Dance Genealogy: Tracing the Unarchived Epistemology of Practice

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Abstract

The epistemology of dance, namely, how dance is understood and the circumstances through which it is utilised and re-enforced as knowledge-making, is paramount to the development of dance and its history. I am not concerned about defining what dance is—that is separate from the main discussion of this article; rather, I address the way and the conditions in which it is captured, archived, transmitted, and re-used. A dance genealogy can be synthesised by examining one's autoethnographic dance archive, including unarchived content. Applying dance genealogy to trace the historiographic and ethnographic lines of thought about matters pertaining to dance and performance is a crucial requirement for further study and exploration. In this article, I discuss an excerpt of my autoethnographic dance-based journey and piece together the experiences I collected, as well as the practices and knowledge that shaped my dance genealogy. Using my background helps form a point of reference for further critical analysis. It offers a method of combining research on the performativity of dance, as experienced from the practitioner's and archive user's perspective, and the liveness of dance through reflecting on experiential knowledge. This creates another relationship of critical analysis between the epistemology of the (dance) practitioner and their genealogy so as to open up a post-structural methodological approach to inscribing cultural and social history.

Keywords: dance genealogy; memory; embodied practice; embodied archive; autoethnography

1. Memory as material and process

The consideration to piece together my 'self-archive' as a standpoint, like a mnemonic device with a set of 'hypomnemata'—an anthology of work and life experiences and events, akin to journaling or memo-writing—first arose at the beginning of my

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doctoral research (2017–2021) as a Cotutelle PhD Researcher at Coventry University in the UK and Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia. I looked to establish an autoethnographic worldview as a dance practitioner and to value learning by 'osmosis', in other words, the practice-based knowledge I had accumulated over the years. Thinking of the archive in this way enhances the provenance of the raw material of one's artistic oeuvre and the intrapersonal relationship of the material with one's sense of selfhood and how this is identifiable in an artist's work, profile, and archive.

Hypomnema is a type of journaling that was popular in ancient Greece. Foucault highlights that Plato refers to *hypomnemata* in his *Phaedrus* dialogue (ca. 400 BC), which was a type of notebook, a copybook, and a trend during a period in which writing was considered 'a material support for memory'.[2] Foucault refers to *hypomnemata* as a technology of the 'self', in which, during ancient Greek times, the practice of writing about the 'self' to increase communication with oneself to understand what the 'self' is; as a collective 'self' embedded in the sense of the 'self' as an individual. It was a new technology in those days since many philosophers moved from oral transmission to the written record as the embodiment of memory and the transmission of words, history, and literature. *Hypomnemata* are also accounts, registers, notebooks, and a sort of scrapbook which serves as memoranda:

> Their use as books of life, guides for conduct, seems to have become a current thing among a whole cultivated public. Into them one entered quotations, fragments of works, examples, and actions to which one had been witness or of which one had read the account, reflections or reasonings which one had heard or which had come to mind. They constitute a material memory of things read, heard or thought, thus offering these as an accumulated treasure for rereading and later meditation. They also formed a raw material for the writing of more systematic treatises in which were given arguments and means by which to struggle against some defect [...] or to overcome some difficult circumstance.[3]

I drew on my 'memory' as a tool and my 'memory' as a dancer or, in the context of *hypomnemata,* my 'material memory' to develop each piece of writing, like this article. Moreover, piecing together a type of dance genealogy, like a family tree, gave

[2] M. Foucault., "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress: From Michel Foucault – Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics", The Foucault Reader: An introduction to Foucault's thought, London: Penguin Books, [1984] 1991, pp. 363.

[3] M. Foucault., "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress: From Michel Foucault – Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics", The Foucault Reader: An introduction to Foucault's thought, London: Penguin Books, [1984] 1991, pp. 364-365.

me an overview of my autoethnographic dance practice trajectory and revealed ideas, themes, and concepts related to my practice, ethnographic background, cultural standpoint, and research interests that seem to continue to perform and transform according to the topic that I address.

In other social and cultural contexts, dance and the aspect of embodiment have offered invaluable methods of being in the world as a 'body specialist'; with this, I mean that I trained my body through my dance and somatics-based training, and I gained a vast amount of knowledge through experience. To some extent, this knowledge is stored or archived in the body as an organism and is also associated with how my body and myself relate to the environments within which I (we) move and work. Drawing on pre-Socratic philosophy and ancient Greek poetry and literature, in which I was educated at school while growing up in Cyprus, I collected a set of concepts about the self, the body, and time, which I carry with me in life. I learnt that during the 5th and 6th centuries BC, philosophers and historians viewed the self and the body as a collective substance and essence, both material and immaterial and part of everything and nothing. These concepts and theorisations stem from thinking that predates Western philosophy. Some pre-Socratic philosophers, such as Heraclitus, argued that all things are in a state of constant change, which he named 'becoming'.[4] He is known for claiming 'Τα πάντα ρεί' (Ta panta rhei)—'all flows' and 'you cannot step twice into the same rivers; for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you. It scatters, and it gathers; it advances and retires' (Heraclitus in Laertius 300 BC).[5]

Heraclitus argued that all is changing; therefore, it is impossible to identify what is real because constant change is what is ultimately real, which can be a problem for 'being' in the world. However, Heraclitus did argue that the only constant was the *logos*, which can mean several things in Greek. *Logos*, in this context, refers to a strategy or a plan but can also mean reason. For Heraclitus, *logos* was a strategy to find and form structure through differentiation by identifying commonalities in differences, positioning and placing material and immaterial things, and making sense by inventing a formula. I borrow Heraclitus' concept of 'becoming' as a way of

[4] P. Pecorino. An Introduction to Philosophy: An online text book. Introduction to Philosophy by Philip A. Pecorino (see references for more details)

[5] The references in these paragraphs are based on original Greek source material compiled by Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz in *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Zurich: Weidmann, 1985). Much of the biographical information on the pre-Socratic philosophers, such as Heraclitus, comes from Diogenes Laertius (3rd century BCE), *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, available in various translations. https://www.utm.edu/staff/jfieser/class/110/1-presocratics.htm.

viewing matter/material[6] as constantly transforming and searching for a structure or form that organically develops from the material itself.

Likewise, I connect Foucault's notion of the technology of the 'self', whether collective or individual and offer a notion of the 'body/self' as a reference in my analysis; I consider that to be a type of arena, a place, a location where events take place. Similarly, Tim Ingold writes about understanding the 'self' as a locus, as he refers to how the Ojibwe people refer to the self as a location that is not necessarily inside or outside, or even anywhere specific. So, 'in short the self, as a locus of ideas, plans, memories and feelings, seems to exist as a substantive entity, quite independently of where it is and what it does'.[7] The 'body/self' is a place where events happen, and its *hypomnemata* are the archived 'material memory' of its becoming.

As a dancer, one becomes a 'body specialist' who is well-versed in embodied knowledge, collecting information and moulding it in one's movement repertoire and body memory, as well as understanding how to transmit this knowledge in various contexts. In order to acquire this dance knowledge, one needs to travel, significantly if one has grown up on a small island with insufficient access to knowledge of the arts. I travelled for dance knowledge based on practice and acquired it through 'enskilment' and 'wayfaring'. Here, I am referring to Ingold's concept of 'enskilment' to emphasise that the acquisition of skills in dance requires, as he suggests, the embodiment of skills, 'capacities of awareness and response environmentally situated agents'.[8] Then, 'wayfaring' highlights the element of journeying, literally moving through and testing concepts by practising these physically and processing information through perception-in-action as a way of moving through and absorbing content as 'a sense of knowledge-making, which is equally knowledge-growing'.[9] Through 'wayfaring', I developed and refined practice-based skills and came across many interesting tensions between the practice of dance, the archive, and the materiality of dance content. Throughout my practice and research, I have been interested in find-

[6] This is a reference to how Laurence Louppe refers to dance content in her book *Poetics of Contemporary Dance* (2010) and her suggestion for discussing the matter of dance and the production of dance-based content, which she refers to as matter/material produced by an author (or collectively).

[7] T. Ingold. The Perception of the Environment: Essays in livelihood, dwelling and skills, Routledge: London, UK, 2000, p.103.

[8] T. Ingold. The Perception of the Environment: Essays in livelihood, dwelling and skills, Routledge: London, UK, 2000, p.5.

[9] T. Ingold. "Footprints through the weather-world: walking, breathing, knowing", *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 16, Making knowledge, pp. S121-S139*. Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40606068, 2010, p.122

ing ways and words to name what I do as a dance practitioner, whether in the context of creating and producing dance, teaching dance, and applying contemporary dance as a pedagogical approach. This demanded a tentative approach to the translation of experiences and movement practices into written texts.

To weave the various themes and 'matters' of my research, I draw upon ancient Greek mythical practices and metaphors such as the Titaness of Memory and Time, Mnemosyne and her daughters, the Muses. According to Greek Mythology, Calliope (epic poetry), Clio (history), Euterpe (music), Erato (lyric poetry), Melpomene (tragedy), Polyhymnia (hymns), Terpsichore (dance), Thalia (comedy), and Urania (astronomy) were the Muses and keepers of the arts and sciences who shared one mind. In the following digital copy of a photograph of a mosaic of the Titaness (Titan Goddess) (Figure 1), Mnemosyne (Memory) places her hand on the back of a man's head, symbolically aiding his memory. This also recalls my upbringing and high school education in Cyprus, in which emphasis was given to the island's connection with ancient Greek linguistic and philosophical traces. According to Hesiod's *Theogony,* kings and poets received their powers from Mnemosyne and the Muses, thus controlling and accessing memory, knowledge, oral history, and oral tradition, which predated written literature. Mnemosyne was also one of the names of the five rivers at the entrance of the Underworld; it was known as the river of Memory from which souls would drink in order to remember. Otherwise, souls would drink from the river Lethe (forgetfulness) to forget (delete all their life's content) before the migration of their souls to the afterlife. Once the souls of mortals arrived in the Underworld, they had to choose to drink from Mnemosyne and remember all their pains and the lessons learnt from their life or drink from Lethe and forget all they had experienced and knew. The souls that drank from the river of Mnemosyne in Hades' Underworld were those who could migrate to the Elysian Fields.[10] This idea of Memory, being accessed as water from a river, inspired me to consider dance as a fluid—moving content that transforms into something liquid, solid (ice), and vapor (gas).

Plato offers another way to consider the embodiment of memory when he references Socrates in Theaetetus 191c (trans. Fowler), referring to the Titaness:

> Can he [man] learn one thing after another? . . . Please assume, then, for the sake of argument, that there is in our souls a block of wax, in one case larger, in another smaller, in one case the wax is purer, in another more impure and

[10] Hesiod, Theogony (trans. Evelyn-White). 915 ff. [online] available from <www.theoi.com> [20 July 2018], ca. 800-700 B.C.

(Figure 1.) 'Antioch, House of Mnemosyne' (2nd – 3rd century AD). An image of a Mosaic depicting Mnemosyne.

> harder, in some cases softer, and in some of proper quality . . . Let us, then, say that this is the gift of Mnemosyne (Memory), the mother of the Mousai (Muses), and that whenever we wish to remember anything we see or hear or think of in our own minds, we hold this wax under the perceptions and thoughts and imprint them upon it, just as we make impressions from seal rings; and whatever is imprinted we remember and know as long as its image lasts, but whatever is rubbed out or cannot be imprinted we forget and do not know.[11]

Many authors, historians, and poets of the ancient world called upon the Titaness to tap into the river of Memory to access ideas, thoughts, reason, and knowledge, and the Muses' gifts of creativity, poetry, theatre history, music, astronomy, and dance. However, Mnemosyne's association with reason and knowledge disappeared due to the establishment of the written word and literature occupying more cultural space. Nevertheless, she is occasionally remembered as the goddess of oral tradition and

[11] Plato, Theaetetus (trans. Fowler) Greek Philosophy C4th B.C. 191c [online] available from <http://www.theoi.com/Titan/TitanisMnemosyne.html> [20 July 2018], 400 B.C.

intangible knowledge. This mythical story provides a helpful entry point for writing about dance because it mirrors how dance has shifted its place in the archive.

I also invite the reader to consider 'the body of the archive' as a somatic matter/material that continually changes. Like the block of wax in the above quote, Plato references Socrates' description of the gift of Mnemosyne (memory). Combining pre-Socratic and Socratic notions of matter/material forming and transforming, I suggest that 'the body of the archive' of dance transforms itself through in-depth embodied engagement with the archived material, just as our experiences constantly shape our memories according to our current standpoint. In the same vein, a dance performance continues to perform and emit further impressions and narratives as we recall it.

Many memories are ignited throughout my research and when engaging in any form of dance research, such as visiting different archives, interviewing dance practitioners, choreographers, dancers, and performers, and looking at artefacts. Memories of conversations, moments of dance improvisations and sketches I kept in unsorted files for years resurfaced and took on a whole new meaning. Originally kept to serve as evidence for funding bodies who have sponsored or otherwise supported my work, the material contributed to developing a portfolio. I also kept them for myself as souvenirs, memorabilia, and as part of experimental journaling and creating memory boxes that one day would become a body of my work and dance genealogy. Images, such as those in the following pages, which I kept stored away, evoke a new sense of meaning to my practice and perception of archiving dance and become an inventory of resources for further development.

Many encounters and collections of information through my dance practice along the way kept pointing in the direction of dance transmission, dance documentation, capturing dance, and dance archiving. Collecting and holding on to these materials was necessary to make my practice tangible and serve as an archive to draw upon. In addition, the drive to constantly collect the very few traces (ephemera), which are both evidence and memorabilia of the act of dancing, helped me identify a need for access and connection to dance content in general, especially in Cyprus. Whether they are the traces of my dance practice or another dancer's or choreographer's, the work we produce and the creative strategies we synthesise to compose and transmit this material and knowledge are part of a cultural tapestry and dance heritage that is constantly moving and always on the verge of disappearing.

Considering disappearance as fluidity and plasticity as an act of transformation, knowledge is remembrance, and memory is embodied knowledge. In this article, I pay tribute to my formative years as a dancer in a Greek-speaking environment in Cyprus. I evoke Mnemosyne's spirit and invite her daughter Terpsichore and her sisters to don their sneakers[12] in exploring the ephemeral dance matters across the archives of dance history, present, and future, as I trace my dance genealogy journey.

2. Dance Genealogy

Performance scholar Diana Taylor advocates for performance as a means of preserving and sharing local cultural knowledge that also gives insight into a broader global context.[13] Through my practice as a performer, creator, and producer of work, I have often found myself needing content—seeking sources or resources of existing practice for an idea I was developing or for proposing work and developing interdisciplinary dialogues for the creation and production of work. Along these lines, creating a repository of works with the digital means we possess today is imperative. Furthermore, digital preservation scholar Laura Molloy encourages the next step—how to store and share this knowledge further by providing practitioners, especially those outside of institutions, with the tools and expertise to digitally preserve and curate their performance work.[14] As a process of tapping into my river of Memory (inspired by Hesiod's poetic description in Theogeny), my dance training background and how I accessed knowledge about dance and dance history serve as a starting point to map out one's dance genealogy. I started by writing down the people, techniques, and practices learnt through body-to-body transmission in dance classes, workshops, pixelated images in books and magazines and videos of dance performances, and some rare performances in Cyprus and Greece.

In this context, it is essential to mention that I was born and raised in Cyprus, a land with thousands of years of history. Cyprus only became an officially recognised country in 1960. In 1977, it reverted to half a recognised Republic and, in 2004, it be-

[12] This is a reference to Sally Banes's book *Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-Modern Dance* (1987), in which she documents the history and development of postmodern dance, its artists, performance works, and trends of the sub and popular culture produced by this movement.

[13] Taylor, D., The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas, Durham, USA: Duke University Press, 2003.

[14] Molloy, L., 'Digital curation skills in the performing arts – an investigation of practitioner awareness and knowledge of digital object management and preservation', International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media [online] 10(1), 7-20, DOI: 10.1080/14794713.2014.912496, 2014.

came part of the European Union. A land on which its people speak a 2,500-year-old vernacular Arcadocypriot Greek, which has been orally transmitted for centuries and is still spoken, but Greek and Turkish are its officially recognised languages. Cyprus has a wealthy and complex intangible cultural heritage that appears to be fragmented in historical outputs in different places globally, in museums, and archives, according to ongoing colonial empires that settled on the island throughout history. So, I grew up in a country with hardly any archived history of its own but with many adopted post-colonial tendencies.

Much of Cypriot history relies on storytelling, family photographs, and many archaeological digs. Growing up in Cyprus in the 1980s and 1990s, seeing a dance performance, especially a contemporary one was rare. In those days, the only two indoor theatres on the island hardly hosted any dance performances. The small number of dance performances were guest appearances from a representative ensemble of a Bolshoi ballet performance group, a tour of Flamenco dancers, many ancient Greek tragedies and comedies (it was a tradition to perform these in outdoor amphitheatres in summer), several folk dance festivals and a small number of dance performances from local dance practitioners who had just arrived from studying dance abroad (mainly in the UK and some in Greece, Germany and Canada).

The first two dance companies producing contemporary or modern dance in Cyprus were formed in the mid-1990s—Echo Arts and Corpus Animus—and I had the privilege to dance with the latter. Unfortunately, the only footage I had access to regarding contemporary dance was from VHS tapes that my dance teacher, Natasa Georgiou, shared with us as part of our afternoon modern dance class in the mid-1990s, for which I had to travel three hours to another town and back to take the class. However, I remember watching Mats Ek's reworked version of *Gissele* (1982) and Ultima Vez's *La Mentira* (1992), a dance video by Wim Vandekeybus and Walter Verdin. I still have vivid images of these recorded dance performances I had seen as a teenager. I was so impressed by them that I was curious to know more about this type of dancing and how bodies could move and dance like this. I was also lucky to have viewed a live performance with Steve Paxton in Cyprus in 1997, aged 17, in the context of the first Mediterranean Dance and Disability Program Extended Mobility (1997–2000). I still remember how curious I grew about all matters pertaining to dance, movement, and the body. There was no internet then, so my investigation into studying dance relied heavily on body-to-body transmission from taking classes with teachers in Cyprus who had taken courses with specialists trained abroad.

My undergraduate dance education—in Athens at Rallou Manou Professional Dance School—and practice were based on classical ballet, modern dance technique, rhythm and dance composition, dance improvisation, Greek dance drama (Rallou Manou), contemporary dance techniques, and choreographic methods closely related to European and American dance lineages.[15] As a dancer, I learnt to store, embody, and apply these techniques according to the demands and vision of each choreographer regarding each dance work, and this varied with each dance company or project. After working as a dancer in Cyprus, I moved to Germany, learnt the language, delved into teaching ballet and contemporary dance to children and young adults, and began developing workshops on dance composition and dance improvisation for adults. As a dance educator in Germany, I tried to find ways to break down all this stored and embodied knowledge in order to communicate it and offer a foundation for others to build on.

Beyond merely documenting one's ethnographic background and dance education, it is advantageous to employ a tailored set of inquiries aimed at gathering comprehensive data regarding diverse practices, performance experiences, and professional connections. Insights can thus emerge concerning collaborative endeavours and knowledge-sharing dynamics alongside the immersion in specific techniques or practices fostered within particular places, venues, and institutions. Employing a visual representation, such as a mapped inventory, enables the delineation and contextualisation of pivotal elements including individuals, venues, concepts, narratives, and milestones, which can be further organised chronologically or thematically. In the following sections, I exemplify this approach by elaborating on two distinct periods of my own dance genealogy, focusing on practice-based improvisation experiences and the resulting thematic outcomes. Furthermore, I delineate the research-oriented aspects, outlining the conceptual framework and empirical findings derived from these endeavours.

As a dance practitioner between 2005 and 2010, I often worked with an art professor, Wolfgang Mannebach (b. 1959), from the European Academy of Arts in Trier.

[15] The specific techniques, artists and methods associated to the dance education I have been trained and educated in include: classical ballet (RAD – Royal Academy of Dance and Vaganova method), modern dance techniques (Graham and Limón technique), rhythm and dance (Delsarte, Dalcroze and Laban system), dance improvisation (stemming from early 20th century Isadora Duncan, Eva Palmer- Sikelianos and ancient Greek drama influences), Greek dance drama (Rallou Manou), and contemporary dance techniques (Contact Improvisation form of dancing, Release technique and dance composition - Doris Humphrey) closely related to European and American dance lineages.

Mannebach conducted *Tanzmalerei* [16] workshops throughout Germany, and I was engaged as a dancing model for his workshops. Directly translated, *Tanzmalerei* stands for 'dance drawing' or 'drawing dance'. Mannebach would refer to his practice and drawing method as *Der Tanz auf dem Papier* (dance on paper) or *Bleistftmusik* (pencil music) due to the sound of pencil or any other writing tool on paper. As a dancing model, I would engage with movement, stillness, and improvisation with or without music. On some occasions, with live music, the painters would capture the 'dance on paper' and improvise with the 'pencil music'.

On rare occasions when the workshops took place as a drawing dance residency or retreat for a series of days, a musician and two dancers performed for the workshop participants. The dancing artists and musical companions would interact either all together or through the medium of their art practice in a lengthy improvisational *pas de deux* or *pas de trois* for days. The workshop participants would capture and record the *Tanzmalerei* in their own way, using whatever painting material they applied on paper or canvas. The drawings were then displayed, discussions followed, and another round of improvisation in dance and drawing would follow until lunch or dinner time intervals. This was similar to the dance ensembles of the *Ausdruckstanz* era. That expression, through movement and the body as a means to communicate emotions free from balletic restrictions, was inherently elemental in the creative process. Some drawings were preserved by spraying a fixative type to keep the paint from dripping or the chalk from disappearing, while others were thrown away. I kept some that would be otherwise thrown away. This habit reflects my ongoing interest in dance documentation—collecting traces and creating archives or memory banks to recollect and (re)use as a type of databank.

In *Tanzmalerei,* I was not concerned with a 'signature practice'[17] as an improviser, but rather with exploring the ability of the dancer's body to become a vessel for expression. The rhythm of the communication between dancer and painter generated the drawing impetus, and the dance was captured through the imprints of drawing, putting pen or brush or chalk to paper. Similarly, my experience and practice in fa-

[16] *Tanzmalerei* is a word often used by Wolfgang Mannebach to mean draw dance. Mannebach's website with the same name (https://tanzmalerei.jimdo.com/) describes his method and explains his other two concepts of dance drawing called *Der Tanz auf dem Papier* (dance on paper) and Bleistiftmusik https://tanzmalerei.jimdo.com/das-projekt-bleistiftmusik/.

[17] 'Signature practice' is a common term in dance scholarship and dance artistry. Promoted by dance theorist Susan Melrose, it refers to a type of trademark practice of a choreographer encompassing all the dance influences that a choreographer may have learned, collected, and embodied; it includes what makes their body of work and style identifiable. Source: https://www.sfmelrose.org.uk/jottings/ (Melrose 2009)

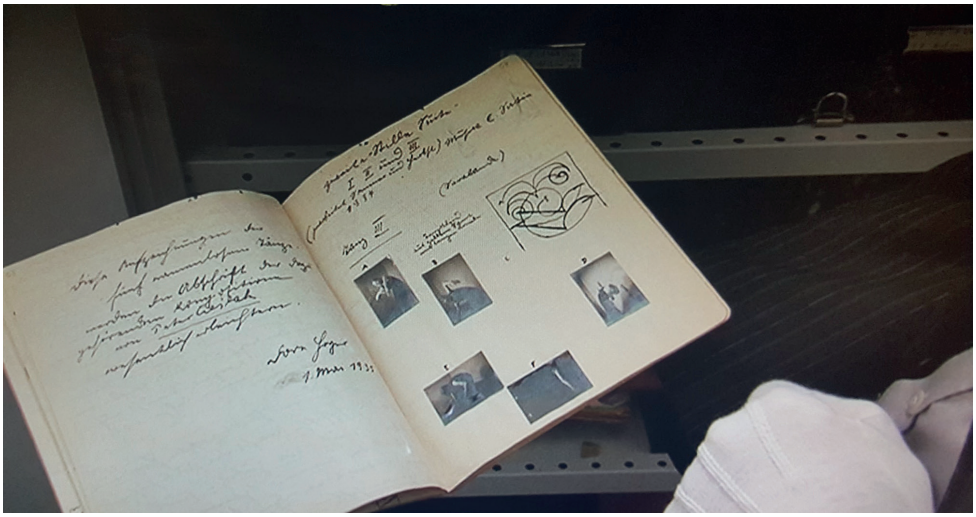
(Figure 2.) Another dancer and me dancing at the Bosener Mühle Tanzmalerei workshop in spring 2007, sketched by workshop participant and painter Renate Gehrke.

cilitating workshops felt like an organic approach to developing an environment for learning and exploration. Additionally, investigating concepts, ideas and content in a workshop that requires embodied inquiry offers a researcher like myself the potential to investigate through somatic engagement. This is familiar and reinforces my approach to generating knowledge through my dance practice. Moreover, facilitating workshops creates an environment for learning, analysing, and discussing within the

(Figure 3.) Drawing of my dance improvisation by Tanzmalerei workshop participants, Ansbach, Germany, 2006.

context of a group through body-to-body transmission, thus sharing knowledge and practices and allowing new, unexpected ideas and narratives to form.

Mannebach focused on facilitating a sense of creative flow for the painters, the dancer, and the musician by using rhythmical impulses, words, poems, and, now and then, playing with pauses. He would request from the painters that they pass around a piece of paper where they would draw the dance, one painter after another, capturing the dancer moving in space, and he would give this to the dancer as a gift (Figure 4).The influence of expressionist dance and dance theorist and choreographer Rudolf Laban (1879–1958) would often be mentioned in Mannebach's workshop, who also had great admiration for dancers and choreographers such as Dore Hoyer (1911–1967) (a page from her notebook is presented in Figure 5). Hoyer was a student of Mary Wigman (1886–1973) and Gret Palucca (1902–1993), and Mannebach often mentioned that my way of moving reminded him of *Ausdruckstanz* dancers. It was interesting that although I was not trained in *Ausdruckstanz*, and it was never taught as such during my early dance studies, these expressionist aesthetics had bled into my dance practice through various other dance techniques I had been exposed to, such as Graham and Limon dance techniques, as well as rhythm and dance analysis. Such drawings are part of the sparse documentation of my dance improvisation sessions.



(Figure 4.) An excerpt from Dore Hoyer's diary taken from a snapshot of Mind Your Step: Fünf Tanzarchiven auf der Spur (2009), a documentary about the trails and traces of five German dance archives. Produced by Ulrich Scholz and the Deutsche Tanzfilminstitut Bremen, and published by Tanz Plan Deutschland. The item can be found in the Tanzarchiv Leipzig special collections, Albertina Library, University of Leipzig, Germany.

There are three points that are relevant to my own dance genealogy in this short section: 1) Mannebach referenced *Ausdruckstanz* as an art form in the context of visual arts workshops; 2) I gained experience of this through references during my undergraduate studies, and as a moving model, and through this experience, I became curious about how dance is transmitted and by which means and media it can be made tangible; and 3) it prompted me to ask how a dance lineage or genealogy of dance can be identified. In other words, what was it that Mannebach saw in my movement, which reminded him of Hoyer's dancing, a dancer he had never seen dancing live and a choreographer I had never heard of until then? Similarly, the poet William Butler Yeats asks: 'How can we know the dancer from the dance?' in his poem *Among School Children* (1933). It is interesting how Yeats, as a contemporary of *Ausdruckstanz* dancers, hints towards the idea of not distinguishing the dancer from the dance, which helps respond to the question about a particular style of dancing that can be identifiable in another dancer decades later. It also highlights that the questions about distinguishing the artist from the artwork are not new. The analysis of his poem and that particular quote have been interpreted in various ways. Still, in the context of this article and the theme of dance genealogy and preservation, it high-

lights how intricate the connection is between the dance artist and the dance work and how this amplifies the challenge of documenting and preserving this art form. In hindsight, however, it also reflects the nuanced and intelligible set of aesthetics and bodily sculpting developed by dance practitioners and choreographers into a dance style and how other artists can identify these in allied fields of study and art practices.

Mannebach introduced me to Renate Gehrke (b. 1948), a visual artist and frequent workshop participant whom I had encountered in these workshops. Gehrke is one of Laban's grandchildren. She and Mannebach suggested that the dance archive in Leipzig was worth a visit due to its collection of Laban and Wigman's legacies, other choreographers' works, and their 'dance on paper' traces. I grew curious about the traces that dance leaves behind and how we transmit dance, and I wanted to know more about dance documentation and archiving. The intriguing challenge of transmitting dance and developing my dance practice in more depth led to my postgraduate studies (2009–2011).[18]

During my MA research project, 'Communicating Choreography: Managing and Fine-tuning Creative Process' (2012), I excavated how dance practitioners and choreographers use their practice to transmit dance. My curiosity was born out of frustration while working in creative processes and encountering communication hindrances in group settings. I felt the need to improve and enhance how dance was communicated within the parameters of production[19] of performing arts-related works and events. This led me to investigate further how dance and choreography can

[18] I learnt, studied, and collected practices from in-person workshops, artistic research laboratories, and courses and sessions on choreographic practices and methods from a variety of practitioners such as: Yuval Pick, Crystal Pite, Deborah Hay, Mary Overlie, Rob Hayden, Bruno Caverna, William Forsythe, Kurt Koegel, Trude Cone, Ka Rustler, Gabriela Staiger, Lance Gries, Dieter Heitkamp, Jean-Guillame Weiss, Gill Clarke, and Myriam Gourfink, amongst others. I also explored dramaturgical methods related to dance making and dance composition from dance scholars Freya Vass-Rhee, Petra Sabisch, Ana Vujanovic, and dramaturge Guy Cools.

[19] The parameters of production are the circumstances and conditions under which we can identify the social and cultural parameters of creating dance. These modes of production were discussed in workshops and a series of talks on referenced publications, and were delivered through conceptual games and strategy building. The social and cultural backdrop of these games drew on concepts of cultural capital, cinematic obstructions, everybody's toolbox, walking theory, and valorisation of the ways in which we create and produce work. This segmentation model of the modes of production was delivered and shared in the context of Motion Bank Workshops No.1 (2012). Source: http://motionbank.org/en/event/motion-bank-workshop-no1.html. In this video, Petra Sabisch and Ana Vujanovic briefly summarise what was addressed in the workshop Everybody's and Walking Theory and propose Modes of Production: Games and Discussions. The link and further details can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQSj7ZA-od4

operate as a strategy in broader social and cultural contexts, and then later, where all this knowledge ends up, for whom, and how it can be accessed.

At this point, I was deeply interested in dance history, how choreographers transmit dance, and how they communicate choreography throughout a creative process. For my MA research project,[20] I followed a qualitative data collection methodology in which participant observation and interviews were central. I conducted a series of interviews with choreographers Gabriele Staiger and Lance Gries, and communication specialist Kirsten Brühl. I found that through interviewing and discussing methodologies or methods of dance transmission with Staiger and Gries, I learnt more about their dance genealogy and their autoethnographic stories and how this information fed into their creative practice and eventually influenced their creative material. I could better understand and then distil their composition or movement language method, which made it easier to embody and transmit them further. My interview with Brühl gave me insight into effective communication strategies and ways of transmission in various contexts, which proved necessary for creative practice and performance production.

Staiger's choreographic methodology, which I recorded in my thesis, drew heavily on Laban Movement Analysis (LMA).[21] Reflecting on Staiger's methodology, I can also detect a deconstructivist approach to how she diffracted her dance-making process with her dancers and utilised Laban's methodology in fine-tuning the communication of her concepts. As a system of analysis, LMA investigates movement by describing with precision what actions are taking place, where in space they are

[20] 'Communicating Choreography: Managing and fine-tuning creative process' (2012) was the title of my MA thesis where I investigated different ways in which choreography can be communicated. My data collection entailed interviewing two choreographers, a communication specialist, documentation from attending several dance workshops and working as a choreographic assistant during my placement opportunities. Moreover, within the framework of practice as research modules at the University of Music and Performing Arts, I was able to collect more data through participant observations in several workshops and research projects in the context of the Motionbank Project at Frankfurt Lab. I collected the methods applied by the dance practitioners and explored the distillation of these methods, along with various ways of documenting them; I presented a selection of methods and tools to support effective communication within creative processes (Charalambous 2012)

[21] Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) is a method for describing, visualising, interpreting, and documenting varieties of human movement. Related to Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis, the method uses a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating contributions from anatomy, kinesiology, psychology, Labanotation, and many other fields. It is a type of Laban Movement Study, originating from the work of Rudolf Laban, developed and extended by Lisa Ullmann, Irmgard Bartenieff, Warren Lamb, and many others. (Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies 2021). Source: https://labaninstitute.org/

happening, with how much effort, all in relation to the other bodies in space. The descriptions and action of 'writing it down' can assist in making the performance of the movement more tangible. It is a helpful way of recording movement with words, signs, or symbols used in Labanotation, notes in a music score, or words placed in a sentence. Movement (inevitably a vague term) thus becomes disentangled, moment by moment, into smaller actions orchestrated to form a dance sequence with a calculated set of codes. Labanotation and related ways of scoring dance can be used for analysis and re-enactment. However, writing and reading Labanotation requires specialist training.

During this period of my postgraduate studies, I was lucky to witness and be part of several projects that focused on dance documentation. One was Dance Plan Germany,[22] a project that traced contemporary dance technique lineages and assembled them in a large-scale publication (book, DVD, and web platform). Additionally, I was involved in initiatives and projects that attempted to link resources such as dance archives, dance documentation projects, and publications on contemporary dance.[23] Consequently, through my dance education, I absorbed and embodied a variety of movement styles and techniques, some of which were influenced by *Ausdruckstanz*[24] and modern dance traditions. I had heard of *Ausdruckstanz* through the ' History of

[22] Dance Plan Germany (*Tanzplan Deutschland*) was a project funded by the Federal Cultural Foundation from 2005 to 2010 to develop sustainable dance measures. The goal was to comprehensively and systematically strengthen the field of dance. Dance Plan Germany promoted artists and young talent, dance training, cultural education, and the cultural heritage of dance. Source: https://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/en/programmes_projects/theatre_and_movement/detail/tanzplan_deutschland.html

[23] Digital Dance Atlas aimed to collect dance archives and other dance resources from across the globe. A number of projects were launched between 2009 and 2011, amongst them MotionBank and RePlay. A list of these projects can be found on the Dance Plan Germany website (mentioned in the previous footnote) and in an editorial by dance scholars Scott deLahunta and Sarah Whatley that can be found at https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1386/padm.9.1.3_2.

[24] *Ausdruckstanz* means expressive dance in German. It is a dance style and methodology of dance practice and/or choreography that combines various choreographic languages, with themes closely related to expressionism. According to Susan Manning, *Ausdruckstanz* artists often used the definitions 'new', 'artistic', 'modern', and 'rhythmic'; they brought to the fore the free-moving, almost naked body (Manning 2007). *Ausdruckstanz* was defined as 'German dance' because of artists' international tours and to differentiate it from other modern dance styles at the time. During the Second World War, Ausdruckstanz was used as a national and racist tool and was therefore misunderstood by the rest of the Western world. It was wrongly translated into 'expressionist dance' in other European countries and further developed as *Tanztheater* (dance theatre) in West Germany. It was taught in institutions under different names or within other practices. An interest in *Ausdruckstanz* resurfaced in the 1970s through publications on Mary Wigman, one of them by Walter Sorell (1973) and an exhibition on Laban at the *TanzArchiv Leipzig* (Franco 2007).

Dance' module during my studies in Athens. It was mandatory to learn and devise dances through training rhythm and dance practices from European and American genealogies of dance, for which we were also assessed. To develop a cohesive portfolio of my own ethnographic mapping of my dance background, I sought to eventually create a dance family tree, a mesh of genealogies branching out and connecting with my interest in documenting, tracing, and tracking, so that I could fully grasp these lineages and how they correlate, and what ideas or concepts they may carry and relate to.

However, I always felt the way dance was transmitted, captured, and codified within the dance studies framework in higher education was insufficient, and I observed that there was an absence of any discourse relating to this in Cyprus. Through my doctoral research (2017–2021) and engagement with dance archive content, I had the opportunity to reflect on my autoethnographic journey and dance training development. To retrospectively contextualise my dance genealogical journey, I pieced together my dance practice lineage and body of knowledge. I examined the many items I collected over 25 years of dancing: images, drawings, ephemera, photographs, and video recordings became an informal mini archive. Through this process, I gained a broader perspective on my dance practice, as well as the styles, aesthetics, and concepts that informed my practice. Also, the various narratives that inspired my approaches and the findings came through reflecting on and reconsidering the relationships between situations and narratives in one's archive and, in a broader sense, in a dance archive.

3. Conclusion

Piecing together one's practice-based background and dance genealogy helps to utilise memory and position one's work and research. It gives a rationale for the necessity of embodied enquiry while using one's training and excavating existing practices and knowledge. The last two decades have seen increasing discourse on 20th century dance and performance in Cyprus, although the topic remains sparse and unarchived. It is known through discussions and talks with practitioners. Furthermore, there has been ongoing development of contemporary dance and performance activity over the last two decades. This leads me to a question how we preserve and archive this development of cultural growth in Cyprus other than through our collective and subjective mnemonic devices.

However, how this diverse type of content should be organised, preserved, and utilised or how the archival should function is a process of learning by osmosis—ex-

ploring dance genealogy-based approaches can offer a way of writing up the archival. This hints towards the impossibility of finding and fixing one absolute method of archiving dance, but instead requires a subtle and ongoing process of gradual structuring and restructuring based on the process and the practice of genealogy through developing a writing practice akin to 'hypomnemata', which allows for multiple methods to arise suitable to the variable nature of dance as live art.

Moreover, the intersection of artistic inquiry and the exploration of ephemeral dance phenomena has ignited my passion to conceptualise and cultivate dance genealogy as both a mnemonic tool and a tangible practice. This conviction crystallised as I delved into cultural policy, arts administration, and the orchestration of expansive dance and performing arts ventures under the auspices of the European Capital of Culture Programmes. This journey compelled me to interrogate: Where do our records reside? How do we access and disseminate our collective output within the dynamic realm of live art? These questions underscore not only pedagogical necessities but also the need to nurture our field's interdisciplinary evolution. Consequently, my commitment to documenting and preserving dance narratives transcends mere archiving; it seeks to galvanise multidisciplinary dialogues and scrutinise the socio-cultural significance of dance and corporeality within historical frameworks.

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Figures

(Figure 1.) 'Antioch, House of Mnemosyne' (2nd -3rd Century AD) Museum Collection, Hatay Archaeology Museum, Antakya, Turkey, Mosaic, Imperial Roman period. [online] available from <https://www.theoi.com/Gallery/Z19.1.html> [18 July 2018]

(Figure 2.) A sketch of the dancer and me in the Figure above while dancing at Bosener Mühle *Tanzmalerei* workshop in Spring 2007, sketched by workshop participant and painter Renate Gehrke. Capture: Erica Charalambous

(Figure 3.) Drawing of my dance improvisation from *Tanzmalerei* workshop participants, Ansbach, Germany, 2006. Capture: Erica Charalambous

*(*Figure 4.) An excerpt from Dore Hoyer's diary was taken from a snapshot from *Mind Your Step: Fünf Tanzarchiven auf der Spur* (2009), a documentary about the trails and traces of five German dance archives. Produced by Ulrich Scholz and the Deutsche Tanzfilminstitut Bremen and published by Dance Plan Deutschland. The item can be found in *Tanzarchiv* Leipzig special collections, Albertina Library, University of Leipzig, Germany. Capture: Erica Charalambous