EMPLOIS AND CASTING AT THE ACADÉMIE ROYALE DE MUSIQUE:

FEMALE OPERA SINGERS AND THEIR ROLES FROM 1669 TO 1715

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Under the supervision of Prof. Dr Suzanne Aspden (Jesus College, Music Faculty)

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Administrative regulations both set the boundaries and encourage artistic experimentation in the history of opera in Europe. While questions related to aesthetics are important, the legal status of theaters, institutions, and genres has played a central role in shaping this history. This historiographical work delves into concepts and documents related to the legal aspects of opera productions, including contracts, administrative roles and functions (such as impresarios in Italy and *inspecteurs généraux* in France), performers' rights, copyright law, and censorship. To reconcile law and opera studies, issues related to the stock of roles (*emploi*, in French) and casting serve as the best entry point. Indeed they are integral to the opera production process and network, and highlight the complex overlap between institutional matters and personal relationships.

However, previous studies have often overlooked the importance of primary sources, leading to incomplete perspectives that favor aesthetics over a careful study of the legal framework. In my work, I examine the period from the birth of the Académie Royale de Musique (1669) until the death of Louis XIV in 1715, focusing on female performers and their roles within the legal framework surrounding the *emploi*. This analysis demonstrates how administrative law fundamentally influenced and guided

artistic creativity.

The introduction provides a critical review of the literature related to all dimensions of the topic, identifying limitations in current scholarship and highlighting the necessary methodology for a comprehensive revision. The first part examines the emergence and use of the *emploi* as an administrative tool. In the first chapter, my investigation focuses on the legal and administrative practices of the ARM, which borrowed from the legal constitution and administrative development of the crown as a 'planner' or 'developer' state during the Ancien Régime. This perspective on the *emploi* raises crucial questions regarding casting practices, including employment (i.e. selection of performers and intern rules regarding payment and retirement), distribution (i.e. association of a set of roles with an individual's particular set of skills), and classification (i.e. elaboration of a hierarchy which combines talents, importance of the roles played, and seniority). In the second chapter, I challenge the initial assumptions by adopting a 'performer-based perspective', again tracing its development over the long term.

The second part of my work explores the evolution of female singers and their repertoire in conjunction with the administrative developments of the ARM. By examining different sequences in the history of the ARM's administration, I aim to connect the evolution of the troupe's soloists and administrative inventions with the development of roles and lyrical genres. This investigation sheds light on how the ARM's specific entrepreneurial and legal dimensions influenced the creation of the emploi. The section is divided into two chronological parts: the first covers the period between 1669 and 1687 and is the focus of chapters three and four. The third chapter presents a systematic analysis of the troupe and its administration, while chapter four examines the role of performers in shaping the variety of artistic material. The fifth (and

final) chapter analyses the period from 1687 to 1715.

The conclusion, in addition to summarising the main findings of this dissertation, proposes new fruitful avenues of inquiry for further work. It is important to note that a great amount of information is also concealed in the appendices of this dissertation, which use archival material that I gathered in France (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Archives Nationales, Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles), the United-Kingdom (British Library), and Italy (Marciana Biblioteca, Conservatorio Benedetto Marcello in Venice, Biblioteca della Fondazione Giorgio Cini). This work has been carried out thanks to the generosity of St John's College, the Music Faculty in Oxford, the Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, and the Art and Humanities Research Council.

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General introduction

There can be no opera without singers, and we intuitively accept the importance of their place and value as being crucial to the formation of any lyrical repertoire. However, our understanding of their concrete influence (its manifestation and how to measure it) over opera production and related creative processes has not received enough attention in the study of French baroque opera. Indeed, past examinations of the Académie Royale de Musique (hereafter ARM) has left some room for investigation.[1] Specifically, the relationship between individual singers and their repertoire, and how it shapes both the performer and the performance, has been considered a secondary feature rather than a central component of opera production. This lack of scrutiny has hindered our understanding of opera production during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Paris and its regions, as well as in different provincial urban nodes.

Furthermore, it has caused some scholars to overlook important administrative evidence and prioritize purely aesthetic approaches to operatic works. This tradition of thought on the subject goes back to a number of pioneering studies, from Lionel de La Laurencie, Jules Ecorcheville, and Henry Prunières for example.[2] It was greatly expanded by postmodern scholars, such as Georgia Cowart.[3] However, a primary focus on aesthetics can become prescriptive and fabricate narratives without factual grounding, especially when coupled with anachronistic psychoanalytic theories. [4] On

[1] In 2013, Lauren Clays argued that '[t]o this point, the business operations of France's theatres [had]
[2] Lionel de La Laurencie, *Le goût musical en France* (Paris, 1905 ; repr. Geneva: Slatkine, 1970); Jules Ecorcheville, *De Lulli à Rameau, 1690-1730 : L'Esthétique Musicale* (Paris: Marcel Fortin, 1906); Henry Prunières, 'Le Cerf de La Viéville et l'esthétique musicale classique au XVII^{e} siècle', *Bulletin Français de la Société Internationale de la Musique* 4 (1908): 619-654.
[3] Georgia Cowart, *The Origins of Modern Musical Criticism: French and Italian Music 1600-1750* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981).
[4] The epitome of this problem is incarnated by Catherine Clément in *L'opéra ou la défaite des femmes* (Paris: Grasset, 1979): in her enquiry into female characters in French opera, the focus on a handful of artistic parameters only crafts a ready-made mould for a specific narrative (i.e. that of the eternal weaker

that point, the careful exploration of the notions of *politesse* and *mondain*, in part related to the voice, by Don Faber convincingly demonstrates the fabricated aspect of aesthetic rules on the basis of class, social norms, and narrow traditions regarding the reception of classical texts during the seventeenth century.[5]

This dissertation aims to recentre the singer in the study of early modern French Opéra (the institution and its genres) through the prism of the *emploi*, another issue on which explanation is deficient in the existing scholarship. The notion of the *emploi* has been adopted in French theatre and opera studies as a convenient and synthetic way to describe a complex mode of operation. *The* emploi, which is still commonly used as a noun in French but not in English, generally refers to an occupation or function. Antoine Furetière described the emploi in these terms in his *Dictionnaire universel* from 1690 onwards.[6] Likewise, this definition is applied by eighteenth-century authors Claude and François Parfaict when discussing French troubadours.[7] It is also in this sense that nineteenth-century commentators Charles Nuitter and Ernest Thoinan use the word in their work on French operatic history where solo singers, members of choruses, of the ballet, and of the orchestra are first and foremost employees of the ARM.[8]

Additionally, the *emploi* designation is traditionally used in the context of

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sex placed in a situation of submission and punishment). Not only does Clément miss the whole Christian depth of the material (in which humility and sacrifice, often associated with female characters, matters to the highest degree), she also overlooks the social dimension of the singers, which easily indicates how powerful many of the female soloists were during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

[5] Don Fader, 'The *Honnête homme* as Music Critic: Taste, Rhetoric, and Politesse in the 17th-Century French Reception of Italian Music', *The Journal of Musicology* 20, no. 1 (2003): 3-44.

[6] Antoine Furetière, *Dictionnaire universel* (La Haye & Rotterdam: Arnout & Reinier Leers, 1690), t. I, Letter E.

[7] Claude and François Parfaict, *Histoire du théâtre françois, depuis son origine jusqu'à présent* (Amsterdam, aux dépens de la Compagnie, 1735), I, 6: 'Singers, whom name expresses quite well the *emploi*, used to sing the productions of the Troubadour Poets.' ('Les Chanteurs, dont le nom exprime assez l'emploi, chantaient les productions des Poètes Troubadours.')

[8] Charles Nuitter and Ernest Thoinan, *Les Origines de l'opéra français, d'après les minutes des notaires, les registres de la Conciergerie et les documents originaux conservés aux Archives nationales, à la Comédie-Française et dans diverses collections publiques et particulières* (Paris: Plon, Nourrit et Cie, 1886), 207: '[…] tous les employés, chanteurs et chanteuses, choristes et danseurs, instrumentistes, et Cambert, leur chef d'orchestre, étaient à leurs [Sourdéac and Champeron's] gages par actes en bonne et due forme.'

modern performance arts and studies to indicate two things. First, deriving from structuralist literary theory, the *emploi* has come to designate an ensemble or category of roles. This entity is made of a particular set of signs, including all or some of text, music, gestures, and visual attributes.[9] Michel Corvin, a scholar specialising in theatre studies, describes the *emploi* in the following terms:

> [The *emploi* represents] the set of roles from a common category that require analogous characteristics from the point of view of physical appearance, voice, temperament, and sensitivity, and thus that are susceptible to be played by one same actor.[10]

Bernard Jolibert applies this definition in the context of the *commedia dell'arte*. He links the *emploi* to female performers and defines the concept on aesthetic and dramaturgical grounds: 'that is to say, more or less precisely defined roles which correspond to an age (the duenna, the *ingénue*), a function (a soubrette, a laundry maid), an occupation (a cabaret hostess, a singer), a social position (a bourgeois, a marquise, an adventurer, a courtisan)'.[11]

Second, the *emploi* in theatre studies also suggests a place in a troupe's hierarchy (as all sets of roles are not equal in importance and stature). It is in that sense that Maupoint used the term in his 1733 monograph about theatre. Whilst the *emploi* designates in Maupoint's writings a position in an administrative structure, the term

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[9] This definition is based on semiotics, which, as Roland Barthes puts it, is a formal study, which has for its object 'any system of signs, whatever their substance and limits: images, gestures, musical sounds, objects, and the complex associations of all these' (Roland Barthes, *Éléments de Sémiologie* [Paris: Édition du Seuil, 1964], 79).

[10] Michel Corvin (ed.), *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Théâtre* (Paris: Bordas, 1991), entry 'Emploi': 'l'ensemble des rôles d'une même catégorie requérant, du point de vue de l'apparence physique, de la voix, du tempérament, de la sensibilité, des caractéristiques analogues et donc susceptibles d'être joués par un même acteur.'

[11] Bernard Jolibert, *La Commedia dell'arte et son influence en France du XVIe au XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999), 39: 'With regards to female roles, including that of servants and lovers […], there isn't any "mask" properly speaking for them, but rather "emplois", that is to say more or less defined roles that correspond with an age (the duenna, the *ingénue*), a fonction (a soubrette, a laundry maid), an occupation (a cabaret hostess, a singer), a social position (a bourgeois, a marquise, an adventurer, a courtisan).' ('Pour ce qui touche aux rôles féminins, y compris ceux des servantes ou des amoureuses […], il n'existe pas de "masques" à proprement parler, mais plutôt des "emplois", c'est-à-dire des rôles définis avec plus ou moins de précision et qui correspondent à un âge (la duègne, l'ingénue), une fonction (soubrette, lingère), un métier (cabaretière, chanteuse), une place sociale (bourgeoise, marquise, aventurière, coutisane).')

'role' (*rolle* [sic]) is employed for discussing a specific fictional character or a set of characters that collectively functions as a sign.[12] According to this definition, the *emploi* deals primarily with questions regarding casting and addresses issues such as the flexibility of roles' assignment within the troupe, soloists' careers, the system of understudies, and the splitting of roles into 'parts' that become more or less the property of the performers (and can be modified, if need be, in order to suit the singers better).

Antonia L. Banducci seem to prefer the term 'typecasting' instead of emploi to better capture the close relationship between casting, singers, roles, and the administrative structure of the troupe.[13] In Anglophone studies, typecasting had first been used in the early twenty century by Thomas Baldwin in the context of his study regarding the Shakespearean Company.[14] Although his method was criticised as prescriptive and his discoveries ultimately neglected, Baldwin's theory of typecasting has been recently revived by scholars such as Skiles Howard and David Grote.[15] Later, in the field of opera studies, the practice of typecasting has also been observed by some scholars working on a handful of singers, particularly in the contexts of the first part and middle of the eighteenth century, in Northern Italy and in England during Handel's London career. Steven C. LaRue, for example, discusses Handel's character typecasting by focussing on singers Francesca Cuzzoni (1696–1778) and Faustina Bordoni (1697–

[12] Maupoint, *Bibliothèque des théâtres, contenant le catalogue alphabétique des pièces dramatiques et opéra, le nom des auteurs et le temps de la représentation de ces pièces, avec des anecdotes sur les auteurs et sur la plupart des pièces contenues en ce recueil* (Paris: Pierre Prault, 1733). For example, Maupoint quotes the following sets of roles (p. 35): 'follower roles' ('roles de suivantes'), 'female lover roles' ('roles d'amantes').

[13] Antonia L. Banducci, 'Acteurs and Actrices as Muses: The Case for Jean-Baptiste Lully's Repertory Troupe (1672-86)', *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music* 21, no. 1 (2015). https://sscm-jscm.org/jscm-issues/volume-21-no-1/acteurs-and-actrices-as-muses-the-case-for-jean-baptiste-lullys-repertory-troupe/

[14] Thomas W. Baldwin, *The Organisation and Personnel of the Shakespearean Company* (Princeton: PUP, 1927).

[15] Skiles Howard, 'A Reconsideration of Baldwin's Theory of Acting Lines', *Theatre Studies* 26 (1985): 1–20; David Grote, *The Best Actors in the World: Shakespeare and his Acting Company* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 2002). See also Simon Palfrey and Tiffany Stern, *Shakespeare in parts* (OUP, 2007) for a criticism of Baldwin's theory.

1781).[16] LaRue affirms that Cuzzoni was usually 'given the pathetic heroine roles' and that Faustina's characters were 'generally much more optimistic and active'.[17] Likewise, singers Anna Giraud and Carlo Maria Michelangelo Nicola Broschi, known as Farinelli, have been observed in relation with typecasting by John W. Hill.[18]

In summary, the *emploi* in the context of performance arts theory and practice consists in binding an actor or actress to a set of characters and a place in the casting's hierarchy of a troupe for a given period of time, generally according to the qualities and skills of that person, which can evolve through time as the artist ages, as authors change, and as the audience's horizon of expectation evolves.[19] Given the interdependence of all these criteria at the intersection, the *emploi* emerges as both the product and the catalyst of a complex dialectic between administration, performers, and sets of roles in various lyrical and dramatic genres, either synchronously or not.

However, the modern meanings of the *emploi* may obscure our understanding of its historical status and significance. While the concept can be traced back to earlier times, it did not fully and explicitly emerge in French discourse about lyrical and spoken theatre until the eighteenth century. Indeed during the early modern period the *emploi* is a notion still in the making, meaning that the contours of its definition are blurry. The first official set of rules (*Règlement*) of the ARM, published in 1713 lays down procedures and codes of behaviours both for the management and for the performers

[16] Steven C. LaRue, *Handel and His Singers: The Creation of the Royal Academy Operas, 1720–1728* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). See also Suzanne Aspden, *The Rival Sirens. Performance and Identity on Handel's Operatic Stage* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 50.
[17] LaRue, *Handel and His Singers*, 158.
[18] John W. Hill, 'Vivaldi's Griselda', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 31, no. 1 (1978), 53–82.
[19] The term 'horizon of expectation' (originally 'Erwartungshorizont') is devised by Hans R. Jauss to denote the criteria which readers use to judge literary texts in any given period. See Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (University of Minnesota Press, 1982), trans. by Timothy Bahti, originally published as *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft* (Konstanz: Konstanzer Universitätsreden 3, 1967).

without mentioning the term whatsoever.[20] Moreover, our common understanding of *emploi* as a taxonomy of roles, which engages in different classificatory schemes, probably conflates seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century understandings of the terms *emploi* and *rôle* (role).[21] If the latter started to endorse the modern meaning of 'character', with distinctive features that can be grouped in broader categories, the term *emploi* was still more likely to refer to an administrative tool used for registering and listing people within any sort of institution, artistic or not.[22]

Therefore, attempts to trace the history or origins of specific sets of roles, especially when using the delicate label of *emploi*, can lead to anachronistic interpretations. This issue has been well addressed by French scholar Céline Candiard, who views the *emploi* in theatre studies as a screen. She argues that nineteenth-century commentators and twentieth-century scholars have entertained an implicit teleological bias and perceive the formalisation of *emplois* during the eighteenth century as 'merely [ratifying] a preceding practice'.[23] In contrast, Candiard points out that the specialisation of actors in different types of roles was never really formalised in official documents but

[20] F-Pan, AJ/13/1 (I), *Privilège accordé, arrests rendus et règlement fait par Sa Majesté pour l'Académie royale de musique*, 1713.

[21] The modern sense of the term 'role' is highlighted by Patrick Coleman in 'Character in Eighteenth-Century Context', *The Eighteenth Century* 24, no. 1 (1983): 51–52. Many different scholars have pointed out the massive influence of Italian artists and works throughout Europe regarding this modern definition of 'role' and the idea of categories or lists imbricated with it. This topic has particularly been investigated through the prism of the influence of the *commedia dell'arte* over opera, which has been frequently highlighted by theatre historians such as Benedetto Croce, *I teatri di Napoli. Secolo XV-XVIII* (Napoli: Luigi Pierro, 1891) and *Storia della commedia dell'arte* (Roma, 1932), Nino Pirrotta, 'Commedia dell'arte and Opera', *The Musical Quarterly* XLI, no. 3 (1955): 305–324, Heinz Kindermann, *Theatergeschichte Europas*, t. II 'Das Theater der Renaissance' (Salzburg, 1959), John Powell, *Music and Theatre in France, 1600-1680* (Oxford: OUP, 2000). Although the distinctive marks of *commedia dell'arte*'s type of performance gradually disappear during the eighteenth century, its codifications are strongly influent in Europe until then; those are written down by Andrea Perrucci in 1699 (*Dell'arte rappresentativa premeditata e all'improvviso*).

[22] From the end of the seventeenth century, the definition of role in French dictionaries implies the function of listing and categorising *drammatis personae*, something that would nowadays be directly associated with the function of the *emploi* in performance arts. The 1694 *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* (Paris: Coignard), for example, links 'role' with 'list' and 'catalogue'. In his 1690 *Dictionnaire universel*, Furetière describes 'role' as an '[i]nventory or list of the names of several persons who share the same condition or the same obligation'. ('État ou liste des noms de plusieurs personnes qui sont de même condition, ou dans le même engagement.')

[23] Céline Candiard, 'Emplois Comiques et Répertoire Moliéresque: Enjeux Dramaturgiques d'un Principe de Distribution', *Âgon* 7 (2015): §1.

was a matter of conventional best practices. Contracts and salaries aimed at delineating a specific place for each actor within a given troupe and, as they rose to the top of the hierarchy, they acquired the right to adjust their set of roles.[24] This fluidity between actors, administrative powers, and repertoire allowed for specific arrangements to be made in order to match individual talents and influences.

Additionally, Candiard affirms that too many modern and postmodern authors assume that eighteenth-century actors 'would have limited themselves to undertake, in a somewhat degraded and caricatural form, the traditions of acting they had received from the first performers of the role'.[25] The strict adherence to their historical vision of French theatre would ignore or overlook the nuances and complexities of the earlier changes and developments that occurred during a critical juncture in the history of French performance arts. These include the growth of institutions, the evolution of genres, and the emergence of new theoretical discourses, all of which played a significant role in shaping the roles and casting practices of that period.

This defect highlighted by Candiard applies also to opera studies. The default Candiard addresses with regards to nineteenth-century commentary is represented in the sphere of opera by writers such as Pierre-David Lemazurier (secretary of the Comédie-Française's administration committee), Émile Solié (historian), François-Henri-Joseph Blaze (art critic, music editor, and composer), Victor Fournel (historian and journalist), Arthur Pougin (historian and music critic), and Germain Bapst (art historian).[26]

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[24] Candiard, 'Emplois Comiques et Répertoire Moliéresque', §5.
[25] Candiard, 'Emplois Comiques et Répertoire Moliéresque', §1: 'la tendance majoritaire est de présenter l'ensemble de la période de l'Ancien Régime comme constituant un tout à peu près unifié, où les comédiens du XVIIIe siècle se seraient bornés à reprendre, sous une forme quelque peu dégradée et caricaturale, les traditions de jeu qu'ils avaient reçues des premiers interprètes des rôles'
[26] Pierre-David Lemazurier (known as Valleran), *L'Opinion du Parterre, ou Revue des Théâtres français, de l'Opéra, de l'Opéra-Comique National, de Louvois, de l'Opéra-Buffa et du Vaudeville, faisant suite à l'Ouvrage publié sous le même titre en Germinal an XI* (Paris: Martinet, 1805); Émile Solié, *L'Opéra depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours, 1645-1847*, (Paris: Breteau, 1847); François-Henri-Joseph Blaze, *Théâtres lyriques de Paris*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1855); Victor Fournel, *Curiosités théâtrales anciennes et*

Likewise, many twentieth-century scholars misunderstood (or, perhaps more accurately, avoided addressing in-depth) the specific institutional, legal, and administrative conditions of the ARM's creation.

The reason why studies on classical spoken theatre have more directly dealt with the administrative dimension of the emploi may be partly due to the greater number of artistic works, authors (who typically generate more historical sources regarding their career than performers), and dedicated places for performance (around which a variety of historical sources are usually produced).[27] In contrast, the interest in the emploi shown by scholars of early modern French opera has been much more limited, and has often been overshadowed by a focus on aesthetics. As a result, some scholars have developed specific taxonomies in order to understand the nature of the characters and events in opera plots. Raphaëlle Legrand was the first to propose a classification of the emploi in the context of female singers and their roles, which primarily distinguishes between two main groups: the 'baguettes' (wands), representing fierce and powerful women often associated with magic, and the 'mouchoirs' (handkerchiefs), representing soft and gentle princesses.[28] This seductive dichotomy has permeated a breadth of scholarship after Legrand. Elements are found in several works, such as that of Muriel Adamo about feminine characters in Lully's operas and Magda-Eliza Maftei in her study of lamentations in the same repertoire.[29] Yet Legrand herself confessed that this binary

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modernes, françaises et étrangères (Paris: Delahays, 1859); Emile Campardon, *L'Académie royale de musique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1884); Arthur Pougin, *Dictionnaire historique et pittoresque du théâtre et des arts qui s'y rattachent* (Paris: Firmin Didot frères fils et Cie, 1885); Germain Bapst, *Essai sur l'histoire du théâtre: la mise en scène, le décor, le costume, l'architecture, l'éclairage, l'hygiène* (Paris: Hachette, 1893).

[27] Clarence D. Brenner estimated the number of spoken plays in the eighteenth century at 11,661 (*A Bibliographical List of Plays in the French Language, 1700-1789* [UCP, 1947]). See also Henry Carrington Lancaster (ed.), *Actor's Roles at the Comédie Française According to the 'Repertoire des Comedies françaises qui se peuvent jouer en 1685'* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1953) where Lancaster lists actors and describes their recurrent roles from the year 1685.

[28] Raphaëlle Legrand, 'Baguettes et mouchoirs : les héroïnes des tragédies en musique', *Musique, filiations et ruptures* (Paris: Cité de la Musique, 2005): 89–96.

[29] Muriel Adamo, 'Les personnages féminins dans les tragédies en musique de Jean-Baptiste Lully : d'une

between leading characters (and therefore singers) is partly invented. Indeed, although the 'baguettes' were gradually and explicitly recorded as an *emploi* within the context of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century classical theatre, the 'mouchoir' was not. The appearance of the handkerchief in numerous visual cues (such as engravings conceived for score printing) is not supported by the existence of an administrative category that would clearly state the existence of a circumscribed category of roles under the label of 'mouchoir'. Therefore, the use of the dichotomy between 'mouchoirs' and 'baguettes' is primarily relevant for modern analytical purposes but runs the risk to foster an incorrect image of the *emploi* at the ARM.[30]

Instead of dwelling on its errors, however, it is more fruitful to consider what question Legrand's theory tried to address. That is to say the absence of inquiry about the interface between opera singers, repertoires, and the administration during the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century. My own work has moved away from investigating the link between female singers and their roles from an aesthetic-focussed narrative based on Legrand's readings. I modified that approach by concentrating on the *emploi* further. Indeed the confusion that underlines Legrand's taxonomy takes place not only around the *types* of *emplois*. More fundamentally, it addresses the definition of the *emploi* itself during the early modern period. This issue led me reorientate the premises of Legrand's investigation. Building on Candiard's criticism of the use of the *emploi* within theatre studies, I challenge the idea that there is a very clearly defined and well-established taxonomy regarding sets of roles during the seventeenth- and early

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approche quantitative à l'étude de la psychologie des personnages', Ph.D. dissertation, Université Toulouse 2, 2002; Magda-Eliza Maftei, 'L'amour – source de tous les pleurs dans les operas de Jean-Baptiste Lully', *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov* 63, vol. 14 (2021): 105–116.

[30] Legrand, 'Baguettes et mouchoirs', footnote no. 2: 'Although the "*baguette* roles" are recorded in classical theatre, and although the handkerchief, just like the fan are common for feminine characters, the systematisation of the opposition between "*baguette* roles" and "*mouchoir* roles" for analytical purposes is my invention.' ('Si les "rôles à baguette" sont attestés dans le théâtre classique et si le mouchoir, tout comme l'éventail, est un accessoire courant pour les personnages féminins, la systématisation de l'opposition "rôle à baguette"/"rôle à mouchoir" à des fins analytiques est de mon fait.')

eighteenth-century at the Opéra. Thus I aim to rethink Legrand's seminal proposition of an *emploi*'s taxonomy, and measure its pertinence by confronting it with historical sources.

As many have already argued, the ARM, as an administrative institution is consubstantial with an understanding of musical and political life in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France.[31] From its creation in 1669, less than a decade after Louis XIV's taking of power after the death of Cardinal Mazarin (1661), the administration of the Paris Opéra fundamentally differed from that of many other operatic organisations in the rest of Europe (driven by the Italian impresario model) precisely because of the organisation and management of its troupe. The ARM flourished in a changeable theatrical landscape, where old troupes were displaced and fused (as exemplified by the birth of the Comédie-Française in 1680).[32] On a fundamental geopolitical ground, the period also recorded a shift in the centre of gravity regarding opera production from the court (Versailles in particular) towards Paris. Time constraints and economic profitability in a context of intense competition (sometimes labelled as 'war') between the troupes, forced people to implement operational working conventions.[33] Some conventions disappeared; other created the baseline of opera production for decades to come. In that context, the advent of the ARM is primarily a question of administrative inventiveness, the story of legal creativity applied in the realm of performance art.

[31] James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music, from Beaujoyeulx to Rameau* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974), 18: 'Any study of the music of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in France must also be a study of the institution from which much of the music issued. Surely no other nation has known the all-pervasive, hierarchical organization that characterised the France of Louis XIV.'

[32] Regarding the Comédie-Française, see Lauren Clay, 'Provincial Actors, the Comédie-Française, and the Business of Performing in Eighteenth-Century France', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 4 (2005): 651–79; Sabine Chaouche, Denis Herlin, and Solveig Serre, *L'Opéra de Paris, la Comédie-Française et l'Opéra-Comique. Approches comparées (1669-2010)* (Paris: École des Chartes, 2012); Stéphanie Lebon, 'La Comédie Française : Évolution et Influences Des Origines Jusqu'au XVIIème Siècle', *Revista De Lenguas Modernas* 20 (2014): 99–131.

[33] On the spectacle wars between theatres during the late reign of Louis XIV, see Guy Spielmann, *Le jeu de l'ordre et du chaos: Comédie et pouvoirs à la fin de règne, 1673–1715* (Paris: Champion, 2002).

My work intends to reinvigorate the intertwined issues of administrative law, private law, and human creativity, a combination rarely explored in the existing scholarship, through the study of the *emploi*.[34] Amongst the levels of uncertainties and cautiousness surrounding the use of the *emploi* in modern scholarship, the administrative dimension of the term can shed some useful light on the functioning of early modern French opera production and the creative process that underlined it. Benoît Dratwicki has highlighted that point when noticing that the notion of *emploi* seems 'absent from administrative documents' although it 'is the key to the troupe's organisation at the Académie Royale de Musique'.[35] He continues:

> [The *emploi*] prevails especially with regard to women, for casting, reallocation [of roles] for recreations from the repertory, and for the assignment of roles at their first creation. Therefore, the notion of the *emploi* impacts directly on the composition of new lyric works, with regard as much to the theatrical aspect (libretto) as to the musical (score) and scenographic (costumes, accessories, decor).[36]

Both the administrative and artistic spheres entertain a substantial relationship that resonates through the *emploi*. However, the norms and conditions (now partly lost) of said relationship need to be made explicit. Why, for example, would the issue of the *emploi* be more salient when it comes to women, as Dratwicki suggests it? Dratwicki's claim echoes that of Jolibert's, who argues that instead of 'groups' or types of 'masks' generally attributed to men, female performers acting in the context of the *commedia*

[34] Note that the recent *Law and Opera* (Springer, 2018), edited by Filippo Annunziata and Giorgio Fabio Colombo, entirely ignores the topic of French early modern opera.
[35] Benoît Dratwicki, 'Tenir la baguette à l'Académie royale de musique au temps de Rameau : étude d'une typologie vocale de l'opéra français du XVIIIe siècle', *Analyse musicale* 73 (2014), 14. See also Dratwicki, 'Chanter *Persée* : l'étude des distributions vocales, une clef de lecture esthétique ?', *Le* Persée *de 1770 à Versailles* (Versailles: CMBV and Centre de Recherche du Château de Versailles, 2016).
[36] Idem: 'La notion d'emploi (ou de genre), quoiqu'absente des documents administratifs, est alors la clé de l'organisation de la troupe de l'Académie royale de musique. Chez les demoiselles, surtout, elle prévaut lors des recrutements, des distributions pour les reprises du répertoire, et de l'attribution des rôles pour les créations. De fait, la notion d'emploi impacte directement la composition des nouveaux ouvrages lyriques, autant sur un plan théâtral (livret) et musical (partition), que scénographique (costumes, accessoires et décors).'

dell'arte are organised according to *emplois*.[37]

The key importance of the *emploi* resides in its normative strength. It engages with complex issues of control and power that are directly related to administrative practices. Placed at the point of convergence of all agents included in the operatic decision-making process, the *emploi* participates in the organisation's structure, the management of the troupe, and the content of the ARM's artistic production. Its analysis opens fruitful avenues of inquiry regarding the study of singers, castings, and their dynamic relationship with the repertory. Ultimately, I aim to re-assess the status of singers as co-creators within the process of opera production, and it is my hope that this dissertation will bring more exposure to the early modern French opera singers in general, and to the legal and administrative structures they navigated.

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Given its close relationship with administrative law, the investigation of the *emploi* at the ARM necessitates to carefully select clearly-defined historical sequences that align with the administrative structure of the institution. In the eighteenth century, the adoption of a new form of collegial management at the ARM intersected with Gluck's reforms around the 1770s; thus it initially represented the chronological boundary for my scholarly investigation of the dialectic between the ARM's troupe, its management of castings, and the evolution of the emploi. However, I found that the first few decades of the Opéra had not been explored thoroughly regarding singers' co-creativity and the *emploi*. Although I have provided some key insights into the period after 1715 in order to compare specific developments and case studies, I chose to reconsider the

[37] Jolibert, *La Commedia dell'arte*, 39.

chronological scope of my work.

The death of Louis XIV in 1715 coincided with the publication of the ARM's first official set of rules (1713–1714). Due to their strong impact on the administrative framework of the Paris Opéra, these sets of rules offer a natural boundary for the study of the *emploi*. Moreover, Louis XIV's reign provided a coherent unity in administrative and political terms. During this time, a new theatrical landscape emerged, featuring inventive administrations and foreign influences (primarily Italian) in terms of repertoires, singers, and best singing practices. Restricting my study to the period between 1669 and 1715 also allowed me to conduct a more thorough analysis of the singers and their roles. I delved into the very first troupes of the ARM and its successive administrative teams, beginning with Pierre Perrin (1669–1672), then Jean-Baptiste Lully (1672–1687), and finally Jean-Nicolas de Francine and his diverse associates, with a major focus on the years 1687–1715.

Tightening further the scope of my analysis, I also decided to focus on female singers. Conveniently, this choice allowed me to prevent from spreading myself too thinly, although I occasionally quote some case studies of male singers in order to allow fruitful comparisons and give more depth to the argument. My choice to work on women for exploring the *emploi* at the ARM and was guided by several remarks made by scholars such as Bernard Jolibert, Sylvie Bouissou, and Benoît Dratwicki. All three suggested that the *emploi* represents a special interface in the case of roles assigned to women.[38] This is perhaps particularly pertinent because female singers in France during the early modern period were not classified according to vocal tessituras, as I analyse in the second chapter of the dissertation. The only distinction rarely made by some seventeenth- and eighteenth-century commentators regarding *dessus* and *bas-dessus*

[38] Jolibert, *La Commedia dell'arte*, 39; Sylvie Bouissou, *Crimes, cataclysmes et maléfices dans l'opéra baroque en France*. (Minerve, 2011); Dratwicki, 'Tenir la baguette', 14.

relies on flimsy explanations and its application is sporadic. It is thus seductive to use instead the *emploi* as a drive for easy classification applied to female singers' repertoire. But the match between female's skills and talents regarding late seventeenth century music is not self-evident, especially so without any clear typology of voices. Finally, the social and economic agency of women in early modern society adds to the specificity of the question. In particular, the issue of musical training directly engages with the *emploi* and its handover within the troupe and from one generation of singer to another. Again here, the individual agency of women needs to be explored in greater details. Their musical training relied exclusively on very personal relationships, either with members of their own family or with mentors. The extent of their support network played an immense role in the development of their career and intertwined with complex issues related to their sex, i.e. the fascination for their sexualised aura, which could both prop up their fame or undo their efforts.

Finally, the availability and reliability of historical sources are crucial factors in framing this work. The study of the *emploi* requires researchers to differentiate between levels of authority, which are not always clearly stated. Therefore, to ensure accuracy, it is necessary to address a wide range of evidence, which incorporates documents and methodological perspectives that have not been traditionally considered relevant in the existing literature on repertoires and castings. Doing so, my sources fall into three main categories.

First, I have gathered bodies of evidence that are of an administrative nature and come from various institutional bodies, mostly from the king's administration and the ARM, as well as from civil registers. Those include letters patent (*lettres patentes*), rulings from the Council of State (*arrêts du Conseil d'État*), the ARM's internal regulations (*règlements*), salaries under the form of receipts (*quittances*), special

certificates (*brevets*), ordinances (*ordonnances*), individual contracts, birth, baptism, and wedding certificates, and various notarial acts. Crucially, few administrative records have survived from before 1750 and there exist no formalised set of rules at the ARM until 1713. This complicates research into the earlier years of the ARM as it leaves a gap of forty-four years from the establishment of the ARM up to 1713 open for interpretation regarding the administrative and artistic practices related to the *emploi*, however it might have been conceived. In order to overcome that difficulty, it is necessary to examine a variety of sources and testimonies, even from other institutional bodies (including, for example, the king's administration) and attempt to provide the least disconnected picture possible. Jean-Baptiste Lully's tight grip has left sufficient traces to show that singers followed clear guidelines. Additionally, the multiplication of parody 'constitutions' after Louis XIV's death (such as Meusnier de Querlon's, Letexier de Forge's, or other anonymous works) point out under the cover of humour the messiness of later forms of management, which can be compared to former practices.[39] Despite the preposterous aspect of their tones or some of their claims, all of these sources might suggest that the failure of good regulation practices is a form of legislative inconsistency that derailed (or at least differed) from the period ante-1715.

The second category of sources embraces testimonies by contemporary commentators. These writings come generally in the form of memoirs or letters in the case of personal writings, or in the form of pamphlets, treatises, or scholarly work in which the authors aim to bestow on their readers a more critical and comprehensive form of knowledge. Some of the writers themselves can be more or less entangled with

[39] *La Musique du diable ou Le Mercure galant dévalisé* (Paris: Robert le Turc, rue d'Enfer, 1711); Anne-Gabriel Meusnier de Querlon, *Règlement pour l'Opéra de Paris, avec des nottes historiques* (À Utopie, 1743); Letexier de Forge, *Idées sur l'opéra, avec un projet d'établissement d'une véritable Académie de musique qui aurait la direction de l'Opéra & de l'Opéra-comique ; projet suivant lequel les auteurs seraient mieux récompensés et les principaux acteurs encouragés en les faisant partager aux profits* (1764; F-Pn, Département Littérature et Art, YF-7727).

the creative process of opera production, whether they were invested in the success of a singer's career or that they worked directly or indirectly for the ARM.

Finally, the dissertation aims to confront hypotheses surrounding the *emploi* with performance material, which encompasses scores, librettos and other types of documents specifically crafted for various sequences of opera production, which can also inform us about the rest of the stage production. As in the case of administrative bodies of evidence, most of the relevant records such as lists of solo singers, chorus, orchestral players, dancers, administrative employees, officials in the ARM's School of Music (École du Magazin), and *pensionnaires* are now lost or incomplete.[40] Before 1699, only librettos for the performances at the court present some of the performers' names with very few exceptions (e.g. Lorenzani's *Orontée* in 1688). It is only after 1699 (with the revival of Lully's *Proserpine* on 31 July 1699) that the cast lists are systematically written down for performances happening at the ARM. Then, the new convention was to divide the cast into separate lists of singers and dancers, while still maintaining the usual separation between the prologue and the rest of the work. From that point onwards, the reading of the castings is easier, although it is necessary to keep in mind that cast lists were rarely updated to reflect the inevitable substitutions that occurred. Some speculation remains unavoidable and some conclusions might only be tentative — which will be verified, modified, or disproved in the light of future studies.

Finally, since scores are brought into the fabric of the argumentation, this raises some issues regarding edition. As Rebecca Harris-Warrick notes, 'only a handful of modern editions in full score have been published to date, not all of them reliable. The

[40] For example, the *Etat général des acteurs, actrices des chœurs, danseurs, danseuses, et des symphonistes des Ballets du Roi* from 1747 only gives the names of the singers, without any other indication regarding their salary or other elements (F-Po, Archives 18 [21]). See also *Liste des sujets du chant, de la danse et de l'orchestre, comparaison entre 1756, 1806, 1856* (F-Po, Archives 18 [22]); and Joseph de Laporte, *Les Spectacles de Paris, ou Suite du Calendrier historique et chronologique des théâtres* (Paris: Duchesne, 1754), 23 and sq.: 'État présent des personnes qui composent l'Académie royale de musique'.

most extensive series, the *Chefs d'œuvre de l'opéra français classique*, exhibits too much editorial tampering and cutting to allow its piano-vocal scores to serve as the basis for scholarly study.'[41] When possible, I have used manuscripts from the composers available at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (i.e. library Richelieu and museum-library of the Opera). Otherwise, I have relied on the editions published by the king's printer, Robert Ballard who offers a comprehensive and unified set of scores.

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My aim to recover and interpret the evidence of creative strategies from an administrative angle during the early modern period flows from a diversity of theoretical works from the early twenty-first century onwards that revived the interest in the concept of 'creativity' from various standpoints.[42] The faculty of being creative, understood as the ability or power to create, is not just a philosophical concept — such as Plato's consideration about *poiesis* (ποίησις), Aquinas's apologetics on God as creator, or phenomenological stances about the structure of experience and consciousness. 'Creativity' is also the bedrock of most human activities, at an individual or broader level, and a valuable angle for gauging their effects in history. In the field of musicology, it is found at the heart of recent scholarship, such as studies by Sabine Chaouche, Rebecca Herissone and Alan Howard that address the shifts in human creativity in music-related activities during the seventeenth century.[43] Their

[41] Rebecca Harris-Warrick, *Dance and Drama in French Baroque Opera: A History* (CUP, 2016), 212.
[42] This has been particularly true from the point of view of literary theory as embodied by John Hope Mason, *The Value of Creativity: The Origins and Emergence of a Modern Belief* (Routledge, 2003); Ronald Carter, *Language and Creativity: The Art of Common Talk* (London & New York: Routledge, 2004); Derek Atridge, *The Singularity of Literature* (Routledge, 2004); and Rob Pope, *Creativity: Theory, History, Practice* (London: Routledge, 2005).
[43] Alan Howard, 'Understanding Creativity', *The Ashgate Research Companion to Henry Purcell*

interdisciplinary approach for investigating the creativity, *savoir-faire*, and artistic innovation has been labelled by Andrew Walkling as a crucial way 'to understand the workings and uses of cultural materials'.[44]

In parallel, many scholars have already made a strong case for accepting the great and special importance of the singer within the creative process of opera production. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, reactions against the existing scholarship that privileged the author have been distilled in many musical issues and topics. In that vein, an increasing number of twenty-first-century studies are directly engaging with performers as co-creative agents. Suzanne Aspen, when delineating the case for the crafting of the modern singer, argued that '[t]he centrality of the performer and the performance to the genre's very structure means that examination of the influence of the singer, moving beyond clichés about diva-ish behaviour, can transform our understanding [of opera].'[45] This new focus around the performer in opera studies has been particularly true within the field of Italian practices, as represented with scholars such as Melania Bucciarelli, Ellen Rosand, Kirsten Gibson, and Antonia L. Banducci.[46] When it comes to French opera, however, the direction of travel regarding the integration of singers within the scope of analysis has been more confused. The use of gossipy elements regarding singers' lives is a prominent across the scholarship, and although anecdotal evidence is not null per se, many nineteenth- and early twentieth-

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(Routledge, 2012), 65–113; Rebecca Herissone and Alan Howard (ed.), *Concepts of Creativity in Seventeenth-Century England* (The Boydell Press, 2013); Herissone. *Musical Creativity in Restoration England* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Sabine Chaouche (ed.), *European Drama and Performance Studies: The Stage and Its Creative Processes (16th-21st Century)*, 2 vol. (Classiques Garnier, 2019–2020).

[44] Andrew Walkling, '"Big with New Events and some Unheard Success": Absolutism and Creativity at the Restoration Court", *Concepts of Creativity,* 33–34.

[45] Suzanne Aspden, 'Crafting the Eighteenth-Century Singer: Introduction', *Cambridge Opera Journal* 27, no. 3 (2015): 187.

[46] Melania Bucciarelli, *Italian Opera and European Theatre, 1680-1720 : Plots, Performers, Dramaturgies* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000); Ellen Rosand (ed.), *Readying Cavalli's Operas for the Stage. Manuscript, Edition, Production* (Routledge, 2013); Kirsten Gibson, 'Author, Musician, Composer: Creator?', *Concepts of Creativity in Seventeenth-Century England*, (The Boydell Press, 2013), 63–86; Banducci, 'Acteurs and Actrices as Muses', 2015.

century scholars have cosmetically played with the label of 'truth' to wrap those anecdotes into more trustworthy narratives.[47]

Although the concept of creativity presents a fruitful avenue to engage with the function, career trajectory, and overall agency of the singer within the opera production process, the method for investigating performers and performance remains an open field for debate. How can the postmodern researcher possibly measure early modern individual creativity? By definition, it is difficult to find the paths of evidence for gauging with precision the impact of actors on the creative process, whether it is during the moment of performance, before, or after. 'Creativity' applied to the field of opera must acknowledge the ever-moving plurality of agents and the intertwined processes within a 'time' of creation that extends beyond the scope of typical rehearsals and the stage performance itself. Taking all of this into account poses major epistemological and methodological issues, as artists' creative agency cannot be measured with the same tools and in the same way as for goods. Additionally, material constraints that participate in opera production are also and foremost living material: namely, the vocal and physical skills of the performers, in addition to their personal wishes, preferences, and their social skills. By their nature, they are ephemeral and therefore complicated to assess through written historical evidence.

First and foremost, then, handling performance or 'music as process' as an object of study implies the pursuit of a specific intellectual effort and carefulness regarding language.[48] As performance deals with issues of process, in space and in time, language often lacks synthetic and concise ways to describe it. Scholarship about performance

[47] See, for example, Arthur Pougin, *Les vrais créateurs de l'Opéra français : Perrin et Cambert* (Paris: Charavay frères, 1881); Léon Vallas, *La véritable Histoire de Françoise Journet, chanteuse d'opéra 1675-1722* (Lyon: A. Rey, 1912). This habit has not fundamentally disappeared from later scholarship, as one can see in Sabine Chaouche's *La scène en contrechamp. Anecdotes françaises et traditions de jeu au siècle des Lumières* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005).

[48] Philip Bohlman's formulation of 'music as process' is defined against the nineteenth-century model of 'music as object' ('Ontologies of Music', *Rethinking Music* [Oxford and New York: OUP, 1999], 18).

studies resembles sometimes a language-in-process, a hurdle that is doubled by the specific difficulties related to the study of the early modern period, an area of inquiry in which musical practices are sometimes, frustratingly, very fluid and hard to grasp.[49] That issue highlights further the importance of redefining the shapes and contours of the *emploi* in order to consider it at its just value.

Given the intricate interplay of decision-making actors and influences surrounding the *emploi*, I argue that a fruitful approach is to view these dialectics through the prism of constraints, powers, and decision-making processes. By adopting this perspective, I explore how the emploi spurred the development of strategic solutions for dealing with opera production. Indeed not all types of creative processes are the same. In the context of the *commedia dell'arte*, for example, the process of creation is clearly that of a 'composition-in-performance' using very tight characters moulds.[50] Yet this model is not universal.

In the existing scholarship about early modern French opera, little has been written regarding a theoretical framework that could help to measure individual creativity and agency in opera production. Antonia L. Banducci is one of the first scholars who has articulated a fruitful epistemological framework by delineating a 'performer-based perspective'. She argues that the investigation of typecasting is a matter of scaling, going from back and forth between the big picture and the individual level of each actors invested in opera production, with a great emphasis on the singers. Looking at casting via the perspective of the actors and actresses combines a long-term vision of their repertoire with a granular analysis for specific roles. Such combination is

[49] Performance arts scholars have often used metaphorical structures in order to size the conceptual substance of performance arts. Image of the chaos, with trials, errors, 'abandonments', 'reversals', and 'unexpected appearances', arguably possesses elements of Judeo-Christian tradition. See Florian Siaud, 'De ce qui naît en premier à Ce qui meurt en dernier', *Jeu: revue de théâtre* 136, no. 3 (2010): 74.
[50] Robin Diwon and Tim Fitzpatrick, 'Creating Commedia. Cognition, Composition-in-performance and the Commedia dell'arte', *European Drama and Performance Studies* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2019), vol. 1, 25–46.

buttressed by an analysis of the performers' reported skills and personal interests. According to Banducci, this 'performer-based perspective' offers a method capable of accounting for the complex creative relationship that binds together composers, librettists, and performers at the Parisian Opera as it seeks to unveil the special dialectic that binds Lully and the singers in his troupe.[51] As a secondary goal, it also participates to the interrogation of the status of the singers, originally a servant but increasingly acknowledged as an employee, with specific duties and rights, from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards.

Building on Banducci's 'performer-based perspective', I seek to detail the dialectic between singers and the rest of the agents invested in the creative process of opera production — of which the administration is one of the most prominent. On the one hand, singers have specific, sometimes immutable traits that need to be properly addressed by the composers and the librettists in order to successfully model their plot and characters. On the other, choices driven by the ARM's administration in terms of casting and rehearsal practices remodelled (or at least adjusted) the performers' skills and expectations. This back-and-forth movement, which included at its heart the point of view of singers, represents the cornerstone of my analysis. It allows for comparison between different significant segments of the history of ARM's governance. Lully's exceptionalism (in terms of the co-creative dynamic) can be somewhat boiled down to the fact that the composer and his singers worked together for a long enough time to mutually influence each other — which had a particularly significant importance vis-à-vis the establishment of the *emplois*. My dissertation tests that idea by allowing comparisons with the periods that directly preceded and followed Lully's directorship.

[51] Banducci, 'Acteurs and Actrices as Muses', §16.1.

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The first part of this dissertation addresses the fact that ARM's administrative practices with regard to operatic creation were not always a matter of positive law. Despite the fact that some documents settle core issues of the troupe's management, not every single step and device of the opera production process was addressed or was detailed enough. This is particularly salient in the case of the *emploi*, which is a crucial concept but virtually absent from early sources. As the *emploi* is in the making during the first decades of the ARM's history, the first two chapters aim to demonstrate the creativity residing at the heart of the administration, which led to the advent of that concept.

The first chapter consists of a preliminary exploration of the appearance and use of the *emploi* as an administrative tool, from the creation of the Paris Opéra until the 1780s, from which period more bodies of evidence have survived. The argument is two-fold. First, I focus on the administrative arsenal of the ARM, which borrowed practices from the constitution and development of the king's administrative state as a 'planner' or 'developer' under the Ancien Régime. Such a perspective on the *emploi* engages with crucial questions regarding casting practices. First, employment as the selection of performers and crafting of intern sets of rules regarding payment and retirement. Then, distribution, that is to say the association of a set of roles with an individual with a particular set of skills. Finally, classification: the elaboration of a performer hierarchy which combines talents, importance of the roles payed, and seniority.

In chapter two, I challenge the initial assumptions by adopting a 'performer-based view', again looking at the ARM's development over the long-term. This method consists in changing the scale of the study by adopting the perspective of the individual singers when assessing the means and outcomes of opera production. It reveals that the

concept of the *emploi* emerged from transgressions made to the norm, rather than from prescriptive guidelines decreed from the Académie's directors in a purely top-down approach. I deal in particular with the management of the soloists, and with the relationship of the performers with the audience. I also engage with two elements that directly disrupted the efforts of the Académie's administration to create stable hierarchies and taxonomies. First, the typology of voices. Second, the concept of '*genre*' that, when applied to an individual in the context of theatre or opera studies, concerns the innate and learned skills or qualities of a particular performer.

Regarding the former, French early modern music presents a lack of clear distinction between the female vocal ranges, which blurs to some extent the process of categorisation of the roles. As for the latter, if the *genre* consists in the stamp a singer puts on the definition of a given *emploi*, it reinforces the idea that *emplois* are not absolute and immutable categories of roles but can, rather, evolve in nonlinear ways, sometimes unpredictable, possibly from one performer to another.

In the second part of the dissertation, I give a thorough description of the singers and their repertoire, with a comprehensive background of the different sequences of the ARM's administration. Doing so, I seek to connect the evolution of the troupe with that of the roles and lyrical genres. This analysis allows for a better understanding of how the specific entrepreneurial and administrative dimensions of the ARM (fundamentally different to that of the Italian models) shaped the making of the *emploi*.

This section of the dissertation is organised around two main chronological sections: first, the years between 1669 and 1687 (i.e. from the start of the Opéra until the death of Jean-Baptiste Lully), then between 1687 and 1715. Chapters three and four engage with the very early years of the ARM under Pierre Perrin's (1669–1672) and Jean-Baptiste Lully's (1672–1687) directorships and juxtapose the findings of the first

two chapters' study of the troupe with the evolution of the repertoire. This repertoire contains a great variety of genres (including *pastorales héroïques*, *tragédies en musique*, and ballets) and encloses different artistic trends that transverse all forms of art in the late seventeenth century (especially around the pastoral as a theme). Additionally, that study brings more nuances to the mainstream conception of the ARM under Jean-Baptiste Lully's directorship, which has traditionally projected a biased image of an authoritarian owner-director.

Finally, in chapter five, I replicate the structure of chapters three and four but apply it for the period following Lully's activity over the ARM, around Jean-Nicolas de Francine and his various associates and replacements. This segment of the ARM's history coincides with major changes around the genre of ballet, which has been little investigated in details although very recent works such as that by Rebecca Harris-Warrick and Barbara Nestola have started to turn the tide.[52] Importantly, the structure of the establishment under the directorship of Lully's successors became more layered and included a greater number of stakeholders. New challenges arose regarding the management of the singers, which engaged with the development of roles, categories of roles, and, at a broader scale, the development of genres.

[52] Harris-Warrick, *Dance and Drama*, 2016; Barbara Nestola, *L'air italien sur la scène des théâtres parisiens (1687-1715)* (Brepols, 2020).

First Part — The emploi at the intersection between written and unwritten conventions

Like any other institution, the Académie Royale de Musique (ARM) was structured by an administration, with specific rules and practices. The principal function of that administration was to find ways to streamline the sequences of opera production so as to avoid cumbersome workloads and ensure profits.

Despite on-going turbulences mostly related to the poor state of its finances, the Opéra's administration proved an unexpected level of resilience throughout the eighteenth century and especially at the time of the Revolution, although the new regime aimed at eradicating all institutions perceived as closely intertwined with the king, and therefore 'despotic'. This robustness was the result of strong administrative skills that played in favour of the organisational stability of the business.

Looking retrospectively at the history of the institution, the administrator (*intendant*) of the Menus-Plaisirs Denis-Pierre-Jean Papillon de La Ferté, wrote in 1789 a treatise untitled *Précis sur l'Opéra et son Administration et Réponses a différentes objections*, in which he proposed to see the administrative development of the ARM in four sequences. First, Papillon de La Ferté argued that the 1660s involved a process of negotiation between entrepreneurs and the more powerful royal authorities with regard to the goals of the new institution (including performance, entertainment, and political propaganda) and the necessary technologies for meeting those. Once those issues had been settled in the institution's founding documents, the ARM could then emerge under the entrepreneur's tenure as a hybrid, innovative form through the recombination of organisational models on which the founding parties had drawn in their initial negotiations. This period, according to Papillon de La Ferté, covers the very first years

of the ARM's existence, during Perrin's directorship until the start of Lully's (1669–1672). Thirdly, Papillon de La Ferté affirmed that the Opéra entered a phase of institutionalisation under Lully (1672–1687) during which the owner organised mechanisms of legal protection and genre creation. The final phase presented by Papillon de La Ferté discloses how politicians recast the Opéra's Ancien Régime identity as beneficial to Revolutionary France.

What Papillon de La Ferté omitted to tell, however, is the details for each of those sequences and, more specifically, what concretely participated in the decision-making process surrounding the structure of the ARM's administrative framework. As a newly established private business, the Paris Opéra was born in a theatrical landscape that provided few models to copy. From its creation in 1669, it was intended to work as a hybrid system, which was absolutely unique in Europe. Within the French capital, the private management of a theatre was a new enterprise and a risky one: before the creation of the Comédie-Française in 1680, theatres were formed and dissolved at a regular pace like those of the fairs, and permanent troupes functioned primarily thanks to patronage. Outside Paris, in the provinces, itinerant theatre troupes survived financially only with great difficulties. In order to grant the ARM some relative stability, private administrators and investors were under some sort of supervision from the king's own administration. The latter supervised the general functioning of opera production.

That trusteeship has been widely discussed in the existing scholarship, particularly through the prism of national identity as Louis XIV aimed to foster the development of a musical genre that could celebrate himself through operatic plots and go the distance against Italian cultural hegemony across Europe. Yet the obsessive commentary on the relationship binding the crown and the Opéra under the banner of cultural politics has put out of focus discrete elements that directly formed the origins

and development of the *emploi*. Sketches of the ARM's sociocultural and administrative conditions during the Ancien Régime go beyond the prism of Louis XIV and his own administration.

Reassessing the importance of the troupe's management at the ARM exposes the relative lack of interest in the topic by seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries theorists. Commentaries regarding the ways theatre agents handled issues of time management, amount of plays, roles and elements on stage, organisation between all the individuals involved, and certain aspects of competition within the French and European theatre markets, have to be looked for in a scattered network of historical sources. Few studies have addressed concrete issues related to the practical means of production and, in particular, the relationship between the singers (as individuals and part of a troupe), the composers, the librettists, and the operatic roles. Graham Sadler and Antonia Banducci have addressed the various usages and purposes of inventories and prompt notes.[53] Historian Guy Thuillier is the only scholar who has written a study regarding the Opéra's pension system over three centuries.[54] Benoît Dratwicki has published some work on the technical and relational aspects of the troupe's management.[55]

I aim to add to this scholarship by exploring further the ways *emplois* were intertwined with the administrative fabric of the ARM, and the general organisation and development of French opera production. The *emploi*, when it is broadly understood as a stock of roles, is generally tackled from an aesthetic angle, which is too often oblivious

[53] Graham Sadler, 'Rameau's singers and players at the Paris Opéra. A little-known inventory of 1738', *Early music* 11, no. 4 (1983), 453–467. Antonia L. Banducci, 'Staging a Tragédie En Musique: A 1748 Promptbook of Campra's *Tancrède*', *Early Music* 21, no. 2 (1993), 180–90. Antonia L. Banducci, 'Staging and its dramatic effect in French baroque opera: evidence from prompt notes', *Eighteenth-Century Music* 1, no. 1 (2004), 5–28.
[54] Guy Thuillier, 'Pour un tricentenaire : Les pensions de retraite des artistes de l'Opéra de 1698 à 1914', *La Revue administrative*, no. 299 (1997), 509–517.
[55] Benoît Dratwicki, 'La troupe de l'Académie royale et son évolution au XVIIIe siècle. L'exemple de la gestion de Francoeur et Rebel (1757-1767)', *L'Opéra de Paris sous l'ancien Régime. Approches plurielles* (2015), 18–45.

of the administrative framework of performance arts. Yet, understood as a product of negotiations, the *emploi* highlights key relationships between the singers, their institution, and their audiences, as well as among singers themselves.

Different commentators from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have highlighted the administrative dimension of the *emploi* at the ARM. For example, Maupoint (ca. 1688–ca. 1753), lawyer and cultural commentator, uses the term in his 1733 monograph about French theatre.[56] There, Maupoint uses the *emploi* so as to designate a position in an administrative structure while he refers to the notion of role either as a specific fictional character (which can vary according to the nature of theatrical genres, the author's intentions, and the performance) or as a set of characters that collectively function as a sign (i.e. a socio-cultural abstraction associated with an actantial function).[57] Likewise, nineteenth-century Charles Nuitter and Ernest Thoinan's history of the Paris Opéra use the word *emploi* in order to highlight the fact that vocal soloists — like members of the choirs, of the ballet, and of the orchestra — are first and foremost employees of the ARM.[58] Later commentators, such as Pierre-David Lemazurier, Victor Fournel, and Arthur Pougin also assume that the notion of the *emploi* is somehow fundamental for understanding early modern opera production.[59]

However, the term does not clearly and systematically appears in seventeenth historical sources that include administrative papers, police records, journals, and personal writings. The word is nowhere to be found in the patent letters that formalised the ARM's creation on 28 June 1669.[60] Or that proclaimed the reattribution of the

[56] Maupoint, *Bibliothèque des théâtres* (Paris: Pierre Prault, 1733).
[57] For example, Maupoint quotes the following sets of roles (p. 35): 'the Roles of Followers ('les Rolles de suivantes'), 'the Roles of Female Lovers' ('les Rolles d'Amantes').
[58] Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, 207.
[59] Lemazurier (known as Valleran), *L'Opinion du Parterre*, 1805; Fournel, *Curiosités théâtrales,* 1859; Pougin, *Dictionnaire historique,* 1885.
[60] F-Pan, O1/13, *Lettres-patentes du roi pour établir par tout le royaume des Académies d'opéra, ou représentations en musique en langue française, sur le pied de celles d'Italie, données en faveur de*

privilege to Jean-Baptiste Lully in 1672.[61] Similarly, treatises on the art of singing or acting do not include the term. Although it is common that many different writings from the period can be oblivious of stating the meaning of words that are considered ordinary and obvious, the absence of such concept in seventeenth-century writings regarding the ARM's creative process is undeniably problematic.

Reassessing the *emploi* at the ARM highlights the fact that the study of the court administration, in the context of the development of the French modern and bureaucratic state, represents a particularly useful angle of inquiry for assessing the administrative dimension of performance arts during the Ancien Régime. The eighteenth-century push for a greater form of centralisation, particularly around the issue of finances, as monitored by Necker, for example, had a large impact on the functioning of theatre structures. The Maison du Roi, however, from which the Opéra depended, argued until the Revolution for the 'preservation of its *états*', a system of documentation related to the classification and hierarchisation of employees that is explored in the first chapter.[62] Although the minister Amelot (who was in charge of the Maison du Roi at the end of the eighteenth century) eventually conceded to a greater degree of centralised management in January 1779, some areas remained the privacy of the king's personal administration. Despite the fact that the Maison du Roi had transferred all of the états that related the pensions it had the charge of, omitted to include those that existed on the specific états of the Écuries [stables], the Garde-meuble [furnitures store], and the Opera.'[63]

It is remarkable that the ARM has rarely been the subject of analysis through the prism of administrative law. Indeed, apart from an extremely valuable doctoral thesis by

Pierre Perrin, introducteur des ambassadeurs, et révoquées en faveur de Lully, au mois de mars 1672, d'après une note manuscrite.
[61] F-Pan, O1/16 and E/1766.
[62] Benoît Carré, 'La comptabilité des pensions de cour au XVIIIe siècle', *Comptabilités* 11 (2019), §48. https://journals.openedition.org/comptabilites/2354
[63] F-Pan, O1/656, *Relevé des pensions dans le département de la Maison du Roi jusqu'au 1er janvier 1785*, no. 84.

Victoria Johnson, who has explored the connection between cultural politics and Opéra's administrative skills and structure, very few scholarly works present a comprehensive vision of the Opéra's administration, as a structure and a hierarchy.[64] Elements related to the administrative frameworks and agents arise through the agglomeration of legal texts collected and translated by Caroline Wood and Graham Sadler in *French Baroque Opera: A Reader*.[65] Detailed enquiries about the ARM's personnel are generally focused on the mid and especially late eighteenth century, after the administrative supervision of the Opéra was delegated for the first time to the City of Paris in 1749, after which more bodies of evidences have survived.[66]

The Italian model of production offers a useful point of comparison for this study. Since Charles IX and throughout the seventeenth century, in particular under the influence of Cardinal Mazarin, the French court had become acquainted with the Italian impresarial scheme of production. Various Italian artists, ranging from composers to architects and stage designers, were regularly invited to perform in front of the king. Their industry, thriving through the nascent liberal, market-driven economic system in Europe, which facilitated the dispersal of performers and their repertoires, was creatively adaptive.[67] Reinhard Strohm describes 'Italian *virtuosi* and *virtuose*' as 'employees who could be hired across Europe, in the same way as fencing masters,

[64] Victoria Johnson, 'Founding culture: Art, Politics and Organization at the Paris Opera, 1669-1792' (PhD dissertation, Colombia University, 2002).
[65] Caroline Wood and Graham Sadler, *French Baroque Opera: A Reader* (London & New York: Routledge, 2017).
[66] Youri Carbonnier, 'Le personnel musical de l'Opéra de Paris sous le règne de Louis XVI', *Histoire, économie et société* 22, no. 2 (2003), 177-206. Solveig Serre and Caroline Giron-Panel, 'Un fermier au tripot: Anne-Pierre-Jacques Vismes du Valgay et l'Académie royale de musique (1778-1780)', *Revue de musicologie* 96, no. 1 (2010): 73-89; Solveig Serre, *L'Opéra de Paris : 1749-1790* (Paris: CNRS, 2011).
[67] Reinhard Strohm gives an account of such system in *Dramma per Musica Italian Opera Seria of the Eighteenth Century* ([New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1997], 10): 'An Italian impresario was able to hire all the performers, including the composers, from anywhere, according to what his financial resources, taste and patronage would allow. The contract of work, called scrittura, concerned a single production or more often a whole season, the latter particularly when it came to singers, scenographers and costume designers. At court, existing employees could be 'borrowed' for the opera productions, for example the court poet, architect, the chapel singers and trumpeters, or the prince might impose his favourite chamber artists on the opera management.

cooks or soldiers, and without the pretext of a special patronal relationship'.[68]

The business model of this Italian production system brought to the fore intricate practices in terms of administration, casting, and writing regarding the intersection of roles (or sets of roles) and the performers. On the one hand, seventeenth-century Italian opera incorporated a recognisable system of role categories partly inherited from the *commedia dell'arte*, with dramatic types endorsing theatrical conventions and respecting a form of vocal typology. On the other, some soloists sometimes had the opportunity to choose their characters according to the scores they personally possessed or were eager to perform.

In contrast, French theatre troupes evolved according to a more centralised system. Between the reigns of Henri IV (1572-1610) and Louis XIV (who ruled alone after Mazarin's death in 1661), the number of musicians increased in parallel of the growing of the state administrative structure, which progressively welcomed a greater number of skilled staff. The general structure of the institution dedicated to musical entertainment at the court was called the Musique du Roi. It was composed of three ensembles: the Écurie, the Chapelle, and the Chambre. All three were reunited under the supervision of the Menus-Plaisirs department, which managed the logistics and administration of all types of courtly festivities, ordinary and extraordinary events, within the Maison du Roi (King's Household). The court official in charge of the Menus-Plaisirs was part of the bodies of *intendants*, placed at the top of the most highly graded civil servants alongside *fermiers généraux* and ministers, under whose jurisdiction the administration of the Opera fell.

When the court moved to Versailles in the early 1680s, the general structure for

[68] Strohm, *The Eighteenth-Century Diaspora of Italian Music and Musicians* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2001), 11.

musical entertainment was fully developed in a form that remained stable until the arrival of Necker (1776) and the subsequent 1789 Revolution. The court's artistic activities, in addition to those happening in Paris, created huge incentives for singers to come and work in the region. Naturally, individual powerful figures could create their own ensembles and important urban centres of patronage and work opportunities existed throughout the French provinces. Those influxes triggered dynamics of competition between musicians — composers and performers alike — as Thierry Favier, among other scholars, has shown.[69] However, only the king could grant the ownership privilege for the rights related to a place and to the performance of a specific genre on stage.

The legal influence of the king's administration over theatres went much further. The Opéra initially flourished with no clear institutional template other than that of the king's administrative structure, which stronghold over courtly artistic activities became a model to copy for businesses related to performance arts. As I investigate the issue of *emploi*, I aim to point out how the legal traditions of the Maison du Roi, as part of a broader cultural environment, informed the administration of late seventeenth-century theatres and troupes. More particularly, I aim to closely observe how the circulation of this state's legal model codified in very specific ways the baseline for operatic production and creative issues at the Académie in particular.

The practice of casting represents one of the crucial administrative tasks necessary for the successful execution of a production. During the early modern period, the concept of a troupe director organising roles into consistent categories to establish a clear hierarchy among the singers was not a novel idea. Such practice was already

[69] Thierry Favier, 'Concert et espace musical en province : étude comparative des concerts à Dijon et à Lyon au XVIIIe siècle', *Espaces et lieux de concert en Europe 1700-1920* (Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2008), 147–182; 'Le maître de musique d'Église et le concert en province au XVIIIe siècle', *Le métier du maître de musique d'église du XVIe siècle au début du XIXe. Activités, sociologie, carrières* (Brepols, 2020), 243–259.

discernible within the Italian theatrical companies, whether their repertoire was spoken or sung. Scholars in the realm of theatre studies such as Max Fuchs, David Trott, and Martine de Rougemont, have outlined the contours of casting practices in seventeenth-century French spoken theatre.[70] The harder the socio-economic conditions, the more theatre troupes in provinces sought to streamline the processes of production, including the distribution of the roles among a troupe and their transmission from one generation of actor to another. The assemblage of a set of roles granted to one actor who was clearly identifiable within the hierarchy of a troupe came to be known as an *emploi* in French. Building on Fuchs's extensive research in local archives, Rougemont affirmed that the progressive strengthening of *emplois*' codifications in provincial troupes and theatres during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made some of them 'almost impermeable' to each other — especially between comic and tragic registers.[71] According to her, the rigidifying process that made different codes attributed to each *emploi* impervious to each other facilitated the distribution of roles amongst actors.[72]

Addressing a subtle interpersonal level of decision-making, the first part of the dissertation outlines both the explicitness and the implicitness of the administrative rules surrounding the *emploi*, with all the discrete variables around its implementation and development, in a two-fold approach. Starting by comparing the contexts of creation for the Comédie-Française and the Opéra, the first chapter dissects the *emploi* along the

[70] Max Fuchs, *La Vie théâtrale en province au XVIIIe siècle. Personnel et répertoire* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1986); David Trott, *Théâtre du XVIIIe siècle. Jeux, écritures, regards* (Montpellier: Espaces, 2000); Martine de Rougemont, *La vie théâtrale en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2001).

[71] Rougemont, *La vie théâtrale en France au XVIIIe siècle*, 65: 'For its own repertoire, France [from the seventeenth-century] develops the notion of *emploi*, and the types. Comparing these with the situation in England is revealing: face to face with the general trend of the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramaturgies, Ben Jonson had tried in the beginning of the seventeenth century to display a 'comedy of humours' which would have conformed to Horace's ideas of convenience; although it was admired, the rigor of his system never impacted the acting nor the writing of his fellow countrymen. On the contrary, the French could easily split into tragic and comic registers, and the actors were distributing amongst themselves the multiples and almost impermeable categories of *emplois* that the eighteenth century codified.'

[72] Rougemont, ibid.

lines of the visible legal means of the ARM's ownership and directorship. It presents the administrative and legal documents related to the director's duty to register, sort, and organise singers, and explores two particularly difficult issues with casting from an administrative standpoint: shortages of singers on the one hand, and legal complications of retirement on the other. As a counterpoint, the second chapter presents different ways in which exemptions and transgression of the ARM's explicit rules could also serve as a baseline for defining the reality of the *emploi*. The analysis of different case studies enlightens the ways in which the administrative template for controlling roles within the general process of opera production could be challenged — or even redefined — by individuals and extraordinary contexts.

Chapter I. The *emploi*, an administrative tool?

I.1. Managing the troupe on new institutional grounds: the *emploi* as a mean for streamlining the opera production process

According to Céline Candiard, the creation of the Comédie-Française in 1680 created the institutional conditions for the appearance of the modern system of *emplois* in French spoken theatre.[73] Following the death of Molière in 1673, the Troupe du Roy split and merged with the Hôtel de Bourgogne's troupe on the one hand, and the Hôtel Guénégaud's troupe on the other before finally being reunited in 1680 as the Comédie-Française. The speedy combination of different troupes — previously rival — together 'disrupted former hierarchies' between actors and the roles they were cast to play.[74] Among the major changes, the authority of the playwright was greatly reinforced as a way to stem performers' dissatisfaction and rivalry. In 1685, the *règlement de la Dauphine* further developed this new structure by confirming the responsibility of the playwright regarding the allocation of roles — while performers retained the right to be in charge of the system of understudies.[75] Candiard suggests that this new structure reinforced the trend of writing 'depersonalised' character types, 'detached from the performers' and thus more easily transferable between them.[76]

Prior to 1680, the management of French spoken theatre troupes had been rather different. From the beginning of the seventeenth century, itinerant theatre companies would distribute two kinds of role to an actor, always including one expressly related to comedy (generally entertaining links with character-types from the *commedia dell'arte*)

[73] Candiard, 'Emplois Comiques et Répertoire Moliéresque', §4.
[74] Candiard, *Esclaves et valets vedettes dans les comédies de la Rome antique et de la France d'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2017), 358.
[75] Paul Olagnier, *Le Droit des artistes, interprètes et exécutants* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1937), 102–105.
[76] Candiard, *Esclaves et valets vedettes*, 357.

with a possible margin of adaptation to the performer's skills. Additionally, at least one actor assumed on a recurring basis either the role of first lover, valet, or old man in comic genres.[77] However, as Candiard points out, these kinds of specialisations were never really formalised in official documents. Rather than referring to fixed and immutable categories of roles, administrative documents would depict the 'place' of the actors within a troupe, addressing their contracts and salaries.[78] When an actor or actress rose in status, they acquired the right to adjust their set of roles, as a matter of conventional best practice. Thus, the manager of a theatre troupe could engineer a specific arrangement with an artist in accordance with his or her talent and influence.[79]

What Candiard's analysis reveals is the dialectic between different forms of agents related to authority. Some of them are partly or wholly in charge of delineating legal frameworks (i.e. administrative entities), others are navigating those same frameworks (i.e. individual performers). The relationship between the two is not bound to a master-slave dichotomy but shows signs of interactions, at times fruitful, neutral or conflictual. More to the point, performers are not always submitted to the law set by others: they also have an input on the decisions regarding the development of norms and rules in theatre, and this is generally visible when it comes to the study of their repertoire.

Going back to Candiard's study of the Comédie-Française, it is interesting to see

[77] In 1695, the actor Angelo Constantini (known as Mezzetin) employed by the king at the Comédie Italienne, published a biography of his friend and director of the troupe, Tiberio Fiorilli (known as Scaramouche), entitled *Vie de Scaramouche* (Paris: Barbin). As he described the backstage of the theatre production, Constantini's writings confirm that an *emplois*' system was clearly recognisable around the end of the seventeenth century. Among the different *emplois*, it was necessarily required for the Italian troupe to possess 'two male lovers and three women, including two for the serious genres, and one for the comedy' (171).

[78] Candiard, 'Emplois Comiques et Répertoire Moliéresque', §5.

[79] For example, the 'Contrat de création de la troupe de l'Illustre Théâtre, passé devant notaire le 30 juin 1643' (i.e. Molière's troupe) testified that 'Clérin, Poquelin and Joseph Béjart' could choose 'in alternation the roles of the heros' and that Madeleine Béjart could 'choose the role that she likes'. The text is published by Madeleine Jurgens and Elizabeth Maxfield-Miller in *Cent ans de recherches sur Molière, sur sa famille et sur les comédiens de sa troupe* ([Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1963], 224–226).

if the same process applies to the ARM, which was created only a decade before. The institutional changes of spoken theatre troupes in the late seventeenth century, as described by Candiard, necessarily included at least three main conditions. Firstly, an ample repertoire with key works regularly performed. Secondly, a process of characters' codification within specific genres at the levels of semantics, sociolinguistic registers, and visual attributes which progressively (although not necessarily in a linear way) detached itself from the specific characteristics of the performers. Finally, an administrative framework that kept a record of the roles being played and that facilitated the decision process regarding the distribution of the roles among the actors of a troupe. The following chapter intends to flesh out the relevant administrative traditions, features, roles and functions that directly came to structure the ARM and participated in shaping the concept and reality of the *emploi*.

This chapter section takes as starting point for discussing the administrative dimension of the *emploi* the emergence of the Académie that took place in 1669 (with Pierre Perrin) and 1672 (with Jean-Baptiste Lully). Then, it follows the implementation of administrative strategies and framework throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in order to grant valuable historical perspective regarding the issues specific to the organisation of the troupe and the arrangement and distribution of the roles among the singers. The detail of the interpersonal relations between Perrin and Lully and subsequent owners and directors of the ARM, with considerable biographical material of the singers themselves, will be addressed in later chapters.

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The successive re-arrangements of the ARM's troupe — first under Perrin, then under Lully — demonstrate the ultimate importance of the director as the person in charge for articulating the needs regarding both the repertoire and the troupe. The ARM's directors knew that they owed a great part of their failure or success to their ability to choose and train their performers. But they also had to tie them to their project so that their investments would be sustainable. As such, it is necessary to compare the legal strategies and powers of both Perrin and Lully, before investigating the later development of the positions of ARM's owner and director throughout seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

From its beginning, the ARM's administration had to manage conflicts of interest between musical bodies regarding its cast. Although the ARM started with no preexisting troupe, Pierre Perrin and Jean-Baptiste Lully were able to build on the king's human resources, i.e. the musicians employed by the Musique du roi, despite the legal attempts from the king's administration to prevent them from working elsewhere.[80] TABLE I.1 shows the list of singers who took part in opera performances between 1668 and 1678 with the musical institutions where they were employed. Some of the singers from the Chambre and the Chapelle du roi who had already taken part in the creation of various operatic works prior to Lully's directorship of the ARM in March 1672, continued to appear in the cast for the premieres of Lully's operas at the court between 1675 (*Thésée*) and 1681 (*Le Triomphe de l'Amour*), as well as for some of their following revivals in Paris.

[80] F-Pan, O1/16, fol. 94, March 1672, Versailles, 'Privilege au St Perrin pour l'establissement d'une accademie d'opera en musique et vers francois'. The document is quoted by Marcelle Benoit, *Musiques de cours: Chapelle, Chambre, Écurie / Recueil de documents 1661–1733* (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1971), 37: 'This [Academy] shall comprise whatever number and quality of people he sees fit—whom we shall choose and appoint on the basis of the report with which he provides us—to give performances in our presence when it pleases us of musical works that will be settings of either French or foreign works. […] We permit [Lully] to give public performances of all the works he composes, even those staged in our presence, though he may not use in the [public] performance of the said works any musicians who are in our employ' (translation in Wood and Sadler, *French Baroque Opera: A Reader*, 7–8).

The cohesion of the troupe within the general process of opera production was particularly tricky under the directorship of Perrin who worked almost from scratch. The group of people assembled for the successful production of the *Pastorale d'Issy* (1659) and public rehearsal of *Ariane et Bacchus* (in 1661, just before the death of Mazarin) was an ephemeral formation and did not create a perennial sense of unity and stability.

As holder of the ARM's royal privilege, Perrin had to ensure that 'all the gentlemen, damsels, and other people [who] can sing for this *Opera*' will not 'be deprived of their noble titles, nor their other privileges'.[81] This clause has not been particularly commented on or explicated by any scholar. Conceivably, it might have been a rule that retrospectively acknowledged that members of the court sometimes could participate to official performances, although the practice stopped as the ARM developed its repertory and built its programmation for the Parisian audience. Alternatively, it could have been a way to attract as many talents from diverse background as possible in a context where the scarcity of singers was detrimental to the smooth running of the ARM and its financial success.

The selection of singers for the cast of *Pomone* in 1671, which inaugurated the Opéra, is representative of how shaky the whole enterprise initially was. As the best performers in the Parisian region were already employed at the court and could not be tied by contract as permanent members of the private company, Perrin and Cambert tasked singer Pierre Monier to travel in the provinces and find new talents.[82]

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[81] Lettres patentes from 28 June 1669 at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, copied in Jacques-Bernard Durey de Noinville and Louis Travenol, *HTA* (Paris: Duchesne, 1757), 105 ('Ordonnances, réglements & privileges, concernant l'Opera, depuis l'Etablissement de l'Académie Royale de Musique à Paris'): 'tous les gentilshommes, demoiselles, et autres personnes [qui] puissent chanter auxdits *Opéra*, sans que pour ce ils dérogent au titre de noblesse ni à leurs privilèges.' According to Noinville and Travenol (*HTA*, 105–106), the same statement was preserved in Lully's *lettres patentes* of March 1672.

[82] Nineteenth-century authors Charles Nuitter and Ernest Thoinan relate Monier's task while offering a more detailed description of the singer in *Les Origines* (118). Arthur Pougin (*Les Vrais Créateurs*, 117) wrongly connect the task to find singers with Dominique Normandin de la Grille, a singer for the *Musique du Roi* and a friend of Perrin who, during this period, was in prison (F-Pan, O1/14, fol. 340,

Consequentially, Monier engaged five singers who, according to Évrard Titon du Tillet, were 'the most beautiful voices of the Languedoc Province'.[83] Those singers came from Béziers (Bernard Clédière, *haute-contre*), Albi (Pierre Rossignol, *basse-taille*), and Toulouse (François Baumavielhe, Jean Borel known as Miracle, and Pierre Taulet, respectively *basse-taille*, *taille*, and *haute-contre*). However, some of them left the ARM a few years later to join other troupes: Clédière and Miracle both became Chantres at the Chapelle Royale (between 1675 and 1702 for the former, and between 1679 and 1720 for the latter). If Baumavielhe never fully abandoned the ARM, he nevertheless joined the Musique de Monsieur as a violist (from 1682 until his death in 1688).

The addition of administrative collaborators to the enterprise did not particularly helped Perrin's projects. From 12 December 1669, the economic support of Alexandre de Rieux, known as Marquis Sourdéac and Laurent de Bersac de Fondant, known as Sieur de Champeron came along with legal and financial turmoil. Originally, both were to fund the ARM project, while Cambert and Perrin, as holder of the opera *privilege*, contributed 'solely their knowledge and legal authority'.[84] Sourdéac and Champeron's first attempt for a lease, of the *Jeu de Paume du Becquet*, was unsuccessful: while the room was refurbished for the newly established ARM, the Lieutenant General of Police, Gabriel Nicolas de La Reynie ordered that the company cease performing on the premises, even though it had previously been used as a theatre.[85] It involved a net loss of

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Registre du Secrétaire du Roi).

[83] Évrard Titon du Tillet, *PF*, 'Remarques sur la Poësie', L.

[84] See Benoit, *Musique de cour*, 24-25. The complications regarding Sourdéac's and Champeron's involvement had likely blurred the understanding of their personal legal responsibility with regard to the failure of the business. The confusion regarding all these legal arrangements is particularly palpable in an issue of the *Mercure galant* published in 1687 where appears a confused report about the birth of the ARM and the transfert of the privilege from Perrin to Lully (Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, 365).

[85] Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, 140. Originally a tennis court, the *Jeu de Paume du Becquet* was already used for theatrical purposes before 1670. A contract from the 19 July 1646 attests to an earlier usage by the couple Samuel Speede and Anne André (F-Pan, MC/ET/XCVIII/158). Both rented the place from Robert de La Fosse, its owner, for 7 livres per day (a very high price compared to other theatres). The Englishman and his wife lived with the Petits Commédiens des Marestz (see Jean Lemoine, *La Première du Cid: le théâtre - les interprètes, d'après des documents inédits* [Paris: Hachette, 1937], 6-7).

1,900 *livres*. Another lease, beginning on 8 October 1670, for the *Salle du Jeu de Paume de la Bouteille* that also needed renovations, delayed Perrin's plans further.[86]

Technically, Perrin was legally responsible for the debts he incurred via Sourdéac and Champeron who had used Perrin's royal privilege as leverage to obtain some of the contracts (including the failed lease of the *Bécquet*). In order to soothe his creditors, Perrin agreed to a salary instead of a share of the income, which would represent a smaller amount of money. These irregularities have also been described by Nuitter and Thoinon with regard to Cambert (who 'was promised' the sum of '250 *livres* per month') and Pierre Monier.[87] The latter attempted to take both Sourdéac and Champeron to court when they failed to pay him as promised. In May 1670, '[Monier] took them to the [court of justice of the] Châtelet, so that they would have to pay him 1,500 *livres* according to his treaty and 1,113 *livres* for travel expenses in Languedoc.'[88] A brief financial respite followed when Perrin sold a substantial share of his *privilège* to Jean de Granouillet, Sieur de Sablières (*intendant de la musique* for the duke of Orléans) on 8 August 1671, then to Henri Guichard later that year. However, the effect of that strategy was too short-sighted: the enterprise irremediably crumbled, leaving a free hand to Lully.[89]

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[86] The former tennis court, situated between the Rue des Fossés-de-Nesle (now Mazarine) and Rue de Seine, in front of the Rue Guénégaud (now where the Rue Jacques-Callot goes) was converted into a theatre and inaugurated on the 3 March 1671 with *Pomone*. Contrary to the first lease of the *Bécquet* which was realised under the name of Perrin, the *Bouteille*'s lease was signed between the owner of the place, Maximilien de Laffemas, and Sourdéac and Champeron. The place was rented for five years and for 2400 *livres* per annum. Henry Guichard, Superintendent of Buildings to Philippe of Orléans, was contracted for various works: building a stage, a graded amphitheatre, and boxes; raising the existing edifice by several feet; accommodating the workings of the machines and adjusting everything to the scenery (Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, 143-144).

[87] Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines,* 126.

[88] Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines,* 126: '[Monier] les assignait au Châtelet, pour qu'ils eussent à lui payer 1500 *livres* suivant son traité et 1113 *livres* pour les frais du voyage en Languedoc.' On the history of the legal procedures regarding debt and involving the Châtelet's civil tribunal and prison, see: Julie Claustre, *Dans les geôles du roi. L'emprisonnement pour dette à Paris à la fin du Moyen Âge.* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2007), chap. VIII ('Être prisonnier pour dette'), 313–363.

[89] Nuitter and Thoinan, *Origines de l'opéra français*, 184-190 and 203. See also Jérôme de La Gorce, 'Un opéra français représenté à la cour de Louis XIV en 1671 et 1672: *Les Amours de Diane et d'Endymion*,

Among these major issues, Perrin needed to prevent his musicians from performing in musical productions elsewhere while the future of the ARM was still fragile during the preparative stages. Without any of the official contracts surviving for analysis, it is only possible to speculate that one of Perrin's best ways to bind the singers to his enterprise was to organise his rehearsals as quickly as possible. This activity would not only have occupied the singers but might also have granted them some assurance with regard to the ARM's viability and their careers prospects. While the new ARM's theatre was being renovated, the musicians rehearsed in different places. Nuitter and Thoinan relate that one of the associates of Perrin, Sourdéac, helped organising rehearsals for *Pomone* in a theatre at his countryside property of Sèvres.[90] They add that Cambert trained thoroughly all of the performers.[91] The revival of *Ariane, ou le Mariage de Bacchus* (1669–1670), was prepared at Cambert's home or workplace (cloisters of the collegiate church Saint-Honoré) before some public dress rehearsals in the library of the Hôtel de Nevers (formerly owned by Cardinal Mazarin) where Philippe of Mancini, duke of Nevers, and the nephew of Cardinal Mazarin, was living.[92]

Perrin's management of the ARM appears to be a failure — and rightfully so. His attempts at framing and monitoring correctly the management of his singers encountered a mitigated success at best. The various complications of personal relationships on which his business crucially relied, such as that between Pierre Monier and his late collaborators, highlight the frailty of Perrin's authority and overall grasp

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pastorale mise en musique par Sablières', *XVIIe siècle* 142 (1984), 37–46.

[90] Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines,* 133. Later (p. 136-137), the authors quote an archive of the *Comédie Française* (however, without any call number).

[91] Idem.

[92] See Titon du Tillet, *PF*, 385: the piece was 'liked a great deal'. Nuitter and Thoinan have quoted a contemporary's testimony [probably singer Catherine Suptille's] of the performance at the Hôtel de Nevers preserved in the archives of the Comédie Française as follows: it was happening in front of 'quantity of people of quality, including the Gouverneur de Paris [the duc of Mortemart, father of the favourite Madame de Montespan], the Grand Prieur, the comte and chevalier de Soissons, M. de Lyonne and M. de Nyel [also spelled Niers], first valet of the king, and at least 2000 other persons of whom I do not know the name.' (*Les Origines*, 123-124.) See also Blaze, *Théâtres lyriques de Paris*, vol. 2 'Académie impériale de musique', i. 28.

over the administrative structure of the Opéra. Nevertheless, there is much to learn from his trials and errors, especially when compared to the situation under Lully.

On 13 March 1672, a new *privilège* from Louis XIV simultaneously nullified Perrin's shared license and granted Lully control of the ARM.[93] Lully was in a unique position to assume both the administrative duty of the ARM's director and main composer of the establishment: his mode of governance presented the clear advantage of minimising administrative layers. Although the counterpart of this reality is that a smaller body of historical evidence has survived from his years as director of the Opéra, his royal *privilège* provides glimpses of Lully's duties and rights. In particular, it clearly shows that Lully could train however he saw fit whomever he wanted.[94] This included the exclusive right to stage 'plays in music' and to make use of 'dancing, ballets, concerts of lutes, theorboes, violins and all sorts of music and other things'.[95]

As he took the rein of the institution, Lully had to manage quite a delicate situation. First, the new director of the Opéra could not use the previous theatre (the lease for which was still held by Perrin's associates, Sourdéac and Champeron) and needed to find another place. Thus, Lully rented the *Salle du Bel-Air* and asked the very successful Italian designer Carlo Vigarani to convert it into a theatre. Obviously, this

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[93] F-Pan, O1/16, f. 94, *Privilège en faveur du Sieur Jean-Baptiste Lully, surintendant et compositeur de la musique de la chambre du Roy, pour tenir Académie Royale de musique*, 13 March 1672. After he gained the control of the ARM, Lully receives additional powers (F-Pan, O1/17, f. 72). The steps of Lully's manoeuvres for taking over the royal license of the ARM have been described in detail by different scholars. See: Lionel de La Laurencie, *Lully* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1911); James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeulx to Rameau* (London, 1973); Spire Pitou, *The Paris Opéra: An Encyclopedia of Operas, Ballets, Composers, and Performers*, t. I 'Genesis and Glory, 1671-1715' (London: Greenwood Press, 1983); Marcelle Benoît, 'Paris, 1661-87: The Age of Lully', *The Early Baroque Era from the Late 16th Century to the 1660's* (London: The Macmillan Press Limited, 1994), 238–269; Jérôme de La Gorce, *Jean-Baptiste Lully*, Paris: Fayard, 2002.

[94] 'Establissement d'Académie Royale de musique', *F-Pan*, O1/16, f. 94 (trans. by Wood and Sadler, *French Baroque Opera*): '[Having been] informed that the care and effort which […] Perrin put into the enterprise was unable wholly to fulfill our intention or to raise music to the level we had wished, we have considered that, to succeed better in this sphere, it was fitting to give the management to someone who has the resource enough to […] produce pupils who can sing and perform well on the stage, and to train the bands of violins, flutes and other instruments […]. [The right to establish the ARM] shall comprise whatever number and quality of people [Lully] sees fit […].'

[95] Idem.

change cost him time and money. Second, Lully had to rapidly unify a troupe that had suffered several important disputes, ranging from financial issues and legal prosecutions, to dissatisfaction regarding the distribution of the roles that sparked tensions between performers and the directors.

Lully himself entertained difficult relationships with his former colleague Molière and with the past owners of the ARM's privilège, especially Sablières and Guichard who, unable to compel the composer to make any association with them, attacked him in justice.[96] Later, Guichard eventually doubled down his attacks on Lully through a series of events, eventually ending with a lawsuit. La Gorce has related all of them in many details.[97]

That being said, Lully also knew when to find a sense of balance with close collaborators. Although he always signed all his business contracts in front of notaries as 'the only master of the Académie Royale', it is worth noting that the composer knew how to delegate specific tasks to others. At the very beginning of his enterprise, in addition to Vigarani for the stage sets, Lully also worked with Antoine Desbrosses for the ballets and Jean-François Lallouette (former vicar and singer at the church Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois that trained some of the best singers at the time) for the beating time and indicating *tempi* during rehearsals and performances. Those were not owners of the ARM rather, they endorsed some of the functions now commonly associated with artistic directors, probably advising Lully in addition to working directly with the artists.

With regard to the troupe, Lully's strategy to ensure his stronghold was perhaps more visible. While he rearranged the composition and structure of his troupe, Lully's sought to control his performers. In particular, he aimed to prevent them from leaving

[96] F-Pn, Imprimés, 14.285, *Factum pour Jean de Granouilhet Escuyer sieur de Sablières, Intendant de la Musique de Monsieur, Duc d'Orléans, et Henry Guichard, Gentilhomme de S.A.R.*.
[97] La Gorce, *Lully*, 224–240.

his establishment. On 12 August 1672, the Florentine-born composer made it impossible for any competitors — whether court musical establishments or other private companies — to recruit performers he had already employed, even in the case of musicians who had played only twice in his orchestra, or if Lully himself terminated their service.[98] The oldest contract that survived from the ARM, with the singer Bernard Vaultier, attests of the conditions under which Lully recruited his employees. Vaultier was prohibited from 'singing for the French or Italian speaking theatres or any other', under penalty of 300 *livres* each time.[99] Overall, the conditions for the singers were very strict: they did not have the right to be absent for any given reason nor late. According to Vaultier's contract, the fine was fixed at 20 *sols* for each hour of rehearsal missed, and 6 *livres* if the performer missed a performance.[100] If one singer was sick he or she could be replaced only if Lully approved of the request. Then, the absent performer would have to share half of his or her revenue on the night of the performance with the understudy.

Lully's choices regarding the assemblage of the troupe were paramount. Not only do they illustrate his strategy in terms of authority-building, they also directly engage with the issue of the *emploi*. Given the asymmetrical partnership between himself and Philippe Quinault, as highlighted by Banducci and La Gorce, Lully was the main author to envision the structure of the troupe, as well as the characters of his operas and the related sets of skills necessary for enacting them.[101]

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[98] F-Pan, O1/16, f. 142, Ordinance (12 August 1672).
[99] F-Pan, MC/XLVI/118, Promesse et obligation, 9 February 1674. This is the only document that provides the maximum pieces of information relative to the contractual relation between Lully and his performers. Lully granted him an annual salary of 1200 *livres* for each of the 'three consecutive and fully fulfilled years'.
[100] La Gorce, *Lully*, 192.
[101] Banducci, 'Acteurs and Actrices as Muses', §11.4; La Gorce, *Lully*, 583. This point of view is not equally shared among scholars. Buford Norman, for example, argues in *Quinault, librettiste de Lully: le poète des grâces*, that Quinault's influence over Lully might have been 'considerable' (Mardaga, 2001, 18). However, the argument is based on an intuition only: the sole fact that the genre of *tragédie en musique* was born at the moment when Lully collaborated with Quinault is no clear indicator of the creative balance between the two artists.

Looking into the detail of the roles' distribution until 1678 [TABLE I.1] helps us learn more about this. The singers from the Musique du roi who were repeatedly re-employed by the ARM — even if they belonged to the Musique du roi — fulfilled specific types of roles. The most prominent cases can be classed in three different categories. A first included the *basses-tailles* Jean Gaye (ca. 1640–5 April 1701) and Antoine I Morel (b. 1652–1711), and the *basse-contre* Jacques Godonesche (b. 1654–November 1711) were granted mature males figures (kings, deities) and key male secondary roles (confidants, mythological creatures). A second category was fulfilled by Anne Fonteaux (b. 1640–a. 1719) only who endorsed important female secondary roles. Just like for Gaye and Morel, her roles were generally assisting figures who benefit from useful powers or important social stature. Finally, the third group, perhaps the most diverse, included the *hautes-contres* François Langeais (b. 1651–1682), Philippe Le Roy de Beaumont (b. 1645–October 1704), Dominique de Normandin, known as La Grille (ca. 1645–8 November 1717), and Clédière (who came to work for the Musique du roi from after being employed at the ARM, from 1675 until 1702). These male singers were given a series of secondary of characters (generally allegorical) with a special emphasis on roles borrowing from theatrical comic traditions for Beaumont and Clédière. Their tessitura, situated in-between *haute-contre* and *taille*, allowed them to reach to higher pitches and play with the colour of their voice for a variety of theatrical effects.

The careers of *taille* singers in the ARM's troupe seem to be one of the best examples regarding Lully's understanding of *emplois*. Clédière, originally recruited by Perrin, was among the first performers to take such roles combined with other traditional leading masculine roles and major assisting deities. Miracle also sang roles written for *taille* voice (in addition to secondary masculine roles) but the correlation with the comic register seems much less evident. In 1677, the comic roles from

Clédière's repertoire were removed from his set of roles and given to Beaumont. This new division between the roles made Clédière's repertoire clearer — whilst strengthening the comic undertones of Beaumont's. The degree of confusion between different types of roles contained in the repertoire of one same actor was much lesser. As such, it is likely that it facilitated the understanding and reception of their careers for the audience. Although such *taille* singers were placed low in the ranks of the ARM [see TABLE I.2], they played key roles, highly typical and recognisable for the audience. Whether such performers were rare to find or the pay was not sufficient to give incentives to singers for developing this type of tessitura in the first place is a sort of chicken-and-egg issue. Regardless of which came first, the fact is that Lully seemed to have struggled to find singers to fulfil the roles associated with this quality of voice. However, instead of cutting them from his scores — and therefore from his cast — Lully persevered in seeking out specific performers. In this case, the Musique du roi granted Lully a useful pool of talents he only borrowed occasionally since the roles for *taille* were minor, such as: Michel Bernard (ca. 1650–1713), Jolain (b. 1654–a. 1707), Michel Alexis known as La Forêt (b. 1650 - a. 1687), Léonore Gingant *le cadet* (b. 1645 — a. 1713), and, later, Claude Desvoyes (ca. 1639 — November 1709).

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After Lully's death on the 22 March 1687, control of the opera's production was split between a variety of authorities. Those encompassed the new owner of the institution (Jean-Nicolas de Francine, Lully's son-in-law), additional directors and collaborators (who were not always musicians themselves), the *Inspecteur Général* (Inspector General) that is described below, and even composers. Furthermore, these individuals

acting within the Opéra have to be understood in a broader context of political spheres and other sources of influence, such as individual patrons and commentators, wider audiences (e.g. the court, the Parisian Society), and so on.

Arguably, the entrepreneurial and managerial dimension of the ARM's directorship became — at least by intermittence — more disconnected from the authors' interests while enacting the development of clear and transmittable administrative tools. These tools represented a way to connect the dimensions of the opera production and ensure a minimal communication between the different agents. They also constituted a convenient way for the directors to preserve their power over the progressive multiplication of agents and the complication of social and professional networks in French opera production from the end of the seventeenth century. The increase of administrative agents and the partial distancing between authors and the top of the Opéra's administration had a profound impact on the institution. It is likely that the ARM's internal structure and balance of powers became more difficult.

Furthermore, that situation was worsened by the Opéra's financial position, which grew ever more precarious. Jean-Nicolas de Francine's directorship (first from 1687 to 1704, then from 1712–1728) led to an important debt that Pierre Guyenet, his main creditor and following owner of the ARM (1704–1712), could not solve. Following this long-lasting financial debacle, a 'Union' (*Syndic*) of four entrepreneurs (Étienne-Lambert Chomat, Mathurin Besnier, Louis-Antoine-François Duchesne, Pierre de Laval de Saint-Pont) eventually shared the ARM's privilege with Francine on the 24 December 1712 before André Cardinal Destouches became director himself in 1728.[102] This segment of the ARM's history is investigated in-depth in the fifth chapter.

It is only in 1713 that the first official document used as an internal set of rules

[102] F-Pan, AJ/13/1 (I), *Privilège*.

for the ARM (i.e. *règlement* or *réglement* according to the archaic French spelling) was released. More of them were to punctuate the history of the ARM throughout the eighteenth century, specifying the nature, place, duties, and means of the ARM's directorship, administrative structure and troupe. The wide and eclectic content of this type of document has been described by Caroline Wood and Sadler as follows:

> Their subjects range from the responsibilities of management to the conduct of the performers, touching on the planning of opera seasons, the payment of wages and entitlement to pensions. The stipulations made about such matters as punctuality, the acceptance of assigned roles and costumes and behaviour in the theatre, with the list of penalties for infringements, tell their own tale, and complement La Borde's description of the poor financial state of affairs at the Opéra in the early years of the eighteenth century.[103]

It is this 1713 *Réglement* that specified the function of Director as well as *Inspecteur Général*. It affirmed that both had the duty to find 'the best performers [they could] find' (articles I and VIII), to pay them accordingly to their status, and to ensure the continuity and proper functioning of the hierarchy (articles IX and X).[104]

Throughout the eighteenth century, after decades of financial turmoil, the crown delegated the directorship for the company to the City of Paris (1749) and, later, to a collegial system probably inspired by the Comédie-Française itself. All these successive changes, however, were not considered to be sufficient for redressing the financial situation of the Opéra. That long-lasting financial crisis was directly related to the management of the singers, as individuals with personal caprices and as part of the whole troupe. In an anonymous letter published in 1776, the ARM's management was retrospectively criticised on the grounds that it had been laxist with the performers, granting them too much money and accepting too many of their abuses, which would

[103] Wood and Sadler, *French Baroque Opera*, 10-11.
[104] The nineteenth-century historian Émile Solié affirmed that the position of 'inspecteur général de la régie de l'Académie royale de musique' is 'roughly equivalent to the one of *commissaire royal*' (*L'Opéra depuis son origine,* 11). A *commissaire royal* was a title granted from the sixteenth century, under the Ancien Régime, to any significant agent of the crown performing a specific function in the name of the king. Such agent took part in a pre civil service system, which was composed of an increasingly denser network of persons and functions.

have preventing them to invest their personal career in the success of the ARM. The author commented on the Opéra's management in the second part of the eighteenth century as follows:

> It has been said hundred of times that, under the previous administration, Actors, Actresses, male and female Dancers, had a fix salary [*appointement*] of one thousand *écus*, & that an equal sum was added as a bonus [*gratification*]; from this, it is not difficult to conceive why these Gentlemen and Young Ladies were not very interested in a success of a new creation, how they could even accelerate its failure, thus ruining the Opéra, either by a scheme of retirements, or by feigning diseases and indispositions, singing & acting five or six times before leaving their roles to the understudies who had little intelligence or were unpleasant to the audience.[105]

After the promulgation of the first two sets of *Réglements* (January 1713 and November 1714), both requested by the Opéra's *Syndic* (1712–1728), satirical and parodic 'constitutions' of the Opéra multiplied throughout the eighteenth century. These publications pointed to the confusion following the loss of Lully's centralised management, as well as the financial struggles of Jean-Nicolas de Francine (Lully's son-in-law and successor as owner of the ARM). Framing their commentaries under the cover of humour, authors such as Meusnier de Querlon and Letexier de Forge suggested that some adjustments of the ARM's administration were required.[106] Their calls for a

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[105] *Lettre d'un amateur de l'opéra à M. de ***, dont la tranquille habitude est d'attendre des événements pour juger du mérite des projets* (Amsterdam & Paris: Couturier père, 1677), 40: 'Cent fois l'on a dit que sous l'administration qui finit, les premiers Acteurs, Actrices, Danseurs & Danseuses, avaient mille écus fixe d'appointements, & qu'on y ajoutait pareille somme pour gratification ; de-là il n'est pas encore difficile de concevoir comment ces Messieurs & Demoiselles prenaient fort peu d'intérêt au succès d'une nouveauté, comment ils en accéléraient même la chute, en ruinant l'Opéra, soit par des retraites combinées, soit par des maladies, & indispositions feintes, en chantant, & jouant cinq ou six fois, & laissant ensuite leurs rolles à des doubles, ou peu intelligents, ou désagréables même au Public.'

[106] Meusnier de Querlon, *Le Code lyrique ou Règlement pour l'Opéra de Paris*, 1743. In this parody, the word *emploi* is clearly separated from the one of *rôle*: it refers to the position in the troupe's hierarchy. In Letexier de Forge's *Idées sur l'opéra* (p. 31), the word *emploi* is used as a general category (i.e. all the people occupying a function or position in the Operas): 'All employees, whether at the Opéra, the Opéra Comique, Directors, Actors, Actresses, Dancers, Symphonists, Machinists, Clerks, and so on would be appointed.' ('Tous les employés, tant à l'Opéra, qu'à l'Opéra Comique, Directeurs, Acteurs, Actrices, Danseurs, Danseuses, Symphonistes, Machinistes, Commis, etc. seront appointés.') Rather, the sense we have acknowledged to the word *emploi* lies in the evocation of roles: 'The master will have to explain to the Actors their roles, and to give them the idea and the goal of acting. […] Roles' distribution will be done by the Directors with the opinion of the Académiciens. After the first performances of an Opera, the leading Actors will be obliged to leave entirely their roles to their understudies, should the audience reclaim it.' ('Le Maître de goût aura soin d'expliquer aux Acteurs leurs rôles, & de leur donner l'idée & le dessein du jeu. […] La distribution des rôles sera faite par les Directeurs, de l'avis des Académiciens. Après les premières représentations d'un Opéra, les premiers Acteurs seront tenus de laisser essayer leurs

better regulation of best practices imply a possible form of inconsistency, ultimately underlining the need to standardise, in one way or another, the ARM's organisation. At the heart of these demands lies the question of the *emploi*: in order to escape financial turmoil, the institution needed a system of production that incentivised on the one hand singers to perform what they were given and, on the other, authors to write operas that could realistically be played according to the means of production they had at their disposal. Following the guidelines found in *Réglements* of 1713 and 1714, Meusnier de Querlon and Letexier de Forge urged the singers to respect the set of roles they were assigned and which assigned to them a specific position and salary within the troupe's hierarchy.[107]

The troupe's structure was effectively reinforced along these lines throughout the eighteenth century by the ARM's administration. In 1784, a ruling (*arrêt*) from the Council of State concealed yet another *Règlement* for the ARM: the thirteenth section ('Devoirs & fonctions des Sujets de l'Académie, tant du Chant que de la Danse, & des Symphonies') states once more in greater details the rules of conduct, thus attempting to strengthen the power of the executive committee over individual choices.[108]

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rôles par leurs doubles & de les leur abandonner entièrement, dans le cas où le Public paraîtra le désirer.') (p. 34 and 36)

[107] The same issue appears in 1677 in another sort of satyrical Règlement's parody which pretends to be a prescription (*ordonnance*) from the new directors of the ARM, Le Berton and Trial as well as the Secretary, Joliveau: 'Article VIII: If at least our Actors knew how to be contempt that each God can endorse the major Role he is given; that Apollo always sings well; that love has a seductive face ; that Jupiter was not clumsy on his throne covered in gold and silver; the Spectators would be indulgent !... Which is not nothing, since the gains from the show would be good.' ('Article VIII: Si du moins nos acteurs savaient se contenter Que chaque Dieu put s'acquitter Du Rôle important qu'on lui donne ; Qu'Apollon sut toujours chanter ; Que l'amour eut au moins, une mine friponne ; Que le grand Jupiter couvert d'or et d'argent Parût moins gauche sur le trône ; Le Public serait indulgent !... Ce qui n'est pas indifférent Car la recette alors, sans doute serait bonne.')

[108] *Arrêt du conseil d'État du Roi, contenant Règlement pour l'Académie Royale de Musique* (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 13 March 1784).

The ongoing changes that happened to the Opéra's direction throughout the eighteenth century — with an overall progression towards a more communitarian model — reshaped the delicate balance between the centralised administrative authority and its different artistic agents. In this context, the standardisation of the concept and use of *emplois* in the eighteenth century could have resulted from the implementation of a pragmatic strategy for smoothening out the production system. More precisely, the stiffening of the roles categories and the related methods of distribution within the troupe means that they could be more easily passed on between one generation to another, regardless of changes happening to the administration's members. The progressive stabilisation of the meaning and manifestation of the *emploi* is then to be understood from a very pragmatic point of view. A rigid system could be more easily transmitted between the actors who were enrolled decades after decades, simplifying — and possibly unifying amongst composers and librettists — the creative and production processes.

Accordingly, Lully can be seen as creating some of the very first 'norms' associated to the roles' categories (e.g. sets of vocal and acting characteristics, shape of the troupe's hierarchy). Although Lully himself inherited from other forms of tradition, not only in the realm of music but the one of arts in general (e.g. spoken theatre, plastic arts, romanesque genres), he ultimately presented something undoubtedly new to the Parisian audience. As such, his legacy constitutes the starting point for a much longer tradition that refines and rearranges roles' categories over time.

I.2. Classifying performers: *états* and *emplois*

The two successive eighteenth-century editions of the ARM's *Règlement* (1713 and 1714) grant a first insight into the system of the *emploi*. However, they are not the only body of evidence to consider on that topic. Other administrative archives relate to the management of the troupe and its singers, disclosing further information regarding the possible reality and use of the *emploi* as an administrative tool.

In order to record the presence and function of the artists, the Paris Opéra used a large array of written documentation. In addition to individual contracts and personal salary receipts (*quittances*, signed by the ARM, and *reçus* signed by the employers), long registers acknowledged the presence and service of every singer. Those documents, entitled *état*, were an annual statement organized according to the theatre season's structure, which started in late April, generally on a Tuesday (after the *Quasimodo*, i.e. the Monday following the first Sunday of Easter), and ended in March of the following year, generally on a Saturday (the day before Passion Sunday).[109] In the most complete cases, an *état* encapsulated many details regarding the place and status of the employees: fixed salaries (*appointements*), additional gratuities (*gratifications*), the dates at which individuals became employees of the ARM, when they retired, were dismissed, and died.[110]

This practice of listing and registering in the ARM is directly borrowed from the French royal administration. Indeed the ARM's registers were based on the same template as those for the king's personal finances, which were organised in the

[109] The Church forced theatres to close for a period of three weeks before Easter. In 1687, Louis XIV decided to cancel performances on Sundays at the ARM during Lent. The Opéra circled around this decision in 1732 by choosing to perform an opera by Michel Pignolet de Montéclair based on a biblical story: *Jephté*.

[110] The most complete documents date from the second half of the eighteenth century, such as F-Pan, AJ/13/1 (V-1-a), which covers the period from 1750 to 1781, and F-Pan, AJ/13/15 (I to V), which covers the period from 1750 to 1779.

department named the Maison du Roi (King's House). This structure, thoroughly examined by Pauline Lemaigre-Gaffier, occupied a very specific place within the general system of the finances.[111] Originally united with anything related to warfare (before both poles became separated in 1594 under Henri IV), the Maison du Roi represented the oldest department specialised that ever appeared in the history of French State Secretaries. Its long and complex history exemplifies well the creativity of administrative agents who equilibrate the system by crafting functions and tools.[112] Although it was imbricated in many different ways to the rest of the state administration, the Maison du Roi occupied a very specific place insofar as it served the king's interests while 'having nothing in common with the business of the state'.[113]

This ambiguity derived directly from the duality of the monarch's figure, both head of a royal dynasty and head of a bureaucratic state, owner of a territory and in charge of raising money throughout his kingdom. As a result, the permeability between the state's treasury (Trésor royal) and the personal liquidities of the royal family was constant: the former would regularly aliment the latter.

In the context of the royal administration, an *état* was an administrative piece of paper (*rolle*) that stipulated people's employment and place in the court's hierarchy.[114] It was composed of paper folios set out as a spreadsheet. Such administrative documents were key in the evolution of the French state as a 'planner' or 'developer' body under the Ancien Régime.[115] For the modern researcher, the *état* gives the impression of some

[111] Pauline Lemaigre-Gaffier, *Administrer les Menus-Plaisirs du roi. L'État, la cour et les spectacles dans la France des Lumières* (Ceyzérieu: Éditions Champs Vallon, 2016).
[112] Lemaigre-Gaffier, *Administrer les Menus-Plaisirs du roi*, 52.
[113] F-Pan, G7/1908, *Mémoire d'un commis de la Maison du Roi*, January 1779 ('n'ayant rien de commun avec les affaires de l'État').
[114] 'État' is presented as a 'List, register' in various dictionaries: *Le Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (4th ed., t. I, 1762; 5th ed., t. I, 1798), *Dictionaire critique de la langue française* (Marseille: Jean Mossy, 1787, II). To look simultaneously at all different editions of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, see: https://www.dictionnaire-academie.fr/article/A1E0060-02
[115] A vast body of scholarship explores the ways French monarchic policies have developed

kind of synecdoche between the object (administrative paper) and the reality it describes (the 'state' of an institution at a specific period in time, or the 'position' of an artist within the troupe).[116] The association made by the French royal administration between a rank (social condition) and an official position or function is found again in the idea of the *emploi*.

Generally speaking, an *état* was mostly used for economic and financial matters.[117] The documents set by the ARM were sent to the king administration in order to formalise royal assent, since the king helped subsidising the enterprise.[118] If a musician was said to be 'employed on the *état* of' such and such institution (e.g. the ARM, the Musique du Roi), his or her registration always included a rank that, if it was not accompanied by a specific function, was at least visible in terms of salary.[119] The singers who entered a given musical institution were said by the administration to be

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communication channels by focusing on their tools, both linguistic and material. Progressively throughout the eighteenth century, the state conceptualised 'paper identities', designing processes for identification (e.g., anthropometry) and specific paper-based documents for recording it. See, for example, Nathalie Montel, 'Sur l'État aménageur d'Ancien Régime', *Genèses* 3-4, no. 100–101 (2015): 183–188; Vincent Denis, *Une histoire de l'identité. France, 1715-1815* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon et Société des études robespierristes, 2008).

[116] Jean-Baptiste Dubos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (Paris: P.-J. Mariette, 1740), part. 2, 140: 'Qu'on juge donc de l'ardeur que les Peintres & les Poètes avaient alors pour perfectionner leurs talents, par l'ardeur que nous voyons nos contemporains, pour amasser du bien & pour parvenir aux grands emplois d'un État.'

[117] The word *état* appears in the set of rules of 1713 (Art. XII) regarding the system of payment and its recording ('L'état desdites gratifications sera dressé & arrêté en la même forme que celui des appointemens, & ne pourra y être fait aucun changement, augmentation ni diminution sans qu'au préalable l'Inspecteur Général en ait rendu compte.'). It is found in the *Détail de la régie* from 1738 (F-Po, Archives 18 [20–2]), as well as in other documents dealing with the ARM's finances such as the *État de distribution de la somme 1749-1750* (F-Po, Archives 18 [3–1]) where the artists are listed with the detail of all their different forms of payment (salary, indemnities, exceptional gratuities).

[118] This practice was generally a formality that kept the king administration in the loop and enacted a *fait accompli*. After the approval was granted, an *état* could be annotated with that information, as proven by a note in the margin of an *état* giving the detail of the expenses for the season 1749-1750 (F-Po, Archives 18 [3–1]).

[119] For example, Joseph de Laporte offers a detailled 'État présent des personnes qui composent l'Académie royale de musique' in *Les Spectacles de Paris* (23 and sq.). Likewise, Denis-Pierre-Jean Papillon de La Ferté produced a thorough *État de tous les sujets du chant et des chœurs de l'Académie royale de musique, avec un précis sur leurs talents et leurs services* in 1783 (F-Pan, O1/630, no. 44). At this point in time, the ARM was organised on the same collegial model as the *Comédie Française*: given the number of people participating in the management of the institution on a daily basis, registers of their discussions are regularly kept and deal with numerous issues regarding the distribution of parts. The *Feuille du Comité du Lundi 9 Avril 1781*, for example, stipulates that Cuvillier (either Louis-Antoine, a retired *haute-contre* of the ARM, or his son) is listed as 'employed on the *État* of the [King's] Music' (F-Po, Res 1027 [1-2]).

enrolled on that particular annual piece of paper.

In the context of performance arts, artists were inscribed on those *emplois* and sometimes associated with specific places in the hierarchy or specific sets of roles. As such, the *emploi* resonates with the semantic evolution of the word *rôle* (formerly *roolle*, then *rolle*) from literal to figurative meaning. Until the seventeenth century, *rôle* used to refer first and foremost to a material onto which something else (the text and its system of signs) was stamped. This practice was shared in other European regions. On the other side of the Channel, for example, the word was tied to royal administration, law, and justice; the 'Master of the Rolls', a position officially recorded for the first time in 1286 in England and Wales, used to be a senior clerk responsible for keeping the records of the Court of Chancery. In Furetière's *Dictionnaire* of 1690, *rôle* was employed to designate a sheet of paper on which taxes, military enlistment, official titles, and other administrative information would be written down.[120] The *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* of 1694 also refers to it as a particular administrative folio.[121]

The study of the Italian impresarial system highlights a comparable system regarding the use of administrative lists and registers of singers and their roles as linked to economic matters, albeit in a different context. Lorenzo Bianconi and Giorgo Pestelli have shown that the circulation of lists concerning singers and their repertoire in Europe

[120] Furetière, *Dictionnaire universel* (1690): 'ROLLE, subst. m. Former spelling: *roolle*. Designates the *état* or list of the names of several persons who are of the same status, or employed for the same cause. […] *Rolle* also designates a list [*état*] of several taxes or rights which recovery costs needs to be addressed […]. *Rolle* is also used at the court about a list [*état*] of recorded matters that need to be called and pleaded in order. […] It is said that a cause is appointed 'on the *rolle*' when it still has to be pleaded, when the time for the Hearings for each *rolle* is up; then, a general appointment is usually given for what is left.' ('On écrivait autrefois le Roolle. Estat ou liste des noms de plusieurs personnes qui sont de même condition, ou dans le même engagement. […] Rolle est aussi un état de plusieurs taxtes ou droits dont le recouvrement est à faire […]. Rolle, se dit au Palais, de l'état des causes enregistrées, qui doivent être appellées & plaidées en leur ordre. […] On dit qu'une cause est appointée sur le *rolle*, quand elle demeure à plaider, après que le temps des Audiences de chaque rolle est passé ; car alors on donne un appointement général sur ce qui reste.')

[121] *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française*, 1694: 'It was common to use the spelling *Roolle* for designating one or several paper folios, or parchment, glued together, on which acts and titles were written.'

(through printed publications such as the *Mercure de France*, for example) improved the operational efficiency of the opera industry for impresarios, troupes, and individual singers.[122] These lists helped harmonise, and therefore strengthen, the mechanisms of production among European territories and institutions. Such printed material increased in use as theatrical periodicals specialising in opera personnel (e.g. *Indice de' teatrali spettacoli*, printed from 1764 to 1823) developed.

Similarly, French administrative documents regarding singers and their repertoires were not employed solely for the ARM's internal uses. Their circulation outside the Opéra in the public sphere fed a common interest in gossip. This is demonstrated by numerous personal memoirs and *chansonniers* of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[123] Likewise, police reports about singers could have served a similar purpose, satisfying the curiosity of seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and even nineteenth-century readers for private and erotic anecdotes.[124] They have proved invaluable for modern historians' accounts of theatrical operations during the Ancien Régime.

The lists of performers used by the ARM's directorship for registering, classifying and policing arose from the two *Règlements* of 1713 and 1714. Both fixed the state of the ARM's troupe with a high degree of precision, ensuring that the number

[122] Lorenzo Bianconi and Giorgo Pestelli, *Opera Production and its Resources*. *Storia dell'opera Italiana* (Edizioni di Torino, 1987). The study of such lists tells us about the intensity of theatrical activity during the later eighteenth century.
[123] See for example Abbé de Vassetz (attributed to), *Description de la Vie et Mœurs, de l'Exercice et l'État des Filles de l'Opéra*, in Louis Ladvocat, *Lettres sur l'Opéra à l'abbé Dubos* followed by *Description de la Vie et Mœurs* (ed. Jérôme de La Gorce, Paris: Cicero, 1993); Edmond-Jean-François Barbier, *Journal anecdotique d'un parisien sous Louis XV: 1727 à 1751* (Paris: H. Juin, 1963); F-Po, Archives 18 (24–1), *Constitution de l'Opéra* (1737, parody by François-Antoine de Chevrier); Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens, *La vie de Miss Carville actrice de l'Opéra de Paris* (Cythère: Paris, 1745); Pierre Alexandre Gaillard de La Bataille, *Mémoire pour servir de suite à l'histoire de Mademoiselle Cronel dite Fretillon, suivi de Pensées diverses sur les filles de l'Opéra* (Paris, 1750); Emile Raunié, *Chansonnier historique du XVIIIe siècle… formé avec la collection de Clairambault, de Maurepas,* Paris, 1879; *Le chansonnier françois, ou recueil de chansons, ariettes, vaudevilles et autres couplets choisis* (Paris, 1760–1762).
[124] Detailed police reports are reproduced in Emile Campardon's *Spectacles de la Foire* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1877).

of singers '[couldn't] be increased or decreased'.[125] At that time, the cast included fourteen soloist singers, with three *basses-tailles*, three *hautes-contre*, and two *tailles* for the men, as well as six *actrices*. All were called *acteurs* or *actrices des rolles*, which meant that they played individual characters, with specific names, or were distinct in one way or another from the choir.

The *Règlements* of 1713 and 1714 also included the listing of the singers' payment: annual salary (*appointemens* [sic] *par année*); annual bonuses (*gratifications par année*); special bonuses (*gratifications par extraordinaire*); bread, wine and upkeep of footwear; rises in annual salaries (*augmentations accordées pour appointemens* [sic] *par année*). The exact amount of the annual salary was fixed on appointment and — in theory at least — could not be raised or lowered.[126] The raising of annual salaries was expressly forbidden. Later during the eighteenth century, inflationary and other pressures had clearly necessitated a change, and occasional 'augmentations' (as bonuses or gratuities) were perhaps a way of getting round the letter of the law. In 1713, a fund of 15,000 *livres* was set up to be distributed as annual bonuses to the most deserving singers, dancers, and players. Like the annual salary, it was not supposed to be raised or lowered.[127] The practice of special bonuses via benefit performances (*capitation*) for the actors at the end of each season was established from an early stage. The proceeds of these *capitations* were divided up by the Opéra management and distributed each Easter before the new season began.[128] In addition, excess funds released by the departure, dismissal or leave of absence of employees might be distributed in the form of

[125] The exact number of performers was fixed on appointment and, in theory at least, could not be raised or lowered (*Règlement*, 1713, Article IX). Solveig Serre has shown that this determination was not maintained: the ARM's troupe steadily increased from the period under Destouches and Campra's direction in the 1730s to double that number under Rebel and Francoeur, thus comprising twenty-eight soloists in 1756-1757 (*L'Opéra de Paris*, 111).
[126] *Règlement*, 1713, Article IX.
[127] *Règlement*, 1713, Article XIII.
[128] *Règlement*, 1714, Article XLV.

occasional bonuses.[129] However, neither sets of regulations (from 1713 and 1714) mention the additional payments of 'bread, wine, and footwear' in kind.

The allocation of the annual salaries outlined an order of pre-eminence with three main groups of people, always composed of one *basse-taille*, one *haute-contre*, and one actress who were paid equally. Each group of three respectively being paid 1,500, 1,200, and 1,000 livres, according to the rank. This sense of hierarchy appears in the fourth article of the 1713 *Règlement*:

> All the Actors and Actresses of the Music and the Dance will have to accept and perform the *Rôles* or *Entrée* [the part of ballet] they will be assigned, either as main performers or understudies, under penalty of forfeiting a month of their salary the first time, or being dismissed in case of recidivism.[130]

This method of classification for the singers within a troupe is visible in a later edition of Furetière's *Dictionnaire universel*, where the entry *acteur* presents a reference to a cast's structure based on 'first' and 'second' actors.[131] Later, the entry *chanteur* of the *Encyclopédie*, written by the librettist Louis de Cahusac, refered to the same structure.[132]

The performers placed at the top of the cast were called 'First Subjects' (*premiers sujets*) or actors 'in chief' (*en chef*).[133] They created the main roles of the plot

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[129] *Règlement*, 1714, Articles XXXIII and XXXVIII.

[130] *Réglement concernant l'Opéra, donné à Versailles le 11 Janvier 1713*, copied in Noinville and Travenol, *HTA*, 110: 'Article IV. Tous Acteurs et Actrices de Musique & de Danse seront tenus d'accepter & d'exécuter les Rôles ou Entrées, à peine d'être privés d'un mois de leurs appointemens [sic] pour la première fois, & d'être congédiés en cas de récidive.'

[131] Furetière's *Dictionnaire* of 1727: 'Horace parle d'un *Acteur* qui jouait le second rôle, en imitant le premier *Acteur*, & qui se rabaissait exprès pour servir de lustre à l'*Acteur* principal. On ne sait pas trop aujourd'hui de quelle manière jouaient ces seconds *Acteurs*.'

[132] *Encyclopédie*, 1753, vol. III, 145a: 'Chanteur, euse, s. (*Musicien.*) acteur de l'opéra, qui récite, exécute, joue les rôles, ou qui chante dans les chœurs des tragédies, & des ballets mis en musique. Les *chanteurs* de l'opéra sont donc divisés en récitants & en choristes, & les uns & les autres sont distingués par la partie qu'ils exécutent ; il y a des *chanteurs* hautes-contres, tailles, basses-tailles; des *chanteuses* premiers & seconds-dessus. Parmi ceux qui exécutent les rôles, il y a encore une très-grande différence entre les premiers *chanteurs,* & ceux qui en leur absence (par maladie ou défaut de zèle) les remplacent, & qu'on nomme *doubles.* Les *chanteurs* qui jouent les premiers rôles sont pour l'ordinaire les favoris du public ; les doubles en sont les objets de déplaisance [sic]. On dit communément: *cet opéra n'ira pas loin, il est en double.*'

[133] Solveig Serre asserts that these 'First Subjects' are officially recognised as such in 1776 (Solveig, *L'Opéra de Paris*, 111-117. See also Carbonnier, 'Le personnel musical', 192). However, the concept appears way before in administrative documents. Laporte refers to 'eight first roles' as some form of

and their names were almost always printed on the librettos accompanying the (re)edition of the operas. They are occasionally mentioned as benefitting from personal coaching with opera composers. Finally, in addition to benefit from comfortable financial conditions (which increased throughout the eighteenth century), some of them enjoyed extensive fame across social spheres, providing additional sources of income and privileges.

Tessiture	Sex	Description of the title	Position in the hierarchy	Salary (in *livres*)
Basse-taille	M	First actor	'First Subject' or actor 'in chief'	1500
Haute-contre	M	First actor	'First Subject' or actor 'in chief'	1500
	F	First actress	'First Subject' or actor 'in chief'	1500
Basse-taille	M	Second actor	First understudy	1200
Haute-contre	M	Second actor	First understudy	1200
	F	Second actress	First understudy	1200
Basse-taille	M	Third actor	Second understudy or double	1000
Haute-contre	M	Third actor	Second understudy or double	1000
	F	Third actress	Second understudy or double	1000
	F	Fourth actress	-	900
	F	Fifth actress	-	800
	F	Sixth actress	-	700
Taille	M	First actor	-	600
Taille	M	Second actor	-	600

Table I.2 — Model of the ARM's troupe as described by the 1713 *Règlement*

Underneath that first set of singers, the hierarchical groups of understudies performed specific secondary roles but also had to be ready to step in the leading roles, should the singers 'in chief' not be able to perform. Indeed, the 'first subjects' could decide to leave (temporarily or permanently) their roles after a certain number of performances; they might simply refuse to perform, be officially off duty, or be ill. Roaming through the scores, it appears that the medium male voice of *taille* was never assigned to main protagonists and was, therefore, relegated to the bottom of the troupe's hierarchy of soloist singers.

The internal composition of the hierarchy described in the 1713 *Règlement*

synonym for designing the troupe's hierarchy (*Les Spectacles de Paris*, 'Règlements et privilèges concernant l'Académie royale de musique, confirmés par des Arrêts rendus au Conseil du Roi' [Paris: Duchesne, 1754], Article 11). Likewise, the *Dictionnaire universel* (1727) and the *Encyclopédie* (1753) also develop this sense of semantic hierarchy among performers (as quoted above).

changed during the eighteenth century. The number of performers, although expressly said to be fixed in 1713, increased, and the ranks — between First Subjects and Understudies — were configured differently over time. Nevertheless, the overall structure remained the same: different groups of singers, each of them sharing the same salary range, outlined different ranks within the hierarchy of the troupe.

In the *Détail de la régie actuel* [sic] *de l'Académie Royale de Musique avec un dénombrement de tout ce qui fait la recette et la dépense de ce spectacle en 1738*, an exceptionally detailed document, the ARM's classification shows already an important evolution.[134]

Name	Sex	Tessitura	Annual salary (in livres)	Annual bonus (in livres)	Special bonuses (in livres)	Extra wages for 'bread, wine, and footwear' (in livres)
Chassé	M	Basse-taille	3000	1000	4200 in total (from 1735 until 1738)	200
Tribout [sic]	M	Haute-contre	3000	1000	2200 in total (from 1735 until 1738)	200
Antier (l'aînée)	F	Actrice	3000	1000	-	-
Lemaure	F	Actrice	3000	1000	400 (in 1735)	100
Pélissier	F	Actrice	2500	500	3000 in total (from 1736 until 1738)	100
Dun	M	Basse-taille	2000	500	1600 in total (from 1735 until 1738)	200
Eremans	F	Actrice	2000	500	2400 in total (from 1735 until 1738)	200
Dumas	M	Haute-contre	1500	300	2100 in total (from 1735 until 1738)	100
Jeliote [sic]	M	Haute-contre	1200 (with an important and rapid increase in the salary outined in an extra column, both in 1735 and 1736)	300	980 in total (from 1735 until 1736)	300 in total (from 1734 and 1735)
Julie	F	Actrice	1200 (with augmentations in 1737)	300	200 (in 1738)	-
Petitpas	F	Actrice	1200 (with augmentations in 1733, 1734 and 1737)	300	1100 in total (from 1735 until 1738)	-
Fel	F	Actrice	1200	300	300 in total (from 1735 until 1737)	100 (in 1736)
Cuvillier	M	Taille	1000	200	800 in total (from 1736 until 1738)	
Albert	M	Basse-taille	1000	-	-	-
De Fontenay	M	Basse-taille	1000	-	-	-
Monville	F	Actrice	1000	-	300 in total (from 1736 until 1737)	-
Du Guay	F	Actrice	1000	-	-	-
Mignier [sic]	F	Actrice	900	-	-	-
Cuigner	M	Basse-taille	800	200	-	-
Person	M	Basse-taille	800		400 in total (from 1736 until 1737)	200 (in 1736)
Goujet	M	Basse-taille	600	200		
Bourbonnois l'aînée	F	Actrice	600	-	750 in total (from 1735 until 1737)	-
TOTAL	F (11), M (10)	-	33500	7600	20730 (from 1735 until 1738)	1700 (from 1734 until 1738)

Table I.3 — Principal men and women ('Acteurs et demoiselles des Rolles') in the *Détail de la régie* (1738)

[134] F-Po, Archives 18 (20–2). This inventory is part of a manuscript entitled *Académie Royalle de Musique vulgairement l'Opéra*, which can be found in Fétis's collection now housed in the Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er in Brussels. It is listed as no. 3843 in the *Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique Catalogue de la Bibliothèque de F. J. Fétis, acquise par l'état belge* (Brussels: C. Muquardt, 1877).

In this *Détail*, four artists are placed at the top of the hierarchy and paid 3000 *livres* (i.e. the double of the amount stipulated in the 1713 *Règlement*). Two other recognisable groups are placed respectively at 1200 *livres* and 1000 *livres*. In-between, the list presents an interesting gradation of the wages (between 1500 and 2500 *livres*), suggesting that the rules for categorising roles must have been rewritten around that time. Indeed, Marie Pélissier (on 2,500 livres in the *Détail*) and Catherine-Nicole Lemaure (on 3,000 *livres*) both occupied the same position (i.e. taking the same tender and pathetic roles of the princesses) due to an administrative error, and were challenged in 1738 by the arrival of new talents, namely Miss Julie, Miss Petitpas (who would die prematurely in 1739), and Marie Fel.

On the side of male soloists, the competition was also intense, between the old guard as embodied by Claude-Louis-Dominique Chassé and François Tribou (both on 3,000 *livres*), and the rising star Pierre Jélyotte (starting at 1,200 *livres*, but rapidly increasing in pay). On top of this jostling for position, the arrival of Jean-Philippe Rameau at the ARM had possibly played an important role in the recomposition of the *emploi*, both on the administrative side (as shown by the increase in number of singers and the modification of the salaries) and on the aesthetic level (with new arrangements regarding character-types and operatic genres).

In another register, the *Liste des sujets du chant, de la danse et de l'orchestre, comparaison entre 1756, 1806, 1856*, the soloists' hierarchy in 1756 appears close to the classification described in 1738.[135] Yet, without being radically different, the table for 1756 looks more streamlined, with six clear, main types of annual salary respectively at 3000, 2500-2000, 1500, 1200, 1000, and 800-600 *livres*. It is worth noting that, at that

[135] F-Po, Archives 18 (22), Papiers administratifs / Personnel.

time, the ARM had just been placed under the direction of two talented violinists, François Francoeur and François Rebel (first from 1753-1743, then from 1757-1767), who attempted to restore a sound structure for the troupe, in addition to diversifying the repertoire.[136]

Name	Sex	Tessiture	Annual salary (in *livres*)	Annual bonus (in *livres*)
(De) Chassé	M	Basse-taille	3000	1000
Fel	F	Dessus	3000	1000
Chevalier	F	Bas-Dessus	3000	1000
(De) Latour	M	Haute-Contre	2500	1000
Gélin	M	Basse-taille	2400	400
Jacquet	F	Dessus*	2400	400
Person	M	Basse-taille	2000	-
Dubois	F	Bas-Dessus	1500	500
Davaux	F	Bas-Dessus*	1500	500
Cohendet	F	Dessus*	1500	500
Larrivée	M	Basse-taille	1200	400
Langlois	M	(a)	1200	300
Le Roy (said Desbelles)	M	Basse-taille	1200	300
Duperey	F	Dessus*	1200	200
Godard	M	Taille	1000	200
Pillot	M	Haute-Contre	1000	-
Chefdeville	F	Dessus*	1000	300
Bruyère	M	(b)	800	100
Rivière	F	Dessus*	800	100
Héritié	F	Dessus*	600	200

Table I.4 — Principal men and women ('Acteurs et demoiselles des Rolles') in the *Liste des sujets du chant* (1756).

The nomenclature 'Role with *baguette*', 'Princess' and 'Tender Role' attributed for the main female singers (respectively: Maillard, Arnaud, and Branchu) appears in the

[136] Following the 'Querelle des Bouffons', Francœur and Rebel made the decision to defend as diverse a repertoire as possible. Their first season as directors was formed of *Alcyone* (Marais), *Issé* (Destouches), *Les Surprises de l'Amour* (Rameau), *Alceste* (Lully), and *Énée et Lavinie* (Dauvergne). A decade later, their selection showed a radically different repertoire with *Aline, reine de Golconde* (Monsigny), *L'Europe galante* (Campra), *Zélindor, roi des Sylphes* (Francœur and Rebel), *Sylvie* (Trial and Berton), *Thésée* (Mondonville), *Hippolyte et Aricie* (Rameau). In both cases, the common rule was a spirit of variety that both directors regularly defended: 'We dare flattering ourselves with the fact that the attention we've had so far, and will always have, to vary the genres of the works we've put and will continue to put under the eyes of the audience, convincingly proves that we respect all the tastes, and that we only try to augment, as much as we can, the audience's entertainment…' ('Lettre de Rebel et Francœur à l'auteur du *Mercure*' in *Mercure de France* [January 1758], 155).

ARM's list of singers in 1806.[137] This administrative document seems to be the first in the history of the Académie that presents the troupe's hierarchy with an explicit association between the salaries, troupe's ranks, and a very specific type of set of roles.

[137] F-Po, Archives 18e (22), Papiers administratifs / Personnel.

I.3. Casting the troupe: sorting out shortages and handling the retirement legal problem

From the study of the ARM's administrative documents, two main issues related to the *emploi* arise. A first one focuses on the demand for performers and the challenge related to their scarcity. The quest for finding singers fitted for endorsing established *emplois* increased in difficulty as sets of roles became more stiff and stereotypical throughout the eighteenth century. A poor casting could result in dissatisfaction among the audience, and in-between the singers themselves. Indeed disputes around roles were common. They addressed the relationship between the singers, administrators, and various other members of staff.

A second issue concerns singers' retirement and pensions, a challenging but crucial legal issue. The implementation of the pension scheme directly addressed the state of the Opéra's finances, which management was consistently suffering from various caveats and pressures. At several points in time throughout the eighteenth century, the degradation of the financial situation forced the advent of administrative reforms. Caught between recurrent crises and the risk of upsetting retirees by delaying or cancelling their payments (and so ruin the company's reputation), the ARM needed some assurance of regularity in its system of finances. If the first pensions associated with the Opéra and its members began as personal favours directly granted by the king, the system was administratively regulated on 11 January 1713, before Louis XIV's death.[138]

This formalisation of the pensions' system did not solely have an impact on the finances of the establishment: its effect was also palatable on the musical and artistic side of the Académie. Tied with a mandatory period of fifteen years of activity, the

[138] F-Pan, AJ/13/1, I; copied by Noinville and Travenol, *HTA*, 108–117.

obtention of a pension sent a strong incentive for singers to remain at the Opéra. Thus it radically contrasted with Italian casting practices at the same period of time. In turn, the stabilisation of the company had long-term effects on the whole of the opera production that have not yet been fully gauged by scholars. First, it deeply affected the ways in which composers thought about their music and the ways it intersected with specific voices, bodies, skills and personalities ahead of their work. It also directly impacted how the audience's collective memory of roles and horizon of expectation. That it so say how spectators compared actors' performances from one generation to another in the form of a constructed lineage.

Both issues regarding singers' scarcity and retirement highlight the Opéra administration's reliance on a system of classification (that of the *emploi*) so as to ensure the smooth running of the opera production and a good communication between all of the agents involved.

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The 1713 *Réglement* assigned responsibility for filling vacant places in the troupe with 'good subjects' to the Inspector General (*Inspecteur Général*).[139] Attempts to fulfil this duty, however, were not always successful. A shortage of talented actors was often highlighted throughout the eighteenth century by various commentators (e.g. Louis de Bachaumont, François Raguenet) as well as professionals (e.g. François Francœur and

[139] *Réglement*, 1713, Article VIII: 'The number of Actors & Actresses of Music & Dance, of Men & Girls of the Choruses & the Symphonies, being stated by the *État* in the present *Règlement*, the Inspector General will ensure that the vacant places are necessarily filled by good Subjects.' ('Le nombre des Acteurs & Actrices de Musique & de Danse, d'Hommes & Filles des Chœurs & des Symphonies, suivant l'Etat arrêté dans le présent Règlement, l'Inspecteur Général tiendra la main à ce que les places qui vaqueront soient nécessairement remplies par de bons Sujets.')

François Rebel).[140]

The process of recruitment, sometimes described in the personal writings of professionals (e.g. Favart's *Mémoires*), informs us of the needs and hurdles the ARM's managers faced (whether episodically or continuously).[141] Three criteria were particularly considered: the vocal capacities, the theatrical abilities, and the overall physique of the performer. These parameters were taken into account by recruiters who tried to fill positions within the troupes that were already informed by pre-existing repertoire.

The *emplois* necessarily instructed the criteria, insofar as they delimited specific and recurrent characteristics for characters. A singer who would like to fill a vacant place associated with a set of roles would need to align with (at least a majority of) the core skills related to the person who performed them before. Therefore, the process of casting took into consideration not only the personal talents of an artist, but also gauged their qualities relatively to the vacancies available and the possible career trajectories within the troupe.

In the 1660s and early 1670s, the numbers of plays with music in Paris and at the court increased. It fostered some complications for the recruitment, as more singers

[140] Louis Petit de Bachaumont testifies in his *MS* (20 April 1762): 'We notice a rather considerable reform amongst the lower ranks [probably the choruses], which has little influences on the rest of the show. There should be a more considerable [reform] amongst the [soloist] singers, but the shortage prevents any change.' ('On remarque une réforme assez considérable dans les subalternes, qui influent pour peu sur le total du spectacle. Il y en aurait une plus considérable à faire dans les chanteurs, mais la pénurie empêche de rien changer.') In 1702 already, François Raguenet recalled to his contemporaries' minds the issue of the departure of a soloist as prominent as *Mademoiselle* La Rochois in his *Parallèle des italiens et des français en ce qui regarde la musique et les opéras* (Paris: Moreau, 1702), 97–98: 'If a principal Actress, like the Rochois, were to leave us, it is not only Paris but the whole of France that would not know how to provide another that replace her. In Italy, for one Actor or Actress missing, there will be ten others at once; because the Italians are all born Comedians, & are as much excellent Musicians as they are Actors.' ('Si une principale Actrice, comme la Rochoix [sic], vient à nous manquer, non seulement Paris, mais toute la France entière ne sauroit en fournir une autre qui puisse la remplacer. En Italie, pour un Acteur ou une Actrice qui manqueront, on en trouvera dix autres aussi tôt ; car les Italiens naissent tous Comédiens, & sont aussi excellens Acteurs, que Musiciens.').

[141] Charles-Simon Favart, *Mémoires et correspondance littéraires, dramatiques et anecdotiques* (Paris: Collin, 1808).

were needed, and the possibility for composers and librettists to develop stable, identifiable soloist roles. Therefore, many French productions before *Pomone* displayed very few leading sung roles and large groups of *coryphées*. On the eve of Lully's acquisition of the ARM *privilège*, four musical productions (two of them being premières) were running concurrently in four different places between Paris, Versailles, and Saint-Germain-en-Laye.[142] Produced by and for the court, they relied on the same bodies of musicians and actors with, on top of it, the growing tension between Lully and Molière. The number of performers needed for each of these productions, especially with all the different ballets and *coryphées* that composed each *intermède*, was significant. Lully himself had to endorse the major character of the Mufti in *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, a decision that might been motivated as much by the symbolic dimension of the character within the plot as by Lully's inability to find any proper singer for the role.

Alongside the shortage of reliable artists, another related problem was that of the management of less talented singers. The ARM's directors and inspectors had to deal with performers whose voice deteriorated over time and with others who showed very little talent but were hired either by mistake or for lack (at the time of their enrolment) of any better alternative. One technique for correcting this situation consisted in the administration getting rid of the worst performers either by demoting them in the troupe's hierarchy. Another one consisted in forcing singers into retirement as in the case of Louis-Antoine Cuvillier (1701–1750).[143]

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[142] Between the months of January and February 1672 inclusive, the following works were programmed: A revival of *Psyché* (*tragédie-ballet* by Lully, Molière, Quinault, and Corneille) in the Théâtre du Palais-Royal; *Les Peines et les Plaisirs de l'Amour* (*pastorale héroïque* by Cambert and Gilbert) at the Académie Royale des Opéras; the revival of *Les amours de Diane et d'Endymion* under the title *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* (*pastorale héroïque* by Sablières and Guichard) at Saint-Germain-en-Laye; and *Le Mariage de Bacchus et d'Ariane* (*comédie-héroïque* by Mollier and De Visé).

[143] F-Pan, AJ/13/1 (IV–2), *Lettres et états concernant les traitements, gratifications et pensions*, 'Académie Royale de Musique. Réformes et arrangements proposés', October 1749, 1: 'Sr Cuvillier *Père*,

Amelot de La Houssaie's *Mémoires* lists most of the ARM's singers from 1669 until 1758, and offers an interesting peek into the practices related to the pressure exerted on singers' salaries.[144] The Opéra's directorship showed favour or dissatisfaction for its performers by adjusting their salaries. In various cases, singers either benefitted from significant pay rises (as seen in the *Détail de la régie* in 1738 for Pierre Jélyotte, Julie Delaunai [known as Miss Julie], and Miss Petitpas; or in the Amelot de La Houssaie's *Mémoires* for Miss Duval, Marie Fel and François Lepage) or endured sudden reductions in pay.[145]

The case of Miss Le Breton de Monville, known as Monville *la cadette* (b. 1715–ca. 1769), presents a clear example of salary reduction. From 1730, where she entered the ARM as 'Demoiselle des Rolles' with 1,000 *livres*, she was later downgraded as a 'Demoiselle des Chœurs' at Easter 1743 with 800 *livres*, and ultimately forced to retire in 1748 (after her mandatory fifteen years of service). The career of Miss Pontarly (b. 1720–a. 1743) at the ARM presents a similar case over a significantly shorter period. Having entered the Opera in 1740 with 1,200 *livres*, her salary was reduced to 400 livres as she was put in the chorus in Easter 1741, before being forced to retire in March 1742. An even more extreme example is that of the *haute-contre* Codard: incapable of mastering the first roles he was initially assigned, the singer was dismissed

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Taille, has served for about twenty years, and is now a veteran. His voice is very much diminished, rarely useful, and can be replaced by Sr Selle, who sings in the Choruses for 1,200 *livres* of salary. [Written in the margin:] Was made pensionary on 1 June 1750.' ('Le Sr Cuvillier, Père, Taille, sert depuis environ 20 ans, a acquis la vétérance. Sa voix est fort diminuée, rarement utile, et peut être remplacée par le S. Selle, chantant dans les Chœurs à 1200 [livres] d'appointements. La pension de retraite [de Cuvillier] est de 600 [livres]. […] A été mis à la pension au 1er Juin 1750.')

[144] Amelot de La Houssaie, *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de l'Académie Royale de Musique, vulgairement L'Opéra, depuis son établissement en 1669 jusqu'en l'année 1758* (F-Po, MS autograph, Rés. 516).

[145] La Houssaie, *Mémoires*: François Lepage, *basse-taille* who entered in the chorus in November 1735, received numerous pay increases before being given roles ('mis aux Rolles') from 1737 until his retirement in May 1752. Miss Duval *l'aînée* also had her salary increased so that, from her initial position in the chorus (1749), she came to be ranked to the one of 'doubles' (understudies) for the roles (July 1751).

only a few months after entering the ARM in 1747.[146]

Those cases, however, were quite exceptional as the analysis of the *État des appointements* from July 1751 to April 1760 [TABLE I.5] reveals.[147] Out of 120 singers working over a period of eight years, only three saw their salaries decrease: Miss Duval *l'aînée* (ca. 1714–1769/1775), Favier (ca. 1724–1769), and Miss Gaulthier *l'aînée* (ca. 1729–1758). All three present clear reasons for the decrease of their pay and their consequent departures, which are not always self-evidently connected to a desire on the part of the ARM to get rid of them.

With her sister (who was also employed at the ARM in 1730), Miss Duval *l'aînée* profited from her family's fortune and left the ARM some time after December 1731. She remained active and composed the opéra-ballet *Les Génies* (1736), which became the second opera written by a woman to be performed on the stage of the ARM (after Élizabeth Jacquet de La Guerre's *Céphale et Procris* in 1694). After being re-hired at the ARM in 1751 to sing in the choruses and act as an understudy, Miss Duval *l'aînée* might not have particularly cared for the lowering of her salary or even the fact that the ARM did not grant her a pension (since she did not have the mandatory fifteen years of continuous service when she definitively retired in 1754).

Miss Gaulthier *l'aînée* joined the chorus in 1752, one year after her sister Gaulthier the *cadette*.[148] Both Gaulthier sisters had fragile constitutions and needed to take care of their health: possible absences due to ill health (or unreliability for health reasons) might indicate why the ARM decreased Miss Gaulthier *l'aînée*'s salary.

The last case outlines more clearly the capacity of the ARM's administration to

[146] La Houssaie, *Mémoires*: Codard is fired in October 1747 'as he was incapable of singing the roles for which he had been employed.' ('n'ayant pu chanter dans les Rolles pour lesquels il avait été arrêté.')
[147] F-Pan, AJ/13/15 (I and II).
[148] Gaulthier the *cadette* performed at the ARM as an additional (*surnuméraire*) dancer, and later as understudy for some roles until she retired in 1758.

correct its performers by using its pay scale. The *haute-contre* Favier committed numerous infringements on the rules during his time at the ARM. These included repeated lateness, which triggered a major argument between him and the director, François Francœur. The latter threatened to have Favier imprisoned. Interestingly, the decrease of Favier's earnings (from 600 livres with 300 livres of gratuities in 1752 to 600 livres with 100 livres of gratuities in 1757) did not put an end to his career at the ARM. Surely, his voice — as described by the *Mercure de France* in 1746 — was too beautiful and, thus, much needed. Thus, the administration's decision to decrease his pay was probably intended as a general warning regarding his bad behaviour.[149]

Demotion by salary reduction, however, was not always feasible. In order to prevent a contingent of mediocre talents from blocking others from undertaking important roles, the 1713 *Règlement* expressly included a school for singers, dancers, and instrumentalists, installed where the decors were crafted (rue Saint-Nicaise).[150] This 'École du Magasin' was placed under the control of the Inspector General who already had to check on the quality of the said performers (as stated in Article VIII). In theory, singers had to know how to sing properly before being cast at the Opéra. In reality, however, their vocal competence could vary immensely and some of the singers — especially in the choruses — had to be trained *in situ*. This may have been especially useful for women who had less access to musical education than men in general. However, their place within the cast greatly influenced their access to good singing lessons: only soloists, occupying higher *emplois*, could rehearse with the composers themselves. Those would have personal savings had also the possibility to engage the services of a private teacher: either more experienced ARM's members or foreigners.

[149] *MF*, June 1747, II, 119.
[150] *Règlement* (1713) copied by Noinville and Travenol in *HTA*: 'Article II: In order to raise subjects suitable for filling in the places of those who will leave, a school of Music, one of Dance, and one of Instruments will be established; & those who have been admitted will be taught free of charge.' See also *DOPAR*, 'Lettre M', 637-639.

The École du Magasin, however, was renown for the limitations of the quality of its teaching. With little money, few instructors, and little time to train performers, the outcomes of the school could not be overwhelmingly positive. The institution was only improved in 1766 by Rebel and Francœur before its complete disappearance in 1784, ultimately replaced by the École Royale de Chant à l'Hôtel des Menus-Plaisirs.

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In the case of retirement and pensions, the management of the singers' departure from the Opéra highlights a key dimension of the *emplois*. Two main issues were at stake: the regulation of the ARM's finances and the stability of the troupe's hierarchy.

The right to access annual pensions actually occupied most of the 1713 *Règlement*. A special fund of 10,000 *livres*, specifically dedicated to the ARM performers, constituted the first system of regular civil pensions in France.[151] Singers needed to fulfill fifteen years of service at the ARM to access a pension proportional to their salary. This system indicated a great level of care from the administration at a time when social warfare for the working classes did not exist. At the national scale, it paralleled the one with the army (which was a much older non-civil pension system). For the first time in French history, the system of pension acquired its modern sense.

Importantly, the pension system had a sedimentary effect on the troupe. Indeed it was not in the interest of individual singers to leave the ARM or even move around too

[151] This sum is equal to £125 565,20. Jérôme de La Gorce has shown that, prior fo 1713, the king forced Lully's successor, Francine, to pay some pensions for actresses in 1698, as well in 1704 when the financial manager Guyenet helped Francine, who was in debt, and ultimately went bankrupt himself (*L'Opéra à Paris du temps de Louis XIV: histoire d'un théâtre* [Paris: Desjonquères, 1992]). These pensions were described by l'abbé de Vassetz in *La description de la vie et mœurs, de l'exercice et l'état des filles de l'Opéra* (1694).

much. This financial incentive attempted to defeat the possibility of a high turnover of performers. With regard to the *emploi*, the pensions system aimed for a greater sense of stability regarding the sets of roles and their handover between two generations of singers. The only way for singers to gain agency was to play the interests of the audience against those of the administration. This strategy was not only applied to the pensions and will be investigated further in the second chapter.

The earlier singers could access their retirement money, the more they ran the risk of jeopardising the financial stability of the Opéra. Thus the ARM tried to ensure that good singers, instead of leaving the institution, would fulfil their engagement with the Opéra properly and would complete their mandatory fifteen years of service. This need was also reinforced by the reccurent shortage of singers, previously described.

The Opéra sometimes broke its own *Règlement* by pressuring a soloist to remain in its service even longer than the legally required period, or by enforcing more coercive rules. The effect on performers' voices and bodies, however, could be damaging. In 1706, Jean-Louis Le Cerf de La Viéville noticed that female singers like Marie Verdier and Marie Aubry 'were not much in good spirit to sing' when 'they began to be worn out'.[152] The author's elusive style of writing leaves plenty of room for imagination regarding the use of that latter expression; it is unsure if the notion of 'worn out' relates specifically to their voice or to their whole figure.

Retirement rules were a natural prolongation of norms surrounding the discipline of singers and, more specifically, the management of their attendance to rehearsals and shows. Before a full retirement, performers also had to navigate rules regarding punctual leaves of absence. The ARM monitored these very closely, and almost systematically

[152] Jean-Louis Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française* (Bruxelles, Foppens, 1705–1706), II, 5: 'Ces filles d'Opéra s'usent pourtant plus tôt que d'autres, & d'ailleurs lorsqu'elles commencent à être usées, elles sont d'ordinaire moins en humeur de chanter.'

punished the artists who transgressed the guidelines set by the *Réglement*. Very few exceptions were made, and these only for the most talented performers in the institution. All the other artists had to pay a high price for their disobedience. For example, the *basse-taille* Le Comte (before 1717–after 1738), who entered at the ARM in July 1737 (at a salary of 600 *livres*) was found to be absent in November of the same year without asking properly for his leave, and 'was dismissed for this reason'.[153] Noel (before 1736–after 1774), a *haute-contre* soloist, was declared 'absent without permission, [thus] observed as a fugitive' in 1755.[154] Lombard, a *haute-contre* who joined the choruses in October 1751 faced the same judgement.[155]

Whenever the ARM's administration had enough good reasons to keep or chuck out a performer, means for ensuring that coercion could be found. Marie Fel (1713–1794), for example, demonstrated strong singing skills from the very start of her early career; as such, she was particularly requested and might have been planning to leave the Opéra for another stage just after she enrolled in 1734. The ARM's administration, however, was not willing to let a singer with such talent leave the institution. Following a letter from the royal household itself, the ARM Director Eugène de Thuret decided to forbid Fel's departure from the Opéra, on the pretext that actors were required to give six months' notice.[156]

During the eighteenth century, whilst the pensions system became streamlined, the administrative roles and layers multiplied. Indeed the level of administrative surveillance naturally increased in order to check and process the ARM's subjects. This

[153] La Houssaie, *Mémoires*.
[154] La Houssaie, *Mémoires*.
[155] La Houssaie, *Mémoires*.
[156] Versailles, 20 July 1735: 'In the absence of M. le Comte de Maurepas I have laid before the King the application of Mr and Miss Fel, who ask permission to resign at once from the Académie Royalle de Musique. His Majesty desires absolutely that no actors should be permitted to retire without applying for discharge six months before hand, and consequently, you must not grant the discharge requested by Mr and Miss Fel under any pretext whatsoever.'

phenomenon was reinforced with the shift of the Opéra's ownership to the City of Paris in 1749. The aldermen (*échevins*) working there belonged generally to the merchant's corps, which had been increasingly filled with former intendants from the king's administration.[157] Fewer of them actually engaged in professional activities shared by other Parisian corps; instead, they cultivated a bureaucratic taste for managing institutions, including that of the Opéra.

The eighteenth-century shift regarding the nature of the pension system at the ARM reflects this change explicitly. From representing a gratuitous gesture of bounty flowing from the king's will, pensions increasingly became an object of bargaining between administrators and employees. A perfect example of this change is the comparison between the case of Marie Antier and later ones. Placed in the artistic lineage of Marie Le Rochois and her followers Marie-Louise Desmatins and Françoise Journet, who were generally typecast in the powerful roles of sorceresses and queens, Marie Antier rapidly reached the top of the troupe's hierarchy. After thirty years of service (1711–1741), Antier's rights regarding her pension were arbitrarily augmented, following a direct order from Maurepas at the Maison du Roi:

> Sir, the way Miss Antier has served the Opera merits that she would be treated with distinction, and you may give her 1,500 *livres* as pension instead of the 1,000 *livres* she was supposed to receive on her retirement. This favour granted to Miss Antier must not serve as a rule or be taken as a consequence when other actors retire after they have served the time required for the acquisition of their pension.[158]

[157] See Laurence Croq, 'Les édiles, les notables et le pouvoir royal à Paris, histoire de ruptures (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles)', *Le pouvoir municipal : de la fin du Moyen Âge à 1789* (Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2012), 223–250. The position of intendant itself had been created by Louis XIII in May 1635: it designated an administrative official who served as an agent of the king in each of the provinces, or généralités, participating to the consolidation of royal absolutism (Bibliothèque du Conseil d'État, *Ordonnance des comptes*, t. 5, Vol. EEE, f. 488, 'Édit de création des intendants', May 1635).

[158] F-Pan, AJ/13/1 (II), *Correspondance du ministre Maurepas concernant l'Opéra*, Versailles, 6 July 1741: 'La Manière dont la Demoiselle Antier a, Monsieur, servi à l'Opéra mérite qu'elle soit traitée avec distinction et vous pouvez lui faire payer quinze cent livres de pension au lieu de celle de mille livres qu'elle aurait dû avoir pour sa retraite. Cette grâce accordée à la Demoiselle Antier ne doit point servir de règle ni tirer à conséquence lorsque d'autres acteurs se retireront après avoir servi le temps nécessaire pour acquérir la pension.'

Antier's reward for her career is here understood according to old royal traditions, based on the king's arbitrary benevolence. Loyalty and duty, associated to the highest standards in terms of singing and performance, were acknowledged by the king's administration and rewarded by the allocation of a pension. As indicated by Maurepas, the gesture was, in essence, an exception: it was personal at every level.

In contrast, the directors Rebel and Francœur negotiated their own pension with a high level confidence and a remarkable use of legal rhetoric. In December 1766, whilst organising the departure from their second period of ownership over the Académie, they specified in their request for a lifetime pension a defined amount of money, tied with conditions regarding their disbursement.[159] They asked that the state grant Rebel 9,000 *livres*, of which his wife would receive 2,000 *livres* if he died.[160] Likewise, they asked that Francœur receive a pension of 6,000 *livres*, which would be redistributed in the event of his death to his wife (2,000 *livres*), or in the case of her death, to Francœur's children, a son and a daughter, who would each receive 1,000 *livres*.

Other case studies in the mid-eighteenth century display many valuable elements that merit to be explored. Two of them are particularly representative of the retirement issue and its relation to the *emplois*: Marie-Jeanne Fesch, known as Chevalier (1722–1789), and Françoise-Claude-Marie-Rosalie Campagne, known as Rosalie Duplant (1745–a. 1800).

At the end of the 1750s, the ARM's administration was trying to solve several

[159] F-Pan, AJ/13/1, III, *Soumission des Sieurs Rebel et Francœur de remettre le privilège de l'Académie Royale de Musique*, December 1766, 2; and *Délibération pour la résiliation de la concession du privilège de l'Académie Royale de Musique faite aux Sieurs Rebel et Francœur, et nouvelle concession du Privilège au Sieur Dauvergne*, 10 December 1766, 4–5.
[160] If she died too, half of her sum (i.e. 1,000 *livres*) would be transferred to his daughter Louise-Henriette, married to Martin-François Girard, a highly ranked dignitary (Inspecteur Général de la manufacture du tabac à la Ferme générale).

different problems that engaged, as always, the financial side of the business. Some of these were aggravated by the transfer of the Académie's guardianship to the City of Paris in 1749. In the ensuing administrative turmoil, the number of female positions was drastically reduced, from 15 in the 1740s to 10 in the 1760s. The departures of Marie Fel in 1756 caused a great stir. Although the voice of Marie-Jeanne Chevalier (active at the ARM between 1741 and 1766) appeared to have been damaged, the administration was reluctant to let her leave the stage. One of the reasons for this might have been because Chevalier was assigned roles which did not match her actual vocal capacities. Indeed the ARM assigned her characters that required a lot of vocal power: these probably severely damaged her voice. On the threshold of her retirement, Chevalier's used voice was no longer appealing. The critic Charles Collé wrote: 'Miss Chevalier screams'.[161] Bachaumont said that she 'vociferate[d]' all the time.[162] Comparing Chevalier's skills to those of the best contemporary Italian female singers, Jean-Jacques Rousseau probably criticized her lack of projection of sound when he wrote that 'the illustrious Chevalier used her arms in order to make up for the lack of strength of her loins.'[163] Later in her career at the Opéra, Chevalier tried to perform the popular roles of gentle princesses whose medium tessitura was built on a delicate declamatory style. However, as her voice was already much altered, she did not successfully change the audience's opinion of her. When she played the pathetic role of Issé in 1757, Collé commented sarcastically:

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[161] *Journal et mémoires de Charles Collé sur les hommes de lettres... du règne de Louis XV, 1748-1772* (Paris: Firmin-Didot frères et fils et Cie, 1868), t. III, 337, January 1764.
[162] Bachaumont, *MS* (January 1764). Friedrich Melchior Grimm refers to her in the *Petit Prophète de Boehmischbroda* ([La Haye, 1774], chap. VI 'La Magicienne', 16) and it is also probable that she inspired him to comment satirically on 'the necessity for and the usage of screaming at the Opéra like the possessed in front of a crucifix' (*Correspondance littéraire*, January 1767). At the end of the same year, however, Bachaumont notes that 'It is necessary to give Miss Chevalier justice by saying that she prodigiously plays the role of Clorinde [in *Tancrède*]; she sings and does not shout, according to the reproach that has been made against her for a long time.' (*MS* [5 October 1764]).
[163] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Lettre d'un symphoniste de l'Académie royale de musique à ses camarades de l'orchestre*, dans *Œuvres complètes de J. J. Rousseau avec des notes historiques* (Paris: Furne, 1835), III, 546.

> Miss Chevalier has given some pleasure in the monologues; but needed someone to explain the meaning of the role of Issé so as to perform with sentiment, and not, as she has done, with an impetuous and even furious form of tenderness: this role must be sung tenderly, not shouted.[164]

Rameau probably understood this issue of Chevalier's ageing voice and attempted to accommodate the singer by creating 'tailored' roles. These new heroines required strength and nobility but put the emphasis on the theatrical capacities of the performer and less on the voice itself. Although they were less affected by fragile emotions, these roles were definitely not the type of furious queens or vengeful deities that Chevalier's predecessor, Marie Antier (1687–1747), used to perform.

Date	Roles of vocal strength: sorceresses, deities, powerful and vengeful queens	'Tailored' roles by Rameau in *pastorales* and *ballets*	Tender roles of princesses and other leading female characters in *tragédies* and *ballets*	Other
1740	*Atys*: Cybèle			
1741	*Proserpine*: Cérès (a); *Le Temple de Gnide*: Vénus		*L'Empire de l'Amour*: Clyde, une Bergère; *Les Fêtes grecques et romaines*: Zélide	*Issé*: Une Européenne, Une Bergère; *Alcyone:* Une Matelote
1742	*Fragments*: Vénus (b); *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1st ed.): Diane		*Ajax*: Cassandre; *Phaëton*: Libie; *Issé*: Issé	
1743	*Hésione*: Vénus; *Les Indes Galantes*: Phani-Palla (2nd); *Les Caractères de la Folie*: **VÉNUS, PALMYRE**; *Callirhoé*: La Victoire (P), La Reine; *Roland*: Logistille			*Roland*: Une Fée chantante (P)
1744	*Les Grâces*: La Prêtresse (P), Agariste (2nd); *La Mort d'Hercule*: Déjanire; *Les Augustales*: **LA PRÊTRESSE** (c); *Thésée*: Médée		*L'École des amants*: **ISABELLE** (2nd); *Jephté*: Iphise	*Les Grâces*: Une Sybarite
1745	*Thésée*: Médée; *Amadis de Grèce*: Mélisse; *Zaïde reine de Grenade*: Zaïde; *Platée*: **JUNON**; *Les Fêtes ou Le Triomphe de Thalie*: Melpomène (P), Caliste (3rd) (d); *Fragments*: **LA MUSE DE L'HISTOIRE** (P), **ZIRPHÉE** (e); *Armide*: Armide	*Les Fêtes de Polymnie*: **MNÉMOSYNE, STRATONICE**; *Le Temple de la Gloire*: **LYDIE, PLAUTINE**	*L'École des amants*: Isabelle (2nd)	*
1746	*Armide*: Armide; *La Félicité*: **AMALTÉE**; *Le Triomphe de l'Harmonie*: L'Harmonie (P), Église (2nd); *Scylla et Glaucus*: **CIRCÉ**	*Le Temple de la Gloire*: Lydie, Plautine	*Hypermnestre*: Hypermnestre	*La Félicité*: **PREMIÈRE VESTALE** (P)
1747	*L'Année galante*: **VÉNUS** (P), **LA MINÉIDE** (1st); *Persée*: Mérope; *Les Fêtes de l'Hymen et de l'Amour*: **MIRRINE**; *L'Europe galante*: Roxane (4th); *Atys:* Cybèle	*Les Fêtes de l'Hymen et de l'Amour*: **ORTHÉSIE**	*L'Europe galante*: Olympia (3rd)	
1748	*Médée et Jason*: Médée; *Le Carnaval et la Folie*: La Folie; *Fragments de différents ballets*: Doris (f)	*Les Fêtes de l'Hymen et de l'Amour*: Orthésie		
1749	*Médée et Jason*: Médée; *Les Caractères de l'amour*: Elmire (2nd); *Le Carnaval du Parnasse*: Licoris; *Tancrède*: Clorinde;	*Zoroastre* (1st ed.): **ÉRÉNICE**		
1750	*Tancrède*: Clorinde; *Léandre et Héro*: **THERMILIS** (g); *Linus*: **ISMÉNIDE** (g)		*Les Fêtes Vénitiennes*: Zélie (1st); *Almasis*: Almasis (g); *Thétis et Pelée*: Thétis	
1751	*Les Génies tutélaires*: **LA FÉE DE LA FRANCE.**	*Acanthe et Céphise*: **ZIRPHILE**	*Le Ballet des sens*: La Reine des Sirènes (2nd); *Les Indes galantes*: Émilie (1st), Zima (4th)	
1752	*Omphale*: Manto; *Les Amours de Tempé*: **ÉLÉMIRE**; *Zélindor*: Zirphé		*Acis et Galatée*: Galatée	
1753	*Titon et l'Aurore*: Palès; *Les Fêtes grecques et romaines*: Cléopâtre, Délie; *Les Fêtes de Polymnie*: Stratonice; *Atys*: Cybèle	*Les Fêtes de Polymnie*: Stratonice; *Sibaris*: **HERSILIDE**		*Les Magnifique*: Une Nymphe
1754	*Castor et Pollux* (2nd ed.): **PHÉBÉ**; *Fragments*: Phani-Palla; *Thésée*: Médée; *Daphnis et Alcimadure*: **ISAURE**	*Les Fêtes de l'Hymen et de l'Amour*: Orthésie	*Les Éléments*: Émilie (3rd), Pomone (4th); *Les Fêtes de l'Hymen et de l'Amour*: Memphis; *Alceste*: Alceste; *Thétis et Pelée*: Thétis	
1755	*Le Carnaval et la Folie*: La Folie; *L'Europe galante*: Roxane		*Roland*: Angélique	
1756	*Fragments*: La Folie, Vénus (h)	*Zoroastre* (2nd ed.): **ÉRÉNICE**	*Alcyone*: Alcyone (i)	
1757	*Hippolyte et Aricie* (2nd ed.): **PHÈDRE**	*Les Surprises de l'Amour*: **URANIE** (j); *Les Sibarites*: Hersilide	*Les Amours des Dieux*: Ariane (4th); *Alceste*: Alceste; *Issé*: Issé (k)	
1758	*Les Fêtes de Paphos*: Vénus (l); *Proserpine*: Cérès	*Les Surprises de l'Amour*: Uranie		
1759	*Pyrame et Thisbé*: Zoraïde; *Le Carnaval du Parnasse*: Lycoris; *Amadis*: Arcabonne		*Zémide*: Zémide (m)	
1760	*Canente*: Circé			
1761	*Jephté*: Almasie; *Hercule mourant*: Déjanire; *Camille, reine des Volsques*: Camille; *Armide*: Armide		*Les Indes galantes*: Émilie; *Acis et Galatée*: Galatée	
1762			*Iphigénie en Tauride*: Iphigénie	
1763	*Polyxène*: **HÉCUBE**; *Titon et l'Aurore*: Palès; *Scanderberg*: Roxane; *Castor et Pollux* (2nd ed.): Phébé			
1764	*Castor et Pollux* (2nd ed.): Phébé; *Tancrède*: Clorinde; *L'Europe galante*: Roxane (n); *Titon et l'Aurore*: Palès			

Table I.6 — Roles performed by Marie-Jeanne Chevalier at the Académie Royale de Musique

[164] *Journal et mémoires de Charles Collé*, 67 (January 1757): 'Miss Chevalier a fait quelque plaisir dans les monologues; mais elle aurait eu besoin qu'on lui eût expliqué le sens du rôle d'Issé, qu'elle eût rendu avec sentiment, et non pas, comme elle a fait, avec une tendresse impétueuse et même furieuse: ce rôle doit être chanté tendrement, et on ne doit pas le crier.'

(1740–1764): the roles premiered by Chevalier are written in caps and bold

A generation later, the career of Duplant (active at the ARM between 1761 and 1786) presented equivalent challenges. Soon after she entered the Opéra, Duplant already presented stiff vocal issues. Bachaumont said that her 'great volume of voice' was perceived by some to be a sign of 'heavy machinery', and that she was quite clumsy on the technical level.[165] In 1762, the first mention of Duplant in the *Mercure de France*, March 1762, 186) already highlighted this feature:

> Miss Duplant, young student of the Académie, who was for sometime in the choruses, has started [as a soloist] in the *divertissement* of the *Fragments*'s first act. This voice is one of those of which one can conceive the greatest hopes, as much by the volume as by the quality of the sound.[166]

Confined by the Académie's administration to the performance of roles requiring vocal force and energetic accents (such as furies and gorgons), it seemed that she was regularly 'shouting without singing', possibly because her vocal technique was already altered.[167] Nevertheless, the prospect of her departure around the early 1780s meant that the ARM would have to deal with a substantial void for female roles of strength, as in the case of Chevalier a few decades before. Consequently, the ARM's director of the time, Antoine Dauvergne, expressed some worries about Duplant's retirement: 'This is a performer who may still be useful because we do not have a replacement in this

[165] Bachaumont, *MS* (11 April 1766). In 1762, the first mention of Duplant in the press (*Mercure de France*, March 1762, 186) already highlighted this feature: 'Miss Dupant, young student of the Académie, who was for sometime in the choruses, has started [as a soloist] in the *divertissement* of the *Fragments*'s first act. This voice is one of those of which one can conceive the greatest hopes, as much by the volume as by the quality of the sound.' ('Miss Duplant, jeune élève de l'Académie, qui était depuis quelque temps dans les chœurs, a débuté dans le divertissement du premier acte de ces *Fragments*. Cette voix est une de celles dont on peut concevoir les plus grandes espérances, tant par le volume que par la qualité du son.')

[166] *Mercure de France*, March 1762, 186: 'Miss Duplant, jeune élève de l'Académie, qui était depuis quelque temps dans les chœurs, a débuté dans le divertissement du premier acte de ces *Fragments*. Cette voix est une de celles dont on peut concevoir les plus grandes espérances, tant par le volume que par la qualité du son.'

[167] *Lettre d'Amelot à Papillon de La Ferté*, 'À V[ersai]lles ce 31 mars 1781', F-Pan, O1/615, no. 124.

genre'.[168] A few years later, in 1785, Duplant's departure eventually created, according to Bachaumont, a 'significant void'.[169]

Duplant served exactly fifteen years as one of the leading singers (1771–1786) and twenty-five years altogether in the troupe, much more than the mandatory period of time for the attainment of the Académie's pension. It is likely that her voice deteriorated further as she was kept despite her vocal difficulties, yet her eventual departure created, according to Bachaumont, a 'significant void'.[170] Indeed, she was described by her contemporaries as being gifted with one of the most incredible voices of her time. Some even argued that 'her male truth and the warmth of her performance' could eclipse her own predecessor, Chevalier.[171] In 1790, a document from the Revolutionary Parliament indicates that she still received 1,500 *livres*, probably less than the pension she was initially granted by the Opéra from 1786 onwards.[172]

[168] *Lettre de Dauvergne à Papillon de La Ferté*, 'Ce lundi 2 avril 1781', F-Pan, O1/619, no. 47: 'C'est un sujet qui peut être encore utile parce que nous n'avons pas de remplacement dans ce genre-là.' Here, Dauvergne uses the term of 'genre' at the interface between the *emploi* and the personal style and skills of the singer.
[169] Bachaumont, *MS* (10 April 1785).
[170] Idem.
[171] *Mercure français*, March 1768, 181: 'la mâle vérité et la chaleur de son jeu'.
[172] *Etat nominatif des pensions sur le trésor royal, cinquième classe, en annexe de la séance du 21 avril 1790* (in *Archives Parlementaires de la Révolution Française* 13 [1882], 654): 'The first, without reduction, in consideration for her services at the cour theatre. The second as payment for the surplus taken from her appointements as a member of the Académie Royale de Musique; which pension is also without reduction.' ('La première, sans retenue, en considération de ses services au théâtre de la cour. La seconde, pour lui tenir lieu de l'excédent retranché de ses appointements, en qualité de membre de l'Académie royale de musique ; ladite pension aussi sans retenue.')

Chapter II. Discrete variables: vocal ranges, performers' *genre*, untamed personalities

The use of the *emploi* benefitted the ARM's administration in various ways. Its original intent was to be a means of controlling the structure of opera production, with one specific profile of performer for a specific kind of set of roles. The formal continuity of the ARM as a court institution and the related continuity of repertoire (in terms of re-staging of Lully operas), created the conditions for the modern understanding of the *emploi* to thrive. The administrative system from which it derived helped homogenise the different lyrical productions by offering a common language for the ARM's body of governance, the various composers, and the troupe's performers. *Emplois* contributed to the stability of the ARM's authority over its subjects, notably by linking their salary and career success with their respect for the institution's guidelines and the directors' choices.

However, this administrative tool was not infallible. Numerous discrepancies between the rules of the *emploi* and their application can be observed through time. While the administrative and financial problems of the Paris Opéra throughout the eighteenth century were numerous, it is also likely that decisions surrounding the constitution of the *emplois* were prone to error. As the *emploi* was still a concept 'in the making' during the early modern period, its use presented particular tensions between official or explicit rules on the one hand, and unofficial or implicit norms on the other. Such tensions were made particularly explicit through various legal cases. The discussions they fostered and the impact of their outcomes help us to understand how jurisprudence progressively shaped *emplois*' good practices, on a case-by-case basis.

The ARM's managers dealt with their own tradition not by reproducing *stricto*

sensu former legal and administrative *status quos*. Regardless of their own ingenuity or the influential power of their personal networks, theatre directors understood that they could accomplish little without the talents of their singers who performed the ever-larger number of roles that sustained public interest.[173] Singers themselves could use their influence on the authors and the rest of the opera production in order to increase their own professional status. Indeed the right to access certain types of characters tainted by the positive aura of their original creators played an important part in performers' careers and fame. Additionally, the on-going development of opera sub-genres and occasional cross-disseminations between genres challenged further the consistency of the *emploi*. This last point regarding opera's genres will be investigated further in the later chapters as the current one still focuses on the troupe and performers from an administrative angle.

Many scholars working on early modern Italian opera and singers have thoroughly demonstrated that performers could shape and maintain a 'persona' by ensuring a consistency across the different roles they endorsed.[174] The cultivation of consistent artistic profiles was key, as many Italian singers — female divas, *castrati*, and other male singers alike — had already proven before the creation of the ARM. The career trajectories of the singers created a more or less coherent unity amongst roles. It could also influence the (re-)writing of the characters and the (re-)arrangements of plots. From the choice of the libretto, to the musical arrangements, and the distribution of the

[173] In his essay *La Réforme des théâtres* (Paris: Guillot, 1787), the actor, playwright, and director Mague de Saint-Aubin criticises the kind of director who 'treats the public as his debtor, and the actors as slaves' thus warning that 'it is the public that enriches him, and the actors who bring in the revenue.' (p. 40)
[174] See Berta Joncus, 'Producing Stars in *drama per musica*', *Music as Social and Cultural Practice: Essays in Honor of Reinhard Strohm* (Woodbridge & Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2007), 275-293; Suzanne Aspden, *The Rival Sirens. Performance and Identity on Handel's Operatic Stage*, Cambridge University Press, 2013; Reinhard Strohm, 'Zenobia: Voices and Authorship in Opera Seria', *Johann Adolf Hasse in seiner Zeit*, Series B, vol. XII, Szymon Paczkowski & Alina Zorawska-Witkowska, 2002; Anne Desler, 'From Castrato to Bass: The late roles of Nicola Grimaldi "Nicolini"', *Gender, Age and Musical Creativity*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2015, 61-80.

roles within the troupe, everything could be subject to negotiations, either separately or altogether.

While the *emploi* served as an administrative tool, its significance extended beyond financial and managerial aspects to encompass questions of creativity. The directors of the ARM faced the challenge of nurturing individual talents within the constraints of rigid emploi categories. Rather than being imposed from a hierarchical perspective, the *emploi* system likely emerged at the intersection of administrative needs, powers, and the practicalities of opera production. This intricate dynamic involved the talents, creativity, and agency of individuals. Examining the conflicts surrounding authorship and power within the ARM's troupe reveals a complex network of personal and professional relationships that evolved over time. As artists aged and were replaced, as audience preferences shifted, and as the Opéra's administrative structure underwent changes, the interplay of these factors shaped the trajectory of the *emploi* system.

The upcoming chapter delves into a collection of sources that challenge the notion of the *emploi* as a rigid administrative tool. These sources shed light on its adaptable nature and resist the temptation to establish roles within inflexible taxonomies. In the first two sections, I explore the complexities of female vocal ranges and the concept of *genre*, which refers to the individual's unique skills and personality. The final two sections delve into legal cases within the Parisian theater sphere, specifically the ARM and Comédie Française. These cases provide examples of performers challenging institutional rules and introducing new practices. Together, these sections demonstrate the limitations of a strict emploi classification system and highlight the flexibility and agency exercised by performers within the theatrical landscape.

II.1. Defying the rigidity of *emplois*' taxonomy: the issue of French female vocal ranges

Contrary to spoken theatre, roles in lyrical genres necessarily include a *sui generis* vocal dimension, which was retained as one of the parameters for the constitution and distribution of the *emplois* at the ARM. However, determining the vocal typology of the French singers in the early modern period emerges as a specific issue of its own.

While investigating the *emplois* at the ARM, French scholar Benoît Dratwicki has assumed the existence of an overlap between pitches and the various categories of roles distributed amongst the troupe. Dratwicki's model for the taxonomy of roles is implicitly built on a pitch classification made by Louis-Joseph Francœur in the *Diapason général de tous les instruments à vent* (1772). Traditionally, the pitch for all instruments in this period was based on winds — more especially, the oboe.[175] Dratwicki has read this classification as relevant for the distribution of the roles amongst the singers and, at a deeper level, the dramaturgical model of characters' *ethos* and relationships. In the case of the male leading roles, the tessitura of *haute-contre* would be that of young heroes and lovers while the one of *basse-taille* would be related to senior male figures such as an old king or deity, or to the male antagonistic character. In Lully's *Alceste*, for example, the title role is the female young lover (*dessus*) who is in love with Admète (*haute-contre*) and resists Alcide (*basse-taille*). This aligned with Italian practice: the high male voice (usually, the castrato) was the lover or hero, while the lower male voice was the father figure or antagonist (or both).

Assessing the significance and development of specific vocal ranges or tessituras during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is a challenging task due to the

[175] Bruce Haynes, 'Lully and the Rise of the Oboe as Seen in Works of Art', *Early Music* 16, no. 3 (1988): 112, 117 sq., 123.

scarcity of sources pertaining to musical education, particularly vocal training. This poses a considerable difficulty for understanding the organization of French music education centers, especially outside of Paris where many singers from Pierre Perrin's troupe originated. It is probable that vocal training methods varied significantly across different contexts, particularly considering the limited opportunities available for women compared to men. For instance, religious choirs provided young male performers with early exposure to music, while no equivalent avenues were accessible to girls.[176] Women, maybe more than men, had to seek training in a variety of places and might have perfected a 'learning-by-doing process'.[177] Therefore, finding performers for the ARM was simultaneously a question of ensuring adequate training for both men and women.[178]

In order to better understand French vocal typology for operas, it is interesting to compare it by comparison with the Italian one, which was influential throughout Europe, including France where many Italian operas were performed. To illustrate that point, I will use the example of Cavalli who has been the object of up-to-date scholarly works focusing on performance and production practices.[179] When re-producing some of his works in the French capital, Cavalli had to adapt some of the roles in *Xerse* and *Ercole amante*, including the title role of Xerse. The character had previously been created by a castrato alto in Venice but was re-written for a basse (Paolo Bordigone),

[176] It is not exactly clear that choirs attached to a church, sometimes called *maîtrises*, gave male musicians training suitable for opera. However, they illustrate the fact that France relied on a decentralised network for musical training, and one governed by the needs of the church. Following the *Révolution*, these choirs were closed in 1792 without being replaced, at least immediately, by an equivalent, extensive system.
[177] Jahiel Ruffier-Meray-Coucourde, 'Les institutions théâtrales et lyriques en Provence et leurs rapports avec les théâtres privilégiés de Paris sous l'Ancien Régime et pendant la Révolution 1669-1799' (Université Aix-Marseille 3, PhD dissertation, 2009), 324.
[178] *Causes et moyens d'opposition pour le marquis de Sourdéac et le sieur de Champeron*, Archives de la Comédie Française, quoted by Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, 144: 'It was necessary to select voices, to train them to do this type of singing which is extraordirary and to which the most talented musicians are not accustomed.' ('Il a fallu choisir des voix, les former à cette espèce de chant qui est tout extraordinaire et auquel les plus habiles musiciens ne sont point accoutumés.').
[179] See Rosand (ed.), *Readying Cavalli's Operas*, 2013.

therefore matching the other title role of Ercole (performed by Vincenzo Piccini). This re-writing and change in the vocal register of the leading characters put Cavalli's Parisian versions of his works at odd with Venetian custom. Indeed, the Venetian audience was used to hearing high voices performing the first roles: *castrati*, female *soprani*, and tenors. The adaptations of the scores by Cavalli and his copyists for the revival of his operas in France were likely to have required significant compositional work, as the difference of pitch meant that the parts for these types of voices were not (at least in this period) musically constructed in the same way.[180] Generally speaking, lower voices followed the *basso continuo*, whereas the higher ones could realise a more independent melodic line on top of it.

The whole process raises a range of important questions that remain relevant in the French context. Did Cavalli's changes obey merely a politico-aesthetic constraint he maybe neither foresaw nor wanted? Or did they encompass, even in the slightest degree, a new dramaturgical project in which the Venetian composer tried to challenge his own skills as well as those of the performers? The fact is that, in continuity with a French tradition celebrated from Charles IX onwards, Ercole was traditionally mentioned as a symbol for the king, including Louis XIV.[181] Thus, Cavalli might have had to prioritise the *basse-taille* tessitura traditionally used in French works for kings instead of the Italian high pitch.

The relationship between French audiences' preferences and types of voices is complex. Many French seventeenth-century theorists and commentators such as Antoine Gombault, chevalier de Méré, defend a courtly and balanced use of the singing voice as

[180] This adaptive work for the tastes of the French audience might have played such an important part in the difficulties of production encountered by the Venetian composer, that it ultimately delayed the representations in Paris.
[181] See Corrado Vivanti, 'Henry IV, the Gallic Hercules', in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 30 (1967): 176–197.

part of the best noble qualities.[182] This theory framed around 'delicate taste' and 'polite singing' often leaves little room for a great variety of tessituras — at least at first glance. Le Cerf de La Viéville borrows from this theoretical tradition when he argues that some high-pitched male voices were not always suitable for all sorts of leading characters in the context of French opera.[183] However, the high prestige of *haute-contre* roles, especially in Lully's repertoire, counterbalances this point of view.

Lully created the roles of first lover in his *tragédies lyriques* with three different tessituras: Jean Gaye's medium voice of *basse-contre* (Cadmus, Alcide, Hierax, Pluton), François Baumavielhe's deeper voice of *basse-taille* (Cadmus, Roland), and the higher *haute-contre* voice of Bernard Clédière (Thésée, Atys, and L'Amour in *Psyché*). [See TABLE I.1] The first two singers regularly alternated roles depending on the context of the performance (i.e. in front of the court or in Paris). Clédière, in contrast, was often

[182] Antoine Gombault, chevalier de Méré, *Œuvres complètes du chevalier de Méré*, Garles-Henri Boudhors (Paris: Fernand Roches, 1930).

[183] Le Cerf de la Viéville, *Comparaison*, 112–113: (When it is necessary to fill in the roles of favourite Lovers, don't we have any *hautes-contre* or *tailles* whose voices are equally as soft, flexible, and high has they should be in order to say sweet things tenderly? First, it is natural and plausible that all men have male voices. Thus when the voices of Lovers, leading roles, are so strident and using falsetto, beyond the fact that it becomes tart and awkward for part of the airs, it also has the default to be too feminine, too *daimoiseau*. A third of the leading roles in Lully's operas are for simple *taille*, and it is likely that this excellent man wasn't persuaded that *big and male voices were consistently not proper for the sweetness that these characters say to their mistresses*. As, in *Cadmus*, there was *Clédière*, a *haute-contre* who, since then, has sang Admète, Thésée, Alphée in *Proserpine*, and so on. Lully only gave him the less considerable role of the first Tyrian Prince; instead he gave the extended and gentle character of Cadmus for *Gaye*, who was only a *concordant*. He did the same in *Isis*. *Gaye* played again the lover Hierax, and Clédière ont had the unimportant role of Mercure. In sort that this hugh voices are not absolutement necessary, that we have plenty of them, and that Italian ones, are less proper for major roles, as I showed it with the example of *César & Pompée*.' ('Lorsqu'il faut remplir les rôles d'Amans préférés, n'avons-nous ni hautes-contre, ni tailles, dont les voix sont aussi douces, aussi flexibles & aussi hautes qu'elles le doivent être, pour dire tendrement des douceurs ? D'abord, il est naturel & vraisemblable que tous les hommes aient la voix mâles. Ainsi quand les voix des *Amoureux*, des premiers rôles, sont si perçantes & si en faucet (sic), outre que cela devient aigre aux oreilles & incommode pour les airs en partie : cela a encore le défaut d'être trop féminin, trop Damoiseau. Le tiers des premiers rôles des Opéras de Lulli sont des rôles de simple taille, & il ne paraît pas que cet excellent homme fut persuadé que *les voix grosses & mâles fussent constamment bien moins propres aux douceurs qu'ils disent à leurs Maîtresses* : car dans *Cadmus*, il avait *Clédière*, haute-contre qui chanta depuis Admète, Thésée, Alphée dans *Proserpine*, etc. & Il ne lui donna que le rôle, peu considérable, du premier Prince Tyrien : au lieu qu'il fit le long & tendre personnage de Cadmus pour *Gaye*, qui n'était qu'un Concordant. *Lulli* en usa de même dans *Isis*. *Gaye* eut encore le personnage amoureux de Hierax, & *Clédière* n'eut que le rôle indifférent de Mercure. De sorte que ces voix très hautes ne sont pas absolument nécessaires, que nous n'en manquons point, & que celles des Italiens, passant la juste mesure de haut, elles sont moins propres que qui que ce soit aux grands rôles, comme je vous l'ai montré par l'exemple de l'Opéra de *César & Pompée*.')

relegated to second place roles (including allegories and fatherly figures). Some of his roles were explicitly more oriented towards stereotypical traits such as anger (L'Envie in *Cadmus et Hermione*) and comedy (La Nourrice, also in *Cadmus et Hermione*), which were traditionally assigned to *taille* voices.[184] This vocal distribution proves that there was an association of male vocal ranges and masculine character types in seventeenth-century opera, but that some associations could differ between France and Italy.

As insightful as they are, the premises of Dratwicki's thesis that binds the taxonomy of voices and roles with Francœur's late eighteenth-century instrumental pitch classification might conceal an epistemological error. Even beyond the question of written pitch in the early modern period, which has already been widely discussed, it is not clear if French practices in terms of vocal taxonomy at the ARM distinguished clearly between female voices types.[185] Additionally, ground-breaking scholarly work led by Arthur Mendel, Wulstan, and Andrews, has smashed the belief in the absolute quality of the written pitch. 'Absolute pitch could have had relatively little importance to the musician before the late eighteenth century', writes Mendel.[186] He adds:

> To musicians before 1750, the notes on the staff, and the names by which they were referred to, represented degrees in a gamut that had no permanent anchor at a standard pitch level, but was freely movable up and down according to the nature of the voices or instruments involves on any given occasion. […] While, then, it may be possible to determine at what pitch certain works were performed on given occasions in earlier centuries, and so, for the modern musician, what key they were "really" in, it will hardly

[184] Even in the case of Vertumne, the leading male role in *Pomone* played by Clédière, the lover is not a typical one and keeps changing apparences, as stated by the character himself (I, 6: 'Alas! what is the point in changing everyday my form and face,/And disguising myself in front of all the nature,/If I cannot change the object of my love!').

[185] On this question of pitch at the early modern period, the pioneer's works are the ones of Arthur Mendel ('Pitch in the 16th and Early 17th Centuries', *Musical Quarterly* xxxiv, no. 28 [1948]), Herbert K. Andrews ('Transposition of Byrd's Vocal Polyphony', in *Music & Letters* xliii, n°25, 1962, 25-37), David Wulstan ('The Problem of Pitch in Sixteenth-Century English Vocal Music', in *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 93, n°1, 1966, 97-112), and Bruce Haynes (*A History of Performing Pitch: The Story of 'A'* [Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2002]). As put by Veit Erlmann in 'Refiguring the Early Modern Voice' (2012), the 'constructions of early modern vocality' shaped contemporary debates under the reign of Louis XIV (86). In particular, Erlmann discusses the work *Du bruit* by Claude Perrault (1613-1688), one of France's most prominent intellectual figures under the reign of Louis XIV.

[186] Arthur Mendel, 'Pitch in the 16th and Early 17th Centuries—Part I', *Musical Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (1948), 28.

> be possible to determine, in this sense, what key the composer "really intended" them in. Whatever psychological associations composers had with certain keys cannot have involved definite pitches for those keys.[187]

The existing scholarship has rarely explored how the associations between vocal registers and character types could differ between France and Italy. Instead, it has usually focused on the parallel issue of Italian vocal ranges and training and sometimes retreated on the formless concept of 'common practice', which, as Frederick Neumann has put it, tends to create 'too-sweeping generalisations'.[188] Indeed the Anglophone scholarship, overwhelmingly influenced by the Italian tradition, says little about voice range in performance practices before the nineteenth century.[189] Strohm nuances the picture by noting that 'all Italian musicians abroad had to adapt to circumstances and provide the skills that were most required […]. These constraints of musical specialisation and production, then, shaped the professional career of the migrants.'[190]

In the context of the Paris Opéra, it matters to note that actresses were not statutorily differentiated by the nature of their voice. The classification of female voices which prevailed in the following century, between high voices (*soprano*) and lower voices (*mezzo-soprano*), was not used in French lyric theatre, even if the distinction between *dessus* and *bas-dessus* existed at the time in practice, especially in sacred music.[191] The latter term appeared in 1703 with Sébastien de Brossard's *Dictionnaire de musique* where it designated a rather low voice of a woman or a child, without any other

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[187] Mendel, 'Pitch', 28-29.
[188] Frederick Neumann, *Performance Practices of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 194.
[189] Howard Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie, ed. *The New Grove Handbooks in Music: Performance Practice, Music after 1600* (The Macmillan Press, 1989), 427: 'Voice categories became more pronounced in the nineteenth century as composers became more specific in their exploitation of particular vocal properties and operas became less subject to internal modification and transposition.'
[190] Strohm, *The Eighteenth-Century Diaspora*, 32.
[191] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1765), t. IV, entry 'Dessus', 895: 'The *dessus* is traditionally divided between first and second, and sometimes with a third. The vocal part that does the *second dessus* is called *bas-dessus*, and some *récits* are also done for that specific voice.' ('Le dessus se divise ordinairement en premier et second, et quelquefois même en trois. La partie vocale qui exécute le second dessus s'appelle bas-dessus et l'on fait aussi des récits à voix seule pour cette partie.')

specifics.[192] At the other end of the eighteenth century, the Chevalier Meude-Monpas explicitly linked in his own *Dictionnaire de musique* (1787) the *bas-dessus* to a specific *emploi*, namely: 'the *rôles à baguette* [wand-equipped characters], otherwise called the female magicians'.[193] According to Louis Petit de Bachaumont, these roles 'required a sort of amplitude, a volume, that wasn't granted to every one of the best actresses'.[194]

As the author of the *Encyclopédie*'s entry 'Voice', Jean-Jacques Rousseau declared that the lack of specified vocal ranges for women was a French exception as he compared it to the Italian usage at the same time.[195] Later, however, Nicolas-Étienne Framery (a writer, composer, and collaborator for the *Encyclopédie méthodique*) nuanced Rousseau's understanding. As he wrote the entry 'Dessus' for the *Encyclopédie*, Framery explained the apparent scarcity of lower female voices by highlighting the implicit effects of the *emploi* on repertory and, therefore, on vocal traditions and casting:

> It is not exactly true to say that France ignores the *bas-dessus*: but due to the scarcity of this type of voice, we don't make work for it; and as the female singers who enter lyric theatres are obliged to fill pre-existing roles, made before they're their own, they can only execute them by developing the higher pitch of their voices, and by neglecting their lower registers these become useless. This is what happened to Madame Saint-Huberty, who had a beautiful *bas-dessus* when she entered the Opera, and who was forced to alter its beauty, in order to adapt her voice to *rôles* written far too high.[196]

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[192] Sébastien de Brossard, *Dictionnaire de musique* (Paris: Ballard, 1703), 2nd ed., entry 'Canto'.
[193] Jean-Olivier de Meude-Monpas, *Dictionnaire de musique* (Paris: Knapen et fils, 1787), 21, entry '*Bas-dessus*': '[*Bas-dessus* est le] genre de voix d'une femme qui descend jusqu'aux sons les plus graves. C'est l'opposé de *dessus*. […] Ce genre de voix est nécessaire dans les rôles à baguette, autrement dit de magicienne, etc.'
[194] Bachaumont, *MS* (10 April 1785).
[195] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1765), t. XVII, entry 'Voix', 436: 'In France where people want bass voices, *hautes-contre*, and where no one cares for *bas-dessus*, male voices take different characters and female voices keep only one. But in Italy where a beautiful *bas-dessus* is equally revered as a higher voice, one find among the women very beautiful voices in a low tessitura, which are called *contralti*, and very beautiful high voices, which as called *soprani*. In contrast, with regards to male voices, they only have *tenori*, so that in the same way that our women have one type of voice, their men have only one character.' ('En France où l'on veut des basses, des hautes-contre, et où l'on ne fait aucun cas des bas-dessus, les voix d'hommes prennent différents caractères et les voix de femmes n'en gardent qu'un seul ; mais en Italie, où l'on fait autant de cas d'un beau bas-dessus que de la voix la plus aiguë, il se trouve parmi les femmes de très belles voix graves, qu'ils appellent contralti, et de très belles voix aiguës, qu'ils appellent soprani. Au contraire en voix d'hommes récitantes, ils n'ont que des tenori, de sorte que s'il n'y a qu'un caractère de voix de femmes dans nos opéras, dans les leurs il n'y a qu'un caractère de voix d'hommes.')
[196] Nicolas-Étienne Framery and Guinguené, *Encyclopédie méthodique* (Paris: Panckoucke, 1791), t. I, 429, entry 'Dessus': 'Il n'est pas exactement vrai de dire qu'en France on ne fait aucun cas des bas-

The entry 'Range (Voice)' of the same *Encyclopédie* (1756) brings more layers of nuance (or perhaps confusion) regarding the specific qualities of the label *bas-dessus*. There, the author, Louis de Cahusac, conflated *bas-dessus* with the appellation *second dessus*, affirming that 'people don't know what name to give' to this 'organ more voluminous and less extended than some upper female voices'.[197] Abbot Trublet offered another semantic variation in 1749, when he labelled the voice of the ARM's singer Marie-Jeanne Chevalier that of a '*grand dessus*'.[198]

Laborde's *Essai sur la musique* published in Paris in 1780 represented one of the main sources of evidence for nineteenth-century authors, such as Burney and Arthur Pougin. Both published a series of articles (*La Troupe de Lully*) in the newspaper *Le Ménestrel* in 1895 that related Laborde's views on vocal ranges. However, Laborde's table of voices is of very limited relevance for a study of seventeenth-century opera singers. Even with regard to the male types of voices, which were better defined, Laborde committed at least one important mistake (the *basse-contre* is out by a semitone since a bottom D can be found in *Cadmus*, act I, scene 2).

Amid of these elements, what seems consistent is that both terms *dessus* and *bas-dessus* were totally overlooked in the administrative documents of the ARM. Contemporaries' testimonies rarely mentioned *bas-dessus* in association with female singers. A very few counter-examples highlight the singularity — and possible scarcity — of *bas-dessus* voices. Apart from the case already mentioned of Marie-Jeanne

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dessus: mais cette voix étant rare, on ne travaille guère pour elle; et comme les chanteuses qui se présentent à nos théâtres lyriques sont obligées de remplir des rôles déjà faits avant qu'on en fasse qui leur soient propres, elles ne peuvent les exécuter qu'en cultivant les cordes aigües de leur voix, et en négligeant les graves qui leur deviennent inutiles. C'est ce qui est arrivé à madame Saint-Huberty, qui avait un très beau bas-dessus lorsqu'elle est entrée à l'Opéra, et qui s'est vue forcée d'en altérer la beauté, pour adapter sa voix à des rôles écrits beaucoup trop haut.'

[197] Louis de Cahusac, *Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1756), vol. VI, 46, entry 'Étendue (Voix)': '[on donne] mal-à-propos le nom de *second dessus* ou *bas-dessus* […] à des organes plus volumineux et moins étendus que les *premiers dessus* ordinaires, parce qu'on ne sait quel nom leur donner.'

[198] Abbé Trublet, *Observations sur la littérature moderne* (La Haye; 1749), 205.

Chevalier (1722–1789), two others can be observed. First, Julie d'Aubigny (1670–1707) known as 'Mademoiselle Maupin' or 'La Maupin', whose tumultuous career as an opera singer and swords-woman was popularised in various romanticised biographies, plays, and even films. Secondly, Louise Gondré, active at the ARM between 1742 and 1755 and niece of the opera singer Marie Antier who was known herself for her interesting lower voice.[199] Even with those individual exceptions, opera composers did not always develop expressly these remarkable tessituras in specific roles. For example, André Campra specifically wrote Clorinde in *Tancrède* (1702) for Maupin; however, according to the aesthetic norms of tender and pathetic leading roles of the princesses in *tragédies* — which used a restrained and medium ambitus — the role did not show off her lower register. Moreover, the singers who performed as 'first actrices' in the same category of roles as Maupin (e.g. Marie Le Rochois, Françoise Moreau, Marie-Louise Desmatins, and Françoise Journet) were not renowned for having a similar *bas-dessus* voice.

Therefore, tessitura arguably represents a tricky parameter to take into account with regard to the shaping of the female singers' *emplois* in the early modern period. For women's roles, it is not self-evident, as Dratwicki seems to assume, that vocal ranges articulated themselves with regard to the writing, categorisation, and distribution of the roles at the ARM.

Additionally, the vocal range taxonomy for female performers, in the distinction between *dessus* and *bas-dessus*, is not easily translated into current forms of vocal classification — such as the *Fach* System, for example.[200] Mary Cyr points out that early modern descriptions of the voice, male and female alike, could easily be

[199] Regarding Louise Gondré, Rousseau wrote in the *Encyclopédie* ([Paris, 1754], vol. IV, 895, entry 'Dessus') that he 'had seen the audience applaud a *Mademoiselle Gondré* at the Parisian Opera who, indeed, was showing off quite a beautiful *bas-dessus*.'
[200] See Pearl Yeadon McGinnis, *The Opera Singer's Career Guide. Understanding the European Fach System* (Lanham, Toronto, Plymouth: The Scarecrow Press, 2010).

misinterpreted. She gives the example of the *haute-contre,* which was equated by Brossard with the Italian *altista* and *contratenor* in his *Dictionnaire* (1703). Cyr insists that 'all three terms indicate a range, not a quality, of voice'.[201] By applying Cyr's commentary on Brossard's discussion of the *second dessus* as a synonym for *bas-dessus*, Brossard's explanation becomes clearer. The ordinal numeral adjective of *second dessus* gives little room to interpret it only as a vocal range, thus excluding all possibility to read into *bas-dessus* anything else.

Long before Rousseau, French musician and theorist Benigne de Bacilly (1621–1690) made a case for developing a better understanding of the distinctions between and amongst vocal ranges and vocal timbre. In the seventh chapter of his *Remarques curieuses sur l'Art de bien chanter* about 'Voices Fit for Singing', Bacilly attempted to index these differences between the voices.[202] Rousseau borrowed the same vocabulary in his *Encyclopédie*'s article, distinguishing voices not just in terms of vocal range but also in terms of qualities:

> One may distinguish the voices by many other differences than those between high and low register. There are strong voices which are loud and noisy; soft voices which are gentle and like a flute; voices which reach a large range; beautiful voices which are full, exact, and harmonious; there exist also the contrary of this: voices which are hard and heavy; voices which are flexible and light; some in which beautiful sounds are unequally distributed, either in their high vocal range or the medium or the low register; there are also even voices which give the sentiment of a steady timbre in all their vocal range.[203]

Yet despite the subtle varieties that Bacilly and Rousseau identified, only male

[201] Mary Cyr, 'On Performing the 18th-Century Haute-Contre Roles', *The Musical Times* 118, no. 1610 (1977), 291.
[202] Benigne de Bacilly, *Remarques curieuses sur l'Art de bien chanter et particulièrement pour ce qui regarde le chant français* (Paris, 1668), 35 and sq.
[203] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1765), vol. XVII, entry 'Voix', 436: 'On distingue encore les voix par beaucoup d'autres différences que celles du grave à l'aigu. Il y a des voix fortes dont les sons sont forts et bruyants ; des voix douces dont les sons sont doux et flûtés ; de grandes voix qui ont beaucoup d'étendue ; de belles voix dont les sons sont pleins, justes et harmonieux ; il y a aussi les contraires de tout cela : il y a des voix dures et pesantes ; il y a des voix flexibles et légères ; il y en a dont les beaux sons sont inégalement distribués, aux unes dans le haut, à d'autres dans le medium, à d'autres dans le bas ; il y a aussi des voix égales qui font sentir le même timbre dans toute leur étendue.'

singers of the Académie benefitted from clearly distinguished vocal categories according to range. From the first ARM's *Réglement* of 1713 till the last edition of *Les Spectacles de Paris*, the description of the Opera's troupe divided the singers into four different groups.[204] Three corresponded to men's vocal ranges (*basse-taille*, *haute-contre*, and *taille*). Only one was dedicated to women, who were grouped under the same generic terminology of *actrice* (*actrices pour les rolles*) instead of a reference to any tessitura.

[204] The first *Spectacle de Paris* is from 1756. The review goes on until the Revolution.In an edition of 1754, Joseph de Laporte disclosed an 'État présent des personnes qui composent l'Académie royale de musique' (p. 23 and sq.).

II.2. The *genre* of performers

Vocal ranges alone do not offer a comprehensive framework for examining the development of emplois at the ARM during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As discussed earlier, this is partly because there is a lack of precise definition for range designations, as evidenced by the overlapping references to *bas-dessus*, *second dessus*, and *grand dessus*, among others. Additionally, the issue of pitch further complicates matters, as it underwent significant fluctuations during the early modern period.

However, the tessitura represents only one isolated element amongst the overall qualities of a voice. Cyr's distinction between the voice range and quality is key insofar as it intersects with the issue of individual skills and, ultimately, performer's 'genre'.[205] The latter concept is adjacent to other useful terms, namely: 'talent', 'jeu', 'caractère', and 'style'.[206] During the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, these concepts intertwined in a delicate balance between inherent qualities and acquired skills. This balance, which was not easily understood, reflected the individuality of actors and guided them in developing a distinct style. It involved a combination of natural abilities and intentional training to cultivate their artistic expression.[207]

In the original Furetière's *Dictionnaire*, for example, the entry 'Actor' conflated 'genre' and 'talent'. On the one hand, a person can be better than someone else at fulfilling a task (in which case, this proves their 'talent'). On the other, a person can be a

[205] Cyr, 'On Performing', 291.
[206] Furetière, *Dictionaire universel* (1690), entry 'Jeu': 'It is said that an actor has a beautiful acting [*jeu*] when is has a good figure, a beautiful gesture and action, a flowing declamation, in short when he plays well his role.' ('On dit aussi qu'un Comédien a le *jeu* beau quand il a bonne mine, qu'il a le geste & l'action belle, la parole libre, enfin quand il joue bien son rolle [sic].') Here, 'beau jeu' seems related to a Platonical approach of the concept of Beauty (what is 'beautiful' is 'true' and 'good'). In this case, the perfection of the actor's actions could reflect the exact coordination between what the actor is (her or his qualities) and what the actor performs (the fictional character).
[207] In the late eighteenth century the *Dictionnaire universel Francois et Latin*, commonly known as the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* (1783), and Jean-François Féraud's *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* (1787–1788) clearly fix the modern understanding of *genre* as synonym for 'genius', 'quality' or 'capacity'.

natural fit for a specific 'genre' ('this one is good for the tragic genre or register').[208]

In his *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (1719), Abbé Jean-Baptiste Dubos more clearly articulated the link between the *emploi* and the idea of personal talent under the name of 'génie', thereby implying that individuals are naturally predisposed to occupy specific positions.[209] In its pre-modern application, 'génie' or the idea of genius essentially covers a person's individually distinctive characteristics.[210] Thus it differs subtly from the modern understanding of genius as a person who stands apart from everyone else because his or her talents are so distinctive and original.

Investigating the *emploi*, Dratwicki has sought to refine this articulation between vocal range and performer's 'genre'. He writes: 'For the singers [who could not access higher ranks in the ARM's hierarchy], the best way to protect their prerogatives, was to assert correctly their individual specificity, their 'genre' (and, as such, their type of *emploi*)'.[211] Here, Dratwicki implies that, despite the pre-existing sets of *emplois* and the stiffness of the hierarchy's structure of the ARM, a performer could try to by-pass the rules by showing off their own personal talent, even so it might possibly require to bend or alter some of the roles' characteristics. Here, the question of performers' 'genre' even

[208] Furetière, *Dictionnaire*, 1690, entry 'Actor': 'Someone who represents on the theatre a character from a dramatic work. One is a good *actor* for the tragic genre or register. There are more good actors than there are good actresses.' ('Comédien, ou celuy qui représente sur le théâtre quelque personnage d'une pièce dramatique. Un tel est bon *acteur* pour le tragique. Il y a plus de bons *acteurs* que de bonnes *actrices*.')

[209] Dubos, *Réflexions critiques*, part. 2, 19 and 24: 'The man who is given such genius cannot display it without being called to the positions [*emplois*] for which this genius make him suitable, and he often dies before they are entrusted to him. […] Nothing can keep the man of genius from at least showing what his destiny was, even when he does not fulfill it, whether it is an *emploi* too high or too low or an education that seems to pull him away from the things for which he was born.' ('L'homme dépositaire d'un pareil génie, ne le saurait mettre en évidence, sans être appelé aux emplois auxquels ce génie le rend propre, & il meurt souvent avant qu'on les lui ait confiés. […] Des emplois, ou trop élevés ou trop bas, une éducation qui semble éloigner l'homme de génie de s'appliquer aux choses pour lesquelles il est né, rien ne saurait l'empêcher de montrer au moins quelle était sa destinée, quand même il ne la remplit pas.')

[210] For a discussion of the etymology and semantic evolution of the term *génie*, see Jean-Alexandre Perras, 'L'exception exemplaire: Une histoire de la notion de génie du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle', PhD dissertation, Université Paris VIII & Université de Montréal, 2012.

[211] Dratwicki, 'La Troupe de l'Académie', 43: 'Pour le chanteur, le meilleur moyen de protéger ses prérogatives, est de bien faire valoir sa spécificité, "son genre" (et donc son type d'emploi) à défaut de son rang.'

exceeds the sole issue of vocal qualities so as to encompass acting skills and overall figure of the artist.

The decades 1750s and 1760s offer several case studies that highlight the issue of 'genre' in different ways. After the retirement of Marie Fel in 1757, the star of many opera productions and especially Rameau's works, the ARM was confronted with several issues regarding the casting of good actresses for the right roles. With the departure of Marie-Jeanne Chevalier looming large, the Paris Opéra handled a succession crisis in a troupe's hierarchy which clarity had been confused by a series of roles' redistribution. Chevalier herself, despite her success, had been challenged by the competition that agitated younger talents, not only her own understudies Marie-Geneviève Dubois *l'aînée* (ca. 1729–1804), Miss Davaux (b. 1735–a. 1768), and Rosalie Duplant (1745–a. 1800), but also Fel's (Marie-Jeanne Lemière [1733–1786] and Madeleine-Sophie Arnould [1740–1802]). As mentioned in the first chapter, Chevalier attempted to perform a series of roles that she was not initially cast for, namely: the tender and pathetic roles of the princesses and first female lovers. As she did not encounter much enthusiasm in those, Rameau resolved to write more tailored roles for her, ultimately leading her back to characters which theatrical profile was more subtle and complex.

Conversely, Dubois seems to have made more of a positive impression on the ARM's audience. Since her first adventurous attempts in 1764 (Herminie in the revival of *Tancrède*) and 1767 (Zirphée in *Zélindor*), Dubois performed a diverse range of roles, which included characters *à baguette* (e.g. magician Circé in *Canente*, 1761) and first tender roles (e.g. l'Aurore in *Titon et l'Aurore*, 1768).[212] Dubois's performance of Aurore provoked some form of turmoil placing Dubois is direct competition with Miss

[212] The *Mercure de France* related in January 1761 (p. 188) her success in replacing Marie-Jeanne Chevalier as Circé in *Canente*.

Duplant (1765) and Miss Davaux (1767) who, though early in their careers, disputed with her for the legacy of Marie-Jeanne Chevalier. More than ever, Dubois needed to defend her prerogatives by recalling for her audience her lineage in the ARM and, incidentally, her seniority rights with regard to Chevalier's roles *à baguette* (roles she occupied as a singer in chief from 1764 onwards). In the *Souvenirs de Miss Duthé de l'Opéra (1748-1830)*, Étienne-Léon de Lamothe-Langon affirmed reporting some of the singer Miss Duthé's own lines, which included a rant against Dubois's physique directly following an enthusiastic praise of Lemière's talents:

> After [Lemière], situated at a lower rank, was *Miss* Dubois whose ugliness, her cross-eyes, and the unsightliness of her gangly waist, prevented the audience from enjoying fully the pleasant sounds that came out of her gullet.[213]

Consecutively, Dubois felt somehow the need to re-define for the audience what constituted her *emploi* by addressing an open letter to the editor of the *Mercure*. She wrote:

> I saw in the last [issue of the] *Mercure*, Sir, in the Opera section, the flattering things you wrote about me, with regard to the role of Aurore, which I acted and sang once or twice. I am happy that the audience was pleased with me, and I hope that your friendship towards me hasn't biased you too much in my favour; anyway, you know that I have zeal and good will, and that I always do my best to deserve more and more the kindnesses with which the public has honoured me when I am performing in roles of importance and vocal presence. You have said, Sir, that *I have* [successfully] *replaced Miss Larrivée* [born Lemière] in the role of Aurore; I do not recognise in this sentence your usual exactitude. The genre of Miss Larrivée and mine do not put us within reach of *replacing* one another; if I replaced someone, it is Miss Rivier [Rivière, active between 1756 and 1771], who sang Aurore before I took it; and as I wouldn't for the world want anyone to believe I would replace Miss Larrivée, I beg you to say a word about it in your next *Mercure*. It is as well that I advise you I have only sung the role of Aurore twice — a role which is not at all my genre — at the request of M de Mondonville and of a few of my friends, who desired to see me play and sing it, and who assured me that the audience would be grateful to me for this proof of my desire to please them.'[214]

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[213] Étienne-Léon de Lamothe-Langon, *Souvenirs de Miss Duthé de l'Opéra (1748-1830)* (Paris: Louis-Michaud, 1909), 178: 'Venait ensuite, dans un rang inférieur, Miss Dubois dont la laideur, les yeux louches et la disgrâce de sa taille dégingandée empêchaient le public de jouir pleinement des sons agréables qu'elle tirait de son gosier.'

[214] *Mercure de France*, 'Lettre de Miss Dubois, de l'Académie royale de Musique, à M. de La Place, auteur du *Mercure*' (Paris, 16 February 1768): J'ai lu dans le dernier *Mercure*, Monsieur, à l'article de l'Opéra, ce que vous avez bien voulu dire de flatteur sur mon compte, à l'occasion du rôle de l'Aurore,

This letter shows that singers had a clear understanding of what their *genre* and the associated *emploi* could be. In the midst of competition from Duplant and Davaux, who vied for the same roles as Marie-Jeanne Chevalier, Dubois found herself in a precarious position. To assert her seniority rights and claim ownership of certain roles, Dubois seized the opportunity presented by the media frenzy surrounding her performance as Aurore. Her public letter not only served to reaffirm her position but also highlighted instances where the ARM's rules regarding *emploi* assignments were occasionally disregarded. It was noted that composers could have a say in the distribution of roles when creating a new work, and this influence might extend to remakes as well, as demonstrated by Dubois' case in the 1768 production of *Titon et l'Aurore*.

The terms *genre* and *talent* are also visible in documents relative to the dispute between the Comédie-Française actresses Vestris and Saint-Val, which will be discussed in further detail in the following section of this chapter:

> I [Saint-Val] have entered [the Comédie-Française] in 1767 as understudy for *Mademoiselle* Dumesnil and *Mademoiselle* Dubois: since the retirement of the former was not planned, but that the one of the latter seemed more probable, nothing was adjudicated regarding their roles; I was last to enter, I played everything as an understudy, just like *Mademoiselle* Clairon with regard to *Mademoiselle* Gaussin and *Mademoiselle* Dumesnil. Some disputes arose between Miss Dubois and me, on the matter of roles that *Mademoiselle* Clairon used to play; the genre made the decision: all that were Queens, or Mothers, or Abandoned Women, belonged to me as double of *Mademoiselle* Dumesnil.[215]

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que j'ai joué et chanté deux fois. Je suis bien aise que le public ait été content de moi, et je souhaite que votre amitié pour moi ne vous aie pas trop favorablement prévenu ; quoiqu'il en soit, vous savez que j'ai du zèle et de la bonne volonté, et que je fais toujours mon possible pour mériter de plus en plus les bontés dont le public m'a honorée dans des rôles de conséquence et de voix. Vous avez dit, Monsieur, que *j'avais remplacé Miss Larrivée* [Lemière] dans le rôle de l'Aurore ; je ne reconnais pas dans cette phrase votre exactitude ordinaire. Le genre de Miss Larrivée et le mien ne nous mettent pas à portée de nous *remplacer* l'une et l'autre ; si j'ai remplacé quelqu'un c'est Miss Rivier [sic], qui chantait l'Aurore avant que je le prisse ; et comme je désirerais que l'on ne crût pas dans le monde que je remplace Miss Larrivée, je vous prie d'en dire un mot dans votre premier *Mercure*. Il est bon que je vous prévienne que je n'ai chanté que deux fois le rôle de l'Aurore, rôle qui n'est point de mon genre, qu'à la prière de M. de Mondonville, et de quelques-uns de mes amis, qui désiraient de me le voir jouer et de l'entendre chanté par moi, et qui m'ont assuré que le public me saurait gré de cette preuve de mon envie de lui plaire. J'ai l'honneur, &c. Dubois.'

[215] F-Pn, Département Philosophie, histoire, sciences de l'homme, 8-LN27-18360, *Lettres de Madame la Comtesse de Mal*** à Mme la Marquise d'A**** (1779), 'Discours de Miss St Val l'aînée, lu à

Just as in the case of Miss Dubois's letter, the mention of *genre* was directly related to the issue of seniority and prior rights within the troupe:

> For all eras of theatre, the actor or actress who was engaged in an *emploi*, did it by reason of their right of seniority and their talent, & not because of personal fantasy or because of the intrigue.[216]

Likewise, a few decades earlier in 1744, a dispute between Jeanne-Catherine Gaussem (known as Gaussin) of the Comédie-Française and Miss d'Arimath of the Opéra-Comique exemplified the connection between *genre*, *talent*, and *emploi*. This case study highlights in particular the difference between someone's *genre* and its possible inadequacy with the *emploi* occupied.[217]

Casting was a double-edged phenomenon. On the one hand, it was primarily a way to find performers able to understudy or permanently replace other artists with regard to a set of pre-written scores and librettos. On the other — if it is correct that singers had a form of creative agency — the acquisition of new artists could ultimately

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l'Assemblée des Comédiens Français, le 17 Avril 1778', 30: 'J'ai été reçue, en 1767, en double de Mademoiselle *Dumesnil* & de Mademoiselle *Dubois*: comme on ne prévoyait pas la retraite de l'une, & que celle de l'autre paraissait plus prochaine, on ne statua rien sur les Rôles; j'étais la dernière, je jouais tout en double, comme Mademoiselle *Clairon* du temps de Mademoiselle *Gaussin* & de Mademoiselle *Dumesnil*. Il s'éleva quelques contestations entre Mademoiselle *Dubois* & moi, pour des Rôles que Mademoiselle *Clairon* avait joués; le genre en décida: tout ce qui était Reines, ou Mères, ou Femmes délaissées, m'appartenait comme double de Mademoiselle *Dumesnil*.'

[216] 'Second Discours de la Demoiselle St. Val, l'aînée, lu à l'Assemblée de Messieurs les Comédiens François, le 23 Avril 1778' in *Lettres de Madame la Comtesse de Mal****, 39: '[…] De tous les temps des Spectacles, l'Acteur ou l'Actrice, qui s'est livré à un emploi, l'a exercé en raison de son droit d'ancienneté, de son talent, & non de la fantaisie, ou de l'intrigue.'

[217] In the *Réponse pour Miss Gaussin à Miss d'Arimath de l'opéra-comique, en forme d'une lettre adressée à M. Fagan* (F-Pn, 1744), it is said that 'Granval n'a pas exécuté à son ordinaire le plus beau Rolle [sic] de la Pièce dont vous l'aviez chargé (c'est peut-être la raison pour laquelle l'Auteur inconnu le rabaisse aux seconds Rolles).' (p. 16) Later, the author adds: 'Si le sentiment de l'Auteur de la Lettre est suivi, une demi-douzaine d'Acteurs & autant d'Actrices seront exclus de la Scène, il ne faut plus qu'envoyer au Japon le reste de la Troupe ; le Public alors sera forcé d'appeler au Théâtre vacant ceux qu'il n'y souffre aujourd'hui qu'après qu'ils s'en sont rendus dignes par le long apprentissage qu'ils font à l'Opéra-Comique : je me trompe, le Public gagnera au change, la Dumenil [sic], la Gaussin, & la Clairon, seront remplacées avec avantage, la Dumesnil est pitoyable dans les Rolles de fureur, la Gaussin, dans le tragique & dans le tendre, n'a jamais arraché une larme à aucun Spectateur ; la Clairon prononce mal & n'aurai jamais été une bonne Actrice, la Torillière est guindé dans les petites Pièces, le Grand, dans les Tragédies ne vaut rien pour le récitatif, Armant est un sot valet, les talents heureux se trouvent dans les Acteurs & les Actrices de l'Opéra-Comique.' (p. 18–19).

redefine more or less in-depth the qualities of specific characters and, on a larger scale (and in a longer time frame), could reset the composition of the *emplois*. Scholars such as Banducci and Maria José Mora have discussed this hypothesis, which explores the short- and long-term influence of personal talents on the creation and revision of roles. Mora's study of British Restoration Theatre delves into the concept of 'type-casting' and its implications.[218]

Building on this hypothesis, the study of a performer's *genre* should inform us of the possible influence one talented individual could have had on the creative process overall. On this matter, it is interesting to consider the tradition of associating the name of a performer with a particular set of roles. In their retrospective histories of the theatre in France, the nineteenth-century commentators Pierre-David Lemazurier (known as Valleran) and Victor Fournel provided many examples of this. In Fournel's monograph, amongst many different *emplois* the author listed, some refer to the mid- and late-eighteenth-century *emplois* under individuals' names: 'Les Clairval' and 'Les Dugazon'.[219] But this can be observed even before the nineteenth century, although it might have been done in a more discrete way. For example, the excitable commentator on the ARM and other theatres, Charles Collé, discussed the impact of the performers using absolute terms, as if their essence inhabited the roles they used to play and passed on to new generations. He wrote, for example:

Poirier and Godard, who fueled the impatience of the audience by playing in turn the

[218] Maria José Mora, 'Type-Casting in the Restoration Theatre: Dryden's "All for Love", 1677-1704', *Atlantis* 27, n°2 (2005), 75–86.

[219] Fournel, *Curiosités théâtrales*, 329: 'The Clairval' designated the 'Premiers rôles de l'Opéra-Comique' based on the actor Clairval, 'créateur des jeunes premiers chantants' who 'rivalisait de ton, de dignité et de tenue avec les premiers acteurs de l'ancienne Comédie-Française'. Clairval made the most out of a voice 'grêle et glapissante' to build his 'merveilleux' vocal talent (230). Regarding the 'Dugazon' (329): 'Cet emploi se divise en jeunes Dugazon, et Dugazon mères. Cette actrice célèbre a eu seule l'honneur de laisser son nom au genre que la marche du temps lui a tracé à deux époques de sa vie. Douée d'une sensibilité exquise, d'un organe expressif, elle immortalisa la première moitié de sa vie par les rôles de Nina et de Babet; dès qu'elle pressentit les prémices de sa vieillesse, *Marianne, Camille*, la *Pauvre Femme*, et la *Mère du prisonnier*, l'élevèrent sur le trône d'une autre gloire: c'était vraiment l'actrice de la nature.'

> role of Apollon, managed to make Jéliotte regretted, despite their own talents; and Miss Lemaure was desired, although Miss Chevalier worked herself to death, body and soul, to make her forget, and her pride led her to think that people remembered the actress only to admire herself even more.[220]

This tradition does not seem to be exclusively French. Italian troupes present similar case throughout the seventeenth century. Céline Candiard has shown in her meticulous inquiry about the star comic roles of slaves and valets in the Roman theatrical repertoire that, prior to the restructurings of the Théâtre-Italien in Paris (in 1680 and 1716), these two specific *emplois* were merged with the physical and spectacular characteristics of its performers.[221] As 'playmakers', 'the strong spectacular identity of these performers' blurred the lines between the actors and their roles' characteristics.[222]

[220] Collé, *Journal et mémoires*, II, 67 (January 1757): 'Poirier et Godard, qui se relayaient pour impatienter le public dans celui d'Apollon, ont fait, malgré leurs singuliers talents, regretter Jéliotte; et l'on désirait Miss Lemaure, quoique Miss Chevalier se tuât le corps et l'âme pour la faire oublier, et que son amour propre lui ait persuadé qu'on ne se souvient de cette actrice que pour l'admirer, elle, davantage.'
[221] Candiard, *Esclaves et valets,* 357.
[222] Idem.

II.3. The delicate management of the singers and their 'seniority rights'

The task of managing soloists — including issues surrounding their roles — became increasingly complicated for the ARM's administration after Lully's death and throughout the eighteenth century. Although the ARM's administration tried to prevent any disruptions to the best of its capacities, such task was not infallible. When it comes to performers, the directors had to manage mediatised scandals and personal caprices coming from the troupe — overwhelmingly so for the 'first subjects' or main soloists — which from time to time disturbed the smooth running of the programme.

The phenomenon is far from being exclusive to France. Italian proto-divas have been thoroughly scrutinised in various publications, either through a biographical angle or a that of performance practice and opera production. In the context of French baroque opera, a few highlights have outlined the existence of such personalities across theatres. Yet analyses sometimes miss the opportunity to showcase the long-term influence of such behaviour on the evolution of the *emploi*.

The final two sections address that issue from different perspectives. First, a legal angle, that of the 'seniority rights' (*droits d'ancienneté*), which engages explicitly with the hierarchical structure of the troupe, the system of salary and pensions, and the possibility to contest administrative decisions on these key issues. Second, a broader point of view that builds on the eighteenth-century development of media dealing with cultural and social commentary. This last section will focus on the question of image making that sprung as various public networks interfered in the relationship between performers and the ARM.

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The problems surrounding singers and their quest of proto-celebrity all address questions of authority and deal at one degree or another, directly or indirectly, with the *emploi*. They stemmed from at least three different sources, here ranked in order of increasing interest for the present study. Firstly, singers could face legal disputes with people from outside the institution, which might nonetheless cause trouble for the ARM.[223] Secondly, members of the troupe could directly attack the ARM's direction if enough performers found that the administration was overriding its own *Réglement* or misrepresenting the interests of the institution and its artists. Finally, singers could engage into quarrels with one another.

With regard to internal quarrels, the antagonism between the two female singers Nicole-Catherine Lemaure and Marie Pélissier is enlightening. Both shared the same position within the ARM's troupe and engaged in a ferocious competition, which spilled out into media networks. This exceptional circumstance was directly related to the fact that Lemaure had multiplied caprices and that the administration needed to find a reliable replacement for her. However, when she reclaimed her position and that the ARM could not come to terms with sacking her (given her wide range of support amongst the audience), both Lemaure and Pélissier remained in the troupe for the same type of cast.

[223] Marie-Madeleine Jossier was caught in a trial between the heir of her first husband (Christophe Cartillier) and of her second one (Sylvestre de La Roche). Some documents relating this trial are kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Archives Générales du Royaume, *Conseil d'État*, carton n°113 'Comédies, Théâtres'). Marie-Hélène de La Place and her husband, François de Monhers, bourgeois of Paris, solicit in for this judicial case the testimony of Jean-Baptiste Grimberghs, former 'bourgmestre of Nations', collector at Brussels and former director of the Théâtre de la Monnaie. Before a Brussels notary, Grimberghs declared that he had known the Cartilly spouses very well more than thirty years previously: the couple lived near the Sablon, Mademoiselle Cartilly sang at the Opera and taught music to several 'people of quality'. François Beaumavielle, singer for the king's brother (Monsieur) as well as the ARM also encountered legal difficulties. Two main cases are related in the *Traité des fonctions, droits et privilèges des commissaires-enquêteurs-examinateurs* (F-Pn, Département Droit, économie, politique, F-26766, Paris: Debure l'aîné, 1759), including an issue of succession rights in 1688 with the Demoiselle Madelaine Martin ('Extrait des Registres de Parlement' from the 4 December 1688, p. 434-437).

Regarding salaries, soloists did not always have the option to contest the decisions made by the ARM. Under Lully especially, the administrative aspect of the ARM's management was so tightly controlled by the composer that the troupe had little space for negotiation.[224] However, it is likely that, in subsequent decades, senior performers gained in agency regarding the calculation and distribution of their salary. In particular, they may have acquired some leverage regarding their bonuses (a more flexible part of their total salary) and their pensions. The latter were particularly prone to diligent bargaining on the part of the performers and represented a regular source of tensions between the ARM and its troupe.

Because seniority rights were directly related to the issue of salaries (their amount and ways to be allocated), it also engaged with the *emplois*' system, for a rank and occupation equated to a specific salary. As such, 'seniority rights' were an unofficial rule endorsed as good practice for preserving order in the troupe's hierarchy and its clarity with regards to the *emplois* (i.e. how the sets of roles were formed, distributed, and inherited from one performer to another). Simply put, the rule ensured that the actors who entered a given troupe were granted priority for first roles according to their date of entry — as positions became available — and for restructuring the *emplois* to suit their skill set, over the artists who were recruited later. However, this rule was also prone to creating many inconsistencies, which exemplified how difficult is was for an administration to coerce its actors to fall into line.

This rule was not a trait particular to the ARM alone. It was usual to find it in French theatres during the early modern period. It was instaured as a way to regulate a former system of privileges regarding the performers' choice to play specific roles

[224] Most F-Po archives about finances are receipts (*quittances*) from performers that merely acknowledge the reception of their due salary. See, for example: F-Po, Archives 18 (8), *Finances. Pensions et gratifications 1771-1772*.

developed on the basis of individual relationships between actors and troupe directors and/or authors, as well as on financial calculations. The Comédie-Française, for example, used to give to actors who were likely to attract the audience and ensure the success of a play the right to play in priority the roles they would perceive to be the most prominent. The same rule is found in the document establishing the creation of the Illustre-Théâtre, in 1643:

> […] The new theatre plays that will be given to the troupe will be arranged without question by the authors, without anyone being able to complain about the role they would have been granted; the plays that will be printed, if the author agrees, will be submitted to the plurality of the voices within the troupe, although it will respect the arrangement made for Clérin, Poquelin and Joseph Béjart, who must choose alternately the Heros [the first male leading roles], without being bothered by the mentioned prerogative, as well as for Madeleine Béjart, who will choose whichever role she likes.[225]

Overlapping this loose set up of personal, individually granted privileges, the idea of instituting seniority rights was birthed as a possible remedy to feelings of injustice amongst the artists of a same troupe. Playing the first roles or choosing to alter the roles constituting an *emploi* became a right related to the time served in a company, regardless of the age of the performers themselves.

The rule is more and more explicitly applied and mentioned throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in historical sources as part of the cornerstone of theatres' systems guidance. The plasticity of its enactment was based, as in common law, on precedent and custom.[226] As such, it could oppose a more streamlined a centralised system preferred by administrators for ensuring the smooth running of

[225] The Contract of creation of the Illustre-Théâtre's troupe, dated from the 30 June 1643, is reproduced by Jurgens and Maxfield-Miller in *Cent ans de recherches sur Molière* (224–226): '*Item* que les pièces nouvelles de théâtre qui viendront à la troupe seront disposées sans contredit par les auteurs, sans qu'aucun puisse se plaindre du rôle qui lui aura été donné ; que les pièces qui seront imprimées, si l'auteur n'en dispose, seront disposées par la troupe même à la pluralité des voix, si l'on ne s'arrête à l'accord qui en est pour ce fait envers lesdits Clérin, Poquelin et Joseph Béjart, qui doivent choisir alternativement les Héros, sans préjudice de la prérogative, que tous les susdits accordent à ladite Madeleine Béjart, de choisir le rôle qui lui plaira.'

[226] *Journal de Paris* (26 October 1783): in an open letter, Miss Buret *l'aînée* mentioned the seniority rights and its embedding in the ARM's constitution as 'the results of enlightened experience'.

theatrical productions.

The rivalry between the singers Henriette Adélaïde de Villars, known as Miss Beaumesnil (30 August 1748–5 October 1813) and Rosalie Levasseur (8 October 1749–6 May 1826) in 1778–9 highlights well this issue. The former debuted at the Opéra in 1766, originally working as a replacement for Sophie Arnould (13 February 1740–18 October 1802). It was not small matter to be associated with Arnould, who had attempted to place herself in the genealogy of former legendary singers, such as Marie Fel (24 October 1713–2 February 1794), Jean-Philippe Rameau's favourite. Levasseur appeared on stage the same year, in one of the revivals of André Campra's *L'Europe galante* (a ballet first premiered in 1697, which enjoyed a phenomenal success throughout the eighteenth century); yet she did not sparked any real interest before the arrival of Christoph Willibald Gluck in Paris in 1774. The latter could not stand Sophie Arnould[227], and thus favoured Levasseur over Arnould's successor, Beaumesnil. Remarkably, Gluck's favours also came with a good deal of patronising comments:

> Please tell Miss Rosalie to be sure to learn her role [from *Alceste*] in outline only, because she cannot possibly understand the nuances and the delivery, without me; otherwise the correction of bad habits acquired in my absence would be infinitely troublesome to both of us.[228]

Taking advantage of this turnaround, Levasseur tried to trump Beaumesnil's "seniority rights" by requesting to play some first pathetic roles (i.e. princesses). This came in addition to the light and tender shepherdesses from the stock of roles she had already inherited from her predecessor Marie-Jeanne Lemière (married to the *basse-taille* Henri Larrivée, also an Opéra singer), another great singer from the last years of Rameau's career at the Opéra and a direct rival to Sophie Arnould[229]. In the *Journal de Paris* (27

[227] Patricia Howard writes that Gluck would have reportedly said to the singer who complained that her role title in *Iphigénie en Aulide* had only recitative instead of great arias, that 'to sing great arias, you have to know how to sing' (*Gluck: An eighteenth-century portrait in letters and documents*, Oxford, Clarendon Press 1995, pp. 111-112).
[228] P. Howard, *op. cit.*, p. 115.
[229] L.-P. de Bachaumont, *Mémoires Secrets*, Paris, 4 January 1779, vol. XI, p. 241: "La première a écrit

December 1778), Beaumesnil protested publicly in an open letter, writing that she had suffered an act of injustice:

> I was received that the Opera in 1766 for the stock of roles ["emploi"] of the first roles for which I was already the understudy ["double"] of Miss Arnould, who enjoyed a reputation well acquired and deservedly merited; my first role was that of Silvie and, by way of continuity, I sang the roles of princesses, such as those of Églée in *Thésée*, Iphise in *Dardanus*, Adèle of Ponthier, Télaire in *Castor*, Ariane in *Amadis*, and so on. Miss Rosalie known as Le Vasseur [sic], whose debuts [at the Opéra] had preceded mine by two months, was the understudy of Mrs Larrivée [born Marie-Jeanne Lemière] in the roles of Love [Amour] and Shepherdesses and in these was content for seven years. It was at this time that, profiting by a trip that I took and threatening the Directors with her retirement, she managed to sing in my place, the role of Télaire, which I had played two or three previously: six months later, we played this same opera and Mr. The Directors gave me back my role and my rights. We know that since the chevalier Gluck paid her homage with the roles of Alceste and Armide and adopted her as his heroine [in his operas]. […] Humiliated by Miss Le Vasseur's pretentions and without, today, a single role for me, I forbade myself from calling her out as a *thief*, and abandoned the fight at a moment when, after working for twelve consecutive years, I should have expected to the place left for me by Miss Arnould's retirement.[230]

Beaumesnil managed to get some sort of compensation by being entrusted the female lead in Gluck's last (but unsuccessful) opera, *Echo et Narcisse*, in September 1779. A second protest on Beaumesnil's part, during which she threatened to leave the Opéra, led to her effective resignation in 1781.

Another similar case at the Opéra, explicitly based on the same question of seniority rights, opposed Miss Buret the eldest (active at the Opéra between 1781 and

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une lettre où elle se plaint que la seconde, faisant valoir son antériorité au théâtre de deux mois, accapare tous les rôles des opéras, tant anciens que modernes, quoique sa destination ne dût être à sa réception que de doubler Mme Larrivée, tandis que la sienne était de remplacer Miss Arnould."

[230] Letter of de 27 December 1778 published in the *Journal de Paris* and reproduced in the *Abrégé du Journal de Paris* (Paris 1789), part II, pp. 1777–1781: 'J'ai été reçue à l'Opéra en 1766 pour l'emploi des premiers rôles dans lesquels je doublais Miss Arnould qui jouissait d'une réputation si bien acquise et encore mieux méritée ; mon premier rôle fut celui de Silvie et par continuité j'ai chanté après elle les rôles des princesses, tels que ceux d'Églé dans *Thésée*, d'Iphise dans *Dardanus*, Adèle de Ponthieu, Télaire dans *Castor*, Ariane dans *Amadis*, etc., etc. Miss Rosalie dite Le Vasseur, dont le début avait précédé le mien de deux mois, doublait Mme Larrivée dans les rôles d'amour et de Bergères et s'en est contenté l'espace de sept ans. C'est à cette époque que profitant d'un voyage que je fis et menaçant MM. Les Directeurs de sa retraite, elle obtint de chanter à ma place le rôle de Télaïre que j'avais joué deux ou trois années auparavant : six mois après on redonna ce même opéra et MM. Les Directeurs me rendirent et mon rôle et mes droits. On sait que depuis, M. Le chevalier Gluck lui a fait hommage des rôles d'Alceste et d'Armide et qu'il l'a adoptée pour son héroïne. […] Humiliée des prétentions de Miss Le Vasseur et n'ayant pas aujourd'hui un seul rôle à moi, je me restreins à crier *au voleur*, et j'abandonne la partie au moment où par un travail de douze années consécutives je devais m'attendre à occuper la place que me donnait la retraite de Miss Arnould.'

1791) and Marie-Thérèse Davoux, known as Maillard (who entered the Opéra right after Buret, in 1782). In open letter, Buret articulated the exact same arguments as Beaumesnil:

> I am, by seniority rights, the first understudy ["double"] of Mrs Saint-Huberti [sic], and following the Opera's statutes, to which we are all equally submitted, I have to sing three consecutive times the role when it is relinquished by the first actress. Likewise, this same role then belongs by right, on three occasions, to the second understudy who is Miss Maillard, and so on until the first actress takes it back again. These rules are the results of an enlightened experience[231].

The case suggests a degree of competition between the understudies, as if the role might eventually pass permanently to either of them, whoever is better at performing it.

Financial and legal issues were made particularly salient by the more or less frenetic succession of directors and even models of directorship that took place during the eighteenth century. If enough performers found that the administration were not serving their interests enough, or misrepresenting their interests, singers could be emboldened to attack the Opéra's direction. The most famous example of this scenario is undoubtedly the crisis between the Opéra's troupe and the director Jacques de Vismes du Valgay (1745–1819) in 1778–1780[232].

When Anne-Pierre-Jacques Vismes du Valgay was appointed director in 1778, a few projects for enforcing administrative reforms were submitted to him. Amongst them, a long dissertation — presented in 1778 alongside other documents — engaged

[231] 'Je suis, par droit d'ancienneté, le premier double de Mme Saint-Huberti [sic], et suivant les status de l'Opéra, auxquels nous sommes toutes également soumises, je dois chanter pendant trois fois consécutives le rôle que quitte cette première actrice. Ce même rôle appartient ensuite de droit, pour trois fois également, au second double qui est Miss Maillard, et ainsi tour à tour jusqu'à ce que la première actrice le reprenne de nouveau. Ces règlements sont les résultats d'une expérience éclairée.'

[232] This affair constitutes the subject matter of various historical bodies of evidence, the most relevant of all are legal documents (e.g. testimonies for the instruction of the trial, judgement of the King's Council State). See F-Pan, O[1] 613, *Arrêt du Conseil d'État du roi contenant règlement pour l'Académie royale de musique* (27 February 1778); Ch. Duval, *Instruction du procès, entre les premiers sujets de l'Académie royale de musique et de danse, et le Sieur de Vismes, Entrepreneur, jadis public, aujourd'hui clandestin, et Directeur de ce Spectacle, par devant la Tournelle du Public, Extraits de quelques papiers qui n'ont pas cours en France* (Paris, 1779); and BL, R 397 (17), P.-L. Ginguené (ed.), *Instruction du procès, entre les premiers Sujets de l'Académie Royale de Musique & de Danse, et le Sr de Vismes, Entrepreneur, jadis public, aujourd'hui clandestin, & Directeur de ce Spectacle, Pardevant la Tournelle du Public. Extrait de quelques papiers qui n'ont pas cours en France*, s. d.

with the issue of the salary system.[233] After a review of all the possible causes and effects of the ARM's bankruptcy prior to Vismes's direction, the anonymous authors of the dissertation invoked the former existence of a system of salaries explicitly based on seniority rights. They affirmed that 'it would be necessary to re-establish this ancient law' which, in effect, granted progressive augmentations of the salary to the performers according to their 'rank of seniority'.[234] This proposition of reform followed directly a rant against the multiplication of the performers in the troupe, leading to many untalented artists and creating a vicious circles in which, 'in order to make up for the mood or neglect of the first [singers]', it was necessary to add 'third and fourth understudies (*doubles*)'.[235] The former system is described in the dissertation as follows:

> Although the salaries were weak, they were distributed amongst the principal artists [*premiers Sujets*] in proportion to their talent and their *emploi*. In the secondary ranks [the *doubles*; understudies], salaries were given following the right of Seniority [*droit d'ancienneté*]. The order of justice and equity, which reigned then in this distribution, satisfied [all of] the artists and seemed to be somehow a substitute for not being granted greater salaries, since each of [the performers] would contribute equally to the quality of the show.[236]

This issue regarding salaries and their impact on the troupe's organisation played an

[233] F-Po, Pièce 18, *Dissertation très abrégée des différentes sessions qui ont été faites à l'Opéra depuis l'année 1753 jusqu'à ce jour* (1777).
[234] F-Po, Pièce 18, *Dissertation*, 2: 'Mais puisqu'enfin il faut se conformer à ce luxe si l'on ne veut s'exposer à culbuter ce Spectacle (déjà prêt à s'anéantir de son propre poids occasionné en partie par l'indiscipline et les dépenses extrêmes que font les inutiles) et qu'il est prouvé par des examples, que plusieurs chefs se nuisent entre eux, que d'ailleurs un seul homme ne peut suffir actuellement pour diriger cette grande machine, je crois (et l'expérience le prouve) qu'il serait nécessaire de rétablir cette ancienne loi qui augmentant les appointements par rang d'ancienneté était de toutes distributions la plus juste, et la plus équitable, elle n'est pas à la vérité sans abus, mais on peut les corriger aisément.'
[235] F-Po, Pièce 18, *Dissertation*, 2: 'Jalousie ont eu le Dessus ; les passes-droits, les gens inutiles, les protections et leurs protégés ont absorbé les Revenus, ce qui sema le dégoût et la négligeance parmi les Sujets vraiment utiles. D'après cela, il a fallut payer au poid de l'or les personnes nécessaires ou s'exposer à fermer la porte par le manque de Sujets, ou l'oubli de chercher promptement tous les Moyens de s'en procurer de nouveaux ; toutes ces causes ont rendus les Différents Chefs des Suppliants au lieu de Maîtres, et pour attirer le public déjà blasé sur les beautés, il fallut multiplier l'infini toutes les parties qui composent le Spectacle, acteurs, actrices dont la plupart ne seront jamais bon à rien et qui n'ont été reçus que dans l'espoir qu'ils seront utiles un jour.'
[236] F-Po, Pièce 18, *Dissertation*, 1: 'Les appointements, quoique faibles, étaient distribués parmi les premiers Sujets au prorata de leurs talent, et de leur emploi. Dans les rangs secondaires, il leur étaient donné par le droit d'Ancienneté. L'ordre de justice et d'équité qui régnait alors dans cette distribution, satisfaisait les Sujets, et semblait leur tenir lieu en quelque façon de plus grands appointement, puisque chacun d'eux concourrait à l'envie au bien du Spectacle.'

important role in the struggle that opposed Vismes du Valgay with the ARM's main soloists, ultimately leading to his forced departure from the institution. The weakening of the ARM's financial and managerial ecosystem favoured a rupture in the way performers organised themselves and engaged with the management. Following Vismes du Valgay's resignation, a collegial, more democratic system inspired by dramatic theatre troupes such as the Comédie-Française was instituted.

Nevertheless, as it aligned on the model of the Comédie-Française, the virulence demonstrated by opera singers did not disappear. In a 1789 letter, the director Giovanni Battista Viotti highlighted the difficulties and paradoxes of the new collegial system. Although performers had appealed to a decision of the Council of State from 1780 which 'grant[ed] to the First Subjects all the financial benefits of the Opéra', Viotti pointed out that they failed to take responsibilities for the net losses of the business:

> Sirs, you also refer to the content of a decision from the Council [of State] from 1780, which ensures every benefits of the Opéra to its first subjects; but you neglected to observe that this theatre, because it has only produced losses, as stated in the very account that you are publishing, it is therefore necessary that the advantages that were promised to the first subjects, as in the ruling that you mentioned, is absolutely unrealistic.[237]

[237] BL, R 397-1 (3), *Il est tems de parler, et il est tems de se taire, précédés de la lettre au public, Sur l'Etablissement d'une Ecole Dramatique, protégée par les Comédiens Français* (Paris: Ruault, 1789): 'Vous évoquez également, Messieurs, le contenu d'un Arrêt du Conseil de 1780, qui assure aux premiers sujets tous les bénéfices de l'Opéra ; mais vous négligez d'observer que ce spectacle n'ayant produit que des pertes, d'après le compte même que vous publiez, il s'ensuit nécessairement que l'avantage promis aux premiers sujets, par l'Arrêt que vous invoquez, est complètement illusoire.'

II.4. Created in their own image: performers and the media

Generally speaking, prominent singers were likely to enjoy a greater degree of independence than many other female contemporaries. The reason for this is at least two fold. First, the ARM singers benefitted from an improved quality of life over the period. Marie-Thérèse Bouquet-Boyer has pointed out that during the eighteenth century, the birth of the notion of virtuoso paired with numerous laws that favoured the access to private property and ameliorated quality of life '[affected] directly the musician who had [from henceforth] the possibility to exercise an individual career, internationally, independent of [the performer's] belonging to an official state agency'.[238] Secondly, the autonomy of the singers was also intrinsically connected to the development of an early modern form of media coverage which itself accompanied the progressive strengthening of a direct relationship between performers and their audiences.

Media coverage of singers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries varied in form and intent. In its vast majority it took the form of writings, but could also include visual formats such as paintings and engravings. Visual representations of actors generally worked as ways to summarise their personalities and talents. It could turn them into clichés or it could use pre-existing clichés in order to make sense of the actor. With regard to written media, authors could also borrow stereotypes or fabricate new ones; yet the medium, given its versatility and popularity, offered greater room for nuance and more layers of meaning. The following section focuses on written media in order to assess singers' agency in society and how singers relied on members of their audience to validate their legitimacy to perform specific *emplois*.

[238] Marie-Thérèse Bouquet-Boyer, 'Le document historique et musical dans l'histoire de la musique', *Culture et idéologie dans la genèse de l'État moderne* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1985), 290: 'Cette évolution touche directement le musicien qui aura davantage la possibilité d'exercer une carrière individuelle, internationale, en dehors de son appartenance à un organise officiel d'État.'

The very notion of the Republic of Letters or *respublica literaria*, revisited in particular by Marc Fumaroli, is premised on free textual interaction, through private correspondence and published works, which crossed national boundaries in its establishment of relations between both individuals and communities.[239] Conversation during the early modern period was not purely a matter of serious intellectual development. Since the seventeenth century, pleasure and amusement in dialogue were at the heart of writing and publishing affairs. Looking forward to the eighteenth century, as issues of transparency and personal development increasingly mattered, the reproduction of dates and events in personal journals and correspondence gained another layer of meaning, that of intimacy with the subject who was writing and/or with the object of the writing. When such commentary addressed the theatrical landscape and its agents, the question of intimacy could fulfil different purposes. More specifically, contemporaries would comment on actors' lives and careers by weaving together plethora of private anecdotes. Those aimed at disclosing a degree of affinity between the authors and the actors who shared their social circles. At the same time, they could also serve to highlight the controversial dimension associated with the condition of actors during the early modern period by exposing secret facts about them or even by spreading (false or real) rumours.

Dealing with gossips was then a way to judge artists on more different levels than that of the artistic performance, which, to some degree, could guide people's perception of the artist on stage. As such, writings about actors were a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they could demonstrate the proximity between actors and members of high social classes who wrote about them. On the other, actors could be the target of elaborated insults or schemes to demean them, something that contemporaries

[239] Marc Fumaroli, *La République des Lettres* (Paris: Gallimard, 2015).

used for various reasons, from disgust for the actor's profession to strategies for enhancing rival performers. On top of everything, such pieces of testimony were highly sensitive because the personal relationships that singers entertained with their audience was often entangled with sexual favours and romantic adventures.

These forms of written commentaries seem irresistible to us because they are personal and active. Despite being complex and tricky in nature, they reveal something substantial of the context from which they arise. As such, different researchers have tried to spell out pertinent methods able to engage correctly with them and consider them as legitimate historical pieces of evidence. On that point, the methodological work of Virginia Scott demonstrated in *Women on the Stage in Early Modern France, 1540-1750* is particularly enlightening.[240] She specifies that even nineteenth-century commentators of the early modern period, often easily dismissed as historiographically unsound, were conscious of the issue regarding gossips' value but not discouraged by it.[241] Robert Darnton's analysis of police reports from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brings additional light to the question of reconstructing artists' images through fragmented and subjective commentaries.[242]

Gossips and other types of anecdotes had a purpose for those who crafted them, for those who received and recycled them, and even for those included in the stories.

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[240] Virginia Scott, *Women on the Stage in Early Modern France, 1540-1750* (CUP, 2010), chap. 1 'The actress and the anecdote', 11–37. See also Matti Peltonen, 'Clues, Margins, and Monads: The Micro-Macro Link in Historical Research' in *History and Theory* 40, 2001, 348 (who denounces the strained relationship of anecdotes with generalisation).

[241] Scott, *Women on the Stage*, 7–8: 'Poor Lemazurier, stuck in the nineteenth century, was conscious of all those anecdotes and shady tales and all those prurient readers poised to welcome a book that reprised them. Believing, however, there was gold among the dross, that within all the accounts, memoirs, collections of letters and anecdotes, gossip columns, and other publications of the eighteenth century on the subject of actors and actresses he would find enough valid information to construct individual biographies of all the sociétaires de the Comédie-Française from its beginning to the end of the eighteenth century, he decides the projects is worthy one.'

[242] Robert Darnton, 'Policing Writers in Paris Circa 1750', *Représentations* 5 (1984), 9: 'The historian should hesitate before treating police reports as hard nuggets of irreducible reality, which he has only to mine out of the archives, sift, and piece together in order to create a solid reconstruction of the past. The reports are constructions of their own, built on implicit assumptions about the nature of writers and writing at a time when literature had not yet been recognised as a vocation.'

Indeed, early modern artists knew what the codes of reception and commentary were, and what such pieces of information performed within social circles. Some singers knew how to use them — at least to the best of their capacity — so as to empower themselves and advance their career. One can imagine that some performers developed a strong resilience against commentaries of a moral nature, such as satirical poems and other forms of parody-like writings.[243] Generally, these pieces of commentary were crafted by contemporaries who were either entangled with the singers' life at some kind of intimate level, or pursued social gains of any sorts by adding their pennies worth to some of the stories that formed the latest idle-talks and captured people's attention. In return, if they wanted to have their say, performers needed to be integrated in one way or another in the connected network producing and diffusing information. Crafting and spreading gossips was an essential part of the arsenal they had at their disposal.

The ARM had some input into the way singers were ideally presented to the spectators so as to trigger fascination of the audience and, ultimately, financial gain. For example, it could do so through exceptional social events such as *capitations* or galas. However, the administration could not possibly prevent its performers from engaging directly with spectators.[244] In 1699, the playwriter, composer, and critic Charles Dufresny wrote: it is 'the audience [that] is [now the] sovereign on whom depends

[243] In the case of the Meusnier de Querlon's parody of the ARM's set of rules (*Le Code lyrique*, 1743), female performers are refered as easily susceptible to be influenced by the characters they incarnate (p. 34). But, more importantly, actresses and female dancers need to limit their 'laughs' and 'gesticulations' so as to not attract too much of attention (here presupposing sexually charged) from the audience ('Article xxvii', p. 43).

[244] The ARM organised a series of exceptional shows which were marketed as special social events during which the institution pursued two main goals: the emphasise on the artists from the troupe and their talents, and the augmentation of its financial revenues. Every year, when the Opera's season came to an end, the institution organised special shows for rewarding the services of its artists. When the event was focused on presenting to the audience new recrues, these shows were called *capitation* (from the Latin *caput*, *capitis*, which means 'head'). *Capitations* took place on the Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays (instead of the traditional opening days: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays). Additionally, exeptional events of the sort could also happen in order to celebrate even more extraordinary occasions, such as the opening of a new place or a special royal related event (e.g. birth of a new heir or the visit of a foreign personality).

anyone who works for reputation or money'.[245] Aware of their own image and how it could be directly influenced by the audience's opinion, performers attempted to shape it by engaging directly with the spectators. Weaving the threads of their own celebrity necessarily included the fabrication of — or, at least, the active and constant participation in — an emulation by and through the media. Those were materialised through various modes of diffusion: word-of-mouth, manuscript and private writings, as well as printed newspapers.

It seems that female performers had more opportunities than their male counterparts to access personal gains through this specific system of favours, although it is difficult to estimate in absolute terms the actual difference between the two sexes. Our understanding of female performers is more detailed as police reports managed specific entries for them relative to their sexual activity.[246] This increased degree of surveillance regarding women was partially explained by the fact that they could be more at risk to be put out of work (i.e. in case of a pregnancy or venereal disease), thus creating a shortfall for the ARM.

If performers could be in charge of some aspects of their own public relations, therefore they could benefit from this relationship in various ways without any (or otherwise very limited) intermediary. That is to say that the direct connection between performers and their audience was likely to bypass the ARM's authority. This fact had important repercussions on the *emplois*' system. Indeed, if the content of roles' categories and the choice of their distribution amongst the troupe were impacted in any

[245] Charles Dufresny, *Amusements sérieux et comiques* (Paris: Claude Barbin, 1699), 126: 'le public [qui] est [le] souverain duquel relèvent tous ceux qui travaillent pour la réputation ou pour le gain'.
[246] Numerous scholars have explored the issue of working 'in the margins' in Paris and its relationship with the official forms of authority (like the police), such as Arlette Farge (*La vie fragile, violence, pouvoirs et solidarités à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* [Paris: Hachette, 1992]) and Alain Thillay (*Le faubourg Saint-Antoine et ses faux ouvriers: la liberté du travail à Paris aux XVIIe et XVIIIe* [Paris: Champ Vallon, 2002]). See Laurent Turcot, 'Directeurs, Comédiens et Police : Relations de Travail Dans Les Spectacles Populaires à Paris Au XVIIIe Siècle', *Histoire, économie et société* 23 (2004) 97–119.

significant way by the audience's horizon of expectations, such direct connection between performers and spectators could disrupt the choices of the ARM's administration and even, to a greater extend, the *emplois*' taxonomy.[247]

A study case that perfectly exemplifies this issue is the rivalry that took place at the ARM from 1726 till 1741 between Catherine-Nicole Lemaure (1704–1783) and Marie Pélissier (1707–1749). Lemaure's protectors included powerful and influential figures such as Charlotte-Élisabeth Aïcha (known as Miss Aïssé), Victor-Amédée Ier de Savoie-Carignan, as well as the Abbot Claude-Henri de Fusée de Voisenon. When compared to Pélissier's social gunpowder, Lemaure's supporters seemed to have composed the strongest and most virulent network. As part of the rivalry between the two singers, supporters of the latter were striving to offer their favourite as much visibility as possible. They did so not only by criticizing Marie Pélissier negatively, but also by multiplying the writings testifying to Catherine-Nicole Lemaure's talent and their gratitude. The correspondence of Miss Aïssé is, in this respect, particularly eloquent. Following the premiere of *Pyrame et Thisbé* by Francœur and Rebel, the patron emphasised her strong support for Lemaure by comparison with an underwhelming portrait of her rival:

> Miss Lemaure came back [to the ARM]. […] There is a new actress, named Pélissier, who shares the approbation of the audience with Lemaure. Myself, I am in favour of Lemaure: her voice and acting appeal more to me than those of Pélissier. The latter has a very small voice et she has always forced it on the stage. She is a good pantomime, all of her gestures are just and noble; but she has so many of them that Miss Antier appears in one piece next to her. It seems to me that, in the type of role of the female lover, however violent the situation is, modesty and restraint are very much necessary. Every passion must be contained in the inflexions of the voice and the accents. It is necessary to leave to the men and male magicians any gesture that is violent and disproportionated. Those are my reflexions. Do you like them? The audience gives justice to Miss Lemaure and, when she appeared again at the amphitheatre, all of the

[247] Hans Robert Jauss, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory' (trad. Elizabeth Benzinger) in *New Literary History* 2, no. 1 (1970), 13: 'The ideal cases of the objective capability of such literary frames of reference are works which, using the artistic standards of the reader, have been formed by conventions of genre, style or form. These purposely evoke responses so that they can frustrate them. This can serve not only a critical purpose but can even have a poetic effect.'

> people on the stall turned around and clapped for a quarter of an hour. She received this applause with a great joy, and she bowed down to thank the audience. Madame la duchesse de Duras, who protects Pélissier, was furious, and she indicated to me that it was my fault and that of Mrs de Parabère for having paid people to clap. The next day, the same thing occurred, and Miss Pélissier thought she would burst out with resentment.[248]

In 1730, a performance of *Callirhoé* led Miss Aïssé to compare Lemaure and Pélissier in two ways. Not only did Miss Aïssé gauged the difference regarding singing and acting between the two performers, she also specifically addressed their rivalry by contrasting who stood as supporter for one and the other.[249]

The career strategy that consisted in relying on supporters' anecdotes could be hit and miss. Sometimes, it included tactics that could severely disrupt the smooth running of the ARM's production or that could even work against the performers themselves. The career of Lemaure exemplifies this point extremely well. As she chose to abruptly leave the Académie at irregular intervals, Lemaure always assumed her personal network would constitute enough of a stable net to ensure her return and the

[248] *Lettres de Miss Aïssé à Mme Calandrini* (Genève: Slatkine reprints, 1970), Letter II (Paris: November 1726), 180-184: 'Francœur et Rebel ont fait un opéra ; le sujet est *Pyrame et Thisbé*. [...] Miss Le Maure [sic] est rentrée [...]. Il y a une nouvelle actrice, nommée Pélissier, qui partage l'approbation du public avec la Le Maure ; pour moi, je suis pour la Le Maure ; sa voix, son jeu, me plaisent plus que celui de Miss Pélissier. Cette dernière a la voix très petite, et elle l'a toujours forcée sur le théâtre ; elle est très bonne pantomime ; tous ses gestes sont justes et nobles ; mais elle en a tant que Miss Antier paraît tout d'une pièce auprès d'elle. Il me semble que, dans le rôle d'amoureuse, quelque violente que soit la situation, la modestie et la retenue sont choses nécessaires ; toute passion doit être dans les inflexions de la voix et dans les accents. Il faut laisser aux hommes et aux magiciens les gestes violents et hors de mesure ; une jeune princesse doit être plus modeste. Voilà mes réflexions. En êtes-vous contente ? Le public rend justice à Miss Le Maure ; et quand on l'a revue sur le théâtre, elle parut premièrement à l'amphithéâtre, tout le parterre se retourna et battit des mains pendant un quart d'heure. Elle reçut ces applaudissements avec une grande joie, et fit des révérences pour remercier le parterre. Mme la duchesse de Duras, qui protège la Pélissier, était furieuse, et me fit signe que c'était moi et Mme de Parabère qui avions payé des gens pour battre des mains. Le lendemain, la même chose arriva, et Miss Pélissier en pensa crever de dépit.'

[249] *Lettres de Miss Aïssé à Mme Calandrini*, Letter XXVII (December 1730), 237: 'On joue à l'Opéra *Callirhoé*, qui ne réussit pas, quoique cet opéra soit intéressant et joli ; mais le grand air, à présent, est de n'aller que le vendredi à l'Opéra : et d'ailleurs, comme tout est esprit de parti, les partisans de la Le Maure [sic] sont en plus grand nombre à présent que ceux de la Pélissier. M. d'Argental est amoureux de cette dernière ; il est aimé, et il s'en cache beaucoup. Il croit que je l'ignore, et je n'ai garde de lui en parler. Elle en est folle : elle est tout aussi impertinente que la Lecouvreur ; mais elle est sotte, et ne lui fera point faire de folie. C'est un furieux ridicule à un homme sage et en charge que d'être toujours attaché à une comédienne. Tous les partisans de la Le Maure trouvent la Pélissier outrée et peu naturelle. Ils disent que c'est M. d'Argental et ses amis qui la gâtent. Cela m'afflige ; mais, connaissant son abandon pour ce qu'il aime, je me console de cela parce qu'il s'en cache, et que, par conséquent, il vit plus avec le monde pour dépayser.'

continuity of her fame. Yet the staging of her caprices were not always a net contributor to her social success. For example, the singer pretended to enter the convent in 1727, probably in the hope that the news would increase her stronghold over public debates. This departure hindered opera productions to the point that the ARM's administration had to seek for a replacement in the person of Pélissier. In turn, Lemaure cut short her posturing, probably afraid that the nomination of Pélissier would put a proper end to her career.

Later, however, Lemaure departed from the ARM no less than five years (between 1735 and 1740). During that period of time, she continued to perform on rival stages (e.g. Concert Spirituel, Concerts de la Reine) perhaps in order to prove to her followers the range of her musical talents. She then addressed herself directly to the audience in a short text, the *Manifeste de Miss Lemaure, pour faire part au public de ses sentiments sur l'Opéra, et des raisons qu'elle a de le quitter* (1735), where she renewed her attachment to her protectors and emphasised her autonomy regarding the Paris Opéra. Commenting on her return at the ARM in 1740, the music lover Jean-Florent-Joseph de Neufville de Brunaubois-Montador disclosed a very relevant piece of analysis on the situation:

> She had already, under the same circumstances, let down the audience since she became its idol. She was in a position to complain and make [the audience] beg for more. […] On this basis, considering herself as sovereign of the Opera, she did no expect that one could dare to subject her to the rigor of certain laws.[250]

Lemaure's abuses over the administration showed that, to a certain extent, the singer had the ability to stand up against the ARM's administration despite some

[250] Jean-Florent-Joseph de Neufville de Brunaubois-Montador, *Lettre au sujet de la rentrée de la demoiselle Lemaure à l'Opéra, écrite à une dame de province par un solitaire de Paris* (Bruxelles, 1740), 13: 'Elle avait déjà en pareilles circonstances fait plusieurs fois faux-bond au public, depuis même qu'elle en était devenue l'idole. Elle était en possession de se faire plaindre et regretter […]. Sur ce principe, se regardant comme souveraine de l'Opéra, elle ne s'attendait point qu'on pût oser la soumettre à la rigueur de certaines lois.'

occasionally strong admonishments coming from Destouches in particular (ARM's owner between 1728 and 1730), who sanctioned that 'very thorny little creature' whose whims did not 'improv[e] the ARM's revenues'.[251] At a broader scale, it showcased that any strong tempered individual could exercise some influence over the institution via the arrangement of social networks and media. Concretely, the advantages could be sometimes easily observable. For example, the Prince de Carignan put Lemaure out of prison in 1735 after the ARM asked her to be arrested. Later, Abbot Voisenon helped her to regain her position at the Opéra in 1740.[252] They could also be more subtle in their effect. Indeed Lemaure's back-and-forth on the stage of the ARM created a sense of frustrated expectation amongst the audience. Spectators mobilised themselves to support the singer even more when Lemaure would return. Conversely, they would profusely comment on her while she was gone, thus keeping her image alive in people's minds and agendas.

[251] Monaco, Archives du Palais Princier, [C. 183, 'Lettre d'André Cardinal Destouches au Prince Antoine Grimaldi La Vaudoire' (3 September 1730), *La Revue musicale*, vol. VIII, no. 6 (1 April 1927), 151: 'From this I conclude that she will increase the expenditure of the Opera without improving its revenues. She is given 1000 *écus*, and since she is a very prickly little creature, it will probably be at the condition that she decides to sing whenever she pleases.' ('De là je conclus qu'elle augmentera la dépense de l'Opéra sans améliorer la recette. On lui donne 1000 écus, et attendu que c'est une petite créature très épineuse, ce sera apparemment aux conditions de chanter quand il lui plaira.')
[252] Neufville de Brunaubois-Montador, *Lettre au sujet de la rentrée de la demoiselle Lemaure*, 12–13.

Part I — Conclusion

The ARM's administrative needs and regulations participated in the shaping and institutionalisation, both directly and indirectly, of a system of classification known as *emploi*. At the interface of roles and performers, the notion of *emploi* directly engages with the question of casting practices on at least three levels: employment (i.e. selection of the performer and intern rules for payment and retirement), distribution (i.e. association of a set of roles to a particular talent), and classification (i.e. hierarchy which combines talent, importance of the roles payed, and seniority).

All these steps happened at different times and rhythms in the day-to-day life of the ARM's opera production. Whereas recruitment normally took place only once, the distribution of roles and the classification of the performers were dynamic systems; meaning that they could be changed or reshaped at different points in time.

If the manifestation of the concept of *emploi* can be primarily understood as an administrative tool used, *inter alia*, for insuring the smooth running of the company and the discipline of the ARM's artists, it also encountered a series of discrete variables that directly challenged the idea that the *emploi* was a rigid system. As such, the *emploi* was not so straightforward in practice. Individual performers could resist more or less easily the rules set by the ARM's direction (which, in return, attempted to tame some of the disturbances), thus disrupting and possibly resetting the *emplois*' system.

Building on Rebecca Herissone's and Alan Howard's thesis that human creativity shifted in important ways at seventeenth century, the exploration of the making of *emplois* at the ARM must emancipate itself from a sole administrative point

of view in order to incorporate aspects relevant to the individual.[253] Various elements have emerged as proofs of the agency performers could have regarding both the administration and the creative process of opera production as a whole. With a growing network of influential media, the ways performers could somehow override or bypass the authority of the ARM's administration became more diverse.

The fact that roles could explicitly be made and altered so as to match actors' skills and personalities challenges the idea that roles' categories were uniformly standardised through time. Instead, it assumes that authors, who tailored the roles and general narratives according to the pool of talents they had at their disposal, were able to readjust character archetypes for their performers. This fact, however, did not infringe on the need for institutional stability; it aimed to preserve a clear and recognisable order of the troupe's hierarchy so as to enhance the smooth running of opera productions, consolidate the audience's expectations, and ensure the overall financial success of the operation.

The various forms of management have played an important role in the way rules were correctly enforced or not, broken or reformed. As a result, the structure of the ARM's troupe was bound to change throughout the eighteenth century, including more staff and a more diverse range of salaries. Understood as an administrative tool, the *emploi* represented an overarching structure, which was flexible enough to bend in response to different challenges: the shortages of suitable performers, financial bankruptcy of the institution, and so on.

In particular, several disputes surrounding the issue of seniority rights have highlighted an interconnected relationship between the concepts of *emplois* and *genre*.

[253] Herissone, *Musical Creativity*, 2013; Herissone and Howard, *Concepts of Creativity*, 2013; Howard, 'Understanding Creativity', 2012.

The latter encompasses various elements, including the specific question of the voice, which is not just a tessitura but a wider set of qualities (e.g. timbre, texture, asperities, technicality regarding the realisation of ornaments). If Dratwicki has estimated that an overlap is possible between specific types of voices and *emplois*, this connection is difficult to grasp. It requires to investigate the singers, one generation after the other, who performed a same *emploi* so as to see if the voices (in addition to the acting qualities) were more or less the same or, otherwise, if composers had to (re)adapt some roles for specific voices.

The fact that the *genre*, this emanation of the individual's talent and skills, was so primordial in the making and distribution of the roles was particularly visible under the reign of Lully. Indeed, Lully's main female soloists (e.g. Marie Le Rochois and Françoise Journet) who displayed extraordinary capacities in terms of vocal and acting skills, could perform extremely diverse roles and, thus, transcend any rigid *emploi*'s taxonomy. I propose to explore this very specific era of the ARM's history by investigating the relationship between Lully, his troupe, and their repertoire in the first chapter of the second part.

Second Part — The *Académie* and its troupe: management, singers, and repertoire (1669–1715)

Both the administration and the repertoire of the Paris Opéra built on past traditions. The ARM's administrative structure borrowed from that of the state and, more particularly, the Menus Plaisirs, which functioned in a particular manner and retained many of its privileges until late in the eighteenth century. Likewise, the content of the scores and librettos created at the Opéra did not appear *ex nihilo*. Perrin and Lully built from past works that were performed in front of the court and in Paris to create their own operas. They knew well the expectations of their contemporaries in terms of plots, music, and musical talents, and used that knowledge to shape the production of their own operas.

Whilst the first part of this dissertation set up the stage for considering the *emploi* at the ARM through a legal and administrative lens, the second part uses that same lens to reconsider the dynamic relationship between the troupe and its repertoire from 1669 until 1715. Ultimately, I aim to showcase how the *emploi* and its related practices were concretely manifested at the ARM during a period of time when the Opéra's administrative system was still in the making.

Doing so, I put some distance with the aesthetic angle widely privileged the existing scholarship dealing with French baroque opera, which tends to dissociate roles from key elements of their context of creation, including performers. Indeed when it comes to the study of roles, *emplois*, and the related operatic genres in which they are elaborated, the aesthetic debate exposes a clear bias against issues specific to singers and performance altogether. That is the case, for example, in Catherine Kintzler's influential exploration of the *Poétique de l'opéra français* where the differences between opera sub-genres (and, in particular, *pastorales héroïques* and *tragédies en*

musique) are not analysed from the perspective of the singers' skills and the troupe's transformation.[254]

In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, it is true that opera was judged to a large degree as poetry, the features of which — as for spoken theatre — included its adherence to technical rules, its nobility of expression and character development. Thus, cultural history studies regarding aesthetic developments during the Ancien Régime have mostly been preoccupied with the relationships amongst the evolution of genres with 'taste', a malleable concept that puts an emphasis on reception. Yet in that framework singers (and performers altogether) are rarely investigated as co-creative forces, whether in the case of the *emploi* or otherwise.

Alternatively, studies looking at the development of operatic genres or individual works — such as Lois Rosow's thesis on *Armide* — tend to put the emphasis on editorial activities. Thus they focus primarily on the collaborative network of scribal authors, including composers, librettists, and any other writing collaborators.[255] Opera, however, mixes together various artistic media and assumes that its accomplished form is the moment of performance. It necessarily implies that opera is irremediably a collaborative creation that extends beyond just the scribal authors. To my knowledge, only Antonia Banducci and Benoît Dratwicki have started to explore thoroughly the concepts of typecasting and the *emploi*; however, they do not engage with operas, composers, and librettists prior to Lully's directorship.

That is not to say that questions dealing with aesthetics should be entirely cast aside. On the contrary, the analysis presented in the first chapters about the different states of the administration and troupe are conceived as a way to re-enter the aesthetic

[254] Catherine Kintzler, *Poétique de l'opéra français de Corneille à Rousseau* (Paris: Minerve, 2006).
[255] Lois Rosow, *Lully's Armide at the Paris Opéra: A Performance History, 1686-1766*, Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1981.

debate from a different — hopefully fruitful — perspective. In this second part, the performer-based view is privileged for re-assessing the complexity of opera genres and their artistic rules. Singers active in the period prior to the ARM and from the Opéra's early stages are placed at the centre of the enquiry, and not mentioned as mere parameters of the creative process.

The artists who took part in the very first troupes at the ARM were not all new recruits: many of them were active in musical and social networks, especially related to the court. Perrin and Lully themselves had worked together in the past for the king's chapel.[256] As such, singers imported their past practices, experiences, and expectations — which directly involved the crafting of roles and their assignment — with them when entering the ARM. Likewise, the development of French opera roles and genres under Pierre Perrin (ca. 1620–1675), Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632–1687), Jean-Nicolas de Francine (1662–1735) and his associates, despite the great stress put on the specificities of the *tragédie en musique* by many scholars, owe much to the works preceding the birth of the ARM. This artistic genealogy infiltrated the fabric of the plots, the constitution of the roles and stock characters — thus dealing directly with the issue of the *emploi*.

At the same time that it is necessary to consider the impact of long-term trends on the *emploi*, it is also essential to acknowledge new elements related to the administrative framework and the that also shaped the *emploi*. The passage from court operas to commercial opera in the context of the ARM's private business marked a significant shift in the history of French opera production. The first directors-owners and artists of the ARM had to face new and important challenges in a landscape of Parisian

[256] For example, Lully set to music Perrin's six *Motets à deux chœurs pour la Chapelle du roi* (published in eleven volumes later through Ballard in 1684 'by express order' of the king: F-Pn, Vm1-1039 and Rés Vm1-99; F-V, M.S.B in-4°, 1-11).

theatres that was undergoing significant changes over a period of less than two decades, from 1661 (when, following Mazarin's death, Louis XIV decided to govern alone and created the Académie Royale de Ballet) to 1680 (the date of the creation of the Comédie-Française). These changes happened with regard to lyric and spoken theatre alike and were particularly responsive to the rise and fall of Lully and Molière's partnership, beginning in 1661 and ending with *Psyché* in 1671.[257] They directly addressed plots and characters alike, therefore impacting the formation and development of the practices surrounding the *emploi* at the ARM.

This dialectic between continuity and rupture underlines much of the analysis I aim to provide regarding the details of the company itself, from its early stages until the death of Louis XIV in 1715. I mindfully integrate them as core tenets of my study of the emploi as I attempt to present a more refined vision of the function and value of singers within the whole creative process of opera production.

In the last few decades, a new body of scholarship has started to explore the interface between aesthetics, dramaturgy, and opera production through the lens of the performers themselves. La Gorce and Banducci have stressed the fact that Lully and his librettist had individual performing talents in mind, which guided their choices in terms of writing or rewriting, in parallel with the works of Buford Norman, Etienne Gros, and William Brooks, who all studied Quinault.[258] In contrast, studies about Perrin's troupe, his singers, and the specific relationship between the scribal authors and the performers are rare. Consequently, very few scholars have attempted to compare them with

[257] The *tragédie-ballet* was performed at the Palais des Tuileries in January 1671 with the help of Pierre Corneille regarding the libretto.
[258] For example, see William Brooks's suggested actor identifications for *La Comédie sans comédie* (which brings together four different theatrical genres: a *pastorale*, a *farce*, a *tragédie*, and a *pièce à machines*) in *Philippe Quinault, Dramatist* (Peter Lang, 2009), 63–72. See also Banducci, 'Acteurs and Actrices as Muses', §1.2.

Lully's.[259] I plug the gap in chapters III and IV, first with an evaluation of the troupe under both owner-directors, then with a close analysis of the roles and genres created during their time at the ARM. Finally, chapter V applies the same analysis for the period between Lully's death until Louis XIV, mostly shaped by Lully's son-in-law, Jean-Nicolas de Francine.

[259] Perrin's career is mentioned in a few nineteenth-century works that have served as basis for many recent bodies of scholarship, despite the fact that they occasionally comprise some factual inaccuracies: Arthur de Boislisle, *Les débuts de l'opéra français* (Paris, 1875), Pougin, *Les vrais créateurs*, 1881; Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, 1886. It reappears much later in the twentieth century, under the pen of musicologists such as Robert Isherwood (*Music in the Service of the King: France in the Seventeenth Century* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973]) and experts in French early modern literature such as Pierre Danchin ('The Foundation of the Royal Academy of Music in 1674 and Pierre Perrin's Ariane', *Theatre Survey* 25, no. 1 [1984]: 53–67).

Chapter III — The administration and the troupe at the Opéra under Perrin and Lully

The various elements on which Perrin and his associates, and later Lully, came to build their new enterprise required balance and a sense of harmony. Three main issues were at stake. First, both Perrin and Lully had to assemble and train a sustainable troupe. Second, the two ARM owners-directors had to arrange a theatre suitable for their productions. Finally, with regard to the artistic and creative process, both Lully and Perrin dealt with important criticisms arising from their contemporaries. Indeed, the latter regularly pointed out that the lyrical genres the two men were experimenting with lacked a certain degree of coherence on the aesthetic and dramaturgical levels. All these matters requested from the owners-directors to find solid grounds for their enterprise.

The unity and training of the troupe had a particular strategic importance in the successful launching of an Académie, as suggested by Jean Duron in his study of Sébastien de Brossard and the French provincial stage.[260] Indeed the organisation of said troupe raises important issues that directly challenge the structure and functioning of the ARM in relation to the specific market for French singers. Throughout the early modern period, working rights for singers fluctuated from one production context to another. Additionally, their musical training is difficult to establish with confidence since the relevant historical sources are extremely scarce before the end of the eighteenth century. The reason why it is important to address these issues here, however, is because the co-creative relationship between singers, composers, and librettists, addresses the question of characters' modelling and, ultimately, of the *emploi*.

The present chapter is first and foremost concerned with the constitution of

[260] Jean Duron, 'La musique est un théâtre, ou le mariage de raison', *Littératures classiques* 97, no. 3 (2018), 265–284.

emplois through the study of female soloists and their sets of roles from the very beginnings of the ARM (in the 1660s) until the death of Lully (1687). Instead of taking operatic genres as a starting point for the discussion and applying a grid of roles *a priori*, the structure of the argument investigates the circuits of decision-making in creating genres by putting the singers of the troupe at the centre. First, it presents the ARM's landscape under the specific directorships of Perrin's and then Lully's, which performers had to navigate. It explores the ways both owners-directors learned to engage with performers in general, and how they sought to constitute, manage, and strengthen the ARM's troupe in particular. Then, the chapter focuses on the leading female singers themselves and details the roles that structured each of their careers.

III.1. Building a troupe in a competitive landscape: hurdles and experimentations from Perrin to Lully

As presented in the first chapter, the constitution, perfection, and control of the ARM's troupe and its singers were of paramount importance for the first director-owners of the ARM, amongst all of the other parameters of opera production. Indisputably, the final resolution of the difficulties specifically related to the ARM's launch was Lully's achievement. Jacques-Gabriel Prod'homme has even suggested that Lully's ability to shape the ARM's troupe was possibly his main legacy to his successors.[261]

More specifically, Lully's successful strategy for self-promotion and self-enrichment helped to cement the ARM's company with a strong sense of continuity of musical style and *emploi*. Indeed, as the *emploi* could help creating a sense of stability within the troupe, it was necessarily included in Lully's control over his own performers, which ultimately ensured his financial success.

A comparison between the ventures of Perrin and Lully allows a more complete understanding of the administrative, legal, economic, and aesthetic challenges that were constitutive of the ARM's beginnings. In particular, it helps in assessing how Perrin's and Lully's successive managements relied specifically on acknowledging the singers (their place within the troupe and their roles in the repertoire) as part of both the problems and the solutions of opera production. In this section, I will explore more extensively Perrin's (1669–1672) and Lully's (1672–1687) respective directorship in order to give a better account of the landscape in which the relationship between the administration, the composers, the librettists, and the singers came to life and was developed during the first stages of the ARM.

[261] Jacques-Gabriel Prod'homme, *L'Opéra (1669-1925)* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1972), 12.

Name	Other spellings	Dates	Origin	Official enrolment at the ARM
Catherine Suptille		b. 1651—a. 1671		1669—1671
Marotte Labadoys		b. 1652—a. 1672		1669—1671
Marie Aubry		ca. 1646—1704		1671; 1674—1684
Mlle La Gaura		b. 1652—a. 1670		1669
Marie-Madeleine Brigogne	Brie?	ca. 1651—a. 1695		1671—1680
Marie-Madeleine Jossier, known as Cartilly		ca. 1650—1717		1670—1673
Marie Verdier	Du Verdier, Duverdier	ca. 1620—a. 1714		1675—1680
Mlle Saint-Christophle	Saint-Christophe	ca. 1625—a. 1683		1675—1682
Marie Le Rochois	Rochechouai, Rochois, Rochoix, Rochoüas, Rochoys	ca. 1658—8 October 1728	Region of Bayeux	1679—1697
Marie-Louise Moreau [l.]	Louison, Moreau l'aînée	b. 1661—a. 1713	Paris	1680—1692
Françoise Moreau [c.]	Fanchon, Moreau la cadette, Morlan	ca. 1668—3 November 1754	Paris	1682—1702
Marie-Louise Desmatins	Demathin, Démâtins, Des Matains, Desmâtins	b. 1665—20 April 1708	Probably Parisian region	1682—1707

Table III.1: Female singers hired at the Académie under the successive directions of Perrin and Lully.

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We know substantially less about Perrin, his collaborators, and singers than we do about Lully and his troupe. Few historical sources have survived regarding Perrin, who became the director-owner of the ARM's royal privilege in June 1669, and his main composer, Robert Cambert (ca. 1628–1677).[262] All of the musical scores, apart from *Pomone*'s, have been lost. A large part of their initial challenge concerned material conditions, as shown in the first chapter. These encompassed — among other things — obtaining a suitable venue for a theatre, the constitution of a functional and loyal troupe of artists, and the smooth running of the finances. Because of these struggles that sparked the creation of numerous records, Perrin's and Cambert's concerns can be scrutinised thanks to various legal documents and contemporary testimonies.

[262] The *Lettres patentes* (signed on 28 June 1669 at Saint-Germain-en-Laye) that described the ARM's ownership were copied by Durey de Noinville and Travenol (*HTA* [Paris: Duchesne, 1757]).

Despite the financial turmoil, the series of bad choices and bad lucks that plunged Perrin into debt (as described in the chapter I.1), his directorship did not lack successes. Both Perrin and Cambert showed an exceptional degree of resilience by adapting quickly to their material constraints. *Pomone*, for example, was a great success with the public: the opera was performed more than seventy times over eight months, with a seat in the parterre costing half a *louis d'or*.[263] Jacques-Gabriel Prod'homme and Theodore Barker have pointed out that 'the attendance was such that clashes took place between the citizens and the pages, lackeys and men in livery who sought to enter in the train of their masters, as they did at other spectacles'.[264] Ultimately, a royal ordinance was promulgated in order to prevent people from entering the ARM gratis. And yet, sustainable profits did not accumulate.

A valuable testimony from Charles Le Marquetel de Saint-Denis, seigneur de Saint-Évremont (1613–1703), relates the beginnings of the ARM and the adjustments of the performances. Enthusiastic about the *comédie* of *Ariane, ou le Mariage de Bacchus* (1671), Saint-Évremont nevertheless expressed some scepticism with regard to the lyrical genre of the *pastorale*, derived from a utopian imaginary built around the idyllic Arcadia, as championed in Honoré d'Urfé's novel, *L'Astrée*; despite Saint-Évremont's criticism of the genre as over-researched, 'precious and mannered', the genre came to be thoroughly developed during the seventeenth century.[265] With regard to *Pomone*, the

[263] Albert Borowitz, 'Lully and the Death of Cambert', *Legal Studies Forum* 29, no. 2 (2005): 900.
[264] Jacques-Gabriel Prod'homme and Theodore Barker, 'Two Hundred and Fifty Years of the Opéra (1669-1919)', *The Musical Quarterly* 5, no. 4 (1919): 516.
[265] Charles Giraud (ed.), *Œuvres mêlées de Saint-Évremont* (Paris: Léon-Techener, 1865), I, cciii: 'At the very moment when the language became standardised, an ingenious and polite spirit, that of Honoré d'Urfé's, revived in a famous book [*L'Astrée*], the subtle and chivalrous sentiment of love, developed under the Italian form of the pastoral novel. However, for some people of good taste, his over-researched style, too remote from the movements of real nature, discredited this style precious and mannered.' ('Au moment même où la langue commençoit à se fixer, un esprit ingénieux et poli, Honoré d'Urfé, avoit remis en honneur, dans un livre célèbre, le sentiment subtil et chevaleresque de l'amour, développé sous la forme italienne du roman pastoral. Mais la faveur du livre fut passagère: aux yeux des gens de goût, un excès de recherche, trop éloigné des mouvements vrais de la nature, discréditait ce style précieux et maniéré.')

negative aspects of Saint-Évremont's critique were focused on the quality of the poem only.[266] In contrast, he enjoyed the music greatly and highlighted the fact that Cambert had succeeded in making the best of Perrin's troupe:

> Without a doubt, Cambert has a great, beautiful mind [*génie*] that is proper to realise one hundred different and well-mixed kinds of music, with a just balance of the voices and the instruments.[267]

Following the *Pastorale d'Issy*, Saint-Évremont described the innovations introduced by Cambert and Perrin. These were not just a matter of improvements to the music or libretto but also to the musicians' training. He pointed out that the 'more polished and more gallant' opera *Les Peines et les plaisirs de l'Amour* (1672) also benefited from 'voices and […] instruments [that] were already better trained for the performance'.[268] Just like Lully, Cambert had learned a lot from his work at the court prior to the launching of the ARM. In the obituary article that the *Mercure de France* published in April 1677, the composer is indeed depicted as an artist who trained the best voices and who left them as a legacy to the Parisian audience many talents such as Mademoiselle Brigogne's:

> It is the same Cambert who was the first to use the beautiful voices that we still admire every day, and that Gascony gave to him; it is in his *Airs* that Mademoiselle Brigogne appeared the brightest, and it is through those that she charmed her spectators so much, to the extent that the nickname of *petite Climène* [from the role she played in *Les Peines et les plaisirs de l'amour*] remained.[269]

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[266] The quality of the libretto is indeed unequal, using weak images or rhymes, and low poetic registers. For example, Vertumne (the God of the Gardens) uses pastoral imagery that bears salacious undertones when he expresses his love for the pure Pomone: 'Soulage donc les flammes/Du grand Dieu des jardins; De plaisirs éternels il sait remplir les âmes./Renonce pour jamais à l'amour des blondins,/Faibles, trompeurs, inconstants et badins./Unissons, unissons nos cœurs et nos empires:/Ajoute aux fruits de tes vergers/Les herbes de mes potagers:/Joins mes melons à tes poncires,/Et mêle parmi tes pignons/Mes truffes et mes champignons.'

[267] *Œuvres mêlées de Saint-Évremont* (London: Tonson, 1725), III, 395: 'Cambert a sans doute un fort beau génie, propre à cent musiques différentes, et toutes bien ménagées, avec une juste économie des voix et des instruments.'

[268] *Œuvres de Saint-Évremont*, III, 219: 'plus poli et plus galant. Les voix et les instruments s'étaient déjà mieux formés pour l'exécution.'

[269] *Mercure de France* (April 1677), 15–18: 'C'est ce même Cambert qui a fait chanter le premier les belles Voix que nous admirons tous les jours, et que la Gascogne lui avait fournies; c'est dans ses Airs que Mademoiselle Brigogne a paru avec le plus d'éclat, et c'est par eux qu'elle a tellement charmé tous ses Auditeurs, que le nom de la petite Climène lui en est demeuré.'

The variety of the shows both artists put together and, in particular, the addition of dances and diverse decors, were well received by the audience. Cambert proved himself very useful by adapting his score to the poor material constraints of the situation, including Perrin's librettos which poetic value was not unanimous amongst the members of the audience. Actually, the lack of scholarly writings on the author does not do justice to the fame that he enjoyed during his life, going from one significant post to another. He enjoyed such an important success that even his death was framed by some commentators alongside the lines of a romanticised vision of rivalry with the prosperous Jean-Baptiste Lully.[270]

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In contrast, Lully's ownership of the ARM began in March 1672 on less hectic terms.[271] His political finesse and managerial inventiveness, as well as personal ambition and talent, helped him stabilise his enterprise rapidly.[272] This knowledge was largely built on the experience Lully had gained from his years as a musician prior to his ownership of the ARM, first in the service of Mademoiselle de Montpensier (1653–1661), first cousin of Louis XIV, then as the superintendent (*surintendant*) of the

[270] See Borowitz, 'Lully and the Death of Cambert', 899–910.
[271] F-Pan, O1/16, f. 94: *Privilège en faveur du Sieur Jean-Baptiste Lully* (Versailles, 13 March 1672).
[272] After he gained the control of the ARM, Lully even received additional powers with an ordinance, signed by Louis Colbert, which made him forbid actors to use more than two singers and six instrumentalists in performances they could give outside of the ARM: 'His Majesty expressly forbids all troupes of actors, French or foreign, established or to be established hereafter in the fair city of Paris, to use any external musicians, nor a larger number of instrumentalists for the entr'actes, nor any dancers, nor any orchestra, on pain of punishment for disobedience. His Majesty wishes that the present ordinance be notified to the leaders of such troupes, at the behest of the said Lully, in order that they be made aware of it; His Majesty enjoining him to inform him of any contraventions of this ordinance.' (F-Pan, O1/17, f. 72: 'Ordonnance portant défenses aux comédiens' [22 April 1673].)

Musique du Roi from 1661 onwards.[273] A servant at the court, Lully demonstrated a strong capacity for finding innovative ways to create in a highly competitive framework across all of his distinct artistic activities, that is to say not only as a composer but also as a violinist and, occasionally, as a dancer or even an actor. Lully's innovations — whether they concerned instrumentation, vocal or instrumental melodic lines, playing modes, or other things — were calculated to gain him supremacy over other artists. Henry Prunières's argument about Lully's control over opera performers has gone has far as affirming that the composer repelled the Italian artists from the court and Paris after Mazarin's death:

> Colbert, who had just succeeded Fouquet, had no love for [Italian artists], and upheld the principle of protection in matters of art as well as in industry and commerce. Lully therefore shifted his ground and became the champion of French musicians. He had the Italian singers dismissed from court one by one, after so arranging matters that they were never heard.[274]

Such competition, however, was not only directed towards the other Italian musicians who were invited by Mazarin to the court, but also towards the French performers, playwrights, and composers. The famous dispute between Lully and Molière has already been abundantly commented on in existing scholarship.[275] Amongst his fellow

[273] La Gorce, *Lully*, 136: 'À la lecture des différents documents conservés, il apparaît comme un personnage d'un incroyable dynamisme, soucieux de veiller à tous les détails, n'hésitant pas pour mieux y parvenir à figurer pendant les représentations parmi les danseurs, les chanteurs ou les instrumentistes. En lui, on devine l'organisateur exceptionnel qu'il sera durant tout le reste de sa carrière. Attentif à l'équilibre de son orchestre, il recourait déjà à des formations, dont il semble s'être préoccupé de stabiliser les effectifs. Tous ces efforts lui permettaient de maîtriser de grands ensembles et de s'imposer comme le principal compositeur des fêtes et des cérémonies organisées à la Cour.'

[274] Henry Prunières, 'Lully and the *Académie de Musique et de Danse*', *The Musical Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (1925): 530.

[275] After he secured his *privilège*, Lully's strategy regarding both his troupe and its repertoire especially targeted Molière, who felt tricked, although he was officially still allowed to create *intermèdes*. Ultimately, although Molière appealed to the king, he did not obtain the rights for producing more music and lyrics in his plays. Lully made sure that Molière would be limited in his choice when borrowing the services of musicians, instrumentalists (in 1675 and 1682) as well as singers and dancers (in 1682): 'Ordonnance du Roi, portant défenses aux Comédiens de se servir d'aucuns Musiciens externes, ni à leurs gages. À Saint Germain-en-Laye le 21 Mars 1675. Autre Ordonnance portant défenses aux Comédiens de se servir de voix externes, ni de plus de deux voix d'entre eux; d'avoir un plus grand nombre de violons que six, ni de se servir d'aucuns Danseurs, sous quelque prétexte que ce soit. À Versailles le 27 Juillet 1682.' (reproduced by Noinville and Travenol, *HTA,* 107.) In particular, Lully successfully prevented Molière from using any of the dancers employed by the king as well as any performer who had formerly

musicians, Lully challenged Louis de Mollier and Jean-Baptiste Boësset (with whom Lully co-created the *Ballet royal d'Alcidiane* in 1658), as well as the violinists Michel Mazuel, Guillaume Dumanoir, and Michel Léger.[276] Put in charge of the string ensemble called *Petits Violons* around 1670, to 'conduct as he [saw] fit', Lully structured his directorship in direct competition with a larger and older ensemble, the *Vingt-Quatre Violons du Roi* (also called *La Grande Bande*), the first permanent orchestral formation in Europe based on string instruments, that was also granted privileges directly from the king.[277]

Lully repeatedly demonstrated that he was conscious of the key importance of the choices he made regarding the performers, their selection, and training in order to ensure his successes.

> Lully was not only successful as an opera composer, he also knew perfectly how to execute them, and how to govern those who executed them. Provided that he was in possession of a male or female singer whom voice he liked, [Lully] was committed to train them with a wonderful affection; he taught them himself how to enter and walk on stage, how to give graces to the gesture and action; it it him who trained the greatest Actors and the most famous Actresses, such as Beaumavielle, Dumesny, Saint-Christophle, and the famous Rochois, the true model of all great Actresses who have then appeared on the theatre of the Opéra.[278]

As the director-owner of the ARM, Lully was fully invested in the training of his artists, not only on a musical level, but also with regard to acting. Le Cerf de La Viéville reported that Lully regularly modelled all aspects of performance during his rehearsals:

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worked with the composer and did not receive 'express and written leave' from him (F-Pan, O1/16, f. 142, 'Ordonnance du 12 Août 1672', 'Congé exprès et par écrit').

[276] La Gorce, *Lully*, 89.

[277] Le Cerf de La Viéville reported that Louis XIV 'intentionally created' the formation of the *Petits Violons* so as to put Lully 'as leader of a violins' group that [Lully] could conduct as he sees fit' (*Comparaison*, 2nd ed. [Bruxelles, 1705], II 186).

[278] Durey de Noinville and Travenol, *HTA*, I, 63–64: 'Lully n'excellait pas seulement dans l'art de la composition de ses Opéras, il savait aussi parfaitement l'art de les faire exécuter, & en gouverner les exécuteurs. Du moment qu'un chanteur ou une chanteuse de la voix desquels il était content lui étaient tombés entre les mains, il s'attachait à les dresser avec une affection merveilleuse; il leur enseignait lui-même à entrer, à marcher sur le Théâtre, à se donner la grâce du geste & de l'action; c'est lui qui a formé les plus grands Acteurs & les plus fameuses Actrices, tels que les Beaumavielle, les Dumesny; tels que les Demoiselles de Saint Christophe [sic], & la célèbre Rochois, le vrai modèle de toutes les grandes Actrices, qui ont paru depuis sur le Théâtre de l'Opéra.'

> However well trained Lully's actors had been in previous operas, when he assigned them a new and difficult role, he began by demonstrating [it] to them in his apartments, before the general rehearsals. Thus, Pierre Beaupuis played, following his model, the character of Protée in *Phaéton* which Lully had showed him gesture by gesture.[279]

Lully instated a highly competitive process of selection for his instrumentalists and trained some of the young men to play additional instruments, such as the violon, flute, 'and other instruments necessary for the performance of [his] plays'.[280] In 1677, the Mercure galant commented on the new performance of *Alceste* by highlighting Lully's training of the singers he assembled for the opera, to ensure that they were all 'the best voices in France'.[281]

Prior to the ARM, without the benefit of a stable troupe, is it likely that Lully did not have as much time to structurally refine and profoundly influence the skills of the performers he worked with. Indeed following an Italian model of opera production, those performers were assembled as quickly as they dispersed again. Lully's attention was therefore mostly dedicated towards the most perfect pre-selection of the cast. In *L'Amour malade*, ballet created on the 17 January 1657 before the Duke of Modena left Paris for Italy (the score for which has survived), Lully sought to impress his audience not only by magnifying Louis XIV who danced on stage, but also by carefully choosing the other performers.[282] The Florentine-born composer opted for highly qualified singers such as the castrato Atto Melani (for the title role) and Hilaire Dupuis.[283] Both Melani

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[279] Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison*, III, 208: 'Quelque exercé que fussent les acteurs de Lulli par les operas précédents, lorsqu'ils les chargeait d'un role nouveau et difficile il commençait par leur montrer dans sa chambre, avant les répétitions générales. De cette sorte Beaupui [sic] jouait d'après lui le personage de Protée dans *Phaéton*; qu'il lui avait montré geste par geste.' Likewise, Lully also showed his own ideas to his dancers (ibid.).

[280] F-Pan, E/1771: King's Council (Conseil du roi), 14 August 1673, 85–86.

[281] *Mercure galant* (October 1677), VIII, 207: 'Il est impossible qu'elle [la Musique du roi] fasse mal. Elle est composée des meilleures Voix de France, & sous un Maistre tel que Mr de Lully, les moins habiles le deviennent en peu de temps.'

[282] Different testimonies relate the enthusiasm for creating the ballet, such as the *Relations véritables*, 27 January 1657 [From Paris, on 19 January 1657], 48; and *La Muse de la Cour* (16 December 1656), 134.

[283] In the first edition of the *Parnasse français* (Paris, 1732), 40, Evrard Titon du Tillet indicated Hilaire Dupuis was one of the very best female singers alongside Miss Saint-Christophle and Marie Le Rochois, two of the leading singers under Lully's directorship. In a later edition, Titon du Tillet also indicated

and Dupuis had also played together the leading roles in *Ercole amante* (1660), respectively the title role and Vénus, and the French female singer pursued a brilliant career at the Musique du roi. Lully even decided to perform himself as Scaramouche in *L'Amour malade*.[284]

A good example of Lully's successful management of the human resources he had at his disposal can be found in many Italian lyrics and musical features in the *comédies-ballets* he created for the court, many of them with Molière. Although Lully continued to use Italian arias in later works for the ARM, they were considerably less numerous than during the 1650s and 1660s, when a greater number of Italian artists came to the French court at the behest of Cardinal Mazarin. The latter took a personal interest in the recruitment of performers. In the case of Cavalli's *Ercole amante*, Mazarin even addressed to Abbot Buti (who wrote the libretto) the following note:

> You must examine the singers you choose as carefully as the instrumentalists as each must be skilled in his art in order to produce a performance in which there may be no cause for mockery. You know well that the French are prone to that.[285]

The diversity of the talents on hand during that period of time was used by Lully to make some of his pieces seem more grand and to demonstrate his ability to write in both French and Italian styles. For example, in the twelfth *entrée* of the second part of *Ballet de Psyché, ou de la puissance de l'amour* (1656), Lully organised the music so as to

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another female singer, Miss Lefroid, as 'the favorite student of Lambert, who had a light and tender voice and an excellent taste for singing' (Titon du Tillet, *PF* [1743], 795).

[284] The poet and artistic collaborator in the play, Isaac de Benserade, wrote Lully a literary portrait, a form he normally reserved for the king and the nobles of the court (*Ballets pour Louis XIV*, edited by Marie-Claude Canova-Green [Toulouse: Société de Littérature classiques, 1997] I, 376). Atto Melani reported that the Apostolic Nuncio, who attended one performance, 'passionately' admired the show (Letter from the 26th January 1656, quoted by Henry Prunières in *L'opéra italien en France avant Lulli* (Paris: Champion, 1975), 203: 'avec passion'. The secretary of the Apostolic Nuncio wrote that his master liked the show 'especially' (Rome, Vatican Apostolic Archive, Nunziatura di Francia 110A, Letter from the 19 January 1657). See also Nestola, 'L'opéra italien à la cour de France : réception et adaptation d'un objet étranger (1645-1662)', *Bulletin du Centre de recherche du château de Versailles* (2016): online. https://journals.openedition.org/crcv/15097

[285] Translation by Prunières, *L'opéra italien en France avant Lulli*, 231 (Letter from August 1659): 'Je vous prie de vouloir bien examiner les personnes qu'on prendra tant pour chanter que pour jouer […] car ils faut qu'ils soient chacun executant en son métier afin de former un corps de musique duquel il n'y ait pas lieu de se moquer, car vous savez bien que les François y sont assez disposés.'

give the audience the impression of a diverse ensemble. The effect crucially relied on four allegories (Fear, Suspicion, Despair, Jealousy) respectively performed by Anna Bergerotti, Gian Francesco Tagliavacca, Claude Munier Saint-Helme [a *basse*], and a 'Signora Tondi', who alternated with a chorus.[286] In *L'Amour malade*, the 'Chanson des jaloux', sung by Hilaire Dupuy, is built according to the formal plan of contemporary French air (binary structure, median caesura accompanied by a change of meter, varied repetition of the last line of verse) while the 'Le Damigelle delle Cochette' that follows presents tripartite structure with the suggestion of a dal-segno repeat of the opening section.

In particular, Bergerotti's and Munier Saint-Helme's fames served Lully extremely well. Bergerotti's past successes in Italy and triumph in France (where she stayed between 1655 and 1669) catalysed Lully's own reputation. Already in 1655, following a concert during which both singers and Lully participated, Jean Loret testified of the mutual service they provided to one another in terms of social aura.[287] Loret highlighted further the specific bond between Bergerotti and Lully by outlining the efforts that the composer made for magnifying the actress in the *Ballet de Psyché* and *La Galanterie du temps* (where she performed the allegorical character of the Mode).[288]

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[286] Benserade, *Ballets pour Louis XIV*, I, 321. See La Gorce, *Lully*, 87–88.

[287] Jean Loret, *La Muse historique ou recueil des lettres en vers contenant les nouvelles du temps*, edited by Ravenel & La Pelouze (Paris: Jannet, 1857), II, 47: 'Une musique sans égale/Par ses accents doux et vainqueurs/Avait charmé plus de cent cœurs/Dans la chambre de notre Reine,/Qui de gens choisis était pleine./Saint-Helme, qui dans les concerts/Passe pour un des plus experts,/Et certaine Anne d'Italie,/Dont la voix est plus que jolie,/Eux seuls mêlèrent leurs accords,/(Digne d'avoir bien de la vogue)./C'était un charmant dialogue/De la guerre avec la paix,/Un des beaux qu'on chanta jamais,/Et dont l'air, presque à l'improviste,/Fut noté par le sieur Baptiste.'

[288] Regarding *Psyché*: 'Et l'aimable Bergeroti [sic]/Faisait entre dans son parti/Mainte âme excellente et choisie/Quoiqu'elle fût la Jalousie.' (Loret, *La Muse historique*, 154 [Letter of 29 January 1656].) Regarding the *Galanterie*: 'Et cette autre agréable Brune,/Dont l'excellence est peu commune,/La Signora Bergerota,/Vers la fin, les cœurs enchanta,/Ayant dans la douce harmonie,/Un rare et ravissant génie.' (Idem [Letter of 5 February 1656].) Additionally, the newspaper *La Muse royale* also commented in 22 February 1656: 'La Signora Bergerotti,/Objet de grâces assorti/Pour l'amant y fit des merveilles/À charmer toutes les oreilles.'

Lully's clever use of his personnel could also be exemplified in humorous settings to trigger laughter amongst French members of the audience. Indeed many 'grotesque' scenes in Italian (a word defined in Richelet's *Dictionnaire françois*, 1680, as 'humorously ridiculous') that Lully integrated to his works relied explicitly on the qualities and inventiveness of the Italian performers. They were sprinkled through the *Ballet des bienvenus* (1655), the *Ballet royal de l'impatience* (1661) *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (1670), and *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (1670).[289] For example, the 'Récit crotesque' [sic] in the *Ballet royal de l'impatience* represents a comic conversation between a music teacher and a homophonic chorus of his disciples, all sung in Italian. Although the lyrics do not appear in the printed livret of the ballet, the music is preserved in a manuscript copied by the librarian of the Musique du Roi (André Danican Philidor *l'aîné*).

[289] At the beginning of the second part of the *Ballet des bienvenus* was included the mention of a 'Récit crotesque [sic] Italian' with vocal and instrumental parts, as well as the names of the authors and performers playing the 'queerly dressed characters, with many postures and pleasant actions of the body'. (Benserade, *Ballets*, I, 282: 'Récit Crotesque [sic] Italien, partie de Voix, partie d'Instruments, représentés par des Personnages bizarrement vêtus, avec quantité de postures & plaisantes actions du Corps.')



Plate II.1: 'Récit des preneurs de tabac' from the *Ballet royal de l'Impatience*, 1690; F-Pn, RES-F-509

Obviously, since Lully himself was Italian, he was fluent in writing in a style saturated with Italian features that French people would recognise. Elements that might have made such passage 'Italian' and 'grotesque' to French ears (apart from the lyrics themselves) include the wide range, the leaping line, the short melodic fragments, and the broken texture in the last few bars. In other ballets, such as *L'Amour malade*, the composer juxtaposed Italian and French arias, openly playing with the musical and

vocal contrasts between the pieces so as to provoke pleasure in the variety and laughter.[290]

Lully's mode of management scarcely permitted any deviation from his guidelines. His strong control over the company, in parallel to the obliteration of his rivals, indicate a deeply controlling individual who was greatly concerned with his own reputation — including for posterity — as testify his desire and efforts to avoid ridicule for his company. Indeed the ARM director-owner did not easily tolerate his performers being in a poor state for performing, whether through illness or pregnancy. His policy regarding his performers' love life was probably intrusive, as reported by anecdotal evidence about female singers Marie Le Rochois and Marie-Louise Moreau. The argument between Le Rochois and the composer, according to the Parfaict brothers, regards Le Rochois's engagement to a man, not named in their report but who was probably Lebas, a bassoonist working in the ARM's orchestra.[291] The couple separated rapidly after their union. The fact that Lully intruded into the romantic and sexual lives of his musicians is also mentioned by Durey de Noinville and Travenol in their *Histoire du Théâtre de l'Opéra* (I, 68), and by Jean-Nicolas du Tralage in his private papers, later published under the title *Notes et documents sur l'histoire des théâtres de Paris au XVIIe siècle* by Paul Lacroix (Paris, 1880). The latter suggested that Lully also sought to prevent relationships between actresses and male audience members, attributing this desire to avoid public ridicule and speculation, as well as the inconvenience of altering costumes for pregnant performers.

> Before, married women were not well seen at the Opera; now, there are three of them with their husbands, namely: Mr Renaud, Mr Thévenard, Mr Deschars. Most of the other girls have patrons who maintain them at great costs; they are not wed. Typically, one would get pregnant, and would need to have her costume retouched. There is scarce a year where this kind of incident does not happen. Before, Mr Lully did not want to

[290] Loret, *La Muse historique*, II, 291 (Letter from the 20 January 1657).
[291] Parfaict, *HARM*, 45.

> hear any mockery about this, thus no one could go into the orchestra or on stage, there were only actors and musicians. Because of greed, control has relaxed and, when the Dauphin came to the Opera, not knowing where to put the too numerous followers and courtesans of his suite who came with him to be seen, they were put wherever they could; what was then a mishap became a habit. Mr Lully, in order to prevent them to go to the Opera, doubled the price of the places up to a *louis d'or*, when the most convenient boxes and places in the auditorium only cost a *demi-louis*. This change only incentivised those men to come even more, in order to show off and to have the pleasure to tell sweet words to the actresses they fancied. It is there that all love affairs and rendez-vous started. In short, it is the origin of the Opéra's diseases.[292]

Tralage's commentary about Lully's policy on those matters is insightful regarding the power dynamic between female singers, the audience, and the director-owner. To illustrate this, Tralage related one significant case, that of Marie-Louise Moreau (employed at the same time as Le Rochois). According to Tralage, Moreau's pregnancy resulted in her expulsion from the troupe, until the support of her friend Miss Certain, in whose apartment Lully sometimes organised rehearsals, saw her reinstated in the ARM.[293]

Nevertheless, Lully's violence was periodically complemented with evidence of generous gestures.[294] However tyrannical Lully could appear, the composer was also concerned about protecting the performers he wholly or partly trained. La Gorce has suggested that Lully's strategy as an actor and dancer on stage, in addition to being

[292] Jean-Nicolas du Tralage, *Notes et documents sur l'histoire des théâtres de Paris au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Librairie des bibliophiles, 1880), 85–86: 'Autrefois on ne voulait point de femmes mariées à l'Opéra, maintenant il y en a trois avec leurs maris, savoir: M. Renaud, M. Thevenart, M. Deschars. La plupart des autres filles ont des patrons qui les entretiennent à grands frais; ce sont des femmes non mariées. Il y en a ordinairement quelqu'une incommodée du mal de ceinture, et dont il faut élargir le corps. Il n'y a guère d'année où cet accident n'arrive. Autrefois M. Lully n'entendait pas de raillerie là-dessus, et personne n'allait dans l'orchestre ni sur le théâtre, il n'y avait que les acteurs et les musiciens; on s'est relâchés par l'avidité du grain et, lorsque le Dauphin venait à l'opéra, ne sachant où placer ce qui était de sa suite trop nombreuse et les courtisans qui y allaient se faire voir et leurs justaucorps, on les plaça où l'on put, et ce qui n'était qu'un accident qui ne devait point tirer à conséquence devint une habitude. M. Lully, pour les empêcher d'y aller, doubla le prix de ces places et les mis à un louis d'or, au lieu que les plus commodes des loges et de l'amphithéâtre ne sont que de demi-louis. Cela ne servit qu'à faire plus d'envie à ces messieurs d'y aller, pour se faire voir et pour avoir le plaisir de conter des douceurs aux actrices qui seraient plus à leur gré. C'est là que commencent toutes les amourettes et que se donnent les rendez-vous. En un mot, c'est l'origine des maladies de l'Opéra.'

[293] Tralage, *Notes et documents*, 87.

[294] One same anecdote reported by Le Cerf de La Viéville as well as Durey de Noinville and Travenol, affirms that, after he would break the instrument of any violinist, Lully would gave him 'the triple' of the instrument's original price and 'took him out for dinner' (*Comparaison*, II, 227; *HTA*, I, 65).

composer, aimed to reinforce his relationship with the performers by not appearing solely as a distant director but also friendly and relatable.[295]

> Lully had a talent to make others like him, and to make his actors fear him. He had set them up to receive without contestation the roles he assigned to them, and he had a wonderful authority over the Republic of Musicians. His people who were struck everyday by the strength of his talent, and who so him so powerful above them, could not avoid to respect and fear him. Besides this natural authority, from which came his large wealth, his grace, his recognition, were two maxims that attracted an extreme esteem from this society of musicians: Lully paid them wonderfully well […] and he never had any mistress.[296]

Those friendships, perhaps genuine, were business associations at their core. After Mazarin's death and the departure of the Italian musicians from the court, Lully was able to rely on a solid network of colleagues and friends, such as Jean Le Brun, painter of the king.[297] In return, Lully's charge as superintendent for the Musique du Roi, then director-owner of the ARM, granted him several powers, such as the possibility to extend his protection to his performers' children.[298] The penalties Lully enforced on his performers would often be paired with specific rewards. Thanks to Louis XIV's assent,

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[295] La Gorce, *Lully*, 135: 'The different roles [that Lully] endorsed with so much zeal in the performances contributed to bringing him closer to the performers he directed by interacting more and more with them.'

[296] Durey de Noinville and Travenol, *HTA*, t. I, 67: 'Lully avait l'art de se faire aimer, & de se faire craindre de ses Acteurs, il les avait mis sur le pied de recevoir sans contestation les rôles qu'il leur distribuait, & il avait une merveilleuse autorité sur la République Musicienne; ses gens qui étaient tous les jours frappés de près de la force de ses talents, & qui le voyaient si fort au-dessus d'eux, ne pouvaient pas se dispenser de le respecter & de le craindre: mais outre cette première autorité, outre celle qui lui donnaient encore ses grandes richesses, sa faveur, son crédit, il avait deux maximes qui lui attiraient une extrême considération de la part de ce peuple Musicien, Lully payait à merveille […] & il n'avait jamais de maîtresse.'

[297] La Gorce, *Lully*, 137: 'Even before providing each other assistance during a ceremony organised in Paris's Oratory church in 1672 for the memory of Chancellor Séguier, another event suggests that [Lully and Le Brun] already knew each other. During the baptism of Jean-Charles Lefebure on 14 September 1671 in Saint-Hippolyte, another sanctuary of the capital, Lully and Le Brun's wife, Suzanne Butay, were chosen as godfather and godmother of the child [see: F-Pn, Manuscripts, ms. français nouv. acq. 12.086].' However, it is important to highlight the fact that people did not seek these kinds of connections with more powerful individuals because they admired them (though that might also be true), but because it conferred a little authority by association upon them, making them (and their children) seem that little bit more elevated in society.

[298] La Gorce, *Lully*, 135, my translation: 'In 1663, [Lully] gave this honour to two [instrumentalists of the *Petit Violons*]. On 16 January and 12 March, he held over the baptismal font the sons of Jacob Le Gray and Adrien Guénin. He gave them his name, a moving proof of the admiration he provoked among the two fathers [see: F-Pn, ms. français nouv. acq. 12.137 and 12.115]. The following year, on 14 March, it was the turn of Marie-Elizabeth, daughter of Pierre Bony, a singer from the *Chambre du roi*, to benefit from [Lully's] presence [see: F-Pn, Manuscripts, ms. français nouv. acq. 12.053]. Already on 26 March 1662, he had granted that favour to […] Jean Henry d'Anglebert whose son was named Jean-Baptist after him [see: F-Pn, Manuscripts, ms. français nouv. acq. 12.147].'

Lully could grant some of his instrumentalists the right to perform 'at balls, weddings, serenades, and other public festivities', which was economically beneficial for them.[299] Again, the creation of such opportunity entailed that musicians would stay loyal to Lully who forbade them to interrupt their activity 'under the penalty of 3000 *livres*'. Such a bargain was made so that Lully could bypass the authority of Michel-Guillaume Dumanoir II, commonly known as the 'king of violins', who had previously been given incommensurable powers over violinists and dance masters from the Royal Stables by Louis XIV.[300]

Additionally, Lully sought to appear as didactic, innovative, and therefore attractive to his audience by being the first in France to publish his own scores in full, to which he added pleasant visual elements (i.e. engravings of opera scenes).[301] The result was the comprehensive and exciting display of the overall structure and selected extraordinary scenes of his operas, which stirred up the curiosity and imagination of his audience, notably because it reconstructed the scenographic device of 'l'œil du prince' (i.e. illusionary perspective). For doing so, the composer benefited from the development of early modern print technology to publish his own musical works.

This technique allowed Lully's work to last and stand as models for later composers. The fact that Lully aimed for his work to survive him does not necessarily entail the endorsement a nineteenth-century conception of the notion of 'work' and the 'canon'. However, it is possible to infer — looking at each step of his career — that the

[299] Conseil d'État, Arrêt, 14 August 1673, quoted by Laurent Grillet, *Les ancêtres du violon et du violoncelle, les luthiers et les fabricants d'archets* (Paris: C. Schmid, 1901), II, 79.
[300] Statut et Ordonnance, 'Faites par le Roy, pour l'exercice de la charge du roy des violons, maître à danser et joueurs d'instruments tant hauts que bas, et la maîtrise des dits violons, maîtres à dancer et joueurs d'instruments par toutes les villes de France' (22 August 1659), quoted by Grillet, *Les ancêtres du violon et du violoncelle*, II, 74.
[301] See Pascal Denécheau, 'Autour des partitions d'opéra de J.B. Lully conservées à la Bibliothèque musicale François-Lang' (2010): online, https://www.physinfo.org/annexes/lully.pdf; Anthony Saudrais, 'Illustrer l'opéra lulliste. Les vignettes dans les partitions de Baussen et Ballard', *Nouvelles de l'estampe* 266 (2021): online. https://journals.openedition.org/estampe/1817

composer came to contemplate the possibility of creating a body of work with, as its core, a stable set of performers' talents. The reason might have been more utilitarian than anything else. Lully aimed to make the best of what he had so as to ensure strong profits. Thus, the composer had not only the task of providing novelty to his audience but also of making sure that his works could be (re-)performed rapidly — especially if one of his operas were to fail.[302]

Moreover, Lully's editorial work, with augmentations and corrections of the scores, also supported his economic strategy. Indeed the push for reusing and circulating his works presented a clear break with the former tradition of French opera as an object of occasional enjoyment (for particular occasions and demonstration of wealth and power) and encouraged the multiplication of dividends (self-enrichment), as well as the rise of his personal fame (self-promotion).

Amongst the diverse (re-)editions of his texts, Lully generated new works by *pastiche* — that is to say by cutting extracts of previous successful opuses and binding them together, a common practice in Europe. This technique, first used with the *Ballet des Ballets* (first performed in 1661 in honour of Louis XIV and in collaboration with Molière), allowed Lully to earn money easily while simultaneously ensuring the circulation of the most successful parts of his work. When the *Salle du Jeu de Paume du Becquet* was inaugurated on the 11 November 1672, Lully presented *Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*, composed with some of the most acclaimed extracts of his previous scores. The opera encompasses passages taken from *La Pastorale comique* (1667), *George Dandin* (1668), *Les Amants magnifiques* (1670), and *Le Bourgeois*

[302] If a creation was poorly received, Lully developed quickly the habit, as the ARM's director, of programming another opera from his own repertory. This was the case after *Isis* (5 January 1677), for example, which creation failed to appeal to the audience and was directly followed by the revival of *Thésée* (originally created in 1675) one month later, on 16 February 1677. The finances for both operas can be found in Colbert's Manuscripts (F-Pn, Mss Mélanges Colbert 299 [Year 1677], ff. 15v and 325).

Gentilhomme (1670), as well as additional scenes that work as transitions between the extracts.

This economic and artistic success was so important that Lully's model of *pot-pourri* gave birth to a new tradition at the ARM, which would come to bear the name of Lully himself. After his death, the format was entitled *Fragments de Monsieur de Lully* and appeared on the ARM's stage in 1702, 1708, and 1711, more than twenty years after Lully's death. In 1718 and 1722, the name was reduced to the sole one of *Fragments* and, in 1726, it changed to *Fragments ou le Ballet sans titre*. In these pieces, however, the material was not interwoven in the same manner: although Lully and Quinault had sought to completely overlap different bits of their works in order to pretend it was a new opus, with a coherent story displayed over three acts, the following 'fragments' bearing Lully's name only juxtaposed extracts from successful operas.

Such assemblages minimised the time used for rehearsal and maximised the use of Lully's performers acquired know-how. The regular re-programming of former operas worked on the same principle. The audience became accustomed to listening regularly to the same range of successful works and, consequently, the spectator could observe the longer-term evolution of the Académie's performers talents in parallel with the fixing of the *tragédie en musique*'s rules of composition.

At the intersection of all of these phenomena, the *emploi* offered a way to assemble and standardise the intertwined processes involved in opera production. By registering singers, associating them with a set of roles and a salary within the troupe's hierarchy (which greatly shaped their social status), the ARM's first director-owners aimed for gaining elements of stabilisation and predictability. The association between singers and their roles is explored in the next section of this chapter.

III.2. The first troupes of the Académie and their roles, ca. 1660–1680

The relationship between the directors-owners of the ARM and their singers was not trapped in a hermetic top-down approach. Performers were chosen and used for their skills and their prior reputations, which, in return, enhanced the fame of the authors who worked with them. As such, performers played an active role in the process of opera production. This was evidently true insofar as their competencies were taken into consideration by the authors in order to make their work successful. But singers were not passive agents in the general context of opera production: their choices and personal preferences also impacted the decision-making process.

The following sections of this chapter aim to understand former aesthetic concerns about operatic genres and their roles through performers and performance, focusing on the leading female singers (within the broader context of the troupe and the ARM's administration) and their roles. First, the scope of the analysis explores the period between the 1660s, during which the project of the Académie bloomed, until the early 1680s at which point an important turnover among singers redefined the troupe in-depth. Then, a segment is dedicated to Marie Le Rochois, which impact on the *emploi* under Lully was particularly great and shaped most of it for decades after her. Finally, the final section focuses on the ARM's troupe during the final years of Lully's directorship (1680-1687).

*

The study of the troupe under Perrin's directorship is limited insofar that one musical

score has survived (*Pomone*) while only librettos are accessible for the others. Given that the majority of the production scores from Perrin and Cambert, a study addressing the specific skills (especially vocal skills and related musical semiotics, e.g. use of the flutes to flag the expression of pathetic feelings) that could have been favoured through the development of their work is curtailed. However, the librettos, a handful of contemporaries' testimonies, as well as the remains of various administrative sources, allow a peek into the fabric of the roles and the impact of the performers over them.

Name	Other spellings	Dates	Tessitur	Origin	Official enrolment at the ARM
Bernard Clédière	Claidiere, Claidière, Clédiere, Clédières, Clêdières, Clédierres, Cleguiere, Cleidiere	b. 1640—ca. 1712	Haute-contre	Béziers	1671—1680
Pierre Rossignol		b. 1652—a. 1678	Basse-taille	Albi	1671—1677
François Baumavielhe	Baumaviele, Baumavielle, Baumavielh, Beaumaviel, Beaumavièle, Beaumavielle, Bomaviel.	b. 1653—November 1688	Basse-taille	Toulouse	1671—1688
Jean Borel, known as Miracle	Jean Bourel, Jean Borel de Miracle	1646—16 November 1728	Taille / Haute-Taille	Toulouse	1671—1678
Pierre Taulet	Tollet, Thaulet	b. 1654—a. 1678	Haute-contre	Toulouse	1671—1677
Catherine Suptille		b. 1651—a. 1671			1669—1671
Marotte Labadoys		b. 1652—a. 1672			1669—1671
Marie Aubry		ca. 1646—1704			1671; 1674—1684
Mlle La Gaura		b. 1652—a. 1670			1669
Marie-Madeleine Brigogne	Brie ?	ca. 1651—a. 1695			1671—1680
Marie-Madeleine Jossier, known as Cartilly		ca. 1650—1717			1670—1673

Table II.1 bis: Singers selected by Pierre Perrin and Robert Cambert for working in the newly founded Académie's troupe

As a result, the distribution of the roles for each production cannot be fully established [TABLE II.2]. *Pomone*'s cast (1671, libretto by Perrin, music by Cambert) is the most complete, followed by *Les Plaisirs et les peines de l'amour* (1672, libretto by Gabriel Gilbert, music by Cambert). *Les Amours de Diane et d'Endymion* (1671, libretto by Henry Guichard, music by Jean Granouilhet de Sablière) has only three identifiable names, and *Ariane, ou le mariage de Bacchus* (rehearsed in public in 1661 then again in 1669-1670, libretto by Perrin, music by Cambert) only one. Earlier works *La mort d'Adonis* (1659?), libretto by Perrin, music by Jean-Baptiste Boisset) and the *Pastorale d'Issy* (1659, libretto by Perrin, music by Cambert), a work understood by Prunières as

setting a precedent for a French opera understood as national style, have left no record of their respective casts.[303]

From the little information we have about female singers employed by Perrin, at least one clear and significant challenge emerges from the issue of roles' distribution. The title role of Pomone sparked major tensions between the directors and Catherine Suptille.[304] That case study will be the heart of the analysis provided of analysing the intersection between administration, troupe, and roles under Perrin's ownership.

Before the launch of the ARM, Suptille had already performed the first role in the revival of *Ariane, ou le mariage de Bacchus* (1669-1670). Logically, she should have been assigned Pomone, the goddess of fruits who is one of the leading characters in Perrin's opera. The role, however, was given to Marie-Madeleine Jossier (Cartilly) while Suptille ended up with a secondary role, that of Béroé. In a long — and rather clumsily written — letter allegedly written by Suptille as reported by nineteenth-century historians Nuitter and Thoinan (the validity of which is not fully verifiable), the female singer objected vigorously against that decision:

> It happened that Marotte Labadoys, who is relatively well-known in society and in particular by Cambert, told me that she gave two hundred and fifty *livres* from her pension to Cambert, which is why the first role, which I was owed, was not assigned to me, since I did not want to give Cambert the same amount from my pension, which meant that he gave me a role that is usually executed in Italian opera by men disguised as nannies only; his insolence goes as far as saying that I have a deformed face and that I am not able to sing a tender roles, what is more is that he says that my voice is weak because of my pregnancy, which is a proof of a great ignorance for which I am ready to take the matter in front of Monsieur De Nyel, the first valet of the king, Dambruys and Molière, musicians who have heard and seen me singing the first role in the work *Ariane*, which makes for the whole plot of the play, people who after they have seen me performed have admitted out loud in front of the assembly that I was the only one capable to execute this role; and that without me the opera would not be worth being heard, and have offered me to sing it in front of all the experts of Paris that can be chosen as referees. I will expose Cambert's mistake and show that I have the capacity

[303] Prunières, *L'Opéra italien*, 347–348.
[304] Nuitter and Thoinan, *Origines,* 134: 'Pendant les répétitions de *Pomone*, Catherine Suptille avait paru insuffisante, et on lui avait retiré son rôle sans vouloir la payer. Elle intenta, elle aussi, un procès à Sourdéac et Champeron, et ce n'est qu'après bien des alternatives que ce procès se termina en mars 1671.'

> now as before to sing that role. It is not that I have the ambition to sing all the first roles, but only that I want to show those who are invested in operas [probably Perrin and Cambert] that when they speak about the last role I was assigned in *Pomone*, saying that I will not sing it nor any other, and that I won't be part of their opera, and that I only had to retire, I am forced to conclude against them that they have to pay me the pension they promised me on paper and have to compensate me for the sum of two thousands *livres* which they required from me through said treaty since they indicated with their defences that I would have needed to give back my role in order to not be part of said Opera.[305]

Suptille described the role of Béroé as 'usually executed in Italian operas by men disguised as nannies only' and reclaimed for herself the 'tender role' of Pomone, suggesting that is was identical in nature to that of Ariane. Indeed, Béroé — an old nanny whose extinguished passion is revived by the god Vertumne — was at that time a character directly borrowed from a broader theatrical tradition of cross-dressing comic roles and, more especially, men playing female nannies on stage.[306] Although Béroé was then performed by a woman, Vertumne (sung by the *haute-contre* Clédière) who

[305] Archives de la Comédie-Française transcripted by Nuitter and Thoinan, *Origines*, 134-136 (without any call number): 'Est arrivé que la nommée Marotte Labadoys qui est assez connue dans le monde et particulièrement du dit Cambert, laquelle m'a dit qu'elle donnait à perdre au dit Cambert sur sa pension la somme de deux cent cinquante livres, ce qui a été cause qu'il ne m'a pas été donné le premier role qui m'était dû parce que je n'ai pas voulu adhérer à lui en accorder autant sur ma pension, ce qui a fait qu'il m'a donné un rôle qui n'est exécuté d'ordinaire dans les opéras d'Italie que par un homme déguisé en nourrice, et comme son insolence va jusqu'à dire que j'ai le visage difforme et que je ne suis pas capable de chanter un rôle tendre d'autant qu'il dit que ma voix est affaiblie à cause de ma grossesse, ce qui est une preuve très grande de son ignorance, laquelle je suis prête à faire voir devant Monsieur De Nyel, premier valet de chambre du Roy, les sieurs Dambruy et Molière, musiciens qui m'ont ouïe et vue chanter le premier role et faire mon personnage dans la pièce d'*Arianne*, qui fait tout le sujet de la pièce, lesquels après me l'avoir vu représenter ont avoué et dit hautement devant l'assemblée qu'il n'y avait que moi au monde capable d'executer ce rôle; et que sans moi l'opéra ne vaudrait pas la peine d'être entendu, et m'offre à le chanter présentement devant les plus experts de Paris qu'on pourra choisir pour arbitres. Et ferai voir l'ânerie de Cambert en ce rencontre, et que j'ai autant de capacité présentement que j'avais en ce temps-là pour le chanter. Ce n'est pas pour ambitionner tous les premiers roles ce que j'en fais, mais seulement pour faire voir que les dits intéressés aux opéras ne devaient pas, lorsque parlant du dernier role qui m'a été donné dans la seconde pièce nommée *Pomone*, dire que je ne chanterais ni celui-là, ni un autre, et que je ne serais plus de leur opéra, et que je n'avais qu'à me retirer, ce qui m'oblige de conclure à l'encontre d'eux à ce qu'ils aient à me payer la pension à quoi ils sont obligés par leur écrit et me dédommager de la somme de deux mille livres à laquelle ils m'ont obligée par le dit traité puisqu'ils m'ont fait signifier par leurs défenses que j'eusse à rendre mon role pour ne plus être du dit Opéra.'

[306] Different sources related to comic genres or registers inform us about the development of such roles in the early modern period. The model of the nymphomaniac old nursemaid is inherited from erudite comedies of the Renaissance. Jean-François Lattarico has shown how these roles infiltrated 1640s Italian operas, alongside a wide range of other characters, so as to introduce more vocal diversity ('La voix du chanteur italien au XVIe siècle. De la prescription à la perception', *Les sons du théâtre : Angleterre et France (XVIe-XVIIIe siècle). Éléments d'une histoire de l'écoute* [Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013], 7). Virginia Scott also evokes the nannies in French theatre as part of a growing variety of roles throughout the seventeenth century and an evolution of the *emplois*, from masculine and comic '*confidents et nourrices*' to feminine and more serious '*confidentes et caractères*' (Scott, 'Conniving Women and Superannuated Coquettes: "Travestis" and "Caractères" in the Early Modern French Theatre', *Early Theatre* 15, no. 1 [2012]: 191).

pursues a romantic interest for Pomone, 'transforms' himself as the nanny Béroé in an attempt to seduce the goddess. This complex narrative, with layered levels of codified comic effects, relies then on a challenging equilibrium in terms of acting and voice for both performers in charge of Vertumne and Béroé. Although the role of Béroé was lower on a poetic level, it was nevertheless challenging.

Suptille asked for an opportunity to prove to Perrin and Cambert that she was able to perform more poetically significant roles than the one she was ultimately assigned. She rejected the composer's criticisms about her face ('deformed') and voice ('weak'), which he allegedly attributed as the result of her pregnancy. The historians Nuitter and Thoinan added to that testimony that Suptille later decided to sue Sourdéac and Champeron with a trial ending in 1671.[307]

Given the lack of additional sources on the matter, the interpretation of this disagreement about roles' distribution between the singer and the ARM's administration can only be a matter of intuitions and suggestions. It could be that the pool of talents among women was small and that such important roles were difficult to fulfil.[308] It could also be an indication of the possible lack or harmony and coordination within the troupe, between performers, authors, and administration altogether.

The specific complaint made by Suptille regarding her disapproval of performing the secondary role of Béroé — and reclaiming instead the first place of leading female role — highlights other points. First, it shows that members of the ARM's troupe recognised a form of ranking between the roles; thus, despite the abundance of characters relative to the small number of singers in the troupe, all roles were not strictly equal and a change in the cast could be perceived as a downgrade: if

[307] Nuitter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, 134.
[308] This is the hypothesis made by Nuitter and Thoinan (*Les Origines,* 134) who wrote that Suptille's talents 'appeared to be insufficient' but do not provide any source to substantiate their thesis.

not in terms of salary, at least in terms of fame and public recognition. This hypothesis is reinforced by the fact that Béroé, although secondary in terms of social importance among the other characters of the plot, is actually granted a lot of exposure throughout the opera and is not a simpler role than that of Pomone in the slightest. Indeed, for two thirds of the second act, the nanny represents the focal point of the plot. She explains her love for Vertumne (II, 1), suffers his rejection (II, 2), and endures the presence and effects of various magical spells: first with Vertumne transformed into a dragon and who pretends that he will devour her (II, 4), then against twelve ghosts, performed by dancers, who harass her (II, 5) until she is rescued and carried away by the God of the Gardens. All these twists give way to three monologues (sc. 1, 4, and 5), in addition to one long dialogue with Vertumne (sc. 3), during which Béroé exposes a large array of vocal effects. From the introduction of the second act, during which her complaint is highlighted by conjunct movements — often melismatic, within a narrow vocal range — the following monologue (II, 4) contrasts sharply by using disjunct intervals and a simpler rhythmic pattern, with semiquavers to drive the expression of Béroé's desolation (with the exception of the line 'Et ne puis mourir', which creates variety and even, perhaps, a comic relief).

ACTE SECOND.

Berosé.

Ah! n'eſt-ce pas aſ- ſez qu'on ay- me & qu'on ſoûpi- re, Pen-

dant le cours de ſa jeune ſai- ſon? Pourquoy faut-il a-

mour étendre ton empi- re. Juſques ſur noſtre aa- ge gri-

ſon: Malgré tous mes efforts, malgré toutes mes fein- tes, Ie ſens viure tes

feux dans mes cendres étein- tes, D'une cruelle ar-deur je me voy, je me

voy con- ſu-mer, Que la glace des ans ne fait que r'allumer:

J'ayme



Plate II.2: Extract from *Pomone*, II, 1 (Béroé); Paris: Ballard, 1671, Rés. Vm2-1


Vertumne.
Beroé.
EVitons ſa pour- ſuite ? AR-reſte & voy du moins ma peine & mes lan-
gueurs, Vn mo-ment en- cor & je meurs. IL faut l'épouvan-
Vertumne.
Beroé.
ter & luy donner la fuite ? QVe voyez-vo⁹ mes yeux, Quel Dragõ furi-
eux; Mais non r'aſſûrons-no⁹, c'eſt luy qui ſe transfor- me En ce Monſtre diffor-
me ? Hé bien? Hé bien, cru- el ſaoule toy de mon ſang, Con-tente ton envi-
e, Dechire-moy le flanc, Arrache- moy la vi- e, Je be-



Plate II.3: Extract from *Pomone*, II, 4 (Béroé); Paris: Ballard, 1671, Rés. Vm2-1

Moreover, Béroé's voice mingles with the ones of Pomone and her sister Flore at the beginning of the opera (I, 2), during a trio where the goddess of fruits rejects the attentions of Vertumne while Flore praises him and Béroé condemns him. The melodic profiles for each of the character is the same and, thus, creates an impression of likeness between them, despite the difference of feeling and social rank.

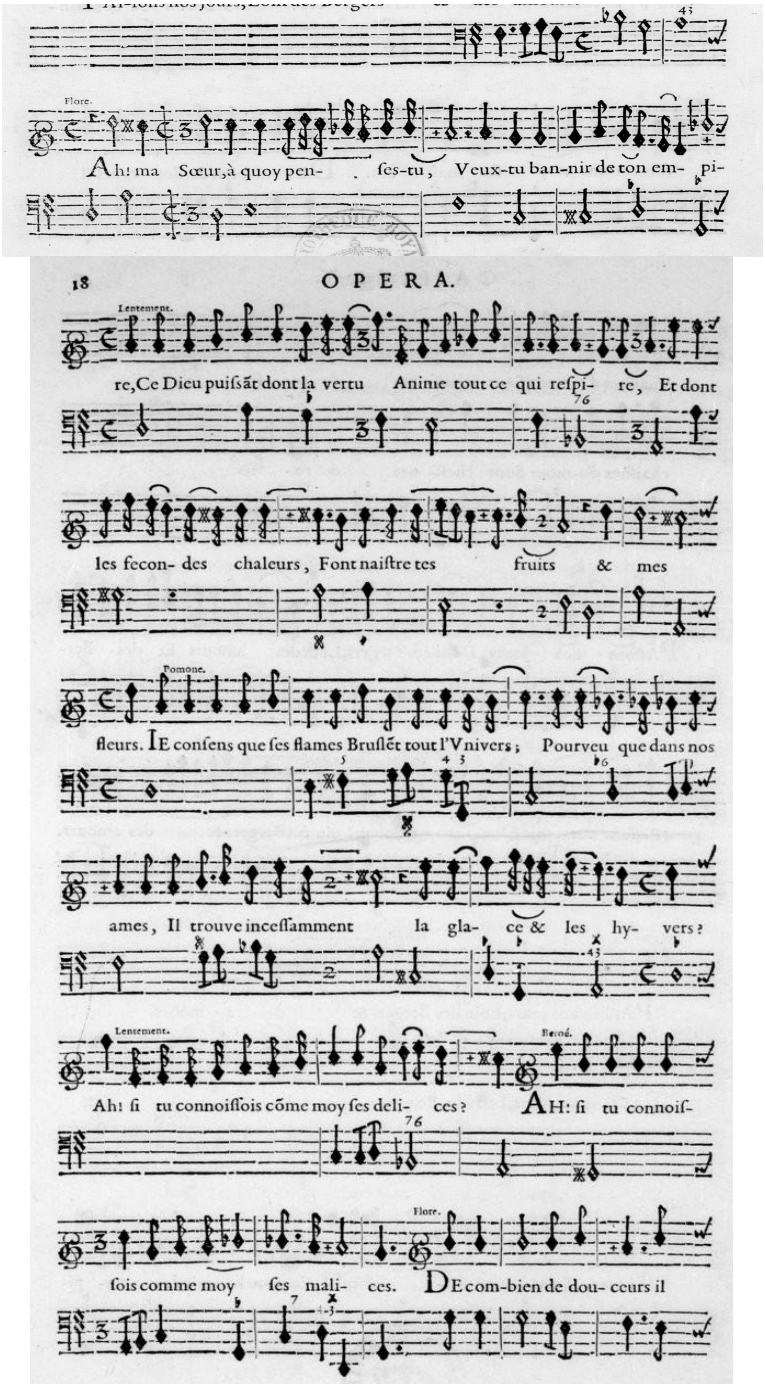




Plate II.3: Extract from *Pomone*, I, 2 (Flore, Pomone, Béroé); Paris: Ballard, 1671, Rés. Vm2-1.

Second, Suptille's complaint suggests that performers had some liberty to contest the directors' authority if the roles they were assigned did not match their expectations or the skills for which they had been employed. On that point, it is necessary to recall Cambert's alleged comment that is reported in Suptille's complaint by Nuitter and Thoinan. If her voice was ever so 'weak', how could she have performed this character which, all in all, seem more challenging than the one of Pomone? Whether Cambert's criticism was fabricated or not, it does not compute with the final decision regarding the roles' distribution (i.e. asking Suptille to perform Béroé and not another character). From that perspective, the variety of effects expected from Béroé might have also repelled or discouraged the singer. Then, Suptille's request to take up the title role of Pomone represented perhaps an attempt to avoid the challenge represented by Béroé, something that, if she were to fail during the performance, could have indeed damaged her social reputation and legitimacy in the troupe.

*

Under Lully, while the section of male singers in the troupe stood more or less put, the selection of female singers was subject to some radical changes. Catherine Suptille and Marotte Labadoys had disappeared in 1671 already, after the performances of *Pomone*. Marie-Madeleine Jossier (known as Cartilly) only participated in the creation and first recreation of *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673 and 1674) as Palès and Charite (respectively in the Prologue and the main plot). Whether these three singers were actually too weak to pursue for Lully's taste or drawn to other projects is impossible to know for certain.

Name	Other spellings	Dates	Tessitura	Origin	Official enrolment at the ARM
Marie Verdier	Du Verdier, Duverdier	ca. 1620—a. 1714			1675—1680
Mlle Saint-Christophle	Saint-Christophe	ca. 1625—a. 1683	Bas-dessus		1675—1682
Marie Le Rochois	Rochechouai, Rochois, Rochoix, Rochoüas, Rochoys	ca. 1658—8 October 1728		Region of Bayeux	1679—1697
Marie-Louise Moreau [l.]	Louison, Moreau l'aînée	b. 1661—a. 1713		Paris	1680—1692
Françoise Moreau [c.]	Fanchon, Moreau la cadette, Morlan	ca. 1668—3 November 1754		Paris	1682—1702
Marie-Louise Desmatins	Demathin, Démâtins, Des Matains, Desmâtins	b. 1665—20 April 1708	Grand dessus	Probably Parisian region	1682—1707

Table II.1bis: Female singer soloists hired by Lully during his ARM's directorship.

Only two female singers previously employed under Perrin remained in Lully's original ARM troupe. First, Madeleine Brigogne performed at least until 1677 in operas such as *Cadmus et Hermione*, *Atys*, *Isis* and *Thésée*; however, she was immediately relegated to second rank characters after she played the title role of Hermione in 1673 and 1674. Secondly, Marie Aubry was recruited by Lully alongside her friend, Marie Verdier. The strong relationship between the two is related in a legal document regarding a donation, made on the 19 August 1674.[309] Aubry and Verdier lived together and wished to attest the 'sensible expressions' of their 'good and close friendship': their contract ensured the 'mutual and reciprocal gift' of their belongings so as to ensure the 'best means of living' for the one who would outlive the other.[310] In another legal document that exposed Henry Guichard griefs against Lully, the former co-owner of the ARM's *privilège* presented Marie-Madeleine Brigogne, Marie Aubry, and Marie Verdier, as 'close friends'.[311] Since Marie Aubry played such an important role in the trial that

[309] F-Pan, Minutier central, LXVI-326, 2 May 1711, *Convention* (quoted by La Gorce, *Lully*, 191).
[310] The clause would have been cancelled in case of one or the other getting married, but it seems that the occasion did not present itself. The Parfaict brothers only mention the fact that Marie Verdier used to be the wife of '[Henry] Verdier, first violin of the Opéra orchestra', but it is not clear if the marriage happened before or after the signature of Verdier's and Aubry's contract (F-Pn, Manuscrits, ms. français nouv. acq. 6532, 27). This is the only instrumentist whom presence has been attested in Lully's troupe when the ARM was situated at the *jeu de paume du Béquet*.
[311] F-Pn, 4-FM-14650, *Requête d'inscription de faux en forme de factum, pour le sieur Guichard* […]

opposed Guichard to Lully, the author felt necessary to specify that the promiscuity binding the three female singers was akin to the one of 'prostitutes'.[312]

Indeed, Marie Aubry was of key importance in the trial that opposed Guichard to Lully.[313] The latter allegedly claimed to have been victim of an attempt of murder with poisoned snuff by the previous co-owner of the ARM's privilege who also happened to be Aubry's former lover.[314] As Albert Borowitz writes, 'If there was any truth in the accusation, it is likely that the plot was, after feeble beginnings, largely an invention of Lully himself for the purpose of entrapping his adversary'.[315] Although Marie Aubry was supposedly one accomplice amongst the performers against the Florentine-born composer, the fact that she rejoined Lully's troupe afterwards and played major roles in his operas suggests that she might have served his interests from the beginning. Indeed, Aubry could very well have been promised a place in his new Académie in return for her help defeating Guichard. Regardless, Aubry's service at the ARM was not short-lived, which suggests that she had genuine talents. Jean-Nicolas du Tralage, writing from first-hand experience, described Aubry's voice as 'beautiful, clear, silvery, and clean' and outlined her acting skills, arguing that 'she alone had mastered gesture and stage movement; the others, for the most part, were like singing marble busts'.[316] In February and March of 1672, even before Lully obtained the ownership of the ARM, Perrin and Cambert assigned a key role to Aubry in their ballet *Les Peines et les Plaisirs de l'Amour* (Philis); additionally, she was appointed as the understudy for the main

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contre Jean-Baptiste Lully, faux accusateur, Sébastien Aubry, Marie Aubry, Jacques Du Creux, Pierre Huguenet, faux témoins, et autres complices (1676), 2.

[312] Idem.

[313] La Gorce has given an account in full of that legal dispute in *Lully*, 224-240.

[314] F-Pn, 4-FM-14650, *Requête d'inscription de faux en forme de factum, pour le sieur Guichard*, iv.

[315] Borowitz, 'Lully and the Death of Cambert', 903.

[316] Tralage, *Notes et documents*, 88: '[Aubry] a encore la voix belle, claire, argentine et nette. Elle était bonne actrice et avait toujours les premiers rôles. […] Il n'y avait qu'elle qui eût du geste et de l'action; les autres, pour la plupart, étaient comme des termes qui chantaient.'

female character, Climène, formally premiered by Madeleine Brigogne.[317]

Alongside Aubry, the other important recruit of Lully's first troupe was Miss Saint-Christophle: she was probably the one exception to the rule which prevented the artists employed at the court to sign a contract elsewhere. Despite being a member of the Musique du Roi since 1645, Miss Saint-Christophle was officially hired by Lully at the ARM in 1675 after she already performed in *Alceste* the year before — although there is no existing record of her alleged contract.[318] With the exception of Marie Verdier (who entered the ARM around fifty-five years old and was by far the doyenne of the troupe), Miss Saint-Christophle, starting her service around fifty years old, was the close second doyenne of the troupe. Undoubtedly, her past experience propelled her directly at the top of the singers' hierarchy: she premiered the main roles of powerful and jealous women, generally using magic [TABLE II.5]. According to the Parfaict brothers, thanks to her beautiful voice as well as her 'grandeur and taste in acting', Miss Saint-Christophle 'fulfilled to the best of her abilities' all of the roles that Lully wrote for her.[319]

Remarkably, the tender and pathetic title role of Alceste that Miss Saint-Christophle premiered in 1674 remained in her repertoire throughout her career. She performed it again in 1677 and 1678, although being radically different from the other ones she was assigned: Médée (*Thésée*), Cybèle (*Atys*), Junon (*Isis*), Vénus (*Psyché*), Sténobée (*Bellérophon*), Cérès (*Proserpine*), La Nuit (*Triomphe de l'Amour*), and Cassiopée (*Persée*). In *Alceste*, the title role slightly differs with the one of La Nymphe de la Seine (in the Prologue), which was also played by Miss Saint-Christophle. The latter has more traits in common with the set of characters the singer later performed for the ARM. For the premiere of *Alceste* in 1677, the *Mercure galant* commented as

[317] Noinville and Travenol, *Les Origines*, II, 75. Aubry was then paid 1200 *livres*.
[318] Parfaict, *HARM*, 1741, I, 34.
[319] Idem.

follows:

> The applause that Miss Saint-Christophle has received speak for themselves, not only because she sang well, but also with regard to the fact that she alternately entered into the strongest or the most touching passion, depending on what the diversity of the subject requested.[320]

Indeed, the Nymphe is a powerful role, who, despite her initial lamentation ('Le héros que j'attends ne viendra-t-il pas?'), gives orders to the chorus and troupe of dancers in company of her peers, the Nymphe des Tuileries (Anne-Renée Rebel), the Nymphe de la Marne (probably assigned to Miss Ferdinand *la cadette*), and the allegory of the Gloire (Miss La Garde), all performed by female singers employed at the Musique du roi.

In opposition, Alceste is a role constantly overwhelmed with expression of tears and sighs, whether she demonstrates them or provokes them in others (e.g. III, 2-7). Her death (act III) serves as pretext for the validation of Admète's tenderness (with multiple scenes of lamentations structuring the act III during which he faints) and Alcide's heroism (as he goes to the netherworld in the act IV, defeats death itself, and chivalrously renounces to his claim over Alceste).[321] De facto, during all of that action, Alceste is rarely present on stage. She appears for the first time at the end of the first act (I, 6) and is immediately kidnapped (I, 7). After a few scenes of dialogue during the second act and the very first scene of the third act, Alceste does not reappear again before the penultimate scene of the final act (V, 4). On a pragmatic level, then, the act of binding together the two roles of the Nymphe de la Seine with Alceste for one singer alone provided more exposure for Miss Saint-Christophle, something useful for her personal fame and also probably for ensuring the success of the opera, given the

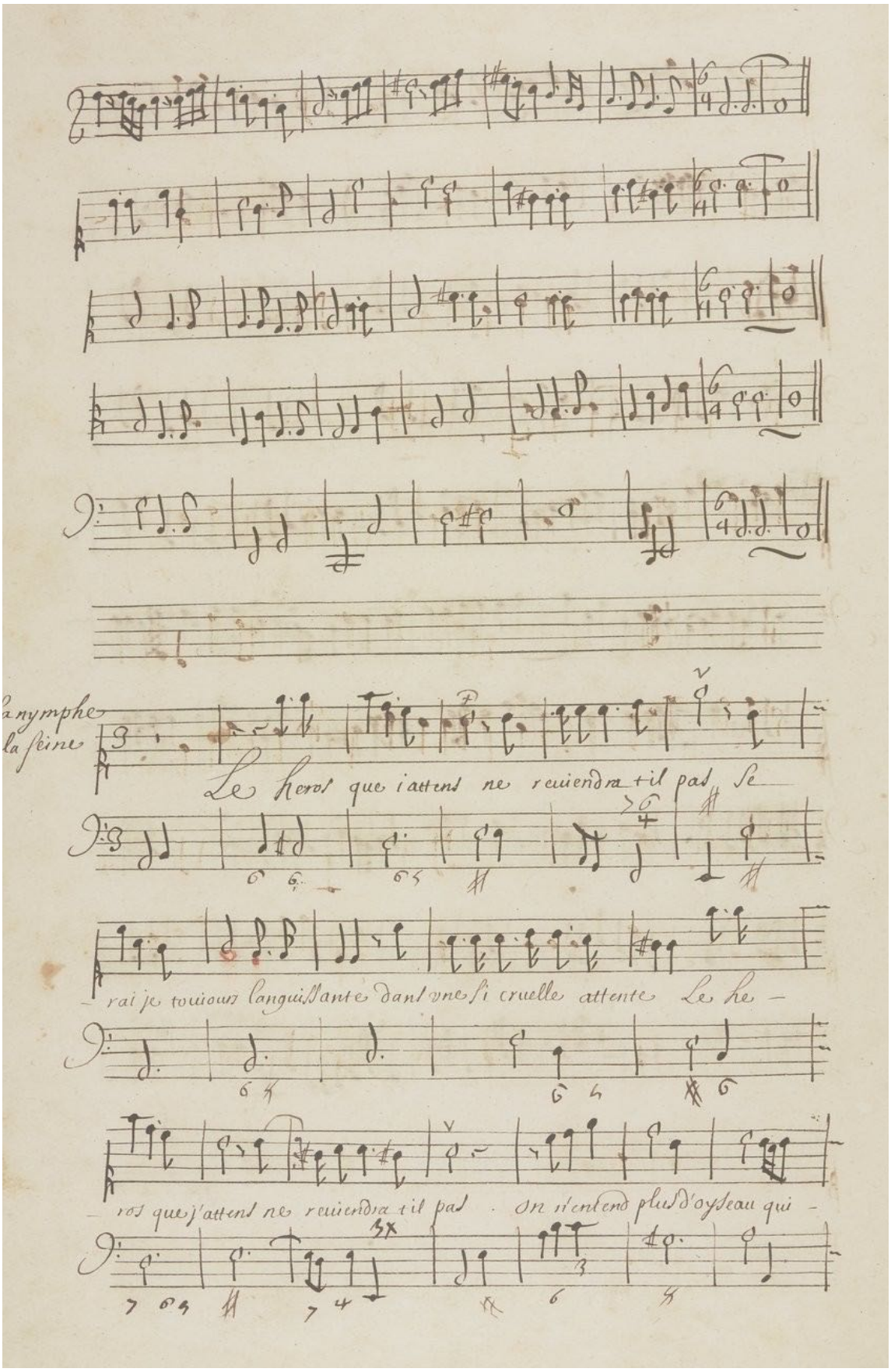
[320] *Le Mercure galant* (October 1677), VIII, 202–207: 'On ne peut rien ajouter aux applaudissements qu'a reçus Me de Saint Christophe [sic], non seulement pour avoir bien chanté, mais pour être entrée dans la passion tantôt de la plus forte manière, & tantôt de la plus touchante, selon que la diversité du sujet le demandait.'

[321] Alcide's heroic victory is at the center of the celebrations which occupy the final act, to which is added the recognition of his selfless decision to let Alcide marry Admète (V, 4): 'Admète and Alcide: Ah! quelle gloire extrême! / Quel héroïque effort! / Le Vainqueur de la Mort / Triomphe de lui-même.'

appreciation of the audience for her.

Additionally, since the Nymphe de la Seine also expresses some sighs and tender sentiments, that role could also have worked as a form of 'type' of Alceste, that is, according to the biblical exegesis tradition, a model which purpose and promise is ideally fulfilled in the forthcoming 'anti-type' (here, Alceste).[322]

[322] In its original sense described by Geoffrey W. H. Lampe and Kenneth J. Woollcombe in *Essays on Typology*, (London: SCM Press, 'Studies in Biblical Theology' vol. 22, 1957), typology is a mode of biblical exegesis which connects, by divine intention and human association, certain biblical persons and events to each other. Typology is traditionally used as a way to explain the Scriptures, generally by mirroring passages of the Old Testament with ones taken from the New Testament, the former being read as a prefiguration of the latter as a mean of progressive revelation or eschatological fulfilment.


la nymphe
la seine
Le heros que i'attens ne reuiendra t il pas Se
rai je touiours languissante dans vne si cruelle attente Le he -
ros que j'attens ne reuiendra t il pas . On n'entend plus d'oyseau qui -

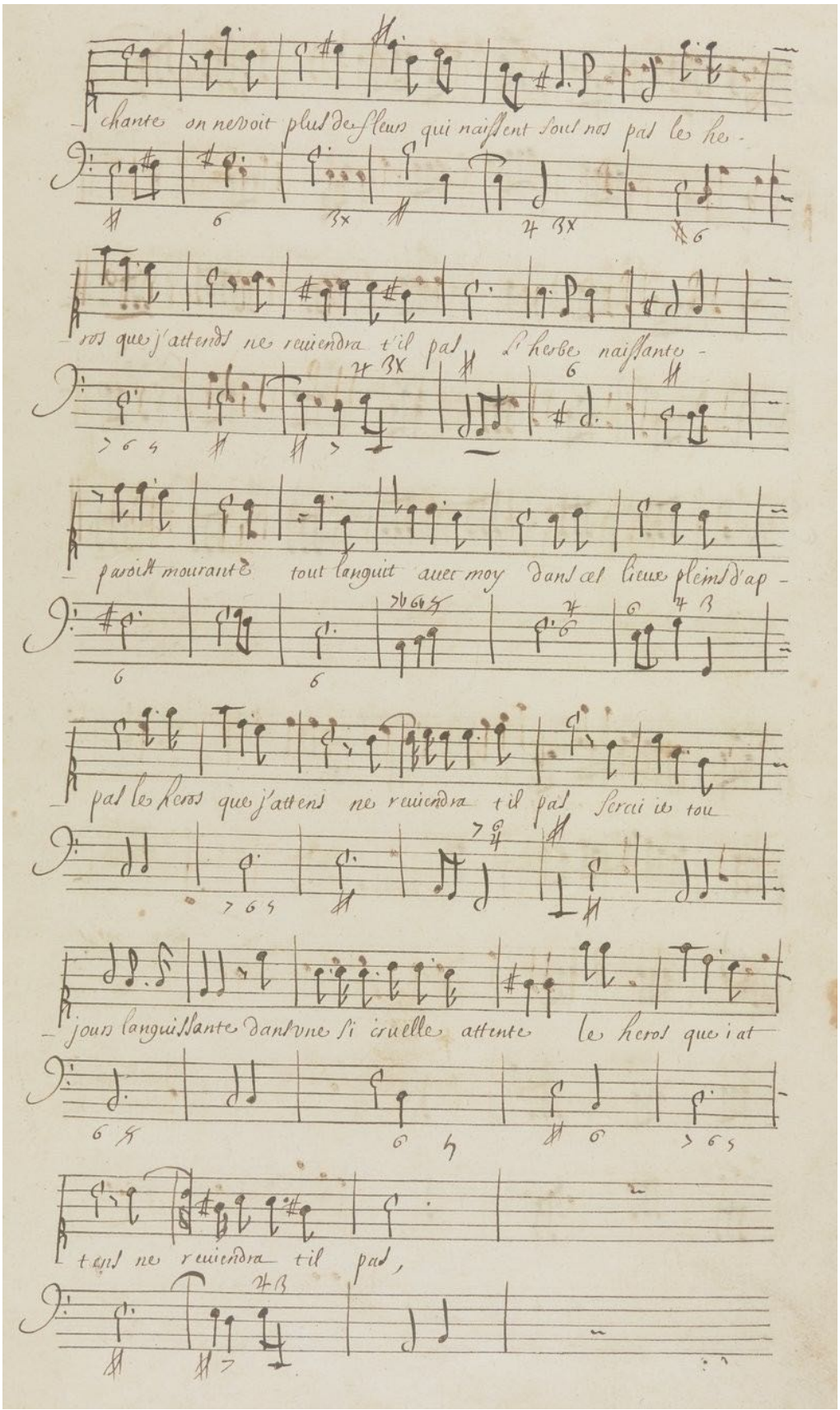


Plate II.4: Extract from *Alceste*, 1674, Prologue (Nymphe de la Seine); MS, Bibliothèque Clignancourt, Paris-Sorbonne, Rés. F7. 253.

The reception of that casting decision, as related by the *Mercure galant*, accounts for another appeal: the capacity to display a 'variety' or 'diversity' of passions, through singing and acting altogether, was perceived by the audience as a positive virtue. Although Miss Saint-Christophle never endorsed two slightly contrasting characters of the sort in any other opera after *Alceste*, her performance functioned as a landmark in the casting practices of the ARM. Her successors also played both roles, regardless of the discrepancy between their ethos, until 1716: at this point, the distribution shifted and two different singers were cast for each of the roles (Marie Antier as the Nymphe de la Seine, and Françoise Journet as Alceste). In that regard, it is useful to note that that performance of Saint-Christophle 'creates' an *emploi* in its own right, that is to say it binds the casting tradition (one performer for both roles) with a writing tradition (a variety of passions concealed in one character).

Indeed this concept of 'variety' does not only function in alternation between characters (e.g. between the Nymphe de la Seine and Alceste) but also works at the scale of one role only. The roles of powerful women performed by Miss Saint-Christophle present a variety of sentiments arranged with an array of diverse musical means.

To exemplify that point, the characters of Médée in *Thésée* and of Cérès in *Proserpine* are perhaps the most remarkable. Both explicitly display poetic and musical elements that convey tenderness and pathos, as if they absorbed the expression of crying princesses (which, according to Legrand's and Dratwicki's taxonomy, are characterised as tender and pathetic). At the beginning of *Thésée*'s second act, for example (II, 1: 'Doux repos'), Médée sings conjoint melodic lines and cadences with long, graceful appoggiaturas that slightly delay the cadence of the voice. This setting, however, is traditionally expected when conveying the pathetic accents of young princesses' lamentations. Médée's sensibility in this passage is even reinforced by way of contrast

with her confidante Dorine whose lyrics display bits of popular wisdom about love, with a different melodic structure built around stereotypical word painting (e.g. ‘volage’ or ‘fickle’) and repetitive dotted rhythm.



Plate II.5: Extract from *Thésée*, 1675, II, 1 (Médée and Dorine). MS, F-Pn, Rés. 686.

A nuance to that observation could be that Médée's lines are sometimes tensed in the high part of the ambitus, something generally more common with fierce characters.

Between 1675 and 1682, Aubry premiered all the roles of leading female roles of princesses. At first glance, that set of characters seems much more homogeneous in contrast to that of Saint-Christophle. However, a closer look to the material reveals that some of Aubry's roles could be somehow diverse. Io (*Isis*), for example, is set up as rather violently agitated at the beginning of the opera (I, 3) and is accused twice of 'cruelty' by Hiérax, the leading male character. Her voice navigates some tensed segments situated in the higher part of the ambitus. Some fierce appoggiaturas and abrupt discontinuous leaps of intervals of fourth (or even sixth), require a physical intensity that electrifies the discourse.



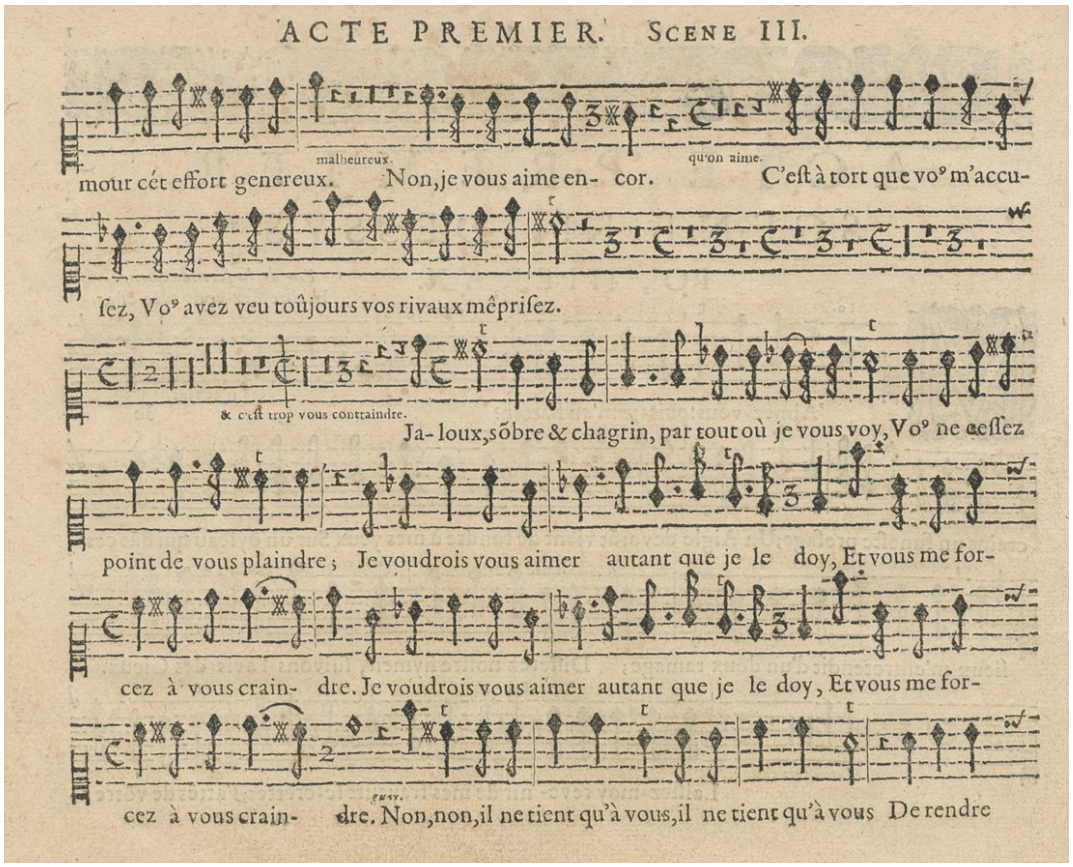


Plate II.6: Extract from *Isis*, I, 3 (part of 'dessus', Io); Paris: Ballard, 1677. Rés. Vmc. 177.

Later, the introductory monologue of Io for the second act (II, 1: 'Où suis-je? D'où vient ce nuage?') and the following dialogue between Io and Jupiter (II, 2) reiterate those features.



Plate II.7: Extract from *Isis*, II, 1 (part of 'dessus', Io); Paris: Ballard, 1677. Rés. Vmc. 177.



Plate II.8: Extract from *Isis*, II, 2 (part of 'dessus', Io); Paris: Ballard, 1677. Rés. Vmc. 177.

Likewise, Oriane (*Amadis*), also performed by Aubry, is a role that can be subject to anger: in dialogue with Arcalaüs (IV, 3), for example, she seems influenced by Arcabonne's explosion of rage a few scenes prior (IV, 1) before returning to a very sentimental state of mind (IV, 4).

Contemporary sources actually disagree about who premiered the role of that jealous lover, Oriane, between the established singer (Aubry) or one of the two young Moreau sisters in what would have been, therefore, their first major role. In their *Dictionnaire*, the Parfaict brothers affirm that a 'Miss Moreau' (without stating the first name) premiered the role of Oriane in 1684. Modern scholarship has followed their lead, assuming that it was Françoise Moreau and not her elder sister, Marie-Louise. The latter had nevertheless a better claim for performing the role, since she arrived two years earlier at the ARM.[323] However, in his *Comparaison* (II, 5), Le Cerf de La Viéville affirmed that Aubry was the one to premiere Oriane. The allegation is a delicate one to make: indeed after April 1682 and her performance as Andromède in *Persée*, Marie Aubry was not recorded in any other casting. Thus, if Aubry ever sang the role of Oriane, it is possible that she performed very little and passed on the role to someone younger, like one of the Moreau sisters.[324]

All these nuances, however, do not fundamentally perturb the essence of the roles. Their diversity, both in terms of vocal profile and poetic ethos, generally remains circumscribed to one scene instead of stretching across the acts and modelling complex narrative arcs. Oriane itself was described by Le Cerf de La Viéville as 'a bit too

[323] Parfaict, *DTP*, I, 53. Both Carl B. Schmidt (*The Livrets of Jean-Baptiste Lully's Tragédies Lyriques* [New York: Performers' Editions, 1995], 340), and James R. Anthony (*Grove Music Online*, s.v. 'Moreau, Fanchon'), identify Françoise Moreau as having premiered Oriane in 1684. The recent *DOPAR* has corrected this assumption by categorising the role of Oriane among Marie-Louise Moreau's list of roles (s.v. 'Moreau [l'aînée], Marie-Louise, dite Louison', 'Lettre M', 831).

[324] This is also the conclusion that Banducci reaches in her analysis of type-casting for Lully's operas: 'The musico-dramatic significance of Oriane's role, coupled with compelling contemporary evidence that testifies to its difficulty, leads me to believe that Lully wrote the part for Aubry, his established romantic lead, even if the newcomer Moreau may have premiered it.' (*Acteurs and Actrices as Muses*, §13.4)

sentimental' (or, more literally, 'weeping'), excluding any form of confusion with regard to the nature of that character-type.[325] Additionally, the severe failure of the opera *Isis* nuances the importance of the role Io within the set of roles attributed to Aubry.

[325] Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison*, II, 5: (The *du Verdier* has sung in shows for fifteen years until the age of sixty, finishing with the role of Cérès in *Proserpine*. I think that she still sings at her home, like *the Aubry* who, beginning in the Operas of Mr the Marquis de Sourdéac, only retired after performing in *Amadis* that admirable role of Oriane (although a bit too sentimental) that had been tailored for her.' ('*La du Verdier* a chanté aux spectacles depuis quinze ans jusqu'à près de soixante, qu'elle finit par le rôle de *Cérès* dans *Proserpine*. Je pense qu'elle chante encore chez elle, aussi bien que *la Aubri* [sic], qui, ayant commencé dans les Opéras de Mr le Marquis de Sourdéac, ne s'est retirée qu'après avoir joué dans *Amadis*, cet admirable rôle d'*Oriane* (quoiqu'un peu trop pleureur) qui avait été fait pour elle.')

III.2. The advent of a modern diva: Marie Le Rochois

The departure of Lully's main soloists, whether in the male section (Pierre Rossignol and Pierre Taulet in 1677, Bernard Clédière in 1680) or the female one, (Marie Verdier and Marie-Madeleine Brigogne in 1680, and Miss Saint-Christophle in 1682) coincided naturally with a new series of recruitments. This period of transition around 1680 marks the emergence of a new troupe, with four remarkable additions among the female singers: Marie Le Rochois (ca. 1658–1728) in 1679 and Marie-Louise Moreau *l'aînée* (b. 1661–a. 1713) in 1680, whose sister, Françoise Moreau *la cadette* (ca. 1668–1754), followed two years later alongside Marie-Louise Desmatins (b. 1665–20 April 1708).

Although those artists sang for only a few years under Lully's direction before his death, the comparison of their early careers at the ARM demonstrates significant points for the present discussion. More details regarding their professional lives under the directorship of Lully's successors will be presented in the fourth chapter. Given the importance of Le Rochois's career for the development of the ARM, her case study is treated separately from the others.

Pascal Collasse who, as Lully's assistant, helped in particular with the harmonisation and the writing of intermediary parts of the scores, decided to present Le Rochois to the ARM's director-owner.[326] She was born in the Bayeux region, perhaps in Caen.[327] Allegedly, Le Rochois lost both her parents when young, and was then raised in Paris by her uncle Jean du Haut Manoir, a bailiff working for the king, who donated her

[326] Parfaict, *HARM*, 45: 'It was Collasse who judged, despite the harshness he found in her voice, that [her sense of] music and declamation would quickly overcome this fault. He introduced her to Lully who then gave her the leading roles [in his operas].' ('Ce fut Collasse qui jugea, malgré la dureté qu'il lui trouva dans la voix, que la musique et declamation dépasseraient bien vite ce défaut. Il la présenta à Lully qui lui donna ensuite les grands rôles.')
[327] The mention of Caen appears in Titon du Tillet's *PF* (790).

an annuity and a house he owned in Sartrouville.[328] Her talent and rare voice of *bas-dessus* were unanimously praised by her contemporaries. Right after she appeared on the ARM's stage, 'she erased [the memory of] the first singers who preceded her. Never had anyone possessed to a greater degree of perfection the perfect taste of singing and the beautiful declamation.'[329]

Anecdotal evidence reveals a real passion for the singer. Le Rochois regularly animated violent romantic aspirations among the audience.[330] Not only did the singer benefit from a beautiful voice, she was also equipped with superior sense of declamation as well as 'wit, the strongest knowledge and understanding, and the most excellent and unfailing taste', as wrote Titon du Tillet.[331] Likewise, Claude and François Parfaict praised the 'great voice that she had received from Nature' and her 'perfection of good taste in singing and beautiful declamation'.[332]

Different sources relate some defect in her physique. However, her ability to represent perfectly a large array of passions, and to be as good an actress as she was a singer, more than compensated for any those imperfections. The Parfaict brothers, for example, affirmed that 'La Rochois was short, her skin tanned, her eyes black, full of fire, and extremely beautiful on stage: she had ugly arms and Persian-fashioned sleeves were invented for her'.[333] On that point, Titon du Tillet's testimony is particularly

[328] F-Pan, MC/ET/LIV/624, Donation (15 January 1676).
[329] F-Pn, Manuscrits, ms. français nouv. acq. 6532, 44: 'À peine parut-elle sur le théâtre qu'elle effaça les premières actrices qui l'avaient précédée. Jamais personne n'a possédé à un plus haut degré de perfection le bon goût du chant et de la belle déclamation.'
[330] In *Arlequiniana ou les bons mots* (Paris, 1694), 39-48, Charles Cotolendi related several of these romantic sentiments from the members of the audience, males and females alike, towards ARM's singers, including Le Rochois.
[331] Titon du Tillet, *PF*, 790-791: 'outre tous les talents qu'elle avait pour le chant & pour la declamation qu'elle possédait au supreme degré, elle avait beaucoup d'esprit, une connaissance & une penetration des plus grandes & un goût excellent & des plus sûrs.'
[332] Parfaict, *HARM*, 1741, t. I, 44: '[L]a grande voix qu'elle avait reçu de la nature. […] Jamais personne n'a offert à un plus haut degree de perfection le bon goût du chant & de la belle déclamation.'
[333] Parfaict, *HARM*, 1741, t. I, 46: 'La Rochois était petite, la peau assez bise, les yeux noirs, plein de feu, & extrêmement beaux au theatre: de vilains bras, & c'est pour elle qu'on inventa les manches à la persane.'

insightful:

> Although she was of an average height, very dark skinned, with one of the most common faces outside the theatre, with the exception of her eyes, which were large, full of fire, and capable of expressing all passions, she outshone all the most beautiful and well-formed actresses when she was on stage, as she had the air of a queen and a deity, with her head nobly poised, an admirable gesture, all her actions beautiful, just, and natural; she understood wonderfully well what is called the *ritournelle*, which is played while the Actress enters and presents herself on stage, as well as mute acting, during which, in silence, all feelings and passions must be painted on the face and appear in the action, something that great actors and actresses have not often understood.[334]

Besides an alleged dispute between Le Rochois and Lully regarding her personal love life, the dynamic between the singer and the composer was probably one of the most fruitful within the troupe throughout Lully's directorship.[335] According to Titon du Tillet, Le Rochois was consulted by Lully when writing his operas — as well as by Campra and Destouches after him — and he often attributed his successes to her.[336]

Traditionally, scholars have discussed Lully's perfection of his mode of declamation by comparing his work with that of Jean Racine.[337] Some of Lully's contemporaries drew parallels between Lully's work and his study of the Comédie-Française actress Marie Desmares, known as La Champmeslé (1642–1698), which

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[334] Titon du Tillet, *PF*, 791: 'Quoiqu'elle fut d'une taille médiocre, fort brune, & d'une figure très commune hors du Théâtre, aux yeux près, qu'elle avait grands, pleins de feu & capables d'exprimer toutes les passions, elle effaçait toutes les plus belles Actrices & les mieux faites quand elle était eu Théâtre, elle avait un air de Reine & de Divinité, la tête noblement placée, un geste admirable, toutes ses actions belles, justes & naturelles; elle entendait merveilleusement bien ce qu'on appelle la *Ritournelle*, qu'on joue dans le temps que l'Actrice entre & se présente au Théâtre, de même que le jeu muet, où dans le silence tous les sentiments & les passions doivent se peindre sur le visage & paraître dans l'action; ce que de grands Acteurs & de grandes Actrices n'ont pas souvent entendu.'

[335] See Parfaict, *HARM*, 45. Le Rochois's sex life was abundantly commented on by her contemporaries and, in that respect, she might be the first modern diva in that anecdotal evidence around her private affairs, far from repelling the audience, helped in building an aura to her career.

[336] Titon du Tillet, *PF*, 790: '[André Campra and André-Cardinal Destouches] consulted this illustrious girl about their works, in doing so, they followed the example of the famous Lully, of whom she was the heroine and to whom he often attributed the success of his operas. ('[I]ls [André Campra and André-Cardinal Destouches] consultaient cette illustre fille sur leurs Ouvrages, en quoi ils suivaient l'exemple du fameux Lully, dont elle était l'héroïne & qui lui attribuait souvent la réussite de ses Opéras.')

[337] Rosow, 'Lully's *Armide* at the Paris Opéra', 512-513: 'Lully has been credited with influencing Racine to teach his actors a more expressive sort of declamation than had previously existed. As Georges Lote [*Histoire du vers français*, t. IV, Presses universitaires de Provence, 2013] had demonstrated, Lully did so in large part by applying pitch, agogic, or metric accents to important internal syllables (as well as by adding expressive pauses in internal locations), thereby undermining the strength of the metric accent on the rhyme or ceasura […].'

perhaps led some postmodern scholars to give too much importance to the actress' actual influence over his composition.[338] In contrast, the talent of Le Rochois on that particular point has been underevaluated and deserves to be restated. Titon du Tillet emphasised her natural ability for declamation:

> She first distinguished herself in the role of Aréthuse in *Proserpine* in 1680 and soon became the greatest actress and the most perfect model for declamation that had appeared on stage. I know this from my own experience and from what I have often heard said to Baron le père, the Théâtre Français's most celebrated actor [*comédien*], and similarly to Miss du Clos and Miss Desmares [Champmeslé], so known for the excellence with which they perform spoken drama [*comédie*].[339]

A few decades later, the eighteenth-century historian, musician, and tax collector (*fermier général*), Jean-Benjamin de La Borde, replicated the same analysis, validating Titon du Tillet's checklist of declamation, singing, divine aspect, gesture, mute acting, and so on, although he had never seen the singer on stage.[340] In other words, La Borde copied Titon du Tillet, which suggests that a specific rhetoric around her talents accompanied the memory of the actress in the collective imaginary. It highlighted in particular Le Rochois's exceptional talent for declamation and for silent (presumably gestural) acting.

How did those skills intersect with the making of the characters at the ARM? The title role Armide, so intrinsically related to Le Rochois' career, is a perfect starting

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[338] Durey de Noinville and Travenol, *HTA*, I, 64.

[339] Titon du Tillet, *PF*, 790: 'Elle commença à se distinguer dans le Rolle d'Arethuse, dans l'Opera de *Proserpine* en 1680, & devint en peu de temps la plus grande Actrice & le plus parfait modèle pour la déclamation, qui ait paru sur le Théâtre; c'est ce que j'ai connu par moi-même, & que j'ai entendu dire souvent à Baron le pere, le plus célèbre Comédien du Théâtre Français, de même qu'aux Demoiselles du Clos & Desmares si connues par l'excellence, dont elles jouaient la Comédie.'

[340] Jean-Benjamin de La Borde, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris: Pierres, 1780), III, 493: 'Lully made her the most perfect actress that never existed. Besides her great talent for declamation and singing, she knew so well how to realise all the passions, that she outshone the most beautiful actresses and had the air of a divinity. Her head was nobly carried, her gesture admirable, and all of her actions including the most simple ones were beautiful; nobody could compare with her regarding silent acting and during moments of musical silence. The role of Armide was her triumph and heightened her reputation.' ('Lully la rendit la plus parfaite Actrice qui eut jamais existé. Outre son grand talent pour la déclamation et pour le chant, elle avait si bien l'art d'imprimer toutes les passions, qu'elle effaçait les plus belles Actrices et avait l'air d'une divinité. Sa tête était noblement placée, son geste admirable, et toutes ses actions belles jusqu'aux plus simples; personne ne pouvait lui être comparé dans le jeu muet et dans le silence. Le rôle d'Armide fut son triomphe et mit le comble à sa réputation.')

point for this analysis. It is not an overstatement to say that Le Rochois's performance of Armide became legendary and fuelled the cult surrounding the singer and, in return, that around the character, as one of Lully's most celebrated. The success of Lully's last *tragédie* created during his lifetime was immense: performances of *Armide* continued nearly a year after the première.[341] Unfortunately, there is little direct commentary on the initial production of *Armide*, which took place in Paris after being postponed several times, apart from a review in the *Mercure galant*.[342] Later on, a few people with first-hand experience of the première and its revivals at the end of the seventeenth century (in 1688, 1692, and 1697) also published their accounts of the pleasure that Le Rochois gave to the audience in the role of Armide. Titon du Tillet, while mentioning several of Armide's *récits* (I, 1) and monologues (II, 5 [last]; V, 5 [last]), highlighted her talent for representing a diversity of passions:

> When [Le Rochois] began to show emotion and to sing, one no longer saw anybody but her on the stage, which is what struck me, especially in the Opera *Armide* in which she played the grandest and strongest Role in our Operas; she appeared there in the first Act between the two most beautiful Actresses seen in the Theatre, *Mesdemoiselles* Moreau and Desmatins, who served as her confidantes and who sought to dispel the sadness in which seem seemed immersed. […] In the moment when *Mademoiselle* Rochois spread her arms and raised her head with a majestic air, singing *Je ne triomphe pas du plus vaillant de tous./L'indomptable Renaud échappe à mon courroux*, her two confidantes seemed, so to speak, eclipsed; one no longer saw anybody but her on the Stage, and she seemed to fill it alone. What rapture to see her in the fifth scene of the second Act of the same Opera, sword in hand, ready to pierce the breast of Renaud, asleep on a bed of greenery! Fury animated her at the sight of him, love came and seized her heart; the one and the other affected her in turn. Pity and tenderness followed them in the end, and love was the winner. Such beautiful, true poses! Such motions and varied expressions in her eyes and on her face during that monologue of twenty-nice Verses, which begins with these two: *Enfin il est en ma puissance,/Ce fatal ennemi, ce superbe vainqueur*. It can be said that this is the greatest excerpt in all of our Operas and the most difficult to perform well, and it was one of those in which Mademoiselle Rochois was most brilliant, as was the one at the end of the same Opera where she sang, *Le perfide Renaud me fuit, etc.* It is enough to cite the Opera *Armide* without dwelling on the other Operas of Lully in which she enchanted the audience in the leading Roles that she sang.[343]

[341] When Lully died, his work *Achille et Polyxène* had barely begun and still required substantial additions (Pascal Collasse was to write the prologue and all but one act). Thus, *Armide* must have been the last work that Lully himself saw performed on the stage of the ARM.
[342] *MG* (February 1686), 292. See discussion on postponing *Armide*'s production in Rosow, 'Lully's Armide at the Paris Opéra', 221–226.
[343] Titon du Tillet, *SPF*, 791–792 (trans. by Rosow, 'Lully's Armide at the Paris Opéra', 231–232):

Le Cerf de La Viéville, probably commenting on *Armide*'s revival in 1697, stressed how impressive Le Rochois's vocal strength was, even at the threshold of her retirement:

> As for me, I think I have seen a Performance of *Armide* that gives me the right to put this Piece above everything that so many centuries have been able to produce. The memory of that evening has always stayed with me, and I keep it with relish. It has often diminished the pleasure that I would [otherwise] have had at the Opera, but in compensation, it will console me [if I do] not go there any more, in case I should renounce [opera] — as some stern friends, against whom I find it difficult to defend myself, are trying to force me to do. *La Rochois*, after having been away from the Theatre five or six years, having found that her voice had returned, wanted to perform again. She had already played Armide twice the day that I heard her, and she was animated by the applause, which she found stimulating again. *La Moreau* and *la Desmatins* played the two confidantes; *Dun*, *Hidraot*; and *Dumesnil*, who by good luck was not at all drunk, *Renaud*. He seemed in truth agreeable enough not to bring shame to the Hero that he represented, and he sang better and more correctly than he had sung since Lully's death: I heard easily and with pleasure those four or five beautiful notes that he had in the middle of his range. (For Dumesnil had only that.) *Boutelou* sang all the little Airs. […] When I picture La Rochois, that little woman who was no longer young, capped with black hair, and armed with a black cane with a ribbon the color of fire, moving about that great Stage, which she filled almost by herself, and drawing from her chest from time to time marvellous bursts of song: I assure you that I shiver again, and as I have never been as acutely affected as I was then, although I have been at the Opera four or five hundred times, I never fail to come back to *Armide* when I want to think of a supremely beautiful Piece of Music.[344]

Lully's operas feature occasional extended airs, duets, and monologues, which are interspersed with instrumental passages and presented as distinct pieces. Such standalone pieces were relatively scarce within the context of a single opera. The second act of *Armide*, then, is unusual in that it is actually dominated by such pieces (with the exception of the very first scene and the sixth one, which is a *divertissement*). Throughout this act, airs are short and largely syllabic, with occasional melismas used

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'Quand elle commençait à s'émouvoir et à chanter, on ne voyait plus qu'elle sur la scène, c'est ce qui m'a frappé, surtout dans le rôle d'Armide dans lequel elle jouait le plus grand et le plus fort rôle de nos opéras. Elle y paraissait entre les deux plus belles actrices et la plus riche taille Miss Moreau et Desmatins et dès le moment où Miss Le Rochois ouvrait les bras et levait la tête on ne voyait plus qu'elle. Dans quel ravissement n'était-on pas dans la cinquième scène du second Acte, de la voir le poignard à la main, prête à percer le sein de Renaud, endormi sur un lit de verdure! La fureur l'animait à son aspect, l'amour venait s'emparer de son cœur; l'une et l'autre l'agitaient tour à tour, la pitié et la tendresse leur succédaient à la fin, et l'amour restait le vainqueur.'

[344] Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison*, II, 10–11; reproduced by Bonnet and Bourdelot, *Histoire*, t. III; trans. by Rosow, 'Lully's Armide at the Paris Opéra', 230. Arguably, these comments referred to *Armide*'s revival of 1697: however, if so, Le Cerf was mistaken about the chronology of Le Rochois's career, for she continued to perform on a regular basis until her retirement from the ARM in 1698.

for word-painting, and organised in binary or *rondeau* forms. The recitative simulates speech patterns by changing the metre extremely frequently, thus eschewing 'the patter of repeated notes in favour of scalar and triadic configurations', which blurs the lines of demarcation among the different musical settings. In the cases of the duet between Hidraot and Armide 'Esprit de haine et de rage' (sc. 2), the air of Renaud 'Plus j'observe ces lieux' (sc. 3), and the monologue of Armide 'Enfin il est en ma puissance' (sc. 5), the mode of expression consists in a fluid mixture of recitative, air, and mixed style (*récitatif mesuré*).[345] It is tempting to see here the direct effect of Le Rochois's talent for declamation and acting, which could have emboldened Lully to foster this tricky mix. Likewise, it is possible that the repeated use of orchestra for accompanying many of the sections of recitative — another feature rarely used in Lully's previous operas — could be a direct effect of Le Rochois' vocal strength.

In particular, Armide's monologue (II, 5) held the audience with bated breath, according to Le Cerf de La Viéville.[346] Lully's continuous effort to mix all musical features reaches here a climax. The scene, compared with Le Rochois's abilities, deserves a closer look.

[345] It is necessary to note that seventeenth-century musical terminologies, more than mid-eighteenth-century musical sources and theoretical writings, were vague and inconsistent: 'air' and 'récitatif [simple]' (characterised by frequently changing metres) were available terms, but 'récitatif mesuré' later also known as 'arioso' (during which no change of metre occurred) was not. Musicians and theorists often relied on the ambiguous term 'récit' to describe almost any setting for solo voice or voices (a usage that continued in the eighteenth century as well). Virtually no generic terms are applied to passages for solo voice in the 1686 score of *Armide*. See Rosow, 'Lully's *Armide* at the Paris Opéra', 203-205.

[346] Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison*, III, 329–330: 'When Armide gets on the verge of stabbing Renaud, I have seen twenty times over the crowd filled with fear, bated breath, immobile, its entire soul in the ears and eyes, until the aria of the violins, which ends the scene, gave permission to breathe again, then breathing with a joyful and admiring buzz.' ('Lorsqu'Armide s'anime à poignarder Renaud, j'ai vu vingt fois tout le monde saisi de frayeur, ne soufflant pas, demeurer immobile, l'âme toute entière dans les oreilles et les yeux, jusqu'à ce que l'air de violons, qui finit la scène, donnât permission de respirer; puis respirant là avec un bourdonnement de joie et d'admiration.'

SCENE V

ARMIDE, RENAUD endormy.

2-11 ARMIDE : *Enfin il est en ma puissance*



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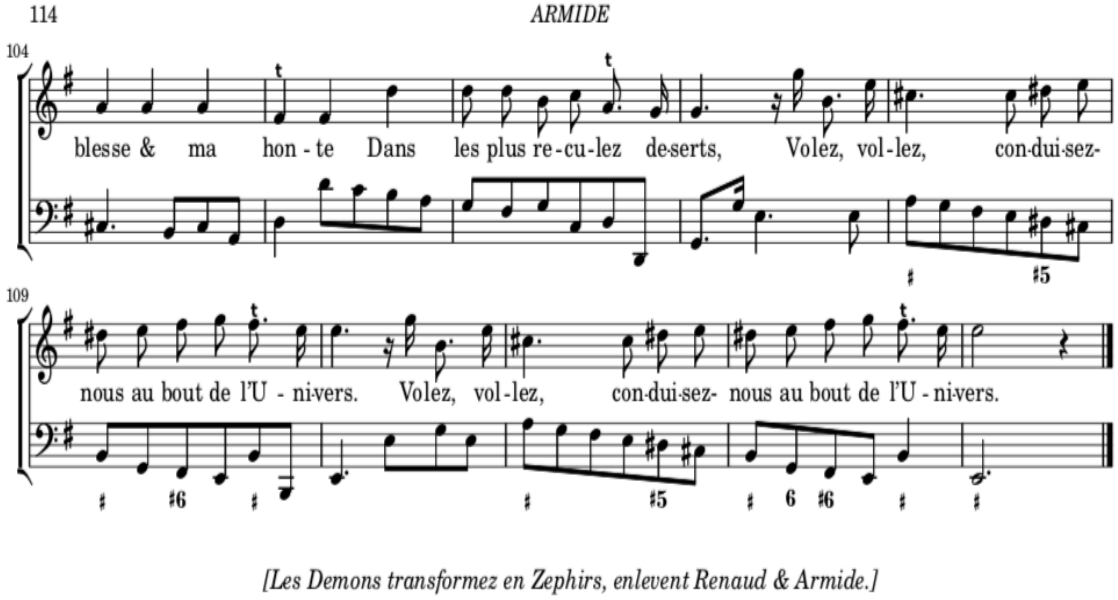


Plate II.9: *Armide*, II, 5; Paris: Ballard, 1686 © 2006-2014 Nicolas Sceaux

In this scene, Armide appears first determined to kill Renaud during his sleep, then hesitating and expressing her passion for the hero. In the recitative part, the metre changes with great frequency, sometimes at every bar, such as in the exact passage during which she finally raises her armed hand: 'Qu'est-ce qu'en sa faveur la pitié me veut dire?/Frappons! Ciel! Qui peut m'arrêter?' (bars 34-38). The contrast with the following bars (38-42), with no change of metre, minimal accompaniment, and prolonged silences which perturb the sense of rhythm in a different way, as if Armide's conscience was literally suspended in the air, highlights further the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic complexity of the score, while glorifying the vocal and acting talent of the singer who performed it. During those few bars, the modulating cadences built on disjunct intervals of perfect ascending fourth and perfect descending fifth, a formula that Lully used for word-painting since his very first *tragédies*, in addition to the trill filled with fierceness ('nous') and the soft final appoggiatura ('soupire'), highlight further the pathos of Armide's lamentation.[347] Lully also uses flat and sharp keys to colour in turns

[347] See Raphaëlle Legrand, 'La rhétorique en scène: quelques perspectives pour l'analyse de la tragédie en

each of the conflictual romantic feelings, something seen in the case of other characters performed by Le Rochois, like Angélique (analysed further below).

The effect of Armide's trouble continues to be developed in an introspective passage: in a few lines — structured, again, by a regular changes of metre — Armide comes swiftly to confess her romantic attachment while admitting her need for revenge: 'Qu'il m'aime au moins par mes enchantements,/Que, s'il se peut, je le haïsse'. The rhythmic variety, fluidly rendered, is paralleled with the expansion of the voice both in the high and low part of the tessitura: the voice stretches rapidly across an interval of tenth (E_4-G_5) several times, swirling ever higher around a complex harmonic sequence. The line ultimately culminates on the cruel 'Que s'il se peut, je le haïsse', which passion offers a natural bridge for the instrumental *ritournelle*, the final air ('Venez, venez, secondez mes désirs'), and visual-mechanical spectacle (after invoking her demons, Armide is carried away with Renaud).

Given the lack of sources for this period, a comparison between the original version of 1686 and eighteenth-century editions — as well as contemporaries' commentaries — is helpful for understanding further how Lully tailored his declamatory style to Le Rochois' abilities. Naturally, theatrical declamation altogether changed between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and throughout the latter.[348] Yet, Lully had set a strong model that composers such as Francœur and Rameau — who participated in the crafting of new editions of Lully's works — recognised and respected.[349] The eighteenth-century case for alterations to Lully's score, especially with

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musique', *Revue de Musicologie* (1998), t. 84, 84-85.

[348] Regarding the ways composers of the late seventeenth century engaged with dramatic declamation, Voltaire wrote: 'This sing-song [*mélopée*] resembled the declamation of today much less than our modern recitation resembles the manner in which one reads the newspaper. I can make no better comparison of the former type of chant than with the admirable recitative of Lulli [sic].' (*Dictionnaire philosophique*, 1764, entry 'Chant', trans. by Rosow, 'Lully's *Armide* at the Paris Opéra', 519.)

[349] Rameau was frequently and unjustly accused by some of his contemporaries such as Rousseau (*Lettre sur la musique française*, 1753) for not liking Lully enough, to the point that Rameau reminded his

regard to the recitative, which canonical dimension had acquired some sort of sacred aura since Lully's own lifetime, was therefore a very delicate exercise.[350] While paying their respects to the Lully, carious intellectual figures such as Nicolas Bricaire de La Dixmerie expressed their strong desires to break up Lully's recitatives, alongside other musical and textual features.[351] In the successive alterations to the score and libretto of *Armide* around 1745 and 1761 in particular, Rosow notes that direct phrase repetition was eliminated from binary airs and that many of the *airs de scène* were eliminated, leaving behind long stretches of *récitatif simple* (with few static moments), some portions of which were ultimately cut as well. Rosow comments that '[w]hen taken together, these isolated cuts have the effect of de-emphasizing points of repose in the recitative' and that other minor revisions pursued the same 'greater impression of forward motion in dialogue scenes'.[352] Armide's famous monologue itself, albeit venerated by the eighteenth-century audience, was not left unscathed by these emendations.[353] Although these changes seem motivated by a shift in terms of musical

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detractors of his thorough and laudatory analysis of Armide's monologue 'Enfin il est en ma puissance' in the *Nouveau système de musique théorique* (Paris: Ballard, 1726) in which he purposefully demonstrated Lully's masterful use of harmony to express the text (*Observations sur notre instinct pour la musique* [Paris: Prault fils, 1754]).

[350] Michel Noiray has shown how eighteenth-century audiences highly valued performances of the 'old repertory', specifically Lully's, and that his pieces were still performed up until 1771 ('The Practical and Symbolic Functions of l'ancienne musique at the Paris Opéra before Gluck', *The Oxford Handbook of Operatic Canon* [edited by Cormac Newark and William Weber. New York: OUP, 2020]) and James Arnold, has also exposed the belief in the canonic authority of Lully's works (James Arnold, *Musical Debate and Political Culture in France, 1700-1830* [Boydell & Brewer, 2017], 61). See also William Weber, 'La musique ancienne in the Waning of the Ancien Régime', *The Journal of Modern History* 56, no. 1 (1984): 87–88.

[351] Nicolas Bricaire de La Dixmerie, commenting in 1765 on the re-editions of Lully's works, wrote about how dearly he was awaiting for the Lullyesque 'eternal recitative' to be broken up by 'animated pieces' (*morceaux de mouvement*) using varied tempi: 'What should be done with regard to the Operas of Lulli [sic]? That which has already been done to some of them: remodel the dance airs, the *ouvertures*, the instrumental pieces; but, above all, animate the longest scenes, something that nobody has yet dared to try […] Let us regard Lully's recitative as sacred wherever it is necessary; it would be difficult, even today, to succeed better in this genre; but let the veneration due this great Artist not harm the progress of the art. Would it be forbidden to add a few interior embellishments to a Temple, to a Palace, on the vain pretext that it was built by *Michelangelo*, *Bernini*, *Mansard*, or *Perrault*?' (*Lettres sur l'état present de nos spectacles, avec des vues nouvelles sur chacun d'eux, particulièrement sur la Comédie Française et l'Opéra* [Amsterdam, 1765], 56–57.)

[352] Rosow, 'Lully's Armide at the Paris Opéra', 405.

[353] The direct repetition of the opening phrase in the air 'Venez, venez seconder mes désirs,/Démons, transformez-vous en d'aimables zéphyrs' was indeed eliminated, perhaps not before 1764.

preferences, as the testimony of Bricaire de La Dixmerie exemplifies, it is tempting to also explain them by the disappearance of Le Rochois from the ARM's stage and the lack of equal talents in later opera singers generations.

Among the list of characters that Le Rochois performed on the ARM's stage [see TABLE II.6], a clear ensemble emerges: Sténobée (*Bellérophon*), Mérope (*Persée*), Arcabonne (*Amadis de Gaule*), and Armide (*Armide*) are all powerful women — queens, sorceresses — devoured by their passions, who gives orders to the choruses and troupes of dancers and drive most of the plots. The issue of *Phaéton*'s casting, given the scarcity of the sources related to the premiere, will be addressed in the last section of this chapter. Again, the types of monologues attributed to those characters, mixing together different musical and textual features, emphasises Le Rochois's ability for upholding a variety of passions and expressions of those passions. Other monologues assigned to Le Rochois in different operas corroborate this hypothesis. In *Amadis* (1684), the introductory scene of the second act, in which Arcabonne affirms that she will not succumb to her passion ('Amour, que veux-tu de moi'), and the following *récit* during her dialogue with Arcalaüs ('Il faut avouer ma faiblesse/Pour commencer à m'en punir') rely on an equally virtuosic series of changes regarding meters and melodic intervals. The constant changes evidently serve the intention of the text whilst outlining Le Rochois's vocal prowess.


Il faut avoüer ma foibleſſe Pour commencer à m'en pu-
bois ſert à l'entrete- nir.
BASSE-CONTINUE.


nir. Un Heros, contre un Monſtre, un jour prit ma deffenſe, J'eſtois morte ſans ſon ſe-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
cours: Il ne voulut pour recompenſe Que le plaiſir ſe- cret d'avoir ſauvé mes
BASSE-CONTINUE.
jours. Je n'ay point ſçeu quel Heros m'a ſer- vie; Je m'informay de ſon nom vaine-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
ment: Mais ſon Caſque tom- ba, je le vis un momẽt, Ce moment fut fa- tal au reſte de ma vi-
BASSE-CONTINUE.

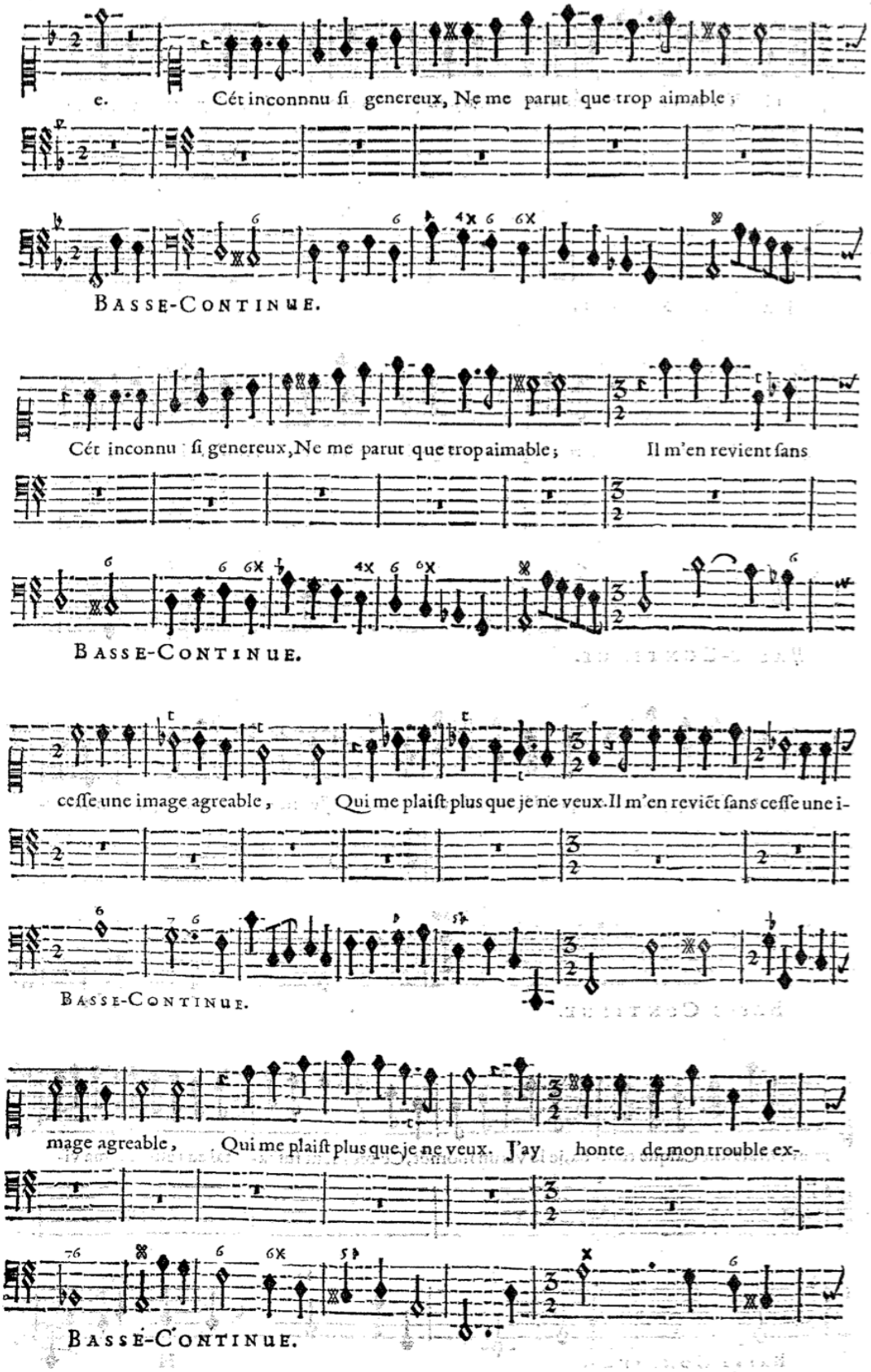

e. Cét inconnnu ſi genereux, Ne me parut que trop aimable ;
BASSE-CONTINUE.
Cét inconnu ſi genereux, Ne me parut que trop aimable ; Il m'en revient ſans
BASSE-CONTINUE.
ceſſe une image agreable, Qui me plaiſt plus que je ne veux. Il m'en reviēt ſans ceſſe une i-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
mage agreable, Qui me plaiſt plus que je ne veux. J'ay honte de mon trouble ex-
BASSE-CONTINUE.



Plate II.10: Extract from *Amadis*, II, 2 (Arcabonne); Paris: Ballard, 1684.

At first glance, the clear unity of Le Rochois's *emploi* around the types of fierce women gifted with magical (or equivalent) powers offers a remarkable contrast with the character of Angélique (*Roland*), a young, loving character also assigned to the singer. However, a closer look at the libretto and score unveils significant elements which explain this choice and blur the distinction between that role and the others.

The analysis of *Roland*'s première is complicated by the lack of knowledge regarding the cast: the original libretto does not indicate names for any characters, nor do the Parfaict brothers in their *Dictionnaire des théâtres de Paris*. Strikingly, *Roland* is one of Lully's *tragédies en musique* that most lacks leading female roles, alongside *Cadmus and Hermione*.[354] While all the others have at least two more-or-less rival leading female characters, *Roland* merely presents Angélique and her confidante, Témire, on stage. As such, the equilibrium traditionally found in theatrical plots between the tender princess and her vengeful rival is displaced. Instead, the main aggressive role is embodied in the male title role, Roland, whose furious anger is at the heart of the canonical story. This absence explains in part why Le Rochois, then placed at the top of the troupe's hierarchy, would be assigned the main role of Angélique.

But Angélique is not a young, gentle princess. She is described as a 'queen' (I, 2) and has a multi-faceted character. The introductory monologue of the opera (I, 1), 'Ah, que mon cœur est agité', places her in a position of strength rather than lamentation or resignation. On three occasions, Angélique affirms her pride ('fierté'), which is echoed in the following dialogue with Témire (I, 2). Later, this characteristic pride is vanquished in the third act, during Angélique's dialogue with Roland (sc. 2), and then in the *divertissement* (sc. 6) with the chorus commenting on the triumph of love, thanks to

[354] *Cadmus et Hermione* equally lacks of the binary between leading female characters. However, since the structure and content of that opera is so radically different from Lully's later work, the comparison is a delicate one to navigate.

the ‘powerful charm of Médor’s looks’ over her.[355]

The dialogue between Angélique and Témire exposes the character’s complexity clearly. Angélique’s melodic profile oscillates between lines that prioritise conjunct intervals and soft cadences when expressing tenderness, and impetuous bursts during which she struggles with her pride, whether in reaction to Témire’s commentaries, or to her own indecision. The lower part of her tessitura, regularly unaccompanied (e.g. ‘mortelle’) paints musically the sentiment of the character, and gives an account of Le Rochois’s ability to navigate a large ambitus quickly.



[355] *Roland*, III, 6: ‘Un des sujets d’Angelique: Angelique n’est plus insensible,/sa fierté se croyait invincible:/elle fuyait l' amour, et le fuirait encore/sans le charme puissant des regards de Médor. Le Choeur: Heureux Médor! Quelle gloire/d’avoir remporté/une entière victoire/sur tant de fierté !’



Plate II.11: Extract from *Roland*, I, 2 (Angélique); Paris: Ballard, 1685.

As in Armide's monologue, musical silence is purposely used to represent Angélique's doubt, building on Le Rochois's talent for suspending the voice in silence, and emphasising her acting. The disruption of the sentence after she expresses her will to 'ban Médor' puts a clear hold on her pride and the exigencies tied to her 'glory', a term equally mentioned on several different occasion. Earlier in the exchange, numerous instances of textual repetition, especially in the higher part of the tessitura (e.g. 'Et je suis en danger de ne jamais guérir'), also assume a great vocal power on the part of Le Rochois, and a feverish temperament on the part of the *dramatis persona*.

These features of vocal power and temperamental volatility are present throughout the opera, in particular during dialogues with Témire, such as the fifth scene of the first act or the first scene of the second act (during which Angélique decides to use a magic ring in order to become invisible). A *récit* (I, 5), supported by the orchestra, is structured around several cries in the higher part of the character's tessitura, using fierce trills and appoggiaturas ('Je mourrais de douleur').





Plate II.12: Extract from *Amadis*, II, 5 (Arcabonne); Paris: Ballard, 1684.

Angélique's speech, like Armide's, is also interrupted as she reflects on her situation ('Non, qu'il ne parte point/Allons le rappeler…/Infortunée,/Où veux-je aller ?'). The progress of her psychological wandering is built on a tension: while the rhythm slows down, the harmonic rhythm accelerates. Although the beginning of Angélique's *récit* works on a regular alternation between D minor and G minor, the harmonic developments a few bars prior to the explicit mention of Angélique's doubt foreshadows her struggle. First, a suspension on F (bar 15) gloomily highlights Angélique's presentation of herself as the 'cause' of the departure of her love. Then, a succession of half-cadences subtly agitates the discourse, with C (dominant of F) at bar 20, and G at bar 22 (acting as a pivot between F, of which it is the dominant of the dominant, and the

original pitch of D). A brusque re-affirmation of D in the following bar (coinciding with the word ‘rappeler’), is followed by a series of brisk harmonic changes: D is turned into the dominant of G (with the presence of a F#) on ‘infortunée’ (bar 24), and a half-cadence on E on ‘Où veux-je aller’ (bar 25) introduces the surprising tonality of A minor (bar 27 on ‘faiblesse’). The chromaticism of that last section, nested in a complex harmonic sequence at a larger scale, assumes that the performer has carefully led the entire scene to that specific harmonic colour. It implies a good understanding of the score, not only its musical structure, but also the acting that pairs with all the subtle changes and, ultimately, a vocal technique which does not falter its power too early on. Instead, the singer must preserve herself in the first lines during which the exposition of the situation revolves around G_5, as well as during the disjunct intervals (on ‘non’ at bars 17-18 and 20-21, and ‘allons’ at bar 22).

Looking ahead in the chronology of the study of the troupe, the fact that Le Rochois mixed roles in her repertoire becomes increasingly visible. After Lully’s death and the change of administration, the singer is attributed many different characters depicting soft, gentle leading women. Additionally, a few other roles present, like the character of Angélique, a wide palette of emotions that mix together forcefulness and softness. That is the case with the roles of Circé (*Circé*, 1694), who is a sorceress in love, Roxane (*L’Europe galante*, 1697), and Vénus (*Vénus et Adonis*, 1697). Those cases, that took place under a different administration, will be studied in the final chapter.

III.4. 1680-1687: the early careers of the Moreau sisters and Marie-Louise Desmatins

The last section of this chapter presents the early careers of three main singers who were the last successful female soloists hired by Jean-Baptiste Lully before his death in 1687. The second part of their work at the ARM under Francine's directorship will be analysed in chapter V.

Alongside Marie Le Rochois, Lully selected the sisters Marie-Louise and Françoise Moreau, commonly differentiated by the stage names 'Louison' and 'Fanchon'. 'Tall, blonde, beautiful, gifted with very tender eyes and a charming face, as well as a perfectly pitched voice and an indubitable spark of intelligence', Françoise Moreau followed her elder sister Marie-Louise into the ARM in 1682, at the age of fourteen.[356] With their elder brothers (Jean and Jacques-Roland, both engaged in successful careers in the army), and another younger sister (Marie-Jeanne, singer for the Musique du Roi until 1717), Marie-Louise and Françoise evolved in a comfortable bourgeois milieu.[357] Their material conditions, already above average for singers, kept improving notably during their service at the ARM. Françoise Moreau, in particular, enjoyed not only financial largesse from her own personal connections but also proved she had a great sense of business.[358]

Like Le Rochois, contemporaries regularly commented on the romantic chronicles of the Moreau sisters. However, it seemed to have affected their careers to a greater extent. Marie-Jeanne in particular suffered the ire of Lully after she became

[356] Parfaict, *HARM*, 1741, 55.
[357] Their father, Jean Moreau, was a wealthy merchant in Paris.
[358] On 12 March 1697, Françoise Moreau bought a house located in Clichy-la-Garenne from Marie-Anne Delaunay, daughter of the banker Jean Delaunay, for 18,000 *livres*. Between 1699 and 1702, the singer asked some of the greatest artists of her time to renovate the place thanks to the money of one of her lovers, Philippe de Vendôme, Grand Prior of France. After their break-up, she rented this pavilion to him on 1 April 1703 for the sum of 30,000 *livres* and the payment of an annual annuity of 3,000 *livres*.

pregnant following an affair with the marquis de La Fare and was denounced by her peers at the Opéra, Marie Aubry and Marie Verdier.[359] As compensation for his former lover, the Marquis de La Fare gave Marie-Louise Moreau a bond of 12,000 *livres* on 2 December 1685, and eventually recognised his illegitimate daughter, Louise, on 18 May 1695.[360] Another recorded story affirms that the Grand Dauphin (Louis de France, 1661–1711) fell in love with Françoise Moreau and requested Jean-Nicolas de Francine and his then associate Hyacinthe Dumont to organise a rendez-vous with the singer, only to be seduced by her sister, Marie-Louise.[361]

The careers of the two sisters were in some ways symmetrical. First, similarities are visible in terms of length of career: Marie-Louise worked for the ARM for about twelve years (1680–1692) while Françoise (1682–1697) fulfilled fifteen years of service. Tralage argued that Marie-Louis Moreau stayed in fact longer at the Opera: between twelve and fourteen years.[362] The fact that both sisters remained at the ARM for (almost) as long as fifteen years could lead one to assume that the retirement rules (encompassing a mandatory service of fifteen years before earning the right to access a pension) were perhaps already in place before they were made official in 1713. Both careers include zones of uncertainty: the names of Marie-Louise and Françoise do not appear in several of the operas' castings at different times throughout their careers [see TABLE II.6].[363] This can be partly explained by the fact that sources related to opera production before the eighteenth century in general are scarce and incomplete. Additionally, both singers found themselves prevented to reach the top of the troupe's

[359] See Richard Trouilleux, 'Fanchon et Louison Moreau de la troupe de Lully', *Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France*, no. 119-122 (1997), 155–188.
[360] Letter patente quoted by Père Alexis in *Généalogie de la maison de La Fare en Languedoc, dressée sur les titres originaux, et établie dans "les Grands Officiers de la couronne"*, 1766 (F-Pn, 8-LM3-514).
[361] Jacques-Claude de Bois Jourdain, *Mélanges historiques, satiriques et anecdotiques* (Paris: Chèvre et Chanson & Arthus-Bertrand, 1807), I, 35-36
[362] Tralage, *Notes et documents*, I, 88.
[363] The case of Oriane has already been addressed in the second section of this chapter.

hierarchy; indeed, from the beginning of their careers at the ARM, that glass ceiling was formed by the presence of senior members placed at the top. In the case of Marie-Louise, it might have been Marie Aubry who was still performing allegedly until 1682 or 1684; but in the case of Françoise, it might have been her very own sister (as it is discussed below).

The similarities between both careers stop there. With regard to Françoise Moreau, the analysis is more complicated and nuanced. Indeed, shortly after she entered the ARM's troupe, Françoise was directly assigned the role of Astrée (*Phaéton*). That early exposure on the Opera's stage implies that her talent was immediately valued. It is unlikely that this cast choice was made by default. It is true that Françoise's sister, Marie-Louise, at the same period of time, fell temporally in disgrace in the eyes of Lully after her pregnancy, which resulted in her temporary dismissal from the ARM. Perhaps Marie-Louise's absence created some room within the troupe that Françoise immediately filled. That being said, the exact chronology of the events is not known and Tralage affirms that Marie-Louise's eviction from the ARM was altogether a very short episode.[364] Later, Françoise's absence from the Opera's cast can be explained by the fact that her sister, as well as Le Rochois, benefitted from a right of seniority over the best roles, thus hindering the promotion of Françoise. However, this does not tell the story in full. Indeed, a few gaps leave room for various hypotheses regarding the careers of both sisters and specifically Françoise.

These gaps, depending on the period, bring up two different issues. First, while the Moreau sisters were performing at the same time in the ARM, both of their names do not appear in the existing sources regarding a series of opera casts: *Phaéton* (1683), *Roland* (1685), *Acis et Galatée* (1686), *Armide* (1688) *Zéphyr et Flore* (1688), *Orphée*

[364] Tralage, I, 88.

(1690), *Coronis* (1691), *Astrée* (1691).[365] Unless there was a significant reason for these gaps that of which we are now ignorant — such as a pregnancy or a romantic relationship, for example — this absence seems only to be the product of the lack of information for that period, i.e. an absence of the cast records. Thus, it could be possible that one of them — if not both — performed solos and even leading female roles in some of the works quoted above, despite their names being absent from the records that survived. Second, after the departure of Marie-Louise from the ARM, some grey areas remain with regard to her sister's career. Françoise is not named for any of the following premières and revivals: *Alcide* (1693), *Céphale et Procris* (1694), *Circé* (1694), *Théagène et Chariclée* (1695), *Jason* (1696), *La Naissance de Vénus* (1696), *La Grotte de Versailles* (1696 and 1700), *Méduse* (1697), *Aricie* (1697), *Vénus et Adonis* (1697), *Le Triomphe des arts* (1700), and *Le Carnaval* (1700). Again, this absence seems more likely to rest on a lack of historical evidence than on an effective absence of the performer or a refusal to assign her any soloistic role. She must then have performed roles of importance in some — or all — of these works.

Those facts make room for imagining which roles, within each opera, one or both of the sisters could have performed. This attempt to reconstruct partial cast lists in the context of Lully's opera productions is the heart of Antonia Banducci's work about 'typecasting'. However, the Moreau sisters performed the same set of characters, which mostly included young women, sometimes more on the side of gallantry, sometimes more on the side of pathos. As such, this exercise of historical reconstruction seems particularly tricky with regard to the first set of opera casts, in which Marie-Louise and Françoise could have taken the same roles. That work is summarised in the TABLE II.7,

[365] The performance of *Le Palais de Flore* (1689), which casting also does not mentioned any of the two names, has a different status since it was performed for the court at Versailles, probably with a formation significantly different than for the usual opera productions in Paris.

which will be analysed in detail during Chapter IV. Among all these roles, only that of Sidonie (in the revival of *Armide* in 1688) can be attributed with a high level of confidence to Marie-Louise, since the singer had already premiered the role in 1686. With regard to the second set of operas, for which only Françoise Moreau could have been cast, it is tempting to imagine her in the shoes of some of the leading female characters, alongside Le Rochois. However, the arrival of Julie d'Aubigny (known as La Maupin) complicates the hypothesis. La Maupin's career, as well as the second part of Françoise Moreau's will also be further discussed in Chapter IV.

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Daughter of the composer, dancer, and ballet master Claude Desmatins, Marie-Louise Desmatins (b. 1665–20 April 1708) navigated the universe of stage performance both as a singer and a dancer from a very early age. Her name appears in librettos in both capacities until 1703; thereafter, until her death in 1708, she sang only. As for a small handful of other seventeenth- and eighteenth-century artists, along with perhaps one of the two Moreau sisters, Desmatins was employed for both singing and dancing.[366] Those types of double performers, who could sing and dance on stage, have not yet been the focus of any significant piece of scholarship; yet their impact on staging must have been significant somehow. As Harris-Warrick writes, 'the division of labor impacts not only Lully's musical constructions, but also the staging.'[367]

Marie Le Rochois would have been the one advising Desmatins to pursue her

[366] Print by Mattheus Seütter and Jeremias Wolff, Paris: Mariette [rue St Jacques, aux Colonnes d'Hercules], paper, cardboard, chisel, etching, 27x18 cm [OD 155]. See also *Mademoiselle Moreau dansant à l'Opéra*, Paris: Mariette [rue St Jacques aux Colonnes d'Hercules] (Victoria and Albert Museum, E.4957-1968).
[367] Harris-Warrick, *Dance and Drama*, 36.

musical career, after she had already performed for the ARM at an early age in 1682 for *Persée* (as a singer and dancer).[368] The Parfaict brothers indicated that she was about twelve years old that year, which means that she would have been about fourteen when she performed one of the main three female leading roles in *Amadis* (Corisande) in 1684 — the same age at which Françoise Moreau endorsed her first major role herself.[369] Le Rochois gave Desmatins singing and acting lessons and the young singer appeared in several roles of importance from 1684 onwards.

Maupoint described her voice as 'wide', using the appellation of *grand dessus*, something rare as seen in the Chapter II.[370] It is no surprise that Desmatins replaced Le Rochois, who also shared her type of voice, after the retirement of her mentor in 1698, and that performed a large number of the majestic characters of terrifying sorceresses and fearsome queens that Le Rochois premiered [see TABLE II.8]. The association between the singer and her roles infiltrated the ways in which is was sometimes represented by her contemporaries. The poet and novelist Antoine-Louis Le Brun, for example, described Marie-Louise Desmatins in two poems. The first is a sort of ode which identifies the singers of three specific roles (Angélique in *Roland*, Armide, and Médée in *Thésée*), which were themselves closely intertwined with Le Rochois's *emplois*.[371]

A later role, Briséis (*Achille et Polyxène*, 1686), assigned to Desmatins fills that

[368] *MF*, February 1737, 356: 'It was in *Persée* that Desmatins made her trial for Singing and Dancing, in which she has subsequently achieved such success.' ('Ce fut dans *Persée*, que Miss *Desmatins* fit son essai pour le Chant et pour la Danse, en quoi elle a réussi depuis avec tant de succès.')
[369] Parfaict, *HARM*, I, 51 and 112.
[370] Maupoint, *Bibliothèque des théâtres*, 164.
[371] Antoine-Louis Le Brun, *Épigrammes, madrigaux et chansons* (Paris, Le Breton, 1714), 140: 'Pour Mademoiselle Desmatins: D'Angélique tendre & fidèle/Imites-tu les doux transports?/Tes spectateurs charmés en te voyant si belle,/Deviennent autant de Médors./Nouvelle Armide sur la Scène/Te voyons-nous briller bientôt?/Enchantés comme lui nous pardonnons sans peine/À la faiblesse de Renaud./De Médée, Amante trahie,/Prends-tu la fureur et le nom?/On déteste avec toi l'indigne perfidie/Et de Thésée, & de Jason./Toujours Actrice inimitable,/Par toi tout est bien imité;/Et de la fiction ainsi que de la fable,/Tu sais faire une vérité.'

same brief, thus extending the pre-existing *emploi* with new creations. A young woman in appearance, Briséis exposes her fierce nature from the moment that she enters on stage (III, 5), which is coincides immediately with the exposition of Achille's romantic betrayal. The central act of the plot is entirely devoted to the expression of jealousy. Briséis's destructive attitude also mirrors the utterly tempestuous character of the goddess Junon who protects her (III, 6) and summons infernal creatures on stage (III, 7).[372] That energy animates Briséis until the very end, when she calls for vengeance whilst Polyxène commits suicide.

During the duo between Achille and Briséis (III, 5), the complex nature of the young woman is musically treated on an equal footing with the treatment that Lully reserved for characters such as Armide. The alternance between the two characters is rigorously organised by a juxtaposition of *récitatifs* and *airs*. Briséis's melodic segments are often broken up with wide intervallic gaps. The minor sixth interval is frequently used to convey a Briséis's betrayal with a seductive touch. In the passage 'Suis-je encore Briséis? N'êtes-vous plus Achille?', the vocal line covers more than one octave (from E_4 to F_5). Briséis also expresses softer accents (e.g. 'Ah! Que mon destin sera doux/Si c'est encore pour moi que votre cœur soupire') whilst Achille highlights the power of her 'tears' on him ('Dans quel temps venez-vous m'accabler de vos larmes?'). The cyclical return of the *chaconne* for each *air*, with sensual intervals of thirds, sixths, and octaves on top of a perpetual movement at the bass, nurtures a bittersweet feeling of hope. Yet, as for Armide, that contrast only reinforces the powerful return of Briséis's vengeful character. The first half of the scene, discussing Briséis's surprise and nostalgia, is grounded in A Major, whereas the second one uses the relative minor to

[372] *Achille et Polyxène*, III, 7: 'DIANE: Calme tes déplaisirs, ne verse plus de larmes,/L'hymen qui cause tes alarmes,/Ne sera jamais achevé,/En vain Priam croit son pays sauvé,/Son trône doit tomber, & de toute sa gloire/Il ne restera rien qu'une triste mémoire,/Je vais évoquer des enfers/La Haine, la Fureur, la Discorde et l'Envie,/Leur présence sera suivie/De cent prodiges divers./Sortez de la nuit infernale,/Noires Divinités, vos antres sont ouverts.'

paint the surge of anger. The volte-face starts with disruptive intervals of 5th and 6th as she attacks and condemns the man whom she loves ('Perfide! C'est assez.'). From that point onwards, the discourse relies on tension by resting often on the leading note G# (both at the bass line and the voice) or by using the dominant chord of E. The basso continuo keeps a steady, quick beat, with swift crotchets and quavers hammered under the line 'Le bruit de cette ardeur nouvelle était venu jusqu'à moi' ('The sound of that new love had reached me'). The modulation in F Major around 'S'en est donc fait? Je ne dois plus penser/À l'hymen qui faisait toute mon espérance' ('Is it the end? I should not think anymore/To the wedding I had hoped for') is traditional when expressing feelings of resignation to one's fate. However, it is followed by further modulations towards G minor and C minor, adding more negative undertones to Briséis's furor.




vous ? Ah ! que mon deſtin ſera doux Si c'eſt encor pour moy que vôtre cœur ſoûpi-
re ! Ah ! Ah ! que mon deſtin ſera doux Si c'eſt encor pour moy que vo-


ACHIL. E.
ſtre cœur ſou- pi- re. O Ciel ! que je ſuis malheureux ! Dans quel temps venez-
vous m'accabler de vos larmes ! Que ne ſuis-je à mon gré le maiſtre de mes vœux ! Je fini-


ACHILLE.
DEIDAMIE.
Mais un charme fatal.... Perfide, c'eſt aſſez. Je voy toute mon infor-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
tune, Une autre amour te rend ma tendreſſe importune, Je te fatigue en-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
fin par mes ſoins empreſſez, Le bruit de cét ardeur nouvelle Eſtoit venu juſques à
BASSE-CONTINUE.
moy, Mais je n'ay pû le croire & ſoupçonner ta foy, J'ay crû tõ cœur trop grãd pour
BASSE-CONTINUE.
n'eſtre pas fidel- le. C'en eſt donc fait ? je ne doy plus pen-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
ſer A l'Hymen qui faiſoit toute mon eſpe- rance, A ce ſupréme hon-
BASSE CONTINUE.


neur il me faut renoncer, D'un amour ſi parfait funeſte recompenſe! Dieux! qu'elle eſt ma dou-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
leur! je cede à ſon effort, Cruel peux-tu la voir avec indifference?
BASSE-CONTINUE.
ACHILLE.
Et ne ſçais-tu pas que ma mort Suivra de prés ton inconſtance? Je ne puis en-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
tendre Une plainte ſi tendre. Je ſouffre autant que vous. Les Dieux m'en sõt té-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
moins. Faut-il vous immoler ma vie, Ordonnez. ce ſera le plus doux de mes
BASSE-CONTINUE.
ſoins De ſatis- faire à voſtre envie. Mais calmez vos tranſports & ne m'affligez
BASSE-CONTINUE.

T


plus Par des reproches ſuperflus. Vous connoiſſez mon cœur incapable de
BASSE-CONTINUE.
feindre, Je ſuis moins criminel que je ne ſuis à plaindre, Du ſort & de l'a-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
mour l'indiſpenſable loy M'entraîne ailleurs malgré moy.
SCENE VI.
BRISEIS ſeule.
Quel amant m'eſt ra-
RITOURNELLE.
BASSE-CONTINUE.


vy? ſa valeur, ſa nobleſſe, L'élevent au deſſus du reſte des mor-
BASSE-CONTINUE.
tels, La victoire le ſuit ſans ceſſe, Et ſes moindres vertus meritent des Au-
RITOURNELLE
BASSE-CONTINUE.



Plate II.13: Extract from *Achille et Polyxène*, III, 5 (Achille and Briséis) and 6 (Briséis); Paris: Ballard, 1687.

Likewise, during the following monologue of Briséis introduced by a *ritournelle* (III, 6), elements in common with the analysis of Armide's profile continue to crop out. Indeed

the music presents additional scattered lines with expressive silences and the voice is very tensed towards the higher part of the tessitura.

The second one of Maupoint's poems is an epitaph which highlights the talent of the actress from whom all emotion generated on stage moved the audience.[373] Doing so, it compares Desmatins to another fictional character, Iris; however the singer was never been assigned any role bearing that name. Thus, Iris could function here as an allegorical reference to the female deity acting as herald for the pagan, mythological gods.[374] That second point of comparison, leaning more towards lighter coquetry, is perhaps an indicator of the fact Desmatins was not confined to the strict endorsement of Le Rochois's roles. The full list of the roles that Desmatins performed during her career at the ARM shows indeed a great diversity [see TABLE II.6], before and after she replaced Le Rochois in the ARM's hierarchy.

Some roles assigned to Desmatins fall into the category of close relatives or confidants who occupy important place within the narration, such as Corisande (*Amadis*, 1684) and Corcine (*Ariane et Bacchus*, 1696). Others, like Orithye (*Le Ballet des saisons*, 1695) and the title role of *Issé* (premiered by Le Rochois herself on the threshold of her retirement), are two characters close to the type of young princesses performed by Marie Aubry. As the main female character of *Le Ballet des saisons*'s last

[373] Le Brun, *Épigrammes*, 146-147: 'Epitaphe de Mademoiselle Desmatins. Ci-gît Iris, qui sous ses lois/Tenait les peuples de Cithère,/Iris, à qui Vénus avait cédé ses droits:/Pleurez, Amour, pleurez, vous n'avez plus de mère./Brisez ces traits vainqueurs, qui ne sont plus pour vous/Que de vains ornements, que d'inutiles armes,/Vous ne deviez qu'au pouvoir de ses charmes,/Celui que vous aviez sur nous./Elle eut pu désarmer la Parque redoutable,/Par la douceur de ses aimables chants,/Si rien pouvait fléchir sa fureur implacable./Arrêtez-vous ici, passants:/Iris dans ce tombeau n'est plus qu'un peu de centre,/Et nous fait voir que rien n'exempte du trépas;/Versez des pleurs, montrez la douleur la plus tendre,/Vos yeux, qui dans les siens trouvèrent dans d'appas,/En peuvent-il assez répandre?'

[374] The allegory of Iris is used as model for various statues and paintings found in different places throughout the Palace of Versailles. It is also used in some personal portraits during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as in galant literature in order to evoke the king's favourites, such as Françoise-Athénaïs de Rochechouart (marquise de Montespan) painted as an Iris by or after Louis Ferdinand Elle *le jeune*. Contrary to other deities like Venus or Diana who were often used as pretext for representing nudity, Iris is correlated with coquettish veils and various layers of — more or less sheer — fabric.

entrée, Orithye incarnates a pathetic and soft role of lover (towards Zéphyr) who is confronted to the rough love of Borée. The latter tries to capture Orithye, but Apollon intervenes and requests that order be restored.





Plate II.14: Extract from *Le Ballet des Saisons*, IV, 3 (Orithye alone); 2nd edition, Paris: Ballard, 1690.

In the third scene, during which Orithye believes that she is alone, the gentle woman reveals her love in an array of melismas using mostly conjunct intervals and sophisticated ornaments that explicitly mimic tears rolling and sighs exhaling. The logical harmonic movement, from G minor to its relative F Major, highlights the two intricate sides of the typical female lamentation, namely pathos and resignation.

III. Conclusion

As demonstrated in the first part of this dissertation, the study of the *emploi* extends beyond the realm of aesthetics alone. In conjunction with the analysis of the troupe and its administrative context, a comprehensive understanding of the *emploi* necessitates an exploration of the networks of individuals and the administrative mechanisms that sought to exert control over the parameters defining roles and categories within the opera.

Choosing for this enquiry the angle of female singers and their repertoire during Perrin's and Lully's ownership of the ARM, the major elements entangled with the roles' musical and poetic characteristics show a great degree of variety. Those elements deal primarily with feelings and motives related to the expression of pathetic sentiments (e.g. cries, amorous languor). However, their pervasiveness across a range of roles complicates their relevance for the classification of characters into a fixed taxonomy of *emplois*. Of course, operatic female and male characters endorsed differing social roles. Nevertheless, the display of love, sighs, and tears was effectively shared by various roles on stage who mobilised radically different modes of expression (from pure softness to enraged furiousness).

As such, it is essential to integrate the analysis of the artists to the refined study of the *emploi*. My closer analysis of performers within the structure of the ARM's troupe demonstrates that singers themselves were one of the *emploi*'s most important regulative forces. With their set of skills, their innate talents, and their personal preferences, singers directly impacted the writing of roles and, on the long term, the organisation of roles' categories into long-lasting *emplois* that could be transferred to later generations (or referred to as coherent units of reference by later commentators).

The study of Marie Le Rochois exemplifies particularly well that point. Indeed her rapid promotion to the first roles in Lully's operas brings the composer to create tailored roles for his successful soloist. That set of roles, at first extraordinary (i.e. new and unique), which blended heterogeneous vocal, acting, and poetic elements, soon became a standard in itself. As such, the strict taxonomy of *mouchoir* versus *baguette* (as Legrand evoked) does not really work here. Instead, Le Rochois's exemplar sets a different tone for understanding the *emploi* and its process of standardisation, which owes more to the singer's direct influence on the creative process than to any speculative aesthetic consideration. The latter cannot be decorrelated from the importance of seizing the evolution of the roles and the genres from an embodied perspective, that of the performer.

Perhaps one of Le Rochois's most important impacts on the Opéra's repertoire (further exemplified by one of her successors, Desmatins) is the stress put on roles of vocal strength, which were particularly amplified during her time in comparison with other main female characters. Although, when compared side by side, gentle princesses and vengeful women shared common elements regarding the expression of tenderness and pathos, the latter benefitted from much more room regarding character development. Operas showcased broad and varied character arcs for them, some going from a position of power to one of defeat, from anger to reconciliation (as it is the case for motherly roles, such as Cérès in *Proserpine*), others demonstrating more nuanced patterns of progressions (such as for Angélique in *Roland*). In order to sustain that degree of complexity, Lully used a large palette of musical features and acting devices that was directly correlated to the skills and abilities of the singer.

Picking the thread from here, chapter four aims to re-evaluate the nature and content of operatic genres from the 1660s until the 1680s approximately. Again, instead

of starting from off-grounds aesthetics, that study acknowledges first and foremost the conclusions drawn from the dialectic between singers, ARM's administration, and roles that lies at the heart of the *emploi*.

Chapter IV — Genres, roles, and the pervasiveness of tenderness

French operatic genres were far from being a static and homogeneous entity. They underwent continuous evolution, although the pace of change varied throughout different periods. The diversity and fluidity among these genres, including the various sub-genres of opera, have been explored by Charles Dill in the context of Rameau's operas and his groundbreaking musical innovations. Dill refers to this phenomenon as 'monstrosity', emphasizing the unconventional and transformative nature of Rameau's compositions.[375] This concept highlights the dynamic nature of French operatic genres and their capacity for innovation and experimentation. The image of 'monstrosity' as 'deformity', a metaphor resurrected from eighteenth-century contemporaries debates, functions here as a way to assess Rameau's conception of the revision of his own works in reaction to the various criticisms he received.

That same concept is applicable to late seventeenth-century operatic opuses, which melded together pre-existing operatic genres. Around the 1660s and 1670s, the variety of generic names for operas mirrors the contemporary hesitation around the genres and, more specifically, how the balance between text and music, should be defined.[376] In the same way that early Italian operas had multiple types of subtitles, denominations for French early operas mixed media, genres, and registers. Some works wore appellations taken directly from spoken-theatre such as *comédie* (*Les Amants magnifiques*) and *mascarade* (*Le Carnaval*), and others used the malleable term of *divertissement* (*La Grotte de Versailles*, *Pourceaugnac*, *Le Ballet de la Jeunesse*).[377]

[375] Charles Dill, *Monstrous Opera: Rameau and the Tragic Tradition* (Princeton: PUP, 1998).
[376] Christian Delmas has summarised the variety of French baroque opera appellations in 'Le théâtre musical et *Psyché* de Molière', *Littérature classiques*, no. 21 (1994): 224-225.
[377] None of these works were entirely sung or assimilable to the kind of theatre 'in' music (*théâtre en*

The diversity of appellations and generic contents both mirrored and participated in the blurring of roles' categories for which singers were recruited. The more or less subtle variations amongst operas (in terms of plots, registers, characters, and generic labels) increase the researcher's difficulty for tracking down a clear and consistent taxonomy of roles (and therefore of *emplois*) in the same period.

The analysis of the troupe and its repertoire in chapter three brought to the fore the importance in nuancing the reality behind what has been described as the advent of 'standardized personae' during Lully's directorship.[378] Such claim traditionally pushes to the margin the importance and impact of the performer and, in doing so, gives the impression that Lully's conventions regarding opera roles and genres followed some kind of natural direction of travel. Of course, Lully greatly contributed to the standardisation of French operatic rhetoric, not just in terms of technical musical language (e.g. structure of *ouvertures*, use of the dotted rhythm, types of cadences), but also, in a broader sense, through the meaning and *telos* of his operas and its components. Nevertheless, the traditional argument of performance as first and foremost an 'habituation' of musical and poetic conventions generally misses the fundamental place and value of performers themselves. The latter are perceived as active only at the end of the creative process of opera production. In other words, this model presents performers are a contingent force, not a necessary one.

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musique) Mazarin introduced it to the court in the 1640s-1650s. The example of *Les Amants magnifiques* (1670) is particularly telling: its full subtitle, 'comédie mêlée de musique et d'entrées de ballet' (comedy mixed with music and dance) indicates that music and dance seemed like additions rather than fully integrated, interwoven parts. Additionally, it also indicated that this type of work did not present any long passage dedicated to dramatic poetry, unlike the traditional genres of the *ballet de cour* and the *pastorale dramatique*.

[378] Veit Erlmann, 'Refiguring the Early Modern Voice', *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences* 21, no. 1 (2012), 87: 'Faced with the disintegration of the Renaissance *episteme*, Lully struggled to regain some measure of semiotic predictability by means of musical stock formulas, standardized personae, and a whole arsenal of dramatic conventions, signs, similes, and chimeras. The fruit of his labors, the *tragédie en musique*, conjoined music and words in order to achieve a new unity of mind and body constituted through the fixity of representation or, as [Gary] Tomlinson puts it, "habituation."' See also Gary Tomlinson, *Metaphysical Song: An Essay on Opera* (Princeton: PUP, 1999), 40–61.

I aim to bring a counterpoint (or, at least, some nuance) to that perspective by arguing that a performer-centred analysis is best for carefully (re-)investigating roles, plots and, ultimately, reassessing the question of operatic genres. Looking at the creative process from the perspective of the performers, characters and their categories appear to be fundamentally shaped by and around those who created them. Indeed the singer alone becomes the logical unit whom made sense of the concept of the *emploi*, during the first decades of the ARM existence. In order words, the individual is one of the greatest binding agents and regulative forces of the *emploi* in a period during which various different genres and registers were still fluid enough so as to blend or overlap. That impression of blurring related to the *emploi* is rather unique in the history of the ARM or at least distinctive from later periods. Indeed, from the messiness of the Opera's early stages emerges more established patterns that work as points of reference and properly defined stock of roles for successive generations of authors, performers, and audiences altogether.

In chapter III, I aimed to prove that, despite the messiness around sets of roles, the influence of singers on the creative process is already perceptible at the scale of opera characters. I now intend to demonstrate that the accumulation of evidence regarding the main female leading roles demonstrates the long-term impact of singers on the forming and development of the operatic genres at a larger scale. More specifically, it demonstrates how singers, *emplois*, and genres articulate in a dialectical way through time. It also encourages the modern researcher to refine our common understanding of opera characters' qualities, on vocal, poetic, and acting levels.

In the chapter four, I explore the diversity of operatic genres and challenge the idea that *emplois* directly relied on ready-made aesthetic conventions that would irrevocably precede them. That study is two-fold. First, I explore the ways in which the

gallant universe of the *pastorale* bled in the material of the *tragédies en musique*. More particularly, I investigate how the older genre of the *pastorale* fertilised the *tragédie* through the concept of 'tenderness'. Second, using a performer-based view, I study further that poetic dissemination by observing the degree of fluidity between roles of different genres. Late seventeenth-century sets of roles were far from being monolithic, with narrow character-types; rather, they breached the gap between operative genres. This is particularly true in the case of the roles assigned to Miss Saint-Christophle and Marie Le Rochois, two highly talented female singers who performed using a great range of sentiments whilst supported by a vast arsenal of musical means and patterns.

During the early modern period, 'tenderness' designates everything that has to do with human passions. The designated the 'impression' of passions in the heart of men, and was not merely defined as a narrow feeling or an isolated characteristic.[379] As I will demonstrate in the first section of this chapter, 'tenderness' is a specific space which, when it is exposed on theatrical stage, mirror that which resides in every human's heart. To have a 'tender' heart does not automatically and only means being 'soft' but rather being receptive to human sentiments or emotions.[380] However, Legrand has used that concept in a narrow way for characterising one type of roles: that of the soft leading, young females who sometimes hold a handkerchief as symbol of their tears and lamentations. Yet the label is far from being exclusively tied to one category of roles.

[379] Likewise, the expression of tears is common to a variety of sentiments and passions, and is common to both men and women. Madame de Sévigné, for example, wrote on 11 September 1680 in a letter the following reflection: 'No, it is not always because of sadness that one cries: many different sentiments enter the fabric of tears.' ('Non, ce n'est pas toujours de tristesse que l'on pleure : il entre bien des sortes de sentiments dans la composition des larmes.') See also Anne Vincent-Buffault, *Histoire des larmes* (Paris: Payot & Rivages, 2001), 116-117.

[380] The expression of 'having a tender heart' (*avoir le cœur tendre*) was used during the seventeenth century, as demonstrated by Pierre de Villiers in *Entretien sur les tragédies de ce temps* (Paris: Michallet, 1675) who, when discussing the effect of the actress La Champmeslé on him, wrote: 'I found her very beautify, and I am not even ashamed to say that I could not prevent myself from crying one or twice when I saw her. If only you had a tender heart yourself, you would have cried as much as myself.' ('Je l'ai trouvé fort belle, et même je n'ai pas honte de dire que je n'ai pas pu m'empêcher de pleurer une fois ou deux en la voyant. Pour peu que vous ayez le cœur tendre, vous aurez pleuré aussi bien que moi.')

Instead, its pervasiveness blurs the understanding offered by Legrand of the artistic conventions that shaped the *emploi* and forces us to redeploy a better reading grid for analysing opera roles and the genres in which they evolve.

IV.1. Intertextuality and the contamination of opera genres

Apart from the ballets that were constitutive of the court's theatrical festivities, two main types of literary material, concealing divergent aesthetics, coincided with the composition of the ARM troupe: the *pastorale* and the *tragédie en musique*. Studies about the French *pastorale* as an operatic genre, which represents the culmination of pastoral music drama in France, have been remarkably scarce and rather hesitant in comparison to other art forms (especially that of the *tragédies en musique*). Yet a few studies, such as David Powers's, John Powell's, Françoise Dartois-Lapeyre's, and Jean-Philippe Grosperrin's works, propose very useful starting points for discussion.[381] Powers and Grosperrin in particular both explicitly highlight the inherent difficulty to define and classify the lyrical genre. Just as the court ballets mixed together so many different media without resembling anything else traditional, *pastorales* did not follow closely the French desire for rules-based theatre.[382]

Likewise, studies about the development of Lully's work (between 1672 and 1686) show that the elaboration of his new operatic genre was not a straightforward

[381] David Powers, 'The *pastorale héroïque*: Origins and development of a genre of French opera in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' (University of Chicago, 1988), and 'The Pastorale héroïque: Problems of Definition and Classification', *Recherches sur la musique française classique* 29 (1996-1998): 53-66; John Powell, '"Pourquoi Toujours Des Bergers?" Molière, Lully, and the Pastoral "divertissement"', *Lully Studies*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, 166-198; Françoise Dartois-Lapeyre, 'La dimension utopique de la pastorale', *Dix-Huitième Siècle*, no. 35 (2003): 467-86; Jean-Philippe Grosperrin, 'Empires du trouble et de la paix. Remarques sur la "pastorale héroïque" à l'opéra (1672-1754)', *Revue Fontenelle*, no. 10: Le siècle pastoral (2012): 233-275. Before them, only a handful of scholarly works had trail blaized the path for analysis: Jules Marsan, *La Pastorale dramatique en France à la fin du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1905); Lionel de La Laurencie, 'Les Pastorales en musique au XVIIe siècle en France avant Lully et leur influence sur l'Opéra', *Report of the Fourth Congress of the International Musical Society* (London: Novello and Company, 1911); Henry Prunières, *Le Ballet de Cour en France avant Benserade et Lully* (Paris: Henri Laurens, 1914).

[382] In a summary of the ARM's history, the author Crébillon (possibly Crébillon *père*) mentioned the *Pastorale d'Issy*, the first collaboration between Perrin and Cambert: despite its interest (especially with regards to the use of flutes in the orchestra) Crébillon specified that the opera was 'without rules' (*Lettre à M.*** sur l'origine & le progrès des Opera en France* [Paris: V. Valleyre, 1739], written on 12 November 1738). The exact same commentary can be found in a handwritten note on a printed version of the libretto from 1659 (Paris, BnF, Dept. Littérature et Art, YF-702). David Powers mentions that although pastoral plays also came under some sort of scrutiny from the Académie Française, it did not come as close as the control exerted on the *tragédie en musique*; furthermore,

process but recorded instead numerous attempts to experiment with diverse material (e.g. Italian songs, comic register, non-linear and parallel love stories). The early *tragédies* in particular (i.e. *Cadmus et Hermione* and *Alceste*) blend together many different musical and poetic features and sparked quarrels of more or less greater significance. Those especially concerned the author's so-called disregard for the doctrine of unity of action, with the presence of comic scenes and multiple sub-plots. For example, Charles Le Marquetel de Saint-Denis, known as the Seigneur de Saint-Évremond (1614-1703), criticised the lack of etiquette (*bienséance*) and verisimilitude for *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673), the first of Lully's *tragédies*.[383] The second one, *Alceste* (1674), triggered an important 'cabal' during which intellectuals attacked one another through the publication of numerous works against and in favour of the opera.[384]

More importantly, both genres cross contaminated in various ways. That phenomenon was partly guided by the influence of the performer as one of the key regulative forces of the *emploi*. Indeed singers created a sense of unity of their own for the set of roles they were assigned, sometimes disregarding genres' apparent boundaries. That is to say that the *emploi* of a given singer tended to have logical sense centred around the performer's qualities, and despite the fact that it could assemble roles picked from *pastorales*, *tragédies*, or other genres. In turn, *emplois* could participate in the making of musical and poetic conventions at the broader scale of opera genres.

When exploring that dialectic between performers, roles, and genres, the concept of 'tenderness' appears as a fruitful angle for assessing the ways in which they interlocked despite their dissimilarities. Both concepts occupy a central place in the

[383] *Nouvelles oeuvres meslées de M. de Saint-Évremont*, ed. Abbé François Raguenet (Paris: Vve de C. Barbin, 1700), 36.
[384] Charles Perrault, the first collaborator of Minister Colbert within the Petite Académie which followed closely all forms of art production and advised the king, a member of the Académie Française, and General Controller of the Buildings, Gardens, Arts and Manufactures of the King, wrote a vigorous and influential defence of *Alceste* (*Critique de l'Opéra*, 16 July 1674).

mental universe and poetic features that are constitutive of the *pastorale* and that represent one of the great regulative forces in Western European art throughout the seventeenth century. The ways in which 'tenderness' (in addition to 'pathetic') is used by Legrand and Dratwicki's discussion of the *emploi* are circumscribed too narrowly for defining the different sets of female roles. A closer look at opera genres proves the permeability of both 'tenderness' across the spectrum of genres performed at the ARM. In this first section, I showcase that permeability through the study of key elements that are constitutive of the compositional strategies for each lyric genres. I outline which elements of the French *pastorale* are necessary to take into consideration in order to better reassess the complexity of the *tragédie en musique* and, ultimately, the role of the performer as a regulative force.

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As first and primary use of the term 'pastoral' (from the Latin *pastor*, shepherd), Terry Gifford writes that is it a 'historical form with a long tradition which began in poetry […] of a specific formal type in which supposed shepherds spoke to each other, usually in pentameter verse, about their work or their loves, with apparently idealised descriptions of their countryside.'[385] The Italian models of the pastoral at the end of the sixteenth century and during the early seventeenth century depict a utopian landscape for these shepherds, that of Arcadia where a simple life is lived in contact with nature. Indeed '[f]rom the beginning of its long history the pastoral was written for an urban audience and therefore exploited a tension between the town by the sea and the mountain country of the shepherd, between the life of the court and the life of the

[385] Terry Gifford, *Pastoral* (2nd ed, London & New York: Routledge), 2020, 1.

shepherd, between people and nature, between retreat and return.'[386] Its material was extremely pervasive in all other artistic media during the seventeenth century. David Fairer emphasises the pastoral capacity in organic realism for adaptability, flexibility and the possibilities of new forms of accommodating relationships.[387]

In France, the polished moral content of the *pastorale*, as poetic material and in particular as a literary genre, has been thoroughly studied according to different angles, from the rebirth of medieval courtesy to the idea of a Biblical parable displaying an example of perfect equality and fraternity (as well represented in Fénélon's *Télémaque*, 1699).[388] The pastoral crystallised a new rhetoric of moral poetry. The incarnation of the Word (as *logos*) was conceived as being inseparable from the poetic fiction: on the model of the *Et in Arcadia ego* painting by Poussin (1636-1637), the Truth arises from inside the pastoral fiction in which the spectator might decipher his own destiny.[389]

From the early seventeenth century, the rise of the novel in literature provided a particularly fertile ground for the development of a utopian imaginary built around the idyllic Arcadia. Its poetic splendour rested on a dreamlike distortion of time and

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[386] Idem, 16.

[387] David Fairer, *Pastoral and Georgic* (Routledge, 2003), 80: 'In being a stereotype, pastoral could be inverted, turned around, parodied, and played with; but in order for all this to work it had to remain a stereotype. Georgic, on the other hand, was at home with notions of growth, development, variety, digression, and mixture, and had a natural tendency to absorb the old into the new, and find fresh directions.'

[388] Jean-Philippe Grosperrin, '"Quelque chose entre deux ". Sur *Adonis* et *Les Amours de Psyché* de La Fontaine', *Littératures* 35 (1996): 78: 'The emergence of truth is indissociable from the poetic fiction. It is from the within of a suave pastoral painting that muffles a truthful word. The idyllic decor itself becomes the mirror in which the spectator deciphers his own destiny. Through this, La Fontaine is less close from the *Fontaine de la Vérité d'Amour*, which he'll borrow for his own *Astrée* to Urfé's, than that of the *Bergers d'Arcadie* by Poussin, that are read by Bellori as a "moral poetry" untitled *La Félicité sujette à la mort*.' ('[L]e surgissement de la vérité est indissociable de la fiction poétique. C'est de l'intérieur d'un suave tableau pastoral que sourd une parole véridique. Le décor idyllique lui-même devient le miroir où le spectateur déchiffre sa propre destinée. Par là, La Fontaine est moins proche de la *Fontaine de la Vérité d'Amour*, qu'il empruntera pour sa propre *Astrée* à celle de d'Urfé, que des *Bergers d'Arcadie* de Poussin, lus par Bellori comme une "poésie morale" intitulée *La Félicité sujette à la mort*.'

[389] The painting was commented on 1672 by Giovanni Pietro Bellori in what is the very first biography of the painter ('Vita di Nicolò Pussino' in *Vite di pittori, scultori, ed architetti moderni*). Bellori highlighted the movement of arising of the truth, from within the fiction towards the outside (the spectator), and omnipresent possibility that the pastoral happiness can tilt to the side of death. On the painting, while a shepherd points the inscription 'ET IN ARCADIA EGO' for the spectator to decipher, the charming nymph suspends her laughs: on the vestiges of her smile can be read the thought of death.

space.[390] Honoré D'Urfé made room for creative exercise across all of the arts around the pastoral with his novel *L'Astrée* (1607-1627) as a consequence of the development of the *dolce stil nuovo*. Fumaroli calls this style a 'vector' in order to explain the direction of travel for substantial parts of seventeenth-century art:

> In the space opened by *L'Astrée*, the theatrical medium welcomes the pastoral at the end of the 1620s, which largely contributes to the modification of the general ecosystem of the French literature. Going beyond the borders between the media, the pastoral universe is the vector of a *dolce stil nuovo* that dissolves the dilapidated antithesis of Seneca's followers at the end of the fifteenth century. It is not only question of another imaginary mode, more peaceful, more modest, tender, but of a new attitude towards the art of writing and the expected impacts. […] From henceforth, all the literary genres, as if they were irresistibly contaminating one another, […] were to be reconsidered in light of moderation, softness, and the "natural" beauty of shepherds.[391]

Fumaroli stresses that the paradigmatic shift led by the advent of the *pastorale* postulated a change in terms of the French imaginary ecosystem and entailed a new attitude towards the art of writing and the effects it provoked. In other words, in the context of seventeenth-century France, the *pastorale* material was highly stylised and perhaps more of an exercise in what people thought an ideal pastoral society should be (filled with virtue, merit, discretion, modesty) than an actual representation of any pastoral society, even an imaginary one. *L'Astrée* represented a keystone experiment in theatrical rhetorics and its moral implications.[392] Of course, the polite behaviours of each character, and the ways they interact, were presented as the incarnation of an

[390] In *De vita solitaria* (1346–1356), an important source of inspiration for the development of pastoral rhetoric during the Renaissance, Petrarch described the *otium* (an ambiguous term relating to self-restraint, contemplation of the past, reflection and diligent study, proximity to nature, and friendship) as dwelling on the affirmation of a withdrawal from public affairs, a distancing that takes place somewhere in between the world of literature and of everyday life.

[391] Marc Fumaroli, *Précis de littérature française du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: PUF, 1990), 64: '[D]ans l'espace ouvert par *L'Astrée*, le théâtre connaît à la fin des années 20 une floraison pastorale qui contribue largement à modifier le climat général des Lettres françaises. Dépassant les frontières des genres, l'univers pastoral est le vecteur d'un *dolce stil nuovo* qui dissout les antithèses heurtées du sénéquisme fin-de-siècle. Il ne s'agit pas seulement d'un autre régime de l'imaginaire, plus apaisé, plus pudique, plus tendre, mais d'une attitude nouvelle vis-à-vis de l'art d'écrire et des effets qu'on en attend. […] Désormais, par une sorte de contagion irrésistible, tous les genres littéraires […] seront reconsidérés à la lumière de la modération, de la douceur, et de la beauté "naturelle" des bergers.'

[392] See Jean-Pierre van Elslande, 'Roman pastoral et crise des valeurs dans la France du premier XVIIe siècle', *Dix-septième siècle* 215, no. 2 (2002): 209–219.

idealised vision of civil devotion, which calls for virtue, merit, discretion, and modesty as practices of a perfect Christian life.[393] But the artificiality of the situations, the ritualistic dimension of the protagonists' gestures and actions, are utterly deliberate. D'Urfé built his novel as a very long theatrical performance in which the characters of the literary fiction are actors whose pastoral identity is worn like a costume, and whose satchels or shepherd's staff, as well as the elements of decorum around them, are stage accessories.[394]

In that context, the expression of perfected love is not only a moral motto, it is also and especially a 'space' (which best version is the *locus amœnus*, i.e. idyllic place) in which introspection happens and where emotions, registers, effects, etc. blend. Loving projects (or creates) a space within the characters. Powers agrees that 'In the *pastorale héroïque*, the struggle is internal and the "battleground" is a pleasant environment where the hero goes through various levels of anxiety.'[395] De facto, that question of whether one can have a tender heart was abundantly debated during the seventeenth century in literature, philosophy, and theology. The imaginary *Carte du Tendre*, inspired by Madeleine de Scudéry's novel *Clélie* (1654), represented an attempt to map (i.e. materialise visually) the imbricated network of internalised feelings related to love. With regard to the theatre, the idea that authors must touch something inside the spectators, which can then be quantified by the physical reaction of the members of the audience (and, in particular, their tears), was a new hot topic closely related to Jean Racine's productions.[396]

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[393] On the topic of civil devotion in particular, see Ruth Murphy, *Saint François de Sales et la civilité chrétienne* (Paris: Nizet, 1964), 75–80.
[394] The 'Avertissement au lecteur' situated at the beginning of the fourth part of *L'Astrée* indicates that the novel is intended by its author as a *tragi-comédie pastorale*, with five volumes each divided in twelve parts, like the five acts of a play (quoted by Henri Coulet, *Le Roman jusqu'à la Révolution* [Paris: Colin, 1967], vol. 1, 144).
[395] Powers, 'The *pastorale héroïque*', 23.
[396] In 1675, for example, Pierre de Villiers argued in a dissertation in the form of a dialogue (between the

In its very nature, the space of 'tenderness' projected by pastoral fiction encouraged the intertwinement and overlapping of various generic characteristics. It represents perhaps the strongest bond between the *pastorale héroïque* and the *tragédie en musique*, insofar as the traditional tragic topos of the sufferance (and sometimes sacrifice) is remodelled in the *tragédie* along the lines of the gallant pastoral lover.

To illustrate that point, the pastoral writings of the prominent author Jean de La Fontaine cultivated aspects of generic ambiguity that are highly relevant for the analysis of French operas from the 1660s and 1670s.[397] While acknowledging the 'taste of [his] time' in terms of poetic and stylistic choices that bound together the expression of love with tempered and idyllic politeness, La Fontaine also flirted with elements of epic poetry, a genre that had disappeared from the audience's horizon of expectation around the 1660s.[398] La Fontaine's experimentation exposed one important fact, namely that gallantry was a matter of register and style which could transcend topics and genres. The exacerbation in La Fontaine's writings of the tension and union between 'the serious [sérieux]' and 'the gallant' moved the traditional dialectic between high and low styles towards another rhetorical game: the alliance between the ornamented and the simple.[399] As a result, the on-going mix of grandeur and simplicity gave birth to what La Fontaine

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two imaginary characters Timante and Cléarque) that the actress La Champmeslé was able to touch a sensitive string and to trigger tears for anyone who had a 'tender heart': 'Je l'ai trouvé fort belle, et même je n'ai pas honte de dire que je n'ai pas pu m'empêcher de pleurer une fois ou deux en la voyant. Pour peu que vous ayez le cœur tendre, vous aurez pleuré aussi bien que moi.' (*Entretien sur les tragédies de ce temps*, 2).

[397] In 1668, La Fontaine published the first six volumes of his *Fables*, followed one year later by another series of publication including *Adonis* (originally written in 1658 and re-arranged in 1669) and *Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon*. Incidentally, the opera *Psyché* by Lully on a text by Molière would be adapted as a *tragédie en musique* in 1678. The connexion between La Fontaine's influential writings and the operatic plot used by Lully — itself preceded by Isaac de Benserade's ballet *Psyché ou la Puissance de l'Amour* (1656) and a series of Italian works (including Diamante Gabrieli's *Psiché* in 1649) — does not seem to have been very much commented on in the existing scholarship.

[398] Jean de La Fontaine, 'Avertissement' of *Adonis* in *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Seuil, 1965), 362.

[399] This confrontation between the serious and the gallant exposed in the *Songe de Vaux* (La Fontaine, *Œuvres complètes*, 396) is particularly salient in *Les Amours de Psyché*. The passage from one style to the other — from ornamentation to simplicity — is not only presented as a proof of excellent oral rhetorics, but also as a way to creatively dig out elements of novelty as well as personal marks of inventiveness.

and his contemporaries called a 'medium' style (sometimes deceptively named 'mediocre') in which threads of epic fiction are woven with pastoral elements. More specifically, some of the symbolic elements — generally characters themselves — from traditional Ancient *muthos* were pulled out from the original fables and dragged onto the space of the pastoral fiction through which was cultivated a breviary of seventeenth-century aristocratic culture.[400] La Fontaine's *Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon* developed in a ludic manner the prestige of Ancient mythical figures under the traits of seventeenth-century socialites, carefully safeguarding them from the dangers of the grotesque by keeping his writing style playful and light. Jean-Philippe Grosperrin analyses La Fontaine's practice as proof of a broader trend, namely the coalescence of antiquity (mythical heroes and tragic conventions) with modernity (the pastoral genre and galant aesthetics).[401]

La Fontaine's literary experimentation both reflected and fertilised the period's collective imagination, and probably influenced the development of lyric genres at the Opera. It is true that, from the early 1670s, the two models of the *pastorale héroïque* and the *tragédie en musique* already proceeded from intellectually distinct traditions in the minds of contemporaries. A clear example of this is that of La Fontaine's failed project of collaboration with Lully around 1674.[402] The former argued that the latter rejected his

[400] This idealised 'pleasant place' of comfort, leisure, and safety, is a literary topos tied to the pastoral universe, inherited from poets such as Theocritus, Horace, Lucretius, and Virgil. Scholar Jean-Pierre Collinet describes this shift between the serious and the gallant as 'a regression of heroism in the face of the popularity of gallantry' (*Le Monde littéraire de La Fontaine* [Paris, 1970], 237: 'une régression de l'héroïsme devant la tendance galante').
[401] Grosperrin, '" Quelque chose entre deux"', 69.
[402] Following an intense cabal against Lully and *Alceste* that sparked the first important intellectual quarrel regarding French opera, the composer was looking for new material. Despite being directly recommended by Athénaïs de Montespan (Louis XIV's favourite) and her sister, Lully rejected the final version of La Fontaine's work. The poet, profoundly vexed by this refusal, wrote a letter that circulated first among his private circle before being published in 1691 — incidentally at the same time as the failure of *Astrée et Céladon*, which was written by Lully's collaborator and follower, Pascal Collasse — in which he discussed his experience and harshly criticised Lully: 'Mon opéra, tout simple, et n'étant, sans spectacle,/Qu'un ours qui vient de naître, et non encor léché,/Plaît déjà. Que m'a donc Saint-Germain reproché ?/Un peu de pastorale ? enfin ce fut l'obstacle. J'introduisais d'abord des bergers ; et le

libretto (based on the myth of *Daphné*) on the ground that the pastoral dimension of La Fontaine's 'simple' fable, without 'heroes', did not make it suitable for the ARM.[403] Yet given the complexity of the *pastorale*'s DNA and its tendency to cross-contaminate a variety of styles and genres, the *pastorale héroïque* is in fact difficult to contrast with the *tragédie en musique*.

The additional qualification of *héroïque* to the label *pastorale* at the Opera is a first obvious indicator of its tendency to mix elements and permeate other genres, in particular the *tragédie en musique*. The *pastorale héroïque*'s hybridity is in fact so prominent that modern scholars sometimes find themselves unable to fully comprehend it. A poetic uncertainty hovers the distinction between the *tragédie* and the *pastorale héroïque* at the ARM. Powers comments on the heroic quality paired with the pastoral universe at the Opera as follows:

> [The *pastorale*] assumes a heroic tone when a legendary hero, deity or other supernatural being is cast as a main personage. This can be in the role of a lover, a rival or, less frequently, a protector of another main character when such person actively participates in the drama and influences the outcome. The heroic quality is reinforced through the actions of one or more personage — deity or mortal. More specifically, the conduct of the individual(s) must reflect considerable strength, merit, and generosity and a deep concern for the well-being of some other person or persons.[404]

The definition echoes eighteenth-century contemporaries, such as Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Nougaret, who defined the *pastorale héroïque* as 'The lyric play in which we see the actions of heroes and gods holds nonetheless the title of *pastorale*; it is enough that the location of the scene is rural, or that some of its actors are of an inferior rank. The drama

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roi/Ne se plaît à donner qu'aux héros de l'emploi./Je l'en loue. Il fallait qu'on vantât la suite;/Faute de quoi ma muse aux plaintes est réduites/Que si le nourrisson de Florence [Lully] eût voulu,/Chacun eût fait ce qu'il eût pu./Celui qui nous a peint un des travaux d'Alcide/(Je ne veux dire Euripide,/Mais Quinault), Quinault donc pour sa part aurait eu/Saint-Germain, où sa muse au grand jour eût paru;/Et la mienne, moins parfaite,/Eût eu du moins Paris, partage de cadette:/Cadette que peut-être on eût cru quelques jours/Digne de partager en aînée à son tour.' (*Œuvres complètes de Jean de La Fontaine* [Paris: Didot, 1836], 'Sur le même sujet que la pièce précédente [Le Florentin]. À Madame de Thianges', 548.)

[403] However, other hypotheses for this refusal, not tied to the generic difference between *pastorale héroïque* and *tragédie en musique* can be advanced, such as the fact that Lully probably preferred to secure the services of the more obedient librettist (i.e. Quinault).

[404] Powers, 'The *pastorale héroïque*', 8-9.

whose subject is more serious than simple, & whose catastrophe is sometimes tragic, is called *Pastorale-héroïque*.'[405]

The array of figures that populates *pastorales héroïques* is very rich. In continuity with its literary origins, the *pastorale* fiction represents a kind of 'school of lovers', in which love — replacing any other philosophical school — represents a natural vector of transcendence. Lionel de La Laurencie, for example, indicates that the genre is composed of 'ingenious dialogues about the essence and modalities of love, [and a] eulogy of country life and the pleasures of hunting'.[406] Often, the *pastorale*'s love affairs proceed according to a formula which Henry Carrington Lancaster refers to as a 'chain of lovers (A loves B, who loves C, who loves D, etc.)'.[407] The romantic couple, made of perfectly tempered shepherd and shepherdess, highlights the idyllic nature of the *pastorale*.

But the galant and gentle young pair of lovers is far from being the only model of characters. Comic roles, often linked to the practice of cross-dressing (as in the case of Béroé in *Pomone*) also occupy a key place within the diegesis. The function of antagonist is generally attributed to an ugly male or even a mythological creature (such as the Faun in *Pomone* and *Les Peines et les Plaisirs de l'Amour*), the physical abnormality and misplaced romantic hopefulness of which trigger the laughter of the audience. Additionally, deities are sometimes mixed in *pastorales*' plots, bringing with

[405] Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Nougaret, *De l'Art du théâtre en général* (Paris: Cailleau, 1769), II, 230: 'The Lyrical Play where one sees Heroes and Gods acting is still called a Pastorale; it suffices that the place of the Scene is buccolic, or that a few of the Actors are from a lower rank. The *Pastorale-Héroïque* has a plot that is more grave than simple, and which the central knot is sometimes tragical.' ('La Pièce lyrique où l'on voit agir des Héros & des Dieux n'en porte pas moins le nom de Pastorale ; il suffit que le lieu de la Scène soit champêtre, ou que quelques-uns de ses Acteurs soient d'un rang subalterne. On appelle Pastorale-Héroïque le Drame dont le sujet est plutôt grave que simple, & dont la catastrophe est parfois tragique.')
[406] Lionel de La Laurencie, 'Les pastorales en musique', 140: 'ingénieux dialogues sur l'essence et les modalités de l'amour, éloge de la vie champêtre et des plaisirs de la chasse'.
[407] Henry Carrington Lancaster, *A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century* (Paris: Les Presses universitaires, 1929; and Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1936), I, 25.

them additional elements linked to their nature and social importance. Looking again at La Fontaine's work, the model of the goddess Venus — as presented in *Adonis* and *Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon*, for example — becomes the beacon of the author's aesthetics of female grace. For composing that model, La Fontaine blends together rhetoric borrowed from Cicero (i.e. *neglegentia diligens* as a way to charm effortlessly) and Neo-Platonist ideas from Renaissance philosophers such as Marsilio Ficino.[408]

This multiplicity of characters participates in the complex dialectic between the *pastorale* and the *tragédie* that bears witness to the existence of an intertextual dialogue at a deep level. Amongst the key elements that proved resilience from one genre to the other is the concept of 'tenderness', which, as highlighted above, provides not only a quality (to *dramatis personae* and sceneries) but also indicates a space. That broad definition of 'tenderness' as 'space' means that it is the mark not only for young lovers, as implied by the taxonomy of *emplois* described by Legrand and Dratwicki, but also of many other kinds of characters. Indeed the introspection triggered by 'tenderness' is not the monopoly of a few roles only. Rather, it circulates among the network of roles — regardless of their fury and cruelty — and can be expressed under diverse forms, often combined at the scale of one scene (and sometimes just within the framework of one opera air). In other words, the *pastorale* teaches the *tragédie* that anyone is capable of love and friendship (or, at least, is capable of recognising them as good and pursuing them to some extent). Anyone is capable of finding a space within themselves where love, with its pains and conflicts, are explored.

From a distance, the development of the *pastorale* and the *tragédie en musique* rely on main characters with different natures. In particular, female roles that occupy

[408] Cicero, *De Oratore*, 77-78, trans. A. Yon (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1964). With regard to Mrcilo Ficino, see Jean Lafond, 'La beauté et la grâce. L'esthétique "platonicienne" des *Amours de Psyché*' (*RHLF*, 1969), 474–490.

central narrative functions present some contrasts. On the one hand, enamoured shepherdesses and peaceful goddesses cohabited in *pastorales* (*Ariane*; Climène, Astérie, and Philis in *Les Peines et les Plaisirs de l'Amour*; *Pomone*). On the other, characters of a more troubled, tortured, and elegiac nature were present in *tragédies* (e.g. *Armide*). Yet those dissimilarities should not obscure the ways in which they intertwined. The mutual contagion between the two genres (i.e. from the *pastorale* to the *tragédie*) is particularly well perceptible through the lens of the characters. As seen in the preceding chapter, many leading roles in Lully's operas swiftly alternate between softness and expressions of power, violence, and vengeance. Leading female roles, however majestic, such as Armide, can express tenderness and provoke it in others.[409] 'Although invincible, one is not less sensitive', affirms Amadis.[410] Not only can violent characters be tenderly in love but, moreover, there can be a 'tenderness' of love and peace just as there is a 'tenderness' associated with violent sentiments of desire, hatred, or fear. 'Tenderness' can designate the gentleness of the pair of lovers as well as the violent pain of grief of a solitary character. It can be perceived both in the 'calm that succeeds the trouble in [Atys's] heart' and the passage from love to vengeance in the heart of the fearsome Cybèle.[411] As such, tenderness binds together all characters of the fiction (whether it is that of the *pastorale héroïque* or the *tragédie en musique*) regardless of the diversity of roles' love types (that scholar Robert Fajon divides into

[409] *Armide*, I, 3: 'Hidraot [followed by the chorus]: Armide is even more amiable that she is fearsome./How glorious is her triumph./Her strongest charms are those of her beautiful eyes./She does not need to employ the terrible art/Which knows, when she wants it, how to arm the netherworld;/Her beauty finds everything possible,/Our proudest enemies moan in her chains.' ('Armide est encore plus aimable qu'elle n'est redoutable./Que son triomphe est glorieux./Ses charmes les plus forts son ceux de ses beaux yeux./Elle n'a pas besoin d'employer l'art terrible/Qui sait quand il lui plaît faire armer les Enfers;/Sa beauté trouve tout possible,/Nos plus fiers Ennemis gémissent dans ses fers.')

[410] *Amadis*, II, 9 (last scene): 'Pour être invincible, on en est pas moins sensible.'

[411] *Atys*, V, 4: 'Un calme heureux succède aux troubles de mon cœur. / Sangaride, nymphe charmante, / qu'estes-vous devenue ? où puis-je avoir recours ? / Divinité toute puissante, / Cybele, ayez pitié de nos tendres amours, / rendez-moi, Sangaride, épargnez ses beaux jours.' This passage of happy serenity culminates right before Cybèle shows the young man the dead body of his love, Sangaride: therefore, the tenderness of the moment rises like a surreal parenthesis in which the whole story is suspended to Atys's ecstasy.

three categories).[412]

Finally, the development of 'tenderness' across genres and medias is echoed by the increased mention of such concept in early modern theoretical writings on theatre. The idea of 'tenderness' as a space of introspection is not only something restricted to the stage; it also included the expression of feeling (and tears in particular) amongst members of the audience. Succeeding in moving the spectators and making them express the pleasure found in the expression of passion (and tears in particular) represented an innovation in the second half of the seventeenth century. Various treatises encapsulating the use of tears as a dramaturgical tools gained a considerable importance in theatre aesthetics throughout the seventeenth century. Among them are La Mesnardière's *La Poétique* (1639), Abbot d'Aubignac's *La Pratique du théâtre* (1657), and Pierre Corneille's *Trois discours sur le poème dramatique* (1660).[413] The late seventeenth-century understanding of galant catharsis directly drew from the *pastorale* universe: it sought not what 'generate[s] horror […] but aims to create a community of compassion, in which the subject experiences both at an intimate and collective level his or her own sensible humanity'.[414] Tragic genres that valorised lachrymal effects, on stage as well as off stage, came to be developed under the pen of authors such as Pierre Corneille, Jean Racine, and ultimately Philippe Quinault and Lully.

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[412] In 'Le Crime d'amour ou la passion coupable à l'Opéra: De la mort de Lully à L'Europe galante (1687–1697)' (*Dix-septième siècle* 198 [1998], 9–16), Robert Fajon studies the ways in which Quinault treated love theme, which leads him to divide main male characters into three groups. First, the triumphant heros (who use valour and courage, such as Cadmus, Hercules in *Alceste*, Thésée). Second, the hero who personifies the conflict between love and glory, destroyed by the consuming passion (such as Atys). Third, the perfect love that is neither a reward or a weakness but the end in itself and the objective of all human life (Amadis, Acis in *Acis et Galatée*).

[413] In that new rhetoric of tears, first elaborated between 1640s and 1660s, it is tempting to see a sort of translation of the water motif found in *pastorales* (that which inhabited the *locus amœnus*) in the universe of the *tragédie en musique*.

[414] Emmanuelle Hénin, 'Le plaisir des larmes, ou l'invention d'une catharsis galante', *Littératures classiques* 1, no. 62 (2007), §3, https://www.cairn.info/revue-litteratures-classiques1-2007-1-page-223.htm: 'Il ne s'agit plus de susciter l'horreur […] mais de créer une communauté de compassion, où le sujet fait l'expérience intime et partagée de son humanité sensible.'

IV.2. Reshaping tenderness and pathos around the performers

In the preceding section, I argued that it is not accurate to presuppose that 'tenderness' is the monopoly of a certain set of roles only. Gentle princesses, although filled with tears and lamentations, are in a way only one 'side' of that 'tenderness'. That concept developed under the auspices of the *pastorale* universe contaminating most leading roles in *tragédies*. The dissemination of 'tenderness' across roles, then, challenges attempts made at offering a reliable taxonomy regarding narrative structures and sets of characters. Indeed if most of the main roles share common elements (some of them, like tears and sighs, that modern commentators might tend to only associate with specific sets of roles), what prevails for proceeding to their characterisation and classification?

In the following section, I argue that the study of the ARM's repertoire from the point of view of performers represents one of the best opportunities for refining our understanding of opera roles and, on a broader level, for the transfer and reconfiguration of central dramaturgical elements from the *pastorale* to the *tragédie* related to 'tenderness'. The place, use, and value of monologues represent a good parameter to gauge the ways in which feelings associated with 'tenderness' can be shared by a variety of characters, thus illustrating its permeability across genres (and works of the same opera genres); therefore, monologues represent the core of the musical analysis below.

*

Opera monologues bear topographical associations.[415] Opera's dramaturgical and

[415] See Herbert Schneider, 'Les monologues dans l'opera de Lully', *Dix-Septième Siècle* 161 (1988): 353–63.

scenographic seventeenth-century innovations — in comparison with spoken theatre — enabled a great variety of decors, which allowed characters to inhabit a larger number of sceneries. Some of these scenographic settings were solitary and remote locations (e.g. lost forests, magical islands), which were sites uniquely open to lyrical expression; there, the 'self' of the character (mainly through the text) and of the singer (mainly through the voice) could resonate and expand with particular acuity.[416] In other words, these opera scenes worked as open grounds for imagination and introspection; they were spaces tailored for the expression of 'tenderness'. That phenomenon took often place during monologues where complex musical organisations, with various combinations of recitative and aria sections, could be employed for the exploration of love sentiments. Such monologues could exemplify the perfection of pastoral gallantry or highlight the complex tensions playing within a character's soul.

Building on Benjamin Pintiaux's fruitful considerations on opera's 'rhetoric and function of the language of tears', the analysis of monologues' network of musical, poetic, and dramaturgical signs leaning towards crying shows that it permeated different *emplois*.[417] This rhetoric in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French opera, mixing sighs, cries, and various other expressions of romantic feelings, associated with specific dramatic situations and musical semiotics (in particular, the use of the flute, which highlights the *gravitas* of the situation and crystallises the mental image of flowing tears), actually transcended the spectrum of roles. Although many scholars, such as Jean-Jacques Roubine, have argued that female roles and actors embodied more

[416] See, for further discussion, the analysis of Blake Stevens in his PhD dissertation 'Solitary Persuasions: The Concept of the Monologue in French Opera from Lully to Rameau' (Stanford University, 2007). The monologues presented as solitary scenes (i.e. scenes in which a character is alone, think he or she is alone, or is accompanied by a chorus that acts as an intern voice) are both a type of dramatic scene and a musical form. As a musical form, a monologue can be comprised of a recitative and an air, or a more complex organisation, with different sections that follow closely the evolution of the character's psyche.
[417] Benjamin Pintiaux, 'Rhétorique et fonction du langage des larmes dans l'opéra français du XVIIIe siècle : l'exemple du *Jephté* de Montéclair', *Littératures classiques* 1, no. 62 (2007), 173–188.

specifically the 'gift of tears' on stage, the distribution of monologue scenes across male and female opera characters suggests that there is much more nuance to it.[418] As such, this symbol of 'pathos' particularly salient in monologues as Sadler argues, directly informed by a specific understand of 'tenderness' both helps and complicates our understanding of the *emploi*.[419]

Each of Perrin's and Cambert's *pastorales* [see TABLE II.3] integrated a handful of monologues. Those were equally divided between the soloists roles, including those placed in second rank (such as Silène and Damon in *Ariane*, Béroé and Le Dieu des jardins in *Pomone*, the Faune in *Les Peines et les Plaisirs de l'Amour*). Among the early *tragédies en musique* [see TABLE II.4], only *Cadmus et Hermione*, with its accumulation of secondary characters and sub-plots, follows this model. In contrast, *Alceste*, *Thésée*, *Atys*, and *Isis* grant solitary scenes of introspection and expression of love to a few roles only, sometimes bypassing some of the main leading roles, such as Alceste (*Alceste*), Thésée (*Thésée*), and Sangaride (*Atys*).

Looking closer to Lully's monologues written before 1679 (i.e. before *Bellérophon*), their composition and distribution are indicative of at least two things. First, they point out who, amongst the soloists, are entitled to explore their own sense of 'tenderness'. Second, their internal structure highlight the manner in which such exploration is conducted.

Amongst the soft leading roles, only three princesses (Hermione in *Cadmus et Hermione*, Églé in *Thésée*, and Io in *Isis*) are assigned monologues that work as

[418] Jean-Jacques Roubine, 'La stratégie des larmes au XVIIe siècle', *Littérature*, no. 9 (1973), 67. Adélaïde Cron has argued that 'the association between tears and femininity is not self-evident during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.' ('Larmes et identité féminine dans l'écriture mémorialiste: une corrélation problématique', *Littératures classiques* 62, no. 1 [2007]: §1.) Anne Vincent-Buffault argues the same in *Histoire des larmes*, 116–117 and 232.
[419] Graham Sadler, 'Rameau, Jean-Philippe', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001 [2nd ed.]), XX, 793.

introspective scenes. Remarkably, their forms are loose. Hermione's scene (I, 3) is a *récit* that uses a continuous form built on direct phrase repetition (AA'BB'BB''C), which, although it is made in presence of her followers Charite and Aglante, her Nourrice, and a Page, functions like a monologue (the other four characters remain absolutely quiet and observant like the rest of the audience during the scene). Two others monologues, one in *Thésée* (I, 2) and another in *Isis* (II, 1) are entirely built as recitatives, following the free flow of the poetic text. Only a second monologue attributed to Io in *Isis* (V, 1) presents a more closed form, with an instrumental introduction (*ritournelle*), followed by an *air mesuré* using a rondo form in which the recurring section, repeating the first three lines, follows the melodic theme introduced by the *ritournelle*. In contrast to those three princesses, most of the monologues attributed in the same operas to other leading roles are generally more structured. In particular, those attributed to fierce and majestic female roles (Médée in *Thésée*, Cybèle in *Atys*, Vénus in *Psyché*'s second edition), are more complex. They constitute full scenes in themselves, sometimes using the ABA' form and the framing with orchestral *ritournelles*. Such setting became more common and widespread across characters in subsequent operas.

From *Bellérophon* onwards, Lully's writing for the orchestra shifted.[420] The density of sound created by the five string parts gave Lully room for sculpting the depth, strength, and mobility of the music. Instead of playing mostly during the *ouvertures*, the dancing and for chorus parts, the orchestra became more involved in the fabric of the show and was assigned a much more significant narrative function. Orchestral parts highlighted the progression of the drama and accompany more of the arias and récitatifs

[420] See La Gorce, *Lully*, 654; Bertrand Porot, 'Poétique de la haine dans Amadis de Jean-Baptiste Lully et Philippe Quinault (1684)', *Les discours de la haine : Récits et figures de la passion dans la Cité* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2009), 153–164, §26; Hervé Lacombe (ed.), *Histoire de l'opéra français. Du Roi-Soleil à la Révolution*, (Fayard, 2021, vol. I).

given to the leading roles. In particular, the orchestra was present during more monologues, playing *ritournelles* (as part of the introduction and sometimes as transition between two sections of the scenes) and as constant accompaniment for the voice. All types of female characters were included, soft and vengeful roles alike. Here again, *tragédies*' musical poetry borrowed to the *pastorale*' dramaturgy as it aimed at representing the internal 'tenderness' of each solo character, independently from their category type.

That being said, fierce and vengeful characters accounted for a large part of opera monologues. Out of the 25 different female characters identified in the TABLE II.4, about half of them can be firmly categorised as falling into the *emploi* of powerful queens and sorceresses or fierce supernatural entities: La Nymphe de la Seine (*Alceste*), Médée (*Thésée*), Cybèle (*Atys*), Vénus (*Psyché*, 2nd edition), Cérès (*Proserpine*), Mérope (*Persée*), Climène (*Phaéton*), Arcabonne (*Amadis*), Logistille (*Roland*), Armide (*Armide*). Not only are monologues more present amongst that category, each of these characters are also given more monologues than other types of roles. In *Armide*, for example, the role title performs not less than four monologues; likewise Médée, Mérope, and Cérès each perform three monologues in their respective operas. Conversely, only seven roles identified in the TABLE II.4 can be described as soft princesses: Psyché (*Psyché*, 1st and 2nd editions), Hermione (*Cadmus et Hermione*), Églé (*Thésée*), Io (*Isis*), Philonoë (*Bellérophon*), Libye (*Phaéton*), Oriane (*Amadis*). In-between sits a series of roles that are slightly harder to classify due to the mixture of elements that characterises their identity: Proserpine and Aréthuse (*Proserpine*), Andromède (*Persée*), Théone (*Phaéton*), Angélique (*Roland*). Finally, only one monologue is delegated to a second ranked role Dorine in *Thésée*.

The abundance of monologues reaches a culmination in the last three *tragédies*

en musique written by Lully, a cycle that breaks with mythological inspiration and displays an interest in the *merveilleux chrétien* (i.e. borrowed from novels concerned with idealised conception of Christian chivalry) confronted with pagan magic and tied in with nationalistic symbols. Whilst a few monologues retained a looser form, generally in the case of mixed characters — Andromède (*Persée*, IV, 5) and Théone (*Phaéton*, II, 2) — and occasionally for a soft role — Oriane (*Amadis*, IV, 4) — the vast majority endorsed structured contours (including the orchestra during introductions and *ritournelles*) up to the display of utterly stereotypical organisations such as the form ABA'. The latter increasingly dominated monologue scenes towards the end of Lully's career.

This whole trend regarding the evolution of monologues coincided with the restructuring of the ARM's troupe and, in particular, the arrival of Marie Le Rochois. I will first analyse roles that were included in Le Rochois's repertoire before addressing the general change in the troupe.

As shown in the section III.3, many of the monologues in *Amadis*, *Roland*, and *Armide*, rely heavily on Le Rochois's vocal and acting skills. Le Cerf de La Viéville summed up the variety of affects in Armide's ultimate monologue, which closes the entire opera (V, 5: 'Le perfide Renaud me fuit'), in those terms:

> How many beauties! How much strength, how skillful expression in the least things! For example, notice the *port de voix* and the tremor on the minim [it is actually a crotchet] of the word *me fuit*. Isn't this long pitch saying *he flees very far from me, he flees from me for ever*? One can single out this scene for pathetic effect, for graces, for the diversity of movements, in short what makes the triumph of French music.[421]

As mentioned in III.3, Lully's continual raising and lowering of tensions using swift

[421] Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison*, II, 15: 'Combien de beautés! Quelle force, quelle adresse d'expression jusques dans les moindres choses! Par exemple, remarquez en passant le port de voix et le tremblement sur la blanche du mot, *me fuit*. Ce long ton ne veut-il pas dire, *me fuit bien loin, me fuit pour jamais*? On peut appeler cette scène pour le pathétique, pour les grâces, pour la diversité des mouvements, le triomphe en abrégé de la musique française.'

sequences of modulating cadences (towards sharp or flat keys) act as a mirror in miniature of the on-going alternation, at the plot level, between the tender and fearsome passions that inhabit the type of complex characters performed by Le Rochois.

Such conflict is particularly salient in characters that were mentioned above as 'mixed'. Amongst that category, almost all of roles (i.e. Aréthuse, Théone, Angélique) were premiered by Marie Le Rochois. Conversely, Andromède and Proserpine were both created by Marie Aubry, whose talent, although not equal to that of Le Rochois, was non negligible. All in all, these characters exemplify well the back and forth between a variety of feelings that all collide and reconcile into the general and broader concept of 'tenderness'.

Let us take again, as example for analysis, the case of Angélique. Throughout the opera *Roland*, the alternation between softness and power is at the heart of the musical, vocal, and acting profile of Angélique. The acts II and III work on clashes between the affirmation of Angélique's grandeur side and her propensity to love. At the beginning of the second act, during a dialogue with Témire, Angélique wishes to drink from the 'fountain of hatred' so that she can ignore her sentiments towards Médor. Her wish to appear distant from love, a cold-headed and independent woman, is also highlighted by the fact that she possesses a magical artefact that allows her to become invisible, something that a strong sorceress would use and no ordinary princess. However, the intervention of Médor in the following scenes overthrows completely Angélique's project, defeats her pride, and brings out the warmth of her tenderness again. The love duet between the two, commented by a quasi-celestial chorus (II, 5: 'Aimez, aimez-vous'), sheds a clear light on Angélique's tenderness. In the third act, the alternation is reversed. During the fourth scene, Angélique expresses extreme pathetic sentiments while she contemplates the possible advent of a 'tragic destiny'; directly afterwards,

however, her powers reassemble the chorus and trigger the final divertissement (III, 5: 'Vous qui voulez paraître'), something that only highly powerful characters do on stage.[422]

As indicated before, the multiplication of monologues in Lully's operas after 1679 indicates a great variety of female leading roles on stage and is directly correlated with the troupe's transition period in the first years of the 1680s. Four *tragédies en musique* premiered between 1680 and 1684 showcase three main female roles [see TABLE II.7]: this, leaving aside the earlier case of *Cadmus et Hermione* where sub-plots naturally multiplied romantic couples, represented an exceptional situation.[423] Those four different sets made of three main female roles (in *Proserpine, Persée, Phaéton, Amadis*) present characters that opposed each other in some capacity and sometimes even a fourth female role of importance could be added (i.e. Cyané in *Proserpine*, which belongs to the *emploi* of confidantes).[424] Looking at the composition of the ARM troupe over the same period of time, six different female solo singers cohabited: Miss Saint-Christophle, Marie Aubry (then on the threshold of her retirement), Le Rochois, the Moreau sisters, and Marie-Louise Desmatins. A performer-based view works here from the intuition that Quinault's librettos incorporated this exceptionally high number of female soloists in the fabric of the plots. Instead of working with a binary opposition amongst female leading figures (i.e. one gentle princess and a vengeful woman), the librettist expanded the dialectic by incorporating a third role. In that new trio setting, the type of soft princess remains intact but the two other types of female roles are considerably more complex. On the one hand, a profile of

[422] *Roland*, III, 4: 'Vivez pour moi, qu'il vous souvienne/Que vôtre destinée est unie à la mienne,/Ma mort suivrait vôtre trépas:/ Évitons un destin tragique;/Médor ne veut-t'il pas vivre/pour Angelique ?'
[423] The ballet *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, premiered at Saint-Germain-en-Laye for the court has a radically different structure, which multiplies the roles. Additionally, the casting indicates a great blend between singers from the ARM and the Musique du roi, complicating the analyse in term of type-casting.
[424] The character of Méduse in *Persée*, which falls into the category of monsters, was a cross-dressing role attributed to a male singer.

socially high-ranked woman integrates to the fiction new literary profiles, i.e. mothers: Cérès in *Proserpine* and Climène in *Phaéton*. On the other hand, a third type encapsulates a nuanced balance between positions of power, love, and deep sentiments of friendship. In that last category can be found the rejected betrothed (Théone in *Phaéton*), frustrated lovers (Mérope in *Persée*), friends and second lovers (Aréthuse in *Proserpine* and Corisande in *Amadis*). All of them occupy a place of importance in the whole plot structure and, importantly, seem affected by a fluidity of sentiments and permeable to characteristics drawn from both other sets of main female roles.

Let us take the character of Aréthuse as a first case study for that last category of roles. In *Proserpine*, Aréthuse absorbs qualities and narrative functions of the main tender princess: logically, that princess is Proserpine, a young deity who suffers injustice (although she is not a fragile human being) and who is relatively absent from the stage throughout the opera. Indeed Proserpine appears briefly at the end of the first two acts, during the *divertissements*, before constituting the focal point of the plot during the fourth act only. As such, Aréthuse is explicitly presented as a central loving and tender character, a function that usually would have been occupied by the role title entirely. First, Aréthuse is designated as a loving role by Cérès herself, Proserpine's mother, who highlights her romantic troubles very early on in the opera (I, 3). Then, Aréthuse sings a pathetic monologue (I, 4: 'Vaine fierté, faible rigueur') that resembles the discourse of a soft character. Finally, Aréthuse becomes the main focus of the plot throughout the second act; she sings alternate duets with Alphée and Ascalaphe, which highlight further her sensible and romantic dimension. Without being *stricto sensu* an antagonist to Proserpine, Aréthuse definitively assists in challenging the idea of a one type of character's monopoly over the expression of tender and pathetic sentiments at the Opera. Looking now at the ARM's troupe and casting, the number of female singers

available for Lully and Quinault for the creation of *Proserpine* was incredibly high. Marie Verdier, then on the threshold of retirement, was designated for the central role of Cérès, powerful yet filled with tender motherly love. Proserpine and Aréthuse, meanwhile, were respectively assigned to two different actresses between the premiere and the first revival. Proserpine was first performed by Miss Ferdinand *l'aînée* (b. 1658–a. 1718) then by the ageing Aubry; Aréthuse by Miss Ferdinand *la cadette* (b. 1659–a. 1718) before being given to Le Rochois, then one of the freshest recruits in Lully's troupe. Without eclipsing any of her eldest colleagues, Le Rochois was nevertheless able to cut her way through the top by playing Aréthuse. In contrast, Miss Ferdinand *la cadette*, like her sister, was probably less embarrassed by respecting seniority rights since she was not part of the ARM's troupe but worked for the Musique du Roi.[425] The choice of the two Ferdinand sisters is explained by the fact that the premiere (3 February 1680) took place in front of the court at Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

That deliberate choice to showcase the talent of three female singers (instead of two) placed in more or less equal positions within the drama is also particularly salient in the case of *Persée*. There, the monstrous role of Méduse, instead of being assigned to a woman, reconnects with the tradition of ugly and comic cross-dressing roles assigned to a male *taille*. The choice cannot be solely explicable using aesthetic terms, disconnected from the study of the performers. In itself, the multiplication of female roles — between the young Andromède, the motherly Cassiopée, the vengeful Mérope, and the monstrous Méduse — blurs the theatrical principle of unity of action. In particular, the roles of Mérope and Méduse overlap in terms of passion and narrative functions. Instead, this high number of characters is better explained by the

[425] It is also logical that Miss Ferdinand *la cadette* would be assigned the role of Aréthuse since she already performed that of Philonoë in *Bellérophon*, also created in front of the court, just one month before *Proserpine*.

multiplication of female singers in the troupe who were granted leading roles for different reasons. Lully could hardly dismiss the singers at the top of the troupe hierarchy (Aubry and Saint-Christophle, who performed Andromède and Cassiopée respectively). At the same time, Mérope is evidently curated so as to expose the talents of his rising star, Le Rochois. The monologues 'Ah! Je garderai bien mon cœur' (I, 3), 'Hélas! Il va périr! Dois-je en trembler?' (II, 4), and 'Ô mort, venez finir mon destin déplorable' (V, 1) present all the musical and vocal elements that take advantage of Le Rochois's skills. The last monologue, for example, displays an impressive melodic interval of minor sixth, highlighted by a chord of a tritone: the terrifying splendour of this monologue recalls that of the other leading characters in Lully's operas performed by Le Rochois.

The most problematic case study is that of *Phaéton*, for which we have almost no name left for the casting of the premiere. The title role is a problematic hero, filled with delusions of grandeur and whose pride is his ultimate weakness. Phaéton resembles Giasone (Jason), another epic hero with a dubious status whose story constitutes one of the most famous and regularly performed of Cavalli's operas around the 1660s-1670s.[426] Phaéton is dramatically and musically upstaged by the three female leading roles: Climène (his mother), Libye (the young princess Phaéton wishes to marry for social status), and finally Théone (the fiancée he ultimately turns down). The scarcity of the sources regarding the casting of the premiere in 1683 leaves plenty of room for speculation. Only one poem by the Abbot de Chaulieu (published by Titon du Tillet in his *Parnasse français*, 794) indicates that Le Rochois created Théone. Arguably, Le Rochois would be equally suited for performing the role of Climène, daughter of the Ocean and irascible mother of Phaéton, especially if no one else was available for doing

[426] See Wendy Heller, 'Hypsipyle, Medea, and the Ovidian Immagination: Taming the Epic Hero in Cavalli's "Giasone"', *Readying Cavalli's Operas for the Stage*, 167–186.

so. Banducci suggests that Miss de Saint-Christophle perhaps performed Climène, but the Parfaict brothers indicated that she retired after playing the role of Cassiopée from *Persée*, in April 1682.[427] It is likely that Le Rochois first performed Théone before being assigned the role of Climène (especially if Saint-Christophle retired shortly after the premiere). But, even if it were the case that Le Rochois played Climène at some point, then, the casting for both Libye and Théone would still be unknown, leaving room for new hypotheses. Given that, in 1682, Marie-Louise Desmatins and Marie-Louise Moreau were already part of the ARM's troupe and that Marie Aubry had not left yet, it is reasonable to imagine that at least two of them occupied the roles of Libye and Théone or, alternatively, that being the latest recruits of the Opéra, Marie-Louise Desmatins and Marie-Louise Moreau were the understudies for one or both of the roles of Libye and Théone. The latter is a character slightly more mature than the former; Libye subscribes more to the characteristics of young, crying, and tender princesses that structured Aubry's career. Compiling all the existing sources and hypotheses described above, TABLE II.7 identifies the cast for *Proserpine*, *Persée*, *Phaéton*, and *Amadis*, in an attempt to reconstruct the missing sections and rectify the elements of uncertainty by applying Banducci's method of typecasting.

Leading roles are not the sole indicators of the influence exerted by singers on the creative process. Amongst the roles identified in TABLE II.4, Dorine is the only second ranked roles played by a female singer that appears. Indeed she is given a monologue during the second act (sc. 5), after she recalls her romantic past with Arcas (sc. 4); additionally, as the confidant of the furious Médée who is central to the whole narrative in *Thésée,* Dorine has real influence on the way things go within the plot. From an aesthetic angle only, it does not entirely make sense that this type of character in a

[427] Parfaict, *HARM*, 34.

tragédie would enjoy such exposure on stage. It is nevertheless tempting to argue that this is here a residual element from the *pastorale* universe in which many second ranked roles could be given monologues [see TABLE II.3]. For example, Dorine displays some comic elements (II, 1) which pop up as residues of *pastorale*'s characters like that of Béroé. From a performer-based view, however, the choice becomes clearer and more evident when one acknowledges the presence of Anne de Beaucreux (b. 1656–ca. 1680) within the ARM's troupe. Beaucreux never enjoyed the level of recognition of some of her contemporaries, and it is hard to understand with great precision the extend of her talents given the scarcity of sources.[428] Nevertheless she seems to have been a singer Lully could trust and rely on.[429] It is no mystery, therefore, that Dorine would be later assigned to promising talents (some of which will be analysed in chapter five) such as Miss Ferdinand *la cadette* (September 1677, 1678), Louise-Élisabeth Heusé (1707), Louise-Élisabeth Heusé (1708), Anne Mignier (1720, 1729), and Louise Jacquet (1744).

[428] As in the case of Marie Aubry, Anne de Beaucreux was involved in the trial opposing Guichard and Lully (*Requête d'Henry Guichard, où l'on va établir l'innocence et la justification du suppliant*, [1675-1676], F-Pn, f. Fm 7207-7208; *Mercure galant* [Paris], February 1680, III, 261–262).
[429] Parfaict, *HARM*, 1741, I, 30.

IV. Conclusion

The study of opera genres, when viewed through the lens of singers, provides valuable insights into the interplay between different dramatic forms. In particular, the dramaturgy of the *pastorale héroïque* had a certain degree of influence on *tragédies en musique*. The choices made regarding genre classification were not purely theoretical but were influenced by various material and human factors. While intellectual figures like Jean de La Fontaine played a significant role in promoting generic blends from a literary perspective, it is important to recognize that practical considerations also shaped these decisions.

The one common criterion that transcended genre boundaries was the exploration of the human soul and emotions. This aspect can be observed in all opera characters, regardless of their ethos or social status. Case studies, such as that of the character of Dorine in *Thésée*, exemplify how tenderness permeates all roles. In the seventeenth century, tenderness was not merely considered a quality but was viewed as an essential aspect of the human condition and a fundamental element of plot structure. It underscores the shared emotional depth across opera characters and contributes to the overall richness of the genre.

The audience loved fierce female roles precisely because they are overwhelmed by a great variety of feelings, navigating the full spectrum of romantic sentiments. In some instances, characters that are traditionally categorised as softer and gentler (such as Angélique in *Roland*) could also showcase an equivalent array of feelings. The exploration of these rare cases is best explained by a performer-based analysis. Indeed it is because Marie Le Rochois performed the role of Angélique alongside explicitly fierce characters, such as Armide, that the variety of feelings in the former makes sense. Lully

and his successors tailored opera roles according to Le Rochois's faculties and image. This is especially true in the case of operas created after Lully's death by other composers who sought to match what the collective memory of the singer had made of her talent and fame. Centring the singer in the analysis helps resolving the apparent aesthetic irregularities regarding the *emploi*.

Thus the singer, as a co-creative agent within the creative process of opera production, can reshape in part not only role categories but also, at a broader scale, opera genres by influencing key dramaturgical aspects. That phenomenon, which I have explored in this chapter between the *pastorale* and the *tragédie* during the first decades of the ARM, is also visible after the death of Lully. Then, authors push back the *ballet* to the fore while taking into consideration the administrative and material conditions of the ARM and its troupe. In particular, the advent of an increasing number of small roles parallels the growth of the troupe. A new spirit of variety and heterogeneity clashes against French theatre tendency to embrace classical norms.[430] This new administrative and creative challenge will be explored in chapter five.

[430] See Marc Bayard, *Feinte baroque. Iconographie et esthétique de la variété au XVIIe siècle* (Rome: Académie de France à Rome-Villa Médicis, 2010).

Chapter V — Administrative turmoil and stylistic reshuffling (1687–1715)

The study of the operatic repertoire after Lully's directorship has been eclipsed by the various historical comparisons between his time and the mid-eighteenth century. The main reason for this, in addition to great interest around Jean-Philippe Rameau, is the incredible focus on the episode of the Querelle des Bouffons. The latter has occupied a great deal of the scholarship on eighteenth-century French opera.[431] During the Querelle, Lully's figure was cited numerous times across the pamphlets written and published between 1752 and 1754. The authors of such pamphlets weaponized Lully for various purposes as they confronted two diverging understandings of music and poetry and intertwined those with political disagreements.

In contrast, scholars have often overlooked, summarised superficially, or addressed in a cursory fashion the period directly following Lully's death (1687). This absence of coverage, as for the period preceding Lully's directorship, is partly explained by the fact that sources remain rare and scattered. In addition to the lack of historical evidence, study of that period is made even more difficult by the vagueness of the functions undertaken by the people who came to mingle with the business of the Opéra. It is often difficult to understand in detail who was responsible for what at the Académie during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Equally, it is hard to capture how interpersonal relationships amongst all these people fitted into the general framework of opera production.

Crucially, there was no unique centralising figure that held the administration

[431] Andrea Fabiano (ed.), *La "Querelle des Bouffons" dans la vie culturelle française du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2005); Thomas A. Downing, "Rameau's *Platée* returns: A case of double identity in the Querelle des Bouffons", *Cambridge Opera Journal* 18, no. 1 (2006): 1-19; David Charlton, 'New Light on the Bouffons in Paris (1752-1754)', *Eighteenth-Century Music* 31 vol. 11 (2014).

together in a sustainable manner. Alongside Jean-Nicolas de Francine (1662–1735), Lully's son-in-law who was granted the Opéra's *privilège* on 27 June 1687, many different co-administrators and co-owners kept rolling through. An unsuccessful manager, Francine took on many debts and needed to find support in order to secure financial solvency. As a result, the rhythm of additions to the administrative team and successions in the ownership of the Opéra became particularly hectic and opaque.

These constant changes inflict many difficulties on our understanding of the ARM's modes of operation. Yet, in spite of them, the administrative turmoil produced clear positive outcomes that are crucial for understanding the troupe and the *emploi*, and need to be addressed. In 1713 and 1714, legal documents came to the fore as a way to streamline the issues encountered in the decades following Lully's death. As seen in the first part of this dissertation, the groundbreaking formalisation of the Opéra's decision-making process represents a key moment in the history of the institution and, more broadly speaking, in the history of French theatres altogether. How opera (or theatres) generated law and how law enabled opera production are two intertwined questions scholars rarely address, but which nevertheless are essential to opera. As I will demonstrate in this chapter again, law is part of the operatic infrastructure, both constraining and facilitating artists' careers, and playing a particularly important function with regard to roles and casting. The implementation of a fifteen years mandatory service before pension, already presented in the first part of this dissertation, is a great example of this. The ways in which performers could obtain their highly desired retirement money had significant effects on the structure of the troupe and the influence of specific singers on the repertoire.

Impacts over the production process were also visible in terms of variety in the repertoire. Despite his financial troubles, Francine attempted to rejuvenate the artistic

side of the Opéra. One of Francine's major contributions was to include at the ARM different composers and poets, and to actively seek more variety in the repertoire.

Most of the existing scholarship on the repertoire during this period has predominantly focused on a select few key authors and works, often overlooking a broader range of composers and their contributions. However, among these composers, André Campra has received considerable attention and analysis.[432] André-Cardinal Destouches, being closely involved with parts of the opera production process, also gained close attention.[433] Yet many other composers from the same period have remained relatively obscure. This can be attributed to various factors, including the availability and accessibility of historical sources, the popularity and longevity of their works, and the extent to which their music has been studied and documented. A performed-based view looks at the repertoire in a transversal manner, thus including all scribal authors into the scope of the analysis.

Few recent scholarly works have tried to disrupt this scholarly *status* quo by addressing authors, performers, works, and creativity between the death of Lully and that of Louis XIV. Following the thread of dance, Rebecca Harris-Warrick offers in *Dance and drama in French baroque opera: a history* (2016) a highly valuable study of the Opera's repertoire. It includes many works that had generally been absent from the traditional scope of analysis. Likewise, Barbara Nestola has published a study of cultural transfer through the prism of Italian arias' edition, circulation, and performance

[432] Antonia L. Banducci, '*Tancrède* by Antoine Danchet and André Campra: Performance History and Reception (1702-1764)' (PhD dissertation, Washington University in St. Louis, 1990) and 'Staging a Tragédie En Musique' (1993); Don Fader, 'The "Cabale Du Dauphin", Campra, and Italian Comedy: The Courtly Politics of French Musical Patronage around 1700', *Music & Letters* 86, no. 3 (2005): 380–413; Benoît Dratwicki, 'Campra, Chantre Du Comique à l'Académie Royale de Musique ?', *Le Carnaval de Venise* (Glossa, 2011).

[433] Lois Rosow, 'From Destouches to Berton: Editorial Responsibility at the Paris Opéra' *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 40, no. 2 (1987): 285–309.

between 1687 and 1715.[434] She demonstrates the importance of composers, performers, and rich patrons who had previously been rarely mentioned — let alone studied.

Those two studies directly challenge longstanding preconceived ideas about opera and theatre production during the late years of Louis XIV's reign. Traditionally, that period has been tinged with a certain gloom, telling the story of a king who fell out of love with the joy and perceived decadence of entertainments, perhaps under the influence of Françoise d'Aubigné (made Madame de Maintenon in 1675), Louis XIV's last lover, and her preoccupation with religion and morality. In addition, the commencement of a costly war of aggression, the War of the League of Augsburg (1688–1697), also changed Louis XIV's focus and priorities. However, the abundance of theatrical development related to comic registers, dance, and Italian singing practices presents a much more colourful portrait of this *fin-de-règne*.

Francine's poor grasp on the Opera's finances generated many gaffes. Likewise, the renewal of the repertoire between 1687 and 1715 was littered with mistakes. Many works were performed for only a handful of times at the ARM, which betokens a process of trial and error. Yet our acknowledgement of the failure of many a *tragédie* must not hide the resplendent successes of other works, especially ballets. Moreover, it should not overshadow the mutual influence between the renewal of the repertoire and the changes happening in the troupe, which were closely intertwined.

In the following chapter, I intend to expose the complexity of the administration's evolution. I will attempt to answer at least two main interrelated questions. First, how did the administrative turmoil under Francine's directorship helped to streamline the legal framework for the institution? Second, how did those same changes influenced the repertoire and impacted the troupe between 1687 and 1715?

[434] Nestola, *L'air italien* (2020).

V.1. New challenges under Francine: variations on the administrative structure

After Lully's death, the Opéra's troupe continued to occupy the theatre situated in the Palais Royal, which had previously been given by the king to Lully. However, some changes started to shake the stability of the administrative structure that, until then, was unified under the iron hand of Lully.

It is difficult to understand with precision the actions led by the ARM's administrators following the death of Lully. The main reason for this is that few documents have survived for the period that covers roughly the late 1680s until the 1730s. One major distinction from the preceding administration, however, is that few of the people placed at the head of the Opéra during this period had any *a priori* musical training at all.

The principal figure that presided over the ARM's administration over the last years of Louis XIV's reign (and for many years thereafter) was Jean-Nicolas de Francine. Jean-Nicolas descended from a family of water supply operators from Florence that came to the French court in 1599.[435] His father, Pierre, knew Lully since 1667 and helped Jean-Nicolas to integrate amongst the establishment. He married into Lully's family in April 1684 via Madeleine-Catherine (1663–1703), Lully's daughter. He was the owner and principal director of the ARM from 27 June 1687 until 7 February 1728, although his dominion was periodically interrupted for reasons discussed in this chapter.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that Francine, like his predecessor, retained considerable personal authority over composition, rehearsal, and other aspects of

[435] Albert Mousset, *Les Francine* (Paris: Picard, 1930).

direction and production throughout his directorship between 1697 and 1728.[436] Despite very tumultuous shifts in the structure of the ARM administration, he was only removed from the directorship for a period of eight years (1714–1721). Additionally, as reported by Travenol and Noinville, Francine left the establishment in 1728 with a very healthy pension, which could indicate that his services were recognised as a positive good:

> M. De Francine was charged for a very long period of time, after the death of Jean-Baptiste Lully, with the general direction of the Opéra, which he left at the start of the year 1728. But he kept an annual pension of 18,000 *livres* on the revenues of the institution.[437]

Prior to his ownership, Francine had helped Lully in strengthening and managing the ARM's administration from a very early stage. Francine had also shown other signs of responsibility and respectability.[438] For example, he inherited the function of Maître d'Hôtel du Roi from his father after his death on 4 April 1686, a highly ranked function within the king's administration, concerning the preparation and other services related to the dining of the king under the command of the Premier Maître d'Hôtel or Grand Maître de France. All this past activity, both outside and within the Opéra, probably reassured the king's administration in the decision to grant him the ownership of the institution. On 27 June 1687 for a period of three years, Francine received his Opera's privilege.[439] The document was renewed several times afterwards, starting on 1 March 1689:

> We have determined to preserve said privilege and, doing so, we have chosen our very dear and beloved friend Jean-Nicolas de Franciny [sic], one of our Maître d'Hôtel in ordinary, son-in-law of late Jean-Baptiste de Lully, not only because of the [wedding]

[436] See Rosow, 'From Destouches to Berton', 286.
[437] Travenol and Noinville, *HTOF*, I, 75: 'M. de Francine fut chargé pendant très longtemps, après la mort de Jean-Baptiste Lully, de la direction générale de l'Opéra, qu'il quitta au commencement de l'année 1728. Mais il lui fut conservé une pension annuelle de 18000 livres sur les revenus de ce spectacle.'
[438] It is worth mentioning at this point that, under Louis XIV, a new culture of meritocracy had started to bloom amongst elites that turned themselves away from traditional values of honour and valour. See Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret, *La Noblesse au XVIIIe siècle: De la féodalité aux lumières* (Brussels: Complexe, 1984); Jay M. Smith, *The Culture of Merit. Nobility, Royal Service, and the Making of Absolute Monarchy in France, 1600-1789* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996).
[439] F-Pan, O1/31, fol. 125 v°, Brevet, 27 June 1687; quoted by La Gorce, *L'Opéra à Paris*, 84–86.

> alliance, but also because we have thought that we could not delegate this privilege to a better person capable of fulfilling it thanks to the experience acquired whilst Lully, his father-in-law, who he assisted, was alive, and since his death we have employed him via our *brevet* on 27 June 1687.[440]

Francine's mother-in-law, Madeleine Lambert (1642–1720), encouraged the decision. Originally, her idea was that Francine would become the ARM's director for a short period of time only, which would give Jean-Louis Lully (Jean-Baptiste's youngest son) time to acquire the maturity necessary to take over the business. Some structural elements regarding the relationship between Francine and Lully's family might have reassured Madeleine Lambert in her ambitions and tempered any mistrust of Francine. Indeed, the latter was legally bound to give exorbitant sums of money to his in-laws; he redistributed them an important yearly pension from the ARM's income, and he paid them rent for scenery storage facilities (i.e. the buildings situated next to Lully's residency at the city quarter of La Ville L'Évêque, now situated in Paris 8th Arrondissement next to the Madeleine).[441]

Yet the handover between Jean-Nicolas de Francine and Jean-Louis Lully never happened. Lully's son died on 23 December 1688 and Louis Lully, the older son, was excluded from the right to succeed by his own parents. Albeit fortunate, Jean-Nicolas de Francine was a disingenuous character. Some of the testimonies made about him by his contemporaries outline an unflattering portrait of a courtesan. More particularly, the fact that Louis Lully had been discounted from succeeding his father, paving the way for Francine's final takeover despite his less strong musical background, gave to some

[440] Lettres patentes, 1 March 1689: 'Nous avons résolu de conserver ledit privilège et pour cet effet nous avons choisi notre très cher et bien aimé Jean-Nicolas de Franciny, l'un de nos maîtres d'hôtel ordinaires, gendre dudit feu Jean-Baptiste de Lully, non seulement à cause de ladite alliance, mais encore parce que nous avons cru que nous ne pouvions accorder ce privilège à personne plus capable de s'en bien acquitter par l'expérience qu'il s'en est acquise tant du vivant dudit feu sieur de Lully son beau-père, qu'il a secondé dans le soin de ses opérations, que depuis son décès que nous l'avons commis par notre brevet du 27 juin 1687.' The name 'Franciny' refers to the Florentine origins of the Francine family.

[441] Jean-Baptiste Lully acquired the house with gardens from Félix du Verger on 5 October 1682 and settled there in 1683 (La Laurencie, *Lully*, 62).

people the impression that Francine was a usurper or even a swindler.[442] On top of this, the rapid degradation of the ARM's finances under Francine's directorship and the increase of his own personal debts provoked further damage to his personal image. Between 24 September 1704 and 5 October 1704 only, the ARM's deficit went from 270,026 *livres* and 14 *sols* to 323,150 *livres*.[443]

The state of quasi-permanent debt in which the Opéra found itself after the death of Lully was not solely the result of Francine's incompetence. Indeed, there were several combined reasons directly related to the royal administration itself that explained the indebtedness of the Opera. Before delving into Francine's own mistakes, it is necessary to explain the general context in which the ARM was economically constrained.

First and foremost, the king's administration decided in 1686 to stop bringing fully staged opera productions from the ARM to the court, although concert renditions still occurred. Following that decision, the royal largesse that was bound to this activity (in particular, the fact that the Opera could re-use costumes and scenery originally coming from the court) stopped, putting a major dent on the finances of the establishment.

Another major reason for the growth of the Opéra's financial difficulties was the fact that Louis XIV ordered the creation of a system of pensions. The first ones were specifically dedicated to Lully's family members in addition to a handful of composers, performers, and other artists. Later, the gesture was made official and extended to all retired performers, which cemented the steep rise of the Opéra's expenses. Between 1713 and 1720, the total expenses solely relating to pensions reached 320,151 *livres*,

[442] F-Pn, Département des Manuscripts français, *Chansonnier dit de Maurepas. Recueil de chansons, vaudevilles, sonnets, épigrammes, épitaphes et autres vers satiriques et historiques, avec des remarques curieuses,* vol. VI, 289; vol. XXVI, 48.
[443] F-Pan, MC/LXXV/466, *Traité au Sujet de la régie et produit de l'Opéra* (24 September 1704), with appendix for the state of the debt on 5 October 1704. See La Gorce, 'L'Académie Royale de Musique en 1704', 163.

about 6% of the total income generated by the ARM over the same period (2,062,850 *livres*).[444]

The formalisation of the system of pension in 1713 not solely had an impact on the finances of the establishment: its effect was also palpable on the musical and artistic side of the ARM. Tied to a mandatory period of fifteen years of performing activity, the obtaining of a pension was a strong incentive for singers to remain at the Opéra, radically contrasting with Italian casting practices in the same period. In turn, the stabilisation of the company had long-term effects on the whole of the opera production that have not yet been fully gauged by scholars. It deeply affected the ways in which composers thought about their music (thinking of specific voices, bodies, skills and personalities ahead of their work) and how the audience's horizon of expectation integrated roles into collective memory (by comparing actors' performances from one generation to the next in the form of a socially constructed lineage).

Additionally, in 1699, the king's administration declared that one sixth of the income of every theatre would revert to the General Hospital.[445] That tax to finance hospitals for the sick and poor was levied on the Comédie-Française and the Opéra and considerably affected the increase of tickets pricing.[446]

It is useful to note that all these financial difficulties took place in the delicate context of state monetary manipulation, a consequence of the War of the League of Augsburg (1688–1697) that forced Louis XIV to seek out alternative sources of funds as ordinary fiscal resources were insufficient, that ultimately devalued the French currency

[444] F-Pan, AJ/13/1 (III), *Mémoire concernant la régie de l'Opéra et sa situation au premier avril 1721* (1721), 11-12.
[445] F-Pan, O1/43, f. 66, Ordinance (25 February 1699).
[446] François Velde, 'An Analysis of Revenues at the Comédie-Française, 1680–1793', *Databases, Revenues, & Repertory: The French Stage Online, 1680-1793* (MIT Press, 2020): online, https://cfrp.mitpress.mit.edu/pub/analysis-of-revenues/release/1.

(the *livre*).[447] From 1690 onwards, the face value of the new coins was progressively reduced (simply by changing the stamping). After April 1692, it went from 3.3 *livres* to 3 *livres*, although another reformation took place in October 1693, issuing a new *écu* at 3.6 *livres*. Nevertheless, from December 1699, the same *écu* was reduced by increments from 3.6 *livres* to 3.2 *livres*. Other reformations took place in 1701, 1704, 1709, 1715, 1718, 1720 (twice) and 1726. In several instances the new coins were of a different weight but the mechanics and purpose were the same: to force coin holders to sell their coins to the mint at a loss (in terms of metal). Due to delays in coin workshops, many of the first reforms caused losses and chaos, which degraded slightly further the state of public finances.[448] In 1721, banknotes that had been introduced by John Law's bank only one year before had to be removed from monetary circulation and turned into public debt.

Comparing that monetary fluctuation to the ticket prices at the Comédie-Française, François Velde successfully demonstrates how the theatrical institution had to increase the prices of its daily tickets (one of the main sources of revenue for the theatre other than annual rentals of boxes) accordingly. The same phenomenon is likely to have affected the ARM.

[447] See Jérôme Jambu, 'Inventer une mutation monétaire. La première réformation, 1689-1693', *Revue numismatique* 172 (2015): 39–86.
[448] Jambu, 'Inventer une mutation monétaire', 66–68.

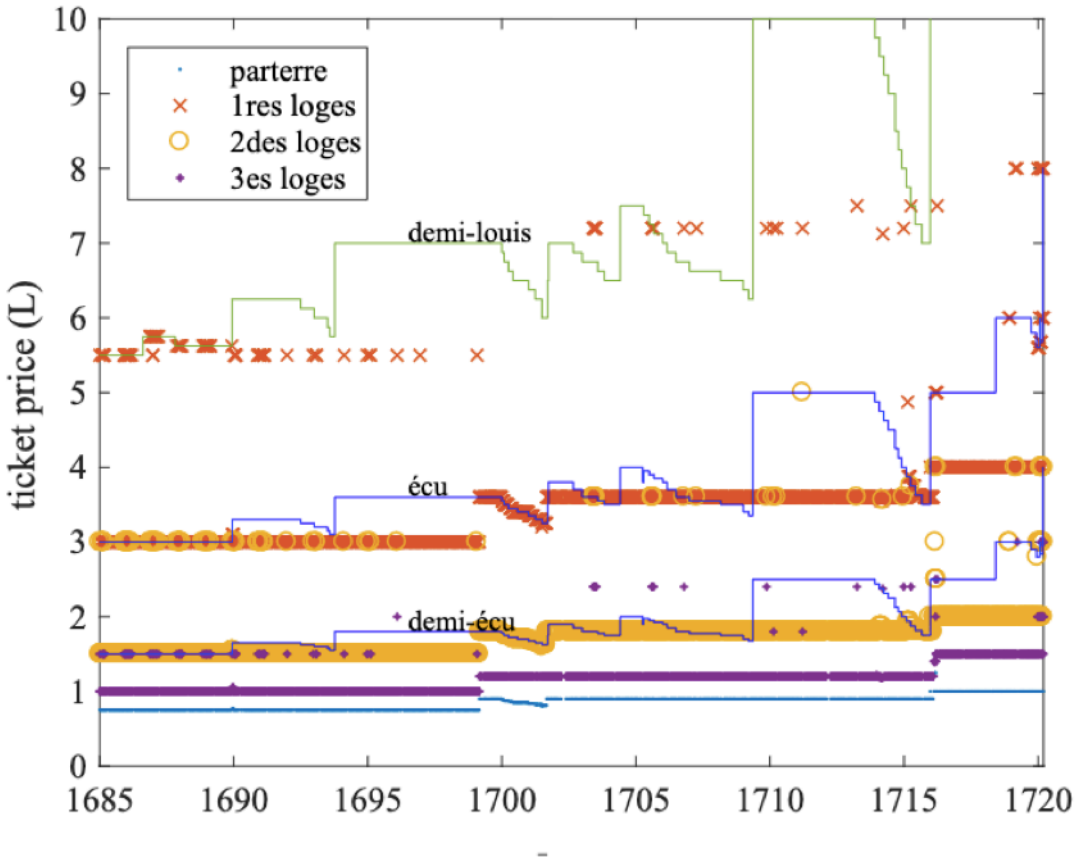


Plate II.14: Velde 'Analysis of Revenues', 2020, Figure 13 ('Prices of selected categories of seats, along with the nominal value of the gold demi-louis and the silver écu and demi-écu')

In parallel to that series of financial crises, the staff at the ARM had to confront a flurry of moralistic tracts by clergymen and poets who denounced the Opéra as a threat to public virtue.[449] Several public debates arose during the last years of the seventeenth century. One, particularly virulent, opposed around 1694 the theologian Francesco Caffaro and Are Jacques-Benigne Bossuet, the famous Évêque de Meaux whose *Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie* severely condemned the alleged corruption found in operas's arias and plots.[450] The situation was also not made easier by the lack of success of many productions, which meant they cost a good deal to put on but did not remain on stage long enough to recoup their expense.

[449] Louis Ladvocat, *Lettres sur l'Opéra à l'abbé Dubos suivies de Description de la vie et moeurs, de l'exercise et l'état des filles de l'Opéra* [1694-1698], Jérôme de La Gorce ed. (Paris: Cicero, 1993), 7–18.
[450] Francesco Caffaro, *Lettre d'un théologien in Pièces de théâtre de Mr Boursault* (Paris: Jean Guinard, 1694).

In order to counterbalance the reduced financial support from the king and the failure of some operas, Francine turned to other significant patrons. Two members of the royal family, in particular, took greater part in the Opéra's business: the Dauphin (Louis de France, known as 'Monseigneur') and his cousin Philippe II d'Orléans (Duke of Chartres, future Duke of Orléans and future Regent of France).[451] The former had been a regular member of Lully's audience throughout the 1680s. The latter showed a keen interest in the Académie and decided to support Francine alongside his half-sister, Marie-Thérèse de Bourbon, Princess of Conty. Philippe II, who was himself a student of Marc-Antoine Charpentier, was extremely keen to support opera creation.

Despite the official nature of this support, the finances of the ARM continued to suffer severely and Francine did not succeed in preventing the establishment from falling into debt. His flawed management snowballed into a series of hectic shifts in the share of the ownership and the administrative structure. In a vicious cycle, the multiplication of managers derailed the smooth operation of the management system and the deficits increased. Francine swung between associates, looking for cash flow and wealth to prevent insolvency. His partnerships became toxic every time the creditors asked for their money back.[452]

Although suffering from dreadful financial misadventures, Francine must have had a talent for convincing new investors to lend him important sums, such as Pierre Le Tessier de Montarsy and the banker Paul Foissin. In 1691, he borrowed a considerable sum to the former, a famous jeweller working for Louis XIV.[453] It is equally possible, however, that this good fortune had less to do with Francine's talent than with the fact

[451] Jean-Paul Montagnier, *Un mécène-musicien: Philippe d'Orléans*, *Régent (1674–1723)* (Paris : Éditions Auguste Zurfluh, 1996), 18–21.
[452] Ladvocat, *Lettres sur l'Opéra*, 42.
[453] Nicolas de Blegny, *Le livre commode des adresses de Paris pour 1692 par Abraham du Pradel [Nicolas de Blegny] suivi d'appendices, précédé d'une introduction et annoté par Édouard Fournier* (Paris: P. Daffis, 1878), I, 246.

that the ARM, associated with high society, was probably perceived by some as a way to introduce themselves into elitist social circles.

The mounting debt of the ARM led Francine and Hyacinte Dumont (who became his associate on 30 December 1698) to sell considerable portions of their privilege to Pierre Guyenet (1667–1712). A financier, Guyenet was originally one of the king's advisors, in charge of controlling specific annuities in the City of Paris (*aides* and *gabelles*). In 1704, Francine and Dumont gave to Guyenet power over the management of the establishment, handing over the 'entire product, the theatres, costumes, machines, decorations, precious stones, feathers, ribbons, and generally speaking all other furnitures and utensils' in exchange for enormous sums of money.[454] Guyenet eventually became the sole owner of the privilege on 7 October 1704; he was then entitled to own the ARM for over fourteen years but engaged himself to pay all the debts of his predecessor. Between 24 September 1704 and 5 October 1704, right before Guyenet ownership, these had already increased from 270,026 *livres* and 14 *sols* to 323,150 *livres*.[455] Two days later, when Guyenet took over the Opéra, which was the point at which he pledged to pay Francine's debts, they totalled 380,780 *livres*.[456] In 1712, the situation had not substantially improved and was aggravated by the sudden death of Guyenet who had spent the last four years of his life hiding from his creditors.

A major reform was then in order. From 1712 until 1720, a 'Union' (*Syndic*) of four entrepreneurs (Étienne-Lambert Chomat, Mathurin Besnier, Louis-Antoine-François Duchesne, Pierre de Laval de Saint-Pont) took over the administration of the

[454] F-Pan, MC/LXXV, 466 (24 September and 5 October 1704): 'le produit entier, les théâtres, habits, machines, décorations, pierreries, plumes, rubans et généralement tous les autres meubles et ustensiles.' Quoted by La Gorce, 'L'Académie Royale de Musique En 1704, d'après Des Documents Inédits Conservés Dans Les Archives Nationales', *Revue de musicologie* 160 (1979), 163.
[455] La Gorce, idem.
[456] F-Pan, O1/48, f. 164, Cession par J. N. de Francine et H. de Gaureault-Dumont à Pierre Guyenet, du privilège de l'Opéra (7 October 1704).

ARM.[457] Those four trustees were the creditors of the late Pierre Guyenet. They confirmed that Francine's behaviour, multiplying personal favours to various people, was detrimental to the well being of the Opéra's finances.[458] On 25 September 1714, the members of the Union made Francine sign a paper in which he declared he would no longer interfere with decisions regarding the ARM. However, this might not have sufficed to stop him meddling: one month later, on 19 November 1714, the Conseil d'État renewed the attempt by formally forbidding Francine to exercise any function at the ARM. Altogether, the Opéra under the influence of the Union benefitted from a better administrative management and a great part of the debts were refunded until Francine and his partner Dumont plotted to return to the head of the directorship again in 1721.[459]

Although he was sidelined regarding the ARM's ownership, Francine remained within the bosom of the institution. On the artistic side, indeed, Francine kept a finger on the pulse of artistic affairs. In theory, the contract signed on 24 December 1712 between the members of the Union, Francine, and Dumont, stipulated that:

> The choice of the plays and roles of the actors and actresses will be conducted conjointly, under the orders of Monseigneur le comte de Pontchartrain [state secretary], by said sieurs de Francine and Besnier, and said [Monseigneur] is begged to have the goodness to give his orders about everything that depends generally speaking of the Opéra's management. New plays will be examined and approved by the person appointed by [Monseigneur] de Pontchartrain.[460]

Francine's artistic directorship over some key elements of the opera production was later confirmed in the first *Règlement* of 1713, the very first article of which stipulates that

[457] Paris, Archives Nationales, AJ/13 1, I, *Privilège accordé, arrests rendus et règlement fait par Sa Majesté pour l'Académie royale de musique*, 1712-1713, f. 7r.
[458] *Mémoire* 1721, 1: 'Ses soins n'ont été employés qu'à faire accorder des grâces à l'Opéra, qui était fort peu en état de se soutenir à causes des charges exorbitantes dont il était chargé.'
[459] F-Pan, O1/65, fol. 79 v°, Ruling from the Council of State (10 April 1721).
[460] F-Pan, AJ/13/1 (I), *Privilège*, f. 8 r°: 'Le choix des pièces, des rôles des acteurs et actrices se fera sous les ordres de Monseigneur le comte de Pontchartrain [le secrétaire d'État] par lesdits sieur de Francine et Besnier conjointement et mon dit seigneur sera supplié d'avoir la bonté de donner ses ordres sur tout ce qui dépendra en général de la régie de l'Opéra. Les nouvelles pièces seront examinées et approuvées par la personne que mon dit seigneur de Pontchartrain en chargera.'

'The sieur de Francine, one of the owners of the Académie's privilege and director, will care for choosing the best subjects he will be able to find for singing, dancing, and instrumental music.'[461]

In reality, Francine's role might have been slightly more limited. He effectively undertook three main tasks. First, Francine selected the librettos and the composers who would set them to music.[462] Once the score was finished, extracts were performed in front of him and his associates, as well as people external to the administration who advised him. Finally, Francine remained in charge of validating the leave requests from his performers so that they could play in other theatres.[463]

This situation left quite a few other functions related to opera production to be filled in, especially that related to score re- and to the selection and training of the cast. The development of music publishing, related to the retouching of Lully's repertoire, reinforced the stratification of the administrative structure. Indeed, as Francine himself was not a composer, he left editorial decisions to 'more musically inclined employees' among who were Marin Marais and André Campra.[464] With regard to casting, Francine also relied on a variety of employees and associates. Even in the late seventeenth century, when Francine was still the principal owner of the Opéra, several people already took part in the artistic process specifically for shaping the troupe. In 1694, for example, it was Pascal Collasse (Lully's former assistant and copyist) and not Francine who auditioned an actress who applied to become the understudy of leading roles.[465] When the Union took over, a new function was legally instituted in the 1713 *Règlement*,

[461] Durey de Noinville and Travenol, *HTOF*, I, 108: 'Le sieur de Francine, l'un des donataires du privilège de l'Académie et directeur, aura soin de choisir les meilleurs sujets qu'il pourra trouver tant pour la voix que pour la danse et pour les instruments.'
[462] Ladvocat, *Lettres sur l'Opéra*, 56 and 63.
[463] Ladvocat, *Lettres sur l'Opéra*, 54: 'Je vous dis qu'après des vitres rompues de part et d'autre et affiches diffamatoires, Miss Macé a demandé son congé à M. de Francine qui n'a pu lui refuser.'
[464] Rosow, 'From Destouches to Berton', 286.
[465] Ladvocat, *Lettres sur l'Opéra*, 21.

that of the Inspector General (*General Inspecteur*), which was originally granted to André-Cardinal des Destouches.[466] Several articles of the *Règlement* briefly detail the function of the post in the following terms. According to the first article, 'No performer will be received without the approbation of the sieur Destouches, inspector general.'[467] He had the duty to enrol 'the best performers [they could] find' (articles I and VIII), to pay them accordingly to their status, and to ensure the continuity and proper functioning of the hierarchy (articles IX and X). Apart from these points, the actual nature of the musical duties related to the inspector general are rather vague. The 1714 *Règlement*, unfortunately, does not clear them up either.[468]

Some of the non-musical duties were taken over by two of the members of the Union, as described in the 1714 *Règlement*. One was in charge of all rehearsals and performances in the theatre, another supervised activities related to the Magasin as well as matters of finance (art. I). However, many of the administrative reports prepared by the members of the Union still required to obtain the Inspector's initials for validation (articles V, XIV, XVIII, XXII, XXXI, XXXIII, XXXVII). The revised role of Destouches was summarised by an anonymous party: the Inspector needed to 'give only his opinion regarding the music, the choice of the operas, as well as examining the performers who would present themselves for entering [the ARM] and giving them the taste for singing which he would report to the direction that would decide about the performances'.[469]

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[466] On 25 June 1715, according to Durey de Noinville and Travenol (*HTOF*, I, 97) a declaration from the Conseil d'État officialise Destouche's salary (4,000 *livres*).
[467] 'Aucun desdits sujets ne sera reçu sans l'approbation du sieur Destouches, inspecteur général.'
[468] The nineteenth-century historian Émile Solié affirmed that the position of 'inspecteur général de la régie de l'Académie royale de musique' was 'roughly equivalent to the one of *commissaire royal*' (*L'Opéra*, 11). A *commissaire royal* was a title granted from the sixteenth century, under the Ancien Régime, to any significant agent of the crown performing a specific function in the name of the king. This was, arguably, a rather vague definition in itself.
[469] F-Pa, MS. 10295, fol. 144v; quoted by Renée Girardon Masson, F-Pn, Rés. Vmb. 43, 'André Cardinal Destouches: surintendant de la Musique du Roy, directeur de l'Opéra, 1672-1749', typescript, 2 vols.

Additional employees filled the gaps. The 1714 *Règlement* spells out the tasks delegated to the musical supervisors employed at a lower rank than that of the Inspector General (art. 26-29), none of which were mentioned in 1713. The *maître de musique* acts as a coach and prompter for the singers, not an orchestral conductor, which is the prerogative of the *batteur de mesure* (who also endorses additional musical and custodial tasks).[470] The *maître de ballet* is a dancing master and presumably the choreographer, and the *maître de salle de danse* his assistant who undertook teaching duties.[471] All of these roles had their significance although they have not been studied thoroughly in the existing scholarship.

(Paris, 1948), I, 225. However, Lois Rosow cannot find the passage in the manuscript]: 'pour donner seulement ses avis pour la musique, le choix des opéras, ainsi que pour examiner les sujets qui se présenteraient pour y entrer et leur donner le goût du chant dont il rendrait compte à cette direction qui déciderait sur ses représentations, ce qui paraissait convenir au bien de cette régie.' Destouches's power to choose the performers (preferably from among the students of the Magasin) was explicitly stated in a royal decree in 1721 (F-Pan, O1/613, no. 14).

[470] See *DOPAR,* 'Lettre M', 655-658, and 'Lettre B', 386-388.

[471] See *DOPAR,* 'Lettre M', 648-655, 658.

V.2. The repertoire between 1687 and 1715

One might assume that the administrative and financial turmoil that shook the ARM in the aftermath of Lully's death would have negatively affected the quality of opera productions and, subsequently, the audience's appetite for them. Yet a closer look at the repertoire, its reception, and the growth of the troupe indicates that the situation was more complex. The struggles of the administration should not overshadow the effusion of creativity that sprung up at the Opéra in the same period. More so, the greater constraints encountered between 1687 and 1715 surrounding opera production might have encouraged, to some degree, the inventiveness of musicians and the multiplication of bold initiatives. Although, generally speaking, poems untiringly addressed the same issue of love (fulfilled and deceived, disrupted and restored), variations on that theme were enabled by the incorporation of a greater number of roles, whilst subtle differences in terms of ethos allowed for actual variety on stage, depending on the performer's age, social functions, origins, attractiveness, and so on. In this section, I demonstrate the ways in which the ARM's repertoire underwent a profound renewal before I compare said changes with the detailed evolution of the troupe.

Harris-Warrick affirms that the struggles of the institution in terms of finances, human resources, and aesthetic debates can be grasped obliquely through the power struggle of the Muses, which were often thematised by librettists in the years following Lully's death.[472] The prevalence of such topics confirms that a rupture had started to take place regarding Quinault's model of librettos. This phenomenon is already detectable with the *tragédie* entitled *Achille et Polixène* (1687), based on a poem by Jean Galbert de Campistron. It was left unfinished by Lully himself, who had composed

[472] Harris-Warrick, *Dance and Drama*, 207.

only the first act, and the rest of the music was the work of Collasse. The prologue presents three Muses: Melpomène (the Muse of Tragedy), Thalie (the Muse of Comedy), and Terpsichore (who is normally the Muse of Dance but was here identified as that of Music). The three characters are here situated in 'a place appropriate for staging spectacles, that could serve either tragedy or comedy', intimating the idea that comedy was here placed 'on an equal footing with tragedy'.[473] Such explicit staging of the tragedy's crisis and its competition with comedy was far from neutral. In the context of *Achille et Polixène*, as Rebecca Harris-Warrick argues, such competition is bound to the idea that the ARM had then entered a state of 'degradation'.[474] The written direction (*didascalie*) that opens the prologue states that 'This place no longer has the magnificence of former times; in fact, it is almost destroyed and ruined.'[475] The muses appear without followers, in a sorry state.[476] Ultimately, the question being asked is: can their alliance still generate art?

In a later work programmed at the ARM, *Les Fêtes de Thalie* (1714), an identical struggle takes place between the comic and the tragic, with a clear intrusion of features from the Comédie-Italienne, such as the stereotypical role of the 'soubrette'.[477] The prologue presents an identical state-of-the-art to that in *Achille et Polixène*. The muse Melpomène vaunts her glorious record over the ARM's repertoire: 'Armide, Phaéton, Atys, Roland, Bellérophon, Thétis — these give me sovereignty over this brilliant place.

[473] Harris-Warrick, *Dance and drama*, 203.
[474] Harris-Warrick, *Dance and Drama*, 203–204.
[475] Didascalie that sets the stage.
[476] 'La tristesse règne en ces lieux,/Nous rougissons de ne pouvoir lui plaire,/Hélas! Ne saurions-nous rien faire/Digne de paraître à ses yeux?' ('Sadness reigns here, we blush at our inability to please him,/Alas! are we incapable of producing anything worthy of appearing before his eyes?')
[477] Maupoint, *Bibliothèque des théâtres*, 136: 'It it the first opera where one could see women dressed *à la mode*, and characters of confidantes looking like the soubrettes of the Comédie[-Italienne]. The Public was troubled at first; however people came in crowds…' ('C'est le premier Opéra où l'on ait vu des femmes habillées à la Française, et des Confidentes du ton des Soubrettes de la Comédie. Le Public en fut d'abord alarmé ; cependant il y vint en foule…').

Muse, withdraw!'[478] But Thalie replies: 'My sister, one tires quickly of weeping. Does anyone ever tire of laughing?'[479] Apollon, then, seeking a compromise between his two muses, asks Melpomène: 'Could you not get together with Thalie in the same work, as you did in the past? This mixture still charms Italy today.'[480]

Building on this early sign of aesthetic change, Harris-Warrick delineates three major tendencies that had an impact upon opera production on the stage of the ARM in the aftermath of Lully's death:

> First, the infusion of new genres such as the opera-ballet changed the tone of the theater by increasing the number of works with light-hearted, or even comic elements. Second, the *tragédie en musique* came to exist in a state of tension between the Lullian model and the new tendencies; the divertissements, both in newly created works and in revivals, became crucial sites where such tensions played themselves out. Third, the amount of dancing on the stage expanded, in all genres, and the best dancers developed a fan base that came to the theater to see them perform, no matter what the work.[481]

Although Harris-Warrick focuses in her work on dance-related issues, her comments open a valid line of enquiry regarding the whole of the repertoire at the ARM. Just as the *pastorale* had contaminated the *tragédie*, the revival of the ballet on the Opera's stage had an enormous impact on the creative process. In particular, the spirit of 'variety' lay at the core of principles and preoccupations related to the domain of dance. Indeed Baroque dance is made of a myriad of step-units that, stacking like building blocks, strongly 'favours variety over predictability' (that of figure, tempo, rhythm, number of dancers, and so on).[482] Within contemporaries' testimonies, praises regarding the

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[478] 'Armide, Phaéton, Atys, / Roland, Bellérophon, et Thétis, / De ce brillant séjour me rendent souveraine. / Muse, retirez-vous.'
[479] 'On est bientôt las de pleurer, / Se lasse-t-on jamais de rire ?'
[480] Ironically, as Harris-Warrick notes (*Dance and Drama*, 205), around the time of *Les Fêtes de Thalie*, a mixture of high and low registers in Venetian operas was actually refined towards a renewal of *opera seria*, with a more restricted register. Somehow, then, the Apollo depicted in the French ballet was not really up-to-date with the reality of Italian operatic practices.
[481] Harris-Warrick, *Dance and Drama*, 204.
[482] Harris-Warrick, *Dance and Drama*, 85, 97, 103, and 130: 'The step vocabulary of baroque dance is rich and varied. Feuillet's numerous steptables in *Chorégraphie* show that dance was based upon a limited number of fundamental movements, each of which could be modified in many ways. […] Variety is the rule in the composition of figures, just as it is in the choice of steps, although symmetry still reigns. […] By the early eighteenth century dancers were beginning to specialize, although most of them still

increase of 'novelty' and 'variety' at the ARM satisfied the listeners.[483]

From a broader angle, that creative impulse came to contaminate operas in general (*tragédies en musique* and otherwise) in various ways: that was true from their structure (especially in the context of ballets in which plots from each *entrée* theoretically worked in an independent manner from one another) and the level of registers (e.g. tragic, comic, light-hearted) to the number of characters and the diversity of their profiles. Whatever the operatic genre used, the margin for the authors' creativity was thin with regard to plot structures and *topoi*. Generally speaking, poems untiringly addressed the same issue of love, fulfilled and deceived, disrupted and restored. However, variations on that theme were enabled by the incorporation of a greater number of roles, whilst subtle differences in terms of ethos allowed for actual variety on stage, depending on the performer's age, social functions, origins, attractiveness, and so on. The amount of characters in opera plots, whether singing or dancing, increased in parallel to the multiplication of operatic works and, within ballets, of *entrées*. This evolution of the repertoire was deemed to have had a fundamental impact on the troupe, whether because a limited number of singers had to undertake a greater number of characters, or because the administration would opt for a larger pool of singers amongst whom to distribute the roles.

Looking at the programme in general, the Opéra's repertoire after Lully's death mingled new works (generally two or three per years) with revivals of operas by Lully. Substantial parts of the operatic material created under Lully's directorship were reused, although generally in edited form. The custom of devoting a large portion of the ARM's

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performed a variety of roles. […] In a musical style that favors variety over predictability, characterization depends on subtle interactions among all the parameters of a piece: form, key, harmony, melody, metre, rhythm, tempo, phrase structure, texture, and orchestration. It is thus more fruitful to study individual pieces in situ than to generalise.'

[483] *MG*, August 1679, 333.

schedule to the revival of Lully's works after his death was formalised in the 1714 *Règlement*.[484]

From there, two main tendencies can be delineated.[485] First, it is clear that Lully continued to cast a long shadow over the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century. Not only were his own works revived several times at the ARM, but many authors of new *tragédies en musique* aspired to fulfil the template that he and Quinault had set up over the course of their collaboration which included, among other features, a fixed structure (one prologue and five acts), a poetic tone, an emphasis on *divertissements*, and a specific set of characters. On the other hand, the period also encompassed forms of experimentation with operatic formats (including that of the *tragédie en musique*). In the immediate post-Lully period, a handful of *tragédies* presented only three acts (following the Italian practice), for example. Additionally, a few works which were designated as *tragédies* should more properly have been labelled something else: *Astrée* (1691), for example, is really a *pastorale*. Generally speaking, genre labels were still extraordinarily fluid, especially that of *ballet* as outlined by Harris-Warrick, which was a more natural home for comic elements than the *tragédie*.[486] This terminological vagueness could grant opera authors some freedom regarding the ways in which they aimed to combine different registers, characters, musical forms, sub-plots, and other musical and poetic elements.

A greater level of variety in the Opéra's repertoire was bound to happen given that Francine opened up the possibility of producing works at the ARM to many different composers and librettists. Lully almost never extended the right to compose for

[484] 'Règlement au sujet de l'Opéra. À Marly le 19 Novembre 1714', Articles 6–8, quoted by Durey de Noinville and Travenol, *HTA*, 127–128.
[485] For librettos and overview of the repertoire, see *Recueil général des opéra, représentés par l'Académie royale de musique depuis son établissement*, 16 vols, (Paris, 1703–1745), 3-vol. facsimile ed. (Geneva, 1971).
[486] Harris-Warrick, *Dance and Drama*, 207.

the Opéra to anyone else. Two exceptions occurred at the very end of his directorship, in 1686: one ballet, *Le Ballet de la Jeunesse* (by Michel-Richard de Lalande and Florent Carton), which was initially planed for Fontainebleau but finally performed in Versailles, and one *tragédie*, *Alphée et Aréthuse* (by Claude-Jean-Baptiste Boësset), performed in front of the court on the 22nd and the 25th October. Both, although they used the staff from the ARM, were performed outside Paris, which was probably a way for Lully to keep his competition at bay. When Lalande asked Lully to organise a revival of his *Ballet de la Jeunesse* in Paris, Lully refused.

The higher number of authors involved in the ARM's programme was strongly related to the increased support of several members of the Orléans family, who already supported many different musicians: French ones (such as Marc-Antoine Charpentier, Charles-Hubert Gervais, André Campra, Nicolas Bernier, Jean-Baptiste Morin) and foreigners (such as Jean-Baptiste Stuck, Antonio Guido, and Michele Mascitti). All of these composers formed a social circle that gravitated around the various chateaux and town-houses of secondary members of the Orléans family, thus avoiding the now-repressive atmosphere at Versailles. All came to create operas at the ARM in the 1690s and early eighteenth century. This decision to open up the Opéra to a new array of composers represented a clear and major break with the former situation under Lully. It was not just a gesture of good-will towards Francine's benefactors. Acting as an entrepreneur, Francine was aiming to integrate artists (like Charpentier) whose fame was already solidly established, or on the rise (like Campra and Gervais). Other composers who produced their works at the Opéra over the same period came from Lully's circle of friends and collaborators, including his sons (Jean-Louis and Louis), Pascal Collasse, Henry Desmarest, Marin Marais and Theobaldo di Gatti.

As mentioned previously, the variety brought by all these musicians was visible

on both macro and micro levels. First, opera genres other than that of the *tragédie* increased in numbers, i.e. ballets, *pastorales*, and mixed or shorter forms (*comédie-ballet, mascarade, divertissement*) [see TABLE II.9]. Second, registers could be subtly juxtaposed or mixed, and roles (which number rose in parallel to that of the ballets' *entrées*) differed in some ways from the model of Lully's *tragedies*. Those roles, contained in stereotypical plots, were generally simpler in character; in other words, they were organised around one relatively straightforward moral and physical features. In one performance of any of these new works, the audience could enjoy a great diversity of profiles, either performed by the same performer or by a variety of different singers. Those two options are explored through the analysis of the troupe and the singers' skills in the next section of this chapter.

The ratio between *tragédies* and ballets (with corollary forms) performed at the ARM becomes more evenly balanced when we take into account the number of times operas were revived at the ARM between 1687 and 1715. In the category of works performed only once at the ARM, *tragédies en musique* are overwhelmingly present (41), when other genres account for a fourth of the same number (13 ballets, 3 *divertissements*, 1 *comédie-ballet*). Looking at the operas performed twice, the gap between *tragédies* and lighter genres starts to close up (15 tragédies for 3 ballets, 2 *divertissements comiques*, 1 *pastorale héroïque*, 1 *comédie-ballet*, and 1 *mascarade*). The ratio becomes 2:1 in the case of works performed three times at the ARM (4 *tragédies*, 2 ballets, 1 *pastorale*) and almost 1:1 when looking altogether at works performed four, five, and seven times at the Opéra (4 *tragédies*, 3 ballets).

From this data, one main trend is clearly visible: *tragédies* encountered a much higher risk of failure whereas few ballets were unsuccessful. Looking at *tragédies en musique* in detail, testimonies relate the weakness of several scores and the lack of

interest in many librettos (some of them being judged too poor or uninteresting). Nevertheless, the reason for the failure of some *tragédies* is sometimes hard to pin down with certainty. In the case of *Méduse* (1697) by Gervais, for example, the reception of the work is not particularly bad at first glance. Gervais, already considered a talented musician, applies a musical style that draws both from Lully and Charpentier, whilst the libretto borrows a lot of elements from the universe created by Quinault.[487] Yet performances stopped extremely quickly after the premiere. Likewise, the lack of interest in the performance of *Médus, roi des mèdes* (1702) by François Bouvard and Toussaint Bertin de la Doué is slightly puzzling. Different contemporaries testified that the quality of the work was good and that the audience reception was positive, despite a cabal launched by the poet Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, who encouraged the circulation of parodies. The appearance of Julie d'Aubigny as Medea was much praised. However, the opera was never revived.

Following the closure of the Comédie-Italienne in 1697, theatre companies rushed to fill its void, each of them capturing in a way appropriate to their own tradition the legacy of its repertoire.[488] That even had a direct and indirect impact with regard to the variety of poetic genres and characters at the ARM. As noted by Rosow, 'Even the Opéra, where poetry and stage action unfailingly followed the rules of decency and decorum, found ways to incorporate *commedia dell'arte* characters and themes in its scores and librettos.'[489] Indeed Francine's attitude towards Italian performers from the Comédie-Italienne was more conciliatory than Lully's. After obtaining the Opéra's privilege in 1687, Francine continued to grant them the annual pension of 1,200 *livres* that Lully already promised them in order to help them pay their rent at the Hotel de

[487] See Jean-Paul Montagnier, 'Claude Boyer librettiste : remarques sur Méduse (1697)', *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 191, no. 3 (1996): 303–320.
[488] To dive more into the reasons for this decision, see Rosow, 'Opera in Paris from Campra to Rameau', 273.
[489] Lois Rosow, 'Opera in Paris from Campra to Rameau', 274.

Bourgogne, until 1692. After that point, however, Francine's debts forced him to stop.[490] On 10 February 1695, a legal document (*Obligation*) attested that situation and specified that Francine owed the Italian troupe, on 31 December 1684, the total of 3,600 *livres* for three years of 'maintenance and accommodation'; the document shows that Francine gave a first account of 600 *livres* and engaged himself to reimburse the remaining 3,000 *livres* and to pursue the periodic payments ordered by the king's administration.[491]

Those payments increased the rapprochement between the ARM and Italian influences in general. Those were particularly visible in terms of isolated arias that came to be included in French works. For example, *Les Plaisirs de la paix* by Thomas-Louis Bourgeois (1715) possesses two Italian arias: one in the entry "La Pêche" (sc. 4 sung by the character Valère), the other in the entry "La Chasse" (sc. 4, "O chare sagitte" sung by the character Arténice). Such practice shows the permeability between genres. Isolated arias act as fertile ground for experimentations, which outcome would later be enacted in larger forms (such as ballets) at the ARM. André Campra in particular (and others such as Nicolas Bernier and Jean-Baptiste Morin) explicitly wished to integrate some Italian musical features in their music. Campra experimented so much with Italian material, which he adapted to the taste of a French audience, that he even decided to publish some arias in a separate edition the fruits of his research. Indeed the composer took part in a broad collection of scores edited and printed by Ballard (the king's printer) between 1695 and 1724 and entitled *Airs sérieux et à boire*. Some of Campra's arias published in those collections preceded his most successful works, such as *L'Europe galante* (1697), participating further in the dissemination of light, and sometimes humorous material marked directly or indirectly by Italian influence.

Transfer from one theatre to another was particularly perceptible with regard to

[490] La Gorce, *L'Opéra*, 89–100.
[491] F-Pan, Minutier central, XV, 341, 10 février 1695, Obligation.

the increase of operas partly or wholly inspired by the Venetian Carnival (e.g. *L'Europe galante*, Campra, 1697; *Le Carnaval de Venise*, Regnard, 1699; *Fragments*, Campra, 1702 and 1708; *Les Fêtes Vénitiennes*, Campra, 1710) and other thoroughly comic works, such as *Les Fêtes de Thalie* which, despite some criticism, generated an immense success. Venice constituted the main basis for the landscape of many different narratives and were reflected through the presence of many characters explicitly originated from Venice. Additionally, the use or the symbolic reference to masks and masquerades, a well-known Venetian practice, also permeated the Opera. Barbara Nestola has meticulously demonstrated in her analysis of the circulation and performance of the Italian aria in Paris at the end of the seventeenth century how much Venetian material (either original or retouched) was circulating in various spheres, including that of the Opéra.[492]

[492] Nestola, *L'air italien*, 2020.

V.3. The troupe of the Académie between 1687 and 1715

One of the key contrasts between Lully's directorship and Francine's was the size of the troupe. Whilst the number of female singers remained constant until 1687 (with around six women in total), many more soloists were enrolled after Francine took over the institution [see TABLES II.10 and II.10 bis]. This general trend encompasses several changes, small but significant, some of which were closely intertwined with the parallel evolution of the repertoire. I explore them in the following section.

The logistical and financial withdrawing of the king's administration for organising opera performances at the court, decided in 1686, had logical consequences. Not only was the ARM cut off from large sums of money and other useful resources in terms of costumes and decors, but the administration also had to rethink the structure of its troupe. No longer could the practice that consisted in occasionally adding singers from the Musique du Roi to ARM's productions continue. As performances outside of Paris (i.e. in front of the court) became much rarer after Lully's death, the Opéra needed to stand on its own two feet for its full artistic season.[493]

After 1687, the rhythm of enrolments at the ARM changed and the number of female singers who entered the ARM rose, with three sharp increments in 1688, 1695 and 1709. In addition, a steady increase in the number of female singers is noticeable from 1697 until 1702. In that period, the programme at the ARM was colourful and diverse. It gathered an influx of new, successful works (e.g. *Issé*, *L'Europe galante*, *Omphale*, *Fragments de Monsieur Lully*), the revival of highly popular Lullian *tragédies* (*Thésée*, *Atys*) and shorter, light-hearted pieces that were originally created for the court

[493] One exception to this new system that occurred during Francine's directorship was the performance of the *Palais de Flore* in Versailles on 5 January 1689, where at least six female singers from the Musique du Roi exceptionally joined the Opéra's company: Anne-Renée Rebel, Miss Lalande, Miss Varango, Marie Chappe, and Miss Brion.

(*La Grotte de Versailles*, *Pourceaugnac*, *Le Carnaval*). The diversity of the programme coupled with the multiplication of characters in the ballet's sub-plots required more people to join the ranks of the choruses and the soloists. Arguably, the number of singers needed for all those performances and diverse characters was important.

Amongst the different sets of operatic work, the presence of Lully's operas stands out. The fact that the repertoire of a dead author would be sung for many years after his death represented a novelty. The practice of reviving Lullian works encouraged for the first time in French opera history the sense of a musical canon — that is to say a repertoire that represented a standard, a point of reference, in terms of cultural memory, taste, and performance.[494] Such idea was evidently salient in Le Cerf de La Viéville's *Comparaison*, which core argument relies on the fact that both French and Italian music had enough standards (in terms of styles, practices, and repertoires) for comparing them thoroughly and comprehensively. Thus Le Cerf de la Viéville argued:

> I still agree that Lully's operas are still the primary treasure of our Theatre. It is good not to play *Amadis de Grèce* immediately after *Amadis de Gaule*, & we should not perform too often new operas to the audience so as to not age those of Lully too much. I even think that nowadays too many people have the brazenness to compose new ones.[495]

This is a crucial point for understanding singers' career strategies and the ways in which the troupe evolved in the aftermath of Lully's death. In collective memories, singers' performances were (and continued to be) judged relative to their predecessors. Additionally, new singers would be selected, at least partly, on their capacity to fill in the void with regard to roles, the characteristics of which were tailored for very specific performers. This point will be developed further in the final section of this chapter.

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[494] Cf. chapter III.3 of this dissertation. See also Noiray, 'Practical and Symbolic Functions', 2020; Arnold, *Musical Debate*, 2017; William Weber, 'La musique ancienne', 1984.

[495] Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison*, I, 98: 'Je demeure d'accord que les opéras de Lully font la principale richesse de notre Théâtre. Il est bon de ne point jouer *Amadis de Grèce* immédiatement après *Amadis de Gaule*, & on ne doit donner au public des opéras nouveaux, que de peur de rendre ceux de Lully trop tôt vieux, en les jouant toujours. Je trouve même que trop de gens ont aujourd'hui la hardiesse d'en composer.'

The fact that the general number of female singers increased throughout Francine's directorship was not always grounded in stability: either some singers would leave very quickly the institution, or a significant part of the troupe could be reshuffled. As such, higher numbers of singers on paper did not always mean that more people were automatically added to the troupe's core, i.e. the group of singers that aimed to stay as long as possible in order to earn their pension. The regularity of number of singers in the troupe (or even their slight increase) could sometimes hide internal turnovers. Indeed singers could come and go at short notice, something that Lully — who invested much time, energy, and money in the training of his performers — tried to prevent with the imposition of strict rules on the behaviour of his singers (see chapter III.1). Although said rules under Lully were not officially criticised or rejected, it seems that, in comparison, the new ARM's administration after the death of the Florentine-born composer was slightly more permissive, which means that some singers who entered the establishment left it soon afterwards without real penalty or risk.

The period that spans between 1699 and 1708 approximately is representative of this phenomenon. Over almost a decade, the number of female singers increased, going from 11 in 1698 to 13 the successive year, and peaking at 17 in 1702 and 1703. Yet this increase did not mean that the troupe simply expanded, adding new recruits on top of older ones. On the contrary, the troupe's composition changed in subtle but significant ways. On the one hand, the ARM witnessed the retirement of one major singer, Françoise Moreau (ca. 1668–3 November 1754), and the departure of two other long-term female performers (definitive in the case of Marguerite Renaud, b. 1666–a. 1702, and temporary in that of Louise-Élisabeth Heusé, ca. 1672–19 March 1728). Whereas Renaud was of less importance within the ranks of the troupe, singing only minor roles, Heusé came to occupy a more central place. Initially, Heusé performed a handful of

minor roles prior to 1702. Yet the roles she undertook after her return to the ARM in 1707 (following a few years spent working at other theatres), which were of higher vocal and acting importance, confirmed the robustness of her skills. From that year onwards, Heusé played numerous young women of different sorts (shepherdesses, allegories, goddesses) in several ballets and in some *tragédies* (e.g. Andromaque in *Achille et Polyxène*, 1712; Astrée in *Callirhoé*, 1712 and 1713; Sidonie in *Armide*, 1714; Orphise in *Arion*, 1714; Eucharis in *Télémaque*, 1714). Perhaps the pinnacle of her career was the title role of Proserpine in 1715. Thus Heusé's temporary departure, albeit less meaningful than Moreau's retirement, was actually far from being neutral. In counterpoint to the departure of those three performers, the influx of new singers over the same period of time was composed of a very mixed group of people. Some of them would stay for a long time at the Opéra, such as Marie-Catherine Poussin *née* Tissart (15 March 1680–25 February 1767), Françoise Desjardins (b. 1685–a. 1732), Françoise Journet (3 April 1675–1719 or 1720), Miss Demerville (b. 1685–a. 1716), Jeanne-Marguerite Aubert (b. 1683–a. 1723), and Marie-Catherine Dulaurier (b. 1693–a. 1717), the last four being enrolled at the same time in 1705. Others would remain between three and six years only: Françoise-Jacquette Salley *née* Thoury (b. 1674–16 October 1745), Miss Bataille (b. 1685–a. 1705), Anne-Marguerite Cochereau *née* Bazin de Chenvrigny (1679–ca. 1712), all four enrolled in 1702, as well as Miss Armand (b. 1685–a. 1708) and Miss Vincent (b. 1687–a. 1722), both hired in 1703. Amongst all of them, however, only one reached the highest rank of 'first subject': Françoise Journet. All the other singers were confined to minor roles or understudy positions throughout their careers at the ARM.

Two main conclusions can be learnt from that analysis of the troupe between 1699 and 1708. First, the perceived increase of the number of female singers in the

ARM's troupe actually hides the fact that many singers left the establishment at the same time, some of whom were in fact key assets for the Opéra. Second, the incoming flux of singers was not homogeneously spread out within the troupe. More specifically, the lower ranks became fuller whilst the number of people at the top, who obtained the higher salaries and performed most of the leading roles, remained as before. This fact would tend to validate the hypothesis that not only did operas (and especially ballets) used a greater number of characters, it was also fashionable to present a variety of profiles and talents.

The coming of Françoise Journet to the ARM deserves closer attention. Journet joined the Opéra's troupe in 1705 at a stage in the history of the institution where a large section of the repertoire, as we have seen, was already engrained and repeated at regular intervals. Although her predecessors performed many roles during premieres, Journet had to perform a significant number of characters already created by other singers in addition to a selection of new roles directly assigned to her. Did she fail following the step foot of some of her predecessors? This could perhaps explain in part why the Parfaict brothers affirm that her debuts on the ARM's stage were difficult and that she did not please the audience much despite the fact that she was recognised for the beauty of her physique and voice.[496] But of whom was she the follower? The comparison between the careers of Françoise Moreau and Françoise Journet shows that, although there was some overlap between the two in terms of roles, Journet cannot be perceived as Moreau's direct heiress [see TABLE II.11]. Both only have in common six major roles (out of twenty-seven identified leading roles performed by Moreau): four in Lullian *tragédies* (Andromède in *Persée*, Églé in *Thésée*, Sangaride in *Atys*, and Oriane

[496] Parfaict, *HARM*, I, 112: 'There was no applauses and Miss Journet was ready to leave when Miss Desmatins advised her to stay.' ('Les applaudissements n'étaient pas pratiqués et Miss Journet était prête à s'en retourner lorsque Miss Desmatins lui conseilla de persévérer.') See also *MF*, June 1721, II, 7 and December 1734, II, 2915.

in *Amadis de Gaule*) and two in ballets (Pomone in the *Ballet des Saisons* and Olympia in *L'Europe galante*). More importantly, none of the *tragédies*' roles were originally premiered by Moreau but by Marie Aubry (with that final incertitude regarding Oriane, as noted in chapter III.2). That set of gentle, soft roles somehow remained in Journet's repertoire; yet, ultimately, her *emploi* gravitated around that of Marie-Louise Desmatins's, which was mostly composed of fierce and powerful women. Indeed Journet appears to be better considered as the successor of Desmatins. The latter, who had been trained by Le Rochois herself, encouraged Journet to persevere in the troupe and trained her.[497]

Why this assemblage of roles in Journet's repertoire, then? A good hypothesis is the following one: as she entered the ARM, Journet might have found herself blocked in the *emplois*' hierarchy since Desmatins remained active in the troupe until 1707. Before the retirement of the latter, Journet undertook some of Moreau's roles in order to make up for her departure, but combined with a larger range of characters, which probably suited her vocal and acting skills better. The Parfaict brothers stated that Journet, a 'tall, well-made, quite pretty' woman put 'a lot of her soul in the high [tessitura] but with slowness'.[498] This could explain, then, that Journet did not provoke any enthusiasm amongst the spectators whilst she performed Aubry's (and therefore Moreau's) *tragédies*' roles (focused on young and gentle leading females). It also assumes that Françoise Moreau's *emploi* was broken down and split amongst the singers of the troupe — for her, then, there does not seem to be any clear handover, and therefore no successor *stricto sensu*.

[497] Parfaict, idem; Pierre-Louis d'Aquin de Château-Lyon, *Lettres sur les hommes célèbres* (Paris: Duchesne, 1752), 168; Jacques Pernetti, *Recherches pour servir à l'histoire de Lyon*, Lyon, Duplain, 1757, II, 331.
[498] Parfaict, *HARM*, I, 112: 'Miss Journet était grande, bien faite, assez jolie, beaucoup d'âme dans le haut, mais accompagné de lenteur.'

Whereas Desmatins and Journet still mingled characters of different ethoses in their respective repertoires, another soloist undertook more specifically roles dealing mostly with supernatural magic [see TABLE II.13]: Julie d'Aubigny, known as La Maupin (1670–1707). Many elements of her personal and professional lives showcase the exceptionalism of her character and talent that have been profusely commented in nineteenth-, twentieth-, and even twenty-first-century popular medias.[499] La Maupin was the daughter of Gaston d'Aubigny, personal secretary of Louis de Lorraine-Guise, comte d'Armagnac. She was not very tall, but was blessed with beautiful chestnut hair with blond hints, big blue eyes, an aquiline nose, and very fair skin.[500] She married very young a man called Maupin who resided Saint-Germain-en-Laye. When he obtained a job in the provinces, Julie remained alone in Paris and learned fencing. She entertained an affair with her fencing professor, Serene, whom she followed in Marseille; there, the couple earned money from performing duels. She could not read music but learned it by ear, listening to the melodies. She started her singing career at the Opéra in Marseille under her maiden name, Miss d'Aubigny, but the scandal triggered by a homosexual relationship she entertained with a young woman led her to leave the city for Paris. She was the only seventeenth-century born female noticed as being gifted with a *bas-dessus* voice.

Alongside the career of Journet, the cases of Poussin, Dupeyré, Armand, Desjardins and Aubert (respectively enrolled at the ARM in 1699, 1700, 1703 for both

[499] See Théophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin, double amour* (Paris: E. Renduel, 1835–1836); Charles Labie and Joanny Augier, *La Maupin, ou, Une vengeance d'actrice: comedie-vaudeville* (Lacombe, 1839); Mauro Bolognini (dir.), *Madamigella di Maupin* (1966); Henri Evans, *La petite Maupin* (1985); Anne-France Dautheville, *Julie, chevalier de Maupin* (J.-C. Lattès, 1995); French televised series *Julie, chevalier de Maupin* (2004); Kelly Gardiner, *Goddess* (2014); *La Maupin, the Musical* (2017). At the entry 'Maupin' in the *Dictionnaire des théâtres de Paris* (III, 351) it is written that: she 'possessed the most beautiful *bas-dessus* that one could have ever heard so that, since her death, no one has found another voice that could even approach hers.' ('[elle] possédait un bas-dessus le plus beau dont on eut ouï parler et tel que, depuis sa mort, on n'a point trouvé de fille qui en ait approché.')
[500] Parfaict, *DTP*, III, 350-351; Campardon, *L'Académie*, II, 177–181.

Armand and Desjardins, and 1705) also present some interesting features [see TABLE II.12]. They all performed important secondary roles in great numbers, sometimes undertaking *dramatis personae* from the same category types (generally confidantes, allegories, and secondary deities), all ranked as relatively important actantial forces. Altogether, the five singers were in some sort of competition for similar pools of roles; yet it is remarkable that there were very little overlap between most of them.[501] In other words, they did not share the performance of the same roles although all of them were of the same kin.

Only Armand and Poussin present consistent similarities in their careers.[502] Like Poussin, Armand performed the role of Clorinde that 'was responsible for the success of *Tancrède*', in alternation with Françoise Journet in 1707.[503] At first, Armand played alongside Miss Vincent and Miss Bataille (Charite in *Cadmus and Hermione*, 1703). However, she distinguished herself by her vocal talents, paired with an appealing figure. To judge by a comment from the Parfaict brothers, who deemed that she had 'little hope to ever become a passable Actress', her lack of acting skills was costly for the advancement of her career.[504]

Although Dupeyré's repertoire contained perhaps a higher number of minor roles than the four other singers named above, which could indicate that she was a singer of a

[501] Overlaps in terms of repertoire between Poussin, Dupeyré, Desjardins and Aubert were rare: Poussin and Dupeyré shared Thestylis in *Alcide*, Dupeyré and Desjardins both played the roles of La Fée Principale and Logistille in *Roland*, Aubert and Dupeyré performed the same anonymous roles of Une Bergère and Une Nymphe in *Tancrède*, and Aubert and Poussin played Flore in *Atys*. Additionally, Aubert and Poussin played alongside (i.e. in the same performance) the same minor, anonymous roles of Une Calydonienne and Une Dryade (in *Méléagre*), and Une Suivante d'Urgande (in *Amadis de Gaule*).
[502] Both perform the following roles at different dates: La Gloire in *Armide* (in 1703 for Armand, in 1713 and 1714 for Poussin), Scylla in *Acis et Galatée* (1704 for Armand, 1718 for Poussin), Electre in *Iphigénie en Tauride* (in 1704 for Armand, in 1719 and 1720 for Poussin), Une Nymphe représentant Syrinx in *Isis* (1704 for Armand, 1717 for Poussin), Thémire in *Roland* (1705 for Armand, 1709 for Poussin).
[503] Parfaict, *HARM*, I, 108.
[504] Parfaict, *DTP*, I, 302: 'Miss Armand was young and pretty, her loss was rather regretted: she had a very graceful voice, but little hope to ever become a passable Actress' ('Miss Armand était jeune & jolie, sa perte fut assez regrettée : elle avait la voix très gracieuse, mais peu d'espérance de devenir jamais passable Actrice.').

less interest, we should nevertheless note that she also undertook a few roles of greater importance. Aside from secondary, anonymous characters, Dupeyré specialised in roles falling into the categories dealing with allegories, priestesses, divinities, as well as fierce women, some of them clearly defined as *baguettes* (Junon in *Omphale*, 1702; Élise in *Philomèle*, 1705; Thestylis in *La Mort d'Hercule*, 1705; Ismène in *Alcyone*, 1706; Urgande in *Amadis de Gaule*, 1707) and others flirting with the same label (e.g. the enraged lover, Doris, in *L'Europe galante*, 1706).

Jeanne-Marguerite Aubert belonged to that rare category of performers who both sang and danced (as will be discussed below). After her debuts at Metz in Claude Rosidor's theatre troupe (1698–1705), she entered the Opéra in 1705 where she both danced and sang, before continuing at the Comédie-Française as an actress in 1712.[505] She even overlapped both positions at the Opéra and the Comédie-Française — a very rare occurrence — in 1713 and 1714 despite an official leave obtained from the ARM in 1712. During that time, her name appeared in the casts of *Télèphe* (Campra) and *Arion* (Matho) alongside of the most prominent artists of her time, Françoise Journet and Charles Hardouin. Her limited progression at the Opéra resulted perhaps from her concentrating her efforts on other stages, such as that of the Comédie-Française and, later, the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels.[506] It is true that Pierre-David Lemazurier describes her in harsh terms, sanctioning the fact that she 'bored the audience', but the source is rather late and perhaps not accurate enough.[507]

[505] Henri Tribout de Morembert, *Le Théâtre à Metz* (Paris-Metz: Librairie théâtrale-Éditions Le Lorrain, 1952), 36.
[506] Jan Fransen, *Les Comédiens français en Hollande aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Purmerend, Musses and Paris: Champion, 1925), 245.
[507] Pierre-David Lemazurier, *Galerie historique des acteurs du Théâtre français* (Paris: Chaumerot, 1810), II, 9: 'This actress who did not have the time to slack off at the Comédie Françoise, although she probably bored the audience, started [at the ARM] on 13 June 1712 in the role of Cléopâtre in *Rodogune* […] She was received on 27 May 1721 and dismissed on 19 May 1722. The Chevalier de Mouhy gives an explanation for her retirement; the reason seems too ridiculous to be reported here, and we would better prefer to believe that Miss Aubert was fired because she did not have any talent.' ('Cette actrice qui n'eut

Marie-Catherine Poussin, a 'tall, pretty, well-made, blond' woman, distinguished herself from the others by occasionally undertaking leading roles of gentle lovers in *tragédies* such as Créuse (*Médée*) and Hésione (*Hésione*).[508] Poussin appears as almost as good a candidate for the succession of Moreau (as a soloist) as Françoise Journet. Indeed, Poussin performed five characters from Moreau's repertoire, all of them premiered by the older singer. In comparison, of the six of Moreau's former roles that were integrated into Journet's repertoire, only half of them were premiered by Moreau herself, which indicates again that the connection between the two singers might be somehow tenuous. Despite her affinity with Moreau's repertoire, Poussin remained confined to roles of secondary importance, as well as to 'comic' ones, according to the Parfaict brothers, which appellation might be a shortcut for designating roles of ballets and especially those that built on an explicit Italian legacy (e.g. *Les Fêtes vénitiennes*, *Les Fêtes de Thalie*).[509]

Between 1709 and 1713, the average number of female singers in the troupe remained relatively stable around historically high figures (eighteen and twenty actors in the troupe), which was more than three times the number of women employed under Lully's directorship. After 1713 and the publication of the ARM's *Règlement*, however, those high numbers diminished again. The amount of female singers at the ARM went from sixteen (in 1714) to thirteen (in 1715). As for many other things, the 1713 *Règlement* was conceived as a way to get a grip on some of the profligate practices that had impaired in many ways the smooth running of the establishment. With regard to the

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pas le temps de s'ennuyer à la Comédie-Française, mais qui probablement ennuyait le public, débuta pour la première fois le 13 juin 1712 par le rôle de Cléopâtre dans *Rodogune* [...] Elle fut reçue le 27 mai 1721 et congédiée le 19 mai 1722. Le chevalier de Mouhy assigne une cause à sa retraite ; elle nous semble trop ridicule pour la rapporter ici, et nous aimons mieux croire que Miss Aubert fut renvoyée parce qu'elle n'avait pas de talent.')

[508] Parfaict, *HARM*, I, 113: 'Elle a été grande, jolie, bien faite et blonde.'

[509] Parfaict, *HARM*, I, 113: '[Poussin] fut chargée ensuite des second roles et des comiques dont elle s'acquitta avec réputation.'

structure of the troupe, however, nothing is said explicitly in the *Règlement* regarding the detailed composition of the company and the singers' hierarchy. Why did the numbers resorb, then? After decades of administrative and financial struggle, the size of the troupe might have found a natural limitation. Its sustainability was even more at stake with all the changes imposed on the administrative functions and the streamlining of salaries and pensions. Perhaps, also, it was a natural backlash against the hectic rhythm of singers' departures and replacements that had happened in the preceding years.

Interestingly, a few of the ARM's performers were both singers and dancers such as Jeanne-Marguerite Aubert whose career has already been discussed above. There is not enough archival material relative to each of them in order to propose an in-depth analysis. However, it is not that surprising to see such a phenomenon in a context where the genre of the ballet was particularly thriving. Each of those performers present a different career's trajectory. As a singer, Anne Lemaire (b. 1680–a. 1741) was only granted small, anonymous roles, which, at first glance, might indicate that she was a secondary performer. However, she was at the same time undertaking major roles as a dancer and succeeded two other admired performers, Miss Guyot and Miss Chaillou. Likewise, Marie Buard (b. 1665–a. 1703), known as Miss Fréville, started as a singer before specialising in dance. Working first at the Comédie-Française where she was already singing, Buard entered the ARM in 1688 playing the transvestite role of Jacinthe in *Orontée* (1688). She left the singers' ranks for that of the dancers in 1692, where she performed all types of roles, even the most stereotypified. The career of Miss Clément *la cadette* (b. 1684–a. 1705) at the ARM exemplifies the inverse path, from dance to singing. Entering the institution in 1697 as a dancer, Miss Clément *la cadette* joined the Opéra's chorus in 1702. Alongside her sister, she performed anonymous characters, with

occasional small roles (e.g. Aminte in *Acis et Galatée*, 1702). Another remarkable case is that of Louise Dimanche *la cadette*. Although Dimanche had only a very brief period at the Opéra (1713–1714), the rest of her career discloses an impressive array of activities across theatres in Paris and beyond. Following her performances at the ARM, Dimanche entered the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Bruxelles (1715), then the troupe of Grimberghs in 1718.[510] A few years later, after much travel in Europe, including Paris and The Hague, she directed her own troupe in Lille for a few months in 1721.[511] Dimanche used all of her different hats, dancing and singing in turn, depending on the theatres, troupes, and productions she became a part of, throughout her life. The study of other female performers is particularly limited given the brevity of their time at the Opéra. Very few is known about Marie-Cécile Basset *l'aînée*, for example, who danced from time to time at the Opéra, sometimes even singing and dancing in the same performance. In 1693, she notably embodied the minor dancing role of a Nymphe in the fifth act of *Didon* (Desmarest) whilst being part of the chorus. With no record whatsoever, Miss Guignard, whose dates of birth and death are not even known, is probably the most limited example of that type of performer. Only one cast, that of *Le Palais de Flore* (1689) records her presence as a singer.

[510] Henri Liebrecht, *Histoire du Théâtre français à Bruxelles au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Champion, 1923), 145; Jean-Philippe Van Aelbrouck, *Dictionnaire des danseurs à Bruxelles*, Wavre, Mardaga, 1994, 110.
[511] *MF* (August 1721), 108; Léon Lefebvre, *Histoire du théâtre de Lille des origines à nos jours* (Lille: Lefebvre, 1907).

V.4. Measuring the creative control of singers over roles: lineages and the spirit of variety between 1697 and 1715

Creative control, as shown through the *emploi*, can be distributed more or less fluidly amongst the agents who take part in the creative process of opera production. In the context of the post-Lully administration that underwent so many struggles, creative ownership was shared amongst many different agents entangled with the process of opera production at the ARM. Amongst those, performers demonstrated a form of authority over the composition and rearrangement of the *emplois*, which is confirmed via an analysis of the ways in which roles were transmitted between different generations of soloists.

With a greater number of singers in the troupe, the consistency of *emplois*, especially when handed over, is more challenging to delineate. Established sets of roles (particularly when mixing characters of different ethoses) during Lully's directorship could be later dissolved and rearranged or wide-ranging categories of characters could be made even broader. Analysing the details of this phenomenon with precision is difficult since we know very little about singers' training, including how some of them learnt amongst themselves in a mentor-mentee relationship manner. Yet it is possible to reconstruct some sort of lineage between generations of opera singers during the late seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century. This represents the baseline for the case studies in the following discussion of how castings and roles inform each other at the Opéra between 1687 and 1715.

The variety of passions and expressions on stage was a key element of opera production as much linked to general aesthetic considerations as to concrete career strategies and a conception of opera as business. The fact that one singer could play

extremely fierce characters on stage, which behaviour could demonstrate a myriad of feelings, as well as playing gentle princesses, represented for that performer a way to showcase to the audience the extent of her talents. In the following section, I address variety in the *emploi* for leading women as a phenomenon specifically derived from Marie Le Rochois. 'The famous [Le] Rochois, the real model for all great actresses who have appeared on the Opera's stage' probably represents the 'source' from which that tradition flows.[512] Building on her model, I analyse how the singer can be understood as the centre of gravity (i.e. the factor of unity) around which roles aggregate, despite some differences, and after which the *emploi* could survived in its original state or be rearranged and its roles split up amongst singers.

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For some time, as shown by the study of the troupe under Lully in Chapter III, the appeal sparked by highly ranked soloists was partly related to their ability to perform different types of characters or, alternatively, to perform leading roles that demonstrated a great palette of passions and moods. As the troupe that was formed under Lully was progressively renewed (and enlarged), incoming singers slightly rearranged the contours of *emplois*. Two main hypotheses are to be considered here. On the one hand, singers could endorse more or less the same sets of roles as the people before them, for whom they sometimes acted as understudies. On the other, they could redefine the set of roles, mix characters, or even show higher degrees of specialisation.

In order to test those possibilities, the study of Marie Le Rochois's succession

[512] Durey de Noinville and Travenol, *HTOF*, I, 64: 'La célèbre Rochois, le vrai modèle de toutes les grandes Actrices, qui ont paru depuis sur le Théâtre de l'Opéra.'

offers a solid ground for grappling with the evolution of the troupe at the level of top-ranked singers. After Lully's death, the importance of Le Rochois within the ARM remained colossal. Like the Florentine-born composer, Destouches and Campra requested her opinion on the opera productions.[513] Several singers were good contenders for replacing this highly influential soloist, one generation after the other: first, Marie-Louise Desmatins, then Françoise Journet and, after her, Marie Antier. The legacy from Marie Le Rochois passed on to the three other singers is visible through two main elements. First, the transfer of the title role of *Armide*, a character that had been shaped by Le Rochois and became intrinsically linked to the singer's aura. Its presence amongst Desmatins's, Journet's, and Antier's sets of roles attests to the strong connections between all of them. Second, Desmatins, Journet and Antier, like Le Rochois, adopted roles that were founded on two different types of ethos (namely gentle, pathetic women on the one hand, and fierce sorceresses and queens on the other).

The analysis of Le Rochois's repertoire under the period of Lully's directorship in Chapter III has demonstrated that the singer had been the first to bring together characters as part of her *emploi* that would, at first glance, be classed in different roles' categories. However, a closer look at the roles reveals the shared complexity of the characters' natures and vocal profiles. Pursuing the study of such variety of temperament after Lully's death, the repertoire attributed to Le Rochois after 1687 shows an even greater level of variety. Indeed, until her retirement in 1697, many different characters representing soft, gentle leading women were added to her repertoire. Those include Galatée (*Acis et Galatée*, 1686), Polyxène (*Achille et Polyxène*, 1687), Orontée (*Orontée*, 1688), Thétis (*Thétis et Pélée*, 1689), Lavinie (*Énée et Lavinie*, 1690), Hermione (*Cadmus et Hermione*, 1690), Coronis (*Coronis*, 1691),

[513] Titon du Tillet, *PF*, 790.

Astrée (*Astrée*, 1691), Procris (*Céphale et Procris*, 1694), Orithye (*Le Ballet des saisons*, 1695), Ariane (*Ariane et Bacchus*, 1696), and Aricie (*Aricie*, 1697). Crucially, a few other roles assigned to Le Rochois present — as with the character of Angélique already analysed in Chapter III.3 — a wide palette of emotions that mix together force and softness. That is the case with the roles of Circé (*Circé*, 1694), who is a sorceress in love, the tragic sultana Roxane (*L'Europe galante*, 1697), and the loving goddess Vénus (*Vénus et Adonis*, 1697). Of those three roles, existing copies of the cast lists show that at least Roxane and Vénus are passed on to Le Rochois's successors. Premiered by Le Rochois (1697), Roxane was then undertaken by Desmatins (1706), Journet (1715) and Antier (1724, 1736). Likewise, Vénus, premiered by Le Rochois in 1697, became part of Journet's repertoire (1717).

Let us compare those three roles: Circé comes from an unsuccessful *tragédie*, Roxane is picked from one of the most successful ballets produced at the ARM, and Vénus appears in a bold work that explicitly sought to mix poetic elements. Whilst all three present clear forms of variety in their temperament and the musical devices that express those, I argue that the greater degree of variety present with Roxane and Venus, correlated with Le Rochois's skills, can explain in part their greater appeal to the audience.

The mixture of sentiments in Circé is showcased at the very start of the opera (I, 1). In that introductory scene, where Circé discusses her love for Odysseus (Ulysse) with her confidant (Astérie), the quality of her 'youth and beauty' associated with the tenderness of her feelings recalls that of a soft princess. Her first lines are as follow: 'Ah que l'amour aurait de charmes lorsqu'il unit de tendres cœurs/S'il finissait pour jamais leurs alarmes.'[514] Circé's first aria contains many melodic traits characteristic of pathetic

[514] Henry Desmarest and Louise-Geneviève Gillot de Saintonge, *Circé* (1694), I, 1: 'Ah! How many

scenes, as seen with soft leading characters: it is mostly built on conjunct intervals and expressively uses languishing appoggiaturas in the medium-high part of the ambitus (here, generally between A_4 and F_5).

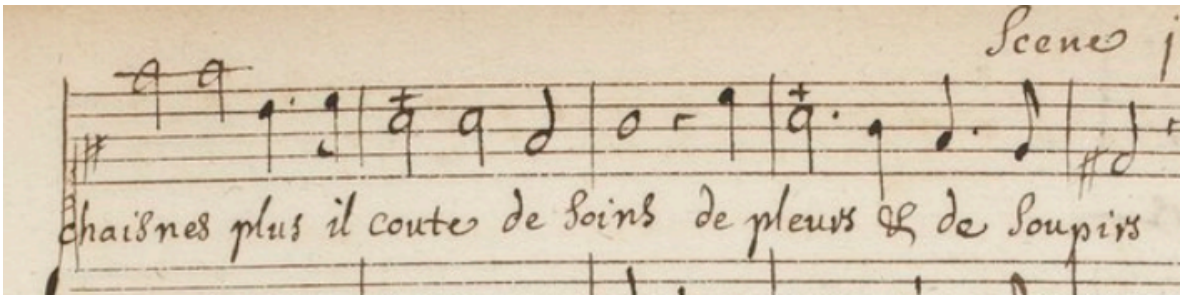


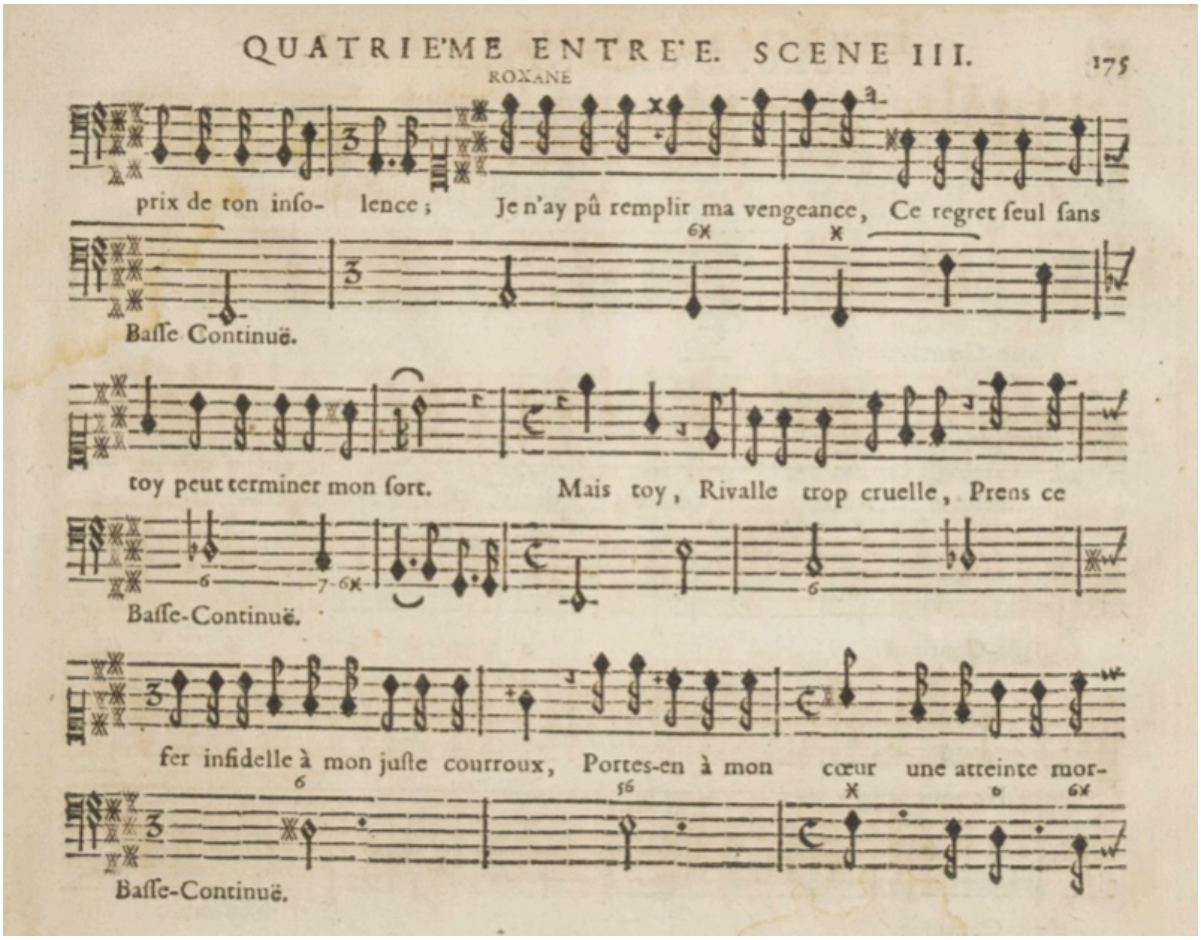
Plate II.15: *Circé*, I, 1, bars 35-39; F-Pn Mus, Manus. X.92, Folio 23r.

This kind of ornamented line, expressing Circé's affection, is particularly salient, as she mentions that her love provokes 'cries and sighs' ('de pleurs et de soupirs'), a pathetic lamentation repeated textually and musically. Although Circé discloses a form of tenderness, she is however no common 'mortal' woman (as Astérie reminds her). In the same introductory scene, Circé shows both the fact that her love is 'tender' and that she entertains a 'secret jealousy' against Éolie. The latter is a pure invention of the librettist, Louise-Geneviève Gillot de Saintonge, who allowed herself quite a few twists on the original material. Embodying the essence of the pathetic character, Éolie necessarily creates a contrast with Circé whose fury soon becomes overwhelming. Performing multiple metamorphoses during almost every act of the play, the sorceress invokes the forces of the underworld in act IV before unveiling a final gesture of pure violence, that of the destruction of her entire island after the departure of Odysseus. The potential to see in action Circé's a double essence — or, at least, an emotional ambiguity — is profoundly limited by Éolie's presence.

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charms love would have when it units tender hearts/If it would forever put an end to their alarms.'

By comparison, the character of Roxane in *L'Europe galante* entertains much more consistently a duality of character, between tender affection and furious desperation. Her sultan, Zuliman, falls under the charms of another sultana, Zaïde, who seduces him during the *divertissement*. In the direct aftermath of Zaïde's seduction, Roxane succumbs to a state of deep anger (sc. 3). Her melodic profile borrows that of a fierce queen or sorceress, with abrupt intervallic leaps of the 4th, 5th, 6th or even 8th.



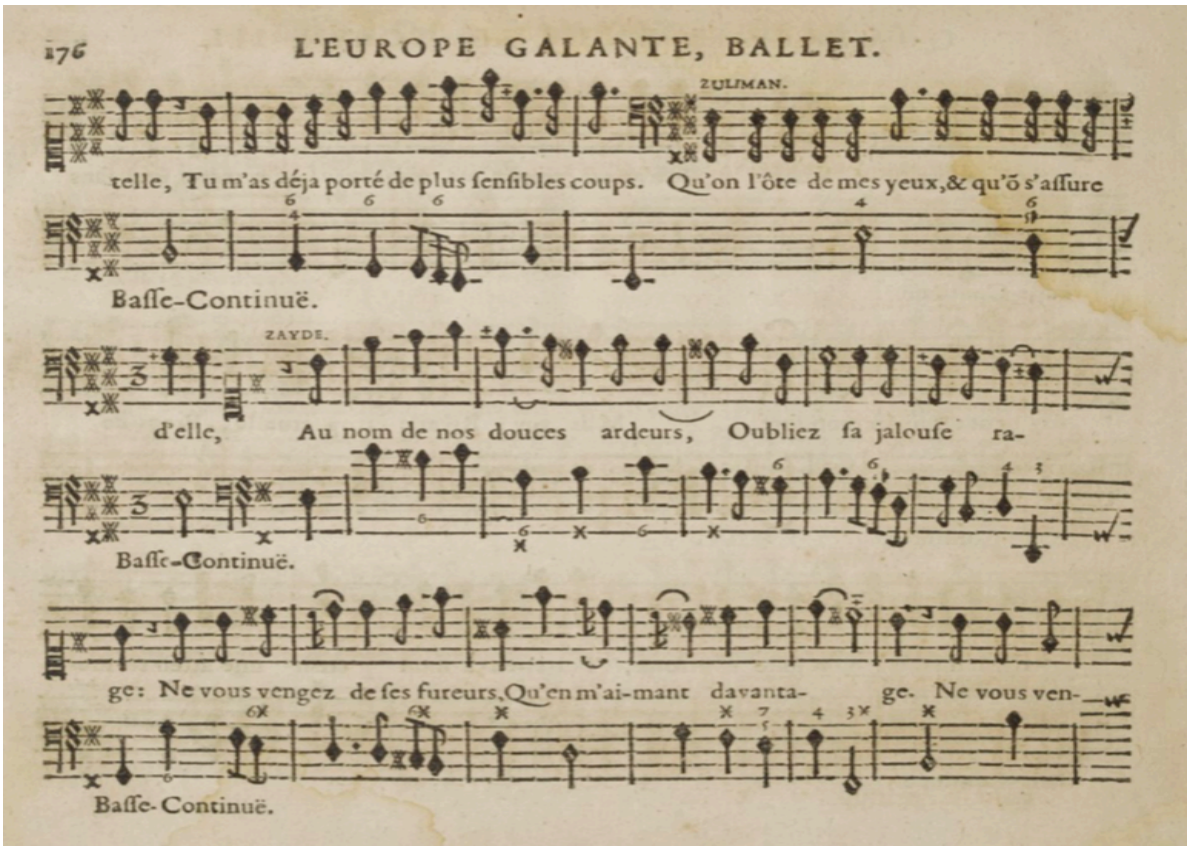


Plate II.16: *L'Europe galante*, IV, 3; Paris: Ballard, 1697, 175-176, F-Po, A-45 (A), ens. RISMImp

Yet the visual depiction of Roxane is that of a tender princess: on an engraving made by Franz Ertinger (1703), the character holds a very large handkerchief that she uses for wiping her tears away. Meanwhile, Zuliman and Zaïde, the cruel man and the seductress, look at each other, captivated. In contrast with the couple, Roxane appears as a much more complex character than that of the vengeful woman; she is somewhat the victim of her own loyalty to the opposite sex (Zuliman) and the betrayal of her own kind (i.e. Zaïde).



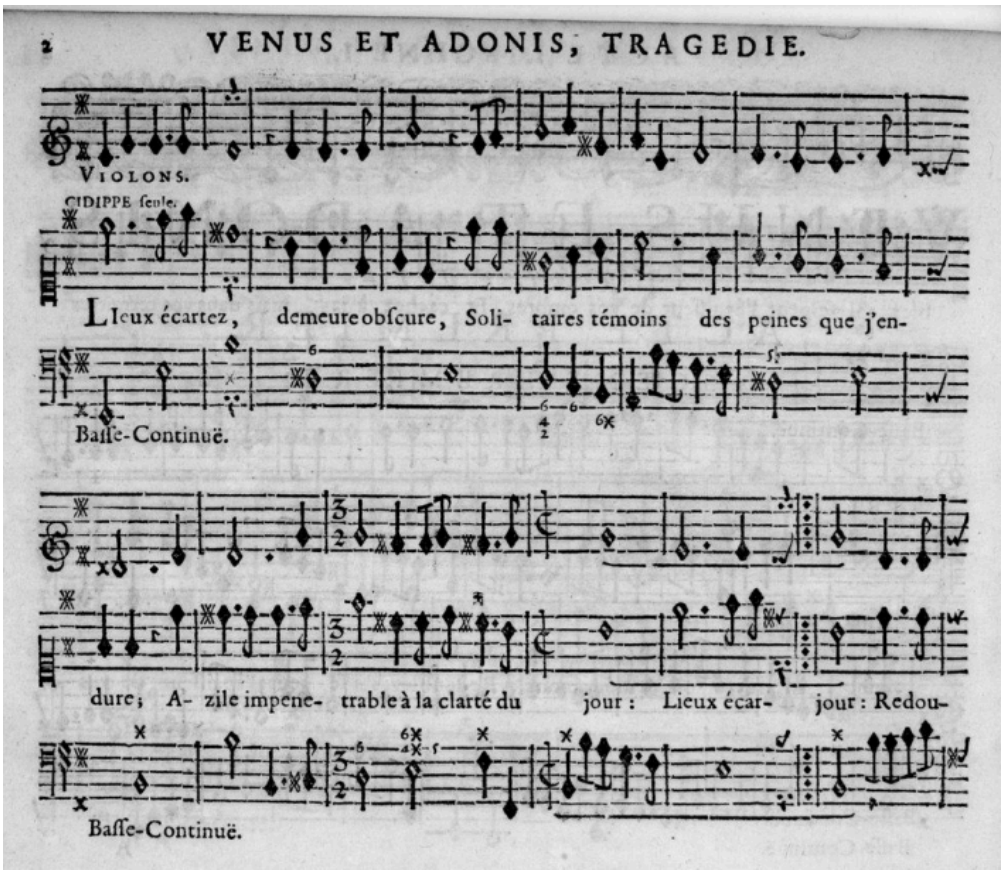
Plate II.17: Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library. Scene from *L'Europe galante*, by Franz Ertinger, 1703. New York Public Library Digital Collections.

L'Europe galante creates an echo with Racine's theatre play *Bajazet* (1672) in which the title role pretends to love Roxane, the Sultan favourite, in order to access the throne, but refuses to marry her and, instead, engages in a romantic liaison with Atalide. However, the plot's ending in the ballet is far from being as bloody as *Bajazet*'s. Despite Roxane's passion and explicit wishes for revenge, her words never become reality. Perhaps, the main reason for such restraint is the fact that few scenes of actual violence were generally allowed on the Opéra's stage. Regardless, it is the effect of such nuance that is interesting to observe in Roxane and, more particularly, what it meant with regard to Le Rochois. Underpinned with strong tragic undertones, Roxane does not indulge fully in the ire of passion, yet her melodic profile never becomes that of a gentle princess either (i.e. using mostly conjunct intervals within a restrained tessitura). She navigates musical and theatrical elements that belong to both categories of characters, rearranging them in the light of Le Rochois's public track record of ambiguous female leaders.

Vénus, finally, blooms within a *tragédie en musique* that was created with the intention to oppose the difficulties encountered by the genre after Lully's death. Jean-Nicolas de Francine is behind the project and sought to seduce a new generation of spectators who were hungry for novelty. Francine chose the subject and advised the librettist, Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1670–1741), to write something that would sound like one of Quinault's and Lully's best *tragédies*.[515] Indeed, several elements from Lullian works are recognisable in *Vénus et Adonis*: the first act resembles that of *Atys*; the call to Jealousy (allegory Jalousie) mirrors the invocation to Hatred (allegory Haine) in *Armide*; the tragic ending (although without any metamorphosis) follows also the model of *Atys*. At the same time, the permanence of pastoral elements is still visible: although shrouded with heroism, Adonis comes first from the *pastorale* universe (as

[515] Le Cerf de La Viéville, *Comparaison*, I, 97–98.

shown, for example, in La Fontaine's *Adonis*, 1658, and Cambert's *La mort d'Adonis*, 1661). Henry Desmarest was then perceived as a meticulous composer who was known for his creativity when using airs and recitatives in order to paint a great variety of passions. That variety is visible between the roles, but also at the scale of one of them: Vénus. Without remorses or fear, Vénus decides to entertain a romance with Adonis but condemns him when she reveals her passion to Cydippe (I, 5) who will tell later her vengeful lover, Mars. Passion, hatred, and sacrifice all spark from Vénus's wishes. In many ways, Cydippe and Vénus, respectively premiered by Marie-Louise Desmatins and Marie Le Rochois, look much alike. Both are in love with the gorgeous Adonis, both are powerful in their own ways: Vénus is a pagan goddess who presides, for example, to the *divertissement*; Cydippe decides to succumb to her hatred and betrays her friend by telling Mars (acts II and III) and unleashing his deadly violence (acts IV and V). Cydippe presents clear characteristics of gentle and pathetic princesses, which is put in evidence from the start of the plot (I, 1) with her monologue 'Lieux écartés, demure obscure'.



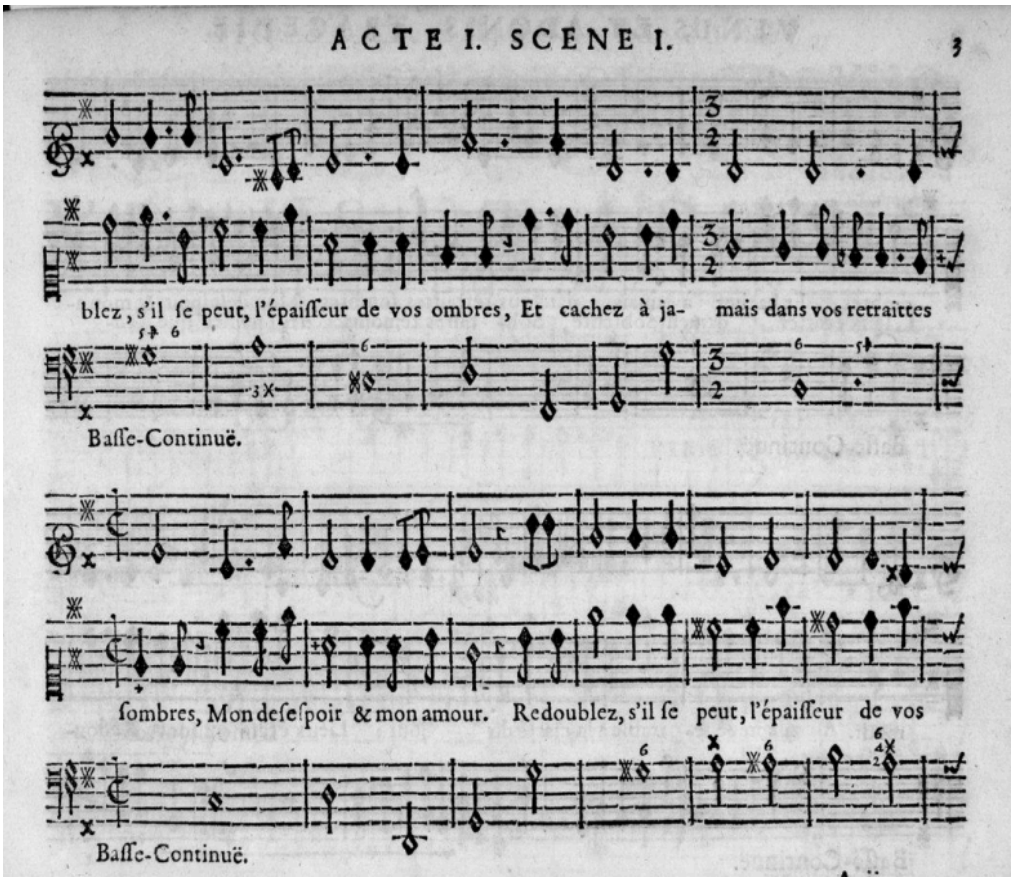


Plate II.18: *Vénus et Adonis*, I, 1; Paris: Ballard, 1697, F-Pn, Vm2-132

Here again, according to the pastoral motto of 'tenderness', the mention of a far removed place invites the solitary princess to explore her heart. The melody integrates quite a few intervallic jumps. Those are not hieratic but carefully organised and repeated in clear patterns. The regularity, also emphasised by the lengthy rhythms (minims and crotchets), adds to the pathetic aspect of the lamentation. Yet the general contours of the melodic line, exploring the whole tessitura back and forth (covering at times an octave in less than a bat), clearly takes advantage of Desmatins's voice, which, like Le Rochois, was known to be that of a *grand dessus* (see Chapter III.4).

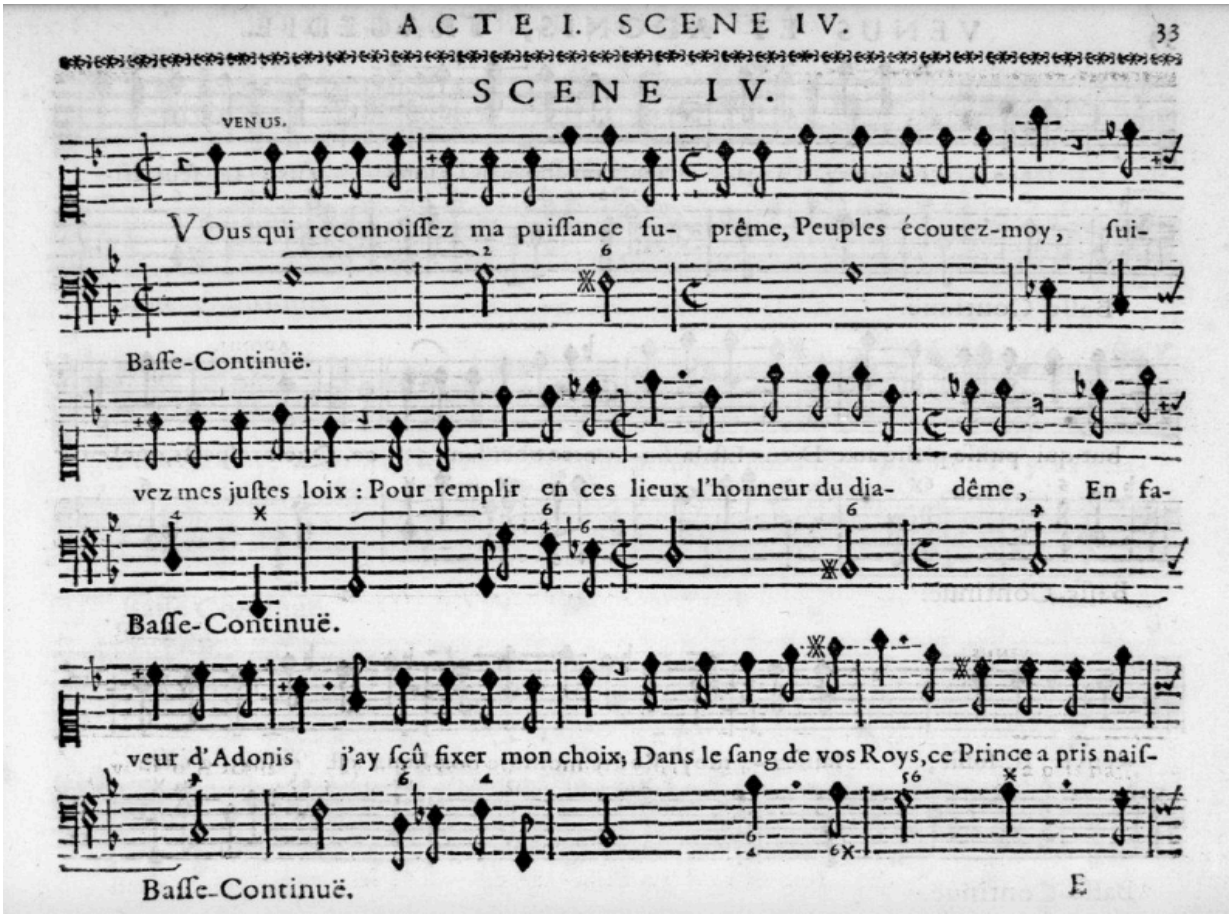
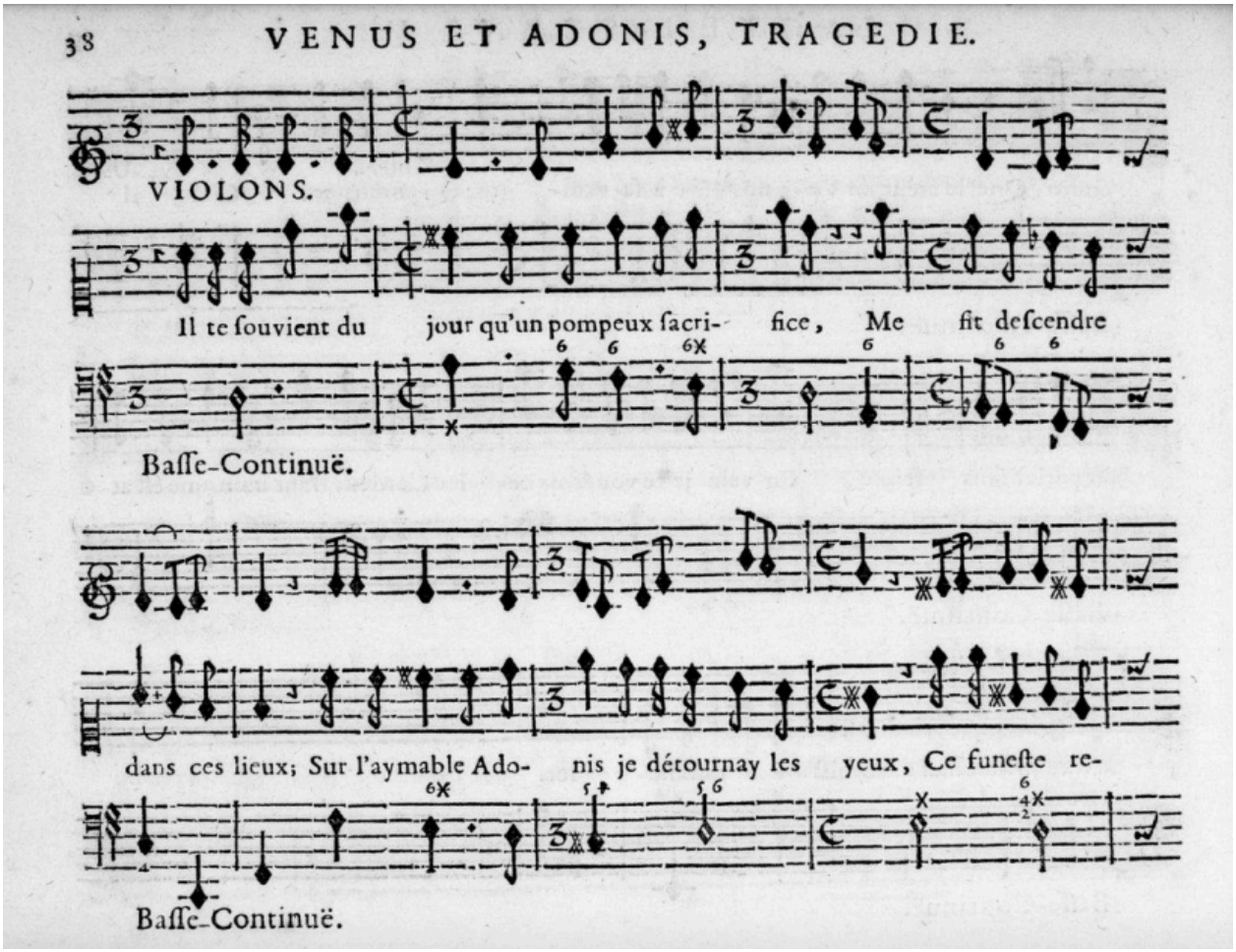
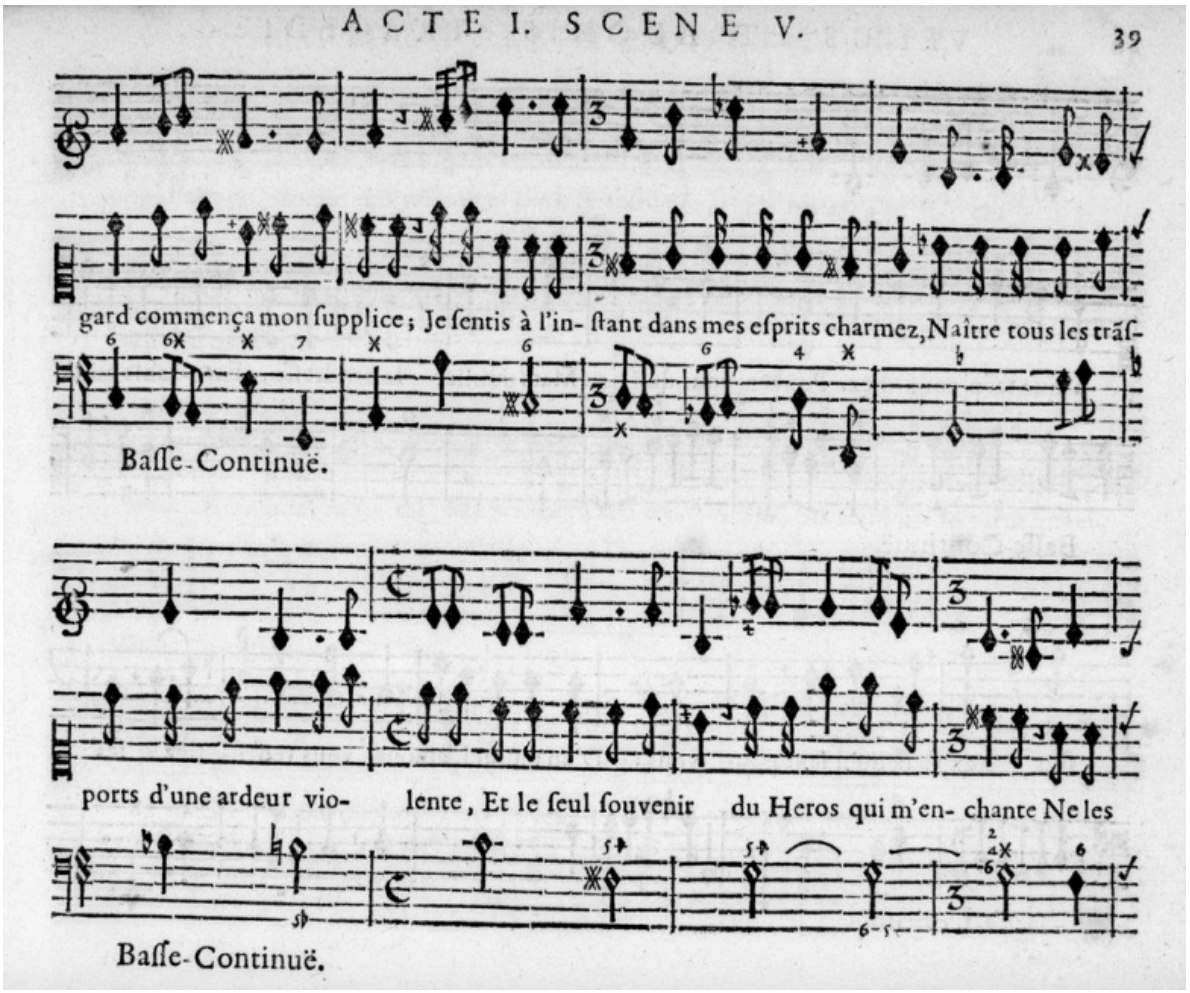


Plate II.19: *Vénus et Adonis*, I, 4; Paris: Ballard, 1697), F-Pn, Vm2-132

Vénus's entrance on a recitative (I, 4), which answers back to the *divertissement* (I, 3), is very dynamic, propelled by a series of quavers and semi-quavers so as to highlight

judiciously the text. It is also continuously tensed toward the highest part of the tessitura (G_5, which is also the tonic) and filled with many different intervallic jumps, both ascending and descending (4^{th} and 5^{th} in particular). Again, the high focus put on the delicate details of the declamation seems tailored for the voice of the actress, Le Rochois. The fifth scene of the first act (a dialogue between Vénus and Cydippe) allows for a greater degree of refinement when comparing both roles.




gard commença mon ſupplice ; Je ſentis à l'in- ſtant dans mes eſprits charmez, Naître tous les trãſ-
Baſſe-Continuë.
ports d'une ardeur vio- lente, Et le ſeul ſouvenir du Heros qui m'en- chante Ne les
Baſſe-Continuë.

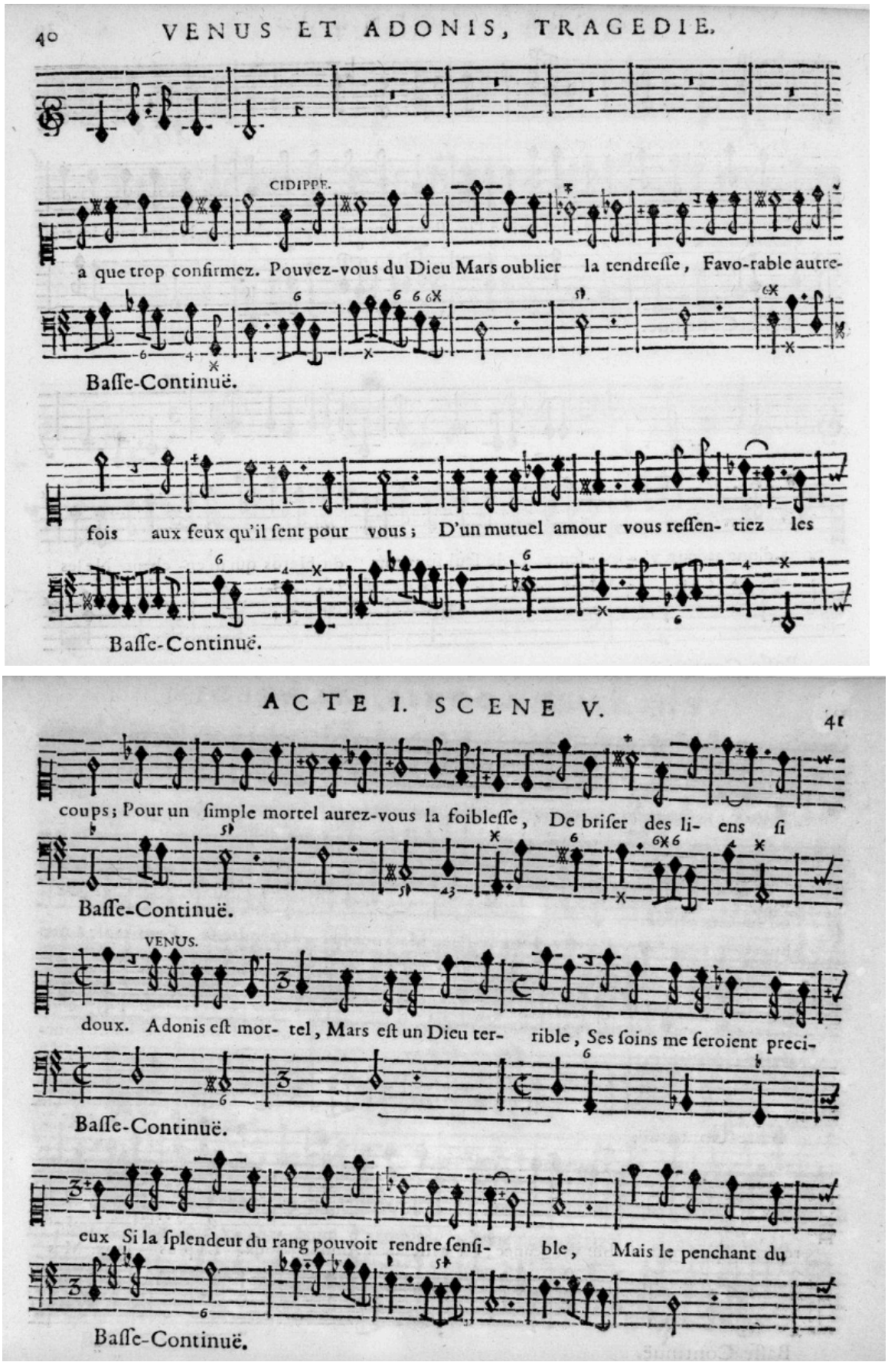


Plate II.20: *Vénus et Adonis*, I, 5; Paris: Ballard, 1697), F-Pn, Vm2-132

Vénus's recitative puts a greater emphasis on nuance regarding declamation. Numerous semi-quavers and quavers agitate the discourse. Time signature changes allow for the music to follow even more closely the musicality of the text. When Cydippe enters, the line flattens slightly, the melodic line becomes a bit more conjunct, and the general pace of the sentence goes slightly slower, notably with the use of minims and the frugal use of dotted rhythm. Contrasts between Vénus and Cydippe are not sharp but they are still palatable. Between the two singers, it would make sense that Le Rochois, Lullist star, would be assigned the role which writing came closer to that of a character like Armide. The role of Vénus went directly to Journet: indeed there was no revival of the play before 1717 (which knew a great success) at which point Desmatins had already left the ARM ten years earlier and her own role, Cydippe, was then assigned to Marie Antier.

Looking at Le Rochois's main successors, Marie Antier probably is the most explicitly represented as mixing the same types of roles. She is described by d'Aquin de Château-Lyon in the following terms:

> Antier charmed everyone by the beauty of her voice […] a majestic height, an admirable [vocal] organ, her nobility and her pride, an air that inspired awe and respect. With all these advantages, could she possibly badly perform the roles of divinities, princesses, and sorceresses, especially as she was trained by the most famous girl [Le Rochois] of the time?[516]

Noinville and Travenol explicitly delineate the links between Le Rochois and Antier, and the continuity in their mixed repertoires by affirming that the former thoroughly trained the latter:

> Marie Antier, who came also from the city of Lyon, came to Paris in 1711, the year in which she entered the Opéra. She charmed first thanks to the span and the beauty of her

[516] Château-Lyon, *Lettres*, 168: '[Antier] charma tout le monde par la beauté de sa voix […] une taille majestueuse, un organe admirable, de la noblesse & de la fierté, un air qui en imposait. Pouvait-elle avec ces avantages mal jouer les rôles de Divinité, de Princesse & de Magicienne, surtout étant exercée par la fille [Le Rochois] la plus célèbre du temps?'

> voice; but in order to also make her the great Actress that she eventually became, she needed someone like the *Demoiselle* Rochois, who delighted in training her as she found in Antier all the necessary talents to turn her into an excellent actress, with her admirable voice, a tall and well-made figure, a noble, proud, and important physiognomy as appropriate for the role-types of princess, sorceress, and divinity. It is for those roles, in which the *Demoiselle* Rochois had sparked admiration in all of Paris, that Antier was trained and in which [Le Rochois] led her to a degree of perfection in which she has been seen performing and unanimously applauded during twenty-nine years, after which she left the theatre in 1741 with a Pension of 1,500 *livres*.[517]

Another eighteenth-century source relates the same story about this specific mentor-mentee relationship that worked from deep friendship bonds; the historian Jacques Pernetti affirmed that it allowed Antier to perfect her art with regard to the performance of mixed *emploi* that encompassed 'majestic roles' and was formerly defined by Le Rochois herself (that of 'divinities, princesses, and sorceresses').[518]

Turning to the other two singers, Desmatins (who acted like her understudy and directly succeeded Le Rochois) and Journet, slight differences between their repertoires are worthy of investigation. Françoise Journet took up some of the most emblematic roles of gentle, soft women premiered by Le Rochois and combined them with other ones, cut from the same cloth, that were originally performed by Françoise Moreau *la cadette*. As demonstrated in the preceding Chapters, Françoise Moreau and her older

[517] Noinville et Travenol, *HTA*, II, 67: 'Marie Antier, aussi de la ville de Lyon, vint à Paris en 1711 qu'elle entra à l'Opéra. Elle charma d'abord tout le monde par l'étendue & la beauté de sa voix ; mais pour la rendre aussi grande Actrice qu'elle l'a été dans la suite, il lui fallait une personne telle que la Demoiselle Rochois, qui se fit un plaisir de la former, lui ayant trouvé tous les talents nécessaires pour en faire une excellente actrice, ayant avec une voix admirable une taille élevée & bien prise, & une physionomie noble, fière & importante telle qu'il convient dans les Rôles de Princesse, de Magicienne, & de Divinité. Ce fut dans ces Rôles, où la Demoiselle Rochois avait fait l'admiration de Paris, qu'elle l'exerça, & la fit parvenir au degré de perfection où on l'a vue représenter avec un applaudissement général pendant vingt-neuf années, après lesquelles qui quitta le Théâtre en 1741 avec une Pension de 1500 livres.'

[518] Jacques Pernetti, *Recherches pour servir à l'histoire de Lyon* (Lyon: Duplain frères, 1757), II, 331–332: 'Marie Antier, famous actress of the Opéra, was born in Lyon in 1687. Her voice was the reason she chose her career. She started in Paris in 1711 and charmed first everyone thanks to the beauty and the scope of her voice, although she was musically absolutely ignorant. After being trained by the *Demoiselle* Rochois, who loved her and thought that she could made a great singer out of her, Antier achieved such a degree of perfection that she was admired for almost thirty years in the majestic roles of divinities, princesses, and sorceresses.' ('Marie Antier, célèbre Actrice de l'Opéra, était née à Lyon en 1687. Sa voix la décida au parti qu'elle prit. Elle débuta à Paris en 1711, & charma d'abord tout le monde par la beauté & l'étendue de ses sons, quoiqu'elle ignorât absolument la musique. S'étant formée ensuite sous la Dlle. Rochois, qui l'aimait, & qui crut pouvoir en faire un grand sujet, elle parvint à un degré de perfection, qui la fit admirer pendant près de 30 ans dans les rôles majestueux de Divinité, de Princesse & de Magicienne.')

sister Marie-Louise mostly performed young women dealing with gallantry and pathos. At least three different mid-eighteenth-century sources depict Journet in the clothes and attitude related to that sort of role, referencing a painting made by Jean Raoux (1677–1734).[519] The portrait (now probably lost) represents Françoise Journet in the title role of *Iphigénie en Tauride*, a priestess of the divinity Diane. As always with this type of artist portrait, the choice of the role is never arbitrary. On the contrary, it seeks to capture a defining moment of the performer's career.[520] Noinville and Travenol, for example, detailed the ways in which Journet's physiognomy and talent perfectly matched the soft character of Iphigénie whose pathetic fate triggered the emotions of the audience:

> Françoise Journet, born in Lyon and Actress at the Theatre of this City, appeared at the beginning of this century at the Paris Opéra where she was admired in the first Roles thanks to the beauty of her voice, the nobility of her figure and her action. She had a soft air, something so interesting and so moving in her physiognomy, that she triggered the tears of the spectators while playing the tender Roles and especially that of Iphigénie. Never were graces so noble seen, never something both so moving and majestic appeared. The action of her voice was perfect, her charming eyes moved, in union with the most beautiful pair of arms in the whole world, and carried at the heart of her expression everything that she had to paint. Raoux, the famous painter, did a magnificent full-length portrait of this Actress, representing Iphigénie in Theatrical dress. In the background is the Temple of Diana, that great Princess of whom [Iphigénie] was the high Priestess.[521]

[519] Pernetti, *Recherches*, II, 207; Noinville et Travenol, *HTOF*, II, 66; Château-Lyon, *Lettres*, 167–168 ('Le Tableau de Miss *Journet* nous la représente en *Iphigénie* ; on voit dans le fond le Temple de Diane : c'est un des plus beaux morceaux de *Raoux*, Peintre estimé.'); Antoine Joseph, Dezallier d'Argenville, *Abrégé de la vie des fameux peintres* (Paris: De Bure, 1762), 377-378 ('Tels sont les portraits en pied de plusieurs actrices de l'Opera, surtout une des plus célèbres [Miss Journet] habillée en prêtresse de Diane, dont elle jouoit le rôle dans l'Opera d'Iphigénie ; une [Miss Quinaut] autre sous la forme d'Amphytrite dans un char tiré par des chevaux marins ; quelques-unes en Bacchantes [Misss Prevost et Poignan] tenant une grappe de raisins ; une autre en Nayade [Miss Carton], & la fameuse Actrice du théâtre Italien [Miss Sylvia], en Thalie.').

[520] See Marle Schneider, *"Belle comme Vénus": Le portrait historié entre Grand Siècle et Lumières* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2020), chap. III 'Représentation sociale', 155–230.

[521] Noinville and Travenol, *HTOF*, II, 66: 'Françoise Journet, née à Lyon & Actrice du Théâtre de cette Ville parut au commencement de ce siècle à l'Opéra de Paris, où elle se fit admirer dans les premiers Rôles par la beauté de sa voix, par la noblesse de sa figure & de son action; elle avait un air de douceur, & quelque chose de si intéressant, & de si touchant dans la physionomie, qu'elle tirait des larmes aux spectateurs dans les Rôles tendres, surtout dans celui d'Iphigénie. Jamais on a vu des grâces si nobles; jamais rien n'a paru de si touchant à la fois & de si majestueux; l'action de sa voix était parfaite, ses yeux qui étaient charmants, allaient, s'unissant aux deux plus beaux bras du monde, porter au cœur de l'expression de tout ce qu'elle avait à peindre. Raoux, peintre fameux, a fait un magnifique portrait en pied de cette Actrice, représentant Iphigénie en habit de Théâtre; on voit dans le fond le Temple de Diane, dont cette grande Princesse était la grande Prêtresse.'

This emphasis on the gentle, soft types of female leaders is highlighted by another comment made by Antoine de Léris (1723–1795), a drama critic who affirmed that Journet 'played in a very noble way, and excelled in particular when performing [in] the tender [style].'[522]

In comparison with Journet's repertoire, Desmatins undertook a few roles that were forceful and intrepid, such as Hécate and Thétis in *Théagène et Chariclée* (1695). For the first, Desmatins came down on stage using a dangerous stair shaped in zig-zag, which represented clouds. For the second, she appeared on the back of a dolphin, a particularly unstable machine which put the actress in danger during each performance. Both examples are strongly representative of the type of roles described as *à baguette*, the demonstration of power for which is generally related to the use of heavy machines on stage. However, the way Desmatins is portrayed in one print shows her holding a handkerchief and a thurible, which brings her much closer to the type of role depicting gentle, soft princesses.[523] Despite some small differences, then, both Desmatins and Journet performed a mixed *emploi*, made of both fierce and gentler leading women, like that of their predecessor at the ARM, Le Rochois.

It is important to add that the lineage between these singers was not solely a matter of repertoire but also of social attitude. Just like Le Rochois, Desmatins's personal character was exceptional. In that respect, both singers are examples of early modern singing divas. Desmatins's particularly difficult temperament was described in various testimonies. As much as it might have participated in the diffusion of her image, it might also have slightly delayed her financial success at the ARM. Indeed, she only

[522] Antoine de Léris, *Dictionnaire portatif historique et littéraire des théâtres, concernant l'origine des différents théâtre de Paris* (Paris: Chez C.A. Jombert, 1763), entry 'Journet': '[Elle] jouait d'une manière très noble, et excellait surtout dans le tendre'.
[523] *Mademoiselle Desmatins, musicienne de l'Opéra*, coll. Michel Hennin (F-Pn, Rés. Qb-201 (83)-Fol., *Estampes relatives à l'Histoire de France*, LXXXIII, piece 7276-7351, period 1710-1711).

reached the top of the troupe's hierarchy in 1704, with a 2,400 *livres* salary, more than 22 years after she was enrolled. In *La Musique du diable* (1711), a satirical text about Desmatins (described as a 'renowned libertine') and other contemporary personalities, the anonymous author (perhaps one of Desmatins's spurned lovers) staged the arrival of the singer in the underworld whilst disclosing scurrilous anecdotes about her.[524] For example, Desmatins is accused of attempting to have Francine killed, allegedly because of an issue regarding a role assignment.[525] Likewise, the satirical text suggests that other performers might have suffered from Desmatins's ire, such as one of the two Moreau sisters (presumably Françoise Moreau) whose success might have represented a threat, as well as some other female singers: Miss Renaud (perhaps Marguerite Renaud, b. 1666–a. 1702), Miss Deschars (probably b. 1680–a. 1706), Miss Florence (no information found), Miss Le Rocher (idem), and Miss Lemaire (perhaps Anne Lemaire, b. 1680–a. 1738).[526] Alleged proofs of Desmatins's jealousy run through the whole document, in which the author made accusations such as that Desmatins asked for a toxic liquid used for etching to be thrown at the face of a young girl she found more beautiful than herself.[527] She is accused of plotting to steal the 'royal clothes' of the 'queens or empresses' that she performed on stage.[528] The soloist is explicitly represented in the frontispiece of the pamphlet, which is commented on during the first few pages. She stands not far from Proserpine. While Pluton is charmed by the actress, the goddess turns her eyes away to focus on Lully who is in the foreground. Proserpine reproaches Desmatins accusing her of having 'copied' her on stage.[529] Finally, the author added sordid details regarding Desmatins' death, which he pretended was caused

[524] *La Musique du diable*, 3.
[525] *La Musique du diable*, 28.
[526] *La Musique du diable*, 28.
[527] *La Musique du diable*, 30.
[528] *La Musique du diable*, 29.
[529] *La Musique du diable*, 45–48.

by a surgical procedure to remove a surplus of grease from her belly that her luxurious way of life enabled — a surplus that the singer would have fed to her guests.[530] Naturally, no other source corroborates this. The Parfaict brothers, instead, stated that the cause of her death in 1708, at the age of forty-three, was an ulcer on her liver.[531]

[530] *La Musique du diable*, 243–247.
[531] Parfaict, *HARM*, I, 51.

General conclusion

In the context of stage performance under the Ancien Régime, the *emploi* is a hybrid notion situated at the interface between the sets of roles, the actor who incarnates them, and the administration that serves as both a general framework and a power enforcing specific rules. In a broad way, the term *emploi* referred to a position within a hierarchical administrative system — originally that of the king's administration — paired with functions or duties and a specific salary. In a narrow way, the *emploi* started to designate during the seventeenth century a specific set of *dramatis personae*, which wideness, characteristics, and grade shaped the casting's structure from two positions: externally (from the point of view of the audience, the horizon of expectation, and foreign influences) and internally (from the point of view of Opéra's administrators and the singers themselves).

The study of the *emploi* in the context of the early stage in the ARM's history shows that the concept cannot be observed as a monolithic entity. Rather, it needs to be understood as a notion under development. The reason for this is due to a specific tension between explicit and implicit norms, written and unwritten conventions, fixed constitutions and evolving compositional and performance practices. Indeed, a dialectic binds together two main elements: on the one hand, the stiffness of the ARM's institution (especially in terms of economic needs), and, on the other, a network of discrete variables that connect in multiple, ever-changing ways the performers with the rest of the agents involved in the process of opera production.

Focusing on that dialectic at the heart of the *emploi*'s analysis exposes the ways in which administrative law contains a powerful creative seed. Indeed the progressive official legal regulation of the Opéra's administration had a vital impact on the creative

and performance conditions of the institution. By considering the *emploi* first and foremost as an administrative tool, this dissertation takes a radical turn by demonstrating how opera production generates law and how the law conditions and guide creativity at the Académie in the specific context of Louis XIV's reign. The administrative and legal evolution of the ARM also foreshadowed a broader evolution of state administration and finances (towards a greater form of bureaucracy). This reality, however, has never constituted the font of any existing scholarship and much work still need to be carried away on that area of scholarship.

Moreover, that dialectic deconstructs the preconceived idea that there existed a clearly defined and well-established taxonomy regarding sets of roles during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries at the Opéra. That statement is anachronistic and gives too much voice to conceptually-loaded reflections on aesthetics generally decoupled from specific material conditions (and especially from the administrative aspects of the theatrical institutions). Of course, literary and theatrical models for female and male characters existed; but a close analysis of the operatic works surrounding the birth of the ARM show that key characteristics could be fluid in-between sets of roles. Authors absorbed more or less archetypal models and re-arranged them around the performers.

This conclusion is drawn from the use of a 'performer-based perspective', a methodology borrowed from Antonia L Banducci's work, which illuminates the creative process involved in the making of operas at the ARM, particularly the establishment of roles. Using that perspective, I have explored the administrative and legal dimensions related to the singers as they engage in their function of co-creators. Many of the decisions surrounding roles and lyrical genres take their roots in interpersonal arrangements, whether positive or negative. The evolution of the *emploi* is concomitant

with the emergence of the modern singers, along with their corresponding responsibilities and privileges. As rules around casting became streamlined, singers could reclaim on legal terms the obtention of sets of roles. That point has been made abundantly clear in the first part of this dissertation with the analysis of a few litigations amongst singers such as the ones that opposed Nicole-Catherine Lemaure and Marie Pélissier, Henriette Adélaïde de Villars (known as Miss Beaumesnil) and Rosalie Levasseur, Miss Buret and Marie-Thérèse Davoux (known as Maillard). It is also salient in the case of disputes between performers and the ARM's administration, like in the case of the Opéra's troupe against Anne-Pierre-Jacques Vismes du Valgay. Two main issues cristallise those conflict: seniority rights (sometimes opposed to right 'by talent') and the system of salary and pensions.

All of these examples, however, take place in the mid and late eighteenth century, when sources are numerous and when administrative rules are more clearly stated. Working my way backward, the legal contours around casting and *emplois* get unquestionably fuzzier. The main reason for this is that individual's talent and skills, in addition to personal social relationship sometimes distilled under the concept of 'genre', were absolutely primordial in the making and distribution of roles. Even though Lully and his successors established the conditions for setting up the *emploi* under a modern acceptation, it was initially the individual singers' characteristics that made the difference. In other words, the singers themselves represented one of the most important regulative forces related to the *emploi*. In particular, the exemplar of Marie Le Rochois sets the tone for understanding the process, which owes to the singer's direct influence on the agents and dramaturgical material involved in the creative process, rather than any woolly speculative aesthetic reflection.

This investigation of the *emploi* in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth

centuries leads then to a new understanding around generic blends that shows a contamination between the pastorale universe and the *tragédie en musique* in particular, through the notion of 'tenderness'. The pervasiveness of the latter is enabled by the fact that is was seen as a quintessential part of the human condition and a keystone of theatrical plot structures. As such, fierce leading female roles and soft, gentler ones both hold substantial forms of 'tender' expression. However, fierce women traditionally expressed on stage a much wider spectrum of passions, from gentle love to furious hatred and wishes of destruction. That variety is particularly well incapsulated by the leading roles that Marie Le Rochois created; not only did she set up that complex model of strong, powerful female characters sharing their tender hearts, but she also became a model of acting and singing that remained as a bedrock for further comparison in the development of art criticism throughout the eighteen century.

It is important to note that, when I started this project, I intended to cover the whole of the eighteenth century. I felt that Lully's period had already been adequately covered. However, when doing all of the groundwork, I realised that Lully lay down the setting for the *emploi* in ways that had not been quite understood. Consequently, I had to work again on the period, scutinising the first decades of the ARM's history. Picking the thread from 1715 onwards, there is much work to be carried on the successive generations of owners, directors, and performers during the eighteenth-century. Additionally, there would be much to learn from a more transversal approach that would make the systematic and comprehensive comparison between all main Parisian theatres, including the Comédie-Française, the Opéra-Comique, and the Fairs. It is also evident that this dissertation, because of its focus on female roles and singers would gain in greater strength with a comparative work including the male counterparts.

Bibliography

General remarks and list of common abbreviations

Primary Sources: This study is based on the analysis of libretti and scores of operas created at the Académie Royale de Musique, in Paris and at the Court (Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Fontainebleau, Versailles), during the second half of the seventeenth century and the early eighteenth century. Other sources (administrative papers, personal commentaries, etc.) were found in France (Paris, Versailles) and the United-Kingdom (London). I have used the Ballard editions when manuscripts were not available.

BL: London, British Library

F-Pan: Paris, Archives Nationales

F-Pa: Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal

F-Pn: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France

F-Po: Paris, Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra

F-V: Versailles, Bibliothèque municipale

Translations: All translations are mine unless stated otherwise. I have chosen to modernise the French when deemed possible and necessary.

Terminology: The terms 'Opéra', 'Académie Royale de Musique', its diminutive 'Académie' and its acronyme 'ARM' are used synonymously throughout.

Abbreviations:

CUP: Cambridge University Press

HARM: Claude Parfaict and François Parfaict. *Histoire de l'Académie royale de musique, depuis son origine jusqu'à present*. Amsterdam, aux dépens de la Compagnie, 1735.

HTA: Jacques-Bernard Durey de Noinville and Louis Travenol, *Histoire du théâtre de l'Académie royale de musique en France depuis son établissement jusqu'à present.* Paris: Duchesne, 1757.

HTOF: Jacques-Bernard Durey de Noinville and Louis Travenol, *Histoire du Théâtre de l'Opéra en France*. Paris: Barbou, 1753.

MF: *Mercure de France*. January 1724–May 1778.

MS: Louis Petit de Bachaumont. *Mémoires secrets pour servir à l'histoire de la République des Lettres en France depuis 1762 jusqu'à nos jours*. Londres: Adamson, 1785.

PF: Évrard Titon du Tillet. *Le Parnasse françois, [suivi des] Remarques sur la Poësie et la Musique.* Paris, Coignard, 1732.

SPF: Évrard Titon du Tillet, *Supplément au Parnasse français.* 1766.

OUP: Oxford University Press

UCP: University of California Press

PUP: Princeton University Press

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Scores and librettos

NB: The following list encompasses the musical examples used for precise analysis of the score in the dissertation. A list of operas created before 1715 and referenced in this dissertation is available as part of the appendices [TABLE X].

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