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THE WORLD OF MOLIÈRE'S COMEDY-BALLETS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE  
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By

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# THE WORLD OF MOLIÈRE'S COMEDY-BALLETS

By Joyce Arlene Chumbley

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Division of the University of Hawaii in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

## ABSTRACT

Between 1661 and 1673 Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, called Molière, wrote for Louis XIV and the French court a number of specially commissioned comedies with songs and dances. The playwright and his troupe of actors appeared in these musical productions; so did professional singers and dancers and noble amateurs including the King. Most of the comedy-ballets were subsequently performed for the public at Molière's theatre in Paris.

This study takes an overview of the comedy-ballets in their seventeenth-century setting, and suggests that these plays with music were lively theatrical entertainments full of wit and charm. Much of the information is brought together in English for the first time.

"Precursors of the Comedy-Ballets" (I) traces the close relationship between the comedy-ballets and earlier French theatre--various comic forms, the ballet, and the beginnings of French opera. "Louis XIV and Molière" (II) places the comedy-ballets in historical context, indicating the importance they had in Molière's career and in the lives of Louis XIV, his family, and his courtiers.

There are ten complete plays, five "Short Comedy-Ballets" (III): The



Bores, The Forced Marriage, The Princess of Elis, Love's the Best Doctor, and The Sicilian; and five "Full-Length Comedy-Ballets" (IV): George Dandin, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, The Magnificent Lovers, The Would-be Gentleman, and The Imaginary Invalid. The discussion of each comedy-ballet includes a mention of sources, an analysis of the text(s), an account of specific circumstances in the original productions which may have influenced the writing, and notes on traditional staging. A brief survey of "Related Works" (V) follows because Molière's writing was affected by them: the Ballet of the Incompatibles, The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, the Ballet of the Muses (Mélicerte and the Comic Pastoral), Psyché, and the Ballet of the Ballets (The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas).

Molière created the comedy-ballet form to meet Louis XIV's demand for amusement, for musical spectacle that would display the grandeur of France, and for an occasional opportunity to dance. "Dance" (VI) includes a discussion of dancers (the King, the courtiers, and the professionals), the specific dances and dance steps of the time, and the dramatic use of dancing. "Music" (VII) covers Molière's three musical collaborators-- Pierre Beauchamps, Jean-Baptiste Lully, and Marc-Antoine Charpentier-- and the instrumental and vocal music they wrote for the comedy-ballets; this chapter also considers the singers and musicians who produced the music. "Theatres and Scenery" (VIII) describes the stages for the original court presentations at Vaux-le-Vicomte, Fontainebleau, the Louvre, Versailles, Chambord, and Saint-Germain-en-Laye, along with the scenery of designers Giacomo Torelli and Carlo Vigarani, an account of traveling conditions for the actors, and a discussion of the Palais-Royal,

the public theatre where the comedy-ballets were presented after their premières at court. The costumes used in the comedy-ballets reflected the lavish attire of the court and the tradition of fancy-dress court divertissements. How the performers dressed for the comedy-ballets and possible contributions of designer Henry Gissey and tailor Jean Baraillon are detailed in "Costumes" (IX).

The study proper is followed by an appendix (A) which describes the livret or ballet-program and another appendix (B) which gives the cast list for each work treated. Two hundred figures (photographs, charts, illustrations) accompany the text and appendixes.

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## PREFACE

Molière wrote his comedy-ballets as special-order divertissements for Louis XIV. In them he combined his own comic materials, which greatly amused the King, with the musical resources available at the French court in order to satisfy the King's taste for balletic spectacle. The purpose of this study is to consider the comedy-ballets in their seventeenth-century setting and to advance them as lively theatrical entertainments full of wit and charm.

An enormous Moliériana exists, but very little has been written about the comedy-ballets as a unique book of work. Two studies specifically devoted to the subject are Maurice Pellisson's Les Comédies-ballets de Molière (Paris, 1914) and Friedrich Bötttinger's Die 'Comédie-ballets' von Molière-Lully (Berlin, 1931). Pellisson attempts to show the value of the comedy-ballets as a dramatic form; Bötttinger's interest lies primarily in demonstrating the role the comedy-ballets played in the evolution of lyric theatre. The attempt here is to go beyond these theses and to present an overall view of the comedy-ballets: their precursors, their place in the social history of the time, and the circumstances of their original production. The production elements considered are the texts of the plays, dance, music, theatres and scenery, and costumes. Much of this material has been brought together and presented in English for the first time.

The French text of Molière used throughout this study is the Oeuvres de Molière (Les Grands Ecrivains de la France) edited by Eugène Despois

and Paul Mesnard (Paris, 1893-1927), and it is cited as "D-M."<sup>1</sup> There is also extensive reference to the commentary which appears in the Oeuvres complètes edited by Louis Moland (Paris, 1880-1885). Quotations from Molière's plays are generally taken from various published translations which are cited in the text. When no appropriate translation for a particular passage could be found, a new translation was done based on the Despois-Mesnard edition. Any quotation in French in the text of this study is used only when the flavor of the French seemed appropriate, and it is accompanied by a translation. French terms are used generally on the same principle. Otherwise, English equivalents have been adopted.

<sup>1</sup>After completing much of the research for this definitive edition of Molière's works, Despois died in 1876, and Mesnard saw the project through publication.

## CHAPTER I

### PRECURSORS OF THE COMEDY-BALLETS

A theatrical tradition existed in France from the earliest times-- that is, even before France became a separate kingdom under Charlemagne in the ninth century--but this early theatrical activity was meager. Even in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the indigenous French theatre was overshadowed by visiting Spanish comedians and Italian commedia dell'arte players. Few comic playwrights before Molière did more than imitate foreign models. Although Molière was also strongly influenced by these same sources,<sup>1</sup> part of his genius was in taking extant theatrical forms and ideas and transforming them into something new, vital, and thoroughly French in manner and spirit. It may be impossible to prove direct sources of influence on Molière's comedy-ballets, or to demonstrate a direct linear development from earlier French theatre, but a survey of the theatrical materials probably available to him can be indicated. And it must suffice to suggest the close relationship between the comedy-ballets and (1) earlier comic forms in France, (2) the ballet, imported from Italy, but eventually more prevalent in France, and (3) the beginnings of French opera.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See Ernest Martinenche, Molière et le théâtre espagnol, Paris, 1906; Sylvanus Griswold Morley, "Notes on Spanish Sources of Molière," PMLA XIX (1904), 270-290; I. A. Schwartz, The Commedia Dell'Arte and its Influence on French Comedy in the Seventeenth Century, New York, 1933.

<sup>2</sup>Major sources consulted:  
THEATRE - Pierre François Godart de Beauchamps, Recherches sur les théâtre de France, depuis l'année onze cens soixante-un jusques à présent (Paris



The origin of French comedy can be traced to the simple jests of medieval ménéstrels (minstrels). Ménéstrels were descendants of the Roman mimi and pantomimi who by the sixth century in northern Europe began to join with Teutonic entertainers and, traveling from place to place, provoked at least a modicum of laughter in the generally severe Middle Ages.<sup>3</sup> Although there came to be little distinction between the mime and pantomime inherited from ancient Rome, mime originally was coarse and physical, pantomime somewhat more refined and literary, and eventually these two impulses, or strains, began to separate again as two types of ménéstrels appeared. Out of the tradition of the mimi developed the tenth and

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1735); Edouard Fournier, Le Théâtre français au XVI<sup>e</sup> et au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle (Paris, 1871); Edouard Fournier, Le Théâtre français avant la Renaissance (Paris, 1873); Grace Frank, The Medieval French Drama (Oxford, 1954); Frederick William Hawkins, Annals of the French Stage from its Origin to the Death of Racine (London, 1884); H. Carrington Lancaster, A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century (Baltimore, 1929-1942); François and Claude Parfaict, Histoire du théâtre français depuis son origine jusqu'à présent (Paris, 1734-1749); Maurice Pellisson, Les Comédies-ballets de Molière (Paris, 1914); L. Petit de Julleville, Histoire du théâtre en France. La Comédie et Les Moeurs en France au moyen âge (Paris, 1886); Eugène Rigal, Le Théâtre français avant la période classique (Paris, 1901).

MUSIC - Howard Mayer Brown, Music in the French Secular Theater, 1400-1550 (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1963); Manfred F. Bukofzer, Music in the Baroque Era (New York, 1947); Ludovic Celler, Les Origines de l'opéra et le ballet de la reine (Paris, 1868); Marie-Françoise Christout, Le Ballet de cour de Louis XIV, 1643-1672 (Paris, 1967); Marie-Françoise Christout, "The Court Ballet in France: 1615-1641," Dance Perspectives (New York, 1964); Paul Lacroix, Ballets et mascarades de cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (Geneva, 1868-1870); Lionel de La Laurencie, Les Créateurs de l'opéra français (Paris, 1921); Duc de La Vallière, Ballets, opéras et autres ouvrages lyriques (Paris, 1760); Margaret M. McGowan, L'Art du ballet en France, 1581-1643 (Paris, 1963); Marin Mersenne, Harmonie universelle (1636-1637) (Paris, 1963); Henry Prunières, Le Ballet de cour de France avant Benserade et Lully (Paris, 1914); Romain Rolland, Histoire de l'opéra en Europe avant Lully et Scariatti (Paris, 1895); Julien Tiersot, La musique dans la comédie de Molière (Paris, 1922).

<sup>3</sup>E. K. Chambers, The Mediaeval Stage (London, 1903), I, 25.

eleventh century jongleurs (jugglers). They danced, played musical instruments, sang, and performed tricks wherever an audience would gather. By the age of chivalry, in the twelfth century, more cultivated performers in the pantomimi tradition had become established. These poet-singers or trouvères (finders or inventors) related at noble houses and chateaux their chansons de geste (songs of deeds--such as the Song of Roland, c. 1100), and romans d'aventure.<sup>4</sup> French theatre, which developed basically from the medieval minstrel, was characterized from the beginning by these two strains. The rowdy, ribald acrobatics of the jongleur became the popular, bourgeois form of expression (esprit gaulois), emphasizing the down-to-earth mocking French spirit. From this strain came the farce that Molière appropriated as an actor in the provinces. The gallant songs of the chivalric trouvères became the refined, aristocratic form of expression (esprit courtois), capturing the grace and charm of the French spirit. From this strain, modified by Renaissance classicism, developed the pastoral and the court ballet that Molière adopted as creator of divertissements for Louis XIV. In his comedy-ballets Molière attempted to fuse the esprit gaulois with the esprit courtois.

While a religious drama was developing through the Church, the first secular plays of the French theatre evolved from medieval story-tellers. Frank points out that there was little distinction in the Middle Ages between narrative and dramatic performances, citing as an example the thirteenth-century Aucassin et Nicolette that was performed by a narrator and a singer in discourse.<sup>5</sup> Aucassin et Nicolette may have been one of

<sup>4</sup>Trouvères were the narrative and epic poets of northern France as distinct from the lyric troubadours of southern France.

<sup>5</sup>pp. 237-242.

France's first comedies. "The first writer of profane plays, whoever he may have been, had but to present narrative poems par personnages [with characters], inject humour into the situation portrayed and a comedy would be born."<sup>6</sup> Aucassin et Nicolette, the only chante-fable extant, is an early example of a parody with music. It ridicules chivalric romance as Molière was later to ridicule pastoral romance.

It was but a small step from narrative-dramatic poems with characters to actual dramatic action for medieval balladeers such as Adam de la Halle (c. 1240-c. 1286), the trouvère whose thirteenth-century jeux (song-plays) are forerunners of the comedy-ballets in their mixture of comedy and music, of fantasy, pastoral, and satire. Adam wrote the Jeu de la feuillée to entertain friends before he left his home in Arras to seek his fortune elsewhere. Greenery, fertility, and supernatural creatures are mixed with liturgical feast. This work is not much more than a series of satirical character sketches and has very little plot. The action takes place at Pentecost when the women of Arras go to the Crois ou Pré to see fairies and when the shrine of Notre Dame in the Petit Marché is covered with a canopy of green foliage, a feuillée. The scene is a tavern where drinking, eating, and joking take place. Several songs are incorporated into the action, including one by the fairies who sing as they go from their visit at the tavern to the shrine.

A more significant work is Adam's Jeu de Robin et Marion, a pastoral (pastourelle) with characters from the Robin Hood legend: the shepherdess Marion is pursued by a knight, but remains faithful to the shepherd Robin.

<sup>6</sup>Frank, p. 215.

Pastourelles in the medieval minstrel repertory are defined as "generally dialogues between a knight and a shepherdess, in which the knight makes love and, successful or repulsed, rides away."<sup>7</sup> Adam's lyric-narrative basically follows this stylized courtly convention, but also includes, in the latter half of the play, light-hearted bergeries--games and pastimes of the peasants that are expressed in songs and dances--and ends with a round dance of awkward country buffoons. Because there is considerable music in the Jeu de Robin et Marion, it is often referred to as the first opéra-comique in France, a rather elaborate term for such an unpretentious little pastoral. Simple though it may be, however, this song-play is a precursor of later pastoral drama and of Molière's rustic interludes (intermèdes rustiques) in the comedy-ballets. And like the comedy-ballets, the Jeu de Robin et Marion was written as a noble diversion. In 1282 Adam accompanied his patron, Robert, Comte d'Artois, who was sent by Louis IX of France to southern Italy in order to assist Charles d'Anjou in battle. The play was written and performed to entertain the troops as they rested between sieges. In combining a basically refined chivalric eclogue with boisterously comic dancing, Adam joined the esprit courtois with the esprit gaulois. Unfortunately, Adam, like Molière, had no followers to match his talents and his jeux, like the comedy-ballets, remain an isolated type of comedy with music.

Music was the medium through which Church drama of the Middle Ages evolved. Tenth century tropes (intoned dialogues interpolated into the

<sup>7</sup>Chambers, I, 78.

Catholic Mass) developed into simple dramatizations of Biblical scenes within the church, then into theatrical performances outside the church--mystères (stories from the Bible) and miracles (plays in honor of the Virgin and the saints)--and finally into elaborate municipal spectacles on Church festival days. The 1547 Passion cycle at Valenciennes was a series of plays with an enormous cast of characters and complicated scenic devices. This liturgical drama was essentially reverent in nature, but it had its humor, too, in secondary characters such as merchants, wives, servants, and devils. Two early plays in this tradition that include comic scenes may be cited. The first is Jean Bodel's Jeu de Saint Nicolas (c. 1200, a miracle play that includes scenes of low life--drinking, gambling, quarreling of thieves), and the other is an anonymous dramatization of the parable of the Prodigal Son, Courtois d'Arras (before 1228), in which the prodigal is shown in an Artois tavern duped by two girls into giving them his money for "safekeeping." While both plays have a somewhat serious intent and end with the Te Deum laudamus (hymn of thanksgiving to God), the comic treatment shows distinct evidence of early esprit gaulois. In the fourteenth century another form of religiously inspired play developed, the moralité. Moralités are considered religious plays because of their didactic nature (the allegorical representation of a moral issue), and yet they are very often comic in tone, reflecting a delight not only in amusing abstractions, but in singing and dancing. All these religious dramas included some music.

Concurrently with the development of Church drama, strolling ballad-eers continued to perform their separate, secular entertainments, out of which came the farce. The first farceurs were these singer-players, and

singing and dancing were part of the plays they wrote. There is music in the earliest surviving French farce, the anonymous Le Garçon et l'aveugle (The Boy and the Blind Man, after 1266). In this little play a prosperous blind man who begs only for the purpose of fooling people is tricked by a roguish boy who makes off with the old man's money. "The emphasis in the play is not on the blind man's infirmity but on the fraud and guile made possible by it. . . ." <sup>8</sup> Although four hundred years elapsed between the appearance of this play and the works of Molière, noteworthy similarities are the ancient comic device of tricking the trickster, a potentially serious situation given farcical treatment, and the use of music. Le Garçon et l'aveugle has three songs--two topical and an opening song in which the blind man begs for alms.

By the fourteenth century, interest in theatrical activity had increased significantly. Townsfolk performed in Church drama as well as in the infamous parody of the Church, the Feast of Fools (Fête des fous), which included uproarious drinking songs and licentious dances. After the Feast of Fools declined through disrepute, and Charles VI's decree of 1402 gave exclusive performance rights for liturgical drama to a theatre guild, the Confrérie de la Passion, amateur entertainment was assumed by secular societies, sociétés joyeuses (mirthful fellowships) or compagnies des fous. These companies grew primarily out of literary societies and student groups. The Parisian basoche (basilica) theatre, for example consisted of a group of law clerks in Paris who "met regularly in the Palais to plead mock

<sup>8</sup>Frank, p. 222.

<sup>9</sup>Brown, p. 31.

cases as training for their future vocations as avocats. Sometimes the cases would be causes grasses, imaginary suits pleaded elaborately about extremely inconsequential things."<sup>9</sup> These entertainments, which may or may not have involved music, must have been similar at least in subject matter to the case that is considered by the singing advocates in Molière's comedy-ballet Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.

The amateur groups with the most general appeal were groups of sots (fools), such as the outstanding Enfants-sans-Souci, organized about the same time as the Confrérie de la Passion. They performed farces and some religious plays, especially moralities, but they were primarily known for their repertoire of sotties. Sotties were short topical satires which had "little plot and depended for their theatrical effect on slapstick and on visual comedy as well as on double meanings, obscenity, and quick patter."<sup>10</sup> They were normally used as curtain-raisers for other comic pieces and were performed by sots--fools in their multicolored costume of short jacket, tights, bells, and cap. Popular Parisian fools "had to be young, agile, and intelligent. Acrobatics were involved in playing the fool, and they would have needed some musical ability. Undoubtedly a knack for improvising lines and perhaps whole roles also would have been desirable."<sup>11</sup> One of these entertainments, Les Vigiles de Triboulet (The Vigils of Triboulet, c. 1480), concerning a famous dead fool, ended with a "mock ceremony for Triboulet, sung antiphonally by four actors,"<sup>12</sup> which

<sup>9</sup>Brown, p. 31.

<sup>10</sup>Brown, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup>Brown, p. 30.

<sup>12</sup>Frank, p. 252.

anticipated the musical mock ceremonies Molière later used in The Would-be Gentleman and The Imaginary Invalid. The best-known sixteenth-century mère-sotte (chief fool) was Pierre Gringore, whose Jeu de prince des sots (1511) is a fusion of sottie and moralité.

The French farce that developed after Le Garçon et l'aveugle is often very similar to the sottie, and yet there is characterization, not merely a variation of the standard sot, and simple plot development. Farces deal with marriage, cuckoldry, pedantry, and master-servant relationships, and include duping, beatings, disguising, and misunderstandings. Coarse, but often based on good sense, these farces are typically another French expression of esprit gaulois. The best of the early French farces is considered to be the anonymous Maître Pierre Pathelin (written c. 1465 and later performed by the Enfants-sans-Souci) about a tricky lawyer, Pathelin, who wins a case for his shepherd client by having him answer "Bah" to all questions. The shepherd then tricks Pathelin by answering "Bah" to the question of the lawyer's fee. The trickster is tricked. By the sixteenth century, farces commonly included songs known as voix-de-ville. These "voices of the town" or vaudevilles were, according to the music theorist Mersenne, the simplest kind of song and one to which any sort of lyric might be applied.<sup>13</sup> But the lyrics were often satiric<sup>14</sup> and the tunes catchy, so that vaudevilles became widely known about town. A new song could be popularized by its performance on the stage, and current favorites were often incorporated into the farces by popular demand.

<sup>13</sup>II, 164.

<sup>14</sup>"Mazarinades" were vaudevilles satirizing Cardinal Mazarin that had widespread popularity during the Fronde. (On the Fronde, see Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière.)



Along with these early farces developed a lesser, shorter, but not unimportant comic form--the farce à un personnage--which amounted to an actor's "turn" or "number." It could be a humorous monologue in the manner of sermons joyeux exhibiting much mock learning (Biblical and Latin quotations or legal jargon such as in the basoche productions) or a character study depicting a lover, a boasting soldier, a valet, a chambermaid, a charlatan. Many of the characters Molière used in both his plays and musical interludes seem derived from this little entertainment. Farces à un personnage, even in the beginning, were always performed as part of a larger program. A sixteenth-century evening's fare (such as might have been presented by Gringore's group) would include an opening sottie, a monologue, a morality, and a farce.<sup>15</sup>

Comic elements in theatrical performances were so popular with audiences that they were increasingly incorporated into Church drama. Because these elements were so often obscene, however, Church fathers strongly objected. By an arrêt de Parlement of November 17, 1548, the Confrérie de la Passion lost its privilege to perform religious plays. This restriction was in reality a boon to the secular theatre for from that time it gained more attention and became more professionally conceived and produced. In Paris the Hôtel de Bourgogne, the first permanent public theatre in France, was built by the Confrérie to stage the new plays. Within a few years, a comic literature dealing in some depth with aspects of human folly began to replace the slight farcical sketches with music that, except for the chivalric ballads, the didactic pastorals, and Church plays, had constituted comic theatre until this time.

<sup>15</sup>Brown, p. 12.

In contrast to the coarse entertainment that had prevailed until the sixteenth century for the French bourgeoisie was the splendid pageantry with which the nobility diverted itself and dazzled its subjects. There were two major types of staged princely display: processions and court entertainments. The grand processional entry of a ruler into the city let the ruler and his nobles show themselves to the people and, in turn, allowed the people the opportunity to celebrate the ruler and his favorites with street theatres and triumphal arches set up along the parade route. Lavish entertainments provided for such court festivities as weddings and state functions included pageant-jousts, masquerade balls, and banquets in which musical interludes were given between courses. Entremets (interludes: "sweet dishes"--that is, something "in between" and later known as inter-mèdes), a more elaborate form of the trouvère's performance during a noble repast, consisted of dances and skits. Although some crude jesting was allowed, most of these entertainments were prescribed by the court's code of politeness (Figures 1, 2, and 3). For mascarades (known at first as momeries) the ladies and gentlemen of the court dressed up in exotic costumes and masks. Then they made a grand entrance into the ballroom on floats from which they descended to engage in figured dancing. Revels of this sort had occurred in the French court at least since the fourteenth century. The first record of this kind of royal exhibition is of a performance in 1393. On that occasion Charles VI almost burned to death when he was dancing as a "savage" in the Bal des ardents, his costume caught fire.<sup>16</sup> Dancing from earliest times was a social and self-glorifying

<sup>16</sup>Prunières, Le Ballet de cour, pp. 3-4. Charles VI or Charles the

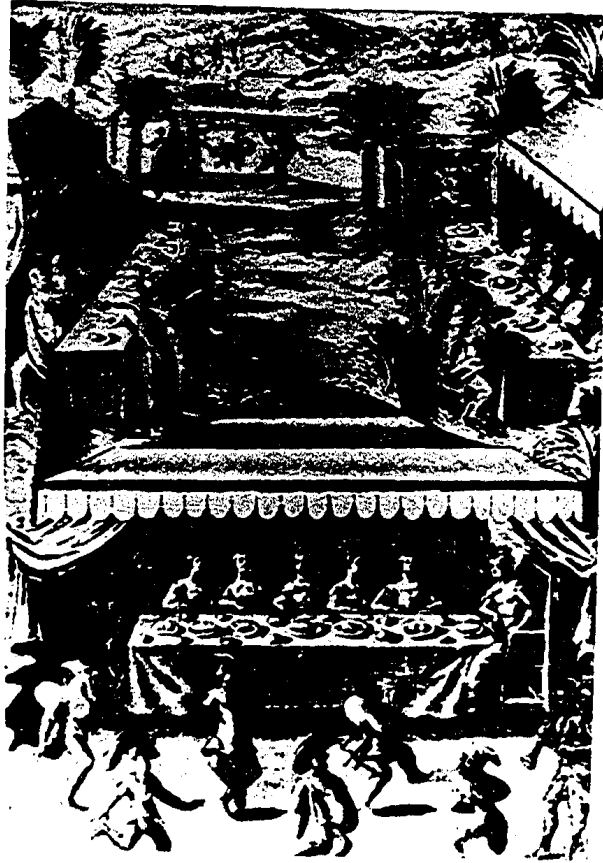


Figure 1. Burlesque interlude



Figure 2. Traveling players visit a manor



Figure 3. Players' rehearsal

pastime for the nobility that eventually reached its most lavish form at the court of Louis XIV. In the sixteenth century Pierre Gringore devised many court spectacles. Essentially a comedian, this writer of sotties also arranged mascarades and produced mimes (mystères mimés or dumb shows) and tableaux vivants (living pictures) for the entries of the royal family and important noblemen into the city.<sup>17</sup> He engaged in the same dual activity in the sixteenth century that Molière was later involved in--working in the popular theatre as well as at court.

Court entertainments in France were greatly influenced by the Italian Renaissance. The Renaissance was not only an unearthing of the Greek and Latin classics but also a revival of the ideas they promoted--interest in man, in learning, and in inquiry. There was a turning from the spiritual and abstract (the theological approach) to the worldly and concrete (the humanistic approach). As a result, a great period of artistic activity based on the observation and gratification of man and based on his desire to explore new and rediscovered forms of expression flourished. One manifestation of this activity was the development in Italy of lavish, indulgent entertainments at the city-state courts. Intermezzi, consisting of music, poetry (sung or declaimed), pantomime, and dancing, loosely linked together by a central classical theme dealing with characters from antiquity, were performed by the nobility between the courses of festive

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Mad (Le Fou, 1368-1422), who not only actively encouraged court entertainments but issued the original privilege for the first permanent acting company in France, the Confrérie de la Passion, was intermittently insane; and this incident left him permanently deranged.

<sup>17</sup>For example, the Mistere fait à la porte de Paris pour la décoration de l'entrée du roi à Paris, le 15. février 1514 (Beauchamps, I, 135).

banquets. They also provided enlivening spectacle between the acts of the sometimes dull classical plays performed at court. The costumes and scenery were elaborate, and the dancing was based on the formal, elegant court dances of the period. The fullest impact of Italian Renaissance entertainment struck France in the second half of the sixteenth century. Tastes of the learned, aristocratic French shifted from religious drama and the enactment of chivalrous tales to court spectacles and literary drama based on classical themes.

A group of poets, the Pléiade (1549-1572), led in the main by Pierre de Ronsard (1542-1585), sought to reform French poetry through imitating Greek and Roman dramatic and lyric verse. The Pléiade wanted to replace farces and moralities with a more literary form of comic expression based primarily on Terence and Plautus. Thomas Sebillet's Art poétique (1548), which has been called "a sort of dramatic manifesto of the Pléiade,"<sup>18</sup> shows the influence of Aristotelianism and Italian ideas on French criticism. It draws a parallel between the French morality play and the classical tragedy, and heralds the beginning of the Renaissance in French theatre. The first French Renaissance comedy was Eugène (1552), written by a member of the Pléiade, Etienne Jodelle (1532-1573). A satire on the self-indulgence of the clergy, Eugène, is structured like a Roman comedy but owes much of its liveliness to medieval French farce. Unfortunately, Jodelle's successors chose not to follow this style, but merely to imitate foreign models. Neo-classical comedy based on the Greeks and Latins continued to be written, and as a further hindrance to a spontaneous French

<sup>18</sup>Barret H. Clark, ed., European Theories of the Drama (New York, 1947), p. 73.

drama, the playwright and critic Jean de la Taille, in the early 1570's, enunciated the principles of Aristotle as interpreted by Horace and later Castelvetro regarding the dramatic unities of time, place, and action that were then imposed on French dramatists. Early French comedy written accordingly is in general imitative, pretentious, and lifeless.

While perhaps some stifling of native energies occurred because of the classical revival, much discovery and expansion was also made possible as Renaissance man tried to recapture a total artistic expression--music, poetry, and dance--that was lost after the decline of the Greek and Roman civilizations. Another member of the Pléiade, Jean-Antone de Baïf (1532-1589), aspired to a perfect synthesis of music, poetry, and dancing based on the Greek pattern. His comedy Le Brave (The Boaster, 1567) had songs between the acts,<sup>19</sup> but whether or not his ideal was accomplished with this play is uncertain. In 1571 he founded the Académie de Poésie et de Musique which had a great influence on the future of French music and dancing, as well as poetry. Along with several of his associates including Jodelle and Ronsard, he wrote mascarades for the fetes and divertissements of the court. It was this group's insistence on the purity of language, not to be distorted even by music, that set the standard for musical theatre in France. They codified the ballad tradition of the trouvères. Dramatic language was to be simple and direct and, in singing, the emphasis was to be on the intelligibility of the words. They established the syllabic verse Molière inherited and used for his lyrics. The traditional emphasis on language was a primary reason why the French in the 1660's preferred Molière and Lully's comedy-ballets over

<sup>19</sup>Parfaict, III, 352.

imported Italian opera.

After the entry of Henri II's wife, Catherine de'Medici, into Paris in 1548, the sumptuous festivals characteristic of the city-state courts of her native Italy came into fashion in France. The Queen was extremely fond of ballet spectacles. Under her patronage, dancing at the French court flourished through the efforts of a series of imported Italian ballet masters. A stronger interest in dance developed in France than in Italy, where elaborate scenic displays and, later, vocal music seemed to have greater appeal for courtly audiences. The dancing of French nobles (Figure 4) was a refined, codified version of primitive forms danced by the peasants. As more sophisticated dances brought from Renaissance Italy were introduced at the French court, the simple mascarade developed into the ballet de cour (court ballet). French dancing, which had been graceful but rather stiff and formal, gained vigor and liveliness from the Italian influence. "Ballet as we know it was born when the acrobatics of the professional and the artistic grace of the courtier were united."<sup>20</sup> It is this professional tradition that paved the way for the comedy-ballets.

In 1567 the Italian violinist and dancer Baldassarino di Belgiojoso was brought to the French court to satisfy the demand for dance entertainments. He enjoyed great opportunity and encouragement under the patronage of Catherine, adopted the French equivalent of his name (Balthazar de Beaujoyeulx), and, as artistic director of the court ballet, made important innovations in the technique and subject matter of the dance. The most celebrated court entertainment, which became known as "ballet" (from the

<sup>20</sup>Arnold Haskell, Ballet (Baltimore, 1955), p. 20.



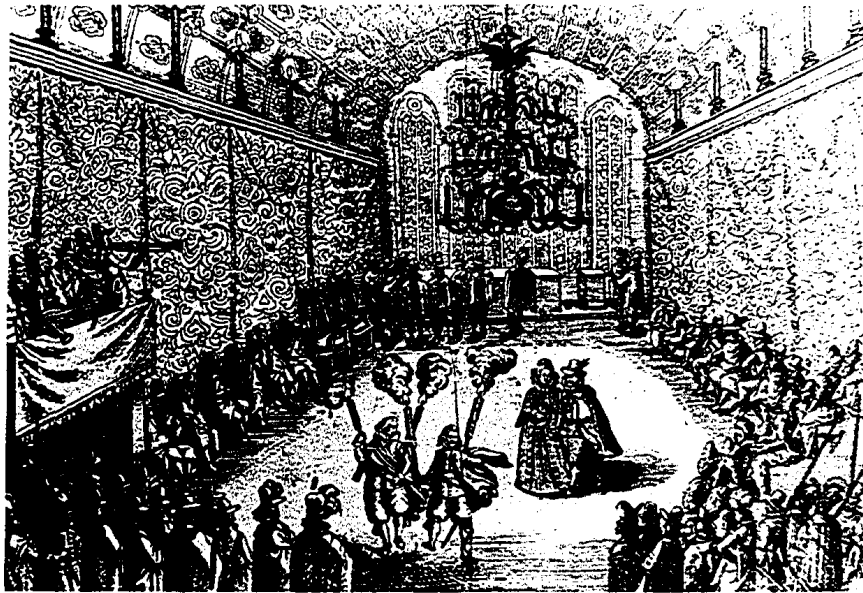


Figure 4. A court dance

Italian ballare, to dance), of the reign of Catherine's second son, Charles IX (reign, 1560-1574) was the Ballet des Polonais (1573), produced for the visiting Polish ambassadors (Figure 5). The music was by Roland de Lassus, the choreography by Beaujoyeux. The Ballet des Polonais was choreographically more complex than any previous entertainment had been.

During the reign of Henry III (1574-1589) a ballet of great import was produced. The Ballet comique de la reine, commissioned from Beaujoyeux by Catherine for the marriage celebration of Henri's brother, the Duc de Joyeuse, and Marguerite de Vaudemont, sister of Henri's queen, was performed on October 15, 1581, in the Salle du Petit-Bourbon by the Queen (Louise de Mercoeur), nobles of the court, and a corps de ballet including the Queen's ladies (Figure 6).<sup>21</sup> Beaujoyeux, who master-minded the whole production, brought together in a new unity music, poetry and dance, because he thought that neither a play nor figured dancing alone would be grandiose enough for such an occasion. The production, sometimes referred to as Circé et ses nymphes, was based on the classical legend of Circe and had a two-part form: (1) figures, dramatic dances presenting the characters of the myth, and (2) the grand bal, the finale with all characters participating in figured dancing and a grand procession around the ballroom. Permanent set pieces were located at various places on the

<sup>21</sup>In the engraving, note Henri III seated in the place of honor with his mother Catherine de'Medici. On the stage are the woodland setting, complete with Pan, on the right, the cloud containing the musicians on the left, and the garden of Circe at the far end of the hall. This arrangement of scenery is similar to the simultaneous settings of the medieval Church drama. The hall in which this performance took place, the Salle du Petit-Bourbon, was the first court theatre of France. Ballets were staged there. The Italian players performed there when they first came to Paris, and Molière and his troupe occupied this theatre from 1658 to 1660.

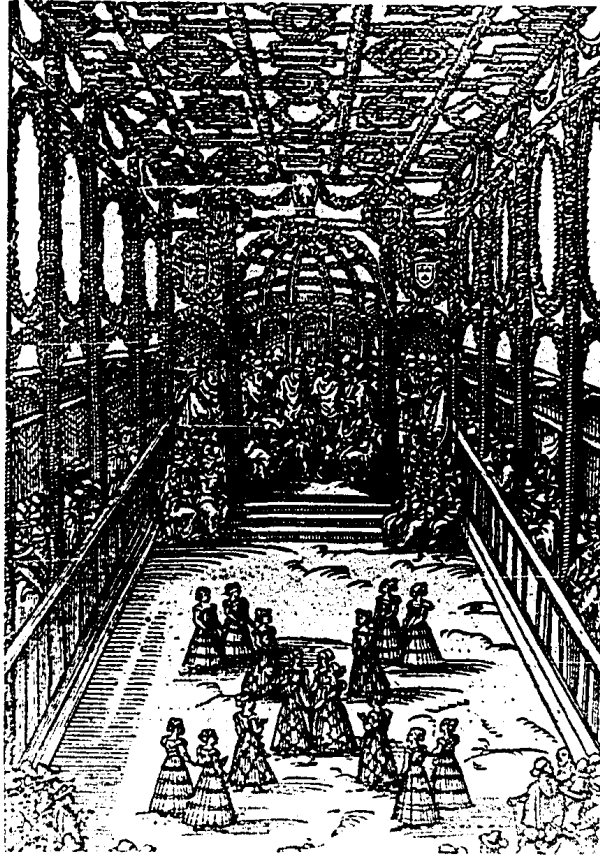


Figure 5. Ballet des Polonais (1573)



Figure 6. Ballet comique de la reine (1581)

dance floor, including a cloud setting in which the musicians were positioned to play the music of Beaulieu and Salmon. Mascarade-like floats glided around the hall carrying dancers, singers, and those who recited verses to the place where they performed in front of the King. Each appearance of a new group was an entrée. The songs or verses were called récits.

Beaujoyeux, like Gringore, was a professional in charge of organizing court entertainments, a position Lully and Molière were later to inherit. He instituted ballet at court, and, although none of the subsequent "ballet-comiques" (dramatic ballets) achieved the degree of unity and excellence of Circé, the ballet de cour remained the most popular of the noble entertainments until the mature work of Molière.

Court ballets were never meant to be dramatic works; they were spectacles. They were often based on classical subjects, but were never restricted by literary rules, such as the neo-classical unities of time, place, and action. They never had the dramatic cohesion of plays. As greater artistic specialization occurred in the late sixteenth century, the combined dancing, singing, and recitation of earlier popular and courtly musical entertainments became separated to some extent for the development of dance and music technique on one hand and written drama on the other.

The French literary comedy begun by the Pléiade had an enlivening influence from plays and popular actors from Italy. Well-known to the French were the vigorous Italian comedies of Aretino written between 1524 and 1542, plays which revolved about an individual who is dominated by a single characteristic. This comedy, with its ample supply of ardent suitors

and clever servants, is similar to the improvised comedy of Italian acting companies which were organized to perform the popular comedy of masks, sources for which predate the golden age of Greece. While the first French neo-classical comedies in a style like Arteino's were being written, the Italian commedia dell'arte players were performing in Paris and throughout the provinces. I Comici Gelosi (The Zealous Actors), one of the most famous commedia dell'arte companies, established in Milan in 1569, appeared in France in 1571, probably at the request of Charles IX. I Gelosi established a precedent Molière's troupe was to follow. They performed not only character farces but also comedies with songs and dances and elegant musical scenes not unlike the intermezzi at Italian courts. Italian comedians, who offered entertainments including the acrobatic and pantomimic type of dancing, performed in France almost continuously for nearly a century. Pierre Larivey (c. 1540--c. 1612), saw the Gelosi act at Blois in 1577 and as a result wrote a number of comedies that had widespread influence, such as the servant-master comedy Les Esprits, gentler in tone than the Italian originals and in French settings. These comedies showed similarities to the existing esprit gaulois of the French farces, but were more complex in incident and characterization. Molière, in his formative years as an actor and playwright, was familiar with these kinds of plays as well as touring Italian comedians.

While neo-classical French tragedy became the leading expression of esprit courtois, it shared the attention of people of refined taste with the ballet and with another dramatic form: the pastoral. In 1573, L'Aminta, a pastoral or shepherd play by the Italian poet Torquato Tasso, was produced in Ferrara. This play and Il Pastor fido by Battista Guarini, produced in Mantua in 1598, were the first outstanding examples of a

fully-developed dramatic form based on the Greek and Roman eclogues. They greatly influenced literature in seventeenth-century France. The pastoral, traditionally associated with music, provided characters and themes for musical entertainments at court that were still popular in Molière's day.

Sources for the pastoral tradition can be traced to the ancient Greek satyr play, with its use of rural settings and characters such as nymphs, satyrs, and shepherds, and to the Greek idyls, particularly the lyrics and dialogues of Theocritus (fl. 3rd century B. C.), that in their settings of wooded Sicilian valleys and of grand halls pointed up the humorous contrast between the rustic and the refined. Vergil (70-19 B.C.), in his eclogues, or short discussions between shepherds, established the pastoral world of Arcadia (a district of Peloponnesus) which included Pan and his followers, shepherds, love, natural simplicity, delicate feelings, and music. Horace (65 B.C.-8 B.C.) also wrote in the pastoral style. David was a pastoral singer--the Lord was his shepherd--and the "Song of Songs" which came to France through Spain remains the outstanding Hebrew idyl. Songs of idyllic life were adopted into the repertoire of the minstrels. When the pastoral in the Middle Ages became "Christianized," two major types developed, the decorative and the allegorical, although both used basically the same materials. Adam de la Halle's pastourelle par personnages, Jeu de Robin et Marion, is an example of the decorative form that is highly conventionalized and lacks moral instruction. It was the decorative form that Molière used in his court productions. Chivalry evolved to gallantry. The lyrics of Petrarca (1304-1374) and the garden settings of Boccaccio (1313-1375) reflected the pastoral influence, and with the classical emphasis of the Renaissance, the pastoral was developed

as a major form. An early adaptation of the Italian sacre rappresentazioni to a subject from classical mythology was Poliziano's idyl of Orfeo and Euridice, Favola d'Orfeo, performed with music at Mantua in 1471. Italian intermezzi also incorporated pastoral elements.

Thomas Sebillet in his Art poétique talks of the allegorical eclogue: "The Eclogue is Greek by invention, Latin by usurpation, and French by imitation."<sup>22</sup> In France, Nicolas Filleul produced a dramatized eclogue entitled Les Ombres in 1566, but the most influential dramatic pastoral was Tasso's L'Aminta. The French pastoral plays at first were based on the Italian and Spanish models. An example is Nicolas de Montreaux's Arimène (1596), which had an intermède between each act. Pastoral elements were used in the ballets produced at the French court. Astrée (1607), a French pastoral romance by Honore D'Urfé, had great influence on all literary forms including drama. Tragi-comedy was an important medium for the use of pastoral elements; and Alexandre Hardy (c. 1575--c.1613) was the leading playwright of his day in both tragi-comedy and pastoral forms. As of 1658 the pastoral was defined by the critics Aubignac and Colletet as a standard type of drama along with comedy and tragedy.<sup>23</sup>

In the pastoral, the joys and woes of love are played out in a rural environment that reflects the simple life--life before it became complicated by the demands of society, a natural world made for lovers alone. There are no rooms or city streets; the myrtle grove, rustic cottage, hills and woods, rocky places, river banks, bathing pools, and cool

<sup>22</sup>Clark, p. 74.

<sup>23</sup>François Hédelin d'Aubignac, La Pratique du théâtre (1657) and Guillaume Colletet, Traitté de la poesie morale et sententieuse (1658).



grottos are the settings, whether the pastoral was artfully contrived in a ballroom or more appropriately played on a garden stage. The time is usually fresh, clear dawn or soft, serene twilight. The characters are shepherds and shepherdesses, Pan and his fauns, nymphs (who are merely a type of shepherdess), fisher boys and girls, an echo, farcical rustics, and the satyr, who represents brute nature. Innocent and attractive lovers are separated or love's passion is thwarted by virginal coldness. The despair of these lovers is superficial and fleeting, however; love conquers all, and the pastoral ends happily. The pastoral tradition is a musical tradition: romantic shepherds have the leisure and the emotional inclination for song.

The pretense of the pastoral is simplicity. The poetic form, however, is highly stylized with strict rules and standard subject matter. Raw nature is transformed by delicate feelings and sentimentality to symbolize the ideal. Intriguing and philosophizing are as out of place as wit in this simple, quiet, tranquil life. In essence, the pastoral is not realistic, nor is it satiric. It is somewhat ironic, perhaps, in its cultivated naiveté and in the traces of melancholy, disillusionment, and bittersweet nostalgia; but it exists typically on a fanciful plane bordering on festivity--a theatre of escapism that contrasts with the civilized world.

The pastoral form that Molière inherited was rigidly fixed, almost passé in its usefulness as an independent dramatic form for the public theatre. It persisted at court, however, because it lent itself so readily to sumptuous stage settings and elaborate display, for the shepherds and shepherdesses were always garbed in silk and satin. The conventions of the pastoral were considered by the courtier to be charming

ornaments, and Molière used them, including an imitation of Horace in The Magnificent Lovers, with much charm and grace in his court productions. Pastoral scenes ornamented a number of his character comedies, and several of his comedy-ballets are almost entirely pastoral in form. Like the thirteenth-century balladeer who satirized the esprit courtois romances of chivalry, however, Molière, in some very effective comic instances, held the pastoral up to ridicule.

Pastoral drama was a manifestation of the literary activity and the expanding professionalism that occurred in the sixteenth-century French theatre. But France trailed Italy, Spain, and England in the development of a national theatre of its own--in staging, acting, and a powerful dramatic literature. Theatre was stifled or neglected partly because throughout the sixteenth century political and religious strife divided the country and so drained it of energy and resources that little attention could be devoted to the arts. Also, the strict theatre monopoly held by the Confrérie in Paris severely limited dramatic activities in France's major city. By the 1570's, however, plays were being written, and groups of strolling players in the provinces were beginning to form permanent professional companies. By 1578 the Confrérie had begun to lease its playhouse to touring companies. Although the Confrérie still prevented regular dramatic activity in Paris and environs except in its own house, it had no control over court performances, fairs, and the thriving street theatres.

Sixteenth-century court entertainments continued, but in a somewhat more modest manner than that promoted by Catherine de'Medici. There was no male successor to Henri III, the last of Catherine's sons, and the

crown passed to the Bourbon Henri de Navarre (Henry IV, reigned 1589-1610). Because of civil disorders during Henri's reign, the Duc de Sully, Superintendent of Finance, persuaded the King to put an end to expensive and ostentatious court spectacles and to support mainly simple medieval-style ballet-mascarades and burlesques. Michel Lecomte, dancing master during the reigns of Henri IV and Louis XIII, worked on these court entertainments. His collaborator was the court composer Claude Lejeune (c. 1525-1600). The "grand bande" or Vingt-quatre Violons du Roi (the twenty-four member royal string orchestra), which Lejeune headed, played most of the dance music for the courts of Henri IV and Louis XIII. Lejeune, despite Sully's economies, aspired to the highest ideals of the poets Ronsard and Baïf who had written verses for his earlier mascarades, and he aimed at creating unified productions in which poetry, dancing, and scenic display shared in importance with the music.

While ballet productions were the dominant diversion at court, Henri IV, who was fond of visiting the booths and sideshows of the Parisian fairs, granted a special license in 1595 for performances at Saint Germain (Figure 7) in the spring and Saint Laurent in the autumn. The Parisian théâtres de la foire offered entertainments much like earlier popular forms--juggling and tumbling, and an occasional farce with singing and dancing. The fair theatre was little more sophisticated than the street theatre which consisted of the amusements provided by vendors who hawked their wares in the city streets and on the Pont-Neuf (Figure 8), especially the charlatans, like the one in Molière's Love's the Best Doctor, whose singing and dancing were accessory to medicine selling (Figure 9).

These minor theatrical forms and the theatrical activity in the

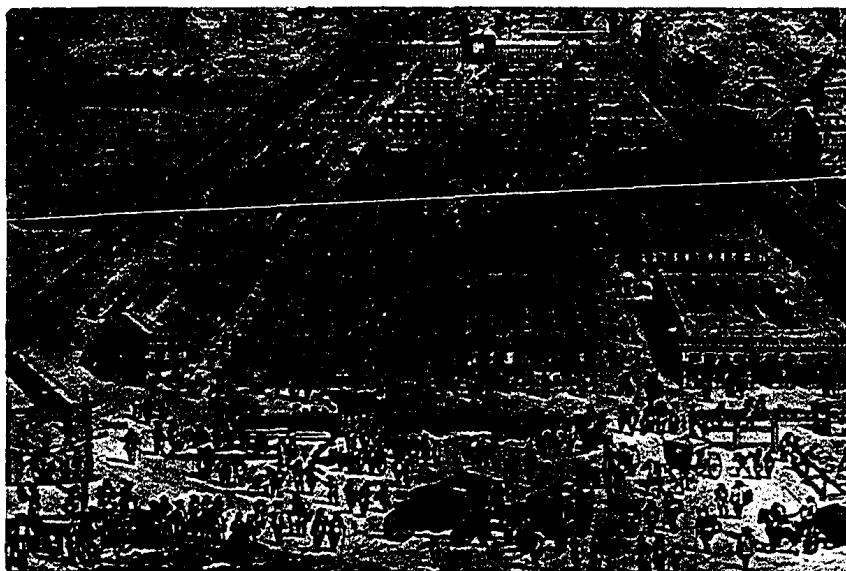


Figure 7. Fair of Saint-Germain



Figure 8. Pont-Neuf



Figure 9. French charlatans

provinces provided a training ground for actors. In 1598 the Hôtel de Bourgogne was leased to a company headed by Valleran Lecomte (fl. 1590--c. 1613), one of the most outstanding early French professionals, an actor who came to Paris after a successful career in the provinces. The Lecomte company's leading playwright was Alexandre Hardy, a writer of tragedies, as mentioned earlier, tragi-comedies, and pastorals. Although he wrote no pure comedies, there are comic incidents in the plays of intrigue he based on Spanish and Italian models. Sometimes lyric choruses occur, and some of his plays have been called operas without music.<sup>24</sup>

The most popular actors in the early part of the seventeenth century, however, did not depend heavily on playwrights for their material. They were the farceurs: from the fairs, Bruscabille (fl. 1610-1634) and his partner Jean Farine (fl. 1600-1635); the three at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, Turlupin (c. 1587-1637, called Henri le Grand) who played Arlequino parts, Gaultier-Garguille (c. 1573-1633, Hughes Guéru) who played Dottore parts and sang,<sup>25</sup> and Gros-Guillaume (fl. 1600-1634, Robert Guérin) who played Pantalone parts (Figures 10 and 11); and the clown on the Pont-Neuf and at the Place Dauphiné, Tabarin (? - 1626; Figures 12 and 13). Only with the serious acting of Bellerose, who appeared in pastorals and tragi-comedies, did farce such as that of Guillot-Gorju (1600-1648) become secondary (Figure 14).

While the groundwork was being laid for an actively professional public theatre, court theatre also had a new burst of energy. In 1610

<sup>24</sup>Lancaster, Part I, I, 58.

<sup>25</sup>Chansons de Gaultier Garguille, Paris, 1858.



Figure 10. Characters at the Hôtel de Bourgogne: a Frenchman, Turlupin, Gaultier-Garguille, Gros-Guillaume, a Courtesan, the Spanish Captain



Figure 11. Hôtel de Bourgogne farce actors



Figure 12. Tabarbin's Street Show in the  
Place Dauphiné (Abraham Bosse)



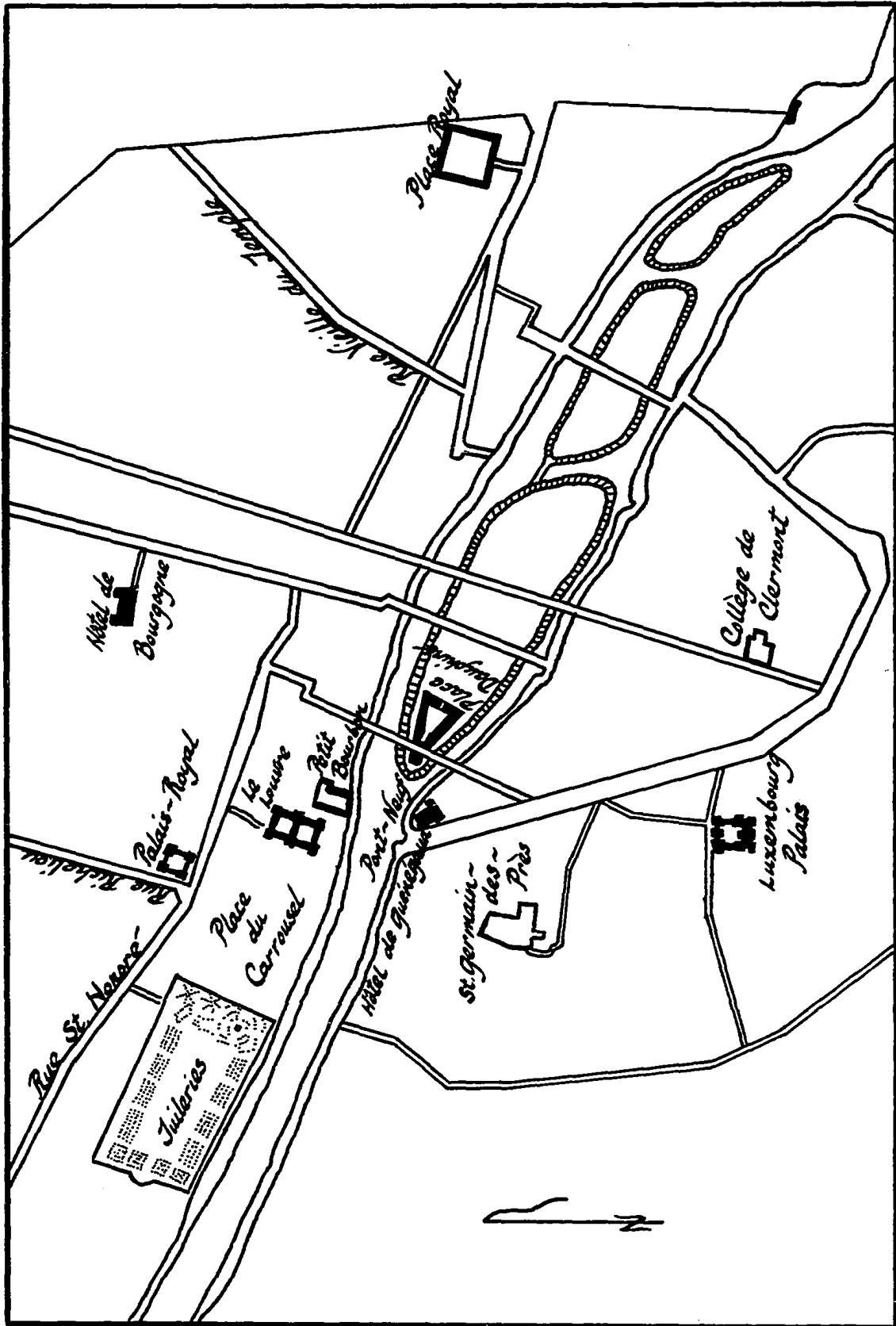


Figure 13. Map of Paris



Figure 14. Composite of seventeenth-century comic actors

Henri IV was assassinated, and because his son, Louis, was only nine, the Queen Mother, Marie de'Medici, became Regent. Marie, like Catherine before her an avid ballet patron and participant, revived the ballet de cour in all its splendor. The ballet de cour received additional stimulation from advances being made in musical expression through Italian opera.<sup>26</sup> Under the Italian influence, ballets-mélodramatiques with expressive singing became fashionable in France. They included récits set to music and the new airs de cour (solo songs more musically sophisticated than the vaudevilles and more dramatically useful than the polyphonic compositions previously in vogue). They had simple esprit courtois plots based on antiquity or knightly tales and were usually written in four or five acts. Recited verses were eliminated. The first of these ballets-mélodramatiques was the Ballet de Monsieur de Vendosme (or Ballet d'Alcine, 1610) that had the sorceress Alcina as its subject, a subject later to be used for The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (1664) in which Molière participated. The most successful ballet-mélodramatique was the Ballet de la délivrance de Renaud, the story of Renaud and Armide, performed at the Louvre in January, 1617, by the sixteen year old Louis XIII and by the most prominent nobles of the court, with the Duc de Luynes, Intendant des plaisirs, as Renaud (Figures 15 and 16). What was lacking in acting ability was compensated for by masks, elaborate costumes, and the scenic

<sup>26</sup>At the beginning of the seventeenth century in Italy, opera ("work" in music) resulted from the experiments of the Camerata, a group of Florentine noblemen, poets, and musicians, not unlike the earlier French Pléiade. In an attempt to recreate Greek tragedy, which in their opinion had originally been for the greater part recited to music, they developed a music drama of which Dafne (1597-1598) and Euridice (1600) by composer Jacopo Peri (1561-1633) and librettist Ottavio Rinuccini (1562-1621) are the first major examples.

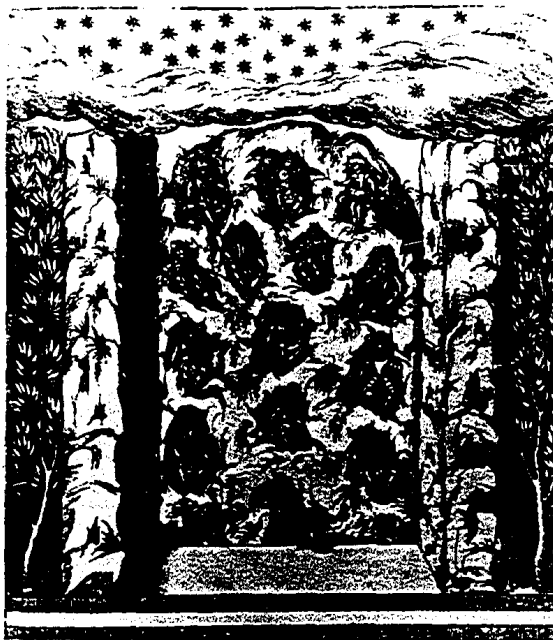


Figure 15. Ballet de la délivrance de Renaud (1617),  
"La montagne des demons" (The King and twelve gentlemen)



Figure 16. Ballet de la délivrance de Renaud,  
"Les monstres metamorphosés"

devices of Tomaso and Alessandro Francini, machinists.<sup>27</sup> The emphasis, as with the famous Ballet comique de la reine, was on dramatic unity. The music was composed by Pierre Guédron (1565-1621), who succeeded Claude Lejeune and was a frequent collaborator of the poet François de Malherbe (1558-1628) on court ballets. Because Guédron showed a strong inclination for vigorous, dramatic music and the extensive use of solo singing, he is considered an important precursor of Lully and French opera. The movement toward French opera eventually promoted and included the comedy-ballets, but this progress was slow and hesitating.

The interest in dramatic ballets declined by about 1620. Antoine Boesset (1585-1643), who had assisted Guédron on such court ballets as the Ballet de la délivrance de Renaud, succeeded to the post of leading court composer. His music lacked the dramatic qualities of Guédron's but provided significant advances in musical technique, thus helping to open the way for Lully. Music which had earlier existed mainly to accompany dancing began to have a stature of its own. Fortunately, Boesset's less dramatic approach to ballet music coincided with the notions of the newly appointed intendant des plaisirs. When the Duc de Luynes died in 1621, he was replaced by the Duc de Nemours who preferred more diversified ballet scenes and farce rather than dramatic continuity. Ballets-mélodramatiques were supplanted by the freer and gayer ballet à entrée, a more elaborate version of the earlier ballet-mascarade. This new type of ballet de cour consisted of a series of sometimes unrelated dances and spectacular tableaux, although usually a unifying theme was chosen to tie

<sup>27</sup>From this time a primitive type of changeable scenery began to supplant the simultaneous stage of the Ballet comique de la reine.

the ballet-entrées together. The order of the ballet was: an instrumental overture, generally ten to thirty ballet-entrées, and a Grand Ballet finale. While new forms were being absorbed into the music of the ballet de cour, dancing was also becoming more complex, with professional dancers beginning to appear in greater numbers. Marais, Louis XIII's court buffoon, was the leading dancer of the day. In 1626 he played the part of the Grand Turk in La Douairière de Billebahout (Figure 17) and danced alongside the King. From earliest times, but especially in the seventeenth century, the most talented and successful professionals--dancers, musicians, poets--became associated with court entertainments. Years after Marais, Lully served a similar function: his buffooneries amused Louis XIV, and in The Would-be Gentleman (1670) he even played a role similar to Marais's Turk.

Farce was never uncommon in the ballet de cour and comical interludes were often mixed with serious dancing. The farceurs Guérin and Turlupin had appeared in court ballets. The ballet-burlesque, in which farce was predominant, was a very popular variation of the court ballet between 1620 and 1636. An example of this form is La Douairière de Billebahout (verses and music by a number of people, but Boesset was the leading composer). The ridiculous Douairière (dowager) and her lover, the Fanfan de Sotteville (an ancestor of Monsieur and Madame Sotenville in Molière's George Dandin), invite the most prominent rulers from the four corners of the earth to attend a ball.<sup>28</sup> Supposedly the Douairière was intended to ridicule Marguerite de Valois, the first wife of Henri IV, a satire that

<sup>28</sup>Figure 18. The costume designs for this ballet were by Daniel Rabel. Henry Gissey, during the time of Molière, followed the notions of Rabel concerning unified design.



Figure 17. La Douairière de Billebahout (1626)  
the Grand Turk (Marais)



Figure 18. La Douairière de Billebahout  
(a) La Douairière and (b) her Lover

would have amused Marie de'Medici before she was exiled from court by Louis XIII's chief minister, Cardinal Richelieu, in 1630. There are several entrées in this ballet that have parallels in The Would-be Gentleman: the exotic yet absurd Turkish antics and the Spanish sarabande. Ballet-burlesques, such as La Douairière de Billebahout, with their combination of courtly elegance and lively Gallic spirit established a pattern Molière was to follow in entertaining the court with his comedy-ballets.

Another noteworthy court ballet in the comic style during this period was the Ballet des effets de la nature (1632). The ballet begins with cooks who carry culinary utensils in preparation for a village wedding and dance to a playful air, characters who bring to mind the cooks of The Would-be Gentleman. Each entrée of Effets de la nature has something to do with a wedding celebration, but the ballet has no plot. This production was one of the first ballets to be performed in a public theatre to a paying audience. After its court performance, it and the Ballet de l'harmonie were produced by an enterprising machinist and fireworks maker (artificier du roi), Horace Morel, at the tennis court (jeu de paume) that was to become the Théâtre du Marais. Neither of these ballets nor a subsequent production in 1633, Les Cinq sens de la nature, however, was a success. Ballet was not popular in the public theatre until Molière's comedy-ballets.

Guillaume Colletet (1596-1659) wrote the Morel ballets. Court poet of many royal divertissements, Colletet had devised a Ballet of Nations in 1622 that preceded Molière's by fifty years. And he had many of the same problems Molière was later to encounter. He "lamented that 'people think of the steps, cadences, tunes, mechanical effects, and costumes'



before calling on him at the last minute, allowing him three days instead of the three weeks he feels are necessary."<sup>29</sup> When Molière was later to receive only fifteen or five days to prepare a comedy-ballet libretto, therefore, such short notice was not an unusual occurrence.

Despite the failure of Morel and Colletet's works on the public stage, burlesque ballets continued to be presented occasionally, sometimes to replace the traditional farce before the presentation of a play. For example, a burlesque ballet was performed with Pierre Corneille's first play, Mélite, in 1634 by Guillaume Montdory's troupe at the Théâtre du Marais.

Montdory led the acting company, which had been giving performances sporadically in Paris since about 1600 in violation of the theatre monopoly, to settle in 1634 on the Rue Vieille du Temple: the Théâtre du Marais (Figure 13). The Marais, in competition with the Hôtel de Bourgogne, whose actors had been given the official title and position of Comédiens du Roi in 1629, produced many of Corneille's plays, including his early comedies,<sup>30</sup> with Montdory as the leading actor. Corneille, who had contributed verses to court entertainments such as the Ballet du Château de Bicêtre (1632), was perhaps the most important playwright prior to Molière in the development of French comedy. His comedies, more substantial than earlier farces and less stilted than imitations of the ancients, focused on characters and situations of everyday contemporary

<sup>29</sup>Marie-Françoise Christout, "The Court Ballet in France," p. 13.

<sup>30</sup>La Veuve (1631), La Galerie du palais (1632), La Suivante (1633), La Place royale (1633), and L'illusion comique (1636). Corneille's best comedy, Le Menteur, appeared there in 1643.

French life. They were an outgrowth in part of the new phase of neo-classicism (1625-1636) that gave renewed life to playwriting but only too soon involved Corneille in a raging controversy over his tragi-comedy Le Cid (1636). Jean Chapelain (1595-1674), poet and literary arbiter of taste who set down rules of dramatic composition in the 1630's, objected to Corneille's apparent violations of these neo-classical rules; he spoke on behalf of the Académie Française, which had been established in 1635 by Cardinal Richelieu to honor distinguished men of letters and to provide a forum for considering such questions. Molière never became a member of the Académie. He would never abandon acting to become a "respectable" author, and as an author he never seemed much concerned about rules. He took what was useful from the comedy of Corneille and other French playwrights of the time,<sup>31</sup> added his own sense of humor and genius for satire, and eclipsed most of the venerated academicians. But his predecessor, the great Corneille, was worthy of such an academy. Corneille continued writing in spite of Le Cid's adverse criticism, and became, as will be discussed shortly, a leader in French musical theatre.

in the 1640's the Hôtel de Bourgogne began to concentrate on tragedy with such leading actors as Bellerose (c. 1600-1670) and Montfleury (1600-1667) and with more actresses than had been used in French theatre before; the Marais presented the great actor Floridor (later with the Hôtel de Bourgogne) and the comic Jodelet (later with Molière's troupe), and then

<sup>31</sup>Among them were Jean Rotrou (1609-1650), official dramatist at the Hôtel de Bourgogne after Hardy, Paul Scarron (1610-1660), whose comedies written between 1645 and 1655 were more comic than any other playwright before Molière, Thomas Corneille (1625-1709), Pierre's brother whose writing began in 1647, the prolific Abbé Boisrobert (1592-1662), and Philippe Quinault (1635-1688).

concentrated on spectacles (pièces à machines) such as Chapoton's Descente d'Orphée aux enfers (1640) and Rotrou's La Naissance d'Hercule (1649) accompanied by music; and Cardinal Mazarin tried to institute Italian opera at court. Theatrical activity prospered more than ever before.

Since the late sixteenth century, Italian entertainments had been very popular, especially with the court. On the invitation of Louis XIII, Guiseppe Bianchi (called Capitano Spezzaferro on the stage) and his troupe of commedia dell'arte performers came to Paris in 1639. Tiberio Fiorillo, the famous Scaramouche who later performed at Molière's theatre, was probably by that time a member of the company. Louis XIII's minister Cardinal Richelieu, who loved classical drama and spectacles, built an Italianate theatre in 1641, the Palais-Cardinal,<sup>32</sup> to accommodate court entertainments for the King. When Richelieu died in 1642 he was succeeded by Cardinal Mazarin, a politician who also knew the advantages of lavish court entertainments. They enchanted Queen Anne, who was widowed in 1643, and Mazarin further solidified his influence on the Regency by promoting them. He sent for musical performers from Italy,

<sup>32</sup>See Chapter VIII: Theatres and Scenery. The Palais-Cardinal, which later became famous as Molière's theatre (the Palais-Royal), was inaugurated with Jean Desmaretz's spectacle Mirame (January, 1641; Figure 19), followed by his Ballet de la prospérité des armes de France (February, 1641). Desmaretz complied with the trend of the late 1630's, presumably instigated by Cardinal Richelieu, of writing relatively serious court pieces which flattered the monarchy. In honor of the birth of Louis "Dieudonné" (Louis XIV), he had written the Ballet de la félicité (1639) in this style. Although known for his character comedies such as Les Visionnaires (1637), he apparently had not the inclination or the opportunity to mix comedy and spectacle as the first playwright of the Palais. But his comic characters foreshadow Molière's gallery of fools: they have misconceptions about themselves because of some dominating obsession. They think themselves to be brave when actually they are cowardly, or adored when actually ridiculed.



Figure 19. Mirame at the Palais-Cardinal (1641)

and brought to France the scene designer Giacomo Torelli.

Attempting to supplant the ballet de cour with Italian opera, Mazarin commissioned Torelli and the Bianchi troupe in 1645 to produce Giulio Strozzi's La Finta pazza or La Folle feinte (The False Loon) at the Petit-Bourbon. La Finta pazza, a comedy in five acts with songs and spoken verses, included absurd antics similar to those seen at the fairs, and dances of monkeys and bears, ostriches, and Indians with parrots.<sup>33</sup> The music was by Sacrati. Although the choreographer, Balbi, was a Medici dancer trained in the classic style, the dances were in the *commedia dell'arte* tradition. Their vitality and their grotesque and exaggerated movements delighted the little Louis Dieudonné as the similarly-styled dancing in Molière's comedy-ballets delighted the King twenty years later. The Italians also played Orfeo (Orphée), an Italian-style opera, in 1647 before leaving Paris because of the Frondist disturbances. Luigi Rossi wrote the music, which includes some comic airs, and the Abbé Francesco Buti of Rome the libretto. Torelli remodeled the Salle du Petit-Bourbon to house his machines for the production. Orfeo was lavish and expensive; the Frondeurs denounced it as an example of the Regency government's excesses.

In 1654, after the Fronde was subdued, Mazarin, hoping to recapture the spectacular qualities of Orfeo, promoted the Nozze di Peleo e di Theti (Noces de Pélée et de Thetis), with music by Carlo Caproli, libretto by the Abbé Buti, verses for the characters of the ballet by Isaac Benserade, and the whole production under the supervision of the Comte (later Duc) de Saint-Aignan. There was French opposition from the beginning, however,

<sup>33</sup>Rolland, pp. 244-245. Works performed in France in Italian were also known by their French titles.

to Italian musical productions. Mersenne contrasted the violence of Italian music with the sweetness of the French.<sup>34</sup> The sumptuous spectacles of Torelli were a popular novelty, but the French disliked the Italian opera because it was too emotional and in a language they could not understand.

Some French writers were beginning to consider the possibility of an indigenous musical spectacle or opera. The Abbé de Mailly wrote a tragedy with music, Achebar, roi du Mogol, for Cardinal Bichy in 1646. In 1650, Corneille prepared a tragedy with spectacle and music, Andromède,<sup>35</sup> which was performed at the Petit-Bourbon by the Marais actors. With its classical subject and elegant poetry it was a forerunner of French opera, but the music, by the vagabond Assouci, was secondary to Torelli's machines. Corneille failed at this point to see the dramatic value of music. He said:

. . . I have employed music only to satisfy the ears of the spectators while the eyes are occupied with looking at the machines . . . . But I have been careful to have nothing sung that is essential to the understanding of the play because words which are sung are in general badly understood . . . .<sup>36</sup>

Corneille wrote another musical production, La Conquête de la Toison d'or, in 1660 in honor of Louis XIV's marriage. It was produced by the Marquis de Sourdeac, who was later involved in the beginnings of French opera, and performed by the actors of the Marais. The composer is unknown, but even

<sup>34</sup>II, 357.

<sup>35</sup>Tiersot, pp. 20-34. Andromeda had been the subject of several Italian musical productions--Venice in 1637 and Ferrara in 1638--and Torelli's influence on the French version was probably considerable.

<sup>36</sup>Pierre Corneille, Oeuvres (Paris, 1862-1925), V, 3-4.

less music was used than for Andromède. With this experience, however, Corneille was an obvious candidate to complete Molière's tragi-comedy-ballet Psyché in 1671.

More interested than Corneille in producing a music drama to French tastes was the Abbé Pierre Perrin (1620-1675), poet and introduceur des ambassadeurs for Louis XIII's brother. He engaged a composer of considerable position to assist him: Robert Cambert (1628-1677), surintendant de la musique for Queen Anne. Together they produced a musical Pastorale in 1659 at the house of M. de la Haye (Queen Anne's maître d'hôtel) in the village of Issy. The music is lost. The libretto is more idyllic than dramatic, but the work is described in Perrin's works as the "first French comedy in music presented in France."<sup>37</sup> While obviously not the first play with music, the Pastorale d'Issy was very popular with court society and was a significant step in the development of French opera. Perrin and Cambert projected two more music dramas in 1661, but their work was cut short by the death of Mazarin.

Mazarin's last attempt to further Italian opera in France was sponsoring the work of the Venetian composer Francesco Cavalli. Cavalli's Serse (Xerxes) was produced in 1660 for the marriage of Louis XIV, his Ercole amante (Hercule amoureux) in 1662 for the Peace of the Pyrenees. These operas were well-received, however, mainly because of the ballet-entrées written by Lully and Benserade that were performed between the acts. The last act of Ercole amante had a finale of twenty-one ballet-entrées.

<sup>37</sup>Charles Parry, The Music of the Seventeenth Century (London, 1938), p. 225.

The 1650's saw a resurgence of interest in the ballet de cour, partly as a reaction against Italian music drama and partly because artists of considerable gifts appeared at this time. The poet Isaac Benserade (1612-1691) revitalized the ballet de cour with elegant verses and dramatic substance. He reinstated a trend toward unified plots and themes. The first musician to contribute to the revival of the ballet was Jean de Cambefort (1605-1661), a court composer since the 1630's and surintendant de la musique du roi. Jean-Baptiste Lully, who was to become Molière's major collaborator and the most esteemed composer of his time, provided the music for court ballets from 1654. Added to this group of professional artists in the 1650's was the great dancer-choreographer Pierre Beauchamps. The ballet was enthusiastically pursued by these talented men because it was the favorite entertainment of young Louis, who began appearing in ballet productions in 1651. The most elaborate production of the period was Benserade's Ballet de la nuit (1653) in which the King appeared as the Sun (Figure 20). The music was by Cambefort, choreography by Beauchamps, and Lully danced alongside Louis XIV. Molière, then trouping in southern France, very likely knew of this ballet, and he performed in a provincial court ballet himself only two years later.<sup>38</sup>

As ballets continued to be produced throughout the 1650's a conflict developed within the ballet itself between Italian and French styles. In 1657 Lully produced Amor malato (Ballet de l'Amour malade), a comic ballet with libretto by Buti and Benserade, which is almost an Italian comedy with singing and dancing. Amor is looked after in his sickness by Time,

<sup>38</sup>See Chapter V: Related Works - Ballet of the Incompatibles.





Figure 20. Ballet de la nuit (1653),  
Louis XIV as the Sun

Disdain, and Reason. They comment in Italian on each of the groups (ballet-entrées) who offer him a cure. The Scaramouche finale is a doctoral initiation ceremony that anticipates The Imaginary Invalid in its lively buffooneries. With its Italian verses and Italian-styled characters, Amour malade displeased the advocates of a more refined, intelligible ballet. They countered with the Ballet de plaisirs troublés, produced by the Duc de Guise, with music and verses by Louis de Mollier and choreography by Beauchamps. But the Ballet de plaisirs troublés is little more than a collection of colorful ballet-entrées, each being interrupted, or disturbed, by the next. While the structural principle of Plaisirs troublés recurs in Molière's first comedy-ballet, The Bores (1661), the spirit of the comedy-ballets in general is closer to Amour malade. The elegance of Beauchamp's entrées and the dramatic continuity and verve of Lully's Italian ballet needed only the esprit gaulois comedy of Molière for the comedy-ballet to be created.

As mentioned, ballets sometimes had comic interludes. An entrée could be a non-balletic pantomime, especially the entrées bouffonnes of demons, satyrs, savages, and so forth. In 1655 a one-act farce by Boisrobert, Amant ridicule, was inserted into the Ballet des plaisirs (Benserade, Lully with Jean-Baptiste Boisset, and Beauchamps), danced at the Louvre with Louis XIV as one of the performers. The little play was performed in the ballet as one of the "divertissemens de la Ville."<sup>39</sup> Molière simply reversed the process; he began with a play and inserted ballet into it. But that approach was not even new with Molière. Plays with songs and dances, as has been seen, had long existed. A number of

<sup>39</sup>Lancaster, Part III, I, 57-58.

plays immediately before Molière contained single ballet-entrées, such as Durval's L'Agarite (1636) and Rotrou's La Belle Alphrède (1634). Noces de Vaugirard (1638) had dances and an instrumental serenade. A piece entitled Comédie des chansons, which has been attributed to Charles de Beys, was given in 1640 with currently popular airs. One of the most extensive uses of music was in Sallebray's Belle égyptienne (1642), with its singing and dancing gypsies.<sup>40</sup> The anonymous L'Inconstant vaincu (1644) is a pastoral with songs. Assouci published his pastoral, Les Amours d'Apollon et Daphné, a "comédie en musique," in 1650 (the same year as Andromède), although it may never have been performed. In 1655 the actors of the Marais produced with songs and machines the Comédie sans comédie by Quinault, the playwright who would collaborate with Molière on Psyché in 1671 and as Lully's opera librettist for many years. La Fontaine had a little comedy, Rieurs du Beau Richard, performed at Château-Thierry in 1659 with singing and dancing at the end.

The comedy-ballet evolved from the prevailing theatrical conditions and court tastes of the 1660's. Comedy in the 1660's was Molière's domain. During his professional career in Paris, 1659-1673, he and his troupe came to be the undisputed leading actors of comedy. They overshadowed the Italian comedians as well as the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, who included some comedies in their repertory of tragedies. Molière's comedy was equally popular at court and on the public stage. In both theatres, however, spectacle was also in great demand. Royal ballets and mascarades were being produced at court and pièces à machines at the

<sup>40</sup>Lancaster, Part II, II, 411-413.

Théâtre du Marais. While dancing and spectacular stage effects continued to dazzle the theatre-goer, a musically sophisticated French opera began to emerge. The comedy-ballets combined the comedy of Molière, the ballet of the court (a Lully-Beauchamps compromise), and the musical techniques later to be employed in Lully's operas.

Except for the music and dancing, Molière's comedy-ballets are not very different from his other plays. They are basically in the tradition of the farce, but tempered by the pastoral, Italian comedy of character, Spanish comedy of intrigue, and French literary comedy. The addition of songs and dances can be seen as a harking back to the roots of French comic theatre, an idea as old as the chante-fable. Through the comedy-ballets Molière became the jongleur and the trouvère, the mère-sotte and the law clerk, the farceur and the charlatan. He produced more cultivated versions of the jeu, the moralité, the sottie, and the farce with vaudevilles, but his entrées are not unlike the actor's "number" of the farce à un personnage. He produced more dramatic versions of the mystère mimé and the ballet-burlesque; and, unlike court performers whose entertainments separated the acts of neo-classical comedy or opera, he attempted to integrate the intermèdes with the fiber of the play. Molière became a singer and a dancer as well as a poet and a farceur. And the comedy-ballets were a thoroughly professionally conceived theatrical form, even though the King and some of his courtiers participated occasionally in the dancing and a nobleman supervised most of the court fetes in which Molière's productions appeared. Lully, a baseborn Florentine who won professional recognition, was an excellent collaborator, for in the 1660's he had not yet reached the degree of refinement that would eventually cause him to remove all broad humor from his operas, or tragédies-lyriques

as they were called. As creators of court entertainments, Molière and Lully followed the lead of Adam de la Halle, Gringore, Baïf, Beaujoyeux, Lejeune, Colletet, and Benserade, all of whom tried to achieve unified productions of artistic quality. The comedy-ballets represented a reuniting of comedy, music, and dancing after each discipline had been separately developed under professional specialists. Molière was not the first professional actor to participate in ballet productions.<sup>41</sup> Nor was he the first playwright to mix comedy and music and dancing. But he was unique in producing comedies of substance in which music and dance play an integral part, entertainments that, unlike most of the popular and courtly theatre before him, would last beyond one evening's amusement.

<sup>41</sup>In addition to the examples already cited is the Ballet fait par la troupe de Bellerose, January 27, 1636 (McGowan, p. 303).

## CHAPTER II

### LOUIS XIV AND MOLIERE: THE COMEDY-BALLETS IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT<sup>1</sup>

Molière spent a sizable portion of his career performing for and catering to noble patrons and an audience of France's "people of quality" (personnes de qualité). But his greatest honor was the support of Louis XIV and the privilege of appearing before the King's court. Court approval was the ultimate reward.

MOLIERE [as himself]: Didn't I obtain for my comedy  
all I hoped for it, since it had the good fortune  
to amuse the distinguished people I particularly  
wanted to please?

#### The Impromptu at Versailles

Although other performers entertained at court, the King summoned Molière and his troupe between 1664 and 1672 for most of the important fetes and holiday celebrations. Molière met the challenge to amuse and to provide vehicles for displaying the splendor of France by producing on these occasions the comedy-ballets. The court audience, even some of the performers, for Molière's comedy-ballets consisted of a glittering dramatis personae--France's leading political-social figures.

The eyes of the western world focused with awe upon the seventeenth-century court of Louis XIV, a court frequently "in progress" and well-publicized through letters sent and stories brought away by foreign

<sup>1</sup>Figure 13 (Map of Paris) and Figure 21 (Map of France) serve as general references for this chapter.



J. Dal

Figure 21. Map of France



### Key to Cities and Chateaus

- City  
 † Chateau
- 1 Dover
  - 2 Dunkerque
  - 3 Lille
  - 4 Lens
  - 5 Arras
  - 6 Valenciennes
  - 7 Aix-la-Chapelle
  - 8 Sotheville-sur-Mer
  - 9 Rouen
  - 10 Sotheville
  - 11 Saint-Germain-en-Laye
  - 12 Versailles
  - 13 Vaux-le-Vicomte
  - 14 Fontainebleau
  - 15 Compiègne
  - 16 Villers-Cotterêts
  - 17 Reims
  - 18 Chantilly
  - 19 Saint-Pol-de-Léon
  - 20 Nantes
  - 21 Chambord
  - 22 Blois
  - 23 Limoges
  - 24 Solignac
  - 25 Angoulême
  - 26 Montpellier
  - 27 Pézenas
  - 28 Narbonne
  - 29 Perpignan
  - 30 Lyon
  - 31 Pignèrol
  - 32 Belle-Ile
  - 33 Auteuil
  - 34 Vincennes
  - 35 La Raincy

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visitors, as well as engravings and written accounts of its activities.<sup>2</sup> Louis's most significant political and cultural achievements were embodied in his court. The leading French nobles were his courtiers, subjected to him as servants of the royal household and as soldiers of the royal army. The leading professionals of the day were retainers of the court as part of the government or the royal household, if only in honorary positions. The King's greatness lay in his ability to select talented people and to evoke their most devoted service to the state. The sun around which other heavenly bodies revolved is the metaphor often used to describe Louis XIV, the Sun King, with his courtiers and the outstanding men of politics, letters, and the arts in his service. Louis became the inspiration as well as the object of everyone's efforts. To serve him was an integral part of the national mystique. And the King, by extending royal patronage to the finest talents of the time and bringing them to his court, could use them to his own advantage. When an accomplished actor and playwright like Molière performed at court, he not only diverted the King but reflected the King's gloire at the same time. Such a performance and the glamorous audience assembled to witness it proclaimed to the world the magnificence of the Roi Soleil. Because lavish entertainments were part of the King's early scheme of rule, Molière served the King particularly

<sup>2</sup>A number of publications existed in France at this time. The official voice of the court was La Gazette de France (founded in 1631), which reported with extravagant praise political and military news and court events. Court gossip was carried in La Muse historique (1650-1665), a journal with rhymed accounts of personalities and occasions at court written by Jean Loret (1600-1665), a protégé of Mazarin and the King's cousin Mlle de Montpensier. Charles Robinet (1626-1698) wrote and published regular news "letters" in verse (to Madame, Monsieur, and so forth), that included reports of court functions. In 1672, Jean Donneau de Visé founded Le Mercure galant, another gossip sheet.

well. But Molière and his entertainments were only part of the larger spectacle that was the court of Louis XIV. Court life itself was a magnificent production--arranged and artificial--with Louis XIV as the star attraction, "the finest actor of royalty the world has ever seen."<sup>3</sup> Art and life became almost inseparable, and this performance succeeded in dazzling France and the western world for half a century.

Political events during the Regency before Louis's personal reign provoked the King to create a court that encompassed all the important people of France. In order to understand the noble assemblage for whom Molière performed and the significance of his royal patronage, therefore, it is necessary to review these events. Although never involved in politics, Molière was closely associated with the histoire galante of the mid-seventeenth-century beau monde.

Louis XIV's life had an auspicious beginning. His birth, on September 5, 1638 at Saint-Germain-en-Laye was considered a remarkable occurrence because his parents, Louis XIII and the Spanish Queen Anne d'Autriche,<sup>4</sup> hostile toward one another, had been childless for twenty-three years of marriage. With the arrival of this God-given Dauphin (called "Dieudonné"), France entered into a hopeful new era.

On May 14, 1643 Louis XIII died and, because of his heir's age (Louis XIV was not quite five years old), the councilors and Parlement designated Anne, Queen Mother, as Regent and the Richelieu-trained

<sup>3</sup>W. H. Lewis, The Splendid Century (New York, 1957), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>So-named after her grandmother Anne of Austria, who married Felipe II of Spain.

Italian cardinal Jules Mazarin as Chief Minister. The first major problem the Regency confronted was to secure the frontiers of France for the future King, to settle the long struggle in which France had been engaged with Spain and the German Hapsburgs (Thirty Years' War). Finally, in August, 1648, the great French soldier the Prince de Condé<sup>5</sup> led a decisive victory over the Spaniards at Lens, and the Peace of Westphalia was concluded, bringing the war to an end. France's eastern border was extended but the victory had been bought at a tremendous price. The people were weary of war and taxes, and in fact the conflict was not settled. Fighting between France and Spain continued for another decade, and civil strife erupted in Paris immediately, creating an impression on the boy-king he would never forget.

Louis learned at an early age about dangers that threatened monarchical power. He must have realized that his mother mistrusted his uncle Gaston<sup>6</sup> and his cousins the Condés, whose claims to the throne were thwarted by his birth and who stood in line to inherit if he and his younger brother Philippe (b. 1640) did not survive. Louis knew what happened when revolutionaries took power: in England his uncle Charles I had been executed and his aunt Henriette<sup>7</sup> with her two sons and daughter had fled to France for asylum. Also, Louis must have been aware of the general hatred the French had for Mazarin, whom they considered to be a

<sup>5</sup>Louis, the "Grand Condé" or "Monsieur le Prince" (1621-1686), was Louis XIV's cousin, a member of the cadet line of the house of Bourbon. He had a politically arranged marriage with one of Richelieu's nieces.

<sup>6</sup>Jean-Baptiste Gaston, Duc d'Orléans (1608-1660), younger brother of Louis XIII.

<sup>7</sup>Henrietta-Maria, daughter of Henry IV of France, sister of Louis XIII.

despicable foreigner with too much power. But the series of events that clearly put Louis's future in jeopardy was the revolt of the Frondeurs.

The Fronde (the "Sling," named in ridicule from a children's game of flinging stones) was an attempt by Mazarin's strongest enemies to reduce the power of the central government, a civil war that occurred in two phases. The First Fronde (Parlementaires, 1648-1649) broke out after Condé's victory at Lens. Parlement had always been hostile to Mazarin's policy of central control in the hands of the Regent and Chief Minister, who acted on behalf of the King; and Mazarin took the end of the war as an opportunity to arrest his most outspoken critics, an action which led to great disorders in Paris. Joining the opposition to the Cardinal were the Prince de Conti, the Duc de Longueville, and the Duc de Beaufort.<sup>8</sup> The young Louis had to be taken in secret out of the Palais-Royal and away from the city to protect his life. When Condé, who remained loyal to the crown, returned with his army to the capital, he surrounded Paris and starved the rebellious city into surrender.

The Second Fronde (Princes, 1649-1652) was led by Condé himself, who recognized his importance to the Regency and demanded extensive concessions as reward for putting down the revolt. Mazarin had Condé, Conti, and Longueville arrested in 1650. But Condé's great influence forced Mazarin to release the Princes, while Gaston and his daughter Mlle de Montpensier (called "Mademoiselle") joined the rebellion. Mazarin and his followers, assisted by Maréchal Turenne who opposed Condé, defeated the Fronde only

<sup>8</sup>The Prince de Conti and the Duc de Longueville were brother and brother-in-law of Condé. The families of both Longueville and Vendôme-Beaufort issued from bastard children of former kings and were both related by marriage to legitimate cadet lines of the royal family.

by avoiding direct conflict, including a withdrawal by Mazarin from Paris, by buying off a number of the key Frondeurs, and by waiting long enough for the jealousies among the nobles and against Parlement to weaken their position. The people, despite their dislike for Mazarin, remained loyal to the boy-king. Louis, at age fourteen, was sent to Parlement to declare that neither parlementaires nor the princely or ducal families would henceforth have any substantial responsibility for the administration of the kingdom. Thus, the control of the government by the monarch and his council of advisers, a plan begun by Richelieu, was accomplished by Mazarin for Louis XIV. Never again would any great lord or any faction build an army stronger than the King's. And the King would never again trust Parlement or the crowds of Paris.

The final defeat of the Fronde made Mazarin and the monarchy stronger than ever. To celebrate, Louis appeared in the 1653 royal Ballet de la nuit mentioned earlier, taking the role of the Sun King, which he adopted permanently as the symbol of the royal person. With the rebels subdued and the people ready to idolize their grown King whom Mazarin presented, Louis, then fifteen years old, was crowned at Reims on June 7, 1654. He distinguished himself that year soldiering in the field as the conflict with the Netherlands resumed, and dancing in the ballet de cour as court entertainments were freely reinstated. The end of the Fronde, like the end of civil disorders early in the seventeenth century, provided the incentive for increased activity in the arts. The ballet de cour began to thrive, particularly with the dancing and musical talents of the young Italian Jean-Baptiste Lully. But it would be a few years before a new leading figure emerged in the theatre, for while France's political turmoil was being settled in Paris, Molière was still learning his trade

in the provinces.

Monsieur de Molière was born in Paris in 1622 (baptized January 15) and named Jean-Baptiste Poquelin.<sup>9</sup> During his youth, Jean-Baptiste's respectable bourgeois family lived on the Rue St. Honoré somewhere between the market place and the elite blue salon of society leader Marquise de Rambouillet. His father was a well-to-do upholsterer who acquired an appointment in 1631 as tappissier ordinaire du roi. Jean-Baptiste observed the social world of nobles, bourgeoisie, and servants who visited his father's shop, and he was exposed to the theatrical world

<sup>9</sup>The earliest account of Molière is a brief biography written by La Grange and Vinot as a preface to the first edition of his complete works (Paris, 1682). Grimarest, who consulted Molière's actor Baron, wrote the first major biography, La Vie de Monsieur de Molière (Paris, 1705), but the work is riddled with apocryphal stories. Not until the last half of the nineteenth century when several collections of contemporary documents were published was there any substantial and comprehensive scholarship on Molière: Edouard Soulié, Recherches sur Molière et sa famille (1863), Jules Loiseleur, Les Points obscurs de la vie de Molière (1877), Paul Lacroix, Collection Moliérésque (1867-1875) and Nouvelle Collection Moliérésque (1863-1884), Georges Monval, Nouvelle Collection Moliérésque (1884-1890). Monval also edited a monthly review Le Moliériste (1879-1889). An extensive biography based on the newly discovered and collected information appeared in the Despois-Mesnard edition of Molière's plays (Vol. X, 1927). But much of the activity of the "Moliéristes" tended to transform Molière from a legendary figure entangled in seventeenth-century gossip merely into an equally imaginary literary god. The trend in the twentieth century has been to consider Molière as a man of the theatre: Gustave Michaut, La Jeunesse de Molière (1923), Les Debuts de Molière à Paris (1924), Les Lutttes de Molière (1925), Ramon Fernandez, La Vie de Molière (Paris, 1929), René Bray, Molière: homme de théâtre (Paris, 1954), and Léon Thoorens, Le Dossier Molière (Verviers, 1964). A number of Molière biographies in English are available including Henry Trollope, The Life of Molière (New York, 1905), Brander Matthews, Molière, His Life and His Works (New York, 1910), Hobart Chatfield-Taylor, Molière, a Biography (New York, 1928), Harry Ashton, Molière (New York, 1930), John Palmer, Molière (New York, 1930), Arthur Tilley, Molière (Cambridge, 1936), Percy Chapman, The Spirit of Molière (Princeton, 1940), a translation of Fernandez by Wilson Follett as Molière: the Man Seen Through His Plays (New York, 1958), D. B. Wyndham Lewis, Molière: the Comic Mask (New York, 1959), and a version of Thoorens's La Vie passionnée de Molière (1958) as The King's Player (London, 1960).

of the Pont-Neuf where street players performed, the fair of Saint-Germain-des-Prés with its trestle stages, the Hôtel de Bourgogne with the famous actor Bellerose, and the Hôtel du Petit-Bourbon with the Italian comedians, especially Tiberio Fiorillo. He received the best education available at the fashionable Jesuit Collège de Clermont (after 1682 called Louis-le-Grand), a school he entered about 1631 and that later the Prince de Conti attended. There undoubtedly Jean-Baptiste saw student productions of Latin and Greek dramas and perhaps even some small-scale ballets. He completed his education by taking a law degree at Orléans and by studying philosophy with the Abbé Pierre Gassendi, the epicurean advocate of common sense, who instructed a number of young men including Cyrano de Bergerac and Poquelin's life-long friend Claude Chappelle.

In 1642 the twenty-year old apprentice upholsterer Jean-Baptiste (Figure 22) probably traveled in his father's place to Narbonne as valet de chambre to Louis XIII. The royal army was beseiging the invading Spaniards at Perpignan (Thirty Years' War) and the King required staff to maintain his bedchambers at the campsites. The trip would have been extremely enlightening for the young Poquelin: traveling through the country as part of the royal household, witnessing not only the realities of the war but the intrigues and pleasures of the courtier's life as well. During this sojourn in the Pyrenees, he was on hand when the Marquis de Cinq-Mars, a favorite of the King but accomplice of the King's brother Gaston, was arrested for plotting the assassination of Cardinal Richelieu. And he would have been with the entourage when a group of traveling players performed for the King at a village near Nîmes; it is possible that Jean-Baptiste met the actress Madeleine Béjart (b. 1618) for the first time on that occasion, although he may have known her earlier in Paris.

Madeleine and the theatre apparently appealed to Jean-Baptiste more strongly than being a barrister or an upholsterer with an occasional opportunity to make the King's bed. The following year he gave up his hereditary rights to the minor court position of his father and signed a contract with a group of actors establishing the Illustre Théâtre which included Madeleine Béjart and her family. At this time Jean-Baptiste took the name "Molière" in order to spare his family the disgrace of relationship with an excommunicate actor. The Illustre Théâtre was a failure in Paris, but the troupe managed to secure a patron. Madeleine had connections. She had been mistress a few years earlier of the Baron (later Comte) de Modène, a gentleman at the time in the service of Gaston. The playwright François Tristan l'Hermite (1601-1655), another gentilhomme ordinaire of Gaston, was also interested in Madeleine's career and gave the Illustre Théâtre two of his tragedies to perform. Perhaps through Modène's praise of Madeleine and then Tristan's intercession with the King's brother, the troupe was summoned by the Duc d'Orléans to his Palais (later called the Luxembourg Palace) in 1643-1644 where they performed "not only comedies and tragedies but ballets and musical pieces."<sup>10</sup> But Gaston, the intriguer, was an erratic patron of the arts. His pensions were undependable, and the troupe's right to be called the Illustre Théâtre, "kept by His Royal Highness," lasted only about a year. Sometime in 1646 the actors who remained with the group left Paris for seasoning in the provinces and to look for another patron.

Before Louis XIV created a centralized court under his control, the nobles of France were installed around the country on their own estates.

<sup>10</sup>Paul Lacroix, Iconographie Moliéresque (Paris, 1876), p. 124.



The prospect of a troupe of actors finding a wealthy benefactor in the provinces, therefore, was as likely as in Paris. The Duc d'Epéron, Governor of Guyenne, who already had actors in his service, was a good possibility. His actors, led by Charles Dufresne, may have been those with whom Madeleine had been associated in 1642, and perhaps through her influence, the governor extended his patronage to include the "illustrious" newcomers. The "Comedians of the Duc d'Epéron" traveled from town to town on their own, but were available to perform for their patron on command, particularly as part of the sumptuous fetes the governor prepared for his mistress Nanon de Lartigue.<sup>11</sup> When the unpopular Epéron was forced out of Guyenne in 1650, the troupe was left without support. But the actors survived being abandoned and being under the constant threat of highwaymen and soldiers involved in the Fronde. And by 1653 they caught the attention of an even more important patron: a graduate from Molière's school and a member of the royal family, the Prince de Conti (1629-1666).

Mazarin granted Armand de Conti amnesty after the Fronde, providing that the prince marry one of his nieces and accept an assignment out of Paris. Conti went to southern France to preside over the States (Etats) of Languedoc, and settled in the chateau La Grange des Prés near Pézenas, where he proceeded to take up princely amusements. When his mistress Madame de Calvimont requested a company of actors, Molière's troupe was chosen through the intercession of the prince's secretary Sarrazin (d. 1654), who was partial to the beautiful actress Mlle Du Parc.

<sup>11</sup>See Paul Scarron's The Comical Romance and Other Tales (London, 1892), especially I, 300-306. The traveling players in this story, written in 1651 as Roman comique, are not as respectable as Molière's troupe, but even they perform "before the illustrious company then assembled at Mans."

Molière probably headed the troupe by this time. At any rate, he and the Bèjarts were greatly admired by the vagabond poet-musician Charles Coypeau d'Assouci (b. 1605) who traveled with the troupe for a while as a companion. Assouci, a follower of Luigi Rossi in the late 1640's, played the lute and composed music. In his youth, he had the protection of several nobles, and even performed for Louis XIII at the court of Saint-Germain. But he was a drinking, carousing, boasting adventurer who worked only sporadically. As mentioned earlier, he wrote a "comédie en musique" called Les Amours d'Apollon et de Daphné, and he composed the music for Corneille's Andromède (Paris, 1650), which Molière's troupe performed in Lyon about 1653. He apparently indicated an interest in writing music for the plays Molière was beginning to write. Another adventure called, however, and Assouci left the troupe before any collaboration could take place.<sup>12</sup>

Molière's players, known as the "Comedians of the Prince de Conti" from 1653 to 1656, were the official entertainers for the States of Languedoc. They performed for the prince at his chateau and in the surrounding towns where the States were held. Besides the privilege of being associated with the cadet line of the royal family, Molière had an opportunity to observe the provincial nobles for whom the parlements were an excuse to rendezvous and imitate the amusements of Parisian court society. These observations served as subject matter for a number of plays Molière would later write. The highlight of this period under the patronage of Conti was the Ballet of the Incompatibles performed for the wedding celebration of the prince and his bride Anna-Marie Martinozzi

<sup>12</sup>See Chapter VII: Music on Assouci.

held at Montpellier during Carnival in February, 1655.<sup>13</sup> Conti prized Molière and would have made him his secretary, but Molière chose to remain an actor and the manager of his troupe. The following year, in 1656, Conti became a zealous convert of Jansenism and completely renounced the theatre, dancing, and the performers who had been in his employ,<sup>14</sup> a temporary setback which motivated Molière to move closer to Paris.

During the time Molière was traveling between the provinces and Paris seeking a new benefactor, Philippe, then the Duc d'Anjou and "Monsieur" to the court--young, irresponsible and mainly interested in the recreations of horses and dice--decided to become a patron of arts and letters, as befitted the brother of a king. Since princes customarily supported entertainers, he arranged for a performance by Molière's troupe, known to consist of the best actors in the provinces and to have been rudely dismissed by Conti through no fault of their own. The performance allowed for the momentous meeting of Molière and Louis XIV.

On October 24, 1658, in the Louvre's Salle des Gardes with Louis XIV, Monsieur, Anne, Mazarin, the ladies and gentlemen of the court, and members of the Hôtel de Bourgogne troupe (then called the Grands Comédiens or the Troupe Royale) present, Molière and his players presented a tragedy which they had performed in the provinces, Pierre Corneille's Nicomède (1651). The hero of Corneille's play, a handsome young prince of twenty

<sup>13</sup>On the Ballet of the Incompatibles see Chapter V: Related Works.

<sup>14</sup>Ten years later before he died in 1666, Conti wrote a treatise against theatre, Traité de la comédie et des spectacles selon la tradition de l'église. It has been traditionally thought that Conti may have provided Molière with models for two comic characters: the "converted" Conti as Orgon, the dupe of religious extravagance in Tartuffe, and Conti the young debauchee as the cynical lover Don Juan.

(Louis XIV at this time was twenty), is a godlike absolute ruler who, with virtue and intelligence, masters all of his adversaries and secures peace founded on justice and respect. The players' intention was good; their acting of tragedy was not. Tradition says that Molière stepped forward after the conclusion of the play, thanked the King for enduring the defects of the performance and for giving his troupe "the honor of amusing the greatest monarch in the world,"<sup>15</sup> and then asked permission to perform as an afterpiece a trifling entertainment he had written, The Physician in Love (Le Docteur amoureux).<sup>16</sup> D. B. Wyndham Lewis points out the significance of the situation: "The Molière we may picture at the dawn of his fame is a brilliant farceur of nearly middle age bent double before a patron young enough to be his son, by the scale of the period."<sup>17</sup> The King was so pleased by Molière's farce that he issued without hesitation the decree that the company was to become the Troupe de Monsieur. The troupe would alternate with the Italian commedia dell'arte players at the Petit-Bourbon instead of having to rent the Théâtre du Marais as planned, and each actor would receive 300 livres. Molière, after thirteen years apprenticeship in the provinces, could return to Paris at last, and under the name of the royal family, although the promised honorarium was never paid.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup>Quoted in D-M, I, xiv from the Preface of the 1682 edition of Molière's works.

<sup>16</sup>This little comedy was thought to be lost, but A. J. Guibert has presented a text that may have been Molière's (Paris, 1960).

<sup>17</sup>p. 12.

<sup>18</sup>Registre de La Grange (Paris, 1876), p. 3. The eighteen year old Monsieur did not concern himself with such details.

In 1659 the Italians and the Grands Comédiens dominated the public theatre. And the court was being treated to the Ballet de la Raillerie (Benserade-Lully), like L'Amour malade a ballet mixed with comic scenes, and Perrin and Cambert's Pastorale d'Issy. The audience the Troupe de Monsieur hoped to attract was accustomed to a comedy of masks, tragedy, and ballet-musical spectacle.

During the first season at the Petit-Bourbon, Molière played tragedies (predominantly by the elder Corneille) and a few farces, including two of his own pieces from the provinces, The Blunderer or The Mishaps (L'Etourdi ou les contretemps, c. 1653) and The Lovers' Quarrel (Le Dépit amoureux, c. 1658).<sup>19</sup> Molière also had the honor of performing several times for the King at the Louvre and Vincennes, but receipts at the theatre were meager until November and December when the troupe presented Molière's new comedy The Affected Ladies (Les Précieuses ridicules). Before the season ended in March, 1660, Molière was summoned to a number of important houses for special performances (visites) of this scandalous new play which satirized and rendered obsolete the decadent versions of social gatherings at the Hôtel de Rambouillet--the coterie of précieuses who mistook affectation in language for refinement.<sup>20</sup> Molière had become

<sup>19</sup>Of the other provincial farces only two are extant and have texts attributed to Molière: The Jealous Husband (La Jalousie de Gros René or La Jalousie du Barbouillé) and The Flying Doctor (Le Médecin volant).

<sup>20</sup>The grande dame herself, Catherine de Rambouillet, whose salon helped promote the Académie Française, is thought to have seen and enjoyed the play.

Visites:

March 4 - Madame Sanguin for Monsieur le Prince (Condé). Sanguin had been an officer of the recently deceased Gaston.

a playwright (Figure 23) out of the need to provide plays his troupe could perform. But instead of intrigues and masks, he had produced a comedy based on people and situations in French society. The "exquisites" were destroyed and all the rest of Paris was laughing.

The time was right for Paris to discard the old ways, to laugh, and to celebrate. The decade of intermittent war between France and Spain that followed the Peace of Westphalia had been terminated by the Peace of the Pyrenees in November, 1659.<sup>21</sup> The young King yielded to the needs of the state and secured the peace treaty by agreeing to marry the Infanta of Spain, Marie-Thérèse. In June, 1660, Louis XIV met Marie-Thérèse at the frontier of France and Spain and they were married. The royal couple journeyed toward Paris, stopping during July and August at the chateaux of Chambord, Fontainebleau, Vaux-le-Vicomte, and Vincennes. Molière and his troupe were asked to appear three times at Vincennes for the newlyweds and then at the Louvre after the King had triumphantly entered Paris with his Spanish bride. Royal approval extended to Molière's plays would later make the public flock to the playwright's theatre, but it did little for the box office at this time. The crowds were too involved in the processions and fireworks celebrating the royal wedding.

Shortly after the celebrations concluded, however, Antoine de Ratabon, Superintendent of Royal Buildings, authorized an unannounced demolition of

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March 8 - The Chevalier de Gramont (Comte de Gramont).

March 10 - Mademoiselle la Maréchale de l'Hôpital (Madame de Choisy), who later introduced at court Mademoiselle de La Vallière, Louis's future mistress.

<sup>21</sup>On February 21, 1660, Molière played a free performance in honor of The Peace.



Figure 22. Molière at twenty



Figure 23. Molière (Mignard--Coypel--Lépicié)

the Petit-Bourbon. The excuse given was that Claude Perrault had to continue his work of enlarging the Louvre. The cause for this hasty action, however, was more likely the result of pressure from offended précieuses or from rival actors at the Hôtel de Bourgogne suffering because of Molière's popularity. At any rate, Molière's troupe was unceremoniously turned out of the theatre with no time to make other arrangements.

Molière appealed to Monsieur who, in turn, spoke to the King. Ratabon was instructed to make amends by restoring the Théâtre du Palais-Royal for Molière. The three months required for theatre repairs might have created serious financial difficulty for Molière and his actors except for visites at houses of nobility<sup>22</sup> and an appearance at the Louvre on October 26. For this royal command performance, attended by the gravely ill Cardinal Mazarin and Louis incognito, the troupe received its first pension from the King: 3,000 livres.

Louis came to Molière's aid many times during the actor-playwright's controversial career. Without this royal protection, Molière could never have maintained freedom and dignity to develop his art. In 1661, both Louis and Molière assumed the full responsibility of their lifework.

Molière's renovated theatre at the Palais-Royal opened on January 20 with The Lovers' Quarrel and Molière's new play Sganarelle or The Imaginary Cuckold (Sganarelle ou Le Cocu imaginaire). After the failure of

<sup>22</sup>Including Sanguin again, Fouquet, the Superintendent of Finance, and at houses associated with two of Mazarin's nieces--the Maréchal de la Meilleraie (father-in-law of Hortence Mancini) and the Duc de Mercoeur (widower of Laure Mancini).

See Chapter VIII: Theatres and Scenery for a discussion of the actors' mode of travel.



Don Garcie de Navarre or The Jealous Prince (Dom Garcie de Navarre ou Le Jaloux prince), a rather tedious heroic play by Molière which posed as a tragedy, the comedies were reinstated, and box office receipts quickly revived. From then on, Molière followed the dictates of his audience, abandoning the notion of being a tragic playwright and concentrating his attention on the business of comedy. The troupe he managed and wrote for consisted of well-seasoned professionals;<sup>23</sup> it had a home, patronage, and support of people of quality even to the King himself.

<sup>23</sup>By Easter, 1660, Jodelet, who had joined Molière's troupe for a brief time, was dead and so was the elder Béjart brother, Joseph; Dufresne had retired. The following list by year shows the composition of the troupe from the 1660 season to 1673 according to shares specified in La Grange's Registre.\*

- 1660 - 12 parts: Messieurs Molière, Louis Béjart (Figure 24), Du Parc (called Gros-René; Figure 25), L'Espy (brother of Jodelet; Figure 26), De Brie (Figure 27), Du Croisy (Figure 28), La Grange (Figure 29).  
Mademoiselles Madeleine Béjart (Figure 30), De Brie (Figure 31), Du Parc (Figure 32), Du Croisy (Figure 33), Hervé (Geneviève Béjart; Figure 34).  
(Only married ladies of the court used the word "Madame"; all others were described as "Mademoiselle.")
- 1661 - 13 parts: Added an extra part for Molière. (This part was for Armande Béjart, whom he would marry in 1662. It is not known whether or not she joined the troupe in 1661).
- 1662 - 15 parts: Added M<sup>rs</sup> La Thorillière (Figure 35) and Brécourt (Figure 36) and Mlle Molière (Armande Béjart; Figure 37).
- 1663 - 14 parts: L'Espy retired.
- 1664 - 14 parts: Brécourt left for Hôtel de Bourgogne; Hubert (Figure 38), from the Marais, took his place.
- 1665 - 12 parts: Du Parc died; Mlle Du Croisy was dropped.
- 1666 - "
- 1667 - 11 parts: La Du Parc left for Hôtel de Bourgogne.
- 1668 - "
- 1669 - "
- 1670 - 12-1/2 parts: Added M<sup>rs</sup> Baron (see Figure 63) and Beauval (1/2 part; Figure 39) and Mlle Beauval (Figure 40); Louis Béjart retired.
- 1671 - "



Figure 24. Louis Béjart



Figure 25. Du Parc



Figure 26. L'Espy



Figure 27. De Brie

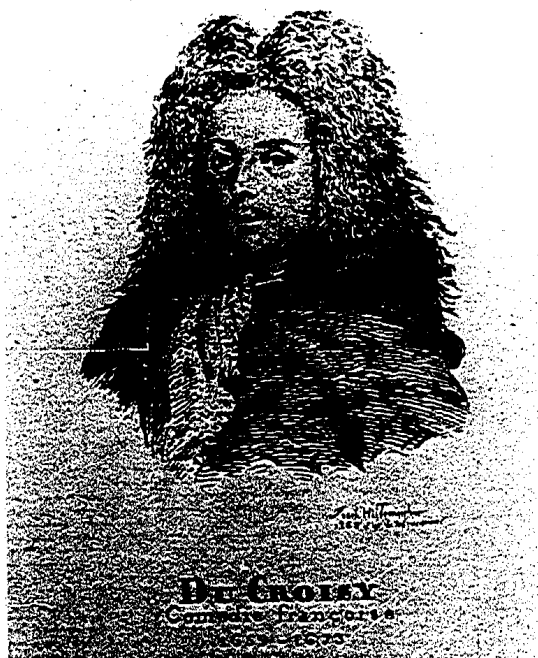


Figure 28. Du Croisy



Figure 29. La Grange



Figure 30. Mlle [Madeleine] Béjart



Figure 31. Mlle De Brie



Figure 32. Mlle Du Parc



Mlle Du Croisy

Figure 33. Mlle Du Croisy



Figure 34. Mlle Hervé



Figure 35. La Thorillière



Figure 36. Brécourt



Figure 37. Mlle [Armande] Molière





Figure 38. Hubert



Figure 39. Beauval

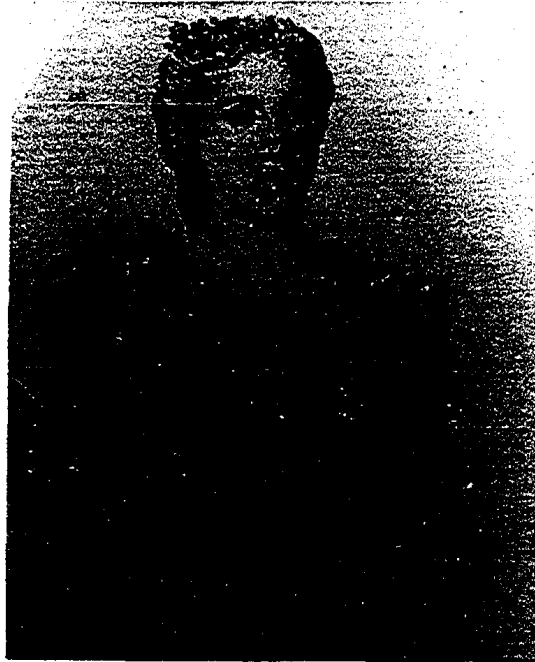


Figure 40. Mlle Beauval



Figure 41. Mlle de La Grange

Mazarin died in March, leaving to Louis, whom he had trained to be a king and had married to the daughter of a rival royal house, a strong and united kingdom with potentially all power in the hands of the ruler. In effect, Mazarin led Louis to prevent any further ministers from having the control the Cardinal had had. His plan, which Louis adopted and enforced, was that the wealthy and titled would be relegated to social positions; professionals would run the government; and there would be no Chief Minister. With the death of Mazarin, the personal reign of Louis XIV, began, a reign, the King made immediately clear, in which he alone would rule and his ministers would act only with his approval.

Louis's first high council consisted of Michel Le Tellier, secretary of state and war, Hughes de Lionne, secretary of foreign affairs, and Nicolas Fouquet, superintendent of finance. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, who had been Mazarin's secretary, soon replaced Fouquet, and became minister of commerce and internal affairs. By 1671, Le Tellier's son, the Marquis de Louvois, had taken over the war ministry, and Arnauld de Pomponne succeeded Lionne who died that year. These men were experts in their fields, not hereditary nobles, but loyal subjects with family backgrounds of service to the state. Louis wanted men ambitious for France and the

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1672 - 12 parts: Mlle Béjart died; added Mlle La Grange (Marie  
(14 actors) Ragueneau de l'Estang, daughter of the pastry cook  
Cyprien Ragueneau, and called Mlle Marotte; 1/2  
part; Figure 41).

\*Besides La Grange, both La Thorillière and Hubert also kept registers: William Leonard Schwartz, "Light on Molière in 1664 from Le Second Registre de La Thorillière," PMLA, LIII (1938), 1054-1075 and Schwartz, "Molière's Theater in 1672-3: Light from Le Registre d'Hubert," PMLA, LIV (1941), 395-427.

King rather than themselves. In turn, he gave them great honor and wealth, and made them, after the King, the most important and powerful figures in the realm.

While creating his council of professional advisers, Louis also attended to developing his court and finding something for the people of quality to do. He arranged his brother's wedding for April, 1661. Philippe, then the Duc d'Orléans, married Henriette d'Angleterre (Henrietta-Anne), sister of England's Charles II, a woman who would become a favorite of Louis and his court and a valuable friend of Molière. Everyone celebrated the happy event. For the new royal couple, Monsieur and Madame, and the Queen of England, Fouquet gave a fete in July at Vaux-le-Vicomte, and commissioned Molière to perform his new play The School for Husbands (L'Ecole des maris) for the occasion.<sup>24</sup> Not even the King feted the newlyweds more charmingly.

Nicolas Fouquet (Figure 42) acquired his position as Superintendent of Finance under Mazarin, and by the time Mazarin died, Fouquet possessed great power and wealth. Of all Louis's ministers, Fouquet was the most likely threat to succeed Mazarin and to dominate the young monarch, a formidable danger made known to the King by Colbert.<sup>25</sup> The Superintendent had an enormous personal following. He was an astute administrator and a patron of the arts. His chateau Vaux-le-Vicomte and the court gathered

<sup>24</sup>Fouquet was generous. When the average rate for a visite was about 250 livres, he gave 500. For the July fete, Fouquet rewarded Molière's troupe with 1,500 livres. The School for Husbands had premièred at the Palais-Royal, but when Molière published the comedy, he capitalized on having performed it for his royal patron by dedicating the play to Monsieur.

<sup>25</sup>John B. Wolf, Louis XIV (New York, 1968), pp. 133-144.



Figure 42. Nicolas Fouquet

there showed he had princely tastes; his fortress at Belle Isle and the forces amassed there showed he could launch another Fronde to exact any demands for more power he might make.

In response to a warning of royal displeasure, the misguided Fouquet decided to entertain the King with a magnificent fete at Vaux-le-Vicomte. His secretary, the poet Paul Pellisson, arranged for a promenade around the vast grounds of the chateau, a banquet, an after-dinner divertissement, and a spectacular fireworks display.<sup>26</sup> Employed for the entertainment were some of the leading artists of the day: Molière to present a play which would include dancing because of the King's partiality for the ballet de cour; Torelli, who had been protected by Fouquet since Mazarin's death, to do the machines; the artist Le Brun to provide scenic embellishments; and Beauchamps, Louis's dancing master, to compose the music and set the dances. Molière's first comedy-ballet, The Bores (Les Fâcheux), resulted from this collaboration, and was designed to be a generous gift to the King. Little did Fouquet realize that this generosity would be an excuse for his downfall.

At 3:00 p.m. on August 17, 1661, the royal party and entourage left Fontainebleau for the three hour, thirty mile trip to Vaux-le-Vicomte. In the King's calèche were Monsieur, the Comtesse d'Armagnac, the Duchesse de Valentinois, and the Comtesse de Guiche. In Anne's calèche were Madame and several ladies of the court. Of the royal circle only Marie-Thérèse, who was pregnant, did not go.

There were at least six hundred invited guests at the fete. Waiting

<sup>26</sup>See Chapter VIII: Theatres and Scenery, p. 553, on sources for the fete and Figures.

to greet the King, his mother, and the leading nobility of France was Fouquet's "petite cour" including poets, such as La Fontaine, artists such as Le Vau and Le Nôtre, members of Fouquet's family with high governmental and clerical appointments, a cluster of Fouquet's "creatures" (administrative assistants), and Vatel, Fouquet's maître d'hôtel. It was a proud day for Fouquet to be hosting the Prince de Condé, Monsieur le Duc,<sup>27</sup> M. de Longueville,<sup>28</sup> M. de Beaufort,<sup>29</sup> and the Duc de Guise.<sup>30</sup> There were a great many marquis and counts on hand as well.<sup>31</sup> Fouquet's colleagues, the other ministers and officials of the government, were probably there for the festivities, especially Colbert, who could use the occasion to accuse Fouquet of squandering public funds to support such a lavish existence. The young sovereign was more than impressed with Vaux-le-Vicomte; indeed, he was outraged with its overwhelming ostentation, with the opulence that even he, the King, did not maintain. He might

<sup>27</sup>Familiar name for the Duc d'Enghien, son of Condé (1643-1709).

<sup>28</sup>Charles-Paris d'Orléans (1649-1672), nephew of Condé, son of Condé's brother-in-law who had been involved with the Fronde. He died in the Rhineland during Louis's war against the Dutch.

<sup>29</sup>François de Bourbon-Vendôme (1616-1669), mentioned earlier as associated with the Fronde, was the first Admiral of France.

<sup>30</sup>Henri II de Lorraine (1614-1664) was the first nobleman of France after the princes of the blood. His various adventures included a plot against Richelieu and a rash attempt to become king of Naples. During 1644-1654 he donated clothing to the Hôtel de Bourgogne and the Théâtre du Marais but also to Molière's "illustrious" actors, probably on the recommendation of Tristan l'Hermite. Shortly after Molière and company departed for the provinces, their friend Modène, who had left Gaston, went with the Duc de Guise on the Italian expedition.

<sup>31</sup>After Molière's performance, according to a traditional anecdote, the King pointed to the Marquis de Soyecourt (Figure 43), a hunter and future Grand Veneur (Master of the Hounds), beginning 1669-1670, and suggested that he might serve as model for another boring character.

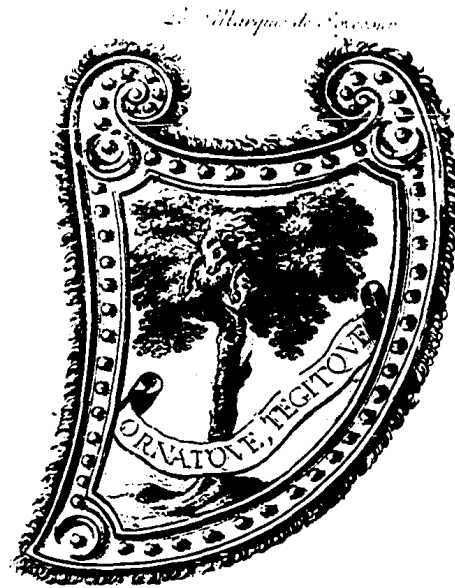


Figure 43. Crest of the Marquis de Soyecourt



have had Fouquet arrested that evening during the fete except for the intercession of the Queen Mother. As it was, the King refused to stay the night, and with his suite returned at 2:00 a.m. to Fontainebleau.

Several weeks later Charles de Batz, Seigneur d'Artagnan with a company of his Mousquetaires followed Fouquet to Nantes to arrest him for dishonesty and treason. Despite the undisputed fact that Fouquet lived royally, no instances of embezzlement could be proved against him. He was merely a threat to the King, and had to be removed. After a long and difficult trial, the King won his battle for power: Fouquet was sentenced to life imprisonment at Pignerol in Italy. Louis would be sovereign, there would be no challenges to his authority, and only his court would have social and cultural prestige.

One of Fouquet's "crimes" that did not figure in the trial, but counted strongly against him, was the attention he paid to the King's first mistress, Louise de La Vallière (Figure 44). Fouquet was popular with the ladies because of his charm, wit, and generosity, but his gifts and efforts to please La Vallière and the portrait of her which hung at Vaux-le-Vicomte infuriated the jealous young King.

Louis's mistresses were an important part of court life. His marriage had been a political convenience, and although Queen Marie-Thérèse (Figure 45) was completely devoted to her husband, noble-natured and close to the Queen Mother, she was a dull and credulous woman who held little interest for the Sun King. He never abandoned the Queen, but constantly sought other female companionship. During the summer of 1661, Louis had a brief affair with his brother's wife Henriette. The excuse to spend time with her was a pretended infatuation for one of her maids-of-honor, Louise de La Vallière, a pretense that before long became a fact. Louise



Figure 44. Louise de La Vallière



Figure 45. Marie-Thérèse

attended Fouquet's fete as part of Madame's suite;<sup>32</sup> and Louis may have resented her fascination with the Superintendent's glamorous milieu.

Although Fouquet's fete may have angered Louis, he was delighted by Molière's comedy-ballet with its references to the King--the King who wisely puts a stop to dueling and who must constantly endure a stream of boring petitioners. Louis and the Duc de Beaufort may have shared an amused reaction to the petition for turning the entire French coast into seaports. According to La Fontaine, the production charmed "all the court." For the artists involved in the fete, with the exception of Pellisson who was arrested with Fouquet, the occasion was advantageous because when Louis adopted Fouquet's luxurious tastes, they were all called into service. A week after the fete, the King asked Molière to come to Fontainebleau, where The Bores was repeated several times to celebrate the feast of St. Louis, his patron saint (August 25).

Molière did not première The Bores at the Palais-Royal until November, and then played it in honor of the birth (November 1) of the Grand Dauphin, a gesture which removed any stigma of the play's association with Fouquet while attracting the curious who wished to gaze at an entertainment devised for royalty. Loret "reviewed" it in La Muse historique:

Les Fâcheux, ce nouveau Poème,  
 . . . . .  
 Dans Paris, maintenant se joüe:  
 Et certes tout le monde avoüe  
 Qu'entre les Pièces d'à-préant,  
 On ne void rien de si plaizant;  
 Celle-cy, sans doute, est si belle,  
 Que l'on dit beaucoup de bien d'elle,

<sup>32</sup>According to Augustin Challamel, The History of Fashion in France (New York, 1882), p. 129, she was lovely in a white gown with flowers and pearls in her fair hair.

Et selon les beaux jugemens,  
 Elle a quantité d'agrémens;  
 . . . . .  
 . . . Balet, Violons, Musique  
 Afin d'avoir grande pratique;  
 . . . . .  
 Enfin, pour abréger matière,  
 Cette Pièce assez singulière,  
 Et d'un air assez jovial,  
 Se fait voir au Palais-Royal,  
 Non par la Troupe Royale,  
 Mais par la Troupe Joviale  
 De Monsieur le Duc l'Orléans,  
 Qui les a colloquez léans. 33

Although Fouquet was unable to settle his accounts for the fete, including payment to Molière, Louis compensated Molière's troupe generously for the Fontainebleau performances; and the play was popular in town. When Molière published The Bores, he dedicated it to the King, the only one of his plays so inscribed.

Because the first years of Louis's personal reign were not particularly eventful in matters of war and foreign affairs, and he had no battlefield on which to prove himself a prince, the King established his gloire and delighted his subjects by engaging in the pomp and majesty worthy of a great monarch. In February he allowed the Cavalli opera Ercole amante that Mazarin had ordered to be presented for the inaugura-

<sup>33</sup>November 19, 1661. Quoted in Pierre Mèlèse, Le Théâtre et le public sous Louis XIV, 1659-1715 (Paris, 1934), pp. 252-253. "The Bores, this new poem . . . is playing now in Paris. And certainly everyone admits that among the present plays one sees nothing more pleasing. It is, without question, so fine that much good is said of it; and according to the best opinions, it has a quantity of embellishments--ballets, violins, music--in order to give it more scope and appeal. Finally, to cut it short, this rather unusual and rather jovial piece can be seen at the Palais-Royal, not by the Troupe Royale, but by the jovial troupe of Monsieur, the Duc d'Orléans, who summoned them there."

tion of the Salle des Machines, the theatre in the Tuileries built in honor of Louis's marriage. And the event was dedicated to Monsieur and Madame, as though to obliterate the efforts of Fouquet. Then, in June, Louis held his first great spectacle, the Grand Carrousel, a tournament to commemorate the birth of the Dauphin.<sup>34</sup> Pavilions, booths, and tilt-yards (for "cutting the Turk's head") were constructed between the Louvre and the Tuileries (an area later named the Place du Carrousel). In a splendid international quadrille, Louis portrayed a Roman emperor, his emblem the sun and his device Nec Pluribus Impar;<sup>35</sup> Monsieur led a group of Persian warriors, the Prince de Condé the Turks, the Duc d'Enghien the Indians, and the Duc de Guise a tribe of savages. Molière, in deference to the royal spectacle, closed his theatre during the tournament days.

Although pageantry and spectacle continued throughout the long reign of Louis XIV (d. 1715), the diversions of the first decade (the "sunrise") were the freest and most spontaneous. The young King indulged in care-free pleasure; he laughed; he enjoyed the amusing, matchless plays of Molière, which reflected the vitality and unmitigated self-confidence of the times. For Molière, in the full maturity of his career, it was a serious but rewarding period of working to capacity to take advantage of the opportunities given him. While Louis's illicit romances were just beginning, Molière's years with mistresses were over. The playwright settled on a single, if somewhat difficult relationship with Armande Béjart

<sup>34</sup>Celebrations were being planned well before the child was born; Molière referred to them in The School for Husbands.

<sup>35</sup>"Superior to Everyone," in the sense of better than many others put together. Figure 46.



Figure 46. Nec Pluribus Impar

whom he married in February, 1662. While Louis pursued the business of government cautiously, Molière persevered brashly with his controversial satire. The King, for whom the troupe performed many times in 1662, seemed to encourage Molière. For a series of appearances at Saint-Germain the actors were awarded 14,000 livres which were paid in three installments (6,000 livres in August, 1662, 4,000 in March, 1663, and 4,000 in May, 1663). Molière amused the King and could do no wrong, as seen in the furor of 1663.

A raging scandal followed the December, 1662 première at the Palais-Royal of The School for Wives (L'Ecole des femmes), a comedy in which Molière exposed the problems of arranged marriage, jealousy, and dominion-subjection relationships. Molière was accused of gross impiety for his "realistic" portrayals. The "dévot" Conti joined the horrified outcry. But the play so amused the King when it was performed at the Louvre in January, 1663 that he requested it again within two weeks. And when Molière published The School for Wives, he dedicated it to Madame, a lady who knew well the problems of a marriage of convenience but whose piety could not be openly disputed. The controversy provoked by The School for Wives was known as the Comic War (la Guerre comique). It lasted until mid-1664, and included several scurrilous plays and pamphlets against Molière. But Molière, with royal support, managed each step of the way to triumph over his opponents, mainly the actor Montfleury of the Hôtel de Bourgogne and the young writer Jean Donneau de Visé, who later made peace with Molière and had plays produced at the Palais-Royal in 1665 and 1667.

While Molière was being attacked for his wicked play, the King ordered his name added to the annual pension list: "Au sieur Molière, excellent

poète comique . . . . . 1000 livres."<sup>36</sup> This yearly payment, distributed by Colbert, was designed to award great men of science and letters, and Molière was the only actor-playwright on the list. Molière responded with a "Remerciement au Roi" ("Thanks to the King") in one hundred and two lines of verse including this pledge he makes to himself:

. . . vos désirs  
Sont, après ses bontés qui n'ont point de pareilles,  
D'employer à sa gloire, ainsi qu'à ses plaisirs,  
Tout votre art et toutes vos veilles. . . .37

On the strength of his success and his monarch's approval, Molière presented in June, 1663 The Critique of The School for Wives, a discussion of The School for Wives by a clique of "fashionables" in which the ridiculousness of their objections to the play is made apparent. The Critique was met with a wave of angry abuse. Tradition says that the Duc de la Feuillade, for whom Molière had played The Bores a year earlier en visite, thought he might have been the model for the ridiculous Marquis who makes such noisy objection in The Critique (Le Marquis: Ah! ma foi, oui, tarte à la creme!) to the cream tart in The School for Wives. Meeting Molière at court, La Feuillade supposedly clasped the poet's head and, feigning to greet him vigorously, badly scratched his face with diamond buttons, crying, "Tarte à la creme, Molière! Tarte à la creme!" The King, when he heard of this incident, was appalled by so rude an action, reproved the duke, and banished him for a time to his country estate.

<sup>36</sup>D-M, III, 293. Lists 1663 to 1671 include Molière; the list for 1672 was probably not issued until after his death.

<sup>37</sup>D-M, III, 299. ". . . your desires are, after these unparalleled kindnesses, to employ all your skill and all your waking moments to his glory and his pleasures. . . ."



Louis, who had become concerned at this time with fortifying his kingdom's frontiers, celebrated the first military victory of his personal reign with an entertainment by the controversial Molière. In 1662, Louis had bought Dunkirk from Charles II of England, and then had paid Charles, Duc de Lorraine, for the annexation of Lorraine to France. When the duke failed to comply completely with the agreement, Louis forced a take-over. His orders having been successfully carried out, the King then went to his favorite retreat, Versailles, and he summoned Molière. Molière wrote a sketch for the occasion in which he not only ridiculed some of his critics, especially Montfleury, but further revealed his attitude about being the King's entertainer. He says, as himself, in The Impromptu at Versailles:

A King expects prompt obedience; he doesn't like obstacles thrown up at him. He wants his entertainment when he asks for it; he doesn't wish to be kept waiting. As far as he's concerned, the faster it's prepared the better. We can't study our personal feelings; we're here to satisfy him, and when he gives us an opportunity we must seize it and do our best to give him pleasure in return. It's better to make a clumsy attempt than not to make an attempt until too late. Even if we don't entirely succeed it'll be to our credit that we complied with his orders. 38

Not all of Molière's roles were on the stage. He, too, played the courtier. Although he resigned all rights to the paltry court position of tapissier et valet de chambre ordinaire du roi at the beginning of his acting career, he hastily regained this inherited right to keep the King's bedchamber in April, 1660 when his brother, who had assumed the job, died. And Molière fulfilled his quarter-year duties in this position for the rest of his life. According to a legendary story (the "en cas de nuit")

<sup>38</sup>Albert Bermel, trans., One-Act Comedies of Molière (Cleveland, 1965), pp. 99-100.

incident), Molière even shared a midnight supper with the King, who had heard that other members of the royal chamber were annoyed at having to eat with an actor. Whether true or not, the story indicates the widespread conviction that Molière was personally protected by the King. Molière enjoyed a position in the royal household and he received a royal pension; in return for these bounties, the King made special demands on him.

Early in 1664, Louis commissioned a musical divertissement, the first of many, from Molière--a play with balletic interludes, like The Bores, in which the King and some of his courtiers (the Comte d'Armagnac,<sup>39</sup> the Marquis de Villeroy,<sup>40</sup> Monsieur le Duc, and the Duc de Saint-Aignan<sup>41</sup>) could dance. Molière presented his comedy-ballet, The Forced Marriage (Le Mariage forcé) on January 29, 1664 at the Louvre in Anne's apartment as a special treat for the Queen Mother.

Say that at the acme of an absolute power,  
 Her grandeur without pride or pomp appears;  
 That in most dangerous times her constant prudence  
 Has fearless the prerogative supported;  
 And in the happy calm gained by her labours  
 Restores it to her son without regret.  
 Say, with what great respect, with what complaisance,  
 That glorious son rewards her for her cares.  
 Let's laud the just laws, and the life-long labours  
 Of that same son, the greatest of all monarchs;

<sup>39</sup>Louis de Lorraine, Comte d'Armagnac (1641-1718), called "Monsieur le Grand," was the Grand Ecuyer (Master of the Horse). He married the sister of the Marquis de Villeroy.

<sup>40</sup>François de Neufville, Marquis de Villeroy (1644-1730), was the son of the governor of Louis XIV and future governor of Louis XV. Figure 47.

<sup>41</sup>François de Beauvillier, Duc de Saint-Aignan (1610-1687), who had produced Orfeo (1654) for Mazarin, was First Gentleman of the King's Chamber. The duties of this office included supervising Louis's entertainments and ordering his ballet costumes.

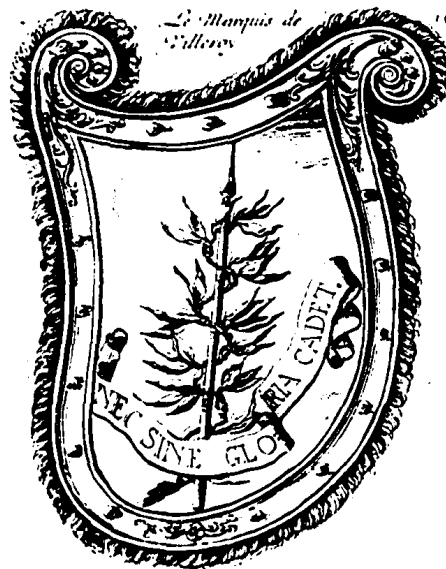


Figure 47. Crest of the Marquis de Villeroy

And how that mother, fortunately fruitful,  
Giving but twice, gave so much to the world.

Verses spoken in praise of Anne during  
The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (1664).<sup>42</sup>

Anne, the daughter of Felipe III of Spain, was a beautiful and passionate woman whose marriage to France's Louis XIII had been a bitter disappointment until the birth of her first son. After her husband's death, she headed the Regency government of Mazarin, whom she probably secretly married about 1647.<sup>43</sup> With Mazarin she protected the royal prerogative against the Fronde, raised Louis XIV and helped to prepare him for a glorious reign. She may in part have inspired the young King's taste for court divertissements. Anne loved the theatre and dancing. The entertainments of Lope de Vega had been performed at the Spanish court where she grew up. In France she participated in the ballet de cour, shared Mazarin's interest in Italian opera, and supported the Grands Comédiens of the Hôtel de Bourgogne. Molière's dedication of The Critique of The School for Wives to Anne may have helped to prompt the King's request for a comedy-ballet for her in 1664. A comedy-ballet would amuse the Queen Mother and allow her to see her son dance as well. The action of the play, which ends with the marriage of Sganarelle and Dorimène, has a "Spanish Concert" as part of the wedding celebration, a concert prepared especially

<sup>42</sup>Henri Van Laun, The Dramatic Works of Molière (Philadelphia, 188-), III, 22.

<sup>43</sup>Wolf makes a very convincing argument for this marriage. He shows from the letters of Mazarin and Anne what closeness and affection existed between them, and points out that such a pious Christian woman as Anne would not have engaged in such a relationship if not married. Since Mazarin was not an ordained priest, he had no religious vows to prevent it. Figure 48.



Figure 48. Anne of Austria

for Queen Anne.

The Forced Marriage is little more than a sketch,<sup>44</sup> but its illustrious audience, which included many distinguished guests,<sup>45</sup> received it enthusiastically. And it was repeated a number of times at court, where its similarity to an incident in real life must have been recognized. Philibert, Comte de Gramont,<sup>46</sup> after being banished from France for his attentions to Louise de La Vallière, went to England, became engaged, and would have deserted the lady, Elizabeth Hamilton, when called back to the French court except for persuasion to the contrary by her brothers.

As appreciative a spectator as Anne may have been, she continued to support the Grands Comédiens. Three performers from the Hôtel de Bourgogne (Floridor, Mlle Des Oeillets, and Mlle Montfleury), in an attempt to fight against the increasing favor shown Molière, obtained permission to present the prologue to a ballet, the Amours déguisés (verses by the parlementaire Président de Périgny), danced by Louis on February 13.

Montfleury kept on with the Comic War. The previous November-December (1663), Montfleury's son Antoine had produced with the Duc d'Enghien's approval The Impromptu at the Hôtel de Condé, a retaliation for Molière's Impromptu at Versailles. But for the wedding of Monsieur le Duc and Anne

<sup>44</sup>Loret described it in La Muse historique (February 2):  
 Cette pièce assez singulière  
 Est un impromptu de Molière

Quoted in D-M, IV, 5.

Sganarelle, who would break off with the young woman to whom he is betrothed, is forced by her brother to go through with the wedding.

<sup>45</sup>Christian Huyghens, the Dutch mathematician who was a frequent spectator at court entertainments while in Paris, wrote to his brother that he had seen this comedy-ballet at the Louvre.

<sup>46</sup>Brother of Maréchal de Gramont and uncle of the Comte de Guiche.

of Bavaria, daughter of the Princesse Palatine, the Prince de Condé hired the Troupe de Monsieur to perform The Critique and The Impromptu at Versailles, another victory for Molière. Montfleury, who had been unable to best Molière professionally, then attacked him personally. Molière was accused of incest--of having been Madeleine Béjart's lover, of fathering Armande (b. 1643), and then marrying his own daughter. Although Molière never publicly denied the charges, no action was ever taken against him, and family records indicate all but conclusively that Armande was the legitimate daughter of Joseph Béjart père (d. 1643) and Marie Hervé and, therefore, Madeleine's sister. At any rate, to stop the raging scandal and perhaps to show royal appreciation for The Forced Marriage, the King and Henriette stood as godparents by proxy to Molière's first child, a son, baptized February 15, 1664 with the name Louis.<sup>47</sup> The same day, Molière, capitalizing on his success, opened The Forced Marriage at the Palais-Royal.

Family was important to Louis, and his court grew from a familial base. The court in the early years of his personal reign was headed by the King, his wife, the Dauphin (called "Monseigneur"), and the Queen Mother. It also embraced an older group of family members--the Prince de Condé, the Prince de Conti, the Duc de Guise, the Duc de Beaufort--and a younger group--Monsieur and Madame, Mademoiselle, the Duc de Longueville, and the Duc d'Enghien. But then Louis began to expand his court by inviting more of the high nobility to share his company. Eventually about

<sup>47</sup>The Forced Marriage had been performed en visite for Madame on February 9. For the baptismal ceremony, the wife of the Maréchal du Plessis represented the Duchesse d'Orléans and the Duc de Créqui, who with La Feuillade would become a leading marshal in the Dutch War, represented the King. Molière's son died the following November.

250 dukes, counts, marquis, and barons lived with the King. This community was attended by many more ladies and gentlemen attached to the royal households, servants, clerks, aides, and guards. The rigid court etiquette which characterized Louis's later reign began to be formed in the 1660's when nearly all the activities of the King became magnificent public rituals. The King, fascinated with luxury and the almost unlimited resources available to him, loving to dress up and perform, knew at the same time the value of using opulence and spectacle to convince the world of his greatness. For eating, dressing, traveling, and most especially for entertainments at the royal residences, Louis acted en roi, and surrounded himself with splendidly arrayed courtiers. This theatricality became fully apparent when in May, 1664 the King and his court pretended to be transformed into captives of an enchanted island.

The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée) was originally intended as merely a garden party and lottery, but developed into the most memorable fete of Louis's reign, lasting seven days, May 7 to 13. Louis, who learned well from Fouquet, requested feasting and promenading in the park, the al fresco performance of a comedy-ballet, and a spectacular fireworks display. And the King added to his fete, which obscured once and for all the infamous day at Vaux-le-Vicomte, an equestrian parade to begin the amusements and a ballet de cour as a climax, as well as hunts, balls, and other plays on the final days of the week.<sup>48</sup>

There were six hundred invited guests and undoubtedly many more

<sup>48</sup>See Chapter V: Related Works for sources and a discussion of the "text" of the fete.



spectators, with the soldiers of Maréchal de Gramont controlling the crowds.<sup>49</sup> Never before had the efforts of so many people contributed to a royal entertainment--government officials, army officers, nobility of the royal household, professional artists, and scores of craftsmen. The Président de Périgny, Benserade, Lully, Molière, the designer Carlo Vigarani, and a great group of workers brought from Paris prepared the

<sup>49</sup>Customarily several thousand witnessed any large court event. The French court was characteristically disorderly, with more people crowded into a room than could be accommodated and much talking and jostling (Wolf, p. 123). Loret in La Muse historique describes the Ballet de la nuit (1653) audience:

Vous, cardinaux, princesses, princes,  
 Gens de Paris, gens de provinces,  
 Ambassadeurs et résidents,  
 Presidentes et présidents,  
 Conseillers et maîtres des comptes,  
 Femmes de ducs, marquis et comtes,  
 Abbés, prieurs, bénéficiers,  
 Directeurs, banquiers, financiers,  
 Polis, galants, coquets, coquettes,  
 Marchandes, bourgeoises, soubrettes,  
 Qui, pour plus aisément passer,  
 Vous laissiez un peu caresser;  
 Vieilles, vieillards, puceaux, pucelles,  
 Enfin, tous ceux et toutes celles,  
 Et moi tout aussi bien que vous,  
 Qui d'un plaisir tout à fait doux  
 Eumes l'aimable jouissance,  
 Voyant ce ballet d'importance  
 Dans un auguste et brillant lieu,  
 Disons-lui pour jamais adieu.

"You, cardinals, princesses, princes, people of Paris, people of the provinces, ambassadors and residents, president's wives and presidents, councillors, and masters of accounts, wives of dukes, marquis, and counts, abbots, priors, clergymen, directors, bankers, financiers, polite society, gallants, gigolos, coquettes, sales ladies, housewives, ladies' maids, who to get in more easily allow themselves to be caressed a little, old men, old women, lads, and lasses, finally, all those, and myself as well as you, who had the agreeable enjoyment of a gentle pleasure seeing this important ballet in an august and splendid place, say to it forever farewell." Quoted in John Lough, Paris Theatre Audiences in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (London, 1957), p. 66.

fete under the supervision of the Duc de Saint-Aignan and Monsieur de Launay, intendant des menus plaisirs et affaires de la chambre.

Colbert handled finances and was given special credit in the official description of the fete for his "indefatigable pains." The King instructed him to purchase jewelry for a number of the ladies at court who would attend, including two of Louis's favorites from Madame's household, Mademoiselle de La Vallière and Madame de Montespan. Such gifts would cost dearly, the King admitted, but they would give great pleasure to the court, "especially to the Queens."<sup>50</sup> Officially, the fete was given in honor of Anne and Marie-Thérèse, but the spectacle served the political purpose of attracting the attention of France and of all Europe to the court of Louis XIV. And such magnificence would impress Louise de La Vallière, the real queen of the fete, who had presented Louis with the first of his bastard children five months earlier.

The first three days of the fete were based on an incident in the epic Orlando Furioso by Ariosto. Louis and leading members of the court participated in the tournament of the first day as Knights of Ariosto's tale. Fourteen mounted knights, gloriously costumed, entered in procession. After the herald-at-arms, came the Mousquetaire d'Artagnan as page du roi. Following him was the Duc de Saint-Aignan, the fete's master of ceremonies, who led the way for the King portraying the hero Rogero. After the King were the Duc de Guise,<sup>51</sup> Monsieur le Duc, the Comte d'Armagnac, other lieutenant-generals and gentlemen of the King's

<sup>50</sup>Wolf, p. 278.

<sup>51</sup>The fete was the last major "adventure" for the duke; he died less than a month later.

chamber, the Marquis de Soyecourt, and the Marquis de La Vallière, Louise's brother, who subsequently won the tournament prize of a golden sword enriched with diamonds.<sup>52</sup>

A collation followed the joust. The Queen Mother sat at the center of the royal table; on her right were the King, Monsieur, and a group of ladies including Madame de Montespan; on her left were Marie-Thérèse, Madame, and a group of ladies including Mademoiselle de La Vallière. The King's favorite ladies--maids-of-honor and ladies-in-waiting to the queens and Madame, wives of officers and noblemen, and the unmarried daughters of France's leading families--were seated; the gentlemen of the court stood. During the feast a pageant was presented to this illustrious gathering by Molière's troupe, the only professional actors to appear in The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.

The next evening presumably the same audience attended Molière's The Princess of Elis (La Princesse d'Elide), a comedy-ballet in honor of the two queens, written hastily for the occasion and based on a Spanish play.

Although Molière probably intended merely to contribute to the romantic tone of the fete with his heroic pastoral, the second verse of the prologue's chanson d'amour is often quoted as a reference to Mademoiselle de La Vallière:

Soupirez librement pour un amant fidèle,  
Et bravez ceux qui voudraient vous blâmer.  
Un coeur tendre est aimable, et le nom de cruelle  
N'est pas un nom à se faire estimer:

<sup>52</sup>See Appendix B: Cast Lists for a full account of the participants and the characters they portrayed.

Dans le temps où l'on est belle,  
Rien n'est si beau que d'aimer. 53

In 1664, Louis was in the prime of his young manhood, when all the months were May, and, reflecting the King's age and inclinations, the theme of youthful pleasure recurs throughout all Molière's court entertainments. Molière wrote, for example, in the Comic Pastoral (1666-1667):  
". . . when, alas, old age has chilled our feelings, our happy days return no more."<sup>54</sup> And in Psyché (1671) he asserted:

To snatch Hours which swiftly run  
Youth's wisdom lies in this;  
In knowing how t' enjoy the present Bliss.<sup>55</sup>

Plaisir was a noble prerogative. Many ballets proclaimed as much. Even in Les Plaisirs troublés (1657), one pleasure merely disturbed or interrupted another for the delight of a distinguished audience. Molière was employed to perpetuate the tradition of princely pleasure. Speaking in The Impromptu, he was clearly aware of his responsibility; and he restated a number of times, even in the prologue of his last play, the desire to provide pleasurable diversion for the King.

Molière wrote The Princess of Elis as one of the "pleasures" of the "enchanted island." And, according to Grimarest, "That play reconciled him with the angry courtier."<sup>56</sup> Instead of Molière's usual jabs at con-

<sup>53</sup>D-M, IV, 132. "Sigh shamelessly for a faithful lover, and defy those who would blame you. A tender heart is lovable, and the name 'cruel' is not an esteemed title for a maiden: for in the prime of her beauty, nothing is more suitable than for her to love."

<sup>54</sup>Van Laun, IV, 38.

<sup>55</sup>John Ozell, trans., The Works of M. de Molière (London, 1714), Book III, Vol. V, 54.

<sup>56</sup>p. 25.

temporary manners and people, it contained noble characters and fine sentiments to which no one could object. But Molière did not remain out of trouble for long. After Molière's play, the fete proceeded with a ballet, more jousting and feasting, a lottery, a visit to the aviary, revivals of Molière's two earlier comedy-ballets, The Bores and The Forced Marriage, and the première of a non-musical play he had just written called Tartuffe. Molière may have intended this new play merely to please an audience not disposed on such a gay, carefree occasion to want critical or thought-provoking drama, but out of the fripperies of this week of plaisir he found himself embroiled in his fiercest battle, l'affaire Tartuffe.

Word from court traveled fast, and news about Tartuffe at Versailles quickly raised a storm in Paris. Molière had presented a portrait of a hypocritical directeur de conscience of the type who at the time lived in many Parisian households. But Molière was accused of attacking religion. The controversy aggravated the already vehement opposition between the Jesuits and the Jansenists. Louis XIV, "Rex Christianissimus," who privately relished Molière's play, found it politic to avoid any further religious turmoil, and prohibited the play in case it might offend or mislead anyone who did not realize that a false and not a true devotion was being portrayed. During the period the play was banned, 1664-1669, Molière revised the play to make its point more obvious, and he formally petitioned the King three times to lift the restriction. At first, only public performances were prohibited, not private presentations. In August, Molière gave the play for the Cardinal Fabio Chigi, the papal legate; in September there was a performance for the official protector of the troupe, the Duc d'Orléans, along with the rest of the royal family

at Villers-Cotterêts, north of Paris in the Ile de France; and in November Tartuffe was performed for the Prince de Condé at Raincy, the country estate of the Princesse Palatine, Anne de Gonzague. Despite Molière's continued efforts to defend his play, he kept busy during 1665 and 1666 with royal performances and new plays at the Palais-Royal. The prohibition of Tartuffe in 1664, however, created an immediate problem: Molière had no new fall play to offer the public. The Princess of Elis, which had not been written for his Paris audience, might never have been transferred to the Palais-Royal if Tartuffe had not been banned.

At the Palais-Royal Molière had a mixed audience, from servants and shop assistants to France's highest nobility.<sup>57</sup> Monsieur (Figure 49) came to see the actors who bore his name<sup>58</sup> and even Louis saw The School for Wives and The Critique there, as well as a special performance in January 1664 of La Bradamante ridicule, a play given to Molière's company by the Duc de Saint-Aignan. Although the King thereafter preferred living out of Paris and summoning Molière to perform at the royal chateaux, his courtiers went to the public theatre with great frequency, especially to see plays again that had been performed at court. Conspicuous evidence of the King's approval greatly publicized Molière's theatre to the bulk

<sup>57</sup>Lough, p. 79.

Apparently it was not uncommon for nobles to attend and have the troupe "bill" them for price of admission. The Comte de Guiche came to the Palais-Royal several times in the fall of 1664, and probably sat on the stage. He did not pay at the door. Also, in the register of La Thorillière (Schwartz, p. 1071) is this item: "Owed by M<sup>r</sup> De Villeroy . . . a place for 5# 10<sup>s</sup>." On money, see note 62, p. 115.

<sup>58</sup>When Monsieur attended the theatre in 1672, he reserved two rows of seats in the auditorium (Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 419).

of the Paris audience--the bourgeoisie. The box office thrived on the quality of Molière's productions, controversy, and the glamorous associations of which the troupe could boast. The troupe became what the "illustre" of the early group's name had implied--la mode.

Molière dealt swiftly and directly with the arrogant dandies and swaggerers who abused their positions and caused problems in his theatre. In The Bores he ridiculed the courtier who sits on the stage and interrupts a performance; he obtained an order from the King that the members of the royal household, who were accustomed to filling the parterre without paying, would have to buy admission like anyone; and he kept a police guard to prevent any rowdiness in the theatre.

The theatrical season in Paris began after Easter and ended at Lent's Holy Week. Molière's troupe performed at the Palais-Royal usually on Sunday, Tuesday, and Friday, alternating with the Italian players. (Whenever the King called for the troupe, the actors went "on the road," and sometimes returned to perform at the theatre on an off day.) Performances began about 4:00 p.m. Although the troupe operated on democratic principles, Molière was the doyen, or senior member of the troupe, and its manager. According to La Grange in 1660, "All the actors loved the Sieur de Molière, their chief. . . ."59 An "orator" (Molière, then La Grange after 1664) was responsible for having posters (red and black and later green for the troupe) printed, and he made announcements from the stage, including compliments to important people in the audience. The troupe played in repertory, constantly adding new plays and repeating popular ones. Molière performed the works of other playwrights, but his own plays proved

<sup>59</sup>La Grange, p. 26. Figure 50.



Figure 49. Philippe



Figure 50. Molière and his troupe at a rehearsal  
(G. Mélingue)



to be the most well-received. The Bores, the play most frequently performed at court during Molière's lifetime, was also one of the most often revived in town.

Molière transferred all the comedy-ballets from the court to the Palais-Royal, with the exception of The Magnificent Lovers. Although they may have been produced with merely a suggestion of the musical spectacle seen at court, the comedy-ballets were expensive productions. Admission prices were usually doubled for the first performance of a play to cover production costs, including payment to the playwright, and members of the troupe shared the receipts each day after expenses. The share-holders (sociétaires) realized only about half the profit from a comedy-ballet as from a non-musical play. When The School for Wives brought 1,518 livres gross income, each share amounted to 81 livres; when The Forced Marriage made 1,509 livres, a share was only 47 livres. The same ratio prevailed for The Princess of Elis.

After a trip to Versailles in October, 1664, it became apparent to Molière that the ban on Tartuffe would not be lifted, and he premièred The Princess of Elis at the Palais-Royal in November. The high standard of public decorum and refinement demanded by Louis XIV of his courtiers may have helped purge the stage of obscenities and low comedy, but Paris did not respond well at this time to courtly pastoral romance, and Molière's comedy-ballet was not particularly popular.

In February, 1665 Molière introduced a new play, Don Juan, or The Statue at the Feast (Don Juan, ou Le Festin de Pierre).<sup>60</sup> Don Juan is

<sup>60</sup>The subtitle is difficult to translate because of puns on the words Pierre ("stone" and the name of the person the statue represents) and feast (a banquet and a celebration of a great person).

not only a libertine without moral principles, he is an intellectually arrogant atheist. The clergy and the pious people of Paris were outraged again, objecting forcefully enough to the new piece that it was not called to court and Molière did not resume performances of it after Easter. With both Tartuffe and Don Juan eliminated from the repertoire and The Princess of Elis not worth reviving, the troupe accepted for performance at the end of April a tragi-comedy, The Coquette, or The Favorite (La Coquette ou Le Favori), by Mlle Des Jardins, one of the first women playwrights of France. Then the call came for the troupe to entertain at Versailles.

Although the King had seemed to be satisfied to celebrate Carnival with a ballet, Naissance de Venus, prepared by the court regulars Benserade, Lully, Vigarani, and Beauchamps under the direction of the Duc de Saint-Aignan, apparently he had not forgotten the comedy-ballet. In June, Molière's troupe was summoned to Versailles where they played The Favorite in the manner if not the substance of a comedy-ballet, with the music and dances of Lully's ballet Les Gardes between the acts. La Grange described the setting--a garden stage adorned with orange trees--and the prologue which Molière performed "as a ridiculous marquis who wanted to be seated on the stage in spite of the guards, and had a conversation with an actress who played a foolish marquise placed in the middle of the audience."<sup>61</sup> Although this production was undoubtedly satisfactory as a simple outdoor entertainment, Molière would never again be caught without a play of his own with which to amuse the King. He wrote at least one entertainment for the King every year for the rest of his life.

<sup>61</sup>La Grange, p. 74.

Perhaps to compensate Molière for the forfeiture of Tartuffe and Don Juan and to reward the troupe for services rendered (no payment had been made for The Favorite), the King called the troupe to Saint-Germain in August. Louis also undoubtedly wanted to congratulate Molière on his new daughter, baptized only ten days earlier as Esprit-Madeleine (after her godparents, Esprit de Rémond de Mormoiron, the Comte de Modène and Madeleine Béjart). But the main purpose of the visit was for the King to announce that he had asked Monsieur to release Molière and his actors and that they henceforth would be known as the Troupe du Roi, Louis's personal entertainers with an annual specified pension of 6,000 livres.<sup>62</sup> Their contribution to the plaisir and the gloire of France would be in the name of the King. Only rarely would the troupe play en visite for anyone else again. Important people had requested their services--the Duc de Beaufort, Le Tellier, and Colbert. But as the King became more absolute in his rule,

<sup>62</sup>The Grands Comédiens received an annual pension of 12,000 livres, the Italians 15,000.

Seventeenth-century money:

12 <u>deniers</u>	= 1 <u>sol</u> (today, 5 <u>centimes</u> )
20 <u>sols</u> (today, <u>sous</u> )	= 1 <u>livre</u> (or 1 <u>franc</u> )
3 <u>livres</u>	= 1 <u>écu</u>
10 <u>livres</u>	= 1 <u>pistole</u>
5 <u>livres</u> 10 <u>sols</u>	= 1 <u>demi-louis d'or</u>
11 <u>livres</u>	= 1 <u>louis d'or</u> (later, 20 <u>franc</u> = 1 <u>louis d'or</u> )

French money in this study will be shown with these symbols: 5# 10<sup>s</sup> (5 livres, 10 sols). The spending power of the livre was equivalent to about \$2.50 in modern times: 6,000# (1672) = \$15,000 (1972). A loaf of bread was one to two sols, a pint of wine two to three, and a dozen eggs or a pound of candles ten sols, ballet shoes--5#, a wig--12#, a round trip Paris to Versailles by coach--6#. The ticket range at the Palais-Royal was 15<sup>s</sup> (parterre) to 5# 10<sup>s</sup> (box or stage seat). Guards at the theatre received about 1# per night, dancers 5# 10<sup>s</sup>, actors as much as 208# 4<sup>s</sup> (opening of Tartuffe in 1669). The average season's share per actor was approximately 4,000#, about 600# of which came from the King (pension and additional payments).

he personally controlled all aspects of national pride.

Since the King then had an official master of entertainments, he wasted no time in making use of his new retainer. Only two weeks after the actors' return to Paris from Saint-Germain, the call came for an entertainment. Molière, having learned from his experience with the court production of The Favorite that music and dancing could end up as part of the program of one of his performances whether he intended it or not, took the initiative for this new piece and incorporated musical agréments into the action, with the characters Comedy, Music, and Ballet created to sing a tribute to the pleasure and glory of his sovereign and new patron. Performances at the Palais-Royal were cancelled for a week, and in five days Molière put together a comedy-ballet, Love's The Best Doctor (L'Amour médecin) for a hunting party the King had ordered at Versailles.

In the absence of war, tournaments, such as the Grand Carrousel and the jousting contests during The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, provided the nobles of the court something to do to display their prowess. So, too, did the hunt, a traditional aristocratic pastime, which required skill with a sword and a horse. The hunt was one of Louis's favorite activities.<sup>63</sup> During the fall, and especially to celebrate the feast day of Saint Hubert,<sup>64</sup> patron of the deer and of the hunt, Louis often gave a hunting party, an occasion that was at once a religious, social, and sporting event in which even the ladies participated (Figure 51). In September,

<sup>63</sup>The prologue of The Princess of Elis with its sleepy whipper-in preparing for the hunt showed Louis in an amusing way an aspect of the sport he possibly had never seen.

<sup>64</sup>November 3.



Figure 51. Louis XIV's hunting party

1665, the court went to Versailles for an early season hunting holiday, and Marie-Thérèse, Madame, Mademoiselle, and her half-sister Mlle d'Alençon took part in the chase. Among other amusements arranged for the holidays, the hunters were treated to Molière's new comedy-ballet.

Molière included the musical spectacle the King enjoyed in Love's the Best Doctor while at the same time writing a social comedy which ridiculed the excesses of the contemporary medical profession. The Duc d'Enghien wrote to the Queen of Poland about the court production:

There was a new comedy that an actor named Molière wrote. He is a man who has as much wit as one can have and who, like the ancients, in all his comedies mocks the vices of his century . . . He does these things so delicately that those against whom he does them cannot take them for themselves, and everyone else recognizes them. In this last comedy he attacks doctors. . . . 65

While Molière probably never wrote a pièce à clef or merely reproduced an individual from contemporary life in his plays as he was frequently accused of doing, he presented characters in Love's the Best Doctor that his audiences thought they recognized: physicians associated with the court. Royal physicians were important court retainers who would have aroused much interest as characters in a play. The eminent doctor Gui Patin reported only what everyone was gossiping about when, in reference to Molière's public performances, he wrote that everyone was going to see court doctors represented, principally Esprit and Guénaut.<sup>66</sup> Some thirty years after the play was first produced, Claude Brossette wrote that

<sup>65</sup>Quoted in Mélése, p. 278, from Lettres du Grand Condé et du Duc d'Enghien (Paris, 1920), p. 209.

<sup>66</sup>D-M, V, 267.

Boileau furnished Molière names for the doctors based on Greek terms and that the characters represented the court doctors Des Fougerais, Guénaut, D'Aquin, Esprit, and Yvelin.<sup>67</sup>

Colbert Searles, a modern scholar, agrees that the character "Des Fonandrès" was Beda des Fougerais (a medical consultant at court) and that "Macrothin" was Guénaut, but he disputes the other identifications made by Brossette.<sup>68</sup> "Tomès," he suggests, was Vallot, premier médecin du roi, rather than D'Aquin, who did not succeed to that position until 1671. Besides, Vallot would have been a better subject for ridicule because he was known to have displeased the King on a number of occasions. The character "Bahys," according to Searles, represented Brayer rather than Esprit. Brayer was not a regular court physician and would have been more inclined to assume the subservient attitude suggested in the play toward the elderly and experienced Guénaut ("Macrothin") than Esprit, who had the high position of premier médecin de Monsieur.

Searles supports his choices with the theory that Molière based the doctors' consultation scene on an incident during the final sickness of Mazarin (1661) in which each of four doctors--Des Fougerais, Guénaut, Vallot, and Brayer--diagnosed different causes for the Cardinal's malady.

<sup>67</sup>Claude Brossette (1671-1743) edited the works of the poet-critic, Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux.

<sup>68</sup>Colbert Searles, "The Consultation Scene of 'L'Amour Médecin,'" Modern Philology, XV (1917-1918), 401-418.

BROSSETTE	Character	SEARLES
Beda des Fougerais	"Des Fonandrès"	Beda des Fougerais
Guénaut	"Macrothin"	Guénaut
D'Aquin	"Tomès"	Vallot
Esprit	"Bahys"	Brayer
Yvelin	"Filerin"	Mazarin

This incident may have been widely known, for there was keen interest in the circumstances of Mazarin's sickness and death. Boileau, who knew about court doctors and referred to them in his Satires, may have suggested this incident as well as the character's names to Molière.

That the character "Filerin" was Yvelin, premier médecin de Madame, is also refuted by Searles. In the play, "Filerin" takes a position of authority over the other doctors: he warns them to stop disagreeing or the patient will never be deluded into thinking that doctors know what they are doing. Yvelin, Searles argues, would not have had this control over the other court doctors. Searles suggests instead that the model for "Filerin" was not a doctor at all, but Mazarin, who, during a sickness of the King in 1658, tried to arbitrate between disputing doctors. The Machiavellian attitude of "Filerin" who says doctors should profit as much as possible from human gullibility is cited as further evidence for Mazarin. Searles also puts forth the notion that "Filerin" was not part of the original play (and indeed he is unnecessary to the action), but was interpolated later, perhaps at the suggestion of the King, in the manner that the hunter based on the Marquis de Soyecourt was supposed to have been suggested for The Bores.

Perhaps the "interesting coincidence" Searles finds between "Filerin" and Mazarin can be granted. Though Mazarin may have been thought a ruthless plotter by his enemies, it is doubtful, however, the King thought of him that way. It also seems unlikely that Louis would have allowed ridicule of Mazarin to be shown before the Queen Mother (Mazarin's widow), who most likely attended the court performances. If an alternative to Yvelin must be sought, Raynaud's suggestion that "Filerin" stands for



the whole medical faculty of Paris seems more plausible.<sup>69</sup> "Filerin" might even have been an ironic portrait of Gui Patin himself, a respected Faculty member but known for disputing with his colleagues. As interesting as Searle's possibly accurate identifications may be, however, Molière's audiences apparently were intrigued most with the idea of barely-disguised court physicians being portrayed. Perhaps Molière was surprised to learn his characters were based on anyone. But controversy, especially when it concerned court gossip, always boosted box office receipts.

Sad news for the King's wife followed the festive autumn hunt at Versailles. Felipe IV, King of Spain, died on September 17, 1665, and the French court went into a period of mourning for Marie-Thérèse's father. Then an even deeper mourning enveloped the court of Louis XIV when the next January (1666) the Queen Mother died. Anne had always been the honored guest at court. Louis was extremely devoted to his mother and substantially influenced by her. He even kept his affair with La Vallière as discreet as possible because of his mother's objections. Although the King at last became personally and politically independent when Anne died, his sorrow over her passing was great. The Carnival celebration was omitted and there were no large festivities at court for almost a year.

The beginning of 1666 was a difficult time for Molière as well, bringing estrangements and sickness. Molière's interest in doctors, shown in Don Juan and Love's the Best Doctor, probably reflected the emergence of a lung condition and a nervous disorder that plagued him for the rest of his life. He was undoubtedly consulting his doctor and friend

<sup>69</sup>Maurice Raynaud, Les Médecins au temps de Molière (Paris, 1862).

Jean-Armand Mauvillain not only as a playwright needing comic material, but as a sick man.<sup>70</sup>

Although Molière's actors had acquired an impressive title and had played Tartuffe again for Condé and the Princesse Palatine (November, 1665), they suffered a professional set-back at the end of 1665 that also affected Molière personally. Jean Racine, whose first play, The Theban Brothers (La Thebaïde, 1664) had been produced by Molière when no one else would take it, betrayed his friend Molière and the Troupe du Roi. In December, 1665 Molière's actors had premièred Racine's second play Alexander the Great, but during the run discovered to their great surprise that the Hôtel de Bourgogne also presented the same play. The Comtesse d'Armagnac had sponsored a private performance by the Grands Comédiens to be given for the King, Monsieur and Madame, and invited guests; Racine preferred this production and authorized it at Molière's rival theatre. Molière was thus deprived of a brilliant young playwright's work, their friendship was seriously impaired, and the troupe lost Mlle Du Parc who followed Racine to the Hôtel de Bourgogne.<sup>71</sup>

The marital problems that Molière endured for most of the rest of his life also surfaced at this time. Malicious gossip had always prevailed about Molière's marriage with a woman half his age. The problems of such an alliance are delineated in a number of his plays. When Armande played

<sup>70</sup>The only political favor Molière ever asked of the King (third placet of Tartuffe) was for the appointment of Mauvillain's son to a canonry in the royal chapel of Vincennes.

<sup>71</sup>All Racine's subsequent plays were done at the Hôtel de Bourgogne. Mlle Du Parc became Racine's mistress and created the title role in his Andromaque the following year; she died in 1668 in childbirth.

the Princess in Molière's comedy-ballet for The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, she was supposed to have been dazzled by the glamor of the surroundings and the attentions of a number of courtiers. At least since that time stories persisted about her infatuations and infidelities.<sup>72</sup>

Burdened with overwork, domestic and professional problems, Molière closed his theatre for seven weeks at the beginning of 1666. Because of the royal mourning, Molière had no obligations at court, and after the winter season his health temporarily improved. He then wrote two of his best plays--a comic masterpiece and one of his most popular farces.

The Misanthrope, or the Morose Lover (Le Misanthrope ou L'Atrabilaire amoureux) was premièreed in June, 1666. Tradition says that the model of Alceste was the Duc de Montausier, the stern governor of the Dauphin who had married one of the daughters of Madame de Rambouillet and, therefore, knew intimately the affectations of the younger précieuses. Instead of showing anger at being identified with a man whose virtue is his obsession, the duke praised the play extravagantly and invited Molière to dinner. Although The Misanthrope was not performed at court, the court came to see

<sup>72</sup>The slanderous stories about Mlle Molière were collected and preserved for posterity to ponder in an abusive little pamphlet La Fameuse comédienne, ou Histoire de la Guérin auparavant femme et veuve de Molière (The Famous Actress, or the Story of La Guérin, Formerly Wife and Widow of Molière, Frankfort, 1688), written fifteen years after Molière died when Armande was then married to the actor Guérin. The author is unknown, but may have been a rival actress. Among the many accusations included are that Armande was Madeleine's daughter, that during the Versailles fete Armande succumbed to the Comte de Guiche (who was not even in France at the time) and the Comte (later Duc) de Lauzun (who was otherwise occupied at the time with the sister of the Comte de Guiche), and that she and the actor Baron had an affair during the run of Psyché (1671-1672).

The several visits of the Comte de Guiche to see The Princess of Elis in the fall of 1664 may have precipitated rumors. Armande was probably flirtatious, vain, and susceptible to flattery, but no substantial evidence exists to prove she was unfaithful to Molière.

it at the Palais-Royal, and it was greatly appreciated by the littérateurs, especially Boileau.

From the philosopher, Molière returned to his role as the farceur and produced The Doctor in Spite of Himself (Le Médecin malgré lui), introduced at the beginning of August when the crowds for The Misanthrope began to dwindle.

By the Christmas season of 1666, Louis had ended his mourning and ordered a grand entertainment called the Ballet of the Muses.

L'auguste Ballet des neuf Soeurs,  
Ou l'on voit d'excellents danseurs,  
Divertit toujours à merveille  
Le cour, des cours la non pareille.<sup>73</sup>

The Ballet of the Muses was repeated through mid-February, 1667 amid matters of life and death in the royal family. Before the fete began on December 2, the first son of Monsieur and Madame became ill, but Madame danced in two ballet-entries on the opening day and on December 5. Although called away when the boy died, Madame answered her duty to the court and returned shortly to the festivities at Saint-Germain. Only a brief delay in the fete resulted from the birth of a daughter for Louis and Marie-Thérèse, and apparently a "Spanish Masquerade" was added to the entertainment to celebrate the Queen's fruitfulness. According to the Gazette, the ambassadors and foreign ministers visiting the court paid their respects to the Queen on the birth of the princess and then went by order of the King to the Ballet of the Muses.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup>See Chapter V: Related Works for a discussion of the "text" of the fete. "The august ballet of the Nine Sisters, in which one sees excellent dancers, always marvellously amuses the court, of all courts unequalled." Robinet's Lettre of December 26, 1666, quoted in Moland, VIII, 102.

<sup>74</sup>D-M, VI, 208.

The Troupe du Roi stayed at Saint-Germain from December 1, 1666 to February 20, 1667, presenting as the third entry of the fete two pastoral plays--Mélicerte at first, which was later replaced by the Comic Pastoral.<sup>75</sup> Even vers for Molière appeared in the livret distributed to the distinguished guests:

Le célèbre Molière est dans un grand éclat:  
Son mérite est connu de Paris jusqu'à Rome.  
Il est avantageux partout d'être honnête homme,  
Mais il est dangereux avec lui d'être un fat. 76

Then as the fourteenth and final entry of the fete, Molière, in a comedy-ballet, The Sicilian; or, Love Makes a Painter (Le Sicilien ou L'Amour peintre), made "the court laugh"<sup>77</sup> again by playing a foolish tyrant Don Pedro, whose freed slave-girl whom he intends to marry is stolen from him by her clever young lover. Robinet called the play a "masterpiece" ("chef-d'oeuvre"). The only specific model from life that critics have been able to divine is the Président de Périgny, thought to be the magistrate (Le Senateur) to whom the Sicilian Don Pedro appeals for retribution at the end of the play.<sup>78</sup> The Magistrate is more interested in a mascarade of dancers in Moorish costume than he is in Don Pedro's lawsuit. The similarity would have amused the court. Although Périgny was président

<sup>75</sup>Molière wrote the role of the young lover in Mélicerte for a boy-actor Michel Baron (b. 1653), whom he had adopted in 1664 as a protégé after Baron appeared at the Palais-Royal with Madame Raisin's children's company, the Comédiens de Monsieur le Dauphin.

<sup>76</sup>"The celebrated Molière is in great éclat; his merit is known from Paris to Rome. It is advantageous any place to be a modest gentleman (honest, cultivated, refined), but with him it is dangerous to be a conceited ass." D-M, VI, 134.

<sup>77</sup>D-M, VI, 211-212 (Robinet's account of the play).

<sup>78</sup>Le Moliériste, IV, 209 (Edouard Thierry).

aux enquêtes (in charge of investigations) at the Parlement of Paris, his court functions were much more important: he helped prepare the Carrousel of 1662; as already mentioned, he wrote the 1664 ballet, Les Amours déguisés, and contributed to The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island; he had recently been appointed preceptor of the Dauphin; and he was one of the organizers of the Ballet of the Muses. No Parlement duties could be more important than the preparation of a court entertainment, especially one in which the King appeared.

The King danced several times in the Ballet of the Muses. He was a Moor in The Sicilian along with the Marquis de Villeroy and the Marquis de Rasan, Madame, Mademoiselle de La Vallière, Madame de Rochefort, and Mlle de Brancas.<sup>79</sup>

Pour le Roy, Maure.

Ce Maure si fameux, soit en paix, soit en guerre,  
 D'un merite éclatant et d'un rang singulier,  
 Pourroit mettre a ses pieds tout l'orgueil de la terre,  
 Et difficilement souffriroit le collier.  
 Il ne scait ce que c'est d'estre sans la victoire,  
 Et tous les pas qu'il fait le mènent à la gloire;  
 Sur un chemin si noble il efface en allant  
 Tout ce que les Zégris et les Abencerrages,  
     Ces illustres courages,  
     Firent de plus galant.  
 Lorsqu'il fait le Berger il est incomparable;  
 Représentat Cyrus, il prend un plus haut vol;  
 Qu'il se déguise en Nymphé, il a l'air admirable;  
 C'est la mesme fierte s'il danse en Espagnol;  
 Sous l'habit africain luy-mesme il se surmonte;  
 Mais de ces jeux divers quand il faut qu'il remonte  
 A son vray, naturel, et sérieux employ,  
 Ou pas un ne l'égale, où nul ne le seconde,  
     Personne dans le monde.  
     Ne fait si bien le ROY.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup>Of these notables: Rasan was a lieutenant-general, d. 1718; Mme Rochefort was the wife of the Marquis (Figure 52), later Maréchal de Rochefort, court intriguer, and mistress of Louvois; Mlle Brancas married the Prince d'Harcourt in 1667.

<sup>80</sup>Quoted in Victor Fournel, Les Contemporains de Molière (Paris,

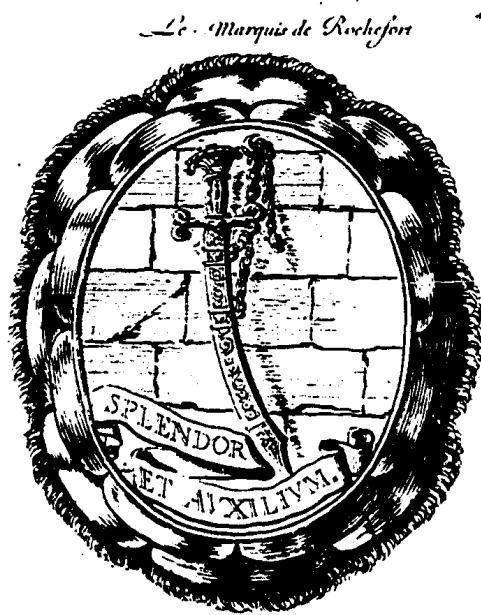


Figure 52. Crest of the Marquis de Rochefort

Molière's contribution to the fete so pleased the King that he granted the troupe 12,000 livres, twice its annual pension, and gave expensive gifts to the actresses.

The festival spirit that ushered in 1667 not only ended Louis's mourning but provided the send-off for an action he had avoided while his peace-loving mother was still alive; the conquest of territory in the Spanish Netherlands.

An alliance had been made in 1662 between France and the Dutch for the purpose of reaching some agreement over the long-contested northern frontier of France. The Dutch invoked this alliance and appealed for assistance from France when, in 1664, England began to interfere with the extensive Dutch trade market. France declared war on England in January, 1666, but built troops in order to invade the Netherlands. Louis had a dynastic excuse for his aggression: he was protecting his wife and son's Spanish rights.

Marie-Thérèse's dowry from Felipe IV of Spain had never been paid. Upon the Spanish king's death in 1665 and the succession of a sickly child, Carlos II, Louis demanded that payment be made or that Marie-Thérèse's

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1866), II, 616. "For the King, Moor. This Moor, so formed in peace or in war, of shining merit and singular rank, could put at his feet all the pride of the earth, and would with difficulty bear the yoke. He does not know what it is to be without victory, and every step he takes leads him to glory; on such a noble road he wipes out as he goes all that the Zégris and the Abencerrages, these illustrious men of courage, did that was most gallant. When he acts the shepherd he is incomparable; performing Cyrus, he flies higher; if he disguises himself as a Nymph, he is admirable, he is pride itself if he dances as a Spaniard; he surpasses himself in the guise of an African; but when, after these various acts, he must return to his true, natural, and serious employ, where none equals him where no one comes near him, no one in the world acts so well the King."



renunciation of inheritance of the throne, agreed upon the the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), be annulled. Since the Spanish made no response, Louis called up the Law of Devolution, which declared that children from a first marriage become heirs to the exclusion of children from a second marriage. According to this law, the Spanish Netherlands rightfully belonged to the Queen and her son. While the English and Dutch engaged in naval battle, French troops marched north in May, 1667 for the War of Devolution, and the summer campaign was completely successful.

Whether or not the excitement and concern over the war adversely affected the theatre is difficult to say, but Molière had an extremely troublesome time in 1667. He might have been able to capitalize on the glamor of his court affiliations by producing The Sicilian immediately after the Saint-Germain appearances. Instead, when finally able in February to return to Paris, he honored a commitment to produce Pierre Corneille's new play, Atilla, which had been ready since November. It was a privilege to première a play by the great Corneille, but the reaction to the production was mixed. Although Molière always aspired to success in tragedy, he never won over the audience, who appreciated the declamatory style of the Hôtel de Bourgogne. His own new "masterpiece," The Sicilian, was not produced until June, usually the slowest month of the season; box office receipts dropped lower than at any other time in Molière's Paris career.

Probably Molière's renewed sickness, which forced him to close the theatre several times during 1667, helped cause the failure of both Atilla and The Sicilian. The Easter break had been extended to almost seven weeks. The theatre reopened in mid-May, but shortly thereafter closed for another two weeks. During the run of The Sicilian between

June 10 and July 24, the theatre closed again for over a week.<sup>81</sup> Performances at the Palais-Royal were unreliable, and it was even rumored for a time that Molière had died.

Molière's troubles were further compounded by Armande. The young actor Baron, on whom Molière doted, had left the troupe because of a quarrel with Mlle Molière. Then Molière and his wife, seeming to be hopelessly incompatible, separated. Molière "retired" for his health's sake to Auteuil, a quiet village outside Paris, and Armande stayed in town. Apparently their separation was a mutual and friendly agreement because no official papers were drawn. They saw one another constantly at the theatre, and Molière continued to write leading sympathetic roles for Armande in his plays.

The one thing that could revive the theatre after the meager summer of 1667 was Tartuffe. Before departing for the Flanders battlefield, Louis apparently gave verbal approval for performances of Tartuffe, perhaps because Anne, who had so strenuously disapproved, was dead. Molière rehearsed the play and presented it on August 5 at the Palais-Royal. The next day, the First Président of the Parlement, Guillaume de La Moignon, notified Molière that further performances would not be permitted. Hardouin de Péréfixe, Archbishop of Paris, followed with a mandement forbidding the play to be presented, read, or listened to in his diocese. Unable to get authoritative help from Henriette, Molière immediately sent his leading actors La Grange and La Thorillière with a desperate placet to the King, who was with Maréchal Turenne at the head of the army.

<sup>81</sup>From this time to Molière's death, an "Interruption," as La Grange called it, in performances at the Palais-Royal became a frequent occurrence.

besieging Lille. Molière petitioned against the "Tartuffes," concluding:

May your goodness, Sire, give me protection  
against their venomous rage, and may I, on Your  
Majesty's return from this glorious campaign, assist  
You to relax from the fatigues of conquest, offer  
You harmless amusement after Your noble labors, and  
inspire laughter in a Monarch who has made all Europe  
tremble!<sup>82</sup>

The actors were sent back with a promise that the King would consider the question upon his return. Lille fell at the end of August, and the victorious King returned to Saint-Germain in September, at which time he upheld the official restraint of Tartuffes. Production had been suspended at the Palais-Royal for seven weeks and the Troupe du Roi had spent 1,000 livres in traveling expenses for nothing.

The only heartening event of this year of reverses and disappointments may have been a trip to Versailles in November, during which the company received its much-needed pension. Through all the difficulties Molière at least had the solace of his friends, Chapelle, La Fontaine, and Boileau. Chapelle, who shared Molière's house at Auteuil, was a man of independent means,<sup>83</sup> a frequent carouser, but good-natured and lively, a healthy contrast to the contemplative and melancholy Molière. Racine probably no longer shared the company of this group, but the philosopher Jacques Rohault and the painter Pierre Mignard<sup>84</sup> could be counted among Molière's friends. Boileau, one of his most devoted companions, continually tried to persuade Molière to forego acting and concentrate on writing, but

<sup>82</sup>D-M, IV, 394.

<sup>83</sup>Illegitimate son of a government official, François Lullier.

<sup>84</sup>Molière met Mignard about 1657 in the provinces about the time the painter had finished a portrait of the Duc de Guise. Mignard painted most of the important people of France, and did several representations of Molière (Figure 53).

Molière apparently needed the activity of the stage to inspire him. And, anyway, things looked brighter in 1668.

Louis's war was not over until 1668, but the young King had conducted himself extremely well in the eyes of people impressed with externals. The summer's campaign had been almost a glorified tournament or equestrian parade. Louis visited the camps of his soldiers and took his court with him--the Queen, Monsieur and Madame, La Grande Mademoiselle, Louise de La Vallière, the Marquise de Montespan, the Comtesse de Béthume and other beauties of the court including the Princesse d'Harcourt and Madame de Roure. Members of the cortege traveled in their finest clothes and in superb carriages; they rested in magnificent tents. The air of frivolity with which these troop visits were conducted helped to inspire the army. In July the court made a tour of the newly conquered Flanders to impress its people with the grandeur of France.<sup>85</sup> Molière had described this form of royal pageantry in his pastoral Mélicerte:

. . . The King has come to honour Tempe with his presence in the most magnificent style . . . he made his entry into Larissa yesterday afternoon . . . I saw him there comfortably installed with the whole Court . . . I have seen a hundred things there, delightful to behold. Nothing but great lords, glittering and brilliant from head to foot, as if dressed for a holiday; they astonish one's eyes; and are more dazzling than our meadows at spring-time with all their flowers. As for the prince himself, he is easily known among all the rest; he looks like a grand monarch a mile off. There is something about him that makes you tell at once that he is a master King. He performs his part with matchless grace; and to say the truth, it suits him admirably. You would hardly believe how every one at court eagerly watches for a glance; there reigns around him a pleasant confusion; and

<sup>85</sup>Figure 54. This engraving is of a later period, but shows the standard mode of royal travel.



Figure 53. Molière (Mignard as presented by Thoorens)



Figure 54. Royal entry

one would think it a swarm of brilliant insects following everywhere a sweet honeycomb. In short, I have seen nothing so lovely under the canopy of Heaven; and our much cherished feast of Pan is a mere piece of trash compared with this spectacle.

(Van Laun, IV, 12-13)

During the summer progresses through the country, the people were also treated to the spectacle of the "three queens": Queen Marie-Thérèse, Louise who had once reigned over the King's heart and was pregnant but mistress then in title only, and the King's new favorite, Madame de Montespan.

For pre-Lenten festivities in 1668, the King and La Montespan led a royal masquerade called Le Carnaval (Benserade and Lully). Then Molière opened his new play Amphitryon at the Palais-Royal on January 13, and performed it for the King and his court at the Tuileries. Molière may have intended Amphitryon to be a portrait of Louis's current affair, perhaps based on gossip picked up by La Grange and La Thorillière at the northern camp. Jupiter's replacement of Amphitryon as Alcène's husband is generally thought to be a travesty upon Monsieur de Montespan being replaced by Louis XIV. The god says, "To share with Jupiter in no way brings dishonor."

Madame de Montespan was the vivacious and haughty daughter of the great house of Mortemart (Françoise Athénaïs de Rochechouart de Mortemart b. 1641) and considered to be the most beautiful woman in France (Figure 55). Athénaïs came to court at the beginning of Louis's personal reign. Soon afterward she left to marry the Marquis de Montespan, had two sons, and then deserted her foolish husband to join Madam's household. Becoming a good friend of Marie-Thérèse and La Vallière allowed her to be near the King. By the time the court returned from the 1667 summer campaign in the

north she had replaced Louise as the King's mistress. For many years, however, La Montespan's husband, who objected to the ménage à trois, continued to be troublesome. And throughout the twelve years of the King's liaison with La Montespan (with seven children), even after the Montespan marriage had been dissolved, scandal over the double adultery in this affair persisted.

In February, 1668, Louis sent Condé on his first commission since the Fronde to attack Franche-Comté, and Monsieur le Prince won an easy victory.<sup>86</sup> The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which ended the conflict in the north, followed shortly. The restoration of Franche-Comté to Spain made the northern boundaries irrational, with French and Spanish territories surrounding each other, but peace prevailed for the moment, and the glory of France deserved to be celebrated.

Le Grand Divertissement royal de Versailles, perhaps the most lavish fete ever given on a single day, took place on July 18 at Versailles to celebrate the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and to show by a dazzling array of magnificence that France was a great power and had won a great victory.<sup>87</sup> It was as though the size of the celebration would determine the size of the triumph in the eyes of Europe. And perhaps only such a magnificent celebration could dazzle the sophisticated La Montespan.

The Duc de Créqui, who had represented the King as godfather of

<sup>86</sup>When Molière published Amphitryon in March, he dedicated it to the Grand Condé (Figure 56) and his conquest of the Franche-Comté.

<sup>87</sup>According to Carlo Vigarani, the date of the fete was advanced a month so that Louis's queen, approaching her ninth month of pregnancy, would still be able to attend. Letter quoted in Prunières introduction to Lully's Les Comédies-Ballets (Paris, 1933), II, xiii.



Figure 55. Madame de Montespan



Figure 56. Prince de Condé



Molière's son, was at this time First Gentleman of the King's Chamber, and he supervised the evening's activities.<sup>88</sup> Nearly three thousand people attended, although probably only about half that many were able to partake fully in all the events, including a new comedy-ballet by Molière, George Dandin, or The Outwitted Husband (George Dandin ou Le Mari confondu).

Molière's play, which was the only theatrical entertainment of the evening, presented characters bearing a remarkable resemblance to illustrious personages of real life: George Dandin (Monsieur de Montespan), who seems doomed to be cuckolded, is a rural landholder scorned by his wife (Athénaïs) and her aristocratic but impoverished parents (the Mortemarts).<sup>89</sup>

A list has been preserved of those who attended the banquet after the comedy-ballet. This banquet roster gives a good notion of who the important people at court were and who saw Molière's comedy-ballet. Louis was being discreet: the Duchesse de La Vallière<sup>90</sup> sat at the King's table, but Madame de Montespan sat elsewhere at the table of the Duchesse de Montausier. Other courtiers at the King's table included Louise's sister-in-law (the Marquise de La Vallière), the Princesse de Monaco,<sup>91</sup> the Maréchale de l'Hôpital, the Marquise de Villeroy, and Madame de Brancas. Some of the

<sup>88</sup>See Chapter VIII: Theatres and Scenery on sources for the fete and a summary of the evening's events.

<sup>89</sup>Through Athénaïs's influence, her father the Duc de Mortemart was appointed Governor of Paris and eventually raised to Maréchal.

Another of the witty, personable Mortemarts was the Maréchal de Vivonne, brother of Athénaïs and long-time friend of the King's. According to Grimarest (p. 91), he befriended Molière. And he apparently joined in the lively discussions of the Boileau group.

<sup>90</sup>The title was given her in May, 1667. She was no longer the King's mistress, but maintained a high position at court.

<sup>91</sup>This daughter of the Maréchal de Gramont had not only been romantically involved with Lauzun (1664), but with Louis briefly as well in the early fall of 1665, about the time of Love's the Best Doctor.

ladies who had been with the King's entourage at the camps were also present for the banquet: the Princesse d'Harcourt, Madame du Roure, and the Comtesse de Béthume.

Louis was always extremely concerned about his children, and the families who cared for them were included in court festivities. Among the guests at the banquet were a representative of the La Motte family (Madame de La Motte, wife of the Maréchal, was governess of the King's legitimate children), Madame Colbert, wife of Louis's minister and governess of La Vallière's children,<sup>92</sup> and Madame Scarron, Paul Scarron's widow who would care for La Montespan's children. The Duchesse de Montausier superintended Marie-Thérèse's household, and as mentioned, her husband was governor of the Dauphin, his position gained probably through the intercession of his friend La Montespan.

Other familiar names from the fetes of 1661, 1664, and 1666-1667 were the Comtesse de Guiche, Madame de Périgny, the Duchesse de Saint-Aignan, and Mlle de Launay. The Mancini girls continued to be prominent, especially the court intriguer Olympe, Comtesse de Soissons, who headed a table. Female writers were represented among the guests: a member of the Scudéry family (Mlle de Scudéry wrote many popular romances) and Marquise de Sévigné, whose famous Lettres chronicled the era. Also present were the Cardinals of Vendôme and Retz and Bargellini, Archbishop of Thebes and Papal Nuncio from Clement IX.<sup>93</sup> Ambassadors from England and Savoy attended the fete. Their letters give very little attention to Molière's comedy,

<sup>92</sup>The first daughter, Mlle de Blois, had been legitimized in 1667.

<sup>93</sup>It was quite regular for church officials to be in attendance at court entertainments. Cardinals ranked with Princes of the Blood; ecclesiastical peers ranked with dukes and foreign princes.

but indicate that the diplomats were impressed with the gastronomic delights.<sup>94</sup>

Molière did not transfer George Dandin immediately to the Palais-Royal from the July fete at Versailles. He may have already intended The Miser (L'Avare) for production when the call came for a comedy-ballet, and the two "interruptions" in August may have been to rehearse this new play. Only after a visit to Saint-Germain in November when George Dandin was repeated, did it appear in Paris. Both The Miser and George Dandin then became standard pieces in the troupe's repertoire.

Along with two new plays at the Palais-Royal, Molière gained a significant breakthrough for Tartuffe. In September the Prince de Condé requested a performance of the forbidden play to be presented at Chantilly, his chateau in the Ile de France. The King still upheld the Church leaders' condemnation of the play, but the Grand Condé, who had survived more serious battles, had no such scruples. Based on this bold action, which was followed by no severe repercussions, and the relative calm in France's religious conflict, Molière petitioned the King for the third time to allow regular performances of the play. Pope Clement IX had recognized the Jansenist bishops (denounced since the 1650's); and Louis made no objection, although he always suspected that the austere Jansenists, who were enemies of Mazarin, did not support him. At any rate, none of the clergy would jeopardize their own security by opposing the King on the matter of Molière's play, and on February 5, 1669 Tartuffe was officially restored by royal decree. The production had a phenomenal response. It continued to be popular and the big money-maker for the rest

<sup>94</sup>Prunières, Les Comédies-Ballets, II, xiii.

of Molière's life. Molière proudly published the play with its placets, and performed it on several occasions en visite. He may even have been giving a private performance for Mademoiselle at the Luxembourg Palace on the day of his father's death (February 25, 1669).<sup>95</sup> Jean Poquelin, the bourgeois upholsterer, had never disowned his son for becoming an actor, and Molière's acclaim was a great satisfaction to him in his last years.

Molière spent 1669 enjoying the success of Tartuffe and performing for the King, including three appearances at Saint-Germain in the fall. His only new work was a comedy-ballet, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, for an October hunting party at Chambord where the troupe sojourned a month. It was rumored that Molière based the central character of his comedy-ballet on a Limousin gentleman who caused a disruption on the Palais-Royal stage. Robinet said, "L'original est à Paris."<sup>96</sup> Whether this story is true or not, Molière probably had the scenario, which mocked his own physical condition, ready before arriving at Chambord to collaborate with Lully. According to Robinet, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac was "un vrai plaisir du roi." In December, Molière transferred Monsieur de Pourceaugnac to Paris after another short "interruption."

By 1670, Louis exerted more control than ever before in all phases of his rule--his government's policies and the activities of his court, including its amusements. For the Carnival celebrations at Saint-Germain, the King wanted an entertainment from Molière composed of all the elements

<sup>95</sup>D-M, X, 395 on discrepancies in La Grange regarding Tartuffe performances.

<sup>96</sup>D-M, VII, 214-215. Lettre à Madame (November 23, 1669).

the stage could supply--comedy, music, dancing, pantomime, and machinery. Louis himself suggested rivalry between two princes as the subject. The comedy-ballet which resulted from these demands was the rather stilted courtly romance, The Magnificent Lovers (Les Amants magnifiques), sufficiently grand to include the gods Neptune and the familiar Apollo for the King to portray. Although the King stipulated spectacle and aristocratic tone for the comedy-ballet, another member of the court--Mademoiselle de Montpensier--is thought to have inspired the particular dramatic twist of the plot.

La Grande Mademoiselle, as the Duchesse de Montpensier was called, was the eldest daughter of Gaston d'Orléans and Marie de Bourbon (Figure 57). Her hope as a young woman had been to marry her cousin Louis, nearly twelve years her junior. But if Louis had any interest in Anne-Marie-Louise, he lost it when she sided with Condé in the second phase of the Fronde. When Gaston died in 1660, Mademoiselle became the richest woman in France, perhaps in all Europe, and more willful and independent than ever. She refused several marriage proposals, including that of Don Carlos, pretender to the throne of Portugal, and remained at the French court. She was not a dancer like her cousins, but she had always supported theatre and often engaged actors to perform for her. In 1669, when she was slightly over forty, she fell in love with Lauzun, the cadet of Gasconne, the dashing soldier noted for his conquests in love. But he was beneath Mademoiselle's rank. Molière's comedy-ballet, The Magnificent Lovers, has been traditionally thought of as a dramatization of Mademoiselle's situation, as well as an attempt to predispose the King and his court to the romantic plausibility of such a match. The Magnificent Lovers, presented at court in February and March of 1670, is about



Figure 57. Mademoiselle de Montpensier

the Princess Eriphile (Mademoiselle) who rejects two eligible princes (the rivalry suggested by Louis) to accept the low-born but brave and worthy general, Sostrates (Lauzun). Whether Molière assisted Mlle de Montpensier's affair or not, Mademoiselle requested and was granted permission at the end of the year to marry Lauzun. A few days later, however, the permission was withdrawn, a reversal that probably had nothing to do with Lauzun's lack of royal blood. More likely Louis's ministers, especially Colbert, who mistrusted Lauzun, and Louvois, who despised him, pointed out to the King that this Gascon was an ambitious young man. Lauzun's bold character supported by La Grande Mademoiselle's great wealth could mean the most serious threat to the crown since Fouquet. Not only was marriage denied, but Lauzun was arrested and taken by the Mousquetaire d'Artagnan to Pignerol, where Fouquet (d. 1672) was imprisoned, for a ten year sentence. When Lauzun returned to France, he was no longer a threat and probably then married Mademoiselle.

Of The Magnificent Lovers, Robinet wrote:

Le Divertissement royal,  
 Dont la cour fait son carnaval,  
 Est un ballet en comédie,  
 Je ne crains point qu'on m'en dédie,  
 Ou bien comédie en ballet,  
 Qui, ce dit-on, grandement plaît  
 Par ses récits, par ses prologues,  
 Et les amoureux dialogues  
 De Bergères et de Bergers,  
 Constants en amour, non légers.<sup>97</sup>

The audience included the visiting King of Poland and children of the royal

<sup>97</sup>Lettre à Madame (February 15, 1670), quoted in D-M, VII, 354. "The Divertissement royal, with which the court celebrates Carnival, is a comic ballet (no one would deny that it is a balletic comedy), which pleases greatly by its récits, its prologues, and its amorous dialogues of Shepherds and Shepherdesses, who are constant in love, not flighty."

family, notably the Dauphin and the eight year old daughter of Monsieur and Madame, Mademoiselle Marie-Louise d'Orléans. And the play was a princely delight. Molière's exposure of Anaxarque, the astrologer, as a parasite and a dissembler like Tartuffe may have raised the ire of Madame de Montespan, who was an avid follower of astrology, but no member of Louis's Catholic court could openly object to such ridicule. The troupe received 12,000 livres over and above its regular pension for the plaisir derived from The Magnificent Lovers.

The Magnificent Lovers was not produced in Paris. Its scenic embellishments from Saint-Germain could not be reproduced at the Palais-Royal, and the play itself had little of the gaiety and contemporaneity that Molière customarily offered his Paris audiences. The gods and heroic sentiments, like those in the Lully finale of George Dandin, represented the King's growing seriousness and obsession with grandeur; they had little to do with Molière's comic muse. But Molière did not have to rely on The Magnificent Lovers to fill out his repertoire. He had Tartuffe and Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.

The Louis of 1670 was no longer the fun-loving young man he had been at the beginning of his personal reign. The internal affairs of France were running smoothly with his nobles "domesticated" and potential challengers removed. But foreign problems began to dominate the King's attention. The War of Devolution had been temporarily successful, but the threat of a Spanish Hapsburg encirclement of France remained. The King thought the northern provinces as far as the sea should belong to France. The Dutch, fearing for their own territorial integrity, objected to Louis's designs on the Spanish Netherlands, and Louis realized that war with the Dutch was inevitable. He spent four years, 1668-1672, preparing for it.



His first move was to purchase England's neutrality by paying off Charles II, who needed money, through the Treaty of Dover (1670). Henriette, Charles's sister, went to conclude the treaty at Dover while the French court waited on the other side of the Channel. With this act to protect Louis's foreign interests, Henriette performed her last service for the grandeur of France.

Vous en avez, MADAME, du côté du range et de la naissance, qui vous font respecter de toute la terre. Vous en avez du côté des grâces, et de l'esprit et du corps, qui vous font admirer de toutes les personnes qui vous voient. Vous en avez du côté de l'âme, qui, si l'on ose parler ainsi, vous font aimer de tous ceux qui ont l'honneur d'approcher de vous: je veux dire cette douceur pleine de charmes, dont vous daignez tempérer la fierté des grands titres que vous portez; cette bonté toute obligeante, cette affabilité généreuse que vous faites paroître pour tout le monde. 98

Henriette (b. 1644) came to France as a child, escaping from the civil strife in England. She was a gangly girl as she grew up at the French court and when she returned to England for the Restoration of the Stuarts. But when Henriette arrived back in France to become the wife of Philippe, she had suddenly become a pretty, vivacious young woman (Figure 58). Marriage to Philippe could hardly have been very satisfying for Henriette. Philippe had always been treated like a weak little girl by Anne, who was determined that he would not grow up to be a threat to Louis XIV as Gaston

<sup>98</sup>D-M, III, 156-157, from Molière's dedication to The School for Wives. "You have MADAM because of your rank and royal birth the respect of the whole world. You have grace, spirit, and beauty which make everyone who sees you admire you. You have such perfection of soul that, if one may speak thus, all those who have the honor of coming near you, love you. I refer to that charming sweetness with which you temper the stateliness of the great titles you bear, that obliging goodness, that generous affability that you show to the whole world."



Figure 58. Henriette

had been a threat to Louis XIII. Anne's second son, therefore, became a foppish young man who wore rouge, ribbons, lace, and more jewels than the fashion called for, and was weak and lacking in self-confidence. Henriette seems to have enjoyed her life at the French court, however, in spite of him. After the King, she had the Comte de Guiche as her lover. She was active in court ceremonials, participating occasionally as a dancer in court ballets and comedy-ballets and she was otherwise always in attendance. She was a valuable supporter of Molière. As noted, Molière had dedicated The School for Wives to her in 1663, and she responded by acting as god-mother to his first child. Also, a number of special performances were played for Madame while Molière's actors were the Troupe de Monsieur. She defended Molière in his battles over Tartuffe and must have been pleased at its eventual release. Shortly after Henriette returned to France from her political mission at Dover for Louis, she became fatally ill. She was convinced she had been poisoned, but she probably died of natural causes (June, 1670) or perhaps from the remedies of the court doctors who attended her.<sup>99</sup>

After elaborate funeral ceremonies in August, the court observed the fall hunting season as usual with a new comedy-ballet from Molière, The Would-be Gentleman (Le Bourgeois gentilhomme) presented in October at Chambord. Molière returned in this play to the contemporary characters and spirited action of the best of his earlier work, even though his patron dictated that the play should include a Turkish scene.

The Chevalier Laurent d'Arvieux had visited Saint-Germain the previous

<sup>99</sup>On patients who die from doctors' treatments, see discussion of Loves the Best Doctor, p. 224.

December (1669), where he related to the King stories of his travels in the Middle East.<sup>100</sup> Present at Arvieux's audience were La Vallière, Monsieur, and Madame de Montespan, the latter two particularly amused by his account of Turkish manners. Then during 1670, Soliman Pasha, an envoy from the Grand Turk, Mohammed IV,<sup>101</sup> was in Paris to discuss the current Cretan question: Candia had recently been taken from the Venetians by the Turks with the loss of a number of French lives, and the French Ambassador had been recalled from Constantinople. Accustomed to ostentation in his own country, the visiting "Muta Ferraca" (Turkish courtier) showed apparent indifference to the splendor of the French court. This effrontery caused a furor in Paris, and, upon the Turk's departure, a ballet was requested that would burlesque Turkish manners and customs. Molière incorporated this ballet into his play.

Grimarest writes that during the first performance of The Would-be Gentleman, Louis gave no sign of approval.<sup>102</sup> Assuming the King was displeased, a number of nobles reproached Molière for losing his talent and taking them for fools. Two dukes who were especially indignant cited the "hala bala bala chon" of the "Turkish Ceremony" as evidence of his decline. After this cold response, Molière stayed in his room for five days, sending Baron, who had recently returned to the troupe, to check on the disposition of the courtiers towards his play. Baron's reports were always bad. But when the comedy-ballet was performed again, the King said, "I have not spoken to you about your play since it was first performed

<sup>100</sup>Laurent d'Arvieux, Mémoires (Paris, 1735), IV, 185.

<sup>101</sup>Reigned over the Ottoman Empire 1648-1687.

<sup>102</sup>Grimarest, pp. 81-82.

because I was afraid of being prejudiced by the superb way in which it was acted; but, really, Molière, you have not written anything which has amused me more, and your piece is excellent!" The courtiers made an immediate about-face, stammering forth a chorus of praises, and declaring that Molière had more comic power than all the ancient playwrights put together. Grimarest wrote with considerable knowledge of the court, but he was often mistaken in his facts. The Gazette reported that only two days after the first presentation The Would-be Gentleman was requested again; it was played twice more within a week, and except for Grimarest there is no other indication that the King ever withheld his approval.<sup>103</sup>

There may indeed have been some indignant dukes, however, in the court audience for The Would-be Gentleman, because the satire of an errant nobleman is as strong as ever appeared in Molière's plays. Generally Molière wrote comedies with bourgeois characters, as the literary critic Jean Chapelain had specified as proper; but the foibles he described in the bourgeoisie could by extension be applied to the aristocracy. And on occasion he quite explicitly ridiculed the vices and fashions of the court. Molière had great respect for the court, and freely ridiculed any person of quality who digressed from the seventeenth-century ideal of the perfect courtier, that is, an honnête homme, a man of moral and social virtue--honest, decent, refined, brave, intelligent--and most importantly a man of bon sens and self-discipline. Molière's ridiculous marquis character is a boorish and vain fop embodying all the affectations of the Grand Siècle, the very opposite of what the courtier should be. Winning an audience of nobles while exposing their weaknesses was not easy to

<sup>103</sup>D-M, VIII, 6-7.

accomplish. During the early part of Molière's Paris career, a sizable portion of the high nobility thought it was bad taste and beneath their dignity to support this upstart farceur, especially against the established Grands Comédiens. But the King's partiality for Molière during these years forced an eventual change in attitude. Then it became fashionable to identify people with Molière's characters; and because his satire was never vicious, but good-natured, and designed more to amuse than to attack and reform, many people were actually flattered by seeing their portraits in Molière's plays.<sup>104</sup> But not everyone could tolerate the playwright's honesty and sense of the ridiculous. And since the comedy-ballets were intended for plaisir, to keep the nobles out of political mischief, not to insult and incite them, Molière risked reproach for The Would-be Gentleman. To a court society based on an ever increasingly strict etiquette, social climbing was a sensitive issue. The court was filled with barons who wanted to be counts and dukes who wanted to be marshals, and of Louis's bureaucrats, Colbert was probably the biggest parvenu of them all. Therefore, when in The Would-be Gentleman the real honnête homme refuses to call himself a "gentleman," and the nobleman, who is a scoundrel, uses his rank to swindle the foolish tradesman, some of the less broad-minded members of the court audience may have responded indignantly, not to the Turkish nonsense, but to an imitation of their own foolish aspirations.

Molière opened The Would-be Gentleman in November at his theatre in Paris, but played it only twice before premièring Pierre Corneille's new

<sup>104</sup>Tradition says that The Bores may have been written in part as Molière's answer to all the pests who, after the success of The Affected Ladies, asked him to write a play ridiculing some particular person.

heroic tragedy, Tite et Bérénice, the only play not written by Molière that had much success at the Palais-Royal. The two plays, The Would-be Gentleman and Tite et Bérénice, were performed on a generally alternating basis (and concurrently with Racine's Bérénice) until March, 1671, with The Would-be Gentleman eventually outdrawing the Corneille work.

Early in 1671, Louis called for his annual Carnival entertainment-- a "magnificent divertissement"<sup>105</sup>--that would put to use the Salle des Machines. Because Molière had been occupied with two new plays at the Palais-Royal, he had time only to sketch the idea and write some of the verses for a tragi-comedy-ballet based on the Psyche legend. Pierre Corneille finished the play, Lully wrote the music, and Philippe Quinault, who was to become Lully's collaborator after Molière, wrote words to the songs.<sup>106</sup> Although Molière showed little interest in Psyché, he apparently realized that the King could then be satisfied only with such grandiose productions,<sup>107</sup> and that Paris also wanted spectacle.

After the Easter break, Molière resumed theatre operations with the best plays of his repertoire: Tartuffe, The Would-be Gentleman, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, The Miser, and The Misanthrope. But to keep audiences coming, he introduced something new, The Rascalities of Scapin (Les

<sup>105</sup>D-M, VIII, 268, from "Le Libraire au lecture" of the original edition.

<sup>106</sup>Philippe Quinault, a follower of François Tristan l'Hermite, had written plays since the 1650's. In 1670 he was elected to the Académie Française. Boileau and Racine disliked him and considered his work insipid and sentimental.

<sup>107</sup>After Psyché the annual pension of the Troupe du Roi was raised to 7,000 livres.

Fourberies de Scapin) in May. This bright farce, which appalled the lofty Boileau, satisfied the crowds while the Troupe du Roi prepared Psyché for a July production in town. Psyché was very well-attended. Because production expenses were so high, however, the share-holders did not begin to realize any substantial income until October. And just then the call came from the King for a new court entertainment in December. The troupe suspended the lavish Psyché and reinstated standard plays while the new piece was being written and rehearsed.

The court function to which the King asked Molière to contribute an entertainment was a royal wedding. The need for Monsieur to remarry after Henriette's death became clear with Louis's remark, "There is a place vacant. . . ."108 Some court matchmakers talked of Philippe and Mademoiselle marrying, but neither would agree to it. In November, 1671, Princess Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria (1652-1722) became the new Duchesse d'Orléans or Madame (known later to the court as Liselotte). Madame arrived at Saint-Germain on the afternoon of December 1st and the next evening the Ballet of the Ballets, which consisted of musical scenes from some of Molière's previous court entertainments and his new play The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, was performed in honor of the marriage.

Liselotte lacked the dainty refinement of a French gentlewoman; she was sturdy and outspoken (Figure 59). The slanderers of Liselotte and Molière variously accused the playwright of basing the coarse and pretentious Comtesse of his play on the Princess. Of all the apocryphal stories concerning Molière and the nobility, this is among the least likely to be true. Not only is it improbable that Molière met her before

<sup>108</sup>Wolf, p. 310.





Figure 59. Liselotte

the December performance and could have known about her only through the gossip which preceded her arrival, but it is almost inconceivable that he would have displayed such bad taste and ill manners, amounting almost to lèse-majesté.

Liselotte participated with great enthusiasm in all court events, and wrote many letters which provide a chronicle of the times. Although she had little opportunity to see Molière perform,<sup>109</sup> she admired his plays. She wrote in 1705 to the Duchesse de Hanovre:

Molière has written some pleasing comedies, but I believe, as you, that Tartuffe is the best. The Misanthrope is also good, as well as The Learned Ladies. But to enjoy Pourceaugnac and M. Jourdain, one must know this country, especially Paris, better than you do. 110

She might have included with the two comedy-ballets The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, which was as topical and regional a play as Molière ever wrote. Not only did he refer to his own production of Psyché, which according to the Comtesse is one of the great pleasures of Paris, but he touched on current affairs of state. The Vicomte of the play refers to a provincial rumor-monger, a self-styled gentleman who bores everyone to distraction with his supposed knowledge of the decrees of the King's council and with all the "foolishness" he has read in La Gazette de Hollande, a newspaper widely followed by the French as the war with Holland seemed more imminent. A political agent from Brandenburg even described Molière's play in one of his letters as "a comedy against the Dutch."<sup>111</sup>

<sup>109</sup>When, as mentioned earlier, Monsieur attended the Palais-Royal in 1672, she accompanied him for a performance of Psyché.

<sup>110</sup>Quoted in Mélése, p. 161, from Mémoires (Paris, 1832).

<sup>111</sup>D-M, VIII, 532.

The Ballet of the Ballets was so enjoyed by Louis and his court that it was requested again in February, 1672, and like the celebrations of early 1667, it served as the send-off for a military campaign. By the spring of 1672, a well-equipped, well-trained army was ready for a full-scale invasion along the Rhine. With Pomponne directing the effort for Louis, the French embarked on the Dutch War (1672-1678) in April. Maréchal de Rochefort and Maréchal de La Motte had positions of command; Turenne was to lead the troops to Germany, Condé to Holland. The first major campaign met with defeat, however, as the French advance was stopped when the Dutch cut the dykes and flooded the land. The verses Molière had written for the King representing Neptune in The Magnificent Lovers may have been recalled with bitter irony:

No State nor Country can withstand my Frown,  
Or dare oppose me when I please to drown,  
Shou'd tripple Banks or Dikes dispute my Sway,  
My Waves shou'd leap the Mound and force their Way.

(Ozell, III, 81)

With Louis's hope for conquest in 1672 thus dashed, the mood of the time was solemn and defensive. A more adverse atmosphere for Molière can hardly be imagined. And for Molière, 1672 was a year of frustration and disappointment. Although reunited with Armande and living again in Paris, Molière embarked not on a new beginning but on an endgame. During the troupe's stay at Saint-Germain in February, he was called back to Paris because of the death of his long time friend Madeleine Béjart. His second son, Pierre,<sup>112</sup> who was born in September, died in October. And his own health

<sup>112</sup>The godparents were Boileau's brother Pierre and a daughter of Pierre Mignard.

grew progressively worse.

His professional problems resumed. In March, he premièred The Learned Ladies (Les Femmes savantes) at the Palais-Royal. As usual, detractors immediately accused Molière of slavishly copying persons from real life. The two "wits" (esprit doux) of the play were supposedly based on the poet Ménage<sup>113</sup> and the notorious pedant Abbé Cotin, who attended social gatherings at Mademoiselle's.

More damaging than the attacks on his new play, however, was the breach with his musical collaborator, Lully, and the aggressive moves the Florentine made to dominate the French musical theatre.<sup>114</sup> The King, before leaving in May for the war, granted Lully patents which limited the amount of music Molière could use on the stage at a time when musical scenes were the rage. When Louis returned to Saint-Germain in the fall, he granted Lully further concessions, perhaps through the influence of La Montespan and Colbert. Molière protested against Lully's patents and challenged the musician's ability to enforce them. The growing antagonism between Molière and Lully, each with his own supporters, may have provoked the riot at the Palais-Royal in October when Molière performed The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas and Love's the Best Doctor with new music by Marc-Antoine Charpentier. At any rate, Molière apparently expected the King to support him against Lully or at least seek a fair solution to their differences. After all, Molière was the King's own player, his

<sup>113</sup>The Menagiana (1693) of Gilles Ménage provides some of the standard anecdotes about Molière.

<sup>114</sup>See Chapter VIII: Music for a detailed account of the Molière-Lully conflict.

"excellent comic poet," a tapissier of his Chamber; Molière and his troupe occupied a theatre in the King's royal palace in Paris and entertained at all royal fetes; and Molière in the past had been protected by the King from angry courtiers, clergy, and rival actors and playwrights. But Molière was wrong. He had lost touch with the King, who was no longer young and flexible, and who was inclining toward majestic entertainments that would reflect his heroic image. Lully promised to sing the King's praises, and Lully prevailed.

Anticipating the Carnival season (1673) and undoubtedly hoping to regain royal favor, Molière with Charpentier prepared a new comedy-ballet, The Imaginary Invalid (Le Malade imaginaire) for the King's diversion. But Molière's entertainment was not requested for the celebrations at Saint-Germain. Instead, Louis called for the Hôtel de Bourgogne production of Mithridates (about the courageous king of Pontus), the latest tragedy by Racine, who about this time was named one of the "immortals" of the Académie Française. Being excluded from the festivities at court was a severe blow to Molière. Seemingly his patron had forsaken him. When he opened his play on February 10, 1673 at the Palais-Royal, his beloved Paris audience showed its strong support, but according to Grimarest, Molière said at the time to Armande and Baron:

As long as my life was mixed with pain and pleasure  
I thought myself happy; but, now that I am overwhelmed  
with troubles and can count on no moments of satisfaction  
or peace, I feel it is time to be going. 115

Shortly after the fourth performance of The Imaginary Invalid, on February 17 and one year to the day after Madeleine's death, Molière died at his

115<sup>Grimarest, p. 88.</sup>

home on Rue Richelieu, never having performed his last comedy-ballet for the King.<sup>116</sup>

Apparently, as Molière lay dying, a priest had been summoned, but he arrived too late. And actors who had failed to renounce their profession were denied a Church funeral and burial in consecrated ground. Mlle Molière petitioned the Archbishop of Paris for a dispensation, but was rejected. She appealed to the King, and finally the Archbishop authorized a modest Christian service. Molière accordingly was buried at night with the barest of ceremony, his grave marked so meagerly that its exact site is now unknown.

On February 18, Robinet wrote a brief account of Molière's death:

Molière. . . a fini son Destin.  
Hier, quittant la Comédie,  
Il perdit, tout soudain, la vie.<sup>117</sup>

He was too sad to say more. La Gazette made no reference to the death of Molière at all. Mélése speculates that despite Molière's widespread popularity and his royal patronage, he was never more than a despicable farceur, the King's clown, to that snobbish newspaper; and because the author of The Imaginary Invalid seemed to be out of favor, the Gazette was perhaps afraid of displeasing the King by speaking of Molière.<sup>118</sup> On the other hand, the Prince de Condé grieved so for Molière that when an abbot presented him an epitaph for the poet, Condé said, "I wish he

<sup>116</sup>Figure 60. This interpretation of Molière's death shows the two nuns who were with him when he died and includes Baron, Armande, and Molière's servant La Forêt.

<sup>117</sup>Quoted in Mélése, pp. 91-92. "Molière has completed his destiny. Yesterday, after leaving the theatre (the comic muse, the world of comedy), he suddenly lost his life."

<sup>118</sup>Mélése, p. 92.



Figure 60. Death of Molière

was alive to write yours."<sup>119</sup> With remarkable restraint, La Grange wrote a brief account in his register of Molière's death, a loss that would drastically affect the lives of all the actors in the Troupe du Roi.

The King thought that the Troupe du Roi could not survive without Molière and considered ordering its members to join their arch-rivals, the Grands Comédiens. But a week after Molière died, his actors resolutely resumed production at the Palais-Royal. After Easter, however, Baron, La Thorillière, and the Beauvals defected to the Hôtel de Bourgogne. The King dealt personally with the resulting upheaval in the professional theatre. He sent the Spanish players home; he closed the Théâtre du Marais, whose machine plays were not only bankrupting its players but were outlawed, in any case, by Lully's ordinances against spectacle; he gave Lully and his Académie Royal de Musique the Palais-Royal for opera production; and he set up the Marais players with Molière's remaining actors under the leadership of La Grange and Mlle Molière at the Théâtre de Guénégaud.<sup>120</sup>

Meanwhile, the war continued. By 1673, the great generals Turenne and Condé, always too independent to satisfy the King, were being surpassed

<sup>119</sup>Grimarest, p. 92.

<sup>120</sup>In 1677, Mlle Molière married Guérin d'Estriche, a second-rate actor from the Marais who was less indulgent than Molière but with whom she seems to have been compatible. The Théâtre de Guénégaud had been a tennis court located on the Rue Mazarine vis-à-vis the Rue Guénégaud. It was converted to a theatre by the Marquis de Sourdeac and Bersac de Champeron in 1671 for Cambert and Perrin's *Pomone*. Cambert and Gilbert's *Les Peines and les plaisirs de l'amour* played there in 1672, but the theatre was closed that year because of Lully's ordinances.

See Chapter V: Related Works, on the Spanish players.



by the war ministry at Saint-Germain and the younger military officers it commanded: Jean Martinet, the drillmaster whose strict discipline produced a controllable army, and Sebastian le Pestre de Vauban, who emerged from Condé's entourage to become the leading marshal of France. Louis went with Vauban to join Philippe and the Duc d'Enghien in the Spanish Netherlands, where the siege of Maestricht was successful despite heavy losses, including Capitaine d'Artagnan. But in the summer of 1673 Prince William III of Orange (b. 1650) became leader of the United Netherlands, and would be the Sun King's implacable enemy for many years.

From Saint-Germain Louis directed the 1674 campaign against Franche-Comté, and the occupation of this southeast territory was the only decisive gain of the year, perhaps of the whole war. The grandeur of France again deserved to be celebrated. A fete was held during the summer at Versailles. Condé sent flags and standards of the conquered army to be presented, and a series of collations, boat rides, and promenades en calèches were held through July and August. The Troupe Royale presented Racine's new tragedy Iphigénie as part of the festivities. But Lully dominated the fete's entertainment. He presented his new opera Alceste, with a libretto by Quinault, in the recently completed Cour de Marbre, and revived his first collaborative work with Quinault, a little entertainment La Grotte de Versailles (1668), as well as their first opera Cadmus et Hermione (1673). The Imaginary Invalid appeared mid-way through the celebration, serving as a comic interlude for the other divertissements. It was splendidly mounted at the Grotte de Thétis, and, although Molière was not alive to play the leading role, the official report of the fete noted that, "Their Majesties and all the court received no less pleasure

than always from the plays of its author."<sup>121</sup> Ironically, Molière's laudatory praises of Louis's victories, which appear in the first prologue of the comedy-ballet, did not apply in the early phase of the Dutch War, and were more appropriate after the Franche-Comté campaign. The 1674 divertissement was the last of the grand fetes of Louis's reign.

Not present at the summer celebration was La Vallière, who had entered a convent in April. La Montespan, who still reigned as the King's mistress, would eventually be discarded as La Vallière had been. Louis legitimized the oldest of La Montespan's children in December of 1673, and in the spring of 1674 Parlement granted her a legal separation from her husband. But Athénaïs was becoming less suitable as a companion for the King. She frankly disliked and could not be bothered with her children; her gaiety was becoming shrill and her looks less beguiling. Unlike the sweet and appealing La Vallière, Athénaïs was always difficult and a controversial figure with many enemies. Louis gave her the title of duchess in 1678, but by 1680 her twelve year affair with the King was over. In 1691, she, like La Vallière before her, retired to a convent.

The woman who replaced La Montespan was Françoise d'Aubigné (1635-1719), Madame Scarron, who had been brought to court to take care of La Montespan's children. Madame Scarron, Paul Scarron's widow, was a self-sacrificing woman of modest means but impeccable reputation. She was calm and sensible and good with the children; she soon became Louis's confidante. He rewarded her with the name and title Marquise de Maintenon (Figure 61).

<sup>121</sup>André Félibien, Les Divertissemens de Versailles donnez par le roy à toute sa cour au retour de la conquête de la Franche-Comté en l'année 1674 (Paris, 1676), p. 12. See Chapter VIII: Theatres and Scenery for a description of the setting.

The quarrels between Madame de Montespan and Madame de Maintenon during the 1670's were notorious. Eventually, La Maintenon prevailed. She probably became the King's mistress about 1681 (when she was forty-six years old), and most likely married him as early as 1683 or 1684, after Marie-Thérèse died, although she never became Queen of France or was acknowledged as his wife. Her dislike for levity and frivolity appropriately coincided with the essentially sober demeanor of the King in his later years.

The serious business of war dominated the late 1670's. In October, 1675, Lully produced a court entertainment called Le Carnaval which, like the Ballet of the Ballets, included entries from several of the comedy-ballets--the Comic Pastoral, The Sicilian, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, and The Would-be Gentleman. Some of Molière's gaiety may have been revived, but there was little about which to be amused that year. Turenne and the Maréchal de Rochefort were dead, Condé retired; and the other leading figures of the court could not leave the battlefronts for festivities at home. The King, then thirty-two (Figure 62), journeyed frequently to the campsites to review the troops, taking with him the ladies of the court, including the pregnant La Montespan.

The Treaty of Nymwegen, which ended the Dutch War, gave France Franche-Comté from Spain, a few border towns in Flanders, and what constituted a defensible frontier in the north and east. The victory was a modest one, but the French, weary from loss of life and high taxes, were glad for the war to be over. There was no great fete as in 1664, 1668, or even 1674; in 1679 in Reims a fireworks display entitled "Le Triomphe de Soleil" marked the peace.



Figure 61. Madame de Maintenon



Figure 62. Louis XIV at 32

The King, turning once more to domestic issues, intervened again in the professional theatre situation. Theatre had survived in spite of Lully's restrictions. Paris audiences still continued to support plays even when the theatres could offer only modest musical embellishments. But rivalry was strong between the Hôtel de Bourgogne and the Théâtre de Guénégaud, with the latter taking the edge. In 1679, when Mlle Champmeslé, who had created the title role in Racine's Phaedra (Phèdre, 1677) with Baron as Hippolytus, left the Hôtel de Bourgogne for the Guénégaud, the King prevented a crisis at the older theatre by ordering the two troupes to merge. He thus established in 1680 what came to be known as the Comédie Française (to differentiate it from the Comédie Italienne). Louis was consistent--one King, one court, one opera, and then one national theatre. The new Comédie Française had a rich repertoire. It could play alternately Phaedra and The Would-be Gentleman with La Champmeslé, her husband, and the Molière-trained Baron (Figure 63) as the leading performers.

In the 1680's, France entered a new era. The days of Aurora--full of hope and energy and daring, unblemished by loss and defeat--were gone. The King had become Louis-le-Grand, blinded by the brilliance of his own royal image. The Roi Soleil, who once inspired genius, then merely exacted homage. Racine ceased his regular output of plays and became the royal historiographer, writing as a first effort an account of the Dutch War. Lully and Quinault produced a series of dreary mythological operas in which Louis's glories were inevitably proclaimed. Even Paul Pellisson, who had been released from prison in 1666 after the Fouquet affair, had become the King's secretary, and helped him write his Mémoires for the education of the Dauphin. Many of the people of 1661--those golden days



**BARON**  
Comedie française  
1694 1695

Figure 63. [Michel] Baron

when both Louis and Molière had just "arrived"--were gone. Anne, who loved the theatre, was dead, and so was Henriette, who loved to dance. Both La Vallière and La Montespan, whose grace and beauty inspired court entertainments, had faded away; the queens of the stage, Madeleine Béjart and Mlle Du Parc were gone as well. And the perceptive, chiding, irrepressibly spirited Molière spoke no more.

The King can hardly be accused of misusing Molière. He recognized Molière's abilities more clearly than many people of the time and for a stormy decade protected Molière against his enemies. There is no reason to believe Molière did not enjoy writing and performing for the self-indulgent and pleasure-seeking but extremely personable young monarch. And nowhere could Molière have found a more illustrious audience. That Louis appreciated Molière cannot be denied; that he understood his genius is less certain. When, in later years, the King asked Boileau to name the writer who most glorified his reign, and Boileau answered Molière, the King replied that he had not thought so.<sup>122</sup> But the King ranked Molière as one of the two men he could never replace, the other, significantly, being Lully. That he seemed to choose Lully over Molière was one of the King's great blunders. The ungrateful, seemingly heartless manner in which the King treated Molière at the end was an example of the lack of judgment that eventually led him to engage in lengthy, useless wars. The private, inner part of this very public king may have been aware of his shortcomings and may even have been bored with contemplating the apotheosis of his royal person. Louis, as his reign progressed, often did not attend

<sup>122</sup>Jean Racine, Oeuvres (Paris, 1922-1929), I, 271. This story was told by Racine's son Louis.

the monotonously similar court celebrations in his honor. But nearly to the time of his death, he requested that scenes from Molière's plays and especially songs from The Would-be Gentleman be performed for him, perhaps occasionally recalling the 1660's before La Maintenon, before the wars, before his own studied magnificence rigidified his conduct.

Molière would have been unsuited for the 1680's, out of character as one of the artists promoting the cult of royalty in a world highly codified, artificial, and self-consciously refined. The compliments he had paid to the King were always flippant and light-hearted, based on true respect and devotion, not fawning, self-interested servility and conventionality. But the irreverence of the 1663 Remerciement would have been out of keeping with majesty as serious policy in 1680. Although the King played his royal role magnificently to the end, with the decorative nobility and court retinue serving both as his supporting cast and his enthusiastic audience, Molière, at least, never had to dedicate his talent exclusively to the support of such a spectacle.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE SHORT COMEDY-BALLETS

Molière's first five comedy-ballets, like his earlier non-musical plays, are short pieces. When writing them, during approximately the first half of his career in Paris, 1661-1667, he responded to the King's demand for court entertainment. Experimenting with and developing a new dramatic form, he learned the use of songs and dances, what their subjects should be and where they should be placed within a play. He discovered means of combining materials from the comic theatre with airs and ballet-entries of the court ballet. Of necessity, he acquired the ability to work with speed; yet it is apparent that he aimed at writing plays with music that would amuse and delight the widest range of theatre-goers and that would survive an evening's entertainment. The early short comedy-ballets are The Bores, The Forced Marriage, The Princess of Elis, Love's the Best Doctor, and The Sicilian.

#### THE BORES

More is known about Molière's purpose and method in his first comedy-ballet, The Bores (Les Fâcheux), than in many of his other works because of the Preface and the Dedication he wrote for the first published edition of the play. In the Preface (Avertissement)<sup>1</sup> Molière comments on his haste--fifteen days to write and produce the play. Being so rushed, he

<sup>1</sup>D-M, III, 28-31.

add~~s~~ mischievously, he could only present a few of the many bores to be seen at court and in the city, and he made use of the first plot he could find. He declares no interest in determining whether or not his piece follows the rules, though he says he can quote Aristotle and Horace as well as anyone.

Molière's mention of Horace may not have referred only to comic theory. Among the sources generally accepted for The Bores<sup>2</sup> is Horace's account of a similar pest in Satire I, 9 (Ibam forte via Sacra). Horace, in turn, was imitated by the French poet Mathurin Regnier (1573-1613) who wrote a satire (Satire VIII) on the same subject, which may have been familiar to Molière. Two letters by Paul Scarron (Epître chagrine to Maréchal d'Albert and Epître chagrine to M. d'Elbène) in which bores are named and discussed may have suggested the idea for a play to Molière.<sup>3</sup> Or he may have got it from the series of related comic types in Desmaretz's well-known Les Visionnaires.<sup>4</sup> Like Les Visionnaires, The Bores is an episodic play (pièce à tiroirs) with very little plot. It is about a young man, Eraste, who is kept from meeting with his loved-one, Orphise, by a series of boring intruders. The plot allows for a number of characters, the order of whose appearance does not particularly affect the dénouement. "Is this not the resurrection of our ancient theatre's comic monologue?" asks Gustave Lanson in his essay "Molière and Farce."<sup>5</sup> The slim plot and the tension between

<sup>2</sup>D-M, III, 6-13.

<sup>3</sup>Moland, IV, 150-152.

<sup>4</sup>Henry Carrington Lancaster, A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century (Baltimore, 1929-1942), Part III, I, 239-240.

<sup>5</sup>Jacques Guicharnaud, ed., Molière, a Collection of Critical Essays (New Jersey, 1964), p. 21.

the persistence of the bores and Eraste's impatience unify the play's episodes into a single action. The plot Molière used, and referred to in his Preface, may have come from Le Case svaligliate ovvero gli Interrompimenti di Pantalone, a commedia dell'arte piece Molière undoubtedly had seen the Italian players perform.<sup>6</sup> In this farce Pantalone is prevented from meeting Flaminia, whom he loves but who does not love him, by an array of nuisances put in his way by her valet Scapin. A variation of this situation may be seen in The Bores. And, as mentioned above, there are similarities between The Bores and literary satire and the comic monologue, but all these are transformed and made thoroughly French and contemporary in spirit.

The Bores is written in twelve-syllable Alexandrine verse. It is constructed in three brief acts of six French scenes each (the equivalent of a one-act play) with a prologue, two balletic interludes, and a musical finale. Molière observed some of the neo-classical rules: the scenes are linked and the unities of time and place are observed. His Dedication (Au Roi)<sup>7</sup> reveals that the final version of the play was not the same as the original. After witnessing the original presentation on August 17, 1661, at Vaux-le-Vicomte, the King had suggested a character that Molière with "ease and readiness" added to his collection of bores. Tradition says that the character the King proposed was a hunting bore based on the Marquis de Soyecourt, and that Molière had added the character by the time his troupe performed the play again for the King on August 25 at

<sup>6</sup>This Italian sketch was performed under a number of different titles. See Gustave Michaut, Les Débuts de Molière à Paris (Paris, 1924), p. 138.

<sup>7</sup>D-M, III, 26-27.

Fontainebleau. The Bores was first presented in Paris on November 4, presumably including the new character, and was printed on February 18, 1662.<sup>8</sup> Molière does not name the new character in his Dedication. He says only that the character suggested by the King was thought by everyone to be the finest part of the work. The most elaborate and extended portrait is unquestionably Dorante, the hunting bore. Lancaster suggests that the most convenient places for Molière to have added a new character to an already written play would have been at the end of Act I or Act II. He points out that probably an addition was not made to Act I because the last two scenes of Act I are linked by rhyming couplets (Scene 5 between the lovers and Scene 6 between Eraste and the bore Alcandre); whereas the last scene of Act II (Scene 6 between Eraste and the bore Dorante) could have been added to the play because this scene can be removed without disturbing either an individual couplet or the regular succession of feminine and masculine rhymes.<sup>9</sup> Then too, the play is complete structurally and dramatically without the Dorante scene. Both Act I and Act II, without the Dorante scene, end with a crisis: Orphise leaves Eraste. All three acts, without the Dorante scene, have three major bores (Act I: the theatre bore described by Eraste, Lysandre, and Alcandre; Act II: Alcippe and Orante and Clymène; Act III: Caritidès, Ormin, and Filinte). The Dorante scene fills out Act II to six scenes, as in Acts I and III, but also makes the second act slightly longer than the first and third.

After discussing the subject matter of The Bores in his Preface,

<sup>8</sup>The King's privilege to publish was granted on February 5, 1662, and the play was printed by Guillaume de Luyne. A.-J. Guibert, Bibliographie des oeuvres de Molière, publiées au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle (Paris, 1961), I, 73-78.

<sup>9</sup>Lancaster, Part III, I, 241-242.

Molière proceeds to mention the "ornaments." He does not name Fouquet, but says that a ballet was requested as well as a comedy to be presented to the King, and that he created for the fete at Vaux a new dramatic form, the comédie-ballet. Molière explains that there were only a few good dancers available, so that, in order to give them time to change their costumes, ballet-entrées were made to alternate with the acts of the play and were designed not to interrupt the action but to make an integrated whole of the comedy and the ballet. He justifies what he calls a "new mixture" of comedy with music and ballet by referring to "authorities in antiquity." While Aristophanes, Plautus, and Terence may have inspired him, many models existed in French theatre for the mixture. The music and dancing of Spanish comedians and their farces also may have had some influence on The Bores.<sup>10</sup> In any case, the mixture was successful. The poet La Fontaine, impressed with the piece, compared Molière with Terence, praised him above Plautus, and noted evidence of greater dramatic truth than in the comedies of Jodelet. Based on this comedy-ballet that charmed "all the court" La Fontaine said of Molière, "He is my man."<sup>11</sup>

In the Preface Molière describes the way the performance at Vaux-le-Vicomte began:

Immediately upon the curtain rising, one of the actors, whom you may suppose to be myself, appeared on the stage in an ordinary dress, and addressing himself to the King, with the look of a man surprised, made excuses in great disorder, for being there alone, and wanting both time and actors to give his Majesty the diversion he seemed to expect.

(Van Laun, 50)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Ernest Martinenche, Molière et le théâtre espagnol (Paris, 1906), p. 110.

<sup>11</sup>La Fontaine, "Lettre à Maucroix," D-M, III, 97-103.

<sup>12</sup>English translations of Les Fâcheux: (1) Henri Van Laun, The

This appearance was a novel way of executing the harangue regularly given in the French theatre by the orator of an acting company. The harangue was, in turn, a variation of the cri used in sotties to gather an audience together and to arouse interest in the play; and the cri was a descendant of the Roman prologue in which the poet's spokesman welcomed the audience. The mimus carried this tradition through the Dark Ages and used "the parade or preliminary patter, merely about himself and his proficiency, which at all times has served the itinerant entertainer as a means whereby to attract his audience . . . The parade, also, seems to be the origin of a certain familiar type of prologue in which the author or presentors of a play appear in their own persons."<sup>13</sup> Molière, as poet-actor, was his own spokesman and, using the pretense of being unprepared, established an impromptu quality for the performance. As Molière made his embarrassed apology, almost like a miraculous response from beneficent gods "in the midst of twenty natural cascades, a large shell was disclosed, which every one saw: and the agreeable Naiad who appeared in it, advanced to the front of the stage. . . ." (Van Laun, 50).

The Naiad (Nymph), who comes from her "grotto profound," delivers the formal Prologue<sup>14</sup> which was written by Fouquet's secretary, Paul Pellisson. She praises "le plus grand roi du monde" and introduces the

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Dramatic Works of Molière (Philadelphia, 188-), II, 45-81, (2) A. R. Waller. The Plays of Molière (Edinburgh, 1907), II, 323-387, (3) John Ozell, The Works of Monsieur de Molière (London, 1714), Volume II in Book I, Benjamin Blom reprint (New York, 1967), as The Impertinents, 55-98. Line quotation references from any of these works will appear in the text.

<sup>13</sup>E. K. Chambers, The Mediaeval Stage (London, 1903), I, 85.

<sup>14</sup>D-M, III, 32-33.

"spectacle nouveau." To honor Louis XIV she calls forth nymphs, fauns, and satyrs from the garden. The stage direction reads: "Several Dryads, accompanied by Fauns and Satyrs, come forth out of the trees and Terms."

She tells them:

Quit now your ancient Forms but for a Day  
With borrow'd Shape cheat the Spectator's Eye,  
And to Theatric Art yourselves apply.

(Van Laun, 52)

She explains that the sole purpose of this entertainment is to please the King and that these creatures will turn into actors portraying bores.

Impertinents, avant; nor come in sight,  
Unless to give him more supreme Delight.

(Van Laun, 52)

Then: "The Nymph brings with her, for the play, some of the people she has summoned to appear, while the rest begin a dance to the sound of oboes, accompanied by violins." In other words, so that some of the "creatures" can change into "actor-bore" costumes, those who remain provide a rustic ballet. This gallant mythological-pastoral world of grotto and woods peopled with nymphs and satyrs was used by Pellisson in esprit courtois fashion for the customary glorification of the sovereign. Molière later returned to this convention many times, but even here influenced its use. The prologue is fanciful and amusing because it continues Molière's effect of improvisation and creates a complexity of masking that leads smoothly into the comedy.

The action of the play begins with a direct statement from an exasperated young man, Eraste, about the problem that plagues him. He says to his valet La Montagne: "Good heavens! Under what star was I born, to be constantly tormented by boxes?" In a long monologue-like narrative,

Eraste relates that he has just encountered an acquaintance--an unnamed bore--at the theatre. As a spectator on the stage, this nuisance made a spectacle of himself and of Eraste by association. After the play he was such a pest with his idle chatter that Eraste now fears he is late for an arranged meeting with his loved-one, Orphise. It is indicated almost immediately, however, through what Eraste says, that his complaint about bores who complicate his life is merely a symptom of the real problem: his "great passion" which has been thwarted by Orphise's guardian.

Eraste wants to look for Orphise, but La Montagne, a seventeenth-century French variation of the Brighella servant character from the commedia dell'arte,<sup>15</sup> delays him with aggravating valet duties. La Montagne straightens Eraste's collar front, his hair, his hat. While Eraste's agitation mounts, the hat is elaborately brushed and straightened and then, as it is being ceremoniously handed over, it is dropped to the ground (Figure 64).<sup>16</sup> The constant chatter that accompanies La Montagne's duties sends Eraste into a rage: "The deuce take every officious servant who worries his master, and does nothing but annoy him while setting himself up as indispensable!" But when Eraste wants an opinion from his valet about whether or not Orphise has just passed by quickly with another man (Alcidor), the wounded La Montagne refuses to speak: "Monsieur, I say

<sup>15</sup>Pierre Louis Duchartre, The Italian Comedy (New York, 1966), p. 165.

<sup>16</sup>The plumed hat worn and carried by the gallants of Molière's time was an effective hand property for comic stage business. Apparently its use as a source of comedy in The Bores was so successful that Molière was prompted to incorporate variations of hat business in the later comedy-ballets, George Dandin, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and The Would-be Gentleman. A suite of thirty figures from Molière's plays, designed by Pierre Brissart and engraved by J. Sauv , appeared in the 1682 edition. See Paul Lacroix, Iconographie Moil resque (Paris, 1876), p. 265. The Brissart figures included here are from that collection.





Figure 64. The Bores (Brissart)

ERASTE. Do you intend to keep that hat  
forever?

LA MONTAGNE. It's ready.

ERASTE. Give it to me, then.

LA MONTAGNE. (dropping the hat) Ah!

ERASTE. There it is on the ground. That's  
a great help. Plague take you.

The Bores, Act I, Scene 1

nothing, lest I bore you." Then La Montagne's niggling exasperates Eraste even further. Eraste tells him to follow Orphise and the man to see what they do; and La Montagne goes and comes back the classic three times in order to get the correct instructions.

Bores are those who insist upon dwelling on their favorite interests. The first bore who appears in the play is a dancing bore, Lysandre, who must tell Eraste about the dance-tune he has just composed. First he hums the tune, then he describes the dance to it while demonstrating the steps (Figure 65), and then he makes Eraste take the part of the lady. Eraste, besides being distracted from his waiting for Orphise, is placed in a ridiculous position by Lysandre who is oblivious to his plight.

Eraste is in the grip of two attitudes--one social and one personal. Because of his social position he cannot avoid people like Lysandre. "Good heavens! Must rank cover everything and oblige one to suffer gladly a hundred fools every day? Must we constantly demean ourselves to applaud their stupidity for politeness's sake?" (Waller, 340-341). On the other hand, he cannot forget his personal preoccupation. When he hears from La Montagne that Orphise is coming: "Ah, how that agitates me! I am filled with anxiety. I love her still, the merciless beauty, though my reason tells me I ought to hate her." (Waller, 340-341). He is a man whose bon sens has escaped him. It is this amorous fixation, a "suffering" that is exaggerated but out of the realm of seriousness, of real pain, that makes the situation comic. The interrupters, after all, are bores, but as Eraste admits about one of them: "At any other time I would have laughed heartily at his foolishness." Henri Bergson, in his well-known "Laughter," states an idea about comedy that applies to The Bores:



Figure 65. The Bores at Vaux-le-Vicomte, Lysandre and Eraste  
(Champollion after Louis Leloir)

At the root of the comic there is a sort of rigidity which compels its victims to keep strictly to one path, to follow it straight along, to shut their ears and refuse to listen. In Molière's plays how many comic scenes can be reduced to this simple type: a character following up his one idea, and continually recurring to it in spite of incessant interruptions! <sup>17</sup>

Molière used rigidity many times, more skillfully and more extensively perhaps in some of his non-musical plays and later comedy-ballets, and with more complex results, but the idea is recognizable in Eraste, as well as in the bores he encounters.

Orphise is also plagued by bores--first, Alcidor, the fawning bore she could get rid of only by asking him to escort her to her carriage (an action that disturbed Eraste greatly because he misunderstood its purpose --misunderstandings being the stock in trade of comedy) and later by some country cousins, "who bore everyone at court." But despite her annoyance with the bores, especially the "provinciales" (a group Molière became fond of ridiculing), she is not overcome by them as Eraste is. Orphise is a cool ingenue who rather enjoys teasing Eraste and furthering his predicament. She gives little, yet demands much. For example, in Act II she departs in a huff when she finds that Eraste is not suffering alone waiting for her, but is with "such pleasant company." The pleasant company is Orante and Clymène, the affected ladies Eraste cannot get rid of, but Orphise gives him no chance to explain. Among the young women of the comedy-ballets, Orphise has the detachment of Dorimène (The Forced Marriage) and Angélique (George Dandin) and perhaps is their prototype, but in the plot of The Bores she is, nevertheless, the young lover's inamorata, not

<sup>17</sup>Wylie Sypher, ed., Comedy (Garden City, New York, 1956), p. 180 .

unlike the later characters Lucinde (Love's the Best Doctor) and Lucile (The Would-be Gentleman).

After Eraste finally meets with Orphise, he is interrupted by another bore, Alcandre, who has been insulted and wants Eraste to duel with the offender. In contrast with his explosive responses to previous interruptions, Eraste, "after being silent for some time," delivers a very restrained rebuff, reminding the bore in superior tones of the King's edict against dueling. Eraste is completely in control as he dismisses Alcandre with "Adieu." He is set up to be razed. When he turns from Alcandre and sees that Orphise is gone, his control is destroyed, his calm shattered. He cries frantically to his valet, "Go and look everywhere until you find where she is. I will wait in this path." The extreme contrast has its comic effect. And because Eraste is confined to this spot, the unity of place is used to dramatic advantage. There is much movement around Eraste, but he is fixed in one place, waiting, unable to look for Orphise elsewhere because he might miss her where they had arranged to meet. Pacing and agitated movement in this restricted area illustrate his frustration.

At this moment of crisis--the loss of Orphise--and while Eraste waits for word from La Montagne, the first musical interlude (Ballet du Premier Acte) is interpolated into the action. The street scene remains unchanged. but whereas all the people to this point who have appeared on the public street have been associated in particular with Eraste, the people of the first interlude are merely characters out of life who are only annoying to Eraste in a general way. Dancers portraying pall mall players ("joueurs de mail"), crying out "beware" as they enter (first ballet-entry), force Eraste to to withdraw from the street while they perform a stylized game

there. When they are finished, Eraste returns only to encounter a crowd of people curious about his loitering in this place (second ballet-entry). They dance around him, turning him around to get a good look at him, making him flee from sight until they have gone. The first interlude is not well-integrated into the play, but the central character is involved; variety is achieved through the presentation of intruders different from those in the play; the tension is broken for a few moments of spectacle; and time is allowed to elapse. Eraste says at the conclusion of the first interlude (and the beginning of Act II): "Have all the bores at last gone away? . . . The sun sinks fast; I wonder why my valet has not yet come back." (Waller, 346-347).

After the first interlude the tension starts to build again as Eraste is greeted by a card-player, Alcippe, who bores him with details of a game. This incident was especially relevant to Parisians of Molière's day for whom the game of piquet was the rage. But as incessant, inconsequential nonsense it transcends its particular reference and is universally amusing.

La Montagne returns and after some stalling and digressions informs the anxious Eraste that Orphise has been detained by bores. Eraste sends La Montagne away so that in solitude he can adapt some verses to an air that pleases Orphise. This minor musical episode is presently interrupted by the two précieuses, Orante and Clymène, who are arguing "that which denotes the most perfect lover." They ask Eraste to rule on whether or not a lover should be jealous, a question typical of the "learned" debates of the salons. These characters are symmetrical opposites: they state their positions in one line of dialogue each; each has two lines of alternating dialogue for brief statements; each expands her ideas with a lengthier speech; then each has a four-line rebuttal. The formality of this

structure underlines the absurdity of their precious refinement. Eraste devises an answer that makes both their arguments correct, but he has concluded this conversation too late. Orphise has seen him, has thought him to be courting other ladies instead of waiting for her, and has departed.

Eraste attempts to follow Orphise, but he is interrupted by Dorante, the stag-hunter. Dorante, undoubtedly one of the characters played by Molière, is the most long-winded bore of the play. His harangues describing a stag-hunt are filled with hunting jargon that few people would understand, much less care about--especially Eraste at this moment. As with the card-player, it is Eraste's restless reaction to this persistent nonsense that creates the comic effect. At the end of Dorante's long tirade, dramatic tension is relaxed with the second interlude.

Again, as in the first act, individual, specific bores are followed in the musical interlude (Ballet du Second Acte) by characters out of French life that might be encountered on the street. The clashes in the interludes are less intense than in the scenes. The emphasis is on spectacle. The first ballet-entry of the second interlude is a group of boule players (old-style French bowling) who stop Eraste to measure a shot about which they are in dispute. He then exits and they do a dance composed of gestures that are used in this game. They are interrupted by an entry of boys with sling-shots (petits frondeurs).<sup>18</sup> These rascals are discovered by their fathers (slippermakers) and mothers who chase them away and who,

<sup>18</sup>Sling-shots were a favorite plaything with French children at this time. The comic effect here is that "harmless" children portray the once powerful group of nobles and parlementaires who opposed the monarchy--the Fronde. Such satiric "shots" made Molière a theatrical frondeur.

in turn, are sent off by a gardener who dances a solo entry tidying up the area.<sup>19</sup> This gardener, appearing appropriately enough in a hedge theatre, may have been a personification of the great garden designer Charles Le Brun, who helped provide the setting for The Bores at Vaux. Highly ordered geometrical patterns were characteristic of both the garden and the ballet. The gardener, after the confusion of the earlier balletic interruptions, at least momentarily restores order.

At the beginning of Act III, Eraste, speaking to his valet, reveals that time has passed and a secret meeting with Orphise has been arranged. He is on his way to this meeting. After sending La Montagne away, Eraste is prevented from reaching Orphise's door, however, by two bores with petitions for the King. First is Caritidès, the needy scholar who wants to correct the spelling on public signs.<sup>20</sup> Then there is the needy economist, Ormin, who has a get-rich-quick plan to turn the entire French coastline into profitable seaports. Eraste is detained further by another duelist, Filinte, who offers to stand in for him for a supposed offense. His "friendship" causes Eraste to be late for his appointment.

It is night. Eraste has stated that his secret rendezvous with Orphise was to be in the evening, which in the comedy-ballets is a time of confusions and ambushes, but also a magical time of music and merry-making. As Eraste arrives at his destination, Orphise's guardian, Damis, appears

<sup>19</sup>This interruption of one ballet-entrée by another is the structural device that was used in the Ballet de plaisirs troublés (1657).

<sup>20</sup>An anecdote in Jacques Losme de Monchesnay's Bolaeana (Bon mots de Boileau, 1742) tells that because of haste Molière asked his friend Chapelles to write the Caritidès scene, but the result was so lacking in humor that he did not use it. Little credibility is given to this story (D-M, III, 9-11).



at her door accompanied by his valet, L'Espine. Damis has learned of the secret meeting and plans an ambush. La Rivère, in the service of Eraste, and two of his comrades overhear Damis threaten Eraste, and they attack him. Eraste draws his sword and chases off the attackers. Damis is so grateful that his opinion of Eraste changes, and he agrees to a marriage between the young lovers. While Eraste was perhaps in no real danger from his own men, his intention to save Damis was honest. And because Damis could be favorably impressed by appearances, the circumstances merely worked to Eraste's advantage.

After the conciliation, the problem of the separated lovers is resolved very quickly. When Orphise appears (with silver candlestick--a light in the darkness), Damis calls for musicians to celebrate the happy occasion (Ballet du Troisième Acte), thus providing a romantic dénouement and a musical finale to the play. Masqueraders (people dressed up with or without masks in fancy dress, generally ridiculous, not elegant) enter and momentarily threaten to separate Eraste and Orphise again, but Eraste calls for help from Swiss Guards (minor officials having disciplinary duties) who enter (first ballet-entry) with halberds and good-naturedly chase out the masked "bores." The guards also make way for four dancing shepherds and a shepherdess (second ballet-entry) who put a pastoral end to the divertissement, thereby concluding the play in the same outdoor, rustic manner with which it opened.

In the Fâcheux Molière had shown how it was possible to get away from the frippery of mythology and to devise a genuine play, which would justify a succession of songs and dances quite as well as the earlier and emptier schemes introducing gods and goddesses. In that comedy-ballet, simple as it was, he had proved that a web of true comedy might be embroidered with the interludes of singing and dancing which charac-

terized the ballet. The comedy-ballet, as Molière thus presented it, was less pretentious and less fatiguing than the earlier type with its exaggerated grandiloquence; and it was more amusing, because it contained within the spectacle what was after all a real play. 21

#### THE FORCED MARRIAGE

In the Dedication to The Bores Molière said that a command from the King could inspire "a whole comedy,"<sup>22</sup> as easily as the King's suggestion had inspired the addition of a single character to that play. Furthermore, in his Preface to The Bores, he asserted the new mixture of comedy and ballet "could serve as an idea for other things which might be planned with more leisure."<sup>23</sup> Molière had the opportunity to follow up these suggestions when in 1664 Louis XIV requested from the Troupe de Monsieur a play in which he could dance. For this commission Molière produced his second comedy-ballet, The Forced Marriage (Le Mariage forcé), and with it became special dramatist to the King.

The Forced Marriage, a prose farce (the equivalent of a one-act play), is about a foolish old man, Sganarelle, who must suffer the consequences of stubbornly seeking marriage with a frivolous young girl. Although less like a revue than The Bores, it is an episodic play. It consists of the incidents in Sganarelle's quest for advice on his dilemma: the desire for companionship and children on one hand, and the fear of becoming a cuckold

<sup>21</sup>Brander Matthews, Molière, His Life and His Works (New York, 1910), p. 134.

<sup>22</sup>D-M, III, 26.

<sup>23</sup>D-M, III, 31.

on the other. Like The Bores, The Forced Marriage is essentially in the esprit gaulois style with even broader buffooneries such as beatings and outrageous dialogues, but its ballets, better integrated with the action of the play, show Molière's developing ability to mix gallant and courtly elements with his comedy. "The ballet was logically connected with the comedy, assisting its progress or embodying the fancies and distractions of the comic protagonist."<sup>24</sup>

The major source for The Forced Marriage seems to have been Book III (1546) of Rabelais's Gargantua and Pantagruel. Sganarelle of the play is the character Panurge of the satire, whose adventures include seeking advice from a friend, from a dream (as a form of divination), a seeress, a fortune teller, a devilish deaf-mute, and a philosopher.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup>John Palmer, Molière (New York, 1970), p. 295.

<sup>25</sup>Comparison of The Forced Marriage and Gargantua and Pantagruel

<u>Episodes of the play</u>	<u>Incidents of the satire*</u>
Sganarelle consults his friend Géronimo (Act I, Scene I)	"How Panurge Consulted Pantagruel on the Advisability of His Getting Married" (III, 9)
Sganarelle falls asleep and dreams ( <u>Récit</u> of Beauty, Entry #1 and Entry #2)	"How Pantagruel Advised Panurge to Fortell by Dreams the Success or Failure of His Marriage (III, 13)
Sganarelle consults a philosopher (Act II, Scene 3)	"How Skeinwinder [Trouillogan] the Philosopher, Disposed of the Difficulty of Marriage" (III, 35)
	"Of the Answers Vouchsafed by the Philosopher Skeinwinder, Who Was Ephectic (He Suspended Judgment) and Pyrrhonic (He Believed Certitude Unattainable)" (III, 36)

\* Jacques Le Clercq, trans., New York, 1936.

Michaut discusses extensively the sources of The Forced Marriage, touching primarily on the doctors and the cuckoldry theme.<sup>26</sup> Pancrace and Marphurius, he suggests, are based on the doctors of the commedia dell'arte and Italian literary comedy. Earlier examples from Molière's plays are the Scholar in The Jealousy of Barbouillé (c. 1653) and Métaphaste in The Lovers' Quarrels (c. 1656). The theme of cuckoldry was widely used in the French theatre during Molière's first years as an actor; he adopted it for many of his plays, notably the early Sganarelle, or The Imaginary Cuckold (1660). The use of disproportionate ages as a cause for cuckoldry was standard esprit gaulois material. By the time Molière came to write The Forced Marriage based on this idea, he had already used it in The School for Husbands (1661) and The School for Wives (1662). Besides Rabelais, his own plays, and the French, Italian, and perhaps even Spanish theatrical sources Molière may have used, incidents out of contemporary French life may have suggested ideas to him: his own marriage with a woman half his age and the well-known "forced marriage" of the Chevalier de Gramont.

During Molière's lifetime, The Forced Marriage was produced in three

Sganarelle encounters gypsies (Entry #3 or Scene 6)	"How Pantagruel Advised Panurge to Consult the Sibyl of Panzoult" (III, 16)
Sganarelle encounters a Magician (Entry #4)	"How Panurge Sought Counsel of Herr Trippa" (III, 25)
Sganarelle encounters mute Demons (Entry #4)	"How Goatsnose [Nazdecabre] Answered Panurge in the Language of Signs (III, 20)

<sup>26</sup>Gustave Michaut, Les Lutttes de Molière (Paris, 1925), pp. 11-16.

different versions.<sup>27</sup> First, as a comedy-ballet it was presented to the court at the Louvre on January 20, 1664 and then to the public for a short run at the Palais-Royal beginning February 15. A ballet livret for this version was published by Robert Ballard in 1664.<sup>28</sup> The comedy-ballet consisted of three acts, in nine French scenes (Act I - two scenes, Act II - three scenes, Act III - four scenes), and eight ballet-entries. Then in 1668 The Forced Marriage was revived on February 24 at the Palais-Royal without the music and dancing. This ten-scene version, published on March 9 by Jean Ribou,<sup>29</sup> has become the standard text and is most commonly referred to when the play is discussed. Although all ballet-entries are eliminated, the gypsy-girl part of Entry #3 (performed originally by actresses in the troupe, not dancers) is retained as Scene 6. The character Lycaste, an admirer of Dorimène, is added, as well as a new scene in which he appears (Scene 7). Lycaste becomes the threat to Sganarelle that the Four Gallants (Entry #8) were in the original comedy-ballet. The name of Dorimène's brother is changed from Lycante to Alcidas. Scene 4 of Act III, which existed only as part of the musical finale of the comedy-ballet, is eliminated. Molière's third production of The Forced Marriage was the play revived again as a comedy-ballet at the Palais-Royal on July 8, 1672. This version was not published, and only fragments

<sup>27</sup>See Figure 66 - Chart comparison of The Forced Marriage: 1664, 1668, and 1672.

<sup>28</sup>Guibert, II, 443-445. The livret appears in D-M, IV, 71-78. For a discussion of the comedy-ballet livrets see Appendix A: The Livret.

<sup>29</sup>Guibert, I, 227-233. The text appears in D-M, IV, 17-66. English translations of Le Mariage forcé: (1) Albert Bermel, One-Act Comedies of Molière (New York, 1965), pp. 119-143, (2) Ozell, Book II, Vol. III, 59-82, (3) Van Laun, II, 223-245, (4) Waller, III, 251-301, as The Compulsory Marriage.

THE FORCED MARRIAGELIVRET of 1664

## Overture

Act I, Scene 1 Sganarelle and Géronimo

Scene 2 Sganarelle and Dorimène

Récit of Beauty

Entry #1 Jealousy, Sorrows, Suspicions

Entry #2 Jokers or Sly-Ones

Act II, Scene 1 Sganarelle and Géronimo

Scene 2 Sganarelle and Pancrace

Scene 3 Sganarelle and Marphurius

Entry #3 Gypsy Men and Women  
Gypsy-girls

Entry #4 Magician and Demons

---

Act III, Scene 1 Sganarelle and Alcantor

Scene 2 Sganarelle and Lycante

Scene 3 Sganarelle and Dorimène  
(Alcantor and Lycante)

Entry #5 Dancing Master

Scene 4 Géronimo and Sganarelle

Spanish Concert

Entry #6 Spanish Ladies and Gentlemen

Entry #7 A Grotesque Charivari

Entry #8 Four Gallants (and Dorimène)

Figure 66. Chart comparison

TEXT of 1668	PRODUCTION of 1672 (conjecture)
	Overture
Scene 1 Sganarelle and Géronimo	Scene 1 Sganarelle and Géronimo
Scene 2 Sganarelle and Dorimène	Scene 2 Sganarelle and Dorimène
---	Dance: The Husbands
---	Musical Dialogue
---	Musical Trio
Scene 3 Sganarelle and Géronimo	Scene 3 Sganarelle and Géronimo
Scene 4 Sganarelle and Pancrace	Scene 4 Sganarelle and Pancrace
Scene 5 Sganarelle and Marphurius	Scene 5 Sganarelle and Marphurius
Scene 6 Sganarelle and Gypsy-girls	Scene 6 Sganarelle and Gypsy-girls Minuet
---	Songs for a Counter-tenor
Scene 7 Dorimène, Lycaste, and Sganarelle	Scene 7 Dorimène, Lycaste, and Sganarelle
Scene 8 Sganarelle and Alcantor	Scene 8 Sganarelle and Alcantor
Scene 9 Sganarelle and Alcidas	Scene 9 Sganarelle and Alcidas
Scene 10 Sganarelle, Alcidas, and Alcantor (and Dorimène)	Scene 10 Sganarelle, Alcidas, and Alcantor (and Dorimène)
---	Singing Gypsies
---	?
---	?
---	?
---	?

of The Forced Marriage, 1664, 1668, and 1672

remain of the new lyrics written by Molière for the Charpentier music which was substituted for Lully's.<sup>30</sup> The order of scenes and musical interludes is conjectural, based on the 1668 text. Since the only change made in the play in 1668 was the removal of the ballet-entries, The Forced Marriage could have been produced with the 1668 text and the 1664 ballet-entries. It seems reasonable, therefore, that in 1672 the script of 1668 was used, with new musical interludes added where ballet-entries appeared in 1664. The subject matter of the dances performed in 1672 is unknown, but a full company of dancers was engaged for the production,<sup>31</sup> and, therefore, dances must have been as important as in 1664.

The central character of the play, Sganarelle, like La Montagne of The Bores, is a seventeenth-century variation of the Brighella character,<sup>32</sup> but he is far from being the Italian commedia dell'arte servant. Not the first character Molière used by this name,<sup>33</sup> Sganarelle had become a French bourgeois, a distinct personality, not just a stock character type. Sganarelle of The Forced Marriage is mature, widely traveled, shrewd, good-natured; yet he is foolish and cowardly for all his years and experience. His idée fixe about getting married eclipses all the qualities which made him a prosperous, respected citizen. The irony of the situation is that he discovers his mistake before marriage, but is forced to go through with it knowing full well what will happen to him.

<sup>30</sup>These lyrics appear in D-M, IX, 588-592.

<sup>31</sup>William Leonard Schwartz, "Molière's Theater in 1672-1673: Light from Le Registre d'Hubert," PMLA, LIV (1941), p. 410.

<sup>32</sup>Duchartre, p. 165.

<sup>33</sup>Sganarelle appeared in the non-musical plays, Sganarelle, or the Imaginary Cuckold (1660) and The School for Husbands (1661).



The scene of all the action is a public square outside the houses of Sganarelle and his neighbor Alcantor. Having already made up his mind to marry, Sganarelle asks his friend Géronimo's honest advice on the matter. When Géronimo concludes to the fifty-two or fifty-three year old bachelor, "I advise you not to think of marriage," Sganarelle responds, "And I tell you that I am determined to marry." Géronimo, a man of bon sens, realizes that Sganarelle merely wants approval not opinion, gives it, and then goes away amused at the absurdity of the proposed match. Because Sganarelle is blinded by his unreasonable determination, he is easily mistaken in his perceptions. Unaware that he is an object of amusement, he says, "This marriage ought to be happy, for it gives pleasure to everyone. All the people I've spoken to laugh when they hear about it." Sganarelle's happiness begins to wane almost immediately, however, when young Dorimène, his betrothed, appears and informs him that this marriage will finally give her freedom from parental authority and the opportunity to pursue pleasures obviously quite apart from her marital life. Furthermore, she is already putting on airs like a "lady of quality" and is on her way to a shopping spree for which she will send the bills to her future husband.

The "organic principle of dramatic structure" suggested by W. G. Moore as the key to interpreting all the plays of Molière, is the struggle "between deceiver and deceived . . . between cunning and foolishness," between the rogue and the fool.<sup>34</sup> This conflict was a standard comic principle of both French farce and Italian *commedia dell'arte*. While only touched on in The Bores (Damis is unaware of the full circumstances of

<sup>34</sup>W. G. Moore, Molière, a New Criticism (Garden City, New York, 1962), pp. 70-71.

Eraste's "rescue"), it is basic in all other essentially esprit gaulois comedy-ballets beginning with The Forced Marriage. The ancient device of the younger duping the older is usually employed--parents and children or husbands and wives--and sometimes that of cuckoldry, or the deception of the gullible husband, which, as already mentioned, was standard material on the French stage. Cuckoldry is threatened in The Forced Marriage and in the later comedy-ballet, George Dandin, but never actually accomplished. Molière seemed to be more interested in depicting the anxiety of anticipation. Sganarelle is taken advantage of by the sly Dorimène and her rakish brother, but the tricks to be played on him by Dorimène's lovers are yet to come.

After Sganarelle meets Dorimène, according to the scene synopsis that appears before the first ballet-entry in the 1664 livret, he ". . . is left alone, rather stunned. He complains, after this discourse, of a dreadful headache, and goes to the side of the stage to sleep. He sees in a dream a woman . . ." representing Beauty personified, who sings a récit. This récit, a chanson d'amour, lightly and charmingly mocks the lover by advising him to choose someone worth suffering for and even worth dying for. Abstract personification was a dramatic device typical of French moralités, sotties, and tableaux vivants, as well as the ballet de cour. Molière's use of the device as a lyric element in a comic situation is an example of his combining esprit courtois with esprit gaulois. "Beauty" (the idealization of Dorimène) in this seventeenth-century dream ballet is followed in the first ballet-entry by "Jealousy," "Sorrows" (Figure 67), and "Suspicious"--all qualities or states of being which relate to Sganarelle. Later it is revealed that even Sganarelle recognizes the significance of his dream when he tells Géronimo: "You know dreams are like

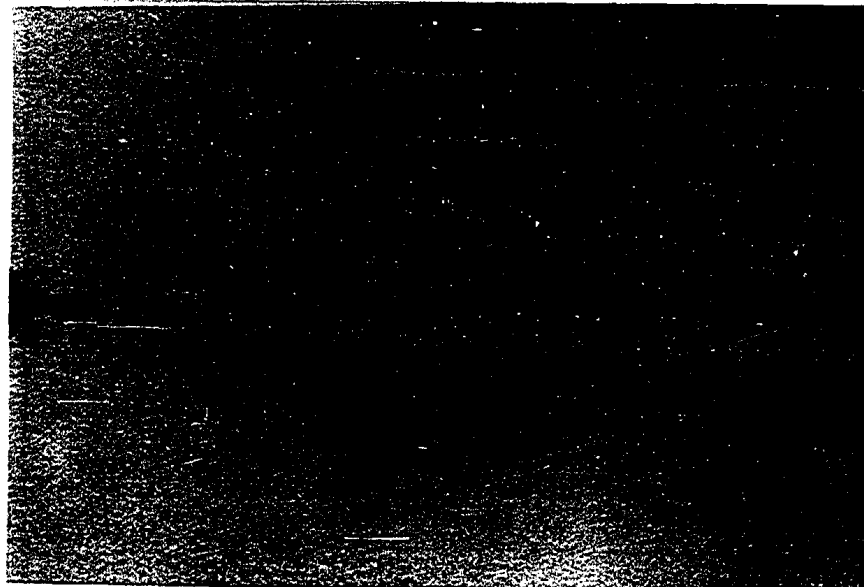


Figure 68. Magician

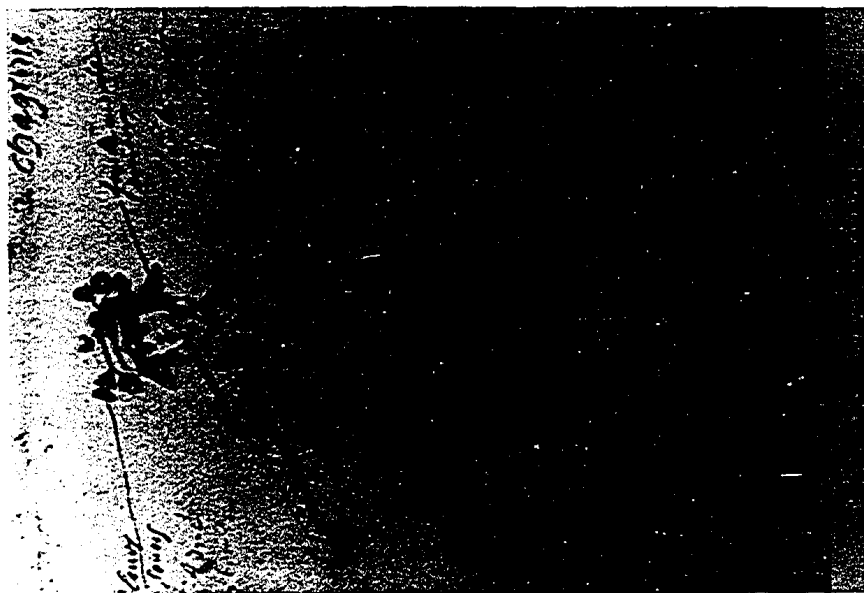


Figure 67. "Sorrows"

mirrors; they can show us the future." Characters in the first ballet-entry represent Sganarelle as he sees himself. Characters in the second entry, four Jokers (or Sly-Ones) poking fun at him, represent others who see him. As Géronimo wakes Sganarelle from his dream (Act II, Scene I), the musical interlude is concluded.

In the 1668 text, Géronimo enters immediately (Scene 3) after Dorimène departs. There is no dream; Sganarelle merely proceeds to tell Géronimo of a dream he had the night before. Because the dramatization of the dream is eliminated, and the cause of Sganarelle's exaggerated fear is not shown, the dream reference has little impact. A dream scene may have been restored for the 1672 production. Two of the songs may have been performed as warnings in a dream: one song about a wife's unpleasant traits, and the other about the inevitability of "horns" for an old man who loves a young girl.

Sganarelle is worried about the dream, but Géronimo does not understand dreams and tells him to consult the local learned philosophers, who with all their knowledge should be able to help. The two philosophers are marvellously drawn pedants who quibble ad nauseum over trifles of semantics, in their obsession completely ignoring Sganarelle's pleas for an answer. Pancrace, the Aristotelian philosopher, says "I'm so angry, I don't know what I'm doing" because of a fierce argument he has just had about whether one should say "the shape" or "the form" of a hat. Disregarding Sganarelle he continues his tirade on the subject, liberally infused with Latin phrases, walking into the house and out again, going away and returning with another point to make, talking incessantly.<sup>35</sup> Lancaster says that

<sup>35</sup>See D-M, IV, 30-46 for philosophical background. Bernel notes

"the interview with Pancrace has no effect upon the action,"<sup>36</sup> a literary opinion. Although the scene was obviously developed for its intrinsic comic values,<sup>37</sup> it is an integral part of the overall structure of Sganarelle's asking for help and growing desperation at not receiving it. He does not believe his friend, Geronimo, the professionals speak only nonsense, and he turns finally to charlatans. It is a logical, dramatic progression. In contrast with Pancrace, who is vehemently sure of everything, the second philosopher Sganarelle consults, Marphurius, a Pyrrhonian or skeptical philosopher, is vehemently sure of nothing. Sganarelle can get nothing but doubt from Marphurius: "you ought not to say, 'I have come,' but 'It seems to me that I have come.'" Infuriated, Sganarelle begins to flog the philosopher. When Marphurius complains about the beating, Sganarelle, like the shepherd in the farce Maître Pierre Pathelin, turns the trick on his teacher; "you ought not to say I have thrashed you, but it seems to you I have thrashed you." (Waller, 284-285)

No dialogue transition or introduction is indicated for the entrance of the Gypsy Men and Women of Entry #3.<sup>38</sup> The scene synopsis of the

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(p. 127) that the name Pancrace means pancratum, a Greek athletic contest. Molière's ridicule of this character was somewhat daring as it was a criminal offense in France to dispute Aristotle.

<sup>36</sup>Lancaster, Part III, II, 615.

<sup>37</sup>The part of the Pancrace interview that continues after the philosopher exits into the house appeared in print for the first time in the 1682 edition of Molière's plays (D-M, IV, 43 ff). This scene is an "actor's number" that apparently continued to grow in performance.

<sup>38</sup>In various editions of the comedy-ballets the words "Egyptien" and "Egyptienne" are interchangeable with "Bohêmein" and "Bohémienne." The meaning is gypsy. See Marcel Paquot, Les Etrangers dans les divertissements de la cour de Beaujoyeux à Molière, 1581-1673 (Brussels, 1932), passim.

livret states merely that Sganarelle drives out the philosopher (Act II, Scene 3) and the gypsies enter. After their dance, designed as an elegant display of Louis XIV and his followers, two gypsy girls appear and Sganarelle asks them to tell his fortune. When he inquires directly whether or not he will be a cuckold, they sing and dance away, teasing, taunting, and avoiding the answer, but repeating the word "cocu" in their song. After Sganarelle encounters the gypsies, he goes a step further into occultism and summons a magician (Figure 68), a ballet de cour character whose antics naturally suggested musical accompaniment. Regarding "Marriage" and "Destiny," about which Sganarelle is concerned, the Magician says he will call forth mute demons who answer questions by intelligible signs. The fourth entry consists of Demons who respond to Sganarelle's inquiries by pantomiming the horns of cuckoldry. While the dance of the "noble" gypsies must have been a gallant spectacle, it makes no dramatic point that is not made better by the scene between the gypsy girls and Sganarelle. The loss of the first part of the entry in the 1668 text, therefore, affects the play very little; however, the récit of the Magician and Entry #4--the Magician and four Demons--does add to the play as a comic scene, and its deletion is unfortunate. In 1672 the song stating "All women are to be feared" may have been substituted for the récit of the Magician. At the end of Scene 6 in the 1668 text, Sganarelle says "I must go find that great magician everyone talks about. . . ." But the magician never appears because Sganarelle's worst suspicions are confirmed at this point by Dorimène and Lycaste, one of her young admirers (Scene 7).

Sganarelle overhears Dorimène tell Lycaste that her marriage will not drive her lover away, that she is marrying for money and expects her husband

to die within six months. Sganarelle, convinced now of his mistake, goes to Alcantor, the father of Dorimène, and tries to persuade him to call off the marriage. Dorimène's brother (1664 - Lycante, 1668 - Alcidas) answers: marry Dorimène or duel to the death. The calm, low-keyed words in which the brother challenges Sganarelle contrast comically with his proposed violent action:

Other families would make a row, and become  
enraged with you, but we take things quietly;  
and I have come to tell you very politely that,  
if you are agreeable, we must attempt to slit  
each other's throats. 39

Sganarelle wants no fight and, after taking some coups de bâton, he submits to the inevitable, the forced marriage (Figure 69).

In the 1664 comedy-ballet, the scene in which Alcantor unites the hands of Sganarelle and Dorimène (Act III, Scene 3) was followed by a musical finale. The fifth entry was executed by a Dancing Master who came to teach a courante to Sganarelle. Like Lysandre in The Bores, he may have been an intruder preventing Sganarelle from taking his bride, or, like the Dancing Master in The Would-be Gentleman, he may have been engaged to help eliminate Sganarelle's coarseness. A scene (Act III, Scene 4) that is described in the livret but for which there is no dialogue has Géronimo coming to tell Sganarelle that the people of the village have prepared a mascarade in honor of the wedding. This entertainment is a miniature ballet de cour with foreign flavor. The "Spanish Concert" included first a group song in Spanish and then a dance by four Spanish Ladies and Gentlemen, who formed the sixth entry (Figure 70). The seventh

<sup>39</sup>Tradition states that Dorimène's brother was based on the Marquis de La Trousse, who was always very polite when killing an opponent in a duel.



Figure 69. The Forced Marriage (Brissart)

ALCIDAS, fancily dressed like a marquis,  
 prods Sganarelle with swords, and says:  
 Father, this gentleman is perfectly  
 reasonable. He has accepted matters in  
 good grace, and you can give him my sister.

ALCANTOR, giving Dorimène to Sganarelle:  
 Monsieur, here is her hand, you have but  
 to give her yours. Heaven be praised!  
 I'm rid of her, and from now on you are  
 responsible for her conduct. Let us  
 rejoice and celebrate this happy marriage.

The Forced Marriage, Scene 10





Figure 70. Spaniard



Figure 71. Charivari

entry, "un charivari grotesque," was a mock serenade performed for a newly married couple (a chivaree) by masked dancers and musicians (Figure 71). The eighth entry referred directly back to the comedy and its characters: four Gallants cajoled Dorimène to make the predicted cuckoldry seem imminent. Bermel devised an appropriate ending not specified in the 1668 text that is in keeping with the spirit of the comedy-ballet: "Music, dance, and the wedding between a resigned SGANARELLE and a joyful DORIMENE, who goes to dance, as soon as the ceremony is over, with LYCASTE." (Bermel, p. 143) The 1672 finale was an elegant pastoral tribute to love by gypsies; it may have been used ironically to mock Sganarelle.

In the comedy-ballet version of The Forced Marriage, Molière began to use ballet as a device to advance the action and to delineate character. When the device works well, as it does with the dream sequence, the Magician's scene, and the musical wedding celebration, it improves the comedy. Beginning with The Forced Marriage, Molière used music and dancing to resolve the plays happily and fancifully without interfering with the rogue-and-fool principle. The central character must face the consequences of his foolishness, but the play is relieved from any sting or touch of bitterness by dissolving into musical spectacle.

#### THE PRINCESS OF ELIS

Molière's next comedy-ballet was written for The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, to be performed during the three-day ballet-fete based on Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. Because his play had to blend with other amusements concerning the noble heroes of gallant romance, Molière may have thought it inappropriate to use his bourgeois Sganarelle. He submitted The Princess of Elis, a "comedy mixed with dance and music" that

was suitable for the most refined of court entertainments. This comedy-ballet with its pastoral elements, its royal personages, its romantic theme, and delicate poetry was Molière's first major excursion into the world of esprit courtois. But he took a few boisterously comic tricks with him. In The Princess of Elis a courtly and gallant subject forms the play proper, but most of the musical interludes concern the farcical esprit gaulois antics of the court fool, Moron.

The Princess of Elis, which is about a young Diana who scorns love until a clever prince scorns her, is based on Augustín Moreto's Spanish comedy, El Desdén con el desdén (Scorn for Scorn).<sup>40</sup> This model, chosen undoubtedly because of the two queens who were to be honored at the fete, was one of the most successful plays (published 1654) of one of their countrymen at the height of his popularity. But Molière had used Spanish sources before, notably for his heroic comedy Don Garcie de Navarre, or The Jealous Prince (1661). For The Princess of Elis Molière retained the main idea of Moreto's play: that love is aroused in one person by the indifference of another, although Molière's play has simpler characters and incidents. The action is moved from Barcelona to Greece--Elis, a region in Peloponnesus, noted for the Olympic Games dedicated to Zeus and near Arcadia, the favorite site of pastorals.<sup>41</sup> But Elis is nothing more

<sup>40</sup>See Martinenche for extensive discussion. Maidens indifferent to love were standard pastoral heroines, by no means limited to Moreto. Tasso's Aminta (1573), the Italian pastoral which so greatly influenced seventeenth-century writers throughout Europe, is about the beautiful Sylvia, who has devoted herself to the worship of the chaste Diana.

<sup>41</sup>Molière used the conventional locale, but also perhaps wished to avoid duplicating or presuming to dramatize a subject related to the Pythian Games of Delphi, dedicated to Apollo, that were used as a thematic element for other amusements of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (see Chapter V: Related Works).

than an imaginary realm for the play's contest of love. Molière's dénouement has less intensity and passion than Moreto's. The pretense of the hero seeking the hand of another woman does not progress so far and the jealousy theme, which Molière treated seriously and unsuccessfully in Don Garcie, is less important. The extolling of beauty, romance, and the happiness to be derived from love, which permeates The Princess of Elis, however, was due undoubtedly as much to the Versailles fete's motif of love as to any literary subject.

When The Princess of Elis was published later in 1664 along with the "Relation" of the fete, the text included arguments for each scene (from the original livret) and the entire book and lyrics. The first act and part of the first scene of Act II are in Alexandrine verse. The Princess of Elis is closer to the original Moreto play than apparently Molière had in mind, because he lacked time to finish the work as planned. He inserted a notice (Avis), in the middle of Act II, Scene 1, advising the reader that

The author's intention was to treat thus [in verse] the entire comedy. But a command from the King, who hurried this affair, made it necessary to complete the remainder in prose, and to pass lightly over several scenes, which he would have expanded further if he had had more time. 42

The Princess of Elis is written in five acts (the equivalent of a long one-act play) and mixed with music and dance. The musical portions are not the "récits" and "ballet-entrées" of the earlier comedy-ballets; Molière uses the word "intermède" (interlude) for the first time to describe them. There are six interludes, four of which consist of two scenes and

<sup>42</sup>D-M, IV, 166.

include dialogue. Only the versified scenes of the play, the interludes, and the dénouement were completely finished. The remainder of the play is in prose and in places seems sketchy. Molière never rewrote the play, and after its initial showing at the Palais-Royal, November 9, 1664 to January 4, 1665 (twenty-five performances), it was never revived at the public theatre during Molière's lifetime.<sup>43</sup>

The musical prologue (First Interlude) of The Princess of Elis establishes the pastoral, romantic nature of the play and its light, comic mood. An incident related to an early morning hunting party is shown, and since the main plot of the play proper begins after the hunt, the prologue creates the setting and circumstances from which the action evolves. The abstract character Aurora<sup>44</sup> sings a récit (Scene 1) that is perhaps Molière's most charming chanson d'amour. Despite all obstacles, Aurora sings, when one is in the prime of beauty, nothing is more suitable than love. Dog-keepers, awakened by Aurora, rise to greet the new day and to prepare for the hunt. They notice that their comrade Lyciscas (from an ancient name --Lyciscos or Lyciscus) is still sleeping, and try, against all his objections, to wake him. Once called, in song, Lyciscas tries to wake up, but falls asleep again. The singers persistently rouse him; and he replies, "How tiresome it is not to be able to sleep one's fill." When Lyciscas finally arises, "with all pain imaginable," he causes such a commotion that he awakens other valets who dance as they prepare for the

<sup>43</sup>A second edition of the play appeared in 1665--privilege January 7 and printed January 31--after the production closed at the Palais-Royal (Guibert, II, 447-454, on the two original editions).

<sup>44</sup>Aurora, or Dawn, is a standard pastoral figure; and the time of pastorals is often dawn.

hunt.

The Argument of Act I reads:

This hunt was prepared by the Prince of Elis, who, being of a gallant and magnificent disposition, and desirous that the Princess, his daughter, would fall in love and think of marriage, to which she was very much averse, had invited to his court the Princes of Ithaca, Messenia, and Pylos, thinking that while hunting, which she greatly loved, and in other sports, chariot-races and court amusements, one of these princes might please her, and become her husband. 45

Euryale, Prince of Ithaca, is love-sick for the Princess of Elis. He is fascinated by her disdain, for she scorns marriage and loves nothing but the hunt. As the play begins, Euryale tells his sympathetic tutor, Arbates, that the Ithaca-born Moron, the Princess's fool, who "has more good sense than some who laugh at him," has promised to assist him in the difficult task of winning the Princess. Moron rushes in just then, frantically looking for protection, and his brand of bon sens is instantly revealed. Why can they not chase harmless hares, rabbits, and young does instead of villainous, brutish boars who chase back, he wonders. He recounts having slipped away from the hunters in order to nap, only to run headlong into a boar of enormous size. Moron's report of the fear which made him run is comically exaggerated, but his reason is sound:

. . . I would much rather it should be said: 'This is the place where Moron saved his life from the fury of a wild boar, by taking to his heels without so much as saying his prayers,' than that it should be said: 'This is the celebrated ground on which the brave Moron, with heroic boldness, faced the impetuous onslaught of a wild boar, which put an

<sup>45</sup>D-M, IV, 143. The arguments are so flattering to Molière that it is impossible to suppose the playwright himself wrote them.

end to his life by tearing him to pieces.'

(Waller, 319)<sup>46</sup>

Moron jabbars on--implying that he is the bastard son of Euryale's father --when two of Euryale's rivals, Aristomènes, Prince of Messenia, and Théocles, Prince of Pylos, pass by. They talk of having saved the Princess during the hunt from an attacking boar and how she was outraged by their interference, insulted by their lack of confidence in her hunting ability. This bit of overheard conversation gives Euryale an idea for a plan to win the Princess. The Prince leaves and the revelation of his idea is delayed by a musical interlude.

Moron, staying behind to converse with the trees and rocks like a typical pastoral character, discloses that he, too, is in love--with the Princess's maid, the shepherdess Philis.<sup>47</sup> This love match constitutes a secondary plot that unfolds in the musical interludes. In the opening spoken dialogue of the Second Interlude (Scene 1), Moron calls out the name of Philis and is ridiculed by an Echo.<sup>48</sup>

MORON: Ah! Philis! Philis! Philis!  
 THE ECHO: Philis.  
 MORON: Ah!  
 THE ECHO: Ah!  
 MORON: Hem.  
 THE ECHO: Hem.

<sup>46</sup>English translations of La Princesse d'Elide: (1) Ozell, Book II, Vol. III, 1-44, (2) Van Laun, III, 29-67, (3) Waller, III, 302-371.

<sup>47</sup>Philis is the name of a country girl in Vergil's third and fifth Eclogues, and a common name for a rustic maiden in pastorals.

<sup>48</sup>François Victor Fournel, in commenting on the Echo of the Ballet de la nuit (1653), notes that echoes are found in nearly all pastoral poems and romances. See Les Contemporains de Molière (Paris, 1866), II, 397. In The Princess of Elis the Echo is seemingly not a character who appears in the play, but an off-stage voice.

MORON: Ah! Ah!  
 THE ECHO: Ah!  
 MORON: Hi, hi.  
 THE ECHO: Hi.

After some doubt is cast by this Echo about Moron as a lover, the fool is then seen as also totally devoid of any qualifications as a warrior. The fear of the boar that he described is fully demonstrated now when a bear appears (Scene 2). Moron dances around hysterically, trying to convince the bear that he would not be good to eat and then trying to propitiate the bear with flattering compliments: "beautiful fur, beautiful head, beautiful eyes . . . beautiful little nose! beautiful little mouth!" He finally panics and calls for help, crying out that poor Moron has been lost. He is saved by Huntsmen (eight peasants armed with quarter-staves and spears), who arrive, to music, and chase off the bear. When a second bear appears, they raise their weapons and engage in a combat with him as Moron leads their attack from afar, probably up a tree. When the bear has been downed, Moron comes to finish off a presumably dead animal. The braggart has great courage when no threat is involved. But a victory has been won, and the Huntsmen dance to celebrate.

The action is not continuous from the musical interlude to the resumption of the main plot. At the beginning of Act II the Princess is discovered in one of the "peaceful places" that so please her:

. . . all the elaborate architecture of our  
 palaces must yield to the simple beauties of  
 nature. These trees, these rocks, this water,  
 this fresh grass have charms for me of which  
 I never tire.

She is accompanied in this delicately contrived wildness by her cousins, Aglanta and Cynthia, who disapprove of her aversion to love. Even Moron confesses to the Princess that he has succumbed. Just then Prince Iphitas,



the Princess's father, brings the three visiting suitors to her. Before he can say anything, she states that as her father he has complete control over her, but marriage would be like death. A kind and considerate father, Iphitas says that although he has made sacrifices to Venus, he will not force her into an unwanted marriage in the interests of the State. He asks only her respectful presence at a race to be run by the three princes. Aristomènes and Théocles each make brief courtly conceits to her, but in contrast, Euryale startles her by saying that he does not want to win her love and only seeks the honor of running the race. Euryale's idea is that treating scorn with scorn will engage the Princess's interest. Moron recognizes the trick, but the Princess is intrigued, and resolves to make Euryale fall in love with her. Cynthia warns her that she may be the victim of her own plot, but the Princess's mind is made up. With the love schemes determined, everyone leaves for the race--everyone except Moron and Philis.

Moron detains Philis, but when, in a dialogue portion of the Third Interlude (Scene 1), she refuses to stay with him, he points out that she would not deny his rival, the shepherd Tircis. She answers, "When you sing as well as he does, I promise to listen to you," and she will stay only if Moron is silent. Moron, a great talker, tries desperately to gesture ("scène de gestes"), perhaps a comically exaggerated avowal of love, but when he can contain his words no longer, she takes flight. Moron concludes that he must learn to sing. Just at this moment, a Satyr, who once promised to teach Moron to sing, appears singing. Moron, in an aside, explains, "He's so used to singing he doesn't know how to speak any other way." The Satyr insists on singing a new song he has just written (not unlike a monomaniac of The Bores), but it is not passionate

enough for Moron. When the Satyr sings of "my mortal pain" Moron is more satisfied and asks the Satyr to teach this song to him. But because the Satyr gives him merely a silly exercise, "La, la, la, la . . . Fa, fa, fa, fa," instead of a real song, Moron is annoyed. The Satyr, who traditionally represents coarse, primitive force, then becomes angry, also, and the two would come to blows if the music did not turn their conflict into a dance.

Act III begins as Cynthia tells the Princess about the Prince's great skill. Euryale, who has won the race, in turn describes to Moron how gracefully the Princess danced and how sweetly she sang at the festivities. In the following scene, the Princess asks Moron if Euryale has said anything about her talents; continuing Euryale's deception, Moron answers that he has not said the least word. The Princess, obviously disturbed, sends for Euryale, whom she upbraids in chivalric terms: "It is becoming for a woman to remain unmoved, and to keep her heart free from the flames of love, but what is a virtue in her is a crime in a man." As difficult as it is for him, Euryale remains firm: "nothing is capable of touching my heart" (Figure 72).

The Princess's maid, Philis, is nearly as cold and indifferent as her mistress. In the Fourth Interlude, Tricis complains in song to Philis: "I touch your ear without touching your heart." Moron arrives to find Philis and Tricis together (a standard pastoral triangle), and Philis's idea that the criterion for lovers is their ability to sing is restated. Moron is heart-broken that he cannot sing. He bellows a conventional sentiment in song: "Will you be so cruel as to make me kill myself?" This question gives Philis an idea that turns his words against him. She responds: "I would love with all my heart a person who would love enough to



Figure 72. The Princess of Elis (Brissart)  
 [Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée]

Moron, The Princess, Euryale, Arbates

EURYALE: Nothing is capable of touching  
 my heart.

The Princess of Elis

Act III, Scene 4

die for me." Tircis in song supports Moron's noble proposal: "How sweet it is to die for one's love," and, speaking to Moron, says, die promptly, generous lover. But Moron, the fool of good sense who has escaped death from wild animals twice this day, will not be foolish enough to kill himself for love.

Moron is not a melancholy lover. Although unsuccessful in love himself, he continues to serve in Act IV as liaison in the romance between Euryale and the Princess. When the Princess announces she is in love with the Prince from Messinia, Moron tells Euryale not to despair. She is only testing Euryale. Euryale, continuing his deception, counters with a confession to the Princess that they "are equally subdued" because he has succumbed to love for her cousin Aglanta. When the Princess, still vain and selfish, asks Aglanta not to accept Euryale, the bold Moron calls the proud Princess a "dog in a manger"<sup>49</sup> and further suggests that she loves Euryale. Her wrath at this suggestion helps to confirm her love. She has weakened, soliloquizes about being overcome by love, and calls for the "heroic shepherdesses," Clymène and Philis:<sup>50</sup> "You fine people can soothe the greatest misery by your sweet songs. Come near, I pray you, and try to charm away my sorrow with your music." (Fifth Interlude) The Princess stops their singing, however, because the musical discussion of

<sup>49</sup>From Lope de Vega: Five Plays (New York, 1961), p. xxvii: "the orchard keeper's dog neither eats nor lets one eat." Lope de Vega's El Perro del Hortelano was published in 1618. Van Laun explains (p. 60): "A dog in a manger cannot himself eat the corn and straw that are there, but barks if any other animal approaches, and will not allow it to eat in peace; this is called in French faire comme le chien du jardinier--because a dog cannot eat cabbage, and does not permit others to eat it."

<sup>50</sup>This Philis is different from the Princess's maid. The role was performed by a singer.

the two views of love--as cruel or beautiful--further upsets her.

The Princess overhears her father talking with Euryale concerning an "alliance" at the opening of Act V. Not realizing her father is encouraging Euryale's suit, she interrupts, begging him not to allow a marriage between Euryale and Aglanta because she was not given the opportunity of refusing him herself. "The mask must be removed," Euryale says, and he confesses he loves only her. The Princess, still unable to admit being in love, asks for time to consider, and withdraws. While she is gone her cousins Aglants and Cynthia are paired with the princes Aristomènes and Théocles. With everyone gathered together, Philis announces that Venus has brought about a change in her mistress. The lovers' duel is ended.<sup>51</sup> Shepherds and shepherdesses (in the silks and satins of Arcadian pastoral) are invited to join in the celebration with songs and dances.

That one cannot love too early or too often, stated in the musical prologue, is reiterated in the musical finale. This idea has special significance for Euryale to whom Arbates has said, "It is not easy for a young prince to be great and courageous unless he is in love," and for the Princess to whom Cynthia has said, "To live without love is not really to live."

The Princess of Elis is not particularly successful as a play. The intrigue is weak, most of the characterizations slight. The deus ex machina ending, although perhaps appropriate to the artificiality of the

<sup>51</sup>Figure 73. The Silvestre engraving seems to portray a tableau near the end of the play (Act V, Scene 3) with the cousins and the princes united, Prince Iphitas and Moron giving the Princess and Euryale to one another, and perhaps Arbates looking on, although the text does not indicate that Arbates is present in this scene.

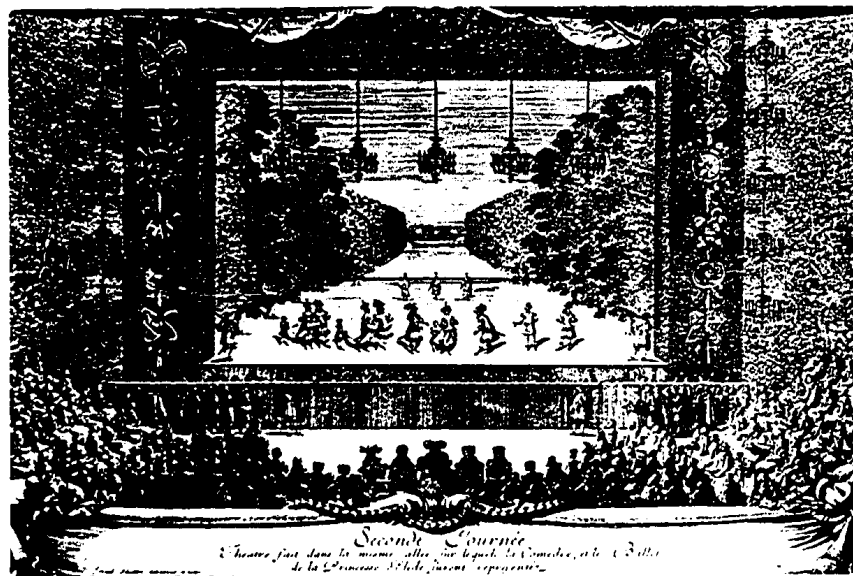


Figure 73. The Princess of Elis (Silvestre)  
[Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée]

pastoral, is unsatisfying, even unnecessary. The Princess of Elis is not especially accomplished as a comedy-ballet, either. The use of singing and dancing is arbitrary, the mixture of play and episodes of music careless and unpolished. The musical character Lyciscas, for example, provides a comic opening for the play, but never reappears and has nothing to do with the plot. Since Molière played this role, as well as that of Moron, the two characters might have been combined. Moron, the court favorite and confidant, probably would not have been wakened by lowly Dogkeepers, but the character in the prologue who hates to get up could have had another good reason: dreading to face the wild beasts to be encountered on the hunt. The comic scenes of Moron are separate from the action of the play proper. While Moron has a function in the plot--he encourages the hero, helps the heroine realize she is in love, and brings information to her father--he seems to be in the play mainly to make the audience laugh. He is Molière's invention, not based on Moreto, and only in a general way on the comic servant of Spanish drama, the gracioso, who is characterized by his good sense. He provides comic interludes in the romantic story--memorable scenes in which he is cowardly, silly, babbling, an absurd lover, and a terrible singer. The comedy-ballet, however, lacks focus and unity of design. Moron's "turns" have little to do with the play; the sub-plot containing them is weakly developed and resolved. But Moron, at least, does his own singing, while a second Philis must sing for the Princess, and the singing and dancing of the Princess, though referred to, is not seen at all.<sup>52</sup> The Princess of Elis was a pretty

<sup>52</sup>Singing, dancing, and acting in Molière's time were for the most part separate disciplines performed by specialists in each area. The actresses who played the Princess and her maid were not also singers.

court spectacle with charming sentiment and scenes of delightful comedy. It is only because Molière achieved greater unity and made better use of singing and dancing in other comedy-ballets that this one is disappointing. Even the finale lacks Molière's typical curtain joke; it is merely a musical wedding celebration, unrelated to the Princess plot or the Moron triangle and with no ironic twist. Molière could use courtly conceits, but he was more successful when handling the escapades of his Sganarelles.

#### LOVE'S THE BEST DOCTOR

Molière returned to Sganarelle for the next comedy-ballet requested by the King. In Love's the Best Doctor<sup>53</sup> (L'Amour médecin), Sganarelle is a father tricked into approving a marriage for his daughter by her lover and the household maid. The characters, the satire, and the use of music in Love's the Best Doctor show Molière developing considerably greater facility with the form, despite the haste with which the production was prepared for performance at Versailles on September 15, 1665. Molière wrote a brief preface To the Reader (Au lecteur) for the first published edition of the play:

This play is only a simple sketch, a little impromptu, which the King commissioned as an entertainment. It is the most hurried of all those works His Majesty has commanded; and when I say that it was conceived, written, rehearsed and presented in five days, I say only that

<sup>53</sup>This title translation is from John Wood, Molière: Five Plays (Baltimore, 1953), where the play appears, pp. 173-196. Other English translations of L'Amour médecin: (1) Ozell, Book II, Vol. III, 83-108, as Love the Best Physician, (2) Van Laun, III, 147-170, as Love is the best Doctor, (3) Waller, IV, 265-323 as Love's the Best Doctor.



which is true. It is not necessary to inform you that in such a play many parts depend on performance. Everyone knows that comedies are written only to be performed; and I advise no one to read this except those who can imagine the action on stage. I shall express also the wish that works of this kind could always be shown you with the ornaments which accompanied them for the King. You would see them in a much more favorable condition; for the airs and the symphonies of the incomparable Monsieur Lully, added to the beauty of the voices and the skill of the dancers, give them, undoubtedly, certain graces it is difficult to dispense with. 54

Although Love's the Best Doctor seems to have been improvised, or pieced together, by the playwright and the composer from familiar dramatic situations and characters and musical "numbers" prepared in advance, it is one of the most delightful of the Sganarelle plays. It is more coherent and better-constructed than any other early comedy-ballet.

The plot is a familiar farce situation: a father outwitted. The characters are also familiar: father, maid, young lovers, and pedants. The plot however, is less interesting than the satire on doctors. Long before Molière, physicians had been satirized by such notables as Petrarca and Montaigne for their pompous, tyrannical, tradition-bound attitudes. They were mocked by Molière's contemporaries, Cyrano de Bergerac, Montfleury, and Scarron. Molière attacked the abuses of the medical profession throughout his entire career--for example, as early as the 1650's in The Flying Doctor, in Don Juan (February, 1665) written just before Love's the Best Doctor, and in two later comedy-ballets, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and The Imaginary Invalid. Some real-life situations may in part have inspired

<sup>54</sup>D-M, V, 293-296. The privilege was granted December 30, 1665 and the play was published on January 15, 1666 by Pierre Trabouillet, Nicolas le Gras, and Théodore Girard (Guibert, I, 154-157).

Molière's satire: the inability of doctors to halt the disintegration of his own health and the constant controversies about the court physicians. Doctors and their practices were common objects of ridicule, but Love's the Best Doctor is thought to have specific literary sources: the consultation scene from Tirso de Molina's La Venganza de Tamar and the dénouement from Cyrano de Bergerac's Le Pendant joué (1654).<sup>55</sup> In any case, the popularity of Love's the Best Doctor was due chiefly to the doctor characters, especially their consultation scene. After its first performance, the play was always referred to during Molière's lifetime in La Grange's Registre as "les Médecins" instead of L'Amour médecin.

The short preparation time for the original presentation of Love's the Best Doctor was possible, Prunières suggests, because already available scenes and "airs de ballets" were used.<sup>56</sup> How much influence Lully had in determining what would be included in the entr'acts is impossible to say, but he must have had a stock of musical pieces and ballet-entrées from the court ballet--for example, a "Scaramouche dance" or a "joyful celebration"--which could have been incorporated into the play. Grotesque doctor dances were no novelty in the ballet de cour; Prunières cites the doctors of Lully's L'Amour malade (1657).<sup>57</sup>

Of the comedy and music in Love's the Best Doctor, Tilley says "it is a union rather than a fusion. The music and dancing are not really essential to the comedy, because they are foreign to its whole tone, and

<sup>55</sup>D-M, V, 284-286.

<sup>56</sup>Henry Prunières, ed., Oeuvres complètes de J.-B. Lully, Les Comédiés-Ballets (New York, 1966), I, xxii.

<sup>57</sup>Prunières, I, xxii.

especially to the personality of the selfish and unromantic bourgeois who is the central character."<sup>58</sup> It is a union rather than a fusion because the musical interludes are "attached" to the play and do not grow inevitably out of the action as in some later comedy-ballets. But it is precisely in their tone that the musical interludes show an improvement over Molière's earlier efforts. There are no pastoral characters; there are no persons of quality like the "noble" Gypsies and the Spaniards of The Forced Marriage inappropriately associated with the bourgeois esprit gaulois Sganarelle; and the doctors and the quacks are just as selfish and unromantic as he. After the prologue, all the musical characters--the servant, the doctors, the quack and his attendants--are out of everyday life. Even the abstract characters of the finale--Comedy, Music, Ballet and Frolics, Laughters, Pleasures--are "performers" summoned by the young lover Clitandre to entertain at the wedding celebration. Molière, as quoted above, comments on the importance of the music, and although his preface is pure flattery, what he says is basically true. Of course, Love's the Best Doctor can be performed without music. The suppression of all music affects only the Orvietan scene, and the Quack Vendor's song can be spoken in patter, but the play is richer and more spirited with its musical ornaments.

There is no evidence that singing and dancing accompanied the play when it was performed at the Palais-Royal, beginning September 22. That the music was dropped does not necessarily show Molière's disapproval of it, however, since the cost of mounting public musical productions was great. Love's the Best Doctor, it would seem, was performed in a shortened

<sup>58</sup>Arthur Tilley, Molière (Cambridge, 1936), p. 227.

non-musical version, and always given with another play. Only in October of 1672, when it was presented with The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, probably as the entertainment within that play, is it likely that the musical interludes may have been restored, because at that time Molière was increasing the amount of music used in his theatre.

The text of Love's the Best Doctor indicates that the scene of the action is Paris, in a room in Sganarelle's house. Despois and Mesnard point out that this setting applies to the acts of the comedy, but that the entr'actes must be played in a public place. They further suggest that a landscape or a cloud scene served as a background for the prologue.<sup>59</sup> According to these notions, and indications in the text, the scenes change as follows:<sup>60</sup>

Prologue - Landscape or cloud scene  
(that is, a pleasant, unspecified place).

Act I, Scene 1 - 4 - Sganarelle's house, exterior.

Scene 1, Sganarelle meets his neighbors.

Scene 2, Sganarelle spies his daughter coming out to take a breath of air. At the end of

Scene 3, when the conversation turns to talk of a husband for Lucinde, Sganarelle escapes, presumably into his house. He leaves Lucinde and Lisette outside for Scene 4, which ends with Lisette saying, 'Let's go in.'

Act I, Scene 5 - 6 - Sganarelle's house, interior.

Scene 5, Sganarelle is seen alone. Then, Scene 6, Lisette comes to speak with him about Lucinde's illness, after which he calls for his servant to fetch doctors.

First Entr'acte - Sganarelle's house, exterior, and exteriors of doctors' houses.

<sup>59</sup>D-M, V, 299.

<sup>60</sup>For scene changing techniques see Chapter VIII: Theatres and Scenery.

Champagne summons the doctors. As the doctors enter ceremoniously into Sganarelle's house, Act II begins.

Act II, Scenes 1 - 6 - Sganarelle's house, interior.

Act II, Scene 7  
and

Second Entr'Acte - Sganarelle's house, exterior (or a public place).

Sganarelle goes out to buy some Orvietan.

Act III - Sganarelle's house, interior.

Although the musical finale--the wedding celebration--is held in the same locale as the action of the last act, the other scenes of singing and dancing require scene changes. But, as can be seen, the unity of place is broken in Act I of the comedy itself. Elaborate scenic display was characteristic of Italian intermezzi and, to a lesser degree, of French ballet-entrées, but the scenic requirements of the musical interludes of Molière's comedy-ballets are generally no greater than those for the acts of the comedies, with the exception of The Magnificent Lovers (1670).

Love's the Best Doctor consists of a musical prologue and three acts (the equivalent of a one-act play). The comedy is in prose, the songs are in verse of mixed meters. Between Act I and Act II is an "entr'acte" or musical interlude.<sup>61</sup> The singing of Comedy, Music, and Ballet in the prologue and in the finale provides a frame for the play.

Instead of returning to the stale pastoral material that the poet Paul Pellisson had used for the prologue of The Bores, Molière fashioned his first musical introduction in a manner appropriate to his own new dramatic form. It is at once a compliment in music to the King and a declaration of dramatic principle. In all the comedy-ballets, music and

<sup>61</sup>This term is not used in any of the other comedy-ballets.

dancing are subordinated to the play. This principle is clear in the prologue of Love's the Best Doctor. The abstract character Comedy takes the lead in proposing to Ballet and Music that their rivalries be halted:

Come, unite then, all three in a fashion  
that best will bring  
Harmony, pleasure, and glory to the great  
King.

Sganarelle is the central character of the play. He is a father this time instead of the aging fiance of The Forced Marriage, but he is similarly narrow-minded and obstinate, seen in his first appearance, like the other Sganarelle, asking for advice which he does not take. His daughter Lucinde is mysteriously melancholy, and Sganarelle asks friends, a neighbor, and a relative what he should do about her condition. M. Josse, a goldsmith, recommends a piece of jewelry.<sup>62</sup> M. Guillaume, a tapissier (like Molière's father), recommends some of his wares. Aminte, a neighbor, suggests that Lucinde be married off because she secretly wants Lucinde's lover for herself. Finally, Sganarelle's niece, Lucrece, because she wants Sganarelle's inheritance, recommends sending Lucinde to a convent. These characters, who never appear again in the play, are used to show that Sganarelle, who refuses their advice, is shrewd enough to perceive the monomanias which prompt their answers. But Sganarelle then immediately displays his stubbornness and lack of perception. He refuses to listen to Lucinde and the maid Lisette who tell him exactly what his daughter wants: a husband. Molière's dialogue is not known for

<sup>62</sup>Sganarelle's line "Vous êtes orfèvre, Monsieur Josse" ("You are a goldsmith, Mr. Josse") has become proverbial for a person whose actions are self-interested.

its maxims or for extractable quotations; however, a statement made by Lisette about Sganarelle's obstinacy is applicable to many of Molière's characters: "It's true enough, there are none so deaf as those who don't want to hear." Although Lucinde has never exchanged a word with the young lover Clitandre, she loves him. Clitandre, in turn, has asked to marry Lucinde. But Sganarelle has refused him, thus causing Lucinde's malady.

Lisette is a wise, saucy, scheming maidservant out of the French farce and the Italian commedia dell'arte (Colombina) traditions, who manipulates action the way the femmes d'intrigue do in the later comedy-ballets, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and The Imaginary Invalid. She knows that Sganarelle could keep the lovers apart. When rogue-and-fool comedy becomes "comedy of substance"<sup>63</sup> the fool is a threat, survival is at stake. Trickery transcends the level of joking and becomes a necessary mode of behavior. Lionel Gossman, in his essay "The Comic Hero and His Idols," explains: "The comic hero's victims defend themselves against his tyranny by ruse and hypocrisy, and he thereby becomes for them not the transcendent subject of his intention but an object to be tricked and manipulated."<sup>64</sup> It is Lisette who makes this point in the play: "So long as a girl does nothing to be ashamed of she has the right to use her wits to get around her father." (Wood, p. 179). The plan Lisette devises is to make Sganarelle think that Lucinde is critically ill and thereby frighten him into a vulnerable position. She begins by using the standard servant

<sup>63</sup>Guicharnaud, p. 3.

<sup>64</sup>Guicharnaud, p. 77.

trick of withholding information. She drives Sganarelle to a peak of anxiety with her insinuations so that the eventual revelation of Lucinde's "sickness" has the utmost impact. He responds to the news by exploding and sending his servant Champagne off to bring doctors, "and lots of them." (Wood, p. 181)

In the first entr'acte the doctors are summoned, and they travel to Sganarelle's house. A link between Act I and Act II is accomplished through music and dance. Champagne, Sganarelle's servant, in the first ballet-entry "knocks on the doors of the four doctors." He is a mute character, who appears in the play only here, having only whatever dimension and personality traits the choreographer/dancer endows him with. A bit of action, which might have been assumed to have happened off-stage, is dramatized through Champagne. The second ballet-entry, on the other hand, serves importantly to reveal the pomposity of the doctors. They are exposed before they begin to affect the action, as they appear, proceed to Sganarelle's, and "ceremoniously enter the house." Their costumes probably were the pretentious black flowing robes and pointed hats often worn by physicians of the time; their balletic gestures probably indicated their lofty, punctilious attitudes. Performance considerations like these, which Molière refers to as so important to the success of a play, could give the ballet a vital dramatic function, particularly appropriate in tone to the comedy.

Act II begins with Lisette waiting for the doctors, typically outspoken: "I knew a man who used to maintain that you should never say such and such a person perished of a fever or pleurisy but that he died of four doctors and two apothecaries." (Wood, p. 182) Shortly after the doctors arrive and before they have conferred on the case, Sganarelle offers them



payment for their services. He knows best what will appeal to them. The stage direction indicates: "He gives money and each one receives it with his own particular gesture." (Figure 74). One is again reminded that Molière wrote little more than a scenario which could be realized to its fullest only on the stage.

The doctors are ridiculed in Love's the Best Doctor for being mercenary, dogmatic, and rigid. They firmly stick to their rules and authorities even when they must digress from good sense. In the first dialogue with a doctor, for example, Lisette tells Dr. Tomès that one of his patients is dead. The doctor replies that it is not possible for him to be dead because it defies the rule set down for his sickness by Hippocrates. A discussion between the four doctors follows concerning the rules of professional etiquette which must be observed regardless of the disastrous effects they may have on the patient. A little later Dr. Bahys delivers this "maxim": "Far better die according to rules than live on in spite of them." (Wood, p. 186) Without the slightest concern for Sganarelle's daughter, the doctors chat amiably about their own affairs. Then when they must focus on Lucinde, they completely disagree about diagnoses and treatment. Later when the doctors reach accord over her illness, an illness which, in fact, does not exist, it is not because of her symptoms, but because quarreling among doctors is not good for the profession. By contrast, the quarreling among Comedy, Music, and Ballet had ceased for the benefit of the one for whom their pleasant relief was intended.

In addition to comic content, several devices of form contribute to the humor leveled at the doctors. In a discussion of etiquette, each doctor tells the other to speak first, and then they all speak at once. Two sets of contrasts are drawn: two doctors with opposing ideas and two



Figure 74. Love's the Best Doctor (Brissart)

SGANARELLE to the doctors  
DES-FONANDRES, TOMES, MACROTON,  
and BAHYS:

Monsieurs, I implore you to  
consult very carefully.  
Although it is not the custom  
to pay in advance, yet, for  
fear I should forget, and to  
have it over with, here is . . .

(He pays them, and each, in  
receiving the money, makes a  
different gesture.)

Love's the Best Doctor

Act II, Scene 2

doctors with contrasting manners of speech. Two of the doctors argue over the two remedies in current use--Dr. Tomès for bleeding and Dr. Des-Fonandrès advocating enemic. (Brought to mind are the two arguing précieuses in The Bores.) Dr. Macroton speaks slowly in a drawling voice; Dr. Bahys speaks quickly in a stammering voice. (These two opposites are predecessors of the singing lawyers in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.) Their manner, if not their mission, is even amusing to Sganarelle who mimics them in an aside: "One's as slow as a funeral, t'other c.c.can't s.s.spit it out fast enough." (Wood, p. 185) As mentioned earlier, it is possible that physicians associated with the court of Louis XIV served as models for les Médecins and that only the rearranging and recombining of traits kept the resemblances from being too exact.<sup>65</sup> Except for Dr. Filerin, the doctors are further mocked by the Greek meanings of their names. Des-Fonandrès is derived from the words "murder" and "man" (mankiller); Tomès means "incision" and aptly, therefore, describes the advocate of bleeding; "long" and "tone" form the name Macroton; and Bahys means "bark."<sup>66</sup>

After the doctors leave, Sganarelle realizes he still has no resolution to his predicament and decides, therefore, to buy some "Orviétan" from a Quack Vendor.<sup>67</sup> The charlatan who sells the medicine, accompanied

<sup>65</sup>See Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière.

<sup>66</sup>D. B. Wyndham Lewis, Molière: the Comic Mask (New York, 1959), pp. 80-82.

<sup>67</sup>Quacks (opérateurs or charlatans, the French version of Italian ciarlatini) performed medicine shows on the Pont-Neuf and at the fairs. Entertainments were performed to attract a crowd to them, and chanted patter was hawked to describe their various medicinal preparations. Orvietan, the most popular elixir, was offered as a universal panacea

by clowns and attendants, sings a vendor song like those from the street or the Pont-Neuf. The lyrics of the song which name the ills and diseases that this specific would cure--"the scabies, the itching, the dropsy, the fever"--and the "business" that would naturally accompany the song are thoroughly in keeping with the play's esprit gaulois. The second entr'acte is a dance by the Quack's entourage.

The Quack Vendor is similar to the Magician in The Forced Marriage. Both musical characters are slick operators (the quack is "L'Opérateur"), dealers in trickery and superstition. Although they are not individualized characters but merely standard types in their professions, they have the dual purpose of providing musical spectacle while giving a "last chance" hope to each comedy's central figure. Both desperate Sganarelles seek out these shysters when unable to find solutions to their problems from more orthodox sources. The Sganarelle of Love's the Best Doctor can penetrate his self-interested advisers; he can laugh at the doctors' speech; he can even doubt the effectiveness of the quack medicine, but he is a dupe. And the point is that while the charlatans (magicians and quack vendors) will deceive him, they are in the long run less dangerous than doctors. Dr. Filerin admits, in a long speech in which

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for all ills. Supposedly an electuary invented by a doctor of Orvieto in Italy, it contained in some variations over fifty herbs and drugs, including opium. See Figure 12--Tabarin's street show, with a case of medicine on the side of the platform stage, and Figure 9--"Teatre et Boutique d'l'Orvietan" in which there is a case of Orvietan on stage, a poster promising cures for worms, smallpox, and other ills, and entertainers to draw a crowd. Charlatans took the name of this powder, and "Orvietan" became a familiar character in the theatre. The character was known to Molière from at least as early as the Ballet of the Incompatibles. A Charlatan in the ballet says "I am this great Orivatan" (D-M, I, 529). In Le Boulanger de Chalussay's satire on Molière, Elomire hypocondre, the playwright is made to say in the presence of the charlatans Orvietan and Bary that he had taken lessons from both (Act I, Scenes 1 and 3).

Dr. Tomès and Dr. Des-Fonandrès are reprimanded for their earlier quarrel over bleeding and enemic, that:

Fortune-tellers by their mendacious predictions profit from the vanity of credulous minds. But of all human foibles love of living is the most powerful. And that is where we can come in, with our pompous technical jargon, knowing as we do how to take advantage of the veneration which the fear of death gives to our profession.

(Wood, p. 188)

The quick-witted Lisette is gaily skeptical about doctors, but she uses Sganarelle's credulity to her own advantage. After persuading Sganarelle that his daughter is critically ill, she plans a second, more elaborate deception. She approaches Sganarelle the same way she did earlier, but this time instead of bad news she has cheerful news which she withholds until he does a song and dance for her. This musical episode, similar to the Lysandre scene in The Bores, shows an exasperated Sganarelle who must submit to a foolish stunt and the delicious incongruity of the master dancing to the maid's tune. Lisette's news, when she finally divulges it, is that she has brought a doctor to the house who has cured Lucinde. The "doctor" is Clitandre.

With Sganarelle on the other side of the room, Clitandre, dressed as a doctor, professes his love to Lucinde while pretending to question her about her health, and then concludes "the trouble arose from a disordered imagination." (Wood, p. 192) To cure her sickness he recommends having Lucinde go through a marriage ceremony that she will imagine to be real. Clitandre, one of the bright young lovers in the comedy-ballets like Euryale in The Princess of Elis, and his accomplice, Lisette, know that a trickster tells a dupe what he wants to hear and thereby tricks him with his own foolishness. As a doctor, Clitandre tells Sganarelle that he has

always had a terrible aversion to marriage, but will participate in this pretense for the sake of the cure. Only Sganarelle is unaware that the pretended ceremony is real. The comic effect of the dénouement is built by specific detail. Sganarelle is told that the wedding ring is merely a talisman which cures aberrations of the mind. The marriage contract is drawn up by a notary who pretends to be a man who writes Clitandre's prescriptions pretending to be a notary. Clitandre has even brought singers, dancers, and musicians to celebrate the ceremony. He says, "I take these people round with me and use them to soothe, with their harmony and dances, the troubles of disturbed minds." (Wood, p. 194) Sganarelle is completely convinced, and, like a fool, he rejoices over the idea that his daughter is to be deceived back to health. "The idiot! The idiot! The idiotic girl!" (Wood, p. 193) he cries, anxious to sign a fake contract.

During the celebration, singers representing Comedy, Music, and Ballet make this plea:

Leave off Hippocrates and come to us instead!

And they assert the value of their arts to a healthy mind:

Without us all mankind would soon be diseased.  
But with us to heal him, then all man's ills are  
eased.

The idea of music to cure one's ills, touched on in The Princess of Elis, developed in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, returned to in the second prologue of The Imaginary Invalid, is never more appropriately used than in Love's the Best Doctor. While the song continues, dancers representing Frolics, Laughter, and Pleasures join the festivities. The "cure" is affected, but then Lucinde and the "doctor" disappear. When Lisette explains that Clitandre and Lucinde have gone off to consummate the marriage, Sganarelle

realizes the truth, explodes, and creates a great commotion, but it is too late. The dancers prevent him from following the newlyweds. Sganarelle has been soundly duped. Love, a more effective remedy than the Medical Faculty can devise and a more powerful force than a tyrannical parent, has triumphed. And music affirms it.

### THE SICILIAN

Love, which prevails in spite of a guardian's interference, is the motif of Molière's next comedy-ballet, The Sicilian; or, Love Makes a Painter<sup>68</sup> (Le Sicilien ou L'Amour peintre). Don Pedro, a Sicilian gentleman, is a tyrant, tricked and robbed of the freed slave-girl he intended to marry by the schemes of a clever young lover and his rascally slave. Some incidents and character traits might be traced to other plays of Molière and to contemporary French and Spanish plays, but the parallels are insignificant.<sup>69</sup> The Sicilian seems to have been essentially Molière's invention. And yet Molière had specific requests to follow in writing it.

<sup>68</sup>This title translation is from Ozell where the play appears in Book II, Vol. III, 215-235 (20 scenes).

The subtitle of this comedy-ballet does not translate well. It does not modify the main title, The Sicilian, but refers, rather, to the love which provokes young Adraste to impersonate a painter in order to meet with Isidore.

Other English translations: (1) Van Laun, IV, 47-66 (22 scenes), as The Sicilian; or, Love Makes the Painter, (2) Waller, V, 253-301 (20 scenes), as The Sicilian or Love Makes the Painter, (3) John Wood, Molière: The Misanthrope and Other Plays (Baltimore, 1959), 77-96, as The Sicilian or Love the Painter. Wood has divided the play into three scenes:

Scene I A public square in Messina  
 Scene II Inside the house of Don Pedro  
 Scene III A public square in Messina

<sup>69</sup>D-M, VI, 216-224. This discussion includes references to possible literary as well as social sources of The Sicilian.

His entertainment had to include exotic characters--Turks and Moors--and afford Louis an opportunity to dance. The Sicilian accomplished its purpose of amusing the court when it was performed during February of 1667; and some critics have considered it a substantial influence on the development of the opéra-comique.<sup>70</sup>

The Sicilian is a one-act play in twenty scenes.<sup>71</sup> There are three musical "numbers," but the singing and dancing does not interrupt the action. There are no "interludes" or "entr'actes." The musical episodes are part of the dramatic structure: Scene 3 is a nocturnal serenade, Scene 8 is a song between the slave, Hali, and the Sicilian, and Scene 20 is a Moorish masquerade (danced originally by the King and his entourage).

The Sicilian was produced at the Palais-Royal in June and July, always with another play--for example, as an afterpiece to Pierre Corneille's Atilia. There are no indications that the musical scenes, as they appeared in the Ballet of the Muses, were performed for these presentations. But since the scenes are necessary to the action of the play, they must have been presented with at least token musical accompaniment. The young lovers make contact through the serenade and the Hali song; Don Pedro's

<sup>70</sup>Arthur Pougin, Molière et l'opéra comique (Paris, 1882), pp. 35-36.

<sup>71</sup>The final edition of the Ballet of the Muses livret included scene synopses of The Sicilian. It was published by Robert Ballard, bearing the date of the beginning of the ballet--December 2, 1666, and is "Edition E" according to Guibert, II, 501-502. The text of The Sicilian was first published by Jean Ribou on November 9, 1667, with the privilege granted on October 31. It was described as a "comédie."

There are only fifteen scenes indicated in the Ballet of the Muses livret. The 1734 edition of the play specifies twenty-two scenes. The action is the same in all three versions. Ozell and Waller based their translations on the twenty scene version, Van Laun on the twenty-two.



efforts to separate the lovers are prevented through the masquerade. The serenade might have been reduced to an instrumental piece played by the house musicians.<sup>72</sup> The Hali-Don Pedro song might have been sung by the actors without additional singers. A much modified finale might have been executed by members of the troupe without hired dancers.

Don Pedro, the Sicilian, is a Sganarelle-type character, not a tyrannical father as in Love's the Best Doctor nor a suspicious husband-to-be as in The Forced Marriage, but a tyrannical master and suspicious would-be lover. Like Sganarelle in Love's the Best Doctor his plans are thwarted because, like Sganarelle of The Forced Marriage, he is a foolish old man who covets a young girl. And, in this case, he is a jaloux who, by his own possessive behavior, drives the girl away and provokes the plots against him. Don Pedro keeps his beautiful freed slave, Isidore, confined, and refuses to let anyone near her because he wants to keep her for himself. In effect, she is still in bondage, although there is never any question that Isidore has free choice and will eventually have an opportunity to exercise it.

The Sicilian is not a study in jealousy any more than it is a tract against slavery. There may have been slaves in Sicily in the middle of the seventeenth century, perhaps even in the south of France, and Molière may have known about them. He has Hali, slave of the young French lover Adraste, say in Scene 1: "What a contemptible thing it is to be a slave." (Wood, p. 79) But Hali enjoys great freedom. He is impertinent, a typical servant character whose variety of tricks and reputation for rascality

<sup>72</sup>A pirated text of the play used in the provinces called for a popular air to be played by violins and a dance, but no vocal music (D-M, VI, 304).

are points of honor with him.

Passionate, if harmless, jealousy along with slave characters, not victimized but colorfully costumed, reflect the exotic, far-off setting of The Sicilian--Messina, Sicily.<sup>73</sup> Such exoticism was standard in the esprit courtois court ballet. But the foreign setting and characters in Molière's play are curiosities, and the French are championed. The inamorata says: "Frenchmen have an unlimited capacity for gallantry and indulge it on every occasion." (Wood, p. 91) The familiar rogue-and-fool principle is the motivating force of the play, with Don Pedro an esprit gaulois character, but there is less broad comic action than in most of the other comedy-ballets and more of "la grace" and "la galanterie" that enchanted Voltaire.<sup>74</sup> Lewis refers to the play as "that most charming and airy of soufflés."<sup>75</sup> The Sicilian's prevailing mood of gallantry as personified in the young French lover is conveyed in the play's language --a rhythmic prose<sup>76</sup> with balanced sentences and gracefully turned phrases. The gibberish of Hali's song in Scene 3 by contrast is a polyglot, a parody of foreign languages.

The play begins with the appearance of Hali. It is Lancaster's

<sup>73</sup>The first part of the play is at night outside Don Pedro's house. The locale changes after Scene 10 to the interior of the house, and then back to the exterior again as Don Pedro goes to the magistrate's house (Scene 18).

<sup>74</sup>D-M, VI, 230.

<sup>75</sup>D. B. Wyndham Lewis, p. 2.

<sup>76</sup>There is much interest among scholars in the language of The Sicilian. Maxime Brienne argues for prose poetry in "Le Sicilien, comédie en vers," Revue Critique des Idées et des Livres, Paris, XXXI (1921), 482-487. Moland discusses the language as free verse, VIII, 190-191.

opinion that "Hali is apparently a Turk or a Moor. . . ."77 As either, his name may have come from the Islamic "Ali." Hali is referred to in the livret as a Turk,78 and he was traditionally dressed like a Turk in Scene 7 as the leader of a band of entertainers.79 But since this garb is probably a disguise to hide his identity from Don Pedro, it might be assumed that he does not usually appear as a Turk. Perhaps he normally wears livery more consistent with his master's French attire. Regardless of how he dresses, Hali may, in fact, be a Moor.80 He sets the scene at the opening of the play by referring to the blackness of night as "this Scaramouche sky," and might not Hali be a black Scaramouche? Although Tiberio Fiorillo, the "Scaramouche" who shared the Petit-Bourbon with Molière's troupe, merely powdered his face, the traditional character, partly because of Spanish (Moorish) influence, was "black from head to foot . . . : a valet of an indigent gentleman . . ." with "a fondness for complicated intrigues."81 Lancaster compares Hali with Mascarille of Molière's The Blunderer,82 who may have been based on the Pulcinella character,83 but who is thought to have been played in a black mask. Hali

77Lancaster, Part III, II, 708.

78D-M, VI, 294.

79A disguise with mask was useful for the original court production because the actor who played Hali was replaced for the song in Scene 8 by a singer.

80Moors had been held as slaves in Sicily.

81Duchartre, pp. 236-237.

82Lancaster, p. 708.

83Duchartre, p. 216.

has nothing to do with arranging the masquerade of Moors in the finale, but he could be a character link to this group of maskers. The text does not say so, but Hali could very well be present to pass judgment on the validity of the costumes and the dancing. It would be an ironic twist not out of keeping with Molière's style to have a Moorish slave applaud the graceful dancing of elegantly costumed "Moors of quality" while the exasperated Don Pedro fumes with rage.

Hali has been called out in the middle of the night by Adraste. The young Frenchman is in love with Isidore, although he has spoken to her only with his eyes. She is kept locked up by Don Pedro, but Adraste is a determined and resourceful lover who devises a plan to communicate with her through music, and calls for Hali and musicians to serenade her. Like Sbrigani in the later Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and Covielle in The Would-be Gentleman, Hali has a band of helpers always on hand to assist in his intrigues.

Hali has decided that the emotional content of music depends on mode--the major mode is for a jolly mood and the minor mode is for a melancholy mood.<sup>84</sup> While Hali is almost always in a "major mode" mood, Adraste's disposition is best described as "minor." The young lover, who yearns to know whether or not Isidore returns his love, says "I want something gentle and sentimental, something to lull me into a sweet and dreamy meditation." (Wood, p. 80) The serenade Hali provides is a com-

<sup>84</sup>Despois and Mesnard point out that Hali, affecting the jargon of a musical connoisseur, uses "bémol" (flat) and "bécarre" (natural) when he actually means minor and major keys (D-M, VI, 238). The music written for the playlet supports this interpretation. Pretentiousness is a facet of Hali's character which is exposed by his absurd misuse of words.

promise; it includes both moods.

There is no musical prologue for The Sicilian, but the first two scenes lead directly into the serenade. This serenade is a playlet—that is, a dialogue in which something happens between characters—like the fourth interlude of The Princess of Elis between Moron, Philis, and Tircis. The two unhappy shepherds, Philène and Tircis, in a rocky place (away from the city and close to nature), sing of their unrequited love for Clarissa and Climène. The inhumane aspects of love are related in typical pastoral fashion. A third shepherd, however, breaks the gloomy spell when he lightheartedly asks: why remain constant if love is slighted? He adds that he would be a match for any unkind beauty. The two melancholiacs are not consoled, however, by his jollity.

The serenade under Isidore's window is integrated into the action of the play and used with dramatic purpose. It is an entertainment for Isidore which displays Adraste's love for her. Perhaps it also asks the question: will Adraste end up like one of the rejected shepherds?

Don Pedro interrupts the serenade to Isidore by appearing at the front door, a ludicrous figure dressed in nightcap and gown, with sword in hand. He and Hali, as strangers in the dark, strike out at one another. This encounter is not a brawl, but a set of quick slaps and quicker retreats by two rather cowardly types. The explosive Don Pedro calls for an army and an arsenal, but withdraws safely into the house:

Hallo there! Francis, Dominic, Simon, Martin,  
Peter, Thomas, George, Bartholomew! Come at  
once! My sword, my buckler, my halberd, my  
pistols, my muskets, my guns. Quick! Hurry!  
Come! Kill! Give no quarter!

(He goes inside - a Silence.)

(Wood, p. 82)

When all is quiet, Adraste calls Hali out of hiding. Hali, the threat removed, is determined to get the better of Don Pedro through cunning, and promises Adraste a variety of tricks of which, he says, "one or other is bound to succeed." (Wood, p. 83)

After the intruders are gone, Don Pedro emerges from the house with Isidore. He has insisted she rise early on this day when he plans to have her portrait painted, and requests that she accompany him on a business appointment. Isidore reveals that she has heard and enjoyed the serenade, and candidly admits her pleasure in the homage of admirers. Like the Princess's cousins in The Princess of Elis, she is an articulate defender of love: "to inspire love is a woman's greatest ambition." (Wood, p. 84) But she dislikes Don Pedro's jealousy and constant surveillance of all her actions. Isidore is as independent as Dorimène and the Princess, and indicates clearly to Don Pedro that she is not interested in trading her bonds of slavery for an "irksome" marriage.

The conversation between Don Pedro and Isidore is interrupted by Hali who appears disguised as a Turk. Hali makes elaborate obeisances to Don Pedro while gesturing to Isidore that he is a messenger from Adraste. Pretending to be a virtuoso,<sup>85</sup> Hali seeks Don Pedro's opinion on a group of singing and dancing slaves he has trained; as Adraste's

<sup>85</sup>When Hali describes himself as a virtuoso, Don Pedro at first mistakes his meaning. Again, Hali may be attempting to show his learning. The word "virtuoso," according to the historian Frederick L. Nussbaum in The Triumph of Science and Reason, 1660-1685 (New York, 1962), p. 8, "had with reference to the general field of scientific activity almost the same significance we now give it in the restricted field of musical technique, except that it did not connote specialization. The virtuoso was one who spent much effort and time in observing nature, collecting materials and seeking results that were beyond the range of ordinary experience."

servant, Hali wants to reveal to Isidore that Adraste has a plan to see her. The song that is performed is a chanson d'amour about a lover thwarted by a jealous keeper. It has a nonsense lingua franca refrain for Don Pedro's benefit. Wood has translated the song thus:

(To Isidore) By ardour driven, where'er she be,  
A lover seeks his dear one  
But her - he may not see  
For jealousy  
Has her in keeping  
With watch unsleeping--  
What fate more cruel ever  
Could befall a lover?

(To Don Pedro) Chiribirida ouch alla  
Me poor Turkish wallah  
You employ me today  
Me workee - you pay  
Me make good cuisine - a  
Rise early matina  
Me good cook and clean - a  
Parlara - please say  
If you buy me - today?

(To Isidore) Pity his fate, forlorn estate  
Thus parted from his dear one  
Let her vouchsafe  
Him cause for hope;  
Let her bright eyes  
Transform his sighs;  
He'll show love mocks  
At bars and locks.

(To Don Pedro) Chiribirida etc.

(pp. 86-87)

Suspecting a scheme and not liking the tone of this song, Don Pedro sings a response:

Learn now my smart fellows  
What means this your song  
It means that I'll beat you  
Back where you belong!

Chiribirida ouch alla!  
Right well you'll be paid  
By my bastonnade

Right well you'll be paid  
By my bastonnade!

(Wood, p. 87)

Don Pedro ends the music by driving Hali and the singers and dancers away, but the impetuous Hali returns and in his rashness reveals his master's intent to marry Isidore in spite of her guardian's restraints.

For all of Hali's trickery, it is Adraste himself, a French gentleman, gallant and clever, who discovers the means of reaching Isidore by gaining entry into Don Pedro's house. He replaces his artist friend, Damon, who has been commissioned to paint Isidore. Adraste arrives, and the impersonation completely fools Don Pedro, who summons Isidore for her sitting. Adraste greets Isidore with a kiss which he tells Don Pedro is the customary greeting in France when the Sicilian objects to this familiarity. The lover gaining access to his loved-one by offering to paint her portrait is a typical situation adopted from Renaissance theatre; the audacity of the young lovers conversing in the very presence of the tyrant has a parallel in Love's the Best Doctor. Isidore is bright enough to recognize the deception, but she is a sensible girl who does not want mere flattery. Compliments are exchanged between Adraste and Isidore which Don Pedro tries to interrupt. Then Hali enters in his second disguise of the day, as a Spaniard, Don Gilles d'Avalos. He detains Don Pedro in conversation on a point of honor so that the jaloux cannot see Adraste and Isidore. (Ironically, the point of honor concerns a slap in the face; and these two characters, Don Pedro and Hali, have exchanged slaps earlier in the play.) Meanwhile, Adraste goes to his knees to confess his love, and Isidore gives her promise (Figure 75). Don Pedro, extricating himself from "Don Gilles d'Avalos," is suspicious of the





Figure 75. The Sicilian (Brissart)

ADRASTE on his knees to  
Isidore while Don Pedro  
speaks to Hali.

The Sicilian; or,  
Love Makes a Painter

Scene 12

situation, as he was of the serenade and of Hali's song, a dupe aware of possible machinations around him but unable to stop them. Adraste concludes the sitting for the day without allowing Don Pedro to see the painting, and retires to prepare the scheme to rescue Isidore. As amusing as this scene is in Don Pedro's parlor, it is unfortunate that it is completely non-musical. There is a considerable musical gap between the song of Scene 8 and the masquerade of Scene 20, creating an imbalance in the comedy-ballet as a whole. The trickery involved in the disguised-painter scene, that Molière was apparently unable to translate into musical terms, was to be better handled in the later The Imaginary Invalid in which the disguised lover is a music teacher.

The final plot of the schemers against the fool is to get Isidore out of Don Pedro's house. While Don Pedro is still muttering about the painter's visit, a veiled woman, Climène (not to be confused with the shepherdess referred to in the pastoral playlet), comes to his door.<sup>86</sup> She pleads with Don Pedro to protect her from her jealous husband, played by the disguised Adraste, who is pursuing her. Don Pedro persuades the "husband" to be reconciled with his "wife," and a veiled woman comes out of the house to join him. While Don Pedro ironically argues against the husband's jealousy, Climène has changed places with Isidore, and the veiled woman who appears is Adraste's loved-one. Isidore and Adraste

<sup>86</sup>This character, according to the livret, was a slave, Zaïde, when the comedy-ballet was first performed at court, but she was changed to Climène, Adraste's sister, when the play was published. In the text, however, Adraste refers to her as a "young slave" in Scene 9. Since there is no reference to a brother-sister relationship, Climène should probably be considered a young slave girl. "The use of the veil would naturally be suggested by the Oriental atmosphere of the play." Lancaster, p. 708.

depart together while the fooled Don Pedro rejoices over having solved a domestic rift, as Sganarelle in Love's the Best Doctor exulted over the notion that he had brought about his daughter's cure. Glimène, who turns out to be a saucy soubrette, informs Don Pedro of the switch, tells him that a jealous man is universally hated, and reiterates the lyrics of Hali's song--that all the locks and bars in the world cannot keep lovers apart.

Don Pedro recognizes nothing but the "mortal insult." He goes to a magistrate to initiate proceedings for a lawsuit in this matter, but the "Senator" is interested only in the masquerade (mascarade) of dancers in Moorish costume that he has prepared and that is going to be rehearsed now for a subsequent public performance.<sup>87</sup> The Senator not only provides an excuse for a musical finale to the play. He also shows an amusing disregard for his duties that heaps a final frustration on Don Pedro. There is no redress for the Sicilian. He cannot rely on the authorities any more than the Sganarelles could rely on the experts. Like the Sganarelles of The Forced Marriage and Love's the Best Doctor, Don Pedro is unspared, is left with the consequences of his foolishness, and is swept away in the gaiety of music and dance.

<sup>87</sup> According to the livret, there were three groups of maskers: Moorish Ladies and Gentlemen of quality (the King and his following), Nude Moors (possibly representing slaves and/or characters whose skin would be exotic to the French), and Moors with Hooded Capes (perhaps the Arab burnoose).

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FULL-LENGTH COMEDY-BALLETS

The second group of Molière's comedy-ballets was written and produced during the last half of the playwright-performer's Paris career, the last five years of his life, 1668-1673. They are full-length plays which reflect Molière's increasing ability to develop and sustain complex comic situations and to manage musical agréments with maturity and sophistication. By 1668, Molière was famous for his comedy-ballets, entertainments dictated by the tastes of the court and written to amuse the King, but, with one exception, all were modified and transferred successfully to the Palais-Royal. One was even premièred on the public stage, although it had been designed for the court. For two of these later comedy-ballets, Molière seems to have written more out of duty than inspiration, but for the other three he obviously accepted the challenge of the form and achieved near-mastery of it. The five full-length comedy-ballets are George Dandin, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, The Magnificent Lovers, The Would-be Gentleman, and The Imaginary Invalid.

#### GEORGE DANDIN

By 1668, the comedies mixed with songs and dances that Molière devised for the King were the leading form of theatrical entertainment at court. When Louis ordered a state celebration in honor of the end of the War of Devolution, the call went out to Molière for a comedy-ballet.

Molière's production, George Dandin or The Outwitted Husband<sup>1</sup> (George Dandin ou Le Mari confondu), was the only theatrical entertainment given during the July fete, known as Le Grand Divertissement royal de Versailles.<sup>2</sup>

According to Prunières,

It is impossible to consider George Dandin a comedy-ballet. Clearly, Molière had a piece all ready when he received orders from the King and Lully, who had himself prepared a great musical pastoral. They tried their best to join one with the other, but without success. 3

Even Félibien, who wrote the official account of the fete, noted the lack of unity while attempting to be complimentary:

Though the piece represented must be regarded as an impromptu, and one of these works, in which the necessity to satisfy the orders of the King on the spot, leaves not always time completely to finish and to polish it, it is nevertheless certain that it is composed of parts so diversified and

<sup>1</sup>The title translation is from Waller where the play appears in VI, 1-87. Other English translations of George Dandin ou Le Mari confondu: (1) Baker and Miller, II, 179-214, as George Dandin or The Husband Defeated, (2) Ozell, Book II, Vol. IV, 67-103, as George Dandin: or, the Wanton Wife, (3) Van Laun, IV, 235-273, as George Dandin; or, the Abashed Husband, (4) Stark Young in Theatre Arts, VIII (1924), 605-621, as George Dandin; or, The Discomfited Husband. The Baker and Miller and Van Laun versions are based on the 1734 French edition in which the play is divided into a larger number of scenes than the original text. None of these translations include the musical scenes as a part of the text. The English word "abashed"--as confounded or confused--is an acceptably literal translation of "confondu." However, "outwitted" is perhaps more in keeping with the play--as tricked, baffled or confused mentally, and foiled by superior cunning. "Discomfited" gives the meaning of defeat, frustration, confusion, but the notion of "defeat" is a bit heavy for the farcical nature of the play. The "Wanton Wife" is an interpretive rather than an exact translation of the play's subtitle.

<sup>2</sup>For discussions of this fete see Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière and Chapter VIII: Theatres and Scenery.

<sup>3</sup>Henry Prunières, ed., Oeuvres complètes de J.-B. Lully, Les Comédies-Ballets (Paris, 1933), II, xiii.

pleasant, that we may safely say that none have appeared on the stage so well calculated to please the eyes and ears of the spectators at the same time. The language for the action it represents, and the verses which are sung between the acts of the comedy, accord so well with the subject, and express so tenderly the passions with which they who recite them must be moved, that there never has been heard anything more stirring. Though it appears that there are two comedies, which are being played at the same time, one of which is in prose and the other verse, they are however so well adapted to the same subject, that they make but one piece, and represent but one action.

(Van Laun, 226)<sup>4</sup>

The "same subject" he describes is as general as the "battle of the sexes," and the production at Versailles could not have been much more than a comedy and a pastoral juxtaposed.

George Dandin might be discussed as a would-be comedy-ballet in the Chapter: Related Works, but, unlike pieces in that chapter, (1) both play and interludes are extant (except for three short dialogues, similar to the missing Scene 4 in Act II of The Forced Marriage) and (2) both play and interludes were new and not an adaptation of some former work. Also, there was some effort made to unify the play and the interludes in the manner of a comedy-ballet for the court production in July at Versailles and in November at Saint-Germain-en-Laye.<sup>5</sup> When George Dandin was transferred to Paris on November 9, 1668, however, the "musical trimmings"<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Robert Ballard published Félibien's Relation of the fete along with the livret (introduction to the fete, the text of the interludes, and act synopses) as Le Grand Divertissement royal de Versailles (Guibert, II, 503-505). They appear in D-M, VI, 599-640. Van Laun has included a translation of both in his edition of Molière's plays.

<sup>5</sup>When George Dandin was performed at Saint-Germain for the feast of St. Hubert, it was, according to Robinet (Moland, IX, 11), played with music and ballet the same as at Versailles.

<sup>6</sup>D. B. Wyndham Lewis, Molière: the Comic Mask (New York, 1959), p. 111.

were dropped. But, as with the short comedy-ballets, this practice was not uncommon. George Dandin became a long one-act nearly always performed with another piece at the Palais-Royal.<sup>7</sup> And when the text was published no musical scenes were included.<sup>8</sup>

By this mid-point in his Paris career, Molière was writing longer, more complex plays. George Dandin is written in three prose acts. It is longer than any of the early comedy-ballets, but not so long as the major full-length non-musical plays--for example, The Misanthrope (1666), Amphitryon (1668), and the lengthened version of Tartuffe (1667-1669). With the musical agréments, however, it would have been at least comparable to a full-length play. Lancaster takes from Eugène Rigal's Molière (1908) the idea that George Dandin ". . . is constructed in accordance with an idea of comic repetition, the second act repeating the first; the third, the second; while each time the protagonist sinks deeper than before into the morass."<sup>9</sup> He continues: "The effect of repetition is increased by the frequent use of short monologues in which Dandin comments upon his misfortunes," and he concludes that George Dandin is "an excellently constructed play, not only technically unified, but with a structure that

<sup>7</sup>Molière kept the play consistently in his repertory. La Grange refers to it in the Registre a number of different ways--by its subtitle at first and then, presumably as the play became more widely known, by "George Dandin."

<sup>8</sup>The play was published as a "comédie," George Dandin ou le mary confondu by Jean Ribou. The privilege was granted on September 30, 1668 (Guibert, I, 284-285), and, although the exact publication date is unknown, the play, as was the usual practice, probably appeared about two weeks later.

<sup>9</sup>Henry Carrington Lancaster, A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century (Baltimore, 1929-1942), Part III, II, 710-711.

adds to the comic effect, while the interest steadily increases."<sup>10</sup> In each act of the comedy, Dandin learns a secret about his wife's transgressions from the simple-minded Lubin, and Dandin three times suffers comic defeat and humiliation. In the following discussion of George Dandin, the play will be considered as it was presented originally at Versailles, with the interludes restored to the text. Since, in the comedy, the pursuit of Dandin is unrelenting, the pastoral, which framed and evolved between the acts of the comedy, must have eased the tension of these persistent attacks.

#### George Dandin - Structural Outline

Instrumental Overture  
 Act I, Scene 1 (introductory monologue)  
 Musical Prologue (Act I of the Pastoral)  
     "Air for Shepherds"  
     "Chansonnette"  
     "Dialogue"  
 Act I, Scenes 2-7  
 Dandin and Shepherdess dialogue  
 First Interlude (Act II of the Pastoral)  
     "Lament in Music"  
 Act II, Scenes 1-8  
 Dandin and Shepherdess dialogue  
 Second Interlude (Act III of the Pastoral)  
     Entry of Boatmen  
 Act III, Scenes 1-8  
 Dandin and Friend dialogue  
 Musical Finale (Act IV of the Pastoral)  
     "Combat of L'Amour and Bacchus"

Because the musical portions of George Dandin appear separately in publication rather than as an integral part of the text of the comedy, some confusion exists concerning the opening sequence. The directions in the livret read:

The overture is performed by four illustrious

<sup>10</sup>Lancaster, Part III, II, 711.



shepherds disguised as servants of the fete, who, accompanied by four other shepherds playing the flute, dance and interrupt the reveries of the married peasant, and force him to retire after some constraint. <sup>11</sup>

It would seem, therefore, that, while the production may have begun with the instrumental overture, Act I, Scene 1 must have preceded the opening songs and dances (Act I of the Pastoral). The action of George Dandin carries even further the multiple masking of The Bores in which dancers in the prologue portray wood nymphs who pretend to be bores. As in the opening of The Bores, a single character is interrupted by balletic spectacle, and, again, the pastoral world is established as the basic reality from which the illusion, or play-within-a-play, evolves. But in George Dandin, dancers become shepherds who then appear as fete attendants ("Air for Shepherds"). These disguised shepherds, in turn, attract shepherdesses, Climène and Cloris, who sing of love and how one can be burned by it ("Chansonnette"). The two lovers of Climène and Cloris, the shepherds Tircis and Philène, then enter and approach the shepherdesses "to tell them of their passion." The following four-part dialogue between the two couples is a musical scene in which the shepherdesses tell the shepherds to go away; the shepherds illustrate the message of the "chansonnette" by telling of their hearts which burn but are denied; each shepherdess tells the other to be sensitive toward this love; but, nevertheless, the shepherdesses leave the shepherds who, as a result, resolve to die. The stage direction (D-M, VI, 605) indicates a droll

<sup>11</sup>The shepherds were probably referred to as "illustrious" because of the famous dancers who performed the roles--Beauchamps, Saint-André, La Pierre, and Favier. Dandin was probably constrained in order to dance with them like Sganarelle in the finale of Love's the Best Doctor, compelled to dance with the maskers.

attitude toward this standard pastoral situation: "These two shepherds go in despair, following the custom of ancient lovers, who fall into despair over a mere trifle." The above arrangement for the opening of George Dandin--that is, with the monologue preceding the musical prologue --is further justified by the first act Argument in the Copie Philidor of the play's musical score: "The married peasant, wishing to return home, finds an unknown man, who tells him that his wife listens favorably to the propositions of a young gentleman who is in love with her."<sup>12</sup> This first part of the Argument describes the action of Act I beginning with Scene 2 after the monologue.

Boccaccio's Decameron (1353) is generally credited as the literary source upon which Molière drew for George Dandin, although an Indian based tale of the Middle Ages, Le Roman de Dolpathos, links the play with an adventure of "Sinbad the Sailor," who, in the Arabian Nights, marries a lady of rank.<sup>13</sup> In the Decameron's Fourth Story of the Seventh Day:

Tofano one night shutteth his wife out of doors,  
who, availing not to re-enter by dint of entreaties,  
feigneth to cast herself into a well and casteth  
therein a great stone. Tofano cometh forth of the  
house and runneth thither, whereupon she slippeth  
in and locking him out, bawleth reproaches at him  
from the window. 14

When Tofano (Eighth Story of the Seventh Day) protests to his wife's family about her wantonness, the lady retorts that Tofano drinks and does not know what he is doing: "Confound him for a sorry drunken beast, that

<sup>12</sup>Quoted in D-M, VI, 605. On Philidor see Chapter VII: Music.

<sup>13</sup>On sources see D-M, VI, 481-494.

<sup>14</sup>John Payne, trans., The Decameron of Giovanni Boccaccio (New York, 1931), p. 523.

hath no shame!" (p. 554) This is "le mari confondu." Angélique denounces George Dandin to her parents as a drunken brute who has maltreated her. After all his troubles, the bewildered George Dandin might well ask, "Am I drunk?" as he joins the Followers of Bacchus.

While touring in the provinces, Molière may have encountered a real-life model for George Dandin. According to an anecdote from Grimarest, Molière avoided the wrath of a man who might have seen himself in George Dandin by offering to read the play especially for him. The fool was so flattered, he became one of the play's greatest supporters.<sup>15</sup>

Some of Molière's own earlier works provided material for George Dandin. Van Laun notes from Aimé-Martin that

the resemblance between George Dandin and The School for Wives has struck all commentators of Molière. Dandin is always told of the faithlessness of his wife, just as Arnolphe is about the stratagems of Agnès. Neither of them, however, succeeds in surprising the guilty.

(p. 238)

George Dandin is thought to be based most directly on an early canevas or curtain-raiser Molière devised probably from Italian scenarios while his troupe was still performing in the provinces. The manuscript of this sketch, The Jealousy of Barbouillé,<sup>16</sup> was not discovered until the eighteenth century, but it is considered Molière's first extant play

<sup>15</sup>Jean Grimarest, La Vie de M. de Molière, 1705 (Paris, 1930), pp. 60-61.

<sup>16</sup>The title is translated by H. C. Chatfield-Taylor in Molière, a Biography (New York, 1928) as The Jealousy of Smutty Face, but by Albert Bermel in his One-Act Comedies of Molière merely as The Jealous Husband. Brander Matthews in Molière, His Life and His Works (New York, 1910), describes (p. 59) the leading character as "the man whose face is smeared with flour." Barbouillé means "dirty face."

regardless of when it may have been put into written form. Some of the elements directly related to George Dandin are (1) the opening monologue in which Barbouillé claims to be the most unfortunate husband in the world, (2) the meeting between Barbouillé and the Scholar with the latter's concentration on names and formalities that anticipates Dandin's encounter with his wife's parents, the Sotenvilles, (3) Barbouillé's concern about becoming a cuckold and the tricks played on the jaloux by the young lover, (4) the blows taken by the husband that were supposedly meant for the gallant, (5) the saucy maid, and (6) the entire final incident of the play in which the wife (also an Angélique), who is caught outside the house, tricks her husband into opening the door by threatening suicide, only then to rush in the house, lock him out, and decry his drunkenness to her father.

It is from an analysis of The Jealousy of Barbouillé that a key to George Dandin can be discovered. Although Dandin is much less coarse than the Barbouillé, and the situation of domestic turmoil with the victimized husband is more well-developed in the longer play, the farcical incidents are as broadly drawn as in the original. The significant difference is the idea of class distinction in George Dandin. This social aspect and its implications qualifies George Dandin, as a "comedy of substance," to use Guicharnaud's term, but it has also made George Dandin a "problem play." As Lancaster points out, "Dandin has been considered a pathetic figure, symbolic of the proletariat martyred by the wicked aristocracy."<sup>17</sup> Interpretations such as the following have been frequent: "Vice is made to triumph in the person of his wife, in order that Molière

<sup>17</sup>Lancaster, Part III, II, 711.

may point the moral that a man who marries above his station is a fool worthy only of contempt. . . ."18 Critics such as Brander Matthews take a more theatrical view:

George Dandin is not wicked; he is only selfish and foolish; but he is punished for his selfish folly as if he had been wicked.

This is what the spectator feels if he takes the play seriously, or if the piece is acted seriously, so as to give the spectator time to think. We may be sure, however, that Molière did not mean the play to be acted seriously. He composed it to be a component part of a comedy-ballet on a joyous occasion when the king had returned triumphant from war and wanted his courtiers to rejoice with him. All the contemporary reports unite in recording the incessant laughter which the comedy evoked from its royal audience. No one of those who beheld it, when Molière was himself impersonating George Dandin, seems to have had a suspicion that the play was other than a farce; and this is evidence that the author-actor must have conducted the performance in a mood of tumultuous fun, sweeping everything along in a whirlwind of gaiety, pushing character to the edge of caricature and carrying comedy beyond the border of farce. 19

W. G. Moore sees "comedy of substance" in the implications that can be perceived beneath Dandin's hilarious plight:

The whole situation is farcical, because he is such a silly man. But the intellectual point of his dilemma is quite independent of this. Even a silly man may suggest the difference between the world of the mind and the world of fact. And in comedy, as in other forms of poetry, suggestion is enough. 20

He goes on:

. . . there is the continuing suggestion, no more, that it is possible to be right and wrong about things at the same time. It is a suggestion of a philosophical nature, concerning the difference between essence and

<sup>18</sup>Chatfield-Taylor, p. 336.

<sup>19</sup>Matthews, pp. 240-241.

<sup>20</sup>W. G. Moore, Molière a New Criticism (New York, 1962), p. 121.

accident. Dandin is essentially in the right, but he is in all actual cases made to appear in the wrong. 21

Perhaps most in keeping with a theatrical approach to the play and with the philosophical notion that comic poets create "livingness"<sup>22</sup> and do not write about moral issues at all is Ramon Fernandez, a Molière biographer, who says:

We are here at a great remove from the identification of truth with clear conscience and of depravity with error. The meaning of George Dandin is that if what is comic is to be based on unquestioned truth and error, it must relinquish equating these with moral values. What is left is a simple matter of accepting what is-- of making terms with it how one will, or how one can. 23

The action of the comedy begins as George Dandin approaches the front door of his house and catches someone coming out of it. In a series of separate asides from the two characters, George Dandin reacts with suspicion, while the guilty stranger indicates that he knows he has been seen, even though he is unaware that it is the master of the house who has spotted him. The stranger is Lubin, a lively but not very bright servant, who tells Dandin exactly what should be kept from the jealous husband: that a certain gentleman named Clitandre, a young courtier and neighbor of George Dandin, has sent a message to the mistress of the house disclosing his secret love for her. Lubin adds that the maid Claudine, to whom he is attracted, gave him entrance to the mistress, and, as though he could not tell enough, reveals that the only concern of Angélique,

<sup>21</sup>Moore, p. 123.

<sup>22</sup>See Susanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form (New York, 1953), the chapter entitled "The Comic Rhythm," pp. 326-350.

<sup>23</sup>Ramon Fernandez, Molière, the Man Seen Through the Plays (New York, 1958), p. 170.

Dandin's wife, was about keeping the incident from her husband. Lubin goes away, the trickster tricked by mistaken identity, not knowing what he has divulged.

This turn of events might well set a man talking to himself, which George Dandin does about the regrettable consequences of wishing to marry a fine lady: "All sorts of tricks are played on you, and you can't revenge yourself because rank ties your hands." Dandin's mistake was in making a business arrangement for a marriage that brought him a wife he cannot control and social conventions he cannot master.<sup>24</sup> The play, however, is not a treatise on social injustice. Only in a farce could the victim react to his misfortune by threatening to "box my own ears." He decides instead, however, to complain to his wife's parents, Monsieur and Madame de Sotenville.<sup>25</sup> The Sotenvilles are impoverished provincial nobles. Their

<sup>24</sup>Van Laun discusses (p. 233) the etymology of the protagonist's name: "Dandin is, according to Nicot, Trésor de la langue française, published in 1606, used to designate a man who foolishly and open-mouthed stares about, ineptus and insipidus. Rabelais uses this word in the twenty-fifth chapter of the first book of Gargantua, which Sir Thomas Urquhart translates 'ninny lobcock.' He employs Dandin also as the proper name of a judge and his son, because it is supposed that this judge used to dangle his legs about, just as the sound of the bells seemed to go, din, dan, din (Pantagruel, 3, 41). Racine calls his judge in the Plaideurs, Pierre Dandin, so does La Fontaine in his fable of L'Huître et les plaideurs. In old French, dandean was said of a wilful cuckold. Etienne Pasquier (1529-1615) connects it with dindan, the noise produced by ringing the bells; and Hensleigh Wedgwood, in his Dictionary of English Etymology, states that the French words dodiner, to rock, to shake; dandiner, to sway the body to and fro; dodeliner, to rock or jog up and down, to dandle; dondeliner, to wag the head; and the Italian dondolare to dandle a child, to loiter; and dondola, a toy, a child's playing baby, are all more or less connected with the English words 'dandle' and 'dandy.'"

<sup>25</sup>D. B. Wyndham Lewis deduces (p. 111) from their title that the Sotenvilles might be Norman because there is a village near Dieppe called Sotteville, and another on the nearby coast called Sotteville-sur-Mer. (See Figure 21 - Map of France) Van Laun, on the other hand, cites (pp. 240-241) a custom in the province of Champagne that would allow nobility

stature rests on family heritage and medieval attitudes of honor and tradition, but their livelihood depends on associations, contemptible though they may be, with wealthy peasants. They would have been only slightly less ridiculous to a seventeenth-century Parisian audience than George Dandin. Félibien's account of George Dandin explains:

The whole of this piece is treated in the same style in which the sieur de Molière is accustomed to construct his other stage plays; which means, that he portrays in the most natural colours the characters of the personages whom he introduces; so much so, that nothing has ever been seen more closely resembling the vexations in which people often find themselves who marry above their station, than what he has written; and when he depicts the humour and manners of certain provincial nobles, he forms no traits but what perfectly convey their true portraits.

(Van Laun, 228)

Meeting the Sotenvilles, Dandin launches immediately into his grievances, but, almost like Sganarelle with the philosophers in The Forced Marriage, he is interrupted and his demands to be heard are put aside in favor of protocol and details of semantics. Madame de Sotenville is concerned with Dandin's behavior in the company of people of quality and insists that he bow properly and that he address her as "Madame" and not with the colloquial "mother-in-law." Dandin's logic never affects the Sotenvilles: he points out that she calls him "son-in-law," but she cites rank as the differentiating factor. For a moment Monsieur de

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to pass to Dandin's children through Angélique. Whether Normandy or Champagne, the north of France was where Louis XIV did battle. It would not have been unseemly to ridicule its pretentious inhabitants. And, in any case, Sotenville is a play on words "sot-en-ville" or "fool in town."



Sotenville seems to be more reasonable as he suggests dropping the matter of titles; but then he immediately displays his own rigidity, corrects Dandin for calling him "Monsieur de Sotenville" instead of merely "Monsieur," and says that Dandin must not call his wife Angélique "wife" as though they were equals. The Sotenvilles do not even approve of Dandin's simple name, and they want it lengthened to a more graceful "Monsieur de la Dandinière." At this moment Dandin is mostly concerned with another name, the label "cuckold." Madame de Sotenville, née de la Prudoterie, is outraged that her daughter whose lineage is "steeped in virtue" (Waller, 17), could be accused of any sort of transgression. When Dandin presents his suspicions to the Sotenvilles, however, they seem to be sensible and promise him satisfaction. This agreement is only a false hope for Dandin that makes his imminent defeat more amusing.

Clitandre approaches. Monsieur de Sotenville detains the mildly contemptuous young noble first with a quick summary of important names and events in his own background in order to impress the young man with his distinction. He then asks Clitandre directly about his alleged love for Angélique. The charge is denied completely and the accuser (Dandin) called a liar and a fool, a rascal and a villain. Clitandre announces, in what is clearly an empty threat, that it is only because Dandin is attached to the noble Sotenville that he will escape being taught a lesson for such an outrage. Clitandre is a clever and self-interested, somewhat worthless, young lover who is always ready for an adventure as long as he is never in any real jeopardy. Madame de Sotenville has summoned Angélique. Angélique, a spirited deceiver but hardly angelic, feigns offense at this confrontation with her would-be lover and tells Clitandre just to try to make love to her and "I promise you that you

shall be received as you should be." This reaction insures that her parents are convinced of her innocence, that ironically Clitandre is informed of her willingness, and that Dandin's complaints are thoroughly discounted. Gossman notes:

It is not surprising that Angélique is a hypocrite. She sees that the world she lives in is a world of lies and fraud and that to defend oneself in such a world one must adopt its weapons and use them cleverly. . . . Like Molière's other hypocrites, Angélique is presented without pathos, neither from the point of view of romantic sympathy with the rebel, nor from the point of view of outraged morality. 26

Claudine, who accompanies Angélique and is one of Molière's most impudent maids, also claims innocence of any duplicity, when Dandin knows that it was she who made the intrigue possible. Everyone has taken sides against Dandin. Monsieur de Sotenville forces the beleaguered husband to apologize to Clitandre, hat in hand, because "this gentleman is a nobleman, and you are not." As Fernandez says:

Every scene is a demonstration of some truism, as the invulnerability of the noble in his relation to the bourgeois, or the emptiness of the code of honor; but at the same time the caricature of the personae and of the principal motif deflects into laughter whatever emotions the subject matter might give rise to. 27

Dandin is left alone, and remarks to himself, "you got what you deserve." But he is not without hope: "Come, it's only a matter of undeceiving the father and mother, and perhaps I may be able to find some means of succeeding."

Dandin has little time to reflect on these means or the shameful

<sup>26</sup>Lionel Gossman, Men and Masks: a Study of Molière (Baltimore, 1963), pp. 156-157.

<sup>27</sup>P. 170.

treatment he has received because he is interrupted by a shepherdess, "who comes to tell him of the despair of the two shepherds." But he "leaves her in anger."<sup>28</sup> Apparently, Dandin is a rural landholder. He probably has crops and stock, with many peasants to tend them for him. It would not be unusual for him to encounter shepherds. But making a realistic connection between Dandin and the rustic characters of the interludes is unnecessary. Dandin's impatient response to the shepherdess points up the essential flaw in his character. He is insensitive to love, and rejects the tender feelings associated with it. He understands only dominion and subjection, and is, therefore, doomed to a marriage of turmoil. Following Dandin's gruff exit, Cloris, one of the shepherdesses from the musical prologue (Act I of the Pastoral) appears, by contrast, in a delicately melancholy mood. She thinks the suicide threatened earlier by her lover has taken place, and sings a lament over having caused his death with her coldness (Act II of the Pastoral).

A more robust love interest is shown at the beginning of Act II of the comedy through the persons of Claudine and Lubin--the first of the servant couples in the comedy-ballets. (Other couples are Sbrigani and Nérine in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, Nicole and Covielle in The Would-be

<sup>28</sup>Livret, D-M, VI, 605. Prunières in "Les Comedies-Ballets," II, suggests (p. xiv) that this shepherdess and the friend Dandin later encounters were probably members of Molière's acting troupe. That musical performers would not be required to play these dialogue scenes seems reasonable; however, the performers were probably not Mlle De Brie and La Grange as Prunières conjectures. He supports his supposition by noting that Mlle De Brie and La Grange played a shepherdess and a shepherd in the Comic Pastoral. But both performers probably had substantial roles in the comic scenes of George Dandin (Mlle De Brie as Claudine and La Grange as Clitandre). And these short dialogue scenes were more likely played by other members of the company who presumably did not figure in the comedy (Mlle Béjart or Mlle Hervé and either Béjart or De Brie).

Gentleman, and Toinette and Polichinelle in The Imaginary Invalid.) A secondary love interest between the servants paralleling that of the young lovers is a characteristic development in the full-length comedy-ballets, an idea that was only touched on in the musical interludes of The Princess of Elis with Moron and Philis. In contrast with the coy and discreet scenes between the young lovers, the servant scenes, like this of Claudine and Lubin, are typically earthy in language and physical action. Name-calling and brawling are standard. Claudine will not let Lubin be too free with her and, like Dorimène, Isidore, or her mistress Angélique, warns him that she dislikes a suspicious man.

Claudine goes to deliver the letter to her mistress brought by Lubin from "Monsieur le Vicomte," but she must stand aside because just then Angélique appears with Dandin. Clitandre enters separately and is unseen by Dandin. A scène de gestes is played by Angélique and Clitandre in the presence of Dandin. While Dandin is upbraiding his wife for her conduct, the other two greet each other, Angélique giving Clitandre a deep curtsy which Dandin mistakenly thinks is meant for him as wifely respect. The greeting is exchanged again. Dandin still mistakes her responses as meant for him which, if only he could realize, she actually denies. Apparently Clitandre mimes the question "When can we meet?" She shrugs her shoulders in reply. Dandin, thinking she is dismissing his comments on marriage, says: "You need not shrug your shoulders, I am not talking nonsense." Contact between would-be lovers in the presence of the fool, a device that was used in Love's the Best Doctor and The Sicilian, is at its boldest and most farcical here. The lover even speaks out before he departs. Dandin thinks he heard something and then finally sees Clitandre as he leaves, but it is too late. The irony is

clear: even while Dandin is reproving his wife for being unfaithful to her marriage, she is making contact with another man. Dandin is worked into such a rage by his wife's contradictions and calm obstinacy that he must leave, for it is all he can do to keep from beating her.

Like Dorimène of The Forced Marriage, Angélique has been the object of a bargain between parents who wanted an affluent son-in-law and a husband who had not the good sense or foresight to see the problems of such a misalliance, nor, it must be added, the concern for her wishes which alone would have prevented the match. Dandin might be a younger Sganarelle after the marriage has taken place, as Angélique might be the kind of wife Dorimène would have become. Perhaps the disenchanted Dandin has lost the affection Sganarelle showed for Dorimène. Dorimène asserted that at last she would be able to enjoy the world; Angélique promises that she will not give up life just because she is married. Dandin, like Sganarelle, must take the consequences of his foolishness. It is the exasperation, the explosiveness of Dandin that is important. The cruelty is never deeper than a surface prick. Dandin is really indestructible.

Claudine, who was in hiding, perhaps observing the action and applauding the treatment of Dandin, sees him go and bounds out to deliver the flattering note to Angélique. Since it is difficult to make contact with an admirer, Angélique must use the silent words of gesture and letters. She goes off to write an answer. Claudine caps the scene by addressing the audience: "I have no need, I think, to advise her to make it agreeable."

Although Clitandre's intentions are well-known to everyone, he first actually admits involvement with Angélique when he arrives with Lubin to reward Claudine for her service. There is a brief, teasing exchange

between Claudine and Lubin, and then Claudine answers Clitandre's inquiries about Angélique by saying that she will arrange a meeting immediately. She and the gallant exit into the house, and Lubin is left alone to comment: "Goodness me! what a clever wife I shall have! She has brains enough for a whole family." (Waller, 47) He then sees George Dandin approach. Still not knowing who this person was he encountered earlier, Lubin rebukes Dandin for being the one who let the information out to the jealous husband. He tells Dandin he will not trust him with another word and then, without realizing what he is doing, proceeds to reveal all the details about the meeting just arranged. Lubin's continued denseness helps to keep the complications mounting; it also provides the background which makes the pride he later displays in his learning (Act III, Scene 1) more amusing. It is lucky for him that Claudine has brains enough for a whole family.

At first George Dandin is unsure of how to use the incriminating information he has just received. In a monologue fraught with action, he weighs the possibilities, stops to peep through the keyhole of his own front door and, seeing Clitandre inside, is confident he has the solution. He says: "Fate gives me a chance to confound my adversary." The situation is perfect as he sees the Sotenvilles approaching. Dandin anxiously greets them with the news of this new effrontery. To Monsieur and Madame Sotenville he is merely a bore, a monomaniac who dwells constantly on the same subject. Again, however, since Dandin is certain that he has been cuckolded, they promise to investigate and take his part against their daughter if she is guilty. While arrangements are being made between Dandin and the Sotenvilles for the exposé, Clitandre comes out of the door, saying farewell to Angélique and making plans for an evening

meeting. Claudine sees the spies who have obviously caught Clitandre leaving the house and cries out in alarm. Angélique, the arch-pretender, immediately assumes the attitude for the benefit of the uninvited audience that Clitandre's attentions were rash and offensive and she will defend herself against him. She takes a stick from Claudine (perhaps the fashionable Clitandre's walking stick or even a cane of Dandin's) and threatens her lover. Dandin rushes between them and, to the urging of Claudine, he gets the coups de bâton instead of Clitandre who escapes in the confusion. Impressed with their daughter's prudence and courage, the Sotenvilles determine instantly that she is innocent and think, therefore, that Dandin, instead of suspecting improper behavior, ought to worship her for her actions. Before they sweep grandly away, they order Dandin to go and apologize to her, thus humiliating him for a second time. Dandin is left alone pleading in highly ridiculous terms to be seen as a dishonored man.

Dandin's pleas are interrupted by the shepherdess who came to him earlier for consolation. Although no dialogue is extant for this encounter, the description in the livret indicates that she tells Dandin that Tircis and Philène, the pastoral lovers, are not dead; they have been saved from a watery death by Boatmen, whom she brings forth. Dandin uninterested in anything but his own affairs, does not wait to see them. But they perform a dance with "boathooks" to show their pleasure for having been rewarded for the rescue. Boatmen were a standard, if secondary, type of pastoral character and, like shepherds, close to nature. This happy, natural, and uncomplicated expression of delight contrasts with the life of material possessions and urban (if not Parisian) complexity seen in the plight of George Dandin. It also follows time to pass serenely and

pleasantly before the next onslaught on the unfortunate husband.

Clitandre sets the scene for the opening of Act III of the comedy: "It is well into the night." A night scene, as in The Sicilian, provides great opportunities for mistakes and strange happenings. The first mistake occurs in a double couple mixup. Angélique and Claudine come out of the house to meet the waiting Clitandre and Lubin. In the bad light Clitandre mistakes Claudine for Angélique; she mistakes Lubin for Clitandre and they both switch partners until Angélique then recognizes Lubin (a lady could distinguish between classes, even in the dark). When the error is corrected, the two couples decide to go sit on the ground beneath a tree<sup>29</sup> for their secret rendezvous. In doing so, Lubin loses track of Claudine. The simple-minded Lubin mistakes Dandin, who has come out of the house at that moment, for Claudine, and reveals the whole situation concerning the assignation between Angélique and Clitandre. He then clasps Dandin's hand to kiss. When Dandin cuffs him soundly on the head, Lubin notices that the hand is uncommonly rough. Dandin bellows out; sudden realization strikes Lubin, and he flees. With this fresh evidence against his wife, Dandin resolves to send for the Sotenvilles again.

The third bit of nighttime buffoonery develops as Dandin calls for his valet Colin. The agile and daring Colin appears at the window and then answers his master's call by leaping out of it. A less fully developed character than Lubin, he is a fantastic servant type used merely for comic action. After landing in the street, Colin, who is half asleep, cannot see where he is, and goes to the opposite side of the square from

<sup>29</sup>According to the stage directions in the 1672 edition (D-M, VI, 570).



Dandin. The direction reads: "As they try to find each other, one goes to the one side and the other to the other." All the time they are groping, they are calling out to each other until finally "They run against each other." Dandin is lamed; Colin runs for his safety from the injured and raging beast lest he get the beating Dandin threatens. Then promising not to harm Colin, Dandin persuades the servant to come and take his orders to summon the Sotenvilles, regardless of the hour, concerning an affair of utmost importance. Angélique's absence from the house is incriminating evidence enough to prove she has been guilty of wrongdoing.

As Colin leaves, Dandin hears a noise and, thinking it may be his wife, hides in the dark in order to listen to her conversation. She is ending her meeting with Clitandre who is at this moment a fervent lover suffering from the thought of separation. Angélique consoles Clitandre by assuring him that she does not love her husband. In turn, Clitandre sympathizes with her over her ill-fortune in having such a husband. Before going inside the house, Dandin makes the incisive, if unheard, remark to Clitandre: "Would to heaven she were yours!" Claudine reminds Angélique that it is late, and the ladies say good-night to their lovers. They start to go in while Lubin still fumbles about in the dark looking for Claudine.

When Angélique and Claudine try to enter the house they find the door locked. Their calls for Colin bring Dandin to the window. The irate husband accuses Angélique of an "escapade" and informs her that her parents have been summoned to witness her unmasking. He gloats over his victory. Angélique pleads with him not to expose her, but to forgive her follies; she even promises never to displease him again but to be

henceforth a loving wife. Her speeches are very persuasive. Dandin, however, knows better: "Ah! you crocodile, you flatter people so that you may strangle them." The struggle is tremendous, but he manages to resist giving in to her. Even when Angélique threatens to kill herself he refuses to believe her. Only when she declares to have committed the suicidal act is he moved. Significantly in the comic spirit, his reaction is not one of grief but of self-concern: "Good gracious! can she have been malicious enough to kill herself to get me hanged?" (Van Laun, 269) He gets a candle and goes outside to see what has happened. Angélique and Claudine are waiting in the dark beside the door. Blustering out the door, Dandin does not see them. They enter the house behind him and shut the door. When he sees no one, he assumes they have merely gone away. He then notices the closed door. His calls bring Angélique and Claudine to the window. Their manner has changed. They are no longer submissive and penitent, but boldly accuse him of staying out drinking all night. Just then Colin with a lantern leads the Sotenvilles, dressed in nightclothes, to the front of the house. Angélique immediately seizes the opportunity to use the situation, which looks bad for Dandin to gain her parents' support.<sup>30</sup> The Sotenvilles are appalled. Dandin cannot even say a word in his own defense because of the bad wine breath Madame de Sotenville thinks she smells.<sup>31</sup> Angélique beseeches her parents

<sup>30</sup>Traditionally Dandin must have appeared in Act III only "partly dressed," as is indicated in the 1734 edition (D-M, VI, 570), and therefore in disarray.

<sup>31</sup>Bad breath is a stock comic device used against a dupe, either as a trick or, as it is here, as a figment of someone's imagination. Claudine, by suggesting that Dandin is drunk, has put this notion in Madame de Sotenville's mind. There is no evidence that Dandin has had a drop to drink.

to separate her from Dandin. She knows her parents would not stand for the scandal of a separation and the loss of their income, and when she consents to remain with Dandin, she seems a dutiful daughter. Instead of reprimanding her, they call her out, and force Dandin to kneel and apologize to her, for the third time. Monsieur even dictates the words for him to use (Figure 76). This apology completed, this ritual the Sotenvilles have accepted as routine performed once more, they leave calmly to return to bed.

There is no real *dénouement*, no solution to George Dandin. Like the shepherds Tircis and Philène, but from a comic rather than a pastoral standpoint, Dandin resolves to throw himself in the river. One of his friends, however, persuades him to drown his sorrows in wine instead of himself in the river and to join "in the manner of ancient shepherds" the celebration with song and dance in honor of Eros and Bacchus.

As Monsieur de Sotenville points out before departing with his wife, "It is nearly daylight." Daylight--dawn---is a familiar time setting of the pastoral. Undoubtedly one is to imagine the light beginning to show in the sky as the "Rondeau for Shepherds," the first musical statement of the finale, is played for the entrance of the shepherds. The Rondeau is followed by a tune for the shepherdess Cloris, who has played the leading role in these intermèdes rustiques. In the lyrics of the song she describes her surroundings--under the trees, on the grass, by the stream, and near the flowers. She calls the shepherds to take up their pipes and mix their music with the songs of the birds. Following her song is a dance by eight gallant shepherds and shepherdesses. Climène, the other shepherdess from the musical prologue, appears then and sings a quatrain that summarizes the major ideas of Molière's love poetry:



Figure 76. George Dandin (Brissart)

In the presence of Monsieur and  
Madame Sotenville, with Colin  
holding a lantern, GEORGE DANDIN  
(kneeling) says to his wife:

"Madame, I beg you to pardon me."

George Dandin or The  
Outwitted Husband

Act III, Scene 7

Ah! how sweet is it, charming Sylvia.  
 Ah! how sweet is it to be inflamed by love.  
 That time of life, which is not spent like this  
 Should be deducted from our days.

(Van Laun, 229)

The next quatrain is also to be sung by Climène according to the musical score; however, in the text it is given to Cloris as part of a four-part song between Climène, Cloris, Tircis, and Philène. As Tircis and Philène emerge from the crowd, the shepherdesses and shepherds of the prologue are reunited in the finale. They end the song by singing together that love is the greatest of gods.

This sentiment brings forth the Followers of Bacchus whose leader steps forward and musically stops the shepherds and shepherdesses in order to present a defense for his god. After the leader's recital, the Chorus of Satyrs sings that Bacchus is the greatest of gods while other Bacchants dance.

Cloris, in another quatrain, restates the case for love--that it is love which awakens the heart; a Follower of Bacchus answers that it is wine which chases worries from the soul. There is then a musical battle between the Chorus of Satyrs and the Chorus of Shepherds and by individuals from each group:

THE FOLLOWERS OF EROS: Ah! what pleasure it is  
 to love!

THE BACCHANALIAN CHORUS: Ah! what pleasure it is  
 to drink!

THE FOLLOWERS OF EROS: To him who lives without  
 love, life has no charms.

THE BACCHANALIAN CHORUS: To live and not drink is  
 simply to die.

(Van Laun, 230)

A shepherd comes in the middle of this dispute and sings to both groups that the two deities are good together and should not be separated. The two choruses end the musical finale, amid dancing and general rejoicing, by singing: "That there is nothing sweeter than Wine and Love."

George Dandin might agree that, after his problems, the only recourse left him is to join the Followers of Bacchus. But Dandin does not belong in their world. For the musical finale in the original Versailles production even the scenery changed from in front of Dandin's house to a pastoral setting of rocks and trees. An engraving made of this final scene shows no sign of the outwitted husband (Figure 77). The esprit gaulois and the esprit courtois meet but never meld in George Dandin. For Molière, the music was a pastiche to his comedy; only the thinnest thread of continuity tied the two together. He seems to have relied mainly on the neo-classic rule of liaison des scènes, or the flow of one scene into another by the carry-over of at least one character, to link the interludes with the comedy. The scenes of Act II and the subsequent musical interlude, for example, are linked. After the opening incident between Claudine and Lubin from which Claudine goes into "open" hiding, the structure is as follows:

Scene 2	( Clitandre George Dandin Angélique (
Scene 3	( Angélique Claudine (
Scene 4	( Claudine Clitandre Lubin (
Scene 5	( Lubin George Dandin ( (

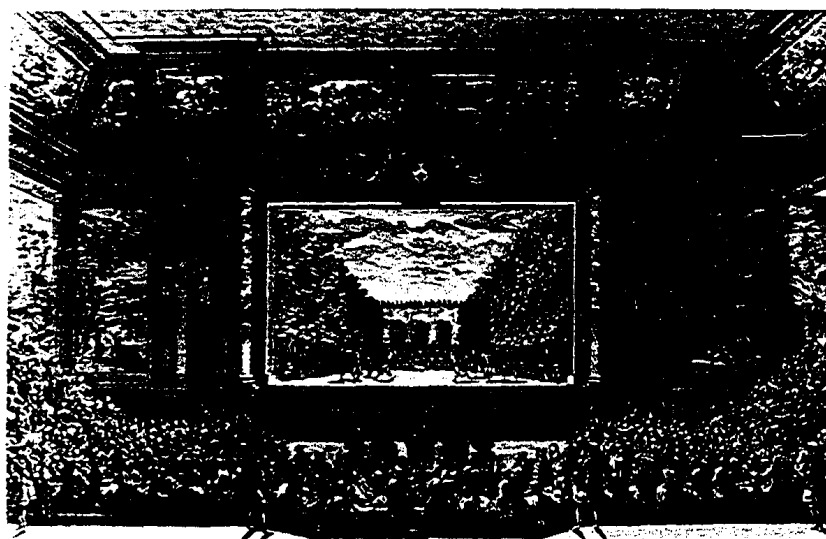


Figure 77. George Dandin finale (Silvestre)

Scene 6	( George Dandin
Scene 7	( George Dandin Monsieur and Madame de Sotenville
Scene 8	( Monsieur and Madame de Sotenville Angélique Claudine Clitandre George Dandin
Dialogue	( George Dandin Shepherdess
Entry	( Shepherdess Boatmen

In the comedy each character gets a scene to play, almost like an actor's number, but the focus is on Dandin. He dominates the action. When the music begins, however, he leaves. The interludes, juxtaposed with the scenes of the comedy as they are, show by contrast what is sorely lacking in Dandin's world. For, as amusing as Dandin's predicament is, the prevailing mood at Versailles was reflected in the verses of the musical scenes. According to the Abbé de Montigny who wrote an account of the fete:

The troupe of Molière played there one of his works, new and comic, an agreeable mixture of récits and entrées de ballet where Bacchus and L'Amour, after quarrelling for awhile over superiority, came to accord finally to celebrate the fete together.<sup>32</sup>

The battle and final accord of Eros and Bacchus undoubtedly constituted for the court of Louis XIV the highlight of the production.<sup>33</sup> And there

<sup>32</sup>Moland, IX, 142.

<sup>34</sup>The "Combat of L'Amour and Bacchus" was used as the third interlude of the Ballet of the Ballets, December, 1671 (see Chapter V: Related Works). The interludes of George Dandin along with fragments of the Comic Pastoral and The Magnificent Lovers served as the basis for Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus (a pastoral in three acts with prologue, some "morceaux" by Molière) which the Académie Royale de Musique produced in



is no reason to believe that the King enjoyed George Dandin any less than some of the earlier or later comedy-ballets in which comedy, songs, and dances are better unified and integrated.

#### MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC

Molière's second full-length comedy-ballet, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, was presented in October, 1669 during Le Divertissement royal de Chambord. It is a three-act prose farce about a provincial who has come to Paris for an arranged marriage, but whose visit in the city, through a series of tricks played on him at the instigation of the bride-to-be's young lover, is made unendurable, and he barely escapes with his life. At Chambord, Molière and Lully had nearly three weeks to work out the details of the production, and Molière may have had much of the play already in mind before they started. The resultant comedy-ballet has two very successful musical scenes and is rich in a variety of comic devices--deceptions, mistaken identity and disguisings, and satire.

Because Monsieur de Pourceaugnac consists of one comic trick after another, many sources can be cited as contributory, from Roman comedy to plays and incidents in Molière's own experience.<sup>34</sup> The idea of a patient put in the hands of a doctor to be cured in spite of himself occurs in a number of early fabliaux. It appeared in a 1661 play by Chevalier, an

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November of 1672 when Lully, after his break with Molière, began to collaborate with Quinault (see Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière and Chapter VII: Music). The "Combat" was the third act of this production; and it was used again by Lully for the fetes at Versailles in 1674.

<sup>34</sup>On sources see D-M, VII, 214-224 and Moland, X, 7-13.

actor at the Théâtre du Marais. In this comedy, La Désolation des filous sur la défense, ou Les Malades qui se portent bien, a poor fool is tricked by a rascal and, although not sick at all, is pursued by apothecaries with syringes. The incident of a syringe forcibly applied to one who has no need of it is traced by Sylvanus Griswold Morley beyond Chevalier to a little Spanish comedy las Burlas de Isabel.<sup>35</sup> Another parallel: the scene in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac in which the young lover persuades the stranger that they are old friends can be found in Scarron's Ne pas croire ce qu'on voit (Not to Believe What One Sees, 1652). Also, Scarron's Le Marquis ridicule (1656) may have provided Molière with the idea of accusing the fool of having wives and children. This trick and the flight of the protagonist dressed as a woman appear in an Italian farce Le Disgrazie d'Arlecchino. Monsieur de Pourceaugnac may have been inspired by ill-treatment Molière received in Limoges when his troupe was touring the provinces, or from a boorish Limousin who caused a commotion at the Palais-Royal. But Molière habitually ridiculed provincials, and perhaps was merely following a traditional prejudice against Limousins that even Rabelais used. Abel Lefranc cites additional plays about provincial gentlemen not discussed by other scholars, and shows particular similarity between Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and Gillet de la Tessonnerie's Le Campagnard (1657), which concerns a gentleman from the provinces who comes to Paris to get married.<sup>36</sup>

After Monsieur de Pourceaugnac was performed for the court, who

<sup>35</sup>Sylvanus Griswold Morley, "Notes on Spanish Sources of Molière," PMLA, XIX (1904), 287-288.

<sup>36</sup>Abel Lefranc, "Monsieur de Pourceaugnac," Revue des Cours et Conférences, XVII (1908-1909), 451-464 and 498-507.

especially relished the mockery of pretentious provincials, the comedy-ballet was transferred to Paris where it enjoyed enormous success. It was requested again at court the following year while it continued to be played at the Palais-Royal. When Monsieur de Pourceaugnac premièred in Paris on November 15, it was performed with The Sicilian, but afterwards played as a single piece. Whether or not the musical portions were kept is impossible to say. La Grange shows no extraordinary expenses which would account for a company of singers and dancers. While the musical prologue and finale could easily have been dropped without having much effect on the play, it is doubtful that the doctor and lawyer sequences, integral to the action, could have been completely eliminated. Possibly these sequences were significantly modified and performed by members of the troupe with a few gagistes and musical performers.<sup>37</sup> At any rate, after Monsieur de Pourceaugnac opened in Paris, Robinet referred to it in his November 23 Lettre à Madame as a comedy and ballet.<sup>38</sup> The musical scenes were included with the text when the play was printed on March 3, 1670 by Jean Ribou (privilege February 20) and called a "comedy performed at Chambord for the Divertissement of the King."<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup>See Appendix B: Cast Lists.

<sup>38</sup>D-M, VII, 214.

<sup>39</sup>Guibert, I, 293-297. A livret, "Le Divertissement de Chambord," was published at Blois in 1669 (Guibert, II, 513-520). This livret was strictly a ballet program. Interludes are described and the performers in them named, but the actors are not mentioned, nor are acts of the comedy summarized. (See further discussion in Appendix A: The Livret.) English translations of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac: (1) Baker and Miller, II, 135-174, as Squire Lubberly, (2) Ozell, Book II, Vol. IV, 175-222, as Monsieur de Pourceaugnac: or, Squire Trelooby. This translation has an English setting and the title and names of characters were based probably on an earlier acting adaptation of Molière's play by William Congreve,

The primary concern of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is the esprit gaulois misadventures of a bourgeois Limousin, but there is a love interest in the plot, and the esprit courtois musical prologue and finale relate to it. The verses of these musical scenes portray love as a refined, gentle, yet all-pervading expression of youth. The songs, so conceived, help to show the play's motif of the disparity between city and country. Romance is a courtly ideal, as sophisticated as a Parisian ball, and nothing so delicate could ever be associated with a country yokel. Therefore, while the young city lovers, Eraste and Julie, are the subjects of idyllic sentiments in the music, the countryman, Pourceaugnac, by contrast, is made to seem ridiculous in the comedy for his aspirations as a lover and his inability to cope with metropolitan life. But, as Tilley observes, "Though Molière generally takes a love-story for his plot, for the obvious reason that it provides a simple and natural dénouement, love cannot be said to play a prominent part in his comedies."<sup>40</sup> The young lovers are eventually united in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, with the prologue and the finale providing a gallant and fanciful frame for the action; however, it is the rogues and fools who are memorable.

Monsieur de Pourceaugnac begins with a spoken introduction to the

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John Vanbrugh, and William Walsh. See John C. Hodges, "The Authorship of Squire Trelooby," Review of English Studies (London), IV (1928), 404-413. In the Ozell version the doctor and lawyer musical sequences are included, the prologue and finale are not. (3) Van Laun, V, 91-137, based on the 1734 French edition scene divisions, (4) Waller, VI, 245-343. Van Laun includes all musical portions; Baker and Miller and Waller omit the prologue.

<sup>40</sup>Arthur Tilley, Molière (Cambridge, 1936), p. 312.

musical prologue. Eraste asks for the serenade he has ordered to begin.<sup>41</sup> This serenade consists of a three-voice song (a female and two male vocalists), a song that applies directly to Julie and Eraste, whose love is being thwarted by parental interference. However, the conclusion of the song makes a happy prediction: love will triumph over all obstacles, even "the parent's harshness, cruel constraint." (Van Laun, 92). The setting of the play, and presumably the locale where this serenade transpires, is a public place in front of the houses of a doctor and of Oronte, Julie's father. And after the serenade there is a series of street scene ballet-entries similar to those which appear in The Bores. They involve characters out of Parisian life who might be encountered on a busy thoroughfare. Two Dancing Masters pass by, probably practicing their ballet steps as they go (First Entry), followed by two Pages (Second Entry), who might be dallying or engaging in off-duty sport. Four Spectators, perhaps on hand to observe the serenade, have quarreled during the capers of the Pages, and now engage in a fight, swords in hand, to dance movement (Third Entry). Two Swiss Guards separate the four combatants, and reconciling them, join in a dance of concord (Fourth Entry.)<sup>42</sup>

The dialogue does not specify that the serenade of the prologue has been provided for Julie by Eraste, the way Adraste employed a group to sing under the window of Isidore in The Sicilian. Julie might have enjoyed

<sup>41</sup>The original edition says only "The Overture is presented by Eraste. . . ." But in the 1682 edition, undoubtedly based on actual performance practice, words for Eraste are added to precede the prologue.

<sup>42</sup>The dance of the two Dancing Masters is not considered a ballet-entry separate from the serenade until the 1734 edition. No dancers' names are mentioned in the livret or the musical score for the Swiss Guards.

the serenade, as well as the following street incidents, from her window, but there is no indication that she emerges from the house for the subsequent dialogue scene. The street clears, and the comedy proper begins as Eraste enters for a secret meeting with Julie, who arrives accompanied by her maid Nérine.<sup>43</sup> It is learned that Julie's father has planned to marry her off to a lawyer from Limoges, but Eraste, with the help of Nérine and a valet in his service, plans to stop this unthinkable marriage.

Nérine, like Lisette in Love's the Best Doctor, is an impudent, scheming maid. She is silly and excitable, as when she gives a false alarm that Julie's father is coming, but she is a reliable pretender as she proves in later intrigues. She is Julie's confidante and echoes her mistress's horror regarding the marriage arranged for Julie with a boor from the wilds of Limoges whose very name, Pourceaugnac ("little pig"), as Nérine points out, is intolerable.<sup>44</sup> The pairing of servant characters seen in George Dandin is continued in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. Nérine has a counterpart, a mastermind accomplice, the homme d'intrigue Sbrigani, who is responsible for many of the plots devised against Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. Sbrigani arrives and, having seen Pourceaugnac, confirms everyone's worst suspicions about him--his grotesque figure and

<sup>43</sup>The meeting between Eraste, Julie and Nérine is Act I, Scene 1 in the original edition and Act I, Scene 3 in later editions, which give Scene 1 to Eraste's introduction and Scene 2 to the serenade and ballet-entries.

<sup>44</sup>"Pourceau" means pig or piglet. Very close to Limoges is a town, Solignac (Figure 21 - Map of France), that may have suggested the gnac ending for Molière's character (D-M, VII, 217). The gnac is also a characteristic family name-ending associated with the southwest region of France. An Americanization of the name might be McPiglet, Pigletsky, Pigletani, or Pigletman. Baker and Miller transform Pourceaugnac's name to Lubberly to emphasize his awkward, ungainly characteristics. Ozell's "Trelooby" is apparently from "tres" (Fr., "very") and looby, or a lout--a very clumsy person.

lack of wit. Nérine and Sbrigani lightly insult one another by describing each other's crimes under the guise of praise,<sup>45</sup> and the young lovers are assured that the Pourceaugnac situation is in the hands of very capable tricksters. Sbrigani, the "artful Neapolitan," may be a form of the Pulcinella character who originated in Naples, yet "Sbrigani" (It. briccone - rascal, and brigante - thief) is "a variant of the name Brighella, and occasionally his exact opposite."<sup>46</sup> Since Neapolitan characters had the reputation in France of being dishonest, it is perhaps significant that Sbrigani is the only Italian-type servant character in Molière's plays who has an Italian name.

Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is a comedy of masks and the masking exists in many forms. Nérine and Sbrigani are the "masks" or stock characters of intrigue. That Sbrigani easily ingratiates himself into Monsieur de Pourceaugnac's confidence is merely the modus operandi of a confidence man, an intriguing Sbrigani. He pays the fool compliments and plays on his self-esteem--calling him "a person of quality" and, ironically, commenting on the grace with which he (the pig) eats. But the play abounds in pretense. Julie is told she must pretend to be satisfied with her decisions in order to make the proposed plots effective. Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is eventually driven out of town and Julie's father changes his mind about her marriage because of the successful pretenses (Figure 78).

The first major trick (Trick #1) played on Monsieur de Pourceaugnac

<sup>45</sup>Van Laun notes (p. 94), "In Plautus' Asinaria; or, the Ass-dealer (Act III, Scene 2), Libanus and Leonida, the servants of Demenaetus, an aged Athenian, also extol each other's exploits."

<sup>46</sup>Pierre Louis Duchartre, The Italian Comedy (New York, 1966), p. 165.



Figure 78. Monsieur de Pourceagnac composite (Le Pautre)



Figure 79. Monsieur de Pourceagnac and Apothecary



is the pretense of Eraste who makes Pourceaugnac think that they are old friends. At first Pourceaugnac does not remember Eraste, but the clever young lover uses the denseness of the provincial and his willingness to mention the highly respectable members of his family--a consul, an assessor, a canon of the church--to get what information is necessary to deceive Pourceaugnac into thinking Eraste is actually a former acquaintance. A typically Moliéresque comic twist concludes the scene between Eraste and Monsieur de Pourceaugnac: Eraste has persuaded his victim to lodge with him, but Pourceaugnac must first arrange for his luggage at the dock. He has forbidden his servant to move it from the place of arrival "for fear of roguery." Unaware he has been duped by two rogues already, Pourceaugnac adds, "It is necessary to be cautious in these parts." (Waller, 269)

Eraste decides in Trick #2 to put Monsieur de Pourceaugnac in the hands of doctors, since, as every sensible person knows (according to Molière's satiric view), doctors can be one of mankind's worst menaces. And in order to assure that the patient-victim will not escape, Eraste tells an Apothecary that Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is "a little mad." (Waller, 269) Doctors, who are ridiculed in Love's the Best Doctor for their obstinate clinging to tradition, are further lampooned in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. The Apothecary describes the Doctor whom Eraste is waiting for: ". . . even when it means his patients dying, he will not abate one iota of the rules of the ancients. . . . not for all the gold in the world, would he cure anyone with other remedies than those prescribed by the Faculty." (Waller, 271) Concerning death the Apothecary says, "One is at least glad to have died methodically." (Van Laun, 103)

After this introduction, the Doctor appears and, in an encounter

with a peasant and his wife whose father is the physician's patient, demonstrates the kind of doctoring the Apothecary described. Completely disregarding the patient's complaints, the Doctor diagnoses only according to Galen<sup>47</sup> and can recommend only bleeding and purging. In conclusion, he remarks to the concerned couple: "I will go and see him in two or three days' time; but if he should die before then, do not fail to let me know, for it is not etiquette for a doctor to visit a corpse." (Waller, 273)<sup>48</sup>

Eraste leaves Monsieur de Pourceaugnac with the Doctor, whom the dullard mistakes for a steward of Eraste and the inquiries of the Doctor merely as a servant's solicitous attentions. Another doctor is on hand to consult over Pourceaugnac's "illness." They seat him and begin to carefully define the disease. Although the doctors promise to speak in the vernacular so that Monsieur de Pourceaugnac can understand them, they cannot refrain from using a few Latin phrases throughout their long-winded arguments. The First Doctor concludes that the patient is suffering from "hypochondriacal melancholy." The Second Doctor agrees completely and

<sup>47</sup>Galen (c. 130-c. 200) systematized medical learning and his authority was undisputed for centuries. He developed the theory of the four humors--blood, phelgm, choler (yellow bile) and melancholy (black bile). The relative proportions of the humors in the body were thought to regulate man's physical and moral qualities. Purges and blood letting were theoretically supposed to keep the humors in proper balance.

<sup>48</sup>Van Laun notes (p. 104): "When M. de Pourceaugnac is acted at the Comédie Française, this scene is omitted." Although the short scene is an episodic digression from the main action of the play, it amusingly and succinctly establishes the Doctor's character. The tradition of deleting the scene may have arisen from economic considerations: two less actors, two less costumes to pay for. See Appendix B: Cast Lists. An extraneous incident similar to this one appears in Doctor in Spite of Himself (Act III, Scene 2) and is also usually cut in performance (D-M, VI, 104).

says to his colleague, "and should he not be, he must become so for the sake of the beautiful things you have said." (Van Laun, 109)<sup>49</sup> But the doctors' arguments, although technically reasonable, are useless because Pourceaugnac is not sick. The doctors, however, are monomaniacs (mask of fixity), and, as Eraste could anticipate, they use Monsieur de Pourceaugnac's protests as proof of his malady and confirmation of their diagnoses.<sup>50</sup>

The musical scenes that follow<sup>51</sup> are deftly integrated into the action of the play as the First Doctor prescribes this preliminary treatment for Monsieur de Pourceaugnac's ailment:

Before aught else, I think he ought to be cheered by pleasant conversation, songs and instruments of music, to which it would not be amiss to add some dancers, in order that their movements, disposition and agility may excite and reawaken the sluggishness of his numbed spirits, which occasions the thickness of his blood, the origin of his disease.

(Waller, 283)

Music to cure one's ills, a theme used in The Princess of Elis and Love's the Best Doctor, develops into an uproarious esprit gaulois musical

<sup>49</sup>This consultation is supposedly almost exact in its verisimilitude (Moland, X, 13-17). The 1682 edition notes that the particularly long speech of the First Doctor is shortened in performance (D-M, VII, 272). Molière probably received assistance for the medical jargon from his friend and doctor Mauvillain.

<sup>50</sup>Van Laun notes (p. 106): "In Plautus' Menaechmi; or, the twin-brothers, Menaechmus Sosicles is mistaken for his twin-brother, Menaechmus of Epidamnus, and behaves so oddly, that the latter's father-in-law and wife consider him mad, and wish him to be treated by a doctor. The real Menaechmus makes his appearance (Act V, Scene 3) and the scene between him and the physician, who thinks he is insane, is like the one between M. de Pourceaugnac and the two doctors."

<sup>51</sup>Scenes 10 and 11 in the original, Scenes 13 to 16 in the 1734 edition.

finale to Act I, which, as Tiersot contends, cannot be termed an "intermède."<sup>52</sup> The music is not a break in the action, but grows out of it, for

. . . in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and its successors Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme and Le Malade Imaginaire, Molière, with the inspiration of genius, has invented a new type of play, in which the ridiculous side of the chief character assumes such fantastic proportions that it can only find its full expression in an extravaganza of song and dance. M. de Pourceaugnac's capacity for being gulled, M. Jourdain's credulous vanity, Argan's fear of death, are all so grotesque as to be almost sublime. 53

This musical sequence provides the play with another kind of masking--a type based on the revelry of mascarades. Two Italian musicians, as charlatans (opérateurs), sing, accompanied by musical instruments for the purpose of curing Pourceaugnac's "madness."<sup>54</sup> These grotesque doctors, in effect, replace the First Doctor and the Second Doctor. When they have completed their Italian song urging Monsieur de Pourceaugnac not to let himself be killed by melancholic grief, they retire, and a group of mummies do a dance around the bewildered Limousin. The Apothecary then tells Pourceaugnac that he must take a little purge, as the two charlatans and the masked dancers (matassins) return<sup>55</sup> (Figures 79 and 80).

<sup>52</sup>Julien Tiersot, La Musique dans la comédie de Molière (Paris, 1922), p. 102.

<sup>53</sup>Tilley, pp. 227-228.

<sup>54</sup>In "Une Représentation de M. de Pourceaugnac à Chambord," Revue Contemporaine, LXIII (1868), 717, Celler notes that the two doctors have been traditionally played wearing deformed face masks with gigantic noses. Celler's note refers to Molière's comedy-ballet, although the article is about a mascarade version of Pourceaugnac that was played by Lully in Le Carnaval (1675). Music from the serenade and the doctor and lawyer scenes were used for this production. See also Moland, X, 119-125.

<sup>55</sup>"Matassin" is a Spanish word with an Arabic origin meaning "masked."



Figure 80. Monsieur de Pourceagnac (Brissart)

While two grotesque doctors and a group of matassins hover behind the seated Monsieur de Pourceagnac, an APOTHECARY appears with a syringe:

Monsieur, this is a little remedy,  
a little remedy, which you must take,  
if you please, if you please.

Monsieur de Pourceagnac

Act I, Scene 11

Armed with syringes, the imposters dance around Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and then approach him ominously, singing "Take this little physic quickly." (Waller, 291)<sup>56</sup> Pourceaugnac dodges and eludes his assailants with the help of his hat.<sup>57</sup> He then runs away with the "doctors" following him.

In the elaborate structure of this rogue-and-fool farce, a pair of rogues, Sbrigani and Eraste, use foolish doctors to trick a pair of fools, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and Julie's father, Oronte. Oronte is nearly as gullible as Pourceaugnac. This marriage arrangement, after all, came about because his brother persuaded him to accept Monsieur de Pourceaugnac for the provincial gentleman's money. In his stubbornness, Oronte resembles the father of Love's the Best Doctor. Both Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and Oronte are governed by personal interests for which they have abandoned bon sens--one for overreaching social ambition and the other for overriding monetary considerations. Neither has considered the interests of Julie. The Doctor is looking for Pourceaugnac as Oronte

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These dancers at one time wore helmets and chestplates and their mock battle movements were in imitation of the ancient Pyrrhic war dance. In France these dancers became playful and clownish. The bells on their legs even suggest the early sots. At any rate, in Pourceaugnac the swords once carried by matassins are replaced by gigantic syringes. The original text and the musical score's introduction call for eight Matassins, but only six dancers are mentioned in the livret and are listed in the score with the music for their dance.

<sup>56</sup>Léon Thoorens points out in his historical novel treatment of Molière's life that the use on the stage in the seventeenth century of an enema syringe or a commode (which might be seen in The Imaginary Invalid) were sufficient to raise laughter because they were close to the conditions of the times, purging being a standard treatment of any illness. The King's Player (London, 1960), p. 164.

<sup>57</sup>In the memoirs of a witness to the plays, Despois and Mesnard conclude (VII, 284) that "This little hat detail, this bit of 'business' of Molière, is authentically traditional."

appears, a meeting that cannot be considered accidental with the dextrous Sbrigani as go-between. Oronte is particularly susceptible to suggestion, and the Doctor creates suspicion and fear in his mind regarding Monsieur de Pourceaugnac's sickness by refusing to discuss it and thereby implying it is something "unmentionable."

Sbrigani then takes the play's masking a step further by disguising himself as a Flemish merchant (Trick #3). Pretending not to know the man to whom he speaks, Sbrigani, as the Fleming, asks Oronte: "Do you know a certain Monsieur Oronte in this town?" (Waller, 297) The "stranger" reveals that Monsieur de Pourceaugnac owes a great deal of money to Flemish merchants and that the Limousin hopes to get money for payment from his future father-in-law. In swift succession Oronte has been led to believe that Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is diseased and penniless. Sbrigani, alone and out of disguise, tells the audience directly what he intends: "I must try to sow so much suspicion and division between the father-in-law and the son-in-law, as will break off the intended marriage." (Waller, 299) He must deceive Pourceaugnac next.

The first time Monsieur de Pourceaugnac appears following the syringe episode he recounts for Sbrigani, who is still supposed to be in his service, what has happened to him, using his assailants' words and imitating their actions.

Doctors dressed in black. In a chair. Feel the pulse. So be it. He is mad. Two great louts. Big hats. Bon di, bon di. Six Pantaloons, Ta, ra, ta, ta; Ta, ra, ta, ta. Alegramente, Monsu Pourceaugnac. Apothecary. Injection. Take it, Monsieur, take it, take it. It is gentle, gentle, gentle. It is to loosen, loosen, loosen. Piglia-lo sù, Signor Monsu, piglia-lo, piglia-lo, piglia-lo sù. Never have I been so stuffed with silliness.

Sbrigani, however, must proceed with his plan, and, pretending he does

not know the purpose of Pourceaugnac's trip to Paris, feigns surprise when he hears Monsieur's intentions toward Julie.

POURCEAUGNAC: Yes, I come to marry her.  
 SBRIGANI: Come to mar . . . marry her?  
 POURCEAUGNAC: Yes.  
 SBRIGANI: In marriage?

This surprise and Sbrigani's evasiveness makes the gull's imagination run wild. Sbrigani is bribed to reveal what he knows. The pretender implies to Monsieur de Pourceaugnac that his honor is in jeopardy because Julie is actually a "coquette" whose father wants her to marry advantageously. When Julie then meets Monsieur de Pourceaugnac she is acting, assuming the mask of the coquette. He thinks that her bold advances show how much she is taken with him, but he also knows that such a wife can give a husband "horns," an unthinkable fate for "Léonard de Pourceaugnac," esquire (écuyer).<sup>58</sup> Oronte sends Julie away and accuses Monsieur de Pourceaugnac of infirmity and debt. The prospective son-in-law and father-in-law are by this time highly antagonistic toward one another.

The schemers then spring an elaborate hoax on Monsieur de Pourceaugnac while he is with Oronte (Trick #4). Lucette, obviously engaged by Nérine and Sbrigani as an accessory to this "masquerade," appears, declaring to be Monsieur de Pourceaugnac's abandoned wife from Gascony. Before the shock of this revelation can subside, Nérine appears, pretending to be his wife from Picardy. Much of the humor of this scene was originally derived from the Gasconne and Picadre dialects.<sup>59</sup> Children,

<sup>58</sup> Ecuyer - the lowest form of nobility, the rank of a simple gentleman, newly ennobled.

<sup>59</sup> Neither dialect is the correct language of the area it represents. Molière, while traveling in the provinces, perhaps never learned the



supposedly belonging to Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, then appear, a boy and a girl for Lucette and a daughter for Nérine. Complete bedlam prevails with the "wives" shouting at each other and at Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and the children crying. Monsieur de Pourceaugnac flees for the second time of the day, on this occasion with the outraged father in pursuit.

Managing to escape from his tormentors, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac returns to tell Sbrigani that he has been threatened with legal action. He denies having studied law (perhaps an activity unbecoming a true gentleman), although he admitted knowledge of it earlier and knows the jargon, and he asks Sbrigani for a lawyer. Sbrigani obligingly summons some rogues from his band of performers (of which Italian musicians, dancers, and Lucette were seen previously) impersonating members of the legal profession (Trick #5), and warns Monsieur de Pourceaugnac not to be surprised at their manner of speaking: "They have contracted from the bar a certain habit of declamation, which makes one think they are singing." (Waller, 321) In commenting on the integration of music with play in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, Tiersot says that "la comédie moliéresque" is more logical than opéra-comique,

for the characters of opéra-comique speak and sing indiscriminately in turn without having any reason for this change of language, whereas we have seen the precautions that Molière takes to explain this duality, and makes it, therefore, conform as nearly as possible to reality. 60

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various dialects with any proficiency. Merely the flavor of the southern argots would have been enough to amuse a Parisian audience. It is possible that a compatriot of the Toulousian poet Goudouli (d. 1649) may have helped Molière with the dialogue for Lucette, because she speaks in a manner that recalls that writer. See A. Brun, "Note sur le rôle de Lucette dans Monsieur de Pourceaugnac," Revue Universitaire, Paris, XX (1) (1911), 399-402.

<sup>60</sup>Tiersot, pp. 102-103.

The counselors Sbrigani delivers, one of whom expresses himself very slowly and the other very quickly, represent an esprit gaulois musical development of the same comic device that was used merely in dialogue for two of the doctors in Love's the Best Doctor.

The musical finale of Act II<sup>61</sup> consists of a consultation between the two singing barristers (Avocats musiciens) accompanied by two dancing attorneys (Procureurs danseurs) and two sergeants. While the fast-talker names all the authorities on the crime in question, the slower one counterpoints the conclusion: polygamy is a hanging business.

Your case  
Is plain and clear;  
And all the law  
In such a matter  
Decides distinctly.  
If you consult our authors,  
Legislators, and commentators,  
Justinianus, Papinianus,  
Ulpianus, and Tribonianus,  
Fernand, Rebuffe, John Imola,  
Paul de Castro, Julianus, Bartholine,  
Jason, Alciati, and Cujas,  
That great man so able;  
Polygamy is a business,  
Is a hanging business.

(Van Laun, 127)<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup>Scene 11 in the original, Scene 13 in the 1734 edition.

<sup>62</sup>Justinian (527-565), the Byzantine emperor, codified Roman law; Papinian, Ulpian (third century), and Tribonian (sixth century) were Roman jurists; Bérenger Fernand was a professor at Toulouse in the sixteenth century, Jacques Rebuffe, a professor at Montpellier, and Jean d'Imola, a professor at Bologna, in the fifteenth century; Paulus (the original text reads "Paul, Castre," not "Paul de Castre") was a Roman jurist, a contemporary and rival of Papinian; Paul de Castro was an Italian of the fifteenth century; Julian was either Julianus Salvius who, in the second century, codified the laws of money-lenders, or Julianus Antecessor (sixth century); Bartole was a celebrated Italian jurist of the fourteenth century; Jason Maino (sixteenth century) and Alciat (1492-1550) were two Milanese jurists; Cujas (1522-1590) was the most celebrated French jurist of the Renaissance. See D-M, VII, 317-318 for further identification of all the names mentioned

They get a flogging from Monsieur de Pourceaugnac for their legal advice, but the other attorneys and the sergeants dance a ballet-entry that sweeps him away along with his protestations.

Act III begins as the two conspirators, Eraste and Sbrigani, meet and the "Neapolitan adventurer" reveals that he has persuaded Monsieur de Pourceaugnac to disguise himself as a woman in order to escape capture and prosecution (Trick #6). Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is already amusing, and was so especially to Parisians of Molière's day, because of his provincial manners, speech and dress, his absurd name, his lack of sophistication or quickness of mind, and his attempts to seem a well-bred gentleman. When he appears, then, "en femme," he is supremely ludicrous, especially because as he says, he has "a bit of a beard." Sbrigani has alarmed him, however: "the people of this town have an intense hatred towards folks from your country, they are never so delighted as when they see a Limosin hanged." (Waller, 325) Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, the would-be gentleman predecessor of Monsieur Jourdain, is almost more concerned about "the loss of caste a gentleman suffers in being hanged" (Waller, 327) than about saving his hide.<sup>63</sup>

Two Swiss Guards, talking about the gallows being erected for the Limousin polygamist, spy Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, who has been left alone to escape in disguise. Mistaking him for a woman of the streets, they

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in the song. Having more than one spouse was a crime punishable by death during Molière's time.

<sup>63</sup>Van Laun explains (p. 129): "Nobles were formerly decapitated, commoners hanged."

make advances and begin fighting over him (Figure 81). A Police Officer rescues Monsieur de Pourceaugnac but then arrests him for acting suspiciously, and eventually recognizes him as Pourceaugnac, the criminal at large, by his manners and language. Sbrigani intercedes and persuades the Police Officer to accept a bribe, to release Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and to escort him out of town.<sup>64</sup> Like George Dandin, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac gets no easy resolution to his problems. The tricks played on him, however, may, in fact, have worked to his advantage; he has been prevented from making Dandin's mistake of a misalliance.

Having disposed of Pourceaugnac, the schemers' remaining obstacle is the stubbornness of Oronte. In Trick #7 Sbrigani tells Oronte that Monsieur de Pourceaugnac has eloped with Julie; but Eraste brings Julie in, reproaching her and pretending to have forced her away from the scoundrel. She contributes to the pretense by saying that she loved Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, which makes Oronte furious. Oronte, like Damis in The Bores, has changed his mind about the young lover, and says to Eraste: "Your conduct touches my heart, and I give you my daughter in marriage." Julie strongly protests, and Eraste says he accepts her only for Oronte's sake, but they soon submit to Oronte's wishes. As predicted in the prologue, love has outwitted the tyrannical parent.

The comedy-ballet ends, as it began, with a musical street scene. Eraste suggests that while they are waiting for the notary: "let us enjoy

<sup>64</sup>Molière must have known of the inequities of criminal procedure as well as the abuses of law enforcement and the weakness of its officers during his time, but the study of jurisprudence apparently made him no crusader for reform. The appeals in his plays to justice and common sense are not attacks on the administration of the criminal law of his time. See Harry Ashton, Molière (New York, 1930).

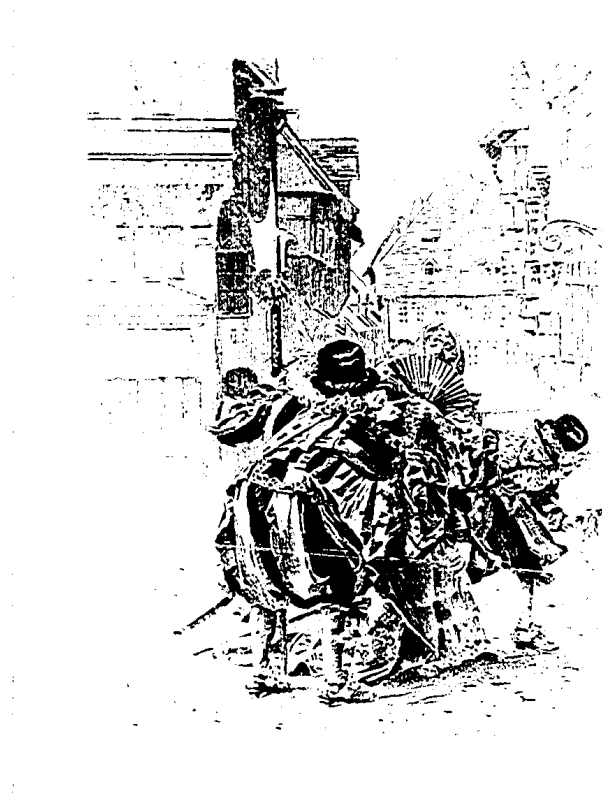


Figure 81. Monsieur de Pourceaugnac "en femme"  
(Champollion after Louis Leloir)

the pleasures of the time and have in the masks which the report of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac's wedding attracted here from all quarters of the town." (Waller, 339) A group of maskers of various kinds crowd onto the street and some appear on the balconies of the buildings.<sup>65</sup> Exotic gypsies sing in praise of love. They are then joined by a chorus of singers--Old Women,<sup>66</sup> Scaramouches, Pantaloons, Doctors, and Rustics-- and there is a final dance of Savages and Biscayens. The theme of a fancy dress mascarade is expressed in the song:

Let's think of nothing else but joy;  
For pleasure is our grand employ.

(Waller, 343)

Perhaps even more appropriate than similar finales in The Bores, The Forced Marriage, Love's the Best Doctor, and The Sicilian is a masquerade to end Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, a comedy of masks. The only deficiency in this conclusion seems to be the absence of the play's central character; but this shortcoming has been remedied in performance practice. Van Laun notes (p. 136) that, while it is customary to end the play with Oronte's call for a notary, at the Comédie Française it is traditional for Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, dressed as a woman, to appear in one of the theatre boxes, make a friendly gesture to Sbrigani, and invite him to visit if he ever comes to Limoges. It is easy to imagine that this comic capper, featuring Molière himself as Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, might at one time have been part of the festive musical celebration at the end of the play.

<sup>65</sup>Scene 8 in the original, Scene 10 in the 1734 edition.

<sup>66</sup>An Old Woman (vieille) appears in the finale of The Would-be Gentleman, paired with an Old Man; one responds to Polichinelle's song in the first interlude of The Imaginary Invalid.

THE MAGNIFICENT LOVERS

For the Carnival celebrations at Saint-Germain-en-Laye in 1670, Molière produced a comedy-ballet, The Magnificent Lovers (Les Amants magnifiques), the subject and substance of which the King himself prescribed. The Preface (Avant-propos) of the play discloses the royal commission:

The King, who will have nothing but what is extraordinary in all he undertakes, proposed to give his court a diversion composed of everything that the stage could furnish; and to take so vast an idea, and to link together so many different things, His Majesty chose for the subject two rival princes, who, in the Valley Tempe, where the Pythian games were to be celebrated, vie with each other in regaling a young princess and her mother with all the gallantries that could be imagined. 67

The Magnificent Lovers is a five-act machine play, not without charm and light humor but lacking the esprit gaulois that is characteristic of Molière. The play is fairly short, Act III containing only one scene. Clearly, the acts of the comedy were little more than an excuse for spectacular musical interludes. And the King's wish was granted, for all the elements the stage could supply are included--comedy, delicate sentiments, music, dancing, pantomime, machinery.

Since Molière's royal "collaborator" set the tone of the piece, the playwright was obliged to produce a gallant esprit courtois entertainment. Molière may have been influenced by Corneille's play Don Sanche d'Aragon (1650) and its source in the writing of The Magnificent Lovers,<sup>68</sup> but it

<sup>67</sup>D-M, VII, 380.

<sup>68</sup>See D-M, VII, 366-367 and Moland, X, 130.

is apparent that he reused material from The Princess of Elis, his own comedy-ballet that had been performed with success a number of times for the King since 1664. The mother in The Magnificent Lovers displays the same kind consideration for the wishes of her daughter that the father of The Princess of Elis shows for his. In both plays three lovers are presented to a reluctant princess, whose heart is won partly through jealousy. This jealousy is created by deliberate efforts--in The Princess of Elis by the young lover and in The Magnificent Lovers by the court jester. The clown of the court in both plays is a bit of a coward, but a stalwart confidant of the young lovers. While the Princess of the earlier play is haughty and uncompromising, Princess Eriphile of The Magnificent Lovers is teasing and more attuned to matters of love. The Venus who brings about the change of heart in the Princess of Elis is the deus ex machina power of love; the Venus who establishes the means by which Eriphile will choose a husband is part of a machine trick that the fraudulent astrologer devises. The Pythian Games finale of The Magnificent Lovers recalls the theme of the fete in which the earlier comedy-ballet first appeared, The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island. There was some contemporary controversy over whether or not Benserade wrote the verses of the interludes, and some later question as to whether or not an incident out of real life--a love affair between the King's cousin and a military officer--may have suggested to Molière the idea of an additional rival for the princess who is a commoner. But, although The Magnificent Lovers is one of Molière's least praiseworthy works, it is probably entirely his own invention, based on Louis's suggestions, and, by all accounts, it thoroughly enchanted the audience for which it was originally intended.

The Magnificent Lovers was performed at court during February and



March of 1670, but was never produced on the public stage during Molière's lifetime. Despite the popularity of machine plays at the Théâtre du Marais and even Molière's own plays with mechanical devices--The Princess of Elis (1664), Don Juan (1665), and Amphitryon (1669)--economic considerations and lack of facilities must have prevented mounting The Magnificent Lovers at the Palais-Royal. Ironically, only a year and a half later, the Troupe du Roi presented a lavish spectacle, Psyché, for which Molière's theatre was remodeled and equipped with elaborate machinery.

Although a special edition of the Gazette de France (February 21, 1670), entitled Les Magnificences, was issued to describe the court production of The Magnificent Lovers,<sup>69</sup> and a livret was printed in 1670 by Ballard called le Divertissement royal ("Mixed with Comedy, Music and Entries of Ballet"), the play was not published until 1682, when it was included in the second volume of the Oeuvres posthumes which formed Volume VIII of the Oeuvres.<sup>70</sup> When The Magnificent Lovers was finally introduced in print, a full account of the interludes appeared with the text of the comedy.

<sup>69</sup>Moland, X, 221-226.

<sup>70</sup>See Guibert, II, 521-525 on the livret and II, 609 and 643 on the complete comedy-ballet. See also Appendix A: The Livret. English translations of Les Amants magnifiques: (1) Ozell, Book III, Vol. VI, 75-120, (2) Van Laun, V, 149-192, based on the 1734 edition, (3) Waller, VII, 1-75, as The Courtly Lovers. Waller does not translate the interludes.

The Structure of The Magnificent Lovers:

Instrumental Overture

First Interlude

Concert

First ballet-entry - Eight Fishermen

Chorus

Second ballet-entry - Neptune and Six Sea-Gods

Act I, Scenes 1-5

Second Interlude

Ballet-entry - Pantomimes

The acts of the comedy are in prose, although "Venus" speaks in verse (Act IV, Scene 2); the interludes have mixed metered lyrics. For the interlude's noble dancers vers were included in the livret. The action of the play takes place in Thessaly, in the Valley of Tempe.<sup>71</sup> Four of the six musical interludes require different and elaborate scenery--the sea (#1), a vine bower (#3), a grotto (#4), and an amphitheatre (#6).

Act II, Scenes 1-5  
 Third Interlude - Pastoral  
     Prologue - Nymph of Tempe  
     Musical scenes 1-5  
     First ballet-entry - Six Dryads and Six Fauns  
     "Amorous Quarrel" (Scene 6)  
     Musical scene (Scene 7)  
     Second ballet-entry - Dryads and Fauns with Three  
         Little Dryads and Three Little Fauns  
     Finale - Shepherds and Shepherdesses  
 Act III, Scene 1  
 Fourth Interlude  
     "Symphony of Pleasures"  
     Ballet-entry - Eight Statues  
 Act IV, Scenes 1-5  
 Fifth Interlude  
     Ballet-entry - Pantomimes  
 Act V, Scenes 1-4  
 Sixth Interlude - Pythian Games  
     Prelude - Priestess, High Ministers, and Greek Chorus  
     First ballet-entry - Six Men Armed for the Sacrifice  
     Second ballet-entry - Six vaulters  
     Third ballet-entry - Slaves and Slave-holders  
     Fourth ballet-entry - Greek Men and Women  
     Prelude for Mars  
     Chorus  
     Fifth ballet-entry - Apollo and his retinue of  
         Six Young Gentlemen  
     Finale - "Minuet of Trumpets"

<sup>71</sup>Thessaly is in north central Greece; the Tempe is a valley of this district, between Mount Olympus and Mount Ossa, and through which the Peneus river flows. To Greek and Roman poets, and to later pastoral writers, any valley with cool shades, singing birds, and lush scenery was a variation of the Tempe.

The Magnificent Lovers begins with an instrumental Overture, followed by the First Interlude--the word "intermède" now a convention, not in this case meaning merely something in between. Since it is later discovered that this interlude is a performance for the noble personages of the play, these characters, out for a "maritime diversion," might be seen proceeding to places near the water during the Overture. As the court of Thessaly is seated, the musical entertainment opens with a tableau. The setting is a vast sea bordered on each side by four large rocks, on the summits of which are eight River-Gods. At the foot of the rocks are twelve Triton. In the middle of the sea are four Cupids mounted on dolphins, and behind them raised above the waves on a cloud is Aeolus, King of the Winds. The Récit of Aeolus is a command for the winds to leave the waters. The Tritons greet the Cupids; the Cupids praise the spectator-princesses: "Ah! How fair are these princesses!" (Van Laun, 150) The sea becomes calm and in the middle of the waves an island emerges. Eight Fishermen come out of the depths of the water carrying mother-of-pearl and branches of coral; they dance and then station themselves on the rocks under the marine deities. A Triton and then the entire Chorus comment on the spectacular arrival of Neptune and his Sea-Gods, who appear on a shell carried by four sea horses.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup>Louis XIV probably performed the role of Neptune in the première, with high-ranking members of his court as the Sea-Gods. The vers in the livret "for the King, representing Neptune" (five quatrains) describes the power of the Ruler of the Sea, the "power" being that of Louis XIV himself. A quatrain for Monsieur le Grand follows praising the empire and "Neptune." Next is a quatrain for the Marquis de Villeroy on the same theme, followed by a couplet for the Marquis de Rassent asserting that Neptune likes zeal in his subjects. A water spectacle with a "sea monster" and "whales" had been performed on the lake at Versailles during The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.

At the beginning of Act I, Clitidas, the court jester, a more refined counterpart of Moron in The Princess of Elis, finds the young lover Sostrate alone, talking to himself: "Ah! my heart, ah! my heart." This first scene is similar to the opening of The Princess of Elis in which Euryale's tutor, Arbates, finds the young man alone and love-sick. Sostrate, however, is a general in the army, not a prince; he is distinguished and noble of heart, but not royal or titled. Clitidas asks what he is doing alone in the woods

whilst all the world runs in crowds to see the gorgeous sea fete with which Prince Iphicrate, in the matter of his love, is regaling the princesses, and whilst the princesses are being entertained there with wonderful music and dancing, and the rocks and the waves have decked themselves with divinities in honour of their charms.

(Waller, 5 and 7)

Sostrate answers by saying that he considers people who go to fetes to be bores. Clitidas refuses to believe this weak excuse and points out that one does not miss a fete unless he is seriously troubled about something. Smelling love in the air, Clitidas suggests and even spells out Sostrate's trouble: "E, by itself, E; r, i, ri, Eri; p, h, i, phi, Eriphi; l, e, le, Eriphile. You are in love with Princess Eriphile." (Waller, 9) Almost with relief Sostrate confesses it is true. How can a man so brave in battle, Clitidas asks Sostrate, be so timid in love, for, like Moron, Clitidas recognizes real danger and has the bon sens to know what to be afraid of: "I know well, so far as I am concerned, that a single Gaul, sword in hand, would make me tremble far more than would fifty of the most charming and beautiful eyes in the world." (Waller, 11) Clitidas chides Sostrate, but Sostrate says he will die without declaring his love.

Because of his low station he cannot compete with the princes who are contending for her hand. Clitidas astutely points out, however, that Eriphile has mysteriously put off choosing a husband, and he promises, with his access to the Princess's confidence, to find out why.

This typical scene of the suffering lover is interrupted by the courtiers who are returning from the fete. Aristione, Eriphile's mother, tells Prince Iphicrate that nothing could have been more magnificent. Iphicrate's rival, Prince Timoclès, fears that his forthcoming simple woodland entertainment will be disappointing by comparison, but Aristione charmingly and diplomatically assures him that they anticipate a very agreeable diversion. Of the two princes who are courting the princess, Iphicrate is ostentatious and scheming, Timoclès is congenial and modestly orthodox. Aristione, noticing Sostrate, comments on his absence from the recent festivities. Iphicrate calls Sostrate's nonconformity and aloofness an affectation; but Sostrate replies that good reason kept him away. Aristione then asks Clitidas if he saw the entertainment.

A new dimension of interest emerges in the play through the explanation Clitidas gives for not attending the fete with the courtiers. He facetiously blames the astrologer Anaxarque. Having dreamed of things that Anaxarque considers bad omens (dead fish and broken eggs) and, therefore, having to act with care to avoid mishap, Clitidas has had to watch the fete from afar on the bank. Anaxarque is an impostor like the magicians and the quack vendors, except that, unlike these characters, his intentions are evil and his actions capable of causing serious harm. Unless exaggerated by bizarre costume and gestures, Anaxarque has little about him that is comic. Astrology was popular in the seventeenth century,

although many people considered it nonsense.<sup>73</sup> It was satirized by Gillet de la Tessonnerie in Le Campagnard (1657).<sup>74</sup> La Fontaine ridiculed the "Charlatans, faiseurs d'horoscope" in several of his Fables. They had their followers, however, even at court. But Molière in The Magnificent Lovers obviously rejects astrology, or at least scorns the witchcraft and magic associated with it, as a digression from good sense. Apparently Clitidas and Anaxarque are old adversaries, for the astrologer strongly objects to the jester's mockery. Clitidas retaliates: "To lie well and to joke well are two very different things, and it is by far easier to deceive people than to make them laugh." (Waller, 17) Aristione, who believes in astrology, senses some seriousness in his tone or perhaps some truth in these words, and is startled. But Aristione (whose blood is royal) is not the object of Molière's jibes, and Clitidas then begins to play the fool conspicuously by talking aloud, advising himself to hold his impertinent tongue.

From this comic bout between the two court retainers, Aristione's attention turns back to the rivalry over Eriphile. Both Timoclès and Iphicrate are asked to report on their progress. Timoclès says the princess has rejected him. He has used all the tender methods of a lover, but has received no response. Iphicrate, on the other hand, has wasted no tears on the indifferent Eriphile, but appeals only to the mother for

<sup>73</sup>D-M, VII, 369-372.

<sup>74</sup>Lefranc, "Les Amants magnifiques," Revue des Cours et Conférences, XVII (2), (1908/9), 500. Because Les Amants magnifiques followed immediately after Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, and because both plays have similarities to Le Campagnard, Lefranc is convinced that Molière was influenced by Gillet de la Tessonnerie's work.

approval. Aristione, however, is an honest and modest woman who seeks no compliments. Like the father in The Princess of Elis (and unlike all the stubborn esprit gaulois fathers and guardians), she is allowing free choice of a husband, based on inclination and love.

Sostrate, who has had to suffer through all this discussion, is brought back into the conversation when Aristione makes a difficult request of him. She asks him to find out from the princess which of the two princes she prefers. The young officer is astonished by this request, its cruel irony, and declares himself ill-qualified for the task. But since Aristione knows her daughter has great esteem for him, she insists he accept the responsibility, and departs without further discussion of the matter. The two princes who remain behind become very gracious to Sostrate, and each tries to influence the emissary on his own behalf. Before setting forth on his mission, however, Sostrate makes his own ironic request: "you will pardon me if I do not speak either for one or for the other."(Waller, 25)

The aid of Clitidas, who is left alone with Timoclès and Iphicrate, is also solicited by the two princes. Iphicrate takes Clitidas aside for a word before leaving; then Timoclès does the same--each thinking he has gained support. Clitidas remains to meet the princess who approaches with her confidante, Cléonice.

Like the Princess of Elis, Eriphile has a favorite rustic retreat. Clitidas does not greet her immediately because she is obviously deep in thought, weary of being courted and, like Sostrate, a little melancholy. She has wandered away from the crowd returning from the fete, but Cléonice reminds her that she has promised to view a troupe of Pantomimists who

wish to enter her service. Reluctantly, Eriphile tells Cléonice to summon them. The type of performance the three Pantomimists offer is unspecified. (Cléonice has said they will execute a dance.) The stage directions indicate that the Pantomimists are dancers who "express by their gestures all sorts of things." At any rate, they are accomplished entertainers, because the princess responds favorably and accepts them into her service.

Act II begins as Eriphile sends Cléonice away, and Clitidas, who has kept out of sight until now, then seizes his chance to sound out the princess. He sings to himself, pretending not to have noticed her. As they meet and he casually comments on the whereabouts of the royal party, she distractedly disregards his remarks about the princes but, by contrast, becomes attentive and alert when he mentions Sostrate. "How is it that he did not come to the excursion?" (Van Laun, 163), she asks. When Clitidas answers that he has "something on his mind" and goes on, after praising the general, to reveal that Sostrate is in love, the princess immediately thinks she is the one. But Clitidas awakens jealousy in her by saying Sostrate has too much respect for her and it is one of her maids, Arsinoé, he loves. Eriphile is obviously shaken and outraged when Clitidas adds that Sostrate asks her aid with his suit. Since her wrath reveals how intensely interested she is in Sostrate, Clitidas admits that the young man does indeed love her. Being tricked into showing her true feelings, Eriphile is momentarily furious with Clitidas, but then offers to forgive him if he will promise secrecy. She warns Clitidas, however, that a declaration of love from Sostrate would only destroy her esteem for him.

As Clitidas departs, Sostrate and Eriphile meet for the first time



in the play. Sostrate has come to the princess on Aristione's commission. Like a soldier he stands and forthrightly declares that he has come "to seek to learn from you, Madam, toward which of the two Princes your heart is inclined." (Waller, 35) He adds that he had wished to avoid this assignment. Knowing as she does from Clitidas what his true feelings are, Eriphile enjoys making his task difficult for him, and even asks his advice on her choice between the rival princes. When pressed for an answer, he can only say that no prince is worthy of her. Sostrate is saved from further agony as a page, Chorèbe, arrives at that moment to announce that Aristione has summoned the princess for a festival in the wood of Diana. Aristione and her following--the two princes and the two court retainers--enter to take Sostrate and Eriphile along with them.

The "simple woodland entertainment" presented to Eriphile by Timoclès is a lavish musical pastoral. The Nymph of Tempe sings the Prologue, greeting the princess and establishing the motif of the production--a tribute to love. A playlet in five scenes follows.

The shepherd Tircis, alone, calls to the birds singing in the trees that they would not sing if they had his troubles. Tircis is joined then by two shepherds, Lycaste and Ménandre, who are surprised at his gloomy appearance. It is the coldness of his loved-one, Caliste,<sup>75</sup> that causes this pain, Tircis explains. His friends chide him for his weakness and tell him to take courage. But he is prepared to die. Eventual victory is being predicted for him when Tircis sees Caliste approaching. He takes his friends into hiding to observe her. Caliste has come to this

<sup>75</sup>Callisto, an Arcadian nymph from mythology.

peaceful place to express the struggle she is experiencing between the love she feels for Tircis and the modesty which keeps her from revealing it to him. Like Tircis, she converses with the birds, wishing to be as happy and free as they are to follow their hearts. She becomes sleepy and lies down to rest. While Caliste sleeps, the three shepherds quietly steal back into the open where they compliment her slumber and where Tircis bids all aspects of nature--birds, winds, rivers--to refrain from waking her. She does awaken, however, and is surprised to find that Tircis has followed her. He admits he could do nothing else, and he wants only to die. His friends beseech Caliste to treat him tenderly. She yields and says her heart is his. Tircis is so overcome with joy that he fears he may die of happiness. A pastoral lover always faces death whether through pain or pleasure. Two Satyrs, who apparently were also suitors of Caliste, appear just in time to see her choose Tircis. They are angered by being rejected, but she declares that Destiny is fulfilled. Rather than death, the Satyrs, like George Dandin, turn to wine:

The Bottle is a sovereign Cure  
Of all the Evils we endure.

(Ozell, 101)

All pastoral characters together call the rustic divinities--fauns and dryads--to come out and dance.

Six Fauns and six Dryads emerge from the woods and dance, after which they move aside to reveal a shepherd, Philinte, and a shepherdess, Climène, engaged in a musical lover's quarrel.<sup>76</sup> Each combatant begins by saying

<sup>76</sup>This "Dépit amoureux" is imitated from an ode of Horace--Donec gratus eram tibi, Ode IX of Book III. See D-M, VII, 372. Molière's early play, The Lovers' Quarrel (Le Dépit amoureux, 1656) is generally thought to be based in part on the same source.

that once there was nothing stronger than their love; then each claims to share love with another now--Philinte with Cloris and Climène with Myrtil. They have barely uttered these words, however, when the thought of each other brings them back together again. All the characters in the playlet (Climène, Caliste, Lycaste, Ménandre, Philinte, Tircis, and the two Satyrs) conclude:

Thus 'tis with you Women, thus 'tis with you Men;  
Whene'er you fall out, 'tis to fall in again.

(Ozell, 102)

The Fauns and Dryads return to dance. Then a ritornelle for flutes is followed by a choral finale, sung by the shepherds and shepherdesses, that ends the pastoral with a salute to love, while three little Dryads and three little Fauns mime the lyrics.

When we love, in Life each thing  
Is pleasant. When two Hearts unite,  
An Ardor, follow'd by Delight,  
Makes one eternal Spring.  
Let's enjoy, let's enjoy the Diversions we find  
In innocent Pleasure and Love, when it's kind.

(Ozell, 103)

At the beginning of Act III, Aristione, in the presence of her court, expresses how much she appreciates the entertainment (Figure 82).<sup>77</sup> Turning to Eriphile, Aristione urges her daughter to show some gratitude for all the favors given her, and to choose one of the princes. The young princess is politely evasive and then cunningly suggests that the decision should be made for her by Sostrate. Firmly declining this "honor," Sostrate says he has good reason for disqualifying himself--desperately suggesting

<sup>77</sup>This Brissart engraving, which appeared in the 1682 Molière edition, must have been based on the artist's concept of the court production because the play was not performed in Paris until 1688.



Figure 82. The Magnificent Lovers (Brissart)

With Anaxarque, the astrologer,  
 Clitidas, the court jester, and  
 Prince Iphicrate on hand,  
 ARISTIONE thanks Prince Timoclès  
 for the "Pastoral" he has just  
 presented to her daughter,  
 Princess Eriphile:

Trifles such as these can agreeably  
 amuse the most serious-minded.

The Magnificent Lovers

Act III, Scene 1

that perhaps he would betray a friend who is in love with the princess. Iphicrate remarks that this "friend" might be Sostrate himself, but before that point can be pursued, the astrologer, Anaxarque, offers to read Eriphile's fortune. The young princess is somewhat dubious, but the two princes are in favor of an astrological forecast. Always silent until called upon, Sostrate tells Aristione that, perhaps due to his coarseness, he has always found astrology "too good to be true" and has had difficulty in comprehending and believing it. Despite Aristione's devotion to astrology, she has no wish to debate the issue further, and suggests that they go to the grotto.

While the princesses and their suite promenade to the grotto a "Symphony of Pleasures" is played. Upon their arrival, eight statues, each carrying a torch in her hand,<sup>78</sup> leave their niches and do a dance depicting a series of sculptural poses and formations.

In Act IV Aristione again praises the entertainment. But following this latest diversion, she departs from the crowd to have a private talk with her daughter. Trying to persuade Eriphile to confide in her, Aristione receives only a polite request to wait for an answer. Eriphile is grateful for her mother's consideration but she cannot deliver a decision. This conversation is interrupted by the astonishing appearance of Venus, accompanied by four little Cupids, in a chariot. The goddess tells Aristione that the immortals wish to reward her with the best possible match for her daughter, and they will give her a sign. Her life will be saved by the man who should marry Eriphile. Immediately following this

<sup>78</sup>This description is based on the livret and the musical score; the 1682 text calls for two flambeaux (D-M, VII, 445).

divine revelation, it is learned, in a scene between Anaxarque and his son Cléon, that the apparition of Venus was merely a trick devised by the astrologer, who used Aristione's honest susceptibility for his own advantage. The princes have bribed him to help them. Since Iphicrate's gifts and promises were greater, Anaxarque will plot to make him the victor. The astrologer has arranged for men to attack Aristione so that Iphicrate can rescue her. It will appear that the prophecy has been fulfilled. The conspirators, father and son, hastily exit to avoid the approaching Eriphile.

Cléonice brings Sostrate to her mistress and then leaves the two young people alone. Directly confronting Sostrate, Eriphile asks him if he loves her, saying she has seen love in his eyes. She reveals she would have been his except for the difficulties of such a marriage. (There is no social comment as in George Dandin; difference in rank is merely a dramatic convenience.) Now the matter seems to be in the hands of the gods, and Eriphile must submit to the choice of Heaven. Sostrate confesses his love, and says her admission makes him the happiest of men. Like a pastoral lover, he is willing to die merely with this blessing. She sends him away before she admits anything more.

Cléonice returns to see Eriphile in a confused state and recommends dancers to soothe her. "Four Pantomomists, as a sample of their skill, adjust their movements and their steps to the uneasiness of the young Princess Eriphile."<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup>In the original production only one dancer--Saint-André--was from the earlier group of Three Pantomimists. This interlude recalls the Fifth Interlude of The Princess of Elis in which shepherdesses are summoned to sing for the melancholy heroine.

Act V begins as Clitidas rushes in frantically searching for the princess. When he spies her he bursts out with the news that Heaven has revealed who her husband will be. But Eriphile is uninterested and does not want to see the jester. The unexpected word from Clitidas that the choice is Sostrate, however, makes her change her mind. Then Clitidas, like La Montagne in The Bores, refuses to talk because of hurt feelings and lest he "interrupt" Madam. After much pleading from her, he begins a long-winded tale of a wild-boar that Aristione and her suite encountered in the forest. Eriphile's eagerness for him to get to the important information makes him cut short a graphic description of the vicious beast and resume relating the events. Aristione threw a dart at the boar, but injured him only enough to anger him. Sostrate, Clitidas continues, appeared at that moment. Because "a little bit of cowardice" prevented Clitidas from seeing all the details of the struggle, he did not actually witness the killing (like Moron, he is not fond of wild, dangerous animals), but when the peril and commotion were over, Aristione was calling Sostrate her deliverer.

Unaware that the whole situation was a trick of Anaxarque that merely worked against him, Aristione arrives to confirm the edict of the gods. Both Eriphile and Sostrate are wonderfully happy. Cléonice comes then bearing the news that, with regard to this heavenly arrangement, Iphicrate and Timoclès believe Anaxarque has deceived them, since neither of them was chosen, and have done the astrologer some harm. Both princes are outraged that a man of lesser rank could be the victor, but Timoclès, the more good-natured of the two rivals, says the grudge will not last. The kind and understanding Aristione forgives everything, and, to crown the happy events of the day, invites everyone to the Pythian

games.<sup>80</sup>

As a prelude to the musical finale, a Priestess and two Greek High Ministers offer praise to their god, a thinly veiled tribute to Louis XIV:

A GREEK WOMAN: Nothing, nothing can withstand  
That forcefull charming God's Command.

(Ozell, 118)<sup>81</sup>

A Greek Chorus expresses the hope that he will listen to their music. The Pythian Games program continues with four ballet-entries. The first entry is by six men "nearly nude," each carrying an axe on his shoulder, who execute a dance to demonstrate their prowess, after which they retire to the side of the stage. The second entry is by six vaulters who, in rhythm, show their skill on wooden horses carried in by slaves.<sup>82</sup> The third entry is by eight slaves who, after being led in by four slaveholders, dance for joy at receiving their freedom. The fourth entry is

<sup>80</sup>The Pythian games included musical, literary, and athletic contests and were held at Delphi (at one time called Pytho) as a pan-Hellenic festival in honor of Apollo. They occurred every four years, midway between each Olympiad (four year period), and alternated with the Olympic games, given at the beginning of each Olympiad.

<sup>81</sup>Some confusion exists regarding the High Minister roles (D-M, VII, 465). The livret calls for two Sacrificateurs (male performers); and two male singers, Gaye and Langez, sang these parts. But in a corrected version of the musical score and in the 1682 edition the roles are given to two Greek Women. The Prunières edition of Lully's music requires singing parts for a Greek man (Gaye was a baritone) and two Greek Women. One of these women may have been the Priestess, performed by Mlle Hilaire; the other may have been Langez, who sang two other female roles for Molière--one in The Would-be Gentleman and one in Psyché.

<sup>82</sup>Gymnastics and skilled horsemanship were fitting subjects for use in a comedy-ballet because they were commonly associated with aristocratic amusements. In Les Contemporains de Molière, II, 217, Fournel says about court spectacle: "It consisted of tourneys, tilting at the ring, jousting, hunting parties, games of all sorts. . . ." The Princess of Elis begins with preparations for the chase.



by four men and four women, dressed as Greeks and armed for battle, who engage in a combat ("une manière de jeu pour les armes"). This "battle" may be a form of the ancient Pyrrhic war dance, but, as mentioned below, their "weapons" seem to be bells and drums. A tribune is opened by slaves and a fanfare is played as a prelude to the arrival of Apollo.<sup>83</sup> The Greek Chorus sings of the luster this place derives from their god. The fifth entry is Apollo and his retinue of Young Gentlemen. The stage directions outline the action:

Apollo, to the sound of trumpets and violins, enters by the portico, preceded by six young men, who bear laurel wreathed around a stick, a golden sun at the top, with the royal device in the form of a trophy. The six young men, in order to dance with Apollo, give their trophy to the six men with axes, and begin, with Apollo, an heroic dance, to which join, in various manners, the six men bearing the trophy, the four armed women, with their bells, and the four armed men, with their drums, while the six trumpeters, the kettledrum player, the High Ministers, the Priestess, and the musical chorus accompany all this, by joining in at different intervals; which finishes the Pythian games, and the whole divertissement. 84

Specifically, the diversion concludes with a triumphant "Minuet of Trumpets," a grand climax fit for a King.<sup>85</sup>

Music for The Magnificent Lovers is more complex than that for any

<sup>83</sup>In Greek mythology Apollo is one of the great gods of Olympus, typifying the sun's light and life-giving power.

<sup>84</sup>D-M, VII, 568-469. See Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière on the famous device of Louis XIV, Nec Pluribus Impar (Figure 46).

<sup>85</sup>Louis XIV probably performed the role of Apollo (representing the Sun) in the première, with the same courtiers who appeared in the First Interlude as the Young Gentlemen. The vers for the King pronounce; "I am the Source of brilliant Light." (Ozell, 119) For Monsieur le Grand, the Marquis de Villeroy, and the Marquis de Rassent, the vers offer praises to the Sun.

of the earlier comedy-ballets. As an example: the Pastoral is a miniature opera. But the dramatic function of the music as part of the play is tenuous. All of the interludes are merely entertainments-within-the-play, and the play's characters are involved only as spectators. And none of the esprit gaulois of other comedy-ballet songs and dances emerges in these musical scenes. It is unfortunate, for instance, that the Clitidas-Anaxarque antagonism could not have been translated into musical terms. The Magnificent Lovers was a dazzling tribute to Louis XIV; its spectacular musical interludes reflected the grandeur of the King and, by extension, the grandeur of France.<sup>86</sup> This comedy-ballet, however, reflects little of the style and genius of Molière.

#### THE WOULD-BE GENTLEMAN

As Molière returned to his French Sganarelle for one of the best short comedy-ballets, Love's the Best Doctor, after the rather insipid The Princess of Elis, he again, after The Magnificent Lovers, by contrast, refocused on bourgeois characters for The Would-be Gentleman, his most celebrated comedy-ballet. The Would-be Gentleman (Le Bourgeois gentilhomme) was produced for the court at Chambord and at Saint-Germain-en-Laye during October and November of 1670. How this production, with comedy and ballet

<sup>86</sup>Because the First and Third Interludes of The Magnificent Lovers were considered to be particularly outstanding achievements, they were revived for two other productions. The First Interlude became part of the Prologue for the Ballet of Ballets of 1671 (See Chapter V: Related Works). Scenes 1-5 of the Pastoral (Third Interlude), with a new scene interpolated between the second and third scenes, reappeared in Act I of Lully's Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus (1672); the "Dépit amoureux" and the chorus that followed it from the Third Interlude recurred in Act II of this production (D-M, VII, 471).

so successfully united, came about may have been due to a series of fortunate, if somewhat accidental, developments.

The visit of a Turkish envoy during the spring of 1670 and stories brought to court by Laurent d'Arvieux from his trips to the Middle East caused an amused interest in things Turkish to become la mode. The King, or perhaps some members of his court, may have expressed the desire to see a dramatic presentation in which these silly Turks would be appropriately ridiculed. At any rate, by August of 1670 Molière was working on a play that would include a Turkish scene. At Auteuil he consulted with Chevalier d'Arvieux on Turkish manners and, with the tailor Baraillon, on Turkish costumes.<sup>87</sup> For dialogue and action, there were models from the French theatre Molière could draw upon. La Soeur (1645) by Rotrou, a playwright Molière knew and whose works he had performed, is the comedy which is generally thought to have been Molière's major source, because the Turkish nonsense vocabulary spoken in The Would-be Gentleman is similar to that spoken by the valet Ergaste in La Soeur.<sup>88</sup>

While Molière undoubtedly was affected by the revival of interest in comic Turks, he may already have had another comic situation and character in mind for a play--the adventures of a parvenu. The desire to be like a gentleman is a theme Molière could have taken from Cervantes by way of a French play La Suite de Dom Quichotte (1639) by Guérin de Bouscal. The pretentious man from La Mancha is dazzled by notions of courtly

<sup>87</sup>Laurent d'Arvieux, Mémoires (Paris, 1735), IV, 252-253.

<sup>88</sup>Leo Claretie, "La Turquie dans Molière," Le Moliériste, IX (1887-1888), 353-357. For an extensive discussion of The Would-be Gentleman sources see Abel Lefranc, "Le Bourgeois gentilhomme," Revue des Cours et Conférences, XVII (1908-1909), 637-646 and 692-694.

chivalry, is foolishly flattered when called a man of quality, and is berated by his sensible wife for insisting on a son-in-law of rank.<sup>89</sup> But foolish vanity and social aspiration, always French, were heightened during the time of Louis XIV. As La Fontaine says:

La sottise vanité nous est particulière:  
C'est proprement le mal français. 90

Grimarest, discussing The Would-be Gentleman, repeats the rumor that Molière took the idea from Gandouin, a hat-seller, who spent a great deal of money on a woman Molière knew, including giving her a house at Meudon. But even Grimarest is skeptical of this story.<sup>91</sup> A fascinating article, on the other hand, has appeared recently revealing that not only did a family of wealthy cloth merchants named Jourdain exist, but they came from the neighborhood of Molière's youth, and an inventory of their living room coincides with properties used in the play.<sup>92</sup> An older notion about a real-life source says that Molière based the lover Cléonte's description of Lucile, played by Armande, on his own attitude toward his wife--infuriated, but irretrievably captivated. Ideas for the Philosophy scene may have been suggested by Molière's recollections of grammar lessons at the Collège de Clermont and a contemporary book on words (De Cordemoy's Discours physique de la parole, 1668). Grimarest also says that Molière tried, in vain, for the sake of realistic effect, to get a hat from the

<sup>89</sup>Morley, pp. 272-273.

<sup>90</sup>"Foolish vanity is a peculiarity of ours; it is rightly the French sickness." Quoted in Moland, X, 230.

<sup>91</sup>Grimarest, pp. 82-83.

<sup>92</sup>Elisabeth Maxfield-Miller, "The Real Monsieur Jourdain of the Bourgeois Gentilhomme (1670)," Studies in Philology, LVI (1959), 62-73.

natural philosopher Rohault for his philosophy teacher to wear.<sup>93</sup> But, regardless of what people or current materials Molière may have used, there are also traces of borrowings from the time-proven comedy of Aristophanes and the Roman playwrights--for example, the philosophy lesson which parallels the Socrates-Strepsiades scene in The Clouds and Jourdain's willingness to give his wife away which recalls the ending of The Menaechmi.

The sources of the comedy are fairly well established, but when did The Would-be Gentleman become a comedy-ballet? It is known from the Mémoires of Arvieux that Lully was included in the Auteuil consultations, and music must have figured in the Turkish scene from the early planning stages. Lully, indeed, may have helped to instigate the idea, having himself performed a Turkish ballet in 1660.<sup>94</sup> It is, consequently, somewhat romantic to imagine, as Larroumet suggests,<sup>95</sup> that Molière hurriedly composed his play during the trip to Chambord, after the royal call had come for a musical entertainment. And yet, there may be some reason to believe that Molière had not completed the scenario before his troupe, according to La Grange, left Paris on October 3. More opportunity for music and dancing than just a Turkish ballet was probably requested, and prepared for, by Lully. The two collaborators had ten days before the

<sup>93</sup>Grimarest, pp. 79-80. The theories of Molière's friend Jacques Rohault (1620-1675) were very controversial. A follower of Descartes, he published in 1671 a treatise on the proofs of reason by experience. He was accused of treating man as a machine was called a heretic.

<sup>94</sup>See Chapter VI: Dance.

<sup>95</sup>Gustave Larroumet, "Le Bourgeois gentilhomme," Revue des Cours et Conférences, IX (1900-1901), 352.

first performance to accommodate musical scenes to the comedy. Therefore, because there happened to be a current rage for Turkish satire, because Molière happened to be developing a play that could accommodate Turks, and because Lully, for the King and court, undoubtedly pressed for more musical spectacle, the action of The Would-be Gentleman includes many musical incidents and, from its opening scenes, moves beyond the Turkish Ceremony toward a grand balletic finale.

When The Would-be Gentleman was transferred to Paris, music and dances were retained. Robinet, in his Lettre en vers à Monsieur of November 22, announced the première:

Mardi, l'on y donne au public,  
De bout en bout et ric à ric,  
Son charmant Bourgeois gentilhomme,  
C'est-à-dire presque tout comme  
A Chambord et dans Saint-Germain  
L'a vu notre grand souverain,  
Mêmes avecques des entrées  
De ballet les mieux préparées,  
D'harmonieux et grands concerts,  
Et tous les ornements divers  
Qui firent de ce gai régale  
La petite oie à la royale. 96

Actually, the play opened on November 23 (Sunday). It was an enormous success, and, during Molière's lifetime, brought some of the highest box office returns of any of his productions. Financial records of 1672 show that music and dancing were still included.<sup>97</sup> While some of the musical

<sup>96</sup>"Tuesday he gives to the public his charming Bourgeois gentilhomme, every bit of it from beginning to end--that is to say, nearly entirely as our great sovereign saw it at Chambord and in Saint-Germain, with the best prepared ballet-entrées, harmonious and grand concerts, and all the diverse ornaments that made of this gay entertainment a royal treat." Quoted in Moland, X, 241.

<sup>97</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 404 for May, 1672 expenses; Jules Bonnassies, La Musique à la Comédie-Française (Paris, 1874), p. 412 for August expenses and p. 414 for September and October expenses.

scenes have been minimized and the finale eliminated in some productions, The Would-be Gentleman can hardly be considered without its "ornaments," without accepting that the play is in the fullest sense a comedy-ballet.

A livret with argument and verses of the ballet for The Would-be Gentleman was published by Ballard, describing the Molière-Lully piece as a "comedy-ballet given by the King to his court in the chateau of Chambord."<sup>98</sup> On March 18, 1671 (privilege December 31, 1670) Pierre Le Monnier printed The Would-be Gentleman text with its musical scenes described as a "comedy-ballet presented at Chambord for the diversion of the King."<sup>99</sup> The text of this play is the only one of Molière's comedies with music that is specifically designated in its original edition as a "comédie-ballet." No reason is given by Guibert for the long time between the granting of the privilege and the printing of the play. Any number of reasons might have accounted for this delay, but for one thing, Molière did not have the printer transcribe the livret directly. In the text, the act divisions are different from those in the livret, and the Turkish Ceremony is expanded to include more stage directions.<sup>100</sup>

In the livret, The Would-be Gentleman is divided into three acts.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup>Figure 83. Guibert, II, 465-468. The livret appears in D-M, VIII, 230-236.

<sup>99</sup>Guibert, I, 307-311.

<sup>100</sup>The livret version was used when the Turkish Ceremony was revised for the Ballet of the Ballets in 1671. A variation of the Turkish Ceremony is included in D-M, VIII, 183-193, based on an even longer version from the 1682 edition with modifications from the edition of 1734. The stage directions are more explicit and the dialogue between the Mufti and the Turks concerning Jourdain's religion is included.

<sup>101</sup>The Would-be Gentleman is usually performed now in three parts, corresponding to the acts of the livret.

LE  
BOVRGEOIS  
GENTIL-HOMME;

*Comedie-Ballet,*

Donné par le Roy à toute la Cour  
dans le Chasteau de Chambort,  
au mois d'Octobre. 1670.



*D. de Y. 6048.*

A PARIS,  
Chez ROBERT BALLARD, seul Imprimeur  
du Roy pour la Musique.  
M. DC. LXX.  
AVEC PRIVILEGE DE SA MAIESTE.

Figure 83. Livret of The Would-be Gentleman



But the 1671 text is based on the standard comedy-ballet structure; it is arranged so that a major musical scene ends each act, thus dividing the play into five acts. The order and balance of the play's elements is praised by Jean Hytier in an article on The Would-be Gentleman written especially for the Comédie Française 1955 tour of the United States.<sup>102</sup> Considering the length of the five acts, he points out that the production is about 1:2:3:2:1. But thematically Hytier separates the play into three parts: (1) the education of Jourdain, (2) Jourdain's family life, and (3) Jourdain in the whirlwind of his megalomania. Lancaster suggests that probably Molière originally intended The Would-be Gentleman as a one-act.<sup>103</sup> If so, this "one-act" would have been the core of the play, which was then embellished by additional musical spectacle. The core likely consisted of the introduction of Jourdain, the love complications, and the resolution of the love complications as Jourdain is made a "Mamamouchi" and outwitted by his own foolishness. In order to determine how the play may have been augmented, it is useful to look at Böttinger's breakdown of the play into two elements--the balletic (I) and the comedic (II).<sup>104</sup> He classifies the Turkish Ceremony with the comic scenes, while the ballet he considers to consist of the musical portions of the Music Master and Dancing Master scenes, the Banquet, and the "Ballet of Nations." What may have been intended as a character comedy ending in a Turkish delight could have been expanded to include these three additional musical portions

<sup>102</sup>Jean Hytier, "Molière and Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme," France in the United States Monthly (October-November, 1955), p. 16.

<sup>103</sup>Lancaster, Part III, II, 724.

<sup>104</sup>Friedrich Böttinger, Die 'Comédie-ballets' von Molière-Lully (Berlin, 1931), pp. 131-134.

(Figure 84).<sup>105</sup> These added scenes are incorporated into the Dorimène sub-plot: the Music Master and Dancing Master are preparing an entertainment for Dorimène; the banquet is given for Dorimène; and the entertainment, promised in the opening scenes, is eventually presented for her. Each of the scenes is an increasingly fantastic expression of Jourdain's desire to do what persons of quality do. Therefore, the musical frame, which probably resulted from court demands for spectacle, became an integral part of the play, and the play is incomplete without it. The finale entertainment is the ultimate phase of the noble life Jourdain emulates.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>105</sup>Structure of The Would-be Gentleman.

<sup>106</sup>English translations of Le Bourgeois gentilhomme: (1) Baker and Miller, II, 219-279, as The Cit Turned Gentleman, based on the 1734 edition scene divisions, uses the Turkish Ceremony variation, but omits the "Ballet of Nations," (2) Morris Bishop in Eight Plays by Molière (New York, 1957), 327-399, as The Would-be Gentleman, in five acts with no scene divisions, uses the Turkish Ceremony variation, but omits the "Ballet of Nations," (3) George Graveley in Six Prose Comedies of Molière (London, 1968), 229-317, (done in 1948) as The Self-Made Gentleman, in five acts with no scene divisions, uses the Turkish Ceremony variation, but omits the "Ballet of Nations," (4) W. Somerset Maugham in Theatre Arts, XXXIX (1955), November 49-64, as The Perfect Gentleman, in two acts only, ending with the banquet, (5) Ozell, Book II, Vol. IV, 223-288, as The Gentleman Cit., (6) Van Laun, V, 203-276, as The Citizen Who Apes the Nobleman, based on the 1734 edition scene divisions with the Turkish Ceremony variation, (7) Waller, VII, 77-223, as The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman, with the "Ballet of Nations" included but not translated, (8) Wood in Molière: Five Plays, 1-62, as The Would-be Gentleman, in five acts with no scene divisions, uses the Turkish Ceremony variation, but omits the "Ballet of Nations."

Van Laun notes (p. 195): "It is difficult to give the correct meaning of the French title, Le Bourgeois gentilhomme. Mr. Ozell translates it The Gentleman Cit, which to my mind gives the idea of a gentleman who was also a citizen." He objects to the Baker and Miller title, "The Cit turned Gentleman, which is not correct, for Monsieur Jourdain never becomes a gentleman. Besides, in Molière's time the word gentilhomme indicated a certain noble descent or rank. . . . M. Jourdain was not a noble by manners or birth, but does his best to imitate one: I first intended to call the play The Citizen who would become a Nobleman; but Jourdain does not desire to be ennobled but only strives to imitate the man of quality's elegant manners, splendid apparel, loose way of living, and learning." The play's title is a humorous contradiction in terms. It would have been impossible for a bourgeois to be a gentilhomme. To capture the incongruity, one might have to say "the middle-class aristocrat."

THE WOULD-BE GENTLEMAN

<u>Livret</u>	Text	Hytier	Böttiger
Act I	Act I, Scenes 1-2 Song Musical Dialogue Dance Demonstration (First Interlude)	EDUCATION OF	I Ballet Music Master and Dancing Master
Act II	Act II, Scenes 1-5 Dialogue Fencing Master Philosopher Tailor Tailor's Assistants (Second Interlude)	MONSIEUR JOURDAIN	II Comedy  I Ballet
	Act III, Scenes 1-16  (Third Interlude)	JOURDAIN'S FAMILY LIFE	II Comedy I Ballet Cooks  (Banquet)
	Act IV, Scenes 1-4 Banquet Turkish Ceremony (Fourth Interlude)	WHIRLWIND OF	Drinking Songs II Comedy
Act III	Act V, Scenes 1-6 Dénouement "Ballet of Nations"	JOURDAIN'S MEGALOMANIA	I Ballet "Ballet of Nations"

Core of play indicated within dotted lines.

Figure 84. Structure of The Would-be Gentleman

Monsieur Jourdain is a merchant who knows the cloth business (he detects the Tailor's filched fabric) and knows how to keep accounts (he inventories Dorante's debt), but his comic flaw is foolish vanity that drives him to achieve social stature above his station. He is a parvenu. His money has been inherited and acquired through marriage and his own hard work, but now he seems to be retired and devoting full-time effort to his obsession to live like the nobility. It is the excess to which he takes this desire for advancement that makes him seem ridiculous and puts his family's welfare in jeopardy so that his wishes must be circumvented by tricks. The nouveau-riche Jourdain is perhaps more sympathetic than George Dandin and Monsieur de Pourceaugnac because he is, for the most part, so well-meaning, naïve, and harmless. His credulity makes him easy prey for flatterers, exploiters, and tricksters as he attempts to educate himself, to associate with nobility, and to provide an aristocratic husband for his daughter. The parade of tutors, tailors, cooks, and entertainers in M. Jourdain's service produces a lavish carnival-time atmosphere, a gaiety out of which the complete madness of the Turkish Ceremony and the high spirits of the "Ballet of Nations" are thoroughly appropriate.

All of the action of The Would-be Gentleman takes place in the house of Monsieur Jourdain. After an instrumental overture, the play begins with a music student composing an air--words and music--for an entertainment M. Jourdain has requested. As he finishes, the Music Master and the Dancing Master, employed by Jourdain in his attempt to ape the fashions and manners of the nobles, enter with their assistants to prepare for the morning's activities. These two pedagogues are thriving because of Jourdain's foolishness. As the Music Master says, their employer's

"visions of gentility and gallantry" have given them secure positions and a nice income (douce rente). Frequently stroking his bag of coins, the Music Master shows that money is his prime concern; it makes up for a patron's lack of discernment. The Dancing Master, on the other hand, is more interested in applause for his elegant poses and gestures, and deplores the idea of being judged by a vulgar and ignorant critic. This pair of opposites--one mercenary, one vain--are both conceited snobs with far greater pretensions than their benefactor.

When Monsieur Jourdain appears, he is a ridiculous figure, attired in a night cap and gaudy red exercise breeches, which are revealed as he twirls around and, like a peacock, fans out his garishly fancy morning gown.<sup>107</sup> He has been told by his tailor that people of quality wear such dressing-gowns in the morning, and he relies completely on people who have knowledge of such matters. The first request Jourdain makes of the Music Master and the Dancing Master is an outrage: he wants to see the "little drollery" of songs and dancing that has been prepared for him. The Dancing Master nearly faints to hear their artistry referred to in such a manner; however, the Music Master retains his composure, takes the lead in praising Jourdain's appearance, and persuades him to listen first to the air just completed for his approval. Jourdain, making sure his lackeys are alert to his every call and that he was not cheated by having a mere student work on his serenade, signals for the song to begin. The female vocalist who starts to sing the air, however, is interrupted several times while Jourdain decides how he should be dressed for the occasion--gown on or off. During the performance, Jourdain nods sleepily.

<sup>107</sup>See Chapter IX: Costume on Jourdain's gown.

When he concludes that the song to "fair Iris" is dismal, the Music Master responds condescendingly, "It is necessary, Monsieur, that the tune be suited to the words." By contrast, Jourdain then illustrates his untutored taste in music by singing a song himself about "wicked Jenny." His song is robust and lively, but obviously not cultured or fashionable. Veiled only from the gullible Monsieur Jourdain is the scorn beneath the Music Master and Dancing Master's polite compliments.

Like typical monomaniacs, both the Dancing Master and the Music Master defend the importance of their respective arts, thoroughly convincing Jourdain that singing and dancing are necessities in the life of a person of quality. For the "drollery" that follows, the Music Master offers an exercise "on the various passions that can be expressed through music." He tells Jourdain to imagine that the singers are dressed as shepherds.

JOURDAIN: But why shepherds again? It always seems to be shepherds.

MUSIC MASTER: Because if you are to have people discoursing in song, you must for verisimilitude conform to the pastoral convention. Singing has always been associated with shepherds. It would not seem natural for princes or ordinary folk for that matter, to be indulging their passions in song.

(Wood, p. 8)<sup>108</sup>

M. Jourdain's natural, unaffected inclinations are suppressed in favor of stylish, acceptable notions, a contrast between nature and "society" that is a recurring theme in the play. Despite Jourdain's understandable

<sup>108</sup>In the original text this response to Jourdain is from the Dancing Master. Wood, as well as Graveley and Bishop, give it to the Music Master, presumably because singing is more appropriately in his domain.

boredom with the pastoral convention (a boredom Molière may have shared), the musical dialogue is a standard ménage à trois between a reluctant shepherdess, the persistent shepherd who wins her, and a melancholy shepherd who is left without anyone to love. The loser joins with the happy couple, however, in concluding that nothing compares with love.<sup>109</sup> As the Music Master's pastoral playlet ends, the Dancing Master summons his dancers.

JOURDAIN: They aren't going to be shepherds again?

DANCING MASTER: They are whatever you please.

(Wood, p. 9)

The dancers perform successive variations of the popular court dances, including the sarabande, bourrée, galliarde, and canaries, but it is the Dancing Master who takes center stage during most of the presentation.<sup>110</sup>

There is no break whatever between Act I and Act II. Immediately after the ballet-entry ("first interlude" in the text), discussion is resumed about the forthcoming musical divertissement (serenade-ballet) planned for a lady of quality whom M. Jourdain wants to entertain. But the Music Master informs Jourdain that a gentleman ought to have "a little musical at-home" every week, and proceeds to tell him what music he will need. (There is no comment here from M. Jourdain like the bourgeois Sganarelle's perceptive "Vous êtes orfevre, Monsieur Josse" in Love's the

<sup>109</sup>John Van Erde describes Louis Seigner's 1955 interpretation of Jourdain in this scene: "The singers of the 'Dialogue en Musique' see M. Seigner distracted by an undoubtedly feminine attraction outside the window, they sneak up behind him to share his discovery, and then tip-toe to their original position, as he resumes listening like a naughty boy." Le Bourgeois in New York, French Review, XXXIX (1955), 473.

<sup>110</sup>See Chapter VI: Dance on this character.

Best Doctor.) The Dancing Master then leads Jourdain, with hat, through a minuet,<sup>l11</sup> the type of dance to be performed in the entertainment, and he demonstrates for the parvenu how a gentleman bows to a lady.

The music and dancing lesson is brought to a close as one of Jourdain's lackeys announces the arrival of the Fencing Master. During a brief fencing match with Jourdain, the Fencing Master's character and occupation are reflected in his speech--an unrelenting assault of words. Another monomaniac, the Fencing Master disarms the startled assemblage with the assertion that his profession is superior to the useless arts of dance and music. The jealous Dancing Master violently objects to this thrust and nearly challenges the fencer to a duel.

DANCING MASTER: He's a funny creature with his  
leather upholstered stomach.

FENCING MASTER: My little hop-merchant, I'll make  
you hop in a minute. And you, my little fiddle  
scraper, I'll make you sing a pretty tune.

DANCING MASTER: Monsieur iron-beater, I'll teach you  
your trade.

JOURDAIN (to the Dancing Master): Are you crazy?  
To quarrel with a man who understands tierce  
and quart, and can kill by demonstrative  
reason?

Jourdain is trying desperately to calm the three of them when the Professor of Philosophy arrives. After pointing out the absurdity of anger like a man of bon sens, the Philosopher begins to arbitrate and restore order but then proceeds merely to defend his own profession above all the others. M. Jourdain's unsuccessful attempts to separate the four "gentlemen" result in a wild melee with more name-calling and a violent

<sup>l11</sup>See Chapter VI: Dance.



exchange of blows. As the fight takes the four combatants through the door and out of the room, Jourdain decides not to spoil his gown by involving himself further in the fray.

When the Philosopher returns, he is disheveled, spectacles askew and book in shreds, but ready to proceed with the academic pursuits that will supposedly make M. Jourdain a learned man. The Professor is a traditional Latin-quoting pedant. But Jourdain is awed and is reluctant to reveal a lack of formal education to his tutor.

PHILOSOPHER: You know Latin I suppose?

JOURDAIN: Yes, but just go on as if I didn't.  
Tell me what it means.

(Wood, p. 15)

An excruciating silence follows each of the Philosopher's suggested discussion topics--logic, moral philosophy, and physics. Jourdain rejects all these weighty subjects, and finally asks to learn spelling. A lesson that might have been very complex is made ridiculously simple, and, in turn, what is ridiculously simple becomes extremely complex, as the Philosopher teaches M. Jourdain to pronounce vowels and selected consonants (Figure 85). Monsieur Jourdain then asks the Philosopher to help him compose a note to the lady he admires. Determining the manner in which this billet doux is to be written leads to an amazing revelation. Jourdain learns that "Whatever isn't prose is verse and anything that isn't verse is prose." (Wood, p. 18) In effect, he discovers he has been speaking the literary form of prose unknowingly for forty years. Again, M. Jourdain's nature is in conflict with a popular misconception, for as Susanne Langer points out:

The belief that prose is the same thing as conversational language is so generally held



Figure 85. Monsieur Jourdain and the Philosopher

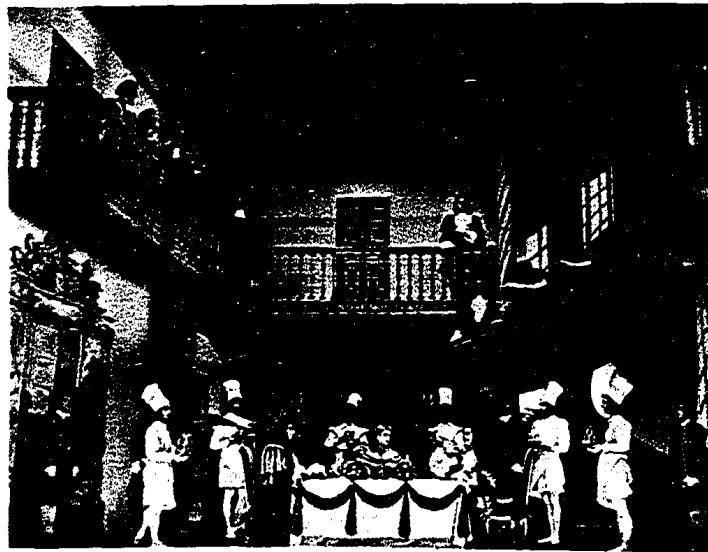


Figure 86. The Would-be Gentleman, banquet scene

that everyone is innocently ready to laugh at the gentleman who was amazed to find that all his life he had been talking prose. In my opinion, M. Jourdain had reason to be étonné; his literary instinct told him that conversation was something different from prose, and only lack of philosophy forced him to accept the popular error. 112

The Philosopher analyzes and rearranges in every possible way a simple sentiment to the lady, which M. Jourdain has submitted for polishing, only to conclude, to M. Jourdain's delight, that the original way was the best. The "philosophy" lesson seems to M. Jourdain to have been a great success when he is able to arrive at such worthy results.

After the Professor leaves, M. Jourdain is left alone for barely a moment when he begins to rail about the tardiness and neglect of his tailor. The Tailor has come in during this rampage, and when Jourdain turns, he collides with the Tailor's assistant who holds the suit he has ordered. M. Jourdain's complaints that his new stockings and shoes fit badly are dismissed by the Master Tailor as merely "imagination." The would-be gentleman is not really pleased with the suit either which is, in fact, an ostentatious and absurd get-up, but the Tailor tells him it is what gentlemen of quality wear. Once more Jourdain's natural inclination, which is right, is squelched. Attendant tailor boys enter and make a dance of changing Jourdain from his exercise clothes to the new suit. They convince him that he likes the clothes; and the strutting peacock pays them handsomely for their flattery, for calling him "Monseigneur" and "Your Grace," names he cannot resist. The tailor boys then dance to show

<sup>112</sup>Langer, p. 257. Molière, whose prose comedies were by the standard of the time very "realistic," must have been well aware of the difficulties of writing conversational dialogue.

their gratitude for his generosity (in the text the "second interlude").

Acts I and II seems little more than a series of actor's turns in which Jourdain is misguided by one person after another who is supposed to be helping him--the hypocritical dancer and musician, the illogical fencer and philosopher, and a tailor with bad taste. But the plot of the play begins to unfold in Act III as the people of the household are introduced. Monsieur Jourdain is about to go out to show off his new clothes and the lackeys in his service, and calls for Nicole, the maid, to instruct her about preparing the house for guests. The sight of him so absurdly attired sends Nicole into an uncontrollable fit of hysterics. Although she denies that he is the object of her laughter, every time he tries to give her orders and she catches sight of him again, she bursts out laughing once more.<sup>113</sup> Nicole's giggles build to great howling guffaws so that she finally collapses, exhausted, on the floor, while, undoubtedly, Jourdain's lackeys, snickering in the background, try to hide their amusement. As Nicole's convulsions subside, Madame Jourdain, a sensible, clear-sighted individual who is satisfied with her social position, enters and caps the situation by asking: "Whatever are you

<sup>113</sup>The laughing scene is a standard comic device used by the lowliest of itinerant players and the greatest of playwrights. This scene in The Would-be Gentleman is an actress's tour de force. When it is performed well, both the ridicule and the infectiousness of the laughter delight an audience. Van Laun repeats (p. 225) the generally accepted story concerning Nicole: "The actress who played this part was Mademoiselle Beauval, who had the misfortune of nearly always laughing when on the stage, which displeased the King. Molière wrote Nicole on purpose for her; and she acted it so well, and laughed so naturally, that Louis XIV. approved of her." Since Mlle Beauval joined Molière's troupe only about two months before The Would-be Gentleman was first presented, this role can be considered another fortunate "accident" in the development of the play. Her success in the part probably prompted Molière to create the saucy maid Toinette for her in his next comedy-ballet, The Imaginary Invalid.

thinking about to get yourself rigged out like that! Do you want to have everybody laughing at you?" (Wood, p. 23)

With Nicole in full agreement, Madame Jourdain protests to her husband about the "carnival time" ("carême-prenant")<sup>114</sup> atmosphere in their house, with people coming and going all the time. She further complains that he has failed to arrange a suitable marriage for their daughter. But M. Jourdain ignores these complaints and loftily informs the women that they are speaking in prose: "Everything is prose that is not verse; and everything that is not verse is not prose." (Waller, 135)<sup>115</sup> When he then attempts to demonstrate his fencing skill, Nicole retaliates and, against all the rules, almost overwhelms him.

Another of Madame Jourdain's objections concerns her husband's friend, Dorante, whom she distrusts. Dorante, a later variation of George Dandin's Clitandre, is an unscrupulous nobleman who, like the

<sup>114</sup>The days which precede Lent. D-M explain (VIII, 102) that "carême-prenant" refers to the masquerading of Mardi Gras.

<sup>115</sup>T. Edward Oliver, in "Notes on the Bourgeois gentilhomme," Modern Philology, X (1912/1913), 407-412, contends that this misquotation (from Waller, the only translator who uses it) is correct. He cites the rendition of this line from Edward Ravenscroft's 1671 English imitation of the play: "Yes, Prose, all that is prose is not verse and all that is verse is not prose." It is significant that Jourdain is incapable of doing correctly any of the things he attempts to do--dance, fence, bow, repeat his lessons or the compliments he has heard. Oliver further supports his argument by pointing out that Jourdain also misuses the greetings he learns from Covielle. Covielle translates Cléonte's Turkish greeting as: "may your heart flourish as the rose all the year round." (Act IV, Scene 4; Waller, 201) Jourdain mixes it up in his Mamamouchi greeting to Dorimène as: "I trust, Madam, that your rose-tree will flourish all the year round." (Act V, Scene 3; Waller, 211) And Covielle's "May Heaven give you the strength of the lion and the wisdom of the serpent" is twisted, when Jourdain greets Dorante, to "I desire for you the strength of the serpent and the wisdom of the lion." He cannot separate sense from nonsense.

tutors, takes advantage of Jourdain's social aspirations for his own gain. Just as Madame Jourdain speaks of Dorante, he arrives and, obviously in his own self-interest, compliments M. Jourdain on his appearance. After some business of hat etiquette, there is an elaborate adding up of what Dorante has borrowed from M. Jourdain, with Madame interjecting comments aside on what a fool her husband is. The impoverished noble uses this inventory merely as a means to ask for an additional grant. And to cinch the loan, he adds he would not offend M. Jourdain by asking for it from anyone else. Jourdain, the dupe, is honored, and goes to get the money. The would-be gentleman can be dazzled by Dorante's reference to court matters and the "Royal Presence," but the modest Madame Jourdain is merely amused when the noble extends an invitation to a royal entertainment.

When M. Jourdain returns with the money, he takes Dorante to one side, so that the women will not hear them, and asks about the noble lady Dorante is supposedly contacting for him. M. Jourdain has sent many tokens of his ardor through Dorante to this lady, including serenades, flowers, fireworks, and most recently, a diamond ring. A banquet and an entertainment, prepared by the Music Master and Dancing Master, are planned for her. Madame Jourdain and Nicole wonder what the men are discussing, and before Jourdain and Dorante leaves, Nicole gets slapped for eavesdropping. Madame suspects the conversation was about some love affair, but at the moment she is more concerned about the welfare of her daughter Lucile and the young man she wants to marry, Cléonte. This love match delights Nicole because she fancies Cléonte's man-servant, Covielle. Nicole is startled, however, when Cléonte and Covielle, who have just arrived, greet her with angry words, and she rushes off to get

her mistress.

The young men think they have been badly treated by Lucile and Nicole. They enumerate their sufferings and the services on the ladies' behalf they have performed in vain. Although Cléonte defends each characteristic of Lucile as proof of her perfection, he vows to hate her. This severe stance is the result of Lucile having avoided him that morning. When Nicole returns with Lucile, the ensuing double lovers' quarrel amounts to a charming and graceful quadrille. The women try to explain, but the men refuse to listen; then the women refuse to explain despite the lovers' pleadings. Not until Cléonte and Covielle threaten to kill themselves (not unlike desperate shepherds of the pastoral), does Lucile clear up the misunderstanding. She and Nicole were with an old aunt who despises men. All is forgiven.

Madame reappears and, seeing Cléonte, suggests immediately that he speak with the approaching M. Jourdain about becoming his son-in-law. M. Jourdain responds to Cléonte's request with a question: "Are you a gentleman?" Cléonte, instead of merely telling M. Jourdain what he wants to hear, gives an honest answer, saying he is a good man, but concluding: "I make no pretense to a title which others in my place might very well consider themselves entitled to assume. I, therefore, tell you frankly that I am not, as you put it, a gentleman." (Wood, p. 40) The answer causes Cléonte to fail the test, and his request is denied. Madame protests, but M. Jourdain is determined that Lucile will marry a gentleman: "It's no use arguing. I shall make my daughter a marchioness if all the world is against me, and if you provoke me any further I'll make her a duchess!" (Wood, p. 41) M. Jourdain's answer shocks everyone. Covielle, however, remembers a trick from a farcical play he once saw that might

solve their problem, and the young men go off to prepare for it. The scheme involves a masquerade, but Covielle, like Hali in The Sicilian and Sbrigani in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, is a trickster with actors and costumes at his disposal.

Monsieur Jourdain, alone, is remarking that there is no true honor and dignity except among the nobility, when the scoundrel Dorante returns. Dorante has brought the noble lady Dorimène with him. Unlike Dorante, Dorimène is a person of honor and dignity. (Also, she in no way resembles the coquette and adventuress Dorimène of The Forced Marriage.) She is a widow whom Dorante is determined to marry (and who will put an end to his excesses, if anyone can). The gifts she has received from M. Jourdain she thinks have come from Dorante. But she has no desire for these extravagances, and feels uncomfortable coming to a banquet at a stranger's house. The moment M. Jourdain has waited so long for, however, has arrived--his meeting with Dorimène. There is never any indication that Jourdain loves Dorimène; she is for him just another symbol of the aristocracy. Jourdain bows to the Countess in the manner taught him earlier by the Dancing Master. (Interestingly enough, he did not execute the gesture earlier; thus the comic effect is saved for this place in the action.) When he comes too close to the lady for the regulation third bow, he asks her to move back so he can complete the greeting properly. As with his fencing fiasco with Nicole, M. Jourdain knows form, but cannot manage it with good sense. Dorante rightly exclaims aside to Dorimène: "He's a worthy merchant, but as you see, rather foolish in his ways." (Wood, p. 44) Dorante takes care of one last detail before calling for supper: he tells M. Jourdain not to mention the diamond ring; such an allusion would be "vulgar behavior." Jourdain



then sits before the lady does, but, realizing his ill-mannered mistake, rises to his feet in embarrassment. Musicians are summoned to play during the banquet, and six cooks enter dancing and carrying a table laden with food (in the text, the "third interlude"; Figure 86).

The action is continuous from Act III to Act IV, the time of the banquet merely compressed. Both M. Jourdain and Dorante regret that the meal is not worthy of Dorimène, and Dorante proceeds to describe a bill of fare that might have been prepared for the "Royal Presence."<sup>116</sup> As the supper continues M. Jourdain cannot resist eliciting some response from Dorimène about the ring, and he compliments her on her lovely hands. She replies it is the ring that deserves the attention, but M. Jourdain like a true "gentleman" dismisses the diamond ring as a "mere bagatelle." (Wood, p. 46) Dorante quickly diverts attention from this subject to the musicians and singers who have been engaged to entertain during the banquet. The songs presented echo the musical finale of George Dandin--the first, dedicated to Philis, champions love and wine; the second says "drink while we may" (Wood, p. 47). The refined Dorimène responds graciously to these offerings, and thinks M. Jourdain is charming.

The banquet is proceeding splendidly when Madame Jourdain returns unexpectedly from her sister's to abruptly interrupt the gala affair.

<sup>116</sup>Louis XIV's appetite was notorious. He consumed enormous amounts of food and established the standard for court dining. W. H. Lewis in The Splendid Century (New York, 1957), describes (p. 206) a meal given by Louvois to the Queen in 1681: "It was of four 'services,' or as we should say, courses, but the courses were gargantuan; the first service consisted of forty plates, that is forty dishes, of entrée: the second, of forty plates of roasts and salads: the third was of hot and cold extremets: and the fourth was 'an exquisite and rare dessert.' Melon was served before, and oranges with the roasts." Molière's banquet scene recalls the first day of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (1664)--the "staged" presentation of a collation.

She confronts her husband with accusations of extravagance and philandering. Dorante, in order to protect his own image with Dorimène, says he was responsible for this festivity. M. Jourdain corroborates Dorante's explanation, thinking it is a trick to fool the irate wife. Dorimène, however, is startled and offended when Madame attacks her, and she departs, with Dorante in pursuit.

Just at this moment of utter calamity for M. Jourdain, Covielle, disguised as a world traveler, arrives to pay his respects. With the ingenuity of his valet relatives, Covielle, the rogue, ingratiates himself with the fool by using his follies against him.<sup>117</sup> Covielle says he knew Jourdain's gentleman father, and implies, therefore, that Jourdain is a man of distinction. With the would-be gentleman's confidence gained, Covielle reveals that he has exciting news: the Grand Turk's son is in town with a splendid retinue of servants and this eminent personage is in love with Lucile. Using Turkish gibberish to punctuate his remarks, Covielle says that in order to arrange a marriage his Turkish Highness wants to raise M. Jourdain to the high rank of Mamamouchi.<sup>118</sup> Unable to recognize the real from the false, M. Jourdain is overjoyed and readily agrees to accept the honor. His only fear is that Lucile, his obstinate daughter, will refuse because of her attachment to Cléonte. Covielle

<sup>117</sup>In The Commedia dell'Arte (New York, 1968), Giacomo Oreglia describes (p. 105) Coviello as "A mask of Sicilian origin who sings, dances and performs acrobatic feats. . .a mixture of the Captain and Zanni."

<sup>118</sup>"Mamamouchi" is a grotesque Turkish title, a grand panjandrum, mocking its bearer as an official of exaggerated importance and great pretensions. In Arabic the term means "good-for-nothing." Jourdain is led to believe that the honor is comparable to a paladin, or great knight: "Giourdina . . . un Paladina . . . deffender Palestina." The King, like Rogero in The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, was a Paladin.

assures M. Jourdain that there should be no problem because the two young men are very similar. Cléonte then enters dressed as a Turk, giving a polite greeting in garbled Turkish, which Covielle "translates." While M. Jourdain is being prepared for the ceremony, Dorante returns and Covielle persuades him to join in the deception.

The Turkish Ceremony begins with a processional entrance of Turks carrying carpets, Turkish singers and dancers, and Dervishes escorting the Mufti.<sup>119</sup> There is an invocation to Allah by the Mufti while the Turks prostrate themselves on the carpets. The Dervishes then bring before the Mufti M. Jourdain dressed in an outlandish Turkish outfit. The Mufti greets Jourdain.<sup>120</sup> A nonsense litany follows identifying the

<sup>119</sup>A Mufti, in Islam, is a civil official responsible for expounding the Koran and Mohammedan law.

<sup>120</sup>Bishop notes (p. 383) that Molière's Turkish is a mingling of genuine Turkish, Arabic, and Hebrew with mere gibberish. He further remarks (p. 387) that "Most of the language of the Turkish ceremony is lingua franca, once used for commercial and diplomatic purposes around the Mediterranean, still known to sailors and harbor men. It is a blend mostly of French, Spanish, Italian, and Arabic. All grammatical forms are simplified; verbs have only the infinitive form. (A sort of Basic Romance.) Any Frenchman, or Spaniard or Italian, could understand the Mufti well enough." The gibberish of the Turkish Ceremony is a translator's dream or nightmare. Waller makes no attempt to transform the lingua franca; Ozell gives the original verses with prose translations; Moore gives the original with translations in footnotes; Baker and Miller, Graveley, and Wood translate the gibberish into broken English. Regardless of what lyrics are used for the Turkish Ceremony, they must fit the music. The Would-be Gentleman is a play of language. Besides this Turkish gibberish, there are the Gascon and Swiss dialects as well as the Spanish and Italian of the musical finale. The language of the Fencing Master has already been mentioned. Robert Garapon in "La langue et le style des différents personnages du Bourgeois gentilhomme," Le Français Moderne, XXVI (1958), 103-112, shows how the characters of the play are differentiated by language—for example, the Dancing Master speaks with great affectation (like a précieux); while Jourdain's language is a mixture of bourgeois and upper class affectation, Madame speaks more like Nicole; through language Nicole represents the simple people, Lucile the bourgeoisie, and Dorimène the nobility.

initiate as a Mohammedan, and a prayer is offered for him, with the Turks singing and dancing. Then Jourdain, almost overcome with emotion-- alternately terrified and overjoyed, is made to kneel for a second invocation from the Koran. A turban is placed on his head and he is given a sabre. The dancers all slap M. Jourdain with their scimitars--initiation coups de bâton. There is a last invocation and then the Mufti and M. Jourdain are carried off in triumph.<sup>121</sup>

Turkish satire, as already mentioned, had been used before in the theatre, and turqueries had occurred in tournaments ("cutting the Turk's head") and the ballet de cour since the mid-sixteenth century,<sup>122</sup> but the appearance of Turkish spectacle as an integrated part of a comedy with music was new. The Turkish Ceremony is one of the most successful scenes in all of the comedy-ballets. When performed in its entirety, it seems a bit long for modern audiences, but not so in the seventeenth

<sup>121</sup>Figure 87 - Brissart engraving. Two views of M. Jourdain as a Mamamouchi:

(a) Figure 88 - From the Turkish Ceremony variation (D-M, VIII, 189-190), "The Mufti returns wearing his ceremonial turban, which is enormous and decorated with four or five rows of lighted candles. Two Dervishes, with pointed hats also adorned with lighted candles, accompany him, and carry the Koran. Two other Dervishes lead in Monsieur Jourdain, who is completely terrified by this ceremony, and make him kneel with his back to the Mufti; then, they make him lean forward with his hands on the ground. They put the Koran on his back, which serves as a reading desk for the Mufti, who makes a burlesque invocation. . . ." This illustration shows the whole group, with Cléonte in disguise sitting on a dais behind the ceremonial proceedings, and probably the disguised Covielle to the right, sword in hand, ready to whack Jourdain with it.

(b) Figure 89 - After the Turks have placed the turban on Monsieur Jourdain's head.

Lully used the Turkish Ceremony as the Sixth Entry of his 1675 Carnaval (D-M, VII, 344).

<sup>122</sup>Marcel Paquot, Les Etrangers dans les divertissements de la cour de Beaujoyeulx à Molière (1581-1673) (Brussels, 1932), p. 26. See Figure 17 - Grand Turk from La Douairière de Billebahout.



Figure 87. "Turkish Ceremony" (Brissart)

The Turkish Ceremony:  
 Monsieur Jourdain with  
 the Mufti, two Dervishes,  
 and a group of Turks.

The Would-be Gentleman

Fourth Interlude

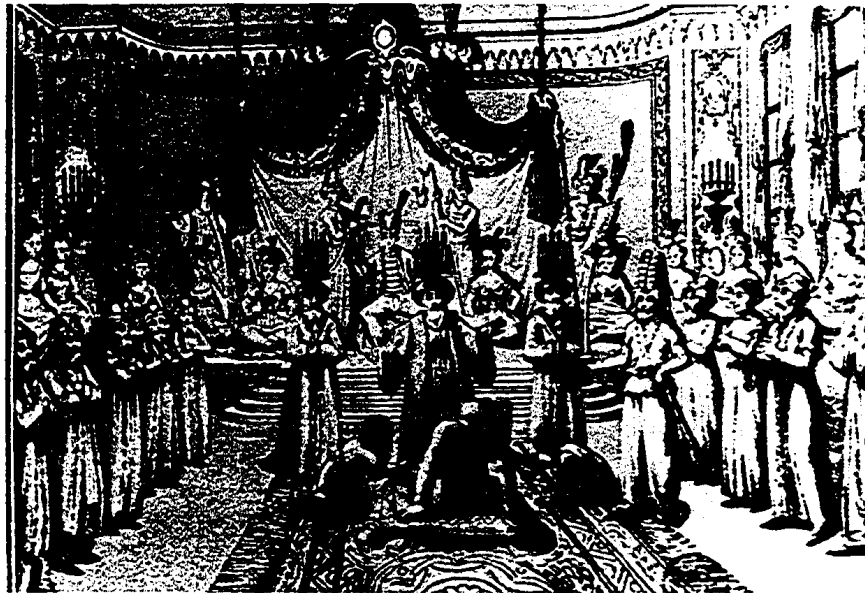


Figure 88. "Turkish Ceremony"



Figure 89. "Turkish Ceremony"

century. At any rate, for all time, it is a superbly farcical music spectacle. Eric Bentley in his essay "The Psychology of Farce"<sup>123</sup> points out that farce, like dreams, includes "the complication of aggression with bizarre fantasy." As delicate as the facade may be, the violent primitive energy that motivates the action is never lost in farce. But the conventions of the ballet de cour, many of which Molière adopted through his collaboration with Lully for the comedy-ballets, produced a threat to this balance, a threat to obliterate robustness (esprit gaulois) with elegance and gallant decoration (esprit courtois). In The Would-be Gentleman, and particularly in the Turkish Ceremony, Molière solved this problem successfully. The focus of the Turkish scene with its fantastic singing and dancing remains on the dramatic effect. Even the first invocation before Jourdain arrives, if treated as a practice session for the maskers, can contribute to this effect--the hoodwinking of Jourdain.

At the beginning of Act V, the mamamouchification is over, the Turks have departed, and Madame Jourdain, who was not present at the initiation, enters to see a giddy M. Jourdain still in costume, making obeisances, and singing Turkish phrases he has learned from the ceremony (like M. de Pourceaugnac who repeats phrases from the Italian song of the syringe-carrying physicians). She thinks he has lost his mind. Singing bits of nonsense, dancing around and clapping his hands, M. Jourdain tumbles over, a great delirious prat-fall, and then with great dignity recovers himself and silences his wife with the command: "Show more respect to a Mamamouchi!"

<sup>123</sup>Eric Bentley, ed., Let's Get a Divorce! and Other Plays (New York, 1958), p. xv.

Wood has translated the scene (pp. 55-56):

MR. JOURDAIN is making obeisances and singing Turkish phrases as she enters.

MRS. JOURDAIN: Oh Lord have mercy on us! Whatever is he up to now? What a sight! Are you going mumming? Is this a time to be in fancy dress? What's it all about? Who on earth has togged you up like this?

MR. JOURDAIN: The impertinence of the woman! How dare you talk like that to a Mamamouchi?

MRS. JOURDAIN: A what?

MR. JOURDAIN: You'll have to be more respectful now that I've been made a Mamamouchi.

MRS. JOURDAIN: What on earth is the man talking about, with his Mamamouchi?

MR. JOURDAIN: I tell you I am a Mamamouchi.

MRS. JOURDAIN: And whatever sort of creature is that?

MR. JOURDAIN: A Mamamouchi is what we should call a - Paladin.

MRS. JOURDAIN: You ought to know better than go a-ballading at your age.

MR. JOURDAIN: The ignorance! Paladin is a dignity that has just been conferred upon me. I come straight from the ceremony.

MRS. JOURDAIN: What sort of ceremony?

MR. JOURDAIN [singing and dancing]: Good Mahometan Jourdina!

MRS. JOURDAIN: And what does that mean?

MR. JOURDAIN: Jourdina means Jourdain.

MRS. JOURDAIN: And what about Jourdain?

MR. JOURDAIN [sings]: Going to make a Paladina - of Jourdina, of Jourdina.

MRS. JOURDAIN: Eh?

MR. JOURDAIN [sings]: Give him galley, brigantina!

MRS. JOURDAIN: I don't understand a word of it?

MR. JOURDAIN [sings]: Him go fight for Palestina.

MRS. JOURDAIN: What on earth -

MR. JOURDAIN [as before]: Give him, give him Bastonnade!



Dorante, who has persuaded Dorimène to return for the entertainment that has been prepared in her honor, tells her they must support Clèonte's bold plan to marry Lucile. Dorimène agrees with Dorante, and adds that she will marry him in order to stop his extravagances. When M. Jourdain reappears, Dorante indicates that they have come to pay their respects to the Mamamouchi and to celebrate the forthcoming marriage. M. Jourdain implies that he has achieved a rank equal with the nobility when he later introduces Dorante and Dorimène as Mamamouchi and Mamamouchess to Covielle, who has reentered. Lucile is summoned, but she refuses to join hands with the Grand Turk's son until she recognizes him as Clèonte. When Madame appears she wonders if her daughter is to marry "a mummer." She objects so strongly that the whole plan is threatened until Covielle, aside, reveals the truth to her. Dorante announces that he and Dorimène will marry at the same time in order to abolish Madame's suspicions about her husband. The delighted M. Jourdain thinks this union is merely a trick, and sends for a notary to perform a triple wedding: Dorante and Dorimène, Lucile and Clèonte as the Grand Turk's son, and Nicole and Covielle, the "interpreter." He would like to give his wife away, too, if anyone would take her. While waiting for the notary, the happy group is entertained with the "Ballet of Nations."

Conceived as a performance for the character-spectators, the finale is the same type of musical entertainment-within-a-play as the Act IV drinking songs and as the performances of The Magnificent Lovers. While the drinking songs serve tantalizingly to delay somewhat the play's complications (although the character-spectator reactions are important during this scene), the "Ballet of Nations," like the musical finale of George Dandin, occurs after the play's complications are over.

M. Jourdain is still oblivious to his mistake; the fool is thoroughly duped by the rogues; and he is literally promoting the celebration of his own foolishness with this musical entertainment.

The "Ballet of Nations" is a miniature ballet de cour. There are even performer-spectators within the entertainment. The first entry is by a man who distributes programs (livrets du ballet) to the gathering--not M. Jourdain and group, but a chorus of men and women within the ballet. There follow song and dance tributes to love from three nationalities--Spanish, Italian and French. All join together then to praise the theatrical event:

What Pleasures regale both our Hearing and Sight!  
Not the Powers Celestial enjoy more Delight.

(Ozell, 288)

Plot and sub-plot, comedy and ballet are brought together in the musical finale. For the ecstatic Jourdain, the nobility represents the "Powers Celestial," and he now believes, in the full glory of his vanity and ignorance, that he shares its delightful, sumptuous pastimes.

#### THE IMAGINARY INVALID

Perhaps hoping to recapture the gaiety and repeat the successful medley of comedy and musical buffoonery of The Would-be Gentleman, Molière prepared another full-length comedy-ballet at the beginning of 1673 which was intended for the King's Carnival festivities. The Imaginary Invalid (Le Malade imaginaire) was designed to celebrate the King's triumphant return from a military campaign in Holland. The Prologue reads:

After the glorious exertions and the victorious

exploits of our august monarch, it is fitting that those who concern themselves with writing should work either to praise him or to provide him amusement. That is what we have endeavored to do here . . . to divert him after his noble achievements. 124

But because of the machinations of Lully, who no longer wished to share the stage and the King's favor with Molière, or the whims of Louis XIV, who may have wanted a more serious entertainment, Molière's play was not requested for the court fetes at Carnival. The comedy-ballet was premièred, therefore, at the Palais-Royal on February 10, 1673. It was received very well, but the public's warm response could hardly have made up for the cold royal rejection. In any case, Molière died after the fourth performance of The Imaginary Invalid without ever having presented it for the King. Molière's last comedy-ballet was not seen at court until August 21, 1674, a year and a half after it first appeared in Paris.

The sudden loss of Molière created problems for the Troupe du Roi, among which was the performance and publication of The Imaginary Invalid. Christophe Ballard published a livret of the musical interludes based on the original production, describing The Imaginary Invalid as a "Comedy, mixed with music and dance. Presented on the stage of the Palais Royal."<sup>125</sup> Unauthorized productions and pirated editions of the text began to appear by 1674. The most corrupt text was published in Amsterdam by Daniel Elzévir, but spurious versions were also printed in Paris (Chez Estienne Loyson) and in Cologne (Chez Jean Sambix). To protect the rights of

<sup>124</sup>D-M, IX, 259-260.

<sup>125</sup>Guibert, II, 481-484.

Molière's troupe, a lettre de cachet had been issued in January, 1674 forbidding The Imaginary Invalid becoming public property.<sup>126</sup> An edition with privilege was published by Denys Thierry and Claude Barbin in 1674 (probably May 2). But the definitive text was edited for Volume VIII of the Oeuvres of 1682 (Volume II of the Oeuvres posthumes) "corrected, according to the author's original, from all false editions and entire scene substitutions made in preceding editions."<sup>127</sup>

The Imaginary Invalid is in three acts of prose with a musical prologue, finale, and two interludes. Except for some minor borrowings, including some comic elements from his own works, Molière relied less on outside sources than ever before. Lully's ballet L'Amour malade (1657) had a mock doctoral reception that predated Molière's burlesque ceremony. But the major influence on the comedy-ballet may have been a vicious assault leveled at Molière several years earlier--Le Boulanger de

<sup>126</sup>Le Moliériste, V, 172-176.

<sup>127</sup>Moland, XII, 24. See Guibert, I, 364-380 and I, 591-592, 644-645 for an extensive discussion of the publication question. English translations of Le Malade imaginaire: (1) Baker and Miller, II, 415-472, as The Hypochondriack, based on the 1734 scene divisions, with opera and finale only, (2) Morris Bishop, The Would-be Invalid (New York, 1950), based on the Pierre Vâlde French edition (Editions du Seuil, 1946), with opera and finale only, (3) Bert Briscoe, The Imaginary Invalid (Birmingham, 1967), an acting edition which includes only the opera and finale, (4) Mildred Marmar, The Imaginary Invalid, with all musical scenes except the prologues, in The Genius of the French Theatre (New York, 1961), (5) Ozell, Book III, Vol. VI, 141-208, as The Hypochondriack, with opera and finale only, (6) Van Laun, VI, 153-234, as The Imaginary Invalid, based on the 1734 scene divisions, with all musical scenes, (7) Waller, VIII, 183-309, as The Hypochondriac, with all musical scenes, but only the opera translated, (8) Wood, The Misanthrope and Other Plays, pp. 203-280, as The Imaginary Invalid, with all musical scenes. Miles Malleeson's adaptation, The Imaginary Invalid (London, 1959), is an acting edition and includes only the opera and finale.

Chalussay's comedy-pamphlet Elomire hypocondre ou Les Médecins vengés (Elomire Hypochondriac, or, The Doctors Avenged, 1670). In this scurrilous play, against which Molière obtained a royal injunction, the whole life of the playwright is attacked. "Elomire" is an anagram of "Molière," and the central character is accused of believing himself to be consumptive, while actually he is only a raving hypochondriac. The motive for the attack is unknown, but Chalussay's play had much notoriety. Prior to 1670, Molière may have intended to write a play about a character perpetually tormented with worries over possible but not real sicknesses. Molière became involved in other works, and the play failed to materialize. Chalussay asserts that his purpose was to dramatize what Molière should have composed. He writes about Molière, the author of Love's the Best Doctor, declaring that the playwright was despised by doctors for his satires and was in reality terrified of them. But Chalussay twists facts and comic attitude to suit his own malice. This theatrical libel, while in no way a defense of doctors, tries to show that Molière's well-known afflictions were only imaginary. Chalussay indicated that Molière, if he were to write a play about a hypochondriac, would have to write about himself. As Chatfield-Taylor suggests, the title of Chalussay's play could be translated as "Molière, the Imaginary Invalid."<sup>128</sup> Molière, therefore, may have returned to the subject of a hypochondriac in reaction against Elomire. But The Imaginary Invalid is not only a riposte to Chalussay. More importantly, it is a great comic work and, as such, a tribute to Molière himself as a master of irony. Argan is not Molière, and, as

<sup>128</sup>Chatfield-Taylor, p. 298.

Palmer rather stirringly describes the paradox: "Molière, sick unto death, writes the comedy of a man sick only in imagination, an act of courage and detachment unequalled in the history of genius. . . ."<sup>129</sup> While Molière continues to ridicule the abuses of the medical profession as he had in earlier plays, the satire in The Imaginary Invalid is double-edged, and focus is primarily on the patient rather than the doctors. Studies have shown that Argan is indeed sick and in need of medical attention, but that the diagnoses within the play are wrong; his sickness is a neurotic obsession with his health, or acute hypochondria.<sup>130</sup> Molière's play, however, is not a tract on mental illness, and Argan should not be considered a case history. The strength with which he engages in all his activities belies his exaggerated postures of illness. He enjoys his sicknesses-- the technical language, the treatments, the attention he gets. The arena Argan occupies is more like a circus than a sick room. His "neurosis" merely makes him ridiculous, not pathetic, for Argan is a credulous fool, whose follies permit him to be outwitted by some good-natured roguery. And all anxieties are swept away in the fantastic musical ceremony in which Argan is transformed from a sufferer to a healer.

The musical prologue, "Eclogue in Music and Dance," written for the intended court production, was designed as a pastoral compliment to the King. It is a playlet with its own cast of characters; it has six scenes and nine ballet-entries (1734 edition). It begins with Flora calling her shepherds and shepherdesses together. Two sets of lovers emerge--Climène

<sup>129</sup>John Palmer, Molière (New York, 1930), p. 423.

<sup>130</sup>See Etienne Levrat, "Le case du Malade imaginaire," Mercure de France, CLIII (1922), 387-400.

and Tircis, Daphne and Dorilas. The shepherds want to talk of love, but the shepherdesses are intent upon answering the call of Flora. Flora announces the news to the shepherd folk:

Louis is returned  
 And with him comes the reign of love and pleasure:  
 Ended now are your alarms;  
 The world submitting to his arms,  
 He now can take his leisure.

(Wood, p. 204)

The shepherds and shepherdesses dance to express their joy at the news.

Flora then proposes a contest:

These rustic lovers shall compete  
 Who can best make a story,  
 Set it to music meet  
 And sing great Louis' glory.

(Wood, p. 205)

Tircis and Dorilas, each with his following, take sides against one another. Flora, accompanied by Zephyrs, is to be judge. Tircis and his group present their song and dance, then Dorilas does the same. Pan, attended by six Fauns, hears them and concludes:

To depict Great Louis' glory,  
 Of such deeds to tell the story,  
 Is beyond the reach of men:  
 Better seek to charm his leisure  
 And contribute to his pleasure.

(Wood, p. 206)

Neither side wins, therefore, but Flora awards a prize to each of the shepherds, and the shepherdesses join their lovers. Flora and Pan console the pastoral group:

Nothing done in Louis' service  
 Can be done in vain.

(Wood, p. 207)

The entire assemblage joins in the dancing and singing:

Let us sing, with one accord  
 Until the welkin rings,  
 With praise of Louis, mightiest of kings!

(Wood, p. 207)

Because The Imaginary Invalid was not premièred at court, a less elaborate prologue apparently was written for the public stage.<sup>131</sup> Instead of praising the King, the shorter prologue exposes the inadequancies of medicine. After an instrumental overture, a Shepherdess, accompanied by Fauns and Aegipans (or goats of Pan), appears in the forest and sings a plaint of love despair:

Vain and foolish doctors you  
 Have no balm can cure my ills.

.....

Your foolish jargon can prevail  
 Only with imagined ills;

.....

Not your jargon, nor your skills  
 Can relieve my heart's despair.

(Wood, p. 209)<sup>132</sup>

At the beginning of Act I Argan, a competent businessman like M. Jourdain, is seen, alone, reckoning up the many costly, but extraordinarily polite bills of his apothecary, M. Fleurant, for the month's medicines and treatments prescribed by M. Purgon, his doctor. The patient is shrewd enough to detect discrepancies:

<sup>131</sup>The alternate prologue does not appear in the original livret, but is included in the definitive text of 1682.

<sup>132</sup>This passage may be the most autobiographical in all Molière's writing. Regardless of the disease Molière suffered, what medicine, after all, could he take to cure his despair over the King's indifference?



Item, on the twenty-fifth, a good purgative tonic and stimulating concoction, composed of fresh cassia with Levantine senna, following the prescription of M. Purgon, to purge and expell the gentleman's bile, four livres. Ah! Monsieur Fleurant, you are joking. Sick people mustn't be treated this way. Monsieur Purgon didn't order you to put down four livres. Put down, put down three livres, if you please. And half of that is enough.

But his conclusions lack good sense:

This month I've had one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight medications and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve enemas; and last month I had twelve medications and twenty enemas. No wonder I'm not as well this month as last. I must speak to Monsieur Purgon about that, so he can put the matter right.

Having made this significant discovery, Argan rings a bell and calls impatiently for Toinette, the maid, to clear away his accounts. Toinette is a pert rascalion, a scheming soubrette, whose first action in the play is a pretense. In order to distract the raging Argan's attention from her tardiness, she pretends to have bumped her head against a shutter, and she interrupts his scoldings with painful outcries. She is about to leave, when Argan asks her how his last enema was. That business is not for her to smell out, she replies, and she tells Argan bluntly that doctors and apothecaries are "making a fool out of you and that nasty old body of yours." (Bishop, p. 5)

Argan's daughter, Angélique, appears just as he expresses the wish to see her. But before he can speak, his face contorts, and he has to make an emergency trip out of the room, with Toinette noting that M. Fleurant's "injection" keeps everyone working. A commode (chaise percée), which, as mentioned earlier, called forth much amusement on the stage during Molière's time, may have been in view for Argan to snatch quickly on his exit (Figure 90). This departure not only inserts a bit of low



Figure 90. Gui Patin

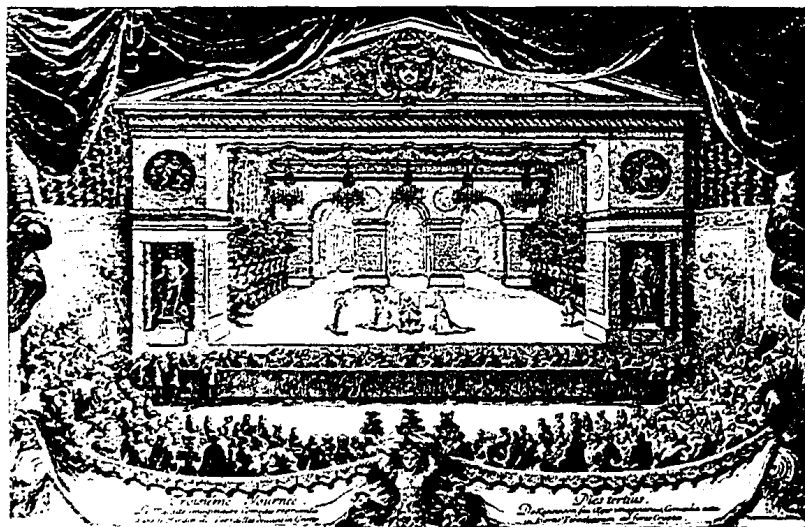


Figure 91. The Imaginary Invalid (Le Pautre)

comedy into the play, but it contributes to the ridiculousness of the central character. It also provides an excuse to have Argan off stage so that other characters can discuss matters not meant for his ears.

An ingenue-confidante scene follows in which Angélique wants to confide to Toinette her feelings about Cléante, the young man she loves. Angélique of The Imaginary Invalid is a thoroughly romantic young girl undoubtedly familiar with the novels of the précieuse Mlle de Scudéry. She is pure and sweet as her name suggests and very different from the Angélique of questionable morals in George Dandin. The young man she describes is also perfect in every way--chivalrous, charming, handsome, noble. She met him only six days ago at the theatre, but has been kept from seeing him again by the restrictions of her father, and she suffers from uncertainty regarding Cléante's intentions.

When Argan returns, he announces that he has had an offer of marriage for Angélique. The young women are delighted by this news because they think the offer has come from Cléante. Argan mentions that Angélique's stepmother (Argan's second wife), Béline, wants to see her and a younger stepdaughter, Louison, put into a convent. (Béline is like Sganarelle's niece, Lucrece, in Love's the Best Doctor, who recommends sending his daughter, Lucinde, to a convent because she wants Sganarelle's inheritance herself.) Although Argan does not share his wife's views, he has little concern for the happiness of Angélique. As the suitor's good qualities are discussed, there is a dramatic build to a surprising reversal: the young man to whom Argan refers is not Cléante, but a medical student, Thomas Diafoirus, the nephew of Argan's doctor Purgon. Argan states frankly his own selfish reasons for this marriage arrangement:

My reason is that in view of the feeble and poorly

state that I'm in I want to marry my daughter into the medical profession so that I can assure myself of help in my illness and have a supply of remedies I need within the family, and be in a position to have consultations and prescriptions whenever I want them.

. . . . .

It's for my own sake that I'm marrying her to a doctor.

(Wood, p. 218)

The outspoken Toinette objects and says Angélique will never consent. Angélique, too stunned and too mild-mannered to speak for herself, lets Toinette, who has no trouble with self-expression, battle Argan for her. But Argan retaliates that if Angélique refuses, she will be sent to a convent. Contradicting everything Argan says, Toinette points out that his fatherly affection would stop him from such an action. Argan is worked into a fury by Toinette's impertinence, and he chases the nimble maid with his cane, hoping to beat her into submission. He is far from fast enough for her, however, and collapses, exhausted in his chair. Parents in the romantic, courtly esprit courtois plays are kind and considerate--the father of The Princess of Elis and the mother of The Magnificent Lovers--and they strongly contrast with the tyrannical fathers and self-seeking relatives of the bourgeois esprit gaulois plays. Although marriages of convenience were a way of life for the aristocracy (the most prominent example being Louis XIV's alliance with Marie-Thérèse), the depiction of a humorous conflict between princely generations might have shown a lack of good taste, and boisterous match-making was generally relegated to less refined bourgeois characters. While Argan shows more signs of affection for his daughters than other bourgeois father characters, he still must be prevented from forcing a misalliance because of

his foolish obsessions.

Argan's scrimmage with Toinette has left him out of breath and he is complaining "This is enough to kill me" (Van Laun, 170) when Béline appears (Figure 91). Toinette and Angélique excuse themselves, and the designing wife proceeds to comfort with patronizing affection her peaked husband. But Béline knows the value of a quick-witted maid, and defends Toinette who, when summoned, denies she did anything to annoy her master. Béline tries to make Argan comfortable in his chair and calls for pillows. Toinette plops the last one on Argan's head, sending him into a great pillow-throwing passion. The sweet-talking Béline calms him, however, as Toinette scampers away.<sup>133</sup> There is very good reason for Béline's loving care at this moment. Argan is about to make out his will. She says that she cannot bear the idea of such a subject, but has conveniently on hand a notary, M. de Bonnefoy,<sup>134</sup> a pompous law-evading scoundrel who obviously has been prompted in her interests. The Notary informs Argan that in Paris he cannot leave his money to his wife; the children would get everything. The only means of provision for a wife are by bequeathing this money to a friend who would turn it over to her by agreement after the husband's death (an idea too risky for Béline to rely upon completely) and by gift during a man's lifetime. Argan reveals his pathetically comic notion that his doctor, M. Purgon, is trying to make him able to

<sup>133</sup>The name Béline derives from an ancient French word for sheep, but is used as an endearment--such as "honey-lamb" or "lamby-pie."

<sup>134</sup>The name Bonnefoy means "good faith" and an "homme de bonne foi" is an "honest man." Dr. George R. Kernodle translated The Imaginary Invalid for a production at Texas Christian University in 1969. He called Bonnefoy "Stickloyal."

have a child by Béline, and while Béline plays up to his fantasies, she is interested only in managing Argan and the law to her own monetary advantage. Her true intentions are hidden under a veil of concern for him (Figure 92):

ARGAN: I must make my will, darling, as this gentleman has suggested. But just as a precaution I am going to put in your hands twenty thousand francs in gold which I have hidden behind the panelling, and two notes payable to bearer which are due, one from Monsieur Damon, and the other from Monsieur Gérante.

BELINE: No, I don't want any of it at all. How much did you say there is behind the panelling?

ARGAN: Twenty thousand francs, my love.

BELINE: Don't talk about money, please. . . How much are the two notes for?

ARGAN: Darling, one is for four thousand franc the other for six.

BELINE: Sweetheart, all the money in the world is nothing to me in comparison with you.

(Bishop, p. 20)

With Béline assisting the faltering Argan, as he suddenly remembers how weak he is, the three negotiators go off to Argan's study to discuss money matters in greater detail.

Toinette reappears to eavesdrop, and then brings Angélique back for a conference. Toinette is a schemer--one of the reasons Béline has an affinity with her. But Toinette schemes for good, not for ill. The maid's loyalties are to Angélique, even though she must pretend to go along with the parents. She reveals to Angélique that she will get her lover, Polichinelle, to inform Cléante of the recent disastrous developments.



Figure 92. The Imaginary Invalid (Brissart)

BELINE: And I will follow you  
to the grave to prove how much  
I loved you.

ARGAN: Dearest, you are breaking  
my heart. Be comforted, please,  
be comforted.

THE NOTARY: There's no reason  
for tears. Things have not  
come to that yet.

The Imaginary Invalid

Act I, Scene 7

The contact Toinette promises to make with Polichinelle is nothing more than an excuse for the First Interlude. She says: "it will cost me some sweet words" (Van Laun, 175-176), meaning that instead of tongue-lashing him as she usually does, she will be sweet-natured in order to get this favor; as a result she will have to endure an encouraged lover's serenading and offers of undying affection. Polichinelle is the central character of the interlude, which is a complete playlet, but he does not figure in the action of the play at all.<sup>135</sup> As the interlude begins,

<sup>135</sup>Polichinelle is based on the Italian commedia dell'arte character, Pulcinella, a Neapolitan mask of many professions, including servant. He has a great heart, but is greedy. (Toinette calls her lover "the old usurer," meaning a lover of money to the highest degree of covetousness.) While a contradictory character, either dim-witted or extremely clever, he is always a master of intrigue, and is generally involved in some sort of physical scrape with beatings. See Chapter IX: Costume for a description of his attire. Although the interlude of eight scenes and four ballet-entries (1734 edition) is barely connected with the play and is seldom used in production, some attempts have been made to revive it and provide dramatic continuity for integrating it into the action. For example, the Robert Manuel Comédie Française production capitalized on the interlude as a tribute to Carnival, or Mardi Gras. (The Imaginary Invalid was originally written for and presented during Carnival celebrations.) In this production the repose of the invalid (played by Louis Seigner) was disturbed by the maskers, and he came to the window (Figure 93). Then Toinette appeared at the window to greet her lover (Figure 94), and later even joined him outside the house. K. H. Hartley in "Italian source for part of the premier intermède in Le Malade imaginaire," Modern Language Notes, May, 1964, 309-311, makes a substantial case for Giordano Bruno's Il Candelaio as the source for the Polichinelle interlude, but suggests that Molière used a visual remembrance, probably of a performance by the Italian players in Paris, rather than a printed text. Only specific details differentiate the interlude from Act V, Scene 25 of the play; the serenading, interruptions, arrest, and thrashing are the same. The appearance of uniformed watchmen with pikes and lanterns is a scene from the earlier play that Molière, according to Hartley, remembered and refashioned for his own purposes. There is a reference to the Italian play in D-M, IX, 337, with a note that it had also been imitated in French under the title Boniface et le pédant (1633).





Figure 93. The Imaginary Invalid,  
First Interlude



Figure 94. Toinette and Polichinelle

Polichinelle enters. It is night--a time of mystery and madness, as in The Bores, The Sicilian, and George Dandin. First, the lover has a "Poor Polichinelle" monologue, as was customary in an Italian commedia scenario, upbraiding himself for being at the mercy of a she-dragon. Then he sings a song in Italian saying he will die for love. He gets a response, not from Toinette, but from an old woman who appears at the window, ridiculing him in song by telling him that a woman is mad to trust a lying lover.<sup>136</sup> There is then a dialogue between Polichinelle and violins in which the sounds from the musical instruments will not allow him to lament the cruelty of his loved-one.<sup>137</sup> He retaliates by pretending to play back at them on his lute. Polichinelle's fantasies of love drive him to

<sup>136</sup>These Italian songs--"Notte e dì" and "Zerbinetti"--do not appear in the livrets published in 1673. They are in the texts, beginning in 1674, including the Complete Works in 1682, and they are generally reprinted with all French and translated editions of the play. Van Laun and Wood both include them, but translate them into English. Julien Tiersot, in an introduction to his reconstruction of this interlude's music (Paris, 1925), takes these songs as a key to understanding the interlude. The whole idea of it, he suggests, is Italian: a scene (intermezzo) of buffoonery, which appears between the acts of a more serious work. Xavier de Couville, in "Sur un intermède de Molière, Revue Musicale, 1925, II, 157-164, concludes from his studies, however, that the Italian songs were not written by Molière, but were added only after his death. (For further discussion, see Chapter VII: Music.) He also agrees with Edouard Thierry, who says in his Documents sur le Malade imaginaire (Paris, 1880), 248-250, that these songs produce inconsistencies in the text. See below, note 137. The irony of the old woman's first word--"Zerbinetti" (which is usually translated as "Gallants")--is that Polichinelle is looking for one of the Zerbinette, or inamorata characters (on her see Duchartre, p. 264), and he gets a hag who scoulds him with a harangue on unfaithful lovers instead. There is no dramatic justification for her character, even within the interlude.

<sup>137</sup>The "violins" can be musicians and dancers of the Carnival. According to Charpentier's score, the "violins" are conducted by Spacamond, an Italian Capitano character--Spaccamonte, or "mountain carver" (D-M, IX, 506). Since Polichinelle has already delivered his serenade, it is inconsistent, as Thierry points out, for him to complain that he is being interrupted.

choler and self-pity and make him as ridiculous as the imaginary invalid. Watchmen pass along on the street and sing "Who goes there? Who goes there?" As usual, Molière makes the separation between speaking and singing obvious. Polichinelle says, "That's the fashion now is it? Talking to music?" (Wood, p. 226) The "Archers"<sup>138</sup> consider Polichinelle's replies to their questioning to be insolent and they decide to seize him. All the watch enters to look for Polichinelle, who hides from them. Polichinelle calls for his servants and his musketoon and pretends to shoot into the air. His adversaries are as frightened of him as he of them, and they run; but while he laughs at them and brags about his trick, they steal back and capture him. Just when a character is most sure and proud of himself, he is most vulnerable--a comic theme transferred to musical conflict. The lantern watch is summoned (a ballet-entry) and there is a dialogue between the singing Archers, insisting that their captive must go to prison, and Polichinelle, pleading for mercy. Like the Police Officer in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, however, they are willing to accept a bribe--in fact, they say he will get a beating if he does not pay them. He chooses not to pay and takes a tweaking of the nose (in time with the music) and a stick beating (rhythmic bastinadoes). Unable to withstand the blows, Polinchinelle succumbs and pays them.<sup>139</sup> There is an elaborate bidding of good-night and the Archers, like the tailor boys in The Would-be Gentleman, dance to show pleasure in the money they

<sup>138</sup> Inferior-police officers formerly wore cross-bows (Van Laun, 131).

<sup>139</sup> The administration of law and justice is not being attacked through dishonest Archers and Bonnefoy; these officials are merely amusing facts of life.

have received.

Time has elapsed (it is probably the next morning) and apparently by the beginning of Act II Polichinelle has contacted Cléante, for the young lover arrives at Argan's house:

TOINETTE; In heaven's name, who are you? What do you want? How did you get in?

CLEANTE: It's me! (He removes his hat and puts aside his cloak)

TOINETTE: You! Monsieur Cléante! You mustn't come here. You're mad!

CLEANTE: I am. I got your message.

(Malleon, p. 23)<sup>140</sup>

Cléante has devised a trick to see Angélique, and declares: "I have not come here today as her suitor Cléante. I have come as a friend of her music teacher. He has given me permission to say I'm replacing him." (Bishop, p. 22) This stratagem is similar to the devices used by the young lovers in Love's the Best Doctor (the doctor disguise) and The Sicilian (the painter disguise).<sup>141</sup> Toinette eagerly joins in the conspiracy, using the visiting "music master" as a means to take a gibe at Argan while the invalid engages in his daily exercise. Scolding Cléante for saying Argan looks well, she adds: "He can get about, sleep, eat, and drink, like anybody else but that doesn't mean that he isn't very

<sup>140</sup>Malleon frequently translates the spirit of Molière, rather than the literal text. The Polichinelle interlude is not included in the Malleon adaptation, but the passage quoted above links the action of comedy and interlude better than a more exact interpretation of the opening of Act II.

<sup>141</sup>Molière used this technique in non-musical plays as well--The School for Husbands and The Miser.

ill indeed." (Wood, p. 235) Angélique enters and quickly covers her surprise at seeing Cléante saying she had dreamed about a man very similar in appearance to this music master, a man who saved her from dreadful trouble. The young lovers greet one another as Toinette distracts Argan with the announcement that M. Diafoirus and his son, Thomas, have arrived. Cléante starts to leave, but Argan stops him and asks him to stay and meet the guests because he expects Cléante and the regular music master to attend the forthcoming wedding.

In the initial meeting between Argan and the doctors, there is a brief bit of comic dialogue as each time Argan tries to speak he is interrupted by M. Diafoirus so that each compliment between them interrupts the other. Finally, M. Diafoirus breaks the pattern by bringing forward his son, described in the stage directions as "a big booby, who just finished his classwork, who does everything clumsily and at the wrong time."<sup>142</sup> After consulting with his father for approval, Thomas gives a prepared "father-speech" to Argan, with the elder Diafoirus probably prompting in the background. Thomas then mistakes Angélique for the step-mother and begins to give a prepared "mother-speech" to her. Corrected, he is advised by his father to pay his compliments to Angélique, which like a robot he does in a prepared "daughter-speech." M. Diafoirus then talks of his son's qualities, turning what are apparent faults and defects into positive attributes. For example, although the young man is obviously stubborn and narrowminded, M. Diafoirus prefers to describe him as "Firm in dispute, a very Turk in defense of a principle." (Wood, p. 240; or

<sup>142</sup>The word "foireux" ("having diarrhoea") seems to be the root of the name Diafoirus. Both characters display verbal diarrhoea. Kernodle's name for the characters was "Bonebinder."

"obstinate as a mule on his principles," Bishop, p. 30) The suitor Argan had described earlier to Angélique as "graceful" and "likeable" bears little resemblance to Diafoirus fils, who offers Angélique, as a sign of his affection, an enormous roll of parchment--his thesis, a refutation against the circulation of the blood--and invites her to witness a dissection with him.<sup>143</sup> Diafoirus explains that Thomas will not pursue a career at court because "The trouble about people of consequence is that when they're ill they absolutely insist on being cured." (Wood, p. 241) The doctor is so absorbed in his own convictions, he cannot realize when he is being ridiculed by Toinette: "That's a good joke! Fancy expecting you fellows to cure them! That's not what you are there for at all. Your job is to collect your fees and prescribe remedies. It's for them to get better--if they can!" (Wood, p. 241)

Argan wants Angélique to sing for their guests, and Cléante recommends a musical dialogue ("un petit opéra impromptu . . . des manières de vers libres"), which he and Angélique can sing together, although he excuses himself for not having much of a voice. As the music master, Cléante describes the scene of this little opera: it is, in effect, the story of Angélique and Cléante in pastoral form. A shepherd watching an entertainment (Cléante at the theatre), was distracted by a shepherdess who needed help and he saved her from a rude fellow (Angélique's "dream"). He fell in love with her himself, but was unable to meet her again because

<sup>143</sup>Thomas represents the typical pedant of the Paris Faculty of Medicine, who firmly opposed any notion that was not based on Hippocrates and Galen. In England William Harvey's theory of the circulation of the blood was known early in the seventeenth century, but the Paris Faculty still generally held such ideas in contempt. The "circulateurs" were ridiculed with the Latin "circulator," meaning "peddler" with "charlatan-vendor" implied.

she was kept under close restraint (Argan's control of Angélique). Determined not to live without her, he decided to ask for her hand, only to learn that she had been promised to someone else. He was desperate and contrived a means of gaining entrance to her house (the music master trick) in order to learn his fate from the shepherdess herself. There he met the unworthy rival (Thomas Diafoirus) of whom the father approved. The musical dialogue begins with the shepherd on the verge of despair because the presence of the shepherdess's father prevents her from speaking. Angélique and Cléante assume the names of Philis and Tircis, standard for pastoral characters, and, under Argan's nose, Cléante asks Angélique through the dialogue of the musical scene for her promise. This musical scene helps give Cléante the quality of passion that most other Moliéresque young lovers lack. He is also honorable, sincere, and bright, and not as much an intriguer as his counterparts, despite this deception. Angélique as Philis says she loves him and would rather die than consent to the arranged marriage. After many declarations of love by the young people, Argan, viewing this spectacle, sides with the father-character of the piece and puts an end to it. "No. No. No. We've had enough. Plays like this set a very bad example. Yon shepherd, Tircis, is a rogue and the shepherdess is an impudent baggage to talk like that in front of her father." (Wood, p. 245) Argan also notices that on the music sheets there are only notes, no words. The quick-thinking Cléante explains that a new method of notating words and music all in one is being utilized. Since Argan knows no better and is unable to discern the ridiculousness of this explanation, he does not contradict Cléante. He is only barely convinced, however, and he dismisses the

"music master." Argan is not entirely stupid. He detects a connection between the musical scene and Angélique's situation. He is just not perceptive enough to figure out the trick. Even with evidence, he can still be fooled.

Béline enters after the concert in which Cléante has shown his cleverness and proficiency with words, and Thomas, in complete contrast with the young lover, steps forward again, beginning his sing-song prepared "mother-speech." He nearly breaks down, however, because he cannot remember it. His father consoles him, and Thomas attempts to make up for his bad showing in speech-making by staging a Latin-infused argument with Angélique about whether or not she should be forced to marry him. There follows a confrontation between Angélique and Béline. The young girl shocks everyone by asking to be excused from marrying a man she cannot love. Trying to anger her stepmother, Angélique indicates her contempt for women who marry for material advantage. Béline would like to disregard her, but Angélique, now confident and able to speak for herself, refuses to be disregarded until her father finally declares that she will marry or be sent to a convent. Angélique leaves, and Béline, who still has Argan thinking she loves him, seems temporarily victorious.

ARGAN: . . . How that woman loves me! It's  
incredible!

(Wood, p. 248)

Again, the fool is most comical when he is inflated with confidence.

Argan takes advantage of his anticipated alliance with members of the medical profession by asking M. Diafoirus to examine him before departing. The kind of gibberish he can expect to receive with Latin phrases and nonsensical advice is delivered: take an even number grains



of salt and an odd number of pills. Even contradictions are made to seem logical to Argan. The only thing Argan has acquired in becoming allied with the doctors is the ability to be perpetually fooled.

Béline remains unnerved throughout the unpleasantness with Angélique, but clearly the battle lines were drawn, and on her way out on an errand to town, she hastens to inform Argan that she just saw a young man in Angélique's room. Argan is appropriately outraged over this tête-à-tête, and calls for Louison, his younger daughter, who Béline reports witnessed the whole incident. Louison appears, and the little girl is asked if she has something to tell. When she denies innocently any knowledge of what her father means, he threatenens her with his cane. He confronts her with Béline's accusations and says he must whip his Louison for fibbing. He takes hold of her, but she pretends to be dead. For those moments of the pretense, the easily fooled Argan is truly stricken, one of the most touching episodes in all of Molière's plays. When she then rises up, he is so relieved he forgives her everything.<sup>144</sup> Louison reveals little by little at Argan's urging that the music master was in Angélique's room and spoke of his love until Béline came. Argan tries to get some last bit of information, but she has told all she knows. He complains, "What troubles I do have. I haven't even time to think about my illness."

(Wood, p. 252)

Béline may be striving to thwart the Angélique-Cléante romance, but another member of the family is supporting it. Béralde, Argan's brother

<sup>144</sup>Molière's own daughter, Esprit-Madeleine, was seven and a half when The Imaginary Invalid was first presented, although she did not perform the role of Louison. The character name was undoubtedly another tribute to the King.

who has a prominent part in the last act of the play, arrives with an offer of marriage for Angélique. At the mention of his daughter's name, the feeble invalid is suddenly a roaring tyrant again. Béralde, who seems at first to be a man of bon sens, is not moved by Argan's illnesses, and he points out that already his visit has made Argan stronger. Then, to improve Argan's humor, which Béralde could anticipate as most likely to be bad, Béralde announces he has brought an entertainment--a mascarade--of gypsies in Moorish costume. Again, Molière turned to the theme of music and dance as a cure. Moorish characters were familiar in the ballet de cour; Molière used them for the masquerade finale of The Sicilian. Here, they are another part of the Carnival-time celebrations, which even a "malade" cannot resist (Second Interlude).<sup>145</sup> Moorish girls sing of love:

Take advantage of the spring  
Of your best years;  
Abandon yourself to the tender passion.

(Van Laun, 204)

. . . . .

If it have some tortures,  
It has a thousand delights  
That charm the heart.

(Van Laun, 206)

In the ballet-entry that follows the song, dancers join the Moorish girls, and bring monkeys who leap and perform.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>145</sup>In the Manuel production Béralde's entertainment was composed of the same group of performers who appeared in the First Interlude. Even Polichinelle was among the dancers (Figure 95).

<sup>146</sup>Dancing monkeys occasionally appeared in court spectacle--for example, La Finta pazza (1645). Mariam Karpilow Whaples in Exoticism in



Figure 95. The Imaginary Invalid, Second Interlude

The action into Act III is continuous: the entertainment has its effect, better than "a dose of senna," Béralde says, as Argan must make another speedy retreat from the room. Toinette has to remind the invalid as he begins to leave that he needs his cane in order to walk. This exit is another excuse to get Argan off stage in order to give other characters an opportunity to establish alliances and plot to circumvent his foolish ideas. Béralde promises to try and further Angélique's interests. In case Béralde's persuasion fails, Toinette says she has concocted a fantastic plan, but Argan returns before she can divulge it. Béralde makes Argan agree not to excite himself during their subsequent discussion. First, Béralde asks Argan why he would consider putting Angélique into a convent, and implies that Béline's inclination to that course of action is for her own self-interest. But rather than dwelling on this aspect of the situation, which only seems to irritate Argan, Béralde moves to the subject of the arranged marriage, and indicates he disapproves of making Angélique marry in order to aid an already foolish pursuit--that is, reliance on doctors. Béralde's reference to the medical profession as an "absurd piece of mummery" (Wood, p. 257) anticipates Toinette's impersonation of a doctor and the mock ceremony that will be staged to make Argan think he is a doctor. However, Béralde is a closed-minded

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Dramatic Music, 1600-1800 (Ann Arbor, 1959), refers (p. 17) to an entire Ballet des singes before 1612. Thierry believes that real monkeys were used rather than dancers in monkey costumes. (Documents, p. 231). Monkeys have from ancient times been used to signify comedy or actors. It is said that Molière's career might have been predicted by a cornerpost carved to represent a band of monkeys climbing an orange tree that supposedly stood at the Poquelin house of Molière's youth (the "Maison des Singes").

extremist in his own way. He is against all medicine and would accept only the course of nature as a cure. He is not the playwright's spokesman, for Molière's attacks are not against medicine per se, only its abuses. Thomas Diafoirus is a baby who might have been thrown out with the bath, but Molière never advocated abandoning the art of medicine entirely. The humor in the Argan-Béralde situation is in Béralde's lack of effect on Argan, who will not listen to anything.<sup>147</sup> He especially balks at the suggestion of seeing a Molière play to learn the truth about doctors: "Your Molière is a very foolish fellow with his comedies; and, to my mind, it is a sorry joke to caricature worthy people like doctors." (Waller, 275) Argan, who was played by Molière himself, further says:

If I were a doctor I'd have my own back on him  
for his impertinence. . . If he were ill I  
wouldn't help him though he were at death's  
door. He wouldn't get the slightest bleeding  
or the smallest injection however much he  
begged and prayed for 'em. 'Die and be damned,'  
I'd say, 'and that'll teach you to make fun  
of the doctors!'

(Wood, p. 260)

One can only wish these words had not been so bitterly ironic.<sup>148</sup>

Béralde makes another plea for Argan to concede to Angélique's wishes as M. Fleurant, the apothecary, enters with a clyster for the invalid's next injection.<sup>149</sup> Argan greets him as though Béralde had never

<sup>147</sup>In the Valde production, Argan's attention during the entire conversation was directed toward soaking his feet (Bishop, pp. 48-53).

<sup>148</sup>See Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière. Molière's actors, after his death, removed all references to the playwright's health, and published a text in 1675 without them.

<sup>149</sup>Fleurant - from "fleurer" ("to smell" or "to give off an odor"). Kernodle's name for Fleurant was "Bottlestopper."

said a word about the follies of medicine. When Béralde stops M. Fleurant the apothecary says that if he is prevented from carrying out his professional duties there will be serious trouble from M. Purgon. Fleurant wastes no time getting Purgon to Argan's house; he leaves and is back with the doctor in an instant. Like the thwarted doctors in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, M. Purgon considers the refusal of his prescription as "a crime against medicine." (Wood, p. 262) The doctor is furious.<sup>150</sup> He renounces all connection with Argan, tears up the marriage settlement made for Angélique and his nephew, Thomas, and, with Toinette spurring him on, predicts a whole series of disorders that will befall the invalid in a kind of ominous litany: "bradypepsia . . . dyspepsia . . . apepsia . . . diarrhoea and lientery . . . dysentery . . . dropsy . . . autopsy." (Wood, p. 263)<sup>151</sup> Argan is overcome with regret for having offended the doctor and, trembling with fear, he blames his brother for this terrible fate.

Argan, in such despair over being abandoned by M. Purgon, is most receptive when just then another doctor arrives. In order to ridicule M. Purgon and his methods, Toinette has disguised herself, but not too realistically, as a ninety-year-old doctor come to see the celebrated invalid. Argan notices a resemblance between Toinette and the doctor,

<sup>150</sup>Purgon - from "purger" ("to purge"). Kernodle's name for Purgon was "Dr. Cathartic."

<sup>151</sup>The litany--a ceremonial prayer with responses. It is used in The Imaginary Invalid three times: in this scene between M. Purgon and Argan, in the soon to follow scene between Toinette disguised as a doctor and Argan, and in the final doctoral receptica. Bishop translates (p. 57) Purgon's litany of afflictions as "colitis . . . enteritis . . . hepatitis . . . appendicitis . . . peritonitis . . . extinction." The final words of this chant might be "rigor mortis."

but is deceived completely when Toinette returns briefly as herself and when Béralde points out that cases of remarkable resemblance between people have been known. Argan is not an idiot; he simply cannot make accurate appraisals. He is even persuaded that he is in error about the doctor's age. Guessing twenty-six or twenty-seven, he is told ninety and that rejuvenation is one of this physician's specialties. Argan has mentioned the desire to have a child and to be healthy and youthful; therefore, Toinette has astutely chosen youthfulness as the facade that would most appeal to Argan. Declaring she has heard that Argan has been given up by all other physicians, "Doctor" Toinette has come to meet the challenge. Argan is greatly flattered by this recognition. No matter what symptoms Argan discloses, Dr. Toinette diagnoses his malady as lung trouble. She reverses all the items of diet prescribed by M. Purgon, makes up her own Latin to describe Argan's former physician: "Ignorantus, ignorantia, ignorantum," and ends her outrageous examination by suggesting that in order to preserve strength, Argan should have an arm off and his right eye out. Even the prescription-following Argan questions these remedies as a bit harsh, but Dr. Toinette makes a dignified exit, and Argan fails to recognize that the doctor was a fake.

Béralde then resumes the question of Angélique's future, but since Thomas has been driven off, Argan is determined that his daughter will take the veil. Knowing what a fool Argan's wife is making of him, Béralde indicates that Béline will be pleased: "I can no more bear your infatuation where she's concerned than your obsession with doctors." (Wood, p. 269) Toinette, ever the schemer, pretends to defend Argan's wife in order to lead the fool into accepting the idea of testing Béline. Antic-

ipating that the hypocritical wife will expose herself, Toinette suggests that to see how much Béline loves him, Argan should pretend to be dead. As Béline approaches, Argan complies and learns for himself that her reaction to his death is one of relief, not sorrow. When he confronts her, she flees in defeat. Béline, in the end, is not clever enough to outwit Toinette. Toinette then suggests that the same test be given to Angélique, who approaches with Cléante. At the news of her father's death, Angélique is truly grief-stricken. Even Cléante, rather than feeling freed from a tyrant, considers this development most unfortunate. Angélique says that marriage is out of the question now, and regrets she ever opposed her father's wishes. Argan rises up, delighted at her response. This tender emotional scene in which daughter has proved her love for her father and therefore ought to be allowed to marry Cléante, is broken by a return to the comic attitude. Argan is grateful, but he is stubborn and essentially unchanged by these critical revelations. He says about Cléante: "Let him become a doctor and I'll consent to the marriage." (Wood, p. 273)

Béralde suggests that Argan become a doctor himself, pointing out that he knows as much about the art of healing as many doctors (since they do not know very much) and that all other professional skills come with donning the cap (bonnet) and gown. He says he has friends in the Medical Faculty who can perform the ceremony. Argan's brother then explains to Toinette that he refers to actors who have in their repertoire a burlesque with songs and dances on the conferring of a doctor's degree. Angélique is concerned about making fun of her father, but Béralde consoles her: "It's not so much making fun of him as playing up to his fancies," and adds, "After all, it's carnival time." (Wood, p. 274)

The finale, the Doctoral Ceremony, consists of a mock reception into



the Medical Faculty, a ritual in which Argan is given a doctorate degree by a troupe of actors disguised as physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries. It is an abridgement of actual ceremonies, from the beginning of study to the final conferring of degree (donner le bonnet).<sup>152</sup> Attendants prepare the hall, and the members of the Medical Faculty enter and take their places according to rank. (The stage directions read: Syringe - carriers, representing macebearers, enter first, then come the Apothecaries, two by two, with mortars, and the Surgeons and the Doctors who take their places on the two sides of the stage. The President mounts a chair, which is in the center, and Argan, who will be received as a doctor, seats himself on a little chair near the President.) All the verses of the finale are in

<sup>152</sup>The type of examination and ceremony to confer a doctoral degree that was customary at Montpellier during Molière's time was witnessed and recorded by John Locke:

The manner of making a doctor of physic was this: the procession, in scarlet robes, and black caps; the professor took his seat, and after a company of fiddlers had played a certain time, he made them a sign to hold, that he might have an opportunity to entertain the company, which he did with a speech against innovation: the musicians then took their turn. The inceptor then began his speech, wherein I found little edification, being designed to compliment the chancellor and professors who were present; the doctor then put on his head the cap, that had marched in on the beadle's staff, in sign of his doctorship, put a ring on his finger, girt himself, about the loins with a gold chain, made him sit down by him; that, having taken pains, he might now take ease, and kissed and embraced him, in token of the friendship that ought to be amongst them.

Peter King, The Life of John Locke (London, 1830), I, 188-189 (March 18, 1676). Since music was not used for the same ceremony in Paris, Molière may have based his burlesque on knowledge of provincial practices.

macaronic Latin.<sup>153</sup> There is an opening address by the Praeses (President of the Faculty) in praise of medicine. Argan is asked a physiological question: why does opium produce sleep? He is then given a general pathological question on the treatment of lung disease and asthma. Finally, a special case is submitted to the candidate for his opinion. Argan is caught up in the nonsense language of the "doctors," and as Bachelierus answers correctly:

Clysterium donare  
 Postea bleedare  
 Then give 'em purgare.<sup>154</sup>

He is sworn in:

Juro.<sup>155</sup>

He is greeted by the surgeons and apothecaries, and is praised by his new colleagues.

Ergo cum isto boneto  
 Venerabili et docto  
 Dono tibi et concedo  
 Virtutem et protestatem  
 Medicandi  
 Purgandi  
 Bleedandi  
 Prickandi  
 Carvandi  
 Slashandi

<sup>153</sup>Macaronic Latin - vernacular words in a Latin context, with Latin terminations and constructions. Van Laun translates the stage directions but makes no attempt to interpret lyrics. Baker and Miller, Bishop, Malleson, Ozell, and Wood translate the macaronic Latin gibberish into broken English.

<sup>154</sup>Figure 96. This photograph is from the finale of the Manuel production. Even Polichinelle seems to have been included in the ceremony.

<sup>155</sup>"Swearo" or "I do-at." According to legend, Molière is supposed to have been stricken as he uttered this oath with the attack that within a few hours killed him.



Figure 96. "Doctoral Ceremony"

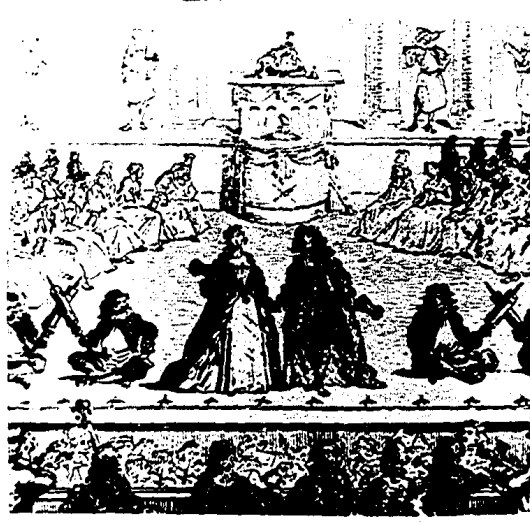


Figure 97. "Doctoral Ceremony"

Et murderandi  
Impune per totam terram.

The wish is expressed that the years will bring the new doctor many diseases to treat.<sup>156</sup> After some revelry and a final salute

Vivat, vivat, endless vivat  
Novus doctor qui tam bene speakat

Mille annis let him purgat  
Et bleedat et killat  
Vivat, vivat, vivat, vivat, endless vivat  
Novus doctor qui tam bene speakat.

the Faculty, of which Argan now thinks he is a member, files out, again in order of rank.

Arthur Tilley points out that The Imaginary Invalid is not so successful a comedy-ballet as The Would-be Gentleman; the fusion between comedy and ballet is not so consistent.<sup>157</sup> But Molière showed significant development in the ability to handle musical scenes in his last comedy-ballet. Even though the first prologue has nothing to do with the play and the Polichinelle interlude does not grow out of the action, these playlets have dramatic conflict, some characterization, and varying degrees of humor. There is an attempt to connect the interludes with the action: even the Moorish dancers help reveal the imaginary nature of Argan's infirmity. The doctoral reception is essential to the dénouement, and it equals if not surpasses the Turkish Ceremony as a musical extravaganza. But perhaps the most mature and sophisticated use of music is the little

<sup>156</sup>Figure 97. This engraving shows the Praeses at his podium, Argan in the examiner's box, the doctors of the Faculty dressed in robes and hats ranged on both sides of the stage, syringe-carriers below and above, the lovers down stage center, and audience standing at the orchestra applauding.

<sup>157</sup>Tilley, p. 275.

opera of Act II. Molière uses the pastoral for dramatic purpose: a means for the two lovers to exchange confidences. The musical prologue is performed by characters in the comedy (and professional singers were not substituted for the actor and actress), and it is not cluttered by elaborating spectacle—that is, unnecessary dancers and choral background. The opera is not an interlude, not even a separate scene. Molière had discovered, at last, the means of truly integrating music with his comedy.

CHAPTER V  
RELATED WORKS

Several musical productions in which Molière was involved relate to the development of his comedy-ballets. Molière was little more than one court retainer among many for the ballet de cour in which he performed in the provinces and for the first day pageant of Louis's ballet-fête at Versailles in 1664. In these productions Molière had the honor of entertaining princely audiences, but had to conform mainly to established forms of court divertissements. Even in 1664, though, Molière's unique abilities were recognized, for he was permitted to present The Princess of Elis during The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island. In the fetes of 1666-1667, Molière accepted the royal invitation to perform with productions that followed the dictates of the court, but also allowed his own comic style to emerge. That Molière was called upon for special musical entertainments, such as the Divertissement of 1668, and the festivity to welcome a new member of the royal family in 1671, reflects his success. But the desire to please his audience occasionally overshadowed his desire to follow his own comedic inclinations--The Magnificent Lovers and the musical spectacle Psyché are examples. Royal demands and the constant press of time also caused Molière to produce a number of ephemeral works that were never intended to be preserved beyond their initial presentations at court. In some of these musical productions Molière's authorship is uncertain or, at most, contributory, as with the Ballet of the Incompatibles and Psyché. He probably had no part as playwright-director in

The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, except for The Princess of Elis. Some of these plays were left unfinished or the texts were not preserved; these include Mélicerte, the Comic Pastoral, and the pastoral of the Ballet of the Ballets. None of these works can qualify as comedy-ballets, which, considered in this study, (1) are written entirely by Molière, (2) are complete enough to be performed, and (3) are a fusion of the esprit gaulois and the esprit courtois which characterizes to some degree all of Molière's comedy-ballets.

#### BALLET OF THE INCOMPATIBLES

Before Molière produced his first comedy-ballet he had some experience with the ballet de cour, as participant and perhaps as writer and director. He is known to have performed (dancing and possibly reciting) in the Ballet of the Incompatibles (Ballet des incompatibles) in 1655. This ballet--its livret and the circumstances of its presentation--relates with some significance to Molière's later divertissements for Louis XIV.

The Ballet of the Incompatibles was performed for the Prince and Princess de Conti during the session of the States of Languedoc held at Montpellier from December, 1654 to March, 1655.<sup>1</sup> The exact date of the performance is not known, but it was probably during Carnival on Shrove Sunday (February 7, 1655), a day ordinarily devoted to the presentation of ballets. Where the ballet was held is unclear; the Prince stayed at

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière. The Prince de Conti, by having the entertainers sponsored by the States, avoided having to pay them himself. Molière's troupe received 8,000 livres for the four months.

the treasurer Girard's residence during these provincial parlements, and the ballet may have been performed there.<sup>2</sup>

The Ballet of the Incompatibles was a provincial imitation of the royal and noble ballets de cour in Paris. Some of the province's people of quality, especially those associated with Conti, danced along with professional performers from the musical troupe of dancer-composer La Pierre and from the Comedians of the Prince de Conti. La Pierre's singers and dancers probably provided most of the more difficult musical performances; Molière and Joseph BÉjart enlivened the ballet with comic characterizations. Mlle Gerar, one of the female dancers who appeared in the finale, might have been Madeleine BÉjart.<sup>3</sup>

The organization of the ballet is quite ordinary. It is divided into two parts with seven entrées in each and a finale at the end of the second part. A récit serves as prologue to each part. Vers accompany each of the entrées; with only a few exceptions, there is a verse for

<sup>2</sup>In 1887 Louis de la Cour de La Pijardière, archivist of Hérault and of the city of Montpellier, proposed marking the site with a marble tablet. "Molière à Montpellier," Le Moliériste, IX, 24-26. Today a plaque, which adorns the front of the Fabre Museum on the rue Montpellicret, reads:

CET EDIFICE EST CONSTRUIT  
SUR L'EMPLACEMENT OU JOUA  
MOLIERE  
PENDANT L'HIVER 1654-1655

(This edifice is constructed on the site where Molière played during the winter 1654-1655.)

<sup>3</sup>Gustave Michaut, La Jeunesse de Molière (Paris, 1923), p. 158. Michaut says one would like to make this identification on the assumption that her name had been misspelled. French orthography was erratic. In the livret of the Incompatibles Joseph BÉjart's name is spelled "Béjarre" and "Béjar." It seems probable that Mlle BÉjart, Molière's leading actress, would have had some part in the performance.



each character in an entrée. The Ballet of the Incompatibles seems extremely simple when compared with the royal Ballet de la nuit (Benserade, 1653) of which it may in part be an imitation. Both begin with Night and end with Sun and include some similar characters, such as Discord and the elements of Fire, Water, Air, and Earth. Benserade's ballet is an elaborate portrayal of many characters who might appear as night progresses to day. The Ballet of the Incompatibles has no story line or progressive action. It has only a unifying theme: incompatibility. But within this theme there is dramatic tension that is not to be found in the more complex Ballet de la nuit. Part I (Night) is contrasted with Part II (Sun or day). After each of the two opening récits there is an entrée of a character who was incompatible with the particular person performing it; Part I - Discord was represented by the harmonious professional dancer La Pierre, and Part II - Ambition was portrayed by the amorous Baron de Fourques.<sup>4</sup> Each successive entrée consists of a set of incompatibles, such as a Charlatan with a Simpleton (an old peasant) and the God of Silence with Six Ladies.

Molière appeared twice in the Ballet of the Incompatibles, as a Poet (a role perhaps considered incompatible with the profession of a comedian) and as Harangue. "Harangère" literally means "fishwife," and Molière may have played the role as a scolding female opposite the character Eloquence, as performed by the Baron de Ferrals (Part II, third entrée).<sup>5</sup> Appearing together in Part I, sixth entrée, were Molière (as

<sup>4</sup>Michaut notes (p. 210) that love and ambition were thought to be opposites in the seventeenth century.

<sup>5</sup>See Chapter VI: Dance.

a Poet) and Joseph BÉjart (as a Painter); they were opposed by Silver and an Alchemist, art and wealth being two different means to uncover nature's secrets. BÉjart appeared in Part II, second entrée, as a Drunk (who drinks openly) contrasted with a Hypocrite ("La Dissimulation," who drinks only on the sly).

The author of the music and the verses for the Ballet of the Incompatibles is unknown. The music is not extant but may have been composed by La Pierre. The livret<sup>6</sup> has been attributed to Molière, and Paul Lacroix is the leading exponent of the theory that Molière wrote the ballet.<sup>7</sup> Molière had the experience, according to Lacroix, from having presented ballets for Gaston d'Orléans.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, Michaut considers the assertion that Molière wrote Gaston's ballets to be groundless, and concludes that Molière may have written the Ballet of the Incompatibles, but his authorship is indemonstrable.<sup>9</sup> One bit of evidence

<sup>6</sup>The Ballet of the Incompatibles was first published at Montpellier by Daniel Pech, imprimeur du roy et de la ville, in quarto, 18 pages (Guibert, II, 778). It was reprinted in 1858 by bibliophile Jacob (Paul Lacroix) and is included in D-M, I, 523-535.

<sup>7</sup>Paul Lacroix, Ballets et mascarades de cour sous Henri IV et Louis XIII, (Paris, 1868-1870) and "Molière: Auteur de ballets et de mascarades de cour," Le Moliériste, II, 229-234.

<sup>8</sup>Lacroix says that Molière probably wrote these ballets for Gaston: Ballet de la fontaine de Jouvence (1643), Ballet de l'oracle de la Sibylle de Pansoust (1644 or 1645), and the Ballet des vrais moyens de parvenir (1644 or 1645). The last of these ballets was repeated for the King on June 12 and 15 of 1651. Molière was in Paris at least in April to settle his mother's estate, and might have been involved with it, as well as aware of the Ballet des festes de Bacchus (May 2, 1651). On February 16, 1654 the Ballet des vrais moyens de parvenir was danced at Lyon in the theatre that the troupe of Molière had occupied since December, 1652.

<sup>9</sup>Michaut, La Jeunesse, p. 118.

given in support of Molière as author of the Montpellier ballet is Harangue's line: "I write verses as beautiful as those I recite." Although the verses throughout the ballet are mediocre, the comic tension created by the clash of opposites suggests that an actor may have supervised the production. The Charlatan and the Simpleton are, after all, the standard rogue and fool of the comic theatre. It is possible that Joseph or Madeleine Béjart, who had been performers longer than Molière and had done some writing, composed or pieced together the verses and "scenes." At any rate, it seems plausible, as Lacroix suggests, that some of the ideas Molière used for Louis's court divertissements may have come from this period in the provinces.<sup>10</sup> Whether or not Molière had actually written a court ballet before The Bores or not, he had taken part in at least one.

#### THE PLEASURES OF THE ENCHANTED ISLAND

The theme of the first three days of Louis's great court fete, The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée, 1664) was based on an incident in Ludovico Ariosto's Orlando Furioso: the sojourn of Rogero and his Knights on the island of the enchantress Alcina (Cantos VI and VII).

Meanwhile Rogero, on the flying steed,  
Arrives in false Alcina's empery. 11

<sup>10</sup>The Charlatan in Love's the Best Doctor, for example, is perhaps a descendant.

<sup>11</sup>Ludovico Ariosto, Orlando Furioso (New York, 1968), p. 45. The Italian poet Ariosto (1474-1533), in his epic Orlando Furioso (Orlando Mad, published 1516), wrote of the adventures of Charlemagne's paladins and their wars against the Saracens. ("Orlando" is the Italian form of

As the fete began, Alcina already had the noble knights under her spell. She had many pleasures in mind for them (which in turn were dedicated to the queens of France). First, she ordered an imitation of the Pythian games.<sup>12</sup> The first activity of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island was a procession of captured knights. Printed verses for each of the knights were written by Président de Périgny. The knights, accompanied by their attendants, entered the jousting lists and lined up to pay their respects to the two queens, the King's wife and his mother. Following

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Roland, the celebrated character of medieval romance, but the hero of Ariosto's epic is Rogero.) Several translations into French were made, and, because of the epic's French heroes and its focus on Paris as the center from which much of the action emanates, it was very popular and well-known in France. A ballet-mélodramatique had been produced in 1610, Ballet d'Alcine, or Ballet de Monsieur de Vendosme, with the sorceress as its subject (see Chapter I: Precursors). Some theatrical influence may have come from Italy. An operatic ballet entitled La Liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina was performed in Florence in 1625 (see A. M. Nagler, Theatre Festivals of the Medici, New Haven, 1964). The island of Alcina (Nagler, Figure 109) and Conflagration on the island of Alcina (Nagler, Figure 110)--designed by Giulio (or Alfonso) Parigi--are similar to scenes in The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island. The official account of the fete, thought to have been written by André Félibien, who chronicled the 1668 fete, or Charles Perrault (Le Moliériste, X, 284), appears in D-M, IV, 107-233, followed by the livret, 234-250. The livret (Figure 98) was first published by Robert Ballard (Guibert, II, 447-453). Israël Silvestre (1621-1691), graveur ordinaire du roi since 1663 and responsible for impressions of the royal residences and official court functions, made nine engravings of the fete: View of the Chateau of Versailles (Figure 99), Procession of the King and his Chevaliers, Appearance of the King and his Chevaliers with the récits, The Tournament, Appearance of the Four Seasons and their followings, with Pan and Diana, Feast of the King, The Princess of Elis, The Island of Alcina, and The Rupture of the Palace. The Relation of Marigny appears in D-M, IV, 251-261. English translations of the verses and descriptions of Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée: (1) Ozell, Book I, Vol. II, 189-210 and Book II, Vol. III, 47-57, (2) Van Laun, III, 3-26.

<sup>12</sup>On the Pythian games see Chapter IV: The Full-Length Comedy-Ballets, p. 312.

LES  
**PLAISIRS**  
**DE LISLE**  
**ENCHANTEE.**

COMEDIE DE BAGVE,  
 Collation, Machines, Comedie  
 meslee de Danse & de Musique, Ballet du  
 Palais d'Alcine, Feu d'Artifice: Et autres  
 Fests & Jeux Magnifiques; faites par le  
 Roy à Versailles le 7 May 1664. Et  
 continuees plusieurs autres Jours.



A PARIS,  
 Chez ROBERT BALLARD, seul Imprimeur  
 du Roy pour la Musique.  
 M. DC. LXIV.  
 AVEC PRIVILEGE DE SA MAJESTE.

Figure 98. Livret of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island

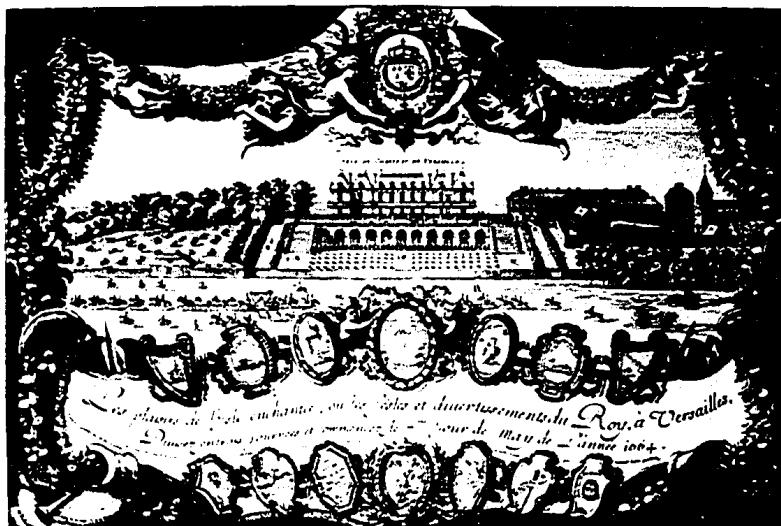


Figure 99. The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island,  
 title engraving (Silvestre)

the knights was the god in whose honor the Pythian games were originally celebrated--Apollo, the ever-present symbol of the King. Apollo, portrayed by La Grange, rode on a cart fitted out as a chariot of the god, drawn by four horses, and driven by Time, a decrepit figure with wings and scythe (a role taken by the King's coachman Millet). Also on the cart were the Four Ages: the Brass Age (Mlle De Brie), the Silver Age (Hubert), the Golden Age (Mlle Molière), and the Iron Age (Du Croisy). Walking alongside the chariot were the Twelve Hours of the Day and the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac. When this parade arrived in front of the audience, the Four Ages and Apollo recited verses written by Président de Périgny to Marie-Thérèse in praise of the King:

Whatever grandeur France or Spain might boast,  
The rights of Charles the Fifth, and Charlemagne,  
Auspiciously transmitted in her blood,  
Will to her throne subject the universe:  
But a yet greater title, nobler lot,  
Which lifts her higher, and which charms her more,  
A name which in itself all names outweighs,  
Is that of consort to the mighty Louis.

(Van Laun, 13)

After this graceful conceit, the tournament took place.<sup>13</sup>

The jousting was followed by a collation in which the service was part of the entertainment (Figure 100). The repast began with music by thirty-four of Lully's musicians. The Signs of the Zodiac danced. The Four Seasons appeared: Spring (Mlle Du Parc), on a Spanish horse, followed by twelve gardeners, Summer (Du Parc), on an elephant, followed by twelve

<sup>13</sup>Pageant-jousts date back to the Middle Ages as a regular form of princely diversion in France. This tournament was held at a crossing of wide alleys on the grounds of Versailles, with the Palace of Alcina constructed on a pond in the distance. See Chapter VIII: Theatres and Scenery.

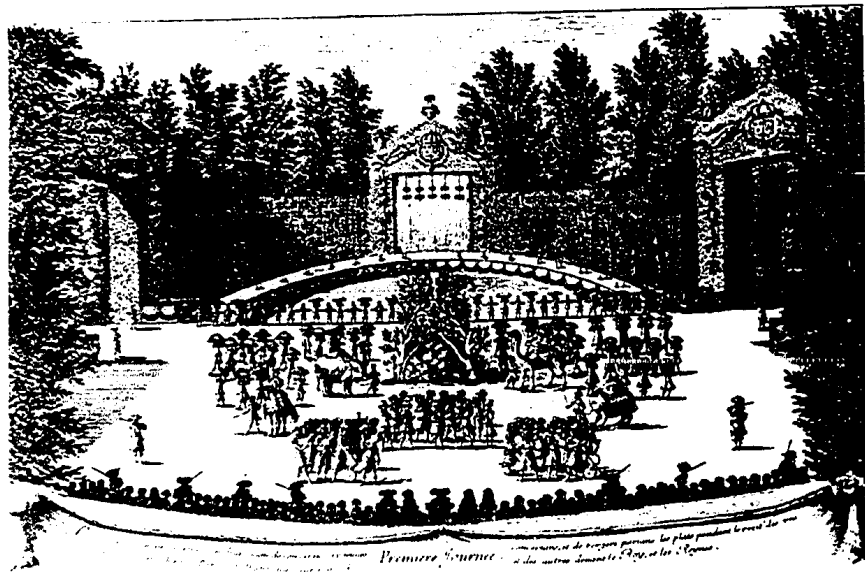
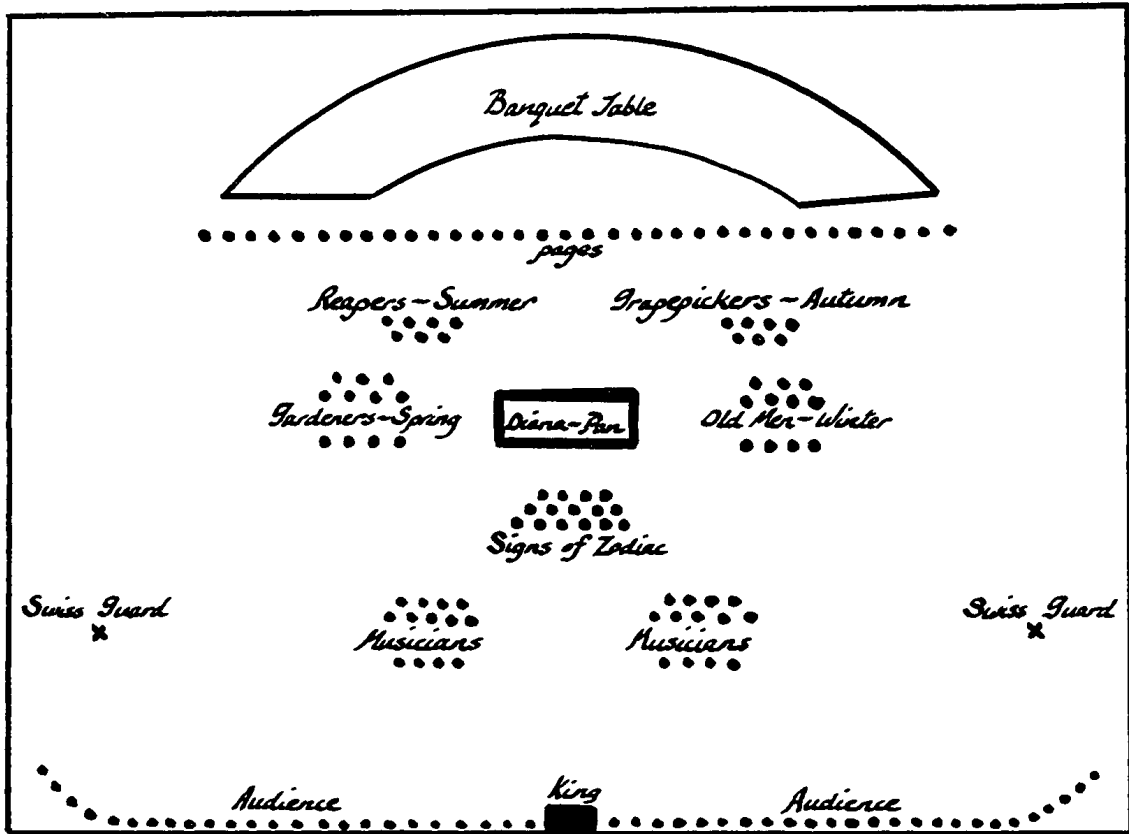


Figure 100. Pleasures, First Day



J. Dalzell

reapers, Autumn (La Thorillière), on a camel, followed by twelve grape-pickers, and Winter (Louis Béjart), on a bear, followed by twelve frost-bitten old men. The Seasons and their followers helped to distribute the delicacies of the feast. Fourteen more musicians accompanied Pan (Molière) and Diana (Mlle Béjart) who entered on a cart, followed by twenty persons of Pan's menagerie and Diana's chase. Eighteen pages completed the service corps. The Four Seasons, Diana, and Pan delivered more verses to the Queen. Then, by the light of candles and flambeaux and while violins played, the glorious assemblage enjoyed its magnificent banquet.

The Second Day of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island was devoted to the performance of a comedy-ballet, The Princess of Elis, ordered by the enchantress as a pleasure for the "captives."<sup>14</sup> It was performed on an outdoor stage with the Palace of Alcina in the background (Figure 73).

On the Third Day, the tale of Rogero and the Knights resumed with the audience moved to a place closer to the pond on which the palace of Alcina was built. The time had come in the fantasy to free the knights so that they might pursue their glorious deeds. Musicians positioned on either side of the palace began to play. Appearing on the lake and approaching the bank were Alcina (Mlle Du Parc), on a sea monster, and two Nymphs, Célia (Mlle De Brie) and Dircé (Mlle Molière), on whales. They recited verses by Benserade that praised the Queen-Mother:

Let's tell her that the public voice proclaims  
The charming beauties of her royal soul.

(Van Laun, 21)

<sup>14</sup>On The Princess of Elis see Chapter III: The Short Comedy-Ballets.



Then they revealed Alcina's forebodings of her imminent defeat (Figure 101). There followed the "Ballet of the Palace of Alcina," a miniature ballet de cour of six entrées leading to the grand finale of the story:

First entrée - Four giants and four dwarfs appear to stand guard outside the palace.

Second entrée - Eight Moors arrive to guard the interior of the palace.

Third entrée - Six Knights try to escape from the palace, but are stopped by Monsters.

Fourth entrée - Alcina invokes all the spirits she controls to come to her aid. Two Demons appear.

Fifth entrée - Four other Demons join Alcina to reassure her of their support.

Sixth entrée - Melissa (the dancer De Lorge) appears disguised as old Atlantes and places the ring of Angelica, which destroys enchantments, on the finger of Rogero (Beauchamps). There is thunder and lightning, the palace is reduced to ashes by fireworks, and the Knights are liberated at last. (Figure 102)

Molière and his troupe not only participated in the pageantry of the first three days of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island; they dominated the last four days with presentations of other plays from their repertoire.

#### BALLET OF THE MUSES

The Ballet of the Muses (Ballet des Muses), an entertainment performed perhaps ten times or more during two and a half months of court festivities, marked the end of mourning for Queen Anne. The first performance was December 2, 1666, the last February 19, 1667. It was an important diversion because of the length of time it continued to amuse its audience, because of the variety of offerings on the program, and because of the

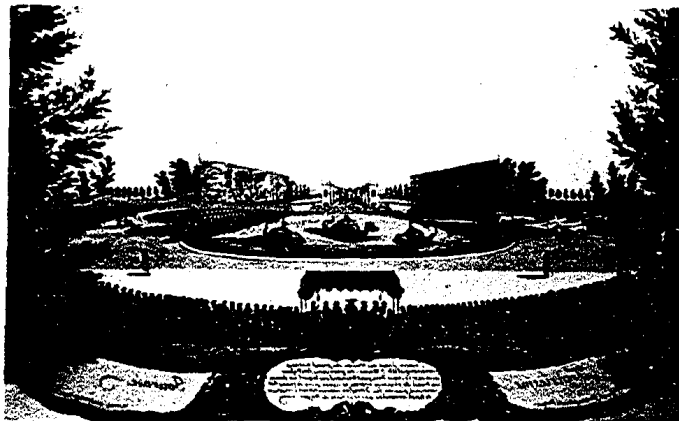


Figure 101. Pleasures, Third Day (Palace of Alcina)

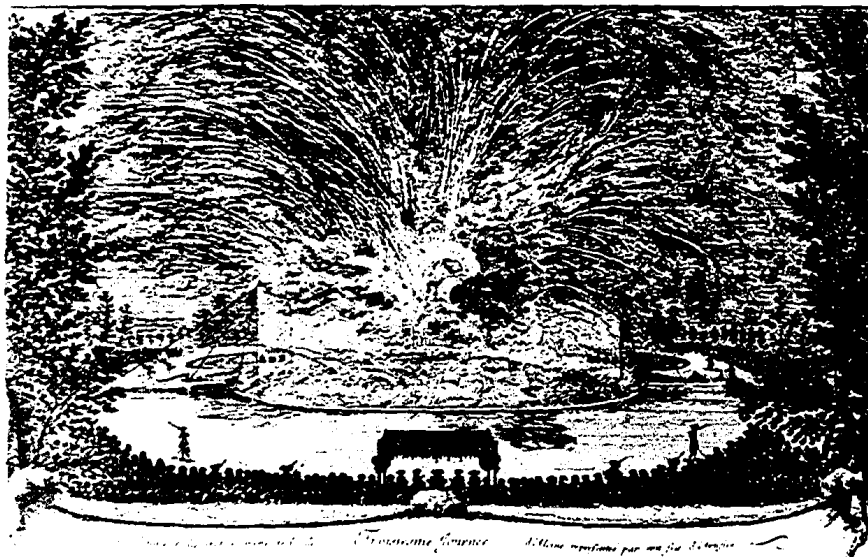


Figure 102. Pleasures, Third Day (Rupture of the Palace)

people involved--the King with some of his highest ranking courtiers and the leading professional performers of the day. Court singers and dancers, players from the Hôtel de Bourgogne, and members of both the Italian and Spanish troupes in Paris participated, as well as Molière's company. Molière contributed three plays to the Ballet of the Muses. Isaac Benserade wrote most of the other récits and vers and formed the general plan of the program. Lully composed the music.

The idea for the Ballet of the Muses--the reciprocity between the King and the arts--was originally suggested by the Abbé de Marolles.<sup>15</sup> The King, who encouraged and supported the arts, was, in turn, honored by them. The notion of all the arts being used to praise the King was nowhere more fully expressed. The argument of the Ballet of the Muses begins: "The Muses, charmed by the glorious reputation of our monarch and by the care that His Majesty takes in making all the arts flourish in his empire, leave Parnassus to come to his court."<sup>16</sup> Like the standard ballet à entrées, the Ballet of the Muses was unified only by overall theme. It consisted of thirteen, and later fourteen, otherwise unrelated entrées. A performance probably lasted for many hours, as earlier ballets de cour had. Although some changes were made in the program during the nearly three months it played, presumably most of the entrées were repeated each performance. The Ballet of the Muses appeared in three basic versions. The first version (December) had thirteen entrées including Molière's Mélicerte as the third entrée and a ballet of Cinq poètes as

<sup>15</sup>D-M, VI, 126. Michel de Marolles, Abbé de Villeloin, writer and translator, theoretician of court spectacles (active in the court of Louis XIII).

<sup>16</sup>D-M, VI, 277.

the sixth entrée. In the second version, Mélicerte was replaced by Molière's Comic Pastoral (January 5), and a comedy entitled Les Poètes, which included a "Mascarade espagnole," was substituted for the Cinq poètes (January 25). This latter comedy was performed by actors from the Hôtel de Bourgogne. It was never published and its author is unknown, but it seems to have been not unlike Molière's comedy-ballets with a mixture of contemporary comic characters and elegant ballet-entries. Molière is supposed to have written some of the verses for its "Spanish Masquerade,"<sup>17</sup> which is similar to the "Spanish Concert" at the end of The Forced Marriage (1664) and to the Spanish entry of the "Ballet of Nations" finale of The Would-be Gentleman (1670). The third version of the Ballet of the Muses had Molière's The Sicilian as the fourteenth entrée. The Ballet of the Muses, therefore, eventually consisted of a Prologue dialogue, an entrée in honor of each of the nine Muses, an entrée (#7) devoted to Orpheus, son of Apollo and the muse Calliope, three entrées on the battle between the Muses and the Pierides, and an entrée (#14) which combined the gifts of Thalia and Terpsichore--a comedy-ballet of Molière. Livrets were printed by Ballard for each of the three versions of the ballet-fête, but only the second and third are extant.<sup>18</sup>

The Ballet of the Muses began with an overture and the appearance of Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, remembering the great heroes of antiquity and wishing to see the august prince who has caused all the

<sup>17</sup>Guibert, II, 496.

<sup>18</sup>The livrets are discussed in Guibert, II, 496-502. A variation of the livret appears in D-M, VI, 275-299, and an even more complete version in François Victor Fournel's Les Contemporains de Molière (Paris, 1866), II, 585-618, with vers, récits, and the names of all the performers.

arts to flourish in his dominions. She was accompanied by the Nine Muses and the Seven Arts (all singers). The subsequent entrées were as follows:

First entrée - In honor of Urania, muse of astrology, the seven planets, Jupiter, the Sun, Mercury, Venus, the Moon, Mars, and Saturn danced.

Second entrée - In honor of Melpomene, muse of tragedy, a scene between Pyramus and Thisbe from the well-known play of Théophile Pyrame (1619)<sup>19</sup> was performed.

Third entrée - In honor of Thalia, muse of comedy, Molière and his troupe presented Mélicerte: later the Comic Pastoral. The official description did not mention a title, but called it "a comic piece . . . composed by the one of all our poets who, in this form of writing, can most justly be compared with the ancients."<sup>20</sup>

Fourth entrée - In honor of Euterpe, muse of lyric poetry (the "pastoral muse"), eight shepherds and eight shepherdesses sang verses in praise of the power of Eros, while four other shepherds and four shepherdesses danced. The dancers were Louis XIV, the Marquis de Villeroy, Raynal La Pierre, Madame, Madame de Montespan, Mlle de La Vallière, and Mlle de Toussi.<sup>21</sup>

Fifth entrée - In honor of Clio, muse of history, a ballet representing the clash between Alexander (Greeks) and Porus (Indians) based on Racine's tragedy Alexandre le Grand (1665) was performed.

<sup>19</sup>This piece was a standard favorite of the amateur repertoire. It was played here by Monsieur le Grand and the Marquis de Mirepoix. Mlle de Rambouillet had taken the part of Pyrame in 1627. Henry Carrington Lancaster, A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century (Baltimore, 1929-1942), Part I, I, 167-168.

<sup>20</sup>D-M, VI, 280.

<sup>21</sup>Mlle de Toussi - daughter of Maréchale de la Mothe.

Sixth entrée - In honor of Calliope, muse of epic poetry, there was a dance of five poets, Dolivet with two serious poets (Mercier and Broüard) and two comic poets (Pesan and le Roy<sup>22</sup>); later changed to a little comedy called The Poets acted by the troupe of the Hôtel de Bourgogne (including Floridor and Poisson). The third scene of the brief work is a Spanish mascarade that a gentleman of quality has prepared to accompany a ball. The Duc de Saint-Aignan and Beauchamps were the Conductors of the Mascarade. The Spanish gentlemen and ladies were the King, Monsieur le Grand, the Marquis de Villeroy, the Marquis de Mirepoix, and the Marquis de Rassin, Madame, Madame de Montespan, Madame de Cursol,<sup>23</sup> Mlle de La Vallière, and Mlle de Toussi. Members of the Spanish troupe in the Queen's service since July, 1660 sang and danced and played musical instruments.<sup>24</sup> The play ended after seven scenes with a dance of Basques performed by courtiers and professionals.

Seventh entrée - Orpheus (portrayed by Lully) played his "lyre" (violin) alternately as the languid, then the resentful lover. A Nymph (Mlle Hilaire), hearing the music, appeared and revealed the secrets of her heart in song. Then eight Thracians danced.

Eighth entrée - In honor of Erato, "who is invoked especially in matters of love," six lovers from famous novels danced. The King represented Cyrus, the character he was the model for in Mlle de Scudéry's pastoral romance Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus.

Ninth entrée - In honor of Polyhymnia, "who rules over eloquence and dialectics," three Greek philosophers and three Roman orators were represented humorously by Italian comedians

<sup>22</sup>The sieur le Roy, not to be confused with the King. Nicolas Hottere, a versatile court musician, was known as le Roy, but cannot be clearly identified here.

<sup>23</sup>Madame de Cursol - daughter of the Duc de Montausier.

<sup>24</sup>It was quite natural for the Spanish players to appear here with the Grands Comédiens because they alternated with them at the Hôtel de Bourgogne.

(Dominique Biancolelli, Tiberio Fiorillo, and Valerio) and members of the Hôtel de Bourgogne (Montfleury, Poisson, and Brécourt).<sup>25</sup>

Tenth entrée - In honor of Terpsichore, "to whom the invention of rustic dances is attributed," four Fauns and four Nymphs<sup>26</sup> danced, holding branches. Their dance was interrupted by a young Satyr (M. le Gros) who sang of love.

Eleventh entrée - The Nine Muses and the nine daughters of Pierus<sup>27</sup> danced separately and then together, each group trying to surpass the other. Among the noble ladies who performed were Madame, Madame de Montespan, Mlle de La Vallière, Mlle de Toussi, Mlle de la Mothe, Mlle de Brancas, Madame de Rochefort, and Madame de La Vallière.

Twelfth entrée - Three Nymphs arrived to judge the combat. The King was one, the Marquis de Villeroy and Beauchamps were the other two.

Thirteenth entrée - Jupiter (Monsieur le Grand) appeared to punish the insolence of the resisting Pierides by changing them into birds.

Fourteenth entrée - The dance of the Turks and the Moors was mixed with "a little comedy" (The Sicilian).

The Ballet of the Muses was important to Molière. According to La Grange, Molière's troupe went to Saint-Germain on December 1, 1666, and did not return to Paris until the 20th of February, 1667, the day after the final performance. Molière wrote four entertainments in which the

<sup>25</sup>The Grands Comédiens, who specialized in tragedy, had to take comic roles in keeping with the gaiety of the celebrations. Brécourt had been with Molière's troupe 1662-1663.

<sup>26</sup>The term used in the livret is "femmes sauvages." They have been called "Faunesses," but could be dryads (Eurydice was a dryad), or tree-nymphs.

<sup>27</sup>In Greek mythology the nine daughters of Pierus were vanquished by the nine Muses in a musical contest and then were changed into magpies.

the troupe and members of the court performed. He was chosen to provide the grand finale of the fete, and this commission included not only the "Entrées de Maures" for the King to dance, but one of Molière's most delightful comedy-ballets, The Sicilian. The Sicilian is discussed in Chapter III: The Short Comedy-Ballets. Mélicerte and the Comic Pastoral are included here as related works because they are incomplete and are inconsistent with the comedy-ballet form.

### MELICERTE

Mélicerte is called a "comédie pastorale heroïque."<sup>28</sup> Perhaps because there was enough singing and ballet on the rest of the program of the Ballet of the Muses in which Mélicerte appeared, Molière was not required to include music in his play. Although Mélicerte was performed as the entrée (#3) in honor of the comic muse, it has little of the robust esprit gaulois that Molière was capable of producing. It has instead the esprit courtois characteristic of The Princess of Elis which Molière had given for the fete at Versailles in 1664 and of The Magnificent Lovers which three years later he would produce at the request of the King. It has comic touches, but the play is basically in keeping with the pastoral-mythological nature of the ballet program. It is even supposedly based on an incident, the story of Sesostris and Timarète, in Mlle de Scudéry's pastoral romance, Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus<sup>29</sup> which provided the character

<sup>28</sup>D-M, VI, 151. English translations of Mélicerte: (1) Ozell, Book III, Vol. VI, 55-74, as Melicerta, (2) Van Laun, IV, 9-25.

<sup>29</sup>Moland, VIII, 96-97 and D-M, VI, 142-144. The locale is transferred from the Nile to the Valley of Tempe in Thessaly (the scene of The Magnificent Lovers).



of Cyrus for the King to dance in the eighth entrée. It is a pleasant bergerie--a pastoral which was appropriately followed in the Ballet of the Muses by an entrée (#4) of singing and dancing shepherds and shepherdesses.

Whether because of a time shortage or because of problems within the troupe, Molière completed only two acts of Mélicerte. It seems to have been a specialty play, a play written as a vehicle to display the talents of the thirteen year old boy-actor, Michel Baron, whom Molière had acquired as a protégé. When writing his Vie de Molière some years later Grimarest obtained his material from Baron, and told this story, including the revelation of a quarrel between Molière's wife and Baron which caused the boy to leave the troupe.<sup>30</sup> With the boy gone, Molière may have lost interest in finishing the play. At any rate, the King expressed his satisfaction with it and Molière was not required to finish it.<sup>31</sup>

The two acts of Mélicerte, written in verse, exist almost as a complete entity--a charming little conceit. The play begins with Daphné and Eroxène, two "noble" shepherdesses, sending away the despairing shepherds, Acanthe and Tyrène, who love them. By comparing portraits of their loved-ones, the maidens discover they both love Myrtil, a young shepherd. They want to confide their feelings to Lycarsis, who is supposed to be Myrtil's father (and because the play is unfinished, this mistake is not set right).

<sup>30</sup>Jean Grimarest in La Vie de Molière, 1705 (Paris, 1930) says (pp. 36-37) Armande gave Baron a "box on the ear" while the young actor was learning six hundred verses (Mélicerte is six hundred verses long), and that although the boy left Molière's house, he promised to act his part. But at Saint-Germain Baron asked leave of the King to retire, and he returned to Madame Raisin's company.

<sup>31</sup>As stated in an editors' note to the 1682 edition (D-M, VI, 185).

Just passing by at that moment is Lycarsis, telling his friends Nicandre and Mopse (supposedly the uncle of the shepherdess Mélicerte) the news that the King will honor Tempe with a visit. When Lycarsis is alone, the two shepherdesses come to him professing their love. Lycarsis thinks that he is the object of this "flame," but they quickly tell him it is Myrtil they desire. After a moment of disappointment, Lycarsis expresses gratitude that the "two nymphs of the highest rank of the land" should be interested in his son, dismisses the notion that Myrtil is already attracted to the shepherdess Mélicerte, and agrees to allow Myrtil to choose which of the two of them he will marry. Myrtil arrives just then, and, much to Lycarsis's dismay, reveals that he loves Mélicerte and could not choose either Daphné or Eroxène. Lycarsis promises otherwise, on his life.

Mélicerte, having heard the news that Daphné and Eroxène seek Myrtil, expresses with great distress to Corinne, a cool, indifferent confidante, the fear that she cannot compete with these ladies of rank. Corinne is a contrast to Mélicerte and the shepherdess's sentimentality. Alone, Mélicerte displays her newly acquired awareness of the cruelty of love. Myrtil appears then, bringing with him a gift for her, a sparrow he has captured and caged (Figure 103). But she is sad and finally confesses her grief. He is wretched that she would doubt him and takes an oath of fidelity to her. Lycarsis interrupts them and makes degrading insinuations about the virtuous Mélicerte which drive her away and anger Myrtil. Myrtil's love is so compelling, however, that his father cannot continue to object. Lycarsis agrees that Myrtil may have Mélicerte. When Myrtil tells Acanthe and Tyrène the news, the shepherds are happy because the shepherdesses may be restored to them. With all of the lovers soon to be



Figure 103. Mélicerte (Brissart)

MYRTIL: I just now, charming  
 Mélicerte, took a little  
 prisoner, which I have kept for  
 you, and of which I may perhaps  
 become jealous of one of these  
 days. It is a young sparrow,  
 which I myself intend to tame with  
 great care, and for your acceptance.  
 The present is not great, but the  
 gods themselves take note of the  
 will only.

Mélicerte

Act II, Scene 3

(Van Laun, IV, 20)

united, the play might have ended here, but Molière intended it to be a longer piece and introduced a complication in the final scene (Act II, Scene 7). Word comes that the purpose of the King's visit is to find the beauty Mélicerte and marry her to some great lord. Confusion prevails as the play terminates.

The two shepherds of Mélicerte are not differentiated from each other, nor are the two shepherdesses, although they are bolder in their declarations of love than Mélicerte. The love scene between Mélicerte and Myrtil is delicate and charming, with Myrtil's presentation of a sparrow a tender stroke. And yet, Molière keeps the play from being too sweet and sentimental with the contrasting confidante and with touches of humor. Despite all the romantic emphasis in the play, some comedy is introduced through the character of Lycarsis. Lycarsis is similar to Moron in The Princess of Elis and Clitidas in The Magnificent Lovers, but he has a touch of the Sganarelle about him. He is stubborn and foolish, a tyrannical father, a ridiculous lover. If Mélicerte had been a comedy-ballet, he might have been given a comic musical scene.

Since no livret which includes Mélicerte survives, it is not known how the roles were distributed, but there are enough roles for almost everyone in Molière's troupe. It seems obvious that Molière played Lycarsis. Baron may have created the role of Myrtil, with Mlle Molière, the youngest woman of the troupe, as Mélicerte. Playing opposite one another might have created the opportunity for the quarrel which drove Baron away. If Baron left before the play was performed, the casting might have been somewhat different. La Grange and Mlle De Brie played the young shepherd and shepherdess in the Comic Pastoral which followed Mélicerte, and may, therefore, have played Myrtil and Mélicerte in the

earlier play. See Appendix B: Cast Lists for a possible distribution of roles.

Mélicerte was not transferred from the court to the Palais-Royal. Molière did not complete the play and never published it. It was printed for the first time in the 1682 Oeuvres.<sup>32</sup> In 1699, Guérin, a son of Mlle Molière's second husband, finished and produced the play under the title Myrtil et Mélicerte, with music written for it by Michel Lalande,<sup>33</sup> but it was not particularly successful.

#### COMIC PASTORAL

In January, 1667, Mélicerte was replaced by a second offering from Molière, the Comic Pastoral (Pastorale comique). Whether this substitution was the result of Baron's departure, thus implying that La Grange was not entirely suited for the role of Myrtil, or merely because the King and his court wanted a new entertainment, perhaps one with music, is unknown. No text of the play survives, only the livrets of the Ballet of the Muses which include a list of scenes and characters in each scene, brief comments on the action, and the lyrics of the songs.

The Comic Pastoral seems to have had very little plot; scenes were mainly an excuse to introduce singing and dancing. Residing at Saint-Germain in contact with Lully and court singers and dancers, Molière had an opportunity to prepare a musical production in the manner of the comedy-ballets. This little impromptu seems to have had more comedy in

<sup>32</sup>Vol. VII, or Vol. I of the Oeuvres posthumes (Guibert, II, 641-642).

<sup>33</sup>Lalande (1657-1726) was a great favorite of Louis XIV; he wrote music for many court productions.

it than Mélicerte, and was, therefore, a more appropriate tribute to the comic muse of the ballet's third entrée, even though it still fittingly preceded the fourth entrée of singing and dancing shepherds and shepherdesses. The original description of the third entrée applies equally well to the Comic Pastoral: "une pièce comique."<sup>34</sup> The setting is the same: Thessaly, in a small village in the Valley of Tempe.

The Comic Pastoral has fifteen scenes and six entrées as follows:

Scene 1 - Lycas (Molière) and Coridon (La Grange).

Scene 2 - Introduces Magic Ceremony, invoking Venus and asking the goddess to beautify Lycas.

First entrée - Magicians with Lycas.

Second entrée - Demons with Lycas.

Third entrée - Magicians and Demons with Lycas.

Scene 3 - Quarrel between Lycas and Filène (the singer Estival) over Iris (Mlle de Brie).

Scene 4 - Iris and Lycas.

Scene 5 - Lycas and Cowherd. Cowherd brings a challenge from Filène.

Scene 6 - Lycas and Coridon.

Scene 7 - Filène challenges Lycas.

Scene 8 - Introduces

Fourth entrée - Eight peasants come to separate Filène and Lycas, but begin to quarrel among themselves.

Scene 9 - Coridon reconciles the peasants.

Fifth entrée - The peasants dance together.

Scene 10 - Coridon, Lycas, Filène.

Scene 11 - Iris, Coridon

<sup>34</sup>D-M, VI, 280. Van Laun has translated the scene descriptions from the livrets (IV, 33-38).

Scene 12 - Lycas and Filène insist that Iris decide which of them she prefers. Filène is quite smug. But Iris, rejecting both of them, picks Coridon.

Scene 13 - Filène and Lycas, in utter despair, decide to kill themselves, but are easily persuaded against it by a shepherd (Scene 14) who tells them in song that to die because rejected by a lover is foolish.

Scene 15 - A Gypsy who suffers for love.

Sixth entrée - Dancing gypsies. The singing gypsy declares that pleasure is the chief object of existence, and pleasure should be taken by the young.

Although La Grange refers to the Comic Pastoral in his Registre (p. 85) account of the Saint-Germain visit as Coridon, after the character he portrayed, the play seems to have been more about the foolish sheep owner Lycas than the young shepherd. The highlights of the play were the Magic Ceremony (Scene 2, Entrées 1-3), the quarrel between Filène and Lycas (Scene 3), and later their rejected lovers' lament (Scene 13).

Enough is known about the Comic Pastoral to show that Molière was developing his ability to use musical materials.<sup>35</sup> The entrée of magicians and demons is a variation on Sganarelle and the demons of The Forced Marriage, and, because the action in it transforms the central comic character, it is a forerunner of the Turkish Ceremony and the Doctoral Initiation. Gypsies, quarrels, and taking pleasure while young are recurring materials of the comedy-ballets. And one musical sequence was directly transferred from the Comic Pastoral to The Sicilian: Scenes 13 and 14 between Filène, Lycas, and a Shepherd of the Comic Pastoral became Scene 3 of The Sicilian between three shepherds, two melancholy and one

<sup>35</sup>See Chapter VII: Music, pp. 522.

happy, in the musical playlet *Adraste* orders for *Isidore*.

The Comic Pastoral continued to be played in the Ballet of the Muses through January, 1667, at Saint-Germain, but was augmented in February by The Sicilian. Molière never produced the Comic Pastoral on the public stage, nor did he publish a text of the play. Unfortunately, like the pastoral he would devise for the Ballet of the Ballets, in 1671, Molière did not think enough of the Comic Pastoral to preserve even the manuscript, and it could not be performed from the remaining fragments.

#### PSYCHE

In 1671, Molière applied his experience in producing comedy-ballets to a loftier court entertainment, Psyché, on which he collaborated as a writer and undoubtedly functioned as general manager. Psyché is not a comedy-ballet; it has been called in the livrets and published editions a "tragi-comédie et ballet" and a "tragédie-ballet."<sup>36</sup> Late in 1670 the King requested a "magnificent divertissement" that could be presented several times before Lent. According to the preface of the first edition, Molière was rushed and could not complete the work himself. After planning its outline and writing a few scenes, he called upon Pierre Corneille to finish it.<sup>37</sup> Philippe Quinault wrote all the lyrics to the songs,

<sup>36</sup>The livret was published early in 1671 by Robert Ballard (Guibert, II, 473-478) and appears in D-M, VIII, 363-384. Pierre Le Monnier printed the text in October (Guibert, I, 333-338). The original spelling of the title is Psiché." English translations of Psyché: (1) Ozell, Book III, Vol. V, 49-96, (2) Van Laun, V, 287-338. Waller, VII, 355-376, includes only Molière's contribution to Psyché, and does not translate the verses.

<sup>37</sup>D-M, VIII, 268. Molière wrote only the entrance of Venus in the Prologue, Act I, Act II, Scene 1, and Act III, Scene 1. The play is attributed to Molière, not Corneille.



with the exception of the "Italian Complaint" which was penned by Lully, who also wrote the music for the production. It is apparent that this illustrious group of writers followed the plan Molière used in constructing his comedy-ballets--that is, alternating scenes with musical interludes. But the subject matter, especially as treated by Corneille and Quinault, made an heroic comedy of the play, unlike any of Molière's works, except perhaps the atypical Don Garcie.

How the subject matter was chosen is not precisely known. There had been Benserade's Ballet Royal de Psyché in 1658 for which Lully provided some of the music. Perhaps Louis himself, who danced in this production at the Louvre, requested a new version. Apparently, the King indicated that this new entertainment should be staged at the vacant Salle des Machines in the Tuileries.<sup>38</sup> Some particular scenery in the royal storehouse, specifically some machinery depicting Hell, was also to be used. Since the tale of Psyché includes a visit to Hades, it may have seemed the obvious choice. Also Molière's friend La Fontaine had published his novel Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon in 1669. Molière and Corneille probably used the Golden Ass of Apuleius (fl. 2nd century A.D.) as their source, and perhaps a number of other treatments of the story.<sup>39</sup> The subject was well-suited to Corneille's heroic style, and he had produced machine plays before: Andromède (1650) and Toison d'or (1660). Psyché, as finished by Corneille, is quite different from the play as begun by Molière.

In the Prologue of Psyché, Flora and a number of deities invite

<sup>38</sup>Figure 104--Théâtre des Tuileries.

<sup>39</sup>On sources see Lancaster, Part III, II, 520-521.

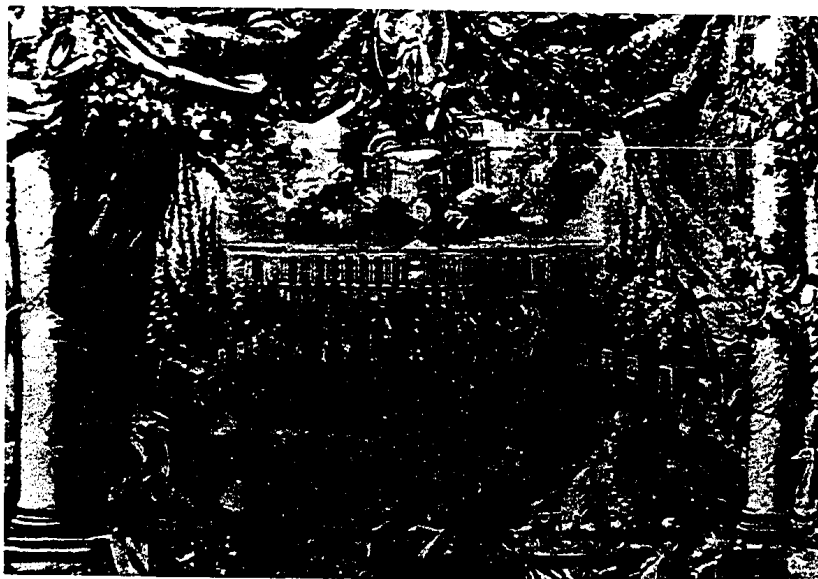


Figure 104. Théâtre des Tuileries (Salle des Machines)



Figure 105. Psyché (Brissart)

Cupid flies away from Psyché.

Psyché

Act IV, Scene 3

Venus to earth in order to add love to the sweet peace enjoyed by all under the dominion of Earth's most god-like King. Venus arrives, but the only thing on her jealous mind is a concern over the excessive admiration shown by mortals to Psyché. She summons Cupid and decrees vengeance on the usurper by ordering that Psyché be caused to love the vilest mortal. (Act I) Psyché is envied not only by Venus, but by her two older sisters, Aglaure and Cidippe, who seek in vain to win her princely suitors, Cléomène and Agénor. For an unknown reason Psyché is unable to love anyone, and she is politely refusing the princes when an oracle is announced that she must be placed on a mountain where a monster will come to be her husband. (Act II) Although saddened to leave her father and sisters, Psyché submits to the zephyrs who carry her away. Cupid has caused these events, but, defying his mother, has prepared a magnificent palace where he will love Psyché himself. (Act III) Cupid appears to Psyché as a handsome young man whom she adores instantly. Psyché wants to share the joy of her new life with her sisters and has them brought to the palace. (Act IV) Instead of appreciating Psyché's happiness, the sisters are enraged, and convince her she should demand to know more about who her lover is. Cupid warns against such questions, but when Psyché persists, he reveals his identity, and then abandons her (Figure 105). The palace vanishes and Psyché, finding herself alone in a wilderness, is kept from suicide only by a kindly River-God. Venus arrives to confront Psyché and send her to Hades. (Act V) In Hades Psyché meets the ghosts of the two princes who died for her, and they tell how her sisters perished for their jealous malice. Psyché then opens a box given to her by Proserpine and faints from its fumes. Cupid, who arrives to take her

back, thinks she is dead. Venus can revive her, but refuses. Mother and son quarrel until Jupiter grants Psyché immortality and sends the lovers off to their nuptial ceremony, which is attended by an impressive array of gods.

Molière's familiar subjects, jealousy and misalliance, can be detected in Psyché, but the treatment is different from Molière's usual approach. Only a few typical touches of Moliéresque irony and humor are present. The Prologue, for example, is a parody on the mythological tribute to a monarch. Venus is stomping mad, over-reacting according to her retinue, and not at all interested in peace and love. While Psyché is gentle and considerate, her sisters are bitter and ridiculous husband-hunters (later variations of Mélicerte's rivals), who are as absurd as the two love-sick princes. The character Molière portrayed in Psyché, Zéphire, might have become a Moron or Clitidas if Molière had written the play alone. However, there is only one scene (Act III, Scene 1) in which a witty exchange occurs between Zéphire and Cupid: Zéphire, boasting what a good job he has done in bringing Psyché to the palace, encounters Cupid in his young man disguise. Cupid does not want to be a boy anymore, even though he knows it will exasperate his mother. Zéphire replies that no woman likes to have such a grown-up son. The play from this point becomes concerned with life and death matters, issues of revenge and justice that, through Corneille, take on a more serious tone than is ever present in Molière's comedy-ballets.

Psyché was extremely successful at court and created so much interest that Molière decided to present it at the Palais-Royal, although his theatre had to be remodeled, at the cost of 1,989 livres,<sup>40</sup> to accomodate

<sup>40</sup>La Grange, Registre, p. 123

the machines. The production itself cost 4,359 livres,<sup>41</sup> but, from its première on July 24, 1671, it became one of the most popular plays in Molière's repertoire during the last period of his life. It provided an excellent vehicle for the talents of Mlle Molière and Baron, who had returned to Molière's troupe.

Machine plays were popular during Molière's time, and the public was becoming more and more eager to share in the magnificent type of entertainment witnessed by the court. Besides being a spectacle, Psyché is a very romantic treatment of the story, with a happy ending. It is uneven and has many faults.<sup>42</sup> It is the ephemeral kind of play that lasts only while the sentiment and the spectacle are being displayed. Thomas Corneille provided Lully with an opera libretto on the same story in 1678, and Charpentier wrote new music for the Molière play in 1684. But Psyché disappeared from the later Molière repertoire, and this production which was such a success in its day is ignored in modern times.

#### BALLET OF THE BALLETS

Molière's court divertissements which uniquely combined comedy and ballet spectacle were apparently for Louis XIV, during the first decade of his personal reign, the epitome of theatrical entertainment. In 1671, when the King wished to mark with special festivities the arrival at court of Philippe's second wife, he commissioned Molière to provide a comedy that would incorporate some of the best musical interludes from

<sup>41</sup>La Grange, p. 124.

<sup>42</sup>Lancaster, Part III, II, 522.

previous court productions.<sup>43</sup> This entertainment was the Ballet of the Ballets (Ballet des Ballets), presented for the first time at Saint-Germain-en-Laye December 2, 1671. It consisted of a comedy of contemporary characters, The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas (La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas), that included a pastoral entertainment with musical interludes. This pastoral play-within-a-play was a performance in the home of the Comtesse allowed in the action of the comedy, but by no means indispensable or the only entertainment that might be used. The five act pastoral is lost and only the characters who appeared in it are known. Like the Comic Pastoral in the Ballet of the Muses, it was probably very brief, little more than a series of introductions to the musical scenes. It is unlikely that the musical interludes within the pastoral had much dramatic justification. Molière apparently thought of the pastoral merely as a theatrical device to be used and discarded. "Molière l'unique, Molière," as Robinet called the King's entertainer in an account of the Ballet of the Ballets,<sup>44</sup> responded to and presumably satisfied the wishes of the King, but produced no play with well-integrated musical scenes. The music does not grow out of the action of the comedy, except as an arbitrary entertainment, nor does it involve the comic characters.

According to the livret,<sup>45</sup> a musical prologue to the Ballet of the Ballets as a whole was followed by the "comedy." The comedy consisted

<sup>43</sup>D-M, VIII, 599, quoting from the livret of the Ballet of the Ballets.

<sup>44</sup>Letter of February 20, 1672, quoted in D-M, VIII, 536.

<sup>45</sup>The livret for the Ballet of the Ballets was published by Robert Ballard in 1671 (Guibert, II, 527-531). An abridged version appears in D-M, VIII, 600-602. See also D-M, VIII, 533-534 for a discussion of the order of scenes.

of The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas with its pastoral entertainment and musical interludes. The Ballet of the Ballets ended with a musical finale. The order of acts and interludes follows:

PROLOGUE

The Magnificent Lovers, first interlude

Psyché prologue (songs and dances up to the entrance of Venus)

Short prologue spoken by Venus who descends from the sky to the stage with six Amours

Musical Overture to The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas

FIRST ACT OF THE COMEDY - The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, Scenes 1-7  
(Up to the beginning of the entertainment and before Harpin's entrance)

Interlude - "The Plaint": a prologue to the Pastoral  
(Psyché, first interlude)

SECOND ACT OF THE COMEDY - Pastoral, Scene 1

Interlude - "The Magicians"  
(The Magic Ceremony of the Comic Pastoral)

THIRD ACT OF THE COMEDY - Pastoral, Scene 2

Interlude - "The Combat of L'Amour and Bacchus"  
(George Dandin, third interlude or finale)

FOURTH ACT OF THE COMEDY - Pastoral, Scene 3

Interlude - "The Bohemians"  
(The Gypsies of the Comic Pastoral)

FIFTH ACT OF THE COMEDY - Pastoral, Scene 4

Interlude - "The Turkish Ceremony"  
(The Would-be Gentleman)

SIXTH ACT OF THE COMEDY - Pastoral, Scene 5

Interlude - "The Italians" and "The Spaniards": a finale to the Pastoral (The Would-be Gentleman, "Ballet of Nations")

SEVENTH AND LAST ACT OF THE COMEDY - The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas  
Scenes 8-9

FINALE - Entry of Apollo, Bacchus, Momus, and Mars  
(Psyché, finale)

The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas was published for the first time in the 1682 edition of Molière's plays, because the playwright did not have it printed in his lifetime.<sup>46</sup> He produced it at the Palais-Royal, but not in the same form it had been presented at Saint-Germain. The pastoral entertainment was replaced variously by other short plays--The Forced Marriage with its musical interludes,<sup>47</sup> Love's the Best Doctor, and a lost farce Le Fin lourdaut. Possibly, as Bermel has presented the play, the entertainment came at the end of The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, thus making of the two plays a standard double-bill program. When The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas was played with The Miser in 1673 perhaps only music served as the entertainment.<sup>48</sup>

The spectacular prologue and finale provided a musical frame for the Ballets of the Ballets; The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas provided the dramatic framework of the production. The play is a slight prose comedy of one act in nine scenes that focuses on the foolishness of provincial manners. The action is set in Angoulême (Figure 21). The Comtesse is a widow of some means ("la petite noblesse de provence") and excessive pretensions, and is, like the social climber Monsieur Jourdain, eager to be in the company of persons of quality.<sup>49</sup> She has recently returned

<sup>46</sup>Guibert, II, 643-644. The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas appeared in the second volume of the Oeuvres posthumes (Vol. VIII of the Oeuvres). English translations of La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas: (1) Bermel, pp. 147-164, as The Seductive Countess, in one-act form with no scene divisions, (2) Ozell, Book III, Vol. VI, 121-140, as The Countess of Escarbagnas, (3) Van Laun, VI, 63-82, as The Countess of Escarbagnas, (4) Waller, VIII, 1-45, as The Countess of Escarbagnas.

<sup>47</sup>The music used was by Charpentier.

<sup>48</sup>D-M, VIII, 540.

<sup>49</sup>Bermel notes (p. 145) that Molière is said to have taken her character from real life. There was, it seems, a lady from Angoulême named Sarah de Pérusse, whose father was the Comte d'Escars and whose husband was the Comte



from a two month visit to Paris. She now imitates the manners of the court ("les grands airs de Versailles") and the intellectual pursuits of the précieuses, and she welcomes into her home a Vicomte, Cléante. Cléante, like Dorante of The Would-be Gentleman, uses this parvenue to court someone else, the Comtesse's protégée Julie. Both Cléante and Julie are of noble houses, but because of a quarrel between their families, the young lovers are forced to meet secretly, and the Comtesse unwittingly provides them this opportunity. Cléante is a literary lover. He writes poetry and plays, and is preparing an entertainment for Julie to be given in the Comtesse's home. The brief meeting between Cléante and Julie, which opens the play, is interrupted by the arrival of the Comtesse; and Cléante leaves quickly to avoid having to encounter her.

The Comtesse immediately displays her lack of taste and breeding. She mistreats her servants, Andrée and Criquet, rudely scorns everything about the country, and foolishly reveals that she believes her beauty, youth, and quality make every gallant fall in love with her. Julie rather devilishly points out that it is a shame, after Paris society, that Madame should be reduced to the company of a councillor (Tibaudier) and a tax-collector (Harpin), who are her real suitors along with the pretender Cléante. The suitor Tibaudier, by way of his lackey Jeannot, sends a note of greeting and a gift of pears.<sup>50</sup> The Vicomte, who arrives

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de Baignac. Molière merely elided the two names for his character's title.

<sup>50</sup>As Bermel notes (p. 156) in his translation of the play, the words for pear and pears (poire, poires) suggest infidelity or mischief to a French audience. Unfortunately, he has not discovered an English equivalent. "Christian pears," as they are called in the play, suggest a medieval instrument of torture (a pear-shaped gag), and imply bitter fruit (see D-M, VIII, 578). The word poire in slang usage means fool or dupe, sucker or pigeon (see M. J. Leitner and J. R. Lanen, Dictionary of French and American Slang, New York, 1965, p. 241). English equivalents might be green apples or lemons, lollipops (suckers) or pigeons.

to announce that the performance is about ready to begin, reads Tibaudier's note to the Comtesse with disdain that she fails to grasp. Tibaudier himself then appears, bringing a poem he has written for the Comtesse which he proceeds to read. The Vicomte mockingly suggests they see if his music, comedy, and ballet can compete with Tibaudier's poetry. The entertainment, however, must wait until the arrival of the Comtesse's son, who is announced just then in most polite terms by the Comte's tutor, Bobinet. The tutor is a pedantic scholar who has taught the young Comte to bow and present himself in a group (Figure 106).<sup>51</sup> But he has also filled him with Latin that the Comtesse cannot understand. Her irritation is interrupted by an announcement that the actors are ready, and the ladies and gentlemen seat themselves to watch the entertainment.

The pastoral with its interludes is performed through Scene 5 and the interlude of the Italians and the Spaniards. Before the performance is finished the other suitor of the Comtesse, Harpin, intrudes in a rage that sends Bobinet with the young Comte out of the room and Tibaudier into hiding. The Comtesse says: "Monsieur Harpin, please! Coming in here like this with your blue language and interrupting our play!" (Bermel, p. 162) The word "blue" is used extensively in the Harpin scene as a swear-word substitute. Harpin rudely complains about his rivals, rails at the pretensions of the Comtesse, and breaks off with her. As the company then settles back to watch the end of the program Jeannot enters with a note someone has given him saying that the dispute between Julie and Cléante's families will be settled if they marry. The Vicomte matches

<sup>51</sup>Brissart misquotes the title as La Comtesse de Scarmagnas.



Bobinet, the young Comte, Julie, the Comtesse, the Vicomte, and Tibaudier.

(MONSIEUR BOBINET returns with the young COMTE.)

BOBINET: Now, Monsieur le Comte, let us show this dignified gathering how you have profited from your studies. First a sweeping bow to the entire room.

COMTESSE: Now a separate bow for Madame [Julie]. A gesture of reverence for Monsieur le Vicomte. And another for Monsieur Tibaudier.

TIBAUDIER: I am ravished, Madame, at the honor you do me. May I embrace the young gentleman. Thank you. One cannot love the trunk and not the branches.

COMTESSE: Monsieur Tibaudier, I am not sure that I like that metaphor.

The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas  
Scene 7

(Bermel, p. 160)

Figure 106. The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas  
(Brissart)

up the couples, taking Julie for himself, suggesting the Comtesse marry Tibaudier and that she give Andrée to Jeannot. When the Comtesse agrees to marry Tibaudier, "if only to spite the others," the finale (to the Ballet of the Ballets) is performed.

As the distribution of roles shows (Appendix B: Cast Lists), there would have been no reason why the actors could not have been an audience for the entertainment, and no reason to assume that the actors would not have remained on stage while the entertainment was being performed. Bermel aborted the beginning of the entertainment by both the entrance of Harpin and the note brought by Jeannot, so that it does not begin until the action of The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas is completed. This order clearly does not follow the livret, but it is a practical way of dealing with the inclusion of music.

The musical interludes selected for this display of the best recent music and dance, this Ballet of the Ballets, tells something of the attitude toward the intermèdes in Molière's work and about what the King thought was important. The musical program begins and ends with the entrance of gods, significant among whom is Apollo, the ever-present symbol of the King. There was extensive use of the lavish materials from the recently successful Psyché. Besides this mythological pageantry, there was a parade of foreign types—Gypsies, Italians, and Spaniards. Two of Molière's most important comic interludes were included: the Magic Ceremony and the Turkish Ceremony. In these two sequences Molière had combined with great success the elements of comedy and ballet, and probably recreated the central roles in them himself, giving further emphasis to the musical portions of the Ballet of the Ballets program over the comedy.

## CHAPTER VI

### DANCE

Louis XIV's "classical" education may have been neglected,<sup>1</sup> but under the guidance of Mazarin and Queen Anne the boy-king developed a partiality for extravagance and a sense of gloire. Both these princely characteristics were served by dancing, one of the refined skills he was encouraged by his tutors to acquire. When he was seven he began studying with the dancing master Henri Prevost,<sup>2</sup> and at eight, perhaps after his training with Pierre Beauchamps had begun, he danced publicly at a ball at the Palais-Royal.<sup>3</sup> He made his debut at thirteen as a ballet character in Benserade's Mascarade de Cassandre (1651), and, like his father, participated with enthusiasm in the ballet de cour. After the famous Ballet de la nuit (1653), when he portrayed the Sun (Figure 20), he danced in at least one ballet almost every year thereafter through the 1660's (Figure 107).

Because Louis loved dancing, he used it to reflect his gloire and

<sup>1</sup>John B. Wolf in Louis XIV (New York, 1968) says, "Louis did not learn to be king from the writers of antiquity . . ." and "as a boy he read as little as possible," p. 56.

<sup>2</sup>Stella Bon, Les Grands courants de la danse (Paris, 1954), p. 27.

<sup>3</sup>A gentleman of the royal household in a description of "the King's day" when Louis was twelve wrote that after morning prayers and studies, the King took dancing lessons and did combat exercises before lunch. The same servant-writer described Louis's activities at about seventeen. There was more ritual to the morning rising, and studies were eliminated, but the young King continued to drill with horse and pike and to dance in his chamber "under the direction of Maître Beauchamp." Quoted in Wolf, pp. 82, 90, and 626.



Figure 107. Louis XIV in ballet costume

the grandeur of France. Dancing afforded the young King an opportunity to show himself to particular advantage. As the focal point of a ballet, the splendidly costumed young sovereign with his graceful movements and elegant poses could give his court the occasion and the prerogative of lavishing praise on him. In addition, he helped to elevate dancing from a traditional courtly pastime to an art form worthy of his royal person by supporting professional dancers and giving them the opportunity to develop their art. To this end, he founded the Académie Royale de Danse in 1661.<sup>4</sup> And before long, it became well known that the best dancing in Europe was to be seen at the French court.

Although Benserade wrote and arranged most ballet entertainments at court in the 1650's and 1660's, Molière could write comedies which amused the King and include in them the King's beloved dancing. The comedy-ballets, like the ballet de cour, afforded Louis's corps de ballet a showcase and on occasion provided a vehicle for displaying and praising the King's royal person. Molière wrote this laudatory verse which was printed in the program for The Magnificent Lovers:

For the King representing the Sun (Apollo)

I am the source of all delight;  
And the most vaunted stars,  
Whose beauteous circle is around me,  
Are only brilliant and respected,  
By the splendour which I give them.

(Van Laun, V, 192)

<sup>4</sup>The account of how Louis XIV created the Académie Royale de Danse along with a list of its original members appear in Michel Félibien, Histoire de la ville de Paris (Paris, 1725), V, 188. The first academicians were thirteen dancing masters who broke from the medieval guild for dancers and musicians and proclaimed themselves, with royal approval, as artists, not artisans. They were recognized officially as the best dancers in France.

Louis was twenty-six years old, at the height of his dashing youthfulness, when he portrayed a noble Gypsy in The Forced Marriage (1664). He probably appeared the following year in Love's the Best Doctor for on the title page of the musical manuscript is the note that this comedy-ballet was danced by His Majesty. Mesnard has conjectured that if the King danced, he was probably not one of the buffoon characters (a foolish doctor or an Italian commedia dell'arte figure) but one of the Frolics, Laughters, and Pleasures.<sup>5</sup> More than likely the major attraction of Molière's The Sicilian (1667) was the presence of Louis as a Moorish Gentleman. That his character had practically nothing to do with the play mattered little; The Sicilian ended the Ballet of the Muses and provided the last opportunity of the Carnival season for the King to perform.

It was a thrilling moment for the court audience when the King rose from his seat to dance. In the eighteenth century, the scene was recalled, "While His Majesty is dancing all stand."<sup>6</sup> At court balls, Louis danced and then returned to his dais to watch the others dance.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps he followed this procedure when performing in a comedy-ballet, especially when he appeared early in the play.

The last time the King is known for certain to have danced was on February 13, 1669 in the Lully-Benserade Ballet de Flore. Early in 1670,

<sup>5</sup>D-M, V, 293 and 295.

<sup>6</sup>Pierre Rameau, The Dancing Master (London, 1931), p. 38. (Written Le Maître à danser, 1725).

<sup>7</sup>After dancing, the King returned to his seat in the center of the hall by way of a passage that allowed him an opportunity to regain himself. Marie-Françoise Christout, Le Ballet de cour de Louis XIV (Paris, 1967), p. 128.



Molière created the roles of Neptune and Apollo in The Magnificent Lovers for the King to dance, but whether he appeared or not is uncertain. Boileau wrote in 1707 that the King did not dance again after witnessing Racine's play Britannicus (1669) in which Nero is told what his enemies say about him:

NARCISSUS: . . . . .  
 'Nero in truth, was never born to rule.  
 He speaks, he does, what we prescribe for him.  
 Burrus directs his heart and Seneca  
 Controls his spirit. He has no ambition,  
 No special gift or talent, but to drive  
 A chariot in the circus, to compete  
 For prizes which he should disdain to take,  
 To make himself a spectacle in Rome,  
 Performing in the theatre and singing  
 Songs he hopes the rabble will admire.  
 Meanwhile his soldiers, ever and anon,  
 Force the applause that so delights his ear.'<sup>8</sup>

That the King's behavior would be determined by a mere allusion in a play seems less far-fetched when, in light of Molière's career, it can be seen that the theatre of the 1660's was a significant source of public opinion and gossip. Louis was very conscious of proper decorum, with maintaining the great dignity of his high office. And since demands of war and problems of state began to take precedence over his youthful occupations anyway, he may have been influenced by Racine's play to stop dancing,<sup>9</sup> but not necessarily in 1669. The Gazette implied that the King appeared at least in the first performance of The Magnificent Lovers,<sup>10</sup> February 4, 1670, and this account is probably more accurate than Boileau's

<sup>8</sup>Paul Landis, trans., Six Plays by Corneille and Racine (New York, 1931), pp. 235-236.

<sup>9</sup>The theory is generally accepted by historians and Louis XIV biographers.

<sup>10</sup>D-M, VII, 354-355.

remembrance years later. And that Louis appeared only in the first performance would not have been unusual. He may never have performed in a ballet after its première, after creating his initial impression. Court productions were subsequently repeated for his enjoyment as a spectator.

If Louis danced in The Magnificent Lovers as Apollo, representing the Sun, he concluded his dancing "career" fittingly--thus reviving an earlier triumph and retaining the mystique of his youthful splendor. Robinet said of The Magnificent Lovers that "this formidable, yet charming, sovereign does not have to engage in mimetic activity to be greater than those he portrays."<sup>11</sup> Louis stopped dancing when he was relatively young, before he became less agile, overweight, and like Racine's Nero, a foolish spectacle. Nevertheless, by having impersonated a pagan deity this Most Christian King could make the omnipotent assertions of the verses from The Magnificent Lovers quoted above. And Molière, by adjusting his talents to Louis's command, helped the King to identify with the gods and to appear before the world in magnificence appropriate to them.

Because of Louis's devotion to the ballet, the title of danseur des ballet du roi was a position of great distinction for a courtier. The noble gentlemen and ladies who appeared with Louis XIV in the comedy-ballets were the Duc d'Enghien, the Comte d'Armagnac, the Marquis de Villeroy, the Marquis de Rasset, Henriette, Mademoiselle de La Vallière,

<sup>11</sup>Ce redoutable et charmant Sire,  
Qui, sans contrefaire ces Dieux,  
Est, par ma foi, bien plus Dieu qu'eux.

Lettre en vers à Madame, February 8, 1670

Quoted in D-M, VII, 353.

Madame de Rochefort, Mademoiselle de Brancas, and the Duc de Saint-Aignan. Not all important members of the court performed in the comedy-ballets, for which the dancing was more demanding than for the processionals and simple dances of other court festivities. All members of the King's suite were attractive, accomplished, and, with the exception of the Duc de Saint-Aignan, young.<sup>12</sup>

The King acquired the best dancers for his court performances from the Académie, the public theatres, the families of court retainers, and even from the houses of his nobles. A Basque gentleman named Tartas, a dancer-acrobat in the service of the Maréchal de Gramont, appeared in the King's ballets,<sup>13</sup> and took the role of a Spaniard in the sixth entry of The Forced Marriage.

The elite group of noble amateurs performed with the elite of the dancing profession, and all were usually put through their paces by Louis's dancing master Beauchamps.

Pierre Beauchamps was the choreographer and leading dancer for most of the comedy-ballets, but little has been written about him, and the extent of his contribution may never be known. Liselotte, second wife of the King's brother, ranked Beauchamps with the great artists of the mid-seventeenth century:

<sup>12</sup>Figure 108 - Chart of roles taken by noble performers in the comedy-ballets. The Duc de Saint-Aignan was, next to Louis, the protector of the Académie Royale de Danse.

<sup>13</sup>D-M, VI, 85.

DANCER	FORCED MARRIAGE	PLEASURES	BALLET OF MUSES	SICILIAN	MAGNIFICENT LOVERS
Louis XIV	Egyptian Gentleman	Rogero	Shepherd, Spaniard Cyrus, Nymph	Moorish Gentleman	Neptune Apollo
M. le Duc	Gallant	Rolland			
M. le Grand	Pleasant	Griffon le Blanc	Pyrame, Spaniard Jupiter	Moorish Gentleman	Sea-God Young Man
Villeroy	Egyptian Gentleman		Shepherd, Spaniard Polexandre, Nymph	Moorish Gentleman	Sea-God * Young Man
Rassent	Egyptian Lady		Spaniard	Moorish Gentleman	Sea-God Young Man
Madame			Shepherdess, Spanish Lady, Piérides	Moorish Lady	
La Vallière			Shepherdess, Spanish Lady, a Piéride	Moorish Lady	
Rochefort				Moorish Lady	
Branças				Moorish Lady	
Saint-Aignan	Gallant	Guidon le Sauvage	Conductor of Spanish <u>mascarade</u>		
* After the first performance, Villeroy took the King's roles--Neptune and Apollo.					

Figure 108. Chart of noble dancers

When I came to France, I saw there such a gathering of talented men as will not be found again for a long time. They were Lully for music, Beauchamps for dance, Corneille and Racine for tragedy, Molière for comedy. . . .<sup>14</sup>

His dates are uncertain.<sup>15</sup> Born probably about 1636, Beauchamps belonged to a family which for at least two generations had careers in music. His grandfather, Pierre de Beauchamps, studied violin and was admitted into the communauté des joueurs d'instruments; his father, Louis, was a member of the violons du roi. Presumably the young Pierre's excellent, well-rounded musical education was influenced by his family. Beauchamps could compose music, direct an orchestra, and dance. He danced at court as early as 1648 in the Ballet du dérèglement des passions performed at the Palais-Royal. About 1650 he became dancing master to Louis Dieudonné, a position of prestige he was to hold for twenty years. He was the most highly paid of Louis's instructors, receiving a basic annual pension of 2,000 livres. Besides tutoring the King, he must have guided the early steps of Lully who danced in court productions and who was, in the 1650's, beginning his first musical compositions. Beauchamps danced in the company of all the high-ranking courtiers who appeared in the King's ballets. In 1657 Loret reported that for his agile movements, precision, and high, bold leaps he was taken "by all members of the noble audience for the best dancer in France."<sup>16</sup> Also he supposedly danced

<sup>14</sup>Duchess d'Orléans, Mémoires (Paris, 1832), p. 365, quoted in Pierre Mélése, Le Théâtre et le public à Paris sous Louis XIV, 1659-1715 (Paris, 1934), p. 161.

<sup>15</sup>August Jal, Dictionnaire critique de biographie et d'histoire (Paris, 1872), pp. 136-137.

<sup>16</sup>In reference to Plaisirs troublés Loret wrote in his letter of

with vigor and fire and was "good at twirling."<sup>17</sup> With the Benserade-Lully ballet Alcidiane (1658) his reputation was firmly established. Louis recognized the importance of his work by making him head of the Académie Royale de Danse.

Favored by the King, Beauchamps was much in demand by the nobles and high officials who presented entertainments in their residences.<sup>18</sup> Nicolas Fouquet commissioned his services for the elaborate Vaux-le-Vicomte fete of 1661 honoring the young King. As someone who could collaborate with Molière on an entertainment to combine Louis's favorite amusements, comedy and ballet, Beauchamps was the obvious choice. Beauchamps wrote the music and devised the choreography for this first comedy-ballet, The Bores, but how many dancers he had to work with is uncertain.<sup>19</sup> Molière said that the construction of the play was

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February 10, 1657 in La Muse historique:

Par de merveilleuses souplesses  
 Elévations et justesses,  
 Si hautement capriola  
 Qu'il fut proclamé ce jour-là  
 Par toute la noble assistance  
 Pour le meilleur danseur de France.

Quoted in Christout, Le Ballet de cour, p. 83.

<sup>17</sup>Dictionnaire de biographie française (Paris, 1932-1968), column 1054.

<sup>18</sup>Bon, p. 38.

<sup>19</sup>Loret wrote in his letter of August 20, 1661 in La Muse historique that the

. . . Ballet fut composé  
 Par Beauchamp, danseur fort prisé,  
 Et dansé de la belle sorte  
 Par les Messieurs de son escorte

influenced by the availability of only "a small number of first-rate dancers."<sup>20</sup> Which dances Beauchamps participated in is also unknown.

When the next comedy-ballet, The Forced Marriage, was produced, Lully composed the music, but Beauchamps's musical assistance to Molière's troupe resumed when the production was adapted for the Palais-Royal. It has been suggested that the amount paid Beauchamps for The Forced Marriage was large enough to have included some airs as well as to set the choreography.<sup>21</sup>

Beauchamps was the leading male dancer of the day, and he frequently headed the lists of dancers whose names appeared in the livrets of the comedy-ballets. He appeared more often than any other professional dancer in the entrées with noble performers: as one of four Gallants in The Forced Marriage with Monsieur le Duc and the Duc de Saint-Aignan, and in the suite of the King in The Sicilian and The Magnificent Lovers. In The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, the King entered in procession as Rogero, the Paladin, on the first day of the fete, but was replaced in that role by Beauchamps in the "Ballet of Alcina" on the third day. The demands of this commitment may have prevented Beauchamps from

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quoted in D-M, III, 6.

<sup>20</sup>D-M, III, 29 (Avertissement).

<sup>21</sup>D-M, IV, 12. From the Registre of La Grange (p. 63):

Donné à M. de Beauchamps, pour faire le ballet,  
cinquante louis d'or, ci 550#. (Figure 109)

For the elaborate production of Psyché at the Palais-Royal in 1671 Beauchamps was paid 1,100# for arranging the choreography and conducting the music. (Registre, p. 124).

220  
 Les Epaves  
 des Epaves  
 des Epaves  
 des Epaves  
 des Epaves

1884  
 Demande n° 17 fédération Allier, 1809<sup>0</sup>

Mercredi 17 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	745 <sup>0</sup>	47 <sup>0</sup>
Mercredi 20 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	1254 <sup>0</sup>	31 <sup>0</sup> 11'
Mercredi 21 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	1270 <sup>0</sup>	03 10'
Mercredi 22 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	600 <sup>0</sup>	04 <sup>0</sup>
Mercredi 23 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	600 <sup>0</sup>	27 56'

Demande n° 18 fédération Allier, 1809<sup>0</sup>

Mercredi 24 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	508 <sup>0</sup>	7 11'
Mercredi 25 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	500 <sup>0</sup>	21 10'
Mercredi 26 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	200 <sup>0</sup>	2 5'
Mercredi 27 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	400 <sup>0</sup>	12 10'
Mercredi 28 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	265 <sup>0</sup>	0 <sup>0</sup>

Demande n° 19 fédération Allier, 1809<sup>0</sup>

Mercredi 29 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	486 <sup>0</sup>	24 11'
Mercredi 30 <sup>e</sup> Allier, 1809 <sup>0</sup>	336 <sup>0</sup>	11 11'

1885

Figure 109. Page from La Grange's Registre



performing in Molière's comedy-ballet, The Princess of Elis, on the second day. A list of the roles that Beauchamps is known to have danced in the comedy-ballets and related spectacles, based on the livrets, follows. Although no livret listings exist for The Bores, Love's the Best Doctor, and The Imaginary Invalid, there is no reason to believe that he did not appear in those productions.<sup>22</sup>

- 1664     The Forced Marriage - Magician, Gallant,  
          Joker  
          The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island  
          First Day - A Sign of the Zodiac  
          Third Day: "Ballet of Alcina" - Moor, Rogero
- 1666-7   Ballet of the Muses - Alexander, a Conductor  
          of the Spanish Masquerade, Theagenes, Nymph  
          Comic Pastoral - Dancing Gypsy  
          The Sicilian - Nude Moor
- 1668     George Dandin - Shepherd as Valet, Boatman,  
          Follower of Bacchus
- 1669     Monsieur de Pourceaugnac - Page, Matassin,  
          Procurer, Biscayen
- 1670     The Magnificent Lovers - Sea-God, Pantomime,  
          Faun, Young Man  
          The Would-be Gentleman - Dancing Turk,  
          Spaniard, Scaramouche
- 1670-1   Psyché - River-God, Cyclops, Fury, Gallant  
          Shepherd, Art as Shepherd, Follower of  
          Mars
- 1671     Ballet of the Ballets - Follower of Bacchus  
          Dancing Gypsy, Cyclops, Dancing Turk,  
          Spaniard, Scaramouche, Follower of Mars

<sup>22</sup>According to the Registre of Hubert, Beauchamps's services were required for the bill of plays on October 7 and 9, 1672, at the Palais-Royal which included The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas and Love's the Best Doctor, more than likely to include dances for the latter. Schwartz, p. 415. Personnel is not mentioned in the livret of the Ballet of the Ballets (D-M, VIII, 601); it is assumed here that Beauchamps recreated his original roles.

Beauchamps, as can be seen from the list, played many different kinds of characters--from elegant (a Gallant in The Forced Marriage) to comic (a Matassin in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac), from gods (such as the Sea-God in The Magnificent Lovers) to shepherds (as in George Dandin). He played national types (Turks, Spaniard, Moor, Biscayen) and pastoral characters (Nymph, Faun).

Hubert's Registre (1672-1673) shows that Beauchamps was frequently in the employ of the Troupe du Roi during the last year of Molière's life. When the break came between Molière and Lully, Beauchamps stayed with Molière. He was associated with the 1672 production of The Forced Marriage, refashioning the choreography to suit the new music by Charpentier. Besides the amount paid Beauchamps by Molière's company for choreography and musical assistance, he received a standard fee of 11 livres per day as balletmaster for training and rehearsing the dancers --for example, for the 1672 revivals of The Would-be Gentleman, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, and The Bores.<sup>23</sup> During the critical period immediately after Molière's death, Beauchamps remained with the company and apparently even helped to restore The Imaginary Invalid to the stage. Hubert reports that on March 3, 1673 Beauchamps was paid for flowers, probably used to decorate Argan's room for the reception ceremony.<sup>24</sup>

Although Beauchamps was Maître de Ballet for the Académie Royale de Musique which merged with the Académie Royale de Danse in 1672, Lully employed the dancer Desbrosses to supervise the choreography for the

<sup>23</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," pp. 404, 407, 413, and 415.

<sup>24</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 426.

Académie Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus (November, 1672).<sup>25</sup>

Thierry points out that it is unclear whether Beauchamps remained with Molière by choice or because Lully took another balletmaster.<sup>26</sup> At any rate, after the death of Molière, Beauchamps eventually assumed a leading position at the Académie. Of his contributions to the later opera productions of Lully, Rameau says:

I cannot speak too highly of the reputation he has justly acquired. His first attempts were masterly and he always shared legitimately in the praise which the composer received in increasing measure. He was skilled and refined in his composition, and had need of capable dancers to execute what he devised.<sup>27</sup>

Beauchamp's goal as head of the Académie Royale de Danse had been to develop capable dancers and to establish a codified dance technique. He is not known to have written a book on dance, but he influenced his contemporaries and his successors considerably. The five basic body and foot positions used in ballet are attributed to him.<sup>28</sup> The "Sarabande pour femme"<sup>29</sup> illustrated in the Recueil de dances by Raoul Feuillet,<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup>Lully used Desbrosses for his first operas Cadmus et Hermione and Alceste.

<sup>26</sup>Edouard Thierry, Documents sur le Malade imaginaire (Paris, 1880), p. 31. In discussing a reference from La Grange's Registre to The Imaginary Invalid ("Récompenses à M<sup>rs</sup> Beauchamps pour les ballets," p. 142), Thierry (pp. 152-153) theorizes that the two Beauchamps ("M<sup>rs</sup>") were Pierre and his father Louis, and that the father helped the son with the musical direction. It is an interesting, if unproved, theory which could change the whole interpretation of Beauchamp's work with Molière beginning with The Bores. The date of Louis Beauchamp's death is unknown, but he was most active in the 1630's.

<sup>27</sup>Rameau, p. xiii.

<sup>28</sup>Rameau, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup>Figures 110-113, corresponding to the first dance of the Spanish entrée in the "Ballet of Nations" (The Would-be Gentleman).

<sup>30</sup>Member of the Académie, pupil of Beauchamps, and inventor of a

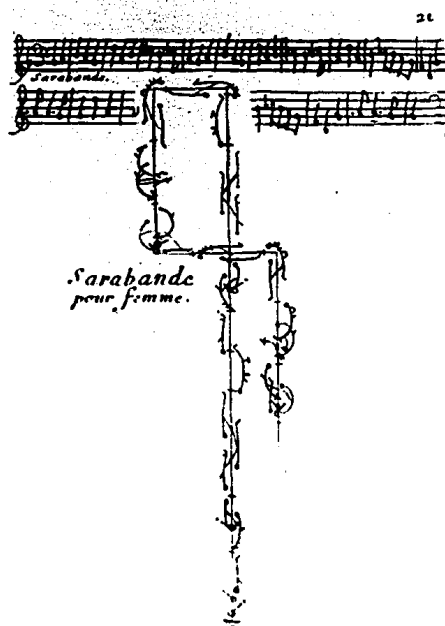


Figure 110. "Sarabande pour femme" (a)

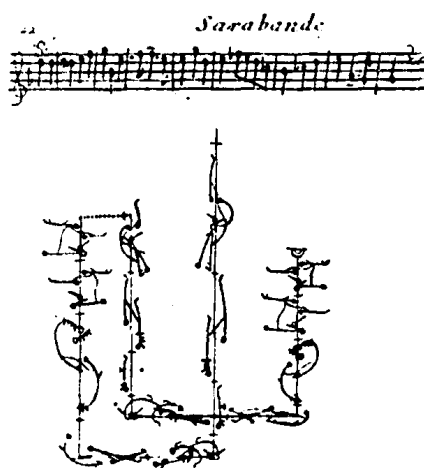


Figure 111. "Sarabande" (b)

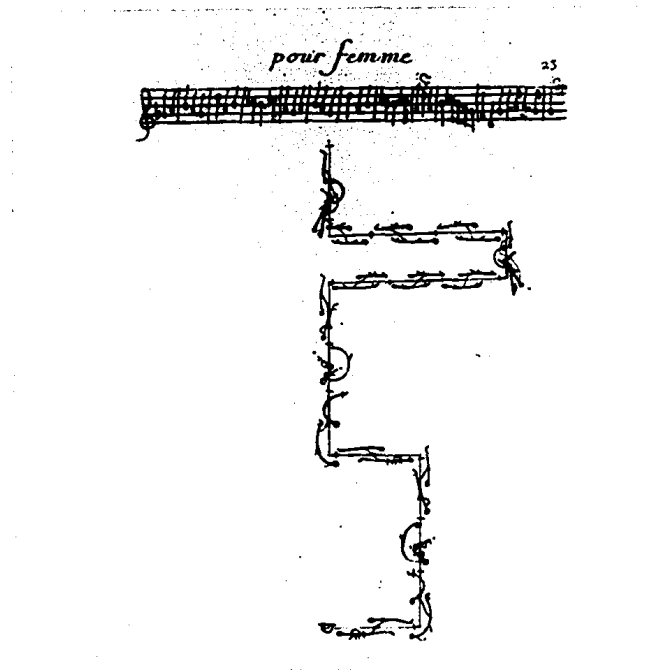


Figure 112. "Sarabande" (c)

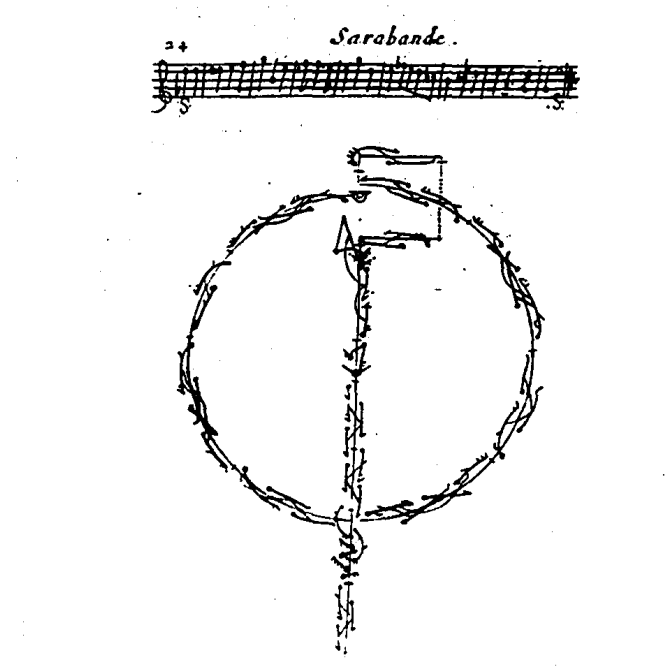


Figure 113. "Sarabande" (d)

is undoubtedly based on materials handed down from Beauchamps. A nineteenth-century descendant of Beauchamps, Jean-Etienne Despréaux (1748-1820), dancer and master associated with the Paris Opéra (later name for the Académie Royale de Musique), pays tribute to Beauchamps (d. 1705) in his songs on the art of the dance. He says that Beauchamps took unpolished dance, gave it grace through order, fitting the dancing to the music, and created the choreographic art.<sup>31</sup> The foundation of this creation was laid during the years of the comedy-ballets.

Five professional dancers, besides Beauchamps, who appeared in court productions of the comedy-ballets, were original members of the Académie Royale de Danse: Hilaire Dolivet, Jean Raynal, Nicolas De Lorge, and the two Des-Airs brothers.<sup>32</sup> Other than Beauchamps, Dolivet performed most of

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system of dance notation.

31 Avant les premiers ans de l'Opéra françois,  
Le caprice tout faisait toutes les loix.  
Quelques pas terre à terre, à peu-près en mesure,  
Tenaient lieu d'ornement, sans grace et sans figure.  
BEAUCHAMPS sur le premier en divisant les temps,  
Débrouiller l'art confus, mesurer les instans,  
Et son crayon util a l'art chorégraphique,  
Nous montra tous les pas tracés sous la musique.

Mes Passe-temps (Paris, 1806), "Chansons suivies de l'art de la danse," p. 195.

32 Seventeenth-century French orthography makes identification difficult. Cartidès in The Bores may be a tiresome, self-seeking pedant, but he had a point when he inveighed against the "barbarous, pernicious, and detestable orthography" of public signs (Act III, Scene 2). Even Molière's name has occasionally been confused with that of the dancer-musician Louis de Mollier because of variations in spelling. In any case, the dancers in question here would seem to be those listed in Félibien: Jean Raynal (from Jean Roynal), Nicolas De Lorge (from Nicolas de Large), and the Des-Airs

the solo specialty roles.

Dolivet's reputation was well-established by the time of the first comedy-ballet. He danced with Beauchamps in The Bores, and was singled out in an account of the court production: "the famous Dolivet, who deserves a certificate of merit, performed many a pleasing entrée."<sup>33</sup> Dolivet appeared as Jealousy in the first ballet-entry and as a Dancing Master in the fifth entry of The Forced Marriage. He was the Giver of Programs at the beginning of the "Ballet of Nations" in The Would-be Gentleman. A dancer of Dolivet's stature would certainly have been cast in the important role of Champagne the dancing valet in Love's the Best Doctor. And he must have performed comic roles because Loret referred to him as "the jovial" Dolivet.<sup>34</sup> Dolivet also assisted Beauchamps with choreography, notably for The Magnificent Lovers.

There were sixteen major dancers in the comedy-ballets and related works--dancers who appeared in at least ten roles.<sup>35</sup> These dancers were

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(from François Galland sieur du Desert and Florent Gallard). D-M, VI, 204.

<sup>33</sup> . . . le sieur d'Olivet,  
Digne d'avoir quelque brevet  
Et fameux en cette contrée,  
A fait mainte agreable entrée.  
Loret, La Muse historique, August 20, 1661

Quoted in D-M, III, 6.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in François Victor Fournel, Les Contemporains de Molière (Paris, 1866), II, 513.

<sup>35</sup> Names of the dancers who participated in the comedy-ballets are listed in the livrets of the court productions and in the musical scores. Professional dancers' names were preceded by a simple sieur (Mr.), D-M, IV, 73. Frédéric Hillemacher has compiled a useful listing of all the performers in Molière's original productions--actors, singers, dancers,

Beauchamps and Dolivet, Chicanneau, La Pierre,<sup>36</sup> Favier l'âiné (the elder), Noblet l'âiné, Magny, Saint-André,<sup>37</sup> Mayeu, L'Estang l'âiné,<sup>38</sup> Bonnard, Joubert, Foignard l'âiné, Le Chantre, Arnald, and Pesan l'âiné. Although a few actresses and several danseuses may have danced in the

musicians--his Galerie historique des portraits des comédiens de la troupe de Molière (Lyon, 1869). He lists each performer and the roles performed. A number of points about dancers in his study should be noted:

(a) Based on typical spelling variations, Le Sieur Boüillard, as a Little Dryad in The Magnificent Lovers (p. 178), may have been the same as Le Sieur Boüillant, as an Amour in Psyché (p. 181).

(b) Le Sieur Des-Airs, galand, as a Nude Moor in The Sicilian (p. 178) is Le Sieur Des-Airs l'âiné listed on P. 170 (shown as François Galland sieur du Desert in the Académie list).

(c) Le Sieur Le Mercier as a Demon in The Forced Marriage (p. 176) is likely the same as Le Sieur Mercier on p. 170. Also, Mercier's role as a bear in The Princess of Elis is not listed.

(d) Vagnard's role as a bear in The Princess of Elis is not listed (Le Sieur Vaignard, l'âiné, p. 165).

(e) Paysan's role as a Hunter in The Princess of Elis is not listed (p. 166).

(f) There may have been two dancers rather than the one listed as Le Sieur Chicanneau (p. 157). In the third intermède of George Dandin a dancer by the name of Chicanneau portrays a Shepherd (D-M, VI, 608) and a dancer by the name of Chicaneau portrays a Follower of Bacchus. These two characters would have been on the stage at the same time. Chicanneau probably would not have danced as a Shepherd and then re-entered later with the Bacchus group because when the two groups combined for the finale there would have been an uneven number of shepherds on the stage. In the livret for Monsieur de Pourceaugnac the name is spelled consistently Chicaneau; in The Would-be Gentleman, it is Chicanneau.

<sup>36</sup>La Pierre was a native of Avignon. His name appears in the livret of the Ballet of the Incompatibles which was held in nearby Montpellier in 1655. After participating in this provincial ballet de cour with Molière's company, he too, made his way to the court of Louis XIV where he performed for several years. La Pierre was also a composer and, later in his career, he founded the Opéra at Rouen (Julien Tiersot, La Musique dans la comédie de Molière, Paris, 1922, p. 40).

<sup>37</sup>Rameau referred to Saint-André as one of the most skillful dancers in Paris and at court (p. xiii).

<sup>38</sup>L'Estang "danced with nobility and precision." (Rameau, p. xiii.)



comedy-ballets, most of the dancing was performed by men.<sup>39</sup> Many male dancers, such as Arnald and Bonnard, performed female roles. The most active dancers did not, such as Beauchamps, Chicanneau, Saint-André, and Dolivet, who would have been expected to perform the more vigorous dancing. The principal dancers who most often appeared in the suite of the King or were associated with the noble amateurs, besides Beauchamps, were Raynal, La Pierre, Favier, and Noblet.

According to the strict division of performance disciplines, dancers for the most part were not required to sing, play an instrument, or do anything but dance.<sup>40</sup> The leading dancers--Beauchamps, Favier, and La Pierre especially--generally appeared in three or four dancing roles in each comedy-ballet, and had to manage quick costume changes, as in The Princess of Elis. Four of the dancers who portrayed Dogkeepers in the first intermède (prologue) also danced in the Hunter intermède, at the

<sup>39</sup>Christout, Le Ballet de cour, p. 165, names four professional female dancers in the early 1660's: Mlles Vertpré, Mollier (married to the musician Itier), Girault, and La Faveur. Three of them have been associated with The Bores. N. M. Bernardin in "Le Théâtre de Molière: 'Les Fâcheux,'" Revue des Cours et Conférences, XII (1) (1903-4), 266, mentions Mlle Giraud (Girault) as a shepherdess in the finale, and notes that this appearance of a female dancer on the French stage was in imitation of the Italian comedians. Daspit de Saint-Amand also lists Girault in "Une Visite de Molière et sa Troupe Chez le Surintendant Fouquet," Moniteur du Bibliophile, III (1880), 301, along with the "mignonne" Vertpré, and Mlle Faveur (La Faveur). No danseuses are known to have appeared in any of the other comedy-ballets. Since the Académie Royale de Danse did not include women, professional female dancers were practically unknown until Lully's Triomphe de l'Amour (1681) when they were officially accepted on the stage.

<sup>40</sup>Lully, a dancer, singer, and musician, was an exception. Another was Noblet l'âiné who sang and danced as a gypsy in the finale of the Comic Pastoral. With him were four gypsies playing guitar (Lully, Beauchamps, Chicanneau, and Vaignart), four gypsies playing castinets (Favier, Bonard, Saint-André, and Arnald), and four playing small cymbals (La Marre, Des-Airs Galand, Du Feu, and Pesan); it is unlikely, however, that this "playing" was anything more than pantomimic dancing.

end of Act I (Figure 114). This act consists of only three short French scenes which could have been played in a matter of a few minutes.

Dancing, like other professions, was often a family trade, and occasionally more than one member of a family performed in the court ballets--father and son, elder and younger brothers. The particularly large extravaganzas--The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, the Ballet of the Muses, The Magnificent Lovers, and Psyché--required many new dancers. Two brothers from the Académie, the Des-Airs, who participated in a number of the comedy-ballets, were joined by two Des-Airs children who appeared in The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island as dwarfs. The Ballet of the Muses brought out Noblet's younger brother for the Comic Pastoral. Several new dancers were used for The Magnificent Lovers: younger brothers of Favier, Foignard, and Pesan, the son of Dolivet, and two new names--the two brothers Du Gard. Psyché also required some additional personnel--the younger brothers of L'Estang, Saint-André, and Vaignard.

Dancers in the comedy-ballets also came from another group of professionals--the Italian comedians, who occasionally appeared in the divertissements of the court. In 1670 Dominique Biancolelli<sup>41</sup> made a special appearance at Chambord for the court production of The Would-be Gentleman. He was employed to play his role of Arlequin, to mime and dance in the Italian entry of the "Ballet of Nations" finale. Dominique, an excellent dancer known for his nimbleness and verve, is reported to

<sup>41</sup>Italian comedian from Bologna. Performed in Paris 1661-1688. Figure 115.

THE PRINCESS OF ELIS

DANCER	FIRST INTERLUDE	SECOND INTERLUDE	SIXTH INTERLUDE
Arnald			Shepherdess
Balthazard		Hunter	Shepherdess
Bonnard	Dogkeeper	Hunter	Shepherdess
Chicanneau		Hunter	Shepherd
Du Pron			Shepherd
La Pierre	Dogkeeper	Hunter	Shepherd
Magny		Hunter	Sherpherdess
Manceau		Hunter	
Mercier		Bear	
Noblet <u>l'ainé</u>	Dogkeeper	Hunter	Shepherd
Paysan	Dogkeeper	Hunter**	
Pesan	Dogkeeper		
Saint-André	Dogkeeper*		
Vagnard		Bear	

\* There is a discrepancy between the livret and the score in the listing of Dogkeepers. Livret - Saint-André (D-M, IV, 246), score - Chicanneau (Lully, II, 29). It seems unlikely that Saint-André would have been omitted; he appeared on the first and third days of the fete.

\*\*Discrepancy in listing of Hunters. Livret - includes Paysan (D-M, IV, 246), score - lists only seven, although eight Hunters called for (Lully, II, 36).

Figure 114. Chart of dancers for The Princess of Elis



Figure 115. Dominique Biancolelli

have performed at court a comic imitation of Beauchamps's dancing which greatly amused the King.<sup>42</sup> Possibly this mimicry took place during The Would-be Gentleman, for Beauchamps appeared as one of two Scaramouche characters before Dominique in this same ballet-entry.

Dominique's satire may have been a revenge for all his fellow Italian players against French performers who had adopted commedia dell'arte characters to their own advantage, and supplanted the Italians at court. Professional French dancers were used as Scaramouches in The Would-be Gentleman instead of Tiberio Fiorillo, the Italian Scaramouche, who had performed alongside Dominique in that role for the Ballet of the Muses in 1666.<sup>43</sup> Also, Trivelins were played in The Would-be Gentleman by French dancers, not Italian performers such as Locatelli, Dominique's master teacher, who was famous for this role. Several Trivelins and several Scaramouches, as valets of the Quack Doctor, are required in the second entr'acte of Love's the Best Doctor. It is possible that Locatelli (and/or Dominique) and Fiorillo performed in this comedy-ballet in 1665. More likely, however, they merely provided contemporary models for the French professional dancers who played the roles, as did other Italian actors for the pantalonnade at the end of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.

The Italian who achieved the greatest success at court was not from

<sup>42</sup>François Parfaict, Histoire de l'ancien théâtre italien (Paris, 1767), p. 60.

<sup>43</sup>Fiorillo (as Scaramouche) and Dominique (as Arlequin) played Roman Orators in the ninth entry of the Ballet of the Muses. D-M, VI, 292 and G. Rouchès, ed., Inventaire des lettres et papiers manuscrits de Gaspare, Carlo et Lodovico Vigarani (Paris, 1913), p. 137.

the commedia dell'arte troupe in Paris, although he, too, used some of its material--his name was Jean-Baptiste Lully. Mademoiselle de Montpensier, to whose household Lully was attached in the early 1650's, said in her Mémoires: ". . . il me demanda son congé, je le lui donnai et depuis il a fait fortune, car c'est un grand baladin."<sup>44</sup> Lully came to the court of Louis XIV as a dancer.<sup>45</sup> Three months after "Baptiste" left the service of La Grande Mademoiselle, he appeared in the splendid Ballet de la nuit (1653), dancing in five roles. He was twenty years old; Louis was fifteen. The close relationship which developed between Lully and the King began with their sharing the stage in this important ballet. For years thereafter Lully danced alongside the King, who always admired his dexterity and buffoonery.

Lully, the expatriate Italian, provided a link between commedia dell'arte and French ballet, and prepared the way for Molière at court. He portrayed an Italian character in the ballet de cour--usually a Scaramouche--and popularized for court productions the broad form of comic action typical of Italian comedians. Immediately before Molière, whose comic style was based in part on Italian forms, began his comedy-ballets, "Le Florentin" amused the King as a dancing Scaramouche in L'Amour malade (1657) and Serses (1660).

Shortly after Lully's debut as a dancer, he began to compose music

<sup>44</sup>"He asked me for his discharge. I gave it to him and he made his fortune, for he is a great dancer." Quoted in Henry Prunières, Lully (Paris, 1910), p. 12. A "baladin" in mid-seventeenth-century France was a professional dancer or balletmaster; the term lacked the dignity of the later "danseur."

<sup>45</sup>Prunières, Lully, p. 12.

as well for the King's ballets. His dancing, as popular if not as accomplished as that of any professional dancer, allowed him to understand from first-hand experience the requirements for ballet music. Because of his experience with comic dance in the ballet de cour, Lully undoubtedly made a substantial contribution to the unification of comedy and ballet when collaborating with Molière. Lecerf de la Viéville de la Fresneuse in his Comparison de la musique italienne et la musique françoise (1705) said that Lully played a part nearly as important as Beauchamp's in the ballets.

He improved the entrances, and imagined expressive steps to suit the subjects; and when there was need of it, he would caper before his dancers to make them better understand his ideas. He had, however, never learnt dancing, and so only danced by fits and starts. But his habit of watching dances, and his extraordinary genius for everything belonging to the stage, caused him to dance, if not with good breeding, at least with a very charming vivacity.<sup>46</sup>

It is likely that he contributed, for example, to the choreographic lazzi of the "Turkish Ceremony," because ten years earlier the court had seen a Turkish ballet "of which Baptiste was the author."<sup>47</sup>

As Lully's stature and responsibilities as a composer increased, he

<sup>46</sup>Quoted in Romain Rolland, Some Musicians of Former Days (Freeport, New York, 1968), p. 173.

<sup>47</sup> . . . On dansa le ballet,  
Peu sérieux, mais très-follet,  
Surtout dans un récit turquesque,  
Si singulier et si burlesque,  
Et dont Baptiste étoit auteur,  
Que sans doute tout spectateur  
En eut la rate épanouie  
Tant par les yeux que par l'ouïe.

Quoted in D-M, VIII, 11-12. La Muse historique, December 18, 1660

performed less and less. Some of his memorable performances, however, were in the comedy-ballets. He danced as a grotesque charivari in The Forced Marriage (Figure 71), possibly as a Scaramouche in Love's the Best Doctor, and as one of the dancing, guitar-playing gypsies in the Comic Pastoral. His roles in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and The Would-be Gentleman, which included singing, will be discussed in the next chapter. Even after Molière's death, Lully continued to play in revivals of the comedy-ballets, using them to his advantage. A well-known anecdote concerns his performance in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.<sup>48</sup> Lully, having displeased the King by making him wait for a performance to begin,<sup>49</sup> wished to make amends and regain royal favor. To do so he played the role of Pourceaugnac in his own Italian version for His Majesty.<sup>50</sup> The piece ended with Monsieur de Pourceaugnac being chased around the theatre by apothecaries armed with syringes. Lully, according to the story, became so carried away with his performance that he hurled himself on a harpsichord in the orchestra. He demolished the harpsichord and reduced the court, especially Louis XIV, to uproarious laughter. Lully's prestige was restored.

Molière received many valuable suggestions on the conventions and characters of the ballet de cour from Beauchamps and Lully, and he used

<sup>48</sup>From Cizeron-Rival, Récréations littéraires (1765) quoted in D-M VII, 206. See also Louis Leclerc (Ludovic Celler), "Une représentation de M. de Pourceaugnac à Chambord," Revue Contemporaine, 2<sup>e</sup> ser., lxxiii, 699-722.

<sup>49</sup>F. W. Hawkins, Annals of the French Stage (London, 1884), II, 69-70.

<sup>50</sup>Lully played Monsieur de Pourceaugnac as part of Le Carnaval (1675).



these suggestions with the sensitivity of a choreographer. His intention in The Bores "to weave the ballet . . . into the subject,"<sup>51</sup> however, implies that he was interested in more than merely contriving scenes which would end with the usual parade of exotic gypsies or the frolicking of charming shepherds. He sought to motivate the dancing and give it dramatic significance. And it was his own characteristics as a performer that provided him with the means to accomplish this aim. Molière was probably as unsuited for elegant ballet as he was for tragedy. But using his great abilities as a comic actor, he avoided an ill-befitting imitation of court dancers by portraying characters who seemed to dance badly.

This notion was foreshadowed by one of the roles Molière played in the Ballet of the Incompatibles (1655). He was Harangue, a character whose clumsy movements made him incompatible with Eloquence. The same comic tension--the awkward in conflict with the elegant--is the general dance principle of the comedy-ballets. Graceful, elegant characters of the ballet de cour encounter in dramatic context an awkward, out-of-step person from everyday life. And Molière portrayed this lummoX. Monsieur Jourdain in The Would-be Gentleman, for example, squeals, "Ah! minuets are my dance!" (Act II, Scene 1), and proceeds to mutilate the latest dance steps shown to him by his refined Dancing Master. He is incapable of the precision, grace, and elegance characteristic of the dainty little steps ("menuets") of this dance; minuets are obviously not for Jourdain at all.

Molière is not known to have had any formal training as a dancer,

<sup>51</sup>D-M, III, 29-30 (Avertissement).

although he must have been able to move with agility and control. His years in the provinces provided ample opportunity to develop technique. During this time he not only worked with La Pierre's dance troupe for the Ballet of the Incompatibles, but must have come in contact with trouping Italian commedia dell'arte and French farce players for whom dance and lively movement were standard fare. Also, Molière may have been influenced further by the Italians--Locatelli, Fiorillo, Dominique--with whom he shared the public stage in Paris.<sup>52</sup> By parodying serious dance, Molière made a comic virtue of being a non-dancer.

The first occasion that called for Molière to practice his faux pas was at Vaux for The Bores. He is thought to have played Lysandre, the gentleman who dances so badly. Then he created the slow-witted Sganarelle of The Forced Marriage who receives a Dancing Master sent to teach him a courante. This Sganarelle is an earlier version of the absurdly unpolished Monsieur Jourdain. Molière's most dramatically successful ballet scenes involve a foolish character (played by Molière) surrounded by dancers who are attacking or tricking him. In The Forced Marriage the bridegroom Sganarelle is teased about becoming a cuckold by a group of Demons. In the finale of Love's the Best Doctor, Sganarelle is prevented from stopping his daughter and her young lover from going off together by wedding guests who restrain him and make him dance with them. Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is chased by syringe-carrying apothecaries. In The Princess of Elis, the cowardly Moron comes into conflict with a Bear and

<sup>52</sup>Molière was generally thought by his contemporaries to have learned his geatures and postures from Italian farce players. In Elomire hypochondriac, he was accused of imitating Scaramouche (Fiorillo).

later a Satyr. Magicians in the Comic Pastoral perform a ceremony of enchantment to make the rich shepherd Lycas more attractive. Perhaps the best-known instances of dance scenes of this type are the two balletic rituals: the "Turkish Ceremony" in The Would-be Gentleman and the doctoral initiation in The Imaginary Invalid. In each, the central character is participating with great fervor in the false ceremony and is oblivious to the trick being played on him; in each, the comedy is enhanced as the fool tries to keep up with the fancy footwork of the rogues.

Although Molière's dancing may have been comically clumsy, his actresses probably danced with grace and allure. One of Molière's actresses almost certainly danced--Mlle Du Parc. As a young girl, La Du Parc, then Marquise-Thérèse de Gorla, performed on the trestle-stage of her father, an Italian charlatan who played at the Saint-Germain fair.<sup>53</sup> During her early career as a dancer she met and joined Molière's troupe in the provinces.<sup>54</sup> She married René Du Parc, an actor in the company, and soon, through her beauty and ability, became a great favorite with the crowds. Apparently she often embellished her acting with dance, and she is considered to be one of the first women to dance on the French stage.<sup>55</sup> She must have been a great asset to Molière when he began to devise comedy-ballets. Loret, in describing The Bores, referred to her:

<sup>53</sup>D. B. Wyndham Lewis, Molière: the Comic Mask (New York, 1959), p.24.

<sup>54</sup>Henry Carrington Lancaster, "An actress: La Du Parc" in Adventures of a Literary Historian (Baltimore, 1942), pp. 79-96.

<sup>55</sup>H.-A. Soleirol, Troupe de Molière (Paris, 1858), p. 91.

This beautiful actress, Du Parc, with the carriage of an empress whether reciting or dancing, is ravishing in every way. Her figure and face made her more and more conquests, but as a thousand suitors will testify so did her lovely steps.<sup>56</sup>

What dances she participated in is uncertain--possibly in the entry of Inquisitive People, in the entry of the Cobblers and their Wives, or in the finale of Shepherds. At any rate, she is said to have worn silk stockings attached to a little pair of tights and to have executed "remarkable cabrioles" which revealed her legs through a slit skirt.<sup>57</sup>

La Du Parc was a particular favorite at court where the nobles lavished praise and gifts upon her. And she danced with them. Loret, in reference to the second presentation at court of The Forced Marriage, mentions how diverting were La Du Parc's feminine charms and dancing. Mesnard has conjectured that as Dorimène, Marquise must have danced with Monsieur le Duc in the finale where he portrayed a gallant who flirts with the new bride of Sganarelle.<sup>58</sup> The height of Mlle Du Parc's

<sup>56</sup> La du Parc, cette belle actrice,  
Avec son port d'impératrice,  
Soit en récitant ou dansant,  
N'a rien qui ne soit ravissant;  
Et comme sa taille et sa tête  
Lui font mainte et mainte conquête,  
Mlle soupirants sont temoins  
Que ses beaux pas n'en font pas moins.

Loret, La Muse historique, November 19, 1661

Quoted in D-M, III, 14-15.

<sup>57</sup> Daspit de Saint-Amand, p. 303.

<sup>58</sup> De la du Parc rien je ne dis,  
Qui rendoit les gens ébaudis  
Par ses appas, par sa prestance,  
Et par ses beaux pas et sa danse.

La Muse historique, February 2, 1664

Quoted with discussion in D-M, IV, 77-78.

recognition at court came in 1664 when she appeared as Alcina, the enchantress of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, dancing with Beauchamps in the ballet of the third day. Already, however, Mlle Molière was emerging as the leading beauty of Molière's troupe and the actress for whom the principal roles were being written. While Marquise may have contributed some suggestions regarding the Quack Doctor character in Love's the Best Doctor, it is doubtful that she performed in the production.

Mlle Molière may have danced,<sup>59</sup> but it is clear that The Princess of Elis was constructed to circumvent the necessity of the Princess, played by Armande, having to dance. In the 1668 revival of The Forced Marriage Mlle Molière played one of the gypsy girls who tease Sganarelle and dance around him playing their tambourines, but this dancing was not a formal ballet-entry. Madeleine Béjart, who was one of the original gypsy girls, also may have danced in the comedy-ballets, for example as the Nymph in The Bores, but dancing was not a major part of her career, either.

What dancers were used at the Palais-Royal is unknown. Daniel Mallet, a dancer who was engaged by the Illustre Théâtre in June, 1644,<sup>60</sup> was perhaps the same Malet whose services were employed by Molière's troupe in 1663, 1664, and 1672. The amounts on each of these occasions, however, are so much smaller than dancers normally received that if Malet

<sup>59</sup> Jules Bonnassies, La Musique à la Comédie-Française (Paris, 1874), p. 40, lists her with Mlle Du Parc as a dancer.

<sup>60</sup> If the Illustre Théâtre performed "ballets" for Gaston (see Chapter V: Related Works), Mallet may have been hired for the dancing.

did dance, his role must have been minor.<sup>61</sup>

When the comedy-ballets were transferred from court to town the corps de ballet was reduced. Fewer professionals were used, and the Paris audience was deprived of the spectacle of the noble amateurs. The livret of The Forced Marriage, for example, shows that, besides the courtiers, fifteen professional dancers performed in the court production; only nine were employed for the presentation at the Palais-Royal. If ballet-entries #3 (Gypsies) and #6 (Spaniards), which were essentially designed for the participation of the nobility, were eliminated and the roles of entries #7 and #8 were redistributed, the dancing could easily have been done by nine dancers. The names of the dancers are not known, but, besides Beauchamps, who was paid separately as the choreographer, the nine dancers might have been Bonnard, De Lorge, Des-Airs l'âiné, Des-Airs le cadet (the younger), Desbrosses, D'Heureux, Dolivet, Le Chantre, and Saint-André (Figures 116 and 117). For The Princess of Elis twelve dancers were engaged at the Palais-Royal and, for the three major ballet-entries ( #1, #2, and #6), twelve dancers had appeared at Versailles (Figure 114); but La Thorillière refers to only one bear (Vagnard) being used in Paris.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 411.

<sup>62</sup>Schwartz, "La Thorillière," p. 1070. In La Thorillière's register there are two payments made to Desbrosses (Des Brosses) of 110 livres on November 9 and 11, 1664. Schwartz, recognizing the name Desbrosses from lists of ballet dancers, conjectures that Molière hired him as balletmaster for the Paris production of The Princess of Elis. Since, as already mentioned, Beauchamps was not involved with Princess as part of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, another choreographer might have been needed, and Desbrosses had just appeared with Molière in The Forced Marriage.

THE FORCED MARRIAGE

## Court Performance

DANCER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Balthazard							Grotesque	
Beauchamps		Joker		Magician				Gallant
Bonnard							Grotesque	
De Lorge	Suspicion			Demon				
Des-Airs <u>l'ainé</u>				Demon				
Des-Airs <u>le cadet</u>		Joker						
Desbrosses	Sorrow							
D'Heureux		Joker		Demon				
Dolivet	Jealousy				Dancing Master			
La Pierre			Gypsy Lady				Grotesque	
Le Chantre	Suspicion							
Le Mercier				Demon				
Noblet <u>l'ainé</u>			Gypsy Lady					
Raynal			Gypsy Lady					Gallant
Saint- André	Sorrow					Spanish Lady		

Figure 116. Chart of dancers for The Forced Marriage, court performance

THE FORCED MARRIAGE

Palais-Royal

DANCER	1	2	4	5	7	8
Beauchamps		Joker	Magician			Gallant
Bonnard					Grotesque	
De Lorge	Suspicion		Demon			
Des-Airs <u>l'ainé</u>			Demon			(Gallant)
Des-Airs <u>le cadet</u>		Joker			(Grotesque)*	
Desbrosses	Sorrow				(Grotesque)	
D'Heureux		Joker	Demon			(Gallant)
Dolivet	Jealousy			Dancing Master		
Le Chantre	Suspicion				(Grotesque)	
Saint- André	Sorrow					(Gallant)

\*Parenthesis denotes conjectured distribution. Only the dancers who appeared most often in the comedy-ballets have been retained. The dancers Balthazard and Le Mercier have been eliminated because they appeared in only one role each in the court production; La Pierre, Noble l'ainé, and Raynal have been eliminated because they appeared in the nobles' entry #3.

Figure 117. Chart of dancers for The Forced Marriage,

Palais-Royal



The number of dancers required for a comedy-ballet performance at the Palais-Royal increased during the period between The Bores and The Imaginary Invalid as did the payment received by each dancer. For a revival of The Bores in April, 1665 nine livres were paid "for the dancers."<sup>63</sup> A single dancer was paid three livres in July, 1664,<sup>64</sup> and this amount might have been paid to each of the three dancers for The Bores. For the opening of The Forced Marriage on February 15, 1664, however, nine dancers were paid five livres for a total of forty-five livres for each of the six initial performances.<sup>65</sup> The five livre amount remained constant for another revival of The Bores even though apparently only four dancers were used.<sup>66</sup> When The Princess of Elis premièred on November 4th of the same year, twelve dancers cost Molière's troupe sixty livres.<sup>67</sup> From 1671 (Psyché) to 1673 (The Imaginary Invalid) the rate per dancer was 5# 10<sup>s</sup>. For Psyché, Molière employed twelve dancers at that amount as well as four "little dancers" at the three livre wage.<sup>68</sup>

Extra expenses were incurred on behalf of the dancers for public performances. In the Premier Registre of La Thorillière an item is noted for expenses for The Bores: "Pour du vin record des danseurs . . . 1 - 10<sup>s</sup>."

<sup>63</sup>La Thorillière, Premier Registre (1663), quoted in Bonnassies, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup>Schwartz, "La Thorillière," p. 1063. Racine's tragedy La Thebaïde was performed with a "Dance" as an afterpiece.

<sup>65</sup>Bonnassies, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup>Schwartz, "La Thorillière," p. 1062.

<sup>67</sup>Schwartz, "La Thorillière." p. 1070.

<sup>68</sup>La Grange, Registre, p. 124.

Bonnassies conjectures that the records were musicians who helped rehearse the ballets.<sup>69</sup> They may have been paid in wine. The same amount is entered in Hubert's Registre on February 17, 1673, the day of Molière's death, for a boy to call the dancers for The Imaginary Invalid: "a Vn garçon qui a auerty les danseurs . . . 1 - 10<sup>s</sup>."<sup>70</sup> Special dressing rooms had to be engaged for the dancers. From February 22, 1664 of The Forced Marriage: "Pour la loge des danseurs . . . . 9 - " Bonnassies notes that undoubtedly a building adjoining the theatre was hired.<sup>71</sup> Also, Hubert includes an amount for baths whenever ballets were performed during the warm months.<sup>72</sup>

Dancing on the public stage was based on the dancing in court entertainments, which in turn came from the dances of the ballroom. To be able to dance was a hallmark of the "people of quality." Since the time of Catherine de' Medici, several treatises had been produced that described and formulated rules of dance: Frabittio Caroso's Il Ballarino (1577), Thoinot Arbeau's Orchésographie (1588), and Cesare Negri's Nuove inventioni di balli (1604). Besides giving instruction on social dances, these books also laid down rules of deportment and ballroom etiquette. One of Arbeau's directives is "Hold your head and body upright with a confident mien, and do not spit or blow your nose much."<sup>73</sup> An account of

<sup>69</sup>Bonnassies, p. 4.

<sup>70</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 425.

<sup>71</sup>Bonnassies, p. 6.

<sup>72</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," pp. 404-405.

<sup>73</sup>Thoinot Arbeau, Orchesography (New York, n.d.), p. 103.

the transition from the simpler dances of the sixteenth century to the more advanced technique of the seventeenth century is to be found in the Apologie de la danse (1623) of F. De Lauze, and yet much of this book is also devoted to the correct ways of bowing and behaving on the dance floor. Since Louis XIII danced and so did Louis XIV, the French nobility followed the royal example and learned to dance. The dance theorist Saint-Hubert said: "Everyone knows that, for a young nobleman to be polished, he must learn how to ride, to fence, and to dance. The first skill increases his dexterity, the second his courage, the last his grace and disposition."<sup>74</sup> As the Dancing Master in The Would-be Gentleman explains to Monsieur Jourdain who wishes to assume the manners of the nobility, "Without dancing one can achieve nothing at all." The early dance treatises, which were addressed to social dancers, must also have served the professionals. Ballet required the same basic training for positions of the feet, head and arms, and carriage of the body as social dancing. The social dances, each with a variety of steps and patterns, were embellished with movements more or less complex according to the abilities of the participants. Claude Menestrier wrote in Des Ballets anciens et modernes (1682), "The ballet is composed of all sorts of dances."<sup>75</sup>

The gentleman dancer, Lysandre, in The Bores mentions the fleuret and the coupé as part of the pas de courante he has devised.

<sup>74</sup>Saint-Hubert, "How to Compose a Successful Ballet" ("La Manière de Composer et faire réussir les ballets," 1641), Dance Perspectives [XX] (1964), 26.

<sup>75</sup>Claude Menestrier, Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre (Paris, 1682), p. 200.

Look, the gentleman crosses thus; then the lady crosses back again; they join; then they separate, and the lady goes there. Do you see the little feigned touch in that? This fleuret? and these coupés after the lady? Back to back; face to face, coming close to her.

(Act I, Scene 3)<sup>76</sup>

The pas de courante, pas de galliarde, and pas de menuet were social dances each consisting of several distinct movements, as were the passepied and pas de rigaudon. The courante ("running"), Louis XIV's favorite dance and very fashionable during his early dancing years, was rather solemn with a noble, grand style and dignified movements.<sup>77</sup> The most popular dance after the courante was the minuet, a dance of little steps, so-called from the word menu (small)--a simple dance, refined and elegant.

The minuet was performed in open couples; spectators and partners were saluted with ceremonial bows. With dainty little steps and glides, to the right and to the left, forward and backward, in quarter turns, approaching and retreating hand in hand, searching and evading, now side by side, now facing, now gliding past one another. . . .<sup>78</sup>

<sup>76</sup>Figure 65 - an artist's conception of this scene. Curt Sachs in World History of the Dance (New York, 1963), p. 403, defines the steps briefly: fleuret - "a bending step followed by two steps on the toes." coupé - "a bending step followed by a straight step or a slide.

The body straightens again on the downbeat."

His definitions agree with those from the Dictionnaire de Richelet (1680) quoted in D-M, III, 48: "Fleuret, terme de danse. C'est un pas de bourrée, qui est une sort de danse gaie." "Coupé, terme de danse. Mouvement de celui qui dansant, se jette sur un pied, et passe l'autre devant ou derrière."

<sup>77</sup>On the courante: see Martin Mersenne, Harmonie universelle (Paris, 1963), II, 165; Mabel Dolmetsch, Dances of England and France from 1450 to 1600 (London, 1949), pp. 133-143; and extensive discussions in Arbeau, De Lauze, and Rameau.

<sup>78</sup>Sachs, p. 405. On the minuet: see extensive discussions in Rameau and Kellom Tomlinson, The Art of Dancing (London, 1735).

The Dancing Master in The Would-be Gentleman has his dancers perform successively a courante, minuet, sarabande,<sup>79</sup> bourrée,<sup>80</sup> galliarde,<sup>81</sup> and canarie.<sup>82</sup> He later leads Monsieur Jourdain through a minuet.

DANCING MASTER: A hat, Monsieur, if you please. La, la, la; La, la, la, la, la, la: La, la, la, again; La, la, la; La, la. In time, if you please. La, la, la, la. The right leg. La, la, la. Do not move your shoulders so much. La, la, la, la, la; La, la, la, la, la. Both your arms look crippled. La, la, la, la, la. Lift up your head. Turn your toes outward. La, la, la. Hold yourself erect.

(Waller, VII, 99)<sup>83</sup>

The music for Six Cooks who dance in The Would-be Gentleman has been lost, but it consisted of a passepied and two rigaudons,<sup>84</sup> the music, as always, taking its name from the dances done to it.

These conventionalized dances served as the foundation for theatrical dancing. The standard steps were used in various combinations and as the basis for more complex movements when dance music, which was also developing at this time, became less restricted to the characteristics of a particular dance style. That theatrical dancing was becoming more an art

<sup>79</sup>On the sarabande: see Mersenne, II, 165 and Sachs, pp. 367-371.

<sup>80</sup>On the bourrée: see Rameau, pp. 78 ff. and Tomlinson, *passim*.

<sup>81</sup>On the galliarde: see Arbeau, pp. 65-103; De Lauze (London, 1952), pp. 111 ff. pp. 149 ff., and pp. 185 ff.; Mersenne, p. 165; Rameau, pp. 86-88; Tomlinson, *passim*; and Dolmetsch, pp. 102-128.

<sup>82</sup>On the canarie: see Arbeau, pp. 150-151 and Sachs, pp. 365-366.

<sup>83</sup>See Chapter XXIV of Rameau: "Of the Carriage of the Arms in the Menuet," pp. 66-71. The Dancing Master refers to the plumed hat of the period which was used for reverences and salutations both at the beginning and at the end of the minuet (D-M, VIII, 69).

<sup>84</sup>See Rameau on these dances, p. 82 and pp. 93-94.

form for specialists is attested to by Michel de Puré, who consulted on court entertainments. He supported the attempts of the Académie to raise the standards of dancing, and warned people of quality that dancing well at a ball was quite different from being able to execute a ballet-entrée.<sup>85</sup> Rameau mentions a few movements which were used in theatrical dancing-- battement (beat), entrechat ("caper"--jump, changing foot position), and cabriole (leap and beat).<sup>86</sup> Other dance steps (pas simples) and combinations of steps (pas composez) of the seventeenth century included the balancé (rocking step), ballonné (bouncing step), chassé (slide and leap), contretemps (hop and two walks), demi-coupé (bend and rise), échappé (springing movement to a different foot position), glissé (glide), jeté (leap), pirouette (whirl), and sissonne (scissors step).

Most of the dancing in the mid- and later seventeenth century was intended for a proscenium stage. Dance technique was influenced by the shift of dancing from the ballroom to the stage and by the formation of rules for dancing. Obviously, the patterned dances, which featured geometric figures, were best appreciated by an audience elevated above the action around the dance floor. When dancing changed to a proscenium stage, dancers developed new ways to move, such as traveling from side to side with the feet and legs turned outward from the hip ("en dehors").<sup>87</sup> This

<sup>85</sup>Idée des spectacles anciens et nouveaux (Paris, 1668). The Abbé de Puré was a tutor of Louis XIV, a follower of the précieuses, and a friend of the Villeroy family.

<sup>86</sup>Rameau, p. 46.

<sup>87</sup>"With the spectators all seated in front, it became necessary for the dancers to face in this one direction as much as possible, which was simple enough when moving forward and back, but which entailed certain obvious difficulties when it came to moving across the stage to right

development was only part of the increasingly more complex and codified technique of the professional dancer who participated in court spectacles. But the rules of theatrical dancing were just beginning to be formulated, and dancers were only beginning to be concerned with the precise execution of movements and the precise coordination of dancers performing together. The Dancing Master who directs Monsieur Jourdain to move "in time" to the music reflects what was at the time a relatively new idea: that steps should follow the music precisely.

Essentially the same dance materials were used whether the dance was mimetic or purely decorative; only the emphasis was different. The decorative, or abstract (entrée figurée) dance featured geometrically patterned choreography and virtuoso footwork. The mimetic (entrée expressif) required some acting ability and often mixed acrobatics with the action displayed.

An example of the more abstract type of dance is that of eight Statues in The Magnificent Lovers (1670). Within the play this dance has no particular dramatic significance; it is merely an entertainment at the grotto for Aristione's court. Menestrier mentions an Italian ballet performed in Parma in 1667 that also included an entry of eight statues. He charts the choreographic figures for this dance<sup>88</sup> (Figures 118 and 119)

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and left. If, however, the legs, instead of being kept in their natural position, were turned outward at the hip so that the toes pointed in approximately opposite directions to left and right, the difficulties were at once obviated, for such a position allowed the legs to pass each other without interference as the body was moved sideways." John Martin, Introduction to the Dance (New York, 1939), p. 181.

<sup>88</sup>Menestrier, pp. 183-186.

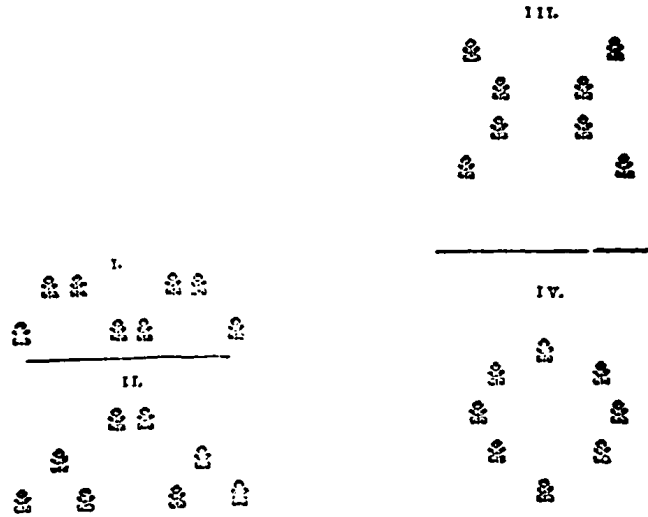


Figure 118. Dance figures (a)

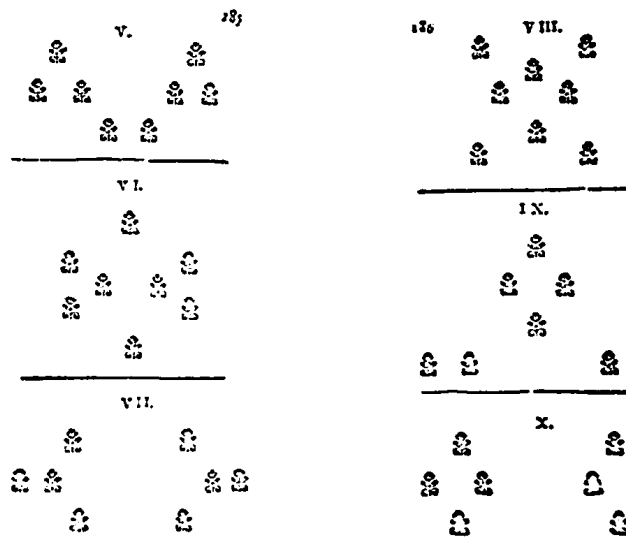


Figure 119. Dance figures (b)



--floor patterns perhaps similar to those which might have been used for The Magnificent Lovers.

The context into which Molière put his dances often made even the decorative dances take on dramatic qualities. The series of dances mentioned above as commanded by the Dancing Master to entertain Monsieur Jourdain is integrated into the comedy through the character of a haughty professional who participates in the demonstration, and mingles with the dancers, directing their movements and showing off for Monsieur Jourdain. At the beginning of the various airs for these dances in an original manuscript, the following commands for the Dancing Master are noted, perhaps written down quickly in the course of rehearsal. "Now, Messieurs, solemnly. --Now, Messieurs, more quickly with this. --Move gravely to the Sarabande. --Now, take up this bourrée well. --Begin it rightly, this galliarde. --Now, this canarie."<sup>89</sup>

Very often specific action is prescribed by the subject of a dance. The people on the street in The Bores are pall mall players who execute a game, some bowlers who measure a shot, little boys who play with sling-shots, and their cobbler fathers and mothers who come after them. The dance of tailors who change Monsieur Jourdain's clothes in The Would-be Gentleman is outlined in the stage directions:

Four Tailor Boys enter, of which two pull off his exercise breeches and the other two his jacket; then they put his new suit on him; and M. Jourdain walks around among them to see if it fits him well All this action is done in time to the music.

(Act II, Scene 5)

<sup>89</sup>D-M, VIII, 65. This passage is not included in the text of the play, but could be advantageously incorporated into a performance.

Jourdain's metamorphosis is most effective if it is not revealed until the end of the dance. If he changes costume amid ordered bustle and confusion, he can emerge for the final part of the music in all his glory, strutting around among his admirers--a preposterous figure indeed. In the same play, the Six Cooks also have specific action; they set a banquet that has been ordered by M. Jourdain for the lady Dorimène.

Dance battles in the comedy-ballets call for the stylized clash of opposing forces. Hunters battle a bear in The Princess of Elis, and the encounter between Moron and the Satyr in the same play ends in a melee ("Les Gestes de Molière et du Satyre"). Dancing peasants in the Comic Pastoral try to separate two rival shepherds, but begin to quarrel among themselves. In the "Serenade" that opens Monsieur de Pourceaugnac four eager spectators argue, scuffle sword in hand, and are brought into accord only through the intercession of Swiss Guards. Three troublesome persons meddle in the distribution of programs at the beginning of the "Ballet of Nations" in The Would-be Gentleman. And according to the Félibien account of Le Grand Divertissement royal de Versailles, at the end of George Dandin

All the dancers join together, and among the Shepherds and Shepherdesses are seen four Followers of Bacchus with thyrsi,<sup>90</sup> and four Bacchants carrying tambourine-like instruments, which are intended to represent the sieves formerly used at the feasts of Bacchus. With these thyrsi the Followers of Bacchus strike on the sieves of the Bacchants, and take different postures, while the Shepherds and Shepherdesses dance more calmly.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup>Thyrus - a staff wreathed in ivy and crowned with a pine cone or a bunch of ivy leaves, as carried by Bacchus and the satyrs.

<sup>91</sup>D-M, VI, 623-624. Figure 77 - Silvestre's engraving of this scene.

The staging of the musical chase scene in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac has become traditional at the Comédie Française. The "course des apothicaires"<sup>92</sup> in pursuit of the fleeing Limousin takes them out into the auditorium of the theatre in a frenetic, uproarious dash along the ground floor side loges, down the center aisle, through the orchestra, around the side stage, up to the balcony, around the balcony, down to the stage, back to the orchestra, and up through the prompter's box to the stage again. Although Molière's theatre did not permit this movement, the inspiration for it may have come from the staging of the original court version. At Chambord, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and his pursuers might easily have run a course through the hall in which the spectators were assembled. When Lully played the title role of this comedy-ballet at court, if the anecdote can be trusted, his antics took him well out of the stage area.

Dancing is included in nearly every musical sequence in a comedy-ballet. Sometimes more than one dance occurs in a musical sequence, particularly when Molière followed the ballet-entry structure of the ballet de cour. The organization of entries is generally similar to that recommended for the ballet de cour,<sup>93</sup> with a different number of dancers appearing in each entry. Dancers usually appeared in groups, in multiples

<sup>92</sup>Discussed in the correspondence of Henry Lyonnet and Maurice Charpentier in Intermediarie des Chercheurs et Curieux, LXV and LXVI, at various times during 1912. The chase in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac has been "plaisamment et gauloisement appelée 'une course de bagues,'" Camille Bellaigue, "Molière et la musique," Revue de la Semaine, Paris III (2) (1922), 17.

<sup>93</sup>Saint-Hubert, p. 29.

of two--two Pages in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, four Demons in The Forced Marriage, six Boatmen in George Dandin, eight Hunters in The Princess of Elis, and so forth, with groups of twelve in the lavish Psyché. Solo dancing was rare. The least dancing occurs in The Princess of Elis and The Sicilian, but each of these comedy-ballets formed part of a larger festival in which ballet was emphasized elsewhere.

Molière's first use of dance in a comedy was very mechanical. The Bores includes a prologue with ballet, ballet-entries after each act, and a ballet finale. Dancing within the play is in the regular ballet-entry form of an unrelated series of dances in variation on a theme--a succession of bores of gestures who keep Eraste from meeting his loved-one. The finale of the next comedy-ballet, The Forced Marriage, also consists of a series of unconnected dances related only thematically to the play. But Molière came to use the ballet-entry in a more imaginative way. Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, for example, includes a prologue with a series of ballet-entries, but the entries of the Matassins and dancing Legal Officers are thoroughly in keeping with the comic spirit of the play and are an integral part of the action as well. The two ballet-entries which constitute the entr'acte between Act I and Act II in Love's the Best Doctor are transitional action, rather than interruptive spectacle; in entry #1 Champagne, the dancing valet, goes off to summon, for entry #2, the dancing doctors who come to consult with Sganarelle.

Since dancing in the comedy-ballets was basically similar to that in the ballet de cour, it was undoubtedly prescribed as much by the type of character who danced as by the dramatic circumstances of the dance. The Spanish Ladies of The Forced Marriage, for example, would have had less

active dance movements than the Spanish Gentlemen because female characters were always more sedate than their male counterparts.<sup>94</sup> Buffoonish characters, such as the Scaramouches who accompany the Quack in Love's the Best Doctor, would have had broader, coarser dance movements than the magnificent Apollo and his Followers in The Magnificent Lovers. There is no reason to believe, however, that authentic movements were used for foreign characters. Arvieux may have suggested some Turkish gestures when he consulted with Molière and Lully on the clothes and manners of the Turks for The Would-be Gentleman, but it is generally thought that the turquerie was at best a stereotyped caricature of an authentic Turkish ceremony.<sup>95</sup> Another special type of ballet character was the Pantomimist. Although the Pantomimists in The Magnificent Lovers have no particular type of dancing specified for them in the text, presumably they are to tell a story with their actions.

CLEONICE: Would you not like, Madame, to see a little sample of the skill of these admirable people who wish to enter your service? They are persons who express everything visually by their steps, gestures, and movements; and they are called Pantomimists.

(Act I, Scene 5)

Molière's ballet character categories are similar to the ballet de cour--allegorical, mythological, pastoral, national, and contemporary.

<sup>94</sup>Marie-Françoise Christout, "The Court Ballet in France: 1615-1641," Dance Perspectives, [XX] (1964), 18 and 20.

<sup>95</sup>Some characteristic Turkish gestures that may have been used in The Would-be Gentleman are cited in D-M, VIII, 199. A Turk salutes his equals by bringing his hand to his chest or heart. When he encounters an important person, his superior, he makes a deep bow with the right hand down, then brings the hand first to his mouth and then to his forehead.

And the characters are organized in the standard manner according to the ballet-entry form. An entrée was literally an entrance: the entry on stage of a dancer or group of dancers and, by extension, a dance or divertissement executed by a dancer or a group of dancers with attributes in common. Molière's ballet-entries include such groups of characters with attributes in common as:

Demons, Magicians, Monsters, Grotesques, Jealousy, Sorrows, Suspicions, Pleasures, Frolics, Laughters, Bacchants, Dryades, Fauns, Statues, Peasants, Shepherds and Shepherdesses, Biscayens, French Ladies and Gentlemen, Gypsies, Moors, Poitevins, Savages, Slaves, Spaniards, Turks and Dervishes, Greeks, Cobblers, Cooks, Tailor Boys, Dogkeepers, Hunters, Bowlers, Fishermen, Boatmen, Jesters, Pages, Dancing Masters, Matassins, Pantomimes, Pantaloons, Trivelins, Scaramouches, Swiss Guards, Sergeants, Procurers, Ensigns, Archers, Apothecaries, Doctors, Surgeons.

The contemporary characters from everyday life are few. The Bowlers, Cobblers, and Gardener in The Bores may have reflected Molière's inexperience with ballet character types more than a conscious effort to use types that would coincide with the characters in his play. According to seventeenth-century convention, ordinary people did not make interesting ballet characters. And Molière, for the most part, followed the convention. His ballet characters never became "real" people. Even the doctors and procurers are caricatures. The characters are not individuals. They are nameless types organized in groups according to occupation, nationality, and so forth. They contribute to a scene but never appear again.

One exception—one ballet character that became an individual—and an indication of the kind of character Molière might have developed with time and opportunity, was the Dancing Master (Figure 120). Since dancing was considered a necessary social skill, dancing masters were vital



Figure 120. Dancing Master

members of the community and were held in high esteem at court. Many of the professional dancers of Molière's time were dancing masters as well as performers, teaching manners and deportment as well as dancing. The gentleman dancer in The Bores shows his boorishness in scoffing at dancing masters. His poor dancing and rude manners indicate how misguided he is.

LYSANDRE: For my part, I don't care a whit for  
your balletmasters.

ERASTE: That is clear.

(Act I, Scene 3)

Dancing Master characters are found in The Forced Marriage and Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. It was not until after Beauchamps's star pupil, Louis XIV, retired from public performance, however, that the Dancing Master became the object of Molière's satire. The Dancing Master in The Would-be Gentleman (1670) is a foil to the foolish Monsieur Jourdain, but as is typical of Molière's double-edged satire, he is also a somewhat ridiculous figure himself. Although he correctly decries Jourdain's lack of good taste, he puts on airs, speaks the language of the esprit doux, and attaches great importance to himself. He certainly would have been a member of the Académie Royale de Danse. Only by showing excesses in an essentially worthy profession could Molière have dared to present such ridicule before the Académie's founder.

Molière made no particular innovations in character types. The Ballet of the Incompatibles (1655) had Swiss Guards and a Nymph. L'Amour malade (1657) included Coquettes and Jealous Lovers, Astrologers, Demons, Gallants, Pages, Doctors, Hunters, and Gypsies. The idea for the doctor characters and their initiation ceremony in The Imaginary Invalid, as



noted in an earlier chapter, may even have come from an entry in this ballet in which Twelve Doctors receive a "Doctor in Stupidity" whose thesis is dedicated to Scaramouche.<sup>96</sup> Molière's innovation was creating the fresh new context for familiar characters and in his attempt to make as much of the dancing as possible in the entrée expressif style. As Louis E. Auld has said in his perceptive article of the comedy-ballets, "dance and comedy function on a continuum, having as their point of contact mime."<sup>97</sup> Molière at his best, used ballet characters to convey his comic ideas through mimetic movement. His attitude toward dancing, for his own purposes, is clear from the livret of The Forced Marriage in which he called ballets "silent comedies" ("comédies muettes").<sup>98</sup>

<sup>96</sup>Isaac Benserade, Les Oeuvres de Monsieur de Benserade (Paris, 1697), II, 178.

<sup>97</sup>Louis E. Auld, "The Music of the Spheres in the Comedy-Ballets," L'Esprit Créateur, VI (Fall 1966), 179.

<sup>98</sup>D-M, IV, 71.

## CHAPTER VII

### MUSIC

Molière had three musical collaborators--the dancing master, Pierre Beauchamps; the most celebrated musician of the day, Jean-Baptiste Lully; and an outstanding composer, Marc-Antoine Charpentier. Music for the first comedy-ballet in 1661 was simple. Besides an overture it consisted only of dance accompaniment. But by the 1670's, when vocal and more complex instrumental forms had been developed and Molière's ability to accommodate musical scenes to his plays had increased, music for the comedy-ballets was considerably more sophisticated. In Molière musicien, Castil-Blaze attempted to prove that Molière was instinctively musical and that Lully merely orchestrated the airs that Molière invented.<sup>1</sup> Prunières, the Lully scholar, proposed an opposite notion: that it was Lully's sense of the theatre that inspired Molière's use of music.<sup>2</sup> Neither view is provable, although both probably contain some truth. At any rate, Molière is the common link among all the comedy-ballets.

There is no evidence that Molière had any formal training in music, but he was related to a family of prominent musicians. His maternal great grandfather was Guillaume Mazuel, joueur d'instruments. Among the many musicians in this family was his great-uncle, Jean Mazuel, a violon du roi (from 1612) under Louis XIII and a colleague of Pierre Beauchamps,

<sup>1</sup>(Paris, 1852), I, 131 and passim.

<sup>2</sup>Oeuvres complètes de J.-B. Lully (Paris, 1930-1939), "Les Comédies-Ballets," I, x.

grandfather of the dancer. Molière's cousin Michel Mazuel held the post of Compositeur de la musique des vingt-quatre violons de la chambre (from 1654), and was a renowned performing artist (lute and violin) during the time of Louis XIV. Livrets show that Michel Mazuel played violin for The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, including The Princess of Elis, and he portrayed a Satyr in the Choir of Bacchus for the finale of George Dandin. Molière, during the early years of his theatrical career, was probably less influenced by family ties, however, than by association with the vagabond musician D'Assouci and with La Pierre, the dancer-composer of the Ballet of the Incompatibles. It seems fairly certain that Molière liked music, or at least valued audiences' favorable reactions to it. He used onstage violinists at the end of The Affected Ladies (1659), which predates the comedy-ballets, and he included songs in the otherwise non-musical plays The Misanthrope and The Doctor in Spite of Himself. All plays performed at the Palais-Royal during the last months of Molière's life were augmented with music.

The type of music used in the comedy-ballets was taken from the ballet de cour--mainly dance suites, but also the orchestral overture and some vocal music (récits and airs). Court musicians were thoroughly familiar with dance forms (the music and the pas), and most court dancers were also musicians. It was not unusual for a choreographer-dancer like Beauchamps to be employed as a composer.<sup>3</sup>

The music for Molière's first comedy-ballet is titled:

<sup>3</sup>It is assumed here that Beauchamps was the dancer, Pierre, and not his musician father, Louis.

Ballet des Facheux. -- Ce ballet a esté fait, les  
airs de la danse, par M. Beauchant.<sup>4</sup>

The Bores has an overture and twelve separate pieces for dance, mostly bourrées and gavottes, but no vocal music. Beauchamps wrote the music in five parts, for the ensemble of the violin family, although oboes are mentioned in the prologue of the play's text. There are only minor discrepancies between the score<sup>5</sup> and the text<sup>6</sup> of the play: (1) the music for the prologue, a courante followed by a bourrée, is for "Les Silvains" (sylvans, or spirits of the forest), but dancers called Dryads, Fauns, and Satyrs in the text; (2) the score indicates that the "ballets" begin an act rather than end it, as implied in the text--for example, the Pall Mall Players appear as the first entry at the end of Act I (Ballet of the First Act) in the text; whereas in the score the music for these dancers is called the first entry of the Second Act; (3) the women who accompany the cobblers in an entry between the second and third acts are described in the score as "Ravaudeuses" ("menders"), but only cobblers' wives in the text; and (4) the last entry in the sequence with the

<sup>4</sup>The score was preserved in the famous Philidor Collection. André Danican (1652-1730), called Philidor, was chief librarian to the King and father of the illustrious composer François-André Danican (Philidor). He, along with the violinist François Fossard, compiled this manuscript collection of airs, concerts, ballets, and operas dating from the time of François I through Louis XIV's reign. The music was reduced to melody and bass only, and some of the volumes over the years have been lost. The Ballet des Facheux appears in Volume 44.

<sup>5</sup>The music used in this study is the Library of Congress copy of the manuscript from the Bibliothèque du Conservatoire National de Musique et de Déclamation, Paris.

<sup>6</sup>D-M, III, 32-96.

cobblers is for "Les Gardiners" in the score rather than the single gardener specified in the text.<sup>7</sup> All the dances are simple, in duple meters with dotted rhythms, of interest mainly as accompaniment. In performance, some pieces may have been repeated at an increased tempo, as in the ballet de cour, if the dancing demanded. Beauchamp's music for The Bores possibly was for the most part adapted from familiar court tunes.

It is certain that Beauchamps used one air, probably the most celebrated piece of the score, that another composer wrote--a courante by the court favorite, Jean-Baptiste Lully. Molière's audiences knew that Lysandre, the dancing bore in the play, was ironically referring to Lully's own music when remarking to the young lover, Eraste: "The very dear Baptiste has not seen my courante, and I'm going to look for him. We have the same taste in tunes, and I want to ask him to score it." (Act I, Scene 5)<sup>8</sup> Lully did not contribute directly to The Bores or the fete at Vaux-le-Vicomte, perhaps warned by Colbert against association with the doomed Fouquet as Prunières suggests,<sup>9</sup> but also probably because he and Benserade were producing the Ballet des saisons, danced at Fontainebleau immediately before The Bores and again a few days later.

<sup>7</sup>Perhaps this entry was originally intended for a group, but became a solo because of the scarcity of good dancers. Dolivet received special recognition for his performance in this role.

<sup>8</sup>Figures 65 and 121. (The role of Lysandre is incorrectly attributed to La Grange in the score.) Many people danced courantes, even the fools who should never have danced at all. Mascarille in The Affected Ladies dances to a badly played courante, and Scarron in his Comical Romance refers (I, 302) to wretched dancers moving awkwardly to courantes.

<sup>9</sup>L'Opéra italien en France avant Lulli (Paris, 1913), p. 269.

*Courante a 3/4 fait par M. de Lully et chanté au Palais  
par M. de la Grange Lamoignon.*

Fac-similé de la courante de Lully pour les Edicteurs

Figure 121. Lully's courante for The Bores

After the success of The Bores, Beauchamps concentrated mainly on dancing and Lully became Molière's musical collaborator.

Pour M. de Lully, Orphée:

Cet Orphée a le goût très-délicat et fin;  
C'est l'ornement du siècle, et n'est rien qu'il attire,  
Soit hommes, animaux, bois et rochers enfin,  
Du son mélodieux de sa charmante lyre.

Toutes ces choses-la le suivent pas à pas,  
Et de son harmonie elles sont les conquêtes;  
Mais si vous l'en pressez, il vous dira tout bas  
Qu'il est cruellement fatigué par les bêtes.<sup>10</sup>

These vers written for the Ballet of the Muses (1666) suggest the same idea proposed in The Bores: a fashionable man is plagued by pests. But Lully must have considered such nuisances a small price to pay for the success and fame he sought and achieved, for having his contemporaries call him "the Orpheus of our day." In 1661 Lully's popularity was already widespread. His songs were sung at court and in the streets of Paris. No royal fete was complete without his efforts, and when Molière began to perform for the King, it was inevitable that the two court retainers would collaborate.

Giovanni Battista (or Giambattista) Lulli was born on November 29, 1632 in Florence.<sup>11</sup> Little is known about his childhood, but he emerged

<sup>10</sup>D-M, VI, 291. "For M. de Lully, Orpheus: This Orpheus has very delicate and fine taste. He is the ornament of the century, and there is nothing he does not attract--whether men, animals, woods, and even rocks --by the melodious sound of his charming lyre. All these things follow him step by step, and are conquered by his harmony. But if you press him on it, he will confide to you that he is cruelly fatigued by the beasts."

<sup>11</sup>The first major study of Lully was Jean Louis Lecerf de la Viéville de la Fresneuse's Comparison de la musique italienne et de musique française

from humble surroundings a spirited young man, who played the guitar and at an early age joined a troupe of traveling actors. The Duc de Guise, away from France after an unsuccessful conspiracy against Richelieu, saw the boy perform and, impressed with his talents for music and mimicry, brought him to France when, after the Cardinal's death in 1642, it was safe to return. Upon arriving in France, the young Florentine became garçon de chambre for the duke's cousin Mlle de Montpensier, who was studying Italian and wanted someone with whom she could converse. He served initially as a kitchen scullion and an errand boy, but industriously studied the violin, and before long became one of the musicians of La Grande Mademoiselle's household. His charming vivaciousness and compelling abilities became known throughout the royal family, even to the young King.

Mademoiselle allowed "Baptiste" to leave her service when she was exiled from Paris in 1653 after the defeat of the Fronde. He remained at the royal court and gained immediate prominence as a dancer, appearing with Louis in the Ballet de la nuit. Soon he became a member of the select Vingt-quatre Violons du Roi which performed for concerts, balls, and ballets. He played with such skill that an orchestra was formed for him to manage--the Petits Violons--and by the mid 1650's he was composing

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(Brussels, 1705), written eighteen years after Lully's death. Lecerf de la Viéville, a Lully contemporary and enthusiast, had first-hand knowledge of the composer, and compiled all the traditional stories about him. The leading modern scholarship on Lully has been done by Prunières, whose biography, Lully (Paris, 1910), corrected a number of errors about the man and his work. An especially penetrating analysis of Lully's music appears in Romain Rolland's Some Musicians of Former Days (New York, 1915), revised from the original Musiciens d'autrefois (Paris, 1908).



music for court productions as well as performing in them. During these early years as a court retainer he studied music with the leading French masters of the day, eventually surpassing all other musicians as a solo performer, conductor, and composer. Between 1654 and 1657 he contributed compositions to nine ballets, including Psyché (1656) and L'Amour malade (1657), the latter too Italian in style for the taste of his one-time benefactor the Duc de Guise. But the expatriate Florentine, whether promoting his own advantage or following his own inclination, was a Frenchman by choice and his music was henceforth unquestionably French in spirit. In 1658, he began to focus primarily on musical composition, and wrote his first full ballet Alcidiane (verses by Benserade), while Beauchamps assumed the position of leading court dancer. He adopted the French spelling of his name Jean-Baptiste Lully, and Lettres de naturalisation were granted him in 1661. His ballet music for the two Cavalli operas produced in Paris--Serse (1660) and Ercole amante (1662)--gave him further recognition, because French ballet was in favor, not Italian opera. The King rewarded his ballet composer; he made Lully solely responsible for court music by granting him the Brevet de la charge de composition de la musique de la chambre du roi (1661) and the Brevet de la charge de maître de musique de la famille royale (1662). Also in 1662 Lully further solidified his position as leader of the French musical world by marrying advantageously the daughter of Michel Lambert, maître de musique de la cour.<sup>12</sup>

By concentrating on ballet, the King's favorite entertainment, Lully

<sup>12</sup>Lambert (c. 1610-1696), song composer and voice teacher, worked with Lully on the development of vocal music.

overlooked the beginnings of French opera. He dismissed the early musical works of Perrin and Cambert as eccentric curiosities. But when Perrin received the royal warrant for opera in 1669, Lully finally realized the possibility, indeed the inevitability, of sung drama different from the Italian. And recognizing the growing popularity of music on the public stage, Lully secured privileges that not only crushed other composers, but seriously affected the production of Molière's plays.<sup>13</sup>

After obtaining official permission to present opera, Lully wrote Cadmus et Hermione in 1673 with Philippe Quinault, who became his principal librettist. Lully exercised his privilege productively, writing at least one "tragédie-lyrique" each year between 1673 and 1687. But during his opera period he returned to ballet occasionally, such as the Triomphe de l'Amour in 1681, the same year in which he was rewarded for thirty years of service to the King by being ennobled through the Lettres de noblesse and by being made one of the Secrétaires du roi.<sup>14</sup> So extensive was Lully's influence that in 1684 a decree was issued preventing any musical work from being performed in France without his approval.

Lully had many detractors. Without mentioning Lully, Boileau expressed his known opinion of the composer when he wrote of "un Bouffon odieux" who is nothing without his theatrical accouterments. La Fontaine was explicit:

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter I: Precursors of the Comedy-Ballets and Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière for further information on the battles for rights to musical production.

<sup>14</sup> Mignard's portrait of Lully was done about this time (Figure 122). Rolland concludes (pp. 129-130) that the painter flattered Lully, who was considered not at all good-looking. Figure 123 - Lully and his musicians.



Figure 122. Jean-Baptiste Lully (Mignard)



Figure 123. Lully and Musicians

Sa femme, ses enfants, et tout le genre humain,  
 Petits et grands, dans leurs prières  
 Disent le soir et le main;  
 'Seigneur, par Vos bontés pour nous si singulières,  
 Délivrez-nous du Florentin!'<sup>15</sup>

But Lully had the constant support of the King, and his work was greatly admired by many of his contemporaries. He was ambitious and enterprising, a clown, a flatterer, and a manipulator. Through his own efforts, talent, and intellect, he became a rich and powerful man. He died in 1687 of an infection from a foot injury self-inflicted with the baton he used to beat time for his orchestra, an ironically fitting end for someone who began as a buffoon and raised himself by his own hard work, by the ribbons of his own ballet-shoes, to a position of great esteem at the court of Louis XIV.

What great composers or musical works may have been stifled as a result of Lully's control of the lyric stage is impossible to say. Whether or not he could have successfully curtailed Molière's activities is equally uncertain. The test of time shows Molière to have been the greater artist and relegates the works of "the incomparable Lully" to relative obscurity. But in the early 1660's, when Molière was little more than a farceur from the provinces, Lully was the King's favorite entertainer. Lully was ten years younger than Molière,<sup>16</sup> closer in age

<sup>15</sup>Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux, Oeuvres complètes (Paris, 1966), "Epistre IX à M. le Marquis de Seignelay," p. 135. Jean de La Fontaine, Oeuvres diverses, p. 614. From "Le Florentin": "His wife, his children, and all mankind, the great and the small, pray night and day: 'Lord, out of Your singular goodness, deliver us from the Florentine!'"

<sup>16</sup>Lully lived fifty-four years, only three years longer than Molière.

to the King, and had been a court musician for ten years. He was emerging as the leading composer of the time: writing memorable, popular music, developing orchestral techniques and training his musicians and singers, trying to free ballet de cour music from rigid schemes and give it range and flexibility. His flair for comedy gave a liveliness to music that was previously uncommon. He was ready to continue the innovations he had begun in the ballet de cour with the comédie-ballet, and for eight years, 1664-1671, he sustained a successful, if occasionally difficult, collaboration with Molière, which produced eight comedies with music: The Forced Marriage, The Princess of Elis, Love's the Best Doctor, The Sicilian, George Dandin, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, The Magnificent Lovers, and The Would-be Gentleman.<sup>17</sup>

Lully wrote most of the comedy-ballet music for a large orchestra considerably more complex than that which the Music Master in The Would-be Gentleman describes as necessary for a proper musical "at-home." Monsieur Jourdain is told he must have: "a bass viol, a bass lute, and a harpsichord for the continuo section, with two violins to play the ritornelles." (Act II, Scene 1)<sup>18</sup> Although some ritornelles, such as in the serenade of The Sicilian (L, II, 121), have parts for two violins and

<sup>17</sup>Their related works, the Comic Pastoral, Psyché, and the Ballet of the Ballets, will not be considered here, except in passing references.

<sup>18</sup>Monsieur Jourdain recommends another string instrument, a member of the violin family: the marine trumpet. Lully had used one for a special effect in Serse (1660), but to suggest it for a salon in 1670 shows Jourdain's utter lack of cultivation because the marine-trumpet was an archaic and grotesque musical instrument. See Figure 124 - a "grotesque" musician who holds a trumpet marine in his right hand.



Figure 124. Musician

a bass, Lully's string ensemble generally consisted of five parts: two violins, two violas, and a cello; these parts were known as dessus de violon, haute-contre, taille, quinte, and basse.<sup>19</sup> The fifth line (bass melody) of this "symphony of strings" was represented an octave lower by another melody instrument, the bass viol (basse de viole); and it was reinforced by instruments also capable of playing chords, the bass lute or theorbo (téorbe), which had been the basic instrument of the ballet de cour, and the harpsichord (clavecin) (Figures 125-130). For the finale of The Princess of Elis the score specifies that harpsichords and bass lutes join the violins (L, II, 63). Chords to be played by these instruments were not written out, only indicated by figures below the bass line. This figured bass (basse chiffrée or basse continue) was intended to be realized in performance with elaborate, improvised

<sup>19</sup>Prunières, "Les Comédies-Ballets," I, 99. The Lully scholar Henry Prunières intended to publish the composer's complete works, but died before more than about a third of the project could be realized. Music for the comedy-ballets, however, appeared in 1931 (Volume I), 1933 (Volume II), and 1938 (Volume III). Unless otherwise noted, all references to Lully's music in this study are to the modern edition of Prunières, and will be cited in the text as "L." The only comedy-ballet music missing is the "Spanish Concert" of The Forced Marriage, which may not have been written by Lully, and the dance of the cooks in The Would-be Gentleman, which apparently has been lost. The Philidor manuscripts mentioned earlier were a major source for Prunières. Philidor's dedication to the King began:

Sire,

After having presented to Your Majesty the collection of music that I have made from the most ancient ballets danced during the reigns of your royal predecessors, I thought I should take pains to put in order all that M. Lully has done for your divertissements, before the operas, and including even the comedies, whenever they were mixed with ballets.

(Quoted in D-M, IV, 67.)



Figure 125. Violin



Figure 126. Viola





Figure 127. Violincello



Figure 128. Bass Viol



Figure 129. Lute



Figure 130. Harpsichord

embellishments.<sup>20</sup>

Woodwinds--oboes (hautbois) and bassoons (bassons)--sometimes reinforced the string orchestra (Figures 131 and 132). The seventh ballet-entry of The Forced Marriage, a "Grotesque Charivari," has an accompaniment of oboes and bassoons (L, I, 45). Despois and Mesnard cite another source besides Philidor<sup>21</sup> which reveals that oboes and violins accompanied the "Ritornelle for Flutes" in the third interlude ("Pastoral") of The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 201). Also, in the fifth entry of the "Ballet of Nations" (The Would-be Gentleman finale), there is a "Second Minuet for the Oboes of the Poitevins" (L, III, 143), for which Despois and Mesnard suggest "two high parts (undoubtedly flutes and oboes) and an accompaniment (of bassoons)."<sup>22</sup>

The most frequently required specialty instrument in the comedy-ballets is the transverse flute (Figure 133). Despois and Mesnard suppose that Descouteaux and the Hottere brothers added some "broderies" ("embellishments") on their flutes to the "Grotesque Charivari."<sup>23</sup> Four flutes are indicated for general accompaniment in the musical prologue for Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (L, III, 179). The flutes already mentioned for the fifth entry of the "Ballet of Nations" presumably would carry over as general accompaniment for the grand finale (sixth entry). The gentle and

<sup>20</sup>The basse continue and the harpsichord part are added to the Prunières edition of the comedy-ballet music by Mlle G. Sazerac de Forge.

<sup>21</sup>"Au tome VI (unique) d'un Recueil de ballets de Lulli qui est aussi au Conservatoire" (D-M, VII, 472).

<sup>22</sup>D-M, VIII, 240.

<sup>23</sup>D-M, IV, 86.



Figure 131. Oboe



Figure 132. Bassoon



Figure 133. Transverse Flute



Figure 134. Tambourine

sweet sound of flutes is particularly well-suited to the pastoral mood, and flutes are found in the three comedy-ballets with pastoral subjects --The Princess of Elis, George Dandin, and The Magnificent Lovers.<sup>24</sup> Eight flutes are called for in the finale of The Princess of Elis (L, II, 63). The "Air for Shepherds" in the opening of George Dandin (L, II, 155) is played alternately by violins and flutes, and the flutes are used in this instance with dramatic purpose: they bring forth shepherdesses who appear in answer to their call. Climène and Cloris, the shepherdesses, sing a chansonnette, and then the flutes and violins play an instrumental version of the song. There are two short ritornelles for flutes in the "Pastoral" of The Magnificent Lovers--one to introduce the shepherdess, Caliste (L, III, 179), and then one to bring the shepherds out of hiding in order to gaze upon Caliste as she sleeps. Also in this interlude is the "Ritornelle for Flutes" mentioned above--a long instrumental passage placed between a dance of fauns and a shepherds' song.

Instruments in the comedy-ballets used for special effects are:

PERCUSSION (Figures 134-138)

Tambourines (tambours de basque) in The Forced Marriage (L, I, 28)--played by the two gypsy girls.

Little drums (tambours) in The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 221)--played by the four Greek men in the Pythian Games finale.

Little bells (timbres) in the same finale--played by the four Greek women.

"Turkish instruments" in the Turkish Ceremony of The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 106). Despois and Mesnard suggest bass drum, cymbals, and triangle to accompany this scene,<sup>25</sup> but Mariam Whaples calls this

<sup>24</sup>On the other hand, no flutes are specifically prescribed for the Comic Pastoral.

<sup>25</sup>D-M, VIII, 179.

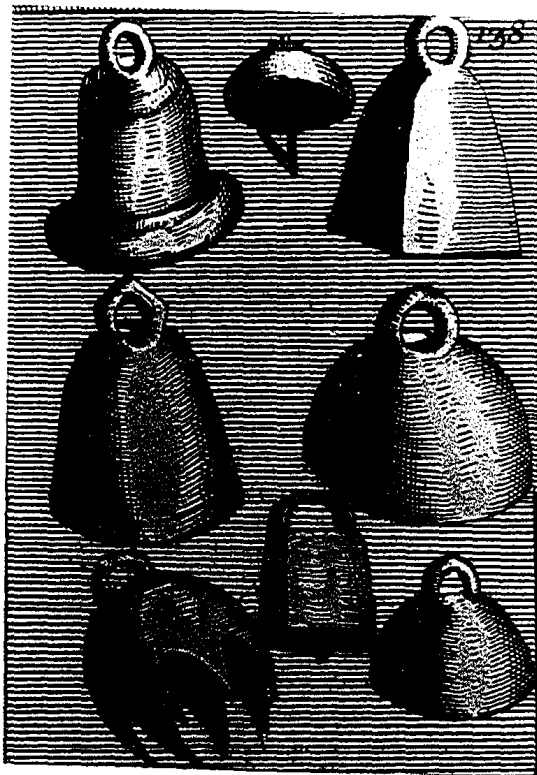


Figure 135. Bells



Figure 136. Nakers



Figure 137. Kettledrums



Figure 138. Bass Drum



notion "an uninformed presumption based on the 'Turkish' music of a later time."<sup>26</sup> She points out that the triangle was not yet associated with Turkish music and cymbals were practically unknown in seventeenth-century Europe. Instead, she proposes that the "instruments à la turquèsque" included tambourines and small paired drums called gnacares (nacaires), the latter of which were authentic Dervish instruments that Lully had used already for exotic effect in the Comic Pastoral.<sup>27</sup>

Kettledrums or timpani (timbales) also in the finale of The Magnificent Lovers--played with trumpets (L, III, 221 and 230).

#### BRASS (Figures 139-141)

Trumpets (trompettes)--used predominantly in the finale of The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 221 and 230) for a "Prelude of Trumpets and other Instruments for Mars" (as appropriately associated with the war-like god) and a "Minuet of Trumpets" (as fitting fanfare for the appearance of Apollo).

Hunting horns (cors de chasse) in The Princess of Elis (L, II, 31)--played with violins as accompaniment in the Dogkeeper sequence.

Pearl conches (conques de perles) in the first interlude of The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 154)--shells blown as horns for the entrance of Neptune.

Perhaps because The Princess of Elis was part of a lavish court fete that had other musical entertainments and involved a vast number of musicians, it has a somewhat more interesting range of instrumentation than the other earlier comedy-ballets. The most varied use of instruments, however, is in the last two Molière-Lully collaborations--The Magnificent Lovers and The Would-be Gentleman.

An extensive record was kept of all the activities of The Pleasures

<sup>26</sup> Mariam Karpilow Whaples, Exoticism in Dramatic Music 1600-1800 (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1959), pp. 98-99.

<sup>27</sup> Other special instruments for the Comic Pastoral are guitars and castanets.



Figure 139. Trumpet



Figure 140. Hunting Horn



Figure 141. Conch Shell Trumpet

of the Enchanted Island, including a list of musicians for the finale of The Princess of Elis: eight flutists and eight violinists who appeared on stage, augmented by an orchestra of six harpsichords and oboes and thirty-two "violins"--a total of fifty-four musicians. But few fete accounts have survived that name court musicians for the other comedy-ballets. Scores and livrets mention only musicians who took part in the action or had some special music to perform. Flutists, for example, are usually designated--Descouteaux,<sup>28</sup> the Hottere (or Opterre) brothers, Philbert, and Piesche forming the core of this group. André Philidor, a versatile court musician who, as mentioned earlier, eventually collected and edited court music, is listed with the "Eight Flutes" in the finale of The Would-be Gentleman. The size and composition of Lully's orchestra varied according to the needs of the occasion, but a large, well-disciplined ensemble was available for fetes and theatrical productions because Lully resourcefully managed the "King's Music," combining instrumentalists from the Grande Ecurie (used for hunting, processions, outdoor festivities) and the Chapelle (used for banquets, concerts, and balls and consisting of the Grand Band of twenty-four virtuosi and the Petits Violons). Reports of the Divertissement royal (1668) show that many of the musicians from The Princess of Elis appeared as Shepherds or Satyrs in the finale of George Dandin among sixty-eight performers, some of whom were singers. And over one hundred instrumentalists played in Psyché.

In the early ballet de cour, musicians were hidden from the audience

<sup>28</sup>Descouteaux (François Pignon des Costeaux) played bagpipe (musette), oboe, and flute for the Chambre du Roi and was a friend of Molière. Boileau, and La Fontaine.

unless they appeared in costume as an integral part of the décor. Lully similarly treated his orchestra. Engravings of the court performances of The Princess of Elis (Figure 73) and The Imaginary Invalid (Figure 91) show musicians placed in front of the stage below stage level and behind a barrier, almost covered from view of the audience. But, like the Ballet comique de la reine (1581) and many subsequent productions, some of the comedy-ballets had musicians who were incorporated into the scenery and the staging.

Dogkeepers and Hunters danced with hunting horns in the prologue of The Princess of Elis (L, II, 31), and the sixteen onstage musicians mentioned earlier appeared in the finale: "a great tree machine rose from beneath the stage carrying sixteen Fauns, eight of whom played the flute and the others the violin" (L, II, 63). The grotesquery of the "Charivari" was not in the music itself but in the costuming and action. Lully danced and led a band of onstage musician-buffoons, including Descouteaux and the Hottere brothers, who may have played the oboe and bassoon accompaniment for the violins or may have performed on lutes (Figure 71) and recorders (flutes à bec; L, I, xxi). Because the flutists for the "Air of Shepherds" in George Dandin are so closely involved in the action, they may have appeared on the stage as pastoral characters. Also, the engraving of George Dandin's finale (Figure 77) shows musicians perched in the tree scenery.

There are a number of additional possibilities for onstage music in the comedy-ballets that are not specifically indicated in the scores. The Trivelins and Scaramouches who attend the Quack Vendor in Love's the Best Doctor dance to show their satisfaction that Sganarelle has purchased

some Orvietan. Since music (for example, guitar and tambourine) was used to accompany the spiels of the charlatans on the Pont-Neuf, it is possible that the dancers in this interlude might have carried musical instruments in order to mime or to play simple accompaniment with the orchestra. Similarly, the troupe of performers Hali brings to serenade under Isidore's window in The Sicilian might have carried their own musical instruments. It is likely that in The Magnificent Lovers the pearl conches of the prologue and the trumpets of the finale appeared on stage because they would have been visually as well as musically interesting.

The Would-be Gentleman has considerable onstage music. As the play begins, a Music Student is composing an air for the serenade Monsieur Jourdain has requested. It is generally thought that the singer who performed this part originally accompanied himself with lute, cello, or harpsichord. Two violin players (Laquaisse and Marchand) attended the Music Master and accompanied the Musical Dialogue in Act I. And the "Turkish instruments" must have been as important to the stage spectacle as to the musical accompaniment.

In the comedy-ballets the merits of the orchestra were displayed most exclusively in the overtures. Lully was by no means the first composer-musician to use an overture. For his early ballet compositions he adopted the two-part form that had been used by his predecessors in the ballet de cour since about 1640: the first part slow, serious and relatively simple with dotted rhythms, and the second part, by contrast, fast, lively, and fugal in style. He also wrote most of the comedy-

ballet overtures in this style, as they became increasingly more complex during his collaboration with Molière. This development led to the expanded Lullian overture, known as the "French overture": slow-quick-slow (the third part optional), a form which became standard for the later French opera. The slow tempo and solemn feeling of the third part was appropriate for the tragédies-lyriques; but the comédies-ballets needed the lively ending.

Lully wrote six comedy-ballet overtures.<sup>29</sup> The earliest, the overture for The Forced Marriage (L, I, 3), complements the play that follows it. The first two notes have a heralding quality--like a trumpet calling the audience to attention. The ending of the 'B' section shows shorter note values and more movement for a typically quick finish. This increased energy builds to a climax which is appropriate to the opening of the comedy: the entrance of Sganarelle with an "important matter" on his mind. Of the early overtures, the one least related in any dramatic way to the play it precedes and the most bland musically belongs to George Dandin (L, II, 153). For Love's the Best Doctor (L, I, 55), Lully departed from the standard bipartite overture, and wrote a chaconne, a dance form in triple meter with a constantly recurring theme in the bass, in which he featured each voice of his string orchestra. The last three overtures are the most complex and, though in the two-part form, are orchestrated to emphasize individual instruments as in Love's the Best Doctor. The overture of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is written in a minor key and has an unresolved feeling that creates anticipation for the

<sup>29</sup>The Princess of Elis and The Sicilian have no overtures because they were part of larger musical entertainments.

opening of the play. A major chord concludes the overture, providing a moment of resolution or a "downbeat" before the "curtain up" as the play begins. The overture for The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 43) is similarly treated. The Magnificent Lovers has an elaborate overture (L, III, 151) more complex contrapuntally than all the others. Of its two sections, the first is regal, pompous, and marchlike; the second is busy, lively, and fugal with five theme entrances and a short-long (two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note) rhythm pattern.

Besides the overture, the comedy-ballets have another important musical form featuring the orchestra: the ritornelle (ritournelle; from the Italian ritornello - "little return"), an instrumental passage that usually recurs between sections of a musical composition, but is not necessarily repetitive. This "linking" music is used to connect verses of a song or variations in a dance suite, to introduce music of a scene, to cover the transition between scenes, or to underscore a series of actions within a scene. In The Forced Marriage, for example, Sganarelle, astonished to discover the frivolous nature of his bride-to-be, staggers to the side of the stage where he sinks to the floor asleep, an action that is underscored by a ritornelle (L, I, 11), which also introduces Sganarelle's dream (a series of dances). The Princess of Elis begins with a ritornelle that has a somewhat high pitch and a sweet, lyrical tone appropriate to the early morning pastoral scene. And this ritornelle (L, II, 15) is based on the same musical motive as the "Récit of Aurora" which it introduces. Ritornelles function musically and dramatically to organize the pastoral playlet in the first scene of The Sicilian (L, II, 121). The first short ritornelle is in a minor key; it sets the



melancholy mood and introduces the first sad shepherd, Filène. After Filène sings, there is a second ritornelle in a different meter and a different minor key (up a fifth) that introduces the second melancholy shepherd, Tircis. Separating the first verses of the prologue in Love's the Best Doctor are ritornelles (L, I, 59 and 62) which reinforce the conflict between Music, Ballet, and Comedy stated in the lyrics; they are rather complex rhythmically, have many accidentals, and include unrelated harmonic progression. Finally, the three characters sing

Come unite then all three in a fashion that best will bring  
Harmony, pleasure, and glory to the great King.

And the last ritornelle, which according to the score is designed "to give pleasure," reflects this unison; it is simple and neatly organized, with the complicated patterns of moving tones, like so many competing voices, removed. Another ritornelle, which occurs between the dance of the fauns and dryads and the finale of shepherds in the "Pastoral" of The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 201), could easily help to cover the movement of these two large groups of people on stage. As the music of the comedy-ballets became more sophisticated, ritornelles were used more extensively, but less formally, more as instrumental inserts where musically and dramatically useful. The phrases the Music Student experiments with as he composes an air for Monsieur Jourdain at the beginning of The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 47) are an example. The music is arranged so that these phrases can be removed; the chord immediately before the phrase fits with the chord immediately following the phrase. Later in the first act of the play when the singer performs this air in its polished form, the instrumental inserts, or trial phrases, are removed.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup>This incident of a Music Student doing work for which the Music

Most of Lully's instrumental music in the comedy-ballets is dance music, an extension of his experience as a dancer and a composer of court ballets. Dance music in mascarades and ballets de cour had been derived from ballroom dances, each dance style having unique musical characteristics (as well as specific pas). Lully included several of these dance styles in the comedy-ballets, either so-indicated or identifiable by type: the courante, the minuet, the gavotte, the bourrée, the sarabande, the galliarde, and the canarie.

The courante is an old French dance that appears in a variety of styles, but generally has a two-part form and triple rhythm with a preponderance of dotted notes. It is refined in character and lively in tempo. The Dancing Master's courante in the finale of The Forced Marriage (L, I, 42) is composed exactly in this manner. The highly ornamented music, complex horizontally and vertically, complements the virtuosity with which the Dancing Master undoubtedly is supposed to dazzle Sganarelle. According to H. M. Ellis's exhaustive study of Lully's dances, the courante is his most musically sophisticated dance form.<sup>31</sup> That Beauchamps and Molière chose to use a Lully courante to highlight the action of The Bores indicates contemporary appreciation.

The minuet is French in origin and was probably well-established before Lully's time. But Lully enlivened it and made it popular. It supplanted the courante and became the fashionable new dance of the 1660's.

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Master is responsible is somewhat similar to the regular procedure Lully followed of having assistants do minor or routine tasks, such as filling in the harmonies for his compositions.

<sup>31</sup>p. 103.

At its simplest, the minuet consists of two eight-measure phrases in 3/4 rhythm with a moderate tempo and a moderate amount of movement. More complex variations are the "Minuet for two Spanish Gentlemen and two Spanish Ladies" in The Forced Marriage (L, I, 44), which has sixteen measures in its second part, and the three-part minuet which begins the French Concert of the "Ballet of Nations" in The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 142). The minuet appears in the comedy-ballets more than any other dance form, although not only as accompaniment for dancing. In two instances, specific musical instruments are featured, giving emphasis to the orchestra: the "Second Minuet for the Oboes of the Poitevins" (eight and sixteen measure two-part form) in The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 143) and the "Minuet of Trumpets" with timpani (six and thirteen measure two-part form) in The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 230).

The French gavotte is moderately fast in duple rhythm, and it often follows a minuet. The gavotte consists of duple groups of binary beats, beginning on the third beat of the measure. A phrase is eight beats long with accents on the fourth and eighth beats. Prunières considers the gavotte of four gallants cajoling Sganarelle's wife (L, I, 48), because of its melodic grace, to be the most successful dance in The Forced Marriage and a forerunner of Lully's best pieces.<sup>32</sup> Another dance style of French origin, similar to the gavotte except that the accent is placed differently, is the bourrée. It begins on the fourth beat of the measure and its accent is on the seventh beat of an eight-beat phrase. A bourrée is often paired with a gavotte—for example, one follows the

<sup>32</sup>L, I, xix.

gavotte just mentioned in The Forced Marriage and a gavotte for happy tailors in The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 79) follows an air (p. 77), similar to a bourrée in rhythm, for the tailors to dress Jourdain. But bourrées appear independently of gavottes, as in the finale of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (L, III, 39) and in the first interlude of The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 73).

The sarabande is a dance style of Spanish origin in triple time having a characteristic accent on the second beat of the measure. It appears appropriately enough for the Spaniards in the "Ballet of Nations" (L, III, 124), but also, because of its dignified character, it is used for grand ballet-entries of the nobility: the "noble" gypsies of The Forced Marriage (L, I, 29) and the followers of Neptune in The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 169).

The comedy-ballets have only one galliarde, a dance from Italy in triple time with a gay, rapid tempo. It is part of a dance suite in The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 72-75). The progression in this series of dances is from the stately sarabande, qualified by Lully's editors as "Gravement," to the relatively lively bourrée, to the still livelier galliarde, to the liveliest canarie. The canarie is a fast dance in triple time with the feeling of short, sharp strokes; it is used in the comedy-ballets only this once.

Lully also wrote an occasional chaconne. One which serves as an overture for Love's the Best Doctor has been mentioned. Another, used as dance accompaniment, appears in the Italian entry of the "Ballet of Nations" (L, III, 136) for Scaramouches, Trivelins, and Arlequins. This dance form may have been used for the entry of the commedia dell'arte

buffoons because, although Spanish in origin, the chaconne, as Sachs points out, was "regarded in the seventeenth century as the most passionate and unbridled of dances."<sup>33</sup> Passion would have been considered appropriate to the French for any Italian scene. Furthermore, the chaconne was a sixteenth-century form and would have provided a satisfying contrast with the minuet, the newly popularized, refined, and courtly dance which dominated the subsequent French entry in the "Ballet of Nations."

Another musical form associated with dancing, although not a dance itself, is the march. In the ballet de cour, the music of an entr ee consisted generally of two parts: the first a 4/4 or 2/4 march or a moderate duple rhythm dance to which the dancers entered, and the second a more flexible piece, the meter and character of which suited the subject of the entry, but often a fast dance in triple rhythm. Because of dramatic considerations, marches and dances in the comedy-ballets are not usually paired in this manner. But Lully sometimes used formal marches. Music for each of the entrances made by Louis when he danced is ceremonious and processional. Perhaps it would have been unseemly for the King to enter except in a grand manner; also, the characters he portrayed justified such weighty music. The entrance music for the King's entry in The Forced Marriage, the "First Air for Gypsy Ladies and Gentlemen" (L, I, 27), is in the rhythm of a bourr ee. It is then followed by a sarabande. The finale of The Sicilian in which the King appeared as a Moor has two contrasting musical pieces: the entrance music (L, II, 148) is marchlike, the music which follows is in 3/4 meter. Both these pieces

<sup>33</sup>p. 372. A chaconne appears in the second entry of the Comic Pastoral--the dance of Magicians (L, II, 85)--also perhaps to signify wildness.

of entrance music for the King are quite difficult, as though especially high quality was sought to suit the monarch. Although there is some question whether or not Louis actually appeared in The Magnificent Lovers, the roles of Neptune and Apollo were written for him to dance, and the entrances are grand marches. The most elaborate and dramatically successful ceremonial entrance in the comedy-ballets is the "March for the Ceremony of the Turks" in The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 88), overly pompous in order to point up the complete absurdity of the situation.

Lully also used the contrast between march and dance to dramatic purpose. In Love's the Best Doctor, the irregular music for Champagne, the lively servant sent to get the doctors for Sganarelle's daughter, is contrasted with the marchlike music (even in the 3/2 section) for the pompous, pedantic doctors inflated with their own learning and importance who ceremoniously proceed to the house of Sganarelle (L, I, 72-74). Another variation on the march-dance set is for the lawyers in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (L, III, 23). The contrast comes through rhythm changes in this instance, within the entrance music, suggesting comic action: the lawyers putting on grand, dignified airs (sedate 3/2 music), then falling into common, coarse behavior (lively 3/4 music), and then resuming great dignity again as soon as they catch the mask slipping (ceremonious 2/2 music).

Lully's creative vision freed theatre music from rigid dance styles. Although Lully used some of these styles, even a dance suite in The Would-be Gentleman, and some of the ballet de cour techniques, such as the march-dance set, most dances in the comedy-ballets cannot be specifically classified, and are merely "airs" for dancing, composed to suit the needs of the play.

The term "air" is a general description for a piece of music, but

usually signifies a musical composition for a single voice or instrument, accompanied by other instruments, with the interest on the upper part. Airs were used not only for dances. From the beginning of the seventeenth century the air de cour became increasingly more accepted as standard for the French song. Unlike the complex contrapuntal music of the Renaissance, the air was simple and monophonic and therefore well-suited to dramatic purposes.

Most songs in the comedy-ballets are freely composed airs, but Lully also used some older, more fixed forms. The rondeau, for example, which appears as both instrumental and vocal music in the comedy-ballets is identifiable by its intermittently recurring refrain. The structure is A-B-A-C-A-D-A and so forth, coming "round again" to a repeated chorus after each different episode. The "Grotesque Charivari" is a rondeau for dancing that would allow Sganarelle to be teased in various ways, but would constantly return to the basic unalterable fact of his married state.<sup>34</sup> In The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 203) a rondeau is used for the choral finale of the "Pastoral," and the joyous spirit of the occasion emerges through the repetition of the "Jouissons" ("Let's enjoy") refrain.

Another older song form in the comedy-ballets is the chanson. Either a solo song or a song for several voices (usually four), sometimes with instruments, the chanson is simple in style with repeating verses, couplet stanzas. In the multiple voice chanson, there can be either a fugal

<sup>34</sup>A "Rondeau for Flutes and Violins" (L, II, 11) was played while a corps of costumed stewards laid the royal table for the collation of The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (First Day). The great platters of food were undoubtedly paraded in review for the King (coming "'round again") before being served to the noble guests.

imitation of parts or a vertical alignment of text for all voices. Usually the upper voice is most prominent. The chanson was popular from the fourteenth to sixteenth century, but by the seventeenth century its original form was less distinct and it probably had no hard and fast rules for Lully.

Chansons appear in The Princess of Elis, perhaps to suit the antiquated pastoral form and to suggest the simplicity of a bygone day: solo chansons of the Satyr (L, II, 40 and 43), which are regular in meter with simple accompaniment, and the chanson à danser (L, II, 62) of a group of Shepherds and Shepherdesses, four voices vertically aligned. The pastoral interludes of George Dandin begin with a "chansonnette" ("little chanson") for two voices (L, II, 157). The comedy-ballets have two types of chansons determined by subject matter, although musical characteristics are essentially the same. The songs just mentioned are chansons d'amour (love songs). Lully also used chansons à boire (drinking songs) in The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 81 and 83). The first has two verses, in duple rhythm, each followed by a happy, rousing chorus in 3/4. The second is a hardy, robust song, somewhat trickier in style than the first. There is a playful treatment of the 'D' scale--a progressive working down the scale in the first part of the song--and an imitation of voices, or one voice coming in after another, at "Buvons" ("Let's drink") and "Dépêchons" ("Let us make haste") to show the drinkers joining together in good fellowship.

Airs or chansons were used in the ballet de cour as the music for récits, narrative verses dealing with the subject of a ballet-entrée which were sung by performers who took no part in the dancing. Prunières



describes a récit as a "little serious or comic discourse."<sup>35</sup> Lully used songlike récits in the comedy-ballets, and they are generally serious in subject matter and introductory in nature, such as the tribute to love, the "Récit of Aurora" (L, II, 17), with which The Princess of Elis begins. But récits also formed the basis for Lully's recitative--that is, music less rigidly structured than a song and corresponding to speech. An example of the recitative type of récit appears in The Forced Marriage, the "Récit of a Magician" (L, I, 31), a clever musical piece consisting of alternating recitative and song for the vocalist with interpolated lines of spoken dialogue for the actor. The recitatives are short speechlike statements (three, six, and four measures) in 4/4 rhythm; the song sections are longer with extended lyrical statements (sixteen, sixteen, and twenty-five measures) and 3/4 rhythm. Recitative is used for musical dialogue between characters in the "Pastoral" of The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 176). After individual lines in dialogue between the shepherds (recitative in 4/4), there is a short lyrical section in 3/4 in which two of the shepherds reflect philosophically about love; and throughout the musical scene there are alternating sections of song and recitative. A complex pattern of intricately woven recitative and song is found in the "A Moi" ("To Me") chorus of the "Ballet of Nations" in The Would-be Gentleman (L, III, 108). Recitative is used for the undifferentiated Beaux and Belles (p. 111) to separate them from the special characters who have short songs. Unlike the Italian recitative in which singers freely embroidered the notes with ornaments that distorted the text, the French

<sup>35</sup>Lully, p. 88.

style was measured to suit the syllabic structure of the verses.<sup>36</sup> Although improvisation may have been allowed in the music,<sup>37</sup> Lully, in conducting his singers, insisted upon clarity of the text over excessive display of the voice. It seems Lully wanted no more criticism like Corneille's early observation that stage songs could not be understood.

A small group of court singers performed most of the vocal music in the comedy-ballets. Little is known about these singers, even the most famous. Mlle Hilaire (1625-1709) was the leading female singer, appearing in major, sometimes multiple roles in six of the eight productions. She had been taught by Michel Lambert, her brother-in-law. As the best cantatrice of France and a relative of Lully (maternal aunt of his wife), Mlle Hilaire was the obvious choice for principal roles in court entertainments. La Signora Anna Bergerotti, a renowned singer from Rome, ranked with Mlle Hilaire among court singers, but was associated with only one comedy-ballet, performing in the Spanish Concert of The Forced Marriage. Most frequently named with Mlle Hilaire in the livrets of the comedy-ballets is Estival or D'Estival, the most celebrated bass of the time. Jean Gaye (baritone, died c. 1684), "ordinaire de la Musique du Roi," was a distinguished virtuoso who sang in the comedy-ballets and

<sup>36</sup>This measured style is in the tradition of the Pléiade. Lully's recitative in the comedy-ballets is crisp and lively. The recitative of his tragédies-lyriques, on the other hand, often seems monotonous and sing-song. Lully succumbed to the French Alexandrine and the declamatory style of stage delivery that Molière had ridiculed in The Impromptu at Versailles. Possibly Molière's acting as well as most of his verse, which was much freer and more natural than that of other poets, prevented Lully's early recitative from becoming stiff and predictable.

<sup>37</sup>Such as the rolled chords supplied for récits by Mlle G. Sazerac de Forge.

then went on to create important roles in Lully's first operas. The leading tenor of the 1660's was Blondel, who sang a number of récits and airs in the comedy-ballets.<sup>38</sup>

Lully apparently could not resist the opportunity to perform, and he created several roles for himself in the comedy-ballets, two of which allowed him to sing. He had a bass voice, but it was thin, and he relied on his personality and his abilities as a buffoon to carry his performances. But being a buffoon had disadvantages for a man who aspired to greater honors than were available to a mere court entertainer. "Baptiste" had become "the illustrious Monsieur de Lully." So, in order to remove any stigma associated with singing and to give himself special significance, he performed under pseudonyms. When he played one of the Grotesque Doctors in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (1669) he appeared in the livret as Il signor Chicacciarone; and when he created the colorful role of the Mufti in The Would-be Gentleman (1670) he was called Le sieur Chiacheron (Figure 144).<sup>39</sup>

Molière was the only member of his acting troupe who regularly sang

<sup>38</sup>Figure 142 - Principal singers and the comedy-ballets in which they appeared. Figure 143 - Distribution of vocal roles in The Princess of Elis.

<sup>39</sup>Hillemacher incorrectly cites "Chiacchiarone" as Lully's stage name for the Mufti. Lully repeated his role in The Would-be Gentleman in a 1681 series of performances at court which greatly amused the King. Tradition says (D-M, VIII, 25) that Louvois reproached Lully for wanting to become a Secrétaire du roi, a mere musician whose only service was to make the King laugh. Lully replied, "You would do the same if you could," and complained to the King. Le Tellier, on behalf of the King, announced Lully's appointment and persuaded the other secretaries to accept him as a colleague.

## MAJOR SOLOISTS

Le Mariage  
ForcéLa Princesse  
d'ElideL'Amour  
MédecinLe Sicilian

Mlle Hilaire	Beauté	L'Aurore 5th <u>intermède</u>		
Blondel		1st <u>intermède</u> (Tircis)		Philène
Estival	Magician	1st <u>intermède</u> Satyre		
Le Gros		(Tircis) Berger		
Gaye				Hali Tircis
Noblet				Berger
Langez				
Mlle des Fronteaux				
Mlle de Saint-Christophe				
Gingant l'ainé				
Gingant cadet				
La Grille				
Morel				
Hedouin				
Don				
Fernon				
Rebel				
Deschamps				
Gillet				
Bernard				
Philbert				

Figure 142. Principal singers and the

George DandinMonsieur de  
PourceaugnacLes Amants  
MagnifiquesLe Bourgeois  
Gentilhomme

Climène Finale	First Voice Egyptienne	Caliste La Prêtresse	La Musicienne Dialogue Finale
Tircis	Un musicien seul Pantalon	Philinte	Drinking song Turk; Vieux bourgeois babillard
Leader of Choeur de Bacchus	Avocat Scaramouche	Éole Satyre Grec	Turk Gascon
Berger	Vieille	Triton Grec	Turk: Homme du bel air
Philène	Serenade Ital. mus. Avocat Egyptien	Tircis Sacrifi- cateur	Music Stud. Dialogue Turk; Gascon Ital. mus.
			Dervish; Femme du bel air 1st Poitevin
	Serenade Paysan	Triton Sacrifi- cateur	Dialogue; Turk Vieille bourg. babillarde
Cloris Finale		La Nymphé	
		Climène	
Un Suivant de Bacchus	Scaramouche	Grec	Turk
		Grec	Dervish
			Drinking song 2nd Poitevin
		Triton; Satyr Grec	Drinking song Autre gascon 2nd Espagnol
	Docteur	Triton; Grec	Turk; A.gascon
		Triton; Grec	
	Finale	Triton Ménandre; Grec	Turk; Homme du bel air
	Docteur	Triton; Grec	Turk;Autre femme du bel air
	Paysan	Triton; Grec	Turk Le Suisse
			Turk;3rdEspagnol
			Turk;Autre Homme
			Dervish; Suisse

comedy-ballets in which they appeared

La Princesse d'Elide

## SOLOISTS

Intermèdes

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
Mlle Hilaire	Aurore				Climène or Philis	Bergère
Estival	Valet		Satyre			Berger
Don	Valet					Berger
Blondel	Valet			Tircis		Berger
Molière	Lyciscas		Moron	Moron		
Madelaine Béjart				(Philis)		
Mlle de la Barre					Climène or Philis	Bergère
Le Gros				(Tircis)		Berger

Figure 143. Distribution of vocal roles  
in The Princess of Elis



Figure 144. Chiacchiarone (Lully as the Mufti)

in the comedy-ballets, and therefore he probably had a reasonably good singing voice. The music written for him was in the baritone range and must have been rendered with proper pitch and clarity for the sake of dramatic congruity. But Molière was a farceur, not a chanteur, and his singing, like his dancing, was obviously broadly comic, intended to seem hopelessly bad. Molière, for example, portrayed Moron in The Princess of Elis, who croaks: "If I could but sing, my affairs might go better." At first, Molière had only spoken lines of dialogue interpolated within the songs of other characters. In The Forced Marriage, Sganarelle asks questions about the future of his marriage from a Magician who responds in song; the sleepy Lyciscas resists with painful outcries the Dogkeepers who try musically to wake him in The Princess of Elis.<sup>40</sup> But even as early as The Princess of Elis, Molière sang scored music. Each of his songs was short and simple, intended to be a parody of singing, the bellowings of a ridiculous character. Moron, the foolish lover, sings to the cruel Philis that he is dying of love for her (L, II, 50). He sings so badly, however, that he drives his loved-one away. Don Pedro, in a jealous fury, responds to Hali's nonsense song "Chiribirida" in The Sicilian with an outrageously threatening refrain (L, II, 140). Since the Slave (performed by Estival) is supposed to be a trained singer, he has trills throughout the song which show off his virtuosity; but Don Pedro's refrain is much simpler and has only half the vocal range of the Slave's. Monsieur Jourdain, the tasteless parvenu, sings in The Would-be Gentleman

<sup>40</sup>Lycas (Molière) and his rival Filène (Estival) sang a musical scene together in the Comic Pastoral (L, II, 93), but Lycas's part is very small; and in Scene 13 Lycas merely interjects exclamatory remarks into Filène's song (L, II, 104).



the kind of unrefined song that appeals to him (L, III, 53). The Philidor manuscript notes that Jourdain sang "Jeanneton" falsetto in order to make it silly.<sup>41</sup> From the earliest comedy-ballet, Molière wove incidental music for himself into the plays: Lysandre, the dancing pest, humming Lully's courante in The Bores; Moron performing a musical exercise given him by the Satyr in The Princess of Elis; Sganarelle, forced to sing for information from his impertinent maid in Love's the Best Doctor, and Clitidas singing to himself and pretending an accidental meeting with the Princess in The Magnificent Lovers. And the reactions to music of the comic characters Molière played increased the dramatic significance of musical scenes: Monsieur de Pourceaugnac imitates his assailants ("Buon di"), and Monsieur Jourdain ecstatically recalls phrases from the Turkish Ceremony.

Classifying the vocal music of the comedy-ballets according to personnel, it can be seen that Lully, influenced by Italian opera, used singing in a variety of ways: solos such as the "Récit of Aurora," duets such as the Italian song of two Grotesque Doctors, trios such as the

<sup>41</sup>Prunières, in "Une Chanson de Molière," Revue Musicale, II (1921), 150-154, shows evidence that this song about "Jenny" was not written by Lully and Molière, but was a common popular song with words by Pierre Perrin and music by Jean Granouillet, sieur de Sablières (Superintendent of music for the Duc d'Orléans). Because the lyrics are crude and are badly set to the music, which is also poor, Prunières thinks that Molière used this song in his play out of jealousy and to ridicule Perrin, who had been granted the opera privilege in June, 1669. It is possible to accept Prunière's theory only if Lully can also be implicated. Unquestionably, both Molière and Lully were affected by a new theatre grant, but Lully was more threatened by Perrin's right to establish music academies than Molière. And it was Lully who refused to work with Perrin and who eventually seized the opera privilege.

songs of Music, Ballet, and Comedy, and small vocal groups (four or more vocalists) such as the chanson à danser of shepherds. Lully's development of a French style of recitative led to the use of musical dialogues. From the lyric dialogue, such as a verse exchange between soloists (pastoral playlet of The Sicilian) or a solo alternating with a chorus (finale of George Dandin), evolved the dramatic dialogue with individual lines, such as the lovers' quarrel "Dépit amoureux" in the "Pastoral" of The Magnificent Lovers.<sup>42</sup> Another significant vocal form developed in the comedy-ballets was the chorus. The short comedy-ballets have only small vocal groups. Of the longer comedy-ballets, George Dandin is overwhelmed by the famous double chorus of the finale, whereas the princely spectacle of The Magnificent Lovers can support the large Greek chorus at the end of the play. Although the final chorus of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac is in keeping with the festive marriage celebration of the play, the most dramatically successful choruses are in The Would-be Gentleman: a group of sixteen singers in the Turkish Ceremony (twelve Turks and four Dervishes), who assist the Mufti in his ceremonial chants, interrogations, and installation of Monsieur Jourdain as a Mamamouchi.

The technical advances in vocal and instrumental music brought about by Lully generally increased the creative materials available for the comedy-ballets, while the composer and playwright continued to extend their abilities to use music dramatically. Italian opera reinforced the concept Lully had followed since he became sole composer of the ballet

<sup>42</sup>Much of the dialogue of the Comic Pastoral is sung.

de cour--that is, writing all pieces for a musical work in a unified style. Besides attempting this overall musical unity in the comedy-ballets, Lully made an effort to achieve dramatic unity with musical means. After the final chorus of Love's the Best Doctor, the chaconne overture of the play is supposed to be repeated (L, I, 98). This reprise shows that a cycle has been completed, that life has been renewed in the marriage celebration, and a new cycle can begin; a chaconne, characterized by a recurring bass theme, is particularly appropriate music to reinforce the comic renewal. In the Third Interlude of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, the poor Limousin is besieged by lawyers, and when the "Air of the Matassins," used for attendants of the Grotesque Doctors in the Second Interlude, is then repeated (L, III, 27), a cumulative effect is created, increasing the victim's terror and exasperation. Reprises within the Turkish Ceremony, especially the chant "Star bon Turca Giourdina," help to build the tension and excitement for Jourdain's final acceptance as a Mamamouchi. It is disappointing, however, that none of the music auditioned for Jourdain in Act I appears in the "Ballet of Nations." If used in some modified way, this Act I music supposedly written for a serenade Jourdain has ordered, might have given far more dramatic justification to the finale than it has.

Lully needed and adopted dramatic subjects for his comedy-ballet music. The idea of music to heal physical or emotional ills may have come from Molière, but can be traced to Mersenne<sup>43</sup> and was incorporated into several of the plays. Lully may have been influenced by Cavalli's musical

<sup>43</sup>Mersenne, II, 89-92. (Proposition that music is "agreeable to the ear and to the spirit.")

sleep scenes.<sup>44</sup> Three variations appear in the comedy-ballets: Sganarelle in The Forced Marriage, Lyciscas in The Princess of Elis, and Caliste in The Magnificent Lovers. The ritornelles and character dances already mentioned show that Molière and Lully could make subject matter and music complement one another effectively. On the simplest level, Lully used the major key to represent a happy or triumphant mood and the minor key to represent a melancholy, expectant, mysterious, or disturbed mood; and Molière described this procedure in a scene of The Sicilian:

HALI: I am all for the major key, Master. You must agree that I know what I'm talking about. The major key's charming; there's no true harmony without it. Just listen to this trio.

ADRASTE: No. I want something gentle and sentimental, something to lull me into a sweet and dreamy meditation.

HALI: I see that you are for the minor key. But there are means of satisfying both of us. They shall sing you a passage from a little play which I have seen them rehearsing. Two shepherds are suffering the pains of unrequited love. They are in a wood and each comes forward in turn to make his lamentations--in the minor key--recounting one to another the cruelties of their mistresses, whereupon in comes a jolly shepherd who makes fun of them--in an admirable major key of course.

(Wood, p. 80)

Lully used G major and minor for most of his "exotic" scenes, although there is nothing particularly strange or unusual about these keys. Exoticism--that is, subjects based on foreign origin or character--which was prevalent in mascarades and the ballet de cour, also appears in the comedy-ballets. There are ballet-entries for Moors and Gypsies

<sup>44</sup>Rolland, p. 152.

(The Forced Marriage, The Sicilian, and Monsieur de Pourceaugnac), and there are foreign "concerts" (the "Spanish Concert" in The Forced Marriage and the Spanish and Italian entries in the "Ballet of Nations"). But it was not the practice to use foreign styles of music for these exotic scenes. Music for the slaves in The Sicilian or for the Greeks in the Pythian Games finale of The Magnificent Lovers, for example, has no ethnic character. Exoticism was shown mainly in the action and the décor and, according to Whaples, "served to gratify a taste for the grotesque."<sup>45</sup> In the comedy-ballets, the exotic characters are usually more elegant than grotesque. But notable exceptions are the Grotesque (Italian) Doctors in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. Their entrance song ("Buon di"--L, III, 15), in the style of Mediterranean folk music and in the key of G minor, identifies them as intriguing foreigners. Also, the harmonic movement of their vocal lines, only a third apart, conveys the teamwork involved in the conspiracy these Italian schemers are plotting against the credulous Limousin. The most dramatically successful of the exotic scenes in the comedy-ballets is the Turkish Ceremony of The Would-be Gentleman. Besides some accent instruments and the G major and minor keys, Lully adopted the solemn ceremonial march associated with exotic subjects, and he used chanting and monotonously repeated chords to give the ritual an hypnotic effect which thoroughly mesmerizes Monsieur Jourdain.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup>p. 17.

<sup>46</sup>Arvieux, with whom Lully consulted, probably had heard Turkish music, but there is no evidence that the composer took any musical ideas from him.

Part of the exotic effect of any foreign scene is derived from the lyrics. Prunières believes that Lully wrote the words as well as the music for the Turkish Ceremony, because the Turkish lyrics are different from the Turkish dialogue of the play and because Lully had been involved with a Turkish entertainment before.<sup>47</sup> Lully probably wrote the Italian lyrics for Monsieur de Pourceaugnac<sup>48</sup> and for the "Ballet of Nations."<sup>49</sup>

Prunières also implies that the court poets or Lully himself might have written some of the lyrics for pastoral or mythological scenes.<sup>50</sup> Unquestionably, however, Molière could write courtly lyrics, but was interested mainly in their dramatic significance. His consistently satirical use of pastoral materials, for example, is reflected in many of the pastoral songs, the finest of which is the "Lovers' Quarrel" ("Dépit amoureux") between the shepherd Philinte and the shepherdess Climène in The Magnificent Lovers (L, III, 194). The lyrics are not just pretty. There is light comedy and dramatic tension in the dialogue exchange. And Lully seems to have been inspired to write highly fitting music. After each lover has claimed to love another the score reads "non legato" ("not smooth" p. 196)--the music reflecting the rough course this relationship between Philinte and Climène is taking. The music is in a minor key and has some unrelated harmonic progressions; it is essentially lilting, though, in 3/4 rhythm, especially at the end when

<sup>47</sup>L, I, ix and L, III, vii.

<sup>48</sup>D-M, VII, 280.

<sup>49</sup>D-M, VIII, 221.

<sup>50</sup>L, I, v-xvi.

the lovers are reconciled. Although Molière and Lully used pastoral subjects, they advanced far beyond the rigid thinking expressed by the Music Master in The Would-be Gentleman:

. . . if you are to have people discoursing in song, you must for verisimilitude conform to the pastoral convention. Singing has always been associated with shepherds. It would not seem natural for princes or ordinary folk for that matter, to be indulging their passions in song.

(Wood, p. 9)

Of all comedy-ballet music, the comic song is Lully and Molière's most important collaborative achievement. More than just a lively melody with amusing lyrics, their comic song at its best is an integral part of the action, reflecting situation and character, and is of itself dramatic. The Dogkeepers' song at the beginning of The Princess of Elis (L, III, 19), for example, establishes the early morning pre-hunt scene: an opening "Hola!" (recitative), music with a trotting rhythm, and the sound of horns of the chase to which everyone responds but the sleepy Lyciscas. The spirited song builds to a climatic ending as the Dogkeepers repeatedly call the laggard's name and order him to get up, and it contrasts comically with Lyciscas's inertia. After the entrance song of the Grotesque Doctors in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, there is a virtuoso song with Italian lyrics (L, III, 16), which was presumably sung originally by Lully. It is playful and spritely, has a major key and a brisk 3/8 rhythm, and moves forward in a non-stop breathless manner like a jester whose babble never stops despite its lack of rhyme or reason. The song's nonsensical insistence clearly foreshadows the subsequent aggressive moves to be made on Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.

Lully creates a comic musical effect with jerky movements, suggesting

animation and tension, and often contrasted with a smoother, more flowing style. In The Forced Marriage (L, I, 31), for example, the frantic and fearful Sganarelle, torn with anxiety over the possibility of becoming a cuckold, is teased and kept off balance by the singing Magician's behavior: an aggressively intense concern for Sganarelle (choppy recitative) alternating with a calm, aloof boastfulness (lilting songlike music). Hali's song "Chiribirida" (L, II, 137) in The Sicilian is similarly based on musical contrast. The first part of the song is a chanson d'amour sung to Isidore in 3/4 with simple accompaniment. The second part, also in triple rhythm, but fuller and more active, is a nonsense refrain sung to Don Pedro. As the romantic serenade to Isidore is resumed, Don Pedro angrily interrupts the singers with his own version of the refrain. His phrases, which are shorter and choppier than Hali's, start with an upbeat so that the strongly emphasized downbeat suggests shouting. The song of the two lawyers in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (L, III, 24) has some of the most clever music and lyrics of any of the comic songs, and it is a variation of the contrast technique. The music delineates opposite characters: the slow-talking lawyer has a smooth musical line with extended note values, and the fast-talking lawyer has a part with short, rapid-fire notes. Each advocate makes a musical statement, and then they sing together. While the fast-talker names in succession all the authorities on Monsieur de Pourceaugnac's crime, the slower one counterpoints the conclusion: polygamy is a hanging business. An even more complex use of musical contrast for comic effect appears in the "To Me" song of the "Ballet of Nations" (The Would-be Gentleman - L, III, 112 and 116). Two characters, the Babbling Old Gentleman and the Chattering Old Lady, emerge



from the crowd assembled to watch the ballet, and are outraged because of their poor seats and because their daughter, "so attractive and refined," has not been given a program. They decide the situation is beyond endurance and prepare to leave. A change of rhythm sets off the music of the Old Gentleman from the recitative of individuals in the audience. The 6/4 time makes his opening statement (A) songlike, the hemiola ("oom-pah") reflecting his indignation. But the 2/2 section (B) which follows is patter-like: he is a wordy codger. A repeat of the refrain (A) prepares for the Old Lady, whose character is established in part through the nagging sound of repeated notes. Music for her at first is songlike in 3/4, and then it becomes jerky as she complains about the man who distributes the programs. She catches her breath in a fourteen-measure section of 6/4, and then launches into a final vocal onslaught before she is cut off by the crowd of Beautiful People who sing in recitative "Ah, what a noise!" After some short statements from the crowd, the Old Gentleman's music alternates between triple and duple rhythms as he repeats the phrase "Let's go, my love." The Old Lady, in a gush of words with rapid, staccato accompaniment appropriate to her prattle, gathers her family, repeating to her son "Let's go, my sweet one."

The Music Master in The Would-be Gentleman tells Jourdain, "It is necessary, Monsieur, that the tune be suited to the words." Since music followed the syllabic structure of the text, he implies unwittingly, therefore, that if the song is boring, the lyrics must be at fault. The irony of this joke at the playwright-lyricist's expense is that the music of the comedy-ballets only rarely matches the rollicking good fun of the plays and the verses of the comic songs. With Molière as a collaborator

Lully was inspired to create music which was livelier and more expressive than ever before. Through the comedy-ballets he increased the range and ability of the orchestra, which became renowned for its precision, especially a sharp first bow stroke. He expanded the use of vocal music on the stage. And he brought together singing and dancing, which Mersenne thought inseparable,<sup>51</sup> in a unity unknown in earlier French theatre. Many of the musical scenes in the comedy-ballets have dances and songs with linking musical themes, the most outstanding example being the Turkish Ceremony. In general, Lully wrote simple music with clear, free-flowing melodies and vigorous, definite rhythms. His pastoral-romantic pieces are graceful and pretty, his comic pieces bright and lighthearted, his dignified courtly music pompous and grand. And yet Lully's compositions, although significantly advanced over the music of his predecessors, excel only technically. They are superficial: well-organized and neatly manipulated, but lacking in warmth, in exhilaration of spirit. If the music seems dull and thin or too dainty for the plays, Molière can hardly be faulted; Lully simply had not achieved Molière's force or depth of expression when their collaboration ended, when Lully pursued an entirely different musical career. Lully's music was fashionable; it reflected courtly refinement.<sup>52</sup> Had Lully been less ambitious, he might have con-

<sup>51</sup>Mersenne, II, 163 ff. He discusses in Proposition XXIII "examples of songs or airs that were written to be danced and to be played by instruments, the greatest part appropriate for violins." He includes song music--vaudevilles, airs de cour, chansons à boire--and various dance styles.

<sup>52</sup>A volume of music published in 1665, Livre d'airs de differents auteurs contained several pieces from The Princess of Elis ("Récit of Aurora," chansons of the Satyr, and the final chorus of the Shepherds) and the "Récit of Beauty" from The Forced Marriage (Guibert, II, 551 and L, II, 227). Charles de Saint-Evremond, a writer and music lover, while

tinued to write comic works, for which, as Rolland suggests,<sup>53</sup> he seems to have been best suited. But he chose instead to work with a poet who allowed his music to dominate, and who used subjects appropriate to the serious, elevated style with which Lully wished to be associated.

Until he obtained the royal grant to produce opera, Lully had been involved exclusively with court theatre. He made no contribution to Palais-Royal productions of plays with his music. But the success of his Opéra (Académie Royale de Musique), a public theatre, was due in part to the taste for music that Parisian audiences had developed because of the comedy-ballets. A long tradition of music in the theatre had existed in France, but a lull prevailed before the comedy-ballets. Musicians were employed merely for incidental music: to soothe a restless audience waiting for the theatre to be filled before a performance, to accompany an occasional song or dance, to play between the acts of a play,<sup>54</sup>

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in England as a political exile, kept track of current French fashion, including the latest popular songs, through an active correspondence. The Comte de Lionne sent him music; and in a letter of 1669 Saint-Evremond responded: "If there be any Airs as agreeable in the Musick of the Feast of Versailles, I desire you to send them me. . . ." The Letters of Saint Evremond (London, 1930), p. 79. John Hayward, the editor of these letters, suggests that the "Airs" requested and, according to the next letter, received, might have been from The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island. But the "Feast of Versailles" could have been the Divertissement of 1668 in which George Dandin appeared.

<sup>53</sup>p. 213.

<sup>54</sup>Chappuzeau advised (III, 119) that it was desirable for musicians to learn the last words of each act instead of waiting for someone to shout "Play!"

or to provide a rousing finale to the performance. But through the comedy-ballets music became an important, integral part of theatrical production.

The actors of *Illustre Théâtre* employed violinists and, as noted earlier, may have used music in their performances; also, they participated in some musical productions while in the provinces.<sup>55</sup> When Molière settled in Paris under royal protection, he not only incorporated music into one of his own early plays, *The Affected Ladies*, but he adopted the practice of regularly using incidental music in his productions. In 1660 the Ordinary Daily Expenses (*Frais Ordinaires*) at the Petit-Bourbon included an amount of 4 livres, 10 sols for violins<sup>56</sup>--three musicians, each paid 1 livre, 10 sols per day. Unfortunately, musical expenses for the original production of *The Bores* in 1661 at the Palais-Royal are unknown, but Molière's first comedy-ballet undoubtedly caused an increase in the theatre orchestra. In 1662 the Ordinary Daily Expenses included 6 livres for four violins; and the troupe bought a harpsichord for 330 livres in the spring of 1663. For a reprise of *The Bores* in 1663 the expenses included two oboes at 6 livres and extra violins at 3 livres.

When *The Forced Marriage* with Lully's music was transferred from court to the Palais-Royal, the troupe encountered new problems and expenses. The string orchestra was increased from four or six instruments to twelve, and the musicians' fee was doubled from 1# 10<sup>s</sup> to 3 livres.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup>See Chapter II: Louis XIV and Molière. Figure 145--a member of Scarron's troupe carries a bass viol.

<sup>56</sup>La Grange, p. 18.

<sup>57</sup>La Grange itemizes the special expenses (*Frais Extraordinaire*) in his *Registre* (Figure 146).



Figure 145. Scarron's troupe of traveling players

1664

Vendredi 20 Janvier Baptiste & Jean 60 31 4

Samedi 21 Janvier Jean 695 39

Dimanche 22 Janvier 266 11

Le samedi 29 Janvier au Louvre 11

Le dimanche 30 Janvier au Louvre 11

Vendredi 5 Février au Louvre 11

Samedi 6 Février au Louvre 11

Dimanche 7 Février au Louvre 11

Vendredi 13 Février au Louvre 11

Samedi 14 Février au Louvre 11

Dimanche 15 Février au Louvre 11

Vendredi 21 Février au Louvre 11

Samedi 22 Février au Louvre 11

Dimanche 23 Février au Louvre 11

Vendredi 29 Février au Louvre 11

Samedi 30 Février au Louvre 11

Dimanche 1er Mars au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Mars au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Mars au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Mars au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Mars au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Mars au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Mars au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Mars au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Mars au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Mars au Louvre 11

Vendredi 31 Mars au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Avril au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Avril au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Avril au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Avril au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Avril au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Avril au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Avril au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Avril au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Avril au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Avril au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Avril au Louvre 11

Vendredi 30 Avril au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Mai au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Mai au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Mai au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Mai au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Mai au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Mai au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Mai au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Mai au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Mai au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Mai au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Mai au Louvre 11

Vendredi 31 Mai au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Juin au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Juin au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Juin au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Juin au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Juin au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Juin au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Juin au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Juin au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Juin au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Juin au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Juin au Louvre 11

Vendredi 30 Juin au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Juillet au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Juillet au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Juillet au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Juillet au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Juillet au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Juillet au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Juillet au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Juillet au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Juillet au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Juillet au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Juillet au Louvre 11

Vendredi 31 Juillet au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Aout au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Aout au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Aout au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Aout au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Aout au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Aout au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Aout au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Aout au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Aout au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Aout au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Aout au Louvre 11

Vendredi 31 Aout au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Septembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Septembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Septembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Septembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Septembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Septembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Septembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Septembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Septembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Septembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Septembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 30 Septembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Octobre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Octobre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Octobre au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Octobre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Octobre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Octobre au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Octobre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Octobre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Octobre au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Octobre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Octobre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 31 Octobre au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Novembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Novembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Novembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Novembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Novembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Novembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Novembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Novembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Novembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Novembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Novembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 31 Novembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 1er Decembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 2er Decembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 7 Decembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 8 Decembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 9 Decembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 15 Decembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 16 Decembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 17 Decembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 23 Decembre au Louvre 11

Samedi 24 Decembre au Louvre 11

Dimanche 25 Decembre au Louvre 11

Vendredi 31 Decembre au Louvre 11

Figure 146. Page from La Grange's Registre

Also hired was a special violinist, at 4 livres, to play the ritornelles and a harpsichord player at 3 livres.<sup>58</sup> The complete orchestra varied somewhat throughout the run of the play. Oboes were used for the first two performances, four more violins, at 1 livre each, were added occasionally as well as two tambourines at 1# 10<sup>s</sup>. On the première, a bonus of 8# 10<sup>s</sup> was given to the musical director,<sup>59</sup> and later a violin player received 11 livres for solving a "special problem."<sup>60</sup> The daily amount for singing (called "Musique") was 5 livres, probably for two voices--a female singer for the role of Beauty and a male singer for the role of the Magician--2# 10<sup>s</sup> each. Neither singers nor musicians were as important as dancers who at the time were paid 5 livres each day.

For the Palais-Royal production of The Princess of Elis in 1664, the basic string orchestra consisted of eight instruments instead of the twelve for The Forced Marriage, but extra violins were used for the ritornelles, and oboes (three musicians at 3 livres per day) were added. La Thorillière's register also shows an amount for the "sinfonie,"<sup>61</sup> possibly a harpsichord player or extra instruments, such as flutes or bass lutes used at court. If six professional singers were used, as in the court production (the finale is written for six voices), each received about 4 livres each per performance, nearly double what was paid singers in The Forced Marriage. Another significant expense for The Princess of Elis was 300 livres given "to Monsieur Cambert," who Schwartz suggests

<sup>58</sup>Bonnassies, p. 5.

<sup>59</sup>D-M, IV, 6.

<sup>60</sup>Schwartz discusses, pp. 1058-1061, expenses for The Forced Marriage from the second register of La Thorillière.

<sup>61</sup>Schwartz, p. 1070.

was Robert Cambert, Perrin's musical collaborator, acting as musical director for the production.<sup>62</sup>

Theatre records are sparse for 1665 through 1670. Palais-Royal productions of Love's the Best Doctor (1665) and George Dandin (1668) probably had little or none of the musical embellishments seen at court. What may have been done for The Sicilian (1667), Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (1669), and The Would-be Gentleman (1670), in which music is an integral part of the action, is unknown. Since The Bores and The Forced Marriage were also revived a number of times during this period, Molière undoubtedly continued to retain a small orchestral ensemble, and may have employed singers when necessary.

Molière's Palais-Royal production of Psyché in 1671 and early 1672 was enormously successful,<sup>63</sup> but it precipitated the break between Molière and Lully. It proved that the popularity of Perrin and Cambert's

<sup>62</sup>Schwartz, p. 1073. Cambert would have been at liberty to assist Molière's troupe further between 1666, when his patron Queen Anne died, and 1669, when he rejoined Perrin in the attempt to create a national opera. He occasionally hired out as a composer-musician. In 1666 he wrote a chant for Brécourt's comedy La Jaloux invisible at the Hôtel de Bourgogne (Lancaster, Part III, II, 704) that resembles the initiation ceremony of The Would-be Gentleman.

<sup>63</sup>The Palais-Royal was remodeled to accommodate a large cast of musical performers for this production, and for the first time, professional singers appeared on the stage with actors and dancers instead of in a partitioned area, as was usual in the French theatre of the early seventeenth century. The singers who performed in Psyché (cited in La Grange, p. 124) were not from the court production, because before the Opéra, court singers rarely appeared on the public stage. But the increased stature of singers is shown in the expense accounts: three vocalists received 11 livres per day (comparable to the highest paid gagiste) and four singers 5# 10<sup>s</sup>, while the twelve musicians were paid the 1664 rate of 3 livres and dancers' fees were not raised.

Pomone (March, 1671) had not been a fluke.<sup>64</sup> Theatre-goers wanted music-drama. In order to keep from losing his audience, Molière may have considered buying the opera prerogative from Perrin, who was an incompetent manager, and sharing it with his collaborator Lully. But apparently Lully wanted no part of playing second fiddle to the poets. Already begrudging Perrin's permission to establish a music academy, he resented Molière's éclat with a work for which he had written the music. And since Psyché, even though only written in part by Molière, was a more substantial work than Perrin had ever produced, Molière became the real threat to Lully's hope of controlling French opera. Molière and Lully must have quarrelled over the issue, and Lully, ever the opportunist, pulled off the most important coup de théâtre of his career: he bought Perrin's privilege himself, using his high standing with Colbert and the King to support his action.<sup>65</sup> A new royal patent was issued to Lully in March, 1672 granting him the right to establish the Académie Royale de Musique and giving him significant authority over all French theatre. It prohibited the presentation of any musical work (that is, a theatrical production with more than two songs performed by more than two singers and two instrumentalists) without Lully's permission. The prohibition prevented anyone but Lully from presenting opera, but also limited any

<sup>64</sup>Late in the 1660's, Perrin published a collection of lyrics dedicated to Louis XIV's finance minister Colbert, the introduction of which called for the establishment of an academy to pursue music drama. In 1669, a royal patent was granted Perrin for the creation of an Académie Royale de Musique.

<sup>65</sup>In his Lettre de Clément Marot à Monsieur de \*\*\* (Cologne, 1688), Antoine Bauderon de Sénecé told the story of Molière's intention concerning the opera privilege and Lully's betrayal. There is no proof that the story is true.



extensive use of music in future productions Molière might want to present at his theatre, newly equipped for musical spectacle. Petitions from Molière caused a revised, more lenient ordinance to be issued in April which stated that no theatrical troupe besides Lully's could use more than six singers and twelve instrumentalists and none of these performers could be from those committed to Lully. There would be no more collaboration between Molière and Lully.

Molière's troupe performed a number of plays in May and June, after the ordinances were in effect, including Monsieur de Pourceaugnac for which musicians and dancers cost 59 livres, 15 sols.<sup>66</sup> This amount is low, and singers are not mentioned, but it probably does not represent a cut-back to observe the ordinances, since Pourceaugnac had never been lavishly produced. However, Molière responded resourcefully to the new situation. He invited to Paris an actor-singer named De Villiers,<sup>67</sup> who performed regularly as a gagiste, but could double as a singer. And Molière found a new musical partner, Marc-Antoine Charpentier.

Charpentier revêtu d'une sage richesse,  
Des Cromatiques Sons fit sentir la finesse:  
Dans la belle Harmonie il s'ouvrit un chemin,  
Neuviemes et Tritons brillèrent sous sa main.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>66</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 407.

<sup>67</sup>Jean Deschamps, sieur de Villiers, belonged to La Raisin's Troupe de Monseigneur le Dauphin, and may have been known to Molière through Baron. La Grange and Hubert both mention him in their registers. He arrived in June.

<sup>68</sup>"Charpentier, endowed with a restrained richness,  
Brought out the finesse of Chromatic Sounds:  
He opened a road into beautiful Harmony,  
Ninths and Tritones (augmented fourths) shone under his hand."  
Quoted in Robert W. Lowe, Marc-Antoine Charpentier et l'opéra de collège (Paris, 1966), p. 15, from Serré de Rieux, La Musique (1714).

Slightly younger than Lully, Charpentier (b. 1634, Paris) came from a family of artists. He might have been a painter, but at fifteen (in the early 1650's) he went to Italy where he studied music with a teacher highly respected by the French, Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674). It is uncertain when Charpentier returned to France, and little is known of his activities during his youth. Although associated with musicians who favored music in the Italian style, he was respected by his French contemporaries and considered to be a more learned and cultivated musician than Lully. But he never achieved the Florentine's opportunities or rewards. He never served the court of Louis XIV directly. His musical career consisted of Church appointments (maître de chapelle for the Dauphin and maître de la Sainte Chapelle, a position he occupied until his death in 1704), private commissions (from 1680 to 1688 he wrote entertainments for the Duchesse de Guise<sup>69</sup>), and theatre works. He composed music for Molière and for the troupe after Molière's death, for the Comédie Française until 1685, and for theatrical productions at Molière's school, the Collège de Clermont. The only Charpentier opera produced by the Académie Royale de Musique was Medée (libretto by Thomas Corneille), in 1693, after Lully had been dead five years.

How Molière met Charpentier is unknown, but the playwright needed someone who could score lyrics, and "the Italian," as Charpentier was often called, was a specialist in vocal music. A revival of The Doctor in Spite of Himself on June 28, 1672 prompted Charpentier's first known stint with Molière. For the drinking song "Glou-glous" ("Gurgles"),

<sup>69</sup>Marie de Lorraine (1615-1688), sister of the Duc de Guise who "discovered" Lully.

Molière replaced Lully's 1666 minuet with a new, livelier tune by Charpentier.<sup>70</sup> But the first major collaboration between Molière and Charpentier was for the Palais-Royal première of The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas on July 8. Molière chose to use The Forced Marriage as the entertainment to accompany The Comtesse instead of the pastoral and ballet-entrées which had been performed at court (Ballet of the Ballets in December, 1671 and February, 1672). Charpentier wrote new music for the production. Only an overture remains for The Comtesse,<sup>71</sup> but extant music for The Forced Marriage includes dances (a minuet, a gavotte, and a sarabande which is sung), a musical dialogue between a tenor and a counter-tenor, a "comic" trio for these two voices and a bass, and airs for the counter-tenor.<sup>72</sup> Dancers, singers, and musicians for the combined plays cost 111 livres on July 8 and 199 livres on July 24.<sup>73</sup> Molière was not scrimping on music, and must have used as many musicians as the law would allow.

<sup>70</sup>Lowe, pp. 20 and 136 and Tiersot, p. 135. The music attributed to Lully appears in D-M, VI, 121-122.

<sup>71</sup>Lowe, p. 31. This fragment, along with most of Charpentier's extant works, is in a collection of autographed manuscripts, called his Mélanges, at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

<sup>72</sup>The lyrics for the "Intermèdes nouveaux de Mariage Forcé" and the placement of the music are discussed in Chapter III: The Short Comedy-Ballets. Two of the singers were Forestier, who had sung in the Palais-Royal production of Psyché, and Le Roy (a performer with this name danced in the sixth entrée of the Ballet of the Muses); perhaps De Villiers sang the third part. Of the three female gypsies specified for the closing sarabande, one was Mlle Turpin, who had appeared in Psyché and probably in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 413). Robinet referred to her as "la jeune Turpin, qui chante d'un air si poutin" ("the little Turpin girl who sings a song in such a cute manner"), and she was a particular favorite of Monsieur (D-M, VIII, 259).

<sup>73</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 410. Compare with 107 livres spent for The Forced Marriage in 1664.

And he must have consulted closely with Charpentier on the new musical production, because the composer was paid for several trips to Molière's house in Auteuil.

During the last months of Molière's life, the constantly increasing amount of music used at the Palais-Royal seems to indicate that Molière was under a compulsion to challenge Lully's monopoly. In August, The Would-be Gentleman was performed with music. The Miser, a non-musical play which had never been particularly successful, had an "Augmentation de simphonie . . . 12 livres."<sup>74</sup> Charpentier served as conductor-composer for a revival of The Bores in August and September and again in October. and by October 23, "Symphonie" became a regular item of the Ordinary Daily Expenses. But Lully retaliated. At the end of September, he obtained another decree which granted that all works for which he composed the music reverted to his control. He exercised this authority by presenting a musical production, Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus, in November, freely using Molière's lyrics as his own.<sup>75</sup> In October and November Molière revived The Misanthrope, which may have included a "Pastoreletta Italiana" by Charpentier entitled "Le Misanthrope, dispute de bergers."<sup>76</sup> Then, in November after Fêtes, the Troupe du Roi reinstated Psyché,<sup>77</sup> and

<sup>74</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 412.

<sup>75</sup>See Chapter IV: The Full-Length Comedy-Ballets, p. 314 for a description of this production.

<sup>76</sup>Tiersot, p. 135. Also found in Charpentier's manuscripts is an instrumental piece and a song for The Sicilian, written possibly as late as 1695 (Tiersot, p. 175). It has been identified as "Serenata a tre voci e simphonia: Sù, sù, non dormite" by A. Gastoné in "Notes sur le manuscrits de M.-A. Charpentier," Mélanges de musicologie by Lionel de la Laurencie (Paris, 1933), p. 157.

<sup>77</sup>Charpentier rewrote the music for a new Comédie Française production of Psyché in 1684.

played it continuously through January 22, 1673, in spite of Lully's license, while Molière and Charpentier wrote and prepared The Imaginary Invalid for production.<sup>78</sup>

No complete score of the original music for The Imaginary Invalid exists. Only fragments remain, and they appear in several different volumes of Charpentier's manuscripts. This disarray occurred because the music had to be changed a number of times to suit production requirements. Molière was not allowed to present his new comedy-ballet at court, even though it had obviously been prepared for the King's amusement;<sup>79</sup> and only

<sup>78</sup>When D'Assouci, who had been involved in years of misadventure in France and Italy since he knew Molière in the provinces, heard that Molière had broken with Lully, he wrote in 1672 to his former friend that he was still interested in writing music for his plays, reminding Molière that a vague promise had been made that one day he would. D'Assouci then learned that Charpentier, whom he had met in Italy about 1654, had been chosen instead for The Imaginary Invalid, and wrote sometime before his death in 1674 or 1679 a verse decriing his fate:

J'ay toujours été serviteur  
De l'incomparable Molière,  
Et son plus grand admirateur. . .  
Que voulez-vous? C'est un malheur,  
L'abondance fuit la misère,  
Et le petit et pauvre hère  
Ne quadre point à gros seigneur.

("I have always been the humble servant of the incomparable Molière, and his greatest admirer. . . However, what can you expect? It's bad luck. Opulence flees from misery, and there's no place for a poor unfortunate devil in the scheme of the lordly great." Quoted and translated in D. B. Wyndham Lewis, p. 175) Charpentier was a better, more formally trained musician and probably Molière wanted nothing to do with such an irreputable and untrustworthy character. Yet had D'Assouci, who was called the "Empereur du Burlesque," been a more reliable and industrious person, he might have been the most appropriate collaborator for Molière of anyone.

<sup>79</sup>When The Imaginary Invalid was finally presented at court in 1674, apparently Lully allowed a full orchestral accompaniment (Figure 91), but it is doubtful that Charpentier received much recognition for the music. Nor did Charpentier, who was not a court musician, have the advantage of Philidor as a copyist.

by special permission was he allowed to perform it, beginning February 10, at the Palais-Royal. La Grange shows clearly that the production as originally conceived with its fifteen musicians (twelve violins and three "symphonistes") and seven singers<sup>80</sup> violated the April, 1672 ordinance. Lully, refusing to allow this flagrant infraction of his monopoly, forced Charpentier to simplify the music. At the beginning of the score is written "Le Malade imaginaire avant les deffences . . . Ouverture du Prologue du Malade imaginaire dans sa splendeur."<sup>81</sup> A few pages later, with the "splendor" gone and the "prohibitions" imposed, the laconic heading reads: "Le Malade imaginaire avec les deffences. Ouverture." When these initial changes in the music were made is unclear. At any rate, after Molière's death the unrelenting Lully took the Palais-Royal for his opera works, and in April he obtained a further ordinance forbidding more than two singers and six musicians in any theatre other than his. Music for later productions of The Imaginary Invalid was determined with this new limitation in mind.

The original prologue, more complex even than the prologue of Psyché was the kind of elaborate tribute to Louis XIV that became standard for Lully's operas. According to the text, this "Eclogue" playlet in song and dance has six major characters.<sup>82</sup> The music in Charpentier's manuscripts corresponding to this prologue is a little cantata entitled

<sup>80</sup>p. 142.

<sup>81</sup>Tiersot, p. 182. Some of the Charpentier music is described as "revised for the third time."

<sup>82</sup>Six singers are named in the score: Mlle Mouvant and Mlle Hardy (sopranos), Mlle Marion (mezzo-soprano), Poussin (counter-tenor), Forestier (tenor), and Frison (bass) (D-M, IX, 509). The principals, probably Mlle Marion and Poussin, received 11 livres per performance, a fee considerably higher than that paid the two singers employed by Molière's troupe in 1664. Louis-Joseph Poussin, who also sang at court, had appeared in Psyché.

"La Couronne des fleurs" which was presented years later in concert for the Duchesse de Guise. The verses are somewhat different from those of the comedy-ballet, and Charpentier undoubtedly altered the music accordingly.<sup>83</sup> The prologue he used in The Imaginary Invalid after the prohibitions was a simple pastoral song for a single voice.<sup>84</sup>

Charpentier generally wrote his stage works for a four-part orchestra, rather than the five-parts characteristic of Lully.<sup>85</sup> Constantly under Lully's censorship, Charpentier seldom specified instrumentation in his stage works,<sup>86</sup> but he used a wide range of instruments including the basic strings of the violin family, flutes, oboes, bassoons, trumpets, kettledrums, and harpsichord. Like Lully, he contrasted a large orchestral group (grand choeur) with a smaller one (petit choeur).

Some of Charpentier's music for The Imaginary Invalid has been restored and published. Camille Saint-Saëns prepared a score in 1892 that included four major pieces: an overture, the musical dialogue of Act II, the gypsy interlude, and the doctoral ceremony.<sup>87</sup> And Julien Tiersot reconstructed and completed additional pieces of music which he published in 1925: another overture and the Polichinelle interlude.<sup>88</sup> Both editors have attempted to recreate Charpentier's style and to present music com-

<sup>83</sup>Tiersot, pp. 139-140. This music was published in 1907.

<sup>84</sup>This song has been preserved in manuscript, but not published.

<sup>85</sup>H. Wiley Hitchcock, "The Instrumental Music of Marc-Antoine Charpentier," Musical Quarterly, XLVII (January, 1961), 58-72.

<sup>86</sup>Hitchcock, p. 70.

<sup>87</sup>Published Paris, 1952).

<sup>88</sup>Score citations for Saint-Saëns & Tiersot will appear in the text.

parable to what would have appeared in the original.

Charpentier wrote two-part and three-part overtures.<sup>89</sup> Saint-Saëns restored the first overture for The Imaginary Invalid in three sections, each part typically contrasted in meter and treatment (S-S, 1-4). The first section, written by Saint-Saëns, has a romantic flourish; the second is chordal; and the third is like a rapid flourish of brasses, an appropriate introduction for the elaborate tribute to the King in the prologue it originally preceded.

"The Pastoral" (S-S, 5-11), which is the "little impromptu opera" sung by Angélique (as Philis) and Cléante (as Tircis), belongs entirely to Saint-Saëns. The dialogue begins with a short, songlike exchange in triple rhythm between Philis and Tircis, its minor key underlining the melancholy mood of the young lovers as they describe their cruel separation. A bright duet follows in duple rhythm and major key as the lovers pledge their love to each other. Staccato chords help to characterize the intense young Tircis; then, after a recitative dialogue, Philis has groups of repeated notes to sing which reinforce her insistence that she will die rather than consent to an unwanted marriage. As Argan interrupts the performance, Tircis sings quietly, "Ah! my love. . . ."

For the gypsy interlude called "Les Mores" (S-S, 12-26), Saint-Saëns added some music of his own (pp. 21-24) to fragments from Charpentier. A lively dance in two parts with contrasting meters opens the interlude. Charpentier must have originally written the vocal music for four voices because there are verses for Four Gypsy Women, and four singers are named

<sup>89</sup>Hitchcock, pp. 69-70.



in the score: Mlle Mouvant, Mlle Hardy, Mlle Marion, and Poussin, the counter-tenor, as the Fourth Woman.<sup>90</sup> The music may have changed several times, and many irregularities exist between score and text, but basically the song has a verse-refrain structure, with solos for each singer. Saint-Saëns presented the song as a trio, based apparently on a version modified from the original.<sup>91</sup> For the final dance of this interlude of "exotic" gypsies, Saint-Saëns supplied the score with an appropriately "passionate" form, the chaconne. Unfortunately, the rather pompous chaconne, with its sections of chords alternating with busy runs and triumphant chordal ending, which he took from Charpentier's opera Medée, seems somewhat overpowering for an entertainment brought to be performed in the invalid's sickroom.

The final portion of the Saint-Saëns score, the Doctoral Ceremony,<sup>92</sup> begins with entrance music (S-S, 31) for the Decorators (Tapissiers). The music is vigorous suggesting skipping and leaping movement as the Decorators busily prepare Argan's room for the ceremony. Then follows the "March of the Faculty of Medicine" (S-S, 32-33)--a ballet-entry with solemn, chordal music similar to the second movement of the overture. Next is the "Intermède et Choeurs." The "interlude" music consists of two ritornelles A-B and C-D (S-S, 34-35) played between the verses of the President's address to the assembly. Although fast and lively, these

<sup>90</sup>Expenses for The Imaginary Invalid include shoes for Poussin "en femme." Thierry, Documents, p. 90.

<sup>91</sup>D-M suggest (IX, 387) that ritornelles between verses were probably danced.

<sup>92</sup>From his studies, Lowe finds (p. 135) the rhythms and melodies of this music changed from the original.

ritornelles have grace and a minuet-like charm, representing the gracious, cultivated members of the Faculty, but are also formal and proper to show the doctors' great dignity. The "choruses" E-G and F-H (S-S, 36-39) are Latin responses by the Faculty as the candidate is examined.<sup>93</sup> The lyrics are written so that each response begins with "Bene. . .responderere" ("good answer")--that is, the Faculty absurdly congratulates the candidate for repeating the same answer to every question. Despois and Mesnard indicate that the Charpentier score may be in error because it does not follow this pattern.<sup>94</sup> Saint-Saëns, following Charpentier, alternates the "Bene" response with an abridged version beginning "Dignus. . ." ("worthy"). The Ceremony continues with "Les Révérences" (S-S, 40), a dance in which the Surgeons and Apothecaries come to bow to the new doctor and invest him with the baccalaureate cap. This somewhat dainty march is to be repeated as many times as necessary to complete the action. After the Bachelierus makes his acceptance speech, there is a choral finale in five-part harmony, with passages for individual voices (S-S, 41-48). The music is full and forceful for the "Long live. . ." sections, but generally in a jovial, playful mood. Unquestionably, the ceremony is a sham. The exit music (S-S, 48) is an instrumental rendition of one of the congratulatory choruses (S-S, 37), which links song and dance thematically in the typical seventeenth-century manner.

Along with his presentation of the Polichinelle interlude, Tiersot included one of the Charpentier overtures written after Lully's prohibi-

<sup>93</sup>The six singers mentioned earlier sang the finale.

<sup>94</sup>D-M, IX, 444. Lully had a Chorus of Doctors sing "oh bene!" to the candidate Scaramouche in L'Amour malade (1657).

tions (T, 1-4). It has two parts: the first short, slow, chordal, and solemn, the second long, fugal, and lively. Tiersot then introduced the interlude with a tender ritornelle (T, 5) which leads into Polichinelle's love song. The two Italian songs, one for Polichinelle and one for the Old Woman he encounters instead of his loved-one ("Serenade Italienne"--T, 6-17), come from Circé (1675), a tragi-comedy by Thomas Corneille for which Charpentier wrote the music. Tiersot transcribed these songs because Molière's troupe performed them as part of the revised music for The Imaginary Invalid.<sup>95</sup> Fragments were found with the Italian songs for the air for violins which follows.<sup>96</sup> Tiersot pieced them together for the Violin Scene (T, 18-21) based on the lyrics. Polichinelle speaks over an instrumental part to be taken by the violins, then he has a simple song in which he imitates the instruments and pretends to play the lute ("plunk, plunk, plunk, plunk"). The music for the next scene, Polichinelle and the Archers, was composed entirely by Tiersot, the Charpentier music having been completely lost.<sup>97</sup> Polichinelle interjects lines of spoken dialogue into the songs of the Archers (a tenor and two bass parts), reminiscent of Lyciscas with the Dogkeepers in The Princess of Elis. The Archer trios alternate with dances, and the interlude ends

<sup>95</sup>When the music had to be drastically reduced, two singers, Molière's gagiste De Villiers and a female vocalist Mlle Freville, probably sang all music except the finale: Mlle Freville soloing on the second prologue, with the two Italian songs and the gypsy interlude performed as vocal duets. (D-M, IX, 508-510).

<sup>96</sup>Xavier de Courville, "Sur in intermède de Molière," Revue Musicale VI (1925), 159.

<sup>97</sup>The Archer scene occurs at night. Charpentier wrote a number of "night-scenes" (sommeils), and specified that mutes (sourdines) to be used in all the string parts (Hitchcock, p. 62).

with a light, but regular minuet. Both the Old Woman and the group of Archers have minuets, this artful and clever musical form appropriately characterizing the rogues who manage to outwit and laugh at the fool.

The loss and fragmentation of the Charpentier music is unfortunate, but reconstructed pieces provide at least an approximation of the original comedy-ballet. At its première, The Imaginary Invalid drew even bigger crowds than Psyché. Molière and Charpentier had successfully produced a crowd-pleasing musical spectacle. Some of it, such as the first prologue and the gypsy interlude, seems now to be too long and too little related to the play. But an outstanding achievement of the two collaborators is the Doctoral Ceremony, in which Charpentier's particular skill in scoring Latin was used to advantage and Molière's comic irony was allowed to be expressed as extravagantly as in the Turkish Ceremony of The Would-be Gentleman. And the musical dialogue, even though Charpentier's music is missing, shows that the playwright and the composer realized the beginnings of sung drama.

Among the expenses during the time The Imaginary Invalid was being prepared was an amount for singing lessons for Baron.<sup>98</sup> Molière may have intended a specific singing role, such as Cléante, for his young protégé; but it is also possible that Molière was merely trying to circumvent Lully's restrictions on the hiring of professional singers by turning his actors into singers. Given the opportunity, Molière, who had used music in his plays probably from the beginning of his career, might have responded to the new rage for vocal music by producing a company of singing actors.

<sup>98</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 421.

CHAPTER VIII  
THEATRES AND SCENERY

Louis inherited an impressive number of chateaux belonging to the royal family. In Paris were the Louvre, the Tuileries, the Palais-Royal, and the Luxembourg Palace. Outside the city were the chateaux of François I: Fontainebleau, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and those of the Loire, including the delightful Chambord. There was a crude structure at Compiègne and in the environs of Paris were Saint-Cloud,<sup>1</sup> the stately old royal palace at Vincennes (1370), and the new little hunting lodge of Louis XIII at Versailles.

These residences gave the King easy mobility, and he knew well the value of a ruler's appearances and progresses among his people. When Louis was only four years old, he encountered great crowds of his subjects for the first time, as he traveled in his mother's open carriage from Saint-Germain to Paris after Louis XIII's death. Thereafter, the appearance of the King always renewed loyalty in his subjects. Louis's long, leisurely wedding trip from the southern border and his triumphant entrance with his bride into Paris (detailed by a number of program-pamphlets sold in the city) was arranged by Mazarin as the best possible means to secure the young king in the hearts of the people on the eve of his personal reign. Although war marches to the battlefronts gave Louis the greatest exposure to his subjects, pleasure trips between residences

<sup>1</sup>Destroyed in 1870.

were also important in creating the King's gloire.

Nothing much had been done to improve the royal residences during the reign of Louis XIII; France's treasury was drained by the long war. Mazarin, after negotiating peace for France in both foreign and civil conflicts, then turned his attention to the personal needs of the King. He realized that a palace had to be built worthy of a great monarch. He thought to remodel Vincennes, but died before this project could be started. Louis learned much from Mazarin and recognized the need to develop surroundings that would reflect his gloire. An energetic and zestful young man, his constant cavalcade from one chateau to another reflected his quest for adventure and for finding his most advantageous environment. Although he grew up at the Palais-Royal, the Fronde taught him that his real strength lay outside the city. Members of his court maintained their Paris hôtels, but had to travel with him in his search for pleasure and until he found a home.

The parade between chateaux was a sizable entourage, for the King took his family with him, a horde of people of quality, and a small army to serve and entertain the court. Molière's experience in the provinces had prepared him for the traveling he had to do as entertainer to the court, for royal entertainments were held at all of the King's chateaux. When the King summoned, Molière and his troupe left their theatre in Paris, traveled to wherever the King was, and adjusted their performance to whatever stage was available. They performed for the King many times; almost every new play received a royal viewing. But the comedy-ballets were commissioned for special occasions, and generally the productions had lavish stage and scenic embellishments that contributed to the

magnificence of the event.

Fouquet conceived the idea of a fete celebrated with a magnificently staged comedy-ballet, and in 1661 summoned Molière's company to perform for the King in the gardens at Vaux-le-Vicomte.

Il me fit voir en songe un palais magnifique,  
Des grottes, des canaux, un superbe portique,  
Des lieux que pour leurs beautés  
J'aurais pu croire enchantés,  
Si Vaux n'était point au monde:  
Ils étaient tels qu'au Soleil  
Ne s'offre au sortire de l'onde  
Rien que Vaux qui soit pareil.

"Le Songe de Vaux"<sup>2</sup>

Vaux-le-Vicomte, twenty-five miles from Paris on the Seine northeast of Melun, was Fouquet's palatial residence (Figure 21).<sup>3</sup> This early masterwork of the architect Louis Le Vau (1613-1670) was an extremely costly chateau--a vast, magnificent building with a moat and drawbridges. The 600-800 acre park contained gardens ornamented with grottos, arbors, marble colonnades, statues, and fountains which were devised by André Le Nôtre (1613-1700), landscape architect, and Charles Le Brun (1619-1690), painter and decorator (Figures 147 and 148).

To accommodate Molière's entertainment, an outdoor stage was built at the end of an avenue of spruces (Allée des Sapins) in a wooded area surrounded by luxuriant foliage and twelve fountains.<sup>4</sup> The stage was

<sup>2</sup>Jean de La Fontaine, *Oeuvres diverses* (Paris, 1958), p. 82. Acante (La Fontaine himself) says, "The God of Sleep showed me in a dream a magnificent palace, grottos, canals, a superb veranda--places that for their beauty I might have believed enchanted if Vaux were not a real place. There was nothing like it under the Sun."

<sup>3</sup>See location on Map of France.

<sup>4</sup>Three sources give descriptions of the setting of The Bores:

*garden  
theatre*

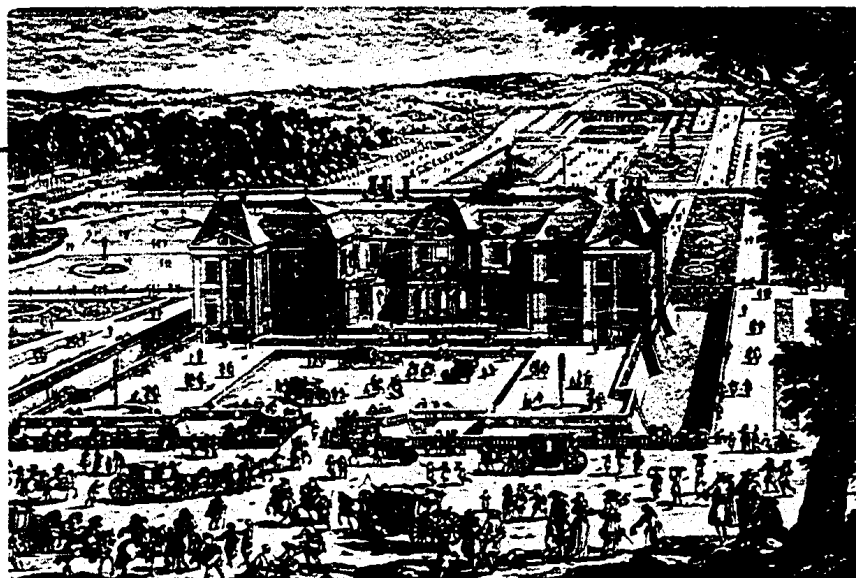


Figure 147. Vaux-le-Vicomte

*garden  
theatre*

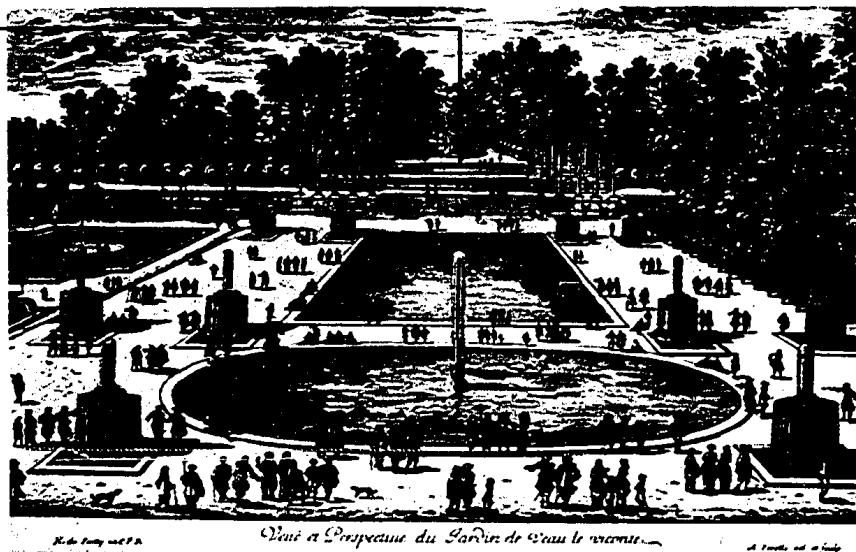


Figure 148. Vaux-le-Vicomte gardens



furnished with the statuary of Le Brun and the machines of the Italian scene designer Giacomo Torelli. According to La Fontaine, "The decorations were magnificent." (D-M, III, 99)

When the curtain, perhaps painted by Le Brun, was opened, the prologue scene was revealed--a stage decorated with terms and statues and a huge rock "so well made that it seemed real." (D-M, III, 100) Imperceptibly the rock changed to a shell which opened to reveal a reclining Nymph. The Nymph, representing the nymph of the fountain where the action takes place, descended to deliver the verses of the prologue. The fountains which surrounded the theatre began to spout water ten feet into the air. The music began to play. The terms and statues began to move, and from behind them fauns, dryads, and satyrs emerged to dance.

Per Bjurström, in his study of the works of Torelli, includes a drawing which he thinks may well have been the setting for The Bores (Figure 150). The drawing shows figures set in the architecture and avenues and fountains in the background, which correspond with the major descriptions of the fete at Vaux, and a crowned "L" over the central archway.<sup>5</sup>

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(1) Lettre de La Fontaine à Maucroix (Relation d'une fête donnée à Vaux) quoted in D-M, III, 97-103; (2) Loret's account of the fete from La Muse historique quoted in Per Bjurström, Giacomo Torelli and Baroque Stage Design (Stockholm, 1961), pp. 181-182, and (3) the anonymous Relation des magnificences faites par Monsieur Fouquet à Vaux-le-Vicomte lorsque le roi y alla, le 17 août 1661, et de la somptuosité de ce lieu included in Jean Cordey, Vaux-le-Vicomte (Paris, 1924), pp. 191-194. See Figure 149--Conjectural sketch of the stage and its surroundings.

<sup>5</sup>Bjurström, p. 183. Torelli (1608-1678) had been instrumental in establishing Italian proscenium staging in France and was extremely influential in increasing the use of scenery and machines in court

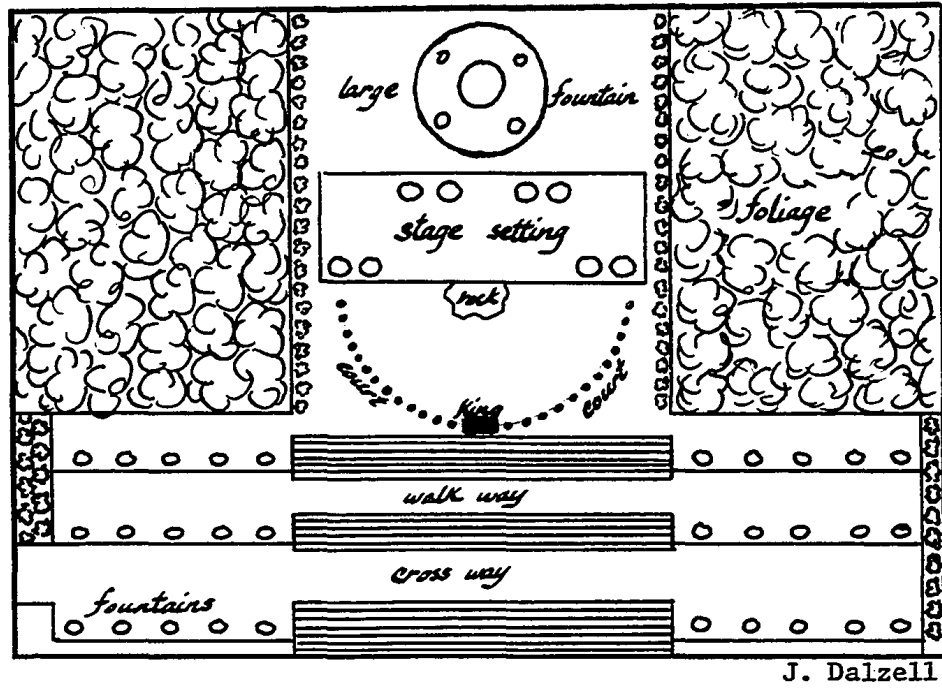


Figure 149. Conjectural setting for The Bores

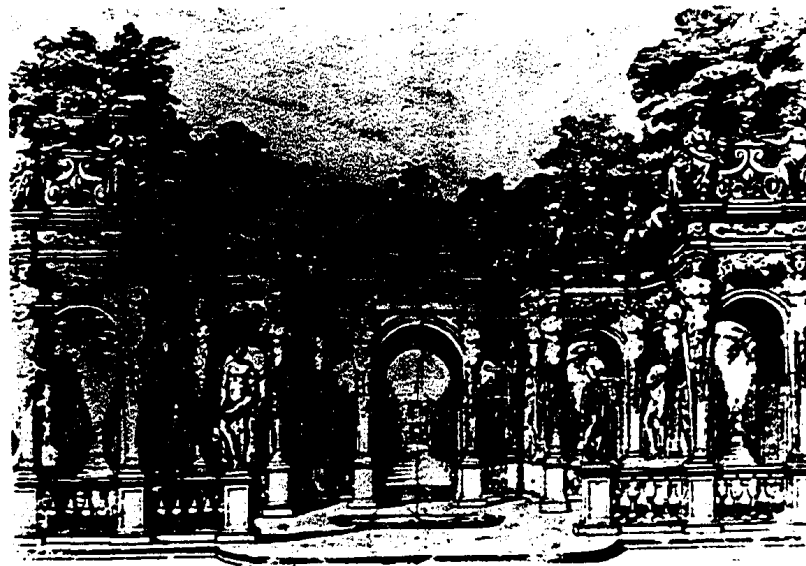


Figure 150. Torelli drawing for The Bores

Only the setting of the spectacular prologue to The Bores is mentioned in the accounts of the fete, but the play itself seems to have been fashioned to take advantage of the park setting. Lysandre, the dancing bore, spies Eraste under some trees (Act I, Scene 3);<sup>6</sup> when Eraste sends his servant La Montagne to look for Orphise, he says he will wait "in this path" (Act I, Scene 6); and the second interlude ends with the entrée of a gardener-dancer.

The performance began in early evening, the foliage surrounding the

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theatre. He was brought to France in 1645 by Cardinal Mazarin and Queen Anne from Italy where he had acquired a reputation as the Grand Sorcerer for his scenic wonders in Venice. His first big success after arriving in Paris was the scenery and machines for the opera La Finta pazza given at the Petit-Bourbon at the end of 1645. Torelli modified the theatre for this production. For Orfeo, performed with elaborate machinery in 1647, he made alterations in the Palais-Royal. It is uncertain whether or not Torelli contributed all of the scenery to the court ballets of the 1650's, although he was the only designer associated with the court at the time. He probably was responsible for the Ballet de la nuit (1653). Records confirm his association with two other productions in which the King performed: Benserade's Les Nocces de Pelée et de Thetis (1654), an opera with ballet between the acts for which a number of spectacular effects were devised, and the ballet Psyché (1656). Décor was never as important in French ballet de cour as in Italian opera. Ballets required little machinery and, when performed in the center of a room, practically no scenery at all, except for some "floats" which were used for entrances of the dancers and then left on the dance floor. The emphasis was on the performer. But Torelli's spectacular scene changes and machines for flying were very popular. When Mazarin sent to Italy for another engineer, Gaspare Vigarani, to build a theatre and plan decorations for the wedding celebrations of Louis XIV, the intention was not to exclude Torelli. Torelli was a scene designer, and the Cardinal needed a theatre-builder. But Torelli was out-manuevered by Vigarani, then left without a protector at the royal court after the death of Mazarin, and finally found guilty by association in the Fouquet affair. He was forced to leave France in 1661. The Bores was his last commission, and its prologue the last instance at the French court of his scenic wizardry.

<sup>6</sup>Figure 65 - an artist's conception of this scene at Vaux.

stage providing shade. Later the area was illuminated by starlight and a hundred blazing torches.

The way The Bores was presented at Vaux seems to have determined the subsequent staging. The scenic requirements at the Comédie Française as set down in Le Mémoire de Mahelot<sup>7</sup> included fountains and a greenery setting with torchlight. According to the 1734 edition of Molière's plays, the scene of the prologue is a garden ornamented with terms and several fountains. The action of the play proper, in this edition, is specified as set in Paris. The setting might have been merely a street scene with the city houses commonly used for comedies; it has been suggested, however, that it was the enclosed promenade of a city square, something like the Place Royal planted with trees,<sup>8</sup> which would have resembled the surroundings at Vaux.

Fouquet's fete inspired the King's wrath, but also gave him a model of magnificence to follow. He employed most of the same designers and performers to create the magnificent royal court. Although it would be some time before the Superintendent's lavish spectacle could be surpassed, the young Louis XIV could enjoy Molière's play on call. Louis had come to Vaux from Fontainebleau and returned there after the festivities. A week later the Troupe de Monsieur was summoned to Fontainebleau to repeat The Bores:

<sup>7</sup>Henry Carrington Lancaster, ed., Le Mémoire de Mahelot, Laurent et d'autres de l'Hôtel de Bourgogne et de la Comédie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle (Paris, 1920), p. 138.

<sup>8</sup>D-M, III, 52.

La Troupe Comique excellente  
 Que cette pièce représente,  
 Est allée, encor de plus beau,  
 La jouer à Fontainebleau<sup>9</sup>

Fontainebleau, located southeast of Paris (Figure 21), is a magnificent Renaissance palace built by François I. The vast forest surrounding the main building in the seventeenth century made good hunting ground, and Fontainebleau was a favorite residence of Louis, especially in the autumn. (Figure 151)

Alfred Marie describes the theatre at Fontainebleau on the basis of a 1682 plan,<sup>10</sup> remarking that presentations of Molière's plays were given there. According to Marie's interpretation of this plan (Figure 152), the gallery is separated into two equal parts, the place for the King is in front of the stage; a lower level (substage) contains machines for ballets; and a top level (fly space) provides for hanging scenery. Probably the theatre was less elaborate in 1661.<sup>11</sup> At any rate, The Bores can hardly have had as much total impact at Fontainebleau as in the gardens at Vaux, and Louis undoubtedly noted the difference.

Besides The Bores, only one other comedy-ballet was performed at Fontainebleau. Between July 21 and August 13, 1664, the court saw The Princess of Elis there following the première at Versailles.<sup>12</sup> There are

<sup>9</sup>"The excellent Comic Troupe which is presenting this play went, in what is an even greater honor, to play at Fontainebleau." Loret, Le Muse historique (August 27, 1661) quoted in Henry Lyonnet, Les "Premières" de Molière (Paris, 1927), p. 86.

<sup>10</sup>"La Salle du théâtre de Fontainebleau (d'Henri IV à Louis-Philippe)," Revue d'Histoire du Théâtre, II (1951), 239.

<sup>11</sup>The Salle de la Comédies was then called the Salle de la Belle Cheminée after the great chimney between it and the guard room. Molière probably performed in this room on a simple elevated stage opposite the chimney. Charles Constant, Molière à Fontainebleau, 1661-1664 (Meaux, 1873), p. 9.

<sup>12</sup>Colbert ordered payment of 437# 10<sup>s</sup> for "furniture for the comedy." Constant, p. 16.

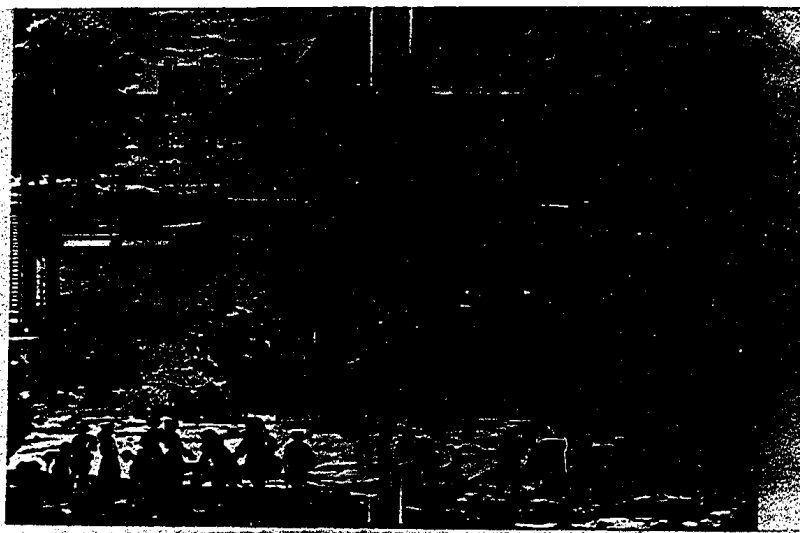


Figure 151. Fontainebleau

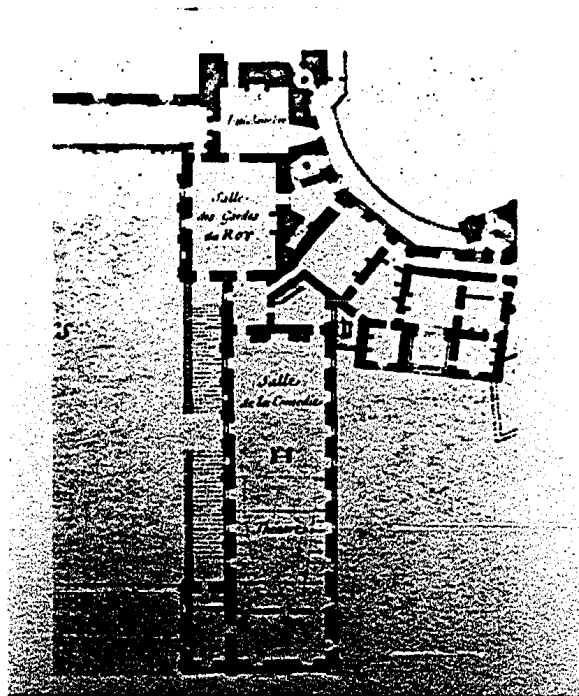


Figure 152. Plan of theatre at Fontainebleau

no other records of comedy-ballet performances at this chateau during Molière's career at court. If Fontainebleau appealed so much to Louis, it is curious that more of the lavish entertainments were not given there during his early reign. Wolf suggests a possible answer. The wayward Louis stayed away from Fontainebleau while the Archbishop of Sens was alive because this powerful Church leader took a strong stand against adultery.<sup>13</sup> Since the King generally gave entertainments to please his current mistress, it was particularly politic in the late 1660's to avoid such conspicuous reveling in the diocese which included Fontainebleau. The archbishop was Monsieur de Montespan's uncle and an archenemy of Athénaïs, then the King's mistress.

As noted earlier, political motivations kept Louis from establishing his court in Paris at one of the royal residences. Although the spacious halls of the Louvre were particularly well-suited to receptions and entertainments, only one of the comedy-ballets was staged there. In 1664, Molière brought The Forced Marriage to the Louvre for a private performance in Queen Anne's apartments.

Louvre, palais pompeux dont la France s'honore!

"Sur le Louvre"<sup>14</sup>

The Louvre, traditionally the royal palace in Paris, was first a medieval fortress which François I had rebuilt in Renaissance style. Eventually its quadrangular building was connected by a long wing to

<sup>13</sup>John B. Wolf, Louis XIV (New York, 1968), p. 301.

<sup>14</sup>"Louvre, pompous palace by which France honors herself!" Voltaire, Oeuvres complètes (Paris, 1877), VIII, 520.

Catherine de'Medici's Palais des Tuileries. Anne continued to occupy the Louvre in these first years of her son's reign.<sup>15</sup>

Almost nothing is known of the stage setting for The Forced Marriage. Gaspare Vigarani's son Carlo wrote in a letter of February 5, 1664 that he had recently constructed two stages--one in the Tuileries for a ballet and one in the Louvre "for a masquerade in which His Majesty figured."<sup>16</sup> This "masquerade" was undoubtedly The Forced Marriage, and the stage was probably built in what is now the Musée des Antiques, in the area below the gallery of Apollo.<sup>17</sup>

Carlo Vigarani (1622-1693) had come to Paris in 1659 to assist his father in building the Salle des Machines.<sup>18</sup> After that theatre was completed the Vigaranis returned to Italy, but when Gaspare died in 1663, Carlo came back to Paris at the invitation of Louis XIV. A designer was needed for court divertissements, and the young Vigarani was a talented professional qualified for the job. His stage for The Forced Marriage was one of his first assignments as the new court designer. The same year he increased his favor with the King by his scenes and machines for

<sup>15</sup>Figure 13 - Map of Paris, Figure 153 - West facade of the Louvre, and Figure 154 - Petite Galerie with the apartment of Anne.

<sup>16</sup>Gabriel Rouchès, Inventaire des lettres et papiers manuscrits de Gaspare, Carlo et Lodovico Vigarani (Paris, 1913), p. 88.

<sup>17</sup>Du Monceau, "Bibliographie," Le Moliériste, VII (1880), 283.

<sup>18</sup>The theatre was to be built for the King's wedding (1660), but there were many delays and difficulties connected with the project. For example, Torelli's machinery at the Petit-Bourbon was to be used for the theatre, and Molière's troupe had been evicted so that it could be removed. But Gaspare, jealous of his predecessor-rival, took the machinery and burned it. The oversized, ineptly-built theatre in the Tuileries was not inaugurated until 1662.



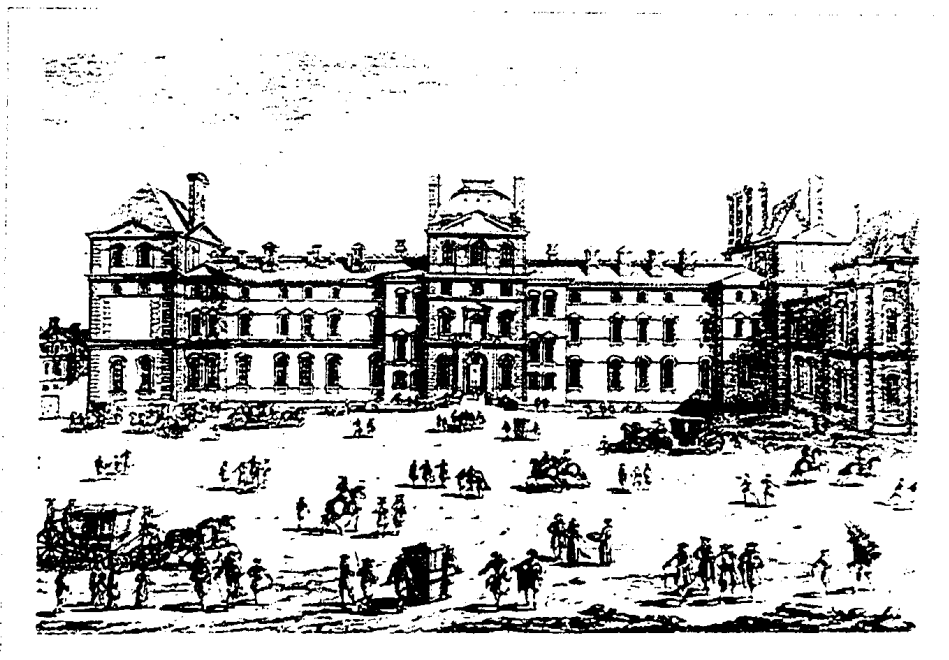


Figure 153. West facade of the Louvre

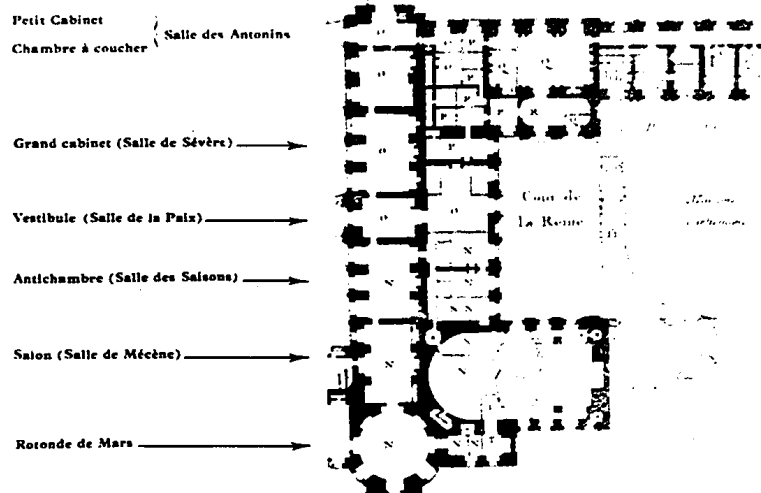


Figure 154. Louvre, Petite Galerie with Anne's apartment

The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island. He later distinguished himself in the other two great garden fetes of the period, Le Grand Divertissement royal de Versailles and Les Divertissemens de Versailles (The Imaginary Invalid, 1674) and with the two most lavish indoor productions of the decade, The Magnificent Lovers (1670) and Psyché (1671). The Gazette's praise of the scenic wonders of The Magnificent Lovers suggests that by then Vigarani had eclipsed Torelli.<sup>19</sup> As chief designer for court festivities, Vigarani was awarded the title Intendant des machines et plaisirs du roi, inventeur et conducteur des machines, entendant de machines des théâtre, ballets, et fêtes with an annual pension of 6,000 livres, and, in 1671, he was given the privilege of living in the Louvre.<sup>20</sup>

Vigarani's scenery was much the same as Torelli's, achieving perspective effects by the use of decorated wings aligned successively along both sides of the stage and on diagonals front to rear. Standard scenes were sea ports, rocky places, grottos, and gardens. Machines for performers to descend and ascend and water displays were incorporated into the designs. Since Vigarani was more an architect and machinist than a painter, he probably had much of his painting done for him by artists of the time.<sup>21</sup> He popularized, following Torelli, the proscenium arch.

<sup>19</sup>Moland, X, 221-226.

<sup>20</sup>August Jal, Dictionnaire critique de biographie et d'histoire (Paris, 1872), p. 1267.

<sup>21</sup>Two Italian painters are mentioned in a 1660 letter of Carlo's brother Lodovico (in Paris to help with the Salle des Machines): Armanio and the Genoese Bursoni. They complained about being paid less than French painters (Rouchès, pp. 28-29). A French artist who worked on decorations of the royal palaces and might have been associated with Vigarani was Noël Coypel (1628-1707). Vigarani attended the wedding of Coypel's son Antoine in 1689 (Jal, p. 1267). The King's household

In August, 1672 he concluded an agreement ("acte de société") with Lully to share the privilege for the Académie Royale de Musique, each contributing ten thousand livres to the venture.<sup>22</sup> Lully needed Vigarani's financial assistance and his technical know-how to convert the tennis court on the Rue de Vaugirard for Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus. Then, after Molière died in 1673, Vigarani assisted Lully in the takeover of the Palais-Royal for opera productions.<sup>23</sup> Vigarani, born in the same year as Molière, outlived the playwright by twenty years. His partnership with Lully, however, was brief. By 1675, Lully began to liquidate their contract. And although Carlo continued to work for the opera until 1680, he was replaced in importance at court by Jean Bérain.

The great challenge and the great opportunity for all artists was at court, and specifically at Versailles. While Louis continued to travel from place to place, the roads kept leading back to Versailles. (Figure 155)

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accounts include a 340 livre payment to the painter Barrois for a proscenium arch for the theatre of Amour and Bacchus (T. E. Lawrenson, The French Stage in the XVIIth Century, Manchester, 1957, p. 137). This theatre may have been for George Dandin (with its Amour and Bacchus finale) or for a possible court production of Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus. The painter Marotte is mentioned in The Would-be Gentleman expense account (Moland, X, 422). The expense account for Psyché includes large amounts to painters: Guillaume Angenier (2,360#), Jean-Baptiste Marot (2,190#), Pierre Jumelle (2,674#), and Claude-Emanuel Le Vasseur (1,500#). S. Borgenot, ed., "Psyché au Théâtre des Tuileries; Etat officiel de la Dépense faite pour représenter Psyché devant Louis XIV., en 1671," Bulletin Historique et Philologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques (Paris, 1891), 75-76.

<sup>22</sup>Rouchès, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

<sup>23</sup>According to the accounts of the King's buildings an amount of 3,000 livres was paid Lully and Vigarani in 1674 for repairs to this theatre (Rouchès, p. 190).



Figure 155. Versailles (Patel)

Notre monarque se divertit à faire bâtir des palais:  
 cela est digne d'un roi. Il y a même une utilité  
 général; car, par ce moyen, les sujets peuvent prendre  
 part aux plaisirs du prince, et voir avec admiration  
 ce qui n'est pas fait pour eux. Tant de beaux jardins  
 et de somptueux édifices sont la gloire de leur pays.  
 Et que ne disent point les étrangers! Que ne dira point  
 la postérité quand elle verra ces chefs-d'oeuvre de tous  
 les arts!

"Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon"<sup>24</sup>

The construction of a hunting lodge at Versailles was commissioned by Louis XIII in 1624. He later had it rebuilt, and he visited there often with his son. It was at this retreat about twelve miles southwest of Paris (Figure 21) that Louis XIV as a young king established his power and glory; his reign would be great and Versailles would reflect this greatness.

Louis chose the artists of Vaux--Le Vau, Le Brun, and Le Nôtre--to begin enlarging and beautifying the chateau and the vast grounds surrounding it. Lavish apartments, courts, pavilions, and an immense terrace were constructed and splendidly decorated. Geometrical gardens were laid with lawns, ornamental flower-beds, fountains, statues, and arbors all harmoniously designed. An Orangerie and a Ménagerie were built. Long avenues led to a canal and to the village of Trianon, where an intimate little dwelling was devised especially for the King.

<sup>24</sup>La Fontaine, pp. 129-130. "Our monarch amuses himself by having palaces built that are worthy of a king. There is even a general usefulness, for, by this means, the subjects can share the pleasures of the prince and see with admiration what is not made for them. So many beautiful gardens and sumptuous buildings are the glory of their country. And what won't the foreigners say! What won't posterity say when it sees these masterpieces of all the arts." La Fontaine, in an attempt to repeat the success of "Le Songe de Vaux," commissioned by Fouquet, wrote flatteringly of Louis's Versailles in "Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon."

The work on Versailles began in 1662; and almost immediately the creation of a residence that would be unequalled in magnificence became one of the King's favorite projects. As construction progressed, court festivities were not interrupted but were rather reinforced by it. The development of Versailles became an integral part of the pursuit of pleasure and opulent living characteristic of Louis's reign. Molière and his troupe were called on short notice to perform for the King during one of his visits there in 1663 to inspect the improvements; for this occasion the memorable Impromptu at Versailles was produced. Until the court moved officially to Versailles in 1680 and Louis established the seat of government there in 1682, special sojourns were frequently arranged which often included entertainments or a fete to mark the completion of some new addition to Louis's showpiece.

For the first three days of Louis's great fete, The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (1664), Versailles became a magic island.<sup>25</sup> Carlo Vigarani engineered the spectacular effects for the al fresco fete. From his letters it is clear that he was more concerned with the pageantry of the first day's triumphal carts and machines (Figure 100) and the enchantment of the third day's scenery, transformations, and final fireworks display (Figures 101 and 102) than with his designs for Molière's comedy-ballet, The Princess of Elis. In a letter of May 16, 1664 he said merely that on the second day of the fete a comedy interlaced with ballets and music was presented in a theatre constructed especially for the occasion<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup>See Chapter V: Related Works for sources. Figure 99--Silvestre's title engraving of the fete which includes a view of Versailles.

<sup>26</sup>Rouchès, p. 91.

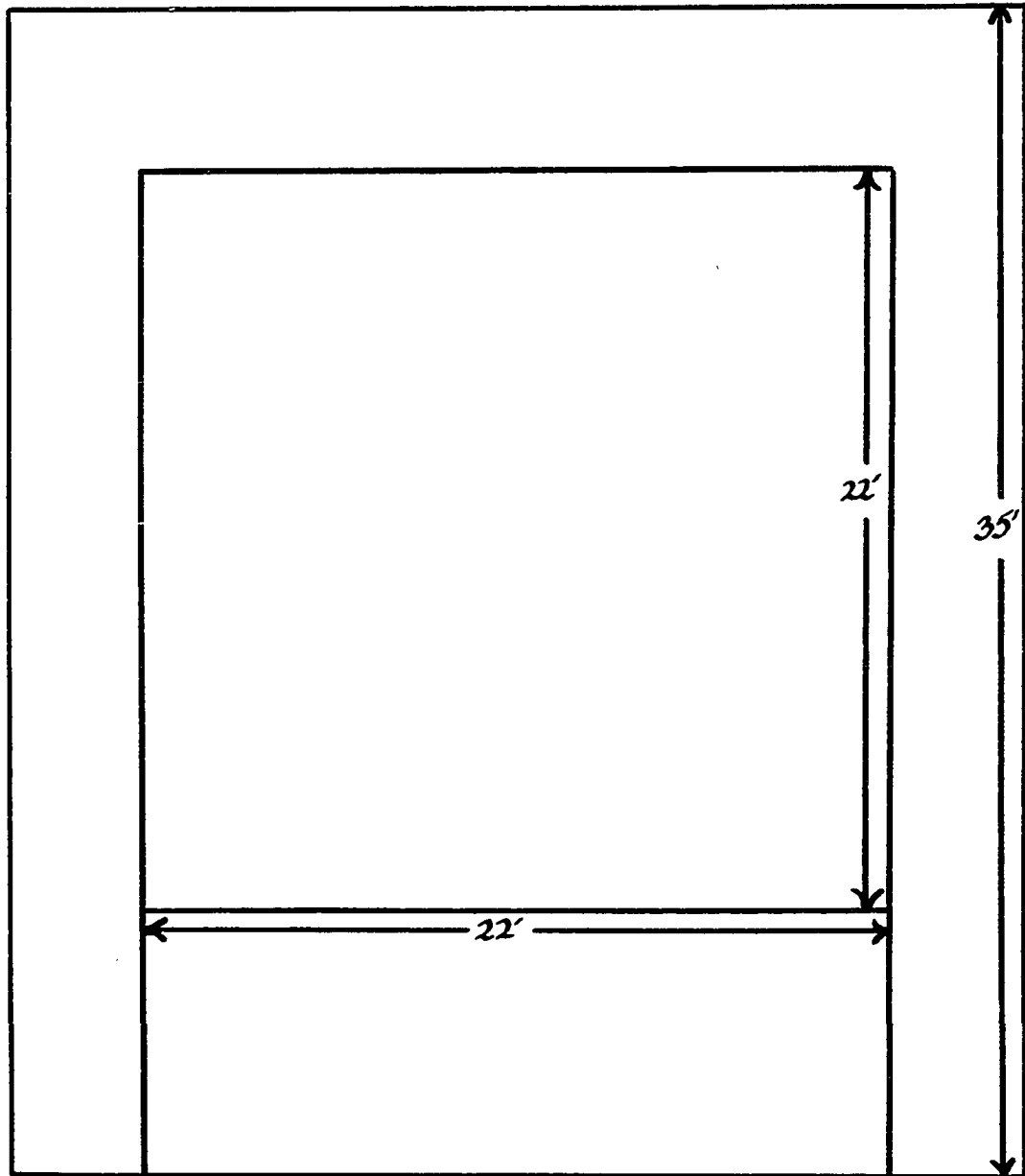
(Figure 73).

The "theatre" (stage house) for The Princess of Elis was located in the middle of the Allée Royale (Royal Avenue) where four wide alleys came together between high palisades. This site was about a hundred feet below where the horsemen had tilted at the ring on the first day of the fete. Four porticos thirty-five feet high formed the scene building. The face of the stage had several festoons ornamented with gold and diverse paintings with the arms of His Majesty. Through the twenty-two foot square opening (Figure 156), the perspective of the Allée Royale (now the Tapis Vert) could be seen with the palace of the Enchantress dimly visible across the waters of the Bassin de Cygnes (Fountain of Swans, now the Bassin d'Apollon). No stage scenery was necessary in such a setting, although a "tree machine" that carried a group of musicians appeared in the finale.<sup>27</sup> Versailles was not transformed into Elis, the setting of the play, but rather this area of ancient Greece conformed to Versailles.

The audience sat in a kind of salon created by hedges and thickets and covered by curtains to protect against the weather. The evening performance was lit by five chandeliers suspended over the stage. Ten others lit the audience area from both sides of the proscenium.

During the time of the original presentations of the comedy-ballets an indoor theatre had not yet been built at Versailles. Temporary stages

<sup>27</sup>Lawrenson notes (p. 113) the significant lack of scenic effects, especially that Dawn in the prologue did not arrive in a "chariot" as was usual for this character in any court production.



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Figure 156. Conjectural sketch with dimensions of Princess stage



were constructed on the ground floor of the chateau in an open vestibule that served as a passage between the entrance court and the park (Figure 157). The two entrances were closed off by shutters to protect against the wind, and candlelight illuminated both court and park sides of the room.<sup>28</sup> A temporary stage of this sort was simple, about twenty-one feet wide and twenty feet deep, of oak boards, raised on trestles a little more than two feet off the ground. Since Carlo Vigarani says of Love's the Best Doctor merely that a little comedy was played in a theatre improvised in a hall,<sup>29</sup> he probably had little to do with the production. Very likely a master carpenter, such as Buret, was the only technician required to manage setting up the stage.

For the fete of 1668, Le Grand Divertissement royal de Versailles, the most lavish array of "adornments" France had ever seen was created at great effort and cost for one evening's entertainment.<sup>30</sup> Officially given to celebrate the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the fete also provided Louis the opportunity to show off the recent improvements to Versailles.

In various garden locations temporary salons, designed by Louis's talented artists, were erected to accommodate the evening's activities.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Alain Decaux, La Belle histoire de Versailles (Paris, 1954), p. 27.

<sup>29</sup>Rouchès, pp. 107-108.

<sup>30</sup>See the George Dandin discussion for sources, p. 246.

<sup>31</sup>Figure 158--Conjectural route based on the three descriptions of the fete. The evening's activities began with a promenade. From the King's apartments, the royal family, the noble courtiers, and their entourage made their way past the Grand Parterre along the side of the Grotte de Thétis to the Fontaine du Dragon at the end of the Petit Parc. Then the glamorous company proceeded past the Bassin de Latone and the

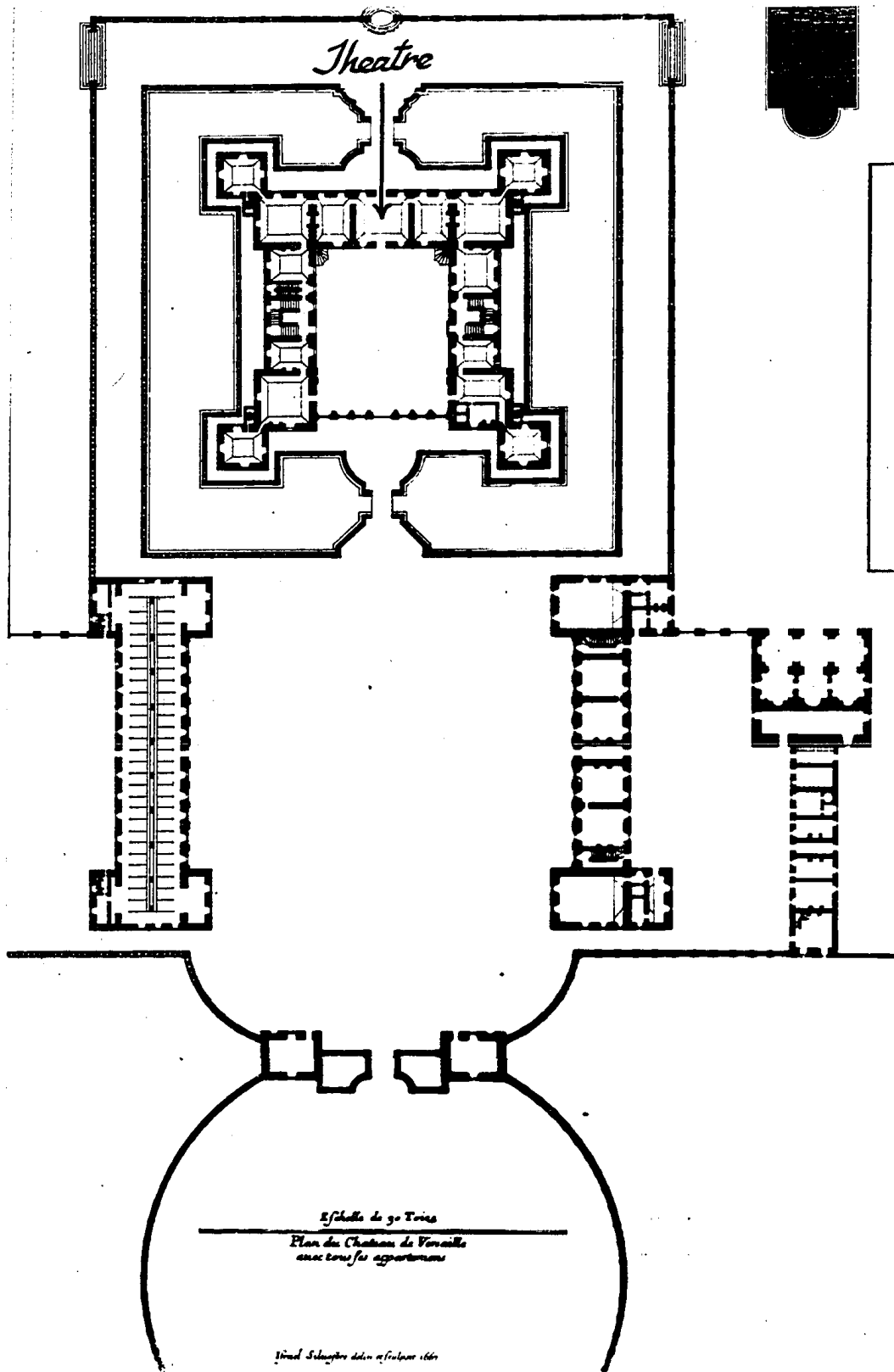


Figure 157. Floorplan of the chateau at Versailles

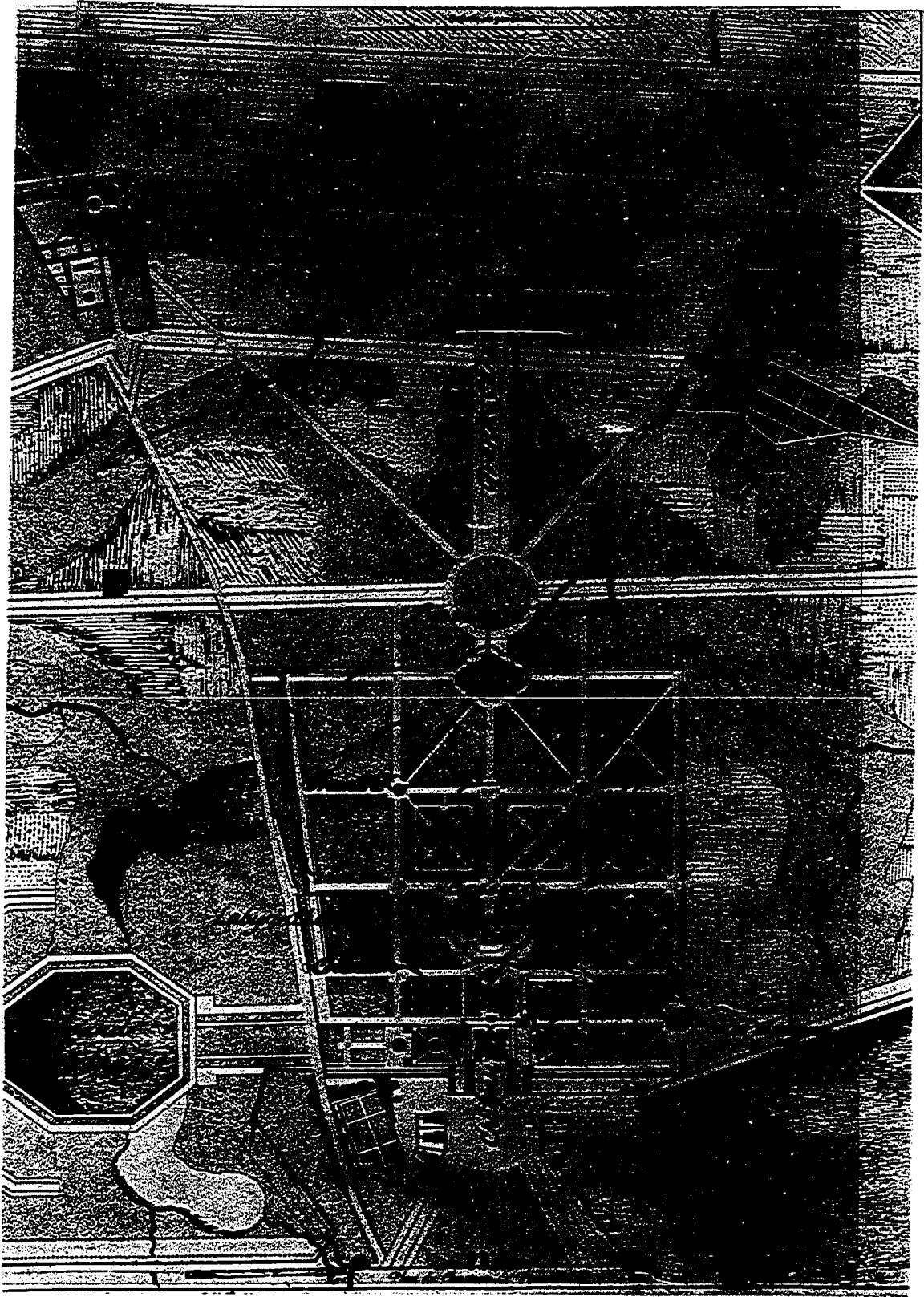


Figure 158. Groundplan of Versailles

For Molière's comedy-ballet, George Dandin, Vigarani constructed a "wooden theatre"<sup>32</sup> in the Allée du Roi (King's Avenue) at what is now the Saturne juncture of the Allée de l'Hiver. The space at this intersection was more than 7,000 square feet.<sup>33</sup>

The room for the audience was about eighty-three feet wide and fifty-eight feet deep, the height thirty-three feet up to a cornice from which the sides of the ceiling rose another nine feet. The walls of the room were covered by foliage on the outside, the inside hung with rich tapestries that Du Mets, intendant of the furniture of the crown, "took care to arrange in the manner most beautiful and most suitable for the decoration of this place." (D-M, VI, 619) From the ceiling hung thirty-two crystal chandeliers, each holding ten candles of white wax. Around the hall several rows of chairs were arranged like an amphitheatre, seating more than twelve hundred people. More people sat on benches in the parterre with Their Majesties on a high dais in the center.

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Labyrinthe to the Cabinet de Verdure for a collation. After this pause for refreshments, the group traveled to the Fontaine des Cygnes and then down a road between the Allée du Roi and the Allée Royale to the theatre. When the theatrical performance concluded, the guests crossed a short distance to a banquet supper at another intersection (now the Bassin de Flore). After the supper, a ball was held at the next crossroads (Bassin de Cères) in an especially constructed salon. From the ball, the guests continued the promenade toward the chateau while an enormous display of fireworks set the buildings and gardens aglow. See Figure 159, which would suggest that they passed by the Bassin de Latone again enroute to the chateau. See Chapter IX: Costumes, p. 634 on designers.

<sup>32</sup>Rouchès, p. 146. Letter of July 27, 1668.

<sup>33</sup>The dimensions in the primary sources are in toises and pieds. For the approximations cited here, these equivalents were used:

1 toise = 6 feet, 4-3/4 inches

1 piéd = 1 foot, 1 inch

See Figure 160.

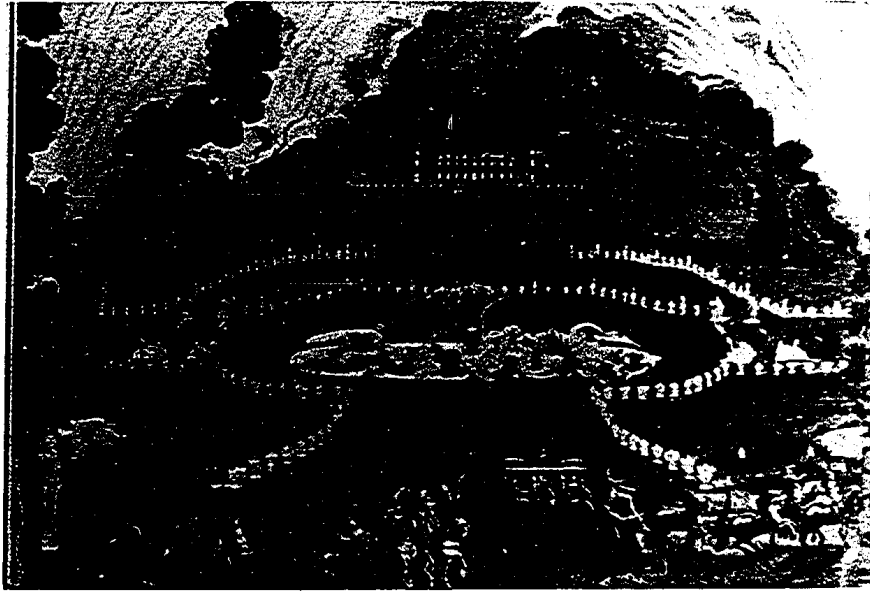
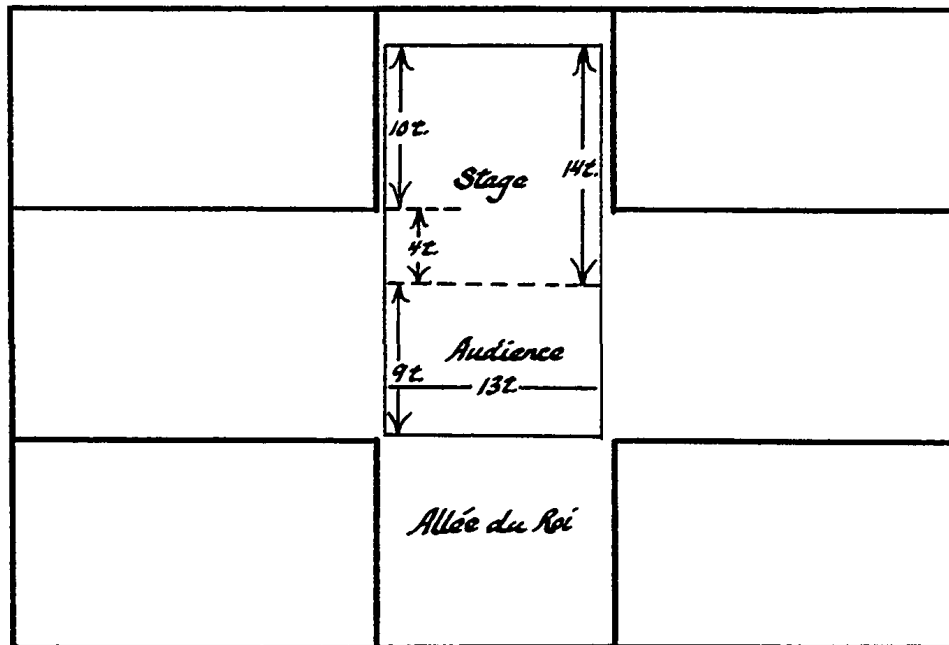


Figure 159. Illuminations during the 1668 fete (Le Pautre)



J. Dalzell

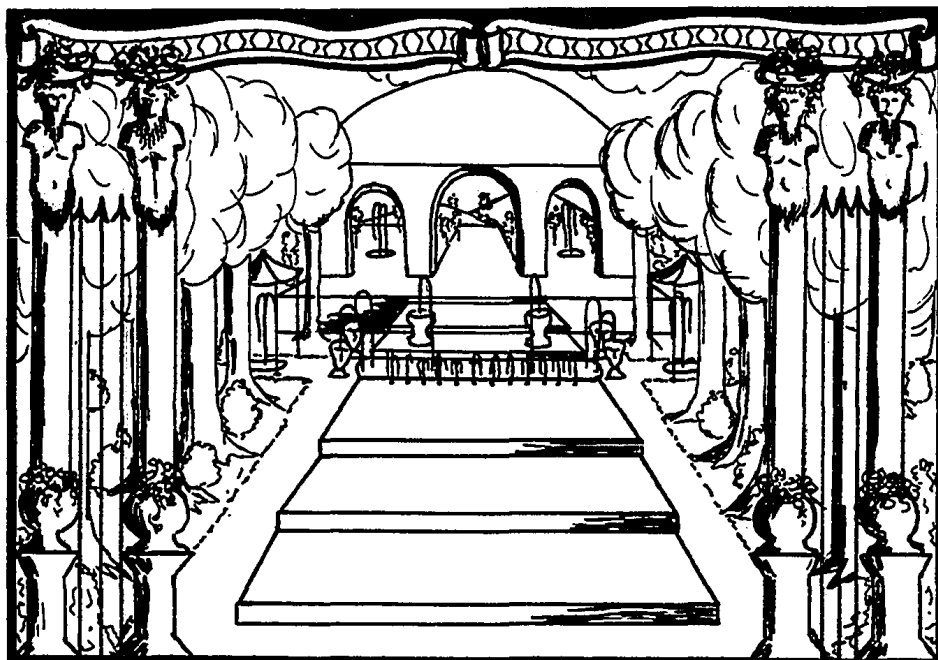
Figure 160. Conjectural sketch of intersection with salon and stage for George Dandin

The stage projected a little into the square and extended back sixty-four feet into the avenue toward the chateau. The proscenium opening was thirty-nine feet wide. On each side of it were two great twisted trunk columns of bronze and lapis lazuli surrounded by branches and by gold vines. They were posed on pedestals painted to look like marble and carried a grand cornice (the top of the proscenium) also marbled, in the middle of which was a gilded escutcheon of the arms of the King accompanied by trophies. Between each of the two columns was an allegorical figure: the one on the right representing Peace, and the one on the left Victory. Together they reflected the conditions His Majesty provided for his people. As Lawrenson says, "the proscenium arch is at once a stage framing device and a tribute to the monarch."<sup>34</sup> The stage was six or seven feet high to permit the operation of machines beneath it.

According to the livret, all the action of George Dandin occurs during a great rustic festival. The first setting at Versailles--the prologue--depicted a garden.<sup>35</sup> Two palisades were patterned to form an architectural unit, the cornice of which was supported by four terms representing satyrs with baskets of flowers on their heads. The terms were gilded bronze with foundations of jasper. On the pedestals of marble that supported the terms were great gilded vases full of flowers. Two three-leveled terraces of white marble surrounded a long canal. Gilded masks at the sides of the terraces spewed water into the canal,

<sup>34</sup>P. 137.

<sup>35</sup>Figure 161--Conjectural sketch of the garden set; Figure 162--a similar Vigarani design with terms, pots of flowers, terraces, stairs.



J. Dalzell

Figure 161. Conjectural sketch of garden set for George Dandin

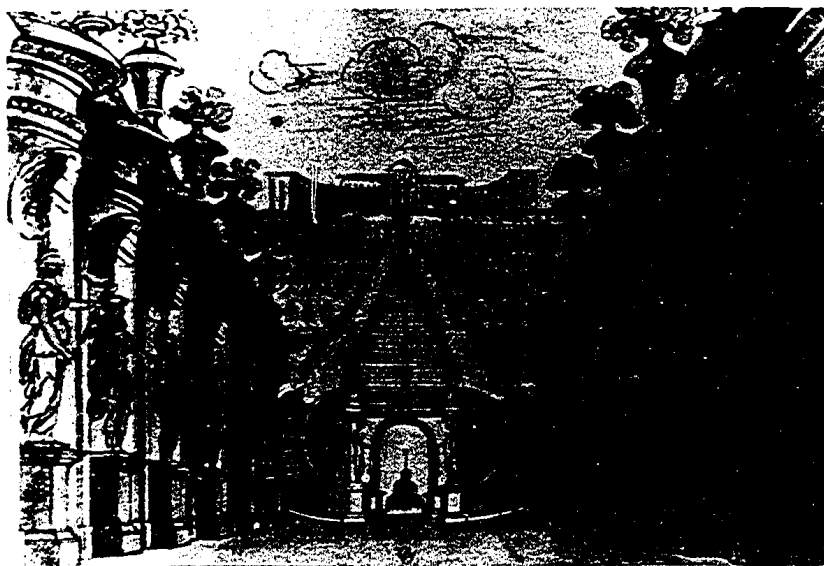


Figure 162. Vigarani design

the vases of gilded bronze above the masks also sent out jets of water. On the same level as the terms were two avenues of large trees. Rustic pavilions appeared between the trees, and each pavilion covered a marble pool that spouted water. The nearer edge of the canal was bordered by twelve jets of water, and on the other side was a superb edifice in the form of a dome. This structure had three great porticos, through which could be seen an enormous expanse of country.

The setting for the comedy proper is not mentioned in the accounts of the fete. The text of the play sets the scene in front of George Dandin's house. For this house with its door and upstairs window, necessary for the action, the standard châssis and ferme (wing and back shutter) arrangement may have been used. The ferme, a backpiece, usually architectural, could have provided the window and door; the châssis could have added the perspective of a village street. This scenery, fixed in slots in the floor, could easily have been moved in and out between the intermèdes.

The prologue garden setting may have been used for the two intermèdes. But for the finale the scenery changed. The jets of water, avenues, and pavilions were transformed instantaneously and magically (D-M, VI, 622) to a scene of trees and great rocks on which shepherds danced and played musical instruments. Following the dance, a machine in the form of a great rock covered with trees came forward from the back of the stage carrying forty satyrs, the troupe of Bacchus (Figure 77).<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup>A machine to carry the Twenty-four Violins had been used in 1647 by Torelli for Orfeo. Gaspare Vigarani had created a machine at Fontainebleau in 1661 which glided toward the audience with a group of courtiers dancing on it. Carlo Vigarani used a tree machine to hold musicians in The Princess of Elis.



The scenery for George Dandin was much more elaborate than for The Princess of Elis, but Vigarani was an architect more than a decorator and the King's next major fete at Versailles provided him with the opportunity to use his talents to best advantage.

Quand le Soleil est las, et qu'il a fait sa tâche,  
Il descend chez Téthys, et prend quelque relâche.  
C'est ainsi que Louis s'en va se délasser  
D'un soin que tous les jours il faut recommencer.

"Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon"<sup>37</sup>

Les Divertissemens de Versailles, given by Louis to celebrate the annexation of Franche-Comté, extended through July and August of 1674. On the evening The Imaginary Invalid was performed, the King and his following enjoyed a collation in the Ménagerie and a boatribe on the Grand Canal, and then went to the outdoor stage that had been built in front of the Grotte de Thétis.<sup>38</sup> According to Félibien's description, the stage was built out from the face of the Grotto and was elevated two and a half feet off the ground (although it looks somewhat higher in the Le Pautre engraving--Figure 91).<sup>39</sup> It "constituted a triumph for

<sup>37</sup>La Fontaine, p. 131.

"When the sun is weary and his task is done,  
He descends to Tethys and rests awhile.  
So too goes Louis to seek some repose from  
The care which, each day, he must take up new."

Translation from Gerald Van Der Kemp and Jacques Levrone,  
Versailles and the Trianons (New Jersey, 1958), p. 10.

<sup>38</sup>Figure 155--The Grotto, shown by an arrow to the side of the main building, was built in 1665 but torn down in 1685 to make way for the northern wing of the chateau.

<sup>39</sup>André Félibien, Les Divertissemens de Versailles donnez par le roy à toute sa cour au retour de la conquête de la Franche-Comté en l'année 1674 (Paris, 1676).

Vigarani."<sup>40</sup>

The proscenium consisted of a cornice supported at the two ends by what looked like solid blocks of masonry decorated with rustic ornaments similar to those on the outside of the Grotto. In each block was a niche containing a statue on a pedestal. On the audience left a figure represented Hercules holding his club and crushing Hydra; on the right Apollo leaned on his bow and stepped on the serpent Python. The cornice had a pediment, the tympan of which was decorated with the royal arms wreathed in laurel leaves.

The stage was lit by seven great chandeliers (although only five are shown in the Le Pautre engraving). Rows of orange trees decorated both sides of the stage.<sup>41</sup> The Grotto itself served as the principal stage decoration, the vista through the three front arches providing a perspective backdrop.<sup>42</sup> Crystal lanterns set on small gold and azure tables and candles on ledges illuminated the Grotto. In the foreground of the middle arch was a table holding a basket of flowers and surrounded by flower festoons. At the rear of the Grotto three niches contained white marble figures. In the center niche was a seated Apollo, surrounded by Nymphs of Tethys perfuming him; in the other two niches were his horses,

<sup>40</sup>Rouchès, p. xxiii.

<sup>41</sup>"A large number of orange-trees in boxes always formed an important part of the decoration, for the King had a very pronounced liking for this tree and the fragrance of its flowers." Rene-Jacques, Versailles (Garden City, New York, 1967), p. 7. Orange trees had been used on the outdoor stage for The Favorite (1665).

<sup>42</sup>Figures 163 and 164--the exterior and interior of the Grotto. Figure 165--An anonymous painting of Louis visiting the Grotto indicates dimension.

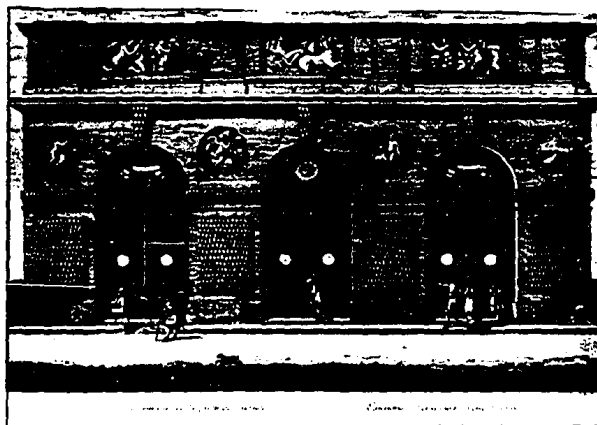


Figure 163. Exterior of the Grotto of Tethys



Figure 164. Interior of the Grotto of Tethys



Figure 165. Louis XIV visiting the Grotto (anonymous)

groomed by Tritons. Behind each niche a waterfall lit by many unseen candles created a shimmering effect. The sound of the cascading water was muted in part by the flowers and the orange trees in pots.

Tapestries stretched on frames in front of high foliage formed an auditorium for the guests. The King, the Queen, and the Dauphin sat in the center, the rest of the audience around the three sides.

Although most court entertainments at the royal residences were lavish affairs, Molière's comedy-ballets at Chambord apparently had little of the scenic spectacle usually associated with the official fetes. Louis used Chambord not for state functions, but for royal retreats.

-- Make way, make way, for Phoebus hunts. . .  
Here come the horses of the Roi-Soleil. . .

-- Louis XIV arrives at Chambord. . .

-- Let trumpets sound, whip in the pack.

-- And more than all the joyous tumult, 't is  
Molière's lusty laugh that thrills Chambord.

-- And fresher than the playing fountains,  
rose Lulli's music in the air. . .

-- 1669. . .

-- Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.

-- 1670. . .

-- On this evening of October 14, before  
His Majesty the King, Molière and Lulli will  
present their musical play 'Le Bourgeois  
Gentilhomme.'<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup>Jean Martin-Demézil and Yves Jamiaque, The Magnificent Hours of Chambord, a Light and Sound Spectacle presented at Chambord in 1952 (translated by A. S. Alexander), Scene IV, pp. 21-22.

Chambord, one of the chief works of French Renaissance architecture, was constructed for François I as a pleasure place. Located on the Loire river near the town of Blois but secluded in the thick woods of the Sologne country, this charming chateau, the largest of the Loire, was Louis XIV's favorite hunting retreat away from Paris (Figures 21 and 166). The four hundred forty rooms adequately lodged the royal entourage, and yet Chambord had a feeling of intimacy because it was relatively inaccessible. An uninvited guest, such as Monsieur de Montespan, could not suddenly appear at the isolated chateau. The whimsical double spiral staircase (Figure 167) seemed to set the tone for the informal royal holidays spent there. Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and The Would-be Gentleman, two of the liveliest and most light-hearted of Molière's comedy-ballets, were premièred at Chambord.

Almost nothing is known of the first presentation of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac on October 6, 1669. Carlo Vigarani's letter of October 11 indicates that he had returned to Paris from Chambord where he had built a "little theatre" for the comedies and ballets.<sup>44</sup> If any kind of stage decoration established a particular setting for the comedy-ballet, it may have been a city scene (Paris) with two houses (Oronte's and the First Doctor's), as was used in a later public theatre performance.<sup>45</sup> The three "tabourests" called for in Act I were similar to the little stools used by select members of the court in the audience.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup>Rouchès, p. 157.

<sup>45</sup>Lancaster, Mahelot, p. 137.

<sup>46</sup>Only certain high-ranking courtiers had the "right of the tabouret," or the very great honor of sitting in the presence of the King. (Wolf, p. 273)

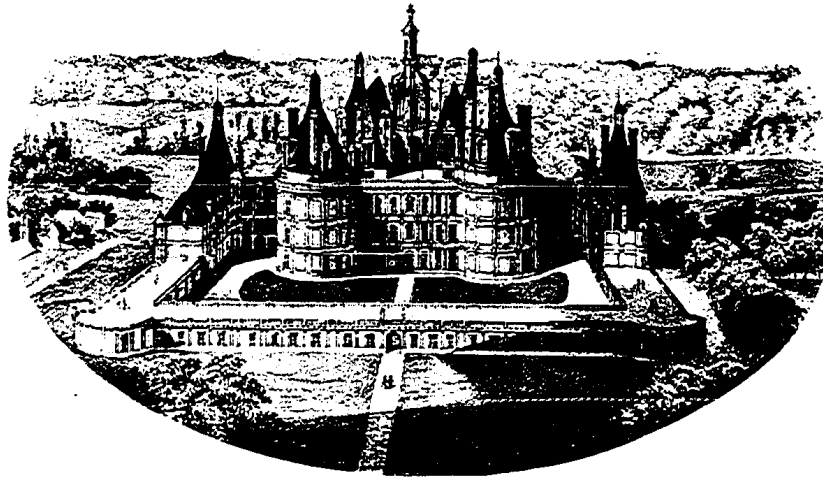


Figure 166. Chambord (Place d'Armes)



Figure 167. Chambord's double spiral staircase

In October, 1670 when the King was again at Chambord for a holiday, Molière and his troupe performed The Would-be Gentleman for the first time. The hooks that held up the stage curtain can still be seen in a great hall of the keep where the double staircase is located.<sup>47</sup> Folding chairs were installed for the royal family. The King had a secluded box on part of the staircase that faces the Salle de Compagnie.<sup>48</sup> A special floor was installed between two columns; tapestries were hung on three sides. Cushions were provided for the ladies of the court, while the men stood around the side areas in front of the stage.

Vigarani's bill for The Would-be Gentleman was a modest 585 livres. He was very likely in charge of the construction, however, because he submitted the account for items of materials and labor:

1,302 livres for the workmen  
 1,250 livres to Marotte, painter  
 120 livres to Jumel for a table service and serving cart  
 273 livres for the rigging, nails, and the curatin  
 130 livres for carts, tables, and folding chairs<sup>49</sup>

This production may have been mounted with the simplest of scenic embellishments--a stage, curtain, a backing, some properties. The entertainments Molière provided at Chambord were small and intimate compared with those for Saint-Germain.

De Saint-Germain en Laye, le 4 décembre 1666.

Le 2 du courant, fut ici dansé pour la première fois,  
 en présence de la Reine, de Monsieur et de toute la  
 cour, le Ballet des Muses . . . ce qui s'exécuta

<sup>47</sup>Pierre Gascar, Chambord (New York, 1962), p. 65.

<sup>48</sup>Figure 168--Floorplan of Chambord with indication of stage and audience areas. Robert Delagrange, "Molière à Chambord," Alsace Française, Strasbourg, IV (1922), 777.

<sup>49</sup>Moland, X, 442.



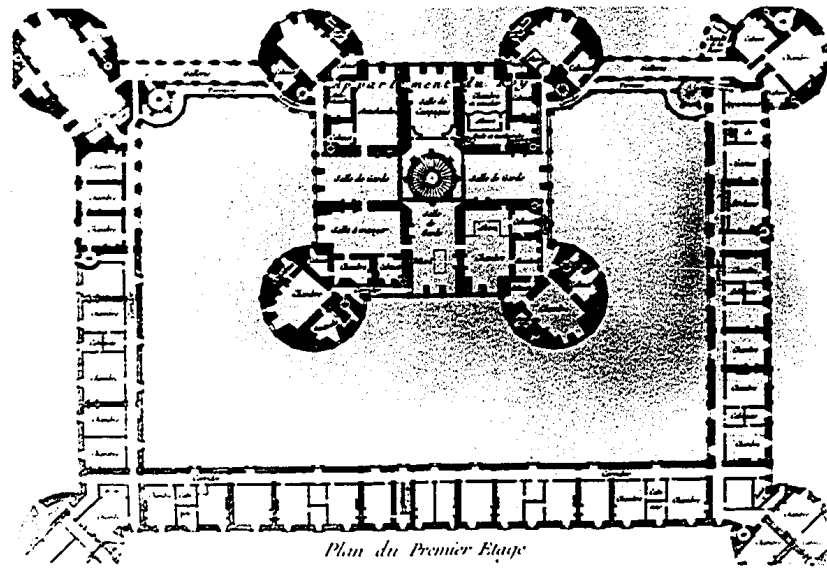
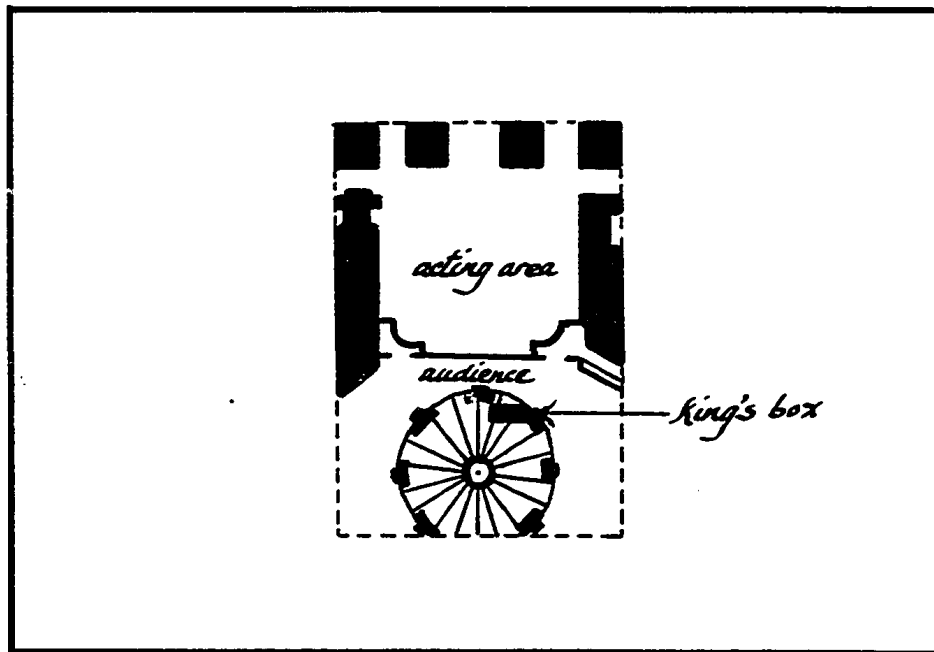


Figure 168. Floorplan of Chambord with stage area



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avec la magnificence ordinaire dans les divertissements de Leurs Majestés.<sup>50</sup>

De Saint-Germain en Laye, le 7 février [1670].

Le 4, Leurs Majestés prirent, pour la première fois, un Divertissement justement appelé Royal, puisque les belles choses dont il est composé sont accompagnées de toute la magnificence imaginable. . . .<sup>51</sup>

Saint-Germain-en-Laye, called the "Vieux-Chateau" because it was built in the twelfth century, is located along the Seine in the Ile de France outside Paris (Figure 21). It was reconstructed in the Renaissance style under François I, and had the distinction of being the birthplace of Louis XIV. The official locale of the royal court was there until Louis settled at Versailles in 1682. During the early years of Louis's reign, the most lavish indoor entertainments were held at this chateau because it had the best-equipped theatre. The Salle des Comédies, in the west building of the chateau (Figure 169), was the Salle du Bal of Henri II, to which Henri IV added a stage and banks of seats facing each other (Figure 170). Houdard, in his study of Saint-Germain, concludes that because no records exist of changes made before 1681 that this hall during Molière's time had the same arrangement as for Henri IV.<sup>52</sup> The

<sup>50</sup>"From Saint-Germain-en-Laye, December 4, 1666. The second of the current month, danced here for the first time in the presence of the Queen, of Monsieur, and of all the court was the Ballet of the Muses . . . it was executed with the magnificence usual in the divertissements of Their Majesties." Gazette quoted in D-M, VI, 128.

<sup>51</sup>"From Saint-Germain-en-Laye, February 7. The fourth, Their Majesties attended, for the first time, a Divertissement justly called Royal, since the beautiful things of which it is composed were accompanied by all imaginable magnificence. . . ." Gazette quoted in D-M, VII, 351-352.

<sup>52</sup>Georges Houdard, Les Châteaux royaux de Saint-Germain-en-Laye (Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 1909-1911), p. 231.

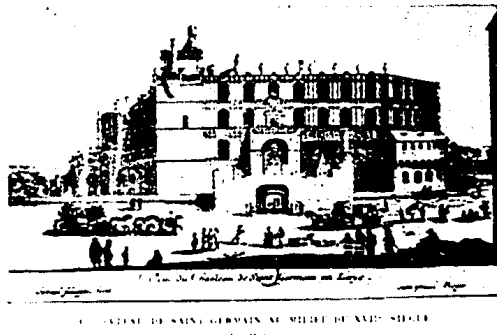


Figure 169. Saint-Germain-en-Laye (West side of Chateau)

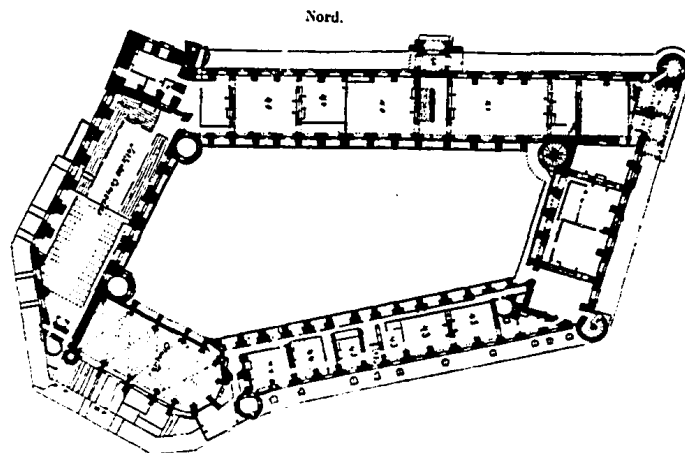


Figure 170. Floorplan of Saint-Germain with theatre

focus in 1666-1667 was on the King and the center of the room where ballet activities were held. In fact, viewing the stage must have been very inconvenient from the side seats.

Molière performed The Sicilian at Saint-Germain as part of the Ballet of the Muses. The action calls for the standard city scene with street and house. Wing apparatus shown on the floorplan of the Salle des Comédies, would allow for a scene change to the interior of Don Pedro's house. In any case, the high point of the performance for the court audience was the mascarade finale in which the King appeared as a Moor. No account of the fete describes the scenery. It is quite possible, however, that the ballet which began on the stage in the finale of the play overflowed into the auditorium by way of ramps and ended on the open space in the center of the room in the tradition of Italian intermezzi and the ballet de cour.<sup>53</sup>

In 1670, Vigarani spent six weeks at Saint-Germain-en-Laye building machinery for The Magnificent Lovers<sup>54</sup> which cost 27,092 livres.<sup>55</sup> The décor of The Magnificent Lovers, including the front curtain, is described in a special edition of the Gazette de France.<sup>56</sup> On the curtain

<sup>53</sup>A. M. Nagler, Theatre Festivals of the Medici (New Haven, 1964), p. 2 (see Figure 171). This arrangement was introduced in France in 1615 for the Ballet de Minerve (Christout, "The Court Ballet in France: 1615-1641," Dance Perspectives, [XX] 1964, 36).

<sup>54</sup>Rouchès, p. 162.

<sup>55</sup>Van Laun, V, 141. To see the relative importance of the décor, compare this amount with the 16,000 livres that Molière and his troupe were paid for their services for the same comedy-ballet. A much less elaborate production was mounted in September of the same year for the Duke of Buckingham; it had a temporary stage that cost about 9,000 livres (Van Laun, p. 142).

<sup>56</sup>"Les Magnificences du Divertissement qui a été pris par Leurs Majestés pendant le Carnaval" quoted in Moland, X, 221-226.

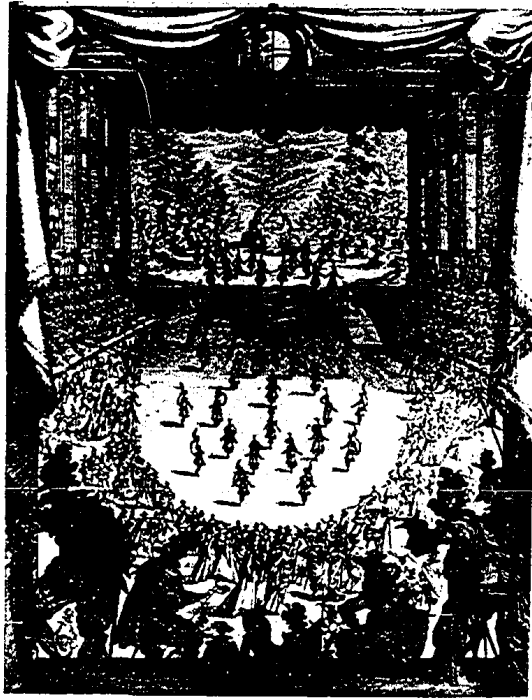


Figure 171. Auditorium and stage of the Uffizi Theatre

was painted a tableau bordered by a frieze of trophies. A sun in the center of the tableau was inscribed with Horace's Aliusque, et idem (Always different, and the same). On the right of the sun, Apollo rested on a cloud; his arrows had vanquished the Cyclops and the serpent Python, who were portrayed on the crest of distant mountains. To the left, the same god appeared on the summit of Parnassus, surrounded by the Muses, and scattered flowers on the Arts at the foot of the mountain.

The first scene of The Magnificent Lovers depicted the sea and the distant horizon, with rocks on both sides of the stage in the foreground. River-Gods leaned on urns at the summits of these rocks; Tritons stood at the foot of the rocks on both sides; Cupids mounted on dolphins rode the waves. Aeolus, King of the Winds, appeared on clouds above the sea. "This representation was so real that the spectators were enchanted and convinced that no sea scene had ever been portrayed so well." (Moland, X, 223) The waves disappeared in an instant and were replaced by an island where eight fishermen were discovered. Then Neptune appeared on a shell carried by four sea horses and accompanied by six Sea-Gods.

After this elaborate prologue, the scene changed to a green landscape--the Tempe Valley in view of the Penee river--which served as the setting for the beginning of the comedy.

A vine bower was added to the background of this landscape for the Third Interlude. Statues enriched with gold and standing on pedestals ornamented with fruit and flowers decorated the area. Orange and pomegranate trees in pots bordered the stage on both sides.

The next scene (Fourth Interlude) was a magnificent grotto located in a garden embellished with decorations and cascades. The grotto held

eight live statues. Later, in Act IV, Scene 2, the center of the grotto's vaulted roof opened and Venus accompanied by four little Cupids appeared in the middle of clouds. The clouds descended and moved to the front of the stage.<sup>57</sup> After Venus spoke to Aristione, the goddess was transported in a little cloud above the proscenium; two of the Cupids flew to either side of the proscenium opening and after some turns in the air, concealed themselves also in the clouds. The clouds withdrew and the roof closed again.

The forest reappeared for the last scene of the comedy.

The setting for the finale was a vast hall arranged like an amphitheatre, with a great arcade in the background above which was a tribune, and in the distance an altar. This hall was filled with painted spectators, dressed like Greeks, assembled to see the Pythian Games celebrated in honor of Apollo. Through the portico entered the great array of performers who appeared in the finale, including Apollo, whose entrance was announced from the tribune by a trumpeter.

The Ballet of the Ballets (1671) was also staged at Saint-Germain-en-Laye. And the production had stage machinery, for the prologue included a scene from Psyché in which Venus descended from the sky with six Cupids.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup>A machine of this type is described by Sabbattini in his Manual for Constructing Theatrical Scenes and Machines (Pratica di Fabricar Scene e Machine ne' Teatri, Ravenna, 1638), Book Two, "How To Lower A Cloud With Persons In It From The Rear Of The Heavens To The Center Of The Stage," (The Renaissance Stage, Coral Gables, Florida, 1958, p. 158).

<sup>58</sup>Psyché had been commissioned early in 1671 to use the idle stage and equipment at Vigarani's Salle des Machines in the Tuileries. Following this court performance, the production was transferred to the Palais-Royal which had to be modified to accommodate it. Psyché was the most

Molière's comedy-ballets were mounted at court with the most lavish and sophisticated scenic embellishments of the period. The simultaneous settings of the early ballet de cour with units of scenery positioned around the dance floor (décor dispersé) denoting different locales, had been replaced, mainly through Torelli's influence, by changeable scenery (décor successif) consisting of flat pieces painted in perspective and installed with a chariot-and-pole system on a proscenium stage. Wing pieces were attached to "poles" that came up through slots in the stage floor from wheeled "chariots" in the substage. Lawrenson argues that the proscenium, or stage frame (frontispice), was used like the arc de triomphe through which a prince entered a city.<sup>59</sup> A triumphal arch, lavishly and symbolically decorated, framed the perspective view behind it while at the same time paying tribute to the honored guest. Molière's outdoor stages at Vaux and Versailles, which were built to take advantage of the natural perspectives of the garden avenues seen through their prosceniums and were decorated with symbols of the monarchy, resembled these arches. Besides the proscenium, decorated curtains and elaborate scenes and machines served the same function--to glorify the King and to display the grandeur of France. It was a prince's duty to support such display. Aubignac wrote:

---

extravagant spectacle with which Molière was ever associated. See S. Wilma Deierkauf-Holsboer, L'Histoire de la mise en scène dans le théâtre français à Paris de 1600 à 1673, Paris, 1960, p. 76.

<sup>59</sup>p. 130.



And indeed it belong'd to no body more to adorn the Kingdom with all delightful Spectacles, than to him; who every day increas'd our Victories, and Crown'd us with new Lawrels. 'Twas but reasonable that he, who was in War so like Caesar and Pompey, should imitate them likewise in the restoring of Theatres, and other Princely Diversions; and in a Word, the magnificence of Publick Spectacles could not be better deriv'd than from him, who was himself the most glorious and noble Spectacle in the World.<sup>60</sup>

The scenic complexity and the optic opulence of Molière's musical entertainments generally increased throughout the years he wrote for the court. And the peripatetic custom of the court afforded a constant variety of surroundings for the productions.

Usually Molière and his actors, who were kept continually on the move to Versailles, to Chambord, to Saint-Germain, had very little notice to prepare for a journey. They probably did not travel in the royal cavalcades but went to court only when summoned. The length of their stay at any of the chateaux depended on the demands of the King. There were quick, one-day trips, week-long visits, and extended stays up to nearly three months. The description of Scarron's roving players traveling with a rough cart, "drawn by two yoke of lean oxen," and "laden with trunks, portmanteaus, and great packs of painted clothes,"<sup>61</sup> cannot be applied to Molière's troupe. Chappuzeau said, "When a person of quality engages a group of actors, carriages are put at their disposal."<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup>François Hédelin, Abbé d'Aubignac, The World Art of the Stage (New York, 1968, reprinted from the London translation of 1684), Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 13. Aubignac's La Pratique du théâtre was dedicated to Cardinal Richelieu, but perhaps even more appropriately applies to Louis XIV. Although the Pratique refers to theatre of 1635-1645, it was not published until 1657, and it influenced this later period.

<sup>61</sup>Paul Scarron, The Comical Romance and Other Tales (London, 1892), I, 3.

<sup>62</sup>Samuel Chappuzeau, Le Théâtre françois (Lyon, 1674), III, 119.

Molière's troupe went to Saint-Germain for performances of The Magnificent Lovers from March 1 to 9, 1670, and four "carrosses" (horse-carriages) were provided for the actors and a "calèche" (an open carriage with a folding top) for "le sieur Molière."<sup>63</sup> Customarily, special waggons ("charettes") carried their baggage.<sup>64</sup>

In the early years of Molière's Paris career, the visites were a glamorous, rather leisurely activity. The following is a probable order of events for the trip to Vaux-le-Vicomte in 1661. Molière and his troupe played a Sunday afternoon performance on August 14. After religious services on the 15th, a fixed holy day (the Assumption), the troupe traveled to Vaux-le-Vicomte. They set up and rehearsed on Tuesday the 16th, and performed The Bores the evening of Wednesday the 17th. On the 18th and 19th they rested and packed, and on Saturday the 20th returned to Paris where the next day, the 21st, they played their regular Sunday performance at the Palais-Royal. By 1670, the royal visites had become more routine and demanding "business trips." Molière and his troupe were in Chambord October 3 to 28 to rehearse and present The Would-be Gentleman; they returned to the Palais-Royal for three performances November 2, 4, and 7, and then went to Saint-Germain from November 8 to 16. And traveling was not without hardship. The roads were dusty or muddy, full of holes and rocks. Highwaymen necessitated an escort of gens d'arms. But since Louis was oblivious to bad weather and the fatigue and general discomforts of traveling,<sup>65</sup> he expected his court and his retainers to keep up with

<sup>63</sup>Moland, X, 517 (an expense account from Chambord and Saint-Germain).

<sup>64</sup>Moland, X, 424 (The Would-be Gentleman expense account).

<sup>65</sup>Wolf, p. 274, and W. H. Lewis, The Splendid Century (New York, 1957), p. 37.

him.

Besides transportation, actors received expenses for visiting the royal chateaux. For the trip to Fontainebleau where Molière and his troupe performed The Princess of Elis four times in 1664 (July 21 to August 13), the registers of Colbert include a living allowance for the actors (2,000 livres) and lodging (300 livres), as well as carriages (500 livres).<sup>66</sup> According to Chappuzeau, a troupe of actors on an extended stay at court received gratuities ("gratifications") of 1,000 écus monthly, and each performer 2 écus daily for expenses ("nourritures").<sup>67</sup> During their visits, each of the actors and actresses received periodically from the King's household three logs of wood, a bottle of wine, a loaf of bread, and two white candles. Meats and fruit for the performers are mentioned in The Would-be Gentleman expense account.<sup>68</sup> Chappuzeau also notes that actors were given servants to assist them, including an officer who made their lodging arrangements. The actors stayed in towns near the royal residences or at the chateaux. They were given lower buildings at the end of one exterior court when they visited Chambord,<sup>69</sup> and possibly the far houses at Versailles (Figure 155). The company's theatrical needs were taken care of as well as their personal accommodations, such as the dressing rooms built for them when they performed The

<sup>66</sup>Constant, p. 16.

<sup>67</sup>p. 89. Income listed in La Grange's register agrees: 6# (2 écus) per day for the stay at Saint-Germain in November, 1670 (p. 116) and 66# (2 écus per day) for the eleven day visit there in December, 1671 (p. 128).

<sup>68</sup>Moland, X, 386.

<sup>69</sup>Delagrangé, p. 775.

Would-be Gentleman.

Court entertainments were traditionally as transient as the temporary facilities devised for their production. Molière, however, needed plays he could subsequently present in a public theatre to a paying audience. The crowds loved spectacles, but spectacles were expensive.

Aubignac warned against them:

But for our times, though the Court does not dislike these Ornaments, and that the People crowd to see them, yet I would not advise our Poet to busy himself much in these machine Plays; our Players are neither Rich, nor Generous enough to make the Expense of them, and their Decorators want ability in the performance.<sup>70</sup>

Even for his court entertainments, therefore, Molière wrote plays that for the most part could be simply staged at the Palais-Royal, although the theatre had been built for spectacles.

Construction on the Salle du Palais-Cardinal, a private theatre for Richelieu, began in 1637 under the supervision of Jacques Lemercier.<sup>71</sup> Located in the right wing of the cardinal's palace with an entrance on the Rue St. Honoré, this Italian-style theatre had its formal inauguration in 1641 with the spectacle Mirame (Figure 19). When Richelieu died the following year his possessions became royal property; his palace was then a royal residence, the Palais-Royal, and the playhouse the Théâtre

<sup>70</sup>Book 3, Chapter 13, 94-95.

<sup>71</sup>Major sources besides Lawrenson and Deierkauf-Holsboer are: Henri Sauval, Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris (Paris, 1724), and V. Champier and G.-Roger Sandoz, Le Palais-Royal 1629-1900 (Paris, 1900).

du Palais-Royal. An engraving entitled "Le Soir" (Figure 172) shows a performance there attended in 1643 by Louis XIII and Cardinal Mazarin after Mazarin had succeeded Richelieu. During the Regency the theatre was used intermittently for court entertainments such as the opera Orfeo in 1647 for which, as mentioned earlier, Torelli made some modifications in the stage to accommodate his scenery.

The portion of the palace which constituted the theatre was approximately 110 feet long, including the stage, and probably 59 feet wide. The auditorium (amphithéâtre) was a rectangular hall with a depth of about 65 feet from a three-arch portico at the rear to the stage. Spectators had to be given candles when they had a ballet program to read because of poor lighting in the auditorium.<sup>72</sup> "Le Soir" indicates that the ground floor was a flat, open area (parterre) used exclusively by the royal family, while two galleries of seats for other spectators lined the walls on either side. There may have been rows of raised seats behind the parterre at that time, or they may have been installed later (Figure 173). At some point in the theatre's history, according to Sauval and the plan in the National Museum of Stockholm (Figure 174), graduated stone benches (gradins) or steps on which wooden chairs could be placed were constructed in the auditorium.

The stage (scène) in 1643 was raised, probably under six feet in height, and there were five steps from the stage to the auditorium. A proscenium arch separated the stage from the auditorium in the Italian manner. Decorated with an ionic column on each side and niches, faced

<sup>72</sup>Deierkauf-Holsboer, p. 76.

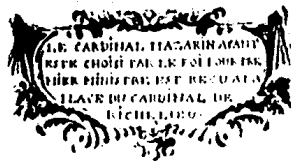
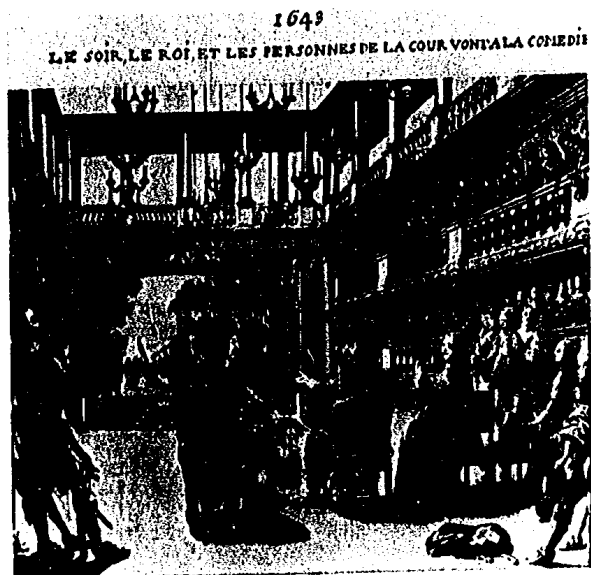


Figure 172. "Le Soir" at the Palais-Cardinal  
(alternate view at right shows Louis XIII  
and perhaps Cardinal Richelieu)

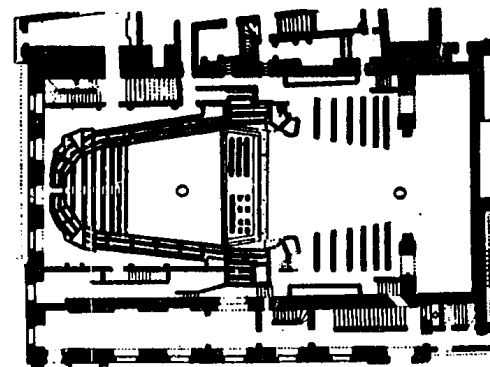


Figure 173. Jacques François Blondel's  
plan of the Palais-Royal  
(18th Century)

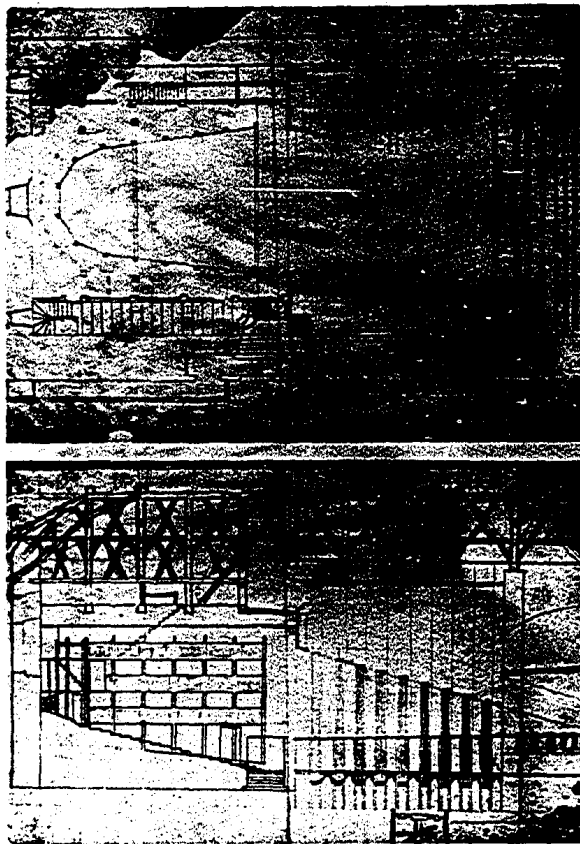


Figure 174. Stockholm plan of the Palais-Royal



Figure 175. Hôtel de Bourgogne with spectators on the stage  
(Le Pautre)

onstage, containing allegorical figures, the proscenium opening was about 30 feet wide and 22 feet high, the stage about 45 feet deep. The stage floor had a slight rake and was slotted for wings (châssis des coulisses) and backpieces (fermes and toiles de fond), which were topped by borders (frises). Although a front curtain was used for Mirame, there seems to be no evidence that Molière used one when he occupied the theatre.

By 1660 the theatre was unused and had fallen into disrepair. La Grange says that it took three months of repairs and redecoration, including the hasty installation in the galleries of boxes (loges) that had been brought from the Petit-Bourbon,<sup>73</sup> before Molière could open the theatre on January 20, 1661.

Capacity at the Palais-Royal is uncertain, but probably the theatre could comfortably accommodate 1,000 spectators. The Troupe du Roi offered the following ticket range in 1672: seats on the stage (théâtre), seats in the auditorium (amphithéâtre), first gallery (loges hautes), second gallery (loges du 3<sup>e</sup> rang) and pit (parterre).<sup>74</sup> The receipts from one of Molière's best-attended performances--the opening of The Imaginary Invalid in February, 1663--shows 682 spectators, 394 of whom stood in the pit.

Spectators on the stage are mentioned by Eraste in The Bores,<sup>75</sup> and

<sup>73</sup>Registre, p. 26.

<sup>74</sup>John Lough, Paris Theatre Audiences (Oxford, 1957), p. 107.

<sup>75</sup>Act I, Scene 1. Translation from Waller, II, 327-329.  
ERASTE: . . . I was on the stage, quite prepared to listen to the piece, which I had heard many praise; the actors had begun; everyone was silent; when a blustering fellow with big knee-ruffles, who looked a regular bore,



the implication is that these spectators at Molière's theatre sat on chairs and not on benches as at the Hôtel de Bourgogne (Figure 175). The stage could hold about thirty-two spectators, but apparently none could be seated there for machine plays.

The modifications made in the Palais-Royal to produce Psyché in 1671 were probably additions to the wings and the substage for increased chariot-and-pole scene-shifting apparatus. The Stockholm plan shows nine wing positions. Also, the original steps leading from the stage were probably removed at this time to place musicians in a box (orchestre) in front of the stage.<sup>76</sup>

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came rudely in. 'Hulloa!' ho! bring me a chair, directly,' he cried out, surprising the whole audience by his pronounced manners, and interrupting the play at its finest part. Good heavens, said I, will Frenchmen, who are so often sneered at, never act like sensible men? Must we show off our worst faults on the public stage, and thus confirm, by senseless conduct, what our neighbours everywhere say of us? While I shrugged my shoulders the actors tried to go on with their parts, but the man made a fresh disturbance as he seated himself, for he strode across the stage with big strides, although he might have been quite comfortable near the wings, planted his chair right in front, and, with his broad back turned insolently to the audience, hid the actors from three-fourths of the pit. A murmur arose which would have made anyone else ashamed, but he did not take any notice of it. There he sat, as firm as a rock, and would have remained unmoved, if, as my ill-luck would have it, he had not caught sight of me. . . He immediately asked me a hundred frivolous questions in a louder voice than any of the actors used. Everyone cursed him; and, hoping to check him, I told him I wanted to listen to the play. 'You have not seen it before, Marquis? Ah! God bless me, it is a very comical play, and I am not a fool at this sort of thing. I know by what rules a perfect work is fashioned: Corneille used to read me all he wrote.' Thereupon he gave me a summary of the play, scene by scene, telling me what was coming next, and even going so far as to recite aloud to me some lines he knew by heart before the actors. I tried in vain to restrain him. He followed up his advantage, and rose to leave long before the end. Men of fashion, you know, who give themselves airs, never think of staying to hear the finish.

<sup>76</sup>Chappuzeau, III, 119.

Descriptions of scenery used at the Palais-Royal are extremely rare, and little is known about the décorateurs. La Thorillière mentions a scene painter named Cronier in his Premier Registre.<sup>77</sup> La Grange allots 3# to Crosnier in the expenses for The Forced Marriage (Figure 146). Apparently the troupe even took him on the road with them, for he is mentioned as rendering them services at Versailles.<sup>78</sup> And Hubert in 1672-1673 names Crosnier on almost every other page of his register as the company's stage mechanic, decorator, and factotum. La Thorillière refers to a carpenter, Maître Denis, who built a platform and a tree machine for The Princess of Elis.<sup>79</sup> This reference indicates that some of the scenic effects used in the court production were incorporated into the Paris production, but until Psyché, Molière's musical productions probably had stage settings of simple wings, backpieces, and borders.

Kernodle has concluded that most of the scenery used in French public theatres not devoted to spectacles consisted of flat, two-dimensional representations of house fronts and rooms: "As the inner scene was usually the interior of the building represented on the ferme, the two scenes had a space relationship that approached that of the actuality they represented."<sup>80</sup> A typical entry from Mahelot is: "The scene is of

<sup>77</sup>Schwartz, "La Thorillière," p. 1055.

<sup>78</sup>Schwartz, "La Thorillière," p. 1062.

<sup>79</sup>Schwartz, "La Thorillière," p. 1071. La Grange also notes (p. 68) "extraordinary expenses," probably for décor, on November 9, 1664 when Princess opened; he applies all of the money received from a visite to Colbert (300 livres) to pay for "decorations" at the theatre (p. 69).

<sup>80</sup>George R. Kernodle, From Art to Theatre (Chicago, 1944), p. 210.

houses, a room [made ready] at the back. A ferme opens to allow the room to be seen."<sup>81</sup> Love's the Best Doctor may have had this kind of scenery to accommodate the change of action from in front of Sganarelle's house to inside. A ferme closing in front of Argan's room in The Imaginary Invalid might have been used to set the scene for the Polichinelle interlude; this ferme could have had a window cut in it from which Toinette called to her lover on the street. Fermes were used not only for windows, but frequently as doorways. The Would-be Gentleman may have had wings to represent the parlor of Monsieur Jourdain, a portal (ferme) upstage (through which the cooks and Turks could enter), behind which was a vestibule backing,<sup>82</sup> or possibly a terrace as indicated in the Brissart engraving (Figure 87).<sup>83</sup>

Mesnard has suggested that perhaps Molière's plays were staged with one simple set, and if a change of locale occurred in the action, the actors indicated the new place through dialogue and movement.<sup>84</sup> And possibly in effect stage properties constituted most of the "scenery." The list of properties for The Imaginary Invalid, for example, is extensive, and includes furniture, lanterns, and pillows.<sup>85</sup> Clearly, the

<sup>81</sup>Lancaster, Mahelot, p. 34.

<sup>82</sup>D-M, VIII, 43.

<sup>83</sup>See also Figure 175---reconstructions of possible floorplans: (1) based on Fritsche's notion that at least six coulisses lined each side of Molière's stage, with the three downstage remaining stationary in order not to disturb the spectators on the stage (H. Fritsche, "La Scène de Molière," Le Moliériste, IX [1887], 110), and (2) similar to the reconstruction for The School for Husbands in Pierre Sonrel, Traite de scenographie (Paris, 1956), p. 59, which employs angle wings (châssis brisés).

<sup>84</sup>D-M, VI, 258.

<sup>85</sup>Lancaster, Mahelot, p. 123.

emphasis at Molière's theatre was on the actors, not the stage decorations. Molière died before the trend toward elaborate scenery for musical productions led Charles de Saint-Evremond to say of opera, "A foolishness laden with music, dances, machines, and decorations, is a magnificent foolishness, but still a foolishness."<sup>86</sup>

<sup>86</sup>Quoted in Gustave Cohen, L'Evolution de la mise en scène dans le théâtre française (Lille, 1910), p. 16.

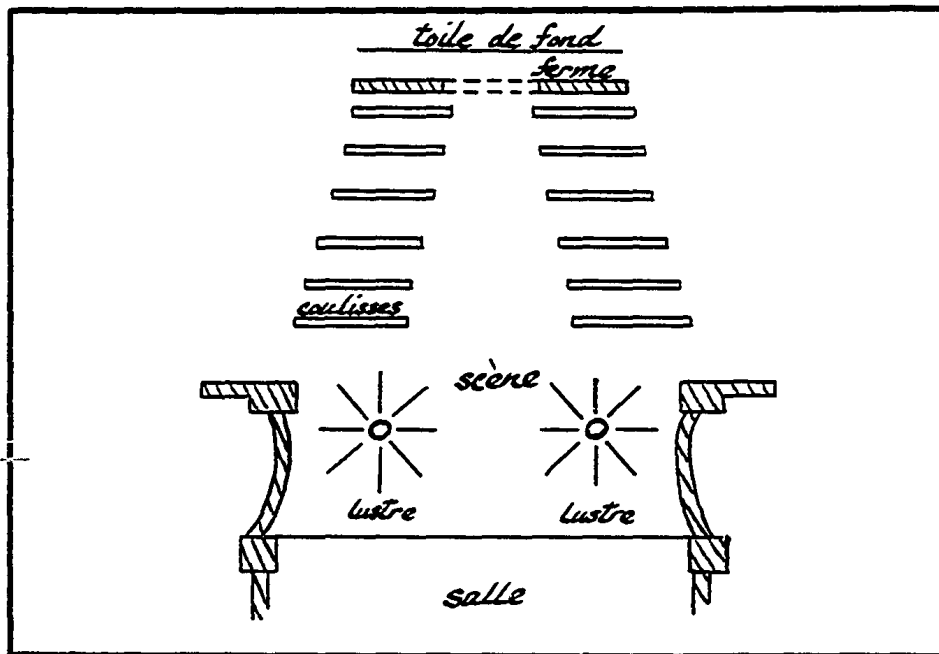
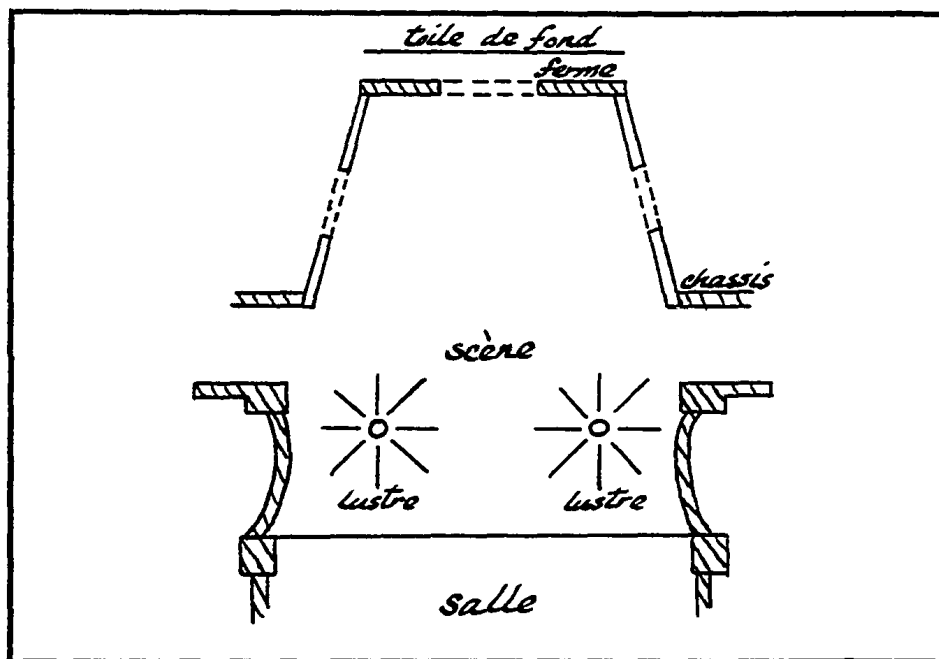


Figure 176. The Would-be Gentleman set reconstructions



J. Dalzell

## CHAPTER IX

### COSTUMES

One of the major decorations of Louis XIV's reign was his richly adorned court. When Louis's nobles were reduced to ceremonial functions and courtly amusements, they organized these activities into splendid affairs requiring appropriately lavish attire. As each courtier attempted to out-do the others with a more striking wardrobe, the King was provided with a dazzling array of mannequins he could manipulate at will.

Fashion became a matter of etiquette. The Grand Monarque himself set the rules of style and appropriateness, and the court obeyed. He distributed presents of jewelry and clothes-stuffs to his favorites, and sometimes he provided clothing for them at his various residences. Accounts of the King's finery describe fabrics of gold and silver and rich brocades covered with laces, diamonds, and emeralds. The constant succession of magnificent court divertissements given by the King encouraged extravagance in dress, and people of quality frequently incurred great debts for clothing in order to maintain the standards he demanded.

Louis apparently loved dressing up. He even raised the ordinary function of getting dressed to the level of artful ceremony. To attend the King for his daily event was one of the great privileges of the highest ranking courtiers. The King allowed his favorites to dress up in a special blue silk coat embroidered with gold and silver (le

justaucorps à brevets).<sup>1</sup> For his court he provided masking and costuming, a traditional pastime of nobility which reached a zenith at the Court of Apollo where the King led the dressing up for hunts, balls, and ballets. While these excesses for the nobility were acceptable, even expected, they were not for anyone else; a pretentious bourgeois guilty of the same obsession with clothing was ridiculous:

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: What it is to look like a person of quality! Go on dressing as an ordinary person and nobody will ever call you a gentleman.

The Would-be Gentleman

Act II, Scene 5

And his dressing up, used by Molière for a dance sequence, was an even greater absurdity.<sup>2</sup>

Louis's taste for opulent attire determined the type of costumes worn by court entertainers. Great quantities of gold and silver cloth, velvets, embroidered satins, silks, semi-precious stones, and plumes were made available to court performers from the King's supplies. A court performance had to be at least in keeping with the magnificence of everyday court life. Mlle Molière as the Princess of Elis wore a costume which consisted of a skirt of lemon yellow taffeta garnished with lace and a bodice decorated with gold and silver embroidery.<sup>3</sup> The gypsy

<sup>1</sup>Maurice Leloir, Dictionnaire du costume (Paris, 1951), p. 54.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Grimarest in La Vie de M. de Molière, 1705 (Paris, 1930), tells stories (pp. 78-79) about Molière that make him sound rather like Jourdain. Molière dressed like a man of quality (a "Grand Seigneur"), would not even tie his own cravat, and once at Chambord kicked his valet in the backside for repeatedly putting a stocking on him inside out.

<sup>3</sup>Figure 73 - Silvestre's interpretation of this costume. Some of

costume worn by her when she performed in The Forced Marriage included a satin cloak and skirt of several colors. Robinet, in an account of The Sicilian performed at court, related how the two Greek slave girls (Mlle Molière and Mlle de Brie), "who could enslave and fire a hundred hearts with their charm," wore very costly costumes that were royal gifts.<sup>4</sup>

Molière used the lavish costuming required for court performances as dramatic material for his plays. The dressing up of Monsieur Jourdain has already been mentioned. Another example is George Dandin. His elaborate costume not only perpetuates the tradition of pastoral silks and satins; it reveals this rich peasant's absurd pretentiousness. Noble characters in The Princess of Elis and The Magnificent Lovers would naturally be dressed in fine clothing, but the bourgeois would-be lovers are also justified in being well-dressed. Fools, such as Sganarelle and Monsieur Jourdain, parade themselves in finery in the vain hope of

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Armande's costumes were described in the inventory of Molière's costumes at the time of his death. Eudore Soulié, Recherches sur Molière (Paris, 1863), pp. 275-280. Brissart's engraving (Figure 72) shows the Princess in a dress that has been traced to Soulié's inventory by Eugène Lapierre ("Molière Illustré," Le Moliériste, IX (1887-1888), 341, quoting from p. 279 of the inventory). This dress has a bodice brocaded with silver flowers and Isabel sleeves streaked with silver and rose.

<sup>4</sup>Lettre en vers à Madame of June 19, 1667 quoted in D-M, VI, 225.

Surtout on y voit deux esclaves,  
 Qui peuvent donner des entraves,  
 Deux Grecques, qui, Grecques en tout,  
 Peuvent pousser cent coeurs à bout,  
 Comme étant tout à fait charmantes,  
 Et dont enfin les riches mantes  
 Valent bien de l'argent, ma foi;  
 Ce sont aussi présents de roi.



favorably impressing the young women they seek or marry. Even Argan would not be a completely disarranged invalid with a new wife in his house for whom he wishes to be attractive. This dramatic justification kept extravagant costumes from overwhelming the plays.

Costumes for actors and actresses in court productions were based essentially on fashions of the people of quality, which in the early 1660's were very fancy, featuring an abundance of ribbons and bows (les petites oyes). As the decade progressed a less effeminate mode for the men appeared with the arrival of the coat (le justaucorps). Molière's costume inventory shows that his costumes for the earlier comedy-ballets consisted of the full breeches ornamented with ribbon loops and lace (la rhingrave), the short doublet (le pourpoint), and the cloak (le manteau) of the then current fashion. With Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (1669) the items of apparel listed in this inventory change, according to the changing style, to the coat and vest. Several of these costumes also included the wig and plumed hat worn by men of the time and the cap used to protect the closely-cropped head when the wig was not worn. Leloir points out that the battle between the old beribboned style of the rhingrave and the new tailored style of the justaucorps is clearly portrayed in The Would-be Gentleman as Monsieur Jourdain obtusely clings to a thoroughly out-moded fashion.<sup>5</sup> Female attire of the time (Figure 177) included a long skirt (la jupe) topped by a tight-fitting bodice (le corps) with a

<sup>5</sup>p. 348. Monsieur Jourdain's rhingrave undoubtedly would have been accompanied by fancy leg coverings (canons) that were starched and bouffant, making the wearer walk ridiculously with his legs far apart (Figure 65). The garish "Indienne" dressing gown Jourdain wears is also out of style; Persian fashions were "in" (D-M, VIII, 50-51).



Figure 177. Female attire in the mid-seventeenth century

low neckline and full sleeves, occasionally accompanied by a short cloak (la mante). Hair was worn parted in the middle, with loose, flowing ringlets at both sides. The fabrics used for actresses' costumes were rich, and the ornamentation profuse. A particularly elaborate costume, such as for The Princess of Elis, had a plumed headdress (le panache) and long double skirts with a train that had to be carried by a page. A page was required to hold Dorimène's train in The Forced Marriage.

According to Chappuzeau, expenses for an actor's costume for presentations at court were paid out of the royal treasury by the gentlemen of the chamber at 400 livres each.<sup>6</sup> When actual goods were not provided, some such payment may have been made to Molière's company. But Chappuzeau's estimate does not hold for The Would-be Gentleman. The expense account of this court production shows that 4,400 livres were given to the actors of the Palais-Royal.<sup>7</sup> There were thirteen members of the company, some of whom, such as Molière in the role of Monsieur Jourdain, required more than one costume, and therefore payment per costume must have been somewhat less than 400 livres. La Grange's Registre notes that the amount given him by the King for his comedy-ballet costumes was not sufficient, and he had to pay 2,000 livres more himself.<sup>8</sup> He received only a 200 livre costume allowance for The Would-be Gentleman.

<sup>6</sup>Le Théâtre françois (Lyon, 1674), Book III, p. 92.

<sup>7</sup>Moland, X, 418.

<sup>8</sup>P. 146. Figure 178.

*Memoires.*

*De l'argent que Jay Receu pour  
le habit des pieces qui ont esté  
faictes pour le plaisir du Roy.*

<i>Marriage forcé . . .</i>	<i>100:</i>
<i>Princesse d'Orléans . . .</i>	<i>200:</i>
<i>Médecin . . .</i>	<i>300:</i>
<i>Scilicet . . .</i>	<i>100:</i>
<i>Lavallée Cardon . . .</i>	<i>200:</i>
<i>Leurs Dames . . .</i>	<i>200:</i>
<i>Leurs pages . . .</i>	<i>200:</i>
<i>Bourg gentilhom . . .</i>	<i>200:</i>
<i>Princes Magnifiques . . .</i>	<i>200:</i>
<i>Elyché . . .</i>	<i>200:</i>
<i>Escabagnas . . .</i>	<i>100:</i>
	<i>2000:</i>

*Comme ce que le Roy devoit Récom-  
penser par la despense qu'il falloir  
faire les habits des autres Courtiers  
de deux autres mil livres sur son pain  
d'ordres de leur part.*

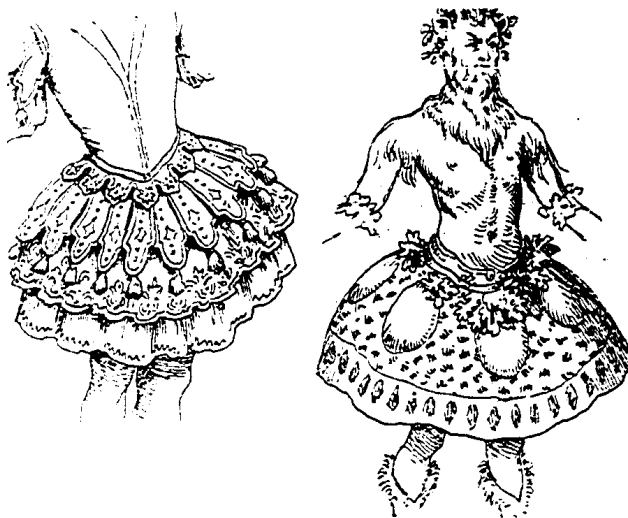
Figure 178. Page from La Grange's Registre

Figure 179. Tonnelets

The actors and actresses of Molière's company received special costume allowances, and the comedy-ballets were lavishly costumed at great expense not only because these entertainments were performed for an illustrious audience, but because they were an extension of the ballet de cour which had always had rich costumes. Indeed, the greatest expense of a comedy-ballet at court was for costumes (more than for stage settings or all the fees to transport and house the performers) because of the musical interludes. Costumes for dancers and singers required large payments to tailors and various additional amounts to many people who provided accessory goods such as stockings, ribbons, garters, dancing shoes, masks, plumes, wigs, gloves, and gems.

Presumably many of the conventions of costume in the ballet de cour were adopted for the comedy-ballets. Male dancers during the time of Louis XIV wore a costume "in the antique fashion."<sup>9</sup> The upper part of the garment was tight-fitting around the torso like the Roman breastplate. The most distinctive part of the costume was the short skirt (le tonnelet) which was also an imitation of ancient military garb.<sup>10</sup> The tonnelet was usually highly ornamented, often with scallops (Figures 179 and 107). Decorative trim also adorned the dancer's costume generally at the collar, shoulders, waist, and sleeves. The neckcloth (la cravate), an item that became associated with the justaucorps, is an accessory

<sup>9</sup>Leloir, p. 144. This style came from the characters of antiquity so frequently used in court ballets.

<sup>10</sup>The tonnelet was derived from les bas de saie, or bottom of the saie (Roman mantle).

accounted for in ballet expenses.<sup>11</sup> Wigs and plumed headdresses were standard ballet gear, the headdress far more magnificent than the Roman helmet upon which it was based. The dancing pump (l'escarpin) was a simple, lightweight shoe with a small heel. These dance costumes, although richly decorated, were designed to show the body line advantageously, to allow freedom for lively movements, and to reveal a well-turned leg. They looked particularly well on the King. Female ballet characters were always more modest and sedate than their male counterparts, with less active movement in their dancing; they wore calf or ankle-length skirts (Figure 180). Their costumes, like those for male characters, were highly decorated, but they always more closely resembled contemporary dress.

Whether or not a great difference existed between street dress of the mid-seventeenth century and the costumes for the comedies of Molière, a noticeable distinction prevailed for the ballet costumes. A costume designer worked closely with a choreographer in order to exaggerate the buffoonery or elegance of an entrée. The idea was to extend the style of the day to the limit of fantasy. In discussing the ballet de cour as antecedant to the comedy-ballet, Pellisson mentions the bizarre practice of amassing on the costume of a character the articles of his metier.<sup>12</sup> He refers to a description of Music so garbed in Les Fées des forêts de Saint-Germain and remarks that this practice continued through the work

<sup>11</sup>See Figure 82 in which the noble characters of antiquity in The Magnificent Lovers wear the cravat with the tonnelet, an example of "period" costuming as influenced by dictates of the court.

<sup>12</sup>Les Comédies-ballets de Molière (Paris, 1914), pp. 52-53.



Figure 180. Female ballet character (Shepherdess)

of designers Gissey and Bérain.<sup>13</sup> Making the accouterments of a character's profession conform to the human body as well as resemble the silhouette of the current fashion was a designer's tour de force. The character Music in Love's the Best Doctor might have been costumed in this manner with musical notation and musical instruments as decoration. Other comedy-ballet characters that might have had similar treatment are the apothecaries in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac,<sup>14</sup> the shoemakers in The Bores,<sup>15</sup> the fishermen in The Magnificent Lovers,<sup>16</sup> the tailor boys in The Would-be Gentleman, and the surgeons in The Imaginary Invalid.<sup>17</sup> Performers so costumed, after making an entrance, generally abandoned the more cumbersome accessories in order to dance more freely.<sup>18</sup>

It was customary in court ballets to reuse dance costumes from

<sup>13</sup>See Figure 181--"Recit de La Musique" from Les Fées des forêts de Saint-Germain (1625), Figure 182--Ballet design by Henry Gissey (c. 1670), and Figure 183--Ballet design by Jean Bérain (late seventeenth century). See p. 637 of this study for a description of the Gissey design. See also Figure 124--a Musician, noted in an earlier chapter, from a collection of engravings by Nicolas Larmessin, Grotesques (people adorned in the attributes of their profession).

<sup>14</sup>See Figures 184 and 185--a seventeenth-century engraving and a costume design of Henry Gissey. Although the first of these figures is the more fantastically descriptive, Reade in his Ballet Designs and Illustrations 1581-1940 (London, 1967), p. 9, points out that Gissey's costume clearly denotes its wearer's occupation: "The hat is in the form of an alembic on a stove, in the middle of which, just above the man's left eye, a fire is shown burning."

<sup>15</sup>See Figure 186--Ballet design by Jean Bérain (late seventeenth century).

<sup>16</sup>See Figure 187--Fisherman.

<sup>17</sup>See Figure 188--Tailor and Figure 189--Surgeon (Seventeenth-century engravings).

<sup>18</sup>Marie-Françoise Christout, "The Court Ballet in France: 1615-1641," Dance Perspectives [XX] (1964), p. 21.





Figure 181. Musique

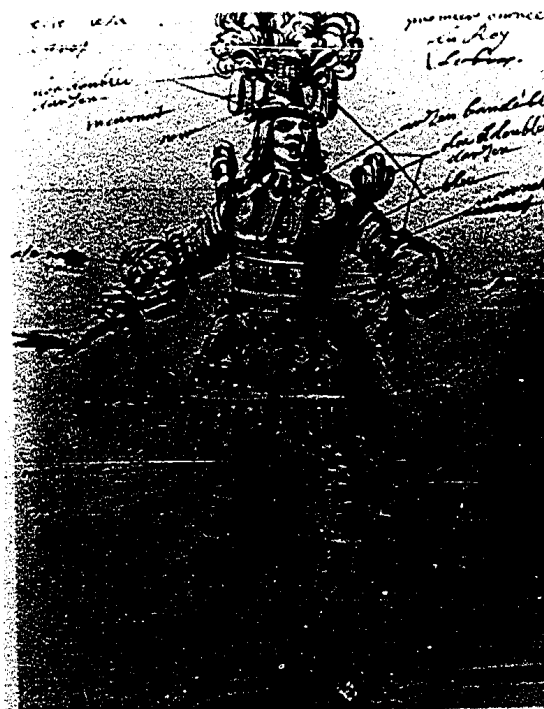


Figure 182. Music (Gissey)



Figure 183. Music (Bérain)

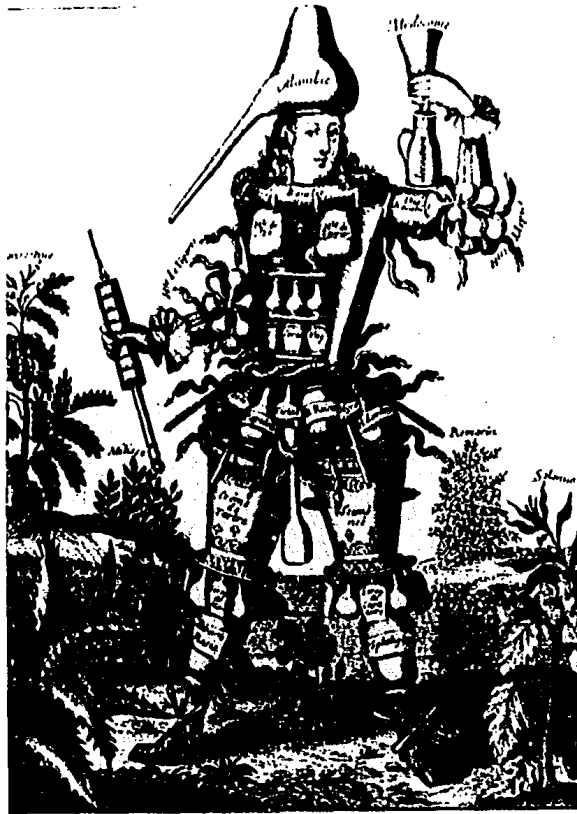


Figure 184. Apothecary



Figure 185. Apothecary (Gissey)

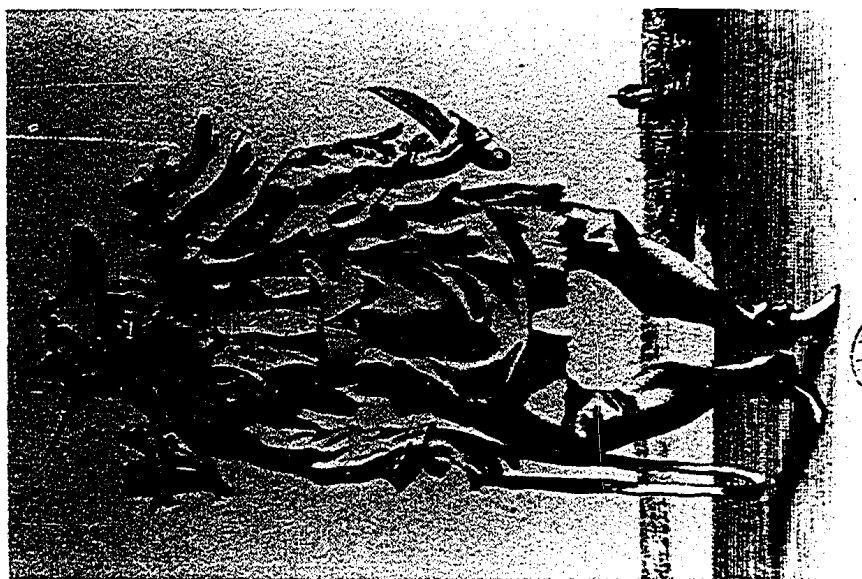


Figure 186. Shoemaker (Bérain)

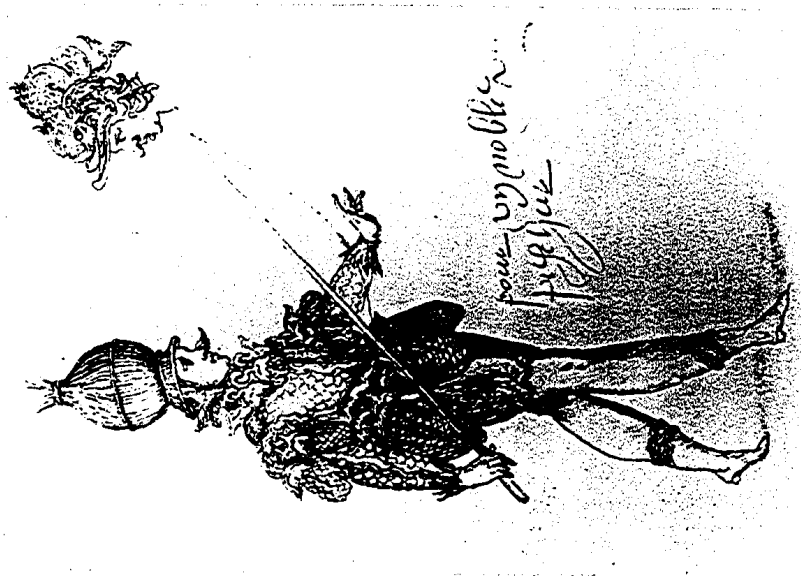


Figure 187. Fisherman



Figure 188. Tailor



Figure 189. Surgeon

previous productions.<sup>19</sup> Apparently, tailors in the King's service kept a store of costumes for standard character types that could be rented, and expense accounts for the comedy-ballets include costume rentals. Also, the King had his own supply of costumes, some of which may have been used for Molière's entertainments. In an appendix to his study of the comedy-ballets, Pellisson has included the Inventory of the Costumes of the Ballets of the King taken in 1754, claiming that the classification of items at that time was probably very similar to the one under Louis XIV.<sup>20</sup> Entries familiar from the comedy-ballets are costumes in the Greek style including those of priests and priestesses, pastoral costumes of various kinds ranging from gypsy to gallant, peasants, pantomimes, demons, Moors, Egyptians, Tritons and naiads, woodland characters including fauns, dryads and satyrs, winds and zephyrs, hunters, Spaniards and Turks, Sicilians, and costumes in the French style. While the unique and lavishly decorated costumes of the King would be kept in a special collection, those of the court dancers could be grouped together under character types. Engravings of groups of dancers show that generally all ballet characters in an entrée were dressed alike (Figures 190, 191, and 16).

Some standard characters from the ballet de cour reappeared in the comedy-ballets and a few recall characters of the very important Ballet

<sup>19</sup>An actor, on the other hand, kept his own costumes to be used for play revivals. That basic items of a particular costume were not reused for different plays is apparent from the inventory of Molière's costumes in which each costume is basically separate and intact.

<sup>20</sup>Pp. 225-227.



Figure 190. Choreographic composition (a)



Figure 191. Choreographic composition (b)

de la nuit (1653) for which there have been preserved some brief costume descriptions. The gypsies of The Forced Marriage, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac and The Imaginary Invalid could have resembled the gypsy of the Ballet de la nuit who played a tambourine and the gypsy girl who danced in a red waistless robe, a handkerchief with two hanging tails on her head.<sup>21</sup> Games or Frolics in the finale of Love's the Best Doctor might have been similar to this character who appeared in the earlier ballet in a checked costume with cornucopias on the shoulders, a band of cards in the head-dress and hanging at the belt, and dice on the doublet as buttons<sup>22</sup>-- another example of a character whose profession is portrayed by his costume. The Followers of Bacchus in the finale of George Dandin might have resembled the Bacchus character in Ballet de la nuit who wore a short vermilion doublet wreathed with vine-branches and whose head was dressed with a straw bottle and foliage.<sup>23</sup> The Demons of The Forced Marriage might have resembled an earlier demon whose costume was black with red ribbons and ornaments, tails and wings. His belt was made of serpents and two more serpents stood on end hissing on his head, coiling their tails around his horns.<sup>24</sup>

Sketches for some of the costumes of The Forced Marriage are reproduced in Henry Prunières's edition of Lully's musical score: the Magician, a Spaniard, the Sorrows, and the Charivari. A comparison be-

<sup>21</sup>François Victor Fournel, Les Contemporains de Molière (Paris, 1866), II, 371.

<sup>22</sup>Fournel, p. 375.

<sup>23</sup>Fournel, p. 381.

<sup>24</sup>Fournel, p. 388.



tween the comedy-ballet Magician (Figure 68) and one in an early ballet de cour, the Ballet du château de Bicêtre (1632) (Figure 192) shows that costume interpretation could vary. The later version, perhaps influenced by the spirit of the comedy-ballet and more advanced ballet technique, is lighter, more whimsical in design as well as less encumbering for the dancer.

Annotations on the design for the costume of the "Sorrows" (Chagrins) (Figure 67) reveal some enlightening interpretative material. Sorrows in The Forced Marriage was represented symbolically: the passage of leafage which accompanies the end of autumn. Marigolds, the autumn flower, adorn the character's hat, but hanging from this hat, as elsewhere on the costume, are dead black leaves. Black stripes alternate with gold on the legs to indicate further perhaps the sadness of warm autumn changing to grim, cold winter.

The display of colorful costumes was one of the most important features of the ballet de cour. Ballet costumes had to be elegant, exotic, or comic. These characteristics can be illustrated by the attire for several character types adopted in the comedy-ballets--Swiss Guards, Turks, Doctors, and Italian commedia dell'arte figures.

Swiss Guards (Suisses) were disciplinary officers who since 1496 had been attached to the kings of France. Along with torch-bearing pages, they took positions around the dancing area for ballets (Figure 100); otherwise they were stationed in front of the stage (Figure 73). Because of their picturesque trappings they also proved to be popular ballet characters. They appear in the ballet portions of The Bores and Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. Under Louis XIV their garb consisted of red



Figure 192. Magician in the  
Ballet du Château de Bicêtre



Figure 193. Swiss Guard

and blue breeches and doublet and a white shirt with a wide square collar. They wore a hat of pleated black velvet trimmed with a white feather. A decorative sword belt and sheath, a sabre, and a halberd completed the outfit.<sup>25</sup>

Turks were excellent ballet characters because of the exotic, colorful nature of Turkish attire. The most characteristic costume feature of a turquerie was the large turban elaborately rolled about a fez, sometimes forming a high point at the crown. The garment itself consisted of a long-sleeved, well-fitting tunic with a long full skirt, the corners of which were occasionally folded back to expose baggy trousers. An illustration of four dancing Turks of the type what would have appeared in The Would-be Gentleman is included in Lambranzi's New and Curious School of Theatrical Dancing.<sup>26</sup> As can be seen in the Brissart engraving of The Would-be Gentleman, the Mufti has a more elaborate headdress and richer brocade fabric in his garment than the less important figures in the Turkish ceremony (Figure 87). Lully, of course, played this famous Turkish character.<sup>27</sup>

A seventeenth-century physician looked somewhat like a sorcerer in his long black robe with large flowing sleeves and black steeple hat with a narrow brim and a high crown.<sup>28</sup> While perhaps not all physicians

<sup>25</sup>Leloir, pp. 81-82. Figure 193.

<sup>26</sup>Part II, #38. Figures 194, 88, and 89.

<sup>27</sup>Figure 144. Although Hillemacher says he based his sketch of Chiacchiarone (Lully) as the Mufti on a bust engraved by A. de Saint-Aubin, the details seem to be the same as the Brissart engraving, only reversed, including the jacket, the turban, the earring, and even the mustache.

<sup>28</sup>Leloir, p. 273. A modified version appears in Figure 195. Sometimes rings of bright-colored velvet encircled the hat.



Figure 194. Dancing Turks



Figure 195. Seventeenth-century Physician

actually wore such a specialized uniform, it was standard practice in the ballet to use it for comic exaggeration. Note the difference between this description and the Brissart engraving of Sganarelle and the four physicians in Love's the Best Doctor. The character-doctors are in realistic street clothes of the time (Figure 74).

Sometimes performers from the Comédie Italienne, the Italian commedia dell'arte players in Paris, participated in the ballets at court. Dominique performed his well known Arlequin character, presumably in his typical costume (Figure 115), at court in The Would-be Gentleman.<sup>29</sup> More often, though, the Italians' colorful appearance was merely copied by French court dancers. Since Molière frequently used commedia-inspired characters in his plays, comedy and ballet found a common meeting ground in these costumes. Scaramouche, the character traditionally garbed in a black costume with a wide white collar and a floppy hat (Figure 196), may have served as the basis for Molière's Hali in The Sicilian. Whether or not Hali actually sang his own music, or whether he was replaced by a singer-dancer, his character, similar to a ballet de cour figure, would have justified a conventionalized Scaramouche costume.

<sup>29</sup>A description of Arlequin's costume is quoted in D-M, VIII, 224, from Maurice Sand, Masques et bouffons (1862):

Jacket and pants of light yellow with triangles of red and green. Copper buttons. White stockings. Shoes of white leather and red ribbons. Belt of yellow leather with a copper buckle. Black mask. Tight black cap. Black chin strap. Gray hat with a hare's tail. Slapstick. Bug muslin collar.

With the exceptions of the shoes and belt, this description seems to match the illustration of Dominique very well.

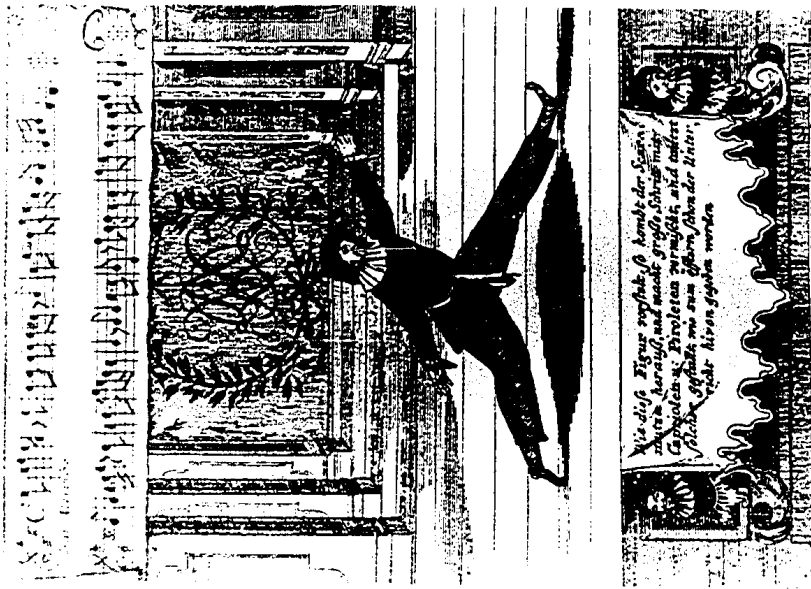


Figure 196. Scaramouche

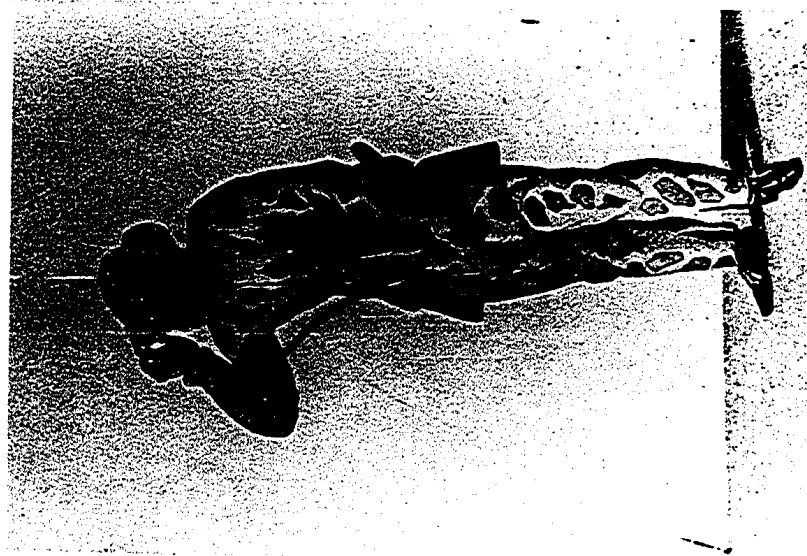


Figure 197. Locatelli

Covielle of The Would-be Gentleman may have been inspired by this Italian character,<sup>30</sup> and in a recent production at the Comédie Française the modified Scaramouche costume was retained. Scaramouches and Trivelins<sup>31</sup> appear in ballet sequences of Love's the Best Doctor and The Would-be Gentleman. The Polichinelle character of The Imaginary Invalid comes from the Neapolitan Pulcinella. His costume<sup>32</sup> originally was the peasant garb of the district of Naples--broad pantaloons, a wide belt, and a loose blouse of white linen that covered his protruding belly and humped back. He later acquired a pointed hat, a mustache, and a beard. Eventually cock feathers were added to the hat and a starched ruff and stripes to the garments, as were used for a recent production of The Imaginary Invalid at the Comédie Française (Figure 94). Two other comedy-ballet characters resemble Italian types: La Montagne in The Bores, a variation of Brighella,<sup>33</sup> and Sbrigani in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, a variation of Brighella or of Polichinelle.

Although it is impossible to determine exactly who was responsible for creating specific costume designs during the early years of Louis XIV's reign, the leading costume designer for court festivities during

<sup>30</sup>D-M, VIII, 42.

<sup>31</sup>The name Trivelin means "tatterdemalion" and one of his costumes is similar to Arlequin's; another is decorated with stitched-on triangles, moons, and stars. Pierre Louis Duchartre, The Italian Comedy (New York, 1966), p. 157. See Figure 197--the famous Trivelin, Locatelli (d. 1671; Paris).

<sup>32</sup>Laver, p. 71.

<sup>33</sup>The traditional Brighella costume consists of white pants and a white jacket with horizontal stripes of green braid across the front.



the time of the comedy-ballets was Henry Gissey (1621-1673).

. . . Jessé fut admirable  
A former des desseins pour des jeux de balet;  
Ses crayons achevez ne portoient rien de laid.<sup>34</sup>

Gissey's birthdate, given as 1608 by Montaiglon in his brief biographical account of the artist, has been disputed and corrected to 1621.<sup>35</sup> Gissey came from a family of artists. His father, Germain, was a sculptor for Louis XIII, a position which very likely placed the family in close association with the royal court. According to Montaiglon, the first written record of Gissey as an artist of the court is for the course de bague that took place at the Palais-Royal in 1656 and for which Gissey may have designed the costumes and devices.

About the time Molière became established in Paris, Gissey acquired the official title of Dessinateur ordinaire des plaisirs et des ballets du roi. In this position he performed many functions. He organized a ballet-fête given by Mazarin in the Louvre in 1661<sup>36</sup>--a few months before The Bores was commissioned. Perhaps the greatest achievement of his career and the project which firmly established his favor under Louis XIV was the Grand Carrousel of 1662 given to celebrate the birth of the Dauphin. He designed all the costumes for this equestrian masquerade which included about a thousand horsemen dressed as Romans, Persians,

<sup>34</sup>"Jessé [Gissey] was admired for his ballet designs; nothing unsightly appeared in his drawings." Quoted on the title page of Anatole de Montaiglon's Henri de Gissey de Paris (Paris, 1854) from Le Livre des peintres et des graveurs by the Abbé de Marolles.

<sup>35</sup>Jal, p. 644.

<sup>36</sup>February 6.

Turks, Indians, and American Tribesmen.<sup>37</sup>

Gissey was received into the Academy of Painting in 1663 not because he was a painter but because of his role as engineer and designer of "the pleasures and the ballets" of the King. The 1650's were very busy years for him. He engineered a fireworks display for the court in 1667. For the fete in 1668 which included George Dandin, Gissey was one of the major designers; Vigarani constructed the theatre, Le Vau arranged the place for the ball, and Gissey the place for the supper.<sup>38</sup> In the expense account for The Would-be Gentleman the sum of 483 livres is itemized for the "designs and efforts of Gissey."<sup>39</sup>

The greatest achievements of Gissey's career coincided with the extravagant entertainments of Louis's youth and with the court career of Molière. From the registers of the Academy the date of Gissey's death has been determined as February 4, 1673, only a few days before the death of Molière. An era came to an end. Lully took full control of musical entertainments at court. Jean Bérain succeeded Gissey and outlasted the scene designer Carlo Vigarani to do both sets and costumes for Lully's operas.

Brian Reade in his Ballet Designs and Illustrations has reproduced

<sup>37</sup>The engravings of this event, especially those of the General Plan and of the King, Philippe, and the Prince de Condé on horseback, have frequently been reproduced. See John B. Wolf, Louis XIV. With this project, Henry Gissey capably succeeded the miniature painter and court designer Daniel Rabel who promoted the idea of unified design under one artist.

<sup>38</sup>"Relation de la fête de Versailles" in D-M, VI, 615. See Figure 158--The groundplan of the fete shows the location of the supper.

<sup>39</sup>Moland, X, 425.

some costume designs attributed to Gissey for the period 1660-1673.<sup>40</sup> According to Reade, there is evidence of Italian influence on Gissey's designs but also the development of a characteristically French style of "orderly excess in ornamental details."<sup>41</sup> While the designs are more elaborate than those of earlier times, they are softer and looser than those of the period of Bérain.

The Gissey costume designs cannot be attributed specifically to any of the comedy-ballets, but they give the flavor and the type of costume that would have been used. The Female Dancer (Figure 180) might have been a Shepherdess from The Princess of Elis; the Male Dancer (Figure 198) could have been a Moor in The Sicilian; the Follower of Diana (Figure 199) is very likely similar to the mythological characters of George Dandin or The Magnificent Lovers; the Apothecary could have appeared in Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. Three of these designs are extensively annotated. If the designs are Gissey's, the descriptive notes may also be his. In any case, the notes are worth transcribing.

The Male Dancer's costume, which Reade describes as "pseudo-oriental,"<sup>42</sup> has, according to the annotations, a brown fur hat with matching trim on the shoulders, sleeves, and possibly on the skirt. The skirt and probably the doublet are in a dark mat fabric on which bands of red trim are stitched with silver. The undersleeve is in golden yellow and the costume is sashed with Chinese taffeta. The dancer in this illustration is playing

<sup>40</sup>Plates 24-29. Most of these plates are relevant to this study. See Figures 107, 180, 185, 198, and 199.

<sup>41</sup>p. 8.

<sup>42</sup>p. 8.



Figure 198. Male dancer



Figure 199. Follower of Diana

castanets.

The Follower of Diana wears a silver helmet with red plumes. Gold trim adorns his headdress, shoulders, and sleeves. His doublet is blue with silver sleeves and red trim. The tonnelet is blue and white and also has red trim. A spear completes the dancer's costume.

Brian Reade describes the costume of the Apothecary from the original water color plate: "The jacket is coloured chestnut brown, and according to one of the annotations was made of satin. The doublet and breeches are black with gold linings showing through the rows of slashes."<sup>43</sup> Another note beside the figure indicates that the ruff was made of "fine material." This ruff has the same archaic and fantastic quality that Reade attributes to the sleeves and epaulettes.

Of the designs attributed to Gissey that have been reproduced in Laver's Costume in the Theatre, two have importance here. The Amour (Figure 200) might have been similar to his counterparts in The Magnificent Lovers. Hearts embellish his costume on the headdress, the tonnelet, and on the legs. A light, airy impression is obtained from the sheer sleeves and draping; but the costume glitters with gold, silver embroidery, and fringe. The costume for the musical character, already mentioned with regard to depicting professions with clothing (Figure 182), is very richly detailed, very colorful. The plumed headdress that sits on a black crown features a musical staff with notes in gold overlaid with silver, and has red and blue ribbons for trim. The musical staff motif is carried out in the body of the costume, and golden musical pipes

<sup>43</sup> Reade, p. 9.



Figure 200. Amour

adorn the upper part of the legs. These musical pipes are cleverly arranged to resemble the tonnelet of a standard ballet costume.

Several of Henry Gissey's designs for the period of the comedy-ballets show the use of the mask--the Follower of Diana (Figure 199), the Apothecary (Figure 185), the Female Dancer (Figure 180), and probably L'Amour (Figure 200).

Masks were adopted for the ballet de cour and subsequently the balletic portions of Molière and Lully's comedy-ballets from the traditional masking of Carnival and the court mascarade. Several practical reasons accounted for the use of the mask. Since there were so few female professional dancers and ladies at court who participated in the dancing, female characters could be portrayed by male dancers. Comic scenes could be enhanced by grotesquely exaggerated masks. Also, a few dancers could appear in several different entrées and, by changing masks, could avoid having this reappearance noticed.<sup>44</sup> The mask was a useful device in accommodating the court taste for variety and that which was always strikingly new.

If hiding identity had been a part of early mascarades, for the courtier-performers it was not of the ballet de cour, at least not during the time of Louis XIV. Times had changed. The nobility in the well-guarded court of Louis XIV did not need to hide from hostile enemies; nor did the ladies need to cover their faces when the "public" was only

<sup>44</sup>Molière admitted to having constructed The Bores so that a few dancers could do all the dances; and The Princess of Elis chart (Figure 114) shows how dancers reappeared in different roles.

the exclusive court. The tradition of masking may have continued for traveling and for some fancy balls and hunting parties, but flirtation was very open at Louis's court, and beauty proudly displayed. Louis did not disguise himself in his ballet performances; instead, he costumed in the symbolic manner shown in paintings and tapestries in order to underscore the glory of his person.<sup>45</sup> The King's courtiers, copying their sovereign's every whim, eagerly sought to be identified with the dance, and ladies of the court, such as La Montespan, would not have concealed their beauty behind a cumbersome mask. An ambitious court retainer like Lully would not have wanted to let the pleasure his performances provided for the King go unrecognized. If he performed the "charivari grotesque" in The Forced Marriage in mask, it was only a deliciously coy move, as were his later pseudonyms, to intrigue rather than to delude. The mask continued to be worn, for the most part, only by the professional corps de ballet.

The mask relieved the dancer of being concerned with facial expression and allowed for more concentration to be focused on dance movement and footwork, one reason dance became a highly developed specialization. The mask was standard for French dancers. Although some actors in the seventeenth century may have performed in masks, because of the Italian *commedia dell'arte* influence, there is no indication of a use of masks for singers or actors in the comedy-ballets. A contemporary letter from Gui Patin of the Parisian Faculty of Medicine concerning Love's the Best

<sup>45</sup>The practice of describing a costume in the livret of a court production of grand scale, such as an equestrian ballet where the King could only be recognized from a distance by the spectators, was not used for the comedy-ballets.



Doctor has created some confusion about masks for that comedy-ballet. Patin reported that characters in the play represented real doctors at court, who were identified by masks. Significant errors in this letter, which include misnaming the play and attributing it to the wrong theatre, however, cast serious doubts on the authenticity of any of it.<sup>46</sup> No other sources for Love's the Best Doctor refer to the use of masks by the actors. A reasonable assumption, on the other hand, would be that the dancing-doctors did use masks for the ballet-entr ee so that they could be easily replaced by the actors for the following dialogue with Sganarelle.

There are some specific indications of masqueraders in the comedy-ballets, frankly costumed and most likely masked. The finale of The Bores calls for masqueraders; The Sicilian ends with a Moorish masquerade; and masques conclude Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. All these masqueraders are musical characters.

Masks were made of leather or gummed paper, and are listed in the ballet expense accounts as accessory items.<sup>47</sup> The costume designs referred to above show only full-face masks, but some half-masks may have been used. For a recent production of The Imaginary Invalid at the

<sup>46</sup>Paul Lacroix in Iconographie Moli resque (Paris, 1876), p. 291, quotes the letter dated September 25, 1666: "On joue pr sentement   l'H tel de Bourgogne l'Amour malade. Tout Paris y va en foule pour voir repr senter les m d cins de la Cour et principalement Esprit et Guenaut, avec des masques faits tout espr s. On y a ajout  Des Fougerais, etc. Ainsi on se moque de ceux qui tuent le monde impun ment."

<sup>47</sup>Payment to the Widow Vaignard in The Would-be Gentlemen account (Moland, X, 419) and The Magnificent Lovers-Monsieur de Pourceaugnac account (Moland, X, 516). Payment to Ducreux in the latter account (Moland, X, 516).

Comédie Française this type of masking was preserved for the Polichinelle interlude and Béralde's masquerade divertissement (Figures 94 and 95).

Theatrical makeup was merely an extension of everyday wear. Gorgibus in The Affected Ladies complains about his daughter and niece:

Those jades with their pomades are trying to ruin me. I see nothing in this house but whites of eggs, 'virgin's milk,' and a thousand other mysterious concoctions. Since we've been here they've used up the lard from at least a dozen pigs, and four servants could live out the rest of their days on the sheep's feet they've ground up for their pastes.

(Bermel, p. 49)

Actors and actresses wore rouge and hog fat makeup, as did dancers who did not wear masks. The makeup man for court productions was Paysan (or Paisant), mentioned in both expense accounts cited above for his "powder and pomade" and the efforts of his assistants.

Among other accessories in common use for the stage in both ballet and comedy-ballet were costume hand props. For the men there were walking sticks decorated with ribbons and bows with which to swagger and pose, hats for bowing and gesturing, combs to arrange their wigs, weapons for combat. The women carried folding fans, often beautifully painted and mounted in wood, ivory, or gold. An elaborate etiquette evolved for hats and fans, and Molière often incorporated hat business into the action of his plays--such as the bowing of Monsieur Jourdain in The Would-be Gentleman.

Besides actors, dancers, and singers, another group of performers was customarily given elaborate costume treatment for court productions; the musicians. Musicians, after all, performed in view of the audience, either in front of the stage as in The Princess of Elis (Figure 73) and

The Imaginary Invalid (Figure 91) or in the scenery, as in the finale of The Princess of Elis.<sup>48</sup> The first entrée of a comedy-ballet at court may have been the musicians moving in procession to their places as they often did in the court ballet.<sup>49</sup> Presumably the troupe de Lully would have been arrayed for the comedy-ballets as befitted its high regard at court.

MASTER TAILOR: Here is a coat as fine  
as any at court . . . .

The Would-be Gentleman

Act II, Scene 5

Building and possibly designing some comedy-ballet costumes for both court and public theatre was Jean Baraillon. Perhaps Baraillon, tailleur ordinaire des ballets du roi, had been associated with court festivities before the time of the comedy-ballets. Perhaps it was at court that Molière met him. The name Baraillon does not appear in the accounts of Molière's troupe until the time of the transfer of The Forced Marriage from court to the Palais-Royal. It was when this comedy-ballet was presented in town that apparently for the first time the troupe needed the services of a tailor. There were, according to La Grange's list of extraordinary expenses, some "unexpected circumstances" ("Cas impreuus"). An amount due to M. Baraillon was finally determined as 22 livres and paid on the 29th of February in 1664.<sup>50</sup>

From that time Baraillon was to serve Molière's troupe for many

<sup>48</sup>Figure 77--the engraving of George Dandin in which musicians seem to be perched in tree scenery.

<sup>49</sup>Christout, "The Court Ballet in France," p. 7.

<sup>50</sup>La Grange, Registre, pp. 62-63. See Figures 146 and 109. This transaction also appears in Le Second Registre de La Thorillièrre as noted by William Leonard Schwartz in his article "Light on Molière in 1664," PMLA, LIII (1938), 1061.

years. His name appears in both the expense account for The Magnificent Lovers and for The Would-be Gentleman.<sup>51</sup> The account for The Magnificent Lovers (which also includes a revival of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac) stipulates 1,568 livres for Baraillon: 138 costumes rented from his supply at 5 livres each for two performances (1,380 livres) and miscellaneous pants, cravats, sashes, and "other things" necessary for the divertissements (188 livres).<sup>52</sup> The Would-be Gentleman account (which also includes expenses for other productions) shows the very large sum of 5,108 livres.<sup>53</sup> This amount, the largest in the whole account, was for

22 costumes @ 80 livres each	1,760
27 costumes @ 100 livres each	2,700
1 costume	90
4 costumes for "an Englishman"	260
Cravats, pants, rented costumes	298
	<u>5,108</u>

Another item in this account can be more specifically related to The Would-be Gentleman: to Baraillon "for the gentlemen of Lully and the young lady Hilaire the sum of 900 livres for three costumes at 200 livres each and 300 livres for the ribbons for three costumes at 100 livres each,

<sup>51</sup>Another tailor, Claude Fortier, appears in both court expense accounts. He received somewhat less than Baraillon but provided a large number of costumes and accessories for the court productions including, for The Would-be Gentleman, eight costumes for the flutists at 60 livres each, the brocade costume and cloak for an Italian, and the twenty costumes for the spectators of the "Ballet of Nations." (Moland, X, 417-418)

<sup>52</sup>Moland, X, 515-516.

<sup>53</sup>Moland, X, 417. Laurent d'Arvieux spent eight days with Baraillon supervising the construction of the garments and turbans for the Turkish characters (Mémoires, IV, 252-253). There were twenty-two singing and dancing Turks, besides Lully and Molière, and the first item in Baraillon's bill may have been for their costumes.

900 livres.<sup>54</sup> Presumably these costumes were for the three singers in the Pastoral Dialogue in Music that the Music Master presents to M. Jourdain in the first act. The two gentlemen Baraillon made the costumes for would have been the singing shepherds played by Langez and Gaye. Baraillon may have made suggestions to Molière on the treatment of the Master Tailor in this comedy-ballet and the action of the dancing-tailor interlude. Even ballet characters may have been suggested by Baraillon, based on his costume supply, such as the rented items listed above. He probably designed the costumes he made.

The association between Baraillon and Molière's troupe became personal as well as professional when on April 25, 1672 he married a half sister of Mlle de Brie, Jeanne-Françoise Brouard, whose father had been a member of His Majesty's Twenty-four Violins. Baraillon's dual commitment to court and town is seen in the way in which he is designated in the marriage contract: "tailleur ordinaire pour les ballets de Sa Majesté et maître tailleur d'habits à Paris."<sup>55</sup>

Thierry points out<sup>56</sup> that in the livret of Psyché (1671) among the names of the six Amours of the Prologue the name of Baraillon appears, which becomes Barillonnet as one of the "Deux Petits Amours" in the list of actors of the piece.<sup>57</sup> He conjectures that this Baraillon is a son

<sup>54</sup>Moland, X, 418.

<sup>55</sup>Moland, X, 515. Moland, in citing this contract, elaborates on La Grange who told of his marriage on the same day to Marie Ragueneau and mentioned that Baraillon married a sister of Mlle de Brie (Registre, p. 131).

<sup>56</sup>Documents du Malade imaginaire (Paris, 1880), p. 214.

<sup>57</sup>See livrat in D-M, VIII, 366-367.

of Molière's tailor either by a former wife or by an early liaison with his wife-to-be Jean-Françoise Brouard.

Baraillon stayed with Molière's troupe through the difficult time with Lully in 1672-1673. Noted in Le Registre d'Hubert is payment to Baraillon in two installments (July 24 and October 2, 1672) for the silk hose he provided for The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas.<sup>58</sup> He contributed costumes to the defiant revival of The Forced Marriage,<sup>59</sup> and he is mentioned along with the other major artists, Beauchamps and Charpentier, involved with The Imaginary Invalid.<sup>60</sup> Thierry includes Baraillon's bill in Documents du Malade imaginaire<sup>61</sup> and notes that this rather rich costume is the original attire for Argan. According to Le Registre d'Hubert a fee of 22 livres was paid Baraillon for providing a costume for M. Monier, who was probably one of the singers in The Imaginary Invalid.<sup>62</sup>

Productions of the comedy-ballets at the Palais-Royal were not as lavish as at court, but despite certain economies, such as false lace and imitation gold and silver cloth, Molière's expenditures were always larger than for non-musical plays. Some of these additional expenses were for costumes. The largest expense in the Paris production of The Forced Marriage, according to La Grange's Régistre, was for costumes: "Habitz

<sup>58</sup>Schwartz, "Molière's Theater in 1672-1673," pp. 410, 414-415.

<sup>59</sup>La Grange, Régistre, p. 135.

<sup>60</sup>La Grange, p. 142.

<sup>61</sup>p. 205.

<sup>62</sup>William Leonard Schwartz, "Molière's Theater in 1672-1673," PMLA LVI (1941), 424.

. . . 330 livres" (Figure 146). Dancing shoes (les escarpins) and silk stockings (les bas de soye), quickly worn out by the dancers, appear constantly in the expenses of the comedy-ballets at the Palais-Royal, the first of such listings being in The Forced Marriage expenses. Additional costume items especially for the comedy-ballets include gems,<sup>63</sup> plumes,<sup>64</sup> and artificial flowers.<sup>65</sup> Expenses were incurred for hair arrangements when singers began to appear on stage ("coeffures des damoiselles").<sup>66</sup>

For Palais-Royal productions of the comedy-ballets the costumes worn by the actors and actresses of Molière's company, as well as the musical performers, were undoubtedly those that had been worn at court. They represented an additional subsidy, for the Troupe du Roi at least, besides the regular payment for court performances; they eliminated the actors' need to provide costumes when the comedy-ballets were performed in town. The public must have known, if only by gossip, that these costumes were supplied by the King. A comedy-ballet performance at the Palais-Royal gave the people of Paris an opportunity to see a parade of fashion and have a taste of the finery that existed at court.

<sup>63</sup>The expense of 14 livres is attributed to M. de Brécourt in The Forced Marriage account for gems (D-M, IV, 6). He also provided gems for The Would-be Gentleman.

<sup>64</sup>For the revival of The Bores in 1664, 15 livres were paid the Feather Merchant for repairing 58 plumes for the ballet. Schwartz, "Light on Molière in 1664 from Le Second Registre de La Thorillière," p. 1068.

<sup>65</sup>For the doctoral reception ceremony of The Imaginary Invalid. Schwartz, "Molière's Theater in 1672-1673," p. 426.

<sup>66</sup>Schwartz, "Hubert," p. 420.

## CONCLUSION

The comedy-ballets expressed the baroque magnificence that permeated the seventeenth-century French court. The baroque, characterized by elaborate ornamentation and restless, diffuse energy, was apparent in the fancy scallops on the tonnelet, in the trills and runs improvised to embellish the music, in the intricate patterns made by dancers twirling and cutting cabrioles, in the proscenium decorated with various interlocking tributes to the King, in the episodic nature of the presentation --alternating scenes of comedy and music--with no certain resolution, only movement which begins and ends in medias res. Although the baroque temperament sought constant variety and increasingly brilliant effects, it also demanded order and harmony. Apollo, the ever-present symbol of the King, was the God of Harmony in the finale of Psyché; Molière's fools, on the other hand, deserved to be laughed at because they were out of tune with the "harmonie universelle." The comic action in the comedy-ballets may have been considered by some members of the court audience as a mere accessory to the singing and dancing, but clearly for Molière it was the core to which all the embellishments were attached. Maurice Pellisson suggests that Molière sought to copy antique comedy in which the choreographer and musician were subordinated to the poet, who brought all elements into harmony.<sup>1</sup> In being able to manage the diverse theatrical materials of the comedy-ballets, Molière proved himself a

<sup>1</sup>Les Comédies-ballets de Molière (Paris, 1914), p. 62.



great baroque artist.

Unquestionably, Molière created the most harmonious presentations of comedy, music, and ballet in the theatre of his time. In fact, he restored singing and dancing, which had been an integral part of early French theatre, to the stage. Theatrical advances of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries tended to separate the forms. The ballet de cour included singing, but emphasized dancing. The opera, imported from Italy, consisted primarily of vocal music. This separation and specialization of theatre disciplines resulted not only in improved quality and technique but in competition and antagonisms between the promoters of each medium. Molière, in combining his comic abilities with the musical inclinations of the court, reunited singing, dancing, and jesting in a unique body of work.

Molière's ability to absorb and to assimilate made the comedy-ballets possible. He borrowed esprit courtois materials from the mascarade, ballet de cour, and pastorale, and enlivened them with his own esprit gaulois contemporary applications. The comedy-ballet was not an established genre. Molière created and developed it specifically to suit the tastes of Louis XIV. And in responding to demands of the King for court entertainments, Molière made a virtue of necessity.

There are at least four musical sequences in each of the comedy-ballets--usually a prologue, two interludes within the play, and a finale. Molière found in comic situations and characters, especially the characters he played, the justification for musical spectacle. In two instances he attempted to carry over characters from musical scenes to scenes of dialogue--the doctors in Love's the Best Doctor and Hali in The Sicilian. But

the division of disciplines required that these characters be played by both actors and musical performers. Not until The Imaginary Invalid did actors other than Molière do any substantial singing. If Molière had had the opportunity to train his actors for musical performances and the time for more thorough preparation of his plays, he probably would have embellished many more comic scenes with music. For example, he might have written a musical scene for the double lovers' quarrel in The Would-be Gentleman, based on the "Pastoral" of The Magnificent Lovers, and for the "ceremony of chairs" in The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, in which the parvenue shows her ignorance of etiquette by ironically sending her servant to bring a chair of less distinction than the one offered for someone she intends to honor.

Without Lully, it is doubtful that the comedy-ballets would have developed into the lavish musical spectacles they became. Lully was the Orpheus of his time, multi-faceted, but always harmonious, and the symbolism of Orpheus as the son of Apollo can hardly have been overlooked. Molière and Lully, referred to by the gazetteers as "the two great Baptistes," were independent men of strong will, both serving the purpose of entertaining and idealizing the King. Tradition says that Molière, the great farceur, said of Lully, "Baptiste makes me laugh." The antagonisms between them, however, have led Moliéristes to make Lully play Anaxarque to Molière's Clitidas (The Magnificent Lovers).

It is impossible to know what Molière thought of the comedy-ballets, or what he might otherwise have written in the time devoted to them. Voltaire called the comedy-ballets Molière's "ouvrages frivoles,"<sup>2</sup> but

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in D-M, VII, 232.

the leading French critic of the nineteenth century, Charles Sainte-Beuve, greatly admired them. To Pellisson the comedy-ballets were Molière's "petite théâtre."<sup>3</sup> Because they brought together a number of musical and theatrical traditions, Prunières referred to them as a "genre hybride."<sup>4</sup> They were to Böttinger a "Zwischenform" (transitional form) between the ballet de cour and the opera.<sup>5</sup> The comedy-ballets constitute about a third of Molière's entire canon. They contain some of his most fanciful visions and some of his most penetrating satire. They lack the tautness and simplicity of his non-musical plays; they are rambling but richly theatrical. Molière had Aristione in The Magnificent Lovers refer to court entertainments as "trifles," but, as she says, "Trifles such as these can agreeably amuse the most serious-minded."

<sup>3</sup>Pellisson, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Les Comédies-Ballets," I, xvi.

<sup>5</sup>Die 'Comédie-ballets' von Molière-Lully (Berlin, 1931), p. 9.

## APPENDIX A

### THE LIVRET

Printed programs were distributed to the audience for court productions of the comedy-ballets. Programs had been a regular feature of the ballet de cour since 1610 when a livret de ballet (ballet book) was prepared for the Ballet de Monsieur de Vendosme (or Ballet d'Alcine).<sup>1</sup> Because the comedy-ballets followed in the tradition of the ballet de cour as court entertainments, this nicety continued to be observed.

Programs provided spectators with a souvenir of the occasion and an order of events to follow. Court entertainments often took a great deal of time to get started and were extremely long. A program and refreshments made the long wait more pleasant, according to Fournel,<sup>2</sup> while high-ranking members of the court settled in their places and intruders were intercepted. Félibien said in his Relation de la Fête de Versailles (1668) that the guests, after arriving at the theatre (where George Dandin was to be performed), were treated to oranges from Portugal and given printed books ("imprimés") which contained the "subject of the comedy and the ballet."<sup>3</sup> How enthusiastically spectators sought their livrets de ballet is reflected in Molière's "Ballet of Nations" in The Would-be

<sup>1</sup>Margaret M. McGowan, L'Art du ballet en France, 1581-1643 (Paris, 1963), p. 69.

<sup>2</sup>François Victor Fournel, Les Contemporains de Molière (Paris, 1866), II, 208-209.

<sup>3</sup>D-M, VI, 620.

Gentleman. The Giver of Programs is nearly attacked by the balletomanes each singing out "a program, please . . . to me!"

Essentially the same information was supplied in a program for the comedy-ballets as for the ballets de cour. A livret often included an introduction explaining the author's intent and sometimes presenting the subject of the work as a whole. Each ballet-entry was listed with a description of the characters and the names of the performers. The livret of a ballet de cour included narrative verses called écits, which were sung or recited by performers who took no part in the dancing. These écits, having become the simple songs of the comedy-ballets, continued to be included in the livret. Even the lyrics of complex vocal choruses came to be incorporated into the descriptions of ballet-entries or musical interludes. One feature of the court ballet livret not common with that of the comedy-ballet was the inclusion of vers. These verses, unlike the écits, were not part of the performance, but were merely short descriptions, sometimes panegyric, sometimes satirical, of the nobles who took part in the ballet-entry or of distinguished persons in the audience. The Magnificent Lovers is the only comedy-ballet that has vers--tributes to Louis XIV, Monsieur le Grand, and the Marquis de Villeroy.

The livret for a comedy-ballet was intended to explain the musical agréments; it was not a guide to the play. Even the summaries of comic scenes, which were usually inserted in the livret, served essentially to lead into descriptions of the musical interludes. Names of actors did not appear in the "livret des intermèdes" of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac; they were added only in the second edition of the livret for The Magnificent Lovers. Perhaps because no noble amateurs appeared in

George Dandin, the names of even the musical performers were added only incidentally in the margins of the livret, except for a list of those in the large choruses of the finale. The ballet book had been created in the first place primarily to recognize the accomplishments of performing courtiers, and the same emphasis prevailed during Molière's lifetime.

Livrets are extant for all the comedy-ballets except Love's the Best Doctor and The Bores.<sup>4</sup> The existence of "arguments" for each of the acts of The Bores, however, suggests that perhaps a livret may have been printed even for this first comedy-ballet.<sup>5</sup>

A curious and court-admiring public could purchase copies of the livrets after court events.<sup>6</sup> Livrets for the comedy-ballets from The Forced Marriage through The Would-be Gentleman were printed by Robert

<sup>4</sup>Because Molière wrote Love's the Best Doctor only five days before it was presented, possibly there was not enough time to prepare a livret. Most of the livrets are included in the Despois-Mesnard edition of Molière's works: The Forced Marriage, IV, 71-88; The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, IV, 234-250; the Ballet of the Muses, VI, 277-298; George Dandin, VI, 599-614; Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, VII, 339-343; The Would-be Gentleman, VIII, 363-384; the Ballet of the Ballets, VIII, 599-602.

<sup>5</sup>A version of The Bores is included with a copy of The Forced Marriage livret in the Bibliothèque National. An argument of each act precedes the two interludes and the finale (D-M, XI, 9-10). The existence of these arguments suggested to Despois and Mesnard that a livret may have been printed for Fouquet's fete, for the presentation at Fontainebleau for the King, or even for the spectators at the première performance at the Palais-Royal. These arguments, along with the prologue and the subjects of the ballet-entries, would have constituted a standard livret. The argument for Act II includes the Hunter. Since this character was not supposed to have been added to the comedy until after the Vaux presentation, such an argument would not have been used for a livret provided by Fouquet.

<sup>6</sup>A.-J. Guibert has reproduced facsimiles of the title pages of the livrets in his study on the publication of Molière's works, Bibliographie des oeuvres de Molière publiées au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle (Paris, 1961). See Figure 98--The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island (Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée) and Figure 83--The Would-be Gentleman (Le Bourgeois gentilhomme).

Ballard (Balard). Ballard, whose printing house was in Paris, held the title of sole Imprimeur du roy pour la musique. In reference to the livret of Le Grand Divertissement royal de Versailles (George Dandin), Robinet wrote:

Et, pour plaisir, plus tôt que tard  
 Allez voir chez le sieur Ballard,  
 Qui de tout cela vend le livre,  
 Que presque pour rien il delivre,  
 Si je vous mens ni peu ni prou;  
 Et si vous ne saviez pas ou,  
 C'est a l'engseigne du Parnasse.<sup>7</sup>

The last livret for Molière produced under Robert Ballard's name was the Ballet of the Ballets in 1671. Perhaps the break in 1672 between Molière and Lully produced an awkward situation for their printer as well as their choreographer. The livret for Lully's Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus (1672), which included some songs written by Lully and Molière without the playwright's consent, was not published by the house of Ballard. Perhaps Robert Ballard was too ill for the commission, for by 1673 he was dead. Christophe Ballard<sup>8</sup> printed a livret for The Imaginary Invalid that year without the King's privilege, possibly on the authorization of Molière's widow,<sup>9</sup> and probably because of nine years' collaboration between Christophe's father and Molière.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup>"And for your pleasure, sooner than later, go see Mr. Ballard, who sells the book of all this, which issues for almost nothing, I kid you not. And if you don't know where, it is at the sign of Parnassus." Lettre à Madame (July 21, 1668) quoted in D-M, VI, 478.

<sup>8</sup>Christophe Ballard (1641-1715) was Robert Ballard's son and the fourth leading name in this family of printers who held a monopoly for the King's music. He printed Lully's opera programs.

<sup>9</sup>Guibert, II, 489.

<sup>10</sup>Perhaps because of the unofficial status of this livret, it contained no names of actors or musical performers.

Amounts paid Robert Ballard, listed in various available expense accounts for Molière's court productions, give some notion of the cost of these programs. For presentations of The Magnificent Lovers and Monsieur de Pourceaugnac Ballard was paid 695 livres for furnishing 1,760 simple ballet books and 280 fancier ones.<sup>11</sup> Assuming that the more elaborate livrets cost about twice as much as the simple ones, the following cost per livret is possible:

6 <sup>s</sup> (ea.) for 1,760 simple <u>livrets</u>	528 <u>livres</u>
12 <sup>s</sup> (ea.) for 280 deluxe <u>livrets</u>	168 "
	<u>698 livres</u>

Ballet books, therefore, probably cost less than a livre, while printed plays sold for three to six livres.

Ballard received 1,022 livres to print livrets for The Would-be Gentleman.<sup>12</sup> This amount was quite high. The same expense account shows about the same sum for the traveling expenses of forty musicians and singers and for eighty pairs of stockings. Of the 1,022 livres for programs, 176 were paid Jules Autot, printer at Blois. Guibert's theory regarding Autot's edition of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac may apply as well to The Would-be Gentleman. Ballard may have been commissioned to prepare the livret for Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, but when the court arrived at Chambord and the number of programs seemed to be insufficient, a local printer was called upon to do a special issue.<sup>13</sup> Since The Would-be Gentleman was also given at Chambord, extra programs may have been

<sup>11</sup>Moland, X, 517.

<sup>12</sup>Moland, X, 420.

<sup>13</sup>Guibert, II, 514-516. This special issue from Blois has the name "Hotot" on it.



printed by Autot for this comedy-ballet.

The most expensive livrets for any of Molière's entertainments were those for Psyché, proportionate to the greater costs in all areas for this production. Ballard received 3,494 livres for programs distributed at the Salle des Machines.<sup>14</sup>

An indication of what livrets looked like comes from the expense account cited above in which 695 livres were paid Ballard. The more costly livrets had mottled paper and were decorated with ribbons. The simple livrets mentioned in the same account may have been more like those regularly printed by Ballard in quarto to be sold to the public. Shorter livrets had eleven to twenty-six pages, longer ones up to sixty-seven.

The most elaborate published livret was for The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island which appeared in folio with eighty-three pages and included nine engravings by Israël Silvestre. This "livret de la fête" listed the activities of the first three days of divertissements, the entrées, characters, the names of the performers, and even the attire of noblemen who entered the first day on horseback. At the end of the livret was appended a "Liste du Divertissement de Versailles" which contained all the participants in the fete including the Heralds who opened the festivities on the first day, all persons who appeared on machines, foot valets, all singers, dancers, and musicians, as well as pages to serve and officers to guard the tables where the ladies sat. A souvenir program similar to the livret was later produced, beautifully

<sup>14</sup>Moland, XI, 71.

hand-written on sheepskin.<sup>15</sup>

A program was undoubtedly distributed, according to custom, at the opening of the Ballet of the Muses on December 2, 1666. The third item on the program, the entrée of Thalia, was Molière's Mélicerte. Because this pastoral was not specified by name, the later substitution of the Comic Pastoral with the same setting did not constitute a major change in the description of the third entry. The Comic Pastoral, unlike Mélicerte, however, included musical agréments which were added to the livret.<sup>16</sup> A livret for the Ballet of the Muses conforming to the final state of the fete is presented by Despois and Mesnard. This arrangement corresponds to published "Edition D" as listed in Guibert,<sup>17</sup> and includes the last entrée (#14) of the fete, Molière's comedy-ballet The Sicilian.

Livrets were published separately from the texts of the comedy-ballets, but besides The Bores and Love's the Best Doctor Despois and Mesnard have united interludes and scenes of comedy for two comedy-ballets -- The Magnificent Lovers and The Imaginary Invalid. Neither of these comedy-ballets had texts published during Molière's lifetime, although the livrets of both appeared in the same years the plays were first performed.

The title page of the livret for The Imaginary Invalid describes the work as a "comedy mixed with music and dance presented at the Palais-

<sup>15</sup>D-M, IV, 268.

<sup>16</sup>Since the Comic Pastoral was never published as a play, the lyrics and an outline of the scenes survive only because of the livret.

<sup>17</sup>Guibert, II, 494-502.

Royal."<sup>18</sup> Mesnard suggests that perhaps this livret was intended for spectators at Molière's theatre.<sup>19</sup> Possibly programs were used at the public theatres during this period. Livrets had been provided for spectacles in the early days of the Palais-Royal, and booklets were sold at the door for the later Lully operas presented there. But very little evidence exists to support the supposition that programs were ordered and paid for by Molière's troupe.

Who wrote the livrets is for the most part uncertain. Mesnard conjectures that the livret-programme for George Dandin, called "Le Grand Divertissement royal de Versailles," was written by Molière or at least that he supplied the information for it.<sup>20</sup> Tributes are made to the King and to Lully similar to those Molière had made at other times. Then the comedy is introduced by someone who says, "Molière wrote it." This unidentified person adds that because he and Molière are such good friends, he cannot judge the play. The lightness of touch and the sly humor reminiscent of that used by Molière in the introduction of The Bores (the pretense of being unprepared to give a performance) points to the playwright himself as writer of the livret. Molière also may have written the livret of The Magnificent Lovers, called "Le Divertissement royal." Robinet attributed it at first to Benserade, but later he declared that both the comedy-ballet and the ballet book had been written by Molière.<sup>21</sup> Robinet's error was no great disservice to Molière; it

<sup>18</sup>Guibert, II, 482.

<sup>19</sup>D-M, IX, 259.

<sup>20</sup>D-M, VI, 595-596.

<sup>21</sup> Parmi ce ballet charmant

merely indicated that Molière had learned court conceits so well he could be mistaken for the poet who had written the ballets de cour for years. It was later recognized that Molière probably wrote the vers of The Magnificent Lovers as a good-natured parody of Benserade's flowery style.<sup>22</sup>

Molière's name never appeared on the title pages of the livrets as it did when the texts of his plays were published. His individual rights, however, may have been gladly exchanged for the distinction of having his efforts given such high favor.

---

Se jouoit encor galamment  
 Petite et grande comédie,  
 Dont l'une étoit en mélodie,  
 Toutes deux ayant pour auteur  
 Le comique et célèbre acteur  
 Appelé Bâstiste Molière,  
 Dont la Muse est si singulière,  
 Et qui le Livre a composé,  
 Demi-rimé, demi-prosé

Lettre en vers (February 22, 1670) quoted in D-M, VII, 355-356.

Benserade retired officially after his Ballet de Flore in 1669, partly because Molière had surpassed him as court librettist.

<sup>22</sup>Jean Grimarest, La Vie de M. de Molière (Paris, 1930), pp. 84-85. and D-M, X, 401-402.

APPENDIX B

CAST LISTS

The following cast lists for the comedy-ballets and related works are based essentially on livrets of original productions. When the distribution of roles is unknown, a conjecture is given based on the composition of Molière's troupe at the time. Each list is arranged according to order of speaking or appearance. From these lists it can be seen that actors and actresses tended to play types of roles--for example, La Grange the young lover; Mlle Beauval, the saucy maid; Hubert, the older woman. Doubling was necessary frequently, and additional performers (gagistes or assistans) were hired occasionally.

THE BORES<sup>1</sup>

MOLIERE, as himself . . . . .	Molière
NYPH . . . . .	Mlle Béjart
ERASTE, in love with Orphise . . . . .	La Grange <sup>2</sup>
LA MONTAGNE, valet of Eraste . . . . .	Du Parc
ORPHISE . . . . .	Mlle Béjart
ALCIDOR, suitor of Orphise . . . . .	Du Croisy <sup>3</sup>
LYSANDRE . . . . .	Molière

<sup>1</sup>See D-M, III, 15-17.

<sup>2</sup>Later when La Grange became ill, Du Croisy took the role.

<sup>3</sup>Or gagiste. There are no speaking lines for this character.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

ALCANDRE, duelist . . . . .	Molière <sup>4</sup>
ALCIPPE, card-player . . . . .	Molière
ORANTE, a <u>précieuse</u> . . . . .	Mlle Du Parc
CLYMENE, a <u>précieuse</u> . . . . .	Mlle De Brie
DORANTE, hunter <sup>5</sup> . . . . .	Molière
CARTIDES, orthographer . . . . .	Molière
ORMIN, economist . . . . .	Du Croisy
FILINTE, duelist . . . . .	Béjart
DAMIS, guardian of Orphise . . . . .	L'Espy
L'ESPINE . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>
LA RIVIERE, valet of Eraste . . . . .	De Brie
Companion of La Rivière . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>
Companion of La Rivière . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>

THE FORCED MARRIAGE<sup>6</sup>

-1664-

SGANARELLE, middle-aged bachelor . . . . .	Molière
GERONIMO, friend of Sganarelle . . . . .	La Thorillière
DORIMENE, young coquette, engaged to Sganarelle . . . . .	Mlle Du Parc
PAGE <sup>7</sup> . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>

<sup>4</sup>This role was probably not important enough for Molière to have played it.

<sup>5</sup>This character was added after the première at Vaux-le-Vicomte.

<sup>6</sup>See D-M, IV, 69-70.

<sup>7</sup>A Page is not shown in the list of characters, but one was used to hold Dorimène's train, and she speaks to him in Scene 2.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

PANCRACE, Aristotelian philosopher . . . . .	Brécourt
MARPHURIUS, Pyrrhonian philosopher . . . . .	Du Croisy
FIRST GYPSY WOMAN . . . . .	Mlle Béjart
SECOND GYPSY WOMAN . . . . .	Mlle De Brie
ALCANTOR, father of Dorimène . . . . .	Béjart
LYCANTE, brother of Dorimène . . . . .	La Grange

-1668-

FIRST GYPSY WOMAN . . . . .	Mlle Molière
SECOND GYPSY WOMAN . . . . .	Mlle De Brie
LYCASTE, admirer of Dorimène . . . . .	La Grange
ALCANTOR, father of Dorimène . . . . .	Béjart
ALCIDAS, brother of Dorimène . . . . .	De Brie

THE PLEASURES OF THE ENCHANTED ISLANDCAPTURED KNIGHTS<sup>8</sup>

GUIDO THE SAVAGE . . . . .	Duc de Saint-Aignan
ROGERO . . . . .	King
OGIER THE DANE . . . . .	Duc de Noailles
AQUILANT THE BLACK . . . . .	Duc de Guise
GRYPHON THE WHITE . . . . .	Comte d'Armagnac
RINALDO . . . . .	Duc de Foix
DUDON . . . . .	Duc de Coaslin
ASTOLPHO . . . . .	Comte de Lude

<sup>8</sup>See D-M, IV, 110-115.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

BRANDIMART . . . . .	Prince de Marsillac
RICHARDETTO . . . . .	Marquis de Villequier
OLIVIERO . . . . .	Marquis de Soyecourt
ARIODANTES . . . . .	Marquis d'Humières
ZERBINO . . . . .	Marquis de La Vallière
ORLANDO . . . . .	Monsieur le Duc (Duc d'Enghien)

THE PRINCESS OF ELIS<sup>9</sup>

ARBATE, tutor to the Prince of Ithaca . . . . .	La Thorillière
EURYALE, Prince of Ithaca . . . . .	La Grange
MORON, fool to the Princess of Elis . . . . .	Molière
ARISTOMENES, Prince of Messenia. . . . .	Du Croisy
THEOCLES, Prince of Pylos . . . . .	Béjart
PRINCESS OF ELIS . . . . .	Mlle Molière
AGLANTE, cousin of the Princess . . . . .	Mlle Du Parc
CYNTHIE, cousin of the Princess . . . . .	Mlle De Brie
PHILIS, maid to the Princess . . . . .	Mlle Béjart
LYCAS, an attendant . . . . .	De Brie
FIRST PAGE . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>
SECOND PAGE . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>
THIRD PAGE <sup>10</sup> . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>

<sup>9</sup>See D-M, IV, 238.

<sup>10</sup>Lycas enters Act III, Scene 3 to announce to the Princess the arrival of her father. He could not have been one of the attendants holding the ladies' trains. The three ladies of quality, the Princess,



## APPENDIX B - Continued

IPHITAS, father of the Princess . . . . . Hubert

LOVE'S THE BEST DOCTOR<sup>11</sup>

SGANARELLE, Lucinde's father. . . . . Molière

GUILLAUME, a tapestry dealer, friend of Sganarelle . . La Thorillière

JOSSE, a goldsmith, friend of Sganarelle . . . . . Hubert

AMINTE, a neighbor . . . . . Mlle Du Parc

LUCRECE, Sganarelle's niece . . . . . Mlle De Brie

LUCINDE . . . . . Mlle Molière

LISETTE, Lucinde's maid . . . . . Mlle Béjart

DOCTORS:

TOMES . . . . . La Thorillière

DES FONANDRES . . . . . Béjart

MACROTON . . . . . Du Croisy

BAHYS . . . . . De Brie

FILERIN . . . . . Hubert

CLITANDRE, in love with Lucinde . . . . . La Grange

NOTARY. . . . . gagiste

Aglante, and Cynthie, are on stage at the time. The Silvestre engraving (Figure 73) shows three pages attending their skirts. There must have been a third page in addition to Lycas.

<sup>11</sup>There is no contemporary authority for role distribution. Many Molière critics have suggested actors for a few of the roles. Alexandre Dumas père produced a play, Trois entr'acts pour L'Amour médecin (1850), in which Mlle Du Parc and Mlle Du Croisy dispute over the role of Lisette. But Mlle Du Parc did not play soubrettes and Mlle Du Croisy had been dropped from the troupe before Love's the Best Doctor was presented.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

MELICERTE<sup>12</sup>

ACANTHE, in love with Daphné . . . . .	La Grange (La Thorillière)
TYRENE, in love with Eroxene . . . . .	Hubert
DAPHNE, noble shepherdess ("nymph") . . . . .	Mlle Du Parc
EROXENE, noble shepherdess ("nymph") . . . . .	Mlle De Brie (Mlle Molière)
NICANDRE, shepherd, friend of Lycarsis . . . . .	Du Croisy
LYCARSIS, herdsman, supposedly Myrtil's father . . . . .	Molière
MOPSE, shepherd, supposedly Mélicerte's uncle . . . . .	La Thorillière (De Brie)
MYRTIL, in love with Mélicerte . . . . .	Baron (La Grange)
MELICERTE, shepherdess . . . . .	Mlle Molière (Mlle De Brie)
CORINNE, Mélicerte's confidante . . . . .	Mlle Béjart

COMIC PASTORAL<sup>13</sup>

LYCAS, a rich shepherd,* in love with Iris . . . . .	Molière
CORIDON, a young shepherd,** confidant of Lycas, and in love with Iris . . . . .	La Grange
FILENE, a rich shepherd, in love with Iris . . . . .	D'Estival <sup>14</sup>
IRIS, a young shepherdess . . . . .	Mlle De Brie

\* "Pasteur" - one who owns sheep  
 \*\* "Berger" - one who guards sheep

<sup>12</sup>See D-M, VI, 144-145.

<sup>13</sup>See D-M, VI, 189-204.

<sup>14</sup>Professional singer

HERDSMAN***	Chateauneuf <sup>15</sup>
SHEPHERD	Blondel <sup>14</sup>
DANCING MAGICIANS	La Pierre, Favier
SINGING MAGICIANS	Le Gros, Don, Gaye
ASSISTANT MAGICIAN DANCERS	Chicaneau, Bonard, Noblet <u>le cadet</u> , Arnald, Payeu, Foignard
DANCING PEASANTS	Dolivet, Paysan, Desonets, Du Pron, La Pierre, Mercier, Pesan, Le Roi
GYPSY WOMAN, who sings and dances	Noblet <u>l'ainé</u>
DANCING GYPSY MEN	
Playing the guitar	Lully, Beauchamps, Chicaneau, Vagnart
Playing the castinets	Favier, Bonard, Saint-André, Arnald
Playing the cymbals	La Marre, Des-Airs <u>second</u> , Du Feu, Pesan

THE SICILIAN<sup>16</sup>

HALI, Adraste's valet <sup>17</sup>	La Thorillière
ADRASTE, French gentleman, in love with Isidore	La Grange
FIRST LACKEY	<u>gagiste</u> <sup>18</sup>
SECOND LACKEY	<u>gagiste</u>

\*\*\*"Pâtre" - a cowherd

<sup>15</sup>Gagiste

<sup>16</sup>See D-M, VI, 294.

<sup>17</sup>Described in the livret as a "Turk, slave of Adraste" (D-M, VI, 294).

<sup>18</sup>Three members of the troupe might have been available to fill these roles: Hubert, Bêjart, and De Brie.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

DON PEDRO, Sicilian gentleman . . . . . Molière  
 ISIDORE, Greek slave girl . . . . . Mlle De Brie  
 CLIMENE,Adraste's sister<sup>19</sup> . . . . . Mlle Molière  
 SENATOR<sup>20</sup> . . . . . Du Croisy

GEORGE DANDIN<sup>21</sup>

GEORGE DANDIN, a rich peasant, Angélique's husband . . . . . Molière  
 LUBIN, Clitandre's servant . . . . . La Thorillière  
 MONSIEUR DE SOTENVILLE . . . . . Du Croisy  
 MADAME DE SOTENVILLE . . . . . Hubert  
 CLITANDRE, Angélique's lover . . . . . La Grange  
 ANGELIQUE, Dandin's wife, daughter of Sotenvilles . . . . Mlle Molière  
 CLAUDINE, Angélique's maid . . . . . Mlle De Brie  
 COLIN, Dandin's valet . . . . . Bédart

MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC<sup>22</sup>

JULIE, Oronte's daughter . . . . . Mlle Molière  
 ERASTE, in love with Julie . . . . . La Grange  
 NERINE, companion of Sbrigani . . . . . Mlle Bédart  
 SBRIGANI, Neapolitan adventurer . . . . . Du Croisy

<sup>19</sup>Shown as "Zaïde, slave" in the livret, but changed when the play was published (D-M, VI, 230 and 294).

<sup>20</sup>Shown as "Sicilian Magistrate" in the livret.

<sup>21</sup>See D-M, VI, 496-501.

<sup>22</sup>See D-M, VII, 228.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, a Limousin . . . . .	Molière
APOTHECARY . . . . .	La Thorillière
MAN FROM THE COUNTRY . . . . .	De Brie
FIRST DOCTOR . . . . .	Hubert
WOMAN FROM THE COUNTRY . . . . .	Mlle De Brie
SECOND DOCTOR . . . . .	Béjart
TWO SERVANTS <sup>23</sup> . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>
ORONTE, Parisian gentleman . . . . .	Béjart
LUCETTE, follower of Sbrigani, pretending to be from Gascony . .	Hubert
FIRST SWISS GUARD . . . . .	La Thorillière
SECOND SWISS GUARD . . . . .	Hubert
POLICE OFFICER . . . . .	De Brie
FIRST CONSTABLE . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>
SECOND CONSTABLE . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>

THE MAGNIFICENT LOVERS<sup>24</sup>

CLITIDAS, court fool . . . . .	Molière
SOSTRATE, army general, in love with Eriphile . . . . .	La Grange
ARISTIONE, Eriphile's mother . . . . .	Mlle Béjart <sup>25</sup>
TIMOCLES, prince, suitor of Eriphile . . . . .	Hubert
IPHICRATE, prince, suitor of Eriphile . . . . .	La Thorillière

<sup>23</sup>For Act I, Scene 8 (D-M, VII, 269).

<sup>24</sup>See Lancaster, Part III, II, 723.

<sup>25</sup>Mlle Hervé according to H.-A. Soleirol, Molière et sa troupe (Paris, 1858), p. 92.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

ANAXARQUE, astrologer . . . . .	Du Croisy
CLEON, Anaxarque's son . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>
ERIPHILE, princess . . . . .	Mlle Molière
CLEONICE, Eriphile's confidante . . . . .	Mlle Hervé <sup>26</sup>
CHOREBE, page . . . . .	<u>gagiste</u>
VENUS . . . . .	Mlle De Brie
FOUR CUPIDS . . . . .	<u>gagistes</u>

THE WOULD-BE GENTLEMAN<sup>27</sup>

MUSIC MASTER . . . . .	Hubert
DANCING MASTER . . . . .	La Grange
MONSIEUR JOURDAIN . . . . .	Molière
FENCING MASTER . . . . .	De Brie
PHILOSOPHY TEACHER . . . . .	Du Croisy
MASTER TAILOR . . . . .	La Thorillière
TAILOR'S ASSISTANT . . . . .	Beauval
NICOLE, the household maid . . . . .	Mlle Beauval
MADAME JOURDAIN, Jourdain's wife . . . . .	Hubert
DORANTE, a nobleman, in love with Dorimène . . . . .	La Thorillière
CLEONTE, in love with Lucile . . . . .	La Grange
COVIELLE, Cléonte's valet, in love with Nicole . . . . .	Du Croisy
LUCILE, Jourdain's daughter . . . . .	Mlle Molière

<sup>26</sup>Mlle Béjart according to Soleirol, p. 82.

<sup>27</sup>See D-M, VIII, 24-32.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

DORIMENE, a lady of quality . . . . . Mlle De Brie  
 LACKEYS . . . . . gagistes<sup>28</sup>

PSYCHE<sup>29</sup>

VENUS . . . . . Mlle De Brie  
 CUPID . . . . . Baron  
 AEGIALE, one of the Graces . . . . . Daughter of La Thorillièrre  
 PHAENE, one of the Graces . . . . . Daughter of Du Croisy  
 AGLAURE, older sister of Psyché . . . . . Mlle Marotte  
 CIDIPPE, older sister of Psyché . . . . . Mlle Beauval  
 CLEOMENE, prince in love with Psyché . . . . . Hubert  
 AGENOR, prince in love with Psyché . . . . . La Grange  
 PSYCHE . . . . . Mlle Molière  
 LYCAS, Captain of the Guards . . . . . Châteauneuf  
 KING, father of Psyché . . . . . La Thorillièrre  
 ZEPHIRE, in the service of Cupid . . . . . Molière  
 RIVER-GOD . . . . . De Brie  
 JUPITER . . . . . Du Croisy  
 TWO LITTLE CUPIDS, TWO FOLLOWERS, TWO PAGES

<sup>28</sup>Baron (age 17) was a member of the troupe at this time and might have taken a role.

<sup>29</sup>See D-M, VIII, 367.

## APPENDIX B - Continued

BALLET OF THE BALLETS<sup>30</sup>The Comtesse d'Escarbagnas

CLEANTE, the Vicomte . . . . .	La Grange
THE COMTESSE D'ESCARBAGNAS . . . . .	Mlle Marotte <sup>31</sup>
ANDREE (La Suivante) . . . . .	Mlle Bonneau <sup>32</sup>
THE YOUNG COMTE . . . . .	Gaudon <sup>32</sup>
MONSIEUR BOBINET (Le Précepteur) . . . . .	Beauval
CRIQUET (Le Laquais) . . . . .	Finet <sup>32</sup>
JULIE (La Marquise) . . . . .	Mlle Beauval
MONSIEUR TIBAUDIER (Le Conseiller) . . . . .	Hubert
MONSIEUR HARPIN (Le Receveur des Tailles) . . . . .	Du Croisey
JEANNOT (Le Laquais du Conseiller) . . . . .	Boulonnois <sup>32</sup>

The Pastoral

NYMPH . . . . .	Mlle De Brie
SHEPHERDESS as Man . . . . .	Mlle Molière
SHEPHERDESS as Woman . . . . .	Mlle Molière
SHEPHERD LOVER . . . . .	Baron
FIRST PEASANT . . . . .	Molière
SECOND PEASANT . . . . .	La Thorillière
TURK . . . . .	Molière

<sup>31</sup>The Comtesse was probably played by Hubert at the Palais-Royal (D-M, VIII, 538).

<sup>32</sup>Gagiste.



THE IMAGINARY INVALID<sup>33</sup>

ARGAN, Parisian gentleman . . . . .	Molière
TOINETTE, maid . . . . .	Mlle Beauval
ANGELIQUE, Argan's daughter . . . . .	Mlle Molière
BELINE, Argan's second wife . . . . .	Mlle De Brie
NOTARY . . . . .	Du Croisy
CLEANTE, in love with Angélique . . . . .	La Grange
MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS, doctor . . . . .	Hubert
THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, son of the doctor . . . . .	Beauval
LOUISON, young daughter of Argan . . . . .	Louise Beauval
BERALDE, Argan's brother . . . . .	Baron <sup>34</sup>
MONSIEUR FLEURANT, apothecary . . . . .	La Thorillière
MONSIEUR PURGON, Argan's doctor . . . . .	Du Croisy

<sup>33</sup>See D-M, IX, 242-252.

<sup>34</sup>After 1673, this role was played by Du Croisy, Argan by Baron.

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