A Historiography of Dance Film: Focusing on the Dynamics between Art, Academe, and Film in the Early 20th Century American Dance Field

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I. Introduction

This study attempts to situate dance film within the discursive formation of dance as art and academe in the early 20th Century American dance field. Regarding dance film as a cultural phenomenon interacting with the shifting notion of dance, I suggest a more contextualized and multi-layered historical narrative that will situate dance film within the larger movement of the American dance field that was working to establish dance as an artistic and intellectual field. Particularly, the formation of historical and cultural episteme of dance scholarship will be discussed in relation to the growth of the dance film field.

This historiography focuses on the period between 1926 and 1940. The

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starting point in 1926-7 vividly suggests the four integral movements of the American dance field gained momentum: 1) dance as art, 2) dance as an academic discipline, 3) dance journalism as a discursive arena for the dance field, and 4) the representation of dance in the sound-image medium convention. The year 1926 is a symbolic watershed in the discourse of the American dance field: Martha Graham held a dance concert in New York City that is generally regarded as the first modern dance concert, while Margaret H'Doubler established the first dance department at the University of Wisconsin.

In addition, professional dance criticism and journalism emerged at that time when three major dailies on the east coast–*the New York World*, *the New York Herald Tribune*, and *the New York Times*–all hired full-time dance critics who produced intellectual discourses on dance by "propagandizing"[1] the newly emerging art-dance form in New York City. If these serious dance critics taught their readers to appreciate "art dance" on the east coast, *the American Dancer*, a dance periodical that later became the *Dance Magazine*, began its publication in the heart of "movieland" in California to promote the interests and concerns of "chorus girls" in Hollywood. Considering Benedict Anderson's emphasis on the role of print journalism in creating national identities,[2] the role of dance journalism in forming the identity of the dance field at the time should not be underestimated. The dance field started to form its own arena of discussion via those periodicals, in which dance film phenomena began to be illuminated and reconsidered in regards to various

1) Explaining the unique style of prescriptive dance writing of those early dance critics, Lynn Connor quoted John Martin's call for "education and propaganda" of modern dance. Lynn Conner(1997), *Spreading the Gospel of the Modern Dance: Newspaper Dance Criticism in the United States, 1850-1934* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press), pp.1-2.

2) Benedict Anderson(2006), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition (London and New York: Verso).

concerns and interests of people in the field. Lastly, the invention of the "talkie" movie in the late 1920s and the consequent boom of "musical" films during the following decades that exerted a sizable impact on American social life. Talkie films in Hollywood were a disseminator of dance to American audiences, yet they also invoked the conceptual distinction between dance as a form of popular entertainment and dance as an artistic and intellectual practice. In a situation in which most dancers remained passive consumers of those popular films, supporters of "serious dance" conceptualized dance film for the sake of the dance field, separately from its phenomena in the popular entertainment realm. These four initial forces during the early twentieth century rendered the history of dance film rich and complex.

Situating dance film within the context of the collective project to make dance an artistic and academic subject, this study will discuss the formation of the thesis of dance as an artistic and academic subject, and the popular phenomena of dance film as its antithesis. My hypothesis is that the field of dance film influenced, and was influenced by, the shifting historical and cultural concept of dance. By interchangeably addressing the realms of concert dance, dance in higher education, popular dance, film industry, dance journalism, and dance scholarship, this historiography will reveal how the discourse of dance film intersected with the formation of the American dance field, and how dance film is not just a by-product or supplementary tool of dance in theaters and schools but also a catalyst for and aftereffect of conceptualizing and institutionalizing dance as an artistic as well as academic field.

The purpose of retelling the dance film history is revisionist in that it questions the traditional way dance film history has been told and presents a more contextualized historiography. In a sense, revisionist approach to dance film history is an oxymoron in that dance film does not have historiography as orthodox as those of theatrical dance or dance education do.[3] Instead, the way

dance film has been discussed is in either media-centered or pioneer-centered mode so that "video dance" and further reflections on digital media and hybrid dance form has been one of the most popular topics of inquiry. Kent de Spain's interrogation of media technology[4] or Noël Carroll's reflections on the terminology of "moving-picture dance"[5] are representative and suggestive accomplishments on this trend. Ironically, just because there is no comprehensive body of work on it, the history of dance film is generally conceptualized as the accumulation of "firsts" and "landmarks" for which "who made what when" has functioned as the primary framework. One of its most representative examples is that *Envisioning Dance on Film and Video*,[6] an edited book that comprehensively reflects on dance media, put Virginia Brooks' "Timeline: A Century of Dance and Media" as the fundamental framework for the rest of the chapters, which chronologically juxtaposes the history of film media and that of dance film between the 1880s and 2001. Interweaving what she calls "advances in film/video technology" with "landmark dance films/videos," Brooks portrays dance film history as the narrative of the "firsts" and the "landmarks."

Notwithstanding the efficiency and convenience of the chronological chart, the stories that this narrative tells are limited, not only because the "first" is merely the result of multiple and complex phenomena but also because it is inevitably distanced from the substantial discourse that it generated. For

3) For example, Sherril Dodds's 12-page-long description of "histories of dance on screen" in her book, which is focused on the U.K., is one of few attempts at historical overviews of the phenomena. Sherril Dodds(2001), *Dance on Screen: Genres and Media from Hollywood to Experimental Art* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), pp.4-15.

4) Kent de Spain(2000), Dance and Technology: A Pas de Deux for Post-Humans, *Dance Research Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp.2-17.

5) Noël Carroll(2001), Toward a Definition of Moving-Picture Dance, *Dance Research Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 1, pp.46-61.

6) Judy Mitoma, (ed.) (2002), *Envisioning Dance on Film and Video* (New York: Routledge).

example, although the musical film *The Jazz Singer* (1927) is listed as the "first talkie," sound film was not invented in one day or developed in a linear, gradual fashion–and, in fact, the film was not even the first talking film.[7] This shows that, although technological timelines or canonic narratives of dance film might allude to a tidy, discrete flow of self-evolution, they tend to neglect diverse desires, positions, contentions, and collective efforts of the people in their cultural context. Moreover, the timeline of the firsts and lankmarks represents modernist historical epistemology as it designates "what is worth remembering" in the history of dance film. Within this conceptual framework, individual filmmakers, choreographers, and their film works were endowed a position only when they are either the "first" or a "landmark" in the canon of dance film.

Suggesting another historiography, the study presupposes the distinction between the terms of history, historiography and historicity. Generally, historiography is the text written by the historian and history is the object of the text. Also, historicity is the particular interrelation of the mode of historiography and the types of construction of history related by it.[8] This recognition enables us to distinguish the "real" pastness from its recount in and for the present, as well as to treat historical claims on dance as social and cultural constructs.

Given that, the revisionist approach to history enables me to address the following theoretical issues regarding postmodern historicity. First, postmodern historicity perceives the historical narrative not as unitary but multiple and multilayered, depending on the individual's perspective and point

7) Richard Barrios(1995), *A Song in the Dark: the Birth of the Musical Film* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.13.
8) Philip Rosen(2001), *Change Mummified: Cinema, Historicity, Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), p.xi.

of entry. From this epistemological stance, the narrative comprised of the "first" and the "landmark" becomes problematic, since it is easy to overlook the fact that they create temporal and social lapses among different social levels and communities before they have a substantial impact on the field. When it comes to dance film, the disparities between technology, discourse, and phenomena should be acknowledged, because film's technological barriers inevitably created multiple realms of discourses both in theory and practice. Thus, the limited and uneven access to film apparatus until the first half of the twentieth century resulted in discrepant attitudes and understandings among Hollywood choreographers, those in the theater dance field, a handful of dancers who possessed film cameras and the rest of the dancers who remained passive consumers until the 1970s.[9] In this sense, I am conscious of and try to address disparate technological, conceptual, and phenomenal flows of dance film that have intersected and reverberated in the North American dance field.

Second, this historical retelling does not presume the progress of dance film as a predestined consequence of history. Technological developments and discursive consensus helped formulate a unified and controlled discourse of dance film, yet it is dangerous to assume that this unification indicates progress. Rather, it is intriguing to see how disparate voices and imaginations were screened and regulated into this unifying process. Focusing on the theme of historical preservation and cultural recognition, a revisionist history will shed light on how the particular discourse of dance film was consciously and

9) While 16mm film camera was introduced as early as in 1923, its high cost of film prevented many dancers from becoming real users in full potentials. The first VCR was released by SONY in 1971, and the first compact and portable videocassette recorder was introduced also by SONY in 1967. These digital media enabled average dancers easily shoot playback their dance works.

collectively pursued in relation to the larger goals of the dance field.

Third, considering that the usual postmodern strategy is to challenge the canonical historiography by excavating histories that were marginalized by the canon, it seems ironic to investigate the postmodern historicity of dance film within the North American context. The reason I focus on the North American dance field is not to strengthen the dominance of the North American dance field in dance scholarship, but to particularize and relativize its discourse. It is common to frame the history of dance film in medium-centered narratives, treating film as if it were a neutral and technological condition. However, while film is a technological apparatus, its meaning and function were endowed and determined by the larger episteme of its time and context. This is especially telling in the context of Korean dance field, which accepted the Western conceptualization of dance as art, the American system of dance in higher education, as well as film media technology. Compared to the immense impact of these imported concepts and structures on Korean dance scene, it is more often than not neglected that these discourses were cultural constructs in its own context. In this sense, my strategy is to emphasize the particular and contingent socio-cultural context of the North American dance field, rendering the "History", with a capital "H", into "histories."

Methodologically, this study is primarily a historical research, particularly using a layering strategy. In order to highlight the interplay between disparate discourses including dance as art, dance as entertainment, ballet, modern dance, Hollywood musical film, dance as academe, I strategically build a historiography layer-by-layer, adding dynamics and tensions among them. Focusing on this early history of dance film, this study aims to show how the conceptual and phenomenal formation of dance film has interplayed with the broader orientation of the dance field itself. For this goal, I primarily analyze periodicals at the time such as *the American Dancer, Dance Observer,*

Impulse, Dance Perspectives and *the New York Times*. Briefly discussed above, those periodicals not only vividly illustrate the atmosphere but also effectively reveal the multifaceted voices much of which were inevitably wiped out in the canonic historiography. Periodicals are not books, and articles in them do not have an overarching agenda or hegemony. Because of this, periodicals seems extremely precious for the revisionist approach of this historiography. I accessed these periodicals in library bindings and microfilms in libraries at Temple University, University of Pennsylvania, New York University, and the New York Public Library.

Extensively covering the topics of dance education, theatrical dance, dance film, and dance journalism, the research is influenced by findings of other scholars including Thomas K. Hagood, Janice Ross, Lynn Conner, and Mark Franko. Thomas K. Hagood's dissertation-turned-book chronologically analyzes the academic history of dance as "an account of the struggle for cultural, academic, and artistic clarification and meaning for dance.[10]" If Hagood provides a general entry to the history of dance in American higher education, Janice Ross specifically focuses on the impact of Margaret H'Doubler on higher education on dance.[11] While comprehensive and balanced, these two books primarily deal with higher education, while leaving behind more vernacular and popular forms of dance. Meanwhile, Lynn Conner sheds light on the formation and impact of newspaper dance criticism in the United States, and yet its time frame of 1850-1934 only briefly intersects with this research.[12] While these studies share with this research in terms of the

10) Thomas K. Hagood(2000), *A History of Dance in American Higher Education: Dance and the American University* (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press), p.5.
11) Janice Ross(2000), *Moving Lessons: Margaret H'Doubler and the Beginning of Dance in American Education* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press).
12) Lynn Conner(1997), *Spreading the Gospel of the Modern Dance: Newspaper Dance Criticism in the United States, 1850-1934* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press).

interests in the formation of the American dance field, their seemingly lack of interest in dance film phenomena, particularly of popular musical films, also inspired this research to fill the gap of these rather canonical narratives. While the presence of chorus girls was largely excluded from the orthodox dance history, Mark Franko's book is exceptional in that, analyzing the interrelation of dance, labor, and culture during the 1930s, it views that "the bodies of ballet dancers, modern dancers, and chorus girls were protagonists of class struggles."[13] Particularly the chapter 5, "The Ballet-versus-Modern wars as Ideology," effectively shows how chorine served to this ideological work, yet his discussion of chorine is primarily focused on those at commercial theater dance, notably such as the Rockettes. Given the absence of interests in the musical film and the chorus girls in these studies, this study sheds light on them by beginning the discussion from the chorus girls in movieland.

In the following chapters, the research will build the discussions, from musical films to dance as art to dance as academe to dance film discourse. Chapter II sheds light on chorus girls and dance directors in Hollywood musical films, and discusses how they set the American public's preconception of dance. Chapter III adds to the previous chapter by adding the emerging concept of dance as art. Particularly it revisits the seeming rivalry between ballet and modern dance and their more fundamental antagonism against popular dance symbolized with chorus girls. Chapter IV shifts to the idea of dance as academe in American higher education, and addresses how dance journalism fostered the formation of the discourse of dance as art and academe. Finally, chapter V returns to the dance film discourse, but from the point of the American dance field this time. By showing how much the new

13) Mark Franko(2002), *The Work of Dance: Labor, Movement, and Identity in the 1930s* (Connecticut, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press), p.7.

conceptualization of dance film within the dance field dance was ruptured from Hollywood dance directors' initial conceptualization of dance film, it aims to add historicity to the discourse of dance film.

II. Setting the Tone: Chorus Girls in Movieland

Soon after the invention of film at the turn of the 20th century, "cinema" became the most popular type of filmic representation. While early audiences were enthralled with the moving images of the arrival of trains (Lumière) and the movements of Annabelle the dancer (Edison), these soon lost their novelty and had to be supplemented with storytelling. Thus, as Noël Carroll says, narrative fiction film became a staple of filmmaking and its industry became a major cultural force.[14] Before TV in the 1950s, cinema was the only mass media of moving-image through which dance was delivered to the general public.

Compared to the relatively open format of TV programming that allows various formats of shows, movies, and documentaries, cinema maintained a closed format. Its framework is set with its own narrative, characters, and story development. Cinema's closed format inevitably influenced the way dance was represented in cinema. Famous contemporary dancers such as Anna Pavlova and Ruth St. Denis appeared in popular movies such as *The Dumb Girl of Portici* (1916) and *Intolerance* (1916), respectively, yet their insignificant role in the cinema's framework seldom matched their real world fame and achievement. Besides rare documentary recordings of dance, such as

14) Noël Carroll(2003), *Engaging the Moving Image* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press), p.11.

Pavolva's *Dying Swan shot* by Douglas Fairbanks at the set of *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), the entry for dancers to film representation was mostly through narrative cinema, especially musical comedy films.

Musical comedy film was a new entertainment film genre that emerged with the invention of "talkies" in the late 1920s. This new sound-image technology was expected to promote classical music appreciation,[15] yet it unexpectedly promoted the popularity of the musical film. As a visual and aural spectacle of song and dance, musical film rapidly became a major force in the American popular entertainment industry. While dance footage had been used as a prologue or inserted between short programs in silent films, dance became a crucial part of musical films as Hollywood aimed for "100% talking, 100% singing, 100% dancing film."[16] The only possible plot that made this unrealistic goal possible was a variation of backstage stories, in which Broadway chorus girls as well as ballerinas were readily exploited as the background for a conventional love story. Both loved and derided as popular entertainment, musical films functioned as the most popular vehicle for the conceptualization of dance of the American masses.

Due to the popularity of musical films and yet the limited accessibility to Hollywood's production system, the dance numbers in musical films formed a small niche for dance professionals. In the 1930s several professional dance directors were responsible for most musical productions in Hollywood, including Ernest Belcher, David Bennet (Paramount), Larry Ceballos and Jack Haskell (Warners and First National), Norma Gould (Norma Gould Production, Ltd.), Sammy Lee and ballerina Albertina Rasch (MGM),

15) As the first Vitaphone program with classical orchestra footage in 1926 indicates, sound-film was expected to be "the most potent factor in the national appreciation of good music" whereas only silent film was regarded as a proper medium for drama art. See Richard Barrios(1995), p.22.

16) Arthur Knight(1947), Dancing in Films, *Dance Index*, 6(8), p.183.

Seymour Felix (Fox), Pearl Eaton (RKO) and Earle Wallace. Belcher owned his own studio and taught many famous actresses, while Wallace had his own dance studio and professional cinema dance team called The Earle Wallace Movieland Ballet.[17] These "Movieland" choreographers were responsible for the dance numbers in the complex productions of the cinema industry.

The popularity of dancing in musical film urged many dancers to find their paths in cinema land. Some prominent dancers, including Lina Basquette who was declared "America's Prima Ballerina" by Ziegfeld, actually became successful actresses. However, its bigger impact was that dance became the prerequisite for a film career, especially for actresses. Actresses received their dance training under dance directors such as Wallace and Belcher. More than twenty-five actresses studied dance with Belcher and became stars, including the two protégés of filmmaker D. W. Griffith, Lillian Gish and Carol Dempster.[18] The fact that actresses learned dance for musical films is an intriguing yet "unexpected" consequence of the "talkie," since the issue of enunciation – that one had to learn to speak the proper English of "the cultured Englishman"[19] – had been the biggest concern in the early stage of talkies. As it turned out, it was not dancers who learned how to act, but actors who learned how to dance. Dancing was a prerequisite for any girl "who wishes to enter picture work or who aspires to the stage,"[20] and who wanted to cultivate "bodily grace."[21]

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17) Betty Carue(1929), The Motion Picture's Influence on the Dance, *the American Dancer, Jan,* p.26, 29.
18) Ruth Eleanor Howard(1927), An Interview with "The Ballet Master to Movieland," *the American Dancer*, June, p.10-11.
19) Ruth Eleanor Howard(1928), Sound Pictures Will Change Industry, Says Paul Gerson, *the American Dancer*, September, p.14, 29.
20) George Landy(1927), Dancer's Path Leads to Cinema Land, *the American Dancer*, Nov,. p.11.
21) Ruth Eleanor Howard(1929), Yesterday--The Play's the Thing, Today--The Revue's the Thing, Hollywood talkies are dancing now, *the American Dancer*, July, p.26-7.

The talkie's biggest contribution to the dance field was not so much that dancers could actually talk and act as that there was an ever-greater demand for dancers as a whole. In other words, it was a matter of quantity instead of quality. As seen in the long title of an article called "Yesterday--- 'The Play's the Thing, Today--- 'The Revue's the Thing, Hollywood talkies are dancing now,"[22] *the American Dancer* positively and excitingly reported on the growing demand for dancers in musical films in the late 1920s. The magazine declared, "That Hollywood would be the dance capital of the world was pre-ordained, but that its rise to that enviable position would come almost overnight was entirely unexpected."[23] The reason seems obvious; "Practically every picture of any consequence that is made today, has its chorus."[24] Big production companies held chorus girls under contract, between about sixteen (William Fox Studio, 1929) and a hundred (M.G.M., with an additional fifty boys, 1929), while a single film production hired hundreds of dancers for a scene. A ballet scene in *Beyond the Purple Pool* included a hundred female dancers,[25] while the production of *Show of Shows* hired three hundred and fifty chorines under contract with additional supplementary members.[26] In 1929 *the American Dancer* started "Cinema Chatter" bulletin of audition and production news, and promoted it as the "only authentic column devoted exclusively to dancing and dancers of the films."[27] Indeed, published at the heart of movieland, *the American Dancer's* early issues were devoted to the interests and concerns of chorus and dancers, and the bulletin's existence

22) Ibid.
23) Ruth Eleanor Howard(1929), Dancing has brought new angle to talkie, *the American Dancer*, Nov, p.14.
24) Ruth Eleanor Howard(1929), July, p.26.
25) Ruth Eleanor Howard(1927), p.10-11.
26) Anita Spier(1929), Cinema Chatter, *the American Dancer*, Sep-Aug, p.26-7.
27) Anita Spier(1929), Cinema Chatter, *the American Dancer*, Oct, p.26.

throughout the late 1920s and the early 1930s proves the massive presence of the musical films in the dance field.

Dance as a staple of musical films produced an archetype of a "chorus girl"–dancers with youth, beauty, and dance ability. As the number of chorines grew, their dancing abilities became more versatile, while their physical and personal conditions became almost identical. Thus, while they were expected to do the four most popular styles of dance–kick, tap, toe, and ballet work–equally well, what was rather fanatically emphasized was their identicalness. The rule of identicalness applied not only to movement execution, costume, and alignment, but to the dancers' bodies, images, and even their personal and social identity as well. Paramount Studio's standard for their chorus girls included "shoe, size 21/2 to 4; height, 5'2" to 5'4"; weight, 105 pounds to 115 pounds; age, 16 to 20 years."[28] Also, Paramount Studio's dance directors listed, in order of importance, dancing ability, looks, personality, figure, carriage, expression, and youth as qualifications for their chorus girls. Examining one hundred and fifty dancers they identified as the "typical" chorus girl Maxine Cantway who is "nineteen years old, weighs 108 pounds, has bobbed light brown hair and blue eyes. She is five feet three inches tall, she was born in the middle west, and lives with her family who are Americans. She does not own an automobile and has not taken an assumed name for the screen."[29] In this context, chorus girls were expected to be clones of one archetype dancer. Because chorus girls dominated both mass-media musical films and revues in permanent theaters by the same big film production companies, these dancers' typicality as being young, hospitable dancing women quickly became the norm for "a dancer," at least in the

28) Ibid.
29) Bernard F. Williams(1929), "Typical" Motion Picture Chorus Girl is Found, *the American Dancer*, Dec. p.11.

grammar of popular media and to most Americans.

What needs more speculation in this heightened popularity of musical film is the conceptualization of film dance in relation to stage dance practice. Intriguingly, it was dance directors in Hollywood who initiated the distinction between film dance and stage dance. Professionalizing their own practices, those dance directors advocated their new specialty by discussing how to best represent three-dimensional dance on the two-dimensional screen. Not surprisingly, since the directors as well as the chorus girls worked for both stage and cinema productions within the "big-studio-and-theatre-chain systems,"[30] the two realms often merged and overlapped. Moreover, since hundreds of identical chorus girls appeared in a dance number, the choreographic principle was not much more than aligning the dancers. Still, it seems fair to say that the theoretical discourse of dance film was slowly forming as these dance directors discussed in dance periodicals their views about what film dance was and how to best shoot dance.

Besides the detailed technical suggestions on how to film dance, the most conspicuous aspect of the dance directors' advocacy was the claim that dance in motion picture raised the standard of theater dancing as a whole. Film distributed dance, and more importantly, it distributed "good" dances. Whether silent, talkie, or color, film was "a means of spreading the gospel of the dance…. It will bring beauty, talent, and genius to even the smallest of towns."[31] They argued that musical film's dissemination of dance throughout the country not only acquainted audiences with dance, but also rectified "abuses…committed in its name of dance."[32] The quality of dance performances fluctuated, especially in small towns, whereas cinema as a

30) Richard Barrios(1995), p.9.
31) To Produce Screen Dancing in Color, *the American Dancer*, April 1930, p.33.
32) Comment of Earl Wallace. Quoted in Betty Carue(1929), *the American Dancer*, Jan. p.26.

"democratic" technology always provided dances of high quality. Dance director Earle Wallace saw that continuous exposures to musical films would educate mass audiences to differentiate between excellent dance and mediocre dance. This would, in turn, compel stage dancers to inevitably raise the quality of their dancing to meet the audiences' heightened expectations. Praising this mass educational function, Wallace argues that, "The country as a whole is greatly benefited and should be duly cognizant of the greater artistic appreciation which the motion picture productions have given them."[33] Wallace presupposes that film dance should "*of necessity* be far more perfect in technique and execution than the same number presented on a stage before the most critical of audiences [Italic added]." It is obvious that his reasoning is grounded not so much in film media's innate traits but in its cultural and phenomenal situation. In other words, it is not that film dance is by its nature superior to stage dance, but that superiority should be pursued out of necessity – a normative, rather than descriptive statement.

Why did they think film dance should be better than stage dance? First of all, it is because of the socio-economical condition – making film is expensive. For instance, dance director Earnest Belcher listed speed and certainty as a qualification for a dance director to avoid wasting of film or time, and resilience and improvisation to master any unforeseen situations. Bragging about the outstanding efficiency of directing a dance for the film *Twinkletoes*, he reportedly made two thousand feet of film on dance within three hours, of which two-thirds was usable. He was also asked to choreograph a quadrille and train dancers on the spot at nine forty-five in the morning and managed to finish it before noon.[34] These anecdotes imply that film is an expensive, labor-

33) Ibid., p.29.
34) Ruth Eleanor Howard(1927), pp.10-11.

intensive, large-scale industry with which dance directors should promptly and fully collaborate instead of endorsing their own working rhythm. Moreover, with the big paychecks given to directors, technicians, and sound-stage actors, it was considered wise for studios to "pay so handsomely money for well-trained dancers" to save both time and money. As the pool of chorus girls grew, it became possible to fill the chorus lines with ALL good dancers, instead of having two or three good ones in the front line.

Secondly, dance directors thought that film dance should be better than stage dance, because of the characteristics of the medium–film shows more detail than stage dance. Wallace explained that, "The glamour of gorgeous costumes, inspiring music and sparkling personalities carries the audience to a certain point of enthusiasm. But on the silver screen the slightest movement of each body in a ballet is critically noticed–for sans color, life and the perfect rhythm of an orchestration the watcher's gaze is focused on the actual execution of the dance."[35] Of the difference between film dance and stage dance, Wallace interpreted that film forced viewers focus on the actual execution of dance while stage dance enhanced the audiences' enthusiasm with elements other than dance (orchestra, costume, etc.). While often understood as a synonym for boredom to many contemporary viewers, the lack of risk in film dance meant "progress" to early dance directors because it eliminated poor dance and guaranteed a higher quality of dance.

The popularity of musical comedy films and chorus girls gained a momentum in 1936 when the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences added an award for the best dance director to its annual list.[36] A few years

35) Betty Carue(1929), p.26.

36) Do Athi Bock Pierre(1936), Hollywood Recognizes the Dance: Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Added Award to Dance Director to its Annual List, *the American Dancer*, April, p.11, 29; Idem(1936), Dave Gould – Hollywood's Ace: Something about the First Film Dance Director to Win an AMPAS Award, *the American Dancer*, May, p.12.

after the inception of the award, however, the Academy eliminated the award in that there were few competitive nominees. Considering that this excuse was held even through the mid-1950s when successful musicals such as the *King and I* enjoyed unprecedented popularity in the public domain, it becomes clear that dance in musical film remained marginalized in the film industry. More important, ambivalently loved and derided, musical films functioned as a background against which more serious conceptions of dance emerged. This is visible in the change of *the American Dancer's* editorial direction. While initially represented the concerns of chorus girls, Hollywood matters, and reviews, issues of legitimizing dance as an artistic and intellectual field dominated the magazine in the 1940s.

One of the biggest causes for the ontological degradation of musical films is the emergence of the idea of artist and artwork. Despite their self-imposed role as the distributors of excellent dance, the status of the dance directors remained ambiguous, somewhere between technicians and artists. Called "dance directors" rather than "choreographers," their roles were to fully and promptly respond to the Hollywood studio system; they were given little artistic freedom or auteurist voice. The qualifications of speed, efficiency, and resilience--once cherished as requirements for dance directors--became obstacles to their artistic freedom and expression, shaping them instead as technicians. It was especially true with the advent of auteur-choreographers with distinctive styles, such as Busby Berkeley, Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly. It is well known that Berkeley's geometrical patterning of chorus dance using the perpendicular camera angle was recognized as differentiating film dance from stage dance in its extreme sense, while Astaire and Kelly promoted dance from an excuse to dance to the film's *raison d'être*, featuring dancer-actors who responded to their situation by dancing. Against the new trend of musical *in situ*, dance numbers in traditional musical comedy to which dance

directors contributed seemed outdated and unnatural filler within the plot. The fact that Astaire and Kelly were frequently and continuously featured and discussed with significance in dance magazines despite the diminished interest in musical film as a whole, reveals that their auteur-artist status was much more respected than that of other dance directors.

Moreover, the influx of stage choreographers to Hollywood problematized the artistic possibility of musical film. Asides from hiring dance directors, Hollywood studios also began to collaborate with established choreographers including George Balanchine, Bronislava Nijinska, Agnes deMille and Eugene Loring. Their roles were not much different from those of dance directors, as they were asked to make simple background dances, which were then ruthlessly chopped and edited to fit the plot. For theater dance audiences who were already familiar with the artistic accomplishments of these choreographers on stage, it was an obvious sign that Hollywood had no place for creative choreographers. Criticizing Hollywood's customary prodigality for wasting dance artistry, Arthur Knight criticized cinema choreography for being "a foolish and discouraging business for the artists whose careful work is arbitrarily shredded by the editorial shears," and further claimed that "certainly no one with anything serious to offer in any field of the dance can long afford to be tied up with this frustrating sort of creation."[37] The abrupt degradation of dance director's status, from being respected as pioneers in the late 1920s to being derided as insignificant fillers in the 1940s, reveals the growing importance of artistic dance and the notion of dance as the repository of an individual artists' creativity.

37) Arthur Knight(1947), p.190.

III. Ballerinas vs. Modern Dancers against Chorus Girls

Receiving the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' first dance director award in 1936, dance director Dave Gould foresaw that ballet would gain great popularity on the screen in the next few years. However, when asked about the possibility of seeing modern dance in pictures, Gould answered that modern dance could be seen as boring or funny, as "it was still too unknown to the huge rural public to whom pictures played."[38] His comment hints at the complicated dynamics between dance as entertainment and dance as art as well as between ballet and modern dance in the mid-1930s. This chapter will show that, although ballet and modern dance became notable rivals in the concert dance genre in the 1930s, both of them had developed into the dual practice of modernism in the American dance field through the negation of the image of chorus girls in musical film.

Ballet easily found its way into the early stages of the cinema industry. The interview of dance director Ernest Belcher in 1927 included a picture of a ballet scene that he choreographed, where 100 corps de ballet dancers wearing romantic tutus posed under the proscenium arch in front of the silhouette of trees.[39] As seen in that the first permanent American ballet company was the Radio City Music Hall Company established in 1932 as an adjunct to the Rockettes,[40] ballet was equally popular in film productions, revues, and vaudeville stages. Similarly, ballet was a frequent part of musical films including *Glorifying the American Girl* (1929) and *Goldwyn Follies* (1938, choreographed by George Balanchine, danced by the American Ballet). In

38) Do Athi Bock Pierre(1936), p.12.
39) Ruth Eleanor Howard(1927), p.10.
40) Mark Franko(2002), *The Work of Dance: Labor, Movement, and Identity in the 1930s* (Connecticut, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press), p.111.

Hollywood, the ballet phenomena on stage and on cinema were inseparable. In 1935, the Hollywood Bowl production of [A] *Midsummer Night's Dream*, with a cast of 200 ballet dancers, ended with great financial success, making $135,000 in eight performances, and was reformatted into a musical film version with the choreography of Bronislava Nijinska. Also, as the Monte Carlo Ballet Russe's visit attracted numerous Hollywood audiences who were already acquainted with the Nijinsky legend, ballet had become as popular as musical films in the mid-1930s.[41)]

The boom of ballet in cinema reached a new phase as its double connotation became obvious. While ballet was regarded as "dancing material," a popular dance form compatible with kick, tap, and toe dance in musical films, Hollywood film industry found equally valuable the idea of ballet as "a dancer (ballerina)." If ballet as "dancing" was a popular dance form, ballet as "a ballerina" reminded audiences of the classic form with its European origins and aristocratic nuances which were widely appropriated in Hollywood melodramas. In other words, a ballerina as a cinema character had much richer cultural connotations than a chorus dancer had. As Adrienne McLean finds in *Dying Swans and Madmen*,[42)] since the early silent films in the mid-1910s the romantic drama frequently featured a ballerina as its protagonist. It means that ballet was not only dance material, but also a significant component of the narrative. Whether she actually performed ballet steps in the film seldom mattered, and sometimes the role of a ballerina was entirely acted--not danced--by an actress. It became an "offstage icon" symbolizing death, despair, and romanticism, such as Greta Garbo in *Grand Hotel* (1932), and

41) Murray Pennock(1935), Hollywood Sur Les Pointes: Picture Companies and Fanchon and Marco Combine in Movie Capital Dance Comeback, *the American Dancer*, May, p.14.

42) Adrienne L. McLean(2008), *Dying Swans and Madmen: Ballet, the Body, and Narrative Cinema* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press).

Vivian Leigh in *Waterloo Bridge* (1940). The popularity of these ballerinas in cinema indicated that ballet's frequent exposure and clichéd role in Hollywood musicals and melodramas not only taught American audiences what ballet was, but also shaped its romantic yet mortal connotation. Through the mass distribution, film formed a stereotype of ballet much stronger than that of any stage performance by traveling ballet troupes.

Meanwhile, as Gould predicted, modern dance, unlike ballet, had little compatibility with musical film. Except for the early presence of Ruth St. Denis in narrative films and Loïe Fuller's self-experiment with film, modern dancers never really became a part of the Hollywood industry. This was primarily because modern dance's precept of expressing the individual artist's emotion opposed the aesthetic of identical chorus girls. Modern dance had established its own realm of concert dance, a new performing format that was separate from both vaudeville stages and musical comedy films. The growth of modern dance was rapid. If Martha Graham's solo performance in 1926 signaled the beginning of American modern dance in the form of concert dance, modern dancers such as Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, Mary Wigman and Helen Tamiris already began to be revered for their contributions and became cornerstones of the modern dance genre by the mid-1930s. Also, as Bennington College's decision to provide a six-week residency for these modern dancers in 1934 quickly turned the loosely organized modern dance movement into a bona fide art form to be taught in higher education dance programs, modern dance was firmly established as "the" American dance form by the 1940s.

Despite its rapid expansion, modern dance was primarily limited to the east coast, and rarely accepted by rural America. Considering its individualistic and expressive movement quality, it is understandable that dance directors in Hollywood believed that modern dance would not fit the custom of "precision

units" of chorus lines as easily as corps de ballet. However, it was not just the immanent elements of modern dance, such as solo format and expressive movement style, that prevented it from becoming a part of the Hollywood film industry, but it had more to do with the conceptual schism between art dance and entertainment dance. In other words, New York-based modern dancers had no urge or interest in flocking to the west coast to join a chorus line, since modern dancers prided themselves as different from the often-derided chorus girls. Consequently they had little presence in the American public's notions of dance that was mediated and circulated in those popular films.

Rejecting collaboration with the mass media, modern dancers instead promoted their dance practice as a new entity–an intellectual and artistic endeavor. Modern dance was seen as a culmination of the shared advocacy and recognition among dancers for more intellectual and logical dance making. In 1929 when the "talkies" mesmerized many dancers, choreographer G. Leidigh Macfarlan published an article called "The Dance as a Serious Art."[43] What Macfarlan meant by the art of dance was dance composition, and he argued that, "It must be arranged with intelligent understanding and if possible performed with the same." The following year, another choreographer, Jai Marchon, wrote an article called "In defense of Dancing as a Fine Art."[44] Subtitling it as "an article for dancers which should be read," Marchon directly confronted the issue of dance composition, and argued against meaningless "jumbles of steps." Marchon presupposes that dance should begin with an idea that the artist wants to express, and it should be done intelligently.

While intellectual dance composition was highly regarded in most dance

43) G. Leidigh Macfarlan(1929), The Dance as a Serious Art, *the American Dancer*, Jan., p.10.
44) Jai Marchon(1930), In defense of Dancing as a Fine Art: An Article for dancers Which Should be Read, *the American Dancer*, Jan., pp.17, 30.

genres, modern dancers avowedly pursued it as their primary artistic goal. As experimentation with form, style, structure, and movement vocabulary became critical in modern dance, choreography became more valued than dancers' charm. Moreover, the choreographers' artistic endeavors became sophisticated by the reciprocal synergy between them and advocatory dance critics who recognized and stimulated their endeavors. Although there were several critics who played this role, John Martin was pivotal. As the first full-time dance critic on the staff of the *New York Times*, Martin wrote prescriptive and pedagogic reviews to educate and propagandize American audiences about American modern dance. As Connor aptly explains, Martin "turned each essay [in the newspaper] into a lecture on the dance. About sixty percent of these lectures were devoted to an understanding of the form and function of the emerging modern dance."[45] Martin consistently and obsessively discussed modern dancers' works in terms of form and content, echoing the urgings of aforementioned articles.

Martin was opposed to what he thought of as spectacular dance, which included not only musical comedies and musical films, but also many ballet productions. His critique was grounded in both epistemological and ontological reasons. He saw little artistic potential and meaning in musical film and ballet, arguing that both of them were "spectacular" by their very nature. "After all, high kicks can get no higher than straight up... the importation from Harlem are dulled by repetition and the difference between them lie chiefly in their fantastic titles; precision units have become about as precise as possible and their repertoire is extremely narrowed by their very nature."[46] Treating dance as "text" to be analyzed, he saw no intellectual

45) Lynne Connor(1997), p.107.
46) John Martin(1929), The Dance: A Crisis for Musical Comedy, *the New York Times*, May 26.

meaning to interpret beyond the superficial joy in spectacular dance. Also, Martin thought that, governed by the dictates of the box office, spectacular dance was bound to go in for glamour and entertainment. For him, serving the public's taste potentially meant disregarding one's artistic responsibility. Contradicting the belief that dance should always be entertaining, he instead argued for the need to educate audiences. The artist, he believed, should not conform to public taste (and thus profit from it), but teach the public what was good taste (thus urging them to change their taste).

Not surprisingly, the role of dance directors in Hollywood was devalued in Martin's modern dance-centered perspective. He commented that,

> The musical comedy dance director bears much the same relation to the modern concert dancer as the humorist bears to the poet. His subject matter must always be to a large extent topical and therefore ephemeral. Even the topics are not of his own selection, but must conform to the lyrics of the songs and to the general plot of the piece. Thus almost his only outlet for free creation is the form in which he expresses the somewhat second-hand ideas. Even here he is governed largely by the rhythm and phrasing of the music.[47)]

What Martin valued was intellectual renditions of form and content in modern dance and the independent status of modern dancers, both of which he believed were absent in musical film. This explains the inevitable marginalization of the role of dance directors and their works in musical films; their priorities of efficiency and resilience were no longer valued as highly as artistic independence and expressiveness.

While John Martin educated American masses about modern dance as "art dance," Lincoln Kirstein popularized the concept of "American" ballet. In the "ballet vs. modern dance war" that continued throughout the 1930s, Kirstein was an eager advocate of ballet, attacking Martin's "anti-ballet bias."[48)] As a

47) Ibid.
48) Lincoln Kirstein(1937), *Blast at Ballet* (New York: Marston Press), p.107.

wealthy and knowledgeable balletomane, Kirstein envisioned establishing an American ballet free from foreign influences, particularly that of Russia. In a time when news and trivial exposés on Russian ballet had seized the American public's interest, he emphasized that ballet principles could be combined with other ethnic or national characteristics while saying that, "*Russianballet* is not a single word."[49] Instead, he tried to adapt classic ballet principle to American themes and popular entertainment, especially that of revues and vaudeville. Arguing for "popularizing" dance for the American audiences, however, Kirstein did not acknowledge the fact that ballet was already practiced in revue theaters. Thus, even when he proposed "lower" ballet for the public's taste, he presupposed that ballet was, in principle, a classical art form whose high art position must be adjusted for the American public. Mark Franko argues that ballet-versus-modern wars, especially between John Martin and Lincoln Kirstein, were an ideology camouflaging a dual critical practice of modernism at the expense of popular dance practices. According to him, "Ballet maintained its 'high' status by appearing to be 'low' (popular), and radical modern dance was perceived as 'high' by deprecating the commodifications of popular culture in favor of the working-class audience"[50] in which the chorine remained the shadowy supplement of art dance. Agreeing with Franko, I also believe that Martin and Kirstein were elitist in the way they promoted dance in terms of mainstream art dance at the expense of popular dance practices. It is no surprise that they ignored musical films in their discussions of dance.

However, what is intriguing, and where I go further from Franko's discussion, is that Martin's and Kirstein's elitist attitudes toward concert dance

49) Lincoln Kirstein(1937), p.11.
50) Mark Franko(2002), p.123.

have a parallel resonance in musical film, since dance directors in Hollywood also promoted their specialty dance numbers using the same logic. Referring back to the discussion in the previous chapter, the dance directors argued that film dance should be better than stage dance to make high quality dance available to American audiences. Like Martin and Kirstein, they perceived themselves as educating the American masses about "good" dance; The only difference is that the dance numbers in musical film became despised as a lower form by those who defended art dance. John Martin argues that, "The fine art of the dance had similarly declined until it was nothing more than a second-rate decorative art in which the dancers, now almost altogether women, made no attempt to say anything in their performances, but concentrated on exploiting themselves as charming personalities."[51] The paradigm of "good" dance shifted. The rationale of democratizing "good" dance would reappear with the invention of TV in the 1940s. Yet, the difference lay in that TV easily broadcasted already-proven concert dance repertoires, while dance in musical film was, no matter how much they adopted ballet and other theater dance, still grounded in the popular dance tradition. This explains why, despite the popularity of musical films throughout the 1930s to 1950s, musical films were soon absent from the discourse of dance as art.

IV. Promotion of Dance as an Academic Discipline

While dancers and dance critics attempted to intellectualize dance by making dance a serious and high art practice, another mode of

51) John Martin(1965), *Introduction to the Dance* (New York: Dance Horizon Publication, 2nd Edition), p.21.

intellectualization occurred in universities as dance was also promoted as an academic discipline. As universities became departmentalized and new subjects and inquiries were accepted in the educational agenda of the twentieth century, dance, along with other fine arts, found an excellent opportunity to find its place in academia. The first university dance degree program was in the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Physical Education Women's Division in 1926. This was considered a watershed in dance education since dance was, for the first time, accepted as a legitimate, independent discipline in the university. Yet, the idea of learning dance at a university was not easily adopted; it was rather a long and complicated process of negotiating and dealing with disparate ideas and attitudes towards dance in and out of the dance field.

This chapter will examine how dance secured its unique position as an artistic and academic discipline in higher education. While the history of dance in American higher education has been comprehensively discussed in the previous researches including Thomas Hagood's, Janice Ross's, and Richard Kraus and Sarah Chapman's,[52] this study differs from them by furthering the analysis to how dance periodicals functioned in convincing the dancers themselves with the idea that dance should be taught in colleges. Amy Koritz argued that, "It is, after all, an open secret in the academy that the disciplinary division of knowledge we currently operate within is a product of historical circumstance rather than the nature of the human mind of behavior."[53] The hard-won independent status of dance in academe is a cultural construct consciously articulated and advocated by those in the dance field. I argue that

52) Richard Kraus, Sarah Chapman(1981, 1969), *History of the Dance in Art and Education,* Second edition (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.).

53) Amy Koritz(1996), Re/Moving Boundaries: From Dance History to Cultural Studies, in *Moving Words: Re-Writing Dance*, edited by Gay Morris (London and New York: Rutledge), p.98.

dance in higher education was formed through the confrontation of the two issues: one is to abolish prejudices against dance, while the other is to articulate its identity in higher education. In other words, dance educators confronted the questions of "Is dance worth teaching in public school?" and "What is the goal of dance education in public school?" Not only did dance educators have to verify the educational value of dance to those who were either indifferent or suspicious of the presence of dance in public school, but they also had to strike a balance between the educational and professional goals of the field. In doing so, dance in higher education eventually became independent from physical education and gained its identity as an artistic and academic subject.

First, the question of "Is dance worth teaching in public school?" mattered because of the anti-dance atmosphere at the time. As Elizabeth Aldrich shows with various treaties against social dancing written by religious leaders in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, anti-dance prejudice had a long and persistent history in North America and deprived dance of its social and moral values.[54] Moreover, the stereotypes of popular dance in the 1920s were "nothing to really think about," which was further deteriorated due to cinema representations such as in Griffith's *Intolerance and Babylon*. Given the prevailing anti-dance atmosphere, the most viable option for the inclusion of dance in higher education was via physical education, which turned out to be beneficial for both dance and physical education. While dance found its place in academe via physical education, physical education found dance beneficial for its needs at the time. In fact, physical education itself had recently been

54) Elizabeth Aldrich(2008), Plunge Not into the Mire of Worldly Folly: Nineteenth-Century and Early Twentieth-Century Religious Objections to Social Dance in the United States, *Dance, Human Rights, and Social Justice: Dignity in Motion*. Edited by Naomi Jackson and Toni Shapiro-Phim (Lanham, Maryland, Toronto · Plymouth, UK: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.), pp.20-33.

included as a new and controversial department in the traditional scheme of higher education at the beginning of the twentieth century, John Dewey's idea that progressive education was learning through experience to prepare for life helped to promote the intellectual relevance of physical activity.

Despite the affinity and synergy between them, dance within physical education contained potential problems: the dance genres embraced in physical education were by no means representative of the dance phenomena at the time, and more importantly the desire to pursue aesthetic quality in dance conflicted with the pragmatic approaches of physical education.

First, dance within physical education was conceptualized as a purely physical activity totally separate from the existing conventions and systems of social dance. According to the pragmatic interest of physical education, dance functioned as a useful exercise, especially for female students. Consequently, educational dance consciously neglected its cultural connection with the concurrent dance practices in the field, particularly with dance studios. As the major form of teaching dance throughout North America until the 1920s, dance studios were usually small in size, but there were some large-scale and institution-level studios. Dance director Earle Wallace's ballet studio held hundreds of pupils, while Ernest Belcher's dance school held month-long teacher's training courses annually. Also, the Denishawn School, now remembered for giving birth to a handful of the pioneers of modern dance, was the biggest entrepreneurial dance studio at the time, even publishing its own quarterly called *The Denishawn Magazine*. These studios were the major outlet for most dancers who filled vaudeville stages and musical comedy films. No matter how institutional and successful these dance studios were as the suppliers of dancers, dance educators in higher education self-consciously ignored them and remained separate from their contribution to theatrical practices in the field. This seems to indicate that, just as popular dance

functioned as the antithesis of the formation of dance as art, it also functioned as the antithesis for the development of dance in American higher education.

Second, folk and "national" dances dominated physical education for their pragmatic, physical and communal value, yet dance activities in physical education never completely conformed to the tenets of physical education. Indeed, a handful of dance educators, such as Gertrude Colby, began to envision dance education not merely as a recreational activity but as an expressive, meaningful, and artistic practice. Colby's program titled "Natural Dancing," organized at Columbia University Teacher's College in 1918, approached dance conceptually by introducing aesthetic notions of dance into the curriculum.[55] Although her program now seems no more than motion-based storytelling, its motto of "dancing from ideas, not steps"[56] clearly indicates the intellectualizing tendency of educational dance. Her achievement also lies in the fact that dance, for the first time, was conceived as something worthy of an independent place within physical education in higher education.

As Colby's "Natural Dancing" program indicates, the characteristics of educational dance shifted from "national" to "natural," which resonated with the tradition of Delsarte, Dalcroze, Duncan-style, and even German gymnastics-inspired exercises. Delsarte and Dalcroze-influenced agendas of body-mind integration and expression fit well with the tenets of both progressive education in general and physical education. As a part of physical education in public school, these dance forms changed the notions of female physicality, recreation, sanity, health reform, and higher education for women. However, given that these dance forms' idealized, rhythmic and communal

55) Organizing the first educational program for art dance in American higher education in 1913 in New York City at the Speyer School, a division of Teachers College of Columbia University, Colby established a dance education program at Teachers College named " Natural Dancing" in 1918.

56) Thomas K. Hagood(2000), p.77.

qualities were suggested as an alternative to the popular, theatrical, commercial and even vulgar images of vaudeville stages and musical comedy films, the boom of natural dance in physical education still remained separate from the dance phenomenon rather than challenging the anti-dance ideology.

As female physical educators desired to broaden physical education for women as part of the boom of "New Women", the first dance major program was created by Margaret H'Doubler and her supervisor Blache Trilling in the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1926. Sally Banes vividly characterized H'Doubler's significance as a two-fold paradox: H'Doubler feminized physical education while masculinizing dance.[57] This means that H'Doubler legitimized dance in the academic realm as a female alternative to male-dominated sports, but she also characterized the seminal form and content of dance in higher education by "scientifying" it. Aiming to rid of mysticism, H'Doubler consisted a dance major program with courseworks of kinesiology, technique, dance history, composition, rhythmic analysis, teaching methods, and dance philosophy. While these later became a departmental framework for teaching a body of knowledge in dance,[58] she did not embrace the entire spectrum of dance phenomena. H'Doubler firmly believed in the educational value of liberal and democratic dance, while dismissing theatrical, technical, and professional dance. She was never really a fan of dance as an art form, considering Martha Graham "a little too professional,"[59] not to mention of other vernacular and social dance forms. Since H'Doubler's scientific, egalitarian and liberal model of dance education was firmly based on the distinction between theatrical and educational dance, her establishment of a

57) Sally Banes(2000), Forward, p.ix; Janice Ross, p.5. Both in *Moving Lessons: Margaret H'Doubler and the Beginning of Dance in American Education* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press).
58) Thomas K. Hagood(2000), p.9.
59) Janice Ross(2000), p.6.

dance major seems to be the result of maximizing the preexisting notion of educational dance rather than breaking away from it. In other words, H'Doubler's dance major program achieved integrity as an academic discipline, yet it did so while excluding the rest of the dance phenomena in the field.

Regardless of H'Doubler's reservation, the rapid growth of dance as art increased the desire for more artistic and professional aspects within university curriculum. The pursuit of aesthetic quality inevitably ignited conflicts with the utilitarian nature of physical education, providing a powerful rationale for separating dance from physical education. This aestheticization was accelerated by what was called the "Bennington Experience,"[60] the summer residence program at the Bennington College that introduced professional dance artistry into the university curriculum. Initiated by Martha Hill and run from 1934 to 1942, artists–mostly modern dancers such as Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and Hanya Holm–taught technique and choreography, while John Martin taught pedagogy and criticism and Louis Horst taught music and composition. These modern dancers and modern dance advocates' predominance in the Bennington program contributed to equating university dance with modern dance.

While H'Doubler's concept of dance education was remote from real-world dance practices, the Bennington program's secular and pragmatic approach enabled dance in higher education to confront the tide and trend of art dance. Introducing concert dance practices into educational dance, the Bennington program inevitably caused frictions with more traditional dance educators. The differing ideas between members in the dance field about dance in higher

60) Thomas K. Hagood evaluates Bennington Experience as a seminally important event for dance in higher education from which a subsequent turn toward professional standards in dance curricula emerged.

education provoked incessant questions regarding what dance in higher education should be.

Consequently, artistic value and academic value of dance competed with each other in the context of higher education. On one hand, with the success of the Bennington programs and the contingent boom of modern dance courses on campuses, many college dance faculty spent their summers at Bennington, returning to their academic programs to incorporate their experiences into their teaching. Since they sometimes hastily digested modern dance and then taught it to students, many dance educators and commentators voiced their concerns about the sacrifice of pedagogical value to professionalism. John Martin warned against the practice of educational dance instructors turning for guidance to professional artists and even teaching young students exercises directly taken from the artists. He went on to say that, "the relation between the professional dancer and the educator should be reversed, and it should be the professional dancer who comes to the educator for teaching principles instead of the other way round."[61] As Martin's comment reveals, the rapid influx of professionalism made dance in higher education dependent on and receptive to the professional dance field.

On the other hand, as the choreographers' techniques and compositions became the major sources of material for university dance programs, modern dancers, especially the "Big Four" of Graham, Humphrey, Weidman, and Holm were inevitably canonized. John Martin's lecture-demonstration series on modern dance at the New School for Social Research in New York City in 1931-32 laid the foundation for modern dance artists to gain artistic authority for their philosophies and techniques. At the same time the Bennington program institutionalized their canonical positions making them a bona fide art

61) John Martin(1965), p.302.

form to be taught in colleges. As participants in the Bennington summer residencies returned to their school to teach what they just learned at the program, and as modern dance artists were invited to teach on college campuses via the gymnasium circuit, the works of the Big Four became the "literature" of dance. Due to constant interaction with the professional dance field, dance in higher education was uniquely conceptualized as both artistic and academic. This shows that, while dance educators gained their pedagogical materials from professional dancers, professional dance became knowledge by being included in the academy.

Another sign that reveals the constructed nature of dance in higher education was the time-lapse for the idea of learning dance in college to be embraced by the dance field. In other words, college education for dancers needed to be advocated not only to the public and university officials, but also to the members of dance field. Dance journalism helped bridge this conceptual gap by introducing and publicizing the need for dance in higher education. In 1938, *the American Dancer* conducted a special project of nation-wide survey on the state of college dance courses in 341 colleges, including 141 colleges that responded.[62] Also, in 1940 Walter Terry conducted a survey and reported it in his article "Collegiate Dance" published for the *New York Herald Tribune*.[63]

Interestingly, these surveys intended to act as advocates for educational dance, which is visible in prejudices and biases of both surveys. First of all, these reports were instigative, urging dance teachers to unite to take action to promote dance in colleges. *The American Dancer* quoted the negative

62) Patricia Shirley Allen(1938), The Dance in Our Colleges: A Nation-wide Survey of Universities, *the American Dancer*, July, p.21.
63) Walter Terry(1940), Collegiate Dance, *New York Herald Tribune*, June 9. Quoted from Thomas K. Hagood(2000), pp.149-154.

responses at length at the beginning of the article: "…Shades of Diogenes, what next! Now credit for dancing! Who ever heard of such sheer nonsense? It is time youth became serious in life preparation and did not think of college as a place simply for social life."[64] Putting at the forefront harsh and conservative responses from some of the academics that were either indifferent or suspicious of dance was a rhetorical strategy to provoke dance educators to unite and act as a community. Their advocacy tone was overt, to the extent that Terry's survey, as Thomas Hagood argues, was "a thinly disguised attempt to prove what he suspects is wrong, yet true, about how dance education is viewed by many academics."[65] Indeed, the fundamental purpose of the two nation-wide surveys was not simply to discover just what opportunities are offered, but to convince dancers of the importance of the recognition of dance as art and its presence in college. Both surveys called for organized activity among dance teachers to promote progress in dance education, have dance become independent from physical education, and standardize dance education itself.

Along with these surveys, dance magazines showed continuous interest and support for dance in higher education. In 1940 *the American Dancer* launched a new department called "Trend in Education"–just as it launched the "Cinema Chatter" column to observe the new musical film industry in the 1930s–to provide an overview of the new movement taking place throughout the country.[66] *The Dance Observer*, a magazine published from 1934 to 1964 focusing on modern dance, included regular features on college dance, including a section called "College Correspondence" which introduced events

64) Author unknown. Quoted in Patricia Shirley Allen(1938), The Dance in Our Colleges: A Nation-wide Survey of Universities, *the American Dancer*, July, p.21.
65) Thomas Hagood(2000), p.151.
66) Mildred Glassberg Weiner(1940), Trends in Education, *the American Dancer*, April, pp.14-15.

and news about dance programs. These articles presented the relatively new idea of going to college to become a professional dancer as a viable option. *The American Dancer* published an interview in 1944 with a young, professional dancer who attended college, introducing how she successfully managed both college and career (e.g., she eliminated extra-curricular activities on the campus in order to concentrate on dancing, and read three times as fast as before to save time), and why she believed that formal education was necessary for dancers (e.g., "Dance is the most important, but there are other important things, too."). While this article praised the benefit of the intellectual growth gained from a college education, it also showed that college degrees were already an option for many young dancers. But it was not clear whether dance department programs or college education in general satisfied these needs, when the article repeatedly emphasized that "there are other things in the world besides dancing."[67)]

Although these interviews and articles on dance in higher education did not make the idea of going to college to become a professional dancer fully and readily accepted, it was undeniable that college had become a viable option for studying dance, especially for American modern dance. It is clear that making dance an artistic endeavor and making it a serious academic subject were epistemologically interrelated because both pursued the intellectualization of dance practice. Since dance composition and choreography were emphasized in both the artistic and educational fields as foundations of dance making and appreciation, both professional and educational dances were interested in shifting the status of dance from a mere entertainment to an intellectually meaningful activity.

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67) Earl Leaf(1944), College Degree vs. Dance Career, *the American Dancer*, Dec., p.23.

V. The Germination of Dance Film Discourse within the Dance Field

While the concepts of dance as art and academe slowly began to align with higher education, this process of intellectualization and legitimization presupposed its stance against dance phenomenon as a mere spectacle or entertainment. Given that musical film had been the primary distributor of this popular image of dance, it is not surprising that the phenomenon of dance film rarely attracted the attention of dance artists or educators. However, their suspicious attitudes towards the dance phenomenon in musical film should be distinguished from their attitudes towards the film medium itself, because more and more dancers recognized the potential film had to benefit dance as an artistic and academic field. While the chapter II approached dance film from the standpoint of Hollywood dance directors and chorus girls, this chapter will reexamine the discourse on dance film from the viewpoint of choreographers, dance theorists and educators in the newly forming field of dance as art and academe. This multi-layered reading will shed light on how the same phenomenon of dance film was differently interpreted and conceptualized according to the subjects' premises and attitudes toward dance.

At first glance, there was no prominent relationship between the development of the dance field and dance film field until the mid-1940s, primarily due to the technological barrier. Until the distribution of videocassette recorder/players in the 1970s and digital camcorders in the 1990s, access to filmic apparatus was limited by political, financial, and technological conditions. However, this seemingly isolated development of the two realms obscures two important points: 1) both art dance and dance in higher education emerged against popular dance practices, whose stereotypes were widely distributed via the Hollywood film industry; 2) despite limited

access to filmic apparatus, there emerged an enthusiastic interest in film corresponding to the intellectualizing movement within the dance field. Dance film began to be envisioned from the perspective of dancers.

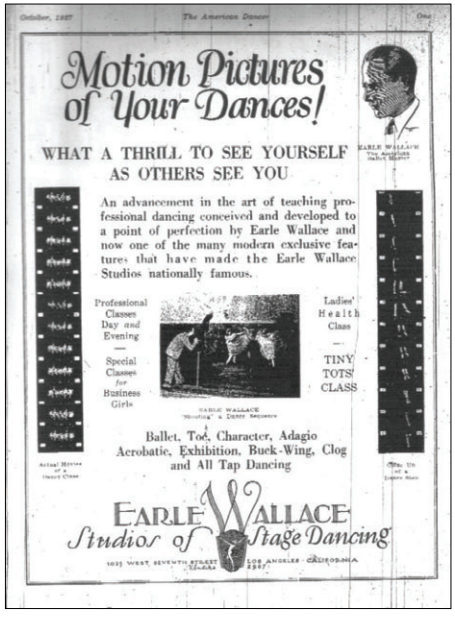
Film was an expensive media for individual dancers to experiment with, especially for solo dancers or choreographers who were outside the Hollywood system. It was estimated that twelve minutes of dancing could be filmed for less than fifty dollars on silent 16mm film in 1934, yet it was still a financial burden compared to the meager earning of individual dancers.[68] In addition to the cost, limited access to cameras also prevented dancers from experimenting with film. One exceptional case was dance director Earl Wallace's studio that offered private shoots for dancers. In 1927 at the dawn of musical comedy films, Wallace advertised the availability of movie cameras for teaching professional dancing [Pic. 1].[69] Under the catch praise of "Motion Pictures of Your Dances! – What a thrill to see yourself as others see you," the advertisement displayed a picture of Wallace shooting a dance sequence, and two resulting filmstrips of a group dance class and a close up of a dance step. Wallace's goal in providing this service was to give a "new" perspective on dance–to see yourself dancing as others see you. This desire for a new perspective preceded the urge to "preserve" one's dance. Since the average dancers and dance teachers would be benefited from this type of filming, Wallace's advertisement should have attracted a lot of attention among dancers. However, from the fact that the advertisement never appeared again,

68) Lewis Jacobs(1934), Toward Dance Films, *Dance Observer* 1(5), June-July, p.1, 53, 57.

69) Regarding the copyright of the picture, since both the subject of the advertisement and the magazine that held the advertisement do not exist anymore, it is impossible to track the copyright holder. Also, in that the advertisement is used only for the academic purpose of an individual researcher, this resides within the realm of "fair use." For further information on the doctrine of "fair use," see the website of U.S. Copyright Office. <http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html, 2011. 4. 1>.

it can be assumed that few dancers made use of this opportunity. Nevertheless, the important thing is that this advertisement was designed for and marketed to professional dancers beyond Hollywood's control.

Those who had the greatest access to this new technology were the dance directors in Hollywood. Yet, no matter how much they filmed dance, these directors had limited influence on the formation of dance film discourse because of their diminished professional status. Their Hollywood status was marginalized to the extent that many film studios would ask one chorus girl to spontaneously make up some steps even in the height of musical films in the mid-1930s. The choreographer had little or no status in the concert dance world because their collaboration with the entertainment industry indicated the lack of artistry and choreographic value to art dance professionals.



Picture 1. The Advertisement of Earl Wallace Studios of Stage Dancing in *The American Dancer*, October, 1927.

Instead, it was dance critics or a handful of choreographers with limited access to film media who provided the preliminary discourse of dance film. Since their brief exposure to film could not be compared to the dance directors' seasoned expertise, it indicated that 'who said' began to matter as much as 'what was said' in the dance film discourse. For example, after being invited to teach for four weeks at the Norma Gould Studios in Hollywood, ballet choreographer Adolph Bolm said in an interview that he saw a "great future for dancers in motion pictures." He argued that, "Ballets, pantomimes, and such forms are the creations of the past; the talking picture with its syncronization [sic] with music and its marvelous capabilities should develop a new dance for the present."[70] Many choreographers joined Bolm in projecting a promising yet somewhat vague vision of the future of dance film.

There were a limited number of art dance professionals with hands-on experience with film; therefore, the discourse of dance film formed almost entirely on conceptual and theoretical dimensions. This discussion was focused on how to utilize film for the sake of the dance field rather than to conform to the Hollywood system. For instance, filmmaker and theorist Lewis Jacobs discussed film as a means for dance documentation, and further suggested three kinds of documenting modes satisfying the specific needs of the dancer, the student, and the spectator.[71] He argued that film of a fixed and single point of view served the choreographer, that slow motion pictures became a visual textbook to learn the details of dance, and that the interpretive shooting of a dance gave the viewer a proximity sense of the physical and psychological dimensions of dance. Despite their subtle differences, all of them served to prevent an "irreparable" and "unpardonable" loss.

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70) Anita Spier(1930), Adolph Bolm Sees Great Future for Dancers in Motion Pictures, *the American Dancer*, May, p.9, 26.
71) Lewis Jacobs(1934), p.1, 53.

While Jacobs concentrated the discussion on using film for dance preservation, John Martin discussed its social impact on the dance field. His article "The Dance: Presentation on the Screen," published at the dawn of "talkies" in the end of 1928, was one of the first examinations of the film medium written from the perspective of an insider of the emerging art dance field.[72] Martin found two additional uses for film: building audiences and creating a new genre of dance film art. However, unlike his contemporaries, he was rather skeptical of film's potential, as he did not think these uses were fundamentally effective or relevant to the development of the dance field. For instance, Martin saw little potential in building dance audiences via film, because educating audiences via film required showing educational footage that would not be shown in regular movie theaters. Since dance film showings targeted dance communities rather than the general public, they did not build new audiences.

It is interesting to compare Jacobs' and Martin's opposing views on dance preservation, more specifically on film vs. notation as a means of preservation. While Jacobs believed that film preserves subtle nuances and the social meanings of dance, Martin maintained that film records performance rather than dance itself. Jacobs said, "How can any notation indicate the delicacy or brutality of a thrust, a contraction, and expansion, a fall?" While Jacobs suggested that film could preserve what is missing in charts and diagrams of notation, Martin defended notation over film for the same reason. Distinguishing between the dance and the dancer, between the creative and interpretive process, Martin said that film records only the interpretation of an act while leaving behind the creation itself. Comparing the dancer's reproduction of dance via film to the musician's playing music by listening to

72) John Martin(1928), The Dance: Presentation on the Screen, *the New York Times*, Dec 23.

a phonograph, he believed that reproduction by eye was not scientific and systematic enough for a notation system. Just as a phonograph could not replace music notation, film recordings would be appreciable only to layman, not to professional dancers. Martin's adamant belief that film could never equal written notation in preservation function led him to become a firm supporter of Labanotation.[73)]

The conflict between film and notation has become a highly debated topic in the dance field. However, what should be emphasized here is that, despite their opposing stances toward the value of film as a preservation tool, both Jacobs and Martin grounded their evaluations firmly on the criteria of live concert dance. Jacobs mentioned Duncan, Nijinsky, Pavlova, and Ruth St. Denis as those who danced in the motion picture era yet left scant, if any, traces on film, while arguing that his contemporary dancers Graham, Wigman, Kreutzberg, and Weidman would encounter the same fate if not recorded soon. Moreover, his discussion of different technical modes of preservation presupposed the perfect viewing position (front row center balcony) for learning and experiencing a concert dance work. This supposition of an auditorium view excluded dance forms and phenomena other than concert dance from the outset. Martin also criticized film from a concert dance-centered perspective. He said, "[film's] plasticity is anathema to the dance."[74)] Dance's architectural quality should be viewed in relation to space and floor pattern, but the camera's follow shot or zoom shot distorts this quality. For this reason he advised not to see the film versions of Mary Wigman's dance shown in a local theater without prior familiarity with her dance. Believing that

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73) For a further discussion of the debate on Labanotation vs. film, see my previous article, The Babel of Dance Literacy: Reflections on the heterogeneity of dance notations in mid-twentieth century North America, *the Korean Journal of Dance Studies*, 2010 Fall, pp.137-162.

74) John Martin(1931), The Dance: Film Versions, *the New York Times*, May 10.

audience response constituted a significant part of a dance's meaning, Martin rejected film's potential for creating dancer-audience relationship. It is because film had a fixed audience, if any at all, during the shoot and repeated the same dance regardless of the responses of future viewers. Thus Martin believed that it could not seriously contribute to the development of performance art.

Based on the same criteria of concert dance, Jacobs and Martin had antithetical attitudes toward the value of film as a means of dance preservation. To add another interesting layer to it, as much as opposing conceptions could be drawn from the same epistemological orientation, the opposite case is also possible--that is, similar conceptions can be drawn from opposing views. For instance, Martin and Hollywood dance directors had similar methodological discussions on how to best shoot dance, despite their differing ideas on what constituted film dance. Viewing dance film records as a memory aid, Martin criticized three common mistakes in shooting dance: 1) cutting into the middle of a movement phrase, 2) ignoring dance's conventions, forms and styles, and 3) showing either a part of the dancer's body or the whole body all the time. He thought that these shooting choices rendered dance monotonous, meaningless and superficial, which paralleled the suggestions made by early dance directors in Hollywood.[75] As discussed earlier in the study, dance directors such as Earle Wallace and Ernest Belcher discussed how to best shoot dance. Recognizing that "the camera does lie," they meticulously standardized dance lines, set some preferences for choreographing and shooting dance, and developed shooting skills to cope with the camera's dimensional limitations. Their efforts often resulted in the invention of new devices, such as the "dance meter," a mechanical device to measure dance steps, helping to keep dancers within camera focus and to synchronize the steps with the lens.[76] Dance

75) John Martin(1942), The Dance: In the Films, *the New York Times*, May 31.

director Antonio Gaudio preferred group dance to solo dance, opted to shoot it from above, and insisted on capturing a dancer in her full length rather than from neck to knee. He believed that these representations of dance were aesthetically superior to monotonous shootings.[77] It can be seen that although the issue of how to best shoot dance continued to be a major controversy, the methodological discourses of the art dance and Hollywood dance fields reached similar conclusions despite their differing perspective of what film dance was and what it served.

VI. Conclusion

Rewriting a historiography of dance film, this study intentionally began with chorus girls in the Hollywood film industry to emphasize the significance and influence of popular film phenomena on the formation of dance film discourse as well as the formation of American dance field. While traditional narratives of American dance scholarship paid little attention to it, the fact that dance numbers in musical film were initially considered superior to stage dance provides layered insights into the dynamics between dance as art, dance as academe, popular dance phenomena. As the American dance field endeavored to establish dance as an artistic and intellectual field, popular dance on stage and musical films functioned as its antithesis. Despite the conceptual distinction between concert dance and dance in higher education, and despite the superficial conflict between ballet and modern dance, they share the desire to legitimize dance in society and the elitist criticism of dance

76) Clarence Locan(1930), Dance Meter Solves Problem of Filming, *the American Dancer*, January, p.14.
77) Verna Arvey(1936), Dancing for the Camera, *the American Dancer*, January, p.9, 26.

used as popular entertainment.

Moreover, what should be emphasized is that dance directors in Hollywood had already theorized dance film as early as in the 1920s and yet their discourse has been largely ignored when dance film discourse germinated within the dance field in the 1940s. If the discussion of dance film for the sake of dance as art and academe comprised the core of the current discourse of dance film, its obvious distantiation from the dance directors's expertises reveals that the dance film discourse has also formulated according to the whole dance field's agenda of intellectualization and legitimization.

Interrogating the intricate relationship between dance film phenomena and dance film discourse in the period between 1927 and 1940s in and around the American dance field, this study sheds light on reciprocality that they created. While musical films as the popular dance film phenomena functioned as the antithesis of the formation of dance as art and academia, the artistic and academic dance fields also provided the basis for developing the discourse of dance film. At the same time, the theories and practices of early dance directors were marginalized since neither their identities nor their achievements were considered worthy of being included in the reconceptualized field of dance.

This reciprocality seems particularly suggestive in the trend of film and digital media researches in Korean dance scholarship. While many studies focus on new technological possibilities as a means of preservation, representation, and artistic exploration, the effort to embed it within the discourse of dance has been less visible. Returning to Korean context, it was not through incessant self-reflexive discussions that Korean dance field acquired the idea of dance as art and academe. Instead, Korean dance field as we know of today was quickly established by adopting imported concepts and systems. Since we lack the process of self-questioning and self-identifying,

understanding how the idea of dance as art and academe was formed through numerous discussions over years seems pressing. Moreover, given that film actually influenced the discursive formation of dance as art and academe in North American context, it is also needed to approach dance film field not merely as a technological genealogy but as a cultural entity that are entwined with the formation of North American dance field. For this, this study is expected to stimulate further inquiries on how film and other media has influenced the way we think of dance in Korean context.

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국문요약

무용필름의 역사 다시쓰기: 20세기 초 미국무용계 형성의 맥락을 중심으로

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본 연구는 20세기 초 예술로서의 무용과 학문으로서의 무용개념이 형성되던 미국무용계의 맥락 속에서 무용필름의 역사를 재조명한다. 기존의 무용필름 연구에서 "비디오댄스"와 디지털 테크놀로지 등 미디어의 가능성을 타진하는 방식이 주류를 이루었다면, 무용필름에 대한 역사적 관점은 "누가 무엇을 언제 처음으로 만들었는가"를 나열하는 연대기적 접근에서 크게 벗어나지 못했다. 그러나 "최초"와 "선구자" 중심의 역사관은 매우 제한적으로 현상을 조명할 뿐 아니라 이를 가능케 한 문화적 맥락을 소외시킨다는 한계가 있다. 따라서 본 연구는 20세기 초 미국무용계에서 형성된 네 가지 움직임, 즉 예술로서의 무용관, 학문으로서의 무용관, 무용저널리즘, 그리고 동영상 매체를 통한 무용재현의 시작이라는 맥락에서 무용필름의 초기 역사를 재조명하고자 한다.

예술과 학문으로서의 무용개념이 당시 미국무용계의 테제를 이루었다면, 헐리우드 영화산업을 중심으로 한 대중적인 무용필름 현상은 이의 안티테제를 구성하였다는 것이 본 연구의 주장이다. 무용필름 담론은 급격히 변화하는 무용개념에 영향을 주었으며, 동시에 이에 영향을 받았다. 발레와 현대무용으로 대표되는 극장예술무용, 대학교육으로서의 무용, 대중무용과 헐리우드 필름산업, 무용매체의 등장과 전문적 저널리즘의 형성, 그리고 학문으로서의 무용이라는 이질적 담론들이 서로 영향을 주고받으며 무용을 지성화, 정당화하는 과정에서, 무용필름은 단지 창작작업 및 무용교육의 도구나 부산물이 아니라 무용담론 형성에 직접 영향을 미치는 문화적 구성체로 작용하였음을 강조한다.

특징으로는 기존 무용연구에서 소외되었던 대중문화 현상인 헐리우드 뮤지컬 영화를 출발점으로 삼아, 뮤지컬 장르의 맥락에서 형성된 무용필름 담론과 예술무용의 맥락에서 형성된 무용필름 담론간의 다층적 긴장관계를 중첩적으로 분석하는 방법론적 전략을 사용한다. 미국 주요대학의 도서관 및 뉴욕공공도서관에 마이크로필름으로 소장된 초기 무용잡지들을 모두 훑어서 방대하고 구체적인 사료를 통해 미국무용계의 형성과정을 생생하게 제시하려 한 점이 특징이다. 이를 통해 발레 및 현대무용 중심으로 하는 고전적 무용역사관에서 벗어나 보다 넓은 시각에서 무용필름의 역사쓰기를

시도한다. 뮤지컬 영화에 출연하던 코러스 걸 무용수들이 발레리나와 현대 무용가로 대변되는 예술무용이 형성하는데 필요한 상징적 대척점 역할을 했다면, 뮤지컬 영화에서 무용장면을 담당했던 무용 감독들의 존재와 담론 역시 이후 무용계 내에서 무용필름 담론이 형성하는데 대척점이 되었다. 특히 주목할 점은 이들 무용 감독들이 무용 필름이 무대 무용보다 우월하다고 개념화했다면, 이후 무용계에서는 무대 무용이 무용필름보다 우월하다는 주장이 더 우세를 띈다는 점이다. 이처럼 무용 필름과 무대무용이 정반대의 논리를 껴안으면서 구별되어 왔다는 점은 무용필름 담론이 필름 매체에 내재된 고유한 특성에 연유하는 것이 아니라 맥락적 요구에 따라 변화하는 것임을 증명한다.

예술이자 학문으로서의 무용 개념을 오랜 기간에 걸쳐 자기반성적으로 형성한 것이 아니라 갑작스럽게 외부로부터 받아들인 한국무용계의 맥락에서는 특히 무용담론이 서서히 변화하는 메커니즘을 주의 깊게 살펴볼 필요가 있다. 또한 무용필름에 대한 논의 역시 기술적 매체로서의 가능성에만 집중하는 한국 무용학계에서의 연구 경향에서 볼 때, 무용필름의 현상 및 담론 모두 당시 무용계의 복잡다단한 움직임과 영향을 주고받으며 형성된 문화적 개체로서 접근할 수 있는 계기를 마련했다는데 본 연구의 의의가 있다.

주제어: dance film(무용필름), dance as art(예술로서의 무용), dance as academe(학문으로서의 무용), Hollywood film industry(헐리우드 필름산업), dance journalism (무용 저널리즘)