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THE DRAMATIC IMAGINATION OF PASCAL

A STUDY OF TECHNIQUES OF PERSUASION IN THE PENSEES

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By

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VITA

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INTRODUCTION

There are many conversations in the Pensées. Sometimes they take the form of dialogues. More often, though, they are suggested by the use of an occasional question and answer or a subject pronoun. These conversations are unobtrusive and, to a considerable extent, implicit. The main reason why they are so unimposing is that they always appear out of context. Perhaps if Pascal had finished the apology he would have explained the circumstances for the conversations. As it is, though, we have no explanation of what the function of the conversations is in relation to the whole work. The exact circumstances concerning how and why these people get together, and where they are, remains unknown. We have scarcely any more information about the identity of the characters involved in the conversations. We know very little about their personality, their family background, their professions, or their age. We cannot even be certain of their sex. However, these conversational situations occur so frequently that one wonders if they have an important function in Pascal's method of apologetics. Since Pascal did very little by way of organizing the fragments, any unifying elements are important. The conversational situations have three features which lend unity to the whole work. They always involve two characters whose identities remain consistent in many ways. Secondly, they always treat religion. And finally, the description of the dramatic
scene consists of only those details pertinent to the business of bringing about consent and omits all superfluous information. One of the characters engaged in the conversation performs the function of an apologist. As the most active of the two, and the one possessing the most self-confidence, the apologist does most of the speaking. In fact, it is appropriate for the reader to assume that the apologist is the principal speaker in all of the fragments. On many subjects the apologist is a skeptic, but his belief in God is always firm. The other participant in the conversation, the character with whom the apologist speaks, changes from fragment to fragment. We shall refer to him as the interlocutor, or the listener. Variation in his identity does not obscure certain similar traits. Usually the interlocutor is passive and talks very little. Sometimes he even allows the apologist to answer for him, and only rarely does he object to what the apologist has to say. During the course of longer fragments his attitude changes somewhat and the change is always made in the direction of submission of his will to the will of God. So the conversational situation consists of two characters, one of them engaged in an act of persuasion and the other reciprocating with an act of consent.

The form of Pascal's method of apologetics is doubly dramatic. The conversational situation is the basis for another category of dramatic elements. The apologist mentions hundreds of characters in his conversation with the listener, thus creating a new role in Pascal's dramatic scheme; the role of a third party. The characters who play this role never make a physical appearance on the scene with
the two people engaged in the conversation. They serve as illustrations in the apologist's argument. These example-figures make a sharp visual impression on the reader because their role often requires them to perform specific gestures or activities. They gamble, drink wine, listen to sermons, walk on planks spanning precipices, hunt rabbit and wild boar, play tennis, leap out of bed in the morning to chase after things of imaginary value, play piquet in a dungeon while awaiting a sentence and try to build towers up to infinity on unsound foundations. The kind of activity performed by these characters differs from that performed by the apologist and the listener. These two characters talk but they never do anything of a physical nature. The reader never sees them in very clear focus because they make only very few gestures, and are rarely even described. Of course, it would not be very realistic for them to describe themselves in their own conversation. By contrast, the characters evoked in their conversations come into sharp focus for the reader because they perform specific actions and sometimes they perform them at a precise time and in a definite place. So the reader can easily recognize the third party in the dramatic framework, not only because he is talked about by the apologist and the listener while never appearing in person with them, but also because his activity makes a memorable visual impression.

In the seven chapters which make up this thesis I have tried to do three things: (1) to determine to what extent Pascal gives a theoretical basis for a method of persuasion which calls for a dramatic form, (2) to isolate and define dramatic elements which
appear frequently in the *Pensées*, and (3) to determine the persuasive import of each of the dramatic elements.

I propose to demonstrate how Pascal handled one of the most problematic aspects of the art of persuasion. He defines the problem in an important fragment on method, "De l'Art de persuader". The problem arises from his basic assumptions about the nature of the human mind and the act of consent. The two most important assumptions are: 1) the mind consists of two regions; of one the person is aware, and of the other the person is almost totally ignorant, 2) the conscious mind is consistent. Each element (idea or feeling) agrees logically with every other element, and all of the elements make up a single coherent body. The consenter wishes to maintain harmony among his conscious opinions. Therefore, in order to produce consent a persuader must first learn the criteria imposed by the individual for judging new opinions. Then he must show the logical or emotive association between the criteria and the new opinion. Now the problem lies in the diversity of the consenter's criteria. One encounters such diversity that it is impossible to ascertain the criteria of a given person. It is interesting to note that Pascal states in "De l'Art de persuader" that he believes the problem to be insoluble.

Although Pascal does not provide a theoretical solution to the problem caused by variation in the natures of consenters, he did face the problem in the *Pensées*. In this work Pascal defines many different types of consenters. They vary as to the amount of, and the kind of opinions they can accept. Some heed the promptings of imagination at the expense of reason. Others fall into error just
as surely by suppressing altogether the voluntary impulses and claiming to be entirely rational. A third type is insincere. He accepts opinions which contradict his own basic ideas and feelings. Now, the variety of types of consenters is wide. So Pascal does indeed find a practical solution to the theoretical impasse.

Each of the chapters of this thesis pertains to one of the various aspects of the art of persuasion. Chapter I treats the theory of persuasion exposed in "De l'Art de persuader" with especial emphasis on the theoretical impasse which arises from variations in the nature of consenters. Chapter II shows the relation of the theory of persuasion with the dramatic framework of the Pensées. The art of persuasion consists of three major aspects: 1) method, 2) manner of consent and 3) opinions. Each of these aspects corresponds to one of the characters in the dramatic framework. The dramatic counterparts are: 1) the apologist who executes a method of persuasion, 2) the interlocutor who performs the act of consent, and 3) example-figures who embody various opinions in the apologist's argument. Chapters III, IV, and V describe the persuasive import of each character of the three-sided framework. In addition, these chapters show how each one of the characters contributes to the solution of the theoretical impasse. Chapter VI treats the right-thinking consenter. In it I show how Pascal defines the mental operations which lead to a good judgement, and how he employs discourse to influence those operations. In the final chapter I discuss the positions of several critics on the dramatic aspects of Pascal's method of persuasion.
Criticism of the style of the Pensées is abundant. Most of the critics whose work appears before 1950 deal with the classification of Pascal's style. In that year Sister Mary Maggioni in her book The Pensées of Pascal -- a Study in Baroque Style,¹ presented evidence that the style of the Pensées is baroque. She assumes that there are two factors which determine an author's style: the particular social, political, philosophical, and spiritual forces of the period, she calls this factor "epoch style", and the author's inner disposition. She concludes that the tension which is fundamental to the baroque concept is an innate characteristic of Pascal and that it accounts for the principal features of the style of the Pensées. Not only is her argument a sound one but her work is valuable because of its accurate description of Pascal's style.

In 1966 Professor Topliss published The Rhetoric of Pascal -- a Study of his Art of Persuasion in the Provinciales and the Pensées.² Her thesis is that Pascal did not invent an original theory of rhetoric. Instead he drew on the Ancients for his method of persuasion. Her study can fairly be called an extrinsic one in as much as she amasses all of the external evidence pertinent to Pascalian rhetoric. She presents the scanty information available on Pascal's education. She establishes that the seventeenth century was


interested in rhetoric and that authors did look to classical models. And she describes the most important principles of rhetoric held by Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and Horace. These authors have a psychological approach to rhetoric as evidenced by the following principles espoused by all of them: 1) Knowledge of the nature of the consenter is essential because the method of persuasion must be adjusted to suit his personality. 2) The aim of rhetoric is threefold: to please, to instruct, and to move. 3) The appeal of rhetoric must be directed to the emotions as well as to reason because emotions are an important factor in determining judgement. Professor Topliss has a very broad idea of the material pertinent to the support of her thesis. One of her chapters deals with the tradition of apologetics during the seventeenth century and the circumstances which surrounded the writing of the fragments. In another chapter she traces the steps of the long process by which the fragments left by Pascal found their way into print.

Professor Topliss accords a full chapter to the style of the Pensées. She points out that all of the stylistic virtues of the Pensées have been already labeled by critics. Her list includes: simplicity, naturalness, clarity, geometrical qualities, density, richness of vocabulary, concreteness, original and forceful imagery, dramatic elements, variety of tones, eloquence, lyricism, musical qualities, forcefulness, and expression of the author's personality. Professor Topliss validates each of these stylistic qualities with copious references to the text. Her hope is that by matching the broad judgments with specific examples she can provide insight into
the mechanism of Pascal's style. She organizes the results of her analysis under four headings: clarity, concreteness, emphasis, and the pathetic.

Pascal achieves clarity by four rules: 1) choice of vocabulary, 2) simplicity and lucidity as evidenced primarily in sentence structure, 3) vivid images, and 4) casting statements in the form of maxims. The quality of being clear, regardless of how it is produced, appeals to the intellect of Pascal's audience. Professor Topliss points out that although the Pensées do appear to be clear all is not clarity. Many passages have the appearance of self-evident truths, while in reality the certitude is an illusion created by stylistic devices. Miss Topliss is puzzled by equivocation. Words such as "coeur", "sentiment", and "raison" vary in meaning with the context. Pascal's use of negative and positive variations in word meaning is not offered as an explanation for some of these ambiguities.

The word "concreteness" refers to the use of physical details which stimulate the imagination. Professor Topliss along with almost all of Pascal's critics, is impressed by his enthusiastic representation of the external world. Pascal makes his reader see even before he invites him to ponder over religious issues. Miss Topliss cites dancing, billiards and other ball-games, hunting, gambling, soldiering and the theatre all of which Pascal uses in fragment 44 to convey the principle of "divertissement". Pascal's handling of images is characterized by rapidity of evocation, profusion of separate images, and an extraordinary range which covers a diversity of fields. Although his images bear the mark of his individual
style they appear in the works of other authors such as Montaigne and Saint Augustine. Miss Topliss points out that many of Pascal's images are dramatic in form.

The third of Professor Topliss' categories of rhetorical devices is "emphasis". Pascal suggests moderation in all things except in the realm of language where he achieves an extreme forcefulness. This quality is produced by repetition, enumeration, antithesis, and hyperbole.

The last of the four categories is constituted by techniques which produce an effect on the emotions. Professor Topliss calls this effect "pathetic". Five groups of techniques create the emotional impact: 1) motifs of words and images which suggest claustrophobic anxiety, despair, fear of falling and darkness, 2) dialogue form, 3) Pascal's ability to confront the reader with baffling metaphysical problems, 4) rhythm, 5) the use of anacoluthon for building up tension.

The critical work of Professor Topliss and Sister Maggioni leaves untreated an important area of the subject of rhetoric. The omission is due to the critical language and to the manner in which they conceive of their theses. Sister Maggioni uses a critical vocabulary which was originally designed for the spatial arts. Although she describes the style of the Pensées very perceptively and although she shows how Pascal's inner tensions actuate his style, she does not treat the effect of Pascal's style on his reader. The omission occurs in Professor Topliss' work as well. She covers every imaginable aspect of rhetoric except what happens within the
mind of the reader. Her approach limits the range of her study. She uses exclusively the critical vocabulary developed by Classical authors. Although she does refer often to the text she is content to locate examples and attach the appropriate classical terms to them. She does not explain how Pascalian rhetoric works.

Professor Davidson in his book *Audience, Words, and Art* and in his article "Conflict and Resolution in Pascal's *Penseés*" treats the neglected area. His purpose is to uncover a pattern of argument used by Pascal. He finds that Pascal consistently applies a method based on contradictions and he calls it the method of dialectical harmonization. The first phase of this method defines the contradictions in human nature, and the second phase introduces concepts which will harmonize the contraries.

Professor Davidson's studies remain primarily on an ideological level. Similar to his studies, my work concerns patterns according to which whole fragments are organized. Unlike his approach, though, my interest lies in the formal aspects of these organizing principles.

* * *

It is surprising indeed that the *Penseés* have achieved great literary fame. It is certain that Pascal never intended the manuscript to be published in the state in which he left it at his death.
In fact more than two hundred years elapsed from the time of his death until the publication of the text which in format and in completeness approximates the original. The quotations of the text of the Pensées are taken from the edition established by Louis Lafuma (Paris: Editions du Luxembourg, 1952). This edition contains, between parentheses and written in italics, the words and phrases which Pascal crossed out. I have included only those variants which are necessary for the interpretation of the fragments. The number which accompanies each quotation from the Pensées is the one assigned by M. Lafuma in his 1952 edition. The same numbering system is used in his paperback edition, Edition du Seuil, 1962. The quotations of "De l'Art de persuader" and of "Préface pour le Traité du Vide" are taken from the edition established by Jacques Chevalier, Pascal, Oeuvres Complètes (Editions Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1954).
CHAPTER I

THE ART OF PERSUASION

Variable Factors and their Relations

Pascal treats methods of persuasion in "De l'Art de persuader", a short article which was not completed, and which is usually published along with another article, "De l'Esprit géométrique". Both articles expose approximately the same ensemble of rules for the persuasion of opinions. But the documents are not equally valuable as sources of explanation for the persuasive import of the apologist-interlocutor conversation. Pascal organizes the two articles differently. The difference in organization accounts for the inclusion of material about the persuasiveness of dramatic elements in one of the articles, and the exclusion of this material in the other one. "De l'Esprit géométrique" begins with a statement of the ideal method for persuading opinions. The ideal method calls for defining all words and proving all propositions. Unfortunately, these tasks demand super-human intelligence on the part of both the persuader and the consenter! Since definitions and proofs depend on more

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fundamental knowledge which in turn rests on still more fundamental definitions and proofs and so on, the process, if it is to be executed properly, requires unlimited intelligence. Consequently, Pascal modifies the ideal method to make it suitable for use by humans of limited intelligence.

In the process of modification he deals with man's rational characteristics first. Only toward the end does he treat the emotional influences on consent, and he does not cover the subject very completely. The influence of emotions on consent is considerable. Emotions sway the consenting mechanism more than reason, and in some cases reason is denied altogether. Voluntary forces are not only strong but they are rarely overt. Consequently, their influence on the act of consent is difficult for the persuader to counteract. I intend to show that Pascal's methods for bending a man's will have a dramatic format. Since "De l'Esprit géométrique" is limited to the exposition of rules for persuading reason it is less relevant to a study of dramatic techniques.

Although the second article, "De l'Art de persuader", presents essentially the same method of persuasion, Pascal organized it in such a way that the voluntary faculties receive more attention. He begins the article with an explanation of all the variable factors of persuasion. Consideration of these variable factors reveals the existence of many different situations in which persuasion can be performed. Each one calls for a different method. Subsequently, Pascal moves through a systematic process of excluding from consideration those situations in which the method he wishes to expose would be
ineffective. Finally, he establishes the need for two methods of persuasion, and goes on to set down the rules for the operation of only one of them. My interest lies primarily with the method which he does not set down. Its pertinence to my thesis lies in the fact that its implementation calls for a dramatic framework, i.e., an apologist-interlocutor conversation in which characters are used to represent ideas.

In the first sentence of "De l'Art de persuader", Pascal makes a distinction between three aspects concerning the work of persuasion: the condition of the opinions to which consent may be produced, the act of consent, and the act of persuading.

L'Art de persuader a un rapport nécessaire à la manière dont les hommes consentent à ce qu'on leur propose, et aux conditions des choses qu'on veut faire croire.²

The three aspects of persuasion, opinions, consenters and persuaders, represent a kind of contract in which a persuader tries to cause another person to consent to an opinion. The nature of the three aspects and their interrelationship are of capital importance to the art of persuasion.

Pascal's method of exposition is dialectical. The meanings of key vocabulary words alternate between negative and positive depending on the state of the three aspects of persuasion. In view of the possible confusions which could arise as a result of Pascal's dialectical approach to the exposition of his method, I will indicate

several of the most fundamental distinctions concerned with the three basic aspects of persuasion before explaining the complex web of interrelationships in which they are fixed. Each of the three aspects of persuasion, opinions, consenters, and persuaders, has two or three principle variable factors. 1) Opinions pertain to either supernatural or natural matters, and they are either true or false. 2) Consenters possess two faculties for bringing opinions into the soul. Each faculty subjects the opinion to its own criterion. Reason brings the soul to believe whatever derives logically from previously accepted opinions, whether these are true or false. The second faculty, will, espouses those opinions which appear to provide pleasure. The will is easily satisfied; association with any of the will's previously accepted objects of pleasure is enough to certify a new object for acceptance. Both faculties work together to bring opinions into the soul, but they become operative at different moments in the process. Consequently, there are two orders: opinions pass either from reason to will, or they move from will to reason. The ability of the consenter for taking in opinions differs in another manner. This difference is the result of a flaw in the mechanism of consent. The mechanism of consent may be either corrupt or uncorrupt with references to its ability to avoid error and recognize truth. 3) There are divine and human persuaders, and each employs different methods. Divine methods are largely unknowable by man. Among the many possible methods within the capacity of human persuaders, the two main ones are the "méthode de convaincre", which appeals to reason, and the "méthode d'agréer", which appeals to the will. So Pascal
views the art of persuasion as a discipline consisting of three interrelated ensembles of variable factors: the condition of opinions to which consent may be produced, the manner in which men consent and the method employed by the persuader to bring opinions into the soul of another man.

The nature of the relationship between the three sets of variables is important. In the sentences quoted above Pascal states that variations in the act of consent and in the opinions imply corresponding changes in the method of persuasion. Actually, it becomes clear during the course of the first few paragraphs of "De l'Art de persuader" that the interrelationship of variable factors involved in each aspect of persuasion is still more complex. Change in any one of the aspects implies a necessary and corresponding change in the other two aspects. Therefore, if we make constants out of all of the variable factors, in two of the aspects of persuasion we can make predictions about the effect of the variables in the remaining aspects on the act of consent. For example, if a human persuader is given a valid opinion about natural matters to persuade by means of the "méthode de convaincre", then his success will depend on whether or not he is able to cause the consenter's reason to become operative before his will. In other words, he would have to insure that the mechanism of consent be uncorrupt. Looking at the subject of persuasion from a different perspective, we see that the ability of the persuader places limitations on what opinions he will be able to persuade, and ultimately affects how the consenter will accept the opinions. In conclusion, effective persuasion depends on how
well the method correlates with the condition of both the opinions and the consenter.

One of Pascal's basic assumptions about the nature of persuasion in "De l'Art de persuader" is that consent depends on what the consenter has already accepted as truth. Before the persuader thinks of how he will conduct himself in order to bring about consent, he must know the mind and the heart of the person he is trying to persuade. Once he has fixed the identity of the prospective consenter, he can ascertain the degree of attraction the opinion will hold for this person. Then the persuader takes whatever measures are necessary to make the opinion appear agreeable to the heart and convincing to the reason of the prospective consenter.

Pascal's objective in the article is to show the dynamic nature of the relationship of the act of consent and the condition of opinions to the act of persuasion. Accordingly, he takes up in the course of the article, each of the variable factors of all three aspects of his subject. At the same time that he treats the variables in one aspect, he makes constants out of all of the variables of the other two aspects. The procedure of holding some factors constant and varying other factors yields a series of experimental situations. Upon introducing each new situation, Pascal explores its influence of the art of persuasion. As his thoughts unfold, the notion of the whole subject gradually becomes clearer. At any given point in the two articles, Pascal is treating a situation which he has defined by a manipulation of the variable and constant factors of the three
aspects of persuasion. Subsequently, he moves to explore other situations defined by the same means.

**Dialectical Exposition**

The effect of the dialectical procedure on the meaning of important terms is striking. As the zig-zag pattern of the exposition progresses the values of key vocabulary words alternate between positive and negative. The dialectic is so important in the articles that it is appropriate to introduce the procedure before analyzing the articles. The full meaning of most of the important vocabulary becomes clear only after the reader considers the entire article or at least a large portion of it. For example, Pascal assigns contradictory values to the term "volonté". "Volonté" is a faculty for knowing and as such, it makes up part of the mechanism of consent. The contradictory values attributed to the term appear in close proximity of one another. In the second paragraph of the article he describes the term as "basse, indigne et étrangère." In the following paragraph he informs us that "volonté" is the passage through which divine truths enter into the soul. He resolves the paradox by introducing new information about another of the basic aspects of persuasion. In this case, the condition of the opinion determines the value of the consenting mechanism. "Volonté", applied to natural matters, causes the soul to fall into error, whereas applied to supernatural matters it brings the soul to believe divine truths. Just as the value of the word "volonté" alternates between positive and negative, the values of all of the key words do the same. Consequently, the reader is obliged not only to consider the meaning
of certain terms as tentative, but also to accept radical changes in meanings as Pascal's thoughts gradually unfold.

The portion of the text of "De l'Art de persuader" which pertains to the persuasion of voluntary faculties is reproduced in Appendix A at the end of this thesis. Pascal begins the exposition by explaining the manner in which men consent. The mechanism of consent consists of two faculties: "la volonté", will and "l'entendement", reason. As I mentioned above, each of the faculties operates according to its own principle: "preuve" in the case of reason and "agrément", in the case of will. The information given about the function of the faculties of consent must be considered in the context of the other aspects of persuasion. Three things about the context of the situation of persuasion become clear: that questions of methodology have been postponed, that the mechanism is somehow corrupt, and that the mechanism is applying its knowing powers to natural objects. The corruption of the faculties manifests itself in their inability to function together harmoniously. Reason, although always reasonable or logical, is weak, and it accounts for only a few of the opinions taken into the soul. "Volonté" competes with reason and usually wins out because men are usually brought to believe by pleasure rather than by reasonableness. Pascal implies that the cause of the corruption of the mechanism lies in the use which has been made of the faculty of will. The knowing powers of the voluntary faculty have no proportion with natural objects, and are therefore unsuited for apprehending them. The inappropriate use which the soul has made of the faculty earns for it the derogatory remarks from Pascal:
"Cette voie est basse, indigne et étrangère: aussi tout le monde la désavoue".

Although the picture is a negative one at this point, Pascal's comment about the relation of the soul to its faculties reveals the possibility for a successful technique of persuasion. The soul appears to exercise some measure of independence in regard to the operation of its faculties. The suggestion is that although the actual function of the will cannot be altered, the input of the faculty is subject to judgment by the soul. Furthermore, it will become apparent farther on in the article that the soul can control the objects upon which its faculties exert their powers of knowing. The degree of the soul's autonomy, however small, offers some hope to the apologist. He is trying to cause an opinion to gain entry into the soul which will increase the soul's independence from, and control over the faculties.

The dialectical approach to the composition of the article becomes clear in the next paragraph. While explaining the fundamental notions about the manner in which men consent, Pascal creates a need for information about the condition of the opinions to which consent may be produced. Although both categories of valid opinions, natural and supernatural, share the same mechanism to gain entry into the soul, each makes its own particular kind of demand on the mechanism. Each kind of opinion requires the faculties to become operative in a different order. In the case of men whose faculties are uncorrupted, natural opinions appeal first to the mind in order to make their way into the soul. If they meet the criterion they become objects of
love and move on to ratification by the faculty of reason. "Et de là vient qu'au lieu qu'en parlant de choses humaines on dit qu'il faut les connaître avant que de les aimer, ... les saints au contraire disent en parlant des choses divines qu'il faut les aimer pour les connaître, ..." (Oeuvres, p. 592) a truth can gain entrance into the soul through these channels only if it appeals to the faculties in the order prescribed by its condition, i.e., natural or supernatural.

It is important for the reader to pause from time to time during the course of his reading to make an assessment of the state of completeness to which Pascal has brought his theory. In order to make his assessment he must extract himself momentarily from the dynamic system. The following interpretation is not based exclusively on any one paragraph of the text, but its validity is corroborated throughout both articles. It concerns the relationship of opinions to the mechanism of consent. As one might expect, there is a correlation between false opinions and the corrupt mechanism. Falsehoods cannot find consent in the uncorrupted soul. Those pertaining to the natural order never find favor with reason, and those pertaining to the supernatural order never pass the criterion set by the will. However, when something goes wrong in the operation of the faculties, false opinions do find entrance into the soul and acquire the status of an object of belief. The malfunction occurs in spite of the fact that the faculties perform their accustomed motions in the proper manner and use the proper channels for bringing opinions into the soul. The mistake lies in the order in which the faculties treat
opinions. The soul falls into error when reason applies its energy
to opinions of supernatural matters before the will has become active.
Similarly, error results when the will certifies a natural opinion
before reason has judged it to be true. The mechanism of consent may
be said to be corrupt when its faculties become operative in the
wrong sequence.

In the following passage Pascal explains that the source of
corruption lies in the misuse that men make of their faculties.

Il semble que hom [il s'agit des hommes] ont néanmoins corrompu cet ordre
l'ordre du cœur en faisant des choses profanes
ce qu'ils devaient faire des choses saintes, parce
qu'en effet nous ne croyons presque que ce qui
nous plaît. (Oeuvres, p. 593)

In this example the voluntary faculties have attached themselves to
natural matters without first consulting reason. Corruption results
just as surely when the rational faculties apply their criterion of
truth or falsehood to supernatural matters. In both cases reason
and will have not become operational in the proper sequence. And in
both cases the faculties become corrupt. Reason loses all notion of
the limits of its knowing powers and encroaches upon the domain for
which only will is a suitable knowing agent. Will attaches itself
to natural objects.

The persuader can heal the corrupt mechanism of consent. In
other words an apologist can help a person to use his faculties in the
manner prescribed by the nature of the opinion. Before defining the
effect that the persuader can have on a person Pascal makes a distinc-
tion between the capacities of divine and human persuaders. The
human capacity for persuasion is limited strictly to opinions about
natural matters. The apologist can not inculcate divine truths into the minds of men, he only helps men to acquire the necessary disposition for receiving them. God is the only agent capable of persuading divine truths, and the principles of His method remain beyond the grasp of human intelligence. The requirement of order imposed by God has a salutary effect on the mechanism of consent.

He sais qu'il [Dieu] a voulu qu'elles [les vérités divines] entrent du coeur dans l'esprit, et non pas de l'esprit dans le coeur, pour humilier cette superbe puissance du raisonnement, qui prétend devoir être juge des choses que la volonté choisit, et pour guérir cette volonté infirme, qui s'est tout corrompue par ses sales attachements. (Oeuvres, p. 592.)

God provides the means for correcting the ingrained tendencies to accept error, i.e., to replace a bad habit with a good one. In the case of reason, pride becomes humility, and the faculty restricts its activity to objects suitable to its ability. And will is cured of its propensity to attach itself to natural objects, referred to as "sales attachements".

The number of possibilities for methods of persuasion, any of which might be suitable for Pascal's consideration, is enormous because of the many variables involved with each of the three aspects of persuasion. Pascal narrows down the field of possibilities by gradually paring away some of the variables. The first exclusions made pertain to persuaders and to opinions. Of the two possible persuaders, divine and human, only the human receives much attention after this point. The exclusion has significant ramifications on the condition of opinions because the human capacity for persuasion is limited to opinions about natural matters. Consequently, the method
which he intends to expose will apply only to the persuasion of opinions about natural matters. Once Pascal has made all of the exceptions and explained all of his limitations and qualifications, he will begin a second phase of the article in which he will expose the rules for one method to be used by a human persuader to bring about consent to natural opinions. However, the process of exclusion and qualification requires him to define in general terms other methods. And it is one of these methods which makes use of a conversational situation.

Pascal revises the situation of persuasion now by focusing attention on the condition of opinions, and more specifically on the effect that natural matters produce on our faculties. Natural matters have the ability to make themselves attractive to our mechanism of consent as possible objects of knowledge. He refers to the power that natural objects have for motivating us to consent to them in two phrases: "puissances qui nous portent à consentir", and "les premiers moteurs". The intensity of the attraction that objects make on our faculties varies. Some objects appeal more to one faculty than to the other. Accordingly, Pascal makes two categories of natural objects: those which correspond to the mind, "esprit", and those which correspond to the will, "volonté". He calls natural objects which appeal to the mind, "vérités naturelles". "Vérités naturelles" satisfy the criterion of reasonableness imposed by the faculty of reason. The "vérités naturelles" which are accepted by everyone compel reason to assent to them because their validity is self-evident. These truths are axiomatic. For example, the whole is greater than any of its parts.
Unfortunately, the criterion of reasonableness can be met, not only by natural truths, but by objects which are not true as well. These false opinions do not receive universal assent.

Pascal completes the paragraph about the motivating power of "vérités naturelles" on reason with an indication of the effect that they have on the mechanism of consent after they have been received. The motivating power of natural truths on reason is not limited to their ability to produce consent. They influence the function of the mechanism, and to a degree at least, they are like an appetizing nourishment that is assimilated into an organism and becomes part of its substance. The corrupting effect caused when one admits into the mind the reasonable, but erroneous, natural opinions on the soul's ability to distinguish truth from falsehood is indicated in this line: "dès qu'ils sont admis, ils sont aussi puissants, quoique faux, pour emporter la créance, que les plus véritables." Pascal makes it clear farther on in the article that "la créance" brought about as the result of a criterion consisting of false opinions is always false.

After treating natural objects which appeal to reason, Pascal takes up those which appeal to the will. He calls them "désirs naturels". He attributes two meanings to the word "désir". On one hand he means an internal disposition to seek something like happiness, and on the other he means an external object which appears to satisfy the desire. However, some natural objects do not satisfy the desire of the will, and consequently, do harm to the faculty without producing lasting pleasure. The quotation below expresses this important
bit of information. In order to understand it, one must check back in the article to find the antecedent to the pronoun "ceux", and one finds that it is the principles according to which natural objects make themselves attractive to the faculties. The meaning of the passage, if simplified, goes something like this. The appeal of natural objects originates from within the being, and it is a legitimate desire shared by all men. But, paradoxically, some natural objects do not properly satisfy the longing. Instead, they have a pernicious effect on the faculty.

ceux de la volonté sont de certains désirs naturels et communs à tous les hommes, comme le désir d'être heureux, que personne ne peut pas ne pas avoir, outre plusieurs objets particuliers que chacun suit pour y arriver, et qui ayant la force de nous plaire, sont aussi forts, quoique pernicieux en effet, pour faire agir la volonté, que s'ils faisaient son véritable bonheur. (Œuvres, p. 593.)

After treating the attraction which natural objects exert over the faculties, Pascal shifts the emphasis onto the use to which a persuader can put the information. He introduces the new point of view with this line: "Mais pour les qualités des choses que nous devons persuader, elles sont bien diverses." The question suggested by the sentence is how can the persuader distinguish those things which can be persuaded from those things which cannot be persuaded. He knows that there are two faculties of consent and that each is suited to natural objects of different kinds. In order for him to put this information into perspective he must determine the limits of his persuasive influence. He must consider not only how certain kinds of objects correspond to one faculty or to the other, but he must also consider objects to which men cannot consent.
Since the emphasis is at this moment placed on the persuader, Pascal establishes a criterion for classifying objects of consent which will be useful to the persuader. He classifies objects according to the probability of their being accepted or rejected by a prospective consenter. He makes five categories of opinions: those to which consent is likely (there are two types of these), those to which consent is unlikely, and those to which consent cannot be produced. It is to be noted that the validity of the system of classification is unaffected by the condition of the objects classified or the manner in which they are accepted or rejected. The system works equally well for truth and falsehood and for corrupted and uncorrupted consenters. Here is a list of the five groups:

1) A person will always accept an opinion which derives logically from his own previously accepted opinions. Whether the opinion be valid or not is immaterial. The persuader must show to the prospective consenter the connection between the opinion in question and opinions held by this person. If this condition is met, consent will always be produced.

2) A person will always accept things which appear to satisfy the will's desire for pleasure. The persuader need only establish the causal relationship between that thing and pleasure in the mind of a man in order to produce consent.
3) Things which meet the criteria of both the mind and the heart are invariably accepted.

4) Things which bear no proportion to either faculty can never be persuaded.

5) In the four situations above there is no question about whether or not consent can be produced. There is one situation in which the outcome is uncertain. When an object appeals to reason, and yet displeases the will, persuasion is unlikely.

The fifth category of natural opinions, the one in which will and reason dispute over the acceptance of the opinions, represents the kind of situation found so often in the Pensées. Pascal depicts the consenter in the Pensées as faced with a decision on a metaphysical plane. The outcome of the decision always depends on the relative strengths of will and reason. Although the personage of the consenter appears in both the Pensées and in "De l'Art de persuader", there are considerable differences in the treatment of him. In the Pensées, Pascal often expresses the factors that influence consent in terms of concrete examples. He assigns an ensemble of personality traits to the consenter and places him in the context of a specific situation.

By contrast, in this article, Pascal presents the conditions affecting consent in psychological terms. The conflict in the mind of the consenter revolves around an object which appeals to reason yet which offends the will. Whether or not the consenter's reason will accept this object depends entirely on what he has previously accepted.
Let us say for example, that he believes that proposition X is valid. He will accept the new object, proposition Y, be it true or false, if it derives logically from proposition X. The criterion exercised by the will is similar to that of the reason. If the consenter believes that object X will provide pleasure, then he will accept any new objects, object Y for example, which he associates with object X. The conflict occurs when the acceptance of proposition Y demands the rejection of object Y. The same kind of conflict appears in the Pensées in an endless variety of concrete circumstances. For example, the hunter cannot engage in introspective thought as his reason tells him to do, because his mind is completely occupied with the business of hunting, an activity motivated by the will's desire for pleasure. Pascal states in "De l'Art de persuader", the reason for the conflict. The "volonté" of the hunter has become corrupted and as a consequence, has lost the ability to function on a supernatural level, i.e., engage in introspective thought. Still the mind, however corrupt, maintains the external appearances of rationality.

... cette âme impérieuse, qui se vantait de n'agir que par raison, suit par un choix honteux et téméraire ce qu'une volonté corrompue désire, quelque résistance que l'esprit trop éclairé puisse y opposer. (Œuvres, p. 594.)

The soul affects a reasonable exterior while really following the unreasonable demands of a corrupt will.

Pascal organizes the materials in "De l'Art de persuader" logically. He starts with self-evident truths about the nature of the relationship between the persuader, the consenter and the object of consent, and he moves in a logical manner toward the formulation
of rules of persuasion. He has reached the point in the development of his thoughts about persuasion at which he can make a statement of great value to the persuader as far as matters of theory are concerned. The single most important requirement for successful persuasion is a profound knowledge of the consenter.

C'est alors qu'il se fait un balancement douteux entre la vérité et la volupté, et que la connaissance de l'une et le sentiment de l'autre font un combat dont le succès est bien incertain, puisqu'il faudrait, pour en juger, connaître tout ce qui se passe dans le plus intérieur de l'homme, que l'homme même ne connaît presque jamais. (Oeuvres, p. 594.)

The statement concerns the factors which determine consent, and how and by whom the factors can be modified and controlled. Pascal indicates the important aspects of persuasion by using two comparisons. The subject of both comparisons is the act of consenting and the two images are a balance scale and a battle. The images resemble each other. They are moving toward a conclusion which will be very apparent when it does occur, but which can be detected even before any overt signs have been produced. One side of the scale will descend and one of the sides in the battle will win. Pascal wishes to predict the outcome by determining which side of the scale contains the heaviest object or by determining which army is the stronger. The images suggest a relationship between the three aspects of persuasion. Conflicting tendencies exist simultaneously in the mind of the consenter; one causes him to pursue truth and the other causes him to seek pleasure. The outcome of the struggle, which is at this moment uncertain, is whether or not the soul will come to believe in a natural opinion. The judge of the outcome corresponds to the persuader. The new piece
of information added in this passage concerns the importance of the persuader. He can know more about the probability for the acceptance or the rejection of an opinion than the consenter himself. Knowledge of the outcome of the battle between reason and will depends on knowledge of human nature. If the persuader can know the factors which influence the act of consent then he might be able to exercise some measure of control over them and eventually influence the act of consent.

Diversity as a Problem

Pascal is working toward the point at which he will have to make some capital decisions about the scope of the method he will eventually expose. The target method will have its limits. It will not apply in all situations. There will be some types of consenters and some kinds of opinions and certain combinations of these two aspects for which the method will be ineffective.

A brief summary of the important phases of the development of Pascal's ideas will help us to see the factors which will precipitate these decisions about the limitations for the method. He started the exposé by showing that the consenter, the opinion, and the persuader represent three interrelated sets of variables. Then turning his attention to one of the aspects of persuasion, the nature of the consenter, he defined the mechanism of consent. Two faculties constitute this mechanism and each selects opinions according to its own criterion, i.e., reasonableness in the case of reason, or pleasure in the case of will. Subsequently, he made clear that there is a
correlation between the two faculties of consent and a duality in the appeal that natural opinions hold for the consenter. Some natural objects satisfy the criterion of reasonableness, while others provide pleasure. At the present stage in the exposition he has just explained how important it is for the persuader to understand the consenter. Since consent depends on what the consenter has already accepted as truth, the persuader must know which opinions the consenter finds reasonable and which objects he associates with pleasure, before he can successfully persuade an opinion. It is at this stage that the problem of diversity becomes apparent. If variation in the state of the consenter implies a corresponding variation is approach, then the number of different approaches is the same as the number of different consenters. And we know that this latter factor is particularly diverse.

Some qualification will be necessary in order to avoid the impossible situation in which a different set of techniques of persuasion would be required for each individual consenter. Pascal's first move for reducing the number of possibilities for methods of persuasion is to establish two broad categories of methods, each of which corresponds to one of the faculties. The passage in which he makes this distinction suggests that the persuader follow a certain order in the process of bringing about belief. He is to look first at the consenter and to know his mind and heart. Next, he is to consider the opinion and ascertain the attraction it holds for both faculties. Finally, he begins a phase of active persuasion in which he must make the opinion appear agreeable to the heart and convincing
to the reason. It is at this point, the third step in the performance of the act of persuading, that the necessity for distinguishing between two major subdivisions of the art of persuasion becomes clear.

Il paraît de là que, quoi que ce soit qu'on veuille persuader, il faut avoir égard à la personne à qui on en veut, dont il faut connaître l'esprit et le coeur, quels principes il accorde, quelles choses il aime; et ensuite remarquer, dans la chose dont il s'agit, quels rapports elle a avec les principes avoués, ou avec les objets délicieux par les charmes qu'on lui donne. De sorte que l'art de persuader consiste autant en celui d'agréer qu'en celui de convaincre, tant les hommes se gouvernent plus par caprice que par raison! (Œuvres, p. 594.)

The passage marks a major division in the structure of the article because it establishes the distinction between two fundamentally different approaches to persuasion.

Some important information is given about the nature of the two methods. Each one applies to a different category of natural opinions and each appeals to a different faculty. Pascal refers to each subdivision as a method in itself and he assigns names to them. The "méthode d'agréer" is appropriate for persuading opinions which correspond to the "volonté", and it makes its appeal to that faculty. The "méthode de convaincre" persuades opinions which correspond to reason and it makes its appeal to that faculty. Pascal has simplified the exposition considerably by distinguishing between the two methods. Now he can treat either one or the other, and by choosing between them he cuts down significantly on the number of variable factors to be considered.
The choice that Pascal makes, as we have indicated, is to abandon the "méthode d'agréer" and devote his attention to the "méthode de convaincre". And he limits the scope of that method considerably by stipulating that it be applied only to consenters who consistently affirm the same principles. These limitations concern the variable factors of two of the three aspects of persuasion. Concerning the act of persuasion he excludes a great variety of methods within the range of human powers, and which appeal primarily to the will. Concerning the act of consent, he excludes many types of consenters, such as those who, being fickle, change their minds about such beliefs and convictions, and those for whom natural opinions have only a weak attraction for reason. The limitations have only a little effect on the condition of opinions. Of course, it is already understood that supernatural opinions cannot be persuaded by men. But natural opinions on any subject fall into the category of persuadable opinions. Farther on in the article, at the point where he begins the exposition of the rules of the "méthode de convaincre", he indicates that the method works for the persuasion of both voluntary and rational opinions.

Or, il y a un art, et c'est celui que je donne, pour faire voir la liaison des vérités avec leurs principes soit de vrai, soit de plaisir, pourvu que les principes qu'on a une fois avoués demeurent fermes et sans être jamais démentis. (Oeuvres, p. 595.)

Again we find an insistence on the need for an uncorrupt consenter who holds consistently to the same assumptions. Now for the first time in the development of the article we have a definition of the
situation of persuasion for which the target method, the "méthode de convaincre", is suitable.

The critic who seeks to apply either the "méthode de convaincre" or the "méthode d'agréer" to the Pensées makes a fundamental error. Pascalian methods do not exist as entities separate from persuasive situations. The passage quoted above indicates the dependence of method on the condition of the opinion to be persuaded, and ultimately on the nature of the consenters. In other words, Pascal conceives of a method as a means suitable for the persuasion of a particular opinion, be it rational or voluntary, to a particular type of consentor, be he corrupt or uncorrupt. So, neither method corresponds to the needs of the persuasive situation of the Pensées. The circumstances which account for the coming into being of both methods are practical. Before establishing the rules of a method, Pascal must reduce the number of variable factors. So in distinguishing between the two methods he has drawn the line so as to separate workable conditions from unworkable ones. Since the "méthode d'agréer" came into being in the negative fashion as a means to siphon off unmanageable persuasive situations it most certainly does not apply as it is to the Pensées.

Still, of the two methods, the "méthode d'agréer" is the most suitable to the conditions of persuasion in the Pensées. It is designed to persuade consenters whose opinions are governed by caprice and not by reason. Indeed, this category includes many of the consenters in the Pensées. In many cases characters affect a rational exterior as a pretense to cover up a corrupt inner being. Usually
this corruption originates in the voluntary faculties. For example, some types suffer from an inability to activate their will, and as a result are incapable of apprehending supernatural truths. The gambler in "Le Pari" is such a type. Others like the character in the article on imagination have allowed their will to form pernicious attachments with objects in the natural realm. Still others, like the indifferentist, have suspended their authentic feelings and ideas and have accepted opinions in contradiction with their real identity. Whatever the case, most of the consenters of the Pensées do not follow reason exclusively in the formation of new opinions. Consequently, they are often impervious to the rational approach of the "méthode de convaincre". On the other hand, all of them would be subject to the persuasive import of the "méthode d'agréer".

Before leaving the subject of the "méthode d'agréer" and going on to describe the other method, Pascal gives valuable information about it. His description has such depth to it that in spite of the obvious need to exclude unworkable persuasive situations, one gets the impression that there is a real method here, a method which could be elaborated on, and modified and put to use in specific situations. On the basis of this feeling one is justified, I think, in giving consideration to the applicability of the "méthode d'agréer" or some modified version of it in the Pensées.

Curiously, Pascal declines to state the principles according to which the "méthode d'agréer" operates, saying that although they do exist, he does not know if it is possible to formulate them into a doctrine or an art. "... je ne sais s'il y aurait un art pour
accommoder les preuves à l'inconstance de nos caprices." (Oeuvres, p. 595.) The word "preuves" is especially significant. Proofs affect the reason, but not the will. Furthermore, the method is more than just difficult to prescribe rules for. There is something about it in Pascal's opinion which is disproportionate with human intelligence. Not only would it require a superhuman intelligence to describe it, it would also require a superhuman intelligence to put it into practice.

Mais la manière d'agréer est bien sans comparaison plus difficile, plus subtile, plus utile et plus admirable; aussi, si je n'en traite pas, c'est parce que je n'en suis pas capable; et je m'y sens tellement disproportionné, que je crois la chose absolument impossible. (Oeuvres, p. 595.)

Still Pascal backs off slightly from this pronouncement. He knows some people whose minds have a singular ability, and who just might be able to put such a method into practice, although, even so they could not describe it.

Au moins je sais que si quelqu'un en est capable, ce sont des personnes que je connais, et qu'aucun autre n'a sur cela de si claires et de si abondantes lumières. (Oeuvres, p. 595.)

Pascal does not make the reference to these people any more explicit. It is plausible that a detailed explanation would reveal the type of mind which Pascal calls the "esprit de finesse". The principles proportionate to the knowing powers of the intuitive type mind surpass rational description, and cannot be isolated from one another for the purpose of scientific description.

The following passage states the nature of the relationship between the consenter and the persuader which would result from the
application of the "méthode d'agréer". If the persuader could succeed in executing these rules which defy all description, the consenter will react in a predictable manner.

Ce n'est pas que je ne croie qu'il y ait des règles aussi sûres pour plaire que pour démontrer, et que qui les saurait parfaitement connaître et pratiquer ne réussit aussi sûrement à se faire aimer des rois et de toutes sortes de personnes, ... (Oeuvres, p. 595.)

The feeling of affection produced in the mind of the consenter toward the persuader may be a key factor in the operation of this method. How this emotional reaction could be evoked is not stated. But how the persuader-consenter bond of affection would be used as a technique of persuasion, to put the matter coldly, has already been set forth. A man will accept anything as truth if it is associated with an object of love. If the object to be persuaded is reasonable in appearance as well, then it will be invariably accepted. The "méthode d'agréer" meets both conditions. By using this method, the persuader can induce the consenter to feel a strong personal bond of sympathy and understanding with him. After producing this reaction in the consenter, he can influence belief with a minimum of interference from reason. He need only maintain an appearance of reasonableness to preserve his influence over the consenter's mind.

The "méthode d'agréer" would adapt remarkably well to individual differences in the will of the consenter. Unlike the "méthode de convaincre", it would not require that the consenter hold firmly to his convictions. The voluntary faculties are fickle by nature when applied to natural objects. Although the will always holds to a criterion of pleasure, its notion of what will provide pleasure
changes. Variation in the criterion exists not only between different individuals, but also within individuals.

La raison de cette extrême difficulté vient de ce que les principes du plaisir ne sont pas fermes et stables. Ils sont divers en tous les hommes, et variables dans chaque particulier avec une telle diversité, qu'il n'y a point d'homme plus différent d'un autre que de soi-même dans les divers temps. Un homme a d'autres plaisirs qu'une femme; un riche et un pauvre ont de différents; un prince, un homme de guerre, un marchand, un bourgeois, un paysan, les vieux, les jeunes, les sains, les malades, tous varient; les moindres accidents les changent. (Œuvres, p. 595.)

Thus it is clear why the method is difficult to describe. The success of a persuasive endeavor conducted against the voluntary faculties depends on whether or not the consenter associates the target opinion with an object of pleasure. It is imperative that the persuader take stock of the consenter's opinions before he formulates a method. But he is not capable of apprehending such diversity of opinions. So the remarkable effectiveness of the method on a wide range of consenters is the quality which makes the method impossible to describe and inoperable by most human persuaders.

The plausibility of the hypothesis that Pascal used a modified version of the "méthode d'agréer" in the Pensées remains to be shown. There is a precedent which lends credence to the idea. In the article "De l'Esprit géométrique" he presented the rules for an ideal method of persuasion. Like the "méthode d'agréer", this ideal method is inoperable by the human intellect.

Mais il faut auparavant que je donne l'idée d'une méthode encore plus éminente et plus accomplie, mais où les hommes ne sauraient jamais arriver: car ce qui
After explaining the rules for the "véritable" or perfect method, Pascal makes the necessary modifications in it in order to adapt it for human use.

The perfect method, as I said above, calls for defining all words and propositions. To make a proper definition we designate a thing clearly by using perfectly well-known terms, and then we assign a name to that thing. Propositions are handled in the same manner. We must show how each proposition derives necessarily from known propositions. The method appears simple. It consists of nothing more than these two steps, defining and proving everything. The ideal method is based on the assumption that knowledge is a fabric composed of interrelated elements. Each word or proposition is the consequence of the one before it and the antecedent of the one after it. So there is a catch in what would be a perfect method. The method demands unlimited intelligence, and human intelligence is limited. The limits of human knowledge become apparent if we follow the interrelated elements which comprise this knowledge back to the most fundamental elements. Working back to the source of our knowledge, if we are capable of the task, we find a stage in the progression which has no antecedent. This is the end of the chain. Modification of the ideal method will be necessary in order to adapt it for use by beings of limited intelligence. The final product of the modification is a method called the "méthode géométrique" in the article "De l'Esprit
géométrique", and called the "méthode de convaincre" in "De l'Art de persuader".

The "méthode d'agréer", like the ideal method of demonstration is inoperable by human persuaders. Consequently, the "méthode d'agréer" could not be the method applied by Pascal in the Pensées. But it could be related to it as a sort of parent method. I suggest that the method of persuasion used in the Pensées is indeed a modified version of the "méthode d'agréer", and that the dramatic elements constitute part of that method. Support of this contention requires a consideration of two things. One must first look at the principles of persuasion exposed in "De l'Art de persuader", and then ascertain whether or not they pertain to the persuasive situation in the Pensées. Second, one must consider the essential character of the "méthode d'agréer" and determine whether or not it supplies the needs of the persuasive situation in the Pensées. The article "De l'Art de persuader" exposes three principles which are of capital importance to a study of persuasive techniques used in the Pensées.

1) The art of persuasion comprises three basic aspects: (1) the manner in which men consent, (2) the condition of opinions, and (3) the method used by the persuader to promote the transaction. Each of these aspects varies in several ways.

2) The three aspects of persuasion are directly related to one another. Change in any of the variable factors of one aspect implies a necessary and corresponding change in the other two aspects.
3) The mechanism of consent values consistency above truth. It accepts opinions which are consonant with its previously accepted opinions. As a consequence, habit determines the fundamental identity of the mechanism as either corrupt or uncorrupt.

It remains for us now to evaluate the persuasive import of these and other principles exposed in "De l'Art de persuader", in the context of the Pensées.
Dramatic Framework

The purpose of this chapter is to determine the essential characteristics of the method of persuasion used in the *Pensées*, and once these traits have been defined, to compare them with the "méthode d'agréer", referred to in the article "De l'Art de persuader". Pascal bases his method of apologetics on a dramatic situation in which two people are engaged in a conversation. The one who does most of the talking is the apologist. The one whom we see nodding his head in agreement every so often and who less often still advances his own contradicting opinion only to have it demolished by the superior logic of the apologist, is the listener. It is for his benefit that the *Pensées* were written and, accordingly, his presence is essential to Pascal's dramatic scheme. These two personages make up the dramatis personae. They mention other personages in their conversation but none of these, however brilliantly they are described, find their way on to the stage. Here is an example in which all of the dramatic roles are easily distinguished.

(196) Ma fantaisie me fait haïr un coasseur et un qui souffle en mangeant. La fantaisie a un grand poids. Que profiterons-nous de là? que
This scene might take place in a drawing room where two people could talk comfortably. The apologist does all of the speaking. He presents two example-figures whom his fantasy makes him inclined to dislike, one who croaks like a frog and another who puffs while eating. Then he baits the listener in his characteristic manner. He does this by avoiding mention of the faculty, reason, which should guide a man in forming opinions about the sort of people in the example. Instead, he emphasizes the power that fantasy (a more general word would be the faculty of imagination) has over his feelings about people. How will the listener react? The apologist lets us know as he puts words into his mouth. The listener, completely taken in by the apologist's trick, suggests that we follow our natural inclination. The final twist leaves us wondering why he wasn't right. With some thought we conclude that reason should have prevented him from forming his opinion however strong his faculty of imagination. This fragment contains the complete Pascalian cast: apologist, listener, and example-figure. And if something about the fragment appears unfinished, that is because the reader must make an intellectual calculation of his own in order to complete the action.

1All of the quotations of fragments from the Pensées have been taken from the edition established by Louis Lafuma: Blaise Pascal, Pensées sur la Religion et sur quelques autres sujets (Paris: Editions du Luxembourg, 1952). The variants have not been included unless they are necessary for the interpretation of the passage.
Pascalian apologetics implies this dramatic situation. Not only does Pascal evoke characters vividly, but he presents them in a manner that resembles a theatrical production. The text invites us as readers to look at the apologist and the interlocutor as they are engaged in a conversation. Generically speaking, we have something like an "entretien". There is a spectator-performer relationship on another level. The apologist and the interlocutor discuss a third party, and use him as an example. Often they evoke the example-figure vividly and imagine his physical actions. The dramatic aspects of Pascal's method of apologetics are not limited entirely to formal considerations. An intellectual or moral plot is worked out. The plot always concerns the relationship of the interlocutor to God. The other two dramatic characters, the apologist and the example-figures, do not participate in this inner experience. One of them promotes the change and the other serves to illustrate ideas and moral qualities. The term "dramatic" designates the principal formal characteristics more accurately than such terms as "conversational" or "dialectical". Indeed, conversations are an important aspect of the form of the Pensées. The word "conversational" describes exactly the activity in which the apologist and the interlocutor are engaged. But it does not suggest the use of example-figures to illustrate the apologist's arguments which is one of the most striking characteristics of the Pensées. The word "dialectical" is inappropriate because it suggests the ideological aspects of the exposition and it does not imply the use of personalities at all. Consequently, I will use the word "dramatic" to
designate the apologist-interlocutor conversations as well as the use of personification involving example-figures.

Pascal had already achieved a resounding literary and polemical success by using a dramatic format in the *Provinciales*. The dramatic elements in the two works are comparable. The relationship between the apologist and the interlocutor corresponds to the relationship between Montalte and his young provincial friend. In both cases two people discuss moral issues and one member of each pair reports the activities and the words of people concerned with these issues. As far as characterization is concerned, Montalte differs sharply from the apologist. Montalte takes a naive viewpoint on moral and religious issues, but he is capable of cogent reasoning. The apologist, on the other hand, is above the conflict. It is plausible that Pascal would have incorporated into the *Pensees* some of the dramatic techniques which he used in the *Provinciales*.

The apologist begins his work with a person who is indifferent or perhaps even hostile to the Christian religion. His job is to bring this person from his initial unfavorable attitude into one of submissiveness. Putting his abstract arguments into dramatic form makes his job easier because it makes the *Pensees* easier to understand. The reader need not translate abstract religious arguments into terms applicable to his own life. By identifying with the listener he can see himself on the scene receiving direct personal attention from a person who cares about him. He sees the listener asking questions that he himself would like to ask. The answers to "what should I do?" "What should I say?" "How can I find out?" are
framed so that he can put them immediately into use. In the following fragment the dramatic situation is ambiguous. There is some confusion as to the identity of the interlocutor. One wonders if he holds the same opinions as the group referred to in the third person in the opening sentence.

(§16) J'aurais bientôt quitté les plaisirs, disent-ils, si j'avais la foi. Et moi je vous dis: vous auriez bientôt la foi si vous aviez quitté les plaisirs. Or c'est à vous à commencer. Si je pouvais je vous donnerais la foi. Je ne puis le faire ni partant éprouver la vérité de ce que vous dites, mais vous pouvez bien quitter les plaisirs et éprouver si ce que je dis est vrai.

The apologist's objective is clear. He proposes to move the interlocutor away from the group that believes they have rational grounds for not sacrificing pleasures. Therefore, it makes sense for the reader to consider the group of excuse-makers as example-figures whom the apologist quotes. The apologist criticizes the group sharply and offers the listener a way of disassociating himself from it without losing face. So the sudden change from third person to second person indicates that the interlocutor shared the opinions of the group and that he is now ready to reject this opinion.

The dramatic framework of the passage produces two effects that would not be possible in a non-dramatic statement. First, it affects the reader's willingness to listen to Pascal's advice about faith. The reader wants to find out how this group of pleasure-seekers is wrong. After arousing interest Pascal gives his advice: 1) renouncing pleasure is prerequisite to acquiring faith, 2) the individual must make a move toward acquiring faith since no one else can give it
to him. In the final sentence Pascal shows up the flaw in the position of the group of pleasure-seekers. Their position can never be verified because faith cannot exist if it is subordinated to pleasure. In contrast, the validity of Pascal's position can be demonstrated by anyone. Second, the dramatic form enables Pascal to create the impression of genuine concern for the listener. It is much more effective to say, "Si je pouvais je vous donnerais la foi", than it is to say, "Faith can only be acquired by the individual who is willing to sacrifice pleasure". So, dramatic form makes the Pensées a more effective apology. The reader does not feel like a man in a store being waited on by a half-interested clerk. The owner of the establishment is giving him special attention. None of these effects would be possible without the identification between the reader and the listener. He needs someone to help him react to the situation posed by the apologist because he is not so expert at grasping concepts and drawing conclusions. The sight of a less adept person struggling with religious problems and finally resolving them encourages him to do the same.

Pascal uses the conversational situation extensively. One third of the fragments contain elements which contribute to establishing in the reader's mind the idea of a conversational situation. Here are some of the elements which produce a more or less clear conversational image:

1) possessive adjectives in the first and second persons;
2) interrogative adjectives;
3) interrogative sentence form;
4) imperative constructions;
5) first and second person pronouns for subjects, direct and indirect objects, reflexive verbs, and disjunctives;
6) significant frequency of conversational structures like the pronoun ("on") and informal vocabulary words;
7) the use of the "passé composé" instead of the "passé simple".

These elements occur very frequently, even in the briefest fragments. It is obvious that they were intended to perform an important function in the finished apology.

In some fragments which stand alone artistically like maxims the elements which suggest a conversational framework have a more valuable function. In this sentence the possessive adjective is particularly important. (22) "La puissance des mouches, elles gagnent des batailles, empêchent notre âme d'agir, mangent notre corps." The use of "notre", the device of metonymy and the temporal structure implied in the sentence all contribute to making an impact on the reader. Flies substitute for external disturbances on men. They distract the mind so that it cannot exercise reason, and as a result men fail in such worldly endeavors as waging battles, and they distract the mind from its more important function of the introspective thought necessary for attaining salvation. The last part of the sentence, "et mangent notre corps", produces a more expanded temporal perspective. The flies no longer appear as a substitute for disturbances. They are really there eating the body of someone who while in life was not able to defend himself against physical harm and who was also unable to prepare for his eventual death. The use of "notre" brings this unpleasant thought home to the reader because it prevents him from disassociating himself emotionally from the
fate of mankind. So "notre" is an effective part of this sentence.

A portion of the fragments which contain dramatic elements suggestive of a conversational framework has special significance. This portion amounts to eight percent of the total number of fragments and about one third of those in the group with dramatic elements. The fragments in this special category definitely establish the existence of a conversation between the apologist and the listener. In each fragment the listener participates. Either he makes a direct verbal contribution or the apologist conveys the reader's reaction in a comment. The first subcategory amounts to a dialogue. In one example the apologist and the listener disagree over the nature of God. The listener holds that God is immanent in nature. Accordingly, he finds that environmental objects like birds and the sky imply the existence of God. The apologist holds an opposing view, that God is a transcendent being. For him God's being is separate from and prior to the world. Consequently, he feels that he cannot experience God in the same way that he experiences birds and the sky.

(3) Toutes choses changent et se succèdent.
Vous vous trompez, il y a ...

Et quoi ne dites-vous pas vous-même que le ciel et les oiseaux prouvent Dieu? non. Et votre religion ne le dit-elle pas? non. Car encore que cela est vrai en un sens pour quelques âmes à qui Dieu donna cette lumière, néanmoins cela est faux à l'égard de la plupart.

Dialogue has one advantage and one disadvantage. It provides an added dimension by permitting characterization. The listener interrupts the apologist with his hasty question. The reader gets the impression that the listener may have formulated his ideas about God
in the same impetuous manner. In spite of its effectiveness Pascal does not use actual dialogue form very often. The use of dialogue precludes the use of another technique that Pascal uses particularly well. By using this other technique he can foster the reader-listener identification and use it to guide the reader's reaction. According to this procedure, Pascal presents two attitudes; the undesirable attitude of a group and the proper religious attitude. In a second phase, he undertakes to move the listener from the negative pole to the positive. The best way to initiate the movement is to convince the listener that he never held the attitude of the negative group. If the reader identifies with the listener he will make the same change in his life. Now the dialogue form in which the listener is characterized in some detail prevents the effective operation of this technique in two ways. If the personality of the listener is carefully drawn, the reader may fail to see himself in the character. There is a second reason why the vague, mildly doubting character typical of Pascal's listener suits this method better than a fully drawn character. A fully characterized listener would mean presenting a negative example. This character would embody the evils against which the apologist is waging war. The confrontation between the apologist and the enemy would result in loss of face and loss of self-respect for the enemy. Consequently, the reader, who is never willing to give up his self-respect would have no one who could reflect his own thinking.

In the second subcategory the listener participates indirectly. The fragments of this subcategory establish the conversational
situation in the mind of the reader as do those in the dialogue
variety. The difference between the listener-apologist dialogue and
the fragments in which the listener participates indirectly lies pri-
marily in the manner in which the character of the listener is
treated. He has not thought out his intellectual position well
enough to defend it. He is mild-mannered and rarely has anything to
say except in response to the apologist. And that response is most
likely a "yes" or "no" answer to a question. He has opinions but
they have to be drawn out of him. This kind of person is willing to
follow a good leader. The apologist helps him to articulate his
thoughts and in so doing he guides him over to the Christian way of
thinking.

One of the most interesting examples of the apologist's report
of listener participation is found in the last "Divertissement" frag-
ment. This fragment consists of two parts. In the first part Pascal
presents an imaginary scene in which society imposes so many activ-
ities on its young members that they will never think of their real
condition. It even goes so far in its domination of individual minds
as to define happiness as having health, honor, fortune and friends.
So men pursue these goals in the vain hope of finding happiness. If
this endeavor fails to exhaust all of their mental energy and thereby
prevent introspective thought, society has an even more thankless
activity. It sets men to the task of looking after the same exter-
nal well-being of their fellow as they had acquired for themselves.
This concern diverts the mind even farther from its responsibility
of inner-directed thought.
(139) Divertissement.

On charge les hommes dès l'enfance du soin de leur honneur, de leur bien, de leurs amis, et encore du bien et de l'honneur de leurs amis, on les accable d'affaires (afin qu'ils soient tellement occupés à toutes ces pensées qu'ils ne songent point) de l'apprentissage des langues et d'exercices, et on leur fait entendre qu'ils ne sauraient être heureux, sans que leur santé, leur honneur, leur fortune, et celles de leurs amis soient en bon état, et qu'une seule chose qui manque les rendra malheureux. Ainsi on leur donne des charges et des affaires qui les font tracasser dès la pointe du jour ...

The next part of the fragment is not set off from this one in a different paragraph and it is not quite as long. It could be called the dramatic part because it consists of the typical Pascalian one-sided conversation in which the apologist does all of the talking. In it Pascal gives the motive for the coercion of the individual: self-awareness is painful. The purpose of this part is two-fold. First, it causes a delay in the presentation of the explanatory sentence. The delay emphasizes the importance of the message and it builds up an expectancy in the reader which makes him feel the need to know the explanation. Secondly, it provides an example for the reader of the listener struggling to understand and succeeding with the help of the apologist.

... Voilà direz-vous une étrange manière de les rendre heureux; que pourrait-on faire de mieux pour les rendre malheureux? Comment, ce qu'on pourrait faire: il ne faudrait que leur ôter tous ces soucis, car alors ils se verreraient, ils penseraient à ce qu'ils sont, d'où ils viennent, où ils vont, et ainsi on ne peut trop les occuper et les détourner. Et c'est pourquoi, après leur avoir tant préparé d'affaires, s'ils ont quelques temps de relâche, on leur conseille de l'employer à se divertir; et jouet, et s'occuper toujours tout entiers.
The dramatic situation suddenly becomes very complex with the words "Voilà direz-vous ...". They evoke a conversational situation of the one-sided variety in which the apologist puts words into the listener's mouth. This conversation reminds one of a television comedian speaking to someone over the phone. We cannot hear the other person but we know how he reacts to the subject being discussed through the intermediary of the speaker's words.

Now with the addition of the apologist-listener team to the dramatic situation, the cast consists of four elements: the two characters conversing on-stage and the off-stage contingent who provide the subject for the conversation. This latter group consists of society and its individual members. The action performed by these two elements revolves around the bad effects the group can have on the individual. Society protects its members and rewards them with happiness if they conform. This mutual responsibility works for the good of both the group and the individual as long as men have at least a minimum of self-awareness. When this balance is destroyed, good things become bad and what appears to be a happy state for men becomes real misery. This is the picture that the apologist offers to the listener. He represents a society which coerces its members into externally oriented activity which stifles introspective thought. And it does so in the name of happiness. The listener recognizes at once that men in this situation couldn't be more unhappy, but he does not yet know the reason why this is so. The apologist voices the listener's position, "que pourrait-on faire
de mieux pour les rendre malheureux?". The listener's thinking has advanced to the point of grasping the first phase of a paradox. Men are unhappy trying to avoid unhappiness. Society recommends health, honor and fortune for the individual and his friends but the activities which lead to attaining these goals cause unhappiness. Now the apologist has sufficiently deepened his listener's comprehension for the resolution of the paradox. The way to happiness is to become unhappy, i.e., for man to look at himself, to think about where he is, from where he comes and where he is going. The perspective is not pleasant, but it is the only way to attain happiness. Pascal relies on the conversational devices at the crucial point in the development of the paradox. Failure to pause for the listener to attempt to understand would have obscured the phases of the paradox.

The final sentence in the fragment is especially interesting. The human heart is hollow because men, as Pascal has described them, are unaware of the inner self. Their minds constantly face outward, leaving a void at the center. The human heart is also foul because instead of having compassion on others it draws them into the same miserable condition.

The apologist frequently calls on the listener to consider an example figure who personifies an idea. Here are a few examples of the invitation that he extends to the listener:

(36) Mais ôtez leur divertissement vous les verrez se sécher d'ennui ...  
(38) Trop et trop peu de vin. Ne lui en donnez pas : il ne peut trouver la vérité. Donnez-lui en trop : de même.
(44) Imagination

... Ne diriez-vous pas que ce magistrat ... se gouverne
par une raison pure et sublime, ... Voyez-le en-
trer dans un sermon, ...

(48) ... Ne vous étonnez point w'il ne rai-
sonne pas bien à présent une mouche bourdonne à
ses oreilles. ... Si vous voulez qu'il puisse
trouver la vérité chassez cet animal qui tient
sa raison en échec ...
man in church. If he really does guide his opinions by reason then he will accept truth regardless of who offers it. But the apologist introduces such a ridiculous looking minister that the listener concludes that the magistrate's imagination will overrule his reason. Accordingly, the listener pictures the magistrate rejecting the truth spoken by a dirty, poorly shaven, gravelly voiced preacher. (48) The example character could exercise his reason if only he could concentrate. But flies and other disturbances prevent him from keeping his mind on his lofty activities. The apologist sends the listener off to chase away the flies. There is some humor in this request. A willing listener might try, but the job is impossible, Pascal uses this pattern for the construction of most of the conversational fragments. First, the apologist introduces the imaginary example, next, he invites the listener to join in the imaginary activity and finally, the two characters observe the effect of the moral experiment carried on in their imagination.

Pascal involves the listener in only eight percent of the fragments. And of course, this involvement clearly establishes in the reader's mind the existence of a listener-apologist conversation. This small group enhances the value of conversational elements in another larger group of fragments. In this group, Pascal suggests the conversation framework, but he does not clearly establish a conversational image. The group consists of twenty-four percent of all the fragments. In it the listener does not participate either in the conversation or in the treatment of the imaginary scene involving example-figures. The apologist suggests his presence by using the
first person, the interrogative, or some conversational word like "voilà". The vagueness of these indications does not detract from their significance. It is only natural that they should be vague since they are part of fragments. If we imagine for a moment what effect these signals might have in the hypothetical finished product we can see better what their significance is for the fragments in the form that we have them. If Pascal intended the finished work to have an essential element that is dramatic then we can properly assume that some of the fragments would reflect this concern. Initially in the finished text he would have established the conversational situation in the mind of the reader. The small group of fragments in which the listener participates reflects this concern. The finished work would need no more indications of the listener's presence in order to create the impression of a conversation.

Pascal would have had to reinforce the image of two people talking from time to time. The fragments in the larger group (twenty-four percent of the total number), would satisfy this requirement. The use of "nous" is more than enough to bring to mind the conversation. But even the interrogative can do this effectively. For example, (194) "Pourquoi ma connaissance est-elle bornée, ma taille, ma durée à 100 ans plutôt qu'à 1000? ..." Once the conversational situation has been initially established this kind of questioning clearly implies the existence of a listener. This hypothetical use to which Pascal could have put dramatic elements is based on the signs observed in only thirty-two percent of the fragments. But even the fragments containing no dramatic elements could fit easily
into an apology in dramatic form. It is not my intention to make a hypothesis about the finished apology. I am interested in the significance of the dramatic elements in the fragments in their present form. Now there is even more evidence that the dramatic elements are an important feature in the text. There is a much higher frequency of dramatic elements in the longer fragments. If we look at the longer fragments in the Lafuma 1952 edition, taking into account only those exceeding a half page in length in the "papiers classés", we find that seventy-eight percent contain some dramatic elements. Moreover, the impression of a conversational situation created by these elements extends its influence over the entire passage. So, the conversational elements in the fragments are not only important in predicting what the final form of the Pensées would have been. They are also an important feature to the text as it exists in its unfinished state.

Pascal organizes conversational passages according to the stages in the change undergone by the listener. For the fragment below he has chosen for a listener the know-it-all type. A person belonging to this type will not admit that there is anything which surpasses the range of his intelligence. He contents himself with simply denying the existence of whatever he cannot explain. One of the things beyond his intellectual reach is God. True to his principles, he declares that an infinite and indivisible divine being is impossible. This attitude contrasts sharply with Pascal's. As a skeptic, Pascal feels keenly the limits of his intelligence, but he does not resort to the facile declaration that nothing exists beyond what his mind
can grasp. On the contrary, the most important concern of life for Pascal is to direct his thought toward the reality which lies beyond human powers of comprehension.

The change that the listener undergoes is a change of attitude in regard to this area of reality beyond our grasp. It takes place in three phases, and the apologist guides him through each phase. First, the apologist challenges the listener to defend his concept of God. Next, the apologist makes good on his challenge by providing a demonstration of an infinite and indivisible figure. Finally, the apologist helps the listener to draw a conclusion based on the demonstration.

Pascal's primary concern is not the expression of an idea, but the effect the idea can have on men. He did not present the geometrical figure of a point moving everywhere at an infinite speed for the purpose of instructing about the nature of God. His intention is to humble the listener by making him think about something that surpasses his intellectual grasp. If the listener concedes that it is possible for something infinite and indivisible to exist he will change as a
result. He will have to discard his know-it-all attitude and become aware of the limits of his intelligence. The apologist could produce no better reaction than this in his subject. Pascal does not seem to fear that his listener will slip beyond this healthy skepticism into atheism. So, Pascal shifts the emphasis off the expression of the idea and places it on the reaction the listener makes to the idea. Of course, notions about the nature of God might prove valuable to those willing to change their attitude. Still it is the change of attitude that accounts for the movement of the passage and accordingly receives more emphasis.

Example-Figures

The cast of example-figures is enormous. I have counted more than four hundred fifty different characters in the Pensees. This figure comes from those fragments only which are written in French and which are not obviously intended for some work other than an apology. In other words, the fragments in Latin and those referring to characters and situations in the Lettres provinciales do not figure in this count. This figure is only a partial indication of how example characters bulk in the text. Repetition adds considerably. In the large article entitled "Divertissement" (136), the king appears four separate times and the soldier five times. But the actual number of characters is greater yet because Pascal frequently describes the character without naming him. Again in "Divertissement", the gambler appears six times and the hunter eight times, but the words "joueur" and "chasseur" are not used.
In the following examples there are no names to count up for the list of characters. In each case, however, the character in the picture is easily recognized. There is a hunter: "... le lièvre qu'on court"; a billiard player: "Et il est si vain qu'étant plein de mille causes essentielles d'ennui la moindre chose comme un billard et une balle qu'il pousse, suffisent pour le divertir."; and again we see a hunter: "... il est tout occupé à voir par où passera ce sanglier que ses chiens poursuivent avec tant d'ardeur depuis six heures ..." In these examples Pascal describes physical activities instead of using names. Sometimes he differentiates one type from another on a psychological basis. In the following example Pascal divides men into two major groups and then he makes a subdivision in one of the groups.

Pascal distinguishes one group from another on the basis of his personal view of human nature. He sees man as a dual creature composed of two opposing psychological forces, reason and passion. He makes his first division between men at this level. Some people are aware of the basic duality of man. Although he does not treat them in this passage we know something about them from other passages. They realize that man is both god-like and animal-like and they use
this fact of human nature as a foundation for their spiritual principles. Pascal talks only about those people who have not seen this duality in human nature. They make the mistake of seeing man either as a reasonable being or as a passionate being. Consequently, these people fall into two sub-groups. Neither group attains the inward peace that all of us seek. The interior war between passion and reason rages on, made worse by ignorance. Passion lives in those who think of themselves as god-like; reason troubles those who think of themselves as animal-like. There is only one name in the whole passage. That is "Des Barreaux" a well known atheist who was converted. It is plausible that Pascal thought of Des Barreaux, the atheist, as being the rationalist type. The atheist concludes that God does not exist on the grounds that reason is incapable of grasping a supernatural object. Des Barreaux admitted the passionate side of human nature when he renounced atheism to become a Christian. Consequently, he represents the synthesis of the two types of people.

So the cast of example characters is very large. Not only are there many names, but there are many repetitions and many descriptions of characters without names. Consequently, there are one or more imaginary characters associated with almost every passage. Of course there are fragments in which there is no mention of imaginary off-stage characters. These amount to thirty-six and one-half percent of the total. But if one considers the number of short fragments and the overlapping of significance that example-figures would have on adjacent passages in the finished apology, one can safely conclude that personification is Pascal's favorite literary device.
The entire cast of example-figures is significant in another way. Pascal's choice of characters reveals something about his method and something about the way he viewed his audience. The list below gives the number of different character-names associated with a variety of categories. A sample of names accompanies each definition. This selection of names gives no indication of frequency or importance. Instead it represents the variety of names found in each category and thereby contributes to the definition.

73 Biblical names: Abel, Abraham, Adam
65 Names indicating occupation, profession or social class; occupations: barbiers, couvreurs, cuisiniers; professions: docteurs, avocats, prédicateurs; social class: ducs, empereurs, pauvres, princes, riches
64 Names of historical personages; St. Augustine, Calvin, Montaigne, Des Barreaux
62 Names which derive from a person's attitude, state of mind or ability; attitudes: abominables, pré-somptueux, bouffons, gens sobres; states of mind: fous, misérables, purs; abilities: fins, habiles
46 Names which indicate the relationship of a person or a group to other people: aînés, camarades, captifs, enfants, un tiers indifférent
45 Names of religious groups, names deriving from a person's attitude toward religion, and names deriving from religious doctrines: anges, apôtres, catholiques, douteux, élus, hérétiques
32 Names which designate a person or group by their activity; adorateurs, adultères, avant-coureurs, danseurs
20 Names which indicate physical characteristics; beaux, boiteux, aveugles, muets
16 Names of scholastic and intellectual groups; athées, déistes, génies, philosophes
11 Epithets for God and Jesus Christ: Etre universel, Libérateur, Rédempteur
10 Names of animals, fish or birds
9 Names of nationalities
6 Names from mythology

We can draw some very general conclusions about Pascal's method on the basis of the list. It is commonly known that Pascal borrows
many of the ideas contained in his text. He refers to these ideas by using the name of some personage associated with them. In many cases this is the author of the idea, like Descartes or Montaigne, or it may be a Biblical personage whose life illustrates the idea like Job or Solomon. In other words, he makes an allusion to a mythological, historical, Biblical or literary personage for the purpose of transferring to his text an idea associated with this personage. Speaking in terms of literary devices, this is the mildest of personifications. Pascal uses the name as a kind of shorthand symbol to stand for a fuller expression of the idea. In the passage below he uses the name "Montaigne" to represent Montaigne's writing and the value that can be derived from reading it. Montaigne thinks that writing about himself increases his self-knowledge and that self-knowledge is synonymous with knowledge of mankind. Pascal takes exception, not with the eventual goal, but with the means of attaining it.

(649) Montaigne. Ce que Montaigne a de bon ne peut être acquis que difficilement. Ce qu'il a de mauvais, j'entends hors les moeurs, pût être corrigé en un moment si on l'eût averti qu'il faisait trop d'histoires et qu'il parlait trop de soi.

So Pascal agrees reluctantly that self-knowledge and the knowledge of human nature that it implies are good. His orientation as a writer contrasts with that of Montaigne. He is not trying to discover knowledge, but rather to produce a change in attitude in his readers. So the name "Montaigne" serves in Pascal's text as a title for an idea. This practice is almost like putting the man on trial instead of criticizing an impersonal idea. Approximately half of the list of example-figures perform the same function in the fragment.
Referring to the list, most of the names of Biblical, historical and mythological personages, and names of intellectual groups fall into this category. And some of the names in the group related to religions and religious attitudes serve in this way also. So the use of personalities to denote ideas accounts for a large percentage of the example-characters.

As an apologist, Pascal is interested in the effect of ideas on people. Consequently, his treatment of ideas involves not only an abstract statement of them, but the presentation of characters who embody them. In many fragments there is no historical source for the idea, and consequently, allusion is not possible. Pascal still uses characters in the expression of abstractions. But since these abstractions have no prior association with characters, he must establish an association within the text. Any meaning that a roofer, a locksmith, a dancer, or a blind man might have must be conferred on them by the context in which they appear. This group of example-characters makes up a large percentage of the total. To refer again to the list of characters on page 64, this group consists of most of the names of occupations, professions, and classes; names deriving from attitudes, states of mind and abilities; names which indicate relationships between people; names which indicate activities; and names which indicate physical characteristics. Certainly one of Pascal's salient traits is the use of characters in the expression of ideas. The passage below uses characters to represent the idea that men are vain. Regardless of what they do they want praise.
Pascal's method of making an observation of human nature like this one is effective because it shows a human trait and helps the reader see it for himself instead of telling him about it. The idea that he wishes to communicate is that men want praise for whatever they do, not because what they do is right, but simply because they are doing it. Accordingly, he shows a soldier whose job it is to keep peace (not to make war), and a ruffian who wishes to disturb the peace. The contradiction is intended. The reader sees it and concludes that one of them must be right, the other wrong. But they both want praise, not for being right, but because they are human and humans are vain. For the same purpose Pascal shows us philosophers holding contrary views (perhaps neither of them are right). They want praise just for having their opinion as do their readers who are proud to have read something regardless of its value. Finally, the author refers to himself. But this time it is not an apologist speaking, but Pascal himself who, being human, wants praise for what he has written, not because it is right, etc., and so on with his readers. Pascal's method calls for the use of characters to show the application of his idea to human situations. This procedure helps the reader see a human quality (and consequently feel proud because he has made an observation). Pascal's originality certainly does not
reside in the creation of new ideas, but in his visual method of expressing ideas which gives them new persuasive force. The reader sees for himself with a vision made keener by Pascal's ability to magnify and simplify the scene. Then the reader draws his own conclusions, and is pleased because he has been an active learner rather than a passive witness.

There is a major distinction to be made in the cast of example-figures, whether they be used to allude to historical ideas or to represent human characteristics. Some make a more definite visual impression on the reader than others. The difference is so great that two distinct groups can be singled out and discussed separately. So far we have mentioned only the type of example-figure which makes a vague visual impression. This character represents the idea well enough in the context. By using such characters Pascal makes the passage understandable to a wider audience. But we do not visualize the character in any detail. Such is not the case with the other type of example-figure. This example-character makes a visual impression like a character in a play. He speaks, makes a gesture or appears in a setting.

Pascal accomplishes some very subtle effects on his reader's attitude by using example-characters. In the passage below he presents two of them on the battlefield. He ridicules relative justice by using one of his preferred techniques: a shift in point of view.

(51) Pourquoi me tuez vous à votre avantage? Je n'ai point d'armes -- Et quoi ne demeurez vous pas de l'autre côté de l'eau? Mon ami, si vous demeuriez de ce côté je serais un assassin, et cela serait injuste de vous tuer de la sorte.
This scene shocks the reader. We expect the characters to think and speak according to the same perspective on life that we have. But Pascal endows them with a childlike naïveté coupled with penetrating understanding. The passage gives the necessary information about the situation. There is a war between two countries which are separated from each other by a body of water. There are two characters, one from each country, both men. One is armed and presumably a soldier; the other is unarmed and he is not a soldier. The unarmed man is on enemy soil. The dialogue begins as the soldier is executing an attack on the unarmed foreigner. The unarmed man initiates the dialogue with a question which the reader finds as unexpected as he finds it appropriate. "Pourquoi me tuez-vous à votre avantage? Je n'ai point d'armes." The question is unexpected because it implies that the foreigner is interested in something beyond mere survival. We expect him to fight back as best he can, or run only because we assume that his primary concern is self-preservation. The soldier's reply is equally unexpected and equally appropriate for his character. The soldier's first words indicate that he is as surprised at the unarmed man's question as we are: "Et quoi ..." He must have mistaken the foreigner to be one of the enemy. He goes on to glibly justify his action in geographical terms. The man must have absolutely no principles. He makes a complete mockery of relative justice. But there is no flaw in his logic. His answer goes back farther than just the economic and political causes of the war. For the two economies and
and political systems which made this war possible were the result of the natural water barrier which divided the people into two groups. Consequently, this body of water is the original cause. So his answer is actually surprisingly accurate. Next, he goes on to explain his answer. Relative justice is eventually based on the same natural geographical barrier. If he kills someone from the other side of the water he is considered brave and just by those on this side. A murderer is someone who while in his own country kills a man born on his side of the water. Right and wrong depends on where you are and whom you are with. According to the relativistic morality even killing under certain circumstances is praiseworthy.

It is easy to see how Pascal treats the two example-characters in order to accomplish his purpose. In this instance he obtains the persuasive effect by developing the situation into an allegory. He derives four advantages from the use of allegorical characters. Briefly stated they are: 1) he simplifies the intellectual positions of both the relativists and the absolutists to promote better understanding, 2) he emphasizes the unattractive features of the relativist's position and deemphasizes the disadvantages of the absolutist's position, 3) he omits the rational basis for the war and by so doing, makes the soldier appear even more ruthless, and 4) he associates relative morality with an unattractive person, and associates absolute morality with an attractive person.

The simplification of the contrasting ideas results from the circumstances in which the dialogue is spoken. The two countries are at war. The unarmed man, the representative of absolute morality,
is on foreign soil, while the soldier, representing relative morality is on his home soil. These circumstances raise a question; what are the moral implications in the event that the soldier kills the unarmed traveler? Location, that is, being away from home or at home; the state of war between two countries; whether or not a man is armed; profession, one of the characters is a soldier; and violence are features about this dramatic example which are pertinent to the morality of this question, whether relative or absolute. Regardless of how the reader turns this question over in his mind, the method of presenting it is an effective one.

Now the second advantage that Pascal reaps from this kind of dramatic form involves emphasis. He constructs the dramatic example purposely to emphasize the weaknesses of the relative position. He puts the relative position on the defensive while letting the absolutist merely ask questions. Furthermore, he has chosen a soldier in the act of killing an unarmed man as the defender of the position. So the weaknesses of relative morality appear highlighted while any weaknesses that the absolute position might have remain in the dark.

Thirdly, the relativist position is made weaker by the omission of the immediate causes of the war. The only causes revealed are either too personal, the soldier's desire for glory, or too remote, the natural water barrier between the countries. The relative position would look better in the light of the political and economic and ethnic or racial causes of this war. At least, the soldier who represents relativity would appear more sympathetic. All we need to do to change the perspective on the soldier's attitude is to imagine
the traveler as a North Vietnamese on Southern soil, and to imagine
the soldier as being a South Vietnamese.

Finally, Pascal prejudices the opinion of his reader by means of
association. The Soldier representing relativity is a profiteer without
scruples. He calls the unarmed man "mon ami", but he intends to
continue his attack and kill him just the same. His motive is glory
and he is actually unconcerned about the morality of his action.
Strictly speaking, he does not represent the true position of relative
morality at all, but rather the degenerated morality of the unscrupu­
losus individual who takes advantage of the weaknesses of relative
morality. The unarmed man refers to the soldier's motive in his
question "Why are you killing me for your profit?" These words in­
dicate that he knew what the relativist's motive was. So, on the
allegorical level, his question is an invitation to the relativist to
explain his ideas and apply them to war and murder. In contrast to
the unscrupulous soldier, Pascal provides the unarmed man with admir­
able characteristics. If he is not unafraid of death he is at least
still concerned enough about justice to ask about it while facing
death at the hands of a soldier. He is concerned about the soldier's
motive. He was unprepared for the attack because he had trust in
people. He expected the soldier to think of him as a human being
regardless of his birthplace, and not as a means of acquiring glory.

In this example as in so many others, Pascal motivates the
reader to participate. The reader must draw conclusions based on
the allegorical scene in order for the communication to be completed.
In conclusion, Pascal's dramatic method makes ideas clearer, easier
to comprehend and more readily applicable in specific circumstances. He encourages the reader to feel involved in the interpretation of example cases and perhaps even personally responsible for the opinions he derives from them.

Pascal's example characters help the reader to see. In the example just quoted, the reader sees the verbal encounter of two characters who personify conflicting ideas. As a result, he better understands the nature of the ideas. Pascal also uses dramatic techniques to sharpen his reader's vision in the following passage. This scene, like the one in the previous example, has an allegorical meaning.

On the surface, Pascal describes a man in prison. Beneath the surface level of meaning he has depicted the human condition.

(163) Un homme dans un cachot, ne sachant pas si son arrêt est donné, n'ayant plus qu'une heure pour l'apprendre, cette heure suffisant s'il sait qu'il est donné pour le faire révoquer. Il est contre nature qu'il emploie cette heure là, non à s'informer si l'arrêt est donné, mais à jouer au piquet.

Ainsi il est surnaturel que l'homme etc. C'est un appesantissement de la main de Dieu. Ainsi non seulement le zèle de ceux qui le cherchent prouve Dieu, mais l'aveuglement de ceux qui ne le cherchent pas.

The prisoner's condition restricts him in two ways. The physical confines of the prison limit him spatially. He cannot move or see beyond the prison walls. Pascal's prison is not of the Stendhalian variety, high on a hill or in a tower overlooking the inspiring aspect of all society. The walls cut the man off absolutely from the outside and he has no idea of what lies beyond them. The prisoner is temporally limited as well as physically limited. He has only one
hour. At the end of this time his condition will change. He will no longer exist in absolute ignorance of whatever exists outside of the walls of his dungeon. For he will learn at that moment whether or not a sentence will be passed on him. As for the present, he has the power to find out whether or not an unfavorable sentence has been passed, and he has the power to have it revoked. This is a supernatural power because it enables the prisoner to find out about the possible existence of a being beyond the prison walls, i.e., outside of the range of his perceptive powers. Here ends the first sentence and the description of the condition of a certain man.

In the next phase of the passage Pascal discusses two courses of action open to this man, and he passes judgement on them. If the man is indifferent about his condition and about what is going to happen to him he will not bother to have the unfavorable sentence revoked. Instead, he would occupy his mind with some activities like cards which would leave him no energy for other thoughts. Pascal calls this course of action unnatural. The second course of action receives only the briefest mention in an unfinished sentence which begins a second paragraph. Pascal tells us that something about him is supernatural. Obviously then, if Pascal had completed this paragraph he would have shown the alternative line of action. In this instance the condemned man would exercise his supernatural abilities to find out if a sentence had been passed and if necessary to revoke it.

This last sentence in the second paragraph of the fragment brings up two questions: the meaning of the sentence itself and the effect it has on the meaning of the first paragraph. Let us take up the
latter of these first. The sentence mentions God, and in so doing makes it clear that the first paragraph is an allegory. The judge beyond the limits of the prison walls is God, the hour is the counterpart of a human life span, and the sentence is the final judgment. Prison is the image of the human condition. The metaphor states that the conditions of life in prison are essentially the same as those of human life. There is, of course, one obvious difference. The relationship between the prisoner and men who are out of prison does not apply to man's condition. All men are imprisoned, not just a certain portion of them. Pascal makes no mention of getting out of the dungeon. Man is imprisoned in space and time. His very existence depends on these restrictions. When a man comes into being and thereby acquires physical substance his body is necessarily localized in space and time. It could not exist in all times at once. Consequently, to have physical substance is to be imprisoned in a single place at any given moment. Obviously these restrictions apply not only to the physical being, but also to what the being can know. It is possible to know about something which falls within the same temporal and spatial limits. But a supernatural being who exists in all places at once and who exists in all time falls infinitely beyond all human capacities for knowing except for one. And that means of knowing is faith, the only means available to man for knowing God.

Now the question remains, in what way God is making his authority weigh more heavily. Pascal gives the answer in the final paragraph. It involves the same two courses of action: one looking for proof of God's existence and the other putting the thought aside. The
existence of people who follow both lines of action proves the existence of God. The word "appesantissement" refers to the ambiguous manner in which God reveals Himself to men. Whether or not men see God depends on their disposition. He is visible to those who seek with all of their heart, and He is invisible to those who are indifferent. Pascal calls this latter group the blind. The blindness meant here of course is spiritual, not using or not possessing faith, the capacity for knowing God. There is justice in this manner of revelation. To make Himself visible to those who lack the capacity for faith would mean either releasing man from the spatial and temporal confines imposed by existence and raising him to the level of God, or it would mean a debasement of God.

Pascal makes use of most of his standard dramatic techniques of persuasion in this passage. He uses an allegorical scene of man in a dungeon to achieve the most persuasive statement of a message. And the message is a simple one, that man should seek God. Here is a brief statement of the advantages that Pascal obtains from using an allegory to express this message. First, he adheres to religious doctrine while avoiding distracting complexities. Had he gone into an abstract discussion of faith as a means of knowing a supernatural being, or of the nature of God, or of the human condition he would have at least posed knotty religious problems. The reader would then be able to find loopholes in the argument or maybe he would not even understand. Consequently, Pascal avoids the disadvantages of this discursive approach by using the allegory. The prison walls represent the limits of rational human knowledge. Faith is the capacity for
knowing what lies beyond the limit, and God is the being who exists there. Man is condemned to spend a limited time in a single place, isolated by the prison walls of his existence from an infinity of times and places. Pascal derives another advantage from using a dramatic form. He avoids making blunt assertions or appearing like a tiresome advice-giver. If he presented himself in this image to his reader he might provoke a flat rejection. He uses the allegory to adapt his message to suit the particular nature of his audience. Of course, the recipient of his message is the card-player, a type who often appears in the Pensées, and whom Pascal calls "aveugles" or "indifférents". Now this card-player could know the nature of his condition if he would only open his eyes. Perhaps the perspective would be too unpleasant for him.

Pascal's strategy has three aspects: open the eyes of the card-player, evoke fear to counteract his indifference and quickly provide a resolution for him which will reduce his anxiety. Pascal organizes the materials in the fragment according to these three phases in his persuasive strategy. First, the reader sees a man in prison. The prospect opens his eyes. Next, he sees himself in the person of the card-player. Pascal does not need to admonish this person any more than to call his indifference unnatural. Thirdly, the reader learns that there is another course of action that the prisoner could take, and this course of action is referred to as supernatural. He does not need to be told that he has a choice. Pascal has constructed the situation so that the reader cannot comfortably choose indifference. To be indifferent toward the possibility of a sentence
simply does not make sense. It would be embarrassing to choose that course. It is given that if the prisoner knew there was a sentence he would not play cards. Furthermore, there is the stipulation that he could know if he put his mind to the problem. So the reader has very little choice in his reaction to this persuasive technique.

Modification of the "Méthode d'Agréer"

In this chapter I have discussed formal aspects of the Pensées, and have limited my treatment of arguments and literary qualities to brief comments, pertinent to examples at hand. It is clear that the conversational situations and the example-figures of Pascal's method are highly persuasive structures. Two questions remain: what are the essential characteristics of the method? and how does it compare with the "méthode d'agréer"? First of all, there is an obvious relationship between the principles of persuasion exposed in "De l'Art de persuader" and the Pensées. The fundamental elements of the dramatic framework correspond to the fundamental elements of the theory of persuasion. The theoretical counterparts of the apologist, the interlocutor and the example-figure are the method used by the persuader, the manner in which men consent, and the condition of opinions. Not only does the dramatic framework consist of the same elements provided in the theory, but it preserves the same relationship between them. The most important character is the consentor, for his action gives purpose and meaning to the whole endeavor. Who he is? What ideas he accepts? What things please him? are questions which determine the form in which the opinion will be presented, and
ultimately the method used by the persuader. Change in the identity of the consenter brings with it change in the condition of the opinion and change in the method. So the dramatic framework preserves the essential relationship inherent in the elements of the theory.

Apologetics concerns people. An apologist need not have an exceptionally strong penchant for dramatization to employ a method based on conversations and the use of characters to illustrate ideas expressed in these conversations. But the persuasive techniques of the dramatic framework of Pascal's method are not just haphazard results. They represent the implementation of principles set down in "De l'Art de persuader". One piece of evidence of the close theoretical relationship between the two works is that most of the persuasive techniques apply more to one of the basic aspects of persuasion than to the other two aspects. They fall into three clusters, according to whether they associate more directly with the consenter or with the opinion or with the method. The terms for these three groups could be assigned on the basis of the nature of the techniques. The consenter-oriented group involves identification. The identification of the reader with the personage of the interlocutor gives the apologist a considerable persuasive advantage. It leads to the sought-after change in the reader's attitude, i.e., consent to the opinion presented by the apologist. Identification means that the reader himself participates in the three-part relationship between persuader, consenter and opinion upon which Pascal's method of persuasion is built. Once the reader has entered into this relationship, the apologist can exert pressure on him by manipulating the variable
factors of the three aspects of persuasion. For example, the reader-consenter bond makes one of the principles of consent used in the "méthode d'agréer" valuable. This principle states that the will consents to opinions associated with previously accepted objects of love. Identification is a kind of emotional involvement according to which the reader wishes to make his thoughts and feelings coincide as nearly as possible with those of the consenter. The reader associates his own self-respect with respect for the consenter. As a consequence, he feels inclined to accept those opinions which the consenter espouses.

In the dramatic method, the role of the consenter is very important. This character differs significantly from the consenter described in connection with the "méthode d'agréer". The "méthode d'agréer" is inoperable by a human persuader because individual variations in the consenter require so many corresponding adaptations in the method. The dramatic counterpart of the consenter in the Pensées provides a solution to the impossible situation raised by the perfect method. Pascal has constructed his personality so as to induce readers who hold the greatest variety of ideas about how to attain happiness to identify with him. The broad attractiveness of the character derives from a combination of features. He embodies fundamental metaphysical problems shared by all human beings without possessing individualizing characteristics such as social rank or a definite philosophical position. Emphasis on the fundamental human traits displayed by the consenter and drawing attention away from
superficial qualities insures a permanent bond between the reader
and the consenter.

Example-figures and the persuasive techniques associated with
them make possible a genuine act of consent on the part of the reader
which involves his essential being. Pascal's objective is to make a
fundamental change in the way the reader sees himself. Authentic
consent to a given opinion occurs when the reader sees two relation­
ships: the relationship between the opinion in question to previously
accepted ideas, and the relationship between that opinion to pre­
viously espoused beliefs. Consequently, self-awareness and full com­
prehension of the opinion being persuaded are prerequisite to the
act of consent. The use of example-figures enables the apologist
who knows the beliefs espoused and the ideas accepted by the consenter
to produce the necessary awareness and comprehension. Example-figures
provide means of spotlighting the voluntary and rational affinities
between the reader and the opinion. Frequently we see the apologist
invite the interlocutor to participate in a kind of controlled moral
experiment. The two conversationalists interpret the meaning of
example scenes, adjust the conditions in which the figures are
cought, and imagine the probable reactions which result from the ad­
justments. Example-figures serve to cause the reader to put his own
opinions into question, to evaluate moral dilemmas, and to formulate
opinions based on his authentic self.

A third group of techniques concerns the method employed by the
apologist. Like the reader-interlocutor identification and the reader
involvement inspired by the use of the example-figures, these
techniques are dramatic in nature. They concern the method according
to which the apologist uses example-figures to manipulate the reader.
Usually there are many different example-figures in longer passages.
They fall roughly into two groups: those who are morally inferior
to the interlocutor and those who are superior. The apologist con-
trols the degree to which the interlocutor identifies with either
the negative or the positive examples. His objective is, of course,
to move the interlocutor away from the attitude of the negative ex-
amples and towards the positive examples. Often the apologist pro-
duces the change in attitude by manipulating the number of roles.
At times the roles in the Pascalian drama appear clear-cut in order
to promote reader identification with an example figure. For example,
the apologist may draw a sharp line between believers and non-
believers. The reader, feeling that he fits neither category exactly,
may find himself identifying with non-believers. Then suddenly
Pascal subdivides this group into two new groups: true seekers who
have had no satisfaction, and indifferentists. Again the reader is
confronted with a decision. As the new roles become more completely
defined, the reader identifies with a new group which is somewhat
smaller and more select. All the while, the apologist leads the
reader toward a deeper understanding of himself and a clearer picture
of the way he sees himself in regard to belief in God. The affinity
between the target opinion and the predilections of the heart of the
consenter gradually emerge. In the final stage in the progression
toward a new religious identity, the interlocutor has made a signi-
ficant change, if not a complete revolution from non-believer to
believer, at least from non-believer or indifferentist to one who is concerned.

The dramatic method of persuasion used in the Pensees preserves the essential characteristics of the "méthode d'agréer" while avoiding the disadvantages. Pascal did not describe this method in "De l'Art de persuader"; instead, he described the effect that it would produce on the consenter, a bond of sympathy and understanding between the persuader and the consenter. Elsewhere in the article he indicates the persuasive value for persuading the will that could be derived from this relationship. A person will accept opinions which are associated with his principles of love and pleasure. The "méthode d'agréer" is inoperable by human persuaders because of the staggering diversity in voluntary principles. Not only do they vary among different people, but individuals constantly change. Persuasion of the heart, the objective of the "méthode d'agréer", is difficult because it demands such a profound knowledge of the consenter's heart, and because of the inconsistencies of the heart. With the dramatic method Pascal has overcome the disadvantages of the "méthode d'agréer". The dramatic method reduces the troubling diversity of voluntary principles in two ways. It penetrates the superficial layers of diversity in men, and it establishes new emotional ties. All men are subject to fear, pain and death. Pascal establishes contact with the reader by evoking these fundamental concerns of human existence. The second means of circumventing the problem of diversity is the establishment of new emotional bonds. Each character of the dramatic framework contributes in its own way toward the
development of new principles of love. Example-figures provide negative moral examples associated with pain, and thereby move the reader away from this identity. The interlocutor represents the metaphysical problems of men in such a general way that all readers see their essential being in this character. The reader identifies his inner conflicts with those of the interlocutor and he imitates him in his attempt to resolve the conflicts. The third dramatic character, the apologist, confronts the reader with decisions about his identity. By manipulating the identities of example-figures he uncovers the most fundamental problems of human existence and stimulates the reader to think about them. In conclusion, both the "méthode d'agréer" and the dramatic method appeal to the will, and both derive their persuasive import by associating the target opinion with voluntary principles of the consenter. The two methods treat the consenter differently. The "méthode d'agréer" takes the consenter as he is, while the dramatic method provokes certain predictable reactions in the consenter.
CHAPTER III
THE TWO SIDES OF THE APOLOGIST

Unity and Diversity in the Image
of the Apologist

Normally we think of an apologist as one who defends Chris-
tianity. His arguments protect the Christian religion against the
potential danger that non-believers could cause. The Pascalian
style of apologetics differs from this conception of the art in that
it does not emphasize the defense of an opinion. Pascal's attitude
in regard to his work is suggested by the dilemma expressed in this
fragment.

(2) + Ordre par dialogues.
Que dois-je faire. Je ne vois partout
qu'obscurités.
Croirai-je que je ne suis rien? Croirai-je
que je suis dieu?

The passage indicates Pascal's intention to organize the apology in
a series of dialogues. This statement of intention suggests that the
passage reflects an effort to prepare for the work of the apology.
If it was to appear in the finished work it would have been placed
in a preface or a prologue. The passage contains another indication
of its relation to the whole project. It differs from the vast
majority of fragments in that it does not aim at changing the attitude
of the reader. Rather than portraying an apologist who is applying
all of his energies to bend the will of a potential consenter, it
shows a man reflecting about the basis for action. The introspective mood must have preceded Pascal's decision to devote himself entirely to the writing of an apology. Furthermore, one could speculate that Pascal's reflections on his identity resulted in a conviction so strong that it was to form the basis for a sustained and painful effort. The text which came into being as a result of this effort testifies as to the firmness of his conviction. It reveals a deep concern for the well-being of mankind. Pascal does not relegate his concern for man to a second position beneath the well-being of Christianity. Instead, he defends men against the danger they expose themselves to by not accepting God. His arguments are designed to protect men and not to preserve ideas.

There are two approaches to the subject of the persuasive value of the personage of the apologist. The first approach is an evaluation of his effectiveness in terms of his function in a system for persuading. He is an indispensable part of the system. An evaluation of the apologist's role in Pascal's mechanism of persuasion requires one to consider the nature of the relationship which exists between the three personages which make up the dramatic framework of Pascal's apologetical method. Each of the personages possesses his own special persuasive import, and the value of each derives from his relation to the other two. As we have seen in Chapter I, the relationship between the three fundamental aspects of persuasion is a proportional one. Change in the factors involved with any one of the aspects implies a necessary and corresponding change in the other two aspects. Consequently, the apologist affects the interlocutor and
the example-figures by putting a method into practice, and conversely, he adapts his method according to the nature of these personages. So the personage of the apologist is a part of a system of persuasion, and consequently, his persuasive value must be evaluated within the context of the system.

The second approach to evaluating the persuasiveness of the apologist concerns the resemblance between this character and Pascal himself. Since Pascal embodies his religious conviction in the apologist, it is probable that he translated something of his own personality into the character as well. Indeed, the passage quoted above reveals something of the author himself. The speaker of the passage poses a question that precedes any human endeavor: what is the basis for action? Pascal assumes that the answer to this question depends on the identity of the being who poses it. "What should I do?" is a question that can be answered only after one finds an answer for a more fundamental question, "Who am I?". The speaker looks to the world around him for a clue as to his identity, but finds no relief. He sees only darkness. Knowledge of the relation of the self to the world cannot come from observing the world. He cannot know himself because knowledge of something requires knowledge of what that thing is not. The whole of reality surpasses human intelligence to such an extent that it offers no perspective for man to judge himself. The speaker knows only that he is a creature suspended between the two extremes of nothing and everything, "rien" or "dieu". The speaker is caught in a painful state of uncertainty similar to the crisis that Pascal must have experienced. But Pascal finds a way out.
He finds his identity and he knows the line of action implied by that identity. How Pascal saw himself and how he transformed that vision into action is recorded in the *Pensées*.

Not all fragments give equally valuable information on the nature of the apologist and his persuasive function. In most fragments Pascal emphasizes one of the aspects of persuasion and deemphasizes the other two. Which aspect will receive emphasis depends exclusively on the nature of the consenter. Pascal makes it clear in "De l'Art de persuader", that according to his conception of human nature, the capacity for accepting new opinions varies greatly from person to person. Pascal deploys the dramatic framework of each fragment so as to emphasize that aspect of the art of persuasion which most appeals to the particular consenter that he wishes to persuade. Consequently, the image of the apologist varies according to the demands of the situation.

But variation in the apologist's image as it appears from fragment to fragment is not the same as the variation in the nature of the interlocutor. We see a number of different interlocutors, each displaying a different kind of malfunction of knowing faculties, and each possessing a different personality. In contrast to this diversity, we see in the apologist only one identity which remains the same throughout all of the fragments. He may apply different persuasive techniques, and as a result expose one aspect of his personality while obscuring another. But in all fragments, the apologist possesses the same characteristics. Consequently, his presence lends unity and coherence to the apology.
One of the consistent features of the personage of the apologist is his superior awareness. He presides over the entire apology by virtue of his broad span of awareness. Everything passes through his consciousness. He creates all of the characters and controls the presentation of all of the opinions and concepts. His intelligence penetrates beyond appearances to expose the real motives for the opinions and actions of men. His superior awareness creates a separation between him and the interlocutor.

There is an even greater separation between the apologist and the interlocutor as far as spiritual perfection is concerned. Both characters are moving through a spiritual evolution, but the apologist has gone farther than the interlocutor. The difference between the two characters shows up primarily in the way that they see themselves in relationship to the world. The apologist possesses confidence. He has found some absolute mark by which he can judge his relationship to the world around him. The interlocutor, on the other hand, suffers from a metaphysical anguish caused by his being cut off from his moral and spiritual roots. He is lost with no means of determining the meaning of his self in relation to the world in which it moves. We see both characters located at temporary stages in an evolution toward spiritual perfection, and one of them is relatively farther along.

In the following passage the apologist reveals that he had formerly experienced the same isolation as the interlocutor. At the time he knew and loved himself alone and had no knowledge of his relation to any object external to the self. He has passed beyond
the skeptical crisis in which the interlocutor is still embroiled. He uses the image of a member to the whole body to define the relationship of himself to the whole of reality.

(373) Il faut n'aimer que Dieu et ne haïr que soi.

Si le pied avait toujours ignoré qu'il appartient au corps et qu'il y eut un corps dont il dépendit, s'il n'avait eu que la connaissance et l'amour de soi et qu'il vint à connaître qu'il appartient à un corps duquel il dépend, quel regret, quelle confusion de sa vie passée, d'avoir été inutile au corps qui lui a influé la vie, qui l'eût anéanti s'il l'eût rejeté et séparé de soi, comme il se séparait de lui. Quelles prières d'y être conservé! et avec quelle soumission se laisserait-il gouverner à la volonté qui régit le corps, jusqu'à consentir à être retranché s'il le faut! ou il perdrait sa qualité de membre; car il faut que tout membre veuille bien périr pour le corps qui est le seul pour qui tout est.

The apologist has moved out of a state of ignorance about his identity into a state of knowledge. The change is so radical that only terms with the most diametrically opposed meanings are appropriate to define it. Self-love has been replaced by the love for a divine object. If "love" is the appropriate word to designate the feeling of a finite being toward the Infinite Being from whom he received his existence, then the appropriate term for designating the feeling of that being for himself is "hate", a word designating the opposite of love. So, to hate oneself in Pascal's terminology is synonymous with seeing oneself as an instrument of a divine will.

The identity of the apologist has two main aspects. On one hand he is cold and impersonal. One would not call him a person without human failings because the "personal" side of the character
is not presented. He seems to be beyond human conflicts. His passions do not detract his faculties for knowing supernatural truths, and his judgements are always good ones. There are two possible reasons for the impersonal quality of the apologist's identity. Indeed, he is an instrument of persuasion. This does not mean that he serves as a model of the proper moral attitude, for there is no proportion between him and the consenter. He is the active principle in the persuasive system. He applies the pressure on the interlocutor to bring around a change of opinion. Consequently, it is not appropriate that the apologist experience spiritual turmoil. This kind of inner experience should exist only the the mind of the interlocutor. The second reason why the apologist's image is impersonal concerns his spiritual perfection. This person has already reestablished the proper spiritual relationship with God. He has experienced a conversion. As we saw in the previously quoted passage, conversion means a reordering of priorities in a person's mind. It is the passage from love of self to love of God. So the apologist really does exhibit a kind of detachment from human concerns.

The Apologist, a Persuasive Instrument

The articles devoted to the persuasion of indifferentists show off the main features of the apologist better than articles on other subjects. We know that the apologist adapts his method for each individual consenter in order to find the most persuasive approach for that individual. It happens that the most efficient technique for persuading indifferentists is to reveal oneself. Consequently, the
apologist even goes so far as to explain his motives for becoming an apologist. Pascal exploits all of the persuasive resources which derive from the personage of the apologist. At various places in the text the apologist appeals to reason by destroying the rational basis of the indifferentist's position. Sometimes he probes into psychology to expose the real motives that lie beneath the mask of indifference. At one point in the passage he engages the imagination by acting the role of an indifferentist. His portrayal emphasizes all of the inconsistencies and emotionally painful aspects of indifference. In other places in the text he relies on the persuasive virtues of social ostracism by suggesting that indifference will cause one to lose friends. Finally, Pascal takes advantage of the persuasive import produced by the character of the apologist. The apologist shows genuine concern for the interlocutor, thereby counteracting indifference with its opposite.

The apologist undertakes to persuade indifferentists in the fragments in Série III of the "papiers non classés" in the Lafuma edition of the Pensées. Série III consists of five fragments numbering from 427 through 431. The indifferentist suffers from a specific variety of corruption to which the human mechanism of consent is subject. His problem is not a malfunction of the faculties. His reason and will become operative at the proper moment in the process of apprehending new opinions. The mechanism of consent of the indifferentist is in propre working order. But its normal operation has been suspended for certain objects of knowledge. The indifferentist can reason about natural matters and he is sensitive to all of
the basic human concerns such as life, death and the way other people consider him. Curiously, the operation of his faculties fails when confronted with the question of a Divine Being. Something in his mind blocks the rational and emotional impulses in regard to this subject. Instead of showing the concern about the existence of God, an attitude so fundamental that its absence is monstrous, the person shows indifference.

The dramatic framework of Fragment 427, the longest of the fragments on indifferentism, deviates from the norm. The interlocutor does not utter one word throughout the entire passage. However, there is still much evidence of a formal nature to indicate that there exists a kind of conversational situation. One piece of evidence concerns the organization of the arguments against indifferentism. Instead of presenting one statement of position, the apologist attacks a series of pro-indifferentism opinions and refutes them one by one by exposing their lack of rational foundation. The movement away from indifferentism could plausibly take place within the mind of a single person. So the arguments in the text unfold as they would in a debate between Pascal and an indifferentist. Even though the personage of an interlocutor is not present, the movement of ideas on the text implies his presence, and the persuasive forces in the text are designed to produce an effect on a specific kind of consenter.

The effectiveness of the personal approach becomes apparent when one investigates the nature of the indifferentist. The real indifferentist does not know God and does not seek to know Him.
Pascal asserts that genuine indifferentism, in regard to the existence of God, cannot exist in the human mind. The rational and voluntary powers with which all normally constructed human minds are equipped will not tolerate it. Some people claim to be indifferentists and feel that they are sincere. But they are mistaken. The basic assumption upon which Pascal builds his assertion about indifferentism concerns his conception of human nature, and more specifically, a theory of knowledge. A person will admit into his mind only those opinions which can thrive in the logical and emotive environment of his mind. The mind is like a body. It supplies the life needs for organs of its own nature, but rejects organs of an essentially different nature. The milieu of opinions compatible with indifferentism includes indifference in regard to one's possessions, to one's professional success, to friendship and acceptance of other people, to one's life, and finally, to the certainty of death. An attitude of detachment in regard to all of these things is alien to the human soul, and since such a detachment is a prerequisite for authentic indifferentism, the position cannot exist.

The apologist applies two kinds of pressures on the indifferentist. Some of the persuasive forces are designed to shake him out of his indifferent posture and move him away from it. These techniques constitute a negative approach. They evoke a host of unpleasant sensations and emotions, such as the unpleasant sensation of falling in space, the terror of being lost, the fear of the unknown, the fear of death, the shame of failure, and the anguish of social ostracism. These negative sensations and emotions are important
motivating forces. The apologist uses them by establishing a connection between them and indifferentism. A second category of persuasive techniques complements the negative forces. The positive complements consist of friendship, understanding, sympathy, assurance, and admiration. These pressures encourage the interlocutor to accept a new intellectual and emotional posture. The apologist associates the positive forces with the whole-hearted seeking of God. So the apologist's approach consists of the simultaneous application of complementary presuasive forces. Negative forces drive the indifferentist away from his attitude, and positive forces lure him toward another attitude which will replace his former one.

Article 427 divides into three sections. Each of the three sections has its own persuasive thrust and presents its own thesis. In the first section, the apologist appeals to reason, and he demonstrates the thesis that indifferentism is unreasonable. In the second section, he plays on the emotions of the interlocutor by evoking fearful subjects like death, and he presents the thesis that genuine indifferentism i.e., a conviction which derives logically from authentic feelings and ideas, is monstrous and cannot exist in a human mind. In the third section, he moves onto a psychological plane of persuasion. His thesis is that indifferentism is the product of a diseased mind. Man is subject to the disease because of the anguish he feels at being metaphysically isolated from his fellows. The disease sets in during man's attempt to establish a meaningful contact with others. Often he imitates the attitudes and opinions of groups of people from whom he seeks admiration and acceptance. As a
result of imitation, he appropriates inauthentic attitudes, i.e., opinions copied from other people rather than derived from his own being. The condition favorable for the perpetuation of the disease is ignorance. And the cure is insight into self. So, the appeal of each section differs. The first section appeals to reason, the second one makes an emotional impact, and the third is psychological.

The main thrust of the apologist's argument against indifferentists in the first section concerns logical contradictions. Indifferentists profess attitudes which cannot logically co-exist in the same mind with indifferentism. One of their statements provides the point of departure of the article. They assert that the natural world does not give evidence of the existence of God, and that this assertion gives them the right to attack those who uphold the Christian religion. But this concept of God coincides with that of the apologist. God is a transcendent being from whom man is separated and who surpasses human capacities of knowing. Indeed, He is hidden from man. He has obscured the signs which indicate his existence so that only those people who seek whole-heartedly will see them. So indifferentists are correct in their observation about the nature of God. But their observation, far from depreciating the Christian doctrine, adds to the evidence in its support. Their attitude toward the Christian religion is inconsistent with their beliefs. Hostility does not derive from indifference, but from concern. So if the so-called indifferentist were genuinely indifferent toward the existence of God he would not take the trouble to prove that other people are wrong about their belief.
Incompatible opinions, indifference and concern, co-exist within the same mind. This situation cannot endure after the person becomes aware of the incongruity of the two opinions. The next step in the development of the argument is to throw a spotlight on the contradiction. For this purpose, the apologist introduces the second example-figure, the authentic seeker. This positive example-figure makes every effort to find God without any satisfaction. It is plausible that the authentic seeker, because of his genuine concern about the existence of God, might house in his mind a feeling of hostility toward the Christian religion. Hostility can derive logically from concern. Now the apologist maintains that the genuine seeker who has had no satisfaction cannot exist. The human condition does not afford the possibility for such a creature as the genuine seeker who is unrewarded. He states his thesis here, near the beginning of the first section.

Mais j'espère montrer ici qu'il n'y a personne raisonnable qui puisse parler de la sorte: et j'ose même dire que jamais personne ne l'a fait.

Thus it is that the personage of a genuine seeker comes into being. His sincerity and his whole-hearted efforts will make a contrast to the dishonest and unenlightened character of the indifferentist.

The apologist's strongest and most effective argument is the assertion that indifference about the existence of God implies indifference about death. In the first section of the article he emphasizes the reasonableness of his assertion without making a play on emotion. For the apologist, to seek knowledge about God is the same as to seek knowledge about the nature of one's condition in the
eternal state of death. Since death is a permanent state and life is temporary, what happens after death is the most important concern of life. Every human action derives its meaning from the position one takes on this question.

L'immortalité de l'âme est une chose qui nous importe si fort, qui nous touche si profondément, qu'il faut avoir perdu tout sentiment pour être dans l'indifférence de savoir ce qui en est. Toutes nos actions et nos pensées doivent prendre des routes si différentes, selon qu'il y aura des biens éternels à espérer ou non, qu'il est impossible de faire une démarche avec sens et jugement, qu'en les réglant par la vue de ce point, qui doit être notre dernier objet.

The idea appears in many contemporary works; death gives life its meaning. The apologist's assertion is that everyone by virtue of their being a human being must be concerned with this idea. The concept of death is an object of knowledge which appeals to two aspects of human nature, the faculties of reason and will. The words which represent the two faculties in this passage are "sentiment" and "sens et jugement". So human beings, because they possess feelings and judgement, cannot be indifferent to death.

The apologist's argument has two moments. The starting point of the argument is a definition of the indifferentist's position. Then, the apologist states the logical premise from which the indifferentist derives his opinion. In the second moment of the argument the apologist starts with the premise upon which the indifferentist's contention rests, and he proceeds to demonstrate the logical incompatibility that exists between the premise and the indifferentist's opinion. Finally, the apologist advances his own opinion which is based on the same premise, but which is properly derived
from it. So, the argument moves from the indifferentist's opinion back to a premise and then forward to a new opinion.

In this section the apologist shifts the appeal onto a different register, an emotional one. Although the intellectual approach is abandoned the same movement is apparent. He starts the argument with a statement of the indifferentist's feeling toward God, the world, and other men. Then he defines the most fundamental human emotions. On this level there is agreement between the apologist and the indifferentist. Then, in the second moment of the process, the apologist shows how his fundamentally human ideas and feelings imply concern rather than indifference.

The most effective approach for persuading indifferentists demands the revelation of the apologist's identity. In the following paragraph he expresses his own personal feelings about indifferentists, and he reveals his own personal motive for attempting to persuade men to reject the opinion.

In showing concern for the well-being of indifferentists, the apologist is engaging in a sincere act, an act motivated by the fundamentally human feelings and ideas of his authentic self. The sincerity of the apologist's act contrasts with the inauthenticity of
the indifferentist's opinion. The apologist calls the indifferentist a "monstre" because indifferentism is the logical extension of inhuman feelings and ideas. But there is a human being beneath the mask. It is for the purpose of demasking the indifferentist that the apologist describes his personal motives. So the solution to the problem which the apologist faces calls for the revelation of his authentic identity.

The persuasive concerns of the second section lead the apologist to perform a most remarkable analysis of his self. He presents the self-analysis in the form of a dramatic monologue in which a man reconstructs his mind, starting with the very source of his being, then giving the most elemental awareness of self and of the human condition, and finally drawing conclusions on the basis of his reflection. The speaker portrayed is not engaging in an unstructured reverie. He organizes his reflections. The structure of his thoughts is reflected by the three paragraphs which constitute the monologue. In the first paragraph he takes stock of what he knows about his own faculties for knowledge. In the second, and in the first part of the third he defines his condition, and in the last part of the third he exposes his conclusions. There is another unifying thread to his existential reflection. He answers these three questions in sequence: Who am I? Where did I come from? and Where am I going?

In the first paragraph the speaker appraises the extent of his ignorance. His evaluation is made from a negative point of view. Instead of thinking about knowing in terms of what one knows, he represents his appraisal in terms of what he does not know. In other
words, he focuses his attention on the fringe of his knowledge. This perspective leads one to compare entities between which there exists the greatest possible disproportion. His attention hovers on the borderline separating the temporal from the eternal, and the finite from the infinite.

The speaker views life from this broadest of all perspectives. He realizes that he is unaware of the course of his being and of the nature of the world in which his being exists. Although he knows that he possesses faculties for apprehending external objects and for apprehending his own self inwardly, he does not know the nature of those faculties, nor does he know the nature of any of the objects which they apprehend.

Next, in the second paragraph of the meditation, the speaker turns his attention outward from his own being and appraises the condition of his existence. He is struck particularly by the vastness of reality which exists beyond the fringe of his knowledge. He focuses his mind on that area of reality that exists beyond the periphery of his consciousness. The relation between himself and the object of his knowledge is like that of a man standing in the middle of a field and training his vision on an object beyond the scope of his sight. His state of awareness has nothing in common with ignorance. Far from being unaware, he is acutely aware of an
object, and that object, paradoxically, is the unknown. So he apprehends the unknown as an object of knowledge. By contrasting man's knowledge with the vast area that lies beyond the limits of his knowledge, Pascal is able to communicate the idea that man knows frighteningly little.

The speaker is lost somewhere in the infinite expanses of time and space. He expresses his feelings in regard to his condition by means of the image of a landscape. He perceives two essentially different kinds of elements in the landscape. Some objects fall within the scope of his knowing powers like the corner to which he is attached, the atom and the shadow. The other objects which constitute the landscape are disproportionate with human intelligence, eternity and infinite space. The relationship between the two kinds of elements is important. The infinite and the eternal have possibilities for a frightening movement. For some incomprehensible reason the speaker and his entourage of insignificant objects are fixed in time and space. But this stability is temporary. The speaker's position in the landscape is like that of an immeasurably small body of matter, an "atome", enclosed on all sides by an infinite space. His life span
is like a shadow that passes in an instant and never returns. The horror of being lost in a landscape of time and space is compounded by the prospect which will become a reality in a short time.

In the final paragraph, the apologist reflects on his condition after death. He makes use of the landscape image to provide an emotive context for death. Falling in space and time represents death. He expects that shortly he will be dislodged from the point in space and time where he is temporarily fixed during his life, and he will fall eternally.

Comme je ne sais d'où je viens, aussi je ne sais où je vais; et je sais seulement qu'en sortant de ce monde je tombe pour jamais ou dans le néant, ou dans les mains d'un Dieu irrité, sans savoir à laquelle de ces deux conditions je dois être éternellement en partage. Voilà mon état, plein de faiblesses et d'incertitude.

Pascal has given us a terrifying view of man's life span passed on the brink of a hideous chasm. The thought of the human condition is agonizing.

Both the apologist and the indifferentist agree that the man portrayed in the monologue has made an accurate appraisal of his nature and of his condition. The themes expressed in his meditation are typical of the Pensées: the frightening prospect of infinite space and time, the emotional pain caused by insufficient knowledge, the apprehension of that area which lies beyond the limits of knowledge, and the awareness of the disproportion between man's life span and the eternity preceding and following it.

The value of the dramatic monologue in the persuasion of indifferentists is obvious. No one can face the prospect of the human
condition with indifference. To give no thought to death, to make no effort to determine the existence of God, and to disdain those who do seek God is inhuman. The real indifferentist is a monster. If Pascal shows concern for such a person it is because he believes that indifferentism is an inauthentic opinion and that a real human being exists beneath the mask.

In the third section of the article Pascal shifts the argument onto a psychological plane. Instead of pronouncing indifferentism to be unreasonable and condemning indifferentists as inhuman, he is now trying to prove that indifferentism, as it has been defined, does not exist in most cases. Many people appear to be indifferent, but their apathy is only a mask, an assumed attitude which is not founded on their true being. The motives of the false indifferentists are natural and human. They seek esteem, admiration, friendship, and acceptance. In other words, they are not really monsters, although one might judge them to be so on the basis of their external appearance. False indifferentists lack confidence in themselves. Instead of holding firmly to their own ideas and feelings, and using these as a criterion for judging new opinions, they forsake these genuine ideas and feelings. New opinions gain entrance into their minds without being subjected to the rational and voluntary operations of the faculties.

In the main part of section three, the apologist undertakes to prove that indifferentism, being unreasonable and inauthentic, does not satisfy the fundamental human needs which it was originally intended to satisfy, and which are responsible for the acceptance
of the opinion. Three needs are mentioned in this section, a need to be useful to other people, a need for friendship, and a need to appear intelligent. The apologist takes each of these subjects up in succession. Men love only those things in the realm of natural matters which serve their needs. They, in turn, desire to serve the needs of others.

In this passage the apologist shatters the image that the indifferentist is trying to create. He emphasizes that people do not have confidence in them. The apologist's next attack centers on the need for friendship. Assuming that the indifferentist has accepted his opinions for the purpose of making friends, he expresses what other people think of the conviction.

... qui n'aurait horreur de se voir dans des sentiments où l'on a pour compagnons des personnes si méprisables?

Finally, the apologist moves to the last argument. It is an admonition to be sincere. He assures the interlocutor that indifferentism does not make one appear more intelligent, nor more well adjusted or likeable, nor braver.

Rien n'accuse davantage une extrême faiblesse d'esprit que de ne pas connaître quel est le
He points out that the person who holds the opinion of indifferen-
tism will be ostracized by society. No one would want his friendship,
no one would trust him in business affairs, no one would seek comfort
from him in time of affliction. Such a person is of no use to
anyone.

The Apologist,
Product of a Metaphysical Experience

The fragment entitled "Le Mystère de Jésus" gives important
information about the way Pascal saw himself in relation to other men.
The identity of the speaker of this passage resembles the identity
of the personage of the apologist. So we have another source of
information about the apologist. Pascal did indeed incorporate
something of his own personal concerns into the character of the
apologist.

In the fragment "Le Mystère de Jésus" Pascal meditates on the
mental event which Jesus experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane,
and on the importance of that event in his life. Scholars generally
agree that this text was not intended for inclusion in the Apology.
It describes an inner experience not found in any of the other frag-
ments. In the fragments intended for inclusion in the Pensees we
see Jesus Christ in the act of revealing His nature to man. But in
this fragment Jesus performs an essentially different kind of act.
It is the act through which He acquired His divine significance for
mankind. The fragment "Le Mystère de Jésus" differs in another way from the remainder of the fragments. The speaker undergoes a divine experience. He is no longer the director who brings about changes in other people, he is an actor who experiences the inner modification by which God makes himself known.

The speaker of "Le Mystère" witnesses the spiritual agony of Jesus which fulfilled scriptural predictions, and by means of which He made possible salvation of mankind. Jesus suffers, He seeks consolation from the three disciples, He experiences the additional pain of abandonment, He fears death yet accepts it as a means of prolonging His sacrificial attitude, He complains of His agony and asks God for deliverance from it, and He submits totally to the will of God. In a second part of the text the speaker and Jesus appear together in a conversation. They discuss the appropriate reaction to the events which took place during the night of Gethsemane. In the conversation Jesus explains more fully his relationship to men, and he asks that men imitate Him.

Jesus' inner experience has a bearing on the nature of the speaker in that it serves as a model for the proper attitude toward mankind. The text gives the following information about the experience. Concerning the source of the torment, we learn that it was self-imposed, i.e., Jesus could have elected to avoid it; the blame for it falls on men; its force originated with God; its intensity is so great that only an omnipotent being could withstand it; its impact extends beyond death; and the nature of it is entirely moral. This moral anguish leads Jesus to perform an amazing action. Pascal
describes the action in three separate places in the text. The first occurrence emphasizes Jesus' complaint to God:

Je crois que Jésus ne s'est jamais plaint que cette seule fois. Mais alors il se plaint comme s'il n'eût plus pu contenir sa douleur excessive. Mon âme est triste jusqu'à la mort.

The second occurrence gives more information about the form of the complaint. Jesus asks for deliverance from the anguish on one occasion, and on two occasions He asks for divine intervention. The verses which follow Jesus' complaint indicate that God did not provide relief. In a third passage Pascal explains the significance of the event. Jesus' complaints constitute a sin which produced a new manifestation of His nature comparable to the change produced in human nature by the original sin. In other words, the passage relates something about how Jesus' nature came into being.

Il n'y a nul rapport de moi à Dieu, ni à J.-C. juste. Mais il a été fait péché pour moi. Tous vos fléaux sont tombés sur lui. Il est plus abominable que moi, et loin de m'abhorrer il se tient honoré que j'aillle à lui et le secourer. Mais il s'est guéri lui-même et me guérira à plus forte raison.

Jesus establishes his identity as a human being. Before His complaint there was no proportionality between Jesus and man, and as a consequence, Divine Nature remained entirely beyond the range of human knowledge. Jesus' act opens up the possibility of a new kind of relationship between God and man. The new perspective brought about in minds of men by this event provides the common basis necessary for learning to take place between a knowing agent of a human order and an object of knowledge of a divine order.
Jesus' action offers something more than a means for knowing God. It provides an example of the proper attitude for a man to take in regard to others. Jesus exhorts the speaker to imitate Him and gives information as to how to go about it in three separate passages. One of the qualities of this attitude is a detachment from men. Just as Jesus detached himself from his disciples in order to induce the proper inner state, so must the speaker.

In the subsequent phase the speaker will experience a pain analogous to that experienced by Jesus, but in a lesser degree. Pascal compares the difference in degree of pain experienced by Jesus and by the speaker to the difference between the connotations of blood and tears. The following passage comes from the conversation and is spoken by Jesus.

Veux-tu qu'il me coûte toujours du sang de mon humanité sans que tu donnes des larmes.

In a third passage the speaker states the necessity for identifying with Jesus, and sharing his suffering as a means of acquiring salvation.

Il faut ajouter mes plaies aux siennes et me joindre à lui et il me sauvera en se sauvant.

The speaker wishes to adopt an attitude toward men which is analogous to that of Jesus' attitude. Pascal infers the nature of this attitude by describing the actions motivated by it. It is a selfless attitude which can be reciprocated only through sacrificial
acts. Not even the strongest love of a human order approaches the quality of the love of Jesus. In the following passage Jesus compares his love for men to the human variety. The main difference is that divine love does not depend on reciprocity and it utilizes spiritual anguish to improve the condition of its object.

Je te suis plus ami que tel et tel, car j'ai fait pour toi plus qu'eux et ils ne souffriraient pas ce que j'ai souffert de toi et ne mourraient pas pour toi dans le temps de tes infidélités et cruautés comme j'ai fait et comme je suis prêt à faire et fais dans mes élus—et au Saint Sacrement. Pascal emphasizes that Jesus' love needs no reciprocation in an account of His treatment of Judas. He calls Judas "friend" because He recognizes in Judas a manifestation of God's will.

The personage of the apologist is genuinely concerned about the spiritual well-being of men. The deep concern exists along with an impersonal quality to the character. One of the primary factors which determines the particular identity of the apologist in any given passage is the nature of the consenter in the passage. Pascal adapts the image of the apologist to suit the persuasive needs of the passage, thereby creating the most influential personality in regard to the formation of the opinions of a particular consenter. He comes into being when he measures himself up against the persuasive task at hand. For timid people he is a source of confidence, for the pretentious type he is a source of fear, for the overly rational he is the source of superior logic, for the hyper-imaginative type he is the source of examples which have imaginative import. The apologist assumes the identity which is the most effective persuasive
instrument for introducing opinions into the mind of a given con­
senter. Beneath the multiplicity of the apologist's image there lie
consistent features. The character of the apologist lends unity to
the whole apologetical work. One of the unifying features of the
apologist's character is his superior awareness and his ability to
make moral judgements with confidence. The problem of ascertaining
the identity of the apologist arises from the use Pascal makes of
the personage in the apology. The unifying, coherent identity exists;
yet how much of this identity is revealed and the perspective from
which it is viewed depends on the particular context in which it
appears, and more specifically, it depends on the nature of the
consenter. If we consider the apologist as a means of implementing
persuasive techniques we see a great multiplicity of character traits.
But if we accept the idea that Pascal incorporated something of him­
self into the personage of the apologist then the character takes
on a new interest. The apologist is something more than a means for
producing change, he is a manifestation of a particular spiritual
nature.

We do indeed see something of Pascal's personality in the
character of the apologist. The factor which motivates the apologist
to heal the indifferentist of his spiritual apathy is the same factor
which moves Pascal to write the apology. And this factor is a concern
for the spiritual well-being of mankind. The apologist, in the
articles on indifferentism, is required to justify his concern for
this committment. His explanation is simple. Concern for others
exists in all normally constructed human beings who are aware of themselves and of their condition.
CHAPTER IV

THE INTERLOCUTOR'S MANY ATTITUDES

A Finite Knower before an Infinite Object

Fragment 418 in which Pascal uses the vocabulary of a gambler to frame his argument, is an especially interesting example of the subtle but pervasive importance of the character of the interlocutor in his methodology of persuasion. The religious problems of the interlocutor determine the distinctive qualities of every fragment in the Pensees. In some cases the factor which prevents a person from knowing God is a discord existing between the functions of reason and will. The discord results when a person misuses either of his faculties. For example, the person who is persuaded in fragment 44, on imagination, applies the energies of his will to the apprehension of opinions concerning natural objects, thereby rendering both faculties corrupt. His reason becomes powerless to enforce the rejection of false opinions and his will loses its ability to know divine verities. Another example of a personage who is incapable of knowing God appears in fragment 136, entitled "Divertissement". He has allowed his mind to turn away from the unpleasantness of introspective thought. As a consequence, the interlocutor loses the capacity to know self and God. Nevertheless, he is vaguely aware of the need for introspective thought and resorts unwisely to the use of reason to fulfill it. The interlocutor in "Le Pari", exhibits a
similar problem. After the apologist has applied considerable persuasive force, he finally gives in and agrees that it is not unreasonable to bet that God exists. But he is still incapable of belief. He says: "je suis fait d'une telle sorte que je ne puis croire."

Reason has so completely dominated will in his particular case that he finds himself unable to activate the faculty. The apologist pays especial attention to the motivation of the will at the end of the passage after he has achieved a rational victory over his listener.

The listener's particular religious problem determines the method of persuasion. Each person will consent to certain opinions and categorically reject other opinions. For the "habiles par imagination", reason has no persuasive effect. The only techniques by which they allow themselves to be persuaded are techniques which appeal to the imagination. In the same way the listener in "Divertissements" has closed his mind to the painful emotion evoked by introspective thought. He will not listen to any overt suggestion. Consequently, the apologist must use indirect suggestions to show him that divertissement will eventually produce a pain greater than that evoked by introspective thought. The interlocutor in "Le Pari" is incapable of taking in any knowledge of the supernatural. How can the apologist bring this person to wish that God exists or even to agree that the possibility is good? Since he accepts nothing beyond the scope of his reason, the apologist emphasizes the importance of reason as a knowing agent and postpones the full treatment of the knowing powers of the will until a more opportune moment.
The fragment divides into three phases on the basis of the interlocutor's attitude toward the efforts of the apologist. In the first phase, without using high pressure persuasive techniques, the apologist secures the listener's agreement about the conditions under which man can know. He is able to do this by allowing the listener to think that reason is the only means of knowing, a thought readily accepted by a mind with an excessively rationalistic penchant. Operating in a geometrical manner, he puts forth the axiomatic foundation of human knowledge. Then he shows how certain propositions derive logically from the axioms. Finally, he draws the demonstration to an end with the conclusion that man cannot know God by means of his reason but that by means of faith he can know that God exists and that in a state of "gloire", he will eventually know the nature of God. The conclusion seems a little precipitate. Apparently, the listener has not been convinced by the geometrical demonstration.

Moving into the second stage of the project the apologist asks the listener to take a position on the existence or non-existence of God. Now he begins to apply pressure. He says that the listener cannot remain indifferent to the question. At this point the roles of the primary dramatic situation become distinct and the pseudo-geometrical procedures, although they are never discarded, fade back into a position of secondary importance. In contrast to the passiveness and willingness to accept new ideas that the listener exhibited in the first stage, he now becomes hard to manage. He is b Aly because the apologist is confronting his mind with ideas hitherto denied by it. He voices his objections and gives ground in the
argument only when thoroughly subdued by the apologist's logic. Finally, he admits that the apologist is right; it is not unreasonable to believe in God.

In the ensuing phase, the third one in the project, the consenter is docile. He asks the apologist how he can acquire belief. The apologist supplies him with instructions on how to go about activating his will, a means of knowing with which the consenter is completely unaccustomed. All three parts of the fragment work together to produce the desired change in the interlocutor's attitude. The first part introduces certain ideas into the mind of the interlocutor which, although he does not know it, will contradict his previously accepted notions which have been preventing him from knowing God. The second part, in which the wager is made, makes him see the contradictions; the third part provides new ideas again which will enable him to resolve them. The listener's attitude provides the organizing principle of the passage. How he reacts determines not only the value of every element in the passage, but also the order in which each element is introduced.

In addition to the use of paragraphs to indicate divisions in the course of the movement of the first stage Pascal uses lines. Lines separate the eleven paragraphs of the first stage into four sections. It seems likely that he thought of each section as representing some kind of unit. The first section consists of a statement about the limits of rational apprehension. In the next three sections the apologist, while maintaining the focus on the limits of reason, attempts to broaden the perspective of the listener. He does
this by presenting analogies between geometrical axioms and supernatural truths. He begins the second, third, and fourth sections with an axiomatic truth, i.e., a statement about the natural world with which no one takes exception. Then he exposes the analogies to these axioms which exist on a supernatural plane. The axioms and propositions exposed by means of analogies put the listener off because they make a demand on him beyond what his reason can grasp. Finally, in the fourth section the apologist draws a conclusion about how man can know God. So the last of the four sections which comprise the first stage of the fragment draws to an end on a note of disagreement. The apologist's method of exposition is dialectical. Accordingly, it consists of a series of opposing ideas. The dialectical approach accounts for Pascal's use of lines to divide the first stage into four sections. Each section corresponds to one set of opposing ideas in the dialectic. The dialectic can make sense only in terms of the consenter's attitude because he alone considers the ideas in each section to be in opposition. The first phase of the dialectic is a positive one in his eyes because it contains ideas with which he is familiar and which he can accept. In this phase the apologist applies the theory of knowledge to geometrical matters. This phase invariably produces consent in the mind of the interlocutor because he is accustomed to reasoning about natural matters. The second phase of the dialectical unit strikes the interlocutor as being unsound. In his eyes this phase is a negative one because in it the apologist applies the ideas about knowing to supernatural matters. So the first stage of the passage consist of four sections, indicated
by lines and the last three of the sections are dialectical units composed of positive and negative moments.

As the apologist works toward his conclusion, he makes use of a law of knowing which governs the relationship of the knower and the object of his knowledge. The knower must have something in common with an object in order for him to know it. The commonly possessed quality is either finiteness or infiniteness. Accordingly, the object of knowledge and the knower must be either both infinite or both finite in order for learning to take place. When the knower and an object possess either finiteness or infiniteness in common, Pascal says that they are in proportion. When one of them is infinite while the other is finite, he speaks of disproportion. Since the apologist does not explain the law at any point in the whole fragment we can assume that the interlocutor is knowledgeable in such matters. I think we can also assume that the interlocutor holds the position that man cannot know God because of a total lack of proportionality between the finite knower and the infinite object. Eventually, in the course of the apologetical work the interlocutor will see that conditions for knowing apply not only to natural truths but to supernatural truths as well.

In the first section, the apologist establishes himself on the same intellectual terrain as his listener by explaining the basis of human knowledge in terms of rational apprehension. The soul reasons and through this activity comes to belief.
Knowledge depends not only on the activity of a knowing agent but also on the condition of the objects. Reason enables the soul to know natural objects exclusively. Natural objects are defined as objects which possess three qualities: number, time and dimensions. To possess dimension and number is to be finite in extent, and to possess a temporal existence is to occupy only one instant of time during any single instant. The statement makes a good point of departure for the apologist's project, not only because the listener will readily agree with it, but also because it emphasizes the limits of what man can know by means of reason. Objects which possess the qualities, number, time and dimensions, fall within the range of the knowing powers of reason. Since the limits have been so neatly established, one thinks quite naturally about the condition of objects which fall beyond them. What about an object which is infinite in extent and which transcends time, i.e., occupies all instants of time simultaneously? The persuasive value of the initial statement is obvious; it produces consent to an opinion which is in logical harmony with the target opinion, and which draws attention to important aspects of the target opinion.

The persuasive value of the argument in the second section derives from two factors; it shakes the interlocutor's confidence in his position, and it suggests a concept of God which will prove valuable farther on in the passage. The main thrust of the argument
lies in the analogy between an axiomatic truth and man's relationship to God. The position held by the listener about the relationship of man to God is very skeptical. He believes that man cannot know God because the divine and the human are completely disproportionate. According to him, man cannot know of the existence or the nature of a Divine Being. Now, the apologist has found a weak spot in the listener's skepticism. It is an unreserved confidence in the validity of certain axiomatic truths. The axiom used by the apologist, any number + infinity = infinity, compels the listener's mind to assent. In the following quotation, the first sentence expresses the axiom and the second sentence expresses the analogy between the axiom and the relation of the human to the divine.

L'unité jointe à l'infini ne l'augmente de rien, non plus que un pied à une mesure infinie; le fini s'anéantit en présence de l'infini et devient un pur néant. Ainsi notre esprit devant Dieu, ainsi notre justice devant la justice divine.

The relationship between the finite and the infinite expressed in the axiom parallels the relationship between the human and the divine. The apologist derives from this analogy great persuasive value in regard to this particular person. Both persuader and consenter agree perfectly on the axiom. The validity of an axiom is indisputable. They even agree on the analogy between the axiom and the relationship of man to God. But they are diametrically opposed on the conclusion to be drawn on the basis of the analogy. For this interlocutor the analogy does not constitute an argument in support of the tenuous assertion that man can know God. His
conclusion is just the opposite. For him, disproportionality between man and God means that man cannot know God. The apologist attacks the interlocutor's position by pointing out its inconsistency with other opinions. The interlocutor is accustomed to dealing with ideas of unquestionable validity about which an even greater disproportion exists. The disproportion between human and divine justice is less than that between the finite and the infinite. "Il n'y a pas si grande disproportion entre notre justice et celle de Dieu qu'entre l'unité et l'infini." The apologist has narrowed down the possibilities for a rational defense of the interlocutor's position. No longer can he glibly reject the position that man cannot know God on the grounds that divine nature is simply beyond the grasp of human intelligence.

The apologist obtains another persuasive value from the second section. Without having produced consent in the listener about the knowability of God, he indicates some important things about the nature of a Divine Being. God has predestined some men, the "élus" for salvation and others for damnation, the "réprouvés".

It is obvious that any man who accepts the doctrine of predestination must consider himself to be one of the elect unless he has fallen into complete despair or thrown off all moral laws. The apologist indicates that God may accord mercy to the elect or he may punish them. During the course of the second part of the fragment, the
apologist will encourage the listener to accept the concept of God as a rewarer and a punisher of men. He has made his task somewhat easier by including some mention of Divine nature in this passage.

The reader encounters a complication in the third section which he must deal with in order to fully understand the apologist's argument. Pascal assumes that both the apologist and the interlocutor are acquainted with a technical idea about knowing. It is not Pascal's intention to expose the idea as part of his argument for persuading the interlocutor. Instead, he refers to it as something about which there is agreement and he builds his argument on it. The idea concerns kinds of knowledge. What can be known about anything falls into two categories: whether or not the things exists, and if it exists, what its nature is. Proportionality between knower and object can exist in regard to one or both of these categories. In other words, a knower must share finiteness or infiniteness with either the existence of, or the nature of a thing, in order for learning to take place. In summary, there are two conditions for knowledge. The first condition involves the relationship of the knower and the object of his knowledge, either proportionality or disproportionality. The second condition involves kinds of knowledge, either existential or essential.

The positive moment of the dialectic in section three treats the subject of man's knowledge of a numerical infinite. The apologist asserts that man can know the existence of a numerical infinite but that it is impossible for him to know the nature of it. He supports his assertion about each kind of knowledge. The first
assertion, that we know a numerical infinity exists, is true because we cannot negate the opposite of that assertion, i.e., that numbers are finite. The apologist's proof of his second assertion, that we do not know the nature of the numerical infinite is more elaborate. He attempts to define the nature of an infinite number and finds that the terms appropriate for defining finite numbers do not apply to infinite numbers.

Nous connaissons qu'il y a un infini, et ignorons sa nature comme nous savons qu'il est faux que les nombres soient finis. Donc il est vrai qu'il y a un infini en nombre, mais nous ne savons ce qu'il est. Il est faux qu'il soit pair, il est faux qu'il soit impair, car en ajoutant l'unité il ne change point de nature. Cependant c'est un nombre, et tout nombre est pair ou impair. Il est vrai que cela s'entende de tout nombre fini.

In the negative phase of the dialectical unit the apologist makes an analogy between the geometrical demonstration and a supernatural truth. He constructs the analogy by applying the same theory of knowledge to the knowing of a Divine Being as he has applied to the knowing of infinity.

Ainsi on peut bien connaître qu'il y a un Dieu sans savoir ce qu'il est.

N'y a (-t-) il point une vérité substantielle, voyant tant de choses vraies qui ne sont point la vérité même?

Man's knowledge of a numerical infinite is analogous to his knowledge of God. This analogy would be valid only if we could assume that God existed in the same manner as man. Actually the analogy as it is stated does not find favor with either of the two men. However, the use of an analogy has strengthened the apologist's argument and
weakened the interlocutor’s defense. It has emphasized the fact that the interlocutor accepts the existence of something of which he does not know the nature.

The apologist summarizes all of the points of agreement between him and the interlocutor on the subject of knowledge in the positive moment of the third section. There are three possible objects of knowledge: things finite, things infinite, and God. Proportionality between a human knower and the three objects varies. The following passage contains all three cases.

Nous connaissons donc l'existence et la nature du fini parce que nous sommes finis et étendus comme lui.

Nous connaissons l'existence de l'infini et ignorons sa nature, parce que (nous avons rapport à lui par l'étendue et disproportion avec lui par les limites) il a étendue comme nous, mais non pas des bornes comme nous.

Mais nous ne connaissons ni l'existence ni la nature de Dieu, parce qu'il n'a ni étendue, ni bornes.

It would seem now that the apologist and the interlocutor agree perfectly. But the agreement is temporary because the three statements are valid only in terms of the rational faculty of knowing. The apologist goes on to what the interlocutor would consider to be the negative moment of the dialectic by adding two faculties of knowing "foi" and "gloire".

Mais par la foi nous connaissons son existence de God, par la gloire, nous connaîtrons sa nature.

Or j'ai déjà montré qu'on peut bien connaître l'existence d'une chose sans connaître sa nature.
This passage reveals the apologist's position fully and enables the reader to determine the nature of the discord between the apologist and the interlocutor. The apologist's procedure has been to apply the theory about the conditions for knowledge in each of the four sections. He has produced agreement with the interlocutor in the first moment of each section by limiting the application of the theory to the faculty of reason. Subsequently, in the second moment he referred to other faculties of knowing. The theory applies in all situations regardless of the means of knowing. But the interlocutor cannot accept this idea because he denies the existence of any means of knowing other than a rational one.

In the first stage of the article the apologist introduces a subject and he exposes a thesis. The subject is a theory of knowledge. The thesis is that there are three means of knowing, "raison", "foi", and "gloire", and the theory applies to all three of them. The method of exposition is dialectical. Four dialectical units make up the first stage. The first unit is incomplete, in a sense, as it consists only of a positive moment about which the apologist and the interlocutor agree perfectly. The last three units all contain positive moments and following them negative moments, on which the interlocutor disagrees.

The attitude of the consenter toward the opinion is the organizing principle of the passage. He accepts the opinions expressed in the four positive moments, and he rejects the opinions expressed in the three negative moments. He objects more strongly to each
succeeding moment. So the materials progress according to a principle of order derived from his opinion on the subject of knowing.

The Hyper-Rationalist

The apologist changes his manner of proceeding in the second stage of the project. The adjustments consist of a change in the method of exposition and a revision of the objectives of the persuasive endeavor. The changes produce a more effective persuasive instrument for introducing a new opinion into the mind of one very particular kind of consenter. The effectiveness of the new procedure indicated by the fact that the interlocutor does consent to the target opinion in this stage, whereas in the first stage he remained unreceptive to the very end.

The disposition of the consenter accounts for all of the adjustments in persuasive techniques of the second stage. The important feature about this type of person concerns his ability to take in new ideas. Although he is obviously very intelligent and knowledgeable in certain areas his mechanism of consent is defective. His rational powers have developed disproportionality with his capacity for faith. The disproportion is so extreme that reason has usurped all of the knowing activities of this mind and allowed no place at all for "volonté". One of the major adjustments in the second stage derives from the inability of this reason-dominated person to perform an act of faith. It is a change in the objective. The apologist's objective in the first stage was to persuade the interlocutor of the opinion that God is knowable by "foi" and "gloire", but not by
reason. Persuasion of this opinion is not a suitable objective in view of the consenter's disposition. A person will accept only those opinions which derive logically from opinions which he has previously certified as valid. This particular consenter has only a very limited act of accepted opinions from which new opinions can be derived. He has never accepted an opinion on faith. Therefore, his mechanism of consent is constructed in such a way that it can accept no opinion which falls beyond the knowing powers of reason. Clearly then, a revision in the objective must be the persuasion of an opinion which appeals to reason. Even though reason is incapable of knowing whether or not God exists, the faculty is capable of weighing the advantages and disadvantages of betting on His existence. The revised objective is the persuasion of the opinion that it is reasonable to act as if God exists.

The new objective calls for a different method of exposition. The second stage abandons the dialectical exposition, and replaces it by a conversational situation in which the apologist and the interlocutor debate the reasonableness of an opinion about the existence of God. The discussion never extends on to the subject of faith or "gloire" as means of knowing, but remains entirely within the limits of the knowing powers of reason. The shift is methods, from dialectical to conversational, does not destroy the continuity of the passage. The conversational situation preserves the agreed upon opinions of the positive moments, such as the ideas about the conditions for knowledge. In many ways the conversational method is
a prolongation of the positive phase of the dialectic, an abandon-
ment of the negative phase.

The apologist states his intention to limit the subject to the
level of rational apprehension in the first sentence of the second
stage. "Parlons maintenant selon les lumières naturelles." In a
summary statement he describes the extent of the knowledge man can
acquire about God by means of the faculty of reason. Reason cannot
apprehend an object without parts or limits. Its powers are out of
all proportion with such an object. The apologist goes on to define
the scope of the ensuing conversation and to point out the effect of
the newly imposed limits on the positions of both men.

S'il y a un Dieu il est infiniment incompré-
hensible, puisque n'ayant ni parties ni bornes, il
n'a nul rapport à nous. Nous sommes donc incapables
de connaître ni ce qu'il est, ni s'il est. Cela
étant qui osera entreprendre de résoudre cette
question? ce n'est pas nous qui n'avons aucun rap-
port à lui.

Reason can answer neither the existential nor the essential question
about God. But if reason can affirm nothing on a divine plane
neither can it disprove anything.

The negotiations between the two begin with a peripheral ques-
tion. The apologist states that the interlocutor cannot rightfully
blame Christians for not having rational support for their belief.
The support of his assertion lies in the previously agreed upon
opinion that belief is not a matter of reason. The interlocutor
agrees and counters with a modification of his position. His words
now appear for the first time in this passage as they would in a
direct quotation. The word "cela" refers to the apologist's
assertion. The passage refers to two groups of people. The first group recognizes the lack of rational support of the Christian belief, and the second group espouses the belief knowing that it lacks rational proof.

Oui mais encore que cela excuse ceux qui l'offrent telle, et que cela les ôte du blame de la produire sans raison cela n'excuse pas ceux qui la recoivent.

The underlying assumption of the interlocutor is that reason is the only means of knowing and that consequently, any person who accepts an opinion not in accordance with reason is unreasonable and subject to blame.

The two men undertake the discussion of a point of crucial importance in the development of the whole argument. The apologist holds that one must decide on the question of whether or not God exists. The interlocutor says, "le juste est de ne point parier". Since reason cannot decide the question, one should withhold judgment. Unless the apologist can move the interlocutor away from this sceptical position, the project will fail. He does not offer logical support for his position, as both men agree that there is none, instead he asserts that it is necessary to make a decision. Then he introduces a new technique, the presentation of his position in terms of effects on the interlocutor. Either God exists or He does not exist. Both men agree on that. The question is: what will the effect on a man be if he chooses to believe that God does not exist? And what will be the effect if he chooses to believe that God does exist? His device for persuading is to expose the opinion in terms
of a gambler's wager. The apologist begins the presentation of his case by elaboration on the stakes.

Voyons; puisqu'il faut choisir voyons ce qui vous intéresse le moins. Vous avez deux choses à perdre: le vrai et le bien, et 2 choses à engager: votre raison et votre volonté, votre connaissance et votre béatitude, et votre nature (a) deux choses à fuir: l'erreur et la misère.

This statement does not include the terms of the actual wager. It describes the possible gains and losses which result from the wager. If the interlocutor makes the right choice, regardless of the motive, he will enjoy truth and goodness. The wrong choice would produce error and misery. In addition to these possible gains and losses, the statement includes the faculties for knowing. Two products result from the exercise of the faculties. Reason provides knowledge and will provides beatitude. Now the four sets of terms form a coherent statement if arranged so that one term of each set is associated with the natural realm and the other term with the supernatural. The scheme looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>à perdre</th>
<th>à engager</th>
<th>à fuir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>supernatural</td>
<td>bien</td>
<td>volonté</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>béatitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural</td>
<td>vrai</td>
<td>raison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>connaissance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reason adds to the knowledge contained in the soul by distinguishing between truth and error. Will adds to the soul's beatitude by seeking good and avoiding misery. There are two indications to support this
interrelation of terms. First it corroborates the theory expressed in "De l'Art de persuader". Secondly, and most importantly, although it is not explicitly stated in the text it is suggested. Two textual elements support the relationship of terms indicated by their arrangement in the chart. First, Pascal set them down in an order which implies this relationship. The first term of each set pertains to the natural things, and the second to supernatural things. Secondly, Pascal excludes from the wager those terms which pertain to natural things, the entire lower strata as it appears on the chart. He makes the exclusion immediately after the statement of possible gains and losses.

Votre raison n'est pas plus blessée puisqu'il faut nécessairement choisir, en choisissant l'un que l'autre. Voilà un point vide. Mais votre béatitude?

Reason, then, does not figure into the wager as one of the stakes, whereas, beatitude, a state of being brought about by means of "volonté", is the only thing risked. The apologist restates the conditions of the wager in the more simplified version which resulted from the exclusion.

Pensons le gain et la perte en prenant croix que Dieu est. Estimons ces deux cas: si vous gagnez vous gagnez tout, et si vous perdez vous ne perdez rien; gagez donc qu'il est sans hésiter.

The apologist invites the interlocutor to consider the gain and loss if he bets on the existence of God. Regardless of the outcome of the wager he cannot lose. He has everything to gain and nothing to lose. The apologist's strategy succeeds in dislodging the interlocutor
from his skeptical position. He admits that the wager was necessary.

With the acquiescence of the interlocutor, a new objective comes into view and the apologist initiates a technique designed to achieve it. The question now is how much to bet. The answer depends on the favorability of the odds and the amount of the possible gain and the possible loss. There is considerable disproportion: the risk is a finite life associated with nothingness and the prize is an infinite life of happiness.

The apologist's objective for this phase of the project is to persuade the interlocutor to bet everything on the existence of God. For this purpose he constructs a complex argument which unfolds in several stages. The principle for creating persuasive effects according to which the argument is constructed is simple. First, the apologist secures consent from the interlocutor on a proposition. Then he alters the proposition to make it even more convincing. Subsequent modifications in the proposition culminate in a final statement of the target opinion. According to this method of reasoning the apologist deduces the consequences of a self-evident truth in several stages. The series of propositions, each more attractive than the previous one, have a cumulative effect on the interlocutor. The final form of the statement appears overwhelmingly true. Pascal begins the system of arguments with the simplest possible wager: the interlocutor stands to gain two against one at equal odds. He modifies two elements of the basic wager, the rewards and the odds. The modifications occur at different moments, and consequently,
they indicate two stages in the argument. In the first stage he makes
constants out of the odds and the stake hazarded by the interlocutor
and he varies the amount of the reward. He adjusts the basic reward
from two against one, to three against one, and finally places the
value at infinity. All the while, the object risked, one life, and
the chances of winning, fifty-fifty, remain the same.

Il faudrait jouer (puisque vous êtes dans la néces-
sité de jouer) et vous seriez imprudent lorsque vous
êtes forcés à jouer de ne pas hasarder votre vie
pour en gagner 3 à un jeu où il y a pareil hasard
de perte et de gain. Mais il y a une éternité de
vie et de bonheur.

The disproportion between the finite and the infinite, which previous-
ly in the exposition has worked against the passage of knowledge,
now works to the apologist's advantage. The infinite reward compels
the interlocutor to hazard his single life.

The argument moves into its second moment when the disproportion
between the object risked and the prize to be gained reaches a
maximum. The apologist fixes the value of the object risked at one
and holds the value of the reward at infinity. The thrust of his
argument is produced by a manipulation of the odds. He varies the
odds from even to one against infinity.

The elaborate approach to the statement of the wager heightens
the interlocutor's awareness of the variable factors of the wager and
increases his appreciation for the advantages of the apologist's
proposal. The terms of the actual wager are fixed in the following
phrase.

... mais il y a ici une infinité de vie infiniment
heureuse à gagner, un hasard de gain contre un
The final statement of the wager stipulates the risk of a finite object, the possibility of an infinite reward, at good odds. Under these conditions the reasonable gambler will want to bet everything he has.

The apologist brings the exposition of the wager argument to a close with a treatment of a possible objection to the advisability of betting his whole life. A conservative gambler might elect to reserve his capital for a sure thing. The interlocutor's objection is motivated by the unattractiveness of the odds. The sure-thing would have better than even odds. The apologist tries to direct attention off the odds and on to the attractiveness of the tremendous disproportion between finite stakes and an infinite reward. Any wager in which there is the slightest chance of winning an infinite good is a good one. Only if there were no chance of winning, would the odds be unattractive and then the wager ceases to exist in fact. But the wager offered by the apologist does not offer disadvantageous odds. There is a certainty of losing the stakes which are finite, while at the same time the odds for winning an infinite reward are even. The interlocutor may not have a sure-thing as far as the odds are concerned. But the extraordinary quality of the reward would transform a one-in-a-million chance into an attractive wager. The interlocutor cannot pass it up and he admits that it is reasonable to wager all he has on the existence of God.
The Docile Gambler

Now that the apologist has succeeded in bending the reason of the interlocutor to accept the wager, he undertakes to persuade his will. The objective of this stage of the work resembles that of the first stage. The apologist proposes to activate the interlocutor's will, a means of knowing which has become inoperative because of lack of use. Persuasion of the reason is not an end in itself. It is a necessary step in a process. The apologist's approach has produced submission, but has not brought satisfaction. The interlocutor indicates dissatisfaction along with his acceptance of the apologist's reasoning.

Je le confesse, je l'avoue, mais encore n'y a (-t-) il point moyen de voir le dessous du jeu? oui l'écriture et le reste, etc. Oui mais j'ai les mains liées et la bouche muette, on me force à parler, et je ne suis pas en liberté, on ne me relâche pas et je suis fait d'une telle sorte que je ne puis croire. Que voulez-vous donc que je fasse?

The passage is important because it contains the interlocutor's submission to the reasonableness of hoping that God exists and it expresses his awareness of an inadequacy not previously admitted. His deficiency is an inability to believe and realizing this he asks for the apologist's help.

Now that the apologist has persuaded the reason of the interlocutor, he has to persuade his will, i.e., enable him to acquire faith so that he can believe in the existence of God. The new project implies a change in methods. Instead of looking to the faculty of
reason for a guiding principle, the apologist looks to authority. He proposes to bring about a change in the interlocutor's attitude by offering examples and giving advice rather than showing proofs. Faith can be acquired by reading scriptures, reducing the attraction of passions, and imitating others who already exercise the ability of which he feels the lack. The last prescription, imitation, includes all of the others. The apologist refers to the procedure for activating the faculty for belief by images in which people recuperate from a sickness, liberate themselves from bonds, and travel along a road.

You want to cure infidelity and ask for remedies, learn from those who have been like you and who now have everything. These are the people who know the way you want to follow and cure from a malady you want to cure; follow the way they have begun.

The interlocutor does not follow the instructions of the apologist without hesitation. He objects to a code of behavior which has no rational control. This objection weakens quickly before the apologist's description of the man who has wagered all, and completely submitted his reason to God.

Or what will happen to you (-t-) in taking this part? You will be faithful, honest, humble, recognizing, beneficent, and sincere, veritable... In truth you will not have point in the delights, in the glory, in the delights, but you will have other point?

The interlocutor becomes even more confident upon hearing that the wager will look even more advantageous after the apologist's instructions have been put into practice. The stakes, which must be
sacrificed, will lose all value in the interlocutor's eyes and the odds will appear far more advantageous. Finally, he will come to see what the conditions of the wager are in reality; nothing at stake against an infinite good at the best possible odds. So the sure-thing sought by the interlocutor comes into view. The only thing standing in the way of its realization is the implementation of the apologist's recommendation.

The interlocutor's attitude has gone through a significant change in this fragment. The change divides into three parts, each of which corresponds to a definite phase of the text. In the first phase he makes no concessions in his overly rational position about whether or not God is accessible to human powers of knowledge. However, at the request of the apologist he has reviewed in his mind a theory of knowledge and the application of the theory in regard to the objects which are infinite. The idea of infinity induces him to affirm the existence of some thing which lies beyond the knowing powers of reason. In the second phase of the text the interlocutor submits to the logic of the apologist. It is reasonable to act as if God existed even if this affirmation cannot be substantiated by a rational calculation. This reaction falls far short of a genuine conversion, for it is the result of a rational operation. In the third phase of the article the interlocutor demonstrates the sincerity
of his affirmation. He accepts the apologist's advice about how to activate his voluntary faculties for bringing the light of God into his soul.

The Imagination-Directed Consenter

The fragment entitled "Imagination" treats one particular kind of corruption to which the mechanism of consent is subject. As we shall presently see the person who exemplifies the malfunction is designated by a great many epithets. Since Pascal did not use a term for the entire group of people of this type, I will consistently use my own term, the "imagination-directed" person.

Imagination is the motive for a certain kind of behavior. Both the gambler-type of the wager fragment, i.e., the chronic rationalist, and the imagination-directed type espouse erroneous opinions and allow these opinions to determine their actions. But error is the only common ground for these two types. In most respects they are antithetical. The gambler-type prides himself with justification on his rational powers. He suffers from an abnormally developed faculty of reason which has usurped the knowing powers of the will. Reason serves as his sole agent for knowing. Since the faculty has no proportion with supernatural truths it cannot apprehend them. Consequently, the gambler-type errrs in spite of his respect for truth. He is always rational, and for that reason, always wrong in divine matters. Similar to the gambler-type, the imagination-directed person holds erroneous opinions. But unlike the former type of person, he makes no pretention of heedng the promptings of reason.
On one hand, is a person who guides his life according to the principle of reason, on the other hand, is a person who flaunts reason. Although the imagination-directed person makes a mockery of reason, he still makes a feeble attempt to present a reasonable exterior. Magistrates, philosophers, judges and lawyers all pass for reasonable men, but Pascal's descriptions of them penetrate the mask of reasonableness to expose the real motives for their decisions. The quality of being fickle belies the reasonable exterior. The two principles of conduct differ most radically in regard to truth. Reason, by definition, is the power to distinguish truth from falsehood. Imagination does not make this distinction. The apologist refers to the fickleness of imagination in this phrase: "marquant du même caractère le vrai et le faux." So the imagination-directed person is the antithesis of the gambler-type. He suffers from an abnormally developed faculty of imagination which has usurped the knowing powers of reason.

The first sentence of the article contains important indications about the nature of imagination.

C'est cette partie dominante de l'homme, cette maîtresse d'erreur et de fausseté d'autant plus fourbe qu'elle ne l'est pas toujours, car elle serait règle infaillible de vérité, si elle l'était infaillible du mensonge.

Imagination causes misconduct, insincere actions, and falsehoods. The passage suggests the possibility of detachment from the power of imagination. But the unreliable character of the faculty makes partial detachment impossible. A person must categorically reject the promptings of imagination if he is to avoid its pernicious effects.
Before elaborating on the definition of imagination, the apologist makes provisions to guarantee the proper response from the reader. Some readers might try to disassociate themselves from the problem caused by an over-bearing imagination on the grounds that they are too intelligent. In anticipation of the unfavorable reaction Pascal baits a trap. He finds some undesirable characteristic that most people associate with the group of people that he wishes his reader not to identify with. Consequently, two groups come into the picture: those whose imaginations are not strong enough to overcome their reason, and those whose imaginations are strong. Pascal trusted that his readers would find it plausible that intelligence and imagination normally accompany one another. In other words, a weak imagination is a sign of a weak mind. And so he designates the first group as "des fous", and the second as "des plus sages..." "Je ne parle pas des fous, je parle des plus sages." The reader, of course, always considers himself as part of the second group. There is no escape for the reader who would like to consider himself too intelligent to let himself be taken in by imagination. This example of the apologist's skillful manipulation of the reader's response to his ideas is the first step of a method designed to change the way the reader sees himself in regard to the influence of imagination.

The atmosphere of the article on imagination contrasts sharply with that of the wager. Pascal does not give any details of the setting in the wager fragment. The fragment is dominated by the gambler-mentality of the interlocutor. In the spirit of a gambler, he figures all of the angles in an effort to find the most
advantageous wager at the best possible odds. He calculates the odds and debates theories of knowledge with the apologist. Their conversation remains on the level of intellectual abstractions throughout most of the passage. It contains only a few images, most of which occur near the end of the article. In contrast to this situation the presence of the interlocutor is vague in the article on imagination. There is none of the intellectual debate characteristic of the wager. The apologist does most of the talking and from time to time he refers to the presence of the interlocutor. The atmosphere of the article is set by the numerous example-figures who appear in the apologist's speech. There are "magistrats", "médecins", "crocheteurs", "docteurs", "rois", "gens de guerre", "ballefrés", "seigneurs", "janissaires", "avocats", "juges", "parents", "maîtresses", "barbiers", among others. The apologist's descriptions of these characters make a sharp sensual appeal. These characters perform gestures and engage in various activities. The feelings and emotions which they experience manifest themselves visually and audibly to the reader. There is especial emphasis on the dress and accoutrements which correspond to the character's profession. These descriptions produce an atmosphere of lively animation quite unlike the stark intellectual atmosphere of "Le Pari".

Pascal assigns the same qualities to the term "imagination" as he does to "volonté corrompue" in the article "De l'Art de persuader". Each of the articles emphasizes a different aspect of the faculty. As Pascal explains in "De l'Art de persuader", the two faculties for bringing new opinions into the soul both have a healthy and a
corrupt state of being. When the faculties of the soul are healthy they coordinate their knowing activities for the well-being of the soul. When they become corrupt they work at crosspurposes with each other. Each faculty applies its energies to objects which are disproportionate with its knowing powers. Reason claims to be able to know divine truths and will focuses its attention on natural objects. The gambler of "Le Pari" exemplifies the former kind of corruption. He is satisfied to believe that God does not exist because his reason gives him no indication of the existence of a Divine Being. The interlocutor of "Imagination" represents the latter kind of corruption.

In the article on imagination Pascal proposes to reestablish a harmonious working relationship between reason and imagination in people whose imagination has corrupted their reason, and become their sole means of knowing. The persuasion of imagination-directed people presents special difficulties. Such a person wishes to appear reasonable while in reality, his behavior is motivated by imagination. The reasonable approach to persuading the imagination-directed person is simply playing into the hands of the imagination. Consequently, Pascal avoids confronting imagination with reason, and tries to beat imagination at its own game. Sometimes his words become transparent for us, and we see his intention.

... l'imagination a le grand droit de persuader les hommes. La raison a beau crier, elle ne peut mettre le prix aux choses.

One of Pascal's principles of persuasion is to suit the method to the characteristics of the consenter. Accordingly, he uses a
rational approach to persuade the rational type of consenter in the wager fragment, and he uses an imaginative approach to persuade the imagination-directed person. There is a paradox of course. His procedure for reducing the influence of imagination is like fighting fire with fire. He associates unpleasant consequences with the power of imagination. This procedure induces an emotional reaction which turns imagination against itself. He destroys imagination by feeding it objects made poisonous by fearful and painful associations.

Imagination refers to one of the functions of the will. The term designates the activity of that faculty in regard to the apprehension of opinions about the natural world. When the will and reason work together harmoniously, the soul is able to suppress the bad influence of imagination. However, a malfunction of the faculty is self-perpetuating. Once imagination gains a foothold in the terrain intended for reason alone, the faculty of will becomes corrupted. It loses its capacity for apprehending supernatural truths. From this moment on, imagination dominates reason and thereby deprives the soul of the knowledge of truth and falsehood. Reason has become entirely ineffective in controlling belief. As the corruption spreads the notion of the natural world is affected. Imagination systematically assigns values to everything in the natural world and thereby establishes a second nature in men. Each member of the group of people to which the following passage refers has formed a concept of his nature and of his relation to other people which does not correspond with a rational view of reality. These people are what they imagine themselves to be.
Cette superbe puissance ennemie de la raison, qui se plaît à la contrôler et à la dominer, pour montrer combien elle peut en toutes choses, a établi dans l'homme une seconde nature. Elle a ses heureux, ses malheureux, ses sains, ses malades, ses riches, ses pauvres. Elle fait croire, douter, nier la raison. (Elle fait agir les sens, sentir aux sens, elle nous.) Elle suspend les sens, elle les faitsentir. Elle a ses fous et ses sages.

The last two sentences of the passage express a particularly important quality of imagination. Imagination is contradictory by nature. It motivates belief, and it motivates the opposite reaction to opinions, doubt. It can reverse the reason's appraisal of reality. In addition, it has the even greater power of controlling the input of the senses. Not only can the faculty suspend the operation of the senses, but it can impose its own interpretation of impressions. In short, imagination controls the image of reality held by the soul.

It takes complete control of human nature, substituting its own system of values for the one based on reason.

The objective of the fragment "Imagination" is to persuade the reader to associate pain and fear with the values considered good by imagination, thereby reestablishing in the reader's soul the proper relationship between the knowing functions of reason and will. Of course, the effect that Pascal wishes to produce in his reader is not just tacit agreement. He wants to produce a real conviction which will manifest itself subsequently in the reader's behavior.

For Pascal, consent means a change in one's self-concept. The consenter will no longer see himself as an imagination-directed person. Pascal does not present the new vision of the consenter's self, but
he does indicate the initial stages in the change. As we have seen above, the apologist prevents the reader from disassociating himself from the problem. He must now inculcate a profound distaste for the values of imagination-directed people in the mind of his reader. The effect of this strategy on the consenter is to cause him to recognize the danger of imagination for him and then to resist the influence of imagination on his opinions. The apologist distinguishes between imagination-directed people and those whose faculties are uncorrupted by imagination. In the following sentences he refers to the former as "hôtes", to the satisfaction brought by imagination, and to the latter as "les prudents". It is clear that he considers himself and the interlocutor to be among the prudent.

Et rien ne nous dépite davantage que de voir qu'elle remplit ses hôtes d'une (joie) satisfaction bien autrement pleine et entière que la raison. Les habiles par imagination se plaisent tout autrement à eux mêmes que les prudents ne se peuvent raisonnablement plaire.

The suggestion is that the reader rejects the satisfaction produced by imagination. It is not clear at this point whether or not rejection of imagination-produced pleasure means the rejection of all pleasure. However, it is clear that reason cannot bring happiness.

Imaginative scenes occur frequently throughout the article on imagination, and they constitute an important persuasive technique. Although they appear in the passages spoken by the apologist, the interlocutor shares in the effort to bring them into being. The imaginative scenes produce an effect on the consenter, whether this person be the interlocutor or the reader. They destroy the value
system on which the consenter's imagination has founded a second nature. In other words, it is by means of imaginative scenes that Pascal inculcates painful and unpleasant associations with imagination-based values in the mind of the consenter. The imaginative scenes in the article entitled "Imagination" differ from those in "Diver­tissement". This latter variety consists of example-figures engaged in some activity. Only at the very end of the article is the conversational framework brought into use in the persuasive endeavor.

In contrast to this procedure, the scenes in "Imagination" all appear in the context of the apologist-interlocutor conversation. The combination of imaginative scenes and the conversational framework produces a particular atmosphere in the passage. It facilitates the reader's interpretation of the scenes. Without the interlocutor's attempt to make sense of the imaginative scenes, they might remain unintelligible to the reader.

Imaginative scenes produce the main persuasive thrust of the article. Most of the imaginative scenes consist of characters and situations associated with the legal system. These characters and situations constitute a legal motif. Among the characters in the motif there are judges, lawyers, plaintiffs, defendants, magistrates and kings. Appearing in a variety of situations, they discuss the validity of opinions, attend social functions not connected with law, such as church, and conduct legal procedures in and out of court. The legal motif serves a structural function in the article by showing the interrelationship of the various imaginative scenes. It signals a fundamental similarity in all of the imaginative
scenes, a similarity of greater importance than association with law and justice. In each of the scenes which constitute the motif, personages are concerned with the act of consent. The consenters all appear to be rational and just, they all find themselves in situations in which knowing the truth is extremely important, and they all succumb to the influence of imagination. Consequently, reasonable people always receive unjust treatment at the hands of imagination-directed people. In the following sentence, imagination-directed lawyers are persuading judges of the same nature.

Ils regardent les gens avec empire, ils disputent avec hardiesse et confiance - les autres avec crainte et défiance - et cette gaieté de visage leur donne souvent l'avantage dans l'opinion des écoutants, tant les sages imaginaires ont de faveur auprès des juges de même nature.

The confidence exuded by the lawyers does not correspond with a case based on the truth, and the forthcoming judgement is likely to be unfavorable for the side of justice.

A single scene consisting of example-characters and accompanied by the reaction of the interlocutor is particularly important. The scene illustrates the theme of the article. A magistrate attends a sermon and forms an opinion of the preacher's message. Instead of basing his opinion on reason, he allows imagination to influence him. The main point of the scene is not to cause the reader to question the validity of legal judgements. Instead, the point is to show that the imagination-directed person affects a rational appearance while in reality he follows the dictates of a pleasure-seeking imagination.
The principle features of the magistrate-preacher scene are designed to induce the reader to participate in the imaginative process in which the apologist and the interlocutor are involved, and to encourage him to draw his own conclusions about what goes on in the mind of the magistrate. One of the important characteristics of the scene is its dramatic form. The apologist and the interlocutor are engaged in a conversation on the subject of the relative influence of imagination and reason on the opinion of an example-figure. The apologist introduces the scene by inviting the interlocutor to form an opinion about the manner in which the magistrate forms his opinions. He offers a choice of two manners of consenting. The strong consenter governs himself by reason, and he judges things according to their nature. The weak consenter does not base his opinions on the nature of things. Instead, he sees only appearances and he allows imagination to influence his opinions.

Ne diriez-vous pas que ce magistrat dont la vieillesse vénérable impose le respect à tout un peuple se gouverne par une raison pure et sublime, et qu'il juge des choses par leur nature sans s'arrêter à ces vaines circonstances qui ne blessent que l'imagination des faibles.

The apologist offers a choice in name only, for he has constructed the situation so as to permit only one opinion. And that opinion is that the magistrate is reasonable. One of the means for insuring that the interlocutor make the desired choice is the external perspective of the description. The apologist presents for the interlocutor's consideration only the surface aspects of the magistrate's character. Magistrates make a profession of being reasonable and of resisting
the corrupting influence of imagination. Furthermore, it is a fact that this particular magistrate is respected by everyone for his venerable old age. Since this magistrate possesses all of the external qualities associated with a reasonable man, and since the interlocutor has no other information on which to base his opinion, he concludes that the magistrate does indeed form his opinions on the basis of sound reasoning, and that his keen rational faculties immunize him against the pernicious effects of imagination.

After introducing the personage of the magistrate, the apologist invents a test situation in which the imagined character will perform the act of consenting to an opinion. Again he refers to the interlocutor, inviting him to visualize the example-figure's reactions to the new set of circumstances.

Voyez le entrer dans un sermon, où il apporte un zèle tout dévot renforçant la solidité de sa raison par l'ardeur de sa charité; le voilà prêt à l'ouïr avec un respect exemplaire.

In this sentence the apologist attributes another important quality to the magistrate. The quality is designated by the words "zèle" and "charité". Charity is the capacity to love a divine object. A man can acquire charity only when his faculty of will works harmoniously with his reason and restricts its activity to objects in proportion with its abilities. So the magistrate possesses reason and charity, two qualities which counteract the pernicious effects of imagination. At this point in the exposition of the scene it looks like the apologist will be hard put to bring about a convincing demonstration of his thesis.
In the third sentence of the scene, Pascal makes our interpretation of the magistrate's character do an abrupt about-face. He produces the reaction by manipulating the elements in the scene which affect the act of consent. The situation in which the apologist places the magistrate makes an ambiguous appeal to his faculties of consent. Some elements of the situation appeal to a healthy mechanism of consent in which the faculties operate in harmony with each other. And other elements appeal to the corrupted mechanism ruled by imagination. The test situation unfolds in such a way that we see only the surface of the magistrate's character. He appears to be reasonable and charitable. Consequently, we expect to see both of his faculties operate harmoniously for the well-being of his soul. Since this man is not corrupt he will not allow his imagination to impede the communication of truth. But we receive a little shock. Imagination does influence the magistrate. The reversal in our opinion is produced by the introduction of the preacher. Presumably, this man could have something valuable to say to the magistrate. But he does not get the opportunity to impart his message because his personal aspect makes listening to him impossible. He has a gravelly voice, a bizarre looking face, he is poorly shaven, and not too clean either. So two forces come together in the scene to influence the reader's opinion about the magistrate's act of consent. We expect to see him form his opinion on the basis of reason and charity but he succumbs to the influence of imagination.

Que le prédicateur vienne à paraître, si la nature lui (a) donné une voix enrouée et un tour de visage bizarre, que son barbier l'ait
Nowhere in the magistrate-preacher scene does the apologist state his thesis about imagination. He determines the conditions of consent in the imaginative scene. There is a consenter who is capable of apprehending natural and divine objects. There is an opinion which appeals to both faculties. And there is a persuader who possesses the method of persuasion and who happens to have certain unfortunate physical characteristics. The apologist communicates his idea very clearly. He invites the reader to draw his own conclusion. Of course, he gives us a few hints as to how to interpret the scene and the magistrate's reactions. But he leaves the actual interpretation of the scene up to the reader. He assumes that the reader will want to get involved with the creation of the scene and perform an act of his own imagination. The last step in the process of communicating the idea is made by the reader. He imagines the mental reaction of the magistrate. Pascal has constructed the last sentence quoted above so as to promote reader involvement in the imaginative activity: "... je parie la perte de la gravité de notre sénateur." The phrase implies that the magistrate has allowed imagination to control his opinion. The force of the suggestion is softened in two ways. The verb, "parier" makes it clear that the interpretation of the situation is the apologist's personal opinion. Furthermore, the verb affects the periodicity of the scene. The reader knows all of the significant information about the nature of the consenter, the opinion and the persuader. But the apologist is careful not to give the reader
the feeling that someone is putting words into his mouth. The act of consent has not yet occurred. If the reader is to know the outcome, he will have to deduce it from the information given and his own insight into human nature. Of course, the reader is not left entirely on his own. He can refer to the position of the apologist. But even this suggestion does not preclude reader-involvement. The apologist states his opinion in a vague image of the magistrate losing his composure. Only by interpreting the image does the reader deduce its meaning in terms of the effect of imagination on the magistrate's act of consent.

As I said above, the persuasive import of the article is effective for the imagination-directed reader. This does not mean that other types of readers will be bored with the text or that they will learn nothing from it. For the reader who is uncorrupted by imagination, the text offers valuable insight into human nature. But for the imagination-directed reader, the text is an instrument of persuasion. Pascal designed the text to produce change. The text is a means of introducing opinions into the mind of a certain type of person. It is evident that the rational type of consenter, who appears in the wager article, would successfully resist the persuasive appeal of the imaginative scenes in article 44. He would not lose his composure at a sermon delivered by a bizarre looking preacher. Instead, he would accept or reject the preacher's message on rational grounds. For the rational type consenter, the article on imagination is an ineffective persuasive device.
Pascal shows all of the adverse effects of imagination on various members of society, and in so doing, he paints a picture that would vex even the rational type of consenter. As I intend to point out, the effect of the description on the imagination-directed reader is more intense. There is no escape from the adverse effects of imagination. He receives unjust treatment from nearly everyone. An appeal to reason is futile. The extraordinarily well-developed rational powers of the greatest philosopher in the world are impotent in the ludicrous situation in the following passage.

Le plus grand philosophe du monde sur une planche plus large qu'il ne faut, s'il y a au-dessous un précipice, quoique sa raison le convainque de sa sûreté, son imagination prévaudra. Plusieurs n'en sauraient soutenir la pensée sans pâlir et suer.

The philosopher professes a reasonable basis for his opinions. But the silly predicament in which the apologist places him belies the power of his imagination. If the sight of a precipice beneath him inspires fear, what reaction will he experience at the prospect of death? Should the imagination-directed reader turn to the law, he finds injustice. Not only do judges make decisions on the basis of imaginary evidence, but lawyers, if well paid in advance, use techniques of persuasion based on an appeal to the imagination. Even doctors compensate for a loss of respect due to lack of medical knowledge by the donning of their traditional robes and hats. The king does not need to compensate for any lack. He has power to support his position. For the person who really believes in imagination there is no escape from the injustices produced by the faculty.
He sees his own disposition in every custom and every person around him.

The interlocutor has been demasked. The real motives for his behavior and for the opinions that he holds are exposed. Exactly what he will do as a result of the discovery is not indicated. However, there is an interesting passage which would prevent one type of reaction. It is an imaginative scene in which a personage experiences unpleasantness and the pain of physical

... il faut puisqu'il y a plu, travailler tout le jour pour des biens reconnus imaginaires et quand le sommeil nous a délassés des fatigues de notre raison il faut incontinent se lever en sursaut pour aller courir après les fumées et essuyer les impressions de cette maîtresse du monde.

It is unlikely that the interlocutor will conclude in despair that he is unable to resist the evils of imagination-directed people in any way except to join forces with them. The thought of work, fatigue, awakening too soon from a sound sleep only to pursue imaginary values is a disturbing one for the interlocutor. He suffers not only at the hands of imagination-directed people and also from internal corruption brought about by imagination.

The key to the understanding of any given fragment is to be found in the identity of the interlocutor. His particular criteria for judging new opinions determine the kind of materials included into the text. Pascal constructs every fragment so that the relationship between the interlocutor and the opinions which the apologist persuades is proportional. Of course, disproportion
between the opinion persuaded and the knowing capacity of the inter-
locutor would mean the failure of the apologist's objective. Texts
in which the interlocutor is an imagination-directed type of person
contain opinions which appeal to the imagination. Those texts in
which the interlocutor is hyper-rational present opinions which
appeal to reason. The identity of the interlocutor determines
another feature of Pascalian texts. This feature is the organization
of his materials. The phases in the wager fragment are negative and
positive only in the eyes of the gambling-minded interlocutor. Other
types of consenters would not consider the structure to be dialectical.

The internal change experienced by the interlocutor always
parallels the change in the nature of opinions discussed by the apolo-
gist and the interlocutor. The movement of ideas in a text in which
an apologist-interlocutor conversation exists can be described in
terms of a closing of the gap between the target opinion and the
interlocutor's capacity for consent. In longer fragments the apolo-
gist usually persuades a number of intermediate opinions before
presenting the target opinion. The intermediate opinion persuaded in
each stage of the text is logically compatible with both the target
opinion and with the interlocutor's capacity for knowing. The act
of consenting to the intermediate opinions broadens the knowing
capacity of the mechanism of consent of the interlocutor. For example
the hyper-rational type consenter of the wager fragment can accept
ideas about infinity. The notion of an infinite object of which he
cannot know the nature prepares his mind for accepting the idea of
a Divine Being. In conclusion, the interlocutor's capacity for accepting new opinions increases as new demands are made on it.
CHAPTER V
EXAMPLE-FIGURES AND IMAGINED SCENES

The Presumptuous and the Timid

One of the three aspects of persuasion is the condition of the opinion to which the apologist wishes to produce consent in the interlocutor. Perhaps the most important variable factor about opinions is whether they pertain to natural matters or to supernatural matters. The distinction between the two realms of matter is important for the apologist. The apologist's objective concerns supernatural matters, but his ability to persuade is strictly limited to natural opinions. He treats each kind of matter differently. For example, his objective might be to persuade a man of the opinion that it is not unreasonable to love God. But he must never undertake to persuade the man to actually love God. Such an "opinion" is supernatural, and lies beyond the persuasive capacity of the apologist. But the apologist must know more than how to distinguish one kind of matter from the other. He must know the essential characteristics of each realm of matter. The success of persuasion depends on how well the apologist knows the effect of each kind of matter on the consenter, and on how well he can manipulate these factors.

Pascal explains how the condition of opinions affects the other aspects of persuasion in "De l'Art de persuader". Opinions vary in
two ways. They are either natural or supernatural, and either true or false. The first variable factor receives special attention in many of Pascal's works. Such a definition appears not only in "De l'Art de persuader", but also in "Préface sur le traité du vide", and it figures into many articles of the Pensées. Once the line between divine and profane matters has become clear, Pascal goes on in some cases to develop the subject of natural matters. He believes that natural matters have an inconsistent appeal to the faculties of consent. Some matters compel the mind to assent, while others have the force to engage the will. Convenient adjectives for these two categories of natural matters are "voluntary" and "rational". The consenter must respect the difference between voluntary and rational matters if he is to avoid error. And respect for the distinction means that he must exercise the knowing faculties which correspond to the nature of the matter at hand. The inability to distinguish rational from voluntary matters is one form of corruption to which the mechanism of consent is subject. The consenter whose faculties are thus corrupted will fall into error because he applies rational principles to voluntary matters and voluntary principles to rational matters. The treatment of the subject in "De l'Art de persuader" is brief and general, and it is not explicit as to how Pascal would apply the distinction in an actual situation.

Pascal applies the distinction between rational and voluntary matters in an article entitled "Préface pour le traité du vide". He isolates various aspects of the condition of opinions, assigns terms to those aspects, and gives clear definitions. His purpose
for writing the article was to present his side of a controversy over the relative importance of respect for classical authority and for reason. He argues that the scholar must respect the distinction between voluntary and rational matters, and that failure to do so leads invariably to error. His argument does not treat the other factors of consent, i.e., method of persuasion and manner of consent. Problems concerning these factors do arise, but in the context of this polemic they are of secondary importance. Therefore, Pascal limits his exposition to giving information about the condition of opinions. By defining the variable factors of opinions and giving examples of the mistakes made by people who disregard the variables, he hopes to settle the controversy.

The controversy arose when some people applied respect for classical authority in matters where reason is the only valid criterion. Pascal deplores the situation caused by these people. They take thoughts of the ancients to be oracles and they consider obscurities to be religious mysteries. The situation has become so bad that reasonable people cannot present new ideas without peril, and that an ancient text destroys reason. Pascal advances the opinion that both reason and authority have their proper place, and that the application of either one as a criterion for judging all natural matters is wrong. Accordingly, he undertakes to define the distinction between the two kinds of matter, the one for which reason is a valid criterion, and the other for which only authority can serve.
Pascal calls the two categories of matter historical and dogmatic instead of voluntary and rational. For historical matter respect for authority is appropriate, and for dogmatic matter reason alone is the criterion for validity. Pascal defines the two categories of matter in terms of their relation to the knowing faculties. Each of the two kinds of matter makes a different kind of demand on the mind. Historical matters depend entirely on the faculty of memory. In matters of this sort no new discoveries are possible since what can be known is strictly limited to what is contained in the books on these subjects. The subjects listed under this category are history, geography, languages and theology. Strangely enough, jurisprudence is also included here. The other category of subject matters depends primarily on the faculty of reason. These subjects are dogmatic and do not conform to authority and tradition as do historical matters. Dogmatic matter consists of observations and experiments made on natural things. It changes as the number of observations and experiments increases. The student of dogmatic matter seeks to know the hidden truth of nature. Pascal lists in this category geometry, arithmetic, music, physics, medicine and architecture. So the two categories of subject matter appeal to different faculties because they differ in form and substance; the one consists of the knowledge contained in certain books, and the other consists of the knowledge contained in nature.

In reality, both bodies of matter are infinite in extent, but they differ as to the amount of each that a man can know. The knowable portion of historical matter always remains constant in amount,
never allowing increases or decreases. The limit of the extent of that part of this matter which man can know coincides with the contents of the books in which it is set down. In the following quotation Pascal emphasizes the static quality of historical matters:

... il faut nécessairement recourir à leurs livres, puisque tout ce que l'on en peut savoir y est contenu: d'où il est évident que l'on peut en avoir la connaissance entière, et qu'il n'est pas possible d'y rien ajouter. (Oeuvres, p. 530)

Pascal mentions a few questions that fall under the heading of historical matter: who was the first King of France? where is the first meridian? what words were in usage in a dead language? The answers to these questions cannot be apprehended partially. A man either knows or he does not know, there is no in-between state of partial knowledge.

There is a corollary to the statement about historical matter. Not only is human apprehension of historical matter always whole, it is perfect as well. All men always have the same idea of its nature, and this idea remains consistent for all generations. If someone could discover some new aspect to historical matter, then man's perspective on the nature of the whole body would be affected. This can never happen because discoveries are impossible and theories unnecessary. In order for these things to be possible, a partial state of knowledge would have to exist, and this, by definition, is not possible. Once a man has apprehended this category of matter, if he is capable of the task, he grasps it all completely and perfectly.
In the paragraph that concludes his definition of historical matter, and just prior to the main body of the article where he defines dogmatic matter, Pascal inserts an interesting comment which pertains to the frequently renewed polemic involving science and religion. Historical matter shares a quality with supernatural matter and the shared quality is indubitability. On the one hand there is the certainty of a fact; either the word is in the dictionary or it is not, and on the other hand there is the certainty of an act of faith; either the matter is contained in a sacred text or it is not. The simplest definition of historical matter obscures the distinction between natural and supernatural. This definition is contained in the following phrase: "dans toutes celles qui ont pour principe, ou le fait simple, ou l'institution divine ou humaine,..." Then, in the very next paragraph, the one referred to above, Pascal gives an admirable definition of the difference between natural and supernatural matters. The definition is contained in one long sentence. In the first part of the sentence he identifies truth with authority; authority is the only source of supernatural opinions and one has no choice but to trust it implicitly.

Mais où cette autorité a la principale force, c'est dans la théologie, parce qu'elle y est inséparable de la vérité, et que nous ne la connaissons que par elle: ... (Oeuvres, p. 530.)

Authority is the only means for conveying divine truths, and it must be trusted. This is the first of two basic assumptions. The second assumption contained in the sentence is that reason is completely foreign in nature to divine matters. Rational principles which lead
man to the truth when properly applied to natural matters of the dogmatic variety, do not apply to supernatural matters. Reason produces error in divine and historical matters just as surely as respect for authority results in error in dogmatic matters. Both kinds of matter conform to their own set of laws and neither can be explained accurately by the laws of the other. One must add a comment about Pascal's method of exposition in order to put this statement into perspective with opinions expressed in other passages. Although it is true that the rational faculty and historical matter are disproportionate and although it is even true, according to Pascal, that rational principles of knowing lead to error in the supernatural realm, it is nevertheless true that reason can function in harmony with voluntary faculties in the apprehension of supernatural truths. This passage emphasizes the disproportion; however there are other passages which explain the proper application of reason in regard to supernatural truth. In no passage does Pascal say that man can know God by means of his own rational faculties. However, in passages such as the fragment on the wager, Pascal makes it clear that it is not unreasonable to act as if God does exist and furthermore he holds that reason must recognize its own impotence. Reason, if it is strong, can see that something lies beyond its grasp.

In the final phrase of the sentence, Pascal indicates the reason for the importance of authority as a means of conveying historical and supernatural opinions. The human faculties for knowledge, having no proportion with these matters, cannot apprehand them. Therefore, one must accept knowledge of them from an external source.
... de sorte que pour donner la certitude entière des matières les plus incompréhensibles à la raison, il suffit de les faire voir dans les livres sacrés (comme pour montrer l'incertitude des choses les plus vraisemblables, il faut seulement faire voir qu'elles n'y sont pas comprises); parce que ses principes sont au-dessus de la nature et de la raison, et que, l'esprit de l'homme étant trop faible pour y arriver par ses propres efforts, il ne peut parvenir à ces hautes intelligences s'il n'y est porté par une force toute-puissante et surnaturelle. (Oeuvres, p. 530.)

Both indisputable facts and supernatural truths fall beyond the range of man's rational powers.

Unlike historical matter, dogmatic matter can never exist wholly and perfectly in the minds of men. It gradually increases in volume as men learn more. The never-ending augmentation of human knowledge of dogmatic matter does not mean that men are becoming more intelligent. Pascal speaks of the fertility of the mind in the following quotation, and indeed the faculty of reason is the cause of the increase.

Mais comme les sujets de cette sorte sont proportionnés à la portée de l'esprit, il trouve une liberté tout entière de s'y étendre: sa fécondité inépuisable produit continuellement, et ses inventions peuvent être tout ensemble sans fin et sans interruption... (Oeuvres, p. 530.)

The knowing powers of reason are in proportion to the nature of dogmatic matter. Consequently, reason will apprehend dogmatic matter if given the liberty, and by so doing it will add to the store of human knowledge. So it is not the faculty that grows in strength or capacity, but it is the objects apprehended by it which increase in number and volume. Dogmatic matter grows up little by little by the accumulation of experiments and judgements made on the basis of the
experiments, all of which are contributed by many different persons.

Les anciens les ont trouvées seulement ébauchées par ceux qui les ont précédés; et nous les laisserons à ceux qui viendront après nous en un état plus accompli que nous ne les avons reçues. (Oeuvres, p. 531.)

Not even the nature of dogmatic matter is consistent as men see it because each new discovery either confirms or destroys theories based on partial knowledge.

After making the distinction between historical and dogmatic matters Pascal applies it to the polemic. The opposition makes two basic errors in regard to knowing. Both kinds of error involve failure to respect the essential nature of the matters in question. Scholars fall into these errors by approaching either of the categories of subject matter with an attitude appropriate only to the other category. Pascal gives examples of each kind of error. The theologian who finds new opinions in religious matters is guilty of using reason and experimental methods on matters unsuited for them. His instrument for knowing is out of proportion with the intended object of knowledge. The researcher who supports his findings by the authority of ancient texts has fallen into this kind of error. He should refer his conclusions to the same authority that the ancients themselves looked to, observation and experimentation. Revelation and authority have no place in dogmatic matters. Pascal does not analyze the mechanism of consent which produces these two types of error. He does give a brief explanation concerning the nature of the malfunction of the faculties. The researcher who allows
the voice of authority to dominate his reason is timid and needs
someone to buck up his courage. He lacks the confidence necessary
to follow the dictates of reason in spite of any conflicts with the
opinions of previous scholars. The other type of mistake is made
by the rash theologian. This type of person lacks humility. Unaware
of the limits of his own knowing capacity he makes pronouncements on
matters that he cannot possibly know. Characters exemplifying both
types of errors appear along with characters who make many other
kinds of mistakes in the act of consent in the Pensées.

In the remainder of the article Pascal undertakes to build up
the confidence of the scientist in his work. His objective is to
bring the scientist to understand the vital importance to science and
to the well being of all mankind of his allowing reason to guide his
conclusions as a knowing agent operating freely within the entire
domain of dogmatic matter. He associates the scientist with the vast
ever growing body of knowledge to which scholars of each successive
age make their contribution. That new findings will lead to hypo­
theses which contradict old established ideas is inevitable. How
could a hypothesis serve to explain the relationship of evidence for
which it was never intended to explain, and about which no one knew
at the time the hypothesis was formulated? Pascal uses several
examples to illustrate his point. We say that gold is the heaviest
of all metals. But it would be presumptuous to assume that the
statement holds true for metals which have not yet been discovered.
In the following passage Pascal conveys a sense of the importance
of the work of scientists. Contradictions do not imply lack of
respect for men because all men are engaged in a collective effort which demands the respect of the evidence uncovered.

The present day scientist should do his predecessors the honor of imitating them, not by accepting their conclusions without subjecting them to the scrutiny of reason but by using reason in the same way as they did. Each succeeding generation has the advantage of a larger body of knowledge with which to work. Each begins the work of a new generation on the shoulders of the previous one. Pascal's perspective broadens even to the point of involving the fundamental nature of man. He represents mankind by the image of a single man who is the composite figure representing all of man's evolving and all of man's constant features.

... toute la suite des hommes, pendant le cours de tant de siècles, doit être considérée comme un même homme qui subsiste toujours et qui apprend continuellement ... (Oeuvres, p. 534.)
The polemic over the importance of reason and authority is now far in the background. New questions have taken its place, such as: Who is this being? What is his relation with the world? The final portion of the article suggests that man has two primary qualities which determine his identity. Man subsists and he learns continually. Reason and time are the two principles which account for man's essential qualities. Man subsists as a creature with the same fundamental trait, reason. But reason means continual change because its energy produces a continually increasing body of knowledge.

The Workman and the Soldier

Pascal, the apologist, resembles Pascal, the scientist. Whether he is devising a new system of glass tubes, membranes, and mercury baths for demonstrating the existence of a vacuum; or whether he is developing vignettes in which characters illustrate moral principles, the objective of his work and the method for obtaining that objective are very often the same. When he steps from the laboratory into the study he carries with him certain ways of thinking. It is not surprising that a scientist who turns to apologetics would make use of his accustomed techniques in his new endeavor. Normally we do not expect this carry-over to involve personalities. But in the case of Pascal it does. For him, scientific methodology translates into the realm of apologetics in a dramatic form.

It is probable that Pascal applied certain methods from his scientific endeavors to his apology. Scientific apparatus functions in much the same way as the example-figure. The apologist manipulates
the conditions of example-figures like a scientist adjusts experimental equipment. For example, he provides a gambler with money for betting and then takes it away making the gambler play without it. He gives him too much wine and then takes it away. In both examples he compares the effects of the two situations on the experimental figure.

Sometimes the apologist conducts his verbal experiment with many characters all involved in the same kind of situation. In fragment 35, "talon de soulier", he presents a sort of collage scene involving two characters, a workman and a soldier, both in different places, yet both are involved in the same situation. The selection of characters of two different trades and the separation of their location suggests that they represent all mankind. The apologist subjects each of them to the same set of circumstances. He presents them in a dramatic scene in which people praise them for their professional skills. He quotes these words of praise, "O que cela est bien tourné! que voilà un habile ouvrier! que ce soldat est hardi!"
The apologist's next sentence in the fragment explains the significance of the dramatic example. He is not quoting an example here, but speaking directly to the interlocutor. "Voilà la source de nos inclinations et du choix des conditions." Vanity accounts for the establishment of our values and the source of our values lies in other people. In other words praise by other people forms our system of values because we are vain. The last of the apologist's sentences shows the eventual results of men's vanity. "Que celui-là boit bien, que celui-là boit peu: voilà ce qui fait les gens sobres et
"ivrognes, soldats, poltrons, etc..." The outcome of the character depends on the kind of praise he receives. The workman turns out to be a moderate drinker and probably a good workman or else he becomes a drunkard and a poor worker, depending on how his personality has been formed. In the same way the soldier becomes brave or cowardly. So, Pascal's method is both dramatic and scientific. It is scientific in that he varies the condition of an experimental apparatus under various circumstances. And it is dramatic because he uses personalities to embody his arguments. In short, Pascal demonstrates religious truths much like the scientist demonstrates physical laws.

In his experiments with the Torricellian tube Pascal is interested in the relationship of the level of mercury to the air pressure at different altitudes. In the case of the following fragment he is interested in the relationship between the ability of the experimental figure to find truth and his consumption of certain quantities of wine.

38 (71)
Trop et trop peu de vin.
Ne lui en donnez pas: il ne peut trouver la vérité. Donnez-lui en trop: de même.

Of course the apologist is not interested in genuine experimentation. The effects of wine on the rational powers of men illustrates his subject in an imaginative way. His manipulation of the example-figure gives a kind of scientific validity to his argument.

The opinion is one of the three basic aspects of persuasion. It is the subject of the conversation between the apologist and the interlocutor. Apologetics propose to bring about a transaction in
which the opinion passes from the apologist to the interlocutor. Like the other two aspects of persuasion, the persuader and the consenter, the opinion corresponds to some personage in the *Pensées*, the example-figure.

An Enigmatic Figure in a Room

Some fragments emphasize the function of the personages who represent the opinion. One such fragment is entitled "Diversissement" (136). Although the apologist and the interlocutor have important functions, it is the example-figures which account for the major portion of the persuasive thrust of the passage. The relative importance of the function of each aspect of the persuasive mechanism is easy to appraise. The interlocutor does not appear until the latter part of the article. His function at that time is to give the reader an example of the appropriate reaction to the apologist's observations on human nature. The function of the apologist in the persuasive endeavor is far more complex. The apologist introduces the subject of the passage: the relationship of mental activity to happiness. Everything in the passage passes through his mind. His imagination provides the example-figures for the consideration of the interlocutor. The apologist provides an important structural function in the fragment. Without the character of the apologist, Pascal would not be able to make persuasive capital out of the paradoxical relationship between awareness and happiness. The apologist creates the paradox by giving the history of his observations and reflections on human nature. He has not always held the
same opinion about man's happiness and misery. His observations of human behavior date back to two different occasions, each separated by a considerable time span. During the lapse of time between the two observations, the apologist changes the value of the term "happiness", and by so doing he inserts a contradictory element into his comment.

The third aspect of the persuasive mechanism, the example-figure, performs the most complex function. Example-figures embody the opinion to which the apologist strives to bring about consent in the mind of the interlocutor. There are four sets of interrelated variable factors associated with the character of the example-figure: behavior, awareness, happiness and misery. Significant change in any one of the factors implies corresponding changes in the other three. For example, behavior of a certain kind determines the degree of awareness a person can have. Awareness in turn fixes the kind and amount of happiness and misery that this person will inevitably experience. It is clear, now, that much of the complexity of the passage centers around the example-characters.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the article "Divertissement" is the paradox embodied by the example-figures. The paradox is based on the assumption that awareness of the human condition requires the complete attention of the mind. A man cannot be aware of his condition while his mind is occupied with anything external to it. Any activity that a person might be engaged in, whether it be tennis, politics, talking to women at court, or working out the solution to a problem in mathematics, precludes self-awareness and
awareness of one's condition. These activities cause the mind to reach beyond itself into an exterior field of perception to grasp an object. The mind diverts its attention away from itself and becomes aware only of the external object. Mental diversion occurs not only when the mind is occupied with physical things like calculating the speed of a tennis ball. It can occur just as well when the mind loses itself in abstractions like politics and scholastic activities. All these activities are essentially the same. The mind moves outward and fixes itself on an external object. The idea of "divertissement" holds that the mind cannot perform this externally oriented activity, and at the same time, perform an activity of an essentially different nature, an internally oriented activity. It cannot look in two directions at the same time. Perception of the self and perception of external objects cannot occur simultaneously.

In conclusion, Pascal bases the theme of "divertissement" on the assumption that mental activity and awareness are related. There are two kinds of mental activity. Each is essentially different in nature and each leads to a different kind of awareness. If the mind looks outward, it sees external things in its perceptual field; if it looks inward it can perceive itself, its own nature and its condition.

Men are temporarily happy when they divert their thoughts from their condition. Full awareness of the misery of man's condition is so painful that escape into ignorance is enough to make men happy. Ignorance produces more than this uneasy happiness, it also makes eventual misery a certainty. Hence, the paradox: diversion produces
both happiness and unhappiness. These men think they are happy, but they are enjoying only a temporary happiness. The realities of their condition, like sickness and death, will surely catch up with them. The second phase of the paradox, the resolution phase, emphasizes awareness and the possibility of eventual happiness that awareness opens up for men. Awareness makes us miserable but it is a necessary phase in the process of obtaining happiness.

The persuasive import of the passage derives from the paradox. The truth which Pascal wishes to inculcate into the reader lies at the end of the reader's struggle to make sense out of the apologist's contradictory observations. One of the apologist's functions concerns the exposition of the paradox. He supplies the observations on human nature and he grapples with the contradictory features in them. In the first sentence he tells us of his first observation of human behavior and of the conclusion he drew about human misery on the basis of it.

Quand je m'y suis mis quelquefois à considérer les diverses agitations des hommes, et les périls, et les peines où ils s'exposent dans la Cour, dans la guerre d'où naissent tant de querelles, de passions, d'entreprises hardies et souvent mauvaises, etc., j'ai dit souvent que tout le malheur des hommes vient d'une seule chose, qui est de ne savoir pas demeurer en repos dans une chambre.

The sentence proposes to enlist the reader's help in explaining the reason for the misery of man's condition, and by doing so, produce the desired change in his attitude. Two elements contribute to this design: the point of view from which the observations are made and the apologist's attempt to understand. The apologist views the two
antithetical modes of behavior from the outside. The external perspective is suited for "divertissement" activities because they have a visible external manifestation. Men who divert their thoughts from their condition are necessarily engaged in externally oriented behavior. They focus all of their physical and mental energies on the attainment of external goals. The external point of view obscures the fact that these people are unaware of their real identity. The effect of the external perspective on the description of the other mode of behavior is quite different. A description from an external perspective of an activity which has no external manifestation necessarily leaves out of the picture the essential feature of the activity. It shows us a character reposing in a room. He does not have to move at all in order to perform this activity because it is entirely inner oriented. So the reader cannot see that the figure in the room is directing his energies toward the attainment of an inner awareness. The perspective of the descriptions emphasizes the sharp contrast in the natures of the two activities.

The point of view is only one of two important features which affect the reader's involvement with the message. The other element which promotes reader involvement is the attempt made by the apologist to understand human behavior. For the apologist upon the occasion of his first observation of human behavior, unhappiness appeared to be the unavoidable consequence of prolonged "divertissement". And he thought at that time that introspective thought would give man the possibility of attaining happiness. Moreover, he wrote off the possibility of men ever attaining happiness by saying that they
were incapable of directing their energies toward knowing their inner self. These reflections and conclusions establish the first phase of the paradox. Expressed in a formula they look like this: divertissement $\triangleright$ unhappiness and introspective thought (if men were capable of it) $\triangleright$ happiness.

The two principal elements of the passage quoted above, the external point of view and the apologist's first attempt to make sense out of what he has seen, affect the reader. They enlist the reader's interest and participation. He becomes curious about the turbulence of the one kind of activity and the calmness of the other one. He learns from the apologist that men are incapable of reposing in a room and that their inability to perform this obviously simple act is the cause of all their unhappiness. The curious reader wants to know the deeper meaning behind the surface description. He wonders about the importance of the conspicuous omissions in the descriptions, i.e., what goes on inside of the minds of the example-characters.

The persuasive advantage obtained from the reader's involvement with the object to be persuaded is explained in another fragment: "On se persuade mieux pour l'ordinaire par les raisons qu'on a soi-même trouvées que par celles qui sont venues dans l'esprit des autres." (737)

The reader's comprehension moves from the exterior to the interior. His understanding is limited to what the apologist tells him at the beginning of the passage. This comprehension, as I said, is superficial and based on the external manifestation of human behavior. During the course of his reading he forms his own opinions.
These conclusions penetrate beneath the surface. He apprehends the nature of both activities in terms of the kind of mental activity they imply. The change in the reader is more than just a change in his knowledge. It is also a change in his self concept. He sees himself as a different kind of person. The full gamut of the reader's change is represented by the two antithetical modes of behavior. He disassociates his self from the externally-oriented type of person and identifies his self with the introspective type.

At some indefinite time after the initial observations and subsequent reflections on human nature, the apologist revises his conclusion. No additional information about the human condition is uncovered. The only change in the apologist's revised statement is in the interpretation.

Mais quand j'ai pensé de plus près et qu'après avoir trouvé la cause de tous nos malheurs j'ai voulu en découvrir les raisons, j'ai trouvé qu'il y en a une bien effective qui consiste dans le malheur naturel de notre condition faible et mortelle et si misérable que rien ne peut nous consoler lorsque nous y pensons de près.

The apologist's thoughts have penetrated to the real motives of man's externally oriented behavior. "Divertissement" is not the pursuit of some goal, it is an escape. Men divert their minds from their condition because their condition presents their mind with an emotionally intolerable prospect. Thus the original formulation of the apologist's opinion about the motive for externally oriented behavior and man's happiness is reversed: repose $\succ$ unhappiness; activity $\prec$ happiness. The reader cannot deny the validity of the apologist's revised opinion, yet he is unwilling to reject the initial conclusion.
Consequently, his mind is faced with a paradox and will remain in a state of tension until it acquires the knowledge to resolve it. The effect of the paradox derives from a judgement which appears both plausible and impossible at the same time. Succinctly stated, the paradox in this passage is this: both ignorance and awareness have the same two contrasting effects on men. They produce both happiness and unhappiness. The state of confusion caused by the lack of knowledge makes the reader more receptive for that knowledge. The tension felt by the reader diminishes when the apologist supplies the missing piece of knowledge. In a sense, a need for that knowledge has been created in the reader and then, subsequently, it has been satisfied. Eventually the reader will become aware of the real need for that knowledge and the device of a paradox will no longer be necessary to motivate him. One might say that the reader forms the paradox in his mind and then goes through the steps in his thinking to resolve it.

At this moment in the progression of the article, the reader experiences maximum tension, and as a result, he is receptive to new ideas that might reduce the tension. Pascal has achieved this effect through the use of example-figures. His treatment of the two motifs of example-figures insures two reactions from the reader. He needs to have the reader consider himself to be one of the group involved in violent activity directed toward a worldly goal. This reaction amounts to a confession of an irreligious attitude by the reader although he is unaware of making it. Pascal's second concern in this phase of the article is to stimulate the reader's interest in
the nature of the behavior of an enigmatic figure reposing in a room. He does this by juxtaposing the two entithetical modes of behavior in the same paragraph. In addition, he draws attention to the contrast between them by describing both of them from an external perspective. The result of this use of point of view is that the reader compares the two activities point for point. It is to promote this participation, as I mentioned before, that the apologist never describes the target attitude directly. The reader wonders why men are not capable of such an apparently simple and rewarding activity, he wonders how it could make them happy; and he wonders whether normal human behavior precludes this one.

Now to sum up the movement in phase one: the reader has taken three steps in his thinking: 1) he has identified with one kind of human behavior; 2) he has become curious about another kind of behavior about which he knows very little; 3) and he has agreed that men could be happy doing something else besides their normal violent, world-oriented activities. So, Pascal's objective for the first phase goes far beyond getting the reader to make a response. By introducing an enigmatic figure and then stimulating curiosity about him, he has planted a seed in the mind of the reader that eventually matures into the idea of a proper religious attitude.

Once the paradox has been established in the mind of the reader the role of the apologist becomes less complex and the example-figures play a correspondingly more important role. Twenty-three different characters appear in the example vignettes presented by the apologist. Some reappear at intervals like motifs throughout the
entire fragment. It is interesting to note the variations in these recurrent scenes and to appreciate the correlation of the particular mood of each scene with the reaction of the reader as his attitude in regard to introspective thought changes. Other figures make only one or two appearances. They don't have the value of a motif in relation to the whole passage. There are kings, soldiers, gamblers, hunters, men engaged in violent external activities, the figure sitting in a room engaged in a mental activity, a scholar, children, subjects of the king, domestics, men who frequent salons and the court, a play goer, a dancer, a billiard player, a man experiencing agreeable passions, men who talk with women, men who hold high offices, a superintendent, a chancellor, a Chief Justice, an importer of goods, a criminal, hunstmen, and Pyrrhus. Six of these characters reappear in several phases. They are the soldier who appears five times; the king who appears four times; the gambler who appears five times; the hunter who appears eight times; the frequenter of salons and courts who performs several activities like attending plays, playing billiards and conversing with women, and finally a man engaged in some violent external activity which is not specified.

Pascal's objective for the remaining portion of the article is to enable the reader to resolve the paradox and to encourage him to imitate the figure reposing in a room, i.e., to engage in introspective thought. He achieves this purpose through the use of the scenes involving example-figures. All of the personages in the imaginative scenes enjoy temporary happiness, and they all are destined for a permanent misery. The apologist does not express
these conditions explicitly, but he demonstrates them in each of the scenes. For example, no one enjoys a better condition than the king. But his happiness depends on "divertissement", and without a diverting activity he would be more unhappy than the least of his subjects who diverts his mind from himself. Pascal emphasizes the dependence of happiness on "divertissement" and indicates the fear that the example-figures would experience without it.

It is interesting to note a progression in this existential reflection. The reflection moves from subjects associated with the condition of a king, such as threatening views and revolts, onto more general subjects pertinent to all men, such as death and sickness. So the imaginative scene causes the reader to question the quality of the happiness produced by "divertissement".

The purpose of deprecating the happiness produced by externally oriented activity is to invite the reader to reverse his opinion on the value of the activity. The reversal takes place gradually. The next step in the change involves a group of example-figures engaged in goal-oriented activities like gambling, talking with eloquent women, war, politics, and hunting. Pascal's strategy is to give them the object that they are pursuing and let the reader decide for himself if they will be happy with it. Of course he describes these goals in terms that make men look ridiculous. For example, the
hunter would not want the rabbit if it were given to him. And the soldier who is apparently seeking danger, does not really want to risk his life. These goals, game and honor, are acceptable in the eyes of men, but they are not the real motives for the associated activities. Men escape by "divertissement" and in order to do it they deceive themselves into thinking that they are pursuing a worthwhile goal. Happiness, then, depends on ignorance and self-deception. Moreover, it is none too satisfying at best, and it is continually threatened by the situation in which our attention is not completely absorbed by external things. Pascal describes the unhappiness which awareness would produce in the following quotation. The words "usage mol et paisible" refer to the situation of a man who has received the objectives of his activity.

Ce n'est pas cet usage mol et paisible et qui nous laisse penser à notre malheureuse condition qu'on recherche ni les dangers de la guerre, ni la peine des emplois, mais c'est le tracas qui nous détoure d'y penser et nous divertit.

The central portion of the article consists of a series of imagined scenes. Each is designed to convey the same idea: pleasure derived from "divertissement" is temporary and the misery of the human condition is permanent. In each scene Pascal draws attention to the inevitable moment of truth when the character will no longer be able to divert his thoughts. His objective is to induce the reader to resolve the paradox. His technique is to refer the activity of each example character to a scale that moves from temporality to permanence. Most of the scenes are negative examples because they depict characters who apply the wrong solution to the human condition.
Pascal emphasizes the imperfections of these solutions. He never impunes the sincerity of the character. However, it is quite clear that other people do not attribute the same value to the escape activity. In the following example the gentleman hunter and his huntsman have a different opinion about hunting. If the sport afforded genuine happiness both men would recognize it.

Le gentilhomme croit sincèrement que la chasse est un plaisir grand et un plaisir royal, mais son piqueur n'est pas de ce sentiment-là.

Man as a Contradictory Being

Pascal changes the tone of the article at this point. The change is brought about by two factors: an explanation of the real motives for "divertissement", and the introduction of a conversational situation made possible by the appearance of the interlocutor.

The value of the explanation of the motivation for human behavior is to suggest that introspective thought may be an appropriate activity for men. Two instincts prompt men to action. Although the goal of both instincts is happiness, they pursue the goal by different means. One tendency seeks external activity, and the other, repose.

Ils ont un instinct secret qui les porte à chercher le divertissement et l'occupation au dehors, qui vient du ressentiment de leurs misères continues. Et ils ont un autre instinct secret qui reste de la grandeur de notre première nature, qui leur fait connaître que le bonheur n'est en effet que dans le repos et non pas dans le tumulte.

So human nature impels men to engage in both kinds of activities. The addition of information about the instinctive basis for behavior brings up a question. To what extent should man follow his
instincts? One possible answer comes to mind immediately because it has been embodied in all of the preceding example scenes. That answer is to follow whatever tendency brings pleasure and satisfaction. This solution leads to a fundamental confusion:

Et de ces deux instincts contraires il se forme en eux un projet confus qui se cache à leur vue dans le fond de leur âme qui les porte à tendre au repos par l'agitation et à se figurer toujours que la satisfaction qu'ils n'ont point leur arrivera si en surmontant quelques difficultés qu'ils envisagent ils peuvent s'ouvrir par là la porte au repos.

The reader has all of the necessary information to prompt him to make the desired reaction. He knows how unsatisfactory the previously demonstrated solution is and he has been properly motivated to find his own solution.

The conversational situation appears toward the end of the passage and creates a new persuasive dimension. The conversational situation brings the reader to reject "divertissement" as a means of attaining happiness and to try introspective thought in its place. The new persuasive influence derives primarily from one aspect of the conversational situation, the personage of the interlocutor. The interlocutor provides a positive example for the reader. He differs from the example-figures because he is aware of the real motive for "divertissement" whereas they deceive themselves about it. The reader shares this quality with the interlocutor. Both the reader and the interlocutor want to resolve the paradox of "divertissement" and ideally they both react similarly to the argument of the apologist.
Two imagined scenes presented by the apologist bring the article to a conclusion. Together they make the most forceful persuasive impact on the reader of any other part of the fragment. In the first of the scenes, the apologist and the interlocutor perform a sort of moral experiment on an example-figure, a gambler. The experiment takes place within the imagination, a convention agreed upon by both conversationalists. The apologist provides the idea for the experiment. He manipulates the condition of the example-figure in the same manner as a scientist adjusts experimental apparatus. The objective of the experiment is to determine the motive for gambling. Do men gamble for the enjoyment of the game or do they desire the winnings alone? With the purpose of finding the answer the apologist establishes the given in the experiment: a man who avoids boredom by gambling a modest sum daily. "Tel homme passe sa vie sans ennui en jouant tous les jours peu de chose." The apologist asks the interlocutor to execute the experiment by varying the conditions of the gambler. The variable factors are the enjoyment of the game and the winnings. Following the instructions of the apologist we imagine how happy the gambler would be if he had the winnings without being allowed to play the game, or if he could play without the possibility of winning something.

Donnez-lui tous les matins l'argent qu'il peut gagner chaque jour, à la charge qu'il ne joue point, vous le rendez malheureux. On dira peut-être que c'est qu'il recherche l'amusement du jeu et non pas le gain. Faites-le donc jouer pour rien, il ne s'y échauffera pas et s'y ennuiera. Ce n'est donc pas l'amusement seul qu'il recherche.
The experiment proves that the gambler is motivated neither by the enjoyment of the game nor by the prospect of winning. Avoidance of boredom (ennui) requires both things. This is true for the gambler and for all of the other example-figures in the passage. Men need more than an engrossing activity which can divert their thoughts from the misery of their condition. Real "divertissement" means that they believe in the imaginary value of the activity. They must be able to delude themselves by imagining that the goal of their activity has intrinsic value, and that it will make them happy. It is only after they have deceived themselves about the ability of the goal to make them happy can they lose their thoughts entirely in the pursuit of the goal and derive the questionable benefits of "divertissement".

Il faut qu'il s'y échauffe, et qu'il se pipe lui-même en s'imprimant qu'il serait heureux de gagner ce qu'il ne voudrait pas qu'on lui donnât à condition de ne point jouer, afin qu'il se forme un sujet de passion et qu'il excite (ses passions sur cela pour ne point sentir passer le temps pour empêcher l'ennui de se répandre et sa misère de paraître à sa pensée) sur cela son désir, sa colère, sa crainte pour cet objet qu'il s'est formé comme les enfants qui s'effrayent du visage qu'ils ont barbouillé.

The image of children afraid of their own mask suggests the relationship between the gambler and the object of his game. The children painted the mask and then attached emotional significance to the object just like the gambler set the stakes for his game and then deluded himself into thinking that he would be happy if he should win.

The two imagined scenes contribute to the purpose of the article. The first scene, the experiment performed on a gambler, supplies knowledge about the motives for "divertissement" activities.
The second scene does not involve experimentation. In it, the apologist and the interlocutor discuss a man with whom they are both acquainted, an example-figure. This scene motivates the reader to reject "divertissement" as a means of attaining happiness.

The scene begins with a question posed by the interlocutor about his and the apologist's mutual acquaintance. He is unable to understand how a man as deeply troubled as their acquaintance can divert his thoughts from his condition. "D'où vient que cet homme qui a perdu depuis peu de mois son fils unique et qui accablé de procès et de querelles était ce matin si troublé, n'y pense plus maintenant." A man in this situation presents a sort of test case for the phenomenon of "divertissement". Three things confront him: the death of his son, legal troubles and family quarrels. One wonders how he can blot these things out of his mind. The apologist's answer indicates that "divertissement" works under any set of circumstances.

Ne vous en étonnez pas, il est tout occupé à voir par où passera ce sanglier que ses chiens poursuivent avec tant d'ardeur depuis six heures. Il n'en faut pas davantage.

The objective of this passage is to persuade the reader that "divertissement" delays the realization of misery without ameliorating it in any way. The example-character is miserable. All that he can accomplish by hunting is the momentary suspension of his awareness of his misery. He was worried this morning. Now his dogs have been running for six hours. Presently they will scare the wild boar out of the underbrush, and the hunter will get a shot at it. Even if he brings it down, his happiness will not last much longer, and the
thoughts of trouble and death will return. The apologist encourages the interlocutor to draw his own conclusion about the happiness of the example-figure. He emphasizes the temporary nature of the happiness derived from hunting. Then he generalizes, saying that all men can acquire happiness of the same kind from some absorbing activity.

Throughout the article, in all three phases of its development, a spotlight has been illuminating the imagined dramatic scenes. The example-figures which compose them attract the reader's attention more than the personages of the apologist or of the interlocutor do. Although in the first scene the apologist verbalizes the paradox of "divertissement", it is the antithetical modes of behavior performed by example-figures that stick in our minds. A great variety of example-figures appear in a series of scenes which constitute the second phase of the passage. They serve as examples to support the apologist's assertion, that man would not be happy with the objects that they pursue in the name of happiness. Finally, in the third phase of the article, the interlocutor who appears in a conversation with the apologist, helps to direct the reader's reaction to the imagined scenes. Still the subject of their conversation is the actions and feelings of example-figures whom they imagine in a variety of circumstances.

The persuasive import of the imaginative scenes derives from the way they are treated. They promote reader-involvement in two ways. We see them almost exclusively from an external perspective. A view of surface behavior is insufficient for understanding the essential nature of either "divertissement" or introspective thought. The
external viewpoint from which we see characters performing the two modes of behavior sets our thinking into motion. A satisfactory answer demands penetration beneath the surface of a physical description. The reader needs to know what goes on within the mind of the enigmatic figure reposing in a room and the billiard player and others who are performing externally oriented actions. Another technique, also pertaining to the perspective from which the description of imagined scenes is made, engages the reader's thoughts and encourages him to draw conclusions. This technique, like that of the external perspective, derives from a limitation of information given about the imagined scene. The imagined scenes present two meanings, one explicit meaning which the apologist interprets for us and an implicit meaning which we must read ourselves. The implied meaning is that "divertissement" produces only temporary happiness. The scenes contain two elements which convey this implication to the reader, emphasis on the dependence of "divertissement"-produced happiness on self-deception and emphasis on the temporary nature of happiness. We see the imagined figures in frantic pursuit of goals that they would not want if they were given to them. And we know their motivations. We see them experience fear and trembling when their absorbing activities are momentarily suspended. The description of example scenes indicates the temporary nature of happiness, but not a word is mentioned about what will happen when "divertissement" is no longer possible. The reward is so temporary that one wonders if it is worth the effort. The two sentences quoted below follow the scene concerned with the hunter who has lost his son and who has so many troubles.
L'homme quelque plein de tristesse qu'il soit, si on peut gagner sur lui de le faire entrer en quelque divertissement le voilà heureux pendant ce temps-là, et l'homme quelqu'heureux qu'il soit s'il n'est diverti et occupé par quelque passion ou quelque amusement, qui empêche l'ennui de se répandre, sera bientôt chagrin et malheureux. Sans divertissement il n'y a point de joie; avec le divertissement il n'y a point de tristesse. Et c'est aussi ce qui forme le bonheur des personnes.

Upon reading this passage most readers will realize that their opinion has changed, that their understanding has deepened and that they have resolved the paradox.
CHAPTER VI
RIGHT-THINKING CONSENTERS

Geometrical and Intuitive Consenters

Consenters fall into two categories: corrupt and uncorrupt. So far in this thesis I have treated only those consenters whose mechanism of consent is corrupt. Chapter Three treats the false indifferentist. His variety of corruption stems from his failure to reject from his mind those opinions which do not conform to his authentic self and his view of the human condition. Chapter Four deals with the hyper-rationalist and the imagination-directed type. These consenters have misused their rational and voluntary faculties, and as a result they no longer possess the ability to perceive the truth. Chapter Five treats the timid person, the presumptuous type, and the type who, lacking courage, diverts his thoughts from the unpleasant reality of his condition. These consenters resemble each other in one respect. All of them suffer from a corruption of the mechanism of consent.

There are variations in the act of consent other than those brought about by corruption. Uncorrupted consenters, i.e., those whose opinions correspond consistently to something real which is exterior to themselves, vary by their natures. According to this idea, some right-thinking consenters may not be able to accept
certain valid opinions. The inability to accept truths of one kind or another does not always imply corruption, but instead it can imply limitations of the knowing powers.

Pascal treats the variations in the nature of right-thinking minds in fragments 511 and 512, in which he defines the difference between the "esprit de géométrie" and the "esprit de finesse." The two fragments seem to give contradictory information. The contradiction involves the two antithetical types, whom I shall designate as geometrical and intuitive. In fragment 511, Pascal says that the geometrical type is capable of drawing accurate conclusions from a great number of principles. Then, in fragment 512, he says that the same type of mind falls into error because of an inability to grasp a great number of principles. I intend to show that the contradiction is an apparent one and that the two passages really complement each other.

In both fragments Pascal advances the same thesis about knowers and objects of knowledge. The thesis is based on two assumptions. One of the assumptions is that there are various kinds of right-thinking minds, and that there are various kinds of matter. The thesis which derives from this assumption concerns the relationship between the consenter and the opinion. A given variety of mind, if it possesses only the characteristics of that variety and no others, corresponds to some varieties of matter and not to others. In other words, the proportionality between the subject and the object which is a necessary condition for knowledge does not exist between all minds and all objects. Consequently, the drawing of accurate
conclusions depends on the matching up of a certain kind of mind with a certain kind of object. The second basic assumption concerns the act of consent. In Pascal's view, the act of consent consists of two distinct phases: apprehension and judgement. The apprehension phase occurs prior to the formation of an opinion. It consists of bringing into the mind data or principles associated with external objects. The second phase takes place within the mind. It consists of drawing conclusions about the principles.

Both fragments taken together constitute integral parts of a unit of meaning larger than either one of them. Consequently, one cannot grasp the whole idea without reading them both. Two indications suggest the interrelationship between the passages. First of all it is obvious that in both of them Pascal espouses the same basic ideas about the relation of the mind to objects of knowledge and about the nature of the act of consent. Secondly, the two articles define the characteristics of the same kind of mind, the "esprit de géométrie".

If one were to weld the two fragments together to form a single coherent statement, as Pascal very likely would have done, one would encounter certain difficulties. One is provided with no information as to how the passages interrelate. Furthermore, although the theory expressed in each article is the same, Pascal applies it to different phases of the act of consent. Article 511 treats the difficulties encountered by uncorrupt consenters in the second phase, the phase in which judgements are made. Article 512 treats both phases of the act of consent with particular emphasis on the first
phase. The final difficulty in finding the interrelationship between the two articles has already been mentioned. Each passage ascribes different characteristics to the geometrical type of consenter. The apparent contradiction comes about because of actual indifferences in the nature of the matter apprehended in the first phase of the act of consent. Of course, any difference in the nature of opinions affects the act of consent. In short, the difficulty in reading the complete statement about the relationship between the mind and objects of the mind arises from two factors. Full comprehension of one fragment is attendant upon comprehension of the other one, and the passages lack clear indications of how they fit together.

In article 511 Pascal asserts that there is more than one kind of right-thinking mind, and that each kind is proportionate to some orders of matter and disproportionate to other orders.

Diverses sortes de sens droit, les uns dans un certain ordre de choses et non dans les autres ordres où ils extravaguent.

This passage makes it clear that right thinking depends on matching the mind of a certain type with things in proportion to it. But it does not state the kind of relationship which exists between subject and object. In the next two paragraphs Pascal indicates that this relationship concerns the drawing of conclusions. In addition, he limits the possibilities of variations: there are two kinds of minds and two kinds of objects of knowledge.

Les uns tirent bien les conséquences de peu de principes et c'est une droiture de sens. Les autres tirent bien les conséquences des choses où il y a beaucoup de principes.
So far Pascal has done two things. He has defined two types of mind in terms of their capacity for knowing, and he has defined two categories of matter; one of which possesses a greater quantity of principles than the other.

In the remaining two paragraphs of fragment 511, Pascal gives more information about both variable factors. Each category of objects presents a different problem to the mind. Some things are opaque to the intelligence. It is difficult to draw conclusions about these things even when they involve only few principles. Wherever these matters are concerned only the high-powered and accurate mind can avoid error. Since Pascal gives no term to designate this kind of matter I will use the term opaque for the sake of convenience. The other category of matter presents a different kind of problem to the knower. This problem is caused by the complexity of the matter. Even when the individual principles are easily understood their numbers are so great that apprehension and judgements are difficult to perform. Complex matters made a different kind of demand on the knower. Only the person whose mind can handle a multitude of principles can avoid drawing erroneous conclusions about complex matters. In the following passage from the same fragment, Pascal defines both categories of matter, opaque and complex, and he associates each of them with a particular kind of mind.

Par exemple les uns comprennent bien les effets de l'eau, en quoi il y a peu de principes, mais les conséquences en sont si fines qu'il n'y a qu'une extrême droiture d'esprit qui puisse aller et ceux là ne seraient peut être pour cela grands géomètres parce que la géométrie comprend un grand nombre de principes, et qu'une nature d'esprit peut être telle
qu'elle puisse bien pénétrer peu de principes jusqu'au fonds, et qu'elle ne puisse pénétrer le moins du monde les choses où il y a beaucoup de principes.

In the concluding paragraph of fragment 511, Pascal assigns names to the two kinds of mind. The "esprit de justesse" has the capacity to draw accurate conclusions from opaque principles. I will designate this type of mind as the penetrating mind. The penetrating mind does not necessarily possess the capacity to handle many principles at the same time. Its distinguishing ability is intellectual force and accuracy in drawing conclusions about opaque matters. The second type of mind does not necessarily possess the intellectual force of the penetrating mind. Pascal calls it the "esprit de géométrie", or the geometrical mind. One of the characteristics of the geometrical mind is the ability to make accurate judgements on complex matters.

Il y a donc deux sortes d'esprit, l'une de pénétrer vivement et profondément les conséquences des principes, et c'est là l'esprit de justesse. L'autre de comprendre un grand nombre de principes sans les confondre et c'est là l'esprit de géométrie. L'un est force et droiture d'esprit. L'autre est amplitude d'esprit. Or l'un peut bien être sans l'autre, l'esprit pouvant être fort et étroit, et pouvant être aussi ample et faible.

Pascal attributes good eyesight to the intuitive consenter in the first positive phase. Farther on in the article he clarifies this image. The intuitive type actually feels things beyond what the keenest eyesight could possibly apprehend.

Articles 511 and 512 provide a good example of the difference between the description in two articles of the same character. The
character who appears in both articles is the geometer. In 511 he
is compared to the "esprit de justesse", and in 512 to the intuitive
type. In both cases the geometer is the antithesis of a consenter
type, and in both cases the character with whom he is compared dif­
fers. Consequently, it is necessary for Pascal to emphasize different
aspects of the geometer. According to fragment 511, the geometer
cannot penetrate opaque principles, while he can handle the complex­
ities which arise in connection with making judgements on many prin­
ciples. Article 512 does not contradict this information although it
does introduce something new and apparently contradictory. Compared
to the penetrating mind the geometer does indeed handle many prin­
ciples. He is accustomed to arranging propositions in a logical se­
quence. At the end of the sequence he finds truth. Compared to the
intuitive type the geometer handles only a few principles. Now on
this point, the intuitive type enjoys a considerable advantage over
both of the other types. He uses another means for apprehending and
judging. Pascal likens this means to feeling as opposed to seeing,
as in the case of the other two consenters. There is one final
piece of contradictory information. Article 512 states that the
geometer may possess the accuracy and intellectual penetration at­
tributed to the "esprit de justesse", though he does not need this
ability to perform his characteristic knowing activities. However,
the intuitive type must possess the quality. For without great in­
tellectual force he would be unable to make good judgements. In
conclusion, Pascal attributes those characteristics of the consenter
types in the two articles which best bring out their antithetical nature.

Fragment 512 begins with a comparison of the two types of consenters. The geometer and the intuitive type encounter different problems in the act of consent. Pascal represents the mental operations of the apprehension phase by means of an analogy with the physical movements required to see an object. The perceiver must first turn his face toward the object, and then he must register in his mind an accurate visual impression of the external object. Both types of consenters, geometrical and intuitive, perform the two movements. Since the two types of consenters perform different mental operations as they apprehend principles, the corresponding physical movements of the example-figures differ. The geometer turns his head aside, and the intuitive type simply looks straight ahead. Since the posture of the consenting mind determines the extent of the field of perception, the alteration in posture excludes the possibility of apprehending some kinds of objects, and at the same time, it makes possible the apprehension of other kinds of objects.

The geometer possesses the special ability to turn his head ever so slightly. The movement aligns his vision with principles outside of the perceptive field of those people who have become accustomed to keeping their eyes fixed on what is directly in front of them.

En l'un les principes sont palpables mais éloignés de l'usage commun de sorte qu'on a peine à tourner la tête de ce côté-là, manque d'habitude: mais pour peu qu'on l'y tourne, on voit les principes à plein: et il faudrait avoir tout à fait l'esprit faux pour mal raisonner sur des principes si gros qu'il est presque impossible qu'ils échappent.
The image represents clearly two distinct operations. The geometer directs his vision to the principles proportionate to his knowing powers, in order to see them and then he judges them. He need not possess exceptionally keen vision because the principles concerned in this operation are palpable and easily perceived. He does not even need an exceptionally high-powered intelligence to draw accurate conclusions from these principles. Making good judgements about these matters is relatively easy. Only the entirely corrupt mind would go astray in this phase.

The second paragraph gives the same information in the same order about the antithetical figure, the intuitive type consenter. The intuitive type looks straight ahead. Although he lacks the ability to turn his head, he does have good vision. Good eyesight is essential for the intuitive type because the principles proportionate to his abilities are numerous and intricate. The intuitive type runs into much difficulty in the act of consent because of the nature of the principles involved. It is almost impossible for him to apprehend all of them. Consequently, he risks falling into error in his judgement of them because omission of even one principle necessarily brings error. He has an additional problem in the second stage of consent. Intuitive principles demand not only good eyesight, but keen intelligence as well. Consequently, the intuitive type needs an "esprit juste" to make good judgements.

Mais dans l'esprit de finesse, les principes sont dans l'usage commun et devant les yeux de tout le monde. On n'a que faire de tourner la tête, ni de se faire voile; il n'est question que d'avoir bonne vue, mais il faut l'avoir bonne:
car les principes sont si déliés et en si grand nombre, qu'il est presque impossible qu'il n'en échappe. Or l'omission d'un principe mène à l'erreur; ainsi il faut avoir la vue bien nette pour voir tous les principes, et ensuite l'esprit juste pour ne pas raisonner faussement sur des principes connus.

In the following passage Pascal stresses the inadequacy of both types when they try to judge matters disproportionate with their abilities. Of course, the intuitive type cannot turn his head, and the geometer cannot see what is in front of him.

Ce qui fait donc que certains esprits fins ne sont pas géomètres

Tournez.

c'est qu'ils ne peuvent du tout se tourner vers les principes de géométrie, mais ce qui fait que des géomètres ne sont pas fins, c'est qu'ils ne voient pas ce qui est devant eux et qu'étant accoutumés, aux principes nets et grossiers de géométrie et à ne raisonner, qu'après avoir bien vu et manié leurs principes, ils se perdent dans les choses de finesse, où les principes ne se laissent pas ainsi manier.

This sentence indicates a factor which determines the identity of the two types. That factor is habit. As the person becomes accustomed to one manner of thinking, i.e., turning or not turning his head, he loses the ability to think in the other manner. The inference of this passage is that a right-thinking consenter of either type may be capable of thinking in the manner of the other type. To do this he might plausibly establish another set of habits of thinking, or he might liberate his manner of thinking from the control of habit.

In the following passage Pascal adds another piece of information about the two kinds of minds. The information concerns the
ability of each kind of mind to make judgements. He exposes his idea by means of an imaginative scene in which the two antithetical example-figures apply their knowing powers on both kinds of matter, geometrical and intuitive. First, Pascal defines intuitive principles, and then introduces the two figures. They compete with each other at apprehending and judging intuitive principles. Under these circumstances the geometer looks foolish because his method of knowing is inappropriate. Then Pascal alters the situation. He substitutes geometrical principles for intuitive ones. This time the outcome is reversed.

On les voit à peine, on les sent plutôt qu'on ne les voit, on a des pleines infinies à les faire sentir à ceux qui ne les sentent pas d'eux-mêmes. Ce sont choses tellement délicates, et si nombreuses, qu'il faut un sens bien délicat et bien net pour les sentir et juger droit et juste, selon ce sentiment, sans pouvoir le plus souvent le démontrer par ordre comme en géométrie, parce qu'on n'en possède pas ainsi les principes, et que ce serait une chose infinie de l'entreprendre. Il faut tout d'un coup voir la chose, d'un seul regard et non par progrès de raisonnement, au moins jusqu'à un certain degré. Et ainsi il est rare que les géomètres soient fins et que les fins soient géomètres, à cause que les géomètres veulent traiter géométriquement ces choses fines et se rendent ridicules, voulant commencer par les définitions et ensuite par les principes, ce qui n'est pas la manière d'agir en cette sorte de raisonnement. Ce n'est pas que l'esprit ne le fasse mais il le fait tacitement, naturellement et sans art. Car l'expression en passe tous les hommes, et le sentiment n'en appartient qu'à peu d'hommes. Et les esprits fins au contraire, ayant ainsi accoutumé à juger d'une seule vue sont si étonnés quand on leur présente des propositions où ils ne comprendraient rien et où pour entrer il faut passer par des définitions et des principes si stériles qu'ils n'ont point accoutumé de voir ainsi en détail, qu'ils s'en rebutent et s'en dégoûtent.
The imaginative scene is a means of highlighting the differences in the procedure according to which each mind performs the act of knowing. Both consenter types can find truth provided that they apply their faculties to matter in proportion to them. In the apprehension phase of the act of consent the geometer makes distinctions within the geometrical matter. He operates like a researcher collecting data. He separates one principle from another and takes note of all of the details of each one. Then in the judgement phase he organizes the various principles. The sequence of principles is all important. Each principle is both antecedent and consequence of adjacent principles. The intuitive type cannot distinguish one principle from another and he cannot organize them properly either. He operates in a manner radically different from that of the geometer. Instead of separating principles he grasps them all in one single non-sequential movement. For him the important factor is not sequence but completeness. Failure to apprehend all of the principles invariably leads to an erroneous judgement. So both types of consenters are uncorrupt when they apply themselves to the proper object.

The Intuitive Judgement

Articles 511 and 512 define the strengths and weaknesses of the geometer and the intuitive mind as knowing agents. In these articles Pascal does not evaluate the two types. His treatment stops short of a value judgement. Either type if it be pure, i.e., the geometer strictly geometrical and the intuitive type strictly intuitive, has
a certain range of objects within which it functions as an accurate and reliable agent of consent, and beyond which it errrs. Since the two consenter types are antithetical the ranges of objects which each type can know do not overlap. What one can do the other cannot and vice versa. So it would appear that the right-thinking mind equipped with only one of these two abilities is insufficient. As he is, this type of person could not establish the proper thought relationship with the world and with God.

Pascal makes a value judgement about the adequacy of right-thinking minds in fragment 513. Instead of comparing the two minds directly and drawing a conclusion about their value, he compares the objects of the two minds, and pronounces those of one type to be better than those of the other. The feasibility of such a comparison is based on the assumption that certain aspects of each kind of matter correspond to aspects of the other kind. Furthermore, the sets of counterparts which exist between the two orders of matter resemble each other sufficiently to cause confusion. Indeed the same terms represent the comparable matters in each order. So geometrical eloquence, morality, and philosophy correspond to, but do not equal, intuitive eloquence, morality and philosophy, Pascal develops the equivocations into a paradox.

(513) Géométrie. Finesse.
La vraie éloquence se moque de l'éloquence, la vraie morale se moque de la morale. C'est à dire que la morale du jugement se moque de la morale de l'esprit qui est sans règles.
Car le jugement est celui à qui appartient le sentiment, comme les sciences appartiennent à l'esprit. La finesse est la part du jugement,
Pascal indicates one difference between geometrical and intuitive matters. Each requires the operation of a different faculty. Intuitive matters rely on feeling-based judgements, that is, judgements produced by the operation of the voluntary faculties. Consequently, rules have no place in intuitive matter. This information corroborates with the description of intuitive matter in fragment 512. Having no characteristics which can be isolated, intuitive matters lend themselves to apprehension and judgement by a single, non-analytical movement of the voluntary faculties. The application of rules implies an analytical and sequential operation which would be inappropriate for intuitive matter. Pascal does not present this information objectively. He passes judgement on the subjects saying that the three intuitive subjects are more genuine. He conveys his opinion by using the verb "se moquer". Real eloquence, i.e., the intuitive variety, surpasses its geometrical counterpart in the accomplishment of objectives mutually sought, and it does so without bothering about rules. Pascal alters the word arrangement to good advantage in his statement about intuitive philosophy. There is no escape for any person who calls himself a philosopher. The suggestion is that all philosophers by reason of the concern for logic disqualify themselves from genuine philosophy which concerns the will.

Pascal treats the advantage of the intuitive type in fragment 534. Both the geometrical type and the intuitive type consenters are engaged in an act of judgement about the same object, a work of
some sort. The geometers apply their accustomed procedures to the formation of an opinion about the work. Their opinion is erroneous because the geometrical procedures are disproportionate with the demands of the task. A judgement made by geometrical rules is bound to go astray. One can rely only on intuitive procedures for valid judgements. In drawing up the passage Pascal suggests a paradox which if stated precisely would go something like this: where judgements about intuitive matters are concerned, no rule is the best rule.

(534) Ceux qui jugent d'un ouvrage sans règle sont, à l'égard des autres, comme ceux qui ont une montre à l'égard des autres. L'un dit: "Il y a deux heures"; l'autre dit: "Il n'y a que trois quarts d'heure." Je regarde ma montre, et je dis à l'un: "Vous vous ennuyez", et à l'autre: "Le temps ne vous dure guère"; car il y a une heure et demie; et je me moque de ceux qui me disent que le temps me dure à moi et que j'en juge par fantaisie. Ils ne savent pas que j'en juge par ma montre.

The image which compares the accuracy of the judgements of geometers and intuitive types, brings out an important fact. Judgement of a work falls beyond the capacity of the geometrical type consenter just as accurate measurement of time is impossible for those without a watch.

It is quite clear, judging from the two previous examples, that geometers need to be persuaded. They are not naturally constructed so as to be able to accept total submission to the will of God as a valid opinion. In other words, their knowing capacities are disproportionate with this opinion.
The Influence of Discourse

Before entering into the problem of how to persuade right-thinking minds, one might well ask about the effect of the persuasive instrument on the consenter. The written text is not an instrument for transplanting ideas from one mind into another. Instead, it is an optical instrument by which the reader can better see himself. In other words, the effect produced is an opening up from within the reader which enables him to better know aspects of his own self. Pascal expresses this idea about the effect of discourse on the reader in fragment 652.

Quand un discours naturel peint une passion ou un effet, on trouve dans soi-même la vérité de ce qu'on entend, laquelle on ne savait pas qu'elle y fût, en sorte qu'on est porté à aimer celui qui nous le fait sentir; car il ne nous a pas fait montrer de son bien, mais du nôtre; et ainsi ce bienfait nous le rend aimable, outre que cette communauté d'intelligence que nous avons avec lui incline nécessairement le coeur à l'aimer.

The passage suggests a persuasive technique described in "De l'Art de persuader", and is associated with the "méthode d'agréer" outlined there. The persuader first establishes a bond of affection with the consenter. This first step can be accomplished with either kind of right-thinking mind. It requires the proper use of discourse, i.e., the use which instead of revealing something of the author, reveals the reader to himself. In the case of the geometer that something revealed is an "effet", while in the case of the intuitive type it is "une passion". Paradoxically, the persuasive value of the method does not reside in the effect produced on the reader by natural discourse. Instead, the value derives from the bond of
affection established between the persuader and the consenter which 
results from the experience the reader has gained from the discourse. 
Pascal refers to this bond as "cette communauté d'intelligence".
Pascal explains in "De l'Art de persuader" that the bond fosters an 
ideal persuader-consenter relationship, one through which both geo-
metrical and intuitive opinions can be persuaded.

Pascal refers to the same kind of inner experience which occurs prior to consent and which is a necessary prologue to consent in fragment 737.

On se persuade mieux, pour l'ordinaire, par les raisons qu'on a soi-même trouvées, que par celles qui sont venues dans l'esprit des autres.

So Pascal does not proselytize or transplant ideas from his head into the head of the consenter. He begins his work by deepening the consenter's knowledge of his self. In this first stage of the work of persuasion, the consenter does not receive opinions from the apologist. He forms them from his own store of knowledge to which the apologist gives him access by fostering introspective thought.

Once the self-awareness of the right-thinking consenter has increased sufficiently, the second stage of persuasion can begin. The consenter by virtue of the bond of affection produced by discourse is predisposed to accept opinions from the apologist. New opinions introduced into the right-thinking mind work like leavening. They transform the whole mind, and disperse their beneficial effects throughout. Pascal states the effect of his new opinions on healthy minds in fragment 698.
Valid principles perpetuated themselves in healthy minds like seeds grow in good soil. But seeds do more than simply grow larger. They change in form. In the same manner valid principles extend into valid consequences.

This idea is based on the assumption that the human mind wishes to be consistent. Normally, the mind will admit into its sphere of awareness only those things which agree with the things previously contained within the sphere. In this respect, the mind is like a closed society accepting only those new members whose identity is fundamentally the same and rejecting those whose identity does not conform. Pascal's two phase method takes advantage of the natural tendency of the mind to maintain harmony among all of its parts. The first step, in which discourse causes the reader to see more of his self, broadens the perimeter of the mind's sphere of awareness. In the second phase, the apologist, thanks to the virtue of the bond of affection between him and the consenter, can introduce new opinions into the consenter's mind. The mind, having undergone these modifications, will reestablish a new equilibrium. New opinions will spread their influence throughout the mind, purging it of error.

How the mind establishes inner coherence, and the persuasive value of this basic characteristic is the subject of fragment 585.
The thesis expressed in this very dense text unfolds in five stages, each of which constitutes a short paragraph. Lines drawn beneath each paragraph emphasize the divisions. In each stage of the development Pascal integrates an additional piece of information into the whole statement. For the sake of clarity I will quote the entire text in one place, and then explicate each of the five stages individually.

Il y a un certain modèle d'agrément et de beauté qui consiste en un certain rapport entre notre nature faible ou forte telle qu'elle est et la chose qui nous plaît.

Tout ce qui est formé sur ce modèle nous agrée, soit maison, chanson, discours, vers, prose, femme, oiseaux, rivières, arbres, chambres, habits, etc.

Tout ce qui n'est point fait sur ce modèle déplaît à ceux qui ont le goût bon.

Et comme il y a un rapport parfait entre une chanson et une maison qui sont faites sur ce bon modèle, parce qu'elles ressemblent à ce modèle unique, quoique chacune selon son genre. Il y a de même un rapport parfait entre les choses faites sur les mauvais modèles. Ce n'est pas que le mauvais modèle soit unique, car il y en a une infinité, mais chaque mauvais sonnet par exemple, sur quelque faux modèle qu'il soit fait, ressemble parfaitement à une femme vêtue sur ce modèle.

Rien ne fait mieux entendre combien un faux sonnet est ridicule que d'en considérer la nature et le modèle et de s'imaginer ensuite une femme ou une maison faite sur ce modèle-là.

The first paragraph contains the assertion that we consent, i.e., find things beautiful or agreeable, to those things which conform to a model. Now this model is not an example of the perfect form
of a single object. Instead, it is a relationship between the subject and the object. As such it does not consist of any specific form, but of a kind of form. The model varies according to the state of our nature, be it weak or strong. This variation provides the possibility of a corrupt or a perfect model. Whatever the condition of the model, its function as a criterion is not impaired.

In the second paragraph, Pascal expands on the application of the model. It serves as a criterion for judging objects of different kinds. The mind requires all of its objects to conform to its model. By rejecting whatever is inconsonant with its fundamental identity it tends naturally toward a state of harmony in which all of its opinions conform to the same model.

The abstract model of beauty which each of us possesses enables us to make judgements. The normal procedure for arriving at a judgement which satisfactorily reflects our personal model is to refer the object directly to the model. Whether or not we find a woman beautiful depends on whether or not she conforms to, or nearly approximates, our abstract notion of beauty. The procedure of direct reference works in most cases. In the second part of the sentence, Pascal lists several objects for which it does work.

In the third paragraph Pascal states the converse situation; objects which do not conform to the model displease us. At this point Pascal introduces a new concept, one which bears upon the accuracy of the judgement. Good taste is the ability to discern how nearly the object conforms to the model. So according to this notion, good taste has nothing to do with the absolute validity of
the opinion. It is merely the capacity which enables one to maintain a state of harmony in which all objects conform to a single model.

In the fourth paragraph Pascal treats the problems which arise when we find it difficult to make good judgements. Although the model for consent enables us to make up our mind about objects of various kinds, some objects pose problems. Pascal does not list examples of the problematic subjects, but he does tell us how to overcome the difficulties presented by them. The obvious solution would be a two-step process. First, one would derive the model according to which the problematic object is constructed, and secondly, one would compare the derived model with one's own personal model. Unfortunately, the obvious solution, Pascal tells us, will not work, because we do have first-hand knowledge of the nature of our own model. He makes an explicit statement about our ignorance on this point in the fragment 586, the fragment immediately following this one.

... mais on ne sait pas en quoi consiste l'agrément qui est l'objet de la poésie. On ne sait ce que c'est que ce modèle naturel qu'il faut imiter ...

Indeed we do make use of a model to arrive at judgements, but having use of it does not mean that we know it. Or perhaps we should say that we know the model only by its effects which are observable, but that we do not know its essence.

Still the model for consent facilitates comparisons. Objects which conform to the same model enjoy a perfect relationship. For example, a song and a house which are made according to the same
model resemble the model and consequently, in their own way, they resemble each other. The relationship between the song and the house can be perfect in spite of any imperfections which may exist in the model.

Sometimes people find the comparison of some objects difficult. In such cases, the person is experiencing two problems at once. Not only does he find judgement of the object impossible, but also he is incapable of comparing this object to other objects about which the person has made up his mind. Pascal uses a bad sonnet as an example. The consenter who cannot decide whether or not the sonnet is a good one, and who is unable to compare it to a house or to a woman, has a third recourse for arriving at a good judgement. He derives from the sonnet the model according to which it is made. As we have seen, this operation alone is insufficient. The consenter is unable to evaluate the abstract model, nor can he compare the model with the one unique model which he himself holds. Consequently, he must construct by an act of the imagination an object of another kind in conformity with the newly arrived at model. The imaginary construct provides the consenter with a point of comparison. Pascal suggests using a woman or a house for the imaginary product. Next, he compares the construct with similar objects made according to his personal model, and from there makes reliable judgements. The process gives the right-thinking consenter the advantage of being able to transform unfamiliar or problematic objects like poems or moral questions into familiar terms where his taste will give him reliable indications.
Apologetics proposes to correct a disorder of consenting apparatus and thereby enable a person to accept an object of knowledge about which, in Pascal's view, no real disagreement exists. All men love God naturally. But some cannot accept God either because their minds are corrupt or because they have fallen into habits of thinking which make acceptance of a supernatural truth difficult. So the business of persuasion does not end with the treatment of the corrupt mind. Right-thinking consenters need persuasion. Pascal's objective in the case of the right-thinking person is to open his mind to all of its knowing capacities. The pure geometer and the pure intuitive type have allowed habitual modes of thinking to become so ingrained that their minds are closed to some things. Pascal wishes to help the consenter to realize all of his natural faculties for knowing.

Proportionality between the knower and the object of knowledge is an important concept. Pascal confronts each individual consenter with opinions which are proportionate to this person's capacity for knowledge. In order to make this adjustment in approach he must consider two things: 1) variations in the nature of the consenters and of the principles, and 2) the nature of the act of consent.

The application of the notion of proportionality to the situation in which persuasion is to occur is the prerequisite to the application of more active principles of persuasion. The apologist uses discourse in a special manner. His purpose is not to convey ideas from his mind to the consenter. Instead, he uses discourse to help the consenter see himself better. The increase in knowledge of self
which can be brought about through the medium of discourse yields two advantages to the apologist. It fosters a special relationship between the persuader and the consenter which in itself can be the basis for accepting new opinions. Secondly, it is the medium by which the apologist influences the mechanism of consent. Pascal believes that a man will accept those opinions which conform to his personal notion of truth. The problem arises when the right-thinking consenter lacks experience in making judgements and is therefore an unreliable judge. Pascal uses discourse to develop their natural capacity for making judgements.
CHAPTER VII
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Recovery of Experience

Professor Demorest, in his book Dans Pascal,\(^1\) recognizes dramatic elements in the Pensées, and he distinguishes between the dramatic counterparts of the three basic aspects inherent in Pascal's notion of persuasion. He points out that dialogues are the formal means by which Pascal represents the inner movement of the act of consent, an act which involves emotions and faith. Professor Demorest emphasizes the close relationship between Pascal and his reader, and speaks of the inner experience shared by both through the medium of Pascal's art. As a consequence of this emphasis he makes little distinction between the example-figure which personifies opinions and the inner reaction of the reader to the imaginative scenes composed of example-figures. He does discuss techniques but passes quickly to the message conveyed. The distinction between form and content is very real and necessary for the critic who treats techniques of persuasion as I have. For this point of view concentrates on what happens before and during the act of consent. Professor Demorest, on the other hand, is fascinated with what happens in the mind of the reader after the experience of consent has occurred. He is not

\(^1\)Jean Demorest, Dans Pascal (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1953), pp. 139-140.
questioning whether or not consent will occur, or even how and why it does occur. Instead, he appreciates the close identification with the mind of a creative artist that the text affords to the reader.

Now one expects quite naturally that critics of both points of view will indeed find the same important structures in the *Pensées*. However, the difference in perspectives accounts for differences in emphasis. One paragraph taken from the same chapter as the line referred to above, "Le Mouvement", provides a good example. Professor Demorest begins the paragraph with a statement of a fundamental trait of Pascal's creative mind: the tendency to animate objects of perception. This tendency always manifests itself in a similar pattern moving from abstraction toward concrete figures composed of human beings.

Transportée à la morale et à l'abstrait, la tendance à l'animation devient une personnification. Au lieu d'identifier essence avec existence, la personnification identifie l'abstraction avec l'existence. De manière plus frappante que dans le cas de l'animation, elle est l'expression d'un dynamisme psychologique. Pascal transpose l'abstrait en termes humains, c'est ainsi que la raison devient un personnage dramatique .... Raison et imagination, participantes au dialogue intérieur et agents de guerre, sont partout élevées à la dignité de personnes. (Demorest, pp. 146-147)

This passage contains two important points. It states that Pascal embodies in his work his own fundamental psychological traits which are dynamic and oriented toward human beings. The work in turn produces the same inner experience in the reader. The suggestion is that the reader experiences the same spiritual evolution as the author. The second point contained in the passage concerns the
example-figure. Example-figures serve as the structural medium through which the inner experience of the author passes to the reader. The example-figure personifies the same internal conflicts for both reader and author.

Professor Demorest stresses the inconsistencies of the Pascalian dramatic framework. Again his comments correspond to something real in the text that would not be brought out in criticism limited to apologetical potential. According to Professor Demorest, Pascal gives human voices to his inner conflicts. The dramatic confrontation of his contradictory tendencies projects itself into his work. So dramatic elements are not just formal devices for conveying ideas, they reflect his innermost being. Professor Demorest is looking beyond dramatic elements to the creative mind of Pascal. He considers the formal dramatic elements to be vestiges of a spiritual evolution. Each stage in the evolution corresponds to a change in cast. In the following quotation Professor Demorest speaks of looking beyond formal dialogue to a more intimate dialogue. The more intimate dialogue is a reference to the inner disposition which is prior to the work and reflected in it.

Dans le cadre du dialogue formel, la persistance d'‑un dialogue plus intime entraîne une seconde ambiguïté du drame. A tout moment surgit la multiplicité des identités. Et l'on est amené à s'écrier: Mais qui parle? (Demorest, p. 188)

So there are two dialogues, the one in the text being the echo of the movements of the author's inner being. Changes in characters such as the sudden appearance of a multitude of identities, are reflections of a spiritual evolution. Accordingly, the reader of his
work does not look beyond the drama to the idea. Instead, he gets himself caught up in the drama. He participates in the creative process which brought the interior drama into being. The question, Who is speaking? is not an idle one. Nor is the question designed solely to find out who the characters are in the dramatic framework. A new character means the emergence of a new aspect of oneself, a deepening of one's self-awareness. Professor Demorest answers the question in this paragraph which immediately follows the previous one.

Notre perplexité devant l'identité des interlocuteurs provient en partie de l'état d'inachèvement de l'Apologie. Cependant, la véritable cause est dans la profondeur intérieure où le dialogue a lieu. Là s'effacent les distinctions. Les situations deviennent interchangeables.

Professor Demorest explores the significance of changes among dramatic elements. The following two sentences indicate that changes in identity correspond to changes in awareness. "La fluidité des personnes, la convergence répétée de Pascal et de l'incroyant en 'nous' est une marque de la solidarité humaine ressentie par un poète.... Le passage de 'il' à 'nous' s'effectue chaque fois que l'incroyant reconnaît sa misère." (Demorest, p. 189) The reader feels these changes. Instead of remaining off stage, so to speak, as an objective observer of the Pascalian drama, he suddenly feels that he is subjectively involved. He is no longer observing from a distance but he is experiencing the drama from within.
Two Phases in the Apologist's Arguments

The relationship between the apologist and the interlocutor is of crucial importance in the execution of the apologetical method. Before studying the nature of the apologist-interlocutor relationship I wish to indicate the difference in critical perspective between such a concern and Professor Demorest's work. Professor Demorest treats mainly the poetic predisposition which produces the work of art and the reader's inner reaction which results from the work. By treating the apologist-interlocutor relationship we are moving away from the deep psychological concerns of Professor Demorest and moving toward an area of interest situated between the soul of the poet and that of the reader. In other words, we are interested in the persuasive import of the structures of the Pensées. Accordingly, less emphasis will be placed on Pascal the man, and more emphasis will be placed on the nature of the act of consent and the factors which determine whether or not it will take place. Two critics have made especially important comments about the nature of the apologist-interlocutor relationship and how this relationship evolves. They are Professor Davidson, in his article "Conflict and Resolution in Pascal's Pensées," and Professor Marin in his article "Réflexions sur la notion de modèle chez Pascal." The works of both critics


treat structures and patterns in the *Penseés*. The conclusions of both men are based on careful analysis of fragments. Professor Marin's article concerns the nature of the mechanism of consent, and more specifically, the criterion according to which the interlocutor judges new opinions. The scope of Professor Davidson's article is much greater than that of the article by the other critic. It concerns the fundamental aspects of the entire apologetical endeavor.

Professor Davidson's article treats the *Penseés* on an ideological level. Consequently, formal aspects of the work remain outside the scope of his article. Professor Davidson proposes to define a pattern of argument used by Pascal in many fragments and in connection with many subjects. Not all fragments contain all phases of the argument. The initial phase alone appears in many fragments. This phase consists of two moments: in the first moment a pair of contrary terms comes into view and with them a subject. In the second moment Pascal attributes the contraries simultaneously to the subject. Professor Davidson uses fragment 199, "Disproportion de l'homme", as an illustration of the tripartite argument. In this fragment Pascal defines three subjects: man as a physical being; man's knowledge; and the inner nature of man. Pascal attributes contradictory qualities to each of the subjects. Man as a body is large and yet small, man's intelligence knows and yet it does not know, and man's inner nature is spiritual and yet animal-like. Pascal applies the three-sided definition in which contraries are joined in a third something to many other subjects throughout the *Penseés*. Professor Davidson
has listed these subjects. Among the most important are God, who is at once manifest and hidden, and the Bible, which contains the story of a people informed of the coming of a Savior by divinely inspired prophets and who, once the prophecies were fulfilled, failed to recognize Christ.

The definition of contradictions is a means, not an end in itself. Professor Davidson shows how Pascal uses the intellectual discomfort caused by contradictions in a more comprehensive scheme. The complete argument consists of three steps. First, Pascal defines the contradictory nature of things. These definitions produce wonderment in the reader, a reaction which predisposes him to accept the argument of the second phase. In the second phase Pascal explains the underlying reasons for the contradictions. The explanation does not harmonize the contraries, but it does make their simultaneous presence understandable. It causes the reader to see the contraries in a positive way. Finally, in the third phase, Pascal introduces a new factor which resolves the conflicts altogether. The argument moves from contradiction to resolution, and it does so by way of explanations. Many fragments concentrate on either the negative or the positive phases of the movement. Only a few contain the complete pattern, and the A.P.R., fragment 149, is one of them. Man is shown to have contradictory tendencies; his pride causes him to aspire to be God's equal, and his concupiscence draws him toward animality. There is an explanation for the co-presence of contraries. Human nature at the time of Adam was perfect. Man fell from this state of original perfection when he turned away from God and began to seek
good within himself. Man did not entirely forget his original perfection. The vague memory of it accounts for his aspiration to compete with God, and for the anguish he experiences from awareness of his condition. In the resolution phase of the argument Pascal introduces another subject, God. The ambiguity with which God reveals himself to man leads to a comprehensive unity. The obscurity surrounding God which prevents non-believers from seeing Him is not so great that He is hidden from true seekers. Divine ambiguity is a means of reaching divine justice. In spite of the fact that God is a subject about which contraries may be said, He is an integrative force. He corrects human pride by changing it into humility, and He counteracts man's desire for sensual pleasure with penitence. The human contradictions still exist, but in their corrected state man qualifies to receive grace and through grace, salvation. Thus Professor Davidson has located and defined an important organizing principle: an argument which moves through stages of definition and explanation to resolution.

Internal Change

Professor Marin, the second critic whose work concerns the nature of the apologist-interlocutor relationship, emphasizes the nature of the mechanism of consent. This emphasis contrasts with that of Professor Davidson, whose work treats the method of persuasion employed by the apologist. The interest of both men lies primarily in the persuasive virtue of the work. They see the Pensées in terms of the objective of the work, that is, as an instrument of persuasion.
This critical perspective differs considerably from that of Professor Demorest who sees the Pensées as a means of recovering and reliving experience.

Professor Marin's article, "Réflexions sur la notion de modèle chez Pascal," defines the nature of the change which takes place within the mind of the interlocutor. Of course, this change is called conversion, and stated simply it consists of a movement from an attitude of hostility or indifference to one of submission. But this definition accounts only for external differences. Professor Marin's treatment goes far beneath the extrinsic description of conversion into the psychological aspects of the subject. He does four things in his article: 1) he defines Pascal's concept of the nature of the mechanism of consent, 2) he exposes a theory of expression held by Pascal, 3) he posits a similarity between the nature of language and the mechanism of consent, and 4) on the basis of the similarity he advances a theory of consent. The value of his work lies in his description of the inner modifications which result in conversion.

Professor Marin arrives at a statement about the mechanism of consent. His explanation places great importance on the consenter's criteria for judging new opinions. Pascal refers to the criterion as a model of consent and beauty. Those opinions which possess the same characteristics as the model gain acceptance, and those which differ from the model do not. Professor Marin has brought together a number of fragments which concern the model of consent. The most important of these fragments is number 585. The first sentence of the fragment 585 is: "Il y a un certain modèle d'agrément et de
beauté qui consiste en un certain rapport entre notre nature faible ou forte, telle qu'elle est et la chose qui nous plaît." On the basis of a close reading of this sentence especially, and of the rest of the fragment as well, Professor Marin draws four conclusions:

1) The model of consent is a kind of relationship between a person's nature and an object of pleasure.

2) The model, an unconscious structure used for judging truth, makes possible the comparison of different kinds of things.

3) The perfection of the similarity between the object and the model is independent from the perfection of the model itself.

4) When the consenter is in doubt as to how nearly a given object conforms to his individual model of consent he can evaluate the object by a two step operation. First, he considers the nature of the model of the object in question. Then, using the derived model as a guide, he makes an imaginary construct of an object of another kind and about which there is no problem of judging. Examples of non-problematic objects are women and houses. So, the method which remedies the indecision of the consenter calls for the imaginary transformation of one object into another object which conforms to the same model.

Basing his argument on the method for comparing models Professor Marin advances a theory of how the corrupt model becomes a healthy one. Conversion is not the result of a rational effort, because

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4 This fragment was treated at length in Chapter VI, pp. 208-214. I have abbreviated the report of Professor Marin's conclusions about this fragment because they duplicate my comments.
reason cannot cope with the infinite variety of corruption inherent in the consenting mechanism of men. It cannot occur until reason submits to will. In the sentences quoted below, Professor Marin explains that conversion, i.e., the bestowal of grace, originates from an external source of power, and that it consists in a total regeneration of a person's nature. He explains this change in terms of a movement from diversity to uniformity. There is an infinite variety of corrupt structures or models for consent, but only one is uncorrupt and healthy. If all men possessed this new and unique structure of agreement the staggering diversity of human opinions and behavior would be reduced to uniformity.

Aussi, contradictoirem ent, cette diversité est réductible absolument, ..., par la simple soumission de la raison à la grâce qui n'est point seulement une illumination extérieure, mais une régénération totale et complète de la nature et marque l'apparition du nouvel homme dont parle Saint Paul. La diversité des hommes, c'est-à-dire en fin de compte, celle des structures de l'agrément, est réduite dans l'uniformité des chrétiens dans l'Eglise, dans celle des coeurs réformés par la grâce, c'est-à-dire dans une nouvelle et unique structure de l'agrément. (Marin, p. 95)

The correction of a person's model of consent results from repeated comparisons. The apologist prepares the way for the conversion of the interlocutor by presenting negative and positive models for consent in the form of concrete examples. He demands that the interlocutor participate by reading the model implied by the examples and ultimately by deepening his knowledge of his own authentic model of consent.

... l'action de persuasion sur autrui ... s'interdit le recours aux présupposés religieux et
The Pascalian apologetic consists more of exercising moral faculties than of the instruction of religious truths. It encourages the interlocutor to increase his moral sensitivity and judgement by upgrading the quality of his model for consent.\(^5\)

Professor Marin does not develop the implications of his thesis in the direction of a method of persuasion. Had he done so it seems plausible that his findings would corroborate Professor Davidson's theory of dialectical harmonization. Professor Marin has defined the inner reactions of the interlocutor which correspond with the two phases described by Professor Davidson. The wonderment produced in the mind of the interlocutor when he is confronted with the baffling contradictions inherent in man's condition motivates him to participate in the moral experiments proposed by the apologist. The resolution of the contradictions comes only after reason has suspended its activities and the person has adopted a disposition of submission for the acceptance of healing grace.

Instead of exploring the methodological implications of his thesis Professor Marin supports his thesis by referring to fragments  

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\(^5\)I have reached this same conclusion in Chapter VI. However, it is necessary to restate it here in order to preserve the coherence of Professor Marin's complex arguments.
on the subject of language. His assumption is that the relationship between the model of consent and the object made according to the model corresponds to linguistic concepts upon which a theory of expression held by Pascal is based. The key linguistic concept of Professor Marin's thesis is that words serve two distinct functions: designation of objects and power of suggestions. The opposition of the functions of words is apparent in fragment 509:

Masquer la nature et la déguiser. Plus de roi, de pape, d'évêque, mais auguste monarque, etc... point de Paris, Capitale du royaume.

Il y a des lieux où il faut appeler Paris, Paris, et d'autres où il la faut appeler capitale du royaume.

The words "roi", "pape", "évêque", and "Paris" designate objects in nature. Professor Marin calls this category of terms primitive language. The terms "auguste monarque" and "capitale du royaume" do not pertain to the same category. They constitute a second degree of language which functions both as a persuasive instrument and as a designation for natural objects. The persuasive value of the second degree of languages dulls the clarity and transparency with which primitive language reveals nature. This distance between the object designated and the second degree of language, referred to by Professor Marin as the interior distance of language, is the variable factor upon which Pascal's ideal of beautiful language rests. Language becomes more beautiful as the distance between the sign and the object signified is reduced.

Pascal seems to make no distinction between language and thought. Professor Davidson confirms this statement in *Audience, Words,* and
Art on page 113. Professor Marin arrives at the same conclusion in the process of supporting his thesis about the process according to which the model of consent becomes more perfect. In other words, language is simply one of the many kinds of objects which are judged on the basis of their relationship to a model of consent. The positive norm implied by the model is the smallest possible distance between the sign and the object. The model, be it positive or negative, can be realized in a linguistic order as well as in terms of feminine beauty. Fragment 586 provides an example of the transformation of a linguistic object, poetic jargon, into feminine beauty as an imaginary variant on the same model. "Mais qui s'imaginera une femme sur ce modèle-là, qui consiste à dire de petites choses avec de grands mots, verra une jolie demoiselle, toute pleine de miroirs et de chaînes dont il rira parce qu'on sait mieux en quoi consiste l'agrément d'une femme que l'agrément des vers." The same opposition between nature and artifice exists in the linguistic object and in the imaginary variant produced by transposition. Since the model is a negative one there is a disproportion between sign and object. Poetic jargon says little but uses big words to say it, while the natural beauty of the girl, i.e., the object signified, is obscured by her dress and jewelry, i.e., the signs of beauty. Transposition of a real object into an imaginary object conforming to the model of the real object gives the consenter an advantage because it is easier to make good judgements on certain orders of things, such as houses or feminine beauty than on other orders.
Stages of Conversion

Jean Mesnard's book, *Pascal*, 6 concerns the religious aspects of the *Pensées*, as do the articles of Professor Davidson and Marin. Instead of remaining primarily on the ideological level like Professor Davidson, and instead of taking the psychological orientation of Professor Marin, Professor Mesnard's approach deals with the inter-relationship of important concepts and ideas. Each of the three critics is associated with a different one of the three primary aspects of apologetics. Professor Davidson traces the phases in the apologist's argument, Professor Marin exposes the psychological reactions experienced by the consenter in the act of consent, and Professor Marin's approach is most closely associated with the opinion. His interest in techniques of persuasion is limited to the effects produced on the mind of the consenter as it confronts various Pascalian themes. On the other hand, he does not delve into the psychological nature of conversion.

The main thrust of Professor Mesnard's work is his analysis of the steps that lead man on a path to God. All of the steps considered together constitute a fundamental human experience, conversion. Professor Mesnard cautions the reader about the possible misconceptions that can arise about the meaning of the term "conversion". Basically, it refers to the passage from unbelief to faith. However, the same term designates a religious experience which Pascal himself knew on

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two different occasions. Prior to these experiences Pascal had been a firm believer whose life conformed to Christian doctrines. Nevertheless, the change that he underwent involved his relationship with God. His abstract and intellectual knowledge of God suddenly became an intuition of a Divine Presence. After recognizing the distinction between two conversions experiences Professor Mesnard shows how they are similar. The difference is one of degree, not of kind. The non-believer and the Christian travel the same road; one of them has farther to go than the other.

The conversion of the nonbeliever is nothing but a variant of the conversion of the Christian. Moreover, it cannot be considered complete if it does not end with the same steps as that of the Christian.... Although Pascal himself did not have to pass from unbelief to faith, his experience, meditated upon and stylized, nourished the dialectic of the Pensées. (Mesnard, p. 30)

Professor Mesnard emphasizes the similarities between consenters, and explains individual differences in terms of distance from the knowledge of God. This perspective on conversion leads one to compare variations in the nature of consenters to an itinerary between two places. The various stops on the itinerary compare to a conversion experience which differs from the other experiences only in the degree of estrangement from God. Professor Mesnard proposes to follow that itinerary and at the end of it he hopes to discover the nature of the relationship between man and God.

Professor Mesnard sees conversion as an organizing principle in the Pensées. One encounters along the road from unbelief to faith three principle landmarks. The most fundamental aspect of conversion
is the affirmation of the existence of God, and it is treated in the first chapter. Affirmation, an existential act, is the prerequisite for a more satisfying relationship with God. The person who has affirmed that God exists and who has moved beyond mere affirmation finds himself in an unsatisfying state. His knowledge of God is the result of a rational operation. A more personal relationship with God comes only after a person learns how to read the signs by which God reveals Himself to man. Professor Mesnard treats the revelation of God in the second chapter. Interpretation of miracles and prophecies involves an operation of voluntary faculties. Professor Mesnard exposes some ideas about Divine Nature. Once a person has become proficient at interpreting miracles and prophecies he becomes interested in the nature of the relationship between God and man. Professor Mesnard entitles this chapter "The Mystery of God", because a persistent obscurity always accompanies the knowledge of God no matter how certain this knowledge is. The three stages in the process through which man establishes a relationship with God are:

1) the development of powers of rational apprehension which lead to the affirmation of God.

2) the development of voluntary faculties for reading the signs by which God reveals Himself.

3) and the development of an understanding of the ambiguous nature of the signs which reveal God. A person who travels beyond the three stages enjoys the fullest possible knowledge of God. In a concluding chapter, Professor Mesnard describes the changes which occur as a result of this knowledge.
Any given fragment usually pertains more closely to one of the three moments in the process of conversion. On the basis of this relationship, Professor Mesnard organizes the various subjects and ideas expressed in the *Pensees*. The act of affirmation may assume many different forms depending on the state of the mechanism of consent of the individuals involved. Atheists have concluded that because God does not exist within the domain of reality accessible to reason He does not exist at all. Curiously, deists misuse reason in the same way. They hold that man can know God by means of rational faculties. Although atheists and deists reach opposite conclusions they both fail to affirm the existence of God in the proper manner. Their conclusions spring from the misuse of reason as well as the suspension of the voluntary faculties. Although reason cannot attain absolute knowledge it can demonstrate that reality extends beyond the domain of its powers of apprehension. Two things cause reason to recognize its own impotence: the idea of infinity and contradictions. These subjects disarm reason and lead it to posit the existence of something which lies beyond its knowing powers.

Professor Mesnard refers to the most famous fragments in the *Pensees* in connection with the chapter on affirmation of God: "Disproportion de l'homme", "Le Pari", "Divertissement", "A P. R." His perspective on "Le Pari" is particularly interesting. The purpose of the fragment is to produce an affirmation based exclusively on a rational calculation, and it is not designed to bring about a full conversion. The final passages of the wager to motivate the consenter to engage in a program of activities which is designed to cause him
to superimpose habits of faith in God over those of disbelief. The wager is not an access to God, but a first step in the right direction.

Each of the critics discussed emphasizes one of the three aspects of the dramatic framework. Professor Davidson's work pertains to the method which the apologist applies. The apologist confronts the interlocutor's mind with baffling contradictions and then shows him how the unifying factor lies in a divine mind. Professor Marin studies the psychology of the consenter. The interlocutor learns to exercise his criteria for judging opinions on moral issues. Professor Mesnard deals primarily with opinions. He sees conversion as an experience common to all men. The only differences between individuals are in the degree of estrangement from God. He arranges each concept on a line moving toward the fullest possible knowledge of God. Professor Demorest's point of view places him on a different level. Since his primary interest lies in the recovery of experience, he does not emphasize the distinction between method, manner of consent and opinions. One of his conclusions is of especial interest to my study. He sees dramatic elements as the most apt form for the externalization of inner conflicts inherent in Pascal.

The positions of the three critics who treat Pascal's methods of persuasion are related in another way. They each offer a different solution to the theoretical impasse concerning variation in the act of consent. Professor Davidson shows how the method of dialectical harmonization derives persuasive import from contradictions about human nature. Regardless of the reader's criteria for judging
opinions, he cannot deny the fundamental contradictions of human nature. Man aspires to the infinite but his capacity for truth and happiness is limited to the finite. Pascal builds his method on these contradictions shared by all men. Professor Marin points out another way of coping with the diversity of the interlocutor's ability for assent. All men judge opinions according to a model of perfection. The inability to compare the model for consent implied in some issues is oftentimes the cause of error. Men are consistent, however, in that all men can perform an imaginary transposition by which the model implied by one opinion is materialized in another opinion. Although men differ in opinion, the human mechanism of consent does have common features which can be the basis for universal agreement. Professor Mesnard demonstrates that all men travel the same road which leads to knowledge of God.

Conclusion

The effect of the apology on the reader is Pascal's primary concern. The problem in this regard is that of finding a method which obviates the task of appraising each individual reader's criteria for judging new opinions. Such an appraisal is impossible not only because of the great variety of criteria imposed by different people but also because the reader comes into existence only after the text has left Pascal's hands. The importance of understanding the consenter's criteria becomes apparent when one considers three factors: 1) Pascal's fundamental beliefs about the nature of the mind, 2) his apologetical objective, and 3) his conception of
the limitation of human capacities of persuasion. Pascal must have put the question something like this: How can I persuade opinion X when my capacity for persuasion falls so far short of the capacity which would be required to persuade the human mechanism of consent? He was faced with the problem of finding persuasive techniques which would be effective in specific situations and which could be implemented by a human persuader.

I have pointed out that Pascal holds four fundamental ideas about the nature of the human mind and the manner in which it performs the act of consent:

1) Men are often unaware of some of the feelings and ideas contained in their mind and which constitute the authentic identity. The extent of the ignorance varies with the individual. However, in cases where the conscious regions of the mind almost completely displace ignorance, i.e., people who are fully aware of themselves, there is always perfect agreement on valid opinions.

2) The conscious region of the mind tends naturally to be consistent. It maintains a logical harmony among all of its objects. New opinions gain entry into the mind upon the condition that they appear to agree logically with previously accepted opinions. The criteria for acceptance of new opinions derives from the composite identity of all of the opinions existing within the mind.

3) The mind judges new opinions according to two criteria. New opinions must either appear to conform to the logical context of the mind or they must be associated with the attainment of
pleasure. Consent is all the more certain if both criteria are met, but in case of conflict the pleasure criterion always wins out.

4) The mind contains some innate opinions such as a natural love for a Divine Being, the notion that reality extends beyond the limits of rational apprehension and the vague memory of an original perfection according to which men judge the misery of their present condition. The perimeter of awareness can expand sufficiently to include these opinions, and when this happens the sphere of awareness contains incompatible opinions. The eventual result of the introduction of new constituents into the mind is a fundamental change in the nature of the consenter. The change is accompanied by an adjustment of the criteria for judging new opinions, and by an increase in the capacity of consent.

The second of the three factors which lead to an apologetical crisis is the target opinion. The ultimate goal of apologetics never varies. It is to persuade men to submit their will to a divine will. So the situation faced by the apologist consists of a man whose criteria for accepting opinions will not allow him to accept the target opinion. We know that the three factors of persuasion, the opinion, the manner of consent, and the method of persuasion, vary together. Consequently, Pascal must compensate for variations in the consenter's criteria by adapting his method.

The problem of appraising the consenter's criteria never occurs within the dramatic framework. In a sense the dramatic framework offers the perfect solution because the interlocutor's criteria is
always apparent. As I have shown, Pascal follows a definite procedure for persuading the interlocutor. I will organize my summary by referring to the terminology of the ancient rhetoricians. The Ancients divided the subject into four elements: invention, disposition, elocution, and delivery. (Topliss, p. 13) The last one will be omitted as it does not apply to written texts.

1) Invention, i.e., the assembling of proofs and arguments.

Since the target opinion cannot gain acceptance into the mind of the interlocutor Pascal persuades other opinions which I shall call "intermediate opinions". Intermediate opinions have two characteristics: logical compatibility with both the interlocutor's criteria and the target opinion. Examples of intermediate opinions are: --Man can know the existence of a numerical infinite but he cannot know its nature, and --Introspective thought is emotionally painful and cannot be tolerated.

2) Disposition, i.e., arranging the materials in the most effective order.

The order in which opinions are approached is determined by the interlocutor's capacity for accepting opinions. Pascal begins by treating those opinions which are most in harmony with the interlocutor's standards. Consequently the gap between the target opinion and the interlocutor's capacity to accept things closes gradually during the course of the fragment.

3) Elocution, i.e., the art of presenting each argument as clearly and persuasively as possible.

The most fundamental structural element of the Pensées is the
dramatic framework. Each of the personages who make up the framework possesses his own persuasive import. The apologist advances convincing arguments, and probes into the psychological motives which underlie the interlocutor's opinions. The interlocutor serves as model for the reader of how to perform the act of consent. The apologist uses example-figures, the third personage of the framework, to embody opinions in his argument, thereby making them more accessible. Example-figures have the added value of arbitrarily associating ideas with personalities.

The keystone in Pascal's system of persuasion is the reader-interlocutor identification. For every persuasive element derives its value from the particular identity of the interlocutor. The questions "What opinions does he accept?" and "What objects does he associate with pleasure?" are fundamental to the whole procedure. So the use of a dramatic framework in which various types of consenters appear is only a partial solution. The apologist can always find a method of persuasion which is effective for the interlocutor because he knows this person's criteria for judging new opinions. Consequently, we always see apologetical successes in the Pensées. But a new problem emerges from the solution to the original one. Although each fragment is persuasive for the interlocutor, it is appropriate to ask whether or not the reader will feel the same persuasive thrust as the interlocutor. Of course, he will feel it provided that he identifies with the dramatic figure. Now the newly created problem is how to produce the reader-interlocutor
identification? For without this reaction Pascal's whole system of persuasion would crumble.

I have suggested that one of the means of producing the reader-interlocutor identification lies in the manner in which the character of the interlocutor is drawn. Instead of presenting a fully drawn character Pascal gives us only the vague outlines of a personality. He purposely omits all details such as traits of personality, age, social status or profession. A fully characterized interlocutor would make identification impossible for all readers who do not share the same characteristics. So Pascal's interlocutor possesses only those traits shared by all mankind such as fear of the unknown and fear of death. These qualities motivate him to seek God. The hope is that the reader will recognize his own metaphysical problems in the person of the interlocutor.

Sister Mary Maggioni in her book, The 'Pensees' of Pascal, shows how Pascal solves the problem of inducing reader-interlocutor identification on another level. Her purpose is to demonstrate that the style of the Pensees is baroque. Accordingly she begins with the concepts established by Wölfflin for the recognition and description of spatial art. One of the concepts defined by Wölfflin is the "open form". The quality of being "open" is achieved in a painting through manipulation of perspective. It induces the viewer to bring within the range of his vision a point in space which lies beyond

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the ultimate point in perspective. Consequently the perspective does not end with the final visual point on the canvas and because of this the viewer tries to follow it beyond the border of the painting. The "open form" by distorting perspective aims at bringing into proximity something visible with something which can be seen only by the imagination.

In one of the chapters of her book Sister Maggioni demonstrates that Pascal's images are open forms. (Maggioni, pp. 80-103) She maintains that Pascalian images and open art forms evoke the same reaction for the audience, i.e., the attempt to visualize the invisible. Both spatial and literary images aim at incarnating thought. Of course the media for achieving this purpose differ. But whether the artist uses line and color or words, his objective is to embody abstract notions. Sister Maggioni refers to this process as "materialization". To materialize an idea is to give it concrete form. Excessive materializing would destroy the affinity between the image and the idea. Sister Maggioni uses fragment 578 to support her contention.

L'éloquence est une peinture de la pensée et ainsi ceux qui après avoir peint ajoutent encore font un tableau au lieu d'un portrait.

The pronoun "ceux" refers to those artists who overmaterialize and thereby produce a closed form, i.e., the tableau. One of the precepts of eloquence is the curtailment of materialization in order to preserve an open form. Sister Maggioni's thesis is that the open form stimulates the reader to complete the process of materialization within his imagination.
The "open form" is primarily an effect created in the reader. Its principal quality is a feeling of incompleteness which stimulates the reader's imagination. Pascal achieves this quality by means of the dramatic framework. Example-figures which embody abstractions invite the reader to draw conclusions about the moral implications of their activities. The apologist and the interlocutor supply some interpretations but they never finish the job. The reader must decide for himself. He completes the picture with details drawn from his own experience.

The question of Pascal's success is problematic. Professor Topliss says that the Pensées are no more than partially successful but that they enjoy the unchallenged status of a masterpiece. (Topliss, p, 315) In other words the work succeeded as literature but as an apology it was only a mediocre success. Its appeal is due in large measure to the insight that it gives into man's nature and into his condition. I would like to suggest another way of looking at the question. The Pensées can be considered an apologetical success whenever the reader feels that his own metaphysical problems are embodied in the personage of the interlocutor. Certainly the success is relative to the nature of the reader. But each time the reader feels this identification a dent is put in his self-centered outlook on his surroundings and he moves closer to a grasp of his true proportion to the world.
APPENDIX
De l'Art de Persuader

L'Art de persuader a un rapport nécessaire à la manière dont les hommes consentent à ce qu'on leur propose, et aux conditions des choses qu'on veut faire croire.

Personne n'ignore qu'il y a deux entrées par où les opinions sont reçues dans l'âme, qui sont ses deux principales puissances, l'entendement et la volonté. La plus naturelle est celle de l'entendement, car on ne devrait jamais consentir qu'aux vérités démontrées; mais la plus ordinaire, quoique contre la nature, est celle de la volonté; car tout ce qu'il y a d'hommes sont presque toujours emportés à croire non pas par la preuve, mais par l'agrément. Cette voie est basse, indigne et étrangère : aussi tout le monde la désavoue. Chacun fait profession de ne croire et même de n'aimer que s'il sait le mériter.

Je ne parle pas ici des vérités divines, que je n'aurais garde de faire tomber sous l'art de persuader, car elles sont infiniment au-dessus de la nature : Dieu seul peut les mettre dans l'âme, et par la manière qu'il lui plaît. Je sais qu'il a voulu qu'elles entrent du cœur dans l'esprit, et non pas de l'esprit dans le cœur, pour humilier cette superbe puissance du raisonnement, qui prétend devoir être juge des choses que la volonté choisit, et pour guérir, cette volonté infirme, qui s'est toute corrompue par ses sales attachements. Et de là vient qu'au lieu qu'en parlant de choses humaines on dit qu'il faut les connaître avant que de les aimer, ce qui a passé en preuve, les saints au contraire disent en parlant des choses divines qu'il faut les aimer pour les connaître, et qu'on n'entre dans la vérité que par la charité, dont ils ont fait une de leurs plus utiles sentences.

En quoi il paraît que Dieu a établi cet ordre surnaturel, et tout contraire à l'ordre qui devait être naturel aux hommes dans les choses naturelles. Ils ont néanmoins corrompu cet ordre en faisant des choses profanes ce qu'ils devaient faire des choses saintes, parce qu'en effet nous ne croyons presque que ce qui nous plaît. Et de là vient l'éloignement où nous sommes de consentir aux vérités de la religion chrétienne, tout opposée à nos plaisirs. "Dites-nous des choses agréables et nous vous écouterons", disaient les Juifs à Moïse; comme si l'agrément devait régler la croyance! Et c'est pour punir ce désordre par un ordre qui lui est conforme, que Dieu ne

1 Chevalier, pp. 592-595.
verse ses lumières dans les esprits qu'après avoir dompté la rébellion de la volonté par une douceur toute céleste qui la charme et qui l'entraîne.

Je ne parle donc que des vérités de notre portée; et c'est d'elles que je dis que l'esprit et le coeur sont comme les portes par où elles sont reçues dans l'âme, mais que bien peu entrent par l'esprit, au lieu qu'elles y sont introduites en foule par les caprices téméraires de la volonté, sans le conseil du raisonnement.

Ces puissances ont chacune leurs principes et les premiers moteurs de leurs actions.

Ceux de l'esprit sont des vérités naturelles et connues à tout le monde, comme que le tout est plus grand que sa partie, outre plusieurs axiomes particuliers que les uns reçoivent et non pas d'autres, mais qui, dès qu'ils sont admis, sont aussi puissants, quoique faux, pour emporter la croyance, que les plus véritables.

Ceux de la volonté sont de certains désirs naturels et communs à tous les hommes, comme le désir d'être heureux, que personne ne peut pas ne pas avoir, outre plusieurs objets particuliers que chacun suit pour y arriver, et qui, ayant la force de nous plaire, sont aussi forts, quoique pernicieux en effet, pour faire agir la volonté, que s'ils faisaient son véritable bonheur.

Voilà pour ce qui regarde les puissances qui nous portent à consentir.

Mais pour les qualités des choses que nous devons persuader, elles sont bien diverses.

Les unes se tirent, par une conséquence nécessaire, des principes communs et des vérités avouées. Celles-là peuvent être infailliblement persuadées; car, en montrant le rapport qu'elles ont avec les principes accordés, il y a une nécessité inévitable de convaincre, et il est impossible qu'elles ne soient pas reçues dans l'âme dès qu'on a pu les enrober à ces vérités qu'elle a déjà admises.

Il y en a qui ont une union étroite avec les objets de notre satisfaction; et celles-là sont encore reçues avec certitude, car aussitôt qu'on fait apercevoir à l'âme qu'une chose peut la conduire à ce qu'elle aime souverainement, il est inévitable qu'elle ne s'y porte avec joie.

Mais celles qui ont cette liaison tout ensemble, et avec les vérités avouées, et avec les désirs du cœur, sont si sûres de leur effet, qu'il n'y a rien qui le soit davantage dans la nature. Comme au contraire ce qui n'a de rapport ni à nos créances ni à nos plaisirs, nous est importun, faux et absolument étranger.

En toutes ces rencontres il n'y a point à douter. Mais il y en a où les choses qu'on veut faire croire sont bien établies sur des vérités connues, mais qui sont en même temps contraires aux plaisirs qui nous touchent le plus. Et celles-là sont en grand péril de faire voir, par une expérience que n'est que trop ordinaire, ce que je disais au commencement : que cette âme impérieuse, qui se vautait de n'agir que par raison, suit par un choix honteux et téméraire ce qu'une volonté corrompue désire, quelque résistance que l'esprit trop éclairé puisse y opposer.
C'est alors qu'il se fait un balancement douteux entre la vérité et la volupté, et que la connaissance de l'une et le sentiment de l'autre font un combat dont le succès est bien incertain, puisqu'il faudrait, pour en juger, connaître tout ce qui se passe dans le plus intérieur de l'homme, que l'homme même ne connaît presque jamais.

Il paraît de là que, quoi que ce soit qu'on veuille persuader, il faut avoir égard à la personne à qui on en veut, dont il faut connaître l'esprit et le cœur, quels principes il accorde, quelles choses il aime; et ensuite remarquer, dans la chose dont il s'agit, quels rapports elle a avec les principes avoués, ou avec les objets délicieux par les charmes qu'on lui donne. De sorte que l'art de persuader consiste autant en celui d'agréer qu'en celui de convaincre, tant les hommes se gouvernent plus par caprice que par raison!

Or, de ces deux méthodes, l'une de convaincre, l'autre d'agréer, je ne donnerai ici que les règles de la première, et encore au cas qu'on ait accordé les principes et qu'on demeure ferme à les avouer : autrement je ne sais s'il y aurait un art pour accommoder les preuves à l'inconstance de nos caprices.

Mais la manière d'agréer est bien sans comparaison plus difficile, plus subtile, plus utile et plus admirable; aussi, si je n'en traite pas, c'est parce que je n'en suis pas capable; et je m'y sens tellement disproportionné, que je crois la chose absolument impossible.

Ce n'est pas que je ne croie qu'il y ait des règles aussi sûres pour plaire que pour démontrer, et que qui les saurait parfaitement connaître et pratiquer ne réussirait aussi sûrement à se faire aimer des rois et de toutes sortes de personnes, qu'à démontrer les éléments de la géométrie à ceux qui ont assez d'imagination pour en comprendre les hypothèses. Mais j'estime, et c'est peut-être ma faiblesse qui me le fait croire, qu'il est impossible d'y arriver. Au moins je sais que si quelqu'un en est capable, ce sont des personnes que je connais, et qu'aucun autre n'a sur cela de si claires et de si abondantes lumières.

La raison de cette extrême difficulté vient de ce que les principes du plaisir ne sont pas fermes et stables. Ils sont divers en tous les hommes, et variables dans chaque particulier avec une telle diversité, qu'il n'y a point d'homme plus différent d'un autre que de soi-même dans les divers temps. Un homme a d'autres plaisirs qu'une femme; un riche et un pauvre en ont de différents; un prince, un homme de guerre, un marchand, un bourgeois, un paysan, les vieux, les jeunes, les sains, les malades, tous varient; les moindres accidents les changent.
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Editions


The following works are discussed in this thesis.

Books


Describes the creative mind which brought the Pensées into being. He bases his study on the assumption that stylistic characteristics such as paradox and dramatic form are authentic manifestations of Pascal's inner conflicts.


Describes and categorizes all of the variants. Classifications include: punctuation, grammar, vocabulary and kinds of images.

Defines the seventeenth century notion of rhetoric, shows how Pascal used two methods of persuasion, one assimilated to geometry and the other adapted from tradition.


Demonstrated that the style of the Pensees is baroque. Pascal experiences inner tension as the result of adhering simultaneously to opposing convictions. He expresses these tensions in forms based on antimony.


Treats first the rational and then the voluntary operations by which man affirms the existence of God. Describes the state of mind in which the fullest knowledge of God is experienced.


Articles


Defines a method of argument used in connection with diverse subjects. In the first phase Pascal emphasizes antithetical qualities in a subject, and in the second phase he introduces a new concept which integrates the contrary terms.


Explicates Pascal's fragment on the wager, number 418. In addition to explaining the complexities of the mathematic calculation, the author explains Pascal's theories of knowledge and the relation of the fragment to the whole apology.

Explains the process by which a person improves his ability to make accurate judgements of moral issues. Interprets fragments 585, 586 and those on the subject of "l'esprit de finesse et l'esprit de géométrie."

The following titles are indirectly relevant to this thesis and are not discussed in it.

Books


This book gives meaningful biographical information, explains Pascal's major scientific endeavors and summarizes important texts.


Briefly discusses important concepts of Pascal's philosophy and thought such as "grâce", divine justice and mercy, the will and reason as agents of knowing. Following the discussion he interprets the Pensées.


Defines the French mentality of the seventeenth century. Definitions include: political, social, intellectual and religious concerns. The author shows how the word of Pascal and Racine are products of this age and thus express a tragic vision of the world.


Contains a collection of short essays each related to a specific question and interrelated by two unifying features: 1) comparisons with Leibniz and 2) definitions of the unique quality of Pascal's genius.

Examines the plan of the apology in the light of internal and external evidence. She concludes that Pascal would have used a dialogue form.


Clarifies Pascal's vocabulary, ascertains the meanings of important words, and discusses images and grammar.


Part I gives biographical details. Part II discusses the fortunes of the Pensées, summarizes important texts, and explains Pascal's theory of knowledge. The author is adept at relating Pascal to modern day concerns.


Describes a theory of knowing which Pascal exposed and/or implied in many of his opuscules. Then the author shows how Pascal uses the theory as a basis for a method of persuasion.


Compares the points of view of three authors on the subject of two faculties of knowing, faith and reason.


There are four parts to the book. Part I treats Pascal's early life and scientific projects; Part II, the Provinciales; Part III, the composition and genesis of the Pensées; and Part IV, themes in the Pensées.
Articles


Analyzes the first "liasse" for internal evidence of order. The material suggests that the finished apology would have been dramatic in form and that the fragments in the "liasse" are arranged in a logical manner.


Gives a line by line explication of the "Mémorial," that Pascal had sewn into his jacket during those last years of his life.


Explicates Fragment 919 "Le Mystère de Jésus".


Reconstructs the Pascalian mind from various temporal concepts.


Dramatic elements in Pascal are a means of implementing his persuasive arguments and are embodiments of his view of the world. Concludes that Pascal associates stages of his arguments with personalities.