

Reconsidering Knowledge Production and Inclusion/Exclusion in Dance Communities

Proceedings of the 32nd
Symposium of the ICTM Study
Group on Ethnochoreology

EDITED BY
Rebeka Kunej and Ann R. David

Symposium 2022

29 July–5 August 2022

**International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM), Study Group on Ethnochoreology
(in August 2023 renamed as International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance - ICTMD)**



The 32nd Symposium was organized by the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology, and hosted by the Institute of Ethnomusicology Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU) in partnership with the Posavje Museum Brežice and the Slovene Ethnological Society.



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**RECONSIDERING KNOWLEDGE
PRODUCTION AND INCLUSION/EXCLUSION
IN DANCE COMMUNITIES**

Proceedings of the 32nd Symposium of the ICTM
Study Group on Ethnochoreology

29 July–5 August 2022, Brežice, Slovenia

Edited by
Rebeka Kunej and Ann R. David



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Ljubljana 2024

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INTRODUCTION

It is a great privilege to introduce the *Proceedings of the 32nd Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology*. This publication is a partial but significant reflection of what was the lived experience of the Study Group in Brežice, Slovenia. The 2022 Symposium was hosted in the inspirational surroundings of Brežice Castle, co-organised by the Institute of Ethnomusicology at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Glasbenonarodopisni inštitut ZRC SAZU), the Posavje Museum Brežice (Posavski muzej Brežice) and the Slovene Ethnological Society (Slovensko etnološko društvo).

I extend my thanks to everyone involved: our Program Committee – Placida Staro and Kendra Stepputat (Co-Chairs), Ann R. David, Ronald Kibirige, Jeanette Mollenhauer, Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin, Colin Quigley, and the Organizing Committee Rebeka Kunej (Chair), Alenka Černelič Krošelj, Mojca Kovačič, Andreja Matijevc, Anja Serec Hodžar, Andrej Tomazin, Anja Verderber, their collaborators and their families. It is hard, consistent work to arrange such a Symposium but everyone contributed fully in a friendly, collaborative way, enabling the event to run smoothly. Our gratitude goes to the people of Brežice, to the local administration and to the music and dance groups too; their contribution brought a richness to our Slovenian experience.

The 32nd Symposium took place after the Covid-19 period, so we decided to preserve the hybrid format option one more time, allowing our members from different continents to join us virtually. This was another challenge for the local Committee, who helped and volunteered to maintain a high standard when dealing with the technical issues. In this Symposium, we gave attention to the discussions of the general ICTMD too, particularly to the issues of adding "Dance" to the overall ICTMD title, a theme strongly supported by our former Chair, Catherine Foley. We thank Catherine, the president of ICTMD Svanibor Pettan who joined us in Brežice, and the entire ICTMD for this historic result. Personally, I thank everybody for trusting and supporting me in being elected Chair of the Executive Committee of our group during the Brežice assembly. I will endeavour to follow the legacy of our previous Chair, Catherine Foley, working with the aim of spreading the knowledge of our discipline and extending our inclusivity to independent scholars outside of academia and to groups with protected characteristics.

In this volume of the Symposium *Proceedings* there are the reviewed papers and materials from the two themes we considered at the Symposium: 1. Reconsidering knowledge production in dance research, and 2. Inclusion/exclusion in dance communities. These themes provided crucial points of discussion and evolution in our disciplinary field: debates on ethics and the structure of knowledge are the motivations and aims of our work. These *Proceedings* are an excellent record of the event but cannot convey fully the deep experience and understanding of the intercultural, international, multi-level debates experienced during the discussions. We were inspired by the young scholars, moved by the different kinds of group collaboration presented, and entertained by our communal dancing.

I congratulate the co-editors Rebeka Kunej and Ann R. David, and the technical editor Ana Vrtovec Beno for their work in editing and making available this volume to us.

Happy reading!

Placida Staro
Chair, ICTMD Study Group of Ethnochoreology
December 2023, Monghidoro – Bologna, Italia

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work together on the publication *Reconsidering knowledge production and inclusion/exclusion in dance communities. Proceedings of the 32nd Symposium of the ICTM¹ Study Group on Ethnochoreology* that took place in the magnificent surrounds of Brežice Castle, Slovenia in July–August 2022. At the conference were 54 different contributions by 81 speakers; in the *Proceedings* we publish 53 authors and their 49 contributions. These have been organised into our two themes for the Symposium, that of a) Reconsidering knowledge production in dance research, and b) Inclusion/exclusion in dance communities. Decisions were made to not include all abstracts from the Symposium as they were already published and are available on ICTMD website,² and for the *Proceedings* to be a record of all those wishing to contribute their papers for publication. This decision acknowledges the fact that the dissemination of scholars' work takes place very differently in these changing, pressured times for scholarship, so not all those presenting at the Symposium were able to offer papers for the *Proceedings*. Therefore, these *Proceedings* record only the papers offered to the editorial team after the event.

As noted, all papers are listed under the two themes and organized alphabetically by the authors' last names. Panel and student presentations are indicated; all other papers were presented as individual ones. Additionally, there is a separate final section for posters presented at the Symposium. The volume also includes a photo appendix of moments during the 32rd Symposium that offer a glimpse of the event's embodied experience, even though the Symposium was hybrid in nature.

The tradition of using the DdA (Dunin de Alaiza) reference format, developed by former Publications Chair Elsie Dunin in collaboration with her UCLA colleague Candi de Alaiza in these *Proceedings* is still present, although many of the challenges in editing the cited references suggest that the guidelines need to be updated to include new ways of referencing (for example, the use of DOIs and ebooks). At the same time, the question arises as to whether the *Proceedings* are really the symposium document or whether, with the use of digital technologies, a video record could fully replace it? And could the printed *Proceedings* be replaced by a purely electronic, more multimedia-friendly format? These are pressing questions for future publications. A tradition that embraces change becomes resilient to modern academic challenges.

The experience of the post-pandemic era shows that participants wish to experience personal, face-to-face interaction in gathering together. Despite the fact that the Brežice Symposium was hybrid, there is no doubt that the Symposium will once again become a face-to-face meeting.

Our thanks to the hard-working team of proof-readers for the English content, namely Anne von Bibra Wharton, Nena Couch, Liz Mellish, Jeanette Mollenhauer and Andriy Nahachewsky, as well as technical editorial support by Ana Vrtovec Beno.

Ann R. David and Rebeka Kunej

¹ The name change to the *International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance* (ICTMD) was supported by a vote at the General Assembly held at the 47th World Conference in Legon on 15 July 2023. It was ratified by the membership on 26 August 2023.

² <https://ictmusic.org/sites/default/files/Brezice%20Symposium%202022%20Abstract%20booklet.pdf>

PROGRAMME

Presentations are listed as they occurred at the symposium venue. The symposium was conducted in a hybrid mode. A virtual presentation is indicated next to the presenter's name.

Friday, 29 July 2022	
12:00–18:30	Arrival & registration
19:00	Opening of the exhibition <i>Matt Hoyer: The American Goes Back Home</i> in the Posavje Museum Brežice
20:00	Opening ceremony
THEME 1: Reconsidering knowledge production in dance research	
Saturday, 30 July 2022	
9:00–10:30	SESSION 1
	Panel 1: Gediminas KAROBLIS, Egil BAKKA, Ronald KIBIRIGE (virtual): Dance as personal data: ethnographic research in the digital age
11:00–11:30	Business meeting of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology
11:30–13:00	SESSION 2 Chair: Catherine Foley
	Tvrtko ZEBEC: Dance research in digital humanities
	László FELFÖLDI: The Institute for Musicology in Budapest as a research place for traditional dances
	Student papers: Konstantina GIATRA (virtual), Myrto KARFI (virtual): Reconsidering knowledge production in dance research through the symposia of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology (1988–2018) Lika TSNOBILADZE (virtual): Reconsidering and studying dance during the self-confrontation interview with a dancer in question
14:30–16:00	SESSION 3 Chair: Egil Bakka
	Fahriye DINÇER: On developing delicate balances in ethnographic research processes: a personal reflection
	Siri MÆLAND: Renewal of applied ethnochoreology in Norway: a case study
	Urmimala SARKAR: Performing gender in contemporary Delhi: a case study of embodied resistance
16:30–18:15	SESSION 4 Chair: Andriy Nahachewsky

	Student paper: Laura KOLAČKOVSKÁ: Folk dance in the city
	Panel 2: Andriy NAHACHEWSKY, Marie-Pierre GIBERT, Mats NILSSON: Mistakes in/as knowledge production
20:00	Optional: Attend the local festival <i>veselica</i> in Bukošek village
Sunday, 31 July 2022	
9:00–10:30	SESSION 5
	Panel 3: Daniela STAVĚLOVÁ, Dorota GREMLICOVÁ, Lucie HAYASHI, Daniela MACHOVÁ: (In)visible dance research: from nationalism to ideology and liberalization: the Czech case
11:00–12:30	Sub-study group meetings
	Sub-study Group Dance and Ritual
	Sub-study Group Dance, Gender and Power Relations
	Sub-study Group Dance and/in Diaspora(s) [group in the making]
14:30–16:00	SESSION 6
	Chair: Gediminas Karoblis
	Juan Felipe MIRANDA MEDINA (virtual), Marisol Cristel GALARZA FLORES (virtual), María Gabriela LÓPEZ YÁNEZ (virtual): On the importance of dance syntax in ethnochoreology
	Stefanie ALISCH: Introducing Angolan <i>kuduro</i> dance and the interactive dance interview method
	Elina SEYE: Local dance knowledge on video
16:30–18:30	SESSION 7
	Chair: Svanibor Pettan
	Tomaž SIMETINGER: Dance folklorism in the light of contemporary cultural policies in Slovenia
	Round table: Heather VAN NIEKERK (virtual), Mark LENINI PARSELELO (virtual), Eric BAFFOUR AWUAH (virtual), Oyinkansola GORIOLA (virtual), Gerald SSEMAGANDA (virtual), Maluwaya MCDONALD (virtual): 'Insider' dance research: an African perspective
20:00–21:30	Sub-study group meetings
	Sub-study Group Movement Analysis
	Sub-study Group 19th Century Round
	Sub-study Group Field Research Theory and Methods

Monday, 1 August 2022	
9:00–10:30	<p>SESSION 8</p> <p>Chair: Tvrtko Zebec</p>
	<p>Joško ČALETA and Iva NIEMČIĆ: Cultural promotion and symbolic (re) presentation of community music and dance traditions: the case study of the Lastovo carnival</p>
	<p>Radboud KOOP: The international folk dance repertoire: labelled commodities and the myth of village sources</p>
	<p>Else SCHMIDT: Standardization tendencies in Austrian dance communities</p>
11:00–12:30	<p>SESSION 9</p> <p>Chair: Marie-Pierre Gibert</p>
	<p>Mehmet Öcal ÖZBILGIN (virtual): Restructuring folk dance education to reflect the political views of the 21st century</p>
	<p>William KEARNEY: Towards a multimedia choreomusicology: exploring the potential of digital animation as a tool in sound–movement research dissemination</p>
	<p>Henrik KOVÁCS (virtual): A teaching method for the revival of traditional dances</p>
13:45–14.30	<p>Optional: Guided tour of the permanent and visiting exhibitions of the Posavje Museum Brežice</p>
14:30–16:00	<p>SESSION 10</p> <p>Chair: László Felföldi</p>
	<p>Concluding session of symposium Theme 1: summary & discussion</p>
16:30–18:00	<p>SESSION 11</p> <p>Poster presentations:</p> <p>Fatema ALBASTAKI: Hip hop and martial arts: crossover in marginal spaces</p> <p>Nena COUCH: The Dance Notation Bureau Collection as a resource for dance research</p> <p>Lia FERNANDES MEIRELLES: From the inside to the outside: the transmission of contemporary dance in the context of Yuval Pick's dance company</p> <p>Sydney HUTCHINSON (virtual): "All the young people are dancing": socialism vs. social dance in the GDR</p> <p>Emma PETROSYAN (virtual): Rope-walkers and acrobats in Armenian traditions</p> <p>Magdalena Maria WOLF: 'Authentic' attraction: Styrian folk dance as a commodity between tourism, expectation and stylisation</p>
20:00–21:30	<p>Social evening: Dance Workshop with the Slovene Ethnological Society</p>

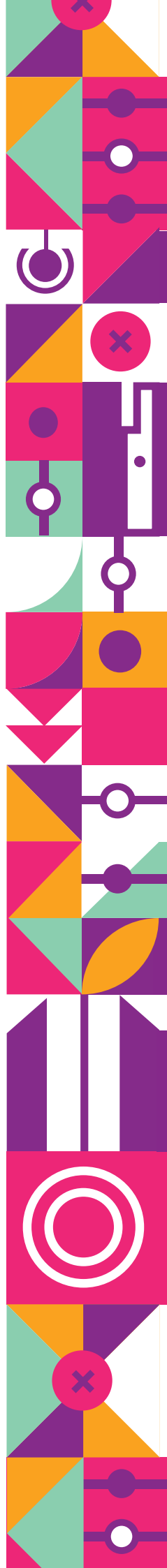
THEME 2: Inclusion/exclusion in dance communities

Tuesday, 2 August 2022	
9:00–10:30	SESSION 12 Chair: Jorgen Torp
	Rebeka KUNEJ: Folk dance ensemble: between cultural society and dance community
	Vesna BAJIĆ STOJILJKOVIĆ: Dance communities in the Serbian diaspora: a case study 'Folklorists around the world'
	Dilyana KURDOVA: Sakrovishtnitsata: a virtual dance community
11:00–13:00	SESSION 13 Panel 4: Theresa BUCKLAND, Georgiana GORE, Corina IOSIF (virtual), Maria KOUTSOUBA: Strategies of inclusion: crossing boundaries and building bridges in dance idioms
14:00–21:30	Half-day excursion
Wednesday, 3 August 2022	
9:00–10:30	SESSION 14 Chair: Maria Koutsouba
	Stephanie SK MARBACH: Competing in the living room: examining the surge of digital competitions in Irish step dancing during the pandemic in 2020
	Daniela IVANOVA-NYBERG: Dance, Covid-19, and the notion of flow: interpreting dance experience(s) under pandemic restrictions
	Juliette O'BRIEN (virtual): The dancing meme and cultural inclusivity
11:00–12:30	Business meeting of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology
14:30–15:45	SESSION 15 Chair: Ann R. David
	Dalia URBANAVIČIENĖ: Change in social traditional dance events in Lithuania: the middle of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century
	Student papers: Anja VERDERBER: The public's polyvalent relationship with the polka in Slovenia: the identity of a community through stereotypes Shanny RANN (virtual): Like dance but not dance: situating Taiji within the discourse of dance studies in the case of Sanxing Taiji Katarina NIKOLIĆ: Serbian and Romanian balls: the paradox of ethnically determined dance events as a medium of social inclusion in south-eastern Hungary
16:30–18:00	SESSION 16

	Panel 5: Konstantinos DIMOPOULOS, Georgios FOUNTZOULAS, Chariton CHARITONIDIS : How inclusive or exclusive is social dancing? Examining aspects of participation in contemporary Greek contexts
20:00–21:30	Social evening: Dance workshop by ICTM members
Thursday, 4 August 2022	
9:00–10:30	SESSION 17 Chair: Anne von Bibra Wharton
	Catherine DULIN : 1773 <i>Fasching</i> in Vienna: a new phase of inclusion/exclusion in dance venues during Carnival
	Chi-Fang CHAO : Diaspora in connectivity: moving in and out of the Uchinaanchu (Okinawan) cultural body in Hawai'i between 2020 and 2021
	Kendra STEPPUTAT : Why they don't dance with you: partner selection in tango argentino social dancing
11:00–12:30	SESSION 18 Chair: Urmimala Sarkar
	Kristina DOLININA : Tendencies for inclusion and exclusion in the contemporary Kathak dance teaching scene
	Mojca KOVAČIČ : Representations of minority folk dance ensembles: official discourses vs. individual needs and everyday realities
	Eleni FILIPPIDOU (virtual): Dance and social integration: Greek Gagauz strategies of acculturation through the example of the dance Syrtos Kalamatianos
14:30–16:00	SESSION 19 Chair: Placida Staro
	Cornelia GRUBER : Repositioning embodied experiences and relationships through voguing
	Ann R. DAVID : Dance, inclusivity, health: bodies at the centre
	Carmel MCKENNA (virtual): 'Reels on wheels': practitioner reflections on a pilot adapted Irish Céilí dance programme for wheelchair users
16:30–18:00	SESSION 20 Chair: Elina Seye
	Solomon GWEREVENDE (virtual): Ubuntu/Unhu in situations of ecosystem instability: dancing with musicking that models sustainable social relations and inclusive participation
	Drago KUNEJ : Musicians in folk dance ensembles: included or excluded participants
19:00	Optional : Guided walking tour of Brežice
20:30	Social dance evening in the castle yard with Robert Petan and the Grajski Kvintet

Friday, 5 August 2022	
9:00–10:30	SESSION 21
	Panel 6: Jeanette MOLLENHAUER, Deborah WILLIAMS, Stephanie SMITH (virtual), Raymundo RUIZ GONZÁLEZ: Linguistic choreographies: motifs of exclusion
11:00–12:30	SESSION 22
	Panel 7: Anna SZÉKELY, Judith OLSON, Dóra PÁL-KOVÁCS: Redefinition, (self)exclusion, and transgression on the dance floor: research in response to current events on Hungarian and related topics
12:45–14:30	Optional: Guided tour of the permanent and visiting exhibitions of the Posavje Museum Brežice
14:30–16:00	SESSION 23
	Chair: Csilla Könczei
	Concluding session of symposium Theme 2: summary & discussion
	Final discussion
20:00–21:30	Closing ceremony: performance & reception

**THEME 1: RECONSIDERING
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN
DANCE RESEARCH**



Stefanie ALISCH
(Berlin, Germany)

INTRODUCING ANGOLAN *KUDURO* DANCE AND THE INTERACTIVE DANCE INTERVIEW METHOD

Kuduro is percussive electronic music from Angola with accompanying dancing that can be competitive, ludic, acrobatic, comic, sensual, and theatrical. Since around the year 2000, *kuduro* has become the dominant youth culture in Angola and the Angolan diaspora. *Kuduro* dance is inspired by daily life, earlier local or cosmopolitan dance practices, martial arts. In this paper I introduce *kuduro* dance systematically and present the innovative interactive dance interview as a research method.

Keywords: Angola, *kuduro*, popular dance, dance research method, dance systematisation

Entry vignette

To start I show a video of a *kuduro* dance performance. The resolution is low as I recorded far away from the stage with a high zoom. The video is shaky because I filmed holding my little Casio Exilim camera by hand. The sound is distorted because the PA was ear-splittingly loud. The camera work is a bit hectic because there was so much happening on stage I could barely decide who or what to follow with my lense. However, the video is useful as it conveys the sense of overstimulation, audience involvement, battle culture, deliberate mayhem, group cohesion, interaction, tension and aesthetic excess that *kuduro* practioners called *kuduristas* praise as *carga* (charge). Furthermore, the video is useful, because it contains nearly all important elements of *kuduro* dance, executed by highly experienced professional dancers as well as the *kuduro* star Puto Lilas on the microphone at a high stakes performance situation.

23 June 2012, Luanda, capital of Angola. It is ten weeks before the first election since 1992. Amongst the efforts to ingratiate the current president José Eduardo dos Santos to the Angolan people is a low-fee popular music event called "*Show does Multidões*" (Show of the masses) at Cidadela stadium, which I visit together with the veteran press photographer Paulino 'Cinquenta' Damião. A dos Santos portrait about five metres high greets the arriving audience from the outside walls. Inside, the only decorations an even larger portrait of the president hung next to a giant map of Angola. Vendors sell Cuca beer cheaply. On a bare stage mounted on the playing field, pop stars from Angola and other African countries sing and dance for several hours.

Enter *kuduro* artist Puto Lilas and his troupe. Puto Lilas chants towards a diaper-wearing dancer "Piko, Piko. Look, Piko!". Dancer Piko is rolled onto the stage in a wheelchair mimicking physical and mental disability. Piko is pushed by a dancer with bleached hair wearing an electric blue skiing suit. He rolls his eyes and contorts his face and walks – torso bent over – twitching his limbs with a high muscle tone. At the back of the stage several people clap a beat of ca. 140 BPM velocity. Puto Lilas chants "*Olha Piko, Piko dá kota*" (Look Piko, dance the old man). Piko responds by scrambling out of his wheelchair, he arches his back, pokes out his belly and staggers using the laborious steps of a person with a walking impairment – in the sequence of verbal dance calling and kinetic response I perceive the stereotype of an old man. Next Puto Lilas intones "*Olha nenuce dançar*" (Look, the baby dances) and the very same diaper wearing dancer now appears to mock the media stereotype of starved African children with his poked out belly. Piko stops, faces the audience and sticks his hand into the front of his diapers displaying a dreamy face. The crowd roars. Piko drops backwards onto the stage and

with an arched back cramps his hands and arms into the air following Puto Lila's rhythm who relentlessly chants "Look, the baby dances!". Puto Lilas speaks a closing command that I hear as "*Agora baixinho*" (Now very calm) and Piko sheepishly stands himself to the side of the stage lowering his head.

Next, Puto Lilas animates another dancer by chanting "*Olha só Zédu, da-lhe só Zédu!*" (Look Zédu, do the Zédu!, that is Dance 'the president!'). The dancer mimics the president's grave gait while waving to the audience. Puto Lilas' troupe cheers behind the dancer, lauding the *kuduro* impersonation of the president whose portrait overlooks the goings-on. Seconds later Puto Lilas animates a dance move that I hear as "*Gado Pascoal*", which the dancer executes with large bodywaves similar to Congolese *ndombolo* and, again, a hand in the crotch area. To the call "*Mangaba, Mangaba!*" the dancer responds by walking while rotating his angled legs from the hip joints, thus evoking images of the many injured army fighters of Angola where civil war raged for 27 years (Alisch, Siegert 2013).

After 1,5 minutes of animation and dance without any recorded music Puto Lilas demands "Bring up [the sound], DJ" and hard *kuduro* beats boom through the stadium. As the music injects additional energy into the situation, many things now happen at once: The electric blue dancer crawls across the floor, faces the audiences with locking-like movements and launches into a backflip before convulsing his entire body while climbing up and down a stage frame and contorting himself on top of a speaker box. Simultaneously, Piko backflips himself into the audience in the pit where dancing and fisticuffs are hard to tell apart.

Someone pulls Piko back onstage. Here Puto Lilas arches his tense body over his microphone animating individual dancers. Piko and two others gesticulate rhythmically towards the rambunctious audience with vigorous arm movements until another dancer taps them on the back. It's time to join the troupe for a line-dance like choreography to accompany Puto Lilas' hit "*Mana Tocobina*" (Dr.Ló_Video Maker 2011). After 20 seconds of coherent group movement the dancers break into solo mode again. Piko struts around the front stage, holding his wheelchair above his head, while another dancer moves 10 meters in the air on swaying lighting trusses. The performers seem not only accustomed to the adrenaline of the people, they work it up so as to work with it.

Such rapid sequences of drastic movement are common in *kuduro* dance. These spectacles often leave viewers nonplussed. However, this effect is not due to chaos or dancers losing control. On the contrary, *kuduristas* deliberate their stunning performances with the explicit goal of overwhelming their audience and to this end they developed a *kuduro* inherent system which I portray in this paper.

What is *kuduro*?

Kuduro (*cú duro* mens 'hard arse' in Portuguese) is electronic dance music that originated in the Angolan capital Luanda in the 1990s, but is rooted in Angolan and Black Atlantic urban music and dance forms of the entire 20th century. *Kuduro* as a dance-music-complex relies on fast-paced, rhythmic tracks that are computer-produced. Over the propulsive beats, dancers perform rapid, often shocking, moves and vocalists chant raspy non-pitched lines in a style called *animação*.

An intense impetus called *carga* (charge) marks a good *kuduro* performance on the rhythmic, vocal, kinetic, and sartorial levels. *Kuduristas* state that *carga* is produced in an overall spirit of competition: via good preparation, collective performance, audience interaction, and a form of verbal duelling called *bife*. *Kuduro* dance pioneer Tony Amado understands *carga* as a result of the "synchronism of the group" (Amado 2012) connecting DJ, vocalists, dancers and audience. *Kuduristas* liken the experience of *carga* to adrenaline and as such link it to the

frantic pace of life, charged social interactions and constant tension in the Angolan capital Luanda – its ubiquitous music and yelling, its traffic jams and power outages.

Kuduro is dance for competitions among dedicated professionals who train hard and equally a dance for children's birthday parties. The joyous wide reception in school yards, bus stops, at large beer fuelled festivals called *maratonas*, at private functions, and street corners generates public demand and, in turn, visibility and income for performers (Tomás 2014). The visceral and the visual (Daniel 2011:29) are in constant dynamic exchange in *kuduro*.

Kuduro draws its charge from long-standing music and dance traditions in Angola (Dos Santos 2012), global migration, digital connectivity, aesthetic duelling, oil riches, civil war, dictatorship, volatile living conditions, and an idiosyncratic hyperbole. These are also the very aspects that complicate research on *kuduro*.

The close interplay of music and dance reflects in media discourses and personal conversation around *kuduro*. Here, it is a much-contested question whether *kuduro* is a dance or a musical style and how the two relate to and enable one another. Despite the local, regional and global significance of *kuduro* dance and fans' and academics' fascination with it, to this date there is hardly any academic work on it.

The scarce Angolan literature on and documentation of dance focusses on staged neotraditional dance (Nguizani 2003) and contemporary dance (Jorge 2003; Marques 1999). Carvalho (1989), Dos Santos (2012) and Moorman (2008) mention Angolan popular dances in passing. In the 1958 edition of the curious propaganda tinted research publications by the mining consortium DIAMANG that portray the north-eastern Lunda provinces, a photograph of partner-dancing couples is captured in "New dances appear (Dundo neighbourhood)" (DIAMANG 1958:139). Nina Baratti (2022) revisits the history of the *semba* couple dance and popular dance scholar Alexandra Harlig maintains a blog where she offers verbal descriptions (and rather associative interpretations) of *kuduro* dance moves (Harlig 2015). So far, I am not aware of any systematic study of *kuduro* dance. In this paper I first introduce the interactive dance interview and then present a systematisation of *kuduro* dance moves.

Positionality and methods

As a musicologist I mainly work in the areas of popular music studies and ethnomusicology, always thinking about music together with body movement. Starting as a teenager, I have taken different popular and folklore dance classes in Germany, the UK, Brazil, Portugal and Angola, but the study of dance and movement was not part of my academic training. During research in Luanda (2011, 2012), Lisbon (2012, 2013), Paris (2011, 2012), Amsterdam (2012), Berlin (ongoing) and Maputo (2012) I filmed and trained *kuduro* dance and also danced it on dancefloors and stages. Furthermore, I developed an interview form which I call the interactive dance interview. In an interview at the weekly tv show "Sempre a Subir" *kuduro* star Titica demonstrate to TV anchor Carina Gonçalves – and thus the TV audience – how to dance specific moves and gives details of who invented them (Zetney 2010). My interviews with *kuduro* dancers often took on a similar dynamic. When interviewing *kuduro* dancers I perched the camera on a tripod (or someone else held it) and positioned myself with the dancers so we were filmed together. In a semistructured open interview format I enquired about their activities and the beginning of their dancing career. When they mentioned a dance-move I asked them to demonstrate it, repeated it and developed questions from this movement. In this way, we discussed meanings and origins of *toques*. We recorded dancers' realisations of them as well as mine and also how dancers corrected my dancing.

A recurring moment of significance was when I aligned myself on the side of the dancer, shoulder to shoulder, settling into collapse position (Dauer 1983:235), knees slightly bent, legs



Figure 1. Dancer Aurio Dance guides researcher in exploring afrohouse footwork during interactive dance interview in his backyard, Chicala 2, Luanda, 2012. Photo by Paulino Cinquenta Damião.

hip wide, inclined torso and with a heightened kinetic attention, readying myself to mirror their moves. This shifted the mode of communication from exclusively verbal to kinetically enhanced conversation. It was as if we recognised each other in the commitment ignore any supposed Cartesian divide. As I detail here, *kuduro* dancers work closely with animators and other dancers, alert to kinetically respond to any verbal, visual, or visceral cues. Regardless of how I frame non-verbal communication in everyday, esoteric or scientific terms – *kuduro* dancers are experts in it. The interactive dance interview is a simple, mobile, and flexible method to honour dancers' expertise by addressing them through non-verbal communication. At the same time, *kuduro* dancers elaborate on their dancing using specific vocabulary. The interactive dance interview enables dancers to mobilise embodied dance knowledge and to verbalise it in conversation with the researcher.

The interactive dance interviews rendered names of and discourses around *kuduro* dances as well as biographical and historical information. When observing the footage, the juxtaposition with my amateur dancing throws into relief details of *kuduro* dancers' proficiency such as fine footwork and posture as well as rapid, high impact, or complex movements.

Attempts to discuss dance through on-line chat were much less fruitful if not futile. Performing movements or movement qualities complemented a gap in verbalisation due to my lacking a specific *kuduro* term or the apparent complete absence of a name for a phenomenon, for example "flipping over" as discussed in Alisch (2017).

Filming is an established method in dance research since the 1960s (Bakka and Karoblis 2010:170). Interactive dance interviews, in addition to capturing movement in camera, proved a suitable way to mobilise dancers' tacit dance knowledge and to practice, discuss, and anatomise *kuduro* dance. This dance-conversation is initiated by the researcher and driven by her questions. As such it is an interview and not a natural conversation. In its enmeshed character it is already close to thick participation as described by ethnologist Gerd Spittler (2001), a method that mixes practice and conversation in an attempt to mobilise tacit knowledge.

Systematisation of *kuduro* dance

Combining thick participation, netnography, and different forms of interviews *kuduristas* and I co-constructed how *kuduro* dancers loosely group their movements into the three main categories of *toque*, *esquema*, and *individual*. In 2022 I checked back with longstanding professional *kuduro* dancer Manda Chuva when meeting in Lisbon and he found this grouping to be plausible. Beside these three categories some basic movements exist.

Basic movements

Early *kuduro* dance was dominated among others by locking-like basic movements. Since around 2007, a light-footed basic movement called *conjugação de pernas* (connected movement of the legs) has become established. Here, the dancers tilt their static upper body slightly forward while performing brisk, delicate footwork – often on tiptoe – with their hands lightly slapping their thigh, foot or shin. In addition, women in particular often dance a basic undulating movement, inspired by Congolese *ndombolo* dance, characterised by hip and torso rotations. These basic movements can connect the elements introduced below or form their basis.

Toques

Toques are the most important element of *kuduro* dancing. Much like in Jamaican dancehall, *kuduro* songs are usually launched together with a signature dance move, the *toque*.

Kuduristas aim at having their *toques* danced far and wide. *Toques* are one of the main promotional instruments for creating mass reception for a *kuduro* song through fan appropriation via dancing. As star *kuduro* artist Noite Dia points out in an interview with me, *kuduristas* design their *toques* with the distinct aim that they can be copied easily by the general public. Singers and their dancers typically perform the short motional sequences that can span up to one rhythmic measure during the coro of a song.

Toques often gesture at the song's lyrics through a typical movement or by transmitting an energetic state kinetically. The nervous zombie-like staggering and head-shaking of *Tá maluka* (She's mad) for example goes together with a paranoid bit by DJ Killamu and the lyrics "Are you mad? She's mad, she's mad, she's mad, she's mad", all delivered in a tongue-in-cheek manner.

Through nominal or kinetic references *toques* often point to quotidian life in Luanda. *Kuduristas* often discursively root their song-*toques* in the day-to-day conviviality of their neighbourhoods, mimetically drawing on everyday occurrences, images, and movements. In *Dança Engraxador* (Shoeshiner dance) Os Namayer incorporate the typical rubbing circular hand movement of Luanda's many shoe shiners. In the dance of the generator they incorporate the pulling of a generator's cord – with the frequent power cuts in the capital, this movement is engrained in Luandans' collective kinetic repertoire. The *toque* of their song "*Helicóptero*" (Helicopter) is an imitation of the rotor-blades. Puto Lilas' song and *toque* "*Enchimento*" (The filling) celebrates the ample derriere or bosom of an imaginary female interlocutor. The *toque* entails cupped hands that gesture at the latter body part, going along with the lyrical line "All of this is yours ?!?". The backhanded compliment – conveyed through the conjunction of lyrics and *toque* – alludes to the fact that many Luandan women like to flaunt their curves, enhance them through fashion, and sometimes through plastic surgery. In 2013, Puto Lilas' "*Está Xuxuado: Com V da vingança*" (It's xuxuado: with the V of vengeance) alludes to the female fashion trend *xuxuado* of wearing tight leggings in a way to accentuate the crotch. The *xuxuado* was so popular in 2013, it sparked themed party nights. In 2014 Mauro Alemão launched the song-*toque* "*Catolotolo*". With its spastic moves of cramped joints at the shoulders, wrists, and ankles it references an outbreak of *catolotolo* fever (caused by the chikungunya virus) in Angola in 2014. The *toque* "Bela" (Beautiful woman) was inspired by a fight of an inebriated couple, the dance-move mimicking the backward leaning stagger of Bela's partner as he tries to avoid her blows.

As much as *toques* come up through playful sociability, *kuduristas* also consciously device them. When I ask *kuduro* star dancer and vocalist Noite Dia about her process of creating new *toques* she muses:

I think you have to dance every day, and watch the others as well, right? Because I also appreciate the styles of others. When I see them, how can I say this? Every day I am in my room in front of the mirror always dancing. And from this I invent. If I am doing a solo *toque* and like it then I will teach it to my girls [dancers] so it can stick. I work always to be able to please the audience, because not always does the audience receive well the *toques* that we create. It's laborious. One has to train a lot. That way I find the ideal *toque* to pass to everyone. (Alisch 2011b)

If a *toque* catches on, broader audiences on formal and informal dance-floors dance it when the respective song is played but they also accompany other songs with it. As such, some *toques* circulate not only on dance floors but also through different artists' performances and videos. *Toques* evoke in embodied and visible ways what may not be expressed verbally. They kinetically mirror, contradict, or undermine what the lyrics transmit. While they need to be performed in recognisable ways their execution also varies. Due to their accessibility, *toques* are – beside the call-and-response lines – the *kuduro* practice that most mobilises joy and collectivity.

In the above mentioned video *toques* are among others "Mangaba", "Zé Dú" or "Mana Tocobina". "Mangaba" was developed by dancer King, a member of the Turma Fecha troupe and mimics walking impairment. *Mangaba* is akin to the *manganza* movement, which is also title of a song by *kuduro* group "Os Vagabanda".

Esquema

In *kuduro*, *esquema* (scheme) denotes a short dynamic group routine which dance troupes present in formation during stage shows and videos. They insert it during a sequence comprising solo passages with theatrical, improvised or acrobatic dancing, *toques*, or battle situations. They usually repeat an *esquema* several times in a row and also use *esquemas* to open or close the live performance of a *kuduro* song.

I have seen dancers perform different *esquemas*, but in conversation they usually refer to 'the' *esquema*, as if only the presently danced *esquema* exists or is relevant. Expert dancer Maninho da Vassoura created a popular *kuduro esquema* based on a karate sequence (Alisch 2013). I understand an *esquema* to be different from a *toque* in so far as it does not bear its own name and that it is not the signature dance of a song. An *esquema* is less narrative-based or denotative than a *toque*, and is closer to an aerobics or zumba routine. When dancers synch up in *esquema* they create unity and coherence after a whirlwind of more varied and aesthetically stimulating passages. This helps to create the "synchronism of the group" mentioned by Tony Amado. When the dancers in the video example perform "Mana Tocobina" in a line they create this effect of an *esquema*.

Individual

The *individual* (pronounced "ĩdividu'al") is a solo passage in *kuduro* dancing where expert dancers show off their brilliance. This solo aspect distinguishes the *individual* from *toque* and *esquema*, as these are collective forms of dancing. During the *individual*, dancers perform theatrical movements and gestures such as limping as if missing a leg, moving as if disabled, facial contortions called *cara feia* (ugly face) or falling flat on the ground as if shot. Dancers have their personal repertoire but also show expert interpretations of *toques*.

Especially in *underground* dancing the *individual* entails transgressive performances that can be comic, absurd, acrobatic, violent, or sensual. As much as they might appear to onlookers to be free-wheeling madness and as much as dancers claim to be acting in a state of trance – these show-stoppers are also planned and regimented. Dancer Come Deixa frequently distinguishes

himself through *individual* during TV appearances or at the Underground My Music (short UMM) gathering of veteran underground dancers initiated by Paulucho. When Come Deixa performed at the festival "*Kuduro não Para*" (*Kuduro* doesn't Stop) as the dancer for Agressivo do Cazenga I followed him with my camera (Alisch 2011a). While the vocalists animate the audience, Come Deixa strides up and down the edges of the indoor football pitch that serves as a stage. He rattles moveable football goals, checks the stability of the loudspeakers, and visually assesses a hoisting ramp from across the pitch. When the vocalists return their focus to him, Come Deixa runs over to the ramp and – still jogging – traverses it to ascend the goal.



Figure 2. Dancer Come Deixa & animador Agressivo do Cazenga at event "*Kuduro não Para*", Cidadela stadium Luanda, August 2011. Photo: Paulino Cinquenta Damião.

He mounts the goal but a security guard is quick to order him down and he obeys, continuing his *individual* on the floor.

When I discuss Come Deixa's apparent circumspection with expert dancer Maninho da Vassoura he tells me that he, too, scans the specifics of his dance environment and, indeed, every good *kuduro* dancer needs to "read the room" in preparation for their numbers (Alisch 2013). Beside the dancers' pre-planning, the *individual* is typically also held together through the instructions of the *animador* (see also Alisch 2017:159). The intensity of *individual* dancing often marks the height of a *kuduro* performance with maximum *carga* and audience engagement.

As much as the *individual* gives room to dancers' creativity and innovation, there are recurring routines such as the clownish performance of dancers sitting on the floor with stretched out legs, moving forward in a locomotive-like motion clapping their hands and grimacing to the audience with a grin. This move's infantilising body language – delivered with a subservient attitude – reminds me of the stereotypical roles of black and black-faced performers in US and South African minstrelsy. (The similarities between the theatrical elements of *kuduro* dancing and South African pantsula dancing are striking: performances that mimic riding a bicycle, picking each other up by pinching the shirt, or driving a car.) During *individual* expert dancers flaunt their prowess. These solos are transgressive moments in any type of *kuduro* dance, be it based on *ndombolo* or popping, sensual waist-winding, or autoaggressive back-flips. In the *individual* resides the well-calculated shock value of *kuduro* that affords visibility and media presence.

Whenever dancers perform solo in the introductory example, be it climbing up stage frames or contorting on speaker boxes, performing the baby and the old man or jumping into the audience – this is in *individual* mode.

Conclusion

Dancer Piko in nappy and wheelchair conjoins lifeworldly disparate states through dance: infantility and senile decay, body control and loss of control, brutality and helplessness, submissiveness and desire, fighting and camaraderie he combines in an incredible way. The cultural theorist Tejumola Olaniyan developed the concept of the "postcolonial incredible"

(Olaniyan 2004:2) in reference to the Nigerian afrobeat originator Fela Kuti in particular and to performative arts in African states in general. He states:

The 'incredible' inscribes that which cannot be believed; that which is too improbable, astonishing, and extraordinary to be believed. The incredible is not simply a breach but an outlandish infraction of 'normality' and its limits. If 'belief, as faith, confidence, trust, conviction, underwrites the certainty and tangibility of institutions and practices of social exchange, the incredible dissolves all such props of stability, normality, intelligibility (and therefore authority) and engenders social and symbolic crisis. (Olaniyan 2004:2)

Similar to Nigeria, Angolan oil money has brought unimaginable wealth to a few, but also intensifies warfare, violence, poverty or the impact of dance and music.

Kuduro dance – like many other performative practices in the global South – exteriorises the postcolonial incredible. In their *individual* performances, *kuduristas* transform the violence that permeates Angolan society as a consequence of colonial history, slavery and civil war into movement and entertainment. *Kuduristas* present the postcolonial incredible as spectacle. They thus offer an external view of the unbearable contradictions in a way that enables collective euphoria and concomitantly allows viewers to distance themselves from the unspeakable. *Kuduro* dance exposes the labour Angolans have to do to navigate and survive their everyday. At the same time, they generate pleasurable community in dance.

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CULTURAL PROMOTION AND SYMBOLIC (RE)PRESENTATION OF COMMUNITIES' MUSIC AND DANCE TRADITIONS: LASTOVO CARNIVAL CASE STUDY

The article focuses on an unusual case of interaction between the local and scientific communities. The reason for the specific cooperation was the preparation of an application for registering the Lastovo carnival for the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The research methodology, where local 'voluntary researchers' actively participate in addition to the researchers, resulted in a more subjective view in which the most critical voice is the local community's reflection on historical and contemporary life issues reflected in the *Lastovski poklad* custom.

Keywords: carnival, Lastovo, Croatia, carnival music, sword dance

Introduction

The Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia declared the *Lastovo poklad* (Lastovo carnival) a protected intangible cultural heritage and included it in the Register of Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Croatia on 17 January 2008. Ten years later, the idea of registering the Lastovo Poklad as a Croatian candidate for the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was born among the people of Lastovo. Since the ratification of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2005, the Republic of Croatia has been implementing intense activities of valorization, documentation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage. The efforts of the local community largely coincided with the aforementioned guidelines, so it was to be expected that the initiative would come from the active participants of the *Lastovo poklad*.

For the islanders, *poklad* is the most important custom, a tradition that they actively cherish, but also a social event that determines the rhythm of the year, an entity to which they adapt, through which they think, reflect on social meaning, togetherness, forgiveness and kindness. *Poklad* is also a symbol of resistance that lived through the centuries and survived various authorities, governments, was led by different flags, outwitted various prohibitions. It adapted and changed, but always remained the same, the most important event for Lastovo residents. The interest of researchers, heritage institutions and the media is therefore not surprising, including the two of us, an ethnochoreologist and an ethnomusicologist who have been following and recording insights about the *Lastovo poklad* for over twenty years. The initiative has turned into a concrete project – an excellent example of in-depth ethnographic field research of a small island community that has enriched scientific research with its own efforts and contributions. In this research, we have combined our long-standing ethnochoreological and ethnomusicological research with the 'voices' of the majority of participants in carnival events, the 'builders of culture', whose memories of participation in carnival events over the past fifty years were recorded in a comprehensive survey in the period from 2018 to 2020.

Fieldwork research in Croatian ethnology

In the decades-long tradition of Croatian ethnology, fieldwork has been one of its fundamental strongholds (Čapo Žmegač, Gulin Zrnić and Šantek 2006:8). Research practice is based on short field trips, participation and observation of a particular event, and conversations between the interviewer and informants about the history of a researched tradition.

Carnival events are a special challenge for a researcher since they reach their peak on only one or two days during the year. If anything is left unclear or there are any dilemmas, the researcher needs to wait for the next annual cycle for a new field trip to verify or challenge information. Gaining an in-depth knowledge of the Lastovo *poklad* events took a decade of research and continually returning to the island in the middle of winter, when islands are left to themselves, stripped of tourists and cultural events. On the other hand, our approach to the research on the Lastovo *poklad* has given rise to some new research paradigms that can be linked to the essential principles of the beginnings of ethnology as a science in Croatia.

Antun Radić, considered the founder of Croatian ethnology, defined ethnology as the science of the culture of one's own; he was primarily interested in the role of peasants in society. He was also the first to set parameters for fieldwork. He believed that peasant folk culture could only be credibly and fully understood and consequently investigated and written about by literate, educated people born into the researched communities, which resulted in ethnographic material written down in the local dialect of the researched area (Čapo Žmegač, Gulin Zrnić and Šantek 2006:11). At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, Radić started the fieldwork practice of "folk ethnographers": collectors of material about folk life who were primarily interested in the present (Čapo Žmegač, Gulin Zrnić and Šantek 2006:13). In the 1920s and 1930s, Radić's "folk ethnographers" were slowly replaced by professional ethnographers, with Milovan Gavazzi at their head. They based their ethnological research on fieldwork, an approach that is partly still practiced today, with a focus on interviews with informants about the history of researched traditional practices.

In the 1970s, despite much stumbling and resistance from ethnological standard research practices, ethnologist Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin reintroduced the present as a relevant category in Croatian ethnological research (compare Gulin Zrnić 2004:7; Rihtman-Auguštin 1988:9). The same paradigm was adopted in ethnochoreological practice. Ivan Ivančan collected data about dance with a focus on the past, interviewing numerous informants about how dance was once performed, while Stjepan Sremac introduced the present perspective in ethnochoreological research characterized by participant observation of a specific dance event (Niemčić 2007:18). Since the 1980s, a small community of Croatian ethnochoreologists and ethnomusicologists at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb has based their fieldwork primarily on the participant observation of particular music and dance events, that is, on monitoring the performance context of the researched topic as a starting research position. In research structured in this way, the focus is primarily on monitoring contemporary music and dance practices which is supplemented by interviews with informants about both the past and the present. The first chosen to be interviewed are often 'professional informants' presenting the parts of the tradition that they consider important, which they evaluate and reflect on.

Our research

For us, researchers – outsiders, it was a particular scholarly and research challenge. After years of getting to know carnival in depth using the method of participant observation, an opportunity arose to expand the research with the voices of Radić's 'folk ethnographers'. The aim was to gather stories about the carnival and everything related to its existence, about all its changes from the earliest times to the present generations who are active bearers of this custom.

In this case, the research was initiated by the islanders themselves, so the conversations (research) were mainly conducted by Lastovo residents with Lastovo residents. The trusted souls that share living experience and knowledge about common carnival tradition.¹ As many as 172 informants accepted participation in this unique undertaking of the local community, sharing their stories and memories. They differ from each other in terms of age and gender,

education, employment, functions in the community, by place of residence, as well as their roles and contributions to carnival events. Attachment and participation in carnival events does not necessarily imply permanent residence on the island. The characteristic of island life implies temporary and/or long-term displacement. The traits mentioned here are the reason why we use the term informant with a slightly different meaning than the one primarily associated within contemporary ethnology and cultural anthropology terminology. Appreciating the epistemological questionability of the concept of informants, as well as its relevance within symbolic anthropology, which experiences individuals as builders of culture and creators of meaning, this concept became the link in our field research that connected our ethnographic approach to the perceptions of Lastovo residents about our and their future work. Although contemporary approaches to ethnographic research are characterized by dialogue as a feature of intersubjective relationships realized in the field, the concept of informants became established among our collaborators, the Lastovo residents who conducted research, and whose approaches to interviews and rhetoric remained as a fundamental determinant of information gathering (but not interpretations of the material itself). Our predecessors in the field, for example the researchers of the Institute and Folklore research, helped to establish themes from the island's folklore heritage, and especially carnival themes. During their research from the middle of the last century the term informant became established, over time in the eyes of Lastovo residents, that contributed to this association for the discipline itself (Pleše 2014:10–11).

After the initial talks, a work plan was agreed upon. Our research volunteers made a list of potential informants, divided into three age categories – older (born between 1923 and 1946), 'golden'/middle (1947–1973) and younger/young (1974–2000) generation. The age of the narrator determined the order and schedule of meetings with them. The interviews were done by inhabitants of Lastovo themselves, guided by a series of questions that we came up with together. They also organized several storytelling events, where the informants of the same generation tried to stimulate parts of the collective memory 'buried' in the memories of the most remembered moments of the 20th century's carnival events. Our participation in the first few storytelling events encouraged the young people of Lastovo to continue exploring their community. They started with the oldest community members, whom they often visited individually at their homes where they recorded their conversations about carnival. The 'golden' generation was investigated individually to some extent, but much more through storytelling events where they together recalled memories of events long gone, trying to reconstruct them in animated discussions. All the conversations were recorded and then transcribed. It is worth mentioning that the transcriptions were made by young educated residents of the local community, who could best understand the local dialect full of symbolic idioms that in most cases meant nothing to us as outsiders. The collected and transcribed ethnographic material was archived in the Documentation Department of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb as a manuscript collection of interviews (Čaleta and Niemčić 2022b, 2022c). The value of this initiative and project, as well as the value of the material collected, is significant. All in all, 155 interviews were conducted in which 172 narrators participated – the transcribed and systematized material made a manuscript of more than 800 pages! Some stories and interesting facts about the *poklad* were told that we, as guests from the outside, had not been able to hear in twenty years of visiting and researching the island. All in all, this research represents a unique methodological undertaking, so we are grateful to the Lastovo residents for the opportunity for additional insights and development of our profession, both methodologically and thematically related to the understanding and interpretation of carnival events.

All of the interviews were done face-to-face; there was no one-for-all questionnaire. It is important to note that all of the interviews were conducted in environments that felt natural and

comfortable for the informants, such as their homes or community spaces, and in the company of people they knew well, trusted, could relax with, and with whom they shared exceptional knowledge of carnival.

The stories that emerged in our meetings with Lastovo residents, in workshops that stimulated memories of the carnival period, proved to be a first-class source for understanding the (self)perception of Lastovo residents and the importance of carnival in that process of self-discovery. The stories became a link between the factual and the personal, a foundation that was more than just a folkloric fact and which, in the spirit of contemporary anthropological debates, pointed to the complex intertwining of real situations, transmitted images of the past and symbolic networks woven around cultural worlds, at the center of which Lastovo was located. The story became, in the spirit of Geertz's remark about ethnography as imaginative writing about real people, in real places and in real time (Geertz 1988:141), a point where the varied experiences of the islanders, their fears and longings, were sedimented, a meeting place of humorous observations about the world today and idealized situations from the past. In this way, a representational narrative about 'ideal' traditional practices – one that would be offered to a stranger coming to the island guided by research curiosity – was avoided. In these stories and memories of carnival and its events, told by several generations, we can see Radić's "dynamic conception of culture": the processes of adapting customs to changed life contexts as well as creativity in its sustainability (Čapo Žmegač 1997:28).

Music and dance in research

Dance

During the research, little was said about dances; the very structure of the dance and dance steps was not mentioned even once. Certainly, the reason for this is the 'natural' way of learning dances that on Lastovo still starts from early childhood by observing and repeating motor activities until complete adoption. The people of Lastovo mention the dances they danced at dance parties and festive balls in the dance hall (*sala*), but they rarely or never mention the details and description of the *balo pod liru*, *pokladarsko kolo* or *lijepa maškare* chain dance. It is interesting that even their interrogators – fellow residents, do not consider questions about chain dances as important information, even though they are undoubtedly an integral part of carnival events and customary practices on the island of Lastovo.

This attitude is not new in traditional dance research. A similar example of 'negating' the most represented and most performed dance can be found in Egil Bakka's texts about polka. Writing about the phenomenon of the polka dance, which is extremely present in the traditional dance practice of Norway, Bakka mentions an interesting fact. At the beginning of the 20th century, when the polka spread throughout Europe due to its popularity, booklets with instructions for dancing certain dances began to be published in Norway. Although the polka is often mentioned in these booklets, there are no precise explanations of the polka dance patterns unlike the explanations of the dance patterns of other dances. Moreover, in some of the booklets it is explicitly stated that "everyone knows how to dance" polka (Bakka 2000:5).

All the participants of the Lastovo *poklad* know how to dance *balo pod liru*, *pokladarsko kolo* or *lijepa maškare* chain dance, so they don't need any additional explanation or instructions for dancing. About twenty years ago, when we started my ethnochoreological research on the Lastovo *poklad*, the focus of my research was dance, along with all the usual practices. At that time, the informers, leaders of the custom functions (*capo di balo*) meticulously answered my questions about the dance and dance figures. As we perceived the field work as a "source of data for scientific processing" (Lozica 2006:237), all my scientific texts were created from that point of view. According to Lozica, in field work research it is always about the extreme

situation of our close encounter with the elusive Other with whom, although we meet him every day, "only in the formalized attempt of 'scientific' field work research do we notice his silence and the difficulties of real dialogue"(Lozica 2006:238). As Lozica further states, all "possibilities of writing about the field work are actually our interpretations of the unsaid, forms of our monologue on behalf of the Other" (Lozica 2006:238).

When it comes to dance and dance research, the problem doubles, to say the least. We demand and expect our dancers-narrators to translate non-verbal dance movements into words, which we researchers then turn into (scientific) texts or a series of analytical data, the reading of which enables potential dancers to adopt individual dance steps and figures. Since we are aware of the great limitations in recording dance in this case, the movement will continue to remain invisible or unrecorded. First of all, the intention is to show how difficult it is even for the performers themselves, who without doubt know most about it, to talk about dancing. The same applies to the ways in which performers approach verbalization. In the conversations of islanders with islanders, dance is only mentioned in passing, it is not given special importance. It does not mean that dance is not present in common practice. On the contrary, everyone knows exactly how, when and where they dance, it is part of their lives determined as a regular part of life events. On the other hand, instead of talking about dance they rather reflect the fear of change or the acceptance of change. Dance belongs to a silent collective knowledge that rests on experience and that remains undefined by its verbalization anyway, "what people know best is so self-evident and commonplace that it escapes attention" (Frykman 1990:84). Instead of concrete mentions of dance, our informants like to recount funny incidents related to dance festivities (*balo na salu*).² Likewise, they are rather happy to remember the mischiefs from the trips with the folklore group that performs their local dances. Here, too, instead of the dance topic, the emphasis is on interesting moments related to dance events, while not acknowledging that the stage performance of their local dance was largely inspired by the choreographic idea of Ivan Ivančan performed by the Lado National Folk Dance Ensemble. In fact, their reaction and comments on the performance of Lado, which in staging the Lastovo carnival freely accesses some elements that are 'sacred' for the Lastovo inhabitants, is very harsh. The same applies to the future of dance festivities (*balo na salu*), which are often discussed by coming up with solutions that would encourage younger generations to participate more actively in dance events.

Music

Music is also an important component of carnival events; as in the rest of the world, sudden technological developments and especially tourism brought contemporary global assets that have somehow changed Lastovo's musical soundscapes. Our informants rarely openly speak about music; the most common mention refers to the sound of the *lira*, which brings a special state of consciousness and emotion to all Lastovo inhabitants. The *lira* is a solo instrument that is used as an accompaniment to dancing, less often to singing. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, at the time of the most active musical practice, the *lira* is present in the traditional music-performance practice along the Adriatic coast and most of the islands. In medieval lexicons and dictionaries from our region (especially those from the Dubrovnik and Dalmatia), a musical instrument of this name is not mentioned, which leads the authors to think that the *lira* is domesticated in the musical practice of the Adriatic area only at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century (Ćaleta and Niemčić 2022a:155). The lyre and its strong sound introduce us to a period in which different musical worlds collide in singing, but more often in a music-dance context. Thus, in stories that mention musical idioms, we will often hear 'return to the old days' as an imperative that gives certainty, recognition and predictability

of Lastovo's musical everyday life. Singing, musical genres presented in the carnival period confirm the specific dedication and prestige that those who are skilled in singing or playing in their community deserve. Music is also in the function of intergenerational connection, uniting different generations in a joint activity and thereby passing on tradition to the young.

From the narration, it is possible to conclude that the mindset of the community that lives with this kind of tradition is more susceptible to inventive improvisation of existing musical idioms than to accepting new ones. This attitude can be gleaned from the critical attitude towards new aesthetics that brought new repertoires, but also professionalization. Reflections of local musicians in relation to foreign musicians are frequent in the narrator's comments. In these narratives, one can glimpse the awareness of the gradual acceptance of changes, difficult for the community that is used to decades of adopted music and dance idioms that they consider their heritage.

On the other hand, the most recognizable symbol that everyone mentions in their memories is the sound of the *lira*. As a rule, players of traditional musical instruments are distinguished individuals who sacrifice their time for the love of the musical instrument to improve playing techniques, which the entire community later recognizes as special, skillful and valuable. These are self-taught individuals who learn the tradition by carefully listening and imitating their predecessors.

There are rare cases when the names of prominent traditional players are remembered, but the memory of past prominent *lira* players is still present in Lastovo. Most of the comments in the statements referred to the oldest, most skilled *lira* players who remained in the memories, about whom stories were told, and are still mentioned today. Some associate them with a specific event, some with a time of residence, some remember their other occupations. They are always mentioned as musicians, which is how the community remembers them. The most present questions refer to the appearance of the *lira* players, which has completely changed. Former *lira* players were dressed in a civilian suit with a ribbon over the shoulder as the only decoration, while today's wear a *pokladari* uniform. This visual moment connects both the older, golden and younger generations, and this can be read from the fact that a large number of informants 'touched' this issue.

Conclusion

The book (Čaleta and Niemčić 2022a) as a result of our joint research project brings together in equal manner our ethnochoreological and ethnomusicological research of many years and the 'voices' of the majority of the carnival participants, the 'builders of culture' on Lastovo. Thus, we have come full circle in the development of methodology of research and fieldwork, starting from the current position of professional researchers using the method of participant observation as well as interviews with 'professional informants'. By actively participating in the most important local traditional event, we gained the trust of the entire community. The invaluable role of their initiative prompted a multitude of 'insider voices', 'folk ethnographers' to speak honestly about their memories as well as their fears regarding their community's most important custom, the one that represents them to the outside world. Besides scientists-researchers, local researchers also participate very actively. The results in a more subjective view in which the most important voice is the reflection on historical and contemporary life issues and music and dance of the local community. From traditions from the past to contemporary interpretations and explications, adaptations and changes, the results of research show the resilience and inner need of the local community to survive in its own environment and coexist with nature. All of these factors prove that dance and music have a significant but not the most important place in the narrators' statements; little is said about them but it is understood that they are an indispensable part of rituals especially in the light of contemporary global socio-political and pandemic events.

The book presentation was also brought in the same manner; it happened on the island on the 2 February 2023, on the Our Lady of Candle day. It was a day when *lira* sounds for the first time in the dark, announcing future events. It follows the first round of *pokladari* where after singing everything culminates in frenetic exclamation of shout "Uvooo" before first *pokladari* joint dinner. Most of the inhabitants, our informants were there looking for their names under citations, looking for the memorable photos from family albums, remembering numerous memories of previous carnival events. For us, it was an unusual feeling of strong belonging to the community that so generously welcomed us into their society... Everything that has been said points to the importance and tenacity of the link between the local community and the custom that represents a strong identity marker for the small southern Dalmatian island of Lastovo.

Endnotes

- 1 This recount tries to illustrate our position and confirm our thoughts of 'natives' researching 'natives': in the book *In a company of man* (1960), Ethel M. Albert recounts an incident that happened to her during research in the middle of the last century in Burundi, which influenced future reflections on research methodologies. One morning she found her local assistant sitting at a table with one of the tellers, talking to him and taking notes. When she asked what he was doing, he replied: "Anthropological research like you. But I know the language, so my research will be better than yours" (Albert 1960:369 in Pleše 2014:16).
- 2 The term *balo* from the Italian term *fiesta de ballo* (dance party) is not only a dance, but an evening/all-night event, in the not-so-distant past, the only winter party, a public gathering accompanied by a series of informal situations (*maškare na salu, maškare po mistu, šene, fačende, škerci, skandali*) that are most often remembered and passed on verbally from generation to generation.

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WORKING THROUGH CHALLENGES IN ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH PROCESSES: A PERSONAL REFLECTION ON ORAL INTERVIEWS

In this article I focus on the oral history interview processes that I conducted on Alevi ritual movements (*semahs*). I go through my reflections to show that the interview process taught me how to engage with people in intimate encounters and provided for me an opportunity to understand the sensibilities of the community members. In the end, they all proved to be significant in understanding the transformation/reformulation processes of their ritual movements.

Keywords: Oral history interviews, Alevi ritual movement (*semah*), narrative space, reflection, outsider position

There are various methodologies established and widely used for knowledge production in dance research. Depending on the demands of my research topic, as well as my background and skills, I have been employing a range of methodologies in my own work. Beyond my prior experience in practice of and study on traditional dances, the study I carried out for my PhD dissertation was the first one that gave me some experience in conducting academic ethnographic research, which was intertwined with oral history interviews. My focus was identity construction processes of a religious community (Alevi) in the history of Turkey in relation to reformulation of their ritual movements (*semahs*).

My curiosity about ritual dances of the Alevi, which is a marginalized and stigmatized religious community in Turkey, started essentially in relation to the political context of the time. In the middle of the 1990s, there had been incidents of Sivas (1993) and Gazi (1994), during which a number of Alevi people were killed. My fieldwork, which took place in the late 1990s and early 2000s, was concerned with the ritual movements of this ethnically diverse (Turkish, Kurdish and Arabic-speaking communities), unorthodox religious community, which constitutes about 10% to 25% of the whole population in Turkey. In terms of a ritual movement, political sensitivity is only part of the story; however, at the time, it had an important place in the representation of Alevi identity. As it started to be performed apart from the ritual as a ritualistic dance in the public sphere, where audiences included non-Alevi people, it provided a new perspective for me as well, and I decided to work on *semah* for my PhD dissertation and research.

In this study, fieldwork and oral history interviews were conducted alongside a critical analysis of the available texts. I visited public ritual and gathering places of the Alevis (*cemevi*), attended one of their festivals with the members of Karacaahmet Cemevi *semah* group and partook in conversations with the members of the group, who were mostly young people. Oral history interviews with several elderly people, on the other hand, proved to be utterly significant as they provided a solid ground for me to pursue transformation processes of *semahs* in a historical perspective. More importantly, they taught me how to engage with people in close encounters, which is a primary step in all research that necessitates working together with people. Lindsey French says that she "gained the courage to do ethnographic fieldwork by learning how to conduct oral history interviews" (2019:274). Similarly, my fieldwork started after I attained some experience in conducting oral history interviews, but not because I deliberately planned it. However, I can say that the difficulties I experienced during those interviews were quite challenging and my efforts to overcome them provided me with valuable experience to conduct my entire fieldwork in a more productive way.

In this article I will revisit my oral history interview experiences – which did not include any presentation of the ritual movements but based on oral narratives – as a part of knowledge production in dance research. My main focus will be the interviews I conducted only with one person in order to be thorough in reflecting on the difficulties I encountered, and knowledge and perspective I gained throughout the interview process. However, in order to make sense of the discussions I initiated in relation to this main case, I will occasionally make references to a number of other interview occasions.

Before conducting the interviews, I read many texts on *semahs* and became quite familiar with this literature. In the process, I noticed and decided to explore the discrepancies between the general features of publicly known *semahs* and the recent texts on *semahs* that accompanied them, and the information I gathered from a few *semah* texts published in the initial decades of the Republican period. To understand the transformation processes of *semahs*, I was hoping to explore the connotations of these discrepancies. On the one hand, I continued to work on the reconstruction processes of Alevi identity in different historical periods by critically analyzing discourses of various writers. On the other hand, I wanted to talk to elderly people of the community, who might have attended the rituals back then either in their hometowns or in private gatherings. My aim was to find out if those dances, which no longer exist, have a place in their memories and if this is the case, how their disappearance can be explained. With the help of the Alevi people whom I knew, I was able to conduct oral history interviews with several elderly people.

The main oral history interview that I will reflect on was my first experience in this field and I conducted it with a Turkish *Alevi dede*. The *dedes* are the religious leaders of the Alevi and the ones who conduct the rituals with the help of twelve assistants, each of whom fulfil a specific ritual service. The *dede* whom I interviewed in 1998 migrated to İstanbul more than some twenty years prior to our interviews. He served as a *dede* since 1948 both in his hometown and later in his neighborhood in İstanbul, Rumeli Hisarüstü. At the time we met, there were several *cemevis* in İstanbul for Alevi to come together, work and conduct their rituals. Although he did not want to work in any of them – to which Alevi who migrated to İstanbul from various parts of Anatolia attended – he was in close contact with the people of his community in the neighborhood, and was helping them when his assistance was demanded. In our first encounter, I introduced myself and explained my research. Even though the *dede* welcomed me very nicely, he did not answer my questions. He asked me if I had read certain books. Although I had already read most of them, I did not manage to express myself appropriately. After a very brief conversation I thanked him and left his house. At this point it is worth mentioning that although the Alevi people whom I knew and helped me throughout the process made sure that I was welcomed in the community, I started to understand that hospitality does not mean trust, and that trust should be earned, if possible, and perhaps, only up to a certain degree.

While reflecting on that unpleasant encounter, I asked myself many questions, such as: Did he mean that all those books would tell me what I needed to know since they were available in the libraries and included sufficient information for the outsiders? Perhaps, as an outsider, he did not think that I have a right to go beyond what is already publicly known. I also questioned whether I was concentrating on my position as an outsider too much and neglecting other significant issues, like developing rapport. Perhaps, there were significant issues that I missed when I was studying those books. I did not know if he was expecting me again, but I would go back. I thought that my first step should have been developing a genuine relationship, which also includes getting prepared for each and every interviewee according to their distinct features. In this case, I was talking with a *dede*, an esteemed person of a religious community, that I should find a better way to show my respect for his knowledge and experience instead of prioritizing my research agenda. So, in the meantime, I re-read the books he recommended, examined new ones and, more importantly, I worked harder on the Alevi belief system. Despite the fact that *semah* texts that I had studied contained some information on the rituals, I realized that by concentrating on contemporary issues, I had not opened enough

space to discuss the significance of the rituals and *semahs*, and, more importantly, their intertwined existence in the experience of the *dede*.

However, I was also aware that I faced a problem in personal communication skills; for example, not being ready to open an alternative dialogue when the narrator stops, or kindly rejects to communicate further. Overcoming this problem was a difficult task for me. I was inexperienced, and moreover, a shy person at the time – which is not a very convenient characteristic to conduct interviews. Yet, as I have reflected later on, I was a good listener and being able to listen helped me to overcome some of my deficiencies resulting from being shy. Starting from a positive point, I tried to develop my listening skills as an interviewer.¹ But, even though I could be ready to listen, how would I be able to start a fruitful conversation?

I managed to overcome this problem gradually if not completely. As a first step, I decided to leave my earlier questions aside until we started to communicate and develop some rapport. I tried to open a space in which he could talk about his life in his own way and pace. His narratives made clear that his life, belief system and responsibilities as a *dede* were all intertwined tightly. Actually, this was the main context to which my questions belonged, and the one that I had failed to provide in the initial interview. However, I did not use a shortcut to pass onto questions, realizing that first of all, the most important thing was to develop a relationship and I did not want him to feel as if he was tolerated only up to a certain point. Second, his narratives were supplying me with a wider perspective to formulate new questions, reformulate some old ones and think about issues that were not on my agenda up to that point. Third, some questions were already being replied and/or elaborated more efficiently when convenient contexts appeared in the ongoing narratives. In the end, the *dede* and I established a relationship that our slowly evolving conversations brought us to a point where most of my questions were contextualized and discussed frankly.

I would like to elaborate on the issue of questions by focusing on one of them. As I mentioned in the beginning of this article, while comparing the earlier and recent *semah* texts (and contemporary performances) I found out some discrepancies. One of those was about whether 'touching' arms, shoulders, waists or hands were included in any *semah* forms, or not. Whereas in the older texts it was possible to find a few *semahs* that included it, the recent ones, especially the public performances excluded it almost as a rule. Since even the old texts did not provide much space for them, I was questioning the validity of this information as well. When the *dede* was talking about his visits to various Alevi communities, he mentioned the *semah* of a Çepni group in Black Sea Region. Back at the time (in 1956), the performers were holding each other by the arms tightly. He continued his narrative by saying that they recently changed it in accordance with other public *semahs*. According to him, the performers became unable to move comfortably any more (1998). At this point, I could draw a conclusion like the disappearance of those *semahs* was related to interaction of *semah* groups and the groups' motivation to be appreciated more by the audience.² Personally, I also was observing that *semahs*, which included whirling or rather difficult movements were attracting more attention in the public sphere. With this example, the *dede* helped me see how *semah* styles and choreographies are currently evolving and transcending traditional lines. On the other hand, the exclusion of several styles on artistic (and/or audience-based) preferences was something, their non-existence almost as a rule was something else. Therefore, since he assured me about their existence, instead of jumping at a conclusion, I felt encouraged to do further research on the issue.

Getting to this point with the *dede* and being able to talk openly was not easy and it took time and effort. It was only after the *dede* decided that I was committed and serious enough that he shared with me a glimpse of knowledge that he had accumulated in more than half a century. Reflecting on this experience later, I kind of thought that the *dede* put me through a maturation process which resonated with the stages of the Alevi belief system where you experience and pass each one through your commitment. I was not an Alevi, but he was an Alevi *dede*, who committed himself to teach

people how to earn the right to do the things that they wanted to do. During this process, I gradually learned a lot about his life and his experiences as a *dede*. Sometimes he had visitors from the neighborhood, who added new topics or gave examples from their life experiences. Although many textbooks on oral history recommends to have one-to-one interviews – except in certain cases³ – the conversations in which neighbors participated as well, enhanced significantly my understanding of the community and their sensitivities. These oral history interviews intertwined with my ethnographic fieldwork and the people whom I met there continued to help me in the process.

Even though I had come a long way, as I had wondered following my first interview, I still occasionally felt as an outsider. That position did not prevent me from conducting interviews, having friendly interactions, and consequently acquiring knowledge. Although being an outsider is not a fixed position, I could still feel its effects mainly in three occasions: initial stages of the interviews with a new interviewee, silences on some issues, and explanations given out of context. About the first issue, I should briefly say that even though I was referred to each interviewee by one of our mutual friends, I still had to gain their trust. Additionally, as ordinary people – not *dedes*, or religiously or otherwise significant figures – they had difficulty in understanding if any part of their life could be of interest to anyone or worth exploring. Both of these facts complicated the beginnings but in time they were resolved for the most part. In my experience, being genuinely interested in people's lives and showing my respect to them for opening their houses and accepting to talk with me were important to disregard most of the troubled phases.

Long moments of silence in discussions of various old *semah* forms might be a helpful example for the second issue. It was only the *dede* who confirmed the existence of several *semahs* that include touching and gave a specific example. Did the other narrators have no recollection of those *semahs*, or did they prefer not to talk about them? I do not know the answer and I did not try to force my narrators to get information. I respected their silence and made effort to understand its meaning. This effort would combine with what I understood in terms of the third issue: explanations given out of context. Throughout the oral history interviews, there was a topic,⁴ which was explained without being asked or out of context. It involved an idiom, *mum söndü*, that targeted Alevi, and condemned them as immoral people. Because they were persecuted since the 16th century during the time of the Ottoman Empire, and not accepted as a religious group in modern Turkey, the Alevi used to conduct their rituals secretly. Marginalization and secrecy led many people in a Sunni dominated society to question the morality of the Alevi people. The idiom *mum söndü*, literally 'candles are extinguished', has been an idiom used by some non-Alevi people as a reference to Alevi's secret rituals with a strong connotation that they involve immoral acts. My interviewees were extremely hurt by those allegations and always tried to tell me the importance of the twelve services of their ritual, one of which was lighting, not extinguishing, the candles. Their narratives also involved some examples on how Alevi people survived that kind of accusations and some others on their moral conduct – which were certainly not possible according to their belief system.⁵

When I considered those sensitivities and silent moments in relation to earlier *semah* forms, I thought that bringing up a *semah* form that involves people touching each other's arms, hands, shoulders or waists during a ritual, which had been practiced in secrecy for a long time, could lead some non-community members to question the morality of Alevi. I still do not know if any of my narrators had information of those *semahs*. Yet, their unexpected narratives helped me to consider their sensitivities, which also could have been effective in historical transformation processes of *semahs*. Moreover, narratives that emerged surprisingly as a result of the narrators' personal initiatives provided me with other clues about what they have been expecting from me as a researcher, whose text would access to many others, to whom they were not acquainted with. Whether it was my curiosity, or not (at least in the beginning), I felt the necessity of providing space for them to talk about those issues which seemed very significant from their point of views. Eventually, they have become invaluable tools in the analysis of interview data.

In one of his articles, Alessandro Portelli emphasizes that "[o]ur task is not merely to extract information, but to open up narrative spaces" (2018:43). In this article I revisited my first oral history interview experience, conducted at a time when I was not at anywhere close to such an understanding. However, starting with the first part of Portelli's statement, I can say that practical work taught me not to create pressure on my interviewees due to several reasons: first, being accepted as an interviewer was a privilege that I felt and it should be taken seriously. That was one of the reasons for me to work harder to show my genuine respect. Second, and practically, I wanted to continue with interviews that I was afraid to fail from the beginning. So, I tried to reflect thoroughly and did whatever I could to be able to keep this process alive. Third, if I was expecting sincere narratives, I thought that they could not emerge through pressure, but with mutual respect and rapport. Fourth, I was also aware that ethically, as researchers, we should minimize harm,⁶ since my interviewees were old people and members of a marginalized and stigmatized community, I should be very careful not to cause any harm, be it psychological, or socio-political. Because of these reasons, I did not try to extract information from my interviewees, but worked hard to open up conversations and talk sincerely. In the process, I learned that unexpected narratives can provide us with considerable information, be it on our original topic or any other one. Meaning that, our initial plan may change, if we are ready and willing for it, and those changes sometimes have the potential for opening before us new channels to look into and inquire that go far beyond our initial plans or expectations.

I think that rather than concentrating on collecting data in order to produce a more complete "documentary source" (Sheftel and Zembrzycki 2016:360), focusing on providing a ground where fruitful conversations could take place is closer to what Portelli calls "narrative spaces" in the second part of his statement cited above. I think that the approach that I tried to adopt in the process has a similarity with this one. Retrospectively, I understand that the main question was about various tendencies within the craft of doing oral history and understanding what we mean by source. While the former attitude is more in line with positivist tendencies and objectivity, the latter one signals a post-positivist⁷ attitude in which oral sources are not deprived of their features as humans and thus their subjectivity. It is the subjectivity of the interviewees that shed light on the meaning of the issues being talked about in the interviews since they stem from their life experiences and give an idea about their reservations. As Portelli notes, oral history "tells us less about events than about their meanings" (2003:67). In my experience, too, the "narrative spaces" that I tried to open as much as I could, have proved to be crucial to my attempt to understand the meaning of the data that I gathered throughout the interviews.

In this article, I tried to highlight my reflections that guided me in the research process: the oral history interviews made me question my personal skills and abilities, and also helped me to see the boundaries set by my interviewees. The former one led me reconsider what I lacked, how I could improve my work and what I could manage to do. The latter one motivated me to think deeper about the sensibilities of the community members and what they could have expected from consenting to take part in my interviews – their fears and their hopes in opening themselves up to a relative-outsider. In the end, oral narratives of elderly Alevi people, most of whom could not perform *semah* anymore, had an enormous contribution to the production of knowledge in dance/ritual movement research. The experiences I acquired and the conclusions I drew from those interviews helped me to conduct my ethnographic fieldwork in a much more productive way and with involvement of new issues that I was not able to think about previously. Interviews and my first-hand observations showed me that beyond external or artistic impacts, transformation processes of dances/ritual movements are closely related to socio-political sensitivities of the people who embrace them as a meaningful part of their identity, which is a very significant point in accumulation of knowledge in dance/ritual movement research.

Endnotes

- 1 I started with Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack's article, which helped me to consider the importance of listening by carefully following the interviewees' narratives that go beyond the answers required for questions, or researcher's agenda.
- 2 On the artistic transformation of *semahs*, see Öztürkmen 2005.
- 3 For detailed information, see: Thompson 2000. Chapter 7: The Interview, especially: 234–235.
- 4 Actually, there were two topics of this kind. The other one (*Kızılbaş*) was about acquisitions that have been used to question their loyalty to the state. However, the purpose of preventing a divergence in the structure of the article, I preferred to discuss only "*mum söndü*" since it was directly related to the exemplar case that I have been discussing.
- 5 In terms of the Alevi belief system the basic principle in daily life is summarized as *eline, diline, beline sahip olmak*, literally meaning that people should be in control of their hands, tongue and sexual needs.
- 6 For more information, see: Sheftel and Zembrzycki 2016, especially: 353–357.
- 7 The following articles give detailed information on the history of oral history, with emphasis on turning points: Thomson 2000, 2007; Sheftel and Zembrzycki 2016.

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THE INSTITUTE FOR MUSICOLOGY IN BUDAPEST AS A RESEARCH CENTRE FOR TRADITIONAL DANCES

This paper presents the institutional, social, and political context of folkdance research in the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS) in Budapest. The author also tries to formulate a critical opinion about this rather institutionized context for 'knowledge creation'. For further analysis and interpretation of the phenomenon of this kind of 'knowledge maximalization', the author suggests a diverse methodology combining the approaches of contextual-, organizational-, and political (developmental) anthropology.

Keywords: folk dance research, Institute for Musicology of HAS, organizational approach

Introduction

In my opinion, scientific research in general has three basic factors: 1. the researcher and the research activity carried out by him/her; 2. the objective conditions supporting the research (institutional background, funding, technical facilities); and 3. scientific results objectified in data collections, archives, publications, and theoretical constructions. I touch on all the three factors, but the focus of this thesis is the examination of the institutional background of folkdance research in the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), Budapest. I deal with the institute as a knowledge-creating organization forming an institutional, social, and political context for this particular activity. To my knowledge, there is not enough independent organizational research in this field, although it would be internationally important from the point of view of the interpretation of the accumulated source material. In sociology and in political (developmental) anthropology we may find examples of scholarly interest in institutions, which may help us to establish our current methodology in this research. In this case, I was involved in the activity of the institute for more than two decades.¹ On the one hand, my involvement as a researcher and decision maker on various levels makes it easy for me to evaluate the operation of the institutional context for folk dance research. On the other hand, the close involvement makes it difficult to look at it as a research topic claiming objectivity and unpretentiousness. I try to avoid both excessive objectivism and subjectivism.

The establishment of HAS and the Department of Folk Dance

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS) was the most prestigious organization of Hungarian scientific life starting in 1840.² It followed a kind of Western model representing a body of academicians, the most advanced scientists of the various scientific disciplines. In 1949 it was reorganized according to the Soviet system. This was reflected in the establishment of almost the same organizational system, by defining the same sections of research fields (scientific disciplines) and introduction of the same ranking system of academic achievement. The main organizational unit was the research institute, which served the intensification of the research on each canonized and authorized field.

The process of institutionalisation³ of folk dance research in HAS began in 1965 with the invitation of György Martin and Lányi Ágoston to the staff of the Folk Music Research Group of HAS headed by Zoltán Kodály. An independent Department of Folk Dance Research was established in 1974, when Folk Music Research Group was integrated into the newly founded Institute for Musicology. Creation of the Folk Dance Department in the Institute for Musicology indicated

an appreciation of the promising scientific results of the folk dance researchers in the previous decades (e.g. Morvay and Pesovár 1954; Martin 1955, 1964, 1965; Martin and Pesovár 1958, 1961, 1965ab; Pesovár 1961). The department had a fairly favourable status, closely connected to the Folk Music Department. It was one of the seven research communities that made up the Institute, namely the Bartók Archive, Hungarian Music History (18th–19th centuries), Early European Music History (until the 17th century), 20th Century Music, Systematic Musicology, Folk Music, and finally Folk Dance. Departments worked in open cooperation with each other under the direction of the directorate and with the help of the library, the museum, and the technical division. From that time, folk dance researchers and their research have shared in all the privileges, advantages, and benefits that HAS provided for research communities. Staff members of the Department were György Martin (1932–1983) dance folklorist, head of the Department, Ernő Pesovár (1926–2008) dance folklorist and dance historian, Ágoston Lányi (1923–1986) kinetographer, and István Halmos (1929–2016) ethnomusicologist and ethnographer. Ferenc Pesovár, Jolán Borbély, Bertalan Andrásfalvy, and László Maác, all former fellow university students also collaborated in the work in the Institute, although they worked in various other places.

Research in the Folk Dance Department from 1974

Perspectives inherited and transcended

In the first half of the 20th century, folk dance research followed the objectives of the Finnish School of Geography and History. Methods were determined by Cecil Sharp's folkloristic and Curt Sachs' dance ethnological way of thinking. These were associated with dominance of the empirical (descriptive) method; less predisposition to theoretical research; and traces of a romantic, idealistic approach with its interest in national characteristics. It implied selectivity and the accompanying purism, archaization - historization, searching for origins, nationalization, and ethnicization of traditions. It took great effort for the new generation to go beyond this heritage. Gradual shifts of the old paradigms in folk dance research began in the 1950s in the Institute of Folk Art.⁴ The decades from the 1950s until the 1970s were a period of very intensive field research. Fieldwork took place in collaboration with the participants of the folk dance movement and through the assistance of Hungarian experts living in neighbouring countries.⁵ It was then when the long-term plan for Hungarian folk dance research was developed, which focused on the critical source-publication of the content of the folk dance archive, and the creation of a new theoretical and methodological background for research. The field's academic status, institutional support, and international professional connections in IFMC were firm bases for the implementation of the plans (Martin 1977; Felföldi 2007; Felföldi and Pávay 2006).

New research paradigms

The new paradigm developed by the Martin generation affected almost every component of research on traditional dances:

1. Establishment of a central folk dance archive in HAS covering the whole Hungarian language territory;
2. Shift from the identification of the origin and general national (regional) features of dance traditions to disclosing the means of dance creation, and the dancers' creativity. A precondition for this was the evaluation of the single, momentary dance creation of the individual dancers recorded on film;
3. Complex analytical approach (morphological-structural, functional, and musical aspects);
4. Historical structural typology, determination of the historical stylistic layers; comparison with a wider European geographical-historical framework;
5. Individual dancing creativity inside the community, rules of improvisation;

6. Critical evaluation and publication of the sources in dance catalogues, monographs according to regions, dancing individualities, historical dance types.

The fundamental paradigm building works of the Martin-Pesovár generation are included in the Bibliography section of the Folk Dance Knowledge Base (see <https://neptanctudastar.abtk.hu/hu/bibliography>.) After Martin's and Lányi's untimely deaths (in 1983 and 1986), Ernő Pesovár as department leader made an effort to continue the previous objectives with the younger colleagues (László Felföldi, János Fügedi, and Gyula Pálffy). Although he retired in 1988, he was influential in academic folk dance research until his death (2008) by publishing new volumes and by advocating the fulfilment of the previous tasks set by his generation.⁶

The period of de-sovietisation. Appearance of elements of a new paradigm after the 1990s

The main factors which brought about the process of de-sovietisation were the decentralisation of the academic system, introduction of new fundraising techniques, and reform of the old order of the scientific ranking system. These resulted in a kind of effervescence in academic life, and primarily in research. This was reflected a new wave of field work,⁷ internationalisation of the research by cross-academic connections, and intensification of connections with the international professional organizations (particularly ICTM). The introduction of computer techniques opened new perspectives in the refinement of the research methodology.

The time slowly came for the construction of new paradigms. This process was accelerated by several factors, including; accreditation of a dance researcher training course in Szeged University in 2010, introduction of the dance anthropology perspective into folk dance research, intensive collaboration with other dance research centres internationally, and appearance of the next generation in dance research in the 2000s (Máté Kavecsánszki, Dóra Kovács, Vivien Szőnyi, and Henrik Kovács, each with a PhD.) This younger generation began its activity with a critical evaluation of the paradigm-building works of the Martin-Pesovár generation⁸ and launching new research programs with new themes and new approaches. Unfortunately, very few members of this generation work within the framework of HAS due to a lack of positions. As such, folk dance research may gradually fall out of the framework of the Institute for Music Studies.

Some thoughts on the critical evaluation of folk dance research in HAS

A. The Folk Dance Department as a research centre in HAS

1. The Folk Dance Department occupied a privileged place compared to the other fields of choreology. It was reflected in its modern infrastructure, a fairly good state subvention (through HAS). This required a systematic work process, under the control of the larger organisation.

2. But the department was exposed to the changing socio-political and economic conditions (research funding), which frequently meant the limitation of research staff, budget cuts in the subsidy, and the growth of bureaucracy.

3. HAS and the Dance Department, as a central "knowledge tank" about traditional dance, was the focus of enormous social interest, claiming much time and energy from the researchers (such as giving professional advice to choreographers, participating in festival juries, and other matters).

4. Ethnography, Musicology, and other scientific disciplines demanded the participation of the dance folklorists in the implementation of their comprehensive plans (Hungarian Music lexicon, Ethnographic Lexicon, Music History in Hungary, Hungarian Ethnography, and other projects). This took energy away from the realization of the Dance Department's own plans.

B. Researchers

1. Members of the staff (including external researchers) were in close, friendly, familiar and collegial relationships. Each of them had been a student of the Ethnographic Department of the Budapest

University at approximately at the same time and educated by the same professors. Further, they were all involved in the folklore movement as dancers.

2. Thus the teamwork enhanced the possibilities for developing the new paradigm, the new set of concepts, definitions, and research plans. In this situation, the role of the Department leader was not without difficulties, because of Martin's tender habitus and his strong feeling of individual responsibility (Fiedler 1967). The loyalty of the research community was also an important component in the success of collaborative work.

3. In the 1970s the staff of the Department was recruited from among young ethnographers having practical experience in folk dancing. However, since folk dance was not included in the university curricula for a long time, possibilities to educate the next generation were limited. A special course for dance researchers appeared in the university system only in 2010, in the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology in Szeged University.

C. Research tasks

1. Research tasks deriving from the new paradigm represented a very systematic work plan based on the experiences of the other branches of folklore (folk music, folk tale). For example, the total publication of the folk music collection and the Hungarian folktale catalogue served as a reference point for planning the publication of the folk dance source materials.

2. The extensive collecting work rapidly resulted in a great amount of research material and research tasks, which soon overran the efficiency of the small group of researchers in HAS. After 1990, the new generation went on with the fulfilment of the plans they inherited (see Ugrós táncok/Jumping dances/ series of monographs,⁹ Mátyás István's monograph¹⁰ and some of the planned regional monographs), but the critical publication of the complete dance material in the archive remains truncated even now.

3. Dissemination of the folk dance material was to be a continuous task, but this put a lot of strain on the staff members, especially Martin. Computer aided access to the content of the archives (Dóka et al 2014) began in the 2010s through the Folk Dance Knowledge Base of the Institute for Musicology of HAS. It was implemented by the research team headed by János Fügedi (<https://neptanctudastar.abtk.hu/hu>). This allows for a thorough and quick orientation for researchers and interested people, but it is not the same as a comprehensive critical edition as outlined by Martin in 1977.

Summary

In the short historical survey of folk dance research in HAS with some critical remarks based on my own experiences, other publication, and archival documents, I tried to give an example of the effect of the institutionalisation of a kind of research with a specific timeframe. Methods were combined from those of various approaches from the fields of history, sociology, and anthropology.

1. Organizational approach

Institutionalisation of this kind of research resulted in a kind of socio-cultural institution dealing with scientific research of music (traditional, classical) and traditional dance under the auspices of HAS. It became a central place for the maximalization of knowledge – both from quantitative and qualitative points of view. I have shown how the work intensified and the objective became increasingly concentrated, given the subjective preconditions that took place in the changing circumstances. How do endeavours for creative harmonization of internal and external factors impact on researchers as they face the challenges?

As canons and paradigms shifted in HAS and the Department of Folk Dance, they determined the aims and tasks of research the following decades. These shifts were legitimized by the

research community of the Institute for Musicology and the officials of HAS. I briefly mentioned the influential factors of leadership and staff member loyalty (Garsten and Nyqvist 2013).

2. Contextual approach

Folk dance research existed and partly exists today in a hierarchical, complex socio-political, economic context, comprising the government, the HAS, the Institute for Musicology, and the wider socio-cultural context which surrounds them. I agree with the British philosopher Anthony Price, who said that in some respect, the action, utterance, or expression of any activity can only be understood relative to that context (Price 1967). Based on this premise, I presume that the process and results of folk dance research in HAS can be entirely understood only by the examination of its multi-level context, beginning with the direct setting of the Department, going further to the Institute, HAS, the socio-cultural, political, economic backgrounds engaged with the changing cultural policy goals, and ending with the widest social context of the people being interested in traditional dance.

3. Political (development) anthropology approach¹¹

Soviet folklore theory proclaimed the notion of a new socialist folklore, created by the new folk society based on folk life which is superior to traditional peasant folk art. This mythicized socialist folklore was questioned by Hungarian folklorists. Nonetheless, the main elements of the Soviet scientific paradigm (such as its historicism based on Marxism, anti-"formalism", an overestimated functionalist perspective, positivism (socialist realism), internationalism, anti-clericalism, strong political commitment) remained dominant for more than four decades because of the political commitment in the country.

Since the 1990s, in the new political era, the situation has changed. New "agents" appeared in the arena outside and inside HAS with different priorities and with new decision-making procedure. HAS had to refine its strategies to consolidate its status like an independent public body with state support. This short paper is the first excursion on this topic, which will hopefully form the basis for further, more in-depth study on research about traditional dance in Hungary.

Endnotes

- 1 The short account of my involvement as an insider may explain my intimate knowledge about the operation of this research institute and the folk dance research in it. I began my career in 1984 after obtaining my university doctorate directly after György Martin's death. I was employed as Scientific Researcher in the Department of Folk Dance, which I continued until my retirement in 2012. In that time, I also carried out the following assignments: Scientific Secretary of the Institute (1985–1989), Leader of the Folk Dance Department (1989–2012), Scientific Vice-Director (2002–2007).
- 2 <https://web.archive.org/web/20130511214648/http://mta.hu/articles/history-of-the-hungarian-academy-of-sciences-129195>. The institution was founded in 1830 with the name: Hungarian Scientific Society. The present name – HAS - was given to it in 1840.
- 3 <https://zti.hu/index.php/en>. The first institution that hosted folk dance research was the Ethnographic Museum in Budapest, in the period between the two world wars. This activity continued from 1953 at the Institute of Folk Art, established on the Soviet model, to assist members of the folklore movement get acquainted with folk traditions.
- 4 This was where György Martin and Ernő Pesovár, the future professional researchers and their colleagues, began their careers. Here the practical objectives of the folk dance collection were combined with scientific interest (Földiák 1996). This was the antecedent of the academic research that is the subject of this study.
- 5 In Romania Zoltán Kallós, the Könczey family; in Slovakia András Takács; in Yugoslavia Anikó Bodor.
- 6 For more detailed descriptions of folk dance research in Hungary see in English: Felföldi 1999, 2007; in French: Felföldi and Pávai 2006.

- 7 New research was supported by the Romanian, Slovakian, Serbian, and Russian Academies of Sciences. For instance, the field research on Volga region between 1990–1995 (Felföldi 1993).
- 8 See Fügedi et al (editors) 2020.
- 9 Fügedi and Vavrincez 2013.
- 10 Martin 2004.
- 11 For a comprehensive summary of the main themes and concepts, see Lewellen 2003.

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RECONSIDERING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN DANCE RESEARCH THROUGH THE SYMPOSIA OF THE ICTM STUDY GROUP ON ETHNOCHOREOLOGY (1988–2018)

Considering the knowledge production in dance research, the Symposia of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology holds an important position through the Study Group's longstanding presence. Based on this, the aim of this paper is to reveal the contribution of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology to dance research and knowledge through the study, recording, classification and archiving of its Symposia for thirty years (1988–2018).

Keywords recording, classification, archiving, dance anthropology, choreology

Introduction

Considering the development of Choreology, especially ethnochoreology/dance anthropology, there is no doubt that the ICTM (International Council for Traditional Music) Study Group on Ethnochoreology holds an important position through its longstanding presence and its Symposia. Thus, the contribution of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology to the research fields of dance, human movement and culture, is considered to be very important. The aim of this Study Group is to promote the research, documentation and interdisciplinary study of dance, to provide a forum for cooperation among scholars and students of ethnochoreology by means of international meetings, publications and correspondence and to contribute to cultural and societal understandings of humanity through the lens of dance (<http://ictmusic.org/group/ethnochoreology>).

The history

The IFMC (International Folk Music Council) was founded in 1947 in London as "a scholarly organization which aims to further the study, practice, documentation, preservation and dissemination of traditional music and dance of all countries" (<http://ictmusic.org/general-information>). In 1949, it was placed under the auspices of the non-governmental organization UNESCO. The change of name to ICTM (International Council for Traditional Music) took place in 1981. By means of its wide international representation and the activities of its Study Groups, the International Council for Traditional Music acts as a bond among people of different cultures.

At this point, a number of milestone dates should be quoted, with regard to the history of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology, based on Anca Giurchescu's chapter (2007) titled "A historical perspective in the analysis of dance structure in the International Folk Music Council (IFMC)/International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM)" in the book *Dance structures. Perspectives on the analysis of human movement* (Kaeppler and Dunin 2007). It would be a major omission for us if we failed to mention the crucial effect of Anca Giurchescu, who, having defected in 1979 from Romania to Denmark, acted as a pillar for the connection of the researchers of traditional folk dance and their approaches to the study and research of dance through the lens of ethnochoreology/dance anthropology (Giatra and Karfi 2021; Karfi et al. 2022).

According to Giurchescu's chapter, in 1963 at the prompting of Vera Proca-Ciordea the term *choreology* was introduced. One year later, in 1964, the Folk Dance Terminology Subgroup was established. The aim of this subgroup was not only the unification of dance terminology

and the creation of a scientific language, due to the unnecessary, imprecise and unclear dance terms that were used until then, but also the establishment of a common theory and method of structural analysis of dance (Giurchescu 2007:5). In the early 1970s the Study Group was renamed Choreology and in 1978, at the request of Vera Proca-Ciortea, it took its final name, Study Group on Ethnochoreology. In the structure of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology, two different approaches to the study of dance were merged: the Western (American) with Adrienne Kaeppler as the representative that focused on a linguistic approach and the Eastern Europe approach represented by Anca Giurchescu and her colleagues that focused on structural analysis. This Study Group organizes symposia (biennially) rather than conferences.

The aim of the ICTM's Study Group on Ethnochoreology's Symposia is to foster intercollegiate, intercultural and intergenerational scientific exchange in the fields of ethnochoreology and the anthropology of dance. Their distinctive features include a full-week's Symposium, no parallel sessions, the inclusion of a social programme with dancing, and the expectation of full participation for the entire duration. (Call for Papers: 30th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology, 2017)

Aims

However, though the holding of these Symposia has contributed considerably to the knowledge production in dance research, at least to our knowledge, a detailed analysis of them is not available. This constitutes the content of our study. More specifically, the aim of this paper is to reveal the contribution of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology to dance research and knowledge through the study, recording, classification and archiving of its Symposia for thirty years (1988–2018, 16 consecutive Symposia), through the lens of ethnochoreology/dance anthropology.

The methodological process that was used comprised the study, recording, classification and archiving of the proceedings of the sixteen consecutive ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology Symposia during these thirty years in terms of: the theme/s, titles and keywords of the papers, the names and the affiliations of the authors, for each Symposium, as well as the title of the Symposia, the editor/s, the place and time of publication of the proceedings, the place and time that the Symposia were held, the organizer/s, the number of the participants, and the theme/s for all the Symposia. At this point we should mention that the proceedings are available in both paper and digital archive from 1988, the year in which the Study Group on Ethnochoreology was restructured.

Through this process, due to the large number of published papers for each Symposium, as well as the diverse themes of the Symposia, we hope this paper will constitute an important source for the dance community, as the important and multidimensional legacy to the dissemination of this kind of dance research and knowledge in the international arena is highlighted, while the launch from local ontologies to more collaborative research practices is foregrounded. Furthermore, the archived material that is easily accessible of the sixteen consecutive Symposia over the course of these 30 years will be provided (Karfi et al. 2022).

Before moving on to the results, we should mention the limitations and delimitations we had to deal with during our study. First, some papers were not translated into English, which combined with the absence of mention of the nationality of some researchers, made the process of recording, classification and archiving difficult. In addition, with regard to the representation of the countries, this does not exclusively concern the origin of the researchers, as many of them may represent a different country according to the one they belong to.

Results

For a better understanding of the results by the reader, it was considered to be useful to create a summary table of the sixteen consecutive Symposia of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology from 1988 until 2018. This table includes the total number of these 16 Symposia related to the terms of the title/s of the Symposia, the editor/s, the place and time of publication of the proceedings, the place and time that the Symposia were held, the organizer/s, the number of the participants, as well as the theme/s for all the Symposia.

Table 1. Summary table of the 16 consecutive Symposia of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology (1988–2018)

I/N	N.	Title	Publisher/s	Place & Time of Publication	Holding Time	Holding Place	Hospitality	Participants	Themes
1	15th	The Dance Event: A Complex Cultural Phenomenon	Lisbet Torp	Danish Research Council for the Humanities, Dance Music Council Danish Ministry of Cultural Affairs ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology, Copenhagen, Denmark 1989 (First published in 1988)	13-19 August 1988	Copenhagen, Denmark	Royal Danish Academy for Educational Studies, Copenhagen	26	The Dance Event: A Complex Cultural Phenomenon
2	16th	Dance Transmission and Diffusion; Implement Dances	D. Bartha, Z. Falvy, Gy. Kroó, J. Maróthy, L. Somfai	Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, Hungary 1991 and 1992 (Tomus XXXIII, Volume 33, 1991 – Tomus XXXIV, Volume 34, 1992)	13-20 August 1990	Budapest, Hungary	Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Inoohata a Zoltán Kodály	27	Dance Transmission and Diffusion; Implement Dances
3	17th	Dance and its Socio-Political Aspects & Dance and Costume	Irene Lountzaki, Alexandra Dumas, Hara Deliyanni	Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation, Nafplion, Greece 1994	2-10 July 1992	Nafplion, Greece	Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation, Nafplion	24	Theme 1: Dance and its Socio-Political Aspects Theme 2: Dance and Costume
4	18th	Dance, Ritual and Music	Grażyna Dąbrowska, Ludwik Bielawski Assistant editor: Timothy J. Cooley	Polish Society for Ethnochoreology Institute of Art Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland 1995	9-18 August 1994	Skierniewic, Poland	Cultural Center of Skierniewice near Warsaw	33	Theme 1: Ritual and Ritual Dances in Contemporary Society Theme 2: Dance and Music Relationship
5	19th	Dance, Style, Youth, Identities	Theresa Buckland & Georgiana Gore	Institute of Folk Culture, Strážnice, Czech Republic 1998	5-11 August 1996	Třešt, Czech Republic	Castle Hotel, Třešt	24	Theme 1: Children and Traditional Dancing Theme 2: Dance and style
6	20th	Traditional Dance and its Historical Sources & Creative Processes in Dance: Improvisation and Composition	Frank Hall, Irene Loutzaki	Boğaziçi University Folklore Club [Dans Müzik Kültür Folkloru Dođru (Special Edition)], Instabul, Turkey 2000	19-26 August 1998	Instabul, Turkey	Boğaziçi University, Instabul	32	Theme 1: Traditional Dance and its Historical Sources Theme 2: Creative Processes in Dance: Improvisation and Composition

7	21st	Sword Dances and Related Calendrical Dance Events & Revival: Reconstruction, Revitalization	Elsie Ivancich Dunin, Tvrtko Zebek	ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb, Croatia 2001	2-8 July 2000	Korčula, Croatia	Hotel at Korčula	59	Theme 1: Sword Dances and Related Calendrical Dance Events
									Theme 2: Revival: Reconstruction, Revitalization
8	22nd	Dance and Society	Elsie Ivancich Dunin, Anne von Bibra Wharton, László Felföldi	Akadémiai Kiadó European Folklore Institute Budapest, Hungary 2005	24-31 July 2002	Szeged, Hungary	University of Szeged	47	Theme 1: Dancer as a Cultural Performer
									Theme 2: Re-appraising our Past, Moving into the Future: Research on Dance and Society
9	23rd	Invisible and Visible Dance & Crossing Identity Boundaries	Elsie Ivancich Dunin, Anne von Bibra Wharton	Association "e bene venga Maggio" Monghidoro (Bologna), Italy Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research Zagreb, Croatia 2008	11-18 July 2004	Monghidoro (province of Bologna), Italy	Town of Monghidoro	72	Theme 1: Visible and Invisible Dance
									Theme 2: Crossing Identity Boundaries
10	24th	From Field to Text & Dance and Space	Elsie Ivancich Dunin, Anca Giurchescu, Csilla Kőnczei	The Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities, Cluj-Napoca, Romania 2012	10-16 July 2006	Cluj-Napoca, Romania	University Centre of Cluj	55	Theme 1: From Field to Text: Translations and Representations
									Theme 2: Dance and Space
11	25th	Transmitting Dance as Cultural Heritage & Dance and Religion	Mohd Anis Md Nor, Elsie Ivancich Dunin, Anne von Bibra Wharton	Cultural Centre University of Malaya Ministry of Information, Communication and Culture of Malaysia ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 2009	11-18 August 2008	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Hotel Royale Bintang, Kuala Lumpur	46	Theme 1: Transmitting Dance as Cultural Heritage
									Theme 2: Dance and Religion
12	26th	Dance, Gender and Meanings Contemporizing Traditional Dance	Elsie Ivancich Dunin, Daniela Stavčlová, Dorota Gremlíková Assisted by: Zdeněk Vejvoda	Academy of Performing Arts in Prague Institute of Ethnology of the Academy of Sciences, Prague, Czech Republic 2012	19-25 July 2010	Třešť, Czech Republic	Castle Hotel, Třešť	44	Theme 1: Dance, Gender and Meanings
									Theme 2: Contemporizing Traditional Dance
13	27th	Dance, Place, Festival	Elsie Ivancich Dunin & Catherine E. Foley	The Irish Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland 2014	22-29 July 2012	Limerick, Ireland	The Irish World Academy of Music & Dance, University of Limerick	60	Theme 1: Dance and Place
									Theme 2: Dance and Festival

14	28th	Dance, Narratives, Heritage	Elsie Ivancich Dunin Copy-editors: Kendra Stepputat, Sonja Zdravkova-Djeparoska, Ivana Katarinčić	ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb, Croatia 2015	7-17 July 2014	Korčula, Croatia	Hotel at Korčula	89	Theme 1: Dance and Narratives
									Theme 2: Dance as Intangible and Tangible Cultural Heritage
15	29th	Dance, Senses, Urban Contexts	Kendra Stepputat Copy-editors: Liz Mellish, Andriy Nahachewsky, Kurt Schatz, Doris Schweinzer	ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology Institute of Ethnomusicology of the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, Graz, Austria 2017	9-16 July 2016	Graz, Austria	Retzhof Castle near Graz	70	Theme 1: Dance and the Senses
									Theme 2: Dancing and Dance Cultures in Urban Contexts
16	30th	Dance, Age and Politics	Vivien Apjok, Kinga Povedák, Vivien Szónyi, Sándor Varga,	ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology, Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology- Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences- University of Szeged, Hungarian Association for Ethnochoreology and Research Centre for the Humanities- Institute for Musicology, Hungary 2021	28 July- 3 August 2018	Szeged, Hungary	Department of Ethnology, University of Szeged	81	Theme 1: Dance and Politics
									Theme 2: Dance and Age

From this table several observations are discernible. First, the Symposia have mostly been held in Europe, apart from one, which was held in Malaysia in 2008. Additionally, some European countries have undertaken the organization of the Symposium twice, and these are Hungary (Budapest 1990 and Szeged 2002), Czech Republic (Třešt 1996 and 2010) and Croatia (Korčula 2000 and 2014). Regarding participants, they range from 24 (19th Symposium – 1996) to 89 (28th Symposium – 2014), the number of which increases noticeably from the 21st Symposium (Croatia 2000 – 59 entries) onwards. Also, it is important to mention from the 17th Symposium (Nafplio 1992) onwards there were two themes for each Symposium. Last, but not least, the dance researcher, Elsie Ivancich Dunin was consistently one of the editors of the proceedings from the 21st (2000) to the 28th (2014) Symposium.

Based on the recording, classification and archiving of these sixteen Symposia (Karfi et al. 2022) the total number of published scientific studies was 766, of which the 621 are in full text and the remaining 145 in the form of abstracts. Furthermore, this process showed that the presenters mostly represent European countries, for instance Hungary, Croatia, Italy and many others. As for the non-European presenters, they represent countries from all over the world, such as Canada, the United States of America, Mexico, Jamaica, Ecuador, Taiwan, Turkey, Armenia, Afghanistan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, China, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Uganda, Senegal and India.

Discussion – conclusions

As appeared in the results, there were 766 published scientific studies overall, 621 of which are in full text, and the remaining 145 are in the form of abstracts. This information was obtained from the recording, classification, and archiving of the sixteen consecutive Symposia of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology from 1988 to 2018 (Karfi and Giatra 2022). Moreover, the Symposia have mainly taken place in Europe, with the exception of the 25th Symposium, which took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 2008. A few European nations have held the Symposium twice, including Hungary (Budapest 1990 and Szeged 2002), Czech Republic (Třešť 1996 and 2010), and Croatia (Korčula 2000 and 2014). Furthermore, there are between 24 (19th Symposium, 1996) to 89 (28th) participants. It is noteworthy to see that 64.75% of the 728 presenters overall are from European countries. However, there is global representation of several countries. More specifically, 20.34% from America, 13.82% from Asia, 0.62% from Oceania, and 0.31% from Africa (Karfi et al. 2022).

Those results seem to be reasonable and expected, given the fact that the ICTM was founded in London in 1947, (then known as the IFMC) and in 1949 was placed under the auspices of the non-governmental organization UNESCO. It is the organization in which ethnochoreology found ground with increased interest initially in the structural analysis of dance, which emerged and developed in Europe, specifically in Eastern Europe in the 20th century (Giatra and Karfi 2021). Initially, the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology had a family character, with its members coming from Eastern European countries. However, along the way, and specifically after the end of the "cold war" in 1989, the Group acquired an international scope, with the entry of members from all parts of the world. Thus, the previously limited communication and exchange of scientific material between East and West researchers was restored, which contributed to the creation of an open scientific community.

Once more, it would be a great omission if we did not mention the crucial effect of Anca Giurchescu, who acted as a pillar for the connection of the researchers of traditional folk dance and the approaches to the study and research of dance through the lens of ethnochoreology/dance anthropology (Giatra and Karfi 2021; Karfi et al. 2022). According to this, the themes of the sixteen Symposia are of particular interest. This is because these themes reveal a wide range of interests with a pioneering character in the study and research of dance internationally, regardless of the type of dance, even though the Symposia focus on traditional folk dance.

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MISTAKES IN/AS KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

'Mistakes' in dance research can have important heuristic values. They are also very diverse: some are outright errors, while others are more intentional and creative explorations of the boundaries of the tradition. Our case studies from Sweden, Canada, and France show that some mistakes are made, discovered, and resolved by only a few individuals, while others reach community wide. Some are discovered instantaneously and unanimously, while others remain unnoticed for decades and remain contested.

Keywords: mistakes, dance, knowledge production, misrepresentation, misunderstanding

Mistakes are almost always of a sacred nature.
Never try to correct them.
On the contrary, rationalise them,
understand them thoroughly.
After that, it will be possible to sublimate them.
Salvadore Dalí, *Diary of a genius*.

What can mistakes occurring during fieldwork or in the analytical phase of data elaboration permit us, as anthropologists and ethnochoreologists, to discover, understand, refine, or challenge? What types of knowledge do they question and produce?

As researchers knowing each other for almost two decades, the three co-authors have been talking excitedly for years about the heuristic power of mistakes in fieldwork and beyond, hoping to make it the theme of one of the Study Group's symposia. The 2022 Symposium theme on knowledge production in dance research provided a good opportunity for us to develop our reflections in a more formal frame, to move from the intellectual pleasure of theory towards the stimulating exercise of developing relevant case studies.

What is a mistake?

While some of the benefits of serendipity in the field have been brought to light by Clifford Geertz (1972) in relation to his flight from the Balinese police (see also Sunier, Verkaaik, Blok 2005), other anthropologists have shown how making mistakes themselves,¹ or asking their interlocutors to make them (Sola 2007), can become a valuable and fertile research method, others still are interrogating the status of 'mistake' and related concepts 'error' and 'failure', both in the society they research and in the discipline of anthropology (Jamard 2009). As for the dancers themselves, making a mistake in the process of learning (not producing the right move in relation to the prototype) is common. However, if one makes a mistake 'on purpose', is it really a mistake? For many, this is one of the bases of creativity! Intentionality is therefore one of the parameters at stake. The case studies presented below are an attempt to present an introductory sampling of the many types, forms, and colours of 'mistakes' that might be studied. We have consciously adopted the word 'mistake' as we felt that it encompasses many different notions, such as error, deviation, confusion, experiment, aberration, misconduct, misunderstanding, and so on. Each co-author presents some analysis of the characteristics and nuances of the 'mistakes' they describe in their respective sub-chapter. One sub-chapter focuses on apparent mistakes in terminology, another on seeming mistakes in the dance prescription, and the third on ostensible mistakes in the participants' social behavior. Our joint conclusion touches more broadly on some of the diversity of possible

mistakes, the way different perspectives so often reveal ambiguity, and how, as Salvadore Dalí suggests, mistakes can be great learning opportunities on several different levels.

Whose mistakes?

Often in anthropology, and maybe especially in anthropology of dance and ethnochoreology (as well as in ethnomusicology), there is no clear cut or radical opposition between the 'researcher' and the 'researched', as extended anthropological literature on the insider/outsider debate shows (Koutsouba 1999; Kusow 2003; Faulkner and Becker 2008; Stock and Chiener 2008; Ergun and Erdemir 2010; Aubinet and Malay 2021). We are each professional academic researchers, yet strongly involved as practitioners of the dance genre under study. Therefore, talking about mistakes on the field implies reflection on the diverse knowledge communities involved in the research process, and the ways in which they can overlap, intermingle and/or influence each other in their actions as well as in their representations and in the production of knowledge. As we show below, who is making a mistake, what is perceived as a mistake, and by whom, is a complex affair and calls for a constant shift of perspectives. The same goes for the next step of the intellectual process: Who discovers the mistake? How is it discovered? And once discovered, does it remain a mistake?

Temporality and spatiality also play a central role in the relation between mistake and knowledge production. Indeed, the intervals in time and space between the successive steps of a 'mistake' (action – discovery – production of knowledge) are diverse and can reveal many issues. So much so, that it has become the central criteria for the organisation of our presentations. Therefore, we will start with:

1. Mats Nilsson's examples of 'mistakes' are separated far from their discovery (in time and, here, in support media). In 2018, when he realised that something was wrong in the announced name of a particular dance form, this discovery inspired him to trace the process of naming more than a century before.

2. The 'beautiful mistake' spotted by Andriy Nahachewsky is described as it unfolds in multiple times and spaces: from early 19th century Ukraine to the diaspora in the 1970s, and tracing diverse perspectives about a Ukrainian Canadian dance motif in 2022.

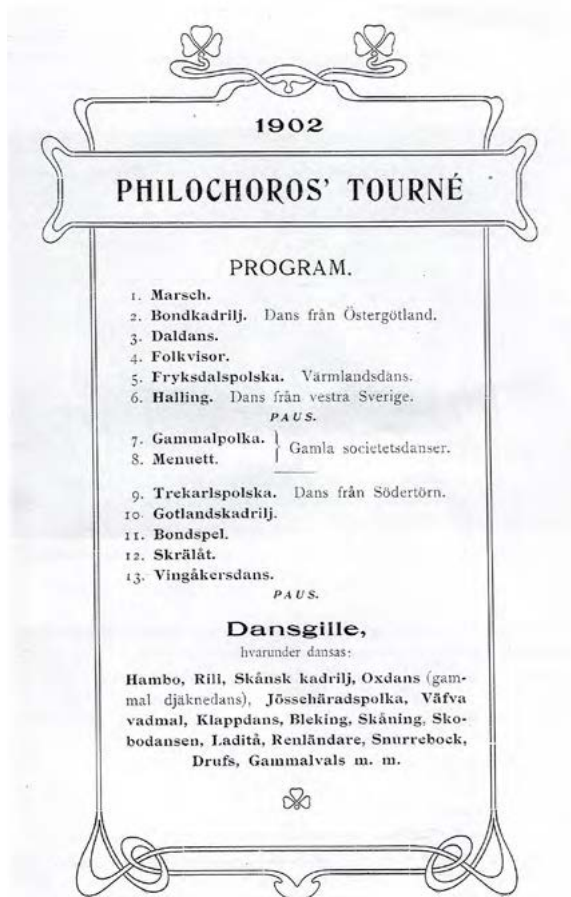
3. The brief ethnographic moment observed by Marie-Pierre Gibert shows a nearly simultaneous action-reaction sequence that suggested divergent bodies of knowledge and aesthetics. However, the researcher needed a longer time frame (a few years of participant-observation) to produce a third piece of knowledge, for which the action-reaction sequence acted as a salient revealing moment.

Mistakes and misinterpretations in the archives – an example from Sweden by M. Nilsson

Digital archives/databases – are they always true?

A colleague of mine ("I" being M. Nilsson) was studying music in early Swedish broadcasting around 1925, and asked me about *gammaldans* (old time dance): "When was the first time the word/concept *gammaldans* was used in Sweden? The search on the net says in a newspaper 1902, in a review of a folk-dance display. Do you agree?". My answer was "no, I don't think so". 1902 was suspiciously early for me for the genre concept of *gammaldans* to be used. In the newspaper review it says they are dancing a *gammaldans* (old time dance), a genre name used retroactively for 19th century European couple dances, including the waltz, polka, *scottish* and *mazurka* as the core dances. The term was, and still is, used as a counterpart to the new jazz or modern dances and dance music that were introduced in Sweden after World War I, in the 1920s.

I read the 1902 newspaper review which was about a stage show in which the first Swedish folk-dance group "Philochoros" performed Swedish dances and then I looked at the programme pamphlet for the performance and realised that there was something strange somewhere (Wahlberg 1980). The programme pamphlet reports that they danced many different dances, including the couple dances *polska* and waltz, contra dances like quadrilles, a minuet, as well as two dances for two boys, *halling*



Tourné 1902. Program.

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and *oxdans*, *gammal djäknedans* (old apprentice dance).² The newspaper review named many of the dances that had been performed on the stage: "There was *bondkadrilj* and *daldans*, *trekarlspolska* and *halling*, *frykdalspolska* and quadrille from Gotland, *skrällåt* and *vingåkersdans*, *hambo*, *Vi Våfa Vadmal* and the comic *oxdans*, *gammaldans* and *laditå*, *snurrebock* and only God knows what" (Svenska Dagbladet 1902).

My conclusion is that the person who wrote the review changed *gammal djäknedans* to *gammaldans* by taking away *djåkne* and pulling *gammal* and *dans* together. That created the mistake, because in Swedish something happens when you combine the words *gammal* and *dans* (old dance) to *gammaldans* (old time dances). The former is just a time label, the latter a whole genre. As a genre name, *gammaldans* had no meaning in 1902 since the parallel genres contrasting with it were not yet common in Sweden until after about 1920. And in any event, *oxdans*, the dance in question, would not have been counted as a *gammaldans* among any Swedes, even if it might have been a *gammal dans* (old dance) or a folk dance.³

My colleague's hypothesis is that it seems to be the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation that created, or at least spread, the genre concept *gammaldans* for the divide between old time dance music (*gammaldansmusik*) and modern dance music (modern dance music or jazz) when they started to send programmes with these labels around 1925 (Björnberg 2019). It is hard to find any other evidence for the concept of *gammaldans* before 1925. So, I agreed with my colleague that there is something wrong in the database. This remains true even if the words *gammalvals* (old waltz) and *gammalpolka* (old polka) were used in 1902 to contrast against the new modern waltz and polka coming with their modern music. *Gammal* was not used in a compound word for a whole genre, only for a specific dance form.

On the other hand, the newspaper's text in 1902 is still the first known mention of *gammaldans*, even if it was a mistake, perhaps a misunderstanding or misinterpretation by the author (or by the typesetter). This mistake created a point in history that in some senses might be called false, since it seems to be after 1925 that *gammaldans* is established as a general concept for older dances. But it is nonetheless actually there in the newspaper in 1902 and not a false hit. It might be called a false input that will be there whenever anyone searches the net for the word *gammaldans*.

Can we trust what's on a film/video?

My second example of when mistakes might create history is from two early films. In a film from 1921 called *Wärmlänningarna* (directed by Erik A. Petschler) the text says that the two boys are dancing the *oxdans* (the music is added afterwards). It is just that every folk dancer in Sweden (and Norway) would see that they are dancing a *halling*. Both *oxdans* and this version of *halling* are arranged and choreographed for two men and both dances are said to be connected to the same region, Värmland.⁴ So, could they have been mistakenly seen as the same dance by the filmmaker?

Another film example, from 1916 without sound, shows a dance that in the text is called *östgötakadrilj* (quadrille from east Sweden).⁵ Again, all experienced folk dancers can see that it is not *östgötakadrilj* but *gotlandskadrilj* (quadrille from Gotland), something an insider would notice at once.⁶ Maybe it is a mistake by the filmmaker, labelling the dance with a wrong name. *Gotlandskadrilj* and *östgötakadrilj* are somewhat similar quadrilles, both arranged and choreographed for the folkdance movement. For a layperson they might look the same. Experience (and descriptions) of both dances tell me and all experienced Swedish folk dancers that there are mistakes here, made by the filmmakers.

Discussion

It is a problem when we just believe what we find today in databases, films, and on the internet. We should scrutinize it with help of other sources and our experience. Prior knowledge about repertoire is always a good thing, and being an insider sometimes helps to identify mistakes. It was my pre-knowledge about dance in Sweden that made me react and see the mistakes in the newspaper and the films. Experience in the dances and the dance context, and being a reflexive researcher (Nilsson 2011), may not eliminate the mistakes themselves, but are crucial aids for avoiding misinterpretations.

Interpretation and translation are also delicate things. When writing this text, I am again reminded about how hard it can be to find the right, or rather the best, words in English for the vernacular ways to name and say things. When used in contemporary research and writing, old texts and films such as these from 1900–1920, are also a sort of translation from yesterday's language to today's way of expressing ourselves. When we research dance history, we understand yesterday using today's knowledge.

The examples above show how easy it is for mistakes to create history. Today's fieldwork, not least in media of all forms, creates a lot of sources for the new generations of researchers. We create data in databases and films with comments, we write texts that hopefully will be read by younger colleagues. I do not think it will ever be possible to avoid all misinterpretations and misunderstandings. The title of the book *Shadows in the field* (Barz and Cooley 2008) is a good metaphoric distillation of the problem. Even if fieldwork is mainly conducted in real life and not in virtual life, there are always things, ideas, persons, and parts of context that we miss and do not observe. These will be, so to say, in the shadow. We might try to see, hear, feel, to understand, describe, and represent what happens when dancing goes on. And if there are shadows in conventional field work – ethnography – there are probably as many and maybe more when we do fieldwork on the internet, netnography (see Kozinets 2010, 2015). In the future, these shadows may well become part of what is then created as the history of our time, 2022.

"Hutsul 1, 2, 3": a beautiful 'mistake' – an example from Canada by A. Nahachewsky

I (A. Nahachewsky) describe below a 'mistake' in a staged-folk dance tradition that was repeated tens of thousands of times over several decades. Unlike some other 'mistakes', this example became institutionalized in a wide circle, and was perpetuated for decades.

As a youth in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, I danced in a senior Ukrainian Canadian group, The Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble, from 1974–1979, rising to become its Artistic Director for a time. Yevshan had developed a special way of performing dance motifs (steps) in dances that represented the Hutsul region in Ukraine, a style which was featured in this group and several others from the mid-1960s into the 1990s. Whereas the leaders and participants in Yevshan desired to dance 'authentically' – recreating the traditional movement style of Hutsul villagers – more recent access to ethnographic sources shows that these steps did not resemble traditional Hutsul dance movements at all. Therein lies the 'mistake'.

Here I focus on one specific step called "Hutsul 1, 2, 3". To understand how this 'mistake' came to be, I trace five historical preconditions for its appearance.

1. Reflectiveness

The first major event in this story is the recontextualization of village dance onto the proscenium stage. The play "*Natalka Poltavka*" was successfully performed in 1819, in what is now Ukraine, and included a scene in which some of the actors played peasant characters and danced with traditional village movement and music. For over two hundred years now, staged Ukrainian folk dance has grown into a widespread tradition of its own. The staged tradition is 'reflective' in that the participants are concerned with the relationship between their current activity and the peasant dances in the past to which they make reference, with greater or lesser emphasis. The emic concept of 'authenticity' becomes relevant; a measure by which a symbolic expression such as a stage dance can be called correct or in error. This recontextualisation and the co-existence of related dances in two settings sets up a comparative split awareness of an 'original' and its 'revival', sometimes quite acute, and other times muted. When the 'original' and 'revival' are shown to differ, this may cause tension. This reflectiveness was an essential factor in the decisions to dance the "Hutsul 1, 2, 3" in the way Yevshan did.

Movements to promote national consciousness tend to emphasise the unity of the nation at hand, and the Ukrainian national 'revival' is strong in this respect. Following "*Natalka Poltavka*", the main ethnographic model for Ukrainian national imagery was the area around the city of Poltava in east-central Ukraine, including the dialect used for the development of standard literary Ukrainian language, the main symbolic folk costume, music, and dance. As a large "imagined community", as Benedict Anderson (1991(1983)) would call it, with thousands of villages extending far over diverse geography, the Ukrainian national movement established a narrative in which all regional variations are considered essentially the same as the core cultural model, and differences are typically described as only on the surface, more recent, and often the result of foreign influence. Regional variation is nonetheless considered a positive feature of national culture, as it can be used to demonstrate the richness of the national tradition and justify claims to a large territory.

The Hutsul area was one of the earliest and most successful regional variations to symbolize Ukrainian national culture. It is in the Carpathian mountains, in the far southwest of contemporary Ukrainian lands. Though Poltava was in the Tsarist Russian Empire in the 19th century and the Hutsul area was ruled by the Habsburg Monarchy, the movement for Ukrainian national consciousness led participants to emphasize cultural commonalities. The first recorded staged folk dance performance representing Hutsul culture was part of the "Hutsul Wedding" theatre production in 1910, directed by Hnat Khotkevych (Shlemko 2010).

2. Isolation

A key feature of national symbols is that they are portable when recontextualized. Thus, dances that were earlier performed in Hutsul villages came to be performed on stages all across the emerging country as Ukraine became clarified from declining empires. This geographic mobility also included transcontinental diffusion following emigrant populations. Some 170,000 Ukrainians migrated to Canada between 1891 and 1914, with many more to follow in subsequent waves through the 20th and 21st centuries. Many of the first wave of migrants had been influenced by the Ukrainian national movement before they left their homeland, while others acquired Ukrainian identity in Canada itself, as the national movement continued to gain momentum, and as more politicized countrymen joined them after World War I.

On the one hand, diaspora communities are characterized by their cultural and ideological connections with their former homeland, though on the other hand, they are also unequivocally influenced by the host country. A particular Ukrainian Canadian culture developed in its large rural bloc settlements and urban centres. Ukrainian Canadians were isolated from Ukraine itself (which became an independent country briefly from 1917–1921, but then was restructured in parts into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Second Polish Republic, and other political formations). Ukrainian Canadian isolation was partly due to the distance and expense of travel in the first half of the 20th century, and greatly intensified by the Cold War and Iron Curtain after World War II. A large majority of Ukrainian Canadians were anti-Soviet and mistrusted Communist and Russian cultural influences, so tried to maintain some autonomy to defend purity in their Ukrainian cultural projects. When Ukrainian staged folk dance became successful and popular in Ukrainian Canadian communities, it grew semi-independently of developments in Ukraine and thus acquired unique features. Contacts with Ukraine did sometimes penetrate into the diaspora sub-culture, but in restricted ways and in particular times. In these decades, there was great desire for more knowledge about traditional dances from Ukraine, though it was mostly inaccessible. Unlike other ethnic groups in Canada, Ukrainians were not allowed to visit villages in Soviet Ukraine to see and learn traditional dances first hand in their original contexts. The Hutsul region, in particular, was part of a closed military zone expressly forbidden to foreigners. This semi-isolation lasted for more than half a century and was eased only with *perestroika* in the 1980s and the independence of Ukraine in 1991.

3. Reformulation

Whereas the earliest Ukrainian Canadians had an active participatory dance tradition, they had almost no staged folk dance revival. Vasile Avramenko immigrated to Canada in 1925 and initiated a very successful staged folk dance movement across the country (as well as in the USA and worldwide in diaspora communities, though he was banned in the USSR). He was a strong romantic nationalist, his repertoire of about 18 dances stemming from the earlier theatrical tradition and ideology. Dances and costumes representing Poltava and the Hutsul region dominated the Ukrainian Canadian national staged folk dance tradition that he founded so successfully, even though few of the Ukrainian Canadian dancers had any ancestry from these regions.

Avramenko was careful to document a finite lexicon of dance steps. Many of the fundamental steps featured a rhythm of three footfalls to the rhythm of an eighth, an eighth, and a quarter note (♪♪♪ R, L, R... L, R, L...). Indeed, the main step, alternating weight transfers in this rhythm became known as "plain step" or "1, 2, 3" in Canada for dances representing the core Poltava region.⁷ These were the first steps taught to novices and considered very basic. Avramenko's dances representing the Hutsul region also used this rhythm predominantly.⁸

4. International Recreational Folk Dance (IRFD)

An essential fourth prerequisite for the development of "Hutsul 1, 2, 3" resulted from input from the IRFD movement. This movement had evolved by the beginning of the 20th century and involved a different kind of recontextualization of 'folk' dances. In IRFD communities, participants learned and performed a repertoire of dances from multiple cultures at each event, primarily for their own pleasure and to reinforce a sense of cosmopolitanism and cultural openness. The IRFD was and remains quite an independent knowledge community from most mono-ethnic organisations. Ukrainian Canadian dancers had few relations with them.

The IRFD movement produced a large literature of repertoire books, and specialists in the mid-20th century sometimes tried to make authoritative statements about human cultural phenomena that could be generalized across cultures. For example, in her *European folk dance* in 1953, Joan Lawson made a global statement about the relationship between traditional dance styles and geography:

The style of movement he performs is greatly determined by the kind of ground on which he dances [...] the travelling movements of the nomadic people of the enormous grasslands and steppes, stretching from the Ukraine to Mongolia. These latter dancers appear to skim over the surface of the ground, and travel with the widest possible variety of movement, in which easy leaps and swift, neatly executed running steps predominate. These are directed almost entirely forwards, and the dances are seldom 'set'. [...] Movements of all mountain people are easily recognized. Being confined to smaller areas and hard ground, the dancers utilize every bit of space by performing exciting high leaps which are accurately placed and accompanied by neat stepping. The accent of such steps is nearly always upwards. (31–32)⁹

This axiom that 'mountain people dance vertically' was repeated countless times in the IRFD world. Some of the leading Ukrainian choreographers in Saskatoon apparently had enough connection with the IRFD to learn this rule. The Hutsul region was mountainous, and Poltava was part of the great flat steppe. The Yevshan leadership connected this idea with the established nationalist principle that regional variations are just surface variations of the main national symbols. They wanted to make more Hutsul choreographies but were badly in need of motifs from which to build them, so they took the established lexicon of Poltava region dance steps and made verticalized versions of them as they now imagined was appropriate for the Hutsul mountainous style. They reasoned: the main step in *hopak* and other central Ukrainian dances was "1, 2, 3". The mountainous variant should be more vertically accented and stationary than the broad plains version, therefore "up, up, down" (on $\frac{3}{4}$ *pointe*, $\frac{3}{4}$ *pointe*, and in a slight *plié*). The gesturing foot was to be bent at the knee and kicked up to the back as high as possible on the third weight transfer.¹⁰ According to this logic, the more extreme the verticality, the more 'true' the performance of the step became, and theoretically the more authentic. When asked about this step, former Artistic Director of Yevshan and the Pavlychenko Folklorique Ensemble, Lusia Pavlychenko, replied proudly, "First of all, I perceived its validity through logic and research, then when I actually went to Ukraine at the end of the 1970s, I was pleased to verify it in the region itself" (Pavlychenko ≤1990).¹¹

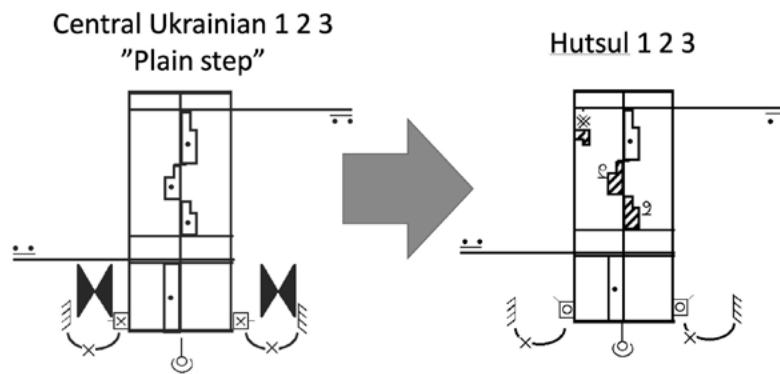


Figure 2. Kinetogram of the transition of the Central Ukrainian "1, 2, 3" step into the "Hutsul 1, 2, 3".

5. A shift to the spectacular

The fifth factor that contributed to the rise of "Hutsul 1, 2, 3" was a shift from a national orientation to a more spectacular orientation within Ukrainian Canadian staged folk dance in the mid-20th century (for more see Nahachewsky 2006). This shift affected this style of Hutsul dance in two ways. On the one hand, this transition introduced a desire for choreographic innovation, with an increasing number of new dances choreographed in Canada each year. This intensified the hunger for additional information about traditional dance in Ukraine as mentioned above, but also opened the door for innovation and creativity. This generation of leaders were mostly Canadian born; few ever having travelled across the Iron Curtain to Soviet Ukraine. Ballet aesthetics were becoming increasingly admired, and the verticality of the movements partially echoed the aesthetic of the rise *en pointe* in some ways. The Hutsul costume was very colourful, and the exceptionally fast tempos, high energy, and unique movement repertoire were very appreciated as they added theatrical variety to concert performances. Especially when supported by a plausible argument for authenticity, these factors supported the belief that this was a 'better' Hutsul style. It was picked up to a degree by the Ukrainian Shumka dancers of Edmonton, some performances in Winnipeg, and many rural children's groups across Saskatchewan which were taught by instructors from Yevshan. Thousands of dancers learned this style over several decades, and hundreds of choreographies were created using "Hutsul 1, 2, 3" and other similar steps.

On the other hand, this shift towards a more spectacular orientation shook the ground upon which the 'mistake' could be evaluated. In the spectacular mode, the goal of representing dance of Hutsul villagers becomes tempered by prioritising creation of beautiful and entertaining art, and the desire for 'authenticity' became counterbalanced by appreciation of innovation, creative expression, and other values of western theatre art. "Hutsul 1, 2, 3" and its relations could be justified as exciting and beautiful in their own right, effective as references to Ukrainian village dancing even if not reproductions. This step and dance style became normal and, for numerous groups, it was the standard for creating and evaluating Hutsul choreographies for a long generation.

This particular style of dancing faded quietly starting in the mid-1980s when new dancers from Ukraine started immigrating to Canada in relatively large numbers. These people knew staged-folk dance from Soviet Ukraine, which had developed its own representations of Hutsul dances. They generally had no interest in Canadian-made styles, and they claimed a higher authenticity and higher authority because (some of them) had professional training, and simply because they came physically from Ukraine itself. Many carved out careers as Ukrainian dance instructors, and they took over the leadership of almost all senior groups across Canada, including Yevshan. Soviet staged Hutsul dance was more spectacular than Canadian staged Hutsul dance.

A mistake?

Given the intensifying shift towards a spectacular orientation, describing "Hutsul 1, 2, 3" as a mistake becomes more complex and problematic. If this step is evaluated for being an accurate imitation of dance movements of traditional Hutsul villagers, as 'purist' revivalists would wish, it is clearly 'unauthentic', and a 'mistake'. If evaluated by its place of origin, as the more recent activists from Ukraine might do, it is evidently a made-in-Canada variation of Hutsul dance style, and thus also questionable. The Canadian innovators simply had not enough knowledge, and not the right kinds. On the other hand, if the main goal of a group is to create and perform beautiful dances that present Ukrainian culture in a positive light, then this choice of movement style was seen by many as at least as effective as others for pleasing audiences. Further, if the definition of a mistake is 'an action that is recognised by the relevant community as outside the bounds of acceptable norms' then this step is arguably not a mistake. The leaders, thousands of dancers, and tens of thousands of audience members who accepted "Hutsul 1, 2, 3" were themselves the relevant community. With leaders such as Pavlychenko and Zerebecky promoting it for decades, it had become the acceptable norm itself. Indeed, Bohdan Zerebecky continues to defend this style of Hutsul dance even today, even when challenged. He continues to use it proudly in his choreographies (Zerebecky 2022). In this respect, it was not a mistake for that part of the community. Admittedly, in a larger context, it was a contested standard throughout its history, as not all western Canadian Ukrainian groups embraced this style, and some pursued other directions. Those other subsets of the larger community may have argued against it as inappropriate, but more often simply observed it as the style of a competing dance group and allowed that they didn't have the knowledge to judge it.

The rise and fall of "Hutsul 1 2 3" (no pun intended) came at the intersection of several different 'knowledge communities'. From my current vantage point, a more comparative ethno-choreological perspective, "Hutsul 1 2 3" can be described in a qualified way as a mistake, but a beautiful one.

A series of mistakes? – an example from France by M. P. Gibert

I (M-P. Gibert) have been convinced about the heuristic power of mistakes for many years, but an incident one evening in the late 2010s really fleshed it out more fully. A very brief action-reaction sequence took place in front of me during the *danse folk* festival *Funambal* in Lyon, France, which I was attending as a dancer. Let us explore this sequence and the various layers of knowledge it reveals.

The plot

This sequence takes place in the context of a *bal folk*, the main type of dance event for the dance genre (*danse folk*), also called (*danse trad'* or (*danse neo-trad'* (a *bal folk* is to *danse folk* what a *milonga* is to *tango*). This dance genre was developed and elaborated in the mid-1970s in France as a revival dance practice partly inspired by the USA-based folk song protest movement, and strongly nourished by the French-based movement of *éducation populaire* (Guilcher 1998; Gasnault 2015a; 2015b).¹² Old dance repertoires from French countryside communities were assembled or collected, and additional external sources circulating across Europe were incorporated. Its repertoire today is composed of pan-European dance types (waltz, polka, *schottische*, *mazurka*) as well as dance types from specific geographic areas, either French (centring around France's *bourrées*, Brittany's *kost ar c'hoad*, *andro*, *rond de Saint Vincent*, and others) or elsewhere in Europe (Swedish *polska*, Spanish *fandango*, Italian *tarentella* and so on). Each dance type is identified by one fixed form (steps plus various upper body gestures) and one specific rhythm and/or musical structure. However, several different tunes exist for each dance type, and the creation of new tunes is very dynamic among musicians of this dance world. *Danse folk* is mostly a recreational dance activity, not staged,¹³ with no paid dancers (although some dance teachers are paid), taking place during *bals*, workshops, and festivals (Guilcher 1998(2001); Gasnault 2015a,

2015b; Apprill 2018; Montagnat 2019). Its practice has spread out beyond France and is now very developed in neighbouring European countries such as Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Portugal (Aubinet and Malay 2021; see also videos by Accordéoniste Flou 2017; Galilea Val 2011).

The specific sequence I would like to focus on happened during a *rond de Saint Vincent* (Saint Vincent's ring), a dance type performed in small closed circles. Originally from the village of Saint Vincent sur Oust in Brittany (in northwest France), this dance type has successfully entered the repertoire of *danse folk* (see videos by Bal Barbare 2018; Tristan Gloaguen 2018).

Having clarified the general setting, one more concept is needed for this discussion: reflexivity, as the sequence was lived and witnessed by me, Marie-Pierre, a dancer, but also an anthropologist.

I have been a practitioner of other dance genres for 40 years, though I entered more deeply into the dance world of *danse folk* more recently, in 2010. Attending events around France regularly with fellow dancers and occasionally participating in event organisation, I consider myself as part of this dance community even though I am far from being one of its most active members. I did not enter this dance community for research, but rather I entered it once I was already trained in socio-cultural anthropology for more than 20 years. I have therefore developed a professional quirk which happens every time I engage in an activity, be it taking a taxi or experiencing chronic illness: although I live the activity fully, I also adopt a "floating attention" (*attention flottante*, Laplantine 1996(2010)), pay extra attention to details, and listen to everyone with an 'external' interest. I also process all these elements, notice recurrences, tensions, and parallels, as if I was conducting what I call 'implicit fieldwork'. In the situation which interests us here, there is no radical difference between the researcher and the 'locals', no insider/outsider opposition, as Maria Koutsouba shows in her great article on the complexity of doing anthropology 'at home' (1999). In terms of knowledge production, it implies an enmeshing of several dancers' and researchers' perspectives.

Action – reaction

Back to the sequence.

1. Action. Imagine a vast room, packed with several hundred dancers organized in small adjacent circles of six to fifteen people. A live band is playing on the nearby wide stage. I am dancing in one of the circles with another ten people or so. Facing me, a young man (let us call him Mr. Blue) seems to struggle to perform the correct and challenging hands-arms-torso gesture required for the *rond de Saint Vincent's* dance pattern. Instead of a smooth double rotation in time with his neighbours, the motions of his arms are quite disarticulated and a lot wider than what is comfortable for the dancers beside him. However, Mr. Blue smiles and laughs, apparently unaware of, or at least unconcerned by, his disorganizing impact on the circle (see video by Jeremie Bonamant Teboul 2016).

2. Reaction. For a few seconds, nothing happens, but these disconcerting moves. Then, I notice that Mr. Blue's neighbour (let us call her Ms. Green), an advanced dancer whom I know by sight, is grimacing each time her arm is being twisted by Mr. Blue's movements. One minute later, Ms. Green makes a sudden departure to a nearby circle, making her departure quite conspicuous, clearly indicating that she still wants to dance, but cannot or does not want to dance next to him anymore. Not a word has been exchanged, but it seems that something in Mr. Blue's actions has provoked Ms. Green's flight, something that we could, for now, call a mistake. How can this sequence produce knowledge? Let us look at it more closely.

Various type of knowledge – a series of mistakes

1. Production of knowledge about the rules of the dance form. Fixed form, variations, and limits: mistake or creativity?

The most obvious interpretation of this sequence is that Mr. Blue made mistakes in the dance form: his hands-arms-torso gesture was incorrect, bringing such discomfort to Ms. Green that

she decided to leave. The first type of knowledge produced by this sequence therefore concerns the rules of this dance type, the *rond de Saint Vincent*.

When a dance type has a fixed form, any dance production seemingly outside of this fixed pattern either falls into the category of variation or into the category of error, hence engaging the limits of what is acceptable for this form. In some cases, the step or gesture which is 'not right' compared to the prototype is clearly an error made by a dancer who has not yet mastered this dance form. In other cases, flirting with the limits of a fixed form and trying something 'new' might be seen as an impulse of creativity by competent dancers who experience it as an exploration of the boundaries, even while it would be unacceptable for 'orthodox' dancers/spectators/commentors, who reject any variation (Gibert 2014).¹⁴

In the *rond de Saint Vincent* dance type, there are only a few accepted possibilities for making step variations (for instance insert turns on the spot), but they are rarely done in the context of a *bal folk*.¹⁵ There were none in the circle we were currently dancing, nor in the other circles nearby. On the other hand, there are various possibilities of emphasis and amplitude in the general motion (from small walking steps to wide jumps). However, they result from an unspoken process of corporeal consensus within the circle and cannot be maintained by the single will of one dancer. To my knowledge, there are no possibilities for changing the hands-arms-torso gesture without impacting the rest of the circle.¹⁶ Therefore, in this sequence, the way Mr. Blue performed can indeed be described as a mistake, an error rather than creativity. It did not seem to be done on purpose and it clearly disturbed the dance flow of his direct neighbours, which in turn had an impact on the entire circle.

2. Production of knowledge about the norms of interactions. Dealing with other dancers' actions. More than one mistake?

Secondly, this action-reaction sequence sheds light on the ways in which dancers deal with the 'mistakes' of their fellow dancers while dancing. The second type of knowledge produced here therefore concerns the rules of interaction between dancers. As I understand from implicit participant-observation of *danse folk* for about a decade, three main types of reactions usually occur when a dancer witnesses a 'mistake' (error) performed by a fellow dancer: not doing anything and continuing to dance as if everything was ok; mentioning the mistake (verbal action) and/or helping to solve the mistake with kinaesthetic action (such as leading the movement, sometimes adding a count of the steps); and subsequently avoiding the mistake maker in various ways, such as not dancing again with or near him/her. This can be done discretely or bluntly, as in the incident we are looking at.

When asked theoretically, most dancers will answer that community norms encourage the second interaction – offering help. Yet participant-observation and informal discussions on real practice show a much more balanced situation between the three types of interactions, with very strong individual differences. I observe a tendency for established dancers to help someone that they already know, or someone who asks for help, rather than a systematic commitment to help everyone who has not mastered the moves.

We can learn something if we look at Ms. Green's reaction, or if we imagine that it could have included some post-dance interactions (which I did not observe at that time but might very well have occurred). For instance, people or friends might have approached the mistake maker (Mr. Blue) to help him learn the proper way. And/or some people could have approached Ms. Green to discuss her reaction, as some dancers may have considered that she also made a mistake in reacting this way instead of choosing another solution (for instance teaching him the right moves). Maybe more than one mistake was committed? This leads us to consider expanding the idea of mistake to include notions of lack of awareness (Mr. Blue not realizing that he was disturbing the entire circle), misconduct (Ms. Green not helping him and moving away), and the

community's misconceptions about its own norms. Indeed, if Ms. Green's reaction does not seem in line with the explicit theoretical norms of conduct, it does fit in well with common interactions I have observed.¹⁷

3. Production of knowledge about a dance world's overall system. A misjudgement on the mechanisms of inclusivity?

A third dimension of knowledge production emerges from this sequence, which reveals even more clearly the heuristic power of mistakes in the field. To reveal it, let us go back to the evening described above, taking place during the *danse folk* festival called *Funambal*, a few years ago. What came to my mind when I witnessed this sequence was not a reflection on dance rules nor on dance interactions, but a little ironic smile, and an inner comment: "so much for the *Bisounours!*". (*Bisounours* refers to their perception of a very inclusive community in which everyone takes care of each other.)¹⁸ It was not the first time that I witnessed or even experienced this kind of reaction myself. That night, however, it suddenly acted as a revealing clue for the researcher in me, a sign of dissonance that I had been perceiving for months or even years, but found hard to pinpoint precisely.¹⁹ Indeed Ms. Green's clear and conspicuous rejection of Mr. Blue's dancing challenges the self-perception of many members of this dancing community, who are comfortable using the self-designation *bisounours* non-ironically.

This little incident, or action-reaction sequence, is therefore not the unveiling of a secret truth, but it epitomizes a discrepancy between a rather common and explicit imaginary and discourse on the *danse folk*'s dance world on the one hand, and my observations and feelings, as well as numerous discussions with other reflexive dancers, on the other hand. A series of common discourses and imaginaries circulate among many new and more advanced dancers, which can be summarised by these three groups of reconstructed quotations: "*Bals folk* are very open to newcomers"; "It is easy to integrate"; "Everyone is welcome"; "It does not matter if you make mistake"; "People are here to help you"; "We are all friends"; "We are peace and love hippies"; "We are *bisounours*". They emphasise conviviality, solidarity, inclusivity, and care for each other, which are supposed to take place throughout the practice of this dance genre. Such ideas are often linked to a strong imaginary connecting 'folk' to 'countryside' and 'peasants' with its evocation of positive social dimensions of village practices (Montagnat 2019).²⁰ Such comments and perceptions are also motivated by the common practice of hugging quite a lot, as well as a strong development of mutual aid and sharing practices beyond the dance, such as sharing car rides, information, volunteering, and ideas.

On the other hand, my attentive participation in this dance world – dancing, living, and chatting with diverse dancers for years, without explicit research in mind but strongly influenced by my anthropological training – have shown me a slightly different world. To start with, the community of dancers is only moderately heterogenous in terms of socio-professional categories, and mainly white.²¹ Regarding openness to newcomers, although today I do have very close friends among the dancers, it took me several months to go further than a 'hello-how-are-you' relationship with any dancer. This feeling of a rather slow integration has been confirmed by several dancers once we go beyond common discourse. In principle, it is acceptable to invite anyone for a couple dance, but refusals are very common (with excuses). Advanced dancers who do not know the person inviting them are particularly likely to refuse. Circle dances are indeed open to everyone, and no one is kicked out of them, but more than once I felt uncomfortable when I did not know the steps and felt that I was impinging on my neighbours' dance flow. Yet, I never experienced an offer to teach me the correct steps. Neither did I offer help to unknown beginners once I had mastered the moves, being afraid that they would take my offer wrongly, as a harsh remark on their poor level of dance.

This dance world therefore operates with an internal tension between a perception of inclusivity and an unintended and perhaps sometimes unperceived but empirically observable exclusiveness. I wouldn't go so far as to call it a 'mistake' in relation to the internal 'truth' about this dance

world, but rather a misjudgement about the mechanisms of inclusivity, and the implicit norms of behaviour on which they are based.²² I will make an attempt to make them explicit, although this is totally exploratory and will need further research and consultation with other dancers to write more assuredly.

As the basic patterns of the various dance types comprising *danse folk* are not very difficult to learn, many beginners start feeling comfortable much sooner than they have mastered their full nuances. Yet the unspoken (and often unconscious) rules are that when you are a real beginner, you should contain your movement not to disturb other dancers inadvertently. However, once you have mastered the core of the steps, and sometimes even before, it is not only about dance expertise, but also about networking. One needs to 'be known' by the other dancers, in particular the advanced and/or popular ones – to have integrated into one of the many networks which constitute this dance world – in order to be able to join circles comfortably even with minor mistakes, and/or to be regularly invited for couple dances and/or to invite others without refusal.

Returning to the analysed sequence, Mr. Blue's 'mistake' as a beginner lay in the fact that he had not yet mastered the 'proper way to perform', both in terms of form (correct gesture) and in terms of conduct (he laughed and made wide disorganized moves while he should have been trying to improve his dancing, or at least trying not to impact negatively on his neighbours). It was answered by what could be seen as a 'mistake' in reaction/interaction by his neighbour according to theoretical rules, which privilege a helping posture. In turn, this reaction reveals a 'mistake' of yet another nature – a misreading of one's own practices. This third 'mistake' is not about the dancers' knowledge of the dance itself, but about their perception(s) of their practice. Or did I, as a researcher, mistakenly mis-interpret what happened that evening? Maybe I have misread a part or the entire sequence... Nonetheless, the various layers of knowledge produced out of this (mis)reading remain useful and relevant to a certain extent since they formalize observations and thoughts which had emerged long before that particular evening. Therefore, even if it is my mistake, it has its own heuristic power!

In addition, many dancers are very reflexive, very articulate, love to look at themselves, and to discuss their practices. When we discuss *danse folk* in its main context, the *bal folk*, and I challenge their *bisounours* self-perception, many agree with my analysis, and we joke freely about it.²³ Hence, what has been produced here is not an outsider's knowledge, an ivory-tower production, but an insider's knowledge elaborated after taking a step back to look at our own practices.

Conclusion

Each co-author has provided some analysis with the description of their case studies above, though taken together, we also propose two overall observations.

Firstly, 'mistakes' are often nuanced rather than absolute. One range of mistakes deals with identification and terminology. They are similar to those raised by Nilsson above, when one dance name in an archive is simply substituted for another in error. *Oxdans*, *halling*, *östgötakadrilj*, and *gotlandskadrilj* were each defined and identifiable choreographically, and differed from each other within the contexts that they were recorded as well as when the recordings were archived.²⁴ Thus, when one name is given for a dance composition associated with a different name, it is clearly a mistake. In these examples, there remains some question about when the mislabelling occurred, and whether the mistake-maker was less knowledgeable than necessary, or less careful. The substitution of one dance name for another does suggest some closer relationship between these two dances than between any other randomly chosen dances.

An additional dimension is introduced when the 'mistake' is a neologism rather than a simple substitution, as when the performance reviewer, or perhaps the typesetter, produced *gammaldans* instead of *gammal dans*. Given that the concept and the word *gammaldans* had not yet appeared

in Swedish vocabulary, it was an error at that time (perhaps with a dash of creativity involved). As Nilsson emphasises however, the new word *gammaldans* does indeed appear in this 1902 text. Some openness to this 'mistake' must have existed in 1902. It was somehow 'less of a mistake' than other possible typos, less irritating, and certainly less than random. It is notable that this particular space was omitted between words, rather than any of hundreds of other spaces in the text, and that apparently no proof-reader noticed, nor perhaps many of its readers, until Nilsson and his colleague attended to it carefully over a century later. Mistake as it is, it somehow indicates a predisposition to this word several decades in advance of its popularization. The existence of a predisposition to the general concept of 'old time dance' is another question again.

Serendipity – chance – has been described in connection with ethnographic fieldwork, as Gibert notes above. Perhaps it was chance that Mr. Blue and Ms. Green danced next to each other in the *rond de Saint Vincent* that evening. Perhaps it was serendipity that Mr. Blue felt so energetically expressive, and that Ms. Green was feeling particularly desirous of an experience of unity and cohesion rather than individualism. Perhaps it was a coincidence that the Yevshan leaders found Lawson's book in their hands, and that paragraph caught their eye because she specifically mentioned Ukraine (Ukraine is mentioned rarely in IRFD literature). On the other hand, as our reading of Nilsson's examples also shows, we tend to downplay serendipity in our examination of these 'mistakes' for this article, and foreground other factors.

In contrast, we note that observing intentionality is often useful in our explorations. Intentionality is also present in a continuum of possibilities: The archivists in Nilsson's case of historic films surely did not want to introduce an error in their catalogue. Avramenko likely overemphasised the 1, 2, 3 rhythm in his lexicon unintentionally, perhaps because it was pedagogically convenient. Mr. Blue seems to have been comfortable and happy with his own dancing, albeit perhaps only partially aware. Ms. Green's response, however, was clear and decisive. The Yevshan choreographers also acted with positive intent after their first revelation, and with sustained concentration and effort as they developed and defended these new steps. The journalist's intentions with the choice of *gammaldans* are unclear. Perhaps we should leave open the possibility that he invented this word on purpose. As each of the co-authors notes, the intentions of the participants in the traditions, and the participants in the documentation procedures, do not reveal all aspects of this issue. The dance anthropologist and ethnochoreologist is correct in being aware of their own perspectives and motivations (and the mistakes that they may instigate) as well. A look at intentionality opens the analysis to otherwise less visible relationships and meanings.

Whereas Nilsson's examples deal with the documentary materials after the dancing is done, Nahachewsky and Gibert identify 'mistakes' that take place prior to or during the dance, and that are ascribed to the dancers or dance leaders themselves while performing. In these cases, too, as both authors emphasise, there is much room for nuance and multiple interpretations in the alleged errors. The Ukrainian Canadian dance leaders were perhaps overly romantic in their goals of reproducing dances from a distant societal context. They were too isolated and uninformed to aspire effectively to 'authenticity'. They took questionable information uncritically from a disparate knowledge community and applied it too literally to their own. They continued to explicitly emphasise deep connectivity with village dance when, in reality, they had become more concerned with positive symbolic representations of their ethnic group, aesthetics, and originality. Similarly, on a more microscopic level, Mr. Blue was not competent enough and too effusive with his dancing, while Ms. Green was not as Care Bear-ish as she might have been. The *danse folk* community might have a misleading explicit self-presentation which contradicts its observable interrelations. On the other hand, one could propose positive counter-justifications for all the statements above: diasporic Ukrainian Canadians legitimately aspired to connect themselves with their homeland and their symbolic ethnic identity. Given their historical context, they did the best they could to fill gaps in their capacity to allow eager

participants to connect with their roots. Hutsul dances, and the "Hutsul 1, 2, 3" step in particular, improved their dance tradition by making it more attractive to dancers and audience members alike. In the same way, Mr. Blue was a participant in an event which was presented as a welcoming and tolerant opportunity for self-expression, and his enthusiasm was surely generally encouraged. Ms. Green was not wrong to want to enjoy dancing smoothly with competent fellow dancers. Every community (and every person) has a 'front-stage' presentation of what they see as their positive features, and a 'back-stage' reality that is more complex and loaded. All of these 'mistakes' can thus be presented in shades of grey rather than black and white.

For most these types of mistakes, we find a continuum of phenomena ranging from correctness and conformity to some usually negatively valued characteristic: ignorance, inferior competence, carelessness, slips, errors, misconceptions, nonconformist aesthetics, divergent priorities, perhaps even intentional deceit. We might find bigger slips and smaller slips, missing the target completely, or just slightly off the mark. But not always. Sometimes, the deviation from community norms is positively valued. Errors and creative genius lie together on another elaborate continuum.

The second main point in our conclusion, the heuristic value of studying mistakes, is strongly connected to the first. Gibert makes numerous explicit references to this in her account of the *bal folk* case study, and they are briefly alluded to in the paragraphs directly above. Because of the multidimensional complexity of 'mistakes', they sometimes open windows into the respective dance traditions that reveal characteristics and subtleties that are not otherwise accessible to researchers. In the *bal folk* example, the actions and reactions of the participants during an exchange that lasted a few seconds drew back the curtain to reveal some of the 'back-stage' of the event and the community. In the Ukrainian Canadian example, a long historical view opens up insights into the influences on the ideological, aesthetic, and institutional biases of contrasting generations. The Swedish examples demonstrate, and Nilsson makes this clear, that researchers are wise to bring strong familiarity of their subject matter as they critically assess every resource and every claim.

Understanding mistakes is intimately intertwined with the awareness of the participating knowledge communities. The simplest mistakes are perhaps quite clear to all participants, including the mistake-maker, perhaps immediately after the fact. In many other situations however, mistakes imply a more sustained difference in awareness/knowledge among the diverse stakeholders, thus already a hint of the existence of divergent knowledge bases. These different 'knowledge communities' might exist on micro-scales and deal simply with individuals on a brief time scale (such as Mr. Blue in his first *bal folk*, compared to a regular *danse folk* insider), at the community level (such as the journalists in 1902 compared to the "Philochoros" performers), and sometimes on macro-scales (such as the differences between the IRFD and Ukrainian Canadian dance revivalists, and both of these again in contrast to the mountain villagers they imagined they were emulating). Becoming aware of a mistake in a dance event can thus be interpreted as expanding one's knowledge base. If everyone comes to share a consensus about the mistake, this leads to harmonization of the knowledge base of the various participants. Alternatively, if people do not come to agree about the existence or the quality of the 'mistake' (misperception, experiment, variation), this may lead to increased awareness of the differences between the knowledge (sub)communities and their greater clarification.

The issues become more complex when we add considerations of the researchers engaging with the 'mistakes'. At a minimum, we now have three potential knowledge sub-communities to be aware of. Almost by definition, the researcher brings additional etic information to the case, contrasting in often profound ways from emic perspectives of the mistake maker(s) and the other insiders. Gibert takes great pains to clarify her positionality as a hyper-observant insider (and thus in some ways atypical again). Nahachewsky has shifted his perspective over the course of his career, while Nilsson's position is clear and stable, even if nuanced, as a well-informed specialist a century after the fact.

Endnotes

- 1 During various discussions of the ICTM Study-Group for Ethnochoreology, Adrienne Kaeppler evoked how she would voluntarily "make a mistake" (that is, test the edges of the rules of the dance tradition she was learning) in order to have her dance teacher expand her explanations about the dance system (Kaeppler 1972: 175–176).
- 2 Descriptions are found in *Svenska folkdanser* 1964. *Oxdans* is also known under the name *frikassé*.
- 3 Folkdance is also a tricky concept, meaning different things in different contexts. I do not go into that here.
- 4 Descriptions are found in *Beskrivning av Svenska folkdanser* (1964).
- 5 *Göteborgs National Danssällskaps danssuppvisning å Duvas backe i Slottsskogen Valborgsmässoafton*.
- 6 Descriptions are found in *Beskrivning av Svenska folkdanser* (1964).
- 7 In Ukrainian, *pokhid skladnyi, bihunets'*, or *dribushechka*.
- 8 Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, increased access to existing ethnographic studies and more recent visits to the Hutsul countryside show that Hutsul villagers have a rich dance tradition, and their footwork involves many rhythms, but rarely this rhythm (see Harasymczuk 1939: appendix p. 53). The same is true of Ukrainian Hutsul staged choreographies in the Soviet traditions.
- 9 Other than a very brief presentation of this plains versus mountains principle in Duggan, Schlottman, and Rutledge (1948:17), Lawson's book is the earliest reference I have found for this claim. I have not yet been able to ascertain her sources for arriving at this observation. I sincerely thank Radboud Koop for identifying numerous later sources for this claim in several variations and describing its circulation in the IRFD communities. I also thank Radboud, Dilyana Kurdova, and Daniela Ivanova Nyberg for their attestation of this concept within the Bulgarian folk dance world, found in publications by Stefan Vâglarov and others, and oft repeated since the 1950s. Bohdan Zerebecky, a choreographer with Yevshan and other groups in Saskatoon since the 1970s, identified Lawson's book specifically as a long-time inspiration (Zerebecky 2022).
- 10 See Zerebecky's *Hutsul pokhid skladnyi* in his *Ukrainian dance curriculum and teacher's guide* for a specific description of this step (363), and numerous other steps developed according to the same principles (358–366, 369–370, 417–426).
- 11 Paraphrased, personal conversation, 1990s. That last part of her description was surprising from my perspective as an ethnochoreologist, since neither ethnographic information about Hutsul dance, the extensive staged folk dance literature in Ukraine, nor participatory dance videos posted more recently online indicate noticeable vertical accents (see Harasymczuk, Humeniuk, Ukrainian Dance World, Iwaszewycz).
- 12 On revival dance, see the edited volume by Stavělová and Buckland (2018). See also Nahachewsky (2001) and Nilsson (2018). For a good synthesis on the concept of revival in music, see the introduction by Hill and Bithell (2014) as well as many examples in their edited volume.
- 13 A very few penetrations of this dance genre into staged contemporary dance have been witnessed and studied by Vellet (2021). Her study focuses on one dance type which is part of the *danse folk* repertoire: the *bourrée*.
- 14 The anthropologist J. Vellet, who has been working on the transmission of *bourrées* and their recent integration into contemporary dance performances writes about the transgressive possibilities of improvisation for this dance type (2021).
- 15 One can witness them more often when danced by experts of Breton dances, for instance during Fest Noz or dance contests.
- 16 However, a Youtube video of a *rond de Saint Vincent* circulates, in which, according to the comments underneath the video, the entire assembly is performing the hands-arms-torso motion wrongly, yet in perfect unison (FestBreizh 2012).
- 17 I would like to thank the various colleagues present at the discussion after our panel, who brought in these various notions of mis- (misconduct, misperception, misconception, misinterpretation) to complexify the situation.
- 18 The official French name for the *Care Bears* ©, composed of the words "*bisous*" (kiss) and "*nounours*" (teddy bear). A group of fluffy colourful little teddy bears, quite in fashion during the 1980s, who are supposed to provide happiness, love, and care. The word has since entered the French vocabulary (and the Larousse dictionary) to describe, often with an ironic and sometimes derogative tone, a person with a naïvely positive view of social relations.

- 19 On mistake and serendipity as tell-tale signs during fieldwork, see Ginzburg, quoted by Blok in Sunier; Verkaait; Blok (2005:109).
- 20 A Master thesis in sociology conducted a few years ago by A. Ménérier is entitled *L'utopie communautaire dans les bals folk* (2008, Université de Lille). I have not yet been able to find its unpublished manuscript, but this title seems to point in the same direction as my reflections.
- 21 Mainly middle class: teachers, academics, social workers, engineers, artists, and cultural workers, etc. or in reconversion towards organic agriculture, bee keeping, craftsmanship, alternative therapies and self-development, and so on. On this question of limited inclusivity and heterogeneity in the *bal folk* community in Belgium, see Aubinet and Malay (2021).
- 22 This particular question of inclusivity is the second theme of this symposium. In the case of *bal folk*, it would call for more precise research, such as is currently being conducted by C. Charitonadis in Greece: looking at inclusion and exclusion processes, he also interrogates the accessibility of the dance form itself (see this volume).
- 23 If you have watched the video clip of the *rond de Saint Vincent* at the Festival La Nuit du Folk (Bal Barbare 2018), you might have noticed that the musicians had a punkish look. Indeed, it was an answer to the evening's theme: "Hippies VS punks". I will need to investigate this, but it could advocate for the intense reflexivity and self-irony of some actors!
- 24 It has been noted, for Scandinavian and other traditional dance repertoires, that the same dance form may have numerous names in different communities, and conversely that the same name may be used for diverse forms in other places (see Nilsson 2014). Nilsson, however, notes that these were all fixed dance compositions in the revival, in which context each dance is more commodified; each name and dance composition is fixed more formally and made discrete.

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FORMULATING DANCE HISTORY: ALFRED WALDAU'S GESCHICHTE DES BÖHMISCHEN NATIONALTANZES (1861)

The paper deals with the contribution of Alfred Waldau to the establishing of choreological research in Czech lands, especially with his book *Die Geschichte des böhmischen Nationaltanzes* (1861). It represents the first attempt to study character and history of Czech (national) dance on the base of historical sources and to examine its interpretation according to contemporary philosophical, aesthetic, and cultural theoretical concepts.

Keywords: dance history, national dance, Alfred Waldau, Czech lands, 19th century

Introduction

The inception of serious research interest in dance in Czech lands is usually associated with the grandiose work of Čeněk Zíbrt *Jak se kdy v Čechách tancovalo* (How they were used to dance in Bohemia) published in 1895 (Zíbrt 1895). His predecessor, Josef Jarosch, alias Alfred Waldau, (Gremlicová 2003) being ahead of him for more than 30 years, remains in his shadow, almost invisible and forgotten. In fact, Jarosch/Waldau was the first researcher, who studied old sources and manuscripts and their recently published anthologies and editions in the effort to collect historical traces and reports witnessing the development of Czech dance. The final text, *Die Geschichte des böhmischen Nationaltanzes* (History of Czech national dance) (Waldau 1861) with the subtitle *Culturstudie*, interprets the dance as "a barometer" of the social, political, and moral state of national culture (Waldau 1861:101). Waldau's book concentrates on cultural topics of his time, especially the complicated national issues of Czech lands, inhabited both by Czechs and Germans by nationality, sharing more and more in the conflict of their common homeland, Bohemia. He was aware, that his attempt to research Czech dance history is unique and that it was left unfinished, calling for successors.

Alfred Waldau as a person

As indicated, Alfred Waldau was the literary pseudonym of Josef Ignaz Jarosch (25. 11. 1837 Petrovice by Rakovník/Žatec, Bohemia – 3. 2. 1882 Žacléř/Schatzlar, Bohemia). The facts of his life are fragmentary and hazy. First, his national identity is unclear. The surname is Czech written in the German manner, but sources differ as to whether he was Czech or German by nationality. Nevertheless, he wrote his books in German, probably his stronger language (Waldau 2003: 134). He studied in Prague at the Piarists New Town Gymnasium and between 1857 and 1861 at the Juridical Faculty of Charles-Ferdinand University (whether he finished his study is uncertain). After a short literary activity (also in Vienna), he became, probably influenced by the death of his father and following existential need, the jurist-auditor in the army in 1863 (in service in Vienna, Graz, Triest, Bjelovar). In 1872 he left the army and settled in Žacléř as a notary. Between 1858 and 1863 he published 8 books in German dealing with Czech culture: translations of Czech folk songs, *Minne* (Courtly love) poetry, folk tales, or poems by leading Czech writer of Romanticism Karel Hynek Mácha. Among these books, meant as a propagation of Czech culture in the German cultural space, were two dedicated to dance: *Böhmische Nationaltänze* (1859, 1860) (Waldau 1859,1860) and *Geschichte des böhmischen Nationaltanzes* (1861), the latter being the main object for this paper.

Sketchiness of Waldau's biography makes any attempt to draw a picture of his personality speculative. Something can be sensed from his texts: his anti-conflict mood, reconciling even the Czech-German tension, that was growing in his times. He was probably an experienced dancer,

a disciple of the famous Prague dancing master, Karl Link, even though he was critical towards the contemporary social dances as "mere sensual pleasure" (Waldau 1861:236). His friends were Czech writers Jan Neruda, Vítězslav Hálek, Adolf Heyduk or publisher Josef Richard Vilímek. Jan Neruda, talented writer, perceptive theatre reviewer and enthusiastic dancer, belonged to the leading personalities of contemporary young Czech patriotic circles. He inspired Waldau with his short treatise on Czech national dances (Neruda 1930) to create his first book on dance dedicated by Waldau to Neruda. The latter, Josef Vilímek, printed in his journal *Humoristické listy* (Humoristic Letters) in 1882 not only Waldau's obituary reminding readers of his work for Czech culture, but also his portrait which filled the whole title page.

Waldau as dance researcher

Both Waldau's books on dance were, as already stated, based on detailed study of historical sources and literature, Czech and foreign, too (chronicles, books of travels, memoirs, poetry, religious and moralistic literature, official records etc.). He also used some modern dance literature, namely treatises by Bonnet/Bourdelot and Cahusac,¹ and in the text, he named Jean-George Noverre as an authority, too. His historical overview of Czech national dance was concentrated on folk dances or medieval and early modern aristocratic, bourgeois, and rural dance cultures. Ballet (theatrical dance of modern times) and social dances were almost excluded: if mentioned, then as unhealthy expression of the decline of European/Bohemian culture calling for its regeneration through Slavic or Spanish vital national dancing.

In his historical treatise, Waldau tried to create a consistent and logically ordered picture of Czech dance development in the background of the European dance situation. He proceeded through key moments of Czech history in general and tried to illustrate them through dance and its momentary character and shape. The overarching ideas of his concept of history sometimes forced him to modulate the facts to fit them. On the other hand, he created credible conclusions on the base of such facts and their comparison with similar phenomena in foreign cultures and reflected on relevant problems (e.g. the transfer of certain dance forms through European cultures). Dance was for Waldau an important cultural phenomenon, rooted in the innermost nature of men (Waldau 1861:18–19). He believed it expressed the life of the human body through geometric, rhythmic, and dynamic beauty of movements and manifested the mood of human spirit (Waldau 1861:235); and the movement in response to music and song permeates the whole body (Waldau 1861:186), unifying the flesh and mind/spirit (Geist).

Waldau as a historian

As a historical text, Waldau's book on Czech national dance stands on the edge of different concepts of how to make history. He was rooted in the especially German philosophy of history, in thoughts of Johann Gottfried Herder, Immanuel Kant and Georg Wilhelm Hegel. He was acquainted with Jules Michelet's work, probably his *Histoire de France*, based on creative connection of the study of sources and author's imagination. And he was probably exposed, too, to the new positivistic attitude claiming the historian as an objective interpreter of collected facts. Waldau named and quoted some of his authorities in the text, and some are present latently through certain concepts and interpretative frames. His opinions were anti-feudalistic, with anti-clerical accents, psychological explanations, sentimental and Romantic aesthetic evaluations. In unison with his classical German masters, the central importance belonged to the issues of moral, mirrored in culture and dance, specifically.

A provoking question is who personally introduced him to such conception of philosophy and history, who influenced his point of view and approach to the study of cultural phenomena. It is very probable that he knew the work of the 'father of Czech history', František Palacký, even

though he did not share Palacký's high evaluation of the Hussite Era, Czech protestant religious movement of the late Middle Ages. During his university studies he probably attended lectures of an influential positivistic Czech historian, Václav Vladivoj Tomek, who it is thought, also introduced Waldau to the practice of archival work and made him familiar with concrete texts.

Waldau's *Geschichte des böhmischen Nationaltanzes* is permeated by the concepts of *Zeitgeist* (spirit of time)² and *Volksgeist* (spirit of nation), the ideas of (dialectic) connection between dance and certain historical period, its cultural, social, and political character. He stated directly, "What a time, such a dance" (Waldau 1861:126). But in fact, he worked with this idea more specifically and dialectically, not as a direct, dependant reflection of historical phenomena in dance. The cultural situation can provoke a dynamic reaction in the character of dance: it can function, for instance, as a defence against the bad, humiliating cultural situations, or as source of freedom and joy in unfree and gloomy times. The special ability of Czech people to resist the tragedy and injustice through humour and satire Waldau proclaimed even to be a distinctive feature of Czech *Volksgeist*. Especially for the country people, it was thought that music, singing and dancing were the only way to cope with their earthly being; without them they would be more animals than humans (Waldau 1861:185). He speculated also about specific dance reactions to the political events such as the Revolution in 1848. In this way, Waldau's thinking seems to be connected mainly with the Hegelian one. This way of reasoning he even applied to the movement content of dance and its character and changes (in rhythm, tempo), based on the action-reaction principle: changes in movement qualities resonates with changes of culture and moral (Waldau 1861:8–9).³

Even his fragmentary biography offers us a clue to one possible source of his interpretative attitude. At the gymnasium, it is thought that Waldau met as his teacher one of the most independent Czech philosophers of the period, August Smetana, inspired deeply by Hegel and his followers (Ludwig Feuerbach) (Šnebergová 2008). Waldau was a young boy at the time, but it was no doubt an impressive meeting. Moreover, Smetana (being Czech) held quite a democratic and non-chauvinistic attitude in Czech-German national rivalry. Waldau acted in similar manner in his public activities, considering the relation of Czech and German nations more on the principle of equality of 'we-you' than the confrontational one 'we-they' (Eriksen 2012:58–60). However, in the reality of the politicising patriotic movements after 1848 and in the atmosphere of mutual hatred, his quest for national reconciliation became more and more peripheral.

To conclude: Waldau's legacy to future dance researchers

After 1863 Alfred Waldau became mute. He did not finish the two other books on Czech culture that he was preparing. He disappeared from Bohemia for many years and after his return, he settled in the borderlands in the Northern Bohemia. Georg Gimpl, the editor of the new edition of Waldau's *Böhmische Nationaltänze* (2003) speculated that there was a combination of motives behind this: the need to earn his living, but also and maybe more significantly his delusion caused by the development of the patriotic movement in 1860s, his disagreement with values, contradictory to his somewhat conservative opinions,⁴ and his loss of confidence, that he could still help somehow his homeland to heal (Waldau 2003:179–181).

Regardless of possible Waldau's doubts of the meaning of his work, both his books on Czech dance elicited some response at home and abroad. Czech writers on dance, František Dlouhý (Dlouhý 1882), Čeněk Zíbrt (Zíbrt 1895), Emanuel Siblík (Siblík 1937) and Jan Reimoser (Rey 1930: 28–29) drew from his books and mentioned him. Abroad mainly German dance historians as Albert Czerwinski (Czerwinski 1862), Franz Magnus Böhme (Böhme 1886) and Curt Sachs (Sachs 1933) followed Waldau's intentions and used his works as a source of information of Czech dance (most often polka). In the Czech choreological context of the second half of

20th century, his works remained in the consciousness of the ethnochorologists, becoming however less and less accessible due to not only the German language, but also the 'Schwabacher', the font of their print. The intellectual background of his interpretation of Czech national dance and its history was not commented on at all.

In Waldau's eyes, dance was a respectful cultural phenomenon with immense and unique value for humankind, "a mimic hieroglyphic language" (Waldau 1861:259) concentrating ideals, beliefs, and character of a nation.⁵ Through dance, he wrote:

three noble ideas make their sense: Schiller's idea of the aesthetic education of human race for taste, further Lessing's idea of the religious education of human race for virtue, finally, Kant's idea of historical education of human race for the legal status. (Waldau 1861:259)⁶

The sense of dance history lay for him in its relation to the present times and even to the future. Waldau was not a choreologist or ethnochoreologist in contemporary sense. But he acquired a representative knowledge of dance, making him competent in this field: he was an active dancer; he studied variety of historical sources; he was familiar with dance literature; he applied creatively methodological concepts and interpretative models from philosophy and cultural history to dance. In his historical treatise he also reflected the character, specificity, and pitfalls (difficulties) of dance research: among others, the lack of direct dance sources, the enormous labour (and expensiveness) of searching for dance reports in sources or their problematic, limited informative potential (Waldau 1861:10, 50, 76, 253–254). He called for further research, hoping that in the future his followers will be able to fill in the gaps, to find new data, to gain deeper knowledge. He meant that it is a work not for a lonely researcher, as he was, but for a whole group of scholars, "eine Gelehrtecompagnie" (Waldau 1861:33, 253, 258).

Endnotes

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2. "Der Charakter der Tänze findet seine Ursache und Erklärung in der Geschichte, in der Richtung, dem Steigen und Sinken der Cultur, in dem 'Zeitgeiste'." (Waldau 1861:9)
3. "daß die mehr oder minder scharfe Rhythmik der Tänze im Völkerleben nicht vom Zufalle oder vom Belieben hervorgebracht sei, daß vielmehr das Tempo mit den Stimmungen der Zeit gleichsam wie Ursache und Wirkung zusammenhänge. Die Umsprünge des einfachen und friedlichen Tempo's in den Füßen zu schnelleren und stürmischeren sind auch Umsprünge in Anschauung, Sitte und Stimmung des Volkslebens."
4. His opinion affinity with more conservative fraction of contemporary Czech politics suggests the dedication of the book *Geschichte des böhmischen Nationaltanzes* to František Ladislav Rieger, the leader of the oldest Czech liberal party.
5. "Der Tanz ist und bleibt ein ungemein werthreicher Beitrag zu der Physiologie und Psychologie der Völker, er ist und bleibt die mimische Hieroglyphensprache, in welchem sich die spezifische Bildung eines Volkes ... ausdrückt." (Waldau 1861:258–259)
6. "Drei erhabene Ideen werden durch ihn [den Tanz] zur Anschauung und Bedeutung gebracht, nämlich die Idee Schillers über ästhetische Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes für den Geschmack; ferner die Idee Lessings über die religiöse Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes für die Tugend; schließlich die Idee Kants über die historische Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes für den Rechtszustand."

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DANCE RESEARCH IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

This paper examines the integration of dance research into the structures of Czech art and cultural organisations. It describes the positions of employees, the evaluation and decision making processes in dance research as it is institutionalised and integrated within the social, economic, and political structures of the state. The uncovered invisibility of dance research results can stand as an alert, applicable to other European institutions involved in dance research.

Keywords: dance, research, Czech Republic, popularisation, institutions

My aim is to map the current situation for dance research in the Czech Republic. I decided to examine the problematics of research from a contemporary point of view, rather than dwelling too much in the past or comparing the situation then and now, because there are many aspects that are simply incomparable. In the last three decades, the Czech Republic has made huge changes which affect today's infrastructure systems in the arts. In terms of art research, there have recently been several years of stagnation, years of destructuralisation, periods of cutting budgets and then growing them again. Tellingly, in the Czech Republic, there have been 18 Ministers of Culture in the 33 years since the revolution of 1989. Each Minister changed the inherited culture policy or rather ignored it. By contrast, there have been only three Ministers for Research and Development during this period: one from 2002–2004, one during 2014–2017, and one from 2021. In the intervening years, this post was left unfilled. These three have always been the ministers without portfolio (minister sans portefeuille). The last was appointed just at the end of 2021.

When looking for hard data to analyse the financial flows into art research, it is almost impossible to gather relevant information from the institutions prior to the internet period. Widespread digitization documents the last 15 years. Thus, I could follow and research progress and compare institutions by relying on the information published on the respective institutional webpages from the time this was mandated by the government.

In 2017, the situation stabilised thanks to a new methodology that slowly began to be applied for evaluation of the research organisations. I will share the new system of registration, funding, and evaluation with you: this last year is the fifth that the methodology was due to be implemented. Decision-making methods for influencing and directing research on dance as well as practices for promoting and popularising dance research will be visible from now on, or hopefully in the immediate future.

Research organisations and government strategy

Research as such is of course included in state strategies. It is under the rubric of the government itself, in the Section for Science, Research and Innovation at the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic and is headed by the Minister of Science, appointed in December 2021 after five years without anyone in the position.

Perhaps thanks to the fact that the Czech Republic held the presidency of the Council of the European Union as of July 2022, the Government of the Czech Republic published its programme statement. Unlike in previous periods, it has a separate chapter on science and research, which is one of the clear priorities of this government. The Government Declaration for Science, Research and Innovation is based on five pillars, 1. Modern, Coordinated and Transparent Management System, 2. Human Resources, 3. Financing Research, Development, and Innovation, 4. Technology Transfer,

5. **Publicity of Science and Research.** The statement says that The Czech Republic must aspire to become a European leader in excellence, science, research and innovation across the whole spectrum of disciplines. Through science and research, we should strengthen critical thinking and the ability to understand the world in a broader context and contribute to a shared perception of our own reality (Programové prohlášení vlády 2022).

Presently we recognize 48 research institutions in the Czech Republic. These can be divided into three segments: Institutes of Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS), Departmental Research Organisations, and Universities. Institutions carrying out research and development are financed from multiple sources, with the targeted component of support in 2019 forming the predominant share of overall support for nearly all groups of beneficiaries (Research, Development and Innovation Council 2020:21). The greatest quantity of institutional support for long-term conceptual development of research organisations in the Czech Republic is provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MEYS) and the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS). Targeted support from other ministries is also successfully utilised by universities, and by entities operated by those ministries.

In terms of areas, targeted support in the Czech Republic goes primarily into the following sectors: Industry (CZK 4.47 billion); Social Sciences and Humanities (CZK 1.63 billion); Life Sciences (CZK 1.51 billion); and Medical Science (CZK 1.47 billion). The high level of support drawn by the field Art, Architecture, and Cultural Heritage demonstrates that certain fields are preferred for the focus of the programme (history, cultural heritage, and architecture) within this field group (Research, Development and Innovation Council 2020: 59). Dance is not included among the performing arts studies (although music, theatre and dramaturgy are specifically noted). We may accept this fact as "normal", but it is alarming from the perspective of dance researchers.

Evaluation methodology M17+

It is very difficult to set "traditional" bibliometric indicators for the Humanities group (we can see a lack of observation in the Art field). When comparing citation impact among various fields, it is necessary to take into account whether relevant WoS indexed journals are published in the specific field and whether the citations come from Czech journals or from abroad.

Since 2017 a change in the system for evaluation of research organisations has been underway consisting in a shift away from measuring quantity to an assessment of the quality and impact of research and development. Well, that sounds good for the humanities, right? All the research organisations are evaluated by five modules: M1 Quality of Selected Results / M2 Research Performance / M3 Social Relevance / M4 Viability / M5 Strategy and policies. According to these five modules the organisations are classified as having a status A, B, C or D. The allocated funds will be split into two segments: (a) a stabilisation segment (the base); and (b) a motivation segment (increment). The motivation segment of funding will be distributed according to evaluation results for the four groups: A, B, C, and D, with a yearly increase from (4.5% up to 10%).

Module 3 is particularly important for the Research Organisations (ROs) conducting research in humanities, that lack good citation results in research journals. It is implemented thanks to the Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research, which states that:

The social relevance criterion will be applied to applied research results, which are of immediate importance to economy, state and public administration, and culture policies. The rate of positive impacts and their results on society and communities are also evaluated in this module as well as the indirect impacts that include the relevance and current needs for research focus; the methods proposed and applied; and the social significance of a particular research project, transferring knowledge to non-academic

entities, impacts of quality of life, benefits for building national and culture identity. (Úřad vlády České republiky 2018:15)

Additional parameters include involvement of students in research; international and national awards or recognition for research excellence; mobility of researchers between ROs and the users of research results; the significance of research organisations to regional development; and popularisation and feedback. According to the government analysis of the existing state of Research, Development and Innovation published in 2019, two of the biggest problems are the weak focus on benefits for society and the low level of Research and Development application in innovations (Research, Development and Innovation Council 2020:63).

Dance research in the Czech Academy of Science

Now let us look at the existing dance research level inside the system of research organisations. And we begin with the largest, the Czech Academy of Sciences, the most well-funded research organisation with its own specific forms of funding, evaluation, and processes. Dance research can be found in the Department of Ethnomusicology and Ethnochoreology which is a part of the Institute of Ethnology under the Czech Academy of Science. It lies in the hands of Doc. Daniela Stavělová, CSc., a key academic researcher on Czech ethnochoreology and dance anthropology, who also encourages other academics and students to contribute to research projects of the department.

The history of the Institute of Ethnology goes back to the beginning of the 20th century. As one of the oldest and largest institutions, the approach of the Czech Academy of Sciences is towards research in the humanities that could be considered quite rigid and conservative.

The Institute of Ethnology was evaluated with an A in the evaluation in 2020, and to keep this rating, the researchers must follow strict regulations.

The research agenda of the department covers a broad spectrum of topics – from folkloristic study of records of traditional folk music and dance to the analysis and contextualisation of musical and dance expressions, to qualitative research of contemporary music and dance settings. Ongoing research projects of the department include: Text structure of Czech folk songs from the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries; Folk song and dance of the Czech lands – digital systems for presentation and preservation; Weight and Weightlessness of Folklore: The Folklore Movement of the Second Half of the 20th Century in Czech Lands. The process of submitting a long-term research theme is quite strict in the Academy of Sciences and needs to be discussed throughout the department. Dance issues are therefore usually researched as a case study topic for a more general chosen theme.

The history of the leading peer reviewed *Czech Ethnological Journal / Český lid* (founded in 1891) is also very rich. This journal is published in print and online in open-access format by the Institute of Ethnology. But students of dance are not really aware of its existence and the percentage of articles related to dance is very small.

Dance research in governmental department ROs

There are many governmental department research organisations. I have chosen three which carry out dance research. These are The National Institute of Folk Culture, The National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture, and the Arts and Theatre Institute.

They all belong under the system of the Ministry of Culture, and they all have certain characteristics in common: their main services lie in the management, administration, and organisational practices in the field; research itself represents 2-20% of their budgets; they use both institutional and targeted approaches to the distribution of research projects; they claim some general themes in the long-term institutional research concept into which dance researchers might try to fit their

ideas; and there is usually an additional small budget for targeted projects for either internal or external research support to study strategies in culture or art.

I have found out that in these institutions, more than anywhere else, dance research lies in the hands of the researchers – the topics, result and methods of proclaiming dance theory is up to these individuals. They are usually entrusted with responsibility for the dance field within the institution, and we can say their approaches are very selective according to their personal interests. There is usually just a single dance-focused person in each institution. The employees of these organisations usually work in administration and are involved in a research project in addition to their usual workload. They generally ask other scholars to help them with the research and thus the results tend to be more in the form of monographic books than research study papers.

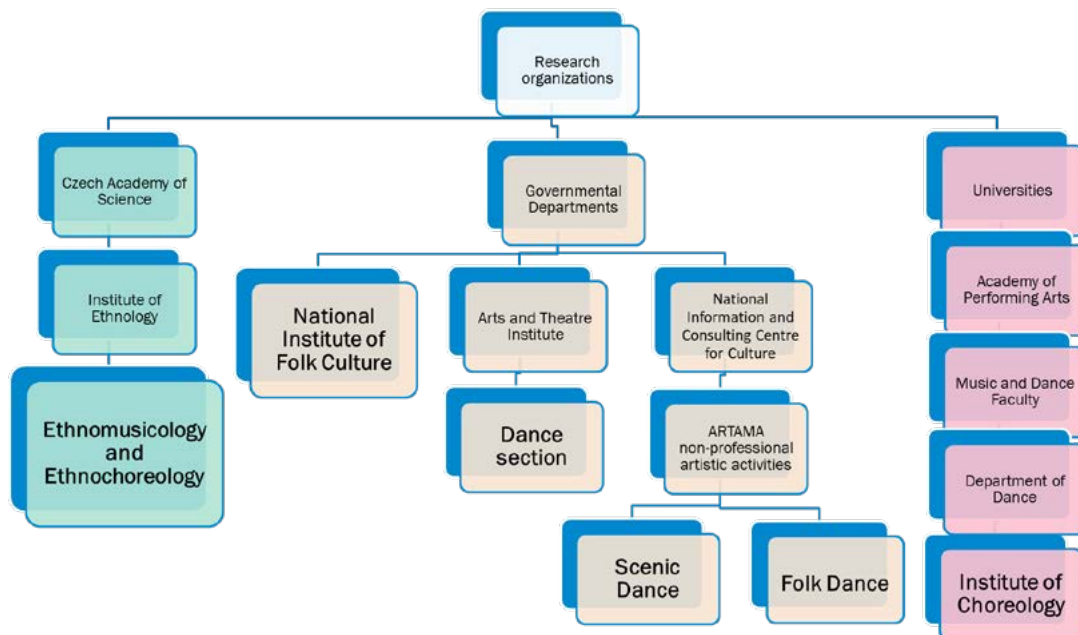


Figure 1. Structure map of culture institutions embracing dance research in Czech Republic.

The National Institute of Folk Culture has been charged with the role of acting as an expert institution; for this reason, it focuses on traditional and folk culture and its safeguarding within the entire Czech Republic. The National Institute of Folk Culture is a research institution founded immediately after the revolution (1990) somewhat continuous with the research in previous regimes. No staff person deals only with dance, but cooperation with the institution on dance topics is possible. Ongoing research projects include: Folk Crafts and Folk Art Production in the Czech Republic – headdresses and hairstyles; Virtual research room for NULK's collections – garments; Folk Handicrafts and Folk Art Production in the Czech Republic – construction of musical instruments; Experimental Centre of Earth Architecture. The institute received a C in the evaluation process, not being able to submit the suggested number of results. They gain substantial visibility by publishing the *Journal of Ethnology / Národopisná revue* (published from 1990 as a descendant of *Ethnological News* (1964–89)), that focuses on ethnological (and related interdisciplinary) issues in social and historical contexts.

The largest institution under the Ministry of Culture is the National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture. The organisation was established in 1991. Their amended founding document formulates their crucial aim as the "support of development of the culture and of public cultural services." In terms of continuity, the organisation is a successor of other institutions (historically the

first being Masaryk's Educational Institute / Masarykův lidově výchovný ústav founded in 1925). The organisation is composed of three departments: The Centre for Information and Statistics on Culture (CIK); Strategy and Methodology in Culture (KaM); and ARTAMA, the department that concentrates on non-professional arts activities consultation and functions as an advisory service for cultural subjects including the agenda of the further education of employees in culture and arts education. There are two sections devoted to dance in ARTAMA – the folk-dance section and the scenic dance section. Yet there is only one full time employee in each section (doc. MgA. Jiří Lössl, MgA. Kateřina Černíčková, Ph.D.). Ongoing research projects include: Support of inter-generational dialogue and the cultural participation of seniors; the Czech amateur theatre database; Living past of Stage Dance – Oral memory database of scenic dance. The National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture was evaluated with a D in 2020 for not being able to submit the suggested number of research results. They do not have their own peer-reviewed journal but used to issue the popular *Journal on Performance Art / Amatérská scéna* (1964–2019) and continue to publish the popular *Dance Education Magazine / Pam Pam* (from 2006).

The third huge and powerful organisation that also deals with dance is the Arts and Theatre Institute. Its research focuses primarily on cultural policy. As a subsidiary organisation of the Ministry of Culture, it responds to contemporary problematics – for example, research on implementing the status of artist into culture policy, an effect of the Covid pandemic.

There is only one person responsible for research in the dance section as a segment of projects within the organisation, Mgr. Jana Návrátová. Her decisions on the research in dance in the frame of the art institute are very selective. She needs to collaborate with other professional dance scholars, organisations, and centres to deliver the projects. Two ongoing research projects consist of: Mapping of the state, structure, conditions, funding and needs of art, and the social status of artists in the Czech Republic of sub-segments in the field of performing arts (dance and movement arts, music, theatre); The Status of Artist (Professional art and Covid-19: current impacts as a challenge for innovation). The Institute received a B in the evaluation process for research organisations. It published a few books but was assessed as not having sufficient research publication activity at the international level. The Czech journal for theatre studies *Theatre Revue / Divadelní revue* was founded in 1989 in the department of Czech Theatre Studies, which is a part of the Arts and Theatre Institute. It is peer reviewed, but they publish dance papers only very exceptionally, and only if its subject is historiography.

Dance research at universities

A third sphere of research can be found in universities. They receive institutional research support, but their role lies primarily in distribution of targeted support among their academics. In general the research topics are decided at the lowest level, with individual researchers applying for support of projects that interest them. It is then up to the faculty committee and university committee to approve the project based on the previous results of the researcher and the development concept of the specific department.

There are many universities that do targeted research on humanities, among which dance can be included, usually as case studies. There are theatre departments in the Faculty of Arts of the three largest universities in the three most populous Czech cities, Charles University in Prague, Masaryk University in Brno, and Palacký University in Olomouc. They do deal with dance studies exceptionally, but not continuously.

The only programme devoted to dance research is situated in Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Music and Dance Faculty. The Academy of Performing Arts was evaluated with a C in the context of all Czech universities, but it is the only institution in the Czech Republic that houses a Dance Department. The Dance Department educates dance teachers and choreographers

as well as future dance researchers. The Dance Department, including its theoretical section, was founded at the same time as the Academy itself, in 1945.

The Institute of Choreology was founded in 1998 to run dance research, but it has never received its own budget or human resources. Without the needed support from the faculty, it is hard to keep research alive. There are few researchers that commit their work to the Institute, but they are paid solely as teachers with the possibility to ask for a specific targeted grant. This they can do freely without the need to fit into a specific theme or designated topic, but it is sometimes easier to collaborate with the projects of other research institutions than to engage in projects by themselves through the Academy. These researchers are primarily graduates of the academy: prof. MgA. Dorota Gremlicová, Ph.D. (head of the Institute of Choreology), prof. MgA. Helena Kazárová, Ph.D., doc. Daniela Stavělová, CSc., me, doc. Mgr. MgA. Lucie Hayashi, Ph.D., MgA. Zuzana Rafajová, Ph.D., and MgA. Mgr. Daniela Machová, Ph.D. There are two ongoing research projects: Economic aspects and commodification of dance art, management and education; and Improvisation as a choreographic, authorial, and creative principle.

There are two peer reviewed research journals run by the Academy of Performing Arts where dance researchers might publish peer reviewed articles. *Arte Acta* was founded in 2018 and it focuses on the artistic research in all the fields of the Academy: drama, film, music, and dance. *Live Music / Živá hudba* was meant to serve as a research journal specialising in musicology and choreology, serving as a space for the publication activities of the music and dance faculty and postgraduate students. Its uniqueness is that articles are welcome from all areas of choreology and ethnochoreology, including historical issues. No other research oriented journal specialised in dance exists in the Czech Republic. It's a shame the word "dance" is not also included in the title of the journal. An even larger shame is that the students in theatre or film studies of the very same Academy usually have no idea about the existence of this journal, as the three faculties each have their own research traditions.

Visibility of dance research

Although the system might look quite rich, the truth is, that there are usually only one or two dance researchers in each of the institutions in the chart above. The total number of researchers is very low, they all know each other and collaborate on various projects together. Their personal relationships can positively or negatively affect the results of dance research in the Czech Republic. A further problem is that, in some of the cooperative projects, only one institution can register the result. That is usually the institution with the best management support at its upper administrative levels and strongest PR record, typically gained through other activities. This institution, the one that already tends to be most visible, thus gains the social credit and relevance, the social recognition mentioned above.

Although there are quite a few peer-reviewed research journals where dance researchers can publish, there are also quite strict parameters on publishing policy and paper selection, so a scholar might need to wait for more than a year for a publication response. As noted above, there isn't a single publication with the word "dance" in its name. It thus can seem as if there is no professional dance research being undertaken in the Czech Republic, as it is literally not "visible" on that level.

A number of popular dance magazines exist(ed), but these do not publish peer reviewed papers. *Taneční listy* covered all dance fields over the past 40 years 1963–2003; *Pam Pam*, from 2001, deals with amateur dance education; *Taneční zóna*, from 1997 onwards, focused on contemporary dance; *Taneční aktuality*, from 2006 to the present, publishes mainly as an online magazine with an annual printed Special Edition. The last two are now supported by annual grants from the Ministry of Culture. The readers of these magazines – dancers, dance students and teachers,

choreographers, and the dance performance public, request greater theoretical approaches, reflection, and articles. Usually, they are unaware of the existence of the research journals mentioned, or the dance research content within them. This may be not surprising, because online searches for "dance" will not include the abovementioned research journals in the results.

Dance research in the Czech Republic is lacking in visibility and popularisation which would enable an increase in social relevance and thus generate funding. This conclusion matches the statements of the evaluation committee for institutionalised dance research, which should bear responsibility for this. It is clear that the more visible dance research becomes, the more relevance, credibility, and funding would accrue to the field. Together with the right management support, this can lead to more motivated researchers, that in turn could help strengthen more visible research.

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TOWARDS A MULTIMEDIA CHOREOMUSICOLOGY: EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF DIGITAL ANIMATION AS A TOOL IN SOUND-MOVEMENT RESEARCH DISSEMINATION

While the use of notation has been problematised by some, the facts remains that writing about music and dance is in itself "a translative act" (Wong 2019). I discuss my early attempts at circumventing the challenges posed by the limits of written language and the static nature of the page by using digital animation techniques. Using a scrolling notation synched to video examples, this system aims to highlight certain sound-movement interrelationships which I believe to be inherent in the performance of participatory Irish set dancing.

Keywords: (ethno)choreomusicology, digital animation, notation, set dancing, Ireland

Background

The impetus to develop this notation system arose during the dissemination phase of an ongoing (ethno)choreomusicological study of the participatory set dancing traditions of Cork, Kerry and West Limerick in Ireland, when I began to think about ways of sharing my observations on the commonalities evident in the performance of the music and dance in these contexts. In Irish traditional music circles, these regions are most renowned for their unique polka and slide repertoires and the *sets* that these tune types are played to accompany.¹ Irish sets evolved during the latter third of the 19th century when itinerant dance masters adapted and localised the quadrille form sweeping across Europe (using the basic framing of four couples dancing 4–6 *contradances*) by incorporating local steps, music and movements. In this period, regional variations developed in the dancing style, playing style, repertoire, and tempo of these sets. As the *contradances* – or "figures" or "parts" as they are known colloquially in Ireland – that make up a set are danced to music in simple or compound time, reels, polkas, hornpipes (simple) and jigs and slides (compound) are used depending on the individual set and the region in which it is danced (Brennan 1999:23–27; see also Vallely 2011:193–198). In the Newmarket region of Cork in the early 20th century for example, a typical polka set was comprised of four polka figures with the addition of a slide, hornpipe and a reel figure, depending on the dancers (Lynch 1991:155). This account was collected from local dancer, Jer McAuliffe:

As a general rule around here they'd nearly always use a hornpipe to finish up a set. It all depends on the people that's dancing. If they wanted a slide, that was it. They always danced a slide with the old polka. On a cold frosty night you'd play a slide, a hornpipe, and a reel before you'd be finished with them. (Lynch 1991:155)

Newmarket is part of a larger geographic region known as Sliabh Luachra. Roughly translating as Rushy Mountain, this is a region that straddles the borderlands of Cork, Kerry and Limerick and is the area within these counties most associated with polkas and slides. Originating from an interest shown by prominent collectors in a handful of local musicians from the mid-20th century onwards, this was fuelled further by the release of a number of highly successful commercial recordings from the 1960s onwards (Ward 1976) and the set dancing revival of the 1980s (Vallely 2011:195). In this time period in particular, the music was lauded for its characteristic 'lift,' that is, its danceability, which was attributed in part to its functional connection to set dancing, a connection which, aside from a few isolated pockets, had largely eroded by that time in the country as a

whole (Randles 2022:106–110). The instrumental music of the aforementioned musicians, namely fiddler Pádraig O’Keeffe (1887–1963) and two of his pupils, Julia Clifford (1914–1997) and Denis Murphy (1910–1974), has been examined by a number of authors who have posited the ways in which elements such as phrasing, bowing technique and ornamentation placement contribute to this infectious danceability particularly as evidenced on commercial recordings (Cranitch 2006). However, aside from rightly situating this music in the contexts of how it was regularly performed and embodied by these musicians, the same analytical approach had yet to be applied to dancing. Such a recognition has led to the undertaking of a historical ethnochoreomusicological study of these participatory oral art forms (Quigley and Mæland 2020; McCollum and Hebert 2014), wherein this infectious danceability, whether perceived in the musicking and/or dancing body, is viewed as a manifestation of a shared "basic process of creation and perception", in which "visible, kinetic and sonic movements overlap" (Mashino and Seye 2021:25–26).

The relevance of this sound-movement approach becomes most apparent when considering the sociocultural realities of the inhabitants of Sliabh Luachra in the early to mid-20th century (this can be taken as broadly representative of other rural communities within the larger Cork/Kerry/West Limerick region at the time). The majority of these inhabitants would have lived on self-sufficient smallholdings. Because everyday transport was limited to walking for the most part, socialising was confined to the local community – in many instances the five or ten homesteads based within a 2km radius. While crossroad dances – and later dance halls – were common, house dances were commonplace. As well as more formal occasions such as funerals or wedding celebrations, the potential for a spontaneous half-set (only two couples) or a buck-set (all-male couples) to break out when visiting a neighbouring house was always present. As a consequence, having a household member or close neighbour with a functional repertoire of tunes – either lilted or played – wasn’t out of the ordinary. All this to say that, from a young age, the inhabitants of this region regularly experienced and embodied participatory music and dance as an interrelated whole (Herlihy 2004).

Choreomusical analysis

In undertaking this study, a number of methodologies were employed, the findings of which influenced the notation system discussed here. While it is beyond the scope of the paper to detail this process in full, it is relevant to synthesise the central conclusions drawn from the analysis of the music-dance interrelationship.² Figure 1, illustration A, shows the basic melodic outline of the first part of a polka and slide and how these temporally relate to the basic 'three step' used in set dancing. This is known as a three step since the dancer dances for three beats – beginning on their lead foot – before shifting their weight (represented by the curved line in the diagram) onto their opposite foot for the next three steps. When taught, this sequence is often vocalised as "1, 2, 3 hop, 1, 2, 3, hop". Figure 1, illustration B, shows what I have called an 'empty structure' elsewhere (Kearney 2022a), which attempts to highlight what I believe to be an underlying rhythmic framework common to the performance of polkas (simple) and slides (compound) in participatory set dancing contexts. In this diagram, the outer lines represent the temporal outline of the music while the inner lines attempt the same for the dance. Accent markings are used to highlight areas of emphasis which I believe to be present in the music and which it is posited evolved from the functional requirement of syncopation to engender entrainment and the interplay between music and dance in these participatory oral contexts. Taking the polka as an example, it can be seen that the accent markings create a grouping of 3 + 3 + 2. This is a rhythmic framing that forms the basis of music genres across many different cultures.³ Since the second group of three begins on an offbeat, it naturally wants to fall onto the next strong beat. When viewed in relation to the steps, this starting point aligns with where the dancer hops to shift their weight,⁴ falling onto their opposite foot to

begin the second half of the step cycle. Lastly, the final grouping of two notes forms a cadence point. On the fourth repetition of a cycle, this cadence point is often marked by a long note in the music and a battering step in the dance. 'Battering' is the name giving to a decorative step performed when a dancer raises their lead foot and stamps it on the ground, producing a percussive resonance (Lynch 1989:11). Though improvised, it is usually performed in one of three places within the cycle, the other two being the first note of a new sequence within a figure and the final note of the second grouping of 3. In isolation, the reasoning for the latter placement might not seem obvious (aside from the fact that it is one of the locations where a dancer would land on their lead foot anyway). However, considering this placement in the sound-movement relationship as a whole, it can be seen that this becomes an anticipation of the cadence point. This anticipation is also often mirrored in the musical performance, either by a repetition of pitch inherent in the composition of the tune itself (see polka in figure 1, illustration A), or by adding emphasis to this note and the following cadence point note.

Figure 1 consists of two parts, A and B. Part A shows two musical staves. The first staff is labeled 'Polka' and is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). The second staff is labeled 'Slide' and is in 12/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). Both staves in A have 'etc.' written at the end. Part B shows the 'empty structure' of the Polka melody on three staves. The first staff has notes G4, A4, B4, A4-G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The second staff has notes G4, A4, B4, A4-G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The third staff has notes G4, A4, B4, A4-G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Below the notes are foot placement notations: L(B), O, L, O, L(B), O(B). A legend at the bottom reads: L = Lead Foot O=Opposite Foot (B) = Battering Step.

Figure 1. Polka: slide steps and empty structure.

Digital animation as dissemination tool

While the notation used in the empty structure is effective, I believe it suffers from a number of drawbacks. Even for those skilled in reading western music notation, the tempos at which set dancing is performed mean that it can be hard to follow notated video or audio examples – especially without some prior knowledge of the dancing. Following from this is the broader question of intended audience; who is this notation for? Although it cannot be denied that ethnomusicologists and ethnochoreologists will form a large percentage of this cohort, there is a hope that this work will equally be of interest to practitioners and enthusiasts who might not be trained in conventional notation systems (Wong 2019). With this in mind, the remainder of this paper is dedicated to outlining the ways in which I have tried to surmount these obstacles, inspired in part by the applied turn in contemporary scholarship and the ways in which music and music education YouTubers add scrolling notation to their videos.⁵ In this sense, each evolution of the notation shares a common trait, in that it is placed directly under a video example, while a scrolling bar is synched temporally, following the performance as it unfolds.

In the earliest attempt at this method, "Scrolling Notation Version 1" (Kearney 2022b),⁶ the conventions of the 'empty structure' example are maintained within the static notation, while red circles highlight the underlying rhythmic framing. Although these additions are helpful, understanding this system still requires a basic knowledge of western notation. Figure 2 shows some subsequent attempts at getting around this issue, which led to the creation of

the notation in its current form. Since the scrolling bar moves in synch with the performance, the static elements of the notation no longer need to convey rhythm or duration; consequently, the first alteration made was to strip away any unnecessary information, with only the note heads, necessary staves and bar lines remaining. The next iteration aimed to take advantage of the potential of using different colours (an extra line was also added here to represent pulse). In representing the steps for example, dark blue was used to signify the dancer's lead foot, while a lighter blue represented the opposite foot. While this seemed beneficial in theory, I felt that the result was visually overwhelming⁷ and so reverted to the stripped back static element which could then be overlaid with a scrolling bar. One improvement was kept from this step however, which was the decision to reverse the order of parts, so that the steps would be on the top staff (nearest the dancer's feet), the music in the middle, and the pulse on the bottom.⁸

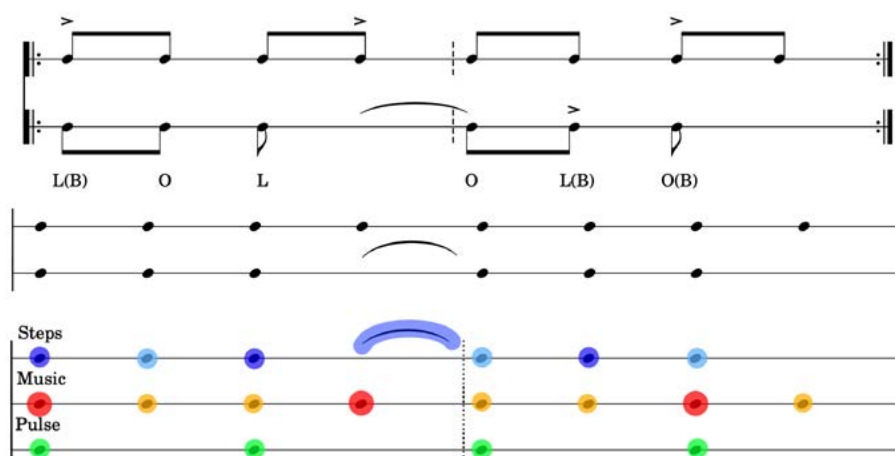


Figure 2. Notation evolution.

Animation process

In order to add the scrolling bar and different colour options, an animation technique known as 'keyframing' was used. Figure 3 shows a screenshot of this process within iMovie – Apple's inbuilt movie editing software. Firstly, the static element of the notation is attached underneath the video example by cropping and using the 'picture in picture' option. This then becomes a template onto which the scrolling graphics are added. The graphics themselves are PNG files which are semi-transparent so that the note heads remain visible even when passed over. Using keyframing, the movement of these graphics is then plotted onto the static notation at points which correspond temporally with the performance example on video. In order to make this plotting as accurate as possible, I recorded an audio track of myself tapping out the underlying motor rhythm of the tune being performed, onto a desk, which produced very definite transients that could then be used as reference points. As a slide is performed in this example, the motor rhythm produced is a long/short, crotchet-quaver pattern. This means that it takes the scrolling bar longer to travel from step 1 to 2 than from step 2 to 3 and so on, and so a visible rocking type motion is produced in the scrolling graphic, which I argue is quite representative of the feel of slides in performance. Because iMovie is a free software, it has its limitations, and so this version then had to be rendered, essentially producing a new template for the graphics highlighting the rhythmic framing to be placed upon.

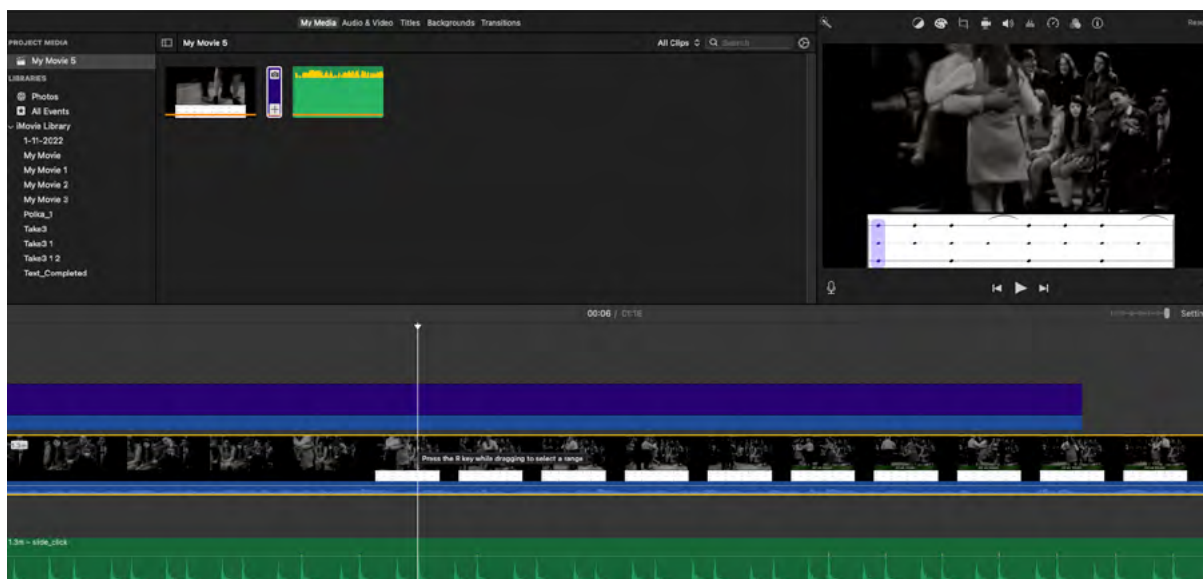


Figure 3. iMovie workflow.

Further dissemination possibilities

Aside from the visual advantages afforded by this method, it also allows content to be easily uploaded onto video sharing platforms such as YouTube (as is the case with the material referenced in this paper). Not only does this open up new avenues of access, it also means that the viewer can take advantage of the option to change playback speed – an inbuilt feature of these platforms. This is especially helpful since polkas and slides are danced at tempos upwards of 140 beats per minute. Slowing these examples down to 0.75 or even 0.5 speed gives the viewer a better opportunity to engage with the material at more approachable tempos. Following the theme of dissemination strategies, the other advantage of this method is that by its nature, it allows for the production of short-form content for apps such as TikTok and Instagram. Whatever one's personal opinion on such apps might be, it cannot be denied that these platforms are the ones which younger generations engage with the most, so having a presence on them maximises the potential for engagement. This is particularly relevant for forms such as the participatory set dancing as set out in this paper, which could be considered as an example of endangered cultural heritage.⁹

Endnotes

- 1 Originally an abbreviation of 'a set of quadrilles'. Not to be confused in this instance with a 'set' of tunes which is the name given to an arrangement of two or more tunes in performance (Vallely 2016:611).
- 2 A more detailed discussion of this process can be found in a previous conference paper (Kearney 2022a).
- 3 In the literature, this is most associated with Afro-Cuban music where it is known as a tresillo pattern. It forms the basis of *Baião* – a Brazilian genre – and is commonly heard in popular music (Kearney 2022a).
- 4 It should be noted that this is subtle. In the Sliabh Luachra style in particular, dancers glide along the floor.
- 5 For example of this 'YouTube style' see EMCproductions 2020.
- 6 An example of this style as applied to a polka figure can be seen at <https://youtu.be/WDx89Cg7G70> (Kearney 2022b). The performers in this example are from West Kerry and so have a more aggressive dancing and

battering style. For a playlist containing all iterations discussed in this paper, see <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1pradCnPLTIHzws2QEp0tTVqHOq7NNrI>.

- 7 See <https://youtu.be/fz1NEEmtyfg> (Kearney 2022c).
- 8 The dancers here are from Cúil Aodha in County Cork and so have a difference style again. In this example they are dancing a half-set <https://youtu.be/vKznIBa5_P8> (Kearney 2022d).
- 9 The potential of these platforms in sustaining 'traditional expressive practices' from an applied ethnomusicological perspective is currently being examined by a European Research Council funded project (CORDIS 2022).

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FOLK DANCE IN THE CITY: THE FOLKLOVE COMMUNITY

Cities offer a great number of diverse cultural events. My doctoral dissertation research, which is still underway, revolves around selected dance events which are predominantly participatory. My research sample consists of dance houses, dance clubs with dulcimer, and folklore aerobic, the project being conducted in three Czech and Slovak cities, Prague, Brno and Bratislava. My objective is to explore why folk dance is practised in cities and what meaning it carries. At the same time, my research brings me closer to communities of active participants of folklore activities.

Keywords: folk dance, participation, folklore activities, community

Introduction

Towns and cities offer a diverse selection of dance clubs, courses and events, with something for everyone: lovers of tango, swing enthusiasts as well as Latin American dance fans. The varied choice also includes events with elements of folk culture, especially music and dance. My observations suggest that folk dance¹ has come to occupy a stable position in contemporary urban society. This is evidenced not only by the wide selection of such events, but also by their increasing regularity and the great number of participants they attract.

These observations led me to formulate my current research topic, which I have now been pursuing for two years in my doctoral studies. My research focuses on current forms of folk dance in selected towns and cities, using the examples of a certain range of folklore activities: dance houses, dance clubs with dulcimer, and folklore aerobic.² Each of these activities has a different scenario and attracts a different audience for a different purpose. What the three activities have in common is their participatory nature, with members of the audience being direct participants rather than passive viewers. It was the participatory dimension of these events that gave me motivation for starting my research.³

Given the wide spectrum of cultural enterprises offered by cities on the one hand, and the fast-paced urban lifestyle on the other, people's selection of leisure pursuits appears to be an attractive research issue. The topic in hand raises more than one research question. I am interested in the motivations of the organizers as well as performers of these activities. Where does the performers' participation competence come from? Why is folk dance practised in towns and cities and what meaning does it have? What is the relationship between the event under research and the participants' personal lives?

My primary research methods comprise participant observation and collection of audio-visual material. More data is gained through semi-structured interviews with pre-selected respondents as well as informal, spontaneous conversations held during my field observation. Further invaluable data comes from the reports made during field work (brief notes taken on-site, and field logbooks). Moreover, interesting insights can be made using the autoethnographic approach, with the researchers' reflections of their own actions, interactions, feelings and other aspects.

Reflexivity as a key component of research

Essential components of research include the researcher's perception of their own position, their expertise in the field and topic under research, as well as subjectivity, which has a significant impact on data interpretation. The major advantage that I have been able to benefit from is my own experience as an active performer and participant in the folklore movement; my practical experience

with folk dance spans almost two decades, resulting in substantial dance competence. Despite not being familiar with the dance repertory in Moravian regions, I am able to observe dance directly at the site of the event and join the performance easily. Another advantage comes from my familiarity with my research locations. Having spent time in Prague and Bratislava prior to the beginning of my project, I had a good awareness of the folklore activities taking place in these cities. Brno, on the other hand, was a new location for me, but frequent visits helped me become familiar relatively quickly. Despite being considered an insider in most parts of my research, I know when and how to maintain adequate distance and detachment.

Doing research in cities

My research has been restricted to cities, where folk dance – or elements of folk music and dance culture – occur outside their original, i.e. rural environment. The three cities selected for research, Prague, Brno and Bratislava, belonged, until 1993 to the former country known as Czechoslovakia. The interesting fact is that the three regions associated with the cities (Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia) have seen different trends in the folklore movement. Therefore, each research location reveals a different way of understanding and manipulating folk dance, and a different form of cultural migration, appropriation and selectivity. My observations so far suggest that the folklore movement has a very strong and lively presence in the cities under research (its viability having been tested by, among other things, the global Covid-19 pandemic), which was one of the decisive factors in the selection of research locations.

Current forms of folk dance in cities

My research sample consists of three events, namely dance houses, dance clubs with dulcimer, and folklore aerobic. Each of the three activities has a different content, story and function. The one aspect they share – and one which is the most relevant for my research – is active participation in dance. Participants are directly involved in the activity and are not necessarily recruited from among members of folklore ensembles and professional dancers; on the contrary, they can be amateurs and members of the general public. It is the shift from the presentational to the participatory that is the most pertinent characteristics of folklore activities taking place in contemporary cities.

The research sample does not include activities by folklore ensembles (rehearsals and performances) and folk dance in academic contexts. This is because, as much as these activities may be classified as forms of folk dance practised in urban contexts, they would make my research sample too broad. Furthermore, my intention was to focus on events where participation does not have to result from membership in folklore ensembles or studies-related duties. Current trends appear to favour dance participation, which is closely related to the return of folk dances from the stage back to people. This is an opportunity offered by the first folklore activity in my research sample, the dance house.

Dance house

The concept of dance houses (*tancház* in Hungarian)⁴ originated in Hungary and dates back to the 1970s; the beginning of the 2000s saw the concept take root in Poland, Slovakia and Czech (Ambrózová 2005: 40). Recently, I have found dance houses to be a regular feature in the cultural landscapes of Slovakia (Košice and Bratislava in particular) as well as Bohemia and Moravia (Brno, Prague). It is interesting to note that the initiative behind the organization of dance houses in Brno and Prague has come from Slovak folklore ensembles based in Bohemia and Moravia.

The dance houses found in my research locations are composed of two (rarely three) parts. First, there is the dance lesson, which provides training in a specific folk dance, the goal being to give instruction about the structure of the dance according to regional rules, basic dance motifs

and how the motifs are combined together. Next, a typical dance house offers dance sessions with no fixed programme, with participants invited to dance pieces of their own choice. By "ordering" the band to play a particular song, dancers – mostly male, rarely female – make it clear which dance is to be danced. This is a clear example of direct interaction between dancers and musicians. A third item on the agenda of a dance house may be diverse cultural activities such as singing lessons and concerts. The rationale behind the concept of dance houses is to eliminate the barrier between the stage and the audience, allowing participants a first-hand experience of folk dance.⁵

Dance clubs with dulcimer

Dance clubs with dulcimer are the longest-established of the three folklore activities in my research sample. These clubs have been an inseparable part of the Circle of Moravian Slovaks in Prague, which gradually came into existence in the late 19th century (Vinkler 1996). The clubs are organized by folklore groups (circles or clubs) based in cities as well as small communities. My research is restricted to club meetings taking place in the three cities specified above. They are informal events which aim at providing regular opportunities for meeting for active members as well as friends supporting the club. There is dancing with no fixed programme throughout the evening, the sequence of dance subtypes being determined by participants themselves through their singing and interaction with the cimbalom band (in a similar way to the second part of the dance house). Dancing and singing are essential but of primary importance here is the social aspect, i.e. the very meeting and informal talks among friends. In addition, these events include birthday celebrations, and reports on the club's activities, past and future. Furthermore, dance clubs with dulcimer are one of the few events that draw huge numbers of participants from among the elderly.

Folklore aerobic

By contrast, folklore aerobic (*Folk it, Folky-polky*) is the most recent of the three activities investigated, its origin dating back to the second half of the 2010s. The author of the concept is Stanislav Marišler, a dance teacher, choreographer and artistic director of the Slovak National Folklore Ensemble (SĽUK). Marišler's concept is inspired by Zumba, an aerobic form of exercise that uses various styles of Latin-American dance (Rádiožurnál 2017). *Folky-polky*, also known as *Folk it*, is a fusion of folk dance and aerobics, where dynamic folk dance elements blend with aerobic movement to the accompaniment of catchy folk tunes. The major aspect that distinguishes the folklore activities discussed above from folklore aerobics is that the latter is a group exercise where participation is possible without having a dance partner, making this activity accessible to a specific audience.

Who are "folklorists"?

Since the very beginning of my research, I have been confronted with communities of "folklorists". Academically speaking, the term folklorist is used to refer to a scholar affiliated with the field of folklore studies. The present study, however, approaches the term folklorists from the emic perspective, with the term denoting participants in folklore activities. Ensemble membership is not a precondition here; on the contrary, participants can include folk culture fans and other such groups.

My participant observations, informal talks and follow-up research interviews have led me to believe that folklorists self-identify as a community. Modern-day communities are primarily characterized by a grouping based on shared hobbies and interests. Another important characteristic feature of communities is identification based on national affiliation (Prague-based communities may identify, among others, as Hungarians, Slovaks and Ruthenians) or regional affiliation (Moravian Slovakia, Moravian Wallachia and other regions).

Folklove communities

The data obtained suggests that the participants tend to understand the folklore activities discussed above – and their own participation in these activities – to be a way of "making the past present" and returning to their roots and traditions. Their membership in folklorist communities may manifest itself in their lifestyles (fashion, music genre preferences, life values). A further finding of research interest is the process whereby traditional culture (or individual selected elements) may prompt the formation of new communities. A denomination of some relevance to these communities is *folklove community*, introduced by the ethnologist and folklorist Ermis Lafazanovski (1996). Lafazanovski understands the *folklove* approach as a way in which community members can express their identity in the modern world. His term denotes "active engagement in traditional folk culture as a hobby, with most cases showing strong emotional involvement in activities associated with learning, protecting, developing and presenting diverse expressions of traditional culture" (Hlôšková 2013:414). Folklove is a specific community which can serve as a symbolic escape from contemporary society, at the same time bringing into contemporary culture values rooted in traditional folk culture. Its other functions are those of socialization and integration (Slušná and Chomová 2015:22).

Summary

The objective of this paper is to outline my research topic, contemporary research and findings reported until now. It is my hope that my doctoral dissertation will allow more detailed insights into the communities and bring answers to most of the questions raised above.

Acknowledgment

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Endnotes

- 1 What follows is a brief explanation of my own use of the term folk dance. In the present paper, I understand folk dance as dance originating from a rural environment and associated with pre-industrial society. Furthermore, I subscribe to the definition of folk dance given by Daniela Stavělová: "However, folk dance may also include a dance which is part of social life no matter what its historical origin, and can be characterized primarily as non-stage, non-professional performance, with a strong degree of spontaneity growing out of the performer. Given the fact that Czech has no other relevant term to characterize different historical layers – unlike the English dichotomy popular dance vs. folk dance – folk dance [literal translation of lidový tanec] will invariably have emblematic meaning to some extent, its origin being related to the process of giving names to phenomena of traditional culture, which received utmost attention primarily during the 19th century national movement." (Stavělová 2014:583, my translation)
- 2 My other detailed exploration of this topic is in a study "Ludový tanec, mesto a životný štýl (Na príklade Prahy, Brna a Bratislavy) [Folk dance, city, and lifestyle (using an example of Prague, Brno and Bratislava)]." *Národopisná revue* 1:18–32. Strážnice: Národní ústav lidové kultury.
- 3 My observations suggest that over at least the last decade, the folklore movement has seen a significant shift from the presentational to the participatory; the categorization of presentational vs. participatory dances was proposed by Andriy Nahachewsky (1995).
- 4 The original term originated in Transylvania, denoting a venue where people would get together to dance (Pesovár 1982:176–177).
- 5 The "movement for authentic folklore" in Slovakia is discussed, among other authors, by Joseph Grim Feinberg in his *The Paradox of Authenticity: Folklore Performance in Post-communist Slovakia* (2018).

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THE INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE REPERTOIRE: LABELED COMMODITIES AND THE MYTH OF VILLAGE SOURCES

The repertoire of the international recreational folk dance community contains a vast number of folk dances, most of which have evolved into commodities, identified through a label that often includes a country and 'village' as source. Due to processes of transmission and transformation, in which different actors play a role, the belief in a village source appears largely a myth. The recent creation of 'fantasy' dances shows how the repertoire is diverging from living folk dance practices.

Keywords: international recreational folk dance, transformation, labels, commodities

Introduction

International recreational folk dancing started over a century ago. The history of international recreational folk dancing is not the topic of this paper and I refer to the existing literature. By using the word 'folk dance' participants in this international recreational folk dance community (IRFDC) usually mean to acknowledge the traditional origins of the dances. They often ask the teachers questions like: "from which village is this dance?" The idea of the dances being 'traditional' is important and attractive to many in the IRFDC (Olson 2015).

When analyzing the dance repertoire of the IRFDC it appears the term 'traditional' is problematic. It is often not easy to identify a clear source of a dance. The path along which the dances end up in the IRFDC consists of several steps of transmission and transformation, in which a diverse group of 'agents' and their personal choices play a large role. Nevertheless, many IRFDC participants still believe they are doing 'traditional' folk dances. In this paper I will research the origin of this belief and whether it is justified.

I have been involved in the IRFDC for more than four decades. I took folk dance classes with many teachers and taught classes in many different countries. I assembled a collection of music, notations, literature, and videos that covers a large part of the IRFDC repertoire. I became personally connected to many IRFDC teachers from different countries, with whom I collaborated and interviewed. I also researched folk dance non-professionally during my travels. The ideas presented in this paper are the result of all my experiences and an analysis of the information I collected over the years. Methodologically my research has been mainly empirical as a researcher-participant in the IRFDC. For a related study subject, see Green (2017) and for a recent, American-centered, discussion on similar issues see "Folkdance footnotes" (2022).

The international recreational folk dance community

In this paper I focus on IRFDC groups in North America, Western Europe, Israel, parts of Asia, Australia, and Brazil. Similar groups exist in some other countries as well, but I have less information on them. I use the word international to indicate that the dance repertoire relates to traditions from more than one (usually many) different countries, nations,¹ peoples. (For the fact that IRFDC groups exist in many countries I will use the term 'global'²). I use the word recreational to indicate groups who dance just for fun, as a hobby, in leisure time, as affinity groups.³ The level of organization of such groups may range from highly structured, regularly practicing groups with a fixed membership, to more loosely organized and irregular get-togethers with highly variable

participant attendance. Some groups have permanent, sometimes trained (semi-professional) teachers leading weekly classes, while others do without regular teachers and thrive on irregular invitations of external teachers to lead specialized workshops.

The IRFDC repertoire

Participating as a dancer and teacher in the global IRFDC for over four decades, I have become well acquainted with its repertoire. Most of these folk dances⁴ relate to Central European, Eastern European, and Southeastern European (Balkan) regions, Israel, and, to a lesser extent, some Middle Eastern regions, and Western, Northern, and Southwestern European regions. Although dances from other regions do exist in the IRFDC, we will focus here on the regions above, with emphasis on Eastern Europe and the Balkans (for which my experiences are most extensive).

The current IRFDC repertoire has evolved over about a century but increased significantly, especially in the recent three decades. I estimate it currently consists of thousands of dances. Despite the large number of new dances being added almost every year, many dances that were introduced in the early days are still popular. Many groups keep lists (often posted on the internet) of all the dances they do. Some teachers travel globally to teach their dances (see for example the lineup of guest teachers at the Stockton Folk Dance Camp <http://www.folkdancecamp.org/>). A large common repertoire among groups worldwide is the result, which is one of the main reasons the IRFDC may effectively be seen as 'one global community'.

Typically, in the IRFDC, the focus is to a very large extent on steps, step patterns, and movements of the legs and feet, with much less attention to other body parts. Also, a large part of the IRFDC focusses on group dances performed in circles or lines holding hands. Independent of the technical level (easy or complicated), for newcomers or outsiders without experience, it is not easy (often impossible) to join in the dancing of an IRFDC group, and teaching is mandatory to obtain a sufficient level of proficiency. Dancing in the IRFDC often comes down to errorless copying of the set dance patterns. Being able to perform a dance flawlessly is an important goal, turning the participant into a good and knowledgeable dancer and at the same time fulfilling the needs of physical and social entertainment.

Folk dances as labeled commodities

Most dances in the IRFDC repertoire are regarded (by IRFDC participants) as single, individual dance pieces, with a unique name and a set/fixed, clearly prescribed, and 'unchangeable' step/movement patterns to be performed to an equally set and prescribed piece of music. Such a 'dance piece' carries with it what I call a label, consisting of name, country/region/'village' of origin and possibly some clarifying 'folkloristic' information on the type, background, origin, performance occasion and symbolic meaning of the dance. Written notations often go with many of the dances, containing the labelling information and a step-by-step or count-by-count description of the dance pattern. This information is then collected in books and syllabi. Videotaped recordings are also made for many dances. An 'IRFDC folk dance' may therefore, for all practical purpose, be defined as a package consisting of a label, a prescribed step/movement pattern, prescribed music and, optionally, a notation/description and/or video.

As a package, a folk dance in the IRFDC repertoire has become a 'dance object' that is uniquely identifiable by the label. These folk-dances-as-objects can be clearly referenced, collected, and traded. Objectified folk dances become 'commodities', understood as such both by teachers and participants. IRFDC participants and groups often showcase their proficiency in international folk dancing by keeping and presenting lists of dances (name and country) that they have mastered. See, for example, the websites of Folk Dance Federation California (<https://www.folkdance.com/resources/dance-notes/>) or Folk Dance Musings (<https://folkdancemusings.com/>).

blogspot.com). It should be noted, though, that many participants in the IRFDC are clearly aware that these 'folk dance commodities' are not simply regular economic goods, but they are imbued with a cultural/folkloristic value and meaning, often confirmed by the information contained in the label, of which the village⁵ is one of the most important.

Over the years the IRFDC repertoire expanded significantly while the corpus of teachers contributing to this repertoire grew too. Dances have often come to be identified, as part of the label, by the name of the person who first introduced the dance, who 'created' the dance, or who exhibits some other 'authority' over the dance. One usually says that a dance is 'from the repertoire/program of' a teacher, sometimes accompanied by copyright claims written in dance notations or on videos. Even such 'authored' dances are still referred to as 'folk dances'.

Transmission and transformation

Referring to a dance by only its name and country evokes the understanding that the dance originates in⁶ that place. Although for some dances this might be true, more often this understanding is inaccurate or even incorrect. Most of the IRFDC dances, although they may be 'based on' village folklore, are not (and have not been) danced in the 'village of origin' in the way the IRFDC performs them. But then the question is: what are the sources of the IRFDC dances? To answer this question, one often tries to devise a classification of folk dances based on their characteristics and compare them with 'original village' dances. An example from the IRFDC can be found here: <https://folkdancefootnotes.org/>, and for more general literature see Nahachewsky (2012). While classifications are academically and methodologically helpful, they sometimes tend to become too structuralist and even dogmatic. Furthermore, the diversity of sources of IRFDC dances is so large that any classification will likely have many exceptions, reducing its usefulness.

Instead, I would like to analyze the IRFDC dance repertoire by looking to the processes, both in time and in space, that took place before the dance entered the IRFDC. The question then becomes: how do IRFDC dances come about, how are they established? To answer this question, one has to re-trace their 'genesis', using information related by teachers, written down in dance notations, and/or that is part of community knowledge.

Over the years, I have done this re-tracing for dozens of IRFDC dances, both by interviewing teachers and by consulting a large amount of literature and dance notations. My analysis reveals that the path from source to IRFDC is characterized by processes of both transmission and transformation. The 'actors' involved in these processes, who make very personalized (conscious or unconscious) choices and decisions, are very important. Here, I will generally denote these actors as 'teachers', being those people who contribute folk dances to the IRFDC repertoire. It is commonly understood that one of the main roles of teachers is the transmission of the dances as truthful as possible. The group of teachers is very diverse: (semi-)professional or self-taught; working locally or travelling regionally, nationwide, or even internationally; specialized in dances from one country or generalists teaching an international program. Teachers transmitting dances within the IRFDC fulfil the role of agents in the evolution of the IRFDC repertoire.

Less commonly understood is that, in the process, many if not most, of the teachers also 'transform' the dances. When designing a teaching program teachers make very personal choices/selections which dances to teach and from which sources to select them. For educational reasons, or reasons of entertainment, aesthetics, popularity, or business opportunities, teachers transform the selected dances, sometimes unconsciously but often deliberately. While such transformations are often applauded by IRFDC participants, the resulting dances cannot simply be referred to anymore as 'original folk dances from a village'.⁷ Teachers transforming dances within the IRFDC play the role of 'creators' in the evolution of the IRFDC repertoire.

Transformations can be seen as re-contextualizations that may take many different shapes, see for example Nahachewsky (2012). I will briefly mention three types of transformation, regarding movements, music, and the label.

Movements. After dances have been observed in a village, the capturing hardly ever maintains the natural variety of movement that occurs in a traditional setting. Instead, one exactly prescribed variant is usually notated. A more complicated dance is, after analysis, split up into larger structural units (motives, figures) as 'building blocks' of the dance. The result is a transformed dance, a fact that often goes un-acknowledged by teachers. In addition, when preparing their program, teachers often reconsider the dances, targeting the abilities and expectations of the IRFDC groups. This transformation may include devising another structure and layout of the dance, and re-organizing figures or step patterns in order to make it easier or more comprehensible, as well as simplification of movements to make them more doable, 'inventing' new steps/movements or even complete figures to elaborate the dance and make it more attractive, or changing movements to polish, cosmeticize⁸ or beautify the dance.

Music. Pre-recorded music is most often used for dancing in the IRFDC. The 'original' music that accompanied the village dance is usually not available. For a dance to be taught, teachers will select music from existing (studio-)recorded music carriers. Sometimes, a music recording is selected first, and a dance is created to that music from steps/figures taken from some source. In both cases, the 'original' connection between music and dance is lost.

Label. Giving a name to the dance and mentioning the country of origin is a very useful method for research and analysis and for capturing/registering a dance. However, in traditional settings the name of a dance is not always uniquely available. Nevertheless, teachers must select a name and country to identify their dances when teaching in the IRFDC, also to clearly distinguish their dances from those of other teachers (IRFDC participants are often confused when incongruences between names and dances occur). The name, country, and other items from the label, are therefore often transformed.

Despite these transformations, the role of teachers as creator (by transforming dances) remains largely unmentioned and unnoticed in the IRFDC. There is a strong belief⁹ in the IRFDC that the dances they do are, in one way or another, 'original' village folk dances (or derived from such dances), and that teachers 'only' act in the role of agents by transmitting dances. For easy reference, the transmission-and-transformation process is depicted schematically in Figure 1.

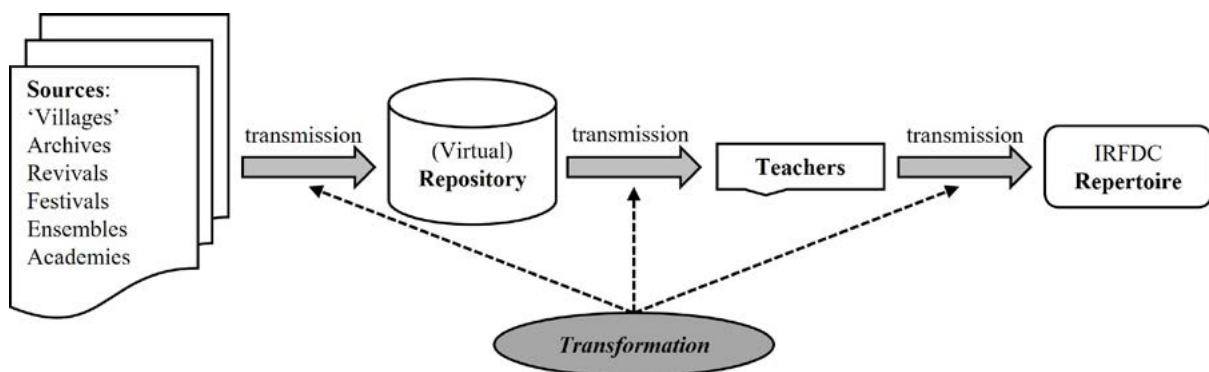


Figure 1. The process of transmission and transformation of dances from the sources to the IRFDC repertoire.

Sources and repository

Some dances in the IRFDC repertoire are more or less truthful 'copies' of dances observed by fieldwork in the village of origin. Such dances, by whoever did the fieldwork, have usually first been captured in written or audiovisual form and subsequently stored/kept in collections (archives). Teachers then consult such archives to select dances. Such dances are representative of the moment of collection, so they are not 'living' dances but 'museum' pieces (compare Nahachewsky 2012), independent of whether the registration was done a century ago or in recent years. Another possible source of dances are the many revival movements¹⁰ that appeared around the turn of the 20th century and later again after World War II.

National or international folk dance festivals are a frequent source for IRFDC dances. In particular, small-scale, local festivals are often believed to present 'original' dances. In reality, the dances presented at many/most festivals are adapted, arranged, or choreographed and not 'original village' dances. Furthermore, at a festival the dances are taken out of social context, which is also a 'transformation' of the dance. Amateur or (semi-)professional dance ensembles are sources related to festivals. Their dances are obviously not 'original village' dances either. Finally, in many countries, academic (folk) dance training programs/schools have been set up, the students of which are presented dances that have usually been arranged specifically for the academic teaching program and are mostly not identical to original village dances.

It should be mentioned that in recent decades many people have come to regard the internet (especially YouTube) as a source of dances too (although the content and labels of videos on YouTube are hardly ever verified). I think the content of internet videos is, to a large extent, covered by the sources already mentioned, and therefore I do not see the internet as an independent source, although it has made large-scale access to sources much easier.

In this paper, I will denote the collection of dances from the combined sources as the (virtual) repository. This repository is not a physical collection stored in one place in any way, but a highly distributed and omnifarious virtual facility. Many (if not most) teachers consult the repository rather than the original sources.

Summarizing, along the path from source to IRFDC several steps of transmission and transformation take place, as depicted schematically in Figure 1. Still, the general idea in the IRFDC is that the dances they perform are 'original village' folk dances. This is so because, to many participants, the processes of transmission and transformation are not known, not understood, or regarded as not important or interesting. But clearly, the idea of 'village source' is, in many cases, a myth.

Recent developments: 'fantasy' dances

For some IRFDC teachers, 'folk dances as commodities' are important for their professional or amateur jobs, sometimes even a source of income and a way of making a living.¹¹ In such cases it becomes imperative to find consumers who like to 'buy' their dance packages. Whether there is a real connection to original village folk dances is not always of the same concern. In recent years several IRFDC teachers have added newly created/composed ('authored') dances to the repertoire, which are no longer 'transformed' village folk dances, but which are highly personal creative and artistic expressions.¹² Typically, an existing (folk-like) musical recording is selected to which they choreograph a dance using all kinds of generic 'folk' dance steps and movements (often Israeli-like or general Balkan-like), sometimes adding newly invented movements and forms. Such dances are then given a 'packaging' in the same way as most of the other IRFDC dances, and offered to the community in classes and workshops. Participants often appreciate such dances, mainly due to the nice music (compare Ivanova-Nyberg 2018). Business-wise, many such dances are good choices. The name of the music is often used as the dance name included in the label, or another name is invented. The country from where the music originates is used as

the country in the label for the dance. Although some of these teachers mention that the dance is their own creation, participants are usually left with the notion that it is a 'folk dance from that country' (clearly a conflict between the label and the real source of the dance). In recent years, some of these newly invented 'folk' dances have been hotly debated (for example, EEFC 2019) between their makers and others who oppose the use of misleading labels or even the creation of such dances in the first place.¹³ To distinguish such newly created dances from transmitted/transformed village dances, I will refer to the former as 'fantasy' dances. It might be argued that some (or many) of the earlier transmitted/transformed dances in the IRFDC repertoire are partly or entirely fantasy dances as well.

Diverging evolutions

A comparison between the IRFDC repertoire and the dance repertoire in the 'villages' of origin (as it was in the past when the dances were collected) reveals large discrepancies that have grown over the years. IRFDC participants who visited the source countries/villages often confirm the existence of such discrepancies or gaps (Olson 2015). At the same time, dancing practices in the 'villages' of origin have evolved into a contemporary repertoire that also strongly deviates from present-day IRFDC dances (Ivanova-Nyberg 2020). Often, people in the places of origin do not recognize the IRFDC dances, while IRFDC participants do not know present-day dances in these places. With the introduction of 'fantasy' dances in the IRFDC in recent years, the gap is growing even larger. Clearly, the 'living' traditions and the IRFDC are diverging as they both evolve, and today there exist, as I like to put it, two very disparate repertoires: the IRFDC repertoire and the evolved 'living' repertoire.

Conclusion

The IRFDC repertoire is the result of, among other things, the combination of transmission by teachers-agents, and transformation by teachers-creators. Since the beginning of the IRFDC, the repertoire has evolved into 'labeled commodities', often with claims of ownership by teachers, as is especially the case with the recent 'fantasy' dances. The IRFDC repertoire therefore constitutes an intentionally created legacy which is to a large extent the result of knowledge production. However, many in the IRFDC still believe in the traditional village origins of their dances. While this appears largely to be a myth, it is inadvertently perpetuated within the IRFDC through the incorrect use of commodified labels. Comparing the evolved 'living' dance repertoire in the places of origin with the repertoire of the IRFDC shows that they have diverged, resulting in two very disparate folk dance repertoires.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank colleagues and friends from the IRFDC and elsewhere with whom I had the pleasure to discuss some of the ideas presented in this paper. I would specifically like to mention: Caspar Bik, Maarten van der Burgt, Peter Endendijk, Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion, Sibylle Helmer, Hennie Konings, Dilyana Kurdova, Jaap Leegwater, Andriy Nahachewsky, Theodor Vasilescu, and Esther Willems, some of whom were so kind to give me valuable feedback on a more extended earlier draft of this paper.

Endnotes

- 1 Words like 'country' and 'nation' are extensively debated in literature, especially in the context of nationalism. An interesting study on music and nationalism is Bohlman (2011), which I believe contains much that is applicable to folk dance as well. In the IRFDC the word 'nation' is hardly used, instead the word 'country' is used nearly exclusively, which I will adopt here too.
- 2 The term 'trans-local' might be more appropriate here but for convenience I will use the word 'global'. I would like to thank Andriy Nahachewsky for bringing this point to my attention.

- 3 Note that the term recreational is not used here as an attribute of the dances. Participants in the IRFDC generally do dances from other traditions than their own, so it is not 'recreational dance' in the sense of performing one's own dances on specific occasions just for fun (as for the purpose of dancing), see Nahachewsky (2012:16–17).
- 4 Here, I will use the term 'folk dance' throughout because it is generally used in the IRFDC. Other terms like ethnic dance, world dance, national dance can occasionally be heard but are far from common practice in the IRFDC. See Nahachewsky (2012) for a detailed discussion on dance naming and terminology, especially from the perspective of the purpose of dancing. As Nahachewsky (2012:31) writes: "The truth of the matter however, is that the term 'folk dance' is used very widely in popular speech, as well as by many dancers who claim to perform it."
- 5 Where the word 'country' is used to roughly indicate the geographical location of the source of the dance, the word 'village' not only has a geographical and societal meaning (in the sense of rural, peasant, folk), but also a metaphorical one indicating that the dance is traditional, authentic, and pure. In this paper I will continue to use the word 'village' with both meanings.
- 6 The words 'originating in' suggest an absolute source or at least the existence of some proof that the dances really originate from these places. This is difficult to establish, which is exactly one of the purposes of this paper. In addition, IRFDC dances are, almost by definition, re-created or revived but can still be identified as dances with a "concern for the past" (Nahachewsky 2012:26), or, as has been called, "dancing in a second existence".
- 7 I would like to point out that talking about 'original' vs. 'transformed' dances in the IRFDC (as elsewhere) often leads to discussions about 'authenticity'. Authenticity is a highly problematic concept in folklore in general, see Bendix (1997). This paper, however, is not about issues of authenticity, so I will not discuss this further.
- 8 I wish to thank the Romanian folk dance maestro Theodor Vasilescu for suggesting this term to me.
- 9 The term 'belief' does not refer to religious belief, but to strong understandings, convictions, unconscious assumptions or 'truths', things that are obvious and not further questioned. I would like to thank Gediminas Karoblis for bringing this point to my attention.
- 10 The literature on folk dance revivals is sparse at best, and, as far as I know, much smaller than on folk music revivals. English country and Morris dances, as collected and re-interpreted by Cecil Sharp, are a clear example of a dance revival starting approximately in the period around the turn of the century, and well accounted for in literature (Fox Strangways 1980). A good example of a post-World War II revival in the 1970s is the Hungarian tancház movement (Szilárd Jávorszky 2015).
- 11 Making money with the cultural expressions of other peoples might appear to be at odds with 'ownership' of such items, which is an issue still under debate, see for example Brown (2003).
- 12 This is somewhat comparable to the creation of Israeli dances that constitute a large part of the repertoire of the IRFDC, but a comparison with Israeli dances is beyond the scope of this paper.
- 13 Apart from issues like tradition, appropriation, or exploitation, some of the arguments brought forward in such debates relate to the difference between 'art' and 'folk' dance, like such categorization in music (Gelbart 2011(2007)).

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A TEACHING METHOD FOR THE REVIVAL OF TRADITIONAL DANCE

Institutional education has now become the primary setting for dance learning. One of the greatest challenges for contemporary pedagogy is the education of new generations. This text introduces the LippoZoo toolkit, which provides a new opportunity for modern folk dance education. The theoretical basis of the system is Hungarian structuralist folk dance analysis, Laban kinetography, and motif writing.

Keywords: dance education, new generations, pedagogical toolkit, children, LippoZoo

In my paper, I introduce my LippoZoo toolkit which, in response to pedagogical challenges, provides a new opportunity for modern folk dance education.¹ LippoZoo is primarily designed for the education of young children and is based on symbols that encode traditional dance. It aims to playfully present children with the symbols that encode the dance, to establish their folk dance skills, to catalyze their learning processes, and to improve their movement coordination. The name LippoZoo comes from a particular Hungarian traditional dance event named Lippogó, and the well-known English word "zoo".

The background of LippoZoo²

The practice of Hungarian folk dance widely uses folk games and tasks based on folk games, modifying them according to specific teaching purposes.³ The latest methodological toolkits catalyze folk dance teaching based on symbolic analogies that appear in countless areas of everyday life.⁴ In music education, the Ulwilla method developed by Heinrich Ullrich uses a similar starting point, while the Mozgáskotta method developed by Gábor Magyar is used for physical education purposes in the development of movement in young children.⁵

The first of the folk dance-based sign systems was Péter Lévai's toolkit,⁶ which appeared in the curriculum of the Hungarian Dance Academy in the early 2010s. In this system, the main motif types of Hungarian folk dance are encoded using geometric shapes. Based on the main motif types of Lévai's system – but slightly modified, emphasising the essential elements of movement – Katalin Balatoni and Henrik Kovács published a system of coloured tulips in 2014, replacing the geometric shapes with the symbol of the "Így tedd rá!" programme. Henrik Kovács developed the LippoZoo toolkit a year later, in 2015. The basis of LippoZoo is the analysis of Hungarian folk dance structuralism,⁷ on the one hand, and "motif writing" on the other, which more generally encodes the structure of the movement.⁸ Based on these two scientific concepts, the LippoZoo educational resource was released in 2016 in 3 different packages, LippoZoo Basic, LippoZoo Colourful, and LippoZoo White, building on the experience of the Lévai and Balatoni-Kovács systems.⁹

The basics of the LippoZoo

The essence of LippoZoo is that it offers rhythmic representations of the main types of movements to the dancers in a systematic, playful, motivational way. The step, the main types of aerial steps, gesture, and touch visualization uses animal characters, while the half-, quarter-, and eighth-note rhythms are encoded in colours. The resulting colourful animal figures create a dance abstraction system that is versatile in dance pedagogy and can be used as a basis for reconstructing dances from symbols.

The first of the two major coding modes mentioned above presents animal characters used to symbolically represent the major motion types. I have chosen an animal to encode a particular motion

type that helps to recall the essence of the movement with its appearance, characteristic movement, or lifestyle.

The frog (figure 1a) is a jump from both feet to both feet (figure 1b).¹⁰ The roadrunner (figure 2a) as one of the fastest-running terrestrial birds encodes the leaps (figure 2b). The bear's (figure 3a) "whacking" represents the steps (figure 3b), while the typical silhouette of the stork (figure 4a) reminds us of hops (figure 4b). The bee sitting on a flower (figure 5a) highlights lightness and weightlessness, a gesture that touches the ground (figure 5b) instead of the support.¹¹ A running rabbit (figure 6a) – its first jump is from both back feet to one front foot – is the symbol indicating a spring from both feet to one foot (figure 6b). The octopus (figure 7a) in the water is an excellent reference to the gestures of the arm, leg (figure 7b), or even the torso, including one of the most characteristic movements of Hungarian folk dance such as clapping, or hitting a leg. The eight arms of the octopus, like the eight-petal flower (such as the bloodpiper and the butterfly flower), are a great help in displaying the 8 + 1 directions. A kangaroo (figure 8a) represents springing from one foot to both feet (figure 8b). The motion of the kangaroo springing from its supporting tail to both feet is well illustrated in a snippet of the Life Story series from the BBC's Natural History Unit.¹²

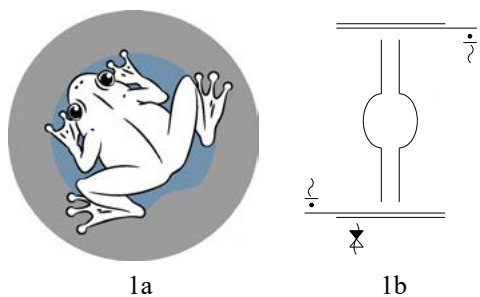


Figure 1. LippoZoo frog

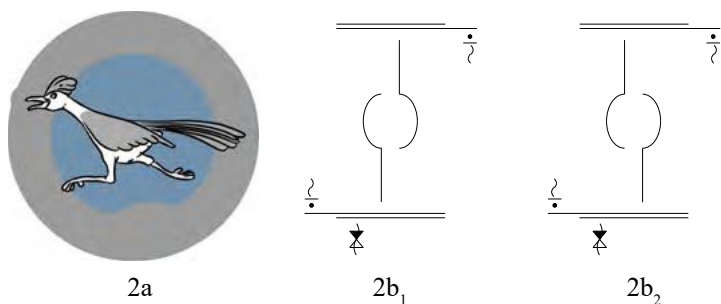


Figure 2. LippoZoo roadrunner

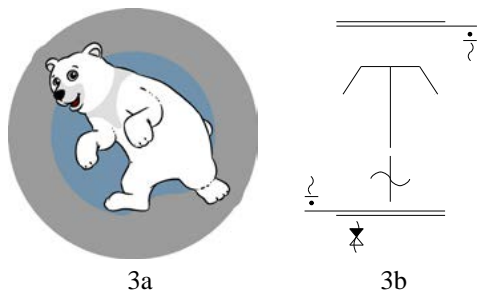


Figure 3. LippoZoo bear

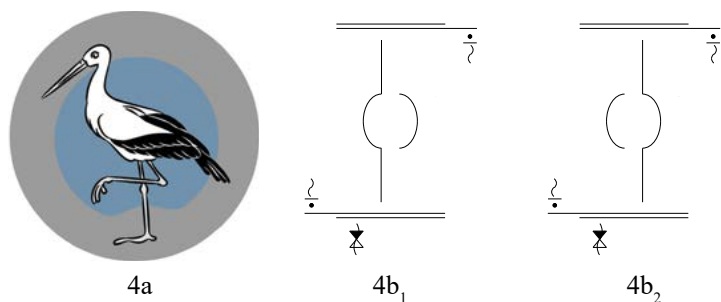


Figure 4. LippoZoo stork

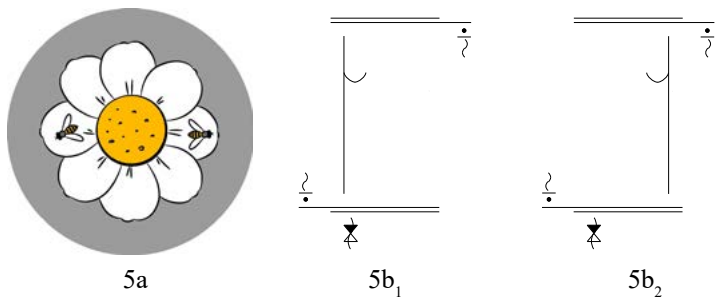


Figure 5. LippoZoo flower and bees

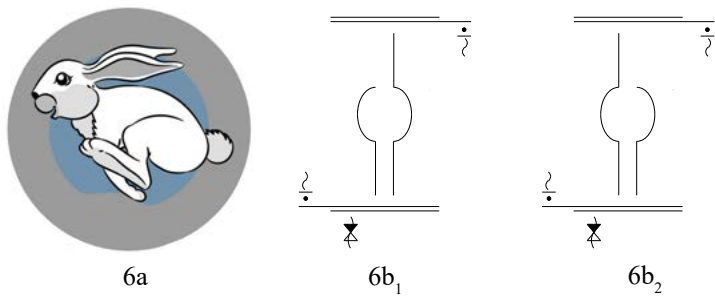


Figure 6. LippoZoo rabbit

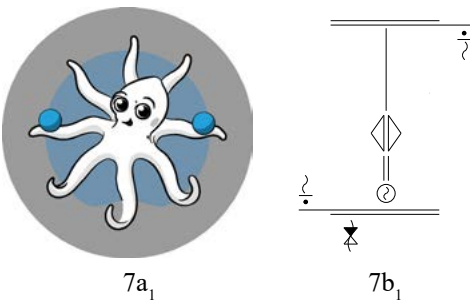


Figure 7a₁. LippoZoo octopus side directions

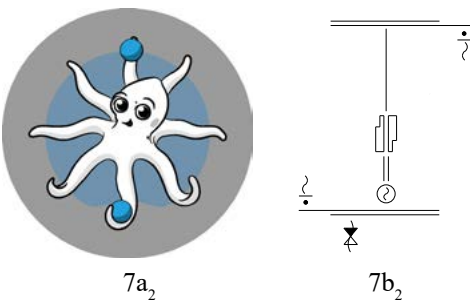


Figure 7a₂. LippoZoo octopus forward and back directions

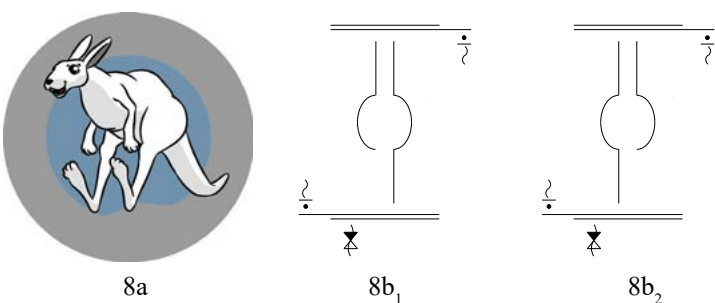


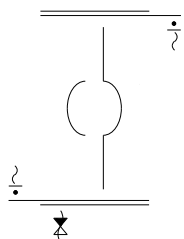
Figure 8. LippoZoo kangaroo

Colours are used to encode the rhythm of the movement. LippoZoo displays the most common rhythm combinations of Hungarian folk dance as follows: The red colour is a half note, yellow is a quarter, green is the combination eighth-eighth-quarter, dark-green is the augmented version of the green; quarter-quarter-half, while blue represents the eighth-eighth rhythm. White discs emphasize only the shape, leaving the rhythm to be decided by the dancer. The system does not prescribe the number of repetitions of the movement, nor the side of the body on which they are performed.

The complete system includes eight disks of different shapes (frog, roadrunner, bear, stork, flower and bee, rabbit, octopus, kangaroo) in six colours (red, yellow, green, dark green, blue, white). In some cases, we introduced "spotted" animal disks to display different support variations. The frog shown in figure 9a is a good illustration of a motif in the first beats of the *mezőkomáromi csárdás* (figure 9b). However, the possible variation of jumping from both feet to both feet in eighth-eighth-quarter rhythm, due to the increase in the number of supports due to the rhythmic expansion, is still possible. Figure 10a also shows a 'spotted' green frog, which corresponds to the pattern of the 24th motiftype of the *hosszúhetényi verbunk* defined by János Fügedi (figure 10b).



9a

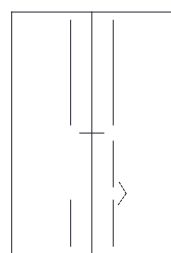


9b

Figure 9a. LippoZoo green frog
Figure 9b. Motif of *mezőkomáromi csárdás*¹³



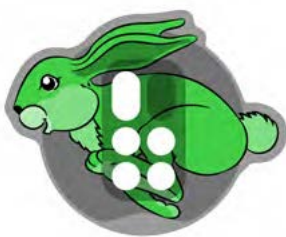
10a



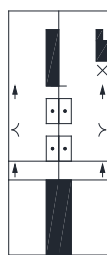
10b

Figure 10a. 'Spotted' green frog
Figure 10b. Motiftype of the *hosszúhetényi verbunk*¹⁴

The rabbit shown on figure 11a is a good illustration of the motif danced in the 6th beat of the *mezőkomáromi csárdás* (figure 11b).¹⁵ LippoZoo's entire system includes a total of seventy-nine different discs.



11a



11b

Figure 11a. 'Spotted' green rabbit
Figure 11b. Women's motif from *mezőkomáromi csárdás*

In the following, I present the LippoZoops which symbolise the most typical movement types and rhythm combinations of the Hungarian folk dance movement. As illustrations, I present the recordings made during the Covid-19 quarantine. The videos were made to help instructors who taught dance and physical education during the online school education in 2019 and 2020.

The yellow flower represents a touch of the floor in quarter-quarter rhythm. The dancer decides how many times, which leg, and which part of the foot.¹⁶ The red frog encodes jumps to the rhythm of half notes.¹⁷ The yellow stork is the symbol of quarter-quarter hops.¹⁸ By changing the body side and the number of repetitions, you can create further motifs. The green bear is the widely-known "three-step" motif, also called *pas de basque* or *tripudium*.¹⁹

The use of the LippoZoo

The primary goal of the LippoZoo toolkit is to catalyse learning to move, to motivate children, and to develop a systematic approach. As a result, it provides only one methodological possibility for teaching folk dance. It complements the presentations of the teacher, the group exercises, the acquisition of the motifs to be learned for the specific regions. There are two ways to use discs. In one case we put them on the ground, in the other we show the discs to the dancers holding them high – in our hands or projected on a wall surface. These two main uses can also be subdivided and varied. Discs may be placed on the ground in an unshaped pattern with large (figure 12) or small distances (figure 13) between them. When the discs are spaced less closely, we develop a positive attitude towards the device and the activity, since the students will mostly choose LippoZoops that will give them a sense of success. When several LippoZoo discs are arranged small spacing, children can be given a task to quickly change the discs, and they can create an increasingly difficult course for themselves. At the same time, this does not exclude the opportunity to move slowly, making careful progress. Thus, a densely arranged space is also suitable for differentiated education: within an exercise, more talented and slower-going students can develop their own set of tasks.



Figure 12. Less frequently placed discs



Figure 13. Densely arranged space

After practising unshaped patterns several times, we can give the students the following task: Imagine your own LippoZoo course for yourself, where any number and any disc can be down on the ground anywhere in the room and dance along! With this task, we will make our dancers improvisational, and with the idea of the discs, they will also create a kind of inner picture of the motifs, which will be extremely useful in the later phases of dance learning. Last but not

least, this strategy also directs their posture in a good way, since it is not necessary to constantly look at the ground.

You can also place the discs on the ground in different patterns. They are most often arranged in a row, circle, or wavy line, and perhaps used in combination with props. In a web-like arrangement made of one type of disc, the given movement and motif have to be danced many times. Thus, its primary role is corrective. Web-like (knitted) forms consisting of several discs are extremely suitable for teaching motif connections and complex motifs.

The row layout is one of the most transparent and easy-to-implement forms of spacial arrangement. In the figure 14a, you can see rows of LippoZoo with a direction of travel for a large group. In the figure 14b, two types of discs form a series of tasks for four smaller groups.

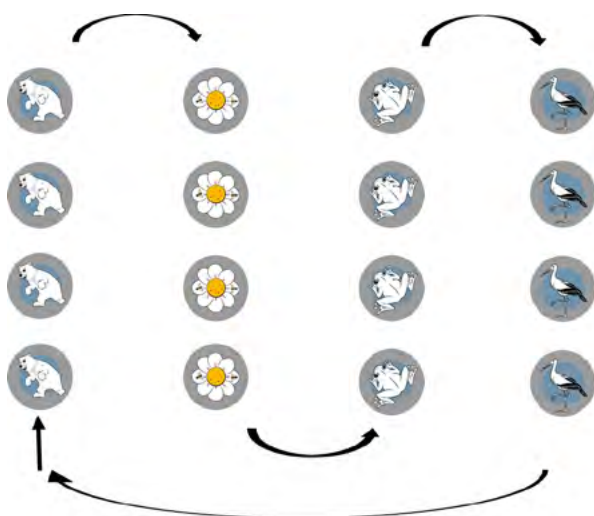


Figure 14a. Row layout for a large group

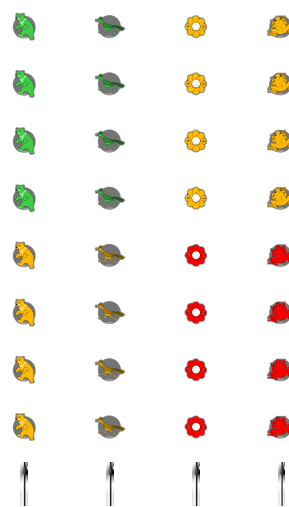


Figure 14b. Row layout for four smaller groups

The eponymous motif of the *kopogó* (*knocker*) in Mezőkomárom is repeated four times by Ferenc Progl in three different lengths.²⁰ By arranging the LippoZoo, we can both give the actual length of the motifs (figure 15) and help our dancers to dance freely by using a simpler form. After all, in this task, we emphasize that they can dance the eight steps on the blue bear with a freely chosen number of repetitions.

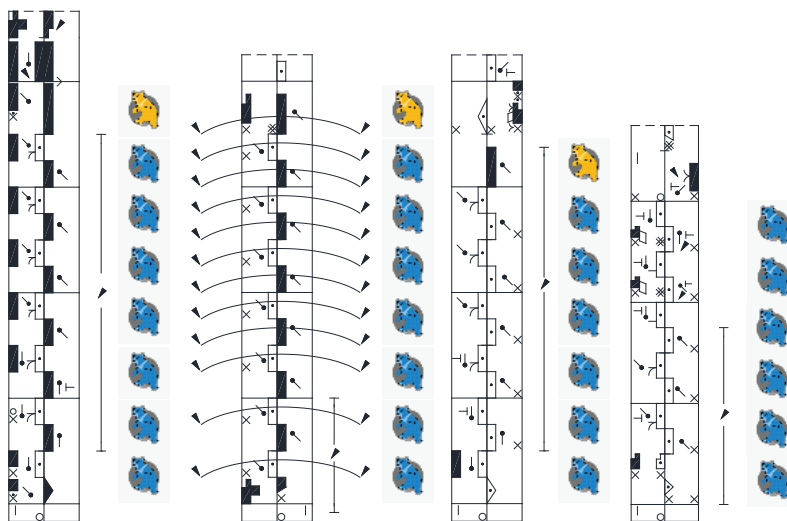


Figure 15. The *kopogó* (*knocker*) motif coded by LippoZoo

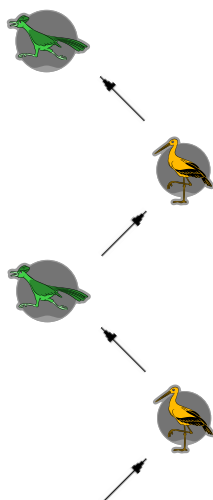


Figure 16. Offset form for motif connections

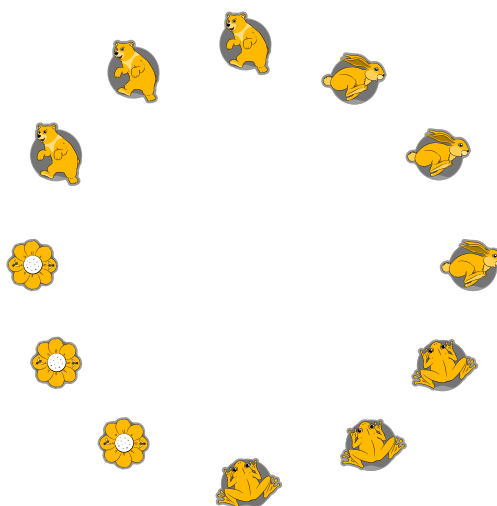


Figure 17. Circle form

An offset space form arranged in a row from two types of LippoZoo is already suitable for teaching specific motif connections (figure 16).

For discs arranged in a circle, you can also change the number, quantity, and variety of discs according to the purpose of the exercise. There are four types of discs coded for the same rhythm for general movement development (figure 17). The form shown in figure 18a, with two different movements and rhythms, displays a particular traditional jump motif (figure 18b).

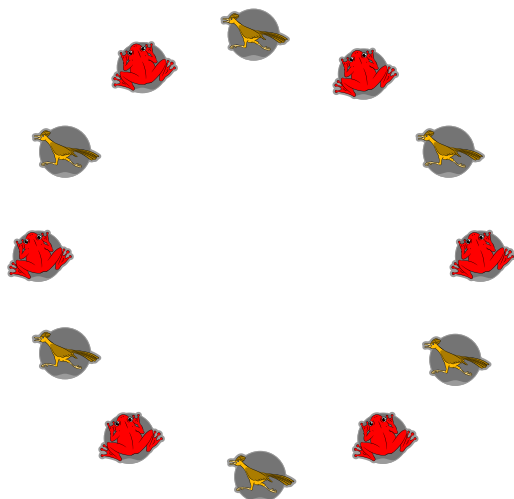
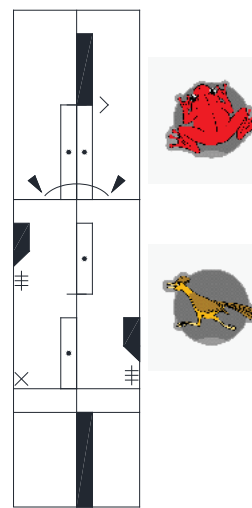


Fig. 18a. Circle form for traditional jump motif

Fig. 18b. Traditional jump (*ugrós*) motif from Alap²¹

Using LippoZoo with props, we can create a wide variety of tasks. The discs used together with sticks, ropes, hoops, beanbags, bottles, etc. present new challenges for children and at the same time prepare our instrumental dances extremely thoroughly.

Discs held high in our hands or projected on a wall direct the dancers' gaze upwards. This brings our students' posture closer to a natural one. We can hold one or two stacked LippoZoo disks in one hand, which we can alternate.²² The presenter chooses how long a task is shown to others.

We can ask for a motif several times (with 6–8 repetitions), or we can switch tasks after each repetition of the motif. The leader can also create another more complicated task when he or she shows two discs at once to determine the motifs to be danced on the right and on the left sides.

LippoZoo can be a great help not only in teaching dance, but also in teaching Lábán kine-tography. I used discs to start teaching my children dancers the dance notation.

Overall, the tool system gives teachers a lot of freedom. At the same time, it provides moti-vational help in developing the dancers' ability to abstract, their multi-level thinking, their ability to reconstruct, and their ability to recognize the structure of dances.

Endnotes

- 1 The paper is part of the SNN 139575 code-named program entitled In a New Disguise: Changes in Traditional Music and Dance Culture in Hungary, Slovenia and Surrounding Areas, funded by the NKFI.
- 2 The first two chapters (Background of the LippoZoo, Basics of the LippoZoo) of this paper are being published in the *Proceedings of the 31st Biennial Conference of the International Council of Kinetography Laban*, where the positive effect of the LippoZoo was introduced as a tool for learning Labanotation in childhood.
- 3 Kiss 2003; Sándor 2005, 2018; Lázár 2007; Benedek and Sándor 2006, 2010; Czinóber 2008; Wirkerné 2008; Lévai 2010, 2015, 2018; Balatoni and Kovács 2014; Balatoni 2016.
- 4 Concise meaning of symbols can be found in, for example, traffic signs, pictograms, hand signs or even writing, sheet music or dance notations.
- 5 Magyar 2023; Ullrich and Vető 2006.
- 6 The system was published in 2018.
- 7 Martin and Pesovár 1960, 1964; Szentpál 1961; Fügedi and Kovács 2014; Fügedi and Varga 2014.
- 8 In 1983, Hutchinson published her motif writing system. In 2013, Wile went into more detail about the use of motif writing.
- 9 A detailed description of the contents of the packages can be found at <<http://en.lippogo.hu/educational-materials>> by Henrik Kovács.
- 10 Figures a) show LippoZoo and figures b) motif writing according to Wile (2013).
- 11 The concept of indefinite hook was introduced into Hungarian literature by Fügedi (Fügedi and Varga 2014: 140) based on the of Hutchinson's Labanotation, second edition (1970:387).
- 12 Kangaroo Boxing Fight. BBC Earth Youtube channel: 01:09-01:15.
- 13 Fügedi and Vavrincez 2013: 220, men's dance 1st beat. The dance film is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I87vYJZERc0&ab_channel=N%C3%A9pt%C3%A1ncTud%C3%A1st%C3%A1r>
- 14 Fügedi and Varga 2014:152 figure 69. The measure is one quarter note, the speed is 120 quarter notes per minute. This timing is understood on the later figures, too.
- 15 Fügedi and Vavrincez 2013: 220, both dancers' 6th beat. The mezőkomáromi csárdás dance (film ID Ft.6.7a-c.) is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I87vYJZERc0&embeds_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fneptanctudastar.abtk.hu%2F&embeds_origin=https%3A%2F%2Fneptanctudastar.abtk.hu&feature=emb_imp_woyt&ab_channel=N%C3%A9pt%C3%A1ncTud%C3%A1st%C3%A1r>
- 16 Learn the LippoZoo! Yellow flower variations 1. <<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/GRmxsZhJajM>>
- 17 Learn the LippoZoo! Red frog variations. <<https://youtu.be/RSYqYH5pWJU>>
- 18 Learn the LippoZoo! Yellow stork variations. <<https://youtu.be/osQOqSg0218>>
- 19 Learn LippoZoo! Green bear variations. <<https://youtu.be/dwdSPFwQxD8>>
- 20 Fügedi and Vavrincez 2013:215-218. The mezőkomáromi kopogó dance (film ID Ft.6.4a-b.) is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVX2NRXWAqk&embeds_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fneptanctudastar.abtk.hu%2F&embeds_origin=https%3A%2F%2Fneptanctudastar.abtk.hu&feature=emb_logo&ab_channel=N%C3%A9pt%C3%A1ncTud%C3%A1st%C3%A1r>

- 21 Fügedi and Vavrincez 2013: 238, women's 9-10. beats. The ugrós dance (film ID Ft.389.14a-c.) is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=EEWOZ-hwhjs&embeds_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fneptanctudastar.abtk.hu%2F&embeds_origin=https%3A%2F%2Fneptanctudastar.abtk.hu&feature=emb_logo
- 22 Both the LippoZoo on the ground and the disks in the hand can be seen in the video LippoZoo a Duna TV-ben. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4J7-WJ9aa5s&ab_channel=Lippog%C3%B3Folk

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RESEARCHING DANCE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The study presents the situation of dance researchers in the Czech Republic and reveals the socio-economic conditions under which the profession of a dance researcher is currently carried out. Using the phenomenon called Matthew Effect in Science described by the sociologist Robert King Merton, the author seeks to find out how a reputation is built in the field of dance research. The information was obtained through qualitative research based on in-depth individual interviews with ten respondents cooperating with research organisations in the Czech Republic.

Keywords: dance researcher, Czech Republic, Matthew Effect in Science, Robert King Merton, reputation

This study reveals the situation of dance researchers in the Czech Republic. The author was interested in the social, economic and political conditions under which researchers perform their profession in the mentioned country. Moreover, the aim was to examine the relevance of so called Matthew Effect in Science described by the sociologist Robert King Merton in the natural sciences and apply the discovered findings in the dance field. The author seeks to find out how a reputation in the dance research field is built and what it brings to its owner.

The data were gained through qualitative sociological research based on in-depth interviews with ten respondents who fulfilled the following criteria: researching any type of dance, publishing activity, affiliation to a research institution.¹ During the interview, questions about the researcher's personal biography, education, career, opportunities, barriers and motivation were asked. The research sample consists of eight women and two men, aged 39–68, who were interviewed from June to August 2022.

Introduction to the Czech dance researcher situation

The data analysis shows that a researcher's interest in dance usually starts very early in life; almost all the respondents have personal experience with dance as their childhood leisure activity and this knowledge, to some extent, influenced their studying paths. Looking at their education, most of the respondents have a degree in Dance Studies and there are also two graduates of Theater Studies and two graduates of Ethnography.

A surprising fact is that for all the respondents, researching dance is only one part of their work activities. Besides that, most of them teach at universities. Some even have a completely different job description in a research institution, which involves management, administration, production, organizational activity or bibliography. Moreover, a few researchers are also dance critics or active choreographers and artists. Their colorful career paths lead to one conclusion – the more activities, the less time for research.

Although some of them admit to enjoying different job tasks, it seems that there is a lack of real research opportunities in the Czech Republic. Even though all the respondents from the sample are affiliated to some research institution, only one of them works as a full-time researcher (at the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences). Also, among the university teachers interviewed, there is only one whose research activity is mentioned in the job description and reflected in the salary. For the rest, researching dance remains only a leisure activity.

Economic situation of dance researchers

In terms of financial remuneration of work, the common practice in Czech research institutions is to pay a nominal salary according to certain tariffs, which are determined by the organization's internal wage regulations. This takes account, in particular, of an employee's level of qualification. The final amount on the pay slip depends on the other components of the salary – the personal assessment and any bonuses and allowances for various functions, however the final income remains below the average salary in the Czech Republic.

Considering the fact that for most of the respondents researching dance is a leisure activity, the question arises about how the research is funded when it is not included in the main work description. If researchers do not want to engage in this activity for free (which some admit occasionally happens), the most common solution is to apply for grants provided by the research organization or from external sources (Grant Agency of the Czech Republic). However, it is a time-consuming activity, as one of my respondents noted: "I spend most of my career looking for time, opportunities and funding to do research. If I had devoted all that time to research, I would have written at least ten books."² It might seem that full-time researchers are exempt from the grant policy, but this is not the case. On the contrary, they are expected to submit external, international grants, as they are a significant contribution to institutional income and play an important role in the evaluation of research organizations. Whatever the funding of the research activity, the respondents mentioned that their research work is not adequately financially remunerated.

If we conclude that the economic conditions of dance researchers are not satisfying, why do they keep on doing it? All the respondents mention similar motivations – internal assumptions involving unquenchable curiosity, desire for knowledge, faith in the mission and a strong believe in the importance of their work. Sometimes, their research activity is stimulated by a sense of responsibility to transfer the acquired knowledge, develop the field of study and support future researchers. However, some of them admit to facing personal burnout due to the number of work duties and a lack of time for research.

Building a reputation in the dance field

One part of the interview was focused on the topic of building a reputation in the dance field. The aim was to verify findings of relevance of the Matthew Effect described by Robert King Merton. Based on Harietta Zuckerman's research with Nobel Prize laureates, Merton concluded that Nobel Prize holders as already well-known researchers gain more social recognition than the lesser known ones (in the case of simultaneous research); gain more research opportunities for expanding their research role; have an influence on the communication system of the field because their findings are implemented faster; their well-known name helps as a guideline for other researchers overwhelmed by an unmanageable amount of specialized literature and centers of sciences are built around these personalities (Merton 1968, 1988). In the case of dance research, there is no such award as the Nobel Prize but still we might search for milestones which facilitate a researcher's career.

According to my respondents, building a reputation in the dance field is a cumulative process. We can follow this career progress in two dimensions: within the field of dance and the society, and within the Czech Republic and the world.

The dance field in the Czech Republic features a small number of researchers who know each other. In this context, the process of being recognized as a field authority is somehow easier. And it is done naturally via teaching at universities, delivering high quality research outputs, and visible research activities. Based on the interviews, academic degrees obtained play an important role. To become an associate professor or even a professor is perceived by academic researchers as a natural and necessary personal career development, which influences a researcher's credibility

as well as their salary. Some respondents even admit that this development brought new research opportunities and invitations to cooperate in someone else's research projects. On the contrary, some young researchers collaborate with experienced authorities not only for research purposes but also for practical ones: an advanced researcher's name in a grant application delivers higher credibility and increases the probability of success in grant committee selections.

Gaining international recognition in the field of dance is more complicated. It requires financial input to be admitted by an international research organization, to attend and present at conferences and symposiums. Surprisingly, in some cases these costs are not automatically covered by a research institution, some researchers have to apply for a research grant or pay these costs by themselves. Attending conferences is important for networking and building international cooperation, meeting foreign publishers and editors to higher up the possibility of publishing research outputs abroad. Another important factor is the willingness to publish research outputs in international languages, such as English.

It seems that for Czech dance researchers, building a reputation in their own country is difficult as the dance field is very small. They often struggle to gain respect within their own research institution or within its field of humanities and social sciences. The situation of Czech dance research centers is fragile as I can demonstrate using the Institute of Choreology based at the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague as an example. This institute was founded in 1998, its activities cover publishing articles, books and organizing conferences. Half of the researchers interviewed are affiliated to it. However, the Institute remains more of an ideal rather than a real institution because in 2022, it still does not have any official research or administrative employees and does not receive any regular and stable financial support from the university budget. There is no adequate support for theoretical dance research except for applying for individual internal grants with a specific topic for each period. However, for some researchers, applying for and processing grants means such a big administrative load that they decide not to apply and wait for opportunities offered by other researchers from different institutions. As a result, some researchers are co-researching in different projects of other research institutions without any official institutional participation of the Institute of Choreology and other research centers, which further destabilizes the potential position of the Institute.

These factors threaten the position of the Institute of Choreology outside of the organization, especially when it comes to asking for prestigious external grants. One of the respondents described a disheartening experience when applying for a grant at the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic. Although the project was accepted by the grant committee and considered as valuable, some official administrative staff questioning the credibility of the Academy of Performing Arts as a research institution later disputed their decision. In the end, the project was not financially supported.

In conclusion, it is obvious that the situation of Czech dance researchers is not easy and the position of the dance field within the research community and the whole society is weak. So how can we turn it for the better? I believe that a possible strategy is to focus on increasing the visibility of researchers and research centers and supporting their promotion and promotion of their outputs. However, this might take a long time. Most of our excellent researchers are naturally very humble and have a negative attitude towards any kind of self-promotion. They strongly believe that their reputation is created by their research outputs. And this mindset needs to change.

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Endnotes

- 1 In the research following research institution were included: Czech Academy of Sciences; research centers at Universities – The Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, The Masaryk University in Brno; two research organizations of the Ministry of Culture - The National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture (NIPOS) and Arts and Theater Institute.
- 2 Interview, female respondent, 18 August 2022.

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RESTRUCTURING FOLK DANCE EDUCATION TO REFLECT THE POLITICAL VIEWS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

In the 21st century, there are two main political forces that affect traditional dance on a global scale and its education. Firstly, the mass political movements of communities who are aware of each other through increased digital communication, and secondly, multiculturalism and conservative attitudes against it, caused by international mass migrations resulting from political interventions. This paper focuses on the transformation of traditional dance education, as it is influenced by international political views. The implications of sociological theories will be demonstrated using examples from educational institutions in Turkey.

Keywords Turkey, folk dance, education, cultural policies, restructuring

Culture policies in traditional dance education in the political environment of the 20th century

Demographic elements, such as exile, migration, change of religion, the employment of foreign experts, which have arisen in Turkey and other countries due to political and economic forces, have accelerated cultural interaction. Based on the context of dance, we can identify three periods in the political development of content and education in 20th century culture policies:

1. The Period of Construction of the "Nation State" (1920–1950)
2. The Period of Political Division and Polarization (1950–1980)
3. The Period of Pluralist Democracy (1980–2000)

1. The period of construction of the "nation state" (1920–1950)

The culture policies of modernism, which dominated this period, ignored local elements and tried to standardize traditional dance using modern and universal principles. In the ideology of creating national dance, classical ballet's universally recognized aesthetic values were accepted. In traditional dance scenes, art authorities emphasized bodies standing upright, resisting gravity, making dynamic and athletic movements. The adaptation of the classical ballet aesthetic, for folk dances, led by the Moiseyev State Folk Dance Ensemble, was seen by the nation state leaders as a sign of modernism.¹

2. The period of political division and polarization (1950–1980)

Due to political polarisation between countries which adopted different political views after the Second World War, a fundamentally bipolar and non-communicative structure was created. In this period, called the "Cold War", traditional dances were used as an "alienating" element. Political powers avoided placing the emphasis on a common past, on the contrary, they developed policies to try to make their hegemony accepted, while resisting the hegemony of other societies. On the other hand, the fatigue of two world wars also led to a more moderate nationalism. Some relations softened as humanist views increased. For example, Balkan dances and music, attracted the attention of Western societies and became fashionable. Interaction was initiated through traditional dance tourism in this way. In this period, many scholars, such as Elsie Ivancich Dunin, carried out ethnochoreological studies on the traditional dance culture of the Balkan and eastern European countries within the western dance education system.

In inter-scholastic and inter-association competitions after 1970, folk dances were performed, consisting of standardized movements as an extension of modernism, where universal values were emphasized rather than local content. Training curricula during this period reveal health and sports characteristics rather than cultural indicators for traditional dance.

3. The period of pluralist democracy (1980–2000)

The 'problematic' relationship between tradition and modernity in the context of culture is interesting. According to Gadamer and Ricoeur, tradition is no longer a relic in modern society; it is something continuously rebuilt, something 'reproduced' (Piercey 2004).

Nation states, whose demographic structure changed due to socio-political transformations, began to care about the growing multicultural social structures within them. In particular, Turkey and the Balkan countries seeking to be part of the European Union developed official policies against ethnic discrimination.

Educational institutions came to realise that ethnic diversity is an inevitable situation in the world and paid increasing attention to dances around them which signify cultural identities. Dances of different ethnic groups became more visible in this period. Meanwhile, political problems, such as the Cyprus conflict between Turkey and Greece and the political problems between Serbia and Kosovo, lead to divisions along borders over ethnicity. In such situations, the ethnic affiliation of dances can be manipulated in traditional dance education.

With the start of the military administration in Turkey in 1980, policies were produced that emphasized national and moral values. The Ottoman dance legacy became important in the context of the reconstruction of the historical, national, and conservative cultural identity. Turkish folk dances were first taught at the academic level in Turkish music conservatoires, opened as alternatives to Western conservatoires. Traditional dance presentations, which emphasized the historical past and especially the Ottomans, were supported by political authorities.

The role of dancing in the 21st century social movements

Aggressive political environments, such as conflicts and riots, which take place on a global scale, result in economic and demographic transformations. In particular, the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Ukraine have created massive social movements. We can classify organized movements or social movements that involve dancing in the 21st century under these headlines (Crossley 2002:1): Social gender movements, Labour movement and trade union movements, Racist / anti-racist movements, Nationalist movements, Solidarity movements, Environmentalist or green movements, Animal rights movements, Peace movements.

In social movements generally against economic and political regulations, requests or needs have been displayed through dance. For example, the Arab Spring movement (Arabic: *al-Thawrāt al-'Arabiyyah*), which started in 2010 and which we can call an "Islamic democracy demand", was a regional, social, and political movement that emerged from the demands of the Arab people for democracy, freedom, and human rights. We can see that dance has often been used in Arab Spring events as a form of collective behaviour.

Another example is the "Pride Walk" of the LGBTQ+ community in Istanbul. In 2014, the number of participants reached around one hundred thousand people. Although banned in 2015 by the ideologically conservative state, it continued nonetheless. A recording of German artist Liana Georgi dancing in front of the police during the 19th march in Istanbul went viral in the media.² Madonna, who has 16 million followers, shared this moment on her Instagram page and asked "Why are there so many police?" thus increasing awareness in the world.³ Similarly, the women who studied male Zeybek dance in the "Yaren Zeybek Oyunları Kulübü", which provides education in traditional Zeybek dance, objected to the masculine hegemony in Zeybek dance by

posting a YouTube video on Women's Day on 8 March 2022, arguing that Zeybek dance can be interpreted with the female body.⁴

Traditional dances are among the most active elements of new social movements.⁵ The dance is used to embody political-ideological, educational, religious, and economic messages within the social system to express the idea targeted and to increase the widespread impact of this idea (Giurchescu 1994:15). "Dance creates a similar sense of personal power and group strength in people who dance and watch the dance. That's why dancing can be of vital importance in the building of a collective solidarity, maturation and affectivity" (Kızmaz 2017:272). In this context, dancing can become a symbol of resistance and organization to help achieve a person's goals.

Environmental protests against hydroelectric power projects in Turkey's Black Sea region are an example of this. The people used traditional Horon dances to express themselves during protests against hydroelectric power plants in the Black Sea region.⁶ Horon dances, regularly danced during environmentalist resistance activities, came to be considered protective dances. The added meaning of Horon dances as a symbol of resistance in the media has increased awareness of Horon. Those who identify as environmentalists increasingly desired to learn the dance, and it has led to more widespread Horon training.

Political authorities want to suppress such social movements with formal prohibitions or unofficial hegemonic sanctions. For example, some symbolic indicators of Kurdish movements, which are considered to drive ethnic discrimination in Turkey, are banned because of their political nature. The traditional form of clothing, manipulated by the PKK terrorist organization into a form of a military uniform, is prohibited in folk dance competitions. In the education of traditional dance, traditional clothing or Kurdish texts used for dancing have been Turkified. Because they were supported by a large proportion of the public, "with the solution (peace) process which started in 2010 and became official in 2013, some policies have softened and liberties appeared in the cultural sense and in language. Folk dance ensembles who sing Kurdish folk songs have started to participate in competitions of universities, clubs and the National Education Ministry." (İnal 2021).

The effects of 21st century political migration on traditional dance

In the 21st century, migration has increased as people escape from hegemony and wars around the world. "In the process of migration, just as they cause sociocultural changes in their new environments, people themselves change too. These are changes in knowledge, faith and values, in technology and material culture, in various institutions, such as family, education, religion, economics, art, social layers and inter-group relations, as well as in human acceptance of the world and themselves" (Zafer 2016:76).

After the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack in the United States, the concepts of migration and immigration in the Western world have been increasingly connected with populist rhetoric that focus more on crime, violence, and danger than on migration itself. The phenomenon of migration has increased social fear and concern. As a result, cultural racism, radical nationalism, and neo-fascist movements that focus more on cultural and social differences than biological and genetic ones have become more widespread. Migrant receiving countries exhibit many different strategies, including dance, to transform migrant societies into a suitable fit for their own worldview.

In Turkey, as of 2022, there are more than 4 million immigrants, including 3,762,686 Syrian refugees (Bozkurt Çakır 2017:33).⁷ Refugees are often seen as a homogeneous social group with similar characteristics: poor, helpless victims, or threatening elements. These stereotypical representations hinder knowledge about the refugees' diverse characteristics and life experiences (Efe, Pandır and Paksoy 2018:143–149). In Turkey, current political policies encourage teaching music and dance to migrant individuals to encourage their communities' adaptation. Children

who are trained in refugee associations and refugee camps are internalising dance cultures other than their own within the Turkish education system.⁸

On the other hand, immigrants who have settled in Turkey and who interact with the local public are deeply affecting Anatolian traditional dance culture. Migrant societies, which have spread to Anatolia and formed urban ghettos, perform their dances in a multicultural way with local people. Professional dancers and musicians accelerate this interaction. For example, in the entertainment of Syrian immigrants with high income levels, trained dancers perform Turkish folk dances in the professional context of a "henna girl". Dance music, which includes Arabic cultural features, is often featured in Turkish entertainments. Today, dance activities like Zumba, accompanied by traditional Arabic music and dances, have gained much interest in many urban environments.⁹

The effects of 21st century cultural policies on traditional dance education

Addressing dance in its socio-cultural context also requires engaging value systems formed by hegemonic relations. Examinations of the political dimension of dance education reveal that cultural policies transform community-type lifestyles into civil society-type lifestyles.

Political changes around the world in the first quarter of the 21st century have led to an increase in the rhetoric of the "New World Order". Socio-economic and political factors are considered to have a primary role in the process of social change, while education is seen as an auxiliary factor that configures and drives change (Eskicumalı 2003:27). According to Dinçer, "Education is an initiative with many aspects, such as social, political and economic, and it does not often determine its own functions to which it is responsible for fulfilling. Education is an effective or powerful tool to raise one identical twin as 'Hitler' and the other as 'Gandhi', if desired, and often finds its strength from the purpose and strength of those who set socio-economic and socio-cultural policies on a social level" (Dinçer 2003).¹⁰

The economic interests of the policies of the culture industry have transformed the relationship of life and traditional dance into a meta that has more of an economic dimension than a social one. In this way, the concepts of nationalism and multiculturalism in political processes are interconnected with global consumption and technology. There has been a difference of meaning between actions and rhetoric. Expectations on consumption imposed by the culture industry lead to major transformations in the goals and practices of traditional dance education.

In dance education, it is important that the internal characteristics of the relevant traditions are maintained and carried out in a balanced manner alongside the art market and the culture industry. In this context, traditional dance education institutions must be restructured to take advantage of the dynamic power of the times. The continuation of traditional dance by conserving its cultural characteristics against social phenomena such as social change, globalisation, standardisation, and alienation is important for its positive effect on these phenomena. At this point M. Öcal Oğuz, who draws attention to the notion of national cultural heritage, suggests that we should benefit from methods that evaluate the concepts of 'local phenomena' which we can offer as a richness to the world that is rapidly becoming standardised with globalisation.

In the process of understanding the dynamics of production and consumption of cultural products and bringing these products from local to global, besides the traditional elements created from the few participants of rural and village life, we should benefit from traditions based on "visual products" where urban life is in connection with adjacent cultures, and which is created by many people who have benefited from formal education processes and often have no language boundary in culture-to-culture transmission (Oğuz 2002:20).

The contribution of traditional dances with visual cultural value to social life as a rich cultural heritage is directly related to the reflexes of political vision in the context of education in current developments.

Conclusion

The rapid development of communication, information, and informatics in the 21st century changed the prioritisation of meanings that nations have assigned to geographical and moral values. In the cultural context, deep differences between the concepts of universality have been eliminated. As TV channels, the internet, new media, and social media spread rapidly, it became easier for individuals to identify and promote the social world they live in, and to connect with developments and events in other communities. However, the questioning attitudes that the institutions or persons sometimes use to make themselves more visible open the doors to a post-truth world. Further, information can be manipulated by the media, which today is the property of large capital due to inequalities in power relations between the social space and the political space. It has become difficult to understand and accurately analyse social events, as individuals may be prevented from reaching the right information. The hegemonic structure has the power to impose its socioeconomic and sociocultural mentality. According to Foucault, power is productive, and especially it produces information. "There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault 2012:24).

Hegemony and class conflicts have led to a change/transformation in culture, art, and education, as well as in all the structures of society that are different from their natural development. Education in traditional dance art, which is at the heart of principles such as creativity, authenticity, and locality, faces many challenges in the face of the hegemonic order that imposes a homogeneous, standardised, and monolithic system. "Post-modern art", which is installed independently from their traditional representation and presentation contexts, such as the normal settings for traditional dance, adds an art value to traditional dances and focuses on them as aesthetic objects. As a result of mutual interactions with other branches of science and art, basic concepts such as anonymity, authenticity, and locality are changing. In the education of traditional dance, the environment of the traditional dance becomes less important, and the philosophy of "common emotion" in dance reduces locality to the individual level, giving a complex multidisciplinary meaning to the traditional dance.¹¹

Today, the population of the world is often concentrated in cities and urban life practices have dominated social life. One of the consequences of this situation is the urbanization of traditional life. The dynamics of migrations from rural to urban areas have caused dance cultures to change, taking on patterns belonging to industrial societies. Political authorities propose this differentiation as an economic model with the concept of prosperity and offer urban solutions to dance practices.

Efforts to ensure continuity of cultural institutions through education is essential for the continuity of the social structure. Freedom in education is possible with a measured level of "conservatism" as well as a sense of education that is open to innovation and drives change. Given that traditional dance education has shifted from its traditional contexts to educational institutions, the particular education program that will be followed at each level becomes very important. In particular, when planning a university-level educational curriculum and employment, ethical values should be taken into account as well as aesthetic values, but also economic conditions.

On the positive side, supported by conservative ideologies since the 2000s, images of traditional dance in the media have increased, and it has been possible to have a greater knowledge of traditional dance education. With digital media, it is easier to access ethnographic dance documents that were previously difficult to find. Those who carry out academic studies in dance have wider access to theoretical and practical data about traditional dance. Today, through new research methods such as netnography, it is possible to access a great deal of data about a particular traditional dance in multiple ways.

With advances in technology, the implementation of dance is growing in ways that were previously beyond imagination. For example, in current times where "metaverse" practices – virtual reality – have entered daily life, three dimensional technologies offer great opportunities for dance education. Artificial intelligence technologies take dance analysis with computer-assisted programs to far greater heights. All of these developments mean that practical and artistic productions in traditional dance education will experience radical shifts in the near future. It is important to consider how to combine "traditional" dance with these technologies. It is important to note that these issues, which should include ethical and aesthetic values in their implementation, have a close relationship with economic and political policies.

Endnotes

- 1 "The presence of folk dances in works of ballet broke new ground in the staging of Russian folk dances and was the beginning of a revolutionary change. The Russian, Igor Moiseyev, who left deep marks in folk dances, sought new lines in the field of art in the Soviet Union after the 1917 revolution which paved the way for the "Moiseyev School of Folk Dances" that was opened within the Moscow Choreographic Academy in 1938." (Ganioglu 2017:347).
- 2 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3PBfeXF5K8>>
- 3 <<https://www.duvarenglish.com/madonna-shares-video-from-istanbul-pride-why-are-there-so-many-police-video-57969>> (access date 17.10.2022)
- 4 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WA5RP4QTQ_Q> (access date 17.10.2022)
- 5 Described as a basic form of social behaviour, social movement is collective behaviour that pushes the boundaries of the system. It occurs when actors combine on the plane of sovereignty and conflict in a certain solidarity through the presentation of demands and complaints of those who came together for a common goal and through individuals' expression of complaints about rights, welfare (prosperity), and well-being by protests in streets.
- 6 <<https://youtu.be/TC3vAsVOrAk>> (access date 17.10.2022)
To the question of "Which dances do you prefer in protests?" in İlker Kızmaz's research the most frequent answer was Halay with 79,35% and second was Horon with 21,94%. (Kızmaz 2017).
- 7 <<https://multeciler.org.tr/turkiyedeki-suriyeli-sayisi/>> (access date 24.09.2020). <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/icisleri-bakan-yardimcisi-tek-tek-acikladi-rakam-rakam-turkiyenin-siginmacilari-42058226#:~:text=%C3%87atak1%C4%B1'n%C4%B1n%20verdi%C4%9Fi%20bilgilere%20g%C3%B6re,4%20milyon%2082%20bin%20693.&text=S%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1nmac%C4%B1lar%C4%B1n%20i%C3%A7indeki%20ge%C3%A7ici%20koruma%20alt%C4%B1ndaki,3%20milyon%20762%20bin%20686>>. (access date 24.09.2020).
- 8 <<https://multeciler.org.tr/multeci-cocuklar-icin-7-bolge-7-cocuk-tiyatro-oyunu/>> (access date 24.09.2020).
- 9 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opNisBGB0DE>> (access date 24.09.2020).
- 10 The desire of the Pamir Kyrgyz ethnic group, who migrated to Turkey from Afghanistan in the 1980s, to rebuild their local dances is an important example for understanding the culture-identity conservation process in a new cultural geography. An educational programme for reviving of the dances of the Pamir Kyrgyz was realised in 2019 with the 'Atayurttan Anayurda: Kırgız Kardeşler Van'da Buluşuyor' ['From Fatherland To Motherland: Kyrgyz Siblings Meet in Van'] project, with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey and the Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism of Kyrgyzstan (<http://mediamanas.kg/>, 2019). Contractual dance instructors came from Kyrgyzstan and taught Kyrgyz language, music, and dance classes in schools. Although supported internationally by political authorities, the dance lessons have not completely reached their desired goals.
- 11 The transmission and education of cultural dance heritage is carried out informally (family, social environment) and formally (school, association). Unusually rapid developments in information societies have affected processes of change, creating metamorphosis in traditional dance and its education. Wars, migrations, social inequality, gender issues, economy, and the recent epidemic diseases all affect world order. For example, the pandemic conditions that have affected the world since 2019 have led to individual and social problems in every field, from economy to education. In this process, the transformation of face-to-face education into a distant education model has particularly affected art education. Education of traditional dance has also suffered in these unfavourable conditions.

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STANDARDIZATION TENDENCIES IN AUSTRIAN DANCE COMMUNITIES

The Austrian dance revival movement is known as *Volkstanzpflege*, which is a programmatic term for organised revitalisation in Austria and Bavaria since the late 19th century. Research and transmitting knowledge have been closely linked from the beginning. This has strongly shaped the concept of "Austrian folk dance" as a living tradition shifting between participation and stage performance. Academic teaching has brought about a paradigm shift in dealing with repertoire and national classification.

Keywords: revitalisation, standardisation, canonisation, education, Austria

Introduction

In Austria, there are various dance communities devoted to traditional dance. Their names refer to their specific concepts. Above all, there is a way of institutionalisation, known as *Volkstanzpflege*, literally meaning 'care', but used more specifically in the sense of fostering. This is a programmatic term for organized revitalisation of dances in Austria and Bavaria that started in the late 19th century. *Volkstanzpflege* can be assigned to two large associations on a national level, the Bund der Trachten- und Heimatverbände (Federation of Traditional Costume and Homeland Associations) and the Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Österreichischer Volkstanz (Federal Association of Austrian Folk Dance) and their organisations in the provinces. You can also find non-organized revitalisation, and dance associations of minorities and immigrants. We distinguish between *Volkstanz*, *Folkloretanz* and folk dance, bal folk, a free scene for European traditional dance improvisation, and many more. The parting line is often drawn in a personal rather than a professional way.

In this paper two of these communities are introduced and characterised. The case studies are based on two scenes taken from material from my field research, even though these examples cannot be fully compared systematically. The presentation of *Volkstanzpflege* as an example of participation, and its standardisation will especially be elaborated, as it had a strong impact on the concept of 'Austrian folk dance'. In contrast to this example, I will give an insight into a dance community – possibly outside *Volkstanzpflege* – in the functional context of its customs. After outlining academic teaching, which has brought a paradigm shift in dealing with repertoire and national classification, a third dance community that is concerned with international folk dance will be presented as an analogy.

Case Study 1

Every year the Viennese Folk Dance Association organizes the Wiener Kathreintanz. Der Ball der Österreichischen Tänze. It is a kind of ballroom dancing in traditional costume with a repertoire of folk dances. The Kathreintanz largely corresponds to the 'folk dance festival' format, which was designed as a model in the context of *Volkstanzpflege* and generally starts with an *Auftanz* (grand march). Usually there is a pre-determined dance sequence, with 40 to 50 selected dances. It ends with a closing circle of all participants, accompanied by a song. However, the Kathreintanz also corresponds to rituals of the Viennese ball tradition as there is an opening ceremony with a specifically designed choreography and a public quadrille.

In 2017 Die Tanzgeiger¹ with Rudolf Pietsch played Puchberger Schottisch mainly for folk dancers from Vienna, Austria and abroad. The prelude initiated the common start of dancing, that led to a simultaneous action. A signature tune introduced the dance with its fixed choreography (Schmidt and Ziegler 2017:05,32–06,15). This dance event is part of *Volkstanzpflege*, in which the framers understood their work as 'scientifically based'. It originated at the beginning of the 20th century and was institutionalised in the 1950s. It is essentially linked to the name of Raimund Zoder (1882–1963), a charismatic researcher and teacher, who promoted both academic research and revitalisation in close connection with each other.

The students of the Zoderschule such as Karl Horak (1908–1992) and Herbert Lager (1907–1992) and many others (Schmidt 2002), served as the authorities until the end of the 20th century. Thus, not only the production, but above all the transmission of knowledge was in their hands and served the revival in the sense of a re-enactment. (Ronström 1996:7, 10).

Following the impulse of the youth movement of the early 20th century, rural dance forms were recorded and used as models for modern urban cultural activities. The notation of dances was almost exclusively described in words for the use of lay people. Attempts were made at labanotation, but they failed to be established, which turned out to be a major shortcoming of Austrian dance research.²

Moreover, the dance descriptions are understood as normative prescriptions. Collectors found a 'wealth of forms' and at the same time gave each example of different variants a specific name, so that they were perceived as works in their own right. Herbert Lager gave a typological overview of the Austrian repertoire in 1986, that was reviewed in 1989 (Lager 1990). According to his paper it consisted mainly of *Steirer* (Styrians) and *Landler, Kleinformen* (short forms) such as *Kreuzpolka, Bayrischpolka/Rheinländer, Neubayrischer, Mazurka, Krebspolka* and *Siebenschritt*, as well as round dances with figures and dance games and comic dances. They were published in many variants in the collections of the different provinces.

As Ulrich Morgenstern (Department of Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology Vienna) notes:

A special feature of the *Pflege* of folk songs (as well as *Volkstanzpflege* in Austria) initiated by Pommer is the high degree of organisation and the strict canonisation of the repertoire that this favoured. (Morgenstern 2015:29; translation Else Schmidt)³

Despite the demand for regionality, the dance canon is valid for the whole of Austria in strict compliance with the dance description. Spontaneity, improvisation, and individualisation can only be seen in isolated cases. The canonisation was particularly promoted by the decision of the leading experts in 1956 to determine so-called *Grundtänze* (basic dances). Initially, twelve dances plus *Auftanz* were agreed upon. The selection was not only based on typological considerations but followed certain ideological views (Waldschütz:35–36).⁴

Austrian dances. Our basic forms was published in 1959 by Herbert Lager and Hermann Derschmidt (1904–1997). It was the declared aim of the group of experts to create an additional common dance repertoire for large national dance festivals, not a standardisation. However, this is exactly what happened. In many cases, the standardised basic dances replaced the diversity of variants. The discussions about the effect of this led to a conscious restrengthening of the regional variants.

The adherence to fixed forms could be explained by dancers' insecurities and lack of mastery of stylistic rules. Nevertheless, or because of this, the ongoing desire for new dance material was great. Therefore, in 1969 Lager published a second part of the book of *Austrian dances* with 18 more dances, which included more than just basic forms (Lager 1969). The repertoire is constantly changing, despite ideas of preservation. Many sung dance games and comic dances have almost completely disappeared and have been become part of children's dances. (Dreier 2012:15) Instead, other European dances or variants, respectively, have been incorporated.

Case Study 2

In the centre of Austria, a mountainous area with many lakes and profitable salt mines brought wealth and privileges to the local population. It is called Salzkammergut and has become one of the favourite residences of the nobility and (Viennese) citizens. In this region cultivating customs still plays a major role. The central part of this area is called Ausseerland, with the municipalities of Bad Aussee, Altaussee and Grundlsee. It has remained largely untouched by organised Pflege and therefore is an outstanding region for field research. The early onset of tourism steered the focus towards the cultivation of tradition. This was encouraged by the collections of the Viennese industrialist Konrad Mautner (1880–1924) in 1910 and the activities of the charismatic teacher Hans Gielge (1901–1970).

In Grundlsee, the shooting club is very active. The Schützentanz (shooters' ball) marks the end of the association's year (Benz and Schmidt 2011). Mainly local visitors come together in their inn for social reasons and to dance to the music of the Citoller Tanzgeiger⁵ with their leader, Hermann Härtel. The musicians come from Eastern Styria. They have been invited for over 30 years and are highly appreciated by the locals.

The introduction to the *Ländler* is signal-like and unifies the music (Schmidt 2020:2/00:46–01:25). However, it does not serve to initiate a harmonised dance action, as it is purely focused on the couple. Although the choreography is fixed in its basic features, it is interpreted individually, without simultaneous movement. Only in the cadenza of the music does everyone come together and join the part for the polyphonic singing and *Paschen* (clapping hands). This does not only happen in the first part, when each couple starts dancing at a different time. The sequence of dancing as well as singing and *Paschen* is repeated three times, and it is followed by a final dance part. Even though the people of Ausseerland are dealing freely with ways of dancing on social occasions, the Volkstanzgruppe Altaussee is trained to perform simultaneously.

The repertoire at the time of Herbert Lager's dance research in this region in the 1960s and 1970s (Lager 1976, 1978, 1979) is listed as *Ländler* and *Steirer* (Styrian), *Schleuniger*, *Waldhansl*, *Kreuzpolka*, *Hiatamadl*, *Siebenschritt*, *Schottisch* (= *Bayrischpolka*), *Mit'n Kopf zamm*, and *Bummelpetrus*. These are only seven short forms or round dances with figures in addition to the *Ländler* forms. The repertoire is constantly changing: *Kreuzpolka*, *Hiatamadl* and *Siebenschritt* have been seen less and less during my field work since 2005. Instead, social dances of the early 20th century, such as tango and foxtrot have been included in certain cases.

Teaching Austrian folk dance

As experts of *Volkstanzpflege* felt responsible for preserving and maintaining the cultural heritage in its purest form they claimed to be the sole authority of interpretation and imparting knowledge (Pecher-Havers 2022:82). As already explained, *Volkstanzpflege* has always combined research, publishing, and teaching. In the 1920s and 30s, the 'radio' came to be the new technology for spreading songs and dances (Brodli 2009:543),⁶ yet it was used in a rather ideological and manipulative way (Froihofer 2011:185). Likewise, urban and rural popular educational institutions successfully used the latest technical aids and the provision of finance to present the transfer of knowledge as an experience (Gamsjäger 2008; Froihofer 2011:123).

The integration into academic teaching after the end of World War II offered a special opportunity for social influence. At the Department of Music Education of today's University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna Zoder taught *Brauchtum und Volksliedkunde* (tradition and folk song studies) from 1945, (Brodli 2009:542) and Herbert Lager from 1953 to 1976. He also taught *Volkstanz* at the dance department and later even at the music therapy department (Benz and Schmidt 2010:689).⁷ Theory and practice were taught authentically to the national ideas of *Volkstanzpflege*, the focus for dance was on the designated Austrian canon.

When Walter Deutsch (*1923) and his assistants Sepp Gmasz (*1949) and later Rudolf Pietsch (1951–2020) took over the lecturing, dance initially receded into the background. Nevertheless, in the early 1980s, folk dance was briefly offered as an optional exercise by Walter Deutsch, which heralded the paradigm shift in the teaching of folk dance. The correspondence of movement and music, and not 'doing it right', moved to the fore. Accordingly, he began with rhythmic step exercises in a circle, to train the way of walking (Deutsch and Schmidt 2022:1/18:53.46–20:33.05). Rudolf Pietsch and Hermann Härtel (*1949) represented a "radical break with institutionalised *Volksmusikpflege*" (Morgenstern 2015:37, translation Else Schmidt), and thus also exerted a major influence on it. Above all they "stand for the close and lasting symbiosis of field-based performance practice and academic research" (Morgenstern 2015:37, translation Else Schmidt).

In the late 1970s, the holistic view, which means the unity of vocal and instrumental music and dance, was discussed anew – from the point of view of musicians. It was

specifically about the aesthetics of music-making, [...] phrasing and tempo - in addition to the handing down of regionally related [...] folk music. The idea was: only when you have also danced this music, [...] physically internalised it, can it also be played accordingly. (Gmasz and Schmidt 2022, translation Else Schmidt)⁸

In 2002, Rudolf Pietsch finally succeeded in anchoring *Bewegungs- und Tanzpraktikum* (movement and dance practical) in the curriculum at the department of music education. In his courses he played the violin and encouraged students to play along. In this way, he addressed performance-practical matters of dance music. It was about dancing itself and not necessarily about a repertoire. The selection referred to the basic types of dance music, and only a few short forms, supplemented by circle dances. Students from different ethnicities were included in the classes with their dance experience. Another specific feature was the cooperation with the Hungarian Tanzhaz movement in Vienna and Budapest. Likewise, a visit to the Wiener Kathreintanz has always been recommended. In cooperation with lecturers at the Institute of Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology, students perform for one hour in several music ensembles on different traditions.

Case Study 3

Since the 1950s, Austrian *Volkstanzpflege* has developed an interest in international dances. This new approach arose in the wake of a growing opening towards different national traditions in folk dancing due to experiences in international congresses and 'good-will-tours'. Some of the European dances, which they learned there, made their way into the Austrian folk dance repertoire under new names, such as *Fröhlicher Kreis/Circassian Circle*.

Numerous Austrian dance collections have been edited by different organisations of *Volkstanzpflege*. Courses were held as a "look beyond the horizons". In contrast to the practice of Austrian folk dance, which is performed almost exclusively with live music, *Folkloretanz* relies on recorded music, as there are very few ensembles that have learned this repertoire. In the beginning the publishers Walter Kögler and Fidula were driving forces to spread *Folkloretanz* throughout the German-speaking world. The records included printed dance descriptions.

In 1980 Raimund Sobotka (*1933) founded a regular dance group in Vienna. He also contributed to the publications of the *Foreign dances* from the beginning. He himself is anchored in *Volkstanzpflege* and he is the key figure of *Folkloretanz* in Austria. The repertoire of this Folkloretanz-Tanzclub was created by attending dance courses in Austria and abroad and thus appears to be equally canonised. There is a pool of about 500 dances from all over the world, with a focus on South-Eastern Europe.⁹ About 150 titles are regularly requested and on one evening about 30 dances are performed (Schmidt 2022:IV, V).

Due to the increasing number of dances an exclusive group of experts has been developing. Although participatory dance is offered, not every member can join in, which applies just as much to *Volkstanzpflege*. In many cases dancers prefer to learn different variants of a dance type but they fail to use them as source for individual improvisation based on the inherent rules. Some of the new members try to improvise, even if they have not fully internalised the rules but they often face comments from the older members who claim the authority to judge what is right and wrong.

Final remarks

Mario Herger from Vienna started posting dance descriptions on a private website in 1997. Since 2001 he has been living in Silicon Valley as a technology trend researcher. At this time, he and other dance-loving website operators agreed on a joint project dancilla.com, which made information on dances from all over the world available free of charge as regards text, music, video, and images, as well as references to groups and literature. The focus of this website is on the repertoire danced in Austria and Germany. The acceptance and range of this website are enormous. To my knowledge, the effects on Austrian dance communities of this homepage or of folk-dance learning apps have not yet been systematically studied. However, from the experience of my students' preference of dance clips more standardisation is likely to be one of the main effects.

Conclusion

Case study 1 shows today's dance activities within Viennese *Volkstanzpflege*, as initiated by Raimund Zoder and his students at the beginning of the 20th century. The transfer of rural dance forms into the urban environment led to a new tradition, with a relatively strict folk-dance canonisation. Case study 2 shows dance in the functional context of local customs. Even though local people usually deal freely with their dances on social occasions, harmonisation takes place in the context of stage performances. The insistence on their own traditional repertoire has had a great impact on the identity of this region. Case study 3 gives an insight into a dance community with an increasingly standardised repertoire within a global framework. Moreover, the availability of dance videos and descriptions in the digital media reinforces the tendency of standardisation. To sum up, the notation of dances led to fixed versions as works in their own right and demands for faithfulness to the original. The tendency to simultaneous and harmonious dancing reinforced standardisation, together with the influence of role models.

Endnotes

- 1 Die Tanzgeiger: Rudolf Pietsch, Theresia Aigner (violins), Klaus Huber (trumpet), Dieter Schickbichler (trombone), Marie Therese Stickler (diatonic harmonica), Michael Gmasz (viola), Sebastian Rastl (doublebass).
- 2 My colleague Nicola Benz, among others, has worked on the development of notation in Austrian folk dance: "Die Tanznotation in der Volkstanzforschung" [Dance notation in folk dance research] *Schrift als Dekor* (61):55–72. Vienna: Phoibos Verlag.
- 3 "Eine Besonderheit der von Pommer initiierten Pflege des Volkslieds (wie auch der Volkstanzpflege in Österreich) ist der hohe Organisationsgrad und die hierdurch begünstigte strenge Kanonisierung des Repertoires." (Morgenstern 2015:29)
- 4 Austrian experts contributed in designing a canon of "German dances", proclaimed in 1939. An ideological orientation is clearly recognisable. Nevertheless, table 7 in Waldschütz' dissertation must be read with reservation.
- 5 Citoller Tanzgeiger: Hermann and Inge Härtel (violins), Hubert Pabi (harmonica), Vincenz Härtel (viola), Ewald Rechberger (tuba)
- 6 Following the "Open Singing" of Karl M. Klier (1892–1966), which RAVAG Radio Wien broadcast, a four-part public event series "We Learn Folk Dances" was also broadcast from the Vienna Konzerthaus in 1935.

- 7 Herbert Lager's estate contains his scripts and catalogues. He noted about the legitimisation of folk dance after World War II: "Significant 'gleaning' of research. [...]
4 functions of dance cultivation stand out clearly:
 1. folk dance as a sociable-festive form of expression
 2. folk dance as a show performance (partly commercialised)
 3. folk dance as a means of international contact (new development)
 4. folk dance as a form of musical and rhythmic education. (Lager [-]: [9])
- 8 "Es ging – neben der Tradierung regionalbezogener burgenländischer Volksmusik – speziell um die Ästhetik des Musizierens, also Phrasierung und Tempo. Die Idee war: Nur wenn man diese Musik auch getanzt, also körperlich verinnerlicht hat, kann sie auch dementsprechend musiziert werden. Wichtig war immer auch, dass ältere Musikanten ins Team geholt wurden, die Überlieferungsträger ihrer eigenen authentischen Spielpraxis waren." (Gmasz and Schmidt 2022)
- 9 The phenomenon that Radboud Koop pointed out in his paper "The international folk dance repertoire: labelled commodities and the myth of village sources" during the 32nd Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology in Brežice, Slovenia 2022, has equally been taking place in *Folkloretanz* in Austria.

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LOCAL DANCE KNOWLEDGE ON VIDEO

This paper discusses a video series that presents the *sabar* dance tradition and its past and current practice in Senegal. The primary target audience of the video series is foreign dance students who often lack contextual information of *sabar* dance, but it also records dance knowledge for future generations in Senegal. The video series is also an effort to shift the focus from the researcher's interpretations to the dance knowledge of local experts as they wish to present it themselves.

Keywords: Senegal, *sabar* tradition, dance knowledge, knowledge transfer, expertise

Introduction

This paper discusses a video series that presents the *sabar* dance tradition, with information about its past and current practice in Senegal. The video series was planned and filmed in collaboration with dancer-choreographer Pape Moussa Sonko, who is the current artistic director of the National Ballet "La Linguère" of Senegal. The primary target audience of the video series is foreign dance students who often lack contextual information of the *sabar* dance movements and choreographies they learn in dance classes. However, Sonko expressed the desire that it would also be important to record the information he and the members of the National Ballet have for young people and future generations in Senegal, because the rapid changes in the *sabar* dance scene, and the lack of formal education for traditional dance in Senegal, are causing dance knowledge to get lost.

Planning of the video series started in late 2020 when I was in Dakar to do fieldwork for my postdoctoral project focusing on the cultural knowledge of *sabar* dancing as it becomes embodied in different kind of events and performances. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, my plans for fieldwork had to be changed drastically, because for several months all kinds of celebrations and gatherings were completely prohibited and thereby none of the dance events – that I had been planning to observe – took place. As a consequence, I visited my long-time *sabar* dance teacher Pape Moussa Sonko quite often, and sometimes attended his online dance classes in person in his living room and stayed afterwards to eat and to chat. From time to time I also went to the National Theatre "Daniel Sorano" to watch the National Ballet's rehearsals, which were still going on despite the restrictions. As a result of several discussions, we then recorded the materials for the video series in 2021.

Background

I have been working with the Senegalese *sabar* tradition, both music and dance, for about 20 years. My doctoral thesis discussed the social and choreomusical interactions in *sabar* dance events (Seye 2014), and it was during my fieldwork for the thesis in 2005–2006 in Dakar when I got to know Pape Moussa Sonko, who then became one of my *sabar* dance teachers. At that time he was one of the few younger male dancers in the National Ballet, but he was also getting more widely known in Dakar for a his small all-male dance group that appeared on pop music videos and performed, when invited, also at larger *sabar* events (see also Seye 2016 on male *sabar* dancers). Around the same time he was also picked up by the world-famous Senegalese pop star Youssou Ndour to perform as a solo dancer at Ndour's concerts both in Senegal and abroad, which he continues to do until today despite other engagements. Since then, Sonko has gained a fame

incomparable to any other Senegalese dancer active today, and, in early 2021, he became the artistic director of the National Ballet. Probably it is also worth mentioning, that most members of Sonko's family are dancers and musicians, and many of his siblings live abroad. Both of his parents are former dancers of the National Ballet, and his father Bouly Sonko also a long-time artistic director of the troupe (see also Castaldi 2006:157–162).

Due to his manifold involvement in the Senegalese dance scene, Pape Moussa Sonko speaks from the point of view of an acknowledged dance expert. Already years ago, he had told me that he also wants to write a book on the *sabar* – with reference to my book, i.e., my doctoral thesis. As I brought this up in a casual conversation one day, he responded something along the lines of "now that you have written your book, you could start writing mine". Since I had planned to focus on cultural knowledge embodied in dance in my research, I was obviously also interested in the ways he and other Senegalese dancers would express their dance knowledge. Therefore, I suggested that maybe we could start recording videos where Sonko explains the things he would like to include in his book. He agreed with my observation that people these days prefer to watch videos on YouTube and other social media platforms than read books if they want to know more about something, so working on "his book" in video format made sense.

For the planning of the video series, it was significant that Sonko is also very experienced in teaching *sabar* and other Senegalese dances to foreigners. As a consequence, our discussions about the possible contents of the videos relied a lot on our shared knowledge of the *sabar* dance activities outside Senegal in addition to his awareness of my previous research on the *sabar*. It was clear from the beginning that the main target audience for the video series would be foreign dance students learning *sabar* dances, who often learn them in group classes where the focus is on learning movements and choreographies, whereas contextual information is less often shared. Also the skills needed to combine appropriate movement patterns into a solo and communicate with the soloist of the drum ensemble while dancing such a solo, are rarely taught in dance classes, although they are considered essential by most Senegalese experts (Seye 2014:70–74).

During our discussions, Pape Moussa Sonko also expressed a concern for younger generations of Senegalese dancers, whose knowledge of the *sabar* tradition is often limited. *Sabar* dancing is no longer an indispensable part of any happy celebration, as it used to be, and there is also practically no formal education available in Senegal for learning traditional dances such as the *sabar*. This, combined with the rapid changes in the popular *sabar* dance scene (fueled for example by dance challenges on social media), is in Sonko's view causing the local dance knowledge to get lost. Therefore, he saw the video series also as an opportunity to document local dance knowledge for future generations of Senegalese dancers.

The making of the video series thus started out as a project of documenting the knowledge of Senegalese experts about the *sabar* tradition with the intention of producing educational materials for foreign students of *sabar* dance and new research materials for myself. On my part, producing a video series was also an effort to work in a more collaborative and possibly decolonizing way, influenced by recent discussions on decolonization and a related push towards collaborative research methods in music and dance studies (e.g., Tan and Ostashewski 2022). The idea thus was to (re)present local dance knowledge in a way that would center on the voices of local experts instead of being mediated through the academic language of a (in my case white European) researcher in the conventional written form of a scholarly article or book. The video format also enabled the inclusion of practical demonstrations of *sabar* dancing that would have been much harder to explain effectively in words or represent through graphical notations. All of this makes the knowledge presented in the video series more accessible to non-academic audiences in both Senegal and abroad.

The contents of the series

I divided the materials filmed for the video series into five thematic episodes of ca. 15–30 minutes each, and a sixth one where Pape Moussa Sonko presents himself and talks about his career. The first episode (1) introduces the *sabar* tradition and the various occasions where it takes place, the second (2) presents the structure of a *sabar* dance event, the third (3) the basic structures of *sabar* dance solos and their relationship to dance rhythms, and the fourth and fifth (4–5) discuss the evolution of the *sabar* dancing from slightly different perspectives: The fourth episode focuses on the concrete changes in the dance movements and the style of dancing. It includes demonstrations by members of the National Ballet. The fifth explains more broadly the processes of change that are going on and in particular the changes that have occurred since *sabar* dances have become a part of pop music performances and music videos. Apart from the fourth episode on the evolution of *sabar* dancing, also the second and third episodes include practical music and dance demonstrations by members of the National Ballet. The structure of the *sabar* dance event is explained by the Ballet's lead drummer Baye Mboup, and the relationship between dance and music is explained by him and Sonko together.

The video series is thus a combination of lecture (at times interview) and practical demonstrations of basic elements of the *sabar* dancing. The language spoken is French, which was chosen instead of the native Wolof, because that would make the materials directly accessible to any Francophone audiences, including most Senegalese youth. Therefore only English subtitles had to be added to reach a very broad audience around the world.



Figure 1. Pape Moussa Sonko demonstrating different styles of *sabar* dancing with the percussionists of the National Ballet (photo taken by the author while filming the video series).

Whose knowledge is this?

Although the video series, in my view, captures well many central aspects of *sabar* dancing, I am a bit hesitant to say that the video series would be simply a (re)presentation of local dance knowledge, although the knowledge is presented by local dance experts. I was not only taking care of most practicalities of making the video series but I also influenced its contents in many ways. I would usually suggest the theme that I would like Sonko to talk about on a particular day of filming, picking from a list of themes I had written down during previous conversations, but there was no advance script to the contents filmed. Instead, since Sonko had explicitly asked me to ask questions while filming, I quite often did and suggested, for example, that he explained or clarified certain concepts that he had mentioned, or pointed out an issue that I felt he should

still talk about. We proceeded in a similar way in the filming session with other members of the National Ballet. Furthermore, I did all the editing, often changing the order of things discussed to make the discussion on the topic at hand more logical (from my point of view). I did send the edited videos to Sonko so that he would check them before I added English subtitles, but he requested no changes to any of them.

My knowledge and views on the *sabar* tradition and its transmission in and out of Senegal thus certainly influenced the contents of the series. For a person watching the series it may very well seem that I have simply captured on video what Sonko and members of the National Ballet have presented: I am not seen at any point and the questions I posed while filming were edited out whenever possible, so even my voice is mostly absent from the final edit. As a consequence, I was left wondering if the process of making the video series was after all that different from fieldwork and writing an academic article or book, since I also in this case initiated the process, negotiated the plan with collaborators, kept asking about possible contents as well as dates when Sonko and others would be available for filming, and finally edited the materials. Most of the information presented in the video series, had actually already been presented previously in my doctoral thesis and other academic writings on the *sabar*, but whereas academic writing inevitably centers the "voice" of the researcher, in the video series my contribution is not directly observable to the viewer.

An additional concern was the ownership and value of the knowledge presented in the video series. We decided to publish it on an online platform (Udemy) where people would have to pay for watching it. According to the principles of open science, I should have made the video series open access (the funding I was working on actually requires this), but on the other hand I felt that also the intellectual property rights of local experts should be respected and they should be compensated for sharing their knowledge, as they would when teaching a dance class, for example. Although I was ultimately able to pay some money from my postdoctoral funding to Sonko and the members of the National Ballet appearing in the series, it still seemed reasonable that they would receive some revenues when people view the series.

As some kind of a conclusion, I would say that the working process in this video project was not very different from the research work I have been doing on the *sabar* tradition previously. Collaborating with local dance experts and building on their knowledge are probably central elements in most ethnographic studies of dance. However, the video series as a publication centers the voices of my collaborators instead of mine, and therefore my efforts for a decolonizing research approach might be judged at least partially successful. But the video format also leads to questions of authorship and intellectual property rights that should probably be considered more carefully even when the final result of the research is a book or an article written by the researcher.

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DANCE FOLKLORISM IN THE LIGHT OF CULTURAL POLITICS IN SLOVENIA

Political circumstances and science have influenced the form of production of folkdance groups in Slovenia. A specific aesthetic of groups was established, which represented a form of authenticity acceptable to the state. On this basis, the performances of folkdance groups are placed in the broader museum discourse. The response to this, however, comes from productions that opposed such approaches, and the so-called creative model of promoting the production of folklore groups develops.

Keywords: Slovenia, folk dance, dance aesthetics, cultural policies, dance evaluation

Introductory framework

The form of production of folkdance groups in Slovenia is the product of a decades-long process, which is also strongly linked to the development of cultural policies in both the present-day Republic of Slovenia and the former Republic of Yugoslavia. One of the key turning points in the development of cultural policies in the field of folkdance groups was the establishment of the Public Fund of the Republic of Slovenia for Cultural Activities (sln. Javni sklad Republike Slovenije za kulturne dejavnosti – JSKD),¹ the successor organisation to the non-governmental organisation called the Association of Cultural Organisations of Slovenia (sln. Zveza kulturnih organizacij Slovenije). The association was an institution established in the aftermath of the World War II, which carried out certain activities in the public interest in the field of supporting amateur cultural activities in Yugoslavia. In 1996, its role was taken over by the state-founded JSKD. With its network of branches at regional and local level, the JSKD covers the whole of Slovenia and parts abroad.² JSKD took a strategic decision early on to establish a three-tier pyramid system for all fields of art it covers.³ Every amateur cultural association can enter the system and be evaluated based on certain criteria as to what quality level it achieves. This system has been in operation in a more or less refined form since 1996.

The JSKD is central to amateur culture, as it is the central state institution operating compared to other mainly western European countries within a highly centralised cultural model and thus has various consequences for the production of folkdance groups. On the one hand, the JSKD's activities bring permanent support to NGOs and thus enable them to operate in relatively stable systemic conditions, but on the other hand, due to its programme orientations and pyramid system, it can have a strong influence on the development of the production guidelines of the entire network of NGOs in the field of amateur culture, including folkdance groups. Since folkdance groups in Slovenia are exclusively amateur⁴ and do not have any professional dancers, choreographers, pedagogues, musicians, or singers in this field at all, the guidelines for the activities of the JSKD are all the more important. The JSKD carries out criteria to encourage or oppose certain production approaches in the field of amateurism and, due to the exclusively amateur nature of folklore activities in particular, has an extremely strong influence on it.

The development of the folkdance group system: a historical perspective

France Marolt (1891–1951) was the first systematic researcher of dance culture in Slovenia. He understood the mission of folkdance groups as a form of stage performance, where the groups' programmes have a stage narrative, costume design, operate in the context of different theatrical

venues (mostly theatre stages), the dances and music are artistically treated, and the dancers and musicians are costumed and perform for the audience. It should be noted here that Marolt had a distinctive vision for the development of this cultural sector, which was never definitively realised. In the Yugoslav context of the time, he explicitly rejected the so-called "Western approaches" to folklore activities. In the spirit of the post-World War II era and the former socialist ideology, on one hand Marolt saw the Western understanding of art and the related performance of folklore as degenerate. These approaches were for him too close to new jazz, pop-culture and other avant-garde artistic practices of the time. He was closer to the idea of building a new socialist human, in which art, and thus directly also folklore activities, play an important role (Marolt 1948, 1949). On the other hand, Marolt also refused to follow the ideas, style and understanding of folklorism as conceived by Igor Moisseev in Eastern Europe. In his post-war reports to the Yugoslav Central Committee of the Communist Party, he refused to do so, despite the fact that he and Moisseev had also worked together. According to Marolt's opinion, Moisseev's approach was too much influenced by ballet and did not reflect "the folk soul" (Marolt 1947:4).

Since the early development of folkdance groups in Slovenia the basic principles of dance stagecraft have not been developed in the way they were known in some other countries of the former Eastern bloc. The concept of the dance house or other forms of folk dance movement, as it is known in Hungary or elsewhere, for example, never came to life in Slovenia. The production of folklore groups has therefore been strongly influenced by the conceptualisation of the notion of folk dance and the question of what should and should not be understood as "folk". Gradually, in the decades following the death of France Marolt (1951), the idea of what aesthetics of stage production folkdance groups should follow took shape. The choreographers of the time based it on the notion of a stage-reworked form of dance, music and costume design, which they believed should still reflect the more or less 'authentic' and 'real' image of certain folk dances. The choreography was thus shaped by the promotion and presentation of a certain aesthetics of choreographic and musical approach, which remained as the dominant model for many decades. In particular, the emergence of core collections of folk-dance recordings,⁵ largely modelled on German folk dance collections template, has shaped the image of 'real folk dance' as performed by folkdance groups. This canon,⁶ as Martin Scharfe (1970) generally notes, has uncritically replaced a broader theoretical reflection on methodology of data collection and paradigmatic orientations. This is also true for Slovenian ethnochoreology. Some researchers have thus started from a view of a proto-form⁷ of folkness, from an essence of the folk and a predetermined basis of folkness that is prescribed and given and thus defines the human being. Some of these researchers were often also choreographers and constantly affirmed something like folkness (including the folkness of dance), while obsessively affirming and seeking the latter without any real theoretical reflection (Scharfe 1970:74–78).

At that time, folkdance groups in Slovenia were part of a broader process, which Utz Jeggle defined as the process of building a "folk human". This created a field that was no longer perceived analytically, but emotionally (Jeggele 1986:23). The image of the primordial world of dance and music took on different representational forms. In Slovenia, these were various folklore-related festivals: *Kravji bal* (Cows Ball) in Bohinj Valley, *Kmečka ohcet* (Rural Wedding) in Ljubljana, *Dnevi narodnih noš in oblačilne dediščine* (Days of National Costumes and Clothing Heritage) in Kamnik, different parades with demonstrations of various farm works, etc. The programmes of folkdance groups played a key role in these festivals.

This approach that constructed the true folkness and the interpretation of dance records in the context of folkdance groups has had important consequences. This led to the concept called the "theatre of history" or "living museum". It was developed in Slovenia in the 1990s by Janez Bogataj when observing the performative practices of the time. Although he often used the term

theatre of history, he never theoretically elaborated and supported it (Bogataj 1992).⁸ Bogataj's concept of theatre of history pushed folklore activities towards museum discourses, which had far-reaching consequences for the production of folkdance groups.⁹ The groups became the guardians of authentic folkness, which, according to the interpretation of the time, is presented as the best possible approximation, shown in the theatrical performances of folkdance groups. The choreographers thus became not artists, but rather museum curators. Choreographies were not artistic works, but museum artefacts. The theatre of history, and thus the work of folkdance groups, found itself in a field where the state, with the help of the JSKD and their experts, determined the more or less appropriate form of choreography. In this process, an important role in the dissemination of these ideas was played by mostly amateur connoisseurs who acted as selectors of folkdance groups and were paid and hired by JSKD. JSKD thus supported and established a relatively narrow aesthetics of understanding the stage choreography of folkdance groups, based on already established practices and ethnochoreological notions of authentic folkness of dance.

The choreographic aesthetics, which were supposed to represent the folk dance and its historical image in choreographed theatrical performances, were based on a few uncritical items. The aesthetics promoted by the JSKD were aimed at technically inferior performances of dance, music and singing, as they were supposed to be more akin to the unskilled peasant of the past, who had no schooling in dance, music and singing. The retreat from more technically sophisticated modes of performance practices with a specific aesthetic approach gave the idea of an authentic image of folkness. An analysis of this process in the European context has been made by Kaspar Maase (Maase 2014).

What Maase notes in general also applies to the present case of dance and music re-creation in Slovenia. Some researchers but mostly amateur connoisseurs in the history of dance and music in Slovenia were at the same time also choreographers and arrangers of the music accompanying folkdance groups. In their work, they retreated from knowledge about the influence of popular culture and educational system on the development of these two phenomena. They understood folk dance and music as a hermetically sealed system that is completely self-contained, as popular culture and educational system should have almost no influence on it. The cultural politics, policies, and guidance of folkdance groups, through their professional guidelines and the state infrastructure, were thus focused on the creation of a specific stage aesthetics, which was the product of an uncritical belief that it reflected a more authentic image of the dance and music of the past. This approach, with the help of the folkdance groups, shaped a peculiar utopian image of the cultural history of dance and music.

At the same time, the principle of folk-dance re-creation was strongly linked to discourses on cultural heritage. In the name of the care and protection of intangible cultural heritage, any deviation from the established aesthetics or other norms of folkdance groups' productions was negatively evaluated. This approach came to be understood as the museum principles of folkdance groups. They were supposed to present an embellished image of the past. The museum mission of folkdance groups gained further impetus in the 1990s, with Slovenian independence. This not only emphasised a romanticised image of folk dance, but also began to even stronger highlight its Slovenian national character. Two decades after the independence, the principles of understanding the mission of folkdance groups and the ways of evaluating their productions were in increasing crisis. This was increasingly reflected in the choreographies of younger choreographers among the folkdance groups and consequently the increasingly loud demands for change of evaluation system.

Since 2004 each year, the JSKD convene all the selectors of folkdance, music and singing groups and hold an annual consultation to set the guidelines for the coming year, while also evaluating the previous year's programmes. Despite the fact that around 2010 the programmes of younger choreographers, which visibly deviated from the existing mainstream practices, were

already beginning to emerge, the JSKD, with the help of the selectors, at best tolerated them, but certainly did not encourage them. Several singing, acting and dancing practices were actively discouraged on this basis. These were to depart too far from established choreographic and musical aesthetic forms, as encouraged by the JSKD, because of their different authorial approaches.

Bojan Knific, then independent producer for folklore activities department at the JSKD, wrote in 2010 in concern about too many departures from the prescribed norms: "Attempts of some folklore groups to prepare music-dance-scene works by in which authorship is more noticeable than the tradition itself, deviate from the guidelines followed by the JSKD in the framework of folklore activities" (Knific 2010:7). Such an approach, where the state and its institutions enter the field of production of folkdance groups and other recreators of the tradition, has led to the formation of a specific state prescribed and acceptable form and aesthetics of choreography. After 2015, Bojan Knific, the long-standing folklore advisor at the JSKD, stepped down. He was followed by several other consultants and two different approaches to folklore activity began to be articulated: a prescriptive and a creative approach. The former was based on the notion of 'true' folkness and the aesthetics that should represent it. On this basis, it very clearly encouraged only certain ways of designing folkdance group programmes. Especially with the change of generations and a different understanding of the folklore activities sector, the creative model of presentation folkdance groups has evolved, especially after 2018. Unlike the first one, this one did not start from a predefined image of folkness that folkdance group production should approach.

Between the prescriptive and the creative model

Over the decades of the development of ethnochoreological practices in Slovenia, the JSKD has developed a model that has greatly concretised the orientations and principles of folkdance groups. Anything that deviated from already established practices of singing, dancing or instrumental music was excluded from the system. As already mentioned, the cultural model in Slovenia, compared to other especially West European countries, is also highly centralised in the field of amateurism. This has resulted in a relatively restrictive cultural policy, which has been justified within the framework of heritage discourses. In the name of heritage care, appropriate and inappropriate practices of folkdance groups were thus prescribed. A cursory analysis of the specific approaches and regulations shows that the JSKD encouraged:

- The verbatim reproduction of dances according to field recording were promoted, while on the other hand paradoxically allowing them to be choreographically altered. What was or was not acceptable was judged by selectors. Notwithstanding the fact that this was never quite directly formalised in the evaluating criteria, preference was often given to performers who performed a technically slightly inferior programme. Technically sophisticated programmes were jargonised as 'too sterile'.

- Technically better folkdance groups were only formally involved in the general selection of folkdance groups. While the other groups were subject to evaluation and thus to the possibility of performing at national folklore festivals, the better groups were given the opportunity to perform at such festivals every few years only by agreement and not systematically.

- Musical arrangements and performances followed the principles that had developed as a form of folklorism. An example of this was the overemphasis on slow music performances, which were often so slow that dancers could no longer dance.

- The groups' programmes often overemphasised the differences between (micro)regions. This practice was based on uncritical interpretation and an essentialist and positivist reading of historical sources.

- The idea of the transmission of dances of anonymous dancers through generations and the consequent transmission of dances to the stage created a discourse that emphasised the apparent

minimisation of authorial choreographic interventions in the dance performances of folklore groups.

- The customization of the groups was based on a discourse of seeking the most authentic and historical image possible. In reality, however, the folkdance groups' costumes have a distinctly stage-embellished and stylised look. However, the use of any kind of body adornment was not allowed (no make-up, no painted nails, tattoos on the body had to be covered up, etc.). The use of glasses was also forbidden, unless they had a special shape, as they had been known in the past.

- Groups' programmes could be relatively long. Initially more than 12 minutes, later their length was reduced. The reason for this lay in the fact that choreographies had rather poor dynamics. In addition, the aesthetics were increasingly moving away from contemporary aesthetic understandings of performance practices.¹⁰

- The use of old instruments and playing techniques was encouraged, but often not sufficiently mastered by the musicians.

- Singing was encouraged without initial intonation, without accompanying instruments, and without a style that was related to bel canto singing techniques or approached the sound of choral or other trained manners of singing.

The concrete orientations promoted by the JSKD described above were based on a top-down approach. In the name of protecting cultural heritage, a series of criteria were put in place to define cultural production. In doing so, the JSKD followed the model of cultural policies as they were known in the former Yugoslavia. As Lynn D. Manners' analysis notes on this topic, the state was the key cultural producer there and the model of JSKD operations described here correlates strongly with the findings of Manners (2002). The groups and their choreographers had to follow these guidelines due to the evaluations of selectors, to satisfy criteria to advance in the three-tier pyramid system of JSKD operations and consequently to qualify for festivals and financing. Experiments that deviated from this model were evaluated negatively.¹¹

Over the last decade, pressure on this type of cultural policies of the JSKD has been growing. Gradually, a new creative approach has been developed within the existing three-tier system of the JSKD. This emphasises two guidelines. The first is based on a different principle of evaluating the productions of folkdance groups. The aim is to encourage quality productions by folkdance groups and their innovation. The second objective pursues the desire to support folkdance and music societies and their members to develop programmes in line with their own objectives and needs and to integrate them into the wider system of the JSKD.

The new guidelines for evaluating groups are not based on the idea of approximating authenticity. The evaluation consists of three parts: programme design, technical delivery, and interpretation. Each of these categories has further sub-categories. In more concrete terms, the programme design is assessed in terms of the clarity of the stage narrative, dynamics, the appropriateness of the choice of dances and music to the context as intended by the choreographer. The technical performance is assessed in terms of rhythmic accuracy, unity of performance, control of dance formations and coordination of the dancers. The interpretation is assessed in terms of the experience and interpretative skills of the dancers. All the evaluation criteria are based on the general principles and laws of stage performance (Guidelines for the evaluation of folkdance groups 2023). The consequences of this, according to the analysis of today's selectors and the independent producer for folklore activity, are as follows:

- This approach seeks to open up the dance genre of folkdance groups towards new and different dance approaches, while at the same time making the level of evaluation of the performance of folkdance groups significantly more objective than before.

- Critical evaluation of the romantic painting of the past, creativity of stakeholders, reflection and a holistic approach to dance programming are encouraged. The evaluation criteria are based on the goal of the individual choreographer or group, rather than the other way around, where, through

the authority of the selectors, certain more or less desirable forms of choreography were prescribed.

– With the new method, the state has had to relinquish a form of power and influence that it initially exercised through narrow guidelines for dance production. At the same time, it has opened a systemic rethinking of the meaning and purpose of amateur creation in general.

– If the past prescriptive model of creating choreographies often resulted in the production of technically inferior performances the creative model rewards also this side.

Instead of conclusion

Preliminary analyses show that within a few years there has been a significant increase in the technical and substantive quality of the performance of groups entering the three-tier competition system of the JSKD. This is reflected in the latest national folkdance group competitions in Žalec, which show an extremely rapid increase in the number of programmes that are closer to the contemporary audience and require an integrated approach even in their design and preparation (Evaluation 2023).

The way in which the selectors who evaluate folklore activities are trained has also changed considerably. Their primary task today is to encourage folkdance groups to pursue their own goals and to help them to make sense of their activities. They should not act authoritatively but supportively towards the groups.

Despite the new approaches, there are systemic problems. The very model of the JSKD, based on a three-tier pyramidal evaluation system, is indicative of the fact that some folkdance groups may not want to participate in a competitive system and not follow the quality of the programme and performance. The JSKD does not offer such groups an alternative with the current way of working. It is therefore essential to make the existing system as integrative as possible. For the same reason there will need to be a wider public discourse and reflection on new cultural model and programme guidelines for the JSKD that complement the existing three-tier system. Systemic support for folkdance groups seems to be urgently needed, as this is the only sector in the field of culture and the arts in Slovenia where only amateurs are active. For this reason, it is highly vulnerable.

Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.jskd.si/>
- 2 An autochthon Slovenian minority with a network of amateur cultural associations lives in the border area of Austria, Italy, and Hungary.
- 3 It covers folklore activities (dance, vocal and instrumental music), historical dances, dance, instrumental music, literature, theatre and puppetry, fine arts, photography, and film.
- 4 There are several professional NGOs or public institutions covering all other cultural fields in Slovenia, but folklore activities sector for example has been deliberately left to the amateurs. In Slovenia, however, folklore activities are not only linked to dancing, but also include musical and singing groups involved in (re-)creating various forms of folk music.
- 5 These are series of publications that were largely published as dance collections. The collections contained field research data on folk dances later reconstructed and put to labanotation. Most of them have been published from 1980s until the early 2000s. The main author of these collections was Mirko Ramovš (1980, 1995, 1996, 1997 etc.). Bruno Ravnikar also played an important role (1980, 2004).
- 6 When I talk about the canon, I am pointing to the fact that only some dances, but by no means all, were chosen as "true" folk dances. Dances that were associated with the emergence of certain forms of popular culture, or that did not fit the notion of a true "national" origin (those with German or Hungarian influences or origin), and others, were detected during field research, but not published in mentioned collections (author's personal conversation with Mirko Ramovš, partly pointed out by Knific 2013).
- 7 In German it is often used the term Urforme.

- 8 For more on the development of this concept, its implications for folklore activity and the critical upheaval in the context of performing arts, consult Simetinger 2022.
- 9 It is very meaningful that during this period instead of the term choreography for the production of folkdance group the term stage set was used, and the author of the stage set was named an author instead of the choreographer. Until 2015 this was intended to emphasise that the work of an author of the stage set was without or minimised artistic enhancement, whereas other choreographed dance genres were distinctly artistic. This was to emphasise the idea that, despite the choreographic treatment of folk dance, they are still performing a form of more or less 'authentic dance, music, singing and costuming'.
- 10 The development of folkdance groups' activities, especially since the 1990s, has gone in a direction that has often not kept pace with contemporary trends in the aesthetics of the stage. This was particularly evident in the serious decline in the number of audiences at performances of folkdance groups, as well as concerts of singers and musicians. This observation was confirmed and partly explained by the survey "Analysis of the situation and needs of young people in amateur culture" in 2020. Most young people perceived folklore activity as belonging to the field of museums and heritage and, in this context, perceived it as a positive value at a normative level. At the same time, it was realistically perceived as unaesthetic, boring and something they would not engage in themselves. In their eyes, folklore activity was thus valued the lowest among the ten artistic fields covered by JSKD (Simetinger 2020).
- 11 An example of this is the attitude towards the choreographies by Iko Otrin. He has developed a choreographic style that was entirely his own (for exp. interference in the structure of the dance figures, incorporation of some ballet elements, many jumps, lifts of the female dancers...), and in doing so he has moved quite far away from the aesthetic guidelines promoted by the choreographers at the JSKD. His oeuvre only came to wider recognition after much after his death.

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RECONSIDERING AND STUDYING THE DANCE DURING THE SELF-CONFRONTATION INTERVIEW WITH A DANCER IN QUESTION

How can a scholar access the dancer's subjective experience? In this article I discuss a particular method as an example to answer this question. It is the self-confrontational interview technique which I used as a method in acquiring implicit information from a tango dancer during my fieldwork in summer 2020 in Tbilisi, Georgia. My example demonstrates how the multivocality of the dance text can be unfolded together with informants when they actively participate in researching their own dance.

Keywords: self-confrontational interview, video, tango, Tbilisi

As a Choreomundus student I conducted my fieldwork among Tbilisi tango community members in summer 2020. My research interest was to study how women experience being in flow when dancing tango with men leading. Following Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1992), my intention was to grasp meanings from the informants regarding their special, optimal, tango experiences. I, as a tango dancer myself, knew that these kinds of outstanding, joyful, experiences in this improvised social dance exist.

For data gathering, in the field, we use different approaches. In qualitative research, interviews are among the most popular. Here, I mainly focus attention on a particular interview technique - the self-confrontational interview with video - that involves active engagement and attention of both the interviewer and interviewee.

My interest in using the self-confrontation interview technique and attempt to mimic explication interview technique came to me before I had a case. I was inspired by several scholarly works including: *Constructing dance knowledge in the field: bridging the gap between realisation and concept* (Bakka and Gore 2007), *Eliciting the tacit: interviewing to understand bodily experience* (Gore et al. 2012), *Towards a "constructivist" and "practise-oriented" organizational ethnography* (Lievre and Rix-Lievre 2012), *Dansebygda Haltdalen – knowledge-in-dancing in a rural community in Norway: triangular interaction between dance, music and partnering* (Mæland 2019). All these texts contributed to my research approach. Also, I am honoured to say that Bakka, Gore, Rix-Lièvre and Mæland are my professors and they have given lectures and inspired me throughout my dissertation.

I hope that an account from my fieldwork will contribute to the further discussion on this subject and will encourage dance researchers to apply the self-confrontational interview technique in their studies more frequently. This kind of interview effectively couples the researcher and the informant and allows both of them to talk about the specific dance realised and captured on the video; and it makes possible co-constructing knowledge 'of' and 'in' dancing by tracing and analysing the dance video together.

My interview with a tango dancer Tekla serves as a strong example. I had several interactions and interviews with her and her Argentinian dance partner of three years, Julio. Then I decided to hold a self-confrontational interview with her alone. Our communication in the field started when I attended Julio's farewell milonga - he was leaving Georgia. It was the last time this popular couple would dance and give an interview in front of the camera. Their relationship at that time was tense. Tekla told me that Julio would not dance with her if not for me. After that day I invited Tekla for a semi-constructed interview in the café. There we talked both on and off

the recording device for almost 6 hours. We met again at the milonga near the lake and continued our interaction later in the bar. We talked much about tango and our personal experiences of it. When listening, I found Tekla to be rather self-reflexive and started to think how much knowledge she possesses on the subject of my research interest. She mentioned one dance which stood out for her as a very painful, unpleasant tango experience with Julio. Immediately I became curious to know why she remembered it that way. I thought that in order to know what it is to be in flow when dancing tango, it would be helpful to know what is the strong opposite of that joyful state.

Soon Tekla sent me the dance video she was referring to. I watched it numerous times and could not really tell why Tekla did not enjoy this dance on the video. From my perspective the dance realisation captured on the video seemed nice. I decided to have a self-confrontational interview with Tekla in order to access her subjective viewpoint of this experience. When I met Tekla on the day of the interview, firstly I let her watch the video fully and before we replayed it, as I put the questions along with the playing video, I asked her about the background and the context of the dance. Tekla remembered that she and Julio were in Alicante at that time giving workshops. Tekla stressed that during her personal workshop Julio made her feel less competent in tango in front of the attendants, because Julio was translating her class from English to Spanish using many more sentences than she was pronouncing and made her feel that the information she was providing was not enough for Julio. It made her feel uncomfortable and caused arguments between the couple.

On the evening of the workshop day, they had to perform in front of the audience. According to Tekla, she was feeling uneasy. Tekla's choice of the music to dance tango was supposed to cheer her up because she loved it. However, as she shared with me, it was considered by Julio as to be upsetting because: "it happened so that lyrics of this tango are super tragic" (Tekla 2020) and he understood it as that she wanted to have the final dance with him. All that time Tekla did not know any Spanish and for her, as for many Georgians, tango firstly was the music, melody, and then the text. She said that her thoughts were concentrated on pleasing her partner so much that she forgot herself. That is the reason, as she says, why she smiled at him at the beginning of the dance which, as she notices, she does not usually do. When re-watching the video of their dance from that day, Tekla notes that they did not have an eye contact, which was unusual "because as a rule, partners have eye contact and then it is physical" (Tekla 2020). That made her more nervous right before the tango embrace.

When watching her dance video, Tekla focusses on the fact that she is not as one with the partner, because she rushes for the step before it is proposed by the leader. She shows me when it is happening, and I can see that she seems to transfer weight before her partner gives the sign for it. I notice how she starts talking in the third person about herself, starting to distance herself from her image, when analysing the dance video with me.

I see, and in my opinion, Tekla dances totally differently if she is not tensed... Tensity, for example, to look at the technical side, to say what is technical detail and not emotional... Now, here, when the leader starts his leg movement, it seems that I am following and we are doing it together, right? Now look while I play it. If you somehow observe, I am rushing the process, because I am tense, because I understand that it is this movement, but, because of my tensity it seems like that the body is rushing the phenomena. Look here (video playing at 00:14) here it is obvious that I rushed out [backwards] before Julio went [forward]... And then I had to wait. (Tekla 2020)

Tekla's mind was not allowing her to relax, and while stepping back she went faster than Julio proposed. This happened because she could not immediately concentrate on the task as she started dancing. Her attention deviated because of her emotional state. After the drama of the day, which was articulated in her tense body, it was hard for her to attune to the feeling of the first touch

of Julio. As it appeared on the video and was said by Tekla, her attention was dislocated in the very beginning of the dance.

I believe that Tekla, who has seven years of dance experience and teaches tango locally and internationally, can feel and understand her body so that she has a strong subjective opinion about her performance. She believes that if she, as a follower, does not wait for her partner to finish his invitation for the step, and by determining beforehand where he intends to move, this causes disruption in the dance. As Tekla notices, attentive followers in tango always feel and exactly know when their partners shift the weight from one leg to another. Contact through the touch of their upper bodies allows them to sense their position and weight in space. The timing of each other's steps and the energy used should be coherent. This idea of being together all the time is one of the difficult tasks of tango.

At the end I would like to point out the benefits of this kind of interview. The self-confrontational interview with the video allowed me as a researcher to ask concrete questions based on the moments that are available and traceable for both the interviewer and interviewee. It is relatively objective, giving clearer information that can be tested in other cases. The self-confrontational interview allows the researcher and participant to go back to the somatic practice together, to reflect on it and elicit the tacit dimension of the practice which is available to the performer (Gore et al. 2012).

I hope that my example has triggered thoughts and will create wider discussion regarding implementing this interview technique to dance studies. I believe that in today's technologically progressed world we should go beyond traditional interviews and use videos, computers and other devices more frequently to access deeper and wider knowledge from informants. For many anthropologists it is obvious that people from the field are capable of reflexivity no less than the researchers. If we use the self-confrontational interview technique as a tool, we can give informants additional way for articulating thoughts and actions.

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DANCE RESEARCH WITHIN DIGITAL HUMANITIES

For more than three decades we have all used computers and other equipment as technical tools that make our research, analysis and interpretation easier and more qualitative. Creating a dance thesaurus seems crucial for better digital data processing capabilities. Therefore, in making this technical aid, we need to re-engage in the classification of dance that could be applied to a wider area. From contextual research, we must return to structural thinking so that we can find a universal unambiguous way of understanding and using the thesaurus. Dance knowledge is necessary for making it because otherwise, the meaning of existing, uneven attempts comes into question.

Keywords: dance, human movement, thesaurus, digital humanities

Talking about digital humanities is a completely new field for me. We introduced a digital repository to the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb ten years ago. In research on koleda dance and customs on the Island of Krk (Zebec 2015) I discovered that the excellent levels of organisation displayed by the local community, which uses digital technology to facilitate communication and keep documentation up to date more efficiently, have proven to be very important for the revival of the custom. Still, I am considering this presentation as a work in progress, from its mere beginning. After a short theoretical introduction, in the second part of the paper, I will focus more on the dance thesaurus and will have more questions than answers.

When introducing dance research to students I always quote Judy Van Zile (1985):

As any discipline grows, its members seek approaches and methodologies that will illuminate the topics of interest to them. Models from other disciplines may be borrowed or adapted, and new approaches unique to specific interests may be developed. Because dance manifests itself in such diverse ways, approaches and methodologies vary as researchers choose to focus on particular facets of the dance.

For more than three decades we have all used computers and other equipment as technical tools that make our research, analysis and interpretation easier and more qualitative. Allegra F. Snyder (2001) warned us at the 21st Symposium in Korčula about the potential of the web itself as a source, and the necessity of a new research strategy. It took almost a decade for digital ethnography to become an important area that is evolving and can be useful for dance research, as well.

What is digital ethnography?

In the introduction of the book about digital ethnography, a group of authors gathered in the Digital Ethnography Research Centre at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia, define briefly:

Digital Ethnography outlines an approach to doing ethnography in a contemporary world. It invites researchers to consider how we live and research in a digital, material and sensory environment. This is not a static world or environment. Rather, it is one in which we need to know how to research in it as it develops and changes. Digital Ethnography also explores the consequences of the presence of digital media in shaping the techniques and processes through which we practice ethnography, and accounts for how the digital, methodological, practical and theoretical dimensions of ethnographic research are increasingly intertwined. (Pink et al. 2016:20)

They continue:

Doing research with, through and in an environment partially constituted by digital media has led to the development of new and innovative methods and challenged existing conceptual and analytical categories. It has invited us not only to theorise the digital world in new ways, but also to re-think how we have understood pre-digital practices, media and environments. (Pink et al. 2016:20)

They also conclude that they can acknowledge that digital ethnography might be practised and defined in different ways that relate more or less closely to the range of existing definitions:

In digital ethnography, we are often in mediated contact with participants rather than in direct presence [...] we might be in conversation with people throughout their everyday lives. We might be watching what people do by digitally tracking them, or asking them to invite us into their social media practices. Listening may involve reading, or it might involve sensing and communicating in other ways. Ethnographic writing might be replaced by video, photography or blogging. (Pink et al. 2016:21)

Finally, the authors of the book about digital ethnography and its principles, give us the same conclusion as Judy Van Zile, more than 30 years ago: "As new technologies offer new ways of engaging with emergent research environments, our actual practices as ethnographers also shift" (Pink et al. 2016:21). There are many more questions such as the importance of identifying the field site or issues of public and private in doing digital ethnography. I will not go further into this discussion but only remind us all of similar questions about the dance ethnography, and the always actual and necessary re-thinking about our disciplines, epistemology and methodology in a dance research field.

What seems to be important, quoting again from the book about digital ethnography, are five key principles for doing digital ethnography: multiplicity, non-digital-centric-ness, openness, reflexivity and unorthodox. I would say, this is similar in general in our lives. If you look more through Google about digital ethnography, what can you find first? An advertisement, of course, where you can find a Digital Ethnography Application – for Mobile Ethnography or Remote Mobile Ethnography,¹ and it can probably be helpful but it can also take us to some other unwilling directions. Narrowing to the context of our discipline, on a Google search you can find information about the Digital Dance Ethnography project.² It is about organising large dance collections (Aristidou et al. 2019), and it is interesting to see what and how our Greek colleagues at the University of Cyprus work on, thanks to funding from the Government of the Republic of Cyprus through the Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development (Horizon 2020 funds). They have developed "a method for contextual motion analysis that organises dance data semantically, to form the first digital dance ethnography" (Aristidou et al. 2019:1). The method is capable of exploiting "the contextual correlation between dances and distinguishing fine-grained differences between semantically similar motions". It illustrates "a number of different organisation trees, and portrays the chronological and geographical *evolution of dances*".

Reading short information or an extended paper about the working methods and terminology on the project, we can have many questions, especially when authors are talking about the "contextual motion analysis", or "chronological and geographical evolution of dances over time", or "forming the genealogical tree of dances as an ultimate target of the project". We are all aware of how terminology is important and how it can mislead us. Of course, no one can proscript it, but we can try to work on it internationally.

Different disciplines have their own thesauruses. Thus, creating a dance thesaurus seems crucial for better digital data processing capabilities and a better understanding of the field of research and its methods. If you look for "dance thesaurus" again with the help of Google search,

you can get information about different thesauruses, getting information for example, that they have a number of synonyms and antonyms for the term 'dance' (see: thesaurus.com). In Marriam and Webster's Thesaurus,³ there are even more synonyms of dance: ball, cotillion, formal, hop, prom, foot (it), hoof (it), step. In wiktionary.org the number of hyponyms is even larger.

Dance and Structural Movement Thesaurus

While working on the preparation of different thesauruses at the Institute (for musical instruments, animal studies, and dance), we had a lot of questions about how to start. I thought it would not be a huge problem as we already have indexes (subject and geographical) from the ICTM members' *Dance research published or publicly presented* bibliography founded by Elsie Ivancich Dunin (1989). But it becomes much more complicated than I thought.

A colleague, a librarian who finished her PhD on the modelling of the diachronic aspect of meanings of classification numbers in the Universal Decimal Classification system (UDC), that is very important in the librarian's theory of classification is helping us in this process (Cupar 2022). She pointed out different glossaries, lexicons, and lists of terms. Her first instruction was to see and follow the Art & Architecture Thesaurus (AAT) of the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, as the most elaborate for the field of Art.⁴ She also pointed out that is very important to use the semantic relationships between vocabulary terms and other data (as facets) for better understanding. Because using defined relationships between vocabulary terms and other data could intelligently link data.

What we got as the timetable to work on is:

1. scope determination
2. collection of concepts and terms: taking terms from other thesauruses, glossaries, lexicons, and encyclopaedias – editing the list locally (in an Excel table)
 - development of the relationships between terms – hierarchy (broader/narrower; subordinate/superior)
3. norming – about this step we should think already at the first stage – norming the terms for entering terms – unequivocally; the thesaurus should have all information about the source of the term (reference)
4. connections/relations:
 - between the terms within the thesaurus (equivalence/synonyms; hierarchy; associative links),
 - between different facets,
 - between terms and sources.

Thinking about the first point – scope determination, we would say that we should include dances from all over the world. But that implies that the term dance is not adequate enough. It is probably better to name the thesaurus as a Dance and Structural Movement Thesaurus, having in mind other possibilities as well. To take into consideration the collection of concepts and terms, as the second point, let us look at two examples from Getty's thesaurus, starting with the term dance. It has two meanings of it:

- 1) dance as the discipline,
- 2) dance as the performing genre in literature and performing arts.

In following Figures 1. and 2. you can see what this hierarchy looks like:



Figure 1. Getty's thesaurus: dance (discipline).



Figure 2. Getty's thesaurus: dance (performing arts genre).

Something similar, more simple, and at the same time more clear is the term dance in UNESCO's thesaurus.⁵ It has only three categories:

- Ballet,
- Modern dance,
- Traditional dance.

In the example of the term *ballet*, we can follow a rough hierarchy, from a broader concept (Dance), related concepts and entry terms, and in which groups it belongs

<i>Ballet</i>	
BROADER CONCEPT	ENTRY TERMS
Dance	<i>Classical ballet</i>
RELATED CONCEPTS	
Dancers	BELONGS TO GROUP
Modern dance	Culture > Performing arts
Movement education	
Performing arts	
<i>Modern dance</i>	
BROADER CONCEPT	BELONGS TO GROUP
Dance	Culture > Performing arts
RELATED CONCEPTS	
Ballet	
<i>Traditional dance</i>	
BROADER CONCEPT	ENTRY TERMS
Dance	<i>Folk dance</i>
RELATED CONCEPTS	
Folklore	BELONGS TO GROUP
Oral tradition	Culture > Performing arts
Traditional cultures	
Traditional music	

Figure 3. UNESCO's thesaurus: Ballet, Modern dance, Traditional dance, with broader and related concepts, entry term, and belonging groups.

In making a dance and human movement thesaurus as a technical aid, we need to re-engage in the classification of dance that could be applied to a wider area. From the contextual research we have used for decades now, we must shift back to the structural way of thinking. How to construct the hierarchy? Which terms can be understood as broader concepts, related concepts, or entry terms, and to which groups can they belong?

We have to find a universal unambiguous way of understanding and using a thesaurus. Dance knowledge is necessary for making it because otherwise, the meaning of existing, uneven attempts comes into question. My plea to all colleagues dealing with dance and structural movement research, from different cultures and continents is to join this project of making a dance and structural movement thesaurus in a simple way. If you have previous scholarly work or if you know from your predecessors, it would be great to find and collect different classifications of dance or structural movements that you think should be incorporated into the thesaurus. Make your suggestions on the hierarchy of terms from your expert knowledge about the cultures and dances or movements you are dealing with. We can try to put all this together and find the best way that thesaurus can function in the international setting. That is why as researchers of dance and structural movement we must also delve into the field of digital humanities.

Through the structural organisation of the thesaurus, the developed relationship between different broader or narrower concepts and terms, and their hierarchy that should be semantically interconnected, we can make this work useful and educational as well, not only for scholars but for the broader audience, too. Only after a thoughtfully arranged structure of the thesaurus, which would allow for a breadth of coverage of different topics of dance research and cultural phenomena, and their semantic connections, the amount of data entered could have an impact on possible changes in the structure of that tool.

Endnotes

- 1 <<https://www.indeemo.com/digital/ethnography>>, (accessed 10 February 2023).
- 2 <<https://andreasaristidou.com>>, (accessed 10 February 2023).
- 3 <<https://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus>>, (accessed 10 February 2023).
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**THEME 2: INCLUSION/EXCLUSION
IN DANCE COMMUNITIES**



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STRATEGIES OF INCLUSION: CROSSING BOUNDARIES, BUILDING BRIDGES? FRESH STRATEGIES AND ECHOES FROM AUSTRIA AND ENGLAND

I consider in brief the work of Austrian choreographer Simon Mayer whose work approaches traditions 'in the light of a global consciousness', together with that of the UK-based group Folk Dance Remixed. Both draw upon yet challenge traditional forms, creating innovative experiences for participants and audience alike. The aim of the paper is to stimulate discussion on the meaning and significance of inclusivity in such developing contexts for traditional dance.

Keywords: Inclusion, contemporary dance, Austrian folk dance, English folk dance

In the interests of stimulating debate and partly as a response to recent constraints of conducting embodied ethnography, this presentation represents a departure for me. My material is primarily internet-based and my panel contribution seeks to test the ground for future research. The focus is on two dance examples that illustrate a burgeoning development in twenty-first century 'staged' dance – that is, the crossing of formerly separate boundaries between once predominantly exclusive dance idioms – those genres known generally as contemporary dance and traditional dance.

This phenomenon of engagement has not gone unnoticed either at earlier symposia or in dance publications such as Yvonne Hardt's article published in 2011. But I want to approach the development via the symposium theme of inclusion, given the issue's rising significance in local and global politics – and to consider here two examples, one rather more than the other since it lies more in my area of expertise. A full analysis of both is of course beyond the scope of a conference paper which seeks to provoke discussion of a wider phenomenon than that presented here.

In the realm of cultural activities, strategies of inclusion aim to embrace and welcome hitherto excluded people and practices. Exclusion may have been or be by criteria, often not always made explicit, of for example race, gender, physical ability, age, religion, residence or occupation. Those exercising exclusion are typically socially, politically, economically, educationally dominant, whereas those excluded are often on the margins. My two examples problematise this seemingly obvious distinction and also illustrate how social groups, indeed individuals, are complex, often internally fractured and fluid, making strategies difficult to determine and abide by.

Many twentieth-century cultural engagements of professional dance artists with traditional dance heritage, have drawn upon Eurocentric staging conventions and the artistic philosophy of ballet or modern dance. The creators of such works have often been accused, especially by dance ethnographers, of exoticism, choreographic imperialism, and of cultural plundering to advance individual careers (see, for example, Farnell 2004; Mollenhauer 2021; Ness 1997). Over recent decades, choreographers have increasingly explored often critically and experimentally the dance knowledge of their own upbringing, following their training in western concert dance techniques. As consequence, a more nuanced understanding of their treatment of differing dance idioms and of the relationships between them needs to be considered. I should say that my approach is not that of a researcher aiming to develop strategies for application but rather that of a researcher who seeks to understand – a position which, unlike many government-influenced institutions shaping research policy today, I still hold remains absolutely vital for the present and future.

My first example is Austrian Simon Mayer (born 1984) – dancer, choreographer, musician,

teacher, curator (Mayer ≤2023a, ≤2023b, ≤2023c). Mayer was schooled in ballet, performed with the Vienna State Opera Ballet and, after training in contemporary dance in Brussels, danced with such choreographic luminaries as Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker and Wim Vandekeybus. A number of his own choreographic works challenge the conventions of traditional Upper Austrian rural culture. This engagement with his early life – he was brought up on a farm in that region – as material for artistic creativity situates his output and vision alongside contemporary dance artists similarly commenting upon their own cultural, regional or indeed national heritage. Mayer has noted his inspiration from other artists re-working their own dance knowledges such as Indian classical dance and Argentine tango under the umbrella of contemporary dance (Smith 2019). In *Sons of Sissy* (2016), he turns to the rural traditions of Bavaria to comment critically through performance on well-known cultural identity markers such as yodelling, local folk songs, cow bells, and the slapping dance performed by men, the *Schuhplattler*. As Alexandra Kolb (2013) has discussed in her study of the ambiguous cultural meaning of the *Schuhplattler* among Austrian diasporic communities, the dance has a chequered history given its 1930s appropriation by the Nazis, like much Austro-German folk dance, as an expression of extreme right-wing nationalism. Mayer expands upon the post-World War II humorous renditions of the dance, often performed for tourists, by dancing it in the nude.

Video illustration 1. *Sons of Sissy*: trailer (Mayer 2019). Warning – this video clip contains nudity.

In publicity for his company's appearance in Canada, Mayer's approach is described as tak[ing] folk traditions and experiment[ing] wildly and openly with them. The key word is deconstruction: stripping and rebuilding and doing it in daring and intelligent ways. In *Sons of Sissy*, Simon literally strips the traditions of Alpine folk dances and music – down to the bone. (Zagar and Curtis 2019)

Mayer's focus here is against traditional expectations and markers of masculinity, which exclude alternative ways of being a man. This theatricalization of traditional dance accords with other artistic moves against right wing populism on the rise across many European nation states. His male dancers perform moves traditionally associated with women, destabilising expected gender relations in performance.

Mayer's engagement with traditional dance is not solely with choreographic production for national and indeed international audiences – he is well known on the contemporary dance festival circuit, performing in France and Canada for example. He also conducts workshops teaching Austrian dance among other activities such as contemporary dance, traditional dance, mindfulness, trance techniques and voice. Together with his brothers, he founded and runs the "Spiel festival" in Austria. As one might expect of a contemporary professional artist, Mayer has a strong profile on the internet.

So too has my second example, the group Folk Dance Remixed based in London, England. Established in 2010, Folk Dance Remixed (hereafter FDR) is a performance group that takes elements from various ostensibly street genres currently performed in England to create shows which seek to engage the general public as spectators and participants. Their sources include maypole dancing, *ceilidh* dance repertoire (primarily English social folk dance), house, hip hop styles such as locking, popping, and break dance, clogging, Bollywood and *morris* dancing, among other styles of dance which the performers bring to the creative mix. A good example of their approach and eclectic style is the thirty-minute show *Step Hop House*:

Video illustration 2. *Step Hop House* blocking footage, Borough Market (Folk Dance Remixed 2018).

The company is led by artistic directors Kerry Fletcher and Natasha Khamjani. The former's dance background embraces an upbringing in the English Folk Revival scene, incorporating the forms of *morris*, clog and social folk dance as well as her less formalised dance experience in the disco (Fletcher ≤2023; Folk Dance Remixed ≤2023a). She is active in a number of national dance organisations, most notably as the co-ordinator of the English Folk Dance and Song Society's (hereafter EFDSS) national Folk Education Network. Khamjani trained at the London Studio Centre, her dance experience covering ballet, disco, hip hop, jazz and street dance. She too has worked at a national level, working in TV and Musical Theatre, and indeed acting as the Mass Movement Co-ordinator and Choreographer for the London Olympics in 2012 (Khamjani ≤2023; Folk Dance Remixed ≤2023a). The vision of their company is clearly expressed on the FDR website:

Folk Dance Remixed takes its inspiration from generating a creative playground to grow new and innovative ideas of mixing folk dance and music of many cultures with contemporary and street dance styles. We are excited by the similarities and differences in hip hop and folk dance; essentially, they have both come from the street and from the people; they both have social aspects and room for self-expression.

As their website declares, inclusivity is an important aspect of their vision:

Folk Dance Remixed is an inclusive and accessible performance and workshop concept, suitable for inside events and the great outdoors, which is funky and fabulously fun! We can provide bespoke packages of participation activities, tailored for your own event/school/community group/festival/wedding/birthday party...anything! (Folk Dance Remixed ≤2023c)

In July 2022, I attended a performance of *Step, Hop, House* at the opening of the new building for the South East Dance agency in Brighton, Sussex, England.

Video illustration 3. At this point, a recording from the author's personal archive was shown.

Performed outside on the square at the entrance to the building and surrounded by recently erected living apartments, the show, according to my observation, attracted a diverse audience in terms of age, gender and ethnicity; it was one which to some extent reflected the local city's arts and immediate residential community. Judging from the audience response, there was little doubt in my mind that the company presented a vibrant, innovative and enjoyable experience for most of its spectators, replicated in its following participatory workshop and ceilidh.

Techniques from TiE (Theatre in Education) and Community Dance were clearly evident in the staging and especially in the approach to audience participation in the maypole dancing workshop. Not all audience members, however, responded to all aspects with equal enthusiasm. It was clear that several middle-aged white men, were not enthralled at being requested to move and vocalise as if imitating their favourite animal as they moved around the maypole. Such mimicry appeared an element removed from the dance traditions featured in the show and were clearly aimed at the young children's enjoyment. Other theatricalised aspects in the production involved the designation of the performance space through use of a rope, drawing a clear dividing line between performers and spectators, as well as the multi-valent function of props to advance the introductory narrative of a boat journey. The music and dance styles referenced popular and folk idioms in a mix that for many in a dance-knowledgeable and/or youthful audience might be readily identified.

The event occasioned me to ponder the degree to which strategies of inclusion in crossing genres and appealing to contemporary urban audiences with little knowledge of English traditional dance might be realised and sustained. For most of the 20th century, English traditional dancing

has been viewed as an almost exclusively white, often middle-class, heteronormative and in the case of display dances, predominantly male activity. Like many accessible amateur dance activities in Britain, the image of English folk dance is often dominated by that of loyal older participants. Those responsible for folk institutions, such as officers in the EFDSS, have frequently worried about appealing to new members, and about remaining relevant to a rapidly changing society. In recent years, the EFDSS has actively sought diversification, inclusivity and habits of equality in its practices. At the top of the front page of the society's official website is a photo of FDR which clearly profiles a youthful, energetic and more racially diverse image. In terms of ethnic heritage and dance background, the FDR dancers are representative of a more culturally diverse England, presenting positive role models, should spectators be moved to join in and become involved.

Adopted by the Society as its Associate Company, FDR thus acts a flagship for such values which are key to government arts funding, including the folk arts. Both FDR and EFDSS have been the recent recipients of arts funding yet the English folk revival scene, from which both derive, has primarily been an amateur movement, and thus for most of its history ineligible for Arts Council funding. As the latter has shifted some of its ground with respect to the relevance of the arts to community participation, more funding has been extended to the folk performing arts on a limited basis. Nonetheless, most recipients have rarely been closely aligned with a fully amateur status in their practice. FDR, for example, operates as a small performance company with the hallmarks of auditions, rehearsals, charges for performance, tours, a level of professional dance training (not all members), outreach work, a highly choreographed repertoire that cannot be found elsewhere nor easily transmitted in its entirety and, to some degree, the use and practices of theatrical performance. Although FDR has and continues to be applauded as the future by many for its work, there are a notable number in the English folk scene who regard such activities as essentially non-folk in nature and unrelated to their own commitment to the folk movement. Bridging the gap of inclusivity between the established folk revival community and the professionals may be difficult for those without access to or interest in the level of professional training and/or experience required to acquire arts funding and/or build a career in what may be categorised as folk dancing. Such factors inevitably point towards contesting issues of ownership, access, eligibility, belonging, and, lurking beneath all, yet further debate on the definition of folk.

Afternote

Readers may be interested to view another example of English traditional dancing that suggests another form of inclusivity – a performance by an amateur team of *morris* dancers at the popular music ceremony the Brit Awards, London, 11 February 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6120T_EDBRc>

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"DANCE IS... FOR EVERYONE". A REFLECTIVE APPROACH ON THE "OPENNESS" OF AN OUTDOOR SOCIAL DANCE PROJECT IN THE CONTEMPORARY URBAN CONTEXT OF GREECE

This paper examines two aspects of a specific outdoor dance project in the contemporary urban context of a suburb of Athens (Greece), while investigating the elements that define inclusion or/and exclusion in participation within the public space. It is argued that the openness of the event is determined on one hand by the dance genre itself and on the other hand, by the ways of implementing the project as well as the "sociability" of the participants.

Keywords: inclusion, sociability, participatory dance, "dance circle in the square", Hellinikon-Argiroupolis

Introduction

To which kind of dance or dancing do we refer, when we define it as "social"? Mats Nilsson (1991:280) refers to "the problem of dance genres, names and concepts used, and the borders between them and what they stand for", and links "social dance" in the Scandinavian context to "being together dance" and "people's dance". Andriy Nahachewsky (1994, 2001) uses the term "social dance" as distinct from "national dance", in order to define the "participatory" dances that took place in weddings and other social festivities in the context of the Ukrainian community in Canada. In Greece, "social dance" is often linked to "ballroom dance" (Skinner 2013) or recreational dancing. According to Hanna Walsdorf (2018:57), during the era of the Socialist regime in East Germany (1949–1990), "'folk' and 'social' dance were notionally (almost) the same", but the latter had political and ideological connotations. Writing about the Norwegian folk dance movement, Egil Bakka (2018:96) refers to the "strong intention" of folk dance to be primarily social dance, characterized by neutrality and openness.

The use of "social" dance or dancing in this study comes into line with the aforementioned statement, and refers to "participatory" dance or dancing, which, by definition, is or should be interwoven with the notion of "inclusion". According to the given definitions, "inclusion" refers to "the idea that everyone should be able to use the same facilities, take part in the same activities, and enjoy the same experiences, including people who have a disability or other disadvantage" (Cambridge dictionary 2022).

The aim of this study, part of ongoing research, is to examine the two aspects of a specific outdoor dance project in the contemporary urban context of a suburb of Athens (Greece), while investigating the elements that define inclusion or/and exclusion in participation within the public space.

Data collection is based on participant observation during ethnographic research (Buckland 1999; Giurchescu 1999; Koutsouba 1999). Analysis and interpretation of data involve the use of the conceptual categories of "participatory/presentational dance" (Nahachewsky 1995) and dance event (Koutsouba 1997).

Dancing in the public space of Hellinikon-Argyroupolis city

Hellinikon-Argyroupolis is a municipality in the South Athens – capital of Greece – regional unit which was established in 2010 by unitizing two formerly neighboring municipalities. Historically, this territory had been an agricultural area, which, in 1925, was initially inhabited by Pontian Greek refugees coming from the region of Pontus. In particular, the refugees came from the area of Sourmena, on the shores of the Black Sea, and the province of Argyroupolis, on the mountains of

northern Anatolia, after the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1923. Nowadays, the population of Hellinikon-Argyroupolis is of diverse origins. According to the 2011 census, it is the 65th largest in population municipality of Greece, with 51,356 permanent residents.

Since 2015, I have been working as a dance teacher in the Municipality's Section of Traditional Dance. In 2017, after having experienced numerous dance-houses in Hungary and participatory traditional Basque dancing in the public squares of Pamplona in Spain, I started organizing, with the support of the Municipality, "open" dance classes and participatory dance events in the public squares of Hellinikon-Argyroupolis. These events became part of a project called *Chorós stin plateia* (Dance in the square), translated as "Dance circle in the square" and initially called "Dance is... for everyone!". The idea behind this social dance action is to transfer traditional dancing outside the boundaries of a classroom and beyond the theatrical stages, and to re-connect it with the public space, the streets and squares, where anyone can freely join. At the heart of this project, which aspires to become part of everyday life of the city, lies the free, indiscriminate, and unpretentious participation in a simultaneously educational and entertaining context of "edutainment" (Pettan 2010).

By the end of 2019, the project had been implemented twelve times in total, as listed in Table 1. Then, after a two and a half years break, because of the restrictions that had been imposed in Greece due to Covid-19, we were able to restart the project and organize both an open class and a participatory event in May and June 2022 respectively. This study focuses on these last two actualizations of the "Dance circle in the square".

Actualizations of the "Dance circle in the square" (<i>Chorós stin Plateía</i>) project				
No.	Date	Place	Type of event	Music
1	2017, September 22	Central Square of Sourmena, Hellinikon	participatory	live music
2	2017, December 11	City Hall Square, Argyroupolis	participatory	live music
3	2017, December 12	National Resistance Square, Hellinikon	participatory	live music
4	2018, May 30	Varnalis Square, Argyroupolis	open class	audio devices
5	2018, September 21	Central Square of Sourmena, Hellinikon	participatory	live music
6	2018, December 9	City Hall Square, Argyroupolis	participatory	live music
7	2018, December 14	National Resistance Square, Hellinikon	participatory	live music
8	2019, March 27	Varnalis Square, Argyroupolis	open class	audio devices
9	2019, May 19	Varnalis Square, Argyroupolis	open class	audio devices
10	2019, September 20	Central Square of Sourmena, Hellinikon	participatory	live music
11	2019, December 8	City Hall Square, Argyroupolis	participatory	live music
12	2019, December 17	National Resistance Square, Hellinikon	participatory	live music
13	2022, May 27	Varnalis Square, Argyroupolis	open class	audio devices
14	2022, June 17	Central Square of Sourmena, Hellinikon	participatory	live music

Table 1. Actualizations of the "Dance circle in the square" project.

The "open dance class" on 27 May 2022

The "open dance class" event in Varnalis Square of Argyroupolis was announced on the official website of the Municipality, through social media, with the use of posters and by word of mouth. The admission was free for everyone and according to the core principle of indiscriminate and unpretentious participation (Charitonidis 2022), during the event there was no intention for direct promotion and public demonstration of the Traditional Dance Section of the Municipality. Nonetheless, both of these happen in an indirect way. Thus, a necessary precondition regarding participants who are members of the local Dance Section, was not to stand out, for example, by wearing a distinctive shirt with the logo of the group. Moreover, it should not be "we and the others", but "all together", since the event was "open" to everybody, regardless of age, gender, origin, competence or prior dancing experience, and all the participants should promote this open access to dancing. Actually, the preparation of this event had started within the context of teaching traditional dance in the classroom, during the weekly sessions, where/when the students were introduced to the principal idea of the project.

Thus, among approximately one hundred participants, there were individuals with no dance experience next to bearers of local rural traditions, a lot of dance students – the majority of them came from the local Traditional Dance Section – and dance teachers. Even one ethnochoreologist as well as Professor at the University of Athens, Maria Koutsouba, attended the event. In order to promote neutrality and openness during dancing, my main role as the dance instructor was to handle this diversity. In order not to exclude the "beginners", while maintaining the involvement of the "advanced" participants, the selection and sequence of dances was based on structural-morphological analysis of Greek traditional dances (Karfis 2018; Koutsouba 2007; Tyrovola 1994, 2001), following connections and correlations among similar or related movements and structural units, with progression from simple to complex. In addition, the inherent power and characteristics of chain/circle dance, typical for Greek traditional dance, which involves close physical contact, served the same purpose. Gradually, the "open dance class" transformed into a participatory dance event with representative dances from different regions – in other words, an "inclusive" dance repertoire – practicing, among other things, the diversity of Greek traditional dance. Some of my students, who never left dancing in the public square, commented later that "there were dances that we had never danced before".

During the "open dance class", the teaching-learning process involved direct observation and imitation of the dance instructor or an experienced participant, to the accompaniment of music. This way, in accordance with the Hungarian dance-house model, participants used "their own individual level of creativity to develop their competence and dance ability" (Csonka-Takács and Havay 2011:65–66) and became active participants in a "dance-floor" which promoted unity without uniformity. Everybody was free to improvise in the limits of the common circle, to guide or to be quidded by the next person in the dance chain, to join or leave the dancing at any time, to practice outside the circle or to participate as a spectator.

Among the attendees, there were also politicians, including a member of the parliament, the Mayor of Hellinikon-Argyroupolis and a few municipal counselors. Shortly after the beginning of the event, the first two welcomed through the microphone all the participants and publicly thanked me for my contribution in, according to their words, this "very important" social dance action. Consequently, they joined dancing for the next fifteen minutes. After all, from the "political" point of view, all the participants were potential voters. Close to the end of the dance event, after three and a half hours, a brass band of street-musicians, that happened to pass by the public square, joined us and they "led" the dance by performing tunes from North Greece, abolishing the use, by that time, of my personal computer, which served as the music player.



Figure 1. The poster for advertising the "open dance class" on 27 May 2022.

free for everyone and the Municipality covered all the expenses, including the payment of the musicians and the audio coverage, since, unlike the "open class", the participatory dance was accomplished with the accompaniment of live music. The orchestra consisted by three separate bands of professional musicians, in order to perform music from different local traditions. I voluntarily participated as a musician too, playing the bagpipe.



Figure 2. The poster for advertising the "open dance class" on 17 June 2022.

The participatory dance event on 17 June 2022

From 2017 to 2019, we have organized annually, every late September, a participatory dance event in the largest square of the Municipality, where, around Easter, the most important Pontian Greek fair within the Attica prefecture has taken place since 1922. However, for 3 years there was no social dancing in this square due to the recent pandemic. So, in June 2022, instead of the annual closing presentational dance event with the participation of the members of the Municipality's Traditional Dance Section, we decided to organize the "open" participatory dance event. We thought that people, at that point of time, needed more "dancing together" without restrictions, instead of watching us dancing on stage.

As with the "open dance class", the event was announced on the official website of the Municipality, through social media, with the use of posters and banners as well, and by word of mouth. Again, the admission was

A crucial difference between this type of event and the "open dance class" was the absence of direct guidance by a dance instructor. In this context, the key factor for the successful outcome of the event was the amount of participation. In other words, for me as a host and for the musicians, the goal was to engage as many people as possible in dancing, for as long as possible.

As with the "open dance class", there were politicians among the attendees, including two members of the parliament, the mayor of Hellinikon-Argyroupollis and a few municipal councilors. The mayor welcomed all the participants through the microphone, and one more time publicly thanked me for my contribution in this "essential" social dance action for "everyday people from... Retirees, workers, housewives, mothers... People, who eventually loved dancing" (Konstantatos 2022). More than eight hundred people attended the event, and this time, the members of the local Traditional Dance Section were the minority. From 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. the public square was full of people dancing and when the main space was not enough, people created their own peripheral "dance-

floors" behind the participant-spectators. Because of the mass participation, concentric dance circles started moving around all together. Gradually, the dance circles separated, as the leaders of different dance chains delimited their space in the square. Eventually, one could notice different dance groups with their members and their more or less random followers. Towards the

end of the evening, the "experienced" and "educated" participants dominated the "dance-floor", performing complex and technically more demanding dance idioms. I reclaim the comment by a participant with little prior experience of Greek traditional dance, who referred to the same situation during the participatory event, back in 2019, by saying "maybe it is not as 'open' as you think it is" (K.K. 2019).

During the participatory dance event the element of improvisation was evident at all levels. Focusing on the orchestra, the musicians determined the sequence of dances, and at some point there were three friends-musicians, who voluntarily got on the bandstand and played music. Two members of the "official" band, even lent their instruments to their colleagues in order to perform in their stead, for a specific set of dances.



Figure 3. Dancing in the Central Square of Sourmena (Hellinikon), 17 June 2022.
Photograph by Chariton Charitonidis.

Discussion

Koutsouba (2020:292) refers to Ehrenreich's work "on the history of collective joy through dancing in the streets" and argues that intrinsic features in this kind of dance reinforce its presence in urban settings. According to her:

Greek traditional dance, through the spatial disposition of the dancers and the physical proximity of participants, who move mostly in circle dances with close physical contact, makes manifest ideas of inclusion, unity, integration, solidarity, and mutual understanding. (Koutsouba 2020:295)

From this point of view, there is a direct linkage between "Dance circle in the square" and the key features of community dance(-ing) in the United Kingdom, both forming "a conducive space" (Wise, Buck, Martin and Yu 2020:387) for practicing and fostering the democratic values of participation, inclusion and empowerment.

On the other hand, for Ogo Alubo (2011:75), who deals with politics of power, gender and exclusion within the public space in Nigeria:

The public space often conveys a notion of *res publica*, owned by all members of the public, with equal access and participation. In reality, however, there are several

publics, as indeed spaces at the local, state, national and international levels. Irrespective of levels, the public space is where decisions binding on all are taken, executed and evaluated. It is an arena where the various publics struggle to have control over and participate in.

In the dance "arena" of the public squares in Hellinikon-Argyroupolis the main "characters" are the dance instructor, myself, with a more or less active leading role, the musicians, the politicians, and the heterogeneous group of participants, which can be divided in various subgroups according to their characteristics – for example, their dance competence – the associations between them and the various ways of participating, to name but a few. If I consider these "characters" to be different "publics", then I could perceive their "struggle" to accomplish their role or to satisfy their diverse needs through social dancing.

The openness of the event is primarily defined by the dance genre itself. Then, my role as organizer, dance instructor or musician, is a determinant for utilizing the inherent connecting power of Greek traditional dance in order to extend the limits of inclusion, in favor of people with any kind of disability or disadvantage. In all respects, it is the participants who actually determine the actualization of the project. Their individual dance competence, experience and knowledge is crucial for the final outcome. But this knowledge is not restricted just to the dance movement. Focusing on the "Dance circle in the square", dance knowledge is mostly related to the "sociability" of the dancers. Thus, as a potential practice for safeguarding the Greek intangible cultural heritage, social dancing in the public space of Hellinikon-Argyroupolis refers to safeguarding the neutrality and openness of traditional dance. What an excellent recreational way to practice these democratic values!

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DANCE, INCLUSIVITY, HEALTH: BODIES AND WELL-BEING CENTRE STAGE

Examining inclusive dance practice in the UK in the light of the UN's 2006 declaration on rights of persons with disabilities, I take the example of Amici Dance Theatre, London in order to understand their careful, integrated dance practice honed over 40 years. I investigate Arts Council England's policy of cultural democracy where arts practitioners work in equal partnership instead of a top-down approach. Creating such safe, inclusive spaces allows health, well-being and equality to remain top of the agenda in arts practice.

Keywords: Inclusive practice, dance, cultural democracy in the UK, co-creators, health and wellbeing

A new definition of health as "condition of well-being, free of disease or infirmity, and a basic and universal human right" was presented by epidemiologist Rodolfo Saracchi (1997:1410) to the World Health Organisation. In 2006, the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was established with the aim of creating an inclusive society where all people can participate without experiencing obstacles (UN 2006). Considering these two significant landmark moments in time, how might dance and the arts in general provide a tool for the health and well-being of an inclusive society, ensuring everyone has access to such basic human rights? This paper takes the example of the practices of an inclusive dance company "Amici", based in west London to examine issues related to such topics. Amici Dance Theatre is a participatory amateur group of 25–40 members that integrates differently-abled performers with physical disabilities, learning difficulties, sensory impairments and those who are able-bodied. It was founded in 1980 by Wolfgang Stange, who brings his German Expressionist dance roots to create full-length works for Amici that are produced and toured biannually.

In today's climate where the term disability is deeply contested and often laden with social (and political) meanings of negativity and tragedy, how does Amici, now in existence for over 40 years, survive and thrive? I examine Stange's vision, his female mentor, his teaching techniques and the impact that Amici has both on its participants and its audiences. I investigate too their work to ensure that disability and inclusiveness is at the heart of evolving arts policy and practice, and their commitment to having all types of bodies at the centre, and on the public stage rather than on the margins. I question how bodily differences might be represented, negotiated, and experienced through artistic expression and take a look at how this might be indicative of a policy of cultural democracy. Dance critic Luke Jennings wrote:

Where others saw limitation, Stange saw potential. Where others saw a medical condition, Stange saw the possibility of a new form of expression...he believed that the key to performance was honesty: the presentation of the authentic self. (2010:n.p.)

In Amici's productions, physical and mental impairments are not only acknowledged but placed centre stage, with no compromise. You leave the theatre with tears in your eyes, but a spring of joy in your step.

It is Wednesday evening. A large dance studio at the top of a theatre building in west London where Amici meets. Slowly, the group gathers, each member being greeted warmly as they arrive by all those present. Chatting, laughing, changing into soft shoes, carers attending to those who need it. We gather in a circle holding hands. Two members are in wheelchairs. To a loud vocal 'whoosh' everyone raises their arms together in the air and brings them down, bending their

bodies simultaneously. This is repeated two or three times. Rosie who has Down's Syndrome, goes round to each member making the signed initial for their name as they join her in forming it – A for Angie, M for Mike, S for Stephen, and so on. These are part of a number of warm up and introductory practices. Over the two-hour class, each participant will demonstrate movement sequences in pairs or in small groups, will initiate action and be applauded after such presentations. Encouragement and support are generously given, but never with sentimentality. One exercise, using a 'magic' (aka ordinary) pen thrown on the floor, that twists around and then points to the next leader, asks the random participant to demonstrate a short movement sequence. Later each one draws these expressions on paper with felt tip pens and 'choreographs' them for their small group. No one is excluded, even if behaviour is challenging. Gentleness, non-compromise and a deep sense of non-difference is at the heart of all that is practiced. Short pieces are created using simple props. Rosie works with Bill, who is wheel-chair bound and speaks with an electronic board. They dance a duet together, showing the energy that runs between each other's hands when they are close but not really touching. We witness Bill's smiles as he joins her in the dance, and the whole evening is spent dancing.



Figure 1. Rosie & Bill in class, 2022.
Photo: A. R. David.

The dancing that I watch and participate in is confirmative, totally inclusive and looks directly to each human being's potential. Language, touch, music, rhythm are used with care and intention. In these ways, each member of the group is allowed to develop their own creativity, in their own ways of expression. Everyone who comes to the room – carer, family member, friend, researcher or dancer is encouraged to join the group so no-one sits out. One of the longer-term members of Amici, Elaine, who also leads the group, recounts how Stange is well skilled at building open, creative spaces, where people are not only encouraged but also challenged to produce their best, with an interplay that works with their own physicalities. His unconventional approach, leading by example, enables talents to emerge and confidence to grow, using a variety of tasks that range from simple to more complex. Techniques of mirroring and flocking are utilised. Those able-bodied in the group are neither supporters nor enablers nor people who legitimate others' movement vocabulary but are co-dancers, co-partners, co-creators and movers together. In Amici's production of "Tightrope" (2010), group member David was selected to fly above the stage on a wire, a decision deliberately made to allow him to be free of his wheelchair-bound existence. This is typical of Stange's encouragement and of his casting in the group shows. As dance critic Jann Parry writes:

Because they're used to improvising in front of each other, they are unselfconscious, electric with energy, some spinning in wheelchairs, others jumping in excitement, one held in the embrace of his carer. (2015:n.p.)



Figure 2. Amici class exercise, 2022.
Photo: A. R. David

Stange's inspiration came directly from his teacher dancer, the visionary Hilde Holger who as early as the 1960s was working with her own Down's Syndrome son and teaching him to dance. She also choreographed a piece at Sadler's Wells Theatre, London for young adults with learning disabilities. Holger had fled Nazi Germany to live in Mumbai, India as World War II broke out, establishing a studio of modern dance there and working with Indian dancers Ram Gopal and Uday Shankar. After 10 years in India she moved to London where she remained working for the rest of her life. Stange (1996) created a danced tribute to Holger "in which the dramas of her life – her journey from Germany to India and beyond – was shown with piercing directness and huge sympathy by Stange and his artists" noted dance critic Clement Crisp (2009:n.p). Stange continues to work not only with Amici in London but extensively in Sri Lanka with refugees and in rehabilitation centres for the ex-Tamil Tigers in the inclusive "Butterflies Theatre Group" that integrates Sri Lanka's different communities. Tamil, Muslim and Sinhalese refugees from the Sri Lankan East Coast share the stage with disabled soldiers, youngsters born with Down's Syndrome, and those with autism and hearing or sight impairment. Productions are presented to the audience in four languages – Sinhala, Tamil, English and Sign. As Parry notes "Like his mentor Hilde Holger, Stange has taken his faith in humanity, and in what differently-abled people can create together, to a variety of countries and contexts" (2015:n.p.).

I am sensitive to the problematic nature of labels and terminology that may be used in discussions relating to this area of practice. In particular of how understanding is needed to not reinforce ideas about normative and 'other' bodies, or notions that imply that a dancer, as Sarah Whatley puts it, "can bridge the distance or overcome disability in performance" (2010:44). These examples demonstrate that in performance an artiste can take control of the onlooker's gaze, by directing it onto their own bodies as they wish, rather than being the passive recipient of hostile or sometimes offensive experiences in the public domain. I use here the terms employed by Amici.

What is shown in these illustrations is a kind of cultural democracy in action. Members of

Amici are co-creators, collaborators in all that takes place. They are colleagues, not 'healthcare clients', immersed and integrated into the workshops, the creation of choreographic material, rehearsals and performances of the group. It is a two-way relationship where power and responsibilities are shared. Techniques of co-creation like this are also used extensively, for example, in the global Dance for Parkinson's movement. Rosie, mentioned above, is now co-leader of a younger group of dancers aged 11–25 called "Young Amici", set up five years ago with some local funding. She has travelled with the second co-leader to Lithuania to teach performance companies techniques of integration based on Amici's arts and performance work. Young Amici's summer school this year featured classes in contemporary dance and improvisation, yoga, ballet, meditation, Feldenkrais and drama work. As noted, the experience of dancing with Amici is a person-centred one, where each is an expert through their own practice and experience. Jurg Koch from "Dance Unstruck" underlines this point, stating, "it is about participating with your own identity and diversity, not dancing with and for people who are disabled" (Koch 2021).



Figure 3. Rosie's solo, 2022. Photo: A. R. David.

The Arts Council England (ACE) has supported a programme of cultural democracy in the arts for some time, setting out in their 2018 booklet the following statements:

The programme is proving that engaging communities, participants and audiences in decision making processes is enabling deeper participation with arts and culture, particularly in places with traditionally low levels of cultural engagement. The process of being involved in commissioning is enabling individuals to feel a sense of ownership over the arts and cultural provision in their local area. (Arts Council England 2018:1)

ACE also states "It's called Cultural Democracy because it's about the inclusion of everyone. It's about fundamentally shifting the way we talk about, think about, and value culture" (ibid:3). Acknowledgement is needed however that sharing democratic ownership can be difficult – outcomes are not necessarily predictable, there may be concerns about artistic integrity, and those used to working with elite, trained performance artists may not find it easy to accommodate different bodies, different capabilities, for example. It may feel counter-intuitive to be inclusive by those used to setting agendas and leading with artistic control. Clement Crisp, known for his

exacting, precise reviews of traditional ballet performance said of Amici:

I recall a version of *Giselle*, that sacred text for great ballet companies, which Stange produced and directed, and which tore at the heart ... far more touchingly so, than the dutiful exercise in Romanticism that it can seem when offered by ballet troupes. (2009:n.p.)

Five keys areas of value were identified by the Arts Council. Starting with the cultural democracy that evolves when the leader works as facilitator and erases any top-down approach; secondly, agency and permission being encouraged to allow freedom for full participation from all present; thirdly, the valuing of everyone and the equality of expertise that might bring different skills to the table (for example, Matt Peacock, of the charity, Arts and Homelessness International remarked how resilient, empathetic, entrepreneurial and communicative their homeless clients are); next, active participation from everyone present, rather than just spectatorship; and finally, respecting process and product equally, so that focus is not just on the finished product.

There are many examples of new creative projects that support contemporary thinking on cultural democracy in the UK and of course across the world. Stange works with a range of inclusive performance groups from New Zealand, USA, Austria and different parts of the UK and they joined the company for their recent performances in London of "One World. Wealth of the Common People"(2022). Other examples include "Slung Low", an award-winning theatre company in the north of the UK, which was set up in 2000 and is known for its community performances. It became a beacon of light during the lockdowns of the Covid pandemic, creating a food bank where food was given to those in need and food parcels delivered to those unable to get out. Pre-Covid "Slung Low" created a Cultural Community College where sessions ranging from star gazing to cooking, singing, dance, carpentry and many other subjects are offered free to all those wishing to partake. People can decide what they pay if they can. The content of the sessions is driven by the users and the policy at the heart of it is access to culture for all. At the University of Roehampton, London, I recently co-organised a "Homelessness Awareness Week" where we offered space to a young writer to be our poet-in-residence. He is homeless and without work but writes the most powerful and heart-rending poetry about the stigmas of being homeless with which he engaged (and deeply moved) our students and staff.

Dance and the arts in general can provide tools for the health and well-being of all of society and ensure everyone has access to these basic human rights through the medium of culture. Indeed, as Imogen J. Aujla and Sarah C. Needham-Beck note in their study on young dancers with disabilities:

Dance may be a particularly valuable activity for promoting wellbeing as it involves physical, cognitive and affective components in the pursuit of creativity, self-expression, and technical expertise. (2020:564)

My paper concludes with last words from Wolfgang Stange in the Amici programme:

Amici is about sharing and accepting differences in whatever shape or form they may take. Celebrating each other's differences is the only way forward. The so-called 'common people' show me their artistry, and art bridges all cultures and economic backgrounds – it unifies our globe. (Amici programme 2022:n.p)

Inclusive theatre such as Amici's company implies changes for every participant, just as an inclusive society would (Wooster 2009). It provides a safe and creative space where the basic rights of every human being are acknowledged and celebrated.

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FROM INCLUSION TO EXCLUSION: RESHAPING THE GENDER PARTICIPATION IN THE DANCE *KARAGOUNA* IN MEGALA KALYVIA, TRIKALA, GREECE

Participatory dances are interwoven with the Greek tradition. In a specific dance, one gender may dance, while the other will be the observer. The aim is to focus on how one gender has been – and continues to be – excluded from dancing the dance *Karagouna* in Megala Kalyvia (Greece). It seems that exogenous factors (dance teachers) can affect the way one community dance. *Karagouna* is an example of how a gender, that is included in one dance, gets excluded, and ends up excluding itself voluntarily.

Keywords: Greece, dance, gender inclusion/exclusion, dance teachers, dance participation

Introduction

Many participatory dances and dance events are interwoven with the life/tradition of certain dance communities in Greece. In participatory dance events, there is an interaction between people that take part in those events. Sometimes, due to this interaction are observed policies of inclusion or exclusion. Moreover, these politics are seen among genders. For example, in one dance event, or even in a specific dance, both genders may participate, but only one (male or female) will dance, while the other will be restricted to the role of the observer, and as a result the dance itself will be a male or female affair.

Before proceeding to my paper, I would like to clarify the concept of inclusion and exclusion. According to the *Oxford dictionary*, inclusion is "the fact or policy of providing equal opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise not get them, for example people who are disabled or belong to minority groups", whereas exclusion is "a person or thing that is not included in something" or "a situation in which a child is banned from attending school because of bad behaviour". I would like to add that the exclusion can be voluntary (someone wants voluntarily to leave the group) or someone is out of the group, because the group does not want him/her anymore.

There are many forms of inclusion/exclusion. One of the most known is gender inclusion/exclusion, because gender is a category of social exclusion (Thapa and Surjyaajeevan 2020:142). This kind of inclusion/exclusion can take place in an education context, where the school policies "are intended to break down gender barriers" (Hebert 2015:35). Unfortunately, this is not always achieved, because in patriarchal environments such as India "due to the existence of deep-seated gender-based dis-crimination, accessibility to school education remains an exclusionary process for girls" (Thapa and Surjyaajeevan 2020:143). Also, in the political arena in some cases still nowadays women "continue to be excluded from legislative bodies at national and state level and deprived from key decision-making positions in government and political parties" (Kumar and Rai 2007:197). Finally, exclusion can be affected by "religion and culture" (Alubo 2011:91).

But what is happening with gender inclusion/exclusion in dance? Although there are movements that show inclusive policies, these policies may lead to an opposite result. For example, "modifications to teaching practices and methods for inclusion should not be applied solely for the benefit of male students, but for all students, so as to encourage a wider range of participation from individuals regardless of their gender identity" (Hebert 2015:39). Gender and dance motivation also are "determinants of the preferred dance style of students" (Coronel, Tiglaio, Solayao and Lobo 2022:37) and factors of exclusion. Moreover, policies of gender exclusion are still there,

because, for example, "male choreographers [...] are the norm" (Hebert 2015:39). In dance events the main characteristic is participation, and "gender is an important criterion for participation and exclusion" (Alubo 2011:82).

However, the examples above refer to professional dance. What is happening in the context of the first existence? Are there politics of gender inclusion or exclusion? The aim of this paper is to focus on how one gender was – and continues to be – excluded from dancing in one community of *Karagounides*, in Megala Kalyvia (Trikala, province of Thessaly) in the heart of rural Greece. Data collection is based on participant observation during ethnographic research. Analysis and interpretation of the data use the concepts of "participatory" dance (Nahachewsky 1995), dance event(s) (Koutsouba 1997), and the dichotomy of "first/second existence" (Charitonidis 2018; Hoerbunger 1968; Nahachewsky 2001).

Ethnographic data

First of all, I introduce the community of Megala Kalyvia. This community lies in the lowland region of Trikala, Greece, and precisely, in the southwest part of the region. It used to be the administrative center of the community named after the village under Kapodistrias Reform Law¹ (together with the communities of Glinos and Agia Kyriaki), whereas it now belongs to the municipality of Trikala city. It is 8 km away from the city of Trikala and is the last community before reaching the province of Karditsa. With a population of 1.849 inhabitants (according to the census of 2011) it occupies an area of 2.900 hectares and has an altitude of 105 metres.

Its initial name was Kalyvia. In the beginning of the 19th century, there used to be several settlements, such as Paschaliori, Kavoures, Logarakos, Kyrazoi, Marmaras and Kalyvia (Chiotis 1997:13). This can also be proved by the script number (prothesi)² 39 of the monastery of Dousiko (16th–17th century). Moreover, the settlement of Paschaliori is dated back to 1592 (Ntoulas 2011:472). The definition "Megala" (Great) appears to have been introduced at a later stage, when all above settlements were unified, apparently around 1810. The name "Kalyvia" is documented for the last time in 1838. According to earlier oral narrations by two locals, F. Papanikolaou (1881–1967) and P. Karalis (1892–1967), "Mpeis, the representative of Ali Pasha of Ioannina, asked the Kotsampasis³ (local Christian notable) how they could create a big village such as Megalos Palamas in Karditsa. The Kotsampasis replied that that would be possible by unifying all above settlements" (Chiotis 1997:21). Hence, around 1810 all settlements were unified and the community was renamed Megala Kalyvia.



Figure 1. The community of Megala Kalyvia on the map.

The inhabitants of Megala Kalyvia belong to the ethnic group of *Karagounides* and they are really proud of their identity. Their main activity is mostly agriculture, while animal husbandry is mainly used to satisfy family needs. Mixing with other populations was rather scarce. The "foreign"

elements appear to arrive mostly after 1900, and they came mainly to Karagounides communities. The ethnic group of Vlachs also settled in the community: they would stay there during the winter months and leave in summer (Chiotis 2005:240). They mainly came from the Vlach communities of Gardiki or Moutsiara, and their arrival is dated around 1900. Their main activities were animal husbandry, trade and dressmaking. No agricultural holding was conceded to them, they only received a parcel of 0.5 hectares of arable land (Chiotis 1997:66). It is worth mentioning that the Vlach population abandoned the community and moved either to the nearby town of Trikala or to Athens (Chiotis 2005:240).

***Karagouna*: a gender misunderstanding of a dance**

Since I was a little child, I thought that one specific dance of the ethnic group of Karagounides, the dance *Karagouna*, was exclusively a female dance. In all dance groups of the wider region *Karagouna* is only danced by women. The same situation existed in the participatory context, where one could only observe women dancing. It was told to me that this is a female dance.



Figure 2. The dance *Karagouna* in dance performances (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDN-MPcRzjDM>)

In 2012 I started my fieldwork research in Megala Kalyvia. There I started to search for gender roles in society and in the various dance events. Although it was expressed to me that *Karagouna* is a female dance I started to ask the inhabitants about gender participation in this dance. It was a surprise when I heard that this dance was danced by "everyone" (E.R. 2012) and that "in the past men were dancing *Karagouna*" (M.G. 2016). More specifically, they were saying to me that "also men were dancing *Karagouna* [...], whoever wanted, and men of course" (V.C. 2016) or "Both men and women were dancing *Karagouna*" (S.G. 2016). Moreover, "*Karagouna* was danced by men and woman exclusively with clarinets" (M.G. 2016) and "men were also dancing *Karagouna*, I don't know about the other villages, here they were dancing *Karagouna*" (S.G. 2016). Finally, the good dancers were dancing this dance, "Men were dancing too. Whoever was dancing well" (P.T. 2015). In fact, there were many famous men dancers, who were great dancers performing this dance. For example, "Vasilis Poulis, Mitros Kavouras" (P.K. 2016), "I remember the late Sokratis dancing *Karagouna*, always nicely, and always this song" (M.G. 2016).



Figure 3. Men (and a woman) dancing the dance *Karagouna* in Megala Kalyvia. (Source: Konstantinos Dimopoulos's archive-20/5/2015)

My next question was about how they were dancing, if the men danced *Karagouna* with women. They responded to me that "the men in front, and the women from behind"(P.K. 2016) and "if we have had a double circle [...], the men in front and the women behind. One circle, the men in front"(V. C. 2016). Moreover "the man was dancing, the women were also dancing from behind [...], they were not holding hands, each one [meaning gender] had its circle. Here, to our village, the men were dancing first [meaning the front circle], and the women from behind" (P.T. 2015). Moreover, the two genders were not dancing independently, but with his/her relative: "Kostas, she would not dance with a foreign man, it was the fiancé in front? The fiancée from behind. Foot to foot...[...] It was her man, her fiancé, her brother, her husband" (M.G. 2016).

Did they dance in the same way? In the same style? Was it the same form for the two genders? I did not receive a clear answer to these questions. However, they tried to explain to me that something was different in the dancing of the two genders in the *Karagouna* dance. They explained to me that "He would dance something else, I would dance something else" (V.C. 2016), "In a different way the men, in a different way the women"(Z.T. 2015); and "All together they were dancing *Karagouna*, both women were dancing *Karagouna*, as well as men, men with their own style, and women with their own style"(E.G. 2015). Moreover, "Men were dancing a little bit differently the *Karagouna* [...] women where dancing more modestly, men were doing figures"(P.T. 2015) and "They [meaning men] were dancing in situ"(V.K. 2016).

***Karagouna*: male exclusion in dance**

As mentioned above, before doing my fieldwork research, I considered that the dance *Karagouna* was exclusively a woman's dance. What happened as to why the men are no longer performing this dance? Why now do we only see women dancing *Karagouna*? The truth is that this change probably occurred back in the 1980s. And there is more than one reason that led to this dance change. In that period in the specific community (but also in others) dance teachers came to teach dance in the local dance group. The name *Karagouna* is a female definition – the male is *Karagounis*. Since the name of the dance is *Karagouna*, they considered that this dance should be danced only by women, without conducting any research about it. As my informants said "Probably, since the coming of the dance teachers" (M.G. 2016), this change occurred. So, the name *Karagouna* itself and the dance teachers "forced" in a way men's exclusion from this dance. As my narrators explain "It doesn't refer to the man *Karagounis*, but to the woman, *Karagouna*"(P.K. 2016).



Figure 4. The dance *Karagouna* in Megala Kalyvia since the coming of the dance teachers. (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsxZbTZzS4I&t=8s>)

Maybe, another reason that inhabitants mention, is the rhythm and the speed of the song *Karagouna*. As they point out "The men now don't dance *Karagouna* because the steps are slow, the youngsters want to jump" (M.G. 2016), or "*Karagouna* goes slowly slowly, men want to dance more..." (M.N 2012). All these resulted in this dance becoming a woman's dance. Gradually it was abandoned by the men and the new generation learnt that this dance is a women's dance. This is

confirmed by the narrative speech that explains that concerning men "The old ones, the younger generation doesn't dance *Karagouna*" (V.K. 2016).



Figure 5. The new generation dances *Karagouna* in Megala Kalyvia, danced only by women. (Source: Konstantinos Dimopoulos's archive-29/4/2019)

If you ask me who is dancing *Karagouna* now in this community I will answer only women. It is so deeply "sunk" in their consciousness that the new generation of men not only no longer consider this dance a women's affair, but they voluntarily exclude themselves out of this dance. For example, when I suggest to them to dance *Karagouna* they answer to me like I have insulted them that "What are you saying? This dance is only for women...". This answer denotes that the men exclude themselves from this dance.

Conclusions

In the specific example we can observe how gender is an important factor in dance participation. At first *Karagouna* was a mixed dance, with the two genders dancing together. Actually, it seems that the men were the leaders (they were dancing in front), with the women following. Later, and for the reasons discussed above, teachers excluded the men from this dance in the context of the second existence. The local dance group presented the *Karagouna* only with women. This affected the community and the men so much that they no longer dance *Karagouna* either with their dance groups (first existence) or in their feasts (first existence). The men now consider this dance to be a woman's dance and they (self)exclude from this dance. The male gender from the condition of no exclusion, passed to the condition of exclusion (second existence context) to voluntary exclusion (first and second existence).

The dance <i>Karagouna</i> from men's inclusion to exclusion and to (self)exclusion		
<i>Karagouna</i> before the dance groups (before '80s)	<i>Karagouna</i> in the dance group context (second existence) ('80s until '00s)	<i>Karagouna</i> now (first and second existence) (after '00s)
Men's inclusion	Men's exclusion by the dance teachers	Men's (self)exclusion from everywhere

Table 1. From inclusion to exclusion and to (self)exclusion. The three conditions of the men's in *Karagouna* dance. The three stages of men's dancing.

This example shows that gender as a criterion of exclusion in dance can be affected by exogenous factors like dance teachers in this case. These factors can so deeply affect the way one local community dance and its gender dance relationship, that one gender will "learn" that this dance is a women's dance and will no longer be danced by men. *Karagouna* is an example of how a gender, that is included in one dance, gets excluded not by the other gender, but by exogenous factors, and ends up to exclude itself voluntarily, because the new generations have taught it so.

Endnotes

- 1 Kapodistrias reform is a common name of a law 2539 Greece, which reorganized the country's administrative divisions.
- 2 Monastery script, in which pilgrims-donors are listed.
- 3 Kotsampasis: comes from the Turkish word *kocabaşı* (*koca* = great, big, old + *baş* = head, first). They were the local Cristian notables, on a province level, during Ottoman period.

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TENDENCIES FOR INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN THE CONTEMPORARY KATHAK DANCE TEACHING SCENE

The article looks deeper into the recent situation for Kathak, with a special emphasis on knowledge transmission. It is partly based on field work conducted in various Kathak communities in 2017 and 2018 and my own experience as a dancer, teacher and student of Kathak. The participant observation, interviews, stories of teachers and students in various places are used to survey the "ethnographic presence" and trajectories of inclusion/exclusion, in this field of transmission of dance knowledge.

Keywords: North Indian dance Kathak, *guru-śiṣya parampara*, contemporary tradition, inclusion and exclusion

Introduction

Kathak¹ is one of the neoclassical dance styles currently recognized and practiced in India and beyond. This dance style has developed from performing traditions of northern central India. Kathak dance, being part of a syncretic North Indian cultural environment, which could not avoid different historical, social, political influences and developed as an extremely versatile, synthetic performative practice, revealing a mosaic of worldviews, identities, ethnicities and belongings.

The classical² form of the dance was revived, institutionalised, nationalised, "purified" and "sanitised" along with the other music and dance forms in the processes of reforms and freedom movement, while searching for authenticity and national identity in the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century (Morcom 2013:112). A few "chosen" hereditary performers and their narrative entreties now represent the dance, leaving behind unsuitable traditions, marginalised in the turns and twists of cultural politics, power, and status shifts.

Recently, while India continues on the path of rapid development, globalization, mass media dissemination, and the spread of consumerism culture, with a drastically changed patronage system, and the dance field becoming very competitive and business-oriented, the Kathak scenario has become even more complicated.

In all of these transformations the main factor for defining the relationships between the tradition and diverse communities, historically, was and continues to be the patronage system and so called "socio-artistic organization" (Neuman 1990) of the Kathak community. Traditional knowledge transmission or *guru-śiṣya parampara*, along with the phenomena of stylistic variations and everyday practices, served as the pillars of this "socio-artistic organization".

The object of this paper is the traditional system of knowledge transmission, as one of the main aspects that form the trajectories of inclusion and exclusion. It provides an overview of the phenomenon generally and details it in the period when it was appropriated and adapted by dance teachers and dance scholars and projected back to the past, becoming an act of politics of representation. In the beginning of 20th century, along with *gharānās* and *riyāz*, it provided an illusion of authenticity and ancient roots for members of the Kathak community and served as warrant of authority and financial sustainability in the changing conditions of patronage system and spectatorship.

From the field notes

It's the usual morning class at Kathak Kendra – one of the largest state-supported Kathak institutes in India.³ Many students of different ages are gathered here. Although the class has already started and the atmosphere is charged with eagerness and anticipation, the teacher is still not present. Finally, when the guru appears, all the students hurry to greet him by touching his feet. After blessing all the students one by one, the teacher slowly proceeds to the far corner of the classroom, where the altar for the gods is placed. Multiple portraits of late senior gurus are also here. A short prayer is sung, blessings of great masters are received and the students follow the teacher in prayer. After this small ritual, all students return to their places. The teacher settles down near the musicians. One of his senior disciples hands him a bowl of sprouted chickpeas for reinforcement. It is his honorable daily duty and a gesture of dedication to the guru. The teacher goes on by blessing each student's ankle-bells – the *ghuṅgharū*. The same thing is done for the musicians, while students approach and touch the instruments. After this brief welcome, the actual lesson begins.

While the musicians start playing a rhythmic cycle, I think over and reflect on the beginning of the class that I just observed. I have many questions. The initial part of the lesson was not like a regular lecture or a practice session in the dance education environment which I am familiar with. It was more like a ritualized act, transferring the participants into some ritualistic reality, a mytho-religious space. The teacher looked more like an elder family member or friend and was very respected, almost having divine status.

Throughout the time of my own Kathak dance studies and practice in India, I always felt that unbreakable connection with my guru, being asked the same question again and again: Who is your guru? As Stacey Prickett rightly puts it in her article:

Yet the answer to the inevitable question of "Who is your *guru*?" continues to shape dancer's identity, their genealogical heritage locating them in relation to dominant power structures of the stylistic schools, the *gharanas* (Kathak) or *banis* (Bharatanatyam). (Prickett 2007:25)

Research questions

The situations and learning experience described above prove the importance of this phenomenon in the cultural entirety of the region and provoke us to look deeper into the *guru-śiṣya* tradition in general as well as into the recent situation for performing arts knowledge transmission, including Kathak in particular. The paper raises the questions:

- What is the significance of the *guru-śiṣya* tradition, apart from it being the main mode of knowledge transmission?
- How are the hierarchy and power dynamics implied in these *guru-śiṣya* relations instrumental in building community belonging?
- How does the traditional *guru-śiṣya parampara* fit into the institutionalized model of teaching, whether state-supported institutions or individual enterprises?
- How does this tradition adapt to the global market and consumer culture?

The study is based on material from ethnographic fieldwork conducted in various periods throughout 2017 and 2020 in various Kathak communities in the central northern territories of India and my own experiences as a Kathak student and practitioner in Delhi from 2003 till 2010. I continue my study and practise of Kathak traveling between India and Lithuania and, recently, online.

The research is grounded in the discourses of critical theory and historiography. The concepts developed by Michael Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu serve as the theoretical background

and methodological tools to delve into the subject.⁴ Postcolonial theory is also important here, as it sheds light on some historiographical details, scrutinizes the concepts of "tradition" and "authenticity" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), and explains some particularities of the modern and global world (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1995).

Guru-śiṣya parampara: overview

According to available oral and written sources, as well as the observed ethnographic reality, theoretical and applied knowledge in South Asia in general and in India in particular has been transmitted through the *guru-śiṣya parampara*, the traditional one-to-one teaching model. The tradition is important in the present too, though sometimes in a much-modified way. At one extreme, it preserves some of the region's vanishing practices or crafts. However, at the other extreme, we may observe a clear caricature of the *guru-śiṣya* pattern. Most explicitly, it occurs in "new age" spiritual movements in the form of such phenomena as "guruism", where the guru acts more like a sales manager or broker for the divine.

The notion of *guru-śiṣya parampara* can be found in a variety of primary and secondary texts. Primary textual sources, such as the *veda*,⁵ *upaniṣad*⁶ or *purāṇa*⁷ mostly speak about the *guru-śiṣya parampara* as the main model of imparting of spiritual knowledge and sustaining different lineages. From these texts we can understand the general importance of the phenomenon and place it among other cultural and social features. However, the language of these primary sources is highly metaphorical and the explanations must rely on wider historical and cultural contexts.

The late medieval period is richer in historiographical evidence. Courtly patronage brings many changes to the organization of performing communities. Specifically, in the northern regions of India, with the establishment of Moghul rule we can trace the process of the professionalization of performers. Knowledge becomes a commodity and it is kept in the rather small and closed circles of stylistic schools. The knowledge transmission is institutionalised and obtains "guild-like qualities" and the knowledge authority rests on a person rather than on written text or tradition. The socio-artistic organization of performing communities served as a management system of performing knowledge and property. *Guru-śiṣya parampara* was an important factor in handing over the exclusive musical property of particular lineages, which was usually secret, unavailable, or only partly available for non-family disciples, traditionally given only in the form of gift exchange after marriage. In today's terms, we would call this phenomenon intellectual property, protected by copyright laws.

In colonial times and the period of reforms leading to India's independence, the main religious and socio-cultural concepts were highly influenced by the intellectual interaction between East and West, processes of knowledge translation, and the individual vision of some thinkers/translators, such as Swami Vivekananda and Ananda Coomaraswamy. A romanticized and mystified approach was used to rewrite dance history and aesthetics in accordance with a nationalist agenda. This resulted in highlighting certain concepts, such as the connection to temple ritual as well as the spirituality, authenticity, and ancient origins of the dance. *Guru-śiṣya parampara* also found importance as an assurance of the "unbroken continuity of the system of oral transmission which was systematized with mathematical precision" (Vatsyayan 1992:2).

Along with the other concepts, the phenomenon of traditional knowledge transmission was fitted into a particular ideologically defined framework without considering problematic issues or the contemporary situation. The lack of evidence and gaps in the discourse were filled with speculative and abstract presumptions, thus creating a history of *guru-śiṣya parampara* on the fringes of mythology.

***Guru-śiṣya parampara* in the performing arts: the Kathak dance situation**

Guru-śiṣya parampara is still very alive as a knowledge transmission model in the performing arts, where the relationship between teacher and student is intimate. Gurus are important, unquestioned, and respected, and striving students are dedicated and initiated (often from the same extended family or community).

Huib Schippers lists the main concepts related to and frequently emerging from the context of *guru-śiṣya parampara*: tradition, authenticity, context, orality, holistic learning, and intangible aspects of Indian music (Schippers 2007:3).⁸ All kinds of knowledge were and are mainly transmitted in an oral mode. The orality of knowledge leads to contextual and holistic modes of transmission. The "in-body transmission" is readily incorporated in the teaching/learning process and leads to the embodied corporeal consciousness of the practitioner (Zarrilli 1984:192).

We can clearly observe three stages of the process. *Shravana*, literally the "act of hearing", refers to learning by means of watching the teacher and senior disciples practicing, hearing the rhythmical and musical patterns, and observing the context of teaching and performing. Observing slowly grows into the more advanced stage – mimicking and practicing or *manana*. Usually, these two stages take years of rigorous practice and dedication. Throughout this period, actual dance or music knowledge is transmitted to the student along with the context of the performative tradition.

After the stages of *sramana* and *manana*, the time for realization, mediation, and transformation of knowledge comes, when the technique is finally embodied by the practitioner and tradition and culture are inscribed in their body and consciousness. The disciple becomes part of the "socio-artistic organization" and is ready to use the "performance knowledge" or learned "codified strips of behavior" in "either structured or improvised performance" (Zarrilli 1984:191).



Figure 1. The students following the movements of the late Pt. Birju Maharaj during his 80th birthday celebration in Lucknow on 4 February 2018. Author's personal archive. Photo credit: Jovita Ambrazaitytė.

The necessary conditions of such holistic knowledge transmission are the long period of time dedicated to learning and the personal bond between teacher and student. Traditionally, the student would stay in a *gurukul* or *asram*⁹ for a certain period. In the case of absence of a structured institution such as a *gurukul*, the student would simply stay with the guru in their family. The teacher and disciple develop an intimate and caring relationship, from one side supported by ultimate acceptance and dedication and from the other side total trust and readiness to share the knowledge without holding back. In conversations with both teachers and students about their learning or teaching experience, this deep connection is always highlighted as a major condition for knowledge transmission. On the contrary, if the bond from both sides is not evolving, the guru refuses to teach or the student looks for another teacher. This proves that the connection required for knowledge dissemination involves a very personal human factor.

Traditionally, the consolidation of the *guru-śiṣya* relationship in society happens through the ritual *ganḍābandhan*.¹⁰ This ritual is an initiation ceremony for the disciple and formal recognition of the particular hierarchical pattern in the given system. From this moment onwards, the personal relationship becomes socially active and the performing life of the student becomes interrelated with that of the teacher.

Another important concept implicit in *guru-śiṣya parampara* is *guru dakṣiṇā*.¹¹ Simply put, it is what the disciple can offer in exchange for the knowledge obtained from his teacher. This concept is portrayed in quite a few episodes in literature and mythology, such as the story of *Ekalavya*¹² depicted in the epic *Mahābhārata*.¹³ Traditionally it is a symbolic concept and can be performed in a variety of modes. One of the most common acts of the *guru dakṣiṇā* is service to the teacher.

So, the knowledge transmission system, along with the factors of practice and stylistic variation, form the basis of this "socio-artistic organization", directly influencing the image and performance of its members. Through the vigorous dedicated practice and commitment to the authority of the guru, who is actually the embodiment of a certain stylistic school, the notions of continuity, lineage, tradition, authenticity, and preservation of intangible aspects of the culture are highlighted. Thus, the identity of the performer is established. It correlates with a particular community and is expressed explicitly in patterns of hierarchy, social status, and performance. The construction of this certain identity is achieved through mind and body discipline.

As observed by Pallabi Chakravorty, "dances were based on a model of durable and reproducible practice (inculcated through terms such as *guru*, *riyaz*, *parampara*), that created a sense of place or a habitus" (Chakravorty 2010:169–170).

"Habitus" is a very fluid term, depicting the web of "dispositions", which acts as the "organizing action" and "designates a way of being, a habitual state (especially of the body) and, in particular, a predisposition, tendency, propensity or inclination" (from *Outline of Theory of Practice*; cited in Grenfell 2008:51). Habitus is both a structured and structuring system: structured by a person's upbringing and educational experiences and the structuring of such factors as practices, beliefs, perceptions, and feelings. It always acts in a relationship with the "field" and "capital". Used in the field of performing practices in India, particularly with respect to traditional knowledge transmission, the tools developed by Pierre Bourdieu evoke the following picture. A particular practice, stated identity, or "way of being" results from performers' dispositions acquired through the *guru-śiṣya parampara* (habitus) and the performers' position in the performing field (capital, both economic and cultural) in the current state of the socio-artistic organization or context of performing community (field). In this way, the habitus here stands for ways of performance, feeling, thinking, and being in particular ways in the spaces of the everyday practice, stage performances, and social activities of the performer. It also captures the way the performer carries the history or lineage/tradition into the present circumstances and makes certain choices.

The concepts developed by Bourdieu serve as tools to understand how the *guru-śiṣya parampara*, with its notion of authority and authenticity, actively influences the performance practices and shapes the relationship between the performer's identity and the socio-artistic organization.

This further leads us to ground the traditional knowledge transmission practices in the realm of theoretical discourse developed by Michel Foucault. One of Foucault's most important ideas is the relationship between knowledge and power. *Guru-śiṣya parampara* – an educational institution through the authority of the guru and notions of tradition and authenticity – constantly exercises power. For Foucault, the main arena of power is the body. Dance and other performative traditions are inseparable from the body as the main medium of performance, so the connection between knowledge and power revealed through the body becomes very explicit in the scenario of transmitting dance knowledge. The discipline of the body and, through the body, the discipline

of the mind, becomes a method of control. It keeps the performer vulnerable and entangled in a web of anxiety and responsibility. It draws the borders of aesthetic, social, and bodily norms and places the subject in a particular position in the hierarchical system or socio-artistic organization of the performative community.

As mentioned, the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century brought a wave of important historical, political, economic, and socio-cultural changes to India, which led to important transformations in the performing arts environment. This period well illustrates how the aspects of socio-artistic organization were used aggressively and resulted in exclusion and replacement. Throughout the Mughal rule in the northern and central regions of India, Kathak in the courts was mainly performed by hereditary women dancers but accompanied and taught by male *gurus/ustāds*. The musical profession was mainly occupied by Muslim hereditary performers. In British Raj, dance was degraded almost to the point of vanishing under the influence of Victorian anti-nautch¹⁴ policies, when *devadāsī*¹⁵ in the south and *tawāfī*¹⁶ in the north were deprived of their traditional performing occupation, marginalized and treated as simple prostitutes. These British ideas and policies were picked up and continued by reformists and freedom fighters. Along with the freedom movement, and later while building a new independent nation, Kathak and other performative traditions became an important field for searching for national identity, authenticity, and a great, lost, ancient culture. Under these ideological influences, some important shifts happened in gender, caste, and religious community in the field of the performing arts. Dance and music traditions were revived, institutionalized, and nationalized. They were taken through the process of "sanskritization".¹⁷ As noted by Urmimala Sarkar Munsī:

There are a number of examples of SANSKRITIZATION of dance forms before and after Indian independence, in an effort to 'save' dance forms from disrepute, or extinction, to move them from their small world of 'little tradition' to the urban 'great tradition', and to give a new legitimacy for survival by identifying and projecting their links with the historical past by linking the movement patterns to the temple sculptures. [...] Sanskritization in the context of dance also means establishing a strong link with the predominantly Hindu historical past. (Munsi 2010:204–205)

Sanskritization went hand in hand with purification, which

has been sanctioned and backed by the cultural bureaucracy and brought into practice by the urban high caste/class elite practitioners, whose principal agenda was to create and establish forms which projected an 'acceptable' image of clean, aesthetically appealing body, which needed its distance in history and in actual projection from the impure nautch or the dance for private patrons that it came to be associated with in the nineteenth century. (Munsi 2010:205)

The best tool for smoothing these processes was the revisited *guru-śiṣya parampara*. With state and private initiatives and support, a number of educational institutions were established, of course, using the Western model of education. The newly built institutional bodies for music and dance were filled with predominantly male *gurus/ustāds* and upper or middle class-educated śiṣyas (predominantly women), motivated reformers/reinventors, and dance visionaries. Concepts of tradition and authenticity were and are carried forwards in these institutions, along with the "upholding of codes of conduct (both gender specific and otherwise)" through the authority of the teacher/master, who is the embodiment of *parampara*, and the "unquestioned submission" to the guru from generation to generation (Munsi 2010:173).

Knowledge transmission in the current Kathak scenario

In the contemporary context of public modernity and market-driven society, with its fast development track, spread of consumerist culture, and mass media dissemination, the dance field also becomes more global and available for all sections of society. However, along with the tendencies of democratization, the performing arts continue to retain an elitist attitude. Retaining the concepts of "tradition", "authenticity", and "purity", the overall situation of dance and other arts nonetheless becomes business oriented and competition driven. In this atmosphere, dance transmission seems to be even more complicated, as it faces challenges accommodating the authority and power dynamics from one side and the democratization of teaching processes from the other.

Conclusion

My own experience of learning dance in India has been very positive. I have been very lucky to become acquainted with very dedicated and knowledgeable teachers, sharing, caring, and loving with motivation and vision. I would say it was rather inclusive in my case, but most so after I was able to understand and submit myself to a tradition requiring so much dedication and commitment. The system itself has many tendencies that may appear positive or negative from different perspectives. Some aspects can be really misused from both sides. The main features, like the system being holistic, contextual, oral, intuitive, and intimate, are helpful in reaching the deepest layers of traditional performance knowledge, and to passing them to generations to come. These features can be labeled as positively inclusive. However, without reflection, and in its corrupted form, the system may incubate questionable values created by hidden hierarchical structures and power relations, identity and body politics, religious and socio-cultural dogmas, and economic factors. All these factors construct a cage of hegemony, stagnation of tradition, unquestionability, and authority that many dancers in India and elsewhere find themselves locked in – unable to be flexible, to be able to reflect and question, to create their own language of expression. Holding on to empty terminologies, sham and fictive rituals, and damaging relationships that increase "otherness", exotify, and separateness are definitely exclusive.

Endnotes

- 1 In Sanskrit word *kathā*, meaning "story", "narrative".
- 2 The use of the term classical is controversial in the context of Indian dance traditions. In the treatise on performing arts *Nāṭyaśāstra* (5th century BCE – 5th century CE), we can find terms *desi* and *mārgī*, which can be considered having approximate meaning of folk and classical. In addition, the term *śāstrīy* can be used, meaning "related to valid treatises on performing arts".
- 3 Originally the department of Shree Ram Bhārtiya Kalā Kendra, taken over by the government in 1964. SBKK was founded as Jhankar Music Circle in 1947 by Mrs. Sumitra Charat Ram and acquired its recent name in 1976. A very important institution, which directly influenced the revival of Kathak dance and Hindustani music.
- 4 More in: Rabinow 1984; Grenfell 2008.
- 5 *Veda* – a large body of religious texts, composed in Vedic Sanskrit and constituting the oldest layer of Sanskrit literature and the oldest scriptures of Hinduism.
- 6 Later commentary, part of the Vedic canon. An ancient Sanskrit text that contains some of the central philosophical concepts and ideas of Hinduism, some of which are shared with religious traditions like Buddhism and Jainism.
- 7 A vast body of literature of different genres (myths, legends, etc.) composed between the 3rd and 10th centuries CE. It covers a wide range of topics and belongs to the *smṛiti* (literally "which is remembered") tradition.
- 8 Musicians and dance performers in North India are very much interrelated, usually originating from the same families/communities. However, a strict hierarchy between them exists, based on the caste system (like in the case of vocalists and sarangi or tabla players).
- 9 A professional guild like an educational environment or residential school, where the student typically lives near

or with the teacher at his home or a particular place for learning (*kul*— "family").

- 10 Literally means the "tying of the sacred thread".
- 11 Means any donation, fee, or honorarium given to a cause, monastery, temple, spiritual guide, or after a ritual. Also, an honorarium given to a guru for education, training, or guidance.
- 12 Ekalavya was asked to cut his own right thumb as a *guru dakṣiṇā* by the authoritative Droṇāchārya.
- 13 One of the two major Sanskrit epics. Along with the second epic, Rāmāyaṇa, it forms the Itihāsa or mythology.
- 14 *Nautch* literary means "dance, dancing".
- 15 Community of hereditary female performers of South India who used to perform in temple and court settings.
- 16 Hereditary community of North Indian female dancers – courtesans – usually related to the Mughal court.
- 17 The term was introduced by the Indian sociologist Mysore Narasimhachar Shrinivas in the 1950s. In the sphere of the performing arts, it was accurately and purposefully used by U.A. Coorlawala and others in their writings.

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DANCE AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION: GREEK GAGAUZ STRATEGIES OF ACCULTURATION THROUGH THE EXAMPLE OF THE DANCE *SYRTOS KALAMATIANOS*

The aim of this paper is to study the dance strategies used by the Gagauz in their interactions with the Greek speakers in the area in order to be accepted and to rise socially. The pan-Hellenic dance *Syrtos kalamatianos* is analysed in relation to the way members of this ethnic group use it to construct and reconstruct their ethnic identity, depending on the circumstances of their social environment.

Keywords: Greek traditional dance, Gagauz, Thrace, acculturation, socio-Cybernetics

Introduction

I was born and raised in Thrace, Greece. Dances, feasts, festivals, ritual events were part of life there. Through them I 'fell in love' with dance and everything that goes with it. In this context, I decided to study at the School of Physical Education and Sports Science with the purpose of pursuing the "Greek Traditional Dance" specialization. Completing my undergraduate studies, I had already made the decision to continue. Thus, I started postgraduate studies, again at the School of Physical Education and Sports Science, in the "Physical Education and Sports" Master's Program in the "Folklore-Anthropology of Dance" direction. Through my undergraduate and postgraduate studies in this university school, I came into contact with a whole range of research and study of human movement in general, but also that of dance in particular, while my interest was focused on the region of Thrace.

Until that moment, in addition to the analytical concepts and tools that came from the dance itself, I had used theoretical schemes and methods from the field of humanities and mainly from anthropology, folklore, and history, since the region of Thrace offered but also required this combined study. Until then, conducting field research in the area of Evros, in Greek Thrace, I had been brought into contact with all the dilemmas and concerns of a native ethnographer who, through processes of reflection, ultimately poses questions not only about the people she studies but and for herself.

I made the decision to continue with doctoral studies. This time, however, beyond my undiminished interest in the music-dance tradition of Thrace, my concerns had broadened both theoretically and methodologically. One of these many concerns concerned what research and study of dance entails. This is because dance is both an act and a process (Koutsouba 1997). This simultaneous and dual nature of dance has the result that the subject can be approached both through the positivist paradigm (positive sciences, final 'product') and through the interpretive paradigm (humanities and social sciences, 'procedure'). Could these be combined? In other words, could a researcher somehow combine the 'product' and the 'process' in a specific study, the positivist and the interpretive paradigms, and if so, in what way?

I decided to undertake this project in this study. Taking as an example the *Syrtos kalamatianos*, a dance that is known throughout Greece, this study attempts to study it through the positivist paradigm of Cybernetic theory and the interpretive paradigm of Anthropology and Folklore today. This project emphasizes the dance itself, which carries its own methods and techniques, but also remains engaged with the threefold nature of Greek traditional dance as music, song, and dance.

Background of the study

The aim of this paper is to study the dance strategies used by members of the ethnic group of Gagauz in Greek Thrace, in their interactions with the Greek speakers in the area, in order to be accepted and to rise socially. The pan-Hellenic dance *Syrtos kalamatianos* is analyzed in relation to the way members of this ethnic group use it to construct and reconstruct their ethnic identity, depending on the circumstances of their social environment.

To achieve this aim, I used the ethnographic method as applied to the study of dance (Buckland 1999) including primary and secondary sources. Primary sources refer to data gathered through fieldwork, particularly participant observation (Buckland 1999; Giurchescu 1999; Koutsouba 1997; Sklar 1991) in Thrace in Greece and particularly in the community of Inoi from December 2008 up to December 2017. I recorded diverse types of *Syrtos kalamatianos* dance and used Laban dance notation (Labanotation and Hutchinson 1977) as well as the Laban System of effort, comparing the two (Holt and Turner 1972). Finally, I interpreted the data through the socio-cybernetic theoretical visuals according to the control model of identity proposed by Burke (1991a, 1991b). In order to highlight the ethnic identity of the Gagauz of Inoi of Evros, this theory will be used in conjunction with the analytical term "acculturation". More specifically, the term "acculturation" will be used according to the multicultural model proposed by Berry (1997).

The ethnographic context

In the 1920s, the Greek state faced the problem of integrating more than 1,250,000 refugees into its social structure. These refugees are populations "with a Greek national consciousness, who are not allowed to return en masse to their geographical area of origin, based on international treaties" (Vergeti 2000:19). The Treaty of Neigi in 1919, the Asia Minor disaster in 1922, and the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, were important intersections in modern Greek history. Apart from the dramatic developments for Hellenism and the trisection of Thrace, the many refugees who were forced come to Greece changed the anthropo-geographic demographic reality and filled the country with new potential (Dalegre 1997; Filippidou 2018; Pelagidis 2003).

The massive population movements of that period resulted in the departure of almost all Bulgarians from the region of Greek Thrace, but also of several Muslim groups. Moreover, these important events resulted in the arrival of a large number of refugees from Turkish and Bulgarian Thrace and from Asia Minor (Empirikos and Mavromatis 1998–1999; Filippidou 2011).

Therefore, Greek Thrace was, from 1919 to 1930, a place of resettlement for populations from Ionia, Pontus, Cappadocia, and also from Turkish and Bulgarian Thrace. In 1930, this area included populations of Greek-speaking local Christian Greeks, Greek-speaking Christian Sarakatsani nomads, Greek-speaking Christian refugees from Eastern and Northern Thrace, Greek-speaking Christian refugees from the Black Sea, Slavic-speaking Christian Greeks, Slavic-speaking Muslim Pomaks, Slavic-speaking Christian Trakatraks from northeast Asia Minor, Bulgarian-speaking Orthodox Christian patriarchal, Turkish-speaking Christian Greeks (Sarros 1906), Turkish-speaking Christian refugees from Cappadocia, Turkish-speaking Christian Gagauz refugees from Eastern and Northern Thrace, Turkish-speaking Muslim Turks, Albanian-speaking Christian Arvanite refugees from Eastern Thrace, Romano-speaking Christian and Muslim Gypsies, Armenian-speaking Christian Armenians, French-, Italian-, and German-speaking Catholics, as well as Spanish-speaking Jews (Chtouris 1999; Dalegre 1997; Empirikos and Mavromatis 1998–1999; Filippidou 2011). Many of these populations settled in the area of Evros prefecture in Thrace, close to those that already existed, creating a "multiethnic mosaic" and making Evros prefecture a multicultural area (Filippidou 2011, 2018; Varvounis 2006).

Greek society has been extremely wary of all refugees, especially non-Greek speakers, and particularly those that speak Turkish. One of these refugee groups that were treated with hostility were the Gagauz people.

The Gagauz or Gagavouzides are a Turkic-speaking Orthodox Christian ethnic group, who are found mainly in southern Moldova, Ukraine, and Bulgaria. Many Gagauz also live in Greece, mainly in the area of Thrace and especially in communities near Trigono, Didymoteicho, and Orestiada in the northern part of Evros prefecture (Filippidou 2011).

The Gagauz of Inoi are refugees from the *Serbettar* community, which is located 12 km east of the river Evros, in the neighboring state of Turkey, and which used to be called *Saraplar*, in the Greek *Krasochori*. After the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne, the inhabitants of *Krasochori* were forced to move further south and settle in the Evros Prefecture. They first moved to the village of *Simenli*, today's *Fylakio*, and then around 1924 they moved to *Jenioglu* where they built their new community. The name of *Jenioglu* (*Ino-glou*, *inos*=wine), as well as the old name *Krasochori* (*Ino-chori* i.e. wine village), gave the new community the name *Inoi* (Filippidou 2011).

According to Inzesiloglou (2000:177) "the term 'identity' denotes the ability of an individual or a group of individuals to remain the same and not differentiate from one image of himself in time". In order to assign an identity to an individual or a group of individuals, it is necessary that certain characteristics of that group remain unchanged over time. In the case of the Gagauz, the characteristic that differentiates them from the "others" is language (Filippidou 2011).

At the same time, the newly established Greek state actively promoted the Greek language and Orthodoxy as structural elements in order to create a single Greek identity. This necessarily resulted in the national ideology rejecting the Gagauz as "others" and excluding them from participating in the nation (Filippidou 2011). Henceforth, the conditions were such that the Greek-speaking populations of the Evros region characterised and addressed the Gagauz as "Turks", considering them second class citizens and treating them disparagingly (Filippidou 2011). Their linguistic otherness, which differentiated them from the "standard Greek", called their "Greekness" into question. They were typically seen by the "Greeks" (Greek-speaking Greeks) as a problematic group and potentially identified with the neighboring state of Turkey, that is, with the "national rival", whom they could not trust (Cowan and Brown 2000; Manos 2004). The direct consequence of this was to "other" their language and other declarative symbols of their identity (Filippidou 2011).

***Syrtos kalamatianos* as a way of communicating with the "others"**

After the Greek Revolution of 1821 and the creation of the Greek state, Greek intellectuals had to deal with an illiterate rural population that constituted a "dissonance" to the beautified form that Greece wanted to show "outside". This desired form was linked to the glorious ancient Greek past, as seen by the European supporters of the Revolution and the establishment of an independent national state (Hertzfeld 2002). This cultural dualism – the distinction between the traditional and the higher culture – dominated 19th century thought. The main concern of the Greek folklorists of the same era was to show the cultural continuity of the entire Greek nation through history (Hertzfeld 2002; Ntatsi 2008).

Folklore emerged as a national science and was mobilized politically and ideologically to prove that the people are heirs to the classical past and identify with the nation. The need for this proof was made more pressing by Fallmerayer's study "On the origin of the modern Greeks" published in 1830, which claimed that not a drop of Greek blood flows in the veins of today's Greeks. After this event, Greek intellectuals realized that this controversy arose because the absence of Byzantium from the historical continuity of Greek history creates a historical void. Thus, they argued for the need for Byzantium to function as a cohesive tissue to support the nation. Paparigopoulos proposed a tripartite scheme: Ancient Greece, Byzantium, Modern Greece (Avdikos 2009).

Greek popular culture was also mobilized to make this scheme work. Greek traditional dance could not remain uninvolved, as it constituted one of the cultural elements that could constitute a bridge that unites the past with the present, highlighting continuity in space and time, thus support-

ing the ideology of the nation-state and giving a unified "national image". As part of this ethicizing process, a specific dance repertoire was selected from the repertoire of dances on Greek territory, forming an elite "national repertoire" of dances, which corresponded to the "national" standards and emphasized ancient Greek connections (Avdikos 2006). In this pan-Hellenic dance repertoire, the *Syrtos kalamatianos* dance held a prominent position.

Later, in 1968, during the Dictatorship of the Colonels in Greece, pan-Hellenic dances came to the fore again, with *Tsamikos* and *Syrtos kalamatianos* considered to reflect the standards of Greekness. In particular, the key characteristics of the *Syrtos kalamatianos* dance were a) its standard musical measure (7/8), b) its twelve movements, c) the Greek song, d) the hand hold used (from the palms with elbows bent) and e) its specific name. Greeks had to follow these without fail in order to be characterized as Greeks.

The dance repertoire of the Gagauz included the *Syrtos kalamatianos* dance, but with different characteristics. Specifically, a) its musical meter was 9/8, b) the song that accompanied the dance was Turkish, c) the dancers held each other from the palms with the elbows bent, however the hands were not fixed, but in motion and d) the name of the dance was Turkish (the Turkish name of the dance was *Kero*). The only parameter that was the same as the standard national *Syrtos kalamatianos* dance was its twelve movements. These differences separate the Gagauz people from the Greek standard – from Greekness – with the most important element being the Turkish language. In order to revise others' beliefs about them and to become labeled as Greeks, they changed the speech component of their dance. Thus, they began to accompany their dance with Greek-language songs and call it *Syrtos kalamatianos* – that is, with a Greek name. The adjective *kalamatianos* was added to this dance name in order to declare its Greekness, since Kalamata, from where it takes its name, is located in the Peloponnese. This was the first part of the country to be freed from Turkish rule.

Although the change in their language resulted in them becoming, to a certain extent, accepted into Greek society, there were parameters in their dance that separated them. Their dance was accompanied by 9/8 musical metre rather than 7/8, so the Gagauz changed this parameter and the movement as well. They also began to perform their dance with a firm hand hold.

All of the above resulted in them becoming similar to "the others" with regards to this dance, and considered as Greeks, and thus being integrated into Greek society. However, though they now acquired the Greekness they so much wanted, this was achieved at the cost of their own Gagauz identity, a fact that contradicted their own identity standard.

The Gagauz define themselves as Greek Thracian Gagauz. So although the first two components match their identity standard, the third component is no longer reflected in this dance, which resulted in friction within the ethnic group. In order to bring their group back into balance, they took action again, changing components of their dance. This time they brought back the Turkish song and also the hand movement in their dance. But again, they became automatically characterized by the "others" again, as "Turks", as Turkish speaking Gagauz. This again brings imbalance to their group, as they do not describe themselves as Turks, and also reactivates social exclusion.

According to Burke (1991a, 1991b), when there is incongruence between the environmental input and the identity standard, a new parameter emerges; distress (sadness), which drives individuals to action. In the case of Gagauz, the fact that local Thracians attributed, again, a stigmatised and inferior identity to them, directly led them to modify their behaviour a third time, with the hope of restoring their identity. So as to maintain their Gagauz identity but also to be accepted by the "others", this time the Gagauz changed other selected components from the threefold nature of the Greek traditional dance (Filippidou 2011, 2018). Thus, they changed the music and the song component in the *Syrtos kalamatianos* but retained the movement component. In this way, they once again brought balance to their group, as well as maintaining their Gagauz identity and integrating more into Greek society.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to study the dance strategies used by the Greek Gagauz in their interactions with the Greek speakers in Greek Thrace, in order to be accepted and to rise socially. The pan-Hellenic dance *Syrtos kalamatianos* was chosen to highlight the way in which the members of this ethnic group used it to construct and reconstruct their ethnic identity, depending on the circumstances of their social environment.

The data showed that the *Syrtos kalamatianos* dance was used by the Gagauz as a means to integrate into Greek society. Specifically, the Gagauz people reacted to the behaviour of their social environment by adapting this dance. They changed the key components of this Greek traditional dance, including the lyrics, the music, and the movement. In a first stage, they changed all three components of the dance, choosing the acculturative strategy of assimilation. This resulted in them being considered Greek Thracians to a greater degree. Then they changed all the components of their dance again, returning it to its earlier form, in order to regain it as an expression of their Gagauz identity. However, this second strategy resulted in discrimination, re-emphasising their "foreign" identity in contrast to the general population. In a third stage, they found a way to bring together a more positive opinion of "others" about them and their identity standard. They adjusted the lyrics and music towards the Greek national standards but retained their particular movement content. Choosing this acculturative strategy of integration, the Gagauz managed to be accepted in Greek society, but also to maintain the Gagauz identity, consistent with their self-identification as Greek Thracian Gagauz.

In the case of the Gagauz refugees in Greece, the dance functioned to reconstruct their collective identity and to be accepted in the Greek society. Through the dance, the Gagauz people managed to maintain their Gagauz identity, but at the same time to be considered Greek Thracians. Until when; until the feelings of "others" about "them" change, in which case they must once again bring their internal standards into balance with what "others" think of "them". After all, the sense of "belonging" is not immutable, but instead is an active process that constantly involves transformative processes, allowing members of groups to change the meanings of their actions in direct interdependence with their social surroundings.

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FROM EXCLUSION TO INCLUSION: THE CASE OF *SYRTOS* DANCE IN KYTHNOS (THERMIA), CYCLADES, GREECE

Participatory dance events in the Aegean island of Kythnos (Thermia) constitute, even today, an integral part of the society's fabric, illustrating social and (re-)formation practices. This study aims to highlight the transformation procedures of *Syrtos*' dance form in Thermia, from a couple to a chain dance, defining inclusion and exclusion. It is demonstrated that young members of the dance community have re-formed one of the most idiosyncratic dances, creating a new scope of inclusion that co-exists with the exclusive long-established dance tradition.

Keywords: Aegean Sea, Greek traditional dance, couple dance, chain dance, thick description

Introduction

Kythnos is an island of the Western Cyclades that has been inhabited since antiquity (Vallindas 1990a, 1990b). Today, the appellation of the island is Kythnos and Kythnios/a for the male and female inhabitants respectively. However, in the context of oral tradition (Venetoulis 2007) and based on the narratives of the locals, the name Thermia and, respectively, Thermiotis/sa and in plural Thermiotes for the inhabitants prevails. This designation is also adopted in the present work.

In the second half of the 19th century, many Thermiotes from Dryopida, due to the difficult living conditions in island Greece, migrated to Athens, organizing a community. Since 1904, the cultural and social center of the community is *Patriotiki Stegi* (Patriotic home), an association housed in a building that was structured pro bono from all the members of the community (Bouritis 2022). My involvement with the community of Thermiotes in Athens began in 2017, when I started to work as a dance teacher in the dance department of the *Patriotiki Stegi*, *Choreftiko Mericha Kythnou* (Dance Ensemble of Merichas, Kythnos). Through my involvement with the dance group, I gradually became part of the community participating in feasts and various dance occasions both in Athens and Thermia. My first research attempt aimed to define the dancing rules that govern the improvisation in the most characteristic couple dances of the local repertoire *Syrtos* and *Balos* (Fountzoulas, in-press). But, during this research project, and more specifically during a spontaneous dance feast in the settlement of Kanala Thermia in 2019, I noticed that the locals performed *Syrtos* dance in a different way than they used to do, namely as a circle dance and not in pairs. This performance triggered this paper.

So, on the one hand, every dance form in Thermia is a couple dance with a man (*cavalieros*) and a woman (*dama*), where *cavalieros* also initiates the dance moves and the choice of the *dama*. On the other hand, the pair dance form itself excluded many people from the dancing procedure, as the procedure was governed by strict rules and orders. Also, the austere social structures dictated not only the paired arrangement, but also the relationship within a couple, as someone could not dance with anyone they wanted. The result of this was the exclusion of many individuals, especially women, from the dancing process. However, today there is a variation in the way young and middle-aged people dance the *Syrtos* dance, one of the main dances in the local repertoire. In many cases the dance *Syrtos* has been transformed from a couple dance to a chain formation.

Based on the above, the aim of this paper is to study the transformation procedures of *Syrtos*' dance form in Thermia (Kythnos) island, from a couple dance to a chain dance, in terms of inclusion and exclusion practices. Data collection was based on participant observation during

ethnographic research (Buckland 1999; Giurchescu 1999; Koutsouba 1999), while data analysis and interpretation took place using the concept of "thick description" (Geertz 1973).

Ethnographic data of the context

Kythnos is an island of the Aegean Sea in the prefecture unit of Cyclades. The capital of the island is Chora and the harbor is Merichas. The island's official name is Kythnos, but as it was mentioned before local inhabitants name it Thermia, due to the hot springs (*Loutra*) of the island. The word Thermia derives from the word *thermos*, which in Greek means hot. This specific designation is also adopted in this paper. Nowadays, the island is a very popular tourist destination due to its proximity to Athens, its hospitality and its special music and dance tradition. Many people come to experience a traditional feast, as dance and music traditions are still very important to the people of the island.

It is an empirical fact that Thermiotes are very proud of their dances, which differ from the dances of other islands due to their unique dance figures (Pirpinias 2010). The most popular dances of Thermia are *Syrtos* and *Balos* (Dede and Stratigos 2017). These two dances constitute a concurrence that starts with *Syrtos* and continues with *Balos*. Dimitris Martinos (74 years old) points out that: "*Syrtos* comes first and then *Balos* [...]. *Syrtos* is more difficult in comparison to *Balos*, because it has slow rhythm [...]. You can understand the difference between two dancers in *Syrtos*, not in *Balos*" (2022). *Syrtos* dance, which is the theme of this study, derives from the verb 'σέρνω' (*serno*), which in Greek means to drag something, and denotes something that is pulled along the ground (Kallergi 2022). Generally, *Syrtos* is one of the most well-known traditional dances of the Greek islands, with many local variations, but the local performance in Thermia differs from every other place in Greece.



Figure 1. Maps of Thermia. (Retrieved from <https://mysticneverland.gr/>)

Ethnographic data of dance: 'Syrtos in pairs'

The dance phenomenon in Thermia constitutes an integral part of the inhabitants' social life. Many informants in fact suggest that if you were a good dancer you were a coveted bride or groom. For that matter Katerina Larentzaki (33 years old) says that "My grandmother wasn't from a rich family, but my grandfather picked her for a wife because she was the *choreftra* [good female dancer] of her age" (2022).

The first key feature of the local dance repertoire is the pair configuration of the dance form. Giorgos Bellis (72 years old) mentions that "We [men] dance with women in couples [...], not

hand by hand [means in circle]" (2022) and Manolis Gonidis (73 years old) indicates that: "Only us in comparison to other islanders dance in couples. Every dance, even *kalamatianos* [a national circle dance]" (2022). The second key feature is *volta*, the most characteristic dance figure, that is performed in *Syrtos* and *Balos*. As far as *Syrtos* is concerned, it is a three-part alternating dance form. Kostas Bouritis, one of the oldest living Thermiotes (92 years old) explains that *Syrtos* "needs simple things: *syрто* or *syrtobalo*, *patito* and *volta*" (2022). *Syrто* or *Syrtobalo* refers to the basic dance moves, *patito* to the bridging part and the start of man's improvisation, while *volta* refers to the peak of improvisation and the consummation of dance, where *cavalieros* and *dama* spin around together.

As mentioned before, social structures were very strict and determined the paired arrangement, the relationship within a couple and the initiative of choosing a *dama* by the male dancer. More specifically, Manolis Gonidis remembers that "Young girls waited outside the *taverna* [Greek restaurant] standing [...]. Waited for us to choose one by giving our handkerchief and dance *Syrtos*" (2022) and Kalliopi Papageorgiou (72 years old) recounts that: "first time I danced [in public space] at the age of fifteen [...]. Some boys came home and asked for my fathers' permission to dance with me [...]. For him this was an honor"(2022). During this procedure many women were left unpicked by male dancers. In support Maria Garderi (71 years old) reminisces that "I danced many times per night. I was *choreftra* [good female dancer]. Other girls just waited vainly all night" (2022) and Tzamaros Larentzakis (76 years old) confirms that something similar happened with men too, "A man who didn't know how to dance, left the *taverna* [Greek restaurant] to go home. He didn't even participate" (2022).

Lastly, *cavalieros* not only had the initiative of choosing a woman but of the dance moves too. Giorgos Patestis (68 years old) points out that "Women didn't raise their hands [during dance], even their eyes. They looked down [...]. She was searching for you, to find your moves, to catch you" (2022) and Kalliopi Papageorgiou adds that "We [women] didn't do *tsalimia* (improvisations in Greek) in *patito*, men did. We danced properly, in a Doric way [...]. To do *patito*, to hang upon *cavalieros*, to follow him, to figure out what he is going to do next" (2022).



Figure 2. Couple during *volta*. (Source: Marietta Tsirdimou, December 2019)

Ethnographic data of dance: '*Syrτος* in circle'

But nowadays, in many cases younger Thermiotes dance *Syrτος* as a circle dance rather than a couple one. This happens because young men do not know how to dance and they do not even participate in the feasts. Michalis Larentzakis (29 years old) says that "Eighty percent of individuals that dance are women [...]. Boys don't dance so much, they prefer drinking" (2022). Moreover, there are foreigners, friends and tourists that come to visit the island during summertime

when most dance occasions occur and they want to participate. From the locals' point of view, foreigners do not know how to dance 'their' dances and under the terms of hospitality they put them in the circle and dance 'their dances' in a different way. According to Katerina Larentzaki, "This way [the circle dance] helps our friends that don't come from Kythnos to dance with us" (2022).

There is another factor that every local recognizes as very crucial about the difference between circle and couple dances and that is the 'safety of the circle'. Michalis Larentzakis admits that "I was afraid of it at first and I recently learnt how to dance [...]. Now I enjoy it" (2022). Flora Filippa (22 years old) mentions that: "this way [the circle dance] covers the fact that someone doesn't know how to dance, perform *tsalimia* [improvisations], *patito* and *volta*" (2022) and Maria Manolika (22 years old) adds that "In a couple dance you are over-displayed, while in the circle dance somebody can be camouflaged [...]. You can just go around and don't be beholden to do *tsalimia* and *volta*" (2022). Furthermore, social structures are different now and girls are not compelled to dance with only one partner all night. They can choose with whom they would dance and what dance figures they would do. Olympia Larentzaki (29 years old) say "You are not beheld to follow the man. You can do whatever you want" (2022) and Giannis Filippaios (68 years old) explains that "During dance man was like a rooster and woman like a chicken. Nowadays, women have become roosters, they jump and raise their hands like men [...], the roles have been lost" (2022).

Moreover, another factor that plays an important role in the transformation of *Syrtos*' dance form that according to the informants is the appearance of *nisiotika*. *Nisiotika* are the new written island songs that are performed by electrical instruments. Michalis Larentzakis says that "Dance changed following the transformation of traditional *zygia* [music company] with violin and lute, to violin, lute, keyboard and drums" (2022) and Pelagia Filippa (27 years old) adds that "In that circle dance, musicians don't play the traditional tunes and songs. How can I say that, when Bellis [the most-known musician of the island] plays the traditional tunes, no one will make a circle, but this will happen when he will play *nisiotika*" (2022).

All the aforementioned resulted in the *Syrtos* dance form's change and transformation from a couple dance to a chain one. Furthermore, the strict rule that the pair arrangement must be a *cavalieros* and a *dama* has been broken, while the second part of the dance *patito*, and more especially improvisations, is often absent. Pelagia Filippa mentions that "During the refrain of the song, where under normal circumstances *patito* would begin, a man catches any woman he wants or two women catch one other and do *volta*, without *patito*. After that in the verse of the song, we form the circle and continue to dance" (2022). Tzamaros Larentzakis admits that "*Tsalimi* is lost. In my days, everyone had his style. We were different from each other [...]. Now, youngsters all they do is *volta*, no *tsalimi* in *patito*" (2022).

Discussion

Greek traditional dance (GTD) as a subject with kinesthetic, emotional and cognitive content, and as a performance and social phenomenon, is a key element of the newer so-called intangible cultural heritage (Koutsouba 2015), the protection of which is a guarantee of the constant creativity of human thought (Fountzoulas et al. 2017; Niora et al. 2019). So, GTD embodies the results of previous continuity, shapes the practices and values of the society in which it is performed and marks the starting point for further development/transformation. One such paradigm is the *Syrtos* dance of Thermia island.

As far as traditional *Syrtos* dance is concerned: it is a couple dance, where *cavalieros* catches *dama* with a handkerchief; it has three parts that are repeated until the end, *syrtos* [the basic dance moves], *patito* and *volta* where improvisation occurs, while *cavalieros* has the initiative of the moves. But, social, economic and personal decisions affected the *Syrtos*' dance form, and new inclusive practices changed its form during the 1990s from a couple dance to a chain one. So,

	<i>Syrtos</i>	
	Couple dance	Chain dance
Dance form	Threefold, alternating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Syrtos</i> (or <i>syrtovalo</i>) • <i>Patito</i> • <i>Volta</i> 	Twofold, alternating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Syrtos</i> (or <i>syrtovalo</i>) • <i>Volta</i>
Dance formation	3–4 couples form a close circle	Autonomous individuals form an open circle
Couple pairing	All the time	Only during <i>volta</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man and woman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man and woman • Woman and woman
Way of holding	Man to woman via handkerchief	Anyone hand by hand
Music	'Traditional' tunes	<i>Nisiotika</i> . New written songs for all Cyclades' islands
Musical instruments	'Traditional' <i>zygia</i> (company) with violin and lute	Orchestra with violin, lute, keyboard and drums
Improvisation practices	Every refrain or during the instrumental part of the tune a pair at a time performs <i>patito</i> and <i>volta</i> , while other couples clap and cheer	Every refrain or during the instrumental part of the tune whoever wants performs <i>volta</i> in the center of the circle, while others clap and cheer
Dance "necessities"	Every couple must perform <i>patito</i> and <i>volta</i> at their turn	No one is obliged to perform <i>volta</i> , whoever wants does

Table 1. Synoptic table of *Syrtos*' dance form characteristics.

Syrtos dance 'in the circle' is a chain dance, where everyone can dance with whoever they want from both sexes, has two parts that are repeated until the end *syrtos* and *volta*, while everyone can dance as many times as he/she likes and do whatever he/she wants.

It is argued that in an ever-changing world, younger members of Thermia's dance community have created a new scope of dance inclusion, that on one hand contradicts the long-established local dance tradition, as it is not accepted by older members of the community, while on the other hand these two co-exist, at the same place but not concurrently and move forward in a parallel way. Michalis Larentzakis says that "Dance lives in Thermia and its adapted itself with the new data [...] it came in an unconscious way, by need" (2022) and Katerina Larentzaki points out that "Today, there are both couple and circle *Syrtos*. This is a transitional period. I don't know which of these two is going to prevail [...]. You can see youngsters to dance in pairs, while the same ones with their friends to dance in a circle" (2022).

Basically, in terms of inclusion this new dance practice arose naturally, as a large part of the island's community re-forming one of their most characteristic dances, so that everyone, regardless of their dance abilities, gender or social position could participate. That happened mainly because

young men do not know how to dance and so girls dance together. In other words, men do not even participate. There are many foreigners, friends and tourists that do not know how to dance the local dances and want to participate in the feasts. There are new-written songs for all Cyclades' island that younger locals dance in chain – like every other islander – not in pairs. Moreover, there is the 'safety of the circle', where anyone can dance, since you do not have to do *tsalimia* in *patito* and *volta* and mainly, social structures have changed and women can initiate the dance too.

In conclusion regardless of the place, by whom and for what reason it is performed, the *Syrtos* dance in Thermia still lives, continues to transform and has great value for the performers. Therefore, the local dance community is constantly renewing its identity, and social structures as well as the links between the subjects that re-synthesize and update it.

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KINAESTHETICALLY BASED BONDING BETWEEN *KRUMPERS* AND 'CONTEMPORARY' DANCERS IN THE PROJECT RAW. EXPRESSION BRUTE DE LA RAGE

This paper addresses the French action-research project on *krump*, funded by the Centre national de la danse (CND), RAW. Expression brute de la rage. After outlining the project and its aims, the author focuses on its inclusive methodology at the heart of which is the "encounter" and its use of *Authentic Movement* as the means for establishing a kinaesthetically based bonding between *krumpers* and contemporary dancers.

Keywords: *krump*, France, action-research, Authentic Movement, bonding

The project Raw. Expression brute de la rage

In 2018 the French Centre national de la danse (CND) (National Dance Centre) funded a research project spearheaded by *krumper* Émilie Ouedraogo Spencer, known as Wounded aka Lady MadSkillz, and dance-artist Laurence Saboye in collaboration with her colleague dancer-choreographer Isabelle Dufau. Ouedraogo Spencer is an established participant in the Parisian and international *krump* scene, performing in both the more social contexts of battles, 'labs' and other spaces for dance interaction, as well as onstage in productions outside the *krump* sphere. Saboye and Dufau are established figures within the more intellectually oriented contemporary dance milieus with expertise in a variety of genres. The former is a kinetography Laban notator and the latter trained in Rythme du Corps, a Dalcrozian approach developed by modern dancer-choreographer Françoise Dupuy. While the project instigators were Ouedraogo Spencer and Saboye accompanied by Dufau, they were joined by a team of colleagues, *krumpers* and others including myself as an anthropologist of dance who, in the end, made a relatively marginal contribution. No distinctions in status were made between team members as all were considered dancer-researchers, knowledgeable in their respective domains, the whole project having an experimental thrust with strong ethical foundations. It was Ouedraogo Spencer who, by putting out a call to community members, recruited the four other *krumpers* who joined the project. Many of the non-*krumper* members were already connected through a graduate level programme established by the late Laurence Louppe at the Cefedem Sud in Aubagne in the South of France, a programme running between 2000–2004 only for two cohorts. This ambitious and intellectually rigorous programme in "choreographic culture" (Izquierdo 2017) under Louppe's leadership effectively created an intellectual community of practice – if this is not an oxymoron – which has, I suggest, spawned many exciting initiatives including Raw.

The project's aims

The aim of the project was to document *krump*.¹ This relatively under researched urban dance form, especially in France, emanates from Los Angeles based *clowning*. The latter was a social and dance movement created by Thomas Johnson, known as Tommy the Clown, as a counterpoint to the urban violence and gang culture of Los Angeles after the 1992 riots in order to provide an emotional outlet and a safe space for expression for youth in his locality. *Krump* gained international notoriety through David LaChapelle's 2005 film "Rize".² Although now well-established as a genre independent from *hip hop*, *breakdancing*, *clowning* and other urban genres

with which it is sometimes identified, young *krumpers* in France were preoccupied that it should be documented for transmission and sustainability. It was this, in part, that spurred Ouedraogo Spencer and Saboye to generate the project. While grounded in practice and empirical research, the ultimate aim was to develop a textual resource that would appeal to different kinds of public: *krumpers* and other dancers, whether amateur or professional, researchers, notators and so on in order to "reveal its expressive identity, its ethical values and its educational or even curative dimension" (Saboye, Ouedraogo Spencer and Dufau 2019).³

Krump or krumping

Krump was founded in the early 2000s by two of Tommy's 'protégés' as an extension of *clowning*, Tight Eyez and Big Mijo.⁴ Indeed, unlike their mentor, they developed the dance as a means of expressing their 'rage', which explains the title of the project. It is interesting to note, however, that in its context of emergence, *krump* was apparently conceived as a gift from and to God and a means of connecting to the divine and joining his 'kingdom' – a posture sometimes apparent in Tight Eyez teaching. It has become, over the last twenty years, an internationally practised genre, with a formally established technique developed principally by Tight Eyez.⁵ *Krump* is practised and transmitted in 'families', which are based on affinity and not blood relations. Nonetheless, these create genealogically mapped connections, each family having a 'Big', that is a recognised expert who is a 'master' at its head. It is practised or performed in a variety of contexts ranging from the 'cage', the more enclosed space for ritualised initiation of a new member, the 'session' for training with a focus on choreographic structure, to the 'lab', a private occasion for experimentation with members of the 'fam', and the 'battle', the public competitive demonstration of skill and mastery.

The project's method: *la rencontre*, collaboration on equal terms as an inclusive strategy

Since at the outset the aim of the project was to create a forum for exchange between all the participants in order to document *krump*, some basis for collaboration between the two groups of 'dancers-researchers' – *krumpers* and others (contemporary dance artists, a therapist, an anthropologist, and so on) – had to be envisaged. In the project description when submitted to the CND, that this would be studio (and not fieldwork) based was implicit, the focus being on observation and analysis of practice during processes of exchange between all project actors. *La rencontre*, the encounter, was the basis for the project, from Saboye's meeting with *krump* and Ouedraogo Spencer in 2015 to the shared experiences in the CND's dance studios, and it became the project's experimental and empirical foundation. Relational reciprocity was crucial to avoid objectification of the other and asymmetry in the interactions between participants. Questioning together, dialogue, exchange, sharing experiences and knowledge were all crucial to avoid the potentially positivist observational stance that may have arisen with a group of non-*krumpers* researching a practice other than their own. The project was characterised, therefore, as one of action-research in that engaged participation through doing and discussing was intrinsic to the methodology, with an understanding that all participants would impact on the project's results even if not all were *krumpers*. In order to make such collaborative research possible, a methodology was required that would both build shared experience and understanding as well as mutual trust. Exchange of movement practices and exchange of points of view were its foundations with the 'danced encounter' being privileged since all participants were dance practitioners of whatever kind. Moving together was thus one of the main strategies devised to eradicate the exclusionary and divisive boundaries if a specific dance genre had been foregrounded from the outset. Nonetheless, in the early stages of the project all team members did share their respective practices with others before a more stable inclusionary method emerged in the creation of a terrain or field for researching *krump*.

The tool: improvisation inspired by *Authentic Movement*

Indeed, it was from these first studio-based experiments that what was to become the main movement-based method for collaboration emerged. Introduced during the early sessions by one of the contemporary dancer-choreographers, improvisation inspired by *Authentic Movement* turned out to be the tool that enabled all to move as they wished while engaging with others in a shared space. This is a Jungian based system developed by a dancer become therapist Mary Stark Whitehouse in the 1950s and used by different communities of practitioners (therapists, dancers...) in order to connect the individuals to themselves. "Movement, to be experienced, has to be 'found' in the body, not put on like a dress or a coat. There is that in us which has moved from the very beginning; it is that which can liberate us" (Mary Whitehouse n.d.). It is one of many somatic techniques developed in the 20th century based on a focus on self, on attention to bodily sensations and processes, and to individual feelings. Prior to observing the 'danced encounter' inspired by *Authentic Movement*, I was extremely sceptical as to its value in the context of a research project on an urban dance form in which confrontation with another during a 'battle' is a privileged scenario. I questioned whether introducing such a method into *krumping* was not a way of imposing on a social popular dance form based on relational dynamics and interaction an experience of self/personhood that is antithetical to its ethos.

The result: inclusion

My brief field experience completely changed my appreciation of the relevance of *Authentic Movement* as a means of developing an inclusive strategy to assist in the research process. *Krump* is in fact a solo dance form practised, however, not only in the presence of others but thanks to their active participation through energetic encouragement, both verbal and gestural. Moreover, in order for it to be effective *krump* must have a strong story line, which is not predetermined but emerges through the movement as it unfolds. It is in effect improvisatory as is *Authentic Movement*, the narrative, however, being produced using the basic *krump* vocabulary, ornamented with additional gestures to give the story substance. A focus on self is therefore essential to draw upon creative resources, so using *Authentic Movement* was by no means contradictory even if the aims of each practice were significantly different. In *krumping* the intention is not only to tell a story but to do so to produce an explosive outcome – to generate 'hype', to 'get off'. Indeed, 'rage' (not violence) is the motor for *krumping* and for the exploration of corporeal and emotional experiences at its core. While no specific emotion drives contemporary dance, analogous experimentations define it. It, therefore, transpired, to my surprise, that the commonalities between *krump* and a somatically based dance/movement technique did indeed render possible the 'danced encounter' between the two groups of participants. Such an encounter I have termed a kinaesthetically based bonding resulting perhaps in a community of practice with its own codes, the impact of which extends perhaps beyond the action-research context.

Endnotes

- 1 The text that is the outcome of the project has not yet been published but exists in draft form, from which I have drawn heavily in this paper. I do not feel, however, at liberty to reference it directly.
- 2 See Stephanie L. Batiste's chapter on LaChapelle's film for a good description of *krump* movements, aesthetics and ethos.
- 3 Translated from the French by the author of this paper.
- 4 Given their renown I have chosen to retain the names by which the two founders are known in *krump* milieus. It should be noted, however, that such names may actually change as it depends on the family to which dancers belong or the name of its head.

- 5 In my contribution to the textual resource I focussed on the transmission of *krump* through online ethnography after participating in only one session of studio-based experimental research. 'Tight Eyez' teaching of several studio-based workshops in Astana Kazakhstan was used as the basis for my analysis. Faced with a non-English speaking public of young pupils I suggest that he was obliged to be exceptionally clear and structured in communicating the basis of the technique over a short and intense period.

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THE IDEOLOGY OF AUTHENTICITY AND THE MEDIA MANIPULATION

In this paper, I show how the ideology of authenticity and the media manipulation of this concept can act as a mechanism of inclusion/exclusion on the market of folklore professionals in Romania. I focus on the analysis of several interviews with professionals (conductors and leaders of traditional dance ensembles) broadcast after 2000 on Radio Romania Cluj.

Keywords: authenticity, traditional dance, media manipulation, Radio Romania, Cluj

The present topic is part of an ongoing research project: an analysis of the process by which so-called traditional cultures serve as a source for broadcasting products.¹ It is based on recordings from the Radio Romania Cluj Archive, a media institution representing Transylvania, Romania. These are broadcasts from the years 2000–2004, but which refer to the situation of the folklore performance industry and especially that of choreographic folklore, starting with the 1960s and until the end of the first 10 years of the post-communist period.

I focused on a few elements of narrative construction that stage the concept of authenticity in the discursive construction of folk dance. My focus will be on broadcasts that feature folklore show practitioners, particularly choreographers and directors of artistic ensembles.

I have to make a few preliminary remarks. First, as a percentage, direct references to traditional dances in the broadcast field named 'folklore' are much lower than those referring to vocal or instrumental music or those relating to 'traditions' as peasant culture. However, the discourse on stage folklore in general can help us to better understand the field of media choreographic folklore in general.

Of the broadcasts made between 1960 and 2005 and then archived, only two are exclusive interviews with significant representatives of choreographic folklore in the region. But we have to keep in mind that not all recordings have been kept. However, any broadcast reference to peasant dance can provide information on: 1. choreographic practices, performative practices or on their management in a media context, 2. criteria for repertoire selection, and 3. rules and norms governing the legitimacy of stage performance of choreographic folklore.

After 1980, in a series of interviews with personalities of stage folklore, be it vocal, instrumental or choreographic, the 'veracity', as the main requirement of broadcast folklore, began to be systematically discussed. Around the 2000s, this discourse became stronger. It was the period when the various 'stars' of the genre, called rhapsods, popular artists, 'masters', had the opportunity, after the fall of communism, to describe or explain aspects that they considered significant for broadcasting folklore. This was a topic that could not be the subject of a radio show during the communist period. Last but not least, these folklore practitioners, having both the experience of rural life and that of the folklore show market, were among the first to become models of the system of rules governing the media folklore industry.

If we focus on the problem of authenticity as a pivotal concept of the discourse on traditions, the first thing that stands out is the following: until 1985, the term was almost absent from the discourse of both radio editors and, especially, the invited 'interpreters'. Oftentimes, folklore is not considered 'authentic' but is considered 'true', if it is recognized as such by speakers.

Moreover, a current practice of the actors involved in the folklore media industry, of choreographers especially, but also of the leaders of various folklore ensembles (instrumental, vocal,

choreographic or large ensembles belonging to various institutions or trade unions) was to preserve a permanent link between the folklore performers and the representatives of the local cultures in which stage folklore had its origin. This practice was reproduced in the folklore show industry until the fall of the communist regime. One of the well-known choreographers from the Transylvania area, in a dialogue with a folklore broadcaster, mentions:

Choreographer: Almost 35 years ago, I collected this dance suite from the Ratiș valley. After I got in touch with the oldest people in the village, the dancers, I staged the dance with a lot of emotion. Following the staging of this suite, we decided to give a performance in the village. I wanted to check to see how well the young people had mastered the dance in their respective locality! [...] Then, to convince myself even more that the work was progressing well, I also involved the old people from whom I learned the dance. Together we completed the show! [...] Because they are generally interested in whether you have embarrassed them or not!

Interviewer: It is a serious responsibility to take a suite from a village and play it the way they play it there; it is very significant! (RRCA 2003)

Using concepts such as 'respect', 'honor', 'value', and 'preserving traditions', a discourse is constructed here that highlights the stereotypes that already supported staging folklore. In this way, a media discourse is built and refined that defines traditions as 'treasury' (a term that became constitutive of the media discourse around the 1980s) and then as national heritage. In this way, the leaders of the media market for folklore validated their artistic production. They also consolidated their authority in a field that was in full development.²

In a 2004 interview, one of the senior choreographers of the dance groups from the Transylvanian Plain, referring to his activity carried out between 1960–1970, says: "Once every two–three years we used to organize pre-selections; [...] We managed to keep the traditions and dances of the Transylvanian Plain as close as possible to the truth" (RRCA 2004a). This was just an example.

The places on which the stage-folklore was performed, until about the 2000s, were the culture houses³ in rural areas; and this practice ensured, among other things, an empirical verification of the 'folkloric truth', and of the actual conformity of choreography or music to local norms.

Up until 1975, the criteria for legitimizing media folklore performances were largely sociological: that 'performers' must have proven rural origins and have lived a 'traditional' existence, free of stage practices. This status was publicly stated, and media stage performance was described as an urbanized continuation of rural practices. Another well-known senior choreographer in the area tells how in 1969 the folk ensemble of the Cluj Urban Transport Authority (an ensemble he founded) consisted of drivers and their wives and other employees of the enterprise; they did not have a musician, but they were all considered exceptional dancers (RRCA 2004c).

The choreographies for stage dances around the 1960s, but also afterward, seem to have been more the result of a negotiation between the ensemble's head and the dancers. In an interview from 2004, one of the directors of the most prestigious folklore ensembles in the region says:

I did the choreography with the boys: one did a figure, then everyone did that figure! The choreography is done by itself. Drawing the movement on stage is easy. With matchsticks you can make as much choreography as you want. The thing was the figures, they had to be original, from the village, from the county. (RRCA 2004c)

This kind of folk-dance staging is called 'collective choreography' during the interview. From this, we can infer at least two rules significant to choreographing the peasant dances that have been staged: 1. The preservation (reproduction) of the 'figure' – which is thus detached

from and defined in relation to the community performance of reference; 2. In this concept, the choreographer is allowed to 'occupy' the performance space (formal or informal stage, television studio, etc.) with various choreographic movements (direction of movement, location in the space, etc.) as long as 'figures' are kept. This freedom will depend on the presence of the public, whether it is mediated by the stage-audience relationship, or by the lens of the camera.⁴

It was relatively easy for the rural population to accept the transformation of social practices, that is musical and choreographic practices, into media products: before the communist regime was installed, the premises had already been established within national policies. The commodification of folklore performance was one of the first processes that produced an influential shift in the (re)construction of the meaning of 'traditions'. It signifies the transition of peasant culture as a cultural reference, from community practices to the demands of the 'market of folklore'. The legitimacy of this process was contested for a long time by the peasants, especially by the adult generation in the early 1960s. One of the most prominent folk singers from the communist period and after it, said in an interview in 2002: "My mother used to ask me: Hey Nicolae, do you get paid for singing? So who pays you for singing??" (RRCA 2002).

In another interview broadcast in 2004, a well-known conductor of a professional folklore orchestra stated: "if everything is done for money, it means that we will work against the value of folklore. In 20 years, we risk being left without folklore, like other peoples, nationalities from Western Europe" (RRCA 2004b).

This inadequacy, unanimously perceived as such in those years in the rural environment, was quickly overcome by the development within rural cultures of a new field: that of stage performance intended for media spectacle. Folklore performers had already begun incorporating and reproducing the ethnologist's work (of spotting, 'collecting', and 'preserving' the so-called 'traditional culture') as a *sine qua non* of 'authenticity' in their entertainment production by the 1980s. This phenomenon sheds light on the presence of two ongoing social processes: 1. One generated by the need for additional authentication of products intended for the folklore media market; 2. Generational changes in the performers industry caused this change: a younger generation, raised and educated in the urban environment, gradually replaced the old.

The method of 'collecting', or rather learning, a repertoire according to the requirements of the market for popular media from the beginning of the 1970s is worth describing. A senior choreographer recounted in an interview in 2003:

[around 1970] I was with my colleague from Valea Largă [The Large Valley], at some old people's house and we started learning. [...] My colleague was trying to capture the figure and I was establishing it in its final form... [...] It took five months of collection! Our dancers, although they took first place in the competitions, did not like this suite with this out of time rhythm at all! Especially the dance known as 'the carried'! And then... little by little, when they saw that the results were worth the work, they started to like it! (RRCA 2003)

To access the folklore media market, the production conditions of media folklore, such as originality, novelty, and variety, had to be melded with the requirement of authenticity. It is the period in which (around 1980) there is more and more talk about professionalization in this field.

The same famous local choreographer in the area said in the 2003 interview:

A real dancer must know all possible folkloric areas and be familiar with the dances of these areas. A true ensemble dancer must have his feet ready for all choreographic elements in various areas! A foot that knows how to perform movements in all areas can be used right from the first rehearsal! (RRCA 2003)

Two basic requirements of media production, originality and novelty, make folklore practitioners resort to performance solutions that transgress the (already settled) norm of 'authenticity' (itself an intellectual construction). Here is an example that sheds light on the methods of composing repertoires for folklore groups; it also sheds light on the historical and cultural context in which the concept of authenticity acquires increasing use value, not only through its symbolic and political meanings, but, above all, by its use value in the booming market of media folklore. The senior choreographer mentioned above stated:

In 1968 after the establishment of the county as an administrative-territorial unit, I ended up doing this suite from Frata's glade. Now that it is no longer a secret, one can say that the dance, in fact, comes not from Frata's glade, but from the Wide Valley. This is in Mureş County. I was also a choreographer at the Centre for Popular Creation in Cluj, so my business was not in Mureş County! This dance suite is actually a study that I did in all the surrounding villages! Not in Mureş county but beyond, in Cluj county. As a result of this synthesis of movements, the suit of Frata's glade or the Wide Valley was born. Because that was the problem, I had to present a choreographic tableau ... of a county! (RRCA 2003)

After the fall of communism, 'authenticity' became the strongest criterion for the next generations of performers to gain access to the media fields of folklore.⁵ There is one particular aspect of this statement that supports it: repertoires (especially vocal repertoires) were generally based on the 'compositions' of the performers. After the 1990s, if the performers cannot 'compose' their repertoire by themselves, they turn to professional text writers. However, folklore was always presented as gathered, collected, or learned from a previous generation. Today, it remains the standard way of proving the 'authenticity' of folklore performances. Its creation by the performer is carefully hidden. Despite this, the so-called theft of pieces or solutions to choreography is a constant subject of discussion among the participants of the folklore media market. This practice, widespread today, opens the (legal) issue of copyright in the field of media folklore and requires a more careful reassessment of the uses of the concept of authenticity. It also raises some questions: who decides what is authentic and what is not and in what context? What are the current uses of authenticity within this field, especially as inclusion/exclusion criteria? Where can we find evidence of the legitimacy of its production?

A few observations can be made in this regard. More than ever today, the ethnological enterprise must be understood in terms of the impact that ethnological research has on its object of study. Then, a methodological aspect that demanded attention more recently is the way in which the intervention of researchers (direct relationship, written text, but also sound and visual recording resulting from field research) can also reshape the production of meaning in the local cultures studied (Hüwelmeyer 2000). Last but not least, and thus returning to the theme of this paper, media coverage of the studied cultures influences their dynamics. This creates distinct domains of local cultural systems, as well as hierarchies of values in local cultures. These, in turn, are organized around the concept of authenticity.

The cultural policies that were consolidated starting from the second half of the 20th century had a defining corollary and support in media production and therefore may be categorized, as I defined previously, the 'market of traditions'. Today, neither these policies nor local cultures can be studied, analysed, interpreted, outside of mediatization processes.

Among these processes, radio broadcasting continued to be a reference, not only because it was the first that, not using written text, expanded its public in an unprecedented way and in an extremely short time (about 10 years all over the world). Because of this, the interest that social researchers have shown in radio production has remained constant.⁶ Equally, it can be observed

that the interest that media actors (performers or radio professionals) have continued to show until today in radio production. It seems to be particularly fuelled by the space that this media field could allocate (in relation to television, which is almost exclusively focused on entertainment) to the reflexive critical discourse on folklore, on the history of this field of performance.

In Romania, at least during the communist period and immediately after, radio production was for more than a decade (until the widespread availability of the Internet) the only medium available to host this type of discourse. Therefore, radio productions can provide the public or 'official' explanation regarding the eligibility and access criteria for folklore performers to participate in mass media productions: public or private television, but with widespread visibility, festivals, and wide-ranging contests. But the pivotal concept around which these eligibility criteria are organized, as well as the mechanisms of inclusion/exclusion of folklore practitioners on the (media) show market of traditions, was, starting at the end of the 20th century, that of 'authenticity'.

In order to better understand these processes, it is not the analysis of the meanings this concept can have that becomes important. The issue is rather a question of its political uses, and, more importantly, of the performative requirements that these political uses impose. Different norms (performance style, clothing, language specificities, not least the proof of the 'autochthonousness' of the staged repertoire) define the legitimacy of a performance and the ability of the performer to access folklore-related media.

Endnotes

- 1 This paper derives from a research project (under the aegis of the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant) entitled "National culture and folklore as its avatar. A study of the forms, metamorphoses and function of folklore as a branch of media culture in Romania". I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the Cluj Regional Radio Station, part of the Romanian Radiodiffusion Company. I thank them for allowing me access to its archives to pursue the research on which this project is based.
- 2 At least in Transylvania, it was a complex process that had particularly rich meanings in this region, also due to ethnic differences. I refer here, comparatively, in particular to the socio-cultural history of what is generically called *táncház* (in translation, dancing house). It is a type of event-spectacle that combines the revival intellectual project with the social practices of local Hungarian peasant cultures. The *táncház* phenomenon brought together intellectuals, musicians, professional and semi-professional choreographers, and local Hungarian musicians and dancers (see Halmos 2000, but also Taylor 2008) and promoted an effective manner of professionalizing folk artists.
- 3 The institution of the so-called 'culture home' (or cultural house) has its origins in the interwar period. In 1921, King Ferdinand of Romania established the Prince Carol Foundation, which had the purpose of "helping, supporting and creating cultural events" (Croitoru, Pălici and Savu 2020:34). Through this institution, cultural homes began to be established in Romanian villages, which always housed a library. Education, sanitation knowledge, and economic practices were their objectives. Continually involved in the activities of this institution, the School of Sociology in Bucharest, whose founder and leader was the sociologist Dimitrie Gusti, organized student field research campaigns that were also dedicated to supporting the education of rural communities. (Croitoru, Pălici and Savu 2020:34–35).
- 4 In the case of filming a dance, the musicians are in most cases concealed from the audience's view. The location where they are located frequently minimizes their presence.
- 5 There were two key moments in the definitive consolidation of the position of absolute power of this concept in the discourse on traditions, respectively on the specificity of local cultures: the fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, then the UNESCO convention of 2003.
- 6 See in this respect Tom Western 2018:1–10.

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DANCE, COVID-19, AND THE NOTION OF FLOW: INTERPRETING DANCE EXPERIENCE(S) UNDER PANDEMIC RESTRICTIONS

What happens with the feeling of "being in the zone" or with the flow (after Csikszentmihalyi 2001) when members of International or Bulgarian folk dance communities can only dance together on zoom? Or, what happens if every dancer is required to wear a mask in the dance hall? How do these experiences reveal the "true" nature of dance and dancing with others? This paper discusses these questions while analyzing surveys and observations, starting with the author's reflection on her personal experience.

Keywords: dance, Covid-19, flow, Zoom

Introduction

This is my third paper on the subject of dance during the pandemic of Covid-19. Previously delivered works include "To zoom or not to zoom? Observations on approaches and practices of Bulgarian and international folk dance groups under pandemic restrictions" and "What did we learn? Why does it matter? Outcomes of teaching and learning Bulgarian dance via zoom in 2020–2021". The first was prepared for the Dance Studies Association's conference in 2021, and the second was delivered during the 8th Symposium of the Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe in Istanbul in May 2022 (see Ivanova-Nyberg 2021, 2022).

I rest on my surveys and observations in my text here, as in my earlier papers. But I look at these through different lenses, now rereading the seminal book on flow and optimal experience by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2001). My clusters of questions were shaped into these major sub-themes:

- What happens with the flow if one dances via zoom (teaches, learns, performs)?
- Where is the flow if one dances with a mask?
- Dance in the future tense?

Each sub-theme is large enough for individual attention and research. For this proceeding, though, I will outline some of my general findings. And I begin with reflections on my experience.

"I-dance-therefore-I-am"

The summer of 2001. Pirin Pee National Folk Festival, called "*Sabor*", on the foothills of Pirin Mountain, Bulgaria, blue sky, bright sunshine, music, and cheerful colors everywhere. Several stages are under the open air, hundreds of people presenting their songs and dancers dressed in traditional costumes watching the program on the central stage. At that time, I am a philosophy teacher on sabbatical, working on my two-year research project, "The folk dance today: fieldwork in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia".¹ Near me sits an American. He wears a T-shirt on which back I read: "I dance; therefore I am." I smile. It had never come to me to "twist" Descartes this way. But I also belong to this club.

We converse for a while on the "existential" hunger for dance before joining the big *horo* in front of the stage. My face is shining with joy. I am in heaven.

The spring of 2020. Silver Lake, Washington, USA. Arcadia dance hall in Seattle, where I teach Bulgarian dance to people from the Bulgarian community weekly, is closed. Arcadia no more.

Friday, 5 PM. I pushed back the sofa, took the music stand from the piano room, raised it high, and pushed it horizontally so that I could put my laptop there. I started the zoom program, still learning about its features, and here is my face in the camera. This is good; the camera is

working. But what about the sound of music? What about my feet? What about my front and back?

I wear my dance teaching outfit and my dance shoes. People from our group "Seattle Cheta" started to join the zoom meeting. Six, seven...ten. Before the pandemic, we could easily count 30 people in the rehearsal hall. How are you? How are things at home? We are fine. How are you? Shall we dance? I echo the famous song from "The King and I". However, the situation is so far from flying across space in an embrace with another dancer or, in our case, from the swirl with others in the circle that I needed some major adjustments.

I start the music. I ask everybody to mute themselves. I lower the laptop's cover with the camera, so my dancers can see my feet and turn my back. In front of my nose is the glass window of the library buffet with the old CD player, hundreds of CDs, books on the top, including a beautiful vase by a Native American artist. We warm up, do some stretches up and down. And then I began jumping, showing some steps. And everything started jumping with me – the old CD player, the hundreds of CDs, the books on the top, and the beautiful vase by the Native American artist. And I am not a heavy person. My American dance friends joke that I have hollow bones. And yet now, my dance seems to shake the entire world.

In a sense, it did. The good thing: I "saw" some of "my" people. I learned they are OK. I stood up from my computer and stretched for one hour.

The fall of 2021. Aria Ballroom, Seattle, USA. Nearly half of the members of our group are now regularly dancing with masks, happy to see each other and to dance in person. All show proof of vaccination or negative Covid-19 test results at the front desk. Some people hugged each other, others stayed more reserved. Smiles, under the masks. I am excited, too, although talking and occasionally singing while dancing with a mask takes away a good bit of the joy I usually experience while teaching.

Once, soon after we began, one of the male dancers took off his mask and said: "I can't do it. I can't breathe. I love you dearly, I miss you all. But I will return when you start dancing again without masks". And he left.

The summer of 2022. Silver Lake, USA. I am reading Brenda Farnell's *Dynamic embodiment for social theory*, with the subtitle, "I move, therefore I am".

Well, well. I wish I could see Descartes's reaction to this.

The body in social theory. The absence of the body in social theory. First somatic turn, with an emphasis "on the *feeling* of the doing and not the *doing itself*" (Varela in Farnell 2012:17, italic by Farnell).

Second somatic turn. Attention to the human body "as a *moving agent in a spatially organized world of meanings*" (Farnell 2012:15, italic as in original).

The pages are full of my pencil's underlining and notes. As distant as this scholarship and practice of and around "dynamic embodiment" from my field is, I can use specific ideas, such as focusing on the 'feeling' of doing, and apply these to my topic.

I opened Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's book *Flow: the psychology of optimal experience* (2001), listening to his many presentations on YouTube.² I pulled out Turino's *Music as social life* (2008) from my library, refreshing my memory about his analytical interpretation of flow, his examples of the bonding experience with and within a group while making music and dancing together.

I also reconnected myself with Ingold's *Being alive*. I found certain closeness between the notions of flow and Ingold's ideas. "Life (in short) is a movement of opening, not of closure". And further, "what does it mean to say of human beings that they are the producers of their lives?" (Ingold 2011:4).

While teaching philosophy, I remember the electricity that topics like "Life as a project" created in the air; even the sleepy heads were up. Is one simply thrown into the world like a rock... (We were reading an excerpt from Heidegger – see Kolev and Pozharliev (2001)). Or, is

man a project to become, a project to be developed over time? Everyone is responsible for this development; one is free to make one's own choices. But what if... Some students started to argue. And in today's world, as it has always been, there are many "but what if...".

The world in 2020–2022

In searching for a proper analytical perspective, I encountered James V. Wertsch's work on the mind as action (1998). This was an inspiring direction to explore since Wertsch was analyzing Kenneth Burke's development of a method, "a perspective about perspectives" (Wertsch 1998:12). The latter revealed Burke's potential role in what Wertsch called sociocultural analysis.

In several subsequent paragraphs, Wertsch brought forth the following key lines:

The starting point of Burke's dramaturgic method is that it takes human *action* as the fundamental phenomenon to be analyzed. The notion of action is coupled with that of 'motive'. [...] He [Burke] was fundamentally concerned with 'what is involved when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it'. (Wertsch 1998:12)

Next, Wertsch brought Burke's account of the 'pentad' and its role in the dramaturgic approach to human actions and motives:

We shall use five terms as generating principle of our investigation. They are: Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, Purpose. In a rounded statement about motives, you must have some word that names the *act* (names what took place in thought or deed), and another that names the scene (the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred), also you must indicate what person or kind of person (agent) performed the *act*, what means or instrument he used (agency), and the *purpose*.

[...] any complete statement about motives will offer *some kind of* answers to these five questions: what was done (act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agent), how he did it (agency), and why (purpose). (Burke 1969:xv cited in Wertsch 1998:13)

So, here is the scene – the world under the pandemic, wrapped as in Christo's project.³ Within it, we have more miniature scenes – blinking windows of a big apartment complex in the dark way above the earth, as in a Bachelard's essay (1969). Behind these windows were people of all professions, including dance professionals and dance lovers, who found "therapy in motion", said freely. These agents decided to act – keep dancing or at least moving, by using the internet and technology.

But why? And what kind of experience was this?

And here, I turn to zoom dancing and the notion of flow.

Zoom dancing and the notion of flow

"I am so happy to see your faces without masks" (National Folklore Organisation online discussion, April 2021).

Let us begin with the notion of flow. This notion includes a broad spectrum of aspects concerning one's personal approaches to life, state of being, and philosophy of living. Flow is about constantly learning and mastering. Flow is always related to moving – literally, symbolically, or both. It is often described as a theory that helps people find life's purpose. It teaches how to reach that state of inspiration, to keep this state as much and as often as possible – being in the flow is another way to say that someone is happy by actively engaging in what one is doing. It also explains how one must balance challenge and boredom (tasks too difficult to achieve or things too easy).

One of the well-cited characteristics of flow is that while it lasts, one is able to forget all the

unpleasant aspects of life. "This is an important by-product of the fact that enjoyable activities require a complete focusing of attention on the task at hand – thus leaving no room in the mind for irrelevant information", wrote Csikszentmihalyi, and continued:

But it is not only the temporal focus that counts. What is even more significant is that only a very select range of information can be allowed into awareness. Therefore all the troubling thoughts that ordinarily keep passing through the minds are temporarily kept in abeyance. (2001:58)

If I apply this description to the zoom dance experience, I can easily count several streams of activities that require constant attention: one's camera, microphone, internet connection, twice more challenging for the teachers, and other distractions of various character. The teacher needs to be fully aware of the number of things and be alert all the time.

There is flow through the senses though (Csikszentmihalyi 2001:106). Such comes from seeing beautiful paintings and art that uplift one's spirit. Under the pandemic, the joy of the senses also included seeing human faces.

Csikszentmihalyi's insights about 1) the dimensions of flow, 2) the motives, and 3) the need to cultivate the necessary skills (or training) to experience flow (2001:108) suggest a further direction to follow in my research on zoom dancing, thinking more specifically of dance teacher's profession.

Studies of flow have demonstrated repeatedly that more than anything else, the quality of life depends of two factors: how we experience work and our relationship with other people. (Csikszentmihalyi 2001:164)

And here come one's responsibility to train oneself, to constantly learn and master new skills. Teaching or organizing dance events via zoom may be considered a will to develop such skills to be with others, to keep the dance community engaged and feeling together.

The Latin locution for 'being alive', wrote Csikszentmihalyi, was "*inter hominem esse*, which literally meant 'to be among men'; whereas 'to be dead' was *inter hominem esse desinere*, or to cease to be among men" (2001:165). And further:

Social science surveys have universally concluded that people claim to be most happy with friends and family, or just in the company of others. When they are asked to list pleasant activities that improve their mood for the entire day, the kind of events most often mentioned are: 'Being with happy people', [...] 'being with friends' [...]. (2001:165–166)

There is a big difference between being with other people via zoom and being with people who are physically present. Still, for the opportunity to virtually stay connected, most respondents said: "It is better than nothing".

The need to move and flow

A dancer in the Csikszentmihalyi survey says: "Dance is like therapy. If I am troubled about something, I leave it out of the door as I go in [the dance studio]" (Csikszentmihalyi 2001:59). But for almost a year, one could not leave the trouble at the door and go to the dance studio. So, dancers and teachers needed to creatively work with what they had. To create a different kind of flow. To find flow in moving in whatever surroundings – at home, or in the park if allowed. The human body is made to move, to keep flexible, alive.

About the body as a source of enjoyment, Csikszentmihalyi wrote:

Sports and fitness are not the only media of physical experience that use the body as a source of enjoyment, for in fact a broad range of activities rely on rhythmic or

harmonious movement to generate flow. Among these dance is probably the oldest and the most significant, both for its universal appeal and because of its potential complexity. From the most isolated New Guinea tribe to the polished troupes of the Bolshoi Ballet, the response of the body to music is widely practiced as a way of improving the quality of experience. (2001:99)

With all of its limitations, zoom dancing provided an opportunity, or rather, a stimulus, to move, to feel active, alive. It made the blood circulate better in nourishing brain activity. It contributed to the 'feeling good' mood in making the body stretch. The physical movement also brought optimism and excitement. In this sense, moving evoked a 'flow-like' experience. In addition to keeping moving, for many international folk dancers, zoom dancing became a 'magic carpet', an opportunity to meet various teachers and learn international dance repertoire from around the globe – something that was never of priority to Bulgarian groups in Bulgaria or abroad.

This text cannot trace the many aspects of human movement. Here it is sufficient to say that the research on zoom dancing crosses trajectories to a whole array of studies,⁴ and by this, it remains open for further exploration in connecting it to topics of body and the embodiment.

Dancing with a mask and flow

Dancing with a mask in a dance hall with others from one's group that followed the "Stay-at-home" period (with the still existing fear of Covid-19 distribution via physical interaction in the dance hall) was vastly preferable to zoom dancing by the Bulgarian community. Here we come to acknowledge the need for another human's touch, a need for the physical presence of others. In the case of an ethnic community living abroad, such as the Bulgarian group in Seattle I am working with, there were even more factors, including language, culture, and social interaction. As much as there is a need for personal space and solitude, humans need other humans – another topic thoroughly researched by philosophers, writers, dance scholars, and others. But never in such circumstances!⁵ Several respondents to my survey (2021) shared that the first thing they would do after returning to the dance hall would be to hug everybody.

Dancing with masks remained far from the flow, understood as losing oneself in the joy of dancing one's favorite genre. There is no way to dance with complete focus and lose the sense of time while dancing with a mask, even if you are holding the hands of other lovely humans.

Human breath is life itself. "In place of the complementarity of self and body", wrote Ingold, "we posit the soul as a vortex in which breathing, thinking, speech and song all flow into one another" (2020). Ingold's view on inhalation-and-exhalation 'meaning' brings even more depth to the complexity of human breath. To me, heavy breathing while dancing with a mask is the struggle of the soul itself. The dancing-with-a-mask experience put under consideration many things that were taken for granted. And breathing freely was one of them.

Translating "flow" with connection to dance in Bulgarian⁶

In Bulgarian, Csikszentmihalyi's book (cited here) was translated literally; "flow" was translated as *potok*.⁷ No 'regular' dancer, however, would say, "*Az sum v potoka*" (I am in the flow) while experiencing complete immersion in dance. Instead, while dancing with their entire being, Bulgarians often say, "I feel like I am flying", (a common idiomatic expression of happiness is to describe oneself as being on the seventh heaven). And it is interesting to compare these two associations with freedom – one related to being free in the air (flying), and the other – to be in the water (flowing while being the flow thyself). This is a state a Bulgarian may describe as *samo-zabrava* (the state of being fully immersed in doing something and forgetting oneself). Another expression is *upoenie* (a rapture) – a pure inspiration, dancing with and dance of love. This is not that far from what we read in Csikszentmihalyi, who, however, makes clear that skills also matter.

Scholars of Bulgarian dance from arche-times describe this complete immersion into music-dance-practice in rituals as a state in which man initially possesses the rhythm until the point that the rhythm starts to possess man (Racheva and Ilieva 1998). An author from the early 20th century, Nayden Sheytanov, found this to be especially true when one dances *rachenitsa*:

In this extraordinary dance, tone and step, spirit and body merge like a whirlwind; every cell catches fire – in a crazy impetus for life, for creative-self-oblivion, for diving into the arch-ecstasy of Eros. (Sheytanov 1994:247)

Rachenitsa in present times is a dance that is performed either as a line dance or as a solo. But, if not to the same extent or as in the poetic description above, it may still bring spirit-and-body whirlwind to passionate dancers.

Not only *rachenitsa* may evoke such an inspiration. However, this is a good example of dance that could be danced at home – alone or with loved ones and family members that can lead to a state of 'being in the flow'. In this case, one may observe someone dancing with a *kef*. And this state is achievable during the pandemic and any other time with the proper attitude.

Flow and *kef*

The connection between flow and *kef* (Serbian *ćef*, Bosnian *ćeif*, Turkish *keyif*, Greek *kefi*, Arabic *kaif*), and *merak* was recently explored by Vesna Maljković in her dissertation *The reason we dance: holistic learning through traditional cultural practices*. The author also linked Csikszentmihalyi's flow model to Ingold's dual inheritance model. To her, if combined with the specific cultural influence and within the specific environment, a person is in the proper position to experience *ćef* (Maljković 2022).

How might this be related to flow with the relationship to dance and dance-under-pandemic with all the complexity of the notion of flow and the challenge to describe *kef/ćef*? The latter can be seen as "a desire, a fetish, or a whim"; this is "the spirit of joy, passion, euphoria, enthusiasm. An action or activity we enjoy" (Maljković 2022:147).

Yet, there is a relationship, although flow and *kef* are not synonyms. In Bulgarian for an expression of "I am doing something with passion, with love, or I am in a good mood" one often say "*na kef sum*" and "*pravya neshto s kef, kefliiski, kef mi e*", that is "I am experiencing *kef*".

One can also be described as dancing with *kef*, or with *merak*, meaning with love and desire. Dancing itself via zoom or with a mask did not and could not bring *kef*, in the way Maljković and the author here understand it.

Wrapping up

During the pandemic, signs of anxiety were in the air. Many people found zoom-dancing depressing. However, there was an urge to explore human's capability to take control of what was happening to them. Those who remained active (on zoom or in the dance hall with masks) found it essential to focus on "what we have" instead of "what we want" – to keep moving and keep community ties strong.

Some people simply could not imagine dancing with a covered face. Those who kept dancing breathed heavily under their masks but did not give up. For there was a pleasure of being with friendly people of having a live experience. The lack of some people's participation was an indication that to them, the complete immersion, the "true flow" or "being in the zone", was achievable only as dancing in a "normal" environment. Today we treasure more than ever our experience with dance with people physically present and with our faces not covered. Without breathing freely, there is no *kef*, *merak*, or other physical-spiritual immersion. There is flow in teamwork on a subject loved by everyone involved. So, flow or close-to-flow experience was

sought through related to dance activities. Similarly, new initiatives appeared in dance classes with children and teens, which is a topic of its own, unaddressed in this paper.

To me, the image of dance attendees' windows on zoom during the closure – little squares filling one's screen – was very symbolic. I read this image as an illustration of a deepened alienation in "troubled times", a representation of the lost "big narrative" of the big lost *horo*, if using Bulgarian terminology. At the same time, this was an image of connectivity, new possibilities, and inventions.⁸

Dance studies in the future tense⁹

"Scene is to act as implicit is to explicit" (Burke 1969:6–7 cited in Wertsch 1998:14).

While going through the "London Review of Books" in June 2022, a title of a newly published book *Going remote: how the flexible work economy can improve our lives and our cities* by Matthew E. Kahn (2022) caught my eye. The reviewer, Edward Glaeser, described it as "a thoughtful analysis of the working-from-home phenomenon". The latter made me think of some of the 'predictions' of Yuval Harari from his *21 lessons for the 21st century*, when he addresses issues of the future job market. To him, many professions will be practiced remotely or replaced by AI. Doctors, for example. However, he continued, "the work of a nurse would not be that easy to be replaced. We will probably have an AI family doctor on our smartphone decades before we have a reliable nurse robot" (Harari 2019:33).

For people living in a dance world, 'going remote' is not an alternative. This is not the direction to improve our lives and our cities. Just the opposite. The experience under pandemic restrictions, the current situation in the world, and the alarming prognostics only sharpened my conviction to stay open to life by doing what I do. To dance, teach, and promote dance. To be (or to remain) human.

Endnotes

- 1 Sponsored by Research Support Scheme, Open Society Institute (2000–2002).
- 2 See for example https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_u-Eh3h7Mo and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tz-Pky5Xe1-s> (7 July 2022).
- 3 More about Bulgarian artist Christo Javacheff here: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Christo> and here, for example: <https://christojeanneclaude.net/artworks/realized-projects/> (5 January 2023).
- 4 See Best (1978), Costonis (1978), Williams (2000), *Journal for the anthropological study of human movement* (JASHM), <https://jashm.press.uillinois.edu>, and others.
- 5 "Society of individuals" (see Elias 1991) had a different interpretation in 2021. See Delmotte and Górnicka (2021).
- 6 I am thankful to Miriam Phillips for sharing her article, "Where the spirit roams: toward an understanding of 'duende' in two Flamenco dance contexts" (Phillips 1987). Her searching for meaning of duende, evoked the thought, how do we, Bulgarians, describe a state of being inspired, somewhat possessed, even transformed into a "crazy" dancer, who lost herself in dance?
- 7 Published in 2016 by Hermes Publishing House, Angelin Mitchev, translator.
- 8 Such examples for creative work during the 'Covid era' are videos of Seattle's Radost Ensemble and Dunava Choir, created by Jenny Sapora – included in the virtual Christmas concert of the Bulgarian Cultural and Heritage Center of Seattle for 2021 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1fzgNLDW28&t=2470s>) (10 January 2023).
- 9 Borrowed by Lawrence Crossberg. See Crossberg (2010).

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GREEK TRADITIONAL DANCE 'IN FASHION': IN THE GREEK DANCE SCENE

In this paper, I investigate the recent dance phenomenon in Greece in the context of which Greek traditional dance has become fashionable in the Greek dance scene. In particular, by looking at two examples of Greek contemporary dance performances and a hip hop one that have incorporated elements from Greek traditional dance, I question whether such strategies of crossing dance boundaries are a matter of survival and continuity for the Greek traditional dance or a form of transcendence and novelty through building bridges in Greek dance idioms.

Keywords: dance idioms, transformation, alteration, hybridization, Greece

Introduction

This paper constituted part of a panel entitled "Strategies of inclusion: Crossing boundaries and building bridges in dance idioms" that aimed:

to examine diverse strategies of inclusion in selected dance idioms in order to explore and question the ways in which dancing individuals and communities address current issues in social and aesthetic politics – from both staged and other contexts. One of the main thrusts of this panel was to question whether such crossing of boundaries and building of bridges generate new modes of social and aesthetic collaboration accessible to all, or unconsciously create new exclusions. (Buckland et al. 2022:50)

My contribution to this panel aimed to examine how Greek contemporary dance and hip hop have incorporated elements from Greek traditional dance, and question whether such strategies are a matter of survival and continuity for the Greek traditional dance or a form of transcendence and novelty.

The stimuli and the dance examples

Stimulus and example no 1

In 2017, I met Polina Kremasta, a contemporary dancer, choreographer, dance teacher and researcher, as I was invited to comment on her dance research called *Apogeio* at the open event "*Apogeios*: contemporary dance meets traditional (dance)" of the Hellenic Open University. We met again in one of her performances and more closely in 2020 when Polina was looking for the possibility of collaborating at a Ph.D. level, a possibility that did not succeed due to academic restrictions. This acquaintance resulted in getting to know the work of Polina Kremasta and her dance research called *Apogeios*.

Apogeios (Apogee), etymologically, is an ancient Greek word that is a synthesis of two Greek words, namely the preposition *apo* – meaning from, and the word *geios/(gi)* – meaning earth. In other words, *apogeios* literally means from the earth. Yet, metaphorically, it is used with the meaning of reaching the most intense, exciting, or important point of something; the highest point, the zenith. *Apogeios* in the case under examination constitutes a research project that aims to create a new "kinetic-dance language" (Kremasta 2018:191) by bringing:

a new awareness around the familiar and known kinetic actions[...] An exciting and inspiring tank for the research's journey is the Greek traditional dances and rhythms

[from Macedonia, Thrace and Epirus][...] The research studies the influences that traditional dance can exert on contemporary but at the same time the ways in which the traditional is redefined through the contemporary. (Kremasta ≤2018)

Having Polina Kremasta as teacher and the Creo (Contemporary) Dance Company's dancer Thenia Antoniadou as assistant, the research project has a duration of almost eight years, from 2014 till today, being under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Sports since 2017. The project has been presented through various workshops, publications and others (such as in the 15th Dance Festival of the Association of Greek Choreographers (2016), the 1st Performance Festival of Volos (2016), the 5th Greek Contemporary Greek Dance Platform (2016), the 23rd Kalamata's International Dance Festival (2017) (and master class), the Kapodistriako University of Athens (2017), the 3rd Folklore Festival of Naousa (2017), the Open event at the Hellenic Open University (2017), the Publication at the "Erma" magazine (2018), the Tipperary Dance Platform, TRY! Residencies in Ireland (2019), and the DeVIR/CAPa–Centro de Artes Performativas do Algarve in Portugal (2019)). It has also resulted in four performances, namely *Apogeios* (2016–2017), *Voreades* (2018–2019), *Apogeios-a variation* (2019) and *Commun* (2020) (Kremasta ≤2018).

Stimulus and example no 2

In 2017, I met Nonta Damopoulo as a final year student at the major "Greek Traditional Dance" at my University (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, School of Physical Education and Sport Science). Nontas (nick name of Epameinondas), a previous athlete and a well-known contemporary dancer, choreographer and dance teacher, "is interested in the partnership between sports and dance, and in the artistic imprint that results from this relationship" (Artworks ≤2022). Nontas had and still has a permanent collaboration with the group "Ki Omos Kineitai" (And yet it moves), that is "a group of artists from 2003 till today with diverse kinesiological backgrounds and with complex physical performances where dance, acrobatics, circus and performance techniques meet and blend" (Kiomoskineitai ≤2022). Through Nonta, I came to attend and know about the performance called *Drakodonti*.

Drakodonti, etymologically, is a synthesis of two Greek words, namely the word *drako* – meaning dragon, and the word *donti* – meaning tooth. In other words, *drakodonti* literally means the dragon's tooth. Yet, *Drakodonti* is also a rhythmical Cretan fairy tale from which *Chainides* (the plural of the word *chainis*, meaning the fugitive rebel), a Cretan folk music group inspired by the vast legacy of traditional Cretan music and whose lyrics borrow words from the Cretan Greek dialect (Wikipedia), were inspired for one of their albums in 2005 entitled *O giteftis kai to drakodonti* (the sorcerer and the dragon's tooth) (Apostolakis and Bratos 2022).

In particular, *Drakodonti* is a combined performance, based on the work *Drakodonti* from the discography of the *Chainides* – with lyrics by Dimitris Apostolakis, and directed and choreographed by the dance and acrobatics group "Ki Omos Kineitai" and the dancer Christina Sougioultzi, one of the founders of the group (Apostolakis and Bratos 2022). The dance and acrobatics group "Ki Omos Kineitai" aims "at forming a distinct way of expression in which the unique artistic style of each of the performers is incorporated through a joint effort, always in relation to a specific performance" (Kiomoskineitai ≤2022).

In the case of *Drakodonti*, Nontas was given the chance to incorporate rhythms and patterns from Greek traditional dance (from Crete, Macedonia, Thrace and Epirus). This resulted in a fruitful collaboration between Greek traditional dance and contemporary dance in the way "Ki Omos Kineitai" perceives it. Once more, in this example Greek traditional dance influenced contemporary, but, at the same time, the traditional was redefined through the contemporary.

Stimulus and example no 3

In 2019, I met Matina Nitsaki, as a final year student at the major "Greek Traditional Dance" at my University. Matina (nick name of Stamatina) was also an admirer and a hip hop dancer having amateur hip hop dance degrees from the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD). With such a background, the topic of her final undergraduate thesis was almost predetermined, since Matina wanted eagerly to combine hip hop and Greek traditional dance. And she did it, ending up with the thesis: *A hip hop choreography with influences from Greek traditional dance* (Nitsaki 2021). In particular, this idea led to the composition of a solo choreography having 38 kinetic motifs in 2/4 accompanied with music. The choreography was analysed, presenting the ten Greek traditional dances on which it was based, namely *Kori Eleni* (Macedonia-Pella), *Mermigas* (Ionian island of Kefalonia), *Vlaha Naxou* (Cycladic island of Naxos-Kinidaros), *Sousta* (Crete), *Hasapia* (Thrace-Evros), *Kavontoritikos* (Island of Evia-Karystia), *Stis treis* (Northern Thrace), *Tamsmara* (Pontos), *Kotsari* (Pontos) and *Tasia* (Thessaly-Trikala), and the alterations that were made.

As Matina wrote (Nitsaki 2021), the path to the creation of this choreographic composition, as well as its analysis, proved that the two dance idioms can be combined and give a harmonious result. In addition, it proved that the mixing of hip hop and Greek traditional dance is a particularly creative process and can lead to new perspectives for the use and teaching of these two dance idioms. Matina also proposed that the kinetic patterns of hip hop (jumps, quick execution of movements) can provide the basis for teaching Greek traditional dances that are considered 'demanding' and that such choreographies may lead to a faster learning of some 'difficult' Greek dances.

Contextualizing the dance examples

Having these three examples as a starting point, I started wondering what has been happening in dance in Greece the last few years and whether Greek traditional dance has become fashionable in the Greek dance scene. These sorts of questions did not come out of nowhere. As I have been stated many times (see for instance Koutsouba 1997, 2008, 2016, 2020, 2021), Greek traditional dance, institutionalized or not, constitutes an integral part of Greek society in all its existences ('first', 'second', 'third'), both officially and unofficially, institutionalized or not, aligning with a radical change in its academic study in the 1980s. Moreover, in Greece, the dance scene of other dance idioms (ballet, contemporary, and others) is also very active from the beginning of the 20th century till today, aligning with a radical change in their practice in the late 1980s and in their academic study the last or so decade (see for instance Mourelou 2018; Savrami 2019; Panourgia and Foley 2020; Nikolopoulou and Koutsouba 2021). Yet, in Greece, as elsewhere, theatre and other dance idioms, and traditional dance are two separate worlds, for a number of reasons (cultural, historical, political, economic and so forth). And I was and still am fascinated by the words of the contemporary Greek choreographer Natalie Zervou, for whom the world of Greek traditional dance, is summarized in the following comment: "I had the voice of my folk dance teacher Maria teasingly asking me 'Is this too bucolic for you Natalie?'" (Zervou 2015 cited in Koutsouba 2021:216).

Moreover, the phenomenon of transformation, alteration, transmutation, change and so on, has been largely and extensively discussed in the case of Greek traditional dance, since by its nature, the concept of tradition, apart from "uniformity, coherence and duration in time" (Damianakos 1984:56), also refers "to a creative process dominated by 'anonymous birth' and the oral transmission and (re)creation of its products" (Tyrovola 1999:104). Apart from the above defining characteristics, in tradition, and thus in traditional dance "everything is differentiation, irrelevance and constant transformation [... therefore] tradition cannot in any way be regarded as blind repetition and passive behavior" (Damianakos 1984:56). On this basis, "a continuous 'update' takes place in the transmission of knowledge, values, symbols, etc., which leads to a 'hybridization of species' in tradition which is achieved through the 'principle of improvisation'" (Damianakos 1984:56; Koutsouba 2016).

Similarly, the phenomenon of transformation, alteration, transmutation, change and so forth has been largely and extensively discussed in the case of theatre and other dance idioms in Greece (see for instance Savrami 2019; Nikolopoulou and Koutsouba 2021), while the notion of hybrid dance performances – not related to Greek traditional dance, has even been discussed at an educational level (Roznowski and Savrami 2016).

Yet, the phenomenon of crossing boundaries and building bridges between traditional and other dance idioms in Greece, it was not and is not common, at least to my knowledge. On the opposite, I would say it is exceptional and I would characterize it as a daring undertaking. In particular, it is in the last decade or so, that this phenomenon started to appear and to attract the interest of the dance people and of the audience in Greece. Is it new then? The answer is no since it is a phenomenon that appears worldwide in many and various ways (traditional dance influencing contemporary, contemporary influencing traditional). I still remember in 1990s in the UK, how greatly surprised and impressed I was attending the Kokuma Dance Company and their "theatricalised rendition composed to enrich identity with its roots culture in a different society" (Barnes 2018:99). Also, I reminded our 26th Ethnochoreology Symposium in Třešt in 2010 (Dunin, Stavělová and Gremlicová 2012) when one of its themes "Contemporizing traditional dance" looked, among others, at "Stage production and authenticity" and "how might contemporary choreographers draw upon traditional dance material" (Zebec 2009). The same holds true for the phenomenon under discussion in Greece.

Discussion – conclusions

Undoubtedly, the phenomenon of crossing boundaries and building bridges between traditional and other dance idioms has pros and cons. For instance, whether such strategies are a matter of survival and continuity or a form of transcendence and novelty for both traditional and theatre and other dance idioms in Greece, I am not sure. Whether such strategies will create new longstanding dance hybrid idioms in Greece, I am not sure. Whether such strategies are necessary for theatre and other dance idioms in Greece so as to find new paths, I am not sure. Whether such strategies will create a form of imperialism of theatre and other dance idioms over traditional dance in Greece, I am not sure. Whether the already existing crossing of boundaries and building of bridges was successful in dance terms, I am not sure.

What I am sure of, is that the further questioning and exploration of this phenomenon in Greece, seems, at least to me, quite interesting and, I would dare to say provocative, thinking of the Greek context. And it becomes even more interesting, when one adds to the picture Greek/international choreographic creations such as those of "Thread":

an innovative modern performance infused with traditional Greek dance, by the internationally acclaimed choreographer Russell Maliphant who forges the past with the present, combining contemporary dance with that of the Greek folk tradition. (The Thread ≤2019)

Based on the above, it seems that a new quest for dance research has opened in Greece. A quest that is not only new for Greece, but which is also growing rapidly due to newly introduced institutions. Among them, the grantee institution 'All of Greece, One Culture' of the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports that, since 2020, aims "to contribute significantly to the development of synergies of cultural heritage and contemporary composition" (Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports ≤2020) holds a special place due to its status, being state-governed and offering grants. Even more interesting is that this particular institution funds only ballet and contemporary dance groups and dancers, but no Greek traditional dance ones, an issue that attracts research interest in its own right.

In any case, this new quest for dance research opened in Greece, first, needs the substantial crossing of boundaries and the building of bridges between choreographers/dancers and dance researchers, as well as between choreographers/dancers/dance researchers and the various dance idioms in Greece so as to be fruitful.

I would like to conclude with the following words from *Drakodonti*: "Σ' αυτό τον κόσμο γίνεσαι ό,τι έχεις αγαπήσει και παίρνεις προίκα σου στερνή αυτά που 'χεις χαρίσει (In this world you become what you have loved and you receive as your last dowry what you have given away)" (Apostolakis and Bratos 2022).

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REPRESENTATIONS OF ETHNIC MINORITY FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLES: OFFICIAL DISCOURSES, IDENTITY CONSTRUCTIONS, INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND EVERYDAY REALITIES AMONG BOSNIAK YOUTH IN SLOVENIA

The article focuses on folk dance activities and its related contexts (minority status, cultural politics) of ethnic minority societies and associations declaring their ethnic belonging to the former Yugoslav republics. Based on the central question of how the affiliations and identifications of the descendants of immigrants are formed within those associations nowadays, members of the Bosniak Youth Cultural Association and their representations of tradition and affiliations in the present day are discussed.

Keywords: Slovenian minorities, Bosniak minority, folk dance group, traditional music, youth and identifications

Introduction

In the context of ethnic minority communities in Slovenia, folklore is one of the most publicly present cultural activities through which, and within which, participants demonstrate their belonging – whether to a folklore/social community or to the ethnic, national or religious community it represents. Exploring feelings of belonging through music and dance is one of the more interesting topics for research, especially when it comes to communities where these feelings and experiences can be traced over several decades or compared across generations.¹ Indeed, bonds, memories, feelings of belonging or understandings of representing one's homeland are reflected in different ways through music and dance. Equally, the expression of ethnic, national or religious belonging is intertwined with the need to belong to a community in which one feels safe, accepted and included. Today, the descendants of the first immigrants in Slovenia are most active through ethnic minority cultural associations. Since these generations feel a dual ethnic identity or are fully assimilated into Slovenian society and culture, and many no longer visit nor speak the language of their ancestral homeland, or have no interest in identifying with the culture of their parents and grandparents, the associations must find other ways to appeal to young people and develop attractive content for them.

In this paper, I first present the situation in Slovenia in which folklore associations are defined on the basis of ethnicity and nationality of the former Yugoslav republics and I highlight the official discourses that also shape the ways of forming affiliations in the such associations. In the main part, based on a case study of a Bosnian youth folklore group, and in conversations with members and the president of the association and leader of the folklore group, Jasmina Imširović Durić² in particular, I delve into the ways that ethnic identity through cultural production, which includes folklore music and dance by descendants of immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina is expressed. The central questions of the research were namely how association members see, feel, understand, construct and represent the links with the ethnicity and religion of their ancestors, and how they identify with them in the present space, society and circumstances in which they have grown up.

Minorities of the former Yugoslav republics and cultural policies

The migration context of immigrants from the former Yugoslav countries to Slovenia is specific, as, during the second half of the 20th century, (mainly economic) migration took place within the same country – Yugoslavia. Due to the political principle of fraternity and unity, which

was reflected both at the institutional level and in people's everyday practices, immigrants from other republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) did not establish associations based on ethnic categories. The position of immigrants in Slovenia only changed after the break-up of Yugoslavia, i.e. after 1991. Immigrants who had already been living in Slovenia (many of whom had acquired Slovenian citizenship³), as well as later war refugees or economic immigrants, felt their minority status, and the need for some of them to unite and to show their ethnic belonging by establishing cultural societies intensified (see also Kunej and Kunej 2019:111–131; Kunej 2021:91–94). Thus, it can be summarised that the intercultural experience of Slovenia is based primarily on the history of living in a common state and the disintegration of the common state, which even today characterises the relations of "Slovenians"⁴ towards immigrants from the former Yugoslav republics or their descendants.⁵

Shortly after the break-up of Yugoslavia, official cultural policy in Slovenia also defined the relationship to the new minorities⁶ and extended the existing cultural activity programme for indigenous minorities to the activities of other minority ethnic communities (Šivic 2019:135). Minority associations started to apply to calls for project tenders from cultural institutions, which provided them with funds to carry out project activities. The strategies of putting on stage performance are therefore closely related to cultural policies in the new country, while not overlooking other reasons such as the political and economic situation of the country of origin, which in some cases supports associations in the diaspora. Other reasons also influence such activity, and these vary greatly from one association to another, e.g. the generational structure and the diverse links of members with the homeland they represent, political frictions and other pragmatic reasons reflecting everyday life and the complexity of individual and group identity positions.

Cultural policy in Slovenia rejects the outdated concept of multiculturalism, which has been labelled as misguided because emphasising cultural differences leads to the consolidation of hierarchical positions of power between the majority and the minority. Nevertheless, associations continue to build strongly on this concept through representations of music, dance and cuisine throughout Europe as well as in Slovenia (Bejtullahu 2021:68–69). Although the calls for tenders, which are specifically aimed at ethnic minorities and are the ones to which minority associations most often apply, do not dictate that ethnic minorities make any reference to tradition, heritage or any cultural practices of the past in their cultural production, in general the minority cultural associations of ex-Yugoslavia remain persistently within these frameworks thereby also emphasising their otherness or difference from the society in which they live. These productions are also linked to the politics of presentations of the country of origin and, as such, maintain cultural productions within discourses of authenticity and originality as well as set frameworks for the inclusion or exclusion of cultural elements in the discourses of (ethnic) presentations of tradition. Thus, members of the associations also receive training in their countries of origin or invite mentors from these countries to Slovenia. At the same time, they are involved in the cultural policy in Slovenia, which evaluates their stage performances and ranks them according to quality, something that may influence their sources of funding (see also Bejtullahu 2016:159–176; Kunej 2021:98–101). But the functional literacy of younger generations shows that they are able to find sources of funding for their cultural productions outside of the ethnically defined calls for proposals. And it is precisely these areas that push the boundaries of understanding representation within the framework of ethnic homogeneity through folklore dance activities towards an intersectional understanding of identities. Namely, the call for proposals also focus on multiple forms of social integration through cultural activities, showing that our society and identities are heterogeneous and thus culture offers many interesting elements that can stimulate transcultural creative approaches.⁷

In the next part of the article, I focus on the case of a Bosniak youth association, descen-

dants of immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, who have found interesting ways of cultural production and presentation in the building their Bosniak identity and sense of belonging. In finding these paths, they are assisted by those who enthusiastically guide the association through their views on the social and cultural position of those involved in the association, as well as by cultural policies that support or even guide their cultural production ideas in Slovenia.

Constructing identity and shaping of belonging – the case of Bosniak Youth Cultural Association Velenje

Bosniak associations most commonly run by first generation members are now encountering the younger next generations who they find difficult to attract. Their sense of ethnicity is quite different as they have no personal experience of emigration and the country of origin, and they freely choose the elements of ethnicity with which they would like to identify, or they perform situational ethnicities, for example, choosing only to express their ethnicity within the association and through public performance. It is also important to understand that young people live in a different social context than previous generations, in a world of hybrid identities, in a world of globalising flows and are confronted with transnational and transcultural networks. As Marco Martiniello puts it, we are also confronted with a growing post-racial urban generation that is involved in "artistic collaborations that are both locally rooted and transnationally connected" (2018:1146). Thus, sometimes the associations are the only link these next generations have with the ethnicity of their ancestors, which is most often represented through selected heritage elements such as folk dance, traditional music, folklore costumes and cuisine.

The Bosniak Youth Cultural Association Velenje (*Bošnjaško mladinsko kulturno društvo Velenje*, referred to as BMKD in this article) whose name already indicates several of the association's aims identify with Bosniak ethnicity. They are mainly directed towards youngsters (up to 30 years old), they operate in a field of amateur production, focus on cultural activities and are located within the city of Velenje.⁸ BMKD Velenje was founded in 2005 and initially responded to the everyday societal needs, such as humanitarian actions, functional literacy of economic migrants, student exchange and cultural exchange between Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The association then focused on visual arts, cultural productions, singing, theatre and addressed the needs of the society they belonged to with various projects. Based on a review of these activities, I conclude that folklore production, which only began in 2014, is of marginal importance for the association, as it is also engaged in other cultural activities that are appealing to young people. However, a conversation with association President, Jasmina Imširović Durić, and other members of the BMKD (all born and raised in Slovenia) revealed to me how vital it is for the association to engage in folklore presentations, whether through a folklore group or singing traditional songs, where folk dance courses have the most popular attendance.⁹

Figure 1. Folk dance group BMKD during their stage performance (2022, photo by BMKD).



I visited the association during of the celebration of Bayram, which is one of the chosen elements that defines their symbolic ethnicity, whether they identify as Islamic or not. Speaking to the members of the group, it was clear to me that Durić is an extremely charismatic leader, and her personality attracts many young people to the association, with those youngsters interviewed speaking very emotionally about her. In this place and through conversations with the young members, I felt that her role as a connector, educator and moral leader is strong and that the members have created robust emotional bonds either to her or between themselves. Her attitude towards Bosniak culture and identity thus has a powerful influence on their collective thinking and feeling, including their sense of belonging to what the association represents. The young people I spoke to never indicated that their parents or grandparents had directed them to join the association. On the contrary, some said that they did not find enough connections to their ethnic origins at home and that they were eager to connect outside their families. Among the reasons given as to why their parents did not pay attention to their children's ethnic identifications were that parents were burdened with their economic situation, or worried that their children would not integrate well into Slovenian society. Sometimes also their parents were already so integrated that they did not see the need to deal with their children's origins. In some cases, these youngsters were not taught the Bosnian language and cultural links were not encouraged; for some, the only link to their ethnic background was visiting relatives in the summer months, so these links were very locally oriented (e.g. they spent two weeks in a village and then returned to Velenje). Many youngsters reported that it was the association that gave them everything they could not get at home. And it is these particular aspects, specifically mentioned as being absent from the family setup, or those offered by the association, that can be identified as the main ethnic identity markers of their belonging to the Bosniak identity. These are: access to the Bosniak language, learning about customs, traditions, literature, Islam, learn to dance in a folk-dance group, sing traditional songs in a vocal group, excursions to larger cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, learning about everyday social issues happening in Bosnia and Herzegovina, etc. Durić is well aware that cultural activities are an attractive force for the integration of young people, through which they receive so much more than cultural competences – they meet new friends, build a social network that will empower them in their future lives and strengthen their self-image. This was also confirmed by the young association members I interviewed, as they all faced ethnic discrimination, which was strongest in primary school (including from schoolteachers), and their involvement in the association did not mean shame, but rather empowered them, and especially through the social support of other members, to become confident and publicly declare their ethnic background or belonging.

Both the members and the president point out that, while the latter connects all the threads of the association, the most important element of building belonging is that she strongly encourages and leaves it to the young people to put their own ideas into practice. For example, young people in their early twenties have just set up a club to meet and discuss some of life's issues, such as feelings of loneliness, fear, and experts in the field (lawyers, psychotherapists) were invited to take part in the discussions. Durić is also thinking of letting younger people take over the leadership of the club, because, she says, it is an important recommendation for the survival of the association that it be led by a member of their own generation.

Cultural policies are an important factor either in processes of integration into the living environment or in constructing identity ties with symbolic ethnicity. As already mentioned, no concepts of multiculturalism are followed at the official level in Slovenia, but these concepts are usually self-generated by ethnic minority associations. I therefore see official policy as crucial, because it offers choices and options that associations can be led by, while also taking (slow) steps in the direction of moving beyond the stratification of society on the basis of ethnicity. Thus, I see BMKD as one of the few exceptions that seeks to cement its place of belonging at both levels –

both within the traditional expressions of ties to ethnicity and at other social levels that are the building blocks of a young person's identifications, cultural competences and an important part of their positive socialisation.

As an example, BMKD were granted two projects within the European Social Funds, which the young members enthusiastically presented to me, giving their core message, which is to be one of transnational cultural cooperation and dialogue, as well as pushing the boundaries in genre, generation and ethnic crossover. Those projects resulted in cross-disciplinary intercultural cooperation – cooperation with a local Slovene folk dance group, a breakdance band, or arrangements of traditional into popular music styles, beats and music production as well as education in ethnomusicology (KulNote project). The other resulted in intergenerational and intercultural cooperation among older unemployed women and young people entering the labour market, joining the practices of making laces, video production and cultural management (KulNit project). Some of them address broader social issues, such as domestic violence against migrant women.¹⁰ In addition to the fact that these projects promote addressing current social problems perceived by minority communities in their own circles, the level of funding certainly plays an extremely important role. Comparing the two mechanisms for promoting cultural production – the Public Fund for Cultural Activities of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Social Fund, which addresses minorities through the Department for Cultural Diversity and Human Rights of the Ministry of Culture, the former offers significantly smaller amounts (e.g. €1,000 for one-off cultural projects), while the latter provides around 10 times higher amounts and includes the employment of one person per project. This contributes to the quality and sustainability of such projects, but such approaches are certainly a step towards the inclusion of young people in society, regardless of their ethnic background, and as such an encouraging way to combat different nationalisms and recognise the existing intercultural society.



Figure 2. BMKD promoting their video *Zasp'o mi je dragi* by project vocal group Kulnote (2019, photo by BMKD).

Conclusion

Understanding of migrant and minority communities as bounded entities has been the target of criticism along with suggestions that they should rather be understood as the idiom, position and claim upon which communities build identifications (Brubaker 2005). The case presented in this article is one example that shows how the leadership of the associations, community members, dancers and musicians as descendants of immigrants, see, feel and build their identity and belonging. In this process, we see that ethnicity and tradition still play an important role, intertwined with symbolic representations of the homeland, the constructs offered by the countries of origin, their own needs for cultural expression and finding a place in society, and the opportunities offered by Slovenia's cultural policy.

Yuval Davis' theoretical framework of belongings which can be applied to the case presented here, understands official discourses as "politics of belonging" and individual discourses as "emotional belonging" (2006:197). Following this, I recognise the politics of belonging as the space of public stage representation that is influenced by broader systemic levels – e.g. how the association functions, how it is funded, the discourses of ethnic representation in the country of origin, etc., and I appreciate emotional belonging as the space of personal narratives and experiences that influence the emotional sense of ethnic belonging and cultural (i.e. folk dance) engagement. In this way, folk dancing or traditional singing of cultural minority associations can also be understood as a reflection of emotional belonging and political constructions of belonging, as one cannot exist without the other. Associations, therefore, although shaped by decision-making bodies and subordinated to cultural and general politics, are shaped by individuals who, in turn, construct collective schemes of belonging on the basis of their own emotional affiliations.

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Endnotes

- 1 Having said that, I am aware that there are many individuals with a migrant background who do not integrate into such communities and also do not want to be part of the "essentialized presentation of minority homogeneity" (Kovačič 2021:44).
- 2 The interviews are stored in the Archive of Institute of Ethnomusicology (Kovačič 2022a, 2022b).
- 3 Here I do not wish to highlight the complex problem of the so-called erased, those who were erased from the register of permanent residents of Slovenia by the Ministry of the Interior in 1992. This measure severely affected some 25,000 people with citizenship of other Yugoslav republics.
- 4 By putting the term in quotation marks, I am pointing to the fragility of the concept, since immigrants from other former Yugoslav republics and their descendants are also Slovenians with formal citizenship, and the numerical categorisation of generations (e.g. second, third generation) is controversial and difficult to define. By labelling young people in this way, "they inherit the 'stigma' of immigration, which is actually a consequence of social position rather than a culturally conditioned category" (Bejtullahu 2021:67).
- 5 These relations (e.g. Balkanophobic discourses, cultural appropriation) have also been explained through cultural studies of musical and other cultural phenomena in Slovenia after 1991; see Velikonja 2002; Baskar 2003; Kovačič 2009.
- 6 The term "new minorities" has often been used to differentiate immigrants from the former Yugoslav republics from other immigrants (Samardžija 2011:5; Žitnik Serafin 2010:67–74).
- 7 Descriptions of some such projects can be found in the collection *Tradition in Modernity* (Prešlenkova and Palač 2017).
- 8 Velenje, an industrial city of younger origin, was the most attractive place for labour migration, which is why it

still holds the reputation of a multicultural city, and it is also the place with 25,000 inhabitants where the Bosniak Youth Association (BMKD Velenje) operates, which I am discussing here.

- 9 Today, there are 360 total members, 170 active members, of whom about 100 are in the folk dance groups and traditional singing groups.
- 10 See the vocal group DeDer production <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTuY0S1YyXM>, KulNote result joining video production, dance and traditional singing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kvr7yioYbzQ>, or joining the global campaign "16 days of activism against violence against women" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDYBFuQSSNs&t=6s>

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RROMANATIVE&CO. A COLLABORATIVE INTERCULTURAL MOVEMENT- THEATRE PROJECT OF TRANZIT FOUNDATION IN CLUJ, ROMANIA

RromaNative&Co. was a project in which Roma non-professionals and Romanian theatre students created and performed together in a socio-political climate which was not favorable for transgressing ethnic borders. Their collaborative work generated a debate that confronted opinions about the role of ethnic minorities in performing arts. The expectation of one party was that they should stick to reproducing to their "own traditions and culture" in a monolithic way, but other voices considered that this practice excludes them from contemporary participatory processes which allow more creative freedom.

Keywords: interculturality, collaborative creation, Roma, representation, Romania

Introduction

The following case study presents and interprets a project to which I have been intellectually and emotionally attached to, which is why I admit to the subjectivity of my voice. The project in case was called *RromaNative&Co.* and it was conceived to create multilingual and intercultural movement-video-theatre productions, offering the possibility for Roma non-professional actors and Romanian theatre students to work, invent and perform together. It ran from 2000 to 2002. For a better understanding of the spirit behind and the roles imagined I will sketch some of the contexts of it. The narrower context of our theme is certainly the institutional and human background of the project, respectively an independent cultural institution in Cluj / Kolozsvár, Romania, called *Tranzit House*, functioning in a former synagogue, being sustained and administrated by a group of committed persons.¹ The broader context would be the situation of Roma communities and the inter-ethnic and social relations in general in the post-socialist Romania during the transitional period.

Tranzit House

The story of *Tranzit House* began in 1997, when together with my life partner, Péter Eckstein-Kovács, we rented the location of the former synagogue *Poalei Tzedek* from the Jewish Community of Cluj with the purpose of reconvertng it into a cultural center. According to a leaflet fixed on the wall of the stairway accessing the women's balcony the last Sabbath was celebrated there sometime in 1974. The 1970s was the period of the growth of emigration amongst the Jewish population of Romania thanks to Ceaușescu's renewal of the trade of Jews to Israel beginning in the end of the 1940s, a sad continuation of the tragedy of the Holocaust (Ioanid 2005). To see the proportions of the loss of the Jewish community in Cluj, we can refer to numerical data as well: before the Holocaust in 1941 it numbered 16.763 persons, a 13–15% of the total population of the city. In 2022 according to the census there were only 223 people.²

Transforming former synagogues which remained without parishioners into cultural centers was not a truly original idea, as there were already a few initiatives, together with whom we built the "Synagogue Chain", an informal network including artists and cultural managers from Slovakia, Hungary, former Yugoslavia and us. In Romania the first of the kind was ours, becoming in the meantime the most long lasting independent cultural institution, in 2022 reaching to its 25th years of existence. The choice of the location though was not random from our part. The mission of the foundation I set up in 1998, which institutionalized the activity of *Tranzit House* and succeeded to continuously attract team mates, besides the rehabilitation of the architectural site and the

construction of interdisciplinary art and research projects, included the battle against all forms of social exclusion. What could be more appropriate for putting into practice such a program than the location of a former synagogue, which was emptied by the extreme forms of exclusion? During the 25 years, the inclusive perspective of *Tranzit Foundation* generated a series of collaborative and intercultural projects, in which also Roma people from different generations were involved. One of the most important has been "Interkulti", the annual intercultural art camp for children designed for Romanian, Roma, Hungarian children, or others having any other ethnic background, aged 7–14. Ours and other colleagues' children grew up socializing in this milieu. For me the most memorable intercultural and multilingual project of *Tranzit Foundation* though was *RromaNative&Co*.

Interethnic relations in post-socialist Romania

Soon after the euphoria caused by the fled and capture of the Ceaușescus, when signs of experiencing the feeling of 'communitas' in Victor Turner's terms emanated from the masses, a short-lived but legendary harmony was created between people belonging to different ethnic groups. Putting in brackets the exacerbated nationalism cultivated in the 1980s, however, a series of interethnic conflicts started to happen. Chronologically the earliest attacks were driven against rural Roma communities, the first pogrom taking place on 10th of January in Turulung, Satu Mare County, in the North-Western corner of the country. Until the middle of the 1990s about 30 'incidents of mob violence' were committed against Roma in different places, all the way down to the South-Eastern tip, not only in villages with a Romanian majority, but also in Hungarian settlements, like in the Seklerland. During the pogroms hundreds of houses were burnt and 11 people died (Haller 2010). The Helsinki Watch reports called the attacks as manifestations of "vigilante-style" violence (Helsinki reports).

Roma people were active agents of the biggest ethnic conflict of the period, the so-called Black March, which included a sequence of escalating events from peaceful demonstrations to bloody clashes. The parties of the opposite sides this time were Romanians and Hungarians from Târgu Mureș / Marosvásárhely, a middle-size city in Transylvania with a slight Hungarian majority, who due to their civil and political status were looked upon as a minority. What they sought was the fulfilment of their minority rights: the restoration of use of their mother tongue in self-managed educational institutions. Romanian nationalist groupings with the complicity of governmental forces provoked sharp confrontations which led to hundreds of injuries and even to loss of life. Some of the participant Hungarian speaking Roma, who came to defend the Hungarian party, became scapegoats and were imprisoned. Taking into account the dubious role and the impassibility of the authorities, all the violence fitted into a wider picture including the mineriads from 1990, which were repeated in 1991 and 1999. In the city of Cluj throughout most of this period, a nationalist municipal leadership prevailed with a notorious extreme right-wing mayor, Gheorghe Funar, head of an anti-Hungarian, rascist and antisemitic party.

RromaNative&Co

At the turn of the millennium, isolation of social, ethnic and professional groups was still a characteristic of Cluj, though a bunch of grass-root initiatives, as well as international cultural and financing institutions had started to appear and to cooperate. The renovation and the functioning of Tranzit House began to gain appreciation and support from more serious organizations, like Pro Helvetia, the European Council and the French Cultural Center. Parallel to physical work necessary for introducing the infrastructure into *Tranzit House* and for the cleaning and reshaping the courtyard, artwork was performed in the frame of Tranz Art in Situ, an EuroArt project funded by the European Council during 2000–2001. Under the coordination of Gerhard Spitzer, a craftsman and activist, youngsters brought up in orphanages volunteered, together with young artists and urban Roma, the latter forming the core of the team of our new

project, the *RomaNative&Co.* We intended to formalize our movement-theatre activity in order to be able to apply for grants, so we designed and named a project, dreaming of establishing a permanent intercultural and multilingual company. Although according to present-day standards we can speak about a very modest amount, we were funded by the Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center (EDRC), member of Soros Open Network (SON), one of the successors of the Cluj branch of the Open Society Foundation Romania, which functioned between 1990–1999.

Antecedents

Most of the members of the new "company" had been collaborating with *Tranzit House* for years. The promoter of the alternative theatre experiment at the end of the 1990s was Radu Afrim, later becoming a famous director, who set up most of his first productions in *Tranzit House* with his fellow actors. The peak of this creative process was an original play called *BluEscape*, premiered in the spring of 1999, built upon the lyrics of Laurie Anderson, Fassbinder and Baudelaire by Afrim. Parallel to the live performance my short videos were screened. One of the most important breakthroughs of the play was the first appearance of Ileana Lăcătuș, alias Ilonka néni, an old Roma lady, who became the central figure of our new project. The total openness the team showed personally towards Ilonka néni and in general towards any minority identity, being non-heteronormative gender or multiple ethnicity, was one of the factors that laid the foundation for further teamwork for sure.

Ilonka néni recited the poem "The thightrope" by Laurie Anderson in Romanian and Romani in her own adaptation, finishing her show with a *tsingerita*, a traditional fast dance, Roma women perform in the region with minimal quick movements of the legs, hand gesturing and finger snapping. As she was illiterate, we read the verses to her in our translation, while she created her own continuously changing versions. Ilonka néni was a close friend of mine, whom I met in 1996, when she knocked at my door looking for waste paper that she collected for selling to supplement her pension. As I stayed permanently home in that time because of my endangered pregnancy with my second child, Ráhel, we could take the time to become friends. She was a pensioner who had retired from the sanitation company where she worked as a street sweeper, living and working in the city since a teenager, and born in a nearby village, in Mera/Méra in 1932. She was raised by her stepmother and father, whom she often helped with herding the buffalos in her childhood. We immediately trusted each other, so she started to regularly visit me, giving me lessons in Romani language. The educational material was compounded by the experiences of the everyday life, so I soon realized that while learning the language, we are doing ethnography as well. As we broadened the topics, Ilonka néni started to recall different events of her life, a turn which transformed the learning process into a collaborative life history research. The stories which had been never told before gradually gained shape. The result was a trilingual book in Romani, Romanian and Hungarian, published in 2002 with the support of Open Society Institute – Budapest, in the frame of Next Page Foundation's Romani Publications Project bearing the title *Ilonka néni* (Könczei and Lăcătuș 2002). Another result of the language courses was Ilonka néni's career as a stage artist which lasted only a couple of years, but was a decisive experience for her and a driving force behind our intercultural movement-theatre project. Ilonka néni was a model for an Eastern-European lifestyle, which was flexible enough to accept and incorporate novelties without deleting all traditional values and etiquettes. She passed away in 2022, at the age of 90.

The working process and the productions

The base for *RomaNative&Co.* was our co-working experience with Radu Afrim and his team of actors. Needing more administration and counselling, young philosopher Vasile Ernu, Viorel Anăstăsoaie anthropologist and Ferenc Sütő editor joined us, with all of us pursuing also

management roles. The first task was the recruitment of Roma actors, which could be done only through informal connections. Fieldwork experience helped, and Ilonka néni became the main 'manager' taking us to visit families to attract potential candidates. The most successful step in this was our participation at a baptism party, being invited thanks to Ilonka néni's arrangements. The party became an important source of inspiration for our work, meeting also one of the main actors of the project, Mihai Varga, "Mihăiță". As we did not want to teach the Roma participants some pre-established theatrical or choreographical skills, or to adapt authored pieces for playing, we initially wanted to use our common experiences acquired during the baptism party. That is why I had filmed relevant details of our visit not only with documenting purposes, but with the intention of integrating them into the final products. Meanwhile we chose Afrim's idea for framing our play, which was to use the genre of the TV-show "Surprize, surprize", very popular in that time, its central plot being the mimicry of the reunion of long time not seen relatives or close friends. The irony of the situation marked the tone of the performance, the realistic fragments of the life-story of Ilonka néni in the main role and the videos captured in the Roma neighbourhood contrasting dramatically with it.

At the beginning the routine of the rehearsals consisted of informal talking and joking which slowly transformed into brainstorming. Afrim was leading this process with great experience, picking on short stories or phrases for the scenario. Lived and shared experiences, like the body search at the customs during the touring of *BluEscape* to Switzerland, became part of the content. As motion was at the centre of our experiment, dance and improvised, stylised body movements took more and more time. Our 'dance teacher' was Cristian Nonica, who was agile in sharing short body drumming formulas and combination skills that he called "rhythm beats of gipsy-folk dance". With the participation of the team we arrived to a series of elaborated dance phrases, pantomimes and fusions, choreographies of 'body search', 'fighting', 'courtship', and so on. Touching and body contact was primordial, challenging the stereotypes of the aversive racism between non-Roma and Roma, being realized in different forms, like stylized wrestling or the girls playing with each other's long hair. Next to the theatre show *Ilona: surprize, surprize*, the real success – and as I will point out also controversy – was achieved by *Black&White*, a performance framed by choreographed parts of the dance shared by Cristian Nonica, which alternated with the inserts of Ilonka néni's own poetic improvisational lyrics that she performed in Romanian and Romani. The latter verse was chanted by the dance troupe in a chorus, echoing Ilonka néni's intonation and accent. The piece ended with the individually elaborated improvisations of the youngsters, mixing disco with break, funk and house, in dialogue with Ilonka néni's playful acting, culminating in Cristian Nonica's virtuoso *tsingerita* performed in a traditional Gypsy-style, which lastly harmonized with the movements of the only female character.³

Echoes, debates and conclusions

The performance, welcomed by the audience, had a couple of elements that the conventional gaze could have found unusual. Five young boys, half-naked and with temporary body tattoos, were interacting with Ilonka néni, who was wearing a wedding robe. The elementary impression was a strange mixture of the sensuality of the dances with the thick humor of the profane texts, which through the recitation transformed into satirical poetry. During the working process we had not explicitated any ideological fundamentals for the potential messages, but in the course of promotion I articulated rather clear directions for the interpretation, as I formulated that "the choreography deconstructs the imagery of stereotypical dichotomies like male – woman, young – old, Roma – non-Roma". I meant by this that the main opposition raised between the elderly woman in white dress and the young Roma and non-Roma dancers in black suit pants and shoes hijacked and transgressed the well-spread racial colour symbolism as well as the split between the mainstream gender and generational roles.

In spite of its positive reception by the public, *Black&White* got a harsh critique, unexpectedly from the part of Roma women activists. The debate took place on the occasion of a feminist conference with our performance in the program, organized by Desire Foundation in *Tranzit House*, called "Another March", the main theme of which was "Women's role in the transgression of the ethnic borders". Both of the discussants were disturbed by the fact that an old Roma woman danced with youngsters and that the language used in the show was colloquial, contesting the way Roma culture was represented. Maria Ionescu expressed her disagreement with the "example of Ilonka" as in her opinion she did not represent her "as a people", because, "in my culture a young boy does not dance next to an old woman and vice versa". Letiția Mark argued in a similar way: "Ilonka does not represent the Roma ethnicity, but represents a search for modernity, new forms of expression, not through the lens of the Roma ethnicity, but as a representation of the old woman who is marginalized from many points of view". As a respondent, I tried to defend my position questioning the expectation that a member of the Roma ethnicity should necessarily represent the whole community through her art: "Ilonka never appeared in the works made together as a representative of the Roma, or as a representative of the Roma culture", I said. This opinion coincided with the ones reflected in the interventions of two anthropologists, Enikő Vincze and Žarana Papič, who interpreted the statements of the Roma activists as part of their assumed nation building ideology, which confers special roles for political leaders in designing and directing the representation of ethnic groups as a whole. As Papič put: "Let's not forget that the idea that each individual should represent the 'community' is inherent in the collective policy of homogeneous communities, in fact in national policy."⁴

The debate is still valid. The question is still relevant: would be an intercultural dance-theatre company with Roma participant that still does not exist in Romania since *RromaNative&Co.* beneficial? One thing became certain. Whether mainstream cultural and political entities preferred such a project or not, audiences liked it, as the Roma villagers' loud and enthusiastic acclamation in Almașu/Váralmás, Sălaj County proved it during our touring, and also the participants liked it, as it can be seen from the quotations written on the poster: "Joy. Soft experiences. New people, hurrah!!! United colors of... Synagogues... Reach out and touch faith."(Cristian Rigman); "I actually dreamed about collaborating with the entire world through this Tranzit foundation."(Cristian Nonica); "Together, black&white, we're like a huge, energetic, maybe... nice Dalmatian. Beats&rhythms, screams&songs... that's us!"(Angel Rusu); "To do my best to do this show wasn't very easy for me because I have a child. I haven't done any shows before and I really liked what I did here" (Claudia Ruha).⁵



Figure 1. Members of *RromaNative&Co.* in the team of volunteers constructing the courtyard of Tranzit House in 2001.



Figure 2. *Black&White* performed at the Mediawave Festival in 2001, in Győr, Hungary.



Figure 3. *Black&White* performed in Tranzit House, Cluj, Romania in 2001. From the Archive of Tranzit.

Endnotes

- 1 www.tranzithouse.ro (5 April 2023)
- 2 More quantitative data and interpretive essays are included on the site of the "Missing 1944" project of Tranzit Foundation. <<http://www.missingsince1944.ro/?nyelv=en>> (5 April 2023)
- 3 *Black&White* was created and performed by Ileana Lăcătuș, Iosif Cristian Nonica, Cristian Rigman, Angel Rusu, Alin Țețglaș, Mihai Varga. Choreography: Könczei Csilla. *ILONA: surprize, surprize* was created by Ileana Lăcătuș, Iosif Cristian Nonica, Elena Popa, Ofelia Popii, Cristian Rigman, Claudia Ruha, Angel Rusu, Alin Țețglaș, Mihai Varga, Csilla Könczei. Video: Könczei Csilla. Edited by: Zsolt Kötő. Artistic supervision and special thanks to: Afrim Radu, Zelwer Jean Marc. Producer: Tranzit Foundation. With the support of: Open Society Institute, Pro Helvetia Foundation, Cultural Ministry of Romania, French Institute from Cluj.
- 4 The whole debate can be read in *Magyari-Vincze* 2001:64–87.
- 5 A retrospection of the project can be watched here: *Ilonka néni in Tranzit. Memories and archive images*. Video montage. 45' Collaborative movement-theatre-video projects with Roma and Gadge from the Archive of Tranzit House: *BluEscape, Black&White, RromaNative&Co*. In the main role: Ilonka néni / Ileana Lăcătuș. 2020.08.13.19:00. <<https://www.cinema-arta.ro/evenimente/ilonka>> (IN)DEPENDENTproject <<https://www.cinema-arta.ro/independent>> (5 April 2023)

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A FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE BETWEEN A CULTURAL SOCIETY AND A DANCE COMMUNITY

Folk dance ensembles in Slovenia, viewed as cultural societies, reinterpret traditional dances on stage. However, they often represent more than their ideological or political objectives; being a member of such an ensemble signifies an engagement in the diverse realities, offering individuals avenues for expression, choice, affinity, and belonging. These ensembles navigate the dynamics of national cultural policies and public funding, balancing dance heritage forms with contemporary expectations of dance communities.

Keywords: folk dance group, festivalisation, artistic expression, dance heritage, cultural policies, Slovenia

Introduction

Today, a folk dance ensemble (or group), in Slovene *folklorna skupina*, is usually perceived as an organised artistic and cultural society that reinterprets traditional dances on stage, which Anthony Shay refers to as ethno-identity dances (2016). An outsider's view often overlooks many other aspects of the formation, maintenance, and future of such institutional dance communities beyond their cultural, ideological, and political ends. Inspired by Martin Slobin's concept of micromusics (2000), being a member of a folk dance ensemble is just one of today's realities of pluralistic societies, providing opportunities for choice, affinity, and belonging.

The present-day folk dance ensembles in Slovenia are increasingly often faced with the dilemma of what their purpose is and what idea they should pursue. Are folk dance ensembles primarily cultural societies that follow the guidelines laid down by the national cultural policy, which is implemented by the Republic of Slovenia's Public Fund for Cultural Activities (JSKD) as the central institution directing amateur, leisure and mass cultural activities, including the activities of folk dance ensembles? Achieving the aesthetic criteria and the direction of artistic expression prescribed by JSKD, even in the post-socialist period, can be defined as a prescriptive artistic model, which requires upgrading stage presentations in a creative way. Or perhaps folk dance ensembles are actually first and foremost dance-based free-time social communities? When it comes to their activities on stage, folk dance ensembles are all about folk dances, their existence is based on stage performances, and yet, beyond this, there seems to be a love of dancing as such and the ensembles offer a way of socialising that involves dance on a formal, informal and private levels of individuals that are part of the dance community referred to as a folk dance ensemble. The aim of this paper is to unveil why a folk dance ensemble is considered to be a dance community in a broad sense and not just a cultural society.

A folk dance ensemble as a cultural society

In Slovenia today, every group that performs Slovenian folk dances is organised (merely) as an amateur cultural society. Slovenia does not have a national folk dance ensemble, nor are there any commercial folk dance ensembles. Gaining a better understanding of the current status, role and position of folk dance ensembles in Slovenia requires taking a brief historical look at the emergence and development of such ensembles.

The first thing to examine is the terms used to refer to such ensembles and the dilemma of how to translate today's most commonly used term for the dance engagement in question, i.e. *folklorna skupina*, into English. Slovenia is faced with a similar predicament as other Slavic – or

Eastern European, if you will – nations that share a common history of cultural activities under communism, which had a profound effect on the understanding of and attitude towards traditional culture, including dance. In Slovenian, a single term is used – *folklorna skupina*, when translating it into English, however, Slovenian speakers use a number of different expressions. Various online machine-translation tools provide the terms 'folklore group' or 'folk dance group' as the most common translation options for *folklorna skupina*. Other translations used by Slovenians include 'folklore ensemble' and 'folk dance ensemble' – the latter is used in this paper. A less common use of the term 'ensemble' in English translations – although it captures the nature of many of today's folk dance ensembles very well – is due to the fact that Slovenia has never had a professional, national or state folk dance ensemble. Although such cultural institutions were characteristic of Eastern European countries, as well as of almost all the republics of the former Yugoslavia (see Kunej 2020; Petkovski 2016) during communist times, Slovenians did not adopt this concept. Whether this is something to be proud of or whether this peculiarity needs to be remedied in the 21st century by establishing such a folk dance ensemble is a question that will remain unanswered in this paper. On the other hand, however, the use of the term 'folk dance' to translate *folklorna* into English indicates the primary mission of such ensembles, which is primarily the interpretation of dance heritage and the heritage that is directly related to it, for example, music, clothing and various rituals.

More than a hundred years ago, when the first formations of this kind started to take shape, the term folk dance group/ensemble was not in use; in fact, it was more common to call such groups ethnographic groups, or locals from a village, which indicates that at the time, the dance traditions were still part of the locals' participatory dance experience or at least still part of the participants' personal recollections. In Slovenian, the adjective *plesni*, which translates as 'dance', was often added to the basic phrase to emphasise the central role of dancing, which, along with rituals, was characteristic of their early presentations. The term *folklorna skupina* did not become established until after World War II, when groups in rural areas were joined by groups in urban centres, which had a different mission and goals than the first groups to emerge in the countryside.

Among Slovenians, folk dance ensembles have a tradition of more than a hundred years. I have previously explored the dynamic past and some of the premises and turns in the transformation of folk dance ensembles' activities in some other papers (Kunej 2018, 2021; Kunej and Kunej 2019). Therefore, this paper includes a summary of some of the most distinguishing characteristics of folk dance ensembles and highlights three milestones in their activities, which I believe are crucial for understanding the current situation and the present-day challenges faced by the participants.

The first milestone was World War II. In the post-World War II period, the first ethnographic groups that started presenting their living or vanishing dance traditions on stage, either in their respective home villages or in larger (and more distant) centres, were joined by ensembles that were usually formed in more urban areas. The pre-war ensembles were involved in the formation of a national identity in the newly emerging south Slavic state that was created after World War I. By performing at various folk dance festivals, they highlighted their Slavicness, seeking to find all things unique and archaic in local traditions. The vanishing (or almost forgotten) local dance tradition was folklorised with the aim of preserving it. Initially, the aim of the folk dance ensembles that emerged in the towns after World War II was to help build the socialist man and to strengthen brotherhood and unity in the then socialist Yugoslavia, of which Slovenia was a part. The characteristics of the post-war period are described hereafter. The newly-established ensembles in towns were gaining in importance and strength, which indicates a shift in the focus of activities from rural areas to urban centres. At first, urban ensembles were formed as part of labour unions' activities in factories, and later as part of independent educational and cultural societies. In relation to this, it is important to mention a folk dance ensemble that later served as a substitute for the national

ensemble – France Marolt Student Folk Dance Group – and indirectly contributed to an increased number of folk dance ensembles in smaller towns and villages (for more on this, see Kunej 2018). An essential characteristic of these 'urban' ensembles was that their respective repertoires were not based directly on the dance traditions of the local environment, but were considerably more varied. Town-based folk dance ensembles reinterpreted the dance traditions of the entire Slovenian territory, and the larger ones of the entire Yugoslav area. On stage, the dancers were no longer directly connected to the tradition-bearers, but to the dance tradition only through choreographies. In the 1980s, folk dance ensembles were classified into two groups, namely the so-called *izvirne*, i.e. original folk dance ensembles, all of which were in rural areas, and *poustvarjalne*, i.e. re-creative folk dance ensembles, most of which were located in towns, but some also in non-urban areas. From the original twenty ensembles in the 1930s, the number increased to almost ninety by 1985. Three decades later, in 2015, the number of adult folk dance ensembles in Slovenia amounted to 230 (Kunej 2020:24).

The second milestone was the year 1990 and the breakup of the then Yugoslavia, which was followed by what could be referred to as 'a folklore turn'. Ensembles in rural areas and smaller local communities regained in importance, while the larger town-based ones faced programme-related challenges following the breakup of Yugoslavia and had to deal with giving up their respective programmes that were no longer (politically) acceptable in a changed socio-political context. On the other hand, this programme-related crisis, hand in hand with the cultural policy pursued at the time, led to the emergence of new programme items and contents that included more and more theatrical segments with the dramaturgical plot and the story being increasingly more important than dancing.

The third milestone occurred during the 2010s, which is marked by current modernity with its tendencies to professionalise the activities of folk dance ensembles and artistic interventions beyond the aesthetics of traditional folk dance. In the context of the current cultural policy, in Slovenia, amateur folk dance activities are becoming a purely artistic practice, which is supposed to follow the laws of stage presentations, this, however, disregards that folk dance ensembles can be dance and heritage communities at the same time. After all, the heritage-bearers of all the dance-related entries in the Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Slovenia are local folk dance ensembles. In the field of today's folk dance activities and related cultural policy, new innovative approaches – transforming, upgrading (or deconstructing) dance – are more than welcome, as some believe this has potential to grow folk dance activities, which are faced with declining interest among young people. According to the perspectives of the Republic of Slovenia's Public Fund for Cultural Activities' current cultural policy, any attempts that deviate from the so-called creative model are not desirable and are certainly not encouraged. The creative model is thus increasingly becoming the prescribed way of re-creating heritage as part of the public fund's so-called folklore activities. Other approaches that would place greater emphasis on folk dances as an intangible heritage and not merely as a contemporary performing arts production are increasingly rare and absent. However, the statutory tasks of the Republic of Slovenia's Public Fund for Cultural Activities are not only to ensure qualitative growth of amateur cultural activities, but also to "preserve, nurture and develop living folk culture as part of cultural heritage"(ZJSKD:Article 4).

In the 1990s, the classification into original and re-creative folk dance ensembles was abolished, as it was believed that both kinds of ensembles recreated dances that were no longer existent outside of folk dance ensembles and could be defined as ethno-identity dances (Shay 2016). Nevertheless, recently, in the face of contemporary challenges and the guidelines laid down by the Public Fund for Cultural Activities, the division between original and re-creative ensembles has been re-introduced, as a result of a more traditionalist or artistic approach to their on-stage interpretations (see Knific 2024).

Today, all folk dance ensembles in Slovenia are organised as cultural (or educational-cultural) societies, operating as part of the amateur, non-professional sphere. Slovenia has never had a professional folk dance ensemble, nor is there a national folk dance ensemble or any folk dance troupes as private institutions. Cultural societies exist in both urban and rural areas. However, those that are located in the countryside often have a stronger role in shaping the cultural landscape and cultural activities in the local environment than those in towns and cities, where the range of cultural activities is more diverse and greater, and where amateur cultural societies – as cells of creativity in an urban environment – are to a significant extent joined by professional forms of artistic production.

Today, each folk dance ensemble in Slovenia operates as a society. It may be just one of the various sections within a cultural society, existing alongside others that are active in the fields of choir singing, theatre, puppetry, instrumental activities, literature, fine art etc. A folk dance ensemble and its related activities may, however, be the sole focus of a society. Regardless of whether a folk dance ensemble operates as an independent society or as a section within a society, nowadays, folk dance ensembles are often segmented further. All of them certainly include a dance group and dance remains a fundamental element, with dancers forming the largest core of every ensemble. An ensemble may even have several dance section/groups, where dancers are divided according to age (children, youth, adult, veteran) or seniority (beginner, principal/leading dance group). In addition to the dancers, a folk dance ensemble is composed of other sections. The following are some of the most typical examples: musicians are part of individual instrumental sections, which are divided according to the musical instruments used (e.g. an Alpine band, a tamburitza ensemble), singers, who may also be dancers are part of vocal ensembles (men's, women's, mixed), etc. Some folk dance ensembles also have an ethnographic or a Shrovetide carnival section (which is responsible for the annual carnival procession in the local community). Regardless of all this, one can nowadays become a member of a folk dance ensemble by making a conscious commitment to joining a society, one can even fill in an application form and pay a membership fee, however, the one thing that is essential is that membership is voluntary and that one can be part of it as an amateur. The activities of a society should not be focused on making profit, but rather aimed at fulfilling its purpose and objectives. Amateur culture refers to the activities, interests, and creative pursuits of individuals outside of a professional context. It involves people engaging in activities driven by their love or passion for a particular field or activity, rather than for payment or profit. This also applies to folk dance ensembles, which focus on traditional dance.

However, there are some noticeable differences between folk dance ensembles in urban and rural areas. Folk dance ensembles in urban environments are often comprised of members of a very similar age, and can be described as monogenerational. Their focus is on the artistic dimension and their main event is the annual show, which is a unique staged dance performance. Folk dance ensembles in rural areas, on the other hand, are much more involved in the cultural life of the local community and are more often intrinsically linked to the calendar cycle of community life. In terms of composition, they are often intergenerational and much more inclusive, welcoming everyone who expresses an interest in joining them. They often have a smaller number of members, their sphere of influence is geographically more limited, and consequently, each member – even those with limited dancing/singing skills – is a valuable member. Rural folk dance ensembles do not hold auditions or tests for new members based on musical/dancing skills. This is ultimately reflected in their performances, which may lack uniformity (in terms of the performers' physiognomy, age, dancing skills). They are more interested in the social-local dimension than in the artistic aspect. For such rural folk dance ensembles, it is very important to be involved in the local environment and to meet the needs of the local community also in terms of socialising, as they often represent only one of the few possibilities of cultural involvement in a given environment. Therefore, the

following statement by the leader of such an ensemble is very telling (anon., personal communication, 18 June 2022). According to him, the quality (excellence) of the ensemble is not only reflected in the single performance of the annual show, but mostly in how the ensemble delivers the most ordinary performances far from the limelight of the big stage.

A folk dance ensemble as a dance community

As a society, a folk dance ensemble functions primarily as a group that performs on stage. In Slovenia, it is therefore not unusual for dancers to rehearse their dances for hours before the actual performance as part of their regular weekly practices; outside of this context and in different circumstances, they usually do not perform these dances. One of the few exceptions is a choreographed performance for a folk dance ensemble member at his/her wedding, as it is customary for the other ensemble members to dance a choreography at the private wedding celebration. When it comes to folk dance ensemble dancers, nowadays, their stage performances are limited to the choreographer's creation and the way he/she understands what folk dance is and how to interpret it correctly on stage. Under the supervision of the folk dance ensemble leaders, i.e. dance teachers (who may also be choreographers, although not necessarily), who are responsible for the dance technique, the dancers try to realise the choreographer's idea to the best of their abilities. This means that the core of the performances is the choreographer's aesthetics and vision, which are actualised and interpreted by the dancers, who dance what they are told to. Of course, they do include a part of their own experience and interpretation in the performance. The question, however, is to what extent this truly reflects their actual dance repertoire in their social context, the corresponding dance aesthetics and their actual dance culture in the broadest sense. Rehearsals and performances are part of the dancers' lives and of the individuals' dance culture, but they are the one part that is meant for public stage presentation. And it could be argued that stage presentations are very much institutionalised and directed. There are very few folk dance ensemble dancers for whom this is the only dance activity they are involved in; when they leave a folk dance ensemble and its mission of presenting dance heritage on stage, other vernacular dance forms emerge.

This takes into account all those other forms of dance that deviate from the stage repertoire and formal rehearsals. It applies to dance occasions that turn into dance parties with live or recorded music at celebrations following successful performances, birthday celebrations of folk dance ensemble members, celebrations of important milestones in the lives of individuals that are part of folk dance ensembles, etc.

Beyond stage performances and rehearsals, dance parties also bring folk dance ensemble members together periodically throughout the year, including at the New Year's party, Shrovetide, the party following the annual show, to name just the most common ones. The one thing that these dance parties have in common is that they are internal and that the dancing is for one's own pleasure rather than for a stage presentation. Their purpose is the ensemble members' socialising accompanied by dancing that differs significantly in repertoire and genre from stage dancing. The focus is on social dancing, which goes beyond ethno-identity dances, stage presentations of folk dance and the current cultural policy within the amateur sphere. These dance occasions rarely involve stage dances, in fact, they are all about ordinary dancing, comparable to the way people dance at other parties in the local environment. Above all, in these cases the focus is on the live musical accompaniment, on interacting and on co-creating a dance event together with musicians who play popular music accompanying social dancing. Such dance party events, which are essentially participatory rather than representational, are highly inclusive in nature and disregard the laws of stage production.

An example to name in relation to this is the ensemble *Folklorna skupina Klas* that is part

of the Horjul Educational Society. Founded in 1978, this ensemble operates as a section of the society. From the very beginning, it has been one of the so-called representative ensembles, as its stage performances in the past have not been linked to any local dance tradition; in fact, the ensemble has always based its programme on Slovenian folk dances. Their regular dance rehearsals are thus not connected to the rest of the dancers' dance culture. The ensemble members love to dance and dancing is part of their way of life (e.g. at school proms, weddings and other personal celebrations, as well as various local get-togethers, such as hootenannies usually organised by the local volunteer fire departments). It is telling that the local house of culture, where the ensemble holds its stage rehearsals, has a basement room exactly underneath the stage, where a disco used to operate in the 1980s and 1990s, as a central get-together place for the local youth. Today, the space is no longer open to the public and is only used for private dance parties organised by the cultural society. The weekly rehearsals, held by the folk dance ensemble on Fridays, thus actually do not end on stage, but literally under the stage in the club premises and with different kind of music and dancing that the one practised on stage for an hour and a half during the rehearsal. The individual dances from the stage production are not part of the 'under-the-stage' dance repertoire. The dance parties taking place in the former disco include the social dances that are popular in the local environment. These dances interact with the contemporary, popular musical tastes of young people, which are co-shaped by today's music industry. The accompaniment to these dance practices can be live or recorded music, in line with the tastes and preferences of the participants. The interaction between the dance and music performers and the observers is constant, and the transition from one group to another is frequent and normal. A similar non-choreographed dance repertoire is noticeable at various after-performance parties, celebrations of the folk dance ensemble members' 18th birthdays, New Year's parties, etc.

All this suggests that Slovenian folk dance ensembles are not merely artistic practices that are part of the activities of various societies, but even more importantly, than one of their main attributes is community dance – the ensemble gathering as a group or community to dance together and get a sense of identity and belonging to a locality or cultural group. A folk dance ensemble as a dance community is a group of individuals who interact with and influence one another and develop a sense of belonging to the group. The community can be based on shared interests, practices, goals, identity, or background. Communities can, but do not necessarily share the same physical space (geographical area). One person can belong to several communities at the same time, as belonging to a community can be temporal. The social organisation of a community is fluid, in fact, communities are generally structured as a loose network. Nevertheless, a community can include central, more influential actors, build inner hierarchies, and even develop formal structures within the network. This type of dance is inclusive and aims to provide quality dance experiences regardless of a participant's background, age, or ability. It creates opportunities for individuals to explore dance, often leading to personal and community growth, enhancing social relationships, and contributing to broader social change (People dancing 2009; Robinson 2007). And a folk dance ensemble is exactly this kind of dance community.

An appeal as a conclusion

As ethnologists, ethnochoreologists and dance anthropologists, we ought to be interested in folk dance ensembles in all their contemporary dimensions, and we should also make sure the research into such ensembles not only focuses on the institutional framework and related cultural policies, but also includes the social aspect. In fact, our research focus needs to shift away from stage performances and rehearsals and understand folk dance ensembles not only as artistic stage ensembles and view these performers as people who preserve and negotiate their own dance culture even backstage (and under the stage), continuing, nurturing and developing

it in their own way, bypassing the guidelines, education and selections made by cultural policy for amateur culture.

It is therefore time to perceive folk dance ensemble performers as more than just stage dancers; they are vital bearers of dynamic dance practices that form an integral part of their lifestyle. This is influenced by various factors, such as stage production, education, commodification, and financial/political support for artistic creation, all of which are deeply interwoven with a passion for dancing. Thus, folk dance ensemble members shape a dance heritage that draws on the past, is shaped in the present for future generations through a bottom-up approach, with and beyond cultural politics. This involves navigating the complex power dynamics of individual actors within the dance community, transcending mere cultural politics. Dance, in its broadest sense, extends beyond staged performances to become a core part of the personal identities of these ensemble members. Contemporary folk dance ensembles should thus be understood as an on and off-stage reality, embodying both a formal cultural institution and an informal dance community.

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SAKROVISHTNITSATA - A VIRTUAL DANCE COMMUNITY

The proposed research discusses the Facebook group Sakrovishtnitsata (The Treasury), a virtual folklore dance community which has grown to become a bridge between researchers, choreographers and dancers. The paper seeks to explore the history, development, content, and role of the Treasury – what is it? Why does it appeal to its members? What is its added value to the area of Bulgarian dance folklore? The paper was provoked by the larger question of digital communities as motors of social change in the given area they belong to.

Keywords: digital humanities, traditional dances, Bulgaria, virtual communities

A person is a social animal, a ζῷον πολιτικὸν wrote Aristotle in his *Politics*, the famous work of political philosophy in which he further develops the idea that we are such social animals by our very nature, not by choice. He adds that society is a level above an individual and anyone who is self-sufficient or desires not to be a part of a society is either a beast or a god. Communicating with others is a need we all have whilst a community cannot be formed without being in connection with each other. In turn, changes in the ways of interaction lead to changes in socializing. With the rapid expansion of the world wide web in the 1990s and the start of Facebook (FB) in 2004, space and time no longer hold such an importance since at any given point and place we can reach out and talk to each other, exchange knowledge and be together online.

Back in 2011 Misho Kadiev (a fellow choreographer with his own dance group) and I started the FB group *Sakrovishtnitsa za bulgarski hora i tantsi* (in Bulgarian: Съкровищница за български хора и танци; in English: Treasury for Bulgarian horos and dances; from now on – the "Treasury"). Initially it was meant to facilitate the quicker communication between us, our recreational groups and fellow dance groups' members. Later on, I took the lead in shaping its contents and turned it into a private FB group, later on into a study group as of 2020 and onwards during the first Covid-19 related lockdown. Today the Treasury has more than 8,500 members from all over the world and is highly respected amongst fellow choreographers and researchers. My personal page on FB and Instagram "Phoenix Perpeticum" came as a natural continuation of the idea behind the Treasury's large virtual community. Both the FB closed group and the FB open page exist and complement each other by bridging dancers, choreographers and researchers; influencing knowledge and repertoire of recreational dance clubs in Bulgaria and abroad as well as serving as an online repository and a database with videos of traditional Bulgarian dance material.

Community can be thought of as the engine by which information services are developed and delivered; indeed, community is a part of the information system itself (Fisher and Durrance 2003:660–662). Technology was created to be neutral, however, we have humanized it. In real life we can only interact with a certain number of people at the same time depending on the social skills we have. In virtual reality we are visible to people from all over the world and this type of network expands exponentially via the profiles of others. Venturing our gaze back in time, we could connect with Plato's Academy in Ancient Greece and its principle on sharing knowledge with the idea behind those FB interest groups, one of which is the Treasury. Such groups establish virtual shortcuts between people; hence their specific knowledge is made available and accessible to everyone within them.

Technological inventions and social media gave us ways to mainstream information. In the absence of physical reality there is also a lack of the feeling of hierarchy and authority – in front of

the screen everyone can make suggestions, offer know-how, lend a helping hand. What is more – all of this can happen in less than a few seconds depending on the wi-fi connection. Communication is horizontal with a global impact, nonetheless. The Treasury took its first steps in tune with the initial FB idea – check out how friends are doing online, everyone collectively browsing ideas, organizing parties in order to meet live and offline. Sharing with each other develops us as intellectual human beings and helps us progress: we give others information and attention; they provide their own perspective back and there is the mutual enrichment and beneficial factor.

I like calling the Treasury a beehive, as opposed to just a meeting spot. It started as a social network but developed into a virtual community with dance as the common denominator and interest. It does have the database part, but it is so much more than a repository for dance material. What might constitute the difference between a social network and a virtual community? The former reminds us of the offline social net we all have – friends, family, colleagues, acquaintances we speak to occasionally or on a regular basis. In its essence social networks are formed of people we already know and want to reach out to – a pre-established connection built in person and moved online for quicker access (Johnson 2014). An online/virtual community, on the other hand, gathers people from all walks of life; most of them have not met at all and are in this community because of a common interest or goal. Anyone can join such a community but the reasons to stay there could be different and depend on the individual choice: 1) some stay because they believe they can contribute to the community, 2) others stick around out of sheer benefit from the community and its work. Once formed, a virtual community can have overlapping interests with another such group and even 'nest' within one another, co-exist and help each other grow. As summarised by Laura Johnson:

Social Networks

1. Bound together by pre-established interpersonal connections
2. Each connection has his or her own social network
3. Characterized by a spider web-like "network" structure

Online Communities

1. Bound together by a common interest or topic
2. ANY person can be a part of ANY community
3. Characterized by a more complex overlapping and 'nested' structure.

(Johnson 2014:n.p.)

Since 1999 I have been actively involved in the blooming recreational dance movement of Bulgaria – dancing Bulgarian folklore for fun and unwinding. The time spent in Greece during my Bachelor studies up until 2007, however, made me rethink the ideas of traditional and modern in the context of folklore dances. This urged me to commence my researcher's path in the field of ethnochoreology in search for a more in-depth view of Bulgaria and its folklore. My personal journey is mapped within the Treasury – it was founded as an online corner where recreational dance groups' leaders and members could gather, exchange dance material, news about folklore festivals, competitions or just gossip while drinking the morning coffee in front of the screen. In time, when I started questioning what was being taught to me by peers and authority figures in the dance field of Bulgarian folklore, I posed questions in and out of the group trying to share and obtain information.

Pioneering in a folklore 'mine-field' costs time, 'limbs' and often means learning through mistakes, being considered a nuisance, and losing group members. According to Andreas Wittel this type of 'network sociality' is a mark of virtual communities: traditional offline communities imply stability, wholeness, feelings of belonging, long-term relationships, feelings of closeness and common history or the so-called 'narrative sociality'. 'Network sociality' is much more unstable

and ephemeral (Wittel 2001:51–55) and the changing numbers of members (some leaving, some joining or re-joining) is the way virtual communities work – nothing personal.

In the beginning of my folklore journey, I was teaching dance material I perceived as traditional (Nahachewsky 2012) which later on turned out to be altered by professional choreographers. In my search for 'the truth' I was eager to 'expose the lies' and share my new-found knowledge with the Treasury, given wings by the passion of youth. Growing as a researcher meant growing as a virtual community leader as well, becoming less biased, trying to show both sides of the story, setting a neutral tone and ways of communicating within the Treasury. See, what we have in Bulgaria in terms of folklore is a researcher's heaven: nowadays we have both a living tradition with dances evolving in a traditional folklore way as well as long-standing choreographic tradition dating back to the 1950s. Stage folklore was used as a political tool to present Bulgaria beyond its borders in the best possible way during Communist times. This paved the way for the so-called "Bulgarian model" (Ivanova-Nyberg 2012) with an elaborate system of folklore dance high-schools, university majors, one state-funded folklore ensemble and ensembles in almost every big city in Bulgaria funded by the municipalities there – a well-balanced system for turning simple village folklore into art.

For half a century many Bulgarians had a blurred idea about what constituted traditional folklore dances and what – choreographed folklore dances, albeit based on traditional dance material. These differences were illuminated within the context of recreational dance groups (Shtarbanova 2013:93). Folklore dances do not belong in the museum; indeed, they change and adapt together with society. However, where do we draw the line between dance evolution from 'within' and such changes due to cultural policies and other extrinsic factors altering the context?

The Treasury adapted and evolved as a response to the commercialization of the recreational folk dance club's activities in Bulgaria. To many it is a 'hard-core purist' community due to the many discussions in it over what is traditional or not, who has the right to radicalize folklore, is monetization the best way to 'treat' tradition and so on. To me, it does not speak against choreographed creations but rather encourages critical thinking as to what is what and from where it stems as well as advocating the conscious preservation of traditional folklore culture in order to transmit it to the next generations of dancers and folklore connoisseurs.

As mentioned above, the Treasury began as a social networking corner, a beehive of busy folklore bees and was open for anyone to join. The more it grew in numbers, the more posts were published, and certain rules of content had to be enacted to keep the collective peace. Content moderation sets the tone of any virtual community and is in the heart of that community's social impact. 'One click to rule them all' might sound authoritative but I have witnessed many virtual communities dissolve due to the lack of norms and chat behaviour prescriptions. The Treasury has only two moderators (Kadiev and I, the founders of the group) so scanning and filtering member-generated content became increasingly difficult when the group gained even more popularity during the first Covid-19 related lockdown in 2020. There were hacker attacks, rude conversations and foul language used by new-comers, and many attempts by online sellers to promote their products. This led to the decision to make the group Private. As compared to other groups about Bulgarian dance folklore, the Treasury has only 8,500 members, each new member undergoes screening and has to answer questions before being approved, while published content is only visible after moderator approval. This firm control helps the group members feel safe to ask questions without fear while the goal of the group is kept clear.

During the Covid-19 lockdowns everyone had a lot of time on their hands and discussions within the Treasury became heated. At the same time a lot of online dance lessons started, folklore dances were more and more accessible to the public. The moment was ripe to introduce

yet another step-up to our virtual community – learning modules. I started by organizing all dance videos ever posted in the group into Learning Modules, a feature recently made available by FB then. I also started "Guess the village and the dances" Monday to keep people busy but also to use the potential of this huge community in order to help my archival work that had just commenced.

In Bulgaria during Communism not many people had access to cameras and so most of the traditional dances captured on video were either in private collections, in the ex-state TV archives, or belonged to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. I was lucky that during my extensive travels all around the world as a dance teacher, many friends gave me their Bulgarian folklore video material shot during trips to Bulgaria, sometimes dating back to early 1970s. For quite some time I had the idea to delve deeper into digital humanities and organize those precious gifts by cutting, fixing the sound, researching, analysing, synthesizing and sharing the information with friends and colleagues. Since travelling for fieldwork was not an option, I could not verify sources and cross-check information. The Treasury gave me the means to do 'online fieldwork' with the help of the whole community. Once dances' names and origin were pinpointed, members could learn them at home. It was a win-win situation.

When I began publishing the old videos there was much positive feedback from group members, an influx of new ones, my personal chat was flooded with messages, my phone was ringing constantly... I never expected my passion to lift up the spirit of people in such a way. I became brave enough to invite colleagues from outside of Bulgaria to the Treasury, adding researchers from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and from the ICTM who were already in my personal FB friends' list. The Treasury started speaking in many languages, became a meeting point of dancers, choreographers, researchers. Yet another idea was already taking shape – the "Phoenix Perpeticum" FB page. Open and with its contents visible to everyone, it was to be a whole new virtual community with numberless views and possibilities for cross-checking the uploaded video material. I adapted a small-audience FB page with not more than 1,100 likes which belonged to my first recreational dance group and was no longer in use. Thus "Phoenix Perpeticum" was born in February 2020.

Today "Phoenix Perpeticum" is quite popular so my online 'detective fieldwork' efforts are helped by many. It has taken the form of a video repository and there is an intriguing process of 'treasure hunting' for video information. When the video is technically ready to be published (clean cut beginning and end, with a synchronized music and video) I take the costumes of the dancers as a starting point and ask friends from the ethnographic area I have deduced to point me to the region they believe the group comes from if I do not already know it. Afterwards I start calling leaders of the local root-folklore groups and try to find out the name of the village and/or the names of the dances. In the end of the process, I have enough evidence to publish the video with a question to encourage the viewers to gather more information thus gathering more data to cross-check. This is a time- and effort-consuming process that takes a lot of my free time because I do it on my own. However, the fulfilment while reading all the happy and nostalgic comments is immense.

FB has a lot of profiles belonging to NGOs and cultural centres. On many occasions when coming upon my published videos, people from the villages in them recognize relatives and contact the cultural centres that in turn get in contact with me, send me pictures, invite me to their gatherings. Whenever possible I take the chance to further the online fieldwork and turn it into a physical fieldwork. This mutual exchange of knowledge has helped many villages resume dancing their dances again, inspired the village people to search and fill in the transmission gap. In 2023 we had the Koprivshtitsa open-air festival for traditional folklore, one of the oldest and most famous such venues. Two root folklore groups took part in it after a long time

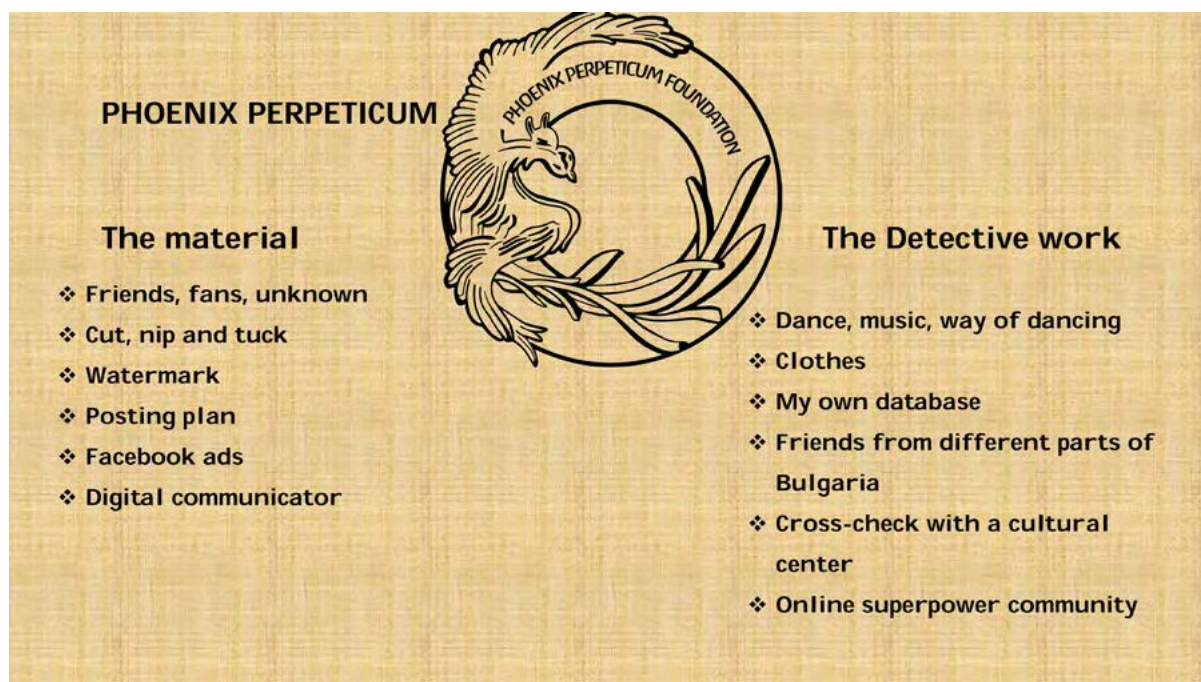


Figure 1. The process to pinpoint the video metadata.

of not participating because they were able to re-learn their own dances with the help of FB group "Phoenix Perpeticum". Last but not least, the FB page popularity prompted me to start a foundation by the same name with the purpose of preserving traditional folklore in all its forms.

The Treasury started initially as a group of people who wanted to keep in touch online via their common interest in horos and stage folklore dances. It gradually became a platform for sharing old videos, teaching tutorials and stage dance jewels and grew to more than 8,500 members. Today the group is one of the largest Bulgarian folklore hotspots online where the amassed virtual database is divided into modules; ideas are shared, and discussions initiated. In addition, different festivals and live gatherings have been born out of the network created within the Treasury dance community. As one of the founders of this digital powerhouse, I can proudly say that it works hand in hand with the "Phoenix Perpeticum" FB page and influences and transforms ideas about Bulgarian and Balkan dance folklore among its virtual community members, greatly impacting the repertoire and natural growth of recreational dance clubs in the country and abroad.

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COMPETING IN THE LIVING ROOM: EXAMINING THE SURGE OF DIGITAL COMPETITIONS IN IRISH STEP DANCING DURING THE PANDEMIC IN 2020

The Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 brought our planet to a standstill. Competitive Irish step dancers across the world were left with no major championships to attend and a lack of training possibilities. As a competitive Irish step dancer, I joined a digitally held competition in Spring 2020. What started as an autoethnographic self-experiment brought me to further examine the rise of digital competitions during the Covid-19 pandemic, highlighting their positive and negative aspects.

Keywords: Irish traditional step dance, competition, digital competition, autoethnography, Covid-19 pandemic

Introduction

Between 2009–2019 I was an active competitive Irish step dancer in mainland Europe with *An Coimisiún Le Rincí Gaelacha* – the Irish Dancing Commission (CLRG), one of the leading competitive Irish step dancing organisations (Cullinane 2003). I observed with interest what was happening to the competitive world of Irish step dancing during the first global lockdown in spring of 2020.

Being stripped of possibilities to compete at a national and international level, the frustration amongst the dancing community was considerable big. Opinions vary broadly as to whether or not competitions in an art form such as dance are relevant, or even necessary, but for many people, it offers an opportunity to improve their dancing skills and to gain confidence. As Frank Hall, an American anthropologist, stated in his PhD on competitive Irish step dancing: "To have danced on stage, even if with relatively little skill, is still an accomplishment" (1995:44). Not only do competition help improve skills and confidence but they also serve as a significant motivating factor (Foley 2010), especially in higher dance levels.

Word quickly spread about companies such as Digital Feis (*feis* means competition), founded in 2016, catering for those people with few opportunities to compete, with geographical, economic, or political impediments. These opportunities offered these dancers a possibility to compete against other dancers worldwide, continuing their competitive career and giving them a goal to work towards. Though at the point of the first lockdown I was not actively competing anymore, I felt my mental and physical health declining due to the global situation and the lack of mobility and dance possibilities. I thus decided to join *April Feis*, organised by Digital Feis, as a self-directed experiment, hoping it would act as a motivation for me to move and train my body through setting a goal to aim towards, while simultaneously catering for my overall well-being.

Methodology

This paper initially intended to examine the unwillingness of CLRG to let their dancers participate in digital competitions organised by other organisations (such as CRN – *Cumann Rince Náisiúnta*; *Comhdháil na Múinteoirí le Rincí Gaelacha Teoranta* – The Congress of Irish Dance Teachers (Cullinane 2016); WIDA – World Irish Dance Association; to name a few) and assess their reasoning for the same. These published reasons and relevant heated discussions on social media that had sparked my initial research question were, at a later date, withdrawn from the internet by the organisation itself. Eventually, after much pressure from their own dancers

asking for opportunities to dance at digital competitions as well, CLRG started organising their own digital competitions, excluding members from other organisations from participating. I then decided to focus on my autoethnographic experiences and those from other international dancers competing with several different digital competition platforms to highlight the advantages and disadvantages that these events might offer to competitive Irish step dancers in a lockdown situation. I conducted an anonymous online survey with 34 adult dancers (one of them slightly under 18 years of age), engaged in conversation over several social media platforms and through email, pursued netnography (digital fieldwork) and communicated with several organisers of different digital competitions. All identities in this paper are kept anonymous unless otherwise stated. Engagement with existing literature was scant to emphasise the focus of these personal accounts and rather new autoethnographic experiences, and also due to the fact that the initial trajectory of this work was fully ethnographic rather than analytical. These observations and accounts are worth sharing as they are.

These observations come from my perspective as a mature mainland European Irish step dancer from a non-professional dancing background competing in adult championships which are not the highest level of competition, and having commenced training as an adult. As a dance scholar of mixed race with no family connection to Irish culture, but with a background in Irish dance studies, I seem to gravitate almost involuntarily towards engaging critically in all things related to Irish step dance, leading to various research projects of a rather 'spontaneous' nature. I must also emphasise that a competitive Irish step dance career does not bring monetary reward or sponsorship, and that dancers in all levels, but especially those with high standard and skills, invest a lot of time and money in order to achieve their goals of winning major championships worldwide.

Explanation of *feis* and Digital Feis

Originally, the Irish/Gaelic word *feis* denoted a gathering of people or a festival, mostly to celebrate Irish culture in their different arts forms including song, music, dance, poetry, painting or even soda bread baking (Foley 2013). From about the 1950's onwards, dance at a *feis* started to get more and more attention. Today, in the world of Irish step dance, the term is used to describe a competition involving Irish step dancing only. These dancing competitions meanwhile spread globally and *feiseanna* (pl.) can be found on all continents. Depending on the attendance of the competition, these can last from one day to up to a week (for world championships) with different categories in age group, level, and type of dance rhythm, and are being danced with either soft shoes – a soft leather laced up pump – or hard shoes – a leather shoe with fibreglass soles and tips to beat percussive rhythms. Most competition dances are solo dances. One to several adjudicators are placed in front of the dance floor or stage to observe and rank the competitors according to the performance of the dancer, who dances alone or with one or two other participants at the same time, each doing their own routine of steps and movements to the same live music. Every dancer gets one chance to do their personal routine. Competitions can sometimes be restricted to only those dancers registered with the organisation running the competition. An awards ceremony is held at the end of major age groups and competitions, also offering a "Parade of Champions" where the winning high standard dancers get to display and showcase their best steps on their own to the cheer and delight of the audience. Though of a very competitive nature, *feiseanna* are big social gatherings that bring dancers from different dance schools worldwide and their families to connect with one another and celebrate an art form that has spread into cultures not connected to Ireland at all.



Figure 1. Ongoing competitions at *Busto Feis 2020*, Italy. With kind courtesy of © Marco Brigandi @mbrphotog.

The company I chose to compete digitally with called Digital Feis was founded in 2016 and is regarded to be an open platform organisation, meaning that any dancer from any organisation is welcomed to join their events – as long as their own organisation allows them to do so. Hence, I as an individual independent dancer, was allowed to register for the competition. Competing dancers organise their own recordings according to specific guidelines and then upload the un-edited video. The platform provides several adjudicators to look through the videos and to mark and assess the dancers within their entered dance category according to timing, carriage, execution, steps and overall look. Results are shared digitally within a given time frame.

Adjudicators in both examples are qualified to execute such adjudication procedures. A big plus in the digital option is the fact that they appear to have more time available to write down thorough feedback, as their adjudication process is not attached to a time schedule at an event and could be more flexible in this respect. This, in fact, to me was what offered the most interesting reason to attend and try this self-experiment myself in the first place. The Digital Feis website also shared a detailed scoring system with an example scoresheet featuring possible feedback for a fictional beginner dancer:

Extend leg more strongly/confidently when pointing. Lift all the way up in back on point-hop-backs. Pay close attention to your feet when you change²³ or point-hop-back – they should be one foot in front of the other, don't let them be side-by-side. Good sense of rhythm. Arms can be improved, but they are an acceptable amount of wiggly for a beginner. (Digital Feis 2020)

In real-life competition, getting written or oral feedback from the adjudicator is very uncommon and often there is little to no transparency as to why results are the way they are – apart from major championships where ranking results are shared on a screen as the winners are being announced.

Hence, more detailed feedback would be very much welcomed by competitive adult dancers in particular and the lack of it often sparks frustrated discussions as I've observed during my competitive career and on several social media platforms.

Personal perceptions

Whereas my initial idea that a digital *feis* might be much easier in regards to time, where preparation, travel and execution is concerned, I found myself very surprised at the fact that it bore some hidden challenges. Turning my living room into an adequate performance space in order to create a neat recording of one dance I decided to enter seemed like a nearly impossible task when shifting heavy furniture out of the filming frame.



Figure 2. Screenshot from the author's competition entry video in Ireland, 2020.

I chose to dance a traditional step dance due to the fact that those set choreographies are similar all over the world and I would not be in conflict by using steps from a former dance school (which would not be allowed). Also, those choreographies do not need a lot of space, which seemed adequate for my limited floor space. A test shoot took place several days before my chosen recording day to make sure my self-filming skills were acceptable and I was to be seen in the picture for the entire duration of the dance. Not having my dance gear with me in Ireland, where I was when lockdown hit, proved a difficulty when choosing alternative attire and footwear. Nerves made me make silly mistakes during the final filming process, which in the end took several hours to get 'the right shot' to cater for my perfectionism. Though I enjoyed the day for the most part, especially the lack of stress during preparation, and my stage fright somehow being under control, I missed having a live musician accompanying my dancing and the sense of community with my international dancing peers or peers from my dancing school. Also, the sense of sportsmanship I knew from across dancing schools in mainland Europe was lost, but the feeling of disconnection was a general issue throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

After two weeks I was emailed my results. I seemed to have been a bit unlucky though with my high expectations of getting a thorough feedback by a new adjudicator: the only feedback for my entry stated: "Great beats. Turn out. Cross over. You are lovely to watch – you look like you love to dance!".

I was sincerely hoping for more constructive feedback and tips on how to improve my weaknesses, such as was shown in the example scoresheet on the company's website. Also, I am a person who very much appreciates feedback of any kind, in order to reflect upon my own dance practice as it helps me to become more self-aware and analytical (Gibbons 2018). Whereas my feedback seemed of a kinder nature to me, I also wondered if that made it more 'meaningless' to me due to the fact that in later years I had started to compete in higher levels, and might thus respond better to harsher criticism and reasoning (Fishbach, Eyal and Finkelstein 2010).

The disappointment struck a bit further as I realized I had indeed won the competition but had only one other competitor at my side, perhaps due to my unfortunate age group. And lastly, the medal I was supposed to get was probably lost in the post and never arrived.

Research data analysis

Many of my personal perceptions resonated with the members of the survey (Marbach 2020a), and many further observations were shared by them with me, filling gaps I had not thought about. It was interesting to me to find out that, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, 45.7% of the 35 participants had already heard of Digital Feis, and even 22.9% had participated in such an event before. By analysing the answers, a main reason for that would certainly include remote geographical locations with little access or possibilities for transportation, and financial and time restrictions. One person stated:

We live in a remote area and have to travel over 2000 km for a live *feis* or host our own where our dancers are dancing against each other. Digital Feis allowed our dancers to compete against others their age. It helped motivate them and progress them. We were no longer at a disadvantage due to our location. (Anonymous 1, 2020)

Having to dance against peers that are known to you, or peers of completely different age groups than yours, can be a frustrating situation when coming from a smaller school. The possibility to see for yourself how well or how poorly you perform in comparison to other dancers matching your own dance level and age group, can help you see how you stand with your own abilities, and what you need to work on. A lack of these possibilities can prove itself to be quite frustrating and be perceived as a lack of adequate competition.

Motivation was another issue mentioned by the majority of the participants. A digital competition "made dancing during the pandemic feel less hopeless", stated another respondent. Having a set goal with a set day to work towards serves as an impulse to keep working hard to achieve that goal.

In addition, further positive aspects also mentioned by participants were the following:

- Getting to participate in international virtual locations otherwise not accessible to them
- An occasion to wear the solo dress again (a solo dress is referred to a costume used predominantly by more advanced dancers to perform their solo dances at championships. These are usually rather more elaborate and expensive than other costumes and offer a more unique experience when performing)
- Knowing the music / tunes ahead of time (comfort in practice)
- Battling anxiety issues (filming on your own / chance to repeat if danced with mistakes)
- Can get decent sleep ahead of competition, in your own bed
- Competition day can be chosen according to best mental and physical well being
- Not having to share the stage with one or two other dancers
- Some teachers got some income by offering to film dancers in their studio
- No need to mingle / feeling of safety at home
- Possibility to pre-film and thus be able to compete even if injured
- Sometimes better age groups

- (More) detailed feedback (on all rounds) from adjudicators
- Inspires to work harder during times when in-person events are not possible

Examining negative aspects of the whole digital experience revolved mostly around the digital issues, like the filming aspect, or concerns of having digital data (personal as well as video material) uploaded on the world wide web. One participant stated:

Having to actually see what you look like when you compete, record over and over and over until finally you have to admit that that's just what your dancing looks like and you can't change it, and now you're exhausted. (Anonymous 2, 2020)

The possibility of having several chances to enter with a dance seemed equally like a blessing and a curse. Whereas when messing up that one and only chance, leaving behind disappointment and wonder as to what could have been, the access to several tries on the other hand can leave a dancer exhausted and even performing worse with time, "but not necessarily improving the dancing", as another dancer wrote. Further aspects concerning the filming were:

- Effort to find adequate filming location (space, floor, noise)
- Unclear instructions for filming
- Finding a person to help with filming procedure
- Self-consciousness about filming oneself
- Film editing and upload could take ages
- Some aspects of dancing are not captured well on video, such as musicality, stage presence, personality
- Entries often get uploaded incorrectly and videos would go missing
- Competitors who recycle the videos for several competitions

It has to be noted at this point that by video editing only simple editing procedures such as cutting excess material to emphasise the actual entry or adding an (anonymous) title of the dance category would be permitted. Though, by engaging with online discussions, it was clear that concerns were high in regards to video-manipulations in order to make the dancer look better or hide mistakes in the execution. Cheating in competitions is an issue that I have heard of, be it at a live *feis* or a digital one, and it seems to me that there will always be loopholes around for people to get by with.

Looking at other negative aspects mentioned by participants, many also pointed out the following:

- Repetition of dancing takes away *feis*-feeling
- Not able to see other dancers for comparison
- No social aspect
- No atmosphere
- Results can take longer to receive
- No live music / choice of music is not nice
- Challenge of dancing to live music goes missing
- No possibility to buy dance gear / meet new vendors
- No new contacts / friendships
- No feeling of performance / energy exchange due to lack of audience
- Too much of overall stress on top of pandemic stress
- Uncertainty if others follow the rules
- No Parade of Champions

Strictly seen, a 'digital *feis*' is not a '*feis*' – a social gathering of people – *per se*, and the word *feis* completely loses its original definition.

If having to rate an experience with digital competitions between 1 (poor) and 10 (very good), no participant rated less than 5 (5.7%). Few rated it with a 6 (8.6%). Most participants give it a 7 (22.9%) or 8 (28.6%) and 17.1% rate it each with a 9 or 10. My personal rating is a 7.

Case study: Carmen

During my research I also communicated with an adult dancer with such a powerful story I felt was important to highlight here as well as part of a small case study. Let's call her Carmen (Carmen 2021).

Carmen loves to compete, but she cannot very often participate in live competitions due to visual impairment and other health issues, meaning that she sometimes has to cancel at the last minute. But once she discovered digital competitions, there was no stopping, and she participated in over 30 competitions in a bit more than a year.

By summer 2021 most places of the world are slowly getting back on track offering hybrid or live events again, giving back a sense of normality and relief to most people. There is talk about fully stopping digital events throughout different lifestyle organisations, of course including digital *feiseanna*.

But for Carmen, a full cessation of digital competition would mean a nearly full restriction to her abilities of attending an Irish step dance competition in the first place. Many other dancers gain freedom. Carmen, and people in similar situations, feel pushed back into a cage again. It is impossible to cater for every single person, but this story to me highlights the fact that we need to be aware of people in other situations, and that it's important to reflect on this and think of ways to include them or make their situation easier.

Conclusion

In a time where most people were stripped of basic human interaction due to local Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, digital *feiseanna* certainly managed to bring some social interaction through a digital format, but mostly hope and a sense of achievement. It may have appeared like a light at the end of the tunnel – a reason for many dancers to get a grip, start exercising again and train towards a specific goal.

Digital competitions definitely have potential. The possibility of such events held even in non-pandemic times seems to be very welcomed by many competitors, especially from more secluded regions with fewer options to compete or as a way to tackle financial, time and health issues. They give dancers a possibility to compete, improve their dancing, keep motivated and move up grades despite the fact that live events are not (yet) taking place.

On a mental health basis, digital competitions during the Covid-19 pandemic have had a huge positive impact on the majority of the dancers I have engaged with. Not only did it keep dancers motivated to exercise again, but it also helped some people to move forward by looking actively for a place to rent nearby for practice, or even build a practice place in their own premises and overall look for a possibility to keep engaged in the dancing and training regime.

In times where environmental issues are of a serious global concern, digital competitions also offer an alternative to people, especially to those impacting the air pollution when having to travel long distances by aeroplane and car.

It is essential that the pursuit of digital *feiseanna* is also accompanied by making sure that data protection is guaranteed, especially concerning underage participants, and that uploaded videos are only accessible to few people either handling or grading them, subsequently deleting the data and thus also avoiding copyright issues amongst dance schools and their personal choreographies, protecting the ownership of their steps, and protecting identities and personal rights of participants.

On a personal level, I very much enjoyed the fact that I was in charge of choosing my own

competition day and time and had no stress or expenses organising a journey and accommodation. Preparation for appearance and warm-up were not hectic and I had enough room, time and mirror-space to use which would otherwise be tight and shared with several dozen other dancers. On my chosen competition day, I felt rested and appreciated the fact that I did not have to start my day at 4 a.m. in order to get ready, travel to a venue and warm up appropriately, but was able to move and prepare from the comfort of my own living space, giving me a calming sensation and thus significantly helping with my stage fright. These changes in logistics when participating in a digital competition gave me a sense of control which I would otherwise lack at a live event. From my personal dance notes, I quote "I get to decide when I'm ready to dance – I'm in control, it helps anxiety issues a bit!" (Marbach 2020b). I must also add that my disappointment in regards to a missing lengthy feedback and medal is personal and most likely not the case with every feedback and person, and that I must have just been unlucky. I would definitely consider joining a digital competition in the future.

It is my personal perception that the positive aspects clearly outweigh the negative ones, though the negative ones are serious issues that certainly need to be properly addressed and worked on. This experience opened up my mind to dare and try something new I would probably, in a non-pandemic situation, never have considered trying. It helped me to shift my perception, learning from people worldwide with the same passion but facing different difficulties and concerns. Through the Covid-19 pandemic the Irish step dancing community was forced to move forward and embrace the possibilities the digital era has to offer. By including these possibilities more, I feel it has potential to reach more dancers and expand the community. For these reasons, I certainly hope that for the sake of people with social, political, geographical, health and financial disadvantages, digital *feiseanna* will remain in the agenda of competitive Irish step dancing organisations in the future.

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"REELS ON WHEELS": PRACTITIONER REFLECTIONS ON A PILOT ADAPTED IRISH *CÉILÍ* DANCE PROGRAMME FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS

"Reels on Wheels"© is a first-of-a-kind, pilot adapted Irish *céilí* dance programme co-developed 'by' wheelchair users 'for' wheelchair users. Reflecting on the pilot programme, I consider the practicalities of setting up the course; the knowledge and teaching skills required to facilitate it; the feasibility of dance adaptations; and future plans for the expansion of, and research on, the programme.

Keywords: Ireland, Irish dance, *céilí*, wheelchair users, inclusivity

Introduction

This paper reflects on "Reels on Wheels"©, a recently completed three-month pilot adapted Irish *céilí* (pronounced *kay-lee*) dance programme for wheelchair users which took place in Limerick, Ireland. The programme was facilitated by myself, Carmel McKenna, in my role as Principal and Creative Programme Director of Munster Academy of Irish Dance. It is from that perspective that I speak to you today.

Defining *céilí* dance

"Reels on Wheels" explored the feasibility of adapting Irish *céilí* dance 'for' wheelchair users 'by' wheelchair users. It is the first known adapted *céilí* dance programme for wheelchair users. By Irish *céilí* dance, or simply *céilí*, I refer to vernacular (or folk) group Irish dances in which couple, circle or progressive line dances are executed with a partner or partners, generally in a social and recreational context. The emphasis is on enjoyment and interacting with your partner and the other dancers through, for example, smiling, eye contact, verbal cues to encourage others and from time to time if something goes wrong, it is a chance to have a bit of banter. The dances include codified *céilí*, as required by at least five Irish dance teaching organisations for their teaching and adjudication qualification examinations, and non-codified *céilí*. The latter exist outside of the prescribed examination syllabi and are primarily passed on through oral transmission. Whether codified or not, in essence *céilí* is movement in, through and on a dance space. It therefore lends itself to adaptation which, through a collaborative process, reflects participants' perceived levels of mobility, agility, cognitive skills and confidence.

The "Reels on Wheels" programme

"Reels on Wheels" took place in the Delta Sports Dome, Limerick, Ireland from 16 February to 13 April 2022. There were two groups of participants with Group 1 attending on eight Wednesday evenings for 30 minute sessions and Group 2 for five 45 minute sessions on Saturday mornings. In total, 26 wheelchair users took part of which 12 identify as male and 14 as female. Dancers ranged in age from 5–49 years old. All but one participant was born in Ireland, and just five had some idea of what is meant by *céilí* before the first session. None had ever previously participated in any form of Irish dance. Not all were full-time wheelchair users, but all used wheelchairs regularly.

A short evaluation survey was distributed to the 13 participants who were aged 18 or over on 22 June 2022 and 11 responses returned by the closing date of 18 July 2022. Surface-level data analysis of responses was conducted by me between 19 and 22 July 2022. Throughout this

paper, this data analysis is supplemented by my own personal observations which were recorded throughout the programme in a reflective journal.

Inspiration for "Reels on Wheels"

Before discussing the survey findings, let us first consider how the idea for "Reels on Wheels" came about. Since 1997 when I founded Munster Academy of Irish Dance, then known as McKenna Munster, I have always tried to remember the roots of the Irish dance tradition, particularly in relation to its inclusive and community aspects (see, for example, Foley 2011). To me, Irish dance was, and still should be, a physical, cultural activity in which all are welcome to participate regardless of their age, genders, ethnicity, socio-economic status, physical, intellectual or cognitive ability.

The ethos of inclusivity took on new significance for me when I was diagnosed with Stage 4 (final) osteo-arthritis in 2010. This began the mental and physical adjustments to my teaching practice to facilitate my dancer's ageing, and now officially, disabled body. As part of that process, I focussed on who, what, how and why I teach. I shifted the focus of my practice from the provision of activities for competition with predominantly able-bodied children, teens and young adults, to an increased focus on the inclusion of activities aimed at encouraging participation in the dance form regardless of age, physical, intellectual or cognitive ability. *Céilí*, and specifically adapted *céilí*, therefore became a more prominent feature of my dance practice.

In relation to *céilí* for wheelchair users specifically, I have drawn inspiration from watching the Paralympic Games since Beijing, 2008. I was most inspired watching the wheelchair rugby and wheelchair basketball competitions at the Tokyo Paralympic Games in 2021, largely because I watched while wearing a medical boot following major foot surgery related to my osteo-arthritis diagnosis. From that point on, I wanted to get my ideas for wheelchair *céilí* out of my head and on to the dance floor.

Pre-programme considerations

Before I could begin any "Reels on Wheels" sessions, however, there were a number of practicalities to consider. These can be broadly categorised under four headings: participant recruitment; funding; venue; and insurance/health and safety.

Participant recruitment

Recruitment of participants led to a lot of questions, most of which focused on exclusion criteria. Did I want able-bodied people using wheelchairs to participate? If only wheelchair users were to be included, were they full or part-time wheelchair users? Did I want participants to use sports, powered or regular day chairs? If I decided on sports chairs, would all potential participants have access to one? Did I want to include those under 18? Would only independent wheelchair users take part? If dependent wheelchair users participated, would they be accompanied by family carers only, or could professional care partners participate? In the end, having given much consideration to the need to be as inclusive as possible in this pilot programme, I chose to target recruitment at all wheelchair users whether full or part-time independent or dependent wheelchair users; family or professional care partners; and regardless of age or chair type used.

I was fortunate that through my role as an independent arts-based researcher and my association with the Social Sciences ConneXions Research Institute (SSC) at the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), I was introduced to Dave Fitzgerald. Dave is a social care professional completing a research masters degree at TUS. He is also a coach and one of the founding members of the Munster Wheelchair Hurling and Camogie Club (hereinafter referred to as "the Club"). The Club is based in Limerick but has participants from four of the six counties or regional

areas of the province of Munster. Time precludes me from providing a detailed description but essentially hurling, and its female equivalent camogie, are national amateur field sports (or indoor court sports in the case of wheelchair hurling and camogie) with a team competition structure at club, county, provincial and All-Ireland levels. These competitions are coordinated by, and run under the auspices of, the Gaelic Athletic Association which also organises a pyramidal system of competition in other areas of Irish culture including, for example, singing, poetry recitation, traditional music, *céilí* and set-dancing (GAA 2022). Dave was enthusiastic about the "Reels on Wheels" concept and so the first, and the bulk of, feasibility programme participants were recruited from the Club's Junior and Senior teams.



Figure 1. "Reels on Wheels" participants (Photo: © Carmel McKenna, 2022).

Programme funding

As this was a feasibility programme, I did not want any of the participants to pay to cover costs such as venue hire, insurance, advertising, my time preparing for and facilitating the sessions, travel to/from the venue and so on. I applied for financial support for the programme from the Limerick Sports Partnership. Notwithstanding the debate as to whether Irish dance is an art form or a sport (see, for example, Hall 2008), I believe all can agree that it is a physical activity. On that basis, the Limerick Sports Partnership provided financial support from their sports inclusion disability fund. Support for the programme was also forthcoming from the Irish Wheelchair Association – Sport.

Venue

Given that the Club trained in the Delta Sports Dome I assumed (incorrectly as it turned out) that the venue was fully wheelchair accessible. It did have wheelchair accessible toilets. It had a ramp entrance at the front door and double doors which automatically opened on approach. These doors were wide enough to enable a wheelchair of any kind to pass through. To access the court, however, there were two other sets of doors which had to be pushed or pulled making it difficult for wheelchair users without assistance. The Club regularly used the back gate and entrance to the venue. The back entrance consists of two steel doors wide enough for any wheelchair and with a small ramp to enable independent access. However, the back gate was closed on Saturdays and the keys could never be found.

Being a basketball court, there was ample room for participants to move without fear of crashing into each other however it also had a three-storey high ceiling and so there was a constant echo and high level of ambient noise. The noise levels were exacerbated when the air-conditioning was switched on, or when the indoor five-a-side soccer and tennis facilities, which shared a space with the basketball court, were in use.

Insurance/health and safety

Although I have insurance in place for teaching dance classes, the insurance company required a detailed explanation of what I planned to do, with whom and where. All of their concerns

related to risk management and risk reduction solely because it was a wheelchair activity. This did not sit well with me as I believe the benefits for wheelchair users participating in a physical activity far outweigh any potential risks and fear of an insurance claim. I reassured the insurers by confirming that all Covid-19 protocols were in place; venue staff have experience of working with wheelchair users as the Club has been using the same venue for over a decade; I am trained in basic first aid; venue staff are trained in the use of a defibrillator if needed as well as in evacuation procedures for wheelchair users in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Adapting dances

What adaptations and what dances are feasible for wheelchair users? Based on the feasibility programme, almost all *céilí* dances can be adapted for wheelchair users. All adaptations were decided by the participants themselves. Firstly, for most participants, manoeuvring the wheelchair into various positions took priority over partnering holds and so for most dances we abandoned the idea of holding partners hands for turning in place. Secondly, wheelchairs can only move forward, backwards or in a circular motion. Where a dance required a move to the side, participants turned their chair to face the direction in which they needed to travel and moved forwards. Finally, in some dances, participants found it difficult to complete the movement within the regular number of bars of music. Instead, they chose to double the number of bars allocated, slow down the tempo of the music, or use the music where specific footwork might be performed by non-wheelchair users to comfortably complete the movements.

Programme evaluation

What did the participants think of the programme? Nearly all said they felt nervous or reluctant to participate initially, but having participated, they really enjoyed the experience. They pointed to factors such as learning new chair skills; trying to work together as a cohesive group where everyone is completing the same action or movement simultaneously (as opposed to during a match where everyone has different but complementary roles to play); and the fun element, especially when things did not quite go according to plan. In terms of benefits of participation, the dancers felt that their fitness and flexibility levels had improved. The key challenges mentioned were learning to use the chair in a new way and remembering what came next in each dance. All survey respondents would recommend the programme to others. The only downside of note for the programme was that participants wanted more time, more sessions, and more opportunities to participate.

Programme expansion

How, then, can the "Reels on Wheels" programme can be expanded? As a starting point, from September 2022, I am expanding the number of *céilí* sessions for wheelchair users that I facilitate. In addition to continuing to work with the Club, I will facilitate sessions for service users of the Irish Wheelchair Association at their centre in Limerick, and with the Central Remedial Clinic in Dublin and Limerick. I am in early-stage discussions with St. Gabriel's School and Centre for disabled children in Limerick and Limerick Spartans wheelchair basketball club regarding the provision of a "Reels on Wheels" trial programme. I will also be providing taster sessions for the soon-to-be-launched Irish Wheelchair Association – Sport's Multi-Sports Club in Limerick.

The challenge for the wheelchair *céilí* programme is that I am just one person and unpublished research conducted by McKenna in 2017 on behalf of *An Chomhdháil*, the Congress of Irish Dance Teachers, suggests that my inclusive teaching practice is the exception rather than the rule. Anecdotal evidence from discussions with my teaching colleagues in November 2021 suggests that their reluctance to provide inclusive dance for people with physical, intellectual or

cognitive disabilities within their practice stems primarily from a belief that they do not have the requisite skills, knowledge or confidence to do so.

Knowledge and skills to facilitate wheelchair céilí

What knowledge and skills did the participants themselves consider useful for a "Reels on Wheels" facilitator to have? They suggested that the ability to adapt dances in response to individual needs is most important. An understanding of various conditions leading to wheelchair use and how this could affect the ability to participate was also considered beneficial. Clear communications and specific training for teaching wheelchair céilí were noted. Previous experience of working with wheelchair users in any capacity would be helpful. The participants were, however, keen to point out that the focus in any wheelchair activity should not be on the disability but rather on the 'ability' to participate.

A key question, I believe, is whether facilitation of the "Reels on Wheels" programme should be restricted to Irish dance teachers only. In my view, it should not. Consider the experience that the Club coaches have of working with wheelchair users. Can that ability be tapped into? Of course it can, but the coaches (and from conversations with some family and professional care partners of participants) do not feel they have the required dance knowledge. What about other wheelchair users facilitating "Reels on Wheels"? Would it not be beneficial for wheelchair users to learn from someone with whom they can identify, that is, another wheelchair user? Again, the participants suggested they would not have confidence in their dance knowledge to do so. How, then, can we overcome the fears expressed by Irish dance teachers, coaches, family and professional care partners, as well as by wheelchair users themselves, to assist in the expansion of the "Reels on Wheels" programme on a regional, national and even international basis?

Facilitator resources and training

Arising from the feasibility programme, I have developed a handbook of adapted céilí for wheelchair users which is in the final stages of editing. The handbook can be used by other facilitators regardless of their background or dance experience. I have also developed a Train the Trainer type programme for those who are interested in offering and facilitating wheelchair céilí. For those who wish to have academic certification, I am collaborating with my colleagues in SSC to develop a suite of micro-credential programmes in inclusive dance, including adapted céilí. In addition to practical adapted dance instruction, the programmes will offer an understanding of physical, cognitive and intellectual disabilities (whether visible or not); care and communication skills; health and safety; risk assessment; and how to plan/organise sessions. These programmes will be open to those from a dance/movement, sports, health or social care background, and volunteers working with wheelchair users, among others.

Future research plans

The provision of training and training aids may still not be enough to convince others that participation in wheelchair céilí (either as a facilitator or a dancer) could be beneficial. Research is therefore needed on the effects of participation in "Reels on Wheels" and plans are already underway in that regard. Again, with my colleagues in SSC, and with wheelchair user service organisations, research in the following areas is in development: firstly, an investigation of the physical and psychosocial effects of participation in a wheelchair céilí programme is planned for 2023; and secondly, comparative research with, for example, Scottish country dancing for wheelchair users, is planned in the future. This latter research will also aim to assess the physical and psychosocial effects of participation for comparative purposes and explore whether there is a cultural significance associated with each dance/movement type for those participating.

If you are interested in future collaboration on a research project, either as a researcher or participant, or if have any queries in relation to "Reels on Wheels", please contact the author of this paper. A short clip of the "Reels on Wheels" participants dancing the *Siege of Ennis* may be found at <https://vimeo.com/774439342/ec9f3ffe4d>.

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THE WHITE PAGES

This paper is based on an historiographical analysis of Australian dance publications, including newspapers, scholarly texts, reports and websites. Numerous linguistic strategies, designed to bifurcate Australian dance into Western concert dance and every other genre, are identified. These tactics reinforce a hierarchy of dance, representing conceptual whiteness in both scholarship and practice.

Keywords: Australia, linguistic strategy, whiteness, marginalisation

"The white pages" is the name for the residential telephone directory in Australia. However, I use the term here to describe the collective textual records about dance in Australia, in which I identify a persistent partiality towards Western theatrical styles, especially classical ballet and contemporary dance, with concomitant marginalisation of other genres. The "other genres" category includes the dances of First Nations Australians, of course, but my emphasis in this paper is on the genres practised by non-Indigenous Australians. By "non-Indigenous Australians", I mean all immigrants and thus I include genres of the British Isles such as Irish step dance, Scottish Highland, Morris dance and so on. While the Anglo-Celtic population sector remains dominant across multiple socio-cultural discourses, that sector is typically represented choreographically by Western concert dance. The indigenous genres of the British Isles are marginalised in the same way as the genres of any other immigrant community.

I have been aware of the inequity throughout the Australian dance landscape for decades through my engagement with recreational folk dance, but the literature search for my doctoral research revealed the magnitude of the situation. Writers about dance in diasporic contexts outside of Australia were dance scholars (Nahachewsky 2012; Shay 2006) but in Australia, the few (but still excellent) studies had been written by anthropologists and sociologists (Ram 2005; Tabar 2005). Thankfully, a little more research has appeared recently, including my own contributions, but non-Western dance remains grossly under-represented within Australian dance scholarship and hence that body of literature is, fundamentally, white.

The "whiteness" within Australian dance publications is:

an ideological construct, enabled through specific social, cultural, economic, and legal [and language-based] arrangements, to secure the positioning of certain subjects as well as ways of being in the world, values, and tastes that are deemed 'naturally' superior to others. (Gaztambide-Fernández, Kraehe and Carpenter 2018:9)

These authors are not alone in their evaluation of the situation. Pauline Greenhill (2002:228) observes that many activities in academia are usually "raced white – associated with, reserved for, and considered appropriate to white people – are rarely problematised as such; they are, in the linguistic sense, unmarked. They are usually seen as people things, not white things". Australian cultural historian Tsui-Ming Teo argues that the notion of whiteness should be understood in terms of:

what it was defined or constructed against; who counted as 'white' and under what circumstances; what unconscious privileges and perceived responsibilities went along with it; what cultural practices gave expression to and reinforced whiteness; and, above all, how being white became normal (Teo 2003:151).

Dance scholars have also devoted considerable attention to the links between Western theatrical dance, especially classical ballet, and conceptual whiteness. Jennifer Fisher argues that classical ballet exhibits "a significant association with whiteness" (2016:585), noting that it is through the presentation of ballet as the 'universal' dance genre that this association is most potently exhibited. Indeed, the "ethnocentric biases" that eventuate through promoting universalism serve to foreground "white, Western, Christian, heterosexual" ideals (Kowal 2016:464). Kowal links whiteness with Western ideologies, and the dance-based corollary of this connection is the belief that:

certain 'high' forms of dance (such as ballet) were inherently more sophisticated and valuable than those of both 'primitive' (or traditional) cultures and 'low' (or popular) cultures [...] Dance scholarship has thus historically evidenced the same elitist proclivities as certain branches of musicology and sociology of the arts, for which the notion of 'art' was a value judgment and only the cultural forms that achieved this condition were deemed worthy of serious attention. (Fogarty 2015:245)

Thus, the concept of whiteness and its close association with Western concert dance produce the linguistic marginalisation that I disclose in this paper.

The term 'colour' assumes an ethnicising aspect throughout many newspaper reports about the dance genres of anyone with a cultural heritage other than Anglo-Celtic. Although the authors were not dance scholars and were most likely unaware of the results of their choice of words, this descriptor was reserved for non-Western dance, even though there are many balletic productions in which the costumes are indeed colourful. A typical example is the 1956 headline "Migrants helped Moomba fun: they added new colour to the festival scene". The Moomba Festival is still held annually in Melbourne, and many performers certainly wear poly-chromatic outfits, but here the reporter links 'colour' with the 'new Australians', an essentialising term used in the article that was probably intended to promote inclusivity but which, in reality, binarised the population. Numerous such examples of the use of 'colour' to emphasise difference are found in newspapers throughout the twentieth century.

However, while its use is not surprising in the 1950s, the term made a surprising reappearance in 2021. An article in *The Sydney morning herald* represents a recent example of the use of 'colour' as the principal descriptor for non-Western dance. The title "An explosion of colour and movement, Sangam pushes in new directions" was assigned to a festival curated in Melbourne by dance scholar and performer Priya Srinivasan, along with Hari Sivanesan and Uthri Vijay. The relevant performance used dance as a vehicle for exploring important social issues, as clearly articulated by Srinivasan in the article, but the reductionist term 'colour' appeared in the headline.

Attitudes to practitioners and performances of non-Western dance within formal dance scholarship in Australia are also questionable. Brissenden and Glennon (2010) provide an excellent account of classical ballet and contemporary dance, but the chapter entitled "Ethnic dance" is, to say the least, anomalous. As I argue elsewhere, 'ethnic' is an unfortunate choice in Australia because it contains "embedded implications of alterity" (Mollenhauer 2021a:99). The chapter's contents are also questionable: it mostly pertains to Indigenous Australian dance. I agree that this topic should be addressed in such a work, but to place it under the 'ethnic dance' heading is highly unusual, at best. Indigenous dance should be given its own chapter rather than being assigned to a chapter with a title that is generally understood, in Australia, to refer to a non-English speaking immigrant community.

Two other topics appear in the same chapter. The first is Spanish dance, which is not included because of a significant Spanish community in Australia, as would be expected in a chapter called "Ethnic dance" but instead, because it forms part of the syllabus for ballet exams. This reason for inclusion demonstrates blatant bias towards Western concert dance within a chapter purporting to

focus on all other genres. The only criteria for providing information in this particular chapter should be that the genre is first, not in the Western canon and second, is practised in Australia.

The second topic is the few paragraphs devoted to Margaret Walker, whose long and wide-ranging career covered many dance styles, although her principal involvement was with various forms of folk dance. The authors attribute this proclivity to her having been a member of the Communist Party. This is certainly true, but the information seems to have been provided in order to explain what the authors deem to be Walker's apparently bizarre choreographic preference; they refrain from commentary about other dancers' political leanings. This way, they create an "exoticising discourse" in which non-Western dance genres are treated as "whacky customs" and "weird, wonderful and freaky traditions" (Winter and Keegan-Phipps 2013:124).

Diminution, whether actual or implied, is a further example of bias. In May 2018, I attended the Annual General Meeting of Ausdance, a national dance advocacy organisation (Ausdance 2022). After the meeting, the chairperson asked if there were any questions about any aspect of Ausdance, so I raised my hand and posed the question: "Has Ausdance ever had anything to do with immigrant communities' dance groups?" The initial reaction was silence, followed by the statement that "a few years ago we had a meeting in Melbourne and we got a Ukrainian group to give us a *little* performance". Using italics here does insufficient justice to the speaker's facial expression, inflection and intent; she did not mean a short performance, but instead clearly indicated that in her opinion, the group was of inadequate standard.

The conflation of 'dance' and 'ballet' is another common strategy. Edward Pask (1979) exemplifies this in his book's subtitle "A history of dance in Australia from 1835 to 1940". Pask had no intention of presenting a history of dance, but of one genre, ballet, and as a history of ballet, it is a meticulously-crafted work. As a history of 'dance', its purview is monocular, completely ignoring the millennia of Indigenous dance along with the forms brought by various immigrant communities since the first British and European settlers arrived in 1788.

Of more significant concern is the problem embedded within the Australian government's arts body, The Australia Council for the Arts. The Council administers the annual Marten Bequest Scholarships which provide individuals with significant financial support to further their careers (Australia Council 2022). However, the list of eligible arts on the Council's website is perplexing in its inconsistency: acting, architecture, ballet, instrumental music, painting, poetry, prose, sculpture and singing. The extra-choreographic items in this list permit selection of any one of a broad range of genres. Only in dance, which is replaced here by 'ballet', is the genre taxonomically prescribed. The list of previous winners reveals that contemporary dance is, apparently, also acceptable, but a Western bias is clearly evident in only one category of the scholarship scheme.

The webpage provides information about John Marten, and one particular clause caught my attention: "John also co-authored *The Bali Ballet Murders* with Cornelius Conyn". I was aware of Conyn's ideas and work because I had conducted archival research about the American-Australian 'ethnic dancer' Beth Dean (Mollenhauer 2021b); both Conyn and Dean were proponents of the once-popular theory of dance evolution. Conyn, in a 1955 series of ten public lectures in Sydney, taught "from tribal dance to folklore" in the first session, "from folklore to ballet" in the second, and devoted the remaining seven lectures to ballet (Mollenhauer 2021b:251). Conyn's lecture program, along with the textual outputs of Dean, references evolutionary theory, where:

most dance history books started with a chapter on 'primitive' dancing, moved up the evolutionary ladder to 'folk' dancing, then on to non-European 'classical' forms, finally reaching the ultimate: Western theatrical dance! In these volumes, human progress is presented as a given—an unchallengeable 'truth'. (Grau 1993–1994:38)

Thus, the premier arts organisation in Australia is propagating outdated anthropology, clearly

unaware of the numerous rebuttals that have been proffered by eminent dance scholars in recent years (Mollenhauer 2021b). This situation clearly exemplifies the observation by dancer and choreographer Russell Dumas, that the "relationship of aesthetics to the political" is evident because "politics determines what is possible through government funding and patronage" in Australia (Dumas and Gardner 2018:381).

A final tactic is textual omission; the failure to record practices and personnel outside of the Western theatrical canon. One of the situations in which omission is employed is in relation to the Australian lists of civic honours. Twice a year, on Australia Day (26 January) and on the Queen's Birthday holiday (now the King's Birthday; the second Monday in June), the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia (2022), releases a document listing the names of people receiving awards for various civic service achievements. Prominent arts bodies publish lists of those artists who have received awards, but a few years ago I became aware of the incomplete nature of those reports.

In June 2019, through my contacts in Irish step dance, I discovered that the Order of Australia medal (OAM) had been awarded to Sydney teacher Janice Currie-Henderson. The Facebook page of Ausdance featured items about Li Cunxin, artistic director of the "Queensland Ballet" and subject of the film *Mao's last dancer*, and Meryl Tankard for her extensive career as a performer, choreographer and producer. However, no mention was made of Currie-Henderson. I commented about this omission and received a cursory acknowledgement of her award, despite her contribution and achievements over 60 years, a period greater than the combined careers of Cunxin and Tankard. Additionally, Ausdance chose to only respond to me privately; they did not publicly comment on Currie-Henderson's award. At the very least, Ausdance could (and should) have asked me, as someone who clearly had knowledge of Currie-Henderson's career, to write a post to add to their Facebook page, but no such request was forthcoming.

Another example is the report about the Australian chapter of the World Dance Alliance, in which Julie Dyson (2021:21) records that "several dance people have been acknowledged in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List" but her compilation excludes Geoffrey Wark, who was awarded an OAM for services to Morris Dance. Over the past few years, I have checked each list emanating from the Governor General's department against what is published by dance and general arts organisations and have compiled a record of award recipients whose names have been omitted by those bodies:

- June 2019 – Janice Currie Henderson (Irish dance)
- January 2020 – Geraldine O'Shea Ryan (Irish dance)
- June 2020 – Felix Meagher (Celtic music and dance), Rama Rao and Shobha Sekhar (Indian music and dance)
- June 2021 – Geoffrey Wark (Morris dance)
- In January 2021, January 2022 and June 2022, only Western dance practitioners received awards.

The demarcation is clear: only those from Western dance are deemed worthy of mention. Even extraordinary longevity is not noted, as in the case of both Janice Currie-Henderson's more than 60 years of practice and Geraldine O'Shea Ryan, who in 2023 will mark 70 years as a qualified teacher of Irish dance. No Western dance pedagogue in Australia has ever achieved such a milestone. The salient question here is: would it be detrimental to Ausdance or any other organisation to include the practitioners listed above in their lists of award recipients? The answer is, of course, no; there would be no disadvantage in naming all dance-related personnel. The information is certainly not difficult to obtain; each January and June a PDF of recipients' names appears on the Governor General's website, and a simple word search can locate all relevant people. Thus, since the data is easily locatable and no detriment is likely to arise from provision of a complete list, the likely alternative is that the omissions are deliberate.

These examples lead to the question: why does this inequitable dichotomy exist in Australia? The principle reason is that there is congruence between two taxonomic bifurcations of 'dance': 'Western concert dance' aligns with 'professional dance' and 'non-Western dance' is almost always 'amateur'. Professional dance is privileged, as in the case of Ausdance, the principal purpose of which is "to advocate for dance and the diversity of professional dance in Australia" (Ausdance 2022). Such a statement is, of course, true, but it also conveniently masks the partiality favouring Western genres; to openly state that their goal is "to advocate for dance and the diversity of Western theatrical dance in Australia" (Ausdance 2022) would attract much justified criticism. However, on the "About us" section of their website, a stated goal is to "identify and promote diverse forms of dance and dance practice" (Ausdance 2022). This incongruity is justified in their minds, most likely, by the existence of professional Indigenous dance ensembles (which they rightly champion). This support, while eminently laudable, is only accorded to one group of non-Western genres, but it permits verification, albeit cursory, of their claim of promoting diversity.

While some texts cited here, such as the mid twentieth century newspaper items, may be evaluated as emerging from ignorance because the authors were not academics, there is certainly evidence that current dance scholars are aware of the genre-based disparity but choose to look the other way. Amanda Card writes that "I do not harbour the shame that colours others' concerns about the history and practice of dancing in the Western world, or in our little corner of that world" (2010:4). Her choice of the verb 'colours' is, in this discursive context, quite ironic, given that I have described the association between Western dance and conceptual whiteness. My concerns about the dance landscape in Australia are indeed 'coloured' with shame because Australian dance scholars perpetuate a hierarchy that places Western arts at its pinnacle, thus ignoring the numerous other genres that are practised throughout multicultural Australia. Evidence of concern about that hierarchy is rare, although Rachel Fensham, describing a 1972 concert featuring a variety of genres, points out that the event "reiterated a hierarchy that saw white concert dance as universal and artistic while [...] promoting all other dance forms as ethnically other" (2013:52). However, an enormous gap between recognition and remediation remains.

Conclusion

The examples presented here are drawn from historiographic analysis of the linguistic strategies employed in Australian dance texts, whether those outputs emerged from vernacular or scholarly domains. Exoticising terminologies and descriptions, the conflation of 'dance' and 'ballet' and strategic omissions are commonly employed to reinforce the gulf between concert dance and all other genres. These strategies provide evidence that Western dance employs "the power to position the other as an object within a space that one considers one's own, within limits one feels legitimately capable of setting" (Hage 1998:89–90).

While I have made many criticisms throughout this paper, I am also endeavouring to ameliorate the situation: to narrow the gap by publishing texts about the dance praxes of diasporic communities in Australia. In this way, I hope that any scholar of non-Western dance coming after me will see that I, an Australian ethnochoreologist, have provided a literary contribution in the field, and that they will be inspired to build on that foundation.

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SERBIAN AND ROMANIAN BALLS: THE PARADOX OF ETHNICALLY DETERMINED DANCE EVENTS AS A MEDIUM OF SOCIAL INCLUSION IN SOUTH-EASTERN HUNGARY

Multicultural communities have formed in Hungary alongside the border due to dynamic processes of the social-political-historical surroundings where the necessity of ethnic identification exists. The paper presents two dance events – Serbian and Romanian Balls, that took place within this context at two localities – Szeged and Elek (South-eastern Hungary). Specific ethnic identities are performed during these Balls and the participants tend to include diverse local inhabitants regarding status, gender, age, and ethnic determinations. Grounded in empirical knowledge, the author will comparatively examine critical features of the structure, symbolic presentation, cultural mediums, and multiple meanings of two case studies of Serbian and Romanian Balls in Hungary.

Keywords: Balls, dance events, social inclusion, South-eastern Hungary

Introduction

European countries, compared to the countries of other continents, are often considered unique in ethnic insight. Hungary is one example where more than 80% are Hungarian people (HSCO 2011). However, dynamic processes of social-political-historical surroundings have formed multi-ethnic communities beside the border where the necessity of ethnic identification exists. In that light, I encountered the contexts I mentioned above in two specific localities, Szeged and Elek (South-eastern Hungary).

Elek is a town located near the Romanian border with Hungary, while Szeged is close to the Serbian border. Five ethnic groups live in Elek: Hungarians, Romanians, Gypsies, Slovaks, and Germans (Elek.hu n.d.). All the communities try to maintain their ethnic identity through many tools: museums houses, cultural events, and festivals. One of the common gatherings is the Ball, an event that occurs annually in February – including the Romanian Ball, German Ball, and Hungarian Ball (Elek.hu n.d.; Nikolić 2020).¹ A small Serbian community exists in Szeged composed of people who lived there as long-term inhabitants and people who migrated during the 20th century (Vukelić 2015: 240; Nikolić 2019; Raduški 2020:47). The Serbian community meets at the Orthodox Church, Serbian school, and Cultural Centre and organize many cultural events (Nikolić 2019). One of them is the annual Serbian Szeged Ball. Common to both localities and communities is the practice of Balls which are, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, "large formal occasion where people dance" (Cambridge dictionary n.d.).

Conducting the research in Hungary since 2019 resulted in curiosity about the minority Balls in Hungary. These dance events are about minority communities through the lens of dance heritage, but with the majority (Hungarians) through the lens of practitioners. This paper will comparatively summarise critical features of the structure, symbolic presentation, cultural mediums, and multiple meanings of two case studies of Serbian and Romanian Balls in Hungary. On the one hand, the points of discussion will be the activities during the dance events seen through a structural lens. On the other hand, this paper will examine the meanings of dance events within two Balls. In this way, the paper intends to show how these events, that are ethnically determined by their names and the dance heritage performed, achieve social inclusion in local multicultural contexts.

Methodological account of collecting fieldwork data

Since the Balls of minorities in Hungary have rarely received academic attention, this paper will be mainly based on the material and knowledge acquired during field research. The first field visit was conducted on 16th November 2019 in Szeged by the author, while the second fieldwork was on 15th February 2020 with a team from the master program, *Choreomundus*.² Both fieldworks included several research methods: 1. semi-structured interviews with key informants and the main organisers of the events, 2. informal interviews with the participants, 3. video recording, and 4. participant observation parallel with taking the notes. In addition, integrated data will be useful in analysing the Balls as dance events and their spatial features, repertoire, participants, and performance quality.

Description of the case studies – when, where, who, what?

Each dance event has a specific time and space of occurrence (Ronström 1989:23). For example, the Romanian Ball was held on 15th February 2020 at the local Cultural Center – Mihály Reibel, while Szeged Ball took place on 16th November 2019 at the local restaurant in Szeged. The space of both Balls had similar organisation being divided into three sections: 1. the biggest area (about half of the total space) for sitting and eating with linked tables and chairs, 2. the area for dancing with free space near the musicians (1/4 of the space), and 3. the area for musicians (1/4 of the space).

The participants of the Ball were primarily local people of all generations, ethnic groups, genders, and social status. Moreover, the many outsiders were the guests of particular individuals or local families. All participants were in a family or friendship group. Therefore, each table was occupied by members who were close and recognizable to each other. Along with the numerous dancers, the other participants who were not participating in dancing on the dance floor were chatting, eating, and drinking.

The reason for choosing those two case studies is their strong tie related to the structure and dynamics of the events. The sequence of the activities in the Romanian and Szeged Balls was almost identical, with slight time differences. Both events started with an informal gathering of people, their arrival, settling at the space previously organised, and waiting for the official beginning of the event. The Balls officially started around 20.00 with welcoming speeches and presentational dancing involving two choreographies.³ After the presentational performances and announcements, participatory dancing started at about 20.45 when all participants of the Balls could openly join the dancing area. The participatory dancing occupied most of duration of the event with a short interruption for a lottery game using tombola around midnight. Participatory dancing continued until the end of the event, which was marked by the musicians.

Spectacle – presentational dancing

The ceremonial part of the event is similar in both case studies. I frame it as a spectacle due to its degree of formality consulting the methodological postulates of Owe Ronström (1989:24). It included speeches by the leaders of communities who are also the main organisers of the events. The speeches were, in both cases, in the Hungarian language because most participants were Hungarians speakers. The two choreographies of the folk dance followed the speeches in both events.

The Elek local dance group performed the dance sequence called *joc* and male choreography Eleki *legenyés*. The *joc* is a dance circle of three different dances: *lungă – minintelu – tiganeasca – ardeleana/lungă* (Felföldi 2013). Couples of men-women from all generations performed them in four horizontal lines. The women were facing the audience, while the men were turning their backs. The lines were arranged from the youngest to the oldest dancers, with the oldest dancers

closest to the audience. The second choreography of dancers included the improvisations of *lunga/ Eleki legényes* dance with plenty of similarities with a similar type of Hungarian dance *legényes*. However, the *Eleki legényes* has different musical accompaniment in aksak meter 7/8 and different terminology for figures and improvisations (see Gyulavári 2014; Unesco n.d.). The motif of generational formation was similar in this choreography. Male dancers were improvising from the youngest to the oldest member in front of the audience in solo, duo, or trio formations facing the audience. Both choreographies perform local heritage that narrates the idea of presenting local and ethnic identity.

The performers in Szeged were the members of the dance group "Bánát" from near the village of Deszk. They were performing two structurally similar choreographies of dances from Central Serbia – 'Traditional dances from Levač' and 'Traditional dances from Šumadija.' Both choreographies have a high level of similarities in repertoire, style, music, and costume. The choice of the repertoire was unexpected for me because the "Bánát" has much choreography based on their local dance heritage. However, it might be explained by articulating the meaning of Serbian on the national level, but not local variety and uniqueness.

All four choreographies included traditional costumes and vital performer-audience context giving formality to those two events. This formal part of the event strongly relates to the specific determination of both events as Serbian and Romanian Balls. According to the interviews and observations, this element had the role of articulating what these events were about or what Owe Ronström would name as a theme of the dance event (1989:24). From the emic lens, it can be achieved by presenting national symbols, which are costumes, flags, and folk dances, in the presentational makeup of both dance events. All of them influence the meaning and confirmation of the events' umbrella theme and purpose of identification of communities with the status of minorities in Hungary. The spectacle part of both events was the moment of presenting the essential idea.

Informal part – participatory dancing

The previous space took on a new context when participatory dancing began. There was no stage as in the lens of the presentational performance, but the open dance floor with formal rules. All the participants, which were approximately 150 people, could freely join the dance floor. The participants could be anyone, no matter their dance skills, age, gender, and ethnicity. Further, from that point onwards, there were no traditional costumes. Instead, people were dressed solemnly according to their preferences. From then on, there was no strict synchronisation of movements, strict formations, or unified linking. Every segment was improvisatory according to the specific moment and participants' will. The participatory repertoire of the Romanian Ball included the dance circle *joc*, which was repeated numerous times in a non-choreographic way by diverse participants. In addition, male dancers performed *Eleki legényes* when all men could join in. Besides those two dance genres, the participants danced well-known Western dances such as *waltz* and *polka* in couples. Those dances were a transitional part with a slow tempo in both case studies. Afterward, there were dances with the elements of a game (stealing the partner with the scarf, hugging) and a few Hungarian dances.

The repertoire of the participatory part of the Serbian Ball was arranged in independent blocks of dances grounded in the meter and tempo. They danced *lako kolo* accompanied by numerous vocal-instrumental songs in 2/4 meter at the beginning of the event. The musicians followed the meter by the acceleration of tempo, which mainly motivated the dancers to perform *kolo u 3* accompanied by instrumental songs. The next block was grounded in vocal-instrumental and instrumental melodies in 7/8 meter and dancing the dance pattern named by the dancers as *make-donsko* (Macedonian). The fast flow was followed by performing two specific dances, *čačak* and *šestorka*, from South Serbia. After the highest tempo spot, the musicians played slower melodies

in $\frac{3}{4}$ meter, followed by dancing in couples. Those blocks were repeated during the long event. An essential role in both Balls was the musicians who were the composers of the dance repertoire in a participatory context by following the energy and flow of the events.

The extent and continuous repertoires of Balls reflect that dancing was the focus throughout the integral event next to chatting of the passive participants. The focus of dancing remained, but the contextual settings changed, which is why I defined it as informal. It is informal because of improvisation, freedom, and spontaneity as the main features. Many other activities underlay the focus, such as chatting, drinking, and eating. Moreover, that is the frame of the Balls from which the social inclusion. Participatory dancing brought inclusivity to its fullness because not all participants could dance at the very beginning of the event. This informal part of the event carries the meaning of the mechanism to include diverse people to corporally experience the event's primary focus – dancing. The informal part also proves, as Elsie Ivancich Dunin said, that "dancing at a dance event is the only moment that allows social verbal/gestural inter-changes among the multi-generations, multi-age groups, and multi-social groupings attending one event" (Dunin 1989:31).

Conclusion

The paper had the goal to present two dance events with multiple layers. Balls are the dance events where the dancing is the focus. However, dancing at Balls is also the tool that defines the activities, the levels of inclusivity, and the meanings those events tend to maintain. On the one hand, Romanian and Serbian Balls have clear messages inscribed within them through the organization's name, symbols, and initial purpose. On the other hand, the spectacle part achieves that with traditional costumes, unified choreographies, and an intense atmosphere among the performer-audience. That is the segment of the Ball that tends to communicate the broad and initial theme of the event, which is the need for ethnic confirmation and celebration of particular identities and heritage. Both events have the role of social inclusivity besides the specific determination of the events. Previous interpretation of data showed how diverse participants were attending the Balls in many roles and levels of participation. That leads to the conclusion that although the need for ethnic identification is achieved by symbolic presentation, the human needs are also for shared coexistence. The Romanian Ball contributes to gathering the small, diverse and multi-ethnic community of Elek by providing rich cultural texts in the form of social events. Similarly, the Serbian Ball gathers the Serbian communities with their friends and families away from daily life and everyday routine. Both case studies of the Balls examined are the dance events or "an interactional unit which can be perceived as something extraordinary, which stands out from the flow of everyday life" (Ronström 1989:23).

Endnotes

- 1 The fieldwork information recorded that the practice of the Ball in Elek has been maintained since the second half of the 20th century. Today, the local people named them 'Nationality Balls' since this kind of event is divided according to the ethnic group (Elek.hu n.d.; Nikolić 2020).
- 2 The team included professors Sándor Varga and Kinga Povedák, colleagues Vivien Tákács Apjok, Gergely Tákács, Manó Kukár, and Anna Székely, as well as my Choreomundus Cohort 8 group. I warmly thank all of them.
- 3 Presentational dances, according to Andriy Nahachewsky, are often performed in formal contexts (mainly on the stages) where the relation between performer-audience noticeably is highlighted, while during participatory dancing, the message of dancing remains among the circle of dancers as a medium for entertainment and engagement (Nahachewsky 1995:1).

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THE DANCING MEME AND CULTURAL INCLUSIVITY

Memes are units of culture, and when a dance phrase becomes memetic, a cultural community is formed. Dance memes are intrinsically inclusive, transcending barriers, and knowledge of a dance meme brings automatic social inclusion. Taking a phenomenological perspective, this paper will examine the Spanish folk *sevillanas* and iconic pop choreographies to explore how simple, repeatable dance phrases become memetic units of cultural transmission and thus means of cultural inclusion.

Keywords: Sevillanas, meme, inclusion, cultural transmission

From folk dances to dance crazes, community dances are memes that have inclusion at their heart and as their goal. Culture is the shared elements of community, and as such, participation in culture means participation in community, and when people dance together, communities form. Richard Dawkins initially defined a meme as something that "conveys the idea of a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation" (Dawkins 2016:325). When a dance phrase becomes memetic, a cultural community is formed. From folk dances to dance crazes, community dances are memes that have inclusion at their heart and as their goal. Dance memes are intrinsically inclusive: they transcend barriers of language, age, and even race and background; and if you know how to perform a particular dance meme, you are automatically included in a shared community.

First of all, it is important to identify what is meant by the term "meme". Neither I nor Dawkins are talking about humorous snippets of image, video or text that are copied and spread on social media. In fact, when Richard Dawkins coined the word "meme" in his bestseller *The selfish gene* (2016(1976)), the word was ascribed to an idea, behaviour or style that spreads from person to person within a culture. It has since been reappropriated by the internet, with material spreading virally, leaping from IP address to IP address, and brain to brain, but this copy paste is not the form of cultural mimesis that Dawkins had in mind. In fact *The selfish gene* Chapter 11 is entitled "Memes: the new replicators", and in this chapter Dawkins states that "Most of what is unusual about man can be summed up in one word 'culture'." and that "Cultural transmission is analogous to genetic transmission" (2016:189). Dawkins argues that a new kind of replicator needs a name, a noun that conveys the idea of a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation. He writes:

'Mimeme' comes from a suitable Greek root, but I want a monosyllable that sounds a bit like 'gene'. I hope my classicist friends will forgive me if I abbreviate mimeme to meme. If it is any consolation, it could alternatively be thought of as being related to 'memory', or to the French word meme. (2016:192)

Examples of memes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches, and, of course, dances. Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation.

A meme might be analogous to a gene, but it remains incorporeal, and the analogy therefore demands scrutiny. Firstly, how can a meme replicate itself? Dawkins himself argues that this is done through the spoken and written word, by great music and great art, and I would add by action. Secondly, what gives a meme survival value? In other words: What is it about an idea that gives it its stability and penetrance in the cultural environment? Again, Dawkins offers an answer:

Some memes are more successful in the meme-pool than others. This is the analogue of natural selection, and in general the qualities for survival must be the same as those for genes: longevity, copying-fidelity and fecundity. (2016:194)

Longevity, in the case of memes, means the survival in the individual memory; fecundity is the spread, popularity, and continued propagation; and copying fidelity would mean accurate mimicry. In terms of longevity, just as any one gene exists in one being, the same is true for memes. Therefore the existence of the meme for, say, 'first position' exists in each of our minds only as long as we remember it and remain alive, so longevity is arguably the least important factor. Obviously the longer I am alive and remember it, the greater chance it might have of fecundity.

Fecundity depends on the spread and popularity of an idea. Some memes, like some genes, achieve brilliant short-term success in spreading rapidly, but do not last long in the meme pool. Most popular songs and fashion styles are examples of this bright yet brief lifespan. Other elements of culture, such as the Jewish religious laws, may continue to propagate themselves for hundreds of years, usually because of the great potential permanence of written records. With the exception of ballet and certain other formal styles, dance's intangible nature has meant that much dance knowledge and culture has been lost over the centuries, and it is only since 2001 that UNESCO has tried to help preserve dance culture, or memes.

Finally, copying fidelity is about the faithfulness and consistency of the replication, and this relies upon such elements as simplicity, patterns, and of course relevance. Here perhaps dance memes have an advantage over other forms of cultural memes, as the combination of set music and set steps creates a high degree of fidelity.

Why are dance memes important?

When we dance with others, mirror neurons in the brain are triggered, creating a sense of connection, which has a positive effect on our mental health. Human beings feel good when they move in synchrony, it creates a feeling of social connection that brings with it a sense of wellbeing. We are social animals, and dancing and moving together both reinforces the sense of community and also each individuals' sense of belonging within that community. The collective joy of the musical or lyrical call to "Do the 'whatever'", be it the twist, the mashed potato, the jive bunny, the locomotion, or any other dance meme, is enough to light up a whole room full of individuals.

Furthermore, anthropologists have discovered that societies that danced together were more likely to survive, so dance is good for society. In fact, according to Steven Mithen's study *The singing Neanderthals: the origins of music, language, mind, and body* (2005), dancing was a way for our prehistoric ancestors to bond and communicate, particularly during tough times. As a result, scientists believe that early humans who were coordinated and rhythmic could have had an evolutionary advantage. Like strong genes, strong memes were important for survival.

Memes in traditional dances: the *sevillanas* as case study

Not all dance memes are dance crazes, and many traditional dances could be qualified as memes, and their memetic qualities might in part account for their ongoing popularity. The *sevillanas* is popular folk music and dance that originated in Castile, and is popular throughout Spain and in particular in Andalucia. This style of dance is performed at fiestas of all kinds throughout Spain, but especially during the feria, when women will wear the *Traje Gitanas*, the colourful polka-dot dresses that add a swirling character and grace to the dance.

The *sevillanas* was originally a courtship dance, although the pair don't touch each other until the final moments when dancers put their arms around each other's waist in a final pose. In the old Spanish tradition, young couples were limited in their courting practises, the man would spend the night talking to his *novia*, through the iron grills of her door or window, and if they did get

the chance to go for a walk, they would most definitely be chaperoned by the girl's mother, sister, or whole family. The *feria* week would be the only time that the man could show his affection to the girl, asking her to accompany him in the dancing of *sevillanas*, and this is most probably why there is little physical contact, as the whole night would be watched over by her family.

Today the *sevillanas* is danced at any form of get-together, whether it is the *feria*, a wedding, or at a family party, where all and everyone present will join in. Like dance crazes, when people hear the distinctive *sevillanas salida* or opening, they begin the *palmas* or clapping to the *compas* or rhythm as they make their way to the dance floor. There they will partner up with family, friends or total strangers, stand opposite one another, and prepare to dance. *Sevillanas* are danced by couples of all ages and sexes during celebrations (*fiestas* or *ferias*), often by whole families and towns.

For many, dancing the *sevillanas* is just routine, something they have grown up with and learnt simply by being constantly surrounded by it, although there are many schools where you can go to learn it. In this way, the *sevillanas* is truly a meme, since it is typically learnt through children imitating or mimicking their elders.

Furthermore, the *sevillanas* has a set and unchanging choreography that consists of a series of *coplas*, or verses, each of which share the same basic traditional structure. The dance has a distinctive rhythm in a 6/8 time signature, each step lasts one measure. It might sound complicated, but this all makes it very easy to remember. The *sevillanas*' choreography is characterised by stability. The shared knowledge and universal, unchanging pattern make the dance entirely inclusive. To stand up and dance *sevillanas* is to participate in the shared joy of any occasion.

It is always amazing to see a whole dance floor or street erupt with people performing this style of dance, and you will normally find that everybody knows how to dance the *sevillanas*, no matter what age. Children are encouraged from a very young age, and there is no embarrassment involved, just a passion for the dance, and the Andalusians express themselves and their shared cultural joy beautifully with the dance. Even those too old to dance will clap along to the rhythm and *ole* the end of each *coplas*.

The first time I visited Spain as an adult I had fairly little Spanish, but had learnt the steps of the *sevillanas* in a flamenco class. I found myself entirely welcome on the dance floors of the *casetas* and in the streets of Malaga during the *feria*, and shared in the dance and the festivities with the locals. The fact that I knew the steps was all that was needed to include me in their culture and joy.



Figure 1. The Sevillanas at the Feria de Malaga, 14 August 2018. Photo: Juliette Angela O'Brien.

Mememes in popular dances: the "Macarena", the "Saturday Night", and the "YMCA"

Dance memes are prolific in popular music culture, with their initial longevity matching their chart success and memorability. However, popular dance meme fecundity, like that of genes, does not seem to be necessarily dependent upon or a reflection of this factor. One interesting comparison is that between Whigfield's "Saturday Night" and Los del Rio's "Macarena". Released worldwide between 1992 and 1994, Whigfield's "Saturday Night" reached Number 1 the European Hot 100, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Spain, the UK and others, setting the record as the "first female solo artist to debut at the top of the singles charts" (Myers 2019). Its choreography was performed across dancefloors for several years, yet it has had relatively little popularity since then. By way of comparison, between 1993 and 1994 the "Macarena" achieved a similar chart success, but has enjoyed a far greater fecundity. The song got the group ranked the No. 1 Greatest One-Hit Wonder of All Time by the VH1 TV network 20 years later in 2002. In 2012, it was ranked No. 7 on Billboard's All Time Top 100. It also ranked at No. 1 on Billboard's All Time Latin Songs (History.com Editors 2010). It is, and continues to be, one of the greatest popular dance successes of all time. With the two dances being remarkably similar, what factors have caused this disparity in memetic survival are hard to define. A recent article in *The Inquirer* attributes the ongoing success of the dance to numerous cover versions over the years (Entertainment Inquirer Editors 2021), and in this way an element of literal fecundity in the music might have brought about fecundity in the dance, though the latter might also have encouraged the former.

Perhaps the most enduring dance memes of the last half century, and I would suggest the most widely recognised and pervasively danced in the world is the "YMCA". However, while the original music video from 1978 shows the Village People performing a set choreography, this does not include the commonly shared dance floor meme. In fact, the popular dance floor choreography to the "YMCA" was an adaptation of the original, and was created when the band performed on *American Bandstand*. It was actually the show's producer Dick Clarke who thought it would be fun to have the audience spell out the letters to the band. The band were not expecting this, but when the lead singer Victor Willis saw it he picked up on the moves and mimicked them back at them, and so the meme was created (Baxter 2019). In this way, the "YMCA" dance has behaved like DNA in a process of copying and adaptation to develop a more successful unit of information.

Conclusion

And I believe that this is the same for all dance memes. Many people who would not normally run into the middle of a dancefloor, be it through shyness or fear, are willing to do so on hearing the first few bars of the "Macarena" and others. Throughout popular dance history of the 20th century and at many wedding parties today, the knowledge of the Charleston, the twist, the locomotion, and other set dances draws people to the dance floor, where they make eye contact and smile at one another, taking joy in the shared dance, and amusement at this strange piece of knowledge held in common between strangers.

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COVID-19 ON THE DANCE FLOOR: HOW HUNGARIAN DANCE GROUPS IN EASTERN NORTH AMERICA ARE COPING WITH COVID-19

Dance is a common thread used to create a sense of community among Hungarians in North America. Covid-19 isolation requirements disrupted community events and halted dance activity, forcing participants to stop or seek new ways to dance together. This paper explores the effects of Covid-19 and the struggle to bring back dance events. It includes a discussion of a "Hungarian dance network" and is written from the point of view of a participant in most of the events discussed.

Keywords: North America, Hungarian dance, Covid-19 response, dance network

With Covid-19's spread in early 2020 we were told to self-isolate, facing the challenge of maintaining, suspending, or losing social bonds, including Hungarian dance. A look at the interlocking circles of community held together and defined by Hungarian dance helps us to understand the effects of this isolation.

This paper explores how folk dance became important to the Hungarian community, the effects of Covid-19 restrictions on dance activities, and the struggle to bring back dance events. I discuss a "Hungarian dance network", including New York; New Brunswick; Washington, DC; Boston; Montreal; and Sauk Valley, MI. I write as a participant in most of the events discussed.

The Hungarian community in North America includes recent arrivals from Hungary and Transylvania, people whose ancestors came in waves of immigration reaching back into the 19th century and before, those who came after World War II and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, and every possibility in-between, as well as children of these immigrants.

Maintaining a sense of what is Hungarian for people coming from many different times and places meant developing some common experiences relating to these origins. Religion, language, and cultural institutions offer a path, as do customs, crafts, food, and activities such as music and dance. A master's thesis from the early 2000's explored how New Jersey Grape Festival celebrations brought together customs from many eras and parts of Hungary and used songs people knew and local Hungarian musicians, creating an American Hungarian experience of many threads (Kiss 1995).

Dance contributed to this sense of community, providing an anchoring experience and an idea of Hungarian village life, drawing Hungarians to dance within the group. One member of the Hungaria Folk Ensemble (Magyar 2022), which began in New York in 1962, told me that he had never thought of doing Hungarian dance, but somehow in moving to the USA, it became the thing to do. He also noted that at least 20 marriages were connected to Hungaria, due to bonds of friendship and socializing.¹

The generation arriving post-World War II and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 fostered Scouting (*Magyar Cserkészlet*) and Saturday Schools (*Magyar Iskola*)² for children. These were used to develop identity and promote friendships with other Hungarian young people. That dancing was something to do in one's youth changed with the *Táncház* (Dance House) Movement in 1972. *Táncház* was an experiment in dancing, playing instruments, and singing in the improvised manner of Hungarian villages in Transylvania. It became a social event, with dance teaching and live music drawing everyone who came into a community.³ *Táncház* reached New York and New Jersey in the early 1980s through the efforts and teaching of Steven and Susan Kotansky⁴ and

Kálmán and Judith Magyar and became a new social space. Hungarian Day in New Brunswick, New Jersey, a celebration of food, language, crafts, and performance, changed from ending with a dance band of fox trots, polkas, waltzes, and *csárdásak* to culminating in a *Táncház*.⁵

Táncház also impacted international folk dancers. Hungarians welcomed these people, drawn by the richness of the dances and the affecting nature of the music. My husband and I organized a monthly *Táncház* in New York beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, first in dance studios and Hungarian churches, then, from around 2000, at the New York Hungarian House.⁶ These events drew about equal numbers of American-born Hungarians, people coming recently from Hungary, and folk dancers.

The Hungarian Folkdance and Folk Music Symposium organized 1978–2002 by Kálmán and Judith Magyar with teachers and bands brought from Hungary, attracted dancers and groups from the USA and Canada.⁷ The Magyars and the Kotanskys booked musician and dancer colleagues they brought to the USA into Hungarian and dance communities in Canadian and East Coast cities, creating a tour circuit. These friends included dancer/choreographer/dance company director Zoltán Zsuráfsky, dancer Zoltán Farkas 'Batyú' and bands, such as "Szaszcsavas". These circuits were used by others such as Zoltán Nagy 'Púder' and the band "Heveder". A recent example of a band following this route is the tour of "Sarjú Banda"⁸ in 2021.

István Berecz
Diana Santana Cadena

SARJÚ
BANDA

ISTVÁN BERE CZ won the soloist folk dance category of the first internationally televised "Főztállott a Páva" Hungarian Talent competition in 2012 and went on to become one of the judges, which is where he started working closely with the Sarjú Band. Additionally, he received the "Eternal Golden Spur" National Folk Dance Soloist Award, and is the Folk Music Director of the Föld Music House.

The SARJÚ BAND's young musicians from Budapest won the band of the year in 2016 as part of the "Főztállott a Páva" National Hungarian Television Talent competition. Their mission is to study and preserve authentic Hungarian village folk music while striving to keep the legacies of the old masters from the villages alive on stage and in dance houses for generations to come.

DIANA SANTANA CADENA is an architectural artist of Hungarian and Ecuadorian descent and dances with the Bartók Folk Dance Ensemble of Budapest. In 2019 she received a Károlyi Gábor Sándor scholarship from the Hungarian Government giving her the opportunity to share her talents with the New Jersey community.

2021 Sarjú Band Tour complete info:
<https://www.facebook.com/sarjubanda>

COVID-19 restrictions

All audience members must provide in-person verification of vaccination. Prior to entering, you will be asked to provide proof of vaccination through the CLEAR app (if available to you), the Excelsior Pass (for New York State residents), the NYC COVID Safe app (for New York City residents), or an original physical vaccination card or photograph of it. If using Excelsior Pass, NYC COVID Safe app, or a vaccination card, you must present photo ID along with your vaccine proof. Children under 12 must be masked the entire time.

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Magyarok Magyar Központja New York

Figure 1. Ildikó Magyar, Poster for the "Sarjú Banda" Concert, 29 October 2021. Between 22–31 October 2021, "Sarjú Banda" performed in Washington DC New Brunswick NJ, Cleveland OH, Detroit, MI, New York NY and Wallingford CT.

Slowly the circuits became routes for dancers to participate in each other's events. But each point on the circuit had its own story relating to Hungarian communities, international folk dancers, and new immigrants.



Figure 2. Hungarian Centers in Eastern North America, dark circles represent (counter-clockwise from bottom) Washington DC, New Brunswick NJ, New York NY, Boston MA, Montreal QC, Sauk Valley MI.

in 2013 to train new dancers. The New York *Magyar Ház* and the Consulate General of Hungary New York¹⁴ draw international performers.

Washington, DC is the home of the Tisza Ensemble,¹⁵ a Hungarian dance group active for 30 years and founded by international folk dancers, Cathy Lamont and Rudy Petke and now led by Cathy Lamont and Joseph Kroupa, performs in the DC area, offers dance classes, teaches within the Hungarian community, and sponsors events.

Early help from Sándor Timár, a founder of the *Táncház* movement, spurred Boston folk dancers to participate in Hungarian dance. Recently international folk dancers, mainly the Forgás Hungarian Dance Group¹⁶ have practiced with Dénes Takácsy from Hungary. In 2019, the Boston dancers sponsored their first Hungarian Weekend at Pinewoods Camp with the Folk Arts Center of New England. Csipke Tábor¹⁷ began in 2006 in Sauk Valley, sponsored by the Csipke Ensemble, founded in 1998 by dancers from Toledo and Detroit of Hungarian, American, and Polish descent, drawing dancers from Canada and the USA, and even Japan.

Likewise, the Montreal dance group, Bokreta Ensemble de Folklor Hongrois (*Bokréta Néptánc Együttes*)¹⁸ sponsored a February Winter Workshop with Hungarian and Transylvanian musicians and dance teachers and local bands. Dancers and wider events could include Toronto, Cleveland, Detroit, and even Chicago and Sarasota, Vancouver, San Francisco and Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, and Minneapolis.

Video Example 1. A collection of short clips from performances and activities of Eastern US-Canada Hungarian dance groups is available at < <https://youtu.be/Y4vQQ-q9g1Q> >.

With added visits and trips home to Budapest and dance camps in Transylvania and Hungary, North American Hungarian dancers had almost enough dancing.

When Covid-19 hit in March of 2020, all Hungarian dance and community events were cancelled. These included Boston's second Hungarian Weekend at Pinewoods Camp, performances

This map shows points on the circuit. New Brunswick, New Jersey is home to the American Hungarian Foundation, the Hungarian American Athletic Club HAAC, the Teleki Pál Hungarian Scout Home (*Cserkészház*), several Hungarian associations and churches, and Hungarian Day since 1975.⁹ Csürdöngölő Folk Ensemble, Inc.¹⁰ formed here in 1998, producing dance shows, local and regional performances, and larger *Toborzó* and *Találkozó* dance gatherings. Csürdöngölő teaches youth (6–18) at the HAAC (Mákvirág Folk Dance Group). In 2019, Melinda Török with Csürdöngölő created the Multicultural Folk Dance Gathering, inviting other New Jersey dance groups to perform, asking each to include teaching involving the audience, her goal to share community participation of *Táncház*.¹¹

New York City fosters many Hungarian institutions, including Hungarian House (*Magyar Ház*), a center including the American Hungarian Library and Historical Society¹² and children's programs. Director Ildikó Nagy began the Délibáb Hungarian Folk Dance Ensemble (*Délibáb Néptánc Együttes*)¹³

in New Jersey and Washington, cultural events in New York, Hungarian Day, and Csipke Tábor. Two teachers from the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program¹⁹ were evacuated to Hungary. Délibáb moved rehearsals online and then halted. Tisza and Csúrdöngölő suspended operations and the Boston group stopped, their facility shuttered. And then we waited.

By the end of the summer, Csúrdöngölő was able to rally they had purchased a dance floor right before the pandemic, and the group began to practice outdoors, each couple on a separate square of floor. Csúrdöngölő also restarted dance teaching for most children outside at HAAC with social distancing, masks, and no touching. Their multicultural program occurred online, each group contributed a video.²⁰ Montreal held its Winter Workshop in February 2021 but online: Roma dance from Szászcsávás taught by Hotenzia Lorincz and Norbert Kovács 'Cimbi' and a *Magyarpalaka* violin class with Florin Kodoba.²¹

2021 brought Covid-19 vaccines. Tisza could practice again. However, in the New York and New Jersey area, some felt immunization wasn't warranted; that they had good health and would not get sick. Others felt it was a personal decision they didn't want taken from them.

The divide cut between the international folk dance and the Hungarian communities and mirrored the political divide. International folk dancers tend to be liberal, especially in New York – an aspect is an interest in exploring other cultures. In general, these folk dancers got vaccinated and shied away from people who didn't. The National Folk Organization met online in April 2021 and included a panel of lawyers discussing possible liability if someone were to contract Covid-19 at an International Folk Dance event. On the other hand, many Hungarians tend to be conservative, as other immigrants to the USA. An identity issue of American Conservatives these last few years has been to be suspicious of vaccines, and many were anti-vaxxers.

Although we planned a party outdoors in April 2021, international folk dancers wanted to avoid going and possibly being in contact with someone who was unvaccinated. We considered requiring vaccination, but we were told unvaccinated Hungarians would not forget being excluded, and in our local Hungarian band was an anti-vaxxer bass player who didn't feel like worrying about the epidemic anymore. Local parents were afraid to come to expose their children to other children. The same dead-lock occurred at Hungarian House, which solved the problem by not having any events at all.

Nonetheless, the Folk Arts Center of New England held an International Folk Dance weekend, requiring proof of vaccination and a Covid-19 test within 9 hours of the start of camp. Some events in Transylvania and Hungary opened up as well, requiring either vaccination or a very recent test. These included dance camps, not requiring masks within the camp. While in 2020, the Méra World Music Festival in Méra, Romania had consisted of online recordings of three groups playing in the outside festival grounds just for locals, in 2021, there was a complete program for about 1000 vaccinated or tested participants.²²

Back in New York, one International Folk Dance group that had a permit to meet outside in Central Park invited "Fényes Banda" to play with them in October 2021. But Hungarian House was still paralyzed by divisions over the issue of vaccination. Then a *deus ex machina* appeared. Two members of the Budapest-based "Sarjú Banda" were Kálmán Magyar's grandchildren, and on their planned tour to the USA it was impossible to deny them a performance at Hungarian House. Because the City of New York had a vaccine mandate for any indoor event, everyone's vaccination status was checked at the door. Dancers who in the beginning had refused to be vaccinated relented – some were required to be vaccinated for work, others got the vaccination to attend this concert.

Video Example 2. Clip of "Sarjú Banda" playing for dancing at Hungarian House, 29 October 2021 at <<https://youtu.be/jUpMmYhYiJs>> [video by rauldougou].

A lapse in positivity allowed the November 2021 Csúrdöngölő Multicultural Folk Dance Gathering in New Jersey to go forward, but Csúrdöngölő's New Year's Party, happening after the

omicron sub-variant of Covid-19, BA-5 appeared, resulted in many Covid-19 cases, including the entire contingent who had arrived from Washington.

Everything has become unpredictable. Boston has yet to be able to begin because the space they were in is still closed. Csúrdöngölő and Délibáb planned to practice with two expert teachers from Hungary in April, but one tested positive for Covid-19 the night before they got on the plane. We nonetheless had a dance party at Hungarian House on 23 April 2022 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the *Táncház* Movement. Afterward, two dancers and a musician tested positive for Covid-19. Délibáb has not yet begun to meet and may have ended because several dancers are moving back to Transylvania. Boston's 9–12 June 2021 Hungarian Weekend at Pinewoods Camp²³ took place, and no one got sick. However, an international folk dance event at the same location a few weeks later ended after one day because people were suddenly testing positive for Covid-19: 55+ people out of about 130. But then Csúrdöngölő held a dance party, and the New Brunswick Hungarian Festival went on as scheduled.

The community of Hungarian Dancers is resilient and dedicated. However, we do not know what new variants will bring. As such, this study is a work in progress.

Update

In the time since our meeting, much has returned to normal. The strongest recovery has been with groups that have strong links within the Hungarian community. The Tisza Ensemble celebrated its 40th Anniversary on 10 September 2022 with a large party. Csúrdöngölő is again performing and sponsored its Multicultural Folk Dance Gathering and Hungarian Dance House on 15 October 2022. Both Tisza and Csúrdöngölő performed at the Washington Hungarian Christmas Bazaar. Csúrdöngölő's New Year's party came off, although with a few illnesses after. Délibáb has begun meeting, but as a smaller group. Cspike Tabor is meeting, but the Bokréta Winter Workshop has not come off in 2022 or in 2023, and Boston has still not returned to normal.

Endnotes

- 1 Magyar, Kálmán (resource person) 2022. Informal conversation with Judith E. Olson, email, 7 and 8 April.
- 2 Examples of current groups in New Brunswick may be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/telekipalcserkeshaz/> and <https://magyariskolanj.wordpress.com/>.
- 3 For a discussion of the *Táncház* movement see Quigley: *The Hungarian dance house movement and revival of Transylvanian string band music* (2013:182–202).
- 4 A biography of the Kotansky's is at https://www.socalfolkdance.org/master_teachers/kotansky_s.htm, a website of The Folk Dance Federation of California, South, Inc.
- 5 The website of the current festival is <http://www.hungarianfestival.org/>.
- 6 More may be found at: <http://hungarianhouse.org> and <https://www.facebook.com/hungarianhouse>.
- 7 A sense of the Symposium may be gathered from [ca. 2000] <https://magyar.org/index.php/hungarian-folk-dance-and-folk-music-symposium/>.
- 8 About the Sarju Banda may be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/sarjubanda>.
- 9 You can find out more about the organizations and their activities on their websites: <https://www.ahfoundation.org/>, <https://magyarklub.org/>, <https://www.facebook.com/telekipalcserkeshaz/>;
- 10 Their official website is: <http://csurfolk.org/>, <https://www.facebook.com/csurfolk/>.
- 11 Many pictures and posters listing Multicultural Folk Dance Gathering participating groups are at <http://csurfolk.org/>, <https://www.facebook.com/csurfolk/>.
- 12 More may be found at: <https://www.hungarianlibrary.org/>, <https://www.facebook.com/americanhungarianlibrary>.

- 13 You can find more about the events at: <http://www.hungarianhouse.org/en/delibab-hungarian-folk-dance-ensemble/>, this site has not been updated recently; <https://www.facebook.com/groups/delibabnyc>, private group.
- 14 More about the Consulate General of Hungary New York at: <https://newyork.mfa.gov.hu/>.
- 15 Official website of Tisza Ensemble at: <https://tiszaensemble.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064691678426>.
- 16 Events and activities of Boston folk dancers can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/forgasBoston>.
- 17 You can see also: <https://csipketabor.org/>, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057737586700>.
- 18 More may be found at: <https://www.bokreta.ca>, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2257134398>.
- 19 <https://www.korosiprogram.hu/korosi-csoma-sandor-program>.
- 20 <https://www.facebook.com/csurfolk/videos/pcb.369925614223030/4743013992407882> (accessed 15 January 2023), In this clip of Csúrdöngölő Multicultural Folk Dance Gathering, we see the floor sections the group used to dance separately in the early part of the Pandemic.
- 21 About the workshop at: http://www.bokreta.ca/w_bokreta/.
- 22 The following link <https://www.meraworldmusic.com/archivum> includes clips for each year.
- 23 About the Hungarian weekend and International folk dance event in Pinewoods Camp you can see the: <https://www.facone.org/hungarian-weekend/index.html>

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Shanny RANN
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LIKE DANCE BUT NOT DANCE: SITUATING TAIJI WITHIN THE DISCOURSE OF DANCE STUDIES IN THE CASE OF SANXING TAIJI

Inscribed as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2020, Taijiquan is rooted in Chinese martial arts and has been described as like dance, but not dance. This paper explores the distinction between both forms while showing how Taijiquan can complement a dancer's training through the works of pioneers who introduced Taijiquan to the West. Using performance autoethnography that centres her dancer-researcher's body as a kinesthetically empathetic source, the author grounds her research in indigenously informed concepts of Taijiquan within a female-led community in Vancouver, Canada.

Keywords: Taijiquan, dance training, performance autoethnography, Vancouver, Canada

Inscribed as UNESCO intangible cultural heritage in 2020, Taijiquan boasts a rich history in China and is being practiced in different countries around the world today. In its adaptation to the West, Taijiquan has come to be known as *Tai Chi*. As illustrated through a Google search, "*Tai Chi*" remains the most popular term with 846,000,000 results, "*Tai Chi Chuan*" 228,000,000, "*Taiji*" 13,000,000 and "*Taijiquan*" 2,370,000.¹ Omitting *Chuan/quan* from *Tai Chi Chuan/Taijiquan* leads to an understanding of *Tai Chi/Taiji* as *Tai Chi Chuan/Taijiquan* but, in fact, they are not the same. The spelling of *Tai Chi* follows the Wade-Giles romanization system (*t'ai chi*), while *Taiji* is transliterated from the pinyin 拼音 system (*tài jí*) approved by the Chinese government in 1958. In general usage, *Tai Chi* is spelled without the apostrophes, leading to a mispronunciation of *chi* as *ch'i*. *chi/ji* 极 means pole/highest point/ultimate/extreme while *ch'i/qi* 气 means energy or life breath. *T'ai/ tai* 太 means great/ grand/supreme, combined with *chi/ji* 极, *Tai Chi/ Taiji* has been translated as "Supreme Ultimate" (Frank 2007); "Great Ultimate" (Robinet 1990); "Supreme Polarity" (Adler 2014). Neither of these English translations is helpful in explaining what the term really means. In fact, it has been argued by Neo-Confucian scholars that *Taiji*² is "not a thing on its own" (Adler 2014:115).

One of the earliest records in which the term Taiji appeared was in *I Ching*, the *Book of changes*, more than two thousand years ago. In this original context, Taiji is a philosophical proposition that represents the "cosmological state of universal unity or oneness out of which duality arises" (Jennings, Dodd and Brown 2020). It is unknown how Taiji evolved into Taijiquan; for a longstanding tradition purportedly founded by legendary figures, the historiography of Taijiquan is known to have posed formidable challenges to scholars (Henning 1994; Wile 2017). "*Ch'uan/quan*" 拳 means fist/ punch/ martial arts; paired with Taiji, Taijiquan represents the embodiment of Taiji as a "traditional physical practice characterized by relaxed, circular movements that works in concert with breath regulation and the cultivation of a righteous and neutral mind" (UNESCO 2020).

Taijiquan has been defined as "centuries-old Chinese ballet-like calisthenics" (Benson 1978) in *New York Times*; "traditional Chinese shadow boxing" (Koh 1981); even as the "oldest form of dance" (Chen 2014). Practitioners are careful, however, to draw the distinction between Taijiquan and dance, describing it as 似舞非舞 – like dance, but not dance. Like dance, because it is graceful and pleasing on the eye. Not dance, because Taijiquan emphasizes function over form. Taijiquan master, Mosheng Mei 梅墨生 (1960–2019) cautioned that Taijiquan is becoming too dance-like, giving the example when practitioners overexert their stances to achieve the 'look', often causing them to experience pain in their knees. He claimed in a talk show, "If they think the lower their

stances are, the better they look, then they are not practising Taijiquan correctly" [author's translation] (CCTVScienceAndEducation 2015). The focus of Taijiquan is inward, paying close attention to the sensation of the body, rather than projecting to an audience. One is to 听劲listen to the force and make 松沉relaxation the ultimate goal.

Nevertheless, Taijiquan can complement the training of a dancer. In a documentary on Cloud Gate Dance Theatre in Taiwan, the founder, Lin Hwai-min, talks about his development as a choreographer through a broad background to various styles, including the Graham technique, classical ballet, Chinese Opera and Taijiquan. He highlights the important role Taijiquan and meditation play in his company dancers' training and creative process, claiming "Not you order the body to do anything, but the energy from inside take you into the movement"(wocomoCULTURE 2020). There is no conscious effort to hold the body in one particular pose to look a certain way, but instead, to let go and yield into a flow of movements.

The learning of Taijiquan is divided into 功法gongfa (work method), which harnesses the internal energy, and 拳法quanfa (boxing method), which builds external strength and is widely associated with 武术wushu (martial arts). As the saying goes in Taijiquan, 练拳不练功, 老来一场空, if one merely focuses on *quanfa* without honing the *gongfa*, one's practice would eventually be wasted. Beginners tend to linger at the level of *quanfa* without mastering the *gongfa*; to seasoned practitioners however, their practice is integrative of both *quanfa* and *gongfa*. This is not different from the training of dancers, who continue to work on the techniques while perfecting their repertoires.

Taijiquan is taught at dance departments in some universities as well as dance companies. Some of the earliest teachers of Taijiquan in Europe and the USA happened to be dancers. Both Sophia Delza Glassgold (1904–1996) and Gerda 'Pytt' Geddes (1917–2006) spent some time in China and Hong Kong in the 1950s learning Taijiquan from Chinese masters. Delza opened a Taijiquan school in New York in 1954 (Ryan 2008), taught at the United Nations and wrote books on Taijiquan from an instructional point of view (Delza 1967, 1972, 1985). Geddes, a Norwegian woman, was the only foreigner disciple of her teacher, Choy Kam Man, who learnt from the famous Taijiquan master, Yang Chengfu. After returning to the UK in 1959, Geddes started to teach Taijiquan at "The Place", which continues to be the hub of the contemporary dance scene in London. The Yang style Taijiquan that she learnt was rarely taught to Western women at that time. Geddes' experiences as a practitioner and teacher of Taijiquan are documented in her autobiography *Looking for the golden needle: an allegorical journey* (1995) and her biography, *Dancer in the light: the life of Gerda 'Pytt' Geddes* (2008), which was published posthumously. Research on Taijiquan in Western academia focuses on its health benefits and its application in rehabilitation, but little has been written about it as "situated aesthetic bodily practice" (Thomas 2013) and much less from the embodied perspective of the practitioners. Douglas Wile is a scholar-practitioner who has written extensively on Taijiquan and Chinese martial arts (1996, 2012, 2017). Within dance anthropology, the only three pieces of writing on Taijiquan were by Drid Williams (1975, 1995) and Janet Goodridge (1999).

Growing up, I was trained in ballet for ten years; I switched to contemporary dance in my twenties before taking up Taijiquan in my thirties. By the time I came to Taijiquan, I had been dancing on and off for over twenty years and had accumulated injuries all over my body. I wanted to learn Taijiquan to heal my body and to study it as my PhD research topic. Even though Taijiquan is a relatively accessible practice with low entry barriers, it is questionable whether having a dance background actually makes it easier for one to learn it. Based on my experience, a dance background makes it harder because of the way a dancer's body has been conditioned. Geddes talked about how "it was one of the most difficult things" (Young 2013) for her to unlearn all her dance technique:

My body had been very well trained in a particular way of moving and I had to re-think everything. It was like learning to walk again and it took a long, long time to get accustomed to the method of movement [...] It was very hard work but when I realised that I had to unlearn my previous patterns of movement I then realised that I just had to let go. This letting go and re-thinking my whole body was the best way for me to learn Tai Chi. (Young 2013)

Throughout my training in Taijiquan, I would often make comparisons between both movement systems, which are obviously very different, but my study in dance anthropology compels me to probe further where the difference lies. Movements of Taijiquan work with the law of nature by sinking the weight and yielding to gravity, which ballet tends to defy with leaps that make one look weightless in the air. Taijiquan is attuned to the meridian channels within the physiological concepts of traditional Chinese medicine, whereas ballet works with the musculoskeletal system within the Western understanding of the human anatomy. Through similar positions such as the bow stance in Taijiquan and the *tondu pli  * second arabesque in ballet, I would question where the centre of gravity is, which muscles are activated, how much flexibility is required and where.

This process of actively questioning and analyzing the movements allows me to examine reflexively my bodily training, and to bring to light the tacit knowledge which enables the movements to be realized. As mentioned by Professor Georgiana Gore and the late Professor Andr  e Grau, "Fieldwork in this way is not just about documenting a movement practice, but questions bodily knowledge, the relationship between movement and sound, and overall helps develop greater empathy and an understanding of a shared humanity" (2014:131). More importantly, a cross-cultural performance ethnography enables me to denaturalize the power relations at play in the privileging of Western forms in my own dance training, and offers me a rich palette from which I can draw connections while making my body (and mind) versatile enough to be conversant in many techniques and ways of thinking.

Taijiquan is traditionally passed down in China through clan-based transmission from the patriarch of a family or through master-disciple transmission. In Canada, Taijiquan is taught in private academies or community centres like any other fitness classes. Since 2016, I have been working with the community of Sanxing Taiji under the tutelage of a female grandmaster, Li Rong, in Vancouver, Canada. Master Li immigrated to Canada in the early 1990s and created her own school of Taijiquan, naming it Sanxing Taiji after Sanxingdui, an archaeological site of a lost civilization from the Bronze Age, dating back to 12th–11th centuries BC in Sichuan, China. The movements of Sanxing Taiji are borrowed from traditional Taijiquan styles and inspired by the artifacts unearthed in Sanxingdui. I situate my autoethnographic research on Taijiquan within Western dance scholarship, while positioning my dancer-researcher's body as a kinesthetically empathetic source.



Figure 1. Master Li Rong and author performing together in British Columbia, Canada.
Photo: Shanny Rann, 2020.

Endnotes

- 1 Google search on 30 November 2022.
- 2 For the sake of brevity, I will adopt the pinyin spelling of "Taiji" in this article except for quoted texts where the Wade-Giles system of "Tai Chi" is used.

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CONFRONTING THE PAST: ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSES TO THE LANGUAGE AND COMPLEX LEGACY OF CECIL SHARP IN ANGLO-AMERICAN DANCE

Smith explores two U.S. dance and music-related organizations which have recently articulated their goals of cultural equity and inclusiveness. This has generated lively discussion and approval as well as controversy among their constituents. English folklorist Cecil Sharp, his connection to both organizations, and the language that appears in his journals are at the center of the controversy. The paper examines this language and that in the organizational websites in this case study.

Keywords: Cecil Sharp, English dance, United States, cultural equity, racism

English collector Cecil Sharp is the central figure in the early 20th century revival of English dance, specifically country dance and ritual dance, in both England and the USA, though his legacy is complex. In 1915, while in the USA, he founded the English Folk Dance Society American Branch in New York, an organization which later became the Country Dance and Song Society (CDSS) which promotes Anglo-American dance and music traditions in the USA. Sharp was joined by his student Lily Roberts and his 'amanuensis' Maud Karpeles in his USA travels, giving lectures and teaching dance classes.

Sharp and Karpeles also collected folk songs of English origin and one dance in Appalachia between 1916 and 1918 (see Smith 2021:336). It is the racist language in Sharp's diaries from this time that has generated controversy about his work. His diaries from 1915–1918 are available on the English Folk Dance and Song Society's Vaughan Williams Memorial Library website with this caveat:

A note about racism:

Cecil Sharp travelled, along with Maud Karpeles, to the Appalachians in search of survivals of British ballads and folk songs, so they restricted their collecting work to settlements which had roots in Britain. They did not visit communities whose people came largely from other parts of the world as this fell outside the scope of their investigation.

However, they clearly shared some of the negative opinions of black people common at the time, and this is reflected in some of their diary entries.

We have decided not to cut these instances out of the diary transcriptions as that would be falsifying the historical record. (English Folk Dance and Song Society. Vaughan Williams Memorial Library ≤2022)

The racial slurs in Sharp's Appalachian diary entries are the lightning rod for his contemporary critics in the Anglo-American dance community.¹

The Country Dance and Song Society (CDSS)

The Country Dance and Song Society is a membership organization based in Massachusetts. Their "About CDSS" webpage states: "We connect and support people in building and sustaining vibrant communities through participatory dance, music, and song traditions" (Country Dance and Song Society ≥2022a). CDSS does this through its programming and membership support

services to individuals and affiliates. CDSS holds programs in various parts of the country, most notably at Pinewoods Camp near Plymouth, Massachusetts. The original focus on dance traditions from England expanded to include various forms of American dance including contra dance, squares, and solo dance such as clogging that comprise the category of Anglo-American dance.

In 2020–2021, CDSS and Pinewoods Camp, Inc. (PCI), began articulating cultural equity goals of inclusiveness and anti-racism. This work was in process when George Floyd was killed by a policeman in a Black Lives Matter protest in Minneapolis, generating widespread outrage. The politics and policies of the Trump administration had fanned the flames of racism, misogyny, and white supremacy in the USA, making this an especially charged moment in history. Many books and articles on racism have appeared in recent years, and I am indebted to the work of Lee Anne Bell (2016) and Anand Prahlad (2021) for a deeper understanding of racism. Prahlad commented in his address to the American Folklore Society in October 2020: "I would not be the first person of color to state that the problem of racism rests primarily with white people, and if one wants to address systemic racism, one needs to turn the lenses toward European Americans" (2021:261).

The CDSS webpage "About our cultural equity work" dates from 2021, from which the following section was taken:

We are owning our history. Sharp was a passionate student of English and Anglo-American folk traditions who traveled to white mountain communities and collected music with ties to his native England. **Sharp's racist and anglo-centric worldview caused him to ignore and exclude traditions, including Black traditions, that he deemed less valuable.** These actions set a false narrative of single-influence traditions that many song collectors and folk dance historians later adopted without question, and that was later reinforced and legitimized during the folk and dance revivals. This is just one example of how the full history of traditional music and dance has been obscured for many years. **We are committed to elevating resources that represent a broader, more accurate understanding of traditional dance, music, and song on this continent.** (Country Dance and Song Society ≤2022b, all emphases by CDSS)

While this explains CDSS's rationale for 'owning' its history, it fails to recognize that Sharp was entitled to choose the focus of his own collecting, though had he been more broadminded, he might have gained interesting insights about song and music transmission between blacks and whites. Jamison has pointed out that there was a history of engagement between blacks and whites in Appalachia in the 19th century at white dances and music events, as well as in other venues (Jamison 2015).

Since this paper was presented in August 2022, a new CDSS website was published in December 2022. The cultural equity page has been rewritten, and the paragraph quoted above is no longer there, although it is accessible through the "Internet archive" (Country Dance and Song Society ≤2022c). The work of the CDSS Cultural Equity Advisory Group is summarized on the new page. A section called "The story we tell matters" states:

We need to interrogate our organization's history, not to erase, but to expand the narrative, acknowledging past harm and omissions, such as the impact on indigenous populations as this land was colonized and the erasure of Black and Indigenous contributions to folk traditions born on this continent. We need to set our story in the broader context of all participatory folk art traditions on the continent. (Country Dance and Song Society ≥2022a)

In addition, the report of the Cultural Equity Advisory Group that was submitted to the CDSS

Board in February 2022 has now been made public (Country Dance and Song Society 2022d). CDSS also held a Zoom meeting on cultural equity on 30 November 2022 to update members on planned goals and proposed actions, and to encourage members to ask questions. The video recording of this meeting is publicly available online (Country Dance and Song Society 2022c).

Pinewoods Camp

Pinewoods Camp, Inc. (PCI) which hosts music and dance programming by CDSS and other user groups, states on its website:

The Board of Pinewoods Camp is committed to antiracist beliefs and practices. White supremacy and white nationalism have no place at Pinewoods. Black lives matter. Racism in our region began over 400 years ago when Europeans first came to Wampanoag territory, and systemic racism continues to negatively impact Black, Indigenous, and other people of color in the local Plymouth community and across the country. Pinewoods Camp, Inc. serves the physical place and environment on which our facilities sit, but Pinewoods is also part of the larger complex cultural history. We commit to study that history and acknowledge systemic bias in our business practices and our relationship to traditional music and dance. It is our intent to provide a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. (Pinewoods Camp, Inc. ≤2022a)

The many ways in which these commitments are to be carried out are listed beneath.

Pinewoods Camp has two dance pavilions that were named C# and C# Minor to commemorate Sharp's connection to the camp's history and to English dance after his death in 1924. Since the 1920s, both pavilions have been replaced and improved up to the present time, so the names have been in place for almost 100 years. Sharp signed his own name as C#, and it also represents musical keys, thus it is a dual pun. Though the camp did not exist in its present form when Sharp was in the USA, his English former student and assistant Lily Roberts married American Richard Conant in 1917, and the camp was bequeathed to them by Boston philanthropist Helen Storrow at her death in 1944. Storrow had supported Sharp's and Karpeles' collecting in Appalachia.



Figure 1. The current incarnation of Pinewoods Camp dance pavilion C# which the Pinewoods Camp Board decided in March 2022 to rename. Photo by Stephanie Smith, 2012.



Figure 2. Dancers enjoy an English country dance in C# pavilion. Photo by Stephanie Smith, 2007.

In 2020, the PCI board received a request to rename the pavilions due to Cecil Sharp's 'negative press'. The board solicited feedback from their predominantly white constituents in various ways during camp sessions and held two Zoom meetings in October 2021 to let people air their views. I attended both meetings as a researcher. What surprised me and undoubtedly others is that many people present either did not know who Cecil Sharp was, or that the names of the two dance pavilions referred to Sharp. There are several user group camp sessions that do not have any English dance or song content, so it is understandable. I got the impression that some people, particularly from the younger generation, were in favor of the name change not because they understood the history, but more because their peers were in favor of the change. Also, as a former PCI board member, I understood how challenging this discussion and impending decision was for the board.

In March 2022, the PCI board emailed their constituents and posted an announcement on their website and on their Facebook page about their decision, after much deliberation, to change the names of the pavilions. It is a very thoughtful and nuanced piece. The introduction states:

We have been carefully and respectfully listening to everyone who has chosen to be part of the discussion. The community is divided on how to best remember Cecil Sharp's dedication to preserving English folk traditions, his collecting, his teaching, and his connection to the founders of Camp. We are not in agreement with any one interpretation of Cecil Sharp's motivation or his world view. There is agreement that he should be remembered, and his history told. (Pinewoods Camp, Inc. ≥2022b)

The announcement continues:

We anticipate a more expanded view of American traditional music and dance in the coming century, while continuing to provide a home to the English, Scottish and other international forms already present at Camp. Now a part of a larger whole, English folk material as collected and preserved by Cecil Sharp continues to be part of his legacy enjoyed at Pinewoods.

Taking all of this into consideration, we, the Board of Directors of Pinewoods Camp, Inc. have voted to change the name of the C# and C# Minor dance pavilions. This decision for change aligns with our policy of not naming buildings for people. In doing so we are not erasing Cecil Sharp; we will tell his story in connection with the founders of Camp. We are looking for names that will be transparent and welcoming to all who come to Camp in the next 100 years. (Pinewoods Camp, Inc. ≥2022b)

Many people posted positive and negative reactions to the Board's decision on the PCI Facebook page which revealed overall a generational split in opinion, with most younger people happy about the decision, and several older people who have been going to Pinewoods for years expressing anger or concern over what they perceived as political correctness and exclusion. One person commented that the decision had ironically divided the Pinewoods community in the interests of inclusion, to assuage those who might be offended by the Sharp name. Another person reflected on being part of the older generation of dancers who had in their youth pushed the boundaries of the dance form to the disapproval of the 'old-timers', now finding themselves the 'old-timers' who are both sad and angry about the new push for change and the expectations of the younger generation. It should be noted that the dance community has, by and large, been multigenerational since the mid-20th century.

Looking to a more inclusive future

It is too early to tell how the Anglo-American dance community will navigate this period of intense focus on cultural equity and Sharp's legacy. The Pinewoods Board, after two years of discussion about the pavilion renaming, has clearly stated the rationale for its March decision. In my view, the wording on the revised cultural equity pages on the CDSS website now aligns more closely to the PCI cultural equity statements.

It will be interesting to see how the two organizations work together in coming years on this front. The challenges that CDSS and Pinewoods Camp face are different, in that CDSS is a membership organization promoting music and dance to members and affiliates through programs and services. It does not own real estate. People who go to Pinewoods not only go because of the programs offered there by user groups such as CDSS, but because of attachment to the place itself. For some, its history is deeply important. I am cautiously optimistic that the generational conflict and feelings of exclusion expressed in reaction to the decision to rename the dance pavilions at Pinewoods will ease with time. The PCI Board's commitment to providing a platform for a better understanding of Sharp's work is noteworthy, and the new CDSS cultural equity webpage suggests a similar approach. Expanded programming by CDSS at Pinewoods and other venues with increased inclusion and integration of different dance and music forms including Anglo-American ones will hopefully bring about a more vibrant, multigenerational dance community that is both inclusive and equitable.

Endnotes

- 1 See Jamison 2015:70–71 for examples of and commentary on some Sharp diary entries from 1917–1918.

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HUNGARIAN REVIVAL FOLK DANCERS DURING THE CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC

This case study presents how the coronavirus epidemic affected the Hungarian folk dance community's everyday life, how they adapted and reacted to the new situation, restrictions, and how could folk dance teaching and learning move to online space. The analysis was based on digital fieldwork accompanied by semi-structured interviews and using an online questionnaire. The paper also discusses the methodological issues and solutions that occurred during the research.

Keywords: Hungarian revival folk dancers, coronavirus, online research, memes

In the year 2020, the coronavirus epidemic occurred and it brought measures that affected our everyday life. The strict epidemical instructions not only influenced the governments' economic system but the society and within that the smaller communities' socio-cultural activities. This research constitutes a case study on how the coronavirus pandemic affected the subcultural life of the Hungarian revival folk dancers in the first part of 2020, or as it was called "during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic".¹ The paper introduces the initiations and online activities that occurred in the civic and subcultural spheres as a response to the crisis among the Hungarian folk dance practitioners.

The Hungarian revival folk dancers

My academic research concentrates on the contemporary Hungarian folk dance revival movement which is also known as dance house or *táncház* (in Hungarian) movement.² I consider the group as a form of a subculture because the members are bonded by their common interests, modes of thinking, behaviour and attributes. They are interested in Hungarian traditional dance, music, and folk culture in general. The composition of the investigated community is diverse. The number and participation of members varies, and individuals cannot be linked to a single place. The term subculture also refers to the social embeddedness of the group, since the principles and ideologies that the community identifies itself with not apply to all members of the Hungarian population.

In the present research, I focused on the group of amateur folk dancers, who learn the dances of a given region (from the Alpine-Carpathian Region) in a dance ensemble or group with help of an instructor.³ They can also deepen their knowledge in various folk dance camps, workshops and courses. In addition to summer camps, their entertainment venues include city dance houses, festivals and folk pubs. The identity of a 'folk dancer' – as a term my interlocutors defined themselves – can be seen not only in hobby dancing, work in dance ensembles and visiting dance houses, but also in the way of thinking of individuals (Szabó 2017).

The coronavirus pandemic had a major impact on the socio-cultural arenas of smaller communities. Like many aspects of ordinary life, the group of the *táncház* movement has also shifted its activities to the digital space. Due to these circumstances, I expanded my research on the current Hungarian revival dancers, focusing on the online aspect of the examined group. Therefore, social media platforms became my field of research, and remote, digital observation was my tool for examination.

Online fieldwork

Once studying a community, fieldwork on the Internet can be complemented by participant observation. An outsider has access to the same web content, with a few exceptions, as any user. In addition, a researcher can find out about the everyday life of informants and the websites related to the subculture through the interfaces. However, there are also limitations to the 'participation' of Internet researchers in terms of accessibility and the search for true content (Vásárhelyi 2015). One of the ethical issues with data collected in a virtual environment and participant observation is the visibility and clarity of researcher status. Compared to traditional fieldwork, where the researcher's personal presence is (mostly) evident, there is an opportunity to 'hide' from the studied community in the online space. The presence of a 'lurking' researcher does not affect group interactions, but may cause ethical issues (Mátyus 2015).

These mentioned dilemmas were also present during my research. Due to my personal and academic interest – I am also a member of these forums, platforms, I am following Hungarian folk dance related Facebook and Instagram pages – during the research period I have encountered several issues, such as the difficulty of entering and exiting the field due to everyday personal use.⁴ However, due to the situation, I did not miss out on the updates and news of the pages, but I had to pay special attention to continue the data collection in a given period, concentrating on the research questions. For this reason, I recorded my experiences and observations in the form of a field diary, and by saving screenshots and Internet pages, I collected the content on the social network which was relevant for the research. Although, the question of visibility was recurring during the research.

Online questionnaire – methodological issues

In the present research, in addition to the continuous fieldwork and journaling, I conducted an online questionnaire survey in which participants could complete their responses in two forms.⁵

One of the two types of questions was the so-called 'checkboxes' where the fillers could choose from several options. The other was a 'paragraph', where the respondents could express their opinions and experiences related to the given question in a longer answer. I also conducted several personal online interviews in connection with the questionnaire, and I made deep interviews about the topic. However, I carefully posted the survey to the examined Facebook groups – after the administrator allowed me to – the questionnaire had its own afterlife. It appeared on other, non-Hungarian folk dance-related forums with a negative response. Some of the form-fillers didn't have adequate information on some questions or they were not relevant to them. These people mentioned their objections to me during the survey and in the last 'comments' section. These answers came from other dancers who practise for example Indian or other nations', nationalities' dances. The feedback confirmed my conviction that Hungarian folk dancers form a separate subcultural group.

During an online data-collecting process, the researcher must also take into account the limitations of the chosen methodology, and the credibility, and usability of the given data. The question is how much influence can the researcher have – as in this case – on the afterlife of questionnaires published on social media? Can we intervene in the means by which the questionnaire is shared? During the examination, based on the responses, I corrected the survey questions, limited the answer options, and highlighted that the inquiry concerns only those folk dancers who practise Hungarian folk dances. In conclusion, if the research involves only a small and relatively closed community a questionnaire shall be shared within a chosen focus group.⁶

#dancelegényesathome⁷

In the following paragraphs, examples will illustrate how the group of Hungarian revival folk dancers responded to the restrictions and quarantine situations at the beginning of 2020.

During the first national lockdown, the so-called "Stay at home" civic and community

initiative was launched to reduce the spread of the virus. The Hungarian National Dance Ensemble joined this with the invitation to the "Dance *legényes* at home!" challenge, and they asked folk dancers to show their dancing skills in their own homes. The participants of the challenge had to dance six male dance motives and invite three other dancers into this chain of activity. This and other similar actions among the folk dancers and musicians drew attention to people to stay and practise at home in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19. According to the questionnaire fillers, the *legényes* call was a good initiative to distract attention from the lockdown and the virus, and it was also a great way to spread folk dancing on social media. Besides the positive reflections, there were some comments on how these challenges and seeing people dancing reminded them of being locked, lack of dancing, their community, friends, and revel.

Other calls and initiations also appeared on social media after the start of *legényes* challenge. As everyone had to stay home it was the time to activate not only dancers but musicians, singers, and other folk lovers too, and drive the attention away from the current situation. Most of the subcultural events were cancelled due to the lockdown and regulations but some could be adapted to the social platforms.⁸ According to the questionnaire respondents highlighted the cohesive power of the community in relation to the challenges and the increased online social life. Participating in the activities provided an opportunity for the quarantined dancers and musicians to move away from everyday life and divert attention from the epidemic. It created a sense of belonging, and a good experience of dancing, making music, and singing, but on the downside, the activities also reminded them of their pre-epidemic situation, isolation, and lack of living community.

Folk dance brought into homes

Another civic initiative called "FolkHome" (literal translation of *FolkOtthon*) was the first to put dance education online in response to epidemiological measures. The name comes from the aforementioned "Stay Home!" movement, a combination of love for folklore and a "request to stay at home" (Székely 2020).

The program's initial aim was to make it easier to get through the period of the coronavirus epidemic in a hopeless situation where all forms of community activity have ceased. Several folk dancers, singers, and storytellers who are known in the revivalist subculture joined the project as instructors or contributors. The education was broadcast live on *FolkOtthon*'s Facebook page, and videos of it were posted on the project's YouTube channel, so they are reviewable. The success of the initiative, according to the head of *FolkOtthon*, lies in the fact that folk dance has been passed on to more people, including those who have been excluded from the circle of the dance house movement or have moved away from their former dance groups and ensembles. The disadvantage of online education is that there is no immediate feedback and the opportunity to ask questions is limited. However, learning to dance from a video is not strange to folk dancers, as it often happens that a dancer acquires a particular dance sequence from a video based on an archive recording (Székely 2020; about the relationship between archive films and revival dancers see Székely 2022).

According to the questionnaire survey, sixty percent of respondents participated in *FolkOtthon*'s education and programs. In their experience, this online learning method is perfectly useable for male dances and folk singing, but it cannot completely replace education based on personal contact. The lack of the instructors' feedback, community, rehearsal atmosphere, and experience of dancing together was cited as the most negative by respondents. Another disadvantage was impersonality, especially in the case of couple dancing, isolation, which prevented many from joining virtual dance learning. On the other hand, those dancers who got out of their dancing communities due to circumstances like changes in their personal life, or moving from their towns, could reconnect with practising folk dance. Moreover, outsiders of the community could also try traditional dances from their homes (Székely 2020).

Memes

Reflections on the Covid-19 regulations and community initiatives also appeared in other genre on the social media platforms connected to the examined community. The Internet memes provide a means of reaction to the life and activities of the group, their ideological orientation, and their critique of society in a humorous form (Glózer 2015). In the case of epidemic memes, we can also speak of a kind of therapeutic role. Communities that learn about individual disasters through the media do not have the opportunity to assess and improve the situation which creates feelings of trauma and helplessness. Jokes that mock disasters are created to process pain and accept losses. The phenomenon of memes can be interpreted in parallel with the upheaval of the values that can be achieved during the carnival period, as mockery and laughter have a liberating, therapeutic effect (Glózer 2020).

At the beginning of March 2020, memes about Covid-19 also appeared on social media. The meme pages related to the Hungarian revival movement published posts that responded to the coronavirus epidemic, missed community events, reflected on dance rehearsals relocated to online space, and folk dance-related online initiatives and challenges.

Conclusion

By demonstrating a few examples of the broader research, I aimed to present the cohesive power of the community that can be observed in the online space. My conclusion is the experience of 'belonging to a community' and being excluded can also be captured on social media. The basis of the group's activities is communality, direct contact with each other through dance and music, and personal connection at urban dance houses or ensemble work, which is not or hardly possible to maintain in the online space. Activities on social network cannot replace personality or face-to-face contact, it only retains or complements the community's subcultural life.

Some further questions can be related to the examined topic like how many people left the group of Hungarian folk dancers, how many joined, or some may have returned? With the easing of epidemiological tightening and the elimination of restrictions, the programs and initiatives described above also lagged behind the everyday life of the community. However, the questions of how the subcultural life of the folk dancers changed after the return of face-to-face meetings or what effect the virus had on dance practices require further research.

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Endnotes

- 1 The research concerns the first half of 2020. I would also like to express my gratitude to those who completed the questionnaire used in the research and to my interlocutors, without whom the investigation would not be complete.
- 2 The Hungarian dance house movement started in 1972 in Budapest, Hungary as a new wave of folklore movement. The pioneers borrowed their idea of organizing a social dance event in urban settings from their experiences in a Transylvanian village. About the revival movement's history see: Taylor 2021.
- 3 According to my observations, the cultural subgroup of the Hungarian revival folk dancers can be divided into two larger layers. One is a group of people who practise folk dancing as a lifestyle or form of life, and the other (or the second) group (or layer) are those who practise folkdancing as a hobby, a chosen leisure activity. The first category includes people who practise folk dance professionally: they work as professional performers, choreographers, teachers, or instructors of various dance ensembles, courses, festivals, and camps in Hungary and abroad. These dancers trained at an institutional level, for whom practicing folk dance is a part of everyday life

and a way to make a living. The second group includes amateur dancers and for them, folk dancing and going to urban dance houses are part of their chosen, leisure activities. They don't see it as a profession, but rather as preserving and nurturing traditions, as a social experience, and as a way of self-expression and entertainment. The motivation of individuals can be different: conscious interest in folk culture, identification of movement and dance with positive feelings, or just relaxation (Takács 2016). This distinction can be detailed in terms of examining the different generations within the táncház movement or exploring local and family traditions related to the group and the activity.

- 4 Field research on the Internet consists of the following six steps: 1. planning, 2. 'entering the field', 3. collecting and analysing data, 4. interpretation, 5. observing ethical requirements and 6. presenting the research to the investigated community (Lajos 2016:839–840).
- 5 For data collection purposes I used the Google Form platform.
- 6 I was also informed by a friend of mine that in another forum which I was not part of someone expressed harsh and negative critiques about the relevance of the research topic in that medical crisis.
- 7 *Legényes* is a solo male dance type from Transylvania.
- 8 For instance, Folk Costume Day (*Népviselet napja*) is a recently invented custom (started in 2015) held on the 24 April every year. For that occasion, some people dress up in their favourite traditional costumes or put on a similar one at home or work.

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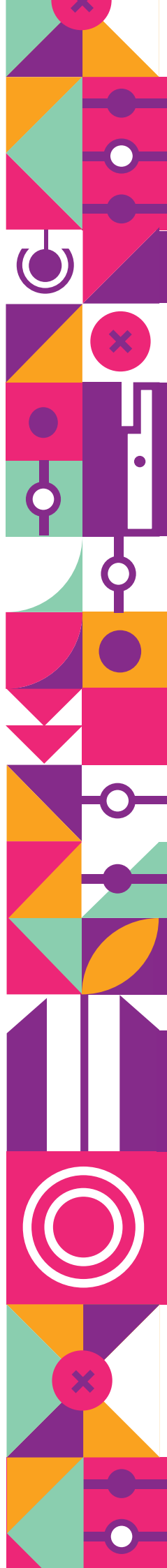
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POSTER PRESENTATIONS



Fatema ALBASTAKI

(Paris, France)

HIP HOP AND MARTIAL ARTS - CROSSOVER IN MARGINAL SPACES

Hip hop dance has entered entertainment venues, competitions, stage, and street performance globally and digitally. Since its development from a strong wave of African American progressive politics, it has inspired especially youth of colour. Asian martial arts have spread globally with practice in training, competition, and play. Controlled violence is allowed and community engagement to confront relational learning of the other's bodies. This poster explores crossovers between hip hop and martial arts in choreographic movements, rhythm, and philosophical message.

Keywords: hip hop, capoeira, cape town, martial arts, youth

Background

During short-term field work in the city of Toulouse in France, I worked with a group of experimental hip hop street artists. A lot of what I witnessed was improvisational and experimental hip hop dance in the context of cyphering in squats and parks, during a nationwide lockdown in France. The street dancers were very experimental with their moves, and they moved as if they were creating objects as accompanying props out of the air from their imagination. This prompted me to think of hip hop dance as a wide imaginative process of creative expression. Initial curiosity in the study concerned Cape Malays practising Silat in South Africa and if the Cape Muslim youth would participate or engage in any form of hip hop digitally or socially. However, upon further research, there were no existing verified academic sources were found in the English language on the study of Cape Muslims practising Silat in South Africa. Given the historical context of martial arts' influence in the world of hip hop, Bruce Lee's appearance and performance in what developed to be *kung fu cinema* borrowing from different martial arts styles to show the most effect flashy techniques in action movies was a symbol of anticolonial representation to many black and brown youth of the time. The consumption of martial arts imagery influenced African-American spectatorship and the hip hop group, the Wu Tang Clan, created "Enter the Wu-Tang" (1993) album which rendered the art of rap music and practice of hip hop as a martial art. Through well-articulated lyrics that exemplified the aggressive elements of martial arts along with musical beats composed of thumping bass line, this changed the music and break-dancing elements of the hip hop scene.

My research considers the shift from the third to fourth industrial revolution and what digital media has offered in terms of transmission, performance and creativity (Anheier and Isar 2010). The parallels between martial arts practice and the hip hop scene are manifested in what Fanon Che Wilkins (2008) would call hip hop imagination. Capoeira arose as a phenomenon from Afro-Brazilians driven by the desire for freedom by enslaved Africans and it synthesises combat, dance, ritual, music, and performance (Capoeira 2007). Hip hop also developed from the streets from marginalised minorities from the early 1970s in the Bronx in New York City. Both practices originated from different parts of the world and are continuously being reproduced in different localised contexts. After netnographically surveying the scene in Cape Town, South Africa, I found that there are groups who practice and perform break dancing jams and informal sessions of capoeira at a centralised location in Cape Town by the beachfront. These groups are discrete entities, but a few individuals tend to gravitate to both practices within this localised context. Therefore, this poster attempts to explore the reconfiguration and cultural translation of these practices in the context of the dance scene in Cape Town highlighting the commonalities and differences.

Methodology

The study aims to collect descriptions of the commonalities between hip hop and martial arts from a hip hop group in Cape Town, South Africa in a qualitative manner. This is done considering some individual members tend to practice both hip-hop break dancing and capoeira as well. In conducting qualitative research of choreographic movements, the primary form of practice that interlocutors of the study are known for is their hip hop practice. Therefore, the background of how and when they started is relevant as it touches on the formation of the social dynamics in practice and the motivations behind why they dance. A list of interview questions was sent netnographically to individual members, in which many questions highlight the comparative aspect to elicit how these two forms of practice exist within the practitioners' repertoire. The history and background of the individual members was an important starting point for the case study.

The 14 semi-structured open-ended questions centre on three main themes. These themes were: choreographic movements, rhythm, and philosophical message. The thematic inquiry aimed to gather background information on the history with both artistic and performative forms, gain technical insight on the similarities and differences of the movements, their motivation for practice and how it affects social and philosophical aspects of the dancer's life. Eliciting technical movements from the practitioners regarding both practices is a significant point of inquiry. It was important to collect a database framing what technical choreographic techniques carry similar features. For this study, it was crucial to collect these insights from experts of the practice. Experts would be able to decipher which moves are characteristically break-dancing material and capoeira material as well as the moves that are shared between the two. This approach showcases how capoeira as a martial art has served as a form of discipline and training to hone their skills in break dancing. It could also serve as a form of inspiration to expand their repertoire of movement and flexibility to complement their own practice.

Research design and its challenges

The study is an ethnographic type of research for now, as these forms of hybridisations can happen in many possible geographical spaces. This could develop into more collaborative ethnographic research if the opportunity presents itself. Since the study potentially investigates in more than one geographical space, the study considers a comparative kind of research because the subject entails forms of hybridisation.

Obtaining qualitative data required time and commitment from participants; contacts were obtained through recommendations by other participants, and interviews were challenging to arrange because contacts were established without any previous familial in-person meetings. Therefore, this made it difficult for participants to commit to a foreign researcher and a physical visitation and meeting in the field would have gravely helped in developing trust in these relationships. A few interlocutors were found through recommended contacts and a breaking and street dancing community page was found in social media.

The study used qualitative open ended semi-structured questions rather than online tools presenting quantitative questionnaires. These questions were sent via private messages in social media platforms. Some discussions were also arranged via phone calls and responses elicited via phone calls were noted down in field notes. Active participant observation proved to be challenging in this context especially in terms of understanding cultural meanings, nuances and mapping out the regularities of the social members and groupings involved. As mentioned, given the challenges that emerged in relation to grasping the social dynamics and structure of the groups – this presented a lack of development of more meaningful relationships with the participants. As a consequence, Daniel Prior and Lucy Miller (2012) illustrate these challenges accurately by highlighting that a prominent disadvantage of netnography is the lack of control on analysing the data obtained.

Improvements and further developments for the study

After gaining insight of the dancers' motivations and why both forms of practice are incorporated in their life, more data can be gathered and developed for analysis by capturing linework and groundwork through picture frames with the aid of experts' eyes and film recordings to capture the beat and rhythm of the movement through transcription method. Because of the small sample the study is concerned with, further developments for the research can potentially use narrative-based investigations and a micro-phenomenological method to analyse the data.

Discussion

My hypothesis suggests that there are commonalities that can be found between hip hop and martial arts, because of the emergence and influence of digital media (Taylor 2010). I have mostly witnessed youths participating in the realm of hip hop in different levels: commercial, underground, diasporic or marginal kinds in countries in which I resided such as Bahrain, Turkey, and France. The study could be developed further to examine the Cape Town dance scene. It is an important approach to investigate the historical and cultural paradigm that is emerging from the community, in order to conduct comparative research. On the level of rhythm and the energetic nature of hip hop movements, significant employment of strength and control is needed to be employed when descending in a flow and dropping to the ground. Thomas DeFrantz and Anita Gonzalez point out that "Hip-hop dancers 'hit it hard' whether breaking or popping; when combining genres to include movements from ballet or house dancing, hip-hoppers tie a persistent weightiness to the pleasure of bringing it down to the ground" (2014:230).

Breaking experts like Physiotherapist and BBoy and DJ with Concrete Apostles, Barry Baumgart attest that such movements like downrock movements if slowed down looks like capoeira. Other interlocutors refer to an example of a break-dancing technique called coffee grinder seems to have a similar pattern to some capoeira techniques like the helicoptero. An important aspect to acknowledge is the relationship between the music and the dance, as both practices possess elements of improvisation, influences of the music/musicians as well as a dancer's opponents/peers on the speed and rhythm of the performance. In terms of formation, practitioners feed from the energy that is produced in the cypher and the roda. In Lee Watkin's ethnographic work on hip hoppers in Cape Town, he notes that "in their music, for instance, hip-hoppers borrow and appropriate grooves and samples from a vast range of sources. These are manipulated to suit their stylistic requirements and ideo-logical needs" (2001:31). During the interview process, interlocutors admitted that there are few members of the community that have been to capoeira classes as well as being established in hip hop culture. They confirm that there is a kind of crossing and exchanging of technical skills that happens between both forms that somehow produces a process of integrating movements. One of the interlocutors pointed out that the floor movements and locomotive patterns of break dancing contain a commonality, a few have suggested that break dancing borrows from many martial arts forms that is not necessarily exclusive to capoeira. One expressed that, "I love doing both art forms because there is so much one can learn and incorporate. The energy and principles are similar".

From Baumgart's personal experience and observations, personal experience and observations of the social grouping and dynamics of the dancing scene in Cape Town he notes that the breaking scene features competition and challenges among members of the community because it is all about showcasing one's own individual style and skill, whereas the community of capoeiraistas tends to move in pairs and in exchange synergistically. But he confirms that these distinct communities both draw and unite a wide range of groups together despite peoples' social and ethnic differences. Since the communities perform in the same grounds and spaces, they tend to appreciate and enjoy each other's craftsmanship as spectators, and this inspires individuals to discipline their sense of

physical balance, strength, and control. Watkins comments on this agency of identity construction among youths given the evolution of South African history and this speaks to the formation of these safe spaces as avenues for many youths. An interlocutor reveals that, "It's definitely an outlet and tool for the youth. Many come from backgrounds where they don't have good mentors, vision, purpose, or direction. The art forms gives you a good perspective on discipline, respecting your body and others, practice makes perfect, failing or losing isn't the end of the world but a place to improve your skills and not give up while having fun with like-minded individuals". The point of interest is how the embodying process creates room for hybridisation of cultures, and more importantly a chance for marginally youth communities to innovatively create and express outside controlled regulated spaces. Further research can be undertaken by scholars to discover more about the phenomena.

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THE DANCE NOTATION BUREAU COLLECTION AND RELATED DANCE HOLDINGS AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The Dance Notation Bureau Collection holds hundreds of folk and indigenous dances in Labanotation. OSU Dance and Libraries faculty have worked in collaboration with the Dance Notation Bureau in New York to build the collection as well as engage students and scholars in activating the archive. An inventory of the world dance scores of the collection provides access to notations of dances from numerous countries.

Keywords: Labanotation, world dance, dance notation, dance archives, instruction using Labanotation

The Ohio State University Libraries Special Collections is home to the Dance Notation Bureau Collection, one of the largest notation collections in the world. As a long-time partner with the Dance Notation Bureau Collection in New York whose mission is to advance the art of dance through creation of dance scores using the symbol system Labanotation, the Thompson Library at The Ohio State University (OSU) holds the final scores of the notated dances in the catalogue *Notated western theatrical dances* as well as drafts and other records associated with those scores. In addition, the archive contains hundreds of folk, indigenous, and historical dances notated in Labanotation and other notation systems. As a further part of the OSU – Dance Notation Bureau partnership, the Dance Notation Bureau Extension Center for Education and Research resides at OSU, promoting the practical application of Labanotation and Laban based theories, implementing research, developing curriculum, and expanding dance notation literature and archival materials.

Throughout the years, the inclusion of the archives into the Special Collections of Thompson Library, has allowed researchers in Labanotation and Laban Movement Studies access to historic dances captured in a particular time to study and analyze scores, and examine the accompanying materials that provide context about the dance, choreographer, notator, music, costumes, and other aspects. For 52 years, faculty from the Department of Dance and the Libraries have worked in collaboration with the Dance Notation Bureau in New York to build the collection as well as engage students and scholars in activating the archive through re-staging, and new creation with it (Couch, Williams 2019).

The Dance Notation Bureau Collection is complemented by other archival collections such as the Akiva Pour-El Israeli Folk Dance Instruction Papers of approximately 230 dances with word descriptions and the Judy Van Zile Collection of notebooks documenting her *bharata natyam* studies.

The principle objectives of this presentation are 1) to analyze the DNB holdings of folk dances by country/region, notator, and date, and 2) to share examples of the research and teaching uses which folk materials in the dance holdings have enriched.

Analysis

While a preliminary inventory of the world dances in the DNB Collection exists online (Guide to the Dance Notation Bureau Collection), it is lacking in detail. Over 2021–2022, OSU Dance student Isabel Brandt worked to compile an inventory of approximately 780 individual and sets of world dances and capture multiple data points on each score including number of dancers, length and notation level of score, name of notator and year of notation, source/choreographer/arranger, country/region/peoples of origination, musical information and other technical information. Some of the items are music scores and research materials related to the dance scores (Brandt 2021).

From Brandt's master inventory, a number of characteristics of the DNB Collection world dance holdings become apparent. The numbers below are not entirely comparable since many are for individual dance scores and others are for volumes of dance scores, and additional work needs to be done to determine the dance scores in volumes as well as ascertain possible duplication of scores. Nevertheless, the rough figures indicate the strength of the collection by country/region/peoples.

Country/Region/Peoples	No. Scores	Country	Scores	Country	Scores
China	106	India	22	Latin America	3
Israel	79	Macedonia	18	Norway	3
United States	64	Ghana	16	Portugal	3
USA: Hawaii	19	Yugoslavia	16	Slovenia	3
USA: Plains People	9	Romania	15	Albania	2
USA: Amerindian	2	Russia	15	Bosnia	2
USA: Croatan Indian	1	Croatia	12	Paraguay	2
USA: Pueblo Indian	1	Tibet	12	Peru	2
Scotland	59	Mexico	10	Philippines	2
Spain	55	Netherlands	9	Samoa	2
Spain: Catalonia	5	Austria	7	Australia	1
Spain: Zaragoza	4	Bulgaria	7	Armenia	1
Spain: Basque					
country	1	Iceland	7	Haiti, Trinidad	1
Hungary	45	Indonesia	7	Chile	1
Serbia	37	Sweden	7	Colombia	1
Volumes, mixed region					
dances	35	Ireland	6	Costa Rica	1
England	32	Argentina	5	Cuba	1
Japan	31	Brazil	4	Denmark	1
Poland	27	Finland	4	Malaysia	1
France	26	Italy	4	Scandinavia	1
Greece	24	Czechoslovakia	3	Slovakia	1
Germany	22	Kenya	3	Ukraine	1
		Korea	3	Venezuela	1

Table 1. Names of country/region/peoples as they are identified in the DNB Collection world dance scores and described by Brandt.

Notators, either in Labanotation or word description, are identified for the majority of the dance scores. Brandt lists 118 notators, with a few such as Gisela Reber (124 scores), Albrecht Knust (42), Alice Lattimore (38), Carl Wolz (37), Ann Hutchinson Guest (17), and others responsible for multiple scores. Some scores during the 1950s were notated by Juilliard School students and a few from the 1990s by Ohio State University students.

Less well documented are the dates of notation with only about one-third of the items dated. Of those, there is a range from the early 1930s to 2002 with the most significant work occurring between the 1950s and the 1980s and the majority in the 1950s and into the 1960s. It is unsurprising that the largest percentage of the work occurred in this period, reflecting interest in the field in the use of Labanotation/Kinetography Laban by individuals and engaged discussion

in the field such as the 1957 Dresden Congress for Dance Notation and Folk Dance Research (Hoerbuerger 1958) and the Dance Notation presentations followed by general discussion at the 11th Annual Conference of the International Folk Music Council, 1958 (Hoerbuerger 1959; Knust 1959; Szentpal 1959; De Laban 1959; International Folk Music Council 1959).

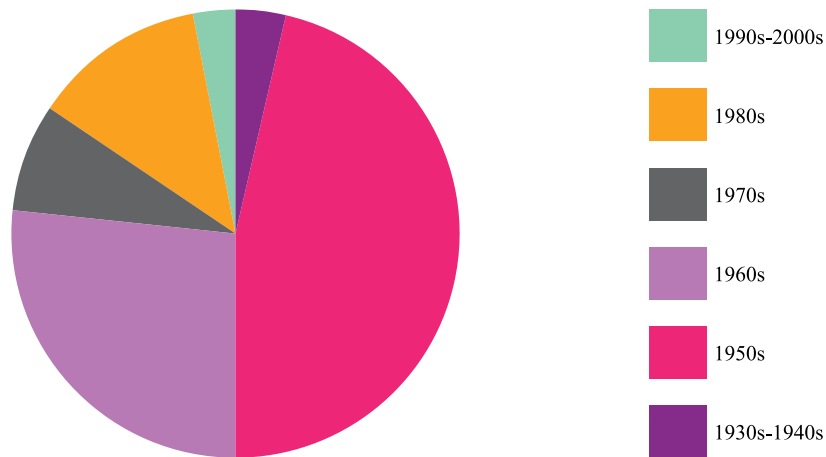


Figure 1. Date creation percentages of those world dance scores in DNB Collection with identified notation dates.

Another problematic documentation gap is a lack of information on the source of the dances with less than one-third identified. In some cases, the notators themselves, such as Dai Ailian and Josefina Garcia, were the sources. Others were performers, teachers, and members of the cultural communities such as Won-Kung Cho, Ana Maletić, Iko Otrin, Rivka Sturman, Emma Lugossy, Winona Kapuailohiamanonokalani Desha Beamer, and others.

Dance holdings in research and teaching

The DNB archive transcends time and comes alive through use by scholars, dancers, researchers, and artists. It brings forward culture of the time in which the work was documented and can enable comparison of the past to today's versions of the movement. As one example, Keahiahi Long, a passionate practitioner from many generations of hula dancers came to research scores. Since she does not read Labanotation, a notation specialist worked with her and the scores in the reading room, in particular, "Lovely Hula Hands" taught by Winona Kapuailohiamanonokalani Desha Beamer at the Dance Notation Bureau (New York) in the late 1940s or early 1950s with Labanotation by Ann Hutchinson Guest. The researcher described that experience: "As a hula practitioner, watching someone with no prior background in hula translate symbols on a page to actual, physical body movements was just amazing." And she shared the movements that were already in her body with the Labanotation practitioner and others with the result of two modes of transmission occurring in our reading room – movement from score and face-to-face learning. The outcome for all was encapsulated in a traditional Hawaiian proverb that Long shared which she translated as: "All knowledge is not taught in the same school. One can learn from many sources" (Long 2014). She went on to say that "Such an experience reminds me of the power of archives to transcend the boundaries of time and space in their mission to preserve and make available knowledge and information" (Long 2014).

Classes at The Ohio State University activate the archive through "making" and "doing". As an example of the dance notation holdings in action in instruction, an introductory class in Odissi took time out from the studio to analyze movement through reading Indian dance in

the OSU collections. The materials that caught the imagination of both instructor and students were the notebooks by Judy Van Zile with the outcome that the final major group project was reframed around the class's special collections discovery of Van Zile's word description for dance to William Wordsworth's poem "Daffodils".

Conclusion

While there are plans to continue work to fill gaps of sources and dates of notations and other details of the Dance Notation Bureau Collection World Dance scores, the inventory work by Isabel Brandt has already enabled improved access for both instruction in OSU Department of Dance curriculum and research by outside scholars.

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FROM THE INSIDE TO THE OUTSIDE: THE TRANSMISSION OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF YUVAL PICK'S DANCE COMPANY

This article presents a study about the process of transmission of contemporary dance mainly in the context of a dance workshop. The research is based on fieldwork conducted in *Centre Chorégraphique National de Rillieux-la-Pape* (France). It shows how the transmission process in this context prepares the dancer by first building self-awareness (the inside) and later the choreography (the outside) by combining participant observation, microanalysis and interviews with the key interlocutors.

Keywords: Contemporary dance, transmission, France, discourse, corporeal experience

Introduction

This research was made as part of my master's dissertation in the Choreomundus Programme. It is based on fieldwork conducted in Yuval Pick's dance company, in the *Centre Chorégraphique National* (National Choreographic Center) of Rillieux-la-Pape, in France, in July and August 2020. In it, I studied the transmission process within the company in three different contexts: the creative process of a new show, the transmission of roles between the dancers in a repertoire piece and a workshop open to the public that Yuval Pick himself taught during my fieldwork. The last context was the highlight of my research, resulting in a detailed analysis that will be shown in this poster/article. In order to build knowledge, a major importance was given to the voice of my key interlocutors in the field, establishing a dialogue between what they said in the interviews and what I observed in the field.

Methodology

My main methodological approach was participant observation. I watched all rehearsals and performances and participated as a student in the workshops that the company offered during my fieldwork. Dancing in the workshops I did what Egil Bakka and Gediminas Karoblis call the first-person approach, by applying an autophenomenology; "One of the aims of autophenomenology is description and analysis of phenomenal experiences that were/are accessible only to me as the subject of these experiences" (Bakka and Karoblis 2010:180). I also video recorded the workshop that Yuval Pick offered. Combining what I saw in this video and what I experienced as a participant in the workshop (autophenomenology) I produced an analysis of the transmission in this situation. In order to assess what my key interlocutors in the field think about their own practice, I carried out interviews, both formal and informal. In my analysis I aim at establishing a parallel between what I saw and experienced in the field and what was told to me in these interviews.

Preparing the dancer: an analysis of the transmission in a workshop by Yuval Pick

To build my analysis I took inspiration from the work of Joëlle Vellet, who researched the transmission process in choreographer Odile Duboc's dance company. Her aim was to

study the processes in the construction of the dance gesture during the transmission of the dance, in order to understand how sensitive and physical dimensions are woven into the experience of the dance and how discursive practices can be an essential element in the emergence of movement qualities. (Vellet 2006:81)¹

Following her lead, I made an analysis of the transmission in the workshop focusing on the discourse. I perceived the workshop as being divided into three parts. Throughout it there is a clear evolution from exercises of guided movement exploration, in which the dancers move with some freedom, to executing a fully structured choreographic phrase. To do the analysis I took an exemplary moment of each of the three parts of the workshop and chose different parameters to do a microanalysis of them, that is shown in tables below, based on the video recording.

Part 1: creating body consciousness in movement exploration

In the first section of the workshop Yuval Pick guides the students in a movement exploration that occurs without interruption. There is no music, and the dancers are lying on the floor spread throughout the room, each of them in their own kinesphere. The teaching is only through verbal instruction since the dancers are not looking at the teacher or each other. Here I bring excerpts of the table that demonstrates the microanalysis of this part of the workshop. In this table I chose the triggers produced by Pick and the movements produced by the dancers as answers to these triggers as parameters.

Triggers	Movement
"And then very gentle you can move to your stomach".	The dancers from the company promptly roll to their stomachs. I and the others take more time to roll.
"Feel very much the flesh and not so much the muscles".	Bodies become more relaxed. Movement speed also drops.
Bilingual guidance "From time to time, <i>de temps en temps, vous pouvez</i> , eh, from time to time you can detach your upper body from the floor, coming to a seated position, finding your seat bones, finding your column vertebrae on top of the seat bones. aaaand coming back to the swimming pool".	At different times, all dancers start to sit and lay down again. The movement exploration is still focused on legs and hips, even though it now includes the sit up and lay down movements. When the dancers seat, they pause for a moment with their back straight. The speed is still slow, and the weight is light.
" <i>Comment tu sens tes pieds par terre, les talons, les orteils également</i> " (how you feel your feet on the ground, the heels, also the toes).	This detailed description of the parts of the feet brings the attention of the dancers to the feeling they are having in these different parts.

The first thing that strikes me in this table is that the phrases used by Pick as triggers lead the dancers in two different dimensions. One is what to do, the action, for example "move to your stomach" or "detach your upper body from the floor, coming to a seated position". The other is what to think about while doing, for example "feel very much the flesh and not so much the muscles" or "*comment tu sens tes pieds par terre, les talons, les orteils également*" (how you feel your feet on the ground, the heels, also the toes). This juxtaposition of functions was observed by Anne Cazemajou in a yoga-based introduction to a contemporary dance class.

The students, concentrated, turned towards themselves, are constantly adjusting and readjusting bodily to the demands made for them, trying to make their sensations coincide with the descriptions of the experience to be lived offered to them. It is therefore the way in which these multiple "things to do" and "to think" also work on the dimension of feeling that deserves to be questioned (Cazemajou 2013:68).²

Likewise, in the first part of Pick's workshop the dancers are focused on themselves and constantly adhering to a guideline that consists of things to do and how to think. This intertwining of functions works towards building body awareness in the dancers because it makes them reflect on what they are doing and feeling during the movement.

Part 2: building structure

During this section, which is the shortest of the workshop, dancers are either in a circle or travelling in space and mostly at a high level. Because of this change, they can see each other and are, therefore, affected by the others even though they are still focused on themselves. With the fact that the students are able to see Pick in this part, he starts to use visual guidance, by fully demonstrating the movements, along with the oral discourse to conduct the class. Therefore, the triggers used by Pick can be based on orality, body movement indications, or both simultaneously.

Another change in part two is that music is added. However, students are not supposed to move to its rhythm. The music is added only to build a shared soundscape. The transmission still relies mainly on guided movement exploration but, in this part, Pick also introduces very short and simple choreographic phrases that each dancer does in his/her own time. Students execute these phrases with the same attention towards themselves as the movement exploration, as I infer from my experience and interpretation of the video, showing that the phrase is also a way to explore their movement. Again, I bring an excerpt of the table that I built with the analysis of this part of the workshop.

Triggers	Movement
Pick demonstrates the movement phrase, a series of <i>développés</i> to the front, back and sides while bending the knee in the support leg. Meanwhile he says "right, and left, and back, very generous", whistles and says words like "aah", "woh" and "yeah", always articulating the sound he is producing with the movements.	Dancers start exploring the phrase at the same time they receive the explanation. They look and listen to Pick to understand the phrase. Each one does the movement in their own time.
Pick does the movement (<i>développé</i>) once more and says, "from the pelvis". After he goes back to watch the dancers moving and keeps saying "from the pelvis, from the celebration of the pelvis".	Dancers immediately start engaging more the pelvis in the movement. The movement that before was happening with a more stiffed pelvis becomes rooted in the movement of the pelvis. Before lifting the leg, dancers lift one side of the pelvis in the direction towards which the gesture leg is going to do the <i>développé</i> .

This table shows a simplification of the verbal triggers in comparison to those from part one. Because he is showing the movement, he does not need to offer such detailed descriptions of them. The students rely very much on the observation and imitate Pick while moving. When he stops moving to watch the dancers, the direction of their sights spread throughout the space without focusing on anything concrete suggesting that their attention turned back into their own kinesphere, as in part one.

Part 3: learning a choreography

In the last part of the workshop there is no more freedom for the dancers regarding movement or space trajectory because the dancers are learning and performing a choreography. Pick keeps using the oral discourse, but he is not stimulating self-awareness in the dancers anymore. He uses it to make them understand the movement qualities he wants using many onomatopoeia along the movements for this purpose. The music keeps being used, but now it imposes its rhythm on the dance. To attend to all these new demands, the focus of the dancers shifts. Their attention is not on their bodily awareness anymore. To learn and perform the choreography their attention must be in the space around them, the music, the other dancers, and the choreography that is being taught. In other words, the focus of attention is outside of their own bodies.

Pick teaches a choreography. He stands in the front, and the dancers behind him, creating for the first time in the workshop a hierarchised space. The dance space starts working through an

Italian stage³ logic. Pick, the authority over the choreography, is performing it downstage centre, and the rest are following behind. For the table with the microanalysis of this part, I chose different parameters because dancers are imitating Pick, therefore I analysed only the triggers produced by him, decomposing them into movement and verbal instructions.

Movement	Verbal instruction
<i>Développé</i> with left leg to the front.	"Forward"
Deep bend in the knees while lowering the upper body forward in a quality of melting down.	"Ahhh"

From the table I see a simplification of the discourse. Pick uses single words or onomatopoeias to qualify the movements he wants the dancers to do.

A striking realisation of all three parts shows that, in the first part the following elements are absent: music, determined space, precise shapes and qualities in the movements, visual reference, and relationship to the others. Part three is the opposite: all these elements are present and clearly defined, constituting an imposition on the movement of the dancers. The intermediary section of the workshop gradually adds structuring elements doing a smooth transition between these two opposite parts. The workshop in general evolves from having a relatively big freedom of movement and space to having none. The focus of the dancers evolves from the bodily self-awareness to the seek for fitting in a movement shape and quality that were pre-determined by the teacher.

Sewing together my analysis and what my key interlocutors said

According to my key interlocutors, individuality is in the spotlight in their work. About an audition process to join the company, one of dancers said

Yuval is choosing his dancers with his heart... He chose his dancers if his heart is beating for them when they dance... I saw him choosing some dancers and it was really like ... Crush. You know? Crush. (Interview Guillaume, 26 August 2020)

In my interpretation this "crush" means that Pick is less worried about the dancer's technique than he is in their idiosyncrasies. In the workshop, even though the last part is about imitating a choreography, the preparation for it is through the enhancement of bodily awareness, which can be seen as an enhancement of the dancer as an individual. Therefore the workshop prepares the dancer to develop himself, his inside, and use this developed self to dance a choreography that comes from the outside. Another dancer of the company spoke to me about the use of improvisation in the creative process in the company.

So, once we wrote it, ok this is your solo, and you know it. But each time when I dance this solo, I know that it comes from my improvisation experience. So, when I dance this solo, I keep this freedom... Now it's a choreography that I can follow. But still inside I can really dance, (be) really creative. (Interview Madoka, 27 August 2020)

According to her, it is possible to keep the feeling of freedom and creativity she has during an improvisation when she is dancing a choreography that comes from the improvisation. Again, I see the individuality of the dancer enhanced. The fact that they are dancing a determined choreography does not erase the quality they had as individuals when improvising.

In my perspective, the workshop works the same way. A good student will keep in the third space while performing the choreography and their individuality is enhanced as it was in the first and second, when doing movement exploration.

Conclusion

The transmission process in Yuval Pick's dance company starts by enhancing the dancer's individuality. This is made in the creative process through the use of improvisation and in the workshop through the movement exploration. In this moment, the dancers are focused on themselves, on their self-awareness: the inside. From this, they build a choreography to be reproduced, imposing a precise shape, space and rhythm on their bodies: the outside. In the context of the transmission of roles between dancers, the process starts from the choreography, therefore the dancers remain with their foci on the outside. However they are trained to work from the inside to the outside, and this training allows them to include their individualities in the given choreography.

Endnotes

- 1 My translation. The original is "*nous nous efforçons d'étudier les processus à l'œuvre dans la construction du geste dansé lors de la transmission de la danse, de façon à comprendre comment les dimensions sensibles et physiques se trament dans l'expérience de la danse, et en quoi les pratiques discursives peuvent être un élément essentiel de l'émergence des qualités du mouvement*" (Vellet 2006:81).
- 2 My translation. The original is "*Les élèves, concentrés, tournés vers eux-mêmes, ne cessent de s'ajuster et de se réajuster corporellement au rythme des demandes qui leur sont faites, tentant de faire coïncider leurs sensations avec les descriptions qui leur sont proposées de l'expérience à vivre. C'est donc la manière dont ces multiples "choses à faire" et à "penser" travaillent également la dimension du sentir qui mérite d'être interrogée*" (Cazemajou 2013:68).
- 3 The type of stage that is in the shape of a rectangle and only has the audience in one of its sides.

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Sydney HUTCHINSON

(Berlin, Germany)

"ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE DANCING": SOCIALISM VS. SOCIAL DANCE IN EAST GERMANY

In 1952 East Germany formed a Dance Music Working Group to produce 'modern' social dances able to compete with rock-n-roll. While the 1959 *lipsi* spread widely in the Eastern Bloc, youth protested it, and no real socialist alternative was ever found. My project uses experimental methods to explore such dances and how they drew on Latin American culture. In so doing, it uncovers tensions between internationalist culture and nationalist policy, socialist ideals and dance practice.

Keywords: socialism, social dance, politics, choreomusicology, experimental methods

Note

This contribution was originally a poster presented during the poster session. It has been reformatted for the page while retaining the same text. Links to associated media appear at the end of the paper. The title is drawn from the lyrics of a famous *lipsi* recorded by Helga Brauer: "Heute tanzen alle junge Leute" (widely available for listening and viewing via YouTube and other media).

"Second world music" project

- 6-year project, "Second world music: Latin America, East Germany, and the sonic circuitry of socialism"
- Run by Sydney Hutchinson, research associate, Humboldt University Berlin
- Assisted by interns Clara Bohner, Tyler Hastings, and Aldo Mauricio Lara Mendoza

Introduction

East German engagement with Latin American sounds was ongoing but changed over time.

1. 1950s–1960s: Social dance from or inspired by Latin American dances
2. 1970s–1980s: Popular music from or inspired by Latin American sounds
3. Throughout: International festivals in GDR where Latin Americans interacted with East Germans

Here I focus on the first period (1). Examples: *bambas* and *lipsi*

Through music and dance, East Germans put the ideology of socialist internationalism into practice, with enduring effects.

Socialist Social Dances

- Regularly published in *Der Tanz* 1959–1969
- At least 15 unique scores and choreographies
- Should be danceable by anyone
- *Lipsi* – most frequently mentioned of these

Experimental choreomusicology

- Collect scores & choreographies
- Analyze videos & recordings
- Play the scores, learn the dances, & share
- (see also Stepputat 2023)

Lipsi – a socialist success?

- Music by Rene Dubianski, 1959¹
- Concept: create something 'novel' from waltz + 'South American rhythm instruments'.
- Dance by Christa and Helmut Seifert (fritz51185)
- Concept: 'modern' social dance – but maintains typical gender roles.
- Widest circulation
- Estonian, Russian versions
- Dozens composed, few recorded (see Sonic Circuit Collective, "Pfeif-Lipsi")
- Target of jokes even in GDR by 1970s
- Resurrected after reunification
 - See for example Bürger Lars Dietrich's 2015 cover (fritz5124)
 - Performing *Ostalgie* (Eastern nostalgia) = pride in GDR + irony + marketing of GDR
 - Or, a symbol of (Western) ridicule
 - We recorded the previously unavailable "Pfeif-Lipsi"

Bambas – a socialist failure?

- Debut: 8th Workers' Festival in Potsdam, 1967, by Hennigsdorf Steel Factory dance club
- Printed in *Der Tanz*, 1967 no. 1
- Music by Gerhard Kunsch based on *danzón* (Figure 1)
 - Uses *cinquillo* rhythm (long-short-long-short-long), rondo form (ABACABA)
- Dance by Hildegard and Bernt Bethge (Figure 2)
- Apparently never recorded or danced socially

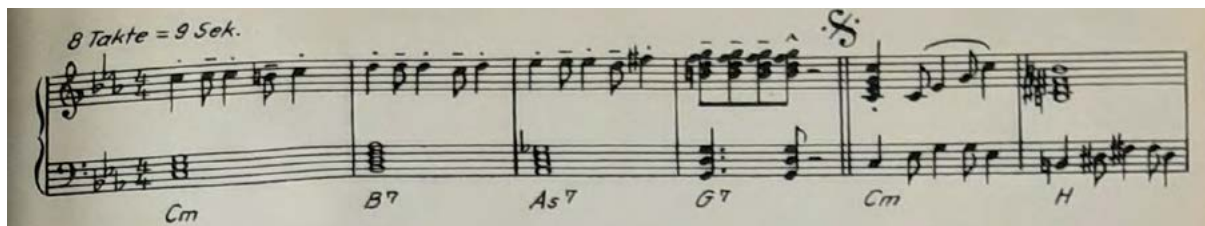


Figure 1. Introduction of *bambas* by Gerhard Kunsch, showing the use of the *cinquillo* rhythm. Source: *Der Tanz*, 1967, vol. 21, no. 1, overleaf.



Figure 2. Hildegard and Bernt Bethge demonstrate *bambas* in *Der Tanz*, 1967, vol. 21, no. 1, pp.8–9.



Figure 3. Still from Tiktok video of *bambas*, 2022 by Sonic Circuit Collective. From left to right: Aldo Mauricio Lara Mendoza, Clara Bohner, Tyler Hastings, Sydney Hutchinson (Sonic Circuit Collective, "Bambas").

Our experience with bambas

- We recorded the music
- We made a Tiktok dance video (Figure 3)
- We perceived a misfit between dance + music
- Dance seems more 'German' than music...²
- ...but musically, the odd harmonies and rests differ from Latin American model

What we know about East German socialist social dances

- East Germans used Latin American models for rhythms, form, and instrumentation
- Latin American sounds signified an alternative modernity (to capitalist one)
- Latin American moves were less easily incorporated into East German dance
- Only limited transculturation (compare Ortiz) possible

What we don't know

- Did people really dance *lipsi* socially?
 - If they did, what did it mean to them?
 - Or is its supposed popularity a post-reunification invented memory?
- Were the other dances used? How? When?
- Why was musical internationalism more successful than choreographic?
- How will our reconstructions contribute to these dances' afterlives?

Endnotes

- 1 Rene Dubianski also had a hit in Hungary, "Mariguana Chachacha", which was resurrected in the 1990s and inspires remixes even today.
- 2 According to interviews with interns upon conclusion of the reconstruction and recording process. The interns' cultural backgrounds were Mexican, Argentine, and Canadian so all were experiencing German culture as cultural outsiders.

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Emma PETROSYAN

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THE ART OF ACROBATS AND ROPEWALKERS IN ARMENIAN TRADITION

Acrobatics, ropewalking, and stilt-walking are among the oldest Armenian folk arts, combining aerial tricks with movements from traditional dance. Interviews with former performers reveal complex recent changes: the comic dialogues, stilt-walking, and many difficult tricks have been forgotten. A soundtrack has replaced the musicians; the hemp rope has been replaced by a metal tram cable and tractor springs, and the ropewalker no longer performs barefoot. Ropewalking has lost prestige.

Keywords: ropewalker, stilts, rope, Surb Karapet, trick, music, jester

A brief history of ropewalking

The earliest information about ropewalking has reached us from the era of the Kingdom of Biayna/Urartu (9th to 6th century BCE). Feasting scenes, apparently during Barekendan (Shrovetide) celebrations, are depicted on bronze belts. They feature acrobats, dancers, and musicians who walk on their hands, spin, jump, and walk on stilts, while accompanying themselves on instruments. Performances with trained animals, especially acrobatic games with bulls, were common not only on Crete and among the Hittites, but also among the Armenians during the Kingdom of Biayna/Urartu, as evidenced by drawings preserved on bronze belts (Seidl 2004:141).

The writer Eznik Koghbatsi (5th century) testifies about the training of animals. Philosopher David Anhaght (6th century) writes that ropewalking and stilt-walking are not useful but not harmful crafts in life (Anhaght 1960:104). Many medieval miniatures preserve images of acrobatic games and trained animals. An illumination on the margin of the manuscript of "Grigor Astvatzaban" of Archimandrite Aristakes (1688–1689) depicts a ropewalker, *zurna* player, and drummer.

Surb Karapet (Saint John) was considered the patron saint of rope dancers. Perhaps he replaced a pre-Christian deity who patronized ropewalkers and wrestlers. According to folk tradition, Surb Karapet treated the sick and the lame, granted various requests, allowed childless couples to have children, and more. On church holidays for saint's days, the priests invited ropewalkers and wrestles to honor the designated saint, taking advantage of the commoners' love for the celebrations.

Acrobats and ropewalkers were folk professionals and traveled as troupes. They did not have a stationary base. Ropewalkers were itinerant and performed on open urban spaces. They typically stretched their rope across the central square of a city or village, where a large number of spectators could fit. After the performance, the ropewalker walked from house to house on stilts, blessed the family, and collected payment for his performance.

A lot of evidence testifies that ropewalkers performed in various provinces of Armenia in the 19th century. Ethnologist V. Bdoyan (1963:175–185) collected and published valuable information. He describes the ropewalking positions during their performances, illustrated by artist H. Katsakhyan.

Information in G. Levonyan's book (1941:166–181) helps us to reconstruct the performances of Armenian tightrope walkers in Constantinople. The famous power athlete Hovhannes Gasparyan, who received the nickname "Nor Hercules" (New Hercules) for his strength, organized a group of ropewalkers with several friends. Their first performance took place on an open area in Constantinople in 1846. The following year Gasparyan formed a permanent group called the "Aramyan Company" and founded a circus, which continued until 1866. The names of the participants are known, and consisted of twelve tightrope walkers and a jester. Gasparyan's first show with friends was in 1848 in Constantinople. One of the most famous acts performed by the group used fire and a pair of ropes, 100m and suspended 20m high.

Gasparyan's troupe also performed in Yerevan, staying at the square near the Ghantar market in the summer of 1850. A festive atmosphere prevailed on the day of the public performance in the city. The playground was covered in colorful carpets with rich Armenian ornaments. The performance with the fire became a major event in the life of the Yerevan residents, who had never experienced such a thing before.

Two pre-revolutionary postcards depict the ropewalker's show with equivalent inscriptions in Russian and in French: "*Народные развлечения в Эриванской губернии*" and "*Fête du rouple dans le gouvernement d'Erivan*". Posters inform us that a troupe of midgets of the Nikitin Russian Circus and of the Yesikovsky Circus also performed in Yerevan, a branch of which later opened in Yerevan.

The ropewalkers group in Yerevan

Ropewalkers are itinerant, not having a permanent venue, but performing outdoors on open areas. Therefore, their art belongs both to the town and the village. Performance venues in cities however, are larger and more diverse. Surb Karapet games were performed in churchyards, as well as in urban and rural squares. In old Yerevan, ropewalkers games took place on Tsakhi square near the Ghantar market. Each group had about sixteen acrobatic and dance tricks.

At the beginning of the 20th century, about ten groups of ropewalkers performed in Yerevan. They mostly came from the village of Tapadibi (now Yeranjatap). Soon some of them settled in Yerevan. These groups were in constant competition. Difficult tricks were honored not only by other ropewalkers, but also by the residents of Yerevan.

After the establishment of the Soviet government, ropewalkers continued their performances in Yerevan as well as in villages. They performed, apparently, also near the eastern bazaars, where there were many merchants and buyers. There they could earn a good income. There were many shopping centers in Yerevan, and acrobats could earn good money there too. Sometimes, a ropewalker walked on the stilts from house to house after the performance on the rope, blessed the family, and collected payment for the show.

Losses and innovations in the performances

The Russian Revolution caused changes in the life of Yerevan residents, which were also reflected in changes in the situation for ropewalkers. To research this question, I recorded the memories of six former ropewalkers and a jester in Yerevan, got acquainted with their instruments directly, and watched the shows of the next generation of ropewalkers. Since I took two groups to festivals, I observed their hierarchy of relationships directly.

It should be noted that the ropewalkers and the members of their teams were not residents of Yerevan. Constantly performing in Yerevan however, they contributed to the culture of the city, especially by demonstrating dexterity and courage, which are important for the upbringing of children. The names of many tightrope walkers are unfortunately forgotten, but the older generation of citizens in the 1990s remembered the name of the talented acrobat and ropewalker Vachagan.

Vachagan and his parents left Igdir during the Armenian-Turkish war in 1920. They settled in village Ankavan, near ancient town Armavir. There Vachagan learned tightrope walking from Karapet, a native of the Martakert district of Karabakh. After completing his training, he gathered his group and began performing in Yerevan, Gyumri, and in many villages. To secure dependable assistants, Vachagan taught two children of Aristakes and Khachik Mirzoyan, also refugees from Igdir. In the 1940s, when he was performing in the village of Tapadibi (now Ernjatap) Vachagan took three Umrshatyan brothers with him as assistants: Patvakan, Ambartsum and Benyamin. These children's grandfather Sargis Harutjunyan was a ropewalker in the town of Khlat until 1915.

When they finished their training, the brothers formed two teams from among the residents of Tapadibi. As a rule, close relatives were involved in the troupe, because of the intense trust required. Over time, this village became the center of training and dissemination of the art of tightrope walking,

although it didn't gain as much popularity as the Dagestan Tsovkra group, which became part of the Soyuzgoscirk (Soviet State Circus institution).

Vachagan is associated with important abilities and accomplishments. He performed acrobatic movements on a pole (in Arm. *dirak*), on stilts, and rode a bicycle on the rope. He was the first to replace the thick hemp rope with a metal rope. Ashot Mkrtchyan, his pupil, was able to take over Vachagan's numbers. Ropewalkers today cannot perform *dirak* or Vachagan's feats on stilts.

Musician Inglis Mkhitarian told me, "I tell you the following story of how the riding on the rope with a bicycle came to Yerevan. A German acrobat with two children performed in Yerevan on tour until the 1920s. When his tour was over, and seeing that Vachagan was a good master, he gave him a steel cable and a bicycle. It is possible that he didn't want to take such a load on the road. Then Vachagan replaced the hemp rope with the metal cable. But since it was impossible to move barefoot on a metal cable, as had been done on a hemp rope, he put on donated shoes". Now all tightrope walkers perform in sports sneakers. So gradually innovations were introduced (Petrosyan 1993:24).

Ropewalker Patvakan also used a cable, and then his nephew Zhora Armenakyan used it. When the cable was worn out, the ropewalkers begged for an electric line from the tram depot. The metal cable made it possible to ride a bicycle in the air by pulling the tires off and placing the concave bicycle rims over the wire.

In the past, before a performance, the ropewalker prayed silently, asking for the patronage of Surb Karapet and his balancing pole. The audience joined in wishing good luck. With the establishment of the Soviet Union, the ropewalkers change some of their traditions and their tricks. The Soviet state was anti-religious and the ropewalker and the audience were forbidden to pray. It was forbidden to mention Surb Karapet. The people fell silent, the jester, addressing to the audience, could sarcastically say: "Look, he didn't pray, and still he doesn't fall off the rope".

In pre-Soviet times, when a tightrope walker came to the village, he asked the headman or priests for permission to perform. During the Soviet era, the Executive Committee of Yerevan included tightrope walkers as employees of Houses of Culture. The bureaucrats demanded a list of performances and their program, and confirmed them with their official seal.

Ropewalkers' clothes have changed. The performers' waistcoats used to feature stitched talismans protecting them from the evil eye. These have now disappeared. Similarly, girls stopped tying handkerchiefs on the rope to invoke the protection of Surb Karapet. Also in the Soviet period, ropewalkers were no longer invited to people's homes; the tradition of bringing dishes or fruit as gifts for performers, as was once common in villages, has ceased. Audience members now only give money.

In the past, logs borrowed from villagers were used to suspend and secure the rope. These were returned after the performance. Over time, such logs were replaced by metal pipes, and the ends of the cable were attached to springs removed from a tractor. Earlier, when performances ended, usually, someone from among the townspeople provided a cart for the further transportation of the performers' tools. Now ropewalkers have cars and everyone travels in this way. The apparatus is simply loaded on top of the car.

An interesting dialogue took place between the ropewalker and the jester as part of the performances. Their script consisted of five or six comic scenes. While the tightrope walker rests between tricks, they begin to argue. Now no one remembers the dialogues, although I managed to record an elderly jester in 1993. The intonations and pronunciation of the text were very similar to the utterances of clowns in the modern circus. Such is the power of tradition.

The composition of the group has also changed in recent years. Previously, it included one or two assistants, two players on *zurna*, one drummer, and a jester. With the change to metal cables, the assistants and the second *zurna* player were eliminated. The rope could now be pulled and secured by the jester and two musicians. The traditional *zurna* and drum are not in use any longer. The ropewalker performs to a recorded soundtrack.

The tightrope walker is the leader of the group; the second authority is the first *zurna* player. The jester has the fewer rights and the lowest position. Most often, the tightrope walker and player on the first *zurna* have the highest level of responsibility. The jester relies on the ropewalker, and the drummer is dependent on the second *zurna* player. This general group structure remains valid today.

Traditionally during a performance, after the end of the third trick, the jester begins to collect money from the onlookers. The jester gives the money to the assistant who serves as the cashier. The entire group counts the money together, and the funds are then distributed by the ropewalker. The income is usually divided into 6 equal parts: three parts for the three musicians, one part for the jester, one part for ropewalker, and one part for the rope (which also went to the ropewalker).

During the distribution, the *zurna* player first said a traditional prayer: "Mshu Sultan, Surb Karapet, be the protector of (insert name of the ropewalker), two for you, one for us". The amount collected has decreased in recent years, and the division among participants. The interviewees suggest that the participants trust each other less now. The jester might steal a few coins by keeping them in his shoes. The jester's clothes have no pockets in which to hide some of the money but nevertheless, sometimes he manages it. If someone of the group finds out about this, the ropewalker beats the jester brutally.

If the ropewalker sees that there are few spectators, then he might reduce the number of tricks, such as riding along the cable on a tray, walking on a board on glasses, etc. Previously, this was not allowed, and the people condemned such behavior.

In recent years, folk and professional ropewalking arts are also demonstrated in the Armenian circus. Vagharshak Arzumanyan was an outstanding and representative talent of the Armenian circus. He performed as an equilibrist and gymnast from 1924–1926. Later Arzumanyan began to work in almost all circus genres, but his most outstanding number was "Flying on his head". Standing on his head, he descended from under the dome of the circus along an obliquely stretched cable down to the arena. He performed this trick in many countries. We conclude by noting this additional innovation in modern Armenian tightrope walking has expanded into two types of performing venues – outdoors and indoors in the program of the Armenian circus collective.



Figure 1. Acrobat walks on stilts. Bronze belt (VIII cent. BCE). Source: Ursula Seidl, *Bronzekunst Urartus*. 2004, by Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz am Rhein, Germany, p. 141, fig. 99.

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'AUTHENTIC' ATTRACTION: STYRIAN FOLK DANCE AS A COMMODITY BETWEEN TOURISM, EXPECTATION, AND STYLIZATION.

This study examines how folk dance develops in tourist regions of Styria (Austria), in contrast to areas where Styrian folk dance is not 'used' for tourism. "Staging of the authentic" (Arleth and Kagermeier 2008) or "staged folklore" (Muri 2001) play a major role in making a place more attractive and so able to profit from tourism. With the awareness of constant cultural change; stylization and re-contextualization (Kunej 2004) offer both chances and risks when trying to fulfil tourists' expectations.

Keywords: folk dance development, cultural tourism, staged folklore, Austria, Styrian folklore

Introduction

In Styria (Austria), folk dance draws on a long history without tourism. Currently, it is increasingly becoming an attractive commodity in intercultural and international exchange. I examine whether there are differences in the development of Styrian folk dance depending on whether it is practiced in a tourist region of the country or in an area where it is not 'used' for cultural tourism, and how these differences are manifested in different ways. Previous research suggests that Styrian folk dances adapt to the expectations of guests through contact with tourists, and frequent performances for those not familiar with the culture. Styrian folk dances performed in culturally familiar surroundings 'do not necessarily have to' function as an attraction. I therefore assume a stronger deviation in the practice of Styrian folk dances in tourist regions than in non-touristic locations. The research field so far includes the tourist region Ausseerland/Salzkammergut in northern Styria, but also various dance and cultural events spread across the rest of Styria, mainly in the south.

Cultural tourism: a guest-host symbiosis

For more than a century tourism has been increasing rapidly, and cultural tourism is the fastest growing category of this industry; in Europe, 4 out of 10 tourists choose their destination based on what the local cultural offers (Jelinčić and Senkić 2019:1). Since the 1980s, tourists have increasingly wanted to not only *see* the other culture but to get to know it intensively and experience it in person (Jelinčić and Senkić 2019:5). The idea of making the locality an attractive destination through the active presentation of one's own culture (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1998:152) appears to be no longer sufficient; a concept of participation is needed, to make the guests co-creators of their cultural vacation experience and to break down intercultural boundaries (Arleth and Kagermeier 2008:164). Through this knowledge and the implementation of the guests' wishes and needs, culture became a marketable product (Arleth and Kagermeier 2008:165f) and a commodity to profit from. Where there is a product, there is also an image. Ultimately, this image stirs up the expectations of its customers, in this case, tourists. For guests and hosts, the conveyed "authenticity" only plays a role insofar as it enables them to experience a staged hyperreality. It appears, a world filled with stereotypical symbols purports to impress tourists far more than reality does. The adaptation of such symbolic structures enables tourism providers to let tourists actively participate in the culture, while simultaneously preventing surprises and disappointments among

guests so as to fulfil all expectations, albeit self-staged ones (Muri 2001:60f). Muri summarizes the result under the term "staged folklore", or in other words: "staged authenticity" (2001:61). It is precisely this shift towards the arranged and organized at the expense of the improvised and free, spontaneous movement that also has varying degrees of influence on folk dance as part of a tourist host culture.

Engagement with expectations in Styrian folk dance culture

Currently (as of summer 2022), it is apparent that in the Styrian tourist regions (for now Ausseerland/Salzkammergut) more value is placed on what dancers call the "old-fashioned" practice and passing on of dances than in the non-tourist regions. Dominik Pucher, chairman of the "Volkstanzgruppe Altaussee" (Altaussee folk dance group) (see figure 1), emphasizes that his group does not orient itself to outside expectations, but rather sticks to 'old' patterns for the sake of tradition:

As soon as there are certain expectations from the outside, we as a traditional folk dance group react all the more with the opposite of what is demanded. Freely according to the motto: 'I am for being against it.' This restraint of our members in this matter is also quite welcome. Down-to-earth-ness and scepticism keep us from adapting to the demands and desires of modern society.



Figure 1. The Folk Dance Group Altaussee during filming for an Austrian cultural television show (Servus Musikantenstammtisch on ServusTV). On the far left, chairman Dominik Pucher. (Picture: Instagram: volkstanzgruppe_altaussee, 15 May 2022)

For example, in Ausseerland still only men are allowed to perform *Paschen*¹ and sing *Gstanzl*,² which are considered important components of Styrian folk dancing. Meanwhile, the women form an outer circle in which they turn around their own axis, swaying and swinging their *Dirndl* (traditional dresses) until the men's part is finished and the couple part of the dance begins. At dance events in non-touristy areas of Styria, this gender-segregated practice is considered "conservative and outdated" (Holzmann 2022). There, although men also form the inner circle to perform the *Paschen* and *Gstanzl* part and the women form the outer circle, they too sing along and some join in clapping in the *Paschen* pattern as well. The women are free to participate or not.

Standardization becomes apparent insofar as in the Ausseerland only four of the dancers "important folk dances" (*Altsteirer*, *Ausseer Landler*, *Waldhansl*, *Schleuniger*) are danced regularly both in small, private celebrations and large events tailored to the expectations of regional audiences and tourists. The four dances listed above are all considered "difficult", but, above all, they carry meanings as outwardly "attractive" dances within the folk dance community. In the

rest of Styria, at least the 10 basic Styrian dances and the 12 Styrian figure dances are cultivated within folk dance associations, but usually, this includes many more. This visualizes the change of form and the reduction in repertoire, as expressed by Kunej (2004:153): "The folk dances on stage are very standardized, preserved dance patterns are formed, some dances or their variants are danced more often and others are omitted completely." In this context of its reinterpretation, Styrian folk dance seems more entrenched than in its original form. However, this does not result in a fundamental impoverishment, but rather in an enrichment of the dance. The new possibilities and variations make it possible to offer the audience a wider variety of dances, all based on the same dance (Kunej 2010:148). This is also the opinion of the folk school teacher, folk dancer and folk dance musician Sophie Wimmer from Grundlsee (Aussee/Salzkammergut) (2022):

The most important thing is to teach children and people in general the traditional basics of dance, both in terms of practice and knowledge about it. After that, the dances can be adapted to the situation and the people who practice them, to their abilities and motivation.

In addition, there is the situational adaptation to the counterpart; hosts thus represent their 'authenticity' in a contemporaneous way; they take "the real thing" based on cultural memory and living experience (Foley 2015:147) and place it in a new context. In short, a version of the dance tradition suitable for tourists is created, which on the one hand promotes the preservation of one's own tradition, and shields it off from excessive influence by foreign cultures, but still meets the needs of tourists. The local traditional dance style is commercialized, re-contextualized, and stylistically performed (Foley 2015:151). The example of the dancers from Aussee shows that the length of the performance time available especially has an impact on the choice of repertoire and the implementation of the dances. The shorter the performance, the more 'attractive' the performance has to be. In other words, more stereotypical symbols that help to market the dances as 'culturally authentic' are used. A concrete example of this would be dances with *Gstanzln*, *Paschen* and many figures. It needs the recognition value to be 'interesting' for the audience:

[...] taking a step [...] and playing theatrically with its movements, rhythms, and style of performance to re-present it in a manner that accounted for audience interests and entertainment. (Foley 2015:151)

Only then tourists are truly satisfied and can return home with the impressions they acquire. For dancers, it means an ever-changing and varied engagement with traditional "raw material", as Richards (2001:55) calls it, to create experiences, both for themselves and for their guests.

Conclusion

The fact that folk dance evolves with the changing times was never in doubt. Equally, it is perhaps little surprising that it does so at varying rates and to different degrees in different regions. In accordance with my initial assumption, the preliminary results indicate that a different development of Styrian folk dance under the influence of cultural tourism can be recognized. It is interesting to note the attitude of dancers towards this development. Especially folk dancers from regions influenced by tourism want to be more careful not to let their dance tradition be changed, at least not by guests, and their expectations influenced by various media. Nevertheless, especially in this region, a strong standardization in the dance repertoire is emerging, as cannot be found anywhere else in the country. Dancers and non-dancers of this region know about it and call it a characteristic of the local dance practice. At the same time, during my folk dance journey through Styria, I was made aware that in non-touristy regions folk dance is lived and performed in a much more open and informal way be it step and form sequences, gender separation or understanding of

the flexibility of a living tradition. More field research is needed to substantiate further cross-field findings, alongside an understanding, from the perspective of tourists, about their experiences and expectations. However, it is gratifying to see a symbiosis between guests and hosts in a touristic cultural landscape, along with a multi-layered profit on both sides.

Endnotes

- 1 *Paschen* refers to common rhythmic clapping of the lads and men in the Austrian-Bavarian area, always following a sung *Gstanzl*, mostly in the context of a folk dance (*Landler*, *Steirer* and others) [...] up to six different rhythms are '*pasched*' at the same time. *Paschen* occurs predominantly in the *Salzkammergut* [and consists of] *Vorpascher* (basic rhythm), *Zuahipascher* (syncopations) and *Sechsterer* (e.g. syncopated every six eighths in three-quarter stroke) (Krautgartner 1986).
- 2 *Gstanzl*: Austrian-Bavarian song form in dialect, mostly as quatrains in couple or cross rhymes, both fixed lyrics and room for improvisation. Predominantly in three-quarter time signature.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC MOMENTS OF THE 32ND SYMPOSIUM

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The beginning, Friday, 29 July 2022: The museum entrance, the beginnings of the 32nd Symposium, opening ceremony and opening of the exhibition *Matt Hoyer: The American Goes Back Home* in the Posavje Museum Brežice.

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From Saturday to Friday, 30 July–5 August 2022: Great contributions and thought-provoking debates from session 1 to session 23 between those in the room and the online participants on the display, initially without health restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

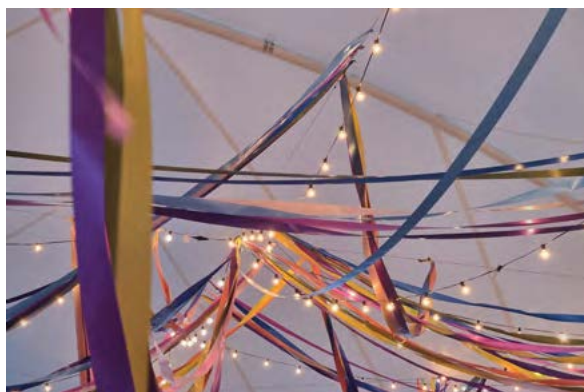
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The **half-day excursion** took us to nearby villages Mostec (ferry across the Sava river), Brezovica na Bizeljskem (wine cellar), and Artiče, where we finished in the village's open-air museum with a dance.

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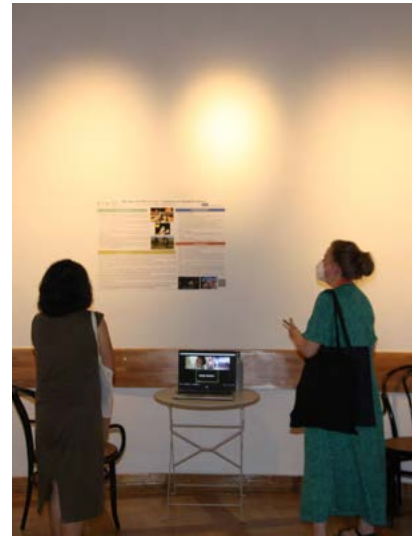
A variety of additional programmes that enriched our Symposium evenings: the local festival *veselica* in Bukošek village on Saturday; a dance and a song on Sunday to honour Allegra Fuller Snyder, Adrienne Kaeppler, Anna Ilieva and Selena Rakočević, the members who passed away; dance workshops with the Slovene Ethnological Society on Monday and with ICTM members on Wednesday; the social dance evening in the castle yard with Robert Petan and his quintet on Thursday; the closing ceremony on Friday with performance of the Folk dance group Artiče.

At the 3 August 2022 **Business meeting of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology**, Placida Staro was elected as the Chairperson and the host country for the next symposium was selected.

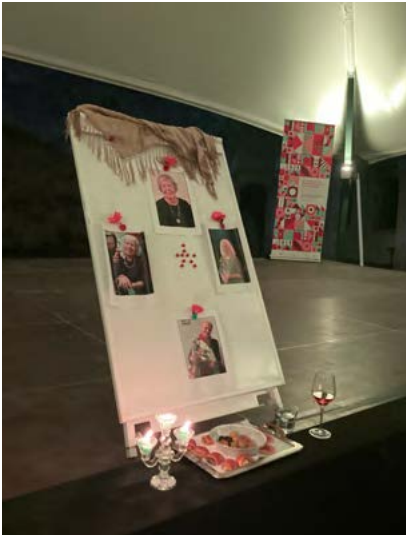


We extend a warm welcome to Turkey in 2024, which will continue this ethnochoreological story of ICTMD.













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