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MICHEL TOURNIER AND THE CHILD: THE PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF TOURNIER'S JUVENILE LITERATURE

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Even a brief look at Michel Tournier's fiction will reveal his fascination with the child. Children, or child-like characters, play significant roles in many of his works, and, in addition, he considers his finest writing to be found in the texts he has published for children. Through his juvenile literature Tournier pursues a three-fold goal, based on what he sees lacking in contemporary society's education of children. First, Tournier attempts to provide children with experiences of initiation, historically an element of education which at the present has been overshadowed by the widespread emphasis on information. Secondly, he attempts to sensualize and even eroticize his books for children, believing that if children come to a better appreciation of their sensual nature, they will grow into sexually healthy adults. Finally, Tournier aspires to teach philosophy to children through stories which invite them to ponder questions of ontology, love, separation, reconciliation, one's relationship to nature, and one's relationship to other people. Despite Tournier's lofty goals, his attitude toward children, as manifested in his texts is problematic, leading one to raise questions of obsession and exploitation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

For ease of documentation within the body of the text, the following abbreviations will be used to refer to Tournier's works:

Le Vol du Vampire (VV)

Le Coq de Bruyère (CB)

Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique (VLP)

Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage (VVS)

Gaspard, Melchior, et Balthazar (Gaspard)

Le Médianoche Amoureux (MA)

Des Clés et des Serrures (CS)

Les Rois Mages (RM)

The children's editions of "Barbedor" and "Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit" are unpaginated. Therefore, quotations from these texts will not be documented with page numbers. The texts are short enough that the reader should have no trouble locating the specific quotations. The quotations from "Amandine" and "La Fugue du Petit Poucet," and "Tupik" are taken from Le Coq de Bruyère and are documented accordingly.

INTRODUCTION

In 1949, after four years of studying philosophy in Tübingen, Germany, Michel Tournier returned to Paris ready to dazzle the French academic scene. As he admitted in Le Vent Paraclet, a series of autobiographical and literary reflections, "je me jugeais carrément comme le meilleur de ma génération" (158). What a shock, then, when this bright star failed the agrégation. Venting his anger against what he saw as the narrow-mindedness of French academia, he refused to resit for the agrégation or to teach with a lesser degree. Instead, he turned away from his plans for an academic career and earned his living through various endeavors in the fields of translation, radio, and television. Finally, nearly twenty years later, Tournier launched his career as a writer with the publication of Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique in 1967, and Le Roi des Aulnes in 1970. Both books received immediate critical acclaim. Vendredi was awarded the Grand Prix du Roman de l'Académie Française, and Le Roi des Aulnes received the Prix Goncourt. As a result of these and his subsequent publications, Tournier has come to be regarded as one of the leading and most provocative writers of fiction in France today.

Now after having found his vocation as a novelist, it seems perhaps ironic that Tournier has also realized his earlier dream of teaching philosophy. The philosophe and professeur manqué continues to flourish through the pen of the écrivain célébré, and nowhere is this more evident than in his juvenile

literature. Having had the official doors of teaching and philosophical inquiry closed to him earlier, Tournier has now found an avenue where he can pursue his first ambition, albeit indirectly. The stories he writes for young readers provide him with occasions to teach without a classroom. Under the guise of entertaining tales he raises questions of fundamental philosophical significance and addresses issues of pedagogical importance.

The pedagogy of Michel Tourniner is born out of both his love for philosophy and his obsession with the child. Tournier admits that even while dreaming of being an academic metaphysician he was intrigued by the idea of teaching younger students. As he explained to Jacques Chancel in an interview in Le Figaro, "Je ne rêvais qu'à la Sorbonne ou mieux encore, au lycée. Seulement, il y avait dans mon ambition une petite contradiction. Je n'envisageais l'enseignement de la philosophie qu'à des élèves de sixième--des enfants de dix ans" (19). Tournier has said that he has "définitivement jeté [son] froc de clerc métaphysicien aux autres et [est] devenu raconteur d'histoires" (19). Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that Tournier has instead wrapped his metaphysical cloak about himself and sat down to tell a story. In doing so he has found a particularly appropriate way to teach children, given the fundamental power of literature in a child's development.

The noted child psychiatrist Bruno Bettelheim speaks of the formative role literature can, and should, play in a child's life. He writes in The Uses of Enchantment, the Meaning and Uses of Fairy Tales:

> As an educator and therapist of severely disturbed children, my main task was to restore meaning to their lives. This work made it obvious to me that if children were reared so that life was meaningful to them, they would not need special help. I was confronted with the problem of deducing what experiences in a child's life are most suited to promote his ability to find meaning in his life; to endow life in general with more meaning. Regarding this task, nothing is more important than the impact of parents and others who take care of the child; second in importance is our cultural heritage, when transmitted to the child in the right manner. When children are young, it is literature that carries such information best. (4, emphasis mine)

Thus, it seems that by teaching through stories, Tournier has found the ideal opportunity to inteact with children at a depth perhaps unattainable through other means, and to influence their basic understanding of life. As we shall see, Tournier often bases his stories on familiar myths and builds a new tale around familiar characters. Although they often subvert the message of the original myth in an unexpected way, Tournier's stories for children frequently embody characteristics associated with two genres traditionally loved by the young--legends and fairy tales. Bettelheim emphasizes the unique contribution that stories of this type make to a child's growth and development:

> In most cultures, there is no clear line separating myth from folk or fairy tale. Both forms embodied the cumulative experience of a society as men wished to recall past wisdom for themselves and transmit it to future generations. These tales are the purveyors of deep insights that have sustained mankind through the long vicissitudes of its existence, a heritage that is not revealed in any other form as simply and directly, or as accessibly to children (25-26, emphasis mine)

The conclusions Bettelheim has come to as a result of his research with emotionally disturbed children are similar to those Tournier himself has drawn

in reflecting on his own early years and the important influence he ascribes to the authors he encountered as a child:

> je pense qu'elles [les lectures de l'enfance] constituent pour chacun un fond intengible, une base inattaquable sur laquelle se sont édifiées, plus que sa culture et son jugement littéraires, sa sensibilité et sa mythologie personnelles. Intangible, inattaquable, oui, car on ne peut pas plus renier ses premières admirations qu'on ne peut recuser son bagage héréditaire . . . . En vérité, le petit a toujours raison. (VP 53)

Knowing how deeply he himself was affected by early literary experiences, Tournier champions the power of literature to imprint lasting impressions on children which will exert a guiding influence on them throughout their lives.

Convinced of the power of literature to influence young people and confirmed in his desire to teach, Tournier uses his texts as a way to correct, or at least to challenge, what he sees lacking in education today. What I term the highly personal "pedagogy" of Michel Tournier can be divided into three main areas: (1) his insistence on the need for initiatory experiences in a child's education; (2) his effort to liberate children's books from societal taboos, notably by the inclusion of sensuality and sexuality in books for children; and (3) his desire to pose fundamental philosophical questions in a way which children can understand.

Tournier, the author-teacher, offers numerous criticisms of contemporary education. In his opinion, schools need to regain their dual nature of formation and information. According to Tournier, twentieth century education has abandoned its initiatory role (in previous centuries performed by the Roman

Catholic Church with its emphasis on rites and rituals), and opted instead for an increasingly intellectual approach. As he explains in Le Vent Paraclet:

> . . . il me semble . . . que nous assistons dans l'histoire de l'education à une diminution progressive de la part d'initiation face à une information envahissante, et cela à un point qui est devenu depuis longtemps néfaste (55). . . . L'affectivité, les liens de personne, voire l'érotisme, ne risquent plus de polluer l'atmosphère aseptisée de l'école. L'éducation lavée de toute trace d'initiation n'est plus que la dispensatrice d'un savoir utile et rentable . . . (62,63). Nous vivons sous le terrorisme d'un savoir abstrait mi-expérimental, mi-mathématique, et des règles de vie formelles définies par la morale. Tout cela, qui sent la caserne, peut à la rigueur faire une existence, certainement pas une vie. (275)

"Faire une vie." That is Tournier's goal for education. And in order to reach this goal he proclaims the need for balance between the two poles of (1) information, embodied in its purest form by the computer, the impersonal always patient dispenser of information, and (2) initiation, whereby one person passes on to another, through ritualized means the knowledge necessary to enable one to be a productive, fully accepted member of that society:

> L'éducation au sens le plus large du mot prépare un enfant à entrer dans la société et à y tenir sa place. Il me semble qu'elle revêt toujours et partout deux formes, l'une morale, affective voire magique, l'autre purement intellectuelle et rationelle. La première est initiation, la seconde information:
>
> Education = initiation + information. (VP 55)

As Tournier sees it, children need both types of experiences--information and initiation--but in a context which is not necessarily that of a religious

institution. For this reason, many of his stories are built around the theme of a journey. These journeys become, for the protagonist, initiatory experiences, turning points which change them profoundly and lead them toward maturity and acceptance of their roles in life.

One of the areas in which Tournier sees a particularly great need for initiatory guidance concerns a child's sensual and sexual development. According to Tournier, children are not offered guidance in understanding their developing sexuality. In fact, they are actively shielded from, and even denied, the very experiences which could help them. As an effort to correct this problem, Tournier preaches the need to stop the censorship of children's books and to include all topics, especially sensuality and the more explicit sexuality, which have been benignly screened from juvenile literature. Recalling his own scholastic experiences as an example of how misguided education often is, he writes, "A l'heure du Front populaire, de la guerre d'Espagne, du nazisme triomphant, seule la masturbation intéressait nos bons maîtres" (VP 26). Tournier laments the puritanical narrow-mindedness such an attitude represents and insists that children must be freely allowed to encounter a wide range of sensual experiences--both in their own lives and in the books they read. Only by encouraging physical contact and nurturing support can the psychological pain of separation from the maternal be in any way eased and acceptable avenues for sexual fulfillment be explored. Tournier draws on Freud and his concept of the "polymorphous perverse." By this he means that

children find pleasure in a host of physical experiences which should not be denied them in order that their sexuality might develop fully. According to Tournier, the result of Western society's suppression of childhood sexuality has been disastrous:

> Je suis sûr que mille problèmes, l'agressivité, la drogue etc. . . . viennent en partie de cette énorme frustration de l'enfance et de l'adolescence. Ensuite, l'enfant est dressé de telle sorte qu'il ne sait faire qu'une chose, féconder une femme. Résultat; il féconde et ensuite, pilule, avortement, et divorce, donc abandon d'enfant [s'il] n'y aurait pas cet interdit du contact physique qui tombe sur le gosse à l'âge de quatre ou cinq ans, et l'enfant aurait toujours le contact physique, il n'y a pas de doute que la sexualité ensuite prendrait sa place dans cet ensemble, mais pas du tout sous une forme aussi dictatoriale, despotique, qui fait qu'il n'y a qu'elle. Du coup, il y aurait des jeux qui n'aboutiraient pas à la pilule ou à l'avortement. C'est à dire qu'il y aurait quelque chose de plus vaste que la sexualité. Au torrent qui coule, on commence par le fermer, et ensuite qu'on laisse passer un filet comme ça, on a alors une puissance absolument destructrice. Moi, je demande qu'on laisse le torrent passer. (Poirson 49)

Tournier is speaking to a great extent out of the experiences of his own childhood, which his reminiscences in Le Vent Paraclet indicate to have been an unhappy and traumatic time for him. He tends to generalize from his past to assume that the majority of children share his experience. I believe that quite a few children, at least in this country, would be surprised to learn of "cet interdit du contact physique qui tombe sur le gars à l'âge de quatre ou cinq ans." Perhaps, hopefully, parenting practices have changed for the better in this regard in the last sixty years. It is true, however, that the limitation of acceptable sexual expression to heterosexual genital sex remains widespread,

hence Tournier's presentation in his books both for adults and children of a wide array of options for erotic expression. As we shall see, the children's stories "Pierrot ou les secrets de la nuit", Vendredi, Les Rois Mages, "Amandine," and "La Fugue du Petit Poucet" all celebrate the flesh and contain positive examples of sensual or sexual experiences, while the short story "Tupik" portrays in horrifying terms the destructive power of adults who impose limiting sex roles on children or who fail to guide children in understanding their bodies.

The third branch of Tournier's pedagogy involves his desire to teach philosophy to young students. A look at the themes of several of his juvenile works will reveal how he attempts to do this through literature. While avoiding the didactic tone often associated with books designed to teach, Tournier's texts bring students face to face with philosophical questions which they can address on their own level. In "Pierrot", which Tournier has called "metaphysics for ten year olds," children confront questions of ontology, separation, reconciliation, and love (Blume 7). The story brings children in contact with these issues without their being aware of it. As Tournier explains:

> On le voit, à travers les deux petits poupées du théâtre italien, ce sont deux visions du monde qui s'affront: la substance contre la forme, l'essence contre l'accident. De grands échos retentissent dans ces puériles porte-paroles. C'est Goethe et Newton séparés sur la théorie des couleurs, c'est aussi mon maître Gaston Bachelard. Cela l'enfant, bien entendu, ne le sait pas. Mais il le sent, et il le comprend à sa manière. ("Comment Ecrire" 19)

Regarding the philosophy present in Vendredi, Tournier explains to Alain Poirson:

> Alors, qu'est-ce qu'il y a dans Vendredi qui est une philosophie pour les enfants--et d'ailleurs pour tout le monde? Robinson débarque dans son île: il y a le problème de la solitude, le problème de l'ennui, le problème de ses rapports avec les animaux, de ses rapports avec la nature. Et puis apparaît brusquement Vendredi, et avec lui le grand problème, qui est le grand problème du vingtième siècle le problème du rapport de l'homme occidental avec le tiers monde. (48)

"La Fugue du Petit Poucet" deals with the conflicts of industrialization and nature, as well as with questions of authority and the rapport between generations. "Amandine" explores changes that come with puberty and the possibility of looking at life from multiple perspectives. In Les Rois Mages the four main characters ask questions which influence their understanding of life and its ultimate meaning. What is important? What is worth searching for? Suffering for? Dying for? In these ways, by telling stories in a simple style which deal with topics of fundamental significance for understanding one's existence and by allowing children to make their own discoveries of the meanings of these tales, Tournier tries to fulfill his dream of teaching metaphysics to ten year olds.

Ironically, however, to speak of Tournier's juvenile literature is in some ways an immediate misnomer, since this celebrated author, whose books are used as lectures suivies in France and other Francophone countries, has repeatedly stressed that he never writes expressly for children. Tournier insists that his

works which children enjoy are written for both children and adults, not children alone, and that they represent the epitome of his skill as a writer. According to Tournier, children are his most perceptive critical audience, and the fact that certain of his works can be appreciated by juvenile readers indicates that these texts have achieved a clarity of expression and a perfection which his other works have not. He maintains that the adult versions of his books are inferior products and that it is only the perfected revision which can meet the criteria which young readers require. As Tournier explained in an interview with Serge Koster, "J'écris seulement avec un idéal de limpidité, de concission et de proximité du corps et des choses que j'approche rarement. Quand cela m'arrive, ce que j'écris est assez bon pour que les enfants puissent me lire" (unpublished). Tournier emphasizes that when he rewrites his adult works, such as he has done with Gaspard and Vendredi, he is not writing a children's version, but merely a better one, one in which he approximates more closely his ideal and that "la version adulte n'est qu'un brouillon" (Chancel 19). He elucidates further in an interview in L'Autre Journal:

> . . . je n'écris pas pour les enfants. Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage n'est pas une version "pour enfants" de Vendredi ou les Limbes de la Pacifique. C'est une version meilleure, c'est tout. J'écris de mon mieux. Quand je suis au meilleur de ma forme et que je fais quelque chose qui se rapproche de mon idéal, c'est si bon que même les enfants peuvent le lire. Quand je ne suis pas en forme, que je suis fatigué, paresseux, non visité par le Saint-Esprit, j'écris des livres que malheureusement seuls les adultes peuvent lire. (Joxe 53)

The idea that literature is worthy of children only when it attains a certain level of perfection is reflected in Tournier's evaluation of other authors. Regarding his personal literary pantheon, he states, "ce sont des auteurs qui n'écrivent jamais pour les enfants. Seulement ils écrivent si bien que les enfants peuvent les lire" (Bouloumié, "Face aux Lycenns" 21). Within this group he includes Perrault, La Fontaine, Lewis Carrol, Selma Lagerlof, Rudyard Kipling, St. Exupéry, and Jack London. Explaining his admiration for works by these authors Tournier says in an article in Le Monde:

> Ces oeuvres se signalent par trois caractéristiques: leur limpidité, leur brièveté, les choses essentielles qu'elles osent aborder. On s'accorde à les déclarer "pour les enfants." C'est rendre un très grand hommage aux enfants et admettre, avec moi, qu'une oeuvre ne peut aller à un jeune public que si elle est parfaite. ("Comment Ecrire" 19)

The demand for perfection of form and content in books directed to this elite readership leads Tournier to speak with outright disgust for much of what is offered to French children today in the name of literature:

> A parcourir les livres ordinaires que l'on donne aux enfants, on dirait qu'ils sont destinés à des brutes insensibles que seules de veritables tord-boyaux littéraires peuvent émouvoir et intéresser. Le fantastique, la cruauté, et la laideur s'y relaient pour vous secouer ménagement. (VP 44-45)

A more pessimistic appraisal would be hard to find. But given Tournier's passion for both children and literature, one can understand the intensity of his reaction to the typical selections addressed to the young.

Tournier is not the only professional to lament the dearth of quality children's literature in France, but his voice is perhaps more strident and less forgiving than others. In 1972, in a lecture at the Loughborough Summer School in Denmark, Genevieve Patte, [then] head of La Joie par les Livres, a children's library in Clamart, discussed three reasons why quality material for children has been scarce in France for much of the twentieth century. She spoke of (1) the domination of the field by commercially successful series where sales assured by quantity and predictability have been emphasized at the expense of quality and creativity; (2) the influence of educational publishers who publish not only textbooks but also fiction which retains a didactic quality; and (3) the historical absence of a public library system in France. In her discussion, Patte made one brief reference to Tournier in which she seemed to reserve judgement but acknowledged that he was a major player on this scene, "We must mention . . . Michel Tournier . . . [He seems] to be attracted by strangeness and miracles, the result of nostalgia for a world to which [he] no longer [has] access. [His] works are interesting especially because of the purity, the limpidity of [his] writing" (24).

Patte makes it clear that the problem Tournier cites is a real one, but the specific charges Tournier levels seem odd in the light of his own fiction. To castigate books for outrageous fantasy and cruelty seems surprising coming from an author who is "attracted by strangeness and miracles" (Patte 24), and who has written stories as fantastic as "Barbedor" and as cruel as "Tupik,"

which, despite opposition, Tournier says is a tale for children. Inconsistencies such as these are common for Tournier and add to the paradoxical nature of his work.

One particularly striking inconsistency involves the differences between the world Tournier portrays when he writes about children and the one he pictures when he writes for them. As McMahan emphasizes in his article in Children's Literature, the message which comes through the adult works contrasts markedly with that of the juvenile works, and one needs an understanding of both aspects of Tournier's work to get a balanced idea of his viewpoint. As he explains:

> There is a progression discernible in Tournier's works for children and an ever visible commitment to particular values which are not as certainly appreciated in his writings for adults: sane integration into the natural world, the reconciliation of adversaries who need not be in conflict, the celebration of routines and rituals which enrich understanding fo the worth of a serene life, and appreciation of enchantment as opposed to insanity. When Tournier writes about children, rather than for them, he depicts a world in which such values are absent or have been set seriously askew. Fortunately, one has the children's works as the assurance of Tournier's belief that those absences and dislocations are the results of abuses and that the child's world does not have to be a place of suffering and confusion, especially if adults attend to their obligations and writers attend to filling in whatever gaps may be created by negligence of those duties. (166, 167)

In this study I will examine some of the ways in which Tourneir proposes to use his pen to fill these gaps. Since this topic is so complex, this study will focus on his juvenile literature while noting significant comparisons with the

adult works where appropriate. In the following chapters I will elucidate Tournier's attitude toward the child and explore Tournier's pedagogy by focusing on his juvenile literature to demonstrate how he addresses the issues of initiation, sensuality/sexuality, and philosophy in these works. In order to bring to life the pedagogical possibilities of these texts, I will also submit strategies and techniques for using five of these works in the American classroom.

CHAPTER I

TOURNIER'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CHILD

Anyone who becomes acquainted with Michel Tournier, the man, or his works, will soon become aware of Tournier's fascination with the child. This preoccupation is expressed in diverse ways, principally through the frequent appearances of children in significant roles in his texts, and through the works he has written or revised which are directed to a juvenile audience. Before exploring the juvenile literature, it is necessary to understand Tournier's underlying attitude toward the child, an attitude which is evident in all of his works, those for adults and children alike. Tournier constantly exalts the child, placing him in a position above adults. This supervaluation of the child is seen through (1) his frequent use of child protagonists; (2) the fact that many of his adult protagonists possess characteristics of children; (3) the fact that children are frequently shown to possess more wisdom, perception, and even maturity than adults; and (4) Tournier's own statements about the joy and fulfillment he finds as a result of certain types of experiences with children. In fact, the theme of the child occurs so often in Tournier's work that it has been termed an obsession (Weightman 43) and a religion (Bouloumié, Roman 211). As John Weightman stresses in his review of Tournier's autobiographical meditations, Le Vent Paraclet:

> It sticks out a mile . . . that one of his [Tournier's] most powerful obsessions . . . is with the idea of the Child, and more particularly with what appears to be the pedophiliac theme of the adult male and the infant or adolescent. The theme is given extraordinary elaboration, from quite explicit erotic descriptions to the most far-fetched neo-religious and cosmic developments, through the use of Christian myth and the astronomical reference to the constellation of the Gemini. . . . (43)

Tournier continually extols the ideal of childhood, not only its innocence, beauty, and wisdom, but especially its significance for adults. In so doing, he stresses both the child's qualitative difference from the adult and the child's innate superiority. As David Bevan states in his study entitled Michel Tournier, "dans sa deuxième version . . . de l'histoire de Robinson Crusoé . . . il [Tournier] amorce pour la première fois une distinction qualitative importante entre enfant et adulte qu'il continuera à développer dans ses écrits postérieurs" (19). In Tournier's works, the child becomes both a treasure to be sought by adults and a goal toward which adults are led in order to find meaning in their lives. The child becomes a possible source of ecstasy as well as an agent of reconciliation and redemption.

This view of the child as a source of salvation leads Arlette Bouloumié to speak of a "religion d'enfance" (Roman 211). She observes that, "L'oeuvre de Michel Tournier célèbre l'enfant, veut convertir à une religion d'enfance ou l'enfant aurait le rôle salvateur du Christ, ou le sacrifice, comme dans la religion chrétienne, serait salvateur" (Roman 211). As we shall see, such an attitude toward the child raises questions about Tournier's valorization of this state.

The connection between religion and the child naturally brings to mind Christianity and the role the child plays in the Christian view of salvation. From Isaiah's Old Testament promise that "a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6 RSV) through God's incarnation in the infant Jesus, to Christ's own words regarding children, the child is valued and integrally connected with salvation. However, there are significant differences between the Christian view and Tournier's view of the child's role in salvation. In the Bible, Isaiah's "little child" refers to one specific child, the Christ child, who does become an adult; and in Christian doctrine, it is the experience of the adult Jesus, his life of loving service, his innocent death, and subsequent resurrection, which bring salvation to the human race. St. Paul points to childhood as a necessary, but temporary, stage. "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways" (I Cor. 13:11 RSV).

Although Tournier sees himself as a Christian writer and even uses Christian myths explicitly in Gaspard, Melchior, et Balthazar and Les Rois Mages, the role he assigns to the child differs significantly from the role the child plays in Christianity. Tournier views any and all children as agents of salvation while the Biblical statements, even those which encompass all children, continue to point through them to one child. "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me" (Matt. 18:5 RSV, emphasis mine). Rather than seeing childhood as a necessary and preparatory stage in becoming

adult, or in attaining salvation, Tournier repeatedly puts the child, with its redemptive qualities, in an exalted position which seems to overshadow and devalorize adulthood. He laments the passing of childhood and suggests that adults would be better off if they returned to childhood, hence his insistence on the "initiation à reculons" (Clavel 610), (i.e., the initiation backwards into childhood). In Tournier's works, adults are often able to accomplish this through close associations with children, and it is through these relationships, rather than through contact with the divine in the form of a child, that the adults find meaning for their lives.

Weightman suggests that "Tournier is not only obsessed with childhood, but also . . . remains deliberately rooted in the prepubertal or preadolescent stage as if growing up and assuming a fully adult view of the world were to accept some kind of lyrical defeat" (44). Tournier, himself, quite often and willingly, admits his preference for prepubescent children. As he says in Le Vent Paraclet:

> Si ma vocatoin n'avait pas été brisée par le système universitaire française, c'est cette classe-là [le sixième] que j'aurais voulu faire . . . . C'est l'âge adulte de l'enfance, celui où l'enfant a atteint le plein épanouissement de son être sans avoir été encore abîmé par la puberté. (38)

In an article in Le Monde Tournier elaborates in stronger terms his views that the child is "un être parfait" and that puberty only signals the beginning of a decline: "Quiconque a des yeux pour voir l'enfant dans la perfection de son

épanouissement redoute la puberté comme une sinistre décrépitude" ("Sacre" 21). Later, in the same article, he speaks of "la mauvaise fée Puberté qui vient souillir l'exquise tendresse des fillettes en fleur" (21). And in yet another interview Tournier insists even more vehemently, "When I look at a man of twenty, and think of the boy of ten he used to be, I feel a lump in my throat: it's like a death" (Zeldin 43).

This attitude poses a problem for readers approaching his works for a number of different reasons. Although Tournier is outspoken about the changes he sees necessary in education to allow children to grow up into psychologically healthy adults, he seems to abandon them once they become teenagers. Is there something wrong with becoming an adult? Can growing up only be tolerated by nostalgically holding onto childhood through memories of one's own or through association with another child? As McMahon explains in his review of Tournier's juvenile texts for Children's literature:

> . . . it [Tournier's attitude] suggests a futile exploitation of children: one takes them through initiatory procedures over the years only to produce, it seems, a condition of being one doesn't like. A further suggestion is that there is no remedy; accession to adulthood can only be calibrated in losses; to become an adult is to live as a defeated child, unless one associates with youngsters in order to repeat with them the games and other adventures of one's own childhood. (157)

In Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique and Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage, Robinson experiences this defeat when Vendredi decides to leave the island and sail with the Whitebird. Overwhelmed by the loss of his friend and mentor

in the ways of childhood, Robinson contemplates suicide but surmounts his despair when he finds the cabin boy, who had hidden on the island to escape the cruelty he had experienced on the boat. On the last page of Vendredi ou la vie Sauvage, Tournier states explicitly the power and potential of Robinson's association with the new boy:

> Robinson sentait la vie et la joie qui entraient en lui et le regonflait. Vendredi lui avait enseigné la vie sauvage, puis il était parti. Mais Robinson n'était pas seul. Il avait maintenant ce petit frère dont les cheveux--aussi rouges que les siens--commençaient à flamboyer au soleil. Ils inventeraient de nouveaux jeux, de nouvelles aventures, de nouvelles victoires. Une vie toute neuve allait commencer . . . . (152)

Perhaps Robinson's experience reflects Tournier's own situation. Could it be that his longing to teach sixth grade is as much a chance to reinvent and prolong his own childhood with "de nouveau jeux, de nouvelles ventures, de nouvelles victoires," as it is an opportunity to help mold and encourage the children of today? One also wonders what Tournier's definition of maturity would be. What possibilities of fulfillment, what hope for the future, are there in adulthood beyond the possibility of continued associations with children? Does this attitude express a sincere love for the child with regard to what is best for the child's development? Or is it basically a selfish stance in which the value of children lies in what the adult can gain from them?

Tournier's tenderness and affection toward chlidren, as well as some of the complexities of this affection, are illustrated in a particularly poignant way in

Des Clés et des Serrures, a collection of photographs with commentary, by his account of an experience in India:

> Et il y a la faim, et il y a les enfants. Ce que j'ai vu en Inde de plus beau, exaltant, émouvant à pleurer, enthousiasement à crier . . . c'était un vieux camion-citerne. Des groupes d'enfants hailloneux se groupaient sagement derrière la citerne. Le chauffeur descendu actionnait un gros robinet qui lachait une bouillie de riz dans le petit bol que tendait un enfant . . . j'ai rêvé d'une métamorphose plus exaltante encore; être le camion-citerne lui-même et telle une énorme trui aux cent tetines généreuses, donner mon ventre en pature aux petits Indiens affamés. (35-36)

Tournier's reaction to this scene illustrates his desire to express his feminine instincts, to become the mother, the nourishing source of life, which he does through his books. Although his stories frequently portray the relationship of the adult male with a boy, Tournier acknowledges the maternal characteristics present in his personality and in his male protagonists. As he explains in an interview in the Observer, "I like to hold a child in my arms, I like to serve a child, to give him food, to wash him, to put him to bed. It's my maternal side" (Zeldin 43). In this combination of male and female characteristics one is reminded of the androgynous Logre who welcomes Petit Poucet into his family. Here is a father, "beau comme une femme" (CB 57), who feeds his children affectively, intellectually, and physically.

And yet there is something unsettling and potentially exploitive about Tournier's ecstatic reaction to the rice truck. To be able to have children sucking from one hundred enormous teats presupposes a starving hoard.

Where are the horror and indignation that wuld seem to be called for in response to a crowd of hungry children? Is Tournier's response perhaps too close to comfort to the other ogre, Tiffauges, who cherishes and nurtures his band of children, but only after having dragged them from their own loving families? Does the possibly erotic stimulation of suckling children overshadow the children's real needs, leading to a short term answer to the problem instead of addressing the causes of such starvation? Must parental instincts be experienced in terms of the "supermom" or are there other ways to express nurturing instincts? One is reminded of the always pregnant Maria-Barbara from Les Météores, one of the few positive adult females Tournier portrays. Is there another valid model for fulfilling one's feminine capacity aside from constantly bearing and/or feeding children?

The question of exploitation arises again in response to an interview Tournier gave to Jacques Chancel in Le Figaro. When asked about the fact that although he writes and speaks so much about children, he has none of his own, Tournier admitted that he would indeed look forward to raising children if he had the opportunity. Yet the reasons he gives cause one to wonder. Tournier explains his feelings, basing his answer on a question from Proust's famous questionnaire, "Quelle est, pour vous, votre idéal de bonheur sur la terre?" Tournier reflects:

> J'ai trouvé la réponse pour moi, mon idée de bonheur serait d'éléver un enfant . . . . Sur un plan personnel et privé d'abord: j'arriverais à fondre en un seul bloc le maximum de tendresse et d'admiratoin. Et

> ça, c'est le bonheur! Et puis, sur un plan littéraire parce que je n'aurais plus besoin de penser à écrire quoi que ce soit: je ferais le journal de cet enfant jour par jour . . . ses gestes, ses débuts de paroles, les raisonnements que je pouvais essayer de lui prêter. Et je construirais ainsi le plus grand chef d'oeuvre littéraire de toute l'histoire du monde. (19)

Despite his avowals of affection, such an attitude seems fraught with selfishness. The child as literary topic surely meets Tournier's needs, but what of the child's? To be fair, such a statement must be taken with a few grains of salt knowing that Tournier delights in outrageous exaggerations. However, it remains true that Tournier's exaggerated statements are always based on his true feelings. Tournier's words seem to reflect a rather Polyanna-ish view of parenthood which could lead many parents to listen to Tournier with a degree of scepticism until he has had the opportunity to actually be a parent himself. Tournier has indicated that raising a child holds the key to his ideal of happiness, and we shall see how this is also true time and again for the protagonists in his texts.

The above illustrations make it clear that Michel Tournier continually places a higher value on the state of childhood than on the state of adulthood. How is this attitude demonstrated in his works? Because examples of the supervaluation of the child abound so copiously in Tournier's work, I have chosen, for the sake of brevity, to restrict my present illustration of this concept to three novels and one conte. Other works, which will be discussed along with these in subsequent chapters, all exhibit this same attitude toward the

child. Gaspard, Melchior, and Balthazar and Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique have been rewritten and published for children as Les Rois Mages and Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage, respectively. The basic story line is the same in both cases, but there are significant differences between the original and revised versions which will be discussed in a later section. The comments made in the present discussion will apply to both versions unless a specific reference is made to one version of the other. Although Le Roi des Aulnes is not a part of Tournier's juvenile literature, I include it here because it is a significant example of Tournier's development of the theme of the child. The concept of la phorie, which is a pivotal element in this novel, is also a primary component in Tournier's personal feelings about children. Therefore, a brief discussion of Le Roi des Aulnes is pertinent at this time. "Pierrot ou les secrets de la nuit" has been published as an episode in his most recent work, Le Médianoche Amoureux and also as a separate illustrated story book for children.

The most obvious indication of the exalted value of the child is the prevalence of juvenile characters in Tournier's stories. Frequently the protagonists are either children themselves or adults who exhibit behavior patterns or personality characteristics which are commonly associated with children. Also indicative of the importance of the child is Tournier's tendency to portray the child as a treasure to be sought after by adults, a treasure which, when found, becomes a source of redemption for those who have

found it. The role of the child as both a treasure and the goal of a quest is demonstrated repeatedly in Gaspard and in a more problematic, but nonetheless emphatic way in Le Roi des Aulnes. Thirdly, in Tournier's world, children, or child-like characters, frequently demonstrate more positive, and ironically, more mature, personality traits than do adults. This is particularly evident in Vendredi and in "Pierrot."

Two very different novels, Gaspard and Le Roi des Aulnes, illustrate vividly the role of the child as a treasure sought by adults. In Gaspard, as in its revision for children, Les Rois Mages, Tournier retells the biblical legend of the three kings while introducing a fourth magus, Taor, prince of the kingdom of sweets. All four seek a child--in this case the Christ child--in order to find the answers to vital questions at the core of their lives; all four experience redemption in one way or another through their association with this child. Gaspard, in love with his Phoenician slave girl, but rejected because of his color, has come to despise his own blackness, once a source of pride. He seeks to come to terms with his racial identity. In addition, through his unhappy experience with Biltine and through the stories which the monstrously sadistic King Herod tells, Gaspard becomes overwhelmed by the ambiguities involved in love. In Les Rois Mages he expresses his dismay at the confusing nature of love thusly, "Etait-il donc possible que l'amour au lieu d'être source de douceur et de tendresse mène à tant de sang et de souffrance" (19)?

Balthazar, the king of beautiful things, has devoted himself to the collection of objets d'art, visiting Greece and other civilizations to gather the most beautiful examples of painting, sculpture, and pottery for his royal art museum, the Balthazareum. His fascination with visual beauty has been with him since childhood when he marveled at the gems in the royal treasury and when later, as a youth, he acquired the knight banneret butterfly in its crystal case. The butterfly, which attracted him by its shape, color, and the design on its back resembling Balthazar's own face, was a symbol to Balthazar of the preservation of beauty and became the beginning of his collection. But both the butterfly and the museum are destroyed by a fanatical priest intent on purging the kingdom of graven images. Balthazar's quest leads him to seek the answer to the question of the relationship between art and religion, between the desire to celebrate beauty and the commandment against graven images. According to the semitic tradition, of which Balthazar is a part, although humankind was created in the image of God, by sinning humanity lost its inner likeness to the divine. Therefore any artistic representation of the human form would be a hollow, false representation of God and would, therefore, be condemned as a lie. Balthazar's question is to find out how the beauty of human flesh can be celebrated without offending God.

Melchior, the youngest of the three kings, has fled in disguise from his own country where his ruthless uncle has usurped the throne. Melchior searches for an understanding of political power and a return to stability where he can

assume his own identity and reign unchallenged, secure in the power that is rightfully his.

As the journeys of these three kings converge and circumstances lead them to seek out the child at Bethlehem, all three find answers to their questions. During a visit to the site of the garden of Eden, Gaspard sees affirmation of his color in the dark soil from which the first human was formed. His incipient acceptance of his race is confirmed when he peers into the manger cradle at Bethlehem and sees a black infant. This unexplained miracle (was the child of white parents really black, or did the infant appear black to Gaspard only?) teaches Gaspard to accept his own dark skin.

Melchior, the victim of an immoral power play, struggles to reconcile his desire to regain the power of his throne with the cruel example of King Herod whose power is absolute. The contrast between the thriving economy of Judea and the intrigue and turmoil in Herod's own family demonstrate to Melchior the price paid in blood for the prosperity of Herod's kingdom. In his encounter with the Christ child, Melchior discovers another kingdom to which he can devote himself. He exchanges courtly machinations and royal power plays for devotion to the kingdom of God and fidelity to the power of love rather than to the love of power.

Balthazar, too, finds the answer to his quest when he confronts the baby in the stable. Since God has become incarnate in a human infant, and since the holy has entered the humblest of human settings, Balthazar sees a reunification

of the likeness and image of God. Henceforth, therefore, to paint or sculpt humanity will no longer be a sin because, by God's indwelling of humanity, his spirit will illumine simple human arts and human flesh, giving them a beauty at once more vibrant and alive than the static perfection of the heroes and gods of ancient Greece.

Thus, pushed by their individual questions and needs, the three traditional kings all set out on a quest for the holy child, and in finding him, find answers which give their lives new meaning and direction. However, the most dramatic illustration of the value of the child is seen in the apocryphal story of Taor, the fourth king. In both the adult and juvenile editions, Taor's story is twice as long as those of the preceding kings. Taor, although of adult age, is essentially a child. His mother, in order to consolidate her power, has purposely shielded him from responsibility, leaving him to devote his life to leisure and culinary pleasure. Taor's love for sweets makes a fitting metaphor for his childishness. His goal in life, with which any child can identify, could be called the quest for the perfect candy bar. In this case it is the search for the recipe for rahat loukum (Turkish delight) which becomes his quest and leads him to follow the trail of "le Divin Confiseur" (45), the Christ. Ironically, unlike the other kings, Taor, the most childlike of the four, never meets the Christ child. He arrives late at Bethlehem where instead of the ecstasy of the scene in the stable, he encounters the agony of the slaughter of the innocents, a tragedy which occurs precisely as he is hosting a feast of sweets for the other

children of the village. Taor's journey takes him from the pinnacle of the kingdom of sugar to the depths of the salty underground world of Sodom where he offers his innocent life to serve the sentence of another man who has been sentenced to thirty-three years in the salt mines. Here, when he has lived in the mines beneath the ground practically entombed in salt, he hears the message of Christ from a fellow prisoner. He recognizes "le Divin Confiseur" in the stories of this man who turns water into wine, who feeds multitudes, and who speaks of bread and water which satisfy hunger and thirst forever.

Finally freed from the salt mines, Taor's quest for Christ continues until he arrives, once again too late, to find the room of the Last Supper already deserted. Yet, sampling the wine and bread left on the table, he becomes the first to partake of the Eucharist and rises to heaven supported by the wings of angels.

Taor's life parallels Christ's in numerous ways. Like Christ, who sacrifices his life to save humanity, Taor gives his life to save another man by offering to serve a condemned man's sentence in the salt mines. The thirty-three years Taor spends in the mines correspond roughly to the years Christ spent on earth. Taor is "buried" in the salt mines, not seeing the surface of the earth for years, just as Christ was buried in the tomb before being resurrected. Like Christ, Taor is cared for by angels and is lifted miraculously into heaven. By ascending to heaven on Thursday before the crucifixion, he prefigures Christ's resurrection. In Taor's story, Tournier has made the most childlike character

become, in the end, the most godlike. Although the other kings find meaning in their lives as a result of their encounter with the child, Taor, who never encounters the Child directly, but who is the most childlike himself, has his life completely transformed and, in the end, transfigured, which suggests the acting out of the scriptural injunction, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3 KJV).

Thus, in Gaspard, Melchior, and Balthazar and its revision Les Rois Mages, the exalted role of the child is clear. Tournier points to the Christ child as the source of answers, understanding, and redemption, while at the same time, through the apotheosis of the most childlike character, he indicates the state of childhood to be the perfect avenue through which to find salvation.

In Le Roi des Aulnes the child again appears as both a treasure to be sought after and an agent of salvation. Again the protagonist, although of adult age, exhibits many characteristics of the child and seeks salvation through his associations with children. However, in this novel, the salvation is problematic and the glorification of the child is fraught with questions of exploitation and victimization.

The theme of la phorie is central to the story of Le Roi des Aulnes. In fact, according to Tournier, it is "le seul véritable sujet du roman" (VP 120). La phorie refers to the ecstasy experienced in the act of carrying a child and the salvation which can be achieved through this act. La phorie is demonstrated in several ways in the novel. At the base of them all are the legends of

Albuquerque and St. Christopher, the Lightbearer, or Christ bearer, "Christophore." In the legend of the saint, the giant Christopher carries the unknown child across the water on his shoulders. Although his burden grows heavier and heavier as he advances toward the other bank, when he reaches the other side, Christopher finds that the child is really Christ, his savior. As Christopher carries the child to safety across the water, he finds his own salvation. Thus the child is both someone to be saved and the means to salvation.

The story of the conquistador, Alfonso Albuquerque, also emphasizes the child's role as savior. Albuquerque clings to a child during a storm at sea hoping that the child's innocence will protect him and that God would deal kindly with him out of compassion for the child. Throughout Le Roi des Aulnes the protagonist, Abel Tiffauges, in attempting to follow the examples of St. Christoher and Albuquerque, eagerly seeks out phoric experiences with children. The ecstasy he finds as a result of "la phorie" brings to life words from his school companion and childhood hero, Nestor. After a vigorous game of piggy-back fights Nestor had told him, "Je ne savais pas que porter un enfant fut une chose si belle" (54). Time and again Tiffauges finds this to be true for himself, also.

Yet despite the positive valuation applied to la phorie throughout the novel, the final phoric scene is highly ambiguous. Fleeing the allied army with the Jewish child Ephraim on his back, Tiffauges reenacts the stories of both Albuquerque and St. Christopher. Tiffauges sees himself as the child's savior,

yet at the same time, like Albuquerque, he clings to the child for his own salvation. However, in this instance the salvation is questionable. Mired in the bog surrounding the besieged napola, or Nazi paramilitary school, of Kaltenborn, both Tiffauges and the child will surely sink to their deaths in quicksand. By insisting on carrying the child, Tiffauges becomes both his own and the child's executioner. Instead of bringing salvation to either of them, Tiffauges' obsession with "la phorie" brings death to them both. Critics disagree on the interpretation of this scene. Does the "phorie" continue to represent salvation? Is Ephraim, with his star of David pointing to the sky, a sign of blessing and pardon for Tiffauges, as Jean-Marie Magnon and Eric Brogniet maintain (Magnon 5-6, Brogniet 10-18)? Or is the phorie in this case essentially evil, a logical assumption since the phoric agent becomes Ephraim's murderer?

Tiffauges' pursuit of la phorie also illustrates Tournier's idea that children find erotic pleasure in many parts of their bodies and that their sexual instincts are expressed in a wide variety of ways. As William Cloonan explains in his study of the work:

> La phorie provides Nestor and later Abel with a non-orgasmic, erotic satisfaction. . . . La phorie can best be understood symbolically. It suggests that the rigid division between heterosexual and homosexual is less incorrect than simplistic and limiting. A variety of forms of sexual expression might be "natural," but have been repressed under the vague label of "the perverse" . . . . At the very least la phorie represents the possibility that human beings have throughout history neglected or were not permitted to explore numerous types of sexual experience. ("Artist" 195,199)

The ambiguities in this novel and in other of Tournier's works can be characterized by Tournier's terms "inversion bénigne" and "inversion maligne". Events or characters which seem positive can become evil with a shift of perspective, just as those which seem negative can shift to positive. Inversion is the alchemy which changes good to bad and bad to good, opening any situation to the possibility of hidden meanings. This is certainly true in Le Roi des Aulnes. The everpresent possibility of inversion leads to an insidious danger as is illustrated by the verbs used in relation to la phorie. Tiffauges, outwardly modeling his behavior on the saint who carried the Child, exults in the joy he experiences as he carried (porter) and serves (servir) the children he recruits, when in reality his actions come closer to the verbs apporter and asservir as he captures the best of the German children to live with him cut off from their families forever, to become, in the end, canon fodder for the Fuhrer's war machine.

Tournier invests the experience of la phorie, the lifting up and carrying of a child, with mystical significance in his own life as well as in that of his fictional characters. In one of the personal passages in Le Vent Paraclet, Tournier describes in part the power that la phorie holds for him. As he was completing the text for Le Roi des Aulnes, Tournier read a newspaper account of a teacher who saved a child's life by catching the child when it fell from the top floor ledge of a building. Seeing the child from a window in his classroom across

the street, the teacher dashed outside and positioned himself so that when the child fell, he landed, uninjured, in the teacher's hands. As Tournier states:

> On imagine mon enthousiasme quand je pris connaissance de cet exploit où éclatent le courage, la force, l'adresse, et aussi la chance. Il me semblait que s'il m'avait été donné d'accomplir cette aussi magnifique phorie, je n'aurais pas eu besoin d'écrire Le Roi des Aulnes, et j'en aurais été heureux jusqu'à la fin de mes jours. (121)

One wonders at the strange power with which Tournier invests this act of la phorie. As Weightman muses in his discussion of Le Vent Paraclet:

> Is there not something unbalanced here? However admirable the life-saving feat, it has no common denominator with the writing of a novel, so that Tournier--philosopher though he may be--is confusing two radically different issues, because of a sentimental peculiarity of his individual temperament. (43)

And again:

> He [Tournier] makes a great play with the concept of la phorie, the carrying, holding, or bearing up of a child . . . as a deeply significant phenomenological gesture, without apparently realizing how odd, or even kinky, it must seem to the average family man, however highly developed his paternal instinct may be. (43)

The character of Tiffauges illustrates Tournier's preoccupation with the child both by his actions and his personality. Throughout the novel Tiffauges' quest for the child takes many forms, from his capturing playground sounds on his tape recorder, to his photographic excursions, his relationship with the school girl Martine, and finally to his literal capture of children for the napola.

Tiffauges is obsessed with children, searching out perfect specimens for the Nazis, pressuring parents to consent to their children's recruitment, reveling in the smell and feel of the children's hair, and ecstaticly rejoicing in the close proximity of so many children in the shower room of the school dormitory. Despite the care he lavishes on Ephraim, the love Tiffauges professes for children is a selfish, devouring love for which he makes no apologies. His voracious appetite for children is never satisfied--hence his title the "Ogre of Kaltenborn".

Tiffauges, himself, is in many ways, a big baby. He sees himself as the reincarnation of the child Nestor, whom he knew at school and characterized as an "être monstrueux, génial, féerique . . . bloqué dans son développement . . . un bébé géant" (36). Although chronologically an adult, Tiffauges is incapable of maintaining an intimate relationship with his girlfriend Rachel. To compensate for his underdeveloped genitals, he cruises the city in his car cradling a camera between his legs, allowing the lens to become his giant penis. During the war, when Tiffauges is assigned to care for the courrier pigeons, the attachment he develops for the birds (he would rather spend his free time in the coop with the birds than with humans) can be seen as an extreme example of a child's attachment to his pets. In the journal of his <u>écrits sinistres</u>, Tiffauges explains his belief that his life has cosmic significance, that he has been coexistent with the world since its inception and that everything which happens to him has a hidden meaning of profound importance which

only he can read in the varied signs which come his way. This ethnocentric world view exaggerates the normal ethnocentricity of a child who gives his own actions a larger cause and effect role than they realistically deserve. This tendency is frequently seen in children who blame themselves for their parents' failures, divorce, and even death, with "if only I had been good . . . ," and is proclaimed daily on the sidewalks of America by the ubiquitious jingle, "Step on a crack, break your mother's back."

When an accident causes Tiffauges to temporarily lose the use of his right hand, he discovers that he can write equally well, although in a different style, with his left. He begins to keep a left-handed diary, his écrits sinistres. This ambidexterity again identifies Tiffauges as a child, since a firm preference for either the right or the left hand is often not established until the age of six or seven. Tiffauges, himself, connects the left hand with children. When he notices a mother reprimanding her daughter for trying to shake hands with the left hand, he realizes that this is a common tendency of young children and makes a mental note to always offer his left hand to children under the age of seven.

An additional connection between Tiffauges and the child involves his fascination with feces which suggests Freud's anal stage of development, usually associated with ages two and three (Lidz 161-162). Tiffauges recounts in detail his schoolboy memory of assisting at one of Nestor's nocturnal defecations where Nestor shares with him his mystical understanding of feces.

During Tiffauges' captivity in Prussia, only fear of public ridicule keeps him from volunteering to empty the communal latrine on a regular basis, a chore he looks forward to and enjoys. As a prisoner, his daily defecations are a time of meditation, solitude, and mystical communion with the Prussian soil.

Thus we see that in Le Roi des Aulnes Tournier's obsession with the child is illustrated by the central role of the child in the novel. The main character is essentially a child whose life is devoted to the search for other children. Yet we also see some of the ambiguities inherent in Tournier's attitude. Tiffauges prizes the children not for themselves, but only for the very fact that they are children and therefore agents used to bring about his own salvation. The idea of the child in general is exalted, but the individual child is frequently ignored or made to take second place to Tiffauges' needs. Children are special only for what Tiffauges can get from them. Tournier denounces Tiffauges' actions through the technique of inversion which shows the dark side of seemingly positive attributes by revealing to Tiffauges the terrifying connections between his own propensities and those of the Nazi regime. Tiffauges is properly horrified to learn that Canada, the name he has given his own forest retreat, is also the name Ephraim and his fellow concentration camp children give the cache of clothes, jewels, and other valuables which the Nazis have confiscated from incoming prisoners. Ephraim's description of the concentration camps reveals to Tiffauges the parallels between these death camps and the napola. Tiffauges has even used the very word "concentration" to describe the richness

he feels in having so many young bodies together in one place. Although these revelations condemn Tiffauges' actions and self-delusions, the reader is still left with uneasy feelings about the treatment of children in this text. As Colin Davis points out, "Tiffauges and the Nazis share a potentially criminal will to power, towards which Tournier's text shows a discomfiting mixture of revulsion and fascination" (60). The tendency Tiffauges exhibits to prize the state of childhood over the individual child, which has already been indicated in Tournier's own remarks, will continue to pervade Tournier's subsequent works.

In Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique and its juvenile revision Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage, both major characters, Robinson and Vendredi, exhibit characteristics of the child. At first glance these characteristics are most clearly seen in Vendredi through his carpe diem attitude, his love of games, animals, and toys. In La Vie Sauvage Vendredi dresses the island's cacti in outlandish costumes, quickly establishes bonds with the dog Tenn, befriends a goat and baby birds, and decorates his hammock with prized trinkets. He perfects his bows and arrows, not to hunt game for food, but to see how far and high his arrows can fly. He exhibits his sense of sport and competition in his contests with the ram, Andoar. The kite he eventually makes from Andoar's hide and his fascination with the "ultimate toy", the white winged boat, both likewise attest to his playful nature. Vendredi's relationship to Robinson in the first part of the book is that of a slave to his master, or, for our purposes, in many ways that of a child to a parent. He follows Robinson's arbitrary rules because he is

dependent on Robinson for his life. He disobeys, as any child would, and takes the consequent punishment. Generally Vendredi submits to Robinson's authority although he does not understand the reasons behind Robinson's rules.

The island Speranza, herself, affirms and reinforces Vendredi's childishness. In Les Limbes Vendredi plants trees upside down, a childish prank, but Speranza accepts it and the trees grow. In La Vie Sauvage, Robinson even questions the validity of his own "adult" preoccupations when he sees Vendredi's happiness and self-sufficiency: "Robinson était stupéfait et jaloux de voir comme Vendredi avait l'air d'être heureux et de s'amuser sans lui. A quoi donc servaient tous les travaux et toutes les obligations qu'il s'imposait chaque jour" (VVS 82)? Once Robinson's paternalism has been abolished through the explosion which upsets the order of their lives physically and symbolically, Vendredi introduces Robinson to the joys of childhood--the freedom from worry for the morrow, the liberating fun of games, the joys of nakedness and the celebration of the healthy body, basking in the glory of the island's sunlight.

Robinson, himself, also demonstrates qualities of the child. Even when he is in the role of adult vis à vis Vendredi, his actions in many ways speak of the child. Robinson's obsession with rules and order reflects the child's need for the structure and stability of dependable routine. His inflexibility illustrates the child's black and white view of morality. At this point he does not have the

maturity to acknowledge shades of grey; in fact, they scare him. He relies on the extreme regimentation of the island as a way of maintaining his sanity, afraid that any deviation from his self-proscribed routine will lead him to despair and madness. The pomp and circumstance he institutes, and the attendant rituals, such as dressing for dinner, or announcing the census of the sea turtles, serve no purpose. Such activities are reminiscent of a child playing dress-up who goes through elaborate preparations for a tea party putting on hat, heels, and gloves while lining up dolls and teddy bears in precise order. Only this time it is Vendredi who plays the role of the less-than-human partner. Eventually Robinson explores the depths of the cave, where he reverts from childhood to infancy. He experiences the island as a mother with "nipples" of stone on the walls of the cave, and a protective "womb" where he can rest in the fetal position while reliving childhood memories of his mother. As he becomes accustomed to the darkness of the cave, the blackness gives way to white, as though he were surrounded by milk and cream, the food of infants.

Ironically, in the second part of the novel, Robinson becomes more adult, i.e., mature, when he embraces the child (i.e., Vendredi's way of doing things). Through the reversal of positions of authority, Vendredi teaches Robinson to let go of the obsession with adult responsibility, to enjoy the prowess of his body, and to enjoy games, which before, he would have considered a waste of time. Vendredi encourages Robinson to throw aside artificial constraints, restricting rules, and the continual need to amass material goods for the future. It is only

after Vendredi accidentally ignites the cache of gunpowder causing an explosion which destroys all of Robinson's imposed civilization and upsets the established order that Robinson learns to deal with ambiguity. This new found ability is illustrated in La Vie Sauvage in several ways. When Vendredi teaches Robinson to cook Indian style, Robinson finds that salt and sugar can be mixed with good results. He learns that words can have multiple meanings. A daisy can be a butterfly and a butterfly can be "une marguerite qui vole" (VVS 108). He learns that people can have flexible roles. He can masquerade as Vendredi and vice-versa to act out scenes from their past. With his new maturity, Robinson is now able not only to play the game but to understand its meaning as well. He sees the exchange of identity as a way for him to reconcile himself with his former tyrannical treatment of Vendredi and for Vendredi to come to terms with having been forced to act as his slave.

Now, instead of being isolated symbolically from Vendredi by color, Robinson lets the sun bronze his skin. He cuts his beard and lets his hair grow in golden curls. In so doing, he not only develops un rapprochement with Vendredi, but he seems physically younger. When he learns the current date from the sailors on the Whitebird, he is shocked to calculate his true age. "Cinquante ans! L'âge d'un vieux bonhomme en somme. Alors que grâce à la vie libre et heureuse qu'il menait à Speranza, grâce surtout à Vendredi il se sentait de plus en plus jeune!" (VVS 140). Thus the paradox: in "youtherning" he has matured, and in maturing he has "youthened".

Therefore, in this novel, as in Gaspard, Tournier is pointing to a child as the road to salvation, to joy, to acceptance of self, and to maturity. When Vendredi, the "savior," deserts the island to sail away on the Whitebird, Robinson is thrown into despair only to be rescued again by another child, this time the cabin boy whose surprise decision to stay on the island offers Robinson a chance to be continually in the presence of youth, and therefore gives him hope for the future.

Children also play significant roles in Tournier's shorter works. In "Pierrot ou les secrets de la nuit" the characters are once again child/adults. That these characters are children is evidenced by their names. "Pierrot" is the diminutive of "Pierre" and he is identified as le mitron, the baker's boy, although one never sees le boulanger himself. "Colombine" is a nickname, too. "Personne ne se souvenait du vrai nom de la blanchisseuse". The naïveté of the illustrations reinforces the characters' childlike simplicity. The drawings are flat like a children's coloring book. Given these outward manifestations of childhood, it is not surprising then that the characters also act like children. Colombine plays hide and seek with Arlequin and thinks the night harbors "bêtes effrayantes". She is easily attracted to outward appearances like a child with a glittering tinsel toy. When Arlequin paints the outside of her house and gives her colorful clothes to wear, she becomes Arlequine. But the transformation is only superficial, like a child playing dress-up who later decides that the clothes aren't comfortable and then wants to change back.

Arlequin's cart is like a "go-bot" which transforms into a jungle gym.[1] What a neat toy! No wonder he makes a hit in the neighborhood. As often happens with real children, when a new child moves to the neighborhood, friends who used to play happily together suddenly discover that three is an awkward number and one is left out. The reconciliation at the end of the story is more reminiscent of the actions of children on a playground than to those of estranged lovers making up.

And yet, despite all their childish characteristics, Pierrot, Colombine, and Arlequin are also presented as adults. They live alone with no adult supervision like Bert and Ernie, the child/adult puppets of Sesame Street fame. Pierrot and Colombine have finished school and hold jobs to earn their living. They make decisions without consulting any authority figure. When Colombine decides to leave with Arlequin, she does not need to ask anyone's permission. The sign on the door indicates that she is getting married, and Pierrot's shocked reaction to whatever it is he sees when he peers into Colombine's bedroom would suggest the possibility of sexual activity between Colombine and Arlequin.

As in Les Rois Mages, Tournier's positive valuation of the child is evident in his treatment of the character with the most childlike attributes. Pierrot, who is perhaps in outward appearance the flattest and most naive of the three

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[1]A "go-bot" is a type of toy which gained popularity with children in the early 1980's. It is so named because by manipulating its parts the child can change it from a vehicle to a robot.

characters, shows the most depth and maturity by his ability to manipulate symbols and deal with multiple meanings. As he explains to Colombine, "Ma nuit n'est pas noire, elle est bleue! Es c'est un bleu qu'on respire. Mon four n'est pas noir, il est doré! Et c'est un or qui se mange. La couleur que je fais réjouit l'oeil, mais en outre elle est épaisse, substantielle, elle sent bon, elle est chaude, elle nourrit." In addition, he is referred to as "la conscience claire du village," "le veilleur du village," "le gardien de Colombie." As these titles suggest, he is described as someone with wisdom, understanding, and a keen sense of responsibility.

The final scene of the story, when both Colombine and Arlequin find refuge in Pierrot's bakery, involves a mixture of sexual and religious imagery in which Pierrot is associated with Christ: "le mitron est transfiguré. Il fait de grands gestes amplifiés par ses longues manches flottantes." This description recalls both Christ's transfiguration on Mount Thabor and the movements of a priest in his chasuble preparing the host for Mass. In an obvious connection with the Eucharist, Pierrot then presents the bread he has baked, the body he has made, to be eaten as a symbol of reconciliation and salvation. Once again, as in the story of Taor, the most childlike character is the one most closely associated with the divine. Tournier thus makes explicit the connection between the child and salvation.

The preceding discussion demonstrates that what Tiffauges does physically in <u>la phorie</u> by lifting up the child, Tournier does metaphorically, constantly

lifting the child into his reader's consciousness through the prevalence of child characters and by exalting the state of childhood as an avenue of salvation for adults. We have seen that Tournier's development of the theme of the child is complex and at times ambiguous. Although the child is presented as a savior, he is frequently portrayed as a victim, exploited, maimed, and even killed by adults. The repeated theme of the ogre suggests this exploitation of the child and leads the reader to wonder at what cost to the child is the adult's possible salvation obtained. This is more visible in Tournier's adult texts, especially in Le Roi des Aulnes and Gilles et Jeanne, than in the ones for children, but even in a story as positive as Les Rois Mages, death is connected with the child. Taor, the most childlike character, experiences symbolic death in the salt mines of Sodom and physical death at the end of the story. The supervaluation of the child leads to the denigration of adults and leads one to wonder what the goals of both childhood and adulthood are for Tournier. Does he integrate the two? And if so, how? Does Tournier value the child as an individual or only in the abstract? And what of girls? Are girls valued equally with boys, or does their value reside in their prepubescent androgynous nature or in their acceptance in adolescence of the traditional role of motherhood? In light of these questions, what does Tournier communicate through his juvenile works? By focusing on the texts for children we will be able to discern more clearly the complexities of Tournier's relationship to this younger, and yet elite, audience and to explore the pedagogical dimensions of his art.

CHAPTER II

TOURNIER'S JUVENILE TEXTS

Having examined Tournier's personal feelings about children, I will now focus on the juvenile texts themselves. This chapter will provide an introduction to both the novels and the shorter works for the reader who may not be familiar with the texts directed toward children. The novels will be discussed in the context of the adult works from which they are derived. As mentioned earlier, Tournier has published two novels for children which are revisions of works previously published for adults. Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage is a retelling of Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique. Les Rois Mages is a revised edition of Gaspard, Melchior et Balthazar.

Tournier has also published several short stories for children, most of which have appeared first either as episodes in the adult novels or as parts of anthologies directed towards adults but which have subsequently been published as separate story books for children. These shorter works include "Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit," "Amandine ou les Deux Jardins," "Barbedor," "La Fugue du Petit Poucet," "Mère Noël," "Que Ma Joie Demeure," and "Angus."

There is some disagreement concerning exactly which texts are meant for children. Tournier, himself, would also include the short story "Tupik,"

althought it has not been published for children for reasons which will be discussed later, and Susan Petit would include the novel Gilles et Jeanne. Petit maintains that, "Because of its style and subject matter, Gilles et Jeanne may be viewed as Tournier's long-promised children's version of his novel Le Roi des Aulnes" ("Gilles" 307). However, hers is a lone voice espousing that opinion. Despite the similarities of the names Tiffauges, Gilles de Rais's castle, and Tiffauges, the Parisian mechanic, and Barbe-Bleue, Perrault's legendary character often thought to be based in part on Gilles de Rais, and Barbe-Bleue, the horse of the Ogre of Kaltenborn, and in spite of the continued development of the themes of the ogre and inversion, there is little to suggest such an interpretation. Although Tournier has expressed the desire to someday rewrite Le Roi des Aulnes for younger readers, he has never indicated that this is what he has done in Gilles et Jeanne. Bouloumié states that Tournier has mentioned certain parts of Le Roi des Aulnes which children would find particularly intriguing. She explains that "Tournier veut enchanter les enfants . . . . Tiffauges colombophile, Tiffauges nourrissant l'élan aveugle ou rencontrant les aurochs primitifs passionerait, dit-il, les enfants" ("Roman" 232). The fact that these particular episodes do not appear in any way in Gilles et Jeanne makes it doubtful that Tournier means this book to be the juvenile revision of Le Roi des Aulnes. In the conclusion of her article Petit herself expresses some doubt as to Tournier's intentions for this story. She explains:

> Michel Tournier may not expect Gilles et Jeanne to be read by children, for the accounts of the children's murders and torture are indeed repulsive, but the simplicity of style, clarity of characterization, and polarization of good and evil seem designed to put this récit in the category of a conte de fée . . . . (351)

Rather than seeing Gilles et Jeanne as a rewriting of Le Roi des Aulnes for children, it seems more appropriate to view it as a separate story which deals with the same theme in a style similar to that which is often used in children's stories.

Before examining each of the short stories listed above, we will look first at the two novels Tournier has revised for children in order to examine the significance of the differences between the adult versions and those directed specifically toward children.

In Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique Tournier takes events and characters from Defoe's classic Robinson Crusoe but significantly alters the tale. As the story opens, Robinson is waiting out a storm at sea in the company of the ship's captain who amuses himself by telling Robinson's fortune with tarot cards. The captain predicts that although Robinson is an organizer, his organizational skills will prove to be an illusion. He will have a difficult and dangerous life, but he will be rescued by a child who will come out of the earth to give him the keys to the City of the Sun. At that moment the ship lurches wildly, the lantern goes out, and Robinson knows nothing more until he awakens to find himself alone on the island, the sole survivor of the shipwreck.

At first Robinson is preoccupied with attempts to escape. He builds a boat which he names "Evasion," but then to his great despair realizes that he has no way of moving the boat into the water. His discouragement leads him to literally wallow in depression in the filthy waters of la souille, a muddy, stagnant pond whose noxious fumes cause him to pass the days in a semi-stupor. He sinks to the level, or beneath it, of an animal, walking on all fours, never bathing, and even rolling in his own excrement. A particularly vivid hallucination in which he sees his sister, whom he knows to be dead, shocks him into the realization that by staying in la souille he risks completely losing his sanity.

To avoid such a fate, he embarks on a period of frantic industry during which he cultivates the land, tames the wild sheep, builds a house and municipal buildings, and in general imposes western civilization on the island. His obsession with order causes him to go to ridiculous lengths, such as saving his entire first crop of grain for seed and writing rules for the island which serve no purpose since he is the only inhabitant. During this time Robinson begins to keep a log book recording not only the daily events but also his meditations on life, death, sex, and religion.

The island, which Robinson calls "Speranza," or Hope, represents not only nature to be tamed, but comes more and more to represent a woman to Robinson. He compares the shape of the island to that of a seated, but headless, woman and regards the island as his female companion. He makes

love to a tree and to the earth. When he sees flowers growing on the site of the love-making, he feels that they are the fruit of his union with Speranza. Robinson also discovers a cave deep within the center of the island which he takes to be Speranza's womb. Crouched in the fetal position within the cave, he continues his sexual fantasies of the island and relives memories of his own mother. The island then has become mistress, wife, and mother to him.

When Vendredi appears on the island, he becomes Robinson's slave, following without comprehension the many rules Robinson has instituted until the day that he unwittingly sets fire to Robinson's reserves of gunpowder, touching off an explosion that destroys all that Robinson had built and returns the island to its natural, untamed state. From this point on Vendredi is the leader. He teaches Robinson to live in the native fashion in harmony with nature. Robinson finds that he is happier without the artificial constraints of western civilization which he had considered so important before. He suspects the presence of another Speranza, a hidden personality to the island of which he had been unaware at first. At the same time he begins to search for a new understanding of himself which he terms his solar self. Before the explosion, Robinson's life had been focused on the earth as represented by "la souille" and the womb/cave. Now, through the influence of Vendredi, he becomes incresingly pantheistic and begins to worship the sun. Vendredi is fascinated by the sky. He challenges and conquers the ram Andoar, making his hide into a kite and his skull into an aoelian harp. He also shoots arrows that travel

farther and farther until he is sure they will never come down. When the British ship the Whitebird arrives, he climbs the rigging thrilled by the way the wind fills the sails. While Robinson is appalled by the greed and cruelty of the Whitebird's crew, Vendredi sees only the amazing white winged bird whose sails allow it to skim over the ocean waters.

Robinson decides to stay on the island and let the Whitebird return to England without him. The next morning, however, he is devastated to find that Vendredi has sailed away on the ship, probably to a life of chains and slavery. Overcome by loneliness and despair, Robinson heads toward the cave to die within the quiet womb of the island. There he is surprised to find the cabin boy from the Whitebird. The boy had fled the ship and the cruelty of its crew to stay on the island with Robinson. Having a new young companion for the years ahead gives Robinson new hope and a reason for living. Thus, as the captain predicted in the prologue, Robinson has been saved by a child who emerges from the depths of the earth whom he can now initiate into his solar rituals.

In rewriting this story Tournier has made some significant changes in both content and style. As he told Xavier Delcout, when speaking of his adaptations, "traduire . . . mes romans pour les enfants . . . est relativement aisé, puisqu'ils sont d'abord écrits pour eux. Mais pour l'adapter, il faut à la fois ôter et ajouter, diffuser une sexualité prégénitale" (25). A comparison of

the two texts will demonstrate exactly what Tournier has taken out, what he has added, and how these changes affect the story.

Reflecting on the process of rewriting, Tournier has explained: "J'ai récrit Vendredi pour les enfants une fois que j'ai vu parfaitement clair en lui" (Montremy 8,9). This clarity of vision and purpose has resulted in a simplification of language and a concretization of content which lead to a sharpened focus avoiding many of the complexities, ambiguities, and subtleties of the former novel. How has this been accomplished?

At the outset the change in title from Les Limbes to La Vie Sauvage indicates a change from the nebulous to the definite. One can exist in limbo, but on the island one lives. Reflecting on his marooned state Robinson acknowledges:

> Tous ceux qui m'ont connu, tous sans exception me croient mort. . . . Quoi que je fasse, je n'empêcherai pas que dans l'esprit de la totalité des hommes, il y a l'image du cadavre de Robinson. Cela seul suffit--non certes à me tuer--mais à me repousser aux confins de la vie, dans un lieu suspendu entre ciel et enfers, dans les limbes, en somme. Speranza ou les limbes du Pacifique. (VLP 129)

Thus, in the "adult" novel Robinson is pushed out of life, "repousse aux confins de la vie" (VLP 129), caught in limbo, a somewhat imaginary state (Does it exist or not?), suspended between continents, between civilizations, isolated from everything and everyone he had known before. The novel is the account of his coming to terms with that situation, of confronting his loneliness, pondering the significance of his existence, and exploring ways to construct a meaningful life

in the limbo of Speranza. The title La Vie Sauvage, on the other hand, points not to an existence out of space and time, but to a definite place, a definite island with a definite type of life that flourishes there. In the revised text, there is much less speculation on the meaning of existence and more emphasis on the learning of a new way of life. Robinson learns through trial and error that the civilization of England cannot be transplanted and imposed upon the island. He learns that there is another way of life that seeks to cooperate with nature rather than to conquer her, and this natural life is "la vie sauvage."

In Les Limbes roughly one fourth of the book is devoted to the time after the explosion when Vendredi teaches Robinson a new way of living, while in La Vie Sauvage the explosion occurs approximately half-way through the story. This shift in proportions again changes the emphasis from Robinson's speculations to the concrete lessons he learns from Vendredi. By giving fairly equal space to the two life styles, Tournier emphasizes the validity of Vendredi's way of life. At the same time he may be extending a measure of equality to the dispossessed immigrant workers of France to whom he had originally wanted to dedicate the book. As he has explained in Le Vent Paraclet:

> J'aurais voulu dédier ce livre à la masse énorme et silencieuse des travailleurs immigrés de France, tous ces Vendredi dépêchés vers nous par le tiers monde . . . sur lesquels repose notre société et qu'on n'entend jamais qui n'ont ni bulletin de vote, ni syndicat, ni porte-parole. (230)

In La Vie Sauvage Tournier omits both the captain's tarot card prophecies and Robinson's log book with its philosophical meditations. As Jean-Michel Maulpoix points out in "Des Limbes à la Vie Sauvage," by suppressing the symbolic prologue and the numerous interior monologues, Tournier turns La Vie Sauvage into an adventure story, a natural attraction for young readers (36).

> La Vie Sauvage est un livre de leçons de choses là où Les limbes du Pacifique sont un ouvrage spéculatif . . . Le log-book représentait le lieu littéraire et narcissique par excellence, il installait dans l'île l'écrivain occidental, sa culture et sa bibliothèque . . . Une telle autobiographie eût lassé le public enfantin et fait perdre au texte sa vertu première; apparaître comme un lieu vital, póetique, double immédiat de Speranza, et non comme la scène d'une "aventure cérébrale." (37)

In this version the story opens with the shipwreck of the Virginia, and from that point on, action continues to be important. The reader joins Robinson in his activities and participates in the events which happen to him rather than in his reflections on these events.

If Tournier pares away his original text, he also adds to it. In a section on language created for La Vie Sauvage, Tournier again moves from the abstract to the concrete. Instead of recording Robinson's reflections on the nature of language, he demonstrates the ways Vendredi and Robinson learn to communicate. First Robinson teaches Vendredi English:

> Sa méthode était simple. Il lui montrait une marguerite, et lui disait:
> -- Marguerite
> Et Vendredi répétait:

> -- Marguerite.
> Et Robinson corrigeait sa prononciation défectueuse aussi souvent qu'il le fallait . . . . Et Vendredi répétait après lui, et répétait aussi longtemps que le mot ne se formait pas correctement dans sa bouche. (VVS 108)

Later, after the explosion, Vendredi introduces his former teacher to the subtleties of symbolic language. He shows Robinson that "un papillon blanc . . . c'est une marguerite qui vole" (109). He challenges Robinson to stretch his conception of language by using metaphors to compare a round seashell to the moon and the rain to tears. Finally, "Robinson commençait à comprendre. Il acceptait peu à peu que les choses les plus éloignées les unes des autres--comme la lune et un galet, les larmes at la pluie--puissent ressembler au point d'être confondues, et que les mots volent d'une chose à autre, même si ça devait un peu embrouiller les idées" (VVS 110). This new skill allows Robinson to enter into Vendredi's game of riddles. Given the clues "une mère qui te berce, . . . un cuisinier qui sale ta soupe, . . . une grosse bête qui . . . trépigne quand il fait du vent, . . . une peau de serpent aux mille écailles qui miroitent au soleil" (VVS 110), he guesses correctly that Vendredi is speaking of the ocean.

In addition, Vendredi teaches Robinson that words are not necessary for communication. When the island is invaded by parrots who constantly mock the words they hear, Vendredi shows Robinson a form of sign language so they can communicate silently. Continuing his emphasis on the concrete,

Tournier even includes illustrations of the signs Vendredi and Robinson use so that young readers can enter into the game, too.

A significant portion of Les Limbes is devoted to Robinson's sex life. Tournier chronicles the stages in Robinson's development as he moves from a sexuality directed toward the earth to a solar sexuality in which he surpasses male and female distinctions and attains fulfillment beyond genital sex. Robinson explains:

> Le coup de volupté brutale qui transperce les reins de l'amant s'est transformé pour moi en une jubilation douce qui m'enveloppe et me transporte des pieds à la tête, aussi longtemps que le soleil-dieu me baigne de ses rayon . . . . En vérité, au suprême degré où nous avons accédé, Vendredi et moi, la différence de sexe est dépassée et Vendredi peut s'identifier à Vénus, tout de même qu'on peut dire en language humain que je m'ouvre à la fécondation de l'Astre Majeur. (VLP 230)

La Vie Sauvage omits all mention of Robinson's sex life, sexual intercourse being inappropriate to a child's expression of sexuality, and, in Tournier's view, limiting at any age. And yet sexuality continues to be present, albeit in a muted fashion. Tournier stresses the sensual beauty of life on the island and adds the character Anda, the goat, who becomes Vendredi's friend and sexual substitute. As he has noted in an interview with Xavier Delcout, to adapt the novel:

> il faut . . . diffuser une sexualité prégénitale. Ainsi pour Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique, j'ai introduit une chèvre comme compagne de Vendredi dans la version enfantine. Ce qui n'aurait jamais été accepté

With Anda, Vendredi finds warmth and physical affection snuggling up to her warm body to keep warm in the night. Although this relationship is essentially that of a boy and his pet, an older reader will not miss the sexual overtones in the jealous competition between Vendredi and Andoar, the ram, since it is clearly sex which interests the old goat.

A further difference between the two versions involves the change in name for the cabin boy, Jean. Originally, Robinson names him Jeudi because "C'est le jour de Jupiter, dieu du Ciel. C'est aussi le dimanche des enfants" (VLP 254), but in the revision Robinson christens him Dimanche. "'Désormais,' lui dit Robinson, tu t'apelleras Dimanche. C'est le jour des fêtes, des rires, et des jeux'" (VVS 152). In both cases the name is a double symbol. In addition to the explanation Robinson gives, the names' religious connotations imply the child's role as savior, an appropriate allusion since Robinson is rescued from suicide by the appearance of the new boy. In Les Limbes, Robinson moves away from Christianity to a pantheism which finds its expression in his worship of the sun. Robinson names the new boy immediately after having had an ecstatic religious experience as he welcomes the sunrise. Therefore, it is fitting that he would celebrate his new found salvation by choosing a name which honors the god of the sky. Hence, he names the boy Jeudi. In La Vie Sauvage Tournier makes a subtle nod to Christianity, Sunday being the day children will associate with Christian worship and the day associated with

Christ's resurrection (and therefore his confirmation as savior). So once again the child's role as savior is emphasized.

The changes in content of the two versions which we have discussed are accompanied by a simplification of style. Jean-Michel Maulpoix demonstrates that when addressing children, Tournier appropriately simplifies his language, yet he does so without becoming simplistic. In fact, in the process of distillation the language becomes even more powerful. Comparing the first pages of the two texts Maulpoix states:

> Le texte destiné aux enfants est plus direct, plus vif. Les phrases se raccourcissent; relatives, conjonctives, métaphores, termes nobles ou expressifs disparaissent. L'écriture se simplifie. La plupart des descriptions ou des commentaires se résorbent (s'affinent, se musclent) afin de céder la place à un univers plus allègre, au contour très sûr. Le roman se désépaissit, il redevient le pur récit d'une aventure. . . . Certes, il s'agissait d'abord pour Tournier d'adapter son écriture aux exigences propres de la sensibilité des enfants et au rythme particulier de leur lecture, à la fois plus lente, précautionneuse, et plus soucieuse d'atteindre son but. Mais ce procédé met ainsi en valeur l'attention que porte le romancier à la personalité de son public; il ne s'agit ni d'abatardir, ni d'infantiliser le texte, mais de le distiller, l'épurer . . . . (35)

The omission of the log-book simplifies the point of view. In Les Limbes, there is constant alternation between the third person narrator and the first person log-book, while La Vie Sauvage is told entirely through a third person narrator. In some cases, the narrator offers straightforward explanations of events, thus further minimizing the ambiguity of the original narrative. For example, the narrator explains Robinson's desire to write laws for the island, indicating that even Robinson was partially aware of the absurdity of his actions but felt the

need to rationalize them: "Dans ces lois Robinson ne pouvait pas s'empêcher de faire comme si l'île avait de nombreux habitants. En effet, il lui paraissait absurde de faire des lois pour un homme seul. Et puis il se disait que peut-être, un jour, le hasard lui amenerait un ou plusieurs compagnons" (VVS 38). After Robinson's decision to save the first grain harvest for seed, the narrator points out the moral implications of this act. "En se privant ainsi de pain, il croyait accomplir un acte méritoire et raisonable. En réalité, il obéissait à un nouveau penchant, l'avarice, qui allait lui faire beaucoup de mal" (VVS 34). And finally, at the end of the novel, the narrator makes it clear that it was Vendredi's enchantment with the Whitebird which caused him to desert the island. "C'était cela: Vendredi avait été séduit par ce nouveau jouet, plus magnifique que tous ceux qu'il avait construits lui-même dans l'île" (VVS 148). In Les Limbes Vendredi's reason for going is never explained. Although in La Vie Sauvage, Robinson voices to himself his fears that by now Vendredi has been put in irons by the slave trader Joseph, in Les Limbes the only suggestion of this outcome is the cabin boy's observation, "il est entré chez le second qui paraissait l'attendre. J'ai compris qu'il resterait à bord" (VLP 252).

The critical response to Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage has been mixed. As a book for children it has been widely acclaimed by teachers in France and other francophone countries. Jean-Michel Maulpoix finds much to celebrate in the revised version. He explains:

> Ce Robinson pour les enfants est plus sympathique que l'autre, car moins tracassé par lui-même et donc ouvert. . . . L'univers enfantin, plus mince, mais musculeux, et solide, a fait de l'île une forteresse, lieu de résistance et de cristallisation à la fois de l'imaginaire. Son royaume . . . . Il faut au romancier épuiser tout d'abord une énorme masse de matière mi-vivante, mi-morte, avant de parvenir à la saisissante nudité du conte. Les romans sont les brouillons, c'est-à-dire les charniers et les souilles, lieux contradictoires d'expériences multiples et paradoxales, lieux baroques où beaucoup de vie vient mourir et se métamorphoser afin que naisse enfin cette plante unique, belle et précise, l'enfant-mandragore, le texte-royaume. (41)

Yet despite these praises, adult opinion has not been uniformly favorable. Perhaps some adult reviewers are reacting less to the book as an example of children's literature than to Tournier's statement that La Vie Sauvage is the better of the two novels. In William Cloonan's opinion "it is certainly a nice story for children, [but] adults miss the subtlety and ambiguity of Vendredi" (Tournier 36). Colin Davis states that the "second edition adds little to the first and loses a lot" (26). Daniel Bougnoux is more strident in his criticism that La Vie Sauvage "ne joue plus" for adults or children. As he elaborates in a postscript to an essay in Critique:

> On souffre en lisant cette "traduction" car l'oeuvre a précisément perdu sa poésie, l'inépuisable mystère de ses rites, de ses obsessions et de ses symboles . . . . Reste un texte laboureusement explicatif dont le signifiant devenu didactique ne joue plus, au moment même où l'auteur, très consciemment, veut se mettre au niveau de ses nouveaux lecteurs. Ce remarquable chasse-croise de l'écriture mérite assurément d'être medité; c'est l'une ou l'autre, il faut choisir; les deux versions de Vendredi montrent clairement qu'on ne peut, quand il s'agit de textes innocemment revenir à l'enfance. (543)

In my own opinion I prefer La Vie Sauvage to Les Limbes, as I find Robinson's meditations tedious and self-centered. I enjoy the additions to the children's text such as the section on language. However, I also agree with those who view this book as a story for children only. It is an adventure story appropriate for children ages ten to twelve, but does not provide the challenge adults expect in a novel.

We have seen that in rewriting Les Limbes du Pacifique for children, Tournier has decreased the ambiguity and complexity of the first text while making the second more concrete, and in the opinion of some reviewers, more limited. In revising Gaspard, Melchior, et Balthazar the result has perhaps been the opposite. Simplification in this case has opened the text, giving it the possibility of greater depth and a closer affinity to the scriptural source from which it is derived. How has this been achieved?

The story of Gaspard has already been reviewed in some detail in Chapter I. Les Rois Mages follows the plot of the first novel closely with only minor changes in the action. However, the revised text is much shorter than Gaspard due to the omission of the donkey's tale, Herod's story, and "Barbedor," three independent episodes which do not affect the action of the story. In addition, Melchior's story is condensed and told as part of Balthazar's tale. In this text, as was true of La Vie Sauvage, Tournier has devoted much less space to philosophical and esthetic ruminations by the characters. Again, as in La Vie Sauvage Tournier has simplified both the language and the point

of view. In Gaspard the three traditional kings recount their stories in the first person while Taor's story is told in the third person. In Les Rois Mages, a third person narrator is used throughout.

Michael Worton, in his article exploring Tournier's penchant for rewriting his works, sees these changes as more than just a technique of simplification to aid young readers, but rather as a means of charging this story with the power of a parable. As he explains:

> Dans la première version, les trois mages traditionnels articulent leurs propres histoires, tandis que l'histoire de Taor est racontée par un narrateur-interprète; dans Les Rois Mages, la vie des quatre mages est racontée par une seule voix narrative. Cette unification des voix dépasse le simple projet de simplification visant à permettre aux enfants de lire et comprendre le récit: elle est un stratagème textuel qui investit la narration de l'énigmatique simplicité prophétique du discours parabolique. Les Rois Mages expliquent beaucoup moins que Gaspard, mais par ce fait même la version ré-écrite dépouillées des méditations philosophiques et esthétiques, demande une lecture spéculative. Activité herméneutique, cette lecture est la quête de la correspondance, la recherche du sens mystérieux qui existe derrière/dans les récits évangéliques. C'est la simplicité narrative des Rois Mages qui laisse entrevoir la nature de leurs relations intertextuelles avec les Evangiles, relations qui transforment le récit symbolique de la venue des mages en une parabole. (64)

A parable, in the sense that Worton uses it, is a method of teaching about abstract truths through concrete examples in the context of an enigmatic story in which the analogies are not spelled out explicitly as they would be in an allegory. Nor is there a one-to-one correspondence between the elements of the story and the ideas they are supposed to represent. Therefore, according to Worton, "toute parabole exige du lecteur (ou de l'auditeur) un travail

interprétif. Événement tout autant que récit, la parabole appelle le complément d'une réponse et n'a pas de véritable vie narrative sans la réaction du lecteur" (63). This understanding of the nature of the parable corresponds both to Tournier's idea of the conte as a "haunted" tale in which the message is itself ambiguous and to his insistence on the importance of the reader's participation in interpreting what the author has to say in any work of fiction. Tournier explains the interaction between the author and the reader in Le Vol du Vampire, a series of personal reflections on various literary texts:

> . . . un livre n'a pas un auteur, mais un nombre indéfini d'auteurs. Car à celui qui l'a écrit s'ajoutent de plein droit dans l'acte créateur l'ensemble de ceux qui l'ont lu, le lisent ou le liront (12). . . . Un roman peut certes contenir une thèse, mais il importe que ce soit le lecteur, non l'écrivain, qui l'y ait mise. Car l'interprétation--tendencieuse ou non--relève de la seule compétence du lecteur, et la pluralité des interprétations--à la limite aussi nombreuses que les lecteurs eux-mêmes--mesure la valeur et la richesse de l'invention poétique, romanesque, ou théâtral du public. (16-17)

A parable then, invites the reader to search for the abstract truths which are embodied in the story, yet refuses to be limited to a single interpretation. A look at the character of Taor will illustrate some ways Tournier has pointed to abstract truths through concrete experiences, making the life of this character a parable.

We have already noted the ways in which Taor's life parallels Christ's--his offering of his innocent life to pay the debt of another, his being buried beneath the earth in the salt mines, his eventual resurrection from the mines, and his

ascension into heaven. Familiar portions of scripture also find expression in his life. While imprisoned in the mines he hears from another prisoner the words of Christ from the sermon on the mount, "You are the salt of the earth" (Mat. 5:13) and "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied" (Matt. 5:6). Living day and night within the salt mines, Taor, the prince of sugar, has become a man of salt. Salt surrounds him, permeates his body, and controls his life; "Durant cette période il ne rencontrait que des hommes de la mine soumis aux memes conditions de la vie que lui. Sa nourriture ne variait jamais: poissons sèches et eau sálee" (RM 68). Because of his hunger to see justice prevail he has allowed himself to be possessed of a thirst that reaches to the depths of his being.

> Dès le premier jour, il eut le gosier enflammé par une soif ardente. Mais ce n'était justement qu'une soif de gorge, localisée et superficielle. Peu à peu elle se calma, mais pour faire place à une autre soif, plus sourde, plus profonde, une soif de tout son corps privé d'eau douce. Cette soif-là, il ne cessait de la sentir brûler en lui, et il savait qu'il lui faudrait des années pour la calmer, s'il était libéré avant sa mort. (RM 68)

Miraculously, even this consuming thirst finds relief in the one tear of clear, unsalted water which the words of Christ evoke from Taor. "Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness . . . shall be satisfied." The physical nature of Taor's experiences increases the power and intensity of the scriptural statements but can in no way contain them. A reader who is familiar with the scriptures will notice other passages which find expression in the life, death,

and ascension of this the most childlike of the magi. "Except ye become as little children you shall not enter the kingdom of God" (Matt. 18:3). And again, "Let the children come to me . . . for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14). In the final sentence of the book the force of the unexpected denouement is increased by the echoes of Matthew 19:30, "But many that are first will be last, and the last first," and Luke 14:11, "For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted."

> Les deux anges, qui veillent sur lui depuis sa libération, le cueillirent dans leurs grandes ailes, et, le ciel nocturne s'étant ouvert sur d'immenses clartés, ils emportèrent celui qui, après avoir été le dernier, le perpétuel retardaire, venait de recevoir l'Eucharistie le premier. (RM 75)

As Colin Davis points out, "The final words of the novel are "le premier,'" which emphasizes what Davis terms, "the most dramatic of Christian inversions" (127). Although Taor may have come to the end of his earthly life, he is entering a life in a new dimension and participating in a renewal for all humankind.

Thus, we see both similarities and differences in the way Tournier has revised his two novels, Les Limbes du Pacifique and Gaspard. In both cases, Tournier shortens the text, simplifies the style, and omits lengthy philosophical meditations. In La Vie Sauvage Tournier illustrates his message concretely in a way that leaves little room for ambiguity. In Les Rois Mages he also demonstrates his ideas through concrete examples, but these comparisons

open the way for the reader to expand the meanings beyond the narrative events of the story.

Many of the themes seen in Tournier's novels also figure significantly in his short stories. In "Mère Noël" the child is once again an agent of reconciliation. For a long time, the secular-religious tensions of the village of Poudreuzit have been focused each year on the Christmas Eve celebrations. The curé holds Mass at the same time that Père Noël arrives at the village school. With the arrival of a new, pious teacher the town wonders what will happen. The clergy hope that perhaps finally the religious ceremony will overshadow the secular, but the teacher schedules the school party at the same time as Mass as in years past. Surprisingly, she also donates her infant to play the role of the baby Jesus in the church crèche. The problems are unexpectedly resolved on Christmas Eve when the baby in the manger starts to cry during the service. "Père Noël" arrives on the scene and quiets the baby by unbuttoning her red suit and proffering a breast to the hungry child.

In "Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit," Tournier explores questions of love, reconciliation, and ontology through the characters of a familiar folk song. Pierrot, the shy baker's boy who loves the night when the village sleeps, and Colombine, the bright blanchisseuse who revels in the sunny day, live happily in the town of Pouldreuzic. Although they were childhood sweethearts, they have never married. Pierrot, shy and retiring, hesitates to speak of his love to Colombine. Instead, he writes her letters which he never sends. Colombine,

for her part, is afraid of Pierrot's way of life, afraid of the dark, the night, the oven--"un trou noir". When Arlequin arrives, he introduces color to the black and white world of Pierrot and Colombine. He repaints Colombine's house and changes it to a teinturerie. He seduces Colombine with a dress of many colors to match his own costume which displays all the colors of the rainbow and more besides, but no black or white. Colombine joyously leaves with him on a wedding trip but the gaiety she first knew with Arlequin disappears as the colors fade, the weather worsens, and she ends up doing the work while Arlequin rests in the cart. One snowy morning she finds a note from Pierrot in which he explains that his nocturnal world is not frightening but full of subtly shaded nuances. She sets out in the snow, the triumph of white, to find her old friend. Pierrot welcomes her into his warm bakery and while Colombine sleeps, he bakes a brioche modeled to look like her. Soon, Arlequin also arrives at the bakery door seeking shelter. Pierrot invites his former rival in and the story closes on a scene of reconciliation and celebration as the three friends share the warm Colombine-brioche and the light of the oven which is not black, but golden.

If, in "Pierrot," Tournier builds a story around familiar characters, in "Barbedor" he creates an entirely new cast and sets them in an imaginary Byzantine kingdom. Yet, he pursues one of his favorite themes--the adult's quest to return to childhood. "Barbedor" is the tale which Svengali, Harod's court jester, tells to amuse the king in Gaspard and has also been published

separately for children. King Nabounassar III, nicknamed "Barbedor" because of his beautiful golden beard, is worried about his lack of an heir. One day he notices a white hair in his golden beard, but while he naps in the afternoon, the hair disappears. This happens each day. In the morning he finds a silver hair, but in the afternoon it disappears. Hair by hair the beard disappears. Finally the king discovers that it is a little white bird who has been stealing his hairs to build a nest. He follows the bird out of the palace across fields and forests until he comes to the nest where he finds one egg. Holding the egg in his hand he returns to the palace, but on his way he discovers that he is no longer an adult. He has become a child. When he approaches the palace, he sees his own funeral procession. The old king is dead. Suddenly, the egg hatches, and Barbedor enters the city accompanied by the cries of the bird who proclaims, "Vive Nabounassar IV." Thus, the problem of succession has been solved. At the end of the story the narrator implies that the process will repeat itself when the king becomes old once again.

"La Fugue du Petit Poucet" is the second generation of Perrault's tale. In this updated version Petit Poucet's father is the chief woodcutter of Paris in charge of clearing trees to make room for parking lots and skyscrapers. When his domineering father announces a move from the country to a climate controlled high rise apartment, Petit Poucet takes his pet rabbits and runs away to the woods. There, the seven daughters of Logre find him and bring him to stay in their warm, sensual home where children and parents live in harmony

with one another and with nature. Poucet marvels at Logre, "beau comme une femme" (CB 57), dressed as a hippie, who treats him with kindness and makes him feel a part of this unusual household. The evening is spent eating a vegetarian meal, smoking marijuana cigarettes, and listening to Logre's explanations of man's fall from the règne végétal to the violence of the règne animal. Finally Poucet falls asleep in the communal bed of the seven little girls beneath a plaque that states, "Make love, not war." In the morning, the authorities take Poucet back to his family and arrest Logre for corrupting minors. But before he is taken to jail, Logre gives Poucet his magic boots which will allow the boy to let his imagination flourish even within the confines of the industrialized, impersonal city.

In "Angus" Tournier retells the story of Hugo's "L'Aigle du Casque" but changes the ending significantly. Also, unlike Hugo, he supplies a reason for the grandfather's desire for revenge against Tiphaine. The story opens as the count's lovely daughter is walking in the woods with her fiancé. Suddenly Tiphaine appears and rapes her. Angus is the offspring of this forced union. The mother dies and the count raises Angus but never reveals the secret of his parentage to him. As in the poem, the grandfather calls Angus to him on his death bed and makes the boy promise to avenge him against Tiphaine when he comes of age. When Angus reaches the age of sixteen, he challenges Tiphaine who surprisingly lets him win. During the heady victory celebration

which follows Angus gets word that Tiphaine has died and made him, his son, his sole heir.

"Que Ma Joie Demeure" is the story of Raphael Bidoche, the child prodigy pianist, who loves nothing more than to exult in the pure beauty of Bach's "Que Ma Joie Demeure." As he grows up, economic reality and the desires of a social climbing wife force him to take a lucrative but demeaning job as an accompanist in a night club. A combination of Bidoche's own ineptitude and the crowd's sadistic sense of humor lead to his being hailed as a comedian, the next Buster Keaton. Bidoche is saved from total humiliation only by the fact that, being extremely nearsighted, he cannot see his tormentors. His comic success leads to a role as a clown in a circus. During his act he strikes discordant notes from a piano which explodes at the end of the show to spew forth sausages and pies. On Christmas Eve Bidoche the clown sits down at the circus piano but waits until the crowd calms down, then unexpectedly begins to play "Que Ma Joie Demeure." At the end of the piece, the piano, instead of exploding with food, opens to allow the Archangel Raphael to flutter up to the top of the circus tent, thus affirming that the gifts of Raphael's childhood have not been lost and forgotten forever.

"Amandine" is the story of a young girl on the edge of puberty and the discoveries she makes about the world around her. Amandine discovers that her cat is a female when the cat has kittens. "Décidément, Claude doit être une chatte" (CB 35). Searching for one of the kittens whom the mother cat

has hidden, Amandine finds a wild overgrown garden on the other side of the wall surrounding her parents' property. It is here that the kitten Kamicha prefers to live, growing up wild, away from the civilizing influence of people. With a mixture of trepidation and attraction, Amandine follows Kamicha into the wild garden where Kamicha leads her to a statue of Cupid. Amandine is struck by the contrst of this garden and the well ordered world of her own home. She returns home with her emotions in disarray. After crying for no reason that she can understand, she discovers a spot of blood on her leg. She also looks in the mirror and discovers that she has changed. She no longer looks like the ten year old girl she ws at the beginning of the story, but resembles the statue of Cupid from the other garden.

In Tournier's opinion, the short story "Tupik" should also be classified as one for children, but others would challenge that idea. According to Tournier, "L'histoire la plus cruelle de toutes, 'Tupik' (un petit garçon qui se châtre avec un rasoir) pourrait faire aussi un album pour enfants si les éditeurs, libraires, et parents étaient moins lâches. C'est en tout cas un sujet pour les jeunes" (Brochier 12). During his daily outings to the park Tupik is attracted by the clean, perfumed ladies' room, but repulsed by the stinking Turkish latrines of the men's side. He confuses the chicken entrails simmering in the restroom keeper's stew with the "quantité de chair bistre et molle . . . cette viande hideuse et inutile" (CB 82) which he sees a man stuffing into his pants after urinating. In a misguided effort to buy his way into the porcelain heaven of the

ladies' room, Tupik sacrifices his own penis to add to the bubbling stew. There is no doubt that toilet training and sexual identity are important issues for children, but to give children an illustrated album of this story would be to invite nightmares and bedwetting at best, sexual confusion for years to come or an imitation of the protagonist's solution at worst! In giving children this story Tournier would be asking them to experience through the avenue of literature an episode of torture equal in horror to the brutal tonsilectomy he experienced as a child, an experience which still haunts him today. As he expressed in Le Vent Paraclet:

> Je fus littéralement noyé dans mon propre sang . . . quarante-cinq ans plus tard, j'en porte encore les traces et je reste incapable d'évoquer cette scène de sang-froid. Au cours de la dernière guerre des fillettes impubères furent violées par la soldatesque. J'affirme qu'elles en furent moins traumatisées qu'un enfant de quatre ans après une pareille scène d'égorgement. (16)

In fact, Tournier even makes a direct connection between his experience and that of Tupik. When Tupik's governess threatens him for wetting the bed, "Elle le [menace], s'il [continue], de faire revenir le chirurgien qui l'avait opéré les amygdales. Cette fois ce serait son petit robinet qu'on lui couperait" (CB 79). It seems surprisingly sadistic for Tournier, with his bitter acknowledgement of the far reaching power of such an experience, to want to put a story like "Tupik" in the hands of children. Violence and victimization of children are present in Tournier's adult texts, but nowhere do they approach this level in books destined for the young. As an exposé of harmful childrearing practices,

this story certainly succeeds by demonstrating the dangers of parents who do not help their children understand their bodies, but why would a child need to read it?

These, then, are the texts to which I will be referring when I speak of Tournier's juvenile literature. In the following chapters I will explore the ways Tournier pursues the pedagogical issues he considers important, namely: (1) the need to offer children experiences of initiation, (2) the need to sensualize children's literature, and (3) the desire to present philosophical topics on a level that children can understand.

CHAPTER III

INITIATION

If current educators were asked to assess the role of initiation in education today, they would likely respond that fortunately initiation has been banished from the school. Perhaps the word "initiation" would conjure up hazings, "hell week," and other traditions whereby, in the past, new students have been initiated into the school community through intimidating and/or demeaning ordeals at the hands of upperclassmen. At the present time most schools have taken steps to outlaw such activities, and if such traditions continue at all, they are conducted by extra-curricular groups such as residence halls, social clubs, fraternities, etc., and are definitely not sanctioned as a part of the curriculum. Most educators would be proud to announce that initiation is no longer present in their schools. And that, Tournier would be quick to point out, is precisely the problem with education today.

In his opinion "l'éducation est un mélange d'information et d'initiation" (Poirsin 47). As I have noted earlier, in Tournier's opinion, initiatory experiences should be included in education in order to balance the purely rational and intellectual content. When Tournier speaks of "initiation," he is speaking not of painful experiences, meant to embarrass or humiliate students, but of activities which address the affective and moral aspects of a person's

development as opposed to the solely intellectual. He sees education as having a dual function, to "form" and to "inform" the student. An overreliance on one aspect of education at the expense of the other leaves the student ill equipped to deal with life. According to Tournier, initiation always changes a person, resulting in a deeper understanding of self, the world, and one's relationship to it. He offers his own definition of initiation when discussing its prevalence in his novels:

> La plupart de mes romans se construisent autour d'un voyage. En quoi ces voyages doivent-ils être qualifiés initiatiques? En ceci qu'ils ont pour effet de métamorphoser en profondeur le voyageur. C'est un voyage de découverte, mais de découverte de soi-même. (Bouloumié, "Face" 253)

Because of the potential for profound change, growth, and discovery which initiation affords, Tournier places it squarely at the base of his pedagogy. Bevan identifies the elemental role initiation plays in Tournier's pedagogy when he states:

> Tournier préconise explicitement dans ses essais, et indirectement dans sa fiction, un retour à une authentique pédagogie initiatrice--véritable éducation, revitalisée étymologiquement, qui redécouvrira une sagesse antique dans laquelle "former" et "informer" étaient indissolubles. Il s'agit là, peut-être, de la conviction la plus profonde de l'auteur, qui colore tout ce qu'il écrit et à laquelle nous reviendrons constamment. (21-22)

Bevan continues, stressing the unique contributions to education which, in Tournier's view, initiation offers and which, at the present time, seem to be largely ignored or undervalued.

> Pour Tournier, l'initiation est principalement affective et morale, même magique, contrastant avec, et complétant, le purement intellectuel. Il prétend que la circonstance historique récente est improductive et impardonnable en raison d'une proliferation d'information qui aurait relégué l'initiatique à un rôle tronqué et secondaire. (22)

In Le Vent Paraclet Tournier reviews the history of education for the past few centuries to demonstrate the shift in emphasis from a primarily initiatory mode of education to one that is nearly totally informative. According to Tournier, the education of the seventeenth century, largely dominated by the Jesuits, was designed for the nobility. The goal was not so much to produce students proficient in certain skills or cognizant of a prescribed body of knowledge, but to form their souls. The classically based curriculum largely ignored the contemporary world. The rising bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century, under the influence of the thinkers of the Enlightenment, revolted against this form of education. They angrily denounced a curriculum which made them at home in Greece or Rome but left them ignorant of France (56-57). Actually, Tournier says, this revolt demonstrated not so much the inadequacies of the Jesuit education, but the differing needs of the bourgeoisie. They were looking for an experience which would enable them to be successful in their trade--an unnecessary goal for the aristocracy of the

previous century. As a result, more and more information was added to the curriculum and initiation was given an increasingly subordinate role. In Tournier's analysis, "En cette . . . fin du XVIIIe siècle, nous avons vu l'éducation des enfants commencer à se vider de son contenu initiatique pour n'être plus qu'un véhicule d'informations utiles aux carrières professionnelles" (VP 280). As Tournier explained to Alain Poirson, "On voit à ce moment-là l'information qui va prendre le pas sur l'initiation dans l'éducation. Et l'éducation va devenir de plus en plus informatrice, et de moins en moins initiatrice" (48). This tendency has continued until, at present, the rational, intellectual side of education has gained complete ascendancy pushing initiation out of the pedagogical picture altogether.

Even so, Tournier speculates, information-oriented schools can have their place so long as other provisions are made to provide the balancing initiatory experiences. He foresees that, "on va aboutir à des écoles qui sont vraiment uniquement des entonnoirs dans lesquels on enfonce des connaissances, et ça, je n'ai rien contre. En effet, il est possible que l'école ne doive pas du tout être initiatrice, mais alors où est l'initiation" (Poirson 48)? Tournier returns repeatedly to this question stressing the current vacuum in this crucial dimension of education. In Le Vent Paraclet he points to increasing technology as another influence in the information based curriculum while continuing to emphasize the need to find compensatory initiatory experiences. "Déjà les ordinateurs remplacent les maîtres. Il faut s'en réjouir, comme chaque fois

qu'un homme est soulagé par une machine d'une tâche purement mécanique. Oui, mais l'initiation" (VP 63)?

If the pressures of bourgeois ascendance, secularization of education, and the increase in technology have combined to chase initiation from the schools, where and how can it be continued? Reminiscing about his own experience, Tournier notes how in church related schools religion has been able to provide at least a partial balance between information and initiation. Despite Tournier's often bitter criticism of the Catholic Church, he finds value in the church's rich heritage of ritual and celebration which has allowed it to retain elements of initiation which have been lost by the secular world. He recalls, "La religion catholique, ses rites, ses fêtes, sa théologie, sa mythologie, apportait aux mathématiques et aux sciences naturelles ce contrepoids affectif et merveilleux sans lequel l'enfant et l'adolescent sont malades de sécheresse et d'aridité" (VP 59). He later continues, "Fastueuse, subtile, érotique, telle est l'Eglise initiatrice dont je rêve quand il m'arrive de refaire mon enfance. Je remercie le sort que celle qui m'a élevé n'ait trahit qu'en partie cet idéal" (VP 62). At the present time Tournier sees initiation persisting surreptitiously in a variety of forms, including such operations as circumcision and tonsillectomy which, for him, evoke the often brutal initiatory rites of primitive people. As he points out:

> Cette autre moitié obscure, chaleureuse, magique, de l'éducation? Chassée de l'enseignement officiel, elle revêt des formes sauvages, clandestines, souvent monstrueuses, tantôt meurtrières--opérations

> chirurgicals cruelles et néfastes--tantôt bénéfiques--, relation d'érotisme vague et tendre entre enfants et adultes. (VP 63)

According to Tournier, the tragedy of these unofficial initiations is that instead of nourishing the child, in reality, they often attack and destroy. He explains:

> L'initiation . . . doit en principe apporter quelque chose à l'enfant, l'enrichir, lui confier un secret qui devient sa propriété. Or, en fait l'initiation émascule. Pour prendre un exemple typique d'initiation émasculante, prenons la circoncision qui se pratique non seulement chez les juifs, mais chez les Arabes et aux Etats-Unis, systématiquement. Or, la circoncision est une atteinte, une attaque anti-érotique contre l'enfant. (Poirson 49)

Given Tournier's faith in the power of literature to affect children's development, it should come as no surprise that Tournier recognizes literature's potential as an avenue of the urgently needed initiation. As he reveals in Le Vent Paraclet, "Initiation, ce grand mot. . . . Il ne nous quittera pas de sitôt . . . c'est à coup sûr le thème littéraire dont l'apparition dans une oeuvre mobilise mon attention et ma sensibilité avec le plus d'urgence" (47). For that reason Tournier repeatedly attempts through his contes to refertilize the wasteland which is contemporary initiation. Bevan sees Tournier's texts as being:

> . . . en quelque sorte l'offrande--toutes proportions gardées--d'un évangelisateur contemporain dont la mission serait de restaurer par sa littérature un côté initiatique en voie de disparition, de rétablir un équilibre caractériel pertubé par des dirigeants désséchés, et d'aider à recoller cette cassure tragique entre le savoir et la conduite de la vie qui, pour lui, constitue le grand problème de notre siècle. (23)

As we shall see, although Tournier's texts continually provide experiences of initiation, they simultaneously raise questions about the form initiation should take and about the outcome of the initiation.

Paradoxically, instead of clarifying the situation, Tournier's own comments on the subject often increse the ambiguity. Although Tournier stresses in Le Vent Paraclet that initiation is an integral part of education, in other instances he speaks as though initiation were the opposite of education. He has compared education to an atterrissage and initiation to a décollage, giving a decidedly negative value to the atterrissage of education while praising the salutory effects of the décollage of initiation. To explain the differences he sees between education and initiation Tournier uses examples from well known novels:

> Phileas Fogg aurait pu, ayant découvert la philosophie hindoue, renoncer à son pari. Jules Verne aurait alors écrit un roman d'initiation. Don Quichote [sic] aurait pu renoncer à ses chimères, devenir raisonnable, se rendre aux conseils de Sancho Panca [sic] Cervantes aurait signé un roman d'éducation. Mais il importe de voir combien ces deux voies--initiation, éducation--divergent l'un de l'autre. . . . C'est que l'éducation est tout le contraire de l'initiation. Son histoire est celle un peu triste d'un atterrissage, alors que l'initiation est un exaltant décollage. Confrontation, éducation, initiation, ou les trois façons de recevoir le grand déferlement de l'expérience, en le défiant, en l'assimilant, ou en le dépassant. ("En Marge" 19)

In the above article it would seem that Tournier is narrowing his own definition of education. Instead of retaining the formula "éducation = initiation + information" (VP 55), he seems to insist that education is no more than the

assimilation of knowledge, while initiation is the surpassing of that knowledge. In a similar vein, in Le Vol du Vampire Tournier contrasts the experience of Goëthe's Wilhelm Meister with that of Novalis' hero Henri d'Ofterdingen. He calls Meister's capitulation to bourgeois expectations (by becoming a surgeon instead of following his dream of the theater) a "contre-initiation" and an "atterrisage brutal" (72). By contrast, he writes that Henri "apprend à participer à un ordre cosmique supérieur" (72). Where Wilhelm is trapped by the limiting effects of education, Henri, as the fortunate initiate, moves to a higher spiritual awareness. Tournier seems to be unnecessarily confusing the issue when he says on the one hand that initiation is contained in education, and on the other, that initiation is the liberating opposite of the restricting bonds of education. Perhaps what Tournier means by this seeming self-contradiction is that when the two experiences are divorced from one another, as they are at the current time, the contrasts are devastating, but when education is allowed to embrace initiation and when the initiation is balanced by an equal emphasis on information, then true education can take place.

Tournier's stories follow closely the archetypal patterns of initiation which Joseph Campbell has documented in his study, Hero with a Thousand Faces (1949). Campbell posits three stages in the initiation process: (1) a departure from the familiar environment; (2) a period of trials which, if overcome, lead to the victories of initiation; and (3) a return to the community of origin, a task which may be the most difficult of all. Frequently the initiate is met on the

journey by a protective figure who gives help or assistance in one form or another (35, 36). The analyses of Tournier's texts which follow in this chapter will demonstrate how Tournier modifies this pattern.

Tournier's texts illustrate two different types of initiation: (1) the initiation of children to prepare them for adulthood, which has been stressed in Tournier's comments above on education, and (2) the initiation of adults back into childhood in order to achieve a superior level of spiritual awareness. Andre Clavel calls this second aspect of Tournier's work an "émigration à contrario." He finds this element of Tournier's pedagogy an arresting idea, as he explains in Critique:

> On ne parle pas assez de la "pédagogie" de Michel Tournier. Curieuse démarche, il est vrai, qui consiste à préserver l'enfance, au lieu de la déshabiller pour lui faire endosser les valeurs adultes, comme nous le faisons dans nos familles et dans nos écoles. Initier les grands et les petits à l'enfance, à toujours plus d'enfance, telle est la règle du jeu. Elle propose une sorte d'exode et d'émigration à contrario afin de quitter la vieille peau adulte. (609)

Whether one is initiated as a child or as an adult, the initiatory experience changes one profoundly, and introduces one to dimensions of life which had been previously unknown. The positing of two forms of initiation introduces the possibility of a cycle which seems to have no true goal or point of issue. The child is initiated into adulthood, but the adult is initiated back into childhood. According to Tournier, this latter step is necessary because the adult is qualitatively inferior to the child and can find salvation only through

reestablishing ties with the child. As we have seen in Chapter I, McMahon raises the question of the futility of initiations which have as their outcome an inferior state of being out of which one must then be reinitiated. Tournier's stories contain examples of both types of initiation, but in none of the stories does the same character go through both initiations. Nor is the reader ever shown what happens later to the children who are initiated. Could it be that Tournier sees the need for the second type of initiation (i.e., the initiation of adults back into childhood) because of the failure of society to provide the first? Might it be possible that if children were provided with the proper initiatory experiences as they were growing up, the persons they would become as adults would be quite different from the adults Tournier sees at the present time? Would they perhaps be able to stay in touch with their childlike qualities which Tournier values so highly (imagination, perceptiveness, innocence), and therefore would not need the second initiation? These are the kinds of questions Tournier's treatment of initiation raises. One can only speculate since he does not clarify these points.

In the remainder of this chapter I shall examine the complexities of Tournier's initiatory experiences, noting the questions they resolve and the ones they raise. To illustrate how Tournier incorporates initiation into his texts, I will begin by examining the initiation of the child as seen in the stories of Colombine, Pierrot, Amandine, Petit Poucet, and Tupik, then will move to the initiation of the adult as evidenced in the lives of Barbedor and Robinson. Les

Rois Mages provides examples of both types of initiation. Taor and Melchior represent the child, Gaspard and Balthazar, the adult. However, in the interest of space, I have decided not to discuss Les Rois Mages in this context. The elements of initiation exemplified by the other works discussed here apply equally well to it.

In "Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit" both Colombine and Pierrot undergo initiatory experiences. As I have indicated previously, although Columbine and Pierrot live and work independently, they are in many ways still children. The arrival of Arlequin in their placid village sets in motion a scenario which leads each of them to make a crucial journey--a journey which will affect them each profoundly but in different ways.

One aspect of maturity is the ability to hold conflicting ideas in the mind at the same time. Children cling to a rigid world of black and white, right and wrong. With maturity comes the ability to see the world in shades of grey and to appreciate paradox. This is the lesson Colombine learns from her journey with Arlequin. Without Arlequin's intervention she might never have made this discovery. As the narrator makes clear, "Les choses aurait-elles pu durer encore longtemps de la sorte, si un beau matin . . . un drôle de véhicule n'avait fait son entrée . . . ."

Arlequin seduces Colombine to come with him and experience the world of colors. She leaves in a riot of color which Arlequin bestows on her through the new dress and the portrait of her on the front of the blanchisserie (devenue

teinturerie) which have every color of the rainbow and more besides but not black or white. In the brilliance of the summer sun nature reflects Arlequin's pallet too. "Bientôt la campagne les entoure et leur fait fête. Il y a tant de fleurs et de papillons qu'on dirait que le paysage a mis un costume d'Arlequin." Before long, however, the sun Colombine has loved so much becomes destructive. Or rather, although the sun remains the same, it exposes the intransigence of the colors. The dress fades as the leaves fall from the trees and Colombine learns that colors do not last. The laughter and adventure of summer are replaced by the dreary sameness of routine. "Le temps se gâtait . . . . Leur bonheur n'est plus le même. . . . De plus en plus souvent maintenant c'est Colombine qui traine la roulette tandis qu'Arlequin s'y repuin s'y repose." She finds that Arlequin and his brilliantly colored surface cannot be trusted. When the color is gone from her clothes, from nature, and from her relationship, what is left? Waking one morning to find that snow has covered everything in winter white, she realizes that "le grand triomphe de blanc" is "le grand triomphe de Pierrot." Underneath all the colors are the basics, black and white. Now that she has experienced the "high" of the colorful life, and the "downer" of its fading, now when she has learned by experience that tout ce qui brille n'est pas d'or, she is ready to find the note which Pierrot had attached months earlier to the scaffolding (devenue roulette). The words speak to her in a way which would not have been possible before. "Ma nuit n'est pas noire, elle est bleue. Et c'est un bleu qu'on respire. Mon

four n'est pas noir, il est doré. Et c'est un or qui se mange." As Jean-Bernard Vray explains:

> Le détail de la lettre de Pierrot accrochée à l'un des montants de l'échafaudage et découverte des mois après par Colombine s'explique dans [la] perspective [d'un trajet initiatique]. Il faut remarquer que Pierrot, depuis longtemps, écrivait de longues lettres pour détromper Colombine, lui expliquant "que la nuit n'était pas ce qu'elle croyait." Il ne les lui addrssait pas, "persuadé qu'elle ne les lirait pas." La logique du récit d'initiation confirme le sentiment de Pierrot. Les lui eût-il adressées, elle ne pouvait comprendre alors le secret. Elle ne pouvait être initiée avant d'affronter l'épreuve. Il fallait que la lettre et la compréhension des secrets de la nuit lui fussent données au terme de celle-ci. Pour qu'advienne la nuit, il faut d'abord que s'écroule le jour, l'été doit précéder l'hiver.

As Colombine begins to understand that what one sees on the surface can hide a different reality beneath it, she starts to make her way back to Pouldreuzic. When she reaches the village, she sees the same scene that has been there all her life, but now has the courage and maturity to look at it in a new way.

> Colombine a maintenant des yeux pour voir: bleue est la nuit, bleue est neige. . . . C'est le bleu lumineux et vivant des lacs, des glaciers et du ciel, un bleu qui sent bon et que Colombine respire à pleins poumons. Voici la fontaine prisonnière du gel, la vieille église, et voici les deux petites maisons qui se font face. . . . La blanchisserie est éteinte et comme morte, mais la boulangerie donne des signes de vie. La cheminée fume, et le soupirail du fournil jette sur la neige du trottoir une lueur tremblante et dorée. Certes Pierrot n'a pas menti quand il a écrit que son four n'était pas noir mais d'or!

Colombine has returned to the place from which her journey began, but she is no longer as she was when she left the valley behind her. She has gone from

white, to colors, back to white again and in so doing has learned the need for balance in order to achieve depth. She has found that she cannot turn her back on her old life and old friends. The colors she had adopted were exciting at first but their instability has enabled her to understand the need for black and white and their subtle nuances along with all the colors of the rainbow. In the bakery when she embraces the Colombine brioche and invites Arlequin and Pierrot to taste and see how good she is, Colombine demonstrates the maturity she has achieved. She has not only learned to look beneath the surface in determining value, but she can now handle conflicting ideas in her mind at the same time. Both Arlequin and Pierrot can be appreciated for who they are and what they represent. The beau parleur and the ecrivain, the nomad and the keeper of the hearth, the novel and the familiar, can all have a place in her life.

Arlequin's effect on Pierrot is important, too. Although Pierrot stays in Pouldreuzic, he makes a brief, but crucial, journey up the scaffolding erected in front of Colombine's house. What he sees through the window, which remains a mystery to the reader, shocks him into action. Returning to his house, he writes his note to Colombine, explaining that all is not as it seems, that black and white can disclose beautiful nuances and shades of color which nourish the soul as well as the eye. Only after the shock of the trip up the scaffolding does Pierrot have the courage to give Colombine the text he has composed. He is no longer the passive Pierrot who writes by candle light but never sends

the letters. He now has the impetus to act on what he believes and to risk sharing his soul with his beloved Colombine.

Despite the significant changes which occur as a result of these two journeys, McMahon sees the initiation as incomplete. He explains:

> He [Tournier] sidesteps one of the main problems he has seen to be of central importance in the world of his readers--their initiation into sexual understanding and performance. What does a young reader make of the conclusion, which either suggests a union of the three or leaves unresolved Harlequin's more distant future? There is something of Marie Antoinette's alleged indifference to the people's hunger in a conclusion which suggests that youthful sexual rivalries can be satisfied by proximity to hot ovens and by the joyous consumption of tasty brioche. (165)

McMahan pinpoints the ambiguities of this highly eroticized text which, nevertheless, leaves unanswered questions of responsible sexual behavior. It would be interesting to know how Tournier would respond to this criticism of the text which he considers "un hymne au contact physique" and the best of all he has written (Pasternak 12). Perhaps Tournier's goal is more modest than the one McMahon envisions. Knowing how limited a child's sensual development is in Western society, perhaps Tournier is merely trying to open to children an awareness of sensual possibilities, trying to counter the prudish attitude which has long dominated writing for children, in order to awaken and affirm the sensual/sexual side of their development. As such, it is a story of awakening possibilities. To offer a final solution at the end would be to limit these possibilities and to pull the reader back to an <u>atterrissage</u> at the very

point of décollage. Yet McMahon's objections must be taken seriously. One would never initiate children into the myriad possibilities offered by fire without also talking about fireplaces and chimneys. The ambivalence of this text highlights the need for balance between the dual components of education, and leads one to wonder if Tournier has adequately accomplished this in the area of sexuality, a topic which will be discussed more fully with regard to this text in Chapter IV.

The lessons Colombine learns are similar in some ways to the discoveries Amandine makes as a result of her initiation when she follows the kitten Kamicha into the wild garden on the other side of the wall. Just as Colombine learns that outward appearances can hide a different inner reality, Amandine learns that the world can be viewed from more than one perspective. Un chat can be une chatte and a garden can be a wild profusion of exotic plants as well as an assemblage of well kept flower beds and neatly-raked walks. She comes to view herself differently, too. Instead of the ten year old girl she saw reflected in the mirror at the beginning of the story, at the end she sees a resemblance between herself and the statue of Cupid in the garden. "Je n'ai plus l'air d'une petite fille de dix ans. De quoi ai-je l'air? Je lève mon doigt vers mes lèvres vermeilles. J'incline ma tête frisée. Je souris d'un air mysterieux. Je trouve que je ressemble au garçon de pierre . . . (CB 46).

Amandine goes no further than the garden next door, yet her journey prepares her for the changes she will encounter as she grows up. All the

discoveries Amandine makes indicate her awakening awareness of her own sexuality, symbolized by the statue of Cupid (Eros), to which Kamicha brings her at the end of the trip across the garden. Kamicha leads her into a world that is new and tantalizing, but at the same time frightening and confusing. "C'est drôle. Tout est mélancolique ici, . . . et pourtant je sens une grande joie. J'ai envie de pleurer et je suis heureuse" (CB 45). The terrifying thought that she might not be able to return to the safe, well ordered world of her childhood, sends her fleeing in panic back across the wall and up to her room where she cries long and hard for no reason that she can understand. When she gets up, she finds a spot of blood on her leg although she has no scratches anywhere. The indications of puberty are clear--the wild mood swings, the onset of menstruation, the need to test parental limits (Amandine is sure her parents would disapprove of her visit to the foreign garden), and the attractive, yet chaotic turmoil of new sexual feelings. Kamicha leads Amandine to discover all of these things, but being an animal can offer no explanation to help her understand what she is going through. However, the fact that Kamicha is soon pregnant can be seen as validation of Amandine's budding female sexuality and its potential biological fulfillment in childbearing. When Amandine decides, "Ça doit être une chatte. Kamichatte . . ." (CB 46), she is perhaps also realizing her own potential as a woman. Although Tournier subtitles this tale "Conte Initiatique," McMahon sees it to be an initiation story "only by way of absence" (162). As he explains:

> Initiations suggest rites and ceremonies, carefully prepared by someone, so that their intent will be known and eventually assumed by those being initiated. What happens to Amandine is that she makes a series of discoveries and undergoes a few events which lead her toward evidence of another world from that she has known--a world she must try to put together on the basis of the new data she has acquired. In the absence of established initiation procedures, she must assume the initiative in putting things together. (162)

Given Tournier's negative feelings toward "la mauvaise fée Puberté qui vient souillir . . . [les] fillettes" (Tournier, "Sacre" 21), it is perhaps surprising that, in "Amandine," he has written such a positive story about puberty. Perhaps the explanation is connected to the fact that in "Amandine" the chaotic changes of puberty find their fulfillment in childbearing, a phoric experience that Tournier can experience vicariously. Howver, this story also leads one to wonder if, in Tournier's mind, girls can find sexual fulfillment in other ways besides motherhood or if they are indeed limited to this one role in his eyes. In addition, one wonders what this story would be like if it concerned a boy. Would the onset of puberty culminate in a celebration of fatherhood, or would the ominous inevitability of aging reflect the death Tournier says he feels when he sees a man of twenty and remembers the child he used to be?

One boy's attempts to grow in sexual understanding are portrayed in the story of Tupic. This disturbing account of childish confusion contrasts with positive discoveries Amandine makes. Lacking both a mentor to guide him and Amandine's ability to draw the necessary conclusions which will clarify his role in society, Tupik's initiation ultimately fails. Tupik views the square where

he plays on his daily outings as "un lieu initiatique, plein de surprises et de menace" (CB 72). Yet the park never fulfills its potential as a place where Tupik can be initiated into the mysteries of life. His questions about the strange statues are answered inadequately by his governess, and the restroom with its intimidating guardian increases the pressure he feels to resolve the question of his own sexuality. He is afraid and repulsed by the men's latrines, as he is by his own father and by the statues of centaurs and minotaurs in the park, yet he is forbidden to enter the ladies' restroom just as he is held at a distance by his own mother. "Ne m'embrasse pas, tu me décoifferais" (CB 71).

Usually in Tournier's stories a journey serves as part of the rite of initiation, and characters who brave the journey are rewarded by growth, maturity, and a deeper understanding of life. The opposite is true for Tupik. The terrifying ordeal of the journey through the labyrinth leads Tupik not to understanding but to increased confusion when he learns that his ami Dominique is really une amie. Even Dominique herself, who has the opportunity to be Tupik's initiator, refuses to give him guidance, putting off his obvious questions with, "Tu comprendras ça plus tard" (CB 82). As we have seen, in his lonely distress Tupik draws all the wrong conclusions with disastrous results. Here is a child who has sought guidance from parents, governess, and a friend only to be rejected each time. He has braved a potentially initiatory trial but instead of being rewarded with an answer to his questions, he is ignored or offered partial

explanations which only increase his misunderstandings. Unconsciously paralleling the traditional initiatory rite of circumcision, he becomes his own initiator and mutilates himself thinking that this is the act by which he will gain the acceptance and privileges he seeks. Bevan calls this story a "commentaire atroce sur l'inadéquat du système social en ce qui concerne l'enfance" (48). Indeed, as we have seen, in Tournier's view the lack of sexual guidance currently given to children would make Tupik's experience more the norm than the exception. In this story Tournier powerfully demonstrates the rationale behind his desire to sensualize children's literature and to lead children to a more enlightened acceptance of their sexuality.

Like "Tupik", although "La Fugue du Petit Poucet" also involves questions of sexual roles. However, in this story the results of the initiation are much different. In this text, as we shall see, the questions are resolved in a positive way, introducing Petit Poucet to more possibilities than he had imagined before, rather than cruelly restricting him as was the case for Tupik.

The initiation of Petit Poucet is unique among the preceding stories because of the religious imagery which permeates it, calling to mind both the Roman Catholic Church and the initiation rites of primitive societies where initiation constitutes part of a person's spiritual development as well as a sign of acceptance into the adult social structure. As we have seen, the initiation traditionally begins with a journey and an ordeal to be surmounted before the one to be initiated is allowed to participate in the rite. Petit Poucet runs away

from home, then faces the ordeal of traversing the Rambouillet forest at night, walking and hitchhiking toward a vague goal. He proves himself by using his wits to convince the truck driver to take him on and by later having the courage to abandon the truck even if "il a l'impression qu'en quittant le camion, il va abandonner un bateau pour se jeter à la mer" (54).

The initiator in this case is Logre whose androgynous appearance reinforces his similarities with a priest, or by extension, even with Christ. In the morning when he appears "pieds nus dans une longue tunique de toile écrue, ses cheveux séparés au milieu par une raie [tombant] librement sur ses épaules" (CB 63), he could easily be the Christ of popular imagination.

In the course of the evening Logre explains to Poucet the mysteries of the origin of life telling him how humankind has fallen from Yahweh's aboreal paradise to the règne animal of today. He shares with Poucet the secrets of the trees and the elemental oneness they represent in their state of perfect equilibrium between earth and sky:

> Toute sagesse ne peut se fonder que sur une méditation de l'arbre. . . . Un arbre, c'est d'abord un certain équilibre entre une ramure aérienne et un enracinement souterrain. . . . (CB 60) L'arbre ne fait qu'un avec le vent et le soleil. Il tète directement sa vie à ces deux mamelles du cosmos, vent et soleil. (CB 61)

The mystical, supernatural character of the evening is reinforced by the hallucinatory quality of the experience. Poucet is not sure whether he is

actually hearing Logre speak the beautiful creation myth or whether the thoughts are being transmitted to him telepathically.

> Logre parle-t-il vraiment ou bien ses pensées se transmettent-elles silencieusement sur les ailes bleues des drôles de cigarettes que tout le monde continue à fumer? Pierre ne pourrait le dire. En vérité, il flotte dans l'air comme un grand arbre--un marronier, oui, pourquoi justement un marronier, il n'en sait rien, mais c'est sûrement cet arbre-là--et les paroles de Logre viennent habiter ses branches avec un bruissement lumineux. (CB 62)

Before the gendarmes take him away, Logre bestows his blessing on Poucet and allows him to keep the boots as a talisman. He acknowledges the mystical power of the boots, advising Poucet, "Laisse-toi emporter par elles au pays des arbres" (CB 63). When Poucet returns to his parents' insulated, impersonal apartment, he has the power to be <u>in</u> the <u>règne animal</u> without being <u>of</u> it. As a result of his having been initiated, he is able to endure, thanks to the boots and to an awareness of the power of his own imagination. He has learned that he is not alone in the world, that the things he seeks are valued by at least some others and that men and women need not be locked into rigid sex roles. In addition, he has learned that he has power to control his life, and that his interior state need not be governed by exterior circumstances. No matter what shortsighted dictates his father makes, Petit Poucet has only to close the door of his room, put on the boots, and close his eyes to be transported far away to the land of the trees where he becomes "un immense marronier aux fleurs dressées comme des petits candelabres crémeux (65).

The initiation has been successful. The lessons he has learned will enhance and enrich the life he must lead after his return.

All of the above texts have explored the initiation of the child. In each case the child leaves the safe familiarity of the home and embarks on a journey with trials which must be overcome. When these challenges are successfully surmounted, the child is allowed to return home, having gained increased insight into life and his role in the world.

As we have seen, Tournier's texts also emphasize the need for adults to experience initiation, but in the opposite direction. As adults move back toward childhood, they also make discoveries which enhance their lives and change them profoundly--so profoundly, in fact, that they may never be capable of reentering their former existence. The initiation of the adult back into childhood is more prevalent in Tournier's adult texts than in those published for children. In fact it figures significantly in Le Roi des Aulnes, Les Météores, Gaspard, Melchior, et Balthazar, and Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique. As Bouloumié explains:

> Pour l'adulte, qu'il s'appelle Robinson, Tiffauges, le nain rouge, ou Hérode (dans le conte symbolique de Barbedor), le bonheur passe par la redécouverte de l'enfance perdue, secret d'éternité et d'innocence. Aussi les initiations sont-elles inversées et se proposent-elles de retrouver l'état d'enfance. (Roman 221)

The purpose of the inverted initiation is purely spiritual rather than being a question of acceptance into society. In fact, as we shall see, having attained a

superior level of awareness, the adult, like Robinson, may decide not to rejoin the society of which he or she had been a part. Among the juvenile texts the experiences of Barbedor, Robinson, and two of the three traditional magi fall into the category of the inverted initiation. For purposes of illustration I will concentrate on the stories of Barbedor and Robinson.

Barbedor's initiation begins with his first signs of age--the silver hairs in his golden beard. He embarks on a journey in which he moves literally from adulthood to childhood, becoming younger at each step. As in usual initiation procedures, he has a mentor, in this case, a bird. It is the bird who guides him with a feather over fields, forests, mountains, and rivers before stopping at the tall oak whose topmost branches hold the nest made from Barbedor's silver hairs. To pass the ordeal, Barbedor must climb the tree and come down again with the golden egg from the nest, which he does, although "il pense plus d'une fois tout lâcher, et même alors qu'il était encore à une douzaine de mètres du sol, il faillit perdre l'équilibre et tomber." Barbedor's journey home leads him through death to reincarnated life. Returning to his homeland, he watches his own funeral cortege before being hailed as King Nabounassar IV.

In style, "Barbedor" is the most like traditional fairy tales of any of Tournier's texts. It is set long ago in an imaginary kingdom. Animals and fabulous events play their part in bringing about a happy ending. The suggestion at the end that the whole episode will repeat itself once Nabounassar IV reaches a certain age suggests the usual ending of living "happily ever after." According

to Bettelheim, a true fairy tale includes a clue to the child about solutions to life's problems (36). Barbedor comes close to fulfilling the expectations for il était une fois, yet lacks the guiding clue. What pedagogical purpose is there in the life of an ineffectual, narcissistic king who can never get past a certain stage in life? He wants an heir, but only one who resembles him. As he ages, he becomes less and less effective as a ruler, though still beloved by his people. Surely Tournier is not suggesting one embrace the adage, "Don't trust anyone over thirty!" Perhaps there is no overriding purpose beyond Tournier's indulging his passion for finding a way to continually return to childhood. McMahon prefers to to stretch this story past the pleasures of entertainment. He states:

> [In Barbedor] Tournier is going even further in his description of the process whereby an undeserving man is visited by renewal and restoration; here he allows for the possibility of a cyclical return to youth. He does not at the same time resolve the problem of how youth can move on to a purposeful, energetic adult life. One ought not to push that reading too far. Perhaps what Tournier wanted was something simpler: to turn his hand to the creation of a magical, langorous world where troubling events become marvels, even for those who have not taken full advantage of their own promise and who have not wholly met their responsibilities. (166)

Barbedor's merry-go-round of initiation suggests the reciprocity which Tournier finds in his friendships with children. He spoke of this give and take to Theodore Zeldin explaining, "The ideal companion for me is a boy . . . we are both initiators and initiated" (Zeldin 43). If Barbedor moves from adult to child and back again, so does Tournier. Perhaps he is suggesting that all adults

should continually replenish and renew their own inner selves while helping to guide and encourage the young.

One finds the movement from initiated to initiator in La Vie Sauvage also. By the story's end, having completed his initiation by Vendredi, Robinson is ready to begin the initiation of Jean, the cabin boy, who has decided to stay with him on the island. How does the change come about?

In this, as in most of Tournier's stories, the initiation is preceded by a voyage which distances the character from everything he has known before. Robinson's voyage on the Virginia takes him from seventeenth century England to a pristine, uninhabited island off the coast of South America. The shipwreck abruptly severs Robinson from all contact with his former world. Eric Brogniet points out that the rupture with the former environment puts the protagonist in position to experience the initiation which will lead to his salvation. As Brogniet explains:

> la quête du héros débute par un abandon, le plus souvent forcé, imposé par un enchaînement de causes sur lesquelles le personnage a bien peu de prise: naufrage du navire de Robinson. . . . Cette rupture engendre la suite d'événements dont les personnages sortiront grandis. (10)

In this, as in the other stories, the initiation is preceded by an ordeal--here, the shipwreck and the forced solitude it brings. Having previously known only one type of life, Robinson first tries to rejoin his former existence through the ill-fated Evasion, and when that fails, tries to construct on the island a facsimile of

the civilization he had known in England. Brogniet sees his reaction as a natural response to the pain of displacement. He states:

> La rupture d'avec le monde ancien n'est certes pas confortable: il [lui] est certes plus aisé de se tourner vers un passé encore récent, de s'en bercer, de tenter l'impossible, à savoir: recréer l'atmosphère sécurisante qu'[il vient] d'abandonner malgré [lui]. Psychologiquement, cette réaction est entièrement crédible et véritable. (10)

This stage, however futile it may seem, is vital in preparing Robinson for his initiation. Just as Colombine would not have understood Pierrot's note before her journey with Arlequin, so Robinson would not have been able to appropriate Vendredi's teachings unless he had first proven to himself that the civilization he had known before was not the answer to a fulfilling life on the island.

In La Vie Sauvage when Vendredi unwittingly ignites the cache of gunpowder, Robinson admits to himself that in many ways the explosion, while destroying all that he has worked for so long to build, is really a welcome liberation. His own constructions have not brought him happiness. In fact, they have enslaved him to their maintenance, yet he is afraid to destroy them himself, seeing no other options open to him:

> Ainsi toute l'oeuvre qu'il avait accomplie sur l'île, ses cultures, ses élevages, ses constructions, toutes les provisions qu'il avait accumulées dans la grotte, tout cela était perdu par la faute de Vendredi. Et pourtant il ne lui en voulait pas. La vérité, c'est qu'il en avait assez depuis longtemps de cette organisation ennuyeuse et tracassière, mais qu'il n'avait pas le courage de la détruire. Maintenant, ils étaient libres tous les deux. Robinson se demandait avec curiosité

> ce qui allait se passer, et il comprenait que ce serait désormais Vendredi qui mènerait le jeu. (VVS 89)

Brogniet points to this curiosity in the face of dangers and uncertainties as a crucial act of courage. Had Robinson not been able to turn receptively to Vendredi's leadership, he would never have achieved his salvation. In Brogniet's opinion, "Le véritable courage sera celui de la curiosité: Robinson quittant ses habits, s'initiant aux jeux éoliens de Vendredi" (10).

With Vendredi as initiator, Robinson begins to remake his life on the island. Bevan describes the forms Vendredi's initiation takes:

> Vendredi ne tarde pas à lui inculquer les joies de la nudité--régression et progression--l'acceptation de son corps, et la polyvalence de ses membres. S'entraînant ainsi à marcher à l'envers, il se met déjà à voir différement le monde physique, et à preparer l'étape suivante de son épanouissement. Petit à petit, guidé par Vendredi, il laisse tomber son attachement précédant au tellurique, et s'ouvre aux plus grandes possibilites de l'éolien. . . . Il atteint ainsi un état paradisiaque où chaque instant n'est plus tourné vers un avenir inquiétant, mais isolé voluptueusement dans une éternité aérienne et ensoleillée. (31)

Enjoying nudity, sports, and life in the present are all characteristics of childhood, which only Vendredi, with his youthful perspective, can demonstrate for Robinson. Kristy Ferguson discusses further the significance of Vendredi's age, stressing how, as a child, he is in touch with a deeper wisdom than is available to Robinson, the adult:

> L'initiation de Robinson à l'absolu est une initiation à rebours; il lui faut perdre l'habitude de se percevoir en tant qu'adulte formé par des

> siècles de civilisation occidentale pour regagner la perspective enfantine telle qu'elle est représentée à l'état sauvage par Vendredi (86).

She elaborates pointing to Vendredi's laugh as the hallmark of both his youth and his wisdom:

> La jeunesse et l'enfance, dans l'oeuvre de Tournier sont aussi intimement liées à l'absolu. Vendredi, qui n'a aucune expérience du réseau relationnel que Robinson tisse soigneusement autour de lui pendant la durée de l'île administrée, vit comme l'enfant dans l'absolu. Son rire est le rire des enfants qui peuvent, par l'intermédiare du clown, voit clair dans le jeu des adultes. Et en effet, Vendredi joue le clown: il pare les cactus, il plante les arbres à l'envers, il contrefait toutes les activités solonnelles de Robinson. (84, 85)

Led by this laughing clown, Robinson finds release from the narrowminded rigidity of his original way of life and encounters a higher order of knowledge. He comes to a liberating awareness of the meaninglessness of materialism and of the futility of his struggles to maintain control over nature. He gains an appreciation for life in its natural state and for a lifestyle which celebrates that life in joyous abandon. McMahon writes that in readily accepting Vendredi's lifestyle Robinson has reverted to a precivilized state which the title, La Vie Sauvage, makes clear. He sees this as a shift in emphasis from the original novel. As he explains:

> In the original, Robinson's temptation not to start all over again is at first presented in a vocabulary which suggests that to succumb would be retrogression; he would thereby rid himself of the burden of an administered life and island. Gradually, however, Robinson's decision to embrace Friday's way of life becomes a transformation, a purgation, rather than a retrogression; it is not a question of having exchanged a

> laboriously established civilized life for a savage condition, but rather of having acceded to a higher perception of and participation in the universe, more particularly in the reign of the sun. (158)

In La Vie Sauvage Robinson's mystical relationship with the sun is not stressed, and the overtly religious aspect of his initiation is downplayed. In both books, however, the direction of the initiation is the same, moving from earth to sky. In La Vie Sauvage Robinson moves away from the earth, symbolized by the souille and the grotte toward the sky, exemplified by Vendredi's fascination with archery, the aeolian harp and the kite made from Andoar's skin.

Robinson's entry into the realm of the sky, while not described in terms of mystical sun worship, as in the original novel, is illustrated by the episode in which he conquers his fear of heights by climbing the araucana, one of the tallest trees on the island. Admitting that before the explosion he would have regarded tree climbing as a ridiculous waste of time, Robinson, as a result of Vendredi's tutelage, decides that it is important to overcome his fear by daily forcing himself to climb to higher and higher heights. On the day in question he has made it to the top of the araucana when, looking down, he becomes paralyzed with fear and dizziness. At this point he is still attached to the earth. His entry into the realm of the sky is completed when he discovers the vital necessity of looking up and not down in order to surmount his terror.

> Enfin il comprit qu'il fallait regarder non pas au-dessous de lui, mais au-dessus de lui. Il leva les yeux. Dans le ciel bleu un grand oiseau d'or

> en forme de losange se balançait au gré du vent. Vendredi avait executé sa mystérieuse promesse; il faisait voler Andoar. (VVS 129)

There, in the lonely treetop, Robinson's struggles to break free from the pull of the earth and to accept the promise of the sky are affirmed by the sight of the ramskin kite flying overhead, as if Vendredi were raising a hand above him in benediction and celebration.

Not long after this experience the visit from the Whitebird proves that Robinson's initiation is complete. Having thoroughly assimilated Vendredi's outlook, he finds himself a foreigner with respect to his former countrymen. Their habits, their attitudes, and even their food repulse him. Having completed the initiation of Robinson, Vendredi, the initiator is free to leave on the seductive ship. However, the departure of the Whitebird with Vendredi on board leaves Robinson once again facing the ordeals of loneliness and despair until the moment when, to his joy, he finds that Jean, the cabin boy, has remained behind. Robinson, the initiated, now becomes the initiator. He eagerly looks forward to passing on "la vie sauvage" to Jean. This initiation will lead to a renewal of life not only for Jean but for Robinson as well. "Ils inventeraient de nouveaux jeux, de nouvelles aventures, de nouvelles victoires. Une vie toute neuve allait commencer, aussi belle que l'île qui s'éveillait dans la brume à leurs pieds (VVS 152). To symbolize the initiation which is about to begin, Robinson rechristens the boy Dimanche because as he explains, "c'est

le jour des fêtes, des rires, et des jeux. Et pour moi tu seras pour toujours l'enfant du dimanche" (VVS 152).

Like Barbedor, who moves from his own funeral to a personal rebirth, Robinson also passes from death to life. As a result of his initiation, he moves from the death, symbolized by the souille, to the life which Vendredi shows him. Later, when abandoned by Vendredi, he prepares to enter the cave to await his own death, but is brought back to life by discovering Jean and anticipating the life they can share on the island. Tournier discusses the relationship between initiation and death in Le Vol du Vampire in the context of Thomas Mann's character, Hans Castorp. Speaking of Castorp, Tournier says, "le jeune Castorp a bénéficié d'une initiation--qui fut certes longue et pénible mais, riche et féconde en enseignement et en sagesse . . . . Castorp trouve au terme de ses épreuves une sorte de santé supérieure" (293). Both Robinson and Taor, in Les Rois Mages, move through death to life and in so doing achieve "une santé supérieure." In Le Vol du Vampire Tournier quotes Mann to elucidate how this happens. Mann explains, "pour accéder à une santé supérieure, il faut avoir traversé l'expérience profonde de la maladie et de la mort, tout de même que la connaissance du péché est la condition première de la redemption (VV 294). With death constituting the supreme "ordeal" of human life, it is not surprising that when it is linked to initiation, the changes in the character who has contemplated death but moved on to life are

profound indeed. So profound, in Robinson's case, that he would rather live and die on the island than return to the land of his birth.

The decision to remain on Speranza illustrates a difference between the outcome of the initiatory journeys in Tournier's shorter works and those of the novels. In the short stories Colombine, Amandine, Petit Poucet, and Barbedor all leave home, experience the journey with its lessons, and then return home. They continue to live in the original setting of their lives, although life altering changes have occurred. In the novels, both Robinson and Taor experience the initiatory journey, change fundamentally as a result, but never return to the original environments from which they came. In the shorter works the initiatory journey is presented as an anecdote, an interlude in a life which has continuity before and after, while in the longer texts the journey leads to a completely new life. Perhaps one explanation for this difference could be the fact that most of the protagonists of the shorter works are children, while in the longer texts, they are adults. Perhaps when one experiences the initiation as a child, there is more opportunity to integrate the experience into one's life. When one is initiated as an adult, however, it causes a cataclysmic upheaval which alters one's perceptions and responses to life in such a profound way that reentering the old life becomes either undesirable or impossible. In Robinson's case the visit from the rapacious sailors of the Whitebird underscores the contrast between Robinson's new life and the society to which he had formerly belonged. Robinson stays on the island because to live life "à la Vendredi"

would be next to impossible in the England which these grasping men represent. The rape of the island and the cruel treatment of the cabin boy illustrate the dangerously adversarial dichotomies which characterize that society--civilization vs. nature, Christian vs. heathen, master vs. slave, adult vs. child. Only on the island can Robinson put into practice, and ultimately pass on, the insights he has learned; because in that setting these divisions have been overcome. La Vie Sauvage represents, in McMahon's words, "a world in which the differences between children and adults no longer matter" (159). Bouloumié points to the union of other opposites in the world Vendredi leads Robinson to embrace:

> L'écrivain se perçoit comme l'ourdisseur d'une réunion, où la vie serait finalement victorieuse à la mort, où l'adulte retrouverait le bonheur de l'enfant. L'oeuvre à la fois dionysiaque et érudite, réaliste et fantastique, métaphysique et enfantine, cosmique et comique est une oeuvre mystique en quête du monde sacré des origines qu'elle fait pressentir et qu'elle cherche à restaurer. (Roman 235)

Thus we have seen how through his texts Tournier has provided a variety of initiatory experiences which can lead one, whether child or adult, to bridge the dichotomies of one's own life and to approach life with a deeper appreciation of its possibilities, its mystery, and its beauty. Yet within these texts, ambiguities remain. The necessity of the double initiation raises the issue of the value of the gifts received when one is initiated as a child. Can these insights persist throughout adulthood, or is decline inevitable unless one is reinitiated into childhood?

The story of Amandine, coupled with the dearth of female protagonists in the other initiation stories, leads one to wonder if girls have the potential to reach the same spiritual heights as boys, or if their fulfillment is limited by biology to reproduction. Furthermore, does initiation lead one to integration into society or to continued withdrawal from the community? In addition, do the initiated have a responsibility to share the discoveries of the journey with the larger community, or are the benefits intended to be only of a personal nature? Questions such as these not only illustrate the ambiguities involved in Tournier's treatment of initiation, but perhaps also hold the key to part of the challenge his work provides.

CHAPTER IV

THE SENSUALIZATION OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

A glance at this year's newspapers will show that in this country sex education is a topic of concern, debate, and controversy among educators and parents alike. The increasing problems of teen sex resulting in the tragedies of unwanted pregnancy and the threat of disease seem to validate Tournier's claim that children have not been adequately prepared to deal with the sensual/sexual needs of their own bodies. He sees this to be the result of the way society has shielded children from their own sexuality, avoiding the topic in juvenile literature and discouraging physical contact of many kinds.

Yet the contrast between what is currently regarded as sex education and the reforms Tournier envisions would perhaps shock many of the staunchest advocates of sex education. Where contemporary efforts in American schools tend to focus on copulation and prophylaxis, Tournier proposes a much broader approach. In his opinion, lessons on biology, will power ("Just Say No"), and birth control, even if presented in grammar school, would be too little, too late, and, more importantly, extremely misguided. To Tournier, sex education is much more, and at the same time, less, than the narrow definition typically given to it. More, because it embraces a whole world of sensual, physical experiences celebrating the flesh in many ways. Less, because it

avoids didactic lessons of mechanics and morality. He explains, "Quand je parle de contacts physiques j'entends bien entendu quelque chose de plus vaste et de plus primitif que les jeux érotiques et les relations sexuelles qui n'en sont qu'un cas particulier" (VP 25).

To emphasize the degree to which Western society has suppressed physical contact, Tournier compares the anti-physical environment fostered by Anglo-Saxon Calvinist morality with what he sees as the healthier approach of African cultures. He says that in France, "C'est une morale qui prêche l'horreur du contact physique: on se tient à distance, chacun maintient son quant à soi . . . tandis que l'Afrique est un continent où l'on dort jamais seul, on dort en grappes, on se tient chaud, on rêve ensemble" (Pasternak 30). In Africa, he continues, children are in constant physical contact with others. The mothers always carry their babies, never leaving them alone in cradles, and even older children find opportunities to prolong physical intimacy. He explains, "Combien de fois voit-on en Afrique une petite fille maigrichonne de dix ans porter à cheval sur sa hanche son petit frère qui est parfaitement capable de marcher mais tous les deux préfèrent ce contact physique étroit" (Pasternak 30). By contrast, he maintains, the fiercely antiphysical society of the West gives children dolls, teddy bears, and pet animals to make up for the lack of human physical contact in their lives. With bitter invective he condemns such habits and blames any number of social problems on the <u>désert physique</u> which society has created for young people:

> Quant aux enfants, il est simplement affreux de leur jeter des poupées ou des animaux pour tromper leur faim d'un corps ami et chaud. Leur détresse est l'invention d'une société farouchement antiphysique, mutilante, et castatrice, et personne ne peut mettre en doute que certains troubles de caractère, les explosions de violence, voire la toxicomanie juvenile, sont des séquelles du désert physique où nos moeurs exilent l'enfant et l'adolescent. (VP 26)

In his nonfiction texts and in his interviews Tournier repeatedly vents his frustration and anguish over this phenomenon. As a remedy he suggests that if the proper opportunities for many kinds of sensual experience and physical contact are made available to children from an early age, they will become comfortable with more options of physical expression than just genital sex and will, therefore, not be locked into the present pattern which causes so many problems.

As has been noted in an earlier discussion, Tournier uses Freudian terms to describe his view of the child's sexuality. He explains, "C'est un pervers polymorphe, un noeud de pulsions . . . qui sont difficilement canalisées et sublimés par la société, et elle ne se distingue de celle de l'adulte que par son caractere plus fruste, moins policé" ("Les Trois Gavroches" 15). Although Freud's term the pervers polymorphe is one of Tournier's favorites when describing a child's development, in his adult novels Tournier's ideas of sexuality diverge from the standard Freudian position which maintains that the early impulses of childhood are meant to grow toward heterosexual relations as their adult fulfillment. A reader of Tournier's adult fiction will find numerous forms of sexuality explored, from the exquisite intimacy of the twins'

homosexual relationship in Les Météores, and the solar sexuality of Les Limbes where Robinson finds himself beyond dsitinctions of gender, to the bizarre ecstasy Tiffauges finds in la phorie and the concentrated presence of so many young boys in the napola. Whereas some readers may find these relationships strange and even perverted, in Tournier's opinion, limiting sexual expression to only one acceptable form is to make it perverted. Therefore, he continually pushes the reader to consider additional forms of intimate physical contact. Cloonan summarizes the approach to sexuality in Tournier's adult texts by stressing that:

> nowhere in his writings is he [Tournier] opting for one form of sexual activity over another. What matters for him is the enormous ambiguity and complexity of human sexuality, a subject that due to religious and social pressures has remained largely unexamined. (Tournier 28)

While acknowledging the complexity of Tournier's treatment of sexuality in the adult texts, the present study will be limited to a discussion of the juvenile works.

As was true in the case of initiation, literature is the avenue through which Tournier attempts to correct a problem he has identified--in this case society's denial of sensual experiences for children. Tournier proposes to confront this issue by sensualizing and even, in some cases, eroticizing his juvenile texts. Challenged by Gutta Pasternak to write a manual for physical expression, Tournier replied, "Je ne fais que cela. Tous mes livres célèbrent le contact physique, et notamment ceux que j'ai écrits avec suffisamment de soin pour

que les enfants puissent aussi les lire" (Pasternak 15). The present study will demonstrate how Tournier has accomplished this, using examples from several texts while focusing primarily on "Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit" and the ambiguities of this work.

Previous discussion has already demonstrated some of the ways Tournier has attempted to address issues of sensuality and sexuality in his juvenile texts. "Amandine" and "Tupik" have dealt with questions of puberty and toilet training, topics not usually explored in children's fiction. In addition, both "Amandine" and "Barbedor" contain descriptions of a variety of physical sensations. Amandine describes Kamicha's garden in terms of tactile and olefactory impressions:

> Le bois était verdi et vermoulu, la rampe gluante de limaces. . . . Il y a des herbes qui m'arrivent jusqu'au nez. . . . De grosses fleurs bizarres me caressant la figure. Elles sentent le poivre et la farine, une odeur très douce, mais aussi qui fait un peu mal à respirer. (CB 44)

"Barbedor," too, emphasizes the importance of touch in the description of the famous gold beard. "Et il ne se lassait pas de contempler au miroir sa barbe d'or dans laquelle il faisait passer complaisamment ses doigts chargés de bagues." The repeated sibilants reinforce the feeling of sillky smoothness which Barbedor enjoys while caressing his beard, a sensation similar to the pleasure many children find in stroking the satin trim of a favorite blanket.

In previous chapters we have seen how, through Vendredi's example, Robinson learns to appreciate the lush sensual beauty of Speranza and to

affirm the value of his own body. Furthermore, while exploring the differences between Les Limbes and La Vie Sauvage, we discussed the addition of the goat Anda with whom Vendredi sleeps. Tournier's own comments have made it clear that he intends Anda to be a sexual substitute in order to emphasize the warmth and closeness available through physical contact. The role of the goat seems entirely appropriate within the context of the story. A child can appreciate the warmth, comfort, and pleasurable tactile sensations it offers. However, for Tournier to use an animal in this way seems odd in the light of his previously quoted diatribe against dolls, teddy bears, and pets. For Tournier to forthrightly give Vendredi a she-goat to snuggle up against and to blatantly define it as a sexual substitute after he has so caustically denounced what he sees as a similar phenomenon in contemporary society, makes one wonder if Tournier has read his own books. In this case, he certainly seems to be "talking out of both sides of his mouth."

Tournier is more consistent with his own stated philosophy in the story of Petit Poucet. Petit Poucet falls asleep in the Rambouillet forest beneath the warm, living blanket of his rabbits, finding with his furry pets the physical closeness he misses from his parents. Yet when he awakens, surrounded by the daughters of Logre, the rabbits have gone. At Logre's house he has no need of them, since all eight children sleep happily entwined in one large bed beneath a decorative plaque's provocative reminder of the importance of touch, "Make love, not war." The contrasts are clear. In Petit Poucet's own

family where all is comme il faut, the only available outlet for physical expression is with the animals. Yet in Logre's household, which society regards as dangerously corrupting, human physical affection is readily available with no artificial boundaries (ça ne se fait pas) imposed.

The brief Christmas story "Mère Noël" offers another affirmation of the physical in the simple description of Père Noël breastfeeding the infant in the crèche. This act, which reconciles the opposing factions of the town, affirms the body and its natural functions as good and related to the divine. The story would have lost its power if Père Noël had pulled out a bottle instead of a breast. The human body is presented as a source of nourishment and life provided by God. As such, it affirms that living flesh has a place in the church in contrast to the focus on the dying body of Christ which the crucifix perpetuates.

As much as the above texts celebrate sensuality and physical contact, in none of them does the degree of sensualization approach that found in "Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit." In "Pierrot" not only the plot, but the language itself, is sensualized and even eroticized to an extent that is extremely unusual for children's books. It is no wonder that Tournier calls this text "un hymne au contact physique" (Pasternak 30). Tournier considers this short tale the epitome of all that he has written and holds it up as an example of the way children's literature can, and should, be sensualized. A close look at the text

focusing on the three characters--Pierrot, the innocent; Colombine, the pure; and Arlequin, the seducer--will demonstrate how this has been accomplished.

The character of Pierrot is presented as the personification of innocence, an attribute reinforced by his childlike simplicity and his white garments. In Tournier's definition innocence implies an acceptance of life and the flesh which has not been dampened by society's taboos, as contrasted with purity which connotes the conscious avoidance of that which society has forbidden (McClean 244). We will see how, in his innocence, Pierrot frequently uses sensual imagery which seems only logical and natural to him, not titillating or naughty as it would be to a child who had been told, "Ne touche pas," or "Cela ne se fait pas."

Touch is important to Pierrot, the baker's boy. He has a physical relationship with his dough, kneading and shaping it as if he were a sculptor. He sees the world in three dimensions, aware of depths and nuances that Arlequin and Colombine, with their emphasis on the visual surface, miss. The tactile imagery of Pierrot's description of the moon illustrates this tendency:

> Il sait voir que ce [la lune] n'est pas un disque blanc et plat comme une assiette . . . . [Il voit] qu'elle possède un relief, qu'il s'agit en vérité d'une boule--comme une pomme, comme une citrouille--et qu'en outre elle n'est pas lisse, mais bien sculptée, modelée, vallonnée--comme un paysage avec ses collines et ses vallées, comme un visage avec ses rides et ses sourires.

In addition to seeing nature through a sculptor's eyes, Pierrot relies on his sense of touch to help him explore the world around him. When confronted

with the offending scaffolding which covers the facade of Colombine's house, "Il le palpe," preferring to investigate with his hands rather than to rely solely on what his eyes can tell him. Pierrot appreciates the richness of a life in which the experiences offered by all the senses are valued. In his note to Colombine he appeals to the tactile, olfactory, and gustatory senses, stressing the importance of these other sensations besides the purely visual. As opposed to Arlequin's toxic, odiferous colors which will later flake and peel, he proposes his own colors which are "vraies et profondes." His night is not black, but "un bleu qu'on respire." Nor is his oven black, but rather "un or qui se mange." The color he makes "est épaisse, substantielle, elle sent bon, elle est chaude, elle nourrit." The association of the baker's boy with physical contact and sensual experiences demonstrates Tournier's belief that just as the bread Pierrot bakes nourishes and sustains life, so does physical contact. The life which is denied the warmth and closeness of touch is a malnourished existence.

Pierrot moves easily from sensual to sexual imagery. Imagining Colombine asleep in her bed, he speaks of "la moite blancheur de son grand lit." What a post-coital picture to include in a children's book! In Pierrot's mind images of Colombine become mixed with the moon, another female figure, when, in his innocence, he humanizes the moon, describing it through a series of increasingly erotic comparisons. He wonders "si cette douce rondeur qui flotte au-dessus des arbre . . . est celle d'une joue, d'un sein ou mieux encore d'une

fesse." Most children would snicker at the idea of comparing the moon to a breast or a buttocks. Their giggles might be indications of both a delighted realization that someone else likes bottoms too, and a slightly guilty reaction to the surprise of finding forbidden language in a children's book. However, to a very young child, Pierrot's comparison would seem logical and natural. What could be softer, rounder, smoother than a mother's cheek or breast? And since very young children would often just as soon go naked as not, they would be apt to agree with Pierrot when he decides, "mieux encore, une fesse."

Whereas Pierrot personifies innocent acceptance of physical pleasures, Colombine exemplifies Tournier's definition of purity. She is perfectly white, devoted to washing and bleaching, enamored of the summer sun which whitens everything it touches. Colombine's purity is based on her avoidance of what she cannot understand. "Colombine évitait Pierrot," who represents to her the things she fears--the dark, the night, and the "trou noir" of his oven. Her fears are based on unsubstantiated superstitions and stereotypes perpetuated by society:

> Pour Colombine, la nuit n'était qu'une obscurité peuplée de bêtes effrayantes comme les loups ou les chauves-souris . . . la vie de Pierrot se creusait de deux autres obscurités encore plus inquiétantes, celle de sa cave et celle de son four. Qui sait s'il n'y avait pas de rats dans sa cave? Et ne dit-on pas: "noir comme un four?

Colombine's purity is the result of her fear of sex and intimacy. She resists contact with Pierrot whose phallic associations are numerous, from the plume

and chandelle of the folk song to the baguettes he bakes and the "longue pelle de bois [avec laquelle] il fait glisser quelque chose hors du four." In addition, Colombine's own sexual potential, symbolized by the "trou noir," is also associated with a variety of imagined horrors. As a result then, although "tout le monde imaginait qu' . . . ils se marieraient," it has not happened. We will see how, through her initiatory adventures with Arlequin, and later Pierrot, Colombine loses her purity and learns to accept both the sensual and sexual parts of her life.

When Arlequin arrives in Pouldreuzic, his actions are described through a series of sexual allusions. He is a slick talker, "le beau parleur," who seduces Colombine by tempting her with bright colors which suddenly seem more exciting than the white to which she had been accustomed. The text tells us, "Arlequin s'efforce de lui mettre couleurs en tête." He carries the empty basket and offers to fill the blank façade of her house. With Colombine's consent, Arlequin and his "roulette démontée [prend] possession de la maison." Perched on the scaffolding in his rooster's plumage, "son collant multicolore et sa crête de cheveux rouges," he engages Colombine in teasing foreplay. Arlequin is a fast worker on houses and women alike. "Le plus effronté de tous les peintres en bâtiments" gets immediate results. "Il a travaillé si vite que tout est terminé quand le soleil se couche, bien que la peinture soit encore loin d'être sèche." Although the text speaks of scaffolding, walls, and paint, one

can easily imagine Arlequin leaning back with a satisfied smile to light a cigarette as he contemplates his latest conquest.

Despite his manipulative approach, Arlequin has not forced himself on Colombine: "Colombine s'est laissée séduire." Yet, in her innocence when she accepted Arlequin's offer to paint the house, she may not have realized that Arlequin would "go all the way" changing the blanchisserie into a teinturerie and making her an Arlequine.

When Pierrot wakes and sees what has happened to the blanchisserie, the shock he receives recalls the startled surprise and outrage of a child who enters the parental bedroom at the wrong time to have his dreams of Oedipal bliss shattered by what he observes. Pierrot "se heurt à l'échafaudage . . . . Le choc l'arrache à son rêve . . . . Il le palpe avec dégout." Yet, as was noted in the earlier discussion of initiation, as painful as this confrontation with reality may be, it is a necessary step if Pierrot is to grow up and take the initiative in pursuing his own relationship with Colombine. "Quelle chute! Est-il mort? Non." No, he is not dead. Only his naïveté has died, allowing a more mature approach to his own needs to be born.

Pierrot sadly realizes that his friend Colombine has lost her virginity and become soiled by her contact with Arlequin. Instead of a life devoted to "linge blanc et frais," she will henceforth be involved with "couleurs chimiques nauséabondes et salissantes de frusques défraîchies." With her new,

multicolored dress Colombine's status will be as obvious as that of Hester Prynne. "Elle est devenue une Arlequine."

Colombine's experience illustrates perhaps the very dynamic Tournier is trying to combat through his sensualization of juvenile literature. Like many contemporary young people, Colombine is at first shielded from physical contact by society's prudish attitudes, then involved in sexual activity before having become comfortable with the prerequisite sensual experiences. In Colombine's case, the disappointment of faded passion eventually convinces her to retrace her steps and to slowly affirm the validity of Pierrot's sensually oriented way of life. Although she can never regain her virginity, "la robe a perdu ses brillantes couleurs sans être redevenue blanche pour autant," she begins to get acquainted with a world where touch and physical contact reveal depths of experience she has never known before. This world is new and frightening at first. Even the gentle friction of snow against her feet and the soft brush of flakes on her face awaken in her mind "une sombre armée, des mots méchants: froid, fer, faim, folie, fantôme, faiblesse." But in time, as she perseveres, she finds comfort in the gentle touch represented by another set of "f" words, "des mots fraternels . . . comme envoyés de Pierrot: fumée, force, flambé, festin, féerie . . . ."

When Colombine arrives at Pierrot's doorstep, her initiation into the world of physical sensation continues. In an image combining the sensual with the erotic she is greeted by "cette bouche de lumière qui souffle jusque sous sa

robe de la chaleur et une enivrante odeur de pain." Colombine pauses on the threshold, hesitating, as in the beginning of the story, afraid to take the next step. "Colombine s'arrête interdite devant le soupirail. Elle voudrait s'accroupir . . ., pourtant elle n'ose pas." Finally daring to enter Pierrot's kitchen, she is surprised to find her fears unfounded. "Comme on est bien!" She is surrounded by maternal warmth, "une bain de tendresse," where she is "bercée par la douce chaleur." Even her own sexuality has lost its terror for her. Instead it is a warm and living flame barely able to be contained. "Les portes du four sont fermées, pourtant la flamme est si vive à l'interieur qu'elle suinte par toutes sortes de trous et de fentes."

Falling asleep atop the flour chest, Colombine rests in a pose of "délicieux abandon." Again Tournier's words evoke both the purely sensual and the erotic. The adjective délicieux underscores the pleasures of taste and eating associated with the bakery where Colombine has found refuge, while abandon implies at once both the totally unselfconscious attitude of a sleeping child and the provocative pose of a woman who has let go of inhibitions and made herself vulnerable to sexual experience. In this erotic context the adjective délicieux reinforces the tantalizing anticipation of the pleasures intimate contact could bring.

Tournier describes Pierrot's reaction to the sleeping Colombine in a phrase that again combines the natural tendencies of children with erotic imagery. "Ses mains aimeraient caresser l'endormie, bien sûr, mais fabriquer une

Colombine de pâte, c'est presque aussi plaisant." To want to reach out and touch is a natural impulse for a child, but a child would have used the verb toucher or taper. Caresser intensifies the experience by implying a more sexual orientation. Through Pierrot's assertion that if he cannot carress the real Colombine, making a brioche Colombine would be almost as enjoyable, Tournier celebrates the validity of multiple forms of sensual, and by extension, sexual experience. The image evokes both the child who plunges his hands eagerly into play dough and the lover who opts for masturbation, a less risky, but nearly as pleasant alternative.

By the time Colombine awakes and sees the Colombine-Pierrette sculpted in brioche, she has completely lost her inhibitions with the world of touch. Joyfully she takes the hot loaf in her arms. Her exclamations of delight indicate that she has accepted Pierrot's world where touch, taste, and smell are just as important as sight. "Comme je suis belle, comme je sens bon! dit elle . . . . Comme je suis savoureuse!" Such an outlook illustrates the healthy child's acceptance and affirmation of his/her body, an attitude Tournier would like to see fostered more intentionally by parents and teachers.

In the final scene of the story Tournier's language becomes even more intensely erotic. Colombine "écarte des deux mains avec une douceur gourmande les seins brioches de Colombine. Elle plonge un nez avide, une langue frétillante dans l'or moelleux du décolleté." Through this closing scene Tournier stresses once again the viability of the multiple forms of sexual

expression open to the perverse polymorph. Despite the extreme eroticism of grabbing the breasts and burying one's face in the cleavage, such an action is perhaps natural to a young child. The breasts make an easily grasped, roll-shaped handful. What could be easier to tear off? After all, doesn't everyone eat the ears off the Easter bunny first? And why not just plunge right in once the steaming, tasty bread has been revealed? A very young child would probably identify with Colombine's pleasure, revelling in the sensations of touch and taste while recalling the comfort of snuggling between a mother's warm breasts. However, a child close to puberty would likely respond with amused snickers, perhaps missing the emphasis on the sensual because of the sudden intrusion of such blatantly sexual material. Once again, though, as was the case with Pierrot earlier, the choice between masturbation and intimacy arises. Colombine enjoys her own body, but also offers it to others. Tournier affirms that both options are among the valid ways to celebrate the goodness of the flesh.

The ending of this story is problematic. We have seen before how the reconciliation in the kitchen is closer to that of playmates than to that of lovers, and as such, seems perhaps incongruous in the context of the erotic language Tournier uses. We have also noted McMahon's objection that the lack of a more definitive ending leaves questions of sexual rivalry unresolved, seeming to suggest that warm bread from the maternal oven can overcome such problems (165). In this story, as in "Mère Noël," it is once again the woman's role to

bring about reconciliation by offering food from her own body. Colombine invites her friends to join her in eucharistic celebration, "Vous aussi, mes chéris, goutez, mangez la bonne Colombine! Mangez-moi!" Her words echo Christ's words from the lst supper, "Prenez, Mangez. Ceci est mon corps," leading Jean-Bernard Vray to exclaim, "Quelle scène! Quelle Cène" (156)! Here, as in "Mère Noël," Tournier places the woman's body in the center of the religious setting stressing once again his desire for a church which is "fastueuse, subtile, érotique" in which "la chair aimée et célébrée en ceux que nous aimons [qui] resplendit comme celle de Jesus sur le Mont Thabor" would replace "l'horreur de la chair [qui place] le crucifix--une charogne clouée sur une poutre--au centre du culte catholique" (VP 62). As Vray suggests, Colombine's actions make her "la prêtresse de cette Eglise" (157). Such an image appropriately underscores the combined emphasis on the religious and the maternal which Tournier develops throughout the scene, for if a priest is traditionally addressed as "Father," would not a priestess be "Mother?"

The reassuring intimacy of the mother-child relationship is portrayed through images of warmth, the bath, and the meal. On entering Pierrot's bakery after her tiring trip in the cold, Colombine "a l'impression de descendre dans un bain de tendresse." Later when Pierrot opens his oven doors to reveal the colombine-brioche, "un flot de lumière dorée, de chaleur maternelle et de délicieuse odeur de pâtisserie baigne les trois amis." The image of the mother bathing the child, caressing its body with soothing bath water in the

warm kitchen reflects what for Tournier is the most intimate of all physical experiences--the contact of mother and child. He explains to Guitta Pasternak, "Souvent lorsque on en [du contact physique] parle on imagine tout de suite l'acte sexuel, mais il y en a d'autres, beaucoup plus intime que le contact physique entre une mère et son petit enfant" (15). In "Pierrot" happiness and reconciliation come from accepting the physical and experiencing the maternal, but there seems to be no other guidance in resolving questions of choice, fidelity, and sexual conduct.

The emphasis on the maternal in "Pierrot" raises again the disquieting issue of the female's adult role. Colombine and Mère Noël both offer their bodies to feed, and thereby reconcile, the opposing elements in these two stories. These actions, surrounded by maternal imagery, lead the reader to the same conclusion implied by the ending of "Amandine," that is, that in adulthood the female is relegated to the role of mother and nourisher.

Tournier, himself, reinforces this idea through his comments in an interview with Alison Browning. Tournier tells of asking school children with which character in Vendredi they identify most strongly. Yet, when he speaks of visiting a class of girls only, he slightly, but significantly, changes the focus of the question. "Je leur ai posé la question carrément: si vous aviez à vous marier, épousieriez-vous Vendredi ou Robinson" (8)? It seems odd for a writer who in other contexts has stressed girls' androgynous nature to limit the

question to the choice of a mate. Tournier does not seem to realize that girls are perfectly capable of identifying personally with a male protagonist.

The theme of motherhood recurs so frequently in Tournier's texts, in the absence of other models of female sexuality, that one has to wonder if it is the only adult role Tournier can envision for females. Can one detect in this attitude a modicum of reverse penis envy? Is Tournier perhaps hoping through his fiction to be able to offer that most intimate of physical relationships which he described earlier?

As an armchair psychologist, acknowledging my own lack of credentials in the discipline, I cannot help but wonder what a professional trained in child development and human sexuality would make of Tournier's position as illustrated by "Pierrot" and the other juvenile texts. Does Tournier's obsession with prepubescent sexuality in its many forms really signify an area which both children and adults need to develop more intentionally for the healthy expression of their sexual drives, or does it indicate his own inability to grow up psychosexually? Is Tournier perhaps still too attached to his own childhood, still searching for the experiences he never had in a way that precludes his developing a mature, adult outlook on sexuality? And is his idealization of the perverse polymorph an indication that he himself has not matured beyond a certain early stage of development? Furthermore, is his insistence on limiting the role of woman to that of mother and foodgiver perhaps a clue to an unfulfilled need he felt with his own mother, a suggestion of an area in which

he needs to do his own psychological homework? In view of these questions, to what extent is Tournier's understanding of human sexuality merely a generalization of his own personal history?

The ambiguities of the ending of "Pierrot" suggest that Tournier himself does not know what form(s) mature sexuality should take. Until he has answered this question more completely, I submit that it would be better for him to limit his goal to a celebration of the sensual with the realization that if children are allowed to have physical, sensual experiences in the context of a warm, accepting, and loving relationship, the sexual will take care of itself. Although I can affirm much of what Tournier proposes--the need for a healthy acceptance of one's body, the need for the church to celebrate the beauty of the human body as created by God, and the need for sensual experiences involving physical contact, Tournier's failure to clearly articulate a model of healthy adult sexuality leads me to question his self-appointed role as sensual/sexual guru of the young.

CHAPTER V

METAPHYSICS FOR TEN YEAR OLDS

Philosophy in the sixth grade? Metaphysics for ten year olds? At first glance, terms like "philosophy" and "metaphysics" seem out of place when juxtaposed with the wiggling denizens of a grammar school playground. The words "philosophy" and "metaphysics" conjure up images of erudite thinkers expounding esoteric theories of existence. What place would such advanced subjects have in an elementary school curriculum? And yet, along with the need for experiences of initiation and sensuality, Tournier sees the early teaching of philosophy as one of the primary needs of education today. As he expressed it to Jacques Chancel in Le Figaro:

> La chose [l'enseignement de la philosophie depuis la maternelle] serait parfaitement possible! Attendons toutefois ce génie philosophique exceptionnel incomparable--qui serait sans aucun doute le plus grand bienfaiteur du XXe siècle capable de proposer un traité de métaphysique à l'usage des enfants. (19)

Whether or not Tournier is, himself, this "grand bienfaiteur" of whom he speaks, future generations of readers will have to decide, but as Chancel points out, and Tournier himself affirms, Tournier's juvenile texts represent his efforts to teach philosophy to this young audience. This chapter will examine both what Tournier envisions when he speaks of metaphysics for children and the

methods he uses to create fiction which invites its young readers to ponder philosophical ideas.

Although Tournier was trained as an academic philosopher, he has not developed a system of philosophy of his own, nor has he attempted, in his juvenile texts, to propagate the systems of other philosophers. When he speaks of teaching philosophy to the young, he seems to have in mind something much simpler than words like "philosophy" and "metaphysics" might imply. He seems to simply mean giving children an opportunity to confront fundamental questions of life at a level commensurate with their stage of development. He accomplishes this through stories which encourage children, even without their being aware of it, to stretch their minds by looking at life from new perspectives.

Tournier refers to his juvenile texts as "des traités de philosophie masquées . . . de la philosophie de contrebande" (Joxe 51). He uses examples from "Amandine" and "Pierrot" to illustrate the philosophical orientation of his stories for children.

> Amandine va voir ce qui se passe de l'autre côté du mur, elle saute le mur, elle fait le mur. Métaphysique: la physique, c'est le mur et méta: de l'autre côté. Qu'est-ce qu'un métaphysicien? C'est quelqu'un qui va voir de l'autre côté du mur: "Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit," c'est de l'ontologie. Parce que c'est une réflexion sur la notion de pâte, de substance. Le pain a une couleur, un moelleux, une odeur: ça c'est l'ontologie. (Joxe 51)

Ontology, ecology, love, solitude, reconciliation, one's relationship to nature and to other people--all are topics which Tournier explores repeatedly in his quest to lead children to grapple with the meanings of existence. His favorite themes overlap one another within the texts and most themes appear in some fashion in more than one text.

Previous discussion has demonstrated how "Pierrot" explores the nature of reality by leading the reader, along with Colombine, to discover unseen depths and possibilities within the familiar. In a similar vein Petit Poucet discovers that a man can be "beau comme une femme" (CB 57), and Robinson learns that a butterfly can be "une marguerite qui vole" (VVS 108).

The adventures of both Robinson and Petit Poucet illustrate the clash between rapacious technology and a reverent respect for nature. In both stories true happiness is possible only through cherishing the values implicit in the "règne végétale . . . la calme croissance dans une union de la terre et du soleil" (CB 60), as opposed to the murderous competition of the "règne animal" where "la chasse, la violence, le meurtre, la peur" (CB 60) are dominant.

The reconciliation of opposites finds expression in a number of texts. "Mère Noël" unites the religious and secular communities through their response to the child in the manger. "Pierrot" revolves around the tension of black versus white and day versus night, while Colombine's final invitation to both Pierrot and Arlequin represents not only the union of these opposing elements but also the reconciliation of the writer and the speaker, the sedentary

and the nomad, the faithful and the prodigal. In La Vie Sauvage Robinson learns that such apparent opposites as salt and sugar can be mixed agreeably. In the same text the rift between youth and age is bridged when Robinson adopts Vendredi's life style. By following his childlike mentor, Robinson becomes physically younger yet paradoxically, psychologically more mature.

Relationships between people offer fertile ground for thought in a number of texts. We have seen how questions of love, fidelity, and commitment lead to an ambiguous ending in "Pierrot." In Les Rois Mages Tournier explores the same issues but with more resolution. Gaspard learns to love unselfishly although his love is unrequited. Balthazar finds that a love of physical beauty need not be regarded as idolatry but can be a way of praising the creator. As a contrast, Herod's gruesome autobiography exposes the dangers of selfish, possessive love. The experiences of Gaspard, Balthazar, and Herod involve questions of earthly love, while the saga of Taor vividly illustrates the radical nature of Christ's sacrificial love. Through the parabolic reflection of Christ's life, Taor's pilgrimage leads to a complete reversal of values as earthly logic is replaced by divine.

Race relations and racial attitudes receive attention in both Les Rois Mages and La Vie Sauvage. Despite his infatuation with the blond slave girl, Gaspard learns to affirm his own blackness, and in spite of his presumed superiority, Robinson learns that an "uneducated" member of the third world has much to teach him about life.

In all these stories Tournier seeks to do more than merely entertain, yet he constantly avoids a didactic tone. In keeping with his image of "la philosophie de contrebande" he prefers to let the philosophical nature of the works creep up on the child unawares. The "what if's" implicit in these texts lead children to engage in abstract thought, which, for a child, is to engage in metaphysics. "What if I were stranded on a desert island?" "What if I discovered a wild secret garden?" "What if all the trees were replaced by parking lots?"

This dialogue between reader and text is fundamental to Tournier's understanding of the function of literature, both for adults and for children. As he explains in Le Vol du Vampire when discussing the role of the "message" in fiction:

> Il importe que, dans la fiction, la liberté créatrice du lecteur ne soit pas compromise par des interventions intempestives de l'écrivain . . . un roman peut certes contenir une thèse, mais il importe que ce soit le lecteur, non l'écrivain, qui l'y ai mise. (16, 17)

The idea that the reader may validly impute a different thesis to a work than that which the writer had originally intended has been illustrated in a personal way for Tournier during his classroom conversations with children who have read La Vie Sauvage. In an interview with Alison Browning he recounts how surprised he was to find that although French children almost unanimously cite Vendredi when asked to choose a character from the novel with whom they would want to be stranded on an island, children of Senegal invariably do the opposite.

Whereas the French children see Vendredi as representing a life of freedom and games in contrast to Robinson's dreary emphasis on work and duty, the Senegalese dismiss Vendredi as "un marginal . . . un sauvage" preferring Robinson in whom they see power, virility, and success (8).

The fictional vehicle Tournier chooses to present his philosophy to readers is the conte. He defines this genre by contrasting it to two other types of short fiction, the nouvelle and the fable. Tournier sees these three categories, which were first proposed by Charles Perrault, as fundamental to European literature of the past three centuries (VV 38, 39). According to Perrault, the nouvelle is a realistic story which could believably happen. It has nothing supernatural, fantastic, or illogical about it (VV 38, 39). Tournier likens the nouvelle to a photograph or to a fait divers from the newspaper (Koster). The reader's enjoyment comes from recognizing himself and his own experiences in the characters and events of the nouvelle. As Tournier explains in Vol du Vampire, the power of a nouvelle comes from its "fidelité au réel" and not from any moral or ideological message:

> De son lecteur, il [l'auteur des nouvelles] attend cette exclamation: "Tout cela est bien déprimant et bien laid, mais comme c'est vrai!" En dehors de cette constatation morose, la nouvelle se veut dépourvue de toute signification, moralité ou autre message plus ou moins idéal ou idéologique. (39)

The fable, on the other hand, as both Tournier and Perrault insist, is a story with a moral in which the message is spelled out explicitly, often in aphoristic terms.

The third category, that in which Tournier places most of his works for children, is the conte, which, by his definition, is a story wrapped in mystery. The conte has a veiled significance, as opposed to the fable where the meaning is presented in black and white. As Tournier explained in an address to the Académie Goncout, "Le conte a indiscutablement une signification. Seulement, nous ne savons pas laquelle. Le conte appuie sur des ressorts qui nous touchent profondément, mais d'une façon confuse, c'est une façon émotive" (Bulletin 308, 309). Tournier is attracted to the translucense of the conte as opposed to the transparency of the fable or the opacity of the nouvelle. As he explains in Vol du Vampire:

> A mi-chemin de l'opacité brutale de la nouvelle et de la transparence cristalline de la fable, le conte--d'origine à la fois orientale et populaire--se présente comme un milieu translucide, mais non transparent, comme une épaisseur glauque dans laquelle le lecteur voit se dessiner des figures qu'il ne parvient jamais à saisir tout a fait. . . . Le conte est une nouvelle hantée. (40)

Because of its translucence the conte is an ideal vehicle for Tournier's metaphysical tales. The "veil" of the story is an important part of its attraction. Children are not threatened or admonished by a moral as they would be in a fable, and as they grow they may be able to approach the conte with fresh insights, responding to the story on different levels at different times of their

lives. McMahon speaks of the value of this approach in his discussion of "Amandine":

> Tournier's points are all clear enough; they profit from being stated mutely, by which I mean that he presents the phenomena of the onset of puberty in ways which would not upset those who had not made Amandine's observations and which might help those who had, but who had been baffled by their meaning. (163)

One cannot discuss Tournier's philosophical methodology without mentioning the role of myth. According to Tournier myth provides him with the bridge between metaphysics and the novel (VP 183). In Tournier's definition a myth is "une histoire fondamentale . . . que tout le monde connait déjà (VP 183-4), "enfantine à sa base, métaphysique au sommet" (Brothier 11). Because of its multilevel structure a myth can speak to people of all ages. The children's story that is its outward manifestation embodies wisdom and insights that have been passed down for generations in an attempt to address the existential human condition.

Although frequently associated with religious traditions, myths also find expression in folk literature. The sources of Tournier's myths are varied. From popular culture he takes the myth of Santa Claus (Mère Noël). From religious tradition he appropriates the myths surrounding the birth of Christ (Les Rois Mages). Literature has furnished him with Robinson Crusoe while folk tales have provided the basis for "Pierrot" and "La Fugue du Petit Poucet." In each

case the clash between the familiar aspects of the myth and the new perspectives Tournier gives it adds to the provocative power of his tales.

Despite some differences of terminology, Bruno Bettelheim's research into the function of myths and fairy tales supports Tournier's belief in the importance of stories of this type for children. Bettelheim draws sharper distinctions between myths and folk/fairy tales while acknowledging that the two often overlap. Fairy tales have sometimes evolved from myth. In other instances they have been incorporated into the myth. According to Bettelheim a myth involves the divine. It carries spiritual force and revolves around superhuman characters while a folk/fairy tale is presented in a simpler style and peopled by characters who represent everyman, even to such an extent that they have no names beyond "a girl" or "the youngest brother" or a generic name such as "Jack" (40). In Bettelheim's opinion myths and especially fairy tales are important for children because they "express an inner conflict in symbolic form and suggest how it may be solved" (26).

Bettelheim's assessment of the role of the fairy tale reflects essentially the same potential for multilevel communication that Tournier claims for the conte. As Bettelheim explains, "Fairy tales . . . convey at the same time overt and covert meanings . . . speak simultaneously to all levels of human personality, communicating in a manner which reaches the uneducated mind of the child as well as that of the sophisticated adult" (5, 6). He further affirms that the importance of the fairy tale lies in the fact that it "confronts children squarely

with the basic human predicaments" (8) while assuring them that although struggle against severe difficulties is an unavoidable part of life, "if one does not shy away, but steadfastly meets unexpected and often unjust hardships, one masters all obstacles and at the end emerges victorious" (8). Such an outcome is close to that which Tournier seeks to accomplish in his juvenile texts. By reclothing mythical archetypes with new dramas and by allowing children to draw their own conclusions from these tales, Tournier is able to engage children in the adventure of abstract thought and to invite them to reflect philosophically on the issues which confront them as they grow and mature in hopes that they will derive strength and guidance from the process.

Perhaps a fitting comparison can be drawn between Tournier and his own character, Logre, the androgenous hippie who enthralls Petit Poucet with his arboreal creation myth, gently sharing the secrets of "ce qu'il y a de plus important au monde . . . des arbres" (CB 59). Petit Poucet is captivated by Logre's words, yet hardly aware of them. "Logre parle-t-il vraiment ou bien ses pensées se transmettent-elles silencieusment" (CB 62)? By the end of the evening Petit Poucet has been transformed by the power of the myth and the beauty of the words. "Il flotte dans l'air comme un grand arbre . . . et les paroles de Logre viennent habiter ses branches avec un bruissement lumineux" (62). Logre's gift to Petit Poucet is not just a static tale to entertain a household of children on the longest night of the year, but an outlook on life which will continue to give comfort and sustenance for the future. Later in the sterility of

his parents' Parisian apartment Petit Poucet finds that although parted from his eloquent teacher, he is still able to become "un immense marronnier aux fleurs dressées comme des petits candélabras crémeux. Ses branches oscillent in gestes bénisseurs . . . . Il est immensément heureux" (CB 65).

If such is the power of the myth and the conte, then perhaps Tournier's statement about the genius who could teach philosophy to children is not as hyperbolic as it sounds. Perhaps this person really would be the greatest benefactor of the twentieth century. To lead children to an understanding of life, to give meaning to their existence, and to introduce them to ideas which will strengthen them to face an uncertain future are educational goals which would be hard to surpass.

CHAPTER VI

USING TOURNIER'S TEXTS IN THE AMERICAN CLASSROOM

In 1979 Dorothy Jean Furnish, a professor at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, published Living the Bible with Children, in which she proposed a model for teaching the Bible to children. This model is divided into three parts: (1) "feeling into" the story, (2) "meeting with" the story, and (3) "responding out of" the story. Although developed for teaching the Bible, I believe this model has validity for teaching literature as well. Therefore, I have used it, with a few adaptations, as the basis of my suggestions for using Tournier's juvenile literature in American classrooms. In this chapter I will first explain the terms "feeling into," "meeting with," and "responding out of." Although I have made some changes in each of these categories, the terminology and basic concepts belong to Furnish. This explanation will be followed by specific suggestions for classroom activities to accompany Les Rois Mages, Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage, "Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit," "Petit Poucet," and "Amandine ou les Deux Jardins."

I. FEELING INTO/PREPARATION

One of the reasons great literature becomes great is that it touches common cords of emotion in people of different times and different places. The

universality of the emotion out of which the work was written ensures a wide and lasting audience. The emotions provide the bridge from the author to the reader. This is especially true for the younger child. Children of ages ten to twelve are only beginning to become capable of, or comfortable with, abstract thought. What they may not be able to deal with abstractly can be dealt with emotionally. The life of la blanchisseuse or le mitron in "Pierrot" may be totally foreign to them, but they can relate to being abandoned by a favorite friend. They may never have been on a Pacific island, as in Vendredi, but they can understand feelings of loneliness and fear. They may never have lived in Paris and their father is probably not a woodcutter, as was the case in "Petit Poucet," but they can understand not wanting to live in a world without trees to climb or pets to love. Although teens can deal more easily with abstract ideas, activities which elicit emotions in a story context continue to be a powerful tool at any age for preparing to understand the author's message. As Furnish summarizes, "When they [the students] feel the same emotions as those felt by the persons in the story, they are well on their way to understanding the story itself" (26). Therefore, many of the activities in the "feeling into" section of the lesson are designed to elicit the same emotions that are depicted in the story. For example, a "feeling into" activity for "Pierrot" could be to ask the students to picture a time when they felt left out. "When have you felt left out? Can you remember a time when you were not part of a group that you wanted to be in? How did you feel? What did you do?" A "feeling into" activity before beginning

the "Taor" section of Les Rois Mages could be to ask class members to bring a favorite candy to class for a "tasting party."

Some of the activities in this section are more cognitively-based and involve information rather than feelings--for example, introducing students to the characters in "Pierrot" and their traditional roles, or asking students to read and compare the biblical accounts of Jesus' birth before beginning Les Rois Mages. Since I have included both emotional and cognitive activities in the introductory section of my lesson plans, I have termed it "feeling into/preparation." Preparation is any activity which prepares the student to understand or profit from the story--whether cognitively or emotionally based. It can serve to pique curiosity, to heighten interest, to set up a purpose for reading, and/or to give the learners prerequisite knowledge or skills before they begin the task. The suggestions in the "feeling into/preparation" sections are presented in order that a teacher may choose the one(s) most appropriate to the level of the class, keeping in mind that the younger the class, the more important it is to include "feeling into" type activities.

II. MEETING WITH

The purpose of "meeting with" is to become aware of what is between the covers of the book. By "meeting with," I simply mean what happens when the student reads the book or hears the story. This section will likely include both classwork and homework. "Meeting with" can be accomplished in a number of

ways. Unless the story is very short, the teacher will probably want to use a variety of techniques in order to maintain interest and keep the story moving. To read these works in the original text assumes the equivalent ability of a third or fourth year high school class. Even then, the vocabulary and sophistication of the language could be quite difficult. Therefore, I have selected the excerpts from each story which I feel are most readily appropriate for American students and their probable abilities. Naturally, if a class is more advanced, the teacher need not be limited to the selections I have chosen.

The questions and activities listed under the "meeting with" heading in the teaching outlines can be used flexibly with any of the "meeting with" approaches listed below. They range from simple recall to drawing inferences and making applications to the students' personal situations. They reflect the hierarchial levels of cognitive skills outlined by Bloom, Sanders, and other cognitive learning theorists. On the lower end of the scale are memory tasks which require simple recall of facts. More difficult, and higher on the scale, are tasks which require analysis of material and drawing inferences. Finally, at the top of the scale, are tasks involving synthesis and evaluation. Although the questions and activities in the "meeting with" sections include examples of all the above categories, most of the questions elicit straightforward, lower cognitively-based information for two reasons: (1) to be sure the student has understood what has been said in the foreign language, and (2) to establish a purpose for reading. The students will likely read more attentively if they know what they

looking for in a passage. (The majority of the activities in the "responding out of" sections represent the higher levels of mental tasks.) Most of the questions in the "meeting with" sections are written in French, assuming that they would be used with an advanced high school class. The same questions could be easily used in English, or the teacher may want to do part of the work in French and part in English, depending on the abilities of any given class.

It is important to remember that reading comprehension and translation are not the same thing. It is not necessary to recognize every verb form, every object pronoun and every example of adjective agreement in order to experience the power of the literary work. Nor is it necessary to understand every vocabulary word to appreciate the story. In fact, the best way to "kill" a piece of literature in the classroom is to translate it word-by-word. Not only does it slow down the process and drag out the story, inducing boredom, but it tells students that they cannot read French until they are much more advanced. A better approach would be to keep the story moving quickly so that interest is high, and to tell students that they are not required, indeed are not expected, to be able to read every word. They will be asked to read some segments in depth, but for other segments they will be asked to skim for the main idea or to scan for supporting details. Sometimes, they will simply listen while the teacher tells part of the story. At times, students will be given unfamiliar vocabulary before reading. Other times, they will be asked to elicit meanings for new words from context. It may also be appropriate to give study questions before

reading so that students will know what they are looking for and can screen out superfluous information.

By his own definition Tournier's contes retain an element of mystery. To spell out the message of the story immediately limits it and reduces it to a fable or an allegory. The teacher should let the child meet with the story, and then let the story speak to the child. The child may find different meanings in the story at different ages. It is not necessary for the child to become aware of everything the teacher sees in the story. However, skillful questioning can open the story to children in a way that will stimulate a deeper interpretation and allow them to see things they hadn't at first. By keeping the questions open-ended and by projecting an accepting environment where a variety of responses are welcomed, the teacher can allow different children in the same class to respond on different levels. Some children may resonate with a story because it speaks to their unconscious, although they may not be aware of the issues within themselves which the story addresses. It is valid to let the unconscious remain unconscious. As Tournier made clear in his previously quoted remarks on Pierrot, "Cela [la philosophie, l'ontologie] l'enfant, bien entendu, ne le sait pas. Mais il le sent, et il le comprend à sa manière" ("Comment" 9).

Since the purpose of many classes will be to "meet with" the language as well as the story, I have included vocabulary and grammar exercises in the "meeting with" section for each work. Les Rois Mages includes an additional

"dictée" section. These tasks reflect both the language and the content of the text in order that the student may learn language in the context of the story.

Techniques for meeting with the story:

A. Read in translation.

B. Read in French.

1. Skim for main idea.

2. Scan for details, limited information.

3. Search for answers to study questions.

a. Questions could be given before reading to set expectations and to give the student a purpose for reading.
b. Questions could be done for follow-up homework after having done #1 and #2 in class.
c. Questions could be answered orally in class, then in writing for homework.

C. Teacher reads aloud in English or French.

1. If reading in English, teacher should take care to read dramatically and with expression.

2. If reading in French, the passage will need to be read several times.

3. Since this is a listening comprehension activity, give students guidelines for listening before reading.

ex.:
a. "Name three things Taor didn't like. Name one thing he did."
b. "Listen to see what happens next. Write five verbs you hear."

D. Teacher tells the story dramatically in English or French. Since Tournier's works involve a lot of narrative and action, they easily lend themselves to this approach.

1. This can be effectively combined with other techniques. For example, tell the story up to a suspenseful point. Then direct

students to read the next two paragraphs on their own to see what happens next.

2. Teacher can role play a character and tell part of the story in the first person.

3. Telling the story in French allows the teacher to simplify the language to the level of the class. Students could go back later and read the same section in the original version (for example for homework). They might find that they can understand more than they thought they could since they know what to expect. To ensure that the second reading gets done the teacher need only say, "Find something which happened that I left out," or "Find the sentence that shows that Petit Poucet's rabbits were smart."

III. RESPONDING OUT OF

The "responding out of" activities are designed to be used after the entire work has been "met with" (i.e., at the end of the book). These follow-up activities will usually not be factual, information-type questions as was true of many of the questions in the "meeting with" section, but rather, will emphasize creativity and application on the part of the student. For example, after reading "Petit Poucet," a student might write an original "fractured fairy tale." To respond to Les Rois Mages, students might dramatize the story or four students could play the roles of the kings for a panel interview. Vendredi might inspire students to create a mural showing scenes from the story or to make a mode of the island Speranza, details from the story. Students who had read "Pierrot" might enjoy retelling the story through a puppet show. Acknowledging that "Arlequin était beau parleur, mais Pierrot aimait mieux écrire," I have tried to

provide a variety of types of expressive activities to take into account different students' learning styles.

Any of the following teaching suggestions could be done equally well in French or in English; that is the choice of the teacher. I have written many of them in English assuming that despite the simplicity of Tournier's style, only advanced French classes would be able to handle the works in French. However, the books cited are appropriate for use in translation with a wide variety of ages and need not be limited to French classes. Tournier wrote them not to teach the language but to tell stories. If third and fourth year French classes are able to learn the language at the same time as they encounter the story, then that is an added bonus for them. Teachers who fear they are "copping out" by using the works in translation can call it a culture lesson to assuage their consciences (or their supervisors). Even for classes who read the works, or parts of them in the original, rereading the entire work in the English translation afterwards can be a valid learning experience. It affords an easy review of the story and allows students to closely encounter parts of the text which they did not have the ability to "meet with" as intimately before.

<u>Les Rois Mages</u>

1. Feeling Into/Preparation

   A. Sing "We Three Kings"

   B. Read Matthew, Chapter 2. Point out how little is really said in the Bible and how much of what we think about the "kings" is legend.

1. The Bible says "wise men," not "kings."

2. The Bible doesn't tell how many wise men there were. Legend has assigned the number three because three specific gifts were mentioned.

3. Matthew 2:11 says "house," not "barn," "stable," or "inn," indicating that this visit may not have happened on the birth night (when the shepherds came), but a little later after Joseph and Mary had set up temporary housekeeping.

4. Throughout the chapter, Jesus is referred to as the "child," not the "baby," indicating that by this time he may have been older than a newborn.

5. Herod had all the children two years old and younger killed, indicating that Jesus could have been any age up to two years by this time.

6. Compare with Luke 2:1-20. Point out that the "kings" are not mentioned in the shepherd story, nor are shepherds mentioned in the "king" story. These are probably two separate incidents which legend and the greeting card industry have fused in our minds. (If students have trouble with what seem to be biblical inconsistencies or legend/myth versus fact and faith issues, see Edward Bauman's The Life and Teachings of Christ, pp. 21-26, for a helpful nonsectarian discussion of these points.)

C. Show examples of artwork representing the three kings. The Gallimard edition of this book is beautifully illustrated with reproductions of famous artwork.

D. Apocryphal Literature - In the stories of Gaspard, Balthazar, and Melchior, Tournier has imaginatively enlarged upon characters in the Bible, a book which many consider sacred. The story of Taor, however, is a purely apocryphal addition. The idea of a fourth king comes from Russian Orthodox legend and has already been given a fictional setting by Henry Van Dyke, an American, and Edzard Schaper, a German; Tournier's story differs from both of these.

1. Introduce the students to the terms "apocrypha" and "apocryphal." Give examples of apocryphal stories about other well known people. (Ex.: George Washington and the cherry tree.) Discuss the purpose of apocryphal literature.

2. Discuss Tournier's statement in the postscript to Gaspard;

> [Les] lignes de l'évangile selon saint Matthieu constituent la seule mention faite des rois mages dans les textes sacrés. Les évangiles selon Mark, Luc, et Jean n'en parlent pas. Matthieu ne donne pas leur nombre. Le chiffre trois est généralement déduit des trois présents mentionés: l'or, l'ensens, et la myrrhe. Tout le reste relève de textes apocryphes et de la légend, y compris les noms Gaspard, Melchior, et Balthazar.
>
> L'auteur avait donc toute liberté pour inventer, conformément au fonds de son éducation chretienne et de la magnifique iconographie inspirée par l'adoration des mages, le destin, et la personalité de ses héros. (270-271)

E. Before beginning the section on Taor, have students bring a sample of their favorite candy bar. Have a tasting party. Bring samples of Turkish delight (rahat loukum) since most American children have never heard of it, much less tasted it. It is available at specialty food stores such as Knoxville's Gourmet's Market.

F. Before beginning the section on Taor's stay in Sodom, give students a small amount of salt to lick from the palm of their hand, or provide a salty snack like popcorn or chips to eat before (or even during) the story, but do not allow anyone a drink until Taor experiences the fresh water tear, at which time small paper cups of water could be passed around. As an extra cultural note, use bottled mineral water.

G. Treasure Hunt. Students follow a trail of clues to find a treasure. Treasure could be a box with free homework coupons, small candy, or some other small items. Each clue would lead to the next. Most clues would be in the classroom, but some could be hidden in other parts of the school.
Ex.:
Clue 1: Cherchez derrière la carte de Paris.
Clue 2: Cherchez sous la poubelle.
Clue 3: Cherchez près du téléphone dans le bureau du directeur.
When clues indicate a different part of the school, two students could be sent out of the class to search for it. Be sure the next clue brings them back to the classroom. When the treasure has been found, give an introductory statement to the story such as, "We are going to read a story about four men who each go on a search. For each man the treasure he seeks is different. As you read, think about

what treasure each man is seeking and what happens to him as he searches.

II. Meeting With

A. The Story--See introductory remarks to this chapter for discussion of ways to present the story and to use the following sample questions. The page numbers refer to the text in the original Gallimard edition.

1. Page 20, "Ce que nous avons trouvé . . ."--end of page 21.
   a. Au lieu d'un palais qu'est-ce qu'ils ont trouvé à Bethléem? Qui étaient là? Quels animaux étaient là?
   b. De quelle couleur étaient les gens dans l'étable?
   c. En utilisant le contexte, devinez le sens du mot "gigotait." (top line, second column, page 20)
   d. Qu'est-ce que Gaspard offre comme cadeau à l'enfant?
   e. Quel est la surprise miraculeuse?
   f. A votre avis, comment est-ce que Gaspard a senti à ce moment?
   g. Qu'est-ce que Gaspard a dit aux autres rois à propos de l'enfant noir? Pourquoi? Qu'est-ce que les autres rois ont dit à Gaspard?
   h. Quel était le resultat de ce voyage à Bethléem pour Gaspard?
   i. Utilisez les mots en contexte dans ce passage pour deviner comment on dit "grandchildren" et "great grandchildren?"

2. Page 25, paragraph 1
   a. Comment était Balthazar?
   b. Qu'est-ce qu'il aimait?
   c. Qu'est-ce qu'il n'aimait pas?
   d. Comment est-il comme artiste?
   e. Quelle était sa vocation?
   f. En utilisant les cinq premieres lignes de ce paragraphe comme guide, décris-toi.

3. Pages 29 "Balthazar fit construire . . ."--page 31 "monstres égyptiens et les héros grecs."
   a. Qu'est-ce que c'est que le Balthazareum?
   b. Qu'est-ce qui caractérisait l'art grec et l'art égyptien?
   c. Pourquoi est-ce que cela ne plaisait pas à Balthazar?
   d. Qui était Assour?
   e. Quelle est la différence entre l'art d'Assour et l'art grec?

f. Où est-ce qu'Assour a trouvé la femme dont il a fait le portrait? Racontez l'histoire.
g. Trouvez l'histoire biblique à laquelle Tournier fait allusion ici.
h. Trouvez une phrase dans le texte qui exprime le but de l'art d'Assour et de Balthazar.

4. Page 36 "Les compagnons de Balthazar s'arrêtent . . ."--end of page 39.
   a. Devinez par le contexte le sens des mots suivants:
      stupéfaits masure malentendu
      désigne s'agenouille (clue: genou=knee)
   b. Dans la phrase suivante qu'est-ce que l'auteur veut dire par les mots "doigt de feu"? ". . . la comète désigne de son doigt de feu la plus misérable masure."
   c. Pourquoi sont-ils stupéfaits?
   d. Quels animaux est-ce qu'on trouve dans une bergerie? dans une étable? dans une écurie?
   e. Qu'est-ce qu'un berger? Expliquez en français.
   f. Qui est là? Quelles sortes de gens?
   g. Comment est-ce qu'on décrit la lumière du comète? La comète est indiquée par trois façons différentes dans ces passages.
      1. _____
      2. _____
      3. _____
   h. Que fait chaque roi pour adorer l'enfant?
   i. Expliquez le sens de ce passage: "Seul Balthazar commence à comprendre. Quant à Assour, son sourire veut dire sans doute qu'il a, lui, tout à fait compris." Qu'est-ce qu'ils comprennent et pourquoi eux?
   j. Que fait Aussour pour adorer l'enfant?
   k. Selon Balthazar pourquoi est-ce que "l'image est sauvée et l'art n'est plus maudit."
   l. Qu'est-ce qui est nouveau du dessin d'Assour?
   m. Assour, quelle vision de l'avenir a-t-il?

5. Page 43, paragraphs 1 and 2
   Comment était Taor?

6. Page 46 "Taor au contraire . . ."--". . . tout le chargement de roses."

   a. Comment est-ce que Taor a changé?
   b. Qu'est-ce qu'il apporte avec lui? Pourquoi?
   c. Qui était Yasmina? Comment était-elle?

d. Qu'est-ce qu'elle porterait? N'oubliez pas cet animal parce que nous la verrons plus tard.
e. Pourquoi est-ce que Taor l'amène avec lui?
f. Parmi les choses que Taor apporte avec lui faites des listes qui montrent vos avis.
   (1) J'aime
   (2) Je n'aime pas
   (3) Je n'ai jamais gouté.
g. Quelles émotions est-ce que vous pensez que Taor avait à ce moment?
h. Vous souvenez-vous d'un voyage que vous avez fait? Quels préparatifs avez-vous faits? Quelles étaient vos émotions?

7. Page 66 "Seigneurs juges . . ."--page 67 ". . . imposait le silence et le respect."

   a. Comment Taor s'excuse-t-il de son erreur?
   b. Quelle est sa deuxième réponse au problème?
   c. Quelle est la réaction du peuple?

8. Page 72 "C'est ainsi que Demas . . ."--end of page 73

   Use this page as a sightreading, scanning exercise. Tell the story up to this point. Then direct students to read for specific information to see what happens next by asking questions a-i orally one at a time, to be answered orally. For homework distribute copies of questions a-k. Students will reread the passage and write the answers.

   a. De quoi parlait Demas?
   b. Comment est-ce que Taor a réagi?
   c. Quels miracles de Jésus est-ce que Demas a raconté?
   d. Demas a appris ce qu'il sait de Jesus par deux façons. Quelles sont ces deux façons?
   e. Quelle est la réaction de Taor à ces miracles?
   f. De quoi parlait Jésus quand ses mots ont touché Taor le plus intimément? Pourquoi?
   g. Lisez à haute voix les mots du Christ.
   h. Quels mots semblaient être adressés personnellement à Taor? Pourquoi?
   i. Quel miracle a eu lieu pour Taor?
   j. Copiez en anglais et en français les vers de la Bible qui sont cités dans ce passage.

Matthieu 5:4,5,6
John 4:13, 14

k. Tournier has altered the chronology of the biblical events. Which miracle is presented in a different chronology than in the Bible? (Hint: Read John 21.)

9. Page 75 "La salle était vide."--end of book
Use this section as a listening exercise. Tell the story up to this point (in French or English). Read aloud and pantomime, where appropriate to explain difficult vocabulary ('coupes," "gobelets," "vertige," "tendait la main," "éleva jusqu'aux lèvres," "ramasser," "bascula en avant"). Then distribute written copies. Direct students to follow along and listen as you read again, then to answer the questions.
   a. Décrivez ce que Taor a vu quand il est entré dans la salle.
   b. Quelles actions a-t-il faites? Faites une liste des verbes dans le passage.
   c. Qu'est-ce qui est arrivé à Taor?

B. Dictée. The following passages have been chosen as appropriate for dictation. They are taken directly from the text with minor adaptations. Dictation not only gives students practice in listening comprehension but brings them into close contact with the text. The repeated contact with an example of well-written French prose can allow them to internalize the qualities of the model and help them in their own stylistic development.

First, read each passage all the way through at normal speed. Then, read several times pausing at appropriate spots. Finally, read once more at normal speed. After students have finished writing, show the text on the overhead projector or distribute copies. Students make corrections on thier papers and then recopy the entire paragraph correctly.

1. Il était une fois au sud de l'Egypte, un roi qui s'appelait Gaspard. Comme ses parents, comme tout son peuple, Gaspard était noir, mais il ne le savait pas. (p. 9)

2. Il était une fois un prince qui s'appelait Taor. Ce jeune homme n'aimait passionnément ni les armes, ni l'or, ni les femmes, ni les oeuvres d'art, ni les chevaux. Non, ce qu'il aimait passionnément, c'était les bonbons, les gâteaux, et, d'une façon générale, tout ce qui est sucré. (p. 43)

3. Contre tout bon sens Taor a insisté que Yasmina est allée avec eux. Contre tout bon sens, en effet, car Yasmina était une jeune éléphante blanche aux yeux bleus, douce, fragile et délicate. Taor aimait tendrement Yasmina. Taor a décidé qu'elle voyagerait dans le même bateau que lui et qu'elle porterait tous les pétales de roses. (p. 46)

4. Trente--trois talents? Je ne les ai pas. Eh bien! J'ai autre chose à vous offrir. Je suis jeune, je me porte bien. Surtout, je n'ai ni femme ni enfant. Je vous demands que je prenne la place du prisonnier dans vos mines de sel. J'y travaillerai jusqu'à ce que j'ai gagné trente-trois talents. (p. 67)

C. Vocabulary--Les Comparaisons

". . . ils ne sont pas blancs, non, ils sont roses. Roses comme des cochons." (p. 12)

"Il vécut d'abord longtemps dans l'immense cave, grande comme une église." (p. 69)

1. Pour que le langage soit plus expressif, on utilise souvent des comparaisons. Complétez les comparaisons suivantes en essayant d'éviter les clichés.

féroce comme _____
douce (doux) comme _____
mince comme _____
rond(e) comme _____
rapide comme _____
noir(e) comme _____
blanc (blanche) comme _____

Faites quelques comparaisons de plus avec des adjectifs de votre choix.

2. Each student writes a noun (a thing or a name of a well known person) on a piece of paper. Students exchange papers. They must come up with one or more similes to describe the noun on their paper.

D. Grammar

1. "Eh bien! les fruits du premier jardin satisfaisaient ensemble ces deux sortes de faim. Car ils n'étaient pas seulement divers par la forme, la couleur, et le goût. Ils se distinguaient aussi par la science qu'ils donnaient. Certains apportaient la connaissance des plantes et des animaux, d'autres celle des mathématiques. Il y avait le fruit de la géographie, celui de l'astronomie, et bien d'autres encore. (pp. 50-51).

   Fill in the blanks with the appropriate forms of celui.
   a. Gaspard était frappé par la différence entre sa peau et _____ _____ de Biltine, entre ses cheveux et _____ de son esclave.
   b. Quelle différence entre les eaux fraîches du Jordan et _____ _de la Mer Morte.
   c. Balthazar était le prince qui aimait l'art. Taor était _____ qui aimait le sucre.
   d. La jeune fille dans le portrait était _____ que Balthazar aimait.
   e. La petite fille ne voyait pas de ressemblance entre le visage dans le portrait et _____ de sa mère.
   f. Gaspard a comparé les femmes de son entourage avec ___ _____ de Balthazar.
   g. Melchior était _____ qui voulait dire à Herode qu'ils avaient trouvé l'enfant.

2. The Subjunctive
   ". . . il faut que tu prennes connaissance de mes comptes." (p. 64).
   a. Review formation of subjunctive and irregular subjunctive stems.
   b. Complétez oralement:
      (1) Avant de quitter Mangalore il faut que Taor_____ _____.
      (2) Avant un rendez-vous il faut que je _____ _____ .
      (3) Quand on rend visite aux gens d'un autre pays, il faut que l'on_____.
      (4) Pour plaire à mes parents il faut que je _____ _____.

   Elicit as many responses as possible for each stem above.

c. Choose several responses from above to use as the basis of a substitution drill, changing the subject pronoun.
Ex.: Il faut que je rentre à l'heure. (nous)
Il faut que nous rentrions à l'heure.

d. Also practice using infinitives to express the same information in a general way.
Ex.: Il faut que j'apprenne la langue.
Il faut apprendre la langue.

III. Responding Out Of

A. Make a bulletin board display of Christmas cards depicting the wise men. Students could design their own cards reflecting Tournier's story.

B. Illustrate a scene from the story.

C. Dramatize a section of the story. This could be effective as a Christmas, Epiphany, or Easter celebration.

D. Panel interview. Choose four students to play the roles of the kings. Other students prepare questions to ask them.

E. Create a mural which tells the story.

F. Read the Bible stories to which Demas alludes in his conversation with Taor.

G. Memorize a beatitude in French that has special meaning to you. Illustrate it in some way: picture, poem, song, story, creative dance, etc.

H. As another example of apocryphal literature, read <u>The Story of the Other Wise Man</u> by Henry Van Dyke, an American pastor. Compare the two stories.

I. Composition Topics.

1. Create your own apocryphal literature. Choose another Bible story. Use your imagination. You may not change what is in the Bible, although you may add to it. You must keep the sense, or underlying meaning, the same.

2. Taor de Mangalore, Prince du sucre et Saint du sel. Selon vous, qu'est-ce qu'un saint? Connaissez-vous des saints? Décrivez-en-un.

3. Taor began his journey in order to find the recipe for "rahat loukum" and found that "le grand confiseur" gave him far more than that. Write a recipe in French for one of your favorite foods. List utensils, ingredients, steps in preparation. Bring a sample to school to share.
Extension: compile a class cookbook.

4. Each of the four kings set out on a journey because of a question he wished to solve. Gaspard wanted to reconcile himself to his race; Balthazar needed to reconcile art and religion; Melchior searched for a way to regain political power; and Taor was looking for a candy recipe. What question haunts your life?

5. How does Taor change during the course of his journey? What was he like before? What experiences does he go through that lead to his transformation?

J. Discussion Topics
Care should be taken that discussions are open ended and not presented dogmatically.

1. Ramifications of the eucharist and the fact that Taor ascends before the crucifixion. For a brief non-sectarian summary of traditional Christian interpretations of the crucifixion see Bauman's The Life of Christ, pp. 52-55.

2. What is a saint?
Extension: See La Peste by Camus, Chapter 2, discussion of sainthood between Rieux and Tarrou.

3. It has been said that pet owners tend to resemble their pets. How are Yasmina and Taor alike? What connection can be drawn between what happens to Yasmina and what happens to Taor?

4. Initiation. What is it? What is its purpose? Give examples from other cultures and our own. In what sense is Taor's journey a journey of initiation?

Fréquemment une initiation comprend (1) une épreuve, (2) quelqu'un qui sert comme initiateur, et (3) un changement profond dans celui qui est initié. Expliquez comment ces trois aspects d'initiation sont présents dans l'histoire de Taor. Pensez-vous que les voyages des autres rois sont des voyages d'initiation aussi? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas?

5. In speaking of this book William Cloonan says:

"In Tournier's . . . novel . . . Jesus never really appears. The book manages to address religious topics without engaging in complicated theological discussions; yet at the same time it reflects much better than his interviews or occasional comments what Tournier values in Christianity." (Tournier 89)

What do you think Tournier values in Christianity, and how is this demonstrated in this book?

Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage

I. Feeling Into/Preparation

A. Values choices--topics for discussion or composition. Some of these could be used as either "feeling into" or "responding out of" activities.

1. You are shipwrecked on an island. Choose five things to be rescued from the ship. Tell why you chose them.

2. You are going on a long and dangerous journey. You don't know when you will see your family or friends again. What one book will you take with you? Why?

3. If you were suddenly forced to live in a remote area away from the luxuries and conveniences we enjoy, what one thing would you miss the most? Why?

4. Your boat is sinking. There are ten people on board. There is a life raft with room for six as well as food and emergency medical supplies. Which six should be allowed to get in the raft? Why? Teacher can make up descriptions of any ten people.
   Ex.: a. a Hollywood starlet
   b. an IBM executive

c. a high school quarterback
d. a woman doctor

Variation: Divide class into groups. Let each group present their choices for the life raft.

B. Read Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe.

C. Watch first part of movie "Home Alone." What would you do if you woke up and found yourself alone? In what other stories or movies does a character suddenly and unexpectedly find himself alone? How does the character solve the problem?

II. Meeting With

A. The Story
Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage is the longest of the juvenile works and, in my opinion, because of the vocabulary, the most difficult for American students to read. It is also probably the most available in translation (Life on Speranza Island). Therefore, I would recommend reading the book in English. The teaching suggestions are directed to that idea. Instead of listing questions to accompany specific excerpts and to elicit obvious facts, a necessary strategy when reading in a foreign language, I have listed examples of more general questions for the teacher to use at the appropriate times during and after the reading of the book. The list is certainly not meant to be exhaustive. (See introduction to this chapter for techniques to use for "meeting with" the story.)

1. Describe Robinson's life on the island before the explosion. Why did he do all these things? Which things seem useful to you? Ridiculous?

2. Describe Vendredi's life on the island before. After.

3. How do Robinson and Vendredi feel about their life on the island? Before? After? Find passages that let you know.

4. How does Robinson change after the explosion? How does his relationship with Vendredi change?

5. What tasks does Robinson dedicate himself to? Before? After? How does success at these tasks make him feel? What tasks does Vendredi dedicate himself to? How does he feel about

them? What tasks have you dedicated yourself to? How have you felt?

6. Describe Vendredi's relationship with animals and contrast with Robinson's.

7. Describe Vendredi's method for doing the dishes.

8. What does Robinson teach Vendredi?
   What does Vendredi teach Robinson?
   What does Tenn teach Robinson?

9. How does Robinson get rid of the rats?

10. Describe Robinson's experience in the mudhole and in the hole in the cave. Why does he go in them? What does he experience there? Why does he come out? What do these places represent to him?

11. Drawing Conclusions
    a. After being rescued from his pursuers, Vendredi places Robinson's foot on his neck. What is the significance of this gesture?
    b. In the scene where Tenn becomes bogged down in the rice field, what can you conclude about Vendredi and his values, what he thinks is important in life?
    c. Why did Vendredi want to challenge Andoar? What feelings does he have toward the king of the goats?
    d. What does Vendredi mean when he says he will make Andoar fly and sing?

12. How do Robinson and Vendredi resolve conflict? Before the explosion? After? Find examples to show that in their "after life" they go through the following steps. Discuss ways we could learn from them.
    a. Acknowledge the anger.
    b. Do something physical to let off steam.
    c. Do not destroy property or hurt each other.
    d. Use humor. Make up.
    e. Acknowledge that these times will come again.

13. What does Vendredi do for fun?

14. Robinson and Vendredi have differing reactions to the visit of the Whitebird. Describe.

15. Describe Robinson's feelings about Jan. Why does Jan come to the island? What effect does his coming have on Robinson?

16. When was Robinson tempted to suicide? Why? What caused him to change his mind? Depending on the class, this might be an opening to talk about teen suicide, signs to look for, things friends can do to help prevent it, etc.

17. In what ways does this story celebrate life?

18. Identify and give significance in the story.

a.	mudhole	f.	Speranza
b.	Escape	g.	40 kegs of powder
c.	Virginia	h.	Anda
d.	Tenn	i.	Whitebird
e.	hole in cave	j.	Jan

19. Find something in this story which also happened in Peter Pan. (Vendredi camouflaged himself as a tree.) What other similarities do you see between these two stories? Ex.: celebration of life, play, childhood. (Avoid carrying the comparison too far.)

B. Language--Metaphors

1. Vendredi describes a butterfly as a daisy which flies. Explain concept of metaphor. Give other examples.

2. Students write their own metaphors.

3. Cultural extension. Give examples of overdone metaphors from "La Preciosité."

III. Responding Out Of

A. Illustrate a scene from the story.

B. Prepare a mural or freize telling the story.

C. Create a model Speranza. Include places mentioned in the book.

D. Dramatize scenes from the story. Can be done as skits, a slide show, or video.

E. Study colonialism and its effects.

F. Prepare and role play a journalist interviewing Robinson. Could do two interviews--before and after the explosion.

G. See movie "Never Cry Wolf" as an example of another person stranded in a very different environment.

H. Read Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe. Compare to Tournier's version.

I. Topics for discussion and/or composition.

1. Robinson rescued certain items from the ship. What were they? If you were shipwrecked, what five items would you want to be able to rescue from your ship? Why?

   Variation: You are leaving to go into exile tomorrow. You may take only one small suitcase. What five items would you not leave home without? Why?

2. The only books Robinson had on the island were the Bible and the blank, bleached pages of other books. If you were stranded on an island, what book would you want to have with you? Why?

3. Write your own Robinson Crusoe story. It might be about someone from the 1990's going to a remote part of the Earth or someone from a future imaginary society (like on Star Trek) going to another planet. It could be a straightforward story, or it could be a humorous parody.

4. Write a sequel to the story. Tell what happens later in life to Robinson, Vendredi, or the new boy. After students have written their stories, read Tournier's own sequel, "La Fin de Robinson Crusoé" from Le Coq de Bruyère.

5. Write a character sketch of either Robinson or Vendredi. You may have to do two for Robinson, before and after.

6. If you were stranded on an island, whom would you want for a companion, Robinson or Vendredi? Explain your reasons.

7. Respond to Tournier's personal comments about Vendredi in Le Vent Paraclet.
   Respond to the following statement by Tournier:
   > There are no savages, only men living in civilization different from our own world and most rewarding for us to study (VP 189).

   What does the verb "to study" suggest?

J. Write to a French penpal. Tell about your experience reading this book and find out if the penpal has read it. Exchange favorite paperbacks? Find out what American juvenile authors are read in translation in France (or in the original in English classes).

K. Robinson began by teaching Vendredi the ways of British civilization but in the end he realized that Vendredi and his culture had many things to teach him. What can we learn from other cultures? Invite representatives of other cultures to come to the class to talk about their way of life, beliefs, demonstrate food, etc.

"Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit"

I. Feeling Into/Preparation

A. Teach the song "Au clair de la lune" and introduce students to the traditional characters Pierrot, Colombine, and Arlequin.
   Ask:
   1. What folksongs do most people in this country grow up knowing?
   2. What puppets are recognized by Americans from childhood on? e.g., Muppets--Kermit, Miss Piggy

B. Elicit feelings. Use questions such as the following to elicit emotions present in the story. After each question, pause briefly to allow students to mentally picture the scene and hold it in their imaginations. Ask students to be quiet so their inner video screens can work. They will have a chance to talk later.

   1. When have you felt left out? Can you remember a time when you were not part of a group that you wanted to be in? How did you feel? What did you do?

2. When have you been excited about something new? What was it? What did it look like? Picture it to yourself. What feeling words describe the way you felt inside? What did you do or say that showed how you felt?

3. When have you been disillusioned by something that didn't turn out the way you wanted it to? How do you feel when you are disappointed? Have you ever had a toy that looked like fun, but then it broke right away, or wouldn't work right? What did you do when you were disillusioned or disappointed?

4. When have you felt wanted, welcomed, and loved? What sights, sounds, smells do you remember about that time? Who was there? What did you do? What did other people do? Who makes you feel warm and welcomed and loved?

5. When the teacher has finished asking as many of the above questions as desired, students may tell about a time they felt left out, disappointed, accepted, etc. Children may respond verbally if they want to, but it is not required. After having unearthed a vivid memory, some may find it hard not to.

II. Meeting With

A. The Story--See introductory remarks to this chapter for a discussion of ways to present the story and to use the following sample questions.

1. Introduction
Give vocabulary: blanchisseuse, blanchisserie, mitron, éviter, colombe.
   a. Comment s'appellent les deux personages?
   b. Quels sont les deux bâtiments?
   c. Quand est-ce que Pierrot travaille?
   d. Quand est-ce que Colombine travaille?
   e. De quelle couleur est la robe de Colombine?
   f. Est-ce qu'ils se connaissent depuis longtemps?
   g. Pourquoi est-ce qu'ils ne se sont pas mariés?
   h. Puisque Colombine travaille pendant la journée et Pierrot travaille pendant la nuit, quand est-ce qu'ils pourraient se rencontrer?

2. Colombine et Pierrot
   a. Qu'est-ce que Colombine aimait?
   b. De quoi avait-elle peur?
   c. Décrivez Pierrot.
   d. Qu'est-ce que Pierrot aimait?
   e. Pourquoi est-ce qu'il n'envoyait pas de lettres à Colombine?

3. Pierrot et la lune
   a. Dans sa description de la nuit dans ses lettres Pierrot utilise beaucoup de mots de la nature. Faites une liste des mots de la nature (e.g., rivière, montagne).
   b. Guess the meanings of the following words from the context:
      (1) plat
      (2) nu
      (3) boule
      (4) lisse
      (5) souffle
      Now look them up.
   c. List the verbs in the bottom paragraph of page 3. Copy the verb form. Then give the inifinitive and the English meaning of the verb.
      Ex.:

VERB IN STORY	INFINITIVE	ENGLISH
connaît	connaître	to know

4. Arlequin
   a. Comment est Arlequin?
   b. Qu'est-ce qui est écrit au-dessus de la porte de la boulangerie?
   c. Pourquoi est-ce que vous pensez qu'Arlequin a fait une moue (frown)?

5. Pierrot et l'échafaudage
   a. Give vocabulary:

échafaudage	l'encrier
grimper	boitant
chute	soupirail
tremper	éteint

   b. List ten things in order that Pierrot does. (In English)

6. L'hiver et la lettre
   a. Give vocabulary:

s'achever	parcourir
se gâter	traîner

b. Guess from context: déteindre
c. Quelles changements ont eu lieu entre Arlequin et Colombine? dans leur vie?
d. Faites une liste des mots qui suggèrent l'hiver.
e. Guess the meanings:
flacons = fla _ _ s
couronner = _____ (un roi porte une couronne sur sa tête.)
f. De quelle couleur est la lune?
g. A quoi est-ce que Colombine pense?
h. Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle pense à Pierrot quand elle voit la lune?
i. Qu'est-ce qu'elle trouve?
j. Pourquoi Pierrot a-t-il écrit cette lettre?
k. Quand Pierrot l'a-t-il écrite?
l. Dans la lettre Pierrot parle des couleurs. Il utilise des mots négatifs et des mots positifs pour décrire des couleurs. Faites deux listes.

Ex.: NEGATIF	POSITIF
chimiques	vraies
superficielles	profondes
toxiques	d'or
malodorants	réjouit
s'écaillent	épaisse
noire	substantielle
	bon
	chaude
	nourrit

8. Colombine commence à retourner
   a. Quel est le secret de Pierrot?
   b. Pourquoi est-ce que Colombine ne veut pas rester avec Arlequin?
   c. Guess meanings of words in the sentence: "Tout à l'heure . . . la route gelée."
   d. Faites une liste des mots méchants.
   e. Faites une liste des mots fraternels.
   f. (To be done in English or French or both). Teacher chooses a letter of the alphabet. Students make two lists, as above, of words beginning with that letter which fit the categories.

Ex.: S

MECHANT	FRATERNEL
snake	sweet
sad	sugar
sorry	soft

9. Pierrot et sa pâte
   a. Qu'est-ce que Pierrot fait?
   b. Avec quoi est-ce que Pierrot fait sa Colombine-Pierrette?
   c. Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle est blême?
   d. Quelles sont les deux Colombines dans le fournil?
   e. Pourquoi Colombine est-elle réveillée?
   f. Qui est là?
   g. Qu'est-ce Pierrot et Colombine entendent?
   h. Qu'est-ce qu'Arlequin veut? Pourquoi?

B. Language Exercises

1. Vocabulary
   a. Hot Seat Game.
      Read excerpt concerning Colombine's journey in the snow. "Elle marche . . . féerie." Look up new words.
      One student takes a seat in the front of the room facing the class. The teacher calls out a letter of the alphabet. Student has 60 seconds to name as many words as possible beginning with that letter.
      Variation: Play in teams. Teams alternate sending a person to the front and each team keeps a cumulative score (1 pt. per word). Or all team members can work together calling out words as fast as they can.
   b. Les Boutiques.
      Colombine travaille à la blanchisserie qui devient teinturerie. Pierrot travaille à la boulangerie. Elicit names of other shops. Ex.: la charcuterie, la boucherie, l'épicerie, etc. Practice with a chain drill where each student repeats the response(s) before him, then adds a new one.
      Ex.: Je vais à la boulangerie pour acheter du pain.
      Je vais à la boulangerie pour acheter du pain, puis je vais à la pâtisserie pour acheter une tarte.
   c. Colors.
      Read description of Arlequin. "L'homme vif, souple, aux joues vermeilles, aux cheveux roux et frisé, était vêtu d'une sort de collant composé d'un mosaïque de petits losanges bariolés. Il y avait là toutes les couleurs de l'arc-en-ciel,

plus quelques autres encore, mais aucun losange n'était blanc ni noir."

(1) Brainstorm. Students list all the colors they can think of. This can be done individually or in teams as a competition using paper and pencil, newsprint and markers, or the blackboard.

(2) Present vocabulary for less common colors if they do not appear in the lsits.
Ex.:

vermeille	bleu marin
roux	azur
châtain	céruléen
ébène	écarlate
argent	or

(3) Elicit all the "white" nouns which are associated with Pierrot and Colombine in the story.
Teacher calls out a color. Students brainstorm nouns which are typical of that color. Be sure to make agreement.
Ex.:
Vert
L'arbre est vert.
Les feuilles sont vertes.
La visage est verte quand on a mal de mer.

(4) Present other words and suffixes which can be used to describe colors.
Ex.:
-âtre - roseâtre
-euse - neigeuse
pale
foncé
clair
fané
blême

(5) Verbs. What can colors do?
scintiller
brûler
miroiter
sauter
refléter
briller

2. Application of vocabulary
   a. Display a picture in front of the class. A large poster or art print by a French artist would be a good choice. Drawing on the color vocabulary they have just learned, class creates together a description of the painting. Do as a directed activity with teacher writing the paragraph on the board as a preparation for individual work.
   b. Display another painting or perhaps two in contrasting styles to give students a choice. Students work individually to write a paragraph describing the picture as in #a above.
   c. Write an e word on the blackboard. Be sure students know what it means. Students write a one page composition responding to the word in any way they wish, but they must be as descriptive as possible.
      Examples of words to use:
      le crépuscule
      l'aurore
      la soirée
      la fête
      le trésor
      la cascade

3. Grammar
   a. Use of reflexive verbs and definite article with body parts.
      "Il [Arlequin] se frotta les mains."
      (1) Pattern Drills. Student repeats the sentence but must change the underlined words to other words which make sense.
         Ex.:
         Il se lave <u>les cheveux</u>. (les mains)
         Il <u>se lave</u> les cheveux. (se coupe)
         <u>Il</u> se lave les cheveux. (Je)
      (2) Grab Bag. Prepare a bag with a variety of small items such as a comb, brush, toothbrush, shampoo, soap, etc. Student draws out an item, pantomimes, and makes a statement about what he is doing.
         Ex.: Je me brosse les dents.
      (3) Imperatives. Spread out items from the grab bag. Student #1 gives commands to student #2 who must pantomime using the correct item.
         Variation: Student #1 gives one affirmative command and one negative command.
         Ex.:
         Ne te coupe pas les pieds. Coupe-toi les ongles.

b. Object Pronouns. Rewrite the following sentences replacing the underlined words with pronouns.
Ex.: La vie avait séparé Pierrot et Colombine
La vie les avait séparés.
Colombine évitait Pierrot.
Colombine l'évitait.

Direct Object
(1) Pierrot connaît la nuit.
(2) Pierrot sait regarder la lune.
(3) Il devient le veilleur du village.
(4) Arlequin arreta son chariot devant la boulangerie.
(5) Voilà Colombine.
(6) Voici les deux maisons.

Indirect Object
(1) Pierrot expliquait à Colombine que la nuit était bonne.
(2) Ses grands yeux attentifs et étonnés donnaient à Pierrot l'air d'une chouette.
(3) Pierrot écrivait de longues lettres à Colombine.
(4) Arlequin fait discours à Colombine.
(5) Colombine repond à Arlequin.
(6) Arlequin propose à Colombine de repeindre la façade de sa maison.

Y, En
(1) Une lune enorme flotte comme un ballon laiteux dans le ciel phosphorescent.
(2) Colombine pense de plus en plus à Pouldreuzic.
(3) Pierrot devient le guardien de Pouldreuzic.
(4) Il est la conscience clair du village.
(5) Il lève sa face pale vers la lune.
(6) Il est frappé de stupeur.

Mixed direct, indirect, y, en, and double object pronouns
(1) Pierrot adressait de longues lettres, mais il n'envoyait pas les lettres à Colombine.
(2) Arlequin arrête son chariot devant la boulangerie.
(3) Pierrot va sculpter une Colombine-Pierrette.
(4) Le ciel est empli de flacons de neige.
(5) Arlequin demandait à Pierrot de lui prêter sa plume et son feu.
(6) Prête-moi ta plume.
(7) Je n'ai pas de feu.

III. Responding Out Of

A. Make puppets and put on puppet show. Write own script based on book.

B. Discussion topics.
1. Fear of the unknown. Ex.: people who are different due to race, nationality, religion, handicapping conditions. Fear of new experiences.
2. The surface versus deeper values. Arlequin vs. Pierrot and Colombine's discovery.
3. Reconciliation and forgiveness.

C. Composition topics.
1. Colombine is attracted to Arlequin because of his outward appearance, but later is disappointed. When have you been disappointed by something or someone that seemed very attractive at first, but when you got to know him/her/it better, you found it wasn't as attractive beneath the surface. How did you feel at first? Later? What happened to change your mind? What did you do about it? What did you learn from the experience?

2. Pierrot sees beneath the surface and explains hidden qualities. "Ma nuit n'est pas noire, elle est bleue! Et c'est un bleu qu'on respire. Mon four n'est pas noir, il est doré! Et c'est un or qui se mange." When was a time when finding out the true nature of something/someone was a positive experience? (opposite of #1 above)

3. Using Pierrot's letter to Colombine as a guide, write your own explanation of something others might view one way but you view another.

D. Experiential Activities.
1. "Arlequin était un beau parleur mais Pierrot aimait mieux écrire." Different peole express themselves best through different methods--talking, writing, drawing, painting, singing, dancing, music, drama. How do you like best to express yourself? Using the method of your choice, create something that will communicate to the class what you think or feel about something important to you. Present your creation to the class.

2. Colombine was afraid of the night because she didn't know it. The fear was in her imagination. Pierrot's note showed her that the night wasn't like she thought it was. What are you afraid of? Students are instructed to answer that question on a 3x5 card, but not to sign their names. (ex. spiders, cobwebs, writing a thesis). The teacher reads the cards to the class, then instructs them: Is someone afraid of something that you are not afraid of? Find a way to tell (or show, or both) about it in a way that will help dispell whatever fear may be caused by ignorance or lack of experience. All responses are presented orally to the class.

3. Bake Bread. Before baking, model it into a shape of your choice. For a recipe and directions see "Teddy Bear Bread" in The Fun of Cooking by Jill Krementz. Younger children will enjoy this book with its many photographs of children cooking. The bread recipe is narrated by a ten year old girl who begins appropriately, "I was born in France, where homemade bread is very much a part of everyone's life."

4. Make and/or bring brioche to class to introduce students to this other type of French bread.

"La Fugue du Petit Poucet"

I. Feeling Into/Preparation

A. Read popular versions of the fairy tale "Tom Thumb."

B. Elicit Feelings. Do you remember a time when your parents made a decision affecting you which disappointed you greatly? Have you ever felt like running away?

C. Vocabulary. Distribute list of possibly unfamiliar vocabulary. Divide class into small groups. Give each group 5 or 6 words to look up in dictionary and to define or explain in French. Groups take turns reading their definitions aloud to the rest of the class who try to guess the meanings of the words from these definitions. Students look up the rest of the vocabulary for homework.

II. Meeting With

A. The Story.

Tell the story while students listen. Simplify language where necessary but include enough of the original to retain the style and flavor of the story. Be sure to include Pierre's note and his exclamation upon seeing Logre in the original. "Vous êtes beau comme une femme" (57).

Then give students study questions. Tell students to see how many they can answer from having heard the story. Finally, distribute the original story and ask students to read and answer the questions. This can be completed as homework.

Study Questions

1. Quelles sont les nouvelles que le père annonce?

2. Comment réagit Mme. Poucet aux nouvelles? Petit Poucet?

3. Pourquoi n'a-t-il plus envie de sa crème caramel tout à coup?

4. M. Poucet est bûcheron. Que fait un bûcheron? Selon lui pourquoi est-ce que les bûcherons sont importants pour Paris?

5. Quelles raisons Petit Poucet donne-t-il quand il part?

6. Qu'est-ce qu'il apporte avec lui?

7. Où va-t-il?

8. Le conducteur pourquoi regarde-t-il Petit Poucet avec méfiance?

9. Trouvez des exemples de la logique enfantine chez Petit Poucet.

10. Qu'est-ce qui montre au chauffeur du camion que Petit Poucet n'est pas en cavale?

11. Quand Petit Poucet descend du camion, qu'est-ce que le conducteur lui donne?

12. A quoi Petit Poucet compare-t-il le camion?

13. Qu'est-ce qu'il fait ensuite?

14. De quoi se sert-il comme couverture?

15. Qui trouve Petit Poucet?

16. Décrivez la maison des Logre.

17. Comment était la chambre des filles?

18. Où est la mère des filles?

19. Pourquoi est-ce que Petit Poucet pense, "Drôle de famille."

20. Qui est Logre? Décrivez-le.

21. Comment est-ce que Petit Poucet le décrit? Pourquoi utilize-t-il ces mots-ci?

22. Qu'est-ce qu'ils ont mangé pour le dîner?

23. Qu'est-ce qu'ils font après avoir mangé? Qui chante? De quelle sorte de cigarettes s'agit-il?

24. De quoi parle Logre? Selon lui, quelle est la malédiction des hommes?

25. Où Petit Poucet passe-t-il la nuit?

26. Qu'est-ce que Logre veut dire par la phrase, "Plus vous voulez vous élever, plus il faut avoir les pieds sur terre?" Comment est-ce que les arbres expriment cette idée?

27. Le matin quand Petit Poucet entend les coups à la porte, à quoi les compare-t-il?

28. Comment est Logre ce matin?

29. Quel cadeau et quels conseils Logre donne-t-il à Petit Poucet?

30. Pourquoi est-ce que les gendarmes cherchent Logre? De quelles crimes l'accusent-ils?

31. Qu'est-ce que Petit Poucet fait pendant le réveillon de Noël? Et ses parents, que font-ils?

32. Faites une comparaison entre Logre et le père de Petit Poucet?

33. Donnez un mot pour exprimer les émotions de Petit Poucet à chaque étape de l'histoire:
    a. Le dîner chez lui quand il écoute son père.
    b. Quand il laisse la note.
    c. Quand il fait de l'auto-stop.
    d. Quand il quitte le camion.
    e. Dans la maison de Logre.
    f. Le matin chez Logre.
    g. Le réveillon chez lui.

B. Language
    1. Vocabulary--Les personnages dans les contes de fée.
        a. Souvent dans les contes de fée il n'y a pas de fées, mais il y a d'autres personnages bizarres qui figurent aussi dans ce genre de littérature.
        Brainstorm in English or French fanciful creatures which appear in fairy tales and legends.
        b. Using dictionaries, students make lists of French names for these and any other fanciful creatures they think of. Share lists. Compile master list on blackboard. Teacher adds any names which have been omitted.
        Ex.: l'ogre — le nain
        la fée — le gnome
        le géant — le fantôme
        le sorcier — la sorcière
        le monstre — le djinn
        la génie — le lutin
        la marraine de Dieu
        animaux: let loup-garou
        la licorne
        le dragon
        c. Call out the name of a fairy tale. Students respond with names from the list which appear in that story.
        d. Let students create a bulletin board or poster illustrating the vocabulary.
        e. Game--Qui suis-je?
        Put words from "b" above on slips of paper in a bag. Students draw a slip of paper, then describe themselves to the class who try to guess what type of fanciful character they are.
        Ex.: Je suis grand. J'aime manger. Je ne vois pas bien. Réponse: Tu es un ogre.

2. Grammar--imperfect and conditional tenses.
   a. Complétez:
      Si j'avais des bottes magiques, je (j').
   b. Choose several sentences from students' completions of above stem to use for pattern drill changing subject pronouns.
      Ex.: Si j'avais des bottes magiques, j'irais à Disney World.
      (vous).
      Si vous aviez des bottes magiques, vous iriez à Disney World.

3. Structure--exclamation constructions.
   "Comme il est grand!" (57).
   a. Hold up a picture or call out the name of someone well known to the class. Elicit responses following the above pattern.
      Ex.: Tom Cruise--Comme il est beau!
   b. Present ways to increase the intensity of the exclamation.
      Ex.: Il est beau.
      Comme il est beau!
      Comme il est beau, celui-là!
      Practice as a chain drill with different adjectives. Be sure to use some feminine and plural adjectives.
   c. Present alternative method to form exclamation and practice with chain drill.
      Ex.: Il est beau.
      Qu'il est beau!
      Qu'est-ce qu'il est beau!
      Qu'est-ce qu'il est beau, celui-là!

III. Responding Out Of

A. Compare with the original "Tom Thumb."

B. Write your own fairy tale or children's story.

C. Write a "fractured" fairy tale.
For other "fractured" fairy tales, students might enjoy the stories in Gripari's La Patrouille du Conte and Les Contes à l'Envers by Dumas and Moissard.

D. Ecology project. Discuss the ecological dimensions of the story. Do a project or report on some current ecological problem.

E. Discuss the implications of Logre's role.
"Vous êtes beau comme une femme." (57)

1. What do you think leads Petit Poucet to make this seemingly contradictory statement?
Think about what Logre is like? Think about what Petit Poucet's parents are like, and hence, perhaps what his expectations of men and women are.

2. What makes a man "beau"? a woman "belle"?
List adjectives which, for you, represent masculinity and femininity. Can a man have characteristics from the woman's list and still be "beau"? and vice versa? If one has characteristics which are from both lists, does that make one less a man? a woman?

3. How are ways we think about men and women influenced by stereotypes? In what ways can stereotypes be limiting, harmful to people?
Students might enjoy some of the songs from Hair as a comment on sexual attitudes and stereotypes.

4. How is Logre like the hippies of the '60's? Logre is arrested for corrupting a minor. Was this true? Why or why not? What about his name? What does it imply?

"Amandine, ou les Deux Jardins"

I. Feeling Into

A. Guided Imagery

1. Students relax and close their eyes as the teacher leads them on an imaginary journey. Students are directed not to talk at all, but to let their imaginations respond to the teacher's clues. Teacher should read slowly with pauses to allow students to develop their mind pictures.

Teacher: You are walking down a path in a park. You've been here before. It is familiar to you. Look to either side of the path. What do you see? What do you hear? A breeze refreshes you as you turn a corner and keep walking. What season is it? What colors do you see? You come to a wall at

the end of the path. It is too high to see over. You walk along the side of the wall and stretch out your hands to feel it. What is it made of? What does it feel like? Are there vines or moss growing on it? You become curious. What is on the other side of the wall? You look for an entrance (a gate, a door, a way around the wall), but there is none. How will you get over? Pause for a minute while you figure out how to get over the wall. Once over the wall you see that you are in another garden. You notice that the garden is a square, bordered on all four sides by walls just like the one you just came over. There are no gates or doors in the walls. This garden is much different from the one you just left. Walk around. What do you see? hear? feel? smell? (After a pause, direct students to open their eyes.)

2. Composition--Write a short story describing your walk in the two gardens. Tell what went on in your mind's eye just now. What did you see, feel? How did you get over the wall? What was on the other side? Describe the new garden in detail. Draw a picture to accompany your composition if you like.

B. Introduce students to the differences between a traditional French garden and an English garden. Show pictures of French gardens such as those at Versailles and Fontainbleau.

C. Discuss initiation.

1. What is initiation? What is its purpose? Give examples from other cultures and our own.

2. Tournier subtitles this story "un conte initiatique." Instruct students to keep this fact in mind as they read and to look for things in the story which justify the subtitle.

D. Do vocabulary building exercises from "Meeting With," part B1. These could be done as part of "feeling into" or "meeting with."

II. Meeting With

A. The Story--See introductory remarks to this chapter for a discussion of ways to present the story and to use the following sample questions. The vocabulary in the story is easy enough that

advanced French students should be able to read it in its entirety. Page numbers refer to Le Coq de Bruyère where this story appears.

In keeping with Tournier's understanding of the "conte" as "une nouvelle hantée" (VV 40), the teacher should guard against being too explicit about "the" meaning of this "conte initiatique." Its meaning may be different for different children, and this can be explained to the students. Many children, especially ages 8-12, will be uncomfortable with this attitude. At this age they see their world in black and white, right and wrong. It would not be unusual for a child to respond to this story with a summary statement, "That's weird," or more probably, "That's stupid," which really means, "I can't understand this story. Therefore, either it or I am stupid. Better it than I." Some students will probably ask, "But what does it really mean?" The teacher can point out that this story may have more than one meaning, that it doesn't have to mean any one thing, and then redirect the question back to the student. "What does it mean to you?" Still, discussion of different aspects of the story may open the students to insights they had not thought of. For younger students it may be best to leave the issues of sex and puberty understated and implied.

1. Qui est Amandine? Comment est-elle?

2. Qui est Claude? Que devient de ses petits?

3. Qui est Kamicha? Décrivez-le.

4. Comment est-ce qu'Amandine décrit la tache blanche de Kamicha?

5. Trouvez des exemples de la logique enfantine.

6. Comment sont la maison de maman et le jardin de papa? Amandine, comment est-ce qu'elle les trouve? Quels adjectifs est-ce qu'elle utilise pour les décrire?

7. (p. 37) Quelle changement mystérieux a lieu dans la vie de Claude, Amandine, et Kamicha?

8. (p. 38 top) "Je viens de voir quelque chose de drôle." Quelle est cette chose?

9. Quelle différence est-ce qu'Amandine remarque entre les chiens et les chats?

10. Pourquoi est-ce que Claude a caché Kamicha?

11. Donnez un synonyme en français pour "écourée" (p. 38).

12. Comment est-ce qu'Amandine a trouvé Kamicha? Comment a-t-il changé?

13. Amandine, quelle raison donne-t-elle pour les moeurs sauvages de Kamicha?

14. Qui est "le gros poussin" (p. 39 top)? Pourquoi est-ce qu'Amandine l'appelle un poussin?

15. Quels sentiments a Amandine quand elle se lève tôt? Qu'est-ce qui arrive dans le jardin à cette heure? Quels animaux voit-elle? Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle se lève de bonne heure?

16. Que veut dire "Claude m'a fait fête"? (p. 40)

17. Le mot "ronronnant" (p. 40) est un exemple de l'onomatopée. Devinez le sens de ce mot.

18. Qu'est-ce qu'Amandine remarque de la vie de Claude?

19. Comment est-ce qu'Amandine essaie d'apprivoiser Kamicha? Qu'est-ce qui arrive? Expliquez en français que veut dire le mot "apprivoiser".

20. Pourquoi est-ce que Claude donne un coup de patte à Kamicha?

21. Amandine, pourquoi est-ce qu'elle veut visiter l'autre jardin? Qu'est-ce qu'elle pense y trouver?

22. Nous ne voyons jamais le papa et la maman. Pourquoi est-ce qu'Amandine pense qu'ils se fâcheraient si elle allait dans l'autre jardin? Et vous, que pensez-vous?

23. Amandine décide de visiter l'autre jardin. Mais quel est le grand problème? Comment est-ce qu'elle résout le problème?

24. (p. 43 top) Amandine a des emotions mélangées. Expliquez. Quand est-ce que vous avez éprouvé une telle expérience? Quand étiez-vous à la fois heureuse et malheureuse?

25. Montrez ce qu'on veut dire par "les jambes écartelées."

26. Décrivez ce qu'Amandine a vu du haut du mur?

27. Quand elle trouve Kamicha dans le jardin, quelle différence est-ce qu'elle remarque en lui? Pourquoi?

28. Dans la description de l'autre jardin quels mots vous indiquent les pensées, les sentiments d'Amandine envers ce jardin?

29. Où vont Amandine et Kamicha dans le jardin?

30. De qui est la statue?

31. Quels sentiments est-ce qu'Amandine subit? Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle part subitement? Selon vous, pourquoi est-ce qu'elle pleure?

32. Quelle changement est-ce qu'elle remarque en se regardant dans la glace?

33. Quelles changements est-ce qu'elle remarque en Kamicha après son visite au jardin?

B. Language

1. Vocabulary

a. Animal names
"J'ai . . . un chat. Je crois que c'est une chatte. . . . Un matin j'ai trouve avec elle dans sa corbeille quatre chatons. . . ." (35)

(1) Warm up. Brainstorm English words for the male, female, and baby of different animal species.
Ex.:
bull, cow calf
dog, bitch, puppy
rooster, hen, chick

(2) Search and Discovery. Give students charts in French such as the one below with one word in each line already filled in. Using dictionaries, students fill in the rest. Could be done individually or in small groups.

Papa	Maman	Bébé
	poule	
		tou-tou
cerf		
taureau		
	brébis	
		chatons
	etc.	

b. Garden nouns

(1) Present vocabulary relating to a garden

Ex.:

la plate-bande	le blanc
le sentier	le pavillon
le gazon	l'allée
l'herbe	le rameau
le buisson	les cailloux
le jardinier	la jardinière

(2) Divide class into small groups. Assign some groups "trees." Assign other groups "flowers." Using dictionaries, students work together to compile lists of names of as many different species of trees or flowers as they can in a given time period.

Ex.:

Trees	Flowers
le saule	la rose
la chêne	l'iris
le pin	la marguerite
le sapin	l'aubépine
le bouleau	la jonquille
le poirier	la gladiole
le pommier	l'oeillet
etc.	etc.

(3) Composition. C'est vous le jardinier (ière). Décrivez votre jardin idéal. Qu'est-ce qu'il y a dans le jardin? Qu'est-ce que vous aimez y faire? Désignez le jardin aussi, si vous voulez.

2. Grammar
   a. "Je viens de voir quelque chose de drôle." (p. 38)
   "Mais j'ai découvert ensuite quelque chose de tout à fait surprenant. . . ." (44)

   "quelque chose de" + adjective
   "quelqu'un(e) de" + adjective

   (1) Complétez:
   _____ est quelque chose de mystérieux
   (bon)
   (effrayant)
   (curieux)
   etc.

   (2) Amandine écrivait dans son journal chaque mercredi et dimanche. Ecrivez un paragraph dans votre propre journal. Utilisez votre imagination. Commencez par: Je viens de voir quelque chose (or quelqu'un(e) de ___ _____.

   b. Gender indicators
   (1) Warm up. Brainstorm names which can be used in English for boys or girls.
   Ex.: Billy, Billie
   Gene, Jean
   Jody, Jody
   Francis, Frances

   (2) List names in French which can apply to either gender.
   Ex.: Claude
   Dominique
   René(e)
   Michel(le)
   André(e)
   Daniel(le)

   (3) Listening comprehension. As the teacher reads the following sentences aloud, students listen for clues within the sentence to determine if the name refers to a boy or girl.

(a) Andrée est une bonne artiste.
(b) Dominique s'est assise dans le fauteuil.
(c) J'ai un ami qui s'appelle René.
(d) Michele est journaliste américaine.
(e) Daniel est journaliste suédois.
(f) Claude est vraiment quelqu'un d'amusant.
(g) André est mort pendant la guerre.
(h) Mon ami Dominique est toujours très active.
(i) Comment trouvez-vous Renée? Je la trouve sympa.
(j) Est-ce que tu vois Daniel souvent? Non, je le vois rarement.

(4) Reading comprehension. Students read the following sentences and use visual clues to determine whether the name refers to a boy or a girl.
(a) As-tu invité Claude? Oui, je l'ai invité.
(b) Claude s'est levée de bonne heure.
(c) Andrée est arrivée le 2 décembre.
(d) Dominique est née en juin.
(e) As-tu vu Dominique? Non je ne l'ai pas vu.
(f) Claude s'est dépêché pour attrapper le facteur.
(g) Claude et Dominique se sont amusées à la plage.
(h) As-tu lu l'histoire de Dominique? Oui, j'ai lu l'histoire de celle-ci.

III. Responding Out Of

A. Topics for discussion

1. Tournier a écrit comme sous-titre, "un conte initiatique." Pourquoi?
Qu'est-ce qu'une initiation? A quoi sert-elle? En quoi est ce conte initiatique? Où va Amandine? Qu'est-ce qu'elle apprend? En quoi est-elle changée? Qui est l'initiateur? Comment est-ce qu'Amandine se voit au commencement du conte? à la fin?

2. Selon vous, pourquoi est-ce que cette histoire s'appelle "les Deux Jardins" au lieu de "l'Autre Jardin" ou "le Jardin Secret."

3. Le symbolisme. Qu'est-ce que l'autre jardin pourrait représenter? la statue? Kamicha? le sang?

4. Qu'est-ce qu'Amandine apprend dans cette histoire?

5. Selon vous pourquoi est-ce qu'Amandine s'amuse dans l'autre jardin? Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle part en hâte? Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle pleure?

6. Quelles changements ont lieu pendant la puberté? Comment sont-ils manifestés dans l'histoire?

B. Keep a journal for several weeks. Make entries at least twice a week. Record your thoughts, feelings, or significant events in your life.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The world of Michel Tournier is a world of inversions. At any given moment an inversion bénigne or an inversion maligne can surge through reality to subvert the meaning of one's experience. Tournier's own life reflects inversion. Here is a university-trained philosopher who, nevertheless, aspires to teach ten year olds, a prize-winning novelist who yet insists that his best writing is found in the works addressed to children. Although Tournier develops the theme of inversion most completely in the novel Le Roi des Aulnes, he continues to express it in the juvenile texts. The aging king, Barbedor, experiences the benign inversion of rebirth as a child. Vendredi's upside down trees continue to thrive when Speranza accepts this playful inversion of Robinson's original values. Logre explains to Poucet that the strength of the tallest tree is a function of its roots, just as in life, "plus vous voulez vous élever, plus il faut avoir les pieds sur terre" (CB 61).

In some ways Tournier's juvenile texts can be regarded as the benign inversion of his adult works. In the works addressed to children the violence, cruelty, and exploitation of the adult texts are, for the most part, replaced by scenes which hold out possibilities of reconciliation, security, and hope for the future. In addition, Petit Poucet's friend and mentor, Logre, is clearly a benign

inversion of Abel Tiffauges, the Ogre of Kaltenborn. Logre is a vegetarian, while Tiffauges prefers raw meat. Logre lovingly raises seven of his own children, but Tiffauges, having no children of his own, must resort to violent kidnapping. Tiffauges rules a castle of boys, while Logre's humble houshold is full of girls. Tiffauges' life finds its fullest significance during the war, while Logre clearly believes that it is better to "make love, not war." Finally, in the ultimate inversion, relationships with Tiffauges lead invariably to death, whereas contact with Logre results in a deeper understanding of life.

Tournier's obsession with the child finds unique expression in these texts written for a juvenile audience. By focusing on the juvenile literature, within the context of the adult works, I have hoped to broaden the scope of Tournierian criticism and to open the door to a deeper discussion of the ambiguities inherent in the juvenile texts. Writing for young readers has allowed Tournier to partially fulfill two of his personal desires. Through his fertile imagination and his talented pen he has found a way to become both a parent and a teacher. The wide distribution of his books has provided an opportunity for the childless Tournier to be in contact with children all over the globe, and his texts have given him a medium through which to address educational issues which he considers to be of prime importance in the world today. As previous discussion has demonstrated, these include the need for initiation experiences, the sensualization of juvenile literature, and the instruction of philosophy to children.

My own journey into Tournier's land of the child has been a stimulating, yet sometimes disturbing, experience. On first reading these texts I was immediately intrigued by them, especially by the profound power of the story of Taor, by the charming simplicity and unexpected denouements of "Pierrot" and "Mère Noël," as well as by the enterprising perceptiveness of Petit Poucet who matter-of-factly packs up his rabbits and set out into the unknown after having logically decided that bottes must have two "t's," "puisqu'il y a deux bottes" (CB 53). Yet the more I study these texts and their author, the more ambivalent I become. Each text raises disquieting questions which continue to echo through the other works. What is the true value of the child in relation to the adult? Does the adult's only hope for happiness and fulfillment lie in returning to the child? And is the child's only value found in what he/she can provide for the adult? How does one define maturity in Tournier's universe? Are trustworthy adult figures found only outside the realm of the establishment? Logre is arrested for corrupting minors and Robinson admits his inability to rejoin English society. With the exception of Gaspard who tells his grandchildren about the amazing journey to Bethlehem, positive pictures of fathers are hard to find. The scarcity of female characters and the fact that the female is so often associated with motherhood leads one to wonder about questions of sexism or even misogyny. Do Tournier's views on children's sexuality reflect a child's true needs or his own unresolved neuroses?

Questions such as these make me hesitant to wholeheartedly endorse Tournier as a children's writer but leave me eager to see what direction Tournier's juvenile writing will take in the future. I would welcome closer literary scrutiny of his work by those who are themselves participants in the field of juvenile literature. It would be interesting to observe Tournier in dialogue with other respected children's writers of this country, such as Madeleine L'Engle, Lloyd Alexander, and Katherine Patterson, and to see how his aims and approaches compare with theirs. Although my own background in the field of children's literature is limited, it seems to me that there is a wealth of quality literature for children in the English language. Previously quoted sources have indicated that this has not been true of the French language, although the trend may be changing for the better. I am led to wonder who, besides Tournier, is a respected children's writer in France at the present time? How do these writers view Tournier? Do they endorse his pedagogical goals, and do they pursue similar objectives, or do the questions I have raised reverberate in their minds also?

These questions and the potential for additional research which they indicate, suggest that this concluding chapter may be in the throes of an inversion. Hopefully, these remarks do not represent an end to the discussion of Tournier and the child, but rather the beginning of deeper study of a significant portion of the work of this provocative writer.

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VITA

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