

being overshadowed in our lifetime. It is thus fitting that the last words belong to the author's epilogue. Molière was:

un acteur hors norme qui avait transformé le jeu comique, un auteur révolutionnaire qui avait bouleversé la dramaturgie comique, un homme d'esprit qui avait su séduire le public exigeant de la Cour et des salons parisiens, et un entrepreneur de théâtre avisé qui avait transfiguré le spectacle le plus aimé de Louis XIV, le ballet de cour où se mêlaient musique, danse et théâtre, en un genre nouveau, la comédie-ballet, acclamé par l'ensemble de son public parisien (485).

Theresa Varney Kennedy. *Women's Deliberation: The Heroine in Early Modern French Women's Theater (1650–1750)*. London and New York: Routledge, 2018. xii + 202 pp. \$109.95. Review by ERIC TURCAT, OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY.

Despite its thinly veiled allusion to second-wave feminism, *Women's Deliberation* offers little by way of women's liberation. Early modern heroines of French women's theater, as Theresa Varney Kennedy argues, are indeed a purely synthetic product. In the best of cases, the synthesis derives from "a 'trialectical' exchange among irrational, dutiful and bold and brazen female[s]" (6). The irrational heroines (Chapter 1) are basically Racinian harpies whose aggression transcends, if nothing else, the Aristotelian stereotype of the passive female. The dutiful heroines (Chapter 2), in line with Cornelian heroism, become leaders so exemplary that even their male counterparts could hardly compete in their subservience to the patriarchal state. As for the bold and brazen heroines (Chapter 3), they epitomize the free spirit of the *salonnières*, women so steeped in courtly romance that their gender-bending initiatives can only underscore the overarching privilege of their aristocratic *filles à papa* status.

In the worst of cases, the synthesis derives not from a "trialectic" but from a mere dialectic, as the irrational heroines fuse into the bold and the brazen, thereby mutating into creatures of pure emotion. In this particular case, deliberative heroines (Chapter 4) synthesize not just a dialectic but, worse yet, a mere binary opposition, and one of the

most hackneyed in Western culture to boot, that of body and mind. As mere constructs of Enlightenment ideology, these deliberative women are indeed further blighted by the phallogocentric task of resolving the “catch-22” built into the age-old dichotomy of *mens* and *corpus*: “Passion, without rationality, is culpable” and “Rationality, without sentiment, is culpable” (177–78). And in resolving this conundrum they apparently succeeded, but only inasmuch as the *philosophes* had already succeeded at striking a balance between mind and body.

Despite this rather bleak outlook on the early modern heroine as a purely synthetic product, Varney Kennedy does great justice to classifying the growing corpus of early modern French women’s theater painstakingly assembled over the past thirty years by our colleague Perry Gethner (to whom her book is dedicated). Furthermore, in repeatedly stressing the importance of performance, the author also reveals the fluidity with which a select few female playwrights successively positioned their heroines in two or three of the major categories listed above. For instance, we are impressed to discover how, within a matter of ten years, Françoise de Graffigny was able to create first the bold and brazen Phaza (119–23), then the deliberative Cénie (157–62), and finally the dutiful Théonise (85–90). Depending on whether her play was performed for her own salon (*Phaza*, 1748) or for the Comédie-Française (*Cénie*, 1750 and *La Fille d’Aristide*, 1758), Graffigny showed repeated acumen in her ability to perform gender differently for different audiences. To that extent, the “gender troubles” of her various heroines might possibly have resonated even with our Butlerian third-wavers.

Besides shedding light on the forgotten works of playwrights as talented as Marie-Anne Barbier (1664–1745) and Madeleine-Angélique de Gomez (1684–1770), Varney Kennedy illuminates the philosophical foibles of the Enlightenment. In doing so, she repeatedly reminds her readers of the extent to which the *philosophes* were prepared to caricature the Cartesian mind/body dichotomy by making the father of modern philosophy disappear into the solipsistic box of his infamous *cogito ergo sum*. In line with Erica Harth’s *Cartesian Women* (1992), the author of *Women’s Deliberation* does not make the mistake of confusing the clarity of Descartes with the confusion of his Cartesian followers. As a result, albeit indirectly, Varney Kennedy reminds us

that Descartes should not be reduced to his very scholastic *Discours de la méthode*. After all, the founder of rationalism also composed *Les passions de l'âme*. Yet this text, which the Enlightenment would have done well to ponder more carefully before trying to reinvent the wheel, continues to remain conspicuously absent from a few too many of our contemporary studies on modern identity A path for future researchers in proto-feminism, maybe?

In short, Theresa Varney Kennedy's *Women's Deliberation* should be treated as an invaluable resource for scholars in early modern theater as well as for researchers in women's literary studies. It is impeccably written and flawlessly edited, and a must-read for the more encyclopedic readers.

Bruce Edelstein and Davide Gasparotto, eds. *Miraculous Encounters: Pontormo from Drawing to Painting*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2018. 160 pp. + 60 color illustrations. \$40.00. Review by LIVIA STOENESCU, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY.

The talent of Jacopo da Pontormo (1494–1557) will never cease to attract expert attention, but the J. Paul Getty Museum has set up a significant precedent with this exhibition catalogue. *Miraculous Encounters: Pontormo from Drawing to Painting* includes new research on the main theme of the exhibition *Pontormo: Miraculous Encounters* held at the Getty Museum in spring 2019, previously shown at the Uffizi and at the Morgan Library & Museum in New York. To underscore the exhibition, the J. Paul Getty Museum additionally organized the international conference *Pontormo: Painting in an Age of Anxiety*, in partnership with the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at UCLA.

The catalogue fosters one of Pontormo's great masterpieces, the *Visitation*, an unprecedented loan from the parish church of Santi Michele e Francesco in Carmignano (Prato, Italy), alongside the Getty's own iconic *Portrait of a Halberdier* and the recently rediscovered *Portrait of a Young Man with a Red Cap*, not seen in Italy for more than two centuries and featured now in the United States for the first time. The editors, Bruce Edelstein and Davide Gasparotto,