

Les Fables de
La Fontaine
Version intégrale



AUZOU

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE'S FABLES

MILA FRÉMONDIÈRE AND VIOLAINE HAUDEBAULT

ERASMUS STUDENTS

WHO IS JEAN DE LA FONTAINE?

- French fable writer
- Born in 1621 in Château-Thierry
- 1656: crippled with debts
- 1664: gentleman of the Duchess of Orléans
- 1668 : first fables book to the Dauphin
- 1678: second fables book to Madame de Montespan
- 1683 : French Academy
- 1693: last collection of fables to Duke of Bourgogne
- Died in 1695 in Paris because of a tuberculosis



THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- During the reign of Louis XIV, 17th century
- The Sun King had a stranglehold on arts
- Renaissance
 - Cultural movement with a breakthrough in Italy in 15th century
 - Ideas of Antiquity came back
 - New thinking about literature, poetry...
- 16th century: Reformation, ambition of massive education
- Two classes
 - Lower social classes: school until 7, keep the children in good behaviours
 - Upper social classes: literature, poetry, speech, astronomy, maths...



THE USE OF ANIMALS

- Use of animals with signification
- A mirror of the human world
 - “I am using animals to educate humans”
- To attract men to teach lessons of the story
- Jean de la Fontaine’s ideas
 - Allegories, human attributes, fantastic literature
 - Opposed to naturalism: nature exists by itself and it is the first reality of the world
 - Animals are able to think
- René Descartes’ ideas:
 - Animal-machines : no spirit and reason, automatic reflects and reactions



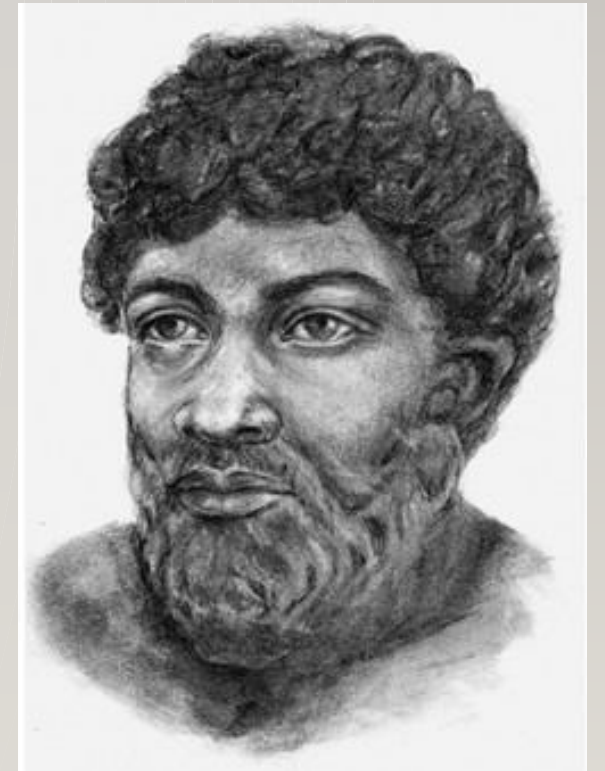
THE USE OF MORALS

- Formula that resumes and brings out the virtues of the society
- To identify the vices of men
- Explicit morals:
 - Beginning or end of the fables
 - “The right of the stronger is always better.”
 - The Wolf and the Lamb
- Implicit morals:
 - Seem to be essay, but complex
 - Pedagogical aim : search, think and understand
 - Protection from the censorship from Church and Royalty
 - The Cicada and the Ant



HOW FABLES HAVE EVOLVED AND WHAT REMAINS OF THEM TODAY ?

- Why La Fontaine's fables still cause such enthusiasm nowadays ?
 - Form : succinct text
 - Fables are timeless, immortal
- "It may be possible that my work will result in other's people desire to carry on the thing further"
 - Source of project
- "I'm singing heroes of which Aesop is the father"
 - Bond between Aesop and La Fontaine (Greece and France)



WHY CHOOSE TO STUDY LA FONTAINE TODAY AT SCHOOL?

- Educational and Philosophical role
 - Learning support in reading, morals and civicism
- The use of animals allow kids to broaden their imagination
- Theatrical dimension
 - Huge source of expression → theatre project
- Institutionally recognized
 - Minister of National Education, Michel Blanquer will distribute fables to the 150 000 CM2. “A book for holidays”



FABLES THROUGH GENERATIONS

- Fables : encourage the kid to memorize text, recitation
 - Only poetic heritage shared with several generations
 - Inexhaustible and intergenerational
- *“Everything speaks in my work, even fish. What they say speaks to everyone”*



HOW FABLES ARE CARRIED ON NOWADAYS?

- Saint Paul school in Athens (franco-hellenic)
 - Fables contest in Greece and across Francophone countries
 - CIREL -International Research Center for the work of Aesop and La Fontaine
- Jean de La Fontaine's Museum - Château Thierry FRANCE
 - Become a museum in 1876
 - Recognized by the French Government “French Museum designation”
- La Fontaine known by the general public : Le Puy du Fou
 - *The Imaginary World of La Fontaine* in 2012
 - Shows the fables in an interactive way



PUY DU FOU

