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/ MASCULINITIES: MAPPING THE FIELD

The Male Dancer and His Role in Theatrical Performances of the 16th-18th centuries

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The beginning of the 19th century brought the absolute domination by women of the ballet stage (although they had to face the challenge of mastering the language of dance created by men and originally intended for them on the professional stage). The process of feminisation, also in this 'symbolic' aspect to which theatre dance had been subjected since the 19th century, directed the research of dance theorists towards the so-called "problem of the male dancer" (Burt, 2007). However, the complexities of the code of masculinity can be traced through all stages of the development of choreographic forms, i.e. from the dance intermedia of the Renaissance to the autonomous, in terms of content, *action ballets* of the Enlightenment (referring, inter alia, to the images of androgynous figures of the burlesque ballets of the time of Louis XIII, or the phenomenon of *cross-casting* of court ballets of the Sun King era).

Keywords: ballet; masculinity; theatre of past eras; cultural patterns; the body

As far as Duport[1] himself is concerned, my admiration is a long-standing affair, to which I have remained faithful. The audience could barely contain its desire to applaud: the King set the example. I heard His Majesty's voice from my box, and the excitement reached the point of fury, which lasted

three quarters of an hour. Duport has all the lightness we saw in Paris in his interpretation of *Figaro*. You never feel the effort, little by little his dance comes alive, and he fills you with the excitement and intoxication of the passion he wants to express. It is the highest degree of expression of which this art is capable. Vestris and Taglioni, like all common dancers, cannot hide the effort; secondly, their dance has no *progression*. And so, they do not even reach *sensuality*, the first goal of the art… *Admiration*, after sensual delight, is almost the entire domain of this oh-so-hermetic art. The eyes, enchanted by the brilliance of the decorations and the novelty of the *groups*, should encourage the soul to pay close and tender attention to the passions that the dancers' steps will paint (Stendhal, 2007, pp. 62-63).[2]

Outline of issues

The history of ballet performances can be viewed from the perspective of the interrelationship of body movement and dramatic narrative or the aesthetic and cultural patterns that shape it. One direction of research into the place of the dancer, or more broadly – the male body in movement in past performances – becomes the establishment of an intra-structural relationship between the 'institutional' conditions of the spaces in which such performances took place and the social expectations of their presentation. Due to the nature of the research, such a study takes on an interdisciplinary character and takes into account the textual and cultural nature of the documents analyzed. The cultural image of the body determined the power of the rules imposed on the dance form, not only the constraints, the obligations of following specific patterns, but also the challenges. And the process of reworking traditional movement codes implied a continual development of choreography. Anya Peterson Royce notes:

> Just as we have recognized ritual and social drama for the condensed presentations they are, so we must recognize movement and dance as forms at once the most and the least resistant to distortion and misappropriation. They provide subtle and multivocalic entryways to cultural examinations both in the actual embodied performance and also in the memory of it (2014, p. 25).

How is the notion of masculinity constructed in choreographies of theatrical performances up to the 18th century? In studies that analyze the forms of choreography's presence on stage, attention is paid to how its structure enforced a specific spectatorial frame that changed and evolved over the eras – the content message, the set design, the stage space, the costume. The aesthetics of a given dance form have been influenced by numerous determinants over the centuries: cultural perceptions of the body, dress codes, gender stereotypes, dominant musical trends, etc. Thus, it seems necessary to consider it in the broader (historical) context of cultural knowledge. The close connection between the creative idea and the manner and place of the performance of a dance character is emblematic of the artistic strategies of the court culture of past eras, inscribing these works in a specific sphere of social communication and thus making choreography a cultural spectacle. Mark Franko draws attention to this aspect by zooming in on the spectacular staging form of the 1581 court show *Le Balet comique de la Royne* (2015, pp. 32-50). For at the time, the body in motion[3] was a vehicle for culturally designed content – not just a record of the character's experiences and their dance expression.

The process of developing a definitive model for professional ballet performance was accompanied from the outset by a clear gender division of functions. Men were masters of court ceremonies and were responsible for

organizing theatrical performances, they were choreographers, educators, critics and theorists of dance,[4] proclaiming an authoritatively binding aesthetic doctrine (in a sense guaranteeing the availability of this form only to a group of men, of noble birth at that). The female body had, on the one hand, to struggle with mastering a technique created by and initially intended for men, and on the other, to find itself in the image associations imposed by the dominant cultural pattern of patriarchy. Female dancers were first and foremost ‘shown’, and the form of this presentation was simply linked to the contemplation of beauty (Reglińska-Jemioł, 2016, pp. 76-77)[5].

Court spectacles between the 16th and 17th centuries. Dancer in the world of gestures and theatrical signs

In dance performances until the 17th century, which belonged to the structure of the patriarchal order, the male creative vision was realized. The male ‘heroic’ body in choreography had to be identified with power, strength, sublimity, which translated into a heavily codified gestural language (see Agnel, 2004; Dziechcińska, 1996). Language, of course, has evolved over the centuries – from a code of behaviour realizing the ethos of chivalry, then the refinement, chic and exquisiteness of the courtier, to a kind of hybrid form merging these two figurations, realized in the vision of the *danse noble* style (Turocy, 2013, pp. 202-203). Here, ‘dance emploi’ was combined with the performer’s tall stature, slender figure, perfect body proportions, majestic movements, masculine grace of expressive gestures and elegance.[6] As Maria Ossowska notes:

> Although the only acceptable profession for a courtier is to be that of a knight, in essence Castiglione's model is a demilitarised one. Tournaments, horsemanship, crushing lances, hurling spears and playing ball will suffice. Nor will the peaceful courtier look for opportunities to duel… It is particularly recommended for a courtier to have charm and a certain nonchalance, which masks his craftsmanship and makes one assume that everything comes easily to him… Obviously, he will not dance at some folk festivals, nor will he perform acrobatics in dancing, which befit only professionals (1986, p. 101).

Court ballet dance of the 16th and 17th centuries used the theatricalized, choreographically tamed body for the purposes of monarchical propaganda. As Voltaire pointed out: 'Louis XIV excelled in grave dances, which were agreeable to the majesty of his figure, and did not injure that of his rank' (*Historia męskości*, 2019, p. 230). The monarch's body, initiating a ball or masque with his movement or closing the court spectacle in a *grand ballet*, was always 'the first mover' (ibid., p. 334). Masculinity in the theatrical spectacles of the past was manifested not only in a confident, practised processional step, but also in the wielding of the sword and horseback riding. Between the 16th and 17th centuries, court spectacles took the form of an elaborate show that mixed 'knightly games with church dramas, processions with intermezzos, the Old Testament with mythology, dance with music and song' (Liński, 1930, p. 16). Participants in these performances, known as carousels,[7] often played the roles of King Arthur's knights, crusaders and Argonauts. Themes from knightly epics and epic poems by Tasso or Ariosto were taken up (for example, the Florentine equestrian ballet of 1637, based on the themes of Tasso's *Jerusalem Liberated*, the theme of

which was a sham battle depicting the imprisonment and subsequent liberation of the participants in the First Crusade).[8]

The settings for these spectacular shows were the town squares, the gardens of the courts and the vast fields outside the city walls. Carousels and equestrian ballets played an important role in the formation of the ceremonial culture characteristic of the Baroque period; their power of visual transmission raised the status of the events they accompanied, in which the male body had a sort of persuasive function. Like *ballet de cour* type performances, they created a courtly iconosphere, common to the whole of Europe, whose message was readable by the elite circles of the continent (Limon, 2001, p. 394). Carousels taking place in urban spaces were addressed to a wide and diverse audience and could thus be read on different levels. The spectators gathered in the streets were dazzled by the enormity and richness of the staging, as well as the equestrian artistry of the participants in the tournament, while the reading of the allegorical messages and figures of the spectacle remained within the interests and perceptive capabilities of the court elites. The initial phase of the spectacle, the processional entry – a kind of parade (usually of representatives of the largest families), was a reference to triumphal royal entries. A recurring element of the performances was the presence of occasional architecture (gates, triumphal arches, rocks, fountains, palaces, defensive fortresses, which formed the centre of the sham battles) (Hübner-Wojciechowska, 1987, pp. 285-286). Over time, the image of the fighting male body in theatrical performances of this type began to serve panegyric purposes or the apotheosis of heroism.

Horse ballets most often depicted battles between the elements (an example is the Viennese production from 1667 – *Sieg-Streit deß Luft und Wassers,*

Freuden-Fest zu Pferd),[9] disputes of virtues and vices, or the four seasons. Usually, these performances were to some extent topical, as they were linked to celebrations in honour of important visitors to the city, anniversaries, religious festivals, wedding ceremonies or coronation ceremonies. A common feature of performances involving horse parades was competition, taking the form of dramatic staging or a choreographic narrative in which the dancers-riders outlined a geometric pattern of formations. *Traité des tournois, joustes, carrousels et autres spectacles publics* (1669) by Claude-François Ménestrier defines the concept of the carrousel as a competition with carts, machines, recitatives and horse dances, which the French Jesuit relates to both equestrian ballet and sham combat, without indicating the differences in the understanding of the ballet form *à cheval* and the *à pied* type. Ménestrier likens the geometric drawing of the choreography of the dances on horseback and on foot, a harmonious image of the entire performance with the central figure of the ruler, to a higher, cosmic world order (1669, pp. 170-180; see Reglińska-Jemioł, 2010, pp. 264-269).

In equestrian ballets and carousels, the traces of chivalric culture were translated into a system of performance signs in which the ideals, attitudes and patterns associated with this cultural formation were reinterpreted through the male body in motion. In the 17th century, as attitudes to the idea of combat changed from an indispensable skill to simply a kind of art, the ability to ride a horse and wield a sword rose to become an effective stage tool for dynastic propaganda. A common element of court ballets of the Renaissance and especially of the Baroque era was the representation of controlled movement, reflecting the unity of the social order. One might add that the presentation of the body on stage was accompanied by allegorical imagery (the French edition of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* [Paris, 1636] on the

title page highlighted the usefulness of this title for ballet makers and dramatic texts).

An interesting clue in the search for a refiguration of masculinity, a cultural legacy of gender indeterminacy/indefiniteness on the ballet stage, is the phenomenon of *cross-casting*, realized in 17th-century ballet burlesque masquerades; in this parodistic type of performance, androgynous figures were relied upon to circumvent censorship (see Prest, 2006; Klimczyk, 2015, vol. 1, pp. 223-245). These forms were present in the repertoire of the Parisian Jesuit stage of the Baroque period. On the stage of the College of Louis-le-Grand, despite the existing standardized orders and prohibitions governing the theatre of the Societatis Iesu throughout Europe, the presence of danced female roles is noted in almost all years. As Judith Rock notes, 'there were the Jesuit educational rules from Rome, the French interpretation of them – and their Parisian interpretation!' (1996, p. 12). At the time, the choreographed movement of male pupils was the response of such establishments to the systemic need to master the kinetic language of the elites. On stage, this form of choreography (harmonious but also quite schematic) additionally became a tool for creating a specific image for the ruler. With their sumptuous staging (which also included choreography), the court productions were able to arouse appreciation among the subjects, which was in keeping with the propaganda message about the ruler.

Noverre's era

A crucial turning point came with the publication of Jean-Georges Noverre's *Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets* (1760), mentioned below in footnote 4, in which the choreographer set out his project for the reform of ballet, postulating above all the development of a ballet with action (*ballet*

d'action), the narrative of which was to become a subject of deeper reflection and emotional involvement for the audience.[10] Ballet should stand on a par with dramatic theatre, but the overriding means of expression was the dance – rather than words.[11] And so, in the Age of Enlightenment, ballet choreography, a pillar of a sublime and highly codified dance form that paid homage to cultural conventions, begins to focus on the emotional message, seeking precisely in it an effective means of artistic commentary.

The credibility of the emotional content was guaranteed by the vivid facial expressions (the theatre dancers' rejection of masks), the simplicity of the choreography, the expressive gestures, the costumes in harmony with the well-thought-out set design, the appropriately selected music, the harmonious collaboration of the show's creators, the sensitivity of the performers, but also the appropriate choice of the libretto's theme.

> When the dancers, animated by feeling, will transform themselves into a thousand different forms with the varied features of the passions; when, Proteus-like, their features and glances will trace all the movements of their soul; when their arms will leave the narrow path that the school has prescribed for them, and when, traversing with as much grace as truth a more considerable space, they will express by correct positions the successive movements of the passions; when they finally combine wit and genius with their art, they will stand out. Stories will then become useless; everything will speak, every movement will dictate a sentence; every attitude will paint a situation; every gesture will reveal a thought; every glance will announce a new feeling; everything will be captivating because everything will be true, and the imitation will be drawn from nature (Noverre, 1959, p. 63).

It is emphasized that in Noverre's aesthetic thought, the emotional message and expressiveness of the theatrical gesture were paramount. The dancer's performance prowess receded into the background (Szyfman, 1954, p. 75). The Enlightenment's (in the spirit of the age – scientific) curiosity about the body, the evolving conception of the body and, at the same time, gender, paralleled the transformation of the art of ballet, based on ballet's assimilation of the capacity for narrative (Foster, 1996, p. 12). Thus, the male body in dance begins to express emotions, supported by the reformed art of mimicry, which allows for a broader spectrum of expression on stage and provides an opportunity to depict the theme of the libretto, competing successfully in this area with drama and this form's natural predisposition to verbal communication (Strzelecki, 2010, pp. 90-93). As the stage art of dance developed, alongside the *danse noble* style a *danse caractère* also developed, reflecting, among other things, the specific national character of dance.[12] As Irena Turska adds, it was the Enlightenment theorists who solidified the division of dancers into several types corresponding to the range of choreographic arrangements performed. The repertoire programme of the classical dancer included so-called noble roles, pathos-filled creations of heroes, gods and protagonists. The semi-classical (semi-choreographic) dancer had a slightly larger range of roles in which he could also display his acting talent. The character dancer (also called the 'grotesque' dancer) performed choreographies of a comic nature, and the folk dances already mentioned (2009, p. 146).[13]

When looking, for example, at librettos projecting movement, one can notice that the male body on the ballet stage began to be treated on an equal footing with the female body, aiming at a general 'rationalization of the ballet' (*Psyche and Amor*, 1762; *Medea and Jason*, 1763; *Iphigenia in Tauris*, 1772; *Diana and Endymion*, 1770; *Acis and Galatea*, 1773; *Judgement of*

Paris, 1793). When analyzing the transfiguration of the image of the male body on the ballet stage, Iwona Pasińska emphasizes that over the centuries there has been a gradual loss of the traditional 'masculine' image in favour of finding in it a feminine identity. The dancer, from being a stage monopolist (using a dance formula promoted in the Renaissance, shaped in the Baroque era and fully categorized in the 18th century), became a mere instrument carrying the female body (2008, pp. 323-324).

Towards a new aesthetic – Romantic ballet

French Romantic ballet, breaking its ties with the traditions of courtly culture, after two centuries of the supremacy of the male body in choreographic depiction, almost completely eliminated it from the performance space. In the structure of a ballet work, the male dancer (as a result of the progressive stage glorification of the female dancer and her privileged position in the choreographic concept) began to play a primarily auxiliary role. And what had previously characterized the male performance form – jumping skills, the changing dynamics of the arrangement, strength, flexibility and resilience – began to determine the quality of female dance as well. The male body was removed from the foreground so that its heaviness would not dampen the impression of the ethereality, transience and lightness of the dance expression. With the use of the form *sur les pointes*, the eternal desire to soar upwards, the illusion of flight in stage movement became attainable for the female body. The Romantic era programmatically initiated this indivisible domination of the female ballet stage, which lasted in Europe until the arrival of Vaslav Nijinsky. The role of the dancer on the ballet stage in the early 19th century was limited to that of a partner, or possibly a display of dancing prowess. This 'non-masculinity' of the ballet spectacle, understood as the secondary nature of male dance creations, is

reflected in – if only – a cursory review of the themes of ballet librettos of the period, the dramaturgy of which, followed by the choreography, promote the movement of the female body (to point out just some of the representative titles: *La Sylphide* (1832), *La Révolte au Sérail* (1833), *La Gipsy* (1839), *Giselle, ou les Willis* (1841), *La Péri* (1843), *Ondine, ou La naïade* (1843), *Le Esmeralda* (1844), *Le pas de Quatre* (1845), *Catarina ou la Fille du Bandit* (1846), *La Fille du Pharaon* (1862), *Coppélia ou la Fille aux yeux d'émail* (1870) (see Reglińska-Jemioł, 2019, pp. 299-302). The scholarly discourse emphasizes that the cult of the female body in movement and the minimization of the space for male dance expression to the dancer's frame of exposition were among the key cultural trends of romantic ballet performance (Rey, 1958, pp. 184-189; Wysocka, 1970, pp. 118-129; Homans, 2010, pp. 135-175).[14] As Arnold L. Haskell points out:

> Man was no longer the hero… With the decline of the great dancers of the period, the popularity of ballet rapidly wanded… Two hundred years after the founding the Academy, ballet in the country of its birth was artistically bankrupt. The art that been raised by a powerful dynasty of kings, nourished by the genius of a Boucher, Boquet, Lully, Molière, dignified by the interest of a Voltaire, that had produced men of the mental attainments of a Noverre, had become merely a prelude to flirtation, the dancers grisettes and expert gold-diggers. (1951, pp. 28-30).

The growing distance towards stage dancers, has led to the exclusion of men from the *corps de ballet*. According to Agnieszka Narewska, the French Chamber of Deputies even took the initial initiative to exclude male dancers from ballet productions altogether, proposing in their stead the presence of

‘versatile conductors who would be given a pair of tights and three or four francs per evening, so they would support the female dancers’ (2016, p. 163). The lack of a male element on stage was compensated for by female dancers *en travesti* in toreador and hussar costumes (*Paquita*, 1846), dancing the parts of ship’s boys and sailors (*Betty*, 1846), female rebels or common *bandits* (London 1846 production – ballet *Catarina ou la Fille du bandit*, choreographed by Jules Perrot). Furthermore, audiences admired women’s bodies forming a battle array or building palisades, adopting male ‘hard, rough’ patterns of behaviour. By performing such choreography, the ballet dancers entertained the audience with a cultural masquerade of gender without stripping men of their traditional cultural costume of power or leadership. This is because performances of this type deliberately avoided retouching femininity (Reglińska-Jemioł, 2019, pp. 299-300).

As Jean-Marie Pradier notes, ‘theatre and dance, when they become feminine, lift a thick layer of dust accumulated over the centuries, hiding silent questions, attitudes and imaginaries’ (2012, p. 16). It is in this ‘layer of stage dust’ of the performance culture of past eras that we can seek an answer to the question of the complexity of male creations (at all stages of the development of the art of dance – from single choreographic insertions, through the *ballet à entrée* type of spectacle, to ballets with action fully independent in terms of content).

The scholarly perspective of viewing the art of ballet (more broadly: dance forms in theatrical and paratheatrical productions) as an intermedial[15] cultural spectacle makes it possible to trace the process of change in male choreography over the centuries. The dynamics of this phenomenon should be linked not only to the way in which the male body in motion is displayed on stage, but also to the evolution of the content transmission of dramatic

roles intended for male dancers (in the 18th century, the key concepts that became the primary carriers of meaning transmission included: emotion, emotionality, passion, naturalness). Certain turning points can be identified in this process – the appearance of professional dancers on the theatre stage for the first time (the ballet *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, 1681), the influence of eminent choreographers recognizing the need to give dramatic clarity to the art of dance (Gasparo Angiolini, Franz Hilverding, John Weaver), the publication of Noverre's *Letters on Dancing and Ballets* (1760), and, finally, the work of the leading dancers of the period who became symbols of the turn towards reformed ballet (Jean Dauberval, Maximilien Gardel, Gaetano and Auguste Vestris). Through cultural transformation, ballet has finally gained the status of a full-scale theatrical form (cutting itself off from the tradition of the court entertainment spectacle); and the contribution to this transformation by choreographers, ballet masters, dance educators and theorists, and finally the dancers themselves, cannot be overestimated.

Translated by Adriana Wacewicz-Chorosz

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Footnotes

1. Louis-Antoine Duport (1781-1853) was an excellent French dancer (forerunner of the Romantic era in ballet), whose performances are mentioned in the letters of, among others, Noverre (Wysocka, 1970, pp. 104-105).
2. There is considerable research potential in personal documents (diaries, memoirs of theatre experts, amateurs of the art of dance, letters, autobiographies of prominent dancers and choreographers), which – in the perspective of the study of this topic – can direct our reflection on the function of choreography and the language of dance as self-narrative testimonies of the era. In all quotations, the spelling and punctuation of the originals have been preserved, and the highlighting of the text is by the author of the article.
3. It should be added that – in the early stages of the development of the art of ballet – it was essentially a male body. By the time the ballet *Le Triomphe de l'amour* (1681), featuring professional female dancers, was staged at the Paris Opera House, female roles were also played by men.
4. Among the more important historical and theoretical works on the art of dance up to the 18th century, the following should be mentioned: Claude François Ménestrier's study *Des ballets ancien et modernes selon les règles du théâtre* (1682); Gottfried Taubert's treatise *Rechtschaffener Tanzmeister* (1717); the works of John Weaver, the English choreographer and 'the father of English pantomime' (among others, *Anatomical and Mechanical Lectures Upon Dancing*, 1721); *Histoire générale de la danse, sacrée et prophane* (1724) by Jacques Bonnet, and *La danse ancienne et moderne, ou traité historique de la danse* (1754) by Louis de Cahusac; and, Noverre's groundbreaking *Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets* (1760). It should be added that the narrative around the reformist theoretical thought about dance initiated during the Enlightenment continued in the writings of Carl Blasis (1797-1878): *Traité élémentaire théorique et pratique de l'Art de la dance* (1820) and *Code of Terpsichore* (1830). In the introduction to his treatise, the Italian pedagogue clearly emphasized that 'the plan and conduct of the ballet's action should be similar, as in comedy and tragedy' (Pudełek, 1986, p. 49).
5. Klimczyk draws attention to the form of the English mask, which, through the active participation of women in the creation of its form, became 'a field of articulation of female kinetic sensitivity' (2015, pp. 81-82).

6. Carlo Blasis, who is primarily credited with systematizing the principles of classical dance technique, as well as formulating clear ways to teach them, also clearly exposed the importance of the physical qualities of the dancer's physique in his works on dance theory (Wysocka, 1970, pp. 113-115). As he points out, 'to him [the dancer of the *serio* roles] belong beautiful *developpés*, *grands temps* and all the noblest steps of dance. He should attract the viewer's attention with the elegance of his figure and the correctness of his poses, attitudes and arabesques' (Pudełek, 1984, p. 57).
7. Carousel (from the French *carrousel*) – one of the most popular types of court entertainment, referring in its form to the tradition of knightly games. In the structure of this public spectacle, the final staging shape of which was formed in the 17th century, in addition to competitions, sham fights, ceremonial processions, one can also find choreographic elements (for example, a type of dance figures performed by riders on horses). As Joanna Hübner-Wojciechowska points out, 'Carousel was one of the many Baroque "theatres" aimed at dazzling and enchanting the viewer. It did this by referring to painting, sculpture, architecture, as well as movement and words, thus becoming the most syncretic work of art of the Baroque period' (1987, p. 294).
8. Bernadetta Craveri notes: 'At the same time, the young ruler suggested through Ariosto – the Italian author whom the French aristocracy most read and liked – the supposed continuity of feudal traditions and customs of absolute monarchy, turning to his advantage the warlike moods and pastoral fantasies manifested by the nobility outside the court and against the court… And yet, in the tournament, temporarily setting aside the royal insignia and appearing as Roger, the prototype of the brave warrior, Louis XIV was paying homage to the chivalric ideal, which was also his ideal' (2009, p. 317).
9. The performance involved about a thousand actors and two hundred musicians. The tournament began with a parade of decorated platforms surrounded by infantry and horsemen. The highlight was a procession of ancestral spirits led by the emperor himself. An allegorical figure of Glory summoned the ruler, twelve ghost figures and thirty-six riders performed a horse ballet. The choreographic design itself is brought to us by a series of thirteen surviving sketches (*Parte delle figure del balletto*) of the arrangements by Johann Heinrich Schmelzer. Owing to these illustrations, we are familiar with the patterns of figures performed by groups of eight, six or four riders (the emperor was always in the middle), as well as the specific steps and jumps of the horses (Watanabe-O'Kelly, 1992, pp. 94-105).
10. Thus, fitting in with the growing criticism of operatic art at the dawn of the 18th century, of which, let us recall, ballet was an integral part. Jean-Jacques Rousseau pointed out the lack of narrative continuity in the texts of the librettos: 'Most of these ballets (operas) consist of as many separate themes as they have acts, and the themes are linked by some metaphysical relationship that the viewer would never have guessed if the author had not been willing to enlighten him in the prologue. Some of them are thoroughly allegorical, such as the carnival or the craze, and the hardest to endure' (Rousseau, 1962, pp. 151-152). Similar criticism can be found in the writings of Francesco Algarotti (*Essai sur l'opéra*, 1755), Gasparo Angiolini (*Dissertation sur les ballets pantomimes des anciens, pour servir de programme de "Sémiramis"*, 1765), Louis de Cahusac (*La danse ancienne et moderne, ou Traité historique de la danse*, 1754) (Foster, 1988, pp. 164-165).
11. The dramaturgical motivation of dance sequences is already clearly present in Molière's comedy-ballet, where ballet took the form of pantomimic dance, illustrating the stage action (e.g., *Les Fâcheux* [The Bores], *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, The Bourgeois Gentleman, The*

Imaginary Invalid).
12. This form of the developmental line of the art of dance was undoubtedly influenced by the aesthetics of the Rococo; the emerging desire for graceful sensations, often dictated by a rather sublime sense of taste, or simply the search for a new aesthetic form and artistic satisfaction. An example of spectacles very different from the pathos-driven realizations of court ballets of the Baroque era was certainly Jean-Philippe Rameau's opera-ballets. One of the most sophisticated examples of the realization of naive exoticism, in which the dancer's movement simply provided the audience with pleasant emotions encapsulated in images from distant travels, is Rameau's work *Les Indes galantes* (in its final version of 1736).
13. Considerable attention was paid to discussing these individual categories by Carlo Blasis. In the eighth chapter of his *Elementary Treatise upon the Theory and Practice of the Art of Dancing* (1820), he focused not only on the external prerequisites that dancers should have, but also on the tasks that the performance of particular roles entailed. Thus, he considered the serio style to be 'the touchstone of the dancer's art,' 'the most difficult variety of dance, requiring a great deal of work and never fully appreciated unless one counts connoisseurs and people endowed with good taste.' In the context of considering the place and role of the dancer in theatrical performances up to the 18th century, the choreographer's observations on 'the decline of artistic serio dance' at the dawn of Romanticism seem valuable. According to Blasis, 'the explanation for this phenomenon should be sought in the confusion of styles and the tainted taste of a certain part of the audience,' as well as in the fact that 'the predecessors were masters of this style, but left few successors' (Pudełek, 1984, p. 54).
14. A general reflection on, among other things, the presence of the problem of cultural gender in the art of dance is developed in the works: *Dance, Gender and Culture*, 1993; Burt, 2007 (further references here); *Corporealities: Dancing Knowledge, Culture and Power*, 1995; Aschengreen, 1974; Bassetti, 2013.
15. The concept of the *intermedium* is classified by Konrad Chmielecki, writing about the research object of intermedia aesthetics. Here, in addition to 'visual poetry, intermedia photography, film, computer animation, theatre' – he mentions ballet (as a type of stage performance that explicitly exposes the close relationship between words, music and dance) (2008, pp. 14, 35, 93).

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