“And the Word Became Flesh . . . ”:
Cannibalism and Religious
Polemic in the Poetry of
Desportes and d’Aubigné

SUSAN K.
SILVER

Résumé : *Cet article explore le déploiement stratégique du cannibalisme et des figures de dévoration dans la poétique de Philippe Desportes et d’Agrippa d’Aubigné. À travers leur poésie séculaire et dévotionnelle, l’article trace la négociation des différences politiques et religieuses. L’échange entre la violence textuelle et la violence sociale est analysé dans le contexte historique des guerres de religion. De cette manière, l’article met en relief l’influence de la polémique religieuse sur la création poétique de ces deux auteurs de cultes opposés.*

During the sixteenth-century French wars of religion (1562–98), one of the clearest boundary markers between Catholic and Protestant writers was the question of the Eucharist — that is, whether eating the body and blood of Christ was to be interpreted figuratively or literally. Catholics claimed that the body of Christ was actually present in the host; Protestants claimed that it was only symbolically present. In spite of their doctrinal differences, however, Catholic and Reform writers often had difficulty separating themselves from the enemy camp in their writing.¹ The rhetorical problematic of negotiating difference will be traced here through selected texts of the Catholic court poet Philippe Desportes and through the Calvinist Agrippa d’Aubigné’s epic account of Protestant martyrs, *Les Tragiques* (1616).

Both Desportes and d’Aubigné composed verse in the secular as well as devotional veins, and the language of both was often laden with physical imagery. Desportes’s textual physicality is most evident in his devotional work, while d’Aubigné’s is exemplified in his militant *Tragiques*. Although the poetry of both d’Aubigné and Desportes bears the marks of their opposed religious convictions, their style testifies to a common background in class-

cal rhetoric and culture. Considered in tandem, the writing of these two poets, produced during the bloody religious wars, offers a glimpse into the deep schisms and curious convergences that wove the fabric of French society during this period.

In the poetry of d'Aubigné and Desportes, ideological differences are frequently represented through images of consumed and consuming bodies, both divine and human. These images are haunted by the theological question of the *corpus dei*, or body of Christ, as it related to the individual Christian's own body and as it was materialized in the mass through transubstantiation. Employing cannibalism as both rhetorical figure and method of literary creation by imitation, both poets appropriate the concept of the foreign body as food.² This essay will explore the process by which cannibalism, in d'Aubigné's *Tragiques* and Desportes's court poetry, becomes a privileged vehicle for literary imitation in a time of social violence.

Les Tragiques is divided into seven sections, or *livres*, describing various aspects of Catholic persecution of Protestants during the wars of religion. The work ends in a vision of Protestant victory over Catholic oppressors by means of divine retribution. Although a career military man and an ardent defender of the Reform cause from his early childhood, d'Aubigné's writing prior to *Les Tragiques* consisted largely of Petrarchan love poetry in sonnets, odes, elegies, and other classical forms favored by the Pléiade tradition. In the opening section of *Les Tragiques*, the poet announces that he has abandoned writing love poetry in order to put his pen to a higher purpose, that of depicting the suffering and persecution of his co-religionists. As opposed to the rhetorical conceits of love poetry, he claims, "Ici le sang n'est feint. . . ."³

For his part, Philippe Desportes was one of the most popular love poets of his day and a favorite among Henri III's *poètes courtois*. Desportes's secular poetry, considered by modern critics to be somewhat watery and insipid, was greatly relished by the poet's contemporaries. New editions of his love poems appeared every year for over ten years.⁴ Although the rhetorical smoothness of Desportes's love poetry stands in sharp contrast to the baroque, physical realism of d'Aubigné's *Tragiques*, both writers were influenced by a literary movement which, in the latter part of the century, was contributing to a whole new poetic style.

Lyric poetry in late Renaissance France was strongly affected by a renewed spirit of devotionism.⁵ The roots of this revitalized spirituality can be traced, in part, to early humanist writers such as Erasmus and Marguerite de Navarre, whose approach to religion and to writing was based on individual reflection and self-knowledge. The growing threat of Calvin-

ism and the onset of civil wars between French Catholics and Protestants further strengthened the devotional trend. By the latter half of the century, French, not Latin, had become the preferred means of transmitting religious theory and practice, a fact which also contributed to the wider availability of devotional literature.

Terence Cave has observed that the historical convergence of the literary devotional trend with the religious wars can be linked "in part to the universal need for 'consolation' at a time of national affliction."⁶ Indeed, the penitential spirit in literature of the late French Renaissance would seem to support Freud's elaboration, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, of a contingent moral sense, according to which,

[a]s long as things go well with a man, his conscience is lenient and lets the ego do all sorts of things; but when misfortune befalls him, he searches his soul, acknowledges his sinfulness, heightens the demands of his conscience, imposes abstinences on himself and punishes himself with penances. . . . This becomes especially clear where Fate is looked upon in the strictly religious sense of being nothing else than an expression of the Divine Will.⁷

As in Freud's analysis, France's devastating civil wars were indeed perceived as punishment from the highest power. Ruling a land torn apart by sectarian hate, Henri III believed that God's wrath could be appeased by ritual discipline and penitential practice. In this he was strongly influenced by the Jesuits and their belief in outward displays of devotion as a means of inspiring inner faith. The Council of Trent's promotion of penitence as a sacrament was also a crucial factor in the growing devotional fervor of Henri III's court. This sacrament allowed the sinner to confess his misery and to beg for God's mercy, an exercise in which the king often set the example. Personally embodying the spirit of Christian repentance by way of public processions through the streets, Henri III inspired members of his court to extremes of imitation. In the words of chronicler Pierre de L'Estoile, "y en eust quelques-uns . . . qui se fouettèrent . . . ausquels on voioit le pauvre dos tout rouge des coups qu'ils se donnoient."⁸

Encouraged by the king to turn their attention to religious works and to the translation of medieval texts such as the *Imitation of Christ*, Henri III's court poets wrote a wealth of devotional material. Edmond Auger, the king's Jesuit confessor, himself produced a French translation of the *Imitation of Christ*, which provided simple exercises in devotional meditation relying more on imagination and feeling than on formal theology.⁹ An important part of penitential exercises, as formulated by the Jesuits, was the art of visualizing and contemplating one's own death. It was thought that in this way believers gained a greater appreciation of their human fragility, the

vanity of earthly experience, Christ's personal suffering, and God's immortal glory. Though not the first to put such images into verse,¹⁰ the penitential poets of the late sixteenth century are marked by a desire to bring death to life in their writing.

In his role as Henri III's poet, Philippe Desportes was thus well positioned to absorb the penitential spirit invading the court. Many of Desportes's religious poems express the poet's desire to appease an angry God. Allusions to personal unworthiness and inner corruption are figured in images of the poet's bodily decay, as can be seen in the following verses from two of Desportes's devotional "Plaintes":

Ma chair comme eau s'est escoulée,
Et ma peau defaïcte est colée
Sur mes os pourris par dedans;
Tout mon bien est mort en une heure,
Et rien de moy ne me demeure
Que la levre aupres de mes dens.
Mes yeux ont tari leurs fontaines,
Mes nuits d'amertume sont pleines,
Mes jours sont horribles d'effroy;
Le sommeil jamais ne me touche,
Et la puanteur de ma bouche
Fait que j'ay mesme horreur de moy.¹¹

De foiblesse et d'ennuis mon ame est esgarée,
Les os percent ma peau, ma langue est ulcerée,
Comme flots courroucez mes maux se vont suivans;
Pour tout nourrissement j'engloutis ma salive,
Et croy que ta rigueur ne permet que je vive
Que pour servir d'exemple de crainte aux vivans.¹²

In these poems, Desportes draws a sharp contrast between himself and his creator by focusing attention on his physical body and its afflictions. The disembodied presence of an invisible God thus becomes all the more awe-inspiring. As Elaine Scarry has observed, such boundary-drawing between man and God is established in the Old Testament as early as the book of Genesis, where it is made clear that "the place of man is in the body; the place of God is in the voice," and that the major difference between the two lies in the "woundability" of the one and the "immunity" of the other.¹³ It is in the body of the New Testament Saviour, both God and man, that identification with the divinity becomes possible. The divine Word made flesh in the body of Jesus and ingested during the Eucharist sacrament can henceforth be a part of every Christian. And henceforth, Word and Body are

interchangeable signifiers. Thus, in the opening verses of one of Desportes's devotional sonnets, it is the Word of God that is crucified rather than his flesh: "Quand le Verbe eternel, par qui tout est formé, / Eut enduré la mort pour nous donner la vie. . . ." ¹⁴ As the Word substitutes for the divine body, so does the human body become the locus of God's Word. The body is healthy when that Word, or Law, is upheld and sickly when it has been broken or transgressed. An ulcerated tongue is the physical embodiment of God's violated Law, the human body making visible the will of the invisible divinity. Man's insides are designed to exhibit God's power to the outside world. In Desportes's devotional "Plainte," the diseased tongue and the bones piercing his flesh express the poet's sinful nature. They offer themselves to God for purification and redemption.

Another of Desportes's poems stages a sacrificial cannibalism, in which the penitent's body and blood become food for "ce grand Dieu vivant." The power of the divinity drinks the blood and roasts the entrails of the believer, consuming his flesh in a reversal of the Eucharist: ¹⁵

Ton trait vengeur, contre moy décoché,
De son venin m'a cuit et desseiché;
Il boit mon sang, il brusle mes entrailles. . . . ¹⁶

As in Desportes's devotional poetry, consumption is also an integral part of d'Aubigné's *Tragiques*. In d'Aubigné's text, the consuming of one term by another, its opposite, is effected through a continual play of antithesis. The rich, the aristocratic, the arrogant, the sacrilegious are set forth against their foils: the poor, the lower classes, the humble, the pious. In a military-like face-off, the strong are defeated by the weak, the overfed by the underfed, the lions by the lambs. Antithesis serves to mark the boundary line between victim and victor. Of course, d'Aubigné was not alone in his exploitation of antithetical discourse. Many of his contemporaries viewed rhetorical antithesis in an agonistic light. George Puttenham, in his *Arte of English Poesie* (1589), praises *antitheton* as a "quarreling figure," although he warns against its overuse in the vernacular. ¹⁷

Had he read *Les Tragiques*, Puttenham would doubtless have placed d'Aubigné among those writers who employed *antitheton* to excess. It is certainly as a quarrelling figure that antithesis invades d'Aubigné's text to distinguish Catholics from Protestants rhetorically. Such distinctions are frequently realized through images of real or metaphorical devouring and, more specifically, through tableaux of cannibalistic consumption.

As stated earlier, one of the principal points of polemical distinction and causes of violence between Protestants and Catholics was the question

of God's bodily presence in the host. Protestant writers satirized the belief in this presence by referring to the Catholic host as *le Dieu de pâte*, *le Dieu rondelet de la Messe*, or *le Dieu de farine*. Reformers' physical attacks on the host often disrupted Corpus Christi Day processions. On the other hand, these processions could also lead to physical violence against Protestants. During one such event at Lyon in 1561, the rallying cry, "For the flesh of God, we must kill all the Huguenots," announced the slaughter of Protestant heretics.¹⁸ Establishing religious identity around the proper or improper interpretation/eating of God's Word/Body — spiritual or literal — confirmed each side's body of belief. The Protestant reformers' desecration and vilification of the Catholic "God of paste" allowed them to embody and thus substantiate their new faith. There remained, however, the ever-present threat of the reformer's reversion and consequent loss of separate religious identity. Thus, as one critic observes, "it became doubly appropriate to represent the Catholics as cannibals who threatened to swallow up both Christ and the true religion."¹⁹

Throughout the seven sections of d'Aubigné's *Tragiques*, representations of cannibalism are a means of portraying the horror and ferocity of Catholic persecutions and royal perfidies. Through figures of cannibalism the author offsets by antithesis an absolute evil in order to foreground an exemplary good. A severe critic of the frivolous, extravagant, licentious lifestyle of the royal court, d'Aubigné, in *Les Tragiques*, mocked the literary sycophancy of Henri III's poets, targeting in particular Philippe Desportes, the most celebrated among them.²⁰ Desportes, for his part, took more than one shot at Huguenot heretics in his secular writing. In one poem, he goes so far as to compare his lady to the Protestant enemy, mixing neoplatonic metaphors, which trope her as a thief of hearts, with contemporary images of wartime pillaging. Oddly enough, Desportes then enjoins the heretics to avenge the wrong she has done him:

Huguenots qui courez la France,
De graces, faites-moy vengeance
D'une aussi mauvaise que vous:
Sa main est apprise au pillage
Et ses yeux, qui feignent les doux,
N'ont plaisir qu'à faire dommage.
Guettez ceste belle meurtriere;
Qu'elle soit vostre prisonniere,
Elle qui met tout en prison;
Liez ses mains de chaisnes fortes. . . .²¹

In another sonnet, Desportes employs the bloody religious wars then raging in France as an allegory for his ravaged psyche, torn asunder by the forces of Eros:

L'Amour qui loge en ma poitrine,
Qui mes sens divise et mutine
Et les fait bander contre moy,
Le traistre est de l'intelligence
De ceux qui revoltent la France,
Ennemis de leur jeune Roy.²²

Paradoxically, the enemy beloved is at once separated from and assimilated into the writing self. Antithesis functions in these poems as a form of writerly cannibalism. For both Desportes and d'Aubigné, deliberate polarization from one's opposite is, thereafter, a means of identification with it. This identification process contributes to the dynamic tension of their texts, since, in order to differentiate and separate the other from the self, it is necessary to paint a *tableau vivant* of the foreign object. However, due in part to its obsessive detail, the tableau then threatens to merge with the self that is portraying it. The self, in other words, runs the constant risk of identification with that which it wishes to reject.

D'Aubigné's *Tragiques* frequently betrays anxiety about blurred identity boundaries, moments of fusion between opposites when two distinct entities converge and become indistinguishable. Cannibalism is the example par excellence of such hybridization. A denatured Nature is represented, throughout *Les Tragiques*, as a joining or blending of that which should remain separate and distinct, the taking inside of that which should remain outside. Thus in "La Chambre dorée," Parisian magistrates and members of parliament are shown feeding on innocent Huguenot victims:

Nous avons parmi nous cette gent canibale,
Qui de son vif gibier le sang tout chaud avale,
Qui au commencement par un trou en la peau
Suce, sans escorcher, le sang de son troupeau,
Puis acheve le reste, et de leurs mains fumantes
Portent à leur palais bras et mains innocentes,
Font leur chair de la chair des orphelins occis.
Mais par desguisemens, comme par un hachis,
Ostans l'horreur du nom, cette brute canaille
Fait tomber sans effroy entrailles dans entraille. . . .²³

In this sequence, d'Aubigné depicts the horror of being assimilated by a corrupt political body through images of cannibalism, hunting and cooking. The innocent are brutally pursued and eaten in the most barbaric fashion,

their blood drained and drunk while still warm, their torn limbs transformed into delicacies for the cannibal palate. The homophonic play on the word *palais*, both palace and palate, intensifies the identification between cannibalism and royalty. Yet it is not simply the ingesting of human by human that constitutes the horror of d'Aubigné's cannibal scene. Rather, it is the transformation of victims into assassins. *Cannibalisme cru* and *cannibalisme cuit* are both equally nefarious in this sequence, the first draining warm life's blood by sucking it directly through the punctured skin, and the second covering up the anthropophagic act via the cooking process. That the flesh of the innocent human victims is *deguisez*, a culinary term meaning to be "prepared in such a way as to be unrecognizable" (unrecognizable as human in this case) shows the doubly evil nature of the act.²⁴ The oppressors not only ingest and assimilate the innocent, but in the process they disguise the victim's identity through an act of culinary trickery.²⁵

If loss of individual identity through fusion with one's opposite is, in this dualistic model of self-representation, a source of perpetual anxiety, it is also a potential wish fulfillment. As Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani has observed, the reversible nature of desire in *Les Tragiques* contributes to a textual oscillation between extremes of love and hostility, such that horror and longing are continually folded back onto each other, each term engendering its opposite.²⁶ The dynamic of conflict breeds a desire for harmony, for the elimination of a perpetually struggling, separate self. This desire, however, quickly becomes yet another threat, one which could lead to the weakening of resolve, the draining of one's inner resources, and ultimately to defeat. At the end of *Les Tragiques*, the poet's longing for the moment of reunion with his Creator, when his ecstatic soul "se pasme au giron de son Dieu,"²⁷ displays an underlying anxiety about self-loss. For d'Aubigné, such anxiety translates into myths and stories of cannibalism, in which dreams of restored unity with one's parents/creators turn into nightmares of being swallowed up and annihilated by them.

Thus, for both Catholic and Reform writers, the cannibal symbolic was sustained at the level of religious polemic. Protestants like d'Aubigné used the cannibal epithet not only against Catholics, who literally devoured the body of Christ, but also in reference to the monarchy and a foreign-born queen. Anti-Italian sentiment and hostility to Catherine de Médici contributed to many tales of cannibalism said to be practiced by the Italian people and aristocracy. At the same time, images of cannibalism were also linked to Protestants, such as the family of Sancerre who were reduced to eating the flesh of their dead child during the siege of 1573.²⁸ Both Protestant and Catholic uses of cannibal imagery were further enlivened by popular travel

accounts circulating at the time, which provided vivid descriptions of the godless, man-eating peoples of the New World.²⁹

In d'Aubigné's *Tragiques*, the fantasy of devouring and being devoured appears as the trace of a rejected religious sacrament, Catholic communion, and a rejected other, the old Church and its royal backing. The menace of being absorbed by an abhorrent body politic is tied to the menace of being assimilated by a corrupt body of belief. Thus d'Aubigné saves some of his most intense invective for those Protestants who had returned to Catholicism:

Je vous en veux à vous, apostats degeneres,
Qui leschez le sang frais tout fumant de vos peres
Sur les pieds des tueurs, serfs qui avez servi
Les bras qui ont la vie à vos peres ravi!³⁰

In the Catholic Eucharist, those who consume the heavenly Father are in turn consumed by him, becoming bodies in Christ. Similarly, in d'Aubigné's representation of apostate Protestants, the traitors to the Reform who drink the blood of their fathers will in turn be consumed by their adopted father, the corrupt political and religious body of which they are now a part.

D'Aubigné's use of writing as a weapon was perhaps modeled on Ronsard's strategy of combatting the Protestant Reform by means of books. In his *Discours des misères de ce temps*, Ronsard had claimed that by distributing devotional literature more widely among the people, the Church could fight fire with fire and gain ground against the power of Protestant psalm books:

Ainsi que l'ennemy par livres a seduit
Le peuple desvoyé qui faususement le suit,
Il faut en disputant par livres le confondre,
Par livres l'assaillir, par livres luy respondre.³¹

The devotional and secular literary traditions thus converge in poetry and in political pamphlets during the religious wars in France. Books and words, mirroring the physical conflicts of the society, are figured as both bodies and weapons. In fact, certain forms of religious persecution literalized the symbolic, employing books as real instruments of torture. In 1562, a Protestant weaver near Le Mans was killed and his mouth stuffed with pages torn from the New Testament. The same treatment was accorded to dead Protestants at a battle in Orange. Catholic soldiers considered this fitting symbolism for heretics who dared to consume, or interpret, the sacred Scripture on their own.³²

Sharing in the power of God by eating his word or body was thus both the boundary marker and the common ground between Protestants and Catholics during the time of the religious reform. Both sides struggled to establish their identity — their body of belief — by incorporating the divine Word. Each group painted the other as cannibal, a foreign menace to be devoured before it could devour them. Ronsard's rhyming of *cannibale* with *Calvinale*³³ in the follow-up to his *Discours* was only the mirroring of Protestant depictions of Catholics who regularly chewed up the body of Christ at their sacrament.

A cultural idiom for violence in a time of social unrest, cannibalism, in the late Renaissance, was both the figure and the mode of psychic engagement with real physical horrors. It served equally to represent the abject other and to define the social self. As a means of polarization and self-distancing from a rejected other, cannibalism operates in the texts of d'Aubigné and Desportes as a rhetorical tool and an ironic weapon. Yet behind ironic devices and interwoven with textual strategies there remained the issues of real bodies and real flesh-eating. The highs and lows of this reality, whether as anthropophagy or theophagy, permeated the literature of late-century France, creating a *lieu commun* between court and Calvinist *cannibales*.

University of Memphis

Notes

1. Pierre Chaunu points out that the Eucharist, as a stronghold of Catholic Christianity, both attracted and repulsed Protestants, so that "when blood was shed it was always around the *corpus dei*" (*Église, culture et société: Essais sur Réforme et Contre-Réforme 1517–1620* [Paris: Société d'Édition d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1981], p. 368; my translation). On the importance of the Eucharistic debate in early modern writing, see Frank Lestringant, *Une sainte horreur ou le voyage en Eucharistie, XVI^e–XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996).
2. Much recent criticism of Renaissance literature has treated the *topoi* of food, ingestion and the body as a model for literary creation during the period. See, for example, Michel Jeanneret, *Des mets et des mots: Banquets et propos de table à la Renaissance* (Paris: José Corti, 1987), as well as *Le corps à la Renaissance: Actes du XXX^e colloque de Tours*, ed. Jean Céard, Marie-Madeleine Fontaine et Jean-Claude Margolin (Paris: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1990). On the cannibal *topos* in literature from the classical period through the nineteenth century, see Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990); Frank Lestringant, *Le Cannibale: Grandeur et décadence* (Paris: Perrin, 1994); and Roger Celestin, *From Cannibals to Radicals: Figures and Limits of Exoticism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).
3. Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Œuvres*, ed. Henri Weber (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), p. 23 ("Misères," line 75).

4. See Jacques Lavaud, *Un poète de cours au temps des derniers Valois: Philippe Desportes (1546–1606)* (Paris: Droz, 1936), and Claude Faisant, "Les Relations de Ronsard et de Desportes," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 28 (1966): 323–53.
5. See Terence Cave, *Devotional Poetry in France c. 1570–1613* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), and Michel Jeanneret, *Poésie et tradition biblique au XVI^e siècle: Recherches stylistiques sur les paraphrases des "Psaumes," de Marot à Malherbe* (Paris: José Corti, 1969).
6. Cave, p. 9.
7. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1961), pp. 73–74.
8. Pierre de L'Estoile, *Registre-journal de Henri III, publié d'après le manuscrit autographe de Lestoile, presque entièrement inédit*, ed. MM. Champollion-Figeac and Aimé Champollion fils, Nouvelle collection de mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France, ed. MM. Michaud and Poujoulat, 2nd series, 1 (Paris: Éditeur du Commentaire analytique du Code Civil, 1837), p. 160.
9. Cave, pp. 2–10.
10. Jean Rousset points out that Ronsard figured among the early "poètes de la mort" with his own meditation on death in the "Derniers vers" (*La littérature de l'âge baroque en France: Circé et la paon* [Paris: José Corti, 1954], p. 100).
11. Philippe Desportes, *Œuvres de Philippe Desportes*, ed. Alfred Michiels (Paris: Adolphe Delahays, 1858), p. 493.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 513.
13. Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 183–92.
14. Desportes, *Œuvres*, p. 508.
15. According to Caroline Walker Bynum, medieval authors who wrote of "eating and being eaten by God" were echoing earlier saints such as Hilary and Augustine, who "had said that we are all present in the sacrifice and Resurrection of the cross, that Christ, in dying, digests and assimilates us, making us new flesh in his flesh" (*Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987], p. 31).
16. Desportes, *Œuvres*, p. 497.
17. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie: Contrived into Three Bookes: The First of Poets and Poesie, the Second of Proportion, the Third of Ornament*, ed. Hilton Landry (1906; fac. rpt. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1970), p. 220.
18. Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975), p. 171.
19. Kilgour, p. 83.
20. Michiels notes: "C'est certainement à Desportes que s'attaque d'Aubigné, quand il traine les flatteurs des rois sur la claie, dans son effroyable satire qui a pour titre Les Princes" (Introduction, Desportes, *Œuvres*, pp. xxv–xxvi).
21. Philippe Desportes, *Les Amours de Diane*, ed. Victor E. Graham, 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Minard, 1959), 2: 272 ("Chanson," lines 7–20).
22. *Ibid.*, 1: 168–69.

23. D'Aubigné, pp. 95–96 (“La Chambre Dorée,” lines 197–206).
24. *Ibid.*, p. 965, n. 3. “Desguisemens de viandes” were among the culinary innovations at the Valois court. Such novelties were criticized by Henri III’s political opponents as representative of the overall license and sensual excesses of the king and his court. See Jacqueline Boucher, “L’Alimentation en milieu de cour sous les derniers Valois,” *Pratiques et discours alimentaires à la Renaissance: Actes du colloque de Tours de mars 1979*, Centre d’Études Supérieures de la Renaissance, ed. Jean-Claude Margolin and Robert Sauzet (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1982), p. 163.
25. See Louis Marin, *La Parole mangée, et autres essais théologico-politiques* (Paris: Méridiens-Klincksieck, 1986), on the semiotics of the cooking motif in seventeenth-century *contes*.
26. Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani, *Agrippa d’Aubigné: Le Corps de Jézabel* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1991), p. 98.
27. D’Aubigné, p. 243 (“Jugement,” line 1218).
28. This scene of cannibalism is described in detail by the Protestant minister Jean de Léry in his *Histoire mémorable du siège de Sancerre*, in Géralde Nakam, *Au lendemain de la Saint-Barthélémy: Guerre civile et famine* (Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1975), pp. 290–95.
29. It should be noted that Montaigne’s treatment of New World peoples provides a striking contrast to this negative view. On the importance of artists’ and travel writers’ depictions of cannibalism in European literature and culture, see *Le théâtre du nouveau monde: Les grands voyages de Théodore de Bry*, ed. Marc Bouyer and Jean-Paul Duviols (Paris: Gallimard, 1992); *L’Amérique de Théodore de Bry: Une collection de voyages protestante du XVI^e siècle*, gen ed. Michèle Duchet (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1987); and Lestringant, *Le cannibale*, and “Catholiques et cannibales: Le thème du cannibalisme dans le discours protestant au temps des guerres de religion,” in Margolin and Sauzet, eds., pp. 233–45.
30. D’Aubigné, p. 217–18 (“Jugement,” lines 107–10).
31. Pierre de Ronsard, “Discours à G. Des-Autels,” *Discours des misères de ce temps*, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Gustave Cohen, 2 vols., Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1950), 2: 565.
32. Denis Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525–vers 1610)*, 2 vols. (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990), 1: 240–304, and “Imaginaire du corps et violence aux temps des troubles de religion,” in Céard, Fontaine and Margolin, eds., pp. 115–27.
33. Pierre de Ronsard, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Paul Laumonier, 20 vols. (Paris: Didier, 1914–83), 2: 49.