

# **TIMES OF CHANGE**

Artistic Perspectives and Cultural Crossings in Nineteenth-Century Dance



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Artistic Perspectives and Cultural Crossings in  
Nineteenth-Century Dance

edited by

Irene Brandenburg, Francesca Falcone,  
Claudia Jeschke & Bruno Ligore



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#### FRANCESCA FALCONE & CLAUDIA JESCHKE

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## Preface

The proceedings in this publication derive from the international conference *Times for Change: Transnational Migrations and Cultural Crossings in Nineteenth-Century Dance* (Salzburg, 28–30 November 2019), which was realized on the initiative of Francesca Falcone as a transnational cooperation among university and non-university dance institutions in Italy, France, and Austria: AIRDanza (Associazione Italiana per la Ricerca sulla Danza), aCD (association des Chercheurs en Danse), and the Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg (Fachbereich Kunst-, Musik- und Tanzwissenschaft). Following the symposium *Danza e ballo a Napoli: Un dialogo con l'Europa (1806–1861)* (Naples 2017)<sup>1</sup>, researchers with diverse scholarly and artistic backgrounds from Europe and the United States gathered to address the multifaceted spectrum of nineteenth-century dance cultures. The focus was on the phenomena of artists' mobilities, exchanges, and transfer processes between cultural spaces and metropolises, as well as on the interconnections and interdependencies among artistic networks, choreographic practices, and specific institutional and sociocultural contexts. In a lively, open dialogue, we not only discussed different scholarly opinions, but also critically evaluated traditional positions and concepts of dance historiography. Moreover, the conference united scholars belonging to diverse research networks and gave them the opportunity to gather again or meet for the first time, creating vibrant relationships, both on personal and professional levels.

With the present volume, we, the editors, present the results of the Salzburg conference with the expectation that the authors' texts will contribute to closing gaps in knowledge, and provide new impulses for future research on dance in the so-called 'long' nineteenth century.

The realization of the conference and the publication of the present volume result from the committed and creative collaboration of various individuals and institutions. The editors' thanks go to the members of the scientific committee who conceived the conference and selected speakers and papers: Roberta Albano (Independent Scholar), Irene Brandenburg (Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg), Francesca Falcone (formerly Accademia Nazionale di Danza, Rome, and President of AIRDanza), Nicole Haitzinger (Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg), Bénédicte Jarrasse (aCD, Labex Obvil Université Paris-Sorbonne), Bruno Ligore (École Doctorale SHAL, Université Côte d'Azur, Nice), Paologiovanni Maione

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the proceedings: *Danza e ballo a Napoli: Un dialogo con l'Europa (1806–1861)*, ed. Paologiovanni Maione and Maria Venuso (Naples: Turchini Edizioni, 2021).

(Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella, Naples), and Maria Venuso (Istituto Suor Orsola Benincasa, Naples).<sup>2</sup> Our sincere thanks are also extended to several groups, including the scholars who presented their research results in Salzburg and/or contributed with their papers to this publication. Nicole Haitzinger, Ingeborg Zechner, Bénédicte Jarrasse, and Matthew Werley spiritedly moderated the panels of the conference and added important impetuses for thoughtful discussions. We also thank the Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg for providing the welcoming local infrastructure and technical support, Hubert Auer for the photographic documentation, and the dedicated team of the Abteilung Musik- und Tanzwissenschaft, especially Nicole Kühnen, Julia Lipold, Miriam Ljubijankic, Andrea Pilz, Natalie Stadler, and Anna-Lena Wieser, who ensured the preliminary and on-site organization as well as the successful operation of the conference. We are equally grateful to the libraries and collections mentioned in the list of illustrations, which provided images for the publication or permitted reproductions. This gratitude is especially true for Debra H. Sowell and Madison U. Sowell, who not only generously shared several images from their outstanding collection with other scholars but also made an important and appreciated contribution to this publication by carefully proofreading the final texts in English.

Without the financial support of the co-organizing institutions—AIRDanza and aCD as well as Stadt Salzburg, Land Salzburg, and the association Freunde der Derra de Moroda Dance Archives/Tanzwissenschaft Salzburg—the symposium and this publication would not have been possible. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to all of them!

Salzburg, Rome, Munich, and Paris  
November 2022

Irene Brandenburg, Francesca  
Falcone, Claudia Jeschke & Bruno  
Ligore

<sup>2</sup> Scholars' home institutions refer to those of 2019. For updated affiliations please see their biographical sketches at the conclusion of this volume.

## Editorial

### Historiographing Mobility

This edited collection of conference proceedings attempts to trace some of the many ‘symptoms’ of the intersecting and influential dance practices in the ‘long nineteenth century’<sup>1</sup> and to link them as transnational phenomena from an interdisciplinary point of view. According to the theory of *histoire croisée*,<sup>2</sup> dance events can be examined in terms of dependencies, interferences, and entanglements, and can be studied by looking at the multidirectional aspects of transfers. In this sense, research on groups and/or families of dancers is revealing, because, by making themselves visible through their art, performers have shaped various trans-spatial communities. This undoubtedly shifts the parameters of ‘foreign cultural influence,’ validating the *métissage* or blending of identities innate to every culture.

The authors of these essays primarily negotiate questions of mobility and, through the abundance of the articles and their range of content, concept, and methodology, allow for expansions and differentiations within the canon of dance history. ‘Mobility’ not only concerns geographical changes of place and spatial awareness, but also challenges people’s mindsets that might involve stylistic changes in one’s agency. Furthermore, ‘mobility’ affects the many dance productions and their reception, *vis-à-vis* aesthetic considerations; the ability to move can also be considered the core of sociologically emancipatory activities. Before proceeding with an overview of the articles contained in this book, we desire first to make some observations on the theoretical path that led us to the organization of our 2019 conference in Salzburg, as well as the effect that the event has subsequently exerted on our reasoning.

#### Questions of Time and Space

German historian Reinhart Koselleck formulated in his writings the existence of “sediments or layers of time,”<sup>3</sup> a notion by which he aimed at “undermining unquestioned ways of employing time in historic interpretation,” as summarized by

<sup>1</sup> The concept is explored throughout the trilogy of Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789–1848* (London: Abacus, 1962); *The Age of Capital 1848–1875* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973); *The Age of Empire: 1875–1914* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Michael Werner, Bénédicte Zimmermann, “Penser l’histoire croisée: Entre empirie et réflexivité,” *Le genre humain* 42 (2004): 15–49.

<sup>3</sup> Reinhart Koselleck, *Sediments of Time: On possible Histories*, transl. Sean Franzel and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 3. “My topic is ‘sediments of time.’ And I should preface it by noting that, as a historian, I am not capable of making any claims based on the laws of physics or biology.

Hagen Schulz-Forberg.<sup>4</sup> Koselleck's reasoning fostered our own perception of the nineteenth century, stimulating us to rethink this period as a *layering* of temporalities, as we shall explain below.

The question of time had, moreover, become prominent among members of the conference's scientific committee since our earlier discussions regarding the most appropriate title for the 2019 conference. *Times for Change* then seemed to be a reference to the concept of the *hic et nunc*, fundamental to the application of the first of the three tracks explored by Koselleck in his 'layers of time' theory, namely that of the 'layer of short-term unique experience.' He cogently observed that against the linear concept of history, going on from one period to another, "there are multiple historical times present at the same moment, layer upon layer pressed together, some still volatile, other already hardened."<sup>5</sup> When all these different layers of time collide with each other, they give rise to historical events, as Koselleck demonstrated by analyzing the clash that occurred with the intersections of law, administration, and social change in Prussia before the revolution of 1848–49.<sup>6</sup> On the side of dance history, we can draw a parallel with the publication in 1820 of Carlo Blasis' *Traité Élémentaire, Théorique et Pratique de l'Art de la Danse*, which is reputed to be one of the most significant events in Western dance. When it was published, it filled a bibliographical gap that had lasted several decades, during which countless transformations had transpired in society, in body representations, and in movement culture. Yet its content was not limited only to dance and visual art concepts: the book subtly introduces the history of the author's family, which had gradually emigrated from southern Italy to southern France in 1799–1803 in consequence of the climate of the Bourbonist repression; the French reception policies towards intellectual refugees in Marseille, and the cultural community of *émigrés* in which the family flourished; Blasis' experiences in Bordeaux and at the Paris Opéra, and the employment opportunities he found

Instead, this essay operates much more in the realm of metaphor: 'sediments or layers of time' refers to geological formations that differ in age and depth and that changed and set themselves apart from each other at differing speeds over the course of the so-called history of the earth. We are, then, using a metaphor that first emerged in the eighteenth century, after traditional, static natural history (*historia naturalis*) had become temporalized and thus also historicized. By transposing this metaphor back into human, political, or social history as well as into structural history, we can analytically separate different temporal levels upon which people move and events unfold, and thus ask about the longer-term preconditions for such events."

<sup>4</sup> Hagen Schulz-Forberg, "The Spatial and Temporal Layers of Global History: A Reflection on Global Conceptual History through Expanding Reinhart Koselleck's *Zeitschichten* into Global Spaces," *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung* 38, no. 3 (145), Space/Time Practices and the Production of Space and Time (2013): 40–58, 41.

<sup>5</sup> Sean Franzel and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, "Introduction," in Koselleck, *Sediments of Time*, XI–XXXI, XIII. On the issue of periodization in dance history see the category of "the contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous" suggested by Christina Thurner as an alternative to the vectorial model of the chronological progressing (developmental) history. Cf. Christina Thurner, "Time Layers, Time Leaps, Time Loss: Methodologies of Dance Historiography," in *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Reenactment*, ed. Mark Franko (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 525–532, 527–28.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Reinhart Koselleck, *Preußen zwischen Reform und Revolution: Allgemeines Landrecht, Verwaltung und soziale Bewegung zwischen 1791 und 1848*, 3d. ed. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981).

in ‘Austrian’ Milan in 1817–19 after the Congress of Vienna reshaped local powers and the theatrical environment. His *Traité* reveals well how complex and multifaceted is the relationship among the cultural concepts and disciplines submitted to the strata of different times.

As Koselleck argues, it is precisely in the so-called “epochal-threshold” (or “transitional threshold”), within the two extremes of 1750 and 1850, that clearly emerges “the notion of self-foreshortening spaces of time,” which “still remained enclosed within a horizon of expectation,” and that “notion is also enriched by other, new kinds of experience.” Furthermore, Koselleck points out “an acceleration of determinable sectors of experience [...] registered within itself.”<sup>7</sup> The 1850s are for instance years marked by a sort of accumulation of hastening towards new experiential phases, imposed by epochal changes in economic, technological, and artistic fields. The great economic crisis in Europe between 1846 and 1848 resulted from a profound social transformation that led to frequent riots and struggles for independence against monarchies or dominant states (Kraków’s uprising in 1846; the first institutional concessions in Italy in 1848) and revolutions (such as the French and German revolutions of 1848–1849). These events in turn brought new political and economic arrangements marked by the course for industrialization, which consequently generated on one hand an insatiable appetite for new territories to be colonized, and on the other hand the search for new markets in which to place not only traveling goods, but also people, ideas, artistic and aesthetic trends.

What we now call ‘history’ seems to be produced in the interplay of tensions between two poles: by the distance created between the field of experience, on one hand, and the horizon of expectation on the other. According to Koselleck’s ideas, the historical novelties—the materialities—that followed one another with incredible rapidity in the nineteenth century, rendered previous fundamental concepts completely inadequate, now incapable of giving voice to a reality that had changed radically. Furthermore, these concepts were clothed with new meanings and new future-facing expectations, following a process that was entirely novel for that period. The possibility of imagining concepts *ex novo* and projecting them into a more dynamic and moving future reshapes them in the light of new experiences and new expectations that can lead scholars to confront the dimension of the future as a new-found horizon.

We can, therefore, redefine the experience of the multicultural historian as one who questions the “past of the present” and at the same time fosters his/her expectations of the “future of the present.”<sup>8</sup> Dance activities and their historiog-

<sup>7</sup> Koselleck, *Sediments of Time*, 95–96.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Schulz-Forberg, “The Spatial and Temporal Layers,” 42. “Crucially, for Koselleck, *Erfahrungsraum* is a category he connects to time. Experience is defined as present’s past. This specific past of a specific present is characterized by a selection of events that is incorporated in the present as its temporal-historical narrative [...]. Expectation is defined as present’s future and combines hopes and fears, wishes and will, worry, but also

raphy are of course not exempt from these processes. In retrospect, our conference mirrored, perhaps unwittingly, Koselleck's ideas and allowed participants to experience firsthand the multiplicity of histories and traditions that scholars embodied all along their research paths (with some study habits inherited from predecessors and deeply ingrained in all of us). So, according to this model, dance historians are situated—actually, ‘fluctuate’—between the awareness of the “past of the present,” and the expectancy of the “future of the present.”

The perception of the *Nachleben* or afterlife of our current scholarly discussions makes us ask ourselves *how* research has been conducted on nineteenth-century dance until now and *how* we can from now on account for our perception of the ‘time layers’ yet unquestioned or unexplored. In answer, an inspiring way of approaching dance history in an alternative way has recently been suggested by Christina Thurner, who underscores the need for “the writing of an alternative history of dance that takes as its starting point the enmeshed model of a network [...] rather than a straight line emerging from one starting point.”<sup>9</sup> With regard to the long nineteenth century, the conventional history of dance was often commissioned—already in the late nineteenth century—by the owner/operators of their own theaters and was intended to bestow a historical identity on their institutional past. This fact has often led scholars to organize sources and to build historical discourse from that point of observation, without adopting the multifocal perspective that, to the contrary, constituted the lifeblood of past dance practices, which flourished according to a ‘multidirectional’ logic.

Regarding this complex network, the conference contributors made us more conscious that the many ‘layers of time’ that we identify can likewise be balanced with—and not yet fully explored—‘layers of space.’ “History,” as pointed by Hagen Schulz-Forberg, “unfolds in a variety of spaces and actors do not only move, speak, and make sense within one space, but also between and across spaces. The agency within different yet related spaces is mutually influential.”<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, we editors could not maintain the original conference title (*Times for Change*) for our proceedings in case such a title were to suggest a teleological approach to dance history. For this reason we changed this volume’s title to *Times of Change* to better incorporate not only the varied dimensions of artists’ journeys, their spatialities,<sup>11</sup> and their comings and goings in space and time (ergo, in memory), but

rational analysis [...]. Experience and expectation, for Koselleck, are useful categories since they combine past and future, and are thus well-suited as an approach to historical time [...].”

<sup>9</sup> Thurner, “Time Layers,” 530.

<sup>10</sup> Schulz-Forberg, “The Spatial and Temporal Layer,” 43. Scholars might be inspired by his wide range of tools to develop historiographical creativity and agency.

<sup>11</sup> The concept of ‘spatiality’ has been explored not only in Geography Studies, but also in Dance Studies since the 2000s. According to the Oxford reference, the terms designs “the effect of space on actions, interactions, entities, and theories.” This source focuses nevertheless on the economic aspects of the concept, quoting Eric Sheppard, who states that “spatiality is a social construct, not an exogenously given, absolute coordinate system...but a product of the political economic system.” See “spatiality,” *Oxford Reference*, accessed 16 November 2022, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100521647>. In Dance Studies, the concept is rather explored through the lens of expression, perception, and movement analysis.

also the diverse aspects of our own ‘circulation of thought’ within the speculative or informed past. Our concern is not about times *for* a change devoted to predetermined historiographical goals, but rather about an exploration of the times *of* a change that are continually being defined by our present analysis, and current, frequently evolving desires. Rather than teleological, our journey is more like a continuous ‘multi-city flight,’ in which every element reverberates with another contemporary element, or with another event in the past or even with elements we wish would appear in the future. As Michel de Certeau stated this position: “Historical actors create historical spaces and its time as they move through, think through it and imagine the world through it.”<sup>12</sup>

Undoubtedly, not all the starting points and questions that we asked ourselves during the conceptual considerations for the Salzburg conference of 2019 could be taken into account or answered at that time. The editing process later confronted us with several difficulties, and the contributions revealed the enriching diversity of approaches and their inevitable overlaps and intersections. In addition, the paper book format has its limitations, and alternate devices would perhaps better suit our ‘network’ way of reasoning in the future.<sup>13</sup> Due to practical reasons and a desire for conciseness, we editors have identified four main thematic areas that seemed nevertheless proper and suitable: *Retracing Artists’ Stories*, *Reviewing Multiple Concepts of Dance and Dancing*, *Displaying Dance Sceneries* and *Understanding Strategies of Decoding Dance*.

### **Retracing Artists’ Stories**

Embedded in a plurality of narratives by our contributors are the artistic lives and careers of so many choreographers and dancers: stars such as Fanny Elssler (Tatiana Nikitina) and Filippo Taglioni (David J. Popalisky); little-known careers, such as that of Gabriele Yella (Tatiana Nikitina); artists of renown, albeit often overlooked, such as Antonio Muzzarelli (Stefania Onesti), Louis Antoine Duport (Roberta Albano), Sofia Fuoco (Elena Cervellati), and Flora Fabbri-Bretin (Thierry L. Jaquemet). Some artists’ lives intersected and/or overlapped through singular events that projected forward and backward in time (see, for example, Elssler and Yella’s experiences in Russia that intersected along a short span of time between 1850 and 1856). The lives of these artists are more or less entangled, or at least inscribed in the same European dance circuits. Each one operated

Psychomotrician Benoît Lesage sees spatiality as “our function of commitment and use of space, but also our imagination and creation of personal and meeting spaces; it is a dynamic process that, just as the body that fluctuates, alternately asserts and fades.” Benoît Lesage, *Un corps à construire: Tonus, posture, spatialité, temporalité* (Toulouse: Erès, 2021), 257. Julie Perrin investigates spatiality in contemporary choreographic practices. See Julie Perrin, *Figures de l’attention: Cinq essais sur la spatialité en danse* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Quoted by Schulz-Forberg, “The Spatial and Temporal Layers,” 43.

<sup>13</sup> Christina Thurner evokes the exploration of different devices for alternative histories: “[I]t could be a DVD, a database, an installation, a lecture-demonstration, a danced reenactment, or some hybrid thereof. Dance, as a form that moves and is moved in living space, insists, in my assessment, on being mediated spatially or at least through spatial metaphor.” Thurner, “Time Layers,” 530.

in spaces where the vibrations induced by the passage of other artists contributed to shape different frames of reference. Their actions were constantly undergoing a process of self-regulation based on personal or institutional strategies. Not everyone was aware of this self-regulation in the same way, and not equally over his or her lifetime. But such a constellation of reciprocating profiles was real and resonates in our era with Koselleck's statement: "Multiple layers [...] refer to each other in a reciprocal way, though without being wholly dependent upon each other." Another common dynamic that we can observe in nineteenth-century dance is the 'regeneration' of social groups such as families—i.e., the genealogy of the Hus family (Jean-Philippe Van Aelbrouck)—which create human bridges consisting of "chains of historical contact."<sup>14</sup>

The many stories of artists in this section demonstrate how travel for work multiplied in the nineteenth century. Travel was optimized both by the railroad communication networks—starting from the 1830s—and by the proliferation of venues for performing arts that became crossroads of cultural and artistic exchange. The opera houses, moreover, followed the models of the first and second industrial revolutions, renewing their structures and organizing themselves into larger and more complex hierarchies. These changes brought with them new dynamics, unseen until then. It should not be forgotten, however, that before the extension of the railway lines, people travelled by stagecoach along a dense network of roads that had multiplied in the decades before the French Revolution or on rivers and canals. For example, a trip from Florence to Rome or from Milan to Venice at the end of the eighteenth century took five days without changing horses with twenty-three posts.<sup>15</sup> Nineteenth-century men and women perceived the railroads as a major change in their lives: "[T]he railroads are [...] a providential event, giving humanity new momentum and changing the color and shape of life. A new chapter in world history begins, and our generation can be proud to have witnessed it. What changes must now enter our outlook and imagination. Even the elementary notions of time and space have become unstable."<sup>16</sup> The Industrial Revolution brought enthusiasm for speeded communication: among the many inventions, 'instantaneous' electric communication as the telegraph—starting from the 1850s—conveyed messages and ideas giving the perception of ubiquity. Times and space became shorter, even unstable.<sup>17</sup>

These mobilities could generate real systems of convergences and interactions that tend to meld with each other into a single system. A network of choreographic exchanges and influences was thus intensified. The communities of dancers and dance masters were never static, with artists moving in and out or simply around. Routes could be heavily travelled such as those based on the Naples-

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 55.

<sup>15</sup> Stefano Maggi, *Le ferrovie* (Bologna: Il Mulino, [2003] 2015), 14.

<sup>16</sup> Heinrich Heine quoted in Charles S. Maier, *Once within Borders: Territories of Power, Wealth and Belonging since 1500* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016), 188–89.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 185–232.

Vienna-Paris triangle, plied by dancers like Louis Antoine Duport whose impresario, Domenico Barbaja, held positions for several theaters at once. ‘Off-route’ forays were however possible, often dictated by necessity or urged by smaller urban centers that were constantly growing and eager for novelty. One methodological tool—computerized data bases able to track these geographical crossings—is used for Italian dancers for the 1815–1860 period (Debra H. Sowell). The data bases reveal an intense theatrical activity by numerous choreographers, some even unknown today, who moved among big and small theaters, even in the smallest provincial towns.<sup>18</sup>

We can rethink artistic mobility also from a gender point of view. How did female dancers move to countries as distant (even metaphorically) as Russia? Did they deal with a ‘culture shock’ when they experienced their reception abroad? Were there differences in crossing the same routes as a male dancer? Were the women always accompanied by family members or partners, or did they travel alone? And how frequently in the latter case? It is also interesting to study the condition of those who ‘stayed at home’ while another family member—like Filippo Taglioni—was traveling, pursuing contracts, and often away from their relatives for work. How did they bring the latest dance news once they returned home, and how were differences transmitted and incorporated? One is also interested to know whether or not the female dancer’s need to travel for business followed a desire to ‘get out’ of the boundaries to which women were relegated by nineteenth-century male domination.<sup>19</sup> Philanthropy (i.e., private management of resources in the social sphere) was one of the activities to which women devoted themselves in the nineteenth century and constituted a form of control of one’s image. Charitable actions such as visiting the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned, were respectable outside the home, and indeed, were considered beneficial for society. Like Sofia Fuoco and Flora Fabbri-Bretin, many female dancers devoted themselves to such charitable acts. Could this be related to the conquest of space and independence that they experienced with their dance activity, often morally despised? Moreover, from a dance practice point of view, what role did this social mobility play in the consolidation of women’s work, like teaching and choreographing?

The multiple circulations explored in this first part are some of the many useful viewpoints that allow us to explore the nineteenth-century complexity; they irradiate indeed the influential materialities that affect dance production. Another insight into dance’s intricacy can be identified in the circulation of mindsets and in the range of dance concepts and their re-envision.

<sup>18</sup> Carlotta Sorba collected several data on theaters’ construction in nineteenth-century Italy. Her map is a useful tool to compare the vivacious activity of numerous theaters in the frame of Italian *melodramma*, and to realize how small centers quickly began to join the network of bigger and older theaters. Cf. Carlotta Sorba, *Teatri. L’Italia del melodramma nell’età del Risorgimento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2001), 22–33.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Michelle Perrot, “Uscire,” in *Storia delle donne in Occidente: L’Ottocento*, ed. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot (Bari: Laterza, 1991), 447–53.

## Reviewing Multiple Concepts of Dance and Dancing

The essays gathered in this section show how the complex phenomena that took place in the mid-nineteenth century were densely intertwined. The authors lead us to a new search for meaning in the elaboration of concepts *vis-à-vis* dance and dancing, and they prompt us to problematize dance-related terminology in the context of a historiographic revision. In the nineteenth century, not only the conception of the dance event changes in itself, but also the need to inscribe it in new spaces, to expand its boundaries, even to the point of dissolving them. This change happens even overseas thanks to new routes and faster means of transport that facilitate travelling, as we have noted in the first section. Performances were more and more appreciated for their magnitude and took place in increasingly expansive spaces.

New elements of stage spectacle were integrated, appealing to a heterogeneous and curious audience. From the United States, in particular, came the demand to ‘buy’ ballets from Europe in ready-made packages. First, these productions employed dancers coming from a general European dance training, which was considered more prestigious than the locally grown ones. Later on, the request became more specific and detailed: French-trained professionals were preferred, if not Italian, since France was considered the ‘cultural center of the world.’ These expectations persisted until the Metropolitan Opera in New York opened its first ballet school, in order to draw on a heritage of local dancers and strengthen their American identity. But this did not happen until 1909, after the incorporation of cultural changes linked to questions such as “expanding and restricting mobility,” and “associated topics like belonging, exclusion and identity” (Anja K. Arend).

Endowing theaters with increasingly full-sized *corps de ballet*, on the other hand, was not a new phenomenon for nineteenth-century ballet, at least in the countries examined by some of the authors in this section. In Paris, in the 1840s and 1850s, there seems to have been an urgent need at the Opéra school to offer specialized training to the ballet ensemble so that dancers could reach those standards dictated by new demands of spectators. But how to prepare artists for the difficulties of performing empathetically in unison in space and time? How was dancing in unison perceived and what skills were needed? How did a group become a unified dance ensemble? The masters of the Opéra agreed that in order to get out of the crisis in which French ballet found itself, it was necessary to resort to new strategies of ensemble movements, in which dancers had to be able to move simultaneously on stage and in more and more complex geometric formations (Olivia Sabee). The sectoral specialization achieved by factory workers in the industrial production system stood, after all, as a model for the creation of labor ranks in the theaters. In Germany, in line with what was happening in France and Italy, a ballet master like Paul Taglioni shifted his focus to decorative elements, playing with compositional patterns of large ensembles, making stage movement more functional in enhancing synchronization at the expense of a ballet’s plot. The roots of this paradigm shift are investigated in Armand Vestris’s choreographic

choices in the first decades of the nineteenth century. With *Die Fee und der Ritter* (Naples, 1822; Vienna, 1823) Vestris already at that time was focused on the *danse proprement dite* rather than mime (Gunhild Oberzaucher-Schüller).

These dynamics invite historians to reflect on how some trends are cyclical and appear repeatedly throughout the nineteenth century. As in the case of unison training, the establishment of a permanent training in pantomime is discussed at various times in history. In Paris, for example, shortcomings in this area were felt in both the 1810s<sup>20</sup> and the 1860s, and attempts were made to adjust the situation by looking at practices in other countries. Recurring problems and returning phenomena thus confront scholars with sometimes overlooked parallels in the continuum of time, or if you will, with the existence of ‘disconnects’ between labor realities and the adoption of measures aimed at structuring dance practices.<sup>21</sup> These shifts in the compositional choices of one or another element in the nineteenth-century ballets—when investigated not in the light of a ‘single agent’ but rather in the complexity of ‘temporal layers’—provide a much broader and more complex overview of the phenomenon. As Thurner states, “the ‘temporal layers’ that Koselleck is talking about, store up much more in, around and through themselves than any single agent could encompass.”<sup>22</sup>

The relationship between dance and the industrial revolution is, however, not limited to body techniques and the organization of labor. Ballets in the nineteenth century also stood as vehicles for concepts and symbols directly related to industry. Faith in progress gave rise to productions rich in allegorical representations of scientific achievements and the ever-closer relations between peoples of different ‘nations.’ Often produced alongside major events, such as universal exhibitions, these kinds of performances were inscribed in a network of exchanges and desires generated by colonial imagery. The category of ‘industrial ballets’ used for productions such as *Les Nations* (1851), *Le Palais de Cristal ou Les Parisiens à Londres* (1851), *Pandora oder Götter-Funken* (1891) and *Columbia* (1893) allow us to relate the turn-of-the-century ‘ballet industry’ to themes of modernity (Johanna Hilari). These works make us reconsider the celebrated *Excelsior* (1881) and its recent productions from a more complex perspective with an even more international profile. They raise, moreover, the question of historical memory and transmission, problematizing the partial image we still have today of an era on the sole basis of later re-stagings, re-constructions, re-enactments, etc., and at the same time questioning the reproduction modes regulated by new professional figures. We are of course aware that the circulation of corporeal tacit knowledge—like social practices, dance techniques, choreographic styles, etc.—is not limited to its period, but is inevitably inscribed in a *continuum* until our days. Since memory is always ‘in motion,’ also the reminiscence of nineteenth-century

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Emmanuelle Delattre, “L’École de danse au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle,” in *Le ballet de l’Opéra: Trois siècles de suprématie depuis Louis XIV*, ed. Mathias Auclair and Christophe Ghristi (Paris: Albin Michel, 2013), 95–99.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. the chapter *History, Law and Justice*, in Koselleck, *Sediments of Time*, 117–36.

<sup>22</sup> Thurner, “Time Layers,” 527.

influential dance events is therefore permeated by several transmission phases that brought these practices to us. The convergence of several artists in England in the nineteenth century, and the re-elaboration of their styles in the twentieth century (Geraldine Morris) is an example of the many layers of memory carried by historians and practitioners, through written or inter-corporeal transmission.

Another dynamic of ‘traveling’ through the layers of memory is explored by dance scholars when they bring out kinetic traces from literature. This happens for example while delving into texts of the long nineteenth century that are less related to the classical past, touching upon gothic, chivalric, or Christian themes. As lime-shell encrusted shipwrecks that are brought to the surface, some written materialities can reveal psychosomatic attitudes, postures, and bodily patterns that are just waiting to come to light. Nineteenth-century readers experienced new emotions relative to the non-classical ages, such as frustration, constriction, sensuality and even horror: analysis of these new visions of the past can unveil the degree of embodiment of the ‘written movements/kinetic terminology’ in a more literate society. This happens, for example, in works like Denis Diderot’s *La Religieuse* (1796), a distinguishable product of the Enlightenment anticlericalism, as well as in English novels of Gothic setting and in melodramas performed in the theaters of the Parisian boulevards at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their stories show the weakness and the perpetual disequilibrium of the characters in a continuous imbalance of space and time. Heroes condemned to atone for faults that are not their own, as well as fallen angels on earth punished with sadistic complacency and imprisoned in suffocating and oppressive settings, present several ways of exploring the potential of gesture and movement. Many of the themes addressed in these texts converge, thanks to a method of intertextual inquiry, in the *Ballet of the Nuns*, a jewel set within the opera *Robert le Diable* (1831), forerunner of many ballet masterpieces of Romanticism (Joellen A. Meglin). The poetics of instability travels not only through the bodies working on stage, but also through written words: body states circulate in fact thanks to the dissemination of literary works capable of activating new perceptual simulations through their style, particularly belonging to kinesthetic imagery.

Several phenomena of crossing spaces correspond to multiple ways of understanding and producing dance. Both acts (understanding and producing) are about physical or imaginary places, social environments, and spheres of influence from which both amateur and professional dancers enter and leave more easily than they did in the eighteenth century. These new phenomena, inescapably linked to economics and power, reinvent the self, emulate the other, and play a key role in the fulfillment of the individual.

### **Displaying Dance Sceneries**

As repeatedly noted, mobility plays out on multiple levels. Some of these directly concern the governmental *milieu*, whose members intentionally structure the practices and their representation, with the aim of defining a new order. This

kind of interaction comes from above and tends to infiltrate other social groups—for instance, professionals involved in other fields (i.e., musicians, printers, ballet masters, amateurs, etc.).

An example of the aggregation of European governmental entities that converged under the recreational sign of dance and sociability was provided by the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815), whose work ended shortly before Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo. This major undertaking of European history, both politically and socially, led the countries of Europe to enjoy peace and a long period of establishment, after an intense diplomatic work. Official ceremonies, dancing parties, and theatrical performances, held in public and private palaces and even in the squares and streets contributed to rejoin the different identities of European nations. The Congress provided an opportunity to Austrian authorities to set up an impeccable organization and gave a sign, at least ostensibly, of harmony and balance in the international relations (Ornella Di Tondo). The concept of ‘nation’ employed in Vienna did not seem to evoke at that historical moment a strictly ‘political’ entity; it was not a rationalist and universalist concept as elaborated in Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *contrat social* and then corroborated by the national-liberal ideas that emerged during the French Revolution.<sup>23</sup> The ‘nation’ was rather understood in its more Romantic and historicized sense: it was not seen as constructed, but as a ‘natural’ entity made up of a group of individuals joined by the same historical origins and cultural values, as theorized by Johann Gottfried von Herder.<sup>24</sup> Such a reading was accepted in the Italian and Germanic territories that would struggle for their own unifications over a long time.

According to Herder, the ‘character’ of the nation—in its cultural and artistic sphere—is determined by the combination of the physical-material side and the spiritual one. During the Congress of Vienna and throughout the long nineteenth century, we also perceive the desire to reunite the pluralisms and to invoke a ‘sense of collection.’ This seems a reaction to the dispersion of the identity boundaries, fostered by the intense circulation of exchanges and encounters. Ideas transmigrate across borders but tend to thicken and essentialize the identity character of each nation. Such character brings out the ‘*couleur locale*’ of dance and its traditions, together with the kinetic agency that emanates from its different ‘temperaments.’

Artists, animated by Romantic nationalism, recognize themselves in their national dances: the Bohemian polka, the Italian tarantella, the Spanish cachucha,

<sup>23</sup> Such a strict distinction between a ‘prospective’ nation (French style) and a ‘historicized’ nation (German style) has been questioned thanks to the analysis of several German-style topics in Rousseau’s writings. Cf. Alban Bouvier, “Peuple et nation dans le Contrat Social de J.-J. Rousseau: Une conception ‘française’ de la nation? Étude de sociologie interactionniste des catégories de la pensée politique,” in *Les Mots de la nation*, ed. Sylvianne Rémi-Giraud and Pierre Rétat (Lyon: Presses universitaires de Lyon, 1996). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pul.1901>.

<sup>24</sup> Herder strongly affected the concept of ‘nation’ in relation to the singularity of a culture, especially in its peculiar development within the population’s proper spirituality. Cf. John K. Noyes (ed.), *Herder’s Essay on Being: A Translation and Critical Approaches* (New York: Camden House, 2018).

the Polish mazurka, etc. The mobile construction of the ‘characteristic’ dances of different nations involves both the theatrical and the social spheres, reaching the peak of popularity between the 1830s and 1840s. The coexistence and/or cross-pollination of the national character with the *danse d’école* also pushed theatrical dance toward outcomes of an historical ‘verisimilitude’ and a different kinetic energy.<sup>25</sup> The borders became increasingly fluid and permeable: the success of national dances in the theatrical sphere (not only in the elitist opera one) was also built by the presence of new spectators who empathized with theatrical dance. Belonging to the middle class, they were driven to emulate what they saw on the stage and to incorporate it in the social dances in which they were protagonists in salon and outdoor spaces.

England in the 1840s witnessed an explosion in the recreational field of social dances, in particular with the diffused ‘polkomania,’ fostered by the transactional circulation of amateurs and professional teachers, as noted above. The need for good quality instruction in these dances led to the identification of an additional level of aggregative form, that of ‘peers,’ in which equal individuals tended to associate, improve, and/or regulate the dance practices, as in the case of the first artists’ unions. The *Provident Society of Dancers and Teachers of Dancing of the United Kingdom and Ireland* (1844) was founded on regulations aimed to give homogeneity to the instructing practices of fashionable dances. It was an opportunity to raise the level of training, which had often been entrusted to amateur teachers. This association, although not long-lasting (it broke up in 1871) represented an exemplary case in that, at least on paper, it provided an opportunity to create a feeling of belonging among its members (who were actually few in number). This phenomenon, together with new market laws, helped to develop competitiveness and earnings in new dance careers (Theresa Jill Buckland).

Finally, on top of the aggregative dynamics rooted at a governmental level and those operating at an associational level, we can add one based on the individual. This level relates to an ‘inner’ mobility that is desired, planned, and set up by dancers. This happened when they performed through different social environments and faced disparate audiences, thanks to their agency and professional choices. In so doing, they challenge our western notion of ‘fixed identity’:<sup>26</sup> their theatrical experiences are concerned with both phenomena of differentiation and affiliation, which distance or bring them closer to their ‘original’ context, from which they are supposed to have started their career. The case study of Giovannina Pitteri, who switched from what was esteemed as ‘high’ culture to what was perceived as ‘popular’ culture, sheds light on such dynamics against the backdrop of geographical mobility in the second half of the nineteenth century (Madison

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Lisa C. Arkin and Marian Smith, “National Dance in the Romantic Ballet,” in *Rethinking the Sylph: New Perspectives on the Romantic Ballet*, ed. Lynn Garafola (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), 11–68, 23, 27.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Andrée Grau, “Dance Identity and Identification Processes in a Post-Colonial World,” in *Dance Discourses: Keywords in Dance Research*, ed. Marina Nordera and Susanne Franco (London: Routledge, 2016), 189–207, 201.

U. Sowell). Her path raises questions of self-perception (does a body correspond to a specific genre?), of artist's preferences (does he/she feel free to choose the style he/she likes more?), as well as that of the artist's commitment in the construction of his/her "narrative identity"<sup>27</sup> (how the capitalist western society affects the dancer's identity, and who creates its limits?).

Although the three dynamics explored in this section can be separately recognized, they cannot be isolated. They operate simultaneously: in a world of complex interactions, the identities of the self and that of the group are co-constructed and are inevitably fluid. They are based on the dialogue with the relative alterities with which they define themselves. This situation opens up an 'anthropology of possibility,' rather than encouraging a myth of clearly defined national characters. Concrete traces of these interactions—which also summon the networks of relations already explored in the two previous parts—is visible in some mnemonic sources related to notation practices. As 'empathic triggers' of gestures, movements, and imaginaries, these dynamics confront us with extraordinary (and sometimes ordinary) cultural crossings.

### **Understanding Strategies of Decoding Dance**

The last thematic area moves altogether from mnemonic devices to dance practices and, conversely, from practices to devices. Delving into some nineteenth-century notational experiments, presenters explored the circulation of movement data in the context of experiential learning. How did ballet masters conceive, use, and share their notation techniques? Were there any constitutive and recurrent elements? How did their notational practices interact with mental and stage representation? And what role did these materials play in the network of cultural crossings? These are some of the questions that emerge from the two final contributions, which question the 'historiographical mobility' through practice-based research, in challenging the critical reading and embodying processes.

The inspection of annotated violin conductor scores of the 1820s–1830s reveals multiple strategies of encoding dance in close relationship to musical notation. It seems clear that some dancers in the nineteenth century were more proficient or gifted in reading, writing, and drawing than their predecessors, and were able to use these skills for their professional advantage. Furthermore, the dispersion of these sources in several archives problematizes the geographical limits of the relative techniques and repertoires: in this sense, the perspective of a clearer

<sup>27</sup> The dancers' identity is fluid rather than static. It is built on the basis of an ongoing dialogue with the other, and it is in permanent construction because of the numerous interactions. We intend here the "narrative identity" in the sense given by Paul Ricoeur: "Unlike the abstract identity of the Same, this narrative identity, constitutive of self-constancy, can include change, mutability, within the cohesion of one lifetime. [...] The notion of narrative identity also indicates its fruitfulness in that it can be applied to a community as well as to an individual." Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, transl. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 3: 244–49.

bibliographical description of such materials opens up the possibility of redefining a map of ballet circulations (Bruno Ligore).

Decoding dance, whether in the past or present, involves an interpretive process that we can define as a ‘hermeneutic spiral’: it is in fact through repeatedly approaching ballet masters’ scores, drawings, notebooks, sketches, and diagrams through an iterative recontextualization that we experience a progression of understanding nineteenth-century dance—as well as dance in the present.

This interpretive course includes not only reading, but also rehearsing, producing, projecting, and anticipating movement, as well as visualizing images. One’s understanding of a representation (written, drawn, or even performed) as a whole is somehow established by reference to the single parts, and one’s understanding of each single part by reference to the whole representation.<sup>28</sup> As pointed out by Bernard Lonergan, “it is a self-correcting process of learning that spirals into the meaning of the whole by using each new part to fill out and qualify and correct the understanding reached in reading the earlier parts.”<sup>29</sup>

Dance scholars face a challenge in their attempt to incorporate and experience different corporealities and techniques, often very different from those to which they are accustomed. Through practical work, they realize the historicity of their own body. This realization helps them better enter into the historical matter, into the *Zeitgeist* of an era, and to embrace a mentality and a culture of the past.<sup>30</sup> Nineteenth-century progressive industrialization seems to have brought new cultural reflexes and attitudes, especially in the consumption of images and ready-made products. Such a posture can be identified in the striking research for new typographical signs and notational combinations. One wonders if, in addition to ballet masters’ illustrational skills, also the spectators’ optically trained eyes contributed to an increasing interest in graphics. Compositional manuals, *livrets de mise-en-scène*, memory guides, and other experimentations appear in fact to be a specific dance phenomenon “oscillating between notating and doing dancing,” as long as they require a specific praxeological approach that allowed artists to craft dances that stimulated analogical and visual responses in the spectators. In this wise, the case of Henri Justamant’s *Pas des manteaux* for *Paquita* (Lyon, 1854)

<sup>28</sup> The term ‘spiral’ serves as a good descriptor since the process of understanding is neither circular nor linear. The spiral is a metaphor for the procedure of replacing initial information on the basis of a progression in understanding, while the ‘hermeneutic circle’ figure theorized since antiquity, and specially discussed by Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer in the twentieth century, does not seem to imply a proper substitution of information. An interesting summary of the approaches of hermeneutic circles and spirals can be found in Mohammad Motahari, “The Hermeneutical Circle or the Hermeneutical Spiral?”, *The International Journal of Humanities* 15, no. 2 (2008): 99–111, accessed 14 November 2022, <https://eijh.modares.ac.ir/article-27-3023-en.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 159, quoted *ibid.*, 102.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Karin Hermes, “Strates d’apparition: Recherche artistique-méthodologique autour du solo de la Mort, *La Table verte* (1932) et *La Grande Ville* (1932), chorégraphies de Kurt Jooss,” in *Interroger les Archives*, ed. Beatrice Boldrin, Bruno Ligore, Bianca Maurmayr and Alessandra Sini (Pantin: Centre national de la danse, 2015), 24–26, 24.

was emblematic. Besides concentrating in its notating process all the above-mentioned cultural tensions, it problematized the notion of Spanishness as a proper 'national' character under the umbrella of Justamant's choreo(-)graphic routines (Francesca Falcone & Claudia Jeschke).

Practice-based explorations reveal layers of kinetic materials and cultural references that push us to question ourselves regarding the complex composition of what we perceive as 'dance traditions.' The latter appear more as 'configurations' rather than 'constructions,' as they change according to the point of view of the scholar that embodies them. Can we really consider 'traditions' as proper 'constructions' if they have no foundations, but they are instead made of equally valid heterogeneous elements?

### **Conclusion: Layers of Research?**

The perspectives suggested by the contributions joined in this book offer various insights into dance and dancing in the nineteenth century: the lives and careers of many choreographers and dancers entangled in a plurality of narratives, between and across spaces; the challenges faced by artists' mindsets that can involve stylistic changes in their actions; the different ways of understanding and producing dance in interchangeable environments; the strategic approach to dance notations that capture productive moments in which all the actions of doing and researching dancing are connected.

Dance historiography is currently searching for these possibilities. However, it finds that it is still particularly difficult to expunge the "gratuitous distinctions and fabricated continuities imposed on dance history" as such.<sup>31</sup> Embracing the enmeshed world of mobilities, materialities, excerpts of lives, thoughts and relationships neglected by history so far, will be our next challenge as scholars. The many 'layers of research' first revealed by the conference in Salzburg, and then through the editing of this book, push us to destabilize and question our positions and habits. The opportunity of doing fruitful research in our times resides not so much in what we discover through our journey, but in how we relate our research to other aspects and how comfortable we feel existing and working in a network. Nothing is self-evident.

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<sup>31</sup> Thurner, "Time Layers," 525–32.