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Phalante

A Tragedy by Jean Galaut

Translated, with Introduction and Notes,
by Richard Hillman

Référence électronique

Introduction to *Phalante*

by Jean Galaut

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Introduction

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Phalante's distinction of being the first of three known sixteenth- and seventeenth-century French dramatic adaptations of material taken from the *Arcadia* of Philip Sidney is sufficient to justify its interest for comparative literary historians. As it happens, that distinction is also linked to an intriguing mystery concerning the means of transmission. The second and third adaptations – respectively, *La Cour bergère* (*The Shepherds' Court*), by André Mareschal (1638), and (again) *Phalante*, by Gaultier de Coste de La Calprenède (1642) – present no difficulty of this kind, since Jean Beaudoin's French translation of the multiply expanded *Arcadia* had been published in 1624-25. Indeed, as the title alone might suggest (for *Phalante* is the name given by Jean Galaut to Sidney's Amphialus¹), the tragedy of La Calprenède is substantially derivative from that of Galaut – to the point where no independent recourse to the *Arcadia* is apparent.² (As for the tragicomedy of Mareschal, it is quite independent in its selection and handling of Arcadian source material.³) By contrast, the absolute *terminus ad quem* for the composition of Galaut's

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- ¹ In the *Arcadia*, Phalantus is the natural brother of Helen, Queen of Corinth, and the latter survives to relate the tragic love-story which the two dramatists alter to include her death. The character and her story do not figure in the work of Mareschal.
 - ² See Henry Carrington Lancaster, "Sidney, Galaut, La Calprenède: An Early Instance of the Influence of English Literature upon French", *Modern Language Notes* 42.2 (1927): 71-77, and Alan Howe, ed., *Phalante*, by Jean Galaut (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1995), p. xxxvii. References to Galaut's *Phalante* are to this edition, on which the translation is also based. An overview of the three French plays derived from the *Arcadia* and of the available translations is offered by Alban Délérís, "Les Vies françaises de l'*Arcadia*: du roman de Sir Philip Sidney à ses adaptations dramatiques en France", *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* 40.3 (2017): 133-55.
 - ³ See *The Shepherds' Court*, trans., with annotations and an introduction, by Richard Hillman, online publication, Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance, Scène Européenne, "Traductions Introuvables",

tragedy is 1605, the year of the author's death (at the age of thirty), while Alan Howe has shown that the playwright had recycled a substantial passage from it for a funeral elegy he composed in honour of one of Toulouse's most eminent citizens, Pierre Du Faur, seigneur de Saint-Jory, who died in 1600.⁴ Given the first publication of the *Arcadia* in 1590—and I will be proposing that this edition was the basis for *Phalante*—the play's composition can therefore be placed with some confidence during the mid- to late-1590s, at a time when no French translation of Sidney's work is known to have existed.

Much remains obscure about the history of *Phalante* and its author, a member of the legal and administrative milieu of Toulouse who, like a number of his colleagues, indulged literary aspirations.⁵ It is possible that the play had been published before its inclusion (as the only dramatic work) in the posthumous collection of Galaut's poetry that appeared in 1611;⁶ there is tenuous evidence of a performance, but only after Galaut's death,⁷ and it may (or may not) be significant that the published text is completely devoid of stage directions. Whether or not the work was staged, or intended to be, it is at times very clumsy in its dramaturgy, as several notes to the translation will point out, while the *Recueil* in general confirms the impression given by the text that Galaut saw himself (and was seen by others) primarily as a poet and master of rhetorical effects. (Not that this excluded, of course, the application of these skills to performance.)

In any case, the chief puzzle to concern the few commentators to interest themselves in the work understandably concerns the author's apparent access to the *Arcadia* in its original language in a period when, and place where, knowledge of English would have been extremely rare. As it is, *Phalante* figures as the earliest confirmed and substantial example of a French adaptation (or, for that matter, translation) of a literary English original, antedating by some seventeen years (if we posit a date of 1598) the translation of Robert Greene's pastoral novel *Pandosto* by L. Regnault, which rendered that work accessible to dramatists, and by some twenty-seven years the translation of *Arcadia* by Beaudoin, who had been commissioned by Marie de' Medici to travel to England and learn the language specifically for this purpose.⁸

Tours, 2017 (<<http://umr6576.cesr.univ-tours.fr/publications/shepherd/>>; accessed 22 November 2017).

- 4 Howe, ed., pp. xvi-xvii. I am indebted to Howe's informative and judicious introduction for several of the points made here.
- 5 The renowned law faculty of Toulouse included literary training in the Greek and Latin classics (Howe, ed., p. xi).
- 6 Jean Galaut, *Recueil des divers poèmes et chans royaux avec le commencement de la traduction de l'Aenéide, etc.* (Toulouse: Vve J. Colomiez and R. Colomiez, 1611).
- 7 See Howe, ed., pp. xvii-xviii.
- 8 On the complex circumstances surrounding French translations of the *Arcadia*, see Albert W. Osborn, *Sir Philip Sidney en France* (1932; fac. rpt. Geneva: Slatkine, 1974), pp. 70-91; Osborn,

I

The basis of Galaut's plot is the story of Helen, Queen of Corinth, as narrated by that character herself in Book I, Chapter 11, of Sidney's pastoral romance.⁹ The story is varied in significant ways, but several of these divergences, as will be discussed, suggest a thorough and thoughtful familiarity with the source, as do some points of characterisation.¹⁰ The elements most directly borrowed from Helen's narrative certainly do so—in matters not only of detail but also of presentation, as has been demonstrated by Howe, who, after considering various indirect routes by which the playwright might have become acquainted with the novel, as well as other conceivable explanations for the similarities, is compelled to conclude inconclusively.¹¹ All in all, unlikely as this appears on the surface, we seem to be dealing with a playwright who had somehow mastered English well enough to work closely with Sidney's original.

Galaut's salient departure from the story in the *Arcadia* entails his concentrated production, from the generically mixed source-material making up the novel, of multiple tragedies resulting from mistaken surmises. In the *Arcadia*, Helen does not kill herself on the false supposition that the man she loves is dead, thereby provoking the latter's suicide, although there are elements, as I will be proposing, that might have pointed the playwright in this direction. More obviously, he had notable models in the stories of Romeo and Juliet and of Pyramus and Thisbe. The former had circulated in France at least by way of Pierre Boaistuau's translation of the *histoire tragique* by Matteo Bandello; the latter was still better known, thanks chiefly to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, although it had

incidentally, is rightly sceptical (p. 68) of Thomas Nashe's claim (in *Have with you to Saffron-Waldon* [1596]) that his pamphlet, *Pierce Penilesse* (1592), had been translated into French—a claim nevertheless perpetuated by Michael Lee Stapleton, *The Cambridge Guide to English Literature*, ed. Nicholas Barker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 632. Cf. Ronald B. McKerrow and F. P. Wilson, eds, *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, rev. ed., 5 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), IV: 85-86 (Notes to *Pierce Penilesse*).

For more on the translations, and dramatic adaptations, of the works of Greene and Sidney (not including La Calprenède's *Phalante*), see Richard Hillman, "Et in *Arcadia* alter egos: Playing Politics with Pastoral in Two French Baroque Dramas", *French Renaissance and Baroque Drama: Text, Performance, and Theory*, ed. Michael Meere (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2015), pp. 267-93 *passim*.

- 9 Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1977), pp. 121-29. For convenience, this is the edition cited here, unless otherwise noted; it is based on the 1593 revised and expanded version of Sidney's work, left incomplete at his death in 1586.
- 10 A few details, however, especially relating to the reluctant killing of Philoxène, suggest uncertain or hasty adaptation; these are indicated in notes to the translation.
- 11 See Howe, ed., pp. xix-xxv, and, for further specific parallels, the notes to the translation, *passim*.

also been retold in French poetic narrative, notably by Jean-Antoine de Baïf in 1572-73, and had previously figured as the subject of a “Moralité” (1535?).¹² The mainspring of the tragic mistaking in both these stories, of course, is love, as it also is in *Phalante*, but Sidney’s narrative of Helen also contained essential psychological factors that Galaut would develop to take the place of, or at least assist, fatal coincidence such as determines the outcome in the prior models (the friar’s deceptive potion in the story of Romeo and Juliet, the garment bloodied by the lion in that of Pyramus and Thisbe).

Most crucially, there is no reciprocal passion in Sidney, but rather a variant on the widespread Renaissance theme of conflict between love and friendship, as well as the common structural device—more usually comic—of the *chaîne amoureuse*.¹³ Amphialus is literally like a brother to Philoxenus (Galaut’s Philoxène), having also been brought up by the latter’s father, the virtuous lord Timotheus (Timothée in Galaut), and when he agrees to woo Helen on his friend’s behalf, there is not the slightest openness to the overtures she begins to make to himself. Indeed, at the moment when she frankly reveals her passion, a resentful revulsion appears, despite the “courtesy” that is his hallmark,¹⁴ and it carries through the sequel of the tale:

But lord, I shall never forget how anger and courtesy at one instant appeared in his eyes when he heard that motion; how with his blush he taught me shame. In sum, he left nothing unassayed which might disgrace himself to grace his friend, in sweet terms making me receive a most resolute refusal of himself. (p. 124 [bk. I, chap. 11])

As will be evident, the mixture of emotions sketched here proved highly useful to Galaut, who developed it dramatically in an ambiguous direction.

¹² For these texts, see, respectively, Jean-Antoine de Baïf, *Le meurier, ou la fable de Pyrame et Thisbe, Euvres en rime, Première partie: Neuf Livres des Poemes*, ed. Jean Vignes, Guy Demerson, Perrine Galand-Hallyn, et al., *Œuvres complètes, Textes de la Renaissance* (Paris: H. Champion, 2002), and *Moralité nouvelle de Pyramus et Tisbee, publiée d’après un exemplaire de la Bibliothèque Royale de Dresde*, ed. Émile Picot, *Bulletin du Bibliophile*, January 1901 (Paris: Librairie Henri Leclerc, 1901), 5-39. The date of 1535 is the editor’s conjecture.

¹³ Certain of Shakespeare’s romantic comedies, especially *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, play on both these patterns. The *chaîne amoureuse* is a standard device in Italian and French pastoral—a genre of which *Phalante* also shows itself conscious. For an illustration and discussion, see Nicolas de Montreux, *Diane (La Diane)*, ed. and trans., with an introduction, by Richard Hillman, online publication, Centre d’Études Supérieures de la Renaissance, Scène Européenne, “Traductions Introuvables”, Tours, 2014 (<<http://umr6576.cesr.univ-tours.fr/publications/diane/>>; accessed 23 November 2017).

¹⁴ Sidney’s Helen reports that “he was commonly called the courteous Amphialus” (p. 123 [bk. I, chap. 11]). See also the translation, n. 64.

By contrast, ambiguity is rigorously excluded in Sidney's subsequent narrative. Amphialus leaves Helen's court to avoid unintentionally encouraging her, and when he unwillingly kills Philoxenus, who has followed him in a jealous rage after divining Helen's passion, and Timotheus immediately dies from shock and grief, he sends this "bitter message" back to Helen:

that he well enough found I was the cause of all this mischief, and that if I were a man, he would go over the world to kill me; but bade me assure myself that of all creatures in the world he most hated me. (p. 127 [bk. I, chap. 11])

Helen is left with a sense of her "heart" as "nothing but a stage for tragedies" (p. 126 [bk. I, chap. 11])—a metaphor that Galaut may well have taken as an invitation to write his own.

The dramatist's first and most obvious structural innovation amounts to literalising Helen's metaphor by taking his Héléne out of the narrative role and making her follow Philoxène's death with her own. Her action is not merely founded on error, as in the precedent of Pyramus and Thisbe (she finds the bloody weapons and armour that Phalante had thrown down in remorseful disgust), but charged with irony reminiscent of Romeo's suicide, for the object of her love is not actually dead. The tragedy is then compounded by a third death—inevitably, that of Phalante himself, who returns to the spot only to find Héléne's body. There is no mistake entailed in his action here—therefore, no irony of the conventional kind. There is, however, a more profound tragic charge, which enters into his sense of the multiple crimes he has committed, however unwittingly. This sense is reinforced both by an evocation of Oedipus—for Phalante puts out his eyes as a prelude to suicide—and by a revelation which comes close to a *coup de théâtre*. The potential ambiguity in Amphialus' conduct so resoundingly rejected in Sidney, but which has been allowed by Galaut to make itself felt indistinctly—a point to be developed below—is here abruptly resolved in the contrary direction. As his final lamenting monologue builds towards self-blinding, then suicide, Phalante declares that he has betrayed both friendship and love, that Philoxène and Héléne were "my soul's two suns [*les Soleils de mon ame*]" (V.v.1598), and he addresses them jointly as "spirits who loved me so and whom I so cherished [*Esprits qui m'aymiés tant et que j'ay tant aymé*]" (1611).

II

Before returning to the preceding dramatic effects that help to invest this climax with surprising power, I want to suggest that the playwright does not actually leave Sidney's romance behind but draws on it to create another level of adaptation. Certainly, Helen finishes her succinct story in the chapter of Book I already cited, which commentators have so far considered exclusively in evaluating Galaut's use of the *Arcadia*. But Amphialus goes on to play an important role in that sprawling romance's principal plot—thereby furnishing the basis, in fact, of Mareschal's later adaptation—and his tragic fate is not at all remote from that of Phalante.

Book III of the *Arcadia* presents the culmination of this segment of action, in which Amphialus discovers that his unscrupulous mother, as part of her plan to seize the throne of Arcadia on his behalf, has been tormenting the imprisoned Princess Pamela and her sister Philoclea, whom Amphialus hopelessly loves. “Full therefore of the horri-blest despair which a most guilty conscience could breed” (p. 572 [bk. III, chapter 24]), Amphialus initiates a confrontation with his mother which accidentally proves fatal to her, whereupon he punishes himself for what he represents to himself, in a lengthy lamenting monologue parallel to Phalante's final one, as a series of treacherous crimes, beginning with “the death of thy most dear companion and friend, Philoxenus, and of his father, thy most careful foster-father” (p. 573 [bk. III, chapter 24]). As in the dramatic adaptation, however, it is responsibility for the suffering of the woman he loves that proves the final unbearable blow, and it is in dwelling on this that he falls on his sword. Unlike Phalante, he at first fails in his attempt, but he soon succeeds in giving himself wounds which will obviously prove fatal, lamenting and blaming himself all the while, in “a pitiful spectacle, where the conquest was the conqueror's overthrow, and self-ruin the only triumph of a battle fought between him and himself” (p. 575 [bk. III, chap. 24]).

The story of Helen thus effectively comes full circle by surrogate in a way likely to have impressed a dramatist seeking to invest it with the utmost tragic intensity. Moreover, that lady herself re-appears in the following chapter to lament over the expiring Amphialus, whom she still loves and will vainly try to save with the aid of her physicians. Her laments include, like those of the suicidal Hélène (“Adieu, potent sceptre—with empery, away! [*Adieu sceptre puissant, belle marques Emperiere*]” [V.iv.1485]), a resignation of claims to majesty in favour of loving womanhood. Indeed, whereas Galaut's heroine merely speaks of giving up all to be Phalante's wife, if only in death, Sidney's original tries to tell Amphialus that she “only sought to make my crown thy footstool, myself thy servant” (p. 577 [bk. III, chap. 25]); she addresses the absent Philoclea with the wish that she had been her “serv-ing-maid” (p. 577) in a marriage with Amphialus, and needs to be reminded by a wise

counsellor that she should “remember what was fit for her greatness, wisdom, and honour ... rather than only show herself a woman-lover in fruitless lamentations” (p. 528).

The conflict between female sovereignty and womanly passion had, of course, been conventional as a means of presenting the irresistible and destructive power of love at least since Virgil’s narrative of Dido and Aeneas.¹⁵ In addition to this model (including its dramatisation in the *Didon se sacrifiant* [1574] of Étienne Jodelle), Galaut would have had the precedent of several Plutarch-inspired dramatic evocations of Antony and Cleopatra—by Jodelle (in *Cléopâtre captive*, pub. 1574), by Robert Garnier (in *Marc Antoine*, 1578) and perhaps (depending on dating) by Nicholas de Montreux (in *Cléopâtre*, 1595?).¹⁶ In the *Arcadia*, however, he would have found particular warrant for developing this theme in relation to Hélène, and indeed he does so, taking a hint from Sidney,¹⁷ from the very beginning of her story, when, in Act One, Scene Two, she debates the issues of sovereignty, love and marriage with her waiting-woman, Mélisse. Once the charms of Phalante have worked their misguided magic, moreover, she does not hesitate to confess to Carie: “he is all my glory, and my whole desire / Is to place in his hands my sceptre and empire—/ And my person, too [*il est toute ma gloire; et . . . en fin je desire / De remettre en ses main mon sceptre et mon Empire, / Et ma personne mesmes*]” (II.417-19). Despite Carie’s urging of restraint and reminder of her superior status, she is obviously too far gone: “His favour I’ll implore, brimful of tears my eyes, / And offer my sceptre, and my heart, as a prize [*Je veux la larme à l’œil implorer sa faveur / Luy offrant à la fois et mon sceptre et mon cœur*]” (455-56).

15 Galaut (like others in his milieu) certainly knew the *Aeneid*; the 1611 *Recueil* included the beginning of a translation (of I.1-273), and the printer expresses regret that he was able to obtain a small portion of that text (“L’imprimevr au lectevr”, sig. A2^r). See also the translation, n. 62.

16 On the various French dramatisations of Cleopatra and their relation to English versions, especially Shakespeare’s, see Richard Hillman, *French Reflections in the Shakespearean Tragic: Three Case Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), pp. 94-149. By whatever means this came to be, Hélène’s longing to follow Phalante in death as his wife is especially close to Shakespeare’s tracing of his heroine’s progression towards the “secret house of death” (*Antony and Cleopatra*, V.i.81) following Antony’s death; she moves from declaring herself “No more but e’en a woman”, tempted “To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods” (73, 76), to a vision of rejoining her “[h]usband” (V.ii.287) in the underworld, although she pointedly reclaims her majesty in doing so: “Give me my robe, put on my crown” (281). (Shakespearean citations are taken from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, gen. eds G. Blake-more Evans and J. J. M. Tobin, 2nd ed. [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997].)

17 See the translation, n. 15.

III

If the last one sees of Amphialus and Helen in the *Arcadia* is during the mournful transporting of his near-lifeless body outside the city gates, accompanied by his stricken (and vengeful) friend Anaxius and amid the laments of the populace, there is a highly suggestive divergence at this point between the revised text of 1593 and the original of 1590. This provides virtually conclusive evidence, I believe, that the latter was Galaut's source. For in the first edition only, a "song of Lamentation", whose text extends over five pages, is "roared out"¹⁸ to conclude the chapter in intensely poetic fashion. This conventional pastoral dirge, in contrast with Amphialus' final monologue, is obviously not in itself a model for Phalante's suicidal self-accusations, but the multiple appeals to nature to take to sympathetic mourning correspond to a supplementary dimension with which Galaut invests Phalante's discourse, thereby adding tragic resonance and a claim to universality. These in turn are ironically overlaid on H el ene's previous evocation of amorous nymphs and deployment of the echo motif prior to concluding that Phalante has been killed (V.iv.1449-54).

It is not surprising to find similar commonplace images in the two texts, but the overlap is concentrated and seems more than simply fortuitous. Galaut's "bird of ill-omen [*oyseau malheureux*]" (V.v.1585) is anticipated when the earth is enjoined, in Sidney, "Vpon thy face let coaly Rauens swarm" (fol. 346^v). The earth is also urged, "Thy selfe henceforth the light doo neuer see", in a way that matches Amphialus' earlier reaction to the deaths of Philoxenus and Timotheus ("ashamed of the light" [Evans, ed., p. 127 (bk. I, chap. 11)]) but especially resonates with Phalante's final moral state—and physical condition.¹⁹ The singer calls on Echo to resound endlessly with grief (1590, fol. 347^r), whereas, according to Phalante, "doleful Echo finds herself weary already / Of answering my voice, become hoarse and unsteady [*la dolente Echo se voit desja lass e / De respondre   ma voix enrou e et cass e*]" (V.v.1537-38).²⁰ The echoing, the song says, is not to end "Till that it hath all woods and waters past" (fol. 347^r); Phalante hopes that the "Nymphs of

18 Cited is Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia, written by Sir Philippe Sidnei* (London: Iohn Windet for William Ponsonbie, 1590), fol. 346^r (bk. III, chap. 25); STC 22539.

19 Howe, ed., p. xxi, signals the play's expansion of this motif at several points, although his expression, "la lumiere en horreur", is actually that of Beaudoin's later translation.

20 Echo was the nymph cursed by the jealous Juno with an inability to speak except by repeating the final words of someone else's speech (see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, bk. III). This is the basis of a widespread gambit in contemporary pastoral, dramatic and otherwise. Cf. also the echo-song in Sidney, pp. 427-29 (bk. II, "The Second Eclogues"), a slightly revised version (with a different singer) of the one in the 1590 text.

the dark forest / And the Nymphs of the waters [*les Nymphes forestiers / Et les Nymphes des eaux*]” (1630-31) may weep and put on mourning. The lamenting, the singer hopes, may move the heavens to “stay the starrs inconstant constant race, / Till that they doo vnto our dolours bende”; the “light of Sunne”, “Phoebus” (fol. 347^r), hides its light. For his part, Phalante complains:

The sun will lend no longer its exalted light
 To my sad days; the moon becomes a bloody sight
 At my resounding clamours; even the stars shed
 Rays that shimmer with faint pallor above my head:
 So greatly can recital of my bitter torments
 Give trouble to the sky and all the elements.

[*Le Soleil ne veut plus éclairer à son rang
 Mes misérables jours: la Lune devient sang
 Au bruit de mes clameurs, et les estoilles mesmes
 Monstrent dessus mon chef des rais pasles et blesmes.*]
 (1539-44)

And finally, of course, with his self-blinding, “Phoebus flames in vain for me, dazzling as he runs [*Rien ne me sert Phœbus, sa clarté ni sa flamme*]” (1597). He might as well declare, as does Sidney’s singer, “I to teach the world complainte am bent” (fol. 347^v). It is, then, as if the supplement of the dirge in the 1590 *Arcadia* contributes to Phalante’s monologue a quality of meta-complaint transcending purely personal experience.

IV

Phalante’s experience of guilt and “pollution” is essentially Senecan, with the ancient Greek tragic model as further background:²¹ “Seeing myself so blackened, so foully polluted [*Me voyant si pollué, si sale et si noirce*]” (V.v.1583). Hence he begins his self-punishment with blindness, like Oedipus, and imagines rejecting even the human kindness of a guide to help him on his way:

21 For a recent study of the Greek model, including a discussion of Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannus*, see Fabian Meinel, *Pollution and Crisis in Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), esp. 47-73. *Mutatis mutandis*, there is in *Phalante* an uncanny sense of the hero’s self-blinding as what Meinel deems, in the case of Oedipus, a “purification” that is “futile” (71) and “perverted” (73). Certainly, Phalante almost at once rejects the Oedipal model as inadequate and appropriates the suicidal end of Jocasta, according to Seneca’s version.

And I wish that no one such charity should show
 As to hold out a succouring hand to my woe;
 With no one in the world to guide me, stumbling blind,
 I'll readily know how the road of death to find.

[*Et ne veux qu'il se trouve aucun si charitable
 Qui tende à mes malheurs sa dextre secourable,
 Car sans qu'homme du monde aille guidant mes pas
 Je sçauray bien trouver le chemin du trespas.*] (1589-92)

This image, too, may be most immediately indebted to another part of the *Arcadia*—the story recounted in Book II, Chapter 10 (Evans, ed., pp. 275-83), of the blinded king of Paphlagonia who, despite himself, finds a guide who leads him away from death and back to life. That narrative has long been recognised as a source for the Gloucester plot in *King Lear*, and the Shakespearean adaptation strikingly intersects with Galaut's in the image used for suicidal despair: Gloucester begs the disguised Edgar to lead him only to the cliff-top, for "From that place / I shall no leading need" (*King Lear*, IV.i.77-78).

Striking, too, for that matter, is the anticipation just a few lines earlier of the key image used by Shakespeare's Macbeth for his own pollution. The latter first imagines hands that "pluck out mine eyes" (*Macbeth*, II.ii.56), then asks, "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood / Clean from my hand?" (57-58). Phalante laments, "nor would the whole sea's flood / Be enough to cleanse my murdering soul of blood [*et la mer toute entiere / Ne laverait le sang de mon ame mertriere*]" (1581-82). Generations of commentators have identified more-or-less close precedents for Shakespeare's imagery, mainly classical and most convincingly Senecan, with lines from the final lament of the guilt-stricken protagonist of *Hercules Furens* making an especially close match.²² The forms of guilt incurred and despair experienced would make that tragedy an obvious source for Galaut, too, to draw on, along with *Oedipus*, in adding Senecan tragic authority and force to Phalante's last moments. The fact remains that if *Phalante* had been separately issued some years before 1611—as is by no means an impossibility²³—

22 See Kenneth Muir, ed., *Macbeth*, by William Shakespeare, 9th ed., The Arden Shakespeare, 2nd ser. (London: Methuen, 1962), n. to II.ii.59-62; cf. Seneca, *Hercules Furens*, *Tragedies*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1917), ll. 1321 ff.

23 Cf. my discussion (*French Reflections*, pp. 142-43, n. 16) of a probable issue of Montreux's *Cléopâtre* prior to its publication as an annex to that author's *Ceuvre de la chasteté* (1595). (On a possible 1610 issue of Galaut's *Recueil* itself, see Howe, ed., pp. xxxvii-xl.) *Phalante* is thoroughly integrated into the *Recueil* with regard to page numbering and typography, and the absence of any reference to it in the introductory epistle ("L'Imprimevr av Lectevr", sig. A2^{r-v}) is not necessarily significant. There is an enigmatic citation after the title in the otherwise simple "Table des Poesies": "Que me

Shakespeare might have had access, in highly compact form, to several image-clusters that he adapted for post-1600 tragedies. Beyond this, of course, one simply cannot speculate responsibly.²⁴ In any case, the correspondences furnish further evidence of the common ground shared by some nearly contemporary French and English dramatic deployments of neo-Senecan elements.²⁵

V

To return to the principal (and documentable) innovation applied by Galaut to his Sidneian raw material, it is worth insisting on the skill with which the playwright manages the audience's uncertain sense of Phalante's feelings about Hélène prior to disclosing them suddenly and fully in the final scene. Hélène herself wavers, before encountering him in the lengthy disclosure scene (the unique scene of Act Two), between certainty that "my youthful charms have made no breach in his heart [*ma jeune beauté n'a faite besche en son cœur*]" (II.404) and the contrary conviction, which savours of wishful thinking: "No, no, my beauties have not failed his soul to seize [*Non non de mes beautés il a l'ame saisie*]" (406). There are indeed points, in the tense encounters between the two after her declaration, where Phalante appears emotionally susceptible to her, but these are not easy to dissociate from the "courtesy" and "sweet terms" that mingle with his "anger" even according to Sidney, and which remain necessary to fulfilling his mission on behalf of Philoxène. As long as he is speaking with her, his praises of her love-inspiring beauty, even his expressions of confusion and wish that he could reciprocate, come with a built-in buffer. His brief aside later in Act Two falls short of a complete private revelation and show him very much on his guard: "[aside] Sweetly loving speeches, how smoothly you caress me! / But you more deeply, in spirit and mind, distress me [*Beaux discours amoureux qui si fort m'obligés, / Mais qui encore plus mon esprit affligés*]" (667-68). The conclusion of the scene confirms, by way of Carie's reply to her discouraged and doubtful mistress, that "Nothing at all from that behaviour can be told [*On ne peut rien juger de ceste contenance*]" (682). Phalante's double discourse is maintained in the final

sert auiourd'hui, &c. [What good to me now is, etc.]. This is enigmatic not for its source (Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, IV.22, where the context is the power of the Stoical will to resist torture) but for its pertinence. Might the printer be signalling something about the play's status in the volume, or is this merely an endorsement of its Senecanism?

24 See, however, the translation, n. 44.

25 See also Richard Hillman, *French Origins of English Tragedy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 33-61.

confrontation: “O beauty divine, who arouse in me love’s flame, / My fair one, let this speech not strike you with despair [*O divine beauté, qui m’inflammés d’amour, / Ma belle que ce mot ne vous rende affligée*]” (III.ii.974-75). The upshot is his departure from court and her anticipation of death from grief.

The audience is clearly cued to expect self-revelation in a soliloquy, but when one is duly provided, Phalante admits only to the possibility of having his resistance worn down if he does not rebuff her firmly, as he is resolved to do: “She who pursues me I’m forced to repudiate, / So that none of Love’s arrows my own heart will bruise [*Il me faut repousser celle qui me pousuit, / Pour ne navrer mon cœur d’une flesche amoureuse*]” (III.iii.858-59). As elsewhere, he blames himself, not for actually loving her, but for ingratitude in not returning a love of which she is so thoroughly deserving: “This ultimate beauty in graces so abounding, / She is well worth the love of the world’s greatest king [*Ceste exteme beauté en graces si feconde, / Qui merite l’amour du plus grand Roy du monde*]” (863-64). Even his protracted lament over his killing of Philoxène (IV.ii.1288 ff.), while understandably defending his “faithfulness [*fidelité*]” (1328), avoids any disclosure of passion for her, when such disclosure might have fitted perfectly well with his doubly crushing sense of guilt.

In sum, even when Phalante is alone, his formulation of his dilemma stops short of, or veers aside from, the straightforward conflict between love and friendship—that is, in the period’s terms, between two forms of love—that an audience trained in tragic convention might have expected.²⁶ The final tragic turn, therefore, when the floodgates of Phalante’s contradictory loves are opened at once, and their destructive consequences realised, gains impact from the playwright’s previous innovative management of the monologue convention to show a character who reveals himself only partially, and through self-concealment. It is—remarkably for its time, place and cultural context—a proto-Shakespearean device for producing an effect of psychological complexity.²⁷

26 See Alan Howe, “The Dilemma Monologue in Pre-Cornelian French Tragedy (1550-1610)”, *En marge du classicisme: Essays on the French Theatre from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, ed. Alan Howe and Richard Waller (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1987), pp. 27-63, who valuably puts the representation of the character into this contemporary context (pp. 48-50) and qualifies the standard critical approach to humanist drama as mere rhetorical exercise.

27 For development and application of this idea, see Richard Hillman, *Self-Speaking in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama: Subjectivity, Discourse and the Stage* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1997), *passim*.

VI

It is also at the conclusion, arguably, that several other aspects of the play's generic instability are resolved, or rather incorporated into a more inclusive form of tragedy than was the norm in the French "*âge baroque*". For it is arguably to that age that *Phalante*, perhaps somewhat precociously, belongs, having largely—despite its concluding appeal to Senecan models—cast off the formal strictures of humanist tragedy: there is abundant and bloody onstage action; there are no choruses; no attempt is made to follow the neo-Aristotelian "unities", although the fateful place where all the concluding disasters occur actually acquires its own unity of a thematically meaningful and dramatically effective kind. But apart from his conception of tragedy as such, Galaut evokes, in ways partially (though not entirely) traceable to Sidney's romance, conventional elements normally belonging to pastoral drama, even pastoral tragicomedy.²⁸

I have already mentioned the mode of pastoral lament, conventionally adorned with nymph and echo motifs, which supplies a generic counterpoint to Phalante's final speech, as he evokes these typical elements across Sidney's own use of them. Phalante's combat with the lustful satyrs on behalf of the distressed maiden is also redolent of pastoral—and made poignantly ironic by causing the delay that makes him responsible for the death of the most distressed maiden of all. The satyrs, an addition to Sidney's original, contribute a virtual anti-masque, setting off the equally dangerous amorous attraction of "fair eyes [*beaux yeux*]" exemplified by the genteel characters. The supernatural trappings, including the dream with its ominous Shade (Act Three, Scene One), are redolent of ancient and more recent Hellenistic narrative,²⁹ yet they too are finally subsumed within the sense of fatality which powerfully emerges through the neo-Senecan stoicism of Phalante's concluding discourse.

The most basic structural borrowing, however, is undoubtedly the *chaîne amoureuse* itself, which the tragic ending redeploys in a way at once conclusive and innovative. Its form until this point has remained enigmatically incomplete: Philoxène loves Hélène, who loves Phalante, who loves—whom, if anyone? The chain in pastoral drama often leads to a mismatched lover or an outright non-lover, at least provisionally, until comic form (sometimes magically abetted) gathers that figure into a completed pattern. In *Phalante*, the chain reverses generic direction, beginning with the first "accidental" death, which rules out any comic ending, and leading to Phalante's unequivocal revelation that he *did* love

28 On this generic admixture, see also Howe, ed., p. xxvi, and Délérís, pp. 153-54.

29 Howe, ed., n. 48 to III.i.776, calls attention to the reminiscence of the *Odyssey* in the magical rites reported by Timothée in ll. 757-76.

after all, and in a way doomed to prove irrevocably destructive. The quintessential device of pastoral plotting perhaps fittingly takes its tragic turn by at once recalling and adapting Sidney's original: Polixenus loved Helen, who loved Amphialus, who loved Philoclea—all with due hopelessness. Philoclea will finally make a love match with Pyrocles (alias Zelman), as Pamela will with Musidorus. These matches would not be realised, however, until the 1590 edition was augmented (and many further vicissitudes traversed). Meanwhile, the death of Amphialus hangs over the possibility of amorous fulfilment.

Phalante dies haunted, not only by his own multiply and intensely tragic fate, but, intertextually speaking, by the image of Amphialus, a tragic mixture of heroism and villainy despite himself, of involuntary destructiveness finally turned inward. As the body of Sidney's character is carried offstage towards the death he has inflicted on himself, the echo of the pastoral dirge that accompanies that passage drives home a lesson eminently familiar in the Renaissance and inescapable in all versions of Sidney's romance: "*Et in Arcadia ego*" — "*ego*", of course, being death.³⁰ The pastoral markers that Galaut chose to incorporate in his tragedy might almost have been designed as a reminder of that lesson.

30 The actual expression may have first appeared in the painting (1618-22) so entitled by Giovanni Francesco Barbieri ("il Guercino"), but the idea of death's presence in Arcadia goes back at least to Virgil's fifth Eclogue, in which the pastoral world (including its nymphs) mourn the death of Daphnis.