



Center on Organizational Innovation

## Unpacking the « Organizational Imprinting Hypothesis »: Cultural Entrepreneurialism in the Founding of the Paris Opera

February 2003

Victoria Johnson  
Department of Organizational Behavior and  
Human Resource Management  
University of Michigan Business School  
[vjohnsn@bus.umich.edu](mailto:vjohnsn@bus.umich.edu)

Center on Organizational Innovation  
Columbia University in the City of  
New York  
803 International Affairs, MC 3355  
420 West 118th Street  
New York, NY 10027  
<http://www.coi.columbia.edu>

This online paper may be quoted under fair use and academic conventions. This paper may not be published elsewhere in any form (including e-mail lists and electronic bulletin boards) without the author's express permission.

The preferred citation for this paper is:  
*Victoria Johnson. February 2003. "Unpacking the « Organizational Imprinting Hypothesis »: Cultural Entrepreneurialism in the Founding of the Paris Opera," Working Paper Series, Center on Organizational Innovation, Columbia University. Available online at [http://www.coi.columbia.edu/pdf/oih\\_vj.pdf](http://www.coi.columbia.edu/pdf/oih_vj.pdf).*

## ABSTRACT

Arthur Stinchcombe's *organizational imprinting hypothesis* is frequently cited by organization theorists, yet the process by which imprinting takes place has remained black-boxed. This paper focuses on the first phase of the imprinting process, in which founders draw on elements from their political, cultural, and economic contexts to construct new organizations. These elements are of interest because they may come to influence an organization's structure and behavior long after the founding phase. I propose that this founding process be understood as one of cultural entrepreneurship, in which founders draw (with varying degrees of success) on available organizational repertoires and genres as they attempt to build their new organizations. Illustrating this process on the case of the Paris Opera, I aim in this paper to contribute to our understanding of *how* the highly consequential organizational imprinting phenomenon operates at the level of individual organizations.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1965, the organization theorist Arthur Stinchcombe noted that “organizations formed at one time typically have a different social structure from those formed at another time.”<sup>1</sup> Stinchcombe hypothesized that this phenomenon was due to the fact that “...organizations which are founded at a particular time must construct their social systems with the social resources available.”<sup>2</sup> As they build new organizations, founders draw on elements from their political, cultural, and economic contexts. These elements of the organization may persist for years, decades, or even centuries, thus creating a link between the specific historical context of founding and the organization’s later structure. This idea, known as the *organizational imprinting hypothesis*, eventually became a major source of inspiration for organizational ecologists, who made it the basis of one of their main lines of research.<sup>3</sup> However, because organizational ecologists study populations of organizations rather than individual organizations, their use of the organizational imprinting hypothesis has focused not on founding *processes* but instead on population-wide *patterns*. Another group of organization scholars who focus on foundings, scholars engaged in “entrepreneurial studies”, have, until recently, paid far more attention to the personal or social *attributes* of founders than to the processes by which founders build new organizations. The imprinting process has thus been left black-boxed, despite many dozens of passing references to Stinchcombe’s hypothesis in the organizational literature. The present paper focuses on the first part of the process (the importation of environmental elements into a new organization at founding), setting aside the far more studied second part of this process (the reproduction of organizational elements over time). By proposing a theoretical framework for understanding the imprinting process and applying it to the case of the Paris Opera, I aim to contribute to our understanding of *how* the highly consequential imprinting phenomenon operates at the level of individual organizations.

### UNPACKING THE PROCESS OF “ORGANIZATIONAL IMPRINTING”

How does a relationship emerge between an organization’s founding phase and its much later trajectory? According to Stinchcombe’s hypothesis, newly founded organizations are shaped by the historically specific resources, such as organizational forms and technologies, upon which their founders initially draw (with more or less success) as they create their organizations. Once founded, these organizations may subsequently survive far into the future—with many or all of their founding characteristics intact—by means of “any one of three processes: (a) they may still be the most efficient form of organization for a given purpose; (b) traditionalizing forces, the vesting of interests and the working out of ideologies may tend to preserve the structure;

---

<sup>1</sup> Arthur L. Stinchcombe, “Social Structure and Organizations,” pp. 142-193 in *Handbook of Organizations*, ed. James G. March (New York: Rand McNally, 1965), p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Jitendra V. Singh and Charles J. Lumsden, “Theory and Research in Organizational Ecology,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 16:161-195 (1990), p. 161.

and (c) the organization may not be in a competitive structure in which it has to be better than alternative forms of organization in order to survive.”<sup>4</sup> The idea of imprinting thus combines two distinct processes under one hypothesis:

- (1) the process by which political, cultural, and economic elements of the founding context shape the characteristics of a new organization, and
- (2) the process by which these founding characteristics are reproduced during the organization’s subsequent history.

The second of these two processes—the reproduction of institutions—is far more familiar territory for most sociologists than is the process of founding. Within organization theory, neoinstitutionalists in particular have made the persistence of less-than-optimal institutions one of their primary explanatory tasks, while some of the most important work in cultural sociology in recent decades has emerged from attempts to explain how social action and interaction contribute to institutional reproduction. Given this disproportionate level of attention to institutional reproduction vis-à-vis organizational foundings, I focus in what follows on the process by which elements of a founding context are incorporated into a new organization.

The first part of the imprinting process takes place while an organization is being constructed out of elements from its founding context. Once in place, these elements represent a link between the organization and its context, and to the extent that these elements—or vestiges thereof—remain in place as the organization ages, they constitute a link to the founding context which may be of great causal significance long *after* the founding phase. Thus the first step in unpacking the imprinting process is understanding the process by which the original relationship between the organization and its founding context is produced. A robust approach to analyzing this process requires attention to the full range of social resources and relationships that contribute to the structure, status, and other characteristics of a newly founded organization.

As the prime locus of historical research in organization studies, neoinstitutional theory would seem eminently well suited to the examination of the imprinting process.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, as Richard Scott has noted, among institutionalist students of organizations “this phenomenon has been much discussed since it was first introduced by Stinchcombe in his seminal essay,” but “there have been relatively few empirical studies of

---

<sup>4</sup> Stinchcombe, “Social Structure and Organizations,” p. 169.

<sup>5</sup> Historically-oriented work from neoinstitutionalists includes, for example, Elisabeth S. Clemens, *The People’s Lobby: Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States, 1890-1925* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Paul J. DiMaggio, *The Invention of High Culture* (unpub. man., 1990) and “Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston, Parts I and II,” *Media, Culture and Society* 4:33-50, 303-322 (1982); Frank R. Dobbin, *Forging Industrial Policy: The United States, Britain, and France in the Railway Age* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994) and “The Origins of Economic Principles: Railway Entrepreneurs and Public Policy in Nineteenth-Century America,” pp. 277-301 in *The Institutional Construction of Organizations*, eds. W. Richard Scott and Søren Christensen (London: Sage, 1995); and Frank R. Dobbin and Timothy J. Dowd, “How Policy Shapes Competition: Early Railroad Foundings in Massachusetts,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 42:501-529 (1997).

imprinting...<sup>6</sup> Indeed, thanks to the specific disciplinary history of their approach, neoinstitutionalists have generally focused their analytical lenses on aspects of organizational life other than foundings. Since their earliest formulations in the 1970s, neoinstitutionalist students of organizations have been interested in explaining the origins of *institutions*, but they have been far less concerned with explaining the origins of individual *organizations* through the activities of entrepreneurs. This fact is tied to the strong neoinstitutionalist critique of interest-based theories of organizational behavior, a critique that was especially important in distinguishing early neoinstitutionalist studies from competing approaches.<sup>7</sup> Because organizational change, especially change induced by entrepreneurial activity, did not seem to provide as fertile a ground for institutionalist analysis as did stable organizations, early institutionalists shied away from empirical investigations of the role of entrepreneurs in organizational foundings.

Sustained internal criticism of the problem of agency in institutionalist analysis, however, bore fruit in the 1980s and the 1990s, when neoinstitutionalists began developing theories of agency compatible with an institutionalist analysis of organizational behavior. At the same time, neoinstitutionalists produced a spate of empirical studies exploring the role of social actors—understood as both interest-driven and shaped by institutionalized meanings—in sustaining or transforming organizations and their environments.<sup>8</sup> This research has been crucial in allowing neoinstitutionalist organizational analyses to move beyond the study of static institutions toward the study of the dynamics of institutionalization. This work has also provided neoinstitutionalists with more adequate tools for the study of organizational foundings by directly addressing the role of entrepreneurs in creating and changing organizations.

The emerging picture is one that accords with the cultural turn taken in so many domains of the social sciences in the last two decades. Instead of an organizational environment that mechanistically stamps particular features on an organization during its

---

<sup>6</sup> W. Richard Scott, “Unpacking Institutional Arguments,” pp. 164-182 in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, eds. Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 178.

<sup>7</sup> For discussions of the problem of interests and agency in neoinstitutionalist work, see especially Frank R. Dobbin, “Cultural Models of Organization: The Social Construction of Rational Organizing Principles,” pp. 117-141 in *The Sociology of Culture*, ed. Diana Crane (London: Blackwell, 1994) and Paul J. DiMaggio, “Interest and Agency in Institutional Theory,” pp. 3-21 in *Institutional Patterns and Organizations: Culture and Environment*, ed. Lynne Zucker (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1988). See also Mark C. Suchman, “Localism and Globalism in Institutional Analysis,” pp. 39-63 in *The Institutional Construction of Organizations*, eds. Scott and Christensen; Jens Beckert, “Agency, Entrepreneurs, and Institutional Change: The Role of Strategic Choice and Institutionalized Practices in Organizations,” *Organization Studies* 20(5):777-799 (1999); and Patricia H. Thornton, “The Sociology of Entrepreneurship,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 25:19-46 (1999).

<sup>8</sup> These studies include, among others, DiMaggio’s work on U.S. museum professionals, Fligstein’s account of how managers helped diffuse a new organizational model in American industry, Dobbin’s studies of railroad entrepreneurs in the nineteenth century, and Lounsbury and Glynn’s work on “entrepreneurial storytelling”. See Paul J. DiMaggio, “Constructing an Organizational Field as a Professional Project: U.S. Art Museums, 1920-1940,” pp. 267-292 in *The New Institutionalism*, eds. Powell and DiMaggio; Neil Fligstein, *The Transformation of Corporate Control* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985); and Michael Lounsbury and Mary Ann Glynn, “Cultural Entrepreneurship: Stories, Legitimacy, and the Acquisition of Resources,” *Strategic Management Journal* 22:545-564 (2001).

founding phase, we find entrepreneurial actors embedded in networks and fields who recombine, according to their power, interests, and positions, resources of all kinds (money, technology, organizational models, legitimating stories) to create new organizations.<sup>9</sup> This picture also accords with recent work by scholars in the field of entrepreneurial studies who have been critical of the longstanding research focus on the psychological traits or social attributes of entrepreneurs. Some of these scholars have called for increased attention to the social context in which entrepreneurial activity takes place, while others have begun to draw on advances in cultural theory to analyze novel dimensions of entrepreneurial activity, including storytelling and the use of metaphor.<sup>10</sup> The present study similarly draws on certain of these advances in order to unpack and analyze the imprinting process.

One of the most powerful theoretical tools in use among cultural theorists today is the concept of *repertoire*. Introduced into social movements research by Charles Tilly in the 1970s as a way of theorizing the types of collective action available to actors in specific historical conjunctures, the concept of repertoire was independently popularized in cultural theory by Ann Swidler in an influential 1986 article.<sup>11</sup> Like the related concepts of schema, tool kit, and script, the concept of repertoire has become an important component of the ongoing effort by cultural theorists to theorize social action as constrained but creative: “A culture,” Swidler writes, “is not a unified system that pushes action in a consistent direction. Rather, it is more like a ‘tool kit’ or repertoire...from which actors select differing pieces for constructing lines of action.”<sup>12</sup>

In the last decade, the concept of repertoire has been usefully deployed in a variety of empirical contexts. In addition to its widespread use in social movement theory, it has been applied, for example, at the national level by Michèle Lamont, Laurent Thévenot, and their research team to analyze cultural differences between France and the United States.<sup>13</sup> And among students of organizations, Elisabeth Clemens has used the concept of repertoire to explain the production of institutional change in the political arena. “[O]rganizational forms are templates, scripts, recipes, or models for social

---

<sup>9</sup> On the idea of recombination, see David Stark, “Recombinant Property in East European Capitalism.” *American Journal of Sociology* 101:993-1027 (1996).

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Murray B. Low and Eric Abrahamson, “Movements, Bandwagons, and Clones: Industry Evolution and the Entrepreneurial Process,” *Journal of Business Venturing* 12:435-457; Lounsbury and Glynn, “Cultural Entrepreneurship: Stories, Legitimacy, and the Acquisition of Resources”; and Sarah Drakopoulou Dodd, “Metaphors and Meaning: A Grounded Cultural Model of US Entrepreneurship,” *Journal of Business Venturing* 17:519-535 (2002).

<sup>11</sup> Ann Swidler, “Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies,” *American Sociological Review* 51:273-286 (1986). Swidler borrows the concept of repertoire from Ulf Hannerz, *Soulside: Inquiries into Ghetto Culture and Community* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

<sup>12</sup> Swidler, “Culture in Action,” p. 277.

<sup>13</sup> *Rethinking Comparative Cultural Sociology*, eds. Michèle Lamont and Laurent Thévenot (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Scholars who rely on the concept of repertoire to analyze social action usually qualify it as pertaining to a particular domain or dimension of social life. They speak, for example, of “cultural repertoires”, “organizational repertoires”, or “repertoires of collective action”. While such distinctions among different types of repertoires are permissible if they are grounded in a corresponding empirical differentiation of social life rather than mere analytic convenience, the term “cultural repertoire” in particular is somewhat misleading. All repertoires are “cultural” by definition, in the sense that they are produced by and help to organize both the taken-for-granted and the normative dimensions of social life.

interaction...Any individual will be familiar with some set of forms; this set constitutes his or her *organizational repertoire*.”<sup>14</sup> Institutional change, Clemens argues, arises through the transposition and recombination of organizational forms by entrepreneurial actors who are nevertheless constrained by the unequal social distribution of knowledge and power:

Like Bourdieu’s cultural capital or Swidler’s cultural toolkit, organizational repertoires may be characterized by their distribution across different social groups and their relation to existing social or political institutions. This distribution will be the product of socialization, exposure to various organizational models, and the fit or resonance between the two. Thus repertoires of organization vary across groups within a society, among societies, and over time.<sup>15</sup>

The process Clemens identifies as a potential source of institutional change is similar to the process by which organizational imprinting takes place. Entrepreneurial actors attempting to found new organizations select, in accordance with their social positions and cultural competence, from among the models in their organizational repertoires, repertoires which have themselves become available to entrepreneurs through previous cultural learning. And when they draw on organizational and other kinds of repertoires—products of particular times and places—to construct new organizations, entrepreneurs are effectively building history into their enterprise.

Like Clemens, I rely on the concept of organizational repertoires to analyze the range of possibilities open to social actors working in the domain of organizational creation or modification. However, instead of theorizing organizational repertoires as being comprised of a collection of organizational “models”, I extend the artistic metaphor invoked with the concept of repertoire in order to theorize the organizational elements available to social actors as organizational *genres*. A genre, whether it structures the way people think about works of art or the way they think about organizations themselves, is a set of guidelines arising from a social process of classification according to which multiple art works or multiple organizations are perceived to be instantiations of the same thing. Thus, while the concept of an organizational “model” is likely to call forth images of social actors consciously working from a clear and complete organizational blueprint, speaking instead of organizational “genres” calls attention to the social activity of organizational construction on the part of the founder. The process of founding may indeed involve a quite conscious modeling on a “successful” organizational genre, but it is just as likely to involve the accidental or intentional recombination of elements from multiple genres to create a new organizational form. While organizational genres provide the entrepreneur with many of the elements that will shape the structure, the identity, and the position of the new organization, it is the entrepreneur who does the initial cultural work of selecting elements from the chosen genre(s) to include in the new organization.

---

<sup>14</sup> Clemens, *The People’s Lobby*, p. 49.

<sup>15</sup> Elisabeth S. Clemens, “Organizational Form as Frame: Collective Identity and Political Strategy in the American Labor Movement, 1880-1920,” pp. 205-226 in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, eds. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 211.

This theoretical emphasis on entrepreneurial creativity vis-à-vis organizational genres is balanced by the bounded nature of organizational repertoires, which offer the entrepreneur a range of choices but which simultaneously limit the genres to which he or she has access, culturally speaking. Furthermore, the ability of an entrepreneur to create the envisioned organization is limited by his or her access to the specific political and economic power dominant in the founding context. And powerful external actors, whether they be individuals (Louis XIV) or corporate bodies (the Paris municipal government) may also play a creative role in addition to a constraining one when they impose particular tasks or structures on an emergent organization. As Clemens has noted of mobilizing groups seeking to create new associations or organizations, “[t]o the extent that such groups share repertoires with those in power, they are better able to misapply familiar organizational scripts to new settings.”<sup>16</sup>

Within cultural, political, and economic limits, therefore, the process of organizational foundings entails the activation and recombination of elements from organizational repertoires by thinking, creative, entrepreneurial actors. “Imprinting” thus turns out to be an inadequate metaphor for the process by which organizations acquire features specific to their founding contexts. While the term was not Stinchcombe’s own, the notion of “imprinting” came to permeate organization-theoretical discourse regarding the link between the nature of a new organization and the context in which it was founded.<sup>17</sup> And despite frequent references to Stinchcombe’s hypothesis by both organizational ecologists and neoinstitutionalists, the actual process currently designated (or masked) by the “imprinting” concept has received very little attention. Thus this somewhat unfortunate metaphor continues to influence perspectives on environment-organization relations at founding as well as on the relation between an organization’s past and its present or future. Integrating insights from cultural theory and neoinstitutionalism—particularly insights into the way social action is structured by cognitive schemas such as organizational repertoires and genres—will help organization theory move from the mechanistic imagery of imprinting to an understanding of the process by which a new organization is structured by its founding context.

#### THE FOUNDING OF THE PARIS OPERA

The raw materials for a new organization are drawn from the historical context in which it is being founded. These materials include not only organizational genres, legitimizing stories, and production technologies, but also the organization’s very goals.

---

<sup>16</sup> Clemens, “The People’s Lobby,” p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Charles E. Bamford, Thomas J. Dean, and Patricia McDougall, “An Examination of the Impact of Initial Founding Conditions and Decisions Upon the Performance of New Bank Start-Ups,” *Journal of Business Venturing* 15:253-277 (1999), p. 254. Warren Boeker erroneously implies that Stinchcombe himself used the term “imprinting forces”; see Boeker, “Strategic Change: The Effects of Founding and History,” *Academy of Management Journal* 32(3):489-515 (1989), p. 492. Mayer Zald suggests a less problematic label, calling it the “impact of foundations hypothesis” (Zald, “History, Sociology and Theories of Organization,” pp. 81-108 in *Institutions in American Society: Essays in Market, Political and Social Organizations*, ed. John E. Jackson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), p. 103.



In the case of the Paris Opera, the goal was the creation and establishment of French opera, an issue of passionate artistic importance to the founder and of great political significance to Louis XIV and his minister Colbert. The Paris Opera was founded in 1669, towards the close of a highly consequential decade in the political and cultural life of Louis XIV's France. Upon the death of the chief minister, Mazarin, in 1661—and following Mazarin's own admonitions—the twenty-three-year-old king abolished the very post Mazarin had held and took the reins of government into his own hands. Louis' subsequent effort to centralize the administration of France and to stabilize the monarchy, extending over the several decades following the death of Mazarin and the commencement of the king's personal reign, would eventually touch on every domain in the administration of France: the judicial system, the structure of government, the policing of cities, the relations among social orders, and foreign, economic, and cultural policy.<sup>18</sup>

Louis XIV and his minister Colbert understood the centralization of cultural production as a crucial weapon in Louis XIV's campaigns to stabilize the monarchy. This centralization enabled them to command and coordinate the celebration of the Sun King in words, pictures, and monuments. The monarch and his minister were also motivated by a desire to prove that the French were superior to the Italians in cultural endeavors such as sculpture, architecture, and music. In the performing arts, the situation was especially delicate: though the French were the undisputed masters of dance, the Italians had a virtual monopoly on opera, since no French operatic genre had been established by the 1660s. In this context, the dogged campaign waged by a poet named Pierre Perrin to get ministerial and royal support for his efforts to theorize and produce opera in French was finally greeted with success. In 1669, Pierre Perrin received a *privilège*—a royal license and monopoly—for the establishment of the Paris Opera.

Though musicologists have all but ignored Pierre Perrin in favor of his immediate successor, the celebrated composer Jean-Baptiste Lully, it was actually in part to an initiative of Perrin's that the Paris Opera would owe its longstanding identity as an organization unique in France. In 1667, Perrin proposed "the establishment of an Academy of Poetry and Music" whose goal would be to synthesize the French language and French music into an entirely new lyric form, that of French opera. As we will see, Perrin's initial idea was profoundly transformed both by technological imperatives and by state interests during the process of implementation. The collaborative process of organizational creation resulted in an organization unlike any other in existence: the Opera partook of the organizational identity, privilege and prestige of a royal academy while conforming in many respects to the model of the public theater.

---

<sup>18</sup> This process, which included rendering nobles dependent on the court and restricting the power of the Parlement of Paris to challenge royal edicts, has been amply documented by historians of Louis XIV's reign. See, for example, Alexandra Bettag, *Die Kunstpolitik Jean Baptiste Colberts* (Weimar: VDG, 1998); François Bluche, *Louis XIV* (London: Blackwell, 1990); Roland Mousnier, *The Institutions of France under the Absolute Monarchy, 1598-1789*, 2 vols., trans. Brian Pearce and Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Roger Mettam, *Power and Faction in Louis XIV's France* (London: Blackwell, 1988); and Pierre Gaxotte, *The Age of Louis XIV*, trans. Michael Shaw (New York: Macmillan, 1970).

The hybrid, schizophrenic nature of the Opera's early identity is captured in a treatise written a decade after the founding of Perrin's "Académie d'Opéra". In one section of this work, Perrin is described as having founded the Opera as a public theater, while in another section Louis XIV is described as having founded the same organization as a royal academy:

[Perrin and two business partners] undertook to open a public theater where one could perform theatrical works set to Music and composed in French Verse. They obtained permission from the King to do this, & [gave it]...the name of Académie de Musique [*sic*] to distinguish it from the actors.<sup>19</sup>

...in 1669, the king, having restored Peace to all of Europe with the Treaty of the Pyrenees [signed in 1659], thought henceforth only of helping the Arts, commerce, Laws, Justice and the Sciences blossom all across his kingdom again. To this end, he established various Academies of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Physics and Mathematics; and by patent letters of June 28 he accorded to Sieur Perrin, who had been the first to present actions in music in our language, the permission to establish in Paris & other cities of the Kingdom, Academies of Music [*sic*] to sing theatrical pieces in public, as is the practice in Italy.<sup>20</sup>

The early Opera's hybrid nature, so neatly underscored by the co-existence of these two passages in a single contemporary treatise, was to be a major influence on its subsequent history. The process by which the Opera emerged as a hybrid organization is thus the process by which it acquired long-lived and causally significant organizational characteristics. In order to begin to construct an explanation of this process, I turn now to the founder and his social and cultural trajectory, moving in the following section to an examination of the political context in which this founder formulated and tried to implement his entrepreneurial agenda.

### *Pierre Perrin*

Born in Lyon around 1620, Pierre Perrin was attached to the household of Gaston d'Orléans by the early 1650s, when he is mentioned in an official document as *Conseiller et Maître d'Hostel ordinaire du Roy et de Son Altesse Royale Madame la duchesse d'Orléans*.<sup>21</sup> In 1653, Perrin married a wealthy and much older widow named Elisabeth Grisson, who helped him purchase the post of *Introducteur des ambassadeurs et princes étrangers* in the Orléans household. The choice of this household was a natural one for an aspiring poet, since Gaston was a patron of the great Molière.<sup>22</sup> In 1653, however, the duke was exiled to his château at Blois for his part in the period of civil war known as the

---

<sup>19</sup> Claude-François Ménéstrier, *Des Représentations en musique anciennes et modernes* (1681; reprint, Geneva: Minkoff, 1972), pp. 209-210.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 235-236.

<sup>21</sup> Charles Nutter and Ernest Thoinan, *Les Origines de l'Opéra Français* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1886), p. 10.

<sup>22</sup> Demuth, *French Opera*, p. 97.

Fronde (1648-1653). Perrin, based in Paris, had no further *ambassadeurs* to introduce, and though he did not lose his post, he was never paid.<sup>23</sup> By the time Gaston died at Blois in 1660, Perrin had long since turned his attentions to gaining patronage for his literary efforts from a far more powerful figure, the minister Mazarin.

Perrin had published his first collection of poetry in his mid-twenties under the title (eccentric even by seventeenth-century standards) *Various Insects: Works of Poetry*, in which he extolled the fine qualities of the flea, the silkworm and other tiny creatures. As early as 1648, Perrin had dedicated a work to Mazarin, namely the first six books of a much-ridiculed verse translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*.<sup>24</sup> This work soon brought Perrin a certain degree (and a certain kind) of celebrity, but his real ambition was to create poetry in French that was suitable for musical setting, and in 1655 he published the first of many poems written expressly for this purpose. Perrin was one of the first poets to contravene the conventional wisdom (firmly espoused at this time by none other than the future "father of French opera" himself), which held that there was as yet no French opera for the simple reason that the language was intrinsically unmusical. Given the perceived unsuitability of the language, very few believed that there ever *could* be such a thing as "French opera", but Perrin persisted in attributing the dearth of French opera to a mere lack of adequate talent. The creation of truly "lyric" poetry, he wrote in 1666,

that is to say, suitable for being sung...with an instrument...demands a very particular kind of genius and an artistry, which, I dare to put forward...has been almost unknown until now by all ancient and modern poets alike, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish and French, among whom one finds few or no *Orphées*, that is to say musical poets or poetic musicians, who have understood how to marry the two sisters of poetry and music.<sup>25</sup>

Perrin mounted his challenge to the prevailing skepticism toward the idea of French opera gradually at first, producing collections of lyric poetry in a wide range of genres. A 1661 collection was advertised as containing "airs de cour, airs à boire, chansons, noëls et motets", as well as a more ambitiously conceived "comédie en musique".<sup>26</sup> One measure of Perrin's increasing success with this approach is that his lyric poetry was set to music by many prominent composers of the day, including Michel Lambert (who in 1662 became Lully's father-in-law) and Robert Cambert, the future *surintendant de la musique* to the queen mother.

It was Cambert who, in 1659, became a partner in the most ambitious venture of Perrin's career to date: a musical drama performed in French and entirely foregoing

---

<sup>23</sup> Nutter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, p. 25.

<sup>24</sup> Perrin, *L'Énéide de Virgile, traduite en vers français. Première partie, contenant les six premiers livres, avec les remarques du traducteur aux marges* (Paris: P. Moreau, 1648). In 1658, Perrin brought out the final six volumes as *L'Énéide de Virgile, traduite en vers héroïques avec le latin à costé...Seconde partie, contenant les six derniers livres, par messire P. Perrin* (Paris: E. Loyson, 1658).

<sup>25</sup> Perrin, "Avant-Propos," in *Recueil des Paroles de Musique de Mr. Perrin, Conseiller du Roy en ses Conseils, Introduteur des Ambassadeurs pres feu Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans*.

<sup>26</sup> Perrin, *Les Oeuvres de poésie de Mr. Perrin, contenant tous les jeux de poésie, diverses poésies galantes, des paroles de musique, airs de cour, airs à boire, chansons, noëls et motets, une comédie en musique, l'Entrée de la reyne, et la Chartreuse...* (Paris: E. Loyson, 1661).

spoken dialogue. Although it remains a point of contention among musicologists of the French seventeenth century whether the initial idea for this experiment came from Cambert or Perrin, credit is generally given to—and was inevitably taken by—the latter.<sup>27</sup> Regardless of whose idea it was, however, the project's originality was obvious to all and it was greeted with great acclaim, bringing glory to both men, at least for a time.

### *The “Pastorale d’Issy”*

In April 1659, Pierre Perrin and his collaborator Cambert made the case for French opera as forcefully as anyone yet had by staging a wildly successful *Pastorale*, which they billed, though not explicitly as an “opera”, as the “première comédie française en musique représentée en France.”<sup>28</sup> The work was put on ten times that month before an overflow crowd of courtiers and bourgeois at the country residence of the Marquis de la Haye in Issy, a village just outside Paris.<sup>29</sup> Perrin later explained that he had chosen Issy in order to avoid “the crowd of people who would undoubtedly have besieged us had we given this work in the middle of Paris.”<sup>30</sup> But the so-called *Pastorale d’Issy* quickly became the talk of Paris, and overflow crowds materialized despite the obscure location.

The *Pastorale* little resembled the sumptuous spectacles that had been staged by visiting Italian troupes of the 1640s and 1650s. The work was performed in an airy room decorated with flowers from the surrounding garden instead of with spectacular sets and

---

<sup>27</sup> Nutter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, p. 32-34, argue that Cambert probably had the idea first, citing a letter in which the normally very modest and retiring composer described how, “Having always had in mind the idea of introducing comédies en musique such as were done in Italy,” he wrote a three-voice musical dialogue which Perrin heard and which inspired the latter to propose that they collaborate on a full-scale music drama. This letter, now in the archives of the Comédie-Française, is also quoted by Ariane Ducrot, “Lully créateur de troupe,” *Dix-septième siècle* 98-99:91-107 (1973), p. 92, and by Jérôme de La Gorce, *L’Opéra à Paris au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Desjonquères, 1992), p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> *Première comédie française en musique représentée en France. Pastorale, mise en musique par M. Cambert*. Paris: R. Ballard, 1659. BN. Castil-Blaze (*L’Académie Impériale de Musique*, p. 32) rejects the idea that the *Pastorale* was the first completely musical drama in French, citing the 1646 performance in Carpentras of a work called *Akébar, roi du Mogol*; still others (e.g., Prunières, *L’Opéra italien en France avant Lulli* [Paris: Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1923], pp. 344-345) cite the 1655 *pastorale Le Triomphe de l’Amour sur des bergers et bergères*, by Charles de Beys and Michel de la Guerre. The first French work designated with the title “opera” would not appear until 1669, with Perrin and Cambert’s *Pomone*, which will be discussed below. Demuth (*French Opera*, p. 105) notes that the term “opera” did not come into general use in French until after 1690, and it was some time before it was given a French inflection, with an accent and an *s* in the plural.

<sup>29</sup> De la Haye is described by La Gorce (*L’Opéra à Paris*, p. 87, n. 1), probably following Nutter and Thoinan (*Les Origines*, p. 43), as an *orfèvre du roi*—a goldsmith in the king’s service. Isherwood (*Music in the Service of the King*, p. 171) claims that he was “the queen mother’s maître d’hôtel.”

<sup>30</sup> Cited by Nutter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, p. 46, from a letter written by Perrin to the “Archbishop of Turin.” This letter gives a very detailed account both of the performances of the *Pastorale* and of Perrin’s understanding of the differences between Italian opera and his work, and it is therefore a document of extreme importance to the founding of the Paris Opera. It has been drawn on extensively by almost every historian of early French opera, including Demuth, *French Opera*, pp. 101-103; Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King*, pp. 171-172; and La Gorce, *L’Opéra à Paris*, p. 12, though not cited specifically.

special effects. Like Italian operas and setting a standard for future operas in French, the *Pastorale* was composed of five acts. However, these acts lacked the overarching coherence of the French operas of the next decades; Isherwood has described them as “a series of vaguely related short tableaux in which arias, recitatives, and dialogues were sung by sylvan deities and shepherds.”<sup>31</sup> Vague or not, both the simplicity of the subject and the extreme clarity with which the seven men and women sang their French texts were delightful to an audience easily fatigued by Italian opera. All these innovations, Perrin noted later, “attracted such a crowd of...princes, dukes and peers...that the entire road from Issy to Paris was covered with their carriages.”<sup>32</sup>

Perrin was describing the scene from hearsay, since he had not actually been able to attend the performances himself—or the rehearsals, for that matter. He had been in jail since the twenty-third of January, a situation indirectly resulting from his unfortunate and shortlived marriage to the widow Grisson.<sup>33</sup> Although his wife’s money had helped him acquire the post he sought with the Orléans family, her grown son had soon persuaded her that she had been duped, and she asked for an annulment.<sup>34</sup> Perrin had been forced to borrow substantial sums to add to what he had borrowed from his wife to make up the 30,000 livres required for the purchase of his post. When he defaulted, his creditors had taken him to court. After his ex-wife’s death, these same creditors went after Perrin’s ex-son-in-law, Gabriel Bizet de la Barroire, who himself retaliated by pursuing Perrin in court for the next twenty years. Unfortunately for Perrin, La Barroire was a councillor in the Parlement of Paris, and it was thanks to him that Perrin would be in and out of the Paris jails for the rest of his life.

Perrin’s absence from Issy did not tarnish the success of the *Pastorale* in the least, and Mazarin himself had it performed at his residence at Vincennes in May 1659 in the presence of Louis XIV. This performance pleased the cardinal and the king so much that Cambert and Perrin were invited to write another music drama in French, and the two set to work at once on a more ambitious work entitled *Ariane, ou Le mariage de Bacchus*. To their great disappointment, Mazarin died in 1661 during the rehearsals, and the work was cancelled. But despite this setback, they could rest secure in the knowledge that they had taken the first steps towards proving that the French language could indeed be set to music gracefully, and that the establishment of French opera was a reasonable and desirable ambition. Perrin, at least, credited himself with a number of improvements over Italian opera, citing the brevity of the work as a whole and of the recitatives in particular, the economical distribution of solos (only one per role), the simplicity of the subject matter and emotional themes, and—reigning supreme among the *Pastorale*’s accomplishments—its elegant and natural sung French verse.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King*, p. 173. Cambert’s music did not survive, but Perrin’s text was published under the title *Première comédie française en musique représentée en France. Pastorale, mise en musique par M. Cambert* (Paris: R. Ballard, 1659).

<sup>32</sup> Cited by Castil-Blaze, *L’Académie Impériale de Musique*, p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> Nutter and Thoinan, *Les Origines*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>35</sup> Summarized from the letter to the Archbishop of Turin by Demuth, *French Opera*, pp. 102-103.

Though Mazarin's death temporarily dampened Perrin's hopes for increased court support for the development of French opera, the project eventually attracted the attention of Colbert, who was engaged in the 1660s in consolidating French cultural production against Italian encroachments. Perrin's concerted efforts to win Colbert's support finally bore fruit toward the end of the decade, when the Académie d'Opéra was created as part of a cluster of royal academies whose focus was the celebration of the reign of Louis XIV.

### *The Campaign for French Opera*

Perrin was released from jail in September 1659, but he was back less than five months later, at the instigation of La Barroire, and he was to spend much of the 1660s in this cycle of incarceration, release, and renewed incarceration. His prison stints were nonetheless highly productive. Hearing in his jail cell the news that Mazarin had requested a follow-up piece to the *Pastorale d'Issy*, Perrin immediately began work on *Ariane* and completed the libretto upon his release. When the death of Mazarin in 1661 put the plans for this work on hold, Perrin divided his time between publishing his poetry, fleeing his creditors, and sitting in jail. In April 1666, after six months at the Conciergerie, Perrin signed an agreement with his son-in-law that granted him a reprieve of two years. The consequences of non-payment at the end of that time would be severe, but Perrin jumped at the chance to get out and stay out, at least for a while. Still dogged in his courtship of the powerful, Perrin dedicated a collection of his poetry to Colbert in 1667, who, though less powerful than Mazarin had been, still exercised considerable sway in the country's affairs, especially those touching the arts. In the preface to the collection he dedicated to Colbert, Perrin quite intentionally touches a sore political nerve by pointing out the obvious superiority of the Italians in music and poetry as well as in the operatic synthesis of these two arts:

In truth, Monseigneur, I dare say to you that it is fitting to the glory of the King and of France not to suffer that a Nation that is victorious in all other things should be vanquished by foreigners in the knowledge of these two arts, Poetry and Music, in which...the Italians have for a few years surpassed us by far. For my part, Monseigneur, I am touched by a strong desire, not only to imitate them and show that our Poetry is capable of the same beauties as theirs and that it has the same advantages for music; but even to show to all Europe that we can improve on their knowledge and their intentions...<sup>36</sup>

Four years later, in the preface to the libretto of the first work that he would mount at his new opera house, Perrin rehearsed similar arguments in favor of a truly French operatic tradition, arguments he had been making to anyone who would listen for much of the decade.<sup>37</sup> In this preface, Perrin systematically presents the objections that had been made against French opera and explains how he envisioned overcoming them. First, partisans of French opera would have to overcome the resistance of those who

---

<sup>36</sup> Perrin, "Avant-Propos," in *Recueil*, n.p.

<sup>37</sup> Perrin, *Avant-Propos placé en tête de l'argument de Pomone* (Paris, 1669).

believed that France's unsurpassed accomplishments in the realm of spoken drama could never be equalled by sung drama. Perrin argued that sung drama, by virtue of its musical setting, possessed specific powers that could not only match spoken drama, but even surpass it:

[O]ne must admit that musical expressions have a completely different power from that of recited plays, that quite often they touch the heart more intensely in two verses than do the others in fifty, and that the sung word, with its changes in tone, inflections, emphasis, anger, gentleness and the ringing sound of the voice, all express more immediately, more agreeably, and with more variety the transports of the soul, than can the unison of the recited word. And if to this beauty one adds that of the Harmony of the chords, which melt the heart and prepare it for the impressions that one wants to convey, the advantage of having various characters expressing simultaneously in an agreeable way the same sentiments, sometimes to have them say the same words together in a conflicting sense...and a thousand other games particular to words set to music, it would not be difficult to prefer them in all things and to make the most obstinate people confess that these kinds of Spectacles unite all the great & honest pleasures...<sup>38</sup>

Despite these heartfelt convictions, Perrin also acknowledged that there was much work to be done if a French operatic tradition was to be firmly established. Not only would potential audiences have to be brought around, but the infrastructure necessary for operatic production would have to be constructed nearly from scratch. It was undeniable that France lacked Italy's marvelous singing actors and the wizardry of its set designers, but with hard work and patience, Perrin argued, these obstacles could be overcome. Paris was, after all, "the dancing school of all nations", and the resources France possessed in its celebrated dancers, choreographers, and costume designers would partially compensate for French backwardness when it came to other crucial elements of opera performance.<sup>39</sup> "These are the reasons," Perrin wrote at the conclusion of his *apologie* for French opera,

that have guided me in this enterprise & for which I have remained determined to persevere despite all the chatterings of ignorant Criticism & all the misunderstandings of the envious, which have been infinite during the two years that I have been laboring at this great work, [and which would have been] too great indeed & too far beyond the power of a single individual, if the King had not had the generosity to support me with his authority...<sup>40</sup>

In the end, the single most persuasive argument in support of French opera would be the wild success of Perrin's first operatic production at his new Académie d'Opéra, but given the intense scepticism he had encountered for the last two decades, even the overly-confident Perrin could hardly have foreseen the acclaim that would greet his first effort at full-scale French operatic performance. But neither could he have foreseen that, even with royal support, the enterprise of the Paris Opera would indeed outstrip the "power of a single individual"—or at least those of this particular individual. Spectacular

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 6 and p. 14.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

collapse was to follow hard on early success. For the time being, though, Perrin's arguments won over both Colbert and Louis XIV. On June 28, 1669, the king signed the *Privilège accordé au Sieur Perrin pour l'établissement d'une Académie d'Opéra en musique, & Vers François*. The Paris Opera was born—prematurely, it would later appear.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL REPERTOIRES IN THE FOUNDING OF THE OPERA

The founding of the Paris Opera as part of the royal academy system was of decisive importance in the Opera's position and trajectory at least as late as 1807, when Napoleon restored to it its Old Regime position and privileges. Though musicologists have overlooked the hybrid nature of the early Opera, its ties to the academy system shaped the entire field of French theater for more than a century and helped it survive the French Revolution. It is true that the Opera resembled other theaters in structure and operations far more than it did the other royal academies, but its organizational identity and national—even international—position were in large part the result of its academy status. How did it acquire this status? Why was the Opera founded as a hybrid of academy and theater rather than simply as a theater? The answer lies in several places: in the novelty of the art form in question, in the entrepreneurial vision of Pierre Perrin, in the organizational repertoires of seventeenth-century France, and in the political interests of Louis XIV and his minister Colbert.

#### *French Opera, Royal Patronage, and Cultural Entrepreneurialism*

Opera had first come to France from the Italian states, of course, where it had, by the mid-seventeenth century, broadened its production base from court-sponsored private performances to include public theaters boasting lengthy seasons.<sup>41</sup> Familiar with the Barberini family's operatic productions in Rome, the Italian Mazarin invited many accomplished Italian singers, composers, librettists and set designers to work their magic at the French court in the 1640s.<sup>42</sup> While the Italians' vocal fireworks and florid music were received with little enthusiasm, the fantastic sets and *machines*—mechanical contraptions designed to lower chariots, storms, gods, and other awe-inspiring phenomena from the heavens—quickly captured the French imagination and would eventually constitute a major element of Lully's operas.

Another means by which the visiting Italian troupes courted French audiences was the addition of ballet *entrées* to their operas, which were performed between the acts to

---

<sup>41</sup> For an overview of the institutional bases of opera production and consumption in seventeenth-century Italy, see Lorenzo Bianconi and Thomas Walker, "Production, Consumption, and Political Function of Seventeenth-Century Opera," *Early Music History* (1984):209-274.

<sup>42</sup> For an account of papal operatic patronage, see Margaret Murata, *Operas for the Papal Court* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981). On the first opera experiments in Paris under Mazarin, see Neal Zaslaw, "The First Opera in Paris: A Study in the Politics of Art," pp. 7-23 in *Jean-Baptiste Lully*, ed. John Hajdu Heyer.



alleviate the tedium of listening to Italian. The typical French *entrées* were made even more diverting by the frequent participation of the young king himself, who had long been celebrated for his grace and skill in dance.<sup>43</sup> Thanks to these ameliorating elements of exciting production design and French ballet, Italian opera enjoyed a vogue in the 1640s. However, its production was substantially slowed by the civil wars of the Fronde (1648-1653), and it had little opportunity in the ensuing peace to effect a significant comeback, given the rising tide of anti-Italian feeling in the late 1650s and the death in 1661 of Mazarin, the foremost patron of Italian opera in France. Isherwood notes that, with the exception of one work in 1681, sixty-seven years would elapse after the 1662 performance of Cavalli's *Ercole amante* ("Hercules in Love") before an Italian opera was again performed in Paris.<sup>44</sup>

Pierre Perrin's writing on Italian music in general and Italian opera in particular is by turns admiring and polemical. His constant goal in these writings was to persuade the French public that French opera would be far more intelligible, entertaining, and visually splendid than Italian opera. Although the critique of Italian opera was natural for an aspiring creator of opera in French, Perrin was thoroughly in step with the surge in anti-Italianism after Mazarin's death, most powerfully expressed in the dismissal from court of accomplished Italians such as Bernini, the designer Torelli and the castrato Atto Melani.<sup>45</sup> Perrin's hopes for a French operatic genre thus accorded well with Louis XIV's growing desire to see France excel over Italy in all the arts and sciences. But how best to fulfill these hopes?

After the great success of the 1659 *Pastorale d'Issy*, Pierre Perrin spent the decade of the 1660s developing a theory of the ideal relationship between music and French verse. He was by no means the first Frenchman to explore this relationship, but he drew up, and tried to put into practice, the most comprehensive set of guidelines ever articulated.<sup>46</sup> In the collection of song lyrics and opera libretti that he presented to Colbert in 1666, Perrin included a long foreword detailing his approach to the composition of French lyrics.<sup>47</sup> In this foreword, Perrin took as his starting point the assumption that

the purpose of Lyric Poetry [is] to give occasion to a perfect and polished music, which, in order to transport the entire man, should touch at one and the same time the ear, the wit, and the heart; the ear by beauty of sound, the wit by beauty of content and by a beautiful musical composition well conceived and well worked out, and the heart by inspiring in him some tender sentiment.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> La Gorce, "Lully," pp. 918-19 in *Dictionnaire du Grand Siècle*, edited by François Bluche (Paris: Fayard, 1990), p. 10; Robert M. Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King: France in the Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), p. 122.

<sup>44</sup> Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King*, pp. 133-134. Lully himself provided the recitatives to this work, though Cavalli wrote the bulk of the music.

<sup>45</sup> Georgia Cowart, *The Origins of Modern Musical Criticism: French and Italian Music, 1600-1750* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981), p. 19.

<sup>46</sup> Auld, *The Lyric Art of Pierre Perrin*, p. 7.

<sup>47</sup> "Avant-Propos," in *Recueil des Paroles de Musique de Mr. Perrin, Conseiller du Roy en ses Conseils, Introduceur des Ambassadeurs pres feu Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans*.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* Italics mine; translation from Auld, *The Lyric Art of Perrin Perrin*, vol. 2, pp. 24-25.

In order to facilitate a fusion of music and text that would “transport the entire man,” Perrin lays out, in this Foreword, a series of arguments regarding every conceivable aspect of lyrics and libretti: appropriate subject matter, characters, musical modes, sentence length, diction, stress, style, vocabulary, rhyme, strophes, repetition and more. Along the way, he makes a momentous suggestion:

It would be desirable, in order to examine and establish the rules of this Art, rules so useful for the advancement and the conciliation of Poetry and Music, that His Majesty decree the establishment of an *Academy of Poetry and Music, composed of Poets and Musicians, or, if possible, of Musician-Poets*, who would set themselves to accomplishing this task, which would be of no little benefit to the public and bring no little glory to the nation.<sup>49</sup>

Both in his ambition to codify the rules of his art and in his assumption that an academy would be the best institutional context in which to arrive at such codification, Pierre Perrin resembled many of his contemporaries working in the arts and sciences. When his Académie d’Opéra was founded in 1669, five other academies were already in existence, and the seventh and final academy was to be founded two years later. The Académie Française had been created in 1635 by Richelieu under Louis XIII, and the Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture in 1648 by Mazarin when Louis XIV was only ten years old; thus both predated Louis XIV’s personal reign. The remaining academies, however, were all founded under Louis’ direct supervision with the help of his top advisor for internal affairs, Jean-Baptiste Colbert. In addition to the Académie d’Opéra, Louis and Colbert oversaw the founding of the Académie Royale de Danse (1661), the “Petite Académie” (1663), the Académie Royale des Sciences (1667), and the Académie d’Architecture (1671). Colbert also turned his considerable energies to the two older academies, the Académie Française and the Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, taking bold steps toward the reorganization and revitalization of these institutions.

Louis and Colbert spent a great deal of energy and money in the 1660s and early 1670s on the creation of this system of academies because it occupied a key position in Louis’ efforts to centralize the administration of France around his person. The academies served the purpose of centralization by rendering men of arts, letters and science even more dependent on, and in some sense indebted to, the French monarchy, than they already were under the extant patronage system. The academy system also allowed Louis and Colbert to direct the production of these men towards works explicitly celebrating Louis’ reign in words and pictures. The creation of the academies and their partial integration with one another through overlapping memberships was thus both a concrete result of the policy of centralization and a source of direct and indirect cultural arguments for centralization—the most heavy-handed of these taking the form of paintings, odes and histories celebrating the great monarch himself. As they reorganized the arts and sciences around the crown, Louis and Colbert were guided by these potential advantages of the academy system over the looser system of individual pensions and the much less tractable system of guilds. Never mind that the creation of

---

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

the academies often entailed rolling back or duplicating privileges previously granted by the crown itself.<sup>50</sup>

Louis' determination to secure the position of the French crown through a systematic concentration of power in his person was at least in part the product of his childhood experience of the civil wars of the Fronde.<sup>51</sup> While the centralization of French government was in the first instance a by-product of the wars waged throughout the seventeenth century, Louis XIV pursued the centralization of cultural production most vigorously in the first period of relative tranquillity after his assumption of personal rule.<sup>52</sup> The sweeping cultural policies aimed at helping to stabilize the monarchy became thinkable only with the Peace of the Pyrenees in late 1659, when a degree of calm finally prevailed after the Fronde and a protracted war with Spain that had begun in 1635.<sup>53</sup> The degree and extent to which Louis modernized France has been hotly debated for decades.<sup>54</sup> However, even historians hesitant to label Louis' accomplishments "revolutionary" concede that one of his most effective tools in reorganizing the kingdom was the redistribution of patronage and privilege.<sup>55</sup> The effort to restructure relations between patrons and cultural producers and to reorganize cultural production itself fell largely to Colbert, who as the *surintendant des bâtiments* acted as a de facto minister of culture in a kingdom where no such position officially existed. When Colbert began, in the early 1660s, to re-evaluate and reconfigure the system of patronage relations, the state's biggest competitor in the realm of private patronage of the arts, Nicolas Fouquet, had just been arrested and his position, *surintendant des finances*, had been abolished.<sup>56</sup> Before long, Colbert's master would be the undisputed prince of patronage.

Colbert understood patronage of the arts and sciences first and foremost as a tool to serve his king, and he quickly set about reinforcing and reorganizing the existing system of patronage. In 1664, he revamped the old list of gratifications and pensions distributed to writers by the king, raising the number of writers receiving gratifications

---

<sup>50</sup> The creation of the academies at times triggered virulent protest from those whose royally-bestowed privileges were thereby revoked or duplicated. This was a common side-effect as Louis reorganized his kingdom both in war and in peace: "In addition to encroaching on local and customary rights, raising new resources often meant abridging or rescinding privileges the state itself had ratified" (Charles Tilly, *The Contentious French* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986], p. 131). See also Jean-Marie Apostolidès, *Le Roi-machine: Spectacle et politique au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Éditions du Minuit, 1981), pp. 34-37.

<sup>51</sup> P.J. Coveney, "Introduction," pp.1-53 in *France in Crisis, 1620-1675*, ed. P.J. Coveney (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977), p. 37; Roland Mousnier, *Louis XIV*, trans. J.W. Hunt (London: The Historical Association, 1974), p. 5.

<sup>52</sup> On the link between war and centralization under Louis XIV, see Tilly, *The Contentious French*, pp. 127ff.

<sup>53</sup> Mousnier, *Louis XIV*, p. 4; Sturdy, *Science and Social Status*, p. 36.

<sup>54</sup> Mettam, *Power and Faction*, pp. 12ff; Mousnier, *Louis XIV*, pp. 18-25. See also John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 285-293; William Beik, *Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and Daniel Dessert, *Argent, Pouvoir et Société au Grand Siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1984).

<sup>55</sup> Mettam, *Power and Faction*, p. 10.

<sup>56</sup> John C. Rule, "The Administrative History of the Reign," pp. 95-109 in *The Reign of Louis XIV* ed. Paul Sonnino (London: Humanities Press International, 1990), p. 104.

from fifty-eight in 1664 to seventy-two in 1666, with the amount distributed among them increasing from 77,500 livres to 95,000 livres.<sup>57</sup> This effort marked the beginning of Colbert's project to centralize literary and scientific culture, but more was wanted for the service of the king than an unreliable trickle of odes and tributes from the grateful recipients of royal largesse.<sup>58</sup> Colbert looked to the two extant royal academies—the Académie Française and the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture—for models of how to further extend state control over the arts.

In this climate, the request made in 1661 by a group of dancing masters (mostly the king's own) that they be granted academy status perfectly suited both the king's predilection for dance and Colbert's desire to erect new cultural institutions tightly bound to the heart of the administration. The Académie Royale de Danse thus became the first academy created under Louis with Colbert's help. Four others were to follow, and with Colbert's revitalization of the Académie Française and the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, France saw the creation, in just over a decade, of an unparalleled system of cultural institutions whose structure, activities, and very existence depended on the king, and much of whose energies were consequently devoted to the celebration in artifacts—from tiny medallions to ornament-encrusted palaces—of the king himself.

#### *“Académie Royale” as an Organizational Genre*

The organizational repertoire of a given entrepreneur is constituted by the range of institutionalized organizational forms socially and culturally available to him or her. As a poet working at the margins of court life, Perrin saw ample evidence of the prestige and power accruing to the members of the royal academies. And since these figures were also devoted to the work of discussion and codification in their respective arts and sciences, an academy seemed to Perrin both a natural and an advantageous framework for the development of sung French works, including French opera. By the time Perrin presented his collection of lyric poetry and his verbose Foreword to Colbert in 1666, the Académie Française, the Académie Royale de Peinture, the Académie Royale de Danse and the Petite Académie were all in operation, and the Académie Royale des Sciences was in the very process of being created. To the extent that these organizations displayed similar structural and functional elements recognized as similar by contemporaries, “royal academy” can be said to have been an institutionalized organizational form—in other words, an organizational genre—in the 1660s when Pierre Perrin was working to build an organizational setting for the production of French opera.

The aspects of the academies examined in this section (and summarized in Table 1 below) include their goals, technologies, mode of diffusion, authority relations, centralization, standardization, and control. *Goals* refer to the formal mission of an organization, while the *technologies* of an organization are the media, materials and

---

<sup>57</sup> Bluche, *Louis XIV*, p. 160.

<sup>58</sup> Alice Stroup, *A Company of Scientists: Botany, Patronage and Community at the Seventeenth-Century Parisian Royal Academy of Sciences* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 31.

modes of production used to meet its goals. The *mode of diffusion* is the means by which the organization's products are distributed to non-members. *Authority relations* and *centralization* are closely related aspects of an organization's structure and procedures, with authority relations referring to formally prescribed hierarchy and centralization referring to the degree of "concentration of authority to make decisions."<sup>59</sup> *Standardization* refers to the "existence of procedures for regularly recurring events or activities."<sup>60</sup>

## 1. Goals

Many formal organizations have as their explicit goal a relatively straightforward task such as the production of a concrete product. In the case of the French royal academies, the goals articulated in the *lettres patentes* were generally more abstract. As we have seen, Louis and Colbert shared a belief that if the academies as a system advanced the arts and the sciences in France, they would thereby contribute to the glory and stability of Louis' reign. This belief was stated in most of the *lettres patentes*, but it was usually left to the statutes to spell out the exact means to the fulfillment of this overarching goal. For example, Louis XIV offered the ambitious but vague declaration in the *lettres patentes* of the Académie Royale de Danse that its goal was to restore the art of dance "to its first perfection."<sup>61</sup> Louis proposed to gather together thirteen of the most experienced court dancers so that they might "confer among themselves on Dance, opine and deliberate on the means to its perfection, and correct the abuses and mistakes that may have been, or may in the future be, introduced into the Dance."<sup>62</sup>

In the late seventeenth century in France, the most direct way to the achievement and preservation of advancements in the arts and science appeared to be the elaboration of explicit codes for practice in a given field. Louis XIV and Colbert accordingly specified codification as the main goal of each academy, with the exception of the Petite Académie, which coordinated the activities of the other academies. An additional goal of several of these academies—the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, the Académie Royale de Danse, and the Académie Royale des Sciences—was the education of future teachers and practitioners of the arts and sciences. In the case of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, modeled on the art academies of Italy, codification of the rules of artistic production and consumption through academic discussion was institutionalized much later than were the more direct pedagogical functions of the academy. Colbert's effort in the early 1660s to make codification a key organizational activity of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture shows, however, the degree to which codification was central to his understanding of the royal academy as an organizational form.

## 2. Technologies

---

<sup>59</sup> Mary Jo Hatch, *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic and Postmodern Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 166.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> *Lettres patentes du Roy, pour l'établissement de l'Académie royale de danse en la Ville de Paris* (Bibliothèque de l'Opéra, PA 16 avril 1662), p. 2.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

Richelet's 1680 dictionary defines an academy as an "assembly of men of letters, or of some important art, who meet regularly in a certain place to speak of *belles lettres*, or of things of their art."<sup>63</sup> Indeed, if the main goal of the royal academies was the development of rules for production in an academy's given area of specialization, the primary "technology" for arriving at this goal was quite simple: regular, formal discussions among members in which principles were debated and, ideally, agreed upon.

The media in which an academy specialized sometimes called for more complex technologies than simple discussion. The Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, for example, elaborated its principles both by analyzing extant works and by creating new ones. The Académie Royale de Danse felt compelled to view demonstrations of dance steps in order to judge their quality. And demonstration was even more *de rigueur* at the Académie Royale des Sciences, where the very culture of scientific inquiry required proof of the validity of one's claims.

### 3. Mode of Diffusion

In the kinds of modern corporations generally studied by organization theorists, an organization's mode of diffusion of its products is often of great importance to its survival. This was emphatically *not* the case for the seventeenth-century French royal academies, for whom the direct diffusion of their material and ideal products to a non-"academic" public might seem strikingly underemphasized to the student of modern contemporary organizations. Indeed, the conventional wisdom in the halls of government and within the academies themselves was that academicians and their projects flourished most freely when protected from the prying eyes of non-members. The secrecy of academic meetings, the pledges of silence regarding the content of discussions, the piecemeal filtering of results and products to the public—these were meant to balance the public's curiosity with perceived requirements of scientific and artistic creativity. However, some public diffusion of academic products could and did take place in various modes: through the occasional presence of non-members in academy meetings; through the publication of treatises detailing the decisions of an academy; or through the display of academy products to non-members outside the context of the academy's private meetings.

### 4. Authority Relations and Centralization

Hierarchy was eschewed at the royal academies, with decision-making powers distributed as evenly as possible by each academy's statutes. Rotating posts, directors appointed for the sole purpose of presiding over meetings, and equal votes regarding potential new members were all measures intended to preserve a horizontal structure among academicians (all of whom were, of course, subordinate to the king). The Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, with its heavy emphasis on teaching, built up a comparatively more hierarchical structure out of the distribution of teaching responsibilities and of students' skill levels, and the Académie Royale des Sciences was

---

<sup>63</sup> Pierre Richelet, *Dictionnaire françois, contenant les mots et les choses...le tout tiré de l'usage et des bons auteurs de la langue françoise* (Geneva: Chez Jean Herman Widerhold, 1680), p. 7.

divided into two sections and employed lab assistants, but still the painters and sculptors met once a week for discussion from 1663, and the scientists all convened twice a week as a unified body of academicians. Codification through discussion obtained as the central organizational goal even in these more complexly-structured academies.

## 5. Standardization

The academies' commitment to power-sharing and their collective status as official royal institutions encouraged the elaboration of detailed protocols for meetings and governance. For example, Article V of the 1648 statutes of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture stipulates in minute detail the procedures to be observed in the meetings. It is worth quoting this article at length because it is precisely this length that reveals the degree to which decision-making processes were standardized in the royal academies:

The twelve elders will assemble on the first Saturday of every month...to deliberate on the affairs of the group...whether on the question of amendments to the present statutes, the reception of those who present themselves for membership, or other matters...and if one of the twelve elders is absent, the oldest of the other members who are present will take the place after the oldest of the elders; and if a greater number [of elders] is missing, the same procedure will be observed; and in the said assemblies, the propositions will be made by the syndic who has been appointed for the month by the head of the Académie and by the elder who is on duty; if one of the elders comes to be absent either by death or by a long absence, the others will name one of the other academicians in his place and will vote by secret ballot, in order to proceed sincerely and without fear of displeasing anyone; and this will be done in good faith, without collusion, intrigue or particular passion, either in this regard or in any other in which some resolution must be taken.

The high degree of standardization suggested by this example obtained equally in the statutes of the other academies, with the exception of the Petite Académie.

These five organizational dimensions—goals, technologies, mode of diffusion, authority relations/centralization, and standardization—capture crucial features of the royal academy as an organizational form as it would have appeared to Pierre Perrin and his contemporaries. In the late 1660s, when Perrin was lobbying for the creation of an academy of opera, the royal academy was an institutionalized organizational form displaying the characteristics summarized above. Nevertheless, as we will see in the next section, the Académie d'Opéra differed profoundly from the extant academies across these organizational dimensions. The *lettres patentes* issued in Perrin's name in 1669 created a substantially different institution from the Académie de Poésie et de Musique envisioned in the 1666 Foreword. Instead of discussion, the sole activity of the new academy was to be public performance, and instead of Perrin's broad agenda for his proposed academy, drawn from the full range of text-based musical genres—from light airs to opera—all that remained was opera. Instead of creating an academy that matched the goals and technologies of the other royal academies, Louis XIV and Colbert had just breathed legal life into an institution the likes of which France had never seen.

### *The Organizational Form of the Académie d'Opéra*

Founded hard on the heels of the Académie Royale des Sciences, Pierre Perrin's Académie d'Opéra was understood by Colbert and Louis to be an organizational sibling of this and the other extant royal academies. As with the other academies, in establishing an academy for opera, Louis wished to “contribute to the advancement of the arts” in his kingdom.<sup>64</sup> As we will see in subsequent chapters, the academy title and the privileges and status that adhered thereto were defining elements of the nascent Paris Opera and bore enormous repercussions for the subsequent history of French theater, both musical and otherwise. Yet a systematic comparison (summarized in Table 2 below) of the Académie d'Opéra with its fellow academies across the organizational dimensions examined above will show how different the Opera was from its fellow academies and thus how surprising it is that it was founded as part of the academy system.

#### 1. The Goals of the Académie d'Opéra

The *lettres patentes* issued to Pierre Perrin in June 1669 granted him the exclusive right to establish academies throughout France “*pour y faire chanter en public*”—to have performed in public there—operas in French.<sup>65</sup> Unlike any other academy, therefore, the Académie d'Opéra (which was, as we have seen, the only one Perrin actually established) had as its explicit and primary goal the sale of its product directly to the public. And while perfection in the art of opera was one of Louis's hopes for the new academy, and echoed the language he used in defining the goals of the other academies, the path to the perfection of French opera was not to be codification through discussion, or even the training of selected young musicians. Instead, the Opera's *lettres patentes* express Louis' desire that “not only will these things [i.e. the performances] contribute to our Entertainment and to that of *the Public*; but further that *our Subjects* will become accustomed to the taste of Music, [that they] will progress [*insensiblement*] toward their own perfection in this Art.”<sup>66</sup> The Académie d'Opéra was thus defined at the outset as an institution oriented toward the public. There were, consequently, no secretive weekly meetings assembling composers and poets to debate, in a genteel manner and on equal footing, the rules of opera creation; and there were no excerpts from such discussions to be filtered in print to a waiting readership. In this regard, the Académie d'Opéra's *raison d'être* differed starkly from those of the other academies. While the conventional wisdom in the halls of government and within the other academies was that, in general, academicians and their projects flourished most freely when protected from the prying eyes of non-members, the Académie d'Opéra did everything in its power to lure the public to its events.

The royal decision to seek the perfection of opera through public performance rather than through private discussion reverberated throughout the Académie d'Opéra.

---

<sup>64</sup> *Privilège accordé au Sieur Perrin pour l'établissement d'une Académie d'Opéra en musique, & Vers François* (Bibliothèque de l'Opéra, PA 28 juin 1669), p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* (My italics.)



This mandate to perform for the public was the ultimate source of the Opera's crucial deviations—in the language of organization theory, the main cause of its “strong speciation”—from the academy genre. The Opera's technologies, its mode of diffusion, and its organizational structure all bore the imprint of the decision to make the public a key participant in the Opera's regular functions.

## 2. Technologies and Mode of Product Diffusion at the Académie d'Opéra

In seventeenth-century France, and indeed throughout most of operatic history, an opera could not be seen or heard unless its performers were physically present (though an audience was not, of course, required for a performance to take place). Other products of the French royal academies, such as paintings, buildings, dictionaries, and scientific treatises, on the other hand, had a material existence independent of their creators, and a public eager for such products could therefore consume them in the absence of those creators. By contrast, in the case of a performing art such as seventeenth-century opera, the consumption of performances required that performers and audiences occupy the same temporal and physical coordinates. The more-than-welcome presence of non-members at the functions of the Académie d'Opéra therefore created a situation unique among seventeenth-century royal academies: the organization's technologies for the production of its academic product (live performance and the requirements thereof) and the mode of diffusion of this product (live performance) overlapped almost completely. The Opera's connection to and dependence on the Parisian public, unheard of for a royal academy, was the overdetermined result of (1) the Opera's mandate to put the product before the public combined with (2) the physical facts of operatic performance in the seventeenth century.

The basic *technological* imperative of opera requiring that performers be present for an opera to be experienced by anyone else was accompanied at the Académie d'Opéra by somewhat less binding but still highly potent *cultural* imperatives, themselves the product of contemporary expectations of what opera should sound like and look like. Some of these expectations mirrored those held for opera throughout most of its history, while others were specific to the historical context in which French opera as a genre was being created by Pierre Perrin and his collaborator Robert Cambert. Among the basic elements expected in operatic production and incorporated into the Académie d'Opéra's performances were, of course, singers and instrumentalists. A stage for the performers, a place for the musicians (though not, at this time, an actual orchestra pit), and a space for the audience (many of whom stood throughout the performance)—all these elements were considered prerequisites for the performance of opera at the time. Other fundamental elements included a text, the music to which that text would be sung, and stage sets to help specify the time and place of the action.<sup>67</sup> The incorporation of these elements into the Académie d'Opéra's productions placed demands on Perrin and his associates for (1) a suitable physical space, (2) the composed

---

<sup>67</sup> These have been basic features of opera throughout most of its history, but this should not be allowed to obscure the fact that they are cultural rather than technological imperatives. Recent experiments in opera composition and production incorporate novel practices, such as employing electronically-generated “voices” instead of live singers or performing opera in urban parking lots instead of in conventional theaters.

work itself, and (3) singers and instrumentalists, who had to be identified, engaged and rehearsed.

Beyond these basic expectations of operatic performance, Perrin's contemporaries brought another range of expectations to the idea of a French operatic genre in particular. In the face of fierce debate over whether opera could even count as such if performed in the "unsuitable" French language, Perrin strove to persuade the Parisian public that his productions would carry France to the summit of operatic excellence, acknowledging in the preface to *Pomone* that "[t]hose who have never seen such pieces are little persuaded that they might succeed."<sup>68</sup> But, he continued, "we have the wherewithal to surpass in French operas those of Italy, in the beauty of the dances & in the...magnificence of the costumes...we have only to prove [something] that, despite being novel and surprising, is no less valid, [namely] that our French language, when all is said and done, is more suitable to music than the richest and sweetest of languages, Greek, Latin, and Italian."<sup>69</sup> Perrin takes as a foregone conclusion not only the fact that France could surpass Italy in dance and costumes, but also that these elements of the spectacle are crucial to the creation of a successful French operatic genre. And his well-placed confidence that these visual elements of operatic performance mattered tremendously to his fellow Frenchmen is reflected in the lavishness of the Opera's sets, the daring of its special effects, and the attention paid to the ballet interludes in *Pomone*. Persuading skeptical Parisians to swallow the strange pill of sung French by means of a blast of visual splendor, Perrin added to the primary requirements of operatic performance an array of other expensive human and material resources: dancers, designers, and carpenters; choreography, fireworks, cables, paint and wood. The Académie d'Opéra's mandate to ply its very unfamiliar wares directly before the public brought with it the need to charm, dazzle, and impress, as well as a set of technologies and expenses related to this need.

The presence of non-members at this royal academy thus created pressures for the Opera's "academicians" to cater to public tastes more directly than was the case for any other academy. As we have seen, no other academy made such a direct offering to the public of the fruits of its labor as the Académie d'Opéra with its jammed performances of *Pomone* and *Ariane*. The only comparable moments of direct public diffusion of an academy's product took place at the annual salon of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture. This exhibition of the academicians' art was not instituted, however, until twenty-five years after the Académie's founding—and four years after the founding of the Académie d'Opéra. Furthermore, these exhibitions were in no way the central function of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture in the late seventeenth century, though their importance to the nineteenth-century Parisian art world is well known and incontestable. The Parisian public thus participated in the activities of Académie d'Opéra in a manner unmatched by, and indeed inconceivable for, any other royal academy.

---

<sup>68</sup> Perrin, *Avant-Propos placé en tête de l'argument de Pomone*, p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

### 3. Authority Relations and Centralization at the Académie d'Opéra

The Opera's organizational structure differed as strikingly from the other royal academies as did its relations to the public. The *lettres patentes* creating the Opera gave Pierre Perrin complete freedom to pick his colleagues at the new academy. "We have," Louis declared, "granted to the said Perrin...permission to establish in our good city of Paris, and others of our kingdom, an academy, composed of whatever number and quality of persons that he deems advisable."<sup>70</sup> Typically, as we have seen, the original members of a royal academy were appointed en masse, with future appointments voted on by the assembled academicians and subject to approval by the king. Nothing remotely resembling this procedure was put in motion as the Académie d'Opéra was created. Pierre Perrin was the sole holder of a privilege that was in some ways closer to those creating *manufactures* than to those creating the royal academies. For unlike the royal academies, including the only one founded after it (the Académie Royale d'Architecture of 1671), the Académie d'Opéra was a for-profit, privately-owned and privately-run organization established in a privately-leased building. The performance mandate had brought with it to the Opera aspects of organizational form typical of an entirely different kind of organization: the public theater. No other royal academy was framed by its official documents as a profit-making organization, and no other royal academy began life under the formal directorship of a single individual—no matter how active Colbert was behind the scenes.

Public theaters in the Paris of Perrin's day were run either by individuals or by partnerships. Like the directors of many other performing troupes, Perrin had sole administrative authority over his organization, and also like many other directors, he soon found it necessary to find partners to help run and finance his theatrical operations. For artistic support, he turned to the composer Cambert. Short of funds, these two soon took on two other partners in order to help finance the enterprise. While this foursome at the Académie d'Opéra matched the original number of members at the Petite Académie, all resemblance even to this unusually small royal academy ends there. Most notably, the technological requirements of opera performance gave rise to an army of salaried and contract workers who took their orders from the oddly assorted committee at the head of the Académie d'Opéra. By contrast, with the exception of a few lab assistants at the Académie Royale des Sciences, salaried employees were absent at the royal academies.<sup>71</sup>

### 4. Standardization at the Académie d'Opéra

The standardization of procedures typical of the royal academies was simply non-existent at the Académie d'Opéra. Though the Opera received *lettres patentes*, no statutes were issued, meaning that there were no articles such as those that outlined typical academic practices at the other royal academies such as election procedures, chairing of the meetings, or protocol for the rare entrances of the public to the academic lair. As with his choice of partners and employees, Perrin had been handed an

---

<sup>70</sup> *Privilège accordé au Sieur Perrin*, p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> Stroup, *A Company of Scientists*, pp. 248-250.

administrative *carte blanche*.<sup>72</sup> The performances of the Académie d'Opéra were rehearsed and produced on an ad hoc basis, probably because the high degree of centralization at the Opera and its quasi-commercial status seemed to obviate the need for the kind of laboriously detailed articles that were so helpful in keeping the vaunted equality of academicians at the other academies from creating chaos in the meetings.

### *The Emergence of the Founding Form*

No scholar, whether musicologist or historian, who has written on the founding of the Paris Opera seems to have noticed the contrast between the Académie de Poésie et de Musique proposed by Perrin in the 1666 Foreword to Colbert and the Académie d'Opéra that was actually founded in 1669. Because we have no surviving historical record of communications that may have taken place between Colbert and Perrin after the presentation of the Foreword and before the issuing of the *lettres patentes*, we have no concrete proof of precisely how the move was made from a discussion academy to an organization for the performance of opera. However, from the evidence presented in this chapter regarding the political importance of creating a French operatic genre and the shared organizational features of the other royal academies, it is possible to construct a plausible account of why this new organizational form—a performing academy—was both conceivable and desirable from the points of view of Louis XIV and Colbert, on the one hand, and of Perrin himself on the other.

Whether the suggestion to give the new academy key features of a public theater came from Perrin or from Colbert, it is not hard to understand why Perrin would have been extremely enthusiastic about the idea. In 1666, the year he presented his Foreword to Colbert, Perrin spent over five months imprisoned in the Conciergerie for debt.<sup>73</sup> A discussion academy of the sort he proposed to Colbert would hardly have brought riches to its members, if the paltry or non-existent remuneration of most royal academicians is any indication of what could be expected for the members of a lyric academy. A theatrical enterprise for which Perrin held a monopoly and to which the public was welcomed on condition of payment, by contrast, might hoist him out the massive debt in which he had been mired for more than a decade. However, given the goals and technologies of the extant royal academies, it would have been sheer folly for Perrin to make a proposal to Colbert that he be made sole director of a commercial organization that nevertheless held the title of academy—even if such a thought did occur to him in 1666, as it might have. A performing academy was simply not part of the organizational repertoire available to denizens of Louis XIV's France in the mid-1660s.

Once the idea *had* been floated, however, the personal benefits for Perrin of a performing enterprise over a discussion academy would have been obvious. The opportunity to stage his own works, to pick his own associates and artists, to bring his

---

<sup>72</sup> The Opera would not receive its first set of statutes until the early eighteenth century.

<sup>73</sup> Perrin was in jail that year from October 21 to April 7. Auld provides as complete a list as the historical record permits of Perrin's six different incarcerations, which took place between 1659 and 1672 (Auld, *The Lyric Art of Pierre Perrin*, vol. 1, p. 27).

creations directly before the Parisian public, and to make financial killing (a real possibility after the success of the *Pastorale d'Issy*) would surely have outweighed the more diffuse rewards that might have redounded to him and his projected company of scholar-poets and scholar-musicians, sequestered in a private hall as they hammered out the rules for a new French lyric art. Regardless of whether it came from above or below, the idea of a performing academy could not but have been dazzling to the down-and-out but ever hopeful Perrin.

There is some evidence in the *lettres patentes* that the idea may indeed have come from Perrin, or at least that he had become a staunch lobbyist for it once it had been brought up. After opening the *lettres patentes* with the traditional greeting (“To all those who will see these present letters, *Salut*”), Louis XIV continues by noting that

Our beloved and faithful Pierre Perrin, Councillor in our Councils, & Introducer of Ambassadors for our very dear and much beloved late Uncle the Duke of Orléans, has very humbly shown to Us, that for several years, the Italians have been establishing various Academies, in which excellent Musical Works are performed, which are called Opera...<sup>74</sup>

Perrin is thus mentioned in the *lettres patentes* as an active supporter, perhaps even the source, of the idea that the new academy should be devoted to performing opera rather than discussing it. Little matter that Italian opera was *not* being performed in academies in the seventeenth century. The examples given—of Venetian opera, and of the performances for the Pope and “other princes”—make abundantly clear that what was now, in 1669, being alluded to as the organizational frame for the Académie d’Opéra was in fact the commercial theaters of Venice and the noble-sponsored productions put on in Rome.<sup>75</sup> The misleading reference to Italian “academies”—whether Perrin knew it was incorrect or not—helps reinforce an elision of great convenience: The organizational *raison d’être* of the French royal academies—discussion and codification—could be discarded (to Perrin’s potential profit), but the academy name could be maintained through a legitimizing reference to Italian academies that were supposedly engaged in the production of opera.

Even if Perrin was indeed an energetic supporter of the 1669 version of the Académie d’Opéra, as is strongly suggested by the opening of the *lettres patentes*, Louis and Colbert, for their parts, would have seen several important benefits for the state in the creation of a performing academy. The first of these was the immediate access of the Parisian public to a new and impressive, and most importantly, *French* art form. That public performance is the primary goal of the Académie d’Opéra is evident in its *lettres patentes*, where the most striking difference from the *lettres patentes* of the other academies is an emphasis on the public diffusion of its product. As I have shown above, the public diffusion of academic products was a secondary, not a primary, goal of the royal academies. The *lettres patentes* of the Académie d’Opéra, by contrast, explicitly

---

<sup>74</sup> *Privilège accordé au Sieur Perrin*, p. 2.

<sup>75</sup> On the venues in which Italian opera was being produced in the late seventeenth century, see Bianconi and Walker, “Production, Consumption and Political Function of Seventeenth-Century Opera.”

orient this academy to such public diffusion, first by stipulating that the purpose of Perrin's *privilège* is to grant him a monopoly on the performance of opera before a paying public, and secondly by suggesting that he may also establish similar institutions in other French cities if he so desires. Why did Louis XIV consider the public diffusion of the still experimental genre of French opera more important than its incubation and maturation in the confines of a discussion-oriented academy? What made the organizational form represented by the Académie d'Opéra imaginable in the first place?

The answer lies in Louis XIV's interest as a young king in court performances, particularly the *ballets de cour*. Louis' attachment to these spectacles grew as he began to grasp their significance as a way of displaying, and even reinforcing, the power of his throne and his state. As a young boy, Louis had seen the glorious Italian operas performed at court in the 1640s under Mazarin, and two decades later, in the 1660s, as Louis and Colbert created a system for the production of the monarchy's image, they were both highly sensitive to the potential of opera as a medium through which to celebrate Louis' reign. Furthermore, the anti-Italian turn of the early 1660s helped whet the appetites of some Frenchmen (not least those of Louis XIV and Pierre Perrin,) for French success in the operatic arena. In his theoretical writings, as we have seen, Perrin took advantage of Louis' competitive attitude toward Italian accomplishments in the arts, as well as mining the "searing trauma to national honor"—inflicted under Mazarin and never since healed—by Italian operatic prowess.<sup>76</sup> References to Italy's operatic performances in the *lettres patentes* suggest that this competitive spirit was a key element in Perrin's negotiations with Louis and Colbert for the right to open the Académie d'Opéra. This spirit was surely also important to Louis' eagerness to bypass the now-traditional discussion academy format in favor of the immediate access of the French public to this new form of French musical theater. The misconception that opera in Italy was performed in "academies" gave Louis and Colbert the chance to create a lyric academy that would retain a strong symbolic connection to the extant royal academies while allowing the organizational genre represented by those academies to be broken open and reworked.

But even if we accept the hypothesis that Louis considered it more beneficial to France and the French state to sidestep codification and discussion in order to move directly to the performance of French opera, we must wonder why he turned the operations and finances of this new academy over to a private citizen, something he did not dream of doing for any of the other academies. As we have seen, the *lettres patentes* gave Perrin the right to create his academy with "whatever number and quality of persons that he deems advisable."<sup>77</sup> Why would Louis and Colbert give such complete freedom over an enterprise of national cultural importance to a single individual?

The most likely answer arises from the fact that the Académie d'Opéra was the only academy whose formation as an organization took place *simultaneously* with the development of its organizational product. Since the genre of French opera was so new,

---

<sup>76</sup> This formulation comes from Catherine Kintzler, *La France classique et l'opéra...ou la vraisemblance merveilleuse* (Arles: Harmonia Mundi, 1998), p. 12.

<sup>77</sup> *Privilège accordé au Sieur Perrin*, p. 2.

and some of its technological requirements so different from extant art forms, part of the infrastructure and skills required to produce this unusual new academic product were completely lacking in France, and their mobilization or creation would be a highly expensive undertaking. Singers, especially, were needed, so much so that promising Languedociens with next to no training were rounded up and shipped to Paris, where they had to learn how to speak French as well as how to sing opera. Thus it is highly likely that the anticipated expenses of operatic productions, together with Perrin's insistent presence as a logical candidate for running the Académie d'Opéra and the possibility that other operatic academies, bringing their own expenses, might eventually be established, all conspired to convince Louis and Colbert that a privately-run organization would be the best form in which to launch the new, risky enterprise of French opera.

Therefore, the fact that this organization went by the name of "academy" was more than a simple reference to the academies in which opera was erroneously supposed to be produced in Italy. This title signalled that the Académie d'Opéra, despite its unusual form, was meant to play a key role in the royal project to propel the arts and sciences in France to the summit of human accomplishment, a project to which the royal academies were integral. The academy status, which would be so integral to the Opera's next century, is also a testament to the process by which the Académie d'Opéra emerged. Through a reference to a suitable organizational form, the royal academy, the entrepreneur Perrin brought his ambitions to the attention of those political authorities whose sanction was required for organizational initiatives. Together, Perrin and his superiors reworked this form in accordance with political expediency, financial interests and the technological imperatives of the desired organizational product. In a political context as centralized as Louis XIV's France, the final decision was out of the hands of the entrepreneur, but through persuasive lobbying efforts and the alignment of interests and organizational repertoires, a new organizational form emerged that had the potential, at least, to bring satisfaction to both parties.

## CONCLUSION

Though it is outside the scope of this paper to examine the Opera's subsequent history, this organization has borne the traces of its founding context for centuries, right up to the present day. Government policy toward the Opera as well as internal organizational dynamics have been structured, sometimes in highly consequential ways, by these residual traces of the seventeenth century. Though most organizations, particularly those of interest to organization theorists, are not as long-lived as the Paris Opera, the causes of organizational behavior may still be traced, at least in part, to emergent organizational form and identity. Thus understanding how an organization's founders incorporate—intentionally or otherwise—elements drawn from or shaped by the founding context stands to improve explanations of later organizational behavior. The case of the Paris Opera suggests that in the analysis of the founding process we should attend not only to founders' access to political and economic resources but also to the historically specific cultural schemas (such as organizational genres) which frame and

constrain founders' choices. These schemas, products of a given time, place, and social position, are central to the process by which historical specificity is built into new organizations.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1659. *Première comédie françoise en musique représentée en France. Pastorale, mise en musique par M. Cambert*. Paris: R. Ballard, 1659.
1661. *Lettres patentes du Roy, pour l'établissement de l'Académie royale de danse en la Ville de Paris*. PA 16 avril 1662, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.
1669. *Privilège accordé au Sieur Perrin pour l'établissement d'une Académie d'Opéra en musique, & Vers François*. PA 28 juin 1669, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.
- Apostolidès, Jean-Marie. 1981. *Le Roi-machine: Spectacle et politique au temps de Louis XIV*. Paris: Editions du Minuit.
- Auld, Louis E. 1986. *The Lyric Art of Pierre Perrin*. Henryville, PA: Institute of Mediaeval Music.
- Bamford, Charles E., Thomas J. Dean, and Patricia McDougall. 1999. "An Examination of the Impact of Initial Founding Conditions and Decisions Upon the Performance of New Bank Start-Ups." *Journal of Business Venturing* 15:253-277.
- Beckert, Jens. 1999. "Agency, Entrepreneurs, and Institutional Change: The Role of Strategic Choice and Institutionalized Practices in Organizations." *Organization Studies* 20(5):777-799.
- Beik, William. 1985. *Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bettag, Alexandra. 1998. *Die Kunstpolitik Jean Baptiste Colberts*. Weimar: VDG.
- Bianconi, Lorenzo, and Thomas Walker. 1984. "Production, Consumption and Political Function of Seventeenth-Century Opera." *Early Music History* 209:209-274.
- Bluche, François. 1990. *Louis XIV*. London: Blackwell.
- Boeker, Warren. 1988. "Organizational Origins: Entrepreneurial and Environmental Imprinting at Time of Founding." Pp. 33-51 in *Ecological Models of Organizations*, edited by Glenn Carroll. Cambridge: Ballinger.
- Castil-Blaze, Francois Henri J. Blaze, dit. 1855. *L'Académie Impériale de Musique: histoire littéraire, musicale, choréographique, pittoresque, morale, critique, facétieuse, politique et galante de ce théâtre de 1645 à 1855*. Paris: Castil-Blaze.
- Clemens, Elisabeth S. 1996. "Organizational Form as Frame: Collective Identity and Political Strategy in the American Labor Movement, 1880-1920." Pp. 205-226 in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Clemens, Elisabeth S. 1997. *The People's Lobby: Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States, 1890-1925*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Coveney, P.J. 1977. "Introduction: France in Crisis, 1620-1675." Pp. 1-63 in *France in Crisis, 1620-1675*, edited by P.J. Coveney. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Cowart, Georgia. 1981. *The Origins of Modern Musical Criticism: French and Italian Music 1600-1750*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press.
- Demuth, Norman. 1963. *French Opera: Its Development to the Revolution*. Sussex: Artemis.
- Dessert, Daniel. 1984. *Argent, Pouvoir et Société au Grand Siècle*. Paris: Fayard.
- DiMaggio, Paul J. 1982. "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston, Parts I and II." *Media, Culture and Society* 4:33-50, 303-322.

- DiMaggio, Paul J. 1988. "Interest and Agency in Institutional Theory." Pp. 3-21 in *Institutional Patterns and Organizations: Culture and Environment*, edited by Lynne Zucker. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.
- DiMaggio, Paul J. 1990. *The Invention of High Culture*. Unpublished manuscript.
- DiMaggio, Paul J. 1991. "Constructing an Organizational Field as a Professional Project: U.S. Art Museums, 1920-1940." Pp. 267-292 in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, edited by Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dobbin, Frank R. 1994. "Cultural Models of Organization: The Social Construction of Rational Organizing Principles." Pp. 117-141 in *The Sociology of Culture*, edited by Diana Crane. London: Blackwell.
- Dobbin, Frank R. 1994. *Forging Industrial Policy: The United States, Britain, and France in the Railway Age*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dobbin, Frank R. 1995. "The Origins of Economic Principles: Railway Entrepreneurs and Public Policy in Nineteenth-Century America." Pp. 277-301 in *The Institutional Construction of Organizations: International and Longitudinal Studies*, edited by W. Richard Scott and Søren Christensen. London: Sage.
- Dobbin, Frank R., and Timothy J. Dowd. 1997. "How Policy Shapes Competition: Early Railroad Foundings in Massachusetts." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 42:501-529.
- Ducrot, Ariane. 1973. "Lully créateur de troupe." *Dix-septième siècle* 98-99:91-107.
- Fligstein, Neil. 1990. *The Transformation of Corporate Control*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Gaxotte, Pierre. 1970. *The Age of Louis XIV*. New York: Macmillan.
- Hannerz, Ulf. 1969. *Soulside: Inquiries into Ghetto Culture and Community*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hatch, Mary Jo. 1997. *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic and Postmodern Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Isherwood, Robert M. 1973. *Music in the Service of the King: France in the Seventeenth Century*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Kintzler, Catherine. 1998. *La France classique et l'Opéra...ou la vraisemblance merveilleuse*. Arles: harmonia mundi.
- La Gorce, Jérôme de. 1992. *L'Opéra à Paris au temps de Louis XIV*. Paris: Desjonquères.
- Lamont, Michèle, and Laurent Thévenot, eds. 2000. *Rethinking Comparative Cultural Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lounsbury, Michael, and Mary Ann Glynn. 2001. "Cultural Entrepreneurship: Stories, Legitimacy, and the Acquisition of Resources." *Strategic Management Journal* 22:545-564.
- Low, Murray B., and Eric Abrahamson. 1997. "Movements, Bandwagons, and Clones: Industry Evolution and the Entrepreneurial Process." *Journal of Business Venturing* 12:435-457.
- McGowan, Margaret M. 1963. *L'Art du Ballet de Cour en France, 1581-1643*. Paris: Éditions du centre national de la recherche scientifique.
- Ménéstrier, Claude-François. 1681. *Des Représentations en musique anciennes et modernes*. Reprint, Geneva: Minkoff, 1972.
- Merriman, John. 1996. *A History of Modern Europe*. New York: W.W. Norton.

- Mettam, Roger. 1988. *Power and Faction in Louis XIV's France*. London: Blackwell.
- Mousnier, Roland. 1979. *The Institutions of France under the Absolute Monarchy, 1598-1789*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Murata, Margaret. 1981. *Operas for the Papal Court, 1631-1668*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press.
- Nutter, Charles, and Ernest Thoinan. 1886. *Les Origines de l'Opéra Français*. Paris: Librairie Plon.
- Perrin, Pierre. 1648. *L'Enéide de Virgile*. Paris: P. Moreau.
- Perrin, Pierre. 1658. *L'Enéide de Virgile...Seconde partie*. Paris: E. Loyson.
- Perrin, Pierre. 1661. *Oeuvres de poésie*. Paris: E. Loyson.
- Perrin, Pierre. 1666. *Recueil des Paroles de Musique de Mr. Perrin, Conseiller du Roy en ses Conseils, Introduceur des Ambassadeurs pres feu Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans*. Paris: BN Manuscrits 2208.
- Perrin, Pierre. 1669. *Avant-Propos placé en tête de l'argument de Pomone*. Paris.
- Perrin, Pierre. 1671. *Pomone. Opera ou Representation en Musique. Pastorale. Composée par Monsieur Perrin, Conseiller du Roy en ses Conseils, Introduceur des Ambassadeurs pres feu Monseigneur le Duc d'Orleans. Mise en Musique par Mr Cambert, Intendant de la Musique de la feüe Reyne*. Paris: Imprimerie Pierre Le Mercier.
- Prunières, Henri. 1913. *L'Opéra italien en France avant Lulli*. Paris: Libraire ancienne Honoré Champion.
- Prunières, Henri. 1914. *Le Ballet de Cour en France avant Benserade et Lully*. Paris: Henri Laurens.
- Richelet, Pierre. 1680. *Dictionnaire françois, contenant les mots et les choses...le tout tiré de l'usage et des bons auteurs de la langue françoise*. Geneva: Chez Jean Herman Widerhold.
- Rule, John C. 1990. "The Administrative History of the Reign." Pp. 95-109 in *The Reign of Louis XIV*, edited by Paul Sonnino. London: Humanities Press International.
- Sadler, Graham. 1992 "Tragédie en musique." Pp. 779-785 in *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, edited by Stanley Sadie. London: Macmillan.
- Scott, W. Richard. 1991. "Unpacking Institutional Arguments." Pp. 164-182 in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, edited by Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Singh, Jitendra V., and Charles J. Lumsden. 1990. "Theory and Research in Organizational Ecology." *Annual Review of Sociology* 16:161-195.
- Stark, David. 1996. "Recombinant Property in East European Capitalism." *American Journal of Sociology* 101:993-1027.
- Sternfeld, Frederick William. 1993. *The Birth of Opera*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Stinchcombe, Arthur L. 1965. "Social Structure and Organizations." Pp. 142-193 in *Handbook of Organizations*, edited by James G. March. New York: Rand McNally.
- Stroup, Alice. 1990. *A Company of Scientists: Botany, Patronage and Community at the Seventeenth-Century Parisian Royal Academy of Sciences*. Berkeley: University of California.

- Suchman, Mark C. 1995. "Localism and Globalism in Institutional Analysis," pp. 39-63 in *The Institutional Construction of Organizations*, edited by W. Richard Scott and Søren Christensen. London: Sage.
- Swidler, Ann. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 51:273-286 (1986).
- Thornton, Patricia H. 1999. "The Sociology of Entrepreneurship." *Annual Review of Sociology* 25:19-46.
- Tilly, Charles. 1986. *The Contentious French*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Yates, Frances. 1947. *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century*. London: Warburg Institute, University of London.
- Zald, Mayer N. 1990. "History, Sociology and Theories of Organization." Pp. 81-108 in *Institutions in American Society: Essays in Market, Political and Social Organizations*, edited by John E. Jackson. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Zaslaw, Neal. 1989. "The First Opera in Paris: A Study in the Politics of Art." Pp. 7-23 in *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque*, edited by John Hajdu Heyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**TABLE 1***ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ROYAL ACADEMIES*<sup>78</sup>

<b>Academy</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Technologies</b>	<b>Mode of Diffusion</b>
<i>Académie Française (1635)</i>	Codification of rules of French language	Weekly meetings for private discussion and readings; composition and publication of dictionary (1694)	Sale of dictionary
<i>Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture (1648)</i>	Codification of rules for composition and appreciation of art; instruction of students	Classes for enrolled students; lectures and meetings for academicians	Classes for enrolled students; publication of lectures by academicians (from 1667); annual exhibitions (from 1673); designs for decoration of royal buildings
<i>Académie Royale de Danse (1661)</i>	Codification of dance steps; instruction of dancing masters and courtiers; review and judgment of new choreography	Weekly meetings for private discussion and demonstrations; public classes	Demonstrations; classes open to public
<i>“Petite Académie” (1663)</i>	Supervision of various literary, architectural and other projects in honor of Louis XIV	Private meetings with Colbert	External execution of projects supervised by its members
<i>Académie Royale des Sciences (1666)</i>	Codification, experimentation, and observation; review of inventions submitted to king	Private meetings of entire academy twice weekly; individual and group research and experimentation	Public works projects for kingdom; incremental publication of research by members

---

<sup>78</sup>Excludes the Académie Royale d'Architecture (1671)

(Table 1 continued)

<b>Academy</b>	<b>Authority Relations</b>	<b>Centralization</b>	<b>Standardization</b>
<i>Académie Française (1635)</i>	40 members, of whom three are officers	Low	Strong (statutes)
<i>Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture (1648)</i>	1648: 12 elders (anciens), each of whom presided over meetings for one month of the year; they also served as professors 1663: The king's "Directeur des Bâtiments" was "protecteur" of the academy; there was a "vice-protecteur"; a "directeur"; four rectors; 12 professors; 6 to 8 conseillers; an open number of academicians in addition to these; and a limited number of students	Moderate	Strong (statutes)
<i>Académie Royale de Danse (1661)</i>	Thirteen equal members; teaching responsibilities rotating among them	Low	Strong (statutes)
<i>"Petite Académie" (1663)</i>	4 equal members under Colbert	High (Colbert)	Weak (no statutes)
<i>Académie Royale des Sciences (1666)</i>	Fluctuating number of members (around 20 to 30) in two divisions (experimental and exact sciences)	Low	Strong (statutes)

**TABLE 2***ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ACADEMIE D'OPERA*

<b>Academy</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Technologies</b>	<b>Mode of Diffusion</b>
<i>Académie d'Opéra (1669)</i>	Performance of opera in French	Opera performances	Public performances in theater for paying audiences

<b>Academy</b>	<b>Authority Relations</b>	<b>Centralization</b>	<b>Standardization</b>
<i>Académie d'Opéra</i>	Business partners: Perrin, Cambert, De Sourdéac, Champeron Artistic direction: Perrin with Cambert Salaried or contracted employees: machiniste, singers, dancers, instrumentalists, painters, carpenters	High	None (no statutes)