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INTERRUPTED DIALOGUE AND THE THEORY OF THE HUMORS
IN LA MOTHE LE VAYER

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

by
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* * * * *

The Ohio State University
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I wish to thank my adviser, Professor Charles G.S. Williams, for his help during the preparation of this study. I also wish to thank my father for his encouragement throughout the period of my graduate studies.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In seventeenth-century France there was a philosophical and literary movement known as libertinage or free-thought. Antoine Adam explains that there were various types of libertinage. There was a scandalous and blasphemous type, represented by those such as Théophile de Viau.* There was also though another type of libertinage known as libertinage érudit.¹ Free-thinking of this nature seriously questioned intellectual, moral and religious orthodoxy. However, while questioning religion, many of those who thought in these terms retained an outer appearance of religious faith. Members of the cabinet Dupuy,** or as it was also known, the Académie putéane, serve as an example of those who were part of the libertinage érudit movement.² A prominent frequentor of this group was François de La Mothe le Vayer (1588-1672).

*Théophile de Viau (1590-1626)—poet; author of Le Parnasse satyrique (1623).

**This literary circle was presided over by Pierre (1582-1651) and Jacques (1586-1656) Dupuy. Both of these brothers were medieval historians. They began to preside over this group after the death of its founder, Jacques-Auguste de Thou (1553-1617), president of the Parlement de Paris. They were also in charge of de Thou's library after his death. In 1645, Pierre became the intendant of the Bibliothèque du roi. After Pierre's death, Jacques continued to preside over the cabinet.³ Other members of this group included Pierre Gassendi, Giovanni Diodati and Gabriel Naudé.⁴
This member of the Académie Française was a prolific writer, whose interests included ancient philosophers and philosophies, history and historians, science, political systems, customs and manners of society, and religious practices.

Le Vayer is best known for two volumes entitled the Cinq dialogues faits à l'imitation des Anciens, par Orasius Tubero,* and the Quatre autres dialogues du même auteur. Faits comme les précédens à l'imitation des Anciens. These dialogues, more commonly known as the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero, appeared between 1630 and 1632 or 1633. The first volume contains the dialogues entitled: De la Philosophie sceptique; Le Banquet sceptique; De la Vie privée; Des Rares et éminentes qualités des asnes de ce temps; and De la Divinité. The contents of the second volume are: De l' Ignorance louable; De l'Opinastre; De la Politique and Du Mariage.**

*As the title of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero indicates, this work originally appeared as the writings of one Orasius Tubero. René Pintard determined that this name is a pseudonym for La Mothe le Vayer. Pintard explained that drawing on Latin and Greek vocabulary, Le Vayer created this name as follows: "Le Vayer" or "le voyeur," the one who sees, became Orasius (Ὀράσιος), and "Mothe" which resembles the word "motte," a lump, bulge or hump, and which in Latin is "tuber," became Tubero.5

**The earliest complete edition of the Dialogues places the first four of these dialogues in volume one and the other five dialogues in volume two. Later editions of either only five dialogues or of all nine dialogues place together the first five dialogues listed above. One may assume, therefore, that Le Vayer decided that it was preferable for these five dialogues to appear as a unit. Further discussion of the arrangement of the dialogues may be found on pages 92-93 of this study. Also, additional information concerning the publication of the various editions of the Dialogues may be found on pages 5-6.
In these dialogues, Le Vayer expresses his basic philosophical position—a defense and praise of scepticism and of the followers of this philosophy. Much of the scholarship concerning Le Vayer has dealt with the problem of determining the true nature of this sceptical position. That is, is Le Vayer sincere in his statements which exempt Christian religious beliefs and practices from the scrutiny of the sceptical questioning of the certitude of any position? Or is Christianity just as arbitrary as any other belief, and subject to the same lack of certitude? Overwhelmingly, critics have favored the second interpretation, a position which for reasons to be considered later seems to be the most reasonable to assume. The purpose of this study thus is not to open again the debate as to whether Le Vayer was indeed a non-believer or not. Rather my objective is to view the dialogues from a different approach, in order to increase understanding of their meaning and of Le Vayer himself.

More specifically, the two major chapters of this study will deal with what I have called "interrupted dialogue." This term refers to the particular situation portrayed by Le Vayer in the Dialogues. Sceptics such as Le Vayer realize that definitive explanations of both the banal and profound questions which confront man are not possible. When the attempts of the Sceptics in the Dialogues to convince others of this fact are rejected, the result is a breakdown in communication. It is this breakdown in meaningful dialogue, resulting from the fact that the Sceptics are unable to gain acceptance of their arguments, which constitutes the situation I have termed interrupted dialogue.
The analysis of each individual dialogue in this study will begin with a detailed summary of the exchanges in the dialogue. Using this summary as a point of departure, I shall then explore the notion of interrupted dialogue as it applies to the particular dialogue being analyzed. Also, I shall consider aspects of certain dialogues which further serve to illustrate Le Vayer's art of dialogue. Such factors would include his method of developing a speaker's personality, and his use of rhetorical devices to underscore his philosophical position.

The last chapter of this study will begin with a consideration of the Prose chagrine (1661). In this work, Le Vayer presents an analysis of himself, explaining that he subscribes to the theory of the humors and views himself as a melancholic. This discussion will serve as a point of departure for a consideration of the Dialogues in terms of the humoral theory, and for a final appreciation of the work of La Mothe le Vayer.

While doing the basic research work for this study, it became evident that there is lacking a single complete listing of the more than one hundred titles of the writings of La Mothe le Vayer and the various editions of these works. I therefore have collected this information, which is scattered in the major bibliographies of French literature and certain specialized bibliographies on Le Vayer, and have placed this information in Appendix A. Furthermore, I have included in Appendix A many notes which detail the discrepancies in information found in the various bibliographies consulted, and I have considered some of the details concerning the actual existence or non-existence of certain editions of the Dialogues. Also, in order to
complement this listing, I have assembled information concerning the manuscripts of works of Le Vayer, and have placed this information in Appendix B. One aspect of the matter of editions though needs to be considered at this point, for it relates to the question of the edition chosen for use as a source of quotations in this study.

René Pintard considers the problem of establishing the editions of the *Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero* in his study, *La Mothe le Vayer, Gassendi, Guy Patin: études de bibliographie et de critique, suivies de textes inédits de Guy Patin*. He classifies these publications as editions A to F, as follows:

<table>
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<th>Pintard's Classification</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>City and date publication, according to title page</th>
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<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Quatre dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens par Orasius Tubero</td>
<td>Francfort, 1604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Missing (This volume would contain the five other dialogues.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Quatre dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens, par Orasius Tubero</td>
<td>Francfort, 1506 [sic]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Cinq autres dialogues du même auteur. Faits comme les précédents à l'imitation des anciens (In this edition, <em>De l'Inignorance louable</em> precedes <em>De la Divinité.</em>)</td>
<td>Francfort, 1606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Cinq dialogues Faits à l'imitation des Anciens, Par Oratius Tubero</td>
<td>Mons, 1671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Cinq dialogues Faits à l'imitation des Anciens. Par Oratius Tubero</td>
<td>Mons, 1673</td>
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On the basis of his comparison of the texts, Pintard states that the incomplete edition A and edition B, the oldest complete text, are the most authoritative. Thus they would certainly be the basis of any critical edition. The edition of 1716, edition E, which does not contain any significant textual variations and which is far more accessible than editions A and B, is the one which has been used in the preparation of this study. Pintard states that less care was taken in the presentation of this text, than in that of edition B (e.g., spelling errors are to be found). However, this situation does not create a problem for the use of this edition in my analysis of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero.

Biographical material on Le Vayer and the critical tradition surrounding him, both briefly alluded to above, remain to a large extent not generally known. Thus in order to provide some background for analysis of Le Vayer in terms of interrupted dialogue and the theory of the humors, I shall now consider briefly each of these topics.
La Mothe le Vayer was born into a family which had settled in the fourteenth century in the province of Maine. His father, Félix Le Vayer, Sieur de la Mothe, was a lawyer in the Parlement de Paris, and later a judge. Le Vayer came to the attention of Richelieu after the publication of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero. Cognizant of the erudition and polemic ability of Le Vayer, and particularly impressed by his treatment of politics in the Dialogues, the Cardinal assigned Le Vayer the task of justifying the alliances of the French with the Protestants of Holland and Sweden. The result of this work was the Discours sur la bataille de Lutzen and the Discours sur la proposition de la trève au (sic) Pays-Bas, en 1633. During the 1630s, Le Vayer continued to write politically-oriented material, such as the anti-Spanish piece, presented under the guise of a translation, the Discours de la contrariété d'humeurs, qui se trouve entre certaines nations, et singulièrement entre la Françoise et l'Espagnole, traduit de l'italien de Fabricio Campolini, Veronois. Also, in 1638, Le Vayer began to publish a series of opuscules, which considered the diversity of customs and ideas, and thereby aimed at lending further weight to the sceptical position.

The last three years of the life of Richelieu marked a high point in Le Vayer's fortunes. During this time Le Vayer was elected to the Académie Française, and at the request of Richelieu, Le Vayer wrote De la Vertu des payens (1642). The purpose of this work, as well as that of another treatise commissioned by Richelieu, La Défense de la vertu (1641) by Père Antoine Sirmond, was to combat Jansenism.

*Père Antoine Sirmond (1591-1643)—confessor of Louis XIII; opposed by Arnauld and Pascal (in the tenth Provinciale).
Both books defended moral virtue in its opposition to "la vertu conditionnée par la grâce," which is the essence of Jansenist doc-

trine.16

Richelieu died in 1642. Though he had intended that Le Vayer serve as the tutor of the future Louis XIV, the death of Richelieu opened the question of filling this post. Mazarin chose Hardouin de Péréfixe, abbé de Beaumont, for this position.17 However, in 1647, Le Vayer was called to court to take charge of the instruction of the King's brother, Philippe, duc d'Orléans, and also assumed some of the duties of instructing the King, especially from 1652-1656.18

During this period Le Vayer wrote various volumes to serve as textbooks for the instruction of Philippe (e.g., La Géographie du prince, La Morale du prince, etc.), and published approximately one hundred short essays in the form of fictional letters.

In 1660 Louis XIV married, followed a year later by his brother. Thus the time had come for Le Vayer to retire from the Court. It was in this period that the Prose chagrine (1661) was composed.19 Furthermore, between 1662 and 1664 a second series of dialogues, La Promenade en neuf dialogues, was published. The year 1664 also marked two major events in Le Vayer's personal life. His son, who was a priest, an editor of his father's writings, and a friend of Molière, died, and Le Vayer remarried, after being a widower since 1655.20

In 1670 there appeared what might be called Le Vayer's "last word," the licentious Hexaméron rustique and the Soliloques sceptiques. The bawdy tone of the first work has a Rabelaisian quality, while
the second work confirms Le Vayer's unrelenting support of the sceptical viewpoint, in his final years. Two years after the publication of these works, Le Vayer died.

Critical work on La Mothe le Vayer has varied widely in its praise and condemnation. There are the mixed feelings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the often negative view of the nineteenth century, and the rehabilitation of Le Vayer in the twentieth century.

In the seventeenth century favorable remarks about Le Vayer may be found in Pellison's *Histoire de l'Academie Francaise* (1653), the *Mercure galant* of March, 1622, and Perrault's *Les Hommes illustres* (1696-1700). One should note though that Balzac and Vaugelas opposed Le Vayer. Balzac stated that Le Vayer was "un grand fanfaron de philosophie," while Le Vayer and Vaugelas differed on matters of style. Le Vayer opposed an extreme purification of language and defended the use of archaic forms, as well as the idea of letting language develop and renew itself. These ideas are expressed, for instance, in the dialogue *De l'Opinastreté*, in the *Discours sur l'éloquence française de ce temps* (1638), and in four letters written in 1647 to Gabriel Naudé. These letters were later included in the *Petits traités en forme de lettres*.

A negative view of Le Vayer may also be found in *Les Mélanges d'histoire et de littérature* (1701) of Vigneul-Marville,* where it was stated that Le Vayer's works "ne sont qu'un amas de ce qu'il

*Vigneul-Marville, pseudonym of Noël Bonaventure d'Argonne (1634-1704)—man of letters; lawyer in the Parlement.
avoir trouvé de meilleur dans le cours de ses lectures, qu'on lisoit autrefois ces sortes de rapsodies mais qu'elles ne sont plus de notre goût.\textsuperscript{26} However, Pierre Bayle, in his Dictionnaire historique et critique (1697), included an article on Le Vayer which supported Le Vayer's writings and philosophical position.\textsuperscript{27} Also, in his article on Pyrrho, Bayle indicated his support of Le Vayer's espousal of pyrrhonism.\textsuperscript{28}

The eighteenth century saw the publication of what is still today the most complete collection of Le Vayer's works, though the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero are noticeably absent from this edition. The anonymous editor of this publication of 1756 traced the life of Le Vayer, and stated that "on ne croit pas trop dire, quand on avance, que le Recueil des Oeuvres de Mr. de la Mothe le Vayer peut tenir lieu d'une petite Bibliothèque à ceux, qui souhaitent d'avoir quelque teinture des Sciences à des belles Lettres."\textsuperscript{29}

As one might well expect, Voltaire supported Le Vayer's views\textsuperscript{30} and included him in the list of authors in Le Siècle de Louis XIV. Voltaire also composed a work entitled the "Idées de La Mothe le Vayer." However, this list of ideas, which appeared both under Voltaire's own name and that of one Abbé de Tilladet, reflected a deism which was not representative of Le Vayer's thought.\textsuperscript{31}

In addition to the collected works of Le Vayer noted above, two anthologies of Le Vayer's writings were published in the eighteenth century. The editor of the volume L'Espirt de La Mothe le Vayer (1763), stated that for Le Vayer all opinions were "presque indifférentes," except those "dont la foi ne permet pas que l'on doute."\textsuperscript{32}
Twenty years later, in *La Philosophie de La Motte le Vayer*, the editor of this anthology made the cautious remark that Le Vayer "respecte toujours les vérités de la Religion, & qu'il les regarde comme certaines et sacrées."  

In the nineteenth century other attempts were made to study La Mothe le Vayer. In 1849, Louis Etienne presented a dissertation to the Faculté de Rennes. The negative views presented in this work were unfortunately the beginning of much of the subsequent critical approach toward the writings of Le Vayer. Etienne maintained, for example, that "rien n'est plus superficiel que le scepticisme de La Mothe-Le-Vayer. Ses dix-huit volumes ne contiennent pas une réfutation, je ne dis pas sérieuse, mais régulière des grands systèmes du dogmatisme," and that "avec moins d'érudition et plus de génie, s'il citait moins et s'il pensait davantage, il eût grossi le nombre des Labruyère et des Vauvenargues." Furthermore, Etienne remarked that

C'est avec La Mothe-Le-Vayer que le scepticisme paraît baisser d'un degré comme philosophie, et tout ensemble s'exagérer et se rapetisser, s'exagérer dans les petites choses, et se rapetisser dans les grandes. . . . depuis . . . [les Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero] et dans ce livre même, Le Vayer s'est appliqué à fuir les grandes, les hautes questions, ou, s'il les aborde, ce n'est pas pour les mesurer, les soulever, les pénétrer, c'est pour y jeter quelques fleurs d'érudition, fleurs communes et faciles.

The work of Sainte-Beuve, *Port-Royal* (1840-59), also considered La Mothe le Vayer. In the context of his analysis of the view held by the leaders of Port-Royal vis-à-vis Montaigne, Sainte-Beuve remarked:
Il y avait, vers cette moitié du XVIIe siècle, assez d'écrivains, soit graves et accrédités auprès des doctes, tels que La Mothe-Le-Vayer, soit frivoles ou à la mode auprès des frivoles, tels que Saint-Evremond, il y avait dans le monde assez d'esprits libertins, pour dénoter et accuser la persistance de ce mal philosophique qu'on appelait à Port-Royal et qu'on spécifiait du nom de Montaigne.37

In addition, Sainte-Beuve mentioned the publication of De la Vertu des payens, while discussing the views of Saint François de Sales.44

Furthermore, in 1879, René Kerviler also published a study on Le Vayer. In this work, Kerviler analyzed Le Vayer's writings, corrected factual errors in Etienne's work, and offered many biographical details which were not in Etienne's study. Near the end of his analysis, Kerviler concluded that Le Vayer was

un sophiste assez inoffensif pour son époque, et l'ardeur des luttes pour et contre le jansénisme empêcha l'opinion d'attacher une importance bien sérieuse à ses rêveries. Malheureusement Le Vayer ne calcula pas la portée de ses coups, ni l'inconséquence de sa sceptique chrétienne. On ne démolit pas impunément des systèmes positifs, si l'on n'en rebâtit pas d'autres aussi positifs. Les petits nuages amoncelés finissent par engendrer la tempête. Quand le vent de l'incredulité souffla sur le XVIIIe siècle on alla chercher des armes dans le riche arsenal approvisionné par notre philosophe qui fit ainsi presque tous les frais de l'érudition des sophistes de ce temps.39

In 1884, Jacques Denis considered Le Vayer in a short study on Le Vayer, Naudé, Patin, Gassendi, and Cyrano de Bergerac. Denis outlined Le Vayer's sceptical position, and had little praise for Le Vayer's style, noting that it lacked imagination and sparkle.40 He concluded that Le Vayer "parait plus près du libertinage que de la foi."41

*François de Sales (saint) (1567-1622)—Bishop of Geneva; author of the Introduction à la vie dévote and the Traité de l'amour de Dieu; important in the formation of the doctrine of Port-Royal.
At the end of the century there appeared a dissertation by Lucien-Léon Lacroix on De la Vertu des payens. Furthermore, in 1896, F.-T. Perrens published Les Libertins, the first comprehensive study of libertinage in France. In Les Libertins, several pages relying heavily on Etienne and Denis were devoted to Le Vayer.

Interest in the libertin movement during the first part of the twentieth century was confirmed by J.-Roger Charbonnel's work, La Pensée italienne au XVIe siècle (1919), and Frédéric Lachèvre's pioneering works on Théophile de Viau, Le Procès du poète Théophile de Viau (1909) and Cyrano de Bergerac, Les Oeuvres libertines de Cyrano de Bergerac (1921). Also, Ernest Tisserand published in 1922 the first modern edition of two of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero—De la Divinité and De l'Opinâtre— in the Editions Bossard collection of the "chefs-d'oeuvre méconnus." This publication signaled the beginning of the rehabilitation of La Mothe le Vayer.

In his introduction, Tisserand surveyed Le Vayer's life, his acquaintances and writings, and summarized the main points of the dialogues comprising the edition. He stated much as had the editor of the 1756 edition of Le Vayer's writings, that the works of Le Vayer may be deemed "une sorte de dictionnaire des moeurs, des connaissances et des croyances humaines, non point classées, mais rassemblées autour de quelques sujets centraux." He also reviewed the comments of Etienne, and maintained that Etienne, in his treatment of Le Vayer, "l'enfonça le plus profondément qu'il put dans sa tombe." Furthermore, Tisserand noted that Le Vayer's work has been both overly praised and not praised enough. This though is not of importance,
for if Le Vayer's work "reste nominalement ignorée, les bons auteurs n'ont jamais manqué, qui la [son oeuvre] pillent pour le bien général. D'autres viendront, qui lui rendront ses droits." 45

Several other studies also appeared in the 1920s and 1930s. Emile Magne considered in detail the relationship between Le Vayer's niece and Molière, while A. Lytton Sells provided facts on the influence of Le Vayer on Molière. Henri Busson wrote of Le Vayer in La Pensée religieuse française de Charron à Pascal (1933), and portrayed Le Vayer as a Sceptic without Montaigne's stylistic genius. A Master's degree thesis at Ohio State University in 1933, by Irwin Johnson, studied Le Vayer's historical writings. And in 1934, a dissertation on Le Vayer's life and works was published by Florence L. Wickelgren. This study remains the standard and most complete—unfortunately it shed no new light on Le Vayer.

The greatest impetus to studies on French free-thought was the publication in 1943 of René Pintard's Le Libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVIIe siècle. In Pintard's study, a systematic and detailed analysis of the libertin movement, Le Vayer's scepticism and his place in libertinage were considered on the basis of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero and his other writings. Pintard concluded his analysis of Le Vayer by stating that "la philosophie de Le Vayer marque assez bien, en dépit de tous ses mensonges, sa fidélité aux intentions libertines qui l'ont suscitée." 46 It will be remembered that in addition, Pintard did extensive bibliographical research on Le Vayer. This work was also published in 1943.
Since Pintard, the studies on Le Vayer by J. S. Spink, Ira Wade, and Julien-Eymard d'Angers have continued to place Le Vayer in the school of scepticism and religious disbelief. Richard Popkin, however, in *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes* (1960), questioned this judgment of contemporary critics, that Le Vayer was a "'sceptique masque'" who lacked the religious fervor of Pascal, or the possibly orthodox intent of Montaigne.47

In 1951, René Jasinski published *Molière et le Misanthrope*. This detailed study considered among other things, the relationship of Le Vayer and Molière, and underscored the importance of the humoral theory in understanding both of these authors.** This matter of the humors, as indicated above, will be considered further in the fourth chapter of this study.

Also, John W. Cosentini treated Le Vayer in his *Fontenelle's Art of Dialogue*. He viewed Le Vayer as lacking the skill and polish of Fontenelle. Furthermore, Cosentini stated that Le Vayer served to form part of a tradition, which helped to pave the way for the triumph of dialogue, in the hands of Fontenelle.

In 1964, Yuksel Ismael presented a Master's degree thesis at Case Western Reserve University on Le Vayer, which did nothing but summarize Pintard and Popkin. In 1972, Ismael presented an edition of two

*A "sceptique masqué" was a Sceptic, who while doubting the principles of Christianity, publically declared that these principles were not subject to doubt.

**It will be remembered that the first subtitle of *Le Misanthrope* was *L'Atrabilaire amoureux.*
dialogues of Le Vayer (De la Vie privée and Des Rares et éminentes qualités des ânes de ce temps), as a Ph.D. dissertation. This "critical edition," though, is based on only one edition of the Dialogues, which is not, as it is claimed, the most "authoritative" for the purpose of establishing a critical edition.

Furthermore, in articles dating from 1969 and 1972, Robert McBride detailed the relationship between Le Vayer and Molière. He again considered this matter in his 1977 volume, The Sceptical Vision of Molière. Also, Bernard Beugnot considered Le Vayer in a 1971 article, "La Fonction du dialogue chez La Mothe le Vayer." Beugnot noted the presence of a type of dialogue situation in those works not necessarily termed dialogues, and commented on the importance of the humoral theory in understanding Le Vayer. In addition, Beugnot mentioned Le Vayer in his studies, "L'Entretien au XVIIe siècle" (1971), and "Dialogue, entretien et citation à l'époque classique" (1976), while Carlo François treated Le Vayer in a 1973 study on the notion of absurdity in seventeenth-century French literature.

Finally, there are two dissertations from 1974 and 1975 which dealt with Le Vayer. The first dissertation, a general consideration of dialogue in seventeenth-century France, by Phillip Wolfe, considered the role of Le Vayer in the development of dialogue. The other, a Canadian dissertation by David Graham, analyzed the moral and religious thought of Le Vayer.49

With this background, one is now prepared to explore the notion of interrupted dialogue in the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero.
Notes

2 Adam, pp. 10-12.
6 Pintard, pp. 13-14.
7 Pintard, pp. 5-6.
8 Pintard, p. 15.
9 Pintard, p. 15.
12 Kerviler, p. 47.
13 Kerviler, p. 69.
15 Tisserand, p. 23.
16 Wickelgren, p. 186.
17 Tisserand, p. 23.
18 Tisserand, pp. 24-25.
19 Tisserand, p. 25.


22 François de La Mothe le Vayer, Oeuvres de François de La Mothe le Vayer, nouvelle édition, revue et augmentée (Dresde: Groell, 1756), I, pt. i, 27.


25 Tisserand, pp. 45-47.

26 Le Vayer, Oeuvres, I, pt. i, 43.


28 Bayle, XII, 99-112.

29 Le Vayer, Oeuvres, I, pt. i, 16.


31 Tisserand, pp. 55-56.


35 Etienne, p. 25.
36 Etienne, pp. 76-77.


38 Sainte-Beuve, I, 262.

39 Kerviler, pp. 198-99.


41 Denis, p. 52.

42 Tisserand, p. 52.

43 Tisserand, p. 12.

44 Tisserand, pp. 52-53.

45 Tisserand, p. 53.


49 See the Bibliography for complete publication data on the studies of David Graham, Phillip Wolfe, Carlo François, Bernard Beugnot, and Robert McBride.
CHAPTER TWO

INTERRUPTED DIALOGUE IN THE CINQ DIALOGUES OF ORASIUS TUBERO

Dialogue has a privileged position in the works of La Mothe le Vayer. Using this genre, he is able to express his philosophical views most clearly and forcefully. For Le Vayer, the idea of dialogue extends beyond those works explicitly termed dialogue.¹ His concept of dialogue includes, for instance, the Prose chagrine, which is an intimate dialogue with himself. Furthermore, to the extent that every work is a dialogue of the author and the reader, philosophical works such as the Hexaméron rustique and the Soliloques sceptiques are dialogues. In La Mothe le Vayer, dialogue often assumes a particular nature, which may be called "interrupted dialogue." This chapter and the following chapter of this study will be devoted to analysis of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero in terms of this concept.

First, in the tradition of the milieu of their author, the Dialogues may be viewed as a discussion of the impossibility of establishing a definitive explanation of the essential questions and problems which confront man. This attitude is based on the sceptical indoctrination of Le Vayer. The impasse which the Sceptics encounter in attempting to convince others of the validity of the sceptical position may be termed interrupted dialogue.
Interrupted dialogue assumes different forms, depending on the particular situation established in the dialogue. In certain dialogues, there is one speaker who supports scepticism and one who opposes scepticism, this second speaker often being a Dogmatist. The Sceptic attempts to convince his antagonist that the sceptical approach is the only reasonable one to assume. If the opponent of scepticism maintains his original point of view, interrupted dialogue develops, for there is a breakdown in communication between the speakers, and the Sceptic realizes that there is little possibility that his adversary will alter his views. In other dialogues, one finds the situation that either the foe of scepticism changes his mind at the end of the dialogue and adopts scepticism, or that all the speakers in the dialogue are Sceptics and are simply presenting an elaboration of sceptical doctrine. In either case, the conclusion of the dialogue is a positive endorsement of the sceptical position. Furthermore, interrupted dialogue is nonetheless a factor in dialogues of this nature. Here, interrupted dialogue is not present on the personal level of the lack of communication between two speakers, but rather exists on the broad level of the lack of communication between the Sceptics and the world in general. That is, those who hold the sceptical view realize that they are not able to provide an argument which will convince others of the validity of the sceptical position, and thereby provide a basis for a continuing dialogue among men.

Interrupted dialogue may be visually symbolized by a circle—a circle which Le Vayer is attempting to complete, but which he falls short of closing. That is, the arguments presented by Le Vayer in support of the sceptical view, the opposing arguments of other
philosophers, and Le Vayer's rebuttals, together may be considered as points which take on the shape of a circle. The final point though is missing. This point would be the argument which might thoroughly convince those who oppose Le Vayer of the correctness of Le Vayer's position. Thus, the completed circle would signify achievement of Le Vayer's goal of general acceptance of the sceptical view—a goal which of course Le Vayer knows he will not attain. The fact that the dialogues often have only two speakers underscores the difficulty Le Vayer knows to exist in his quest for acceptance of the sceptical view. That is, by illustrating the difficulty which exists in establishing the acceptance of the sceptical view on the level of intimate and direct contact between two people, Le Vayer implies how impossible a task he has undertaken, in attempting to accomplish this on the level of society in general.

In order to enhance his presentation of philosophical interruption, Le Vayer makes use of rhetorical devices in the dialogues. These devices, which create a very real feeling of interruption, assume two forms. First, there are those remarks which signal that an interruption is about to come. For instance, a speaker might at some point in his speech make a remark such as "I have said enough," or "Let's change the subject," or "Let me make this point, before I stop." In certain cases, such remarks may be considered as a type of praecisio, in the sense that the speaker may cut himself short, or decide to avoid an explanation of some length. These remarks may also be viewed as an example of tolerantia, if the speaker indicates a certain hopelessness of accomplishment by means of further discussion. Another example of this type of signal that an interruption is about to come
is a variation of the *tempus* technique. That is, a statement may be made to the effect that sunset has come, and thus the conversation must cease.

The other aspect of rhetorical interruption is the use of a rhetorical device which illustrates the impracticality and impossibility of the establishment of a philosophical view which is so resolute as to be unchallengeable. This type of interruption is represented by the enumeration or *enumeratio*. An enumeration may be employed as follows. Speaker A expresses a view which he holds to be true, beyond any question. As a rebuttal to this, speaker B will launch into an enumeration of many practices which question the certitude which can be assigned to speaker A's view. This technique of listing is especially useful to Le Vayer in creating a feeling of interruption, for the very nature of a list implies a certain type of discontinuity, as one idea cuts off the next, before being fully developed. Furthermore, a list serves to suggest the possibility of infinite length or series. That is, the list illustrates the very point which the Sceptics wish to make—the impossibility of establishing any type of closure or conclusion.

In the course of the following analysis of the *Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero*, attention will be given to the use of rhetorical devices employed by Le Vayer in the dialogues. My purpose though will not be to make a detailed analysis of the general rhetorical procedures of La Mothe le Vayer. Rather I shall consider the rhetorical forms as outlined above, in terms of their relationship to the philosophical concerns of the texts.
In considering the *Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero*, it is useful to begin with an examination of the two letters which Le Vayer includes with the dialogues. The first "Lettre de l'Autheur" precedes the first dialogue, *De la Philosophie sceptique*. The second is placed before the sixth dialogue, *De l' Ignorance louable*. Both letters contain some of the typical false modesty and false naïveté often found in prefaces, such as the idea that the value the reader gives to the Dialogues is based on his esteem of Le Vayer and not the merit of the work (I,i), or the remark that this new work will be no better than the other writings of Le Vayer (II,i). Consideration of these prefaces is nevertheless of primary importance in establishing the goals, literary and stylistic concerns, and philosophical position of La Mothe le Vayer. That is, the "Lettres" give a clear idea of what Le Vayer considers to be his purpose and place in the "République des lettres" and in society in general.

On the matter of goals, Le Vayer says in the first letter that

> Ma main est si généreuse ou si libertine, qu'elle ne peut suivre que le seul caprice de mes fantaisies, & cela avec une licence si indépendante & si affranchie, qu'elle fait gloire de n'avoir autre visée, qu'une naïve recherche des vérités ou vray-semblances naturelles, ny plus important object que ma propre satisfaction, qui se trouve en cet innocent entretien (I, viii-ix).

The importance of personal satisfaction alluded to in this quotation is also made clear in the second letter, where Le Vayer states that in his dialogues he proceeds, "suivant tout simplement mes fantaisies, & sans dessein de plaire à qui que ce soit, j'y chante à moy mesme & aux Muses . . ." (II,i). Furthermore, the idea of his
own satisfaction is also pre-eminent in Le Vayer's explanation of his choice of the dialogue form for his work. He maintains that

je ne me suis proposé autre but que ma propre satisfaction, lorsque j'ay fait eslection de ce genre d'escrire par Dialogue, si mesprisée, vraie si deslaissé aujourd'hui; m'estant pleu d'ailleurs tant au sens qu'en la dicction [sic], & en la conception, qu'en la narration, à m'esloigner & départir des modernes pour suivre & imiter les Anciens . . . (I,iii).

One might also note that the second letter indicates Le Vayer's feeling that his work is nothing but a first draft—something in a state of flux. He says that "en toutes ces rapsodies que je vous envoye il n'y a rien que de grossierement ébauché & tel qu'une première imagination aidée de quelque lecture, l'a fantastiquement tracé sous un grossier pinceau" (II, vi). Furthermore, one should remark that Le Vayer feels that while care should be given to those few works one wishes to preserve for eternity, this is not the case for works of the "esprit," such as he is writing here (II, iv-v). One can thus see in these comments a statement on interrupted dialogue, in the implication that finality is something which is not to be found in all matters. Therefore, it is best to maintain a position which does not claim to have reached this state.

With respect to his philosophical position, Le Vayer indicates his attitude quite clearly, while he is defending his choice of subject matter. Though some might attack those concepts he discusses, on the basis of being somewhat exaggerated or frivolous, Le Vayer notes that "toute nostre vie n'est, à la bien prendre, qu'une fable, nostre coignoissance qu'une asnerie, nos certitudes que des contes: bref, tout ce monde qu'une farce & perpetuelle comedie" (I, vi).
Thus life presents little to which one can attach an absolute value, and scepticism would therefore logically follow as a reasonable viewpoint to assume. Le Vayer also indicates in his prefaces that he is not concerned whether others approve of his choice of language (II, xiii), his direct citations from the Ancients (II, vii ff.), and the way in which he makes his characters speak in whatever fashion he feels they should (II, x-xi). However, the fact that he does recognize all of the criticism he might incur as a result of both his style and theme (I, iii)—while realizing also that the honnête homme can do no better than to reject the tyranny of fads (I, iii; I, vii)—clearly shows his appreciation of the impossibility of agreement on the correctness of anything he undertakes. When this idea is coupled with Le Vayer's avowal noted above, that the potential of any work to show the truth can only be "naïve," that is tentative, or severely limited, if not, as is most likely the case, fruitless, and that the world is a farce, there can be no longer any question as to what the thematic raison d'être of the dialogue is. That is, Le Vayer wishes to attack, with few if any true reservations, many institutions which are generally held in high esteem, and in so doing to make a case for scepticism. Furthermore, his comments are not simply to be considered as a witty intellectual amusement, but rather as a reflection of his most inner feelings.

Turning now to the dialogues themselves, one finds that the first dialogue, De la Philosophie sceptique, is a clear exposition of the basic view of scepticism, the traditional rejections of the sceptical position by the Dogmatists and others, and the subsequent defense and
counter-attacks presented by the Sceptics. Relativism is, of course, an essential aspect of this initial "profession de foi sceptique." In the dialogue, one is confronted with varied ways of considering a particular topic or custom, each of whose supporters considers his way of thinking or acting to be the best. Thus, the basis of any position one maintains may be put into question by another person, who has facts which oppose those one considers to be certain.

The speakers in the first dialogue are Eudoxus and Ephestion. While they are not highly-developed individual personalities, each of these speakers is a recognizable porte-parole of his respective philosophical camp. The former is an anti-sceptical philosopher, specifically an Aristotelian, while the latter is a champion of Pyrrhonism, in the tradition of Sextus Empiricus. Though the greatest part of the speaking and argumentation in the dialogue is done by Ephestion, this does not prevent interpretation of the work in terms of interruption. The little which Eudoxus says is enough to pit the opposing forces clearly.

The content and movement of this dialogue are in outline as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pages</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>main actions and/or ideas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) 1-3</td>
<td>Eudoxus</td>
<td>attacks the Sceptics, on the basis of the extremes to which the Sceptics go in their rejection of the existence of any principles or facts which are certain</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) 3-9</td>
<td>Ephestion</td>
<td>defends the Sceptics, noting that Eudoxus misunderstands the Sceptics' position; cites examples to illustrate how our senses deceive us and mentions the names of some figures of Antiquity, who espoused scepticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) 9-11</td>
<td>Eudoxus</td>
<td>feels that the very extreme beliefs of the Sceptics mock God's work and man in general</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4) 11-18 Ephestion cites authorities in order to show that adhering to popular opinion does not lead one to correct beliefs; notes that new discoveries make espousal of public opinion an even more unacceptable position than formerly; remarks that our views on a given subject are always in a state of change

5) 18 Eudoxus maintains that if all is uncertain, as the Sceptics say, then their basic proposition is uncertain too; if so, the opposite of what the Sceptics say is true, and thus there are things which are certain

6) 18-20 Ephestion defends the sceptical view by showing that this position does not by its very essence negate itself

7) 20-21 Eudoxus feels that the Sceptics disagree among themselves as to how to define their position, and that the Sceptics lack many good examples to support their claims

8) 21-76 Ephestion asserts that a variety of ways of dividing the tenets of scepticism is not to be viewed as a major lack of solidarity among the proponents of this philosophy; presents a study of the customs, actions and opinions of different groups; provides in this study many specific examples in support of the Sceptics' view with respect to the diversity and lack of certainty of opinion; notes how every country, tribe, etc., thinks that its ideas are the most valid, and that our actions are not based on reason and justice, but rather usage and imitation

9) 77-79 Eudoxus continues to reject the Sceptics, for their position can only lead to a feeling of uncertainty, while what one actually quests is truth and finality

10) 79-83 Ephestion declares that scepticism is what gives one peace and true repose; maintains that finding absolute truth is a goal which cannot be realized

11) 83 Eudoxus avows his commitment to his views

12) 83 Ephestion departs, noting Eudoxus' blindness in his actions
After the first seven exchanges, in which each speaker sets forth his basic point of view and his unwillingness to accept the other speaker's ideas, Ephestion launches the major portion of the dialogue—a long defense of scepticism. In this section, he discusses the lack of certainty which exists, with respect to topics such as beauty, the use of clothing, youth, eating habits, climate and the relationship of parents and children.

On the subject of youth, Ephestion considers different views on the matter of the age at which a woman is most desirable. He states:

"Ne croyons nous pas que les plus jeunes soient les plus estimées par tout" (33)? However, he goes on to add that in some countries "les plus vieilles y sont en plus grand prix, & celui croit avoir bien trompé son compagnon qui a eu la plus âgée pour sa part" (33-34).

This general matter of youth and old age is also considered in the discussion of the relationship of parents and children. With respect to this topic, Ephestion maintains that the commonly held notion of the obligations of children to parents is far from certain (50 ff.). There is no obligation on the part of the child towards his parents, and indeed, a human is less in debt to a parent than is an animal:

considerant nostre ame immortelle & nous tenans dans les termes des Religions; il faut avouer qu'il n'y a point d'animaux qui ne soient beaucoup plus redevables à leurs parens de l'estre qu'ils ont reçus d'eux, que n'est pas l'homme. Car nous tenons tous que la semence des brutes produit avec le corps l'ame sensitive, qui fait vivre leur generation, laquelle par ce moyen reçoit de ses parens ex traduce, comme dit l'école, la vie toute entiere, & une vie à ne considerer qu'elle temporellement, comme l'on dit, sans comparaison plus accomplie que celle des hommes. Là où les hommes ne contribuant à la production de leurs
enfans que la matière simplement, puisque nous croyons que la forme vient du Ciel, il s'ensuit qu'ils leur donnent beaucoup moins que les premiers, voire même, que si l'axiome est véritable, forma dat esse rei, ce n'est pas d'eux proprement que cette postérité tient la vie (53-54).

These two sections of Ephestion's discussion resemble a passage in Cyrano de Bergerac's *Voyage dans la lune* (c. 1657). In Cyrano's work, the topic is not exactly the same as those discussed above, but is an aspect of the general subject of old age versus youth. Specifically, at one point in his journey, Cyrano engages in conversation with two professors. It is here that young people are portrayed as superior to old people, given the ability of youth to think and act quickly. Certainly, there are laws honoring old people, yet

tous ceux qui ont introduit des lois ont été des vieillards qui craignaient que les jeunes ne les dép possédaissent justement de l'autorité qu'ils avaient extorquée et ont fait comme les législateurs aux fausses religions un mystère de ce qu'ils n'ont pu prouver.6

Thus Cyrano also puts the common notion of the relationship of one generation to the next into question, and the ideas of relativism and of uncertainty that exist with respect to customs and beliefs are clearly illustrated.

In the course of his long speech, Ephestion considers how even good sense and reason may possibly not be as desirable as one might expect. He says that
cette eminence & pureté d'esprit, qui est la lumière & splendeur seiche d'Héraclite,* nous nuit, & nous prejudicieux bien plus tôt dans le cours de la vie civile,

*Héraclite (c. 535 B.C – c. 475 B.C.)—Greek philosopher; held that there was no permanent reality except the reality of change—permanence was an illusion of the senses; considered fire to be the underlying substance of the universe.
And then Ephestion adds, with a final Aristotelian definition likely to appeal to his hearer:

"il n'y a homme de sentiment autre que le vulgaire, lequel n'advoue que son esclaircissement & sa cognoissance luy ont tousjours esté plutost ruineux & prejudiciales, qu'avantageux & profitables . . . ce bons sens ou ce bon espirit, dont on se veut tant prevaloir . . . n'est plus d'usage que dans le desert & la solitude, puisque dans le cours & trafic de la vie civile, il passe pour mar-chandise de contrebande, ou pour monnoye deffendue, & qui n'est de mise, plutost capable de vous nuire & mettre en peine, que de vous servir en vos affaires & au besoin (59-60).

Clearly, Ephestion is thus again making the point that all is relative, all is uncertain.

The topics and examples presented by Ephestion are not enough, though, to shake the firmness of Eudoxus' position. This is evident in the final speeches of the dialogue where, for instance, Eudoxus says to Ephestion: "Vostre chant de Syrene ne peut rien sur mon oreille," and chooses to cling to Aristotle, "aux preceptes duquel je fais gloire de souscrire si besoin est aveuglement" (83). On Cyrano's moon such tenacity in argument will be met—and interrupted—with ridicule, as does Granicus to a lesser extent in his refutation of Telamon in De l'Ignorance louable (II, 85 ff.).
Thus, the exchanges in this dialogue illustrate the concept of interrupted dialogue on the philosophical level. The specific topic under consideration may be in itself of little importance. What is significant is the inference that no matter what the subjects might be, they all reflect the impossibility of resolving anything. There are, of course, token acknowledgments of the validity of the other speaker's point, such as when Eudoxus says:

J'advoué, Ephestion . . . que toutes choses ayant deux anses, comme toute medaille deux visages, il faut user de très-grande reservation d'esprit avant que de rien prononcer; mais de vouloir estendre cela jusques aux choses les plus communes, voire les plus sensibles, c'est non-seulement sortir du grand chemin, contre le precepte de Pythagore, mais veritablement ainsi qu'on dit se moquer de Dieu & des hommes . . . (9).

Furthermore, also early in the dialogue, there is a partial concession on the part of Eudoxus, which is made in conjunction with Ephestion's presentation of several traditional defenses of scepticism—arguments which stem directly from Sextus Empiricus.\(^7\) Eudoxus says at one point, in order to negate scepticism, that

s'il n'y a rien de certain, vostre proposition mesme ne sera pas certaine, & si elle ne l'est pas, son contraire se trouvera veritable; c'est à sçavoir qu'il y a quelque chose de vray & de certain, ainsi voilà la base & le soutien de toutes vos machines renversée par un dilemme qui ne reçoit de replique (18).

To this charge, Ephestion replies though that

quand nous disons qu'il n'y a rien de vray ny de certain, cette voix n'est pas simplement ni absolument affirmative, mais contient tacitement une exception de soy mesme, comme quand nous nommions tantost avec Homere Jupiter pere des hommes & des Dieux, cela se doit entendre luy excepté, autrement puis qu'il est du nombre & le plus grand d'iceux, ce seroit le faire pere & fils tout ensemble (19).
Similarly, scepticism may be defended on the basis that

le feu ayant consommé tout l'aliment combustible, se
consomme encore soy-mesme, & les purgatifs de la mede-
cine en chassant du corps les mauvaises humeurs, sortent
encore eux-mesmes par leur propre faculté, & se
poussent quant & quant au dehors. . . . Ainsi nostre
axiome disant, qu'il n'y a rien de certain, se comprend
& enveloppe soy-mesme . . . en telle sorte qu'il ne
prononce rien contre autruy qui ne s'estende sur luy-
mesme (19-20).

And furthermore,

nous usons encore icy de la comparaison de celuy qui
s'estant servi d'une echelle pour parvenir au sommet desire,
la renverse puis apres, ne luy estant plus d'usage; car
ainsi nous estans servis de la demonstration qui establit
l'incertitude de toutes choses, nous la renversons elle
mesme, rien ne pouvant subsister de certain devant nous (20).

After this presentation of the basis of scepticism, one finds
Eudoxus' partial recognition of the validity of Ephestion's views, for
Eudoxus says that he recognizes that Ephestion's arguments serve to
lend support to his position; however, they are not unchallengeable
as are those of the Aristotelian philosophy to which he subscribes.
Specifically, he states: "J'advoue que les comparaisons sont fort
propices et merveilleusement bien secondantes vos intentions, mais
si ne sont elles pas à l'épreuve de notre Dialectique, qui ne demeure
jamais sans repartis" (20-21). Thus, there is again expressed here a
certain amount of recognition of the other speaker's view, and the
care put into the formulation of this position; yet the basic dis-
agreement remains, and it precludes a resolution of the conflict.8
In the rhetorical technique in this dialogue, *enumeratio* predominates in the long speech of Ephestion. This enumeration takes two forms. There is enumeration in the sense that many general topics are considered, and in the discussion of each topic which is developed with many examples. For instance, climate is one of the matters considered (63-69), and examples are given of differing views on what constitutes a good climate. Most importantly, it should also be noted, by means of consideration of a topic of this nature, Ephestion is showing that if there can be no uniformity of opinion among men, on a matter as mundane as climate, the Dogmatists are without doubt extremely unrealistic and incorrect in their position.

The second dialogue, *Le Banquet sceptique*, presents various contrasts with the first dialogue of Orasius Tubero. With six participants, *Le Banquet sceptique* has the largest number of speakers of any of the nine dialogues. Furthermore, most of the dialogue consists of the recounting by Orasius of the discussion at the dinner. Here, each speaker in turn presents an analysis of a particular topic. The objective of each presentation is to show the necessity of maintaining a sceptical position. That is, the speakers do not represent opposite schools of thought, as they do in the first dialogue and in some of the subsequent dialogues. This dialogue, however, does not fail to illustrate interrupted dialogue on the philosophical level. Though the speakers are united in their acceptance of scepticism, they face a hostile world. Opponents of scepticism will always be ready to defend their beliefs, without understanding the basic shortsightedness of any approach other than that of the Sceptics.
The dialogue may be summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pages</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>main actions and/or ideas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) 85-86 Marcellus</td>
<td>asks for a recounting of what happened at the meal at Xenomanes' residence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2) 86-89 Orasius</td>
<td>agrees to recount the events of the banquet, and expresses the hope that his memory will not fail him</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3) 89-90 Marcellus</td>
<td>feels that Orasius' fear of memory loss is simply a way of increasing anticipation for Orasius' story; remarks again on his desire to hear about what took place</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4) 90-102 Orasius</td>
<td>relates how Diodotus, Divitiacus and he happened to meet Xenomanes, and how Xenomanes invited them to dinner; summarizes the ensuing conversation, which concerns, among other things, Divitiacus' initial reticence about going to the dinner; notes the remarks of the group, which were made just after their arrival at Xenomanes' home, on matters such as the proper role of servants at a meal; recounts the arrival of Eraste and his welcome by Xenomanes</td>
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</table>

N.B. As indicated, this speech begins with Orasius' narration of the events taking place on the way to Xenomanes' home and the reactions of the group on arrival there. It concludes with Xenomanes' remarks to Eraste. What follows are individually marked speeches, the first of which is Eraste's response to Xenomanes. The fact that Orasius is actually relating all of the speeches to Marcellus is not recalled until the end of speech 26, where Marcellus is addressed by name.

5) 102-3 Eraste | wishes to be forgiven for his sudden arrival at the gathering, where he mistakenly thinks he had not been invited; states that if he had known of the meal, he certainly would have not stayed away; is glad that as a result of chance, he is part of the group |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6)</td>
<td>103-4</td>
<td>Xenomanes</td>
<td>welcomes Eraste again, noting that his addition to the group does not cause a problem, but rather is proper and desired by him (Xenomanes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7)</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>Divitiacus</td>
<td>feels that the group needs to select a leader or commander of some type</td>
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<tr>
<td>8)</td>
<td>104-5</td>
<td>Diodotus</td>
<td>opposes the idea of electing a leader, for it could limit the group's liberty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9)</td>
<td>105-6</td>
<td>Divitiacus</td>
<td>feels that Diodotus' fears will not be a problem at this gathering; draws on examples from Antiquity, in order to illustrate his point concerning the role of a commander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10)</td>
<td>106-7</td>
<td>Orasius</td>
<td>comments on varying views concerning the best number of guests to have at the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11)</td>
<td>107-8</td>
<td>Xenomanes</td>
<td>presents different views on what are the proper topics for discussion at the table; feels that a particular topic under consideration does not have to be changed with each course of a meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12)</td>
<td>108-9</td>
<td>Eraste</td>
<td>notes the superiority of conversation over reading, as an activity at the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13)</td>
<td>109-10</td>
<td>Diodotus</td>
<td>indicates the value he places on the company with whom he is presently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14)</td>
<td>110-12</td>
<td>Xenomanes</td>
<td>remarks on the spirit of equality of the group; suggests a discussion on the diversity of the senses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15)</td>
<td>112-13</td>
<td>Divitiacus</td>
<td>notes that the table is not inferior to the study, as a place for the demonstration of the philosophical spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16)</td>
<td>113-14</td>
<td>Orasius</td>
<td>remarks on the popularity of the lentil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17)</td>
<td>114-15</td>
<td>Divitiacus</td>
<td>compliments Orasius on his wit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18)</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>Orasius</td>
<td>denies being so very talented; feels that he is being teased</td>
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<tr>
<td>19)</td>
<td>115-16</td>
<td>Eraste</td>
<td>presents a mocking speech on large appetites</td>
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<tr>
<td>20)</td>
<td>116-18</td>
<td>Xenomanes</td>
<td>comments on how the guests have not indulged beyond a proper extent</td>
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In the initial part of the dialogue, Marcellus asks Orasius to relate what happened at the banquet given by Xenomanes. After describing how the participants in the banquet were invited by Xenomanes, Orasius tells of the group's discussion on the way to Xenomanes' house. The specific remarks of each individual are not given. But the feeling that there was a conversation and that philosophical irresolution, relativism, and moderation characterize the feelings of the speakers, is made apparent in the recounting of this discussion by Orasius to Marcellus. Orasius makes, for instance, the following remarks:

21) 118 Divitiacus thinks, contrary to Xenomanes, that the group ate quite a lot

22) 118-28 Xenomanes proposes that each speaker express his thoughts on any subject he might wish; discuss various eating habits in different parts of the world (types of food, cannibalism, etc.)

23) 128-34 Diodotus continues to discuss eating habits and remarks on different types of table manners

24) 135-41 Divitiacus considers varying habits with respect to beverages and drinking, and the benefits and hazards of wine

25) 141-60 Eraste discusses sexual behavior in humans and animals

26) 160-73 Orasius laments the scorn which philosophy is currently experiencing; defends scepticism--a philosophical position about which there is much confusion; criticizes those who reject scepticism.

addressing Marcellus directly, remarks that his speech ended the discussion at the banquet, and notes that he printed an account of what took place at the dinner.

27) 174 Marcellus promises to publish an account of what was related to him by Orasius.
1) . . . quelqu'un de nous demandoit, pourquoi les promenades en un petit espace & de peu de longueur, estoient plus lassantes & laborieuses que celles qui estoient etendues comme la nostre, comme si cette repetition si frequente d'un mesme principe, estoit importune & travaillante. D'où venoit que si nous eussions ignoré le chemin que nous faisions, il nous eut semblé bien plus long qu'il n'estoit; si cela ne procedoit point de ce que, comme les choses que nous cognoissons sont finies & terminees, aussi celles qui nous sont incognues reussissent, à l'esgard de nostre imagination, infinies & indeterminees, si bien qu'un chemin ignore donnant de la peine à nostre esprit, comme s'il ne devoit point cesser, pourroit encore travailler le corps par consentement, & participa­tion (94-95).

2) Mais parmi tout cela & beaucoup d'autres discours, tels que la rencontre & le genie d'un chacun de nous le portoit, n'estimes pas qu'il y eust plus grande contestation que celle qui pouvoit estre requise pour entretenir nostre conversation (95).

3) Or il y a bien à dire entre ces louables contentions qui se font plus par forme d'enqueste & recherche de la verité, à la façon de Socrates, que pour rien establir de certain, & ces opinastretés insupportables, de ceux que nous voyons si bons amis, de leurs fantaisies & si contans en cette amitié, qu'ils ne les abandonnent jamais (96).

4) je [Orasius] me ris journellement . . . avec grande satisfac­tion d'esprit, de ces pedans pointilleux & critiques, opiniosissimi homines, comme les appelle Ciceron, les­quels pour faire parade des forces Athletiques, comme ils pensent de leur esprit, à ne se relascher jamais, ne s'apperçoivent pas qu'ils ne possedent que celles que leur fievre chaude & billieuse leur fournit (96).

The second quotation, which indicates that moderation should be used in a discussion, deserves special attention, for it shows a very particular aspect of Le Vayer's notion of interruption. Not only is one unable to establish the truth, but one should not even attempt to try to establish it too aggressively. Given the impossibility of the whole project, excessive zeal will do nothing but make one appear even more foolish than would a moderate attempt, resulting in a breakdown of conversational exchange.
In the early part of the dialogue, one finds some mild debate, even though the participants are all of the same philosophical persuasion. In exchanges seven through nine, for instance, there is talk of choosing a leader for the banquet, and a difference of opinion between Divitiacus and Diodotus is presented, Divitiacus favors the idea, while Diodotus does not. The remaining sections of this part of the dialogue (through speech twenty-one) consist of comments on a variety of topics, most of which are related to eating and activities possible at the table. A rhetorical technique such as a very lengthy enumeration is not used in this portion of the dialogue. Philosophical interruption continues to exist though, for there is continually the implication that the views presented would provide the basis for a confrontation of thought with a Dogmatist or a member of some other group.

Within the general context of presenting in this dissertation a Le Vayer who is more than a hopelessly complicated pedant, an aside might be made here, to point out that in this part of the dialogue one may find the type of play on words and wit at times displayed by Le Vayer. At the end of the twentieth speech, Xenomanes says: "De ma part j'asseureray de vous, que si le reste des hommes usoit du boire & du manger comme vous faites, les vivres seroient à beaucoup meilleur prix" (117). The idea here is that food would be worth more, that is, more highly esteemed. To this, Divitiacus replies that he holds a contrary view. He states: "si chascun beuvoit & mangeoit autant qu'il voudroit comme nous avons fait, c'est sans doute qu'ils enchériroient
de beaucoup" (118). In other words, the "price" would not be better, that is, "les vivres" would be more esteemed, but rather their actual cost would increase.

Beginning with speech twenty-two, a long exposé is presented by each speaker. With respect to the topics considered, the philosophical interruption in each speech is in essence the same. There are so many authorities to cite in order to give weight to any stance one may wish to take, that no single viewpoint can be held as the only valid practice. Again, Le Vayer's concern with the question of relativism is put in the forefront here. One can also see in the dialogue the theme of paradox. Man is ready to defend a particular belief, for he thinks that it is the most proper way of thinking or acting, with respect to a specific matter. He does not, however, understand the futility of such action, given the variety of opinions which exist in the world.

The question can be raised as to how much the participants in this dialogue are actually communicating and interacting with each other. The first part of the dialogue is indeed marked by interchange--some mockery of the speakers by each other, mild differences of opinion, etc. The second part of the dialogue (that is, beginning with speech twenty-two) is different. There is communication, for the speakers are working together towards the same goal in the presentation of their remarks. However, by virtue of their long exposés, the spontaneity of earlier passages is lost. In the latter part of the dialogue, though a speaker may even continue to analyze further the exact point just presented, the length of each speech precludes the creation of the same feeling of dialogue which marks the earlier
passages. This situation is a reflection of interrupted dialogue in the broadest sense. If there is only a limited amount of communication which can be achieved even among those who think the same way, there is little hope for reconciliation among hostile groups. This particular situation will also be seen below in some of the other dialogues.

Enumeration of customs, practices and beliefs is in this dialogue, as elsewhere in Le Vayer's writings, of primary importance in the development and strengthening of Le Vayer's philosophical position. This rhetorical technique is used especially in those speeches (pp. 118 ff.) in which each speaker presents his views on a different subject (e.g., eating habits, sexual behavior).

One may also find usage of the self-imposed stop in this dialogue. For instance, Xenomanes says, after discussing cannibalism, that "il y a donc plus de quoy s'estonner de nostre grande aversion en cela, que d'une pratique tellement étendue par tout l'univers. Vous donnant cette consideration pour mon symbole, & presentant le bouquet à mon proche voisin pour me suivre" (127-28).

One may also find in this dialogue a technique which is reminiscent of the tempus technique, for forces beyond those under the immediate control of the speakers would seem to force a conclusion to the dialogue. Orasius notes, as he is relating the events of the "banquet" to Marcellus, that he had been speaking to the group, and made his last point in defense of scepticism, and then, "ce fut par là ... que prit fin mon discours, & en même temps nostre assemblé, parce que le reste du jour estoit necessaire à quelque petits devoirs qui firent
venir Xenomanes jusqu'au premier carrefour où chacun prit le chemin qu'il voulut" (173-74). The necessity of attending to certain "petits devoirs" acts consequently as does a sunset, for it causes an interruption in the conversation.

Le Banquet sceptique thus is unique in some aspects of its form, while being quite typical in theme. Indeed, a major philosophical concern of Le Vayer is expressed in the quotation just cited. Orasius notes specifically that when the members of the gathering of sceptical philosophers finally parted, they went their separate ways. This may be viewed as a concrete yet symbolic representation of the state of philosophy—each school presenting its views, and then going off in its own direction.

In De la Vie privée, La Mothe le Vayer returns to the two-speaker form, yet this dialogue differs to some degree in structure from the two-speaker form of the first dialogue, De la Philosophie sceptique, for in De la Vie privée the confrontation is more evenly divided between the participants. In this dialogue, Philoponus opposes Hesychius. Philoponus represents an attitude of hostility toward those who support the position of the Sceptics—a view which places importance on the life of solitude and repose. His adversary, Hesychius, stands for the position of the sceptical philosophers. He maintains that it is only by means of the "vie privée," that is, by leading the life of one who is engaged in solitary contemplation, that one can find peace and contentment in life.
De la Vie privée is always placed third in the various editions of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero. According to Pintard, however, in terms of date of composition, this dialogue and Des rares et eminentes qualitez des Asnes de ce temps are the two earliest dialogues, on the basis of a comparison of the different editions of the dialogues. Between the printing of edition A* and of edition B, Le Vayer read different works dealing with voyages or descriptions of various countries; took information acquired from his readings; and used it in his revision of edition A, most notably in De la Philosophie sceptique and in Le Banquet sceptique. However, with respect to De la Vie privée and Des Asnes de ce temps, "c'est en vain que nous . . . avons cherché une seule [reference to his readings] dans le dialogue De la Vie privée, et nous n'en avons trouvé que quatre—dont trois fort générales—dans le dialogue Des Asnes de ce temps, bien que la façon dont l'auteur a conçu le sujet pût en amener un grand nombre."  

With respect to the additions which Le Vayer placed in edition B, in order to make more explicit and to justify his position, the number of additions in the two dialogues in question, is relatively less than in others. This situation suggests that Le Vayer had lost his interest and curiosity in these subject matters and at the time of this revision of the Dialogues was directing his attention to new subjects. Pintard does not fail to note, however, that on the linguistic level, it is in these two dialogues—presumably the oldest—that Le Vayer found the largest number of obsolete or antiquated phrases in need of change,

*See above pp. 5-6 for the discussion of the dating of the editions.
and effected the largest number of changes of this sort. Seven archai-
isms in edition A of Des Asnes de ce temps, for instance, do not appear
in edition B. And, after these remarks, based on the evidence he has
gathered, Pintard concludes that:

Ces indices concordants nous incitent à voir dans les
deux dialogues mentionnés [i.e., De la Vie privée and
Des Asnes de ce temps] des œuvres sensiblement antére-
eures—sans qu'on puisse naturellement préciser de com-
bien d'années—à la publication de 1630. Leur contenu,
d'ailleurs, n'est-il pas assez différent du reste du
recueil? Dissertations lentes et assez vaines, lourdes
facéties d'humaniste, c'est bien par là que Le Vayer
a dû commencer: il ne sera venu qu'un peu plus tard au
scepticisme, aux enquêtes systématiques sur les vari-
ations humaines, à l'expression directe d'opinions
hétérodoxes.10

Finally, Pintard notes evidence of the early composition date
of De la Vie privée, when he considers the characterizations of
the two speakers in this dialogue. The contrast of Hesychius,
"l'ami du repos," with Philoponus, "l'ami du travail," "nous
avertit de ne pas voir dans ces beaux discoureurs des créatures de
chair et d'os, mais seulement des porte-parole du philosophe ou des
marionnettes dociles à son poignet."11 As will be shown, it is not
until dialogue five, De la Divinité, that the speakers take on a
greater depth, and a speaker may assume the stature of an inter-
locutor, that is, one who has been given a certain degree of charac-
terization and who has an understanding of the personality of those
with whom he is dealing.

With good reason, one may wonder why Le Vayer does not arrange
the dialogues according to their date of composition, but rather
places the two earliest dialogues in the third and fourth positions
in the work. A solution to this problem may be found by considering
the dialogues as a whole, and the particular nature of each of the
first four dialogues.

Some of the remarks found in each "Lettre de l'autheur" would
indicate that Le Vayer is concerned in the dialogues simply with the
satisfaction and joy he can experience while writing. This idea, how­
ever, as many others already seen and yet to be analyzed, must be taken
cautiously. Le Vayer is also concerned in the dialogues with educating
and persuading to his point of view those who are unschooled in the ways
of scepticism. If one keeps these motives in mind, it becomes logical
as to why Le Vayer begins his work as he does, for with De la Philosophie
sceptique, he is skillfully able to introduce his reader to scepticism
as a whole. Why then should this dialogue be followed by Le Banquet
sceptique? One might offer as a response to this problem that it is
reasonable for Le Vayer to turn early in the formal presentation of his
complete work to a tested method of composition, the symposium technique,
in order to present further his general ideas and convince his reader of
their validity. Or, the use of this technique may be simply a desire on
Le Vayer's part for variety in his work. However, it is more likely
that by using the symposium technique, Le Vayer is insisting upon the
necessity for a certain quality of social discourse as a unique vehicle
or means of purveying the substance of the first dialogue.

In De la Vie privée though, Le Vayer centers his discussion on one
specific aspect of scepticism, the importance of solitary contemplation
--a position which was advanced by Eudoxus. This change in tactics may
be explained on the basis that after having established a type of
foundation for his work in the first two dialogues, it is not illogical for Le Vayer, in attempting to persuade his reader to accept scepticism, to turn away from discussion of mostly general concepts. It is now time to devote one dialogue to a more specific and indeed central aspect of his philosophy, as his reader becomes better prepared to understand a finer point and its centrality. But collectively, all three of these dialogues may be seen as exploring scepticism and thereby serving as a means of preparing the reader for the central dialogue in the series, De la Divinité.

The fourth dialogue, Des Asnes de ce temps, continues to build the foundation of Le Vayer's philosophical views, acting in its way—as enumeration across dialogue divisions—to enforce repetition of the essential tactic of presentation of relativism, already reinforced as a concept once at this stage of the work by the second dialogue. While both Des Asnes de ce temps and De la Divinité, the fifth dialogue, explore the concept of the relativism of opinion, these two dialogues differ in tone, the latter dialogue being far more serious and complex. Thus Des Asnes de ce temps may be viewed as a type of special preparation for the fifth dialogue, and therefore quite logically precedes De la Divinité.

De la Vie privée may be outlined as follows:

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<tr>
<th>pages</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>main actions and/or ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) 174-78 Philoponus</td>
<td>attacks Hesychius' penchant for solitude and the extremes to which he goes in his practice of scepticism; warns against overindulgence in any philosophical system</td>
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2) 178-80 Hesychius denounces, while experiencing both pity and laughter, Philoponus' indictment of philosophy and philosophers; indicates that he would not want to be party to anything of which Philoponus actually approves.

3) 180 Philoponus is surprised by Hesychius' attitude.

4) 180-82 Hesychius proposes to defend his life style; notes that true philosophers are not like those semi-learned pedants, whom Philoponus takes to be philosophers.

5) 182-83 Philoponus declares that honor cannot be achieved by those who spend their life in solitude.

6) 183-85 Hesychius maintains that those of his group are indeed active, that action being contemplation by a truly philosophical soul; notes the great importance of action of the mind over physical acts.

7) 185-88 Philoponus declares that the best life is one of repose and action.

8) 188-94 Hesychius states that while the active life has some value, only by way of the life of solitude does one acquire the most eminent virtues; feels that excesses of enthusiasm should be tolerated for those engaged in philosophy.

9) 194-99 Philoponus states that Hesychius' way of life precludes attaining the "biens de fortune," that is, material wealth.

10) 199 Hesychius maintains that the gods are the friends of those who feel as he does and that this group has more riches than Philoponus could imagine.

11) 200 Philoponus challenges the close relationship of philosophers and the gods.

12) 200-9 Hesychius takes issue with Philoponus' notion of the nature of the gods; maintains that he has all he wants; warns against desiring strongly different types of material wealth; comments on the fact that those considered poor, such as he, are in a better position to meditate and enjoy "repos," than those who are materially rich.
13) 209-13 Philoponus maintains that any pleasure derived from solitude is simply the result of the melancholy which dominates one at a given time and which produces illusions of false and imaginary pleasure; suggests that Hesychius not try so hard to find explanations for all things in the world; declares that activity is needed to perform at one's best.

14) 213-18 Hesychius states that Philoponus and those of his group attack the Sceptics, for it is normal to criticize those values which stand in opposition to those which one supports; feels that Philoponus' life is far more regimented than his, and consequently less happy; notes that philosophers have a privileged position over other men in general and particularly over the politically powerful; recounts how he too had once been driven to pursue the active life; notes that his soul, in its solitude, is free to explore the unknown and see the wonders of the world.

15) 238-39 Philoponus concludes by continuing to reject Hesychius' position.

More specifically, Philoponus begins his attack on Hesychius' solitude by stating: "je doute qu'on vous doive mettre au nombre des vivans, vostre maison vous servant desja de sepulture" (175). Then, in a general condemnation of extreme adherence to philosophy, Philoponus continues:

Vous ne vous aperceveés pas qu'au lieu de vous servir utilement & à propos de ses maximes, [i.e., those of philosophy] vous vous faites servilement son esclave, au lieu de la gouverner selon vostre usage, elle vous regente tyranniquement à sa mode, au lieu de la posséder comme chose vostre, elle vous possede & agite, comme si quelque mauvais Demon vous avoit en sa puissance (178).

It is important to understand exactly what Philoponus means in this section of the dialogue and elsewhere, when using the term "philosophy." Philoponus is most concerned with Hesychius' withdrawal from society, a problem which can be traced back directly to his
scepticism. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that when Philoponus
criticizes philosophy, what he is mainly criticizing is scepticism.
A criticism of other philosophies is present to the extent that they
in some fashion support Hesychius' view or may show the pedantry,
illogic, etc., of those who profess them. Likewise, when Hesychius
defends "philosophy," he is primarily defending scepticism. Those
statements where Hesychius gives support to other philosophical systems
are concerned with those aspects of other philosophies which are in
accord with his views. It is with this understanding that I am using
the term "philosophy" in the discussion of this dialogue.

Hesychius' response reflects his multiple emotions with respect
to Philoponus' attitude:

Bon Dieux, Philoponus! que vous me faites grand pitié
d'une part & grande envie de rire d'une autre! j'ay
grande compassion de vous voir vomir des injures, voire
des blasphèmes, contre la chose du monde la plus venerable
& la plus sainte, qui sont autant de crachats que vous
envoyez contre le ciel, & qui vous retombent honteusement
sur la face (179).

Hesychius then goes on to note that those pedants upon whom
Philoponus has based his concept of philosophers of all schools, are
really not true philosophers (181 ff.). Furthermore, he maintains
that it is wrong to characterize those who lead the solitary life as
"sans actions, & par consequent sans vertu, & sans honneur, puis que
la vertu consiste en action, & que l'honneur doit estre le prix & la
recompense de la seule vertu" (184). But rather it is imperative
for Philoponus to understand that "il n'y a point de plus grandes,
plus importantes actions, que celles d'une ame vraiment Philosophique,
lors qu'elle est le plus avant dans la contemplation" (184).
Some of the critics who have studied La Mothe le Vayer have specifically considered this initial part of *De la Vie privée*. Florence Wickelgren remarks that, "pour le moment, La Mothe le Vayer semble quitter sa philosophie à lui, son pyrrhonisme, pour contempler d'une vue plus large la philosophie tout entière. Le dialogue s'ouvre par le reproche que fait Philoponus à Hesychius sur sa vie retirée. Il trouve à reprendre dans l'excès de philosophie, 'l'intemperence se trouvant aux lettres mesme, et en la Philosophie'." Defining to some extent the term "philosophy" as used in this dialogue and noting the confluence in it of certain aspects of different philosophical systems, attention is given by Wickelgren specifically to Le Vayer's repetition of the advice of Montaigne, "Faisons que nostre contentement dépende de nous" ("De la Solitude," I, 39), and to his expression of stoic ideas directly from Seneca. Le Vayer is able, she maintains, to find a certain affinity between the moderation of the passions and detachment from the opinion of others of the Sceptics and the apathy of the Stoics. Indeed, Wickelgren concludes, these two philosophies, in quite different ways, lead to the same goal—tranquility of spirit and impassiveness in the face of daily life. While for the Stoic this impassiveness stems from a positive conviction towards that which constitutes the "souverain bien," among the Sceptics this attitude comes from an indifference towards all which seems good for man. Wickelgren does not define the word "philosophy" in a broad sense, however, as I have above, and as it should be defined, in order to grasp fully the meaning of dialogue; rather she limits the meaning of philosophy basically to scepticism and stoicism.
Le Vayer's interesting and important usage of ideas from other philosophies has also been considered by Pintard. He remarks that in De la Vie privée,

s'allume parfois, à la rencontre d'une phrase des Lettres à Lucilius, une petite flamme d'exaltation stoïcienne, mais où stoïcisme, épicurisme, pyrrhonisme confondent le plus souvent leurs aspirations dans un unique idéal de soumission aux nécessités naturelles et de mesure, et où Sextus Empiricus s'allie à Sénèque pour recommander une vie couverte et particulière, faite à la fois de repos, de tranquillité, de silence, d'indépendance d'esprit, de comode indifférence, --et de moquerie à l'égard des 'sottes opinions d'une multitude insensée', de sereine contemplation, de 'pleine et véritable liberté'.

Pintard suggests here the personal synthesis of Le Vayer's eclecticms. But like Wickelgren, he does not consider the fashion in which one should interpret the term "philosophy" in this dialogue.

As the dialogue continues, Hesychius does admit at one point that the "vie active" has "par l'exercice de plusieurs vertus, beaucoup de mérite, & de recommendation" (189), but only by way of the life of solitude, the "vie contemplative," Hesychius maintains, does one arrive at the most eminent virtues. He then goes on to say that since this type of life "produit les plus dignes & importantes actions, il me doit estre pardonnable si dans la contrainte que vous m'avés donnée, je la préfere non seulement à la vie active du commun des hommes, mais encore à celle que vous avez voulu nommer raisonnable, & qui est meslée d'action & de contemplation" (190).

Hesychius further notes, basing his remarks on Anichomacus, that "il faut abandonner le corps, & tout ce qui est corruptible, le plus qu'il nous est possible pour vivre principalement de l'esprit. C'est
ainsi qu'on s'approche de la divinité, & qu'on se peut soy mesme . . . Immortaliser" (191). He also maintains that for those who are engaged seriously in philosophy, excesses should be tolerated: "en la Philosophie, . . . cette ebriété & fureur doivent estre nommées sobriété, & temperance: car c'est de ce divin nectar communiqué aux hommes par Tantale, ainsi que l'interprete Philostrate,* que les hommes ne peuvent jamais trop boire" (193). Then he remarks that by engaging in the contemplative life, "les vrays Philosophes sont nommez Pares, & socii Deorum, non supplices" (193). Thus, "puisque nous estimons les Dieux meriter tout culte & veneration, nous ne pourrons denier l'honneur & le respect à ceux qui les touchent de si près" (193–94). Thus again Hesychius explicitly makes the point that only those who lead the contemplative life can experience true happiness and fulfillment.

Even this lengthy exposé, though, fails to bring the two speakers together. Thus the debate continues as to whose position is the more valid, and the idea of the relativism of opinion is further illustrated. Philoponus now states that those such as Hesychius cannot acquire material wealth, because of their lack of action (194 ff.). Hesychius, however, responds by noting that there is a friendship between the gods and those such as he, and that "si le proverbe est veritable, que toutes choses soient communes entre amis . . . ne vous appercevez point, Philoponus, de l'immense grandeur de nos richesses, & combien

*Philostrate (Flavius Philostratus, 175(?) – 247(?) A.D.)—author of The Life of Apollonius of Tyana and The Lives of the Sophists.
nous possédons au delà de tout ce que vous pouviez vous imaginer" (199).

Shortly thereafter, he notes again that his happiness is independent "de tout ce qui releve de la fortune" (201), and that being "dans l'affinité des Dieux," (201), he has all the riches of heaven (202).

He then gives this advice:

ostês les preventions de vostre esprit, effacez en ce qui la tyrannie d'une mauvaise coustume peut y avoir imprimé, renoncez aux sottes opinions d'une multitude insensée, examinant à la regle d'une droite raison les necessitez naturelles, & vous nous trouverez non seulement hors d'indigence, mais encore dans l'affluence des biens, non seulement hors le sentiment, mais mesme hors la crainte de la pauvreté (203).

Philoponus responds to Hesychius' contentions, that any pleasure derived from solitude is due to the effects of melancholy:

C'est une fausse & trompeuse satisfaction & complaisance, qui procede d'un temperament brusle & corrumpu, n'ayant point d'autre fondement que nostre mauvaise complexion, qui deprave & altere les fonctions de nostre ame, luy donnant des illusions d'un faux & imaginaire plaisir (210).

Hesychius replies with the longest speech in the work--about one-third of the total dialogue. Here Hesychius quotes Seneca and gives this counsel:

Tenês ... vostre loisir le plus caché qu'il vous sera possible, mais en tout cas gardez vous bien d'en tirer advantage, & vous en prevaloir sous le titre de Philosophie, imputez le plutost à une indisposition qui vous contraint au repos, dites que vostre imbecillité vous esloigne forçément de l'action, ou que vostre mauvaise fortune vous recule des charges et emplois à regret. Bref, accusez vous plutost de nonchalance & de faineantise, que de laisser penetrer vostre secret (215).

Hesychius goes on to note that life as Philoponus leads it is far from being happy, given the facts that Philoponus cannot obtain all of those things he wants and is regimented in his life (216-17). In
other words, Philoponus' view is paradoxical, for it does not bring
the happiness he is certain it does. Furthermore, Hesychius maintains
that those such as Philoponus, who feel worst off when alone, are not
able to understand the pleasure and satisfaction which can come from
solitude and solitary contemplation (219-20).

Then Hesychius states that true philosophers are in a pre­
eminent position over the politically powerful. While the latter may
be slaves to their passions, philosophers are at rest, contemplating
all, with great pleasure (226-27).

There follows at this point (pp. 231 ff.) a profession of scepti­
cal faith in which Hesychius tells how he came to adopt the philo­
sophical views he holds. After this, Hesychius requests that Philo­
ponus judge, on the basis of "raison naturelle," which of them is
indeed happier and at peace. Given Philoponus' state of quest and
inability to be satisfied, Hesychius then asks how, after all he has
presented, Philoponus could not agree with him (235-36).

Philoponus' response, the last speech in the dialogue, deserves
special attention. Philoponus begins by quoting Aristotle, to whom
he refers as Hesychius' Aristotle, and notes that by practicing a life
of solitude, man becomes either a savage beast or a god (238-39). Then
Philoponus says to Hesychius that "si vous n'estes quelque chose plus
que l'ordinaire & humain, vous avez des saillies d'esprit & des
estravagances aussi gentilles, qu'on en peut loger sous la figure
raisonnable, sans lui faire courir les rues" (238-39). That is, even
if Hesychius' views are nothing more than an ordinary position (the
implication being that they are not and thus Hesychius' views constitute
an extreme position), the witticisms and ideas of Hesychius are so mild and pleasant that they could be part of the make-up of one who appears to be reasonable. Is this an acceptance of Hesychius' view? Does this mean that since Hesychius' views could be part of those of the reasonable person, they are acceptable? That is, does Philoponus accept Hesychius' views? Or does this remark mean that Hesychius' views are of so little consequence, so innocuous, so mild, that they could be part of the ideas of a reasonable man, and not attract attention? In other words, does Philoponus feel that Hesychius' ideas are not a cause for concern—and thus conclude by continuing to reject Hesychius? The solution to this puzzle is in the quotation from Seneca given at the end of the dialogue:

Ecce res magna, habere imbécillitatem/Hominis, Securitatem Dei (What a wonderful privilege, to have the weaknesses of a man and the serenity of a god!) (239).  

If this quotation is Philoponus' view of Hesychius, he would see Hesychius as happy and calm, while being wrong, and having the weaknesses of man. This interpretation would thus mean that Philoponus continues to reject Hesychius' position, for he continues to point out its shortcomings. If on the other hand, this quotation is meant to refer to Hesychius' appraisal of Philoponus, it would indicate that he did not effect any change in his attitude. Thus, both interpretations lead to the same conclusion: there is no change of position in the dialogue. Interruption continues.

The rhetorical devices in this dialogue are rather limited, as compared with some of the other dialogues. Whatever the time span in
the composition of the dialogues might have been, there seems in some dialogues to have been an evolution in the refinement of Le Vayer's technique. Thus, enumerations are used in De la Vie privée, but not as overwhelmingly as elsewhere, and phrases to indicate a desire to change the subject or simply to halt conversation are practically non-existent.

De la Vie privée is thus an important part of the system of ethics being established by Le Vayer. He again shows that any system of moral values must be based on a complete dedication to scepticism. Philosophical interruption in this dialogue is therefore clear, for no change is effected. One may even conclude that Le Vayer is saying that Philoponus' life itself is interrupted, for his life is lacking in lasting, essential satisfaction and happiness, and is thus incomplete or interrupted, that is, subject to the discontinuity of breaks between repeated patterns of quest.

Mention was made above briefly of the difference in the nature of the third and fourth dialogues. In De la Vie privée, within the context of furthering his presentation of the sceptical view, Le Vayer considers a very specific aspect of scepticism, the need for solitary contemplation, and the traditional questions it has raised. In Des rares et eminentes qualitez des asnes de ce temps, however, the relativism of opinion, one of the fundamental building blocks of scepticism, is considered. Furthermore, the narrative-line itself in this dialogue, while elucidating the concept of relativism, does not focus on one very precise aspect of sceptical belief.
In terms of structure, *Des Asnes de ce temps* uses the traditional two-speaker form. Philonius, the "amateur de nouveautés" defends the donkeys, while Paleologue, the "partisan des 'idées anciennes'," is the sarcastic deprecator of this animal. The character of each speaker though is not developed in depth, as will be, for example, the character of Orasius in the fifth dialogue. In a different respect, though, this dialogue is unique, for it has its own special preface.

The tone of *Des Asnes de ce temps* also differs from that found in many of the dialogues and certainly from those considered above. Granted, there is some joviality in *Le Banquet sceptique*; however, in *Des Asnes de ce temps*, a level of sophistication strikingly lower than that of the other dialogues is found. Wickelgren remarks with respect to this change of tone that *Des Asnes de ce temps* is nothing more than "un écrit sophistiqué et moqueur, quoique, par endroits, soient expri-

méées des idées plus élevées." This analysis is somewhat unfair for, as will be shown, it is more than simply "par endroits" that ideas of importance are presented in this discussion.

A different view of this dialogue's tone is presented by René Pintard, who considers *Des Asnes de ce temps* to be in tone a reflection of Le Vayer the man, in the early part of his life.

Sans doute *Le Dialogue sur les rares et éminentes qualitez des Asnes de ce temps* peut-il donner de lui une image assez fidèle. Quel curieux personnage y fait l'auteur! Encombré de choses apprises, ruisselant de citations et de références, pédant comme un écolier, avec cela ami du paradoxe, avide de surprendre, voire de scandaliser, tout prêt d'ailleurs à mépriser son lecteur ou son juge, il cherche un équilibre entre la sagesse et l'audace, entre le sérieux et l'ironie. Il est gravement bouffon, et
lourdement ingénieux; il débite avec une gauche fantaisie des maximes philosophiques qu'il pimente de traits obscènes, souvenirs de sa licence première; son style est un parfait exemple de badinage compassé. On dirait que son esprit se secoue, mais sans parvenir à lâcher le sol; il n'a pas encore assez pris d'exercice; mais surtout il n'a nul mobile qui l'émeuve, nul but vers lequel il ait à s'élancer; il s'attarde doctement dans des jeux puérils; il peine sans conviction sur des futilités. La trentaine largement dépassée, La Mothe le Vayer se cherche encore.  

What is most important to note, though, in the matter of the tone of this dialogue, is the fact that it presents a heretofore unrevealed aspect of Le Vayer's style. It demonstrates Le Vayer's continuation of a literary tradition, embodied by Rabelais, and it gives a first indication of what is to be found in some of Le Vayer's other dialogues and writings.

Much like *De la Philosophie sceptique*, *Des Asnes de ce temps* is one-sided in terms of the respective length of each speaker's role, yet there is ample confrontation to establish clearly the view of each speaker. The structure of the work may be summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pages</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>main actions and/or ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>241-44</td>
<td>preface</td>
<td>justification of the subject and style of the dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) 245-47</td>
<td>Philonius</td>
<td>expresses his feeling that the superiority accorded the Ancients is not true, that is, all things have not deteriorated as time has passed; notes further that the donkey is one example of this fact and that in truth the donkey of present times surpasses all those of former times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 248</td>
<td>Paleologue</td>
<td>agrees that the donkey is worthy of the honor Philonius gives to this animal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) 248</td>
<td>Philonius</td>
<td>remarks that he thinks that Paleologue is mocking him; feels sincerely that the donkey is worthy of respect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4) 249 Paleologue assumes that Philonius is going to discourse on the donkey; remarks that the fact that others have also discussed the donkey is not a problem, for there is so much to discuss on this topic.

5) 249 Philonius agrees with Paleologue that there is much to discuss with respect to the donkeys; feels that the exact choice of subject matter concerning the donkey is difficult to make, given the multiplicity of points to consider.

6) 250 Paleologue advises Philonius that it is best to praise in moderation and thereby avoid having others think that he is praising himself.

7) 250 Philonius maintains that the praise which one accords oneself is permissible, when this is done in conjunction with a praise of the donkey.

8) 251 Paleologue tells Philonius to begin his discussion, since on the basis of Philonius' last remark, the obstacle of self-praise is no longer a problem.

9) 251-64 Philonius feels that Paleologue, as others, has common misconceptions about donkeys; plans to discuss the merits and assets of the donkey in the areas of the body, the spirit, and fortune; notes the donkey's scorn of riches and authority, his nobility and health, and his moderation in food and drink.

10) 265 Paleologue expresses sarcastically his impatience for Philonius to discourse on the beauty of the donkey.

11) 265-313 Philonius discusses the question of the nature of beauty and how this matter is open to many interpretations; presents examples of the donkey's beauty and physical ability; begins to consider the donkey's spiritual wealth, noting his prudence, courage, patience, lack of impiety and that donkey values highly his honor; justifies the donkey's sexual practices; remarks on the donkey's felicity; declares that since the donkey has all he wants and is reasonable in his demands, he is consequently in a state which is superior to that of man.
12) 313-14 Paleologue remarks sarcastically that this conversation is constituting the donkey's canonization
13) 314-15 Philonius denies having engaged in exaggeration
14) 315 Paleologue remarks that Philonius is wrong in considering feelings against the donkey to be a type of conspiracy
15) 315-19 Philonius discusses how the donkey got a bad reputation and how this idea was perpetuated; notes that some figures of antiquity and later times though saw the merit of the donkey
16) 319 Paleologue asks that the conversation cease
17) 319-20 Philonius states that he is not about to relent in noting the respect due the donkey
18) 320-21 Paleologue feels that the donkey has been praised enough; wishes to know how Philonius developed an interest in the subject of donkeys
19) 321-22 Philonius explains how in his desire to learn from all possible sources, he began to study the donkey, and became interested in this subject
20) 322-23 Paleologue notes sarcastically Philonius' ability to talk about an "asnerie" better than anyone else
21) 323-26 Philonius notes that he restrained himself in his praise and that his remarks are not based on untruths
22) 326 Paleologue departs, still not taking Philonius seriously

In the preface to *Des Asnes de ce temps*, Le Vayer begins specifically by citing examples which testify to the fact that, in the past, writers of note had treated subjects which were not "vraisemblables" and had written on trivial subjects as if they had been of considerable importance. Among his examples, Le Vayer cites Homer, who "descrit la guerre des Rats & des Grenouilles, avec autant de soin que celle des Dieux devant Troye" (242); notes that Virgil "a donné un poème entier
à son moucheron, aussi bien qu'à son AEnée" (242); and observes that Mark Anthony "avoit escrit ou vomi, comme dit Pline," a treatise on drunkenness (242). Expanding, as he continues with his paradoxes, ending significantly with Erasmus, whose tone as Le Vayer characterizes it again illustrates the desirable quality of philosophical discourse, Le Vayer states:

Lucien avoit fait de sa mouche un Elephant, & de son Parasite un important personnage. Cardan* a de nouveau accusé Socrate & defendu Neron. Passerat** s'est exercé sur un Rien, un autre Gentil Auteur sur le Point, quelqu'autre sur le Festu. Et l'esprit non moins enjoui que savant d'Eraste, nous a descrit les merites de la Folie, en faveur & sous le nom de son pretieux amy Thomas Morus (242-43).

Given this tradition, Le Vayer feels that "on ne me sqaura pas mauvais gré de cette petite Asnerie" (244), that is, this dialogue or discourse, the "foolishness" of which is only on the surface level. This remark is also of importance, for it demonstrates one aspect of the link which exists between this preface and the whole philosophical outlook of Le Vayer. He is acknowledging here the possibility of dissent on the merits of his undertaking, and thereby he is again showing the problem of the lack of resolution which exists on a given subject. Le Vayer declares though that he will not abandon his project, in spite of whatever public reaction might be to it. Specifically, he states that if in this dialogue, "il n'y a quelque chose

*Cardan (Gerolamo Cardano, 1501-1576)—Italian mathematician, physician and philosopher, born in Pavia; also important in Cyrano's Voyage dans la lune.

**Passerat (Jean Passerat, 1534-1602)—French writer; professor of eloquence at the Collège royal; one of the authors of the Satire Ménipée.
qui plaise en la pensée ou en son explication, elle sera en quelque façon par là recommandable; sinon il en réussira une d'autant plus parfaite Asnerie" (244). This remark is reminiscent of the general prefaces to the dialogues (see above pp. 24-25) in which Le Vayer expresses his lack of concern for public approval of his undertaking. Thus again, Le Vayer's independent spirit is in evidence, yet one may also wonder as to the extent to which such remarks are a defense mechanism for use in the face of attacks on the dialogues.

The first exchanges of Philonius and Paleologue concern the relative superiority or lack of superiority of the Ancients and the Moderns, and the endless debate which exists on this matter. Philonius indicates that reverence of the past is a common position for one to take, yet since every age feels this way, the validity of such a position in questionable (245 ff.). In light of this situation, he suggests the following: "Cessons donc ces plaintes injustes de la nature, & quittons cette erreur populaire, qui nous fait admirer les siècles passés, & mespriser le présent" (246-47). Then he goes on to state that when one compares men of antiquity and today, "la différence n'en est qu'accidentelle, eu esgard à l'éducation des corps, culture des esprits, conjoncture des temps, & autres rencontres fortuites, qui varient les choses singulières & individuelles, sans alteration pourtant des universelles" (247). Finally Philonius notes that the donkey is an example of how things indeed have not deteriorated, for the donkey of their time surpasses all those of previous centuries (247). A few short exchanges then follow, in which
Paleologue agrees with Philonius on the honor which is due the donkey, but which Philonius considers to be in truth Paleologue's mocking of the stature that he (Philonius) gives to the donkey (248). After this, Paleologue notes that there still remains much to discuss on the subject of the donkey, despite the fact that others have considered this topic. Thus, finding things to discuss concerning the donkey will not be a problem. Philonius responds that given the fact that there is indeed so much to discuss, the exact choice of subject matter will be difficult (249). At this point, Paleologue warns Philonius against the danger of excessive praise, for this practice may lead to self-praise—something to be avoided (250). Philonius though dismisses this warning by asking: "quand doit-il estre plus pardonnable de dire quelque chose à son advantage, qu'alors que descrivant les vertus eminentes d'un Asne, les nostres s'y trouvent insensiblement enveloppées?" (250). Paleologue accepts this view, and with the obstacle presented by praise now eliminated, Paleologue then tells Philonius to begin his remarks on the donkey (251).

On the basis of the preceding analysis, it should be clear that the initial exchanges in this dialogue are a very important part of *Des Asnes de ce temps*. One might first experience surprise or bewilderment at the subject matter they treat, in light of the announced specific concern of the dialogue, according to the preface. Yet after viewing the dialogue as a whole, the importance of the consideration of the Ancients and Moderns found in this section of the dialogue
becomes clearer and the pretext less puzzling. This part of the dialogue acts as a point of departure for the discussion of the donkeys, and also serves as an example of another topic upon which resolution is not possible, thereby adding further strength to Le Vayer's basic notion of interrupted dialogue.

Philonius begins his first long defense of the donkeys by insisting on the merit of the donkey, by mentioning the worthiness of this undertaking, on behalf of the donkey, and by noting exactly where donkeys may be found—a fact about which most people are incorrectly informed (251 ff.). He then goes on to say that donkeys may be characterized well in terms of three types of "biens," "ceux de l'esprit, du corps, et de la fortune" (255). Under the rubric of "biens de la fortune," Philonius notes how riches are not of importance to the donkey, comments on the dangers of riches, discusses the nobility of the donkey, and remarks that the donkey draws his greatest glory from his scorn of glory (255 ff.). Philonius then goes on to begin to consider the donkey's "biens du corps," noting the extreme health of this animal (263 ff.).

This discussion though does little to change Paleologue's view, as is evidenced by the sarcastic note in his avowal to Philonius of the "impatience qui me tient de vous oûir faire ensuite une description de la beauté de vostre Asne, à laquelle sa bonne disposition si ferme & arrestée ne peut que beaucoup contribuer" (265).

What follows at this point is the longest speech of the dialogue, Philonius' discourse on beauty. This passage is of special importance, for it serves as the main argument of Le Vayer in this dialogue on
the question of the relativism of opinion, and thus points out more clearly than any other section of the dialogue the paradoxical situation caused by fervent insistence on the correctness of one's view to the exclusion of all others. This part of the dialogue also serves, of course, as the major portion of Le Vayer's development of the concept of the "biens du corps" of the donkey. Philonius begins by discussing the various ways in which beauty has been deified, and the relation of beauty and "esprit" (265 ff.). One is reminded here of the way in which Voltaire also considered the problem of relativism, using the concept of beauty as a way of illustrating his point. In the Dictionnaire philosophique, Voltaire's article on "Beau" begins:

Demandez à un crapaud ce que c'est que la beauté, le grand beau, le to kalon? Il vous répondra que c'est sa crapaud avec deux gros yeux ronds sortant de sa petite tête, une gueule large et plate, un ventre jaune, un dos brun.20

After presenting many definitions of beauty, Philonius indicates how impossible it is to resolve firmly the question of what beauty is, and relates this idea to that of the "biens du corps" of the donkey, by stating: "Mais posons le cas que la beauté soit quelque chose de réel, qui se puisse définir une juste proportion des parties avec une couleur convenable, qu'y aura-t'il en cette definition qui ne convienne autant & mieux à nostre gentil Adon de Cumes, qu'au plus parfait & accompli de tous les hommes?" (275).

Philonius then considers how members of each species see beauty to exist at its highest point or in a god-like way, in the form of their own species. Judging beauty is thus difficult, and it is made
even more so by the lack of knowledge one has of criteria upon which one may judge beauty in another creature (277 ff.).

The general consideration of "biens du corps" also encompasses a praise of the donkey's force, agility and suppleness (280 ff.), after which the discussion turns to the third kind of "biens," those of "l'esprit."

The "biens de l'esprit" are subdivided into three categories: prudence, virtue, and voluptuousness. In describing prudence, Philonius says that:

quand je voys cet Ithaquois [Ulysses] depeint par Philostrate* in Heroicus, la tristesse sur le front, les yeux esgarés, tesmoignans une grande abstractic d'esprit, bref en posture d'un songe creux perpetuel, il me semble que je vois l'idée parfaite d'un Asne, & son pourtrait tres-accomply (284).

With respect to virtue, Philonius notes that justice, or perhaps more accurately the lack of injustice, is a trait of the donkey. Injustice, Philonius maintains, consists of impiety, arrogance, and effrontery or "impudence" (285-86). The donkey is certainly free from impiety, though the religious practices of the donkey may be unknown or difficult to understand (286-87).

This reference to religion assumes a special importance when one thinks of it in terms of the relationship between this dialogue and the fifth dialogue, De la Divinité. Des Asnes de ce temps may be viewed on the basis of this remark on religion as not only a

*Philostrate (Philostratus of Lemnos, third century A.D.)--Greek Sophist; son-in-law or nephew of Flavius Philostratus (see note above p. 52); author of the Imagines and the Heroicus.
clarification of the concept of relativism in general, but also as a specific statement on the relativism of religion. The dialogue would thus serve as an important step in preparing the reader for the main dialogue of Orasius Tubero, *De la Divinité*.

Following his comment on religion, Philonius goes on to state that the donkey values highly his honor (288-89). Indeed, "quant à luy, le point d'honneur luy est trop sensible, pour rien souffrir que de bien à propos" (288). And after this, Philonius considers, still under the rubric of virtue, the great courage and valor of the donkey, and the high esteem the donkey places on life (292 ff.). Furthermore, the donkey is shown to value liberty, yet does not openly react to the way he is denied his freedom, except when his patience is taxed to extremes (296 ff.).

The last of the virtues considered is temperance. With respect to this subject, most of the discussion centers around the extent of the donkey's indulgence in sexual activity. Philonius defends the donkey on this matter, by stating to Paleologue:

> Vous scavez comme la nature l'a avantageusement pourvue des parties ministrantes à cet effet & quas ne ad cognitionem quidem admittere severioris notae Asini solent: ce qui a donné lieu au proverbe, *el Asne, al Diabolo tiene so el rabo*, en bon Français, *l'Asne a le diable sous la queue*. . . . La Nature donc ne faisant rien en vain, il est aisé de devenir à quel usage elle a voué ce merveilleux outil, & qu'elle ne s'est pas oubliée de donner l'instinct, le courage, & les forces, pour employer aux fins auxquelles elle l'a destiné (299).

This type of remark is reminiscent of Rabelais. Donald Frame has noted in his recent *François Rabelais*, that while Rabelais "is obscene, he is never pornographic, titillating, or even really erotic unless
One might extend these remarks to Le Vayer, for though there are sexual suggestions, eroticism is absent. Passion is, rather than portrayed in an obscene context, defended: "Mais attendu que les passions sont la matière des vertus Morales, comme nos ennemis le sujet de nostre valeur, tant s'en faut que ces inclinations de nature soient un obstacle à la vertu, qu'au contraire, elles peuvent servir comme de degrés pour parvenir à une plus éminente perfection" (300). Philonius then gives further examples to support his belief that the donkey should not be chastized for his hearty sexual appetite (301-3), before turning to the third aspect of spiritual wealth—felicity.

Earlier in the dialogue, this third aspect of spiritual wealth had been termed "volupté" (283). In any event, Philonius feels that given the "biens" of "fortune," "corps," and "esprit," of the donkey, the happiness and advantageous state of this animal is without question (306 ff.). Furthermore, though the donkey engages in voluptuousness, it is limited to voluptuousness of a spiritual nature (307-8).

Philonius' long speech fails though to produce any change in Paleologue's view, for Paleologue remains sarcastic as he says: "Je vois bien que c'est icy le lieu de sa canonisation, aussi ne vous reste-il plus rien, ce semble, à adjouster que son apotheose, & relation au nombre des Dieux" (313). At this point, Philonius defends himself, denying that he has engaged in exaggeration, and accuses Paleologue of possessing a certain rancor against the donkey (314-15). Paleologue though states that he does not bear a grudge against the
donkey, but this is what Philonius has felt his opinion to be, all along. Then, with respect to his general view on the donkey, Paleologue asks Philonius: "Mais pourquoi voulés vous que ce soit plutôt une envie publique, & comme une conspiration generale du genre humain, qu'une verité attestée, & avouée d'un chacun, c'est à dire, cette voix du peuple, qu'on dit estre la voix de Dieu" (315).

Philonius responds by explaining how negative attitudes towards the donkey had been started by the Egyptians and that these beliefs were adopted and perpetuated by other civilizations. He also notes though that while this situation was occurring, some people saw the true merit of the donkey (315 ff.). Philonius then goes on to explain that on the basis of the idea that one should learn from every possible source, he became an interested observer of the donkey, taking advantage of what he could learn from the exemplary life of that animal (321 ff.). Philonius also states that he did not mention every detail he could have considered in his praise of the donkey (323 ff.). These remarks though are of little effectiveness, for Paleologue departs, still not taking Philonius seriously, and saying that if he has need to "purger la ratte" (326), he will have Philonius commence discourse again on this topic. What Paleologue means here precisely, is that if he wishes to have a good laugh or a good time (cf. the expression "espanoüir la rate," which is defined as "resjoüir," in the 1695 edition of the Dictionnaire de l'Academie Francaise), he will converse with Philonius.

Thus the term interrupted dialogue does indeed characterize Des Asnes de ce temps, for there is no agreement in this dialogue, nor
is there even any progress made towards an eventual agreement. The dialogue may also be considered an example of absurdity, to the extent that the portrayal of Philonius' serious concern with the status of the donkey is a situation which one could conceivably encounter in everyday life and which would indeed be absurd.

The rhetorical devices in this dialogue raise an important question. In the discussion of the third dialogue, it was indicated that the sophistication of rhetorical usage was limited in that dialogue, and that it seemed reasonable to attribute this situation to the early date of composition of the work—a period in which the stylistic tendencies of Le Vayer were still to develop. While *Des Asnes de ce temps* is also one of the oldest dialogues, there exists a noticeable difference between this dialogue and *De la Vie privée*, with respect to the use of rhetorical devices used to support the philosophical position of this dialogue. The exact reason for this difference cannot be definitely ascertained. A possible explanation for this situation might be that *Des Asnes de ce temps* was composed with more care than *De la Vie privée*, and that Le Vayer thus made an effort in *Des Asnes de ce temps* to use various rhetorical procedures. If this is true though, obviously the theory of the early date of composition of *De la Vie privée* would be invalid, if it is alleged to be of a time when Le Vayer's writing techniques were in a state of development and the widespread use of rhetorical techniques by him was thus not an aspect of his style. The idea that more care was used in the composition of this dialogue though would not conflict with the theory presented by René Pintard, basing the composition date of *Des Asnes de ce temps*
on lack of revision of the content of this work. Le Vayer might have composed the dialogue with care—which might seem to us typical of an early manner Pintard characterizes as "lourde facétie d'humaniste"—then chose not to revise greatly the subjects treated by him, when the dialogue's tone seemed to suit the manner he introduces as desirable earlier in the collected dialogues.

Specifically, in Des Asnes de ce temps, enumeration assumes its usual place of importance in Le Vayer's works. Examples of the use of this technique would be when Paleologue considers the nobility of the donkey (258 ff.), and the discussion of those things which people might consider to be the standard of beauty (265 ff.).

There are also instances in this dialogue where a type of self-imposed stop is used, a technique which takes on the character of both a praecisio and a tolerantia. On the matter of beauty, for example, Philonius says: "N'attendez donc pas de moy, que je m'ingere de vous dire par le menu en quoy consiste cette beauté rare et inconnue, me suffisant de vous avoir fait voir, qu'elle ne peut-estre autre que tres-rare & exquise, & j'ose dire plus qu'humaine (279). Then, shortly thereafter, with respect to the "biens de l'esprit" of the donkey, specifically the donkey's prudence, he remarks: "ce ne seroit jamais fait d'entrer en enumeration des actions de prudence, dont toute la vie de l'Asne n'est qu'une continuation suivie" (285). In the first quotation, Philonius indicates that he is not about to enter into the smallest detail on this matter, implying thereby that there is an endless amount of things to say and that such an undertaking is beyond his ability. In this context,
this statement may also be considered to reveal that Philonius is
cognizant of the fact that with a certain amount of argumentation,
if there is any hope of making his point, he will do so. If he does
not, there is no need to continue further, for all the argumentation
he could possibly present will not change anything. Similarly, in
the second quotation, Philonius is indicating that debate can go on
almost endlessly on a given topic, and he is also implying perhaps
that after a certain amount of talk, further debate is pointless.

One also finds in this dialogue the technique which consists of
a speaker requesting that another speaker continue his remarks. Such
a phrase could be used by a speaker to imply that he is convinced,
and would now like to hear more of the argument to which he has already
been won. However, this remark is used differently in this dialogue:
that is, it is used with the intent of highlighting the problem of
philosophical interruption. An example of this procedure is found in
a remark cited already above, concerning Paleologue's view on the
stature of the donkey. Here, after Philonius' first long defense of
the donkeys (speech nine), Paleologue says: "Je ne vous puis celer,
Philonius, l'impatience qui me tient de vous oüir faire ensuite une
description de la beaté de vostre Asne, à laquelle sa bonne disposi-
tion, si ferme & arrestée ne peut que beaucoup contribuer" (265).
However, what he says in this remark and what he actually means are
quite different. In truth, he is as unconvinced as ever with respect
to the merit of the donkey, and is being terribly sarcastic in this
"eagerness" to prolong the discussion. Thus, by means of this type of technique, Le Vayer is able to show again the diversity of opinion and thereby further the case for the existence of interrupted dialogue.

Finally, one may see evidence in this dialogue of the technique in which a speaker expresses a desire to make just one more point. This technique may be found both in the middle and at the end of a speech, and can be considered a sign of recognition of the irresolution of the problem under discussion, for it indicates that the speaker sees no point in continuing his discussion of one particular subject (the technique is assuming at this point the nature of the self-imposed stop). And then the speaker, seemingly grasping at straws to create dialogue in some fashion, goes on to another point, with the hope of finding some possible resolution of the impasse which has been reached. An example of this in Des Asnes de ce temps is Philonius' remark that: "outre ces aucthoritez neantmoins, je vous en donneray un exemple, après lequel j'estime que tout autre seroit superflus" (281).

Thus rhetorical devices are clearly important in this dialogue and, contrary to what might be alleged of an early period of composition, certainly exist in a proportion characteristic of later dialogues.

The treatment of the status of the donkey as it is presented by Philonius in this dialogue, that is, with all the seriousness due a matter of gravest importance, clearly places this dialogue in the tradition of Erasmus and le burlesque. Indeed, as indicated above (p. 71), Pintard has characterized this dialogue as a "facétie d'humaniste," or humanist joke or prank. However, it should also be noted that though the content of the discussion in the dialogue is not on the deepest level, and
this dialogue is thus perhaps non-meaningful discourse for Paleologue, the reader of this dialogue should not react as does Paleologue, and dismiss the whole discussion. That is, much in the way of _De la Vie privée_, this dialogue is one in which stoicism, epicurianism, and pyrrhonism converge, to recommend a life of tranquility, independence of spirit, and an attitude of convenient indifference. In fact, it may even be said that the donkey assumes to some extent a certain character. Is this animal a cynic, Pintard asks? No, he maintains; more than that, the donkey is

épicurien, si l'on donne à ce mot le sens d'amateur des voluptés non sensuelles, mais spirituelles. Sceptique aussi, usant "en la plus part de ses actions d'une Epoche et suspension nonpareille". Et peut-être encore stoïcien, quand on le rosse. Borner ses désirs, "vivre dans une pleine suffisance de toutes choses" qui "exempte de toutes sortes de souhaits" et qui met en possession du souverain bien, voilà la part de Jupiter. C'est aussi celle de l'âne. Et c'est elle que souhaite avec quelque malice, l'auteur de cette philosophie asinine.

Having presented a lighthearted yet significant statement on relativism in the fourth dialogue, Le Vayer continues his consideration of relativism and interrupted dialogue in the fifth dialogue, _De la Divinité_. However, in this dialogue, the tone changes to one of a much more serious nature, and the complexity of ideas increases dramatically. _De la Divinité_ is, as suggested earlier, the most important of the _Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero_. In this dialogue, while considering the multiplicity and consequent relativism of opinions, Le Vayer presents his most forceful and detailed diatribe against the very fundamentals of religious practices. Given the fact that the characterization of the religious stance of Le Vayer has been the major concern of many of
the critical analyses of his work, it is not surprising that this
dialogue has been the object of more analysis than the other dialogues.
It is important to note that in referring to this dialogue as a state-
ment against religion, I am taking the position held by most contem-
porary critics, among them Pintard and Tisserand, as opposed to that
of Richard Popkin. In the course of this analysis, the views of all
three critics will be presented, as well as a concept none of them
discuss—the relationship between Le Vayer's ideas on religion and the
concept of interrupted dialogue.

Interrupted dialogue itself in *De la Divinité* assumes a multi-
leveled character. One might maintain on one level of interpretation
that there is only limited interrupted dialogue in *De la Divinité*,
because the conflict between Orasius and Orontes would seem to be
confined to a brief conflict of opinion at the beginning of the work.
On a different level of interpretation, however, one sees that Orontes
agrees with Orasius, but in so doing, Orontes does not really under-
stand the true signification of what is being stated by Orasius. There-
fore, on a deeper level of analysis, there is continued interruption
throughout this dialogue. Importantly, the structure of *De la
Divinité* also compliments and supports the idea of philosophical inter-
ruption outlined above. There are a number of fairly long speeches.
Minimizing conversational exchange, they serve as a reflection of
Le Vayer's concern with the difficulty of free and meaningful communi-
cation. The fact that Orontes actually requests Orasius' long speech
has the effect of adding a certain ironic touch to this situation.
The way in which the figure of Orasius is made to assert himself in *De la Divinité* represents the new dimension Le Vayer gives in this dialogue to the two-interlocutor structure. *De la Divinité* being the most important "profession de foi sceptique" of the dialogues, the Orasius of this work is the most skillful debater among the participants in the dialogues. Speakers in other dialogues often present their cases well, yet it is the Orasius of this dialogue who attains a stature and ingenuity of profession not found elsewhere. Orasius may indeed serve as a measure against which the effectiveness of other speakers can be judged.

It is also with respect to the Orasius figure in this dialogue that one is able to comprehend more clearly Le Vayer's distinction between the speaker and the interlocutor. A speaker is one who may profess a certain point, without having any significant psychological insight into the workings of the person with whom he is talking. The interlocutor, on the other hand, has progressed a step and perceives matters beyond the surface level. In the case of Orasius, he is able to utilize to his own advantage Orontes' lack of comprehension of what scepticism really implies. Up to this point, speakers have debated with each other, however, without Orasius' depth of analysis, which will be continued to a certain extent in some of the dialogues yet to be considered.
In its simplest form, the dialogue moves in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pages</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>main actions and/or ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) 327-28</td>
<td>Orasius</td>
<td>presents a defense of scepticism and states his position against the espousal of public opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 329-31</td>
<td>Orontes</td>
<td>criticizes scepticism and Orasius' penchant for solitude, since his adoption of scepticism; does not understand how while rejecting everything, the Sceptics can avoid being in a state of impiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) 331-44</td>
<td>Orasius</td>
<td>declares that he does not condemn other views, but rather simply withholds judgment on them; indicates his happiness at being one who does not accept public opinion; states that the sceptical denial of certitude is not prejudicial to religion; declares that according to scepticism, religion is simply something one accepts on faith, thus scepticism is a perfect introduction to Christianity; notes that those who possess simple souls are the ones in whom Christian virtues are most present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) 344-46</td>
<td>Orontes</td>
<td>thanks Orasius for his explanation of scepticism; notes that he had found scepticism to be interesting previously, yet had not practiced it because of what he thought was its inherent impiety; says that he now understands scepticism's true meaning and accepts scepticism; asks Orasius to relate his observations on the multitude of religions in the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) 346-410</td>
<td>Orasius</td>
<td>notes how difficult it is to understand the nature of God; describes various beliefs on the nature of God and the relationship of man and God; notes the ways in which different groups have proven or denied God; discusses how religion may be used by those with political power, to placate or dominate people; considers the extent of intervention of God in the world; points out that for some, religion is just a way of explaining things which are not understood; notes similarities in the concept of the figure of God, among different groups; remarks on how some people practice</td>
</tr>
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more than one religion; considers the opposing views which exist on immortality; presents a list of varying beliefs, having to do with religion; notes the variety of things which have been deified.

6) 410-13 Orontes expresses his concurrence with all that Orasius has said; rejects the idea that one can claim to have any type of definitive knowledge about God.

7) 413-16 Orasius reiterates his basic views on scepticism.

8) 416 Orontes expresses a final praise of scepticism.

The exact nature of the role of Orasius and his expertise at turning an apparent condemnation of scepticism into an elegant exposition of sceptical doctrine may be ascertained by considering the text in more detail.

The initial Orasius-Orontes exchanges take on the common characteristics of classic interrupted dialogue, that is, a situation seemingly impossible to resolve. Here Orasius begins by declaring his adherence to scepticism and asserts his open-minded attitude to all ideas—a position which is made easier to maintain, given his sceptical orientation. This open-mindedness, though, has its limitations, when it entails espousal of public opinion. Orasius first states: "mon corps n'est point si ennemy de la foule, quoy qu'elle l'incommode merveilleusement, que mon esprit abomine les violentes contraintes d'une multitude" (327). Shortly thereafter, however, he expresses his feelings against popular opinion and belief more vehemently, by saying: "J'ay une telle antipatie contre tout ce qui est populaire . . . que
je ne pourrois condamner l'aveuglement de Democrite* quand il se feroit veritablement crevé les yeux pour ne plus voir les impertinences d'une sotte multitude" (328). Indeed, nothing so opposes scepticism as does "la Tyrannique opinastre des opinions communes" (329).

Orontes, in a gesture of friendship, feels compelled to express the hazards he sees inherent in Orasius' philosophical views. Scepticism is considered with respect to other philosophical systems, as "le plus abandonné & lequel en effet ne peut estre que le plus odieux puisque mesprisant tous les autres, & ne convenant avec aucun, il se les rend tous en mesme temps ses adversaires" (330). And even more importantly, scepticism leads one to a state of impiety (329-31).

Orasius refutes Orontes' contentions with a detailed exposition of the beliefs of scepticism. He says that scepticism does not condemn the maxims of others, but rather simply calls for a "suspension d'esprit" as regards the philosophical tenets of others, and that he (Orasius) receives a certain "satisfaction d'esprit" from this way of life (331 ff.). Scepticism, furthermore, is not an anti-Christian doctrine: "quand nous nions la verité & certitude que chacun veut establir dans la science qu'il professe; & qu'en ce faisant nous les rendons toutes suspectes de vanité ou de fausseté; nous ne disons neantmoins rien de prejudiciable à nostre Theologie chrstienne" (332-3). Theology, he continues, is not a science which requires

*Démcrite (c. 460 B.C.-c. 370 B.C.)--Greek philosopher; held that all things were composed of atoms, which he asserted to be tiny particles, imperceptible to the senses, composed of exactly the same matter but different in size, shape and weight; preached a doctrine according to which happiness may be obtained by moderating one's desires.
principles which are clear to our understanding, in order for its tenets to be acceptable. Rather in theology, "nous consentons à ces principes divins par le seul commandement de nostre volonté, qui se rend obeissante à Dieu aux choses qu'elle ne voit, & ne comprend pas, en quoy consiste le merite de la foy Chrétienne" (333).

Orasius then notes how scepticism provides rest and tranquility for the Christian soul. According to St. Paul, the "Royaume des cieux" is for the "pauvres d'entendement." Those who follow "toutes ces sciences, qui ne font que nous bouffir d'une vaine enfleure, ces sagesses qui ne sont que folie devant Dieu" (334), will not attain this goal. Thus the remarks of St. Paul, Orasius maintains, are in conformity with the position of the Sceptics (333 ff.), and consequently "la Sceptique se peut nommer une parfaite introduction au Christianisme" (336). After this, Orasius concludes by noting:

quand par un raisonnable discours nous avons Sceptiquement examiné les nullitez du sçavoir humain, c'est lors qu'une ingenué reconnoissance de nostre ignorance nous peut rendre dignes des graces infuses du ciel, lesquelles tomberont lors comme dans une terre heureusement cultivée, & dont on auroit arraché toutes les mauvaises plantes qui l'empeschoient auparavant de fructifier (344).

After Orasius' exposition--statements much to the contrary of what Orontes had expected to be the sceptical position--Orontes takes leave completely of his anti-sceptical attitude. Orontes claims that he never was a foe of scepticism, but rather just fearful of the state of impiety which he felt this philosophy implied. Thus now, he expresses his views on scepticism as follows: "vous [Orasius] m'avez fait reconnoîstre son innocence, . . . je ne voy plus rien qui me
puisse divertir de complaire à mon Genie, en conformant mes sensi-
mens aux vostres, & les accompagnant de vostre neutralité, & insepa-
rible suspension d'esprit" (345).

Pintard has pointed out that Le Vayer does not fail "d'affirmer
son pyrrhonisme avec l'intérêt de la piété," and stretches to their
limits the implications which may be derived from the Sceptic's posi-
tion. Keeping this idea in mind, as well as the concept that there
are multiple levels of interpretation possible in this dialogue, one
is ready to examine and understand the essentially paradoxical nature
of this dialogue. That is, on the surface level, as indicated earlier,
there occurs in De la Divinité the refutation of Orontes by Orasius
and Orontes' change of heart. Orasius' whole speech, though, is in
fact based on a falsification—that is, a purposeful distortion of
his point. He is not truly defending scepticism against charges of
impiety, but really is saying that scepticism does imply impiety.
Orasius notes the varying concepts, according to different philo-
sophies, of what the nature of God is and what pleases God, that is,
he shows the relativism of opinion which exists with respect to reli-
gion. There is definitely here the suggestion that Christianity can
be attacked on the same grounds of arbitrariness, etc., as are other
religious beliefs. Thus when Orasius says that he accepts Christianity
ipso facto, and it seems that he is in essence negating or compromising
his own principles, what he is really doing is rejecting Christianity
and indicating that Christianity is just as subject to falsification
and error as any other belief. Whether one can call this situation an
explicit delineation by Le Vayer of his philosophy depends on how one
wishes to interpret this concept. If one is referring to a universally clear pronouncement of thought, then this viewpoint would not apply. However, for one who grasps the true sense of the dialogue, Le Vayer's exposition is quite explicit.

Popkin's study of scepticism does not present Le Vayer's position on religion as I have here. It seems that in formulating his position, Popkin takes literally those statements where Orasius outwardly supports religion. Popkin asserts that:

Beginning with Balzac and Arnauld in the 17th century, down to such contemporary critics as Pintard, Grenier and Julien-Eymard d'Angers, there has been a rather uniform judgment that this so-called 'sceptique chrétien' [i.e., Le Vayer] was really a 'sceptique masqué' who lacked the religious fervor of Pascal, or the possibly orthodox intent of Montaigne. The critics have pointed out that the logic of La Mothe le Vayer's position is such that once one has abandoned all rational standards, one would have no basis for choosing to be a Christian.

He goes on to note, however, that this situation:

is true of the entire history of sceptical Christian Fideism, and, . . . is the case for a great many 16th century sceptics and Counter-reformers. If one doubts that we have any rational means for distinguishing truth from falsehood, one has removed the basis for giving reasons for beliefs. Does this sort of scepticism, even with regard to theology, imply any sort of religious scepticism? I do not believe that it does. If there are no grounds for belief, how does one determine whether one ought to believe or not?

After this, Popkin remarks that in light of all the information about Le Vayer, one could consequently view him either as an "incrédule voluptueux" or as a "sceptique chrétien." Then Popkin goes on to maintain that there is a long tradition of considering Le Vayer as a libertin. However Popkin feels that it is possible
that the continual emphasis found in Le Vayer on Christian scepticism is a sincere view. Thus the libertin érudit was not trying to undermine Christianity. Rather the point of the libertin was to "serve as a buttress for a certain type of liberal Catholicism, as opposed to either superstitious belief, or fanatical Protestantism." Popkin recognizes that only the editor of the 1744 edition of the Dialogues also views Le Vayer as a Christian sceptic, but he is, however, quite convinced of the validity of his minority view. Contemporary critics of Le Vayer, Popkin feels, judge by their own articles of faith, which they assert, and in so doing introduce anachronistic standards for seventeenth-century figures. 29

Popkin concludes his argument by stating that "libertinage érudit" may be a totally incorrect interpretation of certain movements in seventeenth-century France. If one grants the possibility that the revival of scepticism in the sixteenth century was more of an anti-Protestant rather than an anti-religious movement, and that scepticism may be viewed as compatible with Catholicism, then the position of Le Vayer, Naudé and Patin may be "better understood as a continuation of a 16th century development rather than a malicious or delightful (depending on one's perspective) distortion of a previous tradition." While these writers might not be so incisive as their predecessors, they still are part of the same tradition. 30

Those contemporary critics who eloquently present a view which is contrary to that of Popkin are well represented by Tisserand, Pintard, and Adam.
De la Divinité is one of the two dialogues chosen by Tisserand for his edition of La Mothe le Vayer. In his analysis of the religious ideas of Le Vayer, Tisserand states:

En son temps, ... [La Mothe le Vayer] ne passait pas pour très chrétien, et certes, il ne l'était ni à la façon du grand Arnauld, ni à celle du père Garasse. Gui Patin, qui avait fait avec lui des "débauches d'esprit," le soupçonnait du vice qu'on reprochait à Diagoras et à Protagoras,* c'est-à-dire du vice d'athéisme. Balzac ne laissait pas de renchérir sur ces accusations, et le XVIIIe siècle accommoda la pensée de La Mothe le Vayer au goût nouveau.31

Tisserand goes on to note that Voltaire attributed certain remarks to Le Vayer, in the Recueil nécessaire (1765) and in the Nouveaux mélanges philosophiques (1768), under the title of "les idées de la Mothe Le Vayer." These remarks, maintains Tisserand, are "d'un déisme niais qu'il n'est pas inutile de dire que le sceptique n'a pas écrites et qu'il nous choque qu'on ait jamais pu prêter à son esprit." For Tisserand, Le Vayer is no Deist: "Déiste, non pas. Athée, peut-être. Ou pour mieux dire incrédule, libertin, sceptique en sa religion comme en toute autre chose, mais prudent, et plié sans colère à la loi religieuse du souverain."32 Furthermore, as part of his defense against charges of atheism, Le Vayer was not content simply to profess Christian faith, but rather maintained that scepticism was the only philosophy which was compatible with religious dogmas.33 Finally, Tisserand concludes his analysis as follows:

*Diagoras (Fifth Century B.C.)—Greek poet and philosopher; accused of impiety for his raillery of the gods, he fled Athens.
Protagoras (c. 485 B.C. - c. 410 B.C.)—Greek philosopher of the Sophist school; fled from Athens, after being accused of impiety.
Nous avouons qu'il nous semble impossible de nous imaginer un croyant en La Mothe Le Vayer. Tout au plus, pour ce qui concerne sa propre religion, leur [those who view him as a sincere Christian] accorderons-nous qu'il eut quelques scrupules à en douter, son esprit ne conservant sur les autres aucune espèce d'indécision. Il écrivit tout le contraire? Mais il le fallait bien! Et c'est même la seule façon dont il pût se faire comprendre des intelligences qu'il voulait toucher, c'est-à-dire de celles qui entendent l'ironie.34

In Le Libertinage érudit, Pintard most thoroughly considers the religious views of La Mothe le Vayer, and considers the question of whether Le Vayer was a "sceptique chrétien" or a "sceptique incrédule." Pintard notes that Le Vayer attacks at the same time, for instance, the proofs of immortality and those of the existence of a Divinity. Thus, he tears down all which could support religious truths, and delves into matters which before him only the truly non-believer had considered.35 Furthermore, in the name of reason, Le Vayer insinuates statements which are extremely contrary to faith.36 Finally, and quite correctly, Pintard concludes that Le Vayer has two distinct sides to his character: "extérieurement, un chrétien à la mode de son temps; intérieurement, un libertin, par sa mécréance, par la conscience qu'il en a, par le plaisir qu'il y prend."37

Antoine Adam, in his anthology Les Libertins au XVIIe siècle, joins Tisserand and Pintard in his interpretation of the position of Le Vayer. That is, Adam also notes Le Vayer's outward exclusion of Christianity from his attacks, and concludes that Le Vayer's "critique de toutes les croyances religieuses et de toutes les thèses spiritu-alistes n'aboutissait pas, comme l'auteur aurait voulu nous le faire admittre, à une 'heureuse suspension d'esprit'. Elle aboutissait à l'impossibilité de toute foi, et La Mothe le Vayer le savait bien."38
Thus, depending on the analysis one wishes to make of Le Vayer's work in general, and of this dialogue in particular, one can either form a picture of a Le Vayer who is serious in his religious convictions or that of a Le Vayer who rejects religion. It is only by accepting the latter view that one can ascertain the true significance of De la Divinité.

Most of the remaining part of the dialogue is the long speech of Orasius in which he continues to refute religion masterfully and in detail. This speech is filled with enumerations of varying religious beliefs and practices. Every line points to the arbitrary, relative and at times hypocritical nature of religions. That Christianity should be exempt from these characteristics of all religions, despite Orasius' outward indications to the contrary, seems hardly likely. The most ironic aspect of this speech, though, as noted above, is that it is requested by Orontes. He never understands that he is destroying his own position, by asking Orasius to continue. He seems to be concerned only with hearing Orasius say that scepticism does not lead one immediately to a state of impiety.

One must also not forget that while this speech and other exchanges are occurring on the matter of religion Le Vayer is simultaneously presenting another situation—the implied general philosophical opposition of Orasius and those of other philosophical orientations. That an agreement on the correctness of the sceptical position could result from this confrontation—the only worthwhile possible outcome for Orasius—is not indicated as a likely occurrence, given the fact that each philosophy which opposes scepticism, maintains that it is correct in its position.
Specifically, the long speech of Orasius begins with a consideration of the problem of understanding the concept of that which is divine. Orasius maintains that "l'immensité de cet objet divin . . . confond tout à fait nostre entendement comme l'exces de la lumiere du Soleil esblouit & perd nostre veue" (346-47). He then notes (348 ff.) the opposing views which exist on the extent to which one can comprehend God and asserts that those who claim to have a "reconnoissance" of God, based on their knowledge and experience which they apply to all nations, demonstrate nothing more than an "introduction fondée sur une pretendue connoissance de l'opinion de toutes les nations, laquelle nous ne possedons pas" (351). There are so many customs of which we are unaware, that any type of definitive pronouncement is impossible. Orasius then presents a list of examples which illustrate the fact that many peoples have no God or gods (351-52).

At this point, Orasius considers the question of whether one can prove by means of reasoning that God truly exists (352 ff.). After this, he provides examples which illustrate that the concept of God has been used as a political tool for dominating people. Orasius also mentions things which have been deified, because they are a source of great good or great evil in the world (356-59). Again it should be noted, that the real nature of Orasius' religious convictions is clearly manifested in these remarks. Given all of these conflicting practices and ideas, how can there not be an attack here on Christianity?
There follows at this point various examples of the lack of religious belief among historical figures (358 ff.). Then, Orasius considers the situation of those who say that God has not only a general interest in the world's affairs, but detailed interest in every aspect of what is occurring. This group opposes those who say that such a view is far below that dignity which should be given to the Divinity (363 ff.). Specifically, those of the first group view those of the second group as ones who "se moquent de cette providence Divine, ... se rient aussi par consequent de toute sorte de culte, & d'adoration, comme de chose vide, foulans aux pieds superbement autant qu'il y a de Religions" (363-64). Furthermore, those who believe in God's intervention maintain that:

Ce n'est donc chose penible de gouverner les moindres choses, à celuy qui les a créées avec facilité, & il n'y a guere d'apparence à dire qu'il en voulut négliger la conduite, n'en ayant pas mesprisé la creation. S'il y avoit de l'indignité à prendre connoissance des choses basses, & petites, il y en auroit eu à les produire. Et si Dieu connoist le general & le total comme l'on accorde icy, il faut de nécessité qu'il connoisse les parties dont le tout est composé; comme aussi connoissant les parties, il faut que les particules qui en sont les membres luy soient encore connus (368).

On the other hand, those who reject divine intervention maintain that in light of the negative and horrible aspects of the world, one must conclude with respect to God's intervention that

il faut ou qu'il laisse tout aller à la discretion de ne scay quelles Parques. ... Ou que la fortune seule dispose de toutes choses à son plaisir, soit qu'elles dependent du fortuit concours & rencontre des Atomes de Democrite, soit qu'elles viennent de la contingence de quelques autres causes purement casuelles (374-75).
Given this situation,

si toutes choses sont prédéterminées inévitablement de toute éternité, ou dépendent absolument du sort ou de la fortune, sans que les Dieux s'en entremettent, comme les désordres presupposent le monstrent assez, il s'ensuit d'une con- quence nécessaire que toutes nos dévotions, nos latries, nos prières, & oraisons, sont choses vaines & ridicules, inventées par ceux qui vouloient profiter de leur introduc- tion, & confirmées ensuite par l'accentumance aveugle & populaire, voire même par des plus clairs-voyants, qui estimoient cette fiction fort utile à reprimer les plus vicieux (375).

Again, the relativism of religious belief is made clear, and it
is implied that Christian doctrine is far from being a certainty.

After this discussion, Orasius considers further the basis of religious beliefs, by noting that

tout ce que nous apprenons des Dieux & des Religions, n'est rien que ce que les plus habiles hommes ont conçu de plus raisonnable selon leurs discours pour la vie morale, & économique, & civile, comme pour expliquer les Phéno- mènes des moeurs, des actions, & des pensées des pauvres mortels, afin de leur donner de certaines Règles de vivre, exemptes autant que faire se peut, de toute absurdité (378).

This situation is complicated additionally, for everybody feels he is correct in his beliefs (378-79). The point is also repeated that toleration of varied religious practices in a country can be used politically, to impede any type of unification among the people, and that a ruler thereby may maintain more easily his power in a country (379-80).

Orasius then discusses the idea of how one who lived before the Messiah may still be considered a Christian, notes the similarity of concepts in religions, and remarks on the varying views which exist concerning immortality (383 ff.). At this point, many practices and ideas relating to religion are considered, such as some of the various
persons, objects and animals which have been deified (388 ff.). Then, following this discussion, Orasius concludes that "ce n'est pas à mon avis l'abondance de connaissance, mais bien celle de la grace divine qui nous peut rendre icy clairvoyans, ayant esté fort bien dit que toute la science, aussi bien que toute la sagesse humaine ne sont que folie devant Dieu" (409).

The contention made above that Orasius is really saying the opposite of the surface level interpretation of his remarks seems to be proven by analysis of some of his concluding statements. He maintains that:

puis qu'entre tous les genres de Philosophie il n'y a que celuy des Sceptiques qui nous donne instruction de la vanité des sciences, & nous apprenne à les mespriser avec raison, il s'ensuit que conformément à ce que nous avons establì dès le commencement, il doit estre tenu pour le plus approprié à nostre vraye Religion, le plus respectueux envers la Divinité, & le plus fidelle interprete de nostre Christianisme (410).

How can Orasius really mean what he is saying here about Christianity, our "real or true religion?" Given all of the massive evidence just presented, is it not totally hypocritical to embrace Christianity ipso facto? That which Orasius says pleases Orontes; however, both before and still now, Orontes fails to see what Orasius is really saying. Orontes thus typifies for Le Vayer the state of most of the rest of the world--shortsighted and gullible.

What Orontes specifically does after Orasius' comments is to praise the lucidity and validity of Orasius' remarks. In a short speech he says:
Que si vostre but a esté, en m'instruisant des différentes & extravagantes pensées des pauvres humains sur ce theme divin, de me faire voir la foiblesse de nostre ratiocination, quand elle entreprend si fort au delà de ses forces, & de me persuader par mesme moyen la captivité de nostre intellect sous l'obeissance de la foy, croiez que vous avez obtenu sur moy au delà de ce que vous aviez peu esperer (410-11).

In other words, Orontes sees man's "faiblesse," but not his own. This speech concludes with a general condemnation of all philosophies which try to delve too deeply into the origins and basis of religion.

Orasius then returns to St. Paul's remarks on the rejection of philosophical demonstrations and Christianity's call for a moderation of passions, ideas that are very much in conformity with scepticism (413 ff.). In this respect he says:

faisons donc hardiment profession de l'honorable ignorance de nostre bien-aimée Sceptique, puis que c'est elle seule qui nous peut preparer les voyes aux cognoissances relevées de la divinité, & que toutes les autres Sectes philosophiques ne font que nous en esloigner, nous entassant de leurs dogmes, & nous embrouillant l'esprit de leurs maximes scientifiques, au lieu de nous esclaircir, & purifier l'entendement (414).

Orasius' final remarks, an avowal of scepticism, conclude the dialogue. In this last speech, the sunset rhetorical device is used, and signifies several things. Specifically, Orontes says that he does not see two suns, in other words, is not plagued by multiple views, but has even lost the one sun which had been shining. What does this sun signify? On the simplest level, it is sunset—time to conclude. The absence of the sun also is a representation of scepticism and the situation in this dialogue—man's absence of anything concrete and
solid to use as a point of reference. Thus, the dialogue is indeed interrupted. It has not caused anything of substance to be agreed upon. The so-called "agreement" between the speakers is in truth non-existent.

As concerns the use of other rhetorical devices in this dialogue, the role of enumeration and the effect of long speeches have already been indicated. As in other dialogues, these techniques serve to clarify and give weight to the philosophical views of Le Vayer.

De la Divinité is thus extremely important in the characterization and clarification of the thought of La Mothe le Vayer. While the role of Orasius in this dialogue has changed and is far greater in stature than elsewhere, the philosophical position of Le Vayer remains unchanged from that of previous dialogues and is indeed intensified. No one school of thought or author is singled out for attack to the exclusion of all others, but rather all beliefs are taken to task. And most importantly also, Le Vayer shows how a given opinion cannot with validity be held as the only correct viewpoint on a particular matter.

The question of the specific order of the dialogues in the Cinq dialogues, in terms of possible thematic and rhetorical effect as a group of five dialogues, reflects Le Vayer's attitude as to the most forceful fashion of stating his philosophical position. Pintard views the dialogues in terms of three states of evolution: "lourdes facéties d'humaniste," "plus tard au scepticisme, aux enquêtes sur les variations humaines," and "l'expression direct d'opinions hétérodoxes."
This entire evolution of ideas is clearly corroborated by my more extended analysis of the first five dialogues. It illuminates also Le Vayer's wish, evident in the 1671 and 1673 editions, that these dialogues be presented as a group.

The question that arises consequently is Le Vayer's reason for having written additional dialogues. Perhaps because of his temperament or intellectual inclination, it might seem that Le Vayer was simply not content to permit his "enquête" to stop with five dialogues. But, more significantly with his "plaisir de dialoguer avec lui-même," he goes on to develop, refine, and clarify his point of view, in response to challenges to his position.
There are a number of important studies on the development of dialogue. The work of Rudolf Hirzel, Der Dialog: ein literarhistorischer Versuch (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1895), traces the history of dialogue from classical times through the eighteenth century. Also, there are the study of Johan S. Egilsrud, Le 'Dialogue des Morts' dans les littératures française allemande et anglaise: 1644-1789 (Paris: L'Entente Linotypiste, 1934), and the Italian dissertation of Giovana Wyss Morigi, Contributo allo studio del dialogo all'epoca dell'umanesimo e del rinnascimento (Monza: Scuola Tipografica Artigianelli, 1950). Furthermore, the 1954 study of J. Andrieu, Le Dialogue antique: structure et présentation (Paris: Les Belles Lettres), treats the question of dialogue in classical drama. In addition, two recent Ph.D. dissertations consider the manifestation of dialogue in French literature. Mustapha Kemal Benouis' study, presented in 1971 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is entitled Le Dialogue philosophique dans la littérature française du seizième siècle. And Phillip Wolfe's work, Dialogue et société: le genre du dialogue en France de 1630 à 1671, was presented in 1974 at Princeton University. Finally, there are numerous articles on dialogue, such as those of Bernard Beugnot and Maurice Roelens, which are noted in the bibliography.


In the section of A Handbook to Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric entitled "Descriptive Index of Tropes and Schemes," Sonnino lists the term praecisio under the category "figures for ending," and defines it as "a sudden ending. The speech is simply left off" (p. 255). He places tolerantia under the heading of "figures which lead to a certain emotion," defining it as a situation in which "the speaker gives up all hope concerning something" (p. 254).

All references to the "Lettres" are to the 1716 edition of the Dialogues. There is illogical and partial pagination in the prefaces in the edition cited. Thus I have added the numbering for these pages. The roman numerals refer to the volume of the edition being cited.

All references to the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero are to the 1716 edition. For dialogues number one through number five, the references are made to volume one of this edition, for dialogues six through nine, to volume two.

In his article "skepticism," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: The Macmillan Company and The Free Press; London: Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1967), Richard Popkin discusses some of the common attacks made against scepticism, and the traditional defenses of scepticism. For instance, he notes that "Sextus reported (he carefully avoided saying that he asserted anything) that the Pyrrhonians did not hold to the negative dogmatic conclusions of the Academics, in that they did not deny that knowledge of the nonevident was possible. Instead they suspended judgment on the question. In response to opponents who tried to portray the Pyrrhonian attitude as a definite view, Sextus said that it was like a purge that eliminates everything, including itself" (v. 7, p. 450).

In *The Fortunes of Montaigne* (London: Methuen, 1935), Alan Boase discusses the relationship of Montaigne and Le Vayer. An important aspect of this discussion is the matter of fideism. Boase explains that fideism may be defined as "the affirmation that not even the most important dogmas of the Church such as the existence of God and the immortality of the soul can be proved. They must be believed by faith. . ." (xv). Le Vayer was of course familiar with the "Apologie de Raymond Sebond," in which the fideism of Montaigne is elaborated. Boase contends that Le Vayer was a "fideist in religion," and that his sincerity cannot be questioned, at any rate, during the latter part of his life" (260). In contrast to Boase, the position taken throughout this study is that Le Vayer may outwardly at times present an acceptance of certain facets of religion, but that in actuality he rejected all aspects of religion.


15 According to an ancient account, Aristotle dedicated to his son Nicomachus (Anichomacus), the Nicomachean Ethics. Also though, the name of this work possibly is due to Nicomachus having edited the work, as Eudemus may have edited the Eudemian Ethics. See "Nicomachus," The Oxford Classical Dictionary, 2nd edition, 1970.

16 Seneca. Ad Lucilium epistulae morales, trans. Richard M. Gummere (London: Heinemann; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), I, 358-59. This quotation is from Epistle 53. The marginal note in the edition of the Dialogues being used in this study gives Epistle 54 as the source of this quotation. In his critical edition of this dialogue, Ismael, who also uses the 1716 edition of the Dialogues, incorrectly follows the note in the text, and indicates Epistle 54 as the origin of the quotation.

17 Pintard, Etudes, p. 23.

18 Wickelgren, p. 91.

19 Pintard, Libertinage, I, 134-35.


21 Those who had had sexual relations with donkeys were considered so infamous that they were not admitted to trial proceedings. See Yuksel Mehmet Ismael, "A Modern Edition of the Two Earliest Dialogues of La Mothe le Vayer," (Ph.D. dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 1972), p. 175.


24 Pintard, Etudes, p. 16.


26 Pintard, Libertinage, I, 509.

27 Pintard, Libertinage, I, 141.

28 Richard H. Popkin, The History of Skepticism from Erasmus to Descartes (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1960), p. 97. One should also note, with respect to fideism, that there is an implied fideist position in the Fragment d'un traité du vide of Pascal.

30 Popkin, p. 99.


32 Tisserand, pp. 55-56.

33 Tisserand, pp. 56-57.

34 Tisserand, p. 58.

35 Pintard, Libertinage, I, 141.

36 Pintard, Libertinage, I, 142.

37 Pintard, Libertinage, I, 147.


39 Pintard, Études, p. 16.
CHAPTER THREE

INTERRUPTED DIALOGUE IN THE QUATRE AUTRES DIALOGUES

The first of the Quatre autres dialogues, De l'Ignorance louable, is one of the most complex, and without question the longest of all of the dialogues. The idea of "ignorance louable" or "praiseworthy ignorance," is a traditional paradoxical expression of the sceptical position. The term "ignorance" is used here in the sense of restraint from espousal of a definite view, and as Orasius further characterizes this concept, is "une ignorance honorable & vraiment philosophique, laquelle s'accommode à l'obscurité de la Nature, & se mesurant à la portée de l'esprit humain, ne promet rien au de là de ses forces" (27). Thus, though the title of this dialogue may seem illogical and incomprehensible at first glance, it is very meaningful and logical within the context of the moderation dictated by sceptical doctrine.

This dialogue is concerned with the efforts of Orasius and his fellow philosophers to convince Telamon that he should adopt the views of the Sceptics. The conversation ends with Telamon's espousal of scepticism, which he expresses as follows:

Ainsi, comme on voit aux choses naturelles que la corruption de l'une est la generation de l'autre, je n'ay pas eu sitost perdu par vostre moyenn cette folle creance de sçavoir, que je me suis trouvé Sceptique parfait; & comme un cloud [sic] chasse l'autre dont il prend le lieu, l'ignorance Ephectique [sic] s'est mise en un instant en la place de la science pedantesque & Dogmatique (172).
Though scepticism is able to take the place of Telamon's views immediately after his abandonment of his former views, a significant amount of argumentation is needed before Telamon changes his opinions. It is this interchange and argumentation which constitutes the philosophical interruption in this dialogue. Furthermore, it is important to note at the outset, that despite Telamon's conversion and the triumph of scepticism in this situation, another very common problem of the dialogues is also present at the end of this dialogue. The speakers favoring scepticism represent only a very small group, and are hopelessly unable to squelch the infinite amount of controversy and criticism to which they are vulnerable.

Detailed analysis of the dialogue reveals that the three speakers who represent the point of view of the Sceptics are given more than half of the dialogue; however, Telamon is nevertheless able to express his opinion fully. Furthermore, study of De l'Ignorance louable makes clear that this dialogue is one of the most carefully structured of the dialogues, as is evident, for instance, by the effort taken to give a bit of "vraisemblance," formal and traditional as it may be, to this work. That is, a situation is created here which provides a forum for the expression of views by various speakers, thereby recalling at this significant juncture of recommencement the similar use of the symposium technique in Le Banquet sceptique.

This dialogue may be outlined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pages</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>main actions and/or ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) 1</td>
<td>Telamon</td>
<td>acknowledges the inopportuneness of his interruption of Orasius' meditation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) 2 Orasius responds that he often prefers solitude to company, but as concerns Telamon, his arrival is most welcome.

3) 2-3 Telamon wants to know the nature of Orasius' meditation; notes that one should neither over-indulge in meditation nor engage in thoughts which one would not wish to reveal.

4) 3-7 Orasius notes that he had been considering the sun, the nature of man's soul, and the validity of scepticism.

5) 7-12 Telamon compliments Orasius for not partaking in an extreme type of solitary contemplation; feels that it is the noble soul which can properly (i.e. in moderation) engage in meditation or conversation with oneself; opposes that aspect of scepticism which rejects science and the truth of anything.

6) 12-13 Orasius declares that those who accept scepticism are protected from the extravagances of other philosophical systems.

7) 13-14 Telamon continues to denounce the way in which the Sceptics reject the establishment of anything as positive.

8) 14-18 Orasius remarks that those who maintain they have definite knowledge of things are the ones who actually possess less knowledge than others; maintains that by examining other philosophies and seeing their shortcomings, one realizes the superior position of scepticism.

9) 18-23 Telamon notes the importance of man's mental capacities and that the extent of perfection of man is related to that of his intellectual development; defends the study and knowledge of the sciences, as a way of reaching the highest level of intellect man can reach; states that given the importance of the sciences, there can be no doubt of the esteem which the philosophical contemplation of body and soul, a far worthier activity, indeed merits.

10) 23-33 Orasius refutes Telamon's charge of the Sceptics' rejection of all things—an act which in itself would contradict the basic sceptical position of avoiding extremes; maintains that the
Sceptics study widely so as to understand how far the presumption of man does indeed go; declares that the sceptical position is reasonable and logical, thus superior to the position of other philosophies; maintains that the espousal of the sceptical position is preferable to basing one's knowledge on the sciences, something which is not easily understood by man.

11) 33-34 Telamon notes the arrival of the other philosophers and that he cannot fight all the opposition; states that he accepts certain aspects of all philosophies, including scepticism.

12) 34-35 Melpo-clitus indicates (upon arriving with Granicus) that he intends to stay for the conversation.

13) 35-36 Granicus expresses the thought that it will be difficult to convert Telamon to the sceptical point of view.

14) 36-37 Orasius remarks that he is looking forward to the discussion.

15) 37-38 Granicus notes the philosophical position of denying that something is so base, that nothing of importance can be found in it; remarks on the multiplicity of interpretations of the importance, quality, etc., of various objects.

16) 38-39 Melpo-clitus remarks that there is nothing which cannot be viewed with pleasure; suggests that the group try to win over Telamon to their point of view.

17) 39-40 Telamon states that his old views must first be lost, before he can accept new ideas; suggests that each of those who oppose him discuss with him one of the three aspects of philosophy (logic, physics, moral theory).

18) 40-42 Orasius notes the traditional division of philosophy into logic, physics, and moral theory; discusses some of the differing views on how philosophy may be divided, and the relationship among the parts of philosophy.

19) 42-45 Telamon criticizes the Sceptics' rejection of philosophy, the most venerable and worthwhile activity in the world.
20) 45-49 Granicus restates the sceptical position that philosophy is not something which is certain; denies that the Sceptics reject philosophy, but rather maintains that their position puts them in a better position to make use of philosophy; explains how Rhea, wife of Saturn, was a Sceptic

21) 49-61 Telamon insists on the need for logic if one wishes to understand or know something without doubt; maintains that the use of logic helps one in argumentation, and in one's conversation with oneself and one's inner speculations; feels that a rejection of logic would throw all into chaos

22) 61-76 Melpo-clitus maintains that the Sceptics do not reject everything, but just rather refuse to acknowledge the absolute truth of anything, and substitute "vraisemblance," for "le vrai"; maintains that logic does not provide the sound basis for action which Telamon says it does; contends that only natural logic, a mode of thought which does not rely on various philosophical systems, may be considered useful

23) 77-85 Telamon states his intention to discuss physics; maintains that it is only through natural philosophy (that is, the sciences), that one arrives at a comprehension of God; mentions aspects of nature which physics can explain

24) 85-105 Granicus maintains that though study of the world and nature is a worthy undertaking, one cannot assign to physics the certainty which Telamon gives it; feels that if the precepts of Aristotle were indeed true, force would not be needed to gain acceptance of his principles; attacks the certainty of theories relating to concepts concerning cause and effect, time, movement, the number and nature of the elements, the nature of the soul, and the relative status of man and animals in the world; states that immortality should be accepted on faith
25) 105-18 Telamon announces his intention to discuss moral theory; feels that the greatest beauty resides in virtue; maintains that moral precepts will show one how to obtain the highest wealth—knowledge and love of God; examines and defends the passions; maintains that moderation is the key to moral virtue; feels that it is normal for men of virtue to have some enemies.

26) 118-71 Orasius maintains that the Sceptics are not rejecting Telamon's ideas completely, but rather just limiting the extent to which they accept them; notes that many interpretations exist as to what constitutes the "souverain bien," or supreme state of happiness, comfort and contentment; notes that there is much difference of opinion on the question of the reason for our actions; presents varying views on the nature of the passions; considers the nature of virtue and vice; notes diverging views on prudence, justice, courage, death, temperance, ambition, avarice, material luxury; sexual practices, jealousy, beauty, eating, anger and laziness; summarizes his thoughts on the multiplicity of interpretations of all things.

27) 171-72 Telamon states that he now accepts the views of the Sceptics.

The beginning of this dialogue takes on to a degree the aspect of a theatrical presentation. One may imagine a dimly lit stage, upon which Orasius stands alone, engaged in deep meditation. Then suddenly Telamon enters, causing a certain interruption not only of Orasius' thoughts, but of the general tranquility of the scene. An introduction of this nature clearly constitutes an attempt at verisimilitude, for an effort is being made to give a basis for the existence of the discussion between Telamon and Orasius.

Orasius is most gracious in his welcoming of Telamon and quickly dispells Telamon's fears of the inopportuneness of his intrusion. Then, in response to the question posed by Telamon to Orasius as to
the nature of Orasius' meditation, Orasius begins a discourse on the nature of the sun and fire, the composition of man's soul, and the uncertainty of scientific positions. This discussion, of course, also serves as the first presentation in this dialogue of the sceptical position (3-7). Telamon is far from being totally negative in his reaction to Orasius' position, as he notes the beneficial aspects of limited solitary contemplation, such as the calm one experiences in this state. Telamon does though condemn most clearly any type of exaggerated solitary contemplation, which is the result of extreme practice of sceptical doctrine (7-12).

It is not surprising that ideas in the analysis just presented of the introductory section of De l'Ignorance louable should be reminiscent of certain essays of Montaigne, as is the case in the first dialogue of Le Vayer. Le Vayer has, in fact, often been viewed with those who followed the ideas expressed by Montaigne. For example, in The Fortunes of Montaigne, Alan Boase has considered him as "among the ablest and the most influential of the many who followed Montaigne's general way of thinking in the first half of the seventeenth-century."\(^1\) Specifically, in "De l'Incertitude de notre jugement" (I, 47), Montaigne discusses the consequence of certain military decisions, and the best policy to follow in particular military situations.\(^2\) The point of Montaigne's examples is to show that much of the way things result in war is due to fate—"Ainsi nous avons bien accoutumé de dire avec raison que les événements et issues dépendent notamment en la guerre, pour la plupart de la fortune, laquelle ne se veut pas ranger et assujettir à notre discours et prudence."\(^3\) The role of fortune
though may be extended to life in general—"il semble que nos conseils et délibérations en [on Fortune] dépendent bien autant, et que la fortune engage en son trouble et incertitude aussi nos discours."^4 Clearly, Montaigne's acknowledgement of the role of fate in this essay expresses a rejection of the certainty one can assign to events, which is akin to Orasius' denial of the certitude of scientific positions.

Another essay of Montaigne also may be mentioned at this point. In "C'est folie de rapporter le vrai et le faux à notre suffisance" (I, 27), Montaigne presents further the case for espousal of the sceptical position. He states that he feels he was correct in his rejection of magic,^5 but regrets that "la raison m'a instruit que de condamner ainsi résolument une chose pour fausse et impossible, c'est se donner l'avantage d'avoir dans la tête les bornes et limites de la volonté de Dieu et de la puissance de notre mère nature, et qu'il n'y a point de plus notable folie au monde que de les ramener à la mesure de notre capacité et suffisance."^6 Then he notes:

Il faut juger avec plus de révérence de cette infinie puissance de nature, et plus de reconnaissance de notre ignorance et faiblesses. Combine y a-t-il de choses peu vraisemblables, témoignées par gens dignes de foi, desquelles, si nous ne pouvons être persuadés, au moins les faut-il laisser en suspens; car, de les condamner impossibles, c'est se faire fort, par une téméraire presumption de savoir jusques où va la possibilité.^7

Again, a direct line may be seen from the scepticism of Montaigne to that of Le Vayer, in this statement on the uncertainty of opinion.
Beginning with the sixth speech, there are a number of relatively short and rather spirited exchanges, all of which may be viewed as adamant avowals of each speaker's readiness to defend his position. Orasius maintains that the Sceptics do not truly go to the extremes their enemies contend they do, but "au contraire nous nous accommodons doucement au rapport de nos sens, reconnoissans bien que sans cela la vie ne pourrait pas subsister; encore que nous sachions d'ailleurs la tromperie ordinaire d'iceux, d'où naist en partie nostre suspension" (14). He then goes on to insist upon the folly of those "qui pretendent trouver dans la Philosophie cette verité constante & asseuree, n'y ayant peut-estre endroit où elle soit moins perceptible, ny gens qui la possedent moins que les professeurs Dogmatiques de cette science" (15).

Telamon continues to defend man's acquisition of scientific knowledge and other forms of erudition (18-23), despite Orasius' feeling of the limited utility of such undertakings, and states that:

il vaudroit bien mieux estre quelque beau chien, ou quelque cheval bien formé, que d'avoir simplement la figure d'un homme, & n'en avoir pas la vraye forme, telle qu'elle doit estre, comme il arrive à ces ames ignorantes & dépourveues de ce caractere d'humanité [i.e., knowledge and use of the sciences, etc.] dont nous parlons; parce qu'on peut dire, qu'un cheval vigoureux & bien fait, est un animal parfait, & d'un chien de mesme, là où on ne peut pas nier qu'un homme d'esprit defectueux, ignorant & brutal, ne soit un animal extrêmement imparfait (19).

To this, Orasius replies that "nous ne condamnons point la connoissance des lettres & des Sciences, comme vous dites, mais nous enblasmons seulement l'arrogance, & nous contentons d'en moderer l'opinastreté" (23-24).
The exchanges of Orasius and Telamon summarized above constitute philosophical interruption at its best, for no headway is made in changing the views of the other speaker. After the tenth speech, though, a different type of interruption occurs, one of a very physical and consequently structural nature, for the other speakers in the dialogue suddenly arrive.

At this point, there follows a series of short exchanges (approximately one page in length) which serve to establish the identity of the newly arrived speakers, prior to the start of the long speeches in the dialogue. In the course of these short speeches, a remark of great importance is made by Telamon—a statement which actually fore­shadows the outcome of the dialogue. That is, there is an indication here that Telamon is a "sceptique malgré lui." Specifically, Telamon says:

Car comme je n'ay peu encore m'accommoder avec l'indif­ference de vostre secte, aussi puis-je bien dire que je n'ay en horreur aucun genre de Philosophie, qu'entant que le juge deraisonable, ou tout à fait ou en partie, faisant profession d'esiire ce qui me plaist en quelque lieu que je le trouve, & de prendre ce qui est conforme à mes sentimens de quelque main qu'il me soit presenté (34).

Certainly, this is not the remark of a man sure of himself beyond question. Furthermore, it would seem that Telamon's eclecticism, that is, his desire to choose what he thinks is valid from various philosophical systems and to remain open to change, sounds very much like the Sceptics' espousal of those things here and there which they can deem valid. The attitude of Telamon displayed here, however, is nothing new. His limited acceptance of solitary meditation, during
the first exchanges with Orasius (7 ff.), may also be considered as
an indication of his hedging with respect to his anti-sceptical stance.
Furthermore, it is important to note here that both of these remarks
testify to Le Vayer's desire to prepare the reader, very early in the
dialogue, for Telamon's possible "conversion" to scepticism. Despite
this situation, the other interlocutors look upon the attitude expressed
by Telamon as a challenge to their powers of argumentation (34 ff.).

Telamon concludes his remarks in this speech with the suggestion
that the discussion to take place be based on the three parts of
philosophy—logic, physics, and moral theory (39-40).

At this point, three short speeches follow on the merit or lack
of merit of philosophy and on the validity of scepticism (42 ff.).
And so ends the first section of the dialogue, as rapid exchanges
now give way to longer, more complex expositions.

According to the proposed plan, Telamon begins with a defense
of logic, "la science des sciences, l'oeil de la raison, & la balance
de la verité" (50), noting that one must use both one's innate logic
and learned logic (50-51). Furthermore, he declares that "nos plus
profondes speculations sont souvent comme ces perspectives trompeuses,
qui nous font voir ce qui n'est pas, representant aux yeux de nostre
esprit les choses tout autrement qu'elles ne sont; c'est pourquoi
nous avons lors le plus besoin des regies de la Logique" (56-57).

Melpoclitus responds by stating that contrary to what Telamon
maintains, the Sceptics do indeed have a method for the basis of their
judgments—"vraisemblance." This approach to matters
Furthermore, Granicus rejects Telamon's insistence on the need for learned systems of logic, given man's natural reasoning ability. Even this type of logic, he cautions, should be used in moderation. Granicus also notes that historically there has been little unanimity as to what is the most correct system of learned logic (63 ff.).

The second aspect of the debate, physics, is now considered. Telamon shows the importance of physics in arriving at a love of God:

...
Granicus responds to Telamon's position on the usefulness and certainty of physics by presenting a lengthy discussion of the lack of certitude of the sciences. A clearer comprehension of Granicus' position may be had if one first considers attitudes towards science, both before and during Le Vayer's time. The best point of departure for this analysis is a reconsideration of the status of religion in these periods.

On the basis of the fifth dialogue, the precarious situation of religious doctrine both prior to and during the time of Le Vayer should be clear. With the increase of scientific discovery in the first two decades of the seventeenth century, the question of establishing the certainty of any matter became increasingly difficult. Robert Lenoble has considered the concept of scientific progress in the seventeenth century, and notes for instance that the notion of the "indefinite" universe, which does not have fixed outer boundaries, and which is in a state of continual movement, was of great importance to men of that time. Thus, if scientific principles were open to continuing debate, what possible authority could there be, other than blind faith, for certainty in religious matters?

The writings of the Portuguese doctor, Francisco Sanchez (1552-1623), constitute a good example of the questioning which the sciences underwent. In Sanchez's work *Quod nihil scitur* (written 1576, published 1581), he develops the ideas of scepticism "by means of an intellectual critique of Aristotelianism, rather than by an appeal to the history of human stupidity and the variety and contrariety of
previous theories." He "begins by asserting that he does not even know if he knows nothing. Then, he proceeds, step by step, to analyze the Aristotelian conception of knowledge to show why this is the case." He shows the arbitrary nature of definitions, attacks the amount of time spent on analyzing abstract notions and criticizes the method of Aristotlean science, demonstration, as well as the use of syllogisms.  

Sanchez concludes at this point that "science could not be certainty acquired by definitions, neither can it be the study of causes, for if true knowledge is to know a thing in terms of its causes, one would never get to know anything. The search for its causes would go on ad infinitum as one studied the causes of the cause, and so on."  

Given this situation, what would be true science? True science, for Sanchez, is the perfect knowledge of a thing. This genuine knowledge is immediate, intuitive apprehension of the real qualities of an object. "Thus, science will deal with particulars, each somehow to be individually understood. Generalizations go beyond this level of scientific certainty, and introduce abstractions, chimeras, etc. Sanchez's scientific knowledge would consist, in its perfect form, of experimental apprehension of each particular in and by itself."  

Sanchez realizes though that his goal of certain knowledge cannot be achieved for several reasons: man is incapable of certainty, due to the unreliability of the senses; things are related to each other and thus cannot be known individually; there are too many different things for man to know; and things are always changing, thus they are never in that final or complete state in which they could be truly
known. Given this situation, "all man can achieve is limited, imperfect knowledge of some things which are present in his experience through observation and judgment. Unfortunately, few scientists make use of experience, and few people know how to judge."

The views of Rabelais and Montaigne relative to science help to clarify further the ideas of the Renaissance on this matter. With respect to Rabelais, Busson notes in his *Le Rationalisme dans la littérature française de la Renaissance* (1533-1601), that

> alors que dans les deux premiers livres Rabelais se contentait de nier les miracles, dans ses derniers il les explique. Et de même qu'entre le IIe et IIIe livre, il a étudié les théories padouanes* sur l'immortalité, de même, pour les miracles, il a cherché chez les padouanes et trouvé dans Cicéron, la formule définitive qui les nie et qui leur substitue la régularité des lois naturelles.13

Montaigne's view on the status of the sciences, as may be formed on the basis of the *Apologie de Raimond Sebond*, is summarized by Popkin as follows:

In an age when the whole scientific outlook of Aristotle was under attack, the extension of the religious and humanistic crises to the scientific world threatened to destroy the very possibility of any knowledge whatsoever.

*"padouanes"—The Padouans were a group of Renaissance philosophers, whose name derives from the University of Padua. A notable member of this group was Pietro Pomponazzi (1462-1525). He is known for his questioning of the doctrine of immortality, adapted in Vanini's works (Giulio Cesare Lucilio Vanini, 1585-1619, Italian philosopher, burned at the stake at Toulouse, for atheism and witchcraft), and combated by Père Marin Mersenne (1588-1648, author of the *Harmonie universelle*, 1636-37).
Montaigne's last series of doubts, the most philosophical level of his Pyrrhonism, raised a whole series of problems, about the reliability of sense knowledge, the truth of first principles, the criterion of rational knowledge, our inability to know anything except appearances, and our lack of any certain evidence of the existence or nature of the real world. These problems, when seriously considered, undermined confidence in man's ability to discover any science in Aristotle's sense—truths about the world which are certain.¹⁴

Questioning of the sciences continues in the seventeenth century.

While Busson does not delve into the nature of this problem after 1660, he does make the observation that:

si l'on veut toutefois considérer d'un peu haut le résultat de l'offensive padouane au XVIIe siècle, on verra que son principal résultat a été de séparer et même d'opposer la raison et la foi, la philosophie et la théologie... Le développement des sciences accentuera ce divorce. Le XVIIe siècle dans son ensemble n'avait pas connu ni même soupçonné ce nouvel aspect de la lutte antireligieuse. La sottise des cardinaux condamnant Galilée, l'étroitesse d'esprit de certains exégètes de la bible, la résistance de certains théologiens à Torricelli,* créera le problème science-religion. Et si la génération de Gassendi et de Pascal s'efforce de ne pas dramatiser cette opposition, la génération suivante, celle de Huygens,** Auzout,*** Guillaume Lami,**** Fontenelle va ouvertement choisir la science et abandonner la foi.¹⁵

*Evangelista Torricelli (1608-1667)—Italian physicist; student of Galileo; perfected the barometer and did work on the effects of atmospheric pressure; important for both Roberval and Pascal.

**Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695)—Dutch physicist and astronomer active in France and in the Académie des Sciences.

***Adrien Auzout (1622-1691)—French astronomer; inventor of the micrometer; member of the Académie des Sciences.

****Guillaume Lami (1644-1682)—Physician; follower of Gassendi; author of the De principiis rerum (1669); attacked Aristotelianism and Cartesianism.
With respect to the specific views on science of the libertins, Popkin contends that those such as Le Vayer, Patin, and Sorbière seemed to have "little or no appreciation of the scientific revolution going on around them, and regarded the new theories as either another form of dogmatism, replacing the former ones, or insisted on suspending judgment on all scientific theories, new or old." This position, it should be noted, was also that of believers such as Père Marin Mersenne.

Furthermore, Popkin continues, Le Vayer "regarded any and all scientific research as a form of human arrogance and impiety, which ought to be abandoned for complete doubt and pure fideism. The value of scepticism for the sciences, he claimed, was that a proper indoctrination in Pyrrhonism, would lead one to give up all scientific pretentions." One must also keep in mind, though, that while Le Vayer certainly rejects scientific principles, he has more than just a passing acquaintance with these theories, as is evidenced by the detail in which he engages on such matters, in this dialogue and elsewhere.

Returning to the text of this dialogue, after Telamon defends the sciences, Granicus begins his response on this matter, stating that he does not challenge the utility and beauties of physics, but rather the lack of certainty of the precepts of this science. Specifically, he states that contemplation of the world and nature is indeed a worthy undertaking, "puis qu'il y a apparence que les Dieux ne nous ont donné la place que nous y tenons, comme en un magnifique Theatre, que pour en estre avec admiration les spectateurs. Mais si
faut-il demeurer dans les termes de l'humanité, n'estendre pas nostre capacité au de là de la sphere d'activité, & ne pas prendre les doutes pour des certitudes & les vray-simblances pour des veritez" (87).

Granicus then presents various views on nature and metaphysics and questions the methods of the Aristotelians, who bitterly criticize those who oppose their views. Is it not, asks Granicus, "une tyrannie dans la republique philosophique, de vouloir extorquer par force ce que les autres croyent n'estre pas obligez de donner par raison" (91-92). To impose one's will on others, he goes on to maintain, is "une injustice toute pure, & une insolence bien Peripatetique de les [Aristotle's principles] vouloir exiger tyranniquement de la sorte" (92).

Granicus also considers diverging views on matters such as the concept of the void, the meaning of time relationships and movement, the nature of fire and the heavenly bodies, whether animals have the power of reason, the relation of animals and man, and the concept of immortality—the most important area physics treats and the most open to diverse opinion (94 ff.). On the question of immortality, Granicus goes on to note that immortality cannot be proved on the basis of philosophical systems designed by man—immortality can be understood only on the basis of faith (104). Other dialogues already considered, in particular De la Divinité and De la Philosophie sceptique, testify to Le Vayer's feeling that faith is open to question. Consequently, the credit given to faith here, as a way of resolving the question of immortality, would seem limited and therefore doubtful.

It is also during Granicus' attack on physics that another suggestion that Telamon is a "sceptique malgré lui" is made. Granicus
states: "Les cieux sont trop esloignez de nos sens, comme vous [i.e. Telamon] advoiez, pour en rien determiner, & c'est-icy que vous estes le plus raisonnable, & sans y penser, Pyrrhonien, reconnoissant qu'on n'en peut discourir que sur les Phenomenes" (96). This presentation of Telamon's remarks though is taken out of context, and thus this quotation requires especially careful analysis. What Telamon actually states (78 ff.) is that it is the natural sciences which will lead man to an understanding of nature and those things which are otherwise beyond man's grasp. Telamon does leave the impression which Granicus cites—that is, that it is part of man's nature to experience a period of doubt or wondering. However, Telamon also states that this period of doubt which exists with respect to nature and God is terminated with the aid of the sciences. It is this point which Granicus fails to note. In so doing, Granicus is able to distort Telamon's views and say that Telamon is a Sceptic to some extent, and that when in this state, he is acting in the best way he can. The significance of Granicus' remark in terms of the whole dialogue is that Le Vayer is able to show how Telamon's position is quite easily attacked, thus giving a further indication of the ultimate outcome of the dialogue.

After Granicus' speech, Telamon begins the third section of the discussion, "morale," or moral discourse or theory. Telamon maintains that moral theory will teach one what the nature of happiness is and how to obtain it and states that the way to this happiness is knowledge and use of virtue. He also remarks that moral theory will explain the nature of the "souverain bien," that is, the supreme state of happiness, comfort, and contentment (106-7).
Telamon then goes on to state that moral discourse will also explain to man the nature of the passions, since "la bonne constitution de nostre esprit ne depend pas du retranchement absolu de ces passions, mais bien de leur regle et moderation, non plus que la sante du corps ne procede pas de l'aneantissement des quatres qualitez contraires, mais seulement de leur accord & temperature" (109). Significantly here, once again, an underlying and unconscious scepticism (from Telamon's point of view) may be found in Telamon's remarks. The weight he gives to moderation is clearly in the sceptical tradition.

Telamon continues by noting that moral discourse will teach virtues such as prudence, justice, force of spirit and temperance (113), then proceeds to give examples of the importance given to moral discourse by the Ancients and others. He notes, for instance, that "les plus sages de tous les Orientaux, qui sont les Chinois, ne donnent des licences, & ne font des Bacheliers ny des Docteurs qu'en la seule science Morale" (114), and that "Socrate n'ayant cultivé que cette seule partie de la Philosophie, ait esté reconnu des Dieux le plus sage de tous les hommes, & de ceux-cy le pere commun de tous les Philosophes" (114).

Telamon realizes that his position is open to attack, given the fact that some who masquerade as philosophers, professing to have moral virtue, are actually involved in vice. Such people "ne se... [reconnoissent] tels que par quelques discours classiques, & par quelque exterieur encore plus importum (non vita sed scholae discimus), sans que leurs actions correspondent en rien à leur profession, ny que leurs oeuvres ayent la moindre teinture des vertus qu'ils
distinguent & définitions" (116-17). Those who act in this way are to be condemned, Telamon concedes, and thus this situation does not invalidate his ideas on the benefit of moral theory. With the use of the term "discours" here, it is clear that communication and the difficulty of meaningful communication are being kept an ever-present concern by Le Vayer, who designates how discourse may be used so as to impede understanding and distort one's true purpose. A more complete discussion of the problem of discourse, with respect to this dialogue, will be presented later.

Telamon concludes his speech by noting that many are envious of those who profess moral discourse, although the present company—"des hommes de vostre sorte, & en un lieu où les Muses sont si respectées," (118)—is excluded from this passion. After this, Orasius presents his response to Telamon—a speech which constitutes the longest single section of the dialogue.

Orasius begins his speech by noting that those who are Sceptics are not envious. Sceptics would have no ill feelings toward virtue, if it exists in the heavens, but the possible existence of virtue is beyond man's knowledge. Given this situation, the Sceptics are content to laugh at
cette fausse [sic] image de vertu & de ce phantosme de discipline morale, qu'on veut faire passer icy bas pour de veritables subjects. De sorte qu'il s'en faut tant que nous soyons portez d'aucune animosite contre vostre pretendu science des bonnes moeurs, que nous ne reconnoissons ny science aucune à cet egard non plus qu'ailleurs, ny moeurs quelconques qu'on puisse absolument faire passer pour bonnes ou mauvaises, quoique nous nous accommodions doucement à toutes celles que nos coustumes ont introduites, & que nous portions tout le respect possible à celles que les loix divines & humaines ont authorisées parmy nous (119).
Orasius then mentions varying views and concepts on the nature of "le souverain bien," (rest, contemplation, knowledge of virtue, voluptuousness, good fortune, bad fortune, etc.), and states that: "si le fondement de toute cette beatitude depend de la connoistre, personne ne pouvant estre heureux s'il ne s'estime tel, il est aisé de juger que peu ou point la possedent parfaitement, puisque la condition de nostre commun genie est telle, que nous n'entrons en connoissance de nostre bonheur qu'avant ou après la possession d'iceluy" (126). The principles of our actions are open to debate, due to such factors as the controversy of whether intellect and will are distinct forms, the role of providence, and the question of free will (127).

After this, Orasius takes up the question of the passions—whether they are as innocent as Telamon maintains. He notes how the passions may be divided in different ways, but finds most acceptable the division into four reactions—joy, sadness, hope and fear (131). A similar division is found in the writings of Marin Cureau de La Chambre (1596(?)-1669), the physician of Louis XIV, whose ideas concerning the theory of the humors will be considered in Chapter Four of this study. Following his introductory remarks, Orasius illustrates differing views on the nature of these passions, for example, "la joye semble estre recherchée d'un chacun, comme celle qui est à l'ame ce qu'est le repos au corps. . . . Il y en a pourtant qui ont cru qu'elle enervoit les meilleurs esprits (sans parler de ceux qu'elle a fait mourir tout à fait) & l'Ecclesiaste ne se lasse point de luy reprocher sa vanité" (132). Likewise, the other passions are
considered favorably or unfavorably by different groups (132 ff.). From this diversity, Orasius draws his conclusion: "Vous voyez com-
biens ces passions ont esté diversement envisagées, dont je pous
[sic] ajusteray ce seul mot, qu'il ne semble pas que ceux là soient
fort ennemis du vice, qui se contentent de le moderer, & qu'il y a
bien de la peine à conçoquer que la passion soit un vice par son
progres, si elle n'a esté qu'indifferente en son commencement" (136).

After these comments, Orasius supports his argument with respect
to virtue metaphorically: "beaucoup estiment que comme une arondelle
n'annonce pas le printemps, il faut une repetition de plusieurs actions
pour engendrer l'habitude de vertu; d'autres asseurent que nous
pouvons faire une seule action avec tant d'ardeur & de courage, qu'elle
sera suffisante, bien qu'unique; pour produire en nous cette parfaite
habitude" (138).

Different interpretations are introduced on the distance between
vice and virtue, the prevalence of vice at a given time, and the pos-
sibility of completely isolating vice and virtue (142 ff.). This part
of his discussion is concluded by St. Augustin's definition of evil as
an absence of good and its contradiction which exists that "le vice
qui estoit tenu pour un mal positif par quelques-uns, n'esoit repute
par d'autres qu'une pure privation, pour ce que tout estre positif est
un bien; outre qu'il faudroit autrement reconnoistre Dieu pour Auteur
de ce mal essentiel" (144).

Orasius then considers specific types of virtues such as prudence,
justice, force and grandeur of courage, death and temperance (145 ff.),
noting of temperance: "je ne sçay pas comment vous en pouvez faire une vertu morale, après avoir dit que toute vertu consistoit en l'action, car son seul nom de temperance monstre assez que c'est plutost une suspension de nos fonctions, & une bride à nos inclinations naturelles, qu'une veritable operation" (151). In this entire section of his speech, the overriding theme again is the diversity of opinion on the merit and nature of these actions, as it continues to be with respect to vices, in particular, ambition, avarice, sexual pleasures, excesses (or what seem to be excesses) of food and drink, anger (a needed outlet), and laziness (151 ff.), emphatically "evils" not condemned by all. Laziness, for example, may be seen in a good light, since the "suspension d'esprit" of those who are lazy derives from the proper attitude, scepticism (163). Idleness, it may also be noted, is a traditional subject among philosophers, as evidenced for instance in Montaigne (I, 8), who though in opposition to Le Vayer, praises the active mind and finds idleness leads to strange and wild thinking he must combat. 18

Orasius begins his conclusion with a general pronouncement on the inability of man to label anything definitely (164 ff.). With respect to moral theory, he says: "toute sa science va plus à l'ornement & à l'ostentation qu'à la regle & à la bonne conduittre de nostre vie" (166), and that "il n'y a si extravagante action ny si prodigieuse, qui n'aict esté approuvé dans les moralitez de quelque Philosophe" (167). Furthermore, he points out that those who are most vocal in their
extreme philosophical concepts may indeed be those meriting the least amount of belief. Thus, it is best for one to reject the folly of others, and assume the position of scepticism (168).

In the last speech, Telamon changes his anti-sceptical stance, now submitting to all of the argumentation which has been presented. However, as is always the case in the dialogues, the impossible task of convincing the world in general that scepticism is the best mode of conduct still faces Orasius and his supporters.

As indicated above, the questions of the difficulty of communication and the nature of discourse are of prime concern in De l'Ignorance louable. For example, early in the dialogue, Telamon says to Orasius: "or comme jusques icy il y a une merveilleuse conformité d'humeur & de sentiment entre nous, aussi ne puis-je m'empescher de m'opposer aux injustes & extravagantes pensées de vostre Sceptique, principalement lorsqu'elle se rend injurieuse envers les sciences, les acusant d'impertinence, voire de nullité, ce que j'estime un blasphème insupportable" (11). Up to this point, Orasius and Telamon had been agreeing on the positive aspects of solitude and meditation. But this concurrence in their thought is, comparatively speaking, a minor point, and the fact that they are actually incapable of pursuing a conversation in which there is no interruption, is the more significant aspect of this quotation.

Later in the dialogue, as the other speakers arrive, Telamon says to Orasius that "encore que j'estime beaucoup la presence de ses chers amis, si m'auroit-il fasche qu'ils fussent entrez plussto seven plante d'interruption, car je prenois un singulier plaisir à vous voir en si
bonne humeur, quoy que portée à mal mener la science qui vous a
fourny, comme l'Aigle de l'Apologue, les traits dont vous la frappez

Heu patitur telis vulnera facta suis" (33-34). Most importantly, this
statement shows Telamon's awareness of interruption both in terms of
philosophical agreement and physical impediments. If there are
physical factors which make conversation difficult, this is a bad
omen with respect to the possibility of ease in the resolution of the
philosophical debate. That Telamon should make one of his "sceptique
malgré lui" statements at this point (see above pp. 107-8), follows
logically. Since Telamon acknowledges the problem and difficulty of
communication, it is understandable that he would want to assert what
little part of this interruption he has overcome. Ironically, though,
he does not see how he compromises himself by acting in this way.

A further example of the recognition of interruption may be found
in Orasius' remark concerning the attempt which is going to be made
to convince Telamon that he should change his stance. Orasius says
here: "Il me semble pourtant très-raisonnable que nous y facions
nostre possible, car outre l'office d'amie que nous luy rendons, je
ne crois pas que nous puissions prendre un plus agreable & plus
honnestent entreten pour le reste de cet après disnée, puisque pour
m'obliger vous avez voulu la donner à ce cabinet" (36). The key
phrase here is "nostre possible." Orasius, while not admitting defeat,
is far from claiming further victory. Hence, he is acknowledging the
unavoidable presence of interrupted dialogue in his dealings with
Telamon.
Finally, one may note Melpoclitus' remark upon his arrival:

si nous survinions en un lieu de moindre familiarité, il
seroit besoin d'user de beaucoup de civilitéz pour excuser
le trouble que nous pouvons avoir apporté à vôtre entretien.
Mais afin que d'ailleurs quelque mauvais complimens ne
nuisent à une bonne conversation, nous prendrons place
sans autre ceremonie auprès de ce beau feu, & part, s'il
vous plait à vos agréables propos (34-35).

There is here recognition of the difficulty of communication among
men, though not among those assembled for this exchange of views.
It is also important to note that here Melpoclitus implies that with
respect to the conversation between Orasius and Telamon, there may be
a type of "automatic discourse." The term "automatic discourse" sig-
nifies futile, non-meaningful communication, that is, speech which
is simply tolerated, if even that. Recognition of non-meaningful
communication may also be found in one of Telamon's remarks:

Il me reste seulement à prier celuy qui me répondra,
qu'il ne se donne point la peine de me repeter ces longs
discours de vostre Sextus, quand pour destruire la dis-
cipline dont nous parlons, il pretend montrer que tant
s'en faut qu'elle puisse servir à nous faire
reconnoistre la verité, qui est sa fin, qu'à le bien
prendre cette verité n'est qu'une chose chimerique;
& quand elle seroit quelque chose de réel, que nous
n'avons aucun signe certain pour la remarquer, ny
ensuite aucune demonstration pour nous en asseurer,
non pas mesme une faculté qui en puisse juger (60).

This quotation is especially important for it illustrates the problem of
communication which exists not only between two people, but with oneself.

On the basis of other remarks in this dialogue, one knows that Telamon
actually accepts some sceptical views, yet here Telamon is condemning scepticism. One may conclude from this remark that according to Le Vayer, given the difficulty which exists for one to analyze for oneself a plan of thought and conduct, it is that much more difficult for two people to arrive at a common interpretation of matters as complex as those considered in this dialogue.

Thus, by combining topics of former dialogues and giving attention to the old theme of relative nature and uncertainty in the new scientific systems, Le Vayer creates in the sixth dialogue another forceful presentation of this thesis. While not attaining the stature of the fifth dialogue, this dialogue does serve as a link in the development of the idea of the nature of discourse and prepares one thus for further treatment of this question in the seventh dialogue.

The importance of the seventh dialogue, De l'Opinastre, may be immediately discerned by Tisserand's remark that it "fait à peu près le tour des idées de La Mothe le Vayer." Similar to the situation found in other dialogues, the two participants, Ephestion and Cassander, are both Sceptics. They heartily condemn dogmatism, pedantry, short-sighted opinions, and pompous assertions of the truth, and use Ephestion's narration of his encounter with a certain Crates, a dogmatic philosopher, as a springboard for the expression of their views. The importance of this dialogue, though, is not limited to its representation of the sceptical position, for De l'Opinastre also illustrates most clearly an aspect of Le Vayer's "art du dialogue." With this dialogue Le Vayer is consciously creating a certain continuity in his work.
All three major topics of *De l'Ignorance louable*—logic, physics and moral theory—are again considered in *De l'Opinastreté*. Ephestion maintains in his last speech in this dialogue that logic does not provide the truth on a given matter, as some feel it does (218-19). Adding that natural logic is likewise open to debate, he is even more extreme in his denunciation than was Melpoclitus in the sixth dialogue. Immediately after these remarks, Ephestion denounces physics (219-20), in which there is disagreement "non seulement à l'esgard de ses principes, & de ce qui est de plus haute consideration, mais des choses mesmes qui tombent sous nos sens" (219). Early in the dialogue, while Ephestion is still relating his encounter with Crates, he had already posed the limitations of science, holding forth on the folly of a science of grammar when in fact it is subject to the whims of general usage (186-88). Finally, in moral theory (223 ff.), there exists an even greater variety of opinion: "c'est icy que les preventions d'esprit exercent le plus puissamment leur empire, & chacun qui combat pour son usage ... appelle les autres barbares s'ils different en façon de faire, comme au fait des langues les Grecs estoient barbares aux Egyptiens, & nous le sommes tous les uns aux autres" (223).

There is also another aspect to the relationship between the sixth dialogue and the seventh dialogue. In the seventh, one is given something of an outline of the major thoughts which are espoused by those who follow the misguided ways of the Dogmatists and certain other philosophers. The Telamon of the sixth dialogue seems to embody
the misled person who is now the object of the comments of Ephestion and Cassander, and Telamon's conversion is an illustration of the potential success of the Sceptics' efforts. Careful analysis of the dialogue reveals the additional important aspect in this dialogue, of a certain sensitivity between the speakers. Each speaker expresses some understanding of the emotional reaction of the other speaker towards a particular view, without that speaker actually verbalizing his feelings, unlike the fifth dialogue, in which Orasius presents the case of an exemplary figure able to analyze the other speakers beyond the level they themselves can analyze their own thoughts (see above p. 76 and p. 78 ff.). Given the problem of communication with which Le Vayer is repeatedly concerned in the Dialogues, the relationship among the speakers in this dialogue is an important element in the formation of an understanding of Le Vayer's attitude on the potential for interaction among men.

The major ideas in this dialogue may be summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pages</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>main actions and/or ideas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) 175</td>
<td>Ephestion</td>
<td>notes Cassander's desire to hear of the confrontation which Ephestion had experienced with Crates, with respect to the relationship of French and Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 175-76</td>
<td>Cassander</td>
<td>expresses surprise that Ephestion had become involved with someone who is stubborn and contentious, as is Crates; wonders how Ephestion is able to reconcile having engaged in this conversation, with his sceptical position, which precludes involvement with those who go to extremes in their views</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) 176-92</td>
<td>Ephestion</td>
<td>proposes to explain first of all the factors which precipitated the confrontation with Crates; relates how he and Crates had been discussing the affinity of French and Greek,</td>
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and Crates' insistence on the fact that any similarities between these two languages are due to the role of Latin—a fact which Ephestion would not accept and which thereby caused the dispute; gives examples to prove his views on the relationship of French and Greek (e.g., the extent of usage of Greek in ancient Gaul, French words which are derived from Greek); describes Crates' citing of examples and grammatical rules to prove his point and notes Crates' general impassibility when arguing a matter; declares his intention to explain at this point, what moved him to decide to engage in the debate with Crates; acknowledges Crates' expertise in Greek, Latin and literary matters, yet finds it difficult to grant Crates respect, given the stubbornness of Crates; maintains that long study and cogitation, which usually are beneficial, may lead one with a dogmatic spirit only to greater stubbornness, and not to clairvoyance and judgment; cites examples of how one's views become distorted by excessive adherence to a particular subject or mode of thought, and thereby again points out the folly of excessive adherence to a given opinion; characterizes scepticism as the only reasonable alternative to following extreme opinions; notes the hopelessness of trying to analyze the origins of languages, and the foolishness of considering grammar as an exact science, since grammar is based on usage; notes that just as the observer of a work is often a better judge of that work than is its creator, who is overly involved with the work, so is Crates blinded as to the proper perspective to give to the origins of languages and to grammar, due to his involvement with these subjects; remarks that Crates is one of those persons who refuses to retract a view, yet the one who alters his views if they become unreasonable, is indeed superior to those who do not revise previously stated views; concludes with a final praise of scepticism
4) 192-95 Cassander expresses his enjoyment with having heard Ephestion's story; praises scepticism and condemns excessive adherence to opinion

5) 195-97 Epheston condemns espousal of opinions which have the widest general support; remarks that since all opinions have been held and accepted (sometimes many times) by somebody (including persons of note), one should be cautious in condemning those views which seem most extreme; notes that despite this situation, there are those who because of vanity maintain that on a given matter, their original view is unchangeable; concludes with the thought that the most flexible soul is the most noble

6) 197-200 Cassender notes that one's vanity causes one to remain inflexible with respect to a given view; explains that an admission of a change of view may be considered as an avowal of a previous lack of knowledge—a fact which many do not wish to admit; states that it is the mark of the truly wise man to recognize and correct his errors

7) 200-4 Epheston suggests that "amour-propre" may help to explain the reason for obstinacy in opinion; notes that it is natural for man to contradict himself and for men to hold different opinions; discusses how man's views are influenced by factors such as perspective, passion, love and hate; states that our judgments, which are made on a superficial and personal basis, are far from definitive; feels that recognition of the unsure aspect of opinion frees one's spirit and puts one in a state of repose—the state in which true happiness exists; restates the fact that it is not shameful to change one's views

8) 204-17 Cassander asks Ephestion to discuss his latest thoughts on scepticism; states that he will first, however, consider three paradoxes, in order to provide a basis for the forthcoming remarks by Ephestion on scepticism; notes how Columbus' conquests were not a noble and
humanitarian civilization of the savages, but were in truth motivated purely by man's ambition and greed; praises the plague and other methods of population control; questions the superiority of "la belle mort," that is, a slow death under the eyes of one's family, as opposed to a death such as public execution.

9) 217-37 Ephestion notes that the extent of worthiness of philosophy is viewed in various ways; considers some of the many ways in which philosophy is conceived and the fact that everyone feels that all others are wrong in their views; maintains that logic does not provide the truth on a given matter, for the conclusions of logic are open to debate; feels that natural logic is also open to debate; declares furthermore that the concepts of physics are not certain either; mentions some diverging customs and habits among different peoples, before beginning his study of metaphysics; maintains that metaphysics is also far from certain; feels though that it is in the area of morals that the most variety of opinion exists and that one is most forceful in the defense of one's views; presents another list of varying opinions, before restating the feeling that given the uncertainty of a given opinion, scepticism is the best mode of thought; notes again that it is natural for man to change his views; concludes by stating that the sceptical position lets one sample many thoughts, without accepting any, and thus does not preclude all action and involvement.

In this dialogue, a speaker may express a certain hopelessness in pursuing a particular point. An expression of an opinion of this nature may be used to indicate interruption both on the thematic and structural levels. In the first long speech in the dialogue, for instance, Ephestion recounts his confrontation with Crates (177 ff.), noting that Crates' views on the cause of similarities between Greek and French are at odds with his own. Ephestion is, of course, aware
that this confrontation with Crates could go on indefinitely, as is
evidenced by his remark that the "genie" by which Crates is possessed
"luy fait estimer peut estre que la force de l'esprit consiste à
estre inflexible en ses resolutions" (183). A statement of this
nature certainly illustrates a comprehension on the philosophical
level, of the problem of interrupted dialogue. With respect to the
structural use of this remark, one may infer logically from the nature
of the conversation of Ephestion and Crates, as it is retold, that in
the context of a conversation between a Sceptic and a Dogmatist, on
matters such as those considered by Ephestion and Crates, an expression
of hopelessness would have been offered by Ephestion, at this point,
as an indication of his intention to terminate the conversation. A
rhetorical usage of an expression of hopelessness is of course related
to the general rhetorical technique or signal (see pp. 22-23 above),
which is simply an announcement that an interruption is about to occur.

Analysis of *De l'Opinastre* further reveals, as noted above, that
in this dialogue there is a certain sensitivity of the speakers toward
each other. At the beginning of the dialogue, Cassander asks to hear
the story of the confrontation. Ephestion begins to relate it, stating
first those factors which precipitated the discussion. He feels though
that the other part of his discussion, that is, those underlying
feelings towards those such as Crates, which compelled him to engage
in the conversation, would be more interesting to Cassander. Ephestion
expresses this proposed shift in the focus of the conversation, as
follows:
Que si je ne sçavois combien vous mesprizez ces inutiles remarques, que beaucoup veulent faire passer pour fort serieuses, & si je ne faisois conscience avec vous de m'y amuser, veu me same que tant de personnes ont deja traicté cette matiere, il me seroit aisé de faire icy une fort longue enumeration de mots très François, lesquels sont notoirement d'extraction Grecque, sans qu'on les puisse rapporter que forcement à aucun autre idio me (180).

Clearly there is a recognition here by Ephestion of the feelings of Cassander, and the consequent lack of propriety of further discussion of this particular point. By extension, there is of course reflected here Le Vayer's recognition of the difficulty of communication. Given the problems of communication in a simple conversation between friends, one may well imagine the difficulties of communication existing among those who are basically hostile to each other.

But after Ephestion makes the statement just quoted, he remains so involved with his thoughts that he goes on to note a few additional examples of words which come directly from Greek and remarks that good examples of this nature are "en nombre infty" (182). Having Ephestion continue with this particular aspect of the discussion, after saying that he will not, does of course let Le Vayer continue to express a particular view on etymology. However, this situation is not a purely formal rhetorical technique used to bombard the reader with examples ad nauseum. Rather it adds some "vrai-semblance" to the dialogue, for though Ephestion is acutely aware of the difficulty of communication and cognizant of the sentiments of Cassander, his enthusiasm carries him away, and he fails to act in the optimum fashion here.
The sensitivity of Ephestion towards Cassander is also shown when Ephestion actually begins the second aspect of the recounting of his confrontation with Crates. He states:

Or pource que je vous vois principalement en peine de sçavoir ce qui me pût mouvoir à passer si avant contre un tel homme, & sur une matiere de si peu de consideration, je vous rendray d'autant plus volontiers raison de ce mien proceder, que le discours que nous pourrons tenir sur ce subject, sera, comme je crois, beaucoup moins ennuyeux que le precedent, pendant le reste de nostre promenade (183-84).

Furthermore, evidence of Ephestion's awareness of Cassander's sentiments may also be identified in his remark at the end of his summary of the confrontation with Crates. Here Ephestion states: "Et pour ce que mon humeur & mon genre de philosopher vous sont assez connus, ça plus esté par forme d'entretien & de complaisance, que je vous ay recité toute cette petite dispute, comme vous l'avez desiré, que pour besoin que je creusse avoir de me justifier en vostre endroit" (192). Also, at the very end of De l'Opinastre, Ephestion explains the raison d'être of his entire participation in the discussion: 

"[je] ne m'y suis estendu que pour vous complaire" (237), showing thereby again an appreciation of Cassander's feelings.

Cassander also expresses a certain sensitivity towards Ephestion. For example, Cassander says to Ephestion:

je vous prie qu'avant que nous separer vous me communiqiez les dernieres observations que vous avez peu faire sur la difference de tant d'opinions qui maistrisent l'esprit humain, pour que je ne crois pas qu'il y ait rien qui soit plus capable de nous moderer en nos sentimens & qui nous rende plus equitables en ceux des autres (205).

And then upon ending this speech, Cassander continues in the same vein:

"j'ay un extrême desir d'entendre de vous les remarques Sceptiques de
vos dernières lectures, sur tant de différentes pensées qui partagent l'esprit des hommes" (216-17). In other words, Cassander has an understanding of the fact that Ephestion takes pleasure in discoursing on scepticism, and thus he wishes to provide a situation in which Ephestion may expound on this matter. Of course, remarks of this nature also constitute a rhetorical means of providing another opportunity for sceptical doctrine to be further developed. However, as was the case in the similar situation discussed above (p. 132), these comments should not be viewed as a clumsy device of composition, given the fact that they are used as a part of Le Vayer's art of characterization. Indeed, on the basis of these perceptive remarks, one may conclude that Ephestion and Cassander go beyond the level of speakers to that of interlocutors.

Continuing with the analysis of Ephestion's first speech, one may also note that Ephestion views the case of Crates as something of a paradox. He states that Crates is "un des plus sçavans hommes de ce temps aux langues Grecque & Latine & des plus polis en toute sorte de belle Literature" (184). Yet, Ephestion goes on to note:

\[
tant s'en faut, . . . que je pense que les longues estudes & les plus profondes cogitations rendent un esprit dogmatique & asserteur comme le sien, plus clairvoyant & meilleur juge de ce qu'il s'est proposé de reconnoistre, qu'au contraire, j'estime que souvent son travail ne luy sert qu'à s'esloigner de la vérité & à la rendre contre elle d'autant plus opinastre (184).
\]

Then, with this thought in mind, Ephestion comments on the ways in which the Dogmatists in general function: "Or de l'heure qu'un esprit, pour bon souvent qu'il soit, s'est ainsi laissé prevenir de quelque particulière imagination & a pris à party de la soustenir,
sa force ne luy sert plus qu'à se confirmer & roidir en icelle, 
rejettant animeusement tout ce qui semble luy pouvoir contrarier"
(185-86). Indeed, it is only the Sceptic "qui se puisse aucunement 
exempter de tomber en cette flatteuse idolatrie de ses fantaisies, 
à cause de l'indifferente constitution interieure de son esprit"
(186).

Ephestion goes on to discuss at this point the origins of lan-
guages, etymologies and the arbitrary method by which the so-called
"rules" of correct grammar are formed, that is, the fact that they
are formed on the very unscientific basis of popular usage (186 ff.).
He then concludes that contrary to what Crates contends, there is no
scientific basis for the way in which languages have spread and
developed, and this situation thus is a further reason for denying
Crates the authority he claims.

At the end of his long speech, Ephestion reiterates that Crates
is one in whom perseverance is not of the virtuous type, "ferme &
resolu en une opinion raisonnable," (191), but rather he is one of
those who are "opinastres & invincibles en tout ce qu'ils entre-
prennent" (191). Thus no progress can possibly be made with Crates,
and indeed it seems that Ephestion foresaw the impossibility of any
change, as is evidenced by his remark that "ce fut plustost de
gayeté de coeur, comme l'on dit, que par dessein de contester, que
je m'opposay cette fois à Crates" (192).

With the conclusion of Ephestion's monologue, the dialogue
shifts from the specific consideration of the confrontation of Crates
and Ephestion, to a generalized denunciation of dogmatism, and a praise of scepticism. In so doing, further evidence is given by Le Vayer of the difficulty and even breakdown of communication on the philosophical level. Ephestion first notes the relativism of thought, in stating that all opinions have been repeatedly justified by someone, somewhere, and that everyone thinks that he alone is correct and will not alter this view: "si tost que nous avons donné nostre suffrage en faveur d'une proposition, la philautie nous la fait defendre avec tant de passion, . . . que nous combattons toutes celles qui luy sont opposées; & vous en voyez lors de si bons amis de leurs opinions ainsi prises & de si constans en cetteloyale amitié, qu'ils ne les abandonnent jamais" (196). Given this situation, it is best if one avoids espousal of any specific idea or theory (195-96). Such a position would seem to be warranted not only because of the general superiority of a policy of noncommitment, but because language and methods of discourse are inherently unscientific and thus deceptive and misleading. Consequently, putting one's faith in a verbalized expression of opinion is clearly unwise.

Cassander then continues the exchange by noting the role of vanity in making one refrain from revising an opinion which one had expressed at one time. He goes on to explain that those who will not revise an opinion maintain this posture for they feel that modifying an earlier view constitutes an admission of a previous lack of knowledge, something which they will go to great lengths to avoid. The truly wise man, though, does not fear correcting his errors (197 ff.).
Ephestion then adds, (200 ff.), that obstinacy might be explained simply on the basis of "amour-propre," reiterates that it is indeed natural for man to change his mind, and declares that many factors influence one's views—"la raison nous fait voir d'une maniere, ce que la passion nous crayonne d'une autre; l'amour nous fait trouver beau, ce que la haine nous rend difforme; il y a peu de choses que nous ne revestions ainsi de nos propres qualitez au mesme temps que nous les envisageons" (201).

At this point, Cassander proceeds to consider three matters, which he calls the three paradoxes. He indicates that his comments will provide a type of point of departure for the further remarks on scepticism, which he wishes Ephestion to make (204-5).

Cassander first analyzes the true motivation for Columbus' voyages (205-7), and in a larger sense, the goals of all exploration and colonialization. Cassander raises the question of whether one can maintain that the actions of the colonizers were indeed for the good of the savages, or rather if in truth these actions were undertaken purely for the profit of the colonizers. After this, Cassander begins to praise natural means of death (plague, famine, etc.), and man-made methods (abortion, killing, etc.), as effective methods of population control (207-11). He goes on to state on this matter that he considers that the plague is the best of these methods, and therefore certainly not something to be feared.

The last paradox concerns what is called "la belle mort," that is, a slow death which comes in the presence of one's family (211-17). For some, this type of death is accompanied by "quelque volupté, pource
que tout ce qui est purement selon nature ne peut estre que plaisant" (211). Cassander maintains though that this type of death—a fate which in and of itself is not terrible—is not the best type of death. He feels that public execution, for instance, while one is still in a healthy state, is a superior type of death.

At this point, Ephestion presents a final rally for scepticism. He begins with some general comments on philosophy, in which he notes among other things, that:

la connoissance des choses divines, & humaines, telle que nous la pouvons avoir, qu'on appelle Philosophie, & qui donne tant de presomption à beaucoup, est estimée par d'autres un vain amusement & une trompeuse illusion d'esprit; ceux mesmes qui l'ont fait venir du ciel, advoquant que Tantale n'estoit puni aux enfers, que pour avoir communiqué ce Nectar aux hommes, que les Dieux ne leur eussent pas deub envier s'ils eussent esté capables d'en profiter. Les differens moyens que chacun croit estre necessaires pour y parvenir, monstrent assez qu'elle est plus en l'imagination qu'en la réalité (217).

He then goes on to consider logic, physics, metaphysics and moral theory, providing many examples of opposing beliefs which are maintained on this matter. For instance, he states that "Les uns, comme les Académiques,* ont dit que tout estoit problematique, les autres, comme Antisthenes,** qu'il n'y avoir rien qui peust estre contredit.

*les Académiques—those of the philosophical school of Plato, which existed from the 4th century B.C. to the 1st century B.C.; views of this group generally oppose those of scepticism.

**Antisthenes (c. 444 B.C. – c. 365 B.C.)—Greek philosopher. He was a disciple of Socrates, a founder of the school of cynicism, and a teacher of Diogenes.
La logique même naturelle n'a plus de certitude, chacun raisonnant à sa mode" (218), and furthermore that "Les uns ont fait Dieu autheur de ce monde, d'autres en ont attribué l'ouvrage aux mauvais Demons, opinion qui semble moins estrange à ceux qui prennent garde à ce qui s'y pratique" (222).

Additionally, it is important to note that it is indeed in the area of moral theory, a topic which includes matters such as vice, virtue, habits and customs, that the greatest variety of opinions exists. In fact,

il n'y a point de partie en toute la Philosophie qui ait causé de plus fortes contestations. C'est icy que les preventions d'esprit exercent le plus puissamment leur empire, & chacun qui combat pour son usage . . . appelle les autres barbares s'ils different en façons de faire, comme au fait des langues les Grecs estoient barbares aux Egyptiens, & nous le sommes tous les uns aux autres. Ces grands fondateurs des plus saines pensées que possede le genre humain . . . perdent icy leur temps & leur peine, courans mesme fortune de se perdre, s'ils pensent se roidir contre les choses receuës, & s'opposer à ce furieux torrent de la coutume (223-24).

Ephestion then considers specifically varying ideas on matters such as beauty, table manners and sexual practices (224 ff.). Furthermore, he notes that the difficulty of establishing a code of moral practice is not caused simply by the multiplicity of concepts people hold. A problem may also be created by the actual application of a belief, which may have previously been set forth. Such a situation is evidenced by Ephestion's analysis of the Golden Rule:

Ne tient-on pas pour le plus seur fondement de toute la Morale cet axiome de ne faire jamais à autrui ce qu'on ne voudroit pas souffrir? si est-ce que ceux qui l'ont voulu penetrer, ont trouvé qu'à le bien examiner, tant s'en faut qu'il puisse passer pour tel, qu'il est ennemy
de la vie civile, & particulièrement contraire à toute justice, n'y ayant personne qui ne voulut qu'on luy pardonnast toutes ses fautes, & qui ne fuss très-fasché qu'on le condamnast à la mort, bien qu'il eust commis les crimes pour lesquels il est obligé de donner sa sentence contre ceux qui en sont coupables (231).

Shortly thereafter, Ephestion launches a final praise of scepticism, with a thought which well summarizes the thrust of this dialogue. He says, "doutons de tout, puis que c'est le propre de nostre humanité; & afin de ne rien déterminer trop légèrement, ne donnons pas mesme une assurance entiere de nos doutes Sceptiques" (234).

The conclusion of Ephestion's speech leads one to further consideration of the rhetorical features of this dialogue. Given the situation of harmony of thought present in De l'Opinastre, abrupt rhetorical techniques of interruption, which would serve to change the subject, are absent. Rather, as has been shown above, a remark may be made by a speaker, by means of which he invites the other speaker to continue discoursing on the matter of sceptical doctrine. The only remark which shows any tinge of abruptness is that phrase which serves to conclude the dialogue. Here Ephestion uses the "sunset" technique, which he combines with a compliment to Cassander on his ability to analyze and comprehend sceptical views--"vous sçavez ces choses mieux que moy, qui ne m'y suis estendu que pour vous complaire & aucunement à mon propre genie, lequel ne se lasse jamais de cette meditation, comme il semble que face le Soleil de nous esclairer; il est temps de nous seperer puis qu'il se separe de nous" (237).

Relativism of opinion, the paradox of short-sightedness caused by dogmatism, even in one who is basically intelligent, and further
general development of the sceptical position, are thus the basis of 
De l'Opinastreté. The focus on language in this dialogue makes it 
unique in the series, and certainly this work is a valuable aspect of 
Le Vayer's statement on philosophical interruption, in the dialogues 
as a whole.

An integral part of the sceptical position is one's engagement in 
solitary contemplation. This aspect of scepticism is often enunciated 
in the dialogues, and, as for instance in the case of De la Vie privée, 
may be the thrust of an entire dialogue. A situation reminiscent of 
De la Vie privée exists in the eighth dialogue, De la Politique, for 
withdrawal from the petty concerns of everyday political matters and 
attainment of a level of contemplation on a plane far above such 
mundane concerns is the focus of this dialogue.

Philosophical interruption exists in De la Politique on the two 
levels often found in Le Vayer—dispute within the dialogue between 
the speakers and dispute outside the confines of the dialogue between 
the speakers and the philosophical community as a whole. On the level 
of conflict between the speakers, two familiar figures, Telamon and 
Orontes, assume their traditional roles of foe and supporter of Sextus. 
Telamon takes the Aristotelian line, equating action and virtue, and, 
contending that man is something of a "political creature," calls for 
one's involvement in society. Orontes on the other hand presents the 
shortcomings and lack of universality of political systems. In 
responding to Telamon, he all but picks up the gauntlet: "Vous m'avez 
livré la botte bien franche cette fois, & sans aucunement y marchander, 
cher Telamon, en quoy vostre franchise m'oblige à vous repartir avec
pareille naisveté & candeur" (243). Following several additional exchanges, Orontes presents a lengthy exposition after which Telamon changes his views. Then, using this discussion of the drawbacks of engagement in politics as a point of departure, Le Vayer is able to make a statement on scepticism. Refraining from politics, one is free to assume the sceptical posture and engage in the far superior life of contemplation.

At the end of the dialogue, with Telamon's acceptance of Orontes' views, implied interrupted dialogue is again shown to be the situation with which the speakers must now cope. That is, Telamon and Orontes, part of a very small group, are left to face a world which would oppose them, if it knew their true feelings.

The general development of this dialogue may be outlined as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Main Actions and/or Ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) 239-43 Telamon</td>
<td>maintains that since man is more inclined to politics than is any other animal, the study of politics is a worthwhile undertaking for man; contends that involvement in government is beneficial, and since it comes naturally, such action is also done with reason; states that by means of engaging in politics, one may arrive at the supreme level of happiness; praises the philosopher-king; criticizes Orontes' rejection of the positive aspects of politics; notes that the ongoing observation which exists in politics results in a continued formation of new and more perceptive thoughts on this matter; feels that Orontes' scepticism is the cause of Orontes' rejection of politics</td>
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<td>2) 243-52 Orontes</td>
<td>acknowledges that he is influenced by pyrrhonoism; states that persons of note have viewed politics with disdain, as he does, and that he especially scorns politics when one tries to convince him of the merit of politics on the basis of public opinion and authorities; notes that as opposed to other arts and sciences, in</td>
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which one is skilled in both theory and practice, those who engage in political theory with success, have little expertise in practical situations, and vice versa; concludes that those few who are gifted in both political theory and practice, and engage in both of these areas, do so only out of necessity

3) 253-55 Telamon criticizes Orontes for indicting a useful science such as politics; feels that no science can, with reason, be considered as totally certain and exact; maintains that contrary to Orontes' view, politics does have basic principles; notes that politics is founded on reason, and has maxims which are more noble than those of any other science; states that a lack of interest in politics signifies a lack of patriotism and that patriotism is a natural and appropriate feeling to have

4) 255-62 Orontes continues to reject the concept of patriotism, and maintains that the theory of dying for one's country may be maintained with value only in abstract situations; contends that politics actually hurts people, since, for instance, politics causes wars and takes away natural liberty; notes that politics entails much false pomp; states that those who exhibit a certain political skill are really of mediocre intelligence; maintains that no maxims in politics are certain

5) 262-63 Telamon asks Orontes to continue expressing his thoughts on politics

6) 263-340 Orontes (N.B. Orontes now presents a lengthy speech which centers on the types of governments which exist, and varying aspects of governmental systems and practices. Highlights of this very detailed discussion are presented below.)

discusses the varying advantages and disadvantages of the three types of sovereignty—democracy, aristocracy and monarchy; maintains that the superiority of one of these systems over the others cannot be determined; proceeds to discuss general axioms which may be applied to all types of governments; states that conquests and territorial annexation may not always be the best policy, and that excessive good fortune may not be best for a
country; notes that a long heritage of a
country does not imply integrity in the
actions of the country; considers the use of
foreign soldiers in a nation's army; pre-
sents an uncomplimentary description of the
colonial and general political and economic
policies of Spain; remarks that major deci-
sions, policies and undertakings of govern-
ments may be made on the basis of minor
factors, which are motivated by self-interest,
and notes further that false statements are
used to mask this reality; remarks that those
who are of noble character and who reason the
best in general, may not be as skillful in
politics as are unscrupulous persons; notes
that every legislator thinks that his laws
are the best; remarks that kings are taught
to consider themselves as all-powerful; states
also though that the king has certain responsi-
bilities and may be judged on his performance,
and thus a moderate use of one's power is the
best practice to follow; considers the use of
dissimulation in a monarchy and varying views
on whether such a tactic is justified;
notes that the concept of the philosopher-king
is supported by some, yet, as other systems,
it also is not perfect; presents varying
views concerning succession to power in a
monarchy; questions whether guards at court
are an asset or a liability; remarks on the
extent to which a ruler should be accessible;
considers satire and flattery, in terms of their
proper usage, the risks or benefits one may
experience when using them, and the way in
which the king should view such comments;
questions the degree to which the king is
divine; discusses the extent to which one
should obey a king who is extreme in the usage
of his authority; considers the role of "favoris"
(i.e., those with special privileges) at court,
with respect to whether the power of the
"favoris" should be limited, the liabilities
of such people, how many of them there should
be at court, how involved with the secrets
of government they should become, if they
should be foreigners, how they should be dis-
missed, etc; notes that one should avoid
causing people of importance to become upset
with the Court; concludes that all in politics
is open to debate
7) 340-48 Telamon announces his acceptance of Orontes' views on politics and philosophy in general; praises solitude and philosophical contemplation—an act which can best be accomplished in the country; continues to praise the positive aspects of country life, and the pleasure received from contemplating nature.

8) 349-60 Orontes notes that in order to be able to enjoy nature or contemplate to the fullest, inner satisfaction must first be obtained; contends that in this state, wherever one may be, one is able to contemplate with happiness and pleasure; feels that one should not become overly dependent on any particular method of finding contentment, and thus a sceptical view is needed to achieve any type of happiness; gives examples of those facts which one can learn from books, and the enjoyment books may provide, while one is in a state of contemplation; feels that in the state of philosophical contemplation of matters concerning that which is divine, which of course entails divorcing oneself from all other concerns, one finds the most peace; concludes that this high degree of contemplation is not achieved by many and hopes that he and Telamon may experience this state.

Telamon begins the confrontation as Aristotle's *Politics* begins, with the remark that "l'homme est naturellement le plus Politique de tous les animaux" and consequently "l'estude du gouvernement d'Estat, qu'on appelle ordinairement la Politique, soit une des plus dignes contemplations de son esprit, & l'employ qu'il peut recevoir dans ce Gouvernement, la plus belle action où il se puisse porter" (239). It is in politics that man's "souverain bien," or supreme happiness is found, he affirms, and then cites various authorities on the particular form government should take and the difficulty of establishing governmental systems (239 ff.). Plato and others wished, for example, that philosophers be rulers or that kings be philosophers,
parce qu'en ces deux cas, le corps Politique, dont nous parlons, se trouve heureusement animé d'un esprit vertueux, qui le porte à sa dernière felicité; Aristote remarquant encore fort à propos sur ce subject, que la ville de Thebes n'avoit jamais esté heureuse, qu'alors que les Philosophes y avoient exercé les Souveraines Magistratures (241).

Politics may be viewed as a science in a continual state of development, Telamon concludes, and charges that Orontes' rejection of it must be the result of his sceptical position (242-43).

After recalling his characteristic fierceness in defense of scepticism when one tries to convince him of the validity of a particular view on the basis of widespread opinion and authorities (243), Orontes proceeds to counter Telamon's remarks on politics by giving examples of figures from Antiquity who refrained from active participation in the affairs of government. "Ulysse, . . . devant revenir en ce monde, demande d'y vivre en homme privé" (243); "Socrate dit dans son Apologie, avoir toujours esté destourné par son genie de se mesler des affaires publiques" (244); even Plato himself acknowledges "que cette Republique [that is, his ideal republic] ne se trouve nulle part en terre & que le modelle n'en peut estre veu qu'au Ciel" (245). The idea of the Republic was "plutost un passe temps à Platon, qui vouloit essayer ce qui se pouvoit Philosophiquement dire sur ce subject, qu'une serieuse occupation Politique, où il n'a jamais voulu recevoir de veritable employ" (245). Though Le Vayer uses Plato here as an authority, one might also ask whether these remarks contain an implicit criticism of Plato. Given Le Vayer's scorn of politics, it is probable that Le Vayer considers theorizing on the concept of an ideal republic to be an undertaking of limited utility.
Orontes also comments on the arbitrary nature of political systems, the instability of governments, and the fact that politics is unimportant to one who knows of matters which are more certain. One who is not overwhelmed by government, Orontes remarks, takes pity on those who place great faith in and are involved in government. Orontes maintains in addition that numerous theoretical works on government by well-known figures such as Epicurus, Zenon, Cleanthes,* and Chrysippus,** have come from persons who were not engaged in practical politics. Theory and practical politics are

*si distinctes, que ces libres contemplations indefinies & les emplois particuliers dans les fonctions des charges civiles, que, comme a remarqué Aristote au dernier chapitre de sa Morale, la Politique est en cela differente de tous les autres arts & sciences, où ceux qui les professent & enseignent sont volontiers les plus capables de mettre la main à l'oeuvre & de bien agir (248-49).

Going still further, Orontes concludes that those who are the most successful at the management of the affairs of a state, are the least suited to discuss in the abstract, the art of governing (249).

Orontes concedes that there are those gifted persons, like Pericles, who could engage in both the theoretical and practical aspects of politics, but he adds:

* . . . de l'humeur dont je suis, & sans violenter personne en la sienne, que ces belles ames ne se sont jamais portées à des occupations si basses & si frivoles, comme sont tous les interests de je ne scay quelle Seigneurie (s'ils sont regardez hors les preventions que nous donnent l'ambition & l'avarice) qu'ils n'y ayent esté forcez par des considerations domestiques, & par des respects particuliers, qui les y ont insensiblement engagez (251).

*Cleanthes (c. 331 B.C. - c. 232 B.C.)--Greek philosopher; disciple of Zenon, and succeeded him as head of the Stoic school.

**Chrysippus (280 B.C. - 205 B.C.)--Greek philosopher; succeeded Cleanthes as head of the Stoic school.
In response, Telamon asserts that Orontes asks for more than can be expected, if he is looking for precision in a discipline, be it mathematics, politics, or any other field. But contrary to what Orontes thinks, politics does have a set of maxims. Orontes' hostility to governmental systems, he contends, is also an unpatriotic act, contrary to feelings of patriotism natural to men, and the animal world as well (253-55). Telamon at this point still shows no sign of change in his position.

Orontes counters with the view that "le mori pro patria ne peut estre bien entendu que pour des Republiques imaginaires commes celle de Platon" (256). Politics and government have only caused situations such as war, tyranny, and other forms of violence. Governments in fact "ont jetté les fers aux pieds à cette belle liberté naturelle, dont la perte ne peut recevoir de compensation" (257). And no other science is so pompous nor so greatly based on false splendor as is politics (257 ff.).

Telamon first responds by complimenting Orontes on his thorough study of politics, characteristic of him. Then, with the first indication of a possible change in his view, Telamon asks the Sceptic to continue discoursing on politics, "afin que ce qui vous a esté simplement de passetemps, me soit encore d'utilité" (263). If a request of this nature indicates that Telamon is far from being rigid in his views, it is not a total avowal of support for Orontes. But based on the pattern set in the sixth dialogue, Telamon seems to be saying to Orontes: "Your argument is good, and though I am not quite ready to concede, I am interested in your studies. Why let them
remain known just to you? They could be of use to me. Among other things, this information might prevent me from doing something out of ignorance." Clearly, this attitude implies that upon hearing more, and thereby realizing how useful and valid Orontes' ideas really are, Telamon may change his view.

Thus invited to discourse further, Orontes launches the major speech of the dialogue. As he considers the various types of government and many aspects of governmental systems, he continually points out the basic shortcomings and ineptitudes of the persons and systems in control of man. In so doing, Orontes also is clearly presenting a discussion which serves as the basis for the raison d'etre of the dialogue. Given the sorry state of governmental systems and laws, and everyone's certainty of the validity of one's own ideas, how foolish and naïve one really is to want to be involved in politics and to place one's confidence in any particular system. Scepticism is thus the only reasonable view which one might hold.

More specifically, Orontes begins by showing how the major types of government--monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy--all have been both lauded and condemned, and that support has also been accorded to minor systems of government, such as theocracy (267 ff.). His discussion of the monarchy well illustrates the manner in which a particular view may be defended. Orontes states that:
Ceux qui combattent pour la Royauté se moquent de cette multitude insensée [i.e., those who support the idea of the republic], disant qu'il y a bien de l'aveuglement spirituel à presumer qu'un tout puisse estre de nature différente à ses parties, & que le peuple n'estant qu'une réunion d'hommes écrivelez; c'est chose ridicule d'en attendre un raisonnable gouvernement; mais que la Monarchie se voyant establie de la propre main de Dieu par tout l'univers, qu'il maistrise Royalement, il y a quelque sorte d'impieté à luy contester son excellence (266-67).

The second part of the monologue examine "quelques axiomes généraux & desquels semblent convenir toutes ces trois formes de gouvernement" (270). The comments expressed here are generally brief and present varying views on many different aspects of government and society. The polemical use of relativism takes on, as it often does, a negative character, as Le Vayer illustrates the lack of veracity and validity of concepts related to politics. A representative example of an area in which opposing views exist, as presented by Orontes, is civil disorder:

C'est une maxime des plus communes, qu'il faut prevenir les desordres, qui sont bien plus aisez à surmonter dans leur naissance. D'autres veulent qu'on laisse de plus en plus un peuple s'engager dans la rebellion, afin d'avoir un juste titre de dompter tout à fait sa fierté, & le privant tout d'un coup de tous ses privileges, le captiver tout à fait (275).

Among other varying practices, the hiring of foreign soldiers to staff a nation's army (280-81) provides a point of departure for a short consideration by Le Vayer of the Spanish and their politics. Presenting a very negative view of the Spanish, Le Vayer focuses on the role which chance has played in Spain's political success, Spanish cruelty, and the inability of the Spanish to use to the fullest those economic and political advantages fortune has given to them (281 ff.). Clearly, a discussion of the Spanish may be justified thematically,
for it continues to destroy the position of those who support political systems. But Le Vayer's reason for discussing the Spanish may be that given the traditional Spanish-French rivalry, Le Vayer is also taking advantage of an opportunity to engage in criticism against Spain, as he does elsewhere, for example, in "De la Contrariétè d'humeurs qui se trouve entre les Espagnols et les Français, & d'où procede leur intimité naturelle."21

Following his consideration of the Spanish, Orontes continues his anti-political stance, considering political decisions and actions that are not made on the basis of noble aims and with great forethought and the reasons for the masking of various actions and policies of a state (286 ff.). To debase governmental systems further, he maintains that those who are "fort grossiers & vicieux, recontrent mieux dans les intrigues d'Estat, & que de ce bois imparfait se facent les Mercures Politiques, & les plus grands hommes d'affaires" (290).

At this point, Orontes begins his study of the monarchical form of government. Future kings, he notes, are trained to believe that they are superior to all others, whereas they should be taught to be watchful of the excessive use of their authority, for an action of this nature may cause uprisings in response to a sense of abuse of power (292 ff.). Some feel that kings have a special relationship with God, he acknowledges, and that they are governed by a special type of moral code that entails more severe punishments than others receive (300-2). Positive and negative aspects of the concept of the philosopher-king are also presented (303-5). Contrary to the belief of some people,
kings do not experience perfect happiness (316-17). The discussion presented here by Le Vayer illustrates thus that the life of a king entails many problems, though most persons envy the life of a king, for they are convinced that an existence of this sort is free from liabilities. Consequently, by means of this discussion, Le Vayer topples another commonly held notion, and thereby again makes the point that nothing is certain. Furthermore, Le Vayer states here the idea that though the monarchy is considered to be the highest level of humanity, it is plagued by dissimulation and other less than virtuous characteristics. Thus, if this is the state of the optimum system of government, involvement in any type of political system is a less than prudent undertaking.

After a variety of ideas relating to politics, Orontes considers persons who are granted special status at court (326 ff.). The usefulness of the "favoris," the financial support these persons receive, and the amount they should know about the affairs of the state are discussed. In this analysis, authorities may be cited, with respect to a specific aspect of the proper role of the "favoris." For instance, as concerns the number of "favoris" at court, some maintain that one finds only one "favori" at court, if that "favori" is in the good graces of the king, and others state that a court with many "favoris" loses a certain amount of prestige. Now citing an authority, however, Orontes notes:
Aristote veut faire passer pour principe fondamental de la Royaute un proceder tout contraire, defendant tout a fait d'avoir des favoris; ou si un Prince ne s'en peut passer, ordonnant qu'en ce cas il en ait tousjours plusieurs a la fois, afin qu'ils veillent sur les actions les uns des autres, & s'empeschent par ce moyen de rien entreprendre a son prejudice (331).

The discussion of "favoris" concludes with opposing views on whether one can, without admitting to poor judgment and a "grande legerete d'esprit," discredit a "favori" (335 ff.). And following these ideas, Orontes ends his analysis of politics with a few summarial remarks.

Interrupted dialogue on the level of the speakers in this dialogue then ceases, as Telamon says: "Vous avez donne un tel esclaircissement au mien [i.e., his "esprit"], Orontes, sur une matiere [politics] en laquelle je confesse n'avoir veu goutte jusques a present, que je vous serai redevable toute ma vie de cette belle lumiere" (340). Telamon lauds philosophical contemplation in a rustic setting, and the positive aspects of the country life (340 ff.). His praise is now of contemplation, free from any type of restraints:

> quelles esjouissances spirituelles, & quelles extases divines ne produiront point ensuitte les profondes meditations d'un esprit, lequel exempt de passion au dedans, & de tout trouble & empeschement au dehors, ne donne point d'autres bornes a sa faculte discursive, que celles que reoit toute la nature; ny d'autres loix a sa facon de raisonner, que celles qui destachees de toute secte particuliere suivent les veritez ou vraisemblances par tout ou elles se trouvent (346)?

And he professes that he has "tousjours preferé l'opinion du dernier Pline en faveur des estudes champestres, soustenant non Dianam magis montibus, quam Minervam inerrare,22 à celle de Quintilien qui les condamne, comme pleines de distractions par tant d'objets qui nous y partagent l'esprit" (347).
It may seem somewhat puzzling at first as to how Telamon could have "always" had this view, given his recent conversion to Orontes' position. Telamon's remark may reflect his implied lack of conviction with respect to his former position. Also though, Le Vayer might have been quite aware of the confusion the use of this adverb causes, and is thus intentionally creating an unclear situation, in order to underscore again the problem of communication.

Orontes' response at this point requires particularly close analysis. Depending on how his remarks are interpreted, they may imply that either a certain distance may or may not still remain between what Telamon states he now feels and that level of contemplation which Orontes maintains. Orontes says that:

\[
tous\ ces\ avantages\ ne\ sont\ d'aucune\ consideration,\ si\ nous\ n'y\ apportons\ la\ satisfaction\ interieure\ que\ donne\ un\ esprit\ bienfait,\ laquelle\ est\ si\ attachée\ à\ ce\ principe,\ &\ si\ dependante\ de\ lui,\ que\ comme\ nous\ la\ trouvons\ par\ tout\ où\ nous\ la\ portons\ avec\ nous,\ sans\ que\ rien\ la\ puisse\ empescher,\ aussi\ ne\ la\ rencontrons\ nous\ nulle\ part,\ si\ nous\ ne\ la\ possedons\ auparavant\ de\ nous-mesmes.\ Soyez\ seur\ que\ vous\ aurez\ la\ solitude\ &\ la\ tranquillité\ par\ tout\ où\ vous\ sçauerez\ vous\ la\ donner,\ mais\ qu'à\ faute\ de\ cette\ science,\ il\ n'y\ a\ point\ de\ si\ charmants\ deserts\ qui\ vous\ en\ puissent\ faire\ reconnoistre\ l'ombre\ seulement\ (349).
\]

One might view these remarks as a simple reminder by Orontes of the prerequisites of philosophical contemplation, as he views it. Certainly, an attitude of this nature would be in accord with Telamon's position, as given above. But one might also view these remarks as Orontes' expression of the fact that he and Telamon are still not totally united in their way of thinking, for there is an essential element of which Telamon needs to be made cognizant, before he will be able to reach the level of meditation envisaged by Orontes. On
the basis of this latter interpretation, there would be a communication gap between Telamon and Orontes, for the idea expressed here is exactly what Telamon has expressed he will now experience. That is, Telamon speaks of that spirit which is "exempt de passion au dedans, & de tout trouble & empeschement au dehors" (346), which now is a part of him. Why then is there this possible confusion? Perhaps again, this situation was quite purposefully structured by Le Vayer, in order to point out dramatically once more the very difficult problem of communication.

After this, Orontes begins to consider the marvels of which one may become aware by reading, and declares that books are all one really needs to engage in the contemplation that gives inner peace (350-51). Furthermore, he goes on to praise philosophical contemplation as follows: "qu'il fait beau se remettre dans le même estat de felicité & d'innocence que possedoit nostre premier pere, ne faisant de toute la Nature qu'un Paradis terrestre pour la promenade de nostre esprit" (355)! Then, following additional examples of customs and other matters, which one might contemplate in the philosophical state he is describing, Orontes observes that if:

nous portons nostre veuë vers le Ciel, pour y contempler les revolutions de ces spheres; si nous nous attachons aux opinions qu'ont eu les anciens des Dieux et de la Nature, comme ils ont raisonné sur la mortalité ou immortalité de nostre ame, combien ils se sont pennez en vain pour accorder la Providence avec les Destinées; c'est à l'heure que nous sentans transportez d'une felicité si extatique, qu'elle pourroit passer pour une prelude de celle des bien heureux, nous mespriserons tout autre contentement que celui lequel nous sçaurons ainsi nous donner à nous mesmes (357).
In this state of contemplation, one will not attach importance to worldly matters, for it is not possible on this level to engage in both worldly concerns and philosophical contemplation. Indeed, "celui qui saura l'art de s'entretenir & raisonner ainsi avec les intelligences, se moquera bien de l'autre qui nous rend capables des raisons d'Estat" (358). Few, of course, reach this high level of philosophical contemplation, a state which may be considered something of a dream of Orontes or Le Vayer, and which echoes the enthusiasm of other dialogues. Then, to conclude the dialogue, Orontes calls for Telamon and himself to be part of this group secretly, so as not to arouse jealousy among others. And as far as their outward attitude is concerned, Orontes suggests: "Contentons-nous de ce dont les autres font profession d'avoir des sciences certaines, de tesmoigner, si nous y sommes contraints, d'en posséder quelques légeres suspicions selon la portée de nostre humanité" (359-60).

One rhetorical device used by Le Vayer to create an interruption is the simple remark by a speaker that he now wishes to talk. The idea of interruption on the rhetorical level can hardly be expressed more vividly than with a comment of this nature. Such a remark also creates interruption on the philosophical level. Clearly the speaker currently controlling the dialogue is not making much progress or is not captivating the other person with the validity of his argumentation, if his speech is interrupted in this way. Early in the dialogue, for example, when Telamon is discussing politics and the relation of politics and patriotism, Orontes suddenly breaks in with the remark,
"je vous veux rompre le dé là dessus, pour vous empescher de porter plus avant ce discours, où les exemples de ces zelez patriotes iroient à l'infiny" (255-56), and then begins to state his anti-political views.

A remark of the nature of the sentence just cited leads to a consideration of the nature of communication in general. It seems that in De la Politique, Le Vayer is making a very conscious effort to simulate conversation and illustrate the prerequisites of meaningful communication. An impulsive interruption, like that just noted, is a quite natural reaction of disagreement to what one hears. A further example of Le Vayer's effort in this dialogue to simulate conversation is the use of the pronoun "vous" by the speakers, when addressing each other. This technique is, of course, found in other dialogues also. In addition, the speakers here refer to each other by name (e.g., p. 326, p. 348, p. 349), in order to create further a feeling of a true conversation. Finally, Le Vayer's effort to imitate conversation is evident in the fact that sometimes a speaker will introduce a speech with a short remark, which indicates exactly the manner in which he plans to react to a particular point. This type of remark occurs both when the speaker is agreeing and when he disagrees with the other speaker. An example of the former is Telamon's statement, after Orontes' long speech: "Vous avez donné un tel esclaircissement au mien [i.e., his "esprit"], Orontes, sur une matière [i.e., politics] en laquelle je confesse n'avoir veu goutte jusques à present, que je vous serai redevable toute ma vie de cette belle lumiere" (340). The latter case is seen when, responding early in the dialogue to
Telamon's challenge, Orontes says: Vous m'avez livré la botte bien franche cette fois" (243), thereby setting the stage for his dissent.

Most importantly, these remarks constitute more than just an attempt at creating some degree of verisimilitude or naturalness. These statements also serve to illustrate what for Le Vayer is a prerequisite for any type of possible effective communication, that is, an acute awareness of and a sensitivity to the thoughts of the person with whom one is speaking. In all of these examples, the speaker is clearly aware of what has just been said, and therefore can respond meaningfully and directly to the matter under discussion.

The Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero can be seen as falling into one of several patterns: initial dissent which is resolved, initial agreement which is simply expounded upon, and initial dissent which is not resolved. The eighth dialogue clearly conforms to the first pattern. However, by making the last point of the dialogue the conflict of Orontes and Telamon with the world, Le Vayer is able to conclude with a clear statement on the idea of philosophical interruption. Certainly this is a pessimistic ending, yet it is a more forceful way of expressing Le Vayer's concern with this matter, than would be simply noting the accord between Telamon and Orontes, after their initial disagreement.

After having been exposed to Le Vayer's involved treatment of issues as weighty as religion and politics, one's initial reaction upon glancing at the ninth dialogue, Du Mariage, may be surprise. Structurally, this dialogue appears to be an uncomplicated treatment of a commonplace subject. Closer examination of it reveals, however, that this dialogue is a quite complex consideration of scepticism.
Le Vayer's use of the theme of marriage in this dialogue is reminiscent, to some extent, of the Rabelais of the *Tiers livre*. In both cases there is a character who is seeking counsel as to whether he should marry. In *Du Mariage*, Eleus is presented with the opinions of Cassander and Philocles. The former, a bachelor, praises marriage, while the latter, a married man, offers a most negative view of marriage. Similarly, Rabelais presents Panurge, a character who is in search of counsel with respect to whether he should marry and if after marriage he will be a cuckold. The elaborate process of consultation undertaken by Panurge, and his very active role in the plot, however, contrasts dramatically with the very limited remarks of Eleus and his contact with only two other speakers.

In its simplest form, *Du Mariage* may be outlined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pages</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>main actions and/or ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) 361-63 Eleus</td>
<td>notes the role of fate and that of one's own efforts, in contributing to one's success or lack of it in marriage and other matters; proposes a discussion on marriage in order to help him decide whether to marry or not</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2) 363-401 Cassander</td>
<td>expresses satisfaction with his bachelorhood, yet states that he will make a case for marriage; notes that all of nature reflects the concept of love and marriage; gives examples from antiquity of married persons and the high value placed on marriage by these people; notes various advantages of marriage, such as laws favoring married persons; remarks that contrary to some views, women can be considered as being virtuous and intelligent; contends that women may be viewed as being superior to men and as an aid to men; maintains that the sexual satisfaction provided by a wife is greater than that obtained in other ways; remarks that beauty should not be the overriding concern in marriage and that contrary to the views of some, a woman</td>
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may become a better companion as she ages; notes that an older woman is more calm and more faithful than a younger woman, and that the lesser degree of passion in older marriages is superior to the intense level of passion in the marriages of young people; feels that jealousy can be justified; considers polygamy and wife-sharing; recommends that Eleus take a wife who is not extraordinarily beautiful, and thereby he will eliminate a reason for jealousy; feels that repression of a woman's liberty is not a good practice, and that confidence in her loyalty will help to make her more faithful; praises the symbol of cuckoldry, the "cornes"

3) 401-64 Philocles states that he thinks that Cassander was probably not serious in his remarks, and declares his anti-marriage stance; maintains that affection exists only outside of marriage; does not accord the stature to women which Cassander does; notes that marriage does not insure that one is in a state of happiness; indicates that marriage is a restraint to one's freedom; notes the extravagance of women and their deceit to hide their adulterous practices; contends that husbands tend to believe whatever their wives say about their activities, without sufficient suspicion of the truthfulness of the wives' statements; maintains that jealousy is natural for man, and that it is common to animals; notes that women are dominated by ambition, avarice, or voluptuousness, or all three of these practices; points out the difficult responsibilities which come with family life; notes that those who follow one's teachings, and who may thereby be considered as adopted, may perpetuate one's memory better than one's own children; remarks that immortality may be obtained by means of one's writings—a method of immortality given only to man; concludes with a denunciation of the "cornes" and a praise of bachelorhood

4) 464-65 Eleus espouses the anti-marriage stance
5) 465-66 Orasiu* tells Eleus that if Eleus falters in his views, Cassander will provide him with the support he needs

Considering the statements of Cassander and Philocles more fully, one finds that Cassander begins by invoking examples from nature (e.g., the relation of the sky and the earth), as testimony to the widespread acceptance and support of marriage in the world. He moves to figures of antiquity who married (e.g., Euripides), noting that these men, "dans la licence de tout faire en amour, hors la crainte des misères du bordel present, exempte de toute note d'infamie, ne laissoient pas pourtant de s'attacher aux costez d'une femme legitime; & cela si inseparablement qu'ayans la liberté de les renvoyer en les repudiant, ils ne l'ont fait que très-rarement" (367-68). Furthermore, he maintains that marriage responds to a physical and moral need, and even to an erotic need, the last of which Plato recognizes in his Republic as being more powerful than any other force (373).

Another aspect of Cassander's argument, indeed its most essential point, is his general exoneration of women, "une mesme espece avec les hommes, puisque leur contrariété ne se trouve qu'en la disposition de la matiere, & non pas en la forme qui seule fait naistre les differences specifiques" (375). He asks the question: "Quelle apparence y a-t'il de leur desnier les vertus dont nostre sexe peut estre participant?" (375), and then goes on to compare the intellect of women and men. The weaknesses and timidity that are attributed to

*The text here incorrectly reads Orasius, rather than Philocles.
women stem perhaps from the fact that, as compared to men, they have a "plus grande subtilité & vivacité d'esprit, qui leur fait appréhender davantage les perils qu'elles reconnoissent plutost & mieux que nous" (376).

Beginning further on to consider the question of jealousy, Cassander notes that women's lack of fidelity justifies jealousy, since honor involved when a woman is unfaithful is "l'une des choses & des plus delicates & des plus precieuses de la vie" (389). An avowal of this nature could of course have the effect of weakening Cassander's argument, for it would imply that an attempt to ensure fidelity in marriage might be the cause of significant frustration and thereby discourage Eleus from marriage. In order to diminish the force of that cause for discouragement, Cassander develops the point that the concept of fidelity is not a universal value:

. . . la pluspart des Philosophes, & des plus saints, comme Platon, & des plus austeres comme Zenon avec tous les Stoïciens, ont fait les femmes communes dans le modelle parfait de leurs Republiques, Aristote, qui a esté de plus mauvaise humeur, s'estant neantmoins contenté de punir l'adultere . . . d'une simple note d'infamie (389-90).

Cassander then proceeds to give practical advice on creating a happy marriage, like the choice of a wife who is not extraordinarily beautiful (392 ff.).

"Cornes," the traditional symbol of cuckoldry, may, Cassander adds to crown his argument, be viewed in terms other than shame and ridicule. Biblical, mythological, historical, and contemporary examples are used to elaborate his point: "Quand Jupiter voulut
gagner les bonnes graces de la fille d'Agenor,* il se para de la forme & des cornes d'un Taureau" (398). Furthermore, he notes that "Dieu a fait tout ce monde cornu, mettant l'une de ses cornes en l'Inde, & l'autre en Ethiopie" (399), and thus, "les hommes sont noirs en l'un & l'autre endroit, comme est volontiers l'extremite des cornes" (399). The point of using this particular example is, of course, to illustrate that if God has used the "cornes" shape, then the "cornes" cannot be a symbol of shame and something which man should avoid.

Cassander's consideration of cuckoldry also provides one of the principal points of difference between Du Mariage and the Tiers livre. One of Panurge's concerns, perhaps his first concern, is whether he will be deceived or not by his wife. He questions Rondibilis, Trouillogan and others on this point, and receives generally non-committal answers from them.23

Philocles' rebuttal of Cassander begins with an expression of certitude that all of Cassander's remarks have doubtlessly been made in jest (401-2). Whether this reaction by Philocles should be taken at face value will be discussed further on, in the context of the various fashions in which this dialogue may be understood. But in any event, Philocles presents at this point a lengthy consideration of the drawbacks of marriage, beginning with what he cites as the widely held view that "le premier soupir d'amour estoit souvent le dernier de la sagesse" (403). The most essential aspect of love, he continues,

*Agenor--king of Tyre, son of Apollo and father of Cadmus and Europa. Europa was seduced by Jupiter/Zeus, who was changed into the form of a bull.
is knowing that one has established a reciprocal affection, even though "les hommes mariez, non plus que par tout ailleurs les Rois, & les plus grands Princes, ne peuvent jamais avoir que quelques legers ombrages, & jamais aucune certitude, parceque l'ascendant & authority des uns & des autres sur la chose aimee, luy oste la liberté d'agir volontairement, & fait qu'haifs ou aimés, ils sont toujours à peu-prés traittez & caressez également" (405). Philocles then considers such matters as the concept that women are inherently inferior to men and the notion that the punishment dealt to evildoers is reincarnation as women. (405 ff.).

Philocles insists on the very unfaithful nature of women and the ruses they employ to deceive their husbands about extra-marital activities (416 ff.). He illustrates, however, that in such situations husbands prove to be excessively ready to accept as true whatever their wives tell them:

par un effort d'esprit merveilleux, desmentant tous ses sens, & contredisant son propre discours, il preste tout creance à celuy de cette Faustine; & que s'appaisant (s'il avoit ressenti quelque emotion) du vent de sa chemise dont elle se coiffe, il souffre qu'elle lui donne della tette sul naso, comme dit l'Italien, & le trahisse d'un baiser qui devroit estre la base d'un amour fidellement conjugal (420-21).

Women may be classified as being driven by ambition, avarice, or voluptuousness, or all three of these passions (431 ff.). Those driven by ambition lead very promiscuous lives, without hiding their actions from their husbands. With respect to avarice, Philocles notes that women are desirous of money and may be won by those who are wealthy. And voluptuousness is considered in terms of the quest for passion of
some women, who cannot be satisfied by marriage but rather seek a constant variety in relationships. Furthermore, women are physically unpleasant at times, liars, and may be anxious to assume authority. They are constantly engaged in "babil," that is, chattering, which reveals their ignorance and lack of ability to reason (447 ff.).

At this point, Philocles begins to consider disadvantages of family life, such as the responsibility and expenses it entails (457-59). Children born legitimately, he adds, are not necessary in order to acquire a certain immortality for oneself, and those who are illegitimate may do a superior job in perpetuating one's memory (459-60). Adoption, Philocles states, might well be a better way of perpetuating one's memory than relying on one's own children, since in adoption one may choose a child who might perpetuate a spiritual inheritance as did Socrates' Plato or Theophrastus did Aristotle's. Plato and Theophrastus did more to perpetuate the memory of their respective mentors than did these philosophers' true children (460-61). Philocles then remarks that some persons are happy not to have any children, and, in some manner not specified in the text, find immortality. Finally, Philocles notes that immortality may be secured on the basis of the legacy of one's writings—a form of immortality accorded only to man and thus the only one that should be considered appropriate and worthy for his use.

Philocles also takes issue with Cassander's defense of cuckoldry, noting that "tout homme de bien, estoit obligé en conscience de les
[i.e., "cornes"] abominer" (463). Finally, he concludes with a consideration of the tranquility of the single person's life (453 ff.).

The interpretations which may be given to this dialogue are varied. The most common situation in the dialogues is that of each speaker attempting to alter the view of the other speaker. In this dialogue, the speakers may likewise be viewed as being in opposition to each other. But rather than being concerned with effecting a change in each others' views, they simply wish to influence Eleus. In the context of this interpretation, one would thus be viewing each speaker as maintaining a position diametrically opposed to the life-style he actually lives. An analysis of this nature could, of course, lead to a charge of basic hypocrisy on the part of both speakers and a consequent dismissal of any validity which might be accorded to their views. However, even though one is happy with one's life, it is not unreasonable for one to suggest that a way of life which is totally different from what one has practiced may actually be a superior way of living. Indeed, Le Vayer provides the ammunition for those who view each speaker as being sincere and wish to prove on the basis of the text that the speakers are not hypocritical. Specifically, Le Vayer has Cassander state that he is "pleinement satisfait de l'assiette que m'ont donné mes destinées en ce monde, & que je me sois rendu très-plaisante cette façon de vivre à part moi" (363), and then has him compare his praise of a life-style different from his own with that situation in which "nous voyons beaucoup de peres, qui ne permettent pas à leurs enfans de suivre la profession de laquelle neantmoins ils reconnoissent s'estre fort bien trouvés" (363). It is important to
remember here that these statements should not be viewed as a defi-
nitive indication by Le Vayer of the fashion in which the dialogue
is to be viewed. Rather, given the fact that analysis of the dialogue
along the lines presented here is vulnerable, these remarks may be
viewed as an effort to provide a basis for responding to an attack on
what would constitute one interpretation of the dialogue.

The concluding remarks of this dialogue may be viewed in the con-
text of this theory in the following fashion. In the final exchanges,
Eleus states that he will adopt an anti-marriage stance. Philocles
then remarks that if Eleus falters in his position, he then can turn
to Cassander for support. Clearly, this advice is stated by Philocles
in jest. He could not be seriously advising Eleus to look to Cassander
for aid, without compromising the credibility established in his
earlier remarks. Thus philosophical interruption would continue be-
tween Cassander and Philocles, as the dialogue continues.

Though this interpretation answers some questions as to the meaning
of this dialogue, the fact that Le Vayer illustrates how easily this
position might be attacked may be viewed as his challenge to the reader
to probe the dialogue in search of other interpretations. One of them
is to state that there is really no confrontation between the speakers,
that both Cassander and Philocles maintain a stance against marriage,
and that Cassander simply feigns a position, to give Philocles a point
of departure.

The view that both speakers are against marriage may be inferred
from the logical and complete manner in which Cassander presents his
praise of married life. The initial part of Philocles' response to
Cassander's position is filled with surprise and sarcasm (401 ff.). Philocles maintains that he knows Cassander does not really believe anything which he has said in support of women. If at first he feared the possible effect of Cassander's arguments, he now realizes that Cassander had been speaking in a light vein. Philocles even suggests that simply a desire to show respect for his way of life might have been the reason for which Cassander praised marriage, rather than a desire to convince Eleus to marry. On the basis of these remarks, Philocles may be thought to provide a clue for the reader as to the context in which he should understand Cassander's remarks, that is, as something other than his true feelings. Interrupted dialogue would thus not exist between Cassander and Philocles, but would of course continue between them and those who praise marriage.

This interpretation implies, of course, a certain prearrangement on the part of Cassander and Philocles, in the presentation of their common position, although Eleus' initial remarks would make the situation appear as if it were quite spontaneous. He simply suggests a discussion of marriage, with no indication that a discussion of this nature had been previously planned. How though could Cassander and Philocles have worked out their joint position, if the topic was not previously known to them? This point could of course simply be ignored, as contrivance and of little consequence. However, if one wishes to maintain a certain credibility, there is still no problem in explaining this situation. Since the speakers obviously know each other, it could be assumed that at some previous time Cassander and Philocles...
had developed their position and having an opportunity to expound on it do so without hesitation.

In the context of this theory of analysis, Philocles' remarks in the conclusion of the dialogue are again to be viewed as being made in jest. His suggestion that Eleus seek help from Cassander follows logically only if it is viewed as a further attempt to be ironic with respect to the worth of marriage, for Philocles could not seriously counsel Eleus in this fashion, given the anti-marriage position he has expressed.

While the two theories presented above serve to explain the meaning of Du Mariage in two different ways, they both approach the dialogue from the point of view of what the speaker really thinks of married life. It is possible, however, that the topic of marriage is not the basis upon which the dialogue should be interpreted. One might maintain that marriage symbolizes commitment to a particular view, be it dogmatism or some other philosophy, while refraining from marriage constitutes a type of sceptical withdrawal from any type of entanglement. Thus when Eleus asks whether he should marry, he is really asking for advice on whether he should commit himself to the life of the Sceptic or not. Cassander and Philocles understand the real meaning of Eleus' question and respond in a way they feel is best for Eleus, though they each suggest a mode of conduct for him which is different from that which each of them has actually lived.

The problem with this theory of analysis is that Philocles would thus be the spokesman for the sceptical view. However, rather than weighing carefully Cassander's views, and then suggesting a course of
action, Philocles flatly rejects Cassander's position in a rather dogmatic way. Philocles' final advice to Eleus would not negate this fact, for Philocles does not suggest here that Eleus form a position based on both what he and Cassander have said. Rather Philocles simply tells Eleus to look to Cassander for support, if Eleus finds his (i.e., Philocles') counsel inadequate. Thus Philocles' remarks are totally inimical with the characteristics of the Sceptics, as Le Vayer establishes them elsewhere, and one is left with the dilemma of neither Cassander nor Philocles, according to this theory, as a proper spokesman for Le Vayer.

Given the problems presented by certain aspects of the theories of interpretation presented above, one might attempt to form an analysis based on the best facets of each of these theories. One could in this way contend that Le Vayer is presenting in Du Mariage two speakers who are in agreement with each other. What they agree on is the need for a sceptical stance on all matters and thus, of course, are in a state of philosophical interruption with respect to most philosophers. Each of the speakers takes a dogmatic view on the marriage issue—this topic itself being of little consequence—with the purpose of showing how unreasonable any type of view is, which is not formed on a step-by-step analysis of factors relating to the issue under consideration. Since Cassander and Philocles know each other, an exposition against dogmatism could be an argument they had prepared at some prior time, and which they present, whenever given the opportunity to do so. The final comments of Philocles, in the context of this analysis, would again not be meant seriously, for he could not
be praising a view which is just as dogmatic as his own. While this theory of analysis does not present the problems of the other theories, it does underscore an interesting situation. Given this interpretation, one finds that Cassander and Philocles, while attacking dogmatism, are not themselves very good examples of those who have followed the doctrine of the Sceptics. That is, they appear to have been dogmatic in selecting the life style they actually practice.

The question still remains as to Eleus' comprehension of the intentions of Cassander and Philocles. Before Cassander and Philocles begin their discussion, Eleus says, in reference to the idea of maintaining a view in opposition to one's life-style, that "j'estimeray d'autant plus vos conseils, qu'ils n'ont rien de cette sotte ambition qui fait vanter à la pluspart des hommes le genre de vie dont ils ont fait eslection" (362-63). This remark would imply that Eleus is already familiar with the views of Cassander and Philocles, and interprets them in terms of the first theory of analysis. That is, Eleus views the comments of Cassander and Philocles as sincere expressions of their feelings, with respect to marriage. However, if one considers the meaning of the dialogue in terms of the other theories of analysis, Eleus' remark would indicate that Eleus does not understand the dialogue other than in terms of this theory. That is, in the context of the second theory of analysis, Eleus' comment would indicate a basic lack of understanding by Eleus of the ruse being conducted by Cassander and Philocles. On the level of the third theory of analysis, this remark would indicate that while Eleus praises what appears to be the open-mindedness of Cassander and Philocles, he fails to perceive that
Cassander's advice to commit oneself is not really wise, and that Philocles' supposed sceptical view is not formed in the true spirit of scepticism. As concerns the fourth theory of analysis, Eleus' statement would indicate that he does not understand that though Cassander and Philocles are speaking against dogmatism, they do not merit praise, for they appear to have been actually quite dogmatic in the choice of their private life-styles.

As a result of Eleus' contact with what he views as two very formidably expressed arguments, he is in much the same situation as is Panurge, for he must make his own decision as to what to do with his life. However, Eleus does not become the model Sceptic, for ultimately he takes a definitive stance. Even if at a later date he might make very literate use of Philocles' suggestion, and seek counsel from Cassander, he would still be in a position of having espoused one view at a time, to the exclusion of all others, and thus still be far from being a true Sceptic.

Given the multiplicity of interpretations which might be assigned to this dialogue, it is not surprising that one finds that the thematic complexity of the dialogue overshadows the rhetorical complexity of this work. Nevertheless, the rhetorical aspect of this dialogue merits some attention. As always, enumeration is relied upon to make a point with force. For instance, Cassander discusses the conduct of avaricious females, in order to illustrate that avarice guides the actions of women (436 ff.).

Also, the technique of the self-imposed stop is used in this dialogue, in what is in essence the only exchange of the dialogue,
that is, when Cassander is about to yield to Philocles. Prior to these remarks, Cassander has been explaining his pro-marriage ideas, and then he says: "Mais je m'apperçois bien que Philocles ne rit pas de si bon coeur [i.e., in response to his comments], qu'il ferait s'il n'avoit point l'esprit diverty au discours qu'il vous veut faire en faveur du celibat, auquel je veux rendre une aussi paisible audience que vous me l'avez tous deux voulu prester" (401). In terms of the first theory of analysis, Cassander's true opposition to Philocles' views, Cassander would by virtue of this remark be implying that he knows that agreement is impossible. That is, he has said all he can, and cannot refine his position so as to make his case stronger, thus Philocles might as well begin. In the context of the second theory, that is, that the positions of Cassander and Philocles have been pre-arranged, this self-imposed stop would signify that Cassander feels that he has said enough to make himself sound authentic in his opposition, and thus he yields. In terms of the third theory of analysis, this self-imposed stop would be an indication of the fact that Cassander feels that he has now amply illustrated symbolic commitment to a position, and is ready to let Philocles begin his argument. With respect to the fourth theory of analysis, Cassander's remark would again indicate that he now feels that he has adequately expressed one example of dogmatism, and thus Philocles should now begin his speech.

Structurally, the most surprising aspect of this dialogue is its lack of complexity, in terms of the number of speakers and speeches. This is especially surprising, for one might expect the greatest stylistic complexity of all of the dialogues to be found in the last
dialogue. One does not find, however, that there is really any pro-
gressive complexity of style as one proceeds from one dialogue to the
next, in the order in which Le Vayer arranged them for his reader.
While one might of course consider the dialogues in terms of their
date of composition and determine if they become stylistically more
complex or subtle, this determination would not be an especially
meaningful analysis, for Le Vayer is concerned, as in the first five
dialogues, with the effect the dialogues have in the order in which
he placed them for publication.
The question still remains as to why Le Vayer chose a relatively
simple compositional style here, that is, one with few speakers and
long monologues, much in the fashion of the style of the first dialogue,
De la Philosophie sceptique. The answer might be that the stylistic
affinity of the two dialogues is Le Vayer's attempt to suggest cir-
cularity, a central aspect of the dialogues both individually and
finally in their overall grouping. While De la Philosophie sceptique
and Du Mariage, as well as the other dialogues, remain in the state of
purposeful incompleteness of this symbolic circle, for they conclude
with philosophical interruption, one has finally an instance of
carefully structured yet purely formal closure of the dialogues as a
group. The last dialogue assumes a structure of the first.
On the basis of the foregoing analysis, it is clear that the
Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero are a complex presentation of Le Vayer's
philosophical position and personal convictions. Viewed individually
in terms of interruption, the dialogues as a group then prolong the
possibilities of its structuration. De la Philosophie sceptique
serves as an initial point for the circle that represents Le Vayer's philosophical quest. Succeeding dialogues plot additional points that continue to form the circle and to complete it. However, as a group they also fail to close the circle, for the total effect of the dialogues is not one of completion, which would constitute success, but rather simply one of progression toward it. That is, Le Vayer is not able to offer in the dialogues the definitive argument capable of effecting the triumph of scepticism he so desires. The dialogues should not, however, be viewed simply as a defeat, since the progressive illumination of the views of the Sceptics that is important to Le Vayer does take place within its limits. Furthermore, while cessation of philosophical interruption is not accomplished in the dialogues, there is, as noted earlier, a type of completion as regards the stylistic aspect of this work, achieved as Le Vayer ends his last dialogue, with the individuality of the style chosen in his first.

The dialogues as a group may also be considered, beyond the context of interruption, in terms of specific themes that link them. One of these themes, as important finally as religion, is the idea of solitude. This topic, the major concern of the third dialogue, *De la Vie privée*, in which Le Vayer explores what constitutes a reasonable and healthy solitary life, is continued in the sixth dialogue, *De l'Ignorance louable*, where Le Vayer is concerned with the questions of the Sceptic's reasoned limits of solitude and withdrawal from society. The theme of solitude also links with the third and sixth dialogues, the eighth dialogue, *De la Politique*, which weighs the
merits of political involvement against the life of political non-involvement. Le Vayer presents a praise of the life of non-involvement, thereby linking the eighth dialogue to the other two dialogues.

And it is with these thoughts in mind, that one is now prepared to examine another important aspect of Le Vayer—his belief in the theory of the humors, and the manifestation of this theory in the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero.
Notes


3 Montaigne, p. 128.

4 Montaigne, p. 128.

5 Montaigne, p. 85.

6 Montaigne, p. 85.

7 Montaigne, p. 86.


9 Richard H. Popkin, The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1960), pp. 39-40. Though writing some fifty years before the publication of the Dialogues, Sanchez is typical of the questioning of the sciences in more acute form of the late 1620s and early 1630s.

10 Popkin, p. 40.

11 Popkin, pp. 40-41.

12 Popkin, p. 41.


14 Popkin, p. 54.

15 Busson, p. 605.

16 Popkin, p. 87.
17 Popkin, p. 87.

18 Montaigne, pp. 29-30.


20 Crates is identified as Vaugelas, by Tisserand, in his edition of Le Vayer (p. 53), while Pintard uses dates and textual references to disprove various factors which would indicate that Crates represents François Guyet (Études, pp. 20-21). In any event, Crates symbolizes the dogmatic philosopher, who is the eternal object of the sceptical attack.

21 François de La Mothe le Vayer, Oeuvres de François de La Mothe le Vayer, nouvelle édition, revue et augmentée (Dresde: Groell, 1756), IV, pt. ii, 311-86.

22 This quotation is taken from Book I, letter 6 of the Epistulae of Pliny. The entire sentence reads: Proinde, cum venabere, licebit auctore me ut pararium et languculam sic etiam pugillares feras; experieres non Dianam magis montibus quam Minervam inerrare.—For the future therefore let me advise you, whenever you hunt, to take along your tablets, as well as your basket and bottle: for be assured you will find Minerva as fond of roaming the hills as Diana. See Pliny, Letters, ed. W. M. L. Hutchinson, trans. William Melmoth (London: Heinemann; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), I, 18-19.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION: LA MOTHE LE VAYER AND THE THEORY OF THE HUMORS

Analysis of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero in terms of the theory of interrupted dialogue is a major step in gaining a full appreciation of this work. However, the Dialogues cannot be completely understood without a consideration of the theory of the humors. This theory represents a fundamental aspect of Le Vayer's attitude toward himself and the world. In this chapter, the humoral theory will be treated from several different approaches. After briefly defining the nature of the four humors, I shall consider the Prose chagrine (1661), a work which is Le Vayer's most extensive elaboration of his views on the theory of the humors. Following this, I shall explore the humoral theory as it was explained by the physician Galen and understood by contemporaries or near-contemporaries of Le Vayer, and then examine the Dialogues in terms of the humoral theory. Finally, I shall consider the affinities which exist, in terms of the theory of the humors, between Le Vayer and Molière, and the relationship which may be drawn between the humoral theory and the notion of interrupted dialogue.
According to the theory of the humors, a concept which dates from ancient times, one's health depends on the proper balance of four liquids found in the body—blood, pituit or phlegm, yellow bile and black bile—and when this balance is upset, one is subject to mental and physical disorders. La Mothe le Vayer viewed himself as being influenced by one of these liquids or humors, namely black bile. Thus, one may categorize Le Vayer as melancholic or atrabilious (the term melancholic comes from the Greek words melas meaning black and chole meaning bile, and the work atrabilious comes from the Latin atra meaning black and bilis meaning bile).

The definition of humor or "humeur" given by Furetière in his *Dictionnaire universel* (1727 edition), provides a basis for comprehending the fashion in which the concept of the humors was understood in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Furetière states in his definition of "humeur" that the sanguine humor may be described as "gaye, enjouée, complaisante, volage, amoureuse"; that the phlegmatic humor is "douce, posée, froide"; that the person under the influence of the bilious humor (yellow bile) is "colérique, emportée"; and the melancholic humor is a state which may be described as "chagrine, inquiète, triste, noire, sombre, bizarre, insupportable, hypochondriaque." Furthermore, upon consulting the entry "melancholie" in the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* (1695 edition), one finds that melancholy is defined as "le chagrin," and "la tristesse qui vient de l'excès de cette humeur." Finally, one should note that
Furetière's definition of melancholy states that of the four humors, melancholy is "la plus pesante & la plus incommode. Elle vient d'une abondance de bile échauffée, & brûlée."

In the Prose chagrine, Le Vayer attacks inequities and falsehoods which are prevalent in society, and cites his own shortcomings, and gives as a reason for his inadequacies and for his entire attack against society, the melancholic humor to which he is subject. Tisserand feels that the tone of the Prose chagrine may be linked to Le Vayer's general sense of disillusionment when leaving the Court, at the time of the composition of this volume. While this may be true, the melancholic penchant of Le Vayer is a factor which is a constant in his life, and as will be shown below, is discernible in the Dialogues.

The Prose chagrine is not structured in the form of a traditional dialogue, with clearly identified speakers. However, considering the term dialogue in a broad sense, the three sections of the Prose chagrine may be viewed as an intimate conversation of Le Vayer with himself, in which he delves into his deepest thoughts.

Le Vayer begins the first part of the Prose chagrine by characterizing his current frame of mind. He expresses the view that many persons have a preference for solitude (241), but that

le chagrin qui me possède présentement, m'envoie au cerveau des fumées si contraires à toute conversation, que pour aucunement les dissiper, nonobstant leur agrément qui me flatte, ou pour en quelque façon les évanorer au cas que leur charme soit si dangereuse qu'on le dit, il faut que je m'en décharge sur ce papier (241).

Thus resolved to follow his "genie, m'accommodant à l'humeur sombre qui me domine, sans Dieu merci, qu'elle me donne beaucoup d'inquietude"
(243-44), he sets himself to examine "les titres de ce chagrin, & me rendre compte à moi-même des raisons que j'ai d'improuver tant de choses qui me pènent quelquefois l'esprit" (244). In so doing he hopes to find contentment (244).

After this, his mind moves to death. Death should not be contemplated in a negative way, especially if it brings an end to one's problems. Those who appear to be the most illustrious have often accepted death the least graciously (245-47). Then he laments a different kind of death, the fact that one may be put into a profession which does not correspond to that which is best suited for one's temperament (247). Thus, Le Vayer maintains, he finds everyday in the domaine of "belles lettres," many "fous lettrés, & cette stultitia literata me paroit si importune par tout, qu'elle me donne un dégoût de la science, qui n'est pas une des moindres causes de mon chagrin" (248). After this, he confesses under the cover of generalization that

L'on peut voir d'un œil indifferent des hommes sans lettres; mais il est presque impossible de considérer sans indignation des lettres sans homme. Si l'on accuse mon humeur austère de favoriser l'ignorance, j'avouerai franchement que je préfère en beaucoup de façons un modeste ignorant, à un vain & présomptueux savant (248).

If Le Vayer's scorn of "lettres" should be restrained in any respect, it should be in the area of philosophy—a noble calling. But philosophy is also a very uncertain area of knowledge (250), and he cannot resist disappointment when his thoughts turn to the uncertainties of the most important aspect of philosophy, moral theory (251-52). Vice and virtue seem no longer recognizable (252), and finding "un homme véritablement vertueux, ce n'est pas une moindre
merveille, que de trouver une source d'eau douce, comme l'on fait quelquefois, au milieu de la Mer" (253). To make matters worse, those who are virtuous do not receive the proper esteem, while praise is given to those undeserving of it (254-57). Furthermore, praise leads to honor only if it is given by those who possess honor (258), and moderate praise can be of great consolation (259-60). Le Vayer then goes on to remark that among those persons who are in a position of power, there are prudent leaders who scorn praise—a technique often used simply as a means of gaining influence among the powerful. Those in a position of power are also subject to criticism, and Le Vayer suggests that such attacks be ignored (261-63).

After these thoughts, Le Vayer asks himself why, given the fact that his "humeur" is "si éloignée de la médisance & de la satyre," his "chagrin" nevertheless leads him to attack all the things he does question, religion being the one thing which he spares (263). His exemption of religion from the many aspects of society criticized in the Prose chagrine is the more revealing for its illustration of his outward forbearance vis-à-vis the major shortcomings of religion—its abuses and corrupt practices—"en effet si je n'étois rétenu par le respect qui est dû aux Autels, que ne me feroient point dire les abus qui s'y commettent?" (263). One should not try, he adds, to understand the ways in which God works (264). If this remark seems to be included to protect himself, Le Vayer states immediately thereafter that it is indeed difficult to support religion, given one's inability to understand both the ways of God and all of the abuses in religious
practices (264). Then, following these comments, Le Vayer launches a
denunciation of the importance accorded to wealth by both Christianity
and beliefs of ancient times (265-68).

These remarks lead Le Vayer to other injustices and to take issue
with man's administration of justice, whereby it seems that the very
laws enacted for the good of man have become his greatest torment (268).
He condemns the facts that judges tend to make laws rather than inter­
pret the law and do not agree on interpretation of the law with any
degree of consistency (268-69). Returning to the abuse of wealth, it
seems to him that justice is attainable only for those who have the
necessary financial means to obtain it (270).

Le Vayer's attention then stays with finances, as he turns his
attacks to those who unlawfully obtain money from the general finances
of a country (271-72). For most people a desire for riches is a common
inclination; he himself scorns riches. In fact, he is happy simply to
have a spot in which to meditate (274-76). In

la belle position de cet endroit charmant & solitaire, je
m'imagine quelquefois que tout ce que je découvre au dessus
& à l'entour de moi, n'a été produit que pour me plaire,
m'appropriant ainsi avec innocence le bien d'autrui sans
faire tort à personne (276).

More calmly then, he concedes that despite the corruption he finds in
those who administer the finances of a country, all who are involved
in that profession are not corrupt (277).

Returning to his mental state, after first noting that his chagrin
may lead him to make remarks he would otherwise not make, Le Vayer
affirms that he retains the right to change his mind when in a different
mood. This attitude is, of course, in agreement with the Sceptics'
basic idea of the lack of finality in any matter (278-79). The dis-
pleasure he has experienced should not be imputed to his old age.
While he is not unhappy being old, he finds being young to be an even
worse state (279). Furthermore, on the subject of old age, Le Vayer
notes that all old people are not equally unbearable nor equally sad
(280); indeed, old age may be viewed as the best and most productive
part of life (281-82)—a position rarely taken by preachers or moralists
of the period.

At this point, Le Vayer asks that his work not be condemned for
the bitterness it contains (283). He asks for no other treatment when
his work is judged than that he gives candidly of others (284). He
has never written with the expectation of appealing to a wide audience,
he muses, and openly admits both his desire to copy the writing style
of the Ancients (284-85), and to write on matters which have already
been treated (285-86). It is not an improper procedure, he argues
defensively, to make use of "lieux communs," (i.e., commonplaces), if
one goes back to the original sources for them. Such "lieux communs"
are indeed superior to a "sottise" of one's creation (287). In addition,
he deplores the practice of praising a book before its publication—an
action which results in the book retaining little of this praise after
it is actually published. Yet he tempers the extent to which one
should be concerned about this practice, which usually involves those
works which are in fact unworthy of lasting fame. Characteristically,
this situation illustrates the very unsure nature of praise, thereby
underscoring the validity of a sceptical view towards life (288-89).
And it is with these thoughts that the first part of the Prose chagrine
concludes.

In the second part, Le Vayer begins by noting that he does not
subscribe to the practice of suppressing one's feelings within oneself
(290-91). Given this attitude, he is "résolu de donner air à mon
chagrin, d'en continuer la prose, qui me le rend, ce me semble, plus
supportable" (291). The relation of merit and wealth to which he
returns, puts him into a "mauvaise humeur," when he considers the fact
that one is judged to lack merit if one is poor (291-92). He condemns
the practice of those who acquire riches, but will not part with them
(292-93), and reiterates that one should not let oneself be driven by
the shameful desire to accumulate wealth (293).

The importance given to wealth leads Le Vayer to state that all
things deteriorate with time (294). Then he considers science, and
while praising it, notes that just as it is wrong for one to refuse to
part with one's wealth, one with scientific knowledge must not keep it
to oneself. A person of this sort is guilty of a type of avarice (295).
After this, Le Vayer considers the idea that one of the liabilities
attributed to letters is "d'énerver & d'avilir le courage de ceux qui
s'y appliquent avec trop d'assiduité, outre beaucoup d'autres mauvais
effets que produit ordinairement l'intemperance de l'étude" (297).
Thus in the study and use of books, discretion and skill is needed, in
order to benefit from this practice. Despite any drawbacks engagement
in learning might have, however, Le Vayer does not fail to state that
studying and learning constitute one of the most agreeable occupations of life. Such action should be indulged in by both young and old people—the old being even more obliged to study for their ignorance is more shameful than that of the young and they have less time to overcome it (298). Finally, Le Vayer notes, even those who desire to learn may find it difficult to do so (298-99).

At this point the writer confesses the displeasure he experiences from the actions of a person who always contradicts others and in a sophistic manner uses a barrage of whatever terms come to mind, appropriate or not, in order to pursue an argument (299-300). Le Vayer describes the way in which this particular pedant set about on one occasion to refute another person's defense of scepticism. The point is made here that the procedure of the person hostile to scepticism was most unsophisticated, unforceful and gauche. For instance, this person made use of some of the most traditional attacks against scepticism, such as that the very basis of scepticism contradicts itself, and that scepticism is anti-Christian (301-2). These attacks are refuted in the context of the discussion of the pedant, a defender of scepticism who opposes him, and others present at this exchange of views (301-8). This discussion then leads into a lengthy defense of scepticism by Le Vayer. Topics such as scepticism's acceptance of God and religion, and scepticism's belief in true miracles are considered, as well as the view that the sceptical position, one which does not contradict the basis of religion, is the philosophy which one should practice (308-15). After this, Le Vayer considers the position one might best take when confronted with a critic of scepticism.
Though laughing may be the better course of action, the present "humeur sombre qui me chagrine" (316) prevents him from engaging in such a course of action at the moment. Then Le Vayer notes that he will try to refrain from using injurious remarks when opposing others, and will acknowledge his own mistakes, a course of action which is not a shameful one to follow (317).

After presenting these ideas, Le Vayer begins to analyze the reasons for which one defends one's own views as strongly as one does. The cause would seem to be that these views are of one's own creation. But one should avoid as much as possible the inclination of yielding to one's own views (318-19). Then, Le Vayer begins to make some observations in the sceptical tradition, in order to charm "en quelque façon notre chagrin" (320). As is often the situation in the Dialogues, when illustrating the value of scepticism, Le Vayer considers varying customs. Specifically, subjects include practices such as the length of one's beard (321), eating habits (322), and the high esteem accorded by some to women (324-25). In the course of this discussion Le Vayer notes at one point that he has already written elsewhere many complimentary remarks about women, and that if he continues, his "humeur chagrine" might cause him to speak against women (325). Then, however, he states that he is unable to restrain himself from continuing on the subject of women, and notes that there are those who do not hold women highly (325-26).

At this point, Le Vayer observes that there are some people whose internal organs are arranged differently from those of most people (326-28). Le Vayer concludes thereby that since even nature is not always
certain, philosophical positions likewise should be held with a certain degree of flexibility. This question of the certainty with which one holds a point of view leads Le Vayer to a consideration of the medical profession. What disturbs him is the fact that physicians are inclined to state that all they say is certain and imply they do not make mistakes (329 ff.). The extent to which a position of this sort is ridiculous is of course reinforced by the uncertainty of nature, which Le Vayer has just presented. Furthermore, while granting physicians the credit they deserve for their study, Le Vayer also criticizes the avarice which motivates certain doctors (330-31). His "chagrin," he warns, is going to cause him to become even more forceful in his remarks against medicine, unless he begins to restrain himself in some fashion (331). But seemingly unable to do so, he goes on to consider further the shortcomings of medical treatment (331-34). After this, while taking issue also with those books which unfairly attack medicine, Le Vayer notes the "chagrin" which fills him, "lors qu'on veut magistralement qu'elle [la médecine] soit exempte de beaucoup d'erreurs, & de bévues qui s'y commettent, de même qu'au reste des arts & des professions où les hommes s'appliquent" (336). With these thoughts on medicine, the second section of the Prose chagrine ends.

Le Vayer begins the third part of the Prose chagrine by noting that the "esprit chagrin" causes one to feel troubled by all that with which one comes in contact, and turns what should cause joy into displeasure (338). Furthermore, Le Vayer states that one's perspective on a matter is influenced by one's particular frame of mind at a given time, and that his "humeur chagrine" is the cause of his displeasure
(338-39). He then questions the practice of engaging in an overly
detailed examination of one's sadness, a procedure which he feels can
only result in increasing its intensity. Rather he opts for a less
intense sort of therapeutic self-reflection by means of which one might
be able to moderate one's bad habits and other shortcomings. However,
while engaging in this process of self-analysis, Le Vayer notes that
one should be very severe with oneself, that is, as one would be if one
were judging others (340-42). Going on to condemn the fact that he
has let himself be subject to the forces of different sorts of passions
(342-43), he indicts himself for not being able to control his fits of
anger (343). He is often upset with the way in which fate treats one,
much worse for the philosopher who knows one should not try to under­
stand exactly the way in which fate works (344-45).

At this point, Le Vayer discusses the idea that one should be
kind to animals, and then extends this idea, indicating that one
should act in a similar fashion toward one's fellowmen (345). These
comments on the treatment of animals at first appear somewhat startling
and of little consequence, in the context of all which has preceded.
The parallel is drawn quickly, though, and the point is made clearly.
These comments then lead to a brief condemnation which is rightly due,
of those who mistreat animals (345-46).

After this, Le Vayer turns to the subject of incontinence,
denouncing acts of unrestrained passion, especially those practiced by
persons of an advanced age (346-49), and provides suggestions of ways
in which a passion such as hunger may be combatted (350-52). He adds
here that his remarks do not constitute a total denunciation of the
passions, for without this distraction, one would be in a continual state of contemplating one's misery (352-53). However, when engaging in an act which is caused by the passions, one should restrain oneself from demonstrating exaggerated and unbecoming behavior (353-54).

Beginning to consider the actions of his life, Le Vayer admits the fact that he has committed many acts which might be condemned (354-55). He has not been sufficiently involved in his civil duties and has often spent his time in leisure and contemplation (355-56). Rather than solitary retreats, he condemns the hermit-like existence some choose (356-58). Furthermore, philosophical contemplation, Le Vayer feels, is likewise to be condemned, if it is not pursued with the goal of achieving some type of public good (rest and contemplation serve to make one better prepared for indulging in life). Also, he attacks those who make idle use of free time, and defends the devotion of one's time to writing, though this view is not held by all (359-60). Le Vayer's elaboration of scepticism has been and is a useful undertaking (360-61). Speculating then on whether he should engage in activities which present obstacles or those which are easily accomplished, he notes that no matter how he acts, he will be criticized (361-64). Given the criticism to which one is open, especially in philosophical matters, one is best off doing what one thinks best (364-65).

Moving toward his conclusion, Le Vayer notes again the usefulness of self-analysis, which is supposed to produce happiness for those who are virtuous and morally sound. Since he is constantly making self-analyses, yet is still sad, Le Vayer concludes that he is far from
obtaining the goal of happiness which such introspection is said to produce (366-67). Given this situation, he wonders if it would just be best to adopt a happier view of the world (367 ff.). His spirit is beginning to

se revolter contre un chagrin si long-temps continué, & au lieu d'exagé rer tous les maux & toutes les fâcheuses conditions de la vie, comme le faisoit Crates,* pour en donner de l'aversion; il aime mieux en considérer tous les avantages, & toutes les contentemens, à la façon de Métrodore,** afin de la rendre ou plus agréable, ou du moins plus tolerable (369).

After all, it is best simply to accept life as it comes, and not to try to understand those aspects of it which are not explainable (370-72). If one simply laughs at life, one is able to diminish the effect of those unavoidable, unpleasant facets of life (370 ff.). Examples of inescapable aspects of life are envy and jealousy. As concerns jealousy, one should remember that despite its negative aspects, jealousy exhibited is the result of one's merit (372-75). Truth, Le Vayer then remarks, may be found only in God, and all that philosophy can reveal is that which is "vraisemblable" (375-77).

At the beginning of the Prose chagrine, Le Vayer underscores the personal nature of this work, in stating that he is undertaking this self-analysis for his own benefit: "Nous avons tant de fois travaillé

*Crates (Fourth century B.C.)—Greek philosopher; disciple of Diogenes, and the last illustrious representative of the Cynical school; from him comes the movement which later developed into Stoicism.

**Métrodore (Fourth century B.C.)—Greek philosopher; perhaps a disciple of Democritus; one of the founders of scepticism.
pour le contentement des autres, trouvons ici la nôtre, si faire se peut" (244). He also indicates though that he is somewhat on the defensive, for he feels a need to deny that this work is an "extra-vagance" (241-42), and maintains that as concerns possible controversy this work might cause, his advanced age "n'empêche de craindre des tempêtes que j'eusse autrefois appréhendées" (242). This notion of having written the *Prose chagrine* more for himself than for others, and a refusal to be troubled by possible criticism of his work, re-appear as major ideas, as the conclusion continues to develop.

Le Vayer explains that he does not wish to offend with the remarks he has made in this work. Rather he has

simplement suivi l'humeur bizarre qui me possedoit, dont il n'y a personne qui n'ait souvent ressenti combien les saillies sont difficiles à moderer. Elle m'a fait quelquefois passer brusquement d'un sujet à un autre selon que mes caprices sont violens; et je me suis vu reduit au style concis & coupé, qui lui plait comme lui étant naturel, encore que je n'ignorasse pas que c'étoit s'éloigner étrangement de celui qui est le plus en vogue aujourd'hui (377).

Le Vayer goes on to state in defense of his style—a style which does not impose a preconceived form on the expression of his thought—that

la Prose chagrine qui exprime avec impétuosité ce qui se présente à l'imagination, n'a garde de s'asservir aux termes qu'elle emploie; elle est trop sérieuse, & sa chaleur est trop prompte, pour s'arrêter à un soin de l'école, qui la retarderoit comme mal placé, quelque curieux & spirituel qu'il pût être (378).

Furthermore, he maintains that "les proses chagrines doivent être comme parlantes, & posseder une force qui se plait bien plus dans la boutade, & dans le desordre, que dans l'agencement. Ceci soit dit pour justifier aucunement la liberté du stile dont je me suis servi" (378-79).
Le Vayer's return to the ideas set forth in the initial pages of the Prose chagrine continues to be underscored, as he questions whether his entire undertaking was prudent. Though it is often more appropriate to remain silent, Le Vayer maintains that he was correct to have expressed his ideas, for he was not simply displaying his sadness in this work, but rather was trying to instruct others (379-80). After this, Le Vayer defends again his style of writing (381). Furthermore, he maintains that he should not be attacked for having repeated any ideas previously stated in his works (382-83), that he plans to continue writing, and that he is ready to face any opposition which his work might cause (383). Le Vayer then notes, in concluding, that it is difficult to surmount all of the negative aspects of life, and affirms his new view of following the position of Democritus, and laughing at the events of daily life (384-86).

On the basis of the foregoing summary, it is clear that the Prose chagrine provides both an intimate view of Le Vayer's feelings and moods, and an examination of his profound reliance on the humoral doctrine in order to interpret his own life and the world around him. Le Vayer's use of the humoral theory as a basis for understanding man is certainly not unique. Three figures in particular stand out as examples of the use of the humoral theory in the analysis of man—the second-century Greek physician Galen, the Renaissance Spanish physician Juan Huarte de San Juan, and the court physician of Louis XIV, Marin Cureau de La Chambre. Galen, the most important of these figures, served as the primary source for Le Vayer's familiarity with the
humoral theory. All of these men though testify to the use of the humoral theory by persons of note, other than Le Vayer. A brief consideration of each of these figures at this point will aid in understanding the theory of the humors and its use by Le Vayer.

Claudius Galenus was an outstanding physician of Antiquity, second only to the fifth-century B.C. physician, Hippocrates. Galen was born in the second century A.D. at Pergamum in the northwest of Asia Minor. The humoral theory of which Galen was one of the most eloquent spokesmen had existed for a rather long period of time prior to Galen, having been discussed by Hippocrates, and even before him.

Galen viewed the body as being composed of four elements, each of which possessed one principal quality. The elements were fire, water, earth, and air, and the four qualities of these elements were heat, moisture, dryness and cold. These four elements provided the basis for the parts of the body. Galen also contended that the body was made up of three parts—solid parts, liquid parts and spirits. The solid parts were divided into similar and organic parts. Similar parts included parts of the body such as bones, nerves and veins, while organic parts, which were formed from the similar parts, included the feet, the stomach, and the eyes. The spirits—natural, vital and animal—were the source of three corresponding faculties, which governed functions of the body such as digestion, supplied the body with heat and light, and controlled one's feelings.

The liquid parts consisted of the four humors. Galen maintained that blood was the most important liquid, and the source of all of the humors. In each humor certain qualities of the elements were to be
found. Thus, for instance, blood was moist and hot, and black bile cold and dry. As long as the four humors remained in balance, and kept the correct temperature and mild qualities, good health would be maintained. However if these conditions varied, the body would become upset and disease would follow, as the vitiated humor passed from the similar parts to the organic parts. With this idea of temperature in mind, one may now better understand Furetière's definition of melancholy, which was cited earlier. It will be recalled that Furetière notes that melancholy is the result of an "abondance de bile échauffée & brulée." That is, he indicates that an inappropriate temperature may be viewed as a cause of melancholy and is thus clearly in the tradition of Galen, in his definition.

The four humors, their primary qualities, and the particular temperature which one assumes as a result of an imbalance of a particular humor may be summarized, for the purpose of clarification, in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>combined primary qualities</th>
<th>element</th>
<th>humor</th>
<th>temperament</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hot and moist</td>
<td>air</td>
<td>blood</td>
<td>sanguine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moist and cold</td>
<td>water</td>
<td>phlegm</td>
<td>phlegmatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cold and dry</td>
<td>earth</td>
<td>black bile</td>
<td>melancholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dry and hot</td>
<td>fire</td>
<td>yellow bile</td>
<td>choleric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering now a bit more in detail the properties of black bile, it might be noted that though black bile was normally present in the blood, it was especially found in tumors and wounds. Furthermore, Galen described black bile as both a normal constituent of the body and as a useless toxic discharge. He maintained that black bile was formed in
the blood and had the appearance of a heavy sediment, similar to that which he had observed in the fermentation of wine. The toxic influence exerted by black bile on the body and mind was held to cause physical and mental abnormalities. Such ailments included jaundice, quartan fevers, leprosy, cirrhosis of the spleen and liver, cancer, and elephantiasis. Additionally, given the fact that black bile was said to originate in the intestinal tract, it is understandable that melancholy was associated with digestive problems, and "a permanent state of constipation or diarrhoea." Also, a sign of melancholy was "an insatiable and depraved appetite." Furthermore, one should note that sorrow, passion, excesses of all kinds and poor food made one susceptible to the melancholic state, and that melancholy was marked by hate of others, and life, possible suicidal tendencies, and the fear of impending death. Given all the negative aspects of black bile considered above, one should not fail to observe though that Galen did write of this substance in a more positive fashion, too. He held, for instance, that black bile, in small amounts, stimulated digestion.

As noted earlier, the humoral theory was also a part of the thinking of the Renaissance Spanish physician, Juan Huarte de San Juan (1530? - 1591). Huarte authored a study entitled the Examen de ingenios para las ciencias (1575), and in this work made use of Galen's ideas as part of his analysis of man. The question of Le Vayer's awareness of Huarte's work has been considered by Gabriel A. Pérouse in his study of Huarte, L'Examen des esprits du Docteur Juan Huarte de San Juan: sa diffusion et son influence en France aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles. On the basis of having examined various works of
Le Vayer, Pérouse states that Le Vayer had consulted the *Examen de
ingenios*. Even without this proof though, given the erudition of
Le Vayer, one would be guessing intelligently to maintain that Le Vayer
had some familiarity with Huarte.

Pérouse points out, for instance, that in the *Petits traités en
en forme de Lettres, écrites à diverses personnes*, one can find
evidence of Le Vayer's familiarity with Huarte. Specifically, in
letter number 61, "D'un Homme qui repondoit étant endormi, en toutes
langues où on l'interrogeoit quoiqu'il ne les scut pas," Pérouse finds
the following reference to Huarte:

> Ne pourroit-on pas dire . . . que . . . l'esprit humain
> se peut trouver dans une si parfaite disposition, que par
> le même instinct que les a produites, il en aura quelque
> usage & quelque connaissance, dans les termes mêmes de notre
> Religion. Car l'imperfection du péché originel n'a pas
> ruiné de telle sorte notre nature, qu'elle ne paroisse
> souvent toute divine, & comme Aristote la nomme en plus
> d'un lieu, Démoniaque. Aussi, voions nous, que le Médecin
> Huarte a soutenu, dans son *Examen des Esprits*, qu'il s'est
> trouvé des hommes d'un temperament de cerveau, tel, qu'ils
> ont parlé Latin, sans l'avoir jamais apprise.

Clearly, this passage is not dealing with melancholy. However, as
stated above, it attests to Le Vayer's knowledge of Huarte. It
would therefore seem reasonable to assume that in a general fashion,
Le Vayer viewed Huarte as a recognized thinker. Thus, given the fact
that Huarte makes use of the humoral theory in his work, one could
cite Huarte as a significant link in the historical tradition of
viewing man in terms of the theory of the humors.

Among Le Vayer's contemporaries, a figure who made use of Galen
and who was well known for his analyses was Marin Cureau de La Chambre
(1596? - 1669). Cureau was the physician and friend of Pierre Séguier
(1588 - 1672), Chancellor of France under Louis XIII and Louis XIV. Furthermore, Cureau was the physician to Louis XIV, and a member of the Académie Française. His important works include 

Les Charactères des passions (1640 - 42), L'Art de connoistre les hommes (1659), and Le Système de l'âme (1665). Given the fact that the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero appear in about 1631, and Les Charactères des passions begin to appear in 1640, there is no case to be made for the influence of Cureau on Le Vayer, however, Cureau's work represents further documentation of the use of this theory, and aids in forming an understanding of the spirit of the time.

An idea of Cureau's views may be formed by considering Les Charactères des passions. Cureau's great ambition was to write a natural history of man and thus in the Charactères he studies man both physiologically and medically, and discusses passions such as love, joy, hope, anger, hate and sadness. In Molière et le Misanthrope, René Jasinski has pointed out a significant reference to the melancholic humor in the Charactères. Cureau, in discussing what he calls "haine mélancholique," writes that "on l'a sans doute nommée ainsi parce qu'elle procède de cette sorte de mélancholie qui s'appelle atrabile, et qui n'est autre chose que le marc des humeurs naturelles qui se sont brûlées." He then goes on to note that to produce this étrange haine dont nous parlons, il faut que l'atrable soit faite d'une bile grossière qui ait été brûlée jusqu'aux derniers degrés d'embrasement que la vie peut souffrir. Car par ce moyen presque toute l'humidité naturelle s'en est évaporée, et il n'y reste plus pour ainsi dire que la cendre et le sel qui la rendent aigre, piquante et corrosive.
Furthermore, "sa vapeur est si ennemie du cerveau et des nerfs qu'elle les dissout, les fond et dissipe toute leur vertu: d'où viennent les apoplexies, les paralysies et autres accidents épouvantables qui, selon l'opinion d'Hippocrate, n'ont point d'autre cause que cette humeur."  

After this, Cureau goes on to note that  

l'âme qui la voit et qui sent continuellement ces désordres, tombe en un chagrin si profond et si opinâtre qu'il n'y a plus rien qui lui puisse plaire. Les plus agréables objets qu'elle reçoit s'altèrent et se corrompent en se mêlant avec l'ennui et la peine où elle est, et la vie même lui devient insupportable.

Finally, Cureau states that since  

la vapeur maligne que cette humeur exhale se jette dans les artères et dans les organes des sens, elle trouble la pureté des esprits et comme un nuage épais elle obscurcit la clarté qu'ils doivent avoir; de sorte que l'âme, voyant cet orage qui s'amasse et qui va ruiner ses plus nobles fonctions, se laisse emporter à la peur et au désespoir, et se figure ensuite des objets conformes à ces passions. C'est alors qu'une personne perd le souvenir de ses amis, de ses occupations et de ses divertissements; tous les hommes lui paraissent comme autant d'ennemis qu'elle fuit et qu'elle voudrait voir périr; enfin elle se hait elle-même, et, se dégoûtant de la vie, elle la laisse consumer peu à peu par la tristesse, ou la finit par quelque violence.

Indeed, the anxiety and discontent which Cureau finds to be characteristic of "haine mélancholique" is certainly in keeping with the tone of the first section of the Prose chagrine. It will be remembered here that Le Vayer scorns and rejects all institutions, and finds little comfort in his activities.

Having considered the basic aspects of the humoral theory, and viewed Le Vayer's classification of himself as a melancholic of long-standing, when in his later years he puts his life in a type of
perspective in the *Prose chagrine*, one may now with profit consider
the way in which this theory colors the *Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero*.
Orasius, of course, manifests the melancholic humor, and provides the
best example of the use of the theory of the humors. However, the
conduct of other speakers and various comments throughout the text,
also clearly point to Le Vayer's on-going analysis of the world in
terms of the humoral theory.

Orasius appears by name for the first time in the second dialogue,
"Le Banquet sceptique." In this dialogue Orasius takes the role of
the narrator of those events which transpired while he and some acquain­
tances were going to and dining at the home of Xenomanes. Furthermore,
it should be remembered that at the end of the dialogue Orasius relates
the essence of the comments he made during the meal. In this speech
Orasius laments the current state of scorn being experienced by philo­
sophy (pp. 160 ff.). That is, he is unhappy with the state of the
world, as he sees it. A position of this nature is very much in
context for the melancholic. Indeed, this expression by Orasius of
discontent with that with which he comes in contact would seem to be
the same attitude that Le Vayer expresses in the majority of the
*Prose chagrine*.

In the fifth dialogue, *De la Divinité*, Orasius indicates in his
defense of scepticism that he is content with the fact that his par­
ticular philosophical inclination is the object of criticism by
others (332 ff.). That is, he receives a certain "satisfaction
d'esprit" (332) in being attacked, and laughs at these attacks (332).
An attitude of this nature may be looked at as somewhat bizarre, for Orasius is stating that he enjoys being attacked. However, looking at life from a view which is a bit off center is in keeping with that which one might expect from one whose humoral balance is disturbed. Also, though Orasius is quite independent in his views, he notes that in certain matters, he will espouse public opinion. However, the extent to which he will do so is severely limited (327-28). This disenchantment with the world would again remind one of the similar position expressed by Le Vayer in the *Prose chagrine*, as he examines his melancholy.

*De l'Ignorance louable*, the sixth dialogue, begins with the interruption by Telamon of Orasius' solitary contemplation, and Telamon's questioning of Orasius about the nature of his thoughts. In the course of his answer to Telamon, Orasius states that he had been philosophizing "à l'avantage de ce feu, dont mon naturel plus froid qu'une salemandre ne se peut passer en ce rude climat" (6). Coldness, according to the humoral theory, is one of the characteristics associated with black bile. Hence one has here again a clear indication of the influence of the melancholic humor on Orasius. In his response to Telamon, Orasius also indicates that he enjoys his solitude and actually prefers it to company. Telamon then compliments Orasius on the fact that Orasius' solitude is of the healthy sort, that is, it is that type of philosophical retreat that leaves one full of joy and satisfaction (6-8). After this, Telamon goes on to note that in contrast to Orasius, there exist those "misanthropes qui ne se separent du reste des hommes que par la tyrannie de leurs
hypochondres, lesquels en cela sont plus à plaindre qu'à imiter" (8). An observation of this nature seemingly presents a problem for it appears to negate the position which I have advanced, according to which Le Vayer is indeed a melancholic of the extreme sort and his joy is something of a bizarre joy. Telamon's statement though could be attributed to Le Vayer's desire to illustrate Telamon's lack of understanding to Orasius' actual state. Given the fact that the difficulty of communication is a theme which has been shown to be a recurring concern in the dialogue, Le Vayer would thus be taking advantage of an opportunity presented by the circumstances of this dialogue, to illustrate this theme again.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, Orasius has been seen to be both a Sceptic and a melancholic. The question might thus be raised as to whether one of these conditions necessarily produces the other. A Sceptic is not by definition sad, hypochondriacal or simply strange. The Sceptic though has a certain penchant for solitude and individuality, and may take a dim view of others. It seems unlikely that this state could produce the excesses of attitude of the melancholic. However the passions of melancholy may push one towards scepticism. In any event, there is enough common ground between these two conditions, that they are not mutually exclusive.

Thus, in examining the Dialogues, it becomes clear that aspects of the humoral theory may be related to an analysis of Orasius. As indicated earlier, there are also general remarks throughout the Dialogues which illustrate Le Vayer's familiarity and preoccupation with this theory.
In the first dialogue, *De la Philosophie sceptique*, for example, Ephestion expresses a general discontent which is caused by the ideas of the Dogmatists whom he encounters. His negative attitude would seem to constitute a rather melancholic appraisal of the world. Then, turning to *Le Banquet sceptique*, one finds at one point in Orasius' first long speech, the recounting of the remarks of Divitiacus, as the group in this dialogue is proceeding to Xenomanes' home. Here, Divitiacus is quoted as having discussed the way in which hunger affects him, noting that there is nothing "qui me rende de plus difficile maniere que la faim, l'inanité de mon estomach echauffant lors mes entrailles, & irritant ma bile, de sorte que j'ay fort à faire de me moderer" (98). Again, Le Vayer's continued use of the humoral theory is clear. Furthermore, one may note, as indicated earlier, that in this dialogue Orasius relates a particular remark concerning pedants, which he made on the way to Xenomanes' home. He states that he laughs at

> ces pedans pointilleux & critiques, opiniosissimi homines, comme les appelle Ciceron, lesquels pour faire parade des forces Athletiques, & comme ils pensent de leur esprit, à ne se relascher jamais, ne s'apperçoivent pas qu'ils ne possèdent que celles que leur fièvre chaude & billieuse leur fournit (96).

That which makes this quotation especially interesting is that Orasius, who without doubt is a victim of a humoral imbalance, is the speaker who is identifying and criticizing the humoral imbalance in others.

In *De la Vie privée*, one finds a further example of a speaker other than Orasius who is a melancholic, for Hesychius' penchant for solitude and the pleasure derived from it may be viewed as being
similar to Orasius' attitude. Philoponus does not feel that the
inclination of Hesychius is a healthy one, and contends that it is
melancholy which produces the unhealthy pleasure Hesychius finds in
solitude. Specifically, he says that the happiness of Hesychius is
"une fausse & trompeuse satisfaction & complaisance, qui procede d'un
temperament brusle & corrompu, n'ayant point d'autre fondement que
nostre mauvaise complexon, qui deprave & altere les fonctions de
nostre ame, luy donnant des illusions d'un faux et imaginaire plaisir"
(210). This direct cause and effect relationship is of course a rather
extreme position. Since Philoponus is a foe of scepticism, Le Vayer
may have included this remark to illustrate the extent to which the
attackers of scepticism may go. Nevertheless there is though, as I
have contended earlier, a case to be made for a certain affinity in
the characteristics of the melancholic and sceptic states.

Additional examples of the humoral theory may be found in the
sixth dialogue, De l'Ignorance louable. For instance, Telamon con-
siders at one point his views on moral theory. In this context he
discusses the fact that moral discourse will lead one to an explanation
of the nature of the passions, and he states that "morale" will teach
one that "la bonne constitution de nostre esprit ne depend pas du
retranchement absolu de ces passions, mais bien de leur regle et
moderation, non plus que la santè des corps ne procede pas de
l'aneantissement des quatre qualitez contraires [i.e., the humors],
mais seulement de leur accord & temperature" (109). The latter part
of this quotation refers, of course, to the idea that certain humors were thought to embody heat and cold. If one had an excess of either quality, it was considered unhealthy.

Further evidence of Le Vayer's continual use of the humoral terminology may be found in this dialogue in the context of Orasius' discussion of anger. He says that it is impossible to live without anger and that people are

bien dignes de compassion ou de risée, lesquels empeschant seulement que sa pointe [anger's] n'agisse au dehors, la font replier contr'eux mesmes, & ne voulant permettre à ce feu de prendre l'air & s'eventer, comme si c'estoit chose honteuse, demeurant ... miserablement offusquez de fumée au dedans, qui les rend à la fin atrabilaires parfaits (162).

And in addition, Granicus states at one point that "comme il n'y a point de plus fort vinaigre que celui qui est fait de vin doux et de malroisie, aussi n'y a t'il pas de plus gentile ardeur de bile, que ceux qui sont d'ailleurs les plus froids, & se picquent ordinairement le moins" (45).

The character of Orontes in De la Politique might also be considered melancholic. It will be remembered that in this dialogue Orontes expresses a continual discontent with the political systems of the world, and is thus similar in his disillusionment and dis­pleasure to the Orasius of other dialogues.

Finally, another example of the continuing influence of the humoral theory on Le Vayer in the Dialogues is his simple use of the word "humeur" on many occasions, not specifically in reference to one of the four humors, but in the more general sense of personality. In
Du Mariage, Cassander speaks of Eleus' "humeur studieuse." Also, in Philocles' long speech, he considers to some extent those women who seek sexual pleasure outside of marriage. In the course of this discussion, an unfaithful woman is referred to at one point as "une femme de l'humeur dont nous parlons" (441). Furthermore, in Philocles' long speech, one finds the word "humeur" used in discussing the stubbornness of women:

leur opinastreté est invincible, avec une humeur si contredisante, qu'on peut dire que comme Platon faisoit boire des eaux de lethé à toutes les ames avant que venir en ce monde, celles des femmes semblent avoir toutes beu de ces eaux de contradiction dont il est parlé au vingtiesme des Nombres (450-51).

Additionally, in the eighth dialogue, Orontes is discussing at one point those who excel in both the theoretical and practical aspects of politics, and notes that his views are being expressed in the context of "l'humeur dont je suis" (251). And in the sixth dialogue, prior to making the remark cited above, Granicus notes that Telamon is in a "belle humeur" (45).

On the basis of the foregoing analysis, the Dialogues as well as the Prose chagrine clearly present examples of literary usage of the theory of the humors. Further use of the humoral theory in a literary form is found in the work of Molière. This thematic relationship between Le Vayer and Molière is hardly fortuitous, for Molière knew Le Vayer, and was a friend of both Le Vayer's son, the Abbé François de La Mothe le Vayer, and of Le Vayer's niece.
Various critics have considered the link between Le Vayer and Molière. In his edition of the Dialogues, Tisserand acknowledges both the philosophical affinities and the personal contacts between Le Vayer and Molière, while Emile Magne discusses the acquaintance-ship of Le Vayer, Le Vayer's niece and Molière, in both a short study and an article. A. Lytton Sells, in a lengthy article comparing Molière and Le Vayer, carefully juxtaposes passages from various plays of Molière and the works of Le Vayer, and concludes that the influence of Le Vayer on Molière is a "demonstrable certainty." Also, Robert McBride has written two articles which identify Le Vayer as a source for Molière's ideas on marriage, and he documents additional philosophical links between these two men, in his The Sceptical Vision of Molière: A Study in Paradox.

While all these studies are of importance, it is René Jasinski's work, Molière et le Misanthrope (1951), which is the most pertinent to the topics presented in this analysis of Le Vayer, for Jasinski provides a basis for linking Le Vayer and Molière in terms of the humoral theory.

Jasinski maintains that the central idea of Le Misanthrope is found in the Prose chagrine: "Qu'on en suive le thème général: on reconnaîtra sans conteste celui du Misanthrope." Alceste is "un 'atrabilaire' par 'tempérament', qui se complaît dans son 'humeur chagrine' et préfère la solitude à la compagnie des hommes." This description of Alceste clearly parallels that which Le Vayer gives of himself throughout much of the Prose chagrine.
Jasinski also states that the melancholy of both Alceste and Le Vayer causes them to exhibit strange behavior. As proof of this he cites Eliante's remark concerning Alceste: "Dans ses façons d'agir, il est fort singulier" (v. 1163), and Le Vayer's statements in the Prose chagrine that his "bizarrerie me fait aimer ici ce qui est le moins ordinaire," and "Mais de quelle bizarrerie n'est point capable l'humeur chagrine où je suis." Then, as Jasinski continues to make comparisons in this fashion, he notes also a major difference between Le Vayer and Alceste. While Le Vayer decides that he will no longer let himself become despondent when encountering the problems of daily life, Alceste fails to adopt an attitude of this nature.

Jasinski's consideration of the endings of the Prose chagrine and Le Misanthrope provides a point of departure for analysis of the conclusion of each of these works, in terms of the relationship between the melancholy of Le Vayer and Alceste, and the notion of interrupted dialogue. In this context, the attitude which Le Vayer adopts in the Prose chagrine might be viewed as the closing of another symbolic philosophical circle. Points in this circle would represent the attempts of Le Vayer to deal with his frustration and melancholy. The ending of the Prose chagrine suggests that Le Vayer has found an approach to the resolution of his problem, which will free him from the melancholy he experiences. The question which arises though is whether this problem in the Prose chagrine can be resolved, while at the same time the conflicts outlined in the Dialogues remain unsolved. The answer to this question is yes, but only to a limited degree. The
attitude adopted by Le Vayer in the Prose chagrine enables him to experience a type of tranquility, yet it certainly does not solve the philosophical and moral problems outlined in the Prose chagrine and throughout the Dialogues. Thus, in this sense, the Prose chagrine may be viewed as a confirmation of the continuance of the notion of interrupted dialogue in the later work of Le Vayer.

In Le Misanthrope, Alceste is attempting to obtain a declaration from Célimène on the question of marriage. Considering this situation in terms of the idea of the circle, points on the circle would represent here the efforts of Alceste to secure a commitment from Célimène. If Célimène were to agree to marriage, this would close the circle and their dialogue would be completed. Alceste though fails to achieve his goal. Consequently he is forced to live in a state of interrupted dialogue with Célimène. His departure at the end of the play resembles the situation encountered in certain dialogues. At times, speakers in the Dialogues simply reach an impasse, for given the philosophical positions they maintain, there is little change that they could agree on any topic. Alceste has reached a similar impasse with Célimène. She has refused to leave the world of the "salon," yet for Alceste this is a condition of their marriage. Given these circumstances, nothing more can be said or accomplished until there is a change of views. Furthermore, considering Alceste in terms of the humoral theory, his final attitude becomes not only logical, but almost inevitable. In the Dialogues and the Prose chagrine, Le Vayer has illustrated repeatedly
that the melancholic highly values his solitude. Therefore it is only to be expected that Alceste should place his need for solitude above other matters.

Thus, though Le Vayer overcomes his melancholy to some extent, and Alceste does not, interrupted dialogue is a factor of such importance in each of their situations, that it continues to characterize both Le Vayer and Alceste, irrespective of the final disposition of the role of melancholy in each case.

Another approach to analysis of Le Vayer is suggested by the work of the twentieth-century French psychologist, René Le Senne. Le Senne has published various works on personality analysis, or characterology, in which he presents a system on analysis which makes use of the humoral theory. Le Senne starts with Galen's four groups and equates them to his own groupings, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Galen</th>
<th>Le Senne</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sanguine</td>
<td>amorphous and sanguine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phlegmatic</td>
<td>apathetic and phlegmatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>choleric</td>
<td>nervous and choleric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>melancholic</td>
<td>sentimental and passionate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Le Senne explains that the sentimental type is inclined to write a "journal intime," and has a leaning towards solitude. Yet sometimes this solitude is replaced by periods of desire for contact with society. These characteristics are in keeping with Le Vayer's description of himself in the Prose chagrine and the portrayal of Orasius in the Dialogues. The Prose chagrine could indeed accurately be termed
a "journal intime" and here Le Vayer scorns the company of others. In the Dialogues, a desire for solitude is also a dominant trait of Orasius, while however at the same time Orasius wishes for contact with society. The contact he desires though is of a very special nature. He does not wish to join the mainstream of society, rather he is anxious to engage in discussion with both his supporters and adversaries, on the philosophical issues which he holds to be important.

The main problem encountered in applying Le Senne's analysis to Le Vayer is that Le Vayer's personality does not fit simply into one of Le Senne's groups, but rather falls into more than one classification. For instance, Le Senne discusses the inclination toward scepticism in matters of religion and other areas such as moral theory, as being a trait of the sanguines. He also identifies scepticism as being a trait of the phlegmatics. One may thus take issue with the list of traits Le Senne assigns to each of his eight groups. The important factor though is that Le Senne's work testifies to a contemporary application of the ancient concept of the humors.

The fact that Le Vayer considers himself to be under the influence of melancholy may also be related to a theory of interpretation of Le Vayer which has been advanced by Carlo François. In his La Notion de l'absurde dans la littérature française du XVIIe siècle, François suggests that the term "absurd," in the sense of all that which lacks reason, was a concept familiar to writers of the seventeenth century, including La Mothe le Vayer. Indeed, on the basis of Le Vayer's observations and remarks in both the Dialogues and the Prose chagrine, it is clear that he views society as being riddled with injustice,
hypocrisy and illogic. Thus François' conclusion appears to be reasonable. François though fails to ask what factors propel Le Vayer to experience the profound feeling and emotion, which cause him to view society as being absurd. The answer to this question lies in Le Vayer's humoral imbalance. His melancholy intensifies his emotions to the point that he feels compelled to condemn practices of society with the rigor expressed in the Dialogues and the Prose chagrine.

The Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero and the Prose chagrine constitute approximately fifteen per cent of the total writings of La Mothe le Vayer. These works though are among the most representative in terms of the presentation of Le Vayer's basic philosophical position and his view of both himself and the world in general. Le Vayer has often been disregarded in considerations of the movement of ideas from the Renaissance to the Age of Enlightenment. It has been seen though that the thought of Le Vayer is an important example of one of the various philosophical alternatives enunciated in the seventeenth century. In addition, the association which may be made between Le Vayer and Molière serves to underscore the significance of Le Vayer and the importance of directing attention to this work.

The Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero present a system of thought which is carefully structured. On the basis of the foregoing analysis, it is clear that sections of this work are open to multiple interpretations. Perhaps it is because of this fact, that Le Vayer has been dismissed in the past as incomprehensible and pedantic. It is precisely, however,
these various levels of interpretation of the Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero which make the Dialogues worthy of attention, and preclude condemnation of them as shallow rhetorical exercises. The concept of interrupted dialogue as one level of interpretation of the Dialogues is an approach which is essential in the formation of a broad understanding of Le Vayer. Furthermore, imbued as Le Vayer was with the humoral theory, familiarity with this concept enables one to delve into a basic aspect of Le Vayer's character. In applying the theory of the humors to Le Vayer, it has also been seen that this idea serves to compliment and expand aspects of the notion of interruption in Le Vayer's writings.

The pertinence of analysis of Le Vayer in terms of interrupted dialogue and the theory of the humors is certainly not limited to the works discussed in this study. The philosophical issues raised in the Dialogues and the Prose chagrine, and Le Vayer's self-image as a melancholic, continue as basic elements of Le Vayer's thought and character, over the many years of his career. Thus the notion of interrupted dialogue and the theory of the humors may perhaps best be viewed as essential points de départ in any consideration of Le Vayer's work.
Notes


2 All references to the Prose chagrine are to the 1756 Dresden edition of Le Vayer's works. This edition consists of seven volumes, each of which is bound in two parts. The Prose chagrine is found in volume three, part one.


4 Brock, p. 9.

5 Charles Greene Cumston, An Introduction to the History of Medicine: From the Time of the Pharohs to the End of the XVIIth Century (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1926; rpt. London: Dawsons, 1968), pp. 157-58. This study contains an extremely succinct and readable discussion of Galen. The major portion of my summary of Galen's ideas is based on this work.

6 Cumston, p. 157.

7 Cumston, pp. 159-60.


9 Siegel, p. 221.

10 Siegel, p. 221.

11 Siegel, p. 271.

12 Siegel, p. 285.

13 Siegel, pp. 295-96.

14 Siegel, p. 302.

15 Cumston, p. 164.
16 Cumston, p. 164.
17 Cumston, p. 164.
18 Siegel, pp. 301-2.
19 Siegel, p. 262.


21 Pérouse, pp. 112-13. Pérouse clarifies the direct object pronoun "les" in the first sentence as follows: "il s'agit ici des diverses langues." Also, he incorrectly gives page 85 as the reference for the quotation. The correct reference is volume six, part two, pp. 82-83 of the Dresden edition. Furthermore, the textual errors in Pérouse's citation of this passage have been corrected.


23 Kerviler, p. 32.
24 Kerviler, p. 34.

25 René Jasinski, Molière et le Misanthrope (Paris: Nizet, [1970]), p. 127. This work was first published in 1951.

26 Jasinski, p. 127.
28 Jasinski, p. 128.
29 Jasinski, p. 128.
30 Tisserand, pp. 36-37.
31 Emile Magne, Une Amie inconnue de Molière, suivi de Molière et l'université; documents inédits (Paris: Emile-Paul, 1922), pp. 53 ff. Substantially the same material is found in "Une Amie inconnue de Molière (d'après des documents inédits)," Revue de Paris, 29 (1922), pp. 212 ff.


35 Jasinski, p. 261.

36 Jasinski, p. 261.


39 Le Senne, p. 234.

40 Le Senne, p. 236.

41 Le Senne, p. 236.

42 Le Senne, pp. 438 ff.

43 Le Senne, pp. 480 ff.

APPENDIX A

EDITIONS OF THE WORKS OF FRANCOIS DE LA MOTHE LE VAYER

The following list of editions of the works of La Mothe le Vayer is based on the bibliographies of:

the Bibliothèque Nationale

the British Museum

D. C. Cabeen

Alexandru Cioranescu (Bibliographie de la littérature française du dix-septième siècle)

Louis Etienne*

René Kerviler*

the National Union Catalog (Pre-1956 Imprints)

Jean Pierre Nicéron*

René Pintard (The bibliography in Le Libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVIIe siècle is noted in this appendix by the name "Pintard.") The bibliography in La Mothe le Vayer, Gassendi, Guy Patin: études de bibliographie et de critique, suivies de textes inédits de Guy Patin is designated as "Pintard-1.")*

Ernest Tisserand*

Florence Wickelgren (La Mothe le Vayer: sa vie et son oeuvre)*

*Complete publication data concerning these works may be found in the Bibliography.
The editions of Le Vayer are divided into three groups: collected works, the *Dialogues d'Orasius Tubero*, and other individual works. In each of the first two groups, the entries are arranged by date. In the third group, the titles are placed in alphabetical order, with multiple editions of a particular title being arranged according to each edition's date of publication. In those cases where there is an edition of a work whose title differs from the most commonly-used title, or there is a translation of the work, these items are listed after the first entry for the work, and are placed according to their date of publication and as part of the same list as those titles which are exactly the same as the first entry. After each entry, the bibliographies which list the work are indicated, as well as any specific minor deviation from the commonly-held publication data or error in a particular bibliography, as concerns the work in question. In the bibliographies consulted, I also discovered, however, that there are some rather significant omissions and errors, which necessitate special explanation, and which will be considered below.

In his *La Mothe le Vayer, Gassendi, Guy Patin: études de bibliographie et de critique, suivies de textes inédits de Guy Patin*, Pintard notes, as indicated in the first chapter of this study, that there are six editions of the *Dialogues*. He states that edition B₁/B₂ is two volumes in one. On the basis of consultation with the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, it would appear that the binding of their edition of this work is not contemporary with its printing. I have not been able to determine whether there was a separate binding
of each of the two sections of this volume at one time. In any event, though, Pintard does not relate any information about the date of the binding of the copy he consulted.

Furthermore, the National Union Catalog lists an edition of the *Cinq autres dialogues* (1506), entry number NL 0056017, as being in the collections of Yale University and the University of Southern California. At first, I thought that this edition might be what Pintard calls the missing A2 or original edition of the last five dialogues. However, neither Yale nor USC have this volume, attributed to them by the National Union Catalog.

Finally, the National Union Catalog lists the B1/B2 edition as number NL 0056081 (call number PQ 1814/L57Q2/1606), with copies at Yale, the University of Southern California, and Harvard, among other libraries, and as number NL 0058084 (call number *FC6/L1937/630db), with a copy only at Harvard. Yale, USC and Harvard each do have a copy of the B1/B2 edition. However, Yale classifies its edition as Hfc35/16ah, USC uses the number 840/L235/tD/1606, and Harvard has only the copy noted by the National Union Catalog as NL 0056084, with the call number as given for this entry by the National Union Catalog.
PART I: COLLECTED WORKS AND ANTHOLOGIES

Oeuvres de François de La Mothe le Vayer, conseiller d'estat ordinaire
. . . ed. Abbé François de La Mothe le Vayer. 2 vols. Paris:
Courbé, 1654.
  B.N.: Z. 774-75 Pintard
  Cioranescu: 39680 Tisserand: lists as one volume
  Kerviler: lists date with the date of publication
  1653 Wickelgren
  NUC: NL 0056002
       NL 0056003 (Microfilm)

Oeuvres de François de La Mothe le Vayer, conseiller d'estat ordinaire.
seconde édition, revue, corrigée, et augmentée. 2 vols. Paris:
Courbé, 1656.
  Kerviler Nicéron
  NUC: NL 0056005 Tisserand

Oeuvres de François de La Mothe le Vayer, conseiller d'estat ordinaire
. . . ed. Abbé François de La Mothe le Vayer. troisième édition,
  B.N.: Z. 776-77 Nicéron: lists as three volumes
  B.M.: 629.1.14 Pintard
       126.1.8 Tisserand
  Kerviler Wickelgren
  NUC: NL 0056007

Oeuvres. nouvelle édition, augmentée de plusieurs nouveaux traités.
  Kerviler
  NUC: NL 0056008

Oeuvres de François de La Mothe le Vayer, conseiller d'estat ordinaire.
nouvelle édition, augmentée de plusieurs nouveaux traités et
divisée en quinze petits volumes, avec une table fort ample. ed.
Abbé François de La Mothe le Vayer. 15 vols. Paris: Billaine,
1669.
  B.N.: Z. 20039-53 NUC: NL 0056009
  B.M.: 630.b.7-21 Pintard
  Cioranescu: 39681 Tisserand
  Kerviler Wickelgren

"De l'Amour." lettre XIV; "De la Beauté." lettre XV. Notes mss. Détaché
  B.N.: ZZ. 3598
B.N.: Zz. 3459 Wickelgren

B.N.: Zz. 3551 Wickelgren

B.N.: Zz. 3499 Wickelgren

B.N.: Z. 12811

B.N.: Zz. 3472 Wickelgren

B.N.: Zz. 3600 bis Wickelgren

B.M.: 630.b.22 (lists as three volumes with volume one missing) Nicéron: lists as 15 volumes
Cioranescu: 39682 Tisserand: lists as 15 volumes
Kerviler Wickelgren

Oeuvres de François de La Mothe le Vayer. nouvelle édition, revue et augmentée. 7 tomes en 14 volumes. Dresde: Groell, 1756-59.
B.N.: Z. 20054-67 NUC: NL 0056010 (notes that volume 16 has the imprint, Mons: P. de la Flèche, 1671)
Cabeen: 4280 Pintard
Cioranescu: 39683 Tisserand
Kerviler Wickelgren

L'Esprit de La Mothe le Vayer, par M. de M.C.D.S.P.D.L. s.l., 1763.
B.N.: Z. 20071 NUC: NL 0188001 (explains that the editor is Charles Antoine Joseph Leclerc de Montlinot, chanoine de Saint Pierre de Laon)
Cioranescu: 39684 Tisserand
Kerviler: notes review of this book by Elie Fréron in L'Année littéraire, III (1763), 314-33
B.M.: 405.aaa.24 Tisserand
NUC: NL 0056074 Wickelgren

B.N.: 8° Z. 25457
B.M.: 20002.a.29
NUC: NP 0588951
PART II: EDITIONS OF THE DIALOGUES D'ORASIUS TUBERO

Quatre dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens par Orasius Tubero.
Francfort: Sarius, 1604.
B.N.: Z. 16628 Pintard
Cioranescu: 39685 Pintard-1: designates this edition
NUC: NL 0056082 (gives "A1"
probable publication
data as Paris, c. Wickelgren
1630)

Quatre dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens par Orasius Tubero;
Cinq autres dialogues du mesme autheur, faits comme les precedents
à l'imitation des anciens. vol. I: Francfort: Sarius, 1506; vol.
II: Francfort: Sarius, 1606. (Bound as two volumes or as one
volume. Some copies of volume one have the date corrected to 1606.
See the introduction to this appendix for further explanation.)
B.M.: 86.f.17 Nicéron
Cioranescu: 39687 Pintard
Etienne
Kerviler as "B1-B2"
NUC: NL 0056081 Tisserand
NL 0056084 (gives Wickelgren
probable date of
publication as 1631)

Cincq dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens par Oratius Tubero.
Mons: de la Flèche, 1671.
B.N.: Z. 16629 Nicéron
Z. 16698 Pintard
Cioranescu: 39686 Pintard-1: designates this edition
Kerviler: lists as two volumes
Tisserand
NUC: NL 0056013 (gives Wickelgren
probable publication
data as Amsterdam: J. Blaeu, 1671)

Cinq dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens par Oratius Tubero.
Mons: de la Flèche, 1673.
B.N.: Z. 16630 Pintard-1: designates this edition
Kerviler: lists as two volumes
Tisserand
NUC: NL 0056021 Wickelgren
Pintard
Un exemplaire détaché du "Dialogue sur les rares et éminentes qualitez des Asnes de ce temps entre Philonius et Paleologue," avec notes mss. (Extract from Mons, 1673 edition, pp. 200-67.)

B.N.: ZZ. 3468 Wickelgren
Pintard

Cinq dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens par Oratius Tubero.

Liège: Rousselin, 1673.

B.N.: Z. 16631 Pintard
B.M.: 714.a.21 Pintard-1: designates this edition as "D bis"
Kerviler: lists as two volumes Tisserand
NUC: NL 0056019 Wickelgren
Nicéron


B.M.: 8406.aa.29
NUC: NL 0056042 Wickelgren

Cinq dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens par Oratius Tubero;
Quatre autres dialogues du mesme auteur faits comme les precedens à l'imitation des anciens. Contemnere et contemi. 2 vols.

Francfort: Savius, 1716.

B.N.: Z. 16632-33 Nicéron
B.M.: 714.a.22 Pintard
244.1.35 Pintard-1: designates this edition as "E₁-E₂"; notes that the
Kerviler: gives date spelling of the publisher's
of publication of name is an incorrect spelling
vol. I as 1716, and of the original publisher's
vol. II as 1718 name, Sarius
Cabeen: 4281 probable place of publication as "Trévoux"

NUC: NL 0056015 Tisserand
NL 0056034 (gives Wickelgren
NL 0056015 probable place of publication as
"Trévoux")

Un exemplaire détaché du "Dialogue sur les rares et éminentes qualitez des asnes de ce temps entre Philonius et Paleologue," avec notes mss. (Based on Francfort, 1716 edition, I, 241-326.)

B.N.: Zz. 3508 Wickelgren
Pintard
Un exemplaire détaché du "Dialogue sur le sujet de la divinité, entre Orasius et Orontes," avec notes mss. (Based on Francfort, 1716 edition, I, 327-416.)

B.N.: Zz. 3458
Pintard
Wickelgren

Cinq dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens par Orasius Tubero.
Nouvelle édition augmentée d'une réfutation de la philosophie sceptique, ou Préservatif contre le pyrrhonisme, par L. M. Kahle. Berlin: Haude, 1744.

B.M.: 12354.f.37.(1)
Pintard-1: designates this edition as "F"

Cabeen: 4282
Kerviler: Tisserand
NUC: NL 0056016 Wickelgren


B.M.: 12315.bb.51
12354.f.37.(2.)

NUC: NL 0056053 Wickelgren


B.M.: 012314.f.49 Wickelgren

Deux dialogues faits à l'imitation des anciens. ed. Ernest Tisserand.

Paris: Bossard, 1922.

B.N.: 8° Z. 21530 NUC: NL 0056032
B.M.: 012201.c.1/24 Pintard
Cabeen: 4283 Wickelgren
Cloranescu: 39688

PART III: MISCELLANEOUS EDITIONS OF THE OTHER WRITINGS OF
LA MOthe LE VAYER

Des Anciens et principaux historiens grecs et latins dont il nous reste
B.N.: J. 480
B.M.: 804.f.1 Wickelgren
Cioranescu: 39718

[Another copy. ]
B.N.: Rés. J. 1650 (adds the following note: sur grand
papier, relié aux armes de Dupuy)
Wickelgren

Notitia historicum selectorum or Animadversions upon the Antient &
Famous Greek & Latin Historians. Written in French by the learned
Francis La Mothe le Vayer with English additions, trans. W.
D'Avenant, B.A. of Magdalen Hall, Oxford. Oxford: Lichfield,
1678.
B.M.: 586.c.22
NUC: NL 0056062
Wickelgren

[Another issue.] Oxford, 1678.
B.M.: C. 65.f.1 (lists this volume as another issue with a
different title page)
Wickelgren

The Annals & History of C. Tacitus, . . . An Account of C. C. Tacitus
from F. de La Mothe le Vayer. n.p., 1716.
B.M.: 588.c.14
Wickelgren

Considerations sur l'éloquence françoise de ce tems. Paris: Cramoisy,
1638.
B.N.: X. 18566-67 Kerviler
Rés. G. 2862(2) Nicéron
Cioranescu: 5699 Tisserand
39722 Wickelgren
Etienne

B.N.: X. 18574 Nicéron
B.M.: 1019.k.5.(2.) Wickelgren
Kerviler

B.N. X. 18575 Wickelgren

Wickelgren: lists this edition separately from the Sommaville, 1647 edition; since this edition is not given elsewhere, the listing of it by Wickelgren is probably an error.

Deux discours: le premier du peu de certitude qu'il y a dans l'histoire; le second, de la connaissance de soi-même. Paris: Billaine, 1668.

- B.N.: G. 32133
- B.M.: 9004.aa.11
- Cioranescu: 39720
- Etienne: Tisserand: lists date of publication as c. 1668
- Kerviler

Discours de la contrariété d'humeurs qui se trouve entre certaines nations, et singulièrement entre la française et l'espagnole avec deux discours politiques, l'un sur la bataille de Lutzen et l'autre sur la proposition de la trêve aux Pays-Bas en 1633, traduit de l'italien de Fabricio Campolini, véronois. Paris: Richer, 1636.

- B.N.: 8° Li°.1
- Cioranescu: 39689
- Etienne: lists date of publication as Wickelgren between 1634 and 1636

Discours de la contrariété d'humeurs qui se trouve entre certaines nations, et singulièrement entre la française et l'espagnole, traduit de l'italien de F. Campolini, véronois. Paris: Courbè, 1647.

- B.N.: 8° Li°.1.A
- B.M.: 715.b.29 (lists this number under Campolini)
- Kerviler: lists an edition published in 1653, which is cited also only by Nicéron
- Nicéron: see note given above
- Wickelgren


- B.M.: 12352.aaa.32 (notes that this edition is signed D.L.M.L.V.)

[Another edition.] s.l.s.d.

- B.N.: Zz. 3649 (adds the following note: Incomplet. Complété à la main. Extrait du Conservateur, tome 2, décembre, 1756)

Wickelgren
De la Contrariété d'humeurs qui se trouve entre certaines nations, ou
de l'antipathie des Français et des Espagnols. ed. Jacques Joseph

B.N.: 8° Li4.2 Tisserand
Kerviler Wickelgren
NUC: NL 0056024

Discours de la diversité d'humeurs de plusieurs nations et parti-
culièremen des Français et des Espagnols touchant les affaires
du temps present. s.l., 1636.

B.M.: 522.c.27(4.) Wickelgren

Discours de l'histoire où est examinée celle de Prudence de Sandoval,
chroniqueur du feu roy d'Espagne Philippe III, et évêque de
Pampelune, qui a écrit la "Vie de l'empereur Charles Quintz."
Paris: Camusat, 1638. (Bound with Opuscules ou petits traitez,
1643.)

B.N.: G. 32558 NUC: NL 0056035
Rés. G. 2681-2 Nicéron
Cioranescu: 6222 Tisserand
39717 Wickelgren

Etienne
Kerviler


B.N.: G. 32557 Nicéron
Kerviler Wickelgren

Discours pour monstrer que les doutes de la philosophie sceptique sont

NUC: NL 0056036


Etienne Nicéron
Kerviler Tisserand: lists date of publi-
cation as c. 1669


Etienne: lists date of publication as 1632
Kerviler: lists four editions published in 1633
Tisserand
Discours sur la bataille de Lutzen in Mercure françois, 18 (1633), unnumbered pages, beginning on the page following page 769, and concluding on page 770, which is numbered; 19 pages of text. (The date of publication according to the table of contents is 1632, according to the spine of the volume, 1632, and according to the title page, 1633; items dating from 1633 though begin on page 946.)

B.M.: 285.f.1-18 Kerviler: lists date of publication as 1633
285.g.1-7
901.c.2 NUC: NM 0461768
901.c.1 Tisserand

Discours sur la proposition de la trève au (sic) Pays-Bas en 1633 in Mercure françois, 19 (1636), 224-39. (The date of publication according to the table of contents is 1633, according to the spine of the volume, 1633, and according to the title page, 1636.)

Etienne Tisserand
Kerviler: lists date of publication as 1633

Doute sceptique: si l'estude des belles-lettres est préférable à toute autre occupation. Paris: Jolly, 1667.

B.N.: Z. 11175 Kerviler: lists a possible date of publication as 1667
Cioranescu: 3913 Nicéron: does not list a date of publication
39711 Etienne: lists date of publication as no earlier than 1669


NUC: NL 0056037


B.N.: 4°Li4.4 Nicéron: lists date of publication as 1657
Cioranescu: 39701
Etienne: lists date of publication as 1636

The Works of Flavius Josephus which are extant . . . to which are added a dissertation on the writings and credit of Josephus by François de La Mothe le Vayer. London: Penny and Janeway, 1733.

B.M.: 4515.g.10 Wickelgren

NUC: NJ 0170928
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>La Géographie et la morale du Prince.</td>
<td>1651</td>
<td>Paris: Courbé</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.N.: G. 32774 (notes that this work consists of two parts bound in one volume) Cioranescu: 39725 (lists as two volumes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Géographie du prince.</td>
<td>1669</td>
<td>Paris: Billaine</td>
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<tr>
<td>L'Hexaméron rustique, ou les six journées passées à la campagne entre des personnes studieuses.</td>
<td>1670</td>
<td>Paris: Billaine</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.N.: 8°Z. 22852 NUC: NL 0056043</td>
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<td>B.M.: 8403.aaa.19 Nicéron</td>
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<td>Cioranescu: 39713 Wickelgren</td>
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<td>NUC: NL 0056045</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Another edition.] Cologne: Brenussen, 1571.</td>
<td>1671</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B.N.: Y2.41975 Z. 11710 (notes that pagination varies between these two copies; corrects date of publication to 1671) Wickelgren</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Another edition.] s.l., 1671.</td>
<td>1671</td>
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<td>B.N.: Y2.41974 Z. 16626 Wickelgren</td>
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B.N.: Y2.41976 Tisserand
Kerviler Wickelgren

[Another edition.] Amsterdam: Mortier, 1698.
B.M.: 245.b.22 Nicéron
Kerviler Tisserand
NUC: NL 0056049 Wickelgren

[Another edition.] Amsterdam: Mortier, 1715.
B.M.: 721.a.28 Wickelgren
NUC: NL 0056050

B.N.: Z. 16627 Kerviler
B.M.: 12331.aaa.1 NUC: NL 0056052
Cioranescu: 39714 (lists Tisserand date of publication Wickelgren as 1775)

Etienne: gives dates of publication of the three volumes as 1663–64, after 1665, and 1668 at the earliest
Kerviler
NUC: NL 0056054
Nicéron: gives dates of publication as 1654, 1663, and 1666
Tisserand

B.N.: Z. 39245
Cioranescu: 39709
NUC: NL 0056029 (notes publication of this volume also by Courbé and Jolly)
Wickelgren

B.N.: Z. 19835
Cioranescu: 39708
NUC: NL 0056093 (notes publication of this volume also by Courbé and Jolly)
Wickelgren

De l'Instruction de Monseigneur le Dauphin . . . à Monseigneur l'Eminentissime cardinal duc de Richelieu. Paris: Cramoisy, 1640.
B.N.: Rés. Z. 842 NUC: NL 0056023
Cioranescu: 39724 Nicéron
Etienne Tisserand
Kerviler
Introduction chronologique à l'histoire de France pour Monsieur.
Paris: Jolly, 1670.
B.N.: 8° L32.3 Nicéron
Cioranescu: 39721 Tisserand
Etienne Kerviler

B.N.: Z. 2983 NUC: NL 0056056
Etienne Nicéron
Kerviler: notes that Tisserand this volume includes the Préface d'une histoire

[Another copy.] avec ex-libris et notes mss. de Pierre-Daniel Huet.
B.N.: J. 5875

"Du Moyen de dresser une bibliothèque d'une centaine de livres seulement." in Conseils pour former une bibliothèque peu nombreuse mais choisie par M. Jean-Henri Samuel Formey. seconde édition, corrigée et augmentée. Berlin: Haude et Spener, 1750. (This work is "Petit traité #13").
NUC: NF 0244474

B.N.: 8° Q. 3986 NUC: NF 0244475
B.M.: 619.g.4 Wickelgren

B.N.: Q. 3539 NUC: NF 0244477
8° Q. 3100 Wickelgren
B.M.: 271.a.6

[Another copy.] B.N.: Z. Payen. 1031 NUC: NF 0233376
B.M.: 11900.aa.20 Wickelgren

Introduction générale aux sciences, avec les Conseils pour former une bibliothèque peu nombreuse mais choisie. Amsterdam, 1764.
NUC: NF 0244477 (notes that this volume is a later edition of the 1756 text, and that for this edition the title has been changed)
Lettres touchant les nouvelles remarques sur la langue française.
Paris: de la Costeau, 1647.
Etienne: lists title as Des Nouvelles remarques sur la langue française, quatre lettres de M. Naudé, 1647.
Cioranescu: 65808
Kerviler
NUC: NL 0056057
Nicéron
Tisserand

Commentaires sur les 'Remarques' de Vaugelas, par La Mothe le Vayer,
Scipion Dupleix, Ménage, Bouhours, Conrart, Chapelin, Patru,
B.N.: 8°X. 19914 NUC: listed in the 1942 catalog; the appropriate volume of the pre-1956 imprints catalog is not yet available
B.M.: Ac. 9812/48
Cioranescu: 65820

B.N.: Rés. R. 2524 Kerviler
B.M.: 8403.a.13 Nicéron
Cioranescu: 39694 Tisserand
Etienne Wickelgren

B.M.: 8005.aa.25 Wickelgren
NUC: NL 0056066 (both B.M. and NUC explain that the translator is John Evelyn)

B.N.: Fol. Z. 976 NUC: NE 0208025
B.M.: 832.m.11 Wickelgren
89.h.4

B.N.: R. 40549 Kerviler
R. 54942 NUC: NL 0056058
Cioranescu: 39728 Nicéron: lists date of publication as 1655
Etienne: lists date of publication at 1655
Tisserand Wickelgren
B.N.: Z. 16091 NUC: NL 0056060
Cioranescu: 39712 Nicéron
Etienne Wickelgren
Kerviler

B.N.: Z. 20070 Z. 39244 NUC: NL 0056061
Pintard Tisserand: lists an incorrect accession number for the Bibliotheque Nationale Wickelgren

Etienne Niceron
Kerviler Tisserand

Observations diverses sur la composition et sur la lecture des livres.
Paris: Billaine, 1668.
B.N.: Z. 11174 NUC: NL 0056063
Cioranescu: 39723 Tisserand
Etienne Wickelgren
Kerviler

B.N.: R. 45299 NUC: NL 0056064
Cioranescu: 39727 Nicéron
Etienne Tisserand
Kerviler Wickelgren

B.N.: R. 40542 NUC: NL 0056067
B.M.: 1088.b.5 Nicéron
Cioranescu: 39698 Tisserand
Etienne Wickelgren
Kerviler

[Another edition.] avec notes ms. de Monmerque.
B.N.: 8°Z. 16130 Wickelgren

B.N.: R. 54932 Wickelgren
Z. 17968
(Bound with the Discours de l'histoire, 1638.)
B.N.: R. 40543 NUC: NL 0056069 (lists this same volume also under number NL 0056035)
Z. 20068
Cioranescu: 39695
Etienne Nicéron
Kerviler Tisserand
Wickelgren

B.N.: R. 40544
Cioranescu: 39697
Etienne Nicéron
Kerviler Tisserand
Wickelgren

B.N.: R. 40545
Cioranescu: 39696
Etienne Nicéron
Kerviler Tisserand
Wickelgren

B.N.: R. 40547
B.M.: 721.e.19
Cioranescu: 39699
Etienne Nicéron
Kerviler Tisserand
Wickelgren

B.N.: R. 40546 (adds the following note: Armes de la Masle, prieur des Roches au verso du titre)
Wickelgren

B.N.: Rés. Z. 4101 Wickelgren

NUC: NL 0056071

B.N.: D. 40335 Nicéron: states that this volume contains the "corollaire," which is in the third edition
Rés. R. 2496(1)
Cioranescu: 39690
Kerviler Pintard
Etienne Tisserand
Wickelgren

Kerviler

Nicéron: states that this volume contains the "corollaire," which is in the third edition

Petit discours chrestien de l'immortalité de l'âme. Avec le corollaire et un discours sceptique sur la musique. troisième édition.
Paris: Sommaville, 1647.

B.M.: 1019.k.5.(1.) NUC: NL 0056072
Etienne: lists date of Nicéron
publication as 1637 Wickelgren
Kerviler

Corollaire au Petit discours chrestien de l'immortalité de l'âme.
Paris: Camusat, 1637.

B.N.: Rés. R. 2496(2) Pintard
Cioranescu: 39691 Wickelgren
Kerviler

Petits traittez en forme de Lettres (1-60) escrites à diverses personnes studieuses. Paris: Courbé, 1648.

B.N.: Z. 3310 NUC: NL 0056073
B.M.: 715.c.24 Nicéron: lists date of publication
Cioranescu: 39700 as 1647
Etienne: lists date of Pintard
publication as 1647 Tisserand: lists date of publi-
Kerviler: lists date of Wickelgren
of publication as 1647 1647


B.N.: Z. 14393 NUC: NL 0056030
B.M.: 721.d.10 Nicéron
Cioranescu: 39702 Pintard
Etienne: lists date of Tisserand
of publication Wickelgren
as 1659
Kerviler


B.M.: 12354.eee.32 Pintard
Etienne: lists date of Tisserand
publication as 1660 Wickelgren
Kerviler
Nicéron
Nouvelle suite des petits traittez (61-101).
Kerviler
Tisserand

Kerviler
Pintard
Tisserand

La Physique du Prince. ed. Abbé François de La Mothe le Vayer.
Paris: Courbé, 1658. (Bound with La Logique du Prince, 1658.)
B.N.: R. 40548 Kerviler
R. 54941 NUC: NL 0056075
Cioranescu: 39729 Nicéron
Etienne Wickelgren

Etienne Nicéron
Kerviler Tisserand

B.N.: Z. 16622 NUC: NL 0056076 (notes also editions published by Billaine and Courbé)
Cioranescu: 39710 Etienne
Kerviler Nicéron
Tisserand Wickelgren

La Promenade. Dialogue entre Tubertus Ocella et Marcus Bibulus.
Paris: Jolly, 1662.
B.N.: Z. 16634 Pintard
Cioranescu: 39704 Wickelgren

NUC: NL 0056077

NUC: NL 0056079 (notes also editions published by Courbé and Jolly)
Nicéron: notes dates of publication as follows--vol. I, 1662; vols. II-IV, 1663
Tisserand: notes dates of publication as follows--vol. I, 1662; vols. II-III, 1663

B.N.: Z. 16635 Kerviler: lists date of publication as 1662
Cioranescu: 39705 Pintard
Etienne: lists date of publication as 1662
Wickelgren
La Promenade. IVe [-Vle] dialogue entre Tubertus Ocella et Xilinus.  
Paris: Billaine, 1663.  
B.N.: Z. 16636  
Cioranescu: 39706  
Etienne:  
Kerviler: lists date of publication as 1663  
Pintard  
Wickelgren  

B.N.: Z. 16637  
Cioranescu: 39707 (lists contents of volume through 10)  
Etienne: lists date of publication as 1663  
Pintard  
Wickelgren  

N.B.: Though a tenth dialogue is mentioned in the Bibliotheque Nationale entry, I did not find a tenth dialogue in the copies of this work which I consulted.  

[Another copy.] auquel manque le faux titre.  
B.N.: Z. 16638  
Wickelgren  

B.N.: Z. 20023-25  
Cioranescu: 39703  
Etienne: lists date of publication as 1666  
Tisserand  
Kerviler  

NUC: NL 0056085  

B.N.: X. 18455  
Cioranescu: 5705  
Etienne:  
Kerviler  
Nicéron  
Tisserand  
Wickelgren  

La Science de l'histoire avec le jugement des principaux historiens tant anciens que modernes. Paris: Billaine, 1665.  
B.N.: G. 32569  
Cioranescu: 39619  
Wickelgren  

B.N.: G. 32568  
Wickelgren
Scuola de'principi e de'cavalieri, cioè: La geografia, la rettorica, la morale, l'economica, la politica, la logica, e la fisica; cavate e tradotte nella nostra lingua dall'opere francesee del Sig. della Motta le Vayer che le hà distese per instruzionee di Luigi XIV, rè di Francia dall'abbae Scipione Alerani. Bologna: Monti, 1676.

B.N.:  R. 18217-18 (lists date of publication as 1677)
NUC:  NL 0056086 (lists date of publication as 1676)
Wickelgren

B.N.:  R. 18220  NUC:  NL 0056087
B.M.:  1472.aa.26

B.N.:  R. 18219  Wickelgren  NUC:  NL 0056088

Escuela de principes y cavalleros, esto es la geografia, retorica, la moral, economica, politica, logica y fisica; compuesta por el señor de la Mota Levayer, frances, sacada en Toscano, por el abbad Escipion Alerano bolonés [pseud.] y nuevamente traducida en lengua espanola, y añadida de algunas cosas sucedidas despues, que el autor la escrivio, por el P.F. Alonso Manrique. . . . Palérmo: Romolo, 1688.

B.M.:  522.a.42  Wickelgren  NUC:  NL 0056039

Scuola. . . . Venezia: Pezzana, 1737.
NUC:  NL 0056090

Du Someil et des songes. in Recueil de dissertationees anciennes et nouvelles, sur les apparitionees, les visions et les songes avec une préface historique, par M. l'abbé Lenglet-Dufresnoy. 2 vols. in 4. Avignon et Paris: Leloup, 1751.

B.N.:  R. 41546-47 (notes that this copy is missing "les derniers feuillets du T. II")
NUC:  NL 0249122


B.N.:  8°R. 24354 (gives date of publication as 1751-52)
B.M.:  232.1.32 (notes that the second title page of each bound section bears the date 1752)
NUC:  NL 0249123
Wickelgren
B.N.: Z. 16623 NUC: NL 0056091 (lists editions
B.M.: 8411.de.39 also published by Jolly
Cioranescu: 39715 and Courbé)
Etienne
Kerviler
Nicéron
Pintard
Tissierand
Wickelgren

[Another edition.] Réimprimé sur l'édition unique de 1670. Paris:
Liseux, 1875.
B.N.: R. 40550 NUC: NL 0056092
B.M.: 8410.aaaa.11 Pintard
Cabeen: 4284 Tissierand
Cioranescu: 39716 Wickelgren
Kerviler

Trois lettres inédites de François de La Mothe le Vayer à Pierre Du
d'histoire et de litterature, 11 (1872), 316-20.
Pintard

B.N.: R. 7784 NUC: NL 0056025
B.M.: 715.h.5 Nicéron
Cioranescu: 39692 Pintard
Etienne: lists date of Tissierand
publication as 1641 Wickelgren
Kerviler

[Another copy.]
B.N.: Rés. R. 1337 (adds the following note: sur grand
papier relié aux armes de Dupuy)
Wickelgren

B.N.: R. 7785 Nicéron
Cioranescu: 39693 Pintard
Etienne Tissierand
Kerviler Wickelgren

NUC: NL 0056026 (notes an edition also published by Courbé)

[Another copy.] seconde édition. with MS. notes.
B.M.: 4376.dd.14 Wickelgren

[Another edition.] avec les preuves des citations, ajoutées à la fin
NUC: NL 0056027
De la Vie et des actions d'Alexandre le Grand [by Quinte-Curce.] De la traduction de M. de Vaugelas. Dernière édition. [Revised by O. Patru.] Avec les suppléments de J. Freinshemius. Traduits par M. du Ryer. [With the "Jugement de Quinte-Curce, par M. De La Motte le Vayer,] Amsterdam: Jean de Ravestein, 1665.

B.M.: 294.a.8 Wickelgren


B.M.: 802.d.16 Wickelgren


B.M.: 9025.aaa.10


B.M.: 584.a.12


B.N.: J. 10679 Wickelgren
B.M.: 999.ee.9


B.N.: J. 20873 Wickelgren


B.M.: 199.b.22 Wickelgren

De la Vie et des actions d'Alexandre le Grand. [by Quinte-Curce.] De la traduction de Mr. de Vaugelas. Avec les suppléments de Freinshemius traduits par Monsieur Durier [With the Latin text. With "Jugement de Quinte-Curce par Monsieur de La Mothe le Vayer."] 2 vols. La Haye, 1727.

B.M.: 9039.c.10
APPENDIX B

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS OF THE WORKS OF FRANCOIS DE LA MOTHE LE VAYER

CHANTILLY

Musée Condé: Cabinet des Manuscripts

440 (916). Quatre dialogues faits à l'imitation des Anciens par Orasius Tubero (par La Mothe le Vayer), copie: 427 p.

ORLEANS

Bibliothèque

681 (Ms. 13). Quatre dialogues faitz à l'imitation des ancienz par Orasius Tubero (La Mothe-le-Vayer).
   1. "De la Philosophie sceptique"
   2. "Le Banquet sceptique"
   3. "De la Vie privée"
   4. "Des Rares qualités des asnes de ce temps
      A Francfort, par Jean Serarius, 1604"

PARIS

Bibliothèque de l'Institut: Collection Godefroy

217. Mélanges de littérature, t. IV.
   fol. 229. Recueil de proverbes, de la main de La Mothe le Vayer.

Bibliothèque Nationale: Collection Dupuy

790, passim. Lettres de Gassendi, La Mothe le Vayer, Lantin, Luillier, à P. et J. Dupuy.

835, fol. 52-60. "Explication de l'antre des Nymphes du 13e livre de l'Odyssée d'Homère," par Tubertus Ocella (La Mothe le Vayer).

Bibliothèque Nationale: Anciens petits fonds français

22962. Extraits de divers ouvrages de théologie, d'histoire, etc.
   fol. 167. Opuscules de La Mothe le Vayer.
Bibliothèque Nationale: Fonds français, nouvelles acquisitions

1473. Recueil de lettres, quittances et pièces diverses, la plupart des XVIe et XVIIe siècles, formé par le Dr. Payen. feuillets 1660-1661. Lettre.

Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève

3206. Mélanges littéraires de diverses mains fol. 88v°, 105v°. Extraits de Horasius Tubero (pseudonyme de François de La Mothe le Vayer).
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La Mothe le Vayer, François de. Cinqu dialogue faits à l'imitation des anciens par Orasius Tubero. Quatre autres dialogues du même auteur faits comme les précédens à l'imitation des anciens. 2 vols. Francfort, Savius, 1716.


__________. L'Esprit de La Mothe le Vayer. ed. Charles Antoine Joseph Leclerc de Montlinot. s.l., 1763.


__________. Oeuvres de François de La Mothe le Vayer. nouvelle édition, revue et augmentée. 7 tomes en 14 parties. Dresde: Groell, 1756-59.


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Paris: Didier, 1858.

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Juan: sa diffusion et son influence en France aux XVIe et XVIIe 

Perrault, Charles. Les Hommes illustres qui ont paru en France pendant 
ce siècle par Mr. Perrault de l'Académie Française. 2 vols. 
A La Haye: Roguet, 1720.

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graphie et de critique, suivies de textes inédits de Guy Patin. 

__________. Le Libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVIIe 


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__________. "Skepticism." The Encyclopedia of Philosophy. New York: 
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Sells, A. Lytton. "Molière and La Mothe le Vayer." MLR, 28 (1933), 
352-67, 444-55.


Siegell, Rudolph E. Galen's System of Physiology and Medicine: An 
Analysis of his Doctrines and Observations on Bloodflow and 

Sonnino, Leo A. A Handbook to Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric. London: 

Spink, J.S. French Free-Thought from Gassendi to Voltaire. London: 


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———. La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit, Dialogues. nouvelle édition. Paris: Guillaume Desprez; P. G. Cavalier fils, 1743.


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Huarte de San Juan, Juan. Examen de ingenios para las sciencias. Amberes: La Oficina Platiniiana, 1603 (Bethesda, MD: National Library of Medicine, Reel #57-65).


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