

Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



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Volume 45, Number 4, Fall 2022

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1105488ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v45i4.41379>

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Publisher(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (print)

2293-7374 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Article abstract

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Cite this article

Buehrer, S. (2022). Finding Sonnet 44 in the *Hécatombe à Diane*: Aubigné's Manuscripts, Revisions, and a Missing Poem. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 45(4), 37–57. <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v45i4.41379>

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Finding Sonnet 44 in the *Hécatombe à Diane*: Aubigné's Manuscripts, Revisions, and a Missing Poem

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By giving no clear indication of which poem should occupy the position of the forty-fourth sonnet in his Hécatombe à Diane, Agrippa d'Aubigné left the question unanswered within the two manuscripts that contain it. Through a philological survey of these two manuscripts, this article analyzes the marginal notes and textual clues left behind in order to determine a possible choice out of several options. Such analysis of the manuscripts also makes clear that Aubigné continued to work on the Hécatombe throughout his life, and even up to the years close to his death, despite referring to these poems as youthful folly in Les Tragiques. While the question of sonnet 44 may be resolved through analysis that cannot be confirmed by the author's notes, it makes clear that despite the rhetoric present in Les Tragiques, Aubigné continued to intentionally revise the Hécatombe à Diane well past its youthful inception.

En n'indiquant pas clairement quel poème devait occuper la place du quarante-quatrième sonnet de son Hécatombe à Diane, Agrippa d'Aubigné a laissé la question sans réponse dans les deux manuscrits qui le contiennent. À travers une étude philologique de ces deux manuscrits, cet article analyse les notes marginales et les indices textuels laissés par l'auteur, afin de déterminer un choix possible parmi plusieurs options. Une telle analyse des manuscrits montre également que d'Aubigné a continué à travailler sur l'Hécatombe tout au long de sa vie, et même jusqu'à sa mort, bien qu'il ait qualifié ces poèmes de folie de jeunesse dans Les Tragiques. Si la question du sonnet 44 peut être résolue par une analyse ne trouvant pas de confirmation dans les notes de l'auteur, il est clair que, malgré la rhétorique présente dans Les Tragiques, d'Aubigné a continué à réviser intentionnellement l'Hécatombe à Diane bien au-delà de sa jeunesse.

“Je n'escry plus les feux d'un amour inconnu,” writes Agrippa d'Aubigné in *Les Tragiques*,¹ setting aside the writing of love poetry in order to express the ravages of “un autre feu auquel la France se consume.”² Those rejected fires of love burn in the *Hécatombe à Diane*, which could be understood as an “oeuvre de jeunesse”³ that must necessarily be set aside by the logic presented in *Les Tragiques*. However, was this work completely set aside? At first glance,

1. Aubigné, *Les Tragiques*, ed. Fanlo, 55. All subsequent citations are from this edition.

2. Aubigné, *Les Tragiques*, 58. That is, the Wars of Religion.

3. Véronique Ferrer gives a detailed description of the context in which this collection of poetry was written in her introduction to *Le Printemps*, xiv.

it does seem to be precisely an “oeuvre de jeunesse,” as the subject matter dates to an early period of Aubigné’s life during which he fell in love with Diane Salviati,⁴ who was, coincidentally, the niece of Ronsard’s muse Cassandre.⁵ The *Hécatombe à Diane* sacrifices a hundred sonnets in the place of cattle, representing the amorous suffering of an unrealized love. Confessional differences between Aubigné and Diane resulted in her family forbidding a relationship between the two in 1573.⁶ It is likely that many of the *Hécatombe*’s sonnets were originally composed between 1571 and 1590,⁷ encompassing the period of attempted courtship as well as immediately after, spanning a time when Aubigné was between the ages of nineteen and thirty-eight.

But this work that already extended past a general period of youth was not set aside even after the turn of the century. The two manuscripts that contain the *Hécatombe*—Bibliothèque de Genève, CH BGE Arch. Tronchin 157 and Tronchin 159—can both be dated to the first decades of the seventeenth century. This suggests a sustained revision process beyond the decades of composition. This revision includes the addition of poems that can be dated much closer to the time of Aubigné’s life in Geneva,⁸ a period beginning in 1620 and lasting until his death in 1630.⁹ Addressing the unsolved mystery of which poem should occupy the forty-fourth position of the sonnet sequence allows for an investigation into this construction and revision of the work as well as an analysis of the several sonnets that might fit the bill. There are few conclusive indications on the part of Aubigné as to which poem should assume the forty-fourth place in the sequence, so it is left up to the interpretation of later readers and editors to make this determination.¹⁰ This choice can be

4. Between 1571 and 1573. See Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xxxix.

5. Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xiv.

6. Aubigné being a militant Protestant and the Salviatis being Catholic, this was perhaps an unsurprising conclusion to the relationship (Worth-Stylianou, introduction to *Les Tragiques*, 6).

7. Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xxxix.

8. Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xxv.

9. In his edition, Jean-Raymond Fanlo presents a *Tableau Chronologique* of Aubigné’s life (Aubigné, *Les Tragiques*, 1004–5).

10. As Fanlo puts it, “Il n’est que des choix éditoriaux à partir d’états différents de l’oeuvre,” as there is no such thing as an *urtext* to this corpus. No one answer exists, nor does a “correct” one, but an inspection of the manuscripts in their multiplicity remains an interesting exercise. Fanlo, “Sur quelques volumes manuscrits,” 110.

guided by the manuscripts themselves as well as by a consideration of the texts of the poems and their thematic groupings.

The manuscripts

Tronchin 157 (T157) and Tronchin 159 (T159) belong to a collection of papers bequeathed by Aubigné to the pastor Théodore Tronchin.¹¹ Though it bears the higher number, T159 comes before T157 chronologically. Jean-Raymond Fanlo dates it to the end of the sixteenth century, refuting Bernard Gagnebin's earlier claim that the manuscript was completed between 1578 and 1583.¹² Véronique Ferrer pushes this timeline even further forward, proposing that it may have been copied at the beginning of the seventeenth century,¹³ a suggestion that is supported by a poem appearing in the manuscript that was written after the death of Charles de Gontaut, duc de Biron, in 1602.¹⁴ Importantly, Fanlo suggests that, in addition to T160,¹⁵ T154, and T158, T159 was bound while Aubigné was still alive,¹⁶ meaning that T159 represents a work entirely overseen by Aubigné during his lifetime. The manuscript measures 230 x 330 mm and is a collection of 153 folios, which includes a table of contents written in Aubigné's own hand, proclaiming that it lists poems making up "La Jeunesse," the first book of which is listed as "LHécatombe."¹⁷ Fanlo and Ferrer both state that this table of contents was likely added to the manuscript after the sequence was written down.¹⁸ The paper it is written on is of a significantly different quality and size than the rest of the manuscript, with the lower edges of the table extending far below the other folios. This table, which Fanlo describes

11. As explained in Julien Goeury's introduction to *Hécatombe à Diane*, 5.

12. Fanlo, "'D'une mignarde rage,'" 131. However, Ferrer suggests that many sonnets may have been produced, if not copied down, between 1571 and 1590 (Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xxxix).

13. Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xxv.

14. This is supported by Fanlo's refutation of Gagnebin's dating efforts, as he notes a poem towards the end of T159 mentions Biron's death in 1602 (Fanlo, "'D'une mignarde rage,'" 131n4).

15. T160 being the manuscript that contains much of *Les Tragiques*.

16. See d'Aubigné, *Les Tragiques*, 148.

17. Bibliothèque de Genève, CH BGE Arch. Tronchin 159 (hereafter T159), fol. 1r.

18. Fanlo, "'D'une mignarde rage,'" 131; Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xl.

as “parfois illisible” and “surtout incomplète,”¹⁹ contains a list of eighty-two incipits under the heading of *L'Hécatombe*. Then, following a small section of scattered poems at the beginning of the manuscript, come the sonnets of the *Hécatombe*, written down in a secretary's hand and heavily revised in Aubigné's own.²⁰ Like the table, this version of the *Hécatombe* is incomplete and both omits certain numbers and duplicates others. In addition, it includes several unnumbered sonnets within the sequence.

Tronchin 157 represents revisions to the text of the *Hécatombe* that may date from around 1620 to the time of Aubigné's death in 1630.²¹ It is made up of 149 folios and was likely bound in the eighteenth century, long after its initial composition.²² This manuscript is significantly smaller than T159, measuring 215 x 165 mm. All one hundred poems of the *Hécatombe* appear in this manuscript, though the *Stances* and *Odes* that appear in T159 and the table are absent. The *Hécatombe* is once again identified as the first section of a larger collection, this time referred to as “Le Printemps,”²³ which marks a change from T159, though the themes of newness and youth persist. This different title complements the “Hyver du S. d'Aubigné” that also appears within T157.²⁴ The base text of the sonnets in T157 is the corrected text of T159. That T157 represents a more advanced copy of the sequence is also indicated by the *mise en page*, one that might be closer to the text's final published form. In addition to the text of the sonnets and their *mise en page*, the corrections that do appear in T157 are far less frequent and far less extensive than those in T159, which also suggests a more advanced draft.

The many sonnets 44

Over the course of the construction and revision of the *Hécatombe à Diane*, Aubigné sends future readers or editors on a failed search for the identity of

19. Fanlo, “D'une mignarde rage,” 132.

20. Ferrer explains the different hands that appear within T159, noting that there may be at least six different types of handwriting from secretaries (Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xxiv–xxv).

21. Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xl.

22. Fanlo, “D'une mignarde rage,” 132. By process of elimination, as T157 is not listed as one of those bound during Aubigné's lifetime.

23. Bibliothèque de Genève, CH BGE Arch. Tronchin 157 (hereafter T157), fol. 76r.

24. See T157, fol. 134r.

a sonnet 44.²⁵ In the table at the start of T159, the incipit “Que voys iei une” appears listed as sonnet 44.²⁶ The presence of this incipit is an indication of the revision work done over the course of the *Hécatombe*’s creation, since the full sonnet entitled “Que voys iei une” does not appear in the part of the manuscript recorded prior to the insertion of the table. Instead, the sonnet labelled 44, which appears on folio 23r, opens with the line “Amour fut engendré du loisir ocieux.”²⁷ Immediately before it, on folio 22v, an unnumbered poem beginning “Ton amitié me fait souvenir de la prime” seems to have been passed over for the forty-fourth position, since a note appearing in the margin beside it states, “Gardé aux Epigrames avec le précédent & en sa place Que voy-ie” (Fig. 1).²⁸

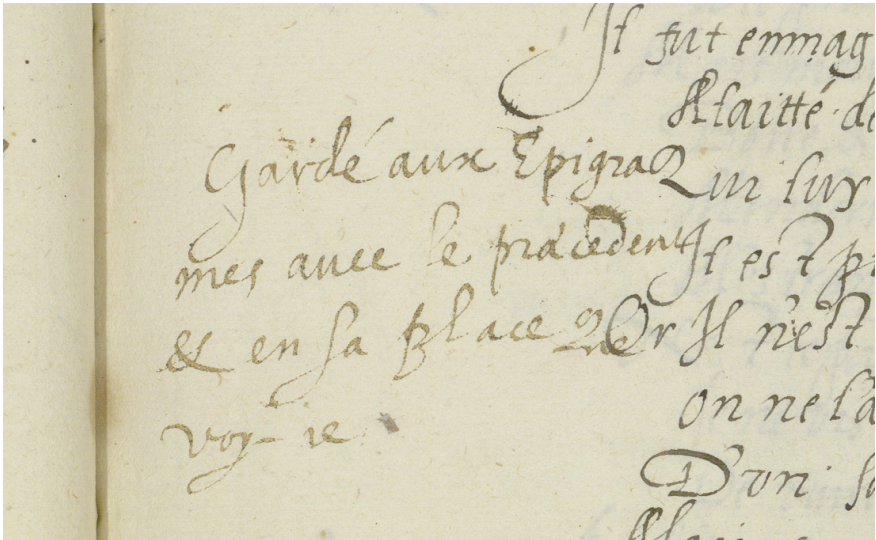


Fig. 1. T159, fol. 23r, detail.

25. Goeury highlights the artificiality of editorial decisions made around the publication of the *Printemps*, also noting that using this title constitutes an imposition on its own. He rejects an overly scientific reconstruction of the text, as the reality of the manuscripts and poems is their scattered and unknowable state. Goeury, “Voir sécher ce *Printemps*?” While the present article certainly falls into the scientific realm, the conclusions drawn here are intended to point less to necessary editorial choices and more to questions regarding Aubigné’s own statements about this collection of poetry.

26. T159, fol. 1v.

27. “Ocieux” is crossed out and replaced by “vieux” in the margin, an autograph correction.

28. T159, fol. 23r.

The relegation elsewhere of “Ton amitié me fait souvenir de la prime” is confirmed by the table and by a note in the bottom margin removing it from the *Hécatombe*. This note reads, “portez Celuy cy aux Epigrammes et en sa place le sonet de lesspinette. Que vois je?” (Fig. 2).²⁹ Like “Amour fut engendré du loisir ocieux,” “Ton amitié me fait souvenir de la prime” is once again replaced by “Que vois-je.”

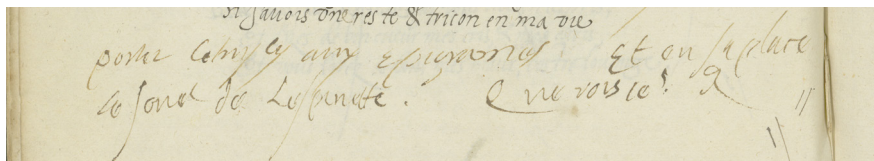


Fig. 2. T159, fol. 22v, detail.

These two notes stand out from the rest of the manuscript, as other unnumbered sonnets typically do not receive such a detailed indication of their intended destination. The removal of these poems also indicates that both were considered for the forty-fourth place within the sequence, with “Ton amitié me fait souvenir de la prime” on folio 22v likely having been marked for replacement first, since it did not even receive a tentative number. Their proposed replacement, “Que voy-je,” does not appear at all in T159, but true to the pattern of revisions, it appears as sonnet 44 in T157 on folio 90v. While T157 is where most revisions find their conclusion, the question of sonnet 44 remains open due to yet another marginal note, which reads, “porter cetuy ci aux choysis—et en sa place metre” (Fig. 3).³⁰

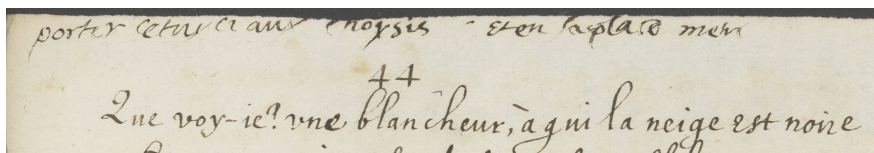


Fig. 3. T157, fol. 89v, detail.

29. T159, fol. 22v.

30. T157, fol. 90v.

With this note, the doubly confirmed insertion of “Que voy-je” does not remain permanent. In this case there is no indication of what should appear in its place, as only blank space follows “metre.” The identity of sonnet 44 remains forever inconclusive since T157 contains the final version of the *Hécatombe* to exist during Aubigné’s lifetime. Thus far, a list of three potential options emerges: “Que voy-je”; “Amour fut engendré du loisir ocieux”; and “Ton amitié me fait souvenir de la prime.” However, a closer look at T159 further complicates the confusion around the identity of sonnet 44.

Towards the end of T159 appears yet another potential sonnet 44: “Le plus de moy en moy & hors de moy demeure.”³¹ This poem appears on folio 143r with a note in the right margin that appears to be written in Aubigné’s hand and instructs, “a LHecatombe et oster. Ce sonet Que voy ie.’ un” (Fig. 4).

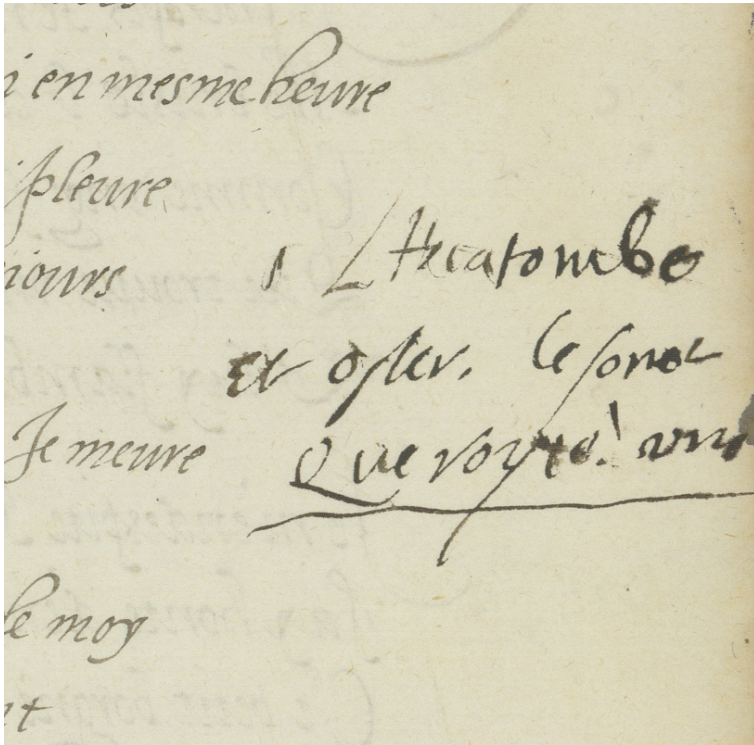


Fig. 4. T159, fol. 143r, detail.

31. This poem and its presence in T159 are noted by Gagnebin in the Droz 1948 edition.

This note represents a clear indication of work done between the copying of T159 and T157, though giving this poem an exact date would be difficult.³² This adds a fourth poem to the list, and a closer inspection of the table provides yet another. At first glance, sonnet 45, “Veulx tu plaider,” seems to be stable, since it is labelled as 45 in the sequences in both T159 and T157. However, though it also appears as 45 in the table, the number has been heavily corrected (Fig. 5).

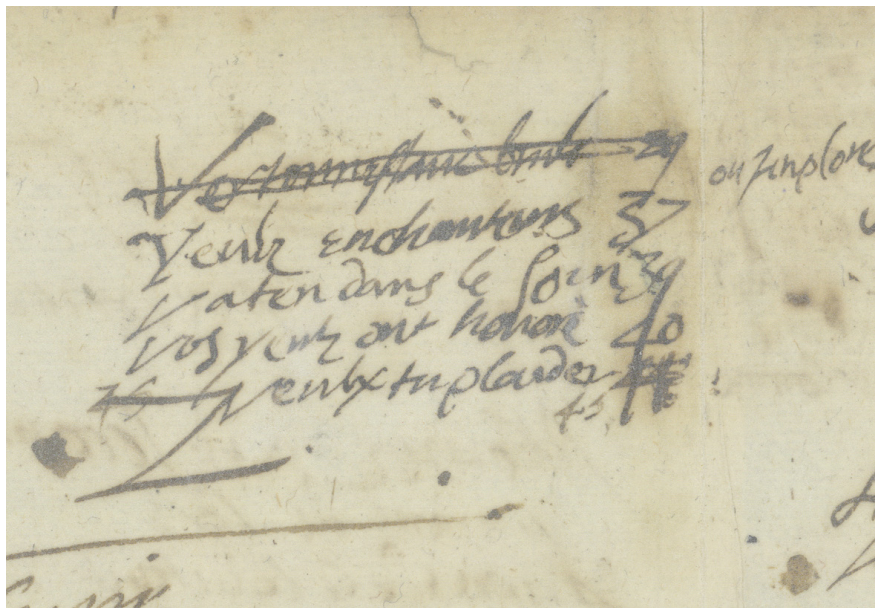


Fig. 5. T159, fol. 1v, detail.

There are multiple 45s written by the incipit, with one appearing before the poem. However, the Z that appears below the V section of the table puts a line through this number (as seen in Fig. 5). Perhaps to make up for it, a smaller 45 appears below and to the left of the column of numbers. The reason for this placement is that the original number has been laboriously scratched out.

32. Its presence in the earlier T159 raises the question of why it is not indicated in the note in T157, but since this article considers the extant poems, making hypotheses about missing poems is beyond the scope of my analysis.

Looking closer, the illegible numeral seems to have the same downwards stroke as the 4 next to it, which may suggest a 4 behind the ink obscuring it. This is one of the strongest corrections present in the table, as many are made by drawing a single line through the poem and number. In this case, jagged lines almost completely obscure the original writing. Though the poem would never be the final choice for sonnet 44 due to both the ink covering the original number and the clear indication that it should be sonnet 45, it still may be considered as one of the initial options. This brings the final list of candidates to a total of five: “Que voy-je”; “Amour fut engendré du loisir ocieux”; “Ton amitié me fait souvenir de la prime”; “Le plus de moy en moy & hors de moy demeure”; and “Veulx tu plaider.” What choice we should make between them may be suggested by other indications within the manuscripts’ pages that point to choices made over the course of revision.

Manuscript markings and *mise en page*

Though the marginal notes highlight the process of selecting a sonnet 44, a further investigation of additional folios suggests methods for evaluating the list. Any revision might involve reordering or reorganization of the sequence, and while other poems also change order between the manuscripts, sonnet 44 stands out in the degree of uncertainty of its placement. In addition to “Ton amitié,” T159 contains two other unnumbered poems,³³ neither of which subsequently appear in the table or T157. Without numbers, these poems are implicitly marked for removal; poems are also explicitly marked for removal, “Ton amitié” being only one example. For instance, the sonnet “Quelque fois [...] jay porté dans le flanc,”³⁴ which appears between sonnets 56 and 57, has a note next to it in the margin stating, “metre ailleurs.”³⁵ This command is, as noted above, carried out, since it disappears from the *Hécatombe*, including from the table. Since neither of the other unnumbered poems appears in either the table or T157, it is safe to conclude that the note accompanying “Ton amitié”—“portez Celuy cy aux Epigrammes et en sa place le sonet de lesspinette. Que vois je?”—represents a final decision, thus removing the poem from the

33. “Fault Il vaincu” (before sonnet 13) and “Quelque fois” (before sonnet 57).

34. The first line contains a blank. T159, fol. 26r.

35. T159, fol. 26r.

list of potential sonnet 44s and leading to a consideration of the subsequent poem as a candidate instead.

Those sonnets that did receive numbers also underwent changes in order over the course of revision. Most changes, in contrast to the shifting candidates for position 44, have been finalized in T157. For example, the sonnet “Pauvre peintre aveuglé” is marked as sonnet 24 within T159, appears as sonnet 2 in the table, but becomes sonnet 24 once again in T157. Another example of this revision effort is the treatment of duplicate listings, which appear both in the table and within the sequence of T159. The table labels both “En un petit esquif” and “Combattu des vens” as sonnet 2; T159 contains two poems labelled sonnet 88—“Diane en adorant tant de divinités” and “Diane ta coutume est de tout desirer”—as well as two poems labelled sonnet 92—“Si mes vers innocens ont fait à leur deceu” and “Je confesse, j’euz tort, quant d’un accent amer.” Though this numerical confusion exists in both the table and the sequence of poems, all of these examples of duplication find resolution in T157.³⁶ With this revision of numbering duplication and Aubigné’s adherence to the notes in T159, “Amour fut engendré” can be eliminated from the list, despite having been numbered 44 at one point. While the replacement in the table of a proposed sonnet 44 with “Que voy-je” is only implicit, as there is no note that appears by it in that context, this indication, taken in conjunction with the notes appearing next to “Ton amitié” and “Amour fut engender,” represents the decision to make “Que voy-je” sonnet 44 having been made. Though there is some degree of change in the identity and order of sonnets among T159, the table, and T157, the only poem that continues to change between all three with no resolution is the one numbered sonnet 44. The instability of this position is unique, but due to other note-based revisions within T159 that can be compared to the case of “Ton amitié,” this evidence shows that notes can be trusted as indications of intended revision and that further examining them may help to draw conclusions about the remaining options for sonnet 44.

The notes written by “Ton amitié” and “Quelque fois [...] jay porté dans le flanc” are not the only type of marginal note to appear in T159. Many written in Aubigné’s hand point to the thematic organization of the collection, which “témoigne d’un effort evident de composition et d’un souci de continuité,

36. In T157, the poems appear thus: “En un petit esquif” (sonnet 2), “Combattu des vents” (4), “Diane en adorant” (88), “Diane ta coutume” (89), “Si mes vers” (92), “Je confesse” (93).

même sporadique.”³⁷ These thematic notes also bring together sonnets that are scattered in T159’s sequence, where sonnets 22–24, among others, do not appear in numerical order. Sonnets 7–18 have a “g” next to them,³⁸ indicating the theme of *guerre*, sonnets 22–25 all appear with some version of the word “tableaux,”³⁹ and sonnets 80–85 appear with “me[– –]e.”⁴⁰ Closer to sonnet 44, sonnets 41 and 42 both have “bla” written next to them, likely referring to the theme of *blancheur* referenced in both poems. Sonnets 48–50 have an “A^b” next to them, possibly referring to the theme of absence. No thematic notations appear by sonnets 43–47, so such markings alone cannot answer the question of sonnet 44, but taken together with the *mise en page* of the manuscripts, they may point to possible conclusions regarding the identity of the poem.

The *mise en page* of the two manuscripts differs greatly. In T159, the collection begins with “Accourez au secours”—marked with “A” instead of “1”—and the first part of “Combattu des vents” on the first folio of the *Hécatombe*, foregrounding the initial sonnet. Afterwards, sonnets are arranged in groups of two per folio, with the reader of the manuscript thus seeing four poems on facing pages when the manuscript is opened. The margins at both the left and right of the sonnets are wide, which allows for many types of corrections to fit into the space. These range from the substitution of a word to a complete reworking of a poem from octosyllables to *alexandrins*.⁴¹ In contrast, T157 has much narrower margins, which may be due in part to its far smaller dimensions. This *mise en page* allows less space for corrections, and, accordingly, those that do appear in T157 tend to be minor and are often single word substitutions. The first sonnet of T157—“Accourez au secours,” here labelled “premier”—appears alone on the same folio as the title of the collection.⁴² This arrangement highlights the beginning of the sequence to a greater degree than in T159. From sonnet 2, “En ung petit esquif,” to the end of the collection, each folio contains one full sonnet

37. Ferrer, “Ce que nous appelons son *Printemps*,” 31.

38. T159, fols. 14r–17r.

39. T159, fols. 13v, 20r, 20v, 21r.

40. T159, fols. 32r–33r. The middle letters are unclear. Based on the poems’ contents, it would make sense should it be a variation of *mois* or the Latin for month, *mensis*, but neither of those words can be decisively discerned. Ferrer notes that sonnets 82–86 follow the theme of “les saisons” (Ferrer, “Ce que nous appelons son *Printemps*,” 46).

41. An example being sonnet 53 of T159 on fol. 25r.

42. T157, fol. 76r.

and either the first or second part of another. This *mise en page*, so different from that of T159, is similar to that of Aubigné's *Petites Oeuvres Meslées*, published in 1629 and 1630. Those sonnets also appear three to a double page, suggesting that the way the poems appear in T157 might anticipate their formatting in eventual publication. In addition to there being fewer verses on each folio, the sonnets appear much closer to each other spatially, an arrangement that occasionally gives the impression that the three poems on a set of facing pages flow into each other without a break in between.

While T157 does not contain the same marginal thematic markings as T159, this visual flow of one poem into another contributes to a connectedness or visual narrative linkage. This is occasionally mirrored by their distribution on the page. While the first poems marked as "guerre" or "tableaux" in T159 both represent the third poem in their respective placement in T157, those marked with "bla," "A^b," and "me[- -]e" each start as the first sonnet in their respective grouping of three sonnets. The *guerre* group ends with sonnet 18, a mid-page poem that flows across folios and is followed by sonnet 19, which does not belong to a labelled group. Due to the sonnets in T159 not being in strictly numerical order, it is notable that the poems at the end of the *guerre* section in this manuscript are displayed in nearly the same way, with sonnets 16 and 17 facing sonnets 18 and 19. While this could be a coincidence, it does raise the possibility of the *mise en page* being related to the themes present in the sequence. Turning back to T157, the *tableaux* group is contained almost entirely on two facing folios after starting on the preceding recto. This configuration sets this theme off from the rest of the collection, which is borne out by the sonnets' complete thematic difference from those around them. Similarly, sonnets 80–85 are also completely contained in two sets of facing folios. The poems marked with "bla" in T159 start a grouping of three in T157, with sonnet 42 as the poem split across the two folios, followed by the unmarked sonnet 43 as the final poem in that spread's grouping. The A^b group appears in T157 with sonnet 48 being split across folios and sonnet 49 as the final poem of the group of three. Sonnet 50 appears as the first poem of its respective grouping, thus making this group somewhat more disjointed than others. The placement of sonnet 50 must also be considered in light of it being the midpoint of the collection, meaning that highlighting the number may take precedence over thematic organization.

However, the other thematic groupings may be used in order to interpret the significance of sonnet 44's position in relation to theme as well as the facts

of its *mise en page*. By starting a new page in T157, sonnet 44 is distanced from sonnets 41 and 42, and from their identification with the theme of *blancheur*. This distance is further increased by sonnet 43, which does not explicitly belong to the *blancheur* group. Because of the distance between sonnet 44 and the previous theme of *blancheur*, T157's *mise en page* suggests a change from the sonnets that come before it. By this point we have seen the choices of poem most likely to fit in the empty space of sonnet 44 reduced to "Que voy-je" and "Le plus de moy en moy." To refine our conclusions further, a consideration of the text of the poems themselves becomes necessary.

The texts

As seen through the marginal notes, theme has an impact on the sonnet sequence of the *Hécatombe*, necessitating a thematic evaluation of the texts of those poems surrounding sonnet 44 as well as the potential choices for the position of sonnet 44. To this end, I will briefly analyze sonnets 39–43 and sonnets 46–51 before again reviewing the potential options for sonnet 44. Sonnet 39, "Vatan dans le sein de ma mye," is one of the few octosyllabic sonnets within the collection. It portrays the poet speaking to a poem sent to his beloved, asking that the written page be welcomed and cherished in place of him. The view shifts slightly in "Voz yeux ont honoré d'une celeste veüe," as the poet now speaks to the beloved as she receives his poem, asking her to pay attention to his suffering. The painful suffering due to love, he states, is the origin of his praise for the beloved. In sonnet 41, the first of the two *blancheur* sonnets, the theme of the poems changes from the paper that replaces the poet to that of the whiteness of the lady. In this sonnet, "L'yver a la teste grisonne," the beloved is compared to snow, satin, and the lily, all of which pale in comparison to her own beauty. As marked in the margin, this theme continues in "Aupres de ce beau teint le lis en noir se change," in which more sinister aspects of the beloved's whiteness are revealed. The poet describes how the lily from the preceding sonnet becomes black in comparison to her beauty, going on to describe the ways in which she surpasses milk, swans, and even the paper the poem has been written on, a paper that appears before her in his stead. After these comparisons comes a turn towards the poisonous and a foregrounding of the lover's suffering as the beloved is compared to arsenic. She may be poisonous, but as with his acceptance of suffering in sonnet 40, the lover is willing to die. Sonnet 43, "Il te

doit souvenir Diane en mon absence,” brings the consideration of Diane from just the tint of her skin to a comparison of their two bodies. Her whiteness is once again highlighted and forms the only difference between the two. And yet, a distance between the two emerges, emphasized far more than it was in sonnet 39.⁴³ Where earlier sonnets substituted the poem on the page for the lover, the struggle of the lover now emerges, as he must try to keep her image in his mind. It is with this concept of the beloved’s image and her distance from the lover that sonnet 44 enters the sequence. The sonnets that come after sonnet 44 continue to show how much the lover suffers for his love, but in ways that thematically differ from those that came before.

Sonnets 46–51 introduce flames, exile, and the court into the narrative of suffering. Sonnet 46, “Tremblant d’une fiebvre cruelle,” describes the sickness and the unquenched fire of love, changing the ice of the earlier sonnets to extreme heat.⁴⁴ Just as the beloved was compared to poison in the earlier poems, she now represents a sickness unto death. This fire continues to burn in “En fendant l’estomac de la saulne argentine,” which describes the ways in which it has become impossible to extinguish the fire of love that has begun burning within the lover’s chest. No water will quench it, and there is no escape from the love that has seized him. Sonnet 48, “J’avois jure ma mort, & de mes tristes Jours,” is the first of the *A^b* poems and describes the manner in which the lover will die now that exile has forcibly separated the pair. However, this will not be an easy death, as he wishes to continue to suffer before he expires. “Si tost que l’amour eut emprisonne mon ame” continues this consideration of the cruelty of love and the suffering that exile brings with it. The middle sonnet of the *Hécatombe*, “Quant du sort Inhumain les tenaisses flambantes,” is a litany of extreme amorous suffering, the cause of which is ascribed to the fire of love that cannot—as in previous sonnets—be extinguished. Sonnet 51, “Pourquoy si vous vouliez a Jamais me chaser,” challenges love, asking why the lover must suffer if he is to never see his beloved again. He considers the painful paradox of forgetting her and compares his situation to a prisoner being executed out of the sight of the judge who condemned him. In the poems that follow sonnet 44,

43. Ferrer suggests that sonnet 43 “lance le theme de la séparation et de l’absence.” Ferrer, “Ce que nous appelons son *Printemps*,” 46.

44. This sonnet is another octosyllabic poem.

themes such as the distance between the poet and his beloved appear, as well as the consideration of his extreme suffering at the hands of love.

It is in the light of these thematic relationships that the contents of the poems that make up the list of options for sonnet 44 should be evaluated. These considerations of the surrounding sonnets and their themes confirm the elimination of “Amour fut engendré du loisir ocieux,” “Ton amitié me fait souvenir de la prime,” and “Veulx tu plaider.” “Veulx tu plaider” introduces the court of love and anticipates the appearance of the judge in sonnet 51 but is not associated with the themes of the previous sonnets in the sequence, making it better situated as sonnet 45. Both “Amour fut engendré du loisir ocieux” and “Ton amitié me fait souvenir de la prime” contain a focus on leisure activities, proving to be thematic breaks in the sequence. Without other choices for sonnet 44, this thematic rupture could mirror others that occur in the sequence. However, the presence of “Que voy-je? une blancheur, à qui la neige est noire” and “Le plus de moy en moy & hors de moy demure,” which do have ties to the surrounding sonnets, suggests that continuity was privileged in this section of the *Hécatombe* over the course of revision. As with the investigation of the manuscripts, these considerations once more bring the potential choices for sonnet 44 to “Que voy-je” and “Le plus de moy en moy.” The former, as the incipit suggests, continues the theme of *blancheur* at the start of the sonnet. As in the sonnets that come before it, the beloved surpasses all other whiteness with her beauty. Just as sonnet 43 turns away from a sole consideration of her white skin, so does this sonnet, moving towards the description of a conflict between the senses. The speaker’s dilemma is that he can only choose one sense at a time, and while he has narrowed this choice to one between sight and hearing, choosing either represents a risk. Unlike the retrospective reference of “Que voy-je,” “Le plus de moy en moy & hors de moy demure” is a poem that carries forward the thematic flow of the sequence to the theme of absence that is introduced in sonnet 43 and brought fully to the foreground by sonnet 48. The distance established between the lovers provokes suffering due to the love the poet still feels. With this separation, “Le plus de moy en moy & hors de moy demure” breaks away from the theme of the lady’s whiteness and inscribes itself into the continuity of the separation of lover and beloved.

This analysis of these two sonnets shows how the overall revision of the sonnet sequence factors into this local choice of sonnet 44. The sequence represented in T157 contains many sonnets in the higher numbered sections

that had not previously existed in T159 and thus has a more fully constructed end point. “Le plus de moy en moy & hors de moy demure” fits into this evolved sequence of sonnets in a way that continues the introduction of the theme of absence, making the similarity and linkage of the poet and beloved more explicit, even as they are kept apart. This poem links sonnets 43 and 44 together and anticipates the *A^b* sonnets.⁴⁵ “Que voy-je? une blancheur, à qui la neige est noire” instead fits into the sequence of sonnets in a way that recalls past themes. In combination with the analysis of the changes to *mise en page*, the textual analysis of these poems helps determine a decision regarding which of these two sonnets is best suited to be sonnet 44.

Conclusions

After separate consideration of the manuscripts and the texts of the five sonnets that might potentially occupy the position of sonnet 44, “Que voy-je? une blancheur, à qui la neige est noire” and “Le plus de moy en moy & hors de moy demure” emerge as the most likely candidates, a situation made evident not only by the explicit marginal notes but also by the contents of the poems themselves. As it appears in T157, “Que voy-je” begins a spread of two folios, carrying on the themes from the previous grouping of three. The visual break in the sequence of sonnets caused by turning the page is not mirrored in the thematic flow of the poems, as this sonnet continues a consideration of prior themes. This happens almost immediately after in T157, as the page break between sonnets 46 and 47 also carries across it the theme of the burning fire of love apparent in both sonnets. Thus, in T157, “Que voy-je” and sonnet 46 are the respective ending and beginning of two trains of thought, with “Veulx-tu plaider” as an interlude spanning the folio space between them. Had the *mise en page* of T159 been retained, showing sonnets 43–45 together on a double page, the visual break between the *blancheur* poems might have functioned differently. Sonnets 43 and 44 being associated with each other on facing pages could have been a continuing indication of the theme as it changed from *blancheur* towards

45. This is noted by Goeury in his 2007 edition of *L'Hécatome à Diane*, as he states that the poem “rompt avec la topique de la blancheur” of the preceding poems, but “s’inscrit cependant bien dans celle de l’absence.” Aubigné, *L'Hécatome à Diane*, ed. Goeury, 129.

absence. The presence of “Ton amitié”⁴⁶ as an unnumbered poem that still takes up space on the page influences the way in which the sonnets are arranged in T159, which does not invite strong conclusions regarding the *mise en page* of that manuscript, especially in the case of those sonnets that follow sonnet 44. The *mise en page* also changed dramatically between T159 and T157, no longer privileging the linkage of sonnet 44 to preceding sonnets. This change makes it less likely that “Que voy-je” would fit properly in this later version of the *Hécatombe*. Substituting “Le plus de moy en moy” in the place of “Que voy-je” continues the introduction of the theme of absence as seen in sonnet 43. This sonnet takes the thematic notions that appear in the final tercet of sonnet 43 as a starting point, thus moving forward with the separation of the lovers. While there are similarities between those two sonnets, the page break between sonnets 41–43 and sonnet 44 is here emphasized, as there is no further mention of the lady’s visual whiteness. Instead, the flames of love are briefly invoked as well as the lover’s death as provoked by his love. In this way, absence leads to physical comparisons between the two lovers being discontinued, instead bringing the lover’s suffering to the fore as in the sonnets that follow sonnet 44. This placement causes the sequence to flow forward sooner, working with the visual break between the poems to do so. With both this later configuration of the page of the manuscript and the contents of the poem itself, it seems that “Le plus de moy en moy & hors de moy demure” is the best extant candidate for the position in the context of continued revision of the text.

Choosing a candidate for sonnet 44 of the *Hécatombe à Diane* is an exercise that takes into account both the status of the manuscripts and the contents of the surrounding sonnets. However, it remains an exercise, as there is no “true” sonnet 44. Aubigné’s manuscripts remain a scattered, disorganized collection of poems,⁴⁷ but an inspection of both the material existence of these poems as well as their poetic structure allows for discussion beyond possible editorial decisions.⁴⁸ The importance of this “missing” sonnet 44—as well as T159, T157,

46. Due to the unnumbered poem, the folios contain sonnets 43–45, but without the numerical confusion, sonnets 43–46 might have been displayed.

47. As emphasized in Goeury, “Voir sécher ce *Printemps*?”; and Fanlo, “Sur quelques volumes manuscrits.”

48. And, as Ferrer concludes, the collection “tire sans doute son charme de ce problème sans solution, de ce mystère opaque.” Ferrer, “Ce que nous appelons son *Printemps*,” 54.

and the table in general—serves to showcase the process of revision⁴⁹ and to confirm that this sequence was not simply an “œuvre de jeunesse,” as the rhetorical posturing of *Les Tragiques* might suggest.⁵⁰ Ferrer explains, stating, “Après avoir feint de renier sa jeunesse, A. d’Aubigné l’exhume, la corrige ou la prolonge, la confirme comme une partie intégrante de soi, comme une pièce majeure d’un ensemble plus vaste.”⁵¹ As Goeury notes,⁵² Aubigné states this himself on the final page of the table, with a quatrain asking for indulgence on the part of the reader as he extends his youth.⁵³ Whether the small quatrain refers to the time of his youth or to the collection itself—called *La Jeunesse* in the table and then *Le Printemps* in T157⁵⁴—it marks a recognized effort in the construction and revision of such a collection and rejects Aubigné’s own rejection of his love poetry.

49. Fanlo discusses Aubigné’s quite utilitarian use of manuscripts at more length in “Sur quelques volumes manuscrits.”

50. Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xi.

51. Ferrer, introduction to *Le Printemps*, xlii. In her more recent book, Ferrer states, “Au terme de cette première enquête, *Le Printemps* apparaît comme le fruit d’une gestation lente qui va à l’encontre du mythe albinéen d’une création fulgurante.” Ferrer, “Ce que nous appelons son *Printemps*,” 53.

52. Goeury, introduction to *Hécatombe à Diane*, 11.

53. My transcription: “Lecteur pour mescuser Quest c[e] / Que ie pourrois dire? Rien / Si jallégue ma jeunesse / Tu diras ie le voit bien.”

54. Ferrer discusses the shifting title of Aubigné’s poetry, suggesting that *Le Printemps* may have been intended as a much bigger collection including *La Jeunesse* itself (Ferrer, “Ce que nous appelons son *Printemps*,” 29).

Appendix: editions of *L'Hécatombe à Diane*

Editor(s)	Year	Title	Sonnet 44	Base MS	Notes	Prints variants by sonnet 44?
Réaume and Caussade	1873	<i>Œuvres Complètes de Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné</i>	“Que voy-je”	T157	No variants noted	No
Gagnebin	1948	<i>Le Printemps: L'Hécatombe à Diane</i>	“Que voy-je”	T159	Notes variants	“Amour fut engendré” ; “Le plus de moy en moy” ⁵⁵
Weber	1960	<i>Le Printemps: L'Hécatombe à Diane et les Stances</i>	“Que voy-je”	Gagnebin 1948 (T159)	No variants noted	No
Goeury	2007	<i>Hécatombe à Diane</i>	“Le plus de moy en moy”	T157	Notes variants	No ⁵⁶
Ferrer	2020	<i>Le Printemps</i>	“Le plus de moy en moy”	T159	Notes variants	No ⁵⁷

55. “Ton amitié” is printed on the page before as 43 bis.

56. “Que voy-je” appears in Annexe 4.

57. “Que voy-je” becomes part of the *Melanges* section of *Le Printemps*.

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