

***"Le Triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes" (1666) & "Le Triomphe de l'Amour" (1681):  
Two French court ballets as examples of King Louis XIV's politics at play,  
in a 'play within a play'***

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### Introduction

In this article I will analyze two 17th century French court ballets: the first one, a *ballet-masquerade* (or 'masque')<sup>1</sup> entitled '*Le Triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes*' (*The Triumph of Bacchus in the Indies*), performed in 1666, and the second one '*Le Triomphe de l'Amour*' (*The Triumph of Love*), staged for the first time in 1681. I selected these two specific plays because I consider them closely connected for a number of reasons. Firstly, they were performed at Saint-Germain-en-Laye in front of Louis XIV (Fig.1), the French 'Sun King', who was himself a dance lover as well as an accomplished dancer. Secondly, both of them employ 'Indian' characters, while their music and lyrics have been composed by Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687) and Isaac de Benserade (1612-1691), respectively. Thirdly, they were created in order to celebrate two joyful and auspicious courtly events: the first one a betrothal and the second one a marriage. Finally, both of them represent two typical examples of the way in which King Louis XIV's economic and political power could be displayed through the dance and theatrical conventions of the time.

The first of these plays, the *masquerade*, was staged at the same time that French merchants reached India (in 1666). They then settled there to start their commercial trading in Asia, which would have been well underway by the time the second, the court ballet, was staged (in 1681). The plays together celebrate an important political and economic achievement for the financial power and foreign diplomacy of France.



**Fig. 1** Louis XIV in 1670 by Claude Lefèvre

Last but not least, in the history of French dance the second court-ballet, '*Le Triomphe de l'Amour*', marked also the first appearance on the stage of four female professional dancers belonging to the Royal Dance Academy, founded in 1661, by King Louis XIV himself. The participation of those dancing girls is by itself an important fact, as till then the only female dancers entitled to take part in those courtly entertainments were distinguished members of the royal family and the aristocracy.

Despite their incontestable aesthetic value and beside the fact that the two plays

were intended to joyfully entertain the invited guests with pleasant music, songs and dance during those two festive occasions, I argue here that the major aim of both ballets was to display Louis XIV's accomplished commercial campaigns in Asia. Thus, through the enacting of mythological stories portraying Greek Gods, Nymphs and other semi-divine beings, characters commonly employed on the stage in those times, both the *masquerade* and the ballet were intended to celebrate the success of the achievements in India by the French *Compagnie des Indes Orientales*, officially founded in 1664.

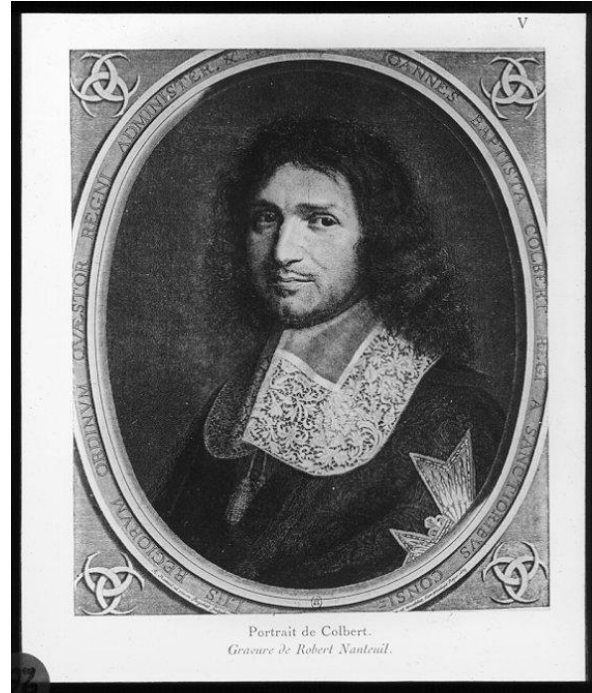
By emulating, firstly in the masque, the victory of Bacchus in the Indies, and later on in the second court ballet, the God of Love's victory on the entire World and on Bacchus himself, who had just conquered the Eastern Indies, I will try to show here how the contemporary Sun King's political messages and expansionistic plans were cleverly 'embroidered' within the narrative frame of those two 'mythological' plays. That is why the depiction of the successful military deeds and love affairs of the ancient Greek-Roman deities were acted here as metaphorical references to Louis XIV's recent achievements in India.

Before dealing with the two ballets in detail, it is useful for readers that those artistic and political events be historically contextualized.

### **The French arrival in India or 'Le Triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes'**

Following the Portuguese (1500), British (1600) and Dutch (1602), the French established their own *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* (East Indian Company) in 1664, in order to avoid dependence upon those foreign companies' markets for imported Asian goods, particularly the spices, the precious stones and the textiles<sup>2</sup>. The *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* was mainly conceived by Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683) (Fig.2), who himself belonged to a rich family of French merchants. In his youth Colbert was politically and diplomatically trained by the

powerful Cardinal Mazarine, of Sicilian origin. Soon after the foundation of the *Compagnie*, in 1665, Colbert became Louis XIV's minister of finance and his royal navy's general secretary, both prestigious positions which he managed to hold until he died in 1683.



**Fig. 2** Portrait de Jean-Baptiste Colbert by Robert Nanteuil, 1676

Colbert was himself inspired by the political plans previously adopted by Barthélemy de Laffemas, the Economic Advisor of King Henry IV, who was the promoter of French colonial expansion towards overseas lands and faraway continents. Similarly, Colbert advised Louis XIV to financially support the French commercial campaigns in Asia. Thus, since then Colbert's clever political strategy of French economic expansion has been named after him with the term of '*colbertisme*'.

In 1666, during Louis XIV's reign and just two years after the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales*' foundation, the French merchants finally arrived at Surat (in the present State of Gujarat), a city located in the west coast of India. There they soon opened their first emporium, and from that wealthy city they started their own trading

activities in the Indian peninsula. Surat, at that time was an important center of commerce for a number of luxury goods, and was particularly well-known for the Golconda diamond cutting economy.<sup>3</sup>

In view of the imminent arrival of their merchants in India, at the beginning of the same year in their native France, on the 9th January 1666, the *ballet-masquerade* 'Le Triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes' was performed in the Hôtel de Créquy at Saint-Germain-en-Laye. The ballet was represented in front of King Louis XIV to celebrate the betrothal celebration of the Marquis du Roure with Mademoiselle d'Artigni. As mentioned above, the music of the Masque was composed by the King's court musician (of Florentine origin) Gianbattista Lully (Fr. Lully) who, most probably, also directed the choreography being himself an accomplished dancer (Fig.3), while the lyrics were composed by Isaac de Benserade (Fig.4).



Fig. 4 Isaac de Benserade



Fig. 3 Jean-Baptiste Lully

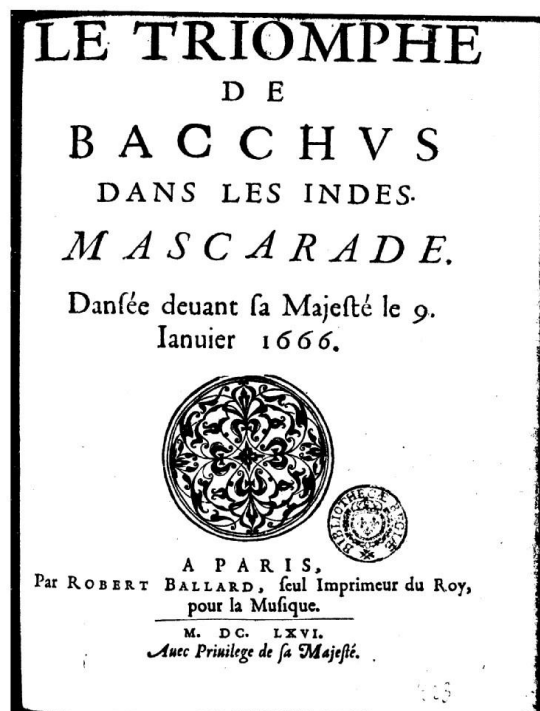


Fig. 5 Libretto of the Masquerade: *The Triumph of Bacchus in the Indies*

**The Triumph of Bacchus in the Indies**

*Bacchus, not being totally satisfied with the fact that his power had been acknowledged by the most celebrated Nations of the world, wanted to spread his glory even more widely, & thus he decided to extend his empire to the remotest corners of the Earth, & to lesser known places as well. It was with this plan in mind that he started his travels & conquest of the Indies. At the very beginning he found some resistance there: but which without much effort he soon overcame. Finally, he had the opportunity to enter in triumph into those lovely Countries, which none among the previous conquerors had dared to penetrate; & it is indeed his triumphal Entry into such a wonderful Country, that forms the plot of this Masque*

*The Stage represents one of the most beautiful Landscapes that Nature could produce, in which there is a Cave, where a sort of Throne had been prepared, a quite pleasant one indeed, despite its rustic aspect. From out of the depths of this Cave comes Bacchus's attendant, Silenus, who is the first to announce the Triumph.*

**The tale of Silenus**

*Sung by Monsieur d'Estival*

*It is in these faraway Climates,  
That the Sun rises from the Waves  
Spreads its first light,  
And its most fertile heat:  
Bacchus is coming today to triumph in these places,  
And his glorious Empire,  
never will be constrained by the World's limits.*

**First Entry**

(...)

**Second Entry**

**The Tale of the Nymph of India**

*Sung by Mademoiselle Hylaire*

*Here is the happy life of innocent pleasures,  
We have no other laws here then those of such desires,  
For the joy of the Mortal ones in these places  
everything conspires :  
Pain is unknown in this lovely Country,  
And if it happens to sigh,  
It is only because of love.  
Bacchus, do not trouble our happiness !  
Your Divine Power must be respected :*

*Thus, remove far away from Us the passion that it inspires,  
If you would like to reign in such a beautiful country,  
Amongst the laws of your Empire,  
Mingle the softness of Love too.*

**Third Entry**

*Meanwhile Bacchus, in order to assure the Nymph of the sweetness of his own Empire, accompanies her towards his Throne, & places himself close to her:*

*The Indians come to greet this Triumphal God, & pay homage to him according to their own customs.*

**Song of the Nymph of India, together with Silenus**

*Sung by Mademoiselle Hylaire & Monsieur d'Estival*

*This God deserves indeed to be loved!  
He knows so well how to charm our senses!  
Let us admire his powerful attire:  
His kingdom is so charming, his sweetness is extreme,*

*The Pleasures, Love itself,  
With Bacchus do not perish.  
All of us should render the weapons to him,  
May his Throne be affirmed;  
Sorrow is his enemy,  
Let us live under his laws without pain, without fear;  
The one who does not know his charms,  
Has experienced of pleasure only the half.*

*Silenus, who does not appreciate the Indians' serious attitude, invites them to get rid of it, and to adopt the joy which must reign in the Empire, and in order to make the process for them easier he calls the Sylvans and the Bacchantes.*

**Silenus' tale to the Indians, to the Sylvans & the Bacchantes**

*Sung by Monsieur d'Estival*

*Leave your slow allure  
And your sad postures ;  
In order to begin to grow your pleasures,  
Bacchus has come amongst you:  
A God so full of charms has laws equally charming.  
Come Sylvans, come Bacchantes,  
Come, all of you, please, come,  
Come to inspire them with your sweetest transports.*

#### Fourth Entry

*The Sylvans appear from one side, & the Bacchantes from the other, the first with their flutes, the others with their small drums, & all of them invite the Indians to take part in the joyful transports which the reign of Bacchus inspires*

#### Fifth Entry

*The Indians, enchanted by the Instruments, & by the Dancing of the Bacchantes & the Sylvans, Engage themselves to dance with all of them without hesitation.*

#### Sixth & Last Entry

*Bacchus followed by the spritely spirits, joins the Indians, Sylvans, & Bacchantes, & in order to achieve his Triumph, in the middle of this general Dance, the Nymph of India & Silenus, join their voices to sing the praise of this victorious God, & to make manifest to the public the charms of his Empire.*

#### Bacchus to the King

GREAT KING, *in order to let your eyes rest for just a few moments,  
I have abandoned my passions, & my excesses,  
My only wish was to mingle some Triumph into your Celebrations;  
Much attention to glory, & to impressions  
Made us aware of your own feelings,  
and of Your own mood, in which it is  
The Triumphs, & the Conquests  
That are your sweetest enjoyments.*

Just by reading this text, and by knowing the history of French expansion in India during those years, one will easily understand the true content of this Masque. By representing the *Triumph of Bacchus in the Indies*, the Greek god becomes here the metaphorical *alter ego* of Louis XIV. Noteworthy is the fact that in the beginning of the libretto, India is evoked by Silenus' song as the place of the 'Rising Sun', certainly not just by chance. Such a sentence is full of political implications: it clearly refers to the 'Sun King', as the 'fittest' conqueror and the 'deserving' monarch for ruling over those 'sunny' and wealthy lands. Though, during the God's expansion campaign in that remote country, the lyrics mention that he has found some resistance among the local people, soon

the text informs the distinguished audience how the powerful Bacchus, *alias* Louis XIV, easily overcame it without much effort, thanks to his strength, his pleasing laws and his sweet and loving rule.

Yet, despite such a magnificent eulogy, one has to wait a few more years in order to be able to admire the true 'triumphal' entry of the Sun King into India, represented on the stage in the following court-ballet.

#### The apotheosis of King Louis XIV as Bacchus and Cupid winning India, or 'Le Triomphe de l'Amour'



Fig. 6 Libretto of *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*

When the *ballet de cour* 'Le Triomphe de l'Amour' ('The Triumph of Love'), was performed on the 21st January 1681, at the Royal Theatre in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, fifteen years had passed since the French merchants of the *Compagnie des Indes*

*Orientales* began their remunerative trade in India, and since the Masque *'Le Triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes'* had been staged at the Hotel de Créquy. In truth, *'Le Triomphe de l'Amour'* was composed to commemorate the marriage of King Louis XIV's son with Marie Christine of Bavaria, celebrated the previous year. Yet, similarly to the previous masque, it also asserts the now well-established presence of France in India and the power of the Sun King in Asia. As mentioned before, the music of the ballet was composed and directed by Gianbattista Lully (Fr. Lully), the lyrics for the entries by Isaac de Benserade, while the libretto (Fig.6) was written by Philippe Quinault (1635-1688) (Fig.7) and the choreography this time was signed by Pierre Beauchamp (1631-1705).



Fig. 7 Philippe Quinault 1670

Constructed as twenty 'entries', instead of the six of the previous Masque, *'Le Triomphe de l'Amour'* further develops the topic of *'Le triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes'* by elaborating the stagecraft, and by augmenting its duration and the number of participants. The main features common to both these court ballets are the following: 'Indian' roles are found in the list of the

various characters, Bacchus is depicted as the 'Conqueror of India', and the subject matter was taken from Greek and Roman myth. However, the major novelty here was that Lully, for the performance staged on the 10<sup>th</sup> May of the same year in Paris, employed for the first time four professional dancing girls<sup>4</sup>. Until then, members of the royal family and aristocracy had been the only female ballet dancers in the French court.

Concerning the plot, the ballet narrates how the Goddess of Beauty, Venus, calls on the Graces, Nymphs and other divine beings, along with distinguished people from all over the world to celebrate the triumph of her son Cupid, the God of Love. The Indian characters appear in three entries (the twelfth, the thirteenth, and the fourteenth) which are totally devoted to India, and again at the end of the ballet along with all the other characters, for the celebration of the God of Love's final 'Triumph over the World'. For the January performance the main role of an *Indian Gent* was played by Monsieur Morel, and those of the *Two Indian Ladies* by Mademoiselle Ferdinand the Youngest and Mademoiselle Rebel.

In the twelfth entry, Bacchus enters in procession on a charriot, after returning from his successful campaign in India (the translation into English is mine, for the original French version of the lyrics see Appendix 2):

*"After Bacchus had added to his Empire almost all the countries of the world, and won the Conquest of the Orient, forcing the submission of its people to his laws ... he is himself obliged to be won over by the power of the God of Love, and nothing can prevent him falling in love with Ariadne as soon as he sees her for the first time. The Indian gents and the Indian ladies following Bacchus admire the force of Love."*<sup>5</sup>

In the thirteenth entry, Ariadne enters the stage with her own procession of 'Greek' dancers, and here she meets Bacchus with his Indian dancing attendants.<sup>6</sup> In the fourteenth entry, both the Indian Ladies and Gents, along with the Chorus, bow together to the powerful God of Love, who had himself won the heart of Bacchus, the World Conqueror.

Interestingly, here the Indian characters who surrender to Cupid by leaving their weapons and paying homage to him, do exactly as the Nymph of India and the other Indian characters did previously to Bacchus in the Masque *'Le Triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes'*:

***The Indian Gent, Two Indian Ladies & the Chorus***

*Why should one struggle so much in order to protect the heart?*

*What pain can be feared when Love is the winner?*

*What lovely weakness ! What joyful sorrow !  
No, Love hurts us but mildly, and in such a charming way.*

***An Indian Lady***

*Love's pains make us shed sweet tears;  
He increases the pleasure by the fears;  
He provokes us to sorrows which make even the Gods jealous :  
Ah ! Which heart can resist his charms !*

***The Indian Gent & the two Indian Ladies***

*Ah ! let us give up, let us surrender, let us leave our weapons:  
Ah ! Let us surrender to his attacks, nothing is sweeter than them.*

***The Indian Gent, Two Indian Ladies & the Chorus***

*What a joyful weakness ! What a lovely pain !  
No, Love hurts us in such a charming way.*

*Mercury sings in praise of Love, & invites all the People to voluntarily surrender to the Empire of such a powerful Conqueror.*

As the title itself suggests, the ballet ends with the 'Triumph of the God of Love', finally drawn in solemn procession onto the stage. Thus, everybody in the entire World, including both divine and human beings, surrender voluntarily to him, and they all celebrate the advent of his Kingdom of Love and Pleasure by bowing, by singing his praises and by dancing in a joyful and festive mood.



**Fig. 8** Jean Bérain père by Claude Duflos

Unfortunately, there is no other indication in the libretto as to the type of dances presented in the choreography, leaving us guessing as to what element might suggest 'Indian-ness'. However, we should bear in mind that very little attention was paid at the time to the 'realistic' aspect of Indian art (as far as the original model was known). This was also the case for the set. By analyzing the drawings of the costumes and scenes designed by Jean Bérain, the father (1640-1711)<sup>7</sup> (Fig.8), perhaps there are five elements which could eventually suggest 'Indian-ness':

First, the image of an idol carried in the procession (though images of ancient gods and, later on, of Christian saints were similarly carried in procession in those times during European religious ceremonies) (Fig.9):



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

**Fig. 9** Le Triomphe de l'Amour -- showing the idol



Habit d'Andimion du balet du Triomphe de l'amour.  
Jean Delaunay, féc. Le Balet est joué aux Châteraux de St. Innocent avec Privilege

**Fig. 11**



Habit d'Indiens du balet du Triomphe de l'Amour  
Jean Delaunay, féc. Le Balet est joué aux Châteraux de St. Innocent avec Privilege

**Fig. 10** Figure of Indian character



Habit representant le mistere au balet du triomphe de l'amour  
Jean Delaunay, féc. Le Balet est joué aux Châteraux de St. Innocent avec Privilege

Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

**Fig. 12**

Second, the dark complexions of the Indian gentlemen (Fig. 10) compared to the features of the other male characters (Figs. 11 and 12);



Third, the allegory of the river Ganges in the background of the picture of one of the male Indian costumes (Fig. 13), although it is not clear whether this detail was reproduced in the scenery;



Fig. 13

Fourth, the multi-coloured rayoned fabrics of some of the Indian Ladies' skirts (Fig.14), a decorative pattern found in a number of textiles produced in India and widely reproduced in the Indian miniatures of that period; and

Fifth, the long veil worn by the Indian female characters (Figs.15 and 16), which does not appear in the costume of the Greek nymphs, Ariadne's dancing attendants (Fig.17).



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

Noteworthy here, the veil, which along with a variety of muslin and silk shawls, would play a major role later on in all the dances performed by the ballerinas/*bayadères*<sup>8</sup> in European operas and ballets<sup>9</sup>.

Of special interest is the opening scene of *Le Triomphe* in which a great number of 'deities' and 'different peoples' form a special audience of divine beings and foreign ambassadors gathered to admire the apotheosis of the God of Love: a true form of 'theatre within theatre' – an evocative mirroring effect where actors and spectators are at once united. France's colonial expansion represented a source of prestige as well as political, economical and military power; thus, the French court was metaphorically celebrating the 'triumphs' and 'conquests' of the Sun King on the stage through the 'conquests of Bacchus and Cupid' in India (Fig.18).



Fig. 16



Fig. 17



Fig. 18

By playing on the mirroring effects of performers and audience admiring and celebrating themselves as 'divine beings', both on and off the proper stage, this court-ballet uses a quite interesting dramatic devise of acting a 'play within a play', as in the case of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Here, dancers and spectators are at the same time actors and observers, and the actual space of the stage gets extended to the totality of the hall where the royal family members, the foreign aristocrats, ambassadors and guests, the large retinue of the Louis XIV, his entire court itself, gathered all together here to acknowledge and admire his recent conquests and 'Triumphs' in Asia.

### Epilogue

In conclusion, the analysis of the ballet-masque, *Le Triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes* (1666) and the court-ballet *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* (1681), show how important political events surrounding the French successful economic expansion in Asia, were metaphorically evoked in the plots of these two court-performances. Despite the fact that both ballets were staged in order to celebrate the betrothal and the marriage of local aristocrats and royal family members (Louis XIV's son), they were clearly employed to communicate to the noble guests in the audience, French and foreign ones as well, the recent overseas conquests of the Sun King.

Thus, by using the mythological character of Bacchus conquering India, and Cupid triumphing over those faraway lands and over the entire world, with the strength of his pleasant laws of Love, it was Louis XIV himself, as the *alter ego* of both Bacchus and Cupid, that the two court-ballets emulate.

Interestingly, one can witness in both the plays how the rules of the previous Italian political, literary and theatrical works of the Renaissance have been fully adopted and enacted in the apotheosis of the Sun King Louis XIV. The monarch is represented here as a true 'Prince' and a perfect 'Courtesan',

according to the principles described by Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) in his book *Il Principe (The Prince, 1532)* and by Baldassarre Castiglione (1478-1529) in his volume *Il libro del Cortegiano (Book of the Courtesan, 1528)*. The first of those two manuals dealt with the political and diplomatic strategy of power and the second with the proper behaviour to be adopted in a princely court.

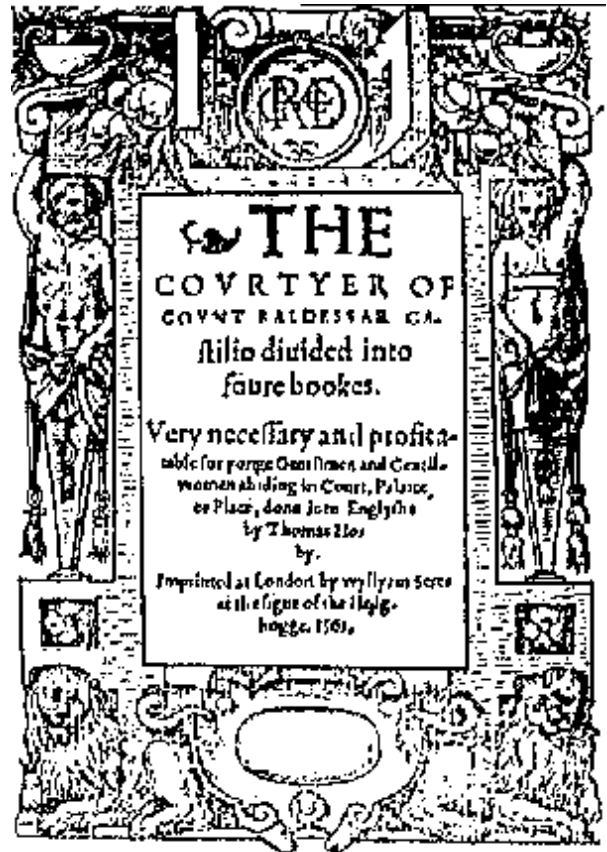


Fig. 19

Castiglione's text, shortly after its publication, became very famous in Europe, and in 1537 was translated into French by Jacques Colin, and in 1561 into English by Sir Thomas Hoby (Fig.19) According to Machiavelli, the just and deserving prince was not only expected to be the political centre and the diplomatic motor of the kingdom, but also a clever and sharp thinker, intelligent and thoughtful in taking the right decisions, a valorous warrior and a fearless conqueror. The same qualities were requested by Castiglione in his work, though he also

stressed that the prince had to be a fine lover of pleasures and beauty too, a sensitive *connoisseur* and practitioner of the arts, and a generous patron of artists as well. Thus, by hosting and financially supporting in his glamorous court the painters, poets, musicians, actors and dancers, the monarch was acting according to Machiavelli's and Castiglione's precepts.

These two ballets were therefore composed and presented in front of their distinguished audience mainly to exhibit the French Sun King's qualities as a true Conqueror and a Loving Ruler, Patron of the Arts, to whom the defeated people 'voluntarily' surrender by graciously acknowledging his power.

To conclude, I hope that this study has helped the reader to realize that, beside the doubtless artistic value of the two mentioned court-ballets, one can also read and decipher in their plots the filigree of the cleverly and finely embroidered political messages concerning the French crown's economic and military expansion in Asia. These messages were particularly addressed to their potential rivals in India: the Dutch and the English.

Thus, despite the fact that the French merchants, and later the French army officers, were amongst the latest Europeans to reach India, their plans were equally as ambitious as those of their predecessors, even if their 'Sun King' presented himself as the conquering Bacchus and Cupid, triumphing on those remote lands with the charming laws of 'Pleasure' and 'Love'.

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## Appendix 1

### ***Le Triomphe de Bacchus dans les Indes (1666)***

« *Bacchus n'estant pas content d'avoir fait reconnoistre sa puissance par toutes les Nations du monde les plus celebres, voulut porter sa gloire encore plus loin, & entreprit d'estendre son empire jusques aux extremitez de la Terre les plus reculées, & les moins connus. Ce fut dans ce dessein qu'il fit le voyage & la conquête des Indes. Il y trouva d'abord quelque resistance: mais il la surmonta bien-tost, & avec peu de peine. Il eust enfin l'avantage d'entrer en triomphe dans ces belles Contrées, ou pas un des Conquerants avant luy n'avoit jamais osé penetrer; & c'est de son Entrée triomphante dans un Pays si délicieux, que se forme le sujet de cette Mascarade. »*

*Le Theatre represente un des plus beaux Paysages que la nature puisse produire, au fonds duquel on découvre un Antre, ou l'on a préparé une espece de Throsne, qui tout rustique qu'il est, ne laisse pas d'avoir beaucoup d'agrément.*

*Du creux de cet Antre sort le bon homme de Bacchus, vient le premier annoncer le Triomphe.*

#### ***Recit de Silenus***

chanté par Monsieur d'Estival

*C'est dans ces Climats escartez,*

*Que le Soleil sortant de l'Onde  
Respand ces premieres clartez,  
Et sa chaleur la plus feconde: BACCHUS vient  
aujourd'huy triompher dans ces lieux,  
Et son Empire glorieux  
Ne sera plus borné que des bornes du Monde.*

#### **Première Entrée**

*Les Cobales, ou Esprits folets, qui sont toujours  
de la compagnie de Bacchus, s'empressent aussi  
des premiers en cette occasion, pour tesmoigner  
leur joye par une Dance badine qu'ils font autour  
de Silene.*

*Silene fait cesser les badinages des Esprits folets,  
dont il commence d'estre importuné, en les faisant  
souvenir du respect qu'ils doivent à la presence de  
Bacchus qui s'approche.*

#### ***Recit de Silene, aux Esprits Folets,***

chanté par Monsieur d'Estival

*Interrompez vos badinages  
Lutins, folastres Dieux du fracas & du bruit,  
Respectez Bacchus qui vous suit,  
Et du moins une fois essayez d'estre sages.*

#### **Seconde Entrée**

*Bacchus couronné de Pampre, & le Thyrses à  
la main, fait paroistre la satisfaction qu'il a de  
sa nouvelle Conquête.*

*La Nymphes de l'Inde vient représenter à Bacchus  
la félicité dont on jouit dans ces Climats  
agréables,  
& le prie de n'en troubler point la douceur.*

#### ***Recit de la Nymphes de l'Inde,***

chanté par Mademoiselle Hylaïre

*Voicy l'heureux séjour des innocents plaisirs,  
On n'a point d'autres loix icy que ses desirs,  
Au bonheur des Mortels en ces lieux tout  
conspire:*

*Les maux sont inconnus dans ce Païs charmant,  
Et si, par fois, on y soupire,  
Ce n'est que d'amour seulement.*

*Bacchus, ne troublez point nostre félicité ?  
Vostre Divin Pouvoir doit estre respecté:*

*Mais chassez loin de Nous les fureurs qu'il  
inspire,*

*Si vous voulez regner dans un si beau séjour,  
Parmy les loix de vostre Empire,  
Meslez les douceurs de l'Amour.*

### Troisième Entrée

*Tandis que Bacchus, pour assûrer la Nymphé de la douceur de son Empire, la conduit à son Throsne, & s'y place aupres d'elle: des Indiens & des Indiennes viennent salûer ce Dieu Triomphant, & luy rendre des honneurs à leur mode.*

*Silene à qui le serieux des Indiens ne plaist pas, les invite à s'en deffaire, pour prendre l'enjouement qui doit regner dans l'Empire de Bacchus, & pour les y mieux engager, il appelle les Silvains & les Bacchantes.*

**Recit de Silene aux Indiens, aux Silvains, & aux Bacchantes**  
chanté par Monsieur d'Estival

*Quittez ces demarches lentes,  
Et vos postures languissantes;  
Pour croistre vos plaisirs Bacchus vient parmi vous:  
Un Dieu si plein d'appas n'a que des loix charmantes.  
Venez Silvains, venez Bacchantes,  
Venez, accourez tous,  
Venez leur inspirer vos transports les plus doux.*

### Quatrième Entrée

*Les Silvains paroissent d'un costé, & les Bacchantes de l'autre, les Uns avec des Flustes, les Autres avec de petits tambours, & tous ensemble conviënt les Indiens de prendre part aux transports de joye que le regne de Bacchus inspire.*

### Cinquième Entrée

*Les Indiens charmez des Instruments, & de la Danse des Bacchantes & des Silvains, s'engagent insensiblement à danser avec eux.*

### Sixième & dernière Entrée

*Bacchus suivy des Esprits folets se vient joindre aux Indiens, Silvains, & Bacchantes, & pour achever son Triomphe, au milieu de cette Danse generale, la Nymphé de l'Inde & Silene, joignent leurs voix pour chanter les loüanges de ce Dieu victorieux, & pour publier les charme de son Empire.*

### Bacchus au Roy

*GRAND ROY, pour arrester vos yeux quelques moments, l'ay quitté mes fureurs, & mes déreglements,*

*Et n'ay voulu mesler qu'un Triomphe à vos Festes; Tant de soins pour la gloire, & tant d'empressements  
Nous font connoistre assez quels sont vos sentiments,  
Et que de l'humeur où Vous estes,  
Les Triomphe, & les Conquestes  
Sont vos plus doux amusements.*

## Appendix 2

### 'Le Triomphe de l'Amour' (1681)

#### Douzième Entrée

*Bacchus après avoir assujetti à son Empire la plus grande partie du Monde, & lors qu'il revient de la Conquête des Indes, dont il a soumis les Peuples à sa loix, est contraint de ceder au pouvoir de l'Amour, & ne peut s'empêcher d'aimer Ariadne au premier instant qu'il la voit. Les Indiens & les Indiennes qui ont suivis Bacchus admirent la puissance de l'Amour*

#### Un Indien de la Suite de Bacchus

[Monsieur Morel]

*Bacchus revient vainqueur des Climats de l'Aurore,/ Il traîne après son Char mille Peuples vaincus;/ Il méprisoit l'Amour, mais l'Aurore est encore/ Un Vainqueur plus puissant mille fois que Bacchus.*

*Il aime enfin, sa fierté se désarme;/ D'un seul regard Ariadne le charme;/ A ce superbe coeur l'Amour donne des fers.*

*Bacchus n'a triomphé du Monde qu'avec peine,/ Et qu'après cent travaux divers;/ L'Amour sans effort enchaîne/ Le Vainqueur de l'Univers.*

#### Deux Indiennes de la Suite de Bacchus

[Mademoiselles Ferdinand la cadette & Rebel]

*Non, la plus fiere liberté/ Contre l'Amour n'est pas en sureté/ Entre les bras de la Victoire./ L'éclat de mille exploits d'éternelle memoire/ N'exempte pas des tourmens amoureux./ On n'est pas moins atteint d'un mal si dangereux/ Pour être au comble de la gloire;/ Non, la plus fiere liberté/ Contre l'Amour n'est pas en sureté/ Entre les bras de la Victoire.*

#### Un Indien

*Tout ressent les feux de l'Amour/*

*Sa flâme va plus loin que la clarté du jour.*

**Un Indienne**

*Rien ne respire/ Qui ne soupire.*

**Une autre Indienne**

*Dans les plus froids climats/ Est-il un coeur qui ne s'enflâme pas ?*

**L'Indien**

*Plus que le Soleil dans sa vaste carrier/ Ne porte la lumiere,*

*De l'amoureuse ardeur on ressent les appas.*

**Les deux Indiennes**

*Tout l'Univers seroit sans Ame/ S'il n'étoit penetré d'une si douce flâme.*

**L'Indien, les deux Indiennes, & le Choeur**

*Tout ressent les feux de l'Amour/ Sa flâme va plus loin que la clarté du jour.*

**Treiziesme Entrée**

*Les Indiens de la Suite de Bacchus, & les Filles Grecques de la Suite d'Ariadne, se réjouiissent de vois Ariadne & Bacchus touchez d'une amour mutuelle.*

**Quatorziesme Entrée**

***L'Indien, les deux Indiennes, & le Choeur, chantent dans cette Entrée***

*Pourquoi tant se contraindre/Pour garder son coeur ?*

*Eh ! quel mal peut-on craindre / De l'Amour vainqueur ?*

**Une Indienne**

*On se plaint sans raison d'être sensible;  
Tous les bienfaits de l'Amour sont des biens imparfaits,  
On se lasse d'un coeur toujours paisible,  
On s'ennuie à la fin d'une trop longue paix.*

***L'Indien, les deux Indiennes, & le Choeur***

*Pourquoi tant se contraindre/ Pour garder son coeur ?*

*Eh ! quel mal peut-on craindre/ De l'Amour vainqueur ?*

*Quelle heureuse foiblesse !/ Quel heureux tourment !*

*Non, l'Amour ne nous blesse/ Que d'un trait charmant.*

**Une Indienne**

*Ses douleurs font verser de douces larmes;/ Il accroît les plaisirs par des allarmes;/*

*Il nous cause des maux dont les Dieux sont jaloux:/*

*Ah ! Quel coeur peut tenir contre ses charmes !*

**L'Indien & les deux Indiennes**

*Ah ! cedons, redons-nous./ Rendons les armes:/ Ah ! cedons à ses coups,/ Il n'est rien de si doux.*

**L'Indien, les deux Indiennes, & le Choeur**

*Quelle heureuse foiblesse !/ Quel heureux tourment !*

*Non, l'Amour ne nous blesse Que d'un trait charmant.*

***Mercure chante les loüanges de l'Amour, & sollicite tout le Monde de se soumettre volontairement à l'Empire d'un si puissant Vainqueur.***

**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> The *Masque* (from the French word *masque*, a 'mask') in the 16th and 17th century Europe, was a form of festive courtly entertainment, during which the participants wore a mask on their face.

<sup>2</sup> See: Duarte 1932.

<sup>3</sup> Golconda was at that time a rich city in Central India, famous for its mines of diamonds, which were cut at Surat and exported all over Asia and Europe. During the 18th and 19th centuries, this city also inspired a number of French novels and plays, amongst which the ballet 'Aline, reine de Golconda' ('Aline, queen of Golconda'), staged in 1766. See: Leucci 2005, 2008, 2012, 2013.

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<sup>4</sup> The names of the four professional dancing girls were: Mademoiselles de La Fontaine, Roland, Lepeintre and Fernon. (Guest 2001: 17).

<sup>5</sup> *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* 1739: 93.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: 94.

<sup>7</sup> See: *Dans l'atelier des menus plaisirs du roi. Spectacles, fêtes et cérémonies aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, Paris 2010.

<sup>8</sup> *Bayadères*: from the Portuguese term Bayladeras, 'dancing girls'. The term denotes the Indian dancing girls, attached to the temples and royal courts. European travellers and missionaries left a number of descriptions of those Indian dancing girls, intrigued by their being accomplished performing artists and courtesans too. Their reports and travel accounts inspired poets, librettists, music and dance composers who created the stage character of the *bayadère*. By the end of the 18th century and throughout the 19th century, the Indian dancing girl as *bayadère* became one of the first and the most celebrated romantic heroines. See Leucci in the bibliography.

<sup>9</sup> See: Leucci 2005, 2011, 2013.