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External Influences in the Transformation of Japanese Dance

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INTRODUCTION

The movements and gestures of dance are thought to be among the most beautiful things that a people can offer, and thus often represent a crystalization of people's thanks to and reverence for the gods. During the *Onmatsuri* Festival, a big harvest festival held every year on the 17th December since 1136 at the Kasuga shrine in Nara, twenty four hours of the ceremonies are dedicated to comforting the gods who are carried to a special place where many dances are done as offerings by the shrine maidens, the priests and some professional entertainers. After the gods are returned to their usual shrine, the people are regaled with dances and sports on the same stage. During those dances done for the benefit of the spectators, the performers face the audience. The same is true of the Buddhist *Bon* Festival held all over Japan in mid-summer. After the people have conducted ceremonies and offered dances to console the spirits of the deceased, they enjoy dancing for themselves. Here, the dances could be said to comfort and amuse not only the gods, but also the people. Therefore, by studying the patterns of the movements and the gestures of these dances, we can get some idea of a people's aesthetic sense, and begin to understand their ways of communication through body movement and gesture.

Culture is in a constant state of change, evolving, developing, and always being passed on in a slightly different form. So too, the factors and conditions that affect cultures are themselves governed by the same laws of constant change and flux. Physical culture, that is to say, the domain of sport, dance and so on, is no exception to this rule, being shaped and reshaped by means of a complex interplay of forces and stimuli both internal and external. It is generally noted, the Japanese, though apparently quite ready to assimilate ideas and movements from other cultures, are, at the same time, little ready to relinquish their own. On the other hand, whatever very small changes have occurred in Japan, owing to the influence of foreign cultures, might become more visible as time passes.

Historically speaking, dance in Japan was probably not as commonplace in the past as it is today. Dance usually performed by the people during set times of the year, it was not part of their daily activities. After finishing the rice planting or during the harvest festival, the people would pray and dance their thanks to the gods. Today, there are many more chances to watch and participate in dance, and people

can go to dance studios or ball-rooms, watch performances at theatres, on outdoor stages or, of course, on TV.

As in Lomax's generalization that "the movement style in dance is a crystallization of the most frequent and crucial patterns of every-day activity" [LOMAX 1968: 226], Japanese traditional dances employ many working movements and communicational gestures, some stylized, some mimetic. We can also say that the movement and the patterns of the human body have been influenced to a great extent by the environment, i.e., climate, geographical features, availability of food, etc. Prior to the 1960's, the standard physique of Japanese youth was that of a long torso and somewhat short, stocky legs. However, it has been shown that the physique of Japanese youth since the 1960's has changed quite radically, owing to changes in diet; the young have grown taller and their legs have become proportionally longer. The nature of their daily activities has changed, as Japan has changed over from an agricultural economy. As opportunities to participate in dance are no longer limited by festival cycles, we may speculate as to what kinds of relationships will emerge between the daily activities of present-day life and dance movement. Furthermore, how will the changing physique be reflected in changes in the aesthetic sense as regards the human body and its movement?

In this paper, I should like to examine the process of the diffusion of dance throughout Japan, that is, the ways in which Japanese styles of dance and the aesthetics of body movement have been influenced through contact with dances from other cultures. The paper will first review briefly the historical influences on Japanese traditional dance from the 7th century through to the 1960's. Subsequently the influence of American jazz dance on Japanese dancing, a process which is ongoing and can be observed and studied in detail as a form of living history, will be analyzed as the main focus of this paper.

Tada [1973: 168] produced data to show that the Japanese body could be considered as being divided at the hip, i.e. separated into an upper section and a lower section. This is interesting work that would seem to confirm the work of Toita [1965: 67] with *Noh* actors. Toita showed how the movements of these highly specialized dancers could be identified by a characteristic lack of movement in the upper body. *Noh* actors when sitting in *seiza* and again when walking, pull in the buttocks, thus forcing the back to remain straight. It is their belief that walking and sitting in these ways is of no small importance in the creating of a spirit of peace and tranquility within the body.

On the other hand, Lomax [1968: 243] was impressed by the way that the movements of Japanese dances, and likewise daily life, could be described as three dimensional spirals and large figure-eight movements of the limbs.

It is certainly the case that such gestures and motions are plentiful within the characteristic canon of Japanese dances. Lomax goes further and speculates that such movements may well have their origins in agricultural labour, "The rice shoots go into the mud of the paddy field with a complex, spiral binding movement of the fingers,... these supple spiralling movements are again mirrored in the savagely

woven lightning of Samurai swordplay.” It seems interesting that Toita and Tada focused their discussion of the Japanese dancing body on the motionless upper body or trunk, whereas Lomax emphasized the vigorous motion of the limbs. It is certainly true to say that those dances native to Japan can be seen to have relatively few movements of the upper torso and that the characteristic movements of the various Japanese dance styles are preserved precisely in the absence of such movements. However, there has been, of late, a dramatic change in the ways in which even the most traditional dances have been performed, the cause of which I shall attempt to elucidate here.

In 1980, when the American Dance Machine held the first jazz-dance classes in Tokyo [COMO 1981: 50], a first step was taken on the way to making jazz-dance a powerful influence upon native and traditional dance styles. The inclusion of the term “jazz dance” in the 1980 edition of *Gendai Yogo no Kiso Chishiki* (Yearbook of Contemporary Terms) a book which each year collects and explains the words appearing most frequently in major Japanese newspapers, magazines and day to day life, marks its emergence as a powerful and important trend among Japanese youth. Taking place alongside the “health and beauty” boom that swept the country at about the same period, jazz dance took firm roots among the populace in the following years, as may be seen by looking at the amount of jazz dance classes that flourished in local communities and cultural centers, springing up “like mushrooms after a spring rain”. There is no doubt that at present jazz dance offers something that is most attractive not only to the young, but also to the middle-aged, especially to housewives. Its popularity continues to increase, and it can be seen to be spreading from the major population centers out to the remotest parts of the country.

ENCOUNTERS WITH FOREIGN DANCES

Ancient Times

Here, I would like to survey those dances of other lands with which the Japanese people have come into contact, and the kinds of influence they have had through Japanese history, although the periods I have assigned are fairly arbitrary. It was during the Aristocratic period that Buddhism and its culture was enthusiastically imported from China and Korea. As early as the 6th century, a devout Buddhist was instrumental in introducing a kind of dance called *Gigaku*, a kind of mask dance that had its origins in China. But this was treated coldly and was soon abolished because of its gestures, thought to be indecent [UEKI 1981: 231].

Again in the 8th century, another Chinese importation, the dance and music known as *Togaku* came to these shores, and the Fujiwara dynasty of the Heian period adopted it for use in the ceremonies and rituals of the court. This was the *Bugaku* that can still be seen performed even today at some big shrines, temples and within the Imperial Household. However, *Bugaku* never had much influence

on the traditional and popular Japanese dances, and conversely, this very ancient form (transmitted from an early Indian original through China and then Korea) has, in its turn, been little affected or influenced by Japanese folk dances. Thus, even today, *Bugaku*, though considered as a traditional Japanese dance, generally still retains an exotic and foreign atmosphere to Japanese eyes. On the other hand, there are many Buddhist images painted and sculpted at temples all over Japan, and some of them often have a slightly curved line to the hips, but we do not find these body movement or gesture in the traditional Japanese dances. Most of these Buddhist accretions came from China, India and Korea as previously mentioned, and furthermore, many Korean people became naturalized Japanese. However, the typical movements and rhythm, spinning and triple-time, which are very popular in that country are not found in Japanese dance. The reason why there are so few



Figure 1 Kannon Buddha with Eleven heads at Kogenji temple in Shiga. The hip is slightly curved. This is done only in statues of Buddhas, not by the Japanese people themselves. (from [KURATA 1984])

spinning movements in Japanese dance could be that the ancient people believed the spirit will get out of the body in dizziness [Ishida 1978: 40].

Middle Ages

During the 14th and 15th centuries, with Japan maintaining very little contact of any kind with China and Korea, there developed within the country a series of original Japanese dances both in the field of religious ceremonies and as simple entertainment. It was during these times that such typical Japanese dance forms as *Noh*, *Kabuki* and the *Bon* dances came into existence, the cultural isolation of almost three hundred years serving to accentuate the originality of these styles. The characteristic movements and gestures in these dances show a low center of gravity, very little vertical movement, mostly hand gestures and very little movement of the torso and legs. It was not until 1853, with the sudden appearance of American battleships in Tokyo Bay, that this period of self-sufficiency ceased, contacts with the outside world were resumed, and Japan was ushered into the modern age. After that the face of Japan was transformed enormously as the country adopted the various social and industrial systems of Europe and America. The sweeping changes that now occurred encompassed almost every sphere of Japanese life, affecting politics, law etc. Particularly important were the reforms that took place



Figure 2-(a)



Figure 2-(b)

Figure 2-(a) The basic way to hold the body: the hips down and the knees bent a little. When moving, the body stays at basically the same level.

Figure 2-(b) The typical women's stance. The hips down, knees bent a little and the toes pointed in.

within the system of education, which was restructured along the lines of the various systems in use in the United States and Europe of the time.

Early Modern Period

In 1872, a public school system was established in Japan. One consequence of the revised education policy was that at kindergartens and primary schools pupils were taught songs and dances which were based upon American and European dances for children.

The various dances imported during the Rokumeikan period were actively adopted for school education by Tsuboi Gendo (1852-1922), and these social dances became very fashionable amongst the staff of universities and colleges [AKIBA 1981: 52]. Soon these dances in which the man and woman hold each other were criticized by other teachers and stopped. Nevertheless, we could say that the dance of the Rokumeikan was the first step in the introduction of European dance into Japan and brought about the later adoption of these dances by the public school curriculum [AKIBA 1981: 51].

With these dances, Japanese people met a style of dance very different from that which they had hitherto known; there were many kinds of leg and foot movements, physical contact of the partners etc. From this there gradually developed an entirely new attitude towards dancing, owing to the introduction of the leg and foot movements known as "steps" and the "hand in hand" style of dancing. After the Second World War, these American and European dancing styles became extremely popular at primary, junior and senior high schools.

The majority of such American and European folk dances, though containing a wide variety of different steps and holding positions, still do not demonstrate many movements of the upper torso, that is of the waist and hips. Thus we can understand how the assimilation of these folk dances was in no way particularly difficult for Japanese people, who soon learned, and enjoyed dancing the various steps (jumping, hopping, two-steps, waltzes, the grape-vine step, the sliding step, etc.) together with the numerous holding positions (hand-in-hand, waist and shoulder, *versovienne*, etc.).

Modern Period

In the 1960's these European folk dances were included, under the direction of the Japanese Ministry of Education, in the physical education curriculum of schools throughout Japan. The same period saw the importation of a whole series of exciting dances from America: dances such as the Mambo, the Monkey dance, the Swim and the Go-Go, which dances were thought of as both fashionable and attractive by the youth of the 60's. In contrast to previously imported dances, these latter were characterized by strong rhythmic movements of the upper torso, the twisting of hips and shoulders and the alternate contraction and relaxation of the muscles of the upper body.

As previously stated, this kind of movement, such as hip-swaying, is particular-

ly scarce in Japanese traditional dances, folk dances or those of an artistic kind. Though such dances were never taught within the framework of the educational system, they seemed sufficiently innovative and "exotic" to the young people of those times to enjoy a strong, if somewhat transitory, popularity, and were much danced at the ball-rooms and cabarets of the time.

The most recent of these waves of dances imported from abroad, would then, appear to be that of jazz dance, which, entering Japan in the later 1970's has proved to be very popular, not with the young alone but also with people of middle and even quite advanced age. It is this phenomenon that I would now like to consider in further detail.

To sum up before continuing, we can say that the first introduction to Japan of isolating movements in popular dancing could be said to have begun in the 20th century, although there might have been some special movements (hip movements etc.) that had existed prior to this as parts of special kinds of entertainment.

JAZZ DANCE IN JAPAN TODAY

Some exciting dance movies were introduced to Japan in the latter part of the 1970's and a jazz dance studio was started in Tokyo in 1980 leading to the Japanese youths' early fascination with jazz dance. We shall concentrate upon the influence of jazz dance in the Kansai district, a district that includes the major cities of Osaka and its environs, Nara, Kyoto, etc.

In the year 1984 the northern Nara district telephone directory showed no listing at all under the heading "jazz dance." In that same year, however, a big supermarket chain opened a large cultural center at which young women and housewives could learn, amongst other things, sewing (both western and traditional), Japanese flower arrangement, and many other such handicrafts. At that time, there were no dance classes at all. The following year the same Directory shows a listing for "jazz dance," and then in the year after that (1986), the words "aerobic dance," "leg-warmers," and "leotards" joined "jazz dance" in the category of new listings.

It must be admitted that though the Northern part of Nara prefecture is that part of the prefecture showing the highest density of population, it still, in no way, compares with such major population centers as Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe and Kyoto. As mentioned before, we can show that in such large cities jazz dance had become fashionable as early as 1980. The equivalent telephone directory for Osaka, for example, in 1986, shows listings for a good many jazz dance classes under a separate category, that of "jazz dance studio." Thus it can be seen that places away from the main cities were affected by the boom a number of years later than the major population centers. At the present time there are now more than ten jazz dance studios in northern Nara.

Each year, since 1983, there has been a large gymnastic festival held in Osaka,

which has shown with each successive year a steady increase in the number of participating groups. Thus, 37 groups in 1973, 40 groups 1984, 53 groups 1985, 60 groups 1986, and 63 groups in 1987. The groups taking part in the festival come not only from large community center sponsored classes but also from private groups.

Under the theme of "Expanding the Circle of Gymnastics" guest groups from Sweden, Denmark, Finland etc., have been invited to participate in this yearly event. Most of the groups are composed of young women including, of course, many housewives. In my opinion their performances are not those of "pure" gymnastics alone but contain movements that show heavy influence of jazz dance: movements like hip and shoulder isolation. This is further corroborated by the fact that the competitors themselves often refer to their routines as "dances" and not as "exercises."

In the Nara section of the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper of October 1st ed., 1987, there was a lengthy article about jazz dance students at primary schools entitled; "Jazz Dance Students Enjoy Dancing at the Sports Festival." The article stressed that the teacher who taught jazz dance was male. Again, in the *Asahi* news of October 4th 1987, it was mentioned that the students of a prefectural school for deaf people were taught jazz dance and much enjoyed it. In 1987, there were many kindergarten, primary, junior, and senior high school students who performed jazz dance or enjoyed gymnastics influenced by jazz dance. Jazz dance has been adopted on the curriculum since 1983. The monthly journal for physical education (which features articles from various newspapers nation-wide) reported many cases that support this statement [*Taiiku · Sports* 1983]. Looking back over the history of physical education in Japan, the curriculum has mostly been determined by the Ministry of Education. Ballroom dancing has not been a part of the curriculum. What is more, most of the teachers have not been influenced by the dances to be found on children's television programmes. The phenomenon of jazz dance at schools in Japan in the 1980's is a very different and definitely an interesting issue in the history of Japanese education. Nowadays the teachers can by no means ignore the demands and the interests of the children, or deny the strong influence of television on the daily lives of the children.

Another topic of interest is the change in the movements and the rhythm of the traditional *Bon* dance of Japan. A small village in southern Fukuoka prefecture is

Table 1 Final portion of a sports festival at a kindergarten

12. Games	—	"Paper, Scissors, Stone" to make a train of people
13. Exercises	—	with mothers and children
14. Folk dancing	—	"let's dance together"
15. Games	—	a race carrying a big ball
16. <i>Jazz exercise</i>	—	folktale "Momotaro"
17. Closing Speech		

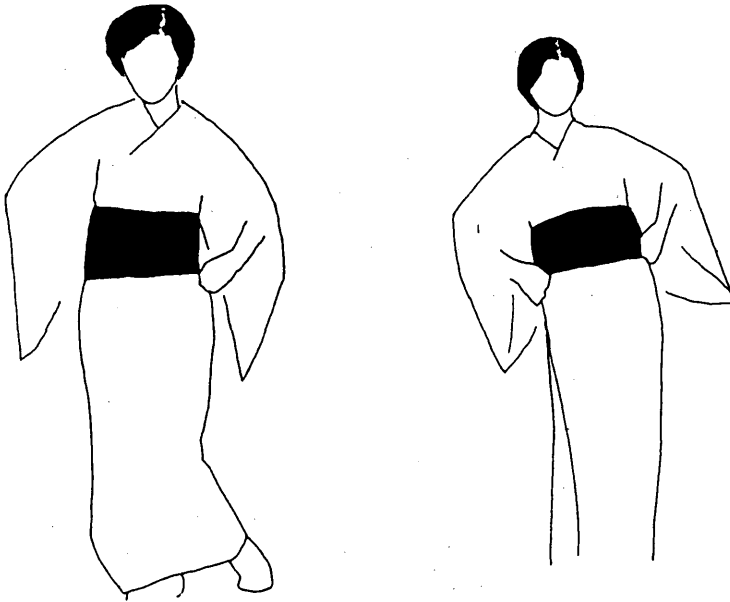


Figure 3 *Zumpa ondo*, showing how Japanese people have adopted jazz dance movements by swaying their hips from side to side.

known for its so-called *zumpa ondo*. This dance is performed in the typical Japanese song style, and most of the movements are of the traditional *Bon* dance style. However, we find some good examples of isolated hip movements in this dance. Before 1986, a small group of housewives had tried the dance but hesitated to do so at the *Bon* dance Festival because the hip movements were thought to be inappropriate to the festival's meaning. However, they decided to dance it at the festival in 1986. The organizer of that small group mentioned that they had realized from many television programmes that dances with isolated hip, torso or shoulder movements are popular these days in Japan, so that they decided to dance *zumpa* in their *Bon* dance Festival. One comment was, "The hip movements are so happy, aren't they?"

In 1985, I had the opportunity to participate in a *Bon* dance festival in a suburb of Kyoto. The children from the kindergarten and primary schools danced some newly choreographed dances from a television cartoon programme (i.e. *Doraemon ondo*) showing hopping, jumping and frequent hip movements, with joyful faces. It was at that time that I noticed that the movements in dance and the expressive movements of the Japanese people might be gradually changing.

THE MOVEMENTS OF JAPANESE PEOPLE IN JAZZ DANCE

What, then, are the distinctive features of jazz dance that have so strongly

influenced the Japanese people? Hofsess noted the following. "Jazz dance, for example, is made up of a series of minutely defined steps. Isolation (moving one body segment, such as the rib cage, while keeping the other parts either still or moving in entirely different directions), the cornerstone of Jazz, is the most extreme form of this unit reduction.... The basic rhythm pattern of Jazz dance, borrowed from the music from which it gets name, is syncopation. Musically, syncopation is defined as playing away from the accent, that is, on weak beats or parts of beats, in order that the stress should be more marked on return to it. Jazz dance uses syncopation not only in a particular dance sequence, but within individual dancers. Jazz dancers must learn to isolate each individual part of the body and be able to move several parts simultaneously in totally distinct rhythms" [HOFSESS 1986: 116]. Andreu stated further that it is the "Use of of the entire body rather than just legs and arms as a means of expressing oneself in movement" [ANDREU 1983: 7].

There are several common features of those who perform jazz dance in Japan. When trying to move the hips (pelvis) swaying from right to left, most Japanese people move both knees from right to left in the same direction as the hip. Most Japanese, including young children and elderly people, dance in this way. On the other hand, the trained person will perform the same hip movements with the right knee stretched and the left knee relaxed. That is, both knees will not be bent to the same side simultaneously as in the movements of the neophyte.

You can see in Figures 6 and 7 that the beginners in jazz dance move their buttocks and not their pelvis, whereas by contrast the trained person moves the pelvis.

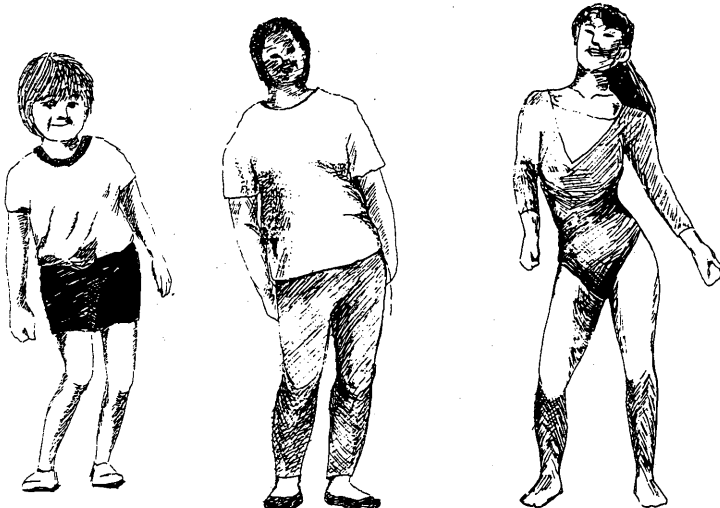


Figure 4-(a)

Figure 4-(b)

Figure 4-(a) Untrained Japanese adult and child. Knees are bent to the same side as the hips.

Figure 4-(b) Trained dancer's stance. Knees are bent in opposite directions.

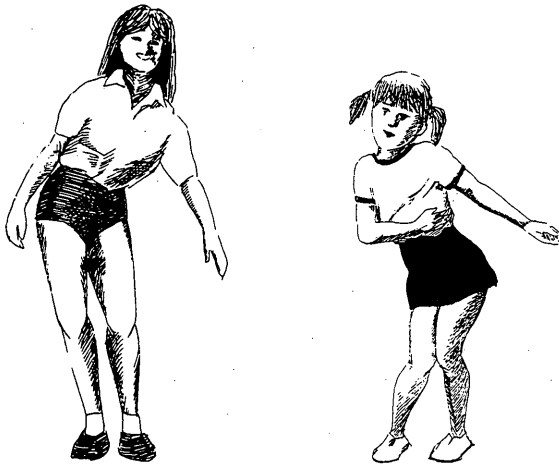


Figure 5 Untrained Japanese young people trying to sway their hips. The result is unconscious movement of the buttocks.

This shows that Japanese people very often cannot distinguish between the buttocks (*shiri*) and pelvis (*koshi*) [IKESAWA 1982: 150].

In other words, Japanese people's traditional movement does not consciously make use of the movements of the waist [KABAYAMA 1987: 175]. However, the result of our experiments upon isolated movement of the pelvis showed that the housewives' group did it most clearly. When it was done however, pelvis movements were accompanied by the arms, or by changing the center of gravity by moving from one foot to another among junior high school students. Rather than not being able to perform such a movement, the students seem to feel some interior opposition to doing it. It can be said that moving the pelvis in isolation amongst Japanese junior high school students is perceived very differently from the way it is understood by equivalent American students.

Furthermore, the shoulder movements that very often accompany the isolated hip movements are probably done unconsciously. The isolated torso movements seem to be very difficult for the Japanese beginner because hip or shoulder movements are mostly done together with torso movements. The junior high school students were better than kindergarten children and housewives, but most of them accompanied the movements with buttocks movements or sometimes up and down movement of the shoulders. Most of the kindergarten children would move the whole of the upper body including the head.

From these results of our experiments, it can be said that even for the youth of Japan today who are surrounded by modern music and rock and roll dances, it is difficult to perform isolated movements of the central part of the body.

One more difficulty for the Japanese has to do with the "minutely defined steps" which are the most typical features of jazz dance, as Hofsess [1986: 116]

shows. In some films of young and middle aged women who are trying jazz dance, these steps seem most difficult, especially the ones that call for relaxing the upper parts of the body.

Ashihara [1986: 314] states that the hands and legs might be moved in the so-called *namba* style (in which the hand and leg of the same side are moved in the same direction), especially when they move powerfully. However, the *namba* style often appears in the beginners when they move at fast tempo. Rock'n roll music can be considered a fast tempo as far as most Japanese people are concerned.

We conducted a survey and collected the results of a questionnaire given to junior high school, senior high school and university students (majoring in P.E. and non P.E.) asking, "What parts of the body do you notice in typical jazz dancing?"

- a) Junior and senior high school students:
 - First legs and feet
 - Second trunk
 - Third arms and hands
- b) University students (non P.E.):
 - First legs and feet
 - Second hip
 - Third trunk
- c) University students (P.E.):
 - First hip
 - Second trunk
 - Third legs and feet

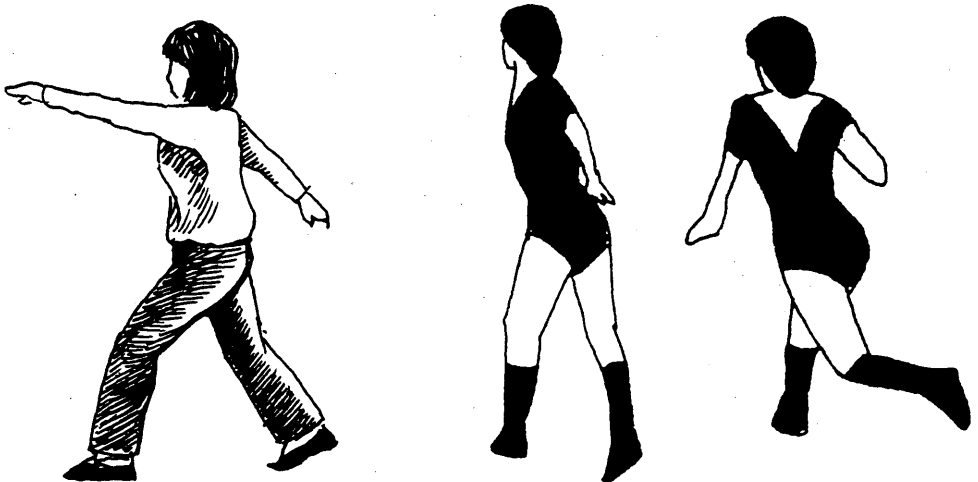


Figure 6(a) Untrained people asked to do "minute steps" swing arms and legs in the *namba* style. (left)

Figure 6(b) Trained dancer doing the "minute steps." (right)

From this survey, we can get some idea of the thinking of young people who have had no experience of jazz dance. They were impressed by the movements of the legs and feet. On the other hand, university students majoring in P.E. who have had some experience of jazz dance were more struck by the hip movements. Furthermore, it seems that the most attractive movements in jazz dance for these young people were the movements of the legs and feet. It is pretty difficult to come to any specific conclusions, but these results indicate that the Japanese youth of today have been impressed by the movements of the legs and feet more than the central parts of the body. Using these results we can speculate as to the significance of leg and foot movements for the Japanese.

Dances and sports originating in Japan show that skillful complex movements of the legs and feet are seldom required. Even in these days, Japanese people are not that good at playing ball games, or at gymnastic exercises requiring complex control of the limbs. The movements of the legs and feet are most important elements in ballet [ASHIHARA 1986: 258].

In this same survey, the subjects were asked: "Do you feel that jazz dance is attractive?" The "yes" responses were as follows:

junior and senior high school students	46%
university students, non P.E.	90%
university students, P.E.	100%

The percentage of the respondents having a good impression of jazz dance among university students was very high; that of junior and senior high school students was not as high as the university students. Some of the reasons that were mentioned as to why jazz dance was not so attractive to them are listed as follows:

- a) Jazz dance seems to be a dance done mostly by middle-aged women.
- b) I cannot imagine it except when middle-aged women are dancing.
- c) Jazz dance seems a little ugly because only fat women dance it.
- d) My mother participates in jazz dance classes.
- e) There are too many waving movements in jazz dancing.

Teen agers in Japan seem to think that jazz dance is mostly for middle-aged women, and they often feel it is ugly or unfashionable.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE JAZZ DANCE BOOM AND ITS MEANING IN JAPAN

We could say that after the Second World War, the Japanese were greatly influenced by the culture of the United States; the youth especially have focused on that country. The mass media, television, newspapers etc. imported American youth culture quickly and intensively to Japan. Naturally, the Japanese youth have accepted this readily and of course, along with American youth culture, jazz

dance was assimilated. From the latter part of the 1970's until the early 1980's jazz dance has been accepted by the youth very enthusiastically and as a result, many discoteques appeared in the big cities and accordingly the mass media extensively covered the phenomenon. Around 1983, many cultural centers and health studios, both public and private, opened jazz dance courses for young and middle-aged housewives. Many women took part in these classes and participated in the class-sponsored events.

At present, what are the impressions of jazz dance amongst the youth? Oddly enough, as was mentioned earlier, jazz dance is thought of as a dance for *obasan* or middle-aged housewives.

Let us look a little at the social position or social situation of women (housewives) in Japan. After 1955, housework was changed by the rapid modernization of household appliances. As a result, even very small villages in the remote countryside became somewhat modernized all over Japan. Housewives have had more leisure time [MINOURA 1987: 80-90]. The 1970's brought drastic changes in ideas concerning the role of women. The traditional idea that "the job of taking care of the children and house belongs to the woman" was thoroughly questioned. The relationships between husband and wife, and parents and children have been gradually changing. In the 1980's, there are some new ideas as to what a typical Japanese household should be like [MINOURA 1987: 80-90].

The "health and beauty" boom in Japan is influencing the thinking of housewives to the point that they are rethinking their own lives and lifestyles. The housewives' leisure hours are increasing more and more, and so are their demands to fulfill their desire to pursue health and intelligence.

The data from the questionnaires given to housewives that asked what motivates them to participate in activities at jazz and aerobic dance studios in the Osaka area showed the following: [HATANO 1986: 13].

- First for reasons of health
- Second to combat mental and physical stress
- Third association: to meet new friends

These demands are not for just dancing, but rather through dancing, the women hope to achieve these goals. They want to live not only for their husbands and their children, but also for themselves, in the pursuit of health and beauty. One of their main reasons for enjoying jazz dance is the "fashionable costumes," the leotards and legwarmers [HATANO 1986: 13]. We would say that these costumes, which fit the body tightly, allow for a wide latitude of movement. Housewives are encouraged in like manner to have the freedom of movement to pursue their personal goals.

Jazz dance might be said to be a dance which through body movement has changed the sense and feeling of women concerning their social position.

YANAGI [1985: 323-326] states the three concepts: sport, health and leisure are the basis of the design of casual wear and this has become an indispensable element

of the fashions of the 1980's. In fact, the fiscal year of 1980-1981 was said to be the year of "high quality sports wear". This is when fashion-wear such as leotards and legwarmers first appeared on the women's fashion scene. Even now, dance costumes that are usually worn on stage are a part of everyday life and this combination of everyday and ballet wear gives women a feeling of freedom.

By 1986, women comprised about one third of the Japanese labour force. This spurred the enactment of an Equal Opportunity Law that resulted in a further increase in the number of women working and, more importantly, in both changing women's pattern of employment from short-term jobs to longer careers, and in developing attitudes of responsibility for and identification with their work. Women have a new consciousness of their enhanced position in society and of their greater opportunities for advancement [*Gendai Yogo no Kiso Chishiki* 1987].

At present, jazz dance gives the impression of being an activity for young mothers and middle-aged women. It could probably be said that jazz dance has become a symbol of the consciousness and the changes in role of women in Japanese society, as well as a change of the aesthetic feeling towards the body and expressive movements. In other words, jazz dance has become their symbol of freedom and liberation.

Finally, the 1987 edition of *Gendai Yogo no Kiso Chishiki* does not have a *jazz dance* listing. The editors now say that jazz dance is not something new and, besides, it is already past its prime and has become something fixed in Japan. However, the up-and-coming styles of aerobic and break dancing have inherited some of the isolated movements that are characteristic of jazz dancing. At present, we really cannot draw any solid conclusions as to how much Japanese dance has been changed by the influence of the jazz dance craze of the 1980's. Nevertheless, this chapter has tried to show some of the phenomena that have resulted from its introduction into Japan. By means of the educational curriculum of most schools (kindergartens, primary, junior and high schools), the children of Japan are being taught these types of isolated dance movements.

Even if they are done poorly now, children seem to be thinking that these isolated movements are natural in some dances, because they are surrounded by such dances on television and in movies. There, they can see the refined isolated movements of jazz dance done by foreign entertainers.

Furthermore, it can be said that young wives and mothers through their own interest and practices influence their children. That is to say, not in the sense of one person initiating another, but rather of a person acting in accordance with or in reaction to the thoughts and actions of another. This is called in Japanese *kyoshin* or "resonance," and it is in this way that children, who have less idea of their own identity, imitate or learn from others [NOMURA 1987: 37]. Thus, actions such as the isolated body movements of the mothers will affect the children in such a way that those actions might become an integral part of the child's own movement patterns.

Now, while young people say that the jazz dancing of young mothers and

middle-aged women is done rather poorly, these young mothers and middle-aged women through the isolated movements of hip, shoulder, torso etc., happily feel a sense of freedom and release.

Hofsess says that real social discontent and a desire for change remain at the root of all social protest, including the latest dance fad [HOFSESS 1986: 118]. Simply stated, jazz dance has become the symbol of the "emancipation" of the modern Japanese women. We might remember, in this same context, the similar situation in America of the 50's and 60's when rock and roll challenged the conservatism of the so-called establishment [HOFSESS 1986: 118], and might understand a corresponding and related function in women's jazz dancing in the Japan of the present day.

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