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English audience allows her to raise questions as to whether these readers were experiencing their own visions and needed to know how to evaluate them (105–108). She intriguingly suggests that Margery Kempe may have been one of those readers and found authority for her own experiences in reading Catherine (127–28 and 157–58). This claim seems plausible, although to some extent readers may wonder if the anonymized, divided, and sanitized texts were really associated with Catherine of Siena. But Brown has stressed from her introduction that this is not a study of the historical woman: “The text and the woman are made and remade to serve the reader, the time, and the place, revealing how translators, editors, and readers work together to create meaning and adapt the text to their devotional moment and context” (28). By paying attention to manuscripts, books, and their textual relationships, Brown’s study convincingly demonstrates the Italian mystic’s adaptability in England between 1380 and 1610. It seems there was a Catherine of Siena for everyone.

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Dancing Queen: Marie de Médicis’ Ballets at the Court of Henri IV.

Melinda J. Gough. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019. 378 pp. \$85. ISBN 978-1-4875-0366-6.

In 1602, Marie de Médici, queen consort of France, wife of Henri IV, and mother of the infant dauphin, included her husband’s favorite mistress, Henriette d’Entragues, among the noblewomen who danced with her in *Ballet of the Sixteen Virtues*. In 1609, Marie convinced her predecessor, Marguerite de Valois, whose marriage to Henri IV had been annulled in 1599, to host the queen’s *Ballet of Diana and her Nymphs* at Marguerite’s private residence in Paris. In *Dancing Queen: Marie de Médicis’ Ballets at the Court of Henri IV*, Melinda Gough demonstrates how Queen Marie used dance as a powerful tool to advance the goals of the Bourbon monarchy and to secure and bolster her own status and political authority. Marie carefully chose her ballets’ themes and characters to promote Bourbon interests, costumed herself and her fellow dancers lavishly to advertise French wealth and prosperity, and showcased avant-garde musical selections and prized performers to highlight her own and the French court’s cultural refinement. She strategically selected the women and men who danced with her,

and personally invited foreign ambassadors to attend the performances to ensure that her messaging reached foreign rulers.

Sometimes the queen's messaging was directed at her husband. Gough's case studies of the queen's ballets shed light on the complex relationships between royal wives and mistresses and among legitimate heirs, "natural" offspring, and their parents. Marie used her ballets to criticize Henri's extramarital affairs and to critique policies she judged anti-Catholic or anti-Christian, such as Henri's decision to maintain France's alliance with the Ottoman Turks against the Spanish Habsburgs. Gough's analysis also touches on such varied topics as women's participation in networks of artistic patronage and the political significance of jewel ownership and display. By drawing on newly discovered archival records, piecing together seemingly unrelated domestic and international events, and reexamining printed sources, including music scores and *livrets* or verse collections, Gough uncovers Marie's likely intentions and motivations in creating her ballets, in addition to providing rich descriptions of the ballets' contents, performance circumstances, and afterlife.

The book has five chapters plus an introduction and brief conclusion. Primarily chronological in organization, the first chapter focuses on the 1602 *Ballet of the Sixteen Virtues*, while the second and third chapters investigate a mysterious 1605 *ballet de la reine* or queen's ballet (the original title remains unknown). The fourth chapter examines the queen's 1609 *Ballet of Diana and her Nymphs* and the less well-known 1609 *Ballet de Madame*, which was organized by Marie but danced by her six-year-old daughter Elisabeth. The final chapter is comparative, considering how each of the aforementioned ballets served diplomatic purposes. Gough shows how all aspects of a ballet were highly political, from the granting and withholding of invitations, to seating arrangements, to selecting who should dance with whom during the social dancing that followed the performance. Gough even reveals how several performances that were allegedly rescheduled for logistical reasons were actually strategically delayed as part of complex diplomatic maneuvers. Additionally, to ensure that even those who did not speak French could follow and interpret the ballet correctly, Marie chose classical and Christian themes and characters familiar to her audience.

Dancing Queen demonstrates why all early modern scholars need to pay attention to dance: women, especially noblewomen, used dance to engage politically. Therefore, to disregard dancing is to disregard an important site of female agency and influence. Happily, *Dancing Queen* makes it easier for the nonspecial-

ist to appreciate dance's importance. Gough defines dance terms and concepts, guides the reader through the intricate maze of French court politics, and offers abundant historical context for artistic and religious, as well as political, developments. Gough also provides both translations and the original-language transcriptions for all non-English material, including for the three ballet verse texts included as appendices. This consideration for the nonspecialist, as well as the overall clarity of the writing, makes this book accessible and useful for a broad audience, whether scholars, students, or aficionados. Moreover, *Dancing Queen* pairs well with studies of English Stuart court entertainments such as Clare McManus's *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court, 1590–1619* (2002), Karen Britland's *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria* (2006), and Barbara Ravelhofer's *The Early Stuart Masque: Dance, Costume, and Music* (2006).

It is worth noting that *Dancing Queen* does not include many details about or descriptions of early seventeenth-century dancing. For those unfamiliar with the main styles, steps, and conventions, I would recommend reading this book alongside Wendy Hilton's *Dance and Music of Court and Theater: Selected Writings of Wendy Hilton* (1997), Margaret McGowan's *Dance in the Renaissance: European Fashion, French Obsession* (2008), or Jennifer Nevile's introduction to *Dance, Spectacle, and the Body Politick, 1250–1750* (2008). There are also modern editions of some of the surviving dancing manuals with useful commentaries. See, for example, Julia Sutton's *Courtly Dance of the Renaissance: A New Translation and Edition of the Nobiltà di dame (1600) by Fabritio Caroso* (1995) and Barbara Ravelhofer's *Louange de la Danse* (2000), a scholarly edition and translation of Barthélemy de Montagut's 1619 (plagiarized) dancing manual.

Queen Marie's ballets took place as courtly dance was shifting in style from Renaissance to baroque. Seeing reconstructions by scholar-practitioners can help the nonspecialist appreciate how the Renaissance dance style of Marie's youth in Italy differed from the new baroque style that she helped develop at the French court, the style that would become the trademark of her grandson Louis XIV and the foundation of modern ballet. Videos such as *Il Ballarino: The Art of Renaissance Dance* (1990) by Julia Sutton and *Introduction to Baroque Dance* (vol. 1, 1999; vol. 2, 2005) by Paige Whitley-Bauguess feature step demonstrations and commentary, as well as performances in period costume, complementing textual sources.

While a thorough introduction to seventeenth-century dance is beyond the scope of *Dancing Queen*, I do wish Gough had spent a little time discussing the etymology of the term “ballet.” In Marie’s time, “ballet” meant *ballet de cour* or court ballet, “a type of composite theatre performance, made up of instrumental and vocal music, texts declaimed in verse and prose, stage design, scenic accessories, costumes, masks and, not least dance” (7). Readers might well wonder how (and when and why) the term “ballet” came to designate the dance style studied and performed around the world today. A few paragraphs in the introduction outlining the history of ballet, plus a chunky footnote to guide further reading, would have been a welcome addition.

I have one other quibble. Given the extensive historical contextualization Gough provides, including of Protestant-Catholic conflicts within France and throughout Europe, it is surprising that she says almost nothing about the heated controversies over the morality and legality of dancing in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. While no one condoned lewd dancing, Catholics and Protestants disagreed about the permissibility of dancing on Sundays and holy days and whether men and women should dance together. Even if the regulations and restrictions imposed on commoners did not constrain the French nobility directly, attacks on dancing in sermons and treatises like Jean Boiseul’s *Traitté contre les danses* (Treatise against dances) (1606) impacted how dancing was viewed and interpreted by both domestic and foreign spectators.

Dancing Queen is the first book-length study in English of an amateur early modern dancer, royal or otherwise. With its nuanced readings of primary sources and compelling, well-substantiated arguments, *Dancing Queen* would make an excellent addition to personal as well as university libraries for scholars interested in gender, France, religious politics, sexuality, queenship, court studies, diplomacy, patronage, music, theatre, spectacle, and, of course, dance.

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