

# INTRODUCTION



## *The Cosmos, Images, and Poetry*

### Poetry and Conceptions of the Cosmos

#### *Relationships between the cosmic, the human, and the divine*

Renaissance texts often express a deep fascination with the relationships between the cosmos,<sup>1</sup> man, and God. The cosmos, like man, was a sign of the God who had created it, although to some degree its perfection, like man's, was deemed to have been spoilt by the Fall. For some Platonizing thinkers, a cosmic hierarchy led towards God, so that certain cosmic bodies might, in a sense, be closer and more similar to God than others, and might help man to know the divine. It was commonplace to observe, after Genesis 1.26, that man was made in the image of God; to what extent postlapsarian man still bore resemblance to God was a popular but more disputed question, addressed by Renaissance writers from Ficino to Calvin, and increasingly controversial in a period of religious schism. Writers also explored in what ways God intervened in the cosmos, how man could know God, and how he could become more like him. The cosmos and the human body also bore some sort of resemblance to one another: both were made up of the four elements, earth, air, water, and fire; and for some the world had a soul as man did. In addition, human history might mirror nature, whether because both were based on a principle of *concordia discors* [discordant concord], or else because both went through cycles. In short, Renaissance writers interrogated in various ways the relationships between the cosmic, the human and the divine, and the roles played there by similarity, difference, and causality.

Such relationships are fundamental to sixteenth-century theology,<sup>2</sup> moral philosophy,<sup>3</sup> natural philosophy, and medicine.<sup>4</sup> They are also central both to the spate of vernacular natural-philosophical poetry in late-sixteenth-century France, and to French love lyric, with its omnipresent cosmic images and divinities. Natural-philosophical poems depict the cosmos and the bounteous goods it provides for man; to differing extents they also explain how the cosmos works or how man organizes knowledge about it; in addition, describing the cosmos often has its justification in the notion that it images the glory and might of its Creator. Love lyric implies a relationship between human love and the cosmos, and its attribution of divine qualities to the beloved lady can explore the role of the divine in human love. Thus sixteenth-century poetry touches, in different ways, upon questions about the relationships between the divine, the human, and the cosmic, questions which are crucial to a sixteenth-century conceptual paradigm.

*Cosmos and Image* analyses depictions of the cosmos in natural-philosophical poetry and love lyric, and argues that some poetic presentations of the cosmos offer particular insight into possible conceptions of it, precisely because of the generically specific ways in which it is explored. I shall suggest that one important characteristic of much poetry lies in its use of images and will argue that this is of crucial importance for a study of the cosmos since, in some sixteenth-century discourses, relations between the cosmic, the human, and the divine were conceived in terms of *real* images or similarities: I aim to show that linguistic images provided a means of reflecting upon the status, nature and implications of ‘real’ or ‘ontological’ images. The four chapters of *Cosmos and Image* will explore this contention through case studies of two poems, Guillaume de Saluste Du Bartas’s *Sepmaine, ou Creation du monde* (1578), and Maurice Scève’s *Délie* (1544). Firstly, this Introduction will discuss what is at stake in these analyses, by investigating different ways of writing histories of the cosmos, as well as the contours of various domains of sixteenth-century knowledge, and the specificities of poetic and imagistic presentations of that knowledge.

*Conceptual paradigms, linguistic ‘outillage mental’, and poetry*

Traditional histories of the cosmos or of Christian thought tend to examine conceptual changes insofar as concepts are formulated explicitly and reasonably clearly, in prose, and most often in Latin. Alexandre Koyré’s classic history of the cosmos — *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* — argues that in the seventeenth century scientific and philosophical thought underwent a profound revolution, in which the ordered, finite, and hierarchical cosmos was replaced by indefinite, or even infinite, geometrical space; this narrative is based on thinkers who elaborated conceptual systems with crucial differences from previous ones, men such as Cusa, Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Newton and Leibniz.<sup>5</sup> Koyré thus disagreed sharply with Pierre Duhem, who had believed less in a ‘scientific revolution’ than in continuous progress, in which seventeenth-century thinkers were deeply indebted to medieval ones.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, both of these histories are linear: they examine systems of thought which in crucial respects are different from previous ones, and are considered to have an effect upon later ones. Finally, while a history of the cosmos might thus discuss Cusa, Copernicus, and Kepler, a history of Christian thought might similarly treat Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin.<sup>7</sup>

Sixteenth-century French poetry is unlikely to contribute to this sort of linear history of philosophical, scientific or theological views (although Koyré did discuss whether the ‘honour of having affirmed the infinity of the Universe’ might be attributed to the neo-Latin poet Marcellus Stellatus Palingenius).<sup>8</sup> However, I would argue that poetry has a role to play in a history which aims to map the varied conceptual possibilities of a given period, and which focuses less upon a post-Enlightenment conception of the ‘idea’ as something which is supposed to exist prior to and independently of language,<sup>9</sup> and more upon the role of language and culture in the formation of world-views. Lucien Febvre suggested that the *mentalité* of a period could be sketched out by looking at its key terms and concepts, its *outillage mental* or ‘thinking tools’.<sup>10</sup> In the history of science, the notion of the ‘paradigm’

has been used to denote a set of basic beliefs which determine the terms of the questions which 'science' poses at a given moment (although 'paradigm' has also been attributed quite different meanings, such as the methodologies learnt in the course of disciplinary scientific training).<sup>11</sup> More generally, 'attention [...] has shifted away from tracing linear development in selected sciences toward an endeavor to map the whole range of medieval and Renaissance natural knowledge'.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, 'constructivist' or 'externalist' histories of science have shifted their attention to the social, cultural and linguistic contexts which shape the items of knowledge produced. Language-contexts are especially important in the Renaissance, since even intellectual activities treating directly the objects of modern-day 'science' were more or less exclusively language-based in the sense that natural philosophy (whether in prose or poetry) involved reading, writing, composing commentaries, and summarizing, much more than experiments and measurements.<sup>13</sup>

Foucault's *episteme* also maps conceptual formations and, furthermore, in his discussion of the Renaissance, Foucault focuses upon similarity, one of the central concerns of this book. Foucault argues that conceptual formations depended in very different domains or discourses upon the same epistemic principles, that is, upon similarity in the Renaissance period, or identity and difference in the Classical period.<sup>14</sup> For Foucault, similarity structured Renaissance conceptions of everything from God to the smallest cosmic phenomenon. Foucault's account, although thought-provoking, is problematic because similarity is not equally central to all Renaissance discourses, and different sorts of similarity were important in different ones;<sup>15</sup> furthermore, humanist dialectic proposed modes of argument ('places') involving both similarity (for example, *comparatio* and *similitudo*) and difference (*opposita* and *differentia*).<sup>16</sup> I focus upon poetic discourses in which similitudes or other forms of image are important, and so one might assume that the role of similarity could be taken for granted. However, it is of fundamental importance that I maintain open questions of the extent and nature of the similarity and difference between, for example, God and man, since answers to such questions were varied and form one of the focuses of this study. I will examine the differences between poetic discourses and other ones, rather than their common subordination to any overarching structuring principle. In addition, for Foucault conceptual formations in the Renaissance depended upon four abstract principles (*convenance*, *émulation*, *analogie*, and *sympathie*) which are present to varying degrees in sixteenth-century language: the question whether, and to what extent, such abstract paradigms might structure thought is a fascinating one;<sup>17</sup> however, while I have signalled the importance of similarity, difference, and causality to my study, I endeavour to address these insofar as they are suggested by particular sixteenth-century terms or images.

The political historian J. G. A. Pocock writes that 'a *mentalité* is too easily alleged if we think only of the normal operations of language and not of the speech acts performed within and upon it', and argues for attention to be paid to both language-context and speech acts.<sup>18</sup> This objection to mentalities might be made in order to argue for a return to 'classic' thinkers who fundamentally alter the basic terms in which something is discussed, who bring about a 'paradigm shift'. However, acknowledging the differences of particular 'speech acts' can also

enable us to enrich our understanding of a particular paradigm of thought — or mentality — conceived not as a static configuration but as a gradually moving nexus of pathways or possibilities. Indeed the model of the paradigm suggests that, although ‘revolutionary’ moments or ‘paradigm shifts’ occur, change and variation are also possible within a particular paradigm: the basic terms may remain the same but questions are formulated and answered differently. Febvre’s notion of mental *tools* can also be interpreted to mean that the key terms or concepts of a particular *mentalité* do not only mean something pre-defined but are also available to do something different with. Thus Neil Kenny writes that ‘in the Renaissance, the mentality of educated people is not a firm set of specific beliefs. Rather it is, like our own, a framework of finite possibilities.’<sup>19</sup>

In this study I use the term ‘thinking tools’ to mean particular linguistic items which are commonly employed to ‘think’ (about man, the cosmos, and God) in the sixteenth century but which can be exploited in very different ways in different genres and by different writers. I interpret ‘thinking’ to mean ‘reflecting upon’ in a sense which may be more or less direct and explicit.<sup>20</sup> In other words, I agree with Stuart Clark that early modern authors might adopt a particular set of ways of thinking without necessarily making a conscious choice to choose those ones rather than the others available.<sup>21</sup> Therefore I consider that ‘questions’ of the cosmos might be approached indirectly or even unconsciously in texts which do not have as their primary or explicit goal an exploration of the relationship between the human, the divine and the cosmic.

‘Mapping’ a mentality conceived openly as a nexus of possibilities would be a Herculean task: examining all the different possible ways in which the *corps politique* is depicted for example, would be a huge undertaking. Quentin Skinner writes that ‘the only history to be written is thus a history of the various statements made with the given expression. This — rather than the history of the sentence itself — would of course be an almost absurdly ambitious enterprise. But it would at least be conceptually proper’;<sup>22</sup> in other words, any additional text might provide a slight variation on a theme, yet it would be rather difficult to examine all available texts. However, if language shapes concepts of, say, the cosmos, then discourses or genres which use language differently are likely to be especially valuable in providing different insights into conceptual configurations of the cosmos which were possible in the sixteenth century: attending to the differences of various discourses or genres provides a way of exploring a given ‘mentality’ as a network of possibilities or questions as much as of limits or answers. In other words, if ideas are not stable non-linguistic entities, unaffected by the language in which they are expressed, then it is not logical to conceive the role of ‘literary texts’ as simply expressing ideas which pre-exist them in an unchanging form. Instead I would argue that texts which we classify as ‘literature’ — rather than ‘philosophy’ or ‘science’ — are not only appropriate objects for a history of the cosmos but may also have something specific to contribute.

In this vein, Ian Maclean has shown that Montaigne, through the form of writing he adopts, contributes something specific to the history of philosophy, something which differs from a more systematic philosophy.<sup>23</sup> Recent research in sixteenth-

century studies has demonstrated that texts we attribute to ‘literature’ — or have difficulty classifying at all — touch upon concerns also present in ‘philosophical’ texts but may treat them in different ways:<sup>24</sup> ‘literary’ texts can become objects for the history of the cosmos if we understand this history to include not only what writers formulated clearly and systematically but also what they expressed more indirectly or diffusely. Discussions of the link between style or genre and ‘ideas’ are frequent in Montaigne studies, presumably because, firstly, Montaigne creates a new genre and, secondly, he is so obviously reflecting on questions also addressed in other philosophical genres. However, I would argue for the inclusion not only of Montaigne or Béroalde de Verville’s non-systematizing or fictionalizing prose but also of various sorts of poetry: in this book, I intend to show that the history of the cosmos can be informed even by love lyric, which does not, of course, explicitly set out to describe the cosmos or the Christian God.

Thus my objective is not to provide poetic ‘examples’ of ‘ideas’ — such as, for example, cosmic harmony — alongside the prose ones; rather I shall consider that the particular stylistic conventions and aims of two poetic genres might influence their different configurations of important sixteenth-century tools for thinking about the cosmos. I propose to examine the genres of natural-philosophical poetry and love lyric, considering them as part of a conceptual paradigm of thinking about relationships between the cosmic, the human and the divine — that is, a paradigm which questions the relationships of similarity, difference and causality between those three, in some of the ways outlined at the beginning of this Introduction. I will argue that the study of these genres enables us to perceive — within this same general paradigm — different possibilities from those offered by other sorts of texts. My analysis will be based upon close readings of poems in their stylistic and imaginative particularities, and will consider that texts may signify beyond their explicitly formulated claims, and might contain meaning about the cosmos even when the cosmos is not overtly the object of representation. It is in this sense that this book combines literary studies with intellectual history: historical concerns overlap with aesthetic and stylistic ones.

As part of my attempt to discern the specificity of particular poems, I shall compare them with non-poetic texts and also poetic texts belonging to different genres and with different aims from those which are the focus of study. These texts belong to various discourses including theology, natural philosophy, medicine, and political philosophy broadly conceived. In particular, Part I of this study will examine various prose depictions of man and of the body politic; Part II explores Italian Neoplatonist prose discourses on love, and the *évangélique*-inspired religious poems and letters of Marguerite de Navarre. These texts will not be interpreted as a stable ‘background’ of sixteenth-century thought but as other configurations of notions key to a sixteenth-century mentality. The readings of these prose texts are more or less prolonged, depending on the degree to which the concerns overlap or differ in interesting ways from those in the poems. For example, I consider Ebreo’s prose dialogues, the *Dialoghi*, and Scève’s poetic cycle, the *Délie*, as different explorations of the question of why the perfect divine would love the imperfect human.

By examining the particularity of literary texts in relation to intellectual history, my project touches upon an issue explored in Terence Cave's *Préhistoires: textes troublés au seuil de la modernité*.<sup>25</sup> However, my intention is not to offer 'prehistories' of later conceptions, although in my discussion of Du Bartas I do briefly suggest that the problem perceived in his depiction of the body politic may constitute one element in the prehistory of a paradigm shift. Instead I will concentrate upon Du Bartas's *Sepmaine* and Scève's *Délie* in relation to possible cosmic conceptions in the periods in which these two texts were written. As a result, this study does not address the contentious question of what constitutes a paradigm shift and what constitutes the logical development of a paradigm:<sup>26</sup> some of my analyses point to 'pressure-points' within a given paradigm of thought but I do not focus upon whether these foreshadow a more marked future shift or simply a variation possible within a paradigm. I aim to enrich our understanding of possible sixteenth-century conceptions of relationships between the cosmic, the human, and the divine, as well as to provide insights into some aspects of sixteenth-century Neoplatonism, political thought, and Christian thought. Secondly, examining poetic representations of man, the cosmos and God provides me with a hold upon one facet of the relationship between literary texts and philosophical, religious or 'scientific' thinking: I shall explore how a particular kind of poetic language formulates 'thinking tools' differently, and, conversely, by linking poetic language to implicit 'thinking' about man, the cosmos, and God, I aim to gain understanding of the energies behind some of the most fascinating aspects of two sixteenth-century poems.

## Generic Specificities

### *'Philosophie', 'théologie', and medicine*

The representations of the human, the cosmic, and the divine which I shall analyse alongside poetry belong to philosophy, theology, and medicine. In the following section, I shall briefly describe the contours of these domains of thought, before then proceeding to investigate what the specificity of poetry might be. The Renaissance concept of philosophy is a slippery one; Cesare Vasoli has even suggested that 'probably the most typical characteristic of Renaissance thought was its constantly changing notion of philosophy, its scope, its purpose, its objects and its methods'.<sup>27</sup> However, philosophy contained the four disciplines of logic, natural philosophy, moral philosophy, and metaphysics.<sup>28</sup> Another tripartite conception of philosophy divided it into speculative philosophy (metaphysics, mathematics, and physics), active or practical philosophy (ethics, oeconomics, and politics), and factive or constructive philosophy (for example, agriculture, navigation, and mining).<sup>29</sup> Finally, philosophy was thought to extend to all that is knowable by human reason,<sup>30</sup> and tended to seek certain causal knowledge.

Natural philosophy involved discussions of both the sublunary and superlunary realms of the cosmos; the human was studied not only insofar as his body was governed by the rules of nature but also in that his soul was the subject of the *De anima*. Natural philosophy was a particularly important part of philosophical



studies at university,<sup>31</sup> and at least one third of all Aristotle's commentators wrote on one or more aspects of natural philosophy — more than those who wrote on metaphysics, ethics, rhetoric, or politics combined.<sup>32</sup> After studying logic, the student would move on to Aristotle's *libri naturales*, the *Physics*, the *De caelo*, the *De generatione et corruptione*, the *Meteorology*, and the *De anima*. Less attention was paid to the detailed studies of particular minerals, plants, and animals as contained in the full Aristotelian corpus;<sup>33</sup> after all, the *sine qua non* of philosophy was usually the progress from particulars to universals. Finally, although natural philosophy was particularly important in universities, the rise of humanism brought an increased emphasis on moral philosophy, that is, on ethics, oeconomics, and politics: the focus of attention shifted towards the human realm.<sup>34</sup>

Classroom teaching involved for the most part a direct reading of Aristotle's texts but commentaries and summaries based on Aristotle's works were produced for private study, in particular concerning the works which were taught at university. Some philosophical textbooks expanded upon what was available in the Aristotelian corpus. In natural philosophy, other subjects such as technical astronomy were added to the traditional subjects contained in the *libri naturales*.<sup>35</sup> Discussions of nature were based not only on the works of Aristotle but increasingly also on other sources,<sup>36</sup> and, as the sixteenth century progressed, some books came to be quite un-Aristotelian or anti-Aristotelian.<sup>37</sup> In the first half of the sixteenth century in particular, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples's voluminous introductory commentaries to a number of required philosophical texts were widely read; they used Platonic and Hermetic themes freely to supplement Aristotle.<sup>38</sup> During the Reformation, there was a renewed emphasis on providing surveys of the basic fields of philosophy.<sup>39</sup>

Works of philosophy were usually in Latin, as were editions of Aristotle's works themselves;<sup>40</sup> increasingly, however, textbooks 'spread beyond the student market, notably in the vernacular'.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, commentaries and text-books were not the only forms of philosophical writing. For example, while commentaries on Aristotle would concentrate on a particular branch of philosophy, more miscellaneous philosophical texts were also composed;<sup>42</sup> these included popular genres such as the *problemata* which discussed natural particulars;<sup>43</sup> other idiosyncratic works took a particular theme, such as Girolamo Cardano's *De subtilitate* (1550) and *De varietate* (1557).<sup>44</sup> Genres such as the *histoires prodigieuses* informed readers of startling events in nature, which were often given a moral interpretation.<sup>45</sup> Many philosophical texts took the form of discursive prose but, particularly in the late sixteenth century, there were also dialogues, poems and Montaigne's *Essais*; many of these were in the vernacular, and some had a fictional setting or contained other fictional elements.<sup>46</sup> For various reasons, some of these sorts of texts not only break down the divisions of types of philosophy (moral philosophy or natural philosophy) but also render impossible any simple division between 'poetry' (as a 'literary' genre) and 'philosophy' (as a discursive and factual genre).

Philosophy was considered to be the key element in a global structure of knowledge which some believed could be complete, an encyclopaedia or knowledge of everything intelligible.<sup>47</sup> In a less compartmentalized and atomizing culture than our own, close intellectual and institutional ties kept philosophical discourse

in touch with a range of other disciplines, including theology, medicine, history, rhetoric, grammar, law, magic, astrology, poetry, and history.<sup>48</sup> Natural philosophy had a particularly close alliance with the practical science of medicine, and was studied at university as a general preparation for medicine, especially in Italy.<sup>49</sup> At Paris and most northern universities, natural philosophy was seen primarily as a preliminary to theology; students studied philosophy (together with the arts, astronomy, and astrology) as the major part of a preliminary arts degree before progressing — if they chose to continue their studies — to the higher faculties of law, medicine, or theology.<sup>50</sup>

However, philosophy tended to be differentiated from theology. Many had little confidence in the suitability of reason to plumb the depths of faith; Jean Gerson's mystical theology, which would influence the French *évangéliques* at the beginning of the sixteenth century, promoted the love of the saviour over the knowledge of an abstract deity. Luther would declare that 'the whole of Aristotle is to theology as darkness is to light'.<sup>51</sup> Towards the end of the sixteenth century it was increasingly common to separate theology from natural philosophy and medicine.<sup>52</sup> Conversely, attempts to submit Aristotle's ideas to the higher truths of religion were sometimes resisted. Nonetheless, it was generally believed that Aristotelian philosophy had a propaedeutic value in grasping some of theology's mysteries;<sup>53</sup> increasingly in the Reformation period, textbooks framed natural philosophy as a pious exercise.<sup>54</sup>

By contrast, outside of university arts faculties, thinkers like Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni Pico, and Nicholas of Cusa to varying extents undermined the division between philosophy and theology. In his extensive writings, Ficino applied reason to religious truth,<sup>55</sup> and put forward his version of Platonism as a new theology and metaphysics, believing that philosophy should, first and foremost, explain theology and moral doctrine.<sup>56</sup> The natural theology of Ramón Lull also provided an alternative to the separation of theology and philosophy, suggesting that the cosmos provided certain signs of the divine.<sup>57</sup>

Therefore, neat divisions often cannot be made between theological texts which treat God, natural-philosophical ones which treat the cosmic, and moral-philosophical ones which treat the human. Many of the prose texts to be analysed here will imply a link between the cosmic, the human, and the divine, or will evoke the possibility of such a link by explicitly rejecting it. I will discuss natural-theological and Italian Neoplatonist thinkers who treat God and the cosmos together, and shall compare their representation of the relationship between the divine and the cosmic to that in the *Sepmaine* and the *Délie*; I will also examine Jean Calvin's concern with separating the divine from the cosmic. In addition, I will make reference to various natural-philosophical representations of the four elements, as well as medical textbooks. I shall also analyse various texts which treat the human realm of politics (part of moral philosophy) but imply a link between the human and the cosmic — or a link with natural philosophy. Finally, I shall also compare love lyric to religious lyric: here the comparisons are much finer than when comparing poetry to Calvin's writings for example. Thus, there is no hard and fast rule for the comparisons to be made between philosophy, theology, and literature; nor is there any simple way to distinguish 'poetry' from 'philosophy'



or ‘theology’. In what follows, I shall discuss where we might locate something specific which poetry has to offer: I shall suggest that this lies in poetry’s stylistic conventions and aims; later in this study I will also identify specificities of particular poetic genres and writers.

‘*Littérature*’, ‘*lettres*’, and ‘*sciences*’

The definition of *littérature* in the *Petit Robert* privileges the aesthetic: literature signifies ‘les œuvres écrites, dans la mesure où elles portent la marque de préoccupations esthétiques’.<sup>58</sup> Arguably another important aspect of the conception of literature, and especially of poetry, is still the post-Romantic one according to which ‘literature’ — and especially poetry — expresses intense experiences which may be both very personal and also universal. Paul Bénichou offers a version of this notion which is much modified in an apparent bid to salvage from both Marxist determinism and twentieth-century theories like structuralism the privileged relationship between literary expression and the universal: literature relates to the particular society in which it was written but nonetheless also enables the ‘collective social psychology’ of the society in question to attain new orders of thought which transcend history and communicate with humanity of other periods.<sup>59</sup>

However, as the *Petit Robert* indicates, the definition of *littérature* in aesthetic terms appears only in the eighteenth century.<sup>60</sup> Bénichou similarly refers to an entity which he considers to have been born in the eighteenth century, before being properly separated off from other modes of discourse and identified as such in the nineteenth.<sup>61</sup> The term *littérature* (or *littérature*) is attested from 1495 but did not signify texts with particular aesthetic qualities. *Littérature* referred predominantly to the mastery of reading and writing, the knowledge of texts and authors, or of *lettres*: it referred to a human attribute or capacity rather than to texts. Furthermore, the texts to be mastered were those containing all domains of knowledge rather than only those which the twenty-first century would define as ‘literary’. *Littérature* came to be a synonym for *belles lettres* only from 1710, and started to supplant the latter only later in the eighteenth century; it was only then that *littérature* was opposed to *sciences* or *philosophie* in a way which resembles the differentiations indicated by the twenty-first-century counterparts of these terms.<sup>62</sup>

Similarly, the categories of *lettres* or *bonnes lettres* or *lettres humaines* might be predecessors of the modern category of *littérature* but they do not share its contours. In a period in which knowledge of all sorts was very much bound up with books, writing of all kinds was conversely associated with knowledge: *lettres* or *res literariae* referred to the totality of knowledge, to all forms of knowledge. The expression *bonnes lettres* (or *bonae litterae*) — which was coined in the Renaissance and frequently employed — referred to the study or knowledge of respected Greco-Latin authors. The adjective suggested first and foremost the superiority of Greco-Latin *lettres* over other (medieval) ones, and Cotgrave translated it as ‘learning’. The Greco-Latin authors to be studied include not only those we would describe as ‘literary’ but also those we would term ‘philosophical’. Since *bonnes lettres* were so partly in contradistinction to scholastic Latin, part of what was ‘good’ about *bonnes lettres* was their style or eloquence; nonetheless, aesthetic qualities were not their principal

defining characteristic, as they would be for *belles lettres* — an expression born in the first half (and probably the first third) of the seventeenth century.<sup>63</sup>

Furthermore *sciences*, like *lettres*, could refer to the totality of knowledge, and thus the term did not differentiate a domain of certain knowledge from other domains of thought or writing.<sup>64</sup> *Sciences* had a secondary sense underlying it etymologically — the certain knowledge of things by knowledge of their causes — but it was only in the seventeenth century that this second definition became important to denote particular domains of knowledge.<sup>65</sup> As we have seen, nature, which is today the object of natural sciences, was the object of the branch of philosophy entitled natural philosophy. *Sciences* were opposed not to *lettres* but rather to *arts*: theoretical knowledge — necessarily incarnated in writing — was opposed to skills rather than to an imaginative sort of writing.<sup>66</sup>

The expression *lettres humaines* emphasized the arts of language more than *bonnes lettres* did. It was based on the expressions *studia humanitatis* and *litterae humaniores* used by Cicero and other ancient authors to describe an education centred on authoritative texts in Greek and Latin. *Lettres humaines* referred in part to the study of grammar, rhetoric, and poetry. Rhetoric in particular had a long history of being opposed to philosophy on the grounds that it aimed to persuade in a particular context rather than to demonstrate unchanging truths; this conflict has sometimes been described as a prehistory of the notion of ‘literature’.<sup>67</sup> However, the *studia humanitatis* also referred to the study of history and moral philosophy.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, the distinction between the arts of discourse or persuasion, on the one hand, and formally valid demonstration, on the other, was rather muddled by humanist dialectic, which focused on the topics (traditionally associated with rhetoric), and which often took examples for its textbooks from imaginative — or ‘literary’ — texts.<sup>69</sup>

Therefore, our twenty-first-century conceptions of ‘literature’ and ‘science’ are troubled by an encounter with the very different sixteenth-century habits for categorizing writing and knowledge. Sixteenth-century concepts of *littérature* and *sciences* do not classify modes of writing about the cosmos in the same way as ours do. On the other hand, it is entirely possible that Renaissance writers might have done something other — or something more — than what they thought they were doing: the absence of the post-Romantic category of literature does not necessarily mean that sixteenth-century poems have nothing in common with what we perceive as literature. However, while one may wish to retain a privileged concept of literature like Bénichou’s, I aim here to study different responses to historical notions rather than discussing how these might correspond to something ahistorical. Moreover, the ways in which sixteenth-century writers perceived their own writing is of fundamental importance in shaping the potential specificities of various genres, the particular ways in which those genres employed sixteenth-century *outillage mental* to represent the cosmic, the divine and the human.

Terence Cave has argued that critics have overstated the notion that ‘literature’ did not exist in the sixteenth century, since *poésie* and *fiction* were categories even if *littérature* was not.<sup>70</sup> For Cave, ‘literature’ has its own particular role to play in relation to history. It can restore to history its ‘mobilité’ by allowing the critic or

historian to examine the particular rather than the general. Moreover, literary texts do not bear signs of the past passively but often reveal *troubles*, that is, conceptual problems which the period in question was not able to voice explicitly. For Cave, this expression of *troubles* stems from the irreducible difference of each literary text, which each literary text insists upon. Nonetheless, the degree to which sixteenth-century conceptions of *poésie* or *fiction* correspond to modern notions of *littérature* is uncertain. Furthermore, while literary texts may indeed express *troubles*, my aim here is to locate specificities of poetry in relation to philosophy and theology, with reference to sixteenth-century poetry's generically determined stylistic features and aims.

*Specificities of poetry: universals, fictions, metaphors, and images*

Poetry was often conceived as a 'seconde rhétorique'. Thus the main justification for poetry, as for rhetoric, was to convey the teachings of moral philosophy.<sup>71</sup> Versification and metre were simply another rhetorical tool, and some poetics treatises basically constitute versification manuals. However, during the sixteenth century, poetry carved out a separate role for itself to some degree. Thus Thomas Sebillet's *Art poétique françois* (1548) describes poetic forms just as the *arts de seconde rhétorique* did, yet it includes rhetorical notions in a text exclusively dedicated to poetry rather than including versification rules in a rhetoric treatise.<sup>72</sup> The rediscovery of Aristotle's *Poetics* was instrumental in creating a sense of poetry's distinctive role: poetics did not yet exist when Aldus published the text of Aristotle's *Poetics* but 'in one generation [...] Aristotle's *Poetics*, together with Horace's long-known *ars poetica*, [...] had established a Renaissance genre'.<sup>73</sup> The first Latin translation was published in 1498, and Aldus's Greek edition in 1508; from the mid sixteenth century, commentaries on Horace were influenced by readings of Aristotle, and the two brought into a synthesis, albeit one strongly shaped by notions from rhetoric.<sup>74</sup>

Aristotle's *Poetics* implicitly or explicitly rejects some of the poetic genres popular in the sixteenth century, including the two upon which this book focuses. It describes a certain type of narrative poetry (thus excluding Pindar and lyric poetry) and Renaissance discussions tended to take this as a point of departure. 'Love lyric', a rather anachronistic term,<sup>75</sup> was rarely evoked in general discussions of poetry.<sup>76</sup> For Aristotle, the distinction between universals and particulars also meant that poetry was distinct from history (often understood in the Renaissance as part of moral philosophy).<sup>77</sup> Moreover, poetry should not be concerned with natural philosophy: Empedocles was not a poet because he described particulars rather than universals. Thus Aristotle explicitly excluded from the category of 'poetry' one of the genres studied here, as well as omitting to discuss the other. In response to Aristotle, Renaissance commentaries on the *Poetics* and the *Ars poetica* often discussed Empedocles and Lucretius, and debated whether astronomy, physics and geography could constitute the subject-matter of a poem.<sup>78</sup> Nonetheless, in his monumental *Poetices libri septem* (1561), Julius Caesar Scaliger let Empedocles back into the canon, together with other philosophical poets. In addition, Henri Estienne published a

*Poesis philosophica* (1573) which contained fragments of philosophical poets including Empedocles and Parmenides.<sup>79</sup>

For Aristotle, the distinctiveness of poetry did not lie in verse; indeed poetry written in prose was possible. A new separation of poetry from the art of versification was mirrored in school studies,<sup>80</sup> although some writers — including Scaliger — continued to define poetry as verse.<sup>81</sup> Aristotle located the distinctiveness of poetry in *mimesis*, a concept which the Renaissance interpreted in the light of rhetoric, and of a rhetorical understanding of Horace, and therefore conceived rather differently from the way in which it is now understood: *mimesis* was generally taken to mean imitation of life or of other authors, or a vivid portrayal, an interpretation deriving from the rhetorical concept of *enargeia*.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, the poetic work was to provide moral improvement or knowledge as much as pleasure, although varying emphasis was placed upon the two.<sup>83</sup>

A different poetic specificity — with an inherently closer relationship to philosophy and even theology — was derived from the Neoplatonist notion that poetry depended upon a divine inspiration — or ‘fury’ — and had divine origins. The divine furies were discussed at length by Marsilio Ficino, and vulgarized in France by Pontus de Tyard’s *Solitaire premier* (1551) in particular.<sup>84</sup> Ronsard voiced a similar theory but put poetry in the first place on the metaphysical ladder rather than making it subordinate to the other divine furies discussed by Ficino.<sup>85</sup> Divine inspiration served to distinguish the true poet from the mere *versificateur* or *rimeur*, and thus, by implication, to liberate poetry from its status as simply a versified rhetoric. The notion of a divinely inspired poetry was often thought to mean that poetry covered all domains of knowledge, even the theological.<sup>86</sup>

Divine inspiration was quickly linked to other potential poetic specificities, in particular to the importance of fictions or fables.<sup>87</sup> The grounding of poetry’s distinctiveness in fictions was frequent throughout the sixteenth century, although there was variation and change in the relative emphasis placed upon the ‘vérité voilée’ [veiled truth] and the pleasure of the fable respectively.<sup>88</sup> The veil of fiction served to distinguish poetry from history,<sup>89</sup> or even from rhetoric.<sup>90</sup> The truths veiled could be of a natural, religious, historical, or moral nature. For Ronsard, as for many others, early poetry had been a ‘théologie allegorique’, which pointed to the religious truths of Christianity.<sup>91</sup> Ronsard used mythological fictions to reveal and conceal ‘les secrets de nature et des Cieux’.<sup>92</sup> The natural-philosophical poet Jean-Edouard Du Monin also ‘theorized’ (in a fictionalized setting) a ‘poésie philosophique’ in which fiction played an important role.<sup>93</sup> Cornilliat and Langer (pp. 124–26) suggest that some Renaissance conceptions of poetic invention conceived it as perfecting the real world by representing a fictional one.

Isabelle Pantin compares poetic depictions of superlunary objects to prose ones in the light of this largely Ronsardian account of poetry’s specificity. She concludes that Ronsard represented the superlunary realm in accordance with the specificity of poetry — that is, through fables or allegories — whereas later poets abandoned this specificity, and simply got their facts wrong without this inexactitude being redeemed by poetic features.<sup>94</sup> It is certainly true that ‘fables’ or fiction constituted the most theorized specificity of poetry in the sixteenth century. Furthermore,

Ronsard was more strident about his special poetic role than most, and therefore said a great deal about the distinctive function of poetry as he envisaged it, and inspired much literary criticism focusing upon his understanding of it. However, fiction was not the only potential specificity of poetry in the sixteenth century. Indeed, the natural-philosophical poem which I shall study in this book employs very rarely the dominant specificity of poetry as theorized by Ronsard and discussed by Pantin<sup>95</sup> — fiction — but has a very marked version of another feature often thought central to poetry: imagistic language and, in particular, images of one thing in terms of another thing which it resembles.

Poetry was often linked to the ‘imagination’ — the faculty of constructing images, or the constructing of images, or the images thus constructed.<sup>96</sup> Olivia Rosenthal shows that some sixteenth-century poetics treatises imply ‘une sorte de communauté de nature entre la poésie (en tant qu’elle est figurée)’ [a sort of common nature between poetry (insofar as it is figurative)] and ‘le fonctionnement de l’esprit’ [the functioning of the mind] insofar as the latter works by producing images.<sup>97</sup> ‘Imagination’ was, in many of its senses, interchangeable with ‘invention’, that is, with that which a poet or rhetorician ‘found’ in the first stage of creating a poem or discourse (*inventio*); the use of the word *imagination* suggested that what poets were looking for in the process of ‘invention’ was *images*. Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* had suggested that images could be used in prose but were much rarer, since they were proper to poetry.<sup>98</sup> In addition, physiology linked the imagination to the hot part of the brain and thus to melancholy, associated with poetry, eloquence and music. In a Platonic scheme of thought poets — like painters, musicians and sculptors — were thought of as ‘image-makers’ since they produced artefacts which were images of things.<sup>99</sup> The Aristotelian Niccolò Tignosi implicitly recognized the importance of images in poetic creation and quoted Horace when elucidating *De anima* III.3.<sup>100</sup> Finally, according to Olivia Rosenthal, in the years around 1550 writings about poetry suggested that it should produce something visual: ‘le langage poétique est figuré, il donne à voir’ (p. 411) [poetic language is figurative, it produces something to be seen].

Both Du Bellay’s *Deffence et Illustration de la langue françoise* (1549) and Ronsard’s *Abrégé de l’art poétique français* (1565) entreat poets to use both descriptions and comparisons.<sup>101</sup> In other words, poets might both depict a thing visually as itself and also represent it through another (probably more concrete) thing. However, poetic creativity may often have been less about visually recreating the world than about exhibiting metaphorical *inventio*. Perrine Galand-Hallyn argues that in the sixteenth century *enargeia* often used metaphorical developments to go beyond elaborate visual display in support of a narrative.<sup>102</sup> Similitudes, comparisons, metaphors and analogies were important to both rhetoric and poetry but sometimes associated particularly with poetry. It was often thought that poetry could multiply rhetorical figures — which include similitudes and comparisons — more than rhetoric could.<sup>103</sup> François Cornilliat and Jean-Claude Mühlethaler point to the importance of metaphors to poetry.<sup>104</sup> In his 1587 preface to the *Franciade*, ‘Au Lecteur apprentif’, Ronsard says that comparisons, provided they are well used, are ‘les nerfs et tendons des Muses’ [the nerves and tendons of the Muses].<sup>105</sup> Jacques Peletier Du Mans’s

*Art poétique* (1555) mentions the role not only of allegories but also of metaphors and comparisons.<sup>106</sup> Finally Simon Goulart, commenting upon a comparison in Du Bartas's *Sepmaine*, claims that it distinguishes the poet from mere 'rimailleurs' [rhymers]:<sup>107</sup> whereas it was often claimed — especially by Ronsard — that fables or fiction distinguished a true poet, here it is a comparison which does so.<sup>108</sup>

Therefore, images, comparisons and metaphors may play a particularly important role in much sixteenth-century poetry. They can also be key 'thinking tools'. Neil Kenny has suggested that *ouillage mental* can include metaphors,<sup>109</sup> and Fernand Halryn emphasizes that thinking in the history of science can be conceived as not only 'des processus d'enchaînement de question et de réponses' [processes of linking questions and responses] but also 'le déploiement et l'adaptation des implications d'une *analogie*' [the unfolding and adapting of the implications of an *analogy*];<sup>110</sup> in Halryn's case, the thinkers to be studied are also central to traditional diachronic histories, but Halryn stresses that Copernicus can only be understood in relation to his 'champ synchronique' [synchronic field], in particular to Renaissance Neoplatonism, since his hypothesis 'émerge ainsi de son milieu culturel, tout en étant encore engagée dans ce véritable bouillon de textes, de préjugés, de *symboles*' (p. 300) [emerges in this way from its cultural context, while still being engaged in a veritable mass of texts, of preconceived ideas, of *symbols*].

If images are indeed important 'thinking tools' in some paradigms of thought, then poetic discourses which use images extensively might provide insight into particular conceptual possibilities of those paradigms.<sup>111</sup> To give a more concrete example, the images of the divine as celestial light, or of human society as a natural body, are 'thinking tools' available in all discourses, but liable to be developed differently in some poetic ones. Therefore I will focus upon the role of particular images which were banal commonplaces in the sixteenth century: images of the divine in the elemental, of natural bodies in political ones, of the divine in particularly impressive human beings, and of the divine in the sun. I will argue that these commonplaces constitute 'thinking tools' for sixteenth-century writers, which are developed differently in different texts and discourses.<sup>112</sup> Therefore *Cosmos and Image* will operate through close readings: it is of no use to my study to simply note the presence of an image; rather I need to explore in detail how it is used and what it implies. My purpose is not to provide a catalogue of cosmic images as, for example, Anne-Pascale Pouey-Mounou has done in an encyclopaedic study of the cosmos in Ronsard's poetry.<sup>113</sup>

### Poetic Images and Ontological Similarities

The conceptual power of imagistic language has been highlighted by modern cognitivist theories of metaphor, which show that metaphors are not simply ornamental depictions of a pre-existing literal meaning but rather shape our thought. David Cowling has powerfully marshalled the insights of cognitivist theories in relation to early modern texts, in particular in his argument that Jean Lemaire de Belges's architectural images serve to modify conceptions of the self.<sup>114</sup> However, as I will suggest, imagistic language might play a particularly potent



role in the case of sixteenth-century thinking about relationships between the cosmic, the divine, and the human, since the conceptual power of images and their utility as a thinking tool may be strengthened by an ontological status attributed to images.

Images — as metaphors or comparisons — represent one thing in terms of another. However, in the sixteenth century, this is also understood to be true of images in a very specific sense which goes beyond the concerns of rhetoric or poetics and is crucial to conceptions of the relationships between the divine, the cosmic, and the human. In his *Abrégé de l'art poétique*, Ronsard defines poetic invention as using the 'imagination' — or 'imaginer' — to represent the 'Ideas' or 'forms' of all things:

L'invention n'est autre chose que le bon naturel d'une imagination concevant les Idées et formes de toutes choses qui se peuvent imaginer tant célestes que terrestres, animées ou inanimées, pour après les représenter, décrire et imiter (p. 435).

[Invention is nothing other than the good natural disposition/nature of an imagination conceiving the Ideas and forms of all things which can be imagined, celestial as well as terrestrial, animate or inanimate, in order to then represent, describe, and imitate them.]

In 'imagining' the Ideas, poetry has a role to play in representing a higher or divine truth. Marie-Madeleine Fragonard describes this in terms which refer more directly to the 'image': 'pour un poète, la notion d'image qui fonde sa théologie, permet de fonder un discours où la métaphore, l'allégorie, la polysémie des signes soient révélateurs des êtres, c'est-à-dire, dans un contexte platonicien, une écriture qui soit réalité' [for a poet, the notion of the image which grounds his theology, permits the grounding of a discourse in which metaphor, allegory, the polysemy of signs reveal beings, that is, in a Platonic context, a writing which is reality].<sup>115</sup> Similarly, Frances A. Yates explained that for Pontus de Tyard images were linked with a higher sort of knowledge than that produced by logic.<sup>116</sup> In Italian theory at least, poetic activity began with the 'idea' or the 'idol' (the idea in the form of an image), and the ensuing passage from Ideas to objects resembled that of the emanative schemes of late Neoplatonists.<sup>117</sup>

Thus the notion of the image played an important role in explaining the function and status of the cosmic and human in relation to God. In Genesis 1.26 man is said to be made in the 'image and resemblance' of God, and this idea had been greatly elaborated on by some Italian Renaissance thinkers.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, Neoplatonist writers popularized the belief that the cosmos had also been created by God to be an image of himself, and some suggested that the cosmos provided a hierarchy of images of God.<sup>119</sup> God, sometimes called an *Imager*,<sup>120</sup> had created the world using images of himself. Jean-Luc Solère explains that 'l'essor du lexique philosophique de l'imaginaire en latin semble lié à celui de la pensée chrétienne' [the rapid development of a philosophical lexis of the imagination in Latin seems to be linked to that of Christian thought], and that, for Augustine, the world was an 'ensemble d'images' [a set of images].<sup>121</sup> The cosmic and the human quite literally provided images of the divine: the cosmos — as an object, rather than in poetic representations of it — was an image of the divine. I will refer to such images —

images which are things rather than words — as ‘ontological images’ to differentiate them from the ‘linguistic’ or ‘poetic’ images which exist in language rather than in the world.

However, I make this distinction precisely to explore the ways in which ‘ontological images’ and ‘linguistic images’ often are not distinguished from one another. Linguistic images were ontologically grounded in the imagistic status of the cosmos itself; or, to use the terminology I have suggested, ‘linguistic images’ were grounded in ‘ontological images’. Poetry produced linguistic versions of ontological images. Thus *image* had different connotations from *metaphor*, for example, since metaphors were usually represented as having an ornamental role. Poetry often depicted things in terms of other things; conceiving these depictions as *images* of God or the Ideas — rather than simply as metaphors — meant, as Fragonard explains in the quotation above, that poetic discourse had an important role to play.<sup>122</sup> Creating through images was implicitly analogous to a divine activity, and furthermore the poet could reproduce the images which God had created. This concept might overlap with that of fictions — which were also supposed to be veiled signs of a higher truth — but it had different implications;<sup>123</sup> furthermore, as we shall see in Part I, some writers, notably Du Bartas, disapproved of Greek mythological fictions but not of imagistic language.

Not all images are ‘images’ in the sense described. Man and the cosmos are images of God because they were created by God; this causality might be considered to progress down a cosmic hierarchy so that the sun is an image of God, and the moon is an image of the sun (and by extension of God). However, the ‘image’ of human society — the body politic — provided by the natural human body is not an ‘image’ in this sense, since neither is causally prior to the other (although perhaps they resemble one another because both are supposed to image God). As Augustine clarifies in a discussion of Genesis 1.26:

omnis imago est similis ei, cuius imago est; nec tamen omne, quod simile est alicui, etiam imago est eius. sicut in speculo et pictura quia imagines sunt, etiam similes sunt, tamen, si alter ex altero natus non est, nullus eorum imago alterius dici potest. imago enim tunc est, cum de aliquo exprimitur.<sup>124</sup>

[Every image is like that of which it is an image, but not everything which is like something is also its image. Thus, because in a mirror or in a picture there are images, they are also like. But if the one does not have its origin from the other, it is not said to be the image of the other. For it is an image only when it is derived from the other thing.]<sup>125</sup>

But the alleged similarity between, for example, the bodies politic and natural, does not seem to be one of purely poetic ornamentation either. As we shall see in Chapter 2, arguments were often based upon this similarity, and some physicians believed that it qualified them to comment upon politics. The link between the two bodies may be ontological rather than purely figurative or heuristic. A theory of the ‘microcosm’ and ‘macrocosm’ was developed primarily out of Platonism, and was especially prominent in the ‘occult sciences’, but also appealed to a wide range of writers; in its various manifestations, this theory considered that there was a relationship of similarity and causality between microcosm and macrocosm.<sup>126</sup>

Jean Rousset argued that the relationship between microcosm and macrocosm ontologically grounded cosmic images in poetry:

l'ancien cosmos analogique [...] fondait logiquement la validité de l'esprit métaphorique reposant sur les similitudes et les correspondances entre tous les ordres de la réalité, de la pierre à l'homme et de l'homme aux astres.<sup>127</sup>

[the old analogical cosmos [...] logically grounded the validity of the metaphorical spirit depending upon the similitudes and correspondences between all orders of reality, from stones to man and from man to the stars]

However, while the real status of similarities or images might ontologically ground poetic images, crucially I would argue that it does not necessarily or logically follow that cosmic conceptions were prior to poetic images. A unidirectional causality does not necessarily stem from conceptions of the cosmos ('philosophy') or God ('theology') to poetic images ('literature'). Instead poetic images might provide a means to explore the nature, extent, and implications of similarities between the human, the cosmic, and the divine. In other words, linguistic images might serve to explore the ontological images which they evoke. *Cosmos and Image* will suggest that linguistic images facilitate a reflection upon the similarities — and differences — between image and imaged, and upon the implications of those similarities and differences.

Thus the imagistic nature of some poetic language is a particularly promising 'poetic specificity' for this study for two related reasons: firstly, I examine a paradigm of thought in which, in varying ways and to varying extents, similarity is important; secondly, I analyse the relationships — between the cosmic, human, and divine — in which questions of similarity are crucial. In conceptual frameworks like that dominant in the sixteenth century, the conceptual power which we understand to inhere in imagistic language generally can operate together with a power deriving from the (culturally specific perception of) the ontological weight of images.

It has been suggested that, for Scève and late-sixteenth-century poets, images are no longer able to refer to reality, so that poetic language is self-referential and creates a parallel world, rather than imaging the real one.<sup>128</sup> By contrast, in *Cosmos and Image*, I will suggest that images do refer to the world, although they do not simply reproduce it. In some cases, the link between a particular image and reality — or, to put this differently, the ontological status of a particular similarity posited by a particular image — is undermined, and I aim to analyse when and how, and what the consequences are (see for example my discussion of images of love in Chapter 2). Elsewhere, I suggest that images explore the nature and degree of the similarity posited, or its implications. For example, in Chapter 1, I show how Du Bartas uses linguistic images of the elemental to investigate the nature of the similarity between God and the cosmic, in particular the fraught question of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and wind. Du Bartas also highlights how warfare can be used to analyse cosmic discord, and the similarity between the two has far-reaching implications in a period of civil war (Chapter 2).

Thus images do not create a parallel poetic universe with no link to the real one, but nor do they simply passively reflect ontological conceptions. Rather they explore dominant interpretations of the world and, while they transform it to

some degree, these transformations constitute a mode of questioning similarity, difference, causality, love, and hate in the relationships between the human, the cosmic, and the divine. Of course there are differences in the sorts of reference implied by the two genres of natural-philosophical poetry and love lyric: the cosmos is central to the subject matter of the former, whereas the latter describes desire for a lady. However, as I shall discuss in Part II, in some love lyric a particular combination of reference and fiction enables the poet to explore the cosmos in a generically specific way.

Finally, by exploring divine, cosmic and human relationships through an examination of images, I also aim to contribute to a history of the image, not that which treats which images were used at a given moment, but a history concerned with the role which images play in relation to thinking and to the representation of reality. I will also touch upon how this role relates to sixteenth-century notions of the function of images. For the time being, I wish to make two points about them. Firstly, although 'image' had a particular sense, it was not necessarily differentiated from 'images' supposed to be purely ornamental. Renaissance categories do not oppose and distinguish uses of imagistic language on the basis of whether they are supposed to have ontological status. Thus Du Bartas's commentator Pantaléon Thévenin uses the term *similitude* — which can mean a linguistic ornament — to describe a representation which is a very common example of a possible ontologically grounded image: the representation of God as the sun. Thévenin writes that the poet 'monstre par une similitude prise du Soleil comme Dieu crea toutes choses sans se pener aucunement' [shows by a similitude drawn from the Sun how God created all things without exerting himself at all].<sup>129</sup> We may take this to mean that it is uncertain whether particular images play the role of ontological images or not; I shall suggest in this book that the possibility of this role makes images particularly powerful (and certainly not purely ornamental) but that ultimately they do not simply 'reflect' in a passive way the thing which they represent.

Secondly, despite glorifications of the imagination — or *fantaisie*<sup>130</sup> —, there were also many indictments of it. There were fears that the image would become too distant from that which it 'imaged', that the imagination would less reproduce that which it 'imaged' than transform it. Indeed Grahame Castor suggests that the notion of imagination was probably even more damaging to poetry than that of fiction (p. 136). In the sixth essay of his commentary *In Rempublicam*, published in 1534 and 1542,<sup>131</sup> Proclus had warned against poetry which made use of the imagination ('celle qui est mêlée d'opinions et d'imaginations'), arguing that it might represent reality in an illusory way, that it was inferior to other kinds of poetry, and that it constituted the poetry which Plato wished to banish.<sup>132</sup> The image-making faculty might deceive by producing images never seen, as well as those from sensations already experienced and processed; the imagination might exert a great transformative power, and this was dangerous as well as fascinating.<sup>133</sup> Similarly, 'imaginations' in a linguistic or cultural form could sully conceptions of God, or transform conceptions of the cosmos. After giving the description of invention quoted above, Ronsard almost immediately proceeds to warn against the unhealthy imagination which would represent monstrous forms in a disordered fashion:

Je n'entends toutefois ces inventions fantastiques et mélancoliques, qui ne se rapportent non plus l'une à l'autre que les songes entrecoupés d'un frénétique, ou de quelque patient extrêmement tourmenté de la fièvre, à l'imagination duquel, pour être blessée, se représentent mille formes monstrueuses sans ordre ni liaison (*Abrégé*, pp. 435–36).

[However I don't mean those fantastical and melancholic inventions, which are no more connected with one another than the disrupted dreams of a lunatic, or of some patient extremely tormented by fever, in whose imagination, because it is sick, are represented a thousand monstrous forms without order or connection.]

Such imaginations are the product of a sick mind, the 'imagination' as faculty of cognition gone horribly wrong.<sup>134</sup> *Cosmos and Image* will not examine the transformative power of images upon conceptions in these terms; however, it will examine their transformative power, and will eventually return to sixteenth-century fears regarding the imagination to suggest that the roles of the images examined may give us some insight into those fears.

### Du Bartas's *Sepmaine* and Scève's *Délie*

Part I of *Cosmos and Image* will examine one natural-philosophical poem, Du Bartas's *Sepmaine*, and Part II a collection of love lyric, Scève's *Délie*. The *Délie* and the *Sepmaine* might seem like a surprising pair of texts. Firstly, they were published thirty-four years apart: Du Bartas first published his *Sepmaine* in 1578, while the *Délie* had been published in 1544, the year of Du Bartas's birth. The *Délie* might therefore be termed a 'pre-Pléiade' poem and the *Sepmaine* a 'post-Pléiade' one. In addition, given that I examine the relationship between God, man, and the world, the doctrinal differences between the two poets might be significant: Du Bartas was a Protestant whereas we are reasonably sure that Scève was not, and his *Délie* was composed before Reformation churches and their doctrines were firmly distinguished from one another.<sup>135</sup>

Furthermore, just as this is not a study of the influences of prose texts upon poetic texts, nor is it a chronological account of a supposed progression from the *Délie* to the *Sepmaine*. The different periods in which the two texts are written will be crucial: the Wars of Religion play a role in the *Sepmaine*, and French *évangélisme* and Italian Neoplatonism in the *Délie*. Interest in particular images may be influenced by the historical position of the poet: I shall suggest that Du Bartas's position as a peace-loving and constitutionalist Huguenot affect his poetry, and that Scève's interest in *évangélique* discourses might inflect his. However, the poems are examined as two fascinating examples of the conceptual configurations possible, rather than as part of a linear narrative.

Both the *Délie* and the *Sepmaine* were accompanied by visual images, at least in some editions: emblems in Scève's case, and pictures of the Creation in Du Bartas's, one of which adorns *Cosmos and Image*. Such illustrations could depict the cosmos, and also provide an image of one thing in another thing. However, these literally visual images exceed the concerns of this study, which focuses not upon the visual aspects of images but upon other particularities of specifically linguistic images,

including, for example, not only the depiction of one thing as one other thing but also the semantic slippage between a nexus of related meanings (Chapter 1).

The two poems have been chosen firstly because both poets write — albeit very differently — in striking imagistic ways, and secondly, because, I will argue, in both cases these images reflect upon a concern with relationships between the divine, human, and cosmic.<sup>136</sup> Therefore I make only very brief references to other poems by Scève and Du Bartas in which images arguably do not play the same role. Scève himself wrote a Christian natural-philosophical poem — the *Microcosme* (1562) — which could be compared to the *Délie* but I concentrate upon the *Sepmaine* because of the role played there by images. As will gradually emerge, further points of comparison between the *Délie* and the *Sepmaine* will be the interest they express in the potential role of love in the cosmos, and, secondly, their concern for the closeness — or distance — between, on the one hand, the cosmos and the human and, on the other, the divine.

Natural-philosophical poetry and love lyric are not monolithic any more than ‘the’ sixteenth-century mentality, and I shall focus upon only one ‘example’ of each: Du Bartas’s *Sepmaine* and Scève’s *Délie*. I would not claim that Du Bartas’s poetic practice is representative of sixteenth-century or even ‘baroque’ poetry, nor that the *Délie* is typical of love lyric. However, these examples serve as case studies: I hope that my work will be of assistance in understanding what is at stake in some other texts of the period, and will occasionally make some suggestions in this direction, in particular in relation to Agrippa d’Aubigné’s *Tragiques* and Marguerite de Navarre’s *Chansons spirituelles*; however, rather than being representative of their genres as a whole, the poems in question demonstrate individual appropriations of certain ‘thinking tools’, and thus present the world in particular ways.

I will focus on the *Sepmaine* in Part I and the *Délie* in Part II. Chronologically speaking, therefore, this book might seem to be written backwards. One could justify this through a model of writing history backwards, or through Terence Cave’s concept of the ‘prehistory’; however, while the two poems do mutually illuminate one another to some extent, it is the chronologically earlier poem, the *Délie*, which might be argued to render more manifest a threat which is more implicit in the later poem, the *Sepmaine*: namely, the absence of a redeeming divine. This, I argue, is due to the generic difference of the *Délie*. Indeed, more generally, the justification for the order of *Cosmos and Image* has less to do with chronology than with genre. I begin with a poem which sets out to describe the cosmos and to perceive God within it, then I move on to a poem which has a rather different expressed purpose: to describe the effects upon the *je* of his beloved, ‘les mortz qu’en moy tu renouvèles’ [the Deaths which in me you renew]. The genre of the *Sepmaine* means that it is in a sense at one less remove from some of the prose discourses with which it is compared. In Part I, I study questions of resemblance and difference between the cosmos, man and the divine in a context in which this ‘divine’ is the Christian God rather than a fantasy lady upon whom both religious and erotic desires are focused; I explore issues in Part I which will arise in very different forms in Part II.



## Terminology

There is no very obvious solution to the problem of what to call the ‘images’ or ‘metaphors’ studied, that is, the representations of one thing in terms of another thing to which it may be similar in some way. The available terms — in both their modern and sixteenth-century senses — are problematic since they assume a priori answers to questions which I wish to remain open. For example, ‘metaphor’ is usually assumed to mean something purely ornamental; nor do I wish to specify that I am using it in the sense of cognitivist linguistics, since in sixteenth-century poetry some of the ‘metaphors’ or ‘images’ discussed may derive significance from (the perception of) their ontological weight rather than solely from the conceptual power understood to inhere in imagistic language generally.

I have chosen to use the term ‘image’. I mean by this not simply a visual representation but a representation of one ‘thing’ which is also a sign of another ‘thing’. Furthermore, I do not assume a priori that poetic images — that is, the image in poetry of one thing as another thing — only repeat ontological ones, for example the poetic image of the divine as the sun might not simply passively echo the notion that the divine is ontologically imaged as the sun. Instead, such a poetic image might itself reflect upon — and affect — conceptions of the relationship between the divine and the cosmic sun. Indeed I shall suggest that poetic images often explore such relationships, and that they impact upon notions of the divine, the human and the cosmic. However, the term serves as a reminder of a dominant sixteenth-century conception of ‘images’, that is, as real reflections of God: there are suggestions in both poems studied that such images are present, either in the cosmos, or in the lady who reflects divine light; however, we shall see that these suggestions are also undermined or rendered problematic, and that images may come closer to ‘inventions’ in the modern sense.

## Notes to the Introduction

1. Like ‘universe’, the word ‘cosmos’ is sometimes taken to mean just the heavens, the superlunary or celestial realm. However, in *Cosmos and Image*, ‘cosmos’ and ‘cosmic’ refer to the whole of the physical world, both the superlunary and sublunary realms; where necessary, I use ‘celestial’ to distinguish the realm of the heavenly bodies from the sublunary.
2. In addition to theology’s general concern with man’s relationship to God, man could — according to natural theology — use the cosmos and himself to know God.
3. Conceptions of man could involve his position in relation to the cosmos: see Jill Kraye, ‘Moral Philosophy’ in the *Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. by Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), pp. 303–86. The *Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* is referred to hereafter as *CHRP*.
4. For example, fundamental to both natural philosophy and medicine is the belief that man’s body is governed by the same processes as the cosmos.
5. *Du monde clos à l’univers infini* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973). Koyré did consider ‘scientific’ thought to be bound up with philosophy and religion: see the introduction to his *Études d’histoire de la pensée scientifique* ([Paris]: PUF, 1966), pp. 11–15. Nonetheless, this is as part of a revolution-based history. Similarly, important historians of philosophy (or of ‘ideas’), including Lovejoy, have examined manifestations of ‘thought’ other than those of philosophy understood in a restricted and intellectualist sense: see Donald R. Kelley, *The Descent of Ideas: The History of Intellectual*

- History* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 263–89. Nonetheless, the point is to situate changes in thought as part of a linear history. Cf. my comments on Pocock below.
6. In particular, his encyclopaedic *Système du monde: histoire des doctrines cosmologiques de Platon à Copernic*, 10 vols (Paris: Hermann, 1913–59) includes thinkers from Pythagoras to Paul of Venice, and covers a wide range of medieval writers. On the conflict between continuity and revolution in the history of science, especially Duhem and Koyré, see Kelley, *Descent of Ideas*, pp. 209–20.
  7. For example, Alister E. McGrath's *Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought* focuses successively upon groups of theologians from the patristic, medieval and Renaissance, Reformation and post-Reformation, and modern periods (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998). See also Geoffrey W. Bromiley's *Historical Theology: An Introduction* (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1978). Justo L. González — who writes a history of 'Christian Thought', rather than of 'theology' — focuses upon theologians like Zwingli, Luther, and Calvin but also discusses at more length writers who would not be described as theologians, or not exclusively as theologians, such as Erasmus (pp. 21–28) and even Galileo and Descartes as part of a 'changing philosophical setting' (pp. 318–46); nonetheless these are writers who expressed new systems of thought in relatively clear fashion, and are considered as part of linear history (*A History of Christian Thought*, 3 vols (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1975), III: *From the Protestant Reformation to the Twentieth Century*).
  8. *Du monde clos*, pp. 37–43 (p. 37).
  9. See in particular Kelley. In this study I will avoid the term 'idea' in order to avoid implying the traditional 'unit-idea' as something stable and pre-existing its appearance in any particular text or discourse.
  10. *Le Problème de l'incroyance au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle: la religion de Rabelais* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1942). Kelley explains that German *Begriffsgeschichte* shares with French historians of *mentalités* the 'effort to reconstruct an intellectual field through the history of terms and families of terms' (*Descent of Ideas*, p. 303); see also pp. 235–36, 293–96. Although initially formulated in response to Rabelais, *mentalités* have often been associated with the study of low culture: I do not use the term in this sense here — I am of course studying literate culture.
  11. Paradigms became a focus of study after the publication of Thomas S. Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1962, which uses the term with some quite different senses: 2nd edn (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). The multivalent concept has been used in differing ways since, not necessarily in accordance with Kuhn's view of the best way to study the history of science. See Jan Golinski, *Making Natural Knowledge: Constructivism and the History of Science* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), pp. 14–27. Kelley compares (briefly) the paradigm to the *mentalité*, the *episteme*, and the *Weltanschauung* (*Descent of Ideas*, pp. 213–14).
  12. Anthony Grafton and Nancy Siraisi, introduction to *Natural Particulars* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), pp. 1–21 (p. 7).
  13. Hence Ann Blair's essay on natural philosophy for the *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, 9 vols pub. (out of 11) (Cambridge: CUP, 1990–), III: *The Renaissance*, ed. by Glyn P. Norton (1999), pp. 449–57. Kelley writes, 'The sharpest of literary turns have been made by scholars who seek to re-create pre-scientific mentality, in which metaphor, myth, and what Fernand Halryn called a "vertical", or qualitative (as distinguished from a "horizontal" or empirical) meaning of phenomena, still functioned in natural philosophy' (*Descent of Ideas*, p. 229). On the increasing use of non-bookish methods of natural philosophy in the Renaissance, see Blair, 'Natural Philosophy', in *The Cambridge History of Science*, 5 vols pub. (out of 8) (Cambridge: CUP, 2003–), III: *Early Modern Science*, ed. by Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park (2003), pp. 365–406 (pp. 384–90).
  14. *Les Mots et les Choses: une archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966).
  15. See in particular Ian Maclean, 'Foucault's Renaissance Episteme Reassessed: An Aristotelian Counterblast', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 59 (1998), 149–66. See also id., 'The Process of Intellectual Change: A Post-Foucauldian Hypothesis', *Arcadia*, 33 (1998), 168–81. It seems to me that it is not unhelpful once again to draw attention to the problems of Foucault's Renaissance *episteme* since, despite its problems, it is still cited, for example in some footnotes to natural-philosophical poems, in order to 'explain' the appearance of cosmic analogies.
  16. For example, Rudolph Agricola, *De inventione dialectica*, ed. by Lothar Mundt (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1992), pp. 144–79; first pub. 1515.

17. An analogous question is asked by cognitivist theories of metaphor: particular metaphors can be creatively developed but limited by conceptions of other things, by other metaphors; and there may be superstructures of basic metaphors, often spatial and directional, into which other metaphors fit.
18. 'The Concept of a Language and the *métier d'historien*: Some Considerations on Practice', in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. by Anthony Pagden, (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), pp. 19–38 (p. 29). Cf. Carlo Ginzburg's criticism of the 'tentation sociologique', which consists in counting the number of appearances of particular words or ideas rather than analysing the different ways in which they are appropriated: see Roger Chartier: 'Histoire intellectuelle et histoire des mentalités: trajectoires et questions', *Revue de synthèse*, 111/12 (1983), 277–307 (p. 294). Pocock uses the terms 'language context' or 'langue', in contradistinction to 'speech act' or 'parole'. I prefer the term 'discourse'. 'Language context' or *langue* can be misleading as these words may refer to the language used, French, for example. More importantly, *langue* implies the overall structure of the language available rather than a mode of representation which may not exist in isolation. By contrast, 'discourse' refers to different sorts of language which may come into contact with other ones (as in the novel, the context in which Bakhtin elaborated the term). Moreover, 'discourse' serves to denote both a particular way of representing something, for example, the cosmos, and also a particular genre, for example late-sixteenth-century French natural-philosophical poetry: it thus points to the way in which particular genres may imply particular views of the world; the implications of this link between genre and world-view are of crucial importance to the questions asked and the assertions made within this study.
19. *The Palace of Secrets: Béroalde de Verville and Renaissance Conceptions of Knowledge* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 241. By contrast, Febvre arguably formulated the concept of a *mentalité* in order primarily to sketch the *limits* on Rabelais's thought, to counter claims that he was an atheist by arguing that such a position was not a conceptual possibility during his lifetime. His section entitled 'outillage mental' is about the tools which, he argues, would be necessary for a certain sort of philosophical thought, and which the sixteenth century lacked (pp. 384–400); see also the section entitled 'Carence d'outils et de langage scientifique' (pp. 421–26). Whereas Febvre discusses 'les mots qui manquent' (pp. 385–88) [the words which are lacking], Kenny's examples of *outillage mental* are words which sixteenth-century writers had, such as *arrester*, *meslange*, and *diversité*.
20. Thus the term 'thinking tools' is preferable for my purposes to the Kuhnian notion of questions, since the latter would probably imply an explicit formulation.
21. *Thinking With Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
22. 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas', in *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, ed. by James Tully (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), pp. 29–67 (p. 56): see especially pp. 54–63.
23. *Montaigne Philosophe* (Paris: PUF, 1996).
24. *Philosophical Fictions and the French Renaissance*, ed. by Neil Kenny (London: Warburg Institute, 1991); Kenny, *Palace*, pp. 158–209.
25. Geneva: Droz, 1999.
26. When introducing the notion of a paradigm, Kuhn mentions figures such as Copernicus, Newton, and Einstein, but in 1969 he noted that he intended the term 'revolution' to apply even to frequently occurring changes in communities which might number no more than twenty-five specialists; since Kuhn 'microhistories' have become the norm. See Golinski, pp. 26–27.
27. 'The Renaissance Concept of Philosophy', in *CHRP*, pp. 55–74 (61).
28. Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford: OUP, 1992), pp. 52–53.
29. William A. Wallace, 'Traditional Natural Philosophy', in *CHRP*, pp. 201–35 (pp. 210–11).
30. Wallace, p. 209.
31. Wallace, p. 213.
32. Blair, 'Natural Philosophy', in *Cambridge History of Science*, III, 372.
33. Copenhaver and Schmitt, p. 213.
34. Vasoli, pp. 58–67.

35. Copenhaver and Schmitt, p. 13; Charles B. Schmitt, 'The Rise of the Philosophical Textbook', in *CHRP*, pp. 792–804.
36. Alfonso Ingegno, 'The New Philosophy of Nature', in *CHRP*, pp. 236–63; Blair, 'Natural Philosophy' in *Cambridge History of Science*, III, 372–79.
37. Schmitt, 'Rise'.
38. Schmitt, 'Rise', p. 795.
39. Schmitt, 'Rise', pp. 796–801.
40. Copenhaver and Schmitt, pp. 11, 35.
41. Ann Blair, *The Theater of Nature: Jean Bodin and Renaissance Science* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 16.
42. Kenny, *Palace*, pp. 37–54.
43. Ann Blair, 'The *Problemata* as a Natural Philosophical Genre', in *Natural Particulars: Nature and the Disciplines in Renaissance Europe*, ed. by Anthony Grafton and Nancy Siraisi (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), pp. 171–204.
44. For a more extensive coverage of different kinds of natural philosophy in the Renaissance, see 'Kinds of Natural Philosophy' in Blair, *Theater*, pp. 14–48.
45. Jean Céard, *La Nature et les prodiges: l'insolite au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, rev. edn (Geneva: Droz, 1996).
46. Kenny, *Palace*, pp. 37–54.
47. Kenny, *Palace*.
48. Copenhaver and Schmitt, pp. 20, 58–59.
49. Wallace, pp. 205, 231–33.
50. Copenhaver and Schmitt, pp. 11–12; Vasoli, pp. 57–58.
51. Copenhaver and Schmitt, pp. 42–43. On Gerson and sixteenth-century French thinkers including Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, see Yelena Masur-Matusevich, *Le Siècle d'or de la mystique française: un autre regard. Étude de la littérature spirituelle de Jean Gerson (1363–1429) à Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (1450?–1537)* (Milan: Archè; Paris: Edidit, 2004).
52. Céard, *Nature*, pp. 437–38.
53. Vasoli, pp. 70–71.
54. Blair, 'Natural Philosophy', in *Cambridge History of Science*, III, 379–84.
55. Ingegno, p. 239.
56. Vasoli, pp. 66–69.
57. Charles H. Lohr, 'Metaphysics', in *CHRP*, pp. 535–638 (pp. 543–44).
58. Paul Robert, *Le Petit Robert*, ed. by A. Rey and J. Rey-Debove (Paris: Dictionnaires Le Robert, 1990), p. 1103.
59. 'Réflexions sur la critique littéraire', in *Le Statut de la littérature: mélanges offerts à Paul Bénichou*, ed. by Marc Fumaroli (Geneva: Droz, 1982), pp. 3–21; repr. in *Variétés critiques de Corneille à Borges* (Paris: José Corti, 1996), pp. 271–92.
60. Philippe Caron, *Des 'Belles Lettres' à la 'littérature': une archéologie des signes du savoir profane en langue française (1680–1760)* (Louvain and Paris: Éditions Peeters, 1992). Marc Fumaroli, *L'Âge de l'éloquence: rhétorique et 'res literaria' de la Renaissance au seuil de l'époque classique* (Geneva: Droz, 1980).
61. *Le Sacre de l'écrivain, 1750–1830. Essai sur l'avènement d'un pouvoir spirituel laïque dans la France moderne* (Paris: J. Corti, 1985), 2nd ed.
62. Caron, pp. 162–84.
63. On *bonnes lettres*, see Caron, especially pp. 150–54; on *belles lettres*, see pp. 102–50.
64. Caron, pp. 42–54. After 1660, the *sciences–lettres* distinction became more and more frequent, although the terms continued to be used in the older interchangeable sense; from 1720–30 *lettres* comes to mean what had been called 'Belles-Lettres' (pp. 55–63).
65. Caron, pp. 42–74 (p. 71–74).
66. Caron, pp. 75–83.
67. Brian Vickers, 'Rhetoric and Poetics', in *CHRP*, pp. 715–45 (pp. 731–40).
68. Caron, pp. 48–49, 154–62; Copenhaver and Schmitt, pp. 24–37. *Lettres humaines* was also used in contradistinction to *lettres divines*: Caron, p. 156.
69. Lisa Jardine, 'Humanistic Logic', in *CHRP*, pp. 173–98. The two poems central to *Cosmos and Image* — the *Délie* and the *Semaine* — have both been said to be influenced by dialectic's

- methods of 'argument' or 'reasoning': see Jan Miernowski, *Dialectique et connaissance dans 'La Sepmaine' de Du Bartas: 'Discours sur discours infiniment divers'* (Geneva: Droz, 1992), and Michael J. Giordano, 'Reading Délie: Dialectic and Sequence', *Symposium (Syracuse)*, 34 (1980), 155–67.
70. *Préhistoires*, pp. 11–13.
  71. Vickers, 'Rhetoric', p. 715.
  72. François Cornilliat and Ullrich Langer, 'Histoire de la poétique au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Histoire des poétiques*, ed. by Jean Bessière, Eva Kushner, Roland Mortier and Jean Weisgerber (Paris: PUF, 1997), pp. 119–62 (p. 121).
  73. Rosalie L. Colie, 'Genre Systems and the Functions of Literature', in *The Resources of Kind: Genre-Theory in the Renaissance*, ed. by Barbara K. Lewalski (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 4.
  74. Vickers, 'Rhetoric', pp. 717–20.
  75. Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani, 'Les Modes du discours lyrique au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *La Notion de genre à la Renaissance*, ed. by G. Demerson (Geneva: Éditions Slatkine, 1984), pp. 129–48.
  76. Cornilliat and Langer, p. 56.
  77. Jean Lecointe, 'La Poésie parmi les arts au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in Perrine Galand-Hallyn and Fernand Hallyn, eds, *Poétiques de la Renaissance: le modèle italien, le monde franco-bourguignon et leur héritage en France au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance, 348 (Geneva: Droz, 2001), pp. 53–89 (pp. 67–68). *Poétiques de la Renaissance* is hereafter referred to as *Poétiques*.
  78. Fernand Hallyn, 'Poésie et savoir au Quattrocento et au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle' in *Poétiques*, pp. 167–217 (pp. 180–90); Isabelle Pantin, *La Poésie du ciel en France dans la seconde moitié du seizième siècle* (Geneva: Droz, 1995), pp. 185–96.
  79. Colie, p. 16.
  80. Lecointe, pp. 58–62.
  81. Cornilliat and Langer, p. 122. In his preface to *Poétiques*, Cave suggests that verse is poetry's only real specificity in the Renaissance: pp. ix–xiv.
  82. Vickers, 'Rhetoric', pp. 719–20.
  83. Cornilliat and Langer, pp. 119–23; Vickers, 'Rhetoric', pp. 717–19. On poetry's moral function, see also S. Verhulst, P. Debailly and J. Vignes, 'Fonction sociale de la poésie au Quattrocento et au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Poétiques*, pp. 346–89.
  84. Perrine Galand-Hallyn, Fernand Hallyn and Jean Lecointe, 'L'Inspiration poétique au Quattrocento et au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Poétiques*, pp. 109–55.
  85. See, for example, the *Ode A Michel de l'Hospital* (1550).
  86. Lecointe, pp. 68–71.
  87. Cornilliat and Langer, p. 134. Poetry's metaphysical role was also conceived in terms of its relationship to music: Jean Vignes, 'Poésie et musique en France au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Poétiques*, pp. 638–58; James Helgeson, *Harmonie divine et subjectivité poétique chez Maurice Scève* (Geneva: Droz, 2001), pp. 19–38.
  88. Ann Moss, *Poetry and Fable: Studies in Mythological Narrative in Sixteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: CUP, 1984); Cornilliat and Langer, pp. 142–46.
  89. Grahame Castor, *Pléiade Poetics: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Thought and Terminology*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1964), p. 118.
  90. This is the view of Boccaccio: see Hallyn, 'Poésie et Savoir', pp. 170–71.
  91. *Abrégé de l'Art poétique français*, in the *Traité de poétique et de rhétorique à la Renaissance*, ed. by Francis Goyet (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1990), pp. 429–53 (p. 429).
  92. For example, the 'Hymne de l'Éternité' and 'Hymne de l'Automne'. Many secondary works discuss Ronsard's attitude towards poetic fictions: for example, Terence Cave, 'Ronsard's Mythological Universe', in *Ronsard the Poet*, ed. by Terence Cave (London: Methuen, 1973), pp. 159–208.
  93. 'Discours philosophique et historial de la Poésie Philosophique: auquel sont arrangés les Poètes, jusques à cet âge, avec la Mithologie de plusieurs fables Poétiques a P. de Ronsard', in *Nouvelles Œuvres* (Paris: Jean Parant, n.d.), pp. 44–81.
  94. 'Les contradictions ou les incohérences qui figurent dans ces poèmes [Jean-Edouard Du Monin's *Uranologie* in particular but also Du Bartas's *Sepmaine*] [...] diffèrent radicalement de ces failles ou de ces ruptures de la continuité logique qui surviennent parfois dans la poésie philosophique

- de Ronsard. Dans le dernier cas, le silence, l'énigme ou l'inconséquence font partie du système poétique et du système de signification, dans le premier ce sont des fautes, car le lecteur est autorisé à se référer à l'encyclopédie commune' [the contradictions or incoherences in these poems [...] differ radically from the rifts or ruptures in logical continuity which occur sometimes in Ronsard's philosophical poetry. In the latter case, silence, enigma or absurdity are part of the poetic system and the system of signification, in the former they are mistakes, since the reader is authorized to refer to the shared encyclopaedia]. Thus, Post-Ronsardian cosmic poets (who belong to a generation which Pantin terms 'l'âge didascalique') had 'renoncé à maintenir la poésie dans un domaine réservé, en même temps qu'elle abandonnait ostensiblement son moyen d'expression le plus spécifique, c'est-à-dire la fable' [given up on maintaining poetry in a self-contained domain, at the same time as it was abandoning ostensibly its most specific means of expression, namely fable]: *La Poésie du ciel*, pp. 497–98.
95. Pantin examines the poem quite briefly since it does not focus only on superlunary objects.
96. See Castor, especially pp. 137–42, 174–83; J. M. Cocking, *Imagination: A Study in the History of Ideas*, ed. by Penelope Murray (London: Routledge, 1991), especially Chapters 9 and 10. On psychological senses of 'imagination', see Ruth Harvey, *The Inward Wits: Psychological Theory in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (London: Warburg Institute, 1975); John O'Brien, 'Reasoning with the Senses: The Humanist Imagination', in *Reason, Reasoning, and Literature in the Renaissance*, ed. by Philippe Desan and Ullrich Langer (= *South Central Review*, 10 (1993)), pp. 3–19.
97. *Donner à voir: écritures de l'image dans l'art de poésie au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998), p. 155; see also pp. 153–85.
98. Ed. by Michel Meyer and B. Timmermans, transl. into French by C.-E. Ruelle and P. Vanhemelryck (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1991) p. 312 (IV, ii).
99. Castor, pp. 137–42.
100. O'Brien, 'Reasoning', p. 16.
101. Du Bellay exhorts the poet to create 'belles comparaisons et vives descriptions de toutes choses' [beautiful comparisons and lively descriptions of all things]; ed. by Henri Chamard (Paris: Société des Textes Français Modernes, 1997), p. 172. Ronsard says to the future poet that 'tu n'oublieras les comparaisons, les descriptions des lieux, fleuves, forêts, montagnes, de la nuit, du lever du Soleil, du Midi, des Vents, de la Mer, des Dieux et Déesses' (p. 437) [you will not forget comparisons, descriptions of places, rivers, forests, mountains, night, sunrise, Midday, Winds, Sea, Gods and Goddesses].
102. *Les Yeux de l'éloquence: poétiques humanistes de l'évidence* (Orléans: Paradigm, 1995).
103. Cornilliat and Langer, p. 128.
104. 'L'Elocutio au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Poétiques*, pp. 509–32 (p. 511).
105. In Ronsard. *L'Art poétique: cinq préfaces*, ed. by Jean Steward (Cambridge: CUP, 1930), pp. 41–65 (pp. 54–55). See also pp. 41–42: alexandrines 'sentent la prose tresfacile' [smack of overly-easy prose] and 'ont trop de caquet' [have too much prattle] if they are not enriched with 'Figures, Schemes, Tropes, Metaphores, Phrases et periphrases' and illustrated with comparisons and descriptions.
106. In *Traité de poétique et de rhétorique à la Renaissance*, ed. by Francis Goyet (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1990), pp. 219–314 (pp. 253–55).
107. In his commentary published with the *Sepmaine* (n.p.: Jacques Chouët, 1593), pp. 297–98. All quotations from Goulart will be from this edition.
108. Of course in some cases it might be difficult to distinguish between a metaphor and a myth, a comparison and an allegory: although Goulart describes the peacock as a 'comparaison' (p. 298), one might wish to describe it as a fiction. I will return to this since it is crucial to some of the arguments in *Cosmos and Image*.
109. *Outillage mental* might be 'a common fund of topoi, genres, metaphors, and concepts', *Palace*, p. 2.
110. *La Structure poétique du monde: Copernic, Kepler* (Paris: Seuil, 1987), p. 12.
111. Some prose writers, such as Montaigne, for example, could certainly also be examined from this point of view. Images in Montaigne usually contribute to the progression of his thought rather than appearing purely decorative: see Carol E. Clark, *The Web of Metaphor: Studies in the Imagery*



- of Montaigne's 'Essais' (Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1978), pp. 137–50; and Floyd Gray, *Le Style de Montaigne* (Paris: Nizet, 1958), pp. 151–81.
112. Cf. Terence Cave, 'Thinking with Commonplaces: The Example of Rabelais', in *(Re)Inventing the Past: Essays in Honour of Ann Moss*, ed. by Gary Ferguson and Catherine Hampton (Durham: University of Durham, 2003), pp. 35–49.
  113. *L'Imaginaire cosmologique de Ronsard* (Geneva: Droz, 2002).
  114. *Building the Text: Architecture as Metaphor in Late Medieval and Early Modern France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).
  115. *La Pensée religieuse d'Agrippa d'Aubigné et son expression* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004), pp. 49–56 (p. 56).
  116. Frances A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Warburg Institute, 1947), pp. 77–87.
  117. Cocking, pp. 208–09.
  118. Charles Trinkhaus, *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Renaissance Thought*, 2 vols (London: Constable, 1970).
  119. Cocking, in particular Chapters 3, 4, and 8; Paul Oskar Kristeller, *The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino*, trans. by Virginia Conant (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), pp. 92–120; Ingegno, pp. 237–39.
  120. For example, by Du Bartas in his *Sepmaine*, in *The Works of Guillaume De Salluste Sieur Du Bartas*, ed. by Urban Tigner Holmes, Jr., John Coriden Lyons, Robert White Linker and others, 3 vols (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1935–40), II, 193–440, 'Day' VI, l. 709. This collection will hereafter be referred to as *Works*. All quotations will be taken from this edition, which is based upon that published by Abel l'Angelier in 1585. I have judged it unnecessary to offer the variants of earlier editions, since the changes made are very slight and do not impact upon the arguments made in *Cosmos and Image*.
  121. 'Les Images psychiques selon S. Augustin', in *De la phantasia à l'imagination*, ed. by Danielle Lories and Laura Rizzerio, (Louvain: Peeters; Paris: Société des études classiques, 2003), pp. 103–36 (p. 103).
  122. Yates also explains that the role which images played for Pontus de Tyard stemmed from a Neoplatonist conception of intellectual ascent (pp. 87–97).
  123. Josiane Rieu describes mythology as 'une métaphore idolâtrée' [idolatrized metaphor]: 'Esthétique de l'idolâtrie dans la poésie française du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Rencontres de l'École du Louvre: L'Idolâtrie* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1990), pp. 133–57 (pp. 148–49).
  124. *De genesi ad litteram imperfectus liber*, in the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vol XXVIII (Prague: Bibliopola Academiae Litterarum Caesareae Vindobonensis, 1894), pp. 497–98 (Chapter 16).
  125. *On Genesis: Two Books on Genesis Against the Manichees and On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis, An Unfinished Book*, trans. by Roland J. Teske, SJ, *The Fathers of the Church*, 84 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1991), p. 183.
  126. See Copenhaver and Schmitt, pp. 151, 179–81, 288–89; Lohr, pp. 552, 571–72, 579–81; Brian P. Copenhaver, 'Astrology and Magic', in *CHRP*, pp. 264–300 (pp. 269, 284–85); Kraye, pp. 312–33; Vasoli, p. 69; Richard H. Popkin, 'Theories of Knowledge', in *CHRP*, pp. 668–84 (pp. 677–78).
  127. *L'Intérieur et l'Extérieur: essais sur la poésie et sur le théâtre au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1976), new ed., pp. 57–71 (p. 67).
  128. Rieu, 'Esthétique'; see also Galand-Hallyn, *Yeux*. Michael Randall makes a similar argument in relation to fifteenth-century *rhétoriqueur* poetry: 'Poésie et Religion au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Poétiques*, pp. 238–57. See also Randall's reading of Molinet's *Chapelet des Dames* in *Building Resemblance: Analogical Imagery in the Early French Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). See also François Cornilliat, 'Poésie et Peinture de Molinet à Lemaire', in *Poétiques*, pp. 579–96.
  129. Du Bartas, *Premier Jour de la Sepmaine* (Paris: D. Cotinet, 1584), p. 37. (There is no title page so the effective title page is the page introducing the first part — or 'Day' — of the poem). All quotations from Thévenin will be from this edition.
  130. *Fantaisie* was used with similar senses to *imagination* (and indeed *Poétiques* does not distinguish between the two in its index).

131. The *In Rempublicam* was published *in extenso* once in the sixteenth century (Bâle: Grynaeus, 1534), and its sixth essay was translated and published by Conrad Gesner under the title *Ex commentariis Procli Lycii, philosophi Platonici in libros Platonis de Repub. apologiae quaedam pro Homero, et fabularum aliquot enarrationes* (Zürich: Froschoverus, 1542). Philip Ford, *Ronsard's 'Hymnes': A Literary and Iconographical Study* (Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1997), p. 26.
132. Proclus, *Commentaire sur la république*, transl. and ed. by A. J. Festugière, 3 vols (Paris: Vrin, 1970), 1, 197–213 (p. 199).
133. O'Brien, 'Reasoning'.
134. See Castor, pp. 136–83 (pp. 172–73). See also Brian Barron, 'Poetry and Imagination in the Renaissance', in *Poetry in France: Metamorphoses of a Muse*, ed. by Keith Aspley and Peter France (Edinburgh: EUP, 1992), pp. 61–82.
135. Albert Baur suggested that Scève became Protestant, basing this on the poet's death away from Lyon, as well as the interest shown by Lyonnais humanists in religious reform, and the fact that some members of Scève's family were Protestants: *Maurice Scève et la Renaissance lyonnaise: étude d'histoire littéraire* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1906), especially pp. 126–29. However, Verdun-L. Saulnier shows that it is unlikely that Scève actually became a Protestant: *Maurice Scève (ca. 1500–1560)*, 2 vols (Geneva: Slatkine, 1981), 1, 379–80.
136. Odette de Mourgues linked Scève's *Délie* to 'scientific poetry' since — although there is no metaphysical school in France — she detected a 'metaphysical line' beginning with the *Délie*, dodging the Pléiade, running in an underground way through scientific poetry, coming to the surface again at the end of the sixteenth century and giving its last scattered manifestations in some minor poets of the mid-C17. De Mourgues defined metaphysical poetry as a blend of passion and thought, emotion and intellect, which reflected upon metaphysics or ontological questions, and in which images were not merely decorative but used to embody a particular metaphysical problem. *Metaphysical, Baroque and Précieux Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953).

PART I



The Cosmos In Du Bartas's *Sepmaine*:  
Images Of God And Of War

# Introduction

## ‘Scientific Poetry’: Diverse Representations of Cosmic Causality

The second half of the sixteenth century witnessed the flourishing in French of poetry which focused upon the objects of natural philosophy, that is, upon cosmic phenomena and cosmic processes. However, the poems differ greatly from one another, in particular concerning their representation of causality, that is, the ways in which they account for cosmic change. In addition, the poems highlight differing subject matter: God is more present in some poems than in others, and some describe the whole cosmos whereas others discuss only the heavens or only a particular type of natural-philosophical object (as in Rémy Belleau’s *Pierres Precieuses*). Therefore it is difficult to define the genre or its sub-groups without misrepresenting the depiction of the cosmos in some poems.

Albert-Marie Schmidt, who brought these poems to the attention of scholars in the first half of the twentieth century, designated them as ‘poésie scientifique’.<sup>1</sup> The name continues to be used but it is generally agreed to be anachronistic and unsuitable, since — as I discussed in my Introduction — our concept of ‘science’ did not exist, and the term had a very different meaning within a very different organization of knowledge. To a twenty-first-century reader, natural-philosophical poems constitute a remarkable reminder of our distance from the late sixteenth century, and of the non-essential nature of our own classification of knowledge and discourse: these poems strike us as strange; we cannot fit them easily into our categories of ‘literature’, ‘science’, or ‘religion’.

However, although these poems all surprise us primarily for the same reason (that they versify natural philosophy, or ‘science’), this should not conceal from us the vast differences between them. Some critics have attempted to provide definitions of the genre in its entirety but these tend to be based on selective readings of the corpus. Jan Miernowski suggests that ‘scientific poetry’ is defined by a combination of fiction and causal explanations which are brought together in an attempt to ‘capter le divin’ [grasp the divine].<sup>2</sup> However, the various poems manifest extremely varied attitudes towards fiction and causal accounts.<sup>3</sup> In fact, as I have suggested, poems within the genre differ enormously in assessing the correct way of representing the cosmos and causality.

When it is necessary to refer to all of these poems as a group, I would propose ‘cosmic poetry’ or ‘natural-philosophical poetry’ as relatively unproblematic; nonetheless, for the twenty-first-century reader these terms do not suggest the imbrication of nature and the divine found in some of the poems, even though the divine played an important role in many forms of sixteenth-century natural-philosophical writing. Isabelle Pantin’s term ‘poésie du ciel’ solves this problem but does not represent the entirety of the genre since many ‘natural-philosophical poems’ do not discuss the celestial realm in isolation but rather the whole cosmos or solely sublunary phenomena.

Odette de Mourgues suggested dividing the genre into three broadly chronological groupings: poems of the first category — which include Jacques Peletier Du Mans's *Amour des amours* (1555), Ronsard's *Hymnes* (1555–56), and Maurice Scève's *Microcosme* (1562) — proudly display encyclopaedic knowledge; the second type represents the fragmentation of a previously unified view of knowledge and the cosmos, and includes Jean-Antoine de Baïf's *Premier des Meteores* (1567) and Belleau's *Pierres Precieuses* (1576); finally the third group is constituted of those poems which express a renewed religious aspiration, such as the *Sepmaine* (1578) and its many imitations.<sup>4</sup> De Mourgues's tripartite classification is more convincing than proposed definitions of all cosmic poetry, since it distinguishes poems in terms of their subject matter, including the relative centrality of God.

However, De Mourgues's taxonomy does not consider the types of argument or discourse used to account for cosmic phenomena and change. For example, in Ronsard's *Hymnes*, fiction is extremely important: processes of cosmic transformation are explicated by myths, notably the amorous adventures of the Olympian gods. By contrast, Scève's *Microcosme* (which De Mourgues classifies with Ronsard's *Hymnes*) presents causal explanations in proper rather than allegorical terms (although it does frame these with the fiction of a prophetic dream which Adam recounts to Eve). Furthermore, Jean-Edouard Du Monin — who writes after Du Bartas — attributes a reasonably important role to fiction or allegory, whereas Du Bartas is extremely wary of it.<sup>5</sup> Finally, Baïf's *Premier des Meteores* and Isaac Habert's *Trois Livres des Meteores* presumably both fall into De Mourgues's second category (since they discuss only one part of the universe), but they use predominantly the proper terms of Aristotelian natural philosophy, and in this sense resemble Scève's *Microcosme* far more than the amorous mineral mythologies of Belleau.<sup>6</sup>

Since cosmic poems differ so greatly, my analysis of the *Sepmaine* cannot be taken as representative of the genre as a whole. However, it should be considered in the light of the brief survey of it outlined above, insofar as the *Sepmaine* plays a role in implicit debate about, firstly, the correct way to describe cosmic causality, and, secondly, God's relationship to the cosmos. My reading will focus upon images, that is, upon a mode of representation which provides an alternative to both the proper terms of Aristotelian natural philosophy and also the mythological terms of Ronsardian fictions. It is for this reason that I propose to examine the *Sepmaine*. In addition, the *Sepmaine* was by far the most popular and influential cosmic poem (as well as the most criticized at a later date): there were at least seventy-three French editions of Du Bartas's works between 1574 and 1590, and at least two hundred between 1574 and 1632;<sup>7</sup> the poem inspired a flurry of imitations (by both Catholics and Protestants),<sup>8</sup> two commentaries by the Protestant pastor Simon Goulart and the Catholic Pantaléon Thévenin, and translations into English, Dutch, Latin, German, Italian, Polish, Danish and Swedish.<sup>9</sup>

### The *Sepmaine*: Imagistic Representations of the Divine and the Elemental

Images are fundamental to the poetic style of the *Sepmaine*. As part of a particularly pronounced 'baroque' style,<sup>10</sup> Du Bartas often lists different images for the same object. Images do not always correspond clearly to a particular phenomenon or to

a particular section of the argument. Sometimes one image, or group of related images, seems to direct the movement of the poem. Some individual images are developed at length in the form of epic comparisons: the poet considered himself to be imitating — at least in part — the epic,<sup>11</sup> and, whereas Ronsard tends to employ only discursive epic comparisons imitated directly from an ancient text, Du Bartas also invents his own.<sup>12</sup>

However, this stylistic practice is not used to describe all objects. Images depict primarily that which is not available to the human senses: underlying cosmic processes (the elements and prime matter), God, the soul, and the internal organs and workings of the human body. Images reflect, in part at least, Du Bartas's unwillingness to provide definitive causal accounts for that which cannot be perceived by the senses. The poet does not distrust sensory information but it is not available for all subject matter; Du Bartas does not claim that therefore we can know nothing about such subjects, but he often prefers not to be too authoritative in the knowledge he presents.<sup>13</sup> One solution he finds is to list several explanations rather than deciding upon one: sometimes these are definitely alternatives and each is introduced by 'soit que';<sup>14</sup> elsewhere the causes are apparently not mutually exclusive, and each cause may be introduced by 'puis que' or 'car'.<sup>15</sup> Another solution to the lack of knowledge about imperceptible processes seems to be to represent them through images rather than through definitive causal arguments.

Therefore some sections of the *Sepmaine* are much more imagistic than others. The representation of animals, birds, and plants, for example, is stylistically very different from that of underlying cosmic forces. In the case of the former, the genus is broken down into its species, which are catalogued in lists, not unlike those of the works which Du Bartas probably consulted, such as Pierre Belon's *Histoire de la nature des Oyseaux* (1555) or Pliny's *Natural History*; the poet also lists causes and effects, very often the uses that the various species serve for man. Images are employed only intermittently for visible phenomena, whereas they tend to dominate the depiction of the invisible.<sup>16</sup>

Part I of *Cosmos and Image* will examine those 'objects' which the *Sepmaine* represents imagistically. This corresponds to my concern with not only the specificities of imagistic language but also the divine, the cosmic, and the human. Images represent the divine. They also depict the cosmic forces and matter which, according to sixteenth-century physics, underlie all cosmic phenomena. Of course descriptions of specific cosmic objects, such as a particular type of bird or plant, also play a role in the poet's conception of the cosmos; however, arguably underlying cosmic forces are of central importance for this, as well as constituting the more usual material of natural philosophy. Finally, the human soul also belongs to the category of the invisible, and the human body is discussed at length with reference to the four imperceptible elements which govern all cosmic phenomena. These images render visual that which the reader might otherwise have difficulty picturing but also, I shall suggest, serve to explore similarity and causality in and between the divine, the cosmic, and the human.

Chapter 1 will analyse elemental images of the divine, especially as wind and water. Chapter 2 examines images of cosmic forces, focusing on the depiction of



elemental discord as human warfare, and of the human body as the body politic. The human soul is discussed in Chapter 1, and the human body — as well as human society — in Chapter 2. Thus, Chapter 1 considers objects of theology, and Chapter 2 objects of natural philosophy. However, my heuristic separation of theology and natural philosophy will be belied by a poem in which conceptions of God and of the cosmos are inextricably intertwined. As will become clear, the consequences of this intertwining will be crucial to the claims made in Part I.

During the course of Part I, I will discuss theological writings by Jean Calvin and others, political literature including that of Huguenot resistance theorists, discussions of ‘vicissitude’, and poetry, especially Agrippa d’Aubigné’s *Tragiques* and Pierre Du Val’s *De la Grandeur de Dieu*. These texts have been chosen because the *Sepmaine* touches upon similar questions to those which they address, and employs similar commonplaces or *outils mentaux*, but ultimately does so to different effect. In other words, these other texts serve to situate the *Sepmaine*’s depiction of the world in relation to those of contemporary or near-contemporary writers, and also to highlight its specificities. Therefore I do not examine all facets of the other texts but focus on their treatment of matters which also arise in the *Sepmaine*. For example, although it has already been shown that in general the Huguenot Du Bartas’s thinking differs from Calvin’s,<sup>17</sup> in Chapter 1 I focus on Calvin’s discussion of the *imago dei* in order to pinpoint Du Bartas’s difference from him on this issue, which the poet explores through images.

Finally, since my primary concern is to consider the *Sepmaine* as a case study of an imagistic poem, I shall refer to Du Bartas’s other poetry only occasionally and briefly. Indeed since a key difference between the first and second ‘Weeks’ lies in the greater importance of narrative and the more explicit treatment of theological points in the latter, and since the dual narrative and descriptive aims of the former are crucial to the issues I analyse within it, the *Seconde Semaine* offers a striking contrast to the *Sepmaine* which within the scope of this study it will only be possible to indicate occasionally.

## Notes

1. *La Poésie scientifique en France* (Paris: Éditions Rencontre, 1970).
2. ‘La Poésie scientifique française à la Renaissance: littérature, savoir, alterité’, in *What is Literature? 1100–1600*, ed. by François Cornilliat, Ullrich Langer and Douglas Kelly (Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1993), pp. 85–99.
3. Hallyn’s ‘Poésie et Savoir’ offers a brief but nuanced account of the different ways in which some natural-philosophical poets used narrative and natural-philosophical knowledge. See also Pantin, *Poésie*.
4. De Mourgues, pp. 31–41. Pantin also classifies ‘poésie du ciel’ chronologically.
5. Du Bartas believes that the poetic fictions of Classical mythology are ‘lies’ which betray the divine function of poetry rather than fulfilling it. See the *Sepmaine*, Day II, ll. 1–30; Day IV, 89–91; and *Uranie*, in *Works*, I, 172–85. On Du Bartas and fiction, see also Miernowski, *Dialectique*, pp. 83–97. Le Fèvre de La Boderie, whose *Galliade* was first published in the same year as the *Sepmaine*, expresses similar views: *La Galliade, ou de la Revolution des Arts et Sciences*, ed. by François Roudaut (Paris: Klincksieck, 1993), for example I, 153–64, 361–76, 867–68, 1303–06; V, 1–46.
6. *Le Premier des meteores*, in *Jean-Antoine de Baïf: le premier Livre des poèmes*, ed. by Guy Demerson

- (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1975), and *Les Trois Livres des meteores* (Paris: J. Richier, 1585). Baïf and Habert provide causal accounts without any framing fiction. Habert does give some mythological narratives but reproaches himself for it. Both Baïf and Habert echo Lucretius in emphasizing the importance of 'reason', and of explaining the 'secrets of nature', or the 'secret reason and hidden cause', since the 'wise man' who knows these secrets is not frightened by phenomena such as flaming images in the sky (*Trois Livres*, pp. 10, 14, 19 *passim*; *Premier des meteores*, pp. 57–104, ll. 345–72, 433–34, 641–88). Cf. also Vergil, *Georgics* (London: William Heineman, 1920), p. 150 (2.490).
7. These are Yvonne Bellenger's figures, with the addition of the edition later discovered by Gilles Banderier: Bellenger, *Du Bartas et ses divines semaines* (Paris: Sedes, 1993), pp. 163–67; Banderier, 'Une édition inconnue de la première semaine', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 58 (1996), 681–83.
  8. James Dauphiné, *Guillaume de Saluste Du Bartas: poète scientifique* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1983), pp. 23–26.
  9. Bellenger, *Divines Semaines*, pp. 158–61. In addition, Du Bartas was intensely admired by many members of the Court at Paris: *Works*, I, 13; Marcel Raymond, *L'Influence de Ronsard sur la poésie française, 1550–1585*, 2 vols (Paris: H. Champion, 1927), II, 299–300. Henri-Jean Martin shows that Du Bartas, together with Ronsard, was the French author who figured most frequently in inventories of private libraries (although the numbers of such books recorded are very small): *Livre, pouvoirs et société à Paris au XVIIe siècle (1598–1701)*, 2 vols (Geneva: Droz, 1969), I, 514. On the reception of the *Semaine*, see also Dauphiné, *Poète scientifique*, Chapter 1; Bellenger, *Divines Semaines*, Chapter 7; Michel Magnien, 'Du Bartas en France au XVIIe siècle', in *Du Bartas 1590–1990: actes du colloque international d'Auch-Le Bartas-Pau (6–8 avril 1990)*, ed. by James Dauphiné (Mont-de-Marsan, Landes: Éditions Interuniversitaires, 1992), pp. 45–80; Robert Garapon, 'Sur la renommée posthume de Ronsard et de Du Bartas de 1590 à 1640', *Œuvres et critiques*, 6 (1981), 53–59.
  10. See André Baïche, *La Naissance du baroque français: poésie et image de la Pléiade à Jean de La Ceppède* (Toulouse: Association des Publications de l'Université de Toulouse, 1976). See also Aron Kibédi Varga, 'À la recherche d'un style baroque dans la poésie française: poésie et vision du monde', in Kibédi Varga, Pierre Guiraud, Paul Zumthor and J. A. G. Tans, *Style et Littérature* (The Hague: Van Goor Zonen, 1962), pp. 39–74.
  11. *Brief Advertissement sur sa première et seconde Semaine* (1584), in *Works*, I, 218–24 (p. 220); liminary sonnet in Gabriel de Lerm's Latin translation of the *Semaine* (Paris: M. Gadouleau, 1583), f. 9<sup>v</sup>, cited in Dauphiné's *Poète scientifique*, p. 33, n. 19 and in Bruno Méniel, *Renaissance de l'épopée: la poésie épique en France de 1572 à 1623* (Geneva: Droz, 2004), p. 151. On the relationship of the *Semaine* to the epic, see also Kurt Reichenberger, *Du Bartas und sein Schöpfungsepos* (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1962), *passim*; Denis Bjaï, 'La Semaine, "Œuvre ... en partie héroïque"', *Cahiers textuel*, 13 (1993), 53–72; Bellenger, *Divines semaines*, Chapter 8; Méniel, *Renaissance*, pp. 151–52.
  12. A. Emerson Creore, 'Ronsard, Du Bartas, and the Homeric Comparison', *Comparative Literature*, 3 (1951), 152–59.
  13. Du Bartas does not denigrate the human senses as inducing error as Baïf does; he is scornful of those who interpret sensory information incorrectly, and sensory information itself is not at fault. Thus although he appears to have a mild sceptical position with regard to reason, his trust in the senses falls far short of a card-carrying sceptical position.
  14. The creation of light (I, 459–74), the creation of angels (I, 543–52), the interaction of the elements (II, 47–54), the formation of rain (II, 493–507), the formation of comets (II, 617–24), the water in the heavens (II, 1031–38), the separation by God of water and earth (III, 41–53), the cause of storms at sea (III, 173–81), and the location of the 'soul' in the body (VI, 761–63). See also II, 889–946, which describes how the poet is uncertain about the heavens, sometimes following Aristotle and sometimes Plato; III, 377–92 suggests different possible natural explanations for the support of water then opts for a divine one.
  15. For example, II, 315–42; III, 421–24. Sometimes this is in order to give a divine cause as well as a natural one.
  16. On the didactic and encyclopaedic aspects of the poem, see Banderier, 'Poétique'. On the use of

dialectical places, see Miernowski, *Dialectique*. Marie-Madeleine Fontaine highlights Du Bartas's use of comparisons and concludes that critics have made a mistake in seeing Du Bartas as a representative of a dialectical method: 'A propos de la vulgarisation des sciences dans la poésie du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle français: le cas de Du Bartas', in *De la science en littérature à la science-fiction*, ed. by Danielle Jacquart (Paris: CTHS, 1996), pp. 23–38. However, Fontaine examines primarily Days I and VII, and thus not the catalogues of plants, birds, animals and so on, but rather discussions of God, the universe as a whole, the poem, and man, which are imagistically represented.

17. For example, Pierre Deghilage, 'La Religion de Du Bartas', *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique, Historique, Littéraire et Scientifique du Gers*, 56 (1955), 361–69 (p. 364).

## CHAPTER 1



# Poetry and Theology: Images of the Divine

*Pour mieux contempler Dieu, contempler l'univers<sup>1</sup>*

*[To contemplate the universe in order to better contemplate God]*

### Ontological Images of the Divine

*God, the Creation, and the cosmos: Mosaic physics and natural theology*

Du Bartas rarely engages directly with theological problems in the *Sepmaine*. Nonetheless, like theology, the poem is about God, and God's relationship to his creation; furthermore, I shall suggest, it approaches, in a 'poetic' or 'imagistic' way, some of the questions posed by theology. It is crucial to remember that the dominant modern distinction between religion and science is foreign to sixteenth-century ways of thinking about the relationship between the divine and natural philosophy: the discussion of natural philosophy was not necessarily perceived as separate and distinct from that of God and of his creative act. This is underlined by two late Renaissance phenomena: Mosaic physics and natural theology.

In the late Renaissance, attempts were made to create a 'Mosaic', 'sacred', or 'Christian' physics by grounding natural philosophy in a literal reading of the Bible, especially of Genesis. The Bible was seen as a source of natural-philosophical knowledge to supplement or, in some cases, to replace Aristotle. Such arguments are made in particular by Protestants. For example, the Calvinist Lambert Daneau writes a *Physica Christiana* (1576) which aims to show that the knowledge of physics is contained in the Bible, and that everything in the cosmos exists for the glory and praise of God.<sup>2</sup> The *Physica Christiana* thus has something in common with the hexaemeral endeavour, and indeed places some lengthy extracts from patristic hexaemera prior to its contents page.

Unlike his fellow Huguenot Daneau, Du Bartas makes limited references to Scripture, and does not explicitly allude to a 'Christian physics' or structure his work as a response to questions asked in physics.<sup>3</sup> However, the poet's Catholic commentator Thévenin implies that the claims of Mosaic physics could be made in relation to the *Sepmaine*: he asserts that his tabulation of the poem's contents shows that 'toute la physique qui oncques fut escrite et pourpensee, gist, et consiste en ce I. ch. du Gene' [all the physics which was ever written and judged, lies, and consists in

this first chapter of Genesis].<sup>4</sup> Much of the physics which Du Bartas describes in fact has no clear correlative in the Bible; but then that was often true of 'Mosaic physics'.<sup>5</sup> Du Bartas's very project of depicting and explaining cosmic phenomena as they are created implies that we can know the cosmos by recounting its creation, and that natural-philosophical knowledge is present in Genesis. The crucial point here is that Du Bartas's evocations of physics are prompted by the Biblical creation narrative, which, in sixteenth-century France, could be seen as a genuine path to natural-philosophical knowledge rather than simply as a narrative device to present it.

If natural-philosophical knowledge could be gleaned from the Bible, it was also proposed that knowledge of the divine could be derived from the cosmos; once again, this is alien to a dominant modern distinction between religion and science. The cosmos — and individual cosmic phenomena, including and especially man — were images of God because God had created the cosmos precisely to be an image, or 'mirror', of himself; the effects of the Creation (the cosmic and the human) bore witness to their cause (the divine). Thus cosmic and human *things* were what I have termed 'ontological images' of the divine: that is, cosmic and human *things* stood in for the divine; by contrast, where 'linguistic images' of the divine are concerned, it is *words* referring to the cosmic and the human which stand in for the divine.<sup>6</sup>

The status of cosmic and human phenomena as images of God meant that they could play a crucial role in natural theology, that is, in the rational knowledge of God using arguments from nature without the need for faith or Scripture. Calvin frequently described the *imago dei* and the manifestation of God's glory in the cosmos, and the theme generally had great appeal with Protestant writers, particularly in apologetic writing in the last quarter of the sixteenth century and in the seventeenth century.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Du Bartas emphasizes his desire to perceive God in the cosmos, evoking this project much more directly than that of Mosaic physics. At the beginning of the *Sepmaine*, the poet — in an apostrophe to God, a sort of prayer — outlines his objectives. He appeals to God for help in his poetic task, and expresses clearly his aim to narrate the creation of the cosmos, to describe the created cosmos, and to perceive God's presence within it.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Du Bartas does not get very far in his narrative before restating these natural-theological aims at great length: seventy lines later, he emphasizes that the cosmos bears the marks of its Creator, and a long list of comparisons suggests that God's image is painted 'sur le front' [on the brow] of his creation, that the universe is a 'mirror' or 'manteau' [cloak] for God, a school where God's 'honneur' is taught, a staircase which gradually elevates us to the heavens, a room where God's riches are displayed, a bridge which permits us to cross the sea of divine mysteries, a cloud through which God's divinity shines, a theatre where his qualities play their roles, and a book in which his 'admirable artifice' can be read (97–154).

It is telling to note why the poet returns so quickly to the issue of perceiving God in the cosmos. After the initial prayer mentioned above, Du Bartas commences the narrative of the Creation. Evoking the role of the Trinity in the Creation, he alludes to the simultaneous sameness and difference of its three persons (65–75). He then reproaches himself for addressing this question, suggesting it can bring about the 'shipwreck' of the cognitive quest (76–88) by depending too heavily upon

reason (79). The Trinity represents a deeply difficult, meaningful and risky issue, and the poet would rather love it than analyse it (90–98).<sup>9</sup> He prefers not to try to ascend to the heavens or contemplate God face to face, but rather to examine his creation in order to perceive him within it (97–154).

Thus Du Bartas chooses natural theology over another possible form of theology. The description of the cosmos is necessary to the poet's aim of knowing God since he expresses profound doubts concerning attempts to do so by reasoning about his trinitarian nature. In addition, like Calvin and other Calvinist poets, Du Bartas also rejects the other extreme of considering the cosmos as an object in itself: as for Calvin, perceiving God in the cosmos is a middle road between, on the one hand, trying to contemplate God directly and, on the other, viewing the cosmos in itself rather than in its relation to God.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the dual generic nature of the *Sepmaine* (hexaemeral and natural-philosophical) is, for Du Bartas, fundamental.

### *The image of God*

Opinions about the potential of natural theology varied greatly. It was generally agreed that humankind was unable to read the book of nature properly because of the Fall; thus the second book of Scripture was necessary. However, some emphasized this limitation more than others. The fifteenth-century writer Ramon Sabunde was very positive about the possibilities of natural theology, inferring from the cosmos not only the existence of God but also the doctrines of the Trinity, the Creation, and the Fall and Redemption of man. Sabunde's work is preserved in many MS and printed editions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and was famously translated by Montaigne.<sup>11</sup> However, although popular, it is unlikely that readers accepted all of its ideas, even if many were less sceptical than Montaigne. Late sixteenth-century Protestant apologists used Sabunde without following him in all points.<sup>12</sup>

For Calvin, man could deduce God's existence from the cosmos, and thus had no excuse for ignoring it; however, Calvin suggests, fallen man cannot gain further knowledge of God through nature alone. The necessity of supernatural revelation, Scripture, and faith are central to the Protestant Reform. Other Protestant writers including Philippe Duplessis-Mornay,<sup>13</sup> Pierre Viret and Pierre de La Primaudaye<sup>14</sup> similarly stressed limits upon natural knowledge of God. Nonetheless, the Protestant theologians Melancthon, Bullinger and Bucer do not go as far as Calvin's emphasis upon man being 'almost blind',<sup>15</sup> and Zwingli and his followers also differed from Calvin on this point.<sup>16</sup> In the genre of Protestant apologetic writing which began to be important in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, some writers highlight less than Calvin the limits upon the natural knowledge of God, and display a greater confidence in reason, since they are not assuming a reader who shared their faith; these writers certainly used not only Calvin but also Sabunde.<sup>17</sup> The *Théologie naturelle* of the Protestant minister Georges Pacard (1574) is less strict than that of Duplessis-Mornay.<sup>18</sup>

As Jan Miernowski and Josiane Rieu have observed, Du Bartas's depiction of natural theology also differs from that of Calvin.<sup>19</sup> His images of the cosmos as



a theatre, a school, a mirror, a room, an image, and a garment are familiar from the first book of Calvin's *Institution de la religion chrétienne* and the preface to his commentary on Genesis.<sup>20</sup> However, he seems more confident than Calvin in the power of cosmic phenomena to serve as images of God, insofar as he omits to mention the Fall in this context, and indeed mentions it relatively rarely in the *Première Sepmaine*;<sup>21</sup> by contrast, according to both Jacques Pineaux and Albert-Marie Schmidt, Calvinist poets usually emphasized the dependence of the natural-theological project upon acquaintance with the Scriptures, thanks to God's grace and Christian revelation.<sup>22</sup> As Rieu points out, Du Bartas's project of describing cosmic objects as he narrates God's creation of them means that he is able to confuse the postlapsarian world with the prelapsarian one in which nature is still a readable book, and man is still a perfect image of God.<sup>23</sup> The omission of the Fall from the poet's discussion is in line with his general practice in the *Sepmaine* of avoiding complicated and potentially controversial theological issues; however, it is also crucial in justifying his double project of writing about the cosmos and God.

Calvin does say that 'les plus rudes et idiots' manage to read something in the book of nature (*Institution*, I.v.2) but elsewhere claims that 'readings' by those without faith and Scripture produce false beliefs and thus take them further away from God. By contrast, Du Bartas marvels at the 'reading' abilities of the 'Antarctique brutal' although he acknowledges that they are greatly surpassed by those of the faithful.<sup>24</sup> As Rieu notes, the limitation upon natural knowledge of God which the poet does discuss is that some might foolishly choose not to pursue it, like the child at school who prefers to look at the decorations in a book than to read it (155–62). In addition, Du Bartas changes Calvin's image of the 'spectacles of Scripture' which enable us to read the book of nature to 'spectacles of faith';<sup>25</sup> while faith may imply Scripture, nonetheless the poet does not mention Scripture directly as Calvin does.<sup>26</sup>

However, Du Bartas is also extremely distant from Sabunde's confident faith in reason (although he represents natural theology using commonplaces popularized by Sabunde's writing).<sup>27</sup> Du Bartas does not use the cosmos to make specific arguments about the nature or essence of God, beyond saying that it manifests his power, greatness, love, and so on;<sup>28</sup> or, on Day II, suggesting that the interactions of the elements manifest the wisdom of God's choice to separate them out of the chaos.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, as we have seen, the poet's decision to perceive God in the cosmos is implicitly opposed to the application of reason to the Trinity. Thus, Du Bartas expresses confidence in man's ability to perceive the cosmos as image of the divine, but not in the powers of human reason to derive from these images answers to tricky questions concerning the nature of the divine.

In Genesis, it is of course man who is said to be made in the 'image and resemblance' of God (1.26). However, Luther had maintained emphatically that the image of God in man had been ruined by the Fall, even if some tiny relic of it might remain. Calvin, on the other hand, while treating the *imago dei* in complex ways, certainly implied more strongly than Luther the continued existence of the *imago dei*,<sup>30</sup> asserting that the image of God, while present in creation in general, was found especially in man, and particularly in the human soul.<sup>31</sup> However, while celebrating human capacities fairly extensively, Calvin also stressed quite

categorically the obliteration of the image of God in man; Francis M. Higman explains that the emphasis upon its destruction is usually in polemical contexts where Calvin contends that the qualities of fallen man are entirely useless from the point of view of salvation, an argument central, of course, to the theological disputes of the Reformation.<sup>32</sup> For Calvin, man ought to be aware not only of Adam's similarity to God but also of fallen man's difference from God.<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, even when claiming the absolute annihilation of the *imago dei*, Calvin often uses expressions like 'presques du tout' [almost entirely] or 'quelques restes' [some remainder], which imply that the annihilation in question is in fact not quite absolute.<sup>34</sup> In short, the question of man's difference from — and imaging of — God was a very live one in the sixteenth century, and central in Protestant challenges to Catholic thought.

Du Bartas refers briefly to man as an image of God on Day VII of the *Sepmaine*, when arguing that God does intervene in the cosmos: since man's humanity stems from certain qualities, it follows that God, of whom man is but a 'mort image' (VII, 109) must also have those qualities of 'Justice, Soin, Conseil, Amour, Bonté, Pouvoir' (VII, 108). Thus man as image of God — albeit a 'dead' image — tells us something about God. However, a lengthier insight into Du Bartas's perception of man is provided on Day VI, when Du Bartas considers first the human body and then the human soul, in accordance with the order of creation suggested by Genesis. He stresses the wonders of the body, and then argues that while the soul cannot be perceived directly, it can be apprehended in its effects, namely in manifestations of human memory, cognition and creation.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, Calvin describes the capabilities of the human soul — its ability to 'journey' through the secrets of nature, through the heavens and the earth, and to retain many things in memory — in order to argue that these capacities clearly exceed those of the body. However, Calvin claims to have touched upon them relatively briefly since, for the Christian reader, it is sufficient simply to be aware of them (*Institution*, I.xv.2); man should not be too confident of his powers.<sup>36</sup> By contrast, as critics have observed, Du Bartas portrays them at great length (VI, 755–932), and describes the soul as divine (759, 855, 906). Du Bartas's discussion echoes in some points that of Marsilio Ficino, who highlighted human achievements in order to demonstrate the immortality and furthermore the divinity of the human soul.<sup>37</sup> Du Bartas evokes human creations which are indistinguishable from their counterparts created by God, and strongly emphasizes that they reveal man's similarity to God. In addition, within the narrative of God's creation, he depicts at length man as a creator; within a description of the signs of God within his creation, he also discusses the signs of the human soul in its creations.<sup>38</sup> I quote a short extract from a longer passage:

Ce chatouilleux desir, qui te fait imiter  
 Les ouvrages plus beaux du nom-feint Jupiter,  
 Porte par ces effects fidelle tesmoignage  
 De ton extraction, et que son saint image  
 Fut en tout ame empreint quand son esprit vivant,  
 Pour animer ton corps, t'emplit d'un sacré vent,  
 Car comme il est tout beau, ton ame est toute belle,  
 Comme il est immortel, ton ame est immortelle.

Il ne chomme jamais, et ton entendement  
Est tousjours en travail, à l'erte, en mouvement. (VI, 909–18)

[This keen desire, which makes you imitate the most beautiful works of the non-feigned Jupiter, bears in these effects faithful witness of your extraction, and that his holy image was imprinted in every soul when his living spirit, in order to animate your body, filled you with a holy wind, for as he is all beautiful, your soul is all beautiful, as he is immortal, your soul is immortal. He is never idle, and your understanding is always at work, vigilant, in movement.]

Du Bartas does briefly mention that man's divinity has been 'effaced',<sup>39</sup> and yet almost two hundred lines have just described it in the present tense.

*God's 'breath' and the human soul*

Du Bartas's discussion of the human soul, like that of Calvin, for example, also treats verse 2.7 from Genesis in which God is said to have breathed his spirit into man.<sup>40</sup> In the Geneva Bible, the verse reads as follows: 'Or le Seigneur Dieu avoit forme l'homme de la pouldre de la terre, et inspire en la face d'iceluy 'spiration de vie, et l'homme fut faict en ame vivante' [God had formed man from the dust of the earth, and breathed into his face the aspiration of life, and man was made into a living soul]. Similarly, the Vulgate gives 'formavit igitur Dominus Deus hominem de limo terrae et inspiravit in faciem eius spiraculum vitae et factus est homo in animam viventem'. In the Geneva translation, a note in the margin pertaining to the word 'spiration [sic]' gives alternative translations: 'Ou, souffle, halaine. C. esprit vital'.<sup>41</sup>

Calvin, like Augustine in his *Two Books On Genesis Against the Manichees* II.8 (pp. 104–07), discusses Genesis 2.7 in detail in order to argue that we must not interpret it as meaning that a part of the nature of God was turned into the soul of man. Calvin emphasizes that the verse does not imply that a portion of divinity flowed into man to form his soul; the soul is not of the essence of God like a shoot is from a plant, or a branch cut off a tree; creation is not a transfusion of God's divinity; humankind is God's lineage in quality rather than in substance. Otherwise God would be subject to change and to passions and all the vices of the human soul. Augustine — the most important patristic writer, of course, for many Reformation thinkers — expresses a similar concern that if the nature of God were turned into the soul of man then God would be subject to sin and imperfection; in addition, he observes that it would suggest that God were contained by place.

Du Bartas treats rather differently from Augustine and Calvin the issue of God's non-separation. He does state repeatedly that God neither divided himself nor shared his essence with his creation (715–16); God lost nothing (717), and man received only qualities from God but took none of his substance ('rien de [...]', 729), not 'la moindre portion' (723) [the least portion]. However, alongside these echoes of Augustine and Calvin, the poet also claims that man receives 'quelque petit' [some small] stream of divinity, and 'quelque' [some] glow of celestial light. The expressions 'quelque petit' and 'quelque' rather contrast with the emphatic 'rien' and not 'la moindre portion'.<sup>42</sup> This apparent contradiction is rather like that which Higman describes in Calvin's writing about the *imago dei* but it is accentuated

and, crucially, does not describe the persistence of the image of God in fallen man but rather the delicate question of God's 'breathing' upon man. Du Bartas asserts that God does not divide his divinity, yet also that man is given 'some small' stream of it:

Or ce docte Imager pour son œuvre animer,  
Ne prit de l'air, du feu, de terre, de la mer,  
Une cinquième essence, ains poussant son haleine  
Il fit comme couler de la vive fontaine  
De sa divinité quelque petit ruisseau  
Dans les sacrez conduits de ce fresle vaisseau.  
Non qu'il se demembrast, non qu'il fist un partage  
De sa triple-une essence avec son propre ouvrage,  
Ains, sans perdre le sien, d'un soufle il le rendit  
Riche de ses vertus, et puissant respandit  
Si bien ses rais sur luy qu'encor mesme il luy reste  
Quelque lustre apparent de la clarté celeste. (VI, 709–20)

[Now this learned Image-maker to animate his work, did not take from air, from fire, from earth, from the sea, a fifth essence, rather emitting his breath he made 'as if' flowing some small stream from the live fountain of his divinity into the sacred conduits of this frail vessel. Not that he dismembered himself, not that he shared his triple-unitary essence with his own work, rather, without losing his own, with a breath he rendered it rich with his virtues, and powerfully spread so well his rays on him that there even now remains in him some manifest glow of celestial brightness.]

Whereas Calvin and Augustine emphasized the non-separation of God, Du Bartas is rather more enigmatic, evoking 'some small' transfer of divinity and then, conversely, denying this ('Non qu'il [...]').

Similarly, a few lines later, Du Bartas states of God's breath that 'ce n'estoit qu'un vent':

Bref, ce n'estoit qu'un vent: or le vent, bien qu'il sorte  
Du creux de l'estomach, toutesfois il n'emporte  
Rien de nostre substance, ains seulement retient  
Les pures qualitez de la part dont il vient. (727–30).

[In short, it was nothing but a wind: now wind, although it leaves the hollow of the stomach, nonetheless it takes nothing of our substance, but only retains the pure qualities of the part from which it comes]

The reference to wind ostensibly demonstrates that God shared with man not substance but only qualities yet, nonetheless, 'ne [...] que [...]', like 'quelque petit', once again implies that God did give *something* to man, albeit something that was only 'wind'. Thus apparently categorical statements about the 'nothing' conveyed to man from God's substance are coupled with references to something which nonetheless was transferred.

Our understanding of that which was passed on to man depends upon how we interpret Du Bartas's 'stream', 'glow' and 'wind'. The poet's discussion differs from that of Calvin and Augustine in referring to what God gave man not only in abstract terms of substance and quality but also through images. For example,

whereas Calvin stated that divinity did not flow into man as if in a transfusion, Du Bartas creates an image precisely of this, perhaps inspired by Psalm 36, as Goulart suggests,<sup>43</sup> or by Lactantius:<sup>44</sup> God 'fit comme couler de la vive fontaine / De sa divinité quelque petit ruisseau' (712–13). Although the poet immediately proceeds to state that this did not imply dividing God's essence, he nonetheless suggests that the image of pouring has some role to play in our understanding what God did when he 'breathed' in Genesis 2.7.

Since both man and the divine are represented as water, a sense of similarity is created between them. If God's divinity is a '*fontaine*' then man receives 'quelque petit *ruisseau*' (712–13): thus, whereas Lactantius suggests that man's soul comes from God's spirit, and uses the image of the fountain, Du Bartas adds the '*ruisseau*' to further emphasize a similarity between the soul and its divine source. The image of the *fontaine* and *ruisseaux* was used by Calvin to represent the Trinity,<sup>45</sup> whose persons are 'non divers en essence' (I, 72), as Du Bartas observed before reproaching himself for his temerity in addressing such a subject; the application of the image to the divine and *man*, with whom God did not share his 'essence' (II, 715–16), is more surprising in the degree of identity implied between the two.

Similarly, where God has '*rais*', man receives 'quelque lustre apparent de la clarté celeste' (718–20). Like those of water, images of light are used for both the human and the divine.<sup>46</sup> Du Bartas does not seem as concerned as Augustine and Calvin to stress man's difference from God, since he does not mention man's sin, but, furthermore, rather than simply neglecting the question of difference, the poet uses images which point to similarity between the human and the divine: linguistic images accentuate the degree to which man is an ontological image of God. The poet began his discussion by referring to man as an 'image vantée' (708) and to God as an 'Imager' (709), thus emphasizing that God created man as an image of himself; the cosmic images used for both the human and the divine underscore a closeness between man and that which he ontologically images, namely God. Cosmic images are used to imply similarities between the human and the divine (as well as, perhaps, between the cosmic and the divine).

The conception of God's 'spirit' or 'breath' as 'wind' stems from the Old Testament, in which the Hebrew word *rûach* carries these diverse meanings. God's spirit was designated with other Hebrew words too, such as *neshâmâh*, used in Genesis 2.7 to describe the 'breath' which animated man; however, in some passages the two words are used in parallel (including in contexts which designate God as he who gives life, the sense with which we are concerned in Genesis 2.7).<sup>47</sup> Thus Biblical references to God's *spiritus* could evoke the image of wind. Furthermore, the challenge posed to translators by the polysemy of *rûach* was well-known. For example, with reference to Genesis 1.2, Luther observed that *rûach* can mean either *spiritus* or *ventus*, and translated it differently at different times; Calvin, for his part, was absolutely clear that *spiritus* was the best translation, and explained this preference in his commentary on Genesis.<sup>48</sup> Du Bartas's more specific image of the wind which leaves the stomach is, as Reichenberger observes,<sup>49</sup> familiar from Augustine's *De anima*. However, it is important to note that Augustine evokes this comparison in order to discredit it: he dwells at length upon its unsuitability and

upon the errors into which it leads the Christian, namely the belief that God made the soul out of himself. By contrast, Du Bartas employs the comparison precisely to make an argument about the nature of the divine.

As Augustine suggested, the very use of an image from the human realm suggests similarities between God and man. However, Du Bartas insists that the image is necessary: 'ce n'estoit qu'un vent'. The 'breath' in Genesis 2.7 was 'nothing but a wind', or 'nothing other than a wind'. This seems to indicate that 'wind' is in some sense a proper description of the breath. The assertion that 'it was nothing other than a wind' implies once again that there was *something*, and, furthermore, that it should be termed *vent*. If that which was given to man can only be termed *vent*, then this image is indispensable. The frequency of images throughout the passage has similar implications: images are of central importance in exploring the mystery of God's 'breath'. In addition to the images of light, water, and wind, Du Bartas also evokes other comparisons with which Calvin disagreed in the *Institution*, namely those with the bud which is born from a shoot, and with human lineage (rather than lineage of 'qualities' alone).

#### *Ontological images and linguistic images*

Du Bartas uses precisely the images which Calvin and Augustine mistrusted, and exploits the implications of these images which the theologians argued against. Furthermore, quite apart from these particular images, the poet's imagistic style differs greatly from the clear argumentative styles of Calvin and Augustine. Images are not surprising in poetry in general or in Du Bartas's in particular; however, here the poet chooses to employ them in what is essentially Biblical commentary. While cosmic images for the divine are widely used in the Bible,<sup>50</sup> the legitimacy of conceiving the divine through analogy with the natural had become an increasingly controversial question, described by Higman as 'one of the great philosophical conflicts of the sixteenth century, one which goes beyond the division between Catholic and Reformed, and is prolonged in the thought of Montaigne: the conflict between Aquinas and Augustine in theological thought', that is, between the divergent opinions according to which, in one case, it is legitimate to know the spiritual through analogy with the sensible, and, in the other, it is in and through the soul that one knows God.<sup>51</sup> This controversy had implications for the use of linguistic images.

As I have discussed, Protestant theologians, including Calvin, tended to suggest that ontological images of God (human or cosmic phenomena which image the divine) could lead postlapsarian man to false notions of the divine. Attempts to infer something about the divine from the human or cosmic would produce a notion of the divine sullied by the human or the cosmic, just as deducing something about God's breath from the human or cosmic realms would imply God's imperfection. Although the only knowledge of God possible is analogical, we must use analogies in a way that makes it clear that they are to be seen as nothing in comparison with God.

These views of analogy and difference are crucial to fundamental Calvinist challenges to Catholic doctrine. For Calvin, the Catholic doctrine of transubstan-



tiation is based on a misunderstanding of analogy, which is supposed to lead us from the visible to the invisible; transubstantiation is a human 'imagination'.<sup>52</sup> It amounts to contaminating or polluting God with the impurity of man and of the elements.<sup>53</sup> In their celebration of the Eucharist, French Protestants were repeatedly reminded that divine power was not to be confused with visible 'earthly and corruptible elements'.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, Catholic veneration of Mary — veneration which seemed to some more like adoration, blurring the theological distinction between the two — is based on assigning to the human attributes that properly belong to the divine.<sup>55</sup>

As is well known, these concerns about the proper separation of the divine and the non-divine rendered problematic the use of visual images. They constitute the theological explanation (as distinct from social explanations) for the iconoclasm which began in the 1520s and continued with vehemence into the 1570s. Most of the Protestant groups, with the exception of Lutherans and Moravians, were uneasy, and frequently antagonistic, to the visual arts in church.<sup>56</sup> According to David Freedberg, *all* sixteenth-century interdictions concerning visual art ultimately concerned the distinction between the everyday and the sacred.<sup>57</sup> Visual images tended to be treated as if they were relics, worthy of adoration rather than simply veneration, and the Council of Trent decree of 1563 responded to criticism of images by claiming that one venerated them not because any divinity was believed to inhere in them but rather because the honour paid to them passed on to the subjects they represented.<sup>58</sup> In other words, debates raged about whether it was legitimate to approach the divine through visual images, and what it meant to do so.

The concern about distinguishing between the divine and the non-divine had implications for linguistic images as well as visual ones. For Calvin, comparisons risked disguising the true nature of God by implying too great a similarity between the invisible world of the divine and the visible world of the cosmos: they are aligned with 'imagination' and 'inventions' used pejoratively.<sup>59</sup> In his commentaries, according to Olivier Millet, Calvin is sensitive to the use of images. He often describes them as *aptum*, thus interpreting them as 'appropriate' and as playing a necessary didactic role. Calvin is obviously uncomfortable about the incongruity of some Biblical images, and warns his reader against the danger of interpreting the subject matter too much in terms of that to which it is compared. He has a tendency to consider every detail of an image as corresponding to a detail of the argument, and is clearly uneasy if it does not.<sup>60</sup>

This affected Calvin's own use of language. Calvin employs images which are either taken from the Bible or similar to Biblical images, thus presumably warding off the danger of creating comparisons without the guide of Scripture. Moreover, Calvin often converts Biblical metaphors into similes, so that the divine and the cosmic are presented as similar rather than being identified: 'what was poetic and representative in the Bible becomes intellectual and illustrative with Calvin'.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, passages explaining doctrine usually contain only the occasional, isolated image.<sup>62</sup> Such images are always subordinated to the theological argument in question and are not elaborated for the purposes of ornamentation. Thus, images are formulated as similitudes which clearly illustrate a particular point in the argument. More generally, Calvin clearly delineates the meanings of words.<sup>63</sup>

Calvin's use of simile rather than metaphor differs not only from the medieval tradition but also from Luther, who believes, for example, that 'ein feste Burg ist unser Gott' [a mighty fortress is our God], and who, of course, upheld the doctrine of the Real Presence.<sup>64</sup> However, Calvin's abstract and analytical style was widely admired. The Protestant Pierre Viret, while using many similes, did so in a way which aimed at clarity of comprehension, and Higman suggests that this is 'not unrepresentative' of the Genevan Reformers. Moreover, in the second half of the sixteenth century, Catholic writers responded to the Protestant challenge not only by publishing works of expository theology and Biblical commentary in French but also by doing so in a style inspired by that of Calvin, which differed greatly from that of pre-Reformation devotional texts with their frequent use of images. Thus, Higman suggests, Calvin influenced the theological writing not only of other Calvinist or Reformed thinkers but also of Catholics.<sup>65</sup> Finally, Melancthon's new rhetorical genre intended for university teachers but particularly for preachers, the 'genre didascalique', similarly advised using figures only with care and never where a proper term would suffice; the goal here, as for Calvin, was clarity.<sup>66</sup>

In its use of images in particular, Du Bartas's treatment of Genesis 2.7 is stylistically very different from this ideal of writing epitomized above all by Calvin. Rather than occasional images, the discussion of God's breath employs a series of different ones. The poet has clearly stated that God used his own breath rather than the four elements to animate man but he obviously believes that the breath can be *imaged* in the elemental.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, while Du Bartas's comparisons may appear to be intended to illustrate a more abstract statement (that God did not divide his tripartite essence), they do not so much illustrate it as make a different portion of the argument ('ains [...]); moreover, as we have seen, they do not really disprove the notion of God's 'separation' but rather imply that God did indeed share something with man.<sup>68</sup> As I have explained, Du Bartas tends to employ images whenever describing something not perceptible by the senses; this applies to his treatment of the divine as well as the cosmic. The Protestant poet is able to use images in a way that the Protestant theologian does not.

We have already seen that Du Bartas chooses to consider the ontological image of the cosmos rather than to reason about God's Trinitarian nature; in addition, he does so by using linguistic images. As I explained in my Introduction, the parallel between ontological images and linguistic ones could justify human imagination or poetic imagination more specifically. Certainly Du Bartas's Catholic commentator Thévenin writes as if poetic images could be equated with ontological ones: he describes Du Bartas's comparison of God's breath to the *vent* which leaves the human stomach as a 'similitude pour eslever les plus grossiers en consideration de l'origine de l'ame' (p. 610) [a similitude to elevate the most obtuse into consideration of the origin of the soul]. This recalls natural-theological descriptions of the power of the *cosmos* to teach even the uneducated about God:<sup>69</sup> here instruction does not derive from the ontological image of the cosmos itself but rather from a poetic image, as if poetic images were a way of apprehending God. Du Bartas's relatively positive view concerning natural knowledge of God may stem from an approach to God through the cosmos which is indebted less to reason than to the imagination (in the sixteenth-century sense of the term, that is, the use of images).

In the rest of this chapter, I shall examine more closely the ways in which Du Bartas uses images in representations of the divine. I shall show that he associates a shifting nexus of divine, human and cosmic meanings in a way which very much goes against Calvin's concern to clearly delineate the meaning of words; in addition, the same image may shift between identifying two terms and comparing them, thereby, I shall suggest, pointing to questions about the degree and status of similarity between them. Thus Du Bartas's images do not simply illustrate a meaning which can be clearly expressed in proper terms, but signify differently from proper terms. Furthermore, Du Bartas's imagistic language can be difficult to make sense of, and calls attention to itself, thereby encouraging the reader to think not only about the divine but also about 'image-thinking' about the divine. While some writers cautioned that images should simply be shunned, in order to avoid implying a similarity between the divine and the non-divine, Du Bartas chooses to use images in complex ways which, I shall argue, serve to explore the relationship between the divine and the non-divine, as well as the ways in which images can be employed to think about this relationship.

### Poetic Images of the Divine

#### *Rewriting the 'De rerum natura': cosmic images in a Christian universe*

After narrating the creation of the soul, Du Bartas argues that it can be perceived in its effects just as the wind can be perceived in its effects upon the landscape, and unseen scents in their effects upon our nostrils, and unseen sounds in their effects upon us (VI, 732–88, especially 743–60). As Stéphane Lamacz has observed, this passage is imitated from Lucretius's *De rerum natura*:<sup>70</sup> Lucretius similarly uses the examples of the wind and scents to argue that we can gain knowledge of something invisible but, in Lucretius's case, the invisible constitutes atoms rather than the soul. Lucretius became popular in the sixteenth century in particular through Denys Lambin's 1563 edition and commentary. Furthermore, Simone Fraisse claims that Du Bartas had read the *De rerum natura* more closely than any other writer of his period except Montaigne,<sup>71</sup> and suggests that, with the exception of Montaigne, Lucretius's appeal was greatest to poets.<sup>72</sup>

Du Bartas's interest in the *De rerum natura* is predictable, since the *Sepmaine* resembles it both in cosmic subject matter and in length. However, the world-views of the two poems differ enormously, and it might seem especially startling that Du Bartas imitates Lucretius's images in a discussion of the soul, which has implications for the relationship between the divine and the human. Where the soul is concerned, one might have expected Du Bartas's images to be adapted solely from Scripture or from Christian theology. However, I will suggest that Du Bartas's way of employing Lucretius's images inscribes his difference from Lucretius — that is, inscribes his Christian world-view — and also reflects upon what that world-view implies for the use of images.

Lamacz, who focuses upon sensory perception in the *Sepmaine*, claims that Du Bartas retains the 'positions sensualistes' of the *De rerum natura* but abandons its logical argument, replacing reason with faith, and the Epicurean with a Christian

empiricist. Of course, Lucretius did aim to undermine religious faith, maintaining that the soul was composed of atoms and would disintegrate with the body. However, Du Bartas does not *replace reason* with faith. Whereas, in the twenty-first century, belief in an immortal soul bestowed by God is usually considered to require faith, in the sixteenth century the existence of this soul — like that of God — was often thought self-evident, and demonstrable by reason without revelation.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, rather than simply describing sensory perceptions, Du Bartas, like Lucretius, constructs an argument based on a comparison, suggesting that if one invisible object can be perceived in its effects, then so can another. Therefore, within the context of sixteenth-century Christian belief, we cannot classify Du Bartas's argument as devoid of reason. Instead, rather like the Protestant apologists of the final quarter of the century, Du Bartas engages with non-Christian views by arguing about the divine from nature.<sup>74</sup>

The fundamental difference between Lucretius and Du Bartas concerns the types of invisible entity which they judge to exist, and which they believe can be compared with visible phenomena. Lucretius apprehends the sensory effects of invisible physical objects, and compares two physical processes (the effects of atoms and the effects of winds). By contrast, Du Bartas perceives the sensory effects of a divine phenomenon (the soul's 'divin pouvoir' [divine power]), and compares a physical process (the effects of winds) with a divine one (the effects of the soul). Thus Du Bartas rewrites a Lucretian comparison, demonstrating that it can be marshalled to attest not to an atomistic universe with no loving God but, conversely, to a universe in which the marvellous effects of a human soul bear witness to its divine provenance: the poet's use of this comparison contributes to a reformulation of the *De rerum natura* into a Christian epic.

Lucretius supposes that natural phenomena can only be compared with other natural phenomena, whereas, as the *Sepmaine* shows, from a Christian standpoint like Du Bartas's, nature also images the divine. Indeed, if we replace Du Bartas's Lucretian imitation in its context in the *Sepmaine*, we can clearly perceive a suggestion by the poet that Lucretius's images are *better* suited to a Christian argument than to an Epicurean one. The passage closely follows Du Bartas's assertion that 'ce n'estoit qu'un vent', and is introduced by the statement that 'ce vent je veux descrire' [I want to describe this wind]. Thus, at the point when the *vent* appears as a *comparison* for the soul, it has already been used as a *name* for it, including in the line which initiates the discussion. Furthermore, when the poet first refers to the meteorological wind (743), it is not clarified for another twelve lines that he intends to compare it with the soul, although the reader might guess this; therefore, when the poet alludes to the (meteorological) *vent*, the reader is all the more likely — in his efforts to make sense of the passage — to connect it to the *vent[s]* which have previously been mentioned, namely the divine breath or the human soul.

Therefore the context in which Du Bartas imitates Lucretius implies that the wind may be similar to the soul in a much more real sense than it is to underlying cosmic forces. Lucretius's image of the wind appears arbitrary by comparison with Du Bartas's. Du Bartas suggests that using images can be more complex than the

recognition of two realities which are similar but separate: in the case of *vent*, divine and cosmic realities can be represented by the same word, as if their similarity were closer to identification than to resemblance. In Du Bartas's depiction of the soul, images associated with wind have a singular significance; it is for this reason that, by contrast with Charles Toutain, who also imitates this passage from Lucretius (and who specifies that 'l'Ame [...] n'a rien [...] de vent', f. 35<sup>r</sup> [the Soul contains nothing of wind]), Du Bartas did not utilize other comparisons (such as noise, growth, heat, and cold) from the long list in the relevant passage in the *De rerum natura*.<sup>75</sup> The wind has a special status as image of the soul and of the divine, and is particularly well-suited for representing them.

### *The status(es) of images*

When Du Bartas affirms of God's 'breath' that 'ce n'estoit qu'un vent', he asserts the centrality of this image but perhaps thereby undermines the importance of his earlier ones, calling into question the value of the images of light and water. Whereas the poet had said that man received 'some small stream' and 'some glow' of celestial light, now he declares that God gave 'nothing but wind'. Not only is the transfer of divinity suggested by 'quelque petit ruisseau' denied ('non qu'il fist un partage [...]') but, in addition, the image is rendered problematic by another one which claims to be the only possible representation of God's breath. The imaging of the divine as water and light thus seems to be provisional and open to question.<sup>76</sup>

The images of lineage and the bud, which Calvin considered flawed, also seem to be both employed and denied in the *Sepmaine*. Du Bartas states that man did not take the least portion of God's substance, like the son receives his essence from that of his father, or like the bud / vine is born from the shoot / branch. The syntax in the poem, as in my paraphrase, is ambiguous: syntactically speaking, it is unclear whether the poet means that God's creation of man was like or unlike the birth of the son or of the bud. Given that the poet has already stated apparently quite unambiguously that God did not share his essence (715–16), we are invited to interpret these lines as differentiating between the creation of man, on the one hand, and that of sons and buds on the other. However, the syntax renders this reading difficult, although not impossible. If the point were to deny the value of these comparisons, as Calvin does, it would be odd to employ such ambivalent syntax. In his syntax, as in his images, Du Bartas's linguistic practice is diametrically opposed to that manifested most extremely by Calvin. Arguably Du Bartas here exploits the fluid syntax which his poetic style permits him. By not unambiguously refuting the comparisons, the poet seems to leave open at least the possibility that they have some value, and to question what role they might play:

Ainsi l'esprit d'Adam proceda de l'Esprit,  
 Pere de l'univers, sans toutesfois qu'il prist  
 La moindre portion de sa simple substance,  
 Comme le fils reçoit essence de l'essence  
 De son pere mortel, ou comme au renouveau  
 De l'humide sarment naist un bourgeon nouveau. (721–26)

[Thus the spirit of Adam proceeded from the Spirit of the Father of the universe, without however it taking the least portion of his simple substance, like the son receives essence from the essence of his mortal father, or like in spring from the moist branch / twig is born a new vine / bud.]

Thus, Du Bartas both employs the images yet also preserves the possibility of denying them. In a very general sense, his practice has something in common with negative theology, insofar as it uses images but also negates them; however, the negation of his images is very different, and remains uncertain. Du Bartas's images for the divine seem, to varying degrees, to be tentative, so that the similarities which they imply between the human and the divine are likewise speculative and provisional.

The nature of similarity entailed by images is also affected by their construction. The images of fatherhood and a plant are, structurally speaking, comparisons ('comme [...] ou comme'), whereas vocabulary of light, water, and wind is used as if it were proper for the divine and the human. One might term the latter 'metaphor' but this would tend to imply that the similarity involved was obviously a figurative and conceptual one, whereas the problem (from Calvin's point of view) was precisely that the similarity between, say, God and light could be understood to be more than figurative, and Du Bartas seems to play with the notion that such terms could actually be 'proper' in relation to the divine (rather than understood to be used *as if* they were proper terms, that is, metaphorically). With *vent* in particular, the poet seems to suggest that the term is a synonym more than a metaphor: the statement that 'ce n'estoit qu'un vent' insists on the identification of God's breath and wind. Thus it is more helpful here to speak of a combination of comparisons and identifications, rather than of comparisons and metaphors. The poet explores the potential 'propriety' of particular images and, by extension, the nature of similarities between various cosmic, human and divine terms.

Furthermore, the same image can be constructed in different ways, pointing up questions about its status. As we have seen, wind is identified with the human soul but later appears as a cosmic phenomenon which serves as a comparison for the soul. The poet shifts between indicating, on the one hand, that the soul can be identified with *vent* and, on the other, that it can be compared with a *vent*. Particularly given the imitation of Lucretius — and the wider context of the passage, which I shall shortly discuss — this invites the reader to reflect upon the status, or propriety, of the image of the wind to represent the divine, to wonder whether wind really is just a comparison from another realm of reality. Thus, my point is not simply that Du Bartas perhaps prefers the image of the soul or divinity as wind over those of them as light and water but rather that, in the case of wind as of those other images, the poet highlights questions about the implications of the image.

The movement between identification and comparison has been recognized as an important feature of both 'baroque' lyric poetry and also Du Bartas's poetry but is usually described as a shift between *metaphor* and comparison.<sup>77</sup> However, at least in relation to Du Bartas's concern with similarities and differences between man and God, this description may be misleading: the identification of *vent* and divine breath may imply a real closeness between them, whereas metaphor would conjure in most



minds a figurative and conceptual relationship rather than a potentially ontological or real one. In the *Sepmaine*, the genre-specific stylistic practice of shifting between the identification and comparison of terms serves as a tool for reflecting upon questions of similarity and difference in the relationship between the divine, the human, and the cosmic. Indeed, as we shall see, Du Bartas accentuates this movement between identification and comparison so that *vent* acquires a range of relations of similarity and difference with cosmic, human, and divine 'soufle' or 'esprit' or 'haleine'.

### *Word-play and similarities*

We have seen that the use of the same images of water and light for both the human soul and the divine point to a similarity between these two. However, the image of the fountain also interrogates the similarity of these to the more physical aspects of man, thus posing questions about the image of God even in man's body. Less than twenty lines before the 'fontaine' and the 'ruisseau' refer to God's divinity and that which he bestows upon man in Genesis 2.7, the same image figures a non-divine facet of man, namely the dispersion of blood around the body by the liver:

Le foye en [du 'chile nourricier'] fait du sang, puis le jettant dehors,  
 Le despart justement aux membres de ce corps  
 Par les *conduits* rameux d'une plus grande veine,  
 Semblable, ou peu s'en faut, à la *vive fontaine*,  
 Qui divisant son cours en cent *petits ruisseaux*  
 Humecte un beau jardin de ses esparses eaux. (VI, 681–86)

[The liver makes blood from it [chyle], then casting it without, distributes it equally to the parts of the body via the branchlike *conduits* of a larger vein, like, or almost, the *lively fountain*, which dividing its course into a hundred *little streams* waters a beautiful garden with its scattered waters.]

As I have mentioned, there is some precedent for the image in discussions of God; nor is it unheard of in the bodily context.<sup>78</sup> However, given the closeness of the two passages in the *Sepmaine*, their similarity is rather striking: in both instances 'vive fontaine' and 'petit[s] ruisseau[x]' are at the end of two consecutive lines. Du Bartas employs the same cosmic image for a divine phenomenon and for a more strictly human one, and — since one usage closely follows the other — the reader is likely to recall the first when reading the second.

Thus the reuse of an image with very different meanings threatens to jolt the reader out of simply 'reading over' a relatively commonplace form of representation. The expressions which introduce the comparisons also invite reflection, since they are diverse, and suggest that the status of similarity can vary among a complex array of possibilities. For example, the 'vive fontaine' seems to be a proper term for God's breath (at least at this point in the poem, before 'ce n'estoit qu'un vent') but pouring is a comparison ('comme'), and therefore is presented as if it might be an approximate similarity. On the other hand, the liver's likeness to a fountain is perhaps tempered by the expression with which it is introduced: 'semblable, ou peu s'en faut' (684). Thus linguistic images highlight potential similarities between the divine and the



physical, pointing to the human and the elemental as ontological images of the divine; at the same time, the repeated variation of images — together with various formulae of similarity — explore the nature of this possible resemblance between divine *fontaine* and human *fontaine*.

The word-play becomes much more striking when Du Bartas introduces the image of the wind which arguably interests him more than the other images with which he experiments. As we have seen, it is brought into the discussion rather emphatically as the correct term for God's breath. It may have seemed more proper to Du Bartas than other ones since, as I have mentioned, it was well known that the Hebrew of the Old Testament associated 'wind', 'spirit', and 'breath'. Furthermore, in the sixteenth century, *vent* could be used to refer to breath more easily than it can be in modern French: Cotgrave translates it not only as wind but also as 'a vent, smell, s[c]ent, aire, breath, vapor',<sup>79</sup> and Huguët provides among its meanings 'souffle, haleine' and 'soupon'.<sup>80</sup> Conversely, Cotgrave includes 'wind' (and various synonyms) among the possible translations of both 'souffle' and 'haleine'.<sup>81</sup> Thus 'haleine' (711) and 'souffle' (717) become, by extension, 'vent'. However, while this might make *vent* seem like a proper term for God's breath, it also demonstrates that *vent* could have both cosmic and human meanings. Du Bartas makes use of this polyvalency, and also further accentuates it: by serving as apparent synonym for God's breath, *vent* immediately acquires a divine meaning, and it is subsequently invested with a range of meanings from soul to physical breath to wind. Like *fontaine* but to a much greater degree, *vent* appears repeatedly, with different divine, human, and cosmic connotations.

The nexus of words around breath and wind was also connected to *esprit*, which had a variety of possible meanings including 'soul', 'breath', 'mind', 'life' and 'wind'. Cotgrave's lengthy entry for the term begins as follows: 'The Spirit, Soule; Heart; breath, heat; mind, thought; opinion; wit, conceit; also, life, courage, metall, stomacke, vivacitie, livenessse, or smartnesse of humor'; Huguët gives as meanings of *esprit* 'souffle' and 'élément subtil, principe de vie et de pensée';<sup>82</sup> finally, Du Bartas also describes winds as *esprits*.<sup>83</sup> In the passage glossing Genesis 2.7, *esprit* refers to Adam's *esprit* and then God's, and the similarity in vocabulary implies a similarity of the entities designated. The contrasting uses of *esprit* draw attention to themselves since both are within the same line: 'Ainsi l'esprit d'Adam proceda de l'Esprit, / Pere de l'univers' (721–22). This poses, indirectly yet clearly, the question of the relationship between man's soul and God's Spirit. Du Bartas similarly plays upon human and divine meanings of *esprit* elsewhere in the *Sepmaine*, including in evocations of the creative powers of both *esprits*.<sup>84</sup> This contrasts with Calvin's care in his commentary on Isaiah 40.13 to present the similitude between man's *esprit* and God's *esprit* as a divine invention with heuristic rather than ontological weight, thus clarifying that man's spirit is not the essential spirit of God (f. 245<sup>r</sup>). Du Bartas's liking for this word-play upon human and divine meanings explains why he does not use the word *ame* more frequently in his ensuing discussion of the soul's powers but prefers the polysemic word *esprit*.<sup>85</sup>

After using *esprit* with both human and divine senses (721), Du Bartas proceeds to a similar but more striking practice with the related word *vent*. After stating that

'ce n'estoit qu'un vent' (727), the poet repeats *vent* three times in the following five lines. The first use of the term on line 727 apparently denotes divine 'breath' and the second human breath — breath that leaves the stomach. The second *vent* is a physical emission of air, connoting — in Aristotelian terms — the organic soul rather than the rational soul: in other words, it denotes the 'breath' which endows man with life but not that which enables him to think and to create. By contrast, four lines later, the same term, *vent*, will be used to introduce the discussion (imitating Lucretius) of man's intellectual powers, that is, of the rational soul rather than the organic one:

Bref, ce n'estoit qu'un vent: or le vent, bien qu'il sorte  
 Du creux de l'estomach, toutefois il n'emporte  
 Rien de nostre substance, ains seulement retient  
 Les pures qualitez de la part dont il vient.  
*Inspiré par ce vent, ce vent je veux descrire:*  
 Celuy n'a point d'esprit qui son esprit n'admire,  
 Celuy n'a point de sens qui nuict et jour ne sent  
 Les effects merueilleux d'un soufle si puissant. (727–34)

[In short, it was nothing but a wind: now wind, although it leaves the hollow of the stomach, nonetheless it takes nothing of our substance, but only retains the pure qualities of the part from which it comes. *Inspired by this wind, this wind I want to describe*: he has no spirit who does not admire his spirit, he has no senses who night and day does not sense the marvellous effects of such a powerful breath / wind (soufle).]

The question of the nature of the soul bestowed in Genesis 2.7 was a theologically difficult one: Augustine initially thought man was created animal in 2.7 but later changed his mind and decided that in 2.7 he was already given the rational soul which defined his specificity and his closeness to God.<sup>86</sup> Du Bartas does not address the tricky question of whether man was given only life or also the rational soul but instead uses the same word — *vent* — to refer to both possibilities. Furthermore, Du Bartas's language is of course even more slippery than the confusion of organic and rational souls suggests, since in both 727 and 731 *vent* also refers to divine 'breath'. The first use of *vent* in line 731 logically refers to divine breath: this corresponds to a more general practice by some Christian poets of replacing the inspiration of the Muses with that of the Holy Spirit (the notion of inspiration in this conception is of course still closely linked to breath). Therefore, in line 731, *vent* has both human and divine meanings. Thus in lines 727–31 *vent* means purely physical human *vent* (that which leaves the stomach), as well as the human *vent* which is the soul and perhaps like the divine, and also the divine *vent* of God.

The particularly prominent word-play in this section is further complicated by similar uses of other words belonging to the *halaine* / *vent* / *esprit* nexus. The word *esprit* returns in 732 to refer to the human soul, and in its repetition within the line echoes the play on *vent* in the previous line, 731. In addition, the 'effects merueilleux d'un soufle si puissant' (734) evoke the *effects* of God's 'soufle' (717) discussed throughout the previous passage — that is, the human soul which is an effect of God the cause — but of course the poet has now progressed to talking about the effects of the human soul, that is, human creations: it is thus as if man's

creative powers simply repeated the divine powers which created him, as if his creative power was exactly analogous to God's which, like his, can be perceived in its effects.<sup>87</sup>

The notion of scent is also connected to this nexus of meanings: one of the senses Huguet gives for 'haleine' is 'odorat' and he quotes Ambroise Paré as stating that 'l'odeur [...] est une qualité en nostre haleine';<sup>88</sup> as we have seen above, Cotgrave included 'smell, s[c]ent' and so on among the possible meanings of 'vent'. Scents were another comparison used by Lucretius for atoms but, like wind, scents have a closer relationship to breath, the subject of Du Bartas's discussion. Where Lucretius simply referred to abstract 'odores', Du Bartas uses the word 'souspirs' [sighs / breaths] to refer to the rose's scent, so that the scent is transformed anthropomorphically into an emission of breath, like the soul or spirit itself. In the following line, the wind itself emits 'souspirs', so that it is brought closer still to the scent of the rose:

L'odorante vapeur que la rose *souspire*,  
Tandis que *les souspirs* d'un amoureux Zephyre  
Esmailent la campagne, [...] (VI, 747–49)

[The scenting vapour which the rose sighs / breathes, while the sighs / breaths of an amorous Zephyrus decorate the countryside, ...]

The use of 'souspir' with reference both to scents and to the wind does not have to be painstakingly sought by the literary critic: as elsewhere, Du Bartas employs the same word more than once within the space of two lines, thus pointing up a similarity between the two entities which it describes. The 'thinking' done through images seems to have been quite intentional on Du Bartas's part. Where the same word is used with contrasting senses within a short section of text, it is difficult to believe that either the poet or any reasonably attentive sixteenth-century reader would not have noticed the word-play.

Terms relating to wind, breath, and spirit are often substituted for one another in the *Sepmaine*; these uses are striking because another term in the cluster of meanings would be more usual.<sup>89</sup> However, the practice reaches a climax in this passage. Instead of using a similitude to distinguish clearly between the divine and the cosmic — as Calvin would no doubt have preferred — the poet seems to go out of his way to confuse the divine, the cosmic, and the human. An image which initially referred to God's spirit and its divine manifestation in man comes to represent human and cosmic phenomena: not only man's divine spirit but also the air in his body, wind, and the scent of the rose. Du Bartas uses *vent* repeatedly within a short section of text and, in its different appearances, it shifts between various divine, human and cosmic meanings, making it difficult to differentiate between them (even if a reader were to undertake a careful and systematic close reading as I have above), and increasing the sense of their similarity. Thus the relations of similarity and difference between the cosmic, the human and the divine appear to be complex.

In the case of breath, the image of *vent* is almost a 'dead metaphor' in the sixteenth century, whereas the comparison between the soul and the *vent* is more striking; however, the repetition of *vent* in different contexts 're-vivifies' all these uses. It invites the reader to consider in each case how 'proper' the term *vent* might be,

and to consider how similar or different the divine, human and cosmic *vents* might be. Thus the play upon various divine and human meanings of *vent* constitutes a way in which the poet indirectly explores the questions of similarity and difference between the human and the divine which he also briefly addresses explicitly in the gloss upon Genesis 2.7.<sup>90</sup>

Du Bartas's word-play suggests that whether a term is proper or not is a question of degree rather than absolute distinctions, and — furthermore — is often not a closed question but rather an open one. A related point is fairly commonplace in the twenty-first century: the notion that all language is metaphorical, and that some metaphors are simply more 'dead' than others. However, Du Bartas's concern is related to the special case of thinking about God and about how God is imaged in the world; highlighting imagistic language has different implications when there is a possibility that images exist which are ontological or real. Where Calvin insisted that there was something proper about some images but that the difference between the divine and the cosmic or human image should also be borne in mind, Du Bartas prefers to question (indirectly) the degree of difference which seems to inhere in particular images. The passage suggests that in this context the relationship between the proper and the symbolic cannot be thought of in terms of antithesis: for example, 'breath' is 'proper' to describe emission from a human mouth but in a sense is also 'proper' to describe God's 'breath'.<sup>91</sup>

Du Bartas uses images in exploratory ways, sometimes affirming them, sometimes denying them, and sometimes varying them with contrasting implications for the relationships between the human, the cosmic, and the divine. The poet thereby prompts his readers to consider the status and function of images, and the ways in which they are employed to approach knowledge of the divine. He poses questions about the use of images in general, and also about particular images, notably that of the wind. Like natural-theological writers, Du Bartas indicates that the cosmos provides imagistic evidence for a Christian cosmos. However, he also suggests that the degree of similarity thus implied between the natural and the divine is uncertain, and can be investigated through a complicated use of linguistic images. In other words, the poet both emphasizes similarities and also explores and plays with them. Thus Du Bartas manipulates the poetic and imagistic particularities of his genre and style in order to make a distinctive contribution towards the mass of sixteenth-century thinking about the relationship between the divine and the cosmos, between God and images of him.

## Notes to Chapter 1

1. *La Sepmaine*, I, 178.
2. Ann Blair, 'Mosaic Physics and the Search for a Pious Natural Philosophy in the Late Renaissance', *Isis*, 91 (2000), 32–58. On Daneau, see Olivier Fatio, *Méthode et Théologie: Lambert Daneau et les débuts de la scolastique réformée*, Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance, 147 (Geneva: Droz, 1976).
3. Many of Daneau's chapter headings constitute responses to questions of physics: they include 'Mundus quid' [what the world is] or 'Mundum in tempore factum esse, non esse aeternum' [that the world was made in time and is not eternal]; Daneau also uses the vocabulary of physics more than Du Bartas does, such as the names of the different sorts of Aristotelian cause (thus God is

- the 'efficient cause' of the cosmos). Quotations are from the *Physice christiana, sive christiana de rerum creaturarum origine, et usu disputatio*, 3rd edn (Geneva: Eustath. Vignon, 1580).
4. Du Bartas, *Premier Jour*, ed. cit., p. 722.
  5. Blair, 'Mosaic'.
  6. See Introduction.
  7. François Laplanche, *L'Évidence du Dieu chrétien: religion, culture et société dans l'apologétique protestante de la France classique (1576–1670)* (Strasbourg: Association des publications de la Faculté de théologie protestante, 1983).
  8. 'O Pere, donne-moy que d'une voix faconde / Je chante à nos neveux la naissance du monde. / O grand Dieu, donne-moy que j'estale en mes vers / Les plus rares beautez de ce grand univers; / Donne-moy qu'en son front ta puissance je lise, / Et qu'enseignant autrui, moy-mesme je m'instruise' (I, 7–12) [O Father, grant me that with an eloquent voice, / I sing to our 'nephews' the birth of the world. / O great God, grant me that I display in my verses / the most rare beauties of this great universe; / Grant me that on its brow I read your power, / and that teaching another, I instruct myself].
  9. The view that the Trinity was a mystery which we should beware of analysing was a common one, voiced for example by both Erasmus and Calvin. See Calvin, *L'Institution chrétienne*, 3 vols (Aix-en-Provence: Éditions Kerygma, 1978), I.xiii.21.
  10. *Sepmaine*, I, 105–54, especially 105–18 (cf. *Triomfe de la Foi*, in *Works*, II, 131–71 (p. 144, ll. 9–20)). Calvin's preface to his commentary on *Genesis*, in *Le Livre de la Genèse*, ed. by André Malet, Commentaires de Jean Calvin sur l'Ancien Testament, I (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1961), p. 18. Jacques Pineaux, *La Poésie des protestants de langue française du premier synode national jusqu'à la proclamation de l'Édit de Nantes (1559–1598)* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971), pp. 396–403.
  11. On Sabunde, see Lohr, pp. 544–45.
  12. Laplanche, p. 84.
  13. In his *De la verité de la religion chrestienne* (1581), quoted in Miernowski, *Dialectique*, p. 275.
  14. Blair, *Theater*, pp. 164–66.
  15. David C. Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context* (Oxford: OUP, 1995), pp. 23–39.
  16. François Wendel, *Calvin: sources et évolution de sa pensée religieuse* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1985), p. 121.
  17. Laplanche. In the seventeenth century confidence in natural theology would increase: Jacqueline Lagrée, *La Raison ardente: religion naturelle et raison au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1991). For a very brief overview of conceptions of the proper relationship between reason and Christianity from the beginning of Christianity to the seventeenth century, see Jan W. Wojcik, *Robert Boyle and the Limits of Reason* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), pp. 27–41.
  18. Miernowski, *Dialectique*, p. 276.
  19. Miernowski, *Dialectique*, Chapter 10. Rieu, 'Le Sentiment religieux chez Du Bartas', in Dauphiné, ed., *Du Bartas 1590–1990*, pp. 317–34. See also Dauphiné, 'De la religion', in *La Bibliothèque de Du Bartas*, ed. by Dauphiné with Marie-Luce Demonet and Gilles Proust (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1994), pp. 57–66. Rieu wonders whether 'le milieu navarrais a vécu un protestantisme particulier, imprégné d'humanisme, et plus enraciné dans l'évangélisme' (p. 327) [the Navarrian milieu experienced a particular Protestantism, permeated with humanism, and more rooted in evangelism].
  20. There are other possible sources for some of these images: Kurt Reichenberger, *Die Schöpfungswoche des Du Bartas*, 2 vols (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1963), II: *Themen und Quellen der Sepmaine*, pp. 32–37.
  21. But see I, 664–66; III, 521–26; IV, 481–84; V, 773–78; VI, 169–89, 995–97. On the Fall, see also Chapter 2. In the *Seconde Semaine*, where the poet recounts Biblical history after the week of the Creation, the Fall has a more important role to play.
  22. Pineaux, *Poésie*, pp. 397–98; Albert-Marie Schmidt, 'Calvinisme et Poésie' in *Études sur le XVIe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1967), pp. 55–65 (p. 57).
  23. 'Sentiment religieux'.
  24. I, 167–74. See also VII, 440.
  25. *Sepmaine* I, 171. *Institution* I.v.14; I.vi.1; I.xiv.1; preface to the Commentary on *Genesis*, p. 20.
  26. Du Bartas has mentioned the necessity of the Bible in a preceding passage designed to refute the

- possibility of knowing God through *reason* (I, 84, 89) but he attacks the use of reason in analysing the logical conundrum of the Trinity's simultaneous sameness and difference rather than in deducing God's omnipotence from his creation. Cf. Miernowski's reading of the replacement of Scripture by faith as a manifestation of Du Bartas's religious frustration (*Dialectique*, p. 283). For an analysis of the importance of the Bible and the cosmos which contrasts with mine, see Frank Lestringant, 'La Bible et le Jardin: les deux voies de la révélation dans "La Sepmaine" de Du Bartas', *Littératures*, 29 (1993), 11–24.
27. Every creature is a letter in God's book, and the universe is a sort of ladder or spiral to the celestial.
  28. 'puissance' (I, 11, 147), 'artifice' (I, 100–01, 152), 'richesse[s]' (I, 100–02, 140), 'force' (V, 67, 396), 'grandeur' (I, 100–02), 'beauté' (I, 100–02), 'honneur' (I, 136), 'gloire' (V, 396), 'justice', 'amour', 'sçavoir', and 'prudence' (I, 148), 'conseil', 'pouvoir' and 'bonté' (VII, 438).
  29. See Chapter 2. This argument is also in the spirit of Mosaic physics: it could be reformulated to suggest that — if Genesis tells us that God separated earth and water and so on — then the elements must be such that they need to be separated into different realms.
  30. On the *imago dei* in Christian thought, including that of Luther and Calvin, see David Cairns, *The Image of God in Man* (London: Collins, 1973).
  31. Francis Higman, 'Calvin et l'*Imago Dei*', in *Lire et Découvrir: la circulation des idées au temps de la Renaissance* (Geneva: Droz, 1998), pp. 663–73, first published in *De l'humanisme aux Lumières, Bayle et le protestantisme: mélanges en l'honneur d'Elisabeth Labrousse*, ed. by Michelle Magdelaine, Maria-Christina Pitassi, Ruth Whelan and Anthony McKenna (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1996), pp. 139–48. See also Cairns, pp. 134–51.
  32. 'Calvin et l'*Imago Dei*'.
  33. On these points, see for example the thirty-ninth sermon on Job.
  34. Higman, 'Calvin et l'*Imago Dei*'.
  35. VI, 732–88. On the positive representation of man, see Yvonne Bellenger, 'L'Image de l'homme dans les *Semaines* de Du Bartas', in *Ouverture et Dialogue: mélanges offerts à Wolfgang Iser*, ed. by Ulrich Döring, Antiopy Lyroutias and Rainer Zaiser (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1988), pp. 607–17, reproduced in her *Divines Semaines*, pp. 295–309; Michel Prieur, *Le Monde et l'Homme de Du Bartas* (Paris: SEDES, 1993), pp. 101–18; Dauphiné, *Poète scientifique*, pp. 69–75.
  36. For example see *Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, ed. by Daniel Guex, *Commentaires de Jean Calvin sur le Nouveau Testament*, 5, (Aix-en-Provence: Éditions Kerygma, 1996), p. 34 (I.20).
  37. *Théologie platonicienne de l'immortalité des âmes*, ed. by Raymond Marcel, 3 vols (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1964), II, 223–29; see Trinkhaus, *In our Image*, II, 474–98. Du Bartas also appears to have made use of Cicero's discussion of Archimedes: *Tusculan Disputations*, trans. by J. E. King, 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 72–75 (I, XXV, 63). Nicholas of Cusa's ideas may have influenced Du Bartas here (Deghilage), and Reichenberger suggests some additional sources (*Schöpfungswoche*, II, 255–61); see also Rieu, p. 324.
  38. In addition, as critics have frequently noted, throughout the *Sepmaine* the poet draws attention repeatedly to a commonplace parallel between poetic creation and divine creation.
  39. 'Heureux, et trop heureux, si tu n'eusses, o pere, / Apostat, effacé ce divin caractere' (931–32) [Fortunate, and so fortunate, if you had not, oh father, / Apostate, effaced this divine character].
  40. *Sepmaine*, VI, 709–31; *Institution*, I.xv.3.
  41. [Geneva]: L'Olivier de Robert Estienne [Henri Estienne], 1560, f. 1<sup>v</sup>.
  42. I am indebted to Wes Williams for his insightful observations concerning these terms of quantity.
  43. p. 550. The Psalms were translated, paraphrased, adapted and imitated 'sans relâche': Michel Jeanneret, *Poésie et tradition biblique au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle: recherches stylistiques sur les paraphrases des psaumes de Marot à Malherbe* (Paris: J. Corti, 1969), p. 523. They have something in common with Du Bartas's project in that they involve perceiving God in nature, and Du Bartas occasionally imitates them closely as is the case with Psalm 19 (IV, 554–60).
  44. Lactantius writes that God 'inspiravit ei animam de vitali fonte spiritus sui' [breathed into him a soul from the life-giving fountain of his spirit]. Lactantius, *Institutiones divinae*, 6 vols (Paris:



- Cerf, 1973–2007), vol. III, ed. by Pierre Monat (Paris: Cerf, 1987), pp. 168–69; also quoted in Reichenberger, *Schöpfungswoche*, II, 254.
45. Nicole Malet, *Dieu selon Calvin: des mots à la doctrine* (Lausanne: Éditions l'Âge d'homme, 1977), pp. 207–12.
  46. Calvin occasionally uses such images but does not use the *same* images to represent *both* God and man. For example, in his thirty-ninth sermon on Job, Calvin refers to the *imago dei* in man as 'clarté' [brightness / clarity], and to God's life-giving 'sagesse éternelle' [eternal wisdom] as a 'fontaine' [fountain]: *Sermons sur le livre de Job* (Geneva: François Perrin, 1569), p. 196.
  47. Daniel Lys, «*Rûach*: le souffle dans l'ancien testament (Paris: PUF, 1962), esp. pp. 312–14.
  48. Richard Stauffer, 'L'Exégèse de Genèse 1, 1–3 chez Luther et Calvin', in *Interprètes de la Bible: études sur les réformateurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1980), pp. 59–85 (pp. 65, 70, 80).
  49. *Schöpfungswoche*, II, 254.
  50. For an overview of Biblical images of the divine as wind, water, light or fire, see Clyde A. Holbrook, *The Iconoclastic Deity: Biblical Images of God* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1984), pp. 99–105. Jeanneret argues that, because of their daily reading of the Bible, Protestant writers used many Biblical expressions: *Poésie*, p. 166.
  51. *The Style of John Calvin in his French Polemical Treatises* (Oxford: OUP, 1967), p. 142.
  52. *Institutions*, 4.17.14. See also 4.14.12, and 4.17.21.
  53. See especially Masur-Matusevich, pp. 417–19.
  54. Christopher Elwood, *The Body Broken: The Calvinist Doctrine of the Eucharist and the Symbolisation of Power in Sixteenth-Century France* (New York: OUP, 1999), pp. 159–60.
  55. *L'Évangile selon Saint Jean*, ed. by Michel Réveillaud, *Commentaires de Jean Calvin sur le Nouveau Testament*, 2 (Aix-en-Provence: Éditions Kerygma, 1978), p. 56.
  56. John Dillenberger, *Images and Relics: Theological Perceptions and Visual Images in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: OUP, 1999), pp. 3–21.
  57. 'The Hidden God: Image and Interdiction in the Netherlands in the Sixteenth Century', *Art History* 5 (1982), pp. 133–53.
  58. Dillenger, *Images*; Freedberg, 'Hidden God'.
  59. For example, 'Comme s'il disoit, m'osterez-vous ma majesté par vos comparaisons? Car combien que les hommes se forgent diverses *imaginacions* et transforment Dieu à leur fantaisie, si est-ce qu'il demeure toujours semblable à soy-mesme, et ne change point de nature par leurs *inventions*' [as if he was saying, will you take away my majesty with your *comparisons*? For however much men forge diverse *images* / *conceits* and transform God through their fantasy, nonetheless he remains always the same as himself, and does not change at all in nature because of their *inventions*]: *Commentaires sur le Prophete Isaie* (Geneva: François Perrin, 1572), f. 247<sup>v</sup>. This is in the context of a discussion of pagan religions which see divinity in the cosmos. Or 'Dieu [...] est grandement outragé quand on compare sa majesté à des choses de neant, voire qu'il est deshonoré si on ne l'esleve par dessus tous les anges, et tout ce qui est estimé divin' (f. 245<sup>v</sup>) [God [...] is greatly outraged when one compares his majesty to things of nothingness, and yet he is dishonoured if one does not elevate him above all the angels, and all that which is esteemed divine]. See also, for a clear but somewhat categorical discussion, T. F. Torrance, *Calvin's Doctrine of Man* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1949), pp. 138–51.
  60. *Calvin et la dynamique de la parole: étude de rhétorique réformée* (Paris: Champion, 1992), pp. 406–18.
  61. Higman, *Style of John Calvin*, p. 141. On Calvin's language more generally, see also Millet's encyclopaedic *Calvin et la dynamique*, pp. 437–870.
  62. Millet explains, though, that the 1559/1560 edition of the *Institution* was more figurative than that of 1541. (pp. 861–70).
  63. *Style of John Calvin*, pp. 66–82. Id., 'The Reformation and the French Language', in *Lire et Découvrir: la circulation des idées au temps de la Renaissance* (Geneva: Droz, 1998), pp. 337–51, also published in *L'Esprit créateur*, 16 (1976), 20–36, and in *Calvinism in France, Netherlands, Scotland and England*, ed. Richard C. Gamble (London: Garland, 1992), pp. 110–26. Id., 'Theology in French: Religious Pamphlets from the Counter-Reformation', in *Lire et Découvrir: la circulation des idées au temps de la Renaissance* (Geneva: Droz, 1998), pp. 353–70, first pub. in *Renaissance and Modern Studies*, 23 (1979), 128–46.



64. Higman, *Style*, pp. 123–52.
65. ‘Reformation and the French Language’; ‘Theology in French’.
66. For Melanchthon, ‘il est parfois nécessaire de recourir aux tropes et aux figures lorsque les termes propres manquent, et la recherche de l’expressivité les justifie aussi, mais on ne les emploiera qu’à bon escient, et jamais à la place d’une expression simple qui suffirait’ [it is sometimes necessary to have recourse to tropes and figures when proper terms are lacking, and the pursuit of expressivity justifies them too, but they should only ever be employed in good faith and never in the place of a simple expression which would suffice]. Millet, *Dynamique*, pp. 113–51 (p. 131).
67. ‘Vent’ does not denote the pure element ‘air’ but Du Bartas — like many writers at the time — does not respect the distinctions between pure and cosmic elements: he often refers to the four elements with the names of the four spatial realms, and vice versa, describing the air, for example, as ‘le venteux element’ [the windy element]: II, 484, 607, 648, 876. The four elements are often referred to using the names of cosmic phenomena in which the element in question is dominant, and vice versa. See I, 248, 250; II, 332, 344, 352; III, 56, 113, 212, 407; V, 14, 149, 186; VI, 405, 451; VII, 79, 446, 490.
68. Similarities between the cosmic and the divine are perhaps also implied when Du Bartas apostrophizes — as if in a hymn — matter and the heavens in terms which should be reserved for God: Luzius Keller, *Palingène, Ronsard, Du Bartas: trois études sur la poésie cosmologique de la Renaissance* (Berne: Francke, 1974), pp. 107–40. Images probably represented a safe way of exploring questions of similarities to the divine, which might lead one to touch upon unorthodox views: certainly Du Bartas seems to have been criticized rather for abstract formulae like ‘triple-une essence’, as well as the representation of hell and heaven as states of the soul rather than as literal places: see Léonce Couture, ‘Les Poèmes de Du Bartas et l’orthodoxie’, *Revue de Gascogne*, 11 (1870), 451–67, 485–92 (pp. 458–66).
69. For Calvin, natural theology could ‘eslever les plus grossiers’ to apprehend the divine.
70. ‘La Construction du savoir et la réécriture du *De rerum natura* dans la *Sepmaine* de Du Bartas’, *BHR*, 64 (2002), 617–38. *La Sepmaine* VI, 743–46 corresponds to *De rerum natura* I, 291–97, and *Sepmaine* VI, 747–50 to I, 298–99. I refer to the Loeb edition, ed. by G. P. Goold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975).
71. *Une Conquête du rationalisme: l’influence de Lucrèce en France au seizième siècle* (Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1962), p. 156. See also José Kany-Turpin, ‘Une réinvention de Lucrèce par Guillaume du Bartas’, in *La Littérature et ses avatars: discrédits, déformations et réhabilitations dans l’histoire de la littérature*, ed. by Yvonne Bellenger (Paris: Klincksieck, 1991), pp. 31–52.
72. Fraisse, p. 128. See also Isabelle Pantin, ‘*Res contenta doceri?* Renaissance Cosmological Poetry, Classical Models and the Poetics of *Didascalica*’, in *Poets and Teachers: Latin Didactic Poetry and the Didactic Authority of the Latin Poet from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. by Yasmin Haskell and Philip Hardie (Bari: Levante editori, 1999), pp. 21–34.
73. Lohr, pp. 616–17.
74. See François Roudaut, ‘Du Bartas, *La Sepmaine*, “Le Premier Jour”’, in *Du Bartas et l’expérience de la beauté: ‘La Sepmaine’, jours I, IV, VII*, ed. by James Dauphiné (Paris: H. Champion, 1993), pp. 113–48 (p. 120).
75. *Tragédie d’Agamemnon avec deux livres de chants de Philosophie et d’Amour* (Paris: M. le Jeune, 1557), ff. 35<sup>v</sup>–36<sup>r</sup>. Fraisse identifies this imitation. Du Bartas does use the example of the ‘discordans accords’ of the lyre which can be perceived through its sound — and which are closer to the object of Lucretius’s comparisons, atoms, than to Du Bartas’s — but the poet passes over this example much more briefly. One might explain its inclusion through the fact that when Du Bartas mentions the senses he likes to list several (for example, I, 130–32), as he does indirectly here (‘l’odeur, le son, le choc’ [odour / scent, sound, (physical) impact]), but see also Chapter 2 on Du Bartas’s fascination with discord.
76. On the other hand, Du Bartas might, consciously or otherwise, have associated the cosmic elements with the Trinity, in which the three persons — like the four elements — are involved in relations of sameness and difference to one another, and also engender one another. There are some signs that the poet makes such a connection, although he does not point to it through play on words and images in a short space of text. Unfortunately a discussion of this would

exceed my concerns in *Cosmos and Image*. However, if my supposition is correct, then it should be observed that, while the different elemental images might relativize one another, on the other hand they confirm each other: they may all be part of the same 'whole', like the three persons of the Trinity.

77. Fernand Hallyn, *Formes métaphoriques dans la poésie lyrique de l'âge baroque en France* (Geneva: Droz, 1975); Pierre Maréchaux, 'L'Espace des signatures: poétique de la comparaison dans la *Sepmaine* de Du Bartas', *L'Information littéraire*, 46 (1994), 3–9.
78. In the anonymous *Traicté des elements, temperaments, humeurs, et facultés naturelles, selon la doctrine d'Hippocrates, et de Galien, vtile tant à ceux qui desirent apprendre la médecine, qu'aux estudians en chirurgie*, the author explains that human beings have three faculties 'chascune procedante de leur fontaine'. The 'faculté naturelle' is 'celle qui procede du foye et donne nourrissement à toutes les parties du corps': anon. (Lyon: Guillaume Rouille, 1555), pp. 94–95.
79. Randle Cotgrave, *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues*, ed. by William S. Woods (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1950), first published in 1611, unpaginated.
80. *Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle*, 7 vols (Paris: Didier, 1925–67), VII, 425. In addition, 'prendre son vent' can mean 'respirer', and 'prendre le vent', 'repandre haleine' (p. 425); 'cueillir vent' can also mean 'repandre haleine': Algirdan Julien Greimas and Teresa Mary Keane, *Dictionnaire du moyen français: la Renaissance* (Paris: Larousse, 1992), p. 650.
81. *Souffle* is translated as 'Ones breath, wind, blast, or breathing; also, a small gale, puffe, gust, or flaw of wind', and *haleine* as 'Ones breath, or wind; breathing'.
82. *Dictionnaire*, III, 686. Cf. Calvin, *IC*, I.xv.2.
83. II, 567–68. In addition, on Day I, Du Bartas had suggested that God animated the body of the *cosmos* by infusing an *esprit* into it (I, 271–74); clearly Goulart was concerned, arguing in his commentary — contrary to appearances — that this has nothing to do with the World Soul (pp. 29–30). This confusion was not unusual: Keller, p. 125.
84. See I, 85–86; and I, 289–94. Cf. Genesis 1.2.
85. In lines 732–944 I count twelve uses of *esprit* to refer to the human soul, and two uses of *ame*. See the list of definitions given in Greimas and Keane, p. 262. God's 'Esprit' is evoked fairly frequently: I, 66, 84, 293, 301, 310, 459; IV, 1; VI, 913; VII, 522.
86. *On Genesis*, p. 105, n. 47.
87. In addition, on Day VII Du Bartas provides a lengthy discussion of God perceiving himself in his effects, and uses similar terms to those used to discuss the perception of the soul through its effects: compare VI, 752–54 and VII, 91–94.
88. *Dictionnaire*, IV, 432. In addition, as meanings of 'halener', Greimas gives 'souffler, éventer' but also 'flairer, sentir' (p. 343). See also Gaspar Contarenus, *De elementis et eorum mixtionibus libri quinque* (Paris: A. Wechel, 1564), f. 90<sup>r</sup>.
89. I, 415, 672, 735–48; II, 500, 517, 593, 871–76; III, 12; IV, 303–08, 337; VI, 671.
90. Cf. Ficino's use of the image of the sun: Kristeller, pp. 97–98.
91. Both of Du Bartas's sixteenth-century commentators describe various of the poet's similitudes as 'propre'.