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Rhetoric and wit in Nicolas Bernier's Le Caffé

Anne C. Wick
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Rhetoric and Wit in Nicolas Bernier’s *Le Caffé*

Anne Carolynn Wick

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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DEDICATION

In memory of Merle and Elizabeth Wick

who raised me with the joy of music
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the many individuals who have helped me with this project. Thank you to my committee: Dr. Dorothy Maddison who has helped from first introducing me to this wonderful work through to the final steps of completion, Dr. John Peterson whose guidance helped me to get the thoughts out of my head, clarified and into words, and Dr. Don Rierson who provided fine tuning and the encouragement to “get it done.” Special thanks to Professor Brenda Witmer who served as my vocal instructor, mentor and champion. I truly appreciate all the James Madison University faculty members; constant encouragement and positive attitude, especially Brian Cockburn and David Newman whose many chats kept me motivated. I would like to thank Cedric Lee of Greenman Press for allowing use of excerpts from his musical score. I deeply appreciate the prayers and encouragement from my sisters, Pastor Sarah, Norma & Jim and Joe. And to the many whom I haven’t named, but who have been a part of this journey, I would like to express my thanks, for their support has been part of my success.
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this document is to create a better comprehension of the French Baroque cantata’s design through an examination of Nicolas Bernier’s *Le Caffé*, with particular attention paid to rhetorical influences, which will enhance the understanding of its value and performance style of the French Baroque cantata for both performers and audiences. To help modern teachers, performers and audiences to appreciate this genre and provide a practical means of approach to performance, this document will: 1) explain the purpose of the Late French Baroque Cantata as a vehicle to display the wit of both poet and composer; 2) reveal the essential qualities of the genre both poetically and musically; 3) discuss examples of both poetic and musical rhetoric in *Le Caffé*, a Late French Baroque Cantata by Nicolas Bernier; and 4) examine the impact of these rhetorical elements on Historically Informed Performance (HIP). Understanding the French Cantata as a vehicle for wit rather than a serious work of high art may lead to a greater appreciation of its charms, allowing early twenty-first century performers and audiences a glimpse of the whimsical nature and the clever rhetorical elements found in French Baroque cantata as demonstrated in *Le Caffé*. 
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The form known as the cantate françoise attracted almost every French composer during the first half of the 18th century. The resulting repertory amounts to well over 800 works, most of which were printed; some 150 printed works are no longer extant. Early scholars such as Fétis tended to underestimate the intrinsic worth of French cantatas. Yet though it would be wrong to claim too much for them, the best of them have a fresh and engaging eloquence. As few are available in modern editions, however, even these finest cantatas are not widely known.¹

The French cantata’s short period of popularity or apparent lack of poetic sophistication seems to have relegated this genre to being easily dismissed; but this secular cantata had a unique purpose that is regrettably overlooked in most modern evaluations. Unless one is in an Early Music program or ensemble, French vocal chamber music studies tend to focus principally on the sophisticated mélodies of the Romantic era and, in comparison, the cantata may seem less intriguing. In addition to the rarity of editions in modern notation, the particular performing forces, restrained character, and unique style of ornamentation needed may be barriers to performance. The aim of this document is to create a better comprehension of the French Baroque cantata’s design through an examination of Nicolas Bernier’s Le Caffé, with particular attention paid to rhetorical influences, which will enhance the understanding of its value and performance style of the French Baroque cantata for both performers and audiences.

Roger Freitas points out that the Italians led the way in the development of the cantata, influencing their French counterparts not only in formal structure and style, but also in the display of wit in the application of rhetorical elements with finesse.

As members of court society strove to display their refinement and mental agility, they applied rhetorical strategies to whatever material was at hand, caring less about expressing a novel idea or sentiment than about expressing familiar ideas and sentiments with a novel turn.  

However, these rhetorical elements “can only be fully understood if language is placed in its social, political, and cultural context.” This connection of music and rhetoric is not new and has been previously examined. There are publications from the seventeenth century which point to the importance of rhetoric in the composition of music both vocal and instrumental, especially from the German theorists, Joachim Burmeister (1564-1629) in *Musica Poetica* (1606) and Johannes Lippius (1585-1612) in his *Synopsis musicae novae* (1612). In 1908 German musicologist, Arnold Schering (1877-1941), coined the term *Figurenlehre* (Doctrine of Figures) to describe the relationship between figures of speech and their corresponding musical figures, but though a codification of ideas was attempted, “no single systematic theory of musical figures exists for Baroque or later music.” In the following discussion, terms normally associated with written or spoken rhetoric will be used to show similar applications in musical elements. To help modern teachers, performers and audiences to appreciate this genre and provide a practical means of approach to performance, this document will: 1) explain the purpose of the Late French Baroque Cantata as a vehicle to display the wit of both poet and composer; 2)
reveal the essential qualities of the genre both poetically and musically; 3) discuss examples of both poetic and musical rhetoric in Le Caffé, a Late French Baroque Cantata by Nicolas Bernier; and 4) examine the impact of these rhetorical elements on Historically Informed Performance (HIP).

**Music in the Public Sphere**

There can be little doubt that the cantata was, for a number of years, one of the most popular forms of music in France. It was heard in the salons, the academies, at the Tuileries, at the Concerts chez la Reine, from the voices of stars like [Mademoiselles] Le Maure and Antier, as well as from rank amateurs. [...] The Mercure de France has recorded the performances of a number of cantatas sung between acts of operas.6

A turning point in the development of solo vocal style transpired in sixteenth-century Italy as monody, a composition for solo vocalist and instrumental accompaniment, began to displace madrigals in popularity. Monody sought to follow the natural inflections of speech rather than employing exaggerated word-painting common to the madrigal genre. It was the Florentine Camerata, a group of literati and musicians, “meeting at the home of Count Giovanni de’ Bardi during the 1570s and 1580s, that ‘invented’ monody.”7 The cameratas and literary salons continued to influence the development of music outside the church and court. The enthusiastic members, who were fond of both poetry and music, often fostered impromptu competitions between authors and composers and the cantata emerged as a popular form. Although the cantata genre originated as a poetic form, it was eminently suitable for being set to music and became

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known by the musical settings for which it was intended and the cantata’s popularity began to spread beyond the borders of Italy.

In spite of the monarchy’s tight hold on the arts and education in France in the seventeenth-century, visiting Italian musicians, international travel and trade inspired broader artistic interests. French courtier and amateur musician, Pierre de Niert (1597-1682), was attributed with introducing monody to the French nobility. During a visit to Rome in 1633, Niert [Nyert, Niel, Nielle, Denièle] attended operatic productions of the Barberini family where he became enamored of the new Italian style of dramatic singing. While in Rome, he studied with a number of the singers, bringing back his newly-found understanding of the style when he returned to his position at the French court.

By 1640 he had begun to have a profound influence on musicians of the French court such as Lambert and Bacilly, both of whom studied with him and adopted his Italianate concerns for natural prosody, clear pronunciation, subtle declamation and a more sensitive approach to texts.8

As entertaining shifted its centre of gravity from the court at Versailles to Parisian town houses or country châteaux, musical patronage shifted from the king to noblemen and even gentlemen who become patrons of divertissements.9

Another important change was from the shift from court-centered entertainment to the musical patronage of both the nobility and the rising middle-class. Salons in private town homes or country châteaux provided fertile ground for artists and engendered a demand for poems and music to entertain the sophisticated audiences. Though some

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cantatas were known to have been performed at public concerts or in opera houses, those performances requiring fuller orchestral accompaniment were not the norm. The more intimate, private salons catered to an elite audience and were eminently suitable for chamber music. Scoring was more likely to be for one or two vocalists with *basso continuo* and the occasional *obligato* instrument. These salons were important not only to the arts, but to the social movements of their day:

Women played a central role in the development of the salon which has been called the cradle of the French Revolution. Indeed many of our modern concepts of individual liberty, equality, and democracy were born in this unique French institution. Salons were not receptions. They were groups of carefully selected people who came together to discuss a common topic skillfully directed by a hostess or *salonnière*. Members of salons sought to attain the highest ideals of truth and beauty as well as to emphasize perfection, proportion, and harmony which they believed led to unity and temperance.  

While new works were evaluated for their musical worth at concerts, the salons were meant for lighter entertainment. Even if the subject were serious, if presented in a clever way, the desired response might be laughter. “The poets wrote chiefly madrigals, epigrams, and *amphigouris*, or tissues of nonsense, to charm the *bureau d’esprit*, [office of the mind] as the salons were soon called. The style was light, the wit pretty, and the prevailing tone that of the inveterate libertine.” As the mid-seventeenth-century experienced a growing interest in science and reason, rhetorical concepts of rationalism (*ratio*) and purging of emotions through experience (*katharsis*) were sources of discourse.

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among salon attendees. French philosopher René Descartes’ (1596-1650) in his *Traité des passions de l’âme* (Treatise on the Passions of the Soul) “provided a rational, physiological and descriptive basis for understanding and portraying the passions or affections.”¹² Music was the perfect medium for portrayal of these passions; how this was to be accomplished was not as easily agreed upon as the heated discussions of the merits of the Italian and French musical styles turned into quarrels.

**Musical Style: Italian versus French**

Scholarly French priest, François Raguenoet (1660-1722), campaigned for the Italian style in his widely distributed 1702 publication, *Parallèle des Italiens et des Français, en ce qui regarde la musique et les opéras* (Parallel of the Italians and the French, in regards to music and operas). Though he begins with praise of the French operatic writing and elegance of the dancers, he included two claims of Italian superiority: the Italian language was preferable for singing and the Italian singers, the *castrati* in particular, exhibited a more artful, varied and passionate vocal style.¹³ Defending the French point of view, Jean-Laurent Le Cerf de la Viéville retorted with his *Comparaison de la musique Italienne et de la musiqueFrançoise* (Comparison of Italian Music and French Music) in 1705, defending the superiority of the French style and its patriotic importance. Raguenet’s response foreshadowed the *querrelle des Bouffons*, a debate over the merits of French versus Italian opera in the mid-century. Many of the French espoused music that was orderly based on consonances and that did not violate

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the laws of nature as seen in the employment of Italian castrati. These and other qualities were viewed as displaying bon goût (good taste). It was most often the purview of the salonnières to determine what was considered good taste; many still looked to the King’s court as the highest standard.

Modern aesthetic theory arose out of the disputes over taste in the early eighteenth century. According to the rationalists, taste was the result of universal reason, which would remain forever codified by the rules of the ancients. (Since ancient music was unknown, the ‘ancient’ music of Jean-Baptiste Lully often served as an equivalent standard.)

Nicolas Bernier (1665-1734)

Nicolas Bernier’s Employment and Court Appointment

Nicolas Bernier was born on the sixth of June, 1665 in Mantes-la-Jolie, France. Bernier likely received training as a choir boy in the Cathédral Notre-Dame de Mantes where he may have developed his interest in and aptitude for singing and composing vocal music. Successful performance for Louis XIV brought Bernier respect and a prestigious position as sous-maître de musique at the Chapelle Royale. Under the patronage of Philippe, Duke of Orléans (nephew of King Louis XIV), he was taken with a group of musicians to study abroad in Rome with Antonio Caldara (?1671-1736). After this sojourn, he returned to Paris in 1692 — where he lived until his death on July 6, 1734 — bringing with him a deeper understanding and appreciation of Italian instrumental style and monody. He also served as maître de chapelle at Chartres Cathedral, St. Germain-l’Auxerrois, and the Sainte Chapelle, composing sacred works including more than forty motets and grand motets, as well as lost works including a

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14 Cowart, 348.
Mass, Te Deum and various chants. In addition, this harpsichordist, theorist and teacher gained recognition as one of the first composers of Baroque secular cantatas.

**Bernier's Position Among the first French Cantata Composers**

Bernier’s first volume of French cantatas was published in the early 1700’s. Three subsequent volumes followed between 1703 and 1714. Published by Foucault between 1703 and 1715, under a *Privilege du Roy* (King’s permission), *Le Caffé* \(^{15}\) is the fourth of six compositions in Bernier’s third set of secular cantatas. Scholars disagree as to who was the first composer of French cantatas. According to Greer Garden, “around 1692, De Bousset emerged as the leading composer of *airs sérieux et à boire* (serious airs and drinking songs) of his generation.” He published *L’Impatience Amoureuse* (The Impatient Lover) in 1705, possibly the first published cantata.\(^ {16}\) Garden further claims that Jean-Baptiste Morin (1677-1745) asserted himself as the first; for though unpublished, Morin’s cantata manuscripts “had been circulating in manuscript for some time.”\(^ {17}\) Nonetheless, Bernier may have been the first, but the precise publication date of his first volume under the 1703 *Privilège* is unknown. Berta Joncus states, “In a report attributed to Voltaire, [Hilaire Rouillé] de Coudray’s mistress, Marie de Louvencourt, possessed a beautiful voice for which Nicolas Bernier wrote ‘the first’ French cantatas – Bernier’s works carried no date – to words by her friend, Jean-Baptiste Rousseau.”\(^ {18}\)

\(^{15}\) Older French spellings, such as “Le Caffé,” as used in the score will be maintained.


\(^{17}\) Ibid., 366.

Musicologists have yet to unravel the mystery of who was truly the first composer of a French Cantata, but it is clear that Bernier was among the pioneers of this genre.

**An Overview of Bernier’s Musical Style**

Though some French composers wrote in a thoroughly Italian style, Bernier was among those composers who sought to retain a French *douceur* (sweetness) and elegance while incorporating some of the more desirable qualities of Italian music. In 1920, a single copy of *Principes de composition de Mr Bernier* (Principles of Composition of Mr. Bernier) was acquired from a private library sale by the National Library of France (Paris). It was subsequently translated into English and published in 1964. There is no evidence that Bernier’s treatise was published during his lifetime, and, in fact may have been written during his last years or compiled from notes or a rough copy after his death.\(^{19}\) Providing a glimpse of his compositional structure, Bernier’s treatise gives a detailed discussion regarding composition of two-part counterpoint and also includes three, four, and five-part instruction along with elaboration on diatonic tonal structure and the careful use of dissonance. There is nothing particularly unique or ground-breaking, in the treatise, but it provides many straight-forward examples and exercises for student practice. Though not unilaterally accepted by the French, it is in Bernier’s French cantatas that his ability to successfully incorporate Italian elements while remaining essentially French is revealed. This blending of tastes came to be identified as *goûts réunis* (conjoined tastes):

Bernier offered a personal solution to the union of French and Italian tastes. He achieved equilibrium between the two styles in his first book of

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French cantatas, a genre of which he was one of the first creators together with Jean-Baptiste Morin. Vigorous recitatives and da capo airs, with or without an initial motto, follow each other freely, while the expressive melody, with few wide intervals or long melismas, is rooted more in the French tradition.\(^2\)

Though following the Italian *da Capo* formal structure and borrowing some of its attributes, in *Le Caffé*, Bernier remained essentially French, not only in regard to the language of the poetry, but also in the significantly French qualities of emotional restraint and *douceur*, and his melodies require ornate embellishment in accordance with French expectations regarding the use of *agréments* and *tremblements* (see Ornamentation). Along with an examination of Bernier’s skillful use of the blending of various musical techniques, this document will consider how Bernier infuses his work with rhetorically effective elements that bring musical and literary concepts into a cohesive whole.

**Secular Influences on Literary Topics in the Cantata Genre**

The airs that were the fore-runners of the cantata had particular topics of interest whose influence can be found in *Le Caffé*. The early strophic *airs de cour* evolved into the more sophisticated *airs sérieux*, frequently dealing with a grandiose treatment of a common object, in this instance, coffee. Also popular, *airs à boire* (drinking songs) and the reactionary *anti-airs-de-boire* (anti-drinking songs) are reflected in one of the main poetic themes of this cantata: the superiority of coffee over wine. Mythological figures of antiquity, allegorical tales, and *pastorales* with amorous exploits of shepherds and shepherdesses set in the idyllic world of Arcadia were among the most popular subjects.

Even without the Arcadian setting, *Le Caffé* may be interpreted thematically as a commoner (singer) who adores someone of elevated rank (coffee personified); at moments the cantata functions as a love song. In addition, Coffee itself may be seen as a magic potion, another convention customarily found in the *pastorales*. Though the simple subject matter of this text veers away from the Arcadian delights for the contemplation of one of a more contemporary pleasure, coffee, the homage to classical mythology can be seen in the inclusion of coffee’s supposed consumption by various deities of antiquity, including Minerva and Apollo.

With its placement in the middle of the six cantatas of Book III (see Table 1), sandwiched between Greek and Roman mythological subjects and *pastorales*, *Le Caffé* stands out with its unusual subject, pre-dating the only other extant and more famous *Kaffee Kantata* of J. S. Bach by several decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Venus</em></td>
<td>Roman Goddess of love and beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Iris</em></td>
<td>Greek Goddess of the Rainbow, Messenger of the Gods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Le Portrait d’Uranie</em></td>
<td>Greek Muse of Astronomy &amp; the Night Sky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Le Caffé</em></td>
<td>Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Hypolite et Aricie</em></td>
<td>Greek Allegorical story of intervention by the gods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Vertumne et Pomone</em></td>
<td>Roman mythology, a tale in Ovid’s <em>Metamorphoses</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar to the current expansion of coffeehouses in the U.S., such as Starbucks, coffee was a growing fad all over Europe at the time. An article comparing the social impact of our modern internet with coffee houses in Europe several centuries ago
purports, “Coffee-houses were popular in Paris, where 380 had been established by 1720. … [they] functioned as information exchanges for writers, politicians, businessmen and scientists … Coffee-houses were calm, sober and well-ordered establishments that promoted polite conversation and discussion.”

This growing interest in coffee provided poets with a popular topic. Perhaps the composer regarded this ode to coffee as the apotheosis of the beverage. Or could it have been a reaction to an overzealous fan of coffee? Bernier dedicated his fifth book of French cantatas to the Duchesse du Maine who, according to James Anthony, held divertissements (staged, impromptu entertainments) “to help endure insomnia.”

Was too much coffee to blame? In any case, this particular and unusual subject would certainly have been appropriate for an audience gaining an appreciation of coffee and its growing impact both socially and individually.

French Cantata Poetical Form

Jean-Baptiste Rousseau and the formation of the French Cantata

According to David Tunley in The Eighteenth-Century French Cantata, “The French cantata was first given poetic shape by Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1671-1741).”

Though born into the lower class, Rousseau’s poetic excellence gained him entrance into aristocratic circles. He incorporated several elements of Italian style into his newly evolving French cantata form. Following ideals germinated in the Italian Renaissance, he chose mythological subjects and incorporated classical rhetorical elements. He allowed freedom in rhyme and meter in his cantatas to provide for the nuances of the French

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22 Anthony, 146.
23 Tunley, 16.
language to be maintained whether spoken or sung. He also adopted the “RARARA” form, three *da Capo* arias each preceded by a recitative. The Italian term *cantata* was given the French spelling *cantate*. “Except for Rousseau, few of the poets who contributed to the cantata are now well known, even to students of the period. As well, many of the cantata texts were anonymous or merely initialed.”

**French Verse Syllabic Stress and Scansion**

Native English speakers often fall into the trap of viewing French verse scansion as one would English, Italian, or German, where syllables are counted as strong or weak and usually fall into 2- or 3-syllable units. “Harmonic orators must keep in mind three important differences between the English and French languages. First of all, French syllables are accentuated by *length*, English ones by *strength*. Second, in a French word the *final* syllable tends to be accentuated, but the accentuated syllable often comes at the *beginning* of an English word. Third, English syllables (especially stressed ones) tend to be pronounced with the curl of the tongue, usually near the *palate*. This curling motion creates a sliding pitch, as with the word “here,” in “he’s here.” French syllables, be they stressed or unstressed, are normally pronounced on an even pitch, with the tongue making precise and quite restricted motions near the *front* of the mouth.”

Though this statement refers more accurately to a British style of “r” rather than the American retroflex “r,” in both cases the tendency to move the tongue or drop the intensity of the air pressure in the end of a word or line in English may inappropriately disrupt the pitch and syllabic stress if carried into the French language.

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24 Tunley, 22.

French syllabification counting can also be significantly different:

Because French poetry is not built of repetitive patterns of iambs, anapests and so forth, it would be indistinguishable from elegant prose were it not for a combination of three rhythmic factors that occur only sporadically in prose. First of all, in poetry, the same number of syllables usually recurs for each line, creating an overarching, repetitive rhythm that distinguishes a poem from prose. Second, the sonorous rhyming syllable that ends each line establishes phrasing patterns based on the round of the rhyme. Finally, within these poetic lines, syllables group into small units of continually varying length, to create expressive rhythms.26

These varying small units (feet) are often associated with particular expressive applications (see “Relationship between Poetic Foot Length, Meaning and Musical Setting”). French poetic lines have either masculine endings of strong, long vowels, or feminine endings where a normally mute “e” is given a separate note and represented in IPA as a schwa [ə]. These endings are important to the rhyme scheme which is usually formally structured. It is critical to note that in the middle of a line, this syllable is counted in scansion if it does not elide with a following word beginning with a vowel; however, it is not counted when it occurs at the end of a poetic line, even when notated separately in a musical score. Thus a feminine ending line that appears to have thirteen syllables will be counted as consisting of only twelve syllables: This twelve-syllable line, known as an Alexandrine, was a prominent feature of serious poetry and often used in the cantata genre.

In addition, the specific treatment of long versus short syllables was exhaustively detailed by Bénigne de Bacilly (1625-1690) in his Remarques Curieuses Sur L’Art de Bien Chanter (Inquisitive Remarks on the Art of Singing) in 1668. The English

26 Ranum, 46-7.
translation by Austin Caswell serves as a valuable tool in understanding some of the intricacies of the language, especially as it relates to singers. As Bacilly explains in the third section of his treatise,

> Since singing scarcely exists without words, in relation to them I must include proper pronunciation, expression, and emotional interpretation, and above all the proper observance of the difference between long and short syllables, which is the principal aim of this work.”

Differences in spelling and pronunciation between Baroque era and modern era French must also be considered in scansion and IPA transcriptions. In spite of these complexities, there is much order and logic in the cantata poetic form, making it more accessible to modern study. The clarity of form seen in the even line lengths, clear divisions into hemistiches (halves of a poetic line of verse), and clear expectations regarding the various vowels is key to understanding the form on a more professional level. This document will discuss in more detail the poetic elements as they relate to content, style and presentation exemplified in Bernier’s *Le Caffé*. (See APPENDIX for poetic scansion, IPA transcription of modern French and translation of *Le Caffé*).

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CHAPTER 2: CLASSICAL RHETORICAL DEVICES EMPLOYED IN *LE CAFFÉ*

Composers and poets at the turn of the eighteenth century were well trained in the art of classical rhetoric as part of the core educational curriculum. As a result of the preceding Renaissance revival of ancient Greek and Roman ideals, aesthetic goals of moving emotions and exciting passions had already become guiding principles in the creation of musical works.28 Audience members, benefitting from the same humanistic school curriculum, understood and expected compositions to be both logical and impassioned and anticipated certain characteristics to be incorporated, from the overall form down to minute details. Rhetoricians embracing the methodized art of persuasion typically divided the process of creating a work into five categories: Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, and Delivery.

Rhetoric requires understanding a fundamental division between *what* is communicated through language and *how* this is communicated. Aristotle phrased this as the difference between *logos* (the logical content of a speech) and *lexis* (the style and delivery of a speech).29

Invention and Arrangement concentrate upon the logical content of what is to be presented (*logos*). Style, Memory, and Delivery determine how this content is communicated (*lexis*). These five categories will be discussed in turn along with illustrations of how each process is exhibited in Bernier’s *Le Caffé*.30

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30 For a more detailed explanation of each category, see “the canons of rhetoric” in *Silva Rhetoricae*. 
Invention

The creative process for a rhetorically-based oration or poem begins with the choice of a topic and a purpose. After choosing the topic of coffee, for instance, the cantata poet would have selected the appropriate type of oratory based on the objective of the oration, paying particular attention to the *kairos*, or optimum time and place.

Rhetorical analysis of any sort begins with some orientation to the *kairos*. Whether or not a rhetorical critic employs the term *kairos*, he or she will examine the exigencies and constraints of place, time, culture, and audience that affect choices made by speakers and authors to influence that moment. Though there are numerous types, there are three “broad categories of intention.”

Each of these three categories is associated with a particular tense: past, present, or future. *Judicial oratory* was suitable for use in a court of law for prosecuting or defending actions that had taken place in the past, rarely employed outside that setting. For political discussions involving social policy and adoption of new laws, *deliberative oratory*, with an aim towards determining future action was preferred. *Epideictic oratory*, on the other hand, “was oriented to public occasions calling for speech or writing in the here and now. [...] The ends of *epideictic* included praise or blame.” Authors employing *epideictic oratory* may choose the praising (*encomium*) or denunciation (*vituperation*) of their subject. The poet of *Le Caffé* elected to use this third category of *epideictic oratory* to extol the glory of coffee.

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31 Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*.

32 Ibid.
Arrangement

Selection of supportive elements and ordering of the argument comprises the next phase in the process after the Invention. At its simplest, the Arrangement consists of a beginning, middle, and end. At a more detailed level, the formal structure consists of six parts: Introduction (exordium), Statement of Facts (narratio), Division (partitio), Proof (confirmatio), Refutation (confutatio) and Conclusion (peroratio). This organization was the core of rhetorical strategy. In the Introduction, an orator gains the attention and favor of the audience (ethos), relates the theme of the discourse and establishes the general ambiance. The Statement of Facts, an explanation of the nature of the case, and the Division, forecasting the main ideas of the discourse, follow. Fourth, the Proof, the primary focus of the oration, explicates more zealously the evidences supporting the claims set forth previously in a manner appealing to logical thought (logos). The subsequent Refutation allows opposing viewpoints to be alleged and rebutted. Lastly, the Conclusion summarizes the arguments with emotional and persuasive appeals (pathos).

*Le Caffé* incorporates five of the six parts of the Arrangement: Introduction, Statement of Facts, Proof, Refutation and Conclusion, omitting the Division. Bernier’s musical setting methodically follows the poem’s recitative and aria subdivisions (see Table 2), enhancing the rhetorical strategies outlined above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhetorical Part</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Statement of Facts</th>
<th>Proof</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Refutation</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Caffé Section</td>
<td>Prelude</td>
<td>First Recitative</td>
<td>First Aria</td>
<td>Second Recitative</td>
<td>Second Aria</td>
<td>Third Recitative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Comparison of Rhetorical Parts of Arrangement with Musical Sections in *Le Caffé*. 
Introduction: Rhetorical and Musical Comparisons

The poetic text, beginning with the first recitative, serves as the author’s Introduction. The authority and benevolence of the speaker (ethos), qualities important to include according to Aristotle, are conveyed through an opening “rhetorical question” (interrogation) implying that anyone who has tried coffee could attest to its delightful nature. The second sentence proceeds with the single-syllable emotional exclamation (ecphronesis), “Ah!” that not only continues to draw attention, but also functions as a mood-setting device. Following the exclamation, there is an allusion to coffee’s superiority over wine, a recurring thematic element, revealing the antagonist and establishing the poet’s intent to extol coffee.

Musically, the cantata opens with an instrumental prélude before the first recitative begins; the genre’s early definition seems applicable in this instance:

A piece that preceded other music whose mode or key it was designed to introduce; was instrumental (the roots ludus and Spiel mean ‘played’ as opposed to ‘sung’); and was improvised (hence the French préluder and the German präludieren, meaning ‘to improvise’). The term ‘praemabulum’ (preamble) adds the rhetorical function of attracting the attention of an audience and introducing a topic. 33

Bernier incorporates formal structure, mode, tempo and meter as rhetorical tools to prepare the audience for what is to come and to begin to win them over to the side of coffee. The chamber ensemble, consisting of basso continuo and solo violin or flute, opens with A major in common time. Bernier musically strengthens the connection

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between the prelude and the first recitative by continuing in the same key and time signature with the voice assuming the role that the *obligato* line had previously fulfilled. The melodic line begins with the same tonic arpeggio and then shifts to follow the metrical patterns of the text (see Example 1). Moreover, although stylistically it is usual to stop completely at a final cadence before proceeding into a recitative, in the original score, the final cadence of the prelude acts as the downbeat of the recitative (see Example 2A), prompting an editorial question mark regarding this potential segue in Cedric Lee’s 2014 score in modern notation (see Example 2B). Considering the prelude and first recitative as sharing one rhetorical function explains the deliberate continuation without the expected break between the two.

Example 1. Opening *obligato* and vocal entrances in first recitative [mm. 1-2].

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Example 2. Final note of Prelude [m. 20] as downbeat of first recitative [m. 1].

Statement of Facts: Rhetorical and Musical Comparisons

The change of mode, meter and tempo at the beginning of the first aria musically signal a change into the Statement of Facts. Despite these distinct differences, Bernier’s choice to employ the closely related key of F# minor, as opposed to a more distantly related key, softens what might otherwise have been a more abrupt departure from the recitative. Although the use of closely related keys was standard compositional practice in the cantata genre, it also helps maintain the smooth flow from one section to another, a trait of effective rhetoric. The text begins with “Favorable liquor” (Marvelous liquid) which connects to the opening words of the recitative, “Agreable Caffé” (Delightful Coffee) by exergasia (repetition of the same idea with new words used for

“amplification, variation, and explanation”). Concurrently, the tempo indication, “Gracieusement,” could also be seen as exergasia of “Agreable.” As used by French Baroque composers beginning in the late seventeenth century, gracieusement corresponds to andante according to Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1718), but it also literally translates as “agreeable, graceful and dainty.” These connections provide a smooth yet perspicuous transition into the statement of facts. The continuo and obligato’s opening imitative ritornello introduces the melodic theme later heard in the vocal line. When the vocalist enters, she sets forth and expounds upon two of coffee’s attributes: its ability to increase the desirable aspects of life and to overcome the undesirable effects of sleep.

**Proof: Rhetorical and Musical Comparisons**

Division of specific points to be presented would be the next section those trained in rhetoric would expect to hear; instead, the poetry moves on immediately to the Proof. This provides the most logical (logos) and thorough exploration of the appreciable attributes of coffee but with slightly more impassioned speech. The second recitative gives details regarding the benefits of staying awake late into the night using more descriptive language. The first reference to humanity and the gods occurs here; Minerva, the Moon Goddess of wisdom (and arts, medicine, commerce, magic, etc.) is deemed to be cognizant of the high value of coffee. The ensuing aria offers stronger and more emotional proofs. The A section employs antagonist argumentation – chiefly against wine. It is interesting to note that, though “Caffè” is explicitly named, the specific word for wine is never actually stated; it is alluded to only through references to Bacchus, God

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36 Burton, Silva Rhetoricae.

of the vine, as juice of the bottle and as poison, strengthening the position of coffee by treating wine dismissively. Not only is this true in the A section of the aria, but it also holds true throughout the entire work. The ensuing B section includes additional, highly desirable benefits of coffee consumption. The stakes are raised with a fight against the fatal poison: the drinking man is rescued from wine’s debilitating influences, restoring his reason and aiding memory, thus the wise man will always choose coffee over wine. Even the glory of Apollo is made greater by coffee’s benefits. To enhance the grandeur of the topic, the second recitative and aria are set in D Major, a key associated with subjects that are joyous, martial, and grand.\(^{38}\) The \(\frac{6}{8}\) meter and “Gay” tempo add to this forward driving, energetic, and triumphant atmosphere.

**Refutation: Rhetorical and Musical Comparisons**

In its usual format, the *Invention* would proceed with the *Refutation*. The third recitative text describes the conquest of all who have never experienced the delights of coffee by its aroma alone. The opening phrase can be interpreted either as a rhetorical question with an assumed answer, or as an emotional exclamation (*ecphonesis*). This difference appears textually when one compares the punctuation in the original score to an alternative punctuation where the question mark might be replaced with an exclamation point: “*Quand une habille main t’appreste/Quel plaisir est egal a celuy que tu fais?*” (When a skilled hand prepares you, what pleasure is equal to that which you give!) A single statement follows completing the recitative: “*Ton odeur seullement te promet la conqueste/ Des mortelles qui n’ont pas eprouvé tes attribs.*” (Your aroma

\(^{38}\) Ranum, 321.
alone promises you the conquest of the mortals who have not experienced your attractions). At first glance, this may seem as if the poet has avoided the expected Refutation, as no explicit counterargument has been presented. One might argue, however, that the poet employs a specific figure of reasoning commonly found in rebuttal, *anthypophera* (a figure of *pathos*), “in which one asks and then immediately answers one’s own questions (or raises and then settles imaginary objections).” Here, the question (“what pleasure is equal to that of coffee?”) appears to invite imaginary objections, but the response that immediately follows seems to quash any such opposition (“the aroma alone will convince even those who have not tasted it yet.”)

A major topic reappears in similar terms (*epimone*) by a veneration of the puissance of coffee’s aroma, where *ton odeur* (your aroma) is reminiscent of *ta vapeur* (your vapor) from the first recitative. This reiteration of an earlier topic along with the tonality serves as preparation for the Conclusion. Though the key signature contains only three sharps presaging the ensuing aria, the recitative is firmly in the key of E major as evidenced by: the leading tone D♯ in the bass in m. 1, the resolution to an E major chord in m. 2 with the bass E tied over the bar, the use of accidentals to raise D to D♯ in the vocal line (mm. 4-5), and a perfect authentic cadence on E in m.7 (see Example 3). This serves as the dominant in the return to A major, the key shared by the third aria and prelude that opened the work. This final aria, sharing the same key signature, serves as the impassioned Conclusion.

39 Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*. 
Example 3. Evidence of E Major Tonality in third recitative.⁴⁰

[Music notation image]

Conclusion: Rhetorical and Musical Comparisons

The dominant characteristic of the poetry of the concluding aria is the presence of strong command words, “regne” (reign), “coule” (flow), “bannis” (banish), “fais” (make happen), set in assertive, six-syllable phrases (possibly seen as hemistiches of an Alexandrine line). This emphatic speech is in line with the pathos expected in a final summary. From the outset, coffee is spoken to as the beloved, “O toy, liqueur que j’ayme” (O you, liquid that I love). Its finest qualities are enumerated with more pathos by way of exaggeration (hyperbole). Coffee reigns and flows everywhere: its empire now expands beyond the bounds of earth; it supersedes the nectar of the gods (claimed to prolong life or grant immortality), continually makes war on wine and brings a taste of heaven to earth.

At times, Bernier borrows musically from earlier sections as part of this summation of ideas, a device often used in rhetorical conclusions. Firmly rooted back in the original key of A Major and quadruple meter of the prelude, with its Gay tempo, the aria evokes an exuberant quality. Unlike the two previous arias beginning with the

an obligato line introducing the melody, the continuo entering next, and the voice entering last, Bernier begins with the *basso continuo* playing the theme, followed unexpectedly by the voice in imitation in m. 4. The obligato enters in imitation after the statement of the first couplet is complete a fifth above the vocal entrance. This unanticipated entrance of the vocal line has the potential, “to excite an audience, especially out of a stupor or boredom,”\(^{41}\) (*exitatio*). Adding to the vitality is the melodic upward-leaping fifth from the tonic to the dominant, an inversion of the original *Caffé* motive. The text at this leap in the vocal line, “Ô toy,” similarly provides a direct reference to coffee as would be expected in a final summation (see Example 4).

Example 4. Vocal entrance with inverted *Caffé* motive in third aria [mm. 1-9].\(^{42}\)

\(^{41}\) Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*.

This section discussed the six parts of Arrangement: Introduction, Statement of Facts, Division, Proof, Refutation, and Conclusion. As mentioned above, this organization was the core of rhetorical strategy and is discernible in Bernier’s musical structure. The following sections will discuss how this content is portrayed through stylistic elements found in the poetry along with Bernier’s clever use of harmonic, melodic, rhythmic and motivic elements to further illuminate the text.

**Style**

The style category relates to the art of writing both the poetry and the music in order to convey the concepts set out in the Arrangement. Style includes figurative language such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and irony, as well as more highly passionate exclamations and phrases of interrogation. In addition, it incorporates various attributes related to the meter of the poetry. The poet displays his or her wit by cleverly using these stylistic elements. For instance, instead of talking about coffee as an object, throughout the entire cantata the poet choses to speak to this inanimate object in a direct manner (*apostrophe*), raising coffee’s importance by treating the beverage as an individual (*prosopopoeia* or *personification*) and as such, its name “Caffé” is capitalized as a proper noun. The poet’s imaginative concept of writing a love poem to coffee is far wittier than an ode that merely describes the attributes of the drink. In addition, by offering a deeper level of intimacy between the speaker and the object of his or her affection, the establishment of a benevolent character, important to the *ethos*, is enhanced.

To the French, maintenance of courtly elegance and *clarté* (clarity of text) were essential. Contradicting the poetic rhythm (*barbarism*) or purposefully obscuring the text
(skotison) through fragmentation or excessive melismatic passages engendered criticism.

In fact, as Tunley notes, “To make nonsense of the poetry was to transgress a fundamental canon of good taste.”43 In the late sixteenth-century, a French style of vocal music known as *musique mesurée* attempted to apply the quantitative principles of classical Greek and Latin to French vocal music:

The process was simple: composers strictly followed the metre of the verse, setting long, accented syllables as minims, and short, unaccented ones as crotchets. This resulted in irregular phrases and bar-lengths, with no regular pulse, and as a result much of this music has no time signature and is left unbarred. Texts were set syllabically and homophonically so that the words were as clear as possible. […] The prime importance of *musique mesurée* lies not in the music composed with it in mind, but in the transference of many of its characteristic features to the *air de cour*, which in turn influenced Lully's recitative style.44

In the mid-seventeenth century, the French dramatic works of dramatist Jean Racine (1639-1699) significantly impacted development of French vocal music. The highly stylized delivery of Marie Desmares, known as ‘La Champmeslé, an actress renowned for her exceptional declamatory style in the plays of Racine, became the model for Lully’s operatic writing.45 As Tunley points out:

To emphasize the rhythmic focal points of the poetry at the end of each line and at the caesure, Lully (usually) coincided these with the first beat of the bar. Maintaining these two rhetorical principles of classical French

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43 David Tunley, 36.


poetry, that is, ‘quantity’ (short and long syllables) and rhythmic focus, often brought about measures of unequal length requiring changing time signatures.⁴⁶

Though vocal music remains absent from his treatise, in his cantatas, Bernier skillfully highlights poetic figures musically and his musical setting reveals his astuteness in accommodating the inherent stresses of the text. Bernier’s musical setting often imitates and serves to amplify the particular rhetorical devices or figures employed throughout the cantata text. These include the importance of poetic foot length, the influence of mathematical proportions in structure, rhetorical connotations of dance music, and the effects of musical rhetorical figures and word painting. In the following section, examples of these rhetorical devices will be considered in their relation to the goals set forth in the Invention and Arrangement of the cantata.

**Bernier’s Text Setting**

An examination of Bernier’s recitatives reveals his careful consideration of the rhyme scheme, caesura or subdivisions of the poetic line, and lyric accents. Similar to musique mesurée, the three recitatives are set syllabically, following natural inflections of the text. Unlike the musique mesurée, however, note values range more widely from sixteenth to dotted-quarter notes. Arias are also Text settings are primarily syllabic, with some neumatic slurs, but melismatic only in a few instances and primarily used for word painting. The addition of notes for usually mute “e” is common. Some repetition of text is found, mostly an entire hemistich, rarely a single word: in these cases, the instrumental obligato typically joins on repetition of text. The basso continuo’s diatonic, homophonic

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⁴⁶ Tunley, 208.
accompaniment supports the text, and the oblìgato instrument becomes tacet during these sections as well, so as not to draw attention away from the singer. This arrangement allows more flexibility of expression by optimizing focus on the text.

“Functioning poetically, the music contributes its own punctuation system to an air.” Bernier’s choice to set cadences concurrently with the punctuation reflects another important trait of his style and demonstrates an important feature typical of the period. As each cadence approaches, the harmonic rhythm increases from two beats per chord to one; this increase in harmonic rhythm is consistently paired with a conventional cadential figure coinciding metrically with each punctuation mark in the poetic text (see Example 5). The type of cadence is directly related to the punctuation. For instance, in the first recitative, the question mark’s counterpart is a half cadence, adding to the sense of being unfinished, awaiting a response. For the first statement of the final couplet, though the original uses a period, in the 2014 score the editor substitutes a semicolon. This stronger pause is aptly portrayed by a Phrygian half cadence which is “a characteristic gesture of Baroque music and often concludes a slow movement that is to be followed immediately by a faster one.” The aria which follows is, appropriately, in a faster tempo.

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47 Ranum, 71.

As a matter of interest, this cadence occurs in conjunction with the word “\textit{rebelles}” (rebellious), a “passion” historically suited to the Phrygian mode. According to the Harvard Dictionary of Music,

\begin{quote}
The idea that each mode possessed a certain affective quality goes back to the ancient Greeks. And though that idea never quite died during the Middle Ages, it was taken up with renewed interest toward the end of the fifteenth century, as music theorists earnestly began their humanistic love affair with antiquity. [...] There was, however, no unanimity about expressive qualities. [...] On the other hand, there was at least a near consensus on the Phrygian mode: it incited anger, and was therefore suitable for war.\footnote{Atlas, 560.}
\end{quote}

Unlike Lully’s works, Bernier’s setting of \textit{Le Caffé} does not change time signatures within the recitative, but Bernier’s score does reveal other ways in which he accommodates or changes the poetic rhythm to emphasize a word or phrase. “Metered
figures,” according to Ranum, are manipulations of the metrical structure of a poetic line or interruptions of predictable meter. They convey a more emotionally motivated declamation. Bernier uses metered figures to great effect in several places. For example, the exclamation, “Ah!” in the first recitative consistently falls on a strong beat, which contrasts with the weak beat entrances of each hemistich. In example 6, the weak beat entrances are indicated by an oval, the contrasting strong beat entrances with a rectangle. This metric shift increases the dramatic effect of the exclamation, which is further emphasized by placement of a rest before and after the word. This pattern of beginning each hemistich on a weak beat occurs not only in all three recitatives, but also in the first and third arias thus establishing this feature as typical across the entire work.

Example 6. Comparison of strong and weak beat entrances in the first recitative.51

![Example 6. Comparison of strong and weak beat entrances in the first recitative.](image)

In the second aria, Bernier creates a contrasting metered figure on the word “Caffé,” [mm.29-30]. Instead of on a weak anacrusis, he places the first syllable on beat

two. Again, he uses rests before and after the word to heighten its effect. However, unlike the word “Ah,” “Caffé,” has two syllables and stands out among the surrounding eighth notes because both syllables are set as dotted-quarter notes (see Example 7). Further examination of the connection between foot length and meaning reveals an important influence on Bernier’s setting.

Example 7. Metrical emphasis and isolation of "Caffé" in the second aria [mm. 28-30].

Relationship between Poetic Foot Length, Meaning and Musical Setting

In French poetry, the length of the foot offers the reader valuable insight into the sentiment being expressed in the text. One-syllable feet, because of their short, interjectory nature, are effective for capturing the attention of the listener. Exclamations, such as “Ah!” as found in the first recitative (see Example 8), stand out in contrast to the surrounding lengthier feet. Bernier further emphasizes the brevity of the exclamation by setting the “Ah!” apart from the surrounding text, as mentioned above, inserting rests in the vocal line before and after the word, and approaching and leaving the word by leap.

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Example 8. Setting of interjection "Ah!" in first recitative [mm. 5-10].

Two-syllable feet, though not quite as powerful as an exclamation, still convey a sense of strength as seen in the final aria with the commands, "Regne, coule" (reign, flow). Bernier enhances their importance in several different places. In their first appearance he sets them melismatically which lengthens the first syllable, making the command more emphatic. When he repeats the entire line, he triples the length of the original melismas (see Example 9). Thus Bernier cleverly employs another rhetorical device, the “repetition of the same idea, changing either its words, its delivery or the general treatment it is given” (exploitio). Perhaps most surprisingly, he inserts the two words from the “A” section into the “B” section of the aria several times.

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54 Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*. 
Example 9. Settings of "regne" and "coule" in third aria [mm. 5-9].

Three, four, and five-syllable feet are predominantly found in combination. In Le Caffé, three-syllable feet are regularly paired with five-syllable feet, producing a longer line. The ending of the first recitative, the three-syllable “a Bachus” (to Bacchus) for example, follows a five-syllable foot, “Des lieux rebelles.” This line appears twice. The first time, the word “a” is emphasized by an ornamented dotted-eighth note along with a faster harmonic rhythm expanding via contrary motion with the bass into the Phrygian cadence on “Bachus” (see Example 10). On the repeat of the text, itself an unusual occurrence in a recitative, the stress changes as the middle syllable of “rebelles” is lengthened and the final syllable of “Bachus” falls on the downbeat on the final perfect authentic cadence resulting in a more balanced 4+4 metrical division, not only another

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56 Though this hemistich may appear to be only four syllables in length, because it occurs in the middle of a line, the final “e” is interior and thus included in the count.
deft use of *exploitio*, but more specifically incorporating a slight alteration of style, diction or tone in the repetition of a phrase (*repotia*).\textsuperscript{57}

Example 10. Variation of metrical stress on eight-syllable phrase in first recitative.\textsuperscript{58}

According to Ranum, a string of three-syllable feet often denotes royalty. The third recitative contains two strings of three-syllable feet, each foot set with two sixteenths followed by a longer note (see Example 11). The elegant lingering effect Bernier creates with the dotted quarter-notes, shown by downward arrows, creates variety and this grandiose treatment foreshadows the final aria where Coffee reigns supreme.

\textsuperscript{57} Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*.

\textsuperscript{58} Bernier, “Le Caffè,” Green Man Press.
Example 11. Three-syllable foot strings in third recitative.\textsuperscript{59}

\begin{center}
\begin{verbatim}
Quand une habi-le main t’a-pre-ste
Quel pla-si-er est e-ga-l a ce-luy que tu fais?
Ton o-deur seul-le-
\end{verbatim}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{verbatim}
Base Continue.
\end{verbatim}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{verbatim}
-ment te promet la con-que-st
Des mor-telles qui n’ont pas prou-vé
 tes at-traits.
\end{verbatim}
\end{center}

Six-syllable feet can occur independently as a full line or as part of a combination. The twelve-syllable Alexandrine, most often reserved for statements of sublime thought, is the most formal line design and is usually broken into two hemistiches of six syllables each – reflecting order and sense. Alexandrines comprise the first lines of the opening recitative and the entire first aria of \textit{Le Caffé}. The use of this particular poetic meter announces the importance, or exaggerates the irony of viewing coffee as an exalted being. The final aria likewise employs Alexandrines, but a more urgent sense of movement results from an additional rhyme scheme at the hemistich as well as at the end of each line. Bernier’s setting emphasizes this feature by setting the ending of the first hemistich as a feminine ending with a separate note for the mute “e.” Moreover, he interrupts the Alexandrine when he repeats the word “coule,” setting it with a feminine ending the first time and a masculine ending on the second as it elides into the next word (see Example 12). This deliberate emphasis and immediate repeat helps the word to stand

out clearly, yet also honors the dropping of the mute “e” necessary to create a true Alexandrine pattern.

Example 12. Feminine and Masculine musical settings in the third aria [mm. 5-6].

The repetition with variation reinforces the urgency of these commanding lines, heightening the pathos essential to the conclusion. Both the intricate details of the poetic structure and Bernier’s insightful setting of the cleverly designed text reflect the wit of both poet and composer.

The Influence of Mathematical Proportions

French Baroque music further reflects rhetorical function in both its formal structure and in its enhancement of the persuasive appeals of ethos and pathos, especially in relation to mathematical proportions or ratios. Greatly influenced by the writings of Descartes, an emphasis on scientific approach to study had taken a firm hold in France; by the end of the seventeenth century, the Age of Reason was in its prime and “a basic social premise that developed under Louis XIV was that man is civilized, and therefore


61 It is interesting to note that the French word for reason, “raison”, can be traced back to the Latin word “ratio.”
his feelings ought always to be controlled through the force of reason […] Love, jealousy, anger, and the other passions are treated with infinite art and delicacy.”

The scientific approach was applied to the study of music through the examination and purposeful application of rhythmic, melodic and harmonic elements. The ancient Greek discoveries of Pythagoras in the study of proportion in music can be seen in form, meter and harmonic progression. Application of geometrical ratios was incorporated in the proportionality of form. The tripartite division of the Italianate da Capo aria reflects the rhetorical beginning-middle-end plan and the use of the dal Segno type of repeat embraces the expected, abbreviated rhetorical summary. Simple proportions can also be found in the division of the measure into equal units, duple, triple or quadruple, or as a compound meter evenly combining the two. These metrical divisions have become so common that twenty-first century listeners may take them for granted. The continuo emerged partly from the desire for steady control of the meter along with the development of harmonic progressions that maintained order and regularity. Commonly occurring rhythmic variations—such as hemiolas and accelerated harmonic rhythm at a cadence—added to the passionate expression of the music. Also based on mathematical ratios, the concept of consonance in the octave, fifth and fourth ‘perfect’ intervals contrasting with the dissonance of ‘imperfect’ intervals became important in the passionate expression rooted in the diatonic scalar system and the resultant Baroque cadential formulas.

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63 The deliberate disruption of these simple, steady meters is an important element of twentieth and twenty-first century compositions seeking to explore “new” material.
Specific qualities of musical meter and rhythmic variation were thought to have precise influences on individual passions, a concept rooted in the ideals of Greek poetry and mathematics and expressed in the dance. Père Marin Mersenne (1588-1648), a highly trained French mathematician, music theorist and theologian/philosopher, in his 1636 musical theory treatise, Harmonie Universelle (Universal Harmony), describes physical effects of the movement of blood through the body spurred by the mind’s passions and that music must mimic these effects. For love and joy, music is gay and full of energy, but sadness should be depicted by slow, dreary tones. Within these parameters, the musical accents should vary to express the different degrees of emotion. The use of equal groupings of measures establishes regularity; unequal patterns, in contrast, can be perceived as more passionate, as a steady heartbeat is regular in its pattern, but can be disrupted by an emotional response to stimuli. Treatises from the late eighteenth century revealed a complexity beyond a general use of fast moving notes for joyous passages and slower tempi for sad sections that is still generally accepted by twenty-first century listeners without question. The more intricate patterns of dance music reveal both balanced proportions and emotional expression.

Rhetorical Connotations of Dance Music

According to Betty Bang Mather in Dance Rhythms of the French Baroque:

“Perhaps more than any other art form, French Baroque dance music as developed at the French court by Lully and his colleagues carefully balances firm control (reason) with strong releases of feeling (the passions).”

In a country where the reigning monarch was

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64 Marin Mersenne, Harmonie Universelle, Book 6, pp. 365-368.
65 Mather, 8.
an avid dancer known to have performed leading roles in the court ballet, knowledge of the patterns and steps of formal dances was widespread. The dance-like qualities of the arias in *Le Caffé* would have been exceptionally familiar to the audiences. Although phrase length and patterns were freed from the meticulous order of dance steps, the cantata maintains “the elegant character and close association with dance forms”\(^{66}\). Because of this connection between dance and declamation, instrumentalists of the seventeenth and eighteenth century were encouraged to make their instruments ‘speak’. Similarly, vocalists should be encouraged to make their vocal lines 'dance.' (For further details and the connection to *notes inégaless* see Rhythmic Alteration.) Lastly, the metrical pulse was important, not only for melodic lines, but in the accompanying harmonic structure. In his treatise Bernier explains: “One must know that in each measure of music there are both strong and weak beats. These serve not only in the ‘scansion’ of the melody and the cadences, that is to say to join faithfully words and musical meter, but also to prepare, to form and to make acceptable the imperfect harmonies, called dissonances.”\(^{67}\)

Bernier’s musical Invention exhibits pleasing proportions; the prelude, all three recitatives and the final aria are set in simple quadruple meter, the first aria in simple triple meter, and the second aria in compound duple meter, all maintaining clear proportions in the subdivisions of the beat. The melodic setting of the text, the regular rhythmic stress with variations and harmonic progressions are all consciously and deliberately linked with the expression of the text, not only in regards to word painting,

\(^{66}\) Tunley, 30.

but on a larger scale as well. Moreover, Bernier’s insightful choice of certain dance types for the arias serve a rhetorical function by enhancing the persuasive appeals of the orator by using the specific dance-quality of each aria to establish a particular ambiance (see Table 3).

Table 3. Overview of Meter and Dance in *Le Caffé*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Le Caffé Section</th>
<th>Prelude</th>
<th>First Recitative</th>
<th>First Aria</th>
<th>Second Recitative</th>
<th>Second Aria</th>
<th>Third Recitative</th>
<th>Third Aria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Signature</td>
<td>(\frac{4}{4})</td>
<td>(\frac{4}{4})</td>
<td>(\frac{3}{4})</td>
<td>(\frac{4}{4})</td>
<td>(\frac{6}{8})</td>
<td>(\frac{4}{4})</td>
<td>(\frac{4}{4})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter</td>
<td>Quadruple</td>
<td>Quadruple</td>
<td>Triple</td>
<td>Quadruple</td>
<td>Duple Compound</td>
<td>Quadruple</td>
<td>Quadruple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Allemande</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Minuet-like</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Corrente (Italian)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Gigue-like</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Prelude, set in a stately, quadruple meter with imitative and ornamented texture, is a grand *Allemande*, serious, without being heavy. Often the opening movement of a dance suite, the *Allemande*, sets a mood in the same manner a speaker’s posture and deportment reflects intent before the first words are uttered; a calm and confident *ethos* can thus be established. Slight exaggeration of the nobility, mirroring the formality used in presentation of partners before a dance begins, helps prepare the audience for the elevated ‘relationship’ between the singer and her beloved, Coffee, and presents the first intimation of irony in the piece. As expected in an *Allemande*, "the speed is generally moderate. Its melody is usually much decorated, with curving groups of short notes."68

This decorative melody of the *obligato* line is enhanced by the contrast with a walking

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bass line. Fugal counterpoint (mm. 4-5) results in a brief use of sixteenth-notes in the otherwise predominantly eighth-note bass line. Though not a French Overture as one might have expected, this steady, but decorated musical entrance can be a stately and elegant introduction, setting the mood of the piece depending upon the tempo of the performance—the slower the tempo, the more serious the mood and more pronounced the irony.

The prelude leads directly into the first recitative at which point the *obligato* line ceases and the *basso continuo* performs an accompanimental function without further imitation. The opening of the recitative uses the same melodic outline heard in the *obligato*, but proceeds on a different melodic path and, though measured, is not as forward moving or rhythmically structured as an aria or dance. The strong and weak beats fall as expected in common time, but the length of the unstressed syllables varies far more here than in the metrical arias and there are no notes longer than the quarter, enhancing the rapidly flowing, speech-like quality.

The triple meter of the first aria is in many ways similar to the pattern of the popular *Menuet* (Minuet), often in ternary form, eminently suitable for a three-part *dal Segno* aria. This is also an example of how the cantata poetry contained dance-like, metrical regularities; if one omits the mute e’s, an anapestic (⊄ ⊷/) poetic foot pattern emerges. Bernier’s astute use of rhythmic diversity on these weak beats enriches the nimble dance-like character (see Example 13). The complexity of the line is a reflection of Baroque dance movements that contained precise hand motions, leaps and turns along with intricate patterns, presented with decorum and restraint, often used to portray a
story. In *Le Caffé* the audience can hear and envision the amiable couple and the delight of the singer.

Example 13. Poetic rhythm in the first aria [mm. 26-31].

![Poetic rhythm example](image)

The sprightly duple compound of the second aria, with its strong groupings of three eighth-notes, shares more similarities with the Italian *Corrente* (running) dance with its incessant motion than it does to the statelier triple meter French *Courante* that often followed the *Allemande* in dance suites. Other distinguishing elements include hops and steps in an imitative texture. The Baroque audience would likely have known this dance was intended for two participants displaying a type of playful courtship. The parallels with dance movements in the second aria can be seen in its constantly running eighth-notes, imitative interplay between the vocal and *obligato* lines, and the *Caffé* motive with its “hop” of a fourth. In example 14, running notes in duet are indicated by rectangles, imitation by circles, and leaps by triangles. The couple’s increasing proximity is revealed in the increasingly close occurrence of the figures until they, the singer and Coffee, represented by the *obligato*, are ‘dancing’ together.

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71 This device was used to great effect in “La ci darem la mano,” the seduction duet from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*.
Example 14. Increasing proximity of figurations in the second aria [mm. 36-46].

The final aria, characterized by sixteenth-note figurations, displays elements found in the *Gigue*, a fast, contrapuntal dance, often in duple meter and binary form. This lively dance was often used as the final movement in suites and other instrumental compositions and thus serves well as a last statement. The weak-strong alternation of stresses in the first line of the poetry works well with this quick quadruple setting and the melismatic sections flow lightly and gently and with a sense of *douceur* (sweetness) so prized in the French style. At the same time, when the body is in a heightened state of awareness and pulse quickens, so the music reflects the emotional impact and excitement of the singer's gratifying interaction with coffee (and quite possibly the effects of caffeine as well).

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Musical Figures and Word Painting

Bernier’s music also portraits the pleasurable quality of coffee and assists in establishing the congenial ambiance of the piece. In the first recitative, the first hemistich of only two words, *Agreable Caffé* (Delightful Coffee), addresses several goals of the Introduction. The poet reverses the usual word order, creating a grammatical shift that draws the attention of the audience and immediately identifies coffee as the subject of the cantata. According to Ranum:

> In everyday speech, all but a handful of French adjectives follow the noun they modify. The few adjectives that preceded the noun involve intrinsic characteristics such as color or size. Placing a normally non-intrinsic adjective before a noun—thereby causing it to convey an intrinsic quality—is a powerful statement, and poets did not hesitate to use this device.\(^73\)

After the introductory instrumental prelude, Bernier’s setting deliciously lingers over those first two words by using a quarter note for the third syllable of “Agreable” and a *port-de-voix* (see Ornamentation) on the final accented syllable of “Caffé”, also on a quarter note (see Example 15). As mentioned previously, the “Ah!” further captures the attention of the audience and as the final hemistich, unexpectedly repeated at a higher pitch, fosters a sense of confidence and authority enhancing the speaker’s aspect, a critical component of the Introduction.

\(^{73}\) Ranum, 280n.
Bernier incorporates several types of word painting, using musical gestures to reflect the literal or figurative meaning of a word or phrase. A favorite tool of Baroque composers, word painting is one of the strongest rhetorical devices available to the composer and is one of the musical rhetorical figures most associated with Baroque compositions. Le Caffé is no exception. Beginning in the first aria, introducing the virtues of coffee, the first of coffee's attributes, increased enhancement of life, is reflected in Bernier's setting by means of textual repetition and fragmentation, lengthening of musical phrases and expansion of the vocal range. Though a copy of the original poetic manuscript is unavailable, it is most likely that it was the composer, not the poet, who chose to repeat portions of the opening lines of the text. Twelve-foot Alexandrine line lengths were normative in this period, but a repetition disrupts the expected line length as the second hemistich of the first line of the poem is repeated in its entirety (see Example 16).

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75 A popular example of Baroque word painting found in most Music Appreciation texts is Antonio Vivaldi’s use of violins to portray chirping birds in “Spring” from The Four Seasons.
Example 16. Textual repetition in first aria [mm. 28-32].

Perhaps more strikingly, in the phrase “augmente nos beau jours,” (increase our happy days), a single word “augmente” is repeated for emphasis (epizeuxis) (see Example 17a). This fragmentation of a single word was considered by many to be less than desirable in the French style. Greer Garden, in discussing the cantatas of André Campra (1660-1774), a composer contemporary with Bernier, notes that Campra was "typically French in his unwillingness to repeat phrases of text or to break up the poetic line when he did repeat words." This kind of avoidance was a reaction to the Italian cantata tradition in which the French viewed textual repetition as an unnecessary extravagance that often obscured the meaning of the words. In the hands of Bernier, however, the repetition does not diminish the clarity of the French text, but rather it emphasizes and musically depicts the meaning of the poetry. Melodic, harmonic and rhythmic elements serve to bring even more attention to this single word, “augmente.” The singer's rising sequential line, harmonized in parallel tenths, rises until reaching E5 that resolves to D5, the structural climax, expanding the range of the singer's line (see Example 17b). This resolution on the

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repeated word doubles the length of the middle and becomes another suspension in a 7-6 chain leading (see Example 17c) to a perfect authentic cadence in A major.

Example 17. Special treatment of “augmente” in first aria [mm. 33-39].

Just before the first line of the couplet is repeated, the use of a hemiola at the cadence point further adds to the impression of stretch as part of a cadential extension that adds one measure of music just before the singer’s entrance (see Example 18).

Example 18. Lengthening by hemiola in first aria [mm. 46-47].

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For a final crowning touch on the final statement of the A section, Bernier increases the range again with the singer reaching the highest notes of the piece (F♯5 and G♯5). The piece ends an octave higher than it began: Bernier thus achieves a two-fold exaltation (*encomium*) by a rising sequence into the word, “*augment*,” as well as ascending from the fourth to fifth octaves over the course of the A section, thus supporting the Invention/Arrangement strategy for introducing an *epideictic* oratory.

In the B section, the second couplet extolls coffee’s ability not only to conquer sleep, but also to repay the time robbed by sleep. The ritornello is only half as long as the opening ritornello and the melody transposed upward to the closely related tonality of C-sharp minor. Because the melody is unaltered, with the exception of the transposition, the word “*sommeil*” (sleep) coincides with a leap to the highest pitch of the phrase (G♯5). The succession of P4 and P5 intervals stands out in contrast to the usually narrow intervallic melody (see Example 19a). The second phrase, “*tu nous rends les moments qu’il dérobe à la vie*,” (You give us back the moments sleep robs from life) is repeated in its entirety, portrayed by a disjunct vocal line (see Example 19b) and a rhythmically active dotted-eighth, sixteenth pattern that remains far from restful (see Example 19c). This use of this direct opposite helps to amplify the text. Moreover, it may also have a similarly rousing effect on the listener, making a stronger argument for caffeine’s energizing effects.
Example 19. Wakefulness portrayed in the first aria [mm. 83-96].

The musical setting of the second recitative also contains multi-layered word painting (see Example 20). First, as it refers to “L’Astre” (stars), the vocal line ascends toward the heavens, rising from A4 to F#5 over a tonic D in the bass with an agrément on “clarté” that sparkles like a star in the sky. The line descends from the heavens down to earth. Second, “feux rivaux” (fire rivals), is harmonized with an A# pedal, a dissonant rival of the diatonic A natural. Third, the A# functions as a leading tone to B minor, followed by a shift to B Major that begins a short cycle of fifths through E to A depicting the “vaste carrière” (vast career). The aria continues the cycle, ultimately returning to D major.

Example 20. Melodic and harmonic word-painting in the second recitative.\textsuperscript{80}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example20.png}
\caption{Example 20. Melodic and harmonic word-painting in the second recitative.}
\end{figure}

In the ensuing second aria, a long melismatic vocal line breaks the syllabic pattern and brings attention to the words \textit{éveille} (awaken) and \textit{gloire} (glory). In the militaristic D Major, these terms have associations with instrumental forces, reminiscent of a reveille used to awaken the troops and send them to battle: the notes are not limited to the bugle’s major triad, but the term “\textit{reveille}” pertains to any “wake up” call. The B section’s “\textit{gloire}” would then signal triumphant celebration of a victorious return. The \textit{obligato} plays first and the singer then joins imitatively in a duet of parallel thirds (see Example 21). Lastly, the A section of the second aria concludes with “\textit{et tu le rends à la raison}” (and you return to him his reason) at which point the melody descends the scale from

\textsuperscript{80} Bernier, “Le Caffè,” Green Man Press.
dominant to tonic, imitating the text by returning to the ‘reasonable’ (mentally stable) tonic.

Example 21. Reveille Fanfare in the third aria [mm. 41-52].

Another technique Bernier uses to enhance the text is inspired in part by the motivic development of the Italians: a Caffé motive returns throughout the aria. Consisting of two notes that descend by fifth from the dominant to the tonic, followed by a rest, the motive is first introduced by the obligato instrument (see Example 22a), made more clearly distinguishable in the absence of the continuo which imitates the motive in m. 2. It becomes associated with the word “Caffé” at the singer’s entrance in m.29. Here the motive is altered to become a leap of a fourth from tonic to dominant because it fits the harmony (see Example 22b). In mm. 66-67, as the initial line of the first couplet returns, the motive is inverted to an upward leap from dominant to tonic (see Example 22c).

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22c), imitating the ascending contour of calling to the waiter for a second cup (*imitatio*), “Garçon!” Now the listener may be in the position to recall an earlier gesture from the first aria that seemed to foreshadow this motive where the word “liqueur” was also placed on a downward leap of a fifth (see Example 20d), memorable as the largest interval in the vocal line of the aria.

Example 22. *Caffé* motive in the second aria [mm. 1-3, 29-30, 66-67] and first aria [mm. 27-28].

The *Caffé* motive reappears in the third aria, inverted again, but rising a fifth rather than a fourth, from tonic to dominant indicative of the higher level of *pathos* in the conclusion. The motive first appears as the opening notes of the *continuo’s* fugal entrance, again at

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the entrance of the vocal line as the text once again refers to the subject, “O toy” in m. 4 and lastly imitated by the obligato in m. 7 (see Example 23).

Example 23. Inverted Caffé motive reappearance in third aria [mm. 1, 4, 7].


The text of the second aria continues with [Caffé,] “du jus de la bouteille tu combat le fatal poison” (of the drink in the bottle you combat the fatal poison,) setting up two opposing forces: coffee and wine. Musically, this rhetorical Antithesis appears in the melodic shape of the vocal line. Baroque Scholar Patricia Ranum describes the usual quality of French speech, when it is not highly emotional, as tending towards a gently undulating, conjunct line with a narrow pitch range. Any variations to the line, therefore, stand out and serve to amplify the intentions of the text, such as a line that is directly up
or down, interrupted with sudden stops or disjunct leaps, or containing extreme high/low pitches or static lines. Ranum goes on to discuss two standard musical melodic shapes found in the works of Lully, labelling them Opposition and Assertion. Melodic lines of Opposition are described as having an abrupt mid-sentence shift in which one half of the line is higher and more emphatic than the other. The higher half exhibits the ‘winning’ quality and it presented more emphatically than the weaker, opposing elements. In mm. 29-34, the word, “Caffé” is followed by a line that ascends to E5 and then abruptly leaps down a fifth, then continues its descent with “poison” (poison) set to the pitch F4 which Ranum would describe as demonstrating the weakness of the poison in relation to coffee (see Example 24).

Example 24. Line of Opposition: Caffé vs. poison in the second aria [mm. 29-34].

For the third recitative, Bernier uses a brief seven measures to reflect the text. Melodically, as in speech, the vocal line ascends in pitch at the end of the question [m. 4], but rather than descending, the line continues to rise like the vapor off of a steaming cup of coffee [m. 4], gently descending an octave on the final Alexandrine line, gliding

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through the two hemistiches, like a long sigh of contentment [mm. 5-7] (see Example 25).

Example 25. Expressive melodic contour in the third recitative.\textsuperscript{85}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example25.png}
\caption{Expressive melodic contour in the third recitative.}
\end{figure}

Word painting occurs throughout the third aria as well. First, the word “\textit{coule}”\textsuperscript{86} (flow or run) is set on melismatic runs with primarily conjunct motion, creating a flowing line. The word is also repeated once, an \textit{epizeuxis} redolent of “\textit{augmente}” in the first aria (see Example 26).

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example26.png}
\caption{Expressive melodic contour in the third recitative.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{85} Bernier, “\textit{Le Caffé},” Green Man Press.

\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Coule} is also a term for one of the \textit{agréments} (embellishments) to be discussed later (see Ornamentation).
Example 26: Word Painting of *coule* and *regne* in the third aria [mm. 14-17, 20-21].

Second, although “Regne” (reign) is set similarly as “coule” at the beginning, it is later set to a rather static dotted rhythm, traditionally associated with French royalty in mm. 20-21 (see Example 26) and again in mm. 39-40. The sudden appearance of this “royal figure” in the vocal line is uncharacteristically absent from the instrumental lines. It stands out powerfully in contrast to the surrounding flowing lines announcing the supremacy of the monarch: Coffee. Moreover, in a most unusual and surprising design, Bernier borrows these two commands, “regne” and “coule,” from the A section and inserts them in the B section with similar, but slightly altered pitches, heightening the excitement and pathos of the Conclusion (see Example 27).

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Example 27. “Regne, coule” interpolated into B section of the third aria [mm. 57-59].

Third, the vocalist begins B section immediately following the final cadence of the A section without the expected ritornello. This sudden beginning depicts the unceasing movement described by the text: “Fais sans cesse la guerre” (make war without ceasing). In addition, rather than transposing the music of the A section, Bernier uses instead the 5–1–3 melodic figure from the prelude, a rhetorical device expected in the conclusion: bringing back ideas stated previously (see Example 28).

Example 28. above Continuous A to B section, melodic figure in the third aria [m. 46]. below Transposed melodic figure borrowed from the prelude [m. 1].

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89 Ibid.
Lastly, the musical setting of “Le doux calme des Cieux” (the sweet calm of the heavens) in the vocal line reflects both the calm and the height referenced in the text, especially when set against the busy *obligato* line. This phrase is set on repeated, lengthy high notes in mm. 54-56 (see Example 29a), and again in mm. 69-71. In the second of these statements, the G♯5 is the highest note of the aria (see Example 29b). With a final conclusive gesture, with a brief transition, the A section repeats, jumping immediately to the entrance in *dal Segno* form, the type of *da Capo* aria used throughout the cantata.

Example 29. Word painting of “Le doux calme des Cieux” in the third aria [mm. 54-56, 69-71].

The use of desirable proportions, metrical setting of the texts, character of the dances, and the specific stylistic traits discussed above serve as blueprints for the performers. The next section, Delivery, will delve into the performance aspects of the piece and the interpretation of the stylistic elements provided by both poet and composer.

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Delivery

If, for the eighteenth century, music’s identity lay in the flexible arena of performance, rather than in the abstract domain of an intellectual concept represented on paper, then we might consider that a work concept for an eighteenth-century musician would have made sense only in relation to the possibility of the concept being realized in the action of performance, rather than embodied in a notated score regarded as the ‘last word’.  

Delivery of the cantata lies in its performance; it is how the performers use the information provided by the score to create a work of art that seeks to move the thoughts and emotions of the audience toward a specific goal. The previous sections were a discussion of what rhetorical elements are present in the work; the following will suggest how these elements might be presented, the most important task of the performer. The various rhetorical elements were selected by the poet, not only for their logic, but more importantly “with the aim of moving (movere), delighting (delectare) and instructing (docere).” The melodic, rhythmic and harmonic attributes of the musical setting ideally move the emotions of the audience. In order to present a musical work effectively, the performers must make informed decisions regarding at least five domains: intention, performing forces, language, expression and improvisatory elements. In each case, determining the performance focus that maximizes the rhetorical elements provided in the composition can be achieved by answering some fundamental questions.

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93 Note the etymological root, “moto,” shared between “motion” and “emotion.”
What ambiance is suggested by the poetry and music and should that be the intent of the performance?

As discussed previously, cantatas provided light entertainment, most often in Parisian salons. The mood of the poetry could be either serious or comedic. The way each singer views the level of seriousness in approaching this text will have a significant impact on performance. In *Le Caffé*, the excessive aggrandizement of coffee’s virtues makes viewing the cantata as an entirely serious piece and a somewhat comedic approach seems more appropriate. A careful balance must be struck: too comedic and the wit is obscured, too serious and the mirth is absent. The point of this piece could be to make fun of those who are obsessed with coffee, to confirm the attributes for those who have enjoyed it, or encourage non-believers to try it. The better-known *Kaffee Kantate* (*Coffee Cantata*) (©1734) by J. S. Bach (1685-1750), is satirical and broadly comedic, viewing the daughter’s obsession with parental disapproval. A similar point-of-view for Bernier’s coffee cantata could be reflected in faster tempos and exaggerated expression, especially in places where hyperbole is evident in the text. This was appropriate and expected in the popular *airs de boire*, however, this seems to go against the French salon ideal of *bon goût*. According to David Tunley, *Le Caffé* has “a vein of humour” but lacks “an essential ingredient of the comic cantata, that is, the burlesque.”

Alternatively, Bernier’s cantata might be best described as “tongue in cheek,” a figure of speech which Merriam-Webster defines as “with insincerity, irony, or whimsical exaggeration.” Within this definition, there is a range of choice for interpretation. Bernier’s setting of the poem seems to hint at

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94 Tunley, 162-3

the slight absurdity of a relationship between singer and his or her beloved, coffee. The music seems to enhance the poetry subtly rather than contradict it or make a mockery of its sentiments, thus making irony or “whimsical exaggeration” a more suitable choice. Overplaying the humor could be detrimental to the refined and reserved character of the music and may be considered impolite—most certainly a faux pas. A slightly humorous rendition could be advantageous in connecting with a potentially coffee-addicted audience. Obviously, consideration of the expectations of the intended audience will have a significant impact on the selected approach. Once determined, the ensemble will be most effective when all share the same intention. As the choice of intent affects the entire delivery, this discussion will concentrate on a subtly humorous, yet dignified approach in keeping with the style suggested by the foregoing examination of the cantata.

Who will be performing?

The score calls for soprano, flute or violin, and basso continuo as performing forces. The requirements for the singer are clarity of tone with ability to control vibrato, some agility for running passages, and a range of C♯4 to G♯5 (sustained). The actual frequency of the pitch is dependent upon the tuning of the instruments. The current tuning pitch of $a' = 440$ Hz was not in place at the time of composition. Many original or replica instruments are tuned down a semitone to $a' = 415$ Hz, but evidence reveals French standard pitch ($Ton de chapelle$) was closer to $a' = 375$ Hz. For the continuo, a harpsichord would be difficult to find tuned to the French standard, but use of a theorbo instead could make tuning down more feasible if the lower pitch were desired for the.

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vocalist or for the effect. The lightness of the piece and style of embellishment decries the use of a modern piano although practical circumstances may make this necessary. The range for the bass line of the continuo is B1 to E4 a viola da gamba would be preferable and truer to the period. Though a modern cello could be used, it may overpower other earlier instruments and octave displacement would be needed for the B1. The range for the obligato part is C#4 to C#6, suitable for violin or flute as suggested. Though a recorder may have the range for this piece, fingering and register shifts are awkward. Ideally, a historically informed performance (HIP) would be most appropriate with a lowered tuning and the unique timbre of period instruments in a suitably intimate and resonant performance space.

Should the French text be pronounced as it was when written or modernized?

Most singers would find it practical to use modernized pronunciation since it is most commonly used in performance of opera and mélodie. Nonetheless, if attempting to recreate the music more closely to its original state, the modern pronunciation would be inadequate. Learning the older pronunciation may also reveal elements of the poetic sound that would otherwise remain hidden and could be a fascinating endeavor.97

Which expressive musical properties will most enhance the rhetorical goals of the text?

Tempo, rhythmic alteration, dynamic changes, and ornamentation are all critical components in the expression of the music in order to move the audience toward the desired emotional state, such as Love, Hate, Joy, Despair, Curiosity, etc.

Tempo

The level of seriousness can have a significant impact on the choice of tempo. For example, some performers have chosen a quick tempo for the prelude, suitable for an informal, entertaining and light-hearted or comical approach to the subject.98 Other recordings are played at a slow, stately tempo begetting a more serious aura.99 The tempo indication *Gravement* can be misleading. This French adverbial form of the Italian *Grave* is often translated as “heavy” or “serious,” but theorists vary in opinion as to whether *grave* is as slow as or slower than *adagio* and *largo*.100 The grander, slower tempo seems more appropriate as a formal rhetorical device and communicates a wittier and more sophisticated discourse is to come. Moreover, if the recitative is to be a continuation of the prelude, the mood should continue in the same vein, but, as in the case of all three recitatives, the dance-like patterns of the prelude should give way to the patterns of speech in the recitative.

Rhythmic Alteration

One of the most important, and perhaps most confusing elements of Delivery in French Baroque music is known as *notes inégales* (unequal notes) in which paired or grouped notes of the same length are not meant to be performed evenly. This technique can be applied to a short phrase or run, for instance, on the regal statement of *regne* in the third aria, m. 20 (see Example 26 above) by lengthening the dotted eighth as if it had two

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100 Fallows, “*Grave*”
dots and making the following a thirty-second note, a technique known as double-dotting or over-dotting. Use of *notes inégales* can also be applied to an entire movement; applied in the third aria, this would affect the running sixteenth-notes throughout with the first of each pair being slightly lengthened, similar to ‘swinging’ the time in jazz. The use of *notes inégales* can also be applied more subtly. According to David Fuller, a musicologist specializing in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French music and Baroque performing practices:

The degree of inequality (i.e. the ratio between the lengths of the long and short notes of each pair) could vary from the barely perceptible to the equivalent of double dotting, according to the character of the piece and the taste of the performer. Inequality was considered one of the chief resources of expression, and it varied according to expressive needs within the same piece or even within the same passage; where it was felt to be inappropriate it could be abandoned altogether unless explicitly demanded.101

In his 1668 treatise, Bacilly provides insight on this convention: “Musical notation is ambiguous in this respect. There is no way of indicating whether a note is to be stressed or unstressed. We must depend upon the singer’s ability to interpret these subtleties properly until such time as a superior system of notation is invented.” He explains that whenever a singer encounters two notes of equal length, one of the two must be lengthened as if dotted. He further clarifies that musical passages written out in dotted rhythms, on the other hand, are often over-dotted and performed in an unacceptably choppy style. Thus the lengthening must not be overdone, but remain subtle and

delicate. This flexibility goes hand-in-hand with the goal of monody in following the natural declamation of the text and serves the rhetorical aim of declamatory distinction and variety.

This flexibility of stress is influential in the metrical sections as well as the recitatives and provides a challenge in poetic scansion as there are more levels of stress than simply weak and strong. The singer can often find these rhythmic nuances and expressive qualities of speech most effectively and intuitively by speaking the text as a theatrical monologue, even if French is the singer’s native tongue, but especially if it is not.

The poem should then be read aloud, spoken with all the interpretation that an actor would give to it. Is a singer not also an actor in the best sense of the word? Otherwise how would he be able to express the meaning of a literary text? How can he hope to sing a poem well if he is incapable of speaking it well? Through speaking the poem aloud one very often discovers the deeper meaning, the atmosphere, the vocal colour, the inflexions and expressive accents, thereby giving life to the interpretation which must then, of course, accord with the composer’s conception.

The monologue concept applies to the instrumentalists as well. John Irving, in his article on eighteenth century performance practice quotes Arcangelo Corelli’s famous question regarding the violin: “Non l’intendite parlare? (Do you not hear it speak?)” This is especially important for the obligato player who often has the same melody as the

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102 Bacilly, 118-119.
103 Timothy Cheek, lyric diction coach at University of Michigan, was so particular about French diction, that he would not allow song coaching to begin until the French text could be spoken fluently with the line flowing smoothly towards the stressed syllables, even if it meant weeks of work without a note of music. As mentioned previously, the stresses of the French language are significantly different from the other standard singing languages, English, Italian and German.
105 Irving, 433.
vocalist. An opening *ritornello* should have the same sense of ‘speaking’ even though no words are used until later. It is extremely important for the ensemble to know the spoken text flow and meaning if they are to convey a unified impression to the audience. In this sense, the instrumentalists borrow the flow of speech when playing *notes inégales*. With a thorough understanding of the text and the passions being expressed, the performer is in a better position to choose appropriate dynamic shadings and embellishments to heighten the text.

**Dynamics**

As if he were an orator, the singer must enunciate every word clearly, underlining its meaning with careful dynamic shadings that range between the softest echoes and the loudest outcries of pain and despair. Moreover, the singer’s whole bearing, his physical presence, must dramatically articulate the passions implicit in the composition.  

An extremely vital and misunderstood quality of Baroque performance practice involves the expressive use of dynamics, an indispensable tool to be employed in each singer’s rhetorically-inspired interpretation and delivery. Unfortunately, most twenty-first century performers are at a disadvantage as the art of oration and impassioned speech is not taught as comprehensively as it was when Bernier was composing his cantatas. Further challenging the dynamic interpretation, Baroque era composers provided few, if any dynamic markings, occasionally indicating *piano* or *forte*, assuming the singers and instrumentalists were knowledgeable and skilled enough to not need specific dynamic instructions. The lack of markings in scores and the limited dynamic capabilities of the

harpsichord have contributed to confusion and a frequent misconception concerning the use of “terraced” dynamics. For instance, in *Wikibooks*, under “Western Music History/Baroque Music,” the following misleading generalization is made:

> Baroque music uses terraced dynamics. This means that the volume stays the same for a period of time, then there is a sudden shift to a different dynamic level. There are no gradual changes in dynamics (such as a crescendo or decrescendo). Terraced dynamics were used as the main keyboard instrument was the harpsichord, which could only be played in two modes, either loud (forte) or soft (piano), precluding the ability to accomplish crescendos or decrescendos.¹⁰⁷

Similarly, the organ, the other primary keyboard of the Baroque period, could only change volume based on the number and type of stops engaged. Due to the mechanical nature of these instruments, dynamic transitions were naturally abrupt and led to a common misconception that all music of the period was ruled by this limitation. On the contrary, evidence reflects a widespread use of dynamic shadings and gradual changes often directly associated with the expression of *pathos*. The importance of dynamic variation in rhetorical oration was directly applicable to performance practice. Theorist Michael Praetorius (?1571-1621), instructing Choirboys in the increasingly popular Italian singing style, affirms:

> The orator’s job is not just to decorate his speech with beautiful, pleasing, and lively words and marvelous figures, but also to articulate clearly and to move the emotions by speaking now with a rising voice, now a falling one, now more loudly, now more softly, now with the fullness of voice.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Western Music History/Baroque Music
https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Western_Music_History/Baroque_Music. Page was last modified on 11 May 2016, at 14:18 (accessed July 7, 2016). This source is included, not because of its scholarly merit, but because it is the type of source many students are likely to consult. Instructors should be aware of this and may need to address this topic with their students.

Instrumentalists searched for ways to emulate the dynamic expressive qualities of the human singing voice, especially regarding *exclamatio*, “the actual means whereby the affections are moved through the swelling of the voice.”\(^{109}\) To this end, English organ builder, Renatus Harris (1652-1724), suggested an alteration to the pipe organ to include what later became known as a “swell box.” Several pipes would be placed in a box with moveable flaps—somewhat like venetian blinds—that could be opened and closed, changing the level of sound released in the venue. With his proposed change, the organ was “made capable of emitting Sounds to express Passion, by Swelling any Note, as if inspired by Human Breath.”\(^{110}\) Likewise, François Couperin (1668-1733), in his 1716 treatise, *L’art de toucher le clavecin* (The Art of Playing the Harpsichord) gave suggestions for the expectation and application of dynamic effects related to the expression of feeling:

As the sounds of the Harpsichord are determined, each one specifically, and consequently incapable of increase or diminution, it has hitherto appeared almost impossible to maintain that one could give any ‘soul’ to this instrument...The feeling or ‘soul’, the expressive effect, which I mean, is due to the (cessation) and (suspension) of the notes, made at the right moment, and in accordance with the character required by the melodies of the Preludes and Pieces. These two agrémens [*agréments*], by their contrast, leave the ear in suspense, so that in such cases where stringed instruments would increase their volume of sound, the suspension (slight retardation) of the sounds on the Harpsichord seems (by a contrary effect) to produce on the ear the result expected and desired.\(^{111}\)

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\(^{109}\) Ibid., 215.


Some of the first markings denoting gradual dynamic changes can be found in French music of the Baroque era. In 1711, Marin Marais\(^{112}\) (1656-1728), celebrated gambist, and French composer—trained by Lully—occasionally inserted an “e” in his manuscripts to indicate “enflé le coup d’archet” (swell the bowstroke), a new symbol to signify a crescendo.\(^{113}\) As musical notation began to evolve, rather than a single “e”, the blackened wedge-shaped symbol (──), a forerunner of the modern crescendo sign, was used by Michel P. Montéclair in his 1736 treatise, *Principes de musique* (Principles of Music), to represent *son enflé* (crescendo) and in the reverse direction for *son diminué* (diminuendo) ornamentation. Montéclair.\(^{114}\)

Further adding to the question of how dramatic and far ranging dynamics should be employed, the French sense of *douceur* was often at odds with the highly impassioned Italian style. There were those who thought it prudent to rein in the passions and remain politely aloof. Yet, those who were guided by rhetorical principals sought to heighten the emotional energies of the performance and tried to follow the passions expressed with more flexibility of dynamic change. There is evidence that some French audiences preferred louder music, in some cases to the point of distortion of tone; following the classical ideology that the strongest expression of feeling was logically the best, some


\(^{113}\) Neumann, 165.

performers used excessive force in playing or singing, leading to criticism for the French overzealous application of rhetorical ideals.\textsuperscript{115}

As there are no dynamic markings in \textit{Le Caffé}, which is not unusual for pieces in this period, for twenty-first century performers used to scores with plentiful expression marks, the lack of instruction in Bernier’s score and misconceptions of how dynamic levels were used in the late-seventeenth, early-eighteenth century music may be a source of frustration. However, \textit{Le Caffé} and similar French Baroque cantatas provide a worthwhile opportunity for the experienced performer, aided by an understanding of rhetorical principles and historical practices, to explore instances in which dynamic variance, whether by section, phrase or note, adds to the expression of the text and the ‘moving’ of the audience. The wit of the performer is thus challenged by the variety of dynamics choices available and their effectiveness.

\textbf{Ornamentation}

One of the most charming elements of French Baroque music is the improvisatory quality of \textit{agrément}s (ornaments or embellishments) that contribute to the elegance and diversity of each performance. Singers and instrumentalists were expected to have a variety of \textit{agrément}s in their musical performance vocabulary and to be able to apply them during performance in their rhetorical function of increasing the persuasiveness of the text, the essential purpose of all French \textit{agrément}s.\textsuperscript{116} One of the primary difficulties


\textsuperscript{116} It is not within the scope of this document to go into great depth or try and teach fluency in technique. For vocalists, a good source for French Baroque ornamentation information is found in the treatise, \textit{Principes de musique, Divisez en quatre parties} (Principles of music, Divided in four parts), by
for twenty-first century performers is determining which agrément should be chosen in a particular instance. In an attempt to quantify and explain the execution of the principal agréments (ornaments or embellishments) in vocal music, Montéclair lists eighteen principal ornaments in vocal music: the coulé, port de voix, chûte, accent, tremblement, pincé, flatté, balancement, tour de gosier, passage, diminution, coulade, trait, son filé, son enflé, son diminué, son glissé, and sanglot and points out a general lack of agreement on the symbols and names applied to French agréments.117 Complicating matters further, French scores commonly use the same symbol for these numerous vocal agréments, or expected ornamentation where notation was entirely absent. The particular agrément chosen could depend upon the embellished note’s length, the relationship of pitches directly before or after, placement in cadential pattern, etc. Agréments in Le Caffé are either notated with notes perdues (“lost” notes indicated by smaller sized note), a plus symbol (+), or a mordent (••), or not notated, but expected or allowed. This section will describe some of these agréments and how they might be approached in Le Caffé to artfully enhance delivery.

As explained by François David in his 1737 treatise on the art of singing, “the port-de-voix was one of the most essential of the melody’s appurtenances; it adorns it in

 Michel Pignolet de Montéclair (1667-1737). An English translation of pages 77-90 of the treatise, covering the principles of vocal ornamentation, have been published as an Appendix in Cantatas for One and Two Voices (volumes 29 and 30), Edited by James R. Anthony and Diran Akmijan, published by A-R Editions as part of the Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era. For keyboardists, one explanation of the ornaments and the signs used for each can be found in François Couperin (1668-1733)’s Pièces de clavcin, Book 1 (Paris, 1713), of which several English translations are available.

117 Montéclair et al., xiii.
so graceful a manner, that it serves to express all that the soul can feel.\textsuperscript{118} The \textit{port de voix} functions as an upward appoggiatura. The first recitative contains a notated \textit{port de voix} on the word “Caffé” (see Example 30a) and an expect, but non-notated, cadential \textit{port de voix} on the leading-tone “Bachus” (see Example 30b). In both instances, the ‘lost’ or added note takes its time from the note of resolution (see Example 30c) and strengthens the downbeat and corresponding syllable in the text. Doubling of the consonant on each \textit{port de voix} further emphasizes its effect. The use of a \textit{port de voix} in the examples shown enhances the stately atmosphere and the revelation of \textit{epideictic} oratory, first establishing the adoration (\textit{encomium}) of the beloved, Caffé, and subsequently the denunciation (\textit{vituperation}) of Bachus and his realm. Because of these opposing emotional elements, by singing the first \textit{port de voix} in a gently lingering manner and the final one stronger and more deliberately, the delivery would display a wittier expression of the sentiments.

Example 30: \textit{Port de voix} in the first recitative [mm. 1-2 and 9-10].\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{118} Jean-Claude Veilhan,. The Rules of Musical Interpretation in the Baroque Era (17\textsuperscript{th}-18\textsuperscript{th} centuries), common to all instruments. (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1979), 38.

\textsuperscript{119} (above) Bernier, \textit{Le Caffé}, Editions Fuzeau.
The *chûte* (chute), according to Montéclair, is “an important embellishment used in melodies of pathos.”\(^{120}\) The sigh-like quality of this downward *appoggiatura*, a can indicate sorrow or yearning. In the B section of the first aria for instance, during “*tu nous renс les momens*” (you give back the moments), a *note perdue* on “*rens*” indicates a *chûte* expressing desire for the return of time lost to sleep (see Example 31) and should be sung with a sense of poignant longing.

Example 31: *Chûte* in the second aria [mm. 108-109].\(^{121}\)

![Example 31](image)

The *pincé* (pinch, mordent) is a very rapid movement, akin to a mordent, moving up or down to neighbor tone and returning to the original pitch, bringing special attention to a word or syllable. The word “*augmente*” in the first aria, previously discussed in regards to word-painting, is further ‘augmented’ by use of a written out *pincé* on the final syllable (see Example 32). The *pincé* is particularly versatile as it can be rhythmically placed on or off the beat (see Example 33) and can often be used in combination with other *agrément*.

\(^{120}\) Montéclair et al., xiv

\(^{121}\) (a) Bernier, *Le Caffé*, Editions Fuzeau.
Example 32. *Pincé* in the first aria [mm. 65-68].

Example 33. Varying stress options for the *Pincé*

- **a.** *Port de voix* on the downbeat with *pincé* added

- **b.** *Pincé* on the beat

- **c.** *Resolution of pincé* on the beat

Borrowing from the Italians, the concept of *diminution*, or breaking a note into smaller, more rapidly moving notes, was being increasingly incorporated into French music, but subject to French *bon goût*; the use of these faster notes was to remain subservient to the text. One type of *diminution*, the *coulade* (run), consisting of two or more rapid notes which ascend or descend in conjunct motion, can also be notated or non-notated. Bernier’s cleverness in word painting is demonstrated again with this *agrément* serving as a musical pun on the word “*coule*” in the third aria (see Example 34). The singer may also choose to add an additional, non-notated *coulade* between the final two eighth-notes. A *legato* connection in the notes can be used to emulate the effect of coffee smoothly pouring into a cup.

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Example 34. *Coulade* notated and optionally improvised in the third aria [mm. 65-68].

The *messa di voce* (placing or putting forth the voice), is a combination of a *son enflé* (crescendo) followed by a *son diminué* (diminuendo) on a single sustained pitch. This particularly challenging vocal technique was considered both a display of virtuosity and one of the most effective tools of expression. This special dynamic *agrément* is not found notated in Bernier’s score, but the *messa di voce* can be extremely effective when added to long notes to add to the fervor of a highly descriptive word such as *ravie* (ravished) (see Example 35).

Example 35. Suggested application of *messa di voce* in the first aria [m. 32].

A variety of non-notated embellishments were made with oscillations of the voice. The *flâté* or *flattement* (“flotte” or flutter/oscillation) was a vibrato of variable speed. This wavering tone mimics the unsteadiness of pitch heard in the voice of a highly passionate oration and is especially important in the rhetorical sections requiring *pathos*.

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The *tremblement* (trill) was the oscillation between two neighbor tones and has a variety of applications. Table 4 provides a brief overview of Montéclair’s classification of several different types of *tremblements*.

Table 4. Chart of Montéclair’s *Tremblements*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>appuyé</em></td>
<td>prepared</td>
<td>prepared by sustaining the voice upon the note immediately above the note to be trilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>subit</em></td>
<td>short</td>
<td>begun at once without preparation used more often in recitatives than in airs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>feint</em></td>
<td>incomplete</td>
<td>prepared as for a complete <em>tremblement</em> but lasting only a short beat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>doublé</em></td>
<td>with prefix</td>
<td>three conjunct scale degrees descending before the trill often found in tender airs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(double cadence)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>chevroté</em></td>
<td>quavering</td>
<td>blurred, overly rapid, like a bleating goat “unbearable” – should be avoided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a quavering trill, *chevroté*, (goat trill) that Montéclair considered unsuitable due to its similarity to the bleating of a goat. Another type of trill consisting of rapidly repeated single notes was also possibly employed, but is more often associated with earlier Baroque style and not included in Montéclair’s discussion; used sparingly, the repeated-note trill is an option that might be considered for adding to the *pathos* and interest of the cantata. Specific trills are not indicated, but they would be expected at cadences and are an option where the “+” occurs to add expressiveness of varying impact.

The *sanglot* (sob) is a forceful *agrément* which is inserted prior to a note. Montéclair describes the *sanglot* as a “spontaneous expression of emotion (*enthousiasme*) … employed for the most acute suffering, for the greatest sadness, for

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124 Montéclair et al., xiv-xv.
laments, for tender melodies, for anger, for contentment, and even for joy. It is almost always used on the first syllable of the word ‘helas!’ and on the exclamations ‘ah! eh! Ô!’

Thereupon, adding a *sanglot* to the previously discussed “Ah!” in the first recitative should certainly be considered for increased dramatic intensity.

Other than the *notes perdues*, the only notations in the score are frequent + signs and occasional mordents that indicate the placement of an embellishment, but leave it up to the performer to decide the particular types and manners of execution of each variation for the greatest effect. *Agréments* should serve the rhetorical purpose of enhancing the text and can be infused the Delivery with increased expressiveness, elegance and variety, and illuminate the wit of poet, composer and performer.

**Memory**

One may think of *memory* primarily as the memorization of the notes and words to be sung. Though this is normally the task of the orator or singer alone, the communicatory nature of rhetoric “invites consideration of how the audience will retain things in mind. To this end, certain figures of speech are available to help the memory.

Along with Delivery, Memory has often been excluded from rhetorical discussion. However, it was a vital component in the training of orators in antiquity.”

Most certainly, setting the words to music is a powerful memory aid. This well-known connection of music and memory is the subject of burgeoning scientific research:

> Music is ubiquitous and seems to be associated with a distinct brain architecture. In recent years there has been a significant increase in studies

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125 Montéclair et al., xvii.

126 Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*.
Music is often used as a mnemonic device. Commercial jingles that are associated with a particular product are intended to make listeners remember the product more easily. In 1974, McDonalds created a slogan to promote their Big Mac. After more than forty years, many still remember the words and tune of this catchy advertisement: “Two all-beef patties special sauce lettuce cheese pickles onions on a sesame seed bun.” A 1975 McDonald’s commercial depicts a variety of people having trouble remembering all the items on the Big Mac, but after learning the jingle, they can quickly recite the list error free. Often, audiences will go out from a performance humming or singing something they have just heard; if it is memorable enough it may even become an earworm.

In a Wall Street Journal article trying to answer the question “Why Does Music Aid in Memorization?” Henry L. Roediger III, professor of psychology at the Memory Lab at Washington University in St. Louis, states “Music is a powerful mnemonic device, but the song’s structure is what allows a person to recall the information it holds—

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necessarily the catchy tune itself.”¹²⁹ The effect of structure on memory reinforces the benefits of a carefully configured Invention and Arrangement and the advantages inherent in rhetorical structure found throughout the French Baroque Cantata. Thus the manner in which the poet expresses the text, the composer sets the text and the performers deliver the text and music are integral components of a memorable performance. Word painting and repetition of phrases or entire sections of da capo arias are obvious ways to assist memory. Also significant is the rhythmic pulse of the text in relation to the meter and rhythm of the music. Most important to memory, rhetorically, should be the impression left on the audience; they should be ‘transported’ by the experience. To be delighted and entertained would be an ideal outcome and if the performance serves to distract from the troubles of life, all the better.

CHAPTER 3: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Exploring the design and delivery of the French Baroque cantata equips the twenty-first century interpreter of the genre to understand its original function as light secular entertainment. Examining the role of rhetoric in structure and expression is essential to understanding music of this period. As Catherine Gordon-Seifert explains:

While the aesthetic necessity to express the passions motivated the craft of musical composition during this period, the means of expression was founded in rhetoric. The various musical devices used by composers during this period to convey the passions constitute the essence of French vocal musical style—a style defined by the interconnections between language and music.\textsuperscript{130}

Understanding the French Cantata as a vehicle for wit rather than a serious work of high art may lead to a greater appreciation of its fascinating, but possibly hidden details. Perhaps this investigation of Bernier’s \textit{Le Caffè} will serve to allow early twenty-first century performers and audiences to enjoy more fully the whimsical nature and appreciate the clever rhetorical elements found in this and other French Baroque cantatas as well. Moreover, discovery of these same rhetorical ideals and devices in other pieces should enhance HIP and allow for greater effectiveness in communication of the wit of poet, composer and performers.

Though French cantatas may have been short-lived as a popular genre, their influence is still observable in works written long since the age of Bernier. The reserved character and precision of language so prized in the French Salon along with distaste for exaggeration is a thread woven into the fabric of French solo music for centuries. As

various connections between music and text have been disclosed, many of the rhetorical
devices of Delivery can be applied to French music of the Baroque era and beyond.

Known for “his vocal refinement, sensitive phrasing, and imaginative projection
of the words,” Pierre Bernac, a long-time musical partner of Francis Poulenc, was
recognized as a leading interpreter of French song in the early 20th century: As a “world
authority on the teaching of French mélodie,” Bernac eloquently addresses the
ongoing importance of le bon gout (good taste) and wit in performance of French vocal
music several centuries after the age of the cantata:

Interpreters can be tempted to go too far in exaggerating their effects in
order to capture their audience. I have had, alas, the experience of hearing
certain concerts and certain recordings which I am sure Poulenc would
have detested. His art is an art of suggestion. I beg the interpreters never,
figuratively speaking, to hold out their hand to their audience. They must
always stay within the limits of a classical style, as far from coldness as
from exaggeration. If, at times, one must suggest a type of popular song,
the mélodies of Poulenc are never popular songs. If one needs to suggest a
certain vulgarity, it must never be vulgar. Even the irony and the drollery
must never go beyond suggestion. There must always be a dignity, a
distinction, which must never be abandoned. There is great subtlety in all
this, to which I shall return, while doing all I can to incite the interpreters
to remain within the limits of good taste, to keep the restraint which
Poulenc never lost.132

This discussion of Bernier’s Le Caffé has been intended to better equip vocalists
in elocution, interpretation and French poetic scansion, provide music educators with
valuable information when discussing rhetoric in Baroque music, especially French
cantata form, serve as a basis for understanding connections between music and text in

Online. Oxford University Press, accessed April 9, 2016,
http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e761)

132 Bernac, Francis Poulenc, 48-49.
French vocal music, and may serve as a starting point for further studies of rhetorically-based French Baroque performance practice. Hopefully, it is a source of inspiration for renewed interest in performance of French Baroque cantata, a charming, yet too often neglected genre.
APPENDIX

POETIC SCANSION, IPA, MODERN FRENCH, AND TRANSLATION

Notes on the following IPA Transcription/Pronunciation:

The IPA above is structured so that every syllable begins with a consonant and ends with a vowel way with the exception of exclamations or words which begin with a vowel. 133

Words ending in mute e are elided if the following word begins with a vowel.

In musical setting, elision of mute e should still be observed in scansion, but may be pronounced if needed for clarity. For final syllable, if mute e is set on a separate note, it is pronounced and indicated in IPA as [(o)] but not counted in scansion. This is directly related to the poetic function of Alexandrine and other foot lengths.

Where musical setting in original seems to give an extra note for ‘i’, for modern French, maintain the first vowel [a] and avoid the diphthong [Second aria: Tu sers les filles de mémoire]

Rolling “r” when followed by consonants increases dramatic inflection, even if “r” is not written double.

Other dramatic doubling of initial consonants is shown, especially for pathos in third aria.

Collins French-English Dictionary Online uses open o [ɔ] as basis for nasalized [ɔ̃], but I chose to use the closed version [õ] more commonly found in vocal music diction textbooks.

Poetic Scansion Key:

\(=\) short

/= long, emphasized by setting on strong beat, or approached by leap larger than a third

|= hemistich

/*= ornament indicated in score

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Le Caffé as set by Nicolas Bernier

Recitative 1

\[ \text{ rhyme scheme } # \text{ of syllables} \]

\[ \text{ Alexandrine (6+6)} \]

\[ \text{ Alexandrine (6+6)} \]

\[ \text{ Alexandrine (6+6)} \]

\[ \text{ Alexandrine (6+6)} \]

\[ \text{ Alexandrine (6+6)} \]

\[ \text{ Alexandrine (6+6)} \]

Agréable café, quels climats inconnus
Lovely coffee, what (climates) regions unknown

\[ \text{ Remain ignorant of the (beautiful fire) inner light your vapor inspires?} \]

\[ \text{ Ah! you count in your empire} \]

\[ \text{ Those places (rebellious) unamenable to Bacchus} \]

Aria 1

\[ \text{ Favorable liqueur dont mon âme est ravie} \]

\[ \text{ Wonderful liquid by which my soul is ravished,} \]

\[ \text{ By your enchantments (augment) enhance our beautiful days.} \]

\[ \text{ We overcome sleep with your (happy) welcome aid.} \]

\[ \text{ You to us give back the moments that it [sleep] takes from life.} \]
Recitative 2

L’Astre dont chaque nuit la clarté douce et pure
The star each night whose radiance soft and pure

Vient du soleil absent consoler la nature,
Comes in the sun’s absence to console nature,

Tu dois souvent les regards des humains.
To you owes often the gaze of mortals.

Les feux rivaux de sa lumière,
The fires rivals of its light,

Aux yeux savants par toi devenus plus certains,
The eyes of the wise because of you become more certain,

Découvrent leur vague carrière.
Discovering their vast (career) potential.

Que Minerve et ses favoris
(That)Minerva and her favorites

De tes divins attributs connaissent bien le prix.
Of your divine attributes know well the value.
Aria 2

\( / / | / / / / / / / / \)  
[ka fe dy 3y də la bu tə j(ə)]

*Café, du jus de la bouteille*

Coffee, of the juice from the bottle

\( / / / / / / / / / / \)  
[ty kə ba lə fa ta lpwa zə]

*Tu combats le fatal poison.*

You fight the fatal poison.

\( / / / / / / / / / / \)  
[ty ra vi zo ddjə də la trei j(ə)]

*Tu ravis au Dieu de la treille*

You take away from the God of the vine

\( / / / / / / / / / / \)  
[lə by vœr kə tə fə rmə vəi j(ə)]

*Le buveur que ton charme_éveille*

The drinker who by your charms is awakened

\( / / / / / / / / / / \)  
[e ty lə rə za la rə zə]

*Et tu le rends à la raison.*

And you restore to him his (reason) senses.

\( / / | / / / / / / / (f) \)  
[lə sa 3(ə) si lsə my za bwa r(ə)]

*Le sage, s’il s’amuse à boire,*

The wise man, if he amuses himself with drinking.

\( / / / / / / / / / / \)  
[nə sə li vər(ə) ka tə du sər]

*Ne se livre qu’à tes douceurs.*

Doesn’t (deliver himself up) surrender except to your pleasures

\( / / / / / / / / / / \)  
[ty sər le fi j(ə) də me mwa r(ə)]

*Tu sers les filles de mémoire.*

You serve the daughters of memory.

\( / / / / / / / / / / \)  
[ka pə lə se le br(ə) ta glwa r(ə)]

*Qu Apollon célèbre ta gloire.*

[That] Apollo celebrates your glory.

\( / / / / / / / / / / \)  
[la sjə n(ə)a kkrwa pa rə tə fa vœr]

*La sienne_accroît par tes faveurs.*
His grows by your favors.

**Recitative 3**

/kũ ty na bi j(ə) mɛ ta prɛ t(ə)/

Quand_une_habille main t’apprête
When a skilled hand prepares you

/ / / / n₁² (3+3+3+3) /
[kə ple zi rɛ te ga la sə lʊ qi kə ty fe]

Quel plaisir est égal à celui que tu fais.
What pleasure is equal to that which you give!

/ / / / / / / / n₁² (3+3+3+3) /
[tõ nɔ dɛ rʃə lɔ mʊ tɔ prɔ mɛ la kɔ ke t(ə)]

Ton_odeur seulement te promet la conquête
Your aroma alone promises the conquest

/ / / / / / / / n₁² (3+3+3+3) /
[de mo rте lki nɔ pa ze pru ve tɛ za rɛ]

Des mortels qui n’ont pas_éprouvé tes_attraits.
Of mortals who have not experienced your attributes.

**Aria 3**

/o twa li kɛ rʃə zɛ m(ə) /

Ô toi, liqueur que j’aime,
O you, liquid that I love,

/* / /* / /* /
[ʁɛ n(ə) kku lɔ tu ιʃ] if repeated - no elision

Règne, coule_en tous lieux.
Reign, flow in all places

/ / / / / / / / /
[bba ni lɔ nɛ kta rmɛ m(ə)]

Bannis le nectar même
Banish the nectar even

/ / /* /* /
[də la ta bʃ(ə) dɛ dʃɔ]

De la table des Dieux.
From the table of the Gods.

/ / / / /
[ffɛ sɔ sə sə la gɛ r(ə)]

Fais sans cesse la guerre
Make war without ceasing
On the seditious juice.

Fais goûter à la terre
Make to taste on the earth

Le doux calme des Cieux.
The sweet calm of the Heavens.

(Aria 3 may be considered four Alexandrines with interior rhymes)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


