DANCE AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Dance and Cultural Diversity examines the art of dance within the context of different cultures and demonstrates the connections between dance and academic disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, and philosophy.

The text shows that dance has the power to provoke intellectual thought, promote the communion of people from all social classes and walks of life, and reveal the undeniable commonalities of the human experience, while also serving as a valuable tool for expressing cultural diversity.

Dedicated chapters explore the essence of dance, dance in American Indian culture, Polynesian culture, African culture, and South American culture, and the African influence on American dance. The book also covers dances of East Asia, India, and Bali, and the healing properties of dance. The chapters explore specific types of dances, historical and political aspects of geographical areas, and the effect that dance has on the members of each community.

The third edition incorporates new, diverse research, more robust coverage of specific dances to provide an expanded look at a region’s cultural groups, and explanations as to why certain cultural dances have been selected for examination within the text. Language and references throughout the text have been updated to increase their timeliness, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity.

Dance and Cultural Diversity is exemplary for courses on dance, world traditions, and cultural diversity. It can also be used in cultural anthropology and global society courses.

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Dance and Cultural Diversity

Third Edition

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I have always been curious about humanity; I’ve often wondered what makes us different and what similarities ring true in all human beings. I am fascinated to learn what people believe and how societies are formed to support one another, ensuring survival and a sense of community. Finding that unifying factor of humanity has proven to be a passion of mine because I think it will bring harmony and balance to my understanding of the human condition. Early on in my career, my intention was to bring peace to the world through the study of dance. Although this was a highly idealistic venture, I still believed it to be my purpose in life. I was hired at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), to teach dance technique classes, and in the process of sharing my knowledge with college students, I was also busy participating in life: gathering experience and pursuing my passion to seek harmony and make sense of the world. Eventually, all my research afforded me the opportunity to teach a course in cultural diversity through the medium of dance, allowing me to contemplate this idea of a common human spirit.

Dance and Cultural Diversity examines how the belief systems and structure of leadership in different cultures manifest in the dance styles, revealing the idea that “art reflects society.” At the end of each chapter is a list of key terms to build knowledge, along with discussion questions designed to encourage critical thinking. Illustrations within the text, along with a list of video references, offer visual examples of the dance styles, exhibiting the correlation between culture and dance. In the appendix, there is a class project designed to bring awareness of the components required to build a society following the principles set forth in this text. Also included are four in-class assignments to use as tools to encourage group discussion and problem solving to complete the group project in a cohesive manner. This course is much more than a dance history or cultural diversity class—it is a course designed to evoke ideas about beliefs, emotions, and the expression of life while building a sense of community.
I believe it is important to recall history and learn from events in the past to create a better future. The knowledge and compassion for people’s conditions will lead us to progressively approach a future where we can thrive in cooperative environments. Some of the information in this text is generalized, introducing the subject to cover the scope of the material. Still, if a subject piques your interest, I encourage you to explore the ideas in-depth to develop research skills, absorption, and application of knowledge. As an educator, I challenge you to embark upon a lifetime of learning, encountering the richness of acquiring information, digesting it, and using it to nourish your life.

Dance is a means of communication that transcends language barriers to express and relay emotions. In a deeper sense, it allows the dancer, if the dancer can surrender, to achieve a state of mind through body movements that explore the depths of the soul and discover the essence of self to connect with the world. Exploring different cultures, and the purpose and methods of dance, reinforces the idea that there is an essence of unity in all human beings, despite our cultural differences and diversities. I still believe that dance can generate peace in the world, and by writing this book and teaching this course, I continue on my journey to fulfill my purpose.
I am extremely appreciative of all my colleagues at CSUF for their fellowship and the shared experience of teaching and learning. Barbara Arms, Gladys Kares, and Robin Johnson were my mentors as I was just beginning my dance career and have offered encouragement and support during each step of my journey. I must offer a big thank you to Robin Kish for sharing information and being an inspiration to me. Throughout the many years of working at CSUF, I have been constantly amazed by the numerous resources available that facilitate every aspect of my job. It is a great place to work. I would like to express my appreciation to my family and friends for the countless hours of discussion pertaining to the topics of dance, culture, and life. I also want to thank my friend Bob Adams for his encouragement and suggestions to clarify the information presented in this textbook. In addition, I would like to thank all the dancers who have been part of the dance department at CSUF for their dedication to the art of dance and Edwin Lockwood for allowing me to include his photographs of the CSUF Dance Theatre in this textbook. Finally, I would like to thank Carrie Montoya and Kaela Martin, editors at Cognella, for their continual support, encouragement, and patience with me and for bringing this project to fruition.
What Is Dance?

Before we can explore the history of dance, we must first define what dance is and why humans do it. Most simply put, dance is **movement to an internal rhythm**. The first instinct of a human being is to put their body in motion. While still in the mother’s womb, a baby listens to the rhythm of the mother’s heartbeat and has the urge to move. Before language is learned and developed, communication is revealed by means of movement and gestures. Movement is the most basic experience of life. Movement is essential to human survival. But even though dance is a form of moving, its function goes beyond the simple movements humans rely on every day. Dance is expression.

Webster’s dictionary defines dance as “moving rhythmically to music,” but it is so much more. Dance is a vehicle that has the power to unite mind, body, and soul; it is a nonverbal means of communicating in the universal language, expressing abstract ideas and emotions by emitting an energy that can be recognized and felt by the affected observer. It has the power to transcend cultural boundaries and speak to people on a deep, spiritual level. Dance is defined by Joann Wheeler...
Keali‘i inohomoku, an American anthropologist and educator, as a means of expression, which is recognized as dance by the performer and the observer.

Dance is a transient mode of expression, performed in a given form and style by the human body moving in space. Dance occurs through purposefully selected and controlled rhythmic movements; the resulting phenomenon is recognized as dance both by the performer and the observing members of a given group (Keali‘i inohomoku, 1965, p. 6).

**Popular Dance**

Anyone paying attention to popular culture can see that dance is becoming extremely visible throughout the world. Many popular movies these days exhibit dance as a means of communication, expression, and sheer delight. For example, in the movie *Guardians of the Galaxy*, the main character expresses his underlying desire for connection with his love interest,
as well as reexperiencing comforting memories of his mother, through his movement to music. In the movie *Trolls*, even the animated characters express their love of life through dance. Ellen DeGeneres opens her popular talk show by dancing through the audience. Her preshow entertainment offers the audience members a chance to improvise their unique dancing styles. Occasionally, Ellen will show a clip of her favorite audience dancers and comment on their expressive movement. She encourages everyone to move to the rhythm of life, expressing their essence in a fashion that suits them and allows them to find pleasure in being who they are by discovering the joy of improvisational dance. Can we bring peace to the world through dance? If it is used as a positive means of expression to discover one’s true feelings and delight in the experience of life, I sincerely believe that we can.

**Methods of Analyzing Dances**

To understand dance as a means of communication and expression, one must be able to observe, describe, and interpret movement. One system of analyzing movement is Laban movement analysis (LMA), which has been developed and expanded over the last century by the dance community and movement specialists. Initially a system called Labanotation was created by Rudolf Laban a German expressionist dance artist and pioneer of modern dance that was used to note a detailed description of movement and intent so that dances could be reproduced with accuracy. However, one of the key figures in the development of LMA was Irmgard Bartenieff, a dancer, choreographer, physical therapist, and lead pioneer in dance therapy. She brought her perspective to the Laban framework, emphasizing the importance of the internal body connection and giving meaning and life to the movement. This system is used to describe how the body moves through space, the shapes and designs created, the effort and energy produced, and the relationship of interactions.

LMA provides a rich overview of the scope of movement possibilities. These basic elements can be used for generating movement or for describing movement. They provide an inroad to understanding movement and for developing movement efficiency and expressiveness. Each human being combines these movement factors in his/her own unique way and organizes them to create phrases and relationships which reveal personal, artistic, or cultural style. (Hackney, 2002 p. 237)

The components of LMA are body, effort, shape, and space. Body is the way in which the body moves, where the movement is initiated, and the development of the movement throughout the body. Effort displays the dynamic qualities and the intention or attitude of
energy. Shape describes the changing forms the body makes in space. Space can be defined as personal space, the form that emerges surrounding the body, or directional space, demonstrated in pathways.

Body

The body is what produces the efficient movement patterns and connections that result in meaningful expression. There are patterns of total body connectivity that create pathways to support movement. Breath provides lung respiration for ease of movement, resulting in grounding, mobility, stability, and rhythm. The expressive possibilities exhibit a sense of fluidity, oneness, and empathy. The functional concept core-distal connects the limbs to the core, expressing the idea of having a strong and stable center with the ability to extend out into the world. The posture, alignment, and spinal articulations are referred to as head-tail, allowing a flexible playful quality to movement. The functional concept of upper lower provides a sense of push-and-pull energy with the expressive quality of hard work and interacting with the world. The body pattern referred to as body-half represents a vertical stability to support turns, resulting in a militaristic expression. And, lastly, the cross-lateral pattern, which is the most complex pattern to make 3-D movement possible, thus allowing the dancer to carve the space fully and realize the movement potential. This total body connectivity can be seen in the body part sequencing as movement spreads through the body simultaneously, successively, and sequentially.

Effort

The dynamic quality of movement is determined by the four effort categories: (1) space, (2) weight, (3) time, and (4) flow. Space can be described as direct, consisting of straight lines in space, indicating a feeling of narrowness or flexibility, and demonstrating a wavy configuration of direction exhibiting expansiveness. Weight can be either strong, appearing heavy and giving into gravity, or light appearing gentle and defying gravity. Time is determined as sudden and consisting of quick movements, which denote a short span of time, or sustained time consisting of slow movements that denote a long span of time. Flow plays an important part in movement expression. It can be bound in a state of control, resulting in the sensation of pausing or freely exhibiting continual energy with a fluid movement quality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPACE</th>
<th>direct/flexible</th>
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<tr>
<td>WEIGHT</td>
<td>strong/light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME</td>
<td>sudden/sustained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLOW</td>
<td>bound/free shape</td>
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Shape
The shape component displays different qualities of change in the form of the body, which can lead to meaningful movement. These subcategories are shape flow, directional movement, and carving. Shape flow is the shrinking or growing of personal space. Directional movement allows the dancer to move from one point to the next within the environment. Carving or shaping movement is created by sculpting the body into shapes or carving out space in the environment. The use of the torso and limbs to contract or fully extend and stretch is an example of shape-flow movement quality. Shape qualities describe the changing relationship of the body parts increasing or decreasing the body’s form. The use of the torso and limbs to contract or fully extend and stretch is an example of shape qualities.

Space
The body moves through space using kinesphere, direction, and dimension to create the movement of the dance. Kinesphere is the personal space of the moving body, the space the dancer can attend to. Direction is the energy flow that radiates out from the center, moving the body from one location to another. Dimension has two directions creating a change in space and spatial pull. These dimensional changes in space and movement can be described as horizontal, vertical, and sagittal as they relate to the human body. Changes in the horizontal dimension occur on a side-to-side plane. Whereas the vertical dimension uses upward and downward directions, and the sagittal dimension results in a forward and backward plane.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Movement</th>
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<tr>
<td>HORIZONTAL</td>
<td>spreading/enclosing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERTICAL</td>
<td>rising/sinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAGITTAL</td>
<td>advancing/retreating</td>
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Another practical system of analyzing dance is by using the elements of dance (Cohan, 1986, pp. 32–50). This approach is a more simplified way to analyze movement with concepts that are familiar to the average person and easily recognized.

There are five basic elements of dance that are inherent in every type of dance from any culture or generation. These elements are movement, posture, balance, gesture, and rhythm. Every dance contains some form of movement. While some portion of dance may involve stillness, there must be some form of motion in every dance. The second element is posture. This is the way one aligns the body. If one dancer is standing tall and erect, they have a different posture from one who is hunched over. A dancer’s posture can indicate certain emotions to their audience. For example, if a dancer is standing tall and erect, this can express a sense of confidence and pride. Meanwhile, if a dancer is crouched or hunched over, this exhibits a sense of humility or even despair. From the standpoint of the dancer, posture
is the key to a successful performance. Proper alignment helps a dancer to maintain balance and, therefore, express themselves with fluidity and grace. **Balance** is a person’s ability to maintain their position while resisting physical forces, especially gravity. To balance, the dancer must be able to not only stand still in a given posture but also to transition smoothly from one movement to another. The fourth element is **gesture**. A gesture is a movement that conveys an idea or message. In dance, gesture is often used to tell a story and to draw the attention of the audience toward specific ideas. For example, Hula dancers and Bharata Natyam dancers use hand gestures to tell traditional myths and stories.

Ballet dancers also often use pantomime to get the story across to the audience. Finally, **rhythm** is any kind of strong, regular beating. In dance, rhythm joins one movement to the next, connecting the dance in harmonious motion. Dances are either performed to the beat of music or with an internal rhythmical beat, such as a heartbeat. The rhythm can be fast or slow. It can stop and start, change at random, or be completely consistent. Nonetheless, it is always there in some form. By using these five components, the body moves through time and space to express abstract emotional ideas. Some of the more subtle and complex elements of dance are **centering** and **breath**. These highly emotional elements are what allow a dancer to be capable of exquisite expression.

**Centering** is related to the basic element of balance. To achieve a sense of balance, a dancer must engage the solar plexus and lower torso. This portion of the body is where most of the body’s crucial organs are located. Focusing on this area gives a dancer a greater sense of strength and connectedness within their body. This stability allows the dancer to display and express emotion with confidence. These deep feelings can be seen and felt by the audience. Dance is not the only practice that is aware of the power that comes from focusing on one’s center. Centering has also been used as a term in ancient philosophies and religious practices to define a pathway for realizing bliss and inner peace. Zen masters refer to it as a way to focus inward, while the Quakers used the term “centering down” to explain a state of focused attention, of attentive listening to one’s inner voice (Richards, 1989, p. xx).

Breathing and **breath** are essential to all humans. Breath is life; we must breathe to live and move. More specifically, our muscles need oxygen to respond to the command of our brains. In dance, an awareness and control over the breath allow the dancer to maintain
a sense of rhythm. Most dances are synchronized to some form of music or sound. If the music is fast, it could stimulate a rapid movement quality and, therefore, cause the dancer to breathe faster. If the music and dance are slow and elongated, the dancer will be better able to perform if they focus on taking deep and deliberately elongated breaths. The dances of some cultures employ chanting, and these dances require an even deeper focus on the breathing patterns. But regardless of the type of dance, a dancer must be aware of breath to get oxygen to the part of the body producing the energy to move. It takes concentration and practice to learn to breathe efficiently while moving, but once this element is mastered, a dancer is able to express a greater sense of grace and control.

Origins of Dance

When studying the history and development of dance, we must start at the beginning. Where and when did dance originate? The answer is simple: Dance has existed for as long as mankind has. It is believed by many to be the first means of artistic expression, preceding even ancient forms of music and painting. Early societies used dance as both social and ritualistic practices. Humans danced to celebrate every aspect of life. They danced to appease the gods, believing it would keep them from causing natural disasters and other forms of calamity. They also danced to express emotion and to understand their relationship with nature.

Many early peoples believed that when they danced with a particular energy and rhythm, they could bring about a desired effect. Rhythmic movement was seen as one way to communicate with the gods. Early man had many elements to deal with, including natural catastrophes. They attributed these events to the will of the spirit world. Often, the meditative collaboration of tribal musicians and dancers would send the performers into what was thought to be an altered consciousness. This was believed to be a sign of a divine presence. In this state of being, the participants often claimed to commune with the spirit world and receive messages and instructions for how to survive. While to the modern viewpoint, these ideas may seem illogical, ritualistic practices, such as dance, were one way that ancient peoples could explain or cope with forces beyond their control. They danced with the hope that it could influence the decisions of the gods. And when a desired result followed, such as a heavy rainfall after a rain dance, it gave people a sense that they had some effect on their situations. It made them feel intuitive and powerful.

In fact, some of the earliest rock paintings show dancers, indicating that it was a well established part of primitive existence. For example, archeologists have discovered prehistoric rock paintings from the Paleolithic era (circa 17500 BC) in Lascaux, France, which depict
dancing figures. Many other primitive drawings and paintings found in caves and burial tombs around the world attest to the fact that dance was a major part of expressing life.

Dance has survived as a means of communication and a way of preserving traditions in different communities in different cultures. The ritual of dance connects the dancer to a supreme force outside of the self. Social dance connects the dancer to the tribe and others in the community. The art of dance brings self-awareness to the dancer and their audience through storytelling and expression of emotion.

**Explanation of Alan Lomax’s Study of Dance in Human History**

*Since dance is the most repetitious, synchronic of all expressive behaviors, it has turned out to be a kind of touchstone for human adaptation.*

—Alan Lomax, 1975

**Alan Lomax** was an ethnomusicologist interested in analyzing dance from different cultures and identifying communication that occurred on a kinetic and subconscious level. He searched relentlessly for footage of dance from around the world, particularly in remote locations. In his article “Toward an Ethnographic Film Archive,” Lomax expressed his concern
about the changing world and the threat it has had on primitive cultures. He believed that the negative by-product of scientific progress and modernization could cause these cultures to lose their traditions, rituals, and art. Dance in particular was in extreme danger. Unlike a painting or sculpture, which can be preserved in its original form or reproduced in photographs, dance is an ephemeral art and can only be understood by experiencing or observing it. Written descriptions can only hint at the message the actual kinetic movement displays. Thus Lomax felt it crucial that cultural dances be documented not through static media, such as photography or written descriptions, but through film. His film, *Dance in Human History*, produced in 1976, makes use of the footage he collected to demonstrate his theory of movement defining cultural traditions.

At the American Anthropological Association meeting held in San Diego in the fall of 1970, Lomax presented his reasons for preserving original dances on film. This presentation was monumental in the field of dance history, and as a direct result, anthropologist Margaret Mead was elected the president of the Anthropological Film Research Institute. Her work led to the establishment of the Ethnographic Film Archive in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. (Lomax, 1971). Lomax, Mead, and other leading anthropologists dedicated themselves to filming and archiving films of Indigenous dances to help preserve the study of cultural traditions. The work of Lomax and Mead, along with John Wesley Powell, led to the development of the National Anthropological Film Center in 1975.

Lomax created the term *choreometrics* to describe his study of dance as a form of expressive behavior. He took advantage of the film archive and analyzed dance styles from around the world, classifying them by the type of repetitive movements found in each culture’s dances. One of his most groundbreaking discoveries was a correlation between the type of dance movement a culture participated in and that culture’s economic status and standing. He described movement types in terms of *dimensions*. The most basic dance dimension is **one-dimensional style**. It consists of linear (straight up and down) movements, which reflected the kind of work movements someone uses when working with stone or wood. He determined that 70% of simple economies employ a one-dimensional movement style. For example, people working with stone or wood must apply careful straight strokes to carve into these hard and brittle media and to skin animals for food and use the pelts for clothing. Meanwhile, the **two-dimensional style** uses curved or circular movements. Eighty percent of the economies that used metal tools, such as sickles, which require a semicircular slashing motion to cut wheat or other materials, also used that kind of motion in their dances. Examples of this two-dimensional style can be seen in many dances that originated in Africa and in some European dances, such as the Spanish Jota. Finally, **three-dimensional movement styles** use a spiral motion, which mimics water wheels used in Asia and Europe for agricultural irrigation. Eighty percent of these more sophisticated economies use the
full-body spin in their dance styles. The correlation between the motion of a culture’s daily tasks and the type of motions found in that culture’s dances suggest that these dances were meant to express or record specific aspects of their civilizations. On the other hand, if these correlations were not conscious, Lomax’s theory is supported by what we know about human muscle memory, which naturally lends itself to any repetitive bodily motion. Even when these cultures used movement as a means of release and recreation, they tended to move in the same way as they did when working.

In addition to his classification of dimensional movement, Lomax also defined single-unit and multiunit movement styles. The single-unit style uses a solid torso, mostly moving the legs, feet, and arms and sometimes bending or using a rhythmic rocking motion forward and back at the waist. Eighty-five percent of the cultures that displayed this kind of dance were from patriarchal hunting cultures. They also tended to exist in cultures from colder climates. Meanwhile, multiunit styles use an articulated torso in which there is movement in the hips and undulation in the rib cage. Ninety percent of cultures displaying multiunit styles of dance are from matriarchal and agricultural societies. These styles are found in warmer and often tropical climates. One explanation for the difference in the styles of dances found in patriarchal and matriarchal societies is that in matriarchal and agricultural societies, there is a greater value of fertility.

**Dance Ethnology**

Although Lomax was successful in cataloging ethnic dance forms, and his theory of repetitive cultural work styles represented in certain ethnic dances has some credence, dance ethnologists claim there are more complex and significant psychological bases revealed in cultural dance forms. Dance ethnology is the study of ethnic dance as it represents a society. Gertrude Kurath, a dance ethnologist, defined it as “the scientific study of ethnic dance in all their cultural significance,
The study of ethnic dance delves deeper into the patterns of movement, along with the psychological and cultural significance exhibited in the expressive movements of the dance styles. Over time, these cultural dance styles have evolved and developed naturally and spontaneously through everyday activities and experiences to represent the societies’ lifestyles. Franziska Boas, one of the pioneers of dance therapy, defined dance ethnology as “a study of culture and social forms as expressed through the medium of dance; or how dance functions within the cultural pattern” (Kurath, 1960, p. 235). Joann Keali‘linohomoku was an anthropologist who focused on ethnic and cross-cultural dance, emphasizing that Western dance is also categorized as ethnic dance. Her approach to this study included tracing popular dance art forms to their ethnic roots. It is important to study these ethnic dance forms, discovering the basic root of this nonverbal expression, along with the cross-cultural similarities and differences of rhythmic patterns, attitudes, and beliefs to gain a better understanding of the human race and the common thread that binds us humans on an emotional level.

The Purpose of Dance

Dance serves as an effective means of communication and a way of preserving traditions in different communities and cultures. The ritual of dance has the power to connect the dancer to a greater understanding of the life force. Early humans danced in honor and celebration of every aspect of life. There were dances to give thanks and honor the gods and ancestors, along with dances to cast out evil spirits. There were dances to celebrate rites of passage, such as birth, puberty, marriage, and death. There were dances to prepare for the hunt and war. Some dances were used to tell stories and pass on tribal traditions. A strong and mobile body was vital to survival in prehistoric times, and dancing helped to keep the people strong. Ritual dances and social dances were a way of life.

In our society today, we still celebrate certain aspects of life with dance. Children naturally dance to music as they express happiness. Teenagers and young adults go to school dances or clubs to dance and socialize. There are coming-of-age dances that are still celebrated. In the Hispanic community, the quinceañera, or a girl’s 15th birthday, is a celebration where dance is a component. Also at a bar mitzvah, a Jewish coming-of-age celebration for boys turning 13, a circle dance called the hora is performed, along with some social dancing. Dancing is also a part of a wedding celebration. The bride and groom do a first dance, their parents cut in to have one last dance, and then all the guests join in to celebrate.

Cultural attitudes are reflected in dance. While watching a dance from a country where you don’t know the language, you can somehow interpret the basic idea. This is because movements expressing emotions transcend language. As part of the human race, we all
seem to feel and understand the same emotions. All human beings experience joy, sorrow, honor, fear, gratitude, love, empathy, anger, and disappointment. All these and a multitude of emotions that are expressed in body movements and gestures, along with the mind’s intentions, can be recognized by the sensitive observer. Because of the awareness of different cultures and the blending of different cultures around the world, dance styles from different cultures are blending too.

Dance can express feelings and emotions, but can it also heal the spirit or the world? In the popular reality TV show Dancing with the Stars, Steve Guttenberg, one of the contestants in Season 6, made the comment that dancing with a partner requires a level of cooperation and communication that is highly sophisticated, and if the world leaders would learn the cooperation and coordination of dancing, then the world would be a better place.

It is important to study dance history to contemplate and gain understanding of the rhythms of life, to realize its universal communication possibilities, and to better understand cultural differences and similarities as a means of broadening our awareness of humanity.

**Dance as a Metaphor for Life**

Dance seems to mimic not only natural human movements and experiences but also complex natural processes. There have been many metaphors using dance as the reference. Scientists talk about the dance of particles and organisms. The idea of something in constant motion, cooperating and flowing rhythmically, triggers one to compare it with the idea of dance. As Santhanam Nagarajan stated in his article “Carl Sagan, Fritjof Capra on the Dance That Reveals the Mysteries of Universe? Part II,”

> Physicists speak of the continuous dance of sub-atomic matter which goes on all the time. They have actually used the words dance of creation and destruction or energy dance. This naturally comes to mind when you see some of the pictures of particles taken by physicists in their bubble chambers. (2009)

Writers also often describe ideas of life using the metaphor of dance. Friedrich Nietzsche, the 19th-century German philosopher and cultural critic who challenged traditional values in an effort to improve social and psychological life, used metaphors of dance to describe life and a person’s connection to the earth. He referred to “primal unity” as surrendering will in the Dionysian ecstasy dance of the reveler:

> In song and dance man expresses himself as a member of a higher community: he has forgotten how to walk and speak and is on the way toward flying
into the air, dancing ... he feels himself a god, he himself now walks about enchanted, in ecstasy, like the gods he saw walking in his dreams ... He is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art: in these paroxysms of intoxication the artistic power of all nature reveals itself. (Nietzsche, 2000, p. 38)

Defining dance is like defining life to some people. As we explore different cultures and their dance styles, we will embark on a journey of the human spirit and how people express life through movement. Witness the dance as it reflects belief systems and societal structures in different cultures. Discover the human psyche, life, and how to live it as revealed in the dance.

**Key Terms List—Chapter 1**

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<th>Gesture</th>
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<td>Rhythm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Centering</td>
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Breath
Alan Lomax
Choreometrics
One-Dimensional Dance Style

Two-Dimensional Dance Style
Three-Dimensional Dance Style
Single-Unit Movement Style
Multi-Unit Movement Style

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