ASPECTS OF THE MASK
IN THE WORK OF EMIL NOLDE AND MARY WIGMAN

A Thesis

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INTRODUCTION

The status of research into Mary Wigman’s and Emil Nolde’s fascination with the mask is still at a superficial level. While it is known that Nolde painted at least fifty-five mask and figural still-lifes between 1911 and 1913, there is, to my knowledge, no study devoted to this body of works nor to his apparent concern with the pictorial potential of the mask, which began in the late 1880’s and continued throughout his life. Among Wigman scholars only Ernst Schreyer and Walter Sorell refer in passing to the symbolic value of Wigman’s use of the mask and the possible influence of Nolde’s mask paintings on Wigman’s dances. According to Schreyer, Wigman began to employ masks in the twenties to impose unity, clarity and stability -- a "classical" balance -- on her ecstatic dances. Sorell makes more substantial reference to the dancer’s use of the mask as symbolic of her increasing concern with man’s psychological existence and her desire to move artistically away from Expressionism into abstraction. No one accounts for her use of mask during World War I in Zurich nor, to my knowledge, is there any comparative study of the mask motif in the works of Nolde and Wigman. On the contrary, Martin Urban maintains that there is no connection between Nolde’s paintings of masks and his preoccupation with the dance and dancers. The problem of the nature and effect of the professional intercourse that surely occurred between these two
artists remains very much an open question. What is known, however, suggests a richness in terms of both art and friendship.

Though little is known of particular instances of the direct mutual influence we sense Wigman and Nolde exerted on one other, certainly it may be said that they were kindred spirits and that in some sense they were aware of this. The single strongest common link between the two is that their ephemeral liaison with the German artists of Die Brücke gave impetus to their development of a personal style and artistic vocabulary based on the idea of man as expressive image and spirit and contributed to their desire to create a new "German" art. In the course of these artistic pursuits, for both Holde and Wigman, the mask became the symbol of contemporary man as spirit, a plastic entity, free and fully articulate.

Likewise, Nolde and Wigman's direct involvement with the new currents in the modern dance provided more area of common interest and occasions for an exchange of artistic ideas. In the context of the dance the mask came to be linked with a kind of physiological and psychological transformation produced in individual consciousness during the process of complete immersion in rhythmic activity.

As one moves beyond external similarities in their use of the mask, however (i.e., to both restrain and heighten human expressiveness in art, their eclectic borrowing from other masking traditions and the dark, tragic side of human nature that their masks often represent), one finds upon closer inspection, two quite different viewpoints and artistic aims. While Wigman used the mask to evoke mood and convey a
more philosophical and abstract view of human personality as pure
spirit, Nolde's interest in the mask was a plastic one. Rather than ex-
plain metaphysical possibilities as did Wigman, his was a concern with
the visual potential of man as expressive image. This study is one of
the first attempts to trace and compare the development of the expres-
sive language of the mask in the work of the painter, Emil Nolde, and
the dancer, Mary Wigman.
CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHY OF A FRIENDSHIP

In 1911, generally agreed upon as the year of Nolde's acquaintance with Wigman,\(^1\) Nolde had already been painting numerous mask and figural still-lifes, quoting from actual primitive and ancient masks and figures, and a number of works representing dancers. Walter Sorell, biographer and longtime friend of Wigman, states that Nolde's mask paintings had a "lasting effect" on Wigman.\(^2\) More specifically, art historian Ernst Schreyer mentions Nolde in his study of Wigman's work compared to that of Oskar Schlemmer, and writes that this early phase of Wigman and Nolde's friendship resulted in Nolde's painting Candle Dancers (1912) (Plate I). In this work, two violet colored female figures, nude to the waist, dance ecstatically between candles. The setting is one in which the air and ground are red, orange and fuchsia. Interestingly, the violent movements of the dancers anticipate Wigman's earliest ecstatic choreography Witch Dance I (1914) (Plate II), a work which is filled with forced, violent movements and relentless rhythms.\(^3\)

Nolde's use of brilliant color in connection with dance even anticipates Wigman's choices of color for various aspects of her medium. In 1919, for instance, she completely covered walls, doors and ceilings of the practice room of the Mary Wigman School in Dresden with a brilliant red. When she could afford the expense (having earned additional
funds freelancing or on tour), she would sew her costumes from the latest in silk, brocades, metallic and art deco textiles. Despite economic crisis in Europe between the two wars, resulting in stage setting that frequently was very spare, in costuming for dance performance, she was extravagant. It is true that the contemporaneous productions of the Ballets Russes also sought out the most sumptuous fabrics for their spectacles at this time, but by comparison with Wigman’s conceptions for dance costume, they were heavy and decorative in purpose, not light, expressively revealing the dancers’ gestures as they moved.

It is surprising that in his autobiography, Jahre der Kämpfe, Emil Nolde makes so little reference to his friendship with Mary Wigman. Though he does admit that he and Ada, his wife, had followed her career already when she was a beginner at Hellerau, the mention of her name dissolves within the broader reference to dance and its link with masks.4 The artist sheds no light on the nature of their relationship or to what extent he thought their friendship influenced their art. He writes only: "Es gaben die Tänzerinnen Anregung zu meinen Bildern, und diese wohl auch einiges wieder."5 Characteristically, Nolde neglects also to say what it was that he, in turn, gave the dancers.

Wigman was more forthcoming on this count. She acknowledged that her friendship with the artist not only dated "far back" but that it was an extremely close one at that. She writes in her memoirs that communication was most complete with the artist when it was made in silence:
... [the] happiest conversations I had with him were when almost no word was uttered—a glance only, a smile... then he would reach for his pencil, draw a fleeting line on the paper, and that was all that was needed to establish contact."

Despite the paucity of material available to document direct involvement of one artist with another, Martin Urban, author and director of the Nolde Stiftung Seebull which houses the artist's archives, writes that Nolde and Wigman not only met often, but carried on a lively correspondence. Wigman herself recounts that, whenever possible, Nolde attended her dance concerts. He was apparently such a "regular" that the theatre managers "knew what was expected of them." Three seats were reserved: one each for Nolde and Ada, who stood watch lest he be disturbed while he was painting, and one for his painting materials. During Wigman's performances, Nolde would produce spontaneous watercolor sketches, a number of which came into the dancer's possession. According to Urban, there are a body of letters, dance invitations, etc., among the Nolde materials which date up to, and including, 1931. After that, there occurs a gap in materials, for as Urban testified, Wigman writes her last letter to Nolde in 1946 on the occasion of Ada's death. Presumably letters between 1931 and 1946 were lost.

Mary Wigman was first introduced to Emil Nolde by her roommate, Erna Hoffmann of Switzerland, who, along with Ada Braun of Holland and Elsy Knüpf of Livland, shared the small house, which they rented "am grünen Zipfel," not far from the Dalcroze School at Hellerau. Hoffman was originally from St. Gallen, where she had known Nolde when he was a teacher at the School of Arts and Crafts there. The women often discussed matters of expression in the visual arts as well as
dance among themselves and with their guests. Although he did not come often, it was especially when Nolde was a guest, however, that discussions concerning movement and expression became particularly heated.\textsuperscript{11} Even when Nolde no longer resided in Dresden after his break with the workshop of the \textit{Die Brücke} artists in 1907,\textsuperscript{12} he continued to maintain his contacts with artistic circles in the city for many years afterwards. Notwithstanding Nolde's ephemeral liaison with \textit{Die Brücke}, it was the activities of this group that helped to bond a kindred artistic spirit between Nolder the painter and Wigman the dancer.

When Wigman first arrived in Dresden in 1909 to study at the Jaques-Dalcroze School of Eurythmics,\textsuperscript{13} she began frequenting the Arnold gallery, where the \textit{Brücke} artists were exhibiting their paintings. Observing the breadth and strength of human emotions she saw expressed in the new expressionistic paintings, she began to explore the nature and limits of her own sensibilities. Although a newcomer to the dance, Wigman quickly realized that the Jaques-Dalcroze method could not express such a broad spectrum of emotions, nor its intensity as she would have liked to explore. Thus, Wigman began to improvise and choreograph on her own in her small room at home. She could not afford an accompanist, and so necessarily had to dance without music. This, however, enabled her to make the form of the dance grow directly from inner feeling. She began to create a new dance language which contrasted with ballet already perceived as artificial empty virtuosity. And so, she began to express honestly, and with greater immediacy and intensity, the nature of her own inner experience, just as she had seen it expressed in the work of contemporary painters.
Nolde must have seen some of these early dances and been inspired by her success in creating a new expressionistic dance vocabulary. No doubt impressed by her endeavors, he gave her a print of his Dancer of 1911, which depicts a woman, curiously resembling the young Wigman, her long black hair flying, lost in the ecstasy of the force of her own movement.Emma Louis Thomas—student, friend and performer with the Wigman Company in the 1960's—describes another of Nolde's works in Wigman's possession which she saw while visiting the dancer in Berlin, shortly before Wigman's death in 1973. It was, in fact, a watercolor of Wigman "dancing in a frenzied state nude, [it] was unsigned. She told me that this likeness was done by Nolde." The intimate nature of this sketch suggests that it was executed during one of the private improvisation sessions which she was known on occasion to give for friends.

After graduation from Hellerau in 1912, Wigman travelled to Italy, where she spent a year sightseeing and studying art and architecture in order to recover from the strain of her final exams and school performances. After her return to Hellerau she travelled again to Dresden, where she danced her choreographic studies and improvisations for Jaques-Dalcroze and for both Ada and Emil Nolde. Understandably, Jaques-Dalcroze would have not been sympathetic to Wigman's choreographies without music, and he apparently did not encourage her. He was a musician and teacher who taught a system which made practical his belief that the exact interpretation into movement of the time and intervals of music would build a new, fully-alive and totally harmonious human being. Ironically, it was the Noldes, however, who gave Wigman
the final decisive push into the next very important period of her career, for they made her aware of Rudolf von Laban, a dance teacher, theoretician and choreographer. According to Wigman's reminiscences, following one of the improvisations, "the otherwise so taciturn Nolde exclaimed, 'We became acquainted in Munich with a man who moves exactly as you do and likewise without music. You should get to know him; his name is Rudolf von Laban." Laban would introduce Wigman to a new aspect of movement as the expression of the "force of dynamic space." He would reinforce feelings about the goal of art that Nolde, the artist, also considered essential: the expression of life in all its polarities. It would be the mask which helped to bring out and resolve these extremes.
CHAPTER II
THE NEW CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY

The artistic language of the mask was an expression of life in all its polarities. In particular, it was a manifestation of a new concept of personality in the modern era. Personality was no longer perceived as fixed and static, subject to norms of physical beauty or behavior, but was viewed as fluid in nature. Personality was spirit. It was plastic, abstract and constantly in a state of becoming manifest in the swing of emotions from one extreme to another. The search and attainment of spirituality, translated as Persönlichkeit, was perceived as the purpose of man's being. Modern artists saw themselves as map makers, in a sense, topographers of this interior, alternate realm of reality. It was their task to formulate a new artistic vocabulary that would express the notion of personality, and they felt it their calling to guide and encourage the average man on this path with led simultaneously inward, upward and backward to the spiritual. In addition, progress along this way transcended notions of actual time and space, and dealt with the supernatural.

To express the dynamism of the spirit, artists thought of art as plastic and they adapted both additive (assembling a rich variety of materials together in a single work) and subtractive (abstracting and
essentializing materials and forms) sculptural methods to their own materials in order to transmit that quality. Indeed art making was seen as an act of possession, the additive method implying that the artist had seized something from nothingness (des Nichts) and had given the supernatural form. By another method, subtractive in nature, the implication was that art making was almost an act of exorcism in which forces perceived as antagonistic to man were rendered null and void as they were given artistic form. Nolde and Wigman illustrate demonstrably these two separate approaches for the attainment of spiritual possession. Emil Nolde, for example, allowed himself to paint ecstasy to relieve the tension of his own stormy inner life, but he also painted to avoid involvement with its potential for complete loss of the self in the nonphysical realm. Mary Wigman, however, repeatedly strove to lose herself in the ecstatic moment to seize "dance personalities"—the content of her dances—from the nonphysical dimension. For their part, artists were guided by the "primitives"—Gothic European and non-western tribal artists—who provided an already complete set of symbols for the spirit world.

Rich in magic, Gothic and tribal art and cult objects could not, in one sense, have been more different in terms of the cultural contexts in which they were created. On the one hand, a set of images had its source in a Christian society, while tribal symbolism, on the other hand, was intricately linked to the tribal sense of community and a belief in demonism and ancestor worship. Despite this difference, the spirit world represented by both Christian and pagan imagery enriched and provided conceptual parameters for modern artists' search to create
their own language of the spirit. Divine and chthonic powers constituted a wholeness for these artists. There was a completeness and harmony in opposition.¹ In the case of other artists, a concern with dualism, synthesis of opposites and the monistic nature of true reality allowed Piet Mondrian, for example, to create works such as **Plus and Minus**. Emil Nolde, too, stated that he deliberately juxtaposed extremes to heighten expressive power.² Mary Wigman likewise remarked that her experience of dance in performance was the experience of being stretched between "poles of tension."³

Whether divine or demonic, by 1916 it had already been acknowledged that spirits and spectres had "unexpectedly" enriched contemporary thought and artistic endeavor. The spirit world was viewed as man's natural environment comparable to the underwater environment of sea creatures. Insofar as man came to know himself as living, immortal spirit, without mass, form, or limitation of any kind, absolute freedom, the "inner vision," thought to possess both reality and power, would be revealed to him. This vision was not subject to natural laws of time and place but was a heightened faculty which implied that the "seer" saw (i.e., comprehended) the human condition from all points of perspective. Personal sense of self which perceived from a single, sensual vantage point had become a world power (Weltmächtig) capable of both transforming and destroying the natural world.⁴

Although there was a widespread concern with the world of spectres and its influence on man's well-being by the 1880's,⁵ the notion that all men could commune with the supernatural was gradually replaced with the much more complex idea of spiritual evolution, to which the average
unenlightened individuum had to be "initiated." Furthermore, by the turn of the century, it was thought that only artists, not priests, were able to initiate the masses into the mysteries of the spirit. The artists of Der Blaue Reiter based their art on the idea of spiritual evolution and increasingly divorced painting from subject matter to convey the spiritual dimension of human experience. Kandinsky, the leading artistic personality of the group, set forth his belief in an inevitable revolution of the spirit in which man and the natural world would be transformed in one apocalyptic moment. He wrote about this in Über das Geistige in der Kunst, published in 1912. Through the process of abstraction by which he stripped and veiled his symbolic imagery, Kandinsky sought to hasten this spiritual revolution. He and others maintained that only the artist through symbol and ritual could reveal the "face" (das Gesicht) of true reality. Inasmuch as the role of the artist was to determine and fashion the form of the face or revelation, it became both a visual as well as a linguistic task.

Like the ancient Christians of the Pentecost, modern artists believed themselves endowed with the gift of spirit, the gift of languages. By means of ritual and parable communicated in artistic, i.e., a more intuitive and thus universal, language, artists saw themselves as restorers of wholeness in man. Man would no longer be merely bombarded by sensations. New coloristic vocabularies such as Franz Marc's conveyed the beauty of animal life, revitalized intensity, subtlety and authenticity of feeling and the new sculptural vocabulary of Ernst Barlach and incisive etchings of Kathe Kollwitz recreated man and his
environment in terms of art, not in terms of science and the so-called natural world.

The form that the artist chose to give to the face of true reality was thus revealed to him by insight (des Gesicht), which in turn compelled him with what Kandinsky called an "inner necessity" to create in a prescribed way.\textsuperscript{7} The power which flowed from the Gesicht to the artist, into the art object to the viewer, was in no way diminished in the transfer. Moreover the limitations of the material, the material act of crafting the art object, in no way compromised the reality or the potency of spirit, the polar opposite of matter. The rhythmic form, the life of the art work, bridged this gap; it embodied and effected the spiritual transformation.

August Macke, who was associated with Kandinsky and Der Blaue Reiter referred to this notion of power in his essay entitled "Masks." Artistic form, he said, is not only the expression of the artist's inner life but these forms "are powerful expressions of powerful life."\textsuperscript{8} This "powerful life" was one of intense experience and spiritual vitality. Conversely, Herwarth Walden, the greatest patron of the Expressionists and proselytizer of Expressionist art, first qualified the fact of the artist's inner vision and then concluded that the authentic artwork was "the equation by which abstractly disposed spirits will be pulled from life . . . without conflict."\textsuperscript{9} Emil Nolde had been immersed in this context already in his earliest endeavors, well before his contact with Mary Wigman.
CHAPTER III
EMIL NOLDE AND THE DOMAIN OF THE MASK

Beginning as early as in 1880, Emil Nolde's first accomplished works reveal that his interest with the face and the mask was directly related to his interest in exploring the inner aspects of personality. He did not outline a specific course in this pursuit to develop his own artistic vocabulary, but took an eclectic approach, drawing on the many cultural types he encountered on his travels and sojourns in Europe, the Orient and Oceania, and on the visual language of numerous cultures. Since Nolde immersed himself in the expressive possibilities of the mask, his mask-inspired works are numerous and varied. For Nolde, the domain of the mask was a realm of portraiture—a genre he was most preoccupied with throughout his life—in which the contour or profile of the face was deliberately emphasized, the features were suggested in a highly schematic fashion, and the entire physiognomy was flattened.

While Nolde's earliest efforts show an interest in capturing a particular, individual static aspect of personality, after 1900, this became a concern with ethnic personality. This he rendered in a much more plastic manner, creating new composite types synthesized from studies of a variety of anthropological and even animal types. Committed to the regularizing conventions of the mask, these composite images of the "many in the one" were transformed into portraits of the
"one in the many," or the communal spirit. Given to self-dramatization, Nolde also depicted himself in many roles and wearing a variety of masks to express aspects of his own personality that he believed he shared with all mankind.

Thus, Nolde's early mask-inspired works—mainly caricatures, furniture designs and actual masks—demonstrate two pursuits which coincided roughly in time and which constitute a wholeness in the artist's oeuvre. After he began work as an apprentice in Sauermann's furniture factory in Flensburg in 1884, he executed a number of furniture designs which included masks and floral motifs. They exhibit the artist's joy in rhythm realized in ornament and pattern. Lion heads with strangely human eyes, classical half-length nikes, Bacchus or Pan masks and figures, are suspended within modelled textures and linear, swirling floral passages. The proportions of the masks are determined by the dimensions of the furniture; they are mostly frontal and generalized, with eyes riveted toward the viewer. In his caricatures, the artist limited his artistic means to the sole element of line in order to reveal an inner aspect of personality. His designs reflect demonstrably a concern with the face as surface. Here, Nolde used line to render the rhythmic configuration of certain physiognomies. He deliberately created and juxtaposed visual rhythms to test the expressive limits of facial gesture. Expanding this concept, in the year 1896, Nolde created a number of drawings of women metamorphosed as flowers. In these the artist captured and made visible the play of emotions by means of a decorative Jugendstil-inspired style. The women are rendered
frontally, directly engaging the viewer, as do the mask forms on Nolde's furniture.\textsuperscript{2}

While Nolde's furniture-design masks are archaically frontal and modelled in three dimensions without exception, his contemporaneous drawings of the burghers of Appenzell and Flensburg,\textsuperscript{3} dated 1885 and 1886, respectively, are virtually unmodelled, three-quarter and profile views. They are rendered in a spirit of play, with a mixture of sympathy, affection and antagonism toward the subjects. Insofar as the artist creatively reduced and deemphasized the normal proportions of the skill—particularly the brow and jaw, as so often seen in masks, he exaggerated features like the nose, mouth and chin to make emphatic the expression of certain aspects of personality. Line was therefore used both as interior and exterior contour to capture the emotional character associated with that particular facial type.\textsuperscript{4}

The face of Johann Schäfer of Appenzell (Plate III) proved a rich source of inspiration for Nolde. He compressed, flattened and pressed the face forward in such a way that the free-flowing rhythms of the physiognomy (the swelling and concavity of volumes, natural wrinkles and contours) were rendered furthermore as forces of curve and counter-curve, two opposing forces of movement coming into and out from the skull, held in tension by the tyranny of the picture plane. This rapid transmutation of the face toward mask-like features is made evident by the juxtaposition of the first drawing of Schafer (1892) with a charcoal drawing of 1894 entitled \textit{Mask} (location unknown) (Plate IV). The former is a naturalistic, frontal representation of the toothless, old man. The latter is a "topographic" translation of the man's facial features,
bone structure, wrinkles and crevices into a kind of rhythmic landscape. As if in searching for the essential, Nolde squeezed the face; force and counterforce are barely held in check as the image almost jumps from the confining edge of the paper. The reduction of the face to the skull and neck is completely omitted here. There is no cranium, no neck, and only a fraction of the brow is represented. Furthermore, the face strains against the picture plane as if it is pressing against a window: the nose is flattened, nearly meeting the chin, which is forced upwards at an angle. The ears and side of the face press forward, so that the right ear is nearly in frontal view. The brow presses down and the eyebrows spring upwards and the smudged spectacles cut into the nose and face.

The importance of rhythm and asymmetry in Nolde's early masks links with the new modern dance as seen in the work of Emil Jaques-Dalcroze and Mary Wigman, his student. Inasmuch as Dalcroze based his entire system of movement training on harmony in contrast, Wigman, as has been noted earlier, cultivated the principle in the posing of opposites (i.e., the freely flowing ecstatic and rigidly ritualistic) ultimately constituting a wholeness, while Nolde, too, adapted the ancient Green principle of eurhythmia to the modern idiom. Both artists rhythmically juxtaposed extremes of feeling in terms of line and shape to establish a new gestural vocabulary. Using this vocabulary they both sought to restate the classical idea of harmony and balance in terms of the eurhythmic idea of harmony in contrast.

Hence, in his mask paintings Nolde continued the definition of contour as a convention of the mask, along with the use of asymmetricality
and flatness. But, by 1896, he added a new dimension to his usual method of abstracting the human face. Three charcoal mask drawings, Mask of Energy (Plate V) Mask of Indolence (Plate VI) and Cave Woman (Plate VII), are infused with tension not by just a compression of features but by an expansion as well. The tiny, round eyes of Mask of Energy are distended as if they are about to spring from their sockets. Mask of Indolence is an image of self-satisfaction, self-containment and complete indifference. The figure’s eyes and mouth are tightly closed and his jowled chin sinks into a fleshy shoulder. His "heart," his sensibility, is worn on a chain around his neck. He will never fully experience the intensity of pain or pleasure, love or hate.

Just before the turn of the century, Nolde continued to explore the compressed and stretched physiognomy in frontal and profile views in a series of mountain postcards begun in 1894 and produced until 1898. These pencil and watercolor sketches are personifications of the forces embodied in the Alpine mountainscape around St. Gallen. In these works, Nolde began to rework the composition of his mask paintings to accommodate several characters crowded together, in predominantly frontal view, in a row across the paper. The viewer’s access to them is immediate. The plane of the "mountain face" establishes a boundary and asserts a flattening effect on the mountain masks. Thin washes of color are used to veil some of the mountain faces. A work such as The Ortler Dreams (1895) (Plate VIII) shows evidence of this method. One has the impression that the visage of the sleeping giant is revealed only as it comes in contact with the blue and violet-tinted plane of the mountain face. As will be evidenced later, this veiling effect is
similar to Mary Wigman's use of body-masks in her ecstatic dances, which reveal only the necessary, emphatic gesture as the limbs touch fabric.

Through his mask studies, Nolde explored personality. Dance offered him yet another venue to probe deeper into character. Nolde's interest in dance to focus on emotional character is evident in Dance Before the Giants, a pen and pencil drawing with color wash of 1902 (Plate IX), an early version of Nolde's Candle Dancers (1912) (cf. Plate I). The work shows five sinister giants with schematic mask-like faces. They gather, transfixed in a circle around two tiny dancers. The inner figures, in turn, move completely self-absorbed in a ritualized fashion within a circle of candles. They are literally and symbolically the center and focus of the composition, living embodiments of rhythm. As visualizations of that universal force, even the great powers of the earth must stand in awe before them.

Hence, Nolde seems to be contemplating the consciousness-altering effect of the dance in both the dancers and the viewers—the ecstasy induced by watching and engaging in dance. When Nolde repainted this composition in oil in 1912, he retained only the nucleus of this composition. But in the later version, the entire context was changed. Intense experience created its own environment. The ecstasy of the dance—act literally fashioned its own space and filled all space. In style and handling, Nolde turned from empirically describing the display of dance to rendering the experience of the danced ecstatic state in terms of flickering, vibrating tints of red and violet. The surface is
energized with color, light and the force of the artist's painting gesture.

Nolde's early portrait studies as seen earlier were crucial to this emotional display. In 1907, Nolde experimented with yet another unconventional portrait style, again using the mask as a source. He painted a group of watercolor sketches in which most of the face was, in fact, effaced with black slashing strokes or by shadows which concealed and flattened the face, very much like Mask of Energy, Mask of Indolence and Cave Woman cited earlier. The previous double-outlining of the exterior contour in black, however, was replaced by a single black outline, in turn circumscribed with white. This double outlining, which has the effect of encircling the figure in an aura of light, became, a decade later, a regular feature of Nolde's woodblock figure style, and also set determined stylistic precedents for some of his most significant work.

Somber Man (Plate X) was executed in this vein and proves to be a demonic transcription of Nolde's own features. Undoubtedly, this mask is a portrait of his inner self, an alter-ego. Nolde used black and white to pose a dramatic contrast. The white skeletal face, floats and presses forward through the inky blackness, prefiguring the ascetic Prophet mask of 1912. The skull is horned and the glowing eyes stare transfixed from black holes, reminiscent of his most famous works.

Ever since Nolde's fruitful association with the Brücke artists in Dresden in 1906, he took an even keener interest in primitive art. Following the example of artists such as Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Max Pechstein and Erich Heckel, Nolde also began to
sketch in Dresden galleries where ethnographic materials were exhibited. Gradually, the "urban" primitives to be found in the variety theatres and cabarets around Dresden further enriched his visual vocabulary with the new expressive types. It is from 1909 to 1911, that the influence of the artist's study of ancient and primitive art is most dramatically reflected in his work. Primitive types and use of color, texture, line quality and composition, inspired by his museum studies, increasingly appeared in his work.

Concurrently, Nolde's religious paintings executed between these years also display the remarkable range of types that he had been accumulating since 1880. Focussing on his plastic, sculptural visual vocabulary, Nolde increasingly used the pen like a penknife, the paintbrush like a chisel. This impulse was catalyzed by carved, painted and assembled masks and fetish figurines he saw in museums, and resulted in the dramatic Christ-type of Nolde's renowned The Last Supper (1909). Inspired by the emphatic gestures of primitive craftsmen, Nolde, too, rendered features in a planar fashion as if they had been cut with the flat edge of a knife.

Just as Nolde's visual vocabulary of types and stylistic conventions was growing under the impact of his museum studies, he began reflexively to expand the "domain of the mask" beyond portraiture of an individual consciousness. Images of the collective consciousness began to dominate his work. A characteristic feature of these works is that they depict some event in which a heightened emotional state is experienced by a group and as a group. Casting the characters within settings that commemorated early Christian, and contemporary rituals,
however mundane, gave focus and perspective to the event. Emotional oneness was expressed by the tight compression of the actors together and toward the frontal plane. Like his earlier renditions, all faces are drawn back against the skull and the characters gesture with deliberation. The mask-like features accentuate common characteristics and universalize the emotional moment. The faces, now like masks, and dematerialized bodies suggest that to realize the communal spirit was to become a higher species of man.

It was while Nolde was at work on these portraits that his tendency toward self-dramatization surfaced with greater frequency. Casting his own face in profile and frontal view in the various styles and types he had assembled, one finds Nolde as Christ among disciples not only in The Last Supper but in The Pentecost (both of 1909),8 and as two of Joseph's brothers in Joseph Tells His Dream (1910). Ironically, while the shy, reclusive artist spent most of his life painfully conscious of what differentiated and separated him from the people around him, in his art he appeared himself in a variety of guises in works depicting communally shared moments.

From his youth Nolde had experienced the distance between his bohemian artistic spirit and that of his conservative family and friends. Later, it was this very conservativeness in his own nature which, combined with his need for creative independence, caused him to refrain from engaging in the workshop environment favored by such artistic groups as the Brücke, the Blaue Reiter, de Stijl or the Bauhaus. Instead, Nolde tried on masks and represented himself experiencing the sense of belonging in his art as he was never completely able to do in
life. Thus, like the theatre people he closely studied and painted—the actors of Max Reinhardt's Berlin-based troupe and dancers such as Isadora Duncan, Loie Fuller, Saharet and Mary Wigman—Nolde too, posed himself in a variety of roles, assuming gestures, postures and masks to express the essential aspects of his own personality that he believed he shared in common with all people. As a culmination of this realization, in 1910, Nolde created a series of twenty-three book vignettes (Plate XI), in which he included a number of types from his repertoire.

These small vignettes were intended as a group and rendered as a "woodblock" style. The broad range of ancient and primitive stylistic influences evident in this group suggests that Nolde was not seeking the solution to a particular visual problem, but was summarizing his repertoire of human types. Their decorative arrangement within registers harks back to Nolde's earliest interest in the face as ornament and as an indicator of racial and cultural temperaments. As attestation to his spiritual closeness to Mary Wigman at this time, one vignette expresses the feeling of kinship he may have felt for his new acquaintance. It also suggests that Nolde had met Wigman, or was at least aware of her, at an earlier date than 1911—the year generally agreed upon as the one of their meeting. It is interesting that, in general, the vignettes depict antagonistic forces—male and female, conflicting personalities, both human and animal—which confront one another but which do not find resolution. Only in the double portrait of Nolde and Wigman is fusion realized. To convey this, Nolde created a bizarre hybrid creature with two faces, one of Mary Wigman with eyes closed and features drawn back in ecstasy—and Nolde's self-portrait Slave of
1907 both growing from one neck. This image expresses Noide's attraction and sense of kinship with the dancer. But the different viewpoints taken for the portrait heads—Wigman oriented to the front as she so often appeared in her dances and the artist himself shown in the more aloof profile view—reveals that even here something remained irreconcilable.
CHAPTER IV
MARY WIGMAN AND THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

For Nolde, the mask was directly related to the idea of the inner aspect of personality and it was used to express the idea of the "other" self, the other face. It was seen at once as a barrier, as rhythmic decoration, even as caricature. For Wigman, the mask was something even more abstract involving emotion, ecstasy and pure spirit. While still working as Rudolf von Laban's assistant in 1916, Wigman began to use the mask already in her earliest choreographies. These first masked dances are known to us in name and from programs. Although we will probably never know what these masks looked like nor how she used them specifically in performance, there is sufficient data to help us reconstruct the milieu in which the dances and masks were created, suggesting, furthermore, possible influences, concerns, and most importantly the nature of these works.

The year 1911 was a point of confluence in Wigman's life. At the urgings of Emil and Ada Nolde, Wigman had travelled to meet and study with Rudolf von Laban at his dance farm at Monte Verità in Ascona, Switzerland. In Laban she found the kindred artistic spirit Nolde had told her about. Laban, like Nolde, was concerned with polarity and defining the expressive human potential in dance. Wigman remained with Laban as a student and assistant and shortly after the outbreak of
World War I, in the summer of 1914, as conditions in Germany worsened, she moved with him to Switzerland, where they reopened the Laban school in Zurich.

The year 1914 had been an important one in Wigman's artistic development. She had performed her first independent solo choreographies Witch Dance I (cf. Plate II) and Lento on February 11, and she choreographed three more solos and four group dances, which premiered March 28 of that year. None of these dances were performed to musical accompaniment nor were they mask dances. Available materials and documentation do indicate, however, that Witch Dance and Lento were intended as a complementary pair. Like the duality evident in Nolde's mask paintings, these first works embraced a range of expressive potential from the ecstatic to the restrained and controlled expression. The slow, measured, flowing Lento was juxtaposed with the demonically ecstatic Witch Dance. For Wigman this constituted a wholeness. This interest in representing in movement an expanded viewpoint in which opposites did not contradict but complemented one another would become a lifelong interest for Wigman.

Wigman's concern with unit was realized in posing two extreme aspects of expression, references to two artistic influences in her development. First, it was the emphatically expressionistic works of Emil Nolde and the Brücke artists that inspired her to formulate a new expressive dance vocabulary, and secondly, the influence of Laban's preoccupation with restoring man's "festive spirit," through ritualized and communal dance events exposed her to the evocative and symbolic potential inherent in ritual. It was also in 1914, however, that Wigman
began to break away from Laban to realize her own expressive potential. Contact with Nolde was temporarily broken at this time. Nolde had embarked upon a trip to the South Seas, while a further breakdown in communications was created by the outbreak of the war. Preoccupation with the nature of subjective reality, the transformation of consciousness and aspects of the mask so evident through her Dresden liaison were concerns which now, in Zurich, would be shared and catalyzed by Wigman's close personal and professional relationship with the Dada artists of the Cabaret Voltaire.³

About the same time that Wigman and Laban were moving and settling in at the new atelier at Seegartenstrasse 2, Janco arrived from Rumania to study architecture at the Zurich Polytechnic School. He became acquainted with the Dada artists soon after his arrival, and in the following year he radically changed from painting pictures in a naturalistic manner to working in a highly abstract and "plastic" style. In May of 1916, Janco's "African masks" were featured for the first time in performances at the Cabaret Voltaire. These coarse and frightening images, often stained a blood-red color, were sculpted and assembled from paper, horsehair, string, and textiles.⁴ Janco's masks became an important element in Dada performances and he continued to design them for the group's evenings until 1919, halting his studies at the Polytechnic school after one year to devote his energies to the making of such art objects.

The effect of the masks was startling. Hugo Ball noted in his diary that when Janco first arrived with his masks, each of the artists put one on and experienced a strange transformation. Ball wrote:
Not only did each mask seem to demand the appropriate costume, it also called for a quite specific set of gestures, melodramatic and even close to madness... The dynamism of the masks was irresistible... [They] simply demanded that their wearers should start up a tragicoabsurd dance.5

Between 1916 and 1918, Wigman used the mask in her work for the first time in six solo dances: Der Tod, Die Qual, Der Wahn, Der Schrei, Präludium VIII and Arie.6 We cannot be sure if Wigman's masked dances were intended to have the same shock value as Janco's.7 On certain occasions, however, she began her performance with masked dances to disarm the audience. In one performance at the Pfauen Theatre in Zurich, she opened the evening with her two most recently choreographed masked works Präludium VIII and Arie. These were followed immediately by three "spectre dances" and after a pause, by four "dream dances." Such a sequence seems to indicate that Wigman, like the Dadaists, was interested in the mask as a significant element in the transformation of individual consciousness. Like the Dada artists, too, her intent was to startle the audience with the unsettling effect produced by the mask face, to prepare them for an evening of dance which probed ever deeper into the spiritual. Thus, the "African" costuming of other contemporary works such as "Idol Worshipper" of Ecstatic Dances (1917) (Plate XII)8 reveal that she was as interested in getting the essential (as epitomized by the "primitive") into her art as were the Dadaists, who recited "African" poetry, composed and performed music wearing "African (or Oceanic-inspired) masks and adopted African stylistic conventions of representation.
Like the Dada artists then, Wigman was probably first drawn to use the mask in performance because of its symbolic connection with the idea of "immersion;" a "sinking" into an alternate reality, in which one experienced the spiritual so vividly and intensely that transformation and spiritual progress was inevitable. Certainly the titles of these first masked works (Death, Scream, Torture, etc.), suggest that on some level this was the case. They also suggest that the close proximity of the war was taking its toll on Wigman. No matter how many masks one wore or how much "interior space" one created for oneself, no amount of immersion in art could entirely block out the madness that was going on around her. Nolde had escaped the madness, for Wigman it was in her midst.

Thus Wigman delved much more deeply into the metaphysical possibilities of the mask to support the danced message. While Wigman shared with Janco and the Dada artists an interest in the mysterious power of the mask to transform individual consciousness and seemingly take on a life and will of its own, "causing" the wearer to conform to its artistic principles, she may have also valued the Dadaist shock value of the mask in performance, sensitizing and rendering the audience more receptive to the subsequent artistic message. This ultimately determined the direction of her creative pursuits.

Wigman considered dance an autonomous art form subject to its own principles, self-sufficient and complete in itself, able to create its own ambiance without the aid of music, sets or costumes. Though she ceded that one may create a mask dance by choreographing the persona of a mask that one has already in hand (just as Nolde was inspired by
masks he saw in ethnographic museums and those in his own growing collection), Wigman preferred instead to draw inspiration from the feeling (ecstasy) deep within herself, for which she then struggled to find the appropriately expressive gesture. Thus, unlike Nolde, rather than begin with the personality of the subject, Wigman wanted to determine the gesture of the body and face herself. The "dance personality," not individual expression, the totality not the typical, was of paramount importance. She frequently rejected music, costume, narrative, anything which would interfere with accurately and honestly expressing the "dance personality" revealed to her as she worked herself into what she termed a "rhythmic ecstasy."

For this reason, only in the course of the creative process, when realizing that the dance came about as a result of the immersion of self into another reality or persona or that it became a facet of herself which now broke free with a life of its own in art, or when the slightest chance movement of the face would conflict with the gesture of the dance instrument or persona as a whole--only then did she use the mask. These are criteria which indicate that her concern with the mask was far more than a romantic fascination or nostalgic longing for the "primitive." Nolde's sensibility to the plastic potential of the mask was, by contrast, influenced by his misconceptions concerning the "purity" of tribal existence. In this respect, Wigman's use of the mask was far less emotional, far more well-considered. Much more akin to Marcel Janco and the Dadaists, she used the mask both to evoke an emotionally disarming response in the viewer and to indicate that a psychological shift had or would occur.
As a choreographer, teacher and author, Mary Wigman understood personality in a broad unlimited sense. She felt that the truly human--i.e., expressive man--could not be held fast and embodied in a single solid mass or contour but only as expressive being and image could he be realized between extremes of expression and only fleetingly at that. True personality was an ethereal essence for Wigman, like electricity, manifesting itself between contrasting poles of force. Man's sense of true being had its source in his sense of identity--his self-image--and this was to be found in the difference between conflicting extremes such as grief and joy, hate and love, torment and pleasure, physical and nonphysical, death and life.

The categories into which Wigman's choreographies can be grouped reveal the approach she used to pursue her exploration of personality. These include freely expressive dances, restrained ecstatic dances, and dances associated with religious ecstasy. The first group of works is characterized by fluid, lyrical gestures executed as the dancer skims lightly over the floor. Frequently in these works Wigman oriented phrases of steps and gestures on a diagonal axis to maximize the sense of movement through space. Wigman performed these works in a relaxed, spontaneous, even arbitrary fashion as if she was dancing a stream of consciousness for the audience. The freely expressive dances are highly personal works--dances of self-indulgence--inspired by feelings and reminiscences of events in her life, and she presented them in a highly personal way. Swinging Landscape of 1929, for instance, is an eight-part dance-cycle inspired by her summer vacation along the Mediterranean coast. The parts entitled "Pastoral" and "Summer Dance" express her
feelings of well-being and lethargy basking in the sunshine of southern France. Another part, "Festive Rhythm," summarized her feelings of anticipation and excitement attending a bullfight in Pamplona. In all of them, Wigman danced with her hair free, with her face, arms, legs and feet bare, wearing costumes that follow her natural contour.

Wigman's restrained ecstatic dances, on the other hand, approached the question of personality from a more abstract and philosophical point of view which embraces a concern with psychological transformation and the spiritual aspect of physical events. In seeking a solution to the visual problem of representing such abstract concepts, Wigman sought inspiration in the non-naturalistic anthropomorphic images created by tribal craftsmen. In this study she was encouraged by Emil Nolde. Like the Dada artists in Zurich, Wigman also became interested in the personal experience of transformation when one wore a mask and the disarming effect masks had on the audience. Works such as "Idol Worshipper" (cf. Plate XII) reveal not only an interest in the abstracting effects of large primitive ceremonial costume, but her numerous masked works personifying death, pain, and insanity, among others, reveal a concern with tribal cultic and art-making traditions in which demonic inexplicable forces are rendered powerless and/or contained through form. For her restrained ecstatic dances, Wigman drew inspiration from the strong emphatic forms of tribal art and ceremony to create symbols embodying conflicting psychological impulses, which she sensed fractured man's sense of identity and alienated him from his environment.
Wigman preferred to use two types of masks: "soft masks" and sculptured, hard masks which, unlike the former, took on a life of their own under the bright stage-lighting. Soft masks appear in her later works of the late twenties and she continued to use them long after she stopped using hard masks in 1930. Soft masks appear to be reserved for those works which fall somewhere between her freely expressive dances and her restrained ecstatic dances. For instance, they appear in dances such as "Storm Song" of *Swinging Landscape* (1929) (Plate XIII), a personification of meteorological forces, and also in the fanciful Dance *Fairytales* (1925) (Plate XIV), and "Shadows," the fifth dance in an eight-part dance cycle entitled *The Way*. In this last dance, the dancers assume frontal and profile views, and yet these positions occur without the tension evident in Wigman's restrained masked works.11

The trend toward using soft masks coincided with the fact that Wigman began to move away from rigorous ecstatic expression either because she physically no longer had the stamina and strength necessary to execute contrasting movements with both great force and control, or because she no longer found that type of expression suitable to her life's experiences. Certainly her concern with transformation and polarity--particularly with life and death--continued throughout her career. This is evident in her repeated revivals of *Orpheus and the Underworld*, and her staging of *Rite of Spring* and *Carmina Burana*. Importantly, however, the above-mentioned shift coincides with a decided and fundamental change in Wigman's view of her work as a whole.

The restrained ecstatic dances such as "Ceremonial Form" (Plate XV) and "Witch Dance II" from *Visions* (1925) (Plate XVI), highly
contradictory in nature and physically very demanding for the dancer, were very different and experimental in approach from her stream of consciousness works such as "Pastoral" and "Festive Rhythm" of Swinging Landscape (1929). The earlier works reveal a fundamental shift of viewpoint from the idea of personality as defined and individual, conveyed choreographically and in performance in a personal way, to a view in which personality is understood in a much broader, universal sense. Through dance, Wigman explored her belief in the boundlessness of man as collective, fully-realized personality and the limitless potential of may as expressive image. Wigman expressed the breadth of this theme in terms of large expansive movements and monumental postures to convey her vision of a fully alive and expressive man. The dancer achieved this through the use of what could be termed a "body-mask" usually sewn from light, reflective, highly mobile textiles that both dissolved the solid mass and contour of the dancer's body and revealed it as a gesturing "speaking" being in a highly expressive way. The body-masks both emphasized the idea of man as essence and facilitated the exploration of man as expressive image.

Fundamental to these restrained ecstatic dances was the idea of the fully aware human being and the loss of, or immersion into, self-consciousness in some overpowering experience that exerted a transformative effect on the individual. Expressing extremes of emotion while drastically subjugating the body to the frontal plane and moving according to a highly architectonic floor pattern that left no room for deviation was always a test for the dancer in performance. The only alternatives were success or failure. Should the dancer encounter
technical difficulties in performance, there was no "recovering" stage presence through pantomime or a charming stage-personality. In this way, Wigman had deliberately poised dance and dancer on the edge of failure to set the stage for the ecstatic transformative event.

The dance forms that resulted from this concern with states of consciousness Wigman termed "Ich-teile"—hidden parts of her own personality. These, she maintained, had broken free from the collective ego ("Gesamt-ich") and subsequently demanded a life and form of their own. Works such as "Witch Dance II" of 1926, always demanded the use of the impersonalizing face and body-mask in both rehearsal and performance to emphasize the "other" face.

Similarly, dances inspired by religious ecstasy implied immersion and transformation of the self in religious experience. To communicate this experience Wigman drew on the religious tradition and imagery of many cultures: Christian medieval, Far Eastern, and primitive tribal. Like Nolde, she was inspired by Catholicism in works such as The Dancers of Our Dear Lady (1917), and Prayer, one of four religious ecstatic dances conceived as a group in 1918-19. Available archival material reveals that she was also inspired by the "spiritually abstracted," expressionistic medieval images of man and Gothic architectonic forms in works such as Dance Macabre (1917), Dance of Death (1926), and Totenmal (1930) (Plate XVII). Her immersion in the religious, dance and visual art traditions of Eastern Asia and the Orient inspired her to create ecstatic works with a decidedly exotic flavor. "Temple Dance," the last of four Ecstatic Dances (1918-19) and "Ceremonial Form" a masked dance from Visions (1925) are two examples of works which
reference the importance of dance in Indian temple ritual practice and use Indian dance gesture and costume. The masks for "Ceremonial Form" and "Witch Dance II," both Oriental in type and carved in the manner of Japanese Noh masks down to a shell-like thinness, as well as her use of sumptuous fabrics for her body-masks suggest a preoccupation with the Noh tradition of theatre.  

Although it is uncertain as to how the sculpted masks offer a different point of view, the change that occurred in Wigman's perception of her work, between her restrained ecstatic dances and works in which soft masks appear was expressed most clearly in the structuring of her program order. The program developed with shifts from a linear progression of eclectic works (with an emotional highpoint in the middle of the evening), to deliberately planned dance cycles, in which change was expressed as gradual and repetitious, not sudden and dramatic. By contrast, in her early career a typical program sequence would consist of two exotic dances accompanied by non-Western percussive instruments, followed by a pair of ecstatic dances, one demonic the other seraphic, and danced customarily without music. This was then followed by some of her more traditional works accompanied by music by Brahms, Liszt, etc. Both she and her audience recognized the ecstatic dances as the dramatic climax of her representation and she built her reputation on them.

Beginning in 1930, however, since Wigman no longer probed into the question of expressive image of man nor into the idea of instantaneous metamorphosis, gradually her idealism began to be tempered by an acceptance of the world as it was. Thus, her concern with personality and
transformation was expressed in terms of the seasonal cycles ("Moon Song," Dance Songs [1935], Autumn Dances [1937]) and the "turning heel of fate" ("Song of Fate," Dance Songs [1935]). She strove to align her image of the woman in society with the more conservative view of the new regime and created listless cycles enacting woman's various roles as bride and mother (Women's Dances 1934). The idealistic enthusiasm of her early works, like the element of ecstasy and the mask, is absent from these works and does not reappear until the fall of Germany became imminent in 1943.

Finally, the notion of human progress was also fundamental to Wigman's choreography and pedagogy. She sought to make dance accessible to all, enabling each "dancer" to gain access to their own "inner" realm and to express the fullness of the abstract experience by means of a suitably expansive and immediate dance vocabulary. The modern environment had changed the nature of man's experience and feelings and a new language was needed. Wigman felt that this education would potentially enrich both the individual and raise the "cultural mean." While all her dances were inspired by personal experience, she sought through dance to reveal the hidden realities of being in an impersonalized fashion which would inspire a feeling of recognition and affinity in every viewer. To this end, Wigman used the idea of the mask to suggest and universalize the mystery and rich potential of this "interior landscape."
CHAPTER V

MARY WIGMAN AND EMIL NOLDE: ASPECTS OF THE MASK

Wigman's desire to simplify and unify form, which ultimately led her to use the mask and body-masks, can be seen in all aspects of her dance. The mask aided her in radically essentializing the human figure to convey the metaphysical content of her works. She sought to do this, particularly in her ecstatic works, in an impersonalized way that she hoped would strike a common chord in the viewer. In doing so, she reduced use of space and movement to the horizontal, vertical, diagonal and the spiral and preferred to limit musical accompaniment, when she used it all, to measured triads of tones or beats of the drum or gong. The abstracting influence of the mask is also evident in her "natural" stage presence. Whether she wore a hard or soft mask, or painted her face with various opaque colors, or not, her face was always composed like a tragic mask. Even in her freely expressive dances where she performed wearing naturalistic make-up, her features were frequently "pulled" back against the skull very much like Nolde's portraiture. She would press her eyelids down as she turned her gaze inward, compressing, as it were, her face into her body in the same way that Nolde made compressions of his sitters.

Wigman associated the mask with the idea of man as symbol, capable of inspiring and revealing universal truths of being. For her, the
mask also symbolized a kind of psychological or emotional space—a domain, a complex space—between the realms of objective and subjective experience. Thus, Wigman frequently termed this the "dance space," a place where the body, the physical instrument of the dancer, became the expressive means of nonphysical experience. The gesturing dancer, like the mask and body-mask, was the medium—the instrument—that expressed both realms.2

Wigman not only used the mask to impersonalize the dance message, to alienate and awaken the viewer to his own metaphysical potential, but the mask also eliminated concern for the chance stressful facial or bodily gesture resulting from the extreme physical demands of the ecstatic dances. Thus, in masking the human form as a process of abstraction, the dancer was literally to become both physically and emotionally transformed. The dancer was to become a mask.3 As a mask, the dancer linked, yet separated, the physical and nonphysical; concealed the personal yet revealed personality on the metaphysical level. As a result, the personal dance-body and individual expression were reduced to an abstract—a "common level"—transcending all time and place to the level of myth.

Nolde's work was somewhat different in intention, method and result. As evidenced, by 1911, Nolde confidently and blatantly quoted from a wide variety of sources in his figural works. He creatively combined his vocabulary of facial types—features, contour, coiffeur, head-dress, etc., to create new facial types and groups. Increasingly, it is in Nolde's still-life works—as unconventional as his portraiture—that he most faithfully quoted from masks and figurines both primitive
and native in origin, creating highly expressive images, arranged in stage-like settings. Nolde painted not only from sketches made in ethnographic museums but also from his own growing collection of masks and figurines. The flowers that often find their way, as bouquets, into these works are from Nolde's own garden. They are images which indicate that Nolde was becoming increasingly self-absorbed, shifting his interest in the mask as an expression of communal spirit to an intensely personal one.

Such preoccupations culminate in works such as *Sick Man, Doctor, Death and Devil* of 1911 (Plate XVIII), which depicts a sick man (Nolde) sitting up in bed. The doctor and death look expectantly at Nolde, and the devil with bat wings spread across the background, is poised, with a frenzied expression of anticipation. The doctor is virtually identical to the dark-skinned mountain giant in _Nordabhang in Lütschenthal_, and seems to be quoted from an Oceanic figure type an example of which had been on exhibit (as of 1895) and remained in the collection of the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro, Paris. An Assyrian type representing the demon Labartu serves as the source for the devil (Plate 19).

By comparison, Wigman's *Dance of Death* (1925/26), the first of two medieval art-inspired masked dances for which archival material is available, reveals a set of sources somewhat different from those which inspired Nolde. In one image (Plate XX), the dancers form a semi-circle around Wigman. She leans back into the group, her body and costume creating a Gothic sway similar to that of the swooning Virgin caught by St. John in Matthias Grünewald's outer panel of the _Isenheim Alterpiece_. A variety of expressions are communicated by the dancers' large, angular,
individualized masks: suspense, grief, resignation and surprise. As a group the face masks are characterized by a reduction to the planar, a broad and symmetrical arrangement of features and smoothness of contour. They have been painted a dull white color and the eyes are pressed closed or stare frightfully ahead. Overall, the elongated faces of the masked dances recall Romanesque relief sculpture with its planar schematic abstraction of the human face and figure. This stylistic reference is reinforced by the rigid frontality of the dancers' poses. The woodcarver's craft is also revealed in these faces.

Like Nolde, Wigman seems to have been concerned that her dance masks bear the mark of the human hand. She valued the expressive gesture left by the craftsman's chisel. In addition, as the dancers perform under the stagelights the masks take on a life of their own, displaying an effect that is curiously reminiscent of Nolde's "double-contour." The rounded, hard edge of the mask caught the stage-light to frame the face within an aural glow.

In Dance of Death the dancers wearing the more sinister face masks worn were transformed into a closed mass of stiff folds by the heavier cloth of which the performers' costumes were sewn. Dancers wearing more lighthearted, comically grotesque masks, in turn, wore the sheerer, expressive costumes which both abstracted and revealed the dancers' gestures. As the soloist, Wigman's costume was distinctive compared to that of the chorus as evidenced in a striking photograph of 1926 (Plate XXI). Wigman's ankle-length dark body-mask with cowled hood, is ornamented with simple bands that are shaped like Gothic pointed arches. Springing upwards from the hem to culminate in the face, these have a
flattening effect on the body and direct the viewer's focus upon the dancer's face.

Wigman's concern with life and death expressed in terms of Christian medieval imagery continued in her choreography for Totenmal (1930), a work based on a late Expressionist poem by Albert Talhoff expanded into a sound-music-and-movement drama. Wigman was commissioned by Talhoff in 1928 to create a series of dances inspired by emotions of sorrow, fear and grief created by the cataclysm of World War I. In this instance the concept of the mask was superimposed on the creative process. Wigman wrote revealingly of her consternation in trying "to come closer" to the fifty odd Totenmal masks:

Confounded, I stood in front of the fifty faces carved of wood ... the male masks could be best adjusted to an almost ghostlike message. On the other hand, the torn-open faces of the women were brought into the focus of too much realism which--even though on a different level--also seemed to be forced into something phantomlike. And thus the first practical attempt failed by slipping somewhat into the grotesque. What was to be done? I knew of no way out.7

It is evident from the methodical nature of her approach that Wigman found it no simple task to use the gesture as a springboard for the creative ecstasy. She preferred rather to begin with the feeling," for which she then struggled to create an appropriate gesture.8 In an attempt to reverse her customary choreographic method, Wigman gave each dancer one of the highly individual and roughly carved masks and for several consecutive days conducted exercises in meditation. The dancers sat on the floor, their backs against the studio wall with their masks before them. Wigman asked the dancers to meditate upon their masks to
sense the specific personality and emotion of each. In the next exercise the dancers put the masks on and meditated upon themselves looking all the while in mirrors, putting themselves into the specific personality. Finally, the dancers were asked to improvise, to move and gesture freely, to express the emotions which filled them as dance instruments.9 It was only in the final stages of the choreographic process that Wigman gave artistic direction and focus to their free improvisations.

The dances were set within a design arranged like a cross-section view of a Gothic cathedral (cf. Plate XVI). Saints and other figures flank either side of the nave like Gothic jamb figures.10 Immediately behind the narthex, in the body of the church are the dead soldiers. They do not pass into the plane of space defined by the proscenium nor may the women pass through the portal into their realm.

The masks for the male chorus are sober and elongated (Plate XXII). The corners of their mouths are pulled down and some lips are parted as if about to speak. The long medieval robes and beguin caps which the men wear recall medieval clothing styles, while the implacable set profiles broad square chins and brows, long broad noses with flaring nostrils and tight-lipped mouths, conjures visions of the Polynesian monoliths of Easter Island. Even the frontally oriented, stepped pyramid formation of the men recalls the uphill scatter of the Easter Island statues, looking out over the sea, images incapable of offering consolation and to which all appeal by the female personalities is futile (Plate XXIII).11

The most dramatically distinctive figure is the ancient Semitic deity, Moloch—a squat frontal grotesque, dressed in Oriental pants and
tunic (Plate XXIV). The entire costume is sewn from silk and metallic fabric, and this lends him a sumptuously exotic and threatening appearance. The image of his bestial face and cruel adder-like mouth command fear and mortal sacrifice.

While there is clearly an eclecticism to be noted in the artistic borrowings of Wigman, very much indeed like that which we sense in Nolde, Wigman's intention is not to create types necessarily, but to evoke mood. For Nolde, it is new types that are created in Still Life of masks I of 1911 (Plate XXV), even though the intense blue-green background suggests the influence of Assyrian ceramic tiles. The brilliant yellow skull mask in the lower right corner seems to be directly copied from a trophy head from Mundurucu, Brazil. The forbidding black mask shown in profile view, to the left side, rendered in black slashing strokes, is strikingly similar to a canoe prow mask of the Solomon Islands.

The principle underlying Nolde's preoccupation with the domain of the mask was very simple: it was plastic. The demonstration of this principle in his works was a rich one. Hence, as a visual artist, Nolde was not interested in the mask as an aspect of a new philosophy of personality, rather, he was concerned with personality in an expanded sense. He was fascinated by the richness of personality as revealed through art and style, which, however multifaceted, repeatedly revealed—as one moved beneath the surface—a fundamentally primitive, authentic (i.e., comprised of freely flowing good and evil characteristics and impulses), common denominator. In seeming opposition lay
harmony and the fundamental interrelatedness of all personality, both natural and supernatural.

By contrast, while Wigman was just as concerned with the problem of personality and harmony as was Nolde, her viewpoint was taken from the opposite end of the spectrum. She was not as deeply concerned with the communal spirit as was the painter but focussed rather on the development of individual personality. She was not as eclectic in her assimilation of dance and costume styles, moreover, but strove to develop a style which expressed her own experience as a modern woman. The mask was a means of facilitating this expression, whether in costume gesture or in actual masks.

Wigman also used the carved wooden mask in a pair of solo dances from the Visions cycle (1926): "Ceremonial Shape" (cf. Plate XIV) and "Witch Dance II" (cf. Plate XV). It is the complementary counterpart of the demonic, earth-bound "Witch Dance," which Wigman admitted she associated with Mongolia, Attila and his conquering Huns. In actuality, the masks are planar portrait likenesses of Wigman's own face. Wigman wrote that, while she was choreographing "Ceremonial Shape," Magito, the mask-carver, sat daily in the corner of her studio and observed the growing of the choreographed figure. He projected himself into this figure. Then he disappeared into the forests of Moritzburg, outside Dresden, to look for the wood best suited to the carving. The first mask was not sufficiently "impersonal" and it eventually was used in "Witch Dance." The second mask, however, was entirely suitable. To quote Wigman:
The finely grained wood was carved down to a chinalike thinness, transfixed into an oblong shape, with a mere suggestion of human features. Mouth and eyes painted with greyish blue brushstrokes on the ivory-colored wood. Two small slits for the eyes. Nothing else . . . To wear the mask was torture . . . Its only orifice, its only supply of air, consisted of the narrow slits for the eyes, which permitted no vision and barely let me recognize whether I moved in light or darkness.  

While the features are unmistakably Wigman's own, the pursed heart-shaped mouth, crescent-shaped eyelids closed as if in meditation and the smooth, gentle swelling cheeks recall Indian sculpture and painting. There is a characteristically Indian sensuousness and vitality here that is heightened by the dancer's costume and delicately gesturing hands and feet. As in Indian art she wears a headdress which rises to a slender flame at the crown of her head indicating her heightened spiritual consciousness. Her bodice is made of a very sheer gauze and the full skirt of a heavy opaque cloth. A large hoop sewn into the hem, 17 gathered the skirt's fullness and also enforced the space-creating discipline which intensified the expressiveness of her ecstatic dances. This dance was extremely controlled. With the exception of a few hip-shot poses, the body is held strictly on axis, moving within a column of space. Only the gesturing hands and feet reach out into space. The mask, ironically, appears to be highly mobile. The subtle nuances of the head under the bright stage lights result in flickering changes in the mask's facial gesture. This was an expressive feature which particularly interested Wigman and one that she would explore further in "Witch Dance II."
The demonic expression, heavier features, larger openings for the eyes and nostrils, abrupt transitions between the facial planes and darker eyebrows distinguish the witch from the ceremonial mask. There are numerous photographs of this, one of Wigman's most popular and long-lived solos. The liveliness of the mask as the light flashes over its surface, heightens the drama of her relationship with the space around her. She raises her hand to the corner of her mouth. The eyes and lips seem to open and close in response to, and as if she were speaking to, the space around her (Plate XXVI). The dance also seems to have a primitive prototype.18

Wigman often remarked that she sensed the slowly evolving dance personality before it ever emerged into the "danced reality." While improvising in her studio to give form to the intensity of feeling which resulted in the creation of "Witch Dance II" the recurrent gesture was one which happened in response to "something" that "forced the body time and again into a sitting or squatting position in which the greedy hands could take possession of the ground."19 One night when she returned to her room from one of her choreographic sessions in her adjoining studio, after having worked herself into, as she said a "rhythmic intoxication" to draw closer to the "stirring character," she caught sight of herself in her dressing mirror. It was then she realized the primitive nature of the dance personality. She writes:

I returned to my room utterly agitated, I looked in the mirror by chance. What it reflected was the image of one possessed, wild dissolute, repelling, and fascinating. The hair unkept, the eyes in their sockets, the nightgown shifted about, which made the body appear almost shapeless: there she was--the witch--the earth-bound creature with her unrestrained, naked instincts,
with her insatiable lust for life, beast and woman at one and the same time. I shuddered at my own image, at the exposure of this facet of my ego which I had never allowed to emerge in such unashamed nakedness.\footnote{20}

In the following two decades, a mellowness and maturity is expressed in Wigman's statement. This is a quality evident even in Nolde during his later years. When Nolde's mask still-lifes reappear at the end of the 1920's during a time of great economic crisis, they are softer, quieter and less intense. There is an air of melancholy about them as if they are remote, inaccessible objects. They are painted in the now familiar shallow stage-space but, as if a scrim had been pulled down over them, the edges are softened and there is a retrospectiveness and great inwardness about them. Nolde's manner of rendering human expressiveness in terms of contrasting rhythms and colors has been softened by the mummified atmosphere of these later mask still-lifes.

At the end of the twenties, Nolde moved from mask-paintings that were theatrical and immediate in appeal to remote internalized images. These no longer expressed his earlier anthropological enthusiasm for the rich variety of world cultures nor, for that matter, any further interest in the idea of the collective consciousness. It is as if the dream of the collective consciousness were but a fond memory. Wigman, on the other hand, used the mask to impersonalize and universalize the inner aspect of personality. For her the mask was directly related to a kind of personal journey that began with the "hidden" other self and moved from there into the physical, tangible realm of the dance. When in the mid-thirties, she too lost "something"--the tension and energy that infused her work with strength and a tireless enthusiasm for the
notion of a kind of spiritual evolution—it was at a time when the new regime had, at least for the moment, rigidly delineated the idea of personality in its most public and private aspects. Personality was no longer an open question, rich in potential.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Emil Nolde's and Mary Wigman's use of the mask reflects a deeply felt German concern with personality in both the individual and society at large. Yet, both artists were interested in exploring the richness and variety of personalities in a manner that cut across historical, geographic and linguistic boundaries and in conveying, through expressionistic images of man, the essential nonphysical aspect of human personality in which all men share but which no individual or society could embody completely. Inspired by the goal of expressing this common spiritual level, they strove to awaken the common man, and ultimately the Volk--through new synaesthetically powerful forms--to the realization of true being, not as a disposable mass of quanta and biological statistics, but as essence and feeling. They used the mask to both shock and arouse the viewer from the deadening conventions which produced "mass men;" but they also emphasized the idea of shared experiences which minimized differences between human beings in what was perceived as an increasingly pluralistic and disorienting environment.

Modern experience had changed man's view of the world and of himself. Man no longer stood at the center of creation--the darling of nature--in awe of the natural environment in which, as if in some great arena, terrible and sublime forces met in conflict. Man himself had
become an arena of conflicting forces. The individual felt torn and isolated. Many saw a need for the restoration of the communal sense and the reintegration of body and soul. Man's view of his environment had been complicated by the simultaneity and dynamism of modern experience, making him no longer sure of his place in the scheme of things. Certain only was that the concern with the personal and collective identity was both metaphorically and literally in the foreground of contemporary thought and art. In all, this was a time which seems to suggest that, when people are least sure of their identity, they are most likely to assume a mask.

The mask alienated, distanced and established a new, more spiritual perspective on the nature of personality. It created "private" space for artists and individuals whose Lebensraum had been invaded by the products of modern technology and industry—systems of mass communication and urban overcrowding. Ironically, behind the mask people were better able to express themselves. Ultimately, in the work of artists such as Wigman and Nolde, the mask was associated with a kind of psychological or emotional space that was created when the artist was able to suspend the artwork between poles of feeling, expressed as rhythmically juxtaposed gestures reduced to their most elemental aspect. It is established psychological distance and space that increased the metaphysical possibilities. To win this space was to win life.

Both Nolde and Wigman were keenly interested in the expressive potential of the human being. This interest led them to cut across geographic and chronological boundaries, to explore the broad range of human gesture. Nolde was primarily concerned with the potential
vocabulary of facial gesture; Wigman with the gesturing body as a whole. They drew from a variety of cultures and artistic traditions far removed in time and place to create an eclectic collection of images. To convey the essential "inner" reality in which all men share (despite external differences), they reduced their artistic languages to essential elements of line, rhythm, form, color, space and composition. Conversely, this impulse toward abstraction informed their point of view. While exploring the range of human gesture they both sought to limit the body, and particularly the face, to the planar. Features were reduced to a set of characteristic symbols, volumes were expressed in terms of force and counterforce. Figures were presented in either frontal or profile view and their eyes were often sightless or the lids closed, the gaze turned inward on the "inner vision"--on the awful, exalted moment in which self-realization occurred.

In this, Nolde and Wigman's approaches differed from James Ensor, one of the most renowned artists of the mask. Indeed, like Ensor, both artists associated the mask with the tragic, darker side of human personality. This is evident in Nolde's early caricatures, strange human and animal composite figures, personifications of fickle, natural forces and religious works. In Wigman's lifetime there was also an ever-present concern with death and the dark, potentially destructive, forces in man and nature. Nolde's vision of man was not very consoling while Wigman's figures frequently expressed an ecstasy of gloom. This similarity with Nolde notwithstanding, Wigman's and Nolde's art was not ultimately a scathing social commentary of the kind seen in Belgian master's mask images. Rather, masks appeared in the work of Nolde and
Wigman as both increasingly sought to convey the non-physical or abstract realm of experience. For these two German artists, the mask established a common level. It symbolized the many and the one, the particular and the universal, the personal and the mythic.

Furthermore, both artists were attracted by the idea of threshold and metamorphosis realized through a highly charged emotional state. The ecstatic state was that moment when unification of the physical and nonphysical realms of individual personality and cultural personality was made potentially possible. The mask in this context did not just symbolize the idea of transformation but established a boundary between the physical reality of the viewer's world and the abstract reality of the artwork.

As evidenced, Nolde's and Wigman's preoccupation with the ecstatic state was to a large degree informed by their interest in the principle of eurythmia, or harmony in contrast. Like other artists associated with developments in the New German Dance, they applied the ancient Greek principle to the contemporary context. The juxtaposition of emotional poles was rendered in a rhythmic composition of contrasting gestures reduced to their most elemental aspect and these images were placed in a flattened plane of space. This created a tension-filled environment which set the art work at the breaking point.

As Wigman and Nolde infused their work with polarities they created an energized, highly potent environment in which tension was controlled by the artist's genius for composition. This was the environment of threshold. Consequently, the more extreme the contrast of polar opposites, the more fully-realized the sense of harmony in the art work and
in the experience of the viewer. In like manner, the greater the juxtaposition between extremes of stylistic expression, the greater the potential and the more dramatic the synthetic, transformative, sublime moment in which the self and the communal sense were revitalized.

Nolde infused his work with dualities in terms of style and composition to realize airless, tension-filled images depicting the transforming power of the communal spirit. Wigman used contrasting gestures and movements to express not just the broad scope of human feeling and expression but she performed with such forcefulness and abandon that she embodied that moment when the ego is torn apart and surrenders itself to a higher power.

Central to the principle of eurhythmia was the concept of rhythm. Rhythm was perceived as the essential ordering and coordinating power—the primal evolutionary force in the universe. It was as close to man as the pulsing of blood through his veins, as the coordination of his limbs as he walked and as extraneous to him as the building and erosion of mountains or the movement of the galaxies. Wigman and Nolde absorbed the belief propagated by such dance pedagogues as Emil Jaques-Dalcroze and Rudolf von Laban that the development of the rhythmic sense would produce a more harmonious individual and society, lessening, in effect, the cleft between physical and nonphysical reality if not altogether eliminating it as these two spheres of experience became integrated. Conversely, within a ritualistic and festive context, the development of the rhythmic sense in communally shared experiences would quicken the communal sense and expand individual potential.
By subjugating his compositions to the tyranny of the frontal plane, Nolde set up strong visual rhythms consisting of contrasting lines and colors which excited the senses and became metaphors for the "plane" of feeling. In his religious paintings in which events from Christian mythology are expressed as intense emotional experiences shared by a group of individuals, the plane of feeling transforms the image into a portrait of the collective consciousness. Wigman also used Christian ritual, but added Indian and Oriental ritual for the inspiration of her dances. Here the restrained gesture of the face and body relentlessly oriented to the frontal plane heightened the expressive transformative moment and created a new equilibrium by establishing an exquisitely controlled tensile relationship between the physical and nonphysical.

Thus we find a two-pronged approach in the work of Wigman and Nolde in reference to the concept of metaphysical evolution. The first sought to initiate the spiritualizing process through the development of the individual; the second began with the community as a whole. Growing out of these approaches, the difference between Nolde and Wigman's work is, then, one of process. An intuitive artist, Nolde began with the gesture to characterize certain emotions. He drew from the visual vocabulary he formulated over the years to express the ecstatic moment. Wigman, on the other hand, began with feeling itself—the ecstatic moment—and then struggled to find the appropriate expressive gesture and language. The eclecticism of Nolde's viewpoint was linked to his concern with the idea of the many in the one—the collective ego in each individual. Wigman focussed on the development of individual potential.
In marked contrast to Nolde, her vision took its point of departure from a concern with the one in the many. Implicit in both viewpoints and processes of spiritualization, however, was the idea that for the ego to be transformed by heightened emotional experience, it had to relinquish its uncertain sense of self to open consciousness to another "power" or realm of experience.

This thought is conveyed in art works of the two artists. Their ecstatic works featuring mask or mask-like faces, are characterized by the use of restraint to convey the heightened emotional state. In essence, they subjugated their own creative will to principles of rhythm and plane and in so doing created works which symbolized and engaged the viewer in an alternate reality: the domain of the mask. This was a domain in which only the common, typical human experience was real; in which the personal self was expanded and the communal spirit revitalized. To be conscious of this realm was to have life.
ENDNOTES

CHAPTER I:

1There are indications that Nolde must have met the dancer at an earlier date, sometime between the time of her arrival in Dresden in 1909 and before he created the very revealing series of book vignettes of 1910 in which he paints portrait heads of himself and Wigman growing from one neck. This image is just one of twenty-four vignettes which are characterized by an interesting combination of dualities: of male and female, good and evil personalities, animal and humans rendered in black and white, which meet in opposition without fulfillment. Shortly after 1911, Wigman and Nolde drift apart. Although it is not the purpose of this essay to explore the nature of their personal friendship but rather the evidence of professional intercourse in their work, it is interesting that, while Nolde had been working with the plastic potential of mask for already twenty years, it is at this time that he becomes completely absorbed in it. One wonders if he was in fact attracted to Wigman and had to mask his feelings. Certainly his masks at this time are associated with the idea of the animus or animality.


3Ernst Schreyer supports this suggestion. See Ernst Schreyer, "The Shapes of Space; the art of Mary Wigman and Oskar Schlämmmer," Dance Perspectives (Spring 1970): 16.

4Though Nolde's preoccupation with the dance is made evident in general comments on the dance, particularly after 1900, Nolde mentions his friendship with Wigman only once. Emil Nolde, Jahre der Kämpfe (Cologne: DuMont Schauberg, 1967): 195.

5Ibid.


7Ibid.

8It is believed that Nolde's dance sketches owned by Wigman were lost when Dresden was bombed. In personal correspondence with the author dated October 19, 1987, Martin Urban relates, however, that some sketches are still extant and are in the Nolde Stiftung Seeßl, the Museum Ludwig, Cologne, and in the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph M. Edinburg in Boston.
9 Ibid.

10 Ada Braun became the wife of architect Mies von der Rohe.


12 See Peter Selz, Emil Nolde (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1963): 15. Nolde's association with Die Brücke artists was as accidental as it was short-lived. After seeing a few of Nolde's paintings on exhibit in the Arnold Gallery in Dresden in 1906, the Brücke artists so admired the older artist's tempestuous use of color that they invited him to become a member of their newly formed group, located on the industrial west end of Dresden. Nolde joined Die Brücke in 1907 and was immediately immersed in the medieval workshop-type atmosphere that these artists cultivated. Inspired by their humanistic goal of revitalizing the communal spirit of the working class, the Brücke artists chose to sacrifice the development of individual style in favor of developing a homogenous group style that would express both the sincerity and the single-mindedness of their artistic aims. The close and intense studio atmosphere of the group had a beneficial effect on the shy, taciturn Nolde. The Brücke artists introduced Nolde to the woodcut, and he, in turn, introduced them to the etching medium and inspired them with the fantastic subject matter and daring use of color in his paintings. While contact with these artists catalyzed Nolde's search for his own style and the number of works he produced increased sharply, Nolde soon found the close creative atmosphere too claustrophobic. He needed solitude and freedom to develop his own style. Thus after only a year Nolde left Die Brücke.

13 É. Jaques-Dalcroze based his system Eurythmics on his belief in the ancient Greek principle of "eurythmía," or harmony in contrast. This concept was known by ballet masters since the Renaissance and now was accommodated by the Swiss musician to suit the modern concept of dance and gymnastics. Just as harmony and balance were maintained by the coordination of parts working together as a unit, so too by developing the rhythmic sense, modern man would awaken to a new sense of harmony; the wholeness of body and spirit. It was believed that modern man had lost this sense, of the great essential life force and by engaging in the study and practice of exercises inspired by simple musical rhythms, man would regain it.

14 Müller, Das Leben eine grosse Tänzerin: 31.

15 Emma Louis Thomas, Professor of Dance, University of California at Los Angeles. Personal correspondence with the author, dated October 28, 1985.
Nolde had also just returned from a trip abroad. From 1910-11 he had travelled to the Netherlands to study the work of Van Gogh and visit the Belgian painter of masks, James Ensor, at his atelier in Ostend. Upon Nolde's return to Germany, like Ensor, he also began to incorporate carnival masks into the numerous mask paintings produced before the outbreak of World War I. Unlike Ensor, who used masks to parody and criticize the Belgian bourgeoisie, who could not understand nor accept his art, Nolde's interest in carnival masks was a plastic one, devoid of cynicism or sarcasm.

Rudolf von Laban, Hungarian dancer and teacher, was first and foremost a dance theoretician. He did not settle on an individual dancing or teaching style but tried to explore all possibilities for dance. He was not concerned with interior, emotional space as was his famous pupil, Mary Wigman, but was interested in developing movement as a theory of harmony, consisting of the elemental powers of space, time and energy. He codified the nature and limits of human movement in his "swing scales" shortly before World War I, using Wigman as his model. Wigman writes in her autobiography that, "Every movement had to be done over and over again until it was controlled and could be analyzed, transposed and transformed into an adequate symbol." Mary Wigman, The Mary Wigman Book (Middletown, CT: Wesleyen University Press, 1973): 39. By the time Laban and Wigman moved to Zurich, Switzerland in 1915, this process of codification had become the body of his revolutionary dance notation, with which he hoped to preserve choreography and build a world literature for dance.

Mary Wigman, The Mary Wigman Book: 55.

Vera Maletic, Assistant Professor of Dance, Ohio State University. "Laban and Wigman," Wigman Centennial Day Conference, February 17, 1986.

CHAPTER II:

There seems to be a direct correspondence between this concern with polarity and the extensions of man into space by means of telegraph, radio, telephone and other systems of mass communication. The Futurists, for example, viewed the mind and heart of man as extending beyond the parameters of the physical body to interpenetrate with objects in the outside world. Man's central nervous system had been extended in all directions both in his immediate surroundings and across the globe beyond the body politic. A decade later the Surrealists, influenced by Freudian psychology, would perceive themselves as mediums, recording and graphically conveying--like telegraph operators--information received from the outer limits of the psyche when the rational mind had been successfully silenced.

Emil Nolde wrote in his autobiography Jahre der Kämpfe that, "Duality plays a large part in my pictures and graphics. Opposition and unity: man and woman, desire and suffering, divinity and devil. The colors are, too, contrasted one against the other: cold and warm,

3 Discussing Mary Wigman's contributions to the modern dance medium, Arthur Michel also wrote that Wigman was the first to realize the "human being as tension in space; that is, the dissolution of the dancer into swaying movement discharging tension . . . [she] embodied human existence as tension within herself." Arthur Michel, "The Modern Dance in Germany Part I," Modern Dance, ed. Virginia Steward (New York: Dance Horizons, 1970): 5.


5 This concern with the supernatural is particularly evident in the work of Symbolist writers such as Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, Knut Hamsun and Maurice Maeterlinck, painters James Ensor and Edvard Munch and composers Hector Berlioz, Claude Debussy and Alexander Skrjabin.

6 Wassily Kandinsky's theoretical writings Über das Geistige in der Kunst (Munich: R. Piper, 1912) and "Über die Formfrage," Der Blaue Reiter (Munich: R. Piper, 1912) supports this idea. He writes that it is only as the average man's realm of experience is expanded through the sensible effects of color and form, that he may attain a higher level development in which he will discern the spiritual meaning of beings and objects. According to Kandinsky, it is only the art work—an emanation of the artist's spirit made concrete—that can initiate and catalyze this spiritual sublimation in the individual and mankind as a whole.

7 Wassily Kandinsky coined the term "inner necessity" to express the artist's experience of the internal content of form. According to Kandinsky, "inner necessity" was essential to the creative process and was determined by what he termed a "purposive vibration in the human soul." See Concerning the Spiritual in Art (New York: Wittenborn, Schulz, Inc., 1947): 48-49.


CHAPTER III:

1 The intertwining of masks and figures on the panels of cabinets and washtables, prefigures Nolde's mask and figural still lifes of the 1920's, in which primitive masks, idols and fetish figurines appear with flowers in a spaceless, stage-like setting. The masks and floral motifs used to decorate a buffet (Cf. Buffet, a drawing executed in St.
Gallen 1892 39.3 x 29.5 cm Schiefler-Mosel 16, Nolde Stiftung reproduced in Manfred Reuther, Das Frühwerk Emil Nolde, [Cologne: DuMont, 1985] Plate 13) later became the subject of his paintings rather than mere decoration.

2 In one such drawing, Girl's Head (Vignette) in the Nolde Stiftung ([14 x 10.2 cm] reproduced in Manfred Reuther, Das Frühwerk Emil Nolde, Plate 125), the head grows upward from the heart of a flower. The un-modelled flat face is framed by an interlace of swirling hair, and the features of the female face are reduced to a few lines and dots.

3 Nolde lived in Flensburg, Germany from 1884-88. There he observed and recorded the middle and lower class "urban primitives" he found in cafes and bars. Later, Nolde began sketching the peasant-folk of Appenzell, a small village outside St. Gallen, Switzerland, even before he took up residence there in 1892. He was both personally and artistically attracted to the indigenous rugged types.

4 The portraits of Appenzeller Hans Heinrich Schurig (1885) and the ascetic Peter Nikolai Utoff (1885), as particular examples, reveal Nolde's interest in visualizing extremes of personality: The caricature of Schurig depicts a shiftily-looking burgher, whose tiny, nervous eyes and large cruel mouth give the impression that his means of doing business are not always the most ethical. Peter Nikolai Utoff, in turn, has a piercing glance and profile which thrusts into space with the fanatic intensity of a zealot. Nolde depicts the "driven" aspect of Utoff's personality literally, as a strong wind blows him from behind sending his hair forward and threatening to pull away his entire face.

Generally speaking, the silhouettes of the Appenzellers are crisp, hard and of a consistent line quality. This is not true of the Flensburg Strolch, and Artist caricatures, where Nolde's own uncertain artistic direction seems expressed in the agitated contour of these images. These drawings are characterized by a compression of all logical anatomical connections between the head and shoulders. They are also Nolde's first tentative efforts to express, through asymmetry, two different aspects of a single personality. The duality is expressed in the eyes which are most noticeably ill-matched: The Strolch's left eye rolls in afurtive way, and the right one stares greedily to the right. In the same way, only one of the artist's long almond-shaped eyes is filled in. It is depicted almost fully frontal, though the head is nearly in true profile, as in Egyptian conventions of representation. Nolde's use of asymmetry became commonplace in his later work, a convention which, with time, gave way to the richness of the artist's eclectic cross-cultural assemblage of facial features.

5 The hybrid Mask of Energy (a composite pig-lion-human mask) also recalls Nolde's furniture designs both in its symmetricality and in the intensity of emotional expression. It also seems to be the first instance of the "trophy theme" in Nolde's art. The octagonal textured background of the mounting and relatively naturalistic rendering of
this mask, suggests that Nolde was influenced by the taxidermist's craft. The trophy theme resurfaced after Nolde's return from the South Seas in 1914, and is characterized by such work as the stil-life Trophies (d.u.), in which several decapitated or shrunken heads are suspended from a pole.

Similarly, the treatment of the face in Cave Women is similar to Nolde's postcard My Bowling Brothers, of 1892, in which the men's bodies are numerously shaped like bowling pins. Their facial features are reduced to simple geometric shapes and stretched over their spherical faces.

Without having any specific references, we can only guess that the artist could have seen ethnographic materials in the anthropological and ethnographic collections of the Dresden Museum of Zoology, Anthropology and Ethnology, which had been accumulating works since they opened to the public in 1868. The Dresden Museum of Antiquities, too, had extensive holdings of art works from all parts of the ancient world. See Thomas Schafer, Meinholds Wegweiser durch Dresden (Dresden: Meinholz and Sons, n.d.): 85-86.

Nolde had been consistently spending winters in Berlin since 1903, but it was only after his association with the Brucke artists that he began to seriously study the works of ancient and primitive artists on exhibit in that city. There he found a wealth of materials on display in museums. Berlin possessed exceedingly rich collections of Non-European and ancient art. The holdings of the Berlin Ethnographic museum rivalled those in the British National Museum in extent and scientific value. Though it is difficult to cite works of specific influence on Nolde's art, it can be surmised that he could have seen works produced by the Indian cultures of Central, South and North America and, notably, a fine collection of dancing masks brought back by Captain Jacobsen from the Kwaikiutl Indians. African culture was also well represented. Of particular value was a fine group of Negro heads brought back from East Africa by Captain Cooke. The museum also owned collections of works from Polynesia, New Zealand, Micronesia, New Holland, New Guinea, Hindustan, Chinese Turkestan, Bukhara, the Himalaya and Brahmapostra districts, Indo-China, Siberia, Mongolia, Korea, China, the Ainans (the original inhabitants of Japan), in addition to prehistoric and ancient European works. The museum also owned Heinrich Schliemann's so-called "Treasure of Priam." Nolde's eclecticism also suggested that he must have spent time studying the extensive collections of ancient art in the Pergamum Museum, the Emperor Frederick Museum and the Old and New Museum. In these he could have seen many works of art and ethnographic materials from all parts of the ancient world. While the Emperor Frederick Museum exhibited Early Christian, Byzantine, Coptic, Mohammedan and Romanesque works, the remaining museums displayed works that were Anatolian, Hittite, Assyrian, Arabian and Egyptian in origin. See Karl Baedeker, Berlin and Its Environs (Leipzig: Karl Baedeker, 1908): 76-90, 98-102 and 133-38. The anthropological assemblage on show here--from art works to everyday objects,
from costumes to agricultural tools—could have nurtured his keen interest in the communities that produced such objects. The homogeneous style of so many of these artistic traditions could also have catalyzed his own interest in rendering the spirit of community in his own art.


CHAPTER IV:

1 Working in her small closet of a room in Dresden, Wigman had begun to choreograph without music out of necessity. She had neither the room nor the money for an accompanist. In time, however, she found that works accompanied only by the rhythmic padding of her bare feet were entirely consistent with her wish that dance be viewed as an independent, self-sufficiently expressive art form. She not only continued to choreograph without music in Zurich but this came to be known as one of her greatest contributions to the dance.

2 Hanya Holm, who for many years was Wigman’s assistant in Dresden, wrote that the choreographer did not seek to express “mere feelings” in dance; these were “already too clearly delineated, too obvious.” Rather, Wigman danced “the constant change of mental conditions, as they are alive in man as a rhythmic flow.” Hanya Holm, “The Mary Wigman I Know,” The Dance Has Many Faces, ed. Walter Sorell (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1986): 42.

3 By her own account, Wigman was intimately acquainted with the Dada artists, particularly with Sophie Taeuber, who studied and designed costumes at the Laban school, and with Hans Arp and Tristan Tzara. The artists were allowed into Laban’s “inner sanctum” only at certain times, but they were frequent guests in Wigman’s apartment. She, in turn, frequented the soirées at the Cabaret Voltaire, performed in Dada performances (as did a number of the “Labanese” girls wearing Janco’s enormous masks) and on one occasion, organized a fancy-dress ball for the artists.


6 Präludium VIII was choreographed to music by Bach. This dance and Arie were premiered June 18, 1917.
7See for instance Janco's oil painting *Cabaret Voltaire* (whereabouts unknown) of 1916, illustrated in William Rubin, "Primitivism" in Twentieth Century Art, vol. 2: 536. This is the only pictorial source depicting those early Dada soirees. The painting, however, captures the same chaotic cabaret atmosphere that is described in literary descriptions. Here an enormous grinning white mask presides over the theatre. It floats above the heads of the grotesquely masked actors and leers at the audience. Four members of the public seem to point and gesture toward it.

8In "Idol Worshiper," Wigman wears a costume that is constructed largely of organic materials. She wears a rattan shirt which is secured around the neck, a coarse straw wig and twisted or knitted fiber cap that is pulled down low over her forehead. This costume is very similar to primitive costumes worn by the South Sea Islanders which Wigman could have seen on exhibit in the Basel Anthropological Museum. Wigman's costume is similar to a Sulka ceremonial mask with a skirt attached under the chin (cf. Plate 47 in Jean Guirat, The Arts of the South Pacific, trans. Anthony Christic [Thames and London: 1963]: n.p.). Her cap seems inspired by an Oceanic type of cap and mask headdress made from twisted fiber, straw and feathers (cf. Plate 18 in Carl A. Schmitz Oceanic Art, trans. Norbert Guterman [New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1971]: n.p.). Wigman's coarse shoulder-length wig--cut off blunt at the bottom and secured at the sides of the face--seems directly inspired by actual native hairstyles (cf. Plate 3, Man and Wife, a photograph of two natives of Dutch New Guinea taken by Colonel Gooszen during his voyage there, reproduced in Kulturen der Erde, vol. 14 "New Guinea," ed. Ernst Fuhrmann [Hagen I.W.: Folkwang, 1922]: n.p.).

9Discussing Wigman's philosophy concerning the artist's role in society, Hanya Holm wrote that it was Wigman's belief that "the artist must absorb the primordial elements of life during the process of creation . . . he must lose himself in something greater" in what Wigman called "The immediate, indivisible essence of life." Though man's individual consciousness may be extinguished momentarily in the course of this experience, the artist is "rewarded for it by the singular gift of his participation in the all-embracing universal happenings of his time." Hanya Holm, "The Mary Wigman I Know," 40.

10Unlike the Dadaists who felt that African or Oceanic-inspired masks best suited the spirit of their art, Wigman seems to have been at some point completely won over by the Japanese Noh masks, in which she said "the mystery of transformation" was crafted-in by the craftsman. This power, she continued, revealed itself only in "soul-filled movement," not as it hung on display against a "museum wall." Mary Wigman, "Der Tanzer und sein Instrument," Der Kreis 9, no. 12 (Dec. 1932): 570. Wigman's interest in the art of the Far East may have been inspired by Nolde, since the brushstrokes of some of his watercolors owe a certain debt to Japanese painting techniques. In general however, the mask had been banished from European realistic theatre since the days of the
Greeks and it was only in the Noh theatre that a mask tradition still flourished to which artists such as Wigman could turn for inspiration. Ernst Schreyer suggests that her interest in the Orient was reinforced by contacts with the Dresden Ethnological Museum and with the art dealer Felix Tikotin, who exhibited his fine collection of Far Eastern art in the Gallery Arnold in 1923. Fred Coolemans, who performed occasionally in the style of Javanese dances, worked as an assistant teacher at the Wigman school and Viktor Magito, a mask-carver from the Baltic states, who experimented with Japanese Noh masks was also in Dresden where his wife studied at the Wigman school. Ernst Schreyer, "The Shapes of Space; the Art of Mary Wigman and Oskar Schlemmer," 20.

While the content of the above dances does not warrant the same kind of evocation as in the rarified transforming emotional experience of her ecstatic dances where sculpted masks are used, they were, nonetheless, sufficiently nonphysical in nature and for Wigman, removed from her own individual life experience. As a result, the impersonalizing use of a mask was not necessary.

While Wigman danced in a fluid, "painterly style" in Dance Macabre, the first version of Dance of Death, another dancer interpreted the musical accompaniment by Saint-Saens with a sculptured, stony quality of a "chimera from Notre Dame." Martin Zendenwall, "Tanz," Der Kritiker 3, no. 3/4 (1921): 39.

Though it is far from clear, Wigman may have been drawn to the Noh tradition of masking and costume because of its connection to the "spiritual." The Japanese spectral cult found its highest expression in the Noh play. In this context, the human face and body were abstracted by means of masks and large loose costumes to suggest disembodied beings. See Siegfried Wichmann, "The Far-Eastern Pattern-Background Principle as Source of Initial Attempts at Abstraction in Western Painting at the Close of the Nineteenth and Beginning of the Twentieth Centuries," World Cultures and Modern Art, ed. Siegfried Wichmann (Munich: Bruckmann Publishers, 1972): 91-96.

CHAPTER VI:

To refocus the dramatic event, to restore equilibrium and centralize her ecstatic choreography, Wigman always included a sequence of circling or spiralling movements. Like the mask, the circle and spiral referenced the universal aspect: the mask conveying man as image transcending all time and place and the spiral conveying the cyclical and progressive nature of human experience. Pola Nirenska, a former pupil of Wigman, stated that the facility to turn indefinitely on a small raised platform without falling was one of the few technical skills upon which Wigman adamantly insisted. Pola Nirenska, "The Evolution of Wigman's Approach in America," City College of New York, 1986.

In this process, Wigman frequently included "emptying-out" exercises in her company and school classes. In these the students were to
experience the sensation of discharging the personal sense out through the extremities; to feel that the envelop of skin was very thin, like a membrane. This accomplished, the dancer could then better absorb and reflect his own time and environment. Wigman in this sense conceived of space as a fluid entity from which one received information not unlike the way a telegraph operator transcribes the electronic impulses that comprise Morse code. The dancer moved and breathed in the "dance space," and it, in turn, flowed through him and compelled him to respond in a certain way. This notion of space and man as a recording and expressive instrument she communicated through the large, voluminous, contour-dissolving body-masks.

Wigman must have been most effective in her role as "self-mask." Already in 1921, before the creation of her great mask dances, reviewer Martin Zendenwall wrote that in performance she literally became a "great, pale, tragic mask." Martin Zendenwall, "Tanz," 39.

Cf. Nordabhang im Lotschental (1894), mountain postcard 9, mixed media 9 x 13.5 cm in the Nolde Stiftung reproduced in Reuther, Das Frühwerk Emil Nolde, Plate 135: 222.

To appreciate how directly Nolde quoted from this type, see, for example, a Labartu plaque illustrated in Andre Parrot, The Arts of Assyria, trans. Stuart Gilbert and James Emmons (New York: Golden Press, [1961]), Plate 130.

The work commemorated the dead soldiers of World War I and the widows, mothers and daughters, who approached the very edge of the "shadow world" to seek their loved ones. The poem received only one publication in Stuttgart by Deutsche Verlagsanstalt in 1930 and the production that same year was the first and last staging of the work.

Mary Wigman, as quoted in Walter Sorell, The Other Face, the Mask in the Arts (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973): 120. Though the entire concept of Totenmal was consonant with Wigman's own artistic pursuits, working within a given context proved to be the most difficult of creative tasks. The problem stemmed in part from the fact that Wigman did not have control over the dance environment and personality but had to fit her works into a pre-existing program of narrative, scenic design and costume. The sculpted wooden masks, too, were not used as a consequence of the nature of the dance ecstasy but instead had to serve as a pretext of the ecstatic state. They were delivered to Wigman before she began setting the choreography.

Ironically, the great proponent of restraint to heighten expressivity found herself with too many restraints, too many theatrical conditions to respect. The identity of the dance had already been secured by external elements: music, text, setting and costume. There was to be no uncertainty, no "edge," no ecstasy and no real personality to these dances.

These figures are part of a tripartite architectural facade in which the outer sections are in advance of the portal and seem to reach forward into the prosenium: the space of the living. Pointed arches or flying buttresses diminish in size as they recede upstage.

The female masks present all ages and are not nearly so uniform in type as the soldiers. The "skin" and features are drawn against the bony structure of the face in pain and with extreme suffering. In one case the eyes are painted and staring. In other cases, like those of the male chorus, the eyes are carved out. They appear as empty, black holes, as if the individual personality had retreated and lay deep within. The sense of fear and sorrow is communally shared and expressed by the masks and the dancers' tentative, brittle gestures and collapsed postures.

An example and possible source of inspiration for Nolde is Assur, Scene of Worship in the Berlin Museum of Antiquities, illustrated in Andre Parrot, The Arts of Assyria, Plate 70.

Cf. Trophy Head illustrated in Rubin, "Primitivism" in Twentieth Century Art, vol. 2; 379.


Masks for both dances were carved by Viktor Magito. Little is known about Magito except that he used to frequent Wigman's school, hovering around the studio as she worked. He was apparently adept as a woodcarver, creating beautiful masks in the style of Noh masks for these dances.

Wigman, The Language of Dance, 34.

While struggling to find the appropriate gestures and movements to communicate the intensity of her feelings, Wigman recounts that she sewed one of the hoops that children played with in the streets into the hem of her long rehearsal skirt to restrain her naturally broad movement style. She retained this artificial restraint in her design for this costume.

"Witch Dance II" is similar to dances of the South Sea islands, many of which are executed from a seated position, and Javanese dances, in which the women "dance" using only the gestures of hands and fingers. Like the mask, the witch costume also seems to be of Oriental inspiration. It was a large robe sewn from a barbaric-looking brocade with large, flat designs in gold and silver metal threads outlined in black on a copper background (cf. Plate 17). Wigman had bought it years before in a Swiss textile store, but, having no immediate use for it, she
stored it away in her costume drawer. When she did at last use the cloth, she seems to have been inspired by the abstracting costumes used in Kabuki folk theatre. Both the fabric design and finished dress are strikingly similar to those worn by Kabuki actors.


20Ibid, 40-41.
APPENDIX A: BIOGRAPHY OF MARY WIGMAN
APPENDIX A: BIOGRAPHY OF MARY WIGMAN

Karoline Sophie Marie Wiegmann was born in Hannover, West Germany in 1886. Between 1892 and 1900 she received middle school education at the "Höhere Tocherschule," Hannover. Upon graduation, she studied the English and French languages and literatures for two years in Peterborough, England and Lausanne, Switzerland. For the next seven years, beginning in 1902, Wiegmann pursued courses in music and voice at the Hannover Conservatory and wrote poetry and prose. In 1909 she had her first exposure to dance: While visiting her aunt in Amsterdam, she attended a Dalcroze dance demonstration and, back home, a performance given by the Wiesenthal sisters in the Hannover Operahouse.

In 1910, Marie Wiegmann was accepted to the Jaques-Dalcroze School of Eurythmics in Dresden. She promptly declared her independence and with her share of the family estate, moved to Dresden to begin the first year teacher-training program. She studied rhythmic gymnastics, singing and auditory techniques, piano and improvisational movement, and saw Expressionist works by Die Brücke artists at the Arnold Gallery. In 1912, she travelled to Rome and Florence with an old admirer, a painter (whose identity is unknown), where she studied the local art and architecture. Wiegmann remained in Italy until April 1913, when she returned to Germany to choreograph and dance in a movement chorus for Max Reinhardt's production of Paul Claudel's mystery
Verkundung to be presented in the summer of 1913 in Hellerau. The premier was cancelled. Instead, at the instigation of Emil and Ada Nolde, Wiegmann joined Rudolf von Laban's "dance-farm" at Ascona, Switzerland. There, she studied "Wort, Tone, and Formkunst," gymnastic dance, and improvisation. In the fall, she followed Laban to Munich and became his assistant.

Between the years 1914 and 1918, Wiegmann performed her first independent choreographies in Munich. Summer was spent in Ascona. With the outbreak of World War I, she and Laban returned to Munich and subsequently moved to Zurich, where they reopened the school. She became close friends with the Dada artists, attending and performing in their soirées at the Cabaret Voltaire. She continued to choreograph solo dances. Among those dating between 1916 and 1918 are her masked dances: Death, Torment, Insanity, Scream, Präludium VIII (1917), and Arie (1917). She also appeared as solo guest artist in Bern, Winterthur and at the Pfauen Theatre, Zurich.

To mark the beginning of her independent career, in 1918, she shortened her name to Wigman. In the summer, she travelled with the Laban School to Monte Verità, Ascona to participate in a ten-day esoteric congress, in which the most prominent personalities in Freemasonry, Occultism and Theosophy taught and lectured. Wigman also presented a discussion entitled "Expressive Culture in the Development of Life and Art." Shortly thereafter she became ill with tuberculosis and travelled to Engadin (then Davos), Switzerland to recover in the cloisters.

In 1919, Wigman made guest appearances in Switzerland, and the major art centers in Germany. She opened the Wigman School in Neustadt
in 1920 and began to formulate and teach a dance technique for the professional, "free-style" dancer and "dance-gymnastics" for the layperson. Her group choreographies date from this year.

During the ensuing year, she organized her first performing group, the Chamber Dance Group Mary Wigman, and in January, 1921 the group presented their first performance in the Dresden Concert Hall. For the next five years she choreographed, taught and performed with her company throughout Europe. Ernst Kirchner returned to Dresden in 1926 and executed many sketches and paintings at the Wigman school. For Wigman, the remainder of the decade was a period of intense preoccupation with masked dances. Her solo masked dances include "Ceremonial Shape" (1925) and "Witch Dance II" (1926) of the Visions cycle; group dances include Totentanz (1926) and Totenmal (1930). Wigman's dance company was dissolved in 1928 due to the deteriorating economic situation in Germany. For three consecutive years, beginning in 1930, Wigman toured America for extensive periods of time in the spring and summer months.

Beginning in 1933, though she continued to choreograph, teach, and undertake strenuous solo and group tours through western and central Europe as part of her contribution to the new German political state, she fell increasingly into disfavor with the new regime. Due to the communist activities of the Wigman School graduates, along with her contact with the Jews, the Expressionists, Freemasons, Dadaists and her numerous trips abroad, she was suspected of cultural Bolshevism in 1933. Her school and adjoining living quarters were searched and members of her household interrogated by the Gestapo. State support and revenue from foreign enrollment dropped off already in 1935, and
she found herself in great financial need. By 1937, all government subsidy had ceased and fewer and fewer reviews appeared in the newspapers.

By 1941, Wigman found herself unofficially blacklisted. Ambitious businessman Hannes Benkert, with whom she had a relationship for twelve years, disassociated himself from her. In March, 1942, the Wigman School was confiscated and in April, she was officially forbidden to perform. Shortly thereafter she gave her farewell performance and moved to Leipzig. Beginning in 1943 students sought Wigman out at her home in Leipzig. At their urging she again began to teach, choreograph and organize performances. In 1945, the Leipzig Cultural Bureau gave official sanction to the reopening of the Wigman School. This was a short-lived endeavor, since she moved to the American sector of West Berlin in 1949 and reopened the school there.

In 1957 her last work, Rite of Spring, set to Stravinsky's music by the same name, was premiered. Plagued by ill health and blindness, for the next ten years she confined her activities to teaching and writing. In 1973 she died at age 87.
APPENDIX B: BIOGRAPHY OF EMIL NOLDE
APPENDIX B: BIOGRAPHY OF EMIL NOLDE

Hans Emil Hansen was born in 1867 in Nolde in northern Silesia, West Germany. He entered the village school of Buhrkall in 1873. Between 1880 and 1883 he executed many pencil drawings, original ornamental designs and copies of schoolbook illustrations.

In 1884, Hansen moved to Flensburg to begin an apprenticeship in the Sauermann furniture workshop. Concurrently, he studied at the Flensburg School of Industrial Design. In 1888, having completed his apprenticeship, he travelled to Munich to view an exhibit of industrial arts and he remained to work there as a furniture designer and carver in furniture factories. He subsequently worked in Karlsruhe and Berlin.

Hansen was offered a teaching appointment by the School of Arts and Crafts in St. Gallen, Switzerland. From 1892 to 1898, he taught courses in ornamental and industrial drawing and design there and during this period he travelled to Milan, Munich and Vienna. He was also exposed, for the first time, to the Symbolist literature of Mallarmé, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Ibsen, Strindberg and Oscar Wilde. He took up the watercolor medium in 1894, and painted his first mask drawings and landscapes of the Swiss Alps. Between 1895 and 1896, he continued to pain caricatures and "masks" of the Alpine folk and his first oil, Die Bergriesen, was completed at this time.
In 1898 financial success from the sale of his mountain postcards allowed Hansen to give up his teaching position in St. Gallen and to work on painting full-time. He returned to Munich for a year where he studied at Friedrich Fehr's private painting school and in his spare time he studied artworks in the Pinakothek. In the summer he was a student in Hülzel's school in Dachau. There he made contact with the Romantic painters of "Stimmungsmalerei." In the autumn he travelled to Paris.

Hansen remained in Paris for nine months, studying at the Académie Julien under Toni Robet-Fleur and Julian LeFevre. He also studied and sketched at the Louvre and visited the special exhibitions of the World's Fair. The summer of 1901 was spent in Lildstrand, a fishing village in northwestern Denmark. There he met Danish actress, Ada Vilstrup. He subsequently travelled to Copenhagen and Berlin.

In 1902 Hansen married Ada, and to mark the start of his creative life as a painter, he changed his name to Nolde. In 1903, he rented a small fishing cabin on the beach of Alsen Island and in the following two years he devoted himself to painting. This was a period of great poverty for Nolde and his wife. She moved to Berlin to earn money as a variety-singer. This was too much for her fragile health and friends provided funds for a cure in Taormina and Ischia, Italy. The Noldes returned to Alsen in the summer and travelled to Berlin for the winter months.

In the spring of 1906, poet Wilhelm Schäfer introduced Nolde to Karl Osthaus, founder of the Folkwang collection in Hagen. In Osthaus' home,
Nolde studied paintings by Gauguin, Van Gogh and other Post-Impressionists. Nolde made the acquaintance of Christian Rohlfs in Soest, and of Gustav Schiefler in Hamburg. Seeing Nolde’s work in an exhibition at the Arnold Gallery, Dresden, Schmidt-Rottluff, representing the Brücke artists invited Nolde to join the group. Nolde accepted and in return, invited Schmidt-Rottluff to join him at Alsen. They painted together at Alsen for three months. Nolde travelled to Dresden and worked with the Brücke artists in a very close workshop atmosphere. They were inspired by his daring use of color, etching technique and fantastic paintings and they, in turn, introduced him to the primitive art on exhibit in Dresden’s Ethnographic Museum and to the graphic medium of the woodcut.

The following year, 1908, Nolde exhibited at the Volkwang Museum, Hagen, the Galerie Commeter, Hamburg and with the Berlin Secession. He produced his first series of lithographs. Nolde found the working situation in Dresden too claustrophobic and left Die Brücke at the end of the year. In 1908, he travelled to Soest and Jena, where he visited with his friend from St. Gallen, docent Hans Fehr. It was Fehr, presumably, who introduced Nolde to Botha Graef, professor of art history and archaeology. Graef had a keen interest in primitive art of all kinds, an interest which Nolde would share and draw on for inspiration, particularly in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of World War I.

Nolde returned to Alsen in 1909, and in the spring he moved to the village of Rutbüll, on the Silesian coast. Here, while Ada was on cure, he fell severely ill, close to death. After his recovery, he

Nolde painted eighty-four paintings between 1910 and 1911. Many treated biblical themes. He also continued to work in the graphic media, producing his etchings of the Hamburg harbor and many more woodcuts. In the winter he painted many scenes of Berlin nightlife. That same year, Nolde entered a number of works in the Berlin Secession exhibition but these were all rejected by the committee. In response to this action, Nolde immediately attacked the president of the Berlin Secession, Max Liebermann, in a letter. Scandal ensued and Nolde was permanently barred from exhibiting with the Secession. Ever keen to observe new ways of using gesture to convey experience, he became interested in Max Reinhardt's theatrical troupe and executed numerous paintings and sketches of the various members in rehearsal and in performance.

Nolde created more landscape and religious etchings between 1910 and 1911. He travelled to Holland and Brussels, where he visited with James Ensor in his atelier in Ostend. Inspired by Ensor's mask paintings, Nolde painted fifty-five mask and figural still-lifes of his own between 1911 and 1913. Upon his return to Berlin, Nolde studied the art of primitive people with renewed interest generated by the numerous anthropological collections on exhibit in Berlin. His nine-part work, The Life of Christ was completed between 1911 and 1912 and exhibited in the Folkwang Museum and at the International Exhibit of religious art in Brussels. Nolde exhibited with the second Blue Rider exhibition at the Sonderbund Exhibit in Cologne. In 1913, his anthropological
interests led him to travel with an expedition to New Guinea. The itinerary included Moscow, Siberia, Manchuria, Korea, Japan, China, Manila and the Palan Islands. The return trip commenced in New Guinea in 1914 and continued over Celebes, Java, Birma, Aden, Port Said, Genoa and Zurich.

In the year following his return to Germany, Nolde painted eighty-eight paintings; among these were six new religious works. His plans to travel to Iceland, Greenland, America and Africa were aborted by World War I. Instead, he took a trip to Hallige Hooge on the west coast of Schleswig-Holstein, where in the spring, he created a series of fantastic watercolors. Nolde left Alsen permanently in 1917. Henceforth, he would spend the summer months in Utenwarf on the Schlesian coast.

Between 1918 and 1920, mask and figural still-lifes reappear in his œuvre. In 1921, he travelled through northern and southwestern Europe. Between 1922 and 1925, Utenwarf became Danish. To maintain his German citizenship, Nolde bought the Seebüll warf and farm, which lie on the German side of the border. Kiel University bestowed an honorary doctorate upon him that same year.

The move to Seebüll was completed in 1927. His sixtieth birthday was honored with an exhibition of his works in Dresden. Other exhibits took place that year in Hamburg, Kiel, Essen and Wiesbaden. In 1931, he was invited to join the Prussian Academy of the Arts.

The thirties were disastrous years for Nolde. He was diagnosed with stomach cancer in 1934 but was successfully operated on in 1935. One thousand and fifty-two of his works were confiscated from museums
under the new regime's action against "degenerate art" in 1937. Forty-eight of these hung in the exhibit targeting Expressionist and abstract artists in Munich. Some of Nolde's confiscated paintings were sold in auction to foreign buyers and others were publicly burned in 1939. Nolde retreated to the Swiss Alps for the winter. In 1940, he was excluded from the Reichskunstkammer and officially forbidden to paint. Out of desperation, he began to paint his Forbidden Pictures around this time. At the close of World War II, his entire atelier in Bayerallee, Berlin was destroyed in a bombing raid.

In 1946, the title of professor was bestowed on Nolde by the municipal government of Schleswig-Holstein. Ada died that same year and Nolde married Jolanthe Erdmann two years later. In 1949, the city of Cologne awarded him the Stefan Lochner medal and in 1950 he received a prize for his graphic work at the twenty-sixth Biennale in Venice. He died in 1956 at the age of eighty-nine years.
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Plate XIX. Assyrian Labartu Plaque circa 1500 B.C.
Plate XX. Mary Wigman and group dancers in "Dance of Death" 1926
Plate XXI. Mary Wigman in *Dance of Death* 1926
Plate XXII. Male chorus in Totemmal 1930
Plate XXIII. Female chorus in Totenmal 1930
Plate XXIV. Moloch in Totenmal 1930
Plate XXV. Emil Nolde, *Still Life with Masks I* 1911
Plate XXVI. Mary Wigman in "Witch Dance II" from Visions 1926.