



“Rire jaune”-The saffron enigma at the end of the *Quart Livre*

From philological game to political satire

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Abstract: The saffron-shit concluding the *Quart livre* is a pun on pharmaceutical terms; it is also a political reference. From Erasmus's *Adages* to Renaissance ethnographies, the saffron shirt, first a shorthand for decadent luxury, becomes the national dress of the “wild Irish,” France's unreliable ally who ultimately lost to England. By weaving philological wit into a satirical emblem of current affairs, the end of the *Quart Livre* magnifies the inventive logic of the enigma so dear to Rabelais.

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