
Book Review

Stephanie Schroedter, Marie-Thérèse Mourey, Giles Bennett (eds), *Barocktanz: La Danse baroque: Baroque Dance and the Transfer of Culture between France and Germany around 1700*, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim, 2008. ISBN 978-3487-13694-3. Trilingual edition. 486 pp., illustrated, 48 EUR.

This is a book which everyone studying, or even casually interested in, the sources for baroque dance ought to acquire, and just to reinforce that point the book is published in three languages.

It is also divided into useful sections. First comes the facsimiles, transcriptions and translations of two small German dance treatises published in 1705: Hugo Bonnefond's *Abregée des Principes de Danse*, and IHP's *Maître de Danse oder Tanz-Meister*. As the Court dancing-master of Wolfenbüttel, Bonnefond was well placed to issue a manual which was clearly influenced by Feuillet's *Chorégraphie* of 1700 but he also provides additional information not found in Feuillet. IHP's *Maître de Danse oder Tanz-Meister* is known to more of us through Jørgen Schou-Pedersen's work on it for many DHDS day courses and summer schools, and it is good to see the whole work and have a commentary upon the different dance types recorded in it.

The second part of the book takes the form of three valuable and well-researched essays: Marie-Thérèse Mourey on 'Dancing Culture at the Wolfenbüttel Court', Stephanie Schroedter on 'The French Art of Dancing as Described in the German Dance Instruction Manuals of the Early Eighteenth Century', and Giles Bennett on 'The Dance Book Authors as Transmitters of Dance Practice'. Mourey's essay provides the context for the extraordinarily rich cultural life at the

Wolfenbüttel ducal court and the Brunswick Opera under the patronage of the dancer-Prince Anton Ulrich, and examines the status of professional dancers and some of the dancing-master dynasties there at that time, including Hugo Bonnefond and his successor at Court, Ernst August Jayme. Schroedter's essay analyses another influential German dance treatise, Samuel Rudolph Behr's *Dancing Master* of 1703, and again we are provided with a careful translation and a meaningful commentary which draws comparisons with the work of Boni, Taubert, IHP himself, and other German writers. As someone with virtually no knowledge of German I find this very exciting as it makes accessible for me primary sources which I never thought I could approach, and I am sure that I am not alone in that view. Bennett's essay returns to Bonnefond and analyses the *Abregée des Principes de Danse* in more detail, and also provides an overview of Bonnefond's career as a dancer and dance teacher.

The book ends with a useful bibliography and notes on the compilers, and the whole work is well presented and punctiliously referenced. If any criticism has to be made it is that the text is in quite small print, but that says more about this reviewer's eyesight than it does about the usefulness of the publication. In terms of furthering our understanding today of baroque dance sources and of the dancing-masters who wrote them, it is a gem of a book.

Jennifer Thorp