European Association of Dance Historians

Volume 3 No. 1
Winter/Spring 2007/8
ISSN 1746-5737

Choreologica

Papers on Dance History

Journal

Volume 3 Number 1
Winter/Spring 2007/8

Choreologica

Papers on Dance History

European Association of Dance Historians

Journal

Volume 3 Number 1
Winter/Spring 2007/8

Index:

Editorial Note 3

Françoise DARTOIS-LAPEYRE

Une Pionnière en Histoire de la danse, Germaine Prudhommeau 5

Anne BLOOMFIELD

Past Inspirations and Future Practices - *ways forward teaching historical dance in the primary school* 21

Alexandra CARTER with Simon DORLING

Historiography and Her Story: The Reminiscences of Cara Tranders, A Victorian Ballet Girl, 1895 55

Toby BENNETT

A Rich and Varied Palette: Artistic choice and changes in the teaching of ballet 77

Dear Members and Readers,

We would like to apologise for the delay with which this issue of *Choreologica* reaches you. The move from the current format to a new, more professional one, has proved more difficult and time-consuming than expected. Still, we are happy to announce that this will be the last issue published in the old format.

The aim of this issue is twofold. On the one hand it wishes to pay tribute to two EADH members who passed away in 2007: Germaine Prudhommeau and Anne Bloomfield. On the other hand, it strives to respond to the many requests we have had, by publishing two of the papers which were formerly available only in electronic format on our website.

Germaine Prudhommeau, one of France's most revered dance scholars, played a significant role in the development of what is today the European Association of Dance Historians. Françoise Dartois-Lapeyre, our French Council member, honours Prudhommeau's memory and achievements by highlighting Prudhommeau's rich and multifaceted personality in a detailed biographical article.

Anne Bloomfield was also a proactive and enthusiastic member, whose constant and infectiously enthusiastic presence at all our events will now be sorely missed. It was the Publications Committee's unanimous decision to re-print one of her papers – first presented in 2000. The article, which outlines the foundations of dance training in British education, reveals in full Bloomfield's vibrant and scholarly approach to a subject that has long been

very dear to her. As many of those who attended her presentations might recall, in Anne Bloomfield's sound vision, dance education always transcended mere physical abilities to encompass social awareness, creativity and artistic appreciation.

With her investigation into the representation of the British ballet girl, Alexandra Carter investigates the boundaries between fact and fiction in historical writings from a feminist point of view. First presented at the 2003 conference *All about Ballet* Carter's paper was delivered in the form of a dialogue, jointly with Simon Dorling, whose "voice" has been rendered here by using a different font. The dialogue thus bridges traditional historiography with a more creative and approach to making and thinking history.

An equally creative approach to a re-visitation of well-rooted historical beliefs is what characterises Toby Bennet's article, also presented at the 2003 *All About Ballet* event. Bennett looks at issues of tradition and style through a detail analysis of how specific ballet practices have stood the test of time. Indeed, his practitioner's background and knowledge inform constantly the proposed thesis, which opens a vibrant debate.

We hope you will enjoy these materials and, once more, we invite you to submit articles for the forthcoming issues.

The Editorial Board

Une Pionnière en Histoire de la danse, Germaine Prudhommeau 1 août 1923 -12 mai 2007

Françoise Dartois-Lapeyre

Germaine Prudhommeau vient de tirer discrètement sa révérence, après avoir consacré soixante ans de sa vie à l'histoire de la danse et après avoir réussi à lui donner ses lettres de noblesse. Elle nous a quittés soudainement, sur un sourire, après avoir passé une excellente soirée avec ses anciens collègues et amis de l'Opéra : elle a regagné les coulisses pour entrer dans l'histoire. Après un départ soudain, l'émotion fut particulièrement forte lors de la cérémonie religieuse qui réunit une partie de ses fidèles à Charenton, le lundi 21 mai 2007. Ce fut l'occasion de rendre un dernier hommage, particulièrement ému, à l'amie fidèle et au chercheur éminent qui consacra son énergie à l'histoire de cet art méconnu, à sa reconnaissance dans le milieu universitaire et à sa diffusion auprès d'un large public.

Elle était membre fondateur de l'Association des Historiens Européens de la Danse, créée en 1989, et son action y fut décisive et exemplaire, tant par son intensité que par sa régularité. Ainsi, elle joua un rôle déterminant dans l'organisation des colloques tenus à Paris, Louvain (1990), Stockholm (1991), Turin (1993), Barcelone (1994) et Paris (1997)... Sa personnalité chaleureuse et à son parcours exceptionnel méritent d'être évoqués, et je le ferai en privilégiant trois facettes fondamentales de son action.

1- Une historienne érudite et passionnée par les recherches en danse

Germaine passa son enfance et sa jeunesse dans le XII[e] arrondissement. De son père, instituteur qui avait travaillé avec Henri Wallon au laboratoire de psychopédagogie de la rue d'Ulm, elle hérita du goût de la recherche et de l'éducation, entretenu grâce à une grande aptitude à découvrir patiemment, à observer et à écouter. Attentif à l'éducation de sa fille, Maxime Prudhommeau s'était illustré par des écrits consacrés à *L'Enfance anormale* (1949), aux *Enfants déficients intellectuels* (1956), au *Dessin de l'enfant* (1947) et au *Dépistage et prévention des inadaptations scolaires* (1971, réédité en 1975). Cet intellectuel, qui avait en outre publié des articles dans la revue *Enfance* (1961) et dans la revue *Raison* (1956), mit au point un test de dessin, mondialement connu et utilisé dans plusieurs pays. Il fut un modèle pour Germaine, élevée dans un milieu où les livres étaient le support de la réflexion et d'une connaissance qui se voulait universelle. Le *Magazine de l'Éducation*, les Lettres classiques et modernes et l'Histoire – de la préhistoire à l'histoire contemporaine en passant par celle de l'Empire byzantin - tenaient une large place dans la bibliothèque familiale, qui comprenait l'édition intégrale des œuvres de Michelet, mais aussi celle de Jules Verne : l'imagination n'était pas négligée. En faisant de la recherche, en écrivant et en enseignant, Germaine marchait sur les traces paternelles.

Son goût pour la danse lui vint vraisemblablement de sa mère, car Marguerite, également institutrice, accompagnait au piano des cours d'Irène Popard et Germaine y assistait : c'est ainsi qu'elle a découvert l'art

qui devint indispensable à sa vie. Mais pour sa famille, les études primaient ; et comme Germaine était brillante, elle passa avec succès deux BAC, philo et math-élèm en 1942 : après quoi seulement, elle eut le droit de faire de la danse, avec pour professeur Marguerite Bertaux-Aubagna. Elle aurait voulu être danseuse, mais elle n'avait ni la technique, ni même, pour l'époque, le physique, et ses parents ne le souhaitaient pas. Comme elle se débrouillait très honnêtement, elle continua à prendre, pour son plaisir, des cours jusque dans les années 1970, tout en faisant preuve d'une grande boulimie de savoir.

Après un diplôme de psychopédagogie de l'École des Hautes Études (1945) et un diplôme d'étude supérieur de Lettres classiques (1947), elle fut licenciée ès lettres et diplômée de l'École nationale des Langues orientales vivantes, en grec moderne et en russe, et devint attachée de recherche en « esthétique et sciences de l'art » au CNRS, à partir de 1947.

Elle concilia alors son goût pour l'étude des Belles Lettres et sa passion pour la danse en choisissant comme sujet de thèse *La Danse grecque antique,* revisitant un sujet abordé par Louis Séchan en 1930. Elle prit cette décision à l'époque où Serge Lifar, Étoile, maître de ballet et chorégraphe donnait un élan nouveau à la danse à l'Opéra, en proposant une succession de créations qui reçurent un accueil triomphal et en organisant des soirées de ballets hebdomadaires. Maxime Prudhommeau, qui avait abordé le cinéma dans le cadre scolaire et avait publié un article sur « Le cinéma éducatif et l'avenir » pour l'Union française universitaire (1944), suivait de près les travaux de sa fille ; il réalisa même les films d'animation qui

accompagnaient sa thèse, permettant de recomposer le mouvement de la danse antique à partir des poses de différentes figurines des vases et bas-reliefs antiques. Elle soutint brillamment son doctorat d'État à la Sorbonne, le jeudi 30 juin 1955, et le publia en deux superbes volumes aux éditions du CNRS dix ans plus tard. Car cette soutenance fut la première étape d'une carrière brillante de chercheur, qui lui fit gravir tous les échelons du CNRS.

À partir de 1951, elle devint Chargée de Recherche, puis Maître de recherche, de 1962 à 1982, pour terminer Directeur de recherche. Spécialiste reconnue de la danse antique, elle élargit le champ de ses études scientifiques en commençant par les origines les plus lointaines de la danse. Ainsi, la danse aux temps préhistoriques fut un sujet de discussion et d'échanges avec des amis de son père, comme le professeur Edouard Bourdelle, directeur de laboratoire au Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle ; mais les Primitifs retinrent aussi son attention et aucun aspect de l'histoire de cet art ne semblait lui échapper - époque contemporaine comprise - tant ses sujets de prédilection s'étendaient dans le temps et dans l'espace.

Sa curiosité et son ouverture d'esprit sur les diverses approches de la danse - aussi bien historiques qu'anthropologiques et ethnographiques - étaient remarquables et régulièrement entretenues par de nombreux voyages liés à ses recherches. Ses missions d'études autour du monde lui permirent de conjuguer l'approche intellectuelle avec la découverte concrète des danses sur tous les continents.

Intéressée par l'approche philosophique, elle collabora aux travaux pour le *Vocabulaire d'esthétique,*

publié sous la direction d'Étienne Souriau, Membre de l'Institut (PUF,1990), pour lequel elle rédigea en particulier les articles « danse, chorégraphie, ballet, lifarien, opéra-ballet... » Mais elle ne se contentait pas d'écrire, elle éprouvait le besoin de transmettre oralement ses connaissances sur l'art de la danse.

Elle assistait régulièrement aux grands congrès internationaux sur la recherche en danse pour apporter, au plus haut niveau, sa contribution éclairée aux débats d'idées, parfois vifs mais toujours courtois, avec d'autres chercheurs comme Francine Lancelot et Jean-Michel Guilcher. Ainsi, elle était à Londres, en 1991, pour « The Marriage of Music and Dance », puis à l'Athens Symposium sur le thème « Dance and Ancient Greece », avec Barbara Sparti et Régine Astier. Elle était entourée de ses anciennes étudiantes au colloque d'Oeiras au Portugal, consacré aux « Continents in movement, The meeting of Cultures in Dance History », en 1998... Mais elle se dévouait aussi pour transmettre ses connaissances aux plus jeunes.

2- Une enseignante chevronnée en Histoire de la danse

Comme son père, elle avait le talent d'intéresser et de motiver et fut très vite sollicitée par les plus grands pour enseigner sa spécialité. À la demande de Serge Lifar, revenu à l'Opéra après deux ans d'interruption, suite à la Libération, elle inventa et mit en place, à partir de mars 1949, le premier cours d'Histoire de la Danse et d'Étude des Ballets. Elle accomplit régulièrement cette mission d'enseignement, qui lui tenait à cœur, pendant

34 ans - jusqu'en 1983 - à l'École de danse du Théâtre national de l'Opéra de Paris, éveillant les jeunes élèves au répertoire, qu'elle avait soin de toujours resituer dans le contexte de la culture générale.

Avec Geneviève Guillot, remarquable Directrice de la danse à l'Opéra, elle travailla en étroite collaboration à la célèbre *Grammaire de la danse classique,* ornée de 118 illustrations très explicites de G. Bordier. Préfacé par Pierre Gaxotte, qui décela dans la danse classique « une Internationale qui tient », l'ouvrage fut couronné par l'Académie Française en 1969, et devint rapidement une référence internationale : il est toujours très recherché, en particulier à l'étranger.

En 1955, elle était aussi professeur d'Histoire de la Danse à l'École Supérieure d'Études chorégraphiques de Paris, dans laquelle s'était ouvert le premier cursus complet de formation théorique et pratique de professeur de danse classique.

Lorsqu'en octobre 1973, les premiers cours d'Histoire de la Danse furent créés au niveau universitaire pour obtenir le DEUG (BAC+2), ils furent inclus dans l'Unité d'Enseignement et de Recherche d'Arts plastiques et Sciences de l'Art, et c'est Germaine Prudhommeau qui les assura à l'Université Paris I.

C'est dans ce contexte que je pris contact avec Germaine pour venir assister à ses cours, en octobre 1977, car mon sujet de thèse portait sur *La Danse au temps de l'Opéra-Ballet* et il n'existait aucune formation universitaire en danse au niveau du doctorat. À l'époque, son séminaire n'était pas encore reconnu pour la formation au DEA et j'avais fait, en tant qu'ancienne élève de l'École Normale Supérieure de Fontenay-aux-

Roses, une lettre appuyant sa demande pour qu'il soit poursuivi au-delà de la licence : je témoignais qu'il s'agissait, « grâce à son exceptionnelle connaissance de l'histoire de la danse », de combler une lacune dans l'encadrement doctoral. La démarche aboutit, et en octobre 1978, elle animait le premier séminaire universitaire de Maîtrise en Histoire de la danse, puis elle prépara officiellement au Diplôme d'Études Approfondies (toujours inclus dans les Sciences de l'Art).

C'est donc au séminaire de la rue Saint-Charles qu'eut lieu ma première rencontre avec Germaine. Elle fut pour moi doublement importante : d'abord parce que c'était une chance de pouvoir travailler avec l'unique Professeur, spécialiste de l'histoire d'un art auquel peu d'universitaires s'intéressaient ; d'autre part, parce qu'en raison de sa grande intégrité et sincérité, elle créa autour d'elle une équipe soudée de jeunes chercheurs passionnés dont je fis partie. Je fus d'abord surprise à son aspect. Plutôt petite et enveloppée, Germaine arborait un physique à l'opposé du stéréotype de la danseuse classique, et gardait sur le visage et sur le bras gauche quelques cicatrices, séquelles d'un accident domestique au cours duquel elle avait été très gravement ébouillantée étant enfant. Mais elle transformait vite ces quelques traits ingrats en avantage, grâce à un regard limpide et bienveillant, à une extrême simplicité, couplée avec une grande attention portée aux autres, et à une gentillesse qui en faisait une personne très avenante, souriante et diserte, qui savait obtenir de ses étudiants le meilleur d'eux-mêmes, tant ils se sentaient bien auprès d'elle.

À partir de ce jour, et jusqu'en 1982, alors que j'étais devenue professeur agrégée d'Histoire, nommée en province, je revenais sur Paris suivre assidûment, avec ferveur, son séminaire. C'était un lieu d'échanges très novateur et stimulant, fondateur pour les recherches futures, où se nouèrent des amitiés solides et des vocations de chercheurs en danse. Avec Jean Jacquart, mon directeur de thèse, elle encadra avec compétence et bienveillance mon travail de recherche, et contribua ensuite à l'orientation de mes travaux. Elle fut une des premières à associer dans un même séminaire la démarche théorique et pratique et à nous faire sentir, dans notre corps, les présupposés de différents types de danse, occidentales mais aussi asiatiques ou africaines. Spontanément ouverte à la diversité, elle accueillait des étudiants de toutes nationalités et encadrait des thèses sur tous les types de danses. Elle eut l'intuition géniale qu'un mode de pensée pouvait passer par le corps, comme l'écrivit son contemporain, Maurice Béjart, décédé la même année, six mois plus tard.

Sa réputation étant bien établie, Germaine s'avéra incontournable lorsqu'en 1981 fut créé, à Paris IV, un Diplôme d'Université en Danse, aboutissement d'un cursus d'études supérieures de danse (théorique et pratique). Le séminaire préparait au diplôme après soutenance d'un mémoire. Elle professa ces enseignements – qui malheureusement ne lui ont pas survécus - jusqu'en 1988 et fit soutenir une cinquantaine de maîtrises et plus d'une vingtaine de doctorats.

Après avoir rédigé différentes versions de ses cours dactylographiés, elle publia son *Histoire de la danse* (Amphora, 1986), dont le premier tome allait *Des origines à la fin du Moyen Age*, et le second *De la*

Renaissance à la Révolution (1989). Ils furent réédités en 1995 et demeurent précieux pour les étudiants.

La loi du 10 juillet 1989 ayant mis en place le Diplôme d'État de professeur de danse, qui comprend une épreuve d'histoire de la danse, elle contribua à mettre en place l'enseignement qui y préparait dans une dizaine d'établissements, à Paris et en province. Roger Dabert collabora avec elle pour les corrections des examens et tous deux publièrent un article dans l'ouvrage collectif coordonné par Valérie Folliot, consacré aux *Costumes de danse ou la Chair représentée* (Ed. La Recherche en Danse, 1997).

L'engagement de Germaine pour la diffusion de la discipline auprès des jeunes générations rejoignait sa volonté de faire avancer la recherche, c'est pourquoi elle était souvent invitée à donner des conférences et des cours à l'étranger.

3- Une ambassadrice prosélyte et amicale de l'histoire de la danse

Germaine était fidèle en amitié et envoyait régulièrement des courriers, en particulier en fin d'année, à l'occasion des vœux, et en vacances, en cure ou au Tréport, où se trouvait la maison de ses grands-parents, devenue sienne. Notre amitié s'était nouée lorsqu'elle m'avait fait l'honneur, avec Pierre Goubert et Jean Jacquart, d'assister à mon mariage aux Invalides, en janvier 1982 ; elle avait participé à la soirée qui avait suivi au Cercle militaire. Festive et gourmande, elle fut toujours une convive très agréable, qui faisait honneur à

la cuisine – sauf au poisson auquel elle était allergique. La naissance de mon fils avait été saluée par le cadeau d'un énorme et superbe lion en peluche offert, sous son égide, par tous les amis de son séminaire. Dès lors, elle demanda régulièrement des nouvelles du « Petit Prince », Saint-Exupéry ayant inspiré notre faire-part de naissance. Elle-même était très attachée à ses petits-enfants et nous nous entretenions souvent de la vie familiale, sur laquelle pourtant elle ne se repliait jamais.

Au contraire, elle surprenait par sa disponibilité, son dynamisme et sa vitalité dans la vie associative. Elle avait gardé contact avec des amies de Faculté, et même du secondaire, qu'elle retrouvait dans l'Association des anciennes élèves du lycée Hélène Boucher, pour laquelle elle organisait de nombreuses excursions et des conférences ayant pour thème la danse ou différents voyages, comme Le Danemark « Des Vikings à nous » ! Quelle que soit l'occasion de la rencontre, dès son arrivée, elle était toujours très vite entourée, car sa conversation, originale, passionnait en raison de l'étendue de sa culture.

Cette infatigable voyageuse n'oubliait jamais ses amis en route. Quand ils ne pouvaient la suivre, elle revenait avec des souvenirs, comme un moulin à prières du Tibet (que je conserve précieusement) et des papyrus peints d'Égypte.

Douée d'une grande énergie, elle faisait preuve d'un prosélytisme de bon aloi, cherchant à diffuser largement ses connaissances et celles des autres spécialistes en danse, pour faire mieux apprécier un champ de recherche qu'elle ne cessa d'explorer tout au long de sa vie et qu'elle contribua à enrichir. Elle fit des

communications dans les hauts lieux scientifiques, comme à l'Institut d'Esthétique et des Sciences de l'art, pour la Société d'Esthétique, et publia dans plusieurs revues scientifiques : dans la *Revue de l'Age nouveau*, dans le *Bulletin de la Société d'Etudes et de recherches préhistoriques*, dans la *Revue France-Grèce*... Elle fut particulièrement active au sein du conseil de rédaction de *La Recherche en danse*, revue régulièrement alimentée par ses contributions.

Mais elle donnait aussi de très nombreuses conférences et communications pour toucher un public plus large que le milieu universitaire. Elle oeuvrait volontiers à la demande de diverses associations de professeurs, d'amateurs et de professionnels de la danse. Ainsi, Germaine était une conférencière très appréciée du Salon de la danse et elle participait régulièrement aux réunions du Comité national de danse, dont elle était vice-présidente. Pour celui-ci, elle sollicitait de nombreuses personnalités et m'avait demandé de faire une communication, en 1999, sur *Les maîtres de ballet et « la belle dance »*. Ces réunions, qu'elle organisait, étaient suivies d'échanges fort passionnants et instructifs et se terminaient dans la convivialité d'un repas : malgré son diabète et en raison de sa gourmandise, elle faisait, en toutes circonstances, honneur aux nourritures terrestres (en particulier aux pâtisseries !) qui accompagnaient celles de l'esprit.

Elle diffusait largement ses connaissances et n'hésitait pas à écrire dans de nombreuses revues de vulgarisation, comme *Le Journal de la Fédération Française de danse classique et contemporaine* et la revue de l'Opéra, où elle recensa par exemple les «

Créations chorégraphiques » (*Opéra de Paris,* n°22, L'Édition artistique, 1964). Les sujets sur lesquels elle a écrit et communiqué sont donc innombrables : la définition de la danse, l'histoire du ballet, l'évolution de la danse classique, les personnalités (danseurs et chorégraphes), les lieux de l'Opéra... Ils sont trop variés pour être énumérés dans le cadre de cette évocation, mais je citerai quelques-uns des chantiers qu'elle a contribué à ouvrir pour montrer l'ampleur de sa réflexion.

Je commencerai par le facteur spatial et temporel comme composante du mouvement dansé. Dans des articles abondamment illustrés, elle rendit accessible l'approche, développée dans sa thèse, de la recomposition du mouvement : celle d'un saut, par exemple, à partir de céramiques grecques. Elle analysait selon la même méthode les peintures préhistoriques de l'époque magdalénienne et les fresques des danses acrobatiques égyptiennes de Tell el-Amarna, qu'elle mettait en relation avec la quête d'éternité et les rites funéraires.

La question du genre dans les spectacles dansés fut au centre de ses préoccupations. Elle s'intéressa au ballet de cour, à la danse théâtrale du XVIII[e] siècle, au ballet d'action de Noverre[1], et plus intensément encore à la gestuelle du ballet romantique, éclairant par ses analyses deux exemples significatifs : *Giselle*, « l'apothéose du ballet romantique » selon l'expression de Serge Lifar, et *La Sylphide,* dont elle dégagea la

[1] Germaine Prudhommeau, « Les tendances du ballet moderne », in *Revue générale belge,* 15 avril 1956, 92[e] année, ed. AD. Goemaere, Bruxelles, 1956, p. 953-964.

portée symbolique. Elle souligna l'importance du développement de la mimique dans *Coppelia,* puis dans *Soir de Fête*, où elle devint inintelligible, avant de disparaître. Elle distinguait la succession de variations « gratuites » des ballets où l'action était bien intégrée à la danse, comme *Sylvia* (1876) et *Le Chevalier et la Damoiselle* (1941). Elle s'efforça de dater l'apparition de genres nouveaux et vanta la construction originale de ballets, comme le *Palais de Cristal* et *Suite en Blanc* de Serge Lifar, représenté à l'Opéra en 1943.

Elle s'intéressa aussi aux héros qui cristallisent une idée, comme *Oriane et le Prince d'Amour* (1938) et *Joan de Zarussa* (1942), à propos duquel elle disait : ce « n'est pas un homme, c'est un Séducteur ». Elle écrivit sur *Lucifer* (1948), sur *Le Chevalier errant* - nouveau Don Quichotte - sur *Phèdre* (1950) et sur le contenu philosophique de *Mirages*...

Elle vécut les grandes mutations chorégraphiques de la seconde moitié du XX[e] siècle et rendit compte de l'introduction de l'intellectualisme, de la psychologie et de la psychanalyse dans le ballet, et elle suivit attentivement les évolutions techniques comme l'introduction de la sixième et de la septième position par Serge Lifar.

Elle fut une des premières à écrire sur « Le Corps humain, matériau du danseur » pour les *Cahiers de Poïétique*, sous la direction de L. Brion-Guerry, dès 1976, et elle participa au volume coordonné par Mireille Arguel, en 1987, intitulé *Corps, espace, temps*[2], ouvrant

[2] Germaine Prudhommeau, « La substitution du facteur spatial au facteur temporel dans la figuration des mouvements du corps », dans

un champ de recherche qui s'est considérablement élargi, comme le montre la remarquable *Histoire du corps* publié récemment par Alain Corbin (Seuil, 2005).

Certes, ses multiples centres d'intérêt ne lui permirent pas toujours d'approfondir avec rigueur tous ces thèmes, mais par sa curiosité, toujours à l'affût, elle a ouvert de nombreuses pistes de recherche, que d'autres continuent à explorer aujourd'hui, en France et à l'étranger. Ainsi, la problématique d'Eugénia Roucher, dans sa thèse, semble répondre comme en écho à ses premières interrogations sur le vocabulaire de la danse classique et le récent colloque sur Marie Sallé, qui s'est tenu à Nantes, en juin 2007, apparaît comme un prolongement de l'article qu'elle avait écrit, en 1986, sur « Marie Sallé et Anne Camargo » pour la revue *Danser*.

Germaine Prudhommeau bénéficie d'une grande notoriété à l'étranger, grâce à la traduction de ses ouvrages en anglais, en espagnol, en grec et en coréen, mais aussi en raison des cours qu'elle fut invitée à donner dans de nombreux établissements d'études supérieures : à Mudra de Bruxelles, au Ballet Royal Flamand d'Anvers, à la School of Performing Arts de New York, en Corée du Sud... Elle avait un attachement et une affection toute particulière pour l'École Supérieure des Hautes Études chorégraphiques du Caire, où elle était régulièrement conviée par Maya Sélim, Étoile puis directrice de la danse à l'Opéra, qui avait soutenu sous sa direction, à Paris, une thèse mettant en évidence les

Corps, espace, temps, Actes du Congrès international, Marly le Roi, 24, 25, 26, 27 septembre 1985, coordonnatrice Mireille Arguel, Editions, Revue S.T.A.P.S., Paris, 1987, p. 124-130.

variations de styles selon les différentes écoles de danse classique : française, russe et américaine.

À la mort de Germaine sont parvenus des témoignages d'Angleterre, des Etats-Unis, du Canada, de Russie et d'Italie, de Grèce et d'Égypte, où elle avait su, au fil des colloques internationaux, faire partager sa passion à de nombreux amis et multiplier des échanges fructueux avec d'autres spécialistes.

Conclusion

Pour avoir fait progresser les connaissances en histoire de la danse, pour avoir permis une meilleure compréhension et une plus large diffusion de la danse auprès du public, elle fut honorée par les distinctions de Chevalier de l'Ordre des Palmes académiques et élevée au grade d'Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. Elle eut la satisfaction de voir reconnu officiellement l'importance de son travail de recherche et la qualité de son enseignement. Mais elle avait tant fait pour la reconnaissance de l'Histoire de la Danse au niveau universitaire et international, qu'elle regretta amèrement la suppression de ces enseignements à la Sorbonne. Il serait souhaitable que sa succession soit assurée pour maintenir l'élan qu'elle a su impulser à l'Histoire de la Danse et il semblerait légitime qu'un colloque international lui soit consacré pour synthétiser ses apports à une discipline qui lui doit en grande partie son essor spectaculaire.

Je m'associe donc à Jacqueline Robinson, qui l'évoque ainsi dans *L'Aventure de la danse moderne* : « Un puits de science que cette historienne à

l'enthousiasme communicatif ! » Car il fallait une personnalité et une intellectuelle de cette trempe pour briser les *a priori* relatifs à un art resté si longtemps en marge des études universitaires.

PAST INSPIRATIONS AND FUTURE PRACTICES - *ways forward teaching historical dance in the primary school*

Anne Bloomfield

Past Inspirations and Future Practices, is a personal vision that considers ways forward in teaching historical dance to primary school children by focusing on the relevance of dance history in nurturing their creative, interpretative and expressive abilities. It asserts that children's historical understanding of dance influences their own choreographic abilities in creative contexts, social awareness and understanding of style, form and presentation. It demonstrates that current legislation, in the form of the National Curriculum for England, if effectively implemented, can facilitate methods that are based on an understanding of a teaching and learning framework based on distinctive knowledge areas in dance. This framework helps to define and determine the role and place of dance within the structure of the primary school curriculum.

Two major sources, one historically based the other using a contemporary case study, are used as reference points supporting a pragmatic implementation of curriculum content and teaching method. The former, constituting what can be termed, the educational heritage of dance, is based on archival evidence and published sources that reveal the achievements of previous generations of children, the latter, as contemporary evidence, is based on an exemplar

research model that has involved over nine thousand pupils who participated in a heritage arts project, *History in Action at Clifton Hall.* In both instances, it reveals how dances of previous ages inspired the momentary lived experiences of subsequent generations of school children through performances and presentations.

Current Legislation

The Foreword statement of National Curriculum 2000[1] provided jointly by the Secretary of State for Education, The Rt. Hon. David Blunkett, and the Chairman of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, Sir William Stubbs, introduces the National Curriculum as being at the heart of government policies to raise standards.

> It sets out a clear, full and statutory entitlement to learning for all pupils. It determines the content of what will be taught, and sets attainment targets for learning. It also determines how performance will be assessed and reported. An effective National Curriculum therefore gives teachers, pupils, parents, employers and their wider community a clear and shared understanding of the skills and knowledge that young people will gain at school. It allows schools to met the individual learning needs of pupils and to develop a distinctive character and ethos

[1] Department for Education and Employment, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority The National Curriculum Handbook for primary teachers in England www.nc.uk.net

> rooted in their local communities. And it provides a framework within which all partners in education can support young people on the road to further learning.
>
> Getting the National Curriculum right presents difficult choices and balances. It must be robust enough to define and defend the core of knowledge and cultural experience which is the entitlement of every pupil, and at the same time flexible enough to give teachers the scope to build their teaching around it in ways which will enhance its delivery to their pupils.
>
> The focus of this National Curriculum, together with the wider school curriculum, is therefore to ensure that pupils develop from an early age the essential literacy and numeracy skills they need to learn; to provide them with a guaranteed, full and rounded entitlement to learning; to foster their creativity; and to give teachers discretion to find the best ways to inspire in their pupils a joy and commitment to learning that will last a lifetime.

The National Curriculum includes a statement on inclusion as the entitlement to learning for all pupils irrespective of what their individual needs and the potential barriers to their learning may be. Equality of opportunity, commitment to a values system, '... ourselves our families and other relationships, the wider

groups to which we belong, the diversity in our society and the environment in which we live'. The main thrust of this Paper is to argue that within this current ethos there is a way forward for the inclusion of the historical aspect of dance for primary school children in England.

Identifying a place for dance history within the English National Curriculum

Published as a handbook for primary teachers in England, The National Curriculum 2000 provides details of teaching requirements for each curriculum subject at two Key Stages. There are three core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science) and seven foundation subjects, Design and technology, Information and communication technology, History, Geography, Art and design, Music, Physical education at both Key Stages. Key Stage I is for children aged between 5-6 years and Key Stage 2 is for children aged 7-11 years. Dance is contained within the programme for Physical Education, but from within the programmes for Music, History, Art and English support for the study of dance history can be found. Additionally, the inclusion of the study of historical dance would provide an invaluable contribution in meeting the requirements of personal, social and health education, and citizenship, especially in terms of its sociological and cultural content and the bearing this has on the pluralist nature of contemporary society.

The National Curriculum has two major aims of providing opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. Each subject has

been given a common structure and a common design with two basic requirements within the programmes of study, one based on knowledge, skills and understanding of a specific subject, the other its breadth of study through contextual and experiential engagement. An examination of the Physical education programme, within which dance is placed, at both Key Stages I and 2 requires that children acquire knowledge, skills and understanding through:-

Acquiring and developing skills
Selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas
Evaluating and improving performance
Knowledge and understanding of fitness and health

The breadth of study includes dance, games and gymnastics. In dance, pupils should be taught to:-

a) use movement imaginatively, responding to stimuli, including music, and performing basic skills.
b) change the rhythm, speed, level and direction of their movements
c) create and perform dances using simple movement patterns, including those from different times and cultures
d) express and communicate ideas and feelings

at Key Stage 2 breadth of study is brought about through the five areas of activity dance, games, and gymnastics, and two areas from swimming, athletics and outdoor and

adventurous activities. In dance pupils should be taught to:-

a) create and perform dances using a range of movement patterns, including those from different times, places and cultures
b) respond to a range of stimuli and accompaniment.

It is evident that any interpretation of the requirements facilities the performance of both creative and traditional dance forms. However, in order to exploit fully the use of time and resources, primary school teachers, with some guidance, can be encouraged to interpret the legislated requirements of the National Curriculum 2000 in an integrated mode, and accordingly it is preferable to teach dance, especially the historical aspects, in collaboration with other subject areas. The following paradigmatic mode l based on these requirements is recommended.

The teaching and learning framework for dance within an integrated mode

A conceptual understanding of the teaching and learning framework for the arts as an interpretation of the Curriculum 2000, as published in Teaching Integrated Arts in the Primary School, recognises distinctive and interrelated areas of study in each major art form - dance drama, music and visual art[2] - which, when sensitively interpreted, will facilitate the teaching of dance history since the teaching and learning principles are based on

[2] Bloomfield, A. with Childs, J. Teaching Integrated Arts in the Primary School. (London: David Fulton, 2000)

the ways in which children acquire knowledge, skills and understanding of the arts through four types of engagement:

firstly, art-making as a process
secondly, realising through art by producing an artifact
thirdly, critical responses to the arts as process and product
fourthly, contextual understanding of art.

The richness of an arts education is provided when children acquire knowledge and understanding through these four recognised routes since the understanding of one area enhances the understanding of another, namely:-

participation - children's knowledge of how to paint, dance, write, and make music.
repertoire - children's knowledge through experience and collecting their work
critical skills - children' s knowledge of the qualities and special nature of the arts
contextual skills - children' s knowledge of the historical, social, and cultural worlds that inform their work.

Each of the above areas are interrelated in some way or other, and each adds to the children's holistic understanding of the arts.

Defining the Arts Curriculum as a model for the new millennium, dance, and indeed other areas of the curriculum can more readily be understood when taught

in a mutually supportive manner through identifying and integrated common traits. According a central and pivotal role for dance, drama, music and visual art captures children's natural enthusiasm for the arts as major and valid sources of knowledge. If nurtured from the time children commence school their motivation and commitment can be maintained throughout their primary years. Dance is a major and vital element in this framework. Teaching approaches and learning experiences advocated incorporate independent linear programmes of study in each arts discipline and subsequently extended to include the exciting possibilities of exploring their integrative nature. In the case of dance history in the European tradition, this would embrace aspects of music education through learning about appropriate dance music, its period and style.

Unity of teaching and learning occurs because of the vibrant interaction of arts disciplines which are strengthened when collaboration and mutual support for, and from, other curriculum subjects takes place. Recognising this framework provides the opportunity for ensuring that dance history is introduced to young children and developed through the primary years. The understanding of the roots of the arts, as cultural forms, recognises the links between creativity and traditional arts from around the world, past and present and also represents how children are taught to reflect upon their own work, and that of others, as a natural outcome of rich experiences.

Dance, because of children's innate kinaesthetic awareness through which they explore and relate to

themselves and each other, is a major vehicle through which understanding of the other art forms in the primary curriculum, occurs. Similarly, it must be acknowledged that experiences in dance both support and invigorate other fields of learning. Performing a traditional dance is acquiring a form of knowledge in its own right that can often lead into a wider and deeper study of a particular period or 'patch' of history, supplemented by visual and written resources at hand within the classroom.

Specific focus on dance, within the suggested teaching and learning framework, means that children's practical knowledge of dance is acquired through participation through performance; their accumulative knowledge of dances they can perform is revealed through their own dance repertoire; their critical skills, reflecting knowledge of the qualities and special nature of dance, as experienced through participating and observing dances, is expressed through discussion and writing; while their knowledge of the historical, social, and cultural worlds that have inspired or informed their understanding of dance, reflects their contextual understanding, again expressed through discussion and writing. Some further elaboration of each of these knowledge areas will illustrate this pedagogical theory.

Participation in dance refers to children's practical knowledge of dance through engaging in practical performance that includes traditional and historical dance forms. Healthy physical growth of children facilitated through dance includes intellectual, emotional and social development. Dance programmes in school can be designed to stimulate children's consciousness of themselves, through emphasising the lived experience

through which they perceive and understand the world around them. It enables them to relate and communicate with each other in a way that is unique to dance. This can be achieved through engagement in creative and traditional dance forms. Dance is experienced through awareness of kinaesthetic flow patterns, the awakening and development of skills through control, coordination, and above all through significance and meaning of movement not only in a creative and expressive way, but al so in an interpretative way, of experiencing for the first time steps, gestures and simple dances that are often timeless.

Children's first encounter with dance in western society is often through singing games and spontaneous rhythmical play actions, acquired through family, nursery and media resources. In this way the comprehension, experience and transmission of culture takes place. Children's practical knowledge of dance through participation is based on their two roles - as creators and as performers, both of which are mutually supporting. Working creatively in dance means that children are putting their own ideas and feelings into a recognisable artistic form based on a process that stems from the natural, spontaneous movement actions. The body, as the instrument through which movement is expressed, is trained to perform the types of movement required to express a certain idea or to convey a particular mood. Children, through regular dance lessons each week, become familiar with the semantic structure of dance and are soon able to convey their thoughts and feelings, growing out of simple movement correlates and basic steps and figures at Key Stage 1 and developing in complexity at Key Stage 2.

Dance skills that children learn are based on the conceptual understanding and performance of natural actions, gestures and steps determined by spatial, dynamic and rhythmical structures. This provides a conceptual tool of analysis alongside the practical dance skills. To attain their best personal aesthetic and artistic standard requires that children acquire body discipline and management. Regular lessons each week enables children's dance skills to develop, as for example through body deportment, transference of weight when stepping, coordination and control, body management, dexterity of footwork, and careful control of arm and hand movements. Creative aspects of dance composition, for example, can take their inspiration from traditional dance music, or the choreographic structures of existing dances. Variations and creative responses to traditional figures and steps can inform creative work.

Repertoire of dance, including traditional and historical dance forms, infers that progression in learning is marked by the children's ability to remember and perform dances. The dance experience that children are offered in school should be something more than either technical practice or spontaneous, expressive movements. The ideal picture of dance over the school year would permit each class to work towards compiling its own repertoire of dances. These will reflect the children's ability to perform dances of different genres ranging from pure dance form, lyrical dances, dance drama, masked dance, and traditional dance forms. Their own dances will each have reference points from the world of dance, and creative work can be informed through viewing videos, working with visiting professional artists, or a visit to see a dance company perform. Each class will have

its own repertoire of historical dances performed on a regular basis throughout the year. Resources for English folk dances, country dances and early dance forms are readily available, while special workshops in Indian dance and Afro-Caribbean dance offered by community dance artists, and regional arts centres enhances their experiences. Professional artists working with children can only serve to enhance and stimulate the cultural ethos of the primary school.

Critical skills of dance, including appreciation of traditional and historical dance forms, implies that children develop analytical powers in order to monitor their own performance and that of others. In this case understanding self accomplishment through doing, and that of others through observing, is strengthened when discussed with the class teacher and the peer group. Immediate discussion following on from dance performance in the hall can be extended within the quiet of the classroom, and linked with literacy development. Observing each other's work and watching a professional company which offers special programmes for young audiences, or viewing television and video programmes all serves to develop children's powers of criticism. Discourse in the classroom is constructed from a terminology of movement which teachers and children need to understand and use. The metalanguage of dance, which describes the action and meaning of dance through verbal and written means, will be based on the terminology of dance as it relates to its elemental analysis, which are the motion factors of time, (indicating the rhythmic nature of movements), energy or weight, (indicating the muscular dynamics in movements), space (indicating the pattern of movements expressed by the

limbs of the body, and of the changing configurations of dancers in the performing space, and flow (indicating the fluency or constraint of movements). Children can then incorporate this vocabulary to discuss the patterns and figures of traditional dances, how they compare and contrast and how they can be used as a basis for their own creativity, perhaps using computer graphics and symbol systems to record their work.

Contextual understanding of dance, including traditional and historical dance forms is acquired through appropriate use of resources. The metalanguage acquired and applied in the practical dance lessons and open class discussion in the hall is developed as discussion in the quiet area and in the written form, which can be effectively linked with literacy sessions. There is now a growing library of dance books suitable for children to refer to, along with magazines and other materials which will encourage reading and writing. Photographs, video and information technology, and recordings of ballet music also provide a rich cultural resource for the classroom or school library and information point. Teachers should be encouraged and supported financially to work with local companies since watching a live performance of dance is an enchanting and unique aesthetic experience for most children and one that happens too infrequently. Most major dance companies have education officers and events for children are frequently arranged. Encouraging and supporting teachers to make links in this way is strongly advocated. Touring companies from abroad also present day time performances and workshops in schools.

The case for the teaching and learning of dance history in the Primary school has been presented semantically and philosophically using a paradigmatic arts framework as a teaching and learning framework. Historically, there is also a rich educational heritage that justifies its inclusion.

Past Inspirations

Any teacher entering the primary school is part of a tradition of education for the young child, and to teach dance is to be part of that tradition also. This section focuses on major landmarks to show that past, present and future of dance is comprehended as a continuum and that the history of dance is seen to be a living history that is dependent on individual contribution. From a sociological perspective in western society, children have been taught dance, either as a community tradition when skills have been passed on from one generation to another, or through expert tuition given by private dancing masters. Historical evidence supports this, often in the form of account books, as for example, the extracts from George Medley's Accounts showing expenditure for dancing lessons in 1555 for Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton Hall, Nottingham. Mr. Horrsseley taught the young Francis to play the virginalles, Richard Bramley taught him to sing, Richard Thaxted taught him to play and to sing, but the dancing master is anonymous, and the entry simply reads:-

> And to one that taught hym to daunce at double tymeijs vid[3]

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries children continued to receive private tuition, either in their own homes or at private academies and boarding schools. Educational innovation for children in schools, in which dance has played an important role, can be traced to the methods promoted by Robert Owen (1771-1858) and Samuel Wilderspin (1792-1866).

Robert Owen's own philosophy of life necessarily shaped the educational pattern of the curriculum in the school that he founded in New Lanark, Scotland. His humanitarian beliefs necessitated the provision of a system that was self-fulfilling. He valued dancing for the pleasure and healthful benefits that it provided. In A New View of Society (1813) Owen set out his plans for an education that would insure health, strength and vigour of body, believing that the happiness of man was built upon the foundations of a healthy body and contented mind. His methods were based on the individual's natural responses to a stimulating and meaningfully structured environment.

> The infants and young children besides being instructed by sensible signs - the things themselves, or models or paintings - and by familiar conversation, were from two years and upwards daily taught dancing and singing, and the parents were encouraged

[3] Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Middleton preserved at Wollaton Hall, Nottingham. (London: HMSO 1911, pages 165,389)

> to come and see children at any of their lessons or physical exercises.[4]

In the playground children danced and sang to the tunes of the fife-playing teacher – James Buchanan or in the large upper room of the Institution for the Formation of Character which was fitted out with a gallery used for an orchestra. Here they were taught the fashionable social dances of the day by professional dancing masters. The children acquired an extensive repertoire of dances including the Scotch reels, country dances and quadrilles. The scene is described by H MacNab Grey:-

> We then went and stood in a gallery in the room where the singers had been, and saw below us a professional man from Edinburgh, teaching four barefooted girls, and four boys, the different steps, bows, curtseys and dancing. It was delightful to see the gracefulness and ease with which these rustic sons and daughters of the working classes made the obeisant compliment, or tripped on the light fantastic toe. They have two violin players, who were also professional men.[5]

Robert Owen, visited the Swiss educator Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), 1818. He found that Pestalozzi's method stressed the importance of discovery learning and active involvement based on a broad curriculum.

[4] Grey MacNab, H. 'The New Views of Mr Owen of New Lanark Impartially Considered' The New Moral World 1836 No 86
[5] Ibid.

Pestalozzian principles influenced Samuel Wilderspin when he established a model infants' school at Spitalfields, London and subsequently in his work as travelling missionary for the Infant School Society. As he toured the country he gave demonstration lessons that included singing and dancing.

The implementation of dance in the curriculum of state schools occurred towards the end of the nineteenth century following the passing of the Parliamentary Acts of 1870, 1876 and 1880 that effectively brought about compulsory education. Following an initiative of the London School Board the Swedish system was introduced into schools and the personal entrepreneur spirit of Madame Martina Bergman-Osterberg (1849-1915) resulted in the foundation of the first women's college of physical education, the establishment of a philosophy for the teaching of physical education which included dance as an important and central element. She created a body of teachers and advisers who were able to establish a national network. Other colleges were founded and aided in the dissemination of, and development of knowledge and method in the teaching of aspects of dance within physical education. Musical drill was popular at the turn of the century and children were taught complex choreographic configurations, albeit in a formal, highly disciplined manner. Syllabuses in Physical Education were introduced by the Board of Education for implementation in the public elementary schools that advocated free movements and dancing steps and which also recognised the need for emotional and aesthetic experiences. The 1909 syllabus states:-

> Dancing steps add very greatly to the interest and recreative effect of the lesson, the movements are less methodical and exact and are more natural; if suitably chosen they appeal strongly to the imagination and act as a decided mental and physical stimulus and exhilarate in a wholesome manner both body and mind.[6]

Dancing steps were implemented in the maypole dances that became popular in the schools, based on the folkloristic celebration of the decorated maypole, when the colourful ribbons, through circular convolutions and weaving created a spatial phenomenon of intricate, vibrant tracery. As dance became established in the curriculum, its role began to change, especially as people became conscious of its place in the national heritage. The interest in the revival of English folk dances commenced during the first part of the century and reflected an earlier European pattern when conscious efforts were made to collect and notate folk dance forms. Cecil Sharp (1859-1924) instigated the work in England and gained official support for its implementation into the schools. He acquired a repertoire of over one hundred morris and sword dances and a collection of country dances, the latter material being more suited to younger children. Sharp published the dances in The Country Dance Book in six parts between 1909 and 1922, The Morris Book which appeared in five parts between 1907 and 1913, and The Sword Dances of Northern England in three parts

[6] Board of Education The Syllabus of Physical Exercises for Public Elementary Schools (London: 1909) Page 152.

between 1911 and 1913. Four editions of The Country Dance Book included reconstructions of the original Playford dances, and one contained eighteen traditional dances that had been collected in English villages. Children throughout the country became adept at performing such dances as 'Brighton Camp', 'The Butterfly', 'Hunt the Squirrel' and 'Pop goes the Weasel'. After examining the early editions of The Dancing Master in the British Museum he eventually published one hundred and fifty eight dances, working from the structural, choreographic form rather than the steps and then bringing in the style.

Artistically the children benefited from the wide range of styles, from the invigorating morris dances to the more refined examples of the Playford dances, and experienced longways sets, square sets and circular forms. The English Folk Dance Society was founded in 1911 and became the authoritative organisation for the promotion of folk dancing which was also introduced into many Teacher Training College courses. Mary Neal (1860-1944) whose approach contrasted to that of Sharp's for its emphasis on a living tradition through natural development, was also actively involved through her work with the Esperance Guild and associated publications. Miss Nellie Chaplin and Miss Alice Cowper-Coles devoted their energies to the reconstruction, publication, and demonstration of the court dances. The national dances of other European countries were also popular in schools. Mary Hankinson (1868-1952) wrote and published handbooks for teachers, and C. Crompton Ward's The Folk Dance Book (1915) included a wide choice of national dances suitable for elementary school children.

In 1919 the Board of Education issued a revised syllabus of Physical Education which consolidated the dance teaching methods that were being used in the schools and which also advocated natural movements that stimulated the mind through imaginative responses. A new movement introduced modern dance teaching into schools and colleges thereby developing the tradition of aesthetic gymnastics and free movement exercises that had been developing in both Europe and America. Rhythm and naturalism provided a fundamental theoretical base for a number of modern dance systems that were essentially neoclassical or quasi-classical in nature. Unlike the social dance forms that reflected the styles of costume, deportment, manners and styles, through the emphasis on carriage, gesture and intricate foot work, the new dance reflected the growing liberation of the body, dress reform and the emancipation of women. It was the forerunner of Laban Art of Movement, whose movement theories and principles inform current practice.

The heritage of dance in primary education is a rich inspirational force for future development. It endorses the importance of dance for the children, and of the important role that children have played in keeping dance alive. Importantly, it reveals that Primary school teachers have in the past, been able to teach traditional dance forms successfully.

Future Practices

It is proposed that future practices in teaching dance history will follow the teaching and learning framework for the arts, as previously expounded, thereby providing

opportunities for both curriculum strength and innovation. Regular dance lessons in school can be enriched through use of heritage sites and specialist expertise. In order to illustrate ways through which primary school children can understand about dance history specific reference to a heritage arts project entitled *History in Action at Clifton Hall* will be used as a case study and reference point for the proposals for future practice. Once the ancestral home of the Clifton family with a history extending from Norman times, Clifton Hall provided the main historical stimulus for an innovative arts project involving nearly ten thousand primary school children. Its architectural form and previous use as a home, along with its role as the focal point of a landed estate and village, made it a cultural symbol that was pivotal to a number of interpretative and creative activities that were undertaken by children on school visits over a period of ten years.[7]

First launched in May, 1988, and officially opened in November, 1989, children aged between four and eleven years participated in the specially designed programmes that focused on childhood life in four historical periods, the Victorian, (19th century), the Georgian (18th century) the Carolean (17th century), and the mediaeval period. Each related to architectural form and aspects of family history for those periods. Two major aims underpinning the programmes related to the acquisition of historical understanding through the arts on the one hand and the acquisition of artistic understanding through history on

[7] Initiated and directed by Anne Bloomfield, during the period when Clifton Hall was the administrative and teaching base of the Department of Primary Education, The Nottingham Trent University.

the other. A knowledge of dance history was implicit in this overall design, since the acquisition of historical understanding through the arts inferred that by utilising a Grade 1 heritage environment children acquired knowledge of specific periods of the past through performing reconstructed dances, performing and listening to music, and enacting dramatic scenarios within relevant locations. The project created a working environment that validated the relationship of history and arts by interpreting source materials, whether dance scripts or musical scores authentically and using historical artifacts and costumes effectively. Conversely, the acquisition of artistic understanding through history came about by utilising specific locations within Clifton Hall which provided images of the past through the arts in order to help children gain a sense of historical time in terms of dance, music, drama, visual art and architecture. It drew upon the children's artistic responses in a manner that was meaningful and relevant to the present by encouraging creative growth and innovation through additional work undertaken in school. By providing opportunity for engagement in the artistic processes of creation, presentation, response and critical evaluation, arising from the stimulus of the heritage site, the project intended stimulating the interaction and rebound that each art form has upon the other at different stages within an aesthetic field.

The successful implementation of the above aims was achieved through the knowledge of convention and inherited traditions that arose from the activities on the visits which were linked with national curriculum requirements in history, visual art, drama, music and dance. The ethnographical interpretation of the site

focused on an inter-cultural celebration of the arts and meant that children's own work was experienced in relation to received cultural traditions in which individual creativity was mapped out in relation to a world order.

The mediaeval period took inspiration from the age of Christian Chivalry, a way of life that was based on clearly defined principles and styles of conduct as contained in the Romances that were preserved in the libraries of various monasteries and cathedrals. The Alexander Romance is an example of an Anglo-Flemish manuscript written around 1340 which has pictorial examples of dancing, singing and disguising and is used as an educational resource that provides evidence of the varied cultural activities pursued at this time. The feasts and celebrations held in the mediaeval halls throughout the country would have reflected those of the courts of Europe, many of which were visited by either the Troubadours, from the south, or the Trouveres, from the north. Artistic activities included in a programme of study for this period focused on the education of the children with particular emphasis on the page. A party of children from a local school had studied the early ballad of the legendary hero, Robin Hood. They took part in a dance-drama workshop and performed specific dances, especially the serpentine dances. Linear dances, like the farandole, and circle dances such as the carole utilise the choreographic forms from which the repertoire of children's singing games and dances has evolved. The Pages' Hall and Great Chamber at Clifton Hall became the venues for seventeenth century programme set within the context of a scenario based on the visit of King Charles I to Clifton Hall around 1632 during the time of Sir Gervase 'the Great' (1587-1666), who was noted for

his courtesy, prosperity, generosity and charity. He entertained all from the king to the poorest beggar. The children, under the supervision of student teachers, teachers and parent helpers engaged in a variety of visual art experiences including observational drawing, portraiture, court handwriting, the making of pomanders and clay modelling based on architectural decoration. Dancing, acting and poetry were brought together through the masque. John Milton's *Comus,* first performed in 1634 provided the inspiration for a children's workshop. A simple but mystical narrative, specially written as part of the programme, was expressed through mime and movement interspersed with selected and appropriate extracts of Milton's verse, percussion accompaniment and contemporary music. The original masque included both court and country dances and so the happy ending was subsequently celebrated by all the children performing the dances they had learned.

The programme for the Georgian period included drama role play, art work based on the neoclassical decor of the Octagon Hall and the Red Room, and dances as experienced by children at special Georgian balls. The minuet as a court dance was highly stylised and formal so the qualities of the dance, rather than the detail, were taught to children and they learned the formal patterns through the identification of the designs they perceived in the rooms in which they danced. Acting, through drama role-play, was set during the life time of the 6th baronet, Sir Gervase Clifton, his wife, Lady Frances Clifton and their sons, Robert, Arthur, Juckes and daughter Frances. Characters were taken from real life, including the authentic names of three of the servants, Sarah Eason,

Elizabeth Barnsdale and Mary White with the addition of guests who gather for a children's birthday ball. The various scenarios of the domestic drama of this period, which the children and student teachers devised, were sometimes linked to the preparations for travel, and included rides in the specially made sedan chair. Children were taught how to interpret historical materials through reference to a collection of domestic artifacts and used account books and inventories which gave insight into the life of the family. Costs for coach journeys, hire of horses, turnpike charges and the details of the resting places, as well as accounts from shopping excursions in London all helped history to be brought alive.

The Victorian programme focused on aspects of life at Clifton Hall one hundred years ago. The venues used were a restored Victorian kitchen, nursery and the large Octagon Hall, which Sir Hervey Juckes Lloyd Bruce and his family, who inherited from the Cliftons, used for their soirees and parties. The Clifton children were expected to entertain family guests, so by referring to more general sources, a programme was created in which children enacted scenes from the Victorian period and the dances they were taught epitomised the fashion of one hundred years ago. *The Schottishe, Military Two-Step,* and variations on circle dances which were interspersed with traditional games as part of the birthday celebrations of the twin boys, Hervey and Percy Bruce. Publications and archival materials relating to dance and physical training, when musical drills and vocal marching were actively encouraged, were the main reference points. The kitchen was equipped with antique or reproductive items used as the props for drama, so

that food preparation, washing, ironing and cleaning activities were undertaken within the context of dramatic roleplay. This was adapted according to the age and experience of the children making a visit. An outline scenario was presented to the children, explaining that the twin boys, Hervey and Percy, who lived at Clifton Hall, were having a birthday party and that they had a number of their school friends down from Eton to stay with them as well as other house guests. Servants were frantically engaged on last minute cleaning of the guest rooms for the young visitors and labouring in the kitchen preparing food. Children acted out being guests or household staff and, with the help of the student teachers, engaged in interactive dialogue and a wide range of domestic tasks.

History in Action at Clifton Hall developed into a progressive working exemplar of an integrative aesthetic experience that reflected the holistic idealism of Schiller and, in recognising the embodiment of knowledge through the artistic experience and in the nature of the artifact, Kantian theory. Pedagogical principles upon which the programmes were based were pragmatic. John Dewey (1859-1952) believed that the arts and history should be taught through active experience. In so doing, this type of engagement, demanding intellectual and practical participation, allowed children to experience at their own subjective level the issues and the social conditions of the past. The nature and meaning of active subjective engagement, based on historical artifacts, archives and locations demonstrated a new significance of the past which, through imaginative recreation resulted in 'the lived moment' which is brought about through linking or conjoining the past with the

present. This is particularly evident in the performance of a piece of music or dance. It also occurs when children observe and create their own artifacts arising, whether through drawing, printing or clay, from their investigative skills, and it is present in the form of dramatic improvisation through role-play and narrative and play script. R.G. Collingwood, writing on history as re-enactment of past experience stated that

> a reflective activity is one in which we know what it is that we are trying to do, so that when it is done we know that it is done by seeing that it has conformed to the standard or criterion which was our initial conception of it. It is therefore an act which we are enabled to perform by knowing in advance how to perform it.[8]

Recommendations

There are close links between history and the arts, since each art area has its own historical context which children can experience through critical understanding as well as by bringing the past alive by performing extracts from plays, musical pieces and dances. The creative use of the arts can be used as means of investigating the past, whether through dramatic role play and the discussion of issues, or by developing key points of an art form by encouraging children to respond through contemporary idioms. For example, looking at early

[8] Collingwood, R.G. History as Re-enactment of Past Experience in Gardiner, P. (Ed.) Theories of History (New York: The Free Press, 1959) Page 260.

musical or dance forms and responding creatively, or by studying Tudor portraiture and producing portraits of other children in the class using different materials and media and by avoiding copying existing works.

Dance and the sister arts enhance children's understanding of historical time and how change impacts upon lifestyle. They represent the changing world of the past, they document the changing fashions of music, dance, theatre, architecture, furniture, literature. By making references to past styles in their own lives present day children can be taught how to comprehend the importance of the arts as chronicling and commenting upon the passing of time. Engaging in traditional singing games and dances are relevant and as much part of the life of the present day child as of the children of yesteryear. Through historical reference, therefore, the arts can help children to grasp the concept of change and times gone by. Role play, use of costumes and historical or reproduction artifacts enable children to understand and express such changes. Firstly, through reference to family and local community and then leading to the studies of the more distant past of British and selected world history as required as part of the National Curriculum studies in history.

Historical understanding through enactment and visual representation relates to the effective interpretation of resources and evidence found in numerous locations pertaining to various forms of evidence, whether musical scores, dance scores, drama scripts, paintings, pictures, sculptures, poetry, other documents - letters, diaries, monetary accounts, printed information and electronic sources. When children perform traditional dances or

music, and learn extracts of plays from the past, especially Shakespearian drama, they are communicating what they know about the arts and history. Historical knowledge as part of heritage education entails visiting museums, galleries and sites which will inspire the teacher to provide interpretative and creative learning experiences for the children. The nucleus of learning in historical dance that relates realistically, yet with aspiration, to other areas of the primary school curriculum for children from the ages of five to eleven years will embrace major topics of dance study as outlined below.

Adaptation of known dances and performance of:-

the mediaeval period (pre 16th century)
Playford dances (17th -18th century)
English country dances (18th century)
Victorian dances (19th century)
English folk dances

Familiar - with a range of dance figures including longways, and square sets, circle dances and partner dances. Basic steps - walk, skip, gallop, two-step and waltz.

Familiar - with creative and expressive aspects of style, choreography, deportment, rhythm expression, musical interpretation, relationship with partner and group, precision and accuracy of movement, development of movement memory, sense of period style - according to children's age and ability.

Performance - in a range of venues to include school hall, classroom, studio. playground, heritage site whether houses, museums, boats, art galleries, theatres etc.,

Resources - developed through partnership between schools and heritage providers, tapping into funding with links with charities and industry. Costume experiences, use of ICT and publications, children's books, musical experiences through workshops.

This strategy shows how the historical experience is also part of the overall creative and expressive experience, and suggests a wide use of resources and venues where children can perform dances in a special way. There is a wide choice of materials within the programme of study at Key Stage 2, and primary school teachers are both familiar and knowledgeable about the content which is based on local, national, European and global areas of study, all of which to some greater or lesser degree facilitate interpretation in and through the integrated arts. Dance history touches upon the local, the national and the international and can effectively complement the required topics of study in history, for example, the events and individuals of the Tudor period. Similarly, the study of the impact of eminent people, events and changes in lifestyle that took place in Victorian Britain will reflect contrasting features of the time, and draw upon the wealth of Victorian art, music, and drama.

For teachers and artists intending to establish history in action programmes based on the arts, in which dance history plays an implicit part, it will be necessary to make

an ethnographical analysis of a site, examine and interpret archival sources and formulate intellectual and practical approaches that will enable children not only to make sense of a set of historical events in order to achieve historical understanding, but will allow them scope for subjective creative engagement. The most effective way forward is to disseminate the models of good practice, based on practitioner-based research, so that strategic heritage sites throughout Europe are able to offer quality arts experiences for children. Ensuring a place for dance history and its development in schools requires that dance as an art form and social force is valued. This requires provision for young people to perform, to see dance, to receive an education in dance by working with people who possess expertise and commitment, either as good quality teachers or professional artists, and to have the resources necessary to accomplish these aims. Dance must reassert itself as to its position in contemporary society and determine its future role in education so that it is valued as a necessary and fundamental part of the curriculum. Part of this resurgence in schools must be the acknowledgement of the dance heritage in schools, and the way it informs future practice.

Bibliography

Abbs, P. Living Powers - the Arts in Education (Basingstoke, Falmer, 1987).

V.Alford, Peeps at English Folk-Dances, (London, 1923).

Bloomfield, A. 'The Dancing Children of Clifton Hall – a Case Study for the Arts in Education' in Wilson, D. (ed) Education and Early Dance (Cambridge, Early Dance Circle, 2000).

Bloomfield, A. (ed) 'On the Creative Endeavours of Children' in Bloomfield, A The Artistic Experience (University of Hull, Aspects of Education No 55, 1998).

Board of Education Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools, (London, 1919).

Chaplin, N. Court Dances and Others, (London, 1911).

Clifton of Clifton Manuscripts (Manuscripts Department, University of Nottingham)

Cowper Coles, A. M. Old Country Dance Steps, (London, 1909).

_____. Greensleeves and Other Old Dances, (London, 1910).

Dolmetsch Historical Dance Society dances for Tudors and Stuarts, (London, 1994).

Sir Thomas Elyot The Boke named The Governour f.p. 1531, (London, 1907).

Karpeles, M. 'The Folk Dance Revival in England with Special Reference to Folk Dancing in Schools'. International folklore Conference Report, (Paris, 1937).

_____. Cecil Sharp, His Life and Work, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967).

Kennedy, D. 'The Folk Dance Revival in England' EFDSS Journal, (1935) Vol. I, 72.

Kimmins, G. The Guild of Play Books of Festival and Dance (London, Curwen [no date]).

May, J. Madame Bergman-Osterberg (London, Harrop, 1969).

Middleton Manuscript. Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Middleton preserved at Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire, (London, H.M.S.O, 1911).

Newbury, E. The Ladies most Elegant and Convenient Pocket Book, (London, E. Newbury, 1795). Compiled at the request of several ladies of quality.

Owen, R. A New View of Society, (London, Cadel and Davies, 1813).

Playford, J. The English Dancing Master, 1651. Cecil Sharp House, Vaughan Williams Library.

Robinson, K. All Our Futures, (DfEE, 2000).

Rock's Ballroom Guide and Fashionable Dance Instructor (London, Rock Brothers and Payne, 1852).

Sharp, C. J. 'Morris and Country Dances' Journal of Scientific Physical Training, (Vol. 3, London, 1910).

_____. The Country dance Book (London, Pt. I, 1909, Pt. II, 1911, Pt. III, 1912, Pt. IV, 1916, Pt. V, 1918, Pt. VI, 1922).

_____. The Morris Book, 1907-1913.

_____. The Sword Dances of Northern England, 1911, 1913.

_____. Folk Dancing in Schools, (London, 1912)

Sharp, C. J. & Oppe, W. The Dance (London, 1924), Groves, L. Dancing (London, 1895).

Strutt, J. Sports and Pastimes of the British People, (London, 1867).

Tomlinson, Kellom The Art of Dancing and Six Dances, (London, 1735 and 1720).

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND HER STORY: THE REMINISCENCES OF CARA TRANDERS, A VICTORIAN BALLET GIRL, 1895

(interspersed with the voices of poets, novelists, lyricists, critics and historians.).

Alexandra Carter with Simon Dorling

If the boundaries between history and fiction are no longer clear or distinct, if, indeed, the argument is that understanding the past is itself a creative act which can be rendered differently by historians, novelists and poets, then the place of the imagination in the construction of historical accounts becomes central.

Husbands 1996: 58

A history teacher addresses his class:

> And did I not bid you to remember that for each protagonist who once stepped on the stage of so-called historical events, there were thousands, millions, who never entered the theatre - who never knew that the show was running - who got on with the donkey work of coping with reality? . . . Each one of those numberless non-participants was doubtless

> concerned with raising in the flatness of his own unsung existence his own personal stage, his own props and scenery - for there are very few of us who can be, for any length of time, merely realistic . . . even if we miss the grand repertoire of history, we yet imitate it in miniature and endorse, in miniature, its longing for presence, for feature, for purpose, for content.
>
> Swift, 1984: 40-41

Between 1884 - 1915, ballet was the main attraction on the programmes presented by London's Alhambra and Empire palaces of varieties in Leicester Square. These venues, off-shoots of the traditional music halls, presented one, two or three ballets each evening and were a significant part of London's entertainment scene. Nevertheless, the period is neglected in historiography and the voice of the ballet girl, as she was called, remained silent. Until now.

It looms up, a large greyish shape with ill-defined edges. I like to think of it as a friendly whale in murky sea waters. Out of the green of the fog, the bus that will take me to the Empire Palace crawls to a stop. Like Jonah, I climb in. Its soft lights envelop me and the conductor greets me warmly, for he doesn't fear my travelling alone. He knows I am a dancer but he has seen my sharp eyes as I repel any potential threat to my reputation. Some people think, you know, that if you

show your body to the public on stage you must be willing to show it to anyone in private. My aunt was horrified when mother told her I was hoping to be a dancer.

> A ballet girl? Are you mad, Florence? Why, what a disgrace . . . an Actress? Better put her on the streets at once.
>
> Mackenzie, 1929: 76

> *The professional dancer is looked upon as one who has sadly misapplied talents which might have won reputation in some worthier path of life.*
>
> Grove, 1895: 1

Aunt changed her attitude, though, when she came to see me in our new show. Escorted by Uncle (for she would never have gone on her own) she was quite dazzled by the spectacle of it all, even though Uncle himself said that he couldn't tell which one was me, being so far from the stage and us all looking alike with our wigs and red and gold costumes.

> Though all alike in their tinsel livery
> And indistinguishable at a sweeping glance
> ....
> A world of her own has each one underneath

Detached as a sword from its sheath.

Hardy, 1917 in Gibson (ed), 1976: 492

Uncle was a bit quiet when we left the theatre and stopped going on about it was all 'bally nonsense'. I wouldn't tell Aunty, not even to spite her, but I believe he's been back to the ballet on more than one occasion since.

I'm a very strong admirer of the ballet and the play
But I haven't told the missus up to now!
And to watch the fairies dancing I pass may(*sic.* 'many') an hour away
But I haven't told the missus up to now!
When I see their graceful attitudes with love I'm burning hot,
And when the angels flap their wings, they mash me on the spot,
And I feel as if I'd like to go at once and kiss the lot,
But I haven't told the missus up to now!

Cornell, 1887

I sink into my seat, relishing the ride from Kentish Town up to Leicester Square when, trapped by my transport, I can do nothing. My body is exhausted, for we were at the theatre at eleven this morning for rehearsal of the new

production. Finishing at two, I have time to get home to give mother her late lunch, for she's poorly now and since Dad ran off there's no one but me to look after her. What I will do when I meet that young chap of my dreams who'll want to whisk me away and look after me, I do not know. But I'm the breadwinner now.

The ballet girls are sometimes married women with families of their own, though more often they are girls living at home and supporting their parents, or else lodging by themselves or with some of their companions.

Leppington, 1891: 251

It seems I'm destined to be always tired, for I don't get the bus home after the show till gone eleven at night then it's up in the morning to tidy mother and the rooms before I leave for the theatre.

Rehearsals were strenuous and frequent, and the girls appeared each morning with the regularity of factory workers. Their life seemed one incessant hurrying backwards and forwards from home to theatre.

Willis in Green (ed.) 1986: 180

She must devote herself each day to practice. At night she must report herself sober and competent. Shortly after eleven you may see her at Charing Cross waiting for the Brixton bus . . . she is the sedate, painstaking artisan of the stage, with her sick clubs, and her boot

clubs, and all the petty prudences of the working class.

Hibbert, 1916: 197/8

Some girls are lucky; they don't have to come and go but can wait at the Rehearsal Club, started by that nice Lady Magenis for the likes of us to flop around during the afternoons when we've a few hours off. My wages aren't too bad, for I'm on twenty shillings a week now and if I can be promoted to the front row of the *corps* I can make thirty five, though by the time I've paid my Sick Club and other clubs that arise from time to time, my take-home's not special.

. . . there are no fortunes to be made as a dancer unless you happen to
be a Loie Fuller, a Genée, a Maud Allan or a La Belle Otero. But most
dancers like the stage life, and prefer it to business. They are doing the work
they like, and this is compensation for their small pay.

anon. 1913: 78

Sometimes I get fined for being late which is a bit unfair because it's always such a rush and I can't help the traffic, especially in the pea-soupers. The scene painters earn three pounds, though. This doesn't seem fair either because they just slap on paint and no-one cares about where the edges are because the audience can't see that close anyway.

At least I'm lucky to have a job. We had a scare at the Empire only last year. That Mrs. Ormiston Chant nearly got us closed down for good, complaining as she did to the Council. She said the ballets were immoral and I said she was an interfering old busybody who should mind where she pokes her nose but some said she wasn't accusing us, just the management of promoting licentious shows. I don't know what licentious means, myself, but it doesn't sound like a compliment.

The works (The Girl I Left Behind Me, 1893 and La Frolique, 1894) 'seemed to be for the express purpose of displaying the bodies of women to the utmost extent. There is not the least attempt to disguise that which common sense and common decency requires should be hidden'

Chant in Donahue, 1987: 58

My friend Emily wrote to the Council appealing to them not to close the Empire, which was ever so brave of her. She's only in the middle row of dancers, like me, but she's become a bit of a star now.

My engagement at the Empire theatre is of subordinate character but as my position is my livelihood I am emboldened to appeal to you, not only in my own name but also in that of my two sisters and other ladies.

Emily Banbury, dancer, in LCC/MIN/10,803
13 October 1894

Fortunately, they did renew the Empire's licence and our jobs were saved. People get mixed up, of course, and confuse those 'ladies' of the night who ply their trade in the promenade at the front of the theatre, and us ladies of the ballet. There was this MP, in a speech, who said that the bulk of stage dancers led immoral lives.

> *Our Alhambra and Empire girls were furious over it, and I was assured that the male relatives of more than one were prepared to lie in wait for the M.P. . . . there was talk of throwing him in the river.*
>
> Headlam in Bettany, 1926: 107

We don't want to be tarred with the same immoral brush as them, though I must say, I do envy their elegance. Some say the men just enjoy the company of these women, but quite a lot goes on at the front there. Not just women but men, too, exchange their company for money.

> *An anonymous letter to the LCC Licensing Committee revealed that the writer had been informed by a theatre attendant that more than half the audience in the shilling promenade were 'sodomites' and that 'he often gave them a good kicking.'*
>
> LCC/MIN/10,803, 15 October 1894

Sometimes I wonder if it's worth being on this side of the curtain rather than out there in the promenade. Not seriously, of course, but I daydream a little when I suffer

the conditions in which we have to work. Our dressing rooms are so cramped, and with a hundred and fifty of us in the big ballets, backstage is worse than Piccadilly Circus on Boat Race night. We have to fly down the stairs after our scenes to get changed for the next one, knocking over anyone who gets in the way - especially that critic chap who lurks around. All you can think of is getting to your room. We just ignore men like him - we've got a job to do.

> *Every few minutes half a dozen pretty girls would rush to their dressing rooms to change, leaving me heart-broken, while another contingent would arrive in fresh costume, as though to console me.*
>
> 'S.L.B.' 1896: 524

It's off with one costume and on with another, then running back up the stairs to make my next entry, panting hard but smiling. Hard, that is, panting and smiling. But we get used to it. We don't always get used to the rats, though they scarper and we just see their tails disappear. They don't like all the activity and, as you can imagine, twelve of us all cramped together in one little dressing room can be a very active occasion - elbows and legs everywhere. You're never sure whose hose you're putting on. We're not allowed out of the room during the break between the two nightly ballets when the other acts are on. It's less frantic then; we might knit or catch up with our sewing, but it's the smell we don't like. We can't help the sweat and the greasy make up, but there's no air and it's hot and sometimes you just hold your breath, so you're panting even more. But you

have to keep smiling, because the management said so and we do what they say or we'll never make the front row of dancers. If I go to the back row before I go forward, I'll just die. The back row is for those who are beginners or those who are past it. Some of the girls' mothers are in the back row. Quite companionable, being on the same stage as your mum, but you can see your future in hers if you're not careful. Mde. Lanner, our ballet mistress, danced professionally until she was nearly fifty, so it can be a long career for those who are lucky, those who work hard and keep out of trouble.

Most of us are really careful to keep out of trouble. And we do work hard, even though it can be boring at times, especially towards the end of a six month run which is quite normal for each ballet. Although we all think we can do more, most us know secretly that we're not trained to be able to display our skills. I learned at Mde. Lanner's National Training School of Dancing in Tottenham Court Road, from where she gets most of the Empire girls. Not the ballerinas of course - they come from abroad where the training's much better. That's why they star. We are pretty well a world apart, as they don't have much to do with us and we wouldn't dare speak to them. But we watch them secretly, when we're framing their performance, and we talk about them after.

> *Some (...of the corps...) are severely critical and obviously of the opinion*
> *that they could do it infinitely better themselves; others whisper*
> *disparagement to sympathetic ears; others study the signorina's every*

> *movement until she is opposite them, whereupon they assume an*
> *ostentatious abstraction as if she was really below their notice.*
>
> Anstey, 1890: 191-192

Some of the girls can be nasty. Jealousy, really, for that's all we are on the stage - a coloured frame around a pure white dancing picture. The ballerinas can go up and stay on their toes. I've tried, time and time again, but my legs won't let me do it. But they've got the muscles for it. Men don't see the muscles, though. I don't really know what they see. The ballerinas are a bit out of their class, being skilled and foreign and all that, but I suppose the men can dream.

Elena (we call her Elly behind her back, just to bring her down a bit; her name's really Elena Cornalba) wears a lovely gauzy dress in our current ballet, *Faust*. She's got no 'character' to play, mind, but she does the proper steps. There's rumours that she's leaving and they're looking to Moscow for another star. That will be interesting. Management can't seem to find a permanent ballerina from Italy. Mde. Cavallazzi as Faust is as strong as ever; we know all her mime actions of course but could never do them as well as she can. I can imagine myself in that black Mephistopheles costume of Zanfretta's with those grand arm gestures which tell the story. So dramatic.

My reverie comes to a jolting halt. I like having reveries as they sound foreign and glamorous - but it's time to get off the bus. Mde. Lanner will be furious if we're late;

she's like a big black beetle in her bombazine. She is good at her arrangements of us *corps de ballet*. Should be by now, for she's been with the Empire since 1887 they say. Her and Mons. Wilhelm work on most of the ballets together. For this *Faust* he's written the story (based on someone else's we think) so he worked more closely with her on each scene as well as designing the costumes as usual. We all know he's actually called William Pitcher and his dad is a ship builder, but he changed his name to sound more foreign because it helps in this business. You can't blame him. Sometimes when I'm standing there in yet another tableau I dream up names I'd choose for myself. I fancy Cara Taglioni so I could keep the same initials, but there's already been one of those.

Costumes - I must get into mine. I fly off the bus and walk ever so quickly to the side street entrance of the Empire where I meet up with my friend Maria. 'Ria used to be with the Salvation Army but there wasn't much life there and she kept banging her tambourine in the wrong place. So she came to us.

> Sister Ria, Sister Ria of the Army
> soon began to tire
> So she's sold her tambourine
> Now she's nightly to be seen
> Dancing in the ballet at the
> Empire
>
> Mills, Lennard, 1895

For tonight's ballet I'm a soldier in the first scene. We play quite a lot of soldiers. There aren't any men dancers except for the occasional foreigner but they're not much

liked even when they're good, like that Mons. Cecchetti who was with us a couple of years ago. Went on to become a teacher of sorts, I think. 'They're all the same' says my Uncle, 'one of those'. The 'male' characters are nearly always played by women; '*en travestie*", they call it. Nice to know a bit of French. We know that the audience like to look at our legs when we're dressed as soldiers and we have to keep our waists trim which is difficult if a girl gets herself in the family way and wants to keep working for as long as possible. But the men can look at what they like. It's all part of the show to us. We march off after the first scene in *Faust*, being careful to keep in time and not rush, for we have a brisk break of one scene before the third, in which I'm a will-o'-the-wisp. It's the last scene that's the worst. We play angels, with lovely golden wigs, but we have to climb these very steep ladders backstage and perch on the top, sticking our heads through a hole in the backdrop, so our faces appear like 'angels in the sky'. We're terrified, because we're so high up and the ladders wobble and it's freezing cold up there, but we have to keep smiling. I imagine it must look good from the audience's point of view but we don't feel much like angels when we're up there, I can tell you.

> A crystal stair, and in the air
> the angels hover round ...
> No more those angels deck the sky
> -
> those angels hail from Peckham
> Rye,
> From Bow or Kentish Town.
>
> 'J.M.B.' 1896: 524

No wonder we get coughs and colds or worse, all this going from those damp and muggy dressing rooms up those cold stairs to the stage, then hot again under the lights. That's why the Sick Club is so important, to help us through those times when we're poorly.

> The little painted angels flit
> See, down the narrow staircase,
> where
> The pink legs flicker over it!
>
> Blonde, and bewigged, and winged
> with gold,
> The shining creatures of the
> air
> Troop sadly, shivering with cold.

Symons, 1895: 21

Sometimes, as I said, the work does get a little boring, though we do two ballets a night. This *Faust* is quite different to the other recent one, *On Brighton Pier*, which has nice popular melodies and we had to learn to move a bicycle around on the stage to show how modern we were. The management like these different kinds of ballets - sometimes a really up-to-date work, or one celebrating Britain's Empire; sometimes one from fairy tale or legend. Keeps everyone happy. The Alhambra are doing *Titania*, based on a Shakespeare play, but they're not as good as us. They say we just hold up the scenery which is a typical thing to come from an Alhambra girl. Admittedly, the movements we're given in all of the ballets are pretty much the same, and are not that difficult in themselves - but it's just the same at the Alhambra. We march a lot, and strike poses, drawing

attention to the ballerina. The management always ask Mde. Lanner to get a vision scene in, a 'transformation', as the audience love these. There'll be tinkly water music and the flimsy curtain at the back of the stage will be drawn back to reveal another tableau, a 'transformed' picture within the picture of the stage. Clever, really. The best bits for us are when we waltz or galop as then you can be carried away with the music and feel that you're really dancing. Often there are long periods when we do nothing at all, just stand in position. Sometimes I try to find faces in the audience but of course you can't see them individually in that great sea of half darkness. My mind wanders then. I think about mother at home and feel the pity for her, all day in that room. That's why I try to get home in the afternoons but it makes my day such a squash. I always seem to feel tired. Sometimes I use those tableaux when the ballerina is doing her thing to plan the next days' meals. Next door gave us some beef dripping, so we can have that with bread tomorrow. Nice and nutritious.

> *Suddenly I saw a beautiful girl whose face was strange to me. She was exotic, with passionate lips and eyes, magnetic. Then she . . . that is you . . . fixed her eyes on mine without surprise, without hesitation, as if drawn by some instinct, your eyes fixed on mine at every turn you made as you danced with the others.*

Symons in Beckson, 1977: 160

Yes, beef dripping would be lovely. Useful thinking time, these tableaux are, so long as I don't forget to move on

the sixteenth beat after the big crash of the drums. You don't often miss your cue, though. Even if your mind has wandered you sense it from the girls when it's time to move as their breath and their muscles prepare. We've been working together so long we almost dance as one, especially when Mons. Wilhelm dresses different groups of us in different colours. We must look like an artist's paint palette. Green's my favourite as it goes with my eyes. Not that anyone could see my eyes.

> *. . . the members of the corps de ballet . . . become convenient units in the development of the (colour) scheme.*
>
> 'T.H.L.', 1893: 344

The important thing, though, is to keep looking at the audience as if you can really see them, as if you're dancing for them. Not go over the top on our character, of course (it's a bit difficult going over the top on being a daisy, anyway) but just sharing our joy of dancing and trying to look attractive. That's important because many of the people in the audience really do love the ballet.

> *London audiences now began to regain an appreciation of the technical basis of the Dance and Ballet which they had lost . . thus, they were enabled the better to understand the Russian ballet when it eventually arrived and achieved instant success.*
>
> Perugini, 1925: 1177

Some of them just come for a night out, because the Empire means all that is 'home' to them, especially when they've been away in our colonies.

> *Something more than a mere music hall . . . it was . . . an Englishman's club, an Empire club, famous wherever Englishmen fought, worked, adventured. Britishers prospecting in the Klondyke, shooting in jungles, tea-planting in Ceylon, wherever they fore-gathered in cities of Africa, Asia and America would bid one another goodbye with a 'See you at the Empire one day when we're back in town.'*
>
> Booth, 1929: 142

We know that some men also come to eye us up and some of the girls even walk out with men they've met at the stage door. I personally don't like to hang around with those johnnies - I'm in too much of a rush to catch the bus - but I don't blame those who do. Some of the dancers from the Alhambra used to go the Crown public house, just off Leicester Square, where they'd meet the young men who claimed they were poets. The girls used to try and explain how the ballets worked and how the steps were performed and they'd get really angry because the men didn't seem to take them seriously. These men belonged to some club - the Rhymers Club, I think. There's an Arthur Symons and a William Yeats but I've never heard of them. Violet Piggot had an affair with this Arthur. He seemed very keen at first but these men don't seem to realise that you can't go to the public house in all your stage finery and in your real clothes, and close-up, you look rather different. What do they

expect, a dancing will-o'-the-wisp in a pub? Arthur turned quite nasty, apparently, and dropped Violet pretty quickly. We hear these stories all the time, of course. At least this Arthur writes nicely about the ballet in the Star and the Sketch and stories come down to us girls about what he, and other writers, have said about the new ballets. They're nearly always complimentary, thank goodness. One critic said how much the dancing of the rank and file (that's us) had improved; that made us glow. Sometimes there are photographs. The girls have to pose for these in whatever position pleases the photographer, often with their arms bent up and their hands behind their heads. This doesn't appear anywhere in the ballet, of course, but the more worldly amongst us know that this position pushes up your bust, making you more attractive. The drawings on the covers of the Empire programmes don't look much like us in real life, either. You'd think we danced half naked, which is nonsense because we always have our fleshings over legs and arms, or that we all look the same when we're actually all shapes and sizes. But I suppose the management like to present an image of us that will draw in the crowds. And if we don't get the crowds, there won't be the money to pay our wages, so we don't complain.

We do try to look attractive, those who can, that is. It's all part of showing off our skills. One critic, a Mr. Bensusan who is probably so ashamed that he has to write under the letters 'S.L.B.' said in a review of an Alhambra work that so long as us ballet girls have good looks talent goes for nothing. That made us cross but it is all part of the attraction of the ballets. For some girls, this is all they care about. Most of us, though, are proud of what we do. The ballet goes way back in to history, and

we're part of that history. We get nearly two thousand people in on full nights (I shake a little when I think about it). Toffs; artists; soldiers on leave; men about town and ordinary people including, more and more, the women. No one knows what they think about the ballet. I imagine they get a different kind of pleasure in watching, perhaps imagining themselves as us, perhaps just enjoying all the colour and lights and movement and a night out. No one tells us what the women think.

What do I think? I think a lot. My body is nearly always exhausted, but I wouldn't do another job. It's wonderful, really, to be able to dance, to be part of such a long artistic tradition. I know I'll never be a star, but that's all right. My job is secure, more or less, and the work is varied compared to the factory or even the office, where so many young girls work nowadays. And it's a million times better than the domestic. The ballet can take me out of my own domestic, out of the worry about home. When I'm dancing, I can dream, and sometimes my mind is empty as my body just takes over. But, I also think a lot. About my aching arms, holding this heavy pole at the exact right angle; about how late the bus will be in the fog; about how Cornalba can't get that crisp finish to her pirouettes; about what I would look like if I were out there in front like her and how that applause would be for me alone as I dazzled them with my spins and turns and jumps and balances. My legs would be strong as iron; my arms as light as muslin. My smile would be confident, my gaze at the audience assured as I returned theirs. I think about a man who will come along and look after me and mother. But he'll have to know the real me from the pretty picture he sees on stage. Yes, I think a lot. But nobody knows what I think. My thoughts won't go down

in history. But the ballet will, and I'm proud to be a part of it.

The history teacher addresses his class:

> Children, you are right, there are times when we have to disentangle history from fairy-tale. There are times . . . when good dry textbook history takes a plunge into the old swamps of myth and has to be retrieved with empirical fishing lines. History, being an accredited sub-science, only wants to know the facts. History, if it is to keep on constructing its road into the future, must do so on solid ground. . . At all costs let us avoid mystery-making and speculation, secrets and idle gossip . . . and above all, let us not tell *stories* . . . let us get back to solid ground.
>
> Swift, 1984: 86

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

anon. (1913) *Confessions of a dancing girl by Herself*, London: Heath, Cranton & Ouseley.

Anstey, F. (1890) 'London music halls', *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*, December pp. 190-202.

Beckson, K. (ed.) (1977) *The Memoirs of Arthur Symons: life and art in the 1890s*, USA: Penn State University Press.

Bettany, F.G. (1926) *Stewart Headlam: a biography*, London: Edward Arnold.

Booth, J.B. (1929) *London Town*, London: T. Werner Laurie.

Carter, A. (1995) 'Blonde, bewigged and winged with gold: women in the music hall ballet' in *Dance Research*, XIII: 2, 28 – 46.

_____ (1996) 'Over the footlights and under the moon: images of dancers in the ballet at the Alhambra and Empire palaces of varieties 1884 - 1915' in *Dance Research Journal*, 28: 1, 7 – 18.

Cornell, C. (1887) Music score: 'I haven't told the missus up to now', London: Francis Bros. & Day.

Donahue, J. (1987) The Empire Theatre of Varieties licensing controversy of 1894: testimony of Laura Ormiston Chant before the Theatres and Music Halls Licensing Committee, *Nineteenth Century Theatre*, Vol. 15, Summer, pp.50-60.

Gibson, J. (ed) (1976) *The Complete Poems of Thomas Hardy*, London: Macmillan.

Green, B. (ed.) (1986) *The Last Empires: a music hall companion*, London: Pavilion.

Grove, L. (1895) *Badminton Library of Sports and Pastimes: Dancing*, London: Longmans, Green.

Guest, I. (1992) *Ballet in Leicester Square*, London; Dance Books.

Hibbert, H.G. (1916) *Fifty Years of a Londoner's Life*, London: Grant Richards.

Husbands, C. (1996) *What is history teaching? Language, Ideas and Meaning in Learning about the Past*, Bucks: Open University Press.

'J.M.B.' (1896) 'An earthly paradise' The Sketch, 1 January, p.524
LCC/MIN/10,803 13 October 1894 Greater London Records Office.
LCC/MIN/10,803 15 October 1894 Greater London Records Office.
Leppington, C.H. d'E. (1891) The Gibeonites of the stage: work and wages. Behind the scenes. *National Review* Vol. 17: 245-261.
Mackenzie, C. (1912,1929) *Carnival*, London: Martin Secker.
Mills, A.J. & Lennard, A. (1895) Music score, 'Sister Ria', London: Francis, Day & Hunter.
Perugini, M. E. (1925) 'Where are we going?' *Dancing Times*, August, pp.1171-1177.
'S.L.B.' (1896) 'Behind the scenes II': The Empire, *The Sketch*, 1 January, pp.523-524.
_____ (1896) 'The Tzigane' at the Alhambra, *The Sketch*, 23 December p.336.
Symons, A. (1895) *London Nights*, London: Leonard Smithers.
Swift, G. (1983, 1984) *Waterland*, London: Picador.
'T.H.L.' (1893) 'A chat with a costumier: Wilhelm at home', *The Sketch*, 8 March pp. 343-344.

A RICH AND VARIED PALETTE: Artistic choice and changes in the teaching of ballet

Toby Bennett

The Cecchetti 'Method' of 'Classical Theatrical Dancing' as it is called in 'The Manual' of 1922 (Beaumont and Idzikowsy, 1922) occupies an important place in the history of ballet technique and teaching. Thanks largely to the efforts of the dance writer and publisher Cyril Beaumont (1891-1976) the exercises taught by Enrico Cecchetti (1850-1928) were recorded in some detail[1], and The Cecchetti Society was set up in 1922 to promote his teaching methods. The Cecchetti Society continues to promote his 'method' throughout the world, and at higher levels still uses the same exercises that Cecchetti himself taught.

Cecchetti's career as a dancer, mime and pedagogue encompasses two of the key artistically creative periods of ballet history: those of Petipa's Imperial Russian Ballet and Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. It is clear, therefore, that this continuing tradition of teaching the Cecchetti work might be able to provide us with insights into the technique of earlier periods including the earlier Italian technique that he took with him from his native Italy to Russia. However, I do not intend to critically assess the importance of Cecchetti's legacy, rather I wish to focus

[1] Beaumont and Idzikowsy (1922); Craske and Beaumont (1946); Craske and de Moroda (1979 [first published 1956]).

on how the performance of Cecchetti's work may have changed since Cecchetti's time, and how these changes may give us an insight into more general trends in ballet teaching and technique. The continuous tradition of teaching Cecchetti's *enchaînements* since the 1920s to the present day make the Cecchetti work a good candidate for such a study.

That the Cecchetti work itself might have changed became apparent to me during my own training in England during the 1980s when I discovered that there were many versions of the Cecchetti work taught by different teachers. In addition some of these versions appeared to be very different in style[2] from the ballet technique I was being taught in my non-Cecchetti classes, whereas some were more similar. More recently I have been working with Dr Ann Hutchinson Guest to prepare a Labanotation-based record and analysis of the extant Cecchetti work (Guest and Bennett, in preparation), and as part of this project we are sifting through differing versions of the various *enchaînements* to try to discern which of them might be older and perhaps nearer to earlier teaching. This is not an easy task since the descriptions in the three Cecchetti 'Manuals' are not always easy to follow and often lack much detail which might otherwise provide a reference point. It is also important to bear in mind that there are no definitive answers here, not only can we not be certain of how the work was performed, but Cecchetti himself may have taught his work differently, both through time and to different dancers. If this is the case then certain different versions may be equally valid,

[2] I use the word 'style' loosely here.

however, I believe that it is possible to discern changes in the way the work is taught some of which I will look at in this paper.

In an article entitled *Changes of Emphasis and Mechanics in the Teaching of Ballet Technique* Richard Glasstone (1983, 56) suggests that recent changes in ballet technique have resulted in '... the sacrifice of movement on the altar of shape' (Glasstone, 1983, 56), he looks in some detail at certain points of technique and concludes saying

> The varying qualities of elevation, movement, rhythm and dynamics handed down to us through the *danse d'école*, constitute a vital part of our dance heritage ... this can give dancers and choreographers schooled in the traditions of Bournonville, Cecchetti, and their heirs, a much richer palette to work with than those who regard the legacy of the *danse d'école* merely as a quaint reminder of another age.
>
> Glasstone, 1983, 63

It is changes in some of these more elusive 'qualities' that I want to investigate. The word 'quality' is problematic but is one that recurs frequently when talking to some of the older Cecchetti teachers – they frequently bemoan the lack of it in many modern students of the Cecchetti method. For example, Laura Wilson (1901-1999) a pupil of Cecchetti's and long time teacher of the method spoke to me of some Cecchetti dancing that she had recently seen

> They didn't bend sideways, they didn't get any light and shade in the kind of movement ... it was all what I would call black and white, and upright or prostrate. ... The trouble was it hadn't got any feeling of pattern in the rhythm of the movement itself ... there was no give and take.
>
> Wilson, 1998

In two interviews I was able to conduct with Wilson before her death (Wilson, 1997 and 1998) she attempted to instruct me in some of the Cecchetti *enchaînements* we discussed. What interested me was the choices she made in describing the movement, she seemed to favour talking about facets of the movement other than specifics of the steps or positions. Indeed, when in one case I pointed out that she was instructing me to do a different arm movement than that which I had previously learnt, she said it didn't matter, but it did '... make a better pattern if you took the arms up ...' (Wilson, 1998).

In order to look at some of these areas in more detail I will use some of the frameworks from Laban Movement Analysis (LMA)[3] and Irmgard Bartenieff's development of Laban's ideas on the use of the body[4]. Using the LMA framework I am attempting to look at changes in 'effort' qualities which might give us an insight into these 'dynamics'. The Bartenieff framework gives us a vocabulary to talk about how the whole body is organised in movement and these ideas have proved very useful in understanding changes in the Cecchetti work.

[3] For a discussion of LMA see Laban (1988) and Youngerman (1984).
[4] For a discussion of Bartenieff's work see Hackney (1998).

I have relied heavily on Wilson's descriptions and she was very old and largely confined to her bed when I spoke to her, fortunately much of her information is confirmed elsewhere. Other sources include my own knowledge of the method and Guest's notes made during the 1950s and 1960s whilst working with various teachers. I draw also from the experience of working with dancers during workshops I have carried out with student and professional dancers both at the University of Surrey Roehampton and at the Cecchetti Centre, London. This work was further developed during a lecture-demonstration for The Cecchetti Centre in January 2001 (Bennett, 2001). Many of these ideas presented in this paper were explored through these practical exploratory sessions, and I refer here to three traditional Cecchetti enchaînements: an adage; a Saturday allegro[5]; and a jumped, diagonal turn.

These are preliminary findings, I am not an expert in the field, and I am indebted to my colleague Natalie Gordon, a Certified Movement Analyst, with whom I have discussed many of these issues.

Pas de l'Alliance

In an article discussing the use of mime in the Cecchetti work Dr Giannandrea Poesio and I (Bennett and Poesio, 2000) suggested that Cecchetti's use of the 'blowing a kiss' gesture, which appears throughout his *enchaînements* in both adage and allegro work, is

[5] Cecchetti organised his set enchaînements into groups to be performed on the different days of the week from Monday to Saturday.

fundamental to the movement qualities he is looking for and gives direction and focus to the movement. We also pointed out that gestures of this type appear to be being lost in current teaching of the Cecchetti work and cited the adage *Pas de l'Alliance* as an example. This adage is composed of a complex mixture of movements some of which we would be surprised to see in an adage nowadays. For example, near the beginning there is a large jump ending in arabesque and a crescent bend in attitude; later there is a quick *fouetté* movement of the leg into an *allongé* arabesque line with the front arm held close to the chest; and the adage ends with a *pas de bourrée renversé en tournant en dehors*. The section I wish to discuss starts with the *allongé* arabesque facing one downstage corner. From here the dancer turns three-quarters of a turn by pivoting on the standing foot to end in the position *croisé devant* facing the other downstage corner. The section continues with a rise onto *demie-pointe* before a *tombé* movement forward into another arabesque line.

During the lecture demonstration I asked three Cecchetti trained dancers to perform this adage which they already knew from other teachers. During the rise and *tombé*, they used their arms following an academic *port de bras* pathway with the upper arm describing the edge of the dancer's kinesphere as it moves from above the head and forward into the arabesque line, in LMA terms this is an example of 'peripheral spatial tension'. This is the movement which appears to have replaced the earlier occurrence of the 'kiss' gesture which Wilson described to me and Guest has notated in some of her Cecchetti class notes. In this 'older' version instead of the peripheral *port de bras* the upper hand lowers to bring

the fingertips close to the lips and then unfolds forwards with the back of the hand leading the movement, according to Wilson '... curl it out like a caterpillar ...' (Wilson, 1997). The movement of the hand from the central region of the dancer's kinesphere, close to the lips, followed by an extension outwards to the periphery is an example of central spatial tension and this gives a strong feeling of direction forwards in the sagittal dimension. Wilson said of my attempt at this movement '... [you] looked rather as if you were indicating a person but not that you're doing it to her', I think this comment suggests that she is looking not only for a strong directionality in this movement but also for a feeling of advancing in the body that seems to be related to this kind of use of the 'kiss' gesture, a quality that the peripheral spatial tension of the more academic *port de bras* does not prepare us for. The movement into the arabesque is described as a *tombé*, and I think the feeling of advancing as you shift the weight forwards adds to the sense of risk that is inherent in a fall (*tombé*): you need to have a sense of advancing in the body in order to take the weight forwards which results in the loss of equilibrium into the fall. It is therefore arguable that the use of the 'kiss' gesture is linked through the resulting central spatial tension and advancing of the body to the disequilibrium of the fall, in which case the apparent loss of the 'kiss' gesture in modern performance has the incidental result of decreasing the potential for the excitement of the fall and the forward projection of the movement.

Wilson was also particular about the performance of the turning movement just preceding the 'kiss' and the *tombé*. As the dancer turns from the horizontal line of the

allongé arabesque[6] the torso moves into a side tilt and then up to the vertical as the dancer turns to face the back. The dancers performing the 'modern version' of the adage do this but they fail to continue the movement over to the other side in the movement that Wilson was looking for. She described the movement after you have reached the vertical as follows: '...then you go over the other side. Let the one arm go down ... [the other one] just curls over a bit, not quite half of a fifth position[7]', and she described the whole movement as 'this is where you turn over like that' (Wilson, 1997). The effect of this continuation of the movement of the torso from one side to the other is to emphasise the movement of the torso in the vertical plane and I would suggest an organisation of the body in Irmgard Bartenieff's 'body-half' pattern[8]. The modern version, stopping as it does when the torso reaches the vertical, merely emphasises the vertical dimension, the sense of the torso as an organising factor continuing the movement over to the other side as the turn continues is largely lost.

During this section of the adage, therefore, I suggest that earlier teaching stressed the following features which are largely missing in modern performances of the adage:

[6] The dancer's torso and aerial leg should form a near straight line more or less parallel to the ground.

[7] By 'not quite half a fifth position' she meant that the arm is more than usually bent and comes closer to the head and more across the midline of the body than is usual.

[8] Bartenieff uses a developmental/evolutionary analogy for the 'body-half' pattern of the lizard moving with one side lengthening in relation to the other, in this way it is suggested that the two sides of the body work by alternating patterns of stabilisation and mobilisation.

1. During the turn, a lateral movement of the body fully engaged in the movement (body-half pattern) from one side to the other, followed by
2. a sense of forward projection into the *tombé* which is dependent on the use of central spatial tension promoted by the use of the 'kiss' gesture.

Temps levé, chassé croisé, coupé dessous, ballonné, grand jeté en tournant (en avant)

Interestingly this Saturday allegro *enchaînement* exhibits similar features to those just discussed in the adage *Pas de l'Alliance*. It starts with an example of the 'kiss' gesture and appears to incorporate a similar 'body-half' patterning, however, in this case both of these features occur within the context of travelling jumps.

Here the 'kiss' gesture also appears to be important to promote a sense of advancing which, in this context, takes the dancer forward in a *chassé* movement (where the foot slides along the floor as the weight is transferred) followed by a *temps levé* in arabesque. Wilson described this section as follows

> the aerial pattern is like this, [it] scoops – along, down and up ... This blowing a kiss, throw it, not too high ...down in the stalls, and let it go...throw your face after it.
>
> Wilson, 1998

Again we see the attention to advancing in space, throwing not only the kiss but also the face after it. The

description of the *chassé*, 'scoop[ing] along, down and up' also suggests an attention to shaping the space that the dancer is moving in and carving a path through it, as well as the importance of an upper-lower body organisation to support lower body propulsion to achieve this 'along, down and up' scooping.

The *enchaînement* continues with a *coupé* and a *ballonné*, then a step sideways followed by a *grand jeté en tournant en avant*[9] which terminates with another step sideways to end the *enchaînement*. Wilson is informative in her description of this section. Firstly she suggests that the arms should be taken above the head during the jump, this appears to be contrary to most current Cecchetti teaching where the arms are brought in front of the body. When I questioned her about this she said that you '... do as you like about that. It makes a better pattern if you take the arms up'[10] (Wilson, 1998). Secondly she was very insistent about the use of the torso during this section, she said it should move from a side tilt '...right over the ... side with your arms right in ...' then as you step into the jump '... throw your body after it ...' so that the arms and torso are high at the height of the jump before taking the torso over to the other side as you land and step sideways. Again, like in *Pas de l'Alliance*, we see a movement of the torso from side to side in the vertical plane and there is a suggestion that this use of the body is integral to the movement: you have to 'throw' your torso into the *jeté* which is, after all, a thrown movement[11]. Again it could

[9] This step is one which non-Cecchetti trained dancers are often inclined to replace with a *saut de Basque*.
[10] Guest's notes also confirm this.
[11] *Jeté* translates from the French as 'thrown'.

be argued that we see a 'body-half' pattern similar to that seen in *Pas de l'Alliance* although in a very different context. Wilson sums up this *enchaînement* by saying '... it's just a swing about ... [it should take you] right across the stage from one side to the other' and I suggest that the use of the body in this way is crucial to attaining this extended travelling and the aerial patterning that Wilson alludes to in her comment about the use of the arms.

Another feature about which Wilson was also insistent was how the arms should move at the end of the jump. Since the arms in her version are above the head, rather than in front of the body, they need to take a different path to arrive in second position, this is not very remarkable but she was insistent that the arms should '...drop, not put – drop. Just stop, arrest them there ...resting on an invisible rest ... Relaxed you see.' She is making a clear statement about the effort qualities here, that the arms should move with free flow, giving in to gravity, to end with a sudden halt in a kind of impact drawing attention to the ending position. With the new, more constrained version of the arms this dynamic play is missing, they merely open to second position with little dynamic nuance.

Lastly the *enchaînement* restarts by bringing the aerial leg through to go back into the beginning *chassé* with the 'kiss' gesture. Here Wilson again chooses to focus on the body organisation '... you bring the leg through and the arms down and through ...turn your shoulders right round [to] come round this way ...' again a focus on body-half patterning of movement, with one side of the body stabilised and the other moving through in relation to it.

During this allegro, therefore, I suggest that earlier teaching stressed the following features:

1. In the *chasse, temps levé* central spatial tension with a strong sense of advancing in the sagittal dimension (compare *Pas de l'Alliance*), and a 'scooping' shaping of the movement during the *chassé* supported with strong lower body propulsion in the upper-lower pattern.
2. During the turning *jeté* a focus on the body moving side to side (again compare *Pas de l'Alliance*), this body movement links the *ballonné* through the jump to the step out of the jump, and brings attention to the spatial shaping through this movement as well as favouring an extended travelling.
3. At the end of the jump the effort qualities draw attention to the weight of the body falling out of the jump and the momentary highlighting of the ending position through the weighty, free movement of the arms into a sudden stop.
4. Lastly a strong use of the body with stabilisation on one side to bring the other side round to repeat the *enchaînement*.

Many of these features are still present to some extent in modern teaching of the *enchaînement* although the arms in point three appear to be lost along with the associated dynamic highlights and their relationship to the use of the torso in point two. However, it is also a question of degree, and it is not difficult to imagine how the other features could be lost or diminished by the removal of

the 'kiss' gesture[12] and the playing down of the body patterning in the turning jump. Indeed modern dancers are often keen to replace the *grand jeté en tournant en avant* with the more familiar *saut de Basque*, the tendency might then be to perform this with a more upright torso and without the body patterning I am suggesting for the Cecchetti version. During the lecture demonstration it was apparent that working on the factors outlined above did begin to result in a noticeable change in the dancers' performance of this allegro *enchaînement*.

Coupé dessous, fouetté, coupé dessous, fouetté en tournant, coupé dessous, pas de Basque, tour en attitude renversée

This *enchaînement* was one I was able to work on in a little more detail during workshops and during the Cecchetti Society lecture demonstration. The resulting changes were the most startling of all the *enchaînements* discussed in this article.

The *enchaînement* starts with two *coupé fouettés*. In contemporary performance[13] the arms are held in a clear academic positions with one slightly rounded in front of the body and the other to the side (forward low and side low), the torso is held vertically with little movement during the jumps and the arms change the position from one side to the other. This is in contrast to the

[12] I have certainly noticed a reluctance in some students to perform this gesture.

[13] I am describing the version as danced by the lecture demonstration dancers who were first asked to perform this *enchaînement* as they had been taught it.

description in the 1956 advanced allegro manual where Craske and de Moroda describe the arms after the first *fouetté* in a very different position. According to them one arm should move 'to fourth position *en avant*, across and close to the body' and the other '*en arabesque*'. They also indicate that the body should not be held vertically but should incline to the side with each *fouetté* (Craske and de Moroda, 1979, 102). Wilson also describes the body movement as follows

> the first one ... arch between your shoulder blades but looking down ... the second is with the head back ... looking up let your body lean forward more keeping the curve
>
> Wilson, 1997

Whereas the 'new' version emphasises solely the vertical dimension in the torso and uses a very simple body design, the 'old' version utilizes the torso with lateral movement in the vertical plane and, it would appear, with some diagonal pulls taking the body out of the vertical plane – a richer three-dimensional use of space as opposed to the one-dimensional vertical of current practice or even a simpler two-dimensional side to side movement.

As in the allegro sequence previously described there is a similar discrepancy of arm movement during the next part of this *enchaînement*. Again the choice is whether to take the arms high during a jump or just to bring them in front of the body. In this case the jump is a *pas de Basque* and current practice for this *enchaînement* is to bring the arms to the front with the palms turned to face

more or less upwards in a gentle 'presentation' gesture. But again Wilson described the arms high, more or less above the head. The high arm position is then used to produce a movement that is completely missing from the 'new' version. Wilson described the arms as coming from a 'full fifth *en haut*' and then lowering quickly until the hands are near the feet and the dancers' '... noses practically on their feet ...'[14]. During the movement the arms turn and move successively with the outer surface leading as they move directly to a forward low direction with the torso leaning forwards. This has some similarities with the familiar 'kiss' gesture but the hands do not come to the centre of the kinesphere (which would result in central spatial tension) but rather they move across the kinesphere, the dancer's inner space is highlighted with transverse spatial tension. This is a large movement done at some speed, Wilson's words were 'heavy in the elbows' (Wilson, 1997). I suggest that free flow using the weight of the limbs to achieve the quick, direct movement ending with a focus on the feet is important here. With the amended 'new' arms we see none of this variety of effort and space, neither do we see the ending relationship established between the head/hands, and the foot.

The *enchaînement* ends with a *renversé* turn. According to Wilson '...the idea is you are trying to see your foot all the way round ... let the back of your head practically rub your shoulders ...', you should end the movement bent to the side 'just flat to the side, till your leg and your head

[14] A similar use of the arms is confirmed by Guest's Labanotation notes and a pupil of the Cecchetti teacher Molly Lake confirmed to me that Lake also used this arm movement.

meet' (Wilson, 1998). It is clear from this that the torso is likely to be very important in this movement, and that the relationship of the head to the feet, looking at the foot as you go round, suggests a head-tail body organisation where there is a focus on the spine.

There is some variation in teaching of the preparation for this *renversé*. Some teachers teach that the front foot is pointed (as Wilson did) and just touches the ground, others teach that it is flat on the ground. In the Advanced allegro manual Craske and de Moroda (1979, 102) state that both heels should be down and both knees bent in a kind of off-centre *plié* in fourth position. In her Labanotation notes Guest records that teachers also said to press the foot to the floor before the turn (Guest and Bennett, in preparation). This suggests that a Bartenieff upper-lower body organisation is important in order that lower body propulsion can be used to drive the *renversé* movement which is organised through a head-tail organisation. This is difficult for modern ballet dancers to achieve, in my experience I have never encountered such a *renversé* movement (with this rich use of the torso and the element of risk that a 'tipped over' movement should entail) in any class other than a Cecchetti class. But Wilson was unimpressed with modern performances of *renversés*, even by Cecchetti trained dancers. According to her

> when they get a *renversé* turn [nowadays] it's only a little thing up here that they're doing, they're not using the whole of the waist, they very seldom complete the circle on that side
>
> Wilson, 1997

In discussing Cecchetti's use of the body she also says that there was a

> tremendous lot of use of the body, in spite of the fact that he wanted us to wear corsets, he didn't approve of us not wearing corsets at all
>
> Wilson, 1997

It can therefore be seen that the movement of the arms preceding the *renversé* turn is necessary to set up the body patterns needed to achieve the depth of movement in the torso that earlier teaching of *renversés* seems to have required.

During this *enchaînement*, therefore, I suggest that the earlier teaching stressed the following features:

1. During the *coupé fouetté* movements a rich three-dimensional use of the torso in space, and the arms moving relatively freely around the body as the dancer turns.
2. After the *pas de Basque* the arms dropping quickly and directly, slicing through the dancer's kinesphere to establish a clear relationship between the foot and the head to prepare for the turn.
3. A head-tail spinal connection through the body as the dancer powers from the front leg using lower body propulsion into the *renversé* turn.

The video recording of the dancers trying this approach to the *enchaînement* reveals the difficulty the dancers

find in working like this (they appear unused to this way of moving) but also the excitement of the *enchaînement* as a whole and in particular such a fully embodied *renversé* movement. One of the dancers appeared more successful in this than the others and I think this is largely due to the fact that she alone could relax enough to sense the gravity in her body and use this to achieve the fast, free flow movements necessary.

Conclusions

If these observations are to be believed I think they are evidence of a gradual process whereby the richness of the Cecchetti legacy is being eroded. The body is being used less and less with an increasing emphasis on the vertical dimension at the expense of a rich use of the torso in space and a body organisation and connectivity to support movement. The dancer's use of space has become more focused on the periphery of the kinesphere at the expense of a fuller exploration of the kinesphere's interior through the use of transverse and central spatial tension[15]. And this can relate to further factors in movement: central spatial tension in particular appears to be related to a clear use of direction and advancing; and we can also see how the drop of the arms slicing through the dancer's kinesphere with transverse spatial tension is used, in the diagonal turn, to establish a head-tail relationship which sets up the body for the *renversé* movement. Lastly the variety of effort also seems to be being diminished with dynamic

[15] This may be related to a reluctance to use arm movements derived or related to mime gesture which may be seen as more old-fashioned.

highlights, such as the sudden dropping of the arms with an arrested moment at the end, being lost.

One would be wrong to criticise the Cecchetti Society for these changes since they are pulled by the potentially opposing forces of preserving their Cecchetti heritage and developing a system which can meet the needs of the modern profession. If ballet in general is also undergoing such changes then changes in the performance of the Cecchetti work can be seen as reflections of this. It could, however, be argued that Cecchetti was always peculiar in this respect and that current practice is only losing something of what made the Cecchetti work special. My argument rests on the former being at least partly the case and anecdotal evidence suggests that other teaching methods have undergone similar changes.

My aim is not to suggest that the performances in the older style are technically better or preferable than the more recent ones, but that the variety of movement exploration is greater. I suggest, therefore, that this impoverishment results in dancers having a more restricted range of potentially expressive, embodied, movement information at their disposal from which they can choose in order to enrich their performances. As Wilson said about some Cecchetti work she had seen on video 'they didn't get any light and shade in the [movement] ... it was all what I would call black and white'. To return to the painting analogy of my title perhaps the exploration of the rich palette offered by this kind of work would enable dancers to work with a greater variety of light and shade and colour in performance. One barrier to this might be that stylistically the work

could be seen as 'old fashioned', but I think that this does not detract from the richness of the movement ideas that it contains, and anyway an exploration of techniques and styles from earlier periods would also be enriching in ballet training. Recognition that this kind of information can also form part of a varied classroom vocabulary might also stimulate new explorations in this direction.

As has been argued by Bennett and Poesio (2000) Cecchetti was working in the tradition of the Italian *Maestro di Perfezionamento*, he was interested in refining dancers and preparing them for the stage. He appears therefore to have divided his *enchaînements* neatly into two categories, on the one hand those that focus on academic clarity, alignment, strength and clear articulation of the body; and on the other hand those that are more complex choreographically, relying on little use of repetition and exploiting a richer vocabulary of movement material. The *enchaînements* I have looked at in this article fall into the latter category. Cecchetti clearly, therefore, saw the need to work on both areas of technique, the mechanical and the expressive. The concern raised by this investigation is that the changing emphasis in ballet teaching is favouring the mechanical aspects of technique at the expense of those areas which give dancers a rich resource to develop the expressive potential of the art form. I do not suggest that we return wholesale to Cecchetti's training methods, but I do think we can draw on resources such as this rich heritage to enrich the dancer's training and therefore the art form itself.

References:

Beaumont, Cyril W. and S. Idzikowski (1922) *A Manual of Classical Theatrical Dancing (Cecchetti Method)*, London: C. W. Beaumont

Bennett, Toby (1998) 'Cecchetti, Movement and the Repertoire in Performance', *Proceedings Society of Dance History Scholars*, Eugene, Oregon, 203-210

_____ (2001) *Cecchetti Then and Now: Some Thoughts on the Cecchetti Heritage*, lecture demonstration for The Cecchetti Centre London, 7th January 2001. Dancers: Greet Boterman, Gustavo Quintans, and Raquel Gaviria

Bennett, Toby and Giannandrea Poesio (2000) 'Mime in the Cecchetti 'Method'', *Dance Research*, vol. 18, no. 1, Summer, 31-43

Craske, Margaret and C.W. Beaumont (1946) *The Theory and Practice of Allegro in Classical Ballet (Cecchetti Method)*, London: C. W. Beaumont

Craske, Margaret and Derra de Moroda (1979) *The Theory and Practice of Advanced Allegro in Classical Ballet (Cecchetti Method)*, London: Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (first published 1956)

Glasstone, Richard (1983) 'Changes of Emphasis and Mechanics in the Teaching of Ballet Technique', *Dance Research*, vol. I, no. 1, Spring, 56-63

_____ (1996) 'The Influence of Cecchetti on Ashton's Work', in Jordan, Stephanie and Andrée Grau, *Following Sir Fred's Steps*, London: Dance Books, 8-13

Guest, Ann Hutchinson (1983) 'In Question: The Body', *Dance Research*, vol. I, no. 1, Spring, 64-76

Guest, Ann Hutchinson and Toby Bennett (in preparation) *The Cecchetti Method* (working title)

Hackney, Peggy (1989) *Making Connections: Total Body Integration Through Bartenieff Fundamentals*, Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach

Laban, Rudolf (1988) *The Mastery of Movement*, Plymouth: Northcote House (first published in 1956 under the title 'Mastery of Movement on the Stage)

Wilson, Laura (1997) Interview with Toby Bennett, 6 November 1997

Wilson, Laura (1998) Interview with Toby Bennett, 23 January 1998

Youngerman, Suzanne (1984) 'Movement Notation Systems as Conceptual Framewoks: The Laban System', in Sheets-Johnstone, Maxine, ed., *Illuminating Dance: Philosophical Explorations*, London: Associated University Presses, 101-123