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THE CANTATAS OF JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU

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By the early eighteenth century, French music was tangibly influenced by the Italian style which had already permeated much of Europe. The French Cantata is symptomatic of that often disparaged influx. The cantatas of Rameau are a significant contribution to an important form. Written almost entirely in the early years of the artist's career, they hold details of his stylistic development.

In the present study of Rameau's cantatas several aspects of his style are discussed as they relate both to his theoretic writings and to the various influences of the time. Examples of those stylistic elements found in the cantatas are cited and discussed. There is, as well, a comparison of the works to the poetic form standardized by Rousseau.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Although the first French Cantata was composed in the last years of Louis XIV's reign, its origins can be traced many years prior to that time. During the Renaissance, a strong desire to emulate classic sources was seen in both France and Italy. For our purposes, the way in which each school interpreted the ancient Greek and Latin art of song is of importance. On the one hand, French scholars, specifically poets, leaned towards the written word, while the Italians leaned towards the sung word. This tendency toward ancient models, found in much of Europe,¹ can be thought of as a unifying element between disparate groups.² Sharply contrasting musical styles of the Italian and French schools were eventually assimilated in the French Cantata. The form is evidence of the often disparaged influence of the Italian style on French music. This melding of styles in many genres was peculiar to that age of questioning and reasoning.

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1. George J. Buelow, "Rhetoric and Music," The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 20 vols., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), XV, 793-802.
 2. "The French Cantata appears to owe its very existence to the new spirit, and the form can be seen as one of the bridges between the Age of Lully and the Age of Rameau." David Tunley, The Eighteenth-Century French Cantata (London: Dennis Dobson, 1974), 1.

The French reverence for ancient poetry was apparent in the fervor with which they pursued its cause. "For one such as Racine, Greece was a heart-moving poetic reality..."³ Racine and Corneille "systematically observed Aristotilian unities, used elevated and elegant language and carefully controlled the 'passions.'"⁴ By studying the manuscripts of the past, poets of the Renaissance detected a prevalence of a unique tie between word and melody. This tie, they believed, caused in the listener certain changes in emotion which they hoped to emulate. To this end, a group of poets established the Pléiade, the main purpose of which was to codify these effects and to ascertain their source. In his treatise of 1549, La Deffence et illustration de la langue françoise, Joachim du Bellay, of the Pléiade, proclaimed their aims and "urged poets to imitate classical forms and meter."⁵ Pierre de Ronsard, their foremost representative, expounded ideas of Plato in his Abrégé de l'art poétique françois of 1565 in which he stressed the "moral and ethical quality of music."⁶ Jean-Antoine de Baïf and Joachim Thibaut

3. Paul Hazard, The European Mind [1680-1715], trans. J. Lewis May (Cleveland and New York: World Publishing, 1964), 337.

4. Gene E. Vollen, The French Cantata: A Survey and Thematic Catalog (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1982), 3.

5. Howard M. Brown, Music in the Renaissance (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 340.

6. Ibid., 341.

de Courville invented a new form, vers et musique mesurés à l'antique, in which they very nearly forced the French language into "an accentual version . . . of the metrical patterns of Greek and Latin poetry."⁷ The complementary music emphasized the long and short syllables of the poetry. Baïf's Académie de poésie et musique was founded in 1570 in order to promote this new form which was embraced by poets of the time. Although he later learned to break arbitrary rules in the name of art, Jean-Baptiste Rousseau went so far as to say: "It has always been my belief that one of the surest ways of attaining the sublime is to imitate the illustrious writers who have preceded us."⁸ Thus the French created an art of control and intellect.

The Italians, by contrast, chose to display those very passions of which the French sought control. Theirs was an art of unconstrained emotion. Rather than emphasizing poetic structure, the Italians created a melodic style which reflected the rhythmic freedom of their language. Within this style, specific emotional words or ideas were given expressive strength through melodic embellishment. The Monody, with its declamatory melodic style, illustrates the Italian method of classicism. Through simplifying the musical texture away from polyphony and using word painting technique they hoped

7. Ibid., 341.

8. Hazard, op. cit., 341.

to convey the emotion of the text. Their endeavors were successful.

There have been several general studies made of the French Cantata. The Eighteenth-Century French Cantata by David Tunley is one such work. In it he traces the origins of and the various influences on the genre. In addition, he makes a stylistic survey of the primary composers and their contemporaries. Tunley's discussion of Rameau's work is brief and incomplete. (Having been written in 1974, the work makes no mention of the recently discovered Cantate pour le jour de la Saint Louis.) The French Cantata: A Survey and Thematic Catalog by Gene E. Vollen is, as its title suggests, a convenient reference work on the genre. The Cantata is discussed by nationality in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeux to Rameau by James R. Anthony discusses the genre briefly. In it the works of Rameau are referred to as "advanced studies for his later stage work."⁹ Also brief is Girdlestone's discussion of the cantatas of Rameau in his biography of the composer published in 1969. More recently, Mary Cyr has written several articles on her research of Rameau's cantatas. The Musical Times of 1979 makes the first contemporary mention of Cantate pour le jour de la Saint Louis

9. James R. Anthony, French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeux to Rameau (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), 372.

in Cyr's article, "A New Rameau Cantata." Most recent is the thesis, "An Investigation into the Influence of Rhetoric on Jean-Philippe Rameau's Solo Vocal Cantatas and Treatise of 1722," by Lucinda Heck Sloan submitted in 1988. The work discusses each of the solo cantatas separately, dealing specifically with rhetorical influences.

There has long been a need for a more thorough study of the cantatas of Rameau. The works are a significant contribution to an important form. Written almost entirely in the early years of the artist's career, they hold details of his stylistic development. Indeed, it is known that he believed the form was essential in his development as a composer of opera.¹⁰ Though relatively few in number (seven extant works), the cantatas show a variety of form, a richness of harmony, and a melodic poignancy which allude to his future successes.

In the study of Rameau's cantatas the works will first be compared to the form standardized by Rousseau. Then several aspects of his style will be discussed as they relate both to his theoretic writings and to the various influences of the time. Examples of those stylistic elements found in the cantatas will be cited and discussed. Finally, there will be a comparison of the cantatas with each other in order to demonstrate their significance in Rameau's development.

10. Ibid., 372.

CHAPTER II

THE CANTATAS OF JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU

The cantatas of Rameau have, until recently, been regarded by scholars only superficially. Mary Cyr is among those to delve more deeply into the various aspects of the works. As she points out, the disregard earlier given them is due primarily to the dates to which they were once assigned. Girdlestone, though he believed their composition to span twenty-six years (1702-28), which he later revised to ten (1718-28), believes the works lack "those very personal characteristics that make his mature work so unique."¹ Cyr, by contrast, and with the assistance of recent discoveries, has arrived at a more concise record of their dates and origins.² By using a more accurate chronology, one can better ascertain the contribution made by Rameau to the genre and better judge his stylistic evolution.

Figure 1. The probable dates
and places of composition of the cantatas of Rameau

<u>Aquilon et Orithie</u>	c1715; by 1719 (revised c1730)	Lyon or Clermont Paris
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1. Cuthbert Girdlestone, Jean-Philippe Rameau: His Life and Work (New York: Dover Publications, 1969), 64.
 2. Mary Cyr, "Towards a Chronology of Rameau's Cantatas," The Musical Times CXX (1983), 539-541.

<u>Thétis</u>	c1715; by July 1718	Lyon or Clermont
<u>Médée</u> (lost)	c1715-22	Clermont
<u>L'Absence</u> (lost)	c1715-22	Clermont
<u>L'Impatience</u>	c1715-22	Clermont
<u>Les Amants Trahis</u>	by 1721	Clermont
<u>Orphée</u>	by June 1721	Clermont
<u>Le Berger Fidèle</u>	by 1728	Paris
<u>Cantate Saint Louis</u>	c1740	Paris

In the article of 1983, "Towards a Chronology of Rameau's Cantatas," published in The Musical Times, Cyr records her findings. She places the composition of Aquilon et Orithie near 1715 and determines that it was written by at least 1719. The work was later revised about 1730. Thétis also was written about 1715 and completed by at least 1718. The earlier date, 1715, of the two cantatas is determined by the letter Rameau wrote to the poet, Antoine Houdar de la Motte, of October 25, 1727. In it the composer describes the two works as having been written "a dozen years ago."³ Rameau hopes that by seeing their dramatic qualities, la Motte will be persuaded to provide him with opera libretti. The 1715 date establishes that they were written either during his short stay in Lyon (1715-16) or during his second stay in Clermont (1716-22). The later dates of the two cantatas

3. Ibid., 539.

are determined by dates entered by the copyists on the manuscripts. Similar dates are found on the manuscripts of Orphée (June 1, 1721) and Les Amants Trahis (1721). The dates of L'Impatience and two others which have been lost, Médée and L'Absence, are determined by the work Éloge historique de Mr Rameau by Hughes Maret, of 1766. He places their composition in Clermont. Due to certain stylistic considerations (the elaborate viol part of L'Impatience, for example, is rare in early cantatas), Cyr places them during Rameau's second stay in Clermont (1716-22) rather than his first stay (1702-06). Le Berger Fidèle and Aquilon et Orithie appear in a printed collection. Unfortunately no date was included on its title page. Cyr has determined a fairly accurate date by examining the addresses of Rameau and the publisher found on the title page. Rameau lived at the "rue des 2 boules aux 3 Rois" in Paris when his son Claude was born, August 23, 1727. By 1731 he had moved. The publisher occupied his address from 1728-1731. Further detective work has determined that the date of publication is very close to 1730. Cyr states that "a list of court payments shows an entry for Rameau's collection towards the end of 1730."⁴ Le Berger Fidèle was reported in the Mercure de France as having been performed at the Concert Spirituel on November 22, 1728. The article refers

4. Ibid., 541.

to it as a "nouvelle cantate."⁵ The date of Cantate Saint Louis presents a different sort of problem. In her article, "A New Rameau Cantata," published in The Musical Times, November 1979, Cyr states that it "would be tempting to postulate a date, on musical grounds, of no earlier than 1740, towards the middle of his operatic career."⁶ In the work, Rameau uses bold harmonic writing and, despite its intimate nature, it reflects his operatic style.

The majority of French cantatas are for soprano voice with continuo.⁷ Those of Rameau show a variety of voice types and instrumentation. There are two for solo bass voice with continuo and violin, Aquilon et Orithie and Thétis. Thétis portrays two characters, Jupiter and Neptune, in addition to a narrator. Two cantatas, Orphée and Le Berger Fidèle, are written for soprano with instrumental ensemble. The works could very well be intended for counter-tenor due to their masculine characterization, though the range is appropriate for soprano voice. Two of the works are for soprano with continuo and obbligato instrument. L'Impatience includes a substantial part for viol. Cantate Saint Louis incorporates a solo treble part very well suited to the

5. Ibid., 541.

6. Mary Cyr, "A New Rameau Cantata," The Musical Times CXX (1979), 909.

7. Vollen, op. cit., 47.

violin.⁸ There remains Les Amants Trahis which is written for two voices, counter-tenor and bass, with obligato viol and continuo. The following chart clarifies the instrumentation.

Figure 2. The instrumentation
of Rameau's cantatas

	Voice	Obligato Instrument
<u>Aquilon et Orithie</u>	Bass	Violin
<u>Thétis</u>	Bass	Violin
<u>Orphée</u>	Soprano (specifies flutes in final air)	Treble
<u>Le Berger Fidèle</u>	Soprano	two violins
<u>L'Impatience</u>	Soprano	Viol
<u>Cantate Saint Louis</u>	Soprano	Violin
<u>Les Amants Trahis</u>	Counter-Tenor and Bass	Viol

The Form

The French Cantata appears first as a literary genre. Jean-Baptiste Rousseau is credited with its conception as a poetic form. He was both inspired by the Italian cantata (which had enjoyed popularity for a number of years in much of Europe), and challenged by the classical ideal of uniting

8. Mary Cyr, "Introduction" of Cantate pour le jour de la Saint Louis by Rameau (Paris: Institut de Musique et Danse Ancienne, 1980).

poetry and music.⁹ The Italian format of recitative followed by aria established a basic framework for his creative expression. His first attempts at this task he thought lacked design:

. . . I perceived . . . that I lost on the side of the verse what I gained on the side of the music and that I produced nothing of value so long as I would content myself with piling up some poetic phrases, without plan nor liaison¹⁰

Then Rousseau came upon the idea "of giving a form to these small poems, to reduce them to an exact allegory, whose recitatives made the body, and whose airs the soul or the application."¹¹ It was his classic training which enabled Rousseau to create a form of lasting value, a form worthy of imitation by many poets of his time.¹²

The cantata of Rousseau follows characteristics described by Vollen in his work, The French Cantata. One aspect he discusses involves the structure of the poetry. The cantata normally consists of three recitative-aria pairs. He has found that the poetic meters vary, though the recitatives are primarily based on the twelve-syllable Alexandrine line, a standard of French poetry. (This point can be argued, however. Vollen describes a verse having only one or two

9. "The union of music with rhetorical principles is one of the most distinctive characteristics of Baroque musical rationalism" Buelow, op. cit., 793.

10. Vollen, op. cit., 63. 11. Ibid., 63. 12. Ibid., 63.

twelve-syllable lines as being based on the Alexandrine. Perhaps the word, "based," is too strong to describe a verse with so few Alexandrine lines.) The lines of the airs are mostly shorter than those of the recitatives, having five-, six-, seven-, or eight-syllables. The number of lines in both the recitative and air also varies. The lengths of the recitatives vary according to the story they relate. The more structured airs are typically of three stanzas with four lines each. The final stanza is often a repetition of the first, prescribing da capo or ABA form musically. Occasionally, the airs further the dramatic action instead of merely commenting on it. In these instances, rather than being repetitive, a long continuous verse of from ten to twelve lines is used. There are also a few airs with four or five stanzas without repetition. Variety is also evident in the rhyme schemes and the line lengths. In these aspects, recitatives tend to be more complex than their air counterparts which, for the most part, hold to a single pattern throughout.

The texts set by Rameau in his cantatas follow this standard form with some exceptions. The normal configuration of three recitative-aria pairs occurs in four of the seven works. In two cantatas, Thétis and Cantate Saint Louis, Rameau includes an instrumental prelude. The humorous cantata, Les Amants Trahis, also elaborates the typical form. The two-voice work has an internal structure in which the bass

and counter-tenor share the recitatives while the bass sings the airs alone. Bordering this structure are two recitative-duo pairs which balance the work.¹³

Of the twenty-one recitatives in Rameau's cantatas, several are based on the twelve-syllable Alexandrine line. Five consist primarily of that type. Another commonly found scheme starts with several Alexandrine lines and ends with a few of shorter length, as in the first recitative of Aquilon et Orithie:

Que j'ai bien mérité la froideur d'Orithie,	(12)
S'écriait Aquilon rebuté des mépris	(12)
De la beauté dont il était épris.	(10)
Ma flamme, disait-il, en fureur convertie	(12)
Va faire succéder à mes soins les plus doux,	(12)
A mon respect, à mon obéissance	(10)
Une barbare violence,	(8)
Un impitoyable courroux!	(8)

Ten recitatives employ an equal, or nearly equal, number of twelve-syllable lines and lines of contrasting length. The three recitatives of Le Berger Fidèle follow this pattern.

The third recitative is quoted here:

Cependant à l'autel le Berger se présente;	(12)
Son front est déjà ceint du funeste bandeau...	(12)
Arrêtez! Diane est contente	(8)

13. The following schematic outline will clarify the structure:
 Recitative-bass and tenor, Duo-bass and tenor/
 Recitative-bass and tenor, Air-bass/
 Recitative-bass and tenor, Air-bass/
 Recitative-bass and tenor, Air-bass/
 Recitative-bass and tenor, Duo-bass and tenor.

D'un amour si rare et si beau.	(8)
Mirttil obtient la fin des maux de l'Arcadie,	(12)
Et, lorsqu'il croit perdre la vie	(8)
L'Hymen pour cet amant allume son flambeau.	(12)

About one quarter of the recitatives, five, have very few twelve-syllable lines. The first recitative of L'Impatience is of this type:

Ces lieux brillent déjà d'une vive clarté.	(12)
Depuis longtemps j'ai vu naître l'aurore;	(10)
Le charmant objet que j'adore,	(8)
Devait la précéder dans ce bois écarté	(12)
Mais je ne la vois point encore.	(8)

Only one of the twenty-one recitatives does not include the Alexandrine. It is the third recitative of Thétis:

Quel aveugle transport vous guide?	(8)
Grand Dieux, calmez ce vain courroux!	(8)
Thétis pour un mortel décide:	(8)
Son coeur ne saurait être à vous.	(8)

The poetic meters of the airs show great variety, though the majority are based on eight-syllable lines. The final air of Orphée is an example of this type. Its length of twelve lines is an unusual characteristic; most of the eight-syllable line airs have eight lines. (excluding the da capo)

En amour, il est un moment	(8)
Marqué pour notre récompense.	(8)
Si quelquefois par indolence	(8)
On échappe ce point charmant,	(8)
Plus souvent encor un amant	(8)
Se perd par trop d'impatience.	(8)

De ses désirs impétueux (8)
 L'amant habile est toujours maître; (8)
 Il tâche avec soin de connaître (8)
 L'instant qui doit combler ses vœux. (8)
 Tel aujourd'hui serait heureux (8)
 S'il n'avait voulu trop tôt l'être! (8)

Another variation employs one or two lines of a different length. For example, the final air of Aquilon et Orithie:

On peut toujours dans l'amoureux mystère (10)
 Trouver le moyen de charmer; (8)
 Celui qui devrait alarmer, (8)
 Devient quelquefois nécessaire. (8)

Une beauté, peut, sans être sévère, (10)
 Refuser l'hommage d'un cœur. (8)
 Loin de l'accuser de rigueur, (8)
 Essayons toujours de lui plaire. (8)

Three of the airs are based on the twelve-syllable line more typical of the recitatives. The first air of Aquilon et Orithie exemplifies this meter:

Un amant tel que moi doit-il prouver sa flamme (12)
 Par les désirs les plus discrets? (8)
 Et de quoi m'ont servi mille soupirs secrets, (12)
 Mille vœux trop soumis qu'avait formés mon âme? (12)

The texts of Rameau's cantatas have a variety of rhyme schemes as well. The first recitative of Orphée incorporates three common types:

(a) Par le charme vainqueur d'un chant harmonieux
 (b) Orphée à l'empire des ombres
 (a) Arrachait l'objet de ses vœux;
 (b) Et le fils de Vénus, dans ces routes trop sombres,

- (a) Conduisait son triomphe à l'éclat de ses feux.
 (a) Un plaisir seul manquait à ce mortel heureux:
 (c) Pluton, par une loi bizarre,
 (c) Avait, jusqu'au pied du Ténare
- (a) Contraint ses regards amoureux;
 (d) Mais de jeunes Amours une escorte riante
 (d) Essayait d'amuser son âme impatiente
 (a) Par ces chants gracieux.

Most of the poetic verses contain twelve lines or less. There are two however whose unusual lengths and structures should be pointed out in more detail. The third recitative of Les Amants Trahis has sixteen lines primarily based on twelve syllables. Unusual are eight interior lines which Rameau chose to set in an arioso style.

Tircis:

- (a) Sont-ce donc là les lois de l'amoureux empire? (12)

Damon:

- (b) Je veux rire!

Tircis: Pleurons, (6)

- (b) Que dis-je? hélas! mourons! (6)
 (b) Profane, suspendez de frivoles chansons. (12)
 (b) Écoutez, de l'amour respectez les leçons. (12)
 (c) Quand on perd ce qu'on aime (6)
 (d) Un recours unique est ouvert, (8)
 (c) Il faut dans son malheur extrême, (8)
 (c) Il faut perdre le jour quand on perd ce qu'on aime! (12)

Damon:

- (c) Quand on perd ce qu'on aime (6)
 (d) Un recours unique est ouvert, (8)
 (d) Il faut n'aimer plus ce qu'on perd, (8)
 (c) Quand on perd ce qu'on aime. (6)

Tircis:

(e) Non! immolons des jours que le sort a proscrits. (12)

Damon:

(e) Vous perdez Cloris, moi Sylvie. (8)

(e) Vous en mourrez, et moi j'en ris! (8)

The interior air gracieux of Orphée is another verse of unusual structure. It is an extensive twenty-six line poem. The first four lines are of typical eight-syllable construction. Lines five through sixteen are based primarily on the twelve-syllable Alexandrine line and tend to further the narration. Therefore, Rameau chose to set them as accompanied recitative. Lines seventeen through twenty-six have a ten-syllable line which repeats itself as a refrain among eight-syllable lines. In effect, the whole is divided into three smaller units each of which employ individual rhyme schemes:

(a) J'ai pour témoin de ma victoire (8)

(b) Les beaux yeux qui m'ont enflamme. (8)

(a) C'est le seul prix, la seule gloire, (8)

(b) Dont mon coeur puisse être charmé. (8)

(a) À ce penser flatteur, il s'émeut, il se trouble, (12)

(b) Il cède enfin au violent transport (10)

(a) De sa flamme qui se redouble. (8)

(b) Attends, fais sur ton coeur encor quelques efforts! (12)

(c) C'en est fait...et ses yeux ont vu ceux d'Eurydice! (12)

(c) Triste jouet de l'infernal caprice, (10)

(b) Prête à quitter les sombres bords, (8)

(b) Une barbare main la retient chez les morts. (10)

(b) Ému par des nouveaux accords, (8)

(d) Ce malheureux époux croit attendrir Mégère. (12)

- (d) Elle est sourde, et ce n'est qu'a l'enfant
de Cythère, (12)
- (b) Qu'il fait entendre ainsi sa plainte et ses remords (12)
- (a) Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime, (10)
- (b) C'est à toi de le réparer! (8)
- (b) Des feux que tu viens m'inspirer (8)
- (a) Ma chère épouse est la victime. (8)
- (a) Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime! (10)
- (b) Vole aux enfers le réparer! (8)
- (b) Ah! devaient-ils nous séparer (8)
- (a) Pour un transport si légitime? (8)
- (a) Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime. (10)
- (b) Ne saurais-tu le réparer? (8)

Vollen also identifies the dramatic purpose of each poetic section.¹⁴ The first recitative sets the stage: time, place, and problem. L'Impatience, for example, takes place at daybreak. Rameau's beautiful setting enhances the effect. On the words, "Long since I have seen daybreak," the vocal line gradually rises as the bass line quickens to heighten the anxiety in the voice. A large descending leap of a major seventh increases the intensity of the words, "But I do not see her yet." The expressive opening of Orphée is a longer example, ". . . by these routes too gloomy," which effectively describes the underworld. Each of the first recitatives relates a problem to be solved or a story to relate. The second recitative hastens the crisis. That of Orphée is a particularly good example. Although short, only three lines, it ominously advances the imminent disaster:

14. Vollen, op. cit., 68-70.

But his soul, sensitive only to Eurydice,
 Only dreams of the pleasure whose end is near:
 Cease, he says, cease a eulogy so vain!

The final recitative resolves the conflict. That of Aquilon et Orithie uses irony to present its resolution:

. . . . The violence of his passion
 Lets her finally know what tenderness lies within . . .

The airs of the cantata have dramatic functions which complement those of the recitatives. They serve to convey the emotional attitude of the protagonist or of the poet towards the preceding action. The first air of Aquilon et Orithie is very short yet expressive. It well describes the passionate Aquilon: ". . . . And of what use were my thousand secret sighs, My thousand too submissive vows" The airs of Cantate Saint Louis are highly expressive of joy and admiration: "May everything here join in the homage Perfume the day that he breathes" "Young Zephirs . . . May your sighs . . . open A thousand flowers on this beautiful site" In addition to the function of emotional support, the final air presents the moral lesson to be learned from the conflict. That of Le Berger Fidèle is a typical example:

Charming Love,
 You make your severities
 Felt only to test constancy.
 You want perseverance
 To be able to merit your favors.

In presenting a large amount of information in a small form, the poet relies on the poetic devices of allusion and symbolism to convey his meaning.¹⁵ The first recitative of Thétis compares the image of battle with the passion of love in the line, ". . . . Wounded by the same arrows, impassioned by the same fires" The sensual text of L'Impatience is unusually overt; ". . . . They taste before me the fruits of constancy"

Allegory is a common poetic device of the French Cantata.¹⁶ One can only speculate about certain references. However, the Cantate Saint Louis specifically refers to Louis XII. (The day of Saint Louis was a much celebrated event.)¹⁷ This work contains a large number of mythological references intended to flatter the saintly king. Even those cantatas specifically based upon mythology were intended to send a message, moral, sarcastic or flattering, to their audience.¹⁸

The use of mythology in the texts of Rameau's cantatas is indicative of the classic ideal. Gods, heroes, and their legends abound. There are the obvious mythological references in the titles of three works. Aquilon et Orithie recounts the rape and abduction of Oreithyia, daughter of Erechtheus

15. Ibid., 72.

16. Ibid., 72.

17. James R. Anthony and Mary Cyr, "Paris," The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 20 vols., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), XIV, 197.

18. Tunley, op. cit., 24.

and Praxithia,¹⁹ by Aquilo, the Roman equivalent of Boreas, the Greek north wind.²⁰ Thétis describes the volatile courtship of Thetis, mother of Achilles,²¹ by the gods Jupiter and Neptune. The dramatic battles of Thétis could possibly represent the many wars which destroyed the French economy in the eighteenth century. Orphée tells the story of the legendary bard as he attempts to rescue his wife, Eurydice, from the dark underworld. In addition to the obvious, there are mythological references within the verses. Cupid is named on several occasions; he is called Love, god of love, and the son of Venus.²² Echo is identified twice in the verses;²³ she is called upon by Tircis in Les Amants Trahis in the first recitative. Rameau musically describes her with an echoing motive. She appears in Le Berger Fidèle as well. Aphrodite (Venus), the Greek goddess of love and beauty and mother of Cupid, is referred to twice as the Child of Cythere, the place where she was born.²⁴ A particularly flattering personification occurs in Cantate Saint Louis in

19. David Kravitz, Whose Who in Greek and Roman Mythology (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1975), 171.

20. Ibid., 30, 46.

21. Ibid., 227.

22. Classical Gods and Heroes: Myths as Told by the Ancient Authors, trans. Rhoda A. Hendricks (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1972), 301.

23. Hendricks describes her as "a wood nymph who lost her power of speech except for the repetition of the words of others." Ibid., 303.

the third recitative. The "Queen of this charming place" is compared with Hebe, representative of eternal youth.²⁵

The poetic form established by Rousseau lends its structure to the cantatas of Rameau as has been discussed. There are, of course, certain purely musical influences. The airs are either binary or ternary. The binary form, a descendant of the air sérieux et à boire,²⁶ lent its structure to French dances.²⁷ The ternary or da capo form is one of the many Italian influences on the French cantata. The ternary form, although referred to by its French name, air en rondeau, was the basis for Rousseau's poetic air.²⁸ Vollen describes pertinent differences between the two.²⁹ The binary type is considered an open form: the first half ends in a key other than tonic, and there is no return to the A section. The ternary form, by contrast, is considered a closed form: the first part cadences in tonic, and there is a repeat of the A section. (Although the repetition is not always complete or exact.) Other differences involve elements of contrast. The binary form has repetitions of each section, and very little contrast of style between the

24. Cythera is an island off the southeastern coast of the Peloponnesus, the large peninsula that forms the southern part of Greece. Ibid., 302.

25. Ibid., 306.

26. Vollen, op. cit., 8-10.

27. Tunley, op. cit., 38-39.

28. Vollen, op. cit., 66.

29. Ibid., 89-92.

two parts. The ternary form has inconsistent internal repetitions (when present), and definite contrasts in style between the A and the B sections.

Primarily, Rameau uses the da capo form for the airs of his cantatas. His approach to the form varies. In several instances there are a number of internal repetitions of the text in both the A and B sections as in the second air of Aquilon et Orithie. These repetitions occasionally occur only within the B section. Examples of this type of setting are found in the second air of Thétis, and in the air gracieux et vif of Cantate Saint Louis. There are also instances when the da capo is written out, often in abbreviated form, as in the first and third airs of Thétis.

Rameau uses the binary form in his cantata airs in only a few instances. The form is usually limited to shorter texts. The first air of Aquilon et Orithie, for example, has only four lines of text. By contrast, "Du dieu d'amour," the third of Damon's airs from Les Amants Trahis, has ten lines of text and is set in rounded binary form. The verse does not display a contrast of moods or ideas which would be better served with da capo form. An unusual example of binary form occurs in the extensive air gracieux of Orphée, the first four lines of which are set in binary form. The entire piece will be discussed more fully below.

There are a few airs in Rameau's cantatas which follow neither the binary nor the ternary form. The first duo of

Les Amants Trahis, "Ma bergère a trahi sa foi," is in three sections, each of which is based on two lines of text. (The verse has six lines.) The contrasting moods of the two heroes, Tircis, the melancholy tenor and Damon, the sarcastic bass, are gradually disclosed. In the first two lines the voices share the text and thematic material in counterpoint. The whining voice of Tircis is expressed in the second part with scale-wise movement. Damon's stronger demeanor is expressed through an arpeggio-based line. (Such melodic expressive tendencies will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.) The concluding section of the duo exhibits their sharply contrasting moods fully. This will be illustrated in the section on word-painting below. The air gracieux of Orphée has already been cited as having an unusual poetic form. Tunley believes the dramatic quality of that cantata owes more to the traditional tragédie-lyrique than do the other early cantatas of Rameau which tend to be much more Italianate in their style.³⁰ The central air gracieux can be compared, in this way, to a scena. Rameau's setting highlights the three sections. Following the initial air in binary form, there is a long section of accompanied recitative (27 measures). The final section is similar in form to "Ma bergère a trahi sa foi": each part of the verse uses different thematic material. There is a refrain on the words,

30. Tunley, op. cit., 160.

"Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime." Each reiteration uses rhythmically similar thematic material. This French trait will be discussed in the section on melodic style.

The Melodic Style

The cantatas of Rameau show stylistic differences in the development of melody which also attest to a combined Italian and French influence. The French melodic style evolved both from dance forms and from the classic desire to express the text in music. The French dance suite lends to the air "its flowing elegance, its rhythmic definition, and its symmetry."³¹ Although repetition is a developmental procedure common to both schools, it is used in very different ways. The Italian method reiterates motivic cells in quick sequence giving the music an energetic forward motion.³² The French method, by contrast, encompasses entire phrases, giving the style a calmer mood. In this technique, the rhythm of the original phrase is retained while the pitch is varied.³³ The final section of the air gracieux of Orphée, cited earlier, exemplifies this French style.

31. Ibid., 40.

32. This technique is most prevalent in the accompaniments of the airs. Ibid., 161.

33. Ibid., 36-40.

Example 1. Orphée, second air, measures 76-81.

... Ah! devaient-ils nous sépa - rer Pour un transport si lé-gi -
 ti-me? Ah! -devaient-ils sépa rer un transport nous Pour si lé-gi
 ti - - me? ...

In addition to the rhythmic similarity between each sub-phrase and its pair, there is a motivic likeness. The repeating note motive is an example of this in sub-phrase, g^*/g^{**} . There is also a similarity of contour. Sub-phrase, h^*/h^{**} illustrates a variation; the scale-wise movement, though broken in h^{**} , is primarily ascending in both. The phrases complement one another in terms of shape. The overall contour of the first is mainly ascending; that of the second phrase is mainly descending. Another French trait apparent in the example is Rameau's respect for the text. Although there is word repetition, it is of an entire line rather than a mere word or two. To further demonstrate this type of melodic development, the text of the entire section is quoted below. Each musical phrase is made up of two lines of text. Each line may be considered a sub-phrase and is

indicated by a lower case letter. Rhythmic similarity is shown by the same letter being used. The asterisks denote the pitch variation occurring in the repetition.

Figure 3. Phrase Analysis
of the second air of Orphée, measures 49-90.

	<u>original</u>	<u>repetition</u>
Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime!	a*	a**
C'est à toi de le réparer!	b*	b**
Des feux que tu viens m'inspirer	c*	c**
Ma chère épouse est la victime.	d*	d**
Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime!	e	a**
Vole aux enfers le réparer	f*	f**
Ah! devaient-ils nous séparer	g*	g**
Pour un transport si légitime?	h*	h**
Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime.	a*	a**
Ne saurais-tu le réparer?	i*	i**

The French style of melody is most evident in the recitative of Rameau's cantatas.³⁴ As has been discussed, the French were deeply concerned with the expression of the text. By careful observation of the dramatic actors of the time, Lully invented a type of secco recitative which was in sharp contrast to the Italian style.³⁵ Whereas the Italian style was more concerned with the "affections" implied in

34. Ibid., 161.

35. "French Baroque recitative was notated as a graphic display of poetic structure." Lois Rosow, "French Baroque recitative as an expression of tragic declamation," Early Music II/4 (Oct. 1983), 468.

specific words or phrases, the French style of recitative reflected the subtle inflections of the language itself.³⁶ Indeed, true justice is served these nuances through the work of Rameau rather than the Italian, Lulli.³⁷ The rhythmic fluidity of the language, carefully described by Girdlestone,³⁸ requires, at times, frequent meter changes not necessarily apparent in the poetic structure.³⁹ Simply, these changes allow the composer to place the stressed syllables of the words on strong beats of the music.

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36. "In reading French poetry, understanding of the meaning is as necessary to a rhythmically correct rendering as it is in prose A thorough knowledge of the language is required." Girdlestone, op. cit., 186.

Rosow cites a common exception to the relationship between poetry and music: "If a feminine (mute e) rhyme coincides with a point of musical closure--i.e. a strong cadence--Lully placed a metrical accent on the mute syllable." In order to avoid this violation of the rules of prosody, Rameau asked his librettists to use masculine rhyme at major points of articulation in the poetry. Rosow, op. cit., 471.

37. Girdlestone, op. cit., 186. 38. Ibid., 184-187.
39. Such meter changes present problems for the performer which will not be covered in this stylistic paper. In his article, Wolf attempts to draw conclusions from the relatively scarce sources on the matter of metrical relationships. "Apparently it is all so obvious to the French that they do not believe it needs explanation. . . . in French recitative . . . the declamation is . . . well served by equating the duration of a half note in either C or 2 with that of a quarter note in 3 or C ." In other words, beat equals beat. R. Peter Wolf, "Metrical Relationships in French Recitative of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," ed. Norbert Dufourcq and Marcelle Benoit, Recherches sur la Musique française classique XVIII (Paris: A. and J. Picard, 1978), 29-49.

The second recitative of Cantate Saint Louis is a typical example of the French style. The bass line generally moves slowly with quicker rhythmic interest occurring at points of drama and points of cadence.⁴⁰

Example 2. Cantate Saint Louis, second recitative.

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor). The time signature is 2/4.

System 1:
 Vocal: A lui plaine on m'a vû, dès ma plus tendre enfance, Bor-
 Bass: (slowly moving line)

System 2:
 Vocal: ner mes plus ar-dens sou-haits; Ciel exauce pour
 Bass: (slowly moving line)

System 3:
 Vocal: lui les avain que jete fais, A quite ma reconnissan—ce
 Bass: (slowly moving line)

There are only two examples of accompanied recitative in Rameau's cantatas. Both examples illustrate the dramatic stress of their texts. The final recitative of Le Berger Fidèle is accompanied by the first and second violins in

40. Vollen, op. cit., 83-84.

addition to the continuo. As the faithful shepherd attempts to sacrifice his life for that of his love, he is abruptly stopped and told that "Diane is content With a love so rare and so beautiful." An equally dramatic example occurs in the central air gracieux of Orphée. In this case, the anxiety felt by Orpheus is reflected in the disjunct viol line. Rameau's use of rhythm supports the effect in a brief section of récitatif mesuré.

Example 3. Orphée, air gracieux, measures 21-28.

Handwritten musical score for Example 3, measures 21-28 of Orphée, air gracieux. The score is in G minor, common time, and consists of three systems. Each system includes a vocal line, a Viol line, and a Continuo line. The lyrics are: ".... A ce penser flat - teur, il s'é - meut, il se trouble, Il cède en - fin au violent trans - port De sa flamme qui se re - double". The Continuo line features complex figured bass notation with various accidentals and fingerings.

There are a few other examples of récitatif mesuré in Rameau's cantatas. The third recitative of Les Amants Trahis is in this style from bar twelve through bar forty. The two voices share a repetitive text during the section, "When one loses what one loves A sole recourse is open." In the final recitative of the same work, Rameau uses the style from bar six until the end. In the latter example the tenor sings the repetitive text alone, "Let us forget Cloris forever. . . ." Although there are no other designated sections of récitatif mesuré in the works, Tunley points out that the melodic line of a few airs unfold in a similar way.⁴¹ The first air of Le Berger Fidèle is an expressive case. The phrases start with held notes then move more quickly on eighth notes. Rameau uses occasional fermati to emphasize phrase endings.

The melodic style of Rameau's cantatas has been greatly influenced by Italian elements as well. Among them, word painting is a striking technique prevalent throughout the works. Diverse images, from human emotions to events in nature, are described in a variety of ways.

The image of flying is artistically painted by Rameau several times in his cantatas. The most flamboyant instance occurs in Orphée in the central air gracieux. This example

41. Tunley, op. cit., 161.

also illustrates the Italian influence of motivic development on his style; each voice presents the material in succession.

Example 4. Orphée, second air, measures 70-71.

Violon

Voice

... cri-me! Vo - - le aux en -

Violon

iers - - le ré - pa - rer

The stormy battle of the raging gods in Thétis is marvelously described by Rameau in several instances of word painting. Each of the examples cited here incorporates scale-wise motion indicative of turbulence (in either air or water); the first one adds to this a quick rising line when referring to the god of thunder and a falling line when

referring to the god of the seas. The use of roulade enhances the storm effect as well.

Example 5. Thétis, first recitative, measures 7-10.

... où le puissant Dieu du tonner - re Et — le ter - ri - ble Dieu des mers ...

Example 6. Thétis, first air, measures 12-15.

... Exci - tez un a - fireux o - ra - ge!

Example 7. Thétis, second recitative, measures 4-6.

... Des vents im - pé - tu - eux ...

The combined effects of laughing and crying are heard in Les Amants Trahis. In the first example Rameau has used a diminished fourth in a descending line to represent the suffering of Tircis.

Example 8 Les Amants Trahis, first duo, measure 20.



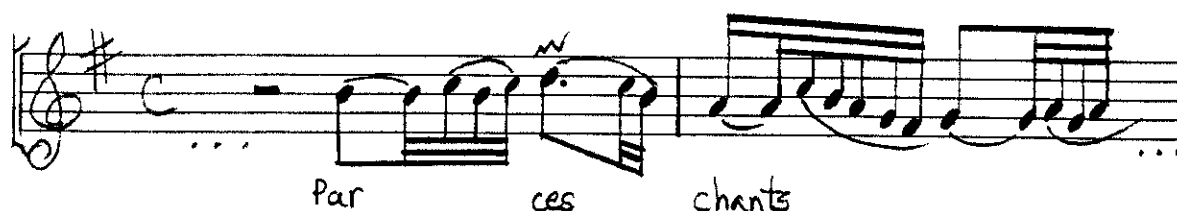
The contrasting emotions of the two voices are characterized by Rameau later in the same duo. Weeping is implied by a slow-moving descending motive. Simultaneously, Damon's mood is described by a quick-moving roulade in ascent.

Example 9. Les Amants Trahis, first duo, measures 33-34.

Rameau's cantatas have several descriptions of singing. Among them, the fabulous voice of Orpheus is beautifully portrayed. Rhythmic interest enhances the fast-paced roulade.

Example 10. Orphée, first recitative, measures 21-22.

42



Rhythm plays an equally expressive role in the descriptive second recitative of L'Impatience.

Example 11. L'Impatience, second recitative, measures 1-2.



The preceding examples have identified only a few instances of word painting in Rameau's cantatas. He uses the technique frequently in the works.

Closely tied to the motivic inspiration of word painting is the sequential development of these motives.

42. It should be noted that the refined French art of ornamentation, while somewhat lacking in his cantatas, was highly regarded by Rameau for its expressive value. Mary Cyr, "Performing Rameau's Cantatas," Early Music XI (1983), 484.

"The duration and complexity of each ornament should be determined by the emotion portrayed and the meaning of the text." Mary Cyr, "Eighteenth-Century French and Italian Singing: Rameau's Writing for the Voice," Music and Letters 61 (1980), 325.

The method is prevalent in Rameau's cantatas. The technique, coupled with his harmonic expertise, creates a driving force typical of the Italian style.⁴³ The earlier cantatas are especially evident of an Italian approach.⁴⁴ The instrumental parts often use shorter motives than are common in French music of the time.⁴⁵ In the vocal parts, however, Rameau ordinarily reiterates complete lines of text rather than short excerpts. This too is reflective of the French respect for the language. There are notable exceptions in which the composer repeats a single word for specific dramatic reasons. Several examples of the Italian trait occur in Les Amants Trahis. In the first duo Rameau reiterates the words "pleurez" (weep), "riez" (laugh), and "éclatez" (give vent) from measure 32 to the end of the piece. In the air, "Le désespoir," he musically describes the word, "tant," in reference to "so many Clorises." The Cantate Saint Louis has another example of the technique in the final air ("the alternate")⁴⁶ on the word "voler" (fly).

43. Tunley, op. cit., 33-36. 44. Ibid., 161.

45. Ibid., 38.

46. "in lieu of the one on page 11 when the Cantata does not serve 'the day of' Saint Louis."
Jean-Philippe Rameau, Cantate pour le jour de la Saint Louis (Paris: Institut de Musique et Danse Ancienne, 1980), 16.

Rhythmic expression plays a significant role in Rameau's cantatas, as has become apparent in the discussion thus far. Of rhythm he wrote, "It is the first effect that strikes us in music The feelings of the heart, the passions, can be well rendered only by altering the beat."⁴⁷ The air gracieux of Orphée offers several examples, one of which has been cited. (page 30) At measures 39-41 of the same piece, Rameau suddenly slows and regulates the rhythm (which has been in recitative style), Très lent, in response to the dramatic intensity of the situation: Eurydice has been abruptly retained in the land of the dead. A similar effect occurs in Le Berger Fidèle during the central air gai. Two brief passages specified lent interrupt the motion, once just before the end of the A section and again just before the da capo. Girdlestone points to another rhythmic effect occurring in Les Amants Trahis in the third recitative. The dichotomy of the two singers' moods is enhanced with opposing figures. Tircis's line is written in even eighths while Damon's is in eighth-note triplets, an effect probably borrowed from opera buffa.⁴⁸

47. Girdlestone, op. cit., 534.

48. Ibid., 69.

Example 12. *Les Amants Trahis*, third recitative, measures 27-31.

... il faut, dans son malheur ex-trê - me Il faut

... Il faut, il faut n'aimer plus ce qu'on perd, Il

per - dre le jour quand on perd ce qu'on ai - me...

faut n'aimer plus ce qu'on perd, Quand on perd ce qu'on ai - me...

Instrumentation

The term ritournelle is described by Anthony as having three distinct meanings.⁴⁹ It may refer to instrumental episodes occurring within airs. (At times, these have the Italian ritornello structure; at times, they merely

49. Anthony, op. cit., 101.

serve to frame the verses of an air in a less structured way.) The term is also used in reference to instrumental preludes. In addition, ritournelle may describe an instrumental conclusion of an air.

Rameau incorporates each type of instrumental ritournelle into his cantatas. The first and last airs of L'Impatience, among others, are very Italianate in their structure having extensive and clear ritournelles. The airs of Cantate Saint Louis illustrate another favored technique occurring in several airs. The instrumental interludes are of smaller size and occur with less frequency. The final da capo duo of Les Amants Trahis is similar having ritournelles only in the A section. In the first air of Thétis Rameau uses long instrumental introductory and concluding sections with no interludes. The first and final airs of Aquilon et Orithie are similar, having long introductions, long postludes, and instrumental interludes. The only examples of instrumental preludes in Rameau's cantatas are in Thétis and Cantate Saint Louis. The prelude of Thétis is in French overture style, marked gravement, with dotted rhythms in duple meter. Rameau sets the stage with great flourish. The battling gods, Jupiter and Neptune, are represented by the violin and viol respectively.

Example 13. Thétis, Prelude, measures 1-3.

The French overture style recurs in a long concluding section of the first air of the work which balances the prelude and propels the action forward. By contrast, the "Prelude" [sic] of Cantate Saint Louis is brief and, astonishingly, Rameau incorporates the first two lines of verse at the end. These words do not recur.

The instrumentation of Rameau's cantatas is frequently left unspecified. In an enlightening article Cyr again sheds light on various problems.⁵⁰ As the viol had long enjoyed great popularity in French chamber music,⁵¹ it is probable that it would have been used in conjunction with the harpsichord in the basso continuo. There are several instances in which the viol plays an obbligato role as well. The instrument often supports the drama beautifully. The air gracieux of Orphée illustrates this effect.

50. Cyr, "Performing Rameau's Cantatas," op. cit., 480-89.

51. Julie Sadie, The Bass Viol in French Baroque Chamber Music (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1980), xi-xiii.

Example 14. Orphée, air gracieux, measures 36-38.

The instrument's wide range (3 1/2 octaves) and flexibility is exploited by Rameau especially in Les Amants Trahis.

In Damon's air, "Le désespoir," it enhances the character's buffo quality.

Example 15. Les Amants Trahis, "Le désespoir," measures 56-58.

An example of what Sadie believes to be "the most striking of all chordal viol parts" in French Baroque chamber music,⁵² occurs in Damon's air, "Du dieu d'amour," a brief excerpt of

which is quoted below.

Example 16. Les Amants Trahis, "Du dieu d'amour,"
measures 52-56.

... Mon cœur prend les aï - les Du dieu d'a - mour!

... 6 7 6 4/5 6 4/5 7 5

The treble instrumental part in Rameau's cantatas is occasionally specified in the score. For example, the ensembles of Thétis and Aquilon et Orithie both call for violin. When the part is not specified, the composer's intentions are usually evident in the style and range of the part. That of Cantate Saint Louis, for example, is characteristically for violin.⁵³ Ordinarily, if the part moves below d' the violin is intended. The two treble parts of Le Berger Fidèle frequently move below the staff. However, a woodwind player of the eighteenth century could have adjusted the passages when a violinist was unavailable. Strangely, given its popularity in France, flutes are speci-

52. Ibid., 64.

53. Cyr, "Performing Rameau's Cantatas," op. cit., 482.

fically indicated only once. In the final air of Orphée the marking flutes & viol is found. The nature of the work would seem to indicate that flute would be appropriate throughout.

The instrumental ensemble provides great expressive force, regardless of the specific instrumentation. The second air of Aquilon et Orithie gives an example. The voice sustains a long note on the word, "ravage" (havoc), while the ensemble displays the destructive force.

Example 17. Aquilon et Orithie, second air, measures 39-47.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Violin, Violoncelle (Cello), and Harpischord (Harpsichord). The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system shows measures 39-43, and the second system shows measures 44-47. The Violin part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Violoncelle part provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained notes and moving lines. The Harpischord part includes figured bass notation (e.g., 9, 6, #7, 6, #6, 5) and a melodic line. The lyrics 'vo - tre ra - va - ge!' are written below the Harpischord staff, with a long note on 'va' in measure 40. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

The second air of Thétis gives an equally dramatic example. Jupiter's wild fury is expressed in a quickly moving instrumental line, while the vocal line is more sustaining. The second air of Le Berger Fidèle shows another method. The violins and voice share motivic material in counterpoint.

Example 18. Thétis, second air, measures 28-35.

... ..

... Par - - tez, vo - lez, brillants é - -

clairs: si - gna - lez, si - gna - lez le

maî - tre du mon - de, si - gna...

Example 19. Le Berger Fidèle, second air, mesures 69-80.

1st Violin

2nd Violin

Voice

Continuo

Par vo-tre gé-né-reu-se flam-

me,

Vous mon-trez comme il faut ai-mer,...

tr

tr

tr

tr

Rameau's Theoretic Writings in Relation to His Style

The theoretic writings of Rameau establish certain conditions essential to a study of his cantatas.⁵⁴ The formal unity of the works is tied to his research into the harmonic hierarchy of the cycle of fifths.⁵⁵ The architectural function of key areas is given expressive force through his belief that "harmony can arouse various passions within us, depending on the chords we employ."⁵⁶ Rameau therefore espoused the use of specific harmony in the expression of specific emotions.⁵⁷

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54. "Rameau's writings show him as a true product of the Age of Reason." Graham Sadler and Albert Cohen, The New Grove French Baroque Masters, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: W. W. Norton, 1986), 305.
55. He believed that "one could not be fully charmed by music unless he had a clear understanding of its firm, clear, simple, and evident structure." Charles Bennett Paul, Rameau's Musical Theories and the Age of Reason (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1966; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 67-5139), 138.
56. Wilfrid H. Mellers, "Jean-Philippe Rameau," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 10 vols., ed. Eric Blom (London: Macmillan, 1954), VII, 34.
57. "He associates a feeling of joy with the family of the dominant, the sharp keys, the major mode, and a rising melody, because they are produced as overtones contained within the resonance of the sonorous body. They are generated directly. On the other hand, he attributes a feeling of sadness to the family of the subdominant, the flat keys, the minor mode, and descending melody, because they are the product of sympathetic vibrations of the multiples." E. Cynthia Verba, "The Development of Rameau's Thoughts on Modulation and Chromatics," Journal of the American Musicological Society XXVI (1973), 72.

According to Rameau, there are certain dramatic and emotional effects inherent in certain chords. Consonant chords express joy and magnificence.⁵⁸ The second air of Thétis, in which Jupiter commands his brilliant lightning to further his wrath, is introduced by a harmonically stable twenty-seven measure instrumental section. Consonant triads occur in twenty-one measures. The keys of C Major, D Major, and A Major are similarly used to express joy and vigor.⁵⁹ Rameau uses the key of D Major in the second recitative-aria pair of Aquilon et Orithie. Aside from structural considerations (the preceding and following recitatives are in G, thus establishing the cycle of fifths relationship), this key seems to indicate a change in Aquilon's strategy; the first recitative-aria pair begins in E Minor and moves to B Major, both of which suggest tenderness.⁶⁰ Perhaps by showing his true overbearing personality, Aquilon can win the heart of Orithie. In the instrumental prelude of Thétis, Rameau uses the key of D Major to foretell the powerful struggle. The joy of anticipation is described by Rameau with the use of C Major in the first recitative-aria pair of L'Impatience.

Harmony which incorporates suave, well-prepared dissonances implies sweetness and tenderness.⁶¹ The sensual text

58. Mellers, op. cit., 34.

59. Ibid., 34.

60. Ibid., 34.

61. Ibid., 34.

of L'Impatience is frequently set in this way, particularly in the recitatives. In addition, the Minor keys of D, G, B, and E are often used to express sweetness and tenderness.⁶² As was stated previously, Rameau uses irony in his choice of keys in Aquilon et Orithie. The first recitative is in E Minor. By his nature, Aquilon, the north wind, is neither sweet nor tender. He is, however, attempting to seduce Orithie by hiding his coldness. The key of his recitative aids his quest.

Gay or tender passages are frequently set in the keys of G Major and E Major.⁶³ An ironic use of G Major occurs in the final recitative of Aquilon et Orithie. The "hero" succeeds in winning Orithie through rape and abduction "inspiring," appropriately, "fear and sadness in mortals." The combined qualities of G Major, gay and tender, are used by Rameau in the first duo of Les Amants Trahis. The characters share the text in the first of three parts -- Tircis in sincere lament, Damon in sarcastic though friendly mockery.

Rameau expresses languor and suffering with both chromaticism and with chords of striking dissonance.⁶⁴

62. Ibid., 34.

63. Ibid., 34.

64. "The concept of implied dissonance based on the context of the chord occurs throughout Rameau's theoretical writings. . . . the music itself is more reliable than the figures (figured bass) in determining the harmony." Verba, op. cit., 78,80. Mellers, op. cit., 34.

(The use of melodic chromaticism will be discussed below.) Augmented and diminished fourth chords are descriptive of the love-sick Aquilon in the first and last airs of that work. A highly expressive use of augmented fourths occurs in the first recitative of Le Berger Fidèle on the words, "Il soupire, il gémit sans cesse" (He sighs, he groans unceasingly). Rameau frequently uses diminished chords in setting the text of Les Amants Trahis. They are most prevalent when describing the suffering Tircis. Chromaticism colors the second and third recitatives of Orphée. In them, Rameau uses ninth chords, augmented seventh chords, and unusual key areas (flat-II, for example) to further the drama.

Rameau conveys fury and despair with unprepared dissonances involving major sevenths.⁶⁵ Diminished sevenths express horror and anguish.⁶⁶ One occurs in the first recitative of Les Amants Trahis on the word, "pleurer" (to lament). Effects of violence and energy are often expressed by more extreme dissonances.⁶⁷ Ninth and eleventh chords occur frequently in the more emotionally charged works. Similarly, the keys of F Major and B-flat Major are appropriate to tempests, furies, and other emotional outbursts.⁶⁸ This usage occurs twice in Les Amants Trahis. The stressful mood of Tircis, the pining tenor, is increased in the opening recita-

65. Ibid., 34

66. Ibid., 34.

67. Ibid., 34.

68. Ibid., 34.

tive with quick modulations to B-flat Major from G Minor. The key of B-flat Major is indicative of his inner storm. F Major is used effectively in the arioso section of the third recitative. The text's emotional power seems to require the use of a furious key:

When one loses what one loves
A sole recourse is open.
One must, in his extreme misfortune,
One must lose the day when one loses what one loves!

In the final recitative of Thétis, the music moves to F Major from A Minor. The narrator is clearly begging the gods to stifle their wrath.

Modulation is used by Rameau to express intense emotion.⁶⁹ Modulations toward the dominant and sharp keys tend to increase the animation and joy of a piece.⁷⁰ Rameau commonly incorporates unusual modulations in the B sections of the da capo arias. Such usage reflects the contrast of mood which ordinarily occurs in the text at that time. For example, the B section of the second air of Thétis

69. "One of the most fruitful springs of emotion lies in modulation," In fact, "the strength of expression depends more on modulation than on mere melody."
Girdlestone, op. cit., 537.

70. ". . . we can consider the rapid modulations as harmonically unstable passages which would normally occur against a background of more structural key relationships a series of passing modulations which suspend a sense of repose . . . gives rise to an expressive effect."
Verba, op. cit., 91.

has dramatic modulations to F-sharp Minor and C-sharp Minor. Subdominant and flat key modulations are indicative of increased gloom or intensity.⁷¹ The air gracieux of Orphée has a dramatic modulation scheme which uses keys such as B-flat Major (flat VI of D), C Minor, and a series of secondary dominants, all of which greatly support the drama. Orpheus has obtained his wife's freedom from the underworld by making a difficult promise: he must lead her away without looking back to be assured of her presence. During the course of the air, he becomes increasingly aroused and finally succumbs to temptation, thus dooming Eurydice: she is turned to stone. A modulation to the sixth degree is often reserved for moments of exceptional dramatic stress.⁷² For example, the first air of Orphée moves to the key of Minor VI on the words, "Elle a su réparer l'outrage Que t'avait fait l'injuste sort..." (It [his voice] was able to repair the outrage That unjust fate has done to you . . .) An unusual example of word painting involving a modulation occurs in the first recitative of Orphée on the line, "Pluto, par une loi bizarre" (Pluto, by a bizarre law). Rameau uses the area of Minor V of Minor II in G Major. An example which beautifully exemplifies the dramatic and emotional possibilities of modulation is the air plaintif of Le Berger Fidèle.

71. Mellers, op. cit., 34.

72. Ibid., 34.

Its wandering tonality creates an emotional roller coaster.⁷³

Rameau's melodic procedure is also influenced by his theoretic writings.⁷⁴ Melodies based on major thirds promote joy.⁷⁵ An example occurs in the final duo of Les Amants Trahis in which the two characters display their shared joy on the word, "rions" (let us laugh). Each line is a rousade based on thirds. In turn, Rameau sets the two lines in thirds with one another. A brief passage is quoted below.

Example 20. Les Amants Trahis, final duo, measures 50-54.

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for Tircis (soprano), the middle for Damon (bass), and the bottom for Continuo (bass). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics for Tircis are "... ri-ons" and for Damon are "... Ri-ons" and "rions, ri-ons". The Continuo part includes figured bass notation such as 5, 7, 5, 7, 5.

73. A: D Minor / F Major / A Minor / F Major / A Minor /
F Major / G Minor / D Minor //
- B: G Minor / B-flat Major / F Major / C Minor /
G Minor / C Minor / F Major / G Minor / D Minor /
G Minor / A Major //

in addition to many secondary dominants in the various key areas.

74. "Since melody has its source in harmony, its emotional force resides in harmony. It can play an accessory role -- strengthening harmonic expression -- but is incapable of expression by itself." Verba, op. cit., 72.

75. Mellers, op. cit., 34.

Melodies based on arpeggio formations indicate stability and power.⁷⁶ Therefore Rameau ordinarily reserves them for dramatic situations. The first air of Orphée exemplifies this usage during the A section. The text, "Que du bruit de tes hauts exploits L'univers toujours retentisse!....L'enfer en respecte les lois." (May the universe always echo With the report of your high exploits! May hell respect its laws.), is well served by arpeggiation. The first and second airs of Thetis show similar patterns. The gods, first Neptune, then Jupiter, call upon their formidable powers during their respective airs.

Melodies incorporating augmented and diminished intervals create strain and tension.⁷⁷ There are several instances in the works. For example, in the third recitative of Les Amants Trahis, Rameau uses a diminished fifth when setting the words, "hélas! mourons!" (alas! let us die!). Similarly, the second recitative of Orphée has another on, "cessez un éloge si vain!" (cease a eulogy so vain!)

Leaps of an octave lend grandeur, solemnity, and passion to the melodies in which they occur.⁷⁸ For example, in Cantate Saint Louis, Rameau uses a descending octave in setting the word, "Règne" (reign), in the second air. Special effects of vehemence often use leaps greater than

76. Ibid., 34.

77. Ibid., 34.

78. Ibid., 34.

an octave.⁷⁹ The air plaintif of Le Berger Fidèle has an ascending leap of a tenth on the line, "...sur vos autels doit expirer, Dieux!" (Must expire on your altars, Gods!). Chromatic melodies, when ascending, denote rising excitement.⁸⁰ There are several examples in the works. In the first recitative of L'Impatience Rameau incorporates ascending chromaticism in the continuo which supports the anxious mood. Similar instances occur in the first duo of Les Amants Trahis (the conflict of mood of the two heroes becomes increasingly apparent), and the first and last recitatives of Aquilon et Orithie. Descending chromatic lines convey melancholy.⁸¹ The sadness of Tircis is exemplified in the examples on page 34. The highly chromatic air plaintif of Le Berger Fidèle has many examples of both types of melody, as would be expected. By contrast, fast-paced scale-wise melodies incite agitation and movement.⁸² The latter permeate Thétis.

79. Ibid., 34.

80. Ibid., 34.

81. Ibid., 34.

82. Ibid., 34.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

As was previously discussed, the French Cantata was the result of a deliberate synthesis of the diverse stylistic traits of the French and Italian schools. Those of Rameau exemplify this synthesis to various degrees. As a result, their study has revealed an apparent development of his compositional style. The earliest works, Aquilon et Orithie, Thétis, and L'Impatience share several traits. They are the most Italianate in the structure of the airs. L'Impatience, in particular, exhibits an almost rigid ritornello structure. Although at times repetitive, the work shows an elegance in its symmetry and in the gentle nuances of its melody. Being of a bombastic nature, Aquilon et Orithie and Thétis show a greatly contrasting mood, one very much suited to the bass voice. The French influence on these three early cantatas is most evident in the vocal melody, with its careful declamation. This trait is prevalent throughout the works.

Les Amants Trahis also exhibits a strong Italian influence, especially in the buffo quality of Damon's bass voice. In this work, the recitatives begin to show greater subtlety of declamation with much more frequent meter changes and definite contrasts of style between the two characters.

With Orphée Rameau's operatic style begins to flourish. The French influence becomes more prevalent in the melodic structure as well as in the melodic declamation. Rhythmic subtleties also become much more various. What Girdlestone deems "a completely personal Rameau"¹ is found in Le Berger Fidèle. In it his operatic style is more nearly complete with bold harmonic writing and passionate melody. In fact, Rameau reused the second air, "L'amour qui règne dans votre âme," eleven years later in Les Fêtes d'Hébé. Cantate Saint Louis, probably composed towards the middle of his operatic career, fully represents his mature style. It should be pointed out, however, that Rameau's use of bold harmony, as discussed in the section on his theoretic writings, is prevalent throughout the works. The ironic use of keys in Aquilon et Orithie and the frequent use of diminished chords in Les Amants Trahis reflect his dramatic style.

The small dimensions of the cantata allowed Rameau to develop techniques useful to operatic writing. Structural elements, including harmony and form, as well as expressive considerations, such as melody and rhythm, were finely evolved to later use. That is not to say the works should be considered merely studies in composition. They are well crafted and at their best, beautiful. As such, the cantatas of Rameau are worthy of contemporary performance.

1. Girdlestone, op. cit., 66.

APPENDIX
ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF THE TEXTS

Aquilon et Orithie

Récitatif

Que j'ai bien mérité la froideur d'Orithie,
 S'écriait Aquilon rebuté des mépris
 De la beauté dont il était épris.
 Ma flamme, disait-il, en fureur convertie
 Va faire succéder à mes soins les plus doux,
 A mon respect, à mon obéissance
 Une barbare violence,
 Un impitoyable courroux!

"How well I have deserved the coldness of Orithie,"
 Cried Aquilon rejected by the scorn
 Of the beauty by whom he was smitten.
 "My passion," he said, "having turned to fury,
 After my sweetest care,
 And my respect, and my obedience
 is going to be followed by
 A barbarous violence,
 A merciless wrath!"

Air

Un amant tel que moi doit-il prouver sa flamme
 Par les désirs les plus discrets?
 Et de quoi m'ont servi mille soupirs secrets,
 Mille vœux trop soumis qu'avait formés mon âme?

A lover such as I, must he prove his passion
 By the most discreet desires?
 And of what use were my thousand secret sighs,
 My thousand too submissive vows that my soul formed!

Récitatif

Peut-être d'Orithie avec moins de douceur
 La fierté sera surmontée.
 Éprouvons du moins si son cœur,
 Trop insensible à la tendre langueur,
 Peut céder aux transports d'une ardeur irritée.

Perhaps with less sweetness the pride
 Of Orithie will be surmounted.
 Let us see at least if her heart,
 Too insensitive to tender languor,
 Might surrender to the excesses of angry ardor.

Air

Servez mes feux à votre tour,
 Force indomptable, affreuse rage!
 Que tout l'univers en ce jour
 Soit en proie à votre ravage!

Pénétrez dans le sein des mers,
 Confondez le ciel et la terre,
 Portez jusqu'au fond des enfers
 Toutes les horreurs de la guerre!

Serve my passions in turn,
 Indomitable force, frightful rage!
 May the whole universe today
 Be prey to your havoc!

Penetrate to the bottom of the seas,
 Confound heaven and earth,
 Carry to the depths of hell
 All the horrors of war!

Récitatif

Après ces discours menaçants,
 Aquilon vole, et ses efforts puissants
 Inspirent aux mortels la crainte et la tristesse.
 Il enlève Orithie en traversant la Grèce;
 La violence de ses feux
 Lui fait connaître enfin quelle en est la tendresse;
 Par un juste retour elle écoute ses vœux.

After these menacing words,
 Aquilon flies, and his powerful efforts
 Inspire in mortals fear and sadness.
 He carries away Orithie by crossing Greece;
 The violence of his passion
 Lets her finally know what tenderness lies within;
 And in return she listens to his vows.

Air

On peut toujours dans l'amoureux mystère
 Trouver le moyen de charmer;
 Celui qui devrait alarmer,
 Devient quelquefois nécessaire.

Une beauté, peut, sans être sévère,
 Refuser l'hommage d'un cœur.
 Loin de l'accuser de rigueur,
 Essayons toujours de lui plaire.

One can always in love affairs
 Find the means to charm;
 That which would cause alarm,
 Becomes sometimes a necessity.

A beauty, can, without being severe,
 Refuse the homage of a lover.
 Far from accusing her of harshness.
 Let us try always to please her.

Thétis

Récitatif

Muses, dans vos divins concerts,
 Chantez ce jour fatal au repos de la terre,
 Où le puissant Dieu de tonnerre
 Et le terrible Dieu des mers,
 Se livrant aux fureurs d'une cruelle guerre,
 Blessés des mêmes traits, des mêmes feux épris,
 Disputèrent le coeur de l'aimable Thétis.

Muses, in your divine concerts,
 Sing this fatal day for peace on earth,
 Wherein the powerful God of thunder
 And the terrible God of the seas,
 Surrendering themselves to the furies of a cruel war,
 Wounded by the same arrows, impassioned by the same fires,
 Will fight over the heart of the lovable Thetis.

Air

Volez, tyrans des airs, Aquilon furieux!
 De Neptune en courroux venez servir la rage!
 Excitez un affreux orage!
 Portez les flots jusques aux cieux!

Allez leur déclarer la guerre!
 Venger son pouvoir irrité!
 Qu'au milieu de ses feux le fier Dieu du tonnerre
 Ne soit pas même en sûreté!

Fly, tyrants of the air, furious north winds!
 Come serve the rage of an angry Neptune!
 Arouse a frightful storm!
 Carry the waves up to the heavens!

Go declare war to them!
 To avenge his angry power!
 That in the midst of his passion the proud God of thunder
 Be not in harm's way!

Récitatif

Neptune en ce moment, au gré de sa fureur,
 Des vents impétueux presse la violence.
 L'océan soulevé jusques aux cieux s'élance,
 Et l'Olympe, frappé d'une soudaine horreur,
 Anime Jupiter pour punir cette offense
 A s'armer du secours de son foudre vengeur.

Neptune at this moment, in his fury,
 Increases the violence of the impetuous winds.
 The aroused ocean surges up to the heavens,
 And Mount Olympus, struck by a sudden horror,
 Incites Jupiter to punish this offense
 To arm himself with the aid of his vengeful lightning.

Air

Partez, volez, brillants éclairs!
 Signalez, le maître du monde!
 Portez vos feux jusque dans l'onde,
 Embrasez l'empire des mers!

Secondez la juste vengeance
 Du souverain des Dieux!
 Faites trembler l'audacieux
 Qui veut mépriser la puissance!

Go, fly, brilliant lightning!
 Point out the master of the world!
 Carry your fires even into the waves,
 Set ablaze the empire of the seas!

Further the just vengeance
 Of the sovereign of the Gods!
 Make tremble the daring one
 Who wants to scorn his power!

Récitatif

Quel aveugle transport vous guide?
 Grands Dieux, calmez ce vain courroux!
 Thétis pour un mortel décide:
 Son coeur ne saurait être à vous.

What blind rapture guides you?
 Great Gods, calm this vain anger!
 Thetis will choose a mortal:
 Her heart will not be yours.

Air

Beauté qu'un sort heureux destine
 À choisir vous-même un vainqueur,
 Que l'amour seul vous détermine,
 Ne consultez que votre coeur!

Ce brillant éclat de la gloire
 Ne doit pas éblouir vos yeux.
 Ne cédez jamais la victoire
 Qu'à celui qui vous plaît le mieux!

Beauty whom a happy fate destines
 To choose yourself a conqueror,
 May love alone decide for you,
 Consult only your heart!

This brilliant flash of glory
 Must not dazzle your eyes.
 Never yield victory
 But to the one who pleases you the most!

L'Impatience

Récitatif

Ces lieux brillent déjà d'une vive clarté.
 Depuis longtemps j'ai vu naître l'aurore;
 Le charmant objet que j'adore
 Devait la précéder dans ce bois écarté
 Mais je ne la vois point encore.

These places shine already with a bright light.
 Long since I have seen daybreak;
 The charming object that I adore
 Was to precede it in this secluded wood
 But I do not see her yet.

Air

Ce n'est plus le poids de ma chaîne
 Qui me fait pousser des soupirs!
 La seule attente des plaisirs
 Fait à présent toute ma peine.

Attends-tu pour payer ma flamme,
 Amour, que je sois plus épris?
 Tu connais l'ardeur de mon âme,
 En peux-tu retarder le prix?

Tis no longer the weight of my chains
 That makes me sigh!
 Only the expectation of pleasure
 Now causes all my sorrow.

Are you waiting to repay my passion,
 Love, until I am more smitten?
 You know the fervor of my soul;
 Can you defer the reward for it?

Récitatif

Les oiseaux d'alentour chantent dans ce bocage
 Et je connois à leur ramage
 Que rien ne manque plus au bonheur de leurs feux.
 Ils goûtent avant moi les fruits de la constance;
 Peut-être mieux traités, sont-ils plus amoureux.

The birds round about sing in this copse,
 And I know by their warbling
 That nothing is lacking in their happy passion.
 They taste before me the fruits of constancy;
 Perhaps better treated, they are more loving.

Air

Pourquoi leur envier leur juste récompense?
 L'amour ne me fait point d'offense
 Quand il rend les amants heureux!

Il songe à redoubler, par mon impatience,
 Le doux plaisir qui doit suivre mes vœux.

Why envy them their just reward?
 Love does not offend me
 When it renders lovers happy!

It thinks of increasing, by my impatience,
 The sweet pleasure that must follow my desires.

Récitatif

Mais Corine paraît, je vois enfin les charmes
 Qui vont dissiper mes alarmes.
 Allons tomber à ses genoux!
 Oiseaux, de votre sort, je ne suis plus jaloux!

But Corine appears, I see finally the charms
 Which will dissipate my fears.
 Let us go fall at her knees!
 Birds, of your lot, I am no longer jealous!

Air

Tu te plais, enfant de Cythère,
 À faire acheter tes douceurs.
 L'amant que tu veux satisfaire
 N'est point exempt de tes rigueurs!

Pour être heureux dans ton empire,
 Il faut qu'il en coûte des pleurs.
 Plus un fidèle amant soupire,
 Mieux il connaît le prix de tes faveurs.

It pleases you, child of Cythere,
 To have your sweetness dearly bought.
 The lover that you want to satisfy
 Is not exempt from your harshness!

Perhaps to be happy in your empire,
 He must pay the price of tears.
 The more a faithful lover sighs,
 The more he knows the cost of your favors.

Récitatif

Tircis: Quoi! vous riez d'une telle disgrâce?
 Damon: Quoi! vous pleurez d'un malheur si léger?
 Tircis: Je verrais sans gémir un rival à ma place?
 Damon: Méprisez la bergère et riez du berger!

Tircis: What! you laugh about such a disgrace?
 Damon: What! you weep about a misfortune so light?
 Tircis: Would I see without groaning a rival in my place?
 Damon: Scorn the shepherdess and laugh at the shepherd!

Air

Damon: Lorsque malgré son inconstance
 Je vois une fière qui pense
 Que j'idolâtre ses appas,
 Ah! je ne rirais pas!

 Lorsqu'un rival bouffi de gloire
 Me croit jaloux d'une victoire
 Dont mon âme fait peu de cas,
 Ah! je ne rirais pas!

 When despite her fickleness
 I see someone who thinks
 I idolize her bait,
 Ah! would I not laugh!

 When a rival, puffed up with glory,
 Believes me jealous of a victory
 Of which my soul can care less,
 Ah! would I not laugh!

Récitatif

Tircis: Sont-ce donc là les lois de l'amoureux empire?

Damon: Je veux rire!

Tircis: Pleurons,
Que dis-je? hélas! mourons!
Profane, suspendez de frivoles chansons.
Écoutez, de l'amour respectez les leçons.

Quand on perd ce qu'on aime
Un recours unique est ouvert,
Il faut dans son malheur extrême,
Il faut perdre le jour quand on perd ce qu'on aime!

Damon: Quand on perd ce qu'on aime
Un recours unique est ouvert,
Il faut n'aimer plus ce qu'on perd,
Quand on perd ce qu'on aime.

Tircis: Non! immolons des jours que le sort a proscrits.

Damon: Vous perdez Cloris, moi Sylvie.
Vous en mourrez, et moi j'en ris!

Tircis: Are these then the laws of the lover's empire?

Damon: I want to laugh!

Tircis: Let us weep,
What am I saying? alas! let us die!
Sacrilege, suspend your frivolous songs.
Listen, respect the lessons of love.

When one loses what one loves
A sole recourse is open.
One must, in his extreme misfortune,
One must lose the day when one loses what one loves!

Damon: When one loses what one loves
A sole recourse is open.
One must no longer love what one loses,
When one loses what one loves.

Tircis: No! let us sacrifice the days that fate has proscribed.

Damon: You are losing Cloris, and I am losing Sylvia.
You will die from it, and I am laughing about it!

Air

Damon: Le désespoir n'est que folie,
De vos jours connaissez le prix.
Songez qu'il est tant de Cloris,
Et qu'il n'est pour vous qu'une vie.

Despair is nothing but folly,
Know the value of your days.
Think...there are so many Clorises.
You have only one life.

Récitatif

Tircis: Pardonne, Amour, pardonne à son égarement.
Que vous avez, Damon, peu de délicatesse!
Que vous connaissez mal la parfaite tendresse.

Damon: Je connais mieux que vous les devoirs d'un amant.

Tircis: Cet ascendant vainqueur, ce noeud tendre et charmant
Qui pour jamais nous engage, nous lie,

Damon: Eh bien! c'est cette sympathie
Qui me conduit au changement
Lorsque je vois changer Sylvie.

Tircis: Forgive, Love, forgive his misguided mind.
How very little refinement you have, Damon!
How badly you know perfect tenderness.

Damon: I know better than you the duties of a lover.

Tircis: This conquering influence, this tender and charming
link
Which engages us and binds us forever,

Damon: Well! it is this sympathy
Which leads me to change
When I see Sylvia change.

Air

Damon: Du dieu d'amour
 Je prends tous les feux dans mon âme,
 Quand une belle offre à ma flamme
 Un tendre retour.

Si la volage
 Ailleurs s'engage,
 Je change à mon tour,
 Et pour voler à d'autres belles,
 Mon coeur prend les ailes
 Du dieu d'amour!

From the god of love
 I take all the ardor in my soul,
 When a beautiful woman offers to my passion
 A tender return.

If fickle
 She commits herself elsewhere,
 I will change in turn,
 And go to other beautiful ones,
 My heart will take the wings
 Of the god of love!

Récitatif

Damon: Ne finirez vous point de si honteux regrets?

Tircis: C'en est fait, je me rends, je cède à la sagesse,
 Cher ami, dans mon coeur tu ramènes la paix.
 Oublions Cloris à jamais,
 Oublions son amour, ses mépris, ses attraits,
 Oublions jusqu'à ma faiblesse.

Damon: Will you not finish with such shameful regrets?

Tircis: It is done, I give up, I yield to wisdom,
 Dear friend, to my heart you bring back peace.
 Let us forget Cloris forever,
 Let us forget her love, her scorn, her charms,
 Let us forget even my weakness.

Duo

Both:

Quand une volage beauté
 D'un tendre amour brise la chaîne,
 Nos pleurs flattent sa vanité.
 Elle rirait de notre peine.
 Rions de sa légèreté.

Un coeur capable de changer
 Merite peu qu'on le regrette.
 Gardons nous même d'y songer.
 C'est en oubliant la coquette.
 Qu'il faut chercher à s'en venger.

When a fickle beauty
 Breaks the chain of a tender love,
 Our tears flatter her vanity.
 She would laugh at our sorrow.
 So let us laugh at her flightiness.

A heart capable of changing
 Deserves little for one to regret.
 Let us guard ourselves from even thinking
 about it.
 It is in forgetting the coquette
 That one must seek one's revenge.

Orphée

Récitatif

Par le charme vainqueur d'un chant harmonieux
 Orphée à l'empire des ombres
 Arrachait l'objet de ses vœux;
 Et le fils de Vénus, dans ces routes trop sombres,
 Conduisait son triomphe à l'éclat de ses feux.
 Un plaisir seul manquait à ce mortel heureux:
 Pluton, par une loi bizarre,
 Avait, jusqu'au pied du Tenare
 Contraint ses regards amoureux;
 Mais de jeunes Amours une escorte riante
 Essayait d'amuser son âme impatiente
 Par ces chants gracieux.

By the victorious charm of a harmonious song,
 Orpheus has, from the dominion of shadows,
 Wrested the object of his vows;
 And the son of Venus, by these routes too gloomy,
 Led his prize by the light of his passion.
 A sole pleasure was lacking to this happy mortal.
 Pluto, by a bizarre law,
 Had, up to the base of Tenare,
 Restrained his loving glances;
 But a smiling escort of young Cupids
 Tried to amuse his impatient soul
 By these graceful songs.

Air

Que du bruit de tes hauts exploits
 L'univers toujours retentisse!
 Et qu'aux sons vainqueurs de ta voix!
 Désormais la terre obéisse.
 L'enfer en respecte les lois.

Elle a su réparer l'outrage
 Que t'avait fait l'injuste sort.
 Et l'avare sein de la mort
 Te rend la beauté qui t'engage.

May the universe always echo
 With the report of your high exploits!
 And may the earth henceforth obey
 The conquering sounds of your voice!
 May hell respect its laws.

It was able to repair the outrage
 That unjust fate had done to you,
 And the avaricious breast of death
 Surrenders to you the beauty which engages you.

Récitatif

Mais son âme, sensible à la seule Eurydice,
 Ne songe qu'au plaisir dont le terme est prochain:
 Cessez, dit-il, cessez un éloge si vain!

But his soul, sensitive only to Eurydice,
 Only dreams of the pleasure whose end is near:
 Cease, he says, cease a eulogy so vain!

Air

J'ai pour témoin de ma victoire
 Les beaux yeux qui m'ont enflammé.
 C'est le seul prix, la seule gloire,
 Dont mon coeur puisse être charmé.

[Récitatif]

À ce penser flatteur, il s'émeut, il se trouble,
 Il cède enfin au violent transport
 De sa flamme qui se redouble.
 Attends, fais sur ton coeur encor quelques efforts!
 C'en est fait...et ses yeux ont vu ceux d'Eurydice!...
 Triste jouet de l'infernal caprice,
 Prête à quitter les sombres bords,
 Une barbare main la retient chez les morts.
 Ému par des nouveaux accords,
 Ce malheureux époux croit attendrir Mégère.
 Elle est sourde, et ce n'est qu'à l'enfant de Cythère,
 Qu'il fait entendre ainsi sa plainte et ses remords:

[Air]

Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime,
 C'est à toi de le réparer!
 Des feux que tu viens m'inspirer
 Ma chère épouse est la victime.
 Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime!
 Vole aux enfers le réparer
 Ah! devaient-ils nous séparer
 Pour un transport si légitime?
 Amour, amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime,
 Ne saurais-tu le réparer?

Air

I have for evidence of my victory
 The beautiful eyes which have inflamed me.
 It is the only prize, the only glory,
 With which my heart can be charmed.

[Recitative]

By this flattering thought, he is aroused, he becomes
 troubled,

He yields finally to the violent surge
 Of his passion which redoubles.

Wait, put more constraint on your heart!

It is done...and his eyes have seen those of Eurydice!...

Sad plaything of the infernal whim,
 Ready to leave the sombre shores,

A barbarous hand retains her in the house of the dead.

Moved by new harmonies,

This unfortunate husband believes to soften Megere.

She is deaf, and it is only to the child of Cythere,

That he thus makes his plaint and tells of his remorse.

[Air]

Love, love, it is you who commits my crime,

It is up to you to atone for it!

Of these passions that you inspire in me

My dear wife is the victim.

Love, love, it is you who commits my crime!

Fly to hell to make atonement for it.

Ah! should they have separated us

For such a legitimate weakness of passion?

Love, love, it is you who commits my crime.

Could you not make atonement for it?

Recitatif

Inutiles regrets!.. à sa douleur mortelle,
 Tout l'abandonne sans retour.
 Ce n'est plus qu'en quittant le jour
 Qu'il peut rejoindre ce qu'il aime.

Useless regrets!.. to his mortal sorrow,
 He is abandoned forever.
 It is only by dying
 That he can rejoin what he loves.

Air

En amour, il est un moment
 Marqué pour notre récompense.
 Si quelquefois par indolence
 On échappe ce point charmant,
 Plus souvent encor un amant
 Se perd par trop d'impatience.

De ses désirs impétueux
 L'amant habile est toujours maître;
 Il tâche avec soin de connaître
 L'instant qui doit combler ses vœux.
 Tel aujourd'hui serait heureux
 S'il n'avait voulu trop tôt l'être!

In love, there is a moment
 Marked for our reward.
 If sometimes by indolence
 One misses this charming point,
 More often still a lover
 Is lost by too much impatience.

Of his impetuous desires
 The skillful lover is always master;
 He tries with care to know
 The instant which must fill his desires.
 Such today would be happy
 If he had not wanted fulfillment too soon!

Le Berger Fidèle

Récitatif

Prêt à voir immoler l'objet de sa tendresse,
 Le fidèle Mirtil déplore ses malheurs,
 Il soupire, il gémit sans cesse,
 Et sa voix aux Echos dit ainsi ses douleurs:

Soon to see sacrificed the object of his tenderness,
 The faithful Mirtil deploras his misfortune,
 He sighs, he groans unceasingly,
 And his voice to the Echos tells thus his sorrow:

Air

Faut-il qu'Amarillis périsse?
 Diane, apaise ton courroux!
 Par un horrible sacrifice
 Peux-tu briser des noeuds si doux!

Ah! si ta timide innocence
 Sur vos autels doit expirer,
 Dieux! quelle est donc la récompense
 Que la vertu doit espérer?

Must Amarillis perish?
 Diane, calm your anger!
 By a horrible sacrifice
 Can you break ties so sweet?

Ah! if your timid innocence
 Must expire on your altars,
 Gods, what then is the reward
 That virtue must hope for?

Récitatif

Mais c'est trop me livrer à ma douleur mortelle:
 Un autre doit mourir pour elle.
 Hâtons nous de la secourir:
 Pour sauver ce qu'il aime un amant doit périr.

But it is too much for me to deliver myself to my mortal
 sorrow:
 Another must die for her.
 Let us hasten to help her:
 In order to save what he loves, a lover must perish.

Air

L'amour qui règne dans votre âme,
 Berger, a de quoi nous charmer.
 Par votre généreuse flamme
 Vous montrez comme il faut aimer.

L'amant léger brise ses chaînes,
 Quand le sort trahit ses desirs;
 Sans vouloir partager les peines,
 Il veut avoir part aux plaisirs.

The love which rules in your soul,
 Shepherd, has something that charms us.
 By your generous flame
 You show how one must love.

The gentle lover breaks his chains,
 When fate betrays his desires;
 Without wanting to share the penalties,
 He wants to take part in the pleasures.

Récitatif

Cependant à l'autel le Berger se présente;
 Son front est déjà ceint du funeste bandeau....
 Arrêtez! Diane est contente
 D'un amour si rare et si beau.
 Mirtil obtient la fin des maux de l'Arcadie,
 Et, lorsqu'il croit perdre la vie
 L'Hymen pour cet amant allume son flambeau.

However, at the altar the Shepherd presents himself;
 His forehead is already encircled by the fatal
 headband...

Stop! Diane is content
 With a love so rare and so beautiful.
 Mirtil obtains the end of the misfortunes of Arcadia,
 And, when he believes to lose his life,
 Hymen for this lover lights his torch.

Air

Charmant Amour, sous ta puissance
 Tot ou tard on sent tes faveurs.
 Souvent, dans les plus grands malheurs,
 Elles passent notre espérance.

Tu ne fais sentir tes rigueurs,
 Que pour éprouver la constance.
 Tu veux que la persévérance
 Puisse mériter tes faveurs.

Charming Love, under your power
 Sooner or later one feels your favors.
 Often, in the greatest misfortunes,
 They surpass our hope.

You make your severities
 Felt only to test constancy.
 You want perseverance
 To be able to merit your favors.

Cantate pour le jour de la Saint Louis

Récitatif

Dieu des vers, c'est toi que j'implore,
Viens seconder l'ardeur qui brule dans mon sein,
En pareils jours, et sur ces bords encore,
Tu m'a plus d'une fois inspiré le des sein
De célébrer le nom d'un ami que j'adore;
Ainsi que sur mon coeur il regne dans ces lieux,
Du beau nom de Louis que tout ici résonne,
C'est à la vertu même un nom que le ciel donne,
Et que portent nos demis Dieux.

God of verse, it is you that I implore,
Come support the ardor which burns within my breast,
On similar days, and on these shores still,
You have more than once inspired in me the intent
To celebrate the name of a friend that I adore;
In the same way as in my heart, he rules in this country,
With the beautiful name of Louis everything here resounds,
It is like virtue itself, a name that heaven gives,
And that our demi-gods bear.

Air

Qu'ici tout sunisse à l'hommage
Que mon coeur doit à ses bienfaits,
Oiseaux, joignez votre ramage
A nos accens les plus parfaits.

Vous, Flore, que dans son empire
L'aurore enrichit de ses pleurs,
Parfumez le jour qu'il respire,
Et semez sa route de fleurs.

May everything here join in the homage
That my heart owes to his kindness,
Birds join your songs
To our most perfect tones.

You, Flora, who in his empire
The dawn enriches with his tears,
Perfume the day that he breathes,
And scatter his road with flowers.

Récitatif

A lui plaire on m'a vû, des ma plus tendre enfance,
 Borner mes plus ardens souhaits;
 Ciel exauce pour lui les voeux que je te fais,
 Acquite ma reconnoissance.

To please him one has seen me, from my most tender childhood,
 Restrain my most ardent desires;
 Heaven, grant for him the prayers that I make to you,
 Thus my gratitude.

Air

Que sur ces rivages aimes
 Règne une fraîcheur éternelle
 Et que Cloris encor plus belle
 S'y montre à ses regards charmez.

Que la lumière la plus pure
 Sans cesse se lève sur eux,
 Qu'à jamais, pour les rendre heur,eur,
 Tout conspire dans la nature.

That on these beloved shores
 May an eternal freshness reign
 And may Cloris still more beautiful
 Show herself there to his charmed glances.

May the purest light
 Unceasingly fall on them,
 May forever, in order to make them happy,
 All conspire in nature.

Récitatif

Mais quelles Déités s'assemblent dans ces lieux?
 Quel nouveau spectacle s'apprête.
 Chacun y vient chargé de ses dons précieux,
 Et Cornus s'offre ici pour ordonner la fête;
 Reine de ce charmant séjour,
 À la place d'Hébé viens te mettre à leur tête,
 Fais les honneur d'un si beau jour.

But what deities are assembling here?
 What new spectacle is being readied?
 Everyone is coming here filled with his precious gifts,
 And Cornus offers himself to regulate the feast;
 Queen of this charming place,
 Instead of Hebe, come, place yourself at the head,
 Do the honors of such a beautiful day.

Air (page 11 in the score)

Pour célébrer une fête si belle,
 Tu sais, Cloris, l'emporter à nos yeux
 Sur cette aimable immortelle
 Et sur le coeur de ton Epoux fidelle.

À l'employ le plus glorieux
 Tes charmes peuvent prétendre,
 Charge toi du soin de repandre
 Le Nectar le plus précieux.

In order to celebrate a feast so beautiful,
 You know, Cloris, how to prevail in our eyes
 Over this beloved immortal
 And over the heart of your faithful spouse.

To the most glorious use
 Your charms can claim,
 Take the charge of spreading
 The most precious nectar.

Air

(au lieu de celui de la page 11
lorsque la Cantate ne sert pas
"le jour de" Saint Louis)

Volez amours, voler plaisirs
Vers l'objet qu'on célèbre en ce charmant empire,
Règne au gré de ses desirs,
Qu'a son triomphe tout conspire.

Sur les pas de Cloris folatrez en ces jour,
Jeunes Zéphirs quittez le sein de Flore.
Que vos soupirs Lasseur éclore
Mille fleurs dans ce beau séjour
Pour rendre hommage à celui qu'elle adore.

Air

(in lieu of the one on page 11
when the Cantata does not serve
"the day of" Saint Louis)

Fly cupids, fly pleasures
Toward the object that we celebrate in this charming
empire,
Reign according to his desires,
To his triumph may everything conspire.

In the footsteps of Cloris frolic today,
Young Zephyrs, leave the breast of Flora,
May your sighs, Lasseur, open
A thousand flowers on this beautiful site
To render homage to the one that she adores.

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