notable latter-day contributor to this fallacy. Christians could cite a number of Biblical passages implying a stationary earth (Joshua 10:13, Psalm 93:1, Psalm 96:10, Psalm 104:5, Ecclesiastes 1:4-5, 1 Chronicles 16:30), but these do not necessarily assign symbolic import to a central position. As C. S. Lewis recounts in *The Discarded Image*, in the medieval world picture the physical universe is suspended between heaven and hell – a neutral location at best and a precarious one. The pre-modern belief in geocentrism depended in the first place on Aristotle, and most Christians continued to accept Aquinas's synthesis of Aristotelian natural philosophy with Christian theology (see McMullin, op. cit.). Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 105, notes that "Copernican theory evolved within a learned tradition sponsored and supported by the Church," that Copernicus was the nephew of a bishop and was himself a canon at the cathedral in Frauenberg, and that he dedicated *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* to Pope Paul III. But before Kepler, the physical centrality of humans was important to Neoplatonists. Ficino, following Proclus, described a series of five hypostases – in ascending order, body, quality, soul, angel, God – that situates humans in the middle. See Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, 150-51.

⁷² See the introduction to Kepler, *The Harmony of the World*, xi-xii. The editors note that before Ramus, Jean Péna had dismissed the theory of concentric spheres for optical reasons, in his edition of Euclid's *Optics* (1557).

of unprecedented cosmological uncertainty.⁷³ At the same time, there was ample precedent for connecting the events of 1572 and 1577 to apocalyptic theories – to a *monde perissable*.⁷⁴

Chandieu's allusion to the *vuide des Cieux* could certainly have struck academic ears as dissonant or controversial – ironically, in a way similar to Giordano Bruno's theory of an infinite void coextensive with an infinite ether, which he published in London in 1584, just after his sojourn in Paris (and just after Chandieu published his *Octonaires* in 1583).⁷⁵ The allusion could well have recalled Democritus's theory of atomism, which became the cosmological basis of Epicureanism and which Bruno used as an inspiration for his own theories. As noted, Aristotle rejected the theory (Kuhn points out that “the impossibility of a void is the basis of the universe's [spatial]

⁷³ See Tobias Sarx, “Reformed Protestantism in France,” in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 232ff. Sarx points out that Ramus's Aristotelian orientation has to be weighed against a “polarization” between the so-called Ramists and traditional scholasticism: “Numerous universities forbade Ramus's writings, because his method seemed to contradict the favored reception of Aristotelian dialectic” (232 n17). See also Donald Sinnema, “Antoine de Chandieu's Call for a Scholastic Reformed Theology (1580),” in *Later Calvinism: International Perspectives*, ed. W. Fred Graham (Kirksville, Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1994), 159-90; Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 244-47. Chandieu considered scholastic argumentation to be the best weapon against the new Jesuit opposition.

⁷⁴ Andrew Cunningham, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Religion, War, Famine, and Death in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 72, writes that “despite his declared inability to indicate anything definite about the exact time of the Day of Judgement, which he, as a good Lutheran, acknowledged was only known to God, Brahe was convinced that the Last Days were imminent and that the comet of 1577 together with the conjunction of 1584, the seventh great conjunction, signified as much. Evidently Tycho Brahe subscribed to the ancient and popular notion of a cosmic week. Mirroring the act of Creation, where God had taken six days to create the world and rested on the seventh, the world would come to an end after the seventh conjunction, also known as the Sabbath conjunction, and as Brahe put it ‘the eternal sabbath of all beings is present in this conjunctio maxima.’” The seventh or Sabbath conjunction is the *septenaire*, to be discussed in Chapter 5. Cunningham also links the Copernican theory and the supernovae of 1572 and 1604 to widespread eschatological premonitions.

⁷⁵ Giordano Bruno, *De l'infinito universo et mundi* (London, 1584); see Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 188-89. Bruno lived in Paris from the summer of 1581 until April 1583. While he also believed in multiple universes, he saw no contradiction between the principle of plenitude and the existence of a void.

finitude”),⁷⁶ but it was reintroduced to western Europe with the fifteenth-century rediscovery of Lucretius, whose *De rerum natura* explained the Epicurean worldview to a Roman audience.⁷⁷ Because atomism contradicts Aristotelian physics, most early-modern philosophers dismissed it.⁷⁸ We have even less reason to think that Chandieu (or Le Jeune) was favorably disposed toward it, as it also denies the existence of a providential deity, positing instead a universe of mere chance existence.⁷⁹ Calvin notes of Lucretius that he “perverts the ordinary course of generation into an argument against the existence of God.” But Calvin adds approvingly that “in the Fifth Book [of *De rerum natura*]...he admits that the world was born and will die.”⁸⁰ On the world’s temporal finitude, its physical instability, subjection to constant change, and uncertain duration, we find significant common ground between atomism and the discourse on universal vanity.

⁷⁶ Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*, 88.

⁷⁷ Lucretius’s *De rerum natura* (1st century BCE) was rediscovered in 1417 by Poggio Braccolini and published in 1473 in Brescia. See Stephen Greenblatt, *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011).

⁷⁸ See for example La Boderie, *L’Encyclic des secrets de l’éternité*, 86; Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, *Déclamation sur l’incertitude, vanité et abus des sciences*, trans. anon. ([Paris]: Jean Durand, 1582), 188-89; Le Roy, *De la vicissitude*, 27v; Joseph Du Chesne, *Le Grand miroir du monde* (Lyon: Barthelemy Honorat, 1587), 156, 162; Jean de Sponde, *Méditations avec un essai de poèmes chrétiens*, ed. Alan Boase (Paris: José Corti, 1954 [La Rochelle, 1588]), 87; Montaigne, *Essays*, 403; Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 13, 19, 72, 164; Tyard, *Solitaire second*, 169. While making exception for Bruno, Yandell incorrectly notes that “[u]ne telle référence à la théorie des atomes de Démocrite...est rare au seizième siècle,” and that “[a]vec Bacon, Galilée et Descartes, l’atomisme devient une question de controverse au dix-septième siècle” (169 n86). Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, 17, write that “Diogenes’ detailed account of ancient atomism from Democritus and Leucippus to Epicurus enabled sixteenth- and seventeenth-century thinkers dissatisfied with Aristotle’s physics to reshape this material into a coherent philosophy of nature, advocated by such scientific revolutionaries as Pierre Gassendi and Robert Boyle.”

⁷⁹ *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. “Democritus,” by Sylvia Berryman, Fall 2010 Edition, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2010/entries/democritus/>: “[a]ccording to different reports, Democritus ascribed the causes of things to necessity, and also to chance. Probably the latter term should be understood as ‘absence of purpose’ rather than a denial of necessity.”

⁸⁰ Calvin, *Institutes*, 19 (I.5.5n).

It manifests in Democritus's visible role in the latter tradition alongside Heraclitus, who represents the offsetting principle of accordant discord.⁸¹

The contrary reactions of Democritus and Heraclitus to the vanity of the world – laughter versus sorrow – was an allegorical tradition already present in antiquity and still popular during the Renaissance.⁸² Montaigne gives the reaction of Democritus more credit,

not because it is pleasanter to laugh than to weep, but because it is more disdainful, and condemns us more than the other; and it seems to me that we can never be despised as much as we deserve. Pity and commiseration are mingled with some esteem for the thing we pity; the things we laugh at we consider worthless.⁸³

But Montaigne also recognized a more profound philosophical conflict between the two than their allegorical pairing might suggest:

From the same foundation that Heraclitus had, and that maxim of his that all things had in them aspects that were found in them, Democritus derived a wholly opposite conclusion, that things had in them nothing at all of what we found in them; and from the fact that honey was sweet to one and bitter to another, he argued that it was neither sweet nor bitter.⁸⁴

Heraclitus, whose fragmentary statements on cosmology are the oldest still extant, could admit no physical corruption fatal enough to undermine his belief in a stable natural

⁸¹ See Chapter 2, section II and Chapter 3, section I.

⁸² Lutz, "Democritus and Heraclitus," 310.

⁸³ Montaigne, *Essays*, 221 ("Of Democritus and Heraclitus").

⁸⁴ Montaigne, *Essays*, 443 (*Apology for Raymond Sebond*). He adds, "The Pyrrhonians would say that they do not know whether it is sweet or bitter, or neither, or both; for they always reach the extreme point of doubt." Montaigne regarded Pyrrhonian skepticism as a sensible position toward new science that contradicted Ptolemaic astronomy: "It would have been Pyrrhonizing, a thousand years ago, to cast in doubt the science of cosmography, and the opinions that were accepted about it.... The question is, if Ptolemy was once mistaken on the grounds of his reason, whether it would not be stupid for me now to trust to what these people say about it; and whether it is not more likely that this great body that we call the world is something quite different from what we judge" (429-30).

order: “The Sun will not overstep his measures, else the Furies, the adjutants of Justice, will find him out.”⁸⁵ Democritean atomism held the opposite. Their opposed reactions to vanity thus correspond to their incompatible worldviews: that of Democritus based on the ephemerality of successive universes, that of Heraclitus on the overarching stability, despite constant flux, of a single and eternal universe.⁸⁶ Heraclitus’s melancholy (or, in some depictions, his cholera) complements his impatience that “We should not act and speak like men asleep” – that is, by failing to perceive and align ourselves with the cosmic order.⁸⁷ Gregory Vlastos writes that his teaching “conveys a truth whose apprehension will change [the Greeks’] mode of consciousness, their very lives – that, if they but grasp what he is talking about, their perceptions, their speech, their actions will alter as dramatically as would those of a sleepwalker if he were to be suddenly jarred awake.” Heraclitus’s cosmology was among the first to counteract the destabilizing archaic belief in capricious divine intervention.⁸⁸ Arguably, Heraclitus plays a more intriguing role in the *vanitas* tradition than Democritus because his cosmology is at once proximate to Neoplatonism and in tension with Plato’s. I will digress briefly on the

⁸⁵ Heraclitus, fragment B94; quoted in Vlastos, *Plato’s Universe*, 9-10.

⁸⁶ Vlastos, *Plato’s Universe*, 7.

⁸⁷ Heraclitus, fragment B73; quoted in Vlastos, *Plato’s Universe*, 8. Fragment B50 indicates that Heraclitus understood his theory of constant flux from a monist perspective: “Having harkened not to me but to the Word (*Logos*), it is wise to agree that all things are one”; quoted Daniel W. Graham, “Heraclitus,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2015 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/heraclitus/>>.

⁸⁸ Vlastos, *Plato’s Universe*, 8-9, gives the following précis: “If you believe that the gods have power to make the sun drop out of his course in the sky, there will be no limit to the number of ways in which you will credit them with the ability to break into your world; and this will affect your whole attitude to what is going on around you and even...to what is going on in you, in your very thoughts and feelings.”

subject here in order to highlight the particular vulnerability of Neoplatonism to ironic critique during the sixteenth century.

Plato accepted the basic cosmological premise shared by Heraclitus and the other pre-Socratics – that there *is* a cosmos – and he accepted the fact of constant change. But unlike his Neoplatonic descendants, Plato did not accept the idea of accordant discord or the unity of opposites, which for him violated the law of non-contradiction. In the *Parmenides*, Socrates responds to Heraclitus’s claim that change is the only reality by proposing that there are two worlds, one of change and one of the unchanging forms.⁸⁹ Aristotle agreed with Plato that the Heraclitean unity of opposites violated the first principle of non-contradiction.⁹⁰ Plato also could not agree with Heraclitus’s atheistic view of an eternal universe, as expressed in the fragment, “This world-order [*kosmos*], the same of all, no god nor man did create, but it ever was and is and will be: everliving fire, kindling in measures and being quenched in measures.”⁹¹ The ironic significance of these disagreements during the sixteenth century can be illustrated by following Heraclitus out of the *vanitas* genre and into one of the period’s most famous history

⁸⁹ This is the converse of Parmenides’s view of universal stasis; see again Chapter 3, note 53.

⁹⁰ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Γ.1012a, K.1062a. Aristotle thought that Plato’s theory of forms acknowledged the Heraclitean reality of constant flux, which, if it were all that one knew of, would make knowledge impossible (*Metaphysics*, M.1078b). However, he appears to have confused Heraclitus’s doctrine with that of his follower Cratylus; see Graham, “Heraclitus.” In the *Phaedo*, 70c-72e, Plato relies on Heraclitus’s view of oscillation between extremes to argue for the immortality of the soul.

⁹¹ Heraclitus, fragment B30; quoted in Graham, “Heraclitus.” The fragment was mulled over by Aristotle’s successor Theophrastus, by the middle-Platonist Plutarch, and by various Stoic philosophers, and would thus have been familiar to humanist scholars of the Renaissance. Brague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 20, notes the difficulty of an exact translation, but the essential point of an uncreated, eternal cosmos is beyond doubt. Vlastos, *Plato’s Universe*, 6, interprets the Heraclitean cosmos as being defined by temporal symmetry, with no idea of “spatial, architectonic symmetries”: “the symmetries...are causal sequences. The order of his world reveals itself in the constancy of the ‘measures’ of its balanced kindlings and extinguishings.”

paintings. In Raphael's *School of Athens* (1509-11), a figure who became identified with Heraclitus is painted as a likeness of Michelangelo, who at the time was working on the Sistine Chapel nearby:



Figure 4.3: Raphael, *The School of Athens* (1509-11)



Figure 4.4: detail of Heraclitus/Michelangelo

It has to be stipulated that Raphael's intention to represent Michelangelo as Heraclitus cannot be proved, but the figure's pensive attitude made this philosopher a natural choice for contemporary viewers.⁹² The fresco's primary subjects, Plato and Aristotle, explain its traditional title; Raphael left it untitled apart from a tondo that reads "Causarum Cognitio," the knowledge of causes:



Figure 4.5: "Causarum Cognitio" tondo

Most of the philosophers thought to be depicted in the fresco were not Athenians. Heraclitus lived in Ephesus; Pythagoras, seated and writing in a book to the viewer's left of Heraclitus, emigrated to Locri in southern Italy; Ptolemy, on the far right with his back to the viewer and holding a globe, lived in Alexandria. The scene's diverse makeup reinforces the appearance of disagreement between the two main figures, who of course represent not one but two distinct Athenian schools with contrasting orientations. Raphael

⁹² See Rona Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Titian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 221-23. The figure does not appear in the work's final cartoon draft, a fact that points to a late inspiration. See also E. H. Gombrich, "Raphael's *Stanza della Segnatura* and the Nature of its Symbolism," in *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 1972), 85-101.

painted the fresco shortly after his stay in Florence (1504-08), having absorbed the Neoplatonic tradition there, and so the appearance of disagreement between Plato and Aristotle may be only that, as Neoplatonists believed in reconciling the two. Given the anti-social posture of the Heraclitus/Michelangelo figure – Diogenes Laertius describes Heraclitus as a misanthrope who “despised the Athenians”⁹³ – it is tempting to read either disdain or rebellion into his attitude toward Plato especially, who stands on roughly the same perspective line under the center arch. The figure of Plato, moreover, is also a likeness of Leonardo da Vinci, and according to Giorgio Vasari the two artists had “an intense dislike for each other.”⁹⁴

We cannot know whether Raphael or his patrons intended more than an allusion to the rivalry between Michelangelo and the older Leonardo, whom public opinion held to be the world’s greatest genius (much like Plato). But educated viewers who linked the figure to Heraclitus could have been reminded of his cosmological divergence from Plato and Aristotle. While Plato adopted the premise of a cosmos or world order, he developed a new and radical epistemology that his predecessors would likely have rejected. Arguably, he broke more decisively from the pre-Socratics than Aristotle broke from him, by inferring the universe’s nature from the starting hypothesis of a benevolent deity or supreme Good who created the universe as a physical likeness of himself. Vlastos acknowledges a tendency among certain of the pre-Socratics, including Heraclitus, to “convert...preconceptions of value into allegations of fact,” but he assumes that all of

⁹³ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, ed. R. D. Hicks (*Perseus Digital Library*, Tufts University), IX.1.3, 1.15. Web. 20 April 2016. <<http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0004.tlg001.perseus-eng1:9.1>>.

⁹⁴ See Johannes Wilde, “Michelangelo, Vasari, and Condivi,” in *Michelangelo: Selected Readings*, ed. William E. Wallace (New York: Garland, 1999), 1-18.

them would have found Plato's blatant manner of doing so objectionable.⁹⁵ In any case, Plato's departure from the early *physiologoi* was adversarial; their lack of intuition, he thought, was blindness masquerading as reason.⁹⁶

Taking account, then, of Heraclitus's popular role as a decrier of vanity along with Plato's departure from him, we can theorize another possible meaning of Raphael's painting. The scorn that Heraclitus felt toward human folly and vanity appears to have stemmed from the widespread incomprehension of his theories.⁹⁷ Diogenes relates the story of Euripides bringing Heraclitus's treatise, *On Nature*, to Socrates, who commented, "The part I understand is excellent, and so too is, I dare say, the part I do not understand; but it needs a Delian diver to get to the bottom of it."⁹⁸ The Persian king Darius, convinced of Heraclitus's wisdom, was said to have invited him to a residency at his court because he was "at a loss to know the right interpretation" of his work.⁹⁹ An irony emerges from Heraclitus's disdain for his contemporaries, because his paradoxical theory of accordant discord, misunderstood or rejected in his own time, became the

⁹⁵ Vlastos, *Plato's Universe*, 29-30: "Suppose we could have asked the *physiologoi* – any of them, from Anaximander down – the following question: 'In your inquiries into nature, when you have to decide whether or not something is thus and so, would you think it right to settle the issue by arguing, "It would be better, more beautiful, if things were thus and so; ergo, they are thus and so?"' There can be little doubt, I think, that we would have got an emphatic, 'No,' from each."

⁹⁶ Cf. Plato, *Phaedo*, 97c-e.

⁹⁷ Geldard, *Remembering Heraclitus*, viii, attributes much of the confusion surrounding Heraclitus to his love of ambiguity: "Whereas the English language is generally intolerant of ambiguous reference, the Greek language thrives on it. Heraclitus, in particular, took advantage of such ambiguity, indeed defined reality through its use." Vlastos, *Plato's Universe*, 4, calls Heraclitus "not a typical *physiologos* – he is too much of a mystic, a poet, and a metaphysician to fit the general pattern."

⁹⁸ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, II.5.22. Web. 20 April 2016. <<http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0004.tlg001.perseus-eng1:2.5>>.

⁹⁹ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, IX.1.13. Web. 20 April 2016. <<http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0004.tlg001.perseus-eng1:9.1>>.

linchpin of Neoplatonism even though its unity of opposites violated the logic of Plato, the philosopher venerated by Neoplatonists above all others, as well as Aristotle, whom they had found compatible with Plato.¹⁰⁰ Small wonder, one might conclude, that Heraclitus looks disappointed in Raphael's painting. But Michelangelo, as Leonardo's successor, also hoped to surpass him, and so too might Heraclitus find belated vindication among the disciples of Ficino. His prominent place in the foreground rather upstages his two more famous descendants. And yet, he could not escape his informal role as an observer of vanity, which might then be projected onto any school of thought associated with him.

¹⁰⁰ Geldard, *Remembering Heraclitus*, 129, writes that "the revision of Platonic thought by Plotinus restored for a time the original Heraclitean mystic vision." Geldard also quotes Ficino (from the *Liber de arte chemica*) expressing sympathy for the Heraclitean view that fire is the most basic element: "Nature is therefore a certain invisible fire, by which Zoroaster taught that all things were begotten, to whom Heraclitus the Ephesian seems to give consent. Did not the spirit of the Lord, which is a fiery love, when it was carried on the waters, put into them a certain fiery vigor? Since nothing can be generated without heat" (64). Geldard cites Aristotle's refutation of Heraclitus's opinion that fire is eternal (129; cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, III.5.204b35-205a5). A Heraclitean view of fire also occurs in one of Michelangelo's sonnets:

Non più che'l foco il fabbro il ferro istende
 Al concetto suo caro e bel lavoro;
 Nè senza foco alcuno artista l'oro
 Al sommo grado suo raffina e rende:
 Nè l'unica fenice se riprende,
 Se non prim'arsa. Ond'io, s'ardendo moro,
 Spero più chiar resurger tra coloro,
 Che morte accrescie, e'l tempo non offende.
 Del foco di ch'i'parlo ho gran ventura
 C'ancor per rinnovarmi abb'in me loco,
 Sendo già quasi infra'l numer de' morti.
 O ver s'al cielo ascende per natura
 Al suo elemento, e ch'io converso in foco,
 Sie, come fie che seco non mi porti?

Quoted from *The Sonnets of Michelangelo Buonarroti*, ed. and trans. John Addington Symonds, 2nd ed. (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1904), 66. Symonds gives the sonnet the English title "Love is a Refiner's Fire," though it does not mention *amore*. It does, however, express an eagerness for spiritual transcendence. On the influence of Florentine Neoplatonism on Michelangelo, see Rudolf and Margot Wittkower (eds.), *The Divine Michelangelo: The Florentine Academy's Homage on his Death in 1564* (London: Phaidon, 1964); Edith Balas, *Michelangelo's Medici Chapel: A New Interpretation* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1995).

To awaken the human mind to the “knowledge of causes,” as Heraclitus wanted, was to take the same fatal step as Adam and Eve.



Figure 4.6: Michelangelo, *The Fall and Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* (1509-10, Sistine Chapel ceiling)

To conclude here by returning to the Protestant view of the Fall, it is most important to consider its perceived impact on the cosmic order along with humanity, which corroborates Le Jeune’s *modus operandi* of creating musical disorder through unstable movements.

The serpent makes a promise to Adam and Even that by eating the apple, they will avoid death and their “eyes shall be opened: and you shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:4-5). God then curses the serpent and punishes Eve with childbirth and with servile desire for her husband (3:14-16). But to deal with Adam, God curses the earth itself –

Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commended thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work; with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. (3:17-18)

– then leaves no doubt of his intention to remain separated from humans:

Behold Adam is become as one of us, knowing good and evil; now, therefore, lest perhaps he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. And the Lord God sent him out of the paradise of pleasure, to till the earth from which he was taken. And he cast out Adam; and placed before the paradise of pleasure Cherubims, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (3:22-24)

For Luther and Calvin, vanity was what befell the cosmos itself after this fall from grace. Luther writes in his commentary on Romans:

original sin enters into us; we do not commit it, but we suffer it. We are sinners because we are the sons of a sinner. A sinner can beget only a sinner, who is like him.¹⁰¹

He argues in his commentary on Genesis that original sin corrupted nature itself, and that afterwards the Flood brought an even “greater curse”:

[O]ur adversaries absurdly dispute at the present day holding that the image and similitude of God still remain, even in a wicked man. They would, in my judgment speak much nearer the truth, if they were to say that the image of God in man has perished and disappeared; just as the original world and paradise have done. Man in the beginning was righteous; the world in the beginning was most beautiful. Eden was in truth a garden of delight and of pleasure. But all these things were deformed by sin and remain deformed still. All creatures, yea even the sun and the moon, have as it were put on sackcloth. They were all originally “good,” but by sin and the curse they became defiled and noxious. At length came the greater curse of the Flood, which destroyed paradise and the whole human race, and swept them from the face of the earth. For if at this day rivers, bursting their banks, inflict by their floods such mighty calamities on men, beasts and fields, what must we suppose to have been the awfulness and horror of the calamities brought upon the earth by the universal Deluge! Whenever therefore we would speak of paradise, since the Flood, let us speak of that now historical paradise, which was once, but now has no longer existence in any trace. Let us speak of it just as we are compelled to speak of the original innocence of man. In doing so our utmost effort can effect no more than to reflect with a sigh that it is lost, and that we never can repair or regain it in this life.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Martin Luther, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. J. Theodore Mueller (Grand Rapids: Kregel: 1954), 95. The quotation is in response to Romans 5.

¹⁰² Martin Luther, *Commentary on Genesis*, trans. John Nicholas Lenker, vol. 1, *Luther on the Creation*, Project Gutenberg, accessed August 25, 2015, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/48193/48193-h/48193-h.htm>. The quotation is in response to Genesis 2:8.

Calvin offers a slightly different view:

For although I acknowledge that the earth, from the time that it was accursed, became reduced from its native beauty to a state of wretched defilement, and to a garb of mourning, and afterwards was further laid waste in many places by the deluge; still, I assert, it was the same earth which had been created in the beginning.¹⁰³

Tyard, in his *Deux discours* on the nature of the world, allows the theologian

Hieromnime to speculate on an allegorical view of Paradise as a place entirely separate from the inconstant elemental world.¹⁰⁴

Calvin's interpretation of the Fall underscores the ongoing human responsibility for natural corruption. God's cursing of the earth in Genesis 3:18 ("Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee") meant not only the inheritance of a fallen world but its continuing defilement by future generations:

Therefore we may know, that whatsoever unwholesome things may be produced, are not natural fruits of the earth, but are corruptions which originate from sin. Yet it is not our part to expostulate with the earth for not answering to our wishes, and to the labors of its cultivators as if it were maliciously frustrating our purpose; but in its sterility let us mark the anger of God and mourn over our own sins. It has been falsely maintained by some that the earth is exhausted by the long succession of time, as if constant bringing forth had wearied it. They think more correctly who acknowledge that, by the increasing wickedness of men, the remaining blessing of God is gradually diminished and impaired; and certainly

¹⁰³ Jean Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis*, trans. John King (Grand Rapids: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, n.d.), 1:73, accessed August 25, 2015, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom01.i.html>.

¹⁰⁴ Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 75v: "Car pource que l'estre de ce Paradis, ou jardin de delices, & sejour de felicité ne peut estre compris par les sens humains & corporels: la sage Theographe a passé legerement ceste description, pour (comme sous vne subtile metaphore) nous faire signe que là dessous est en beau sens allegoric caché & entendu, non vn jardin terrestre: mais bien vn celeste & diuin vergier, planté par vn celeste & diuin Iardinier: non point en ceste terre corruptible & sangeuse, mais en celle eternelle terre des viuans, figuree aussi par la mesme histoire sous le nom de Terre de promission, vray heritage des enfans du Seigneur & createur du Monde." Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 107-08, points out that Tyard has lifted the Curieux's description of paradise from Giorgi (Cf. *De harmonia mundi*, I.7.21).

there is danger, unless the world repent, that a great part of men should shortly perish through hunger, and other dreadful miseries.¹⁰⁵

In spite of this view, Calvin elsewhere shows a willingness to perceive divine perfection in the natural world.¹⁰⁶ But as Edward Dowey points out, Calvin's concept of the *ordo naturae* signifies in particular "the orderliness or constancy of God's will within nature" – not, that is, the orderliness of nature itself after the Fall:

This is not an empirical orderliness pure and simple, but an order such that God can work miracles, which are a scandal from the point of view of empirical order, without breaking the order of nature.

Human society is part of the order of nature. Because of human sin, however, the term *ordo naturae* is in this connection less a description of nature as it is and more a description of nature as it was originally and ought to be.... But since the perfect *ordo naturae* in human history has been disturbed, it has continuing significance rather as precept, or law of God, than as a description of the existing order.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis*, 1:115. Partee, *Calvin and Classical Philosophy*, 48-49, summarizes Calvin's view of nature: "In the first place nature means the perfection in things as they are created by God. In the second place nature refers to the present state of things fallen from perfection.... [T]his created perfection was changed by the fall of man of which the philosophers are ignorant. The whole order of nature is subverted by the sin of man. Now the condemnation of the human race is seen on the heavens, the earth, and the creatures. Animals, young children, and even the elements are involved in this guilt. Still Calvin holds that the creation which was subjected to vanity after the fall of man, yet obeys God and looks to the promised future. According to Calvin, the faithful should not speculate about this future state of redeemed perfection but rest content in the promise that 'God will restore the present fallen world to perfect condition at the same time as the human race.'" Marjorie Hope Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959), chapter 2, offers a literary history of the early-modern preoccupation with corrupted nature, which elicited poetic responses from Donne and Marvell among many others. She connects this zeitgeist to classical poetry such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, medieval poetry such as *Beowulf* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Reformation commentaries on Genesis, and the astronomical breakthroughs of Galileo.

¹⁰⁶ See Appendix 1, section II.

¹⁰⁷ Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, 67-68. Dowey concludes, "Hence *lex naturae* and *ius naturae* are the more appropriate terms since the Fall for what God wills (wants) within creation." Cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, I.16.4-7. The separation of humanity from the natural order occurs the Catholic side as well. For example, Jean de Canaye, in the preface to *Recueil de lettres ... touchant la vanité du monde* (Paris: Cramoisy, 1628), 58: "puis que nous n'appelons pas Monde, vn globe de terre & de mer, mais le grande nombre des personnes qui y vivent. C'est ce que nous accusons quand nous crions contre le monde, & ce que nous rendons coupable de tous les desordres qui se commettent." Canaye (1594-1670) was educated at the Collège de Clermont and entered the Society of Jesus in 1611. In this quote, he appears to deny the Calvinist notion that the "globe de terre & de mer" had also been corrupted by sin.

While he tolerates the idea of microcosm and macrocosm, Calvin berates human beings for their “shameful ingratitude”: “Though they have in their own persons a factory where innumerable operations of God are carried on, and a magazine stored with treasures of inestimable value – instead of bursting forth in his praise, as they are bound to do, they, on the contrary, are the more inflamed and swelled with pride.”¹⁰⁸ And he distances himself from what he regards as the pantheistic tendency to confound the macrocosm with God:

I admit, indeed that the expression, “Nature is God,” may be piously used, if dictated by a pious mind; but as it is inaccurate and harsh (Nature being more properly the order which has been established by God), in matters which are so very important, and in regard to which special reverence is due, it does harm to confound the Deity with the inferior operations of his hands.¹⁰⁹

He ridicules as “jejune speculation” the Timaeian idea of “a universal mind animating and invigorating the world.”

Calvin’s insistence on separating God from Nature again recalls Chandieu’s first three *Octonaires*. Bearing this perceived separation in mind, we may return once again to Chandieu’s invocation of a void, which, along with its physical capacity to disrupt natural movement and regular time-keeping, may also have carried a particular theological significance. Natural philosophers had long debated the possibility of an imaginary, infinite void beyond the finite cosmos, in which God would presumably reside; or, as

¹⁰⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, 17 (I.5.4). Brague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 81, observes that “[t]he Holy Scriptures reproach those who scrutinize the physical universe with being indiscreetly involved in what does not concern them, things on high. They are invited to be concerned with that which is close to them, with that which cannot be closer: themselves. The tendency toward a knowledge of external things should be directed rather toward knowing the instruments of knowledge themselves, the organs of the senses.” He links this to the Delphic maxim invoked by Socrates to “know thyself,” and argues that the *Timaeus* moved to “restore” the pre-Socratic cosmological priority of knowing oneself only through knowing the cosmos first.

¹⁰⁹ Calvin, *Institutes*, 19 (I.5.5).

with Bruno and his atomist forebears, of an infinite cosmos contained by an infinite void. In both cases, the question arose of whether or not infinite space could be thought of as coextensive or even synonymous with God, understood as infinite being. Calvin, citing Augustine, forbade such speculation and declared the universe to be of finite extent.¹¹⁰

In Chapter 3, I described an evolution within Renaissance Neoplatonism toward a cosmic viewpoint that risked conflating God and the universe, to which Calvin has plainly reacted in the above quotation. This development stemmed from the Heraclitean principle of accordant discord, the Thomist-Aristotelian principle of matter as potentiality, and the well-known Hermetic axiom, much discussed among late-medieval philosophers, that “God is an infinite sphere whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere.”¹¹¹ Of the latter, Edward Grant writes,

enormous significance has been attributed to this extraordinary metaphor, of which it has been said that it “presupposes an understanding of God and man which had to lead men beyond the medieval cosmos.” Originally applied to God, it inherently suggested an application to the cosmos itself and was so applied by Nicholas of Cusa (ca. 1401-1464), who transferred the metaphor from God to the universe and thereby “helped prepare the way for the new astronomy.” The “new astronomy” here is not the finite, heliocentric world of Copernicus but the infinite world of Bruno and seventeenth-century Newtonian physics. In extending the metaphor to the cosmos, Cusa conceived the universe as an “infinite unity” realized in a multiplicity that is “spread out in space and time.” Because an infinite universe spread out in space implies an infinite space, it follows that Cusa had derived that infinite space from the implication of the metaphor.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Calvin, *Institutes*, 91 (I.14.1): “Justly does Augustine complain that God is insulted whenever any higher reason than his will is demanded (*De Genesi contra Manichaeos*). He also in another place wisely reminds us that it is just as improper to raise questions about infinite periods of time as about infinite space (*De civitate Dei*). However wide the circuit of the heavens may be, it is of some definite extent. But should anyone expostulate with God that vacant space remains exceeding creation by a hundred-fold, must not every pious mind detest the presumption?”

¹¹¹ See Chapter 3, section I.

¹¹² Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 138-39. Grant is quoting Karsten Harries, “The Infinite Sphere: Comments on the History of a Metaphor,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 13 (1975): 5-8.

Like the theory of void space, the theory of infinite space also contradicted Aristotle, who posited a finite spherical universe and nothing beyond it.¹¹³ But it was a contradiction that some Neoplatonists were ready to entertain as a corollary of their belief in an omnipresent deity who had given humans a material entry point to spiritual transcendence.

Cusa's implicit conflation of infinite God and infinite space removes the sharp distinction between God and the universe that Chandieu insists upon:

Plustost on pourra faire
le jour qui luit,
N'avoir plus pour contraire
l'obscur nuit,
Et marier le feu
avecque l'onde:
Que de conjoindre Dieu
avec le monde.¹¹⁴

*Sooner could you make
The brightness of day
And darkness of night
Lose their contrariety,
Or marry the fire
To the wave,
Than join the world
Together with God.*

¹¹³ Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 4r, has the Curieux point out the inherent difficulty of comprehending Aristotle's worldview: "Outre le Monde, puis qu'il est Tout, rien ne peut estre selon l'opinion d'Aristote, qui plus outre que le Monde ne reçoit ny lieu, ny temps, ny vuide. Chose qui semble estrange & difficile à croire: car s'il se meut, il faut qu'il se meue en quelque lieu qui le contienne: & s'il est contenu, il est fini: mais si outre luy il n'y a rien, c'est conclu vne infinité." He concludes that the universe "est fini, d'espece & de mesure ronde: est fini de vertu, par laquelle toutes choses finies s'engendrent: ressemblant toutesfois infini à cause de l'admirable grandeur de sa masse. Ainsi il est fini en soy, mais semblant infini en nous, pour la difficulté qui est à faire denombrement singulier de ses parties, & non pource qu'il soit ainsi, ny que l'Esprit humain soit incapable de le comprendre."

¹¹⁴ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:11-13. See Chapter 3, section III.

By contrast, Tyard's *Curieux* refers to a cosmos of infinite duration without physical limit,¹¹⁵ of "the sky extending everywhere into the infinite convexity of the whole universe."¹¹⁶ Chandieu's *vuide des Cieux* may be seen to bring this lofty notion back, as it were, down to earth. The hypothesis of an infinite and eternal universe created a problem for theologians who felt an obligation to reserve those qualities for God. But Tyard's Hieromnime, whose piety is typically used to temper the *Curieux*'s scientific digressions, also expresses sympathy for the "fine argument" that "the sky is the seat of God," despite the conclusion that this would reduce God to "some quantity, occupying space like material bodies."¹¹⁷ For Chandieu to associate the *grande monde* with a void was to keep God in an extra cosmic place.

¹¹⁵ Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 115v-123r. The *Curieux*'s argument can be reduced to the statement that "[i]l semble vraiment que tout ainsi que les hommes mortels font les ouvrages mortels & perissables, aussi Dieu immortel doit faire son ouvrage non perissable & immortel, tant il est raisonnable, que les œuvres retirent quelque chose du naturel de l'ouurier" (119r-119v). The opinion of the universe's eternity relied on Aristotle's assumption that circular planetary movements were geometrically and temporally stable, incapable of alteration. In a prefatory letter to Tyard's treatise, Jacques Davy Du Perron indicates equivocal sympathy for the *Curieux*'s viewpoint: "En fin pour finir par la fin du Monde, comme il a commencé par le commencement, il fait amener au *Curieux* les plus apparentes raisons de sa perpetuelle duree, qu'Hieromnime refute, armé de la Philosophie & de la Theologie, fermant par le discours de la diuinité son entreprise. Et de fait, il est bien seant qu'un ouvrage tout diuin se paracheue à la gloire de Dieu: mais le *Curieux* s'enquerra-il point à quel adieu ie luy desrobbe si long temps la parolle? Il vaut mieux luy donner audience."

¹¹⁶ Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 68v: "& le Ciel estant de toutes parts estendu en conuexité infinie du Tout Vniuersel...."

¹¹⁷ Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 126v-127r: "Je ne puis, en bonne foy, ne m'esmouuoir contre ce bel argument, que le Ciel est le siege de Dieu: que fussent les professeurs des saintes lettres, plus sobres quelquesfois à s'acointer des Naturels, & plus discrets à accommoder Dieu avecques les matieres. Il semble que cestuy-cy croye que Dieu soit quelque quantité, occupant lieu, comme les corps materiels: & toutesfois il le confesse estre vne Ame eternelle, qui ne peut estre, disoit le bon Platon, descrite d'aucun nom, ny comprinse d'aucune imagination. Deà, si nostre entendement en vn moment insensiblement soudain, se transporte depuis ceste Terre basse iusques là haut au Ciel: s'il s'estend en vn moment par tout l'Vniuers, mesurant & compassant tout d'une fondaine apprehension: serons nous si grossierement malicieux, que de contraindre Dieu, source & premier de tous entendemens, sous vne moins sublime condition?" Yates, *The French Academies*, 92, suggests that Hieromnime's syncretic views give the impression that he is a "fairly close disciple" of Giorgi, but that "this wide religious curiosity is always integrated by Hieromnime on a Catholic basis."

It would be reasonable to assume that Tyard, a bishop, sided with Hieromnime on the opinion of the world's finite duration, which both Catholic and Protestant teaching maintained.¹¹⁸ Both sides could also agree on the scriptural basis for original sin and human vanity. However, the recognition of sin and vanity could be used to draw different historical and eschatological conclusions. The art historian Hans Van Miegroet acknowledges a historical perspective embedded in the *vanitas* idea: that it asserts “the weakness, fragility and transitory nature of human life compared with Time, the power of God and History.”¹¹⁹ But this definition misleads by limiting the notion of fragility and transience to human life, and by neglecting to apply it to time and history, which Van Miegroet groups instead with God. While time and history outweigh the individual life, and while numerous Biblical passages can be cited to that effect, how one explained time and history in cosmological terms could serve either to affirm or deny the stability of the world order. In the concluding chapter to follow, I will discuss how the *septenaire* and *octonaire* were used metaphorically toward that end.

¹¹⁸ For Hieromnime's argument that “la nature petit à petit est tiree à sa fin,” see Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde*, 123r-128v.

¹¹⁹ *Grove Art Online*, s.v. “Vanitas” by Hans J. Van Miegroet.

Chapter 5

The *Octonaire* in Neoplatonic and Hermetic Discourse: A Symbol of Divine Reunion and a Target for Protestant Subversion

In this study, I have set in opposition the beliefs in universal harmony and vanity, with the view that Le Jeune undermines the former belief on its own terms, through poetry and music. In further support of that interpretation, this concluding chapter will provide some important missing context for the work's poetic title, *Octonaires*. Despite its overall rarity, the word *octonaire* (from the Latin *octonarius*) had acquired by the late sixteenth century an interesting range of connotations – Biblical, Calvinist, Neoplatonic, and Hermetic – that cannot all be reconciled, and that may indicate that its use had become a marker of ideological difference. In particular, two overlooked Neoplatonic and Hermetic definitions of *octonaire* put the word into a controversial light, as it refers in these contexts to the transcendence and final resolution of vanity. The proliferation of French *octonaires* announcing the world's subjection to vanity could therefore have struck a dissonant note with academic readers, while at the same time, it is likely that the Huguenot poets and musicians who favored that title operated in the awareness of its alternative uses, which appeared in close proximity to them.

Octonaire is not listed in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century French lexicons. Its nearest relation, *septenaire*, appears in the first edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1694), which states first that as an adjective, "it is only said in the phrase

Nombre septenaire, meaning the number seven.” But a substantive definition is also given:

It is also a noun, and astrologers use it to signify a lifespan divided into groups of seven years, reckoned from the birthday. *Premier septenaire. second septenaire.* It is said that men change their temperaments every *septenaire*.¹

Septenaire (Latin *septenarius*) thus denoted a traditional and, it should be added, a Biblical way of measuring time. The latter usage is conspicuous in sixteenth-century religious literature, where the word refers to the lifespan of creation. The Six Ages of the World and of Man, an idea derived by Augustine from the template of the creation story in Genesis, were held distinct from a Seventh Age that was not of this world – a *septenaire* of eternal Sabbath, which God’s final judgment would extend to the saved, either by ending the world or making it anew.² The advent of Christ had initiated the

¹ *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694), s.v. “septenaire”: “Il ne se dit qu’en cette phrase, *Nombre septenaire*, pour dire, Nombre de sept. Il est aussi substantif, & les Astrologues s’en servent pour signifier un espace de la vie divisée de sept ans en sept ans, à compter du jour de la naissance. *Premier septenaire. second septenaire. on dit que les hommes changent de temperament à chaque septenaire.*” The latter usage occurs, for example, in the “Advertissement au lecteur” to La Boderie’s *Encyclic des secrets de l’éternité*, 4-5: “Et en ce dous & delectable trauail ie m’employay si obstinement, que ie paruais à la fin du septième Cercle de ce present Oeuure auant que ie feusse parueniu au troisième septenaire de mon aage.” Another example is the *Chronologie septénaire de l’histoire de la paix entre les rois de France et d’Espagne* (Paris: Jean Richer, 1605-12), a history that was resumed under the title *Mercure françois*, the first French serial publication launched in 1611. The complete title of the latter is *Le Mercure françois ou la Suite de l’histoire de la paix commençant l’an 1605 pour suite du Septénaire du D. Cayer, et finissant au sacre du très grand Roy de France et de Navarre Louis XIII* (Paris: Jean et Estienne Richer, 1611-). The “D. Cayer” mentioned is Pierre Victor Palma Cayet, author of part of the *Chronologie septénaire. L’Ancre, Tableau de l’Inconstance*, 225v-226r, writes that “encore que d’ailleurs & de soy le septenaire soit vn nombre fort auguste & mystérieux.”

² Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus*, XXII. See the modern edition, *Instructing Beginners in the Faith*, trans. Raymond Canning, ed. Boniface Ramsey (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City, 2006), 123-52. For Augustine, who rejected millenarianism, the Seventh Age preexisted and ran parallel with the Six Ages of the World; it was eternal and was therefore held in store rather than yet to be created. In late sixteenth-century France, the concept is also invoked by Guillaume de Saluste du Bartas in *La Sepmaine* (1578) and by Pierre de la Primaudaye in the *Troisième tome de l’Académie française* (1590). See Appendix 1, section II.

Sixth Age, over which, despite the good news, the dark cloud of original sin and vanity continued to hang.

In cosmological contexts, *septenaire* also designated the seven planets, which became for Neoplatonists the vertical and spatial equivalent of the Biblical historical construct. Francesco Giorgi's use of *octonaire* proceeds from and adds on to this historical and cosmological framework based on the number seven. Before addressing that, I will first examine the better-known application of the *octonaire* to poems on vanity – an apparent derivation from Psalm 119, the *psaume octonaire* – and point out a hitherto overlooked connection from there to Hermetic cosmological discourse. Then in conclusion, I will draw a contrast between two competing early-modern views of universal history, which the philosophical uncertainty and skepticism of the day had brought into sharp relief, and to which Le Jeune's music responds: on one hand, a cyclical view justified by harmony, and on the other, a linear view justified by vanity – a promotion and a subversion of the Neoplatonic *octonaire*.

I. From the *psaume octonaire* to *octonaires* on vanity

Literary historians have noted Chandieu's preference for *octonaire* instead of *huitain*.

Jacques Pineaux links the title to another Biblical tradition of dividing a whole into parts:

Chandieu did not invent the word. At that time, Psalm 119 was called the *pseaume octonaire* because it had been divided into strophes (twenty-two, ordered by the Hebrew alphabet) comprising eight verses each. The psalm itself consisted of isolated sentences devoted to the praise of God's word and law; its strophic form allowed Calvin to comment in twenty-two separate sermons. But he reserved the term *octonaire* for the psalm itself and used *huictain* for each separate part. Elsewhere, the adjective is applied both to the psalm and to its strophes: "Here

begins the *pseaume octonaire*...in which there are twenty-two parts called *octonaires*, because each *octonaire* has eight verses.”³

Like *septenaire*, *octonaire* had a substantive meaning with a well-known Biblical connotation. Pineaux does not draw a connection between the two words as I will here, but he recognizes in *octonaire* the same grammatical slip (*glissement*) from adjective to noun. Chandieu’s familiarity as a theologian and successor of Calvin with the latter’s psalm commentaries can be assumed, and Pineaux finds it likely that his choice of title was a conscious allusion to Psalm 119.⁴ It should first be noted that the Genevan Psalter of 1562, which comprises verse translations by Clément Marot and Théodore de Bèze, discards the structure of the Hebrew original: each eight-line Hebrew stanza is rendered into a group of four sestetts headed by the appropriate Hebrew letter.⁵ Therefore, the identity of Psalm 119 as the *psaume octonaire* derives from Calvin and from the musical settings to be cited below, to which we can also add the 1530 Vulgate translation by Jacques Lefèvre d’Étaples, which adheres to the original eight-line stanza form.

³ Pineaux, *La Poésie des protestants*, 325: “Chandieu n’avait pas inventé le mot. On appelait à l’époque ‘pseaume octonaire’ le pseaume 119 parce qu’il était divisé en strophes (vingt-deux classées selon l’alphabet hébraïque) comprenant chacune huit vers. Le pseaume lui-même était formé de sentences isolées consacrées à l’éloge de la parole de Dieu et de ses lois; ce qui permit à Calvin de le commenter en vingt-deux sermons différents. Mais il réserva le terme d’octonaire au pseaume lui-même, appelant ‘huictain’ chacune de ses parties. Ailleurs l’adjectif est appliqué au pseaume comme à ses divisions: ‘Cy commence le pseaume octonaire...ouquel pseaume sont 22 parties nommées octonaires, pour ce que chascune octonaire a 8 vers.’” Cf. Jean Calvin, *Commentary on Psalms – Volume 4*, trans. James Anderson (*Christian Classics Ethereal Library*), n.d; <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom11.html>), 357ff. Calvin does not claim credit for the label: “Some call this the octonary psalm, because that, through every successive eight verses, the initial words of each line begin with the same letter in alphabetical order” (358).

⁴ Pineaux, *La Poésie des protestants*, 325: “Chandieu lui-même préféra sans doute ‘octonaire’ à ‘huictain’, car se souvenant de la composition fragmentée du pseaume 119, il désirait souligner le caractère religieux de son œuvre tout en jouissant au moins des mêmes facilités que l’hébreu.”

⁵ Cf. Clément Marot et Théodore de Bèze, *Les Psaumes en vers français avec leurs mélodies: Fac-similé de l’édition genevoise de Michel Blanchier, 1562*, ed. Pierre Pidoux (Geneva: Droz, 2008), 400ff.

Florence Mauger writes that “the noun *octonaire* attracts the attention of modern readers by its extreme rarity.”⁶ She points out a more direct poetic precedent of which Chandieu would have been aware, and which Pineaux overlooks. This was Jean Poitevin’s *Vingt et deux octonaires du Psalme cent dixneuf* (Lyon, 1549), a paraphrase verse translation of Psalm 119 that reached a wide audience through numerous re-editions.⁷ It was harmonized by the Lyonnaise Huguenot composer Philibert Jambe-de-Fer (d. 1566), who wanted to appropriate the Catholic Poitevin’s psalm translations for his own faith.⁸ Jambe-de-Fer’s melodies to the latter appear together with the forty-nine translations of Marot in a complete psalter published in Lyon in 1555 by Michel Du Boys, another zealous Huguenot.⁹ Jambe-de-Fer also completed two harmonizations of the Genevan Psalter between 1559 and 1564.¹⁰ A freestanding edition, now lost, of his harmonization of Poitevin’s *Vingt et deux octonaires* was issued there (or perhaps it was a reissue) in 1561.¹¹

⁶ Mauger, “Les *Octonaires* d’Antoine de Chandieu,” 976: “De toute évidence, le substantif ‘octonaire’ se signale à l’attention du lecteur moderne par son extrême rareté.”

⁷ Mauger, “Les *Octonaires* d’Antoine de Chandieu,” 977-78. On the publication history of Poitevin’s *Vingt et deux octonaires du Psalme cent dixneuf*, see Laurent Guillo, “Le Psautier de Paris et le Psautier de Lyon: à propos de deux corpus contemporains du Psautier de Genève (1549-1561),” *Bulletin de la Société d’histoire du protestantisme français* 136 (1990): 363-419 and 137 (1991): 319-21. Each *octonaire* in Poitevin’s paraphrase consists of eight tercets, or twenty-four verses in all; it is therefore considerably longer than the original psalm.

⁸ Guillo, “Le Psautier de Paris et le Psautier de Lyon,” 372-73.

⁹ See Rodolphe Peter, “Un Imprimeur de Calvin: Michel Du Bois,” *Bulletin de la Société d’histoire et d’archéologie de Genève* 16 (1978): 290-322. Cf. *Les Cinq cinquante pseumes du Royal Prophete David* (Lyon: Michel Du Boys, 1555), in which Jambe-de-Fer’s melodies for Psalm 119 are more elaborate than the Genevan melodies.

¹⁰ Mauger, “Les *Octonaires* d’Antoine de Chandieu,” 979.

¹¹ The edition is listed in *La Bibliothèque d’Antoine du Verdier, Seigneur de Vauprivas* (Lyon: Barthelemy Honorat, 1585), 949: “Philibert Iambe de Fer a mis en musique à 4. parties les vingt-deux Octonaires du Psalme 119. de David traduits par Iean Poicteuin. [impr. à Lyon par Thomas de Straton. 1561.]”

It can be no coincidence that Lyon was also the wellspring of *octonaires* on vanity. Chandieu was made a temporary pastor in Lyon in 1565, having already published there in 1563 an attack in verse against Pierre de Ronsard (anonymously) and a history of Protestant martyrs, which Sara Barker calls “arguably his most celebrated prose composition.”¹² He returned to Lyon in 1571 to restart Protestant worship services, and it was from there that he had to flee to Geneva when the St. Bartholomew massacres arrived in late August 1572.¹³ Joseph Du Chesne first obtained a contract for his *Morocosmie*, a collection of one hundred *octonaires* on vanity (three of which were set by Le Jeune), from the Lyonnaise printer Jean de Tournes in 1574.¹⁴ Two books of *Octonaires de la vanité du monde* by the Huguenot composer Paschal de l’Estocart, which include the first musical settings of Chandieu’s poems along with some by Du Chesne and Simon Goulart, were printed in Geneva by Jean de Laon in 1582 and released in the same year in Lyon by the bookseller Barthelemy Vincent.¹⁵ These settings, which deserve further study, attest to the literary traffic between Geneva and Lyon. L’Estocart, who is known to have lived in Lyon from 1559, would doubtless have been aware of

¹² *Palinodies de Pierre de Ronsard, gentilhomme Vandomoys, sur ses discours des misères de ce temps* (s.l. [Lyon]: s.n. [Jean Saugrain], 1563); *Histoire des persecutions et martyrs de l’eglise de Paris, depuis l’an 1557 jusques au temps du Roy Charles neufiesme* (Lyon: Sebastien Honorat, 1563). See Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 140-41, 161, 290. On the *Palinodies*, see also Jacques Pineaux, *La Polemique protestante contre Ronsard* (Paris: M. Didier, 1973), 2.

¹³ Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 225.

¹⁴ See Du Chesne, *La Morocosmie* (ed. Gibert), 12-17. The work did not appear in print until 1583. It may also be noted that many of Pontus de Tyard’s early publications, including both the *Solitaire* dialogues, were first printed in Lyon by Jean de Tournes. See Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 177-78.

¹⁵ Paschal de l’Estocart, *Premier and Second livre des octonaires de la vanité du monde, mis en musique à trois, quatre, cinq et six parties* (Lyon: Barthelemy Vincent, 1582). See Rouget, “Manuscrits, éditions et transformations,” 567. The *Premier livre* was edited by Henry Expert for *MMRF*, vol. 10 (Paris: Maurice Senart, 1929), and the *Second livre* by Jacques Chailley and Marc Honegger for *MMRF*, vol. 11 (Paris: Éditions Salabert, 1958).

Jambe-de-Fer's settings of Poitevin.¹⁶ But the titular link between the Calvinist *octonaires* on vanity and Psalm 119 was certainly clear enough to have been perceived regardless of a given poet's awareness of it.

The significance of the *psaume octonaire*, which was singled out by both Poitevin and Jambe-de-Fer and repeatedly reissued, can be understood in a general way as a part of the widespread interest in psalmody during the devotional revival.¹⁷ It appears to have been particularly important in Lyon to the contest for musical and spiritual ownership of the Psalms, in the years before the city's Huguenots were decimated. Claude Goudimel, a prolific composer of psalm-motets as well as of simple harmonizations of the Genevan Psalter, was one such victim of the purge in Lyon. As we have seen, the first complete edition of Chandieu's *Octonaires sur la vanité et inconstance du monde* appeared in 1583 (in Geneva) as an appendix to meditations on Psalm 32. Barker views the *Octonaires* as the "poetical twin" of the *Meditations*, and both together as a delayed response to St. Bartholomew.¹⁸ She notes that the *Meditations* are one of only two works that Chandieu translated from Latin into French, from a need consistent with the devotional movement to reach beyond the sphere of educated theologians to ordinary believers.¹⁹ Barker writes that

¹⁶ See *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "L'Estocart, Paschal de," by Marc Honneger.

¹⁷ See Chapter 1, section II.

¹⁸ Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 230-31.

¹⁹ Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 244, 282-83. Barker writes, "Whilst his Latin works would frequently take on Catholic opponents, Chandieu the French writer was content in the main to write for his fellow Protestants. On the rare occasions when he did engage Catholics in the vernacular, it was in response to direct stimuli – the king's repression, Ronsard's attack on Protestant values, the monks of Bordeaux's *Confession*" (282-83).

after fleeing from massacres in Lyon, Chandieu had time to turn his mind to wider issues facing the Reformed Church, not exclusively in France but in Europe as a whole. During the 1560s he had carved out a niche for himself as a talented polemicist. After the massacres, he was expected to announce and reinforce the Calvinist message to the wider world.²⁰

The brief and penitential Psalm 32 may be regarded in contrast to the sprawling Psalm 119 as an appropriate vehicle for expressing chastisement. I have already discussed the particular emphasis given by Chandieu to the Davidic hope for “canticles of deliverance.”²¹ The accompanying *Octonaires* on worldly vanity, as will become clear, could well have been received as canticles intended for musical settings, and they suggest a rhetorical retreat from the worldly contest over the *psaume octonaire*. A brief preface to the collection instructs readers to “flee the world.”²²

Mauger has examined one possible echo of the contest over Psalm 119 in the earliest known printed edition of Chandieu’s *Octonaires*: a collection of eighteen that was published in Strasbourg in 1580, where each *octonaire* has been paired with an emblematic engraving by Étienne Delaune.²³ A noteworthy and perhaps revealing feature of this publication – which was not, it seems, carried out with Chandieu’s involvement, but which he probably would have learned about after the fact, given the engraver’s reputation – is that each poem has been assigned a letter of the alphabet, from A to S, which connects it to an engraving showing the same letter. This feature, in the judgment

²⁰ Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 225.

²¹ See Chapter 2, section III.

²² “L’Imprimeur au Lecteur,” preface to the *Octonaires* appended to Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, n.p.: “Encores aura-on beaucoup à faire à persuader aux mondains, qu’il faut fuir le monde à fin de suiure la crainte de Dieu & obeir à ses commandemens.”

²³ Mauger, “Antoine de Chandieu et Etienne Delaune.”

of Mauger and François Rouget, plainly recalls the alphabetical arrangement of Psalm 119 as well as its didactic purpose.²⁴

Psalm 119 may have had special significance as the longest of the psalms; Laurent Guillo remarks that it was by far the most laborious to translate.²⁵ In recognition of its length, Calvin points to its alphabetical arrangement as a deliberate mnemonic aid. Memorization, in his view, was imperative:

For the purpose, therefore, of rendering it less irksome to the reader, the prophet has distinguished every successive eight verses by their beginning each with the corresponding letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and thus all excuses, on the score of ignorance, are removed, even from the callous and slothful. This help does not extend to those who read it in other languages; but the principle must not be overlooked, that the doctrine exhibited in this psalm should be carefully studied by all the children of God, and treasured up in their hearts, to render them the more conversant with it.²⁶

The psalm's content, which chiefly addresses the need to follow God's law, would have had dramatic appeal for militants on both sides of the religious conflict. The opening verse proclaims, "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." At the same time, the psalmist preaches humility, showing a concern throughout for losing the way and needing to be set straight. Such humility does not, however, indicate uncertainty of the true path; it serves instead to warn against the vanity of following one's own path. The final verse 176 reads, "I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost: seek thy servant, because I have not forgotten thy commandments." Calvin identifies two major themes:

²⁴ Mauger explores the possible relationship between this publication and the *pseaume octonaire* in "Les *Octonaires* d'Antoine de Chandieu."

²⁵ Guillo, "Le Psautier de Paris et le Psautier de Lyon," 370.

²⁶ Calvin, *Commentary on Psalms*, 4:358.

the exhorting of the children of God to follow godliness and a holy life; and the prescribing of the rule, and pointing out the form of the true worship of God, so that the faithful may devote themselves wholly to the study of the Law. Along with these [the psalmist] frequently blends promises for the purpose of animating the worshippers of God to live more justly and piously; and, at the same time, he introduces complaints respecting the impious contempt of the Law, lest they should become tainted by bad examples.²⁷

It would be natural for either side to invoke such reasoning on its own behalf.

It would also not be difficult to connect the psalm's content to the *vanitas* tradition, in as much as the latter folds into a dispute over revelation with severe worldly consequences. Here, for example, is the fifth of the psalm's *octonaires*:

HE [7]. Set before me for a law the way of thy justifications, O Lord: and I will always seek after it. Give me understanding, and I will search thy law; and I will keep it with my whole heart. Lead me into the path of thy commandments; for this same I have desired. Incline my heart into thy testimonies and not to covetousness. Turn away my eyes that they may not behold vanity: quicken me in thy way. Establish thy word to thy servant, in thy fear. Turn away my reproach, which I have apprehended: for thy judgments are delightful. Behold I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy justice. (Ps. 119:33-40)

Perhaps the psalm's best known verse today, which I had occasion to quote in Chapter 4, is verse 105: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." The eyes that might "behold vanity" require divine illumination of the right path. As Calvin writes in response to verse 1, "All men naturally aspire after happiness, but instead of searching for it in the right path, they designedly prefer wandering up and down through endless by-paths, to their ruin and destruction. The Holy Spirit deservedly condemns this apathy and blindness."²⁸

²⁷ Calvin, *Commentary on Psalms*, 4:357.

²⁸ Calvin, *Commentary on Psalms*, 4:361.

The second *octonaire* of mode 7 (Lydian) in Le Jeune's collection echoes this sentiment and provides an unusual example due to its narrative voicing. After addressing the *mondain* in the second person and describing him in the third person, Chandieu switches to the first person in line 7, which may be read as the voice of God, or of the psalmist delivering God's word:

Areste, atens, ô Mondain où cours-tu?
Ecoute, entens la voix de la vertu.
Las! il passe outre, il court apres le Monde
Et va courant, fuyant ainsi que l'onde
D'un gros torrent, que l'orage des Cieux
Fondu en bas, a rendu orgueilleux.
Ma remonstrance est un roc qu'il rencontre,
Passant dessus, murmurant à l'encontre.²⁹

Stop, wait, o Mondain, where are you racing?
Listen, heed the voice of virtue.
Alas! He persists in chasing after the world,
He goes running, fleeing in his pride
Like the wave of a great molten torrent
From the heavenly storm.
My reproach is a rock that he meets
And passes over, murmuring in protest.

Le Jeune superbly conveys the urgency and uncertainty of the opening line by disguising the meter:

²⁹ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 1:77-81.

Example 5.1: “Areste, atens, ô Mondain où cours-tu?” (VII.2), mm. 1-9

The musical score is written for four voices: Soprane (*), Contralte (**), Tenor haute-contre (***), and Baryton (****). The music is in 6/8 time. The lyrics are: "A - re - ste, a - tens a - tens, A - re - ste, A - re - ste, a - tens, a - tens, ô Mon - dain où cours-tu? ô Mon - dain où cours-tu? Mon - dain où cours-tu? où cours-tu? Mon - dain où cours-tu? où cours-tu? - tens, ô Mon - dain où cours-tu? ô Mon - dain où cours-tu?". The score shows the first nine measures of the piece.

The pervasive syncopation ensures that by the time the voices merge into rhythmic unison for “où cours-tu?,” the listener has gained no sense of where the strong and weak beats fall.

Le Jeune selects the words “a rendu orgueilleux” and “Passant dessus” to set in *musique mesurée*:

Example 5.2: “Areste, atens, ô Mondain où cours-tu?” (VII.2), mm. 30-60

que l'o-ra-ge des Cieux Fon-
-rent, que l'o-ra-ge des Cieux, l'o-ra-ge des Cieux Fon-
que l'o-ra-ge des Cieux, que l'o-ra-ge des Cieux Fon - du en
que l'o-ra-ge des Cieux Fon - du en
- du en bas, en bas, a ren - du or - gueil -
- du en bas, en bas, a ren - du or - gueil -
bas, Fon - du en bas, a ren du or - gueil -
bas, Fon - du en bas, a ren - du or - gueil -
- eux, a ren - du or - gueil - eux.
- eux, a rer - du or - gueil - eux. Ma re -
- eux, a ren du or - gueil - eux Ma re-mon - strance est
- eux, a ren - du or - gueil - eux. Ma re - mon - strance est un

Ma re - mon - strance est un roc qu'il ren - con -
 - mon - strance est un roc, est un roc qu'il ren - con -
 un roc, est un roc qu'il ren - con -
 roc, un roc qu'il ren - con -

-tre, Pas - sant des_sus, mur - mu_rant à l'en - con - tre, mur - mu_rant
 -tre, Pas - sant des_sus, mur - mu_rant à l'en - con - tre, mur - mu_rant à
 -tre, Pas - sant des_sus, mur - mu_rant à
 -tre, Pas - sant des_sus, mur - mu_rant à

à l'en - con - tre. Pas - sant des_sus, mur -
 l'en - con - tre Pas sant des_sus
 l'en - con - tre. Pas - sant des_sus, mur mu_rant à l'en - con - tre,
 l'en - con - tre. Pas - sant des_sus, mur - mu_rant à l'en - con -

The pride of the *mondain* inspires a change to triple meter, as though to illustrate his oblivious detachment. Le Jeune opts for the same effect in the second chanson of mode 4 (“Qu’as tu? pauvr’amoureux”) for the words “N’acuse rien que toy.”³⁰ God’s reproach –

³⁰ See Example 2.9 (Chapter 2, section III).

“Ma remonstrance est un roc qu’il rencontre” – is conveyed with stolid regularity in duple time, and by a deliberate avoidance of homophony despite the vertically aligned minims. “Passant dessus,” which is the deliberate avoidance of God’s reproach, brings an abrupt change to syncopated homophony. The rhythmic imbalance of *musique mesurée* suitably represents the knowing flight from truth, the headlong rush into error. To quote again from Calvin’s Psalm 119 commentary: “as often as a man happens to fall, is not the plea of inadvertence instantly alleged, as if none ever sinned knowingly and voluntarily; or as if the law of God, which is an antidote to all delinquencies, because it keeps all our vicious propensities in check, did not furnish us with sufficient wisdom to put us upon our guard?”³¹

II. The Hermetic *octonaire*

The St. Bartholomew’s Day massacres delivered a severe if not fatal blow to the reunionist hopes of the new Academy.³² Amid the chaos, a relatively trivial consequence of the event was to thwart an attempt by François de Foix-Candale, the bishop of Aire, to secure a Parisian publisher for his new translation of the *Hermetica* (from the Greek, with commentaries). His timing was inauspicious: he arrived in Paris with the manuscript on August 26, 1572, three days into the bloodletting, and was forced to return home.³³ As

³¹ Calvin, *Commentary on Psalms*, 4:362.

³² On the academic response to the massacres, see Yates, *The French Academies*, 210-35, 254-55.

³³ Foix-Candale, “Preface de l’auteur” to *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, n.p.: “Ces commentaires furent prests a publier en l’an. 1572, & portez par nous a Paris, ou arriuantz, le 26. d’Aoust nous trouuames telz obstacles, le temps & personnes si indisposées a leur publication, que nous fusmes contrainctz les rapporter, n’ayans eu depuis licence tant pour les miseres vniuerselles, que plus pour les particuliers, d’y

the massacres spread and the country imploded, Foix-Candale had to settle for publishing the translation alone in 1574, in Bordeaux with the recently established printing house of Simon Millanges.³⁴ The voluminous and, for him, essential commentaries did not appear until 1579, also in Bordeaux.

In a preface to the 1579 edition, Foix-Candale asks the reader's forgiveness for the delay,

on account of these very unsettling times that Gaul has suffered during our labors, even in Aquitaine, where great tumults have prevailed, and in particular near our own residence where we were at work. The fighting, murder, and rapine, both on land and at sea, and the many other cruelties and evil deeds that these permitted, appeared to our eyes more than enough (as anyone will understand) to divert and corrupt the minds of many good intelligent men, physically beset as they were by so many violent breaches and persecutions.³⁵

It is ironic that the war between faiths interrupted the appearance of a work that proved, to its translator, the universality of Christian revelation. Foix-Candale did not, however, conceal in it his objections to Reformed theology, while he also managed to provoke Catholic censure.³⁶ His reverence for Hermes was extra-canonical and over-enthusiastic;

mettre aucunement l'œil ou pensée iusques a presant: qui nous faict prier ceux, qui souuent nous ont conuë a la publication d'iceux, recevoir en bonne part les causes de noz empeschements, & penser que a l'adventure ces commentaires n'estoient propres au temps, ou bien le temps a eux." These words were written in 1578 or 1579, the year of publication in Bordeaux.

³⁴ Work cited in Chapter 2, note 44. Foix-Candale also published a Greek-Latin edition: *Pimander, Mercurij Trismegisti Pimandras utraque lingua restitutus* (Bordeaux: Simon Millanges, 1574). See Harrie, "François Foix de Candale," 229ff. All citations here of Foix-Candale are from his 1579 edition with commentaries.

³⁵ Foix-Candale, "Preface de l'auteur" to *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, n.p.: "nous prions le lecteur considerer qu'il est raisonnable de conceder quelque indulgence a l'occasion de ses temps tant perturbés, que ceste Gaule a souffert durant ce nostre labeur, mesmes en l'Aquitaine, ou les grandz tumultes ont regné, & plus particulièrement a l'entour de nostre demeure, ou trauaillantz a nostre œuvre, les combatz, meurtres, & raiissementz tant sur mer que sur terre, & plusieurs autrez cruautéz & mauuaise conduite les permetant, apparoissoint deuant noz yeux chose tres-suffisante, comme il est cogneu d'un chascun, pour destourner & peruertir en un esprit tellement affligé, plusieurs bonnes intelligences, le corps estant assiégué de tant de violantes interruptions & persecutions."

³⁶ See Frederick Purnell, "The Hermetist as Heretic: An Unpublished Censure of Foix de Candale's *Pimandre*," in Hankins (ed.), *Supplementum Festivum*, 525-35; Harrie, "François Foix de Candale and the

he believed him to predate and therefore take priority over Moses and even Abraham. His view of salvation was essentially gnostic and, in its severe dualism, quite distinct from Giorgi's unitary vision.³⁷ Jeanne Harrie writes,

In accepting Hermes' teachings as Christian, Foix-Candale gave his approval to an unorthodox and simplistic concept of evil [rooted in matter, prior to free will] and to a soteriology which in practice involves God very little in the redemptive process. The agent of redemption is not the God-man, the second person of the Christian Trinity, but the sinful individual himself.³⁸

For Foix-Candale, as for "Hermes" and other ancient Neoplatonists, it was the evil inherent in matter, a necessary devolution from unity, that had tempted man into the sin of concupiscence, whereas Christian orthodoxy holds matter to be corrupted as a result of the first temptation. Foix-Candale does not, however, believe God to be the author of evil, and he denounces Calvin's belief in predestination for implying as much.³⁹

Foix-Candale's Hermetic religion can be reduced to the dualist imperative to relinquish all material attachments and to elevate the intellect in order to be united with God, which entails becoming godlike oneself. The transition is accomplished by passing

Hermetic Tradition," 108-16, 242-43. On Giorgi's own censure by the Church, see Yates, *The Occult Philosophy*, 81; Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione*, 224ff.

³⁷ One finds in Foix-Candale's commentaries nothing like Giorgi's exuberant praise of the material world; e.g. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 295: "Le Monde...est louable pour chacune de ses especes, mais beaucoup plus louable pour l'Harmonie de toutes, & pour l'assemblément & liaison des vniuerselles, en quoy est vne souueraine & admirable accordance resultant de contrariété en mesme vie & son, lors qu'entre elles toutes, elles sont diuerses, & que toutes auecques vne chacune conuiennent, comme les tuyaux ou cordes d'un instrument de musique se rapportent en mesme son. De là vient que la fabrique du Monde...demeure en vne accordance indissoluble par raison excellente. Vnique est aussi...la conuersion & retour de la Sphère mondaine, vunique son harmonie, & vunique le bal & la danse des estoilles & des autres choses qui se faict par diuers coucher & leuer. Car tout ainsi qu'aux carolles & danses en rond le guide de la chanson chante le premier en l'hymne, & que les voix graues & aguës meslées ensemble des hommes & des femmes chantans avec luy resonnent vne harmonie, ainsi la diuine Pensée reuele & decouure les varietez mondaines à l'egal d'une consonance."

³⁸ Harrie, "François Foix de Candale and the Hermetic Tradition," 115.

³⁹ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 643 (margin): "Caluin en ses institutions blaspheme de rendre Dieu aucteur de mal." Calvin anticipates and defends against this charge in the *Institutes*, II.4.1-8.

through the cosmic threshold between materiality and divinity: through the eighth or “octave” sphere of the celestial firmament, whose material function is “to cover and surround the universe.”⁴⁰ The fixed stars are the last physical barrier to the realm of purified intellect:

And then this pure and essential interior man, being stripped not only of the miseries to which matter is subject, but also of the actions and emotions of harmony, from which his soul has received the dispositions, preparations, and inclinations toward evil deeds, becomes purified of every imperfection and returns to the octave nature or sphere, which covers all movements and material creatures. And being in this place, the divine and essential man attains his own power and virtue, which material obfuscation and obscurity had suppressed in him, burdening and oppressing him with the transmutation, corruption, and torment of so many diverse actions, until at this time they are removed and he is delivered into the octave nature, that is, into the divine nature.⁴¹

We may note again the contrast with Giorgi’s Neoplatonism: in the strictly Hermetic view, to attain the octave sphere is to renounce universal harmony, which is the material path of evil and vanity, in favor of a purified intellectual harmony.

Leading up to this pronouncement, Foix-Candale has described the Hermetic ascent from the sublunary world to the seventh planet, Saturn, the region where man “abandons falsehood for thought”:

which is as much to say that the greatest task at which the intelligences and divine virtues [i.e., the seven planetary spheres or “governors”] have been employed

⁴⁰ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 87: “Et comme dict S. Pol, voient Dieu face a face: & le tout en vertu de ceste vnion, comme n’estant loisible de cognoistre ou voir Dieu tel qu’il est, que a soy mesme, par dessus ceste octaue sphere, comme n’estant autre qui couure & enuironne l’vniuers....”

⁴¹ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 87: “ET LORS c’est homme interieur & pur essential, ESTANT DESPOVILLE non seulement de la matiere subiecte a tant de miseres, mais aussi DES ACTIONS & emotions DE L’HARMONIE, par lesquelles il auoit reçu en son ame les dispositions, preparations, & inclinations a mal faire, il s’est trouué pur de toute imperfection, & S’EN RETORNE A L’OCTAVE NATVRE ou sphere, couurants tous mouuements & creatures materielles, & estant en ce lieu, c’est homme diuin & essential AYANT SA PROPRE FORCE & vertu, qui par l’ofuscation & tenebrosité de la matiere, chargée & oprimée de tant diuerses actions, toutes tendantes a la transmuier, corrompre & tourmenter, auoyent esté suprimées en luy, iusques a c’est heure qu’il en a esté despouillé, & rendu en l’octaue nature, c’est a dire en nature diuine.” Cf. *C.H.* I.24. Here as elsewhere, words in all caps are original and indicate the words of the *Hermetica* on which Foix-Candale is commenting.

against their true author and Creator, and consequently the greatest crime against their God, has been to want to deprive all creatures, in whom falsehood naturally takes hold, of essence. For as to falsehood, which has no essence and consists rather of total privation, there is no vice more opposite and contrary to the divine majesty, which is solely and entirely essence, action, and habit replete with truth. Wherefore this vice, which crowns all others in malice and imperfection, is appropriate to Saturn, who covers and surrounds all the other actions and spheres of the seven governors, as well as the corruption of the elemental sphere, in which every vice and misery takes falsehood for its common subject and principal material.⁴²

Brian Copenhaver writes that “[t]he Hebdomad, seven planetary heavens created by a maleficent Demiurge, constitutes the lower world that imprisons the Gnostic, who wishes to escape to the next highest level, the Ogdoad, which is the eighth level counting up from the earth.”⁴³ The sharp distinction made between the lower seven positions and the highest eighth position explains Foix-Candale’s negative view of the “seven governors” and of material creation, where the allure of material harmony leads the gnostic away from truth.

The name for the ascent through the eight spheres and for the eighth sphere itself is *octonaire*. I will return in section III to the relationship between *octonaire* and *septenaire*, a proximate and no less ambiguous term that could refer to both the *semaine* of creation and the dubious astrological properties of the seventh planet. Marin Mersenne,

⁴² Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 86-87: “A LA SEPTIESME, qui est Saturne, il delaisa LA MENTERIE POVR PENSEE. C’est autant à dire, que le plus grand employ des intelligences & vertus diuines, qu’il auoit faict contre leur vray aucteur & Createur, & par consequent le plus grand crime contre son Dieu, c’estoit de vouloir priuer d’essence toutes creatures, sur lesquelles mensonge ordinairement entreprend. Car mensonge n’ayant aucune essence, ains consistant totalement en priuation, il n’y a vice si opposite & contraire à la diuine magesté, qui est toute & seulle essence, action & habit plein de toute verité. Parquoy ce vice couronnant tous les autres en malice & imperfection à esté approprié à Saturne, couurant & enuironnant toutes autres actions & spheres des sept recteurs, & corruption de sphere elementaire, en laquelle tous vices, & miseres prennent cestuy cy de mensonge, pour leur commun subiect & matiere principale.” Cf. *C.H.* I.24.

⁴³ Copenhaver (ed.), *Hermetica*, 117.

a historian of the sixteenth-century academies and a careful reader of Giorgi, refers to the “*octonario Hermetico*” several decades after Foix-Candale, and Giorgi treats the concept half a century before him, both having surely taken it from Marsilio Ficino’s widely circulated Latin translation of the *Hermetica*.⁴⁴ Whereas Foix-Candale uses the term “octave nature or sphere” for *ogdoad* in the passage quoted above, he follows Ficino’s precedent in using *octonaire* later on to translate the same word. Copenhaver’s English translation indicates that *ogdoad* occurs in both places in the Greek, and he leaves the word untranslated (understandably, as it designates more than simply an ordinal position). In Foix-Candale’s translation, *octave nature* and *octonaire* should be regarded, if not as equivalent terms, then as derivative of the same concept.⁴⁵

Toward the end of the *Hermetica*, a dialogue between Hermes and his disciple Tat broaches the question of spiritual rebirth, of leaving the body to rejoin the intellectual realm. This Neoplatonic idea, of ascent as the reversal of an initial descent, moves Tat to recall his own birth:

I wish, o my father, to hear sung the prayer of the powers, which you spoke in the *octonaire* when I was born.

O my son, even as Pimander preached [or foretold] by the *octonaire*, you show a worthy readiness to dissolve your bodily temple [*dissoudre ton tabernacle*], having been purged. Pimander thinks that which is of himself, and has taught me only what is written down, knowing that I could understand it on my own, and hear everything I want, and see everything, and that this would permit me to do beautiful things. Wherefore in all things the powers that are in me sing.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Mersenne, *Quaestiones celeberrimae in Genesim*, Qu. XXV (col. 1180): “Hinc in octonario Hermetico constituunt 7 habitus ethicos animæ, planetis 7 respondententes, octauum autem ad firmamentum referunt.”

⁴⁵ Copenhaver (ed.), *Hermetica*, 6 (C.H. I.26), 52 (C.H. XIII.15).

⁴⁶ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 613: “Je desirerois, ô mon pere, ouyr par chant la priere des puissances que tu disois en l’octonaire, quand ie fus nay. O mon filz, tout ainsi que Pimandre a predict par l’octonaire, tu fais belle diligence de dissoudre ton tabernacle, estant purgé. Pimandre pensée de celuy, qui est a part soy, ne m’a plus enseigné que les choses, qui sont escriptes, sçachant que de moy mesmes ie pourray entendre, & ouyr toutes choses que ie voudray, & les voir toutes, & m’a permis celuy là faire les belles choses. Parquoy en toutes choses les puissances, qui sont en moy, chantent” (C.H. XIII.15).

It is curious that Foix-Candale attaches two different prepositions to *octonaire*: first, “que tu disois en l’octonaire” (that you spoke in the *octonaire*), which appears to refer to the eighth sphere as a location; then, “que Pimandre a predict par l’octonaire” (that Pimander preached or foretold by, through, or with the *octonaire*), which appears to change the word’s sense to a manner of prophesying.⁴⁷ Copenhaver’s translation does not convey the same *glissement*: “Father, I would like to hear the praise in the hymn which you said I should hear from the powers once I had entered the ogdoad, just as Poimandres foretold of the ogdoad.”⁴⁸

Foix-Candale’s reason for this shift becomes clear when he goes on to connect the “prayer of the powers” (*priere des puissances*) to the act of *singing* divine praise and thanksgiving, and in particular to psalmody. “Understand,” he tells the reader, “that the ancients discovered that God willingly received their prayers offered up in song, as we can see has since been practiced by David the psalmist and other prophets, whose canticles were diversely observed: either by numbers, measures, rhymes, or other scriptural decorations.”⁴⁹ Having prepared the ground in this way, Foix-Candale then

⁴⁷ The meaning of “predict par l’octonaire” is less straightforward than might appear. Whereas the *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694) defines *predire* first as “Pronostiquer, prophetiser,” Jean Nicot’s *Thresor de la langue françoise* (1606) translates it first into the Latin *praedicere*, which means to proclaim, announce, praise, extol, or preach. Nicot’s second definition is “Futura praecinere,” to predict the future, but *praecinere* by itself can also mean “to play or sing before.” *Predict* is therefore as likely to mean “preached” or “proclaimed” or “sang” as “foretold”; in a religious context, the two meanings could be roughly interchangeable. Either way, the preposition *par* indicates that *l’octonaire* was the form that the preaching, singing, and/or foretelling took, as Foix-Candale goes on to make clear.

⁴⁸ Copenhaver (ed.), *Hermetica*, 52 (C.H. XIII.15).

⁴⁹ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 614: “Entendons que les anciens ont trouué, que Dieu receuoit volontairement leurs prieres presentées par chant, comme nous voyons qu’il estoit encore depuis obserué par le Psalmiste Daud, & autres prophetes, ayantz vsé de cantiques, lesquelz cantiques estoient obserué diuersement, soit par nombres, mesures, rimes, ou autres decors d’escriptures....”

makes his leap from the *octonaire* of Tat's birth – the eighth sphere, the divine threshold – to the hymn that was sung at that time and place by Pimander, which was a particular sort of canticle having eight lines of verse. Thus, out of the variety of canticles just alluded to, Hermes, in imitation of Pimander, “made use at this time of his hymn, or prayer, or song of the eighth number [*chant de nombre octonaire*], which the French call *huictains*.”⁵⁰

The use of *octonaire* or *ogdoad* to designate a particular song form does not occur in Copenhaver's translation. But it is a possible reading of Ficino's Latin translation, which Foix-Candale, who was translating from Greek, may or may not have intended to follow.⁵¹ I leave it to readers of ancient Greek to determine the literal accuracy of Ficino's word choices, but his translation was popular throughout Europe into the seventeenth century and should therefore be considered alongside Foix-Candale's

⁵⁰ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 614: “entre lesquelz Mercure vsoit en cest endroit de son hymne, ou oraison, ou chant de nombre octonaire: que les François nomment par huictains.”

⁵¹ Here is Ficino's translation of the passage, quoted from *Pimander sive de potestate et sapientia Dei*, ed. Maurizio Campanelli (Turin: Nino Aragno, 2011), 101:

TAT. O quam vellem o pater, analogiam illam per hymnum, quem dixisti audisse te a potestatibus, dum ipse in octonario essem. TRISME. Octonarium o fili cecinit ipse Pimander, unde te decet umbraculum solvere.

Analogiam, the accusative of *analogia*, can mean either “analogy” or “ratio” (or “proportion”). The first sentence could thus mean something like “I wish, o Father, for that proportionate hymn that you said you heard from the powers [Pimander], while he was [or as it was] in the ogdoad.” Or, Tat could be requesting “that analogy by hymn” – in other words, to hear a song that analogizes the *ogdoad*. Hermes' reply supports the latter possibility: *cecinit* (from *cano*, *canere*) can denote either singing, sounding, reciting, or foretelling. The latter meaning appears in Copenhaver, but he has translated “foretold *of* the ogdoad” (as opposed to “predict *par* l'octonaire”). Ficino's *octonarium* (accusative case) without preposition indicates that it receives the action of *cecinit*. Does Ficino's Hermes mean to say that Pimander has foretold the *octonarium*, the eighth sphere? This would not appear to make sense in context. It would seem more likely that Ficino's Latin matches the interpretation that Foix-Candale later adopted, of an *octonarium* sung or proclaimed by Pimander himself: “Octonarium cecinit ipse Pimander.”

version.⁵² Foix-Candale's innovation was to equate the hymn of the *octonaire* to the French *huitain*.

Since he has just invoked the psalmist, it remains for Foix-Candale to cite the obvious parallel to a *chant de nombre octonaire*, namely Psalm 119, which, as a Catholic reader of the Vulgate Bible, he knew as Psalm 118:

And in this manner, David made use of a most excellent song or prayer that he had composed, namely the 118th Psalm, which he built out of as many *huictains* as there are letters in the alphabet of his language, giving to each letter a *huictain*, so that the Psalm is called the *octonaire*. In the same manner, a long time before, Hermes had used this mode of praying and singing before God, which he had learned by means of the *octonaire*, or *huictains*, which we are to understand that Hermes sang before the birth of his son, in order to give thanks to God and to praise and glorify him. And his son, desirous to attend [*entendre*], asks him to hear this hymn, prayer, and octonary song.⁵³

Neither Pineaux nor Mauger indicate an awareness of this passage, which provides more solid evidence of an understood correlation between Psalm 119 and the French *octonaires* of the 1570s and 80s. Whether or not Foix-Candale knew of the recent emergence of *octonaires* on vanity, he recognized the same psalmodic basis for the poetic *octonaire* (a title chosen in preference to *huitain*). The fact that Psalm 119 had become something of a doctrinal battleground could have motivated him to make a new connection from the

⁵² Ficino completed his translation in 1463; 1471 is the date of the first publication (in Treviso) of treatises I-XIV of the *Corpus Hermeticum* under the title *Mercurii Trismegisti de potestate et sapientia Dei*. The title of the first treatise, *Pimander* (from the Greek *Poimandres*), subsequently came to designate the entire collection. See Copenhaver's introduction to the *Hermetica*, xlvii-l. Copenhaver writes that "Ficino's *Pimander* remained the most influential presentation of the *Corpus Hermeticum* until the nineteenth century," and that "[b]y the mid-sixteenth century, it had seen two dozen editions" (xlviii).

⁵³ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 614: "Et de ceste maniere a vsé Dauid au plus excellent chant, ou priere qu'il aye fait, qui est le 118. Pseume, lequel il a basti d'autant d'huictains, qu'il y a de lettres en l'alphabet de sa langue, donnant à chascune lettre vn huictain, d'ont ce Pseume est dict l'octonaire: de mesme maniere Mercure long temps auparavant auoit vsé de ceste mode de prier, & chanter deuant Dieu, ce qu'il luy auoit aprins, par ceste maniere d'octonaire, ou huictains, lequel est a penser que Mercure auoit chanté apres la naissance de son filz, pour en rendre graces à Dieu, & l'en louer, & glorifier. Et son filz desireux de l'entendre, le prie de luy faire ouïr c'est hymne, oraison, & chant octonaire."

psalm to Hermeticism. In the next section, I will point out a similar connection that may be inferred from Giorgi and his translator Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie.

We know that some *octonaires* by Chandieu were circulating in Paris in manuscript form by 1576 – four years after Foix-Candale had tried to publish his commentaries there, and three years before he did publish them in Bordeaux. In Rouget’s view, the evidence suggests that before the first printings of 1580-83, Chandieu’s poems were distributed clandestinely in pamphleteer fashion.⁵⁴ In the earliest known manuscript in which some of them were copied (nineteen, in 1576), the poems are attributed to “Zamariel,” the pseudonym also used in Chandieu’s 1583 edition, and they are untitled; that is, they are not called *octonaires* (or *huitains*).⁵⁵ Rouget has examined another, slightly later manuscript owned by the Houghton Library at Harvard – the only other extant example known to predate the first printed edition of 1580 – in which twenty-three poems, again attributed to Zamariel, are labeled *Octonnaires* (sic) and are addressed to Marguerite de France, the wife of Henri de Navarre.⁵⁶ The 1580 Strasbourg edition (with engravings by Delaune) is also dedicated to Marguerite, as is Foix-Candale’s 1579 *Pimandre* commentary.

⁵⁴ Rouget, “Manuscrits, éditions et transformations,” 566: “Les variantes qu’on y observe [in the manuscrit Rasse des Nœux; see the following note] semblent indiquer l’intérêt que le chirurgien marquait à l’égard de ces pièces dont la circulation manuscrite, pamphlétaire et clandestine, était largement diffusé.”

⁵⁵ BnF ms. français 22563 II, ff. 66-68. The manuscript is titled “Recueil de pièces de vers, chansons, sonnets, triolets, sur les guerres de religion, formé par le chirurgien protestant RASSE DES NŒUX.” It is cited by Pineaux, *La Poésie des protestants*, 324 n35. François Rasse des Nœux was a Parisian surgeon and Protestant book collector who copied Chandieu’s poems in his own hand. See Rouget, “Manuscrits, éditions et transformations,” 566.

⁵⁶ Rouget, “Manuscrits, éditions et transformations,” 572; Houghton Library ms. Fr. 337 (“La Rime française”).

At this time, the Catholic Marguerite would have been regarded by Huguenots as an important political ally, if not as someone to be won over to their cause entirely. As is well known, her marriage to Henri de Navarre on August 18, 1572, provided the immediate catalyst for the St. Bartholomew massacres, which were ordered by her older brother Charles IX.⁵⁷ To say the least, her political position after 1572 was complicated, and her open marital relationship was always tenuous, especially given the rumor of an affair with Henri de Lorraine, the Duke of Guise and an arch-enemy of Navarre. But before her expulsion from Navarre's court in 1583, the couple were aligned against Henri III along with her younger brother François, the Duke of Alençon and (after 1576) of Anjou. Charles IX's death in 1574 left François the only surviving brother of Henri III, with whom he quickly fell out of favor. He left the court in 1575 to assist the Protestant rebellion and was joined in the following year by Navarre, after the latter's escape from a four-year detention in Paris. We know that by no later than January 1582, Le Jeune had become *maistre de la musique* to the Duke of Anjou, who also employed La Boderie as his secretary (the title under which he published his translation of Giorgi in 1578) and Du Chesne as his *médécin ordinaire* (the title under which he published his *Morocosmie* in 1583).⁵⁸ Isabelle His speculates that Le Jeune might have accompanied the Duke of Anjou during his stay at Navarre's court in Nérac (in Gascogne near Bordeaux) between September 1580 and May 1581. Marguerite, after taking up residence there in 1579, presided over a literary circle – a *petite académie* – that included Foix-Candale and Michel de Montaigne along with prominent Huguenot writers such as Philippe Duplessis-

⁵⁷ See again Yates, *The French Academies*, 210-35, 254-55.

⁵⁸ His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 46.

Mornay, Agrippa d'Aubigné, Guillaume de Saluste du Bartas, and Jacques de Constans, to whom Le Jeune's *Octonaires* were later dedicated.⁵⁹ Both Marguerite and Catherine de Bourbon, Navarre's sister, were avid music patrons as well, and Le Jeune's later connection to Catherine is attested by d'Aubigné.⁶⁰ Another of Le Jeune's patrons, the vicomte de Turenne (to whom he dedicated the *Dodecacorde*), was for a time one of Marguerite's *galants*.⁶¹

Given this close web of social and literary connections, the choice of Marguerite as perhaps the first dedicatee of Chandieu's *Octonaires* appears striking, perhaps especially in light of Foix-Candale's concurrent dedication of his *Pimandre*. In fact, both the 1580 Strasbourg edition and the slightly earlier collection in the Harvard manuscript begin with an *octonaire* in honor of Marguerite:

Pour t'enseigner Lecteur, à mespriser le Monde,
Et aspirer au bien, qui nous attend es Cieux,
Ce n'est rien de mes Vers, mais tu l'apprendra mieux
D'une fleur, ou le prix de toutes Fleurs abonde,
L'unique Marguerite, & plus digne subject,
De mille & mille Vers, de louange immortelle:
O Monde tresheureux, de ce que au monde elle est,
De ce qu'elle est au monde, Et non le monde en elle.⁶²

To teach you, reader, to despise the world

⁵⁹ His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 53-54, 60. See also Eugénie Droz, "La Reine Marguerite de Navarre et la vie littéraire à la cour de Nérac (1579-1582)," *Bulletin de la Société des bibliophiles de Guyenne* 80 (1964): 3-46; Isabelle His, "Quelle musique à la cour de Nérac?," in "La Cour de Nérac au temps de Henri de Navarre et de Marguerite de Valois," ed. Véronique Ferrer et al, special issue, *Albinea* 24, no. 1 (2012): 157-71.

⁶⁰ His, "Quelle musique à la cour de Nérac?," 162.

⁶¹ His, *Claude Le Jeune*, 54-55.

⁶² Reproduced in facsimile in Mauger, "Antoine de Chandieu et Etienne Delaune," 620 (fig. 4). *Marguerite* also means daisy.

*And aspire to the good that awaits us in heaven,
Never mind my verses, but you will learn better
From a flower worth the price of every flower,
The unique Marguerite, most worthy subject
Of a thousand verses of immortal praise:
O happy World, that in the world is she,
That she is in the world, and not the world in her.*

This poem does not appear in the 1576 manuscript and might therefore have been written closer to 1579-80, when Marguerite resettled in the south. The Harvard manuscript examined by Rouget confirms the identity of the Marguerite in the poem, which the Strasbourg edition leaves unspecified.

Rouget observes that the earliest known printings of Chandieu's *Octonaires* appear in "ornamented editions," whether illustrated, as with the Delaune engravings, or musical, as with l'Estocart's 1582 settings, which predate the first complete edition of 1583. Rouget speculates, "Perhaps the *huitains* owe their birth and raison-d'être to collaboration with artists; it could be that Chandieu conceived and published them with this in mind, after the example of the Psalter of Marot and de Bèze."⁶³ Be that as it may, if we assume that Foix-Candale had no awareness of them and only had in mind the Psalm 119 connection, it still demands notice that he describes the Hermetic *octonaire* as a sung poem that both entails and facilitates the transcendence of vanity. He makes the following comment on the reply of Hermes quoted above: "'O my son, even as Pimander

⁶³ Rouget, "Manuscrits, éditions et transformations," 567: "Il est frappant de noter que les états les plus anciens de l'œuvre poétique figurent dans des éditions ornementales, soit illustrées, soit musicales. Peut-être les huitains doivent-ils leur naissance et leur raison d'être à la collaboration des artistes; peut-être que Chandieu les a conçus et publiés dans cette optique, à l'exemple du Psautier de Marot et de Bèze...." Lucile Gibert credits the musical settings for the longevity of the title *octonaire*: "si le nom d' 'octonaire' est passé à la postérité, c'est presque uniquement par le biais de deux compositeurs, Pascal de L'Estocart et Claude Le Jeune"; Du Chesne, *La Morocosmie* (ed. Gibert), 40.

preached by the *octonaire*,’ when he taught me to pray to him and praise him by every incorporeal and intelligible action, leaving aside all abuse of the corporeal senses.”⁶⁴

Rather than to proclaim the vanity of all things, the Hermetic *octonaire* was intended as a means of escape from vanity and of self-deification.

Foix-Candale’s understanding of the *octonaire* as a transcendental *cantique* recalls Chandieu’s preoccupation with *cantiques de delivrance* in his *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, which appeared four years later alongside the fifty *Octonaires*. Chandieu ascribes to canticles the same purpose of giving thanks and praise to God:

For this word *Cantique* connotes following the way of the Ancients, who ornament their victories with beautiful and excellent canticles, of which we have many examples in the Scriptures. Which, therefore, will not come to pass if we do not take care to render thanks to God for every advantage; and especially, when we have been delivered from great dangers, either in particular or in general, that we will glorify God with hearts and mouths, in order to testify that we are not ungrateful of the benefits that we have received from him.⁶⁵

But as a Huguenot who had just survived a particular “great danger,” he feels obliged to give the *cantiques de delivrance* a strongly penitential cast:

And indeed, from whence do such afflictions ordinarily come, one after another? Whence so many passing calamities, if not from when we rejoice complacently in the order of the Church during the times of greatest abundance, and have not praised God, and have not profited as we must from the teaching of the Evangelist? Therefore let us be converted to our God, with the assurance that our repentance will not be fruitless, and let us say with David, You will surround us, Lord, with canticles of deliverance. Verily we have sinned with our ingratitude

⁶⁴ Foix-Candale, *Le Pimandre de Mercure Trismegiste*, 614: “O MON FILS, TOVT AINSI QVE PIMANDRE A PREDICT PAR L’OCTONAIRE, lors qu’il m’a enseigné a le prier, & le loier par toutes ces actions incorporeles, & intelligibles, laissant a par tous abus des sens corporelz.”

⁶⁵ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 157-58: “Car le mot de Cantique, emporte cela, suiuant la façon des Anciens, qui ornoient leurs victoires de beaux & excellentes cantiques, dont nous auons plusieurs exemples en l’Ecriture. Que doncques ceci ne ce passe sans que nous soions auertis qu’il nous faut estre soigneux de rendre graces à Dieu de tous les benefices, & singulierement quand, ou en particulier, ou en general, nous aurons esté deliurez de quelques grands dangers, que nous glorifions Dieu & de cœur, & de bouche, pour testifier que nous ne sommes ingrats des bien-faicts que nous auons receus de luy.”

and ignorance; but we are at the foot of your mercy that we implore, praying that you put into our mouths canticles of deliverance for glorifying you eternally.⁶⁶

In contrast to Foix-Candale, Chandieu regards the canticle as a vessel for receiving forgiveness for sins that are inescapable, rather than for conquering sin. He Christianizes where Foix-Candale Hermeticizes the Davidic wisdom.

To introduce and Christianize the *Octonaires* that follow the *Meditations*, Chandieu cites New Testament scripture, the first chapter of 1 John, who was assumed to be the same author as that of the fourth gospel and the book of Revelations. Its middle verses read like the Christian fulfillment of the message of Psalm 119:

This then is the message which we have heard of [Jesus Christ], and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John 1:5-7)

“Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” But the last three verses turn into a voice of warning:

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10)

To have no sin, to renounce it voluntarily in the Hermetic manner, is impossible.

⁶⁶ Chandieu, *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII*, 158-59: “Et de faict d’où nous viennent ordinairement tant d’afflictions, les vnes sur les autres, & d’où sont procedees tant de calamitez passees, sinon de ce que lors que nous iouyssions de l’ordre de l’Eglise en plus grande abondance, & d’auec plus de repos, nous n’en auons pas loué Dieu, & n’auons pas fait nostre profit de la predication de l’Euangile, comme il estoit requis? Partant conuertissons nous à nostre Dieu, auec assurance que nostre repentance ne sera pas infructueuse: & disons auec Dauid, Tu nous enuironneras de cantiques de deliurance, Seigneur. Vray est que nous auons peché par nostre ingratitude & mescognoissance: mais nous sommes aux pieds de ta misericorde laquelle nous implorons, te prians de mettre en nos bouches des cantiques des deliurance pour te glorifier eternellement.”

New documentary evidence would be needed to show that Foix-Candale and Chandieu were acquainted with or aware of one another, but the latter possibility appears more than likely, at least by the 1580s. Foix-Candale achieved wide renown for his 1566 translation of Euclid's *Elements*, the first to appear in France, which was commissioned by Catherine de' Medici for the education of Charles IX.⁶⁷ Both Foix-Candale and Chandieu knew Duplessis-Mornay, the "pope of the Huguenots" and a writer who, in his *Traité de la verité de la religion chrétienne* (1581), acknowledges the appeal of some Hermetic beliefs.⁶⁸ D'Aubigné recounts a party hosted by Foix-Candale in 1580, at which Henri de Navarre (a cousin of the bishop) and Duplessis-Mornay were both guests.⁶⁹ Chandieu, while staying with Duplessis-Mornay in Montauban in 1586, wrote his *Response à la Profession de foy des Moines de Bordeaux*, a diatribe against a recently published *Confession* by the monks of the Collège de Guyenne in nearby Bordeaux. Chandieu was employed at this time (from late 1585) as the army chaplain for Navarre, a post to which he was called from Geneva.⁷⁰ Foix-Candale and his family were closely connected to the Collège de Guyenne, which in the 1570s began to cultivate humanist study in imitation of the Paris Academy. This "Bordeaux renaissance," which also

⁶⁷ Harrie, "Duplessis-Mornay, Foix-Candale," 501 n12. A second edition was published in Paris in 1578.

⁶⁸ See Harrie, "Duplessis-Mornay, Foix-Candale"; see also Appendix 1, section II. On Chandieu's relationship with Duplessis-Mornay, see Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 256, 277; Hughes Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le Roi: Le Combat politique de Philippe Duplessis-Mornay (1572-1600)* (Geneva: Droz, 2002), 203ff.

⁶⁹ Théodore-Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Œuvres*, ed. Henri Weber et al (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), 414; cited in Harrie, "Duplessis-Mornay, Foix-Candale," 502.

⁷⁰ Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 256. Chandieu's *Response à la Profession de foy* was first published anonymously by Pierre Haultin at La Rochelle in 1586.

included Montaigne, created the need for the new printing house of Millanges.⁷¹ The *Confession* that provoked Chandieu's rebuttal had been solicited by Henri III in order to spread the awareness of Catholic doctrine, and had been published by Millanges, which was the sole organ for works issuing from the Collège de Guyenne.⁷² The two writers were therefore in close proximity and in the same general orbit as Le Jeune during the late 1570s and 1580s.

III. Psalms, canticles, the *octonaire*, and cyclical time in Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi*

La Boderie's French translation of Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi* was published in Paris in 1578 and immediately reissued the following year, which also saw the appearance of Foix-Candale's *Pimandre* commentaries. Giorgi's use of *octonaire* likewise proceeds from his understanding of canticles as pathways to divinity. He quotes routinely from the Psalms and divides his work into three *Cantici* (*Cantiques*) in a gesture to the tripartite division of the cosmos (into elemental, celestial, and archetypal worlds), its musical foundation, and the Holy Trinity. He calls them "Canticles of the Diapason" and subdivides each into eight sections called "Tones."⁷³ Because he defines the *octonaire* as a stepwise progression through the diapason, the treatise itself comprises a cycle of three *octonaires* representing one 24-hour celestial rotation.

⁷¹ Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 256-57; Harrie, "François Foix de Candale and the Hermetic Tradition," 217-40.

⁷² Barker, *Protestantism, Poetry and Protest*, 256.

⁷³ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 6: "...& pourtant chacun Cantique sera clos & accompli en huit tons: qui font le parfaict Diapason."

La Boderie's introduction to the work concludes with paraphrase translations in verse of Psalms 104 (Vulgate 103) and 149, in between which he inserts a "Hymne de Mercure Trismegiste prins de son Pimandre."⁷⁴ He titles the Psalm 104 paraphrase "Cantique de David Traduict de l'Hebrieu, sur l'Harmonie du Monde," thereby indicating an allegorical link between the psalm and Giorgi's *Cantiques*.⁷⁵ The word "canticle" properly denotes a sacred song of praise other than a psalm, though it appears frequently in psalm translations.⁷⁶ It would probably be worth pursuing an independent study of the word's range of connotations at this time, which extended, as we have seen, to Hermetic discourse.⁷⁷ It is not listed in Jean Nicot's *Thresor de la langue francoyse* (1606), but the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1694) identifies *cantique* as a synonym of *chanson spirituelle*, which suggests that the label could also have been applied to Le Jeune's *Octonaires*.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ The poems appear just before the "Table du Sommaire" and are unpaginated.

⁷⁵ We might also recall Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which is divided into three *cantiche*. Christian Neoplatonists acknowledged the quasi-Christian trinity of Plotinus, composed of Supreme Unity, Divine Mind or *Nous*, and World Soul – the latter strictly unorthodox, though advocated by Ficino. The syncretizing mind might in turn relate this to the much older Zoroastrian Trinity of Ormuzd, Ahriman, and Mithras, as did Ficino, Giorgio, and Tyard, though the latter only indirectly through the figure of Hieronymus the theologian. See Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 66-7; see also Yates, *French Academies*, 91, who notes that "[t]o regard as a foreshadowing of the Trinity three gods, one of whom, as they knew perfectly well from Plutarch, was the evil principle, suggests a certain confusion of thought amongst these Renaissance syncretists."

⁷⁶ Cf. *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Canticle," by Miloš Velimirović et al.

⁷⁷ Pineaux, *La Poésie des protestants*, 164-65 notes the conflation of the terms *ode*, *chanson*, and *cantique* among Huguenot poets in particular.

⁷⁸ *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1694), s.v. "cantique": "On appelle aussi, *Les chansons spirituelles*, Cantiques." The *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (ed. Rey, 2012), s.v. "cantique" offers the following: "Le mot appartient au vocabulaire religieux au sens de 'chant d'action de grâces', réalisé par excellence dans *Le Cantique des cantiques* (1614), traduction littérale de la Vulgate rendant le génitif superlatif hébraïque (la traduction normale serait 'le grand poème', 'le chant suprême'). Par métaphore, le mot a été repris (1532) comme titre de poèmes exaltant une chose ou une personne." Lefèvre d'Étaples had already translated Solomon's book as "les Cantiques des Cantiques" (sic) in the *Sainte Bible* of 1530. For a brief historical survey, see le Père Claude Rozier, "Hymnes et cantiques en France du XIII^e au XVII^e siècle," *La Maison-Dieu* 92 (1967): 136-44. Pineaux, *La Poésie des protestants*, 325,

Psalm 104, “Bless the Lord, O my soul,” fits the description of a canticle or song of praise; the Nouvelle Édition de Genève calls it a “Louange au Dieu de la création.” La Boderie also connects it unmistakably to the “Hymne de Mercure Trismegiste” that follows by liberally translating its opening verse: “O mon Ame beny le Seigneur troisfois-grand” – an obvious allusion to “Thrice Great Hermes.” (Lefèvre d’Étaples’s translation reads instead, “mon Dieu tu es magnifie moult grandement.”) The concluding verses of the paraphrase further encourage a Hermetic reading:

Au Seigneur Eternel de chanter j’ay envie,
 En Pseaumes je lou’ray mon Dieu toute ma vie:
 Luy soit plaisant & doux ce mien chant solennel,
 Je me resjouiray tousjours en l’Eternel:
 Soient esteincts les pecheurs de la terre notoire,
 Et ne soit jamais plus des pervers faict memoire:
 O mon Ame beny l’Eternel Troisfois grand,
 Donnez gloire & honneur à Jah qui tout comprend.

*I want to sing to the Lord Eternal,
 In Psalms I will praise my God all my life:
 Let this my solemn song be pleasing and sweet to him.
 I will rejoice always in the Eternal:
 Let sinners be eradicated from the manifest earth
 And let depravity be remembered no more:
 Bless, O my soul, the Thrice Great Eternal,
 Give glory and honor to Jehovah, who knows all.*

We may note in particular that along with the re-invocation of the “Thrice Great” deity, La Boderie attaches the qualifier “qui tout comprend,” which does not belong to the original psalm and which links the eradication of sin to the possession of knowledge. The

differentiates between the typical “cantique religieux” and Chandieu’s *Octonaires*, on account of the “diversité extrême dans la structure métrique” of the latter.

Hermetic hymn that follows concerns divine knowledge rather than harmony per se, and so the effort here, as always, is to syncretize the two doctrines. The Hermetic soteriology of knowledge may be linked to universal harmony via the Psalms of David, because although the *Hermetica* does not extol harmony, it does itself amount to a lengthy hymn of divine praise.

After the “Hymne de Mercure Trismegiste,” La Boderie paraphrases Psalm 149, “Chantez à l’Eternel un Cantique nouveau,” in which praise mingles with belligerence toward the unconverted:

Un glaive à deux trenchans dedans leur mains flamboye
Pour faire la vengeance entre toutes les Gents,
Et reprendre aigrement les peuples negligens,
Pour mettre aux ceps leurs Roys en contraincte enserrée:
Et leurs Princes lier d’une cheine ferrée,
Et exercer contr’eux le jugement escript.

*In their hands a double-edged sword blazes
For taking vengeance among the Gentiles
And sharply bringing the negligent to heel,
For binding their kings in tight shackles,
And their princes in iron chains,
And wielding against them the written judgment.*

La Boderie may have intended for this psalm to speak to the conflict in which the Duke of Anjou was then playing a major and rebellious part. As an academician, he could scarcely have been delighted with the war against Henri III, while as a “keenly orthodox Catholic” (as D. P. Walker describes him) he may have felt uneasy about his employer’s new reputation as “Duke of the Huguenots.” Walker notes that La Boderie’s *Hymnes ecclésiastiques* (1578), which he dedicated to Henri III, were meant “to counteract the

effects of the Protestant psalms.”⁷⁹ La Boderie’s extreme patriotism, which I will return to below, would also have colored his view of rebellion against the king and the Gallican church.

Whatever his political outlook or sense of personal compromise, La Boderie’s decision to introduce *De harmonia mundi* with these psalm paraphrases conforms to Giorgi’s central argument that the universal music provides access to the divine. For Giorgi, psalmody both fulfills the Christian requirement to praise God and belongs to the musical theurgy of the Neoplatonic tradition. In his preface, he characterizes music and especially psalmody as a restorer of equilibrium. He contrasts the famous story of Timotheus and Alexander, where the general was stirred into a warlike mood by certain “motetz mesurez,” with David’s ability to “moderate with his harp the fury of King Saul when he ascended to sacred things.”⁸⁰ For this reason, he concludes, “songs and harmonious sounds have been introduced into sacred matters by the Royal Prophet [David], the true restorer of sacred mysteries, and by the fathers and forefathers who have recognized these secrets in God and in Nature.”⁸¹ The pacifying ability of psalms derives from the universal harmony that they communicate and underwrite:

But in divine scripture, [harmony] so delights and moves the mind that it seems almost to be transformed – and principally in the hymns of David, which, for all that they are repeated, can never be boring to well-formed minds, but instead

⁷⁹ Walker, “The *Prisca Theologia* in France,” 228.

⁸⁰ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 4-5: “Pareillement Dion escrit d’Alexandre Macedonien, que quelquefois il estoit tellement incité & esmeu par les motetz mesurez de Timothee, que comme furieux & hors de soy tout soudain il sautoit our prendre ses armes. Semblablement la fureur du Roy Saül quand il montoit aux choses sacrees, estoit tellement moderee par a harpe de Daudid, qu’il estoit ramené à son premier repos, & le malin Daimon chassé, lequel abbattu par telle Harmonie, ne peut endurer aucun accord certain, comme luy estant ennemy & contraire.”

⁸¹ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 5: “Donc ie pense que les chants & sons Harmonieux, ont esté introduits aux choses sacrees par ce Royal Prophete vray restaurateur des sacrez mysteres, & par les peres & deuanciers qui ont cogneu tels secrets de Dieu & de Nature.”

rebuild and encourage them. For in these foundational songs, as it were, of the entire Law, the modulated accord between the two worlds [elemental and celestial] and the formal Archetype is sung, and the consonance that has been restored to all things by Christ the Messiah, and the sweet progress by which the Creation itself returns to its most perfect Creator. And not only this Royal Poet, but all those who have given some Symbol and conformity to the Holy Scriptures, have been those in whom we can admire an understanding of the true Harmony and divinity, and a profound study of all the other sciences. For who does not see that all the Prophets have been well taught in the true poetry? Who does not recognize in Moses, Ezekiel, and St. John the most exquisite and subtle measures of Geometry? And again in Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, and in St. John, the numeric proportions; and the sweet and accomplished musical accords in the hymns of David, the Epithalamium of Solomon, and in the description of the Old and New Testaments, as in a nuptial song, perfect in its entirety?⁸²

The “Epithalamium of Solomon” is the *Cantique des Cantiques*, the marriage of Christ with his “bride,” of divinity with humanity.

The Psalms of David thus provided a template not only of universal harmony, as Psalm 104 conveys, but of “the entire Law.” Only a short leap would have been needed from this general view to the *psaume octonaire*, “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord,” which invokes the law in nearly every verse, and which has a numeric and Cabalistic arrangement suitable to Giorgi’s philosophy.⁸³ Giorgi

⁸² Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 5: “Mais aux diuins escrits elle delecte & esmeut tellement l’esprit, qu’elle semble presque le changer en vn autre, principalement aux hymnes de Daud, qui pour estre tant de fois repetez, ne peuuent iamais estre ennuyeux aux esprits bien composez, mais plustost les recreer & fauoriser. Car en iceux comme au sou-chant de toute la Loy, sont chantez les accords modulisez de l’vn & l’autre Monde auec l’Archetype & formel, & ceste consonance ui par le Messie & Christ esté restituee en toutes choses, & par lequel doux progrès l’Ouurage mesme retourne en son Ouurier tresparsaict. Et non seulement ce Royal Poëte, mais tous ceux qui ont donné quelque Symbole & conformité à l’Ecriture sainte, ont esté tels, qu’en eux nous pouuons admirer vne cognoissance de la vraye Harmonie & diuinité, & vn estude profond de toutes les autres sciences. Car qui ne void que tous les Prophetes ont esté instruits & bien appris en la vraye poësie? Qui est-ce qui ne recognoist en Moyse, Ezechiel, & Saint Iean les plus exquisés & subtiles mesures de la Geometrie? Et de rechef en Moyse, Ezechiel, Daniel, & Saint Iean les proportions des nombres: & les doux, & accomplis accords de musique dedans les hymnes de Daud, l’Epithalame de Salomon, & en la description de l’vn & l’autre Testament, comme en vn chant nuptial entier & parfaict?”

⁸³ The editors of the Douay-Rheims edition write that “in almost every verse of this psalm (which in number are 176) the word and law of God, and the love and observance of it, is perpetually inculcated, under a variety of denominations, all signifying the same thing”; accessed July 20, 2016, <http://www.drbo.org/chapter/21118.htm>).

quotes from Psalm 119 at the end of his treatise, in defense of the exclusive and indeed secretive nature of the doctrine he is expounding: “Thy words have I hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against thee” (Ps. 119:11). From there he cites Hermes Trismegistus on the need to withhold the secret wisdom from “imbeciles,” and the warning of Jesus not to “cast pearls before swine” (Matthew 7:6).⁸⁴ Given the doctrine at issue, these were abhorrent and inflammatory sentiments from a Protestant point of view.

Giorgi introduces his first Canticle by explaining the octave’s cosmological significance, which derives, as in the *Hermetica*, from its use to represent descent from and re-ascent to divinity – a stepwise progression from the unison to a tone of mystical equivalence:

Because we must sing of the universal resonance [*la resonance du Monde*], blessed Father, it is well that we take the path well-ordained by degrees, by which the sovereign Arch-muse has entered into creation. He arranged each separate thing and the world in its entirety by sonorous numbers, not staying his hand until he had drawn the work unto himself by certain numbers into a perfect consonance, so that by the full Symphony of the Diapason it was consummated. This is instantly accomplished when the first number, after six intermediaries have passed, recalls to itself the last number, which is the same and not the same as the first. And in truth, all of worldly creation is perfect through the Octave, by which it is arranged and through which it is accomplished. For it is perfect because the sovereign Creator has arranged his entire work by seven degrees of things – tones full of sacred mystery, hidden by Moses beneath the veil of the six days. And he rested on the seventh day, which, if it is counted as the first, is also the eighth day. And the perfect work, arranged by this proper and agreeable succession of days, will persevere, such that always after the seventh day it will return to the eighth, which is the same and not the same as the first. Thus will the work of God ultimately be consummated as perfectly sonorous, when in the

⁸⁴ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 825: “Dedans mon cœur i’ay ton propos caché / Pour ne commettre encontre toy peché. Or les cacher c’est clos souz la clef du silence. Et que ce soit vne chose estrange du deuoir de l’homme de bien, de publier les secrets diuins. Mercure Trismegiste le declaire à Asclepe, quand il dict. C’est le faict d’vn esprit sans religion de publier à la conscience de plusieurs vn traicté fecondement plein de toute la maiesté de Dieu, car dans les ames imbecilles s’auilissent par trop des profonds propos & mysteres de Dieu, pourtant le souuerain docteur [Matthew] disoit: Ne donnez pas la chose sainte aux chiens, & n’exposez les marguerites deuant les porceaux, à sçauoir, en publiant aux personnes indignes & incapables les tres-precieux secrets de Dieu.”

perfect Octave (which we will treat of in its place) all things will be restored in him.⁸⁵

It can be seen here how Giorgi reconciles the uneven *septenaire* with the perfect octave: any given day may be counted as both the first and the eighth.

In the concluding eighth Tone of the first Canticle, Giorgi differentiates between the *octonaire* and the diapason. The latter denotes the consonant 2:1 interval produced after six intermediary steps have been traversed; the *octonaire* is both the traversal itself – a temporal, musical progression, and therefore a kind of song, as it is for Foix-Candale – and the eighth and final step, which returns to the beginning. In a chapter titled “That the perfect Diapason is consummated in the Octonaire,” Giorgi writes:

If we desire to succeed by the octave and true diapason, it is certainly necessary that we enter into the deepest mysteries. For we succeed by the octave when we return to God from whom we proceeded, so that we can say with Christ, I came from the Father and into the world, and again will I leave the world and go to the Father. For we also came from the same father, entering into the world, so that we may return to him in six days, or in six ages or steps, after which rest will be granted, according to the passage from the Apocalypse: “Blessed are they who die in the Lord,” namely the death of the righteous, “from henceforth, saith the Spirit,

⁸⁵ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 6: “Par ce que nous deuons chanter de la resonance du Monde, Bien-heureux Pere, il est bon que nous prenions le chemin par les degrez bien ordonnez, par lesquels le souuerain Archimusee est entré en l'ouurage: Lequel par nombres sonoreux à disposé chasque chose separement, & tout le monde en son entier. Duquel l'Ouurier mesme ne retira sa main que premierement par nombres propres il n'eust conduit l'œuvre en soy-mesme iusques à la consonance parfaicte, à fin que par la pleine Symphonie du Diapason il fust consommé: laquelle orprimes est alors accomplie, quand le premier, les six moyens passez rappelle à soy le dernier, qui est mesme, & non mesme avec le premier. Et à la verité par ceste Octaue toute la Fabrique du Monde est parfaicte, par icelle elle est disposee, par icelle elle est accomplie. Car elle est parfaicte lors que l'Ouurier souuerain par sept degrez de choses tons pleins de sacrez mysteres, cachez par Moyse soubz le voyle des six iours eut disposé toute la Fabrique, & au septieme iour se fut reposé: lequel s'il est nombré avecques le premier, lors qu'il estoit en soymesme, il est l'huitieme. Et l'oeuvre parfaict disposé par ceste propre & conuenable entresuite de iours perseuera tellement, que tousiours depuis le septieme il retourna en l'huitieme, qui est mesme & non mesme avec le premier. Ainsi finalement sera consommé l'œuvre de Dieu parfaictement sonoreux, quand en l'Octaue parfaict (de la quelle nous traicterons en son lieu) toutes choses seront restituees en luy mesme.” Cf. Tyard, *Solitaire second*, 227: “Et me suffit de vous rapporter les sept nombres, pour par leurs proporcons de l'un à l'autre, reconnoitre entre les Planettes une Symphonie procedante de leur mouuement, poußé par vertu de cete grande Ame de l'Uniuers, influant en tous les corps, non seulement celestes, mais encores aus inferieurs & terrestres, une Musicale vertu, de laquelle elle est composée en tant de perfection.” The Curieux designates these seven numbers governing harmonic celestial movement a *septenaire*.

that they may rest from their labors,” namely in Christ in whom they live, being dead to the world.⁸⁶

Giorgi’s entry here into “the deepest mysteries” has been preceded by a conventional account of the Hexameron or six days of creation (in French, the *senaire*) and the *septenaire* or Sabbath day.⁸⁷ Borrowing from Augustine, he analogizes the days of creation to the Six Ages of Man followed by a seventh age of eternal Sabbath. Borrowing from pagan tradition, he analogizes the seventh age to the seventh sphere, Saturn; but his syncretic approach is to equate the planet not with “falsehood,” as in the *Hermetica*, rather with the receipt of Hebrew law and the remission of sins:

But if we mean to say that the Hebrews, to whom this law was given directly by God, have received influence only from him...nonetheless, Saturn is not to be excluded, as they themselves say that they have received the law from the place, or *sefirah*, which they call *Binah*, to which Saturn responds, over which his intelligence presides, and out of which flows repose, the remission of sins, and this super-abundance that we call the Jubilee, by squaring the seventh number, which agrees with Saturn the seventh Planet.... And Saturn is the Divine Portal, receiving divine inspiration that he spreads through his Saturnalias.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 321: “Que le parfaict Diapason est consommé en l’Octonaire. CHAP 14. Si nous desirons de paruenir à l’octaue & vray diapason, certainement il est besoing que nous entrions aux plus profonds cabinets. Car alors nous paruenons à l’octaue, quand nous retournons à Dieu, duquel nous sommes procedez afin que nous puissions dire avecques Christ, Je suis sorty du Pere & suis venu au monde. Derechef ie laisse le monde, & m’en vay au Pere. Car nous aussi sommes sortis d’un mesme pere entrans en ce monde, afin que nous retournons à luy par six iours, ou par six aages ou progresz: apres lesquels sera donné le repos, selon ce passage de l’Apocalypse: Bien-heureux sont les morts qui meurent au Seigneur, à sçauoir de la mort des iustes, dès a present l’esprit dict qu’ils se reposent de leurs labeurs, à sçauoir en Christ, auquel ils viuent estans morts au Monde.”

⁸⁷ Zarlino subscribed to a *senario* with arithmetical proportions, in the view (following Boethius) that this numerical ordering is more natural than and should therefore take priority over geometric and harmonic series. *Senaire*, *septenaire*, and *octonaire* all refer to stepwise ordinal progressions, a fact that ties them conceptually to temporal movement, and that has been overshadowed by the scholarly focus on Zarlino’s views on harmonic proportions. For an account of Zarlino’s idea of the *senario*, see Benito Rivera, “Theory Ruled by Practice: Zarlino’s Reversal of the Classical System of Proportions,” *Indiana Theory Review* 16 (1995): 145-70.

⁸⁸ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 112: “Mais si nous voulons que les Hebrieux (ausquels sans moyen ceste loy a esté donnée de Dieu) ayent receu influence de luy seul, ainsi qu’il est assez démontré en plusieurs lieux d’icelle, toutesfois Saturne n’en est pas forclos: attendu qu’eux mesmes disent qu’ils ont receu la loy du lieu ou de la Sfire qu’ils appellent *Binah*, à laquelle respond Saturne, & son intelligence presidente. Duquel lieu decoule le repos, la remission des pechez, & ceste surabondance qu’on nomme le

As Giorgi goes on to explain, *Binah* means “the Intelligence of the Holy Spirit,” which is linked here to Saturn as the astrological representative of intellect. *Binah* (Hebrew for “understanding”) is the Cabalistic term for the third emanation (*sefirah*) from the Tree of Life. Giorgi was therefore making a common leap for occultists from that context to the seventh planet.⁸⁹

In connecting Hebrew law and the Sabbath to the seventh planet, Giorgi departed from the teaching of Augustine, who had denounced the idea. In *Contra Faustum*, Augustine writes to his Manichaean opponent,

We are not afraid to meet your scoff at the Sabbath, when you call it the fetters of Saturn. It is a silly and unmeaning expression, which occurred to you only because you are in the habit of worshipping the sun on what you call Sunday. What you call Sunday we call the Lord’s day, and on it we do not worship the sun, but the Lord’s resurrection. And in the same way, the fathers observed the rest of the Sabbath, not because they worshipped Saturn, but because it was incumbent at that time, for it was a shadow of things to come, as the apostle testifies.... But if you think it allowable to observe the month of March without thinking of Mars, why do you try to bring in the name of Saturn in connection with the rest of the seventh day enjoined in Scripture, merely because the Gentiles call the day Saturday? The Scripture name for the day is Sabbath, which means rest.⁹⁰

In the Biblical and Augustinian tradition, history ends with the *septenaire* – the seventh age, the Jubilee of eternal Sabbath – which brings rest, the remission of sins, and the fulfillment of the law. A Neoplatonist could associate Saturn and the *septenaire* with each

Jubilé, par le quarré du nombre septenaire, qui consent avecques Saturne septieme Planete.... Et Saturne est Porte-Dieu recevant les inspirations divines, qu’il répand en ses Saturniens.”

⁸⁹ See Moshe Idel, *Saturn’s Jews: On the Witches’ Sabbath and Sabbateanism* (London: Continuum, 2011), 54ff. Idel establishes that the tradition of linking *Binah* to Saturn and the Sabbath began no later than the thirteenth century with the Spanish founder of Prophetic Cabala, Abraham Abulafia.

⁹⁰ Augustine, *Contra Faustum*, XVIII.5, trans. Richard Stothert, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series*, vol. 4, ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo: Christian Literature, 1887), rev. and ed. Kevin Knight for New Advent, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/140618.htm>.

of the latter outcomes, but not as easily with the resolution or end of history itself, as the seventh was only the penultimate scalar position. By proceeding from there to the eighth, Giorgi replaced the Biblical linear conception of history with a cyclical Greek conception: the end of history, accomplished by the *octonaire*, is also a return to the beginning.⁹¹

The unity of opposites again serves as the guiding premise for this view of cosmic history. The diapason constitutes a balance of movements away from and back to the unison, so that “the Heavens in their revolution conduct the Diapason perfectly,” just as humans are conducted back to God.⁹² The same principle of harmonic balance justifies replacing the Hebrew Sabbath with the Lord’s day, the new beginning:

After which rest (admirable thing) follows a happier operation than the rest itself, yet different from the first operation, being rather the opposite. For the first concerns God’s issue in Christ, in whom we find perfection and rest, and the second concerns the return to God in Christ, and the union through him with the Father. The stable mean is accorded most properly between these two opposed movements, in the manner that we have said, and which the natural Philosophers teach is to be found between two contrary movements. For the issue and the return are two contrary movements, and their operations are contrary, for the one labors in expectation of rest, while the other desires no rest at all, nor any ending.... [A]nd the true diapason consists of a double proportion [2:1], yet with seven intervals and eight degrees [*limites*]. And when we have attained the supreme operation through Christ and through the rest that we have in him, we need no longer celebrate the Sabbath on the seventh day, but rather on the following day, which is a better operation than the first that occurred on the same day in the beginning. For the issue of every creature outside of God, and the operation of God himself in deploying these creatures began the first day, and the return to God by the resurrection and stable union begins on the same day, which for this reason is called the Lord’s day. Nevertheless, the Sabbath and day of

⁹¹ An awareness of the tension between Biblical linear and Greek cyclical views of history runs through the Middle Ages and Renaissance periods. See for example Marjorie Reeves, “Pattern and Purpose in History in the Later Medieval and Renaissance Periods,” in Bull (ed.), *Apocalypse Theory*, 90-111.

⁹² Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 322: “Que les Cieux en leur reuolution conduisent parfaitement le Diapason.”

repose has been changed to this octave day of Sunday, verily a feast to be celebrated more by mystery and profound secrets.⁹³

This idea echoes a sermon by Augustine on the Easter Octave, in which he explains why Christians celebrate the Sabbath on Sunday rather than Saturday.⁹⁴ For Augustine, the eighth is the day of baptism, which fulfills the Old Testament tradition of circumcision on the eighth day after birth. At the end of *De civitate Dei*, he also alludes to an “eighth and eternal day, consecrated by the resurrection of Christ, and prefiguring the eternal repose not only of the spirit, but also of the body” – an “end without end.”⁹⁵

Giorgi goes on to apply the *octonaire* to all of universal movement, and in so doing makes it clear that the treatise’s division into three eight-part *Cantiques du Diapason* is meant to reflect the repeating 24-hour cycle of three *octonaires*:

Likewise do the Heavens in their natural revolution return always to the same place in the circuit from which they have departed; yet it is not the same revolution, nor the same day, degree, or minute. For each Heaven or planet changes by one degree per day – or by a minute at least, as with Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, which do not advance by one degree per day, but by a few minutes. But

⁹³ Giorgi/La Boderie, *Harmonie du monde*, 321: “Après lequel repos (chose admirable) s’ensuit vne operation plus heureuse que le repos mesme, toutesfois differant beaucoup de la premiere operation, ou plustost luy estant comme opposite. Car la premiere regarde l’issue de Dieu en Christ, auquel nous sommes parfaicts & reposons: & celle-cy regarde le retour avecques Christ en Dieu, & l’vñion par luy mesme avecques le Pere. Fort conuenablement entre ces deux mouuemens opposites de la maniere que nous auons dicte, est donné le repos moyen, que les Filosofes naturels enseignent estre trouué entre chascuns deux mouuemens contraires. Car l’issue & le retour sont deux contraires mouuemens, & contraires sont leurs operations, car l’vne est laborieuse attendant le repos, l’autre ne desire point de repos, ny ne rencontre point de terme.... & le vray diapason consistant en proportion double, toutesfois avecques sept interualles & huit limites. Et quand par le repos que nous auons en Christ, & par Christ nous serons paruenus à la supreme operation, il ne nous faut plus au iour septieme celebrer de repos ny de sabbath: mais bien le iour auquel succede vne meilleure operation que la premiere, qui au mesme iour fut faicte dès le commencement. Car l’issue de toutes createurs hors de Dieu, & l’operation de Dieu mesme en deployant icelles creatures commença le premier iour, & le retour en Dieu mesme par la resurrection & stable vñion au mesme iour print commencement, lequel pour ceste cause est appellé le iour du Seigneur. Pourtant le Sabbath & le iour de repos a esté changé en cest octaue & iour de Dimenche, feste à la verité plus celebre par mystere & secret tresprofond.”

⁹⁴ Augustine, *Sermo 8 in octava Paschae*; see Suzanne Poque (ed. and trans.), *Augustin d’Hippone: Sermons pour la Pâque* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966), 85-115.

⁹⁵ Augustine, *The City of God*, 867 (XXII.30).

the astral sphere, though it be moved, as many think, from its position by some small distance, also accomplishes this daily revolution, returning to the same point from which it departed. All of the Heavens by their revolutions not only show but also determine that all things receiving their influence follow this circular movement, returning to the same point from which they departed. Corruptible things return to the earth or material from which they are composed, and non-corruptible things, in separating from gross material, return to the principle from which they derive – though for yet another reason. For as they have proceeded from him who is the principle, so do they tend toward him who is himself the end. Nonetheless, the same God is both the principle and the ultimate end. They also make their entire daily revolution in 24 hours, which produces three octaves, or *octonaires*, which, considered together, make a triple proportion. For 24 contains eight three times. And this proportion establishes the diapason and diapente [2:1 and 3:2], so that the contour of the heavens will still be harmonious, as well as the distance between them and the correspondence of their collective movements.⁹⁶

This passage betrays Giorgi's awareness that heavenly movements could be measured accurately enough to undermine the notion of perfection and regularity – small fissures in the cosmic order that needed to be papered over. Recalling the first *Octonaire* of Le Jeune's cycle, "Quand on arretera la course coustumièrè," we can see how it exploits

⁹⁶ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 322: "Devx choses sont considerables au Diapason, l'une que tousiours il retourne au mesme ton d'ou il part, l'autre que ce ton n'est pas de mesme clef & nature... mais ils sont fort bien correspondans en nature. Ne plus ne moins les Cieux par leur ordinaire retour, tous tousiours retournent à vn mesme lieu, duquel par le point du circuit ils estoient partis, toutesfois ce n'est pas vne mesme reuolution, ny d'un mesme iour, degré ou minute: car chascun Ciel ou planete change vn degré chascun iour, ou pour le moins vne minute, comme Mars, Iupiter, & Saturne: lesquels n'auancent pas d'un degré chascun iour, mais de quelques minutes. Mais le Ciel estelé encor que (comme plusieurs pensent) il soit meu de son lieu de quelque espace, il accomplit aussi sa reuolution chascun iour, retournant à vn mesme lieu par le point d'ou il estoit party. Tous lesquels Cieux par cestes leurs reuolutions ne merquent pas seulement, mais aussi donnent faueur à ce que toutes choses qui reçoient leur influence ensuyuent ce mouuement rond, & retournent au mesme point d'ou elles sont parties. Les vnes par corruption retournent en la terre ou matiere d'ou elles sont composées, & les autres non-corrompables par separation de ceste matiere grossiere retournent à ce principe d'ou elles sont deriuées, toutesfois sous autre raison. Car elles sont procedées de luy entant qu'il est principe, & tendent à luy-mesme entant qu'il est la fin. Toutesfois le mesme Dieu est le principe & le terme final. Elles font aussi toutes leur reuolution iournelle en 24. heures, qui produisent trois octaues, ou octonaires, lesquels comparez par ensemble rendent vne proportion triple. Car 24. contient huit trois fois. Et ceste proportion establit le diapason & diapenté, afin que le contour des Cieux soit encor harmonieux, ainsi que la distance d'iceux, & la correspondance de leurs mouuemens par ensemble."

this awareness by characterizing heavenly movements as inconstancy rather than harmony.⁹⁷

As a unitary cosmologist, Giorgi needed to extend the universal harmony of the *octonaire* to human music, which should aspire toward the same perfection. At the beginning of the valedictory eighth *Ton* of the third *Cantique*, he pledges to “imitate, according to our ability, the most excellent Musicians, who have studied always to render the last harmony and verse [*Motet*] the sweeter and more agreeable, and who are sometimes excited by such a great sweetness that, were they not subject to temporal movements and to fainting from overwork, they would carry on the everlasting song.”⁹⁸ The “last harmony and verse” is again the eighth. “Temporal movements” stand between the musician and eternity, which the Canticles of the Diapason mysteriously imitate:

The supreme Arch-muse whose song we have tried to describe, because he surpasses time and enjoys Eternity, arranges and distributes his Canticles in time and leads them toward his Eternity. For he has subjected this harmonic machine, by what artifice I do not know, to the succession of time, even as he has liberated it from time.⁹⁹

Giorgi has already addressed the relationship between time and movement early in his treatise, because, despite his cyclical conception, as a Christian he needs to refute the Aristotelian theory that the universe is eternal. From the assumption that every movement

⁹⁷ See Chapter 2, section I.

⁹⁸ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 730: “nous imiterons selon nostre puissance les plus excellens Musiciens, qui s'estudient tousiours de rendre le dernier accord & Motet le plus doux, & agreable, & quelquefois sont ravis de si grande douceur, que s'ils n'estoient soumis aux mouuemens temporels, & s'ils ne defaillioient trauaillez de trop de labeur, ils continueroient le chant perpetuellement.”

⁹⁹ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 730: “Or le supreme Archimusée, duquel nous essayons de descrire le chant, parce qu'il surpasse le temps, & iouyt de l'Eternité, ores par temps distribue & departit ses Cantiques, & ores les conduit iusques à son Eternité. Car il a soumis, ne sçay par quel admirable artifice, ceste machine harmonique à l'entresuite du temps, & de temps encor l'a rendue libre & affranchie.”

is caused by a prior movement, Aristotle deduced an infinite regress; time, the measure of movement, can therefore have no beginning or end. Giorgi counters that because time is also a byproduct of movement, it must have had a beginning, as it could not logically precede its own cause.¹⁰⁰ Hence, movement and time were created simultaneously by a God who transcends both – “Tu es le vray Dieu sans mouvement, montant à ta sublimité, & descendant à nous” – and salvation must entail the cessation of both.¹⁰¹ Movement through the *octonaire* accomplishes this transition and draws the individual and universal history to a close and a new beginning. The French *octonaires* on vanity look in the same direction, toward eternity, through different eyes and counsel a different path.

IV. Vanity and historical time at the threshold of modernity

The preceding section has shown that Giorgi’s belief in *harmonia mundi* goes hand in hand with his cyclical conception of time. The latter was fundamental to Greek cosmology, which emerged in response to a need to identify predictable physical and historical patterns. Rémi Brague writes,

The idea of a celestial influence does not have just a spatial dimension, in that the superior flows onto the inferior. It is doubled by a chronological dimension: the circular temporality that rules the celestial bodies is believed to govern the linear

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 28: “Mais par ce que le mouuement engendre le temps, & que le temps mesmes est la mesure du mouuement & du repos: de là vient aussi que forgeans leur argument sur vne partie du temps ils paralogisent & faillent à raisonner. Si le Monde, disent-ils, n’estoit point auant qu’il print commencement, attendu que cest *Auant* est quelque chose de temps: donc le temps precedoit le mouuement, qui est sa cause & son progeniteur. Ils adioustent dauantage en tout instant & moment assigné, est le principe du temps auenir & la fin du passé: donques le temps a esté auant ce premier instant, & par consequent le mouuement & le Monde. Toute ceste erreur procede des paroles mal entenduës, quand ils referrent ceste parcelle *Auant* pour signifier seulement quelque partie du temps. Car tant chez les nostres, que chez les estrangers qui sçauent bien & proprement parler, nous voyons que ceste parcelle *Auant* signifie autre chose qu’une partie du temps.”

¹⁰¹ Giorgi/La Boderie, *L’Harmonie du monde*, 826.

temporality of human history. In this way it suggests a cyclical interpretation of the historical future and thus relativizes the aspect of adventure without return that human history might assume. The result is something like a cosmologization of history.¹⁰²

Cosmology “gives rhythm to [human] history, even prevents that history from gaining independence by forcing the development of human achievements to periodically return to zero.”¹⁰³ Eva Kushner identifies the same cyclical view in the philosophy of Pontus de Tyard:

when there is harmony between the “spheres” and the human soul at its most contemplative, time is mastered, homogeneous, and cyclical. On the other hand, to the extent that swinish man loses himself in materialism, his temporal life is, in Platonic terms, non-being, irrecoverable for the history of the mind [*l’histoire de l’esprit*], if indeed we can speak of the mind in historic terms. Becoming is flow, but not history.¹⁰⁴

For academicians, as we have seen, the vanity of materialism could be circumvented, and it may now be added that the contemplative life was seen to enable a kind of intellectual mastery over time itself, as Giorgi’s theory of the *octonaire* plainly suggests. Kushner’s referral to the *histoire de l’esprit* raises a crucial point about the early-modern Neoplatonic worldview, namely that mind (*nous*) and the word of law (*logos*) were conceptually equivalent to the universal creator, and were therefore to remain constant despite historical change. From this point of view, to gain knowledge was, if not an

¹⁰² Bague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 98.

¹⁰³ Bague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 105.

¹⁰⁴ Kushner, “Le Rôle de la temporalité,” 223: “quand il y a harmonie entre les ‘spheres’ et l’âme de l’homme en ce qu’elle a de plus contemplatif, le temps est maîtrisé, homogène, cyclique. Dans la mesure, au contraire, où l’homme-pourceau plonge dans la matière, le temps de sa vie est, en termes platoniciens, du non-être, irrécupérable pour l’histoire de l’esprit si tant est qu’on puisse alors parler de l’esprit en termes historiques; le devenir est flux mais non histoire.”

ahistorical process, then not at least a unidirectional process. Moses and Hermes Trismegistus had possessed divine knowledge already during history's adolescence.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, sympathy for this Greek conception of history manifests, among other ways, in the Neoplatonic endeavor to synthesize pagan revelation (*prisca theologia*) with Biblical revelation. By itself, the cosmic picture that emerges from the Old and New Testaments encourages a more linear view of history: two great ruptures after the creation – the Fall of Adam and the Great Flood – succeeded by further decline, then the advent of a Messiah in fulfillment of prophecy and the ensuing prospect of salvation or damnation. Of course, this narrative had been basic to Christianity from the beginning, but sixteenth-century Reformers could point to erroneous departures from it in the name of the Greek principle of cosmic stability. Giorgi, for one, hardly dwells on future or universal uncertainty, or on vanity and the certainty of death. But he is concerned with reconciling linear Biblical time with his doctrine of *harmonia mundi*, by merging the Augustinian *septenaire* of creation and repose with the Hermetic *octonaire* of devolution and re-ascent.

The cyclical view of history encouraged French intellectuals such as La Boderie, Pierre de la Ramée, and Étienne Champier to regard the *prisca theologia* as an integral part of Christian revelation. Even the Druids of pre-Roman Gaul were honored for having preached the immortality of the soul.¹⁰⁵ La Boderie's academic poem, *La Galliade, ou de la révolution des arts et sciences* (1578), connects an idealized Gallic past, which in his view had spawned Greco-Roman civilization, to his own historical moment.¹⁰⁶ Jean-

¹⁰⁵ Walker, "The *Prisca Theologia* in France," 213.

¹⁰⁶ Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie, *La Galliade, ou de la révolution des arts et sciences* (Paris: Guillaume Chaudiere, 1578). Cf. Secret, *L'Esotérisme de Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie*, 123-52.

François Maillard calls *La Galliade* a “work of propaganda for proclaiming the originality of French musical style and taste”; the cyclical view required that such originality be derived from ancient precedent.¹⁰⁷ La Boderie devotes the third part of the poem to the Druids, the fourth to the “Music and Harmony” of macrocosm and microcosm and “the marvelous effects produced,” and the fifth to poetry, “which, though I have placed it among the Arts and Sciences, seems rather to be more of a sacred furor and elevation of the mind than a doctrine acquired by industry and human power.”¹⁰⁸ He published *La Galliade* in the same year as his translation of Giorgi’s *De harmonia mundi*, and the influence of the latter work is plain. In Frances Yates’s summary of the poem, “all the modern French writers, artists, architects, musicians, poets, are introduced in a philosophical-historical setting, based on Renaissance theories of universal harmony, such as that of Giorgi, adapted to French patriotic and monarchical themes.”¹⁰⁹ Not all, however: as Maillard notes, La Boderie’s failure to mention Claude Le Jeune is conspicuous and surprising.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Jean-François Maillard, “Théorie et pratique musicale chez les kabbalistes chrétiens de la Renaissance,” in *Musique et humanisme à la Renaissance*, ed. Nicole Cazauran (Paris: École Normale et Supérieure, 1993), 54: “les quelque trois mille vers de *La Galliade* consacrés à la poésie et à la musique font oeuvre de propagande pour proclamer l’originalité du goût et du style musical français.”

¹⁰⁸ La Boderie, “Advertissement aux Lecteurs,” preface to *La Galliade*, n.p.: “Au Cercle tiers ie discour particulièrement du sçauoir admirable de noz Druydes en la connoissance de toutes disciplines.... Au quatrieme Cercle, i’ay traité de la Musique, & Harmonie, tant du Monde Archetype, Celeste, & Elementaire, que de celle de l’Homme ou du Petit-Monde, & des merueilleux effets qu’elle produit.... Finalement au cinquieme & dernier i’ay traité de la Poësie, laquelle bien que ie l’aye mise entre les Arts & Sciences, semble toutesfois estre plustost vne sainte fureur & eleuation d’esprit, que non pas vne doctrine acquise par industrie & puissance humaine....”

¹⁰⁹ Yates, *Occult Philosophy*, 65.

¹¹⁰ Maillard, “Théorie et pratique musicale,” 56.

La Boderie's historical awareness of these revelations supported his opinion that human civilization oscillates between peaks and valleys in an orderly process, determined once again by the principle of accordant discord. The cyclical view is developed still more elaborately and tendentiously in Louis Le Roy's *De la vicissitude ou varieté des choses en l'univers*, a treatise dedicated to Henri III in 1575.¹¹¹ The work's subtitle indicates Le Roy's thesis of a "concurrence of arms and letters among the leading and most illustrious nations of the world, from the time when civilization and human memory began until the present" – in short, that literary and military achievements always go hand in hand. Le Roy's historical orientation is thoroughly cosmological. Walter Gundersheimer writes,

Le Roy is not content to see human events as a distinct and isolated category of phenomena. He wishes to set them within the framework of the entire known universe. Thus, we cannot understand Le Roy's analysis of history or of his own time without reference to his cosmological and theological doctrines.¹¹²

Echoing once again the belief in the unity of opposites and in God as both center and circumference, Le Roy attributes every last historical vicissitude to omniscient Providence:

believing certainly that God, the omnipotent maker and governor of this great work, excellent in beauty, admirable in variety, singular in duration, whom I supplicate to help me in an enterprise so lofty, long, difficult, and not yet attempted by anyone, is concerned with every event here down to the least, containing in himself the principle, the end, and the means of them.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Work cited in Chapter 2, note 23.

¹¹² Walter Gundersheimer, *The Life and Works of Louis Le Roy* (Geneva: Droz, 1966), 95.

¹¹³ Le Roy, *De la vicissitude*, 1r: "ie recognois treshumblement la prouidence diuine estre par dessus, croyant certainement que Dieu tout puissant facteur & gouuerneur de ce grand ouurage excellent en beauté, admirable en varieté, singulier en duree, auquel ie supplie m'ayder en entreprise tant haulte, longue, difficile, & non encores attentee de personne, est soigneux de tous affaires y aduenans iusques au moindres, contenant en soy le principe, la fin, & les moyens d'iceux...."

Gundersheimer writes that for Le Roy, Providence was “the axiomatic and unquestionable assumption upon which every rational account of the world was based.”¹¹⁴ But as Le Roy makes clear, Providence always fulfills through its total determinacy the cosmological axiom of *constante inconstance*, which rationalizes and justifies the changes we observe. *De la vicissitude* is saturated with this idea of “how all things in the universe are tempered and conserved by contraries and dissimilarities.”¹¹⁵ The word *vicissitude* in fact connotes cyclical change and regular succession more than random, endless variety: “Revolution, changement de choses qui se succedent les unes aux autres. La vicissitude des saisons.”¹¹⁶

In the sixteenth-century context of an unprecedented struggle for political control over liturgical practices and privileges, disagreements over the knowledge of God, human purpose, and the path to salvation could readily be viewed in this grand world-historical light. Giorgi’s treatise, which first appeared in 1525 at the dawn of the Reformation, takes the long view of a universe already redeemed and in harmony with itself, through which rational philosophers could autonomously decide to navigate away from vanity and toward eternity. Increasingly, though, philosophers would face the challenge of reconciling their devotion to ancient, preordained thought with the modern awareness that the past could be superseded. The early-modern discourse on vanity had an anti-scientific dimension that treated the appearance of empirical progress with arch-skepticism.

Giorgi’s contemporary Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa writes of the perennial “vanity and

¹¹⁴ Gundersheimer, *The Life and Works*, 95-96.

¹¹⁵ Le Roy, *De la vicissitude*, 5r: “Comment toutes choses en l’univers sont temperees & conservees par contraires & dissemblables.”

¹¹⁶ *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694), s.v. “vicissitude.”

uncertainty of the arts and sciences.”¹¹⁷ Montaigne’s great salvo on vanity, the *Apologie de Raimond Sebond* (1575-80), draws from a recent revival of Pyrrhonian skepticism, a long-neglected ancient Greek scourge of innovation: if past is prologue, in Montaigne’s view, today’s new ideas will one day be supplanted like the old ones.¹¹⁸

As a proto-modern intellectual, Montaigne looks at the totality of ancient philosophy and asks, “how could we defend such great inconsistency, variety, and vanity in the opinions that we see were produced by these admirable and excellent souls?”

For what is there, for example, more vain than to try to divine God by our analogies and conjectures, to regulate him and the world by our capacity and our laws, and to use at the expense of the Deity this little shred of ability that he was pleased to allot to our natural condition? And, because we cannot stretch our vision as far as his glorious throne, to have brought him here below to our corruption and our miseries?¹¹⁹

Montaigne remained a Catholic while many in his family converted. But Protestants had little reason to quarrel with his brand of skepticism, as Biblical literalism also excelled at ruling out scientific novelties. The gathering cosmological uncertainty after Copernicus served to reinforce their linear historical view of an unstable universe heading toward apocalypse.

The French reception of Giorgi’s treatise in 1578 must have differed significantly from that of its first publication in Venice half a century before, or its Parisian debut in Latin in 1545. Montaigne, whose liberal intellect was bent on dismantling received wisdom, could not have found it praiseworthy. Yet the *Apologie de Raimond Sebond* is

¹¹⁷ See Appendix 2, note 8.

¹¹⁸ The *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* by Sextus Empiricus (ca. 160-210 CE) were re-published in 1562 and provided additional fuel to the epistemological crisis of early modernity. See Popkin, *The History of Scepticism*, xvii-xxi.

¹¹⁹ Montaigne, *Essays*, 380.

also colored by a certain rigidity that derives from a hunger for absolutes, which infected the age generally and which is also evident in La Boderie's reverent concern for first causes, without which all knowledge crumbles.¹²⁰ For Montaigne in 1580, incompatible points of view only cemented his conviction that "Truth must have one face, the same and universal":

What then will philosophy tell us in this our need? To follow the laws of our country – that is to say, the undulating sea of the opinions of a people or a prince, which will paint me justice in as many colors, and refashion it into as many faces, as there are changes of passion in those men? I cannot have my judgment so flexible.¹²¹

He respects the Platonists for acknowledging that "truth is engulfed in deep abysses where human sight cannot penetrate," which limited them to stating probabilities about the world of becoming. But he is not content with probabilities, which are based on semblance and therefore cannot lead one to the truth:

But how can [the Academics] let themselves be inclined toward the likeness of truth, if they know not the truth? How do they know the semblance of that whose essence they do not know? Either we can judge absolutely, or we absolutely cannot. If our intellectual and sensory faculties are without foundation and footing, if they do nothing but float and flutter, then to no purpose do we let our judgment be carried away by any part of their operation, whatever likelihood it may seem to offer us; and the surest attitude of our understanding, and the happiest, would be that in which it maintained itself poised, upright, inflexible, without motion and without agitation.¹²²

¹²⁰ Nicholas le Fèvre de la Boderie, in a prefatory letter to his translation of Pico's *Heptaplus* (which is appended to Guy le Fèvre's translation of Giorgi) addressed "A Monsieur des Prez Gentil-homme Parisien," writes, "Le commencement & origine de quelconque chose que ce soit, Mon des Prez, est bien de tel poids & importance, que de sa consideration seulement depend toute la cognoissance d'icelle, d'autant que, suyvnt les arrests du Filosofe, il n'est pas possible à un homme, qu'il puisse rien sçavoir, s'il est ignorant des principes & premieres causes...."

¹²¹ Montaigne, *Essays*, 436-37.

¹²² Montaigne, *Essays*, 422. Montaigne would have had Cicero in mind here; cf. *De Officiis* III, 4, 20: "I, however, belong to the New Academy, which allows wide latitude to adopt any theory supported by probability"; quoted from Cicero, *Selected Works*, trans. Michael Grant (London: Penguin, 1971), 166.

His position here, of truth “without motion and without agitation,” is the mirror image of “academism” as Yates defines it.¹²³ He despairs of the possibility of removing doubt, but cherishes the impulse:

[I]f the human grip was capable and firm enough to grasp the truth by our own means; these means being common to all men, this truth would be bandied from hand to hand, from one man to another; and at least there would be one thing in the world, out of all there are, that would be believed by all men with universal consent. But this fact, that no proposition can be seen which is not debated and controverted among us, or which may not be, well shows that our natural judgment does not grasp very clearly what it grasps. For my judgment cannot make my companion’s judgment accept it; which is a sign that I have grasped it by some other means than a natural power that is in me and in all men.

With regard to Le Jeune’s music on vanity and inconstancy, where stylistic and metric ambiguity creates a sense of “propositions...debated and controverted,” this frame of mind may be found strongly suggestive.

In sum, those who regarded the vanity of the world as inescapable, if they wished to avoid atheism or anarchy, needed at least to escape from material uncertainty through a firm belief in the hereafter. For Montaigne, they needed to commit from a position of Christian humility, of total skepticism toward human-made knowledge and a corresponding faith in divine revelation (unavoidably defined in question-begging terms).¹²⁴ Though he was not himself given to academic rule-making, Montaigne contends with the same shifting epistemological ground that increasingly lured academicians into becoming, in Yates’s words, “enslaved by the growing pedantries.”¹²⁵

¹²³ Yates, *The French Academies*, 8: “‘academism’, in the bad sense of the judgment of ideas or of literary and artistic productions in accordance with certain rigidly fixed standards.”

¹²⁴ Popkin, *History of Scepticism*, 47, labels this position “a new form of fideism – Catholic Pyrrhonism.”

¹²⁵ Yates, *French Academies*, 9. Montaigne wrote a brief against pedantry (see *Essays*, 97-106) in which he cites “our good Du Bellay: ‘But I hate above all pedantic learning’” (97) and Rabelais, “that the greatest scholars are not the wisest men” (98).

In late sixteenth-century France, “academism” in that sense remained at an early stage; it would later take center stage under Richelieu. The first Academy had encyclopedic interests, and Giorgi’s brand of syncretism remained central, for La Boderie certainly but also for Tyard. But in as much as French academicians perpetuated the Ficinian belief that the human soul occupied “the central place in the hierarchy of the universe,”¹²⁶ and that human ascent toward God was accomplished not only through divine grace but also, necessarily, through contemplative prowess (deviously credited back to the same grace), they could not hope to escape skeptical critiques. Montaigne’s essay and the harangues of Calvinist theologians are complementary in this respect.

In her monograph on Tyard, Kathleen Hall calls Neoplatonism “perhaps the philosophy which rests more than any other on arbitrary human authority”:

It was built up from the work of Plato, from Alexandrian commentaries on it, from Florentine commentaries on them; to support itself it had fabricated its own type of dialectic and its own body of so-called experience. On Plato’s authority one can ‘asseurer’ that poetry is the gift of a divine frenzy; this can be proved from Plato’s own ‘impugnable’ incontestable argument that any phenomenon too regular to be the work of chance and too irregular to be the work of art must be the work of God.¹²⁷

Hall stresses the fideistic nature of Tyard’s acceptance of Neoplatonic thought in the early dialogues, *Solitaire premier* (1552) and *Solitaire second* (1555): “Throughout the *Solitaire premier* his attitude is exactly that required from the Neoplatonic novice: opinion and reason must alike yield to faith – and, pending direct mystical experience, faith in those who have enjoyed it or say they have.”¹²⁸ But musicologists have taken

¹²⁶ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 59.

¹²⁷ Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 129.

¹²⁸ Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 129.

little note of the erosion of Neoplatonism during the high point of its musical influence, not only at the hands of writers outside the tradition, such as Montaigne, but also from within, as may be observed in the writings of Tyard himself (though in Hall's account he remains a Neoplatonist to the end).¹²⁹

The influence of Tyard's musical dialogues on the early Academy and on subsequent French music has long been recognized.¹³⁰ The *Solitaire premier* and *Solitaire second* are steeped in Neoplatonism; but the scientific treatises immediately following them – *Discours du temps* (1556), *L'Univers* (1557), and *Mantice* (1558) – are marked by a near absence of the same.¹³¹ In the *Discours du temps*, Tyard gives in momentarily to serious disillusionment:

the state of our lives, so inconstant and uncertain that fables (albeit fabulous) do not seem to me to have less of truth or verisimilitude than is encountered in us – whether we look for it in others, or try to assure ourselves of it.... For the course of our lives, now in happiness and now in sadness, now in joy and now in grief, now in one humor and now in another...leaves us with so little of a durable essence, that what today seems to us true or good, tomorrow will have a reputation of falsehood and evil; and worse, that what we think to be estimable seems, to more important neighbors and companions, of so little worth, that behind our backs they wrinkle their foreheads and arch their eyebrows.¹³²

¹²⁹ Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 171ff.

¹³⁰ It is one of the central themes of Yates's history; see esp. chapters 3-4. See also Brown, "Ut musica poesis," 3-6; McClelland, "Measuring Poetry, Measuring Music."

¹³¹ Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 136. Hall calls the appearance of the *Discours du temps* immediately after *Solitaire second* "startling," and observes that "Tyard does not deny Neoplatonism; he simply ignores it. Pasithée has gone; so has the Neoplatonic aesthetic and educational theory of the *Solitaires*; so, most fundamentally, has their placid confidence in authority."

¹³² Tyard, *Discours du temps* (1556), 1-3; quoted in Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 136: "l'estat de notre vivre, tant inconstant et incertain, que fable (tant soit elle fabuleuse) ne me semble moins avoir de verité ou vray semblance, qu'il s'en rencontre en nous: soit que nous la cherchions en autrui, ou qu'en nousmesmes essayons de l'assurer.... Car le cours de noz ans, ores en heur, ores en malheur, ores en joye, ores en dueil, ores d'une humeur, ores d'une autre...nous laisse si peu un estre durable, que ce qui aujourd'hui nous semble vray ou bon, demain nous sera en reputacion de mensonger et meschant: et piz, que ce qu'en nous pensons estre estimable, semble aus plus importants voisins et compagnons, tant peu dine de bonne vuë, que derrier nous ilz en rident le front, et froncent le sourcil" (my translation).

In Hall's estimation,

The whole Discourse can be read as an account of his struggle to regain [his loss of faith], to determine what stability it is possible to attain.... He does not press his scepticism to the point of atheism; but his doubts are up to date and far-reaching.... There is no consensus of opinion about the reckoning of time, 'la diversité des Ans: desquelz l'estendue nous sembloit avoir esté mesuree ores courte, ores brieve, selon les diverse nacions'.... Nature itself is irregular: the length of a day varies in different countries, the length of a natural hour varies in a single day, and the 'variable inconstance' of the stars' movements is such that the Solitaire fears that no one arrangement of them will ever be repeated.¹³³

We have already seen an inkling of this awareness in Giorgi, but we may be struck by the Solitaire's referral to *variable* rather than *constante inconstance*. The lack of a consensus on how to measure cosmic time, forced by the empirical knowledge that the heavens were inconstant, must surely have informed Le Jeune's style of musical representation.

V. Conclusion: leaving the *chemin du monde*

With this study, I hope to have shown how a musical critique of French academic Neoplatonism was facilitated by the eroding scientific and religious foundations of *harmonia mundi*. The third *Octonaire* of mode 12 (Hypoeolian), the last in Le Jeune's collection, provides a fitting critique with which to conclude. The poem by Du Chesne describes the world as a pilgrimage, and the pilgrim's journey in it as a choice between right and wrong paths.

Ce Mond' est un pelerinage:
Les meschans forcenez de rage,
Y sont les devots pelerins

¹³³ Hall, *Pontus de Tyard*, 137.

Qui, fourvoyés des drois chemins,
Tombent en la fosse profonde
De la mort.
Mais, ô toy mon Dieu,
Guidant mes pas en autre lieu,
Tire moy du chemin du Monde.¹³⁴

*This world is a pilgrimage:
The wicked, frenzied with rage,
Are the devout pilgrims who,
Misled from the right path,
Fall into the deep pit
Of death.
But you, O my God,
Guiding my steps to another place,
Draw me from the worldly path.*

Du Chesne appears to go beyond the familiar Christian trope that compares the human lifespan to a pilgrimage by equating the latter to the universe itself. To Giorgi, who links the cyclical *octonaire* of the universal order to the remission of sins and the return to a prior uncorrupted state, the pilgrimage is the human lifespan, a devolution from unity whose reversal had been accomplished by Christ.¹³⁵ In a real sense, Giorgi's *octonaires* are a *chemin du Monde*, a set of road markers to eternity. But without the assurance of celestial regularity, the pilgrimage and its milieu together become an open-ended and uncertain prospect, on a timeline that moves only forward.

The pilgrimage metaphor also raises the question of agency: pilgrims are both drawn spiritually to the destination and expected to put forth their own effort, or at least

¹³⁴ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 8:46-49.

¹³⁵ Cf. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 487: "En oultre nostre docteur & Pere [Jesus Christ] nous enseigne par ceuures plustost que par paroles, que ce monde n'est pas nostre patrie, mais comme vn logis de nostre pelerinage, lors qu'en guise de pelerin il se presenta aux disciples, sous la personne duquel le Prophete a dict: Je suis estrange & pelerin ainsi que tous mes peres."

to make the right decision. Du Chesne's poem differentiates between the two motivations by implying that the righteous pilgrim surrenders to God's will, while the unrighteous are consumed by their own "frenzied rage" – a likely allusion to the war of his time. The poem complements Le Jeune's irenic disposition: at the end of his life, he expressed the hope that "the peace that is supported on our constancies is a lasting tranquility, not a temporary calm."¹³⁶ But the only guarantee of calm was to be drawn away from the world.

Example 5.3: "Ce Mond' est un pelerinage" (XII.3), mm. 1-29

Soprano grave *

Tenor haute-contre **

Baryton ***

Ce Mond' est un pe-le-ri-na-ge, Ce

- ge, Ce Mond' est un, est un pe-le-ri-na-ge:
Mond' est un pe-le-ri-na-ge, un pe-le-ri-na-ge:
Mond' est un pe-le-ri-na-ge, un pe-le-ri-na-ge:

Les meschans for-ce-nez de ra-ge, for-ce-nez de
Les meschans for-ce-nez de ra-ge, for-ce-nez de
Les meschans for-ce-nez de ra-ge, for-ce-nez de

¹³⁶ Le Jeune, "A Monseigneur le Duc de Bouillon, Vicomte de Turenne" (cited in Chapter 1, note 62).

ra - ge, for - ce - nez de ra - ge, Y sont les de -

-vots pe - le - rins, Y sont les de -vots pe - le -

-rins Qui, four - voy - és des drois che - mins, des drois

Musique mesurée is used to represent “les meschans forcenez de rage,” the “devots pelerins” who have lost their way. Le Jeune gives unusual emphasis to the phrase “forcenez de rage,” allowing the repeated syncopation to create a triple meter effect. By inserting a semiminim rest before the start of the next phrase, “Y sont les devots pelerins,” he abruptly cancels that effect, yet continues to obscure the duple meter through further syncopation. In fact, duple meter has never been firmly established; it is hidden in mm. 1-9 by the syncopated points of imitation in all three voices. From a structurally uncertain and unstable beginning (“ce Monde”), the *devots pelerins* only further mislead themselves. The consequences are dire:

Example 5.4: “Ce Mond’ est un pelerinage” (XII.3), mm. 30-45

che-mins, Tom-bent en la fos-se pro-fon-

- drois che-mins, Tom-bent en la fos-se pro-fon-

des drois che-mins, Tom-bent en la fos-se pro-fon-

- de De la mort, Tom-bent en la fos-se pro-fon-

- de De la mort, Tom-bent en la fos-se pro-fon-

- de De la mort, Tom-bent en la fos-se pro-fon-

- de De la mort. Mais, ô toy, ô

- de De la mort. Mais, Mais, ô

- de De la mort. Mais, ô

Here, Le Jeune makes overt his intention to create a deceptive triple meter effect by restating the lines “Tombent en la fosse profonde / De la mort” in notated triple meter, thereby changing the proportions and engineering a slower tempo. By keeping the notes the same for both iterations, he implies that it is the metric contrast that interests him. It would seem, then, that the second iteration in 3 time functions something like *Augenmusik*, as the correct or more rational notated version of the prior deception. Be assured, pilgrim, that the path you have chosen has led you astray; here now is the plainer

illustration of that path, slower and truer so that you will see it and your estrangement from it.

At this point, Le Jeune allows the first clear idea of a regular duple pulse to emerge, evidently inspired by the poem's appeal to divine guidance:

Example 5.5: "Ce Mond' est un pelerinage" (XII.3), mm. 41-63

de De la mort. Mais, ô toy, ô

de De la mort. Mais, Mais, ô

de De la mort. Mais, ô

toy mon Dieu, Guidant mes pas, Gui-

toy mon Dieu, Guidant mes pas, Gui-dant mes

toy mon Dieu, Gui-dant mes pas, Gui-dant mes pas en

-dant mes pas en au-tre lieu, Ti-re moy du chemin du

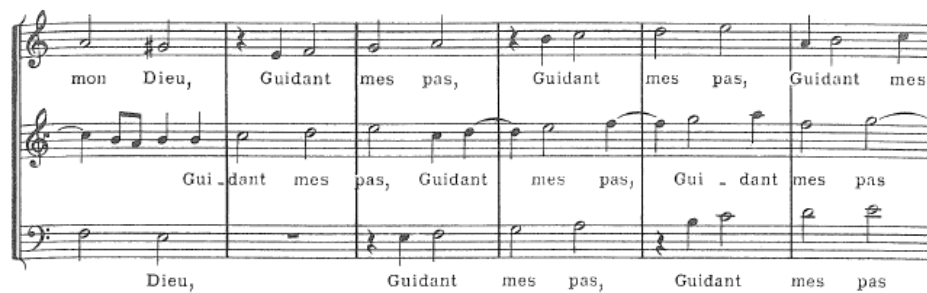
pas, mes pas en au-tre lieu, Ti-re moy du chemin du

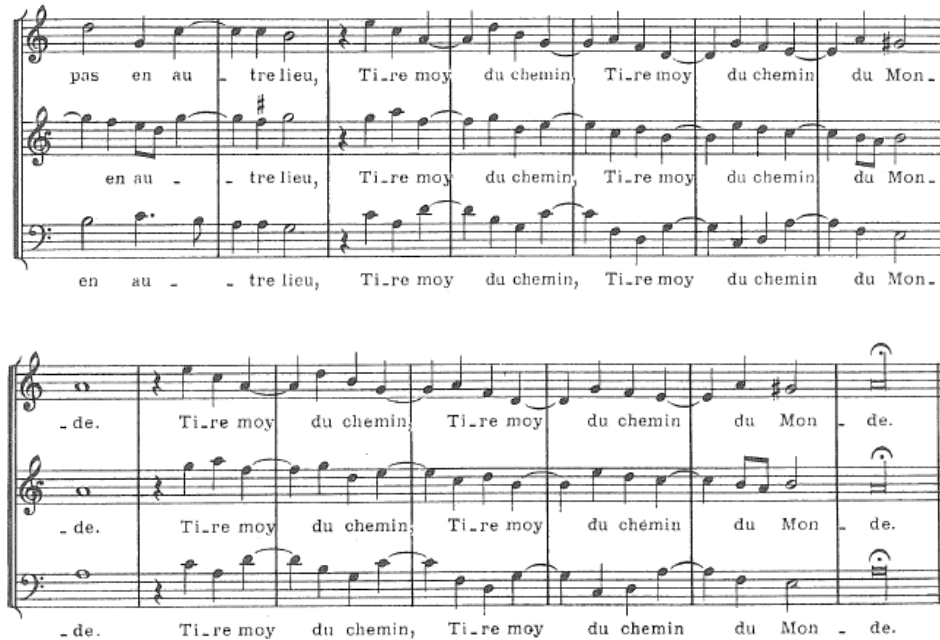
au-tre lieu, en au-tre lieu, Ti-re moy du chemin du



For the concluding verse, “Tire moy du chemin du monde,” he reverts to syncopated homophony. Since he has already connected *musique mesurée* to the wrong path, he seems to acknowledge here that he, too, risks going astray, and that in a cosmological sense, the *chemin du Monde* applies to everyone by default – that it is the wrong path by definition and that the appropriate response is to pray for guidance. The meditative purpose of the line becomes unmistakable with its restatement, for which Le Jeune again uses repetition:

Example 5.6: “Ce Mond’ est un pelerinage” (XII.3), mm. 64-83





The repetitions recall “forcenez de rage” (mm. 11-17), but here they produce the effect of displaced duple meter rather than triple meter. The listener will not be likely to hear this concluding passage as syncopated until it corrects itself with “du Monde.” The semiminim rest that precedes it will be aurally discarded, and we will feel that we are moving in duple time until the correction. Having already tied regular duple meter to divine guidance, Le Jeune uses the temporary impression of duple meter here to express the hope for guidance from a knowingly flawed position. The academic, “correct” accentuation of the phrase “Tire moy du chemin du Monde” determines its metric irregularity; it cannot be made even and right. *Musique mesurée* and the *chemin du Monde* are one and the same: committing to the one binds the pilgrim to the sin and falsehood of the other.

Tes statuts sont le sujet de mes cantiques,
Dans la maison où je suis étranger. (Ps. 119:54)

Les pièges des méchants m'environnent;
Je n'oublie point ta loi. (Ps. 119:61)

Des orgueilleux creusent des fosses devant moi;
Ils n'agissent point selon ta loi. (Ps. 119:85)

Je retiens mon pied loin de tout mauvais chemin,
Afin de garder ta parole. (Ps. 119:101)

Appendix 1

On Neoplatonism and the Neoplatonic Influence among Sixteenth-Century Protestants

I. Neoplatonism and *le monde*

The term Neoplatonism was coined in the nineteenth century and was therefore unknown to earlier self-described Platonists. The label refers in the first place to the dominant Greek philosophical school of late antiquity, founded by Plotinus (204-70); and in the second place to a fifteenth-century revival of that tradition radiating from Florence, where Marsilio Ficino became the first to translate all of Plato and Plotinus (among others) into Latin.¹ An ever-present challenge for writers on the Platonic tradition is to cope with the distinction that obtains between Plato's philosophy, as contained in his dialogues and understood by modern scholars, and the huge body of writings from

¹ Neoplatonism in the first sense remained an unbroken tradition in the Byzantine Empire until its fall to the Ottomans in 1453. Plato, despite his relative eclipse in the West by Aristotle during the late Middle Ages, was known through the *Timaeus*, which circulated widely in a fourth-century partial translation with commentary by Calcidius. He also remained a present influence in the vein of Platonic philosophy that runs through Christian theology, including that of Thomas Aquinas. Paul Henry, "The Place of Plotinus in the History of Thought," in Plotinus, *The Enneads*, trans. Stephen MacKenna, ed. John Dillon (London: Penguin, 1991), xliii, writes that "[t]en centuries of the Middle Ages, though knowing nothing of the *Enneads* of Plotinus, remained paradoxically enough, if only through the mediation of St Augustine and the pseudo-Dionysius, closely dependent on his thought," and that Aquinas "was perhaps more tinged with Platonism than he often himself realized" (xliv). See also Barbara Sattler, "Plato's *Timaeus*: Translations and Commentaries in the West," <http://www.library.illinois.edu/rbx/exhibitions/Plato/Pages/Translations.html>; Thomas Leinkauf and Carlos Steel (eds.), *Plato's Timaeus and the Foundations of Cosmology in Late Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and Renaissance* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005). For an introduction to Renaissance Neoplatonism, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 48-69.

Plotinus onward that the umbrella term Neoplatonism usually designates – to say nothing of Aristotle, Plato’s student for twenty years, or of writers before Plotinus such as Cicero and Plutarch. Aristotle’s near omnipresence in the Neoplatonic tradition puts one at constant risk of over-simplifying. Plato and Aristotle are routinely set in opposition; this was common during the Renaissance as it is today.² But Neoplatonism began as an attempt to reconcile the two, from an equally sound awareness that Aristotle and his erstwhile teacher had subscribed to the same fundamental pursuit of wisdom (with cosmological wisdom, or the knowledge of first causes and universals, taking priority over practical wisdom), and to the same ontological hierarchies.³ One of the early Neoplatonists, Porphyry, claims in his biography of Plotinus that the latter had distilled all of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* into his work.⁴

Given this desire for reconciliation, the well-known influence of Plotinus on Augustine, the most important early Christian philosopher, does not indicate that Augustine had overlooked Aristotle in favor of Plato. As David Conway points out, Augustine, who rated “Platonism” above other pagan philosophies, meant by this term a tradition that incorporated Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus, at the expense of such rival schools as Epicureanism and Stoicism.⁵ Therefore, while I try to follow common practice

² For example, Aristotle disagreed with Plato’s theory of forms (*Metaphysics*, A.987b-993a).

³ Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, A.980a-982a. See David Conway, *The Rediscovery of Wisdom: From Here to Antiquity in Quest of Sophia* (New York: St. Martin’s, 2000) for a brief history of what the author terms the “classical conception of philosophy.”

⁴ A. H. Armstrong (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 14; cited in Conway, *The Rediscovery of Wisdom*, 80.

⁵ Conway, *The Rediscovery of Wisdom*, 81. As I discuss in Chapter 2, Stoic and Epicurean ethics can be applied to the Christian *vanitas* tradition.

in using the term “Platonic” for elements of Plato’s philosophy that are widely regarded as essential to it, and “Neoplatonic” for views expressed by Plato’s followers from Plotinus onward (many of which could just as well be called Platonic), my referrals to Aristotelianism or Thomism should not automatically suggest a polarity.⁶ Ficino’s *Theologia Platonica*, for example, borrows heavily from Thomas Aquinas along with Plotinus and Augustine.⁷

Renaissance Neoplatonists have often been described in opposition to medieval Aristotelians, but this dichotomy has long been understood to be simplistic. Frances Yates writes that “[t]o study the teachings of Pico or of Ficino in Paris was...not necessarily to cancel the prestige of the great Parisian philosophical traditions,” and that “Renaissance thought of this type kept the mediaeval objective of a synthesis between religion and philosophy, but aimed at achieving this through Neo-Platonic mysticism rather than through Aristotelian logic.”⁸ Yates also mentions the example of Jacques Lefèvre d’Étaples (ca. 1455-1536), an influential scholar with Aristotelian leanings and a Biblical translator who also published Ficino’s translation of the Greek *Hermetica* in

⁶ Edward Grant, *Planets, Stars, and Orbs: The Medieval Cosmos, 1200-1687* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 22, defines an Aristotelian as “someone whose education involved a reasonable degree of familiarity with the works of Aristotle and earlier Aristotelians and who had himself probably written one or more *questiones* (treatise in the form of questions) or commentaries on the natural books of Aristotle, for the purpose of presenting opinions about the operation of the physical world.” The term Aristotelianism, then, generally designates adherence to Aristotle’s natural philosophy or physics. The “natural books” (*libri naturales*) of Aristotle, which, from the thirteenth century, formed the core curriculum of the University of Paris, were the *Physica*, *De caelo*, *De generatione et corruptione*, *De anima*, *Meteorologica*, *Parva naturalia*, and the three biological books on animals.

⁷ See Michael J. B. Allen and James Hankins, introduction to Ficino, *Platonic Theology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 1:xi.

⁸ Frances A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Warburg, 1947), 2.

Paris.⁹ Ficino's great contemporary and friend Giovanni Pico della Mirandola has been described as both a Neoplatonist and an Aristotelian. Paul J. W. Miller writes that "Pico adheres to a long tradition of interpretation which maintains that Plato and Aristotle were really expressing the same philosophy in different terms."¹⁰ Michael J. Allen calls Pico "not a devout Neoplatonist like Ficino but rather an Aristotelian by training and in many ways an eclectic by tradition," and he states that Pico's study of Plato and the Neoplatonists "was subsequently harnessed to an encyclopedic, ambitious, essentially Aristotelian plan."¹¹ The distinction that Allen makes between Neoplatonic and Aristotelian could suggest antithesis, but the essential point again is that the two traditions were not regarded as incompatible. Pico's Aristotelian plan was therefore "to gather together an array of Egyptian, Chaldean, Greek, Hebrew (including Cabalistic), patristic, and scholastic (including Arab) propositions" – the 900 theses that he brought to Rome for public debate in 1486.¹² Such an enterprise may be called Aristotelian in its comprehensiveness but also Neoplatonic in its syncretism.

The common use of the word *monde* to refer in a limited sense to the earth and its inhabitants (or to human society) may lead one to misconstrue what was intended by either the *harmonie* or the *vanité du monde*, or to perceive a latent ambiguity. *Monde*

⁹ On the complex philosophical orientation of Lefèvre d'Étaples, see Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 102-03.

¹⁰ Paul J. W. Miller, introduction to Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man; On Being and the One; Heptaplus*, trans. Charles Glenn Wallis, Paul J. W. Miller, and Dougals Carmichael (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), xvii.

¹¹ Michael J. B. Allen, "The Birth Day of Venus: Pico as Platonic Exegete in the *Commento* and the *Heptaplus*," in *Pico della Mirandola: New Essays*, ed. M. V. Dougherty (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 81.

¹² Allen, "The Birth Day of Venus," 81.

derives from the Latin *mundus*, which is explained as follows in Le Robert's *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*:

Designating at first the collection of bodies populating the heavens, the moving celestial vault, *mundus* was narrowed during the imperial epoch to the sense of 'terrestrial world, earth', designating by metonymy the inhabitants of Earth, or humanity. In the language of the Church, it underwent a further restriction, in imitation of the Greek *kosmos*: it designated the terrestrial world in opposition to the heavens, with the pejorative connotation of 'profane, worldly'.¹³

Despite what the words "narrowed" and "restricted" imply, however, these meanings were additional and did not supplant the original, universalist meaning, which continues to appear in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature (for example, in Francesco Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi* of 1525 and in Johannes Kepler's *Harmonices mundi* of 1619). The narrower senses were carried over into French.¹⁴ "Universe" is my primary translation of *monde*, as this sense applies most readily to the cosmological discourses with which I am most concerned. Jean Nicot's *Thresor de la langue françoise* (1606)

¹³ *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, ed. Alain Rey (Paris: Le Robert, 2012), s.v. "monde": "Désignant d'abord l'ensemble des corps peuplant le ciel, la voûte céleste en mouvement, *mundus* s'est restreint à l'époque impériale au sens de 'monde terrestre, terre', désignant par métonymie les habitants de la Terre, l'humanité. Dans la langue de l'Église, il a subi, à l'imitation du grec *kosmos*, une nouvelle restriction: il désigne alors le monde terrestre par opposition au ciel, avec la connotation péjorative de 'profane, mondain'." Pontus de Tyard, *Solitaire premier, ou Dialogue de de la fureur poetique*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Galiot du Pré, 1575), 53, writes that "les anciens nommoient tout l'vniuers, Ciel."

¹⁴ *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (ed. Rey), s.v. "monde": "*Monde* est d'abord relevé dans un sens général pour 'ensemble des choses et des êtres créés', réalisé notamment dans les locutions comme *depuis que le monde est monde* (1549) et *ainsi va le monde* (1640). À partir du XVII^e siècle, le mot est appliqué plus abstraitement à un ensemble complexe et important (1651), à un ensemble de choses formant un domaine particulier (1657-1662, *le monde visible*), puis à tout corps céleste, considéré comme un tout (1672). Dès les premiers textes, *monde* désigne aussi le globe terrestre.... Le mot se restreint à l'acception "partie du globe terrestre", d'abord dans l'expression *le Nouveau Monde* (1516)...[et] par opposition, celle d'*Ancien Monde* (1690). Il renvoie plus particulièrement à la Terre considérée comme lieu de la vie humaine: la naissance est exprimée par les locutions *venir au monde* (1560) et *mettre au monde* (1671), tandis que la mort suscite à la fois l'expression *autre monde* (1585) et la locution *n'être plus au monde* (1671).... Dès le XII^e s. (1145), *monde* est employé par métonymie pour désigner la communauté humaine vivant sur Terre. Il désigne aussi, de façon plus restrictive, une catégorie d'êtres humains (1589) et plus spécialement, avec la développement de la société de cour et en relation avec *mondain*, la société pris sous son aspect de luxe et de divertissement (1584)."

defines *monde* first as “Le ciel, et tout le contenu en iceluy, Mundus, Orbis.”¹⁵ *La terre* – planet Earth as well as the heaviest element – is a component of the heavens; Nicot provides the example, “Au milieu du monde la terre est située.” Later seventeenth-century lexicons follow the same priority.¹⁶

In cosmological contexts, one should not lose sight of the essential connection between the earth and the surrounding heavens, and of the implications for human beliefs and behaviors. *Monde* occurs routinely in the sense of the whole of creation, but could also designate distinct spheres or “worlds” within creation. Christian Neoplatonists liked to refer to God as the “Archetype” who had left his divine traces throughout the universe, and whom one approached via ascent through the elemental and celestial *mondes* to the highest sphere of the intellect, the archetypal *monde*. The *petit monde* of human beings alluded to a harmonic relationship with this *grand monde* or *macrocosme*: following Boethius, one could speak of “the musical harmony both of the archetypal [intellectual], celestial, and elemental *Monde* and that of man or the *Petit-monde*, and of the marvelous

¹⁵ Jean Nicot, *Thresor de la langue françoise tant ancienne que moderne* (1606), s.v. “monde”; accessed via the ARTFL Project, *Dictionnaires d'autrefois*, University of Chicago, <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois>.

¹⁶ Cf. Philibert Monet, *Invantaire de deus langues françoise et latine* (Lyon: C. Rigaud & P. Borde, 1635), s.v. “monde”: “Monde, le contenu dans le ciel, & le ciel même: hic Mundus, di. hic Orbis, is. hoc Vniuersum, si. Rerum vniuersitas”; “Monde, grande etendue de païs, de terre”; “Ce Roi tient vn grand Monde de païs”; “Monde, les hommes”; etc.; Pierre Richelet, *Dictionnaire françois, contenant les mots et les choses, plusieurs nouvelles remarques sur la langue françoise* (Geneva: J. H. Widerhold, 1680), s.v. “monde”: “La terre, les cieux & ce qui est entre la terre & les cieux”; Antoine Furetière, *Dictionnaire universel, contenant generalement tous les mots françois tant vieux que modernes, & les termes de toutes les sciences et des arts* (The Hague: A. et R. Leers, 1690), s.v. “monde”: “Assemblage de toutes les parties qui composent l’Univers”; “se dit aussi des Systemes particuliers que les Philosophes se sont imaginez estre compris dans cet Univers”; *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694), s.v. “monde”: “L’Univers. Le ciel & la terre & tout ce qui y est compris”; “se prend plus particulierement pour la terre, pour le globe terrestre.”

effects produced thereby.”¹⁷ The *deux mondes* are interrelated parts of the same *Monde*, which I take the *Octonaires* to be addressing comprehensively.¹⁸

It is also worth noting an etymological link between the idea of vanity and that of a cosmos. Gregory Vlastos identifies Heraclitus as the first Greek known to have used the noun form of the verb *kosmeō* (“to set in order, to marshal, to arrange” – whence the modern word “cosmetic”) in a universalist way, whereas before it had been limited to “moral, military, civic, domestic, and architectural applications.”¹⁹ Rémi Brague cites the traditional attribution of this coinage to Heraclitus’s contemporary Pythagoras, but states that “it was above all Plato who firmly established its usage.”²⁰ The Latin *mundus*, which meant to ornament or adorn, especially in a feminine context, before it also came to designate the universe, followed a parallel trajectory to *kosmos*. This etymological connection to personal vanity would not have been lost on anyone who could read Greek: *kosmeō* meaning to adorn or garnish occurs numerous times in the Greek New Testament (e.g. Revelation 21:2, “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband”).²¹

¹⁷ Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie, “Advertissement aux lecteurs,” preface to *La Galliade, ou de la révolution des arts et sciences* (Paris: Guillaume Chaudiere, 1578), n.p.: “la Musique, & Harmonie tant du Monde Archetype, Celeste, & Elementaire, que de celle de l’Homme ou du Petit-monde, & des merueilleux effets qu’elle produit.”

¹⁸ The earth-universe distinction is not mentioned in Nicot’s *Thresor de la langue françoise*, s.v. “monde,” though it is latent in the definition he gives of *Grand mondain*: “Secularis elegantiae prudens, Vrbanitatis prudens, et lepore aulico perpolitus, In moribus ciuilibus incoctus.” Another French-Latin cognate is *l’univers*, which Nicot defines as “Orbis vniuersus” and the *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694) as “le monde entier.”

¹⁹ Gregory Vlastos, *Plato’s Universe* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 3-4. See also Rémi Brague, *The Wisdom of the World: The Human Experience of the Universe in Western Thought*, trans. Teresa L. Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 19-21.

²⁰ Brague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 19.

²¹ *Kosmos* in the sense of adornment also appears in the *Timaeus*, 40a, where Plato links this meaning directly to the universal meaning: “He [the Demiurge] spread the gods throughout the whole heaven to be a true adornment [*kosmos*] for it, an intricately wrought whole”; trans. Donald J. Zeyl, in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 1243. Alain Tapié, “Petite archéologie du vain et

The idea of a spherical cosmos is generally credited to Plato, though it was believed already in late antiquity that the word *kosmos* connoted sphericity. Brague cites Diogenes Laertius (fl. 3rd century CE), who became widely read after St. Ambrose Traversari's Latin translation of 1431, as one who made this connection.²² A spherical earth must be surrounded on all sides by sky, and it was this fact that allowed one to speak of physical continuity between earth and sky, and that led to the earth's linguistic containment in the sky – and, by extension, to the notion of human beings' physical continuity with the same. Brague writes that such continuity “wasn't possible so long as the sky was imagined as a flat plane above the earth”:

But once the sky was considered to be rounded and enveloping the earth on all sides, one could, by synecdoche, call the content by the name of the container: just as one calls “a bottle of wine” not only the glass container, but the wine it contains, so one could call “sky” all that the sky contains.²³

The same synecdoche applies in early-modern French, and to several of Le Jeune's *Octonaires*.

Also important, to believe that the godhead of the Trinity was *dans le monde* would have been the heresy of pantheism. But as Paul Kristeller points out, the word pantheism was not coined until 1705.²⁴ The prior absence of a label for the concept would undoubtedly make its intrusion more likely and less readily diagnosed. A

de la destinée,” in *Les Vanités dans la peinture au XVII^e siècle*, ed. Alain Tapié et al (Caen: Albin Michel, 1990), 70, notes the strong historical association of worldly sin and vanity with femininity: Eve in the Judeo-Christian tradition, Pandora in the Greek – “Paradigme du péché originel, la figure de Pandore, Eve grecque, est à l'origine des malheurs de l'humanité.”

²² Brague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 19.

²³ Brague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 23.

²⁴ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 71 n5.

Renaissance Neoplatonist could say that “the Universe that we inhabit contains the simulacrum of God, and man carries the image of the Universe and of the Archetype.”²⁵ Heinz Heimsoeth notices a recurring flirtation with pantheism in pre-modern attempts to overcome the dualist separation between matter and spirit or divinity.²⁶ Elements of pantheism have often been noticed in Plotinian and Ficinian Neoplatonism, as well as in Plato. Anthony Levi refers to a problematic choice for early Renaissance philosophers between “a fundamentally inert Aristotelian divinity” and “the pantheistic tendencies of Platonism.”²⁷ I discuss the conception of divinity articulated by Renaissance Neoplatonists in Chapters 3 and 4, as it applies to the conflicting ideas of universal harmony and vanity.

II. The Neoplatonic influence among sixteenth-century Protestants

The ideological conflict in France with which I am concerned belongs to the wider European conflict of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. It is first important to recognize that after the Council of Trent, a number of Neoplatonic, Hermetic, and otherwise heterodox ideas fell out of favor with a papacy newly committed to reform.

²⁵ Francesco Giorgi, *L'Harmonie du monde, divisee en trois cantiques*, trans. Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie (Paris: Jean Macé, 1578), 182: “Car le Monde que nous habitons contient le simulachre de Dieu: & l'homme porte l'image du Monde & de l'Archetype.”

²⁶ Heinz Heimsoeth, *The Six Great Themes of Western Metaphysics and the End of the Middle Ages*, trans. Ramon J. Betanzos (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 38ff.

²⁷ Anthony Levi, *Renaissance and Reformation: The Intellectual Genesis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 115 n5. Cf. the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. “Pantheism,” by William Mander, Summer 2013 Edition, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/pantheism/>: “Plotinus’ universe comprises in a hierarchy of emanations from what he terms, the ‘One’; but as neither anything in the cosmos nor the sum of all things in the cosmos, as an ideal construction from which all expressions fall short, Plotinus’ God is really too transcendent for his doctrine to count as pantheism proper.”

This theological shift emanated from Italy at a time when France, whose relationship to the Vatican was complicated by Gallicanism, was undergoing a Neoplatonic revival similar to the one that had occurred a century before in Florence.²⁸ Despite this, the Counter-Reformation spread quickly, so that by the 1580s, when the Duke of Guise's Holy League was consolidating power in France and pursuing a treasonous alliance with Spain, the irenic spirit of Florentine Neoplatonism that had motivated the *Pléiade* and the Academy of Poetry and Music appeared increasingly unrealistic. Until its demise, the first Academy could still appeal to Huguenots who desired compromise, but it had been undermined from the political right, where growing dissatisfaction with Henri III thwarted hopes for compromise.

In my discussions of Calvinist theology in Chapter 4, I prioritize the views of Jean Calvin and Antoine de Chandieu. I also refer throughout this study to other prominent Huguenot writers who were either a part of or proximate to the Academy, such as Pierre de la Primaudaye, Guillaume Du Bartas, Pierre de la Ramée, Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, Agrippa d'Aubigné, Joseph Du Chesne, and Simon Goulart (the latter two also contributors to Le Jeune's *Octonaires*). These men were not the first Protestants to affiliate themselves with the broader academic movement that began in Florence. In her book on occult philosophy, Frances Yates mentions the influence of Florentine Neoplatonism on early Reformers, particularly through its adoption and reinterpretation of Jewish Cabala.²⁹ She writes that "enthusiasm for Cabala and for its revelations of new

²⁸ See Yates, *The French Academies*, chapter 1.

²⁹ Frances Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1999), 2-4. Yates bases her study of Renaissance Cabala on Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (Jerusalem: Schocken, 1941); Joseph L. Blau, *The Christian Interpretation of the Cabala in the Renaissance* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1965); François Secret, *Les Kabbalistes Chrétiens de la*

spiritual depths in the Scriptures was one of the factors leading towards Reformation” – meaning both within the Catholic Church and in opposition to it.³⁰ Pico della Mirandola has been called the first Renaissance humanist to establish a Christian Cabala, which then became an important element of Neoplatonic discourse.³¹ The Christian Cabala movement spread northward via Pico’s German disciple Johannes Reuchlin, an uncle of Philip Melanchthon and an admirer of Luther; and into France via Guillaume Postel, who exerted a strong influence on Guy and Nicolas le Fèvre de la Boderie.³² Yvonne Petry identifies two “underlying themes” in Cabala that made it attractive to academicians: “the need to develop a scheme which would unite all ancient knowledge, and the need to empower humanity to act in the world.”³³ Reuchlin, for one, took a quite un-Lutheran view of human empowerment, from a belief that the Hebrew language accorded magical

Renaissance (Paris: Dunod, 1964). Secret and Yates argue against Blau’s view that the influence of Cabalism was only marginal.

³⁰ Yates, *The Occult Philosophy*, 3.

³¹ Yvonne Petry, *Gender, Kabbalah, and the Reformation: The Mystical Theology of Guillaume Postel* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 71, writes that “Christian Kabbalah as a philosophy does not exist as a coherent unit of thought. Rather, in the Renaissance, various writers borrowed different aspects of Kabbalah and used it to suit their own purposes.” She notes that “there is some debate whether Pico can be considered the first Christian Kabbalist” (78 n35), and that Reuchlin is “recognised as the first major Christian Kabbalist” (79). Cf. Bernard McGinn, “Cabalists and Christians: Reflections on Cabala in Medieval and Renaissance Thought,” in *Jewish Christians and Christian Jews: From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, ed. Richard H. Popkin and Gordon M. Weiner (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994), 11-34.

³² Yates, *The Occult Philosophy*, 4: “If one were to look for Renaissance Neoplatonism at its most intense one would find it in the *De arte cabalistica* of Johannes Reuchlin published in 1517.... [W]ithin its predominantly Cabalist framework, Reuchlin’s book is also Renaissance Neoplatonism, full of quotations from Plato and the Neoplatonists, and from Ficino, imbued also with ‘Hermes Trismegistus’ and *prisca theologia*. Renaissance Neoplatonism takes a new turn with Reuchlin, a turn towards reformation and the north, and with greatly increased emphasis on Cabala.” On Postel, see W. J. Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi: The Career and Thought of Guillaume Postel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957); François Secret, “Guillaume Postel et les courants prophétiques de la Renaissance,” *Studi francesi* 1 (1957): 375-95; idem, *Postel revisité: Nouvelle recherches sur Guillaume Postel et son milieu* (Milan: Arché, 1998).

³³ Petry, *Gender, Kabbalah, and the Reformation*, 77.

powers and access to divinity.³⁴ While Cabalism attracted some Reformers who were interested in reviving and prioritizing ancient Biblical wisdom, the tradition's Neoplatonic and gnostic foundations, its primary purpose (among Christian Cabalists) of uniting Judaism, Christianity, and pagan beliefs, and its deep connections to Renaissance magic undermined its appeal for the majority of Protestants.³⁵ Important Neoplatonic texts emphasizing Cabala, such as those by Giorgi, La Boderie, and Pontus de Tyard, posed numerous theological barriers to Protestant acceptance.

Still, a Neoplatonic influence among sixteenth-century Protestants has to be acknowledged. Chiefly through Giorgi, one of the leading Christian Cabalists, and through Giordano Bruno, Neoplatonism made its way to Protestant England during the reign of Elizabeth I, both writers having first gained a high reputation in France (Giorgi, who died in 1540, through posthumous re-edition and translation).³⁶ Early in his career, Calvin appeared regularly at the court of Marguerite de Navarre (d. 1549), an early

³⁴ Petry, *Gender, Kabbalah, and the Reformation*, 81ff.

³⁵ Petry, *Gender, Kabbalah, and the Reformation*, 82: “[w]hile it is not possible to state definitively that Kabbalists were Catholics and those opposed to it were Protestants, this tendency can be seen.” On Cabalism and magic, see also Moshe Idel, “The Magical and Neoplatonic Interpretations of the Kabbalah in the Renaissance,” in *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Bernard Cooperman (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), 186-242. Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 175, raises the question of whether songs composed in *musique mesurée* are “‘incantations’ in the magical sense,” noting that “the borderline between magic and art is as hard to trace in this period as the borderline between magic and religion.” She speculates that “[a] bishop, like Pontus de Tyard, might make cautious reservations in consonance with the Gallican caution about the magic of *prisca theologia*. But we have also to remember that at the centre of the French court, the moving spirit of its festivals in which the new artistic techniques were used, there was ‘the Italian woman’, the Queen Mother, Catherine de’ Medici, member of the great Florentine house which had encouraged Ficino and Pico and had certainly not discouraged their magic.” See also idem, “Dramatic Religious Processions in Paris in the Late Sixteenth Century,” in *Annales musicologiques, moyen-âge et renaissance* (Neuilly-sur-Seine: Société de musique d’autrefois, 1954), 2:215-62; Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Toward a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

³⁶ On Neoplatonism in France, see D. P. Walker, “The *Prisca Theologia* in France,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 17/3-4 (1954): 204-59.

outpost of Florentine Neoplatonism in France. Roy Battenhouse asserts that Calvin “imbib[ed] no doubt the Platonist mystical philosophy there in vogue,” which is plausible on a neutral reading of “imbibe.”³⁷ Calvin’s Swiss associate Huldrych Zwingli was influenced by Pico and to a greater extent by Augustine – a Neoplatonist convert to Christianity whose Reformation influence is well known.³⁸ Luther began his theological career as an Augustinian friar, and in the *Heidelberg Disputation* (1518) he refers to himself as Augustine’s “most trustworthy interpreter.”³⁹ Melanchthon, a Lutheran

³⁷ Roy W. Battenhouse, “The Doctrine of Man in Calvin and in Renaissance Platonism,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 9/4 (1948), 448. Charles Partee, *The Theology of John Calvin* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 84, writes that “Calvin like most theologians East and West was clearly influenced by Plato’s view of the immortality of the soul.” Partee thinks that Battenhouse overstates the influence. J. H. van Wyk, “John Calvin on the Kingdom of God and Eschatology,” *In die Skriflig* 35/2 (2001): 191-205, discusses intersections with Platonism in Calvin’s eschatology, ontology, and anthropology. See also Dewey J. Houtenga, Jr., *Faith and Reason from Plato to Plantinga: An Introduction to Reformed Epistemology* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991), chapter 7; Partee, *Calvin and Classical Philosophy*, esp. chapter 8; idem, “The Soul in Plato, Platonism, and Calvin,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 22/3 (1969), 278-95.

³⁸ W. P. Stephens, *The Theology of Huldrych Zwingli* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), 19-21, 86-87. See also Battenhouse, “The Doctrine of Man,” 447-71. Battenhouse emphasizes the Platonic influence on Protestantism *contra* Reinhold Niebuhr’s characterization of Protestantism and Renaissance humanism as two distinct, equally important yet largely antithetical currents. Cf. Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation* (New York: Scribner, 1964); Paul N. Siegel, “Spenser and the Calvinist View of Life,” *Studies in Philosophy* 41 (1944): 201-22; Quirinus Breen, *John Calvin: A Study in French Humanism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931).

³⁹ Scott Hendrix, “Luther,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, ed. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 42. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 83, writes that during Aristotle’s ascendancy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, “Augustinianism survived as an important secondary current, and even the Aristotelians preserved many traces of Augustinian influence. At the same time, the theology of the mystics and the broad stream of popular religious literature remained unaffected by Aristotle and faithful to the spirit of Augustine.” Kristeller notes that Augustine’s influence extended into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, both among scholastics and elsewhere: in Ficino’s Neoplatonism, in the northern *devotio moderna*, and in German mysticism; and he contrasts the uses to which Protestant and Catholic theologians put Augustine’s work: “It was the theology of the later writings of Augustine, with their emphasis on predestination, sin, and grace, which was taken up by Luther and Calvin and their successors, whereas the theologians of the Catholic Reformation, and later the Jansenists and Oratorians, derived very different theological ideas” (85-86). Heimsoeth, *The Six Great Themes*, 36, characterizes these two currents in more oppositional terms: “[Augustinianism] always expressed the new original element of the Christian world with less restraint: Augustine produced the first really great turning point in philosophical thought” – whereas Aquinas only produced a *summa* of existing thought, and lived before the next great turning point, the fourteenth-century *via moderna*. But Heimsoeth also stresses Augustine’s indebtedness to Neoplatonism, “which, with the oriental tinge in its thought and experience, had developed and redirected the ancient classical system in a direction...more suited to the inclinations of the Christian world than Plato was.”

humanist, and Calvin both expressed qualified admiration for Plato.⁴⁰ In the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin echoes Augustine in calling Plato “the soberest and most religious” of philosophers, although the remark occurs in the unflattering context of a reproach against those who would contemplate the world rather than God.⁴¹

Calvin was also capable of statements that appear sympathetic toward the Neoplatonic idea of *harmonia mundi*. He writes that God “has been pleased...to manifest his perfections in the whole structure of the universe, and daily place himself in our view, that we cannot open our eyes without being compelled to behold him”; and that “there is no portion of the world, however minute, that does not exhibit at least some sparks of beauty; while it is impossible to contemplate the vast and beautiful fabric as it extends around, without being overwhelmed by the immense weight of glory.”⁴² He maintains

⁴⁰ E. P. Meijering, *Melanchthon and Patristic Thought: The Doctrines of Christ and Grace, the Trinity, and the Creation* (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 7, writes that “Melanchthon refers with qualified approval to Plato’s definition of God, the qualification being that Plato does not know that this God is the triune God and that He forgives sins.”

⁴¹ Jean Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2008), 22-23 (I.5.11): “Bright, however, as is the manifestation which God gives both of himself and his immortal kingdom in the mirror of his works, so great is our stupidity, so dull are we in regard to these bright manifestations, that we derive no benefit from them. For in regard to the fabric and admirable arrangement of the universe, how few of us are there who, in lifting our eyes to the heavens, or looking abroad on the various regions of the earth, ever think of the Creator? Do we not rather overlook Him, and sluggishly content ourselves with a view of his works? And then in regard to supernatural events, though these are occurring every day, how few are there who ascribe them to the ruling providence of God – how many who imagine that they are casual results produced by the blind evolutions of the wheel of chance? Even when under the guidance and direction of these events, we are in a manner forced to the contemplation of God (a circumstance which all must occasionally experience), and are thus led to form some impressions of Deity, we immediately fly off to carnal dreams and depraved fictions, and so by our vanity corrupt heavenly truth. This far, indeed, we differ from each other, in that everyone appropriates to himself some peculiar error; but we are all alike in this, that we substitute monstrous fictions for the one living and true God – a disease not confined to obtuse and vulgar minds, but affecting the noblest, and those who, in other respects are singularly acute. How lavishly in this respect have the whole body of philosophers betrayed their stupidity and want of sense? To say nothing of the others whose absurdities are of a still grosser description, how completely does Plato, the soberest and most religious of them all, lose himself in his round globe?”

⁴² Calvin, *Institutes*, 16 (I.5.1).

that anyone, no matter how ignorant, should be capable of “discerning such proofs of creative wisdom as may well cause him to break forth in admiration of the Creator.” He accords particular respect to scientific specialists, but he does not recognize any exclusive privilege on their behalf:

To investigate the motions of the heavenly bodies, to determine their positions, measure their distances, and ascertain their properties, demands skill, and a more careful examination; and where these are so employed, as the providence of God is thereby more fully unfolded, so it is reasonable to suppose that the mind takes a loftier flight, and obtains brighter views of his glory. Still, none who have the use of their eyes can be ignorant of the divine skill manifested so conspicuously in the endless variety, yet distinct and well-ordered array, of the heavenly host; and therefore it is plain that the Lord has furnished every man with abundant proofs of his wisdom.⁴³

The mention of “endless variety, yet distinct and well-ordered array” undoubtedly echoes the Greek idea of accordant discord, which I discuss in Chapter 3; and Calvin goes on to acknowledge that “certain of the philosophers have not improperly called man a microcosm...as being a rare specimen of divine power, wisdom, and goodness, and containing within himself wonders sufficient to occupy our minds, if we are willing so to employ them.”⁴⁴ However, as I show in Chapter 4, Calvin’s view of the natural order (*ordo naturae*) and of man’s relationship to it cannot be fully understood apart from his view of the problem of sin – a view that is clearly born out in the *Octonaires*.⁴⁵

Battenhouse mentions Edmund Spenser and Duplessis-Mornay among others as “men of letters in the Renaissance who cultivated Neoplatonism and Calvinism side by side with apparently little or no awareness of contradiction; men in whom the

⁴³ Calvin, *Institutes*, 17 (I.5.2).

⁴⁴ Calvin, *Institutes*, 17 (I.5.3).

⁴⁵ See Chapter 4, section III.

Renaissance ideal [he means the humanist ideal] and the Protestant ideal...seem actually to have been combined quite comfortably.”⁴⁶ The very idea of a Parisian academy modeled after the one in Florence was proposed to Catherine de’ Medici by the mathematician Pierre de la Ramée (Petrus Ramus), a Huguenot convert who was killed during the St. Bartholomew’s Day massacres of 1572.⁴⁷ The Huguenot composer Claude Goudimel set many of Pierre de Ronsard’s poems to music before himself falling victim to the same event. The Academy had room for d’Aubigné, a humanist poet whose Huguenot identity is usually described as militant, and to La Primaudaye, whose treatise *Academie françoise*, in Yates’s judgment, “probably did more to spread the knowledge of Henri III’s academic movement outside France than any other work.”⁴⁸

As an exemplar of the bi-confessional appeal of French academic philosophy during the religious wars, Yates holds up La Primaudaye, who seems to have belonged to a “Protestant Academy” around Henri de Navarre “in imitation of” Henri III’s Palace Academy.⁴⁹ Yates calls La Primaudaye’s treatise a “‘universal harmony’ bearing in its

⁴⁶ Battenhouse, “The Doctrine of Man,” 447.

⁴⁷ See Yates, *The French Academies*, 20-21.

⁴⁸ Yates, *The French Academies*, 124. The editions of La Primaudaye that I have examined are *Academie françoise, en laquelle est traité de l’institution des Moeurs, & de ce qui concerne le bien et hereusement vivre en tous Estats & conditions: Par les preceptes de la doctrine, & les exemples de la vie des anciens sages et hommes Illustres* ([Geneva]: Jacques Chouët, 1593 [1577]); *Suite de l’Academie françoise: en laquelle est traité de l’homme: et, comme par une histoire naturelle du corps et de l’ame, est discoursu de la creation, matiere, composition, forme, nature, utilité et usage de toutes les parties du bastiment humain, des causes naturelles de toutes affections, des vertus et des vices: item, de la nature puissance, oeuvres, et immortalité de l’ame* ([Geneva]: Jacques Chouët, 1598 [1580]); and *Troisieme tome de l’Academie françoise* ([Geneva]: Jacques Chouët, 1599 [1590]). La Primaudaye associates his first volume with the *Académie du Palais* (and by extension with Plato’s Academy) in the dedicatory letter to Henri III: “Il me vint en l’opinion d’offrir à vostre Maiesté vn entre-mets de fruicts par moi cueillis en vn iardin ou verger Platonique, autrement appellé Academie, où ie m’estoy’ trouué y auoit fort peu de temps avec quelques ieunes Gentilshommes Angeuins, mes compagnons, discourans ensemble de l’institution és bonnes mœurs, & du moyen de bien & heureusement viure en tous estats & conditions” (*Academie françoise*, 4v-5r).

⁴⁹ Yates, *The French Academies*, 123-27. The latter quote is from d’Aubigné: “The king, my master [Henri de Navarre] had organised a little Academy in imitation of the one at the Court. Messieurs Duplecis,

design the imprint of the long tradition of conciliation of *Genesis* with the *Timaeus*,” as well as “the Protestant counterpart of the universal harmonies of Giorgi and Tyard.”⁵⁰

She downplays, in my view, La Primaudaye’s more philosophically conservative and often distinctly Protestant tone; see for example his discourses in the first volume “De la Philosophie” (strongly tinged with Augustinianism) and “De la mort.”⁵¹ The Neoplatonic

Dubartas, Constant, the President Ravignan, La Nagerie, Ville Roche and Pelisson were members of it” (123).

⁵⁰ Yates, *The French Academies*, 126. She further notes, “A careful comparison of La Primaudaye’s harmony with that of Giorgi or Tyard would show how much common ground there was between Catholics and Protestants nourished in the mediaeval-*cum*-Renaissance Platonic tradition. His encyclopaedia probably bears the same relationship to the French Protestant poets as does Tyard’s to the French Catholic poets” (126 n3). Walker, “The *Prisca Theologia* in France,” 205, calls Tyard “the philosopher and theoretician of the Pléiade.” Brown, “*Ut musica poesis*,” 3, calls him “perhaps the pre-eminent French musical philosopher of the sixteenth century.”

⁵¹ La Primaudaye, *Academie françoise*, 18v-24r, 382r-386v. On the contemplation of divine things, he cautions, “Et quant à l’entiere & parfaite cognoissance des mysteres diuines, ils doiuent desirer d’en auoir selon leur pouuoir l’intelligence, & selon le don & mesure des graces qui leur seront donnees d’en haut. Mais si l’œil de leur ame s’esblouit en la consideration d’iceux, il suffira qu’avec deue reuerence ils les honnoient & admirent, & y adioustent entiere foy, estimans que l’entendement humain ne peut entendre à la science de si hauts mysteres” (19v). Of natural speculations: “la plus part desquelles semblent à plusieurs n’estre pas beaucoup necessaires, comme celles qui traitent de la nature des Cieux, du Soleil, de la Lune, de leurs mouuements, mesures, & des causes naturelles de toutes choses. Ce qui sert souuent plus à contenter la curiosité des grands esprits, que pour les rendre meilleurs, cerchans quelque fois tant curieusement par speculations, & questions vaines & friuoles, les causes naturelles des choses, qu’à la fin ils s’efforcent de trouuer vn autre commencement de tout, que Dieu: dont finalement ils demeurent trompez & confus en leur sçauoir, comme les escrits de tant de Philosophes anciens en font foy, & la vie de plusieurs de nostre temps” (19v-20r).

In the concluding discourse on death, La Primaudaye stresses the impending certainty of Judgment Day and reaffirms the Protestant belief in salvation through grace rather than works: “Dieu nous a sauué & appellé par son appellation, (dit-il à Timothee) [2 Tim. 15] non point selon nos œuvres, mais selon sa grace, laquelle nous est donnee & manifestee par l’apparition de nostre Sauueur Iesus Christ, qui, certes, a destruit la mort, & a produit en lumiere, vie & immortalité” (385r). He denigrates the temporal world, comparing earthly life to a grave, a prison, even to excrement: “Aussi, puis que le ciel est nostre pays, qu’est-ce de la terre, sinon vn passage estranger? &, selon qu’elle nous est maudite pour le peché, vn exil, voire & bannissement? Si le departement de ce monde est vne entree à vie, qu’est-ce de ce monde, sinon vn sepulchre? & demeurer en icelui, qu’est-ce, sinon d’estre plongés en la mort? Si estre deliuré de ce corps, c’est liberté, qu’est-ce du corps, sinon vne prison? Et si nostre souueraine felicité consiste à iouyr de la presence de nostre Dieu, n’est-ce pas misere, de n’en iouyr point? Or iusques à ce que nous sortions de ce monde, nous sommes comme esloignés de Dieu. Parquoi si la vie terrienne est accomparee à la vie celeste, il n’y a doute, qu’elle peut estre mesprisee, & quasi estimee comme fiente” (385v-386r). And he ends the volume with a denunciation of worldly vanity: “Et combien que la cupidité de nostre chair, comme elle est aueugle & terrestre, repugne sans cesse aux desirs de l’esprit, taschant de nous esloigner tant qu’elle peut de nostre souuerain bien: ayons pour engraué en nostre cœur, que bien heureux sont ceux qui cognoissent la vanité du monde: encor plus heureux ceux qui n’y mettent point leurs affections: Et tres-heureux ceux qui en sont retirez pour estre avec Dieu au ciel” (386v).

influence on La Primaudaye is nonetheless clear enough. He prioritizes moral and political philosophy in the first two volumes (*Academie françoise* and *Suite de l'Academie françoise*) and is motivated throughout by an Aristotelian need to categorize and classify, and to emphasize the importance to human knowledge of the senses.⁵² The *Troisiesme tome de l'Academie françoise* (1590) broaches cosmology, natural philosophy, and natural theology, and it follows La Boderie's translation of Giorgi closely, at times verbatim. Yates cites one such passage; I have noticed many others, many of them extensive.⁵³ But more interesting are the departures from Giorgi, given how carefully La Primaudaye followed his source. Close inspection reveals that he was selective in what he chose to copy, and that he brought his Protestant sensibility to bear on some important matters of universal genesis, on the hypothetical duration of the cosmos, and on anthropology. Most notably for the purposes of this study, La Primaudaye follows Giorgi closely in his hexameral account of universal history right up until he omits the latter's description of the *octonaire*, preferring instead to conclude his own account with the *septenaire* or Sabbath age. This departure supports the case that I elaborate in Chapter 5, and it is conceivable that a Huguenot artist such as Le Jeune could have read La Primaudaye's *Troisiesme tome*, newly circulating in the 1590s, as a corrective to Giorgi, who indulges a litany of Hermetic and Dionysian superstitions that La Primaudaye ignores.

⁵² See Kate van Orden's discussion in *Materialities: Books, Readers, and the Chanson in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 240ff.

⁵³ Yates, *The French Academies*, 131. Yates acknowledges the "lesser importance which La Primaudaye assigned to natural philosophy.... Compare his brief chapter, 'Of the earth, and of the scituation, immobilitie, figure, and qualitie thereof'...which makes no mention of Copernicanism, with the far greater range of scientific knowledge which Tyard displays on that subject" (126 n3). See Chapter 4, section III.

In as much as the more adventurous cosmological, soteriological, and superstitious views of Giorgi and Tyard should have been disagreeable to him, La Primaudaye's emphasis on moral philosophy no doubt reflects an awareness that such was the terrain on which Catholics and Protestants could best hope to make peace. Yates cites Pierre de Ronsard's preference for moral over natural philosophy for the same reason, "as being of more utility for the governing of men and states in virtue"; but also the contrary position of Bruno, "a strong antagonist of the depreciation of natural philosophy and a defender of its contemplative value."⁵⁴ She calls La Primaudaye's orientation "only a slight shift of balance within the encyclopedia, and by no means a repudiation of the fundamental unity of all knowledge."⁵⁵ But she neglects to address how Calvinists and Catholic Neoplatonists (to say nothing of an iconoclast like Bruno) could possibly have agreed on cosmology without a decisive break from one tradition or the other. The problems that this would have entailed are the focus of Chapters 2 through 4 here. The "slight shift" in La Primaudaye could indicate politic avoidance more than essential agreement, but in any case, there is a clear difference in how Giorgi and La Primaudaye present their treatises.⁵⁶ The difference is immediately evident in Giorgi's syncretic and engaged manner of citation in his preface, as though he would convene with the panoply of ancient writers, compared to La Primaudaye's more impersonal and platitudinous approach.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Yates, *The French Academies*, 125-26.

⁵⁵ Yates, *The French Academies*, 126.

⁵⁶ Yates, *The French Academies*, 127, calls La Primaudaye "a 'politique' Huguenot."

⁵⁷ Cf. Giorgi/La Boderie, *L'Harmonie du monde*, 1-7 ("La Preface de Francois Georges Venitien" and "Pour parler du premier cantique"); La Primaudaye, *Academie françoise*, "Au lecteur" (n.p.).

Joseph Du Chesne, sieur de la Violette, one of the contributors to Le Jeune's *Octonaires*, reveals a Neoplatonic orientation in his encyclopedic poem, *Le Grand miroir du monde* (1587), which he modeled after the famous *Sepmaine* of his fellow Huguenot Du Bartas, but which he failed to complete.⁵⁸ He devotes the first book to "treating no other thing than the Essence of God"; the second, fourth, and fifth books to the intellectual, celestial, and elemental *mondes*; and for the unrealized tenth book he promises to describe the *petit monde* of man, "in whom I would represent all that I have demonstrated in the three *Mondes* [of creation]."⁵⁹ Du Chesne feels free, however, to "monstrer la vanité des Platoniciens": "I prove, against the opinion of many pagan philosophers, how the universe had its origins; against Plato, that the primary material was by no means eternal, and that the universe was created from nothing."⁶⁰ Du Chesne was an alchemist (a follower of Paracelsus) as well as a physician to François de Valois, the Duke of Alençon and of Anjou (the youngest son of Henri II and Catherine de' Medici, for whom Le Jeune also worked) from 1576 to 1584. He was later appointed *physicien ordinaire du roi* to Henri IV in 1598. In the *Grand miroir du monde*, Du Chesne betrays his iconoclasm by seeking to disprove the existence of four elements, arguing instead for a universe composed of only two – a theory that would presumably

⁵⁸ On Du Chesne, see Didier Kahn, *Alchimie et Paracelsisme en France à la fin de la Renaissance (1567-1625)* (Geneva: Droz, 2007), 150ff.; Joseph Du Chesne, *La Morocosmie; ou, De la folie, vanité, et inconstance du Monde*, ed. Lucile Gibert (Geneva: Droz, 2009), 7-106.

⁵⁹ Joseph Du Chesne, preface to *Le Grand miroir du monde* (Lyon: Barthelemy Honorat, 1587), n.p.: "en tout mon premier liure ie ne traite d'autre chose que de l'Essence de Dieu"; "Le dixieme est reserué pour l'Homme le petit Monde, dans lequel ie veux représenter tout ce que i'auray démontré dans tous les trois Mondes."

⁶⁰ Du Chesne, preface to *Le Grand miroir du monde*, n.p.: "Je prouue donc au commencement comme le Monde eu origine contre l'opinion de beaucoup de Philosophes Payens: que la matiere premiere n'est point eternelle, contre Platon: & que le Monde a esté créé de rien."

carry musical implications given the parallels routinely drawn between musical and elemental theory.⁶¹ To dispute Aristotelian elemental theory in this manner was also to expose oneself to the charge of heresy, and Du Chesne was in fact condemned by the medical faculty of the Université de Paris in 1603 for his Paracelsian views.⁶²

Du Chesne's medical and alchemist orientation drew him naturally into Hermetic waters.⁶³ Another and more famous member of the Duke of Anjou's circle, Philippe Duplessis-Mornay (the "Huguenot pope"), appears to have regarded the philosophy of Hermes Trismegistus as a promising avenue for religious reconciliation.⁶⁴ As with La Primaudaye, the reputation of Duplessis-Mornay rests to a considerable extent on his association as a Protestant with the reunionist hopes of the Academy, which required

⁶¹ Du Chesne, preface to *Le Grand miroir du monde*, n.p.: "Après la description de Nature naturee, je viens bastir ce bas Vniuers sur les quatre piliers des Elemens, que ie fonde par les plus fermes argumens des Philosophes, Et puis ie les destrui montrant que la diffinition d'Element ne compete qu'au seul Air, & ce selon l'opinion d'aucuns que ie n'apreuve neantmoins: Le monstre puis apres comme veritablement il n'y a que deux Elemens, sçauoir la Terre & l'Eau, qui sont productifs de toutes choses: desquels seulement Moyse parle au Genese: & suy en cela l'opinion d'un des grands personnages de nostre temps. Le monstre que l'Air n'est autre chose qu'une exhalation d'Eau, & que la Terre contient le Feu: que les quatre qualités se treuuent dans ces deux Elemens...."

⁶² Kahn, *Alchimie et Paracelsisme en France*, 357ff. Cf. the *Mercure françois*, Tome 10 (Paris: Jean et Estienne Richer, 1624), 504-13, which describes the prosecution by the University of Paris of Antoine de Villon, Jean Bitaud, and Étienne de Claves "pour auoir composé, publié & voulu disputer des Theses contre la doctrine d'Aristote." The *Table* for this volume summarizes the case, which was witnessed by "prez de mille personnes" (504) as follows: "[Villon] veut prouuer le monde sublunaire n'estre composé que de deux Elemens: Et le mixte de cinq. Pourquoi le monde sublunaire deuoit estre composé de plus de deux Elements differents essentiellement. Differences essentielles de l'Air & de l'Eau. Refutation de l'opinion de Villon touchant le feu elementel. Villon par ces principes bannit du monde la matiere & la forme, & nie toute principe de corps. Heresie qui se tiroit de ses escrits." De Claves's theses were "deschirees en sa presence," the defendants were forbidden "à peine de punition corporelle" to publish them either in France or elsewhere, and "à peine de la vie, tenir, ny enseigner aucunes maximes contre les anciens Autheurs & approuez, ny faire aucunes disputes que celles qui seront approuees par les Docteurs de ladite Faculté de Theologie" (505).

⁶³ Amid his *querelle* with the Université de Paris, Du Chesne published a treatise called *Ad veritatem hermeticae medicinae ex Hippocratis veterumque decretis ac therapeusi* (Paris: Abraham Saugrain, 1604), which, as its title indicates, seeks to reconcile Hermetic with traditional Greek medicine.

⁶⁴ See Walker, "The *Prisca Theologia* in France."

some measure of sympathy for the institution's Neoplatonic worldview. But while Duplessis-Mornay acknowledged that Hermes had received divine wisdom and inspiration from Moses, the depth of his reverence for the Egyptian sage, as well as for the rest of the *prisci theologi*, may certainly be questioned. He treats Hermes as a wise authority in the treatise *De la Verité de la Religion Chrestienne contre les Athées, Epicuriens, Payens, Juifs, Mahumedistes et autres Infideles* (Antwerp, 1581), but not, as Jeanne Harrie has pointed out, in any of the rest of his voluminous writings. Harrie argues that Walker, Yates, and Jean Dagens overestimate his esteem for the Hermetic religion, whereas his purpose in *De la Verité* had been essentially conservative, namely to subordinate the *prisci theologi* to Old Testament revelation and to appeal to non-believers by finding common ground with their traditions.⁶⁵

With respect to the academic hope for reconciliation, it is also worth remembering a political dynamic that is rather hidden in plain sight, namely that such hopes were ultimately predicated on the apostasy of Protestants and not Catholics. This was achieved most notoriously with Henri IV, a conversion shepherded by Jacques Davy Du Perron and to which Tyard, for example, responded by remaining loyal to the crown and against the League (for whom the Bourbon succession was a calamity).⁶⁶ Yates goes into the

⁶⁵ Jeanne Harrie, "Duplessis-Mornay, Foix-Candale and the Hermetic Religion of the World," *Renaissance Quarterly* 31/4 (1978): 506-07: "Neither in his stated intent nor in his method of argumentation did Duplessis-Mornay show an interest in the Hermetic religion of the world. The full title of [*De la Verité*] reveals his ostensible end, a defense of Christianity against its non-Christian detractors. The author stated at the beginning of the work that this is best accomplished by using works accepted as authoritative by the various non-Christian groups, the Old Testament against the Jew, natural philosophy against the atheist.... It is worth noting that he used the Egyptians as an example of a superstitious people who saw everything as a god and yet recognized the true God. Duplessis-Mornay, however, displays little of the respect for the seedbed of Hermetism typical of many Renaissance Hermetists in his conclusion that the idea of the one true God must have been kept alive by other peoples if even the Egyptians had preserved it."

⁶⁶ Another notorious example is the poet Jean de Sponde, whose conversion, like that of Henri IV, was encouraged by Du Perron. Sponde made important contributions to the *vanitas* genre; for numerous citations and analyses, see Terence Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France, 1570-1613* (Cambridge, UK:

Huguenot-Catholic rivalry a great deal in her history of the Academy, but her discussions center on disagreements over liturgical rights, for which centrists sought peaceful compromise, or on basic political and practical questions, such as whether reunification was desirable and worth pursuing.⁶⁷ Many on both sides wanted simply to coexist in peace. But Yates neglects to discuss how a doctrinaire Calvinist should have regarded the activist Neoplatonic ideals of *fureur poétique* and *musique mesurée à l'antique*, or the mystical interpretation of the *harmonie du monde*. The observation that some, including Le Jeune, outwardly went along with it seems to provide a justification for eliding the internal conflict, or even cognitive dissonance, that it might have produced. D'Aubigné satirized the humanist respect for paganism and the syncretic orientation on which reunionist hopes depended.⁶⁸ This counts as strong evidence that Calvinists took a discriminating approach to academic discourse. I suggest in Chapter 4 that Le Jeune left evidence of regret in the *Octonaires* for his participation in Baïf's mystical program of musical effects.⁶⁹ The intervening years had exposed the program's inefficacy; as Le Jeune observes in his preface to the *Dodecacorde*, "The good fortune and virtue of the

Cambridge University Press, 1969). On Sponde's connection to Claude Le Jeune, see Isabelle His, *Claude Le Jeune (v. 1530-1600): Un Compositeur entre Renaissance et baroque* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2000), 104. On his relationship to Paschal de l'Estocart, see Eugénie Droz, "Paschal de l'Estocart et Jean de Sponde," *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance* 13 (1951): 312-26. On Tyard's life, see Kathleen M. Hall, *Pontus de Tyard and his Discours philosophiques* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 1-33.

⁶⁷ See esp. Yates, *The French Academies*, chapter 10.

⁶⁸ See Yates, *The French Academies*, 214-16.

⁶⁹ See Example 4.5 (Chapter 4, section II).

king [Henri IV] have had more power to create such an effect than all the [musical] tones of the world.”⁷⁰

Furthermore, the moderate inclinations of academic royalists can easily be overstated. Yates writes,

[t]he strongest dislike of “heresy,” its temper and its methods, is characteristic of most of the group, and in some individuals, Dorat for instance [the mentor of the *Pléiade*], it took violent forms. There is inconsistency and confusion throughout, and many of those, who in the earlier period had taken a very different line, later claimed the credit for St. Bartholomew. The lines of demarcation between the “politiques” and the two extremist parties [militant Huguenot and League] are never clear, particularly in the later period when the League is so closely intermingled with Henri III’s movement.⁷¹

Yates concludes that the Academy exhibited, on the whole, a greater preference for ecumenical mysticism than for polarizing attacks. To her suggestion that “[i]n such an atmosphere the differences between Protestant and Catholic Christians cannot have seemed so irreconcilable as they did to rational theologians,”⁷² it would be fair to add that these differences probably appeared less insurmountable to moderate Catholics, who had the political upper hand, than to those on the wrong side of the St. Bartholomew massacres, who had read of the approval of that atrocity by some of their colleagues (most notably Daurat, Baïf, and Pibrac).⁷³

⁷⁰ Quoted in Claude Le Jeune, *Dodecacorde: Comprising Twelve Psalms of David Set to Music According to the Twelve Modes*, ed. Anne Harrington Heider, *Recent Researches in Music of the Renaissance*, vols. 74-76 (Madison: A-R Editions, 1989), 1:xvi.

⁷¹ Yates, *The French Academies*, 234-35.

⁷² Yates, *The French Academies*, 235.

⁷³ Yates, *The French Academies*, 212-13. She notes that “what people said about the massacre need not necessarily be a guide to what they thought. The gentler strain was no doubt much stronger in some members of the academic circle than in others. Dorat seems genuinely to have rejoiced in St. Bartholomew, in accents which forecast the extravagances of the League; for Pibrac and Baïf the rejoicing was perhaps more perfunctory.” One might assume that this would have been small consolation for Huguenots. See also Vignes, “Jean-Antoine de Baïf et Claude Le Jeune: Histoire et enjeux d’une collaboration,” *Revue de musicologie* 89/2 (2003): 274-75.

Appendix 2

A Certain View of Uncertainty: The Role of Paradox, Ambiguity, and Illusionism in *Vanitas* Art and Music

In the *Octonaires*, passages in *musique mesurée* coexist awkwardly with passages in imitative counterpoint. By combining these two styles in ways that create metric disorder, Le Jeune implicitly represents both as unstable or contingent, and could therefore appear to be motivated by an interest in conveying uncertainty about what is true. With the obvious support of the poetry he is setting, I take his primary aim instead to have been the positive assertion of a religious point of view, in humility from an awareness of his compromised human perspective. Whereas the Protestant discourse on vanity can be seen to traffic in early-modern epistemic doubts by highlighting the deceptions of materiality, it was meant in the first place to provide a religious answer to doubt. *Vanitas* painters used the “deceitful” techniques of their craft to expose rather than perpetuate material deception. Le Jeune can be heard to apply the same logic to music: Do not become ensnared by the Greek siren song of universal harmony, which is the kind of delusional materialist heresy that an anthropocentric, world-embracing perspective would naturally lead one into. He offers vivid inklings of the harmonic ideal through *musique mesurée*, only in order to paint the ideal as false. To the extent that one felt new uncertainty about universal laws in a heightened state of flux, this should only have made Biblical truths more pressing, and the conclusion of vanity and world-denial more certain.

We can see, for example, that this *octonaire* by Chandieu is motivated by certainty in the face of apparent uncertainty:

Ce n'est rien qu'une Echo tout cest immonde Monde,
Sortant d'un bois, d'un roc, et d'une profonde onde:
Un son naissant-mourant, une voix vifve-morte,
Un air rejallissant, qu'un vent leger emporte,
Un parler contrefaict, qui est esvanoui
Si tost qu'il a trompé celui qui l'a oui.
Tais-toy, fuy loin de moi, Echo, fuy, Monde immonde,
Demeure au bois, au roc, et en l'onde profonde.¹

*This impure world is all nothing but an Echo
Issuing from a wood, a rock, or a deep wave;
A nascent dying sound, a dead living voice,
A reverberant air lightly borne on the wind,
A false speech that falters
As soon as the ear has been fooled.
Be silent, flee far from me, Echo, flee, foul world,
Stay in the wood, in the rock, and in the deep wave.*

Its ambiguous imagery – note especially the ironic play on words of *immonde Monde* – conveys an unambiguous moral, based on the sure awareness that appearances can deceive.

Ambiguity applies more readily to visual art in the absence of an explanatory text, and unsurprisingly, many art critics have discerned ambiguous motives and meanings in *vanitas* paintings, which their illusionist aesthetic can appear to reinforce.² Illusionism

¹ Antoine de la Roche Chandieu, *Octonaire XIII*, appended to *Meditations sur le Psalme XXXII* (Geneva: Guillaume Laimarie, 1583), n.p. Le Jeune did not set this *octonaire* to music, though he could have intended to.

² Eddy de Jongh, "Some Notes on Interpretation," in *Art in History/History in Art: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Culture*, ed. David Freedberg and Jan de Vries (Santa Monica: Getty Center, 1991), 123, observes that pictures are unfailingly "patient" of the interpretations we impose on them, and that they are "by definition multivalent.... Some pictures, being more than just passively receptive, possess certain qualities that incite the viewer to excesses of reading, and the beholder's share often assumes monstrous

implies deliberate deception, while the moral of vanity can itself be read to subvert the material medium and vice versa. Music, too, had paradoxical associations; to quote Linda Austern, “it was a fleeting pastime, a seducer of the mind, or path to damnation”; yet at the same time it served for religious devotion.³ Therefore, the same question applies to both *vanitas* art and music: whether or not a moral problem or contradiction was seen to arise from using inherently vain means to represent vanity. If so, this could appear to support the idea floated above that representations of vanity were intended to stoke fundamental uncertainty, or at least that they risked doing so. “If I have to choose between whether the moral undermines the art or vice versa, maybe I should just renounce my critical faculties and pray for salvation.” But by that logic, one might just as well become a hedonist: who can say what tomorrow might bring? In disagreement with some of the critics to be cited below, I would argue that an artwork that reminded of vanity no more undermined itself in the act than did St. Paul, a confessed sinner, undermine himself in the act of spreading the gospel.

Rosalie Colie has shown that a widespread interest in paradox among Renaissance thinkers (perhaps most famously, in *The Praise of Folly* by Erasmus) usually indicates a delight in rhetorical prowess, in an educated ability to look at both sides of a question, rather than a skeptical surrender to ambiguity.⁴ The word “paradox” has a conspicuous

proportions. Representations are constantly loaded with meanings that were not and could not have been intended by the artist.” Of course, numerous *vanitas* images contain textual cues. On *vanitas* art, see Ingvar Bergström, *Dutch Still-Life Painting in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Christina Hedström and Gerald Taylor (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1983), 154-90.

³ Linda P. Austern, “‘All things in this world is but the musick of inconstancie’: Music, Sensuality and the Sublime in Seventeenth-Century *Vanitas* Imagery,” in *Art and Music in the Early Modern Period: Essays in Honor of Franca Trinchieri Camiz*, ed. Katherine A. McIver (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2003), 313.

⁴ Rosalie L. Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 3ff. Colie writes that “[t]he humanists and their pupils were masters and mistresses

place in French *vanitas* literature, as it was several times used in the vernacular title of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa's popular treatise, *De incertitudine and vanitate scientiarum et artium* (1530) – in French, *Paradoxe sur l'incertitude, vanité et abus des sciences*.⁵ Colie writes that the term “was often applied, not to a strict logical or rhetorical construction involving some kind of dialectical contradiction, but to a formulation of any sort running counter to received opinion.”⁶ The latter sense was used, for example, in reference to the new Copernican theory.⁷ It also describes Agrippa's broadside against

of the trivial arts [i.e., of the classical *trivium*], and thus were ideally suited to appreciate and to create paradoxes. As Professor Kristeller has often stressed, in the Renaissance major emphasis within the trivium shifted from logic to rhetoric, to the arts of expression and persuasion.... For the humanists, rhetoric seemed to open anew the possibility of expressive integrity such as the ancients had enjoyed, in which style, form, and matter were inextricably conjoined. For persons with such a preference, the rhetorical paradox offered a specific illustration that what was said, to be properly understood, must be said in a particularly appropriate way” (34-35). Kathleen M. Hall, *Pontus de Tyard and his Discours philosophiques* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 165, writes that “Tyard shows in a remarkable degree the Renaissance ability to suspend judgement. It is not modern doubt, deliberate refusal to believe either one side or the other. At heart Tyard is of the generation described by Febvre, with its ‘goût égal pour les opinions les plus contradictoires’, satisfied with ‘situations troubles, ambiguës, peu définies, qui nous semblent absurdes et nous irriteraient’, and vaguely prepared to believe both sides.... Even in the scientific Discourses Tyard retains his capacity for not making up his mind.” Tyard contents himself at times with presenting contradictory viewpoints, leaving the reader to decide which is the more persuasive.

⁵ The Bibliothèque nationale de France lists several editions translated under the title *Paradoxe*..., either anonymously or by Louis de Mayerne-Turquet, in 1603, 1605, 1608, 1617, and 1623 (none with publisher information). The earliest French edition of which I am aware is *Déclamation sur l'incertitude, vanité et abus des sciences, trad. en françois du latin de Henry Corneille Agr.*, trans. anon. ([Paris]: Jean Durand, 1582).

⁶ Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica*, 9.

⁷ Cf. Simon Goulart, *Commentaires sur la Sepmaine de la creation du monde, de Guillaume de Saluste, sieur Du Bartas* (Rouen: R. du Petit Val, 1589), 160r: “Le Poëte parlant du tour & moueement des Cieux autour de la terre, refute cy apres le Paradoxe de Copernicus, qu'il appelle docte Germain, ou Alemand.” Du Bartas argues against the theory of the earth's movement in the “Quatrieme Jour” of *La Sepmaine* (1578). Consistent with the understanding of paradox as a mere rhetorical device, Goulart and Du Bartas preferred to doubt the literal intent or implications of Copernicus's theory: “Le Poëte s'est contenté de toucher ce Paradoxe en vn mot, sans le vouloir trop exactement refuter, pource qu'il se combat de soy mesme, ioint que la Preface mise au commencement de l'œuvre monstre assez que Copernicus a mis cela en auant plus pour inciter les esprits à bien estudier en l'Astronomie, que pour vouloir resolument soutenir telle opinion” (161r). Since both men were Huguenots, it is likely that the Protestant emphasis on a literal interpretation of Biblical scripture also informed their response to some extent. The upshot is that a paradox against dogma need not have been found intellectually threatening; it was already wrong by definition and could be battled around. On the general Protestant rejection of heliocentrism, see Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution: Planetary Astronomy in the Development of Western Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003 [1957]), 191ff.

humanist learning, which nevertheless proceeded from a Neoplatonic orientation. On the “uncertainty” of the arts and sciences, Agrippa wrote (or pretended to write) from a position of intellectual and religious certainty.⁸

I consider illusion and deception to be relevant in a sense to the *Octonaires*, but it is necessary to examine these concepts from the standpoint of deliberate representation, as distinct from subjective reception. My concern here will be to connect Le Jeune’s techniques for representing vanity and the techniques typically used in painting to the same ontological and epistemological viewpoint. I argue that in *vanitas* paintings, illusionism served primarily to represent material transience, rather than to contradict it rhetorically or deceive in the attempt. The same priority is still more evident in *vanitas* music, which enables the literal representation through movement of inconstancy, a

⁸ Agrippa is an exceptional and perplexing case among early-modern Neoplatonists, as he was equally known for his treatise on Hermetic magic, *De occulta philosophia libri tres* (1510), which his later Erasmian polemic explicitly recants. The first complete edition of *De occulta philosophia* was not published until 1533; see Vittoria Perrone Compagni’s critical edition (Leiden: Brill, 1992). Michael H. Keefer, “Agrippa’s Dilemma: Hermetic ‘Rebirth’ and the Ambivalences of *De vanitate* and *De occulta philosophia*,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 41/4 (1988): 620, reconciles the evident contradiction by finding in both works the same “Hermetic interpretation of the Christian mystery of spiritual rebirth or regeneration,” a platform that “is itself an unstable confounding of opposites which finally results in a confusion of the highest forms of magic and of Christian faith (these two are one for Agrippa) with the most dangerous variety of demonic heresy.” Cf. the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. “Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim,” by Charles Nauert, Summer 2011 Edition, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/agrippa-nettesheim/>: “Agrippa...never perceived the disharmony between his essentially Neoplatonic sources, with their ideal of achieving enlightenment and holiness by rejection of the material world and improvement of the soul through meditation and asceticism, and the ‘evangelical’ strain in his thought that emphasized simple faith and the authority of the Bible.” Stephen A. McKnight, “Science, the *Prisca Theologia*, and Modern Epochal Consciousness,” in *Science, Pseudo-Science, and Utopianism in Early Modern Thought*, ed. Stephen A. McKnight (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 104, summarizes Agrippa’s nuanced attitude toward human vanity as a magus in the Hermetic-Cabalistic tradition: “Agrippa’s views of the source of knowledge and the concept of man are not altered in the *De vanitate*. Magic is not included in the sciences that he criticizes. In fact, it is the ‘highest peak of natural philosophy.’ This magic is the key to restoring man as a terrestrial god and the means for overcoming the alienated state produced by Adam’s sin.” On Agrippa’s influence by Francesco Giorgi, see Vittoria Perrone Compagni, “Une fonte di Cornelio Agrippa: il ‘De harmonia mundi’ di Francesco Giorgi Veneto,” *Annali dell’Istituto di Filosofia* 4 (1982): 45-74.

concept that visual art can only gesture toward. But both media could succeed at showing the illusion of material stability to be only that; neither served merely to perpetuate it.

This common orientation between the two media may then be tied to an overarching cosmology, a science that, in Rémi Brague's formulation, provides "an account of the world in which a reflection on the nature of the world as a world must be expressed," and in which "that which makes the world a world...is not presupposed, but, on the contrary, becomes implicitly or explicitly a question to be raised."⁹ Brague's definition perfectly describes the originating cosmic rationale of the *vanitas* genre, which, as I have argued in Chapters 2 through 4, answers the question by departing from Neoplatonic cosmology. When an artwork's intellectual content is overtly cosmological, the applied technique should be analyzed for how it represents or reinforces an "account of the world." The technique becomes a part of the content, represents itself along with the content, and proceeds from ontological premises that should guide reception of the content. I engage with art criticism here because most of the historical commentary on the theme of vanity pertains to its visual treatments, and because I believe that some common views in that discipline on illusion, deception, and ambiguity are misleading on cosmological grounds. Some capacity for nuance was required to distinguish between the world's vanity and its observable beauty or theoretical harmony. But for most Christians, an appeal to insoluble ambiguity would only have undermined the moral case, while for Protestant Christians, an appeal to the salvific power of harmony carried one into heresy.

⁹ Rémi Brague, *The Wisdom of the World: The Human Experience of the Universe in Western Thought*, trans. Teresa L. Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 4.

I. A poetic recipe for a visual *vanitas*, set to music by Le Jeune

To orient the discussion with a musical example, the second *Octonaire* of mode 12 (Hypoaolian) reduces the world metaphorically to a specimen of visual art:

Orfèvre taille moy une boule bien ronde,
Creuse et pleine de vent, l'image de ce Monde,
Et qu'une grand' beauté la vienne revestir
Autant que ton burin peut tromper et mentir,
En y représentant des fruits de toute guise:
Et puis tout à l'entour escry ceste devise:
Ainsi roule toujours ce Monde decevant
Qui n'a fruits qu'en peinture et fondés sur le vent.¹⁰

*Carve for me a ball, goldsmith, good and round,
Hollow and full of air, the image of this world,
Which dons a vestment of great beauty,
As much as your chisel can deceive and lie
In representing fruits of every sort;
And then inscribe this motto all around it:
The deceiving world turns ever thus,
With naught but painted fruits, founded on wind.*

The chanson begins and proceeds for a while in imitative duple meter. The first hint of *musique mesurée* arrives at “l'image de ce Monde” – an image that the poet characterizes as deliberately false:

Example A.1: “Orfèvre taille moy une boule bien ronde” (XII.2), mm. 13-20

¹⁰ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 8:39-45. The poem is by Chandieu.

vent, Creuse et plei-ne de vent, l'i-ma-ge de ce Mon-de,
 Creuse et plei-ne de vent, l'i-ma-ge,
 plei-ne de vent, Creu-se et plei-ne de vent, l'i-ma-ge.
 Creu-se et plei-ne de vent, l'i-ma-ge.

l'i-ma-ge de ce Mon-de, Et qu'u-ne
 l'i-ma-ge, l'i-ma-ge de ce Mon-de, Et qu'u-ne
 de ce Mon-de, l'i-ma-ge de ce Mon-de, Et qu'u-ne
 de ce Mon-de, l'i-ma-ge de ce Mon-de, Et qu'u-ne Et

Later, a stealth transition to triple meter occurs on the words “Autant que ton burin peut tromper et mentir” (As much as your chisel can deceive and lie):

Example A.2: “Orfèvre taille moy une boule bien ronde” (XII.2), mm. 21-34

grand' beau - té, Et qu'u - ne grand'

grand' beau - - té, qu'u - ne

- - ne grand' beau - - - té, Et qu'u - ne

qu'u - ne grand' beau - té, qu'u - - ne

beau - - té la vien - ne re - ve - - stir Au - tant que

grand' beau - té la vien - ne re - ve - - stir Au - tant que

grand' beau - té la vien - ne re - ve - - stir Au - tant que

grand' beau - té la vien - ne re - ve - - stir Au - tant que

ton bu - rin peut trom - per et men - - tir,

ton bu - rin peut trom - per et men - - - tir,

ton bu - rin peut trom - per et men - - tir, En y

ton bu - rin peut trom - per et men - tir,

The instructions for representing falsehood continue for a moment in duple meter imitation, whereupon Le Jeune again reverts to homophony and triple meter to underscore the fruits of deception – “des fruits de toute guise” – presented by the world:

Example A.3: “Orfèvre taille moy une boule bien ronde” (XII.2), mm. 35-59

The musical score is written for four staves. The first system (mm. 35-38) shows the vocal parts entering with the lyrics "En y re-pre-sen-tant, En y re-pre-". The second system (mm. 39-42) continues the vocal parts with "sen-tant, En y re-pre-sen-tant, re-pre-sen-tant, En y re-pre-sen-tant, En y re-pre-sen-tant, En y". The third system (mm. 43-46) features the vocal parts singing "sen-tant des fruits de tou-te gui-se,". The fourth system (mm. 47-50) continues with "re-pre-sen-tant des fruits de tou-te gui-se,". The fifth system (mm. 51-54) shows the vocal parts singing "des fruits de tou-te gui-se: Et puis tout à". The sixth system (mm. 55-58) continues with "des fruits de tou-te gui-se: Et puis tout à". The seventh system (mm. 59-62) shows the vocal parts singing "des fruits de tou-te gui-se: Et puis tout à".

En y re-pre-sen-tant, En y re-pre-
 En y re-pre-sen-tant, En y re-pre-sen-tant,
 re-pre-sen-tant, En y re-pre-sen-tant,
 En y re-pre-sen-tant, En y re-pre-sen-tant, En y
 -sen-tant des fruits de tou-te gui-se,
 re-pre-sen-tant des fruits de tou-te gui-se,
 re-pre-sen-tant des fruits de tou-te gui-se,
 re-pre-sen-tant des fruits de tou-te gui-se,
 des fruits de tou-te gui-se: Et puis tout à
 des fruits de tou-te gui-se: Et puis tout à
 des fruits de tou-te gui-se: Et puis tout à
 des fruits de tou-te gui-se: Et puis tout à

l'en - tour, tout à l'en - tour, tout à l'en - tour e - sery ce -

l'en - tour, tout à l'en - tour, tout à l'en - tour e - sery ce -

l'en - tour, tout à l'en - tour, tout à l'en - tour e - sery ce -

tout à l'en - tour, tout à l'en - tour e - sery ce -

-ste de - vi - se: Ain - si roule toujours,

-ste de - vi - se: Ain - si roule toujours,

-ste de - vi - se: Ain - si roule toujours, Ain -

-ste de - vi - se: Ain - si roule tou -

The “motto” (*devise*) to be inscribed around the globe, the least subtle reveal of all, provides an obvious opportunity for imitative tone-painting, and Le Jeune elaborates the last two lines of verse (“Ainsi roule toujours ce Monde decevant / Qui n’a fruits qu’en peinture et fondés sur le vent”) for some thirty bars in a regular duple meter, without returning to homophony. He uses the *musique mesurée* style to underscore the idea of deception, and frames it with ordinary polyphony telling the listener not to be deceived.

II. Illusion, deception, and ambiguity



Figure A.1: Pieter Claesz., *Vanitas Still-Life with the Spinario* (1628)

This *vanitas* still-life is one of many examples to refer self-consciously to the craft of painting.¹¹ Does Claesz., by putting a skull between the marble Spinario and the palette and maulstick, undermine his own bid to outdo sculpture?¹² Does his evident concern for realism promote an ideal of natural, sensory perception that contradicts the religious perception of vanity?¹³ Is that a false antithesis? Without speculating on the painter's

¹¹ See Eric Jan Sluijter, "The Painter's Pride: The Art of Capturing Transience in Self-Portraits from Isaac van Swanenburgh to David Bailly," in *Modelling the Individual: Biography and Portrait in the Renaissance*, ed. Karl Enenkel et al (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998), 173-96; Hans-Joachim Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstler-darstellung in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1984), 266-88. For an introduction to still-life iconography, see Alan Chong, "Contained under the Name of Still Life: The Associations of Still-Life Painting," in *Still-Life Paintings from the Netherlands 1550-1720*, ed. Alan Chong and Walter Zwoek (Zwolle: Waanders, 1999), 11-38.

¹² A primary account of the rivalry between painting and sculpture (part of the wider *paragone* debate) can be found in Philips Angel, *Lof der schilder-konst* (Leiden: Willem Christiaens, 1642), 24-26. See also Peter Hecht, "The *Paragone* Debate: Ten Illustrations and a Comment," *Simiolus* 14 (1984): 125-36.

¹³ The former rationale is proposed by Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), esp. 229-34.

exact intentions here, we can note the emblems of several other pastimes – writing, drawing, drinking, music, love, and war – which together suggest a comprehensive indictment. Ingvar Bergström gives an inventory of the “symbols of earthly existence” targeted by *vanitas* still-lives, many of which are depicted here.¹⁴ Similar lists could be extracted from the *Octonaires* and similar poetry, or from Agrippa’s *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum et artium*.

We can also assume that Claesz. perceived a correlation between the painting’s meaning and its style of representation or technique, which he raises for consideration by showing the implements of his art. The technique can be described as naturalism or realism bordering on illusionism: toward the ideal that a painting should be like a windowpane onto a real-life scene. A successful display of this technique can always be read as a celebration of the painter, especially at a time when the *vanitas* genre was increasingly being used, ironically or otherwise, for self-portraiture.¹⁵ In the following *vanitas*, for example, Claesz. paints his reflection in a spherical mirror, working at his easel:

¹⁴ Bergström, *Dutch Still-Life Painting*, 154. Bergström groups the symbols into three categories: “(i) Books, scientific instruments, and the materials and tools used in the various arts, symbolizing literature, science, painting, sculpture, music, etc. (ii) Purses, deeds, settlements, jewellery, and other valuable objects of precious metals, collectors’ pieces – such as shells – banners, crowns, sceptres, weapons, and suits of pieces of armour; all these generally denote wealth and power. (iii) Goblets, pipes and other smoking requisites, musical instruments, playing cards or dice, which symbolize the various tastes and pleasures.”

¹⁵ Sluijter, “The Painter’s Pride,” 174, calls this trend “particularly well-represented in the art of painters from Leiden.”



Figure A.2: Pieter Claesz., *Vanitas Still-Life* (1630s)

One may question whether this virtuosic gesture was made in humility, or in the hope instead of triumphing over death through art. I will return in a moment to the latter possibility, but at a minimum, Claesz. left his painting open to the former, non-hubristic reading. By including a *memento mori*, he invoked the familiar moral of vanity, and by representing himself only through an intangible reflection, he linked his own physical impermanence to that of the still-life display.

How does the moral of vanity on display here relate to the technical means of representing it, and to what extent do those means correspond to Le Jeune's in the *Octonaires*? To answer this, I need to digress on the connection drawn by some art critics between illusionism and deception, and on the corollary assumption that a painter contradicted the moral of vanity by pursuing the vain illusionist ideal.

By illusionism in visual art, I do not only mean *trompe l'oeil*, where the notion of deception seems intrinsic, but more broadly the ideal of realistically imitating the natural world, which is accomplished by a mastery of form, perspective, lighting, and shading. The related term "naturalism" implies natural subject matter, but early-modern painters

increasingly applied the naturalist style to religious and mythological subjects (Caravaggio for example).¹⁶ From an orientation that may be called selective naturalism, still-life painters sought not to deceive but to move the viewer's emotions and intellect in one direction or another.¹⁷ A well-known early *vanitas* by Jacques de Gheyn II, which I discussed in Chapter 4 and which is nearly contemporaneous with Le Jeune's *Octonaires*, provides a striking example of selective naturalism:



Figure A.3: Jacques de Gheyn II, *Humana vana* (1603)

¹⁶ For a historical overview of naturalism as the defining principle of Netherlandish painting, see Bergström, *Dutch Still-Life Painting*, 4ff.

¹⁷ Naturalism in seventeenth-century art should not be conflated with the later nineteenth-century practice of depicting reality unvarnished and unglamorous. Selective naturalism describes a synthesis of two competing sources of artistic inspiration, a dichotomy the Dutch referred to as *uyt den gheest* (from the spirit or imagination) and *naer het leven* (from life). Content should appear natural or lifelike, but the composition need not have been painted directly from reality. Still-life compositions foreground the selectivity of the artist, who did not, as is sometimes assumed, look from the easel to the arrangement as it appears in the finished work. See Mariët Westermann, *A Worldly Art: The Dutch Republic 1585-1718* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 71-92. E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 73, makes this procedure into a universal rule: “any artist who wants to make a truthful record of an individual form...begins not with his visual impression but with his idea or concept.”

The giant soap bubble alludes to the precarious state of the world and everything in it.¹⁸

There can be no mistaking its allegorical function for the merely virtuosic imitation of a bubble from nature, which would not stay intact long enough to be copied. But its allegorical effect did depend on virtuosity, on the nearest possible imitation of a bubble's real physical properties.

In a general sense, then, illusionism refers to the attempt to conjure objects and scenes in a natural or realistic way, which became an important ideal in Western art with the ancient Greek revolution in *mimesis*.¹⁹ In a more particular sense, it refers to *trompe l'oeil*, meaning a concerted and inherently playful effort to hide the distinction between representation and reality. Louis Marin defines *trompe l'oeil* as simulation rather than imitation.²⁰ Jean Baudrillard calls it "non-representation," a fundamental attack on

¹⁸ On this painting's attribution, dating, and iconography, see Ingvar Bergström, "De Gheyn as a *Vanitas* Painter," *Oud Holland* 85/3 (1970): 143-57. Bergström gives an interesting analysis of the collection of worldly symbols that are faintly visible inside the bubble. Although de Gheyn's painting is one of the earliest examples of a *vanitas* still-life, by the seventeenth century the theme already had a long iconographic history, in depictions of St. Jerome or Mary Magdalene holding a skull, in allegorical representations of the Dance of Death or *Melancholia*, and on the backs of portraits. See François Bergot, "Le Rien du tout," in *Les Vanités dans la peinture au XVII^e siècle*, ed. Alain Tapié et al (Caen: Albin Michel, 1990), 43-47; Susan Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: Myth and Metaphor* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1994); Dagmar Hoffmann-Axthelm, "Vanitas: Lukas Cranachs *Melancholia*-Gemälde (1533)," *Music in Art: International Journal for Music Iconography* 37/1-2 (2012): 191-206, which also discusses Dürer's *Melancholia I* engraving. Hans Holbein's *The French Ambassadors* (1533), a double portrait *cum* still-life, features an anamorphic skull; see Mary Hervey, *Holbein's "Ambassadors": The Picture and the Men* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1900); Susan Foister, Ashok Roy, and Martin Wyld, *Making and Meaning: Holbein's 'Ambassadors'* (London: National Gallery, 1997); Kate Bomford, "Friendship and Immortality: Holbein's *Ambassadors* Revisited," *Renaissance Studies* 18/4 (2004): 544-81.

¹⁹ See Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, chapter 4. For a general history of illusionism in visual art, see Marie-Louise d'Otrange Mastai, *Illusion in Art: Trompe l'Oeil, a History of Pictorial Illusionism* (New York: Abaris, 1975).

²⁰ Louis Marin, "Imitation et trompe l'oeil dans la théorie classique de la peinture au XVII^e siècle," in *L'Imitation, aliénation ou source de liberté?*, Rencontres de l'École du Louvre, vol. 3 (Paris: La Documentation française, 1985), 181-96; cf. idem, "Mimesis and Description," in *On Representation*, trans. Catherine Porter (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 252-68.

painting's traditional purpose.²¹ Illusionism in this sense is usually and understandably characterized as intending to deceive the viewer, as the verb *tromper* suggests. But the former, more general sense of illusionism may also be called deceptive, typically in order to express admiration for natural detail ("deceptively lifelike").

M.-L. d'Otrange Mastai recognizes that what is being "fooled" by a *trompe l'oeil* is the eye rather than the mind: that an optical illusion causes a delay between what the eye initially sees and what the mind correctly reinterprets.²² Mastai writes that *trompe l'oeil* "is devoted not to 'trickery' but to the representation of pure visual experience with utmost objectivity," and that it "represents the culmination of pictorial realism; under ideal conditions, the result is one of totally convincing visual delusion."²³ The delusion, as she rightly observes, does not persist. Since the painter will have understood this beforehand, deception cannot have been the earnest intent:

No deception is attempted or achieved. More importantly, the viewer is thus made aware that the painted scene is merely an incentive to his own imagination. Far from being passive, he must place himself not only in the right spot, but in the right frame of mind. This covenant between artist and viewer has always been implicit, whether or not the public was directed to a special vantage point. No great illusionistic scheme ever truly deceived, or attempted to deceive. The artist's function was to fling open the illusionistic portals into the domain of imagination, that those who were worthy might enter.²⁴

²¹ Jean Baudrillard, "The Trompe l'Oeil," in *Calligram: Essays in New Art History from France*, ed. Norman Bryson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 53-62.

²² Cf. Pontus de Tyard, *Deux discours de la nature du monde, & de ses parties* (Paris: Mamert Patisson, 1578), 81r, where the Curieux specifies the painter's ability to fool the eye: "La peinture attroupe si discretement vne proportionnee confusion de couleurs, blanche, rouge, jaune, verte, noire, que ses images contrefaits ressemblent les vrais corps, iusques à tromper le iugement des yeux." Implicit in this remark is again the intellectual awareness of a deception.

²³ Mastai, *Illusion in Art*, 15.

²⁴ Mastai, *Illusion in Art*, 11.

In his *Encyclie des secrets de l'éternité* (1570), Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie addresses this need to rationalize what our senses report:

Quand l'oeil seroit trompé, ne seroit pas trompée
La Raison, s'elle estoit du Sens anticipée?
D'où vient donc, je vous pry, qu'en voyant de bien loin
Quelque grand' tour quarée, elle n'a point de coing
Au rapport de vos yeus, ains semble restrecie
Et ronde ombreusement en veüe racourcie?
Toutesfois la Pensée ayant fait son discours,
Sçait que l'oeil se deçoit, que ses rais sont trop cours....²⁵

*When the eye is fooled, will not Reason
Be fooled, if it is preceded by Sense?
How comes it, I ask you, that viewed from afar,
Some great square tower appears to your eyes
Without corners, and rather seems narrowed
And round, shaded and shortened in view?
However, the Mind having made its judgment
Knows that the eye is deceived, the lines too short....*

The term *trompe l'oeil* is often used to refer to discrete effects, such as a ceiling painting where a foreshortened perspective creates the illusion of a vault or dome. In this sense, it could also be applied to details of the *vanitas* paintings shown above, or to any instance of rhythmic or harmonic sleight of hand in the *Octonaires* – *trompe l'oreille*. Mastai holds that a proper *trompe l'oeil* “stands by itself as a self-contained rendering of objects in their entirety,” as opposed to being “part of a larger, preexistent whole from which [the objects] cannot be separated,” and that it is “necessarily restricted and limited

²⁵ Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie, *L'Encyclie des secrets de l'éternité* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, n.d. [1570]), 53. On this work, see François Secret, *L'Esotérisme de Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie* (Geneva: Droz, 1969), 27-50.

in area.”²⁶ The above paintings thus would not qualify in that sense, because the objects appear against backdrops that are represented only partially. Then again, neither would this remarkable *vanitas* by Cornelius Gijsbrechts:



Figure A.4: Cornelius Gijsbrechts, *Trompe l'oeil with Studio Wall and Vanitas Still-Life* (1668)

This painting is always called a *trompe l'oeil*, yet the edge of the canvas interrupts the maulstick and the palette's shadow. But the denominative question is less important than the question of how seriously Claesz., de Gheyn, or Gijsbrechts took their role as “deceivers.” They strove for naturalistic detail, and in Gijsbrechts's case especially a kind of photorealism that even differentiates the objects on the inner peeling canvas from the still more lifelike objects around the canvas.

²⁶ Mastai, *Illusion in Art*, 11.

Hanneke Grootenboer finds that this illusionistic layering produces an infinite regress of uncertainty: that Gijsbrechts “pushes the *vanitas* theme to its limit in an attempt to visualize its paradox, namely, that it [the theme] cannot be visualized.” She writes that he defies the impossibility of representing “nothingness” (i.e., vanity) “by shifting the focus...to the ambiguity of vision itself”; that “our eyes plunge into the depths of illusionist confusion.” The contrast between the inner canvas and its surroundings provokes “a continual alternation between illusion and disillusion in a process that never ends in a moment of revelation.” The painting asks us “what is painted, what is real, what is supposed to appear as painted, and what must look more real than reality?”²⁷ Grootenboer cites Victor Stoichita in support, that Gijsbrechts “challenges the art of painting in this *representation of a painting*.”²⁸ It is strange to find the awareness that the painting is only a *trompe l’oeil* coexisting with the suggestion that it could maintain its deceptive hold indefinitely. Gijsbrechts has stepped back from the traditional *vanitas* still-life to show a bit of the real world surrounding it – the vain world that the objects inside the false canvas were understood to denounce. Painting the outside more realistically than the inside cleverly intensifies the theme.²⁹ The question of basic perception, of “what is painted, what is real,” could be answered by every viewer: all of it is painted.

²⁷ Hanneke Grootenboer, *The Rhetoric of Perspective: Realism and Illusionism in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Still-Life Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 147.

²⁸ Grootenboer, *The Rhetoric of Perspective*, 147-48 (original italics).

²⁹ The painting does not, on the other hand, discourage the view that Gijsbrechts wanted to trump the efforts of other painters, or even to downplay the moral. Just as conspicuous as the skull are the wheat stalks, which symbolize eternal life.

It is impossible to depict transience. Every picture *is* transient by virtue of the universal process of decay, but this outcome is extrinsic to the artist's intent. To quote E. H. Gombrich, "Even the still-life painter cannot describe what he sees, for what he sees must change every moment."³⁰ The inclusion of *vanitas* symbols betrays the painter's awareness that transience has to be represented symbolically – a stimulus to the higher understanding rather than a deception of the lower. The purpose of an illusionist technique was therefore to emphasize this limitation: the closer one came to capturing the fleeting moment, the more effectively one represented it as fleeting. Since one could never finally overcome the limitation, the pursuit was understood to be inherently vain. It would seem likely that the *vanitas* genre arose from, or at least responded to, an awareness of this irony, as realistic techniques advanced.³¹ Eric Jan Sluijter notes the importance of mirrors – symbols of vanity – both as an aid for creating self-portraits and as hand-held tokens within portraits. In the latter case, the mirror was often shown reflecting a skull rather than the sitter's face.³² This link between mirror and *memento mori* indicates the artist's recognition that, to the extent that a painting could be called a "mirror of nature," it illustrated nature's ephemerality above all.

³⁰ E. H. Gombrich, "Mysteries of Dutch Painting," *The New York Review of Books* 30/17 (Nov. 1983): 17 (review of Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing*, cited in note 13).

³¹ Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, 4, reminds, "There was a time when the methods of representation were the proper concern of the art critic. Accustomed as he was to judging contemporary works first of all by standards of representational accuracy, he had no doubt that this skill had progressed from rude beginnings to the perfection of illusion." With regard to the Renaissance, Gombrich cites Giorgio Vasari, who "never fails to pay tribute to those artists of the past who made a distinct contribution, as he saw it, to the mastery of representation" (11), and who "could not disentangle the idea of invention from that of the imitation of nature" (12). Gombrich himself argues for the need to "appreciate the forces which have to be overcome by an art aiming at the illusion of reality. Each of these steps appears as a conquest of hitherto unknown territory that had to be secured and fortified in a new tradition of image making" (23).

³² Sluijter, "The Painter's Pride," 178-79.

An actual intention to deceive or perplex would not in any case have prevented viewers from inferring the moral of vanity. The painter's skill at imitating nature was often compared to that of a Zeuxis or Parrhasios, but it would be outlandish to think that this was more than rhetorical. For example, the Dutch painter and theorist Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-78) invoked the mimetic ideal of these two legendary Greek artists, but he set clear limits: a "perfect painting" was "a mirror of Nature, which makes the things that do not exist, appear to exist, and which deceives in an allowed, amusing and praiseworthy manner."³³ Even were perfection realized, the "deception" would still need to amuse – in other words, be noticed and cease to be operative.

III. *Vanitas* ontology: calling it what it is, or is not?

The moral precept *omnia vanitas* was derived from an ontological precept, that the world's temporal and material condition separates it from God. The ontological precept was logically unassailable as long as one accepted that God exists and that no material configuration lasts forever or stays in one place without changing (an observable fact). It was this outlook of dualist intellectual certainty that determined the existence of *vanitas* art in the first place, and that would also have conditioned responses to it. Yet Grootenboer characterizes *vanitas* art as a paradoxical attempt to represent something that "cannot be visualized," as though it destabilized the normative belief in representing that which is. (By "visualized" she must mean "represented visually" as opposed to

³³ Quoted in Westermann, *A Worldly Art*, 92. See also Celeste Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

conceptualized.) Defining vanity as an “ontology of nothingness,” Grootenboer is able to point out the impossibility of representing nothing. But following Ecclesiastes, she makes it clear that she is using “nothingness” in an axiological sense (of no value, coming to nothing) rather than an ontological sense (literally nothing), and therefore she is not really describing an ontological paradox that should have troubled the art’s initial viewers. Needless to say, vain things first have to *be* in order to be represented as vain; but to be of finite duration, to lead to and be replaced by nothingness, did not make something impossible to represent (if it did, there would be no representative art at all). As for representing the *idea* of finitude and of eventual nothingness, viewers bringing a dualist perspective to *vanitas* art should not have seen a problem. By drawing attention through symbols to a painting’s inability to capture the fleeting moment (which is always “nothing” once it has passed), the painter could represent “nothingness” in Grootenboer’s sense to the viewer’s satisfaction.

Grootenboer also characterizes earthly life as “present being”: “In the Preacher’s view [in Ecclesiastes], present being means nothing, hence the history of life is not a progressive development of man (or of the world) toward being, but toward nothingness.”³⁴ This use of “being” could distract readers familiar with the Platonic and Augustinian conceptions of being, which are central to the *vanitas* tradition. Plato thought that being or essence was only imperfectly or partially reflected in the material world; for this reason, dependable knowledge had to come from elsewhere.³⁵ From this point of

³⁴ Grootenboer, *The Rhetoric of Perspective*, 138.

³⁵ Plato was indebted to Heraclitus for this basic conception of the material world, though he rejected the latter’s belief in a unity of opposites. See Chapter 4, section III.

view, the present life is indeed, or should be, a “progressive development of man toward being,” and it is only its temporary material dimension that leads to nothing.

Grootenboer’s “nothingness” also seems to recall inadvertently what Plotinus called “non-being,” meaning the absence or annihilation of matter – a notion with only theoretical interest because Plotinus assumed (following Aristotle) that matter was permanent and indestructible.³⁶ The Christian concept of vanity proceeded from a belief in an afterlife, the immortality of souls, and the resurrection of the body, and so did not really face down the prospect of material annihilation or nothingness.³⁷ If we are being precise, the “nothingness” or emptiness connoted by the word vanity referred to transient material form, and from there (axiologically) to unstable, empty purpose.

The ontological precept of vanity requires that truth come from beyond, from a fixed, atemporal, divine point of reference. Where does that leave representations of truth that are mired in the here and now? We should recall here Plato’s negative opinion of visual *mimesis*; in Gombrich’s paraphrase, “The picture conjured up by art is unreliable and incomplete, it appeals to the lower part of the soul, to our imagination rather than to our reason, and must therefore be banished as a corrupting influence.”³⁸ Plato aspired to truth at all costs, and he derided painting as the one-sided, false imitation of an already

³⁶ Cf. Plotinus, *Enneads*, II.9.3.12-18. I discuss Platonic ontology as it applies to the *vanitas* theme in Chapter 2, section III.

³⁷ Cf. Goulart, *Commentaires sur la Sepmaine*, 277r: “Le premier homme au contraire a eu Dieu pour son seul Createur, sans aucune corruption, & de matiere telle que quoy qu’elle fust poudre, neantmoins sans le peché demouroit immortelle comme en Iesus Christ, nos corps qui sont de poudre (car ils tiennent de leur premiere origine) seront au dernier iour rendus immortels & incorruptibles.” Grootenboer, *Rhetoric of Perspective*, 138, observes that “[i]n Christianity, death means both the instance at which biological time stops and a transitory stage on the way to the continuum of eternity where time does not exist.” At no point in this process could “nothingness” be said to obtain, except in the relative sense of the negation of temporal life.

³⁸ Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, 127. Cf. Plato, *Laws*, II.656d; *Republic*, X.598, 602c-d.

deceptive material reality. He did not apparently consider the possibility that selective naturalism in painting could stimulate the imagination toward higher reason: that through suitable iconography it could represent the material illusion without asking the viewer to succumb to its charms, using two dimensions to comment on the unreliability of the three-dimensional world. *Vanitas* art upholds a Platonic premise while representing it in a manner inimical to Plato himself.³⁹

In the Platonic view, although material objects cannot represent truth, they do nonetheless have a definite, objective existence independent of the mind. The “deception” of a painting is not therefore a matter of representing the unreal or the “not really there.” Though we cannot claim to *know* about an object without identifying the unchanging Forms or essences of which it partakes, we must posit its existence if we aspire to know about it. Plato argues in Book V of the *Republic* that everything in the world participates in both being and non-being. By non-being, he does not mean non-existence or nothingness, rather the extent to which something does not participate in stable being – relative privation rather than annihilation. Our blindness to an object’s participation in being would limit us to having only haphazard opinions about it, but would not call its physical existence into question, or preclude a “realistic” or “convincing” representation of it. The flower in the picture is a picture of a real flower, which should look the same in reality from the same angle in the same light. Freezing it in a *vanitas* reminded the viewer that it was not thereby made permanent.

³⁹ Plato’s allegory of the cave in the *Republic* (VII.514a-520a) implies the notion of selective naturalism, but with the selectivity coming from the spectator’s unwitting point of view rather than the creator’s knowing point of view: haphazardly choosing what to see rather than deliberately choosing what to show.

I do not consider this argument to be undermined by what has been called “a pervasive sense of vision’s precariousness and fallibility” during the early-modern period.⁴⁰ To doubt the accuracy of one’s ocular perception was not (or not necessarily) to doubt the physical existence of what one saw, or to be left in a state of moral uncertainty about higher truths, which, by cosmic design, one could not see. It might instead reinforce those truths.⁴¹ In a sprawling treatise called *Tableau de l’inconstance et instabilité de toutes choses* (1607-10), Pierre de l’Ancre identifies the certainty that should obtain even for the total skeptic, namely the certainty that nothing is certain.⁴² But he is referring only to sensory, worldly experience, not to religious faith:

⁴⁰ Stuart Clark, “Demons, Natural Magic, and the Virtually Real: Visual Paradox in Early Modern Europe,” in *Paracelsian Moments: Science, Medicine, and Astrology in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Gerhild Scholz Williams and Charles D. Gunnoe, Jr. (Kirksville, Mo.: Truman State University Press, 2002), 223-46. Early-modern scientists were unquestionably preoccupied with vision and optics. Clark cites Mersenne’s view of the arguments for philosophical skepticism, that “virtually all of them depended on Optics” (227). See the following note.

⁴¹ Clark, “Demons, Natural Magic,” 228, cites Montaigne from the *Apologie de Raimond Sebond*: “External objects surrender to our mercy...they dwell in us as they please.” Clark comments that “at issue, as in all attempts to decide between what is virtually real and what *is* real, was a criterion problem – the supposed lack of any independent standard for judging whether sense experience was veridical. Montaigne also argued, for example, that the possible lack of senses additional to the five that human beings possessed meant that they might be experiencing only an approximation of the real world, without having any way of knowing this to be so.” Virtual reality, in this context, was entirely a question of the individual’s ability to interpret external reality accurately. It was not question of doubting the existence of external objects.

⁴² Pierre de l’Ancre, *Tableau de l’Inconstance et instabilité de toutes choses*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Abel l’Angelier, 1610), 140v-141r: “Mais il [Cicero] se sont essayez de passer vn peut trop auant, voulant enuelopper toutes choses sous la generalité de l’incertitude, & dire que tous les sens estoient deceptifs; partant que les notions qui nous venoient par leur moyen, estoient pareillement douteuses, deceptiues & faulses; & ainsi rien ne se pouuoit comprendre qui fust certain. Ce qui est notoirement faux par leur proposition mesme: veu que s’ils scauent que rien ne ce peut scauoir, par consequent quelque chose se peut scauoir; tout ainsi qu’affirmer, qu’on ne peut rien affirmer, est vne espece d’affirmation....” L’Ancre identifies this stance with Pyrrhonism, but a true Pyrrhonist would say that we cannot even claim to know what is uncertain. Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Savonarola to Bayle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), xix, writes that “[s]cepticism for [the Pyrrhonists] was an ability, or mental attitude, for opposing evidence both pro and con on any question about what was nonevident, so that one would suspend judgment on the question. This state of mind then led to a state of *ataraxia*, quietude, or unperturbedness, in which the sceptic was no longer concerned or worried about matters beyond appearances. Scepticism was a cure for the disease called dogmatism, or rashness. But, unlike Academic scepticism, which came to a negative dogmatic conclusion from its doubts [i.e., the conclusion that l’Ancre draws here], Pyrrhonian scepticism made no such assertion, merely saying that scepticism is a purge that eliminates everything including itself. The Pyrrhonist, then, lives undogmatically, following his natural

given that there are many things that do not pass before our eyes or ears, nor any exterior sense: indeed even the most important mysteries, which are those of our salvation and all that depends on belief therein, which nevertheless do not lend themselves to our utmost certainty, when all of our exterior senses come to fail us.⁴³

L'Ancre implies here that seeing is believing, but he accepts the necessity of religious faith in lieu of the possibility of seeing into the beyond. He says that our exterior senses "fail" us (*defaillir*), a revealing word choice as it connotes moral distraction and weakness rather than intellectual deception or confusion.⁴⁴ Much of sensory deception, in other words, was at bottom moral deception – temptation. You were supposed to know better.

Quand la Terre au Printemps prend sa verte couleur
Et l'arbre se revest d'une plus belle fleur,
Sa fleur est messagere
Du fruit que l'on espere.
Mondain, qui es sans fruit, combien que tu fleurisses
En biens, et en honneurs, en plaisirs et delices,
Ta fleur qui trompe et ment,
N'est qu'un joüet du vent.⁴⁵

inclinations, the appearances he is aware of, and the laws and customs of his society, without ever committing himself to any judgment about them."

⁴³ L'Ancre, *Tableau de l'Inconstance*, 141r: "veu qu'il y a beaucoup de choses qui ne nous passent par les yeux, ny par les oreilles, ny mesme par aucun sens exterieur; voire les plus important mysteres, qui sont ceux de nostre salut & tout ce qui gist en soy & creance; qui ne lairroient pourtant d'estre certaines & bien confirmees en nous-mesmes, quand bien tous nos sens exterieurs viendroient à nous deffaillir." Popkin, *The History of Scepticism*, xxi, clarifies that "'sceptic' and 'believer' are not opposing classifications" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. "The sceptic is raising doubts about the rational or evidential merits of the justifications given for a belief; he doubts that necessary and sufficient reasons either have been or could be discovered to show that any particular belief must be true and cannot possibly be false. But the sceptic may, like anyone else, still accept various beliefs."

⁴⁴ The *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1694), s.v. "defaillir," offers the synonyms "manquer" (to miss or lack) and "s'affoiblir" (to weaken). Accessed via the ARTFL Project, *Dictionnaires d'autrefois*, University of Chicago, <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois>.

⁴⁵ Le Jeune, *Octonaires* (ed. Expert), 8:1-4.

*When the earth in spring turns green
 And the tree puts on a more beautiful flower,
 Its flower is a messenger
 Of the fruit that we await.
 Mondain, who is without fruit, for all that you flourish
 With goods, with honors, pleasures and delights,
 Your flower, which fools and lies,
 Is only a plaything of the wind.*

Le Jeune sets this poem, the first *Octonaire* of mode 9 (Mixolydian), using the same stylistic contrast that I have described elsewhere: lines 1-2 and 5-6 are predominantly composed in imitative polyphony, lines 3-4 and 7-8 are in the homophonic *musique mesurée* style. To give further emphasis to the “fleur qui trompe et ment,” he switches abruptly to triple meter:

Example A.4: “Quand la Terre au Printemps prend sa verte couleur” (IX.1), mm. 27-45

The musical score consists of four staves. The first staff has the lyrics "En biens, et en honneurs, en plai - -". The second staff has the lyrics "-neurs, En biens, et en honneurs, -neurs, En biens, et en honneurs, -neurs, En biens, et en honneurs, -neurs, en plai - - - sirs". The third staff has the lyrics "-neurs, En biens, et en honneurs, -neurs, En biens, et en honneurs, -neurs, En biens, et en honneurs, -neurs, en plai - - - sirs". The fourth staff has the lyrics "-neurs, en plai - - - sirs". The score is in Mixolydian mode and features a switch to triple meter.

- sirs et de - li - ces: Ta fleur qui trompe et ment, N'est

Ta fleur qui trompe et ment, N'est

Ta fleur qui trompe et ment, N'est

et de-li - - ces: Ta fleur qui trompe et ment, N'est

qu'un jouï - et du vent. Ta fleur qui

qu'un jouï - et du vent. Ta fleur qui

qu'un jouï - et du vent. Ta fleur qui

qu'un jouï - et du vent. Ta fleur qui

trompe et ment, N'est qu'un jouï - et du vent.

trompe et ment, N'est qu'un jouï - et du vent.

trompe et ment, N'est qu'un jouï - et du vent.

trompe et ment, N'est qu'un jouï - et du vent.

The running eighth notes in triple meter move slower than those we have just heard in duple meter, and they cause the meter change to feel more unsettling than it would without such ornament. The listener is brought up short by the metrical representation of falsehood, which again undermines *musique mesurée* as the representation of truth. Le

Jeune creates the same effect in the third chanson in this mode, “La glace est luisante et belle,” which compares the world to the ice through which one falls into water, as the sinner falls into hell. He switches abruptly into triple meter homophony to proclaim, “Mais la glace en eau se fond” (But ice melts into water). The deception of a flower, or of ice, is recognizable and meaningful in temporal rather than ontological terms. One thing had to change – and be seen to change – into the other: ice into water, a flower from bloom to decay.

IV. The *vanitas* genre as the representation of itself and the artist

Discerning a paradoxical fog between artwork and viewer naturally leads to a critical emphasis on subjective reception. From there, it can also lead to the questionable logic of referring the viewer’s ambivalent reactions back to a coy artistic intent. As with any other genre, a *vanitas* painting could also be viewed as representing itself – a specimen of artistic accomplishment – and its creator. As Grootenboer notes, “[a]n artwork is able to survive its maker and guarantee his or her fame, as a famous *vanitas* maxim expresses: *Vita brevis ars longa*, ‘Life is short but art endures.’”⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Grootenboer, *The Rhetoric of Perspective*, 138.



Figure A.5: Pieter Steenwijck, *Ars longa, vitta brevis* (mid-17th c.)

This is a common observation, and one that again is used to suggest that *vanitas* art is inherently deceptive or equivocal. Anne-Élisabeth Spica introduces a collection of historical essays on vanity by describing a hypothetical viewer who surrenders to uncertainty about the genre's purpose and effect:

The acute sense that this world is nothing but a dream and that death is the inevitable punishment is externalized according to a series of double and reversible formulations: no denunciation of vain appearances without praise for their beauty, no rejection of vanity without an appetite for the vain and empty. In fact, the reader of Ecclesiastes in the Christian West has never stopped engaging with this double postulation: between the feeling of worldly vanity and the discordant, ironic ascertainment of it, between melancholy in the face of a general illusion and the violent anxiety evoked by the awareness of inevitable death, the meditation of *Qohelet* constantly invites one to pass from one side of vanity to the other, with no solution of continuity.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Anne-Élisabeth Spica, "La Vanité dans tous ses états," in "Discours et enjeux de la Vanité," ed. Anne-Élisabeth Spica, special issue, *Littératures classiques* 56/1 (2005): 5: "Sentiment aigu que ce monde n'est qu'un songe et que la mort en est l'inévitable sanction, il s'extériorise selon une série de formulations doubles et réversibles: pas de dénonciation des vaines apparences sans l'éloge de leur beauté, pas de rejet du vain sans appétit et de vain et de vide. De fait, la lecture de l'*Ecclésiaste* dans l'Occident chrétien n'a jamais cessé d'engager cette double postulation: entre sentiment de la vanité du monde et constatation pleine d'ironie grinçante de cette vanité, entre mélancolie devant l'illusion généralisée et violence de l'angoisse que suscite la conscience de la mort inéluctable, la méditation du *Qohélet* a constamment invité à passer, sans solution de continuité, d'un bord à l'autre de la vanité."

But a *vanitas* painting could not simply by virtue of its existence render the message of Ecclesiastes ambiguous, nor is it really a matter of perplexity to crave what one knows should be avoided. And if the painting creates sensual desire in the act of warning against it, it also leaves no doubt of the futility and hypocrisy of shooting the messenger.

In a similar vein, Austern notes the contradiction of artworks that devalue yet ensure their own longevity:

The viewer, raised on the teachings of the Church, knew well that all earthly things withered, and that death came as the end. However, these still visual creations, these exquisite things presented so appealingly on canvas or in books, would remain so even after the demise of their creators.⁴⁸

This would be true for a time, and as Sluijter points out, the notion of painting as a means to posthumous fame had considerable appeal in the seventeenth century.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, everyone would also have realized that artworks were subject, like everything else, to physical decay – a process dramatically accelerated in music.⁵⁰ With regard to exquisite imagery as such, it may be worth recalling the function of such imagery in devotional poetry. Terence Cave finds that “every effort is made to appeal to the reader’s sensual

⁴⁸ Austern, “Music, Sensuality and the Sublime,” 288-89.

⁴⁹ Sluijter, “The Painter’s Pride,” 181, cites Constantijn Huygens writing in 1629: “[Portrait-painters] accomplish a noble task, that more than anything else is absolutely indispensable for our human needs, because, through their agency, we do not die in a sense, and as descendants, we may speak intimately with our ancestors.” See also 192ff. Sluijter cites an extreme contrary viewpoint from Dirck Camphuyzen, that painting was “a seductress of sight, spellbound by all that is transient,” a “seductive deceit of the eyes,” “the art of aping and making ghosts,” and “the foolish mother of all vanities” (183).

⁵⁰ Sluijter, “The Painter’s Pride,” 184, asserts that the “extreme attitude” that painting was, in Camphuyzen’s words, “more food for moths,” was by far the exception “among the prosperous Dutch burghers from the seventeenth century, as we may conclude from the incredibly large production of portraits from the period.” However, he also cites the opinion of David Bailly, one of the leading Dutch *vanitas* painters: “Bailly made abundantly clear that he was deeply conscious of the fact that painting is after all a “semblance without being” – pictorial deceit, nothing more than pigment on panel or canvas – and that this should be a source of pride as well as modesty: in the end the painter’s endeavors are also vain. ‘Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas’ is written on the paper [in Bailly’s self-portrait] which bears Bailly’s elegant signature and the date 1651” (194).

awareness through direct description,” but that it is nonetheless “wrong to assume, in the devotional context, that a wealth of imagery...implies sensual representation: on the contrary, the presence of *similitudes* or other analogies is frequently a sign that the author is trying to make an impact on the reader’s *entendement*.”⁵¹ In the *vanitas* poetry used by Le Jeune, appealing images are devalued as soon as invoked. In such an aphoristic genre, the reader is given no real time to dwell on their delights. In paintings, skulls and other reminders should have served the same purpose of revoking sensual pleasure. One could not embrace the beautiful parts of the image without embracing death as well.

Vanitas painters, moreover, could have found justification in the knowledge that their works would remain, not for the vain purpose of reminding future viewers of the artist, but for the religious purpose of reminding them of vanity. The composer of *vanitas* music could hope for a similar posthumous reach. The maxim of Hippocrates, *ars longa vita brevis*, may in fact support this possibility, as it did not necessarily intend to proclaim the glory of artists and their works. *Ars* in Latin meant skill or technique rather than art in the later Romantic sense, and *ars longa* could simply refer to the length of time needed to acquire technical expertise, relative to the short span of a life. The complete aphorism (from Hippocrates’s *Aphorismi*) reads, “Life is short, and art [method] long, opportunity fleeting, experience perilous, and decision difficult.”

⁵¹ Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France*, 32-33.

Steenwijck thus probably meant, “See how long I labored at this painterly skill, only to die and leave it behind.”⁵² Modern dictionaries also define the maxim in this way.⁵³

Louis Marin comes nearer to describing a cosmological rationale for the *vanitas* theme, which is also my primary concern, but he does so in paradoxical terms that leave the reader to infer that the theme had an ambiguous purpose. He characterizes the artistic genre as the byproduct of “two far-removed extremes”:

[1] that of the most universal framework of being and knowing, and [2] that of a very particular artifact of *mimesis*, which nonetheless have in common a double vanity, since the one extreme manifests as a critical failure of judgment in matters of knowledge, and the other as a strange excess of judgment in matters of taste: on one end the infinite, on the other the genre of painting known as still-life.⁵⁴

⁵² This sense of the Hippocratic aphorism occurs in the opening lines of Chaucer’s *Parlement of Foules* (Assembly of Fowls, ca. 1381-82); see the edition by D. S. Brewer (London: Nelson, 1960). The first stanza reads:

The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne,
Th’assay so hard, so sharp the conqueringe,
The dredful joye alwey that slit so yerne,
Al this mene I by love, that my felynge
Astonyeth with his wonderful werkynge
So sore y-wis, that whan I on him thinke,
Nat woot I wel wher that I flete or sinke.

Chaucer was greatly esteemed among seventeenth-century Dutch scholars, thanks in particular to the efforts of the philologist Franciscus Junius. Rolf H. Bremmer, Jr., “Franciscus Junius Reads Chaucer: But Why? and How?” in *Appropriating the Middle Ages: Scholarship, Politics, Fraud*, ed. Tom Shippey (Cambridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2001), 50, writes that Junius’s copy of the complete works of Chaucer contains a “lengthy Greek citation, from Hippocrates’s *Aphorisms*, with which Junius identified the source of the opening lines of the *Parlement of Foules*.” Junius studied at the university in Leiden, which, according to Bergström, became “the principal home” of Dutch *vanitas* painting (*Dutch Still-Life Painting*, 158). Pieter Steenwijck and his brother Harmen were members of the Leiden Guild of St. Luke; both were pupils of the Leiden-based painter David Bailly, who studied with Jacques de Gheyn II, the leading early influence on the seventeenth-century *vanitas* genre.

⁵³ Cf. the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. “ars longa, vita brevis”: “human life span limits all that might be accomplished”; accessed April 25, 2016, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>.

⁵⁴ Louis Marin, “Les Traverses de la vanité,” in Tapié (ed.), *Les Vanités*, 22: “en voici deux [pensées] qui me paraissent ouvrir le champ de la vanité selon deux extrémités fort éloignées: celle de la structure la plus universelle de l’être et du savoir et celle d’un artefact très particulier de la mimésis, mais qui ont un commun une double vanité puisqu’en l’une se manifeste une défaillance essentielle du jugement de connaissance et dans l’autre, un étrange excès du jugement de goût: d’un côté l’infini, de l’autre le genre de peinture dit de nature morte.”

For Marin, *vanité* amounts to a negative epistemology: our inability to know or prove mocks our compulsory need to judge. The still-life, the “very particular artifact of *mimesis*,” papers over the ignorance of universals with the minute judgment of particulars. The two extremes are connected by the recognition that to imitate (judge) reality is to deceive knowingly, because sensory reality is inherently deceptive and unknowable: “Vanity that wraps itself in the clouds of its deception, where the confusion of the deceived subject is a measure of the illusion of the deceiving object.”⁵⁵

The intellectual framework for Marin’s discussion had been newly erected by thinkers such as Descartes and Pascal. The latter’s *Pensées*, which were collected and published posthumously in 1670, provide the specific context for his essay. In mid-seventeenth-century France, the rhetorical and aesthetic implications of *mimesis* or illusionism and verisimilitude became the focus of a series of *querelles* surrounding the establishment of the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* (1648).⁵⁶ Classicist painters led by Charles Le Brun campaigned to put academic theory above artisanal practice, reviving the ancient controversy over *mimesis*. This was largely an ethical controversy, Plato’s views on which we have seen already, concerned with the rhetorical inconsistency between a representational ideal (the faithful imitation of nature) and an

⁵⁵ Marin, “Les Traverses de la vanité,” 21-22: “Vanité qui s’enveloppe elle-même dans les nuées de sa déception, où la confusion du sujet déçu est à la mesure de l’illusion de l’objet qui déçoit.”

⁵⁶ On the establishment of the *Académie de peinture et de sculpture* and its rivalry with the *Maîtrise*, see Thomas E. Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 23-44; Jacques Thuillier, “Académie et classicisme en France: Les Débuts de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture (1648-1663),” in *Il mito del classicismo nel seicento*, ed. Stefano Bottari (Messina: Guido d’Anna, 1964), 181-209. On the controversy over illusionism, see Paul Duro, “Containment and Transgression in French Seventeenth-Century Ceiling Painting,” in *The Rhetoric of the Frame: Essays on the Boundaries of the Artwork*, ed. Paul Duro (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 44-62; idem, *The Academy and the Limits of Painting in Seventeenth-Century France* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 156-208.

epistemological ideal (the awareness that nature is not truth). Descartes, in a scientific effort to separate objects from the individual's perception of them by measuring their mathematical and physical properties, encouraged a sense of physical rupture between the artwork and the spectator. Because his attempt at an objective, rational philosophy of art avoided a definition of beauty, Descartes also raised the awareness of irreconcilable subjectivities within that domain, which led to reactionary aesthetic theories based in *a priori* conceptions of beauty.⁵⁷

Le Brun's principal antagonist in the new controversy over imitation was the Huguenot Abraham Bosse (d. 1676). Paul Duro writes,

Bosse's religious and intellectual position naturally had a determining influence on his approach to the question of [linear] perspective, engendering in him a desire to find an infallible means to represent the exterior world. The problems such a stance posed for the Academy [which was interested in manufacturing reality, so to speak] are as obvious as they were pressing. While art practice in the Academy was based on the observance of rules that may superficially appear to accord with the Renaissance's delight in the application of scientific progress, a radical shift had taken place in the way artistic value was constructed. Science, far from being the legitimization of artistic worth, had by the seventeenth century taken on the complexion of a mechanical activity. In this climate, the *demonstrable* qualities of perspective were now denigrated as inflexible and its rules and methods seen as inhibiting the free play of the artist's imagination.⁵⁸

A painter's "mechanical" expertise, applied to mundane reality and to decoration, served to devalue the artist's calling, which was to represent more elevated subjects according to the royal priority. The display of such expertise for its own sake invoked the vanity of the world, which was associated with mere scientific progress – not with intellectual

⁵⁷ This move by Descartes can be traced as far back as his early treatise on music, written in 1618 but not published until 1650; see Bertrand Augst, "Descartes's Compendium of Music," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 26/1 (1965): 119-32; see also Brigitte van Wymeersch, "L'Esthétique musicale de Descartes et le cartésianisme," *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 94/2 (1996): 271-93.

⁵⁸ Duro, *The Academy*, 169-70. See also André Blum, *Abraham Bosse et la Société française au dix-septième siècle* (Paris: Albert Morance, 1924), 18ff.

deception per se, but with the potential for rational error based on false premises. To mid-seventeenth-century academicians, illusionism meant cheaply mimicking nature in an obvious way rather than honestly improving on it in an enlightened way. It meant stimulating the senses rather than the intellect, spoiling verisimilitude (a matter of rhetoric more than realism) and subverting the frame.⁵⁹ Yet members of the *Académie royale* could still apply their priority of verisimilitude, of mediated reality and its underlying ideological certainties, to the *vanitas* theme, despite the latter's common association with mechanical expertise in the lowly still-life genre. The symbols of vanity could always rescue the illusionist technique from itself.



Figure A.6: Philippe de Champaigne, *Still-Life with a Skull* (ca. 1671)

⁵⁹ The interest in framing a painting so that it claims distinction from its surroundings – the idea that a painting should be self-contained art and not decoration – was still new in the 1650s. Nicholas Poussin, in the dedication of *Israelites Gathering Manna in the Desert* (1637-39), wrote that “[o]nce you are in receipt of your painting, if you like the idea, I ask you to adorn it with a frame; this is necessary in order that when viewing it in all its parts the rays of the eye are focused and do not become distracted by the impression of other neighboring objects which risk becoming confused with those of the painting. It would be very appropriate if the said frame were gilded in a simple matt gold, because it will then blend very well with the colors of the painting without clashing with them”; quoted in Duro, *The Academy*, 180. See also Louis Marin, “The Frame of Representation and Some of its Figures,” in Duro (ed.), *The Rhetoric of the Frame*, 79-95; idem, “Du cadre au décor ou la question de l’ornement dans la peinture,” *Rivista di estetica* 12 (1982): 16-35; idem, *To Destroy Painting*, trans. Mette Hjort (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 33-35; Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, “Starting Out from the Frame (Vignettes),” in *Deconstruction and the Visual Arts: Art, Media, Architecture*, ed. Peter Brunette and David Wills (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 118-40.

Or, the theme could be classicized:



Figure A.7: Nicolas Poussin, *Les Bergers d'Arcadie* ('Et in Arcadia ego', 1637-38)⁶⁰

The controversy over images as either deceitful or instructive had deep theological roots (for example, the violent iconoclast movements of eighth- and ninth-century Byzantium), but the “anti” position was traditionally more worried about pictures as fancy sensory distractions, moral temptresses, or debasements of the ineffable than as corrupters of one’s intellectual grasp of physical, temporal reality. The two concerns, morals and physics, are ultimately inseparable from a cosmological point of view, but the senses could corrupt behavior even as they furthered scientific truth in the Aristotelian tradition. The pre-modern higher intellect, again, depended on *a priori* metaphysical

⁶⁰ See Erwin Panofsky, “*Et in Arcadia Ego*: Poussin and the Elegiac Tradition,” in *Meaning in the Visual Arts: Papers in and on Art History* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1955), 295-320.

certainty; Marin's referral to "critical failure of judgment in matters of knowledge" points instead to a new, modern preoccupation. Prior to that, we find the deceitfulness of art being called out by those who felt undeceived by it. Ralph Dekoninck quotes a sixteenth-century German theologian, an associate of Martin Luther, who ridicules the *Liber idolatrum* of the iconophile Pope Gregory I:

Tell me, dear Gregory, what good can the laity learn from images? You must admit that one learns of nothing but the misery and vanity of the carnal life, and that they only lead us to the flesh, because they can go no further.⁶¹

A clear directive for making art into *vanitas* art! But the deception inherent to the image was easily recognizable as such: in Dekoninck's words, "its sense is condemned to remain on the surface, to terminate with the material it is made of – sense that is therefore non-sense, because it cannot be attached to the material any more than spirit to the flesh."⁶² A *vanitas* painting, as a refinement of illusionism, "wrapping itself in the clouds of its deception" (Marin), would therefore only make the theologian's point more obvious.

I will conclude on a note of agreement with Michel Faré, who identifies this relationship between clear moral intent and representative technique as the defining feature of the *vanitas* still-life, and as that which separates it from the ordinary still-life:

⁶¹ Quoted in Ralph Dekoninck, "Entre vanité en image et vanité de l'image: Du Statut incertain de la représentation dans les Pays-Bas à la charnière des XVI et XVII siècles," in "Discours et enjeux de la Vanité," ed. Anne-Élisabeth Spica, special issue, *Littératures classiques* 56/1 (2005): 57: "Dis-moi, cher Grégoire, qu'est-ce que les laïcs peuvent apprendre de bon avec les images? Il te faut admettre qu'un n'en apprend rien que souffrance et vanité de la vie charnelle, et qu'elles ne nous conduisent qu'à la chair, car elles ne peuvent aller plus loin." The quotation is from Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt, *Von abtuhung der Bylder und das keyn Betdler unther den Christen seyn soll* (Wittenberg: N. Schyrlentz, 1522), f. A^r-B^r.

⁶² Dekoninck, "Entre vanité en image," 58: "Son sens et comdamné à rester à la surface, à s'arrêter à la matière dont elle est pétrie, sens qui est donc une non-sens, puisqu'il ne peut être attaché à la matière pas plus que l'esprit ne l'est à la chair."

Thenceforth the objects [depicted in *vanitas* still-lives] no longer have only a symbolic value, but a moral one. The motionless things no longer evoke the limit of our perception of the sensible world; nor do they respond to either the pantheistic or materialistic philosophies that delighted an epoch enamored of the physical and natural sciences. They suggest rather man's intellectual presence in their continual deference to his rational and Cartesian mind. With all the weight of their silent life, they affirm the fragility of our human existence. By fixing their images, the painter no longer symbolizes: henceforth he moralizes. The still-life is suddenly devoted to a lofty mission; it adapts itself to the idea of an art instrumental to the perfection of morals, as was the practice of seventeenth-century artists.⁶³

Descartes, after all, confronted the possibility of ultimate uncertainty and rejected it. The *vanitas* image did not simply raise the question of fragility; it raised the specter of it and answered the question in the affirmative. The artistic response to the *vanité du monde* might have instilled personal doubts, but the conviction itself was certain and polemical.

V. *Vanitas* music

⁶³ Michel Faré, *La Nature morte en France: Son Histoire et son évolution du XVII^e au XX^e siècle* (Geneva: Gailler, 1962), 1:110: "Dès lors les objets n'ont plus seulement une valeur symbolique mais moralisante. Les choses immobiles n'évoquent plus la limite de notre perception du monde sensible, elles ne répondent même plus aux systèmes d'une philosophie soit panthéiste, soit matérialiste, auxquels se complaisait une époque éprise de physique et de sciences naturelles. Elles suggèrent plus la présence intellectuelle de l'homme, car elles ne cessent de se plier aux disciplines de son esprit rationaliste et cartésien. Elles affirment de toute la pesanteur de leur vie silencieuse la fragilité de nos existences humaines. En fixant leurs images, le peintre ne symbolise plus, désormais il moralise. La nature morte est soudainement vouée à une haute mission ; elle s'adapte à l'idée d'un art utile au perfectionnement des mœurs, tels que le pratiquaient les artistes du XVII^e siècle." Spica, "La Vanité dans tous ses états," 6-7 n8, states that the earliest known distinction made in France between still-life and *vanitas* still-life postdates the high-water mark of the latter genre: "la première attestation, en France, de cette dénomination [de Vanités] apparaît seulement dans l'inventaire après décès de Ch. Perrault [d. 1703].... Que les hommes du XVII^e siècle – non plus que leurs traités de peinture – n'aient marqué aucune différence générique entre les Vanités et d'autres genres picturaux, les rattachant à la nature morte et les désignant de ce nom, invite à ne pas chercher à toute force à la constituer en structure intégralement isolable, quelque récurrents que nous apparaissent ses traits au XXI^e siècle." Hans J. Van Miegroet points out that "[t]he term *vanitas* first appears in early 17th-century inventories: like the term *trompe-l'oeil*, it is used to describe a type of painted still-life" (*Grove Art Online*, s.v. "Vanitas").

Because music lacks the resort to concrete imagery, a text is needed for it to communicate vanity or any other moral reliably. Polyphonic music, however, could invoke cosmological concepts independently of an accompanying text, and therefore it was conceptually proximate to the concept of both harmony and vanity – two cosmological viewpoints in natural tension with each other. It also follows that different polyphonic techniques could suggest different cosmological viewpoints. Le Jeune could have but chose not to take a more conventional stylistic approach to his *vanitas* music, allowing the words to carry the message. After all, we define *vanitas* paintings iconologically; the same applied technique can be found in other genres. If, for example, Le Jeune had composed the *Octonaires* entirely in *musique mesurée*, he would have ensured the clearest possible expression of the verbal content (short of monody perhaps). By instead combining this style with the style it was meant to replace, he appears to suggest (*contra* the academicians) that music could enhance poetic meaning by virtue of a certain independence from a poetic meter. His stylistic ambivalence, meanwhile, although contrary to the approach taken in *vanitas* still-lives, accomplishes the same end of imitating deceptive nature.

Musique mesurée responded to a desire to transcend materiality and vanity, to unite the *musique humaine* with the *musique mondaine*. It did not aspire to imitate nature as one ordinarily experienced it, rather, a stage of understanding above the illusion. Although the poetry of the *Octonaires* was not written in unrhymed *vers mesurés*, there was nothing to prevent Le Jeune from using the *musique mesurée* style throughout. Poets at the turn of the seventeenth century disputed whether rhymed verse could not serve just

as well for the homophonic style.⁶⁴ But in doing so, he would have been putting a lot of faith in the educated listener's sense of irony. Unlike painters who were tethered to a concrete medium and who used pictorial illusionism to demonstrate their own vanity, he would have been representing the vanity of nature entirely with musical language that purported to transcend it.

My view that Le Jeune's *vanitas* music polemically subverts the Neoplatonic doctrine of *harmonia mundi* depends on the argument I have made here, that the deception of vanity was a matter of collective certainty more than individual uncertainty. But the question remains of whether the "lofty mission" described by Faré, the "perfection of morals," meant the same thing to every participant in the *vanitas* tradition. Because the tradition emerged in an overwhelmingly Christian society, it is easy to assume that while it may have reflected a more stringent outlook among some Christians than others, it did not pose a fundamental challenge to some legitimate rival worldview. On this assumption, *vanitas* art, when it did not fortify the devout, might at best attract moral stragglers, complacent nominal Christians. All Christians could agree that temporal life counted for nothing next to eternity. But in viewing the genre's premise in narrow moral terms rather than more broadly in cosmological terms, and its representative means as the expression of ambivalence rather than certainty, scholars have generally neglected to ask whether and in which cases it harbored a polemical intent or promoted a view of reality from which other Christians had departed in good faith. Le Jeune's *Octonaires* may better be understood as a critique of a specific worldview than as the safe representation of a commonplace idea.

⁶⁴ See Chapter 1, note 55.

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