In recent years there has been growing interest in the tragédie lyrique préramiste. More than sixty new works in this genre premiered at the Académie Royale de Musique during the period (1687-1733). Only a few can successfully withstand the careful scrutiny of modern scholars and audiences, but their position between the works of Lully and those of Rameau affords them considerable historical significance. The nine compositions in this genre by André Campra (1660-1744) were among the most highly regarded.

This dissertation presents a detailed stylistic analysis of a single work, Campra’s Idoménée (first edition 1712, revision 1731), and examines its musical-dramatic structure and innovations. The first part of the document provides the necessary background and historical context for this analysis. It begins with a brief overview of the tragédie lyrique in France from 1673 to 1749. This is followed by a discussion of the structural elements of the tragédie lyrique of the préramiste period through a general analysis of four representative compositions: Hésione (1700) by André Campra, livret by Antione Danchet; Tancrède (1702) by Campra, text by Danchet; Callirhoé (1712) by André Cardinal Destouches, livret by Adrian Le Roy; Jepthé (1732) by Michele Pignolet de Montéclair, livret by Claude-Mathieu Pellegrin. The two works by Campra were chosen to provide depth and perspective to the analysis of his compositional style. Destouches’ Callirhoé and Monteclair’s Jepthé were selected because they are contemporary with the first edition and later revision of Idoménée, respectively.

The second part is a detailed discussion of the musical-dramatic structure of Idoménée. There is also included information about the origins of the story, a synopsis, and an evaluation of the changes and revisions.

In the Appendices is found a critical edition of the score based on the principal manuscript source, with a complete rendering of all available variants, an English translation of the livret, critical notes, and analysis charts.