THREE ASPECTS OF MEANING IN DANCE

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𝕴 begin with some comments on exemplification to elucidate what I take some post-modernist dances to be about. The paper then shifts to a discussion of representation and expression, with most of my examples coming from modern dance and ballet.[1]

EXEMPLIFICATION

Writing at the beginning of post-modernism in 1961, Selma Jeanne Cohen mentioned a "new group of choreographers who ...... reject the idea that a 'story,' or even 'content' in the traditional sense, is necessary to a dance work. Instead, they assert the independence of dance as pure movement."[2] More recently, Marcia Siegel speaks of some of this work as " 'abstract' in the sense that it has neither narrative nor descriptive overtones, neither compositional sequence as it's commonly understood nor any intention of being expressive or impressive."[3] Now there certainly are important post-modernist dances, such as Merce Cunningham's *Summerspace*, Yvonne Rainer's *Trio A*, Trisha Brown's *Primary Accumulation*, and Doug Dunn's *Gestures in Red*, that do not give us "meaning" in the traditional senses of that term. These dances are not representations, do not have a narrative structure, and do not employ standard storytelling theatrical devices. Nor does it seem correct to say, in John Martin's words, that they "arouse us to feel a certain emotion," or that they provide "re-created emotion," that is, these dances neither directly express emotion nor represent the expression of emotion.[4] And they certainly do not fulfil Walter Sorell's demand

that the dance have "meaning in terms of imagery that transcends reality."[5] What, then, can be said about the "meaning" of such dances ? Well, they are "about" movement itself, and the best start we have on elucidating this sense of "about" is Nelson Goodman's notion of exemplification.

Goodman claims that artworks "perform one or more among certain referential functions : representation, description, exemplification, expression."[6] Exemplification for Goodman is of labels, primarily predicates, and it is analyzed in terms of denotation and reference. Thus, he claims that something, i.e., an artwork, object, or body, exemplifies a label if and only if the label denotes that thing and the thing refers to the label.[7] For our purposes we can relax Goodman's nominalistic structures and speak of properties as being exemplified. Goodman himself allows this, for he says that a tailor's sample functions as a symbol "exemplfying certain properties," in which case he speaks of exemplification as "possession plus reference."[8] Thus, a thing exemplifies a property if and only if it possesses (or has) the property and the thing refers to that property.

Now the notion of "reference" in this definition seems problematic in the case of dance. David Gordon's *Sleepwalking* is about speed and acceleration ; the dancers' movements literally possess these features and they are emphasized by the dancers who focus on walking, trotting, running, and then running very fast. But Goodman claims that in exemplifying such properties there are "properties possessed and shown forth — *by a symbol*, not merely things the symbol denotes."[9] The notion of "shown forth" seems appropriate ; the dancers are accelerating and showing forth, emphasizing, or calling attention to acceleration, but it seems odd to say this is accomplished "by a symbol." So let us relax Goodman's definition once more, while restricting our focus to dance, and say that a dance performance exemplifies a property if and only if it possesses the property and it emphasizes that property. This will allow us to retain Goodman's claim that a dance does not exemplify all of its properties, while enabling us to avoid one criticism of Goodman, namely, that his notion of reference takes us outside the orbit of the work itself, that is, it will enable us to say that the work is "about" certain features of movement itself, while remaining faithful to the claim of Cohen and Siegel that such post-modernist work does not serve a referential function.[10]

Now let's focus on the notion of emphasis, for that looks to be as vague and inclusive as Goodman's notion of "reference." We can do so via the work of the Effort-Shape analysts who, following Laban, provide a way of describing qualitative changes in movement features in terms of the ways a mover concentrates his actions.[11]

One of the ways in which Effort-Shape theorists analyze movement is in terms of four bipolar "effort" factors : flow, weight, time and space. These are regarded as basic emphasizable movement elements. The flow of a movement ranges on a continuum from free flow, in which a person "goes with the flow," so to speak, the movement is relaxed, easy, and difficult to halt instantaneously, to bound flow, in which the flow is restricted, held back, restrained, and involves an ability and readiness to halt the action at a given moment. The weight factor in movement ranges from firm, characterized by strong muscular tension and a sense of strength spatially projected as a forceful action, to fine, in which the person acts to withdraw, withhold or rarify the weightiness of an act, to actively overcome gravity's force. The time factor ranges between quick and sustained ; the former involves sudden movements that are urgent or condensed, it typically involves speed and a decisive arrival at a new location, whereas a sustained movement is drawn out or indulged in, is typically slow in developing, and involves a gradual change in location. The space factor in movement relates to spatial focus or attention ; in direct movement attention is focused on one object, in indirect movement there are a number of foci of attention.

In addition to these Effort factors, and their various possible combinations, there are different sorts of changes in the Shape of movement, that is, how the body alters shape or adapts itself to space. First, the changes may be internal to the body itself, it may expand or contract, or an arm can be extended or withdrawn. Second, there are various sorts of paths a person can trace out in moving toward an object, for example, walking straight toward it or executing a set of pirouettes in an arc. Third, movement can shape or adapt itself to objects or other bodies in space.

If this system provides us with an inventory of qualitatively emphasizable aspects of movement, in addition to quantitative factors such as speed and acceleration, we can focus on how such features are emphasized, and thereby exemplified, in dance. First, emphasis may be placed on one of the qualitative or quantitative movement factors or on a particular combination of them. We noted the emphasis in David Gordon's *Sleepwalking* on gradual acceleration, from walking to all-out sprinting. Sally Banes notes that Gordon's *The Matter* exemplifies bound or halted movement ; certain dancers abruptly halt, freeze and hold poses while others dance on.[12] Doug Dunn's *Four for Nothing* emphasizes weight and shaping of the body to other bodies : several people lie down on the floor, other people lie on them and all distribute and adjust their weight ; or they stand and lean against each other absorbing and distributing weight.[13] In Dunn's *Lazy Madge* the

emphasis is on indirect spatial focus and shape awareness.[14] Dunn choreographs solos and duets for his performers, but allows them the choice of when to enter and where to perform, thereby causing the dancers' and spectators' attention to shift among a number of foci and adjust to the persons entering and exiting. Yvonne Rainer's *Trio A* exemplifies a rather generous set of movement qualities, as set forth in her minimalist analysis, but in part it emphasizes the flow of movement, as Sally Banes has noted : "Neither weight, nor time, nor space factors are noticeably stylized or emphasized. The one factor that is obviously altered and manipulated is the flow of movement."[15] The contrast of effort factors among distinct dancers may also be emphasized. In Merce Cunningham's *Rebus,* Cunningham's movements are bound, firm, direct and sustained in contrast to the free, fine, indirect, quick movements of the members of his troupe.

A second way of achieving emphasis is by focusing on a range or number of movement elements or combinations. In *Gestures in Red,* Doug Dunn emphasizes, focuses on, takes an interest in, the range of the movement repertoire. Deborah Jowitt and Sally Banes have both commented on this emphasis in the work. Dunn starts by exploring a variety of backward movements — prone and pushing backward with his feet ; rolling, walking and running backward — then inventories the movements of various parts of the body : arms, head, hips, etc., and combinations of parts, and winds up, in Banes' words, by "stuffing as many movements as he can into each fraction of a second."[16]

Third, the sequence or phrasing of movement can also be emphasized. In most ballet and modern dance there is an initiation of a phrase which builds to an emphasized climax and then subsides ; there is a point in the phrase which is emphasized. But the evenness of phrasing may also be emphasized. Rainer says of *Trio A* that "For four and a half minutes a great variety of movement shapes occur, but they are of equal weight and are equally emphasized."[17]

Fourth, since the conclusion of a phrase, typically leads to, or provides a transition to, another phrase, transitions can also be emphasized. Don Mc Donagh speaks of Steve Paxton's *Transit* as juxtaposing "long periods of walking with balletic movements ... The work explored the transitions of movement from fast to slow and back again."[18] On the other hand, the emphasis can be on eliminating phrase transitions ; although Rainer allows there are distinct phrases to *Trio A,* she points out that "there are no pauses between phrases ... the end of each phrase merges immediately into the beginning of the next with no observable accent."[19] Similarly, Trisha Brown says of her *Accumulation* pieces, in which a sequence of movements is repeated and extended by periodically adding move-

ments to the sequence, that, "I put all these movements together without transitions. I do not promote the next movement with a preceding transition and, therefore, I do not build up to something."[20]

Repetition can also serve to reemphasize or call attention to a movement aspect. Rainer notes that it can serve to "enforce the discreteness of a movement, objectify it, make it more objectlike."[21] In many of the dances of Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, and Laura Dean, repetition and slight variation of simple movements are used to draw attention to the movements themselves.[22]

Of course there is a lot going on in post-modern dance that falls outside the orbit of our discussion. But the dances we have focused on are primarily about movement itself; they exemplify features or qualities of movement itself.

Now what can we say about a dance like Steve Paxton's *Satisfyin' Lover,* in which the performers simply walk across the stage, stopping at times to just stand or to sit on chairs, and then exit by walking to the other side of the stage ?[23] In one sense we can say that each person has a style of walking, his own idiosyncratic, or natural, style, and perhaps we could develop a refined Effort-Shape theory that would anable us to mark off features characteristic of a person's natural movement style. But it seems odd to say that a performer in Paxton's piece exemplifies those features; he does not emphasize them but merely walks across the stage. His walk merely has or possesses those features. We should say that the dance exemplifies the different natural walking styles of the performers. This seems to be what Jill Johnston had in mind when she said that what struck her about *Satisfyin' Lover* was "the incredible assortment of bodies, the any old bodies of our any old lives ... walking ... across the gymnasium ... The fat, the skinny, the medium, the slouched and slumped [etc.] ... the you name it, by implication every postural possibility in the postural spectrum."[14] In presenting this array of natural walking styles, the performance calls attention to, emphasizes, and thus exemplifies the range of natural styles.

Of course, style in most dances is a more complex affair than in *Satisfyin' Lover,* which leads us to consider what constitutes style and whether styles can be exemplified. Mary Sirridge and Adina Armelagos draw a useful distinction between a general dance style, "an inventory of movements or sequences of movements,"[25] or what they call a "spatial vocabulary," and personal style, that is, "a dancer's characteristic articulation of a more general spatial vocabulary,"[26] or, as they put it in a later article, "an individual internalization of general style constraints."[27] Thus, they speak of a general style such as classical ballet, with species such as the Royal Ballet style or the Balanchine style, and personal styles

such as those of Farrell or McBride. Now suppose we have something like a fully articulate Effort-Shape system of movement description. We could then say that a general style involves the choice of certain sorts of Effort-Shape elements in characteristic combinations, phrases, and so forth. Classical ballet, for example, is based on the five positions — which link certain sorts of steps, turns and leaps— along with certain postures, such as the open hips and chest, with the latter framed by the arms, and pointed feet that continue the body's line. A personal style (which is what we are presented with in performance) will incorporate or blend a dancer's natural movement style with ; (1) general style characteristics, (2) certain stylistic deviations which may be set by the choreographer and (3) certain characteristics that we might say are optional in the general style but are emphasized by the individual dancer.

All three of these stylistic·factors are emphasizable. In *Agon*, for example, the classical ballet steps are emphasized ; Balanchine does not invent a new general style. But he distorts, and extends the steps, while altering and emphasizing other conventions, e.g., feet may be flexed and knees turned in. And, as Marcia Siegel points out, part of the effect of performances of *Agon* featuring Allegra Kent and Jean-Pierre Bonnefous in the pas de deux rests on the dancers' natural styles and those aspects of general style which they emphasize.[28] Since all three aspects of dance style are emphasized in *Agon*, we can say that its style is exemplified or that in one sense the dance is "about" its style.

REPRESENTATION :

What *Agon* or *Trio A* are "about," then, is certain aspects of movement, and, although it may require a complex analysis to say with precision what they are about, movement is all they are about. Dances like Loring's *Billy the Kid* and Humphrey's *The Shakers* are also about movement, but it is also true to say the former is about, or represents, the life of Billy the Kid and that the latter is about, or represents, a Shaker dance. What, then, is dance representation and how do dances represent ?

A story-telling ballet like *Billy the Kid* represents sequences of events and acts in the life of Billy : his witnessing the killing of his mother, his act of killing her killer, how he becomes an outlaw, is then captured, escapes, and is finally killed by Pat Garrett. The representationalism in *Billy the Kid* is largely based on represented actions. We have, to take a simplified example, dancer William Carter representing Sheriff Pat Garrett drawing his pistol to shoot Billy. Although from the spectator's point of view there is only one sequence of movements seen,

logically speaking the representation of an act involves two actions; we have, in this case, William Carter drawing and William Carter representing Sheriff Pat Garrett drawing. In the stringing together of such complex acts the saga of Billy is represented.

The recognition that the performance we are watching is a representation of Billy's life is, in part, based on resemblance, in the sense that resemblance is necessary for representation. If there were no scenes, sequences of events, or actions that resembled the events and actions of Billy's life we would not say that we were presented with a dance that represents Billy's life. But resemblance is not sufficient for representation, for the sequence of actions on the stage may more closely resemble the life and demise of Two-gun Jack, a little known desperado who lies buried in Boot Hill Cemetery. There are, however, other factors, such as the title, program notes, costuming, and scenery, upon which representation may also depend ; program notes are particularly important in establishing the representation of particular individuals.

If representation in dance is based on convention and resemblance, then realism is based on degree of resemblance. *Billy the Kid* is fairly realistic ; there are signature dances for characters, e.g., the riders have bowed legs and spread elbows, there are realistic scenes in which everyone recognizes that guns are being drawn, and the costumes and sets are realistic. But even here we do not find the degree of realism achieved in some theater and mime ; Billy the Kid never danced a pas de deux with his girlfriend. The degree of realism is thinner in most full-evening Romantic ballets, where realism is established at the beginning with mime and character dances as opposed to the white acts which feature pure ballet. In Aston's *Enigma Variations* the resemblances are even more attentuated.[29] The costumes and staging are very realistic and capture Elgar's social milieu, and there are some character dances, but the dancers in the "Nimrod" variation stick strictly to a classical sequence of arabesques, tombés and pas de basque. Perhaps some relationship among the trio is represented, but the reference is unclear. And what should we say of a dance such as Balanchine's *Four Temperments* ? John Percival and Don McDonagh regard it as a sequence of character representations ; Marcia Siegel demurs from a representational reading.[30] This seems to be a borderline case ; if the dance represents it is by vague hints and allusions.

Given that dance representation often occurs via allusions, or hints of resemblance, an understanding of style is important, and sometimes essential, in recognizing resemblances. An example is the pas de deux for a tipsy couple in Christensen's *Filling Station*, as described by Marcia Siegel : "... the couple grab for each other and miss, or contact the wrong body parts. They set themselves up for

a supported pose, calculate wrong, fall free for an instant, then collapse against each other. The girl achieves a perfect line in arabesque and locks herself into it while the man ducks confusedly under her leg and comes up on the other side, still holding her up."[31] The resemblance does not obtain between the movements of a typical drunken couple and the dancers' movements, but between the distortions of natural movements we see in a drunken couple and the distortions in the general ballet style exemplified by the dancers. To see that resemblance one must understand ballet style. Similarly, in *Giselle* the ballerina representing Giselle and the dancer representing Albrecht must be capable of representing a range of emotions in both mime and the classical style. In the waltz scene of the first act their mutual joy is represented by a series of ballonné-chassé-coupé, with a beckoning movement by the raised arm on the ballonné. Yet the same series, repeated by Giselle after she becomes hysterical, and now done a bit tentatively and with some stylistic unevenness, represents her torment and disintegration.[32] In both cases a grasp of the emotional state being represented depends on an understanding of ballet style.

In modern dance, Doris Humphrey's *The Shakers* realistically represents a Shaker dance in terms of floor plan, separation of men and women, and costuming, but it also represents the tensions of Shaker life. the struggle to overcome the gravity of flesh and achieve spiritual communion. Humphrey herself has pointed out that her style, based on the fall and recovery principle, is integral to the representation of this struggle, and Suzanne Youngermanns detailed Effort-Shape analysis elucidates how the tension is depicted.[33] On the one hand, there are movements using combinations of strength and bound flow — with the body narrowed or contracted and the limbs held in, and little attention to the environment — which depict the constrictions of the flesh ; on the other hand, light movements with an emphasis on time qualities and spatial attention are used to represent the Shakers' spiritual yearnings. Similarly, Elizabeth Kagan has pointed out that certain elements of Humphrey's style, a "pattern of rebounding in weight and flow with its corresponding breath fluctuations setting off a spatial reaction," forms the basis of representation in *Water Study*.[34] In sum, then, representation is based on convention and resemblance, but an understanding of style is important in recognizing and articulating resemblances.

The dances discussed in this section give us an indication of the range of representation in dance. Individuals, their actions and sequences of events *(Billy the kid)*, sorts (a Shaker dance in *The Shakers*), and types or stereotypes (the heroic gas station attendant in *Filling Station*) are representable. So are fictional individuals (Oedipus in Graham's *Night Journey*) and sorts with no members (the Lilac

Fairy in *Sleeping Beauty*), for in saying that Bertram Ross looks like or resembles Oedipus we are saying that what we see on stage is what Oedipus would look like if he existed as historically specified ; the resemblance is in a counterfactual context. Processes are also representable : natural processes, such as the movement of water in *Water Study* or the play of light on crystals in Balanchine's *Jewels* ; and psychological processes, such as the process of sexual repression, indulgence, guilt and redemption in Tudor's *Pillar of Fire*. The expression of emotions and moods may also be represented ; Fonteyn portraying Giselle represents Giselle's love for Albrecht.

A dance may also represent by denotational devices. Dance mime exhibits a range of representational devices, from the sign for stop (holding a hand up with the palm out), which resembles an ordinarily used conventional sign for indicating to someone to stop, and which is recognizable to one not acquainted with theatrical conventions, to purely conventional devices based on denotation, not resemblance. In the first act of *Giselle*, for example, when her mother warns Giselle that if she continues to dance she will die and become a Wili, she does so by extending her entwined hands above her head, then clenching her fists, crossing her wrists, lowering her arms in front of her, unclenching her fists, placing her hands at her lower spine and gently fluttering her hands. Here we have conventional mime devices that do not resemble or hint at natural gestures, and the meaning of such movements is not available to one who does not understand the conventions. Since such mime conventions are embedded in the ballet style, an understanding of that style is necessary for grasping their meaning.

Finally, dance representation may occur via representational symbolism in which an action or object represents by resemblance and what is represented is symbolic of a quality or set of qualities. [35] In Ted Shawn's *Labor Symphony* we see the acts of laborers represented by resemblance — scattering seeds, cutting wood, pulling oars, etc. — but the acts themselves are symbolic of the nobility, dignity, and honesty of manual labor. Mary Wigman effectively employed representational symbolism in *Face of Night*, the third dance of her solo *Shifting Landscape*. [36] The dancer works off a rigid representation of a cross — feet together and arms extended ; the pose resembles a cross, which, in part, symbolizes suffering. Wigman's movement variations from the cross-posture themselves resemble agonized suffering and are especially effective in the symbolic context. In many cases the symbolism is not as clear cut. Graham's *Errand into the Maze* features a male dancer who represents the Minotaur by resemblance ; he wears a bull-like mask and his arms are fixed on a yoke that rests on his shoulders. Yet the Minotaur is symbolic of crude force, perhaps, or blind oppression, or sexual

power ; it's hard to unambiguously pin down the meaning. And in certain instances the symbolism seems to be personal or private. At one point in Meredith Monk's *Education of a Girlchild* the dancers assemble carrying certain objects : a little model house, a stuffed lizard, a set of deer antlers and a scythe. The scythe symbolizes death and time, and one feels that the other objects are presented as symbolic, but taken together their symbolism remains unclear to the viewer.

EXPRESSION :

In discussing representation, I briefly mentioned that expressions are representable. Now I want to take up the topic of expression more fully, and then explore certain connections between the concepts of expression and representation.

In certain cases "What is this dance about ?" is a request for an elucidation of what it expresses. Now the concept of expression is used in a very generous way in dance criticism, a reflection, perhaps, of the fact that there is a sense in which everything we do expresses our intentions, feelings, motives, opinions and attitudes. In this sense, all movement would be said to be expressive. But this seems a bit too broad. It is sometimes said that a movement expresses gracefulness or delicacy, but these seem to be regional qualities of the movement itself, not psychological states that are expressed. In fact, such qualities arise or emerge when the effort factors discriminated by Laban are combined and emphasized : fine-sustained-flexible-bound movements are undulatingly graceful, delicately smooth and gently buoyant, whereas firm-sudden-direct movements are vigorous, concentrated and powerful. Such qualities may be used for expressive purposes, but are not intrinsically expressive, as can be seen from such post-modern dances as Cunningham's *Summerspace* and Dean's *Stamping Dance.*

A better approach, then, is to start with dances that clearly are, in some sense, expressive : Wigman's *Death Call*, Graham's *Lamentation*, or those parts of *Giselle* in which she is rapturously happy about Albrecht's love and then hysterically angry at his deceit. These examples are closer to our central use of "expression" in ordinary language. In this use, "expression" marks off a relation between items of behavior and certain states of a person — for example, laughter typically expresses joy and cringing normally expresses fear. But not all behavior is expressive because not all of a person's states are expressible. I shall follow Anthony Kenny and Alan Tormey in holding that expressible states take intentional objects, which (if we set aside those dances containing the linguistic expression of opinions, as in certain Grand Union performances) leaves us with the following sorts of expressibles : emotions, such as fear of a dog that is snarling ; moods, such as

apprehensiveness about the weather ; and attitudes, such as a negative attitude toward fighting.[37]

Now let us focus on an example, a person's expression of fear of a snarling dog, to elucidate the concept of expression. According to Kenny and Tormey, the emotion, fear, is a complex having as constituents inner feelings, sensations, and physiological disturbances, plus the behavioral display. Thus "fear" spans both inner and outer, private and public, and the inference from outer to inner is that of constituent part to complex whole. They also stress the connection between fear and fearful circumstances or contexts. Usually a person expresses fear in certain contexts, as in the presence of the snarling dog, and the context typically makes it clear that he is expressing fear. In such a case we can say that his acts of cringing and withdrawing result from his belief that the context is dangerous ; he has certain beliefs about the dog. Of course, the dog may not snarl and may not be dangerous, but if the person believes a docile dog is dangerous his belief about the context is a basis for saying he expressed fear even if the context does not itself make it clear that he is expressing his fear.

There is a wide variety of controllable or voluntary behavior characteristic of the expression of fear : certain bodily attitudes and gestures, facial expressions, withdrawal and avoidance behavior. Other behavior, such as trembling and stammering, may be involuntary. Since dance activity is controllable and modifiable, however, we can restrict our discussion to controllable behavior. In the normal case of expressive activity, then, we have a psychological state that takes an intentional object, controllable behavior, and an appropriate context ; and use of the concept of "expression" warrants an inference from the behavior that is an expression of an emotional state (feeling or attitude) to the complex state of which it is a constituent.

When we turn to the subject of dance, the question is not whether all dances are expressive in this sense, for Brown's *Primary Accumulation* precludes that claim, but, rather, whether some dances are expressive in this direct sense. Margaret Beals' improvised dances with the Impulses indicate that there are ; she feels her way into the music and shapes a mood or emotion directly in the dance process. In her words : "There are two ways of dancing. One is with set material where you make a statement and repeat it many times. The opposite is improvisation where you express your own emotions through the energy you have now. This takes a person with extremely strong emotions and the ability to articulate them with energy in movement."[38]

The notion of "articulation" here is what Collingwood has in mind when he says that the expression of emotion does not involve its venting, arousal or

betrayal, but, rather, the elucidation of its particularity or individuality.[39] Romantic poetry provides many examples of such emotional articulation. In the *Prelude* Wordsworth rows apprehensively out onto a lake on a silent moon-lit night :

> When, from behind that craggy steep till then
> The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
> As if with voluntary power instinct,
> Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
> And growing still in stature the grim shape
> Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
> For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
> And measured motion like a living thing
> Strode after me.

Wordsworth does not say, or mention, that he is apprehensively in awe of nature, he articulates his emotion largely by his careful characterization of the object of his feeling. Word choice, cadence, and repetition elucidate Wordsworth's awe in the presence of nature's power. A dance that expresses an emotion articulates the behavioral dimension of the emotion ; the dancer, using his natural and personal style, shapes the emotion's display. In Beals' dances the articulated expression of emotion takes us rather far from the behavior ordinarily characteristic of the expression of that emotion. And the improvisational dance context does not itself make it clear exactly what emotion she is expressing. Nevertheless, it seems true to say that Beals offers us an articulated expression of her emotions.

If we can say that a dance in which Beals articulates an expression of her sadness need not feature behavior characteristic of a normal or typically sad expression, it is also true that some people may be said to wear a characteristically sad expression even when they are not expressing their sadness (i.e., when their behavior is not an expression of their sadness). Jack Palance, for example, could be said to have a cruel facial expression even though he may not be expressing cruelty. There are certain behavioral features characteristic of an expression of sadness, e.g., a postural droop and downturned mouth ; but a person may just possess such characteristics without those characteristics being an expression of sadness. Thus, there is no logical link between the notion of a sad expression and the notion of an expression of sadness. The fact that the relationship is contingent, however, leaves open the possibility of their simultaneous exploitation in dance.

Some of the dances of Mary Wigman are a case in point. Throughout her career she reiterated that her work was directly expressive, that, in her words, "Creative art is really quite simple, merely the expression of feelings and emotions

in the way we live."[40] She also had, as Walter Sorrell has noted, "an eerie and enviable, an artistic and personal intimacy with death."[41] Her letters and writings reveal a fascination with death, a certain awe and apprehensiveness about it, and she addressed the issue over and over in her dancing. Of the solo *Death Call* in her dance titled *Sacrifice*, she has said that it expresses an apprehensiveness, "a feeling of 'being called' that came from afar, emerging from deep darkness and relentlessly demanding." In articulating, in expressing, this feeling of "all that was hidden behind life, the first realization of all irrevocabilities, of all finality and extinction," Wigman shaped her apprehensiveness of death in a sequence of "static, monumental poses and hugely conceived movements through space."[42] Her account makes it clear that she was actually expressing her apprehensiveness.

If we consider Wigman, the person, we see a bony, muscular, torsocentered individual, whose natural movement style is weighty and strong, and whose face wears or naturally exhibits a range of sorrowful, resigned, apprehensive expressions. It is not that she exhibits a frozen expression ; there is a range of emotional expressions she naturally exhibits. And, to be sure, Wigman herself expressed the range of emotions, from elation to grief. But, as she notes, "Nature did not cast me for the role of a soubrette... I feel that I can speak with the greatest authority on the serious side of life rather than its gayer aspect, although I have an enormous understanding for and delight in the natural effervescence of happiness."[43] In part, then, her bent as a dancer was fixed by the range of expressions she naturally exhibited.

In discussing *Death Call*, I think it is appropriate to say that it is an expression of Wigman's apprehensiveness of death, and that it blends her naturally worn apprehensive expression with her expression of the apprehensiveness of death. To be sure, the dance does not exactly exhibit behavior that is typical or characteristic of the ordinary expression of apprehensiveness ; it is a shaped or stylized expression. She herself states that "Without ecstacy [or emotion] no dance ! Without form no dance !" And she claims that her dancing "articulate[s] stifled, half-formed emotions."[44] But in Wigman's case her general style, the alternation of tension and relaxation, thrust and contraction, is so closely built upon and welded to her natural movement style that it seems correct to say that she articulates both an expression she naturally exhibits and the expression of her emotion.[45]

The distinction we have been focusing on — between the expression of an emotion (where the person actually has the emotion) and an emotion expressed, exhibited, or naturally worn — is also acknowledged in ballet. Both the character

dancer and the classical dancer have to be able to do the steps, and certain physical features such as height and limb proportions do, in part, differentiate them, but the character dancer also typically has an expressive or "magnetic" personality ; in part this means that he can exhibit a wide range of expressions, not that when he does so he is expressing his emotions. For the character dancer typically exhibits his expressions in mimed action or dramatic representation, and these may not involve the expression of emotion at all.

This brings us to a link between the concepts representation and expression. Suppose I am mimicing your fear of a snarling dog. I cringe and grimace in a way which resembles your expression of fear of the dog. But my behavior is not an expression of fear because I am not afraid ; I simply adopt a certain facial grimace and a cringe-like posture. So here we should say that my action is not an expression of fear, but a representation of your expression of fear. Alan Tormey makes this point in discussing theatrical portrayals. He notes that there is a "surface to expressive behavior" that can be used for representational purposes, and that when an actor is said to be expressing fear this typically means that the actor is representing a character's expression of fear.[46]

This holds true in theatrical dancing as well. In dancing the role of Giselle, Fonteyn represents Giselle's love of Albrecht, but Fonteyn is not necessarily feeling the emotion of love. And Nureyev represents Albrecht's love of Giselle, but does not necessarily express his personal love. In fact, Fonteyn notes that Nureyev actually worked himself into the role of Albrecht by getting angry ; he found it "easier to dance in a rage than in cold blood," and in that context Fonteyn found herself to be a bit afraid.[47] In that case we have Fonteyn expressing (and, we might imagine, trying to repress) fear of Nureyev, while representing Giselle's expression of love for Albrecht.[48]

In a similar vein, Sirridge and Armelagos have argued that in ballet "the expression or projection of personal feeling or emotion has nothing to do with the dancer's expectations of himself or with the focus of the dancer's artistic concentration."[49] Instead, the dancer concentrates on executing movements and being in unison with other dancers. They allow that a dancer may express emotion ; Fonteyn may, for example, express delight in the progress of a performance of *Giselle* and also represent Giselle's delight in Albrecht's love. But the connection here is contingent, and Sirridge and Armelagos regard the dancer's personal expression of emotions to be atypical in ballet and, in many cases, distracting. They have a point, but it requires some qualification. If we distinguish the personal expression of emotion from the representation of expressions, then the

ability to bring off the latter in dance will typically require an expressive performer, that is, one who can assume, and so represent, a wide variety of expressive postures and gestures, even though he may not be feeling an emotion. *Giselle* is a case in point. The principle dancer must be able to do the steps and move in unison with other dancers, and in the second act she must be capable of graceful airiness. But in the first act she must also represent the range of emotions from delirious love to hysterical rage. This requires a naturally expressive person who can mime or represent these emotions even if she is not personally expressing them while dancing.[50]

I also think Sirridge and Armelagos overstate the case a bit against the expression of emotion in theatrical dance. Training, technique, style were important to Martha Graham, but only insofar as they "service the body towards complete expressiveness."[51] In *Appalachian Spring* she represented the slightly nervous, excited, happy Bride, but she *was* a slightly nervous, excited, happy bride. She danced her emotions, directly expressing the feelings she had, while simultaneously representing the Bride's expressions.[52] *Errand into the Maze*, as danced by Graham, not only represents a woman's indignant fear of crude power and sexual oppression, it expresses Graham's indignant fear of crude power and sexual oppression. And the same can be said of many performances in classical ballet. Ted Kivitt says that in *Giselle* "I imagine what it would be like to see someone in my own family go crazy. By the end of the first act I'm exhausted. Sometimes I go offstage crying because I'm so involved. It takes me awhile after a performance to calm down emotionally."[53] In such performances we have more than executing the steps and keeping in unison, and expression is more than an aspect of style.

Expression in dance, then, is a complex affair. In the case of a dancer like Margaret Beals, we have a direct, spontaneous shaping or articulation of the expression of emotions. A dance like Wigman's *Death Call* articulates both an expression Wigman naturally exhibits and the expression of her emotion. In some theatrical dances we have the representation of an expression, with no emotion being actually expressed by the dancer. But, where representation is effective, it typically rests on the use of a dancer who is expressive in the sense that he can exhibit, and thus represent, a range of expressive postures. Finally, we have dancers, such as Graham in *Appalachian Spring*, of whom it can be said that they both express their emotions and represent a portrayed character's expression.

NOTES :

1. I wish to thank George Beiswanger, Carole Knapp and Jack Morris for enjoyable discussions on dance and helpful suggestions on the preparation of this paper. 2. Selma Jeanne Cohen, "Avant-Garde Choreography," in *The Dance has Many Faces*, edited by Walter Sorell, 2nd edition (New York : Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 211. 3. Marcia Siegel, *The Shapes of Change* (Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1979), p. 326. Siegel is speaking specifically of Merce Cunningham's dances. Sally Banes makes a similar comment in speaking of some post-modernist choreographers : "Originally reacting against the expressionism of modern dance, which anchored movement to a literary idea or musical form, the post-modernists propose (as do Cunningham and Balanchine) that the formal qualities of dance might be reason enough for choreography, and that the purpose of making dances might be simply to make a framework within which we look at movement for its own sake." Sally Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers* (Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1930), p. 15. 4. John Martin, *Introduction to the Dance* (New York : W.W. Notton Co., 1939), pp. 53, 272. 5. Sorell, "In Defense of the Future" in his *The Dance has Many Faces*. p. 254. 6. Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art* (Indianapolis : Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1968), p. 256. 7. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-67. 8. *Ibid.*, p. 53. 9. *Ibid.*, p. 253 (my emphasis). An interesting discussion of exemplification, from which I have benefited, occurs in the following papers : Monroe C. Beardsley, "Semiotic Aesthetics and Aesthetic Education," *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, vol. 9, no. 3 (July, 1975), pp. 5-26 (note the addendum on pp. 25-26, which discusses Goodman's response); Monroe C. Beardsley, "*Languages of Art* and Art Criticism," *Erkenntnis*, vol. 12, no. I (January, 1978), pp. 95-118 : Nelson Goodman, "Reply to Beardsley," *Erkenntnis*, vol. 12, no. 1 (January, 1978), pp. 169-173. 10. For this criticism of Goodman see : Joseph Margolis, "Numerical Identity and Reference in the Arts," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol 12, no. 2 (April, 1970), pp. 138-146 ; Henning Jensen. "Exemplification in Nelson Goodman's Aesthetic Theory," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. XXXII, no. 1 (Fall, 1973), pp. 47-51 ; Monroe C. Beardsley, "Semiotic Aesthetics and Aesthetic Education," *op. cit*, p. 13 ff. 11. Valerie Preston-Dunlop, *A Handbook for Modern Educational Dance* (London : Macdonald and Evans, 1963) ; Rudolf Laban, *Modern Educational Dance*, 3rd edition, revised with additions by Lisa Ullmann (London : Macdonald and Evans, 1975) ; Cecily Day, *A Primer for Movement Description*, 2nd edition (New York : Dance Notation Press, 1977). 12. Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers*, pp. 102-3. On p. 102, Banes also discusses Gordon's *Sleepwalking*. 13. Discussed in Marcia Siegel's *Watching the Dance Go By* (Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1972), pp. 298-299. It is interesting to note Dunn's comment on his work : "there is an interest in dance as an area to experiment with movement problems or performance problems as possibilities — as opposed to a vehicle for expressing what you think about the world." Trisha Brown and Doug Dunn, "Dialogue on Dance" in *The Vision of Modern Dance*; edited by Jean Morrison Brown (Princeton, N. J. : Princeton Book Co., 1979), pp. 168-169. 14. Discussed in Siegel, *Watching the Dance Go By*, pp. 290-293 ; Banes. *Terpsichore in Sneakers*. pp. 191-2, 195-8. 15. Yvonne Rainer, "A Quasi Survey of Some 'Minimalist' Tendencies in the Quantitatively Minimal Dance Activity Midst the Plethora, or an Analysis of *Trio A*," in *The Vision of Modern Dance*, edited by Jean Morrison Brown, pp. 141-150 ; Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers*, p. 47. 16. Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers*, p. 193 ; Deborah Jowitt, *Dance Beat*, (New York : Marcel Dekker, 1977),

pp. 128-129. 17. Rainer, "A Quasi Survey," p. 147. 18. Don McDonagh, *The Rise and Fall and Rise of Modern Dance* (New York : E.P. Dutton, 1970), p. 125. 19. Rainer, "A Quasi Survey," p. 147. 20. Comment on her work by Trisha Brown in *Contemporary Dance,* edited by Anne Livet (New York : Abbeville Press, 1978), p. 54. 21. Rainer, "A Quasi Survey," p. 149. 22. For discussions of Trisha Brown see : Trisha Brown, "Three Pieces," *The Drama Review,* vol. 19 (March, 1975, pp. 26-32 ; Roger Copeland, "The 'Post-Modern' Choreography of Trisha Brown," *New York Times* (January 4, 1976), part II, p. 1 ; Don McDonagh, "Trisha Brown," *The Complete Guide to Modern Dance* (New York : Doubleday, 1976), pp. 343-347 ; Trisha Brown, "Trisha Brown," in *Contemporary Dance,* edited by Anne Livet, pp. 42-57 ; Trisha Brown and Doug Dunn, "Dialogue on Dance," in *The Vision of Modern Dance,* edited by Jean Morrison Brown, pp. 163-171 ; Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers,* pp. 77-91. For discussions of Lucinda Childs see : "Lucinda Childs : A Portfolio," *Artforum,* vol. 11 (February, 1973), pp. 50-56 ; Childs, "Lucinda Childs," in *Contemporary Dance,* edited by Anne Livet, pp. 58-81 ; Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers,* pp. 131-145. For discussions of Laura Dean see : Siegel, *Watching the Dance Go By,* pp. 306-312 ; Rob Baker, "The Song and Dance of Laura Dean," *Dance Magazine,* vol. LI, no. 11 (November, 1977), pp. 40-44 ; Laura Dean, "Laura Dean," in *Contemporary Dance,* edited by Anne Livet, pp. 93-105. 23. *Satisfyin' Lover* is discussed in McDonagh, *The Rise and Fall and Rise of Modern Dance,* pp. 127-8 ; Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers,* pp. 60. Paxton himself describes the dance in : Steve Paxton, "Satisfyin' Lover," in Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers,* pp. 71-74. 24. Jill Johnston "The New American Modern Dance," in *The New American Arts,* edited by Richard Kostelanetz (New York : Collier Books, 1967), p. 166. 25. Mary Sirridge and Adina Armelagos, "The In's and Out's of Dance : Expression as an Aspect of Style," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* vol. XXXVI, no. 1 (Fall, 1977), p. 18. 26 *Ibid.,* p. 19. 27. Adina Armelagos and Mary Sirridge, "The Identity Crisis in Dance," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* vol. XXXVII, no. 2 (Winter, 1978), p. 131. 28. Siegel, *The Shapes of Change,* pp. 227-234, 239. 29. Discussed in David Vaughn, *Frederick Ashton and his Ballets,* (New York : Alfred Knopf, 1977), pp. 356-363 ; Zoe Dominic and John S. Gilbert, *Frederick Ashton : A Choreographer and his Ballets* (London : George G. Harrap, 1971), pp. 213-219. 30. Don McDonagh, *How to Enjoy Ballet* (New York : Doubleday, 1978), p. 72 ; John Percival, *Experimental Dance* (New York : Universe Books, 1971), p. 32 ; Siegel, *The Shapes of Change,* pp. 213-221. 31. Siegel, *The Shapes of Change,* p. 116. 32. Discussed in Cyril W. Beaumont, *The Ballet Called Giselle* (New York : Dance Horizons, 1969), pp. 78-87. 33 Doris Humphrey and Paul Love, "The Dance of Doris Humphrey," in *The Modern Dance,* edited by Virginia Stewart and Merle Armitage (New York : Dance Horizons, 1970), pp. 59-70 ; Suzanne Youngermann, "The Translation of a Culture into Choreography : A Study of Doris Humphrey's *The Shakers,* Based on Labananalysis," in *Essays in Dance Research : Dance Research Annual IX,* edited by Dianne L. Woodruff (New York : Congress on Research in Dance, 1978), pp. 93-110. 34. Elizabeth Kagan, "Towards the Analysis of a Score : A Comparative Study of *Three Epitaphs* by Paul Taylor and *Water Study* by Doris Humphrey, in *Essays in Dance Research : Dance Research Annual IX,* edited by Dianne L. Woodruff, pp. 75-92. 35. Representational symbolism is discussed in Monroe Beardsley, *Aesthetics : Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* (New York : Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958), pp. 288-293. 36. Discussed in Mary Wigman, *The Language of Dance,* translated by Walter Sorell

(Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1966), pp. 47-50. 37. Anthony Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will* (New York : Humanities Press, 1963) ; Alan Tormey, *The Concept of Expression* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1970). 38. Margaret Beals, private communication. 39. R.G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1938), pp. 105-115 ; 121-124. 40. Walter Sorell, *The Mary Wigman Book* (Middletown, Conn. : Wesleyan University Press, 1973), p. 149. Wigman has also said : "Shock, ecstacy, joy, melancholy, grief, gayety, the dance can express all these emotions. But the expression without the inner experience in the dance is valueless." Published as "The Philosophy of Modern Dance," in *Dance as a Theater Art* edited by Selma Jeanne Cohen (New York : Harper and Row, 1974), p. 152. 41. *Ibid.*, p. 19. 42. Wigman, *The Language of Dance*, p. 18. 43. Sorell, *The Mary Wigman Book*, p. 146. 44. *Ibid.*, pp 88, 53. 45. Speaking of Wigman's approach to dance, John Martin says : "it is fundamental to the Wigman theory that emotion is not put upon the outside of movements already evolved, but that the emotion actually evolves the movements. Thus there is as much stress laid upon emotional training as upon physical, and more, perhaps, upon the production of movement from subjective impulses than upon either element separately." Martin, *Introduction to the Dance*, pp. 233-234. 46. Tormey, *The Concept of Expression*, pp. 51-60 ; 102-108. 47. Margot ·Fonteyn, *Autobiography* (New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), p. 223. 48. In *Afterimages* (New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), Arlene Croce says : "I would much prefer a grouch to the enthusiast who sometime, somewhere, every single season commits to print some variation of the line, 'Fonteyn *is* Juliet !' 'Ulanova *is* Giselle !' I do not know what this means. If intended as a compliment, surely it cannot be much of an accomplishment to become Juliet if you are Juliet. Fonteyn is Fonteyn. Ulanova is Ulanova." (p. 334). Croce's point is well-taken. Ulanova cannot literally become Giselle. It is Ulanova who is acting and representing Giselle forcing Albrecht's sword into her breast. And it may be that Ulanova is expresing her elation (perhaps at the performance's success) and representing Giselle's elation over Albrecht's love. But there are two subjects in either case, Ulanova and Giselle. 49. Sirridge and Armelagos, "The In's and Out's of Dance : Expression as an Aspect of Style," p.16. 50. In discussing representation, I argued that an understanding of style may be an important factor in the recognition of resemblances that are necessary for representation. This holds true for the representation of expression, as my previous discussion of the waltz scene in the first act of *Giselle* indicates. 51. Quoted in ·Walter Sorell's "Two Rebels, Two Giants," in Walter Sorell, editor, *The Dance has Many Faces,* p. 36. Graham has come out rather strongly against unshaped, "self-expression dancing.': See Graham's "A Modern Dancer's Primer for Action," in *Dance as a Theater Art*, edited by Selma Jeanne Cohen, pp. 136-137. But in the same place she states that her "methed..... was secondary" to her shaped, stylized, or articulated expressive aims (p. 136). 52. Discussed in Siegel, *Watching the Dance Go By*, pp. 216-7, 236 ; *The Shapes of Change*, pp. 144-152 ; Edwin Denby, *Looking at the Dance* (New york : Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1949), pp. 318-90. In an earlier work Marcia Siegel stated : "If I had to·pick·out the one driving preoccupation of Martha Graham's that has had the most·widespread and lasting influence on other choreographers, it would be her concern with emotionality. No modern dancer since Graham has been able to avoid dealing with the idea that dancing is﹣always an expression — or a denial — of the dancer's feelings." Siegel, *At the Vanishing Point* (New York : Saturday Review Press, 1968)'
p. 277. Also see, Joseph Mazo, *Prime Movers* (New York : William Morrow, 1977), pp- 178-9.

53. Interview with Ted Kivitt in *Dancers on Dancing*, edited by Cynthia Lyle (New York : Drake Publishers, 1977), p. 82.

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