

## **ABSTRACT**

The main focus of the dissertation is 15th century Italian court dance, which was one of the prime manifestations of the emerging aristocratic society all across renaissance Europe. The dissertation draws on a detailed research into original dance notations and works on dance theory of dance masters Domenico da Piacenza, Antonio Cornazana and Guglielmo Ebreo/Giovanni Ambrosio and contains first-time Czech translations of important parts of these works. The text first addresses general issues (occasions and locations for dancing, dance education and the role of the dance master, functions of dance in a given historical period, intellectual and philosophical framework of early dance treatises) and moves on to analyse specific features of period dance theory and provides a description of practical aspects of the realization of dance choreography (basic steps and movements, figures, spatial dance forms etc.). The dissertation contains a reconstruction of one such dance choreography. A certain journey into related fields and later historical periods are chapters on the aesthetic of movement (required posture, position of the head, facial expression, hand gestures etc.) and period etiquette (acceptance of social hierarchy in dance and beyond, ways of showing respect and greetings, asking to dance and rejection thereof, conventions for both leaving after dance and leaving the dance festivity, proper ways of conduct at a ball while not dancing – proper ways to sit, stand, and conduct social conversation).

In spite of the intricate aesthetic standards and strict rules of etiquette in the 2nd half of the 15th century, it is possible to identify an „individualization“ of dance performance, personal contributions of the performer and opportunities to improvise in dance. A certain „equalizing“ of different degrees of social hierarchy and to a surprising extent also of the sexes occurred in dance as well. This is corroborated not only by the amount and nature of the opportunities, but also by the assessment of dance quality and requirements on the rendition of given choreographies, which were similarly demanding on their performers.