> of the universe; he has done enough if he succeeds in establishing definite general relations in nature.[364]

This was the work of Newton, who did not try to step on God's toes, to delve into the essence of the universe, but only to explain how it worked. The subject of interest was no longer the watchmaker; it was the workings of the watch.[365] There was a transition from pan-rationalism to empirically measured rationalism.[366] Cassirer outlined this in brilliant fashion:

> For Descartes the certainty and stability of all knowledge was founded in its first principles, while everything factual as such remained uncertain and problematical. We cannot trust the appearances of things to the senses, for sense perception always involves the possibility of sense deception. [...] The certainty of the facts is subordinated to that of the principles and dependent on the latter. The new physical theory of knowledge, which owes its existence to Newton and Locke, reverses, however, this relationship. The principle is derivative; the fact as such is original. No principle is certain in itself; every principle owes its truth and inner reliability solely to the use to which we can put it, and this use consists only in the aid we receive from the principle in comprehending the manifold of given phenomena and arranging them according to certain points of view.[367]

In other words, following Copleston this time,[368] we might say that, while Galileo and Descartes saw the mathematical natural sciences as a key to the "secrets of the world," for Newton and Locke they were a search for empirically verifiable laws that could then be applied in practice. The aim was actions cleansed of metaphysical illusions, not the contemplation of all of existence, which took away the individual's initiative. Here Locke emerges as an adherent of rational activism, examining the world for its rational use. The instrumental approach to reality is less marked

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364 Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove, Oxford 2009, pp. 53–54.

365 In *An Essay* Locke writes: "But it appears not that God intended we should have a perfect, clear, and adequate knowledge of them: that perhaps is not in the comprehension of any finite being" (Locke, *An Essay...*, pp. 200–201). Martin Jay joins Locke in saying: "it was less important to know the internal workings of a clock than to be able to read its face to tell the time" (Jay, *Songs of Experience...*, p. 50).

366 As a digression, we quote Butterfield: "it is curious to note that, earlier in the [seventeenth] century religious men [scholars, at least by declaration, were mostly religious] had hankered after a mathematically interlocking universe to justify the rationality and self-consistency of God, before the end of the century their successors were beginning to be nervous because they saw the mechanism becoming possibly too self-complete" (Butterfield, *The Origin...*, p. 137). Among these successors he singled out Newton.

367 Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, pp. 54–55.

368 Copleston, *The History of Philosophy*, Vol. 5.

than in Bacon, but the spirit of his thinking seems clear – Locke defends freedom as the capacity to act, he sees the essence of humanity in action. For action to be effective, the rules governing the earth had to be understood. Their beauty and their tendency to make man contemplate the ways of God slip into the background.[369] Earthly tasks are pushed to the foreground. Human beings are born with a clean slate, and they develop their humanity in rationally shaping their inborn capabilities, by creatively expanding their original "tool box," so to speak, their life's capital. This led to questions on the source of human creativity. Why should we want to sully our clean slate? Newton believed that "God does not simply conserve His creation in a general sense of the word, but He also actively intervenes to keep the machine going."[370] Thus, he was more than a deist. He sensed that not all the forces governing reality were physical. The same went for Locke. Of course, we can in no way speak of his irrationalism. Nor was he, undoubtedly, the apostle of emotion that developed from his protégé, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury. Yet we cannot deny that his system contained a facet that did not quite adhere to self-limiting rationalism. This is the theory of discontent, disquiet, desire as the basic drive behind human actions, which Hazard reconstructed: "the soul is [...] active because it develops the sense-data conveyed to it. Now the essential principle of this activity was *uneasiness*; desire."[371] This discontent is a highly essential trait of the human condition, the true motor of our actions. Locke says outright: "the chief, if not only spur to human industry and action, is uneasiness."[372] True, Locke tried with all his might to believe that the rationally operating mind is capable of mastering this uneasiness, yet the mechanism of desire itself could not be eliminated, at least not in this life: "in the multitude of wants and desires we are beset with in this imperfect state, we are not like to be ever free from in this world."[373] The passion that drives our actions in life must be accepted, understood, tamed, as it will always accompany us. We might say that we are, by nature, creatures that desire.

In Locke the conviction that human nature would not be contained was only taking shape – the French Enlightenment would fully develop it. Yet let us not get ahead of ourselves, and return to the English bourgeoisie of the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They felt they had enormous energy reserves, which they longed to use rationally. This showed a remarkably robust optimism and faith in individual strength. Yet the unease that Locke described filled him with a certain anxiety; he tried to believe that the will guided by empirical knowledge would navigate it properly. In this conviction we find the new bourgeoisie's

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369 Unlike in Newton.

370 Ibid., p. 155.

371 Paul Hazard, *European Thought in the Eighteenth Century: From Montesquieu to Lessing*, London 1954, p. 362.

372 Locke, *An Essay...*, p. 147.

373 Ibid., p. 169.

great confidence in the individual. Locke believed that people were essentially born equal.[374] "For men being all the workmanship of one omnipotent, and infinitely wise maker; [are] all the servants of one sovereign master [...] being furnished with like faculties, sharing all in one community of nature."[375] Following this idea is the famous description wherein man's state of nature is "a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man."[376]

Thus, our point of departure is a collection of equal individuals. This does not mean a state of nature is idyllic.[377] In Locke we find ideas not unlike those in Hobbes. As to why man renounces his original freedom for a community, Locke responds:

> [F]or all being kings as much as he, every man his equal, and the greater part no strict observers of equity and justice, the enjoyment of the property he has in this state is very unsafe, very unsecure. [...] and it is not without reason, that he seeks out, and is willing to join in society with others, who are already united, or have a mind to unite, for the mutual preservation of their lives, liberties and estates, which I call by the general name, property.[378]

Emphasizing the defense of freedom as man's basic aim demonstrates the triumph of the bourgeois mindset in philosophy.[379] Locke went a step further than Hobbes, who called happiness the avoidance of violent death. According to Locke, happiness is not only security: above all, it is the opportunity to use one's own property.[380] Human equality means equal chance of ownership, and the state ought to defend this equality. Importantly, this did not lead Locke to conclude that people ought to be kept on a tight leash, as in Hobbes or Robert Filmer, whose concept of patriarchal authority Locke opposed.[381] Locke stood adamantly against absolutist tendencies, preferring a doctrine based on the division of authority. He saw an absolute monarchy as a harmful thing, incompatible with the logic of consociation.

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[374] He does admit that some are born more skilled than others, but regards this to be a rare exception. Nine-tenths of humanity owes its advantages or shortcomings to education (Section 1, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, available online at: http://www.fordham.edu/HALSA ll/MOD/1692locke-education.asp, accessed: 01.03.2015). Locke writes on inequalities he finds unjust in Chapter VI, Section 54 of *Second Treatise of Government*, Los Angeles 2016.

[375] Locke, *Second Treatise...*, p. 10.

[376] Ibid., p. 9.

[377] Cf. Strauss, *Natural Right...*

[378] Locke, *Second Treatise...*, p. 65.

[379] On how the "cult" of private property was already highly developed in the Elizabethan era, see Tawney, *Religion...*

[380] Cf. Strauss, *Natural Right...*

[381] This polemic is covered in-depth by Zbigniew Rau in his introduction to: Locke, *Dwa traktaty...*, pp. VII–CIX.

This is behind his famous statement: "No man in civil society can be exempted from the laws of it,"[382] meaning that no one, by virtue of birthright or position, stands above the state as a collective of politically equal individuals.[383] "If the ruler does not observe the laws, the people have the right to overthrow him through revolution."[384]

Locke's political concept proposes a special variety of individualism. It stresses the value of labor (agreeing with the thoughts of Puritan thinkers such as Baxter,[385] as well as more activist humanists of the Elizabethan Renaissance), later to be adopted by classical political economics, and then by Marx.[386] Locke emphasizes: "The measure of property nature has well set by the extent of men's labour and the conveniences of life."[387] This leads to a new definition of heroism, divorced from valiance and honor, and tied to labor. Significantly, Locke slips into pathos when he writes:

> though the things of nature are given in common, yet man, by being master of himself, and proprietor of his own person, and the actions or labour of it, had still in himself the great foundation of property and that, which made up the great part of what he applied to the support of his being, when invention and arts had improved the conveniences of life, was perfectly his own and did not belong in common to others.[388]

This intellectual reappraisal of the right to property became the foundation of the bourgeois world view. It meant the gradual lessening of their inferiority complex. The bourgeoisie freed themselves from their longing for an aristocratic way of life, replacing it with their own model, based on the virtues of entrepreneurship, creativity, and consistency. By this new model, chances in life were justly distributed. Everyone had the potential to achieve success in life, if they only worked hard and had the proper conditions to educate themselves.[389]

Here we see the first signs of the turn toward emotion characteristic of bourgeois civilization, and this we should investigate to finish our thoughts on Locke.

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382 Locke, *Second Treatise...*, p. 50.

383 We ought to recall that Locke was no radical democrat. He made political rights dependent on possession of property, which excluded much of the society of the day from citizenship.

384 Peter Kunzmann, Franz-Peter Burkard, Franz Wiedmann, *Atlas filozofii*, trans. Barbara A. Markiewicz, Warsaw 1999, p. 121.

385 Cf. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic...*

386 In Locke we find the characteristic conviction that "it is labour indeed that puts the difference of value on every thing" (Locke, *Second Treatise...*, p. 26).

387 Ibid., p. 24.

388 Ibid., p. 28.

389 The place of women in Locke's philosophy is ambiguous, to say the least. On the one hand, he treats them as independent individuals, while on the other, in examining married life, he writes: "it therefore being necessary that the last determination, i.e. the rule, should be placed somewhere; it naturally falls to the man's share, as the abler and the stronger" (ibid., p. 44).

Descartes wrote that "good sense is the best distributed thing in the world."[390] Locke would surely have cosigned this statement. He added, however, that the same went for the senses. Locke's human being was both reflective and experiencing. These are the two roots of knowledge. This is where we get ideas. Among them, two simple ideas are especially important: pain and pleasure.[391] Experience tells us that they come very often, guiding human behavior. Locke sensed that man was impossible to explain by rationalism alone. This does not mean we find him to be a sentimentalist. It suffices to look at the chapter titled "Of Modes of Pleasure and Pain," from Book Two of *An Essay...*, to be convinced of Locke's sober, common-sense approach to the world.[392] Yet it remains a fact that appreciating the role of the senses in experiencing reality, he showed, perhaps inadvertently, that man cannot give himself to excessively storied reflection. If he is to act and be effective, he must take in the world, be ready to taste it, espouse openness and flexibility. This, it seems, is how we ought to understand the concept of "sensibility" which Locke brought to a wider forum; in the following generation it would become key to a bourgeois sensitivity.

To sum up, let us outline the synthetic portrait of humanity as it emerges in Locke's work. Man is cast into the world to learn about it and use it. This occurs through experience, driven by insatiable aspiration. Man's choices are inspired by the sensations of pain and pleasure. The better he learns and understands the reality surrounding him, the more his chances of having pleasure prevail in his life. He is unable to penetrate the parts of reality that go beyond the senses, and so it is a waste of time to dream up conceptual speculations that might give rise to harmful superstition. It is better to base one's actions on common sense, which tells man that people are, by nature, equal, and should support one another in protecting their property. The latter is acquired by transforming nature's riches through labor – and thus labor should in fact be man's principle occupation. As there are different kinds of labor, society too varies – yet this multiplicity is governed by the principle of mutual respect. The more someone works, the more entrepreneurial he is, and, thus, the more respect he deserves. Here we see Locke's Puritan roots, though he keeps away from its religious context, making it a universal humanizing tool. People can differ in work, but labor is also a common ground where they meet. In this way, Locke manages to join universalism and particularism in his view of the individual. A special model of existence emerges from this synthesis – rational, sensory, activist, and individualistic. Individualism is most visible in his theory of power, the cornerstone of which is the independent individual, the citizen. In pondering

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390 Rene Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Donald A. Cress, Indianapolis–Cambridge 1998, p. 1.

391 Locke, *An Essay...*, p. 148.

392 Ibid.

the state of nature we realize that we have not been cast into the world as a society, but each of us alone. Thus, a community is secondary to the individual, the fruit of a contract. The individual comes before the society, which is the work of individuals.

Strauss has brilliantly outlined the cultural transformation in Locke's philosophy, and so we quote him *in extenso*:

> Through the shift of emphasis from the natural duties or obligations to natural rights, the individual, the ego, had become the center and origin of the moral world, since man – as distinguished from man's end – had become that center or origin. Locke's doctrine of property is a still more "advanced" expression of this radical change than was the political philosophy of Hobbes. According to Locke, man and not nature, the work of man and not the gift of nature, is the origin of almost everything valuable: man owes almost everything valuable to his own efforts. Not resigned gratitude and consciously obeying or imitating nature but hopeful self-reliance and creativity become henceforth the marks of human nobility. Man is effectively emancipated from the bonds of nature, and therewith the individual is emancipated from those social bonds which antedate all consent or compact, by the emancipation of his productive acquisitiveness, which is necessarily, if accidentally, beneficent and hence susceptible of becoming the strongest social bond: restraint of the appetites is replaced by a mechanism [hedonistic appropriation], whose effect is humane. And that emancipation is achieved through the intercession of the prototype of conventional things, i.e., money. The world in which human creativity seems to reign supreme is, in fact, the world which has replaced the rule of nature by the rule of convention. From now on, nature furnishes only the worthless materials as in themselves; the forms are supplied by man, by man's free creation.[393]

This is the backbone of the modern worldview that characterizes a certain, bourgeois form of existence.

In the political model Locke created, there is no room for externally-imposed hierarchies. This is why Habermas could write: "The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public."[394] Here we ought not to interpret "the private" as being cut off from the state, but as its colonization in the name of the private, understood in terms of the Greek *oikonomia*. This is a very interesting phenomenon – the politicization of a larger portion of society than before through labor, accompanied by the socialization of the state. As it turned out, this was possible because labor is a far more universal value than honor, and it ensures the individual a greater sense of autonomy. Labor is, by nature, progressive, and honor conservative. Labor mobilizes, helps you find your inner vocation. Honor petrifies, subordinating individual existence to an external authority.

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[393] Strauss, *Natural Right...*, pp. 248–249.

[394] Habermas, *The Structural Transformation...*, p. 27.

Locke described labor as a creative activity to transform the gifts of nature into goods to satisfy human needs. He enthused at the superiority of bread over acorns, wine over water, cloth and silk over leather and moss.[395] The truly creative individual emerged as a farmer and craftsman here. At the same time, Locke saw the virtue in exchanging goods for money, showing it had a considerable effect in reducing waste. This paved the way for the following generation's ideological operation – valuing non-productive activities as labor. We see this particularly in reading *The Spectator*, a magazine that was highly inspired by Locke, and run by two typical, middle-of-the-road individuals – Richard Steele and Joseph Addison, who had a great influence on public opinion in the early eighteenth century. As the translator writes in the introduction to a Polish selection of articles from *The Spectator*:

> With the growth of the political and economic clout of the bourgeoisie, their cultural ambitions grew as well. [...] The voice of aristocratic London was joined by another London – a city of bankers and merchants, lawyers and doctors, impoverished gentlemen who had taken to trade, and the bourgeoisie who, their sacks full of money, sought to become gentlemen. These were people with open minds, hungry for entertainment and instruction, eager to converse and discuss a wide variety of topics.[396]

This was Habermas's public, holding forth in conversations in the cafes of the capital city, discussing politics, economics, morality, and art, giving shape to the bourgeois worldview. An important aspect of this is the apotheosis of business we find in *The Spectator*, above all in two essays: Steele's defense of merchants, published on Wednesday, September 19, 1711,[397] and "The Royal Exchange" by Addison.[398] In the latter we find some particularly significant words, showing the shift in stress between Locke and his "disciples":

> there are not more useful members in a commonwealth than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of nature, find work for the poor, and wealth to the rich, and magnificence to the great. Our English merchant converts the tin of his own country into gold, and exchanges his wool for rubies.[399]

Addison's praise of the exchange is so enthusiastic that we might suspect it has a touch of irony.[400] Yet this does not change the fact that trade is the focus of inter-

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395 Locke, *Second Treatise...*, p. 27.

396 Zofia Sinkowa, "Wstęp," in: Zofia Sinkowa (ed. and trans.), *Spectator. Wybor*, Wrocław 1957, p. IV.

397 *The Spectator*, Vol. 2, London 1854, p. 69.

398 *Addison's Essays*, ed. John Richard Green, London–New York 2010, pp. 103–107.

399 Ibid., p. 106.

400 We might cite a fragment: "This grand scene of business gives me an infinite variety of solid and substantial entertainments. As I am a great lover of mankind, my heart naturally overflows with pleasure at the sight of a prosperous and happy multitude, insomuch, that at many public solemnities

est, regarded as an important activity for society. Trade is labor, sometimes hard labor, and always of colossal significance for the public good.[401]

The process of making labor, in its broadest definition, public in the arena of eighteenth-century England, in part through the admonitions by Locke and authors of *The Spectator*, translated into a new structure of values. A bourgeois person cultivated a model of life whereby striving to earn money was of key significance; it served both the individual and the society. This required prudence, but not asceticism, frugality but not stinginess, moderation but not severity. We might say we are dealing with a compromise between aristocratic excess and Puritan modesty. *The Spectator* reveals a fully-formed middle road, as clearly demonstrated in a comparison between two articles: no. 151, Thursday, August 23, 1711, by Steele[402] and no. 494, Friday, September 26, 1712, by Addison.[403] The former condemns an extremely sensual existence devoted to the pursuit of pleasure. The negative figure is the gallant, the man of fashion, who was often reviled in *The Spectator*. Living hedonistically, with no sense of responsibility, he was focused on earthly delights deemed hollow, egoistical, and harmful to the gallant and his surroundings. This did not mean, however, that one was to wallow in Puritanical asceticism, as Addison writes in considering his religious contemporaries:

> About an age ago it was the fashion in England, for every one that would be thought religious, to throw as much sanctity as possible into his face, and in particular to abstain from all appearances of mirth and pleasantry, which were looked upon as the marks of a carnal mind.[404]

The religiousness of the bourgeoisie is quite different – it is saturated by optimism, faith in the beauty of man and the world, which strikes them as colorful as the squares and business halls of the day.[405] Not only religion had this optimism. The whole of

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I cannot forbear expressing my joy with teats that have stolen down my cheeks. For this reason I am wonderfully delighted to see such a body of men thriving in their own private fortunes, and at the same time promoting the public stock" (ibid., p. 104).

401 In this context, Max Weber wrote of the transition from the irrational, high-risk capitalism "in the field of fiscal and colonial privileges and public monopolies" to rational "capitalism oriented in relation to market opportunities which were developed from within by business interests themselves on the basis of saleable services" (Weber, *Economy and Society...*, p. 1022). It seems that if this shift did occur, it was on an ideological plane – from William Paterson's capitalism to Adam Smith's.

402 *The Spectator*, Vol. 2, London 1806, p. 377.

403 *The Spectator*, Vol. 7, London 1806, p. 112.

404 Ibid.

405 Sinkowa writes: "The highest creature, the Creator of the World according to the *Spectator* was no longer the terrible and demanding Jehovah of the Puritans, it was the good and understanding Ruler of an understanding Nature, whose existence is proved not only in the *Good Book*, but is chiefly confirmed by the purposeful and structured laws of Nature, discovered in the eighteenth century by the development of the natural sciences" (Sinkowa, "Wstęp," p. LXX).

the bourgeois worldview of this period was marked by a joyful conviction that everything was essentially good. Alexander Pope captured this in his famous "Essay on Man":

> All discord [is] harmony, not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good:
> And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear, "Whatever is, is RIGHT."[406]

In these few lines we see an optimism and trust that testify to almost limitless stores of initiative that characterize the modern bourgeoisie emerging at the time. Throughout the century, it sought a vent for this energy, until the tumultuous events on the Continent in 1789–1795, which finally brought about what would be called the bourgeois era on the Continent. The roots of this process could be found in the England of Locke, Pope, Steele, and Addison. Let us note how intoxicated Addison is by a mobilizing optimism as he outlines a moral program for the bourgeoisie:

> If we may believe our logicians, man is distinguished from all other creatures by the faculty of laughter. He has a heart capable of mirth, and naturally disposed to it. It is not the business of virtue to extirpate the affections of the mind, but to regulate them. It may moderate and restrain, but was not designed to banish gladness from the heart of man.[407]

Over time, it turned out things were not so simple. The bourgeois heart revealed its dark side. But this was only made possible through the initial charge of optimism that pushed it toward creativity.

Bourgeois mobilization was based on the positive perception of sensitivity, visible in Locke, and especially clear in the passage we have cited from Addison: "It is not the business of virtue to extirpate the affections of the mind, but to regulate them." True, Descartes and Malebranche wrote in the same spirit, but in the English bourgeois rendition, "work on emotions" gained new meaning. The point was less to "acquire a quite absolute dominion over all their passions"[408] than to affirm the cooperation between the mind and the affective. The aim was no longer stoic calm, it was an active life. The bourgeoisie did not long to be pillars of wisdom contemplating the world, nor regimented soldiers whipping themselves and reality into shape. They aimed to find pleasure in a rational way, to feel energy manifested in passions. To see how this worked, let us close the chapter by having a look at the bourgeois body on stage, above all the dancing body, which took on a great many colors and became highly dynamic in the early eighteenth century in England.

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406 Alexander Pope, *The Major Works*, Oxford 2006, p. 280.
407 *The Spectator*, Vol. 7, London 1806, p. 116.
408 Rene Descartes, *Passions of the Soul*, trans. Stephen H. Voss, Indianapolis–Cambridge 1989, p. 49.

The Bourgeois Fashion for Dance

In the English theater, the seventeenth century was a time of the bourgeois sensitivity gradually ascending, which led to the bloom of the English bourgeois drama in the first half of the eighteenth century.[409] By the time of the first Stuart, bourgeois voices had appeared on the London stage, in the domestic tragedies of Heywood, in the character comedies of Jonson, and in the moralizing comedies of Dekker and Heywood. We encounter in them characters with their private problems, often from a bourgeois community, "in the heat of their everyday contemporaneous life."[410] This was essentially missing from Shakespeare's tragedies and comedies. The same went for the masques, where the ancient backdrop and the pastoral illusion reined, the protagonists were rulers, or exceptional and unusual people. Things were different in the bourgeois genres, where the increasingly affluent bourgeoisie – a great portion of the audience, and a basic source of income for the theaters – could watch themselves, as in a mirror.

Bourgeois audiences laughed at their own vices, but also at those of the aristocracy, as in the comedies of Thomas Middleton or Richard Brome; they wept at their own moral dilemmas, and were moved by misfortunes that could befall them, as in the household tragedies. Emotional and moral pathos appeared on the English stage with increasing frequency after the Glorious Revolution. The change in tone in Restoration comedies is striking, between the whimsical Etherege and Wycherley and the more frequently moralizing William Congreve. English audiences no longer wished to see the excesses of the fashionable cavaliers. A radical expression of this rebellion was a pamphlet by Jeremy Collier, *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698), a strident voice against theater that did not seek to educate its viewers, but merely to provide a kind of entertainment the author found highly dubious.

Collier was a radical in the tradition of Prynne and others, yet in his works we find a grain of the truth of Steele and Addison, who not only edited *The Spectator*, but also made pieces for the stage. In Addison's well-regarded *Cato*, we find evidently classical tones. Steele specialized in lighter work. Both found themselves inevitably drifting toward sentimentalism. We might quote a characteristic phrase from the preface to one of Steele's comedies: "Men ought not to be laugh'd at for weeping, till we are come to a more clear Notion of what is to be imputed to the Hardness of the Head, and the Softness of the Heart."[411] This is a sign of the transformation we have mentioned. The old values had become obsolete. The Glorious Revolution

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409 This process was described by Grzegorz Sinko in his introduction to: Grzegorz Sinko (ed. and trans.), *Angielski dramat mieszczański XVIII wieku*, Wrocław 1955, pp. III–XXXI.

410 Ibid., p. VI.

411 "Preface to The Conscious Lovers," *The Dramatick Works of Sir Richard Steele*, Dublin 1743.

meant not only a political revolution, but a cultural one as well – a new, prevailing worldview, open to feelings, unlike the paradigm that was fading along with the old order. Thus, Steele, and later other authors as well, and not only playwrights, "showed a powerful streak of sentimentalism in the programmatic tirades against the feudal concept of honor, the inborn goodness of heroes and their eventual improvement."[412] The bourgeoisie gained autonomy, seeing themselves as creatures that could think, but also, above all, that could feel. This distinguished them from the cold, often cynical aristocracy. In this way they could present themselves as more human. This was a typical procedure of distinction that perhaps makes the celebrated eighteenth-century exalted stage body seem highly caricatured to us: "To give the new bourgeois dilemmas, which had been held in contempt or mocked, both weight and gravity, pathos was needed; sentiment made its appeal to viewers' noble nature on equal terms with rational arguments."[413]

We should also see the dance of this period in terms of the bourgeois society's overall sentimentalization of culture. The Glorious Revolution ended the courtly patronage of performances. As good Protestants, William III and his wife Mary had no intention of spending money on public spectacles, especially as the king needed funds for the war against France. This did not mean that the court stopped dancing in the eighteenth century. Under Queen Anne (1702–1714), for example, dance life in Whitehall was alive and well, though not as well as it was under the first Stuarts. The center of dance life moved from the court to the city.

Dance, whether social or staged, was linked once and for all to the free market emerging in all spheres of life. The dance spectacle took shape on stages of the public theaters, both with and without licenses. Dance education, in turn, preparing the individual for social dancing, took place in public dance schools and in private lessons from paid teachers. Jennifer Thorp describes the significance of changes in patronage of dance life:

> a more powerful force than the royal or aristocratic patronage was the influence of the marketplace – patronage from clients, be they pupils, parents of pupils, readers of dance treatises, purchasers of dance notations, or audiences in the theatres. And in such a situation an essential factor was the network of professional contacts each dancing master built up, and also the means by which he publicised and sold his work.[414]

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412 Sinkowa, "Wstęp," p. XXV.

413 Ibid., p. XXVIII. We should also quote the paragraph's conclusion, as to the evolution of bourgeois feelings, which will be our focus through the next two chapters: "We must bear in mind that, in this period, sentimental elements had yet to be emancipated from the bulk of Enlightenment ideas, and did not oppose rationalism; on the contrary, they served its propaganda quite effectively. Only much later, in the mid century, was sentimentalism established as a highly complex approach, opposed to rationalism and bourgeois progress, which manifested itself in the first opposition to the capitalism it built" (ibid., pp. XXVIII–XXIX).

414 Thorp, *Your Honor'd and Obedient Servant...*, p. 84.

Fortunately for the profession, there was a great demand for dance, which became a vital skill throughout Europe. For many people of the lower estates, learning sophisticated manners was a point of honor. This reflected admiration for the aristocracy, the desire to emulate its forms, but also a longing to express a separate dynamism. We have already observed this in the quotations from the life of Samuel Pepys. None of this changed with the Glorious Revolution. The new authorities in no way discouraged dancing lessons. They were only placed in a proper context. Let us return to Locke. We recall that he stressed the need for education, given that every man was born as a *tabula rasa*. This meant it was absolutely necessary to ensure a proper education. It had to be given rational, real aims, be funded, and take everyone into account as an individual. In terms of the aims of education, Locke fell back on the formula "a sound mind in a sound body."[415] This we must stress – Locke posited that the body had to be nurtured as much as the mind. He wrote: "He whose mind directs not wisely, will never take the right way; and he whose body is crazy and feeble, will never be able to advance in it."[416] The whole first part of *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* is devoted to working on the body, in which Locke recommends following what nature seems to suggest. He lauds "plenty of open air, exercise, and sleep; plain diet, no wine or strong drink, and very little or no physic; not too warm and strait clothing; especially the head and feet kept cold and the feet often used to cold water and exposed to wet."[417] In adhering to these rules, the body becomes strong and limber, thus harmonizing with the mind. This cooperation is meant to ensure that "a man is able to deny himself his own desires, cross his own inclinations, and purely follow what reason directs as best, though the appetite lean the other way."[418] Here, too, we see Locke's Puritanical roots, and that he had not strayed far from absolutist rationalism, with its imperative to rein in the desires. Yet iron discipline was not the goal here. True, small children were first to be kept on a very short tether, but then they could be monitored more lightly. Locke recommends the "golden mean":

> he that has found a way, how to keep up a child's spirit, easy, active, and free; and yet, at the same time, to restrain him from many things he has a mind to, and to draw him to things that are uneasy to him; he, I say, that knows how to reconcile these seeming contradictions, has, in my opinion, got the true secret of education.[419]

What was the real secret behind education? Here Locke believed it was inculcating children with a sense of the difference between service and disgrace. A good

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415 Locke, *Some Thoughts...*, Section 1, Mineola–New York 2007, p. 25.
416 Ibid.
417 Ibid., Section 30, p. 28.
418 Ibid., Section 33, p. 28.
419 Ibid., Section 46, pp. 35–36.

education involved appealing to a child's mind through showing what would win others' favor, and what could result in rejection. Most important here are good manners and, as such, Locke writes of dance as follows:

> And since nothing appears to me to give children so much becoming confidence and behaviour, and so to raise them to the conversation of those above their age, as dancing, I think they should be taught to dance, as soon as they are capable of learning it. For, though this consist only in outward gracefulness of motion, yet, I know not how, it gives children manly thoughts and carriage, more than any thing.[420]

Therefore, the aim of dance was not to bring pleasure, it was not there to stimulate the senses, it was to teach inner control and refinement. Yet Locke did not want it to be a kind of ascetic torture. In dance, it seems, one found the ideal educational tool for the "middle path." In dancing, the individual was active and free, yet subject to rational limitations. Dance was a sensory experience inflected by rationality, and this is why it played a key role in educating the bourgeois.

In London in the first half of the eighteenth century, where Locke was among the leading authorities, we see considerable demand for dancing lessons (Ill. 107), and dance was often featured on stage. This was much to the advantage of many dance professionals. Among them were not only dancing masters,[421] but also the more numerous professional dancers of a new kind. While it had once been actors dancing on stage, by the close of the seventeenth century they were unable to keep up with the increasingly complicated choreographic material.[422] This was due to the fact that there was now a powerful lobby for the noble style in England. The end of the seventeenth century brought an influx of French dancers to London, owing to impresario Thomas Betterton. They included such figures as Claude Balon, Marie-Thérèse de Subligny, and Anthony L'Abbé.[423] L'Abbé settled in London for good, and went on to have a major impact on English culture as a dancer and choreographer and, later, as the dancing master of King George I. Other Frenchmen were also in London: François La Rousseau was a dancer and choreographer of comic talents who served the Grandmaster L'Abbé, publishing notations of a dozen of his dances.[424] King George I was so fond of George Desnoyer on stage that

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420 Ibid., Section 67, p. 47.

421 There were an astonishing number of dance teachers. According to Moira Goff's estimates, in 1700–1735, over one hundred dancing masters can be identified in London (Moira Goff, "Dancing-Masters in Early Eighteenth-Century London," *Historical Dance* 1994, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 17).

422 Judith Milhous covers this topic in "The Economics of Theatrical Dance in Eighteenth-Century London," *Theatre Journal* 2003, Vol. 55, No. 3, pp. 483–488.

423 Jennifer Thorp, "Dance in the London Theaters c. 1700–1750," in: Jennifer Nevile (ed.), *Dance, Spectacle, and the Body Politick, 1250–1750*, Bloomington–Indianapolis 2008, pp. 137–138.

424 Ibid., p. 145.

107. William Hogarth, *A Rake's Progress*, plate II: "Morning toilette," in the foreground, with a violin, a young dancing master, probably John Essex, 1732–1735

he was made the dance teacher of his grandson, Prince Friedrich of Hanover.[425] P. Siris was probably also French; he considered himself a student of Beauchamp, and published one of two English translations of *Chorégraphie, ou l'art de décrire la danse* (Choreography, or: The Art of Describing the Dance, 1700) by Feuillet.[426] The French also reigned in London's theaters: Charles Delagarde, Louis Dupré,[427]

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425 Moira Goff, "Desnoyer, Charmer of the Georgian Age," *Historical Dance* 2012, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 3. For more on Desnoyer, who divided his time between London, Dresden, and Warsaw at the peak of his career, cf.: Moira Goff, "The Celebrated Monsieur Desnoyer, Part 1: 1721–1733," *Dance Research* 2013, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 67–77; idem, "The Celebrated Monsieur Desnoyer, Part 2: 1734–1742," *Dance Research* 2013, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 78–93.

426 The other one, which was more well known, was by John Weaver, who will be mentioned shortly. Both were published in 1706. Siris was an outsider on the London dance scene, which does not mean his work was of no cultural significance, as Jennifer Thorp writes: "P. Siris: An Early Eighteenth-Century Dancing-Master," *Dance Research* 1992, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 71–92.

427 Moira Goff points out there were two dancers who went by this name. One was a leading representative of the noble style in France, and we will be speaking of him in a forthcoming chapter; the other appeared in London theaters (Moira Goff, "The 'London' Dupré," *Historical Dance*, 1999, Vol. 3, No. 6, pp. 23–26).

François/Francis Nivelon,[428] François/Francis Sallé[429] and his sister Marie, who, though she only visited London on occasion,[430] made a remarkable impression on English audiences and the local dance community.

At that time, a fashion for noble dance was raging across Europe. This dance spread alongside the political and cultural influences from France, which was the most powerful state in Europe under Louis XIV. The noble dance was associated with elegance, worldliness, sophistication, good manners, and civility. Skills presented by professional French dancers stoked general admiration and prompted emulation. Moreover, notations[431] and theoretical treatises were published, and translated into foreign languages. French dance culture was unquestionably the best developed and most expansive in Europe. The dances it inspired conquered the salons almost everywhere, including England. It suffices to look at the most popular dances in the mid-eighteenth century in London: the *menuet*, *passepied*, *loure*, *rigaudon*, *bourree*, *musette*, *gigue*, brawl, and hornpipe. Only the last two were not imported from France.

Yet the English did not want merely to imitate. Their kinetic sensitivity, symbolized by Playford's work, called for freedom. This is why the English dance of the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries yielded "a constant tension between the desire of some people to romp, peasantlike, through the dances, and the aesthetic sensibilities of certain dancing masters who wished to preserve a degree of decorum in motion."[432] It is true that the dancing master community was hugely influenced by events in France, but it also showed symptoms of aesthetic autonomy (Ills. 108, 109). Of special importance here was the work of English teachers, choreographers, and theorists:

- members of the Priest family, especially Josias Priest, who worked with Purcell,[433]
- the famous teacher Thomas Caverley,[434]
- John Essex, who went down in history as a promoter of the French notation system, a translator of works by Feuillet and Rameau,[435]

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428 Author of *The Rudiments of Genteel Behavior*, published in 1737. For more on the subject, cf. Jennifer Thorp, *Pierrot Strikes Back: François Nivelon at Lincoln's Inn Fields and Covent Garden, 1723–1738*, available at: http://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid%3A245a912c-2aee-4639–830a-926a85c699cf/datastreams/ATTAC MENT 02 (accessed: 01.03.2015).

429 On his life, see: Philip H. Highfill, Kalman A. Burnim, Edward A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, Vol. XIII, Carbondale, IL 1991, pp. 179–180.

430 On Sallé's difficulties in England, cf. Sarah McCleave, "Dancing at the English Opera: Marie Sallé's Letter to the Duchess of Richmond," *Dance Research* 1999, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 22–46.

431 On how the French Beauchamp–Feuillet system was picked up in England, see Moira Goff and Jennifer Thorp, "Dance Notations Published in England c. 1700–1740 and Related Manuscript Material," *Dance Research* 1991, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 32–50.

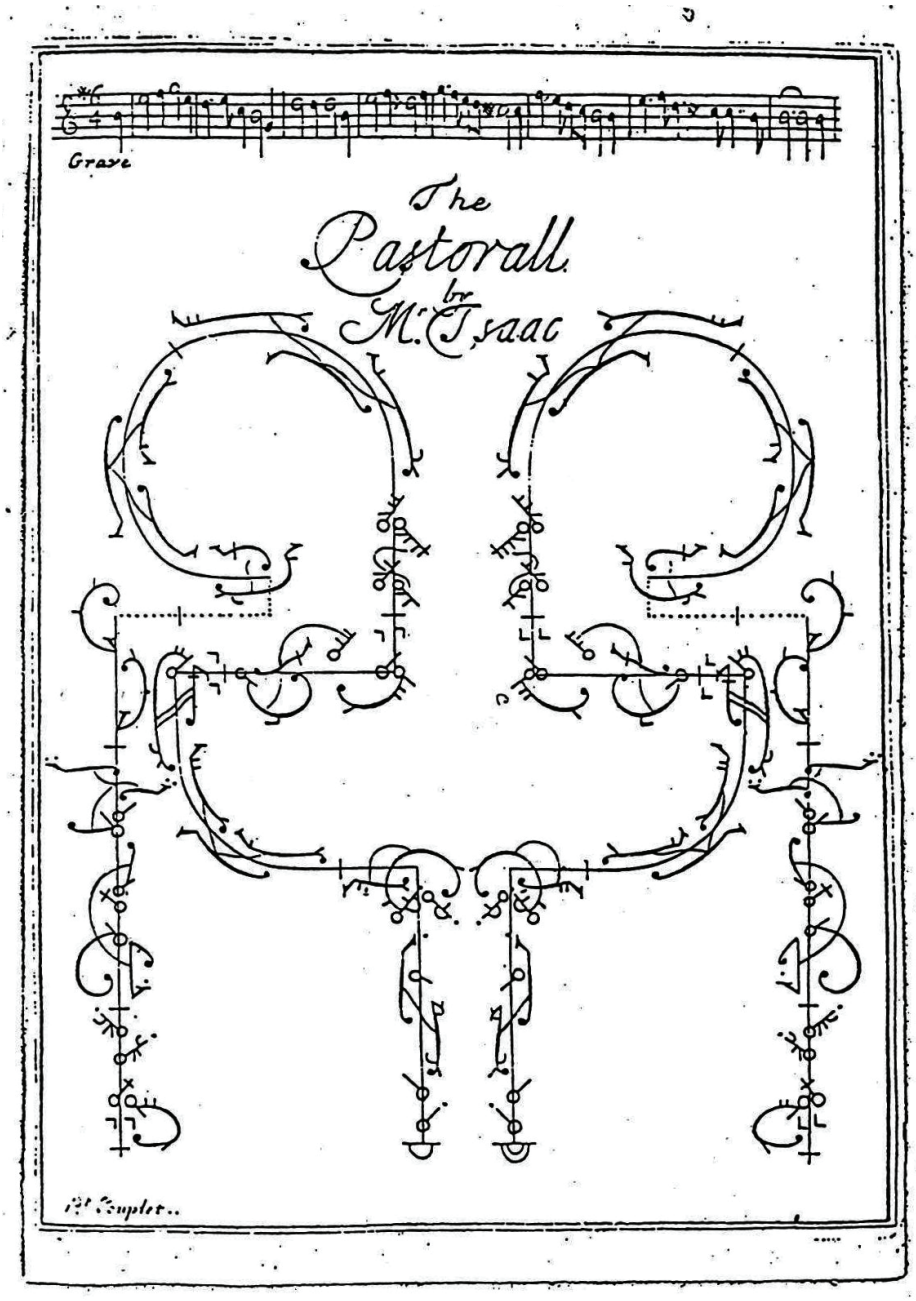
432 Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing...*, p. 298.

433 Thorp, *Dance in Late 17th-Century London...*

434 Goff, *Dancing-Masters...*, pp. 17–18.

435 Ibid., p. 20. *The Dancing-Master* (1728), Essex's translation of Rameau's handbook, available at: http://baroquedance.info/sources/rameau/ (accessed: 01.03.2015).

108. Kellom Tomlinson, *The Art of Dancing Explained*, fragment of instructions for dancing the *passacaille*, 1735



109. Mr. Isaac, *The Pastorall*, notations by Edmund Pemberton, 1713

- the theorist, choreographer, and teacher Kellom Tomlinson, author of a handbook for professionals and amateurs, *The Art of Dancing Explained* (1735),[436]
- Edmund Pemberton, who wrote *An Essay Toward Further Improvement of Dancing* (1711), and annotated and published the ballroom dances of Grandmaster L'Abbé,[437]
- one Mr. Isaac, a dancing master at the court of Queen Anne,[438]
- John Weaver, a dance historian and theorist, a dancing teacher, and a dance arranger, closely tied to London's Drury Lane Theatre.[439]

All of the above were educated by French dance theory and practice, all of them showed a tendency to maintain courtly decorum. Linda Tomko noted in this context that English "dance practice, while readily capable of distinction from the French, would be haunted by its definitional Other. The spectre of the French origin would always remain, nowhere more vividly perhaps than in English satires of the (French) dancing master."[440] We first come across these satires in the first half of the seventeenth century. In the period after the Glorious Revolution they regained their readership,[441] tailored to similar aims – liberation from the kinetic hegemony of the French, and shedding unmasculine affectation, artificiality, and excess despised by the Puritan sensitivity. The work of liberation came neither easily nor quickly. As Tomko writes, the French specter would "haunt" for the century to come. English dance was increasingly aware of this, coming out against unwanted influences with growing assertiveness.

Mr. Isaac's work is a fine example of eighteenth-century efforts to anglicize court life in the spirit of simplicity and vigor. Mr. Isaac transplanted fashions from across the Channel, but in the spirit of the local culture, which had no taste for excessive pathos, overly rigid elegance, and the physical rigor of some minuets. Jennifer Thorp outlines this in detail:

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436 Available at: http://baroquedance.info/sources/tomlinson/ (accessed: 01.03.2015). Of great importance to its success were the engravings it featured, which allowed an amateur to easily learn the steps. For more on Tomlison and his dances, see: Robert Petre, "Six New Dances by Kellom Tomlinson: A Recently Discovered Manuscript," *Early Music* 1990, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 381–391. Tomlison's choreography is analyzed by Thorp, *Dance in the London Theaters*..., pp. 142–143.

437 Moira Goff, "Edmund Pemberton, Dancing-Master and Publisher," *Dance Research* 1993, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 52–81.

438 A biography and analysis of Isaac's choreographic style are provided by Jennifer Thorp, "Mr. Isaac, Dancing-Master," *Dance Research* 2006, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 117–137.

439 The classic monograph on Weaver, including a reprint of his work, is Richard Ralph's *The Life and Works of John Weaver*, New York–London 1985. Another excellent source of information is Nancy Taylor's article, "John Weaver and the Origins of English Pantomime: A Neoclassical Theory and Practice for Uniting Dance and Theatre," *Theatre Survey* 2001, Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 191–214.

440 Linda J. Tomko, "Issues of Nation in Isaac's 'The Union'," *Dance Research* 1997, Vol. 15, No. 2, p. 113.

441 Richard Leppert, "Music and the Body: Dance, Power, Submission," in: *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology and Socio-Cultural Formation in Eighteenth-Century England*, Cambridge 1993, pp. 76–78.

> Isaac showed a lack of conformity to the French models: for example, in his penchant for slightly [choreographically] unorthodox endings to dances, [...] in his clear enthusiasm for the English triple-time hornpipe, […] in his willingness to abandon French conventions of the *entree grave* as a [solo] male theatrical dance, by turning it into a duet for the ballroom, [...] in the subtle humour of the gentle characterisation in dances such as *The Gloucester*, *The Princess,* and *The Saltarella* […] and the eccentricities of form in dances such as *The Spanheim* and *The Royal Portuguez*.[442]

We might turn our attention to the titles of Isaac's dances, often tributes to outstanding Englishmen of the day (*The Richmond*, *The Gloucester*, *The Northumberland*) or to the imperial idea, as in *The Britannia* and *The Union*. Tomko stresses the political dimension of Mr. Isaac's choreographies, showing their links with what was happening in the kingdom at the time – she gleans from them echoes of the anti-fractious politics of Queen Anne,[443] and even a kind of dance manifesto of national unity and imperial ambitions after England and Scotland became the United Kingdom. They responded to the waning position of France as Louis XIV's life ended.[444] This mission was continued by Weaver in the theater, having declared Isaac his patron and publishing his choreographies.

We might say that, in the British Isles, the air was thick with questions concerning the Englishness of dance, as well as similar questions about the culture of the United Kingdom as such. Answers were sought in the affective sphere, in feelings and in temperaments. English culture was contrasted against French manners and meticulousness. Courtly classicism was alien to the English bourgeoisie, even if it was adopted by such figures as Addison and Pope. Yet, in its joyful optimism, Pope's classicism was a far cry from the Continental asceticism, however much it praised moderation and order.[445] Bourgeois England was dynamic and forward-thinking. English rationalism, though it continued to dream of order and harmony, was bursting with energy and enthusiasm. This decidedly set it apart from the increasingly petrified French rationalism. The English greedily pounced on the world – the period of their near-two-hundred-year dominance was about to begin. The key concept of sensibility also had this aftertaste of *joie de vivre*, decisiveness, and dynamism; it looked kindly upon the lurchings of the heart.

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442 Thorp, *Mr. Isaac...*, p. 123.

443 Linda J. Tomko, "Mr. Isaac's *The Pastorall* and Issues of 'Party,', in: Nevile (ed.), *Dance, Spectacle...*, pp. 241–263.

444 Tomko, *Issues of Nation...*

445 In characterizing Pope, Hazard writes: "In the author of the *Essay on Criticism*, two men co-exist side by side, but the two men do not always see eye to eye. […] One displays the dash and impetuosity of a strongly individualistic character, the other stands for law and order" (Hazard, *The Crisis...*, pp. 350–351).

"Senti-mentalism" in Dance – Shaftesbury and Weaver

Honesty had not been freed of its classicist fetters in the early eighteenth century without reservation. The work to contain and mine feelings for a rational socio-political program continued. Yet these sentiments were not always an easy fit. In the early eighteenth century, England was the scene of a turn toward spontaneous emotions. We ought to pause a moment at its philosophical side, taking a look at a man who expressed the sentimental energy pooling in English society more profoundly than any other. This was Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Lord Shaftesbury, opponent of religious enthusiasm, and the herald of a far mightier enthusiasm for the world as a whole. Let us examine his thoughts to shed light on the work of Weaver, a pioneer of sentimentalism in dance.[446]

Shaftesbury had a tempestuous personality, with which he struggled, but which fed him. He was part extreme rationalist, part mystic. As a student of Locke, he wanted to reason as clearly as possible, but, being fond of the Neoplatonists, he desired poetic insight into the essence of the world. Shaftesbury admired the Neoplatonic notion of cosmic harmony, yet he was highly indebted to Newtonian natural science, which confirmed his impression that all of creation was a perfectly operating system. As such, he believed the supreme value in the world as a whole was beauty. His conviction of the perfection of the world was reinforced by the delight he experienced in communing with nature. In the lap of nature he felt that all things were one. He wrote of this in a tone reminiscent of Pope:

> Nor is there ought in this but what is natural and good. 'Tis *Good* that is predominant; and every corruptible and mortal Nature by its Mortality and Corruption yields only to some better, and all in common to that *best and highest Nature*, which is incorruptible and immortal.[447]

Such views led him to believe that good was equivalent to beautiful. Thus, he sought goodness and beauty, and, like the Neoplatonists, he found them in a sense of harmony.

Shaftesbury strove to gain a sense of harmony in every sphere of life. He believed this was only possible when man's inborn fondness for beauty was nurtured. As a part of nature, people are good and beautiful, unless they try very hard to upset natural harmony. They feel a noble union of love for themselves and for their neighbors. Man longs to survive, and to help others survive. Shaftesbury had a strong social streak,

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446 Shaftesbury's role in the cultural transformation embodied in dance by Weaver is noted by Jennifer Homans in: *Apollo's Angels. A History of Ballet*, London 2010, p. 54. Her observations are quite brief, however. We believe they ought to be developed.

447 Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, *The Moralists*, London 1709, p. 35.

a faith that people by nature were good and prone to cooperate, which was clearly opposed to Hobbes, above all. This altruism was not rational, it was aesthetic. Shaftesbury believed the individual would blossom in harmony with himself, and this was to be achieved not through objective judgment, but through focused contemplation.[448]

It has often been suggested that Shaftesbury thought like an artist.[449] Intuitive participation in the beauty of the world was a creative act for him. This was not, then, passive observation, but it was active participation. The world

> is only in appearance an "external" world, that is, a materially present, derived world. The deeper truth of the world also consists in the fact that an operative principle obtains in it, which is embodied in it and reflected by all its creatures in varying degrees and force.[450]

Artistic creativity makes man deeply conscious of this, allows him to feel the workings of the world within him. This is why Shaftesbury posited a total aetheticization of life.

Here we must stress that Shaftesbury was not after an irrational sort of ecstasy. He often spoke out against exultation. He yearned for a moderate, peaceful, harmonious yet expressive life. This was his credo:

> I endeavour to be really one with it [the Great Oneness of the World], and conformable to it, as far as I am able. I consider, That as there is one general Mass, one Body of the Whole; so to this Body there is an Order, to this Order a Mind: That to this general Mind each particular one must have relation, as being of like Substance (as much as we can understand of Substance) alike active upon Body, original to Motion and Order; alike simple, uncompounded, individual; of like Energy, Effect, and Operation; and more like still, if it co-operates with it to general Good, and strives to will according to that best of Wills. So that it cannot but seem natural, that the particular Mind shou'd seek its Happiness in conformity with the general one, and endeavour to resemble it in its highest Simplicity and Excellence.[451]

In these words from the *Moralists* we observe an intriguing combination of rationalist yearning and emotional mysticism. We cannot deny the impression, particularly in the third part of the work, that the mystic eventually triumphs. We shall try to sketch out the cultural backdrop for this victory. It would seem that

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448 Tatarkiewicz wrote: "His main conviction was: the world is not a dead mechanism; this is why its essence can be grasped neither by the rigid formulae of reason, nor the simple comparison of experiments. It is contemplation that does this; observing nature in its entirety, it perceives its life, its organic construction, the harmony of its parts" (Władysław Tatarkiewicz, *Historia filozofii*, Warsaw 2007, Vol. II, p. 134).

449 Cf. ibid., p. 135; Cassirer, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, pp. 357–359.

450 Cassirer, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 314.

451 Shaftesbury, *The Moralists*, pp. 170–171.

Shaftesbury's philosophy is ahistorical, merely another rendition of the eternal human longing for harmony. Yet it has something specific to its time and place – a path English culture began to take in the early eighteenth century.[452] We find tones similar to Shaftesbury's first in the novels of Samuel Richardson,[453] and then in Laurence Sterne[454] and Henry Mackenzie.[455] We see it in the poetry of Edward Young,[456] James Thomson,[457] and Thomas Gray,[458] and in English painting, where oneiric landscapes had held sway since the mid-century. We get a sense of Shaftesbury when our mind's eye strolls through the typical garden of the day, arranged in contrast to the regular, extremely cultivated architecture of the French gardens. One thing linked these fields – a focus on feeling, absorbing the world, appreciating the power of emotions. This focus on internal states was even seen in the medicine of the day, as in George Cheyne's *The English Malady* (1733), a popular title that examined sicknesses of the soul, such as spleen or vapors, which today we might call affective disorders, and a range of works on melancholy, above all Robert Burton's famous *Anatomy of Melancholy*.[459] We might say that sentiment had gained a cultural hegemony, as we see in the language:

> The eighteenth century saw the widespread use of terms for mental states, moods (apathy, sadness, boredom, longing, etc.), generally categorized as "feelings." [...] the word "sentiment" is often used (feelings in the moral, not psychophysiological, sense), as is "sentimental." The latter, derived from a French root, was first used in its modern sense by Richardson in 1753.[460]

Despite objecting to excessive emotional outpourings, Shaftesbury was a voice in the emerging sentimentalism. Yet what was the origin of this rapture, positive or negative, that sentimental literature and art tried to express? Or perhaps we should say – whose rapture was it?

We know that Shaftesbury, although an aristocrat, was a Whig "by descent, upbringing, and conviction."[461] As a Whig, he prized entrepreneurship, openness,

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452 Cf. Lipoński, *Dzieje kultury brytyjskiej*, pp. 402–435.

453 Epistolary novels famed throughout Europe: *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) and *Clarissa; or, the History of a Young Lady* (1748).

454 We have in mind, of course, *A Sentimental Journey*, Oxford–New York 2003.

455 *The Man of Feeling* (1771).

456 *Night-Thoughts* (1742–1745).

457 *The Seasons* (1726–1730).

458 *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* (1751).

459 On the English treatises on melancholy, cf. *Literatura na Świecie* 1995, No. 3, which features translations of fragments not only by Burton, but also lesser-known works by Timothy Bright and Thomas Adams. The section of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* on religion was translated by Anna Zasuń: Robert Burton, *Religijna melancholia*, Cracow 2010.

460 Kon, *Odkrycie „ja"*, p. 155.

461 Quoted from: Adam Grzeliński, "Wstęp," in: Shaftesbury, *List o entuzjazmie...*, p. 6.

tolerance, and, above all, liberty. And we join Starobinski[462] in saying that liberty is the key to Shaftesbury's sentimentalism, as it was for his successors – liberty as a myth that fed the bourgeoisie's rather unclean conscience for centuries. The emerging social forces rejected dry rationalism, courtly etiquette and hierarchies, but also skeptical distance, rigid nobility, absolutely compulsory moral codes. In their place came a fluidity inextricably tied to liberty. As Starobinski writes:

> we shall always flee a sense of emptiness and, through ephemeral sensations and thoughts, pursue intensity and fullness, which always need replenishing. This lifestyle marks all the eighteenth century activities: whether the pursuit of delight, the expansion of trade, or the conquest of nature, nothing can be possessed once and for all; possession occurs for a moment, and the moment vanishes at once. After what has been accomplished, our restless mind hears a new calling, and there our life seeks a new beginning and its confirmation. People must give themselves to passions to elude tedium.[463]

In Shaftesbury the bourgeois insatiability is not quite so visible as it was in France in the latter half of the eighteenth century, but it was taking shape. His sentimentalism, clearly evident in the closing pages of *The Moralists*, is built to some extent on a sense of emptiness dressed in the noble cloth of liberty. This was the social void that remained after the traditional hierarchies, and a moral emptiness tied to the erosion of metaphysical authorities. This hollow feeling was compellingly described by John Wilmot, the infamous Count of Rochester, a libertine from the circle of Charles II:

> After a search so painful and so long
> That all his life he has been in the wrong.
> Huddled in dirt the reasoning engine lies,
> Who was so proud, so witty and so wise.[464]

Absolutist rationalism had not kept its promises. It had not ultimately stabilized the world. Something was needed to bring new hope, the germ of a whole new order. The bourgeoisie thought this "something" might be the power of emotion, giving the individual a sense of satisfaction, a guarantee they were really alive.

In Shaftesbury an emotional guarantee of the authenticity of existence ultimately had to be confirmed by reason. Here we see Locke's influence over several generations of English thinkers. Jerome McGann writes of the "senti-mentality" of the English Enlightenment, later present in Francis Hutcheson, David Hume,

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462 Jean Starobinski, *Wynalezienie wolości 1700–1789*, trans. Maryna Ochab, Gdańsk 2006 [by necessity, the translation is based on the Polish version – translator's note].

463 Ibid., p. 10.

464 Rochester, "A Satire against Reason and Mankind," *Selected Poems*, Oxford 2013, p. 53.

and Adam Smith, which might be opposed to the less rational, fully sentimental Romantic feeling.[465]

Senti-mentality was a weapon for those who would not surrender to the void, valiantly fighting to build a new vision of the world, to join the rational mind with emotional rapture. Among them were the more progressive aristocrats, reflective, sensitive entrepreneurs and merchants, and increasingly, freelancers. Perhaps the most important exponent of senti-mentality in dance was John Weaver, whose name was mentioned at the opening of the chapter.

Weaver had nothing directly in common with Shaftesbury. He came from a family that was neither influential nor wealthy.[466] He was born in the provincial town of Shrewsbury in 1673. When he was still an infant, his family moved to Oxford. Weaver's father was a dance teacher. He passed his trade on to his son, who set off for the capital to earn a living. In this very fact of leaving the family home we see a growing dynamism through migration that was highly characteristic of the epoch, and which this dance reformer fully embodied. Yet this dynamism was still in search of a moral anchor, it wanted to be more than career-hunting. This greatly typifies Weaver as a man and a writer – he possessed moral ambitions that derived from the spirit of the bourgeois revolution. In this sense, he had much in common with Shaftesbury – a longing for harmony, healthy elegance, emotion tempered by reason. Both dreamed of a world in which the individuals could fulfill themselves as feeling beings, not just rational and pragmatic creatures. And for both, finally, the conventional court culture was a negative point of reference; in philosophy, this was represented by scholasticism, and in dance by the *danse noble*.

It is highly significant that, in one of his lesser writings, Shaftesbury used the example of dance to illustrate the harmony he dreamed of:

> What is dance but a like succession of motions diversified, of which not one single one would continue graceful if viewed by itself and out of this change, but which taken as they are joined together and depending on one another, form the highest grace imaginable.[467]

One might suppose that Shaftesbury had in mind a graceful minuet or *bourrée*. But did he? What exactly was this greatest imaginable grace meant to be? Was it geometrically weighed proportions? Or perhaps we are closer to the source of the harmony if we look where disorder seems to prevail – amid human passions and conflicts? These questions may have been what the young man from Shrewsbury asked himself when he arrived in the capital in the late seventeenth century.

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[465] Jerome McGann, *The Poetics of Sensibility: A Revolution in Literary Style*, Oxford–New York 1996.

[466] In reconstructing Weaver's life and work, we have consulted Richard Ralph's brilliant study, *The Life and Works of John Weaver*.

[467] Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, "The Philosophical Regimen," in: *The Life, Unpublished Letters and The Philosophical Regimen*, London–New York 1900, p. 82.

In London, Weaver swiftly found his place in the theater world as a dancer with creative ambitions. He had the opportunity to appear in a varied repertoire and to admire a range of spectacles. Often the performances he saw were not particularly prestigious by the day's standards, though they did enjoy considerable success – these were "night scenes," comedy sketches in the tradition of *commedia dell'arte*.

Italian troupes appeared in England by ca. 1540.[468] We have mentioned the impact these actors had on European theater and dance, as guardians of what might be called the kinetic element of the theatrical show. The Elizabethan theater, including Shakespeare, drew amply from this reservoir, as did Molière. Thus, *commedia dell'arte* turned from an Italian folk culture to a European phenomenon, an alternative to the pathos-filled and stilted high theater symbolized by the French Neoclassical tragedy. In England, the narrative strategies of *commedia dell'arte*, its stock characters, and very physical humor could be seen in performances by people of diverse nationalities, who would not tolerate the classicist corset. Among them were a Frenchman, Sorin, and an Englishman, Baxter, who used *dell'arte* as the basis for night scenes, which caused a furor in London and were emulated by many.[469] Their theater was quite physical and appealed to the part of the dance community in search of something beyond pretty poses and elegant sequences of steps. The night scenes inspired dance to develop in a comedic way, based less on technique than on vivid characters (Ills. 110, 111).

In early-eighteenth-century London, various genres of stage dance began to form. In a later work, Weaver created a typology, discriminating between serious, comic, and stage dance.[470] The first kind referred to performances that sometimes had a dramatic aspect, using the *noble danse* convention, most often in its *grave* variant. The second included dance sketches whose protagonists were representatives of various professions, nationalities, and strata of society – on the one hand, dancing millers and sailors appeared on stage, and on the other, "Dutchmen," "Scots," "Frenchmen," and even "Turks," "Poles," and "Swedes."[471] We know precious

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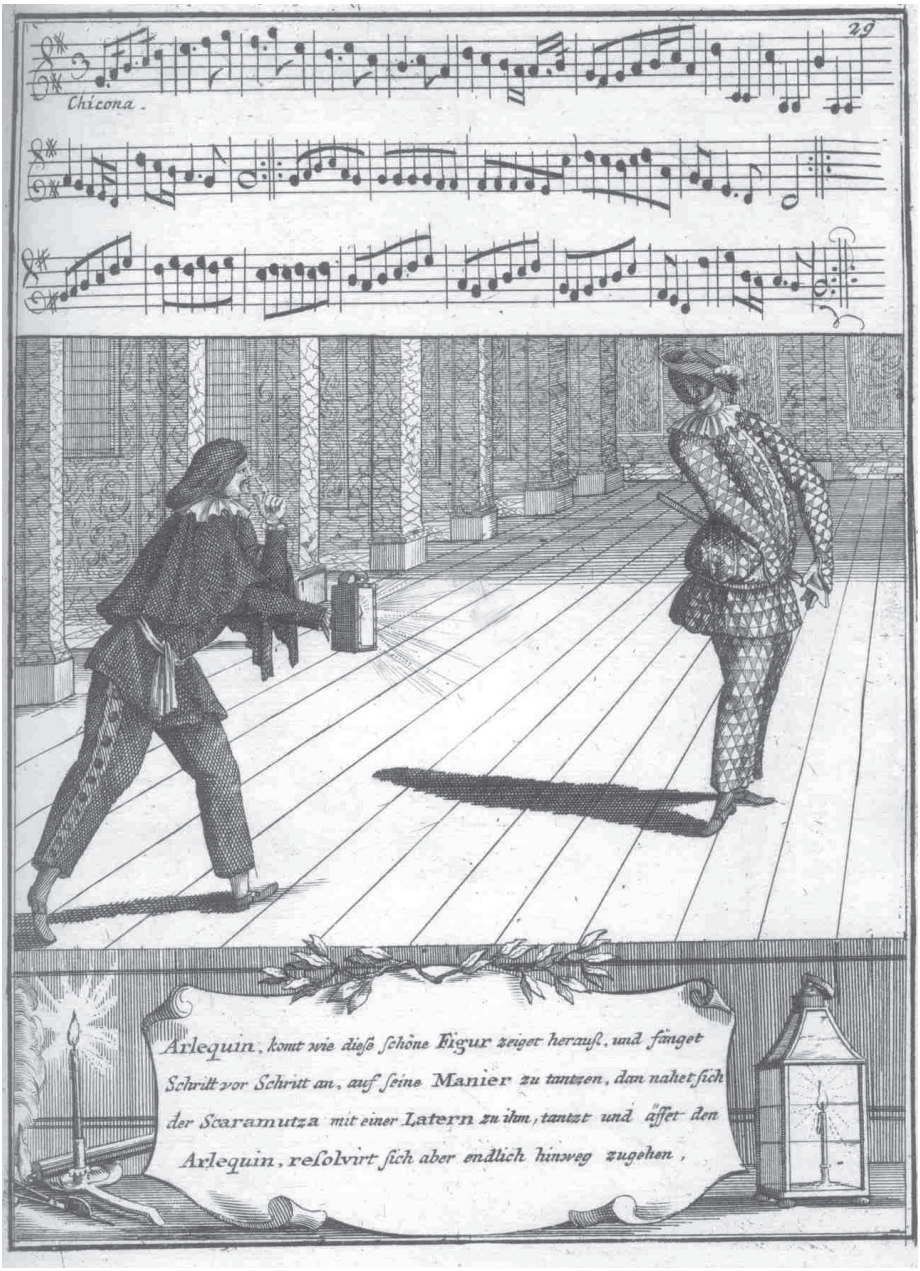
468 John O'Brien, "Harlequin Britain: Eighteenth-Century Pantomime and the Cultural Location of Entertainment(s)," *Theatre Journal* 1998, Vol. 50, No. 4, p. 491.

469 Moira Goff, "'Actions, Manners, and Passions': Entr'acte Dancing on the London Stage, 1700–1737," *Early Music* 1998, Vol. 26, No. 2, p. 220. Night scenes, as the very name suggests, presented situations occurring at night, which served as a pretext for various types of unpredictable events – the actors tripped, fell on one another etc.

470 John Weaver, *Anatomical and Mechanical Lectures upon Dancing. Wherein Rules and Institutions for that Art are laid down and demonstrated. As they were Read at the Academy in Chancery Lane*, London 1721, reprinted in: Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, pp. 861–1031. Weaver called comic dance "grotesque." Here he was alone, however, as this term was used most often in the narrow sense, to define dances of lower-class citizens (villagers and drunks) or material openly defying decorum (Emmett L. Avery, "Dancing and Pantomime on the English Stage, 1700–1735," *Studies in Philology* 1934, Vol. 31, No. 3, p. 422; Avery's article has aged, yet it remains one of the best descriptions of English stage dance of the first half of the eighteenth century).

471 Goff, "'Actions...'," p. 223.



110. Giorgio Lambranzi, *Deliciae theatrales: Nuova e curiosa scuola de' balli theatrali* (Theatrical Delights: An Interesting New School of Theatrical Dance), engraving of a nocturnal scene with Harlequin, 1716

111. Giorgio Lambranzi, *Deliciae theatrales: Nuova e curiosa scuola de' balli theatrali* (Theatrical Delights: An Interesting New School of Theatrical Dance), engraving of a country dance, 1716

little about the choreography of these dances, as only the titles have survived. We may assume they were based on popular social dances, but performed in an unconventional and exaggerated way, adding specific gestures, particularly in dances that portrayed professions or social statuses (village dances). Goff writes[472] that in the comic dances we most fully see the dancers' expressive abilities – this was a space for depicting the bourgeoisie's main interests – activities, manners, and feelings.[473] The third kind of dance performances, which interests us most, used dance to try to tell a story. Originally, these were various scenes cobbled together with a very slight narrative. Over time, however, they gained coherence, and for this, much of the credit goes to Weaver.

Dance was increasingly staged in the London theaters of the first decades of the eighteenth century. It was in vogue, and the more canny impressarios, like Thomas Betterton and John Rich, used this to their advantage. Dance was often used to draw audiences. Viewers enjoyed kinetic entertainment, and theaters used dance to compete for their attentions. Dancers were invited from France, and shows became more and more diverse. Dance came to be seen as another theatrical art – joining comedies and the increasingly popular operas[474] – and was also performed between the acts in other productions (*entr'acte* dances),[475] or when they were finished, as "afterpieces." The latter category included stage dances we might qualify as dramatic. These were the most ambitious type of dance spectacle, particularly those by Weaver, who took it as a point of honor to create a kind of dance that would not only divert the senses, but also feed the mind and be a morally uplifting experience.

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472 Ibid., p. 220.

473 Weaver wrote that dance should "explain Things conceiv'd in the Mind, by the *Gestures* and *Motions* of the Body, and plainly and intelligibly representing Actions, Manners, and Passions, so that the Spectator might perfectly understand the *Performer* by these his *Motions*, tho' he say not a Word" (John Weaver, *An Essay Towards an History of Dancing. In which the whole Art and its Various Excellencies are in some Measure explain'd. Containing the several Sorts of Dancing, Antique and Modern, Serious, Scenical, Grotesque, Etc. with the Use of it as an Exercise, Qualification, Diversion, &.*, London 1712, p. 160).

474 On the difficult relations between dance and opera in those days, see Thorp, *Dance in the London Theaters...*, pp. 139–141, reconstructing the place of dance in a performance from early in the century (*Love's Triumph, an Opera* [1709] with a libretto by Peter Motteux and music by Italian composers), and the limitation of dance's place in opera spectacles. For more on dance in operas of the time, cf. Milhous, *The Economics...*, pp. 499–504.

475 Shorter serious and comic choreographies played this role. Avery describes a program accompanying the play *The Fair Penitent* staged in February 1703 in Lincoln's Inn Fields: "[Over the course of the evening there will be] Four Entertainments of Singing (entirely New) by the Famous *Segniora Francesca Margarita de l'Epine*; to which will be added, the Nightengale Song; It being the last time of her Singing whilst she stays in England. [Then comes] The Instrumental Musick Compos'd by Signior *Iacomo Greber*. With a Country Wedding Dance by Monsieur L'Abbé, Mrs. Elford and others. Also a New Entertainment of Dancing between Mezetina clown and two Chair-men. With the Dance of *Blouzabella* by Mr. *Prince* and Mrs. *Elford*. By reason of the Entertainments, the Play will be shortnd" (Avery, *Dancing and Pantomime...*, p. 419).

We need to turn our attention to the strategies the young dancing master used to make dance moral. The most important aspect was the departure from the lack of content found on French stages[476] in favor of a more direct and powerful message with a corresponding emotional and intellectual impact. Thus, we may speak of a dramatic turn, at whose heart was the resurrection of pantomime. Weaver was not an absolute pioneer here. The first signs of this turn can be found in the antimasques. It was their conventions that led to the development of professional dance culture in England, as we recall. Professional dancers were not bound by decorum, and so could experiment with expressive movement, as Daye writes: "The later development of dances of action and character may well have grown out of the expressive skills [of the court masques] of a dance profession emerging as a specialist branch of the acting profession."[477] The influence of the English acting tradition is not to be underestimated here, especially the extensive Elizabethan repertoire, featuring a whole gallery of expressive personalities, some episodic, which required, as we have mentioned, acting talents that went well beyond declamation. These undoubtedly included elements of pantomime, work with the entire body. This tradition held good in the antimasques.

At the close of the seventeenth century, it was significant that the dancing body began to be more expressive. In England, Purcell's collaborator Josias Priest, for instance, who it seems was influenced by the Italian commedia dell'arte, introduced elements of pantomime to dance.[478] Weaver described him thus:

> the greatest master of grotesque dancing that has appeared on our stage... [H]is Perfection is to become what he performs; to be capable of representing all manner of *Passions*, which *Passions* have all their particular *Gestures*; and that these *Gestures* be just, distinguishing, and agreeable in all Parts: Body, Head, Arms and Legs.[479]

The problem was that the *commedia dell'arte*, and with it, grotesque (comic) dance, were not generally considered to be serious – they were associated with cheap,

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476 This, at least, was Weaver's view, writing about a pioneer of the noble dance, Claude Balon: "he pretended to nothing more than a *graceful Motion*, with *strong* and *nimble Risings*, and the casting his Body into several (perhaps) agreeable Postures: But for expressing any thing in Nature but *modulated Motion*, it was never in his Head. The Imitation of the Manners and Passions of Mankind he never knew any thing of, nor ever therefore pretended to shew us" (Weaver, *An Essay...*, p. 137). This was, of course, a reductive appraisal of the *danse noble*, in which we can also speak of conveying emotion, as Tomko writes, suggesting "affective expression" to replace Weaver's "emulative expression." She states that the *danse noble* affected viewers' emotions through its form, evoking a specific mood in tandem with music; thus, it was not a purely formal exercise, it had dramatic potential (Tomko, *Issues of Nation...*, pp. 107–108). For Weaver, this was too little. He thought that emotions died in French dance under a layer of choreographic icing. He wanted to tear it off, to get at the very heart of the emotions.

477 Daye, *At the Queen's Command...*, p. 89.

478 Cf. Taylor, *John Weaver...*, pp. 192–193.

479 Quoted in: ibid., p. 193.

readily available (in the streets and squares), mindless entertainment.[480] Weaver knew he needed something more valuable if his dance was to become a moralizing spectacle, and this gave rise to the idea of the serious pantomime, practically heroic, more tragedy than farce.

Because even serious dance was seen as ephemeral and devoid of intellectual value, Weaver was adamant that it had to have the right discursive framework. This is why he was the second person after Siris to translate Feuillet's work into English. His translation gained greater popularity. Weaver was probably encouraged to produce the translation by Mr. Isaac, his first patron in London[481] and a man who recognized the power of notation, which was capable of both preserving old dances *and* promoting new ideas and, thus, individual dancing master talents. Notation opened up the possibility of identifying dance authors,[482] strengthening the position of the profession, as it showed that to become a ballet master, one had to have highly specialized skills. Another professional and demanding ability that could ensure social recognition was writing theoretical texts. In his mature years, after 1710, Weaver achieved the greatest mastery of dance theory in England. He had mastered technique, as a translator of Feuillet with a thorough knowledge of the French technical literature, but he had also made his own important contributions, stressing the necessity of approaching dance in terms of the anatomical knowledge of the day.[483] Moreover, for his time he showed excellent historical knowledge of the field, which he longed to reform.[484] Study of the history of dance helped him find points of support for his reform. The young Weaver already basically knew how "dance theater" was meant to look – he wanted to tell stories without words, through movement alone.[485] He was not yet sure how to accomplish

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480 Ibid., p. 194.

481 Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, p. 13.

482 Susan Leigh Foster writes: "Feuillet notation empowered 'choreographers,' those with the ability to read and write the dances, to participate centrally in the circulation and sale of dances to students eager to master the latest trends in physical accomplishment. Dances became authored for the first time" (Foster, *Choreographing Empathy...*, p. 30). This is, of course, a simplification of sorts, for even the Renaissance treatises presented dances as composed by a given master. Nonetheless, notation did make circulation wider and faster, and authorship could be a powerful draw. We should note that this adhered to the logic of the dynamically emerging market society, where goods became commodities. Choreographic notation took on this nature, which means we can speak of this period's mercantilization of dance. Dancing masters often became dance entrepreneurs, such as Pemberton, but even if they did not publish, they had to think in terms of the market. Work not only could, but had to be sold, in order to keep up with the competition, in which tools like notations were most helpful.

483 Weaver, *Anatomical...* Ralph believes this is Weaver's second greatest contribution (after defending narrative in dance) to shaping modern ballet (Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, p. 29).

484 Proof is the countless references to contemporaneous theoretical texts on dance in *An Essay...* The works Weaver cites have been identified by Ralph, describing how Weaver used these sources (Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, pp. 131–138).

485 In his autobiographical narrative, Weaver wrote that in 1702 he composed *Tavern Bilkers*, "The first Entertainment that appeared on the *English* Stage, where the Representation and Story was carried

this in order to deserve social recognition. The answer came when he discovered ancient pantomime, praised by Lucian as the complex art of rendering the depths of the human condition through the body.

Weaver shared Lucian's views, but he also agreed with Locke that dance was both excellent training for the body and a smithy of morality. This was to be the base for a noble form of dance spectacle, whose task was to imitate nature, not to show off physical talents. For Weaver, imitation did not mean slavish, literal copying, it was a moderate demonstration of how things ought to be, with the conviction that nature was less the genesis than the reason of how things are, and, in this sense, its discovery was not the notation of facts, but the construction of a certain model.

Weaver's first attempt to build a dance performance according to these rules, after a period of employment with Mr. Isaac and Thomas Caverley and studies on French treatises and ancient source materials,[486] was *The Loves of Mars and Venus* (1717), performed at Drury Lane, where he was a ballet master.[487] This play had a simple plot: Vulcan is married to Venus, who, unfortunately, loves Mars. Vulcan is jealous, and, with the help of the cyclops, catches the lovers in a net, leaving them to be judged by other gods. Yet they are merciful, and husband and wife are reconciled. There would be nothing exceptional in this moralistic tale of the loves of

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on by Dancing, Action and Motion only" (John Weaver, *The History of the Mimes and Pantomimes, with an Historical Account of several Performers in Dancing, living at the Time of the Roman Emperors. To which will be added, A List of the Modern Entertainments that have been exhibited on the English Stage, either in Imitation of the ancient Pantomimes, or after the Manner of the Modern Italians; when and where first Performed, and by whom Composed*, London 1728, p. 45, reprinted in: Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, pp. 677–732). There is no trace of *Tavern Bilkers* in the theater almanacs. This issue is discussed by Ralph, ibid., pp. 50–53.

[486] From his arrival in London in the closing years of the seventeenth century to his departure in 1707–1708, Weaver worked under Mr. Isaac on translations of Feuillet (*Orchesography, or the Art of Dancing, by Characters and Demonstrative Figures*, London 1706, reprinted in: Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, pp. 175–285; *A Small Treatise of Time and Cadance in Dancing, Reduc'd to an Easy and Exact Method. Shewing how steps, and their Movements, agree with the Notes, and Division of Notes, in each Measure*, London 1706, reprinted in: Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, pp. 361–372). The young talent noted Mr. Isaac's dances with the Beauchamp–Feuillet system (*A Collection of Ball-Dances perform'd at Court*, London 1706, reprinted in: Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, pp. 291–336; *The Union, a New Dance Compos'd by Mr. Isaac, Perform'd at Court on Her Majestie's Birth day Feb 6th 1707*, London 1707, reprinted in: Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, pp. 341–355). In 1707–1708, Weaver returned to Shrewsbury, where he taught dance and worked on his most important treatises – *An Essay...*, *Lectures...* and *The History...* He came to London every once in a while for several months to work in the theater. He appeared on stage as a dancer, and composed dances and pantomime sequences to his own performances, as well as those by John Thurmond Jr. and Monsieur Roger.

[487] The text accompanying the performance, in which Weaver outlines his program of returning to antiquity and provides a description of action on stage is in: Selma Jeanne Cohen (ed.), *Dance as a Theatre Art: Source Readings in Dance History from 1581 to the Present*, *Second Edition*, Princeton, NJ 1974, pp. 51–57.

gods were it not for the form Weaver dressed it in.[488] It focused all the attention on the protagonists' feelings, which were depicted entirely without words, only through dance routines (Mars and his comrades danced a soldier's *pyrrhic*, perhaps similar to Arbeau's *buffens*, Venus performed a *passacaile*) and, above all, pantomime sequences of movements in which gestures, facial expressions, and movements of the entire body portrayed particular emotions.

In the program prepared by Weaver, we are struck by the detail with which he conveys the kinetic expression of the various emotions. This sequence, in which he describes the dance of Vulcan and Venus in Scene Two, is worth quoting *in extenso*:

> Enter to Venus, Vulcan: They perform a Dance together; in which Vulcan expresses his Admiration; Jealousie; Anger; and Despite; And Venus shows Neglect; Coquetry; Contempt; and Disdain.
>
> This last Dance being altogether of the Pantomimic kind; it is necessary that the Spectator should know some of the most particular Gestures made use of therein; and what Passions, or Affections, they discover; represent; or express.
>
> Admiration. Admiration is discover'd by the raising up of the right Hand, the Palm turn'd upwards, the fingers clos'd; and in one Motion Eyes fix'd on the Object; but when it rises to Astonishment. Both hands are thrown up towards the Skies; the Eyes also lifted up, and the Body cast backwards.
>
> Jealousy. Jealousy will appear by the arms suspended, or a particular pointing the middle Finger to the Eye; by an irresolute movement throughout the Scene, and a Thoughtfulness of Countenance.
>
> Upbraiding. The Arms thrown forwards; the Palm of the Hands turn'd outward; the Fingers open, and the Elbows turn'd inward to the Breast, shew Upbraiding and Despite.
>
> Anger. The left Hand struck suddenly with the right, and sometimes against the Breast, denotes Anger.
>
> Threats. Threatening is express'd by raising the Hand, and shaking the bended Fist; knitting the Brow; biting the Nails, and catching back the Breath.
>
> Power. The Arm, with impetuous Agitation, directed forwards to the Person, with an awful Look, implies Authority.
>
> Impatience. Impatience is seen by the smiting of the Thigh, or Breast with the Hand.
>
> Indignation. When it rises to Anguish, and Indignation, it is express'd by applying the Hand passionately to the Forehead; or by stepping back the right foot, leaning the body quite backward, the Arms extended, Palms clos'd, and hands thrown quite back; the Head cast back, and Eyes fix'd upwards.
>
> These are some of the Actions made use of by Vulcan; those by Venus are as follows:

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[488] We confess that we are limiting ourselves to a fairly superficial plot reading of *The Loves of Mars and Venus*. A more ambitious attempt can be found in: Taylor, *John Weaver...*, pp. 203–207.

> Coquetry. Coquetry will be seen in the affected Airs, given herself throughout the whole dance.
>
> Neglect. Neglect will appear in the scornful turning the Neck; the flirting outward the back of the right hand, with a Turn of the Wrist.
>
> Contempt. Contempt is express'd by scornful Smiles; forbidding Looks; tossing of the Head; filliping of the Fingers; and avoiding the Object.
>
> Distaste. The left Hand thrust forth with the Palm turn'd backward; the left Shoulder rais'd, the Head bearing towards the Right, denotes an Abhorrence, and Distaste.
>
> Detestation. When both the turn'd-out Palms are so bent to the left Side, and the Head still more projected from the Object; it becomes a more passionate Form of Detestation, as being a redoubled Action.[489]

This long fragment lets us see how different Weaver's stage dance was from all that came before. He did not entirely depart from traditional dance compositions. They were still meant to have sequences of fluid movements, as we can see from the use of the *passacaile*, but these did not excite him, as he understood that a new kind of expression was needed in dance, if it was to keep step with other fields of culture, giving voice to the emotions. Interestingly, in the work of reconstructing emotions, Weaver had a truly scholastic temperament, creating a remarkably extensive and scrupulous catalog of standardized images, which resembled Bulwer's endeavors of some few decades previous. Perhaps at the time there was no other way to approach the material. Weaver began with assigning emotions to standard elements by which they could later operate – he was a rationalist in a storehouse of sentiments.

Weaver's work criticized dance for its shows of pure technique (the French *danse noble*), but also dance that was exclusively entertainment, pandering to the viewer, such as *commedia dell'arte*, which, to some extent, had shaped him. This reveals a typical middle-of-the-road approach. He saw moderation as the basic principle of creativity, ensuring that the audience would watch a production seriously, as a morally beneficial experience. Thus, in *The Loves of Mars and Venus*, and in Weaver's subsequent works, like *The Fable of Orpheus and Eurydice* (1723) and *The Judgment of Paris* (1733), we encounter dynamic, expressive, but ultimately tamed feelings. This is indicated by one Drury Lane impressario, Colley Cibber, also an actor and playwright, who wrote that in *The Loves of Mars and Venus* "the Passions were so happily expressed, and the whole Story so Inteligibly told by a mute Narration of Gesture only, that even thinking Spectators allow'd it both a pleasing and rational Entertainment."[490] According to Weaver, moderation was the key to success in dance, which, to his mind, meant a clear intent and an awareness of the capabilities

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489 Ibid., pp. 54–55.

490 Quoted in: Avery, *Dancing and Pantomime...*, p. 438.

of dance as a means of communication. This is why Weaver wanted the dancer to be well-educated, to have studied anatomy, music, geometry, philosophy, rhetoric, painting, and history.[491] Only by leveling the body-mind duality could dance be made the profound experience of which he, like Shaftesbury, dreamed.

Weaver's attachment to the intellectual component of dance is highly significant from our present point of view. Weaver was a man of senti-mentality, often basically falling back on Enlightenment rhetoric. The dancer educated at his school was meant to create his own multi-level message, becoming "Interpreter of Aenigmatical Things, and a Clearer of Ambiguities."[492] In this sense, the mind and body were to work together, but in fact the mind took the lead. Because Weaver based his work not only on naturalistic gesticulations, but also on formalized and conventional gestures, intuition was not enough to appreciate his performances' innovations. Though the audience was meant to respond to the movements on stage without external narration, they had to have the requisite knowledge – a familiarity with a glossary of gestures.[493] Without it, the content of the performance and the craft of its technique would be hard to appreciate. The professional dancer became an expert in portraying human nature, a perfectly polished mirror in which the viewer could see their reflection as it should be, as long as they knew the master's "choreographic" code. In this sense, the dancing master was no mere imitator, he was a teacher who taught the code. Nonetheless, Weaver was forever reiterating that this was not about intellect itself, but about man's complex development; encountering an imitation of nature in the theater, he was meant to gain a proper notion of it and a sense of participating in its order. This was far from dry didacticism.

As with the pre-sentimentalist Shaftesbury, in Weaver we cannot speak of a total praise of feeling. As with Shaftesbury, whose mask of rationalism concealed the energy of enthusiasm, in Weaver, the facade of didacticism hid the might of emotion. In the *Anatomical and Mechanical Lectures on Dance* we read: "The *Dancer* [...] allures the *Eye*, and invades the *Mind* of the Spectator; for there is a Force, and Energy in Action, which strangely affects; and when Words will scarce move, Action will excite, and put all the Powers of the Soul in a ferment."[494] It seems these words contain the essence of Weaver's unfolding project to bring pantomime to dance

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491 As Jean-Georges Noverre, the second most important figure in the Enlightenment reform of dance, later commented: "The ballet master [...] should see and study everything, as everything that exists in the universe can serve as a model to be emulated" (Jean-Georges Noverre, *Teoria i praktyka tańca prostego i komponowanego, sztuki baletowej, muzyki, kostiumu i dekoracji*, trans. Irena Turska, Wrocław 1959, p. 40).

492 Quoted in: Taylor, *John Weaver...*, p. 197.

493 Weaver published explanations of the meanings of the formalized gestures in the play program, quoted above.

494 Weaver, *Anatomical...*, p. 144.

theater – the point was to move the viewer, to strike the depths of their emotions. Weaver wanted the audience to feel the promise of liberty endowed by this state of awakening. Although conventional and serious, pantomime was a potent source of energy, as Weaver believed that formalized conventions took the audience to what was most authentic – individual sensitivity, feelings, and imagination.

This is why an important aspect of Weaver's reform was exposing the dancers' faces, which, we believe, is understated in analyses of his historical importance. We must bear in mind that, in the French and English court performances, dancers normally performed in masks. This custom continued in public theaters, where it served either to subordinate the body to a geometrical composition, or to insert it in the demands of a particular stage type. Weaver decided to break with this, understanding there could be no talk of true emotions without a concrete person with a real, living face. When the *danse noble* was danced in masks, it expressed abstract, and thus general, emotions. Though Weaver categorized emotions in his glossary of gestures, he knew that the dancer would personalize them in performance. A wave of the hand, a facial grimace might be similar in outline, and yet quite different when expressed by different people. For Weaver, the exposed face guaranteed the emotional and intellectual message would come through. Here we might quote Selma Jeanne Cohen, who wrote that in Weaver's pantomimes the protagonists

> are no longer type characters but specific personages involved in particularized emotional relationships. They are – unlike Josias Priest's witches, fairies, and idle shepherds – credible human beings. They do not merely ornament a drama with their dancing; their dancing constitutes the drama.[495]

The motion sequences in Weaver were written into a dramatic story, whose protagonists were, in *The Loves of Mars and Venus*, Roman gods, though in fact he sought to tell the story of a pair of lovers and a jealous husband in his day. Thus, Weaver entered regions explored by dramaturgs in the emerging bourgeois drama, though he could not go so far, as the dance spectacles were far more conventionalized than the dramatic theater. He knew that he could not stage pantomimes in which the protagonists were contemporary inhabitants of London, as the audiences were completely unprepared for this. This is why he needed the scaffolding of antiquity. Yet the passions he longed to depict were intended to be modern passions, the passions of the bourgeoisie, as we have said. Weaver was quite closely tied to the organized bourgeoisie. He sometimes wrote on dance for *The Spectator*,[496]

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[495] Selma Jeanne Cohen, "Theory and Practice of Theatrical Dancing," in: Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, Selma Jeanne Cohen, Roger Lonsdale (eds.), *Famed for Dance: Essays on the Theory and Practice of Theatrical Dancing in England, 1660–1740*, New York 1960, p. 43.

[496] No. 334, 24.03.1712, available at: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/12030/12030-h/SV2/Spectator2.html#section334 (accessed: 01.03.2015).

and Steele penned quite flattering reviews of Weaver in *The Spectator*.[497] The idea they shared with Locke was seeing dance as a splendid exercise, shaping a svelte body and a graceful way of moving, and thus manners as well.[498] They tolerated no exaggeration, no oddity in dance, no hollow displays such as the high wire, leaps, or acrobatics. They believed that the stage was not a place for mannerist applause-mongering, but for natural characters, both comic and tragic, tangled in vital conflicts and dramas, which ordinary people could understand because they experienced them as well.

We can now fully present the parallel described above. Although they mingled in such different social spheres, and dealt with such different issues in their work, Weaver and Shaftersbury shared a senti-mental sensitivity. In Shaftesbury's treatises and Weaver's dance and his philosophical works we find the kinesis of an ambitious, progressive bourgeoisie, in a cultural, not economic, sense. We have quoted Cassirer's reconstruction, in which, according to Shaftesbury, "[t]he deeper truth of the world [...] consists in the fact that an operative principle obtains in it, which is embodied in it and reflected by all its creatures in varying degrees and force."[499] This principle was beauty conceived as vital energy, the pulse of nature, its most profound and inextinguishable movement. The task of the individual was to live by this principle – to understand the agency of nature as a Whole and to immerse themselves in it, in its adoration. Weaver's serious and sublime pantomime can be understood in Shaftesbury's categories – as the active embodiment of beauty, a celebration of the dynamism of the world. The dancing master believed that the emotive gesture had the energy of nature. This made pantomime an imitation of nature, whose laws in dance Weaver was the first in England to extol.[500] He took this very far. We might say that, according to Weaver, a dancing person is a Shaftesburian substance, "alike simple, uncompounded, individual; of like Energy, Effect, and Operation; and more like still, if it co-operates with it to general Good, and strives to *will* according to that best of Wills."[501] As such, this was not about releasing emotion, but about emoting the essence of humanity.

According to Shaftesbury and Weaver, the program of "senti-mentalizing" existence required not only an intuitive openness to nature, a sensitivity to the beauty of the world, but also rational control. This is why Weaver cautioned against exaggerated and ecstatic forms of movement, and Shaftesbury mentioned the intellectual

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497 No. 466, 25.08.1712, available at: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/12030/12030-h/12030-h/SV3/Spectator3.html#section466 (accessed: 01.03.2015).

498 Weaver wrote that a dancer should be "not too tall, nor too low, but of a moderate Size; not too fat and bulky, nor too lean like a Skeleton" (Weaver, *An Essay...*, p. 144). As we can see, he was "middle-of-the-road", even when it came to the body.

499 Cassirer, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 314.

500 Weaver, *An Essay...*, pp. 137–139.

501 Shaftesbury, *Moralists*, p. 171.

nature of unity with nature. Both were fond of the principle of the "golden mean." In Weaver this meant a disdain for mannerisms, a pursuit of natural movement that conformed to human anatomy. The man who wrote *Anatomical and Mechanical Lectures upon Dancing* must have been a rationalist to some degree; his actions guided by systematic, scholarly knowledge, he must have had a sober perspective on his profession. We should stress that one authority Weaver appeals to is Locke. Both saw dance as forging masculine qualities in the body. Neither appreciated the exaggerated compositions designed by the fashionable dancing masters.[502] Both saw beauty in a noble simplicity of movement. It strikes us that Shaftesbury would have cosigned these statements. We might recall how he strove for harmony. Weaver entirely shared this passion. For senti-mentality, harmony remained an important ideal. Yet we should note that this harmony was not understood as it was in antiquity, the Renaissance, or even in classicism – it was a harmony pulsing with life.

Weaver's dance and Shaftesbury's thought were saturated with a dynamically conceived, decisive movement. They considered this movement to be in everything, and always present. As we read in *Moralists*:

> Wonderful being [movement]! (if we may call it so) which bodys never receive, but from others that lose it; nor even lose, but by imparting it to others. Even with Change of Place it has its Force: and Bodys big with Motion labour to move, yet stir not; whilst they express an Energy beyond our Comprehension.[503]

This is how the bourgeoisie saw themselves on the way to cultural autonomy – as beings that held nearly infinite resources of energy. This meant they saw their bodies as both expressive and orderly. Life was a dynamic presentation of the individual temperament before other, equally dynamic bodies. This is why the kinetic politics of the English bourgeoisie of the early eighteenth century was conceived in terms of the expressive theater of the body and movement, and not the geometrical courtly ballet. The English bourgeoisie, while looking at the court in Versailles and the fashions it created with admiration, expressed an utterly different kinesis. In their eyes, social life was not a disciplined minuet, it was an energetic and romping country dance performed by separate and expressive bodies. The individual was not to be subjected to an ideal, geometrical structure. The structure was to be animated, made less rigid, letting in creative improvisation. It seems to us that this was why pantomime enjoyed great success in London in the 1720s – and not only in the serious, intellectual form favored by Weaver.

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[502] Ralph, *The Life and Works...*, p. 138.
[503] Shaftesbury, *Moralists*, p. 180.

The Energy of the Pantomime and the Country Dances

Though even today we find statements, in the tradition of Henry Fielding and Pope, that the pantomime of the early eighteenth century was meaningless, "irrational entertainment" of the lowest variety,[504] John O'Brien's splendid analysis shows this stereotype was a distortion: "Far from being the sign of the decline of the stage, the emergence of pantomime could also be understood to be a harbinger of its reform, a return to the classical basis of the theatre in the human body in motion."[505] This reform in England was tied to the name of David Garrick; it will be the topic of the next chapter, as it was a major factor in the shifts in kinetic sensitivities across the continent. Yet here we must join O'Brien in stressing that, were it not for Garrick's revolution in acting, there would have been no pantomime.[506] Let us remind ourselves of the key words for the English kinesis of the early eighteenth century: emotions, personality, liberty, body, motion. These served as the axis for the narrative of identity this period developed. They accumulated the energy that drove the theater. Its kinetic expression was pantomime.

Weaver gave an important spark to the development of pantomime, but he was far from the sole motor behind bringing it to the English, then Continental stages. Others swiftly picked up the baton – at Drury Lane, John Thurmond Junior and Monsieur Roger, and at Lincoln's Inn Fields, John Rich and Lewis Theobald. They all had plenty of skill at dance, particularly when it came to the comedy repertoire, they all felt closer to the *dell'arte* tradition, with which, in spite of Weaver, they had no intention of breaking.[507] In their reckoning, pantomime was not meant to be

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504 O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain*..., p. 490.

505 Ibid., p. 499.

506 Ibid. We have no room to explore this in full, but it would be unforgivable to entirely omit a second important factor in the theatrical reform of the early eighteenth century. We have said that English theater was opened to women after the Restoration. When allowed to enter the theater profession, women never gave it up, bringing in diversity and dynamics. We should add that women cannot be reduced to an exciting or titillating ornament on the English dramatic stage in the first half of the eighteenth century. The same goes for dance. As Moira Goff has brilliantly showed, women were a major force in bolstering the dramatic aspect in dance plays – Margaret Bicknell (whom Steele praised in *The Spectator*, No. 370, 05.05.1712), Elizabeth Younger, and Weaver's favorite dancer, Hester Santlow-Booth (she danced the part of Venus in *The Loves of Mars and Venus*) (Ill. 112), were outstanding actors and dancers at once. These powerful feminine personalities made the acting and dance techniques more expressive increasing the emotional palette. At the same time, some found the presence of women unsettling, prompting paternalistic gestures (cf. Ralph, *The Life and Works*..., p. 126). This is the flip side of emancipation, but for now we will stay with the energy which the women helped bring to the theater. For more on the role of women in the theater of the time, cf.: Anne Cottis, "Women and Dancing after the Restoration," *Historical Dance* 1988/91, Vol. 2, No. 6, pp. 16–20; Moira Goff, "In Pursuit of the Dancer-Actress," in: Brooks (ed.), *Women's Work*..., pp. 183–204.

507 Weaver himself, pressured by the audiences and management of Drury Lane (Steele), presented *The Loves of Mars and Venus* in the same year as a comic pantomime, *The Shipwreck; or Perseus and Andromeda* and *Harlequin Turned Judge*. In the following decade, he took part in the comedy spectacles

112. Artist unknown (attributed to John Ellys), portrait of actor and dancer Hester Booth (née Santlow) in Harlequin garb, 1719

only serious, silent drama, but a kind of total work: "to condense the most popular and notable features of the contemporary British stage: the plots of sentimental comedy, the scenery and diegetic material of Italian opera, the physical farce of Continental *commedia dell'arte* and the elegance of dance."[508]

Rich and Thurmond's work better suited the spirit of the times than Weaver's sublime pantomimes.[509] Their spectacles had a ludic aspect that agreed with audiences. Serious pantomimes could not gain the same recognition as farces, which led stage artists to give them an element of the grotesque, creating a mixed, seriocomic form, or to return to pure, ludic comedy "for the people." In the first type of performance, brilliantly exemplified by Rich's *Perseus and Andromeda* (1730),[510] two parallel narratives were staged: dramatic and farcical. In the dramatic narrative the protagonists were mythological characters, and in the farce, figures from *commedia dell'arte*, including Harlequin. The second type of performance entirely abandoned lofty content in favor of highly dynamic entertainment, bursting with sequences of various kinds of movement – from reasonably elegant dance to lowbrow humor. The best example of how full-blooded these performances could be is found in two competing pantomimes of 1723: *Harlequin Doctor Faust* by Thurmond

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of Monsieur Roger several times, including the popular *Perseus and Andromeda: With the Rape of Columbine; or, the Flying Lovers* (1728).

508 O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain*..., p. 495.

509 Rich openly mocked the pathos of Weaver's pioneering work, staging a parody shortly after its premiere: *Dramatick Entertainment of Dancing in Grotesque Characters, call'd Mars and Venus, or the Mouse Trap* (1717).

510 The performance is discussed in detail by O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain*..., pp. 493–498.

and *The Necromancer; or, Harlequin Dr. Faustus* by Rich (Ill. 113).[511] Both featured rapidly changing sets, protagonists that vanished and reappeared in totally unexpected places, supernatural creatures, and a main protagonist who lost a leg and then swiftly recovered it, all accompanied by various kinds of dance. Compared to this volcanic energy, Weaver's works were doomed to commercial failure. Though bourgeois, they were too sophisticated, too classical.

Audiences, including the working bourgeoisie looking for entertainment, were choosing theater that stayed close to its folk roots, because, for all their work to gain distinction, many viewers still yearned for a simple life and easy entertainment. The early-eighteenth-century repertoires often featured "country dances" whose protagonists were clowns[512] and bumpkins.[513] These were generally satirical pieces,[514] and thus served as a tool of distinction, but there were also performances in which we might suspect we find traces of sympathy for simple folk.[515]

113. Artist unknown, engraving depicting John Rich as Harlequin in *The Necromancer, or Harlequin Dr. Faustus*, 1723

511 Their fairly detailed description can be found in: Avery, *Dancing and Pantomime...*, pp. 440–442.

512 "The word 'clown' in the early 18th century denoted a rustic or a fool" (Goff, "'Actions...," p. 220).

513 Avery, *Dancing and Pantomime...*, pp. 423–424; Goff, "'Actions...'," p. 225. A short outline of Le Roussau's *Entry for Two French Country Men* is provided by Thorp, *Dance in the London Theaters...*, p. 145.

514 An example of a dance of a drunken bumpkin is supplied by Avery, *Dancing and Pantomime...*, p. 424.

515 Avery writes of a dance of amorous bumpkins (idem), and Goff offers a short description of the *Miller's Dance* in *The Necromancer*, performing an argument of simple folk concluding with a warm reconciliation (Goff, "'Actions...," p. 225).

114. Francis Hayman, *Milkmaid's Garland, or Humorous May Day*, 1741–1742

As in the seventeenth century, the pastoral life was often idealized in various fields of art. Examples are Händel's opera *Il Pastor Fido* (*The Faithful Shepherd*, 1712), the poems of Ambrose Philips, the essays of Addison, in which he reveled in folk ballads,[516] and Mr. Isaac's famed choreography of *The Pastorall*, composed for Queen Anne. All these were a kind of kinetic utopia in the space of an Arcadian dream of calm and unification in a real situation of political conflicts and intensifying battles between parliamentary factions.[517] English society was moving toward capitalist development, breaking free of its old limitations, but in choosing free initiative, it set itself up for new anxieties. "The birthing industry and large urban concentrations create new forms of captivity, new political and administrative problems."[518] The period we are describing was the tentative beginning of this process, which brought a new yearning for peace. One possible path of this escapism was the idealization, in the spirit of sentimentalism, of folk culture as universally human (Ill. 114).

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[516] Sinkowa (ed. and trans.), *Spectator...*, pp. 118–135.
[517] Tomko, *Mr. Isaacs "The Pastorall"...*
[518] Starobinski, *Wynalezienie wolności...*, p. 13.

Another strategy was satirizing pompous culture from abroad. One example was John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*. Its composition was inspired by Jonathan Swift, who came up with the notion of staging an urban pastoral, making the protagonists thieves and whores. Yet Gay thought it better to create a satirical image of a corrupt society that began to be torn apart by what we would today call a class conflict. This aspect of Gay's work is generally known, especially since Bertolt Brecht produced his adaptation. Yet we should add, as Forrest writes:

> The enormous success of this opera may have been an index of popular feeling in England concerning what many considered the high-flown effeteness and unnaturalness of elite arts (attributed to the tastes of foreigners, chiefly French and Italian), and the wholesome and earthy flavour of the home-grown traditional product.[519]

Such domestic products were the ballad opera, the anglicized pantomime, and the country dances. All these genres fed on the energy of the bourgeois society and all were, to some degree, escapist.[520]

Thus we should ask if these processes in dance on stage – the flourishing of pantomime, the idealization of rural culture, the step back from aristocratic affectations – were found in the social dances, which we have overlooked in our focus on the stage rivalries of the *noble danse* and pantomime dance. Our answer comes when we observe that Playford's *The Dancing Master* was published regularly until 1728, which demonstrates an ongoing demand for country dances.[521] In urban society, as before at the courts, people longed to immerse themselves every so often in a rural idyll, with its kinetic joy. Obviously, as in the days of the Tudors and Stuarts, the "folk" dances of the eighteenth century were stylized by dancing masters, who tried to make them more elegant and complex.[522] Yet the public was

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519 Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing...*, p. 321.

520 A comparison of the ballad opera and the eighteenth-century pantomime would be highly interesting, especially focusing on Rich, who made both genres a success. Unfortunately, we have no room for it at present.

521 Forrest believes this need was a part of the longing for simple, joyous, kinetic pleasure we have described. He describes a resurgent interest in the morris dance in the 1720s, which he links with a general turn in the culture toward the local, familiar, and rustic, which was, according to Forrest, a central factor behind the popularity of *The Beggar's Opera* (Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing...*, p. 321).

522 Here we observe an interesting exchange between French and English dance cultures. The English country dance was transplanted into the French court in the late seventeenth century. Upon his return from the London court, dancing master André Lorin created a manuscript with descriptions of country dances, titled *Livre de contredance presente au roy* (*The Book of* Contredance *Presented to the King*, 1685). An English translation is available at: http://www.dhds.org.uk/jnl/pdf/hd2n2p03.pdf (accessed: 01.03.2015). Gradually, country dances transformed into more structured, distinguished *contredanses*, which, in return, affected dance trends in the upper spheres in England via John Essex's translation of Feuillet's treatise, *Recueil de Contredances mises en chorégraphie d'une maniére si aisée, que toutes personnes peuvent facilement les apprendre, sans le secours d'aucun maître et même sans*

less interested in these stylizations than the aristocratic elite in previous centuries, causing Pierre Rameau to lament in 1725: "All the perfection of these Country Dances, is by distorting of the body in turning about, and stamping with their feet as if they had wooden shoes on, and putting themselves in several ridiculous postures."[523] As Forrest comments on these words by one of the greatest authorities of the noble style: "There was obviously a continuing interest on the part of some dancers in treating country dances as antidotes to formality."[524]

"Country dances" were appealing precisely because they opposed French affectation, because they were English – communal and simple. This explains their evolution at the turn of the century – in the various editions of Playford's handbook, there were increasing numbers of "longway" dances, involving a double line of women and men, standing opposite each other in straight lines. These could be danced by any number of couples, which meant a highly attractive kinetic community was created – English dances were popular throughout Europe in the eighteenth century: "there were no restrictions on the number of people who could join in, [...] they required no special dance preparation; they were lively, the diversity of arrangements and figures kept them interesting, and allowed for new motifs to be introduced, bringing people together in recreation."[525] This was the social dance of which Locke had dreamed. Weaver, too, had recommended such social dances.

The Beauty of the Moving Serpent

The dance idiom preserved in the various editions of Playford's handbook might be described as "dancing after the English manner."[526] It was based on an effort to find the middle road between folk and court influences. His notion of moderation was fundamental, though it was understood in a manner that was dynamic and joyous, not ascetic. Moderation was meant to release a vigorous elegance. It was in the spirit of Locke, progressive, mobilizing people to act. Community was an important aspect here. In the country dance, the bourgeois could momentarily feel part of an organic community. The society around him was less and less a community

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avoir en aucune connoissance de la chorégraphie. The English translation was titled *For the Further Improvement of Dancing* (1710); it clearly shows what the dancing elite thought about the country dances. On the one hand, they were attracted by their freedom, on the other, they longed to regulate them, to give them choreographic sophistication.

523 Quoted in: Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing*..., p. 322.

524 Ibid.

525 Irena Turska, *Krótki zarys historii tańca i baletu*, Cracow 2009, p. 137.

526 Nicol Dean-Smith, *"The Dancing Master": 1651–1728. Part III*..., p. 211.

of this sort, because of the divisions engendered by economic transformations. We ought to stress the transitional nature of this moving idyll, a result of the clash of the feudal and capitalist models, whose cultural aspect we have tried to outline in this chapter. This transit kinesis gave birth to the "English dance" aesthetic. Let us conclude by viewing it through the eyes of a painter.

For dance studies, an important source for the kinetic sensitivity of the English bourgeoisie of the first half of the eighteenth century is William Hogarth's *The Analysis of Beauty*, and, above all, its closing fragment, "Of dancing."[527] Its importance is in how it distills the essence of the tendencies we have been outlining. Hogarth was a typical man of his day – a citizen from the lower classes who rose to become the king's painter, a Whig with a dynamic world view, averse to classicist idealization in art, a bourgeois moralist scorning lordly customs, and another adherent of "the middle of the road," as we have described them, an artist seeking his identity between the Rococo extravagance of his imagination and an Enlightenment sobriety of reflection.[528]

When we perceive a middle-of-the-road man in this painter, we are not surprised at the duality of his dance ideal. At the opening of the fragment on dance, we read: "The minuet is allowed by all the dancing masters themselves to be the perfection of all dancing."[529] We have every right to suppose that Hogarth agreed with these masters, as he goes on to say: "No doubt, as the minuet contains in it a composed variety of as many movements in the serpentine lines as can well be put together in distinct quantities, it is a fine composition of movements."[530] Art history tells us that the serpentine line embodied Hogarth's ideal of beauty, uniting uniformity, expression, suitability, composed complexity, and dynamism.[531] Hogarth placed the serpentine line in his famous self-portrait with a dog as a crest of sorts. He identified with its simple yet dynamic and energetic rhythm, as opposed to the tedium and coarseness of straight lines. What strikes us as interesting is the justification of this preference found in the chapter "Of Compositions with the Serpent-Line." Hogarth writes:

> nevertheless, by what has already been shewn of [the muscles] and the bones, the human frame hath more of its parts composed of serpentine-lines than any other object in

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527 William Hogarth, *Analysis of Beauty*, London 1772. Our comments draw from the analysis by Mary Klinger Lindberg, "'A Delightful Play upon the Eye': William Hogarth and Theatrical Dance," *Dance Chronicle* 1981, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 19–45, and Annie Richardson, "An Aesthetics of Performance: Dance in Hogarth's *'Analysis of Beauty'*," *Dance Research* 2002, Vol. 20, No. 2, p. 38–87.

528 Hogarth is portrayed as a man of the aesthetic and social transformation by Michał Lachman: "Analizy piękna: Wstęp tłumacza," in: Hogarth, *Analiza piękna*, Gdańsk 2008.

529 Hogarth, *Analysis...*, p. 146.

530 Ibid., p. 147.

531 Hogarth wrote: "the serpentine line […] not only gives play to the imagination, and delights the eye […] but informs it likewise of the quantity and variety of the contents" (ibid., p. 52).

> nature; which is a proof both of its superior beauty to all others, and, at the same time, that its beauty proceeds from those lines.[532]

The key to beauty is the body and, primarily, its pliable fleshiness. This is indeed a striking trait of Hogarth's aesthetics – his passion for anatomy, his fondness for bones and muscles, in which he saw nature's most beautiful creations. This quotation should suffice: "How ornamental these bones appear, when the prejudice we conceive against them,[533] as being part of a skeleton, is taken off by adding a little foliage to them."[534] The addition of a (fig?) leaf indicates that Hogarth was wary about going all the way in appreciating anatomy, yet the tendency is clear. The body fascinated him, in its tissues he found an aesthetic ideal. He wrote on about skin with the greatest delight, and even of the fatty tissue that wrapped unsightly edges. This led him to the following remark: "There is an elegant degree of plumpness peculiar to the skin of the softer sex, that occasions these delicate dimplings in all their other joints, as well as these of the fingers; which so perfectly distinguishes them from those even of a graceful man."[535] This reflection essentially says that anatomy is beautiful because it shows the body is more than a Cartesian mechanism. It reveals to us "the principles of that grace and beauty which is to be found in well-turned limbs, in fine, elegant healthy life."[536]

For Hogarth, movement[537] was crucial as a sign of life, the movement implicitly present in the serpentine line. He writes that "properly speaking, no living creatures are capable of moving in such truly varied and graceful directions, as the human species."[538] Here we return to the minuet. Did Hogarth really see it as the highest ideal? In other words – in what sense was the minuet his ideal? This surely had nothing to do with the courtly elegance this dance represented. Hogarth had mocked this elegance on more than one occasion, drawing ballet dancers as stiff rag dolls. Like Weaver, he was far from uncritically delighting in Continental dance fashions. Like Locke, he kept a healthy distance from dancing masters:

> If a dancing-master were to see his scholar in the easy and gracefully turned attitude of the Antinous,[539] he would cry shame on him, and tell him he looked as crooked as a ram's horn, and bid him hold his head as he himself did.[540]

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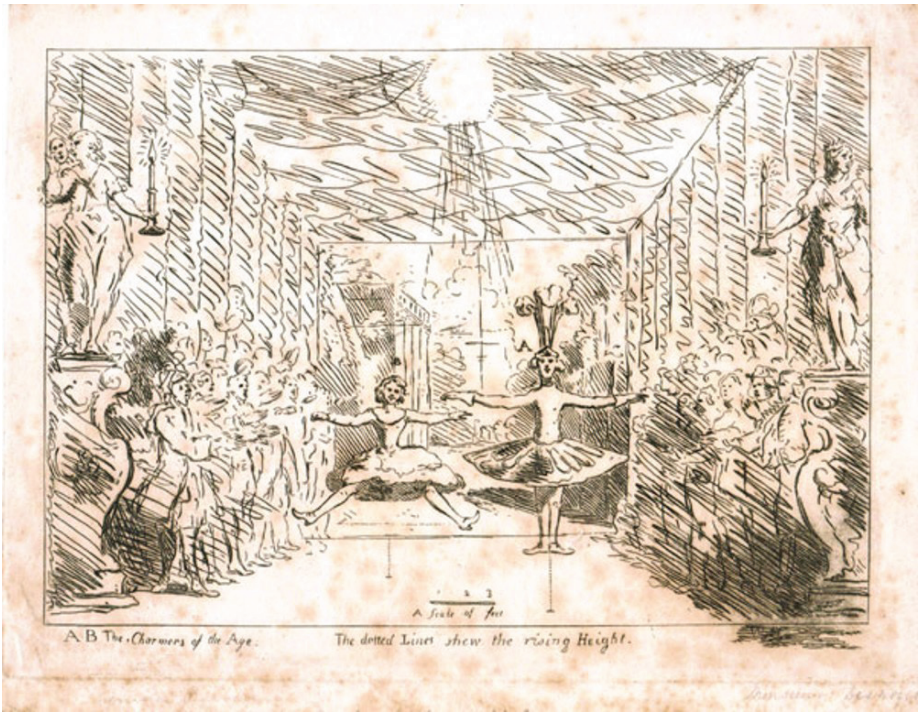
532 Ibid., p. 57.
533 Hogarth writes of the thigh and hip bones.
534 Ibid., p. 55.
535 Ibid., p. 66.
536 Ibid., p. 59.
537 Richardson believes that "Hogarth made movement the crux of his system" (Richardson, *An Aesthetics...*, p. 77).
538 Hogarth, *Analysis...*, p. 73.
539 This pose, stylized on a Grecian sculpture, is Hogarth's example of physical beauty.
540 Ibid., p. viii.



115. William Hogarth, *The Charmers of the Age*, drawing, a caricature of dancers George Desnoyer and Barbara Campanini aka La Barbarina, 1741

This mania came from a widespread conviction that Hogarth tried to oppose, "prejudices in favour of straight lines, as constituting true beauty in the human form, where they should never appear."[541] Thus, only when an elegant court dance was free and gracefully distorted did it win Hogarth's approval. For this reason, he caricatured the "pompous, unmeaning grand ballets"[542] of George Desnoye and Barbara Campanini ("La Barbarina") in *The Charmers of the Age* (Ill. 115). He saw them as lifeless and devoid of true movement.

In Hogarth's eyes, the minuet was beautiful not because it required refined technical abilities. Dance technique alone was no guarantee of a beautiful result: "altho' the muscles of the body may attain a pliancy by these exercises, and the limbs, by the elegant movement in dancing, acquire a facility in moving gracefully, yet for want of knowing the meaning of every grace, and whereon it depends, affectations and misapplications often follow."[543] We know that Hogarth connected grace

[541] Ibid.
[542] Ibid., p. 150.
[543] Ibid., p. 195.

and the serpentine line, representing life's dynamism in its corporeal form. This is why the minuet was only beautiful when it followed the principle of the serpentine line. "[W]hen the parties by means of this step rise and fall most smoothly in time, and free from sudden starting and dropping, they come nearest to Shakespeare's idea of the beauty of dancing,"[544] Hogarth claims, and then quotes Florizel speaking to Perdita in Act IV, Scene 4, of *A Winter's Tale*:

> [...] When you do dance, I with you,
> A wave o'th'sea, that you might ever do
> Nothing but that.[545]

Hogarth was not, therefore, after an apotheosis of a certain kind of dance, but the perfect way of moving – fluid, agile, delicate, yet decisive, meandering, devoid of "uncouth contortions."[546] For this reason, his enthusiasm for the minuet does not end his reflections – he also considers folk dances, in which he admires the agility of performers, and, finally, the movements of *commedia dell'arte* actors, whose physical comedy was very much to his taste, owing to the stress that, he believed, they put on the line of movement. He wrote: "There is much greater consistency in the dances of the Italian theatre than of the French, notwithstanding dancing seems to be the genius of that nation."[547] The Italians were such good dancers because they were energetic. There was no pathos in their movement. When they were stiff, it was with full awareness of the humor in the straight lines of the body. Furthermore, their performances had a ludic dynamic that Hogarth admired, and which we find in his works. This opinion comes as no surprise: "Dances that represent provincial characters, as these above do, or very low people, such as gardeners, sailors, &c. in merriment, are generally most entertaining on the stage."[548] The dances of simple folk are comical, but they also have an energy entirely lacking in ballet. This is exactly the same mechanism we mentioned in describing the popularity of country dances on London stages and dances. Hogarth expresses this brilliantly:

> these sort of dances a little raised, especially on the woman's side,[549] in expressing elegant wantonness (which is the true spirit of dancing) have of late years been most delightfully

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544 Ibid., p. 147.
545 Ibid.
546 Ibid., p. 148.
547 Ibid.
548 Ibid., p. 149.
549 Hogarth saw women as more physical than men, and, as such, their movement gave him more pleasure; his "eye eagerly pursued a favourite dancer, through all the windings of the figure, who then was bewitching to the sight" (ibid., p. 27).

> done, and seem at present to have got the better of pompous, unmeaning grand ballets; serious dancing being even a contradiction in terms.[550]

Thus we reach the kinetic ideal that closes the section of *The Analysis of Beauty* on dance. As we might assume, it is situated between the geometric elegance of courtly dance and the elemental folk dance, which had no proper form. What was it called? This was the country dance. Hogarth enthuses:

> The lines which a number of people together form in country or figure dancing, make a delightful play upon the eye, especially when the whole figure is to be seen at one view, as the playhouse from the gallery. The beauty of this kind of mystic dancing, as the poets term it,[551] depends upon moving in a composed variety of lines chiefly serpentine, governed by the principles of intricacy, &c. the dances of barbarians are always represented without these movements, being only composed of wild skipping, jumping and turning around, or running backward and forward, with convulsive shrugs, and distorted gestures.[552]

It could seem that dance for Hogarth was chiefly an experience of aesthetic pleasure based on distance from an object, presupposing the passivity of the observer. In this sense, we can speak of a contemplative motionlessness. Yet it strikes us that if we take into account the whole of his theoretical reflections and artistic practice, this is a superficial interpretation. For he was a dynamic personality, less seeking distance than activity in life. This went hand-in-hand with his moralism – which targeted the inflated, pretentious, and absurd – so similar to Locke's, *The Spectator's*, Weaver's… Hogarth had no intention of retreating from life, even as he depicted its dark side – the downfall of the naive or the self-important. On the contrary, he demanded a suitable (serpentine) form to shape a body capable of adhering to the ideal of beautiful movement.[553] The rule of the "golden mean" held firm here as well: "he who is most exquisitely well-proportioned is most capable of exquisite movements, such as ease and *grace in deportment*, or in dancing."[554] We feel sure that Hogarth himself danced, that he moved freely and gracefully. Otherwise he

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[550] Ibid., p. 150.

[551] Hogarth alludes to Milton here, going on to quote the same fragment of *Paradise Lost* we have mentioned. He was also the first to paint a picture illustrating the epic. He titled this enormously dynamic work *Satan, Sin and Death / A Scene from Milton's 'Paradise Lost'* (ca. 1735–1740) (Ill. 116). A comparative study of the two artists' kinetic sensitivity would be well worth making. On Milton's influence on Hogarth, see Marcia Pointon, *Milton & English Art: A Study in the Pictorial Artist's Use of a Literary Source*, Manchester 1970, Chapter II: "Milton & the Artists of the English Rococo, 1724–1764," pp. 37–61.

[552] Hogarth, *The Analysis...*, p. 150.

[553] Richardson focuses on this aspect in *An Aesthetics…*

[554] Hogarth, *The Analysis...*, p. 73.

116. William Hogarth, *Satan, Sin and Death / A Scene from Milton's "Paradise Lost,"* ca. 1735–1740

would not have created what he called "an odd, but perhaps efficacious method of acquiring a habit of moving in the lines of grace and beauty,"[555] as presented in the last chapter of *The Analysis*.

Mary Klinger Lindberg suggests we look at Hogarth as a dancing master.[556] He addressed the same problems as they did. Like them, he wrote of body positions, movement, bowing, and lines. Like them, he critiqued stage dance, contrasted the dance cultures of different countries, and even attempted to make dance "notations," as shown by the plates accompanying *The Analysis* (Ills. 117, 118). Above all, however, he put forward his own "choreographies." A particularly evocative one was immortalized in *The Dance* / *The Happy Marriage VI: The Country Dance* (ca. 1745) (pl. VI), adapted for the second plate in the treatise, and commented upon for the "Of Attitude" chapter. This picture is our ultimate piece of evidence that Hogarth had an enormous sensitivity to dance, as a combination of two skills – a grasp of local color of movement and a universal impulse that drove a person to dance. Michał Lachman writes that, according to the artist, "art should grow from an individual experience, from observations made in

[555] Ibid., p. 143.
[556] Lindberg, "*A Delightful Play…*," p. 25.

117. William Hogarth, *Analysis of Beauty*, plate I, engraving, 1753

a concrete place and time."[557] This was Hogarth's approach in painting *The Dance*, one of the most graceful portraits of eighteenth-century group dance. Looking at this picture, we travel to the very heart of bourgeois recreation, practically touching a whole range of figures, in whom we encounter a middle-of-the-road way of being. These are not etiquette-hampered courtiers of Louis XIV, but nor are they the free-spirited peasants of Bruegel. They are not the precise ballet dancers of the Parisian Opera, but nor are they bumpkins pawing each other at carnival.

We should note how far Hogarth's dancers remain individualized in their mass.[558] He had the exceptional gift of making his protagonists more than didactic types. When we view his pictorial stories of the sad fate of a prostitute or a reveler, we see more than personifications of problems with which the bourgeois society grappled. These were not types, but individuals, and their authentic human stories are all the more authentic. The theatricality of Hogarth's imagination has often been

[557] Lachman, "Wstęp...," p. 7.

[558] This distinction is described by Hogarth in: *The Analysis...*, pp. 185–186.

118. William Hogarth, *Analysis of Beauty*, plate II, engraving, in the center an elegant crowd dances a country dance, 1753

observed.[559] He himself expressed it most precisely: "I have endeavoured to treat my subjects as a dramatic writer; my picture is my stage, and men and women my players, who, by means of certain actions and gestures, are to exhibit a dumb show."[560] It is our view that this pantomime took both from the moralizing dramatism of Weaver and the elemental comedy of Rich and Thurmond, biting as the satire of Swift and Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. The pantomimes Hogarth painted are a kinetic politics tailored for a bourgeois society that was gradually coming to appreciate the agitated, autonomous individual. This is why Hogarth, as Richardson notes, supplies more than typical textbook dance of his time, generating the same kind of unrest we find in Weaver. He essentially

> offers the reader a position outside the world of ornament and civility. His reference to serious dancing being a 'contradiction in terms' and to the 'whole business of life'

559 In Poland, by Jan Białostocki in: *Hogarth*, Warsaw 1959, p. 7, cited by Lachman, "Wstęp...," pp. 23–24.

560 Quoted from: *Hogarth's Works with Life and Anecdotal Descriptions of His Pictures*, ed. John Ireland and John Gough Nichols, Alexandria.

> being possible without ornamental movement puts conceptual brackets around polite culture and its theatricality.[561]

In bourgeois existence something far profounder was at stake: authenticity.

The Dance of (Bourgeois) Individuality

Seventeenth-century rationalism foregrounded modernity's key notion of the autonomous subject with a complex, ill-defined structure. The Enlightenment, which began with the appearance of Locke, attempted to specify the subject, giving it a sensory component. Of capital importance here was the step-by-step departure from seeing the body as a mere mechanism subject to the laws of physics. The human being gradually became more dynamic, a process we will further observe in the chapters to come. The body was no longer a marionette, its strings pulled by an incorporeal mind; it acquired its own inner strength, becoming an integral part of an autonomous subject. It gained energy from emotions experienced individually. Bourgeois individuality began to be shaped on these foundations.

It was Renaissance ideas that roused the potent cultural transformation in English society. Shakespeare, that brilliant pupil of Michel de Montaigne, had depicted those who were uprooted and deeply suffering the upheaval of the traditional order, yet full of inner strength, desiring autonomy, driven to act, physical in essence. In Shakespeare we plainly see the early changes in society and culture, as depicted in this chapter. He was a humanist chronicler of the turn toward modernity in the Elizabethan era in England, prepared by humanism in the time of the first two Tudors. The rule of the first Stuarts might be interpreted as a regression, an attempt to stifle the energy of the dynamic strata of society, a desperate attempt to preserve a feudal system by introducing absolutist politics; it was doomed to fail, as violently proven by the civil war and the execution of Charles I, "anointed by God." The bourgeois "self" was forged in these fires. Puritanism spoke out against absolutist rule, urging self-reflection, which in turn led to internal autonomy.

In the seventeenth century, England saw a turn toward introversion: "From Bunyan to Pepys and Boswell [...] the Protestant culture of introspection becomes secularized as a form of confessional autobiography."[562] But this is only half the sto-

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[561] Richardson, *An Aesthetics*..., p. 80.

[562] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge–New York 2006, p. 184. We might also cite Igor S. Kon, who made a fascinating point: "The clearest and most objective testimony of the rise of individual, private aspects of culture and the move toward intimacy is […] the history of language. Old English counted only thirteen words with the prefix 'self,' half of which pertained to objective relations. The number of these words (self-consciousness, self-discovery

ry. At the same time, community bonds were strengthening within the new elite. In place of the courtly ideals, the new elite proposed a simpler, more spontaneous idiom. In the kinetic sphere, this was manifested in abandoning the sophisticated movement in the masques in favor of country dances. The irony is that the country dances were based on steps from those same masques. People of the time were not aware of this irony. They believed the country dance was a typically English paradigm, as opposed to French mannerisms. This allowed the bourgeoisie to joyfully celebrate their gradual victory. This joy and reflecting upon their inner lives strengthened their convictions and faith in their individual autonomy. After all, the chain of dance is only as strong as its weakest link. They had to make sure that all the dancers were of equal strength.

The Puritan revolt paved the way for Locke and his theory of individual freedom, which Charles Taylor has called the punctual self. According to Taylor, Locke's subject identifies itself

> with the power to objectify and remake, and by this act to distance oneself from all the particular features which are objects of potential change. What we are essentially is none of the latter, but what finds itself capable of fixing them and working on them.[563]

Human existence emerged as pure potentiality driven to act by uneasiness. For the bourgeoisie, this opened a space of near infinite freedom. Locke's theory had a critical flaw, however – it did not accept a serious view of the body. Here it seemed to silently acquiesce to the mechanistic philosophy of Descartes. The task of its adherents – Shaftesbury, Weaver, Hogarth, and, across the Channel, French philosophers from the *Encyclopedia* circles – was to overcome this weakness, for the bourgeoisie felt their existence was incomplete without their physicality being taken into account, because the body senses that it is alive, while the mind can only contemplate life. This was the backdrop for the birth of the "dance of (bourgeois) individuality." In the two next chapters we shall show how it matured.

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etc.) grew rapidly from the latter half of the sixteenth century, i.e., after the Reformation. New words entered circulation along with concepts referring to inner feelings and experiences. In old English, 'person' and 'soul' were mainly used in relation to society, the Church, and the cosmos. In the seventeenth century, 'character' appeared, with reference to human individuality" (Kon, *Odkrycie „ja,"*, p. 154). We might note that the last sentence sheds interesting light on Jonson's comedy characters, who illustrate the transformations we are describing – they are a step toward shaping "a theater of bourgeois personalities."

563 Taylor, *Sources of the Self...*, p. 171.

CHAPTER V

Action! *Ballet d'action* in the Context of the French Enlightenment

The Enlightenment French were Anglophiles, including the most important Encyclopedists: Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, Helvétius, and Holbach. They all had the greatest admiration for Locke and, with him, the bourgeois society taking shape in England. The more progressive French looked across the Channel in search of political, social, and aesthetic models. The French Enlightenment worldview was thus at least partly inspired by the British. This had an impact on its kinesis, naturally. The germ of "the dance of individuality" we saw in the previous chapter ripened in France, where there was also a transition from an aristocratic to a bourgeois society, but the transition was more abrupt, because the French aristocracy was far more developed, more oppressive than the British. Thus, in mid-eighteenth-century France and, following its lead, other parts of Europe as well, a dance reform emerged that was more expressive, more radical than what Weaver posited. This will be the main topic of the present chapter. To comprehend this reform, the thesis that English dance was grafted onto Continental soil will not suffice.[564] The process was far more complicated, as it was in culture at large, for the French Enlightenment thinkers were not merely promoting Locke, however much they were indebted to him. Thus, we must investigate what kind of transformations occurred in French culture after the time of Louis XIV, so that it was possible that 1760 saw the release of *Lettres sur la danse et les ballets* (Letters on Dancing and Ballet) by Jean-Georges Noverre,

[564] John Weaver did not have a direct impact on Enlightenment dance thought in France. We find no evidence that his works were read, nor even a mention of his name there. Nonetheless, as a promoter of physical expression, he could have exerted an influence on David Garrick, who, in turn, had an enormous impact on the Enlightenment dance spectacle on the Continent. Cf. Richard Ralph, *The Life and Works of John Weaver*, New York–London 1985, p. 98, note 362.

one of history's most famous dance theory texts, and a passionate manifesto on a groundbreaking form of dance spectacle – the *ballet d'action* (ballet of action).[565]

The basic thesis of this and the following chapter is that modernity took full shape in eighteenth-century France. In this we join Stanisław Zapaśnik, the author of the outstanding, though now seldom cited, *Filozofia a kultura Francji XVIII wieku* (The Philosophy and Culture of Eighteenth-Century France). This work contains a premise of capital significance: the French Enlightenment began to perceive man as elevated above the natural order owing to his being a moral creature.[566] This thought allowed humankind to gain a sense of their inner strength, but also condemned them to an individual existence. In this sense, the French Enlightenment was the space and time when what might be called the paradigm of modern agency came together. By this we mean a transition from a classicist vision, in which rational man was part of an objective Order, to an emotional model of humanity, centered on feelings in all their complexity, with all their dynamic power. It was the French Enlightenment that put the focus on the subjective sphere so crucial to modern culture, becoming a point of reference for all other orders. The emoting subject drew its sense of power from a conviction of the autotelic value of their feelings, and set out to conquer the world, discarding all their inhibitions. In the remaining parts of this book we shall try to set out the ideological genealogy of this subject, in order to see dance through its lens.

Our aim is to understand the call to fill ballet with action articulated by Noverre and the Encyclopedists in terms of the transition from agency as Order to agency as History,[567] which was tied to the end of an aristocratic sensibility and the triumph of a bourgeois sensibility. We will be showing the action the French Enlightenment craved as a longing for what we might presently call an authentic experience, an immersion in the stream of life mainly apprehended irrationally, in short, a longing to "be YOURSELF,"[568] which has driven European culture from then on. This is how a truly bourgeois kinesis came to be.

The desire to truly live, to the marrow of one's bones, the will to live as constant movement, the emotional awakening within the individual, is a powerful presence in the works of eighteenth-century French intellectuals. This is why we place an exclamation mark after the word "action." We also do this for another reason – to

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565 The literature uses terms such as *ballet en action* (ballet in action), *ballet pantomimique* (pantomime ballet), and also, if the authors are describing more serious performances, *ballet héroïque* (heroic ballet) and *ballet tragique* (tragic ballet). See: Edward Nye, *Mime, Music and Drama on the Eighteenth-Century Stage: The Ballet D'Action*, Cambridge–New York 2011, pp. 1–2.

566 Stanisław Zapaśnik, *Filozofia a kultura Francji XVIII wieku*, Warsaw 1982, p. 558.

567 Cf. Michel Foucault, *Słowa i rzeczy. Archeologia nauk humanistycznych*, trans. Tadeusz Komendant, Gdańsk 2006.

568 This is nearly the same "be yourself" that is today required of reality show contestants: "Don't emulate the others, don't be stiff or unnatural – be yourself!"

evoke the "action!" of the film set. The director shouts this command to signal the start of acting and, thus, to construct the fiction, to set in motion an imaginary reality that seems more real than reality itself. *Action!* thus holds an element of fiction. It is a dream of a deep, innermost truth that is condemned to fail. *Action!* serves to bury the impossibility of satisfaction under as thick a layer of evocative verisimilitude as possible. *Action!* is a desperate search for "profound experiences" which are never deep enough. This dilemma was already undermining the French Enlightenment when it tried, as in the works of Rousseau (who will be the subject of our last chapter), to gain access to "authentic" humanity. "Authentic" humanity turned out to be individualized, "subjectivized," as Michel Foucault would have said, and, thus, if we accept the premise that human beings are social creatures, "inhuman" to some degree. The Enlightenment person, locating the center of the world in their heart, gave it a weight it was incapable of supporting. And yet, once infected with a longing for "authentic" life, they were incapable of giving it up. In our view, this is one of the chief contributions of the French Enlightenment to contemporary culture. The Enlightenment marks the full-fledged beginning of the odyssey of modern agency (the hegemony of feelings) and the modern subject (the hegemony of individuality).

Of course, harbingers of the turn toward an emotionalized SELF can be seen earlier, as we signaled in the previous chapter on England, yet it was in pre-revolutionary France that the sphere of emotions and the associated individualization of human existence was clearly on display, leading to a wholesale cultural shift. In our categories, we might call this "permanent mobilization." The Revolution of 1789 and the following years were a manifestation of this mobilization, but the foundations were laid far earlier. In the present chapter, we have built a tale of this construct from a dance perspective. We shall try to describe and explain the ideological dynamism of the French Enlightenment, which translated into social, economic, political, and, above all, kinetic dynamism. The reform of dance spectacles may have taken place on the margins of the cultural transformations as such, yet it is worth noting the constant presence of dance in French society at the time, for the metamorphoses it underwent are symptomatic, at the very least. The reform of dance plainly shows the shaping of the modern kinesis. In terms of stage dance, we are children of Noverre, even if only in negating his ideas. It was he (though not alone, despite his strident declarations) who defined the modern ideal of dance as a way of expressing the depths of a human being, in which the experiences and emotions evoked are essentially more important than the form. In creating dance, the modern bourgeoisie grapple with this ideal to this day. Some still defend it, others strive to overcome it. Yet for all, it is a basic point of reference.

The Multiplier of the Enlightenment

Pierre Chaunu used the term "multiplier" to describe the eighteenth century.[569] All of Europe – especially on its outskirts, but in France as well – had entered a phase of acceleration. Chaunu writes: "the eighteenth century becomes, to some degree, a time of movement which is felt, experienced, conscious – an era of movement, and thus, of progress."[570] Improved hygiene brought about a demographic explosion, but technological progress was also increasing life expectancy. Agriculture became increasingly productive, transportation developed in leaps and bounds, helping to reduce famine. Of course, shortages of foodstuffs continued to occur – this was among the factors that set the machine of the Revolution in motion – yet from a statistical perspective we can clearly see that people lived more easily, comfortably, and securely. These positive phenomena were accompanied by the development of the educational system, particularly on an elementary level. Illiteracy was reduced, readership evidently increased, which in turn meant that enlightened ideas began circulating more widely and dynamically in society. The average citizen was coming to better and better understand the nature of the problems of the community and increasingly demanded the right to speak out. Mobility was also on the rise – in a geographical sense, as people, and especially the elite, were traveling more and more, and in a social sense, as it was growing easier to advance through hard work, as exemplified by the fame of Enlightenment figures like Diderot and Rousseau, who began in the petty bourgeoisie.

We have mentioned progress in agriculture. The French largely owed these advances to lessons learned from the English. Foreigners also played a major role in the development of French industry, which was lagging behind the English, but was still in good shape by general European standards. Trade also began clearly picking up in eighteenth-century France through the dynamic development of colony contacts. This led to opinions not unlike those we heard from Addison and Steele. Voltaire wrote, for instance:

> I don't know which is the more useful to a state, a well-powdered lord who knows precisely what time the king gets up in the morning and what time he goes to bed, and who gives himself airs of grandeur while playing the role of slave in a minister's antechamber, or a great merchant who enriches his country, sends orders from his office to Surat and to Cairo, and contributes to the well-being of the world.[571]

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569 Pierre Chaunu, *Cywilizacja Oświecenia*, trans. Eligia Bąkowska, Warsaw 1989. The general outline of the Enlightenment period in this and the following paragraphs is based on Chaunu's work.

570 Ibid., p. 27.

571 Voltaire, *Philosophical Letters: Letters Concerning the English Nation*, trans. Ernest Dilworth, New York 2003, p. 40.

This uncertainty is, of course, a sham. Voltaire was convinced doing business was a necessity. He himself did business.[572] He was not alone in acknowledging the contribution of trade to a nation's success. Montesquieu made similar statements. There were also voices against it – some physiocrats believed trade to be unproductive. Its development was incontrovertible, however, and it spurred the economic sphere as a whole.

The "multiplier of the Enlightenment" prompted the education of a progressive elite, in which traditional noble models played a diminishing role, though the advancing bourgeoisie often dreamed of acquiring a noble title, again exemplified by Voltaire, who, after many years of efforts, was named a *gentilhomme de la Chambre du roi* by Louis XV. Nonetheless, the hollow ceremony of aristocratic life and its lack of productivity were targets of Enlightenment critics. The courtier was less and less attractive as a career, and a new ideal emerged: the man of action, forever striving to improve the life of society, standing between worlds – the court and the city, the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. This new category included both aristocrats and the bourgeoisie, secular people and progressive clergy, men of science and engineers.[573] This mixture of communities was particularly evident among the physiocrats, where bourgeoisie like Quesnay or Gournay met with such aristocrats as Count Mirabeau, father of the famed future Revolutionary, or barons Montesquieu and Turgot. The bourgeoisie sowed the general idea, while the aristocrats (primarily Turgot) developed and promoted it. At one point, Turgot even became the Prime Minister. Thus, we had cooperation between the estates to improve the country economically. The community of ideas proved itself more fundamental than differences in origins. This was also to be the case during the Revolution, which was supported by an important faction of the aristocracy. This does not mean that changes in worldview were universal. Most of the nobility continued to support the conservative rentier model, trying to salvage the privileges they enjoyed in the previous centuries. This was another cause of the Revolution – the resistance of much of the society, and also the clergy, to the reforms proposed by progressive ministers influenced by Enlightenment ideas, like Turgot and Necker.[574] To this we must add the growing awareness of the people: the petty

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572 In his biography, or in fact hagiography (*Voltaire*, New York 1979), Jean Orieux repeatedly praises Voltaire's "nose for business." The most spectacular example is the watch manufacturer founded by the "wise man of Fernay" and whose products he tirelessly promoted among his high-ranking acquaintances.

573 Technology developed apace in eighteenth-century France, as Chaunu points out in *Cywilizacja Oświecenia*. Interest in construction, mining, and English agricultural and industrial innovations were all on the rise. Military technologies played a major role. Christophe-Philippe Oberkampf and the de Wendel and de Chastenay families dedicated themselves to building French industry. Interestingly, among the industrialists were many aristocrats abandoning their traditional lives of excess. They understood not only the earning potential of industry, but also its social importance.

574 Chaunu, *Cywilizacja Oświecenia*, p. 156.

bourgeoisie, peasants, workers, and servants. The social situation was increasingly complex and tense.[575] This set France apart from England.

In eighteenth-century France, the issue of the monarchy became pivotal. The *philosophes*, progressive intellectuals like Voltaire, Montesquieu, Quesnay, Turgot, Helvétius, Holbach, and Diderot, stood up against the absolutist model with growing assurance, showing that it was both rational and necessary for social and economic reasons to shift from seeing the monarchy as a "royal function" in the style of Louis XIV to a "state function" of a British sort. They posited a parliamentary monarchy, with a division of powers. A classic manifestation of this effort was Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, but Voltaire, Diderot, and Holbach all spoke in a similar vein... The suggestion to utterly eliminate the monarchy appeared very rarely, as the monarchy was seen as a tool for conciliating competing interests limited by the prevailing will and, above all, for progressively limiting the influence of the nobility and the clergy.[576] Neither Louis XV nor his successor were up to this task. They did not wish to abandon their prerogatives, as the absolutist model was too appealing. As such, social frustrations gradually increased, and moods became more radical.

Habermas writes that in Enlightenment France,

> the king largely monopolized public authority. Civic equality existed but in its negative form. All except the king (and one official) were equally subjects and equally subjugated to authority – were private. Their sphere, whether bourgeois or not, was the *société civile* – during the eighteenth century a structure not easily analyzed in terms of class theory.[577]

Non-transparency, frustrations, and soaring ambitions led to a continual ferment, particularly when the monarch tried to bolster his position through conservative prime ministers like le Peletier or Maupeou. This ferment was expressed by

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[575] "The social divisions of eighteenth-century France created a true web of contradictions. The peasantry, exploited and debased, despised the nobility, who were proud of their privileges to rule, command, draw feudal benefits, govern through the church, lead the army, and, above all, to be idle. The bourgeoisie was also desperately sick of the nobles, which tried to monopolize all the dignities, officers' titles, and clerical honors. Of course, misalliances did occur; the aristocrats sometimes invested their money in industry, trade, and finances; the nobility had a lively interest in the ideology of the Enlightenment. Yet how much contempt they had for the commoners! The people who made the revolution remembered this contempt all too well [...]. The bourgeoisie – ambitious, full of initiative, hard-working, educated, and equipped with ideologies that expressed these aspirations brilliantly – would agree to this state of things no more. But the petty and grand bourgeoisie was not the only urban social power of the third estate. There was a new force, still badly assembled, the poor retinues, servants, workers, bricklayers, and miners; a seemingly weaponless army, for they were forbidden to gather. But they had solidarity, especially when social rage erupted. This army of "'men with bare arms,'" *bras nus*, was now bubbling to the surface and beginning to seek their place in society" (Jan Baszkiewicz, *Historia Francji*, Wrocław 1974, p. 349).

[576] The model here was Colbert's rule.

[577] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger, Cambridge 2011, p. 68.

the *philosophes*, who appealed to a constantly growing readership. Though the French Enlightenment cannot be reduced to the city dwellers, the increasing significance of the urban centers was crucial to its development. Urban salons discussed pressing philosophical and social issues, and the sparks of social discontent increasingly flared in the city squares. Pamphlets of various sorts flooded France and added fuel to the fire; these were mainly, but not exclusively, written by the *philosophes*. Often, they were less serious specialist treatises than lively blends of theory and journalism. Agitation was another highly important aspect of the Enlightenment dynamism – the word itself urged action, stoked the masses, eluding more hermetic and structured forms. Though thought still pined for order, it was increasingly difficult to fit into structures. This is why Enlightenment philosophy was incomparably more fiery than that of the previous centuries. The word was rapacious, truculent, or, as Chaunu says, it was "movement that was sensed, experienced, conscious."

In eighteenth-century France the community of critical thinkers was on the rise, and they shaped what we will call the Enlightenment kinesis. Thought was continually mobilized, which translated into a dynamic vision of the world, the community, man, and the dynamic body. Sometimes this vision frightened its authors, who lacked the courage or determination to follow through to the end. They became weary and longed for peace, especially those of the first generation of *philosophes*, like Voltaire and Montesquieu. Their Enlightenment was not essentially radical. Forever urging economic and political freedom, they recalled human limitations, questioning human freedom in a metaphysical sense. Yet the energy that had long been smoldering in what seemed a fossilized society could not be extinguished. Perhaps this was primarily an energy seeking to destroy undeserved privileges and despotism.[578] Yet it also had positive aspects. It posited the triumph of the earthly imagination over metaphysics, of the concrete life over the "spirit of the system." The perception of agency shifted away from rationally systematized order and toward a lively, changeable, even sloppy *praxis*.

The individual shaped by the *philosophes*' ideas began to see oneself as a dynamic being. In place of longing for a metaphysical whole there was a fondness for physical detail. The senses and emotions were restored. Man became, above all, a *feeling* creature, though reason still controlled the affective sphere. People who

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[578] As the Master says in *Jacques the Fatalist*, philosophers are "a breed who are anathema to powerful men to whom they refuse to kneel. Anathema to magistrates, who are the licensed defenders of the very abuses philosophers attack. Anathema to priests who rarely observe them bowing down at their altars. Anathema to poets, who are unprincipled men who stupidly regard philosophy as the hammer which will destroy art, not to mention those of them who, by engaging in the odious practice of satire, have never been anything other than vile flatterers. Anathema to the peoples who are permanently enslaved by the tyrants who oppress them, the rogues who cheat them, and the jesters who keep them amused" (Denis Diderot, *Jacques the Fatalist and His Master*, trans. David Coward, Oxford–New York 1999, p. 62).

eluded the traditional divisions, "easy-going" individuals like Diderot or Rousseau, questioned the prevailing worldviews as a matter of course. Politics and philosophy walked hand-in-hand here, changing the paradigm of existence. This is the basic dimension of the "multiplier of the Enlightenment." Small wonder, then, that dance had its say. Dance responded to the dynamic and energized society and human existence with action.

Toward Cythera

When we left France at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to explore the essential reimaginings of kinesis in England, the dominant aspirations in French dance were discipline and order, symbolized by the geometric figures of the minuet in space and on paper. The picture drawn in Chapter Three was one-sided, however. Even then, in the second half of the reign of Louis XIV, cracks could be noted in the canon of classicist dance. We would even hazard the thesis that it was in a constant state of crisis from the outset, consumed by a basic ambivalence. Disciplined movement was invariably accompanied by a call for emancipation. The textbook rules were one thing – the execution quite another.

Let us recall that when Lully took control of the Opera he began to create a new genre of music and dance spectacle – a lyric tragedy also known as *tragedie en musique*. The point was to fit the Italian invention of opera to the sophisticated French tastes. France had a splendid dramatic tradition, with Corneille and Racine at the forefront. In this context, Italian opera seemed trivial. Lully decided to give it gravity, without losing its most appealing aspects – an emotionality that eluded rational evaluation. Classical tragedy was moving, of course, but according to rigid rules that Racine and Boileau fervently defended. Lyrical tragedy discarded this straitjacket. The themes were to remain sublime, and rationality content, but the senses increasingly demanded their rights. Lully, like many others before him, dreamed of restoring ancient tragedy as a multiple form, combining text, music, and movement, along with dazzling stage decor. The main aim was to move the viewer. *Tragédie en musique* was to strike the eyes, ears, and heart, and only then the mind.[579]

Maestro Lully collaborated on this program with librettist Philippe Quinault, widely admired for his literary craft, even by such opponents of the opera as Boileau.

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[579] Above all, of course, those belonging to the monarch, who was endlessly praised. Yet the pathos of lyrical tragedies such as *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673), *Alceste ou le Triomphe d'Alcide* (1675), *Psyche* (1678), or *Armide* (1683) was driven by far more than a desire to win Louis's favor. For more on the lyrical tragedies as performances of serious passions and the means used to this end, cf. Blair Hoxby, "All Passion Spent: The Means and Ends of a '*Tragédie en Musique*'," *Comparative Literature* 2007, Vol. 59, No. 1, pp. 33–62.

Quinault often strove to enchant the viewer, to seduce their senses, above all, to move their emotions. This explains his fondness and fascination for *les marveilleux*, various sorts of stage marvels: machines, fantastical costumes, and elaborate dance sequences. While classicist tragedy was ascetically staged, practically hieratic in its reliance on static declamations, and its creators spoke out against such marvels, Lully, Quinault, and their adherents built a performance's atmosphere with all the theatrical means at their disposal. This was a different sort of pathos – it was less sublime. It had something elemental about it, but also a kind of lyricism that colored the whole piece. Dance was an important part of it, as its appeal was mainly sensory, it created evocative pictures on stage and set the mood, joined with emotional music. This is why it is untrue to say the minuets and other dances that were part of the lyrical tragedies were merely an added visual attraction, a technical exercise, a show of coordination and feeling for rhythm.

Quinault's supporter, Michel de Pure, refused to reduce dance to a show of technique in *Idée des spectacles anciens et Nouveaux* (Principles of Spectacles Ancient and Modern, 1668), writing: "the principal and most important rule is to make the *pas* expressive, that the head, the shoulders, the arms, the hands may convey what the dancer cannot say."[580] Curiously, in seeking ways to rejuvenate ballet, de Pure made reference to ancient pantomime, in which, he believed,

> dancing did not consist in dexterity of the feet alone or in the precision of the rhythm […] but in a certain converted manner taken from natural movements, which escape from the body following on the disturbances and various agitations of the soul which betray despite our wishes the interior movements which we try to conceal and keep secret.[581]

By this approach, dance was a way of moving people from within. Despite a rigid technical regime, the dancer performing a sequence in a particularly moving moment mainly expressed emotions, becoming a significant part of the performance, not just a beautifully moving body conceived in terms of a mechanism. The emotions the dancer expressed were not theirs personally but those the author put in the libretto, yet their own emotions allowed them to tap into the expressive potential of dance.[582]

The clash between those in favor of and against *tragédie en musique*, whose intensity was shown in the famous quarrel over *Alceste*, was not merely aesthetic, it also reflected worldviews. It was part of an important debate in the history

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[580] Quoted from: Deryck Lynham, *The Chevalier Noverre, Father of Modern Ballet*, London 1972, pp. 122–123.

[581] Ibid., p. 123.

[582] Sarah R. Cohen shows that an expressive approach to dance can be found in the ballets of the court of the young Louis XIV, as in *Les Noces de Pélée et de Thétis* (Sarah R. Cohen, *Art, Dance and the Body in French Culture of the Ancien Regime*, Cambridge–New York 2000, p. 45).

of French culture, between the ancients, led by Boileau, Racine, and La Fontaine, and the moderns, led by Charles Perrault and Bernard de Fontenelle (who were in favor of lyrical tragedy). The debate did not boil down to articulating the conflict between political conservatives and progressives, conformists and rebels. Recent studies have shown that, in political terms, the ancients were more critical than the moderns.[583] The ancients' views held a critique of absolutism, quite evident in Racine, whose tragedies showed the royal courts as ghastly prisons. The moderns were more like law-abiding courtiers. Their works, such as *Le siècle de Louis le Grand* (The Age of Louis the Great, 1684) by Perrault, contain an apologia for the era of the Sun King. They expressed the conviction that they were experiencing history's greatest achievements in art and in science. This does not mean that the moderns negated the achievements of the ancient writers, whose superiority their adversaries posited. The moderns were not after a new beginning. The crux of their view was in the slogan that standing on the shoulders of the ancient giants, they could see even further, as Perrault wrote.

The moderns imbibed on the spirit of critical rationalism, seeing reality in a tendentiously triumphalist manner. They adamantly spoke up for Cartesianism, at least through Fontenelle.[584] Not so with ancients. We should recall that some of them, influenced by Jansenist ideas (at least where Racine was concerned), were careful readers of Pascal, from whom they could become conscious of the gulf between *espirit de géométrie* and *esprit de finesse*, the order of the mind and the order of the heart. They understood that feelings often take the fore in human life. This is why Boileau never declared the absolute primacy of rules over emotions. Furthermore, in his later years, he more demanded a poetry that would open man to the transcendental sphere, surpassing the rational.[585] Thus, it is the ancients we ought to call the champions of feelings, paving the way for French senti-mentalism.

We should note one other thing, which prevents us from a simple reading of the disagreement as a straightforward struggle between ascendant social forces and those shading into the past. The moderns cannot be called unwavering adherents of social and political progress. We cannot reduce their quarrel with the ancients to a battle between a progressive bourgeoisie and a conservative nobility (especially since many leading voices of the ancient camp came from the bourgeoisie), nor to a rivalry between the aristocracy and the king, especially given that the king,

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583 Cf. the excellent article by Milad Doueihi, "The Politics of Simplicity," *Modern Language Notes* 1992, Vol. 107, No. 4, pp. 639–658, in which Racine and Boileau are depicted as subtle critics of absolutism.

584 This would make it a misunderstanding to see classicism as an aesthetic transposition of Cartesianism, as Nigel Abercrombie pointed out long ago, "Cartesianism and Classicism," *The Modern Language Review* 1936, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 358–376. To our mind, this does not harm the analogies involving the joint cultural foundation of classicism and Cartesianism outlined in Chapter III.

585 Cf. Ann T. Delehanty, "Mapping the Aesthetic Mind: John Dennis and Nicolas Boileau," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 2007, Vol. 68, No. 2, pp. 233–253.

although praised by the moderns, was no enthusiast of the extremely modern viewpoint.[586] Nonetheless, we ought to stress that the moderns' aesthetics introduced a fresh perspective, a dynamic that opposed the minor key of the classicists. Even if there was opportunism in this, it was a challenge to tradition, indeed, an invitation to optimism, a dynamic, elemental existence, not a tragic one that negated earthly reality.

We ought to see the dispute over the "marvels" on stage and the value of opera in the context of the clash between the moderns and the ancients. While Boileau and Racine thought they were to be condemned, Perrault was their chief defender, and the musical theater, including dance, happily took this support. After Lully's demise, the Opera departed from the tragic model tied to classicism. Not only lyrical tragedies were performed, but also ballet-operas, which clearly shows the direction of change. The stress in the latter fell upon song and dance. Plot phased into the background, the themes were light, often mere pretexts for showy music and dance, a good example of which is *L'Europe Galante* (Gallant Europe, 1697) by André Campra with a libretto by Antoine Houdar de La Motte. This was simply an assortment of scenes about love in various countries, trussed up with dance sequences. The mood of the spectacle was joyous, subtly erotic, full of gallantry (*galante*), which had become the dominant virtue in social circles, replacing classicist rigorism.

Authors describing the late stages of Louis XIV's rule point to women's increasing influence on culture. This arose from the fossilization of life at Versailles under Louis XIV's highly religious Morganatic wife, Madame de Maintenon.[587] The heart of French culture moved from the palace, from the king's environs (though dances and spectacles were still held there from time to time), to the salons of Paris and to the Opera. An independent social sphere began gradually flourishing, marked by subtle revolutions in customs. The city staged a resistance to the militarism and asceticism of the Sun King era. Faced with various problems plaguing the country (the rise of religious persecution, popular revolts, wars that were less and less successful or even comprehensible, fossilized court ceremonies), there was a tendency to seek shelter in artificially created spaces of civility, intimacy, and peace. Spaces traditionally assigned to women.

The rise of women's importance in French culture explains the dynamic development of the culture of love that gradually replaced chivalry. We find the beginnings

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[586] Promoting the classical style, with its reflection of harmony, purity, and the might of majesty, was a tool for strengthening royal power. Louis XIV was a classicist, though not necessarily an ancient.

[587] Sarah R. Cohen, "Body as 'Character' in Early Eighteenth-Century French Art and Performance," *The Art Bulletin* 1996, Vol. 78, No. 3, pp. 454–466; Georgia Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera* and the Subversive Utopia of the Opera-Ballet," *The Art Bulletin* 2001, Vol. 83, No. 3, pp. 461–478; Carolyn C. Lougee, *Le Paradis des Femmes: Women, Salons, and Social Stratification in Seventeenth-Century France*, Princeton, NJ 1976.

of this process in the Fronde era – in the widely read multi-volume novels by Madeleine de Scudéry, including *Artamène, ou le Grand Cyrus* (Artamène, or the Great Cyrus, published in ten volumes, 1648–1653) and *Clélie, Histoire romaine* (Clélie, or a Roman History, ten volumes, 1654–1661).[588] We can go even further back, to the famous *La Chambre bleue* by Madame de Rambouillet, a prototype for the later salons, in which women would play a more and more important role. Influenced to some extent by these models, women came to have more influence on customs, and their ambitions grew, as Molière satirized in *Les Précieuses ridicules* (The Affected Ladies, 1658). It was in these circles, in salons run by women like Madame de La Sablière, that the latter half of the seventeenth century abandoned the ideal of the *homme gloire*, or even the *honnête homme*, in favor of the *homme galant*.

Racine's interesting positioning of women in the center of the world of the stage is thrown into an interesting light with this "female offensive." We might see here (and in the utopian motif of Cythera, the mythological island of love in La Fontaine)[589] a germ of the turn in French culture, from *gloire* to *amour* as a prevailing category.[590] The moderns also subscribed to this tendency.[591] Perrault wrote *Apologie des femmes* (1694), Fontenelle made one of two interlocutors a woman in the famous *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes* (Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds, 1686). Femininity began shaping culture, within its own sphere, but also the mainstream. Gallantry meant not only an affection for women, it was something more – the ability of two people of the opposite sex to come together in what was called *tendresse*, or tenderness, which, importantly for us, was expressed through the body.

We should look at the Rococo through this lens – as the rebirth of Epicurean ideals that had been simmering in France throughout the seventeenth century. We observed a subtle hedonism tied to the exuberant sphere of various entertainments – from conversation to song and dance after a banquet and the pleasures of libations. We might even speak of a certain "carnivalization" of culture, seen in the highly popular *fêtes galantes* Jean-Antoine Watteau portrayed. In this atmosphere, the constant presence of dance was a given, both in the salons and on the stages. We might look at the refined social forms and polite rituals as miniature choreographies. Social life became a dance. Ballet and social forms underwent

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588 Joellen A. Meglin, "*Galanterie* and *Gloire*: Women's Will and the Eighteenth-Century Worldview in '*Les Indes galantes*'," in: Lynn Matluck Brooks (ed.), *Women's Work: Making Dance in Europe before 1800*, Madison, WI–London 2007, p. 236.

589 Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera*…," p. 464.

590 We must not forget that Boileau was far from an uncritical proponent of increasing women's prestige in culture. It suffices to look at the famous *X Satire*, in which he mocked maidens who longed to be educated, such as Madame de La Sablière (Benedetta Craveri, *The Age of Conversation*, New York 2006).

591 In *All Passion Spent*…, Hoxby describes the lyrical tragedies created after Lully's death as a critique of the dominant model of *gloire*. The crowning example here is *Médée* (1693) by Thomas Corneille (libretto) and Marc-Antoine Charpentier (music).

a close symbiosis. Ballet was a model for *fêtes galantes*, which in turn gave themes of spectacles, such as *Les fêtes galantes* of 1698.[592]

In the relationship between dance and social life during the Rococo era, the new shift in stress strikes us as particularly interesting in terms of the role of the body in defining individual identity and social relations. The public body became more autonomous. While in the courtly rituals it aimed to be merely a sign of a position assigned from above, in the salons and on the Opera stage it entered complex games of presentation and seduction. As Sarah R. Cohen phrases it, "what had begun as an art of courtly self-presentation was becoming a social connoisseurship of the body."[593] The games between people in the Rococo era often played out in dance, creating a space for exploring erotic tension, casting various sorts of challenges. This is why we cannot speak of the minuet and other dances of the period only in terms of discipline. They also provided a chance for self-expression.

We have spoken of how the aristocracy used the *ballets burlesques* to set up (symbolic) resistance against the Crown's absolutist tendencies. The individualized, bold, and ambiguous bodies they shaped were opposed to the pacified bodies of the geometrical ballets, which were subordinate to abstract models. This strategy was not limited to dance. As Cohen demonstrates, the whole of the seventeenth century sculpted a refined and virtuosic aristocratic body, which inspired the bourgeoisie on the one hand and, on the other, the royal powers.[594] In his court ballet roles, Louis XIV used tactics that had been developed by the nobility in *ballets burlesques*, such as taking the part of a woman to show versatility and virtuosity, which lets us speak of the ruler appropriating subversive strategies. The upwardly mobile bourgeoisie also adopted the aristocratic model of physicality. This was facilitated in part by *Mercure galant*, which gave the refined reader details of ceremonial life at court. Equally crucial was the work of artists like Jean Berain, a middleman of sorts between the court and the city, whose engravings showed the middle classes the aesthetics preferred by the high social strata. Part of its attraction was a subtle game of sensual pleasures the nobility played with the ruler. Aristocrats worked out a special form of escapism based on ebullience and vivacity to oppose the hieratic courtly classicism. A specialty of some nobility was finding spaces of sensual freedom in what may have seemed an utterly regulated court life. Cohen writes, for example, of strolls through intricately constructed gardens, of finding solitary places for conversation, enjoyment, and dance (Ill. 119). We might call these strategies "the autonomization of style."

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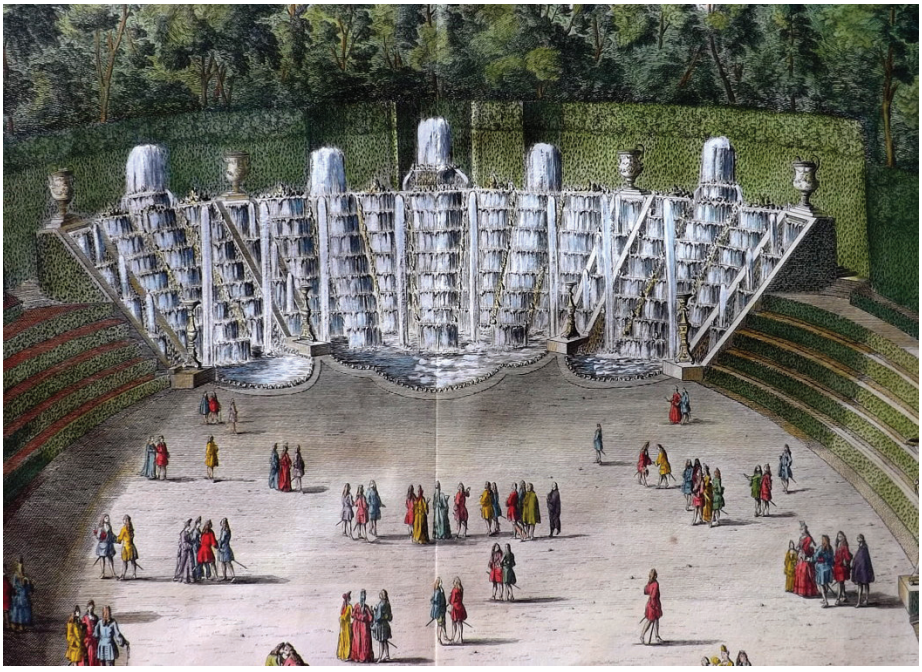
592 Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera*...," p. 462.

593 Cohen, "Body as 'Character'...," p. 457.

594 Cohen, *Art, Dance and the Body*... Our reconstruction of the social impact of the "aristocratic body" in late-seventeenth-century and early-eighteenth-century France is wholly based on this outstanding work.

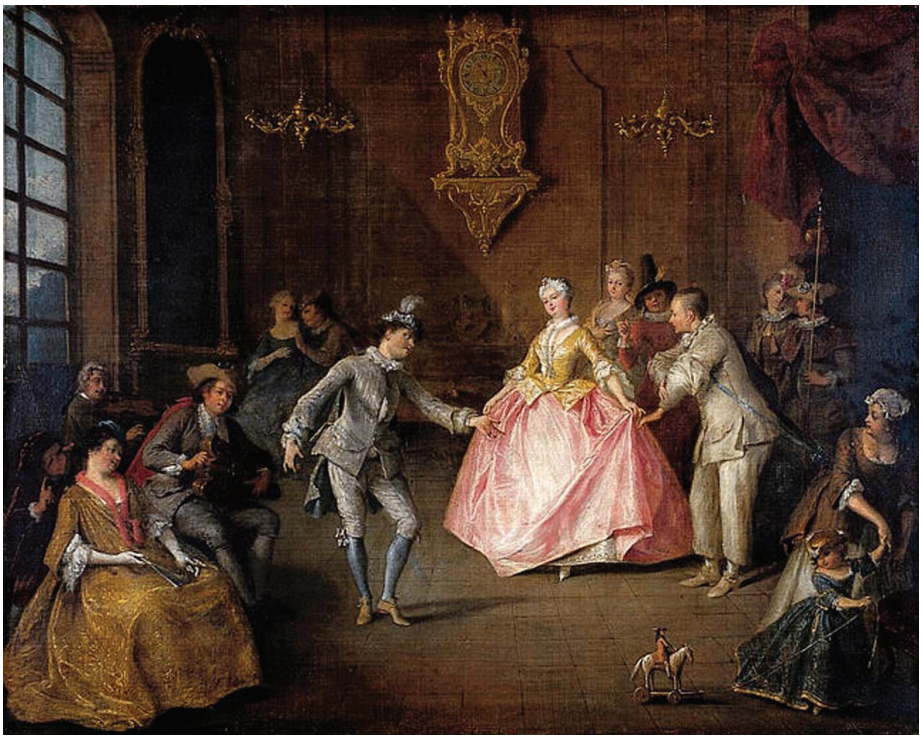


119. Artist unknown, illustration for *Les plans, profils, et elevations des Ville et Château de Versailles* by Gilles de Mortain depicting the Rococo architecture of the Versailles gardens, ca. 1714–1724

Taking part in games established by authorities, Rococo people tried, at least, to carve a place for themselves, autonomously building their social "character."[595] This meant social life turned into a theater of appearances, later copied on the Opera stage in the form of ambiguous though seemingly quite restrained opera-ballets, in whose plots we often find various plays on identity. Small wonder that the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the enormous popularity of masquerades in many places around Paris (Ill. 120).[596] These allowed the individual to design their identity with total freedom, involving the "democratization" of the masked society. A bourgeois man could become a priest for a few hours, or vice-versa. "Experiments" of this kind particularly gained steam in the Regency era, which brought a thaw in customs. This pertly came about through the ideal of sociability, seen as autonomous individuals entering partner relations, and not hierarchical service.

595 Late-seventeenth-century dance theorists Michel de Pure and Claude-François Ménestrier believed that ballet ought not to compete with theater by attempting to dramatize its content. In their eyes, its task was to please the viewers' senses. Dance was primarily considered a visual art, it was meant to provide an intriguing picture on stage. Thus, dancers were tasked less with showing character development than a certain kind of feeling, mood, a certain "character."

596 Cohen, *Art, Dance and the Body...*, pp. 146–165.



120. Nicolas Lancret, *Avant le bal masqué* (Before the Masked Ball), first half of the 18th century

It is from this perspective – the fashion for a new mode of sociability – that we ought to see the *contredanse*'s growing popularity at the turn of the century. It was promoted in France by André Lorin, who published two collections dedicated to the king.[597] Lorin stressed that the pleasure of the contredanse came from its relative simplicity, from the option of combining steps at will, and from the sense of being together, as opposed to the showy and virtuosic nature of dances like the minuet.[598] We find a similar tone in the very title of a highly popular collection prepared by Raoul Feuillet: *Recüeil de contredances mises en chorégraphie, d'une maniére si aisée, que toutes personnes peuvent facilement les apprendre, sans le secours d'aucun maître et même sans avoir en aucune connoissance de la chorégraphie* (A Collection of *Contredanses*, So Simple in Choreography That Anyone Can Learn Them Easily Without the Help of a Dancing Master, Even with No Knowledge of Choreography,

[597] The more well-known of them bears the title *Livre de contredance présenté au roy* (The Book of *Contredance* Presented to the King, 1685). Cf. note 526 in the previous chapter.

[598] Cohen, *Art, Dance and the Body...*, pp. 161–162.

121. Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, *Minuet* (Minuet), 1756

1706). The sociability in the contredanses can be read as symbolic resistance against the politics of rank, which stressed anonymous virtuosity.

This choreographic simplicity concealed an ambiguous pleasure.

The contredanses of the Rococo period were the expression of a body enjoying social games.[599] In the early eighteenth century, the body was still associated with the aristocracy, but in fact it meant something different than in the previous centuries – the aristocracy was increasingly understood as a community of tastes, manners, and convictions, and not blood. Importantly for us, the expression and ambivalence of the "aristocratic" body also went into the minuet (Ill. 121). Cowart writes of "the minuet, of all dances the one that most clearly captures the blend of pastoral elegance and amorous desire that becomes synonymous with the ballet itself."[600] This is indeed a most intriguing ambiguity – on the one hand, order, on the other, eroticism. Salon minuets and other popular social dances of the period, such as *chaconnes* and *passepieds,* remained formalized. They were surely simpler than those danced by the professionals in the opera-ballets, though to dance them with the freedom that *galanterie* presupposed one had to submit to complicated

[599] Ibid., pp. 194–207.

[600] Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera*…," p. 467.

kinetic rules, documented in the handbooks we covered in Chapter Three. Yet in Rococo culture the rules were made to serve the individual dancer, unlike in classicist culture, where the individual was subject to the rules. The stress was laid on forging interpersonal relations in dialogue, using processes of seduction, and not predetermined by the monarch's dictates or tradition. We might speak of the eroticization of culture in the sense that male-female relations were shifted into the foreground as the general model:

> its mapping out of intimate matters of male-female relations gave them a broader significance, endowed them with repercussions for society and transcribed them into a worldview. In this geography of sentiment the personal was indeed political, and female governance was at the heart of civilization.[601]

Love was the order of the day, the paradigm of existence.

Rococo France gave unto the world many who were sensitive to love, dreaming of elegance, flirtation, and sensory pleasures, and, with them, an unending dance of friendship and passion. No one depicted them so beautifully as Jean-Antoine Watteau, an artist in many ways tied to the emerging social forces. He came from the petty bourgeoisie, but owed his career to his talent, as well as to the support of the Parisian elite, which admired him both for his craft and for his libertine views.[602] He mingled in a community affiliated with the moderns, frequented salons, and often visited the Opera, where he could get a look at the actors and dancers, but also the high society. Thus, he was immersed in the dance of the *société tendresse*, and he translated its rhythm, fluidity, and softness to the canvas. We know him as a chronicler of the *fêtes galantes*, as a portraitist of Italian actors expelled from France in the late seventeenth century, but restored to good graces with the death of Louis XIV.

Much has been written about Watteau's melancholy, as well as about the critical aspect of his art. Who has not seen the telling *L'Enseigne de Gersaint* (The Shop Sign of Gersaint, 1620–1621), which shows a portrait of the Sun King being packed into a crate (Ill. 122)? Watteau was among those who breathed a sigh of relief when the Regency began, and was its most important chronicler. Through his work we understand what kind of social multiplier the *galanterie*-type salon really was. It gave vent to deeply buried ideas – critiques of the brutality of absolute rule, yearning for freedom, and the notion of democratizing human relations (at least

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601 Meglin, "*Galanterie* and *Gloire*...," p. 237. Cohen notes that in the early eighteenth century couples' dances began increasingly appearing in spectacles (Cohen, *Art, Dance and the Body*..., p. 192). Opera-ballets used dancing pairs to depict the culture of love, or erotic tension, which was lapped up by the elite as they gradually shed the corset of absolutism.

602 We stress that we are speaking of times when libertinism did not yet chiefly mean promiscuity, but rather freedom of convictions and a critical mind.

122. Jean-Antoine Watteau, *L'Enseigne de Gersaint* (The Shop Sign of Gersaint), 1620–1621

123. Jean-Antoine Watteau, *Le Plaisir pastoral* (Pastoral Pleasure), 1714–1716

among the elite). It is not only our view that *Les Plaisirs du bal* (The Pleasures of the Ball, ca. 1717) and *Le Plaisir pastoral* (Pastoral Pleasure, 1714–1716) (Ill. 123) ought to be read as such – as the lungs filling with air, to some degree a rebellious festival of touch and intimacy, a dream of gentle, sensual, tender sociability. In Watteau we find far more than genre paintings. Georgia Cowart is correct to put him in the realm of the Cythera utopia that was all the rage at the time, expressed through the art of conversation, music, theater, and dance.[603] The free atmosphere of mythological love was dramatically contrasted with the stuffy air of the court. In Cythera, freedom reigned, there was a fondness for civilized entertainment, inhabitants respected one another, and above all, there was a cult of peace. The salons of the Regency period, like the Opera at the time, longed to make this utopia come true. Though we know the reality did not measure up to the ideal,[604] let us have a closer look at it, to see dance at the very heart of culture.

Sarah R. Cohen writes about movement in Watteau's most famous painting, *L'Embarquement pour Cythère* (Pilgrimage to Cythera, 1717) (Ill. 124), as a minuet, though this dance is not literally depicted.[605] Cohen sees the same lines and gestures, the same rising and falling rhythm when she looks at the canvas. It is just as though the dance were the model for an ideal psychophysical state, fully expressing a social ideal. It could have been a minuet, but it just as well could have been another dance, like the *loure*, which Rameau praised based on the choreography of *Aimable Vainqueur*, which was famed across Europe. Yet it was not only a particular choreography that counted. Technique, though necessary, slipped into the background. The society of *amour*, *galanterie*, and *tendresse* was less a society of particular dances than a feel for dance that colored all of existence – and the Rococo feel for dance was central to the utopia of Cythera painted by Watteau, which became the subject of several opera-ballets at least.[606] Love, theater, dance, and art were all seen as equivalent. All of it was a space of sensory arousal.

This was one kinetic strategy used to defend a range of values. On the one hand, dances like the minuet were used to celebrate traditional standpoints and symbols, whose expression in dance was the *danse noble* shaped in the seventeenth century; on the other, a new worldview and a new vision for mankind was sketched out to its rhythm, and of this we can learn a great deal from Watteau. We should have a look not only at those works that directly deal with dance, but also the portraits and drawings. Cohen argues that a fundamental concept for Watteau's art is "character."[607] As part of a society of the spectacle, he realized the importance of

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603 Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera*...".

604 This island of love quite often became an island of debauchery. At least according to the "dark legend" of the regent and his entourage.

605 Cohen, *Art, Dance, and the Body*..., pp. 226–241.

606 Cowart describes this in detail in "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera*…".

607 Cohen, "Body as 'Character'…".

124. Jean-Antoine Watteau, *L'Embarquement pour Cythère* (Pilgrimage to Cythera), 1717

125. Jean-Antoine Watteau, *La Danse* (The Dance), 1716–1718

self-presentation, and to a large extent this was the subject of his art. Yet this was an agency unlike the kind in the court ballets of the absolutist era. Character no longer meant a type, it was an increasingly individualized personality, an autonomous individual. Here we think of the portrait of *Pierrot*,[608] of course, but also *La Danse* (The Dance, 1716–1718) (Ill. 125), one of the most beautiful child portraits in the history of painting. These portraits contain a discreet melancholy, but also a dignity in their subjects once reserved for rulers and clergy, and, above all, a gentle aspect, a delicacy in the artist's approach to the model. Watteau painted as though he were carefully taking his model by the hand and leading them to a dance. Between him and the "character" he portrayed emerged the space of the Rococo *fête*. A space in which emotions played a pivotal role, for, as Cohen explains, "'character' [as a painterly study] entailed a simulation of human emotion itself through the intricacies of a physical movement."[609] The same goes for the painter's group compositions, particularly *L'Embarquement pour Cythère* or *Les Plaisirs du bal* (pl. VII). In these we can trace the Rococo kinetic politics, which might be called a "minuet of individuality." The individuals enter into dynamic relations of seduction, nonetheless structured by complex conventions. The individual bodies, couples, and larger groups create whole compositions that could seem rather unintelligible, but in fact are quite precise. The energy of sociability turns out to give the community a highly organic shape.

We should stress once more that the Paris Opera was important in shaping the Rococo cultural space.

> Many of these courtiers, bored with the lackluster atmosphere at court and freed by Louis's lack of interest, moved to fashionable new *hôtels* in Paris, where they joined an increasingly wealthy upper bourgeoisie to form a 'shadow court' in the foyers, vestibules, and loges of the Paris Opera. There, instead of celebrating the king through empty platitudes of flattery, they could celebrate themselves as a new audience for whom spectacular diversion was provided as regular fare. The stage ballet provided the perfect venue for this new audience, for it both entertained and showcased it as a social elite, just as the court ballet had done for the old nobility.[610]

In this social milieu the status of professional dancers was always on the rise, a point on which we shall have more to say later in this chapter. They ceased to be bodies hired to praise His Majesty and became mirrors of the birthing bourgeois individuality. In the first half of the eighteenth century several of them were public

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608 This mysterious portrait of an actor from a *commedia dell'arte* troupe, which might be a self-portrait, is intriguingly described by Cohen in *Art, Dance and the Body...*, pp. 262–270.

609 Cohen, "Body as 'Character'…," p. 456.

610 Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera*…," p. 463.

figures, forerunners of today's stars of the stage and screen. They were known by their names, but also their individual dance styles, and helped inspire Noverre's reform.

The shift toward the star system in dance began with the autonomization of Parisian society, and with it, the Opera.

> With the diffusion of the court ballet into the varied entertainments of early eighteenth-century Paris [lyrical tragedies, opera-ballets, independent ballet presentations, as well as fairground theaters, which we will come to later], the communicative powers of dancing were increasingly honed to the performing body itself. Good dancers, the critics were now beginning to claim, constructed "characters" which were independent of specific context; a highly skilled body provoked response through the very execution of its own performance.[611]

The weight of gravity shifted from the plot, the form of the performance, everything imposed on the individual dancer from the outside, toward their abilities, charisma, and skill at prompting an emotional response from the audience. Dance connoisseurs began delighting at the individual interpretations of steps. This should come as no surprise, as emotions were playing a major role in culture, and not as an antagonist. We have mentioned Boileau's mature classicism as opening up to the "order of the heart." The "women's offensive" was an attempt to enthrone this order from a new angle. Some bemoaned that this was at the expense of reason. A friend even said of Madame de La Sablière that "she never thought, she only limited herself to feeling."[612] This was not a just opinion. Women, including Sablière, a die-hard Cartesian, did not seek to disavow reason. Nor was this the aim of the bourgeois culture they helped to create, including ballet. The rational order of the positions and steps introduced by Beauchamp, Feuillet, and Rameau continued to play a vital role. The main Opera choreographer of the early eighteenth century, Louis Pécour,[613] was evidently their disciple. Nevertheless, Rococo senti-mentalism steered the art of ballet toward being a space for expressing emotion.

Life-Affirming Libertinism, Dynamic Leibniz

All of the above leads us to second Georgia J. Cowart's claim that ballet in Rococo culture operated as a space of discreet resistance against the absolutist tendencies of classicism:

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611 Cohen, "Body as 'Character'…," p. 462.
612 Quoted from: Craveri, *The Age of Conversation*..., p. 272.
613 He was responsible for the choreography for *L'Europe galante*.

> it combines several qualities that make it the ideal symbol for utopian protest. First, it reflects a world of art and beauty unconstricted by the necessity of monarchical flattery; second, it provides a haven for the masking of subversion under the guise of *fête*; and third, it embraces in its audience a microcosm of the social diversity that would characterize the new utopia.[614]

Presenting opera-ballets as a subversive form might surprise us, and we may suspect that Cowart overstates their role. Even if this is true to some degree, we cannot deny that ballet actively participated in the overall transformation that was taking place in French culture, a transformation that spilled across the whole continent.

In the early eighteenth century the geometric shackles on culture came loose – the rationalist striving for absolute control over the body waned, along with the suspicion of and moral rigor toward sensory pleasures. One more seldom heard that the body was a mere mechanism. Increasingly self-assured individuals seduced one another with the intricate figures of the minuet and joyful strides of the *contredanses*, understanding they were basically corporeal, as the body experienced pleasures that were the essence of existence. Small wonder that Cartesianism, which had begun to be the prevailing academic philosophy in France, was unable to provide the intellectual inspiration needed for the Rococo kinesis. They had to draw from another tradition.

Cowart points out that "the public ballet of the Paris Opéra, under the guise of a social *libertinage de moeurs* that it shared with the court ballet of Louis [XIV]'s early reign, also espoused a political *libertinage d'esprit* foreshadowing the revolutionary thought of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment."[615] The politics of philosophical libertinism will not be of interest to us yet, though the distinction between liberalism of customs and of spirit, and pointing out the link between the latter and the development of French culture, and with it, ballet, will need our attention. For in philosophical libertinism, we can find the inspirations missing from the kinetic imagination of a mechanistic Cartesianism.

J. S. Spink's study of the history of free thinking in seventeenth-century France, already mentioned more than once, remains highly inspiring.[616] The author writes that *la Libre pensée* is a philosophy that is not always systematic, frequently skeptical, and focuses on contesting prevailing dogmas rather than introducing new ones. This is a philosophy of erudites, lovers of life, and people who value common sense. We have already come across it in our sketch of Molière, who could have passed for a libertine spirit. We also spoke of how he was probably influenced by Pierre Gassendi, a logician and restorer of the Epicurean tradition in France. Let us

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614 Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera*…," p. 468.

615 Ibid., p. 463.

616 J. S. Spink, *French Free-Thought from Gassendi to Voltaire*, London 2013.

pursue this lead, for Gassendi epitomizes the sort of seventeenth-century thought that prized the dynamic, exuberant life and appreciated the body.

Gassendi would not agree to a cold mechanicism, though he also took part in the scientific revolution, wholeheartedly standing up for rationalism and structured thought, while taking into account changeability, the mobility of being, appreciating the weight of emotions. This is why he turned to an ancient thinker who was not immune to sensory pleasures – Epicurus. Gassendi was a clergyman, which meant his Epicurean worldview necessarily took God into account. He wrote that God was the creator of atoms, the building blocks of the world for the ancient philosopher. He set them in motion. Yet Gassendi's God was not a god of incorporeal thought, but of elemental life, experiencing and feeling. Even in terms of his physics, Gassendi speaks clearly in favor of dynamism: "atoms are always in motion, [...] motion is one of their properties."[617] Atoms are "naturally active and always active,"[618] "the principle of motion [contrary to Descartes and Malebranche] is in bodies,"[619] and thus reality, too, is active, even on a physical plane.

This picture is quite different from the mechanics of the faction of the Cartesian camp who supposed that, as machines, animals felt no pain.[620] Gassendi calls attention to life as a process of gaining experience, which presupposes the action of the experiencer, not only the passive reception of stimuli. "It [gaining experience] does not consist merely in receiving the species emanating from an object but also in apprehending them and striving towards their source."[621] Thus, every feeling being is dynamic. This is why in "Fifth Objections" made against Descartes' *Meditations* upon Mersenne's prompting, Gassendi devotes so much space to defending animals against automatism.[622] No body, it seems, is purely mechanical. A rigorous dualism is a product of an abstraction detached from concrete existence. Gassendi posits a re-immersion in action, in the stream of experiences, thus anticipating the sensualism Locke was later to develop.[623] This does not make it necessary to surrender to the pressure of sensory experience. Gassendi joined Epicurus in stressing the virtue of moderation. It is true we seek pleasure and we want to avoid pain,

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617 Ibid., p. 88.

618 Ibid., p. 93.

619 Ibid., p. 94.

620 On the perception of animals as automatons at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, cf. Herbert Butterfield, *The Origins of Modern Science*, New York 1965, p. 137.

621 Spink, *French Free-Thought...*, p. 97.

622 René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy with Selections from the Objections and Replies*, trans. John Cottingham, Cambridge 2017.

623 On Gassendi's influence on Locke, see, for example, Kołakowski, "Piotr Gassendi – chrześcijanin, materialista, sceptyk," in: Pierre Gassendi, *Logika*, trans. Ludwik Chmaj, Warsaw 1964, p. XXXII. Also worth consulting are: Tristram Stuart, *The Bloodless Revolution: A History of Vegetarianism*, London 2008, to see how Gassendi's defense of animals was taken up by his editor, François Bernier, who came to influence Locke during his stay in France.

but hedonism is the wrong path, especially as it places the pleasures of the senses above all others. According to Gassendi, a wise life means seeking and experiencing peace in the pleasures of the intellect. One must conquer the passions.[624] Yet they cannot be altogether condemned, as other rationalists had written as well. The key to success was navigating them correctly. Here Gassendi seems to allow himself to go much further than Descartes or Malebranche. His mode of existence is not contemplative, it is active, open to everyday pleasures and a common-sense point of view and, importantly for us, quite at home with the body.

As such, we may speak of the restoration of a materialist philosophy, though Gassendi himself never negates the existence of a non-corporeal soul. Nor does he dismiss the thesis that thought can be an attribute of matter, which Locke later accepted as a hypothesis, and which so impressed Voltaire.[625] Gassendi's "Materialism" is an aspect of a standpoint that knows no extensive speculation, which seeks the simplest solutions, in the spirit of rationalism, but without backsliding into a kind of scholasticism, as was the case, after all, with Descartes himself and, most of all, Malebranche. Gassendi was a greater optimist than either of them. Kołakowski reconstructs the essence of his worldview as follows:

> [Gassendi] tells us to approach human nature trustfully, and heroic exertions do not seem to him needed for a good life, there is no trace of original sin in his picture of man. The human world continues without grace, much as the physical world goes on without God, whose work of creation does not mean we must resort to his help in interpreting events.[626]

As we shall see, this standpoint was quite dear to the libertine thinkers of the Enlightenment era, above all Voltaire, who stressed Newton's debt to the French Epicurean, who was, in turn, the idol of François-Marie Arouet himself.[627]

At present it is hard to determine how great Gassendi's direct influence was on the worldview of the generations to follow. Spink holds that it was more the general Epicurean spirit promoted by his writings as such. For our purposes this is a secondary issue, for it is more the general spirit that interests us, and we must confess that in France of the latter half of the seventeenth century, a common-sense view of the world, accepting the physical dimension of human existence, was far from

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624 Here Gassendi agrees with the greatest rationalists of the seventeenth century: Descartes, Spinoza, and Malebranche.

625 Kołakowski, *Piotr Gassendi...*, pp. XXXVIII–XXXIX.

626 Ibid, p. XLIII.

627 "Newton has often declared to some French gentlemen still living, that he esteemed Gassendi as a very sagacious, accurate, and prudent genius; and that he accounted it an honour in being entirely of his opinion, with regard to all the points we have been considering [...]" (Voltaire, *The Works of Voltaire Vol. XXVI*, trans. T. Smollett, London 1763, p. 98).

rare. There was a whole group of figures from various communities who cultivated "life-affirming" worldviews in their own ways. Among them were adherents of Descartes, who chiefly valued his method of radical criticism and his call to be always researching. This was Fontenelle and the moderns, who were non-dogmatic Cartesians.[628] They saw no reason to deprecate the body and its pleasures, if only moderation was observed. Yet among the ancients as well, we find individuals who thought in a similar vein. La Fontaine, for instance, who lived for twenty years in the home of Madame de La Sablière,[629] was incapable of fully agreeing to animal automatism. According to Spink, he claimed: "It is unthinkable that a mere machine should be taken as the symbol of a man,"[630] while declaring himself an Epicurean. Yet sometimes Epicureanism was insufficient. Saint-Evremond, who, like La Fontaine, would not concur with mechanistically-inclined Cartesians (though here animals were not the main bone of contention) was forced to emigrate when he came forth with his "anti-Pascalian" program. For some time, scholars have called attention to the key role of the theory of "entertainments" (*divertissements*) in his thought.[631] Saint-Evremond spent part of his life on the battlefield, where he gained first-hand experience of an insurmountable opponent against whom all creatures are equal – death. As such, speaking of security and calm as the highest good struck Saint-Evremond as pure sophistry. Only one thing could be recommended: "Rage, rage, against the dying of the light," as Dylan Thomas phrased it.[632] This is also why Saint-Evremond extolled hedonism, which placed intellectual pleasures at the height of importance, though these required constant stimuli: "Our only salvation is in movement, not in contemplation, in a dynamic existence, and not in anticipating an absurd catastrophe."[633] Nor was Saint-Evremond's hedonism isolated, as Cassirer has shown.[634] The aristocrats who met at Paris's Temple, for instance, agreed with him.[635] The philosophical libertinism

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628 "Fontenelle's universe was like Descartes's. In it, vortices of subtle matter whirled the stars round on their courses. But Fontenelle had also read Lucretius. He did not mention Descartes's metaphysics in his imaginary conversations; he was more concerned with emptying the world of beings created by human fear and fancy than with giving man's mind a pre-eminent place in the universe" (Spink, *French Free-Thought*..., p. 202).

629 Ibid., p. 163.

630 Ibid.

631 As was done by the Polish translator of his writings in the introduction to: Saint-Evremond, *O sztuce życia i życiu sztuki. Eseje, listy, maksymy*, trans. Rachmiel Brandwajn, Warsaw 1962, p. 24.

632 Dylan Thomas, "Do not go gentle into that good night," in: idem, *Selected Poems, 1934–1952*, New York 2003, p. 122.

633 Brandwajn, "Wstęp...," p. 24.

634 Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove, Princeton 1951, p. 355.

635 At the close of Louis XIV's reign, the Square du Temple was known as the "temple of godlessness," a meeting place of philosophical libertines who were also liberal in their customs. Among them were royal deputy Philippe de Bourbon-Vendôme, his brother, the high-anking officer Louis Joseph,

of the Enlightenment drew its juices from this source, as well as from Gassendi, elaborating their teachings on ecstasy, opening up to a wide variety of sensory pleasures, particularly when it came to Voltaire, who underwent a Temple "education" in his youth, and La Mettrie, perhaps the most radical Epicurean of the eighteenth-century philosophers.

In late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century France, various chords were struck in the name of a generally rationalist viewpoint, and, as we shall see, "life-affirming" activism and dynamism rang out stronger and stronger. There was no unanimous consent to the mechanization of life and, with it, humankind, especially as the dynamically developing modern natural sciences tended to find more arguments against the mechanization of life than in its defense. This is why we can also speak of the times when opera-ballets ruled the stage as a period of essential exploration and reevaluation in culture. A key figure in these reevaluations, and pivotal for the French Enlightenment, despite its ambivalent stance toward him,[636] was Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz.

It might seem that, because of his German descent, Leibniz should be a marginal figure in our story. Yet in the times under consideration, national belonging of scholars was of secondary significance. At any rate, Leibniz visited France, and took part in its debates. He had also gained a reputation in France as a brilliant mathematician, but a one-dimensional philosopher. He was labeled an "optimist" and a "systematician" of scholastic tendencies, and, above all, an opponent of Newton, for which Voltaire and d'Alembert criticized him. And yet Leibniz's ideas would give the *philosophes* no rest, which made him an essential element of the transformation from classicism to the Enlightenment in French culture. In his critiques of Descartes and Malebranche he noted the passivity of their worldviews, trying to build a theory which saw reality as a dynamic, multifaceted whole. Leibniz suggested a capital thing, which Cartesian dualism could not conceive – he appreciated diversity and, with it, individuality. In his eyes, the universe was a reality pulsing with life, incredibly dynamic, multi-shaped, internally diverse, and abundant. This is why Gilles Deleuze tied him to a Baroque aesthetic – anxious, bursting at every step, folded.[637] In Leibniz, two modes of the body were at the very center of this weave: dark and light. He believed (or so Deleuze claimed, at least) that we must have a body, for in us is something darkly undefined – a passive power for staging resistance, but he also claimed, perhaps more emphatically, that we must have a body because there is light in us.

Duke of Sully, and poets Charles Auguste de La Fare and Guillaume Amfrye de Chaulieu. On Voltaire's contacts with this community, see: Orieux, *Voltaire*.

636 It suffices to read the critique in *Elements of Newton's Philosophy*, and above all, in *Candide*, and to compare them with Diderot's entry in the *Encyclopedia*.

637 Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley, London–New York 2003.

> This time, we must have a body because our mind possesses a favored – clear and distinct – zone of expression. Now it is the clear zone that is the requirement for having a body. Leibniz will go so far as stating that what I express clearly is what "relates to my body."[638]

Maupertuis, and most of all Diderot, who is the end point of the present chapter, fused this Leibniz – expressive, elemental, and body-positive – into the spirit of materialism.[639] This is one reason why we need to dwell a bit longer on Leibniz.

As Spink noted: "At bottom, Leibniz's view of the world was more like that of Gassendi [...] than it was like Descartes's."[640] While Cartesian physics appealed to the law of the conservation of quantity of motion, Leibniz's physics were based on the law of the conservation of energy. This came from a different concept of substance. Leibniz wrote:

> the concept of *forces* or *powers*, which the Germans call *Kraft* and the French *la force*, and for whose explanation I have set up a distinct science of *dynamics*, brings the strongest light to bear upon our understanding of the true concept of *substance*. Active force differs from mere power [...], for active power [...] is nothing but a close [*propinqua*] possibility acting, which needs an external excitation or a stimulus, as it were, to be transferred into action. Active force, in contrast, contains a certain act [...] and is thus midway between the faculty of acting and the act itself and involves a conatus. It is thus carried into action by itself.[641]

According to Leibniz, substance is nothing like an automaton. The world thus has place for initiative, not only receiving external impulses, as in Malebranche. "Leibniz sees the capacity for perception and desire spread throughout nature. Every material object, every plant, every animal, and also every part of every material object, plant, animal enjoys these powers in some degree."[642] This does not mean that Leibniz accepted the world to be undetermined. On the contrary, in his philosophy, too, the world was governed by inflexible laws, which the philosopher could discover. Nonetheless, a reevaluation was evident – after the epoch of mechanistic stabilization, we now had an ontology of action.

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638 Ibid., p. 97.

639 Spink writes of Leibniz's influence on Diderot, *French Free-Thought...*, p. 237. The same is done by Skrzypek, writing of "a spiritual materialization of the German philosopher's monads" in the works of Diderot (Marian Skrzypek, *Filozofia Diderota*, Warsaw 1996, p. 35). The reader interested in exploring this issue in detail is encouraged to consult: Claire Fauvergue, *Diderot, lecteur et interprete de Leibniz*, Paris 2006.

640 Spink, *French Free-Thought...*, p. 234.

641 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, "On the correction of Metaphysics and the Concept of Substance," in: *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, trans. Leroy E. Loemker, Dordrecht–Boston–London 1989, p. 433.

642 Spink, *French Free-Thought...*, p. 237.

> Following Leibniz's concept, bodies that ontically precede extension are its necessary condition [in Descartes it was the reverse]. It is necessary to introduce dynamic properties, which differ from spatial ones, not in the sense of one force common to all individuals, but in the sense of separate, non-extensive substances conceived as individual centers of operation.[643]

Leibniz's famous teaching of the "individual centers of action," or monads, emerges as an attempt to build a theory of reality that emphasizes the power of individuality, though this fundamental mobilization of infinite multiplicity of individual substances is forever subordinate to the transcendental Absolute. To some degree, this was tied to the personality of the philosopher himself.

> What Leibniz perceived in the world most of all was dynamic being – he himself was a dynamic man, finding fulfillment in active thinking and practical action. He opposed his understanding of being to the whole of metaphysical tradition to date, which was incapable of perceiving the active nature of being, of understanding that substance is not a passive being, which submits to certain actions (e.g., capable of being infinitely partitioned, as Descartes suggested), but is a force of action in itself. For Leibniz it seemed evident that, just as a diplomat and a courtier work to achieve an aim [Leibniz was both], but that aim is not the product of their autonomous will, it is assigned them by a ruler, so too substance must work for a goal, and the goal must be supplied from without.[644]

In Descartes we were dealing with one creating substance (God), and two created substances – thought (*cogito*) and extension (body). Leibniz went a different route, creating a tale of a chain of substances at whose beginning was the One, or God, and in which there was no room for the slightest pause. In the Cartesian system, "God still conserves by his co-operation the same quantity of motion and rest that he once implanted in matter."[645] In this sense, the world as a whole is unchanging. In Leibniz we have another concept. It is not motion that is preserved, but the creative impulse, which God breathed into the world. This impulse saturates all of creation, being a kind of concert of mutually attuned beings.

The things we see in the physical world are always an assembly. Any body can be infinitely disassembled. Like Descartes, Leibniz denied the existence of atoms and vacuums, as he believed material reality was infinitely divisible. This viewpoint presupposes that there is a first cause, and sufficient reason, for every being. For

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643 Przemysław Gut, *Leibniz. Myśl filozoficzna w XVII wieku*, Wrocław 2004, p. 75.

644 Jerzy Kopania, "Siła dedukcji i słabość człowieka. Tragiczny optymizm Leibniza," in: Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Teodycea. O dobroci Boga, wolności człowieka i pochodzeniu zła*, trans. Małgorzata Frankiewicz, Warsaw 2001, p. XVI.

645 Baruch Spinoza, *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy*, trans. Samuel Shirley, Indianapolis–Cambridge 1998, p. 100.

Leibniz, this sufficient reason was the individual substance of no physical character: "where there are no constituent parts there is possible neither extension, nor form, nor divisibility. These monads are the true Atoms of nature, and, in fact, the Elements of things."[646] The first monad is God, whom Leibniz called the One Being in one of his most beautiful works:

> Beyond the world, that is, beyond the collection of finite things, there is some One Being who rules, not only as the soul is the ruler in me, or, better, as the self is the ruler in my body, but also in a much higher sense. For the One Being who rules the universe not only rules the world, but also fashions or creates it; he is above the world, and, is to speak, extramundane, and therefore he is the ultimate reason for things.[647]

In these words we detect a theist perspective, but Leibniz's God was not entirely a Christian God of the orthodoxy. He was closer to a deist standpoint. Leibniz situated divinity within the eternal, logical truths, what he called metaphysical necessity. Here we come to perhaps the most pivotal dilemma in his thinking with regards to the place of freedom in the system, and thus, in Leibnizian anthropology, which interests us in particular.

Leibniz wrote:

> in order to explain a bit more distinctly how temporal, contingent, or physical truths arise from eternal, essential or metaphysical truths, we must first acknowledge that since something rather than nothing exists, there is a certain urge for existence or (so to speak) a straining toward existence in possible things.[648]

This, then, is our situation: God operates in terms of metaphysical necessity. As the sufficient reason of everything, God must exist and be of a logical nature. God has an urge to realize himself in the form of a world. From a logical perspective, there is an infinite number of possible worlds. God thus chooses one of them and opens a space of free choice. This choice is not arbitrary, Leibniz writes. It is not a choice in an Augustinian, Calvinist, or Cartesian spirit.[649] It is not random, it is free, and thus, a choice that conforms to the laws of logic. God chooses the best of all possible worlds, driven by moral necessity,[650] yet this is not an absolute neces-

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646 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics and the Monadology*, trans. George R. Montgomery, New York 2005, p. 47.

647 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, "On the Ultimate Origination of Things," in: *Philosophical Essays*, trans. Roger Ariew and Danie Garber, Indianapolis–Cambridge 1989, p. 149.

648 Ibid., p. 150.

649 Descartes believed that if God wanted two times two to equal five, it would be so. Leibniz disagreed.

650 We clearly see here Leibniz's anthropomorphic approach to Divinity: "Yet God is bound by a moral necessity, to make things in such a manner that there can be nothing better: otherwise not only would others have cause to criticize what he makes, but, more than that, he would not himself be

sity, and thus the created world, though the most perfect, is a matter of chance, it could be different, though it is not, by God's sovereign decision. By the same token, once created it has physical necessity, i.e., the law that governs it – striving toward perfection, progress – is invariable.[651]

A critical trait of the theory of the general law of nature in Leibniz is the stress placed on the dynamic, as Lovejoy writes. He believes Leibniz shared a conviction expressed by Bruno: "If there was no change in bodies, no variety in matter, and no vicissitude in beings, there would be nothing agreeable, nothing good, nothing pleasant."[652] According to Bruno and Leibniz, perfection presupposes change, as without change, there would be no quality. When we juxtapose these words with the medieval worldview mentioned in our introduction, we see how fundamentally the European imagination had changed over four hundred years. "Pleasure and satisfaction consists in nothing else but a certain passage, progress, or motion from one state to another,"[653] Bruno wrote. In Leibniz, and then across modernity, we observe a strengthening of this tone, making it a widespread imperative: change and movement are good, rest is not. To our mind, this change is absolutely key to culture, and lay at the foundation of the emancipation of dance as an art, but also the emancipation of the human being, their morality, their practice.

According to Leibniz, the created world is an infinite and dynamic chain of individual monads called to life by the One, operating independently from him, yet according to the laws he established. The monad given to us to know is the human soul. This allows us to understand that the world of monads is a highly precise and subtle construct, based on autonomy:

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satisfied with his work, he would blame itself for its imperfection […] This perpetual sense of his own fault or imperfection would be to him an inevitable source of grief [...]" (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, trans. E. M. Huggard, New York 2009, p. 253). This God oppressed by a sense of grief is in fact a God created in the likeness of man.

651 "And so, we now have physical necessity derived from metaphysics. For even if the world is not metaphysically necessary, in the sense that its contrary implies a contradiction or a logical absurdity, it is, however, physically necessary or determined, in the sense that its contrary implies imperfection or moral absurdity. And just as possibility is the foundation [*principium*] of essence, so perfection or degree of essence (through which the greatest number of things are compossible) is the foundation of existence. From this it is at the same time obvious how the Author of the World can be free, even though everything happens determinately, since he acts from a principle of wisdom or perfection. Indeed, indifference arises from ignorance, and the wiser one is, the more one is determined to do that which is most perfect" (Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, p. 151). Leibniz's statement is explained by Hess: "all the events of the world are hypothetically necessary, because, if we accept the premise that this world and no other has been chosen, everything must necessarily occur as it does. Yet this supposition itself is by chance – in absolute terms the world could be different (i.e., another possible world could exist)" (Leopold Hess, "Leibniz i Spinoza," in: Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Uwagi krytyczne o Spinozie*, trans. Leopold Hess, Cracow 2011, p. 60).

652 Quoted from: Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being*, 2017.

653 Ibid.

> There is no way of explaining how a monad can be altered or changed internally by some other creature, since one cannot transpose anything in it, nor can one conceive of any internal motion that can be excited, directed, or diminished within it, as can be done in composites, where there can be change among the parts. The monads have no windows through which something can enter or leave.[654]

Yet this does not mean that the world of monads is one of isolated, passive beings. On the contrary, each monad is marked by a constant God-given drive to expansion, which is not enacted by force, but in the course of freely choosing what has been assigned to it. This makes the monad a kind of transfer of divinity to the level of chance. Like the One, the monad "strains toward existence":

> God has *power*, which is the source of everything, knowledge, which contains the diversity of ideas, and finally, will, which brings about changes or products in accordance with the principle of the best. And these correspond to what, in created monads, is the subject or the basis, the perceptive faculty and the appetitive faculty.[655]

We now see that each individual monad is activity, straining to exist by its own essence. Yet how is it that monads create a coherent world, and thus coexist in terms of entering relations with one another, though none have a window? Leibniz explains this by the moral necessity lying at the heart of the choice of our world. God chose the best of all worlds, one in which monads perfectly adapt to one another, like synchronized watches. This is a predetermined harmony which explains the body-mind relationship, among other things. By this harmony there are no gaps in the chain of being, and every link is necessary: "each simple substance has relations that express all the others, and consequently [...] each simple substance is a perpetual, living mirror of the universe."[656]

Here we come across a basic problem in Leibniz's philosophy – a contradiction between a monad's freedom to act and the predetermined harmony of these actions, in other words, between voluntarism and determinism, a problem that bothered Diderot, among others. Leibniz insisted that the choice to act in accordance with harmony is an expression of freedom. To his mind, this view was opposed to determinism, in which freedom, at best, meant a passive acceptance of necessity. Leibniz declared that man does not merely accept necessity, but actively chooses it: "God necessarily exists, but he produces things freely. And while the power of things is produced by God, it is distinct from divine power, and things themselves operate, even if they may have received their forces for acting [from elsewhere]."[657] The monad's actions

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654 Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, pp. 213–214.
655 Ibid., p. 219.
656 Ibid., p. 220.
657 Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, p. 275.

reiterate the divine gesture of freely deciding what the intellect dictates. Thus, the intellect is the "soul of freedom."[658] This means that man is determined by a certain law, but not necessarily forced to act in a given way. No one steers him from the outside like a doll. He autonomously decides to pursue rational necessity and this is when he is free.[659] Diderot, as we shall see, was dissatisfied by this solution.

These thoughts might be taken as variations on Cartesianism if Leibniz's anthropology boiled down to pure rationality; yet Leibniz's program was built not only on a conviction of man's ability to act consciously, and thus on a concept of the subject derived from a rational approach to freedom, but also on perceiving the importance of a pre-reflective level. This dimension of Leibniz's philosophy was of special importance for the Enlightenment's interest in the affective sphere as more than a show of passivity.

In *Monadology* we read that all change in the monad, and thus in the world, comes from an internal principle. "The action of the internal principle which brings about the change or passage from one perception to another can be called *appetition*."[660] The perception of this appetition is joined with a critique of Cartesianism for bypassing perceptions "we do not apperceive,"[661] but which are of key significance for the development of monads and, thus, of the world. These perceptions derive from the power that sets substances in motion. Marek J. Siemek calls attention to this theme in his lectures:

> Consciousness is not merely a looking glass, perception is not its only sphere. The essence and proper root of consciousness is "appetition," if we may use a neologism – a pre-conscious perceptual tendency, a straining and a desire that [...] shunt the monad beyond its given state of consciousness. In Leibniz this is tied to a whole attempt to access what might be called the unconscious and pre-conscious roots or sources of consciousness – an effort that was highly original and exceptional for its time.[662]

Here we have something like an initial theory of drives as an affective motor of human actions. Obviously, this does not mean that Leibniz posited that we trust these impulses. Freedom, the highest goal, is, in the case of the thinking monad, more than spontaneity and chance actions, it means conforming to the intellect. The impulse is ultimately circumscribed by reason: "The free substance is self-determining and that according to the motive of good perceived by the understanding, which inclines it without compelling it."[663]

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658 Leibniz, *Theodicy*..., p. 303.

659 Cf. Gut, *Leibniz*..., pp. 161–171.

660 Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, p. 215.

661 Ibid., p. 214.

662 Marek J. Siemek, *Wykłady z filozofii nowoczesności*, Warsaw 2012, p. 452.

663 Leibniz, *Theodicy*, p. 303. On the other hand, we should note that, despite thinking in terms of the *vis activa*, Leibniz saturated his system with a fatalism of sorts. Man is always subject to a pre-established

Thus, in Leibniz's philosophy we are dealing with a complex vision of humanity, in which reason and irrational factors interlock, making up a human world that is lively and pluralistic. The emphasis of the individual's dynamism is crucial here. Cassirer grasped this:

> The monad is not an aggregate but a dynamic whole which can only manifest itself in a profusion, in an infinity, of different effects. In this very infinity it preserves its identity as the same living center of force. This conception, which is no longer based on the concept of being but on that of action, lends an entirely new significance to the problem of the individual entity.[664]

This new concept was developed in the later Enlightenment by thinkers like Diderot. "The whole eighteenth century understands reason in this sense; not as a sound body of knowledge, principles, and truths, but as a kind of energy, a force which is fully comprehensible only in its agency and effects."[665] To some degree this is Leibniz's contribution, but also Locke's, and that of progress in the natural sciences.

Leibniz was not just a philosopher, he was also a multifaceted scholar. He is known for having discovered infinitesimal calculus parallel to Newton, but it was not only mathematics that interested him. He also explored the problems of organic life. He carefully tracked progress in the emerging science of biology, which was not without ties to mathematical concepts. At any rate, infinitesimal equations seem somewhat connected to the invention of the microscope. When Leibniz was working on calculus in the 1670s, Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* was circulating around Europe, causing a stir, above all for its illustrations of what the author observed under a microscope. At the same time, in Holland, Antonie van Leeuwenhoek, the discoverer of red blood cells, was conducting his experiments. This was a revolution involving the "extension of the realm of life

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harmony, by which human souls, or monads, operate. The impulse to act comes from God in the first instance, and aims are determined in God. Man gives his consent to act. Though he could theoretically refuse, he never does. All of reality operates like a system of perfectly synchronized clocks. "Souls act according to the laws of final causes, through appetitions, ends, and means. Bodies act according to the laws of efficient causes or of motions. And these two kingdoms, that of efficient causes and that of final causes, are in harmony with each other" (Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, p. 223). Activating impulses, "appetitions," lose autonomy here, becoming no more than functional elements of a perfect machine leading "to grace through the paths of nature" (ibid., p. 224). In the final instance, the active force perishes in the stability of divine perfection arising from metaphysical necessity, and thus, from unchanging laws of logic. This is the fundamental sufficient reason: "the existence of everything that does exist, and also its attributes, behavior, and relations, are determined by a necessary truth, or a system of such truths" (Lovejoy, *The Great Chain...*). Such a system is, of course, static and unchanging.

664 Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 32.

665 Ibid., p. 13.

downwards,"[666] discovering life that was "infinitely little," and, thus, discovering life everywhere:

> Life, it seemed, was ubiquitous. No bit of matter was so small that it could not afford lodging and nutriment for living beings still smaller; and animate matter itself was everywhere turned to use to sustain yet more animate matter, and this in turn yet more, and so on without ascertainable limit.[667]

The mechanicism of mainstream Cartesianism was incapable of realizing the diversity of creatures, their inexhaustible activity on a microscopic level. Leibnizian philosophy was decidedly more successful. Its vocabulary of straining, monads, life elements, and the chain of being were attempts to think in terms of the microscope. They conformed to what was happening in chemistry and in medicine, disciplines developing through successes mechanical philosophy brought to the natural sciences, while trying not to submit to them entirely.

In Leibniz's day, science was beginning its search for what gave bodies life, for their active principle. Some scholars, such as Georg Ernst Stahl, continued to use the concept of the soul, claiming it was "a source of movement, its overriding principle, and that of the body."[668] Others turned to more refined terms – Dutch scholar Nicolas Hartsoeker wrote of "creative natures," and his countryman, Herman Boerhaave, who taught La Mettrie, coined the term *spiritus rector*. In France, Count Boulainvilliers, an authority on Spinoza, introduced the notion of "ferment" as enlivening all of nature.[669] In these scholars' worlds, physics and biology were forever blending with metaphysics and theology, yet over time, the scientific point of view gained the upper hand. At the same time, some noted that the world had not become more comprehensible in the wake of these scientific discoveries. Newton's physics were generally heralded as a universal key to reality, but it was often remarked that Newton himself was humble. He knew he was merely providing a description to how the natural machinery operated, not discovering its essence. The life sciences proved this humility was justified. The nature of life could not be calculated, the Cartesian method was a let-down, the spirit of geometry was no help. This is why skeptics emerged, such as Pierre Bayle, who tracked down inaccuracies in metaphysical systems, as we shall see a bit later on. The geometrical method was increasingly criticized. Nicolas Freret, who was tied to a circle of erudite eclectics gathered around Count Boulainvilliers, distinguished a philosophical system that involved a constant search, from systemic foundations, which strove to petrify

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666 Lovejoy, *The Great Chain*..., p. 237.
667 Ibid., p. 238.
668 Andrzej Bednarczyk, *Filozofia biologii europejskiego Oświecenia*, Warsaw 1984, p. 31.
669 Spink, *French Free-Thought*..., p. 244.

the world in abstract schemata. Mathematics and geometry ceased to be universal models of knowledge, as, according to Freret, the most important disciplines for man, such as ethics, politics, economics, and medicine, could know no talk of certainty, but only, as Leibniz noted, of probability.[670] Thus physics and mathematics could go their own way, but it was necessary to take another path, particularly in ethics, medicine, and biology. It was stressed once more that mechanicism was insufficient to describe and understand reality. The world as a living, changing, pulsing whole required another perspective, which Leibniz's generation was the first to attempt to create. This we might call the philosophical face of the Rococo.

Making the Stage Body Dynamic

The 1720s and '30s in France saw a "thaw" of sorts – an easing of customs and of other spheres of the social space. One might say that the social imagination turned from a static imagination to a dynamic one. Culture began to organize itself around the concepts of life, action, and sensuality. To this day, the Regency era is labeled a "time of debauchery," but in fact the loosening of erotic mores was merely a symptom of a deeper change, of which the greatest chronicler was Voltaire. The people of the Rococo and later of the Enlightenment were far more impatient than their predecessors. They no longer tolerated subtle conceptual speculations, they had no time for contemplation, they wanted to be in motion, to act.

In Rococo society, what mainly counted was lively intelligence, wit, which could bring company together and help one quickly climb the ladder, as was the case for Voltaire. The elite of the Regency period and later were increasingly under the influence of the *philosophes*, who were undermining the weight of conceptual speculation. They wanted a culture that could not be seen as lifeless. This is why British sensuality gained in popularity, though with an existential twist. This was a special trait of early Enlightenment philosophy – a sensualization of existence. It came from focusing on earthly matters, tending, above all, to quality of life and the pleasures it brought. Sensuality was appreciated because, by engaging the senses and the accompanying emotions, the Rococo individual felt truly alive. Voltaire would never have agreed that the body was merely a cold mechanism. He and his salon companions saw the body as the hub of experience, making existence varied, colorful, full of energy and allure (Ill. 126). Voltaire wrote his "The Worldly Man" in defense of pleasure, stating:

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[670] Nicolas Freret, "Historia a systemy," trans. Bronisław Baczko, in: Bronisław Baczko (ed.), *Filozofia francuskiego oświecenia*, Warsaw 1961, pp. 80–83.

126. Nicolas Lancret, *Danse devant une fontaine* (Dance before a Fountain), ca. 1724

> I love the pleasures of a court;
> I love the arts of every sort;
> Magnificence, fine buildings, strike me:
> In this, each man of sense is like me.[671]

This was quite a different standpoint from Descartes, Malebranche, Pascal, and Bossuet. The language, tone, and purpose are all new. Passionate life defeats rational life, though, of course, Voltaire would not have lauded unadulterated hedonism. Pleasures needed to be properly dosed, they needed to have subtle forms; physical existence could not be mere sensory wantonness, it was to be a sophisticated blend of the sensory and the intellectual. The model persona ceased to be the wise man removed from the world and became the connoisseur immersed in it, the worldly man. He sought moments of bliss, longed to submit to the charms of all kinds of excitement, including, and above all, the erotic. This was an existence whose utopian extravagance was captured in the canvases of François Boucher – life among plush forms, blurry contours, bodies both heavy from yearning and ethereal. The

[671] Voltaire, "The Worldly Man," in: *Philosophical Poems*, trans. T. Smollett et al., London 1764, pp. 212–213.

misty abundance so characteristic of Boucher is a model expression of the Rococo imagination in worldly societies.

Yet let us note an important consequence of the Rococo way of life. It is increasingly difficult to gain a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment if one is always sampling pleasures. Tedium invariably creeps in, giving rise to an anxiety cloaked in wit, even mockery. As we read Voltaire's work, we are struck by an uncompromising impatience and the use of showy simplifications in place of solid arguments. He states there is no time for splitting hairs, as the medieval systematists did. The climate had ceased to favor a geometrical order: "sometimes simply to persuade people of a truth is not sufficient, one must also make them feel it."[672]

The "system" was, for the worldly people, synonymous with a non-vitality, a kind of lie about an element of existence that could not be reined in. This pertained to the system in philosophy, but also in political absolutism, which seemed ghoulish by the end of Louis XIV's rule. Voltaire, Montesquieu, and other *philosophes* increasingly spoke up for changing political relations, yearning to remodel the system of government on English principles, eliminating "tyranny." Absolutism, religious fanaticism, and extreme rationalism were hazardously close to one another, and the Enlightenment, in the *philosophes*' rendition, declared war on them all. We must stress again that this did not show it was irrational. It was more a case of bringing common sense to bear on the strict method of geometrical argumentation. This was declared the main arbiter, in place of a precise, rational logic. And common sense said that absolutism and religious fanaticism were to be crushed. The Rococo sometimes seems an idyllic respite, but this is an illusion.

Social energy in the first half of the eighteenth century grew in the contact between the progressive wing of the aristocracy and the ambitious, liberated faction of the bourgeoisie. The salons were of special importance, for this is where people conversed freely. Habermas pointed out that France differed from England at the time, partly in the much tighter political press restrictions. Far fewer newspapers were published, and these were far more dependent on the authorities, which only changed in the last quarter of the century.[673] What we might call the modern public, and the social and political discussions within it, happened in the French salons. Habermas underestimated their role, stating that "only at the stage of its encyclopedic publication did the moral intent of the *philosophes* develop into a political one, at least indirectly."[674] Yet here it would seem, as indicated by Habermas's example of Montesquieu and his *Persian Letters*, and also several excerpts from Voltaire's *Philosophical Letters*,[675] that

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672 Charles Louis de Secondat Montesquieu, *Persian Letters*, trans. Margaret Mauldon, New York, p. 16.

673 Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*..., pp. 65–70.

674 Ibid., p. 68.

675 We read it in such statements: "The English nation is the only one on earth that has managed to control the power of kings by resisting them, and which, by successive efforts, has finally established this wise government in which the prince, all-powerful for doing good, is restrained from doing harm;

the political revolt had been ripening earlier, in semi-official spheres that might not have seemed political – such as the salon of Marquise de Lambert.[676]

We should have a look at the Parisian stages in this context, for this is where subversive new worldviews were boldly smuggled in, where freedom and emotions were displayed more and more prominently. The theater was also infected by what we have joined Chaunu in calling "the multiplier of the Enlightenment." In the seventeenth century it was dominated by the Crown, starkly divided into the official, royal-sponsored stages and the ludic spectacles by wandering troupes, with very little in between, such as Moliere's theater. In the following century theater became far more varied, offering a wider spectrum of spectacles, and most of all, it became more commercial. Market rules came to govern the stage. Artists who wanted to earn a living had to contend with the expectations of an audience that was growing in numbers and diversity.[677]

We should emphasize again that, in the eighteenth century, the theaters, including the stages of Paris, were open to a new kind of viewer. On the one hand, the bourgeoisie appeared at the Opera and the Comédie-Française; on the other, the aristocracy attended the *foire* spectacles, or the fairground theaters, which had undergone an expansion since the early century. These provided a simple, lively, energetic kind of entertainment (Ills. 127, 128), which the ritzier stages could not give audiences, who were increasingly bored with the pathos of the licensed spectacles. The theater was thus another crucial arena for contact between the classes, and thus a space for molding and reinforcing new preferences, which might be called bourgeois. Theater attendance was mandatory, which made it a powerful social force, which Voltaire used, not without cause, throughout his life, joining a philosophical and critical passion with a passion for the stage.

The theater was, to some degree, a mouthpiece for the new elite. The monarch kept considerable control over what was staged through various sorts of regulations (including a monopoly that limited the highly significant field of maneuver for *foire* theaters) and censorship, but it was incapable of controlling the subtleties, preventing formal shifts which essentially sealed the new worldviews. The censor could block a play whose message was considered an overt challenge to authority, but there was no way to prevent deeper changes, like the plurality of stages and the theatrical languages they used. The censor was powerless to oppose the shaping of new kinetic and physical sensitivities, for instance, and had no effect on

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where the lords, who lack insolence and vassals, are yet great; and where the common people share power without disorder" (Voltaire, *Philosophical Letters*, trans. Prudence L. Steiner, Indianapolis–Cambridge 2007, p. 23).

676 Craveri, *The Age of Conversation*...

677 Lauren Clay describes the crumbling monopoly of the capital city in theater: Lauren Clay, "Provincial Actors, the Comedie-Francaise, and the Business of Performing in Eighteenth-Century France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 2005, Vol. 38, No. 4, pp. 651–679.

127. Bernard Picart, frontispiece of the first volume of *Le théâtre de la foire* (The Fair Theater) by Alain-René Lesage and Jacques-Philippe d'Orneval, 1730

128. Louis-Nicolas van Blarenberghe, *Foire Saint-Germain* (The Fair of Saint-Germain), 1763

the changing popularity of genres, and on people's tastes, which had, of course, political significance as well.

Theater puts man and society on display. Always, even when a plot is trivial or altogether fantastical, it posits a model of existence, a model of how people experience their living conditions. In the theater we have a constant discussion about what the body can and cannot do, how it should behave, what kind of expression befits it, how it can move the viewer most deeply. The Enlightenment was an arena of particularly intense debate in this respect. The feeling individual was also gradually emancipated in the theater, striving for authenticity, and thus for freedom, first in customs and religion, and consequently in politics as well.

The Rococo carved out theatrical genres that fell somewhere between the traditional forms, such as tragedy, opera, and court ballet, and the less strict, more exuberant sorts of spectacles – farces, *commedia dell'arte*, folk dances, and *foire*. We have spoken of the opera-ballets, and to these we should add the slowly emerging melodrama and *opéra comique*. Eighteenth-century audiences were less interested in watching heroic pathos in ancient attire than the previous century was, though of course it did not vanish from the stage. Nor did the audience appreciate the chaotic, often primitive folk performances. Their tastes ran somewhere in between, where the emotions were most intense; on the one hand, noble and elevated, and on the other, simple and undiluted. This is how tragedy in the spirit of Racine turned into tragedy in the spirit of Crébillon père and, above all, Voltaire. It mainly set out to make tearjerkers.

The eighteenth century theater was foremost about crying, and so, though many considered Voltaire to be a tragedian, his *Zaïre* and *Mérope* are more like melodramas[678] in which characters are driven by human weaknesses and virtues, not fate. In the *Philosophical Letters*, he mentioned his admiration for Shakespeare. When his views on theater matured, he tended to take his distance from the Bard, whom he considered lacking in refinement. Voltaire declared that he wanted to achieve the formal mastery of Racine, to uphold his principles. Yet something of the essence of Shakespeare, which, in the previous chapter, we called a turn toward individuality, was essential for Voltaire as well. He wanted to be a classical writer, yet he was too anxious, too self-absorbed, too bourgeois. Having been raised by Jesuits, he constantly mocked the Jansenists. Moral asceticism, a profoundly tragic vision of life, was essentially foreign to him, because he was a restless spirit mainly in search of one thing – a full sensory existence. He found this himself, and his audience with him, in plays full of ecstasy, sentimental tearjerkers.[679]

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[678] R. S. Ridgway called his plays "melodrama heavily laced with philosophical propaganda and masquerading as classical tragedy" (R. S. Ridgway, "Voltaire as an Actor," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 1968, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 265).

[679] Pierre-Claude Nivelle de La Chaussee is considered the man who fully developed the "tearjerker," as we shall later see.

While Voltaire and Crébillon père sentimentalized the tragedy, the opera also underwent a transformation, influenced by such librettists as Antoine Houdar de la Motte, or Louis Fuzelier, who collaborated with fairground theaters.[680] La Motte, whom we encountered working with Campra to create opera-ballets, was among the last leading moderns, even daring to create a travesty of the *Iliad* in verse, changing whatever struck him as needing improvement. He had a similarly nonconformist approach to opera, playing with the structures introduced by Quinault, juggling conventions, stressing *amour* at the expense of *gloire*. Fuzelier was undeniably more what the petite bourgeoisie were looking for, as was Alain-René Lesage, who was active at the time. Both played the engine driving the Theatre de l'Opéra-Comique, which staged satirical plays, often mocking the Comédie-Française and the Opera. In these plays, the narrative was interwoven with music and dance numbers, but with a much lighter touch than at the Opera, as if prefiguring the later vaudeville. They introduced a model of reality that was freer and devoid of pathos. It was based on common sense, *joie de vivre*, and pulling the heart strings. The performances at the Theatre de l'Opéra-Comique were always livelier and more energetic than those at the Comédie-Française and the Opera. The actors' approaches to their roles were more dynamic. The actors of the Opéra-Comique were, to some extent, influenced by the *commedia dell'arte* (Ill. 129). The Italian actors headed by Louis Riccoboni, exiled by Madame de Maintenon, had returned to Paris in 1716. This was another sign of the thaw. We should also add that when the *commedia dell'arte* returned to France's good graces, it underwent fundamental change, becoming more lyrical. When Louis Riccoboni was replaced as director by his son, Antoine François, and Marivaux began supplying the repertoire, there could really be no more talk of the Comédie Italienne as ludic. Importantly for us, its mature form could be seen as another symptom of the new emerging sentimental sensibility. Plays depicted increasingly complex characters, in Marivaux they explored the complex space of amorous relations. This was a deeper, more melancholy[681] Rococo, but it remained passionate, albeit in a subtle and gentle manner. Here, too, tearjerkers were much in demand.

The light theater showed that tastes had changed and, with them, the way people saw taste, expression, and the body. The whole first half of the eighteenth century saw a highly significant process in which the declamation fell out of favor at the Comédie-Française. It is symbolized by a changing of the guard in the main female stars, one that occurred in the Regency period: Miss Duclos, who was known for her static, pathos-filled declarations, was dethroned by Adrienne Lecouvreur

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680 Cowart hypothesizes that Watteau was acquainted with both authors (Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera*...," p. 468).

681 Nicoll writes that Marivaux's style involved "a translation of Racine's tragic method into comic terms" (Allardyce Nicoll, *World Drama: From Aeschylus to Anouilh*, London 1976, p. 311).

129. Artist unknown (attributed to Antonio Verri), *Farçeurs francais et italiens* (French and Italian Farce Actors), 1670

(Ill. 130), Voltaire's beloved actor, famed for a more natural acting style first promoted by the great Michel Baron in the late seventeenth century.[682] Voltaire sympathized with these changes, though as a playwright, he could not rid himself of a fondness for tirades. Nonetheless, he longed to see them performed without mannerism, with attention to true emotion, which placed him in the "naturalist" camp.

While the acting style had changed, there were also those who said that French classicist tragedy itself was no match for the increasingly dynamic reality. This was the context for the appearance of a key word in this chapter: ACTION. In one of his studies, La Motte made an important statement on the tragedy *Romulus*: "every tragedy should have action, if possible from the first scene to the last."[683] Developing this thought, he drew from the English tradition, in which the stage material was primarily action, as a model requiring adaptation. French tragedy was no longer

682 On the rivalry between the "declamatory school" (apart from Duclos, it included Pierre Trochon, known as Beaubourg, and Abraham-Alexis Quinault-Dufresne) and the "natural school," cf. Arthur Tilley, "Tragedy at the Comédie-Française (1680–1778)," *The Modern Language Review* 1922, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 365–370.

683 Antoine Houdar de La Motte, "Rozprawa na temat tragedii *Romulus* (1722)," trans. E. Kolańska, in: Eleonora Udalska (ed.), *O dramacie. Od Arystotelesa do Goethego. Poetyki, manifesty, komentarze*, Warsaw 1989, p. 355, emphasis – W. K.

130. Antoine Coypel, *Adrienne Lecouvreur dans Cornélie* (Adrienne Lecouvreur as Cornélie), 1726

to be based on dialogue and stories, it began to depict the vicissitudes in reaching a goal – to stimulate the viewer, "giving rise to various images in his mind and heart, and thus simultaneously satisfying his interest and desire to be moved."[684] We should note this shift – it was no longer the words that were to move people, but the actions, for the embodied acts, according to La Motte, reach the depth of the heart, while words merely skim its surface, mainly touching the mind. This was a highly characteristic diagnosis for the Enlightenment – very much in the spirit of Gassendi and Leibniz – and later present in Noverre.

The popularity of *foire*, *opéra comique*, and *comédie italienne* also had an impact on the changes that took place on the major dramatic stage. The acting they featured, with its increased emphasis on the performer's physicality, drew larger audiences. Interestingly, to some extent this was, at least with the fairground stages, a result of the restrictions on the performances. In 1707, for instance, a law was passed that said only the state-run theaters could use dialogue. The *foire* theaters were left with monologues, songs, boards with text, and, above all, non-verbal

[684] Ibid.

131. Jean-Antoine Watteau, *Les acteurs de la Comédie-Française* (Actors of the Comédie Française), 1720–1721

communication, including pantomime and dance.[685] It turned out that, with a little imagination, these substitutes could be quite appealing. The Comédie Italienne, led by Riccoboni *fils*, took a similar path, less due to restrictions than because non-verbal communication was a basic part of their theatrical language. He devoted a great deal of space to gestures and faces in his treatise *L'Art du théâtre* (The Art of Theatre, 1750), soberly noting that "while on stage, first we show things, and only later we say them."[686] This was not sheer pragmatism. The aim was to touch viewers deeply, which, according to Riccoboni, required the actor have the right physical techniques for all the parts of the body, as well as an inner understanding of character motivations, less building an expressive statement of the topic than performing actions on stage in a credible fashion.[687] Riccoboni cautioned against

685 On the staging strategies of *foire* theaters to circumvent restrictions, cf. Susan Leigh Foster, *Choreography & Narrative. Ballet's Staging of Story and Desire*, Bloomington–Indianapolis 1998, pp. 35–38; Nye, *Mime...*, pp. 69–72.

686 Antoine François Riccoboni, *Sztuka teatru*, trans. Marek Dębowski, Gdańsk 2005, p. 29.

687 This is why Riccoboni cautioned against rehearsing gestures in front of a mirror: "This method is the mother of affectation. You have to feel the behavior in you and gauge it without seeing it" (ibid., p. 32).

both hollow formalism and excessive excitement. As Diderot later mentioned, he believed an actor ought not to lose himself in his role or to slip into uncontrolled enthusiasm, but should possess a fluent command of the technical means to render emotions, serving to produce the impression in the audience that the character actually felt them. This meant the actor needed a great deal of (kinetic) technique. Thus, the Comédie-Française (Ill. 131) had to rethink its stage arsenal, for keeping with the static declamation model it risked losing audiences, who would get bored with what it had to offer – mere words.

According to Riccoboni *fils*, an important facet of the expanded technique was to be pantomime, "which is surely worth a separate study,"[688] he wrote. His idea caught on. In the eighteenth century, pantomime became a major point of reference for theater practice, first because it made acting more dynamic, and second because it offered a form of direct communication that was far more universal that what words could achieve. In *L'Art du théâtre* we read about the limitations of pantomime,[689] but the Enlightenment mainly noticed its virtues for the theater, including dance – most of all that it communicated emotional states more evocatively than words ever could.

The Dramatization of Dance at the Threshold of the Enlightenment

The Parisian dance community had been interested in pantomime since the seventeenth century, and had stressed the ties between court ballet and pantomime.[690] The eighteenth century explored this path, seeing pantomime as a model for reforming ballet, in part because of the prestige invariably enjoyed by all things ancient in those times. We have seen this already in England, in John Weaver, who wrote extensively of the Roman mimes' power of expression. In France the fascination was equally great.[691] It was used by theorists to outline a program for dance reform. Drawing from Roman source materials,[692] dance was meant to rise above the purely decorative ambitions of the extravagant spectacles of Lully and Quinault and

688 Ibid., p. 62.

689 Pantomime is incapable of "communicating exposition scenes, telling of any facts, or permitting itself to reflect" (ibid.).

690 Menestrier wrote in this vein in *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre* (1682).

691 It is possible there was a direct influence here, as Roger, who collaborated with Weaver, worked with Italian actors in Paris in the 1720s.

692 As we recall, Lucian's treatise had appeared in translation one hundred years earlier. Noverre would make reference to two outstanding mimes of the Augustus period – Batyllus and Pylades – as dancing masters.

speak in its own voice. This capability was signaled, in part, by Jean-Baptiste Dubos: "the gestures of our dancers are usually attitudes and movements which serve only to charm, whereas the gestures of the antique dance were required to speak; they had to signify something."[693] The ornament and technique of Beauchamp's time was, from this point of view, mere hollow spectacle,[694] while the essence of dance, as the Romans perfectly understood, was to communicate feelings. According to Dubos, formal symbolism was to be replaced with emotional expression in dance.

It is not by accident that we mention Dubos, because his name is tied to an aesthetic theory that was highly characteristic of the changes we are describing, fundamentally reevaluating the classicist notion of beauty. Apart from his historical works, Dubos wrote a treatise that was greatly influential in the first half of the eighteenth century, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (Critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting, 1719).[695] This work contained a thought that seems rather prosaic compared to the reflections on beauty in the Renaissance and classicism. He believed that art had one main task – to combat boredom.

Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture is of special interest to us as it begins with the claim that man is a creature in search of constant preoccupation, primarily for his mind. Dubos writes: "The heaviness which quickly attends the inactivity of the mind, is a situation so very disagreeable to man, that he frequently chuses to expose himself to the most painful exercises, rather than be troubled by it."[696] Here we clearly see the Rococo restlessness described above in the context of Voltaire's philosophy, though, on the whole, the treatise has many classicist elements. Dubos battled boredom in the name of clear rational criteria. The engagement of the mind through art was, he believed, only fully satisfying when it met all the relevant formal criteria – composition, *decorum*, the strict division of genres. And yet we cannot deny the impression that there is something sentimental in these conclusions, for Dubos's formal conditions were hardly precise. He did not want the Cartesian ideal, absolute clarity, in art. He knew that art was fundamentally unlike philosophy. This was accompanied by the conviction that human life is a search not only for truth, as the radical Cartesians would have it, but also

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693 Quoted from: Jeffrey Giles, "Dance and the French Enlightenment," *Dance Chronicle* 1981, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 246.

694 As we have demonstrated, this is a simplification, as the dance arrangements of the Renaissance and Baroque were not devoid of content. They simply were not narrative. Dance did not tell a story in the sense of an intrigue, though the trained eye could pick out many "stories" camouflaged in the geometrical arrangements, costumes, and spatial relationships.

695 We are using Thomas Nugent's translation, *Critical Reflections on Poetry, Painting and Music: With an Inquiry into the Rise and Progress of the Theatrical Entertainments of the Ancients*, London 1748, available at: https://archive.org/details/criticalreflecti01dubouoft (accessed: 01.03.2015). Władysław Tatarkiewicz provides a synthesis of Dubos's aesthetics in *Historia estetyki 3: Estetyka nowożytna*, Warsaw 1991, pp. 398–401.

696 *Critical Reflections*..., p. 5, https://archive.org/stream/criticalreflecti01dubouoft #page/4/mode/2up.

sensory experiences. Here Dubos entered sensualist terrain, based more on Locke than Descartes.[697] He understood man as a sensual creature, selecting stimuli based on pleasure and pain. According to Dubos, this is how art operates – it primarily appeals to the "heart," to every human being's inborn sense of taste, conceived as the capability to have an emotional response to beauty.[698] Beauty is the emulation of nature, but not in the sense of a scientific report. Beauty does not simply copy nature, it uncovers its essence. The latter is not like a mathematical equation, for the essence of nature, at least as far as humans are concerned, is the passions. This is why Dubos claimed that, to quote Tatarkiewicz, "poetry and art operate through *moving the emotions*, and this is not proportionate to the poet and artist observing the rules. This was a break with the dogma of classical theory [of art]."[699]

Let us nail down this thesis of Dubos's that is so critical to our study: man is a creature forever in search of emotions, longing to experience them. To prove this, he evokes the human fondness for cruelty and bloodshed – the attraction of witnessing an execution, or fights between animals and people. If we were unfamiliar with his study's backdrop, we might find it odd that he devotes so much of the second chapter of an aesthetic treatise to the Roman gladiator matches. And yet there is a logic here – if it is so crucial that humanity be stimulated, art can be of service. Its great virtue is that it provides safe emotions. Dubos stresses that art is not pleasant when it slavishly recreates reality, only when it creatively emulates it, bringing in an individual element and, thus, distance from nature. Nonetheless, the aim is not to elevate the viewer to a state of remote contemplation, but to make them an active part of the work of art.[700] Life is a search for moving emotions, and thus it is art's task to move people, to supply those emotions.

The dance community responded to theories of this sort with increasingly bold efforts to dramatize dance, displaying not only the dancers' beautiful forms and increasing technical abilities, but also narratives and feelings. Historians acknowledge the first step on this path to be a duet prepared in 1714 by two dancers of the Opera, Claude Balon and Françoise Prévost, based on a fragment of Pierre Corneille's *Horace*. Interestingly enough, it was not performed on one of the official stages, but during a party organized by the Countess du Maine. Noting the Versailles company's star was fading, the countess strove to create a stand-in for palatial splendor at her Château du Sceaux.[701] She organized concerts and theatrical productions, including dance shows, inviting the most well-known artists and attracting the cream of society for her audiences. Among them were Voltaire and

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697 Zapaśnik, *Filozofia*..., p. 147.

698 Ibid., p. 187.

699 Tatarkiewicz, *Historia estetyki*..., p. 399.

700 Dubos mainly explores poetry and painting, but his remarks also apply to theater, music, and dance.

701 In Paris, the countess held a salon at the Hôtel du Maine.

Montesquieu. The spectacles at the countess's salon gave performers and viewers a sense of greater freedom than at the official court performances, and even those staged at the Opera. They embodied the carefree and subversive spirit of the Regency times.[702] We might even say that they encouraged experimentation, such as the Balon and Prévost duo, who "played wholly in pantomime."[703] We do not know the choreographic details, but based on reports from the time, we can conclude that this was an innovative strategy, and thus was greeted with applause. It turned out that dancers could be far more than mechanisms moving in a complicated fashion – they could be actors, showing and evoking emotions.

The viewers watching the dancers perform a fragment of *Horace* were enormously moved, which gave the artists food for thought. From then on, Prévost supported dramatic content in dance. Though full-fledged stories were not yet being told through movement, and though reforms to the extent of Weaver were not yet declared, they brilliantly demonstrated to the French connoisseurs that expression was just as important as technique. An evidently charmed Rameau had already described Prévost's exceptional talent in his handbook, stressing her ability to create diverse characters through dance. This was true in the opera-ballets in which she performed, but above all in a famous solo,[704] *Les Caractères de la danse* (The Characters of Dance, 1714/1715),[705] where she portrayed a whole gallery of beloved figures of various ages and genders.[706] Prévost had struck a soft spot. Viewers had been waiting for this sort of dance – more intimate, psychologically profound, and yet still technically impressive. As Cohen writes: "Prévost's isolated body, reconfiguring itself continuously through 'brilliant and varied steps,' would have generated an ongoing, intricate play among physicality, theatrical type, and technical artifice."[707] This game proved itself so appealing to audiences that in later periods, the solo was passed on to Prévost's students: Marie Sallé and Marie Anne de Cupis de Camargo (Ill. 132). Their task was no easy one, as the public found Prévost to be an exceedingly charismatic dancer.[708] Jean Raoux attempted to capture this in a conventional yet spirited portrait (Ill. 133). Prevost is shown in a Bacchae costume, holding a bunch of grapes, in dynamic mid-leap. One of her breasts can be seen through the sheer fabric of her tunic, but she seems hardly bothered, finding

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[702] Regine Astier, "Françoise Prévost: The Unauthorized Biography," in: Brooks (ed.), *Women's Work*..., p. 134.

[703] Susan Au, *Ballet & Modern Dance*, London 1988, p. 31.

[704] In this period it began to be a tradition that the finest dancers prepared brief solo numbers for special occasions, alongside their performances in ensemble spectacles.

[705] The composer of the music was Jean-Fery Rebel, with whom Prévost regularly collaborated.

[706] This solo is briefly outlined in Au, *Ballet*..., p. 31. For more information, see: Astier, "Françoise Prévost...," p. 132.

[707] Cohen, "Body as 'Character'...," p. 465.

[708] Astier, "Françoise Prévost...," p. 125.

132. Nicolas Lancret, *La Camargo dansant* (Camargo Dancing), 1730–1731

133. Jean Raoux, *Portrait de Mademoiselle Prévost en bacchante* (Portrait of Mademoiselle Prévost as a Bacchant), 1723

satisfaction in her natural eroticism. This is an important portrait, as it is perhaps the first case of a professional dancer shown as a strong and independent personality.

One effect of the cultural triumph of *amour* over *gloire* was that the dancer on stage ceased to be mere decoration, becoming an artist in her own right. Prévost gained particular recognition, but was not the only powerful female personality in Rococo dance.[709] Just as soon as women were allowed on the opera stage, they demonstrated that they were in no way less talented than men. They could not compete, of course, in demonstrations of technique and strength, as their costumes were highly restricting (wig, heavy gowns), but they made up for it with grace, elegance, and, above all, expression. Among Prévost's known students, Sallé particularly stood out for her expression. While Camargo (Ill. 134) impressed with dynamics, precision, and technical innovations,[710] Marie aimed to create a mood, in more sensitive and lyrical tones, which Lancret attempted to capture in her portrait, which was often reproduced as a print (Ill. 135), a fact that shows the extent of the dancer's popularity. In the foreground we have an elegant, slightly pensive Sallé, accompanied on one side by a female dance trio, and on the other by child musicians, all in an ethereal mood. To some degree, this was Sallé on and off stage – focused, somewhat withdrawn, seeking depth of expression.[711]

She took her first steps in the fairground theaters, as she came from a family of artists. That was where she learned the basics of stage technique, substantially based on pantomime. It swiftly came out that both she and her brother François were talented dancers. They formed a child duo, traveled to London to perform, and were a success. Susan Au speculates that Sallé might have seen *The Loves of Mars and Venus*,[712] but there is no solid proof of this. Her teachers were probably Claude Balon, Michel Blondy, and Prévost, though here too we have no solid evidence, only leads, such as her performance of *Les Characters*.[713] In the 1720s, Sallé often appeared on the *foire* stages of Paris, but she also spent two seasons at John Rich's Lincoln's Inn Fields, where she often played comic roles. All this meant that, at the age of twenty, she was an experienced and multifaceted artist, and could be hired at the Opera. This does not mean she settled in Paris, for she still regularly traveled to London. Those trips proved to be very important, as it was in England

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709 For more on women in the Opera dance ensemble in its first phase of operations, cf. Nathalie Lecomte, "The Female Ballet Troupe of the Paris Opera from 1700 to 1725," in: Brooks (ed.), *Women's Work...*, pp. 99–122.

710 She caused a sensation as the first woman to perform an *entrechat quatre*, a figure involving crossing the feet four times in mid-air during a leap.

711 While Prévost and Camargo had flourishing romantic lives, Sallé cultivated a reputation as a virtuous virgin off-stage. There were no men in her life. For more on Sallé's private life cf. Sarah McCleave, "Marie Sallé, a Wise Professional Woman of Influence," in: Brooks (ed.), *Women's Work...*, pp. 162–165.

712 Au, *Ballet...*, p. 32.

713 On Sallé's probable instructors, cf. McCleave, *Marie Sallé...*, p. 161.

134. Nicolas Lancret, *Fête Galante avec la Camargo dansant avec un partenaire* (An Elegant Festival with Camargo dancing with Her Partner), 1727–1728

135. Nicolas de Larmessin IV, *Mlle. Sallé*, an engraving based on a picture by Nicolas Lancret, 1732

in 1734 that Sallé presented choreographed "afterpieces" that became a major success. *Pygmalion* was a particularly intriguing work she created in London, wherein Sallé appeared as Galatea, with her hair down, in a simple Greek-style costume that gave her great freedom of movement, and thus an unprecedented expressiveness in dance. As in her second work, *Bacchus and Ariadne*, we can speak of a dance pantomime, with gestures, facial expressions, but also more traditional sequences to tell a story of feelings, touching the viewer as Dubos once theorized. Among those clearly touched viewers was David Garrick.[714] We might wonder if the French ballerina was part of what inspired him to create his engaged and realistic style that changed modern theater,[715] using the whole body and striving to make expression as evocative as possible.

Garrick was not alone in admiring Sallé's talent in acting and dance. She began working with Händel as a ballet master, creating pieces such as the operas *Ariodante* (1735) and *Alcina* (1735).[716] She was also admired by Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Fontenelle, who saw her as a breath of fresh air in French dance, as opposed to the fossilized style of the Opera.[717] Her dancing was expressive and natural, offering feelings, and not just arrangements of steps,[718] and it was of her own devise. While Prévost was only at times a ballet master, Sallé was one to the full.[719] She confirmed her creativity upon her return to Paris in 1735, when she began collaborating with Jean-Philippe Rameau, France's foremost composer at the time. She danced the main parts in his productions, arranging the steps in some as well.

Rameau was a paradoxical figure. When he appeared, he was criticized for his harmonic experiments, for his lack of respect for Lully's legacy. Soon thereafter, he was viewed as a conservative attached to the theoretical aspect of music, a cold and artificial artist. For the Encyclopedists, Rameau was a symbol of intellectualism in music, praised by d'Alembert,[720] despised by Rousseau. The latter prevailed. And

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714 This, at least, is what we may conclude from Jennifer Homans in *Apollo's Angels: A History of Ballet*, London 2010, pp. 59–60, and Foster, *Choreography & Narrative...*, p. 39.

715 We must recall that this was an expressive realism, which would probably seem inflated to the contemporary viewer.

716 For more on the subject, cf. Sarah McCleave, *Dance in Handel's London Operas*, Rochester–Woodbridge 2013, pp. 70–112.

717 McCleave, *Marie Sallé...*, p. 167.

718 On *Bacchus and Ariadne*, a *Mercure de France* reviewer wrote that "this has beauties which are both more subtle and more difficult to describe [than Pygmalion]. These beauties are feelings and portrayals of the deepest sorrow, despair, fury, and prostration. In a word, every action and emotion of a woman abandoned by the man she loves is shown, perfectly, by means of steps, attitudes, and gestures" (quoted from: ibid., p. 172).

719 McCleave writes that "she was probably the first female dancer to stage her own creations in the opera houses of London and Paris" (ibid., p. 162).

720 In the *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopedia*, we read: "M. Rameau has become simultaneously the model and the object of jealousy of a large number of artists, who deprecate him at the same time they are trying to imitate him. But what more specifically distinguishes him is the fact that he

indeed, Rameau turned out to be merely a transitional phenomenon between two titans – Lully and Gluck – just as the whole Rococo period was a transition from classicism to the Enlightenment. He abandoned classicist simplicity, attempting to create musical structures that were more complex and sophisticated than those in Lully. It was not only the singing that interested him in opera, but also the parts for music and dance. By the same token, his art was deeply immersed in a salon sensibility, infused with *galanterie*,[721] which, in the mid-eighteenth century, was already old-fashioned. It lacked emotional dynamism. We might accuse the form of outweighing the content. Gluck was the antidote here.

Sallé was not entirely comfortable in Rameau's world of gallantry, yet the very opportunity to work creatively was important to her. She composed dance sequences for opera-ballets like *Les Indes galantes* (The Gallant Indies, 1735)[722] and *Les Fêtes d'Hébé* (The Holiday of Hebe, 1739). Among them, *Ballet des Fleurs* (The Ballet of Flowers) particularly stood out – it was considered one of the most charming parts of *Les Indes galantes*. Sallé used dance and gestures to create a picture of a fairy-tale garden as a metaphor of human emotions.[723] She focused on mood, noble simplicity, simple and expressive emotions, and the audience was spellbound. This was the crowning moment of her career.

In 1741, Sallé left the Opera, but she continued to perform at court, also taking the role of a teacher and a choreographer at the Opéra-Comique, where Noverre had the opportunity to work with her. She had achieved more in her line of work than many men had, gaining widespread acknowledgment and becoming one of the first undisputed stars of dance. For a woman from the lower classes this was no mean feat. Women's dance careers of the time in general are worth considering from this perspective as well. Opera gave female dancers freedom. They could make their fortunes quite outside their families. For some of them, this meant seeking a wealthy protector who would allow them to lead a comfortable and affluent life, but some, like Sallé, used this opportunity to professionally develop, to gain success through hard work. This was another manifestation of the "multiplier of

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has very successfully pondered on the theory of music [...], that by this method he has reduced to more certain and more simple laws a science which was formerly given over to arbitrary rules, or rules dictated by blind experiment" (Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopedia of Diderot*, trans. Richard N. Schwab, Chicago–London 1995, pp. 104–105).

721 Meglin, "*Galanterie* and *Gloire*...".

722 One of these viewers was probably Franz Hilverding, studying dance at the time with Blondy. This is described in: Bruce Alan Brown, "'Zéphire et Flore': A 'Galant' Early Ballet by Angiolini and Gluck," in: Thomas Bauman, Marita Petzoldt McClymonds (eds.), *Opera and the Enlightenment*, Cambridge–New York 2006, p. 199; McCleave, *Marie Sallé*..., p. 174. After finishing his education in Paris, Hilverding became a ballet master in Vienna, where, according to his pupil Gaspar Angiolini, he composed ballets with action long before Noverre. We shall have occasion to return to Hilverding and Angiolini.

723 Meglin, "*Galanterie* and *Gloire*...," p. 245.

the Enlightenment," on a minor scale, perhaps, but with major symbolic significance. The role of women in society, in the public space, was on the rise. There was still a paternalistic approach to them, of course. Female actors and dancers were invariably treated as objects of sexual fantasies[724] – their femininity was "Orientalized," to borrow a term from Edward W. Said.[725] Stage divas were exotic, and thus more attractive than ordinary women. Dancers could sometimes use this to their advantage. We see this clearly in the case of Barbara Campanini, known throughout Europe as La Barbarina (Ill. 136), who was adored by many men of society's upper crust, including Prussian King Frederick the Great. Of course, she was manipulated, but she too manipulated her protectors. She gained fame not just as a trophy, but also as a charismatic artist. Part of her charm was her stage appearances. Her talent and hard work gave her much to offer in the social jockeying for status, becoming men's partner, not merely their conquest. This gave her autonomy, much as it did for Sallé.

Compared to these powerful female personalities, from today's perspective the male dancers of the Opera in the first half of the century are somewhat less colorful. They were more devoted to upholding the prevailing aesthetics and working on the technical aspects of dance than exploring the expressive potential of the body, to some extent delaying the reform. Despite the exceptional case of Sallé, the male monopoly on dance mostly remained in the Rococo. The style of dance on stage was set by such artists as:

- Louis Pécour – a choreographer for Campra's opera-ballets,
- Claude Balon – the dancing master of Louis XV and the author of court ballets,
- Michel Blondy – after the death of Pécour, the creator of choreographies for numerous Opera performances,
- François-Robert Marcel – a teacher who was very much in demand,
- Louis Dupré – a famed virtuoso, known as the Grand Dupré.

In their views on dance, technique still very much took precedence over dramatic content. They particularly cultivated the *noble* style, whose most outstanding proponent was Dupré. This Rococo style was taken to perfection on the basis of a model from the Louis XIV era – it demonstrated a total command over the body, but within the limits of good form. It retained much of the ideal of *gloire*. It was

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724 We should cite a highly interesting work by Jerzy Łojek, *Wiek Markiza de Sade*, in which we read about "performances of a special nature, such as the ballet spectacles in the gardens of Versailles, Saint-Cloud, and Fontainebleau, where in the Louis XIV era, and especially the Regency times (1715–1723), the monarch and libertines of the courtly spheres were entertained by mythological ballets featuring whole reams of dancers, presenting their assets quite disrobed, and quite realistically recreating the boldest sorts of erotic subjects from mythology and ancient literature" (Jerzy Łojek, *Wiek Markiza de Sade. Szkice z historii obyczajów i literatury we Francji XVIII wieku*, Lublin 1973, p. 81).

725 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, New York 1979.

136. Antoine Pesne, *La danseuse Barbara Campanini, "La Barbarina"* (The Dancer Barbara Campanini, "La Barbarina"), ca. 1745

sometimes called the heroic style, and for good cause. Every gesture, every movement, had to be properly measured – powerful, but not exaggerated, always distinguished. Susan Leigh Foster says of Dupré:

> His carriage, the easy articulation of his arms and legs, the carefully measured gestures, his alacrity – all demonstrated an ideal way of moving through the social as well as artistic world. Quick, darting motions of the legs, the coordinated rise and fall of arms, and a responsive torso conducted hands, feet, and head along desired pathways that resembled those prescribed by proper social intercourse.[726]

We should stress that the impulse was not top-down, but was deeply internalized by the dancing masters. It became the basis of their identities. We will recall that in the Louis XIV era, when the *noble* style took shape, it was part of the ruler's disciplinary strategy. Louis XV continued these efforts to discipline, but he was far less effective. Society was less and less stable, and grassroots initiatives were increasingly powerful. Yet the old ideal of movement based on strict discipline did not recede quietly into the past. This is a testimony to the classicist techniques of establishing Order, the yearning for which was reflected in the approach to the body. Male bodies introduced this order, and thus were especially attached to it. It ought to come as no surprise, then, that the female body was more active in the first half of the eighteenth century, more open to new forms of bodily expression, while the male body stood up for absolutist ideals. To this there were exceptions, of course.

It was, to some degree, through Sallé's contribution,[727] but also the impetus of the whole dynamically developing field of culture tied to fairground theaters and the Italian tradition, that male dance reformers emerged as well, seeking to develop expressive, lively, comic pantomime, idealized shepherds' dances,[728] the lyricism of lovers, aligning themselves not only with the *noble* style, but also the *demi-caractère*

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[726] Foster, *Choreography & Narrative*..., p. 22.

[727] On Sallé's influence on choreographers like Noverre or Hilverding, cf. McCleave, *Marie Sallé*...; idem, "Marie Sallé and the Development of the *Ballet en action*," *Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland* 2007–2008, No. 3, pp. 1–23.

[728] Ken Pierce notes that Pécour and Campra often put pastoral sequences in their opera-ballets (Ken Pierce, *Shepherd and Shepherdess Dances on the French Stage in the Early 18th Century*, at: http://web.mit.edu/kpierce/www/sdhs2005/pastoralSD HS-3.pdf, accessed: 01.03.2015). In the Rococo, the idealization of life in the lap of nature was a frequent motif, as we see, for instance in the depictions of folk dances in Watteau: *La Danse Champetre* (The Country Dance, 1706–1710) or *Le Plaisir pastoral* (Pastoral Pleasure, 1714–1716). This "folkishness" was a sign of customs relaxing, departing from the rigid rules of an absolutist culture toward the spontaneous, intimate, and pleasant. Interestingly, Louis XV's image was also built along these lines. His grandfather was depicted in heroic terms, as a great conqueror. The successor was to have other traits, above all, to be loved by the people for his goodness. Thus his title *Louis le bien aimé* (Louis the Beloved).

137. F. Bazan (based on a picture by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin), an engraving depicting a scene from the pantomime spectacle *La Guinguette* by Jean-Baptiste De Hesse, 1750

and even the *grotesque* (or *comique*) styles. The stand-out figures among them were Noverre and Jean-Baptiste De Hesse,[729] pioneers of *ballet d'action* in France.

De Hesse, a Dutchman living in Paris, was like Sallé in that he came from a family that worked in fairground theaters.[730] Foster writes that he began performing pantomime ballets of his own devise in 1734 on the stage of the Théâtre Italien.[731] We should stress that here the pantomime element clearly outweighed the dance. Essentially, these were modernized versions of *commedia dell'arte*, much closer to what Rich and Thurmond were doing in London than to the work of Weaver. De Hesse, who also made courtly spectacles on commission by Madame de Pompadour, did not write compact or complex narratives; they were more like assortments of lively scenes (Ill. 137). Nonetheless, he demanded his dancers know how

729 We also encounter this name written as DeHesse, Dehesse, Deshayes, and even des Hayes.
730 On De Hesse's ties with Sallé, cf. McCleave, *Marie Sallé, a Wise Professional Woman...*, p. 174.
731 Foster, *Choreography & Narrative...*, pp. 39–40.

to act. This allowed him to create stage *tableaux* that were highly naturalistic and expressive for their day.[732] Importantly, his performances were populated by characters from the lower classes, whom De Hesse viewed with clear sympathy.[733] The audiences agreed, even those from the aristocracy and great bourgeoisie, who frequented the Théâtre Italien. There was less and less consensus about the prevalence of heroic, mythological, and idealized characters on stage. People wanted to see characters like themselves. We have yet to come to realism, yet this tendency, more evident in De Hesse than in Noverre, is well worth marking.

But Noverre was also a forward-thinking artist in the 1740s. He came from a simple family.[734] His father was a Swiss soldier who hoped his son would follow in his footsteps. Yet he was in for a severe disappointment, for the young man felt much better in the theater, and as a dancer, which was hard for a military man to swallow. Noverre had some talent, enough so that Dupré took him on as a pupil. He also took lessons with Marcel. Soon he was appearing at the Opéra-Comique created by Jean Monnet, where he crossed paths with Sallé, whose work he later used as examples of good dance sequences.[735] Yet he was not given the opportunity to storm the capital, at least not at this stage of his life. He went to Berlin as a dancer in the ensemble of Jean-Barthélemy Lany, the ballet master of the Opéra Comique, who was invited by the Marquis d'Argenson to organize a ballet campaign for Frederick the Great.[736] There Noverre had the chance to see how Lany staged his version of *Pygmalion*, which confirmed his conviction that dance should be a language of emotion, much more than a "soulless machine."

When Noverre returned from Prussia to France to lead provincial troupes as a ballet master, first in Marseilles and then in Lyons, he did whatever he could to keep his work from being called soulless. This meant that in the spectacles he put forward, the mood was most important. In the first years of Noverre's ballet master career he was mainly applauded for his painterly compositions.[737] His ballet *Les*

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[732] Artur Michel, "Two Great XVIII Century Ballet Masters: Jean-Baptiste DeHesse and Franz Hilverding; 'La Guinguette' and 'Le Turc généreux' seen by G. de St. Aubin and Canaletto," *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, May 1945, p. 274, quoted in: Foster, *Choreography & Narrative*..., p. 296, note 70.

[733] Au, *Ballet*..., p. 32.

[734] The most extensive biographical study on Noverre has been written by Lynham, *The Chevalier Noverre*... Noverre's life story is also found in Jan Rey's "Życie i dzieło J. G. Noverre'a," the introduction to: Jean-Georges Noverre, *Teoria i praktyka tańca prostego i komponowanego, sztuki baletowej, muzyki, kostiumu i dekoracji*, trans. Irena Turska, Wrocław 1959. The treatise itself will be discussed later in this chapter.

[735] McCleave, *Marie Sallé and the Development*..., pp. 2–3.

[736] Its ensemble included La Barbarina.

[737] Nye, *Mime*..., pp. 177–178. We should note that in this same period, Jean-Nicolas Servan (prop. Giovanni Niccolo Servandoni), head of décor at the Opera in 1727–1742, proposed a performance in Tuileries that might be called mute visual theater, based on a wealth of decor, special effects, and pantomime. Though technologically he was up-to-date, Servandoni was old-fashioned in terms of content. Noverre saw his work, and even commented on one piece in his writings. It is quite possible

138. François Boucher, *La Danse chinoise* (Chinese Dance), 1742

Fêtes chinoises (Chinese Holidays, 1747) was especially popular. He emphasized the visual beauty of the dance tableaux, the attention to costumes, and the set design in the manner of Boucher's famous painting *La Danse chinoise* (Chinese Dance, 1742)[738] (Ill. 138).

Noverre's performance conformed to the fashion for all things non-European, which, as Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* had shown, also had a political resonance. Taking viewers to idealized worlds in America or Asia, the creators of theatrical productions (such as *Les Indes galantes*) aimed to present alternative models of behavior, to show principles for human relationships unlike those all around. The exotic was also appealing because it was tied to critical thinking, to creating a pluralized worldview.[739] True, in Noverre we are more dealing with typical Orientalism, given

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that Noverre's reputed life-long attention to the visual side of his ballet spectacles was partly inspired by this brilliant set designer. For more on Servandoni's performances, see: Marc Olivier, "Jean-Nicolas Servandoni's Spectacles of Nature and Technology," *French Forum* 2005, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 31–47.

738 Sometimes we read that Boucher was responsible for the decoration in *Les Fêtes chinoises*, but this is not certain, as Nye explains, *Mime*..., p. 178.

739 Butterfield notes the enormous impact travel books had on European culture: "the European outlook came to be envisaged not as universal, not necessarily even as central, but somewhat as a regional affair. It became possible to look upon it as only the local tradition of a comparatively small section

that he was interested in "Chineseness" as an effective costume, to make a composition that still had much in common with the traditional, geometrical approach to dance,[740] not to say anything concrete about China as such. Yet when we note that his gesture was not operating in a vacuum, but was part of a broader tendency to raise real social problems through exotic "fantasies," which was the aim of Voltaire,[741] whom Noverre admired, we might hazard the thesis that this Orientalism was to some extent critical. Yet we know too little about the performance itself to move beyond speculation.

When Noverre moved to Paris in 1753, his *Les Fetes chinoises* traveled with him, becoming one of the greatest hits in 1754 on the Opéra-Comique stage. Monnet named Noverre ballet master. The performance was so popular that the director told his friend, David Garrick, that he ought to bring it to London. Noverre accepted the invitation, and his contact with Garrick came to catalyze a radical critique of mainstream dance theater, which Noverre presented several years later in *Les Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets* (Letters on Dancing and Ballets, 1760), which was famed throughout Europe.

Although the production had to be taken down, as viewers were reluctant to see French artists after the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, for Noverre the time spent with this innovative actor and his dancer wife was invaluable. Garrick's wife worked in Vienna with Hilverding, who was creating ballets that told a story, involving a great degree of dramatism, using the dancer's entire body to express emotions (Ill. 139). Her stories surely confirmed the young ballet master's propriety in the path he had chosen. In Garrick, in turn, Noverre found a confirmation of his intuition that making dance pantomime was the best route to giving it depth and expression.[742] Garrick's acting became the ideal of expression on stage, which Noverre aimed to translate into dance.

For Noverre, Garrick was a master of the individual character,[743] an actor of brilliant facial expressions, performing with all his body, not just his voice (Ill. 140).[744] In *Letters on Dancing and Ballets*, we read:

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of the globe. So one could begin to regard one's own culture, even one's own religion, with a great degree of relativity" (Butterfield, *The Origins...*, p. 195). For more on the topic cf. Paul Hazard, *The Crisis of the European Mind 1680–1715*, trans. J. Lewis May, New York 2013.

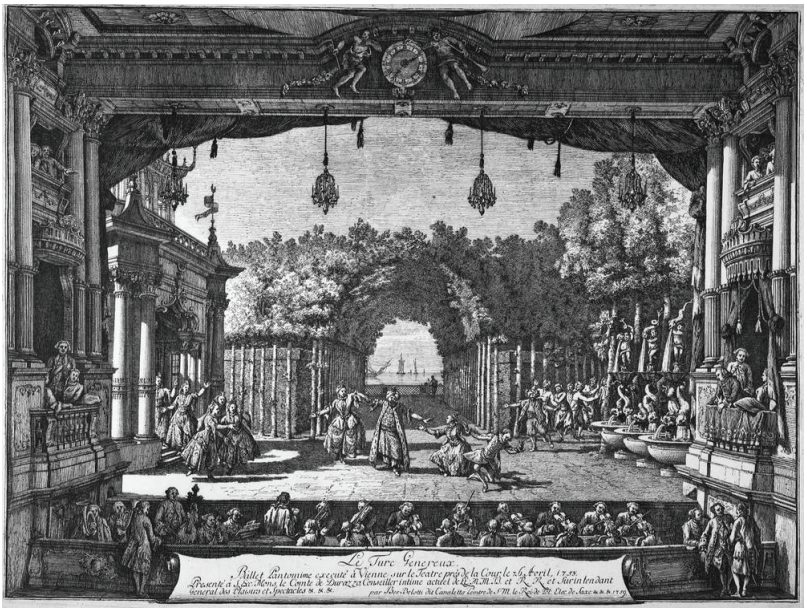
740 This is what we glean from the report of an eyewitness who was enchanted by Noverre's ability to create structured groups of even numbers of dancers (J. des Boulmiers, in: Lynham, *The Chevalier Noverre...*, p. 21).

741 Voltaire particularly admired China as a secular civilization of reason and moderation.

742 We find extensive pantomime segments in *Les Rejouissances Flamandes* (Flemish Entertainments, 1755), which Noverre composed for the Opéra-Comique (Lynham, *The Chevalier Noverre...*, pp. 23–24).

743 On Garrick's contribution to the development of theater, cf. the article by Daniel Heartz, "From Garrick to Gluck: The Reform of Theatre and Opera in the Mid-Eighteenth Century," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 1967–1968, pp. 111–127.

744 Diderot was also highly impressed – he even wrote *Eloge à David Garrick* (1769).



139. Bernardo Bellotto, aka Canaletto, an engraving of the ballet *Le Turc Genereux* by Franz Hilverding, staged in Vienna, 1759

140. William Hogarth, *David Garrick as Richard III*, ca. 1745

> He was so natural, his expression was so lifelike, his gestures, features, and glances were so eloquent and so convincing, that he made the action clear even to those who did not understand a word of English. It was easy to follow his meaning, his pathos was touching; in tragedy he terrified with the successive movements with which he represented the most violent passions. And, if I may so express myself, he lacerated the spectator's feelings, tore his heart, pierced his soul, and made him shed tears of blood.[745]

This was, according to Noverre, what ballet was meant to be, which meant the necessity of radically challenging the fossilized forms of the time. A ballet that made one shed tears of blood? A tragedy, surely, but a dance that tore the heart? We can be sure it was not to be found in the ballets staged at the Opera during the time, nor in the courtly spectacles, such as those with *libretti* by Voltaire.[746] There dance was merely décor, and the human bodies that performed it were playthings set in motion like a top. Noverre wanted more, far more; for he rejected the vision of mankind that lay behind the technical virtuosity.

Matter, the Senses, Emotions – The Enlightenment Vision of Humanity

In writing the *Letters on Dancing and Ballets*, Noverre came out in full force against the man-machine, and in favor of individuality. This is why the concept of the passions was of key significance to his theory. Noverre wanted a dance that stirred the emotions, that expressed humanity, understood as a thinking, but also a corporeal, sensual, emotional existence. This accounts for the enormous dynamism of his vision, the stress of the dramatic appeal of the dancing body. It was meant to express the anxieties that tugged at a person. Ballet was meant to be more than a school of rational conventions. This is why Noverre drew from pantomime. "A well-composed ballet is a living picture of the passions, manners, ceremonies and customs of all nations of the globe, consequently, it must be expressive in all its details and speak to the soul through the eyes."[747] What was this soul Noverre pursued? How did he understand it?

To respond to these questions, we should look at Noverre as a part of an intellectual movement that slowly gained ground in French intellectual life at the time

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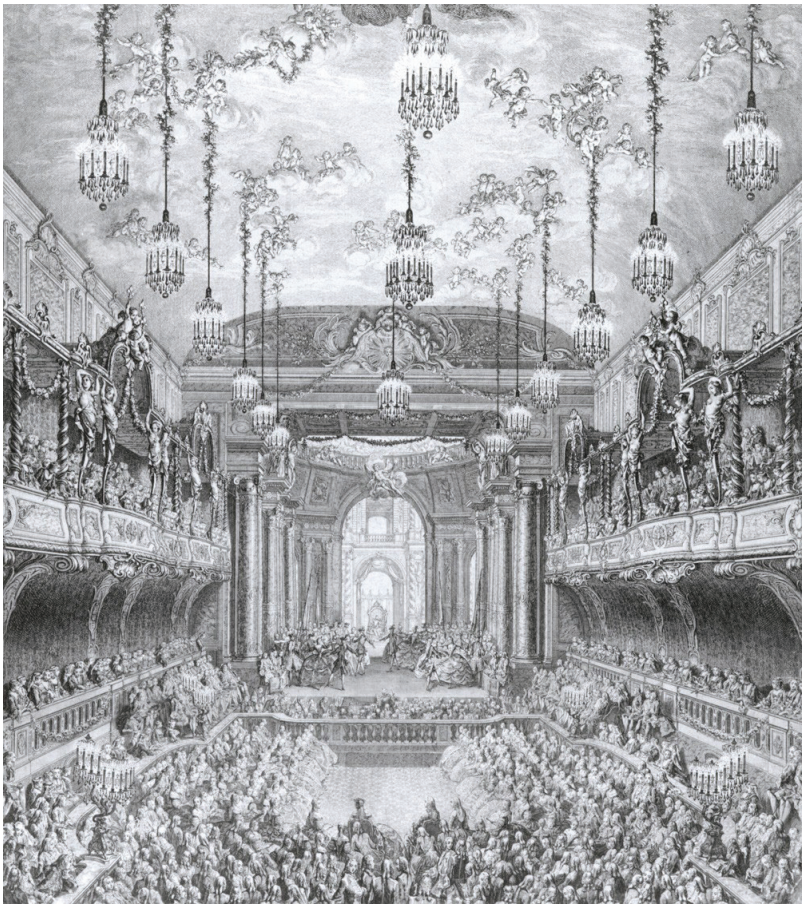
745 Jean-Georges Noverre, *Letters on Dancing and Ballets*, London 1966, p. 82.

746 It is seldom recalled that Voltaire also wrote the *libretti* to highly conventional comedy-ballets with music by Rameau, performed during the festivals at Versailles: *Le Princess de Navarre* (The Princess of Navarre, 1744) (Ill. 141) and *Le Temple de la Gloire* (The Temple of Glory, 1745). Orieux describes them in the above-quoted hagiography of Voltaire.

747 Noverre, *Letters on Dancing...*, p. 16.



141. Charles Nicolas Cochin, an engraving of the Versailles staging of the comedy ballet *Le Princess de Navarre* by Jean-Philippe Rameau and Voltaire, 1745

when he invented his dance reform. That he was a part of this movement we can see from the letters he exchanged with Voltaire,[748] the interest Baron Grimm had in him, but, most of all, the coincidence of his worldview with that developed by the *philosophes*. With no exaggeration, we might say that Noverre was among them.[749] We can even claim that this is the only reason he took up the mission to create a *ballet d'action*. Even if Noverre does not quote philosophical literature,

[748] Included in *Letters on Dancing...* In the same treatise, Noverre often mentions Voltaire.

[749] This is how Judith Chazin-Bennahum sees him, placing Noverre's theory alongside those of the Encyclopedists – Louis de Cahusac and Diderot: Judith Chazin-Bennahum, "Cahusac, Diderot, and Noverre: Three Revolutionary French Writers on the Eighteenth Century Dance," *Theatre Journal* 1983, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 168–178.

his thought was carved out in its influence.[750] There would have been no dance reform were it not for the ferment which people like Voltaire brought to culture from the early part of the century onward. The radical break in *ballet d'action* from technique to emotion must thus be read philosophically, to show that the human condition was now predominantly perceived in emotional categories, as we see in the *Letters*.

The empirical spirit of modern natural sciences was highly important in shaping the Enlightenment; Noverre knew this well, positing that the choreographer devote himself to anatomical studies to become acquainted with dance in a scientific sense. In Noverre's generation it seemed evident that truth about the world was only discovered through empirical study, not speculation. This was a step toward nineteenth-century Positivism, and these were the categories in which some of the *philosophes* viewed the world, particularly Jean le Rond d'Alembert, one of two initiators of the *Encyclopedia*. Again, the inspiration came from England, from such people as Newton or Boyle, and above all Francis Bacon, to whose authority the Encyclopedists openly appealed,[751] and, of course, Locke. These thinkers mainly supported the viewpoint that nature's limitations to man should be observed, and knowledge should be increased within this framework. This meant they fought tirelessly against the metaphysical spirit of seventeenth-century philosophy. Voltaire wrote an introduction to Newton's philosophy that was quite popular in its day, as well as the *Philosophical Letters*, which popularized Empiricism on the Continent. There he proved that pure rationalism is barren, that a natural science based on it alone could only prompt a derisive chuckle. According to the Enlightenment philosophers, if European civilization was to develop, it had to curb its metaphysical ambitions.

Scientific writing developed in this anti-metaphysical climate. Specialist periodicals emerged, the Royal Academy of Science was highly active. Scholars were always debating, which made the scientific community increasingly sensitive to dogmatic judgments without empirical bases. Critical thinking developed. The appearance of scientific journalist Pierre Bayle and his *Dictionary*, released in early 1695, was symptomatic; it contained a whole catalog of the epoch's errors. It suspects all that is murky, its criticism is uncompromising, not sparing even the great systematicians like Malebranche and Spinoza, though religious dogmas were its main target.

Bayle is sometimes called a great destroyer, as his projects chiefly aimed to demolish. Though he made every effort not to succumb to skepticism, he eventually did, as demonstrated by an authority on his work, Paul Hazard.[752] This made enthusiasts of Bayle, including Voltaire, realize that extreme criticism had to lead to

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[750] In his *Letters*, Noverre cites Diderot's theory of theater.

[751] D'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse…*

[752] Hazard, *The Crisis...*, pp. 105–112.

an impasse, not only when it served to build systems, but also when it was subject to severe criticism.

> The philosophers are very good at knocking down received beliefs, but having done so, all they can supply to fill up the gaps are notes of interrogation. Is man the captain, or the captive, of his fate? Argument about this question of freedom is never-ending. The resources of either side are inexhaustible.[753]

Hazard concludes: "Pyrrhonism, a useful ally in restoring to the mind its freedom of choice, now looked as if it were going to annihilate the Will, and, with it, the possibility of choosing at all."[754] The remedy was to be work on the basics – gathering observations, conducting experiments, what Voltaire called "tending to one's own garden."[755]

According to the *philosophes*, the fact that empirical research brought impressive results was best shown by the success of Newton, who created a theory based on observation that was confirmed by calculations and backed up with elegant proof. Cartesian physics created a complex picture of the world, where mysterious vortices played a highly important role – Voltaire could not praise Newton enough for dealing with these, making the theory far clearer.[756] Moreover, Newton openly declared that he had no metaphysical ambitions. He said nothing about the essence of the force of gravity, he simply studied how it worked. The French highly appreciated this as well, at least where the salons were concerned, Newtonism had dethroned Cartesianism, not only at the bidding of Voltaire, but also his life partner, Madame du Châtelet, who translated the *Principia* into French. The Enlightenment public appreciated less the details of this demanding work, which few were able to understand, than its general thrust, the dynamic and persuasive empirical vision of the world. It could be used to support optimism and progressivism, as opposed to the fossilized metaphysics of Cartesian rationalism.

It was optimism and a faith in the possibility of progress through the introduction of systematic empirical study that lay behind the idea of gathering all the profitable knowledge of the epoch in one place. The *philosophes* wanted to continue Bayle's

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753 Ibid., pp. 110–111.

754 Ibid., p. 239.

755 Kołakowski wrote: "Though the classic doctrines of the French Enlightenment had rules encouraging restraint toward purely metaphysical issues, this restraint was not laced with agnostic melancholy, and its aim was not to corrupt faith in reason. On the contrary, in the scope of experience available to people we can uncover or at least establish order and achieve certainty when it comes to matters that affect our lives. [...] Empiricism is a call to take up questions and tasks that, on the one hand, are designed on human scale, and do not push us, on the other hand, into cognitively barren and socially and morally harmful metaphysical and religious upheavals" [Leszek Kołakowski, *Filozofia pozytywistyczna (Od Hume'a do Koła Wiedeńskiego)*, Warsaw 1966, p. 39].

756 Voltaire, *Philosophical Letters...*, pp. 66–69.

critical work, while making it more positive. They initially planned to translate the English lexicon – this, at least, was the idea of the printer who had the initiative – but Diderot and d'Alembert, who had been invited to oversee the project, swiftly decided that this was insufficient to truly inspire minds, and with them, social, political, and economic life, for this, it seems, was the main aim of the undertaking known as the *Encyclopedia*. This is not the place, obviously, to provide an outline of the whole project. We should only stress the main thing. The *Encyclopedia* was an event in the culture, not just in publishing, and thus may be of help in illuminating what was behind the birth of *ballet d'action*.

The *Encyclopedia* is written in vibrant, often cutting language, especially when it criticizes various sorts of superstitions and delusions, as it is eager to do, though often indirectly; it more makes vital allusions while discussing what might seem to be marginal issues. The authors – including such major figures as Voltaire, Diderot, d'Alembert, Marmontel, Turgot, Quesnay, Holbach, and Rousseau – often disagreed among each other in terms of the proposed changes, interests, and scientific and authorial temperament.[757] Yet they all agreed with what d'Alembert wrote in the introduction, in his critique of conceptual speculation so characteristic of the bankrupt metaphysics:

> The only resource that remains to us in an investigation so difficult, although so necessary and even pleasant, is to collect as many facts as we can, to arrange them in the most natural order, and to relate them to a certain number of principal facts of which the others are only the consequences.[758]

According to the Encyclopedists, who were fascinated by Bacon, research was chiefly practical. This was a major shift in stress. The *Encyclopedia* posited that knowledge was not to be gained for purely theoretical satisfaction. The main aim was material and social advancement and improving everyday life. The Encyclopedists essentially agreed that man is a material creature, though only Diderot and Holbach could have been called materialists. Like Gassendi and Locke, they appreciated the importance of physicality in human life. D'Alembert writes in his introduction that man naturally tends toward pleasure and, above all, avoids harm, and is ruled by this basic mechanism. "However interesting these first truths may be for the most noble part of ourselves, soon the body, to which the soul is joined, turns our attention to itself, because of the necessity of providing for its endlessly multiplying needs."[759] If this is so, it is the body and its needs, conceived as just

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[757] To take the first example that comes to mind – physiocratism reigned in articles on economics, introducing the famous critiques of industry and trade in Quesnay's articles, but there were other voices as well, such as de Jaucourt's apologia for industry.

[758] D'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse...*, p. 23.

[759] Ibid., p. 14.

as important as the mind, and not a mere appendage, that should be central to our reflections.

In d'Alembert's words we can hear the voice of common sense, which, the Encyclopedists believed, should be decisive in worldview conflicts, primarily because, as Descartes had it, it was the thing most justly distributed in the world.[760] Unlike conceptual speculation, common sense was not the domain of the select few. Here we see a democratic tendency emerging, though the Encyclopedists, and Voltaire and Holbach in particular, were suspicious when it came to the people. They feared the mob, its fanaticism and conservatism, which is why they did not subscribe to democracy, but to an enlightened monarchy. The democratism of the Encyclopedists was not plebeian, it was aimed at various worldview monopolies – at murky systems of theology and philosophy. They wanted thought to be unencumbered, exploratory, full of life, and still useful, sensitive to people's bodily needs. This is also why they demanded the rights of arts and crafts, and a knowledge that could be used for practical purposes. The *Encyclopedia* grew famous because the authors of its entries journeyed to workshops to learn about different sorts of technologies. They made descriptions, but also engravings, which demonstrated how practical and masterful the work of various anonymous professionals was.[761] We may then conclude that the *Encyclopedia* was an undertaking derived from a fascination for labor, for practical human activity in everyday life. The implied vision of humanity was physical, material, sensory, and striving to improve its lot on earth: "while justly respecting great geniuses for their enlightenment, society ought not to degrade the hands by which it is served."[762]

From our perspective, this challenging of an over-rationalized vision of humanity in the *Encyclopedia* is of special importance. This was no praise of intuitionism, for critical thinking remained the main imperative, along with coherent reasoning and clarity of argument. Yet among the Encyclopedists there could be no talk of a monopoly of the "geometrical method" in philosophy, or more broadly, in culture. The servitude to absolute rules posited by seventeenth-century rationalism hampered innovation, blocked creativity, especially in the fine arts, which the Encyclopedists also explored. D'Alembert wrote:

> Men abuse the best things. That philosophic spirit so much in fashion today which tries to comprehend everything and to take nothing for granted extends even into belles-lettres. Some claim that it is even harmful to their progress, and indeed it is difficult

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760 See the "common sense" entry.

761 True, the *Encyclopedia* was sold on a very expensive subscription basis and simple folk most certainly would not have learned their trades from it. Yet the ideological shift was important – the elite who bought it began to appreciate crafts and industry, which gave a boost to the French economy (though of course this was not the only or even primary effect).

762 D'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse...*, p. 42.

> to conceal that fact. Our century, which is inclined toward combination and analysis, seems to desire to introduce frigid and didactic discussions into things of sentiment.[763]

Let us recall that these are the words of a mathematician who included the following thought in the same work: "Imagination acts no less in a geometer who creates than in a poet who invents."[764] Their similarity did not mean a uniform method, however. In the *Encyclopedia* this sort of pluralism is of capital importance. Every field of human life should be explored in detail, finding the laws that govern it. For there are general, universal laws that every creature of common sense is capable of understanding – the laws of nature – but there are also more specified laws, taking the laws of nature in many different directions, reflecting the richness of the world.

In this spirit of pluralism, the *Encyclopedia* puts forward an image of human knowledge separated into three main parts: memory, reason, and imagination, in which a mass of various fields are singled out.[765] From our perspective, the absence of dance is a disappointment, though opera and tragedy are there (in the imagination section, within dramatic poetry), the art of the gesture is there, including pantomime (in the reason section, within logic, as part of knowledge of signs), as are athletics and gymnastics (in the reason section, within particular physics, as part of hygiene). Thus, we might say that the Encyclopedists did not see dance as an essential manifestation of human activity. Yet this would be going too far. It seems more likely that, in creating their outline, Diderot and d'Alembert simply forgot about it, or were incapable of classifying it properly. As we shall see, there were entries on dance in the *Encyclopedia*, written by Louis de Cahusac. They demonstrate that the progressive camp was interested in dance, and sought new approaches to it. This is one reason why they greeted Noverre with open arms.

We might argue that dance should have been part of the arts and sciences program mainly because its medium is the movement of the human body, and, after all, the *Encyclopedia* defended the rights of the body in its most material sense.[766] Yet the materialist philosophy forming in its circles was still incapable of grappling

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763 Ibid., p. 96.

764 Ibid., p. 51.

765 A diagram depicting the system can be found in: ibid.

766 As we have said, we cannot call the *Encyclopedia* an utterly materialist work. Its authors disagreed in terms of the status of the soul. In his *Preliminary Discourse*, for instance, D'Alembert clearly stated: "this being called Us is made up of two principles of a different nature [body and soul], so closely united that we could neither suspend nor alter the correspondence which prevails between the devements of the one and the other. This mutual slavery [of soul and body] which is so independent of us, together with the reflections we are impelled to make on the nature of the two principles and on their imperfection, lifts us to the contemplation of an allpowerful intelligence who is the source of what we are and consequently requires our worship" (D'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse...*, pp. 13–14). Voltaire tended to limit reality to one substance – matter, which was able to think and feel, though he shared D'Alembert's deism. As we shall see, Holbach and Diderot were more radical, as their thinking left no room for the Prime Mover or an immaterial soul. If we recall

with physical expression. The body was not yet primarily associated with the imagination, or art, but rather with anatomy, i.e., zoology. We might also point out that the *Encyclopedia* placed pantomime within the knowledge of signs, alongside ideograms, hieroglyphs, and crests. It remained difficult for the Enlightenment to imagine a specific field of knowledge that joined the body, communication, and imagination. Yet the enlightened materialism that some of the Encyclopedist camp supported was an important step toward this evident truth. In this materialist philosophy, highly influenced by the natural sciences, the body became a point of departure, man emerged mainly as a body, not a mechanism – a living and dynamic organism.

Materialist strains appeared in French intellectual culture back in the early eighteenth century, initially in anonymous works, because the religious communities heavily resisted this type of "blasphemy."[767] Communities deeply fascinated by discoveries in the life sciences turned out to be particularly susceptible to materialist influences. It was among the natural scientists and medics that materialism made its first major inroads. Through anatomical studies and/or work with a microscope, it was easy to conclude that life is everywhere, and that it has a material basis. This need not have led to ruling out the spiritual element as a separate substance, though in practice it often did. One example is Voltaire, who was very attached to a suggestion he found in Locke, wondering if "he who can do all [the God of the Deists] could also give material being, an atom or an element of matter to thought."[768] The hypothesis of the soul as a separate substance thus turned out to be superfluous, allowing for the seventeenth-century dualism that had plagued philosophers to be discarded. Living meant experiencing as a body, yearning as a body, and thinking as a body, Voltaire seemed to say.

A similarly monistic tone was struck, though with varying conclusions, by a leading supporter of Newtonism in France, Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertuis, whom Voltaire consulted in writing *The Elements of Newton's Philosophy*.[769] Maupertuis' work creatively expanded on atomism in Gassendi's rendering, though colored with elements of vitalism.[770] He saw matter as the only substance. Yet he did not agree that everything occurring in nature could be explained through

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that Diderot was the most important and enduring motor behind the *Encyclopedia*, it seems justified that we place it within the sphere of materialism.

767 Examples are provided by Spink, *French...*, stating that they paved the way for Diderot.

768 Voltaire, *Elements...*, p. 39.

769 A vivid description of Maupertuis'sdifficult character, which, despite an initial fascination, eventually led Voltaire to quarrel with him, is provided by Orieux in *Voltaire*.

770 On Maupertuis, cf. Andrzej Bednarczyk, *Filozofia biologii europejskiego oświecenia*, Warsaw 1984, pp. 120–154. There is also a brief character sketch in Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Vol. VI, Kent 1999, pp. 16–18, which raises doubts concerning his materialism. Yet even Copleston admits that such an interpretation is not unjustified. Maupertuis is unequivocally declared a materialist by Zapaśnik, *Filozofia...* Bednarczyk also heads in this direction, while stressing his Deism (Bednarczyk, *Filozofia...*, p. 140).