

INFLUENCE OF INDIAN DANCE ON THE WEST

Fernau Hall

In the dance-world of today, we may see three great families of the art of the dance. Of these, the Asian family (which includes the great classical styles of India and of countries much influenced in past ages by Indian dance as well as the styles of the countries of the Far East), is by far the oldest and richest with traditions that go back without a break for well over a thousand years. The two Western families are much more recent: ballet, which assumed its modern form (as a self-sufficient art, distinct from opera) at the beginning of the 18th century, and modern dance (or contemporary dance, as it is sometimes called) which originated at the beginning of this century. Ballet and modern dance tend now to fuse together in new works, for the dancers are trained in both, and choreographers call on both techniques as they wish; but they still preserve their separate identity in the classroom and have quite different histories of development.

One of the most striking aspects of the development of both ballet and modern dance in this century is that in both the influence of the dances and dance-dramas of India and Greater India has been of crucial importance. Without some understanding of this influence, we cannot hope to understand what has been happening to the professional dance of the Western world in this century.

The great flowering of ballet in the 20th century was one of the most extraordinary events in the history of art. Here was an art which had degenerated so far that in most of the Western world (apart from Russia and Denmark, where some great old ballets survived in performance) it was not considered an art at all, being treated as a form of light entertainment suited to music-halls. There had been a kind of Renaissance in Russia, which flowered above all in the "Swan" acts of the St. Petersburg version of

Swan Lake, choreographed in 1895 by the first great Russian choreographer, Lev Ivanov; but this great ballet had no immediate successors. There were outstanding Russian designers, composers, dance-teachers, dancers and writers—but no choreographers able to create works in tune with general artistic developments in the 20th century.

The inspiration for the choreographic revolution which completed the transformation of the art of ballet enabling it once again to be taken seriously in the Western world and in fact to give a lead to the other arts, was two-fold.

The first great influence came from the Royal Siamese dancers who visited St. Petersburg in 1897 in conjunction with a visit by the King of Siam.¹ The Siamese showed the Russian dancers, and above all the young Fokine—who was to become the great pioneer choreographer of the new ballet of the 20th century—a quite new approach to dance. Here were barefoot classical dancers to whom movements of the arms and hands were just as important as those of legs and feet, and formed an integral part of their dance-training; who used Indian *mudras* with the greatest artistry, and emphasized contact with the ground in the Indian manner instead of attempting to create the illusion (characteristic of ballet) that they were weightless. As for their themes, these were drawn from Indian religion and mythology, and in particular from the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.

Another important influence came to Russia a few years later from the new form modern dance, created by the American artist, Isadora Duncan. She and her barefoot dancing also had great influence on Fokine. With the intuition of genius, he was able to combine influences from the Siamese dancers and from Duncan's dancing with the great achievements of Ivanov in the "Swan" acts of *Swan Lake* to create a new form of ballet, much more concentrated and poetic than anything seen before; his dance-images² now tended to break away from the classroom steps of ballet in much of his best choreography. Choreographed in this way a ballet was inevitably far more concentrated than before: as Fokine saw very clearly, it should be in one act, whereas in the past ballets had normally been in several acts, lasting several hours.

1. In those days Thailand was known as Siam. Alone among the countries of South-East Asia, it was never colonised by European countries and the King of Siam paid a visit to the Tsar of Russia as head of an ancient and independent State.
2. This is a term now coming into general use which I invented while writing "Modern English Ballet" during World War II. It refers to the basic units of choreography as invented by the choreographer in the general style demanded by a particular new work and suited to the theme and the music as it has developed at that moment in the choreography. Dancers need to be highly trained to execute these new dance-images exactly as they have been imagined by the choreographer, even though the dance-images may well depart from anything they have ever done in class. The problem which faces the great choreographer is that the more his dance-images are fresh and original, the more likely they are to degenerate in transmission (from dancer to dancer and from producer to dancer) to the nearest equivalent among standard classroom patterns. The rapidly expanding use of Benish movement notation by professional companies is now preserving the dance-images with fidelity.

Fokine began his great work before meeting Serge Diaghilev, but it was only when Diaghilev took his "Ballet-Russe" to Paris in 1909, performing a repertoire of one-act ballets all choreographed by Fokine, that the great explosion of creativity took place.

Most of the new ballets had Eastern themes, Eastern-style scenery and costumes with music and choreography looking of the East; here indeed, was a strange paradox, for these ballets were at the same time the most advanced creations of the Western art of ballet.

Vaslav Nijinsky was the supreme male dancer of the Diaghilev Ballet; his range was very great, including such roles as the Golden Slave in *Scheherazade* as well as more mysterious roles such as the ghost of the rose in *The Spectre de la Rose*. He delighted in his Siamese Dance in *Los Orientales*, looking completely Oriental with his tartar cheek-bones and slant eyes.

One very significant ballet of this period was *Le Dieu Blue* (The Blue God) in which Nijinsky danced the role of Krishna. For this ballet Fokine studied deeply ancient Indian art in museums and even used *mudras* in his choreography, no doubt calling on his memories of the Siamese dancers. But the ballet was not a success, and had only 6 performances in Paris. It has splendid decor by Bakst, one of the greatest ballet designers who ever lived, and it is intriguing that this clearly took its inspiration from Angkor Vat in Cambodia—the huge face of a deity emerging from the architecture. Cambodian classical dance is in fact very close to Siamese (Thai) classical dancing, so the instinct of Bakst in looking to Angkor was a sound one; it is a tragedy that one of his greatest masterpieces of design is so little seen.

The trouble was that Fokine's detailed use of ideas from India and Thailand-Cambodia, including the use of *mudras*, did not work aesthetically; one insuperable problem faced by Fokine was that whereas in his other exotic ballets such as *Scheherazade* (which has as a central figure "Shahryar, King of India and China") and *Thamar* (set in ancient Georgia), Fokine was able to use music by nationalist Russian composers with an authentically Eastern atmosphere, the music Diaghilev commissioned from the French composer Reynaldo Hahn for *Le Dieu Blue* was somewhat sweet and insipid, having nothing to do with the East.

It was in *The Firebird* that Fokine achieved his supreme fusion of East and West, helped by the magnificent music by Stravinsky. (This was Stravinsky's first music for ballet, commissioned by Diaghilev) Stravinsky showed an extraordinary flair for using the orchestra in new ways and his rhythms had a dynamic quality which was to help to make him one of the greatest ballet composers of all time—certainly the greatest of the 20th century. Stravinsky wrote music with superb rhythmic vitality, providing

clear-cut beats for the movements of the dancers, and this put his ballet music (along with Jazz) in the same great category of dance music as Indian music, differing sharply from previous ballet music in which the dancer was expected to treat the beats of the music with some fluidity.

The Indian origins of the title role of "*The Firebird*", crucial in the development of choreography in the 20th century, were explained to me by Tamara Karsavina, the eminent ballerina who created this role. When she produced Margot Fonteyn in this role, at the time the ballet was revived at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 1954 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the death of Diaghilev, Margot Fonteyn made the role look very Eastern and very powerful, with wing-beats (suggested by arm and hand movements) that were amazingly like *Kathakali*. An old critic who had seen Karsavina in the original production, before the first World War, criticized Margot Fonteyn severely, saying that her interpretation was quite wrong. This took me aback, for I knew that Karsavina had a superb memory of her own roles, and was an artist of the highest integrity always true to the memory of the great Fokine. So I interviewed her, and she explained to me that she had taught Margot Fonteyn to dance the role exactly as Fokine had taught it to her. Karsavina even quoted the actual words of Fokine to her: "You are very dangerous, very powerful: when you throw away the apple, do not toss it—throw it with all your force!"

As Karsavina explained, the myth of the Firebird entered Russian mythology from Indian mythology. In fact the Firebird (Zhar Ptitsa) becomes in Russian mythology the most dangerous of all the trials a hero must face; so the movements were given this tremendous power by the choreographer and Karsavina helped Margot Fonteyn to reproduce it in her interpretation. (Margot Fonteyn had never had to tackle anything like this in her whole career so far, and for the first two weeks of rehearsal she could not understand the dance-images; but then she began to understand them and at the first night gave a magnificent performance, very *Kathakali* in flavour). Fortunately the ballet is still preserved by the Royal Ballet in its repertoire, and its proper quality—in the title role—can still be appreciated; the rest of the ballet is by no means so original or effective.

In the masterpiece "*The Rites of Spring*" Igor Stravinsky and Vaslav Nijinsky developed still further what one might call the "Indian" approach to ballet music and choreography with strong beats in rapidly changing cross-rhythms in the music, allied exactly to corresponding beats struck out by the feet of the dancers on stage, and the dancers breaking clean away from the gravity-defying lightness previously characteristic of ballet. Nijinsky's choreography for this ballet has unfortunately been lost, for Diaghilev dismissed Nijinsky in 1913 when Nijinsky got married; fortunately we can get some idea of the glories of the original choreography in the masterpiece of Nijinsky's sister Bronislava Nijinska, *Les Noces* in which

she carried on the ideas of her brother, using masterly and intensely rhythmic music by Stravinsky. (In this music the words sung are broken up into rhythmic syllables, so that they cannot be understood as words, the voices are in fact used instrumentally, very much as in the more ancient forms of Indian classical North Indian singing).

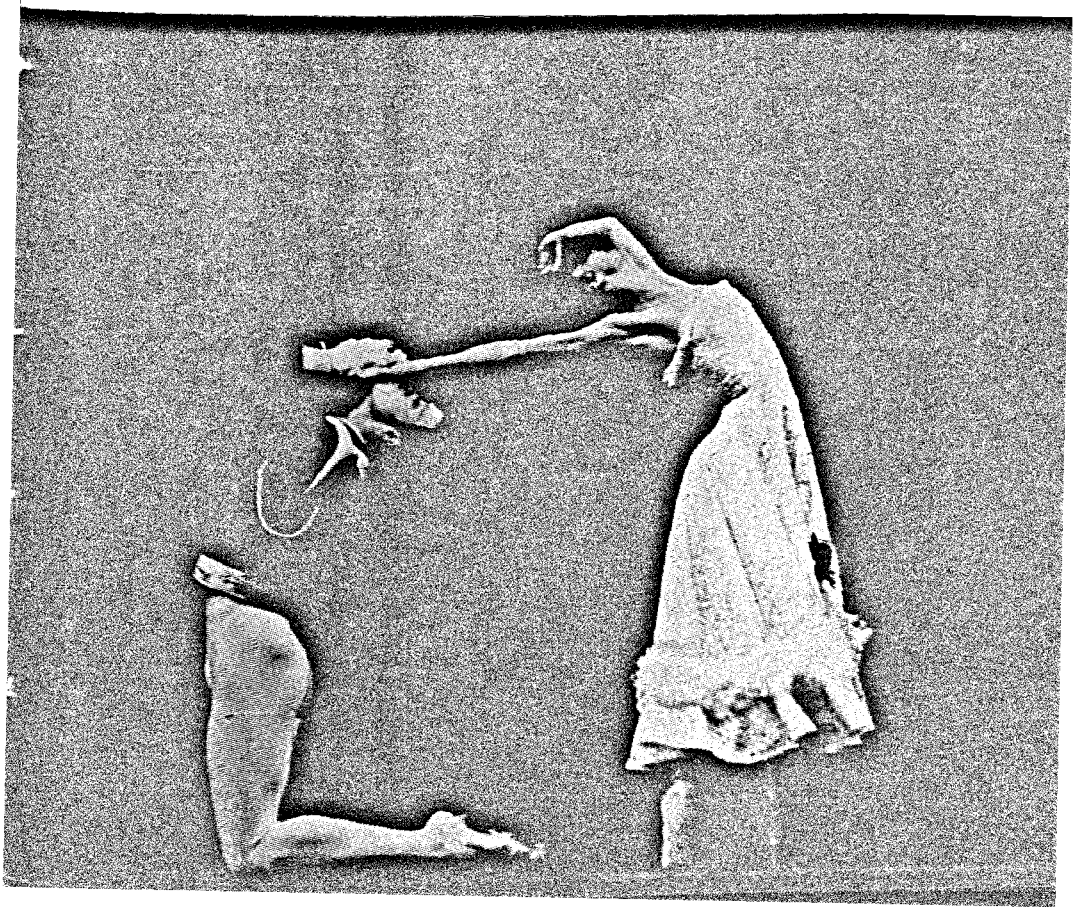
Meanwhile the famous dancer, Anna Pavlova, was carrying along on her own path, quite independently of Diaghilev (though she joined him briefly in his first season in Paris in 1909). Pavlova was much too much of an individualist to work as a member of a team, under the artistic leadership of Diaghilev, and was inclined to commission for his company very conventional ballets with choreography so banal that her own performance would stand out very clearly. Nevertheless her most famous role, that of the Dying Swan was very new; in fact it was created for her by Fokine, and showed strong Indian influence. Here was a dying bird, with wild and fluttering wing-beats, who was at the same time a human being; the death of this bird had something in common with the death of the noble Jatayu in one of the "nights" of the *Ramayana* cycle of *Kathakali* pieces. Pavlova toured far more widely than the Diaghilev company, introducing the art of ballet to large numbers of people; wherever she went, people insisted on seeing her "Dying Swan". Fortunately her sublime performance of this dance has been preserved on film; when she visited Los Angeles Douglas Fairbanks, and Mary Pickford were making a film, and they took several shots of this short dance from various angles (though the very end, when the trembling of hands and feet stops as the bird dies, did not appear in any of the "takes".)

Pavlova herself was fascinated with Indian dancing, and it is significant that in 1909 she chose to celebrate her entry into the Maryinsky Ballet (the Imperial Russian Ballet performing at the Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, then the capital of Russia) by giving a performance of *La Bayadere*. In fact choreographers had been fascinated by the Devadasis of India (called "*bayaderes*" in French and Russian) since the middle of the 19th century, and the Maryinsky repertoire still includes part of *La Bayadere* but it is only very superficially Indian. Choreographers of the 19th century knew nothing about real Indian dancing, and gave the dancers the same sort of ballet steps as in other ballets, with the ballerinas wearing blocked shoes and tutus, the short ballet skirt sticking out from the hips.

Illustrations: P. 35. Above Left: Nijinsky in "Saimese Dance" from "Les Orientales" Above Right: Karsavina as the Firebird. Below Left: Nijinsky as Krishna in "Le Dieu Blue" (The Blue God). Below Right: From the original production by the Diaghilev Ballet of "The Firebird" with Karsavina and Mikhail Fokine (choreographer as well) as the hero. Costumes and decor by Goncharova. P. 36. Merle Park as The Firebird (Royal Ballet London). Photo, Roy Round. P. 37. "Jardin aux Lilas" (The Lilac Garden) ballet by Antony Tudor for the Royal Ballet revived in 1967. Antoinette Sibley and Anthony Dowell. (Photo, Griffiths Photography). P. 38. (Above) "Tandava Nritya" danced by Uday Shankar as Shiva and Simkie as Parvati. Below: an artist's impression of the dance in a sketch by Eileen Pearcey.





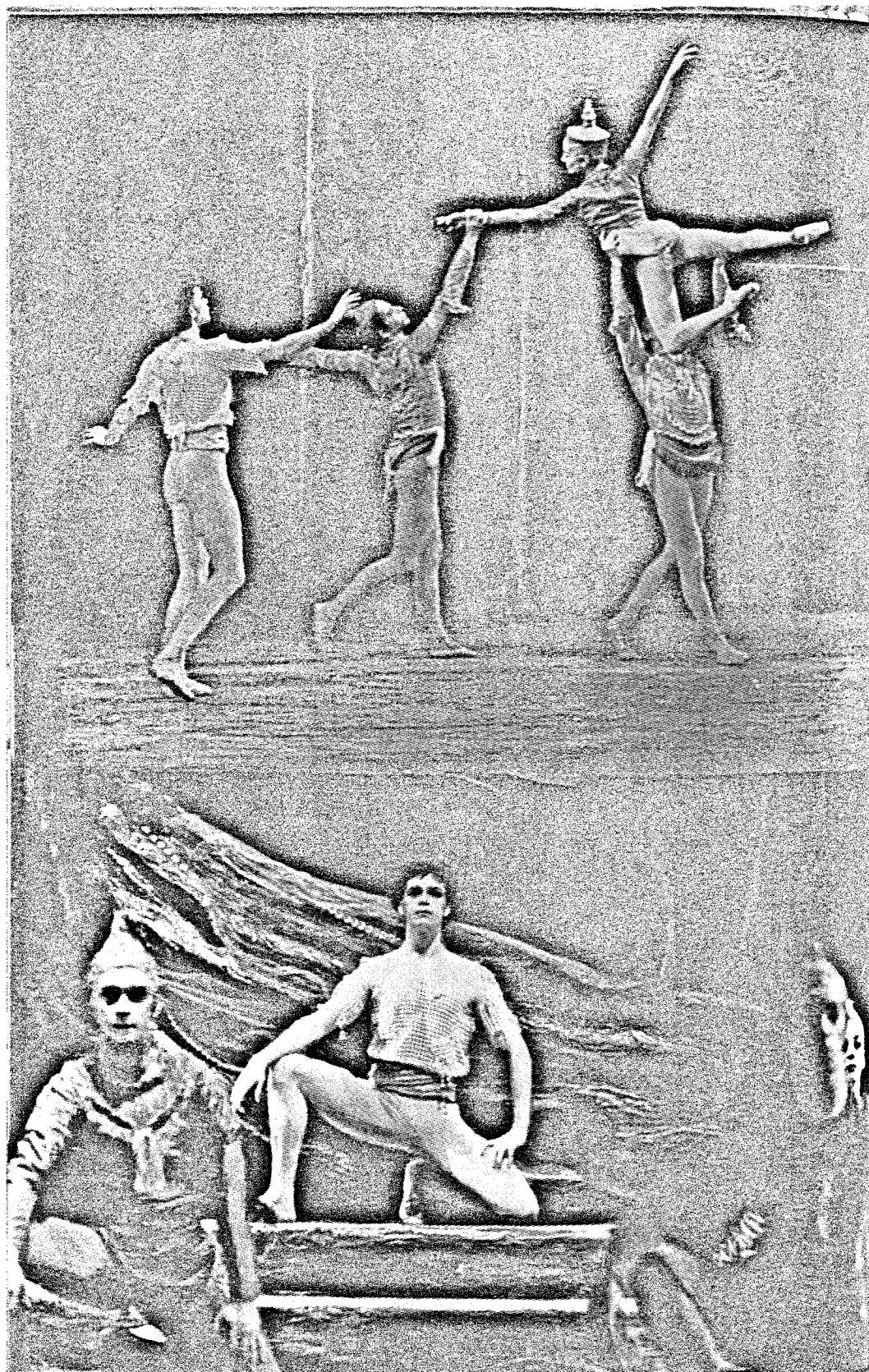












In 1922, touring in India, Pavlova tried to see classical Indian dances, but failed; she was told that they had died out. Nevertheless her desire to present real Indian ballet was so great that she commissioned Uday Shankar, an Indian art-student in London, to create for her two Indian ballets: *Hindu Wedding* and *Krishna and Radha*; in the latter, Pavlova (wearing a sari) danced Radha and Uday Shankar danced Krishna. Uday Shankar toured with Pavlova for a year-and-a-half, before leaving to strike out on his own path in Paris. It was a fateful collaboration, for a decade later Uday Shankar founded his own company and began to tour the world, with a base at Dartington Hall near Totnes in Devon, England.

Uday Shankar had very widespread influence in the thirties, above all in England; in fact he had a crucial influence on the artistic development of an English choreographer of genius, Antony Tudor, in very much the same way that the Royal Siamese Dancers had a crucial influence on Fokine and the whole development of ballet a generation earlier. At the time Uday Shankar introduced large numbers of people to his own very individual form of Indian choreography, and to the Indian orchestral music composed by Timir Baran for Indian instruments and instruments from various countries in South East Asia. Actually Uday Shankar spent a good part of each year rehearsing at Dartington Hall in Devon in England; the rest of the year was spent touring. London, inevitably, was an important "date" for his widespread tours, and his troupe was part of the London theatrical scene as indeed was the modern-dance troupe of Kurt Jooss (exiled from Germany and now based at Dartington Hall) and the various Ballets-Russe Companies (deriving from the Diaghilev Ballet and usually based in Monte Carlo) which played long seasons in London every summer.

Thanks to the genius of Antony Tudor, the art of ballet continued to develop at a rapid rate in London in the thirties. One day I asked Tudor what had set him off on the new path which enabled him to create for the first time ballets of great psychological depth, comparable in their poetic intensity to the plays of Tchekhov and the novels of Proust. To my surprise he replied "Uday Shankar". It was in fact after seeing the Shankar company in the early thirties, at an early and crucial stage in his development as a choreographer, that Tudor was able to make the intuitive leap needed

Illustrations: P. 39. (Above) Uday Shankar as Shiva, Madhavan as Gujasura, the Elephant-demon and (below) a succession of 'images' from "Tandava Nritya". Sketches Eileen Pearcy. P. 40, "El Penitente" (The Penitent) created by Martha Graham in 1940 based on ancient Mexican ritual. Performed by the London Contemporary Dance Theatre. Robert Cohen as the Penitent, William Louther as the Christ Figure. Note hands in contracted Graham position. (Photo by Rosemary Winkley). P. 41. "Shadowplay" ballet by Antony Tudor. The Boy with Matted Locks (Anthony Dowell) tries to escape from the Celestial (Merle Park). Photo, Reg Wilson. P. 42. (Above). In Antony Tudor's "Shadowplay" created for the Royal Ballet, London (1967) Merle Park as the Celestial (Photo by Houston Rogers). Below Anthony Dowell in the Javanese position at the end of "Shadowplay" with the monkeys in front. (Photo by Donald Southern).

to create dance-images of far greater potency and subtlety than ever before, as well as developing quite new relationships with the music, and new types of choreographic structure.

Seeing the Shankar troupe, Tudor was so impressed that he decided in 1933 to create an Indian ballet, complete with *mudras*, on an Indian theme and Eastern music. The sublimely beautiful Pearl Argyle danced Sita and Diana Gould (almost equally beautiful) danced "a Goddess". The very young Hugh Laing, later to become one of the greatest male dancers of the century, danced the hero Vikram; Tudor himself played the King. The music took the form of Eastern music written down to be played on Western instruments by two Hungarian composers. "It was a very bad ballet", said Tudor, "but I learned a great deal from it".

In fact Tudor learned to use the whole body of the dancer in an integrated way, with the hands and arms taking just as important a place in new-minted dance-images as the head, trunk, legs, and feet; and he applied this new understanding to his Western themes.

This very subtle fusion of East and West emerged in one scene in Tudor's first masterpiece, *Jardin au Lilas* (1936). This ballet, set in a period about 1900, concerns a girl who must leave the young man she loves to take part in an arranged marriage with an older man, who at the same time discards his mistress. For the innocent and heartbroken girl Tudor composed some dance-images in which the influence of *mudras* was clear, though he used this influences in a very subtle way, combining it with Romantic music by Chausson so that the total effect was not in the least Indian. The Indian influence becomes even more clear when Tudor revived this ballet for the Royal Ballet in 1968 and gave the central role of Caroline to Antoinette Sibley, one of the company's leading ballerinas. At an early stage in her career Antoinette Sibley had damaged her knee, and had to spend some months in bed—a terrifying prospect for her, since she lived for the dance. But she had just seen Uday Shankar with his company. She was so impressed that she decided to teach herself what she could of Indian dancing—and this work helped her very greatly when faced with the poetic subtleties of the role of Caroline.

Tudor, like so many great artists, passed through a sad period of neglect with few opportunities for creative work. But in 1966 he was given the opportunity he had always wanted to create a new work for the company now called the Royal Ballet. This was an overwhelming challenge, for suddenly, he found himself with the opportunity to return to creative activity at its highest level, working with English dancers in his home city of London.

By this time Tudor's knowledge of the East, including Eastern religion and philosophy, had become profound. The influence of Zen Buddhism on

him was so great that he was close to being a Zen priest living in a flat in the basement of the Zen Institute in New York, taking part in the meditation periods, without personal possessions (which he had given away). Very sensibly he chose for his return to creativity in London a work deeply influenced by Buddhism and Hinduism. This was *Shadowplay*, first danced in 1967 in London, and one of the most profound choreographic works ever created.

The theme (partly based on a story by Rudyard Kipling but going far beyond it) showed a young man in search of understanding of the world and spiritual enlightenment. The programme described this young man as "The Boy with Matted Locks"—presumably a reference to the matted locks of Lord Shiva. The Boy with Matted Locks passed through a series of trials and temptations that had their roots in mythology and yet were very much of today. For example, he was faced with the "Bandarlog", the monkey-people: these symbolised the chaos and vulgarity of so much of everyday life today. He met a Celestial who at first seemed an embodiment of every adolescent dream of pure romantic femininity—a kind of "Mohini"; but at her second appearance the Celestial was very different having been transformed into a kind of Kali—the embodiment of female eroticism, overwhelming in power. The role was danced by Merle Park, one of the greatest ballet dancers of today, and the most versatile of all—capable of understanding what Tudor wanted without any explanation of the theme by him. At the end, the Boy with Matted Locks knelt under the Bodhi tree of enlightenment with one knee up, in the position traditional in Javanese male court dancing; he acknowledged his humanity by solemnly scratching himself twice, thus linking himself with the monkeys around him; but they copied his regal Javanese kneeling position, and so took the first important step in moving away from their vulgarity. As for the dancing of the Boy by Anthony Dowell, the artist became quite transformed under the influence of Tudor, showing a wonderful inner repose, and has now become one of the world's greatest male dancers, following in the path of Nijinsky and Hugh Laing.

Maurice Bejart, solidly established under the auspices of the National Opera of Belgium in Brussels with his very cosmopolitan Ballet of the Twentieth Century, has shown in various ways a very strong leaning towards India. His school, for example, he calls 'Mudra'. But it was in his ballet *Bhakti* (1968) that the influence of India became most clear. This had three main sections: one concerned with Rama and Sita, one with Krishna and Radha, and one with Shiva and Shakti. Bejart's forte is not so much the detail of dance-images in choreography as his spatial effects; he is in fact a major pioneer in developing ballet for performance in huge circular auditoriums, and there he presents works with audiences surrounding the dancers to the extent of about four-fifths of the circle. His Indian ballet was only partially successful, particularly when he was using Hin-

dustani classical music for sitar and tabla not well suited to dancing; but he has a remarkable gift for choosing, developing and producing dancers, and Maina Gielgud made some striking effects, dancing to the Karnatak music for an *Alarripu* in *Bharatanatyam* style. Here was an odd mixture of balletic movements and Indian movements, a mixture which suited Maina Gielgud very well; she made her solo intriguing and quirkishly funny in its mixture of East and West.

In modern dance, the influence of Indian dance goes back almost as far as it does in ballet, and has been no less significant; in fact it is impossible to imagine modern dance without the pervasive and continuing influence of Indian dance throughout its development.

Ruth St. Denis was the great pioneer of American modern dance in America (just as Isadora Duncan, who slightly preceded her, was the pioneer in Europe, rarely revisiting America). The first independent production of Ruth St Denis was *The Dance of the Five Senses*, in which she took the role of the "goddess" Radha, surrounded by Indian supers; stylistically, this item, like the many "India" items created by her in later years was partly inspired by a group of Indian performers (snake charmers, holy men and "Nautch" dancers who presumably performed a simple form of *Kathak*) whom she saw at Coney Island, New York's amusement park. For music she used Western music with a slightly exotic flavour from the opera *Lakme*.

Fortunately her *Nautch Dance* has been preserved on film, so that we can form a reasonably good idea of this pioneer item in American modern dance. Ruth St Denis, wearing a long skirt whirls round and round in one simple step; in general the Indian influence is clear enough, but she did not use any classical Indian technique.

She was very popular and made world-wide tours, but from 1909 onward she remained mainly in the United States. Together with her partner and husband Ted Shawn, she established Denishaw as an institution which included both schools and performing companies. This had great success in the United States in the twenties, whereas the Diaghilev Ballet (over-whelmingly influential in Europe) toured relatively little in the United States. This was one reason (among many) why barefoot modern dance became firmly established in the United States, whereas ballet became the predominant form in Europe (except in Germany and certain other countries of Central Europe, where modern dance developed rapidly until the Nazis took power in 1933, under Hitler.)³

3. Though modern dance was created by Americans, it progressed far more rapidly in Germany (also in Austria and Switzerland) in the twenties than it did in the United States. This was a time of great political turmoil in Germany, but also of great artistic development: in painting, music, dance, architecture, drama, films and other

(Continued)

All the items performed by Denishawn were exotic, with Indian items remaining prominent in the repertoire. The main basis of the technique was simplified ballet, performed in bare feet.

Dissatisfied with this emphasis on the exotic, Martha Graham (later to become the most creative of American modern dancers) broke away from Denishawn in 1923, even though she was one of the company's leading dancers. Her aim was to create a truly American form of dance; among other things, as she told me, her aim was to "stop being an Indian dancer". But she was speaking with a certain irony telling only part of the story. In fact the Indian influence of her early years remained central to her whole development, as dancer-choreographer-teacher, changing from year to year in her work as she moved through various stages of development, she held fast to certain basic ideas which were essentially Indian.

One of these Indian ideas was contact with the ground. In fact, contact with the ground, the emphasis on the weight of the body, remained fundamental, through all her changes; a Graham class, such as is now taught all over the world, begins with a long period during which the dancers sit on the floor in a variety of attitudes, moving head, arms, hands, trunk and hips through the most complicated and precise attitudes. (Japanese dancers take to the Graham technique superbly in fact Graham remains very Eastern in her outlook, combining this, in a way only possible to a genius, with a Puritanism which has come down to her from a long ancestry of austere Protestant forebears in New England).

Like Tudor, Graham uses Indian ideas in her own way, in a very complex fusion of creative ideas. This is true, for example of her use of a stylized hand-position related to two *Bharatanatyam* mudras, "*Kataka Mukha*"

art-forms. Greatest and most influential of all the German modern dancers, Mary Wigman took much from the East: from the masks of Noh and above all from Indian dance. In 1929-30 she was teaching Kathak at her Cologne school, Indhja, a Javanese dancer who has been trained in Kathak as well as in Javanese dancing. Also Uday Shankar and his partner Simkie toured in Germany, making a strong impact on Wigman. Another influence was that of Ted Shawn, the husband and partner of Ruth St Denis, who toured Germany as a soloist in 1931-32; the items performed by him included some "Indian" items much influenced by his wife and included *mudras*. One item performed by Shawn was called *Shiva*, showing influences from ancient Indian sculpture. Another Eastern item was his Dervish Dance.

In 1936-37 Menaka toured Central Europe with her troupe with a stress on Kathak, and winning a first prize at the Berlin Olympic in 1936. But her influence was very limited, for by this time German modern dance (like other arts) had lost its impetus under the crushing censorship of the Nazis. It has never recovered its impetus in Germany, where the stress is now on ballet. Fortunately some of the most important aspects of Wigman-style modern dance were brought to the United States by the Wigman pupil Hanya Holm in 1931, and played an important role in the development of one of the greatest American modern-dance choreographers, Alwin Nikolais.

and “*Mukula*”. To Graham dancers, this is a “contraction” of the hand—contraction and release being fundamental to the Graham technique, and in fact to most American techniques of modern dance, under Graham’s influence. The contracted Graham hand can be understood in many different ways; in her earlier years, it served to conceal the fact that Graham and her dancers moved under a degree of strain that was often excessive and tended to show up in strained hand movements, whereas the contracted hands looked polished no matter what the strain. In later years, taking much from ballet (partly under the influence of Tudor) Graham dancers learned to use beautifully relaxed hands when this was required, but the contracted hand retained its value as an element both in expressive dance and in pure dance, as used by Graham and those influenced by her.

When Tudor came to the United States in 1939, he had an overwhelming impact; not just on the American ballet world (then rather undeveloped) but also on the highly developed American modern-dance world. He in fact was regarded by the modern dancers as one of them, even though he used ballet-trained dancers wearing pointe shoes; for his dance-images sometimes broke just as far away from the standard ballet classroom steps as anything in modern dance. In fact many of the young modern dancers who were to become leading choreographers (Alvin Ailey, Paul Taylor, Glen Tetley and others) came to Tudor’s ballet classes, and learned to see the ballet tradition in a new light. In fact they evolved their own fusions of modern dance and ballet; and the Indian and Japanese influences which had been absorbed by both Tudor and Graham flowed into their work. In making this fusion of modern dance, ballet and Eastern dance, they were in fact following along a path already trodden by Tudor and Graham: in his early formative years, Tudor took ideas from German modern dance and the *Kabuki* of Japan as well as from Indian dance.

The American dancers Ragini Devi and La Meri were pioneers in learning Indian classical dance (above all *Kathakali* and *Bharatanatyam*) and in fact *Bharatanatyam* came to be taught in New York and other cities after World War II. This widespread teaching of Indian classical dance, had the intriguing result that when the very American style and technique of Jazz dance developed after world War II, it absorbed influences not only of African movements still performed by Black Americans (whose ancestors brought them over from Africa in the slave ships), it also took much from modern dance; and because one of its pioneers, Jack Cole, had been trained in *Bharatanatyam*, he introduced a number of characteristic *Bharatanatyam* movements into Jazz dance such as the side-to-side movement of the head and the outflung arms. Jazz dance is now an important technique on its own, taking its place alongside ballet and modern dance; it is of course performed mainly to jazz music, but also to “pop” music. Like American modern dance, it has spread to other countries, but not to the extent of modern dances. One of its finest teachers and choreographers the American,

Matt Maddox, has a loyal following in London. Musically, jazz dance belongs to what one might call the "Indian family," the beats produced by the body are exactly fitted to the beats of the music. It is significant that at the Institute of Choreology in London, the students are taught how to perform and record ballet, modern dance, Indian dance, and jazz dance, along with folk dances, historical, dances, (i.e. the social dances of previous centuries) and character dances (folk and social dances as adapted to the ballet stage). In their studies they must master the music associated with all these forms of dance and their studies in Indian dance and music are of great importance not only in their own right (as being one of the three great families of the art of the dance) but also as an essential too for the understanding of important developments in *Western* choreography in the 20th century.