FORM AND BEING
An Analysis of the Experience of Dancing Linked Chain and Round Dances

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Declaration

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Abstract

This thesis explores how the formal elements of participatory linked chain and round dances (movement vocabulary and dynamics, rhythm and music) contribute to the experience of a dancing person. Developing and applying an interdisciplinary, post-positivist approach produced an in-depth analysis of the associations between form and being. Informed by the literature in Dance, Psychology, Music and General System Theory, the research is presented as four empirical studies, each with a specific guiding question and results.

The first study investigated the way in which six participants—all of whom dance Balkan dances recreationally—reported their general experience of dancing. Theory and method from Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) guided data collection (semi-structured interviews) and analysis, resulting in the following seven themes that span the intra-, inter-, and trans-personal domains of experience: aesthetic experience, autotelic (‘peak’) experience, being cognition, connection, context, growth and development, and self.

The second IPA study focused on the formal aspects of dancing of which the same six participants were most aware, resulting in the following five themes: emergence, group formation, motion factors and Efforts, movement and music. To explore these themes in greater depth, the third study comprised an analysis of and reflections on the associations of form and being based on the researcher’s own, inside experience of dancing linked chain and round dances, using the vocabulary of Dance Analysis and Effort Theory to develop detailed descriptions of specific dances and to suggest how different dances can contribute to different ways of being-in-the-world.

Synthesising the findings of the data obtained in the previous three studies, the fourth study resulted in a conceptual model that associates form and being. In this model, the musical/dancing self both responds to and creates the form of a dance, and it is this creative power that changes the dancer’s way of being.
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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my wonderful mother, Ursula Glass Bennett.

_May her memory be eternal!_
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for me to pursue my dream to bring the profound joy of dancing to light and to realise
my potential as a researcher and educator. He is true, noble, and helps to make my
dreams come true!
1 Introduction

Dancers, choreographers, writers, scientists and philosophers have written beautiful and poetic tributes to the nature of dance. With sweeping statements and engaging metaphor, they have offered a view of dance as a powerful, transformative and life-affirming celebration of the human spirit. Fraleigh, a dancer and researcher, has said, for example:

Dance points toward our moving and perishable embodied existence, holding it before us, filling and freeing present time that we may dwell whole within it.

(Fraleigh, 1987, p. xvii)

Valéry, an early 20th-century philosopher, imbues dance with an other-worldliness:

For the dance is an art derived from life itself, since it is nothing more nor less than the action of the whole human body; but an action transposed into a world, into a kind of space-time, which is no longer quite the same as that of everyday life.

(Valéry, 1983, p. 55)

And Martha Graham offers this view:

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening, that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and will be lost.

(Graham quoted in Halprin, 2003, p. 130)

From my own experience as a person who dances, such statements intuitively ring true. But do these sorts of statements suffice to explain and describe the transformation of being that a dancing person might experience? What does it mean to ‘dwell whole’ within ‘present time’? How is the transformation of space-time achieved in dancing? What is the nature of the ‘vitality’ or ‘life-force’ that demands
expression through dancing? How do people who dance describe their own experience of dancing?

To explore more fully the nature of dancing and to begin to answer more precisely some of the questions that arise from a critical reading of the Dance literature, a detailed and systematic analysis of the experience of dancing is called for, using a new and interdisciplinary methodology that respects the complexity of dancing and that describes dancing in language that is at once specific, technical and clear to scholars in Dance and other disciplines.

This project is a first step towards a systematic analysis of the experience of dancing, exploring how the formal elements of dancing—such as movement vocabulary, rhythm and music—might contribute to the experience of the dancing person, to their sense of being. To research the possible relationship between form and experience, I have adopted an interdisciplinary methodology that represents a convergence of theory and method in the Arts and Sciences, based on a theoretical framework drawn from Dance Analysis, Phenomenology, Psychology and General System Theory.

1.1 Terminology

Terminology in a Dance Studies project can be problematic, and already the terms ‘experience of dancing’, ‘formal elements’ and ‘dancing person’ seem to call for clarification, which I will soon provide. But first, it is important to note the issue of terminology and to challenge some commonly-held assumptions about dance. Because I have not yet defined the specific type of dancing investigated in this study, some readers might assume that ‘dance’ refers to theatrical, concert dance, or what might be called ‘presentational’ dance, to use Nahachewsky’s participatory/presentational distinction (1995). Furthermore, readers might assume that the dancing in question is a genre commonly encountered in Western cultures, such as Ballet, Modern, Post-Modern, or Contemporary dance. Indeed, much Dance scholarship has focused on these genres, with studies of participatory dance tending to
fall within the categories of Dance Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Dance Ethnography or, in Europe, Ethnochoreology (Giurchescu & Torp, 1991). This study challenges these assumptions in two key ways: 1) it explores the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances that are danced by people with no ethnic ties to the regions in which the dances originated, and, therefore, 2) it asks questions that do not fit easily into the disciplinary categories normally associated with participatory dance forms, but rather has a greater affinity with Phenomenology, Dance Analysis and Motivational Psychology.

Now, having argued that the specific type of dancing under investigation does not need to presuppose a particular methodology within any one branch of Dance Studies, I will clarify some of the terminology that I use throughout this project. I use the term ‘participatory linked chain and round dances’ as defined by Torp: ‘Chain and round dances are defined herein as dances performed by more than three people in a linked formation’ (1990, p. 15). ‘Linked’ means that the dancers maintain a physical connection between them. ‘Performed by’ does not imply performance for an audience, but rather the ‘realisation’ (Kaeppler, 2001) of dances; I use the phrase ‘realising a dance’ as the dance equivalent to the concept of ‘playing music’.

‘Participatory linked chain and round dances’ is a technical term for what, in non-technical parlance, might be thought of as ‘folk dance’. I have found, however, that there is a tendency in the literature to either concentrate on the ‘folk’ aspect so that the ‘dance’ aspect becomes secondary (see Vail, 1996, for example), or to focus on structural analysis and classification of the dances themselves within their original cultural and geographic contexts (such as the excellent work by Torp, 1990, or Giurchescu & Bloland, 1995). Certainly, both of these approaches are valuable in answering specific types of research questions and in documenting dances for preservation and research. In this project, however, I seek to understand the experience of individuals who realise dances from regions to which these individuals have no direct ethnic, cultural or geographic connections.
Even within the field of traditional and folk dance studies, researchers do not necessarily agree on what they mean by ‘traditional’ and ‘folk’ dance, although Hoerburger offers useful definitions based on the context and purpose of dancing (1968). Replacing the word ‘folk’ with the word ‘ethnic’ poses other problems, not least of which is the sense that some dances (‘ours’) are not ethnic (‘theirs’). In her classic and often quoted article ‘An anthropologist looks at Ballet as a form of ethnic dance’, first published in 1970, Kealiinohomoku reminds researchers that ‘all forms of dance reflect the cultural traditions within which they developed’ (1983, p. 533). She also emphasises that ‘without the discipline of attempting to define specific terms we are not sure we do all mean the same thing or that we understand how a term is being used’ (p. 541). It is critically important, therefore, to clearly state the type of dance under investigation and to define the terminology used.

For two reasons, then, I use the rather lengthy description ‘participatory linked chain and round dances’ throughout this study. First, this description focuses on the form of the dance in a way that readers can visualise. Second, this description avoids the pitfalls and connotations associated with the terms ‘traditional’ and ‘folk’ dance and opens up wider methodological vistas for investigating the experience of realising these types of dances. The study of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances need not focus on dance only as a cultural artefact or the artistic expression of an ethnic community, but can question how a dancing person experiences the movement and music of cultures different from their own from the inside, dancer’s perspective, and why the dancing person might choose to realise these particular types of dances.

In this study, the ‘experience of dancing’ means the ‘inside’ experience as it is created and lived by the ‘dancing person’, someone who dances recreationally, simply for the experience of dancing rather than for an audience or as part of an established cultural tradition or norm. The words ‘dancing person’ and ‘dancer’ both describe the participants in this study, with the caution that the term ‘dancer’ does not imply any
sort of dance training or any specific technical dance expertise, although most of the participants have achieved a high level of expertise in realising and teaching linked chain and round dances.

The experience of a dancing person includes many elements that affect that experience, such as the formal elements of the dancing, the social and cultural context, the physical setting, and the other dancers. By ‘formal elements’, I mean those elements related to the form of the dance, which might include a dance’s structure and style (Kaeppler, 2001), step patterns and rhythms, and the music that accompanies the dance. Some music researchers have explored the relationship between sonic features and the experience of listeners (Whaley, et al., 2009); this project looks at the possible relationship between form and experience.

1.2 Project background and context

At the age of five, I began to dance linked chain and round dances at informal social gatherings that my family attended. Sometimes, group singing accompanied the dances. Young and old, experienced and novice alike swirled and sang, stamped and shouted in joyful celebration. I loved it.

I pursued my love of Dance by starting Ballet classes at the age of six. When physical problems prevented me from progressing with my Ballet training, I moved on to Jazz, Tap and Ballroom dancing. Then, by happy circumstance, a friend introduced me to International Folk Dancing, and I discovered the richness, beauty and joy of dances from Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Turkey, amongst others. At the time, I was studying to become a School Psychologist, and I noticed that these dances required a great deal of concentration and the application of other cognitive skills. I found little current research, however, on the general transfer of learning skills from
dance\(^1\), and even less research that discussed participatory linked chain and round dances in terms of cognition (Cann, 2003). In fact, the more research I did, the more I realised that studies of individual experience in participatory linked chain and round dances, from the dancing person’s perspective, seemed to be noticeably absent from the Dance literature. There was one notable exception, the work of Mary Coros (1992).

Inspiration for my own PhD thesis came largely from Coros’s work. As a Greek-American dancer of Cretan dances since her childhood, she offers an ‘insider’s’ look at the experience of Greek dance, describing a transcendent moment in space-time that she experienced while dancing *Syrtos* from Crete. During what she calls an ‘IT’ moment, Coros felt herself to have a clear state of awareness, a sense of a distinctive and tangible fluid position in space-time, and a cohesive sense of self (1992, p. 113).

Unlike other authors, Coros provides a unique and in-depth phenomenological exploration of the dancer’s inner experience of dancing a Greek chain dance, *Syrtos*. She describes that experience using language that remains ‘near’ to the experience of dancing and a methodology in which the direction of study moves ‘from dance into reflection’ (p. 232) so that reflection does not alter the experience of dancing by applying ‘ready-made formulations’ (concepts from other disciplines, from an ‘outside’ perspective) without first adequately describing the experience from the ‘inside’ (p. 246).

After reading Coros, I began to explore the literature in Dance Phenomenology and I discovered the following themes, which suggested a starting point for this project:

- Dancing as a way of being-in-the-world (Coros, 1992)

\(^1\) Notable exceptions are Hanna (2000), Mitchell (1994) and the fine practical work done by Phyllis Weikart (1997).
Next, I needed to find a methodology that would help me to investigate whether these same themes emerged in the context of participatory linked chain and round dancing, and to explore why people might seek out the experience of this type of dancing. I began to wonder whether something about the form of the dances might contribute to an intrinsically motivating experience in dancing.

Studies of the Hungarian Táncház (dance-house) movement seemed to support my initial instinct that form contributes to experience. This movement began in the 1970s among the Hungarian, educated, urban middle classes. Founders of the movement looked to the music and dance of Transylvanian villages where traditional Hungarian expressive arts remained largely untouched by the composers and choreographers who transformed village music and dance into more ‘palatable’ forms for general, urban consumption within a socialist political climate. These urban musicians sought a new, avant-garde aesthetic that they believed would have meaning in the context of modern city life, and they found this ‘new’ aesthetic in the music of old Hungary. The dance-house musicians began to research, perform, and teach the dances for which the music that they discovered had evolved, thereby transplanting a traditional village musical experience to an urban context (Frigyesi, 1996).

Similarly, in North America, Western Europe and elsewhere, a dance form commonly called International Folk Dance (IFD) gained popularity in the 1960s and 70s when a number of recreational folk dance groups began to meet regularly and even to perform at community events. Vail describes in detail a dance group in Maine that danced between 1977 and 1982, a performing group composed of Americans with diverse
educational and vocational backgrounds ‘dancing in the style of the Balkans’ (1996, p. 311). Mills (2004) noticed similarities between the dance-house groups in Hungary and the recreational folk dance clubs she had danced with in the United States. Why would educated, urban, middle-class people in geographically distant lands find themselves drawn to the music and dancing of Eastern Europe and the Balkan regions? Was there something about the form of the music and dancing that people found particularly appealing? What might the answer to this question reveal about the experience of dancing more generally? How could I begin to explore these questions using a sound, rigorous and well-established methodology?

These are the general questions with which I began this project and the context within which I provide a rationale for undertaking it.

My research questions and methodological choices depend, to a large degree, on both my academic and dance experiences to date. In this section, I position myself as researcher in relation to this project, in order to make clear why I have made specific methodological decisions.

Having studied at the post-graduate level in both Psychology and Dance, I must acknowledge my disciplinary biases and explain how my preferred methodological framework both facilitates and limits this project. First, my Psychology background reflects my interest in the individual rather than in groups or cultures. More specifically, my post-graduate studies in Psychology have focused on the areas of learning and development, with research projects that investigated the potential of dance to improve children’s developmental, attention and concentration, and cognitive processing skills. When I worked with incarcerated youths as a teacher of independent living skills, I observed first-hand how the opportunity to participate in linked chain and round dances enabled these young people to enjoy themselves in a way they rarely could. Even the most hardened, cynical, and uncooperative of my
students willingly attempted and mastered a complex chain dance, much to my amazement.

As an enthusiastic dancer of European linked chain and round dances in a recreational folk dancing context, and as an amateur dancer trained in a variety of dance forms (Ballet, Tap, Jazz, and Ballroom), I also acknowledge a pre-disposition to discover and describe the unique way in which dancing transforms a person’s experience when the person intentionally chooses to participate in a particular type of dancing that must be sought out and selected from a variety of recreational dance alternatives. While other authors have studied dancing in this context from various other theoretical frameworks\(^2\), my Psychology background points me towards questions of motivation and individual experience.

I am also keenly aware of the issues and arguments around the use of notation and movement analysis in Dance research, and I agree with those who hold that there might be a difference in emphasis within the discipline, with some studies focusing on meaning as evidenced by form and others favouring form with less emphasis on meaning. Giurchescu & Torp describe the differences between (typically North American) anthropological approaches and those of (typically European) choreological approaches—such as ‘Dance Form Analysis’ (Giurchescu & Kröschlová, 2007)—and they argue for a more holistic approach that acknowledges ‘the anthropological and the choreological approaches as complementary and necessary in the holistic study of dance’ (1991, p. 7). The growing body of work in Dance Ethnography addresses issues of cultural practice and meaning; this project, by contrast, focuses on the individual’s experience of being, in terms of time, space, and a sense of self while dancing, relating form with experience rather than favouring one over the other.

\(^2\) See, for example, Shay (2008) and Laušević (2007).
Also, as part of my Dance education, I have read a number of studies in Ethnography and Dance Ethnography, and I acknowledge the importance of some of the key issues highlighted in these studies, namely: (1) issues of objectivity in studying ‘others’; (2) the position of the researcher in relation to those studied and to the conceptual framework within which the investigation proceeds; and (3) general issues related to categorising, recording, describing and analysing dance events within and beyond the boundaries of culture.

In her discussion of positioning the researcher in relation to the research, Williams refers to ‘the power of conceptual categories and how they can prevent us from seeing what is apparently under our very noses’ (1991, p. 72), emphasising that the impact of a researcher’s theoretical framework and associated methodologies on the resulting description and explanation should not be underestimated. For the purposes of my own study, I appreciate Williams’s caution against phenomenological approaches, which tend to have ontological difficulties in that they deny dance and dances any ‘duration in time’ (p. 80). Williams critiques the notion of ‘embodied experience’ and ‘bodily mind’ because this terminology suggests some reality beyond the more traditional notion of mind and, therefore, beyond language (p. 194-195). Her distaste for these terms has caused me to consider the possibilities of overcoming Cartesian mind-body dualism in my own writing not by using language that opposes such dualism, but by using language that transcends it. The ‘dance experience’ as lived, involves the whole person, and requires description of the person’s experience at many levels of perception and being. Phenomenological terms such as ‘the lived body’ seem to artificially separate the person from the body.

Williams introduces the idea of ‘a personal anthropology and the related notion of a different kind of objectivity’ (p. 287), in which the researcher must employ ‘the human capacity to transcend both ego and societal values’ (p. 289) to avoid the problems of projecting the researcher’s own issues and agenda onto the interpretation of the ‘other’s’ experience. She advises researchers to be conscious of their own pre-
formed ideas and assumptions, which result from being born into a particular, language-using ethnicity and from adopting a particular theoretical framework and associated methodologies. She also warns of the dangers of objectification, in which the researcher is somehow removed from the investigation, as if the researcher had no relationship with the conceptual frameworks applied or to the people under investigation, and she mentions this as a particular problem for Dance researchers who do not have training in anthropology:

An anthropologically untrained observer does not know how to separate his or her cultural values and judgments from those of the people who are being investigated, with the result that the published research is a curious mixture of opinions, projections, and identifications which render the work useless in the ongoing life of the discipline.

(Williams, 1991, p. 149)

She reminds researchers that ‘modern styles of doing anthropology are self-critical and self-reflexive’ (p. 193).

Williams points out Pocock’s key statement that a researcher’s report on an ‘outside other’ actually consists of a report on the relationship of the researcher to the researcher’s own understanding and knowledge, not on the essence or ‘truth’ of the other’s being (p. 296). She argues for modifying ‘traditional notions of objectivity’ (p. 297) in favour of a perspective that advocates seeing those studied as subjects within their own language-based contexts (p. 298). These cautionary words from Williams have informed my approach to both the general area of enquiry and to collection and analysis of data in this project.

Geertz’s ideas on ‘thick description’ (detailed description that focuses on the many and varied aspects of an event or experience) and the role of theory within an interpretive science also inform my study of the experience of dance (1975b). For example, the experience of dancing can also be ‘thickly’ described from the inside, that is, from the perspective of the dancer, in terms of the physical, temporal, spatial,
psychological, aesthetic, musical, social, historical, spiritual and cultural aspects of the experience that form the totality of the dance experience as something greater than the sum of its parts. A thick description of a dance experience must reach beyond significance at the level of social discourse to encompass multiple levels of significance—intrapersonal, interpersonal and transpersonal.

Geertz reminds researchers that ‘A good interpretation of anything—a poem, a person, a history, a ritual, an institution, a society—takes us into the heart of that of which it is the interpretation’ (p. 18). This suggests that the ‘thicker’ the description of a dance experience, the more illuminating the interpretation of that experience. In the case of dance, thick description aligns with Geertz’s strategy of keeping his analysis closely tied to the events described and to maintaining ‘the connections between theoretical formulations and descriptive interpretations’ (p. 30). This implies an approach to the description of a dance experience based on an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that takes into account multiple layers of the dance experience, resulting in an analysis that seeks to develop an interpretative theory of dance based on the ‘complex specifics’ (p. 28) of a given dance experience.

My own experience of dancing leads me to concur with Coros that dancing is ‘a way of being-in-the-world as other than I usually am’ (1992, p. 200). The Dance phenomenologists begin their investigations with the movement material itself, but do not describe the specific movements on which they base their higher-level themes or features of experience. My proposed interdisciplinary approach offers the following opportunities to advance knowledge in the fields of Dance Studies and Psychology:

- Studies in Dance Phenomenology provide thought-provoking descriptions of the form-related, lived qualities of dance and the features of the experience of dancing.
Laban Movement Analysis, especially Effort Theory, offers a technical and precise vocabulary for describing and analysing movement from the dancer’s perspective.

Phenomenological Psychology provides a methodological framework that has greater rigour—from my perspective as a researcher trained in the methods of the social sciences—than the more philosophical works in Dance Phenomenology, which tend to rely on first-person accounts of the experience of dancing. In particular, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) studies focus on the experience of others while recognising the ‘double hermeneutic’ described by Smith et al., (2011, p. 3), which acknowledges the interpretative nature of analysis as the researcher’s interpretation of people’s own interpretation of their experience. Applying methods from IPA addresses some of the limitations of previous studies in Dance Phenomenology.

Motivational Psychology can enhance the interpretative framework with which I analyse the themes of form and experience, as can concepts from General System Theory.

I have chosen to study the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances by conducting analyses of experience, using established methods of data collection and interpretation known as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Expanding on the methods and interpretative guidelines of a psychologically-focused analysis, I suggest a way to incorporate dance-based concepts as themes that can also be applied during data analysis and interpretation.

1.3 Rationale for this project

Scholars have studied the experience of dancing in a number of different ways, including anecdotal accounts (Ruyter, 1995; Vail, 1993 and 2008), investigations of the role of dancing in the lives of communities in diaspora (Nahachewsky, 1995 and 2001), and ethnographic studies of the ‘Balkan craze’ in America from a
cultural/historical perspective (Laušević, 2007). Other authors have explored the experience of dancing from a phenomenological perspective (Sheets-Johnstone, 1979; Fraleigh, 1987, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2004; Coros, 1992; Parviainen, , while Bond & Stinson (2000-2001) explored how young people describe their experience of dancing, based on the researchers’ studies of dance in education.

While these studies provide intriguing clues to discovering more about the experience of dancing and how to describe that experience, none actually offer a thorough phenomenological description of the experience of a person who chooses to dance participatory linked chain and round dances recreationally, nor do these studies set out to consider aspects of the experience of dancing by applying theory and method from the discipline of Psychology. Those who have looked at the psychological aspects of movement, such as Kestenburg (n.d.) and North (1972), most often use movement analysis to study personality and to aid in therapy. And even Coros (1992), who comes closest to answering questions about the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances, does not engage with the question of the relationship between form and experience in dancing.

My initial review of the existing literature highlighted the following gaps and opportunities:

- There is a need for the use of clear, consistent and what Burt might call ‘medium-specific’ language (2009, p. 20) to describe both the formal elements of dancing and the experience of dancing in a way that scholars in Dance and related disciplines could find meaningful. The language used by phenomenologists tends towards descriptions of experience that can be ‘ponderous’ (Sheets-Johnstone, 1984, p. 135) and difficult to connect with different types of dancing than those specifically described in each study.

- Some of the ideological reasons why people have chosen to dance recreational participatory linked chain and round dances and the social, cultural and
political climate in which dancing of this type has flourished have been 
explored from a cultural-historical perspective (see, for example, Laušević, 
2007). These accounts briefly mention but do not provide an in-depth analysis 
of the nature of individual experience as it relates to the formal elements of 
music and dancing.

- There is an opportunity to apply a ‘systems’ approach to address research 
  questions that explore the relationship between form and experience in terms 
of emergent properties. ‘Emergence’ refers to how unforeseen properties of a 
complex system emerge from the interactions and forces between the elements 
of that system (Von Bertalanffy, 1971). Rosenboom (1997) offers a 
fascinating application of system theory to creative music-making/listening 
(p. 292), which prompts the question of whether a systems approach can offer 
any explanatory value to a description of the experience of dancing.

This research project contributes to the advancement of knowledge in Dance Studies 
by:

1. Applying a new methodology to the study of participatory linked chain and 
   round dances, giving this popular type of recreational dancing greater 
   visibility within the fields of Dance Studies and Psychology

2. Contributing to theoretical model-building in Dance research by applying 
   Effort Theory to participatory linked chain and round dancing and evaluating 
   its applicability to the study of the experience of dancing

3. Describing the experience of dancing in terms of the ‘dancing self’ across the 
   intra-, inter- and trans-personal domains, which begins a discussion that could 
   be carried forward about how dancing fully engages the dancing person

4. Highlighting the importance of ‘musicality’ in the experience of dancing 
   participatory linked chain and round dances

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5. Combining the vocabulary of Dance Analysis, Phenomenological and Motivational Psychology and General System Theory in such a way that researchers in Dance, Music and Psychology would find clear and coherent

6. Developing and using a new methodology to study form and experience in dancing, a methodology that represents a convergence of theory and method in the Arts and Sciences, built on a platform of Dance Analysis and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), within an overarching framework of General System Theory

1.4 Research questions

The general area of enquiry for this study is as follows:

How do the formal elements of dancing and music contribute to the experience of a dancing person?

More specific research questions include:

1. How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?

2. How do dancers describe the formal aspects of participatory linked chain and round dances that contribute to their experience in dancing?

3. What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?

4. What can be discovered about the relationship of form and being by integrating data that is collected and analysed using different methodologies?

(See page 107 for a refinement and discussion of these four research questions.)
1.5 Methodology

To contribute to the development of theory in Dance Studies, I have adopted an interdisciplinary methodology. Using theory and method from the social sciences (Phenomenological and Motivational Psychology), the natural sciences (General System Theory) and from the arts (Dance Analysis), I explore and compare in detail individual experience, formal elements of dancing and music, and the relationship between form and experience, in terms of a sense of being. By means of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), based on interview data collected during semi-structured interviews, detailed movement analyses of several participatory linked chain and round dances, and personal reflection, I identify ways in which the formal elements of dancing interact to contribute to experience.

1.5.1 Theoretical frameworks

The following disciplines offer ways to study various aspects of the relationship between form and experience in dancing.

Dance Analysis comprises a range of analytical methods. In Adshead’s classic work (1988), she emphasises the importance of clearly identifying and describing the observable elements of dance and considering the relationships between these elements. In her view, it is the relations between the movement, dancers, visual setting and aural elements of a dance that give rise to its form (1988d, p. 41).

Dance Analysis can include different types of movement analysis. For example, Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), which has evolved from the pioneering work of Rudolf von Laban in the early and mid-20th century and which continues to be developed and refined by movement analysts in the 21st century, includes the description of movement dynamics from the dancer’s perspective. These dynamics, or ‘qualities’ of movement, are known as ‘Efforts’. Using Effort Theory, a researcher can investigate movement in terms of the dancer’s intentional use of the motion
factors space, weight, time and flow (Dell, 1977). Moore & Yamamoto describe Effort as the dynamic aspect of movement (2012, p. 134). Effort theory provides a useful terminology for describing the inner motivation and attitude towards movement. Because this project investigates the relationship between form and experience, Dance Analysis and Effort Theory, specifically, provide a solid foundation on which to build an analysis of the formal elements of participatory linked chain and round dances.

While Dance Analysis provides one way to access inner experience, there are many factors that affect movement, such as overall health, cultural norms, and environmental factors. As Blacking points out, ‘We cannot say that the Kwakiutl are more emotional than the Hopi because their style of dancing looks more ecstatic to our eyes’ (1973, p. 33). It is also important to be cautious about making assumptions about the inner experience of any person based solely on movement observation. In this project, therefore, it is important that the findings emerge from data provided by participants, in combination with my own reflections on the inner experience of dancing. The use of methodologies from Phenomenology and Psychology ensure that the findings emerge from the actual data provided by participants.

From Phenomenology and Phenomenological Psychology come theories about lived, embodied experience, philosophies of temporality and being, and methods for the description and interpretation of experience. These methods inform both data collection and data interpretation, with guidelines for producing a rigorous qualitative analysis that I have used to explore how individuals experience dancing. Smith et al. suggest that while IPA is primarily a psychological endeavour, they see the approach as applicable to other disciplines:

So, we think, for example, that a researcher in occupational therapy or film studies can use IPA and can therefore speak to the psychological aspects of that other identity.

(Smith et al., 2011, p. 5)
That is exactly the aim of this project, to speak to the psychological aspects of dancing, identifying themes of experience including dance-related themes that emerge from a focus on the experience of form.

Motivational psychologists Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi (1988) and Maslow (1999) have studied ‘optimal’ and ‘peak’ experience, respectively. Based on studies of the experience of ‘Artists, athletes, composers, dancers, scientists, and people from all walks of life’ (1988b, p. 29), Csikszentmihalyi states that ‘intense involvement, deep concentration, clarity of goals and feedback, loss of a sense of time, lack of self-consciousness and transcendence of a sense of self’ (1988c, p. 365) characterise optimal experiences. Maslow (1999) describes peak experience as ‘a moment of highest happiness and fulfillment’ (p. 85) which ‘carries its own intrinsic value with it’ (p. 90). Their work resonates with the literature in Dance Studies and guides the types of questions included in the semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix A-5).

In the field of Music Psychology, researchers have looked at the experience of listening to and playing music in terms of peak experience (Whaley et al., 2009). Their studies offer examples of how to relate form, in this case sonic structure, with experience. They also describe options for gathering and quantifying data about experience and using both quantitative and qualitative analysis in a ‘mixed-methods’ approach (p. 458).

As I engaged with key concepts from each of the disciplines described so far, I found myself looking for a systematic way to conceptualise and describe how the formal elements of music and dancing contribute to a person’s experience. I wanted to find a way to take the work of some of the Dance Phenomenologists—Sheets-Johnstone (1979), Fraleigh (1987) and Coros (1992)—to a new and more explanatory level. Feeling, as Maslow describes, a ‘dissatisfaction, an uneasiness over what is missing’ in existing description and theory (Maslow, 1999, p. 84), I wondered whether there
might be some systematic way to view and to describe experience in dancing with clarity and from a third-person perspective. IPA offered a way to study others’ experience, but I still needed a framework for conceptualising the interactive elements of dancing. I found this framework when I began to explore Von Bertalanffy’s classic work on General System Theory. If I could reasonably conceptualise the experience of dancing as an organised ‘whole’ comprised of a number of interactive elements, then General System Theory might offer a useful model for the description and interpretation of how form contributes to experience in dancing.

Von Bertalanffy conceived of General System Theory as a paradigm shift in scientific thinking (Von Bertalanffy, 1971, p. xv), a shift from atomistic, structuralist explanations in the physical, natural and social sciences to a holistic, generalist and interdisciplinary approach (p. xviii). General System Theory is based on the idea that study of both the elements of a system and the interactions of those elements is required for understanding. Von Bertalanffy states that the subject matter of General System Theory ‘is the formulation and derivation of those principles which are valid for “systems” in general’ (p. 31).

Key concepts from General System Theory include emergence, teleology, negentropy, complexification and wholeness. The concept of emergent properties, in particular, provides a framework for describing the experience that results or ‘emerges’ from the formal, interrelated elements of dancing, an experience that cannot be adequately described only in terms of its musical, rhythmical and kinetic (movement) elements. Von Bertalanffy defines emergent properties as the ‘constitutive characteristics’ of an organised whole that ‘are not explainable from the characteristics of isolated parts. The characteristics of the complex, therefore, compared to those of the elements, appear as “new” or “emergent”’ (1971, p. 54). This is a more precise statement of what Von Bertalanffy describes as the ‘somewhat mystical expression “the whole is more than the sum of its parts”’ (p. 54).
Teleology, in a systems context, refers to ‘behaviour directed towards a characteristic final state or goal’ (p. 46). In terms of human behaviour, this can be defined as ‘purposiveness, goal-seeking and the like’ (p. 45). What is the nature of a person’s desired experience in dancing? Langdridge (2007) mentions briefly Heidegger’s idea that temporality is a key aspect of being, and that people have a drive to transform existence. How might music and dancing change our perceived experience of time and space? Is the teleology of dancing, perhaps, to actively and intentionally transform our experience of time, space, self, and being?

Entropy refers to disorder or disorganisation. Negentropy, or negative entropy, describes an ordered, organised state of elements within a system. Without an infusion of energy, a system tends towards a state of lower energy and higher entropy (disorder). For example, prior to forming a chain group formation, dancers might mill around the room, chatting and moving randomly from one small group to another (entropy). Once the music begins, the dancers gather to form a specific geometric formation, a chain, physically linked by a hand hold and moving in unison using a specific pattern of steps (negentropy).

Complexification and differentiation refer to the tendency of systems, such as the human organism, to develop specialised systems for specific functions. Examples include the nervous and digestive systems.

Wholeness refers to the organised complexity of the system – ‘making the behaviour of parts different when studied in isolation or within the whole’ (Von Bertalanffy, 1971, p. 30).

Based on the key concepts of General System Theory and the relevant concepts from other disciplines, the most striking points of convergence in theory and method are as follows.
1. The complexity of organised wholes and ideas about increasing complexification in systems fit with Csikszentmihalyi’s description of optimal experience as involving a process of complexification and increased order of the ‘self’ (1988b).

2. The teleology of systems in terms of reaching an end state fits with phenomenological philosophies that focus on how human beings seek to transform existence, and with Maslow’s distinction between ‘becoming’ and ‘being’ in peak experience (1999).

3. The systems concept of interactive elements that result in emergent properties resonates with Adshead’s emphasis on the ‘web of relations’ amongst the components of a dance (1988d, p. 52).

Although the specific dances studied in this project are different, it is possible that the formal elements can be analysed and described in a similar way, in terms of the key concepts from General System Theory. Of course, the experiences that result span a continuum and depend not only on form, but also on context and meaning associated with the music and dancing. These elements might vary in importance for each person dancing.

### 1.5.2 Methods of data collection and analysis

My interdisciplinary, multimodal approach involved generating different types of data, analysing the data by means of different methodologies, and then integrating the results to produce an in-depth, detailed analysis of the relations between form and being in realising participatory linked chain and round dances. This involved the use of theory and method from Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), Dance Analysis (especially Effort theory), and General System Theory. The findings are presented as four related studies, described in more detail in section 1.7.
For any IPA study, the researcher attempts to identify a group of participants who have experienced the specific life event under investigation, in this case, the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances as a recreational pursuit. Aware of the popularity of ‘Balkan’ dancing from my own dance experience in the UK, I decided to narrow the scope of this project to the dances of this region, danced by people with no ethnic ties to any region in the Balkans. The dances from this region tend to be in the form of linked chain and round dances, and therefore provide a sample of the larger category of linked chain and round dances. The term ‘Balkan’ dance might mean little to someone from a country in Eastern or South-eastern Europe, but International Folk Dancers frequently refer to ‘Balkan’ dances as the dances from ‘the countries surrounding the Balkan mountain ranges which traverse south-eastern Europe’ (Oxford Balkansko Oro Balkan Dance Group, n.d.).

The six participants who contributed to this project all responded to a call for volunteers that I published in the monthly newsletter of the Society for International Folk Dancing (SIFD) (see Appendix A-1). Participants specifically mentioned dances from Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Transylvania and Turkey. Because the participants choose this type of dancing from a variety of recreational alternatives, rather than as part of their cultural or ethnic heritage, it would seem that the type of dancing itself—its formal elements in interaction—might be a primary source of motivation and, therefore, more likely to contribute significantly to experience.

To collect and analyse the data, I have:

1. Conducted and digitally recorded telephone interviews with six participants, based on an interview schedule designed for a semi-structured interview (see Appendix A-5). The interview questions were designed to elicit information about participant’s general experience when realising participatory linked
chain and round dances and about the formal elements of dancing that were most relevant to their overall experience.

2. Collected questionnaire data from the participants, such as their five favourite Balkan dances (named dances) and their other dance activities and years of experience.

3. Transcribed the interview data.

4. Performed an analysis of the interview data using a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) tool called NVivo to code the transcripts, identify themes and visualise models of the data. This involved identifying two types of themes that emerged from the interview data: 1) general themes of experience (presented in the first study) and 2) formal themes of experience (presented in the second study).

5. Based on the identification of the participants’ favourite dances and the dances that they mentioned specifically in relation to themes of experience, I performed a detailed Dance Analysis using Adshead’s (1988) guidelines. I also used my own kinaesthetic knowledge of the dances to describe in detail the Effort elements of each dance as experienced rather than as observed, guided by the participants’ sense of the Efforts as conveyed during the interviews. By applying Effort theory to the analysis of movement, I was able to identify the basic effort actions and transformation drives within a dance and across different linked chain and round dances.

Because my own age and ethnicity are similar to those of the participants, and, given my kinetic knowledge of, enthusiasm for and participation in recreational Balkan dancing over the last 25 years, my experiences of dancing

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3 I use the term ‘kinaesthetic’ here to refer to my own, internal sense of movement.
the selected dances are relevant to an ‘inside’ description of the dances and, therefore, a key source of movement material for analysis. As Sklar points out:

We cannot ignore the experiential somatic aspects of dancing in favor of the formal… I sought to understand the danza, and the fiesta as a whole, in terms of how it enabled the experience… I found that there was no other way to it than through my own body, sampling, for example, the qualities of time, intensity, and focus of attention I observed.

(Sklar, 2006, p. 115)

Often, researchers of Balkan dance tend towards description, categorisation and classification. In this third study, I have attempted to describe the unique features of each dance, as well as the complexity and indeed the intricate beauty of how a dancer realises each dance.

6. Compared the results of the Dance Analysis with the results of the IPA studies and identified the relationships between the formal elements of dancing and the experience of those formal elements in terms of being. This fourth study involved engaging in a hermeneutic process, applying theoretical concepts to the interpretation of the data as called for by the data. Relevant concepts included Maslow’s features of being cognition that characterise peak experience (1999), Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi’s ideas of complexification of the self and a tendency towards greater order in consciousness (1988), and Von Bertalanffy’s identification of ‘laws’ that apply to all systems, such as negentropy and teleology.

In this way, I was able to answer the research questions introduced at the beginning of this chapter. My goal was to develop a description of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances in language that scholars from a variety of disciplines would find clearly stated, based on a rigorous and systematic approach, and allowing for interpretation and insight at many levels.
1.6 Results

The results of the first IPA study suggested seven major themes of experience that emerge from verbal descriptions of the experience of dancing. These themes can be further categorised into a motivational model that comprises three domains of experience—the intrapersonal, interpersonal and transpersonal.

A similar approach to the second IPA study resulted in the identification of ‘formal’ themes that represent the formal elements of dancing of which the participants were most aware. In the third study, combining these themes with a detailed description of specific dances showed that music and rhythm were key contributors to experience in dancing, highlighting the way in which a dancer of linked chain and round dances expresses a musical/dancing self within the dancing community.

In the fourth study, relating themes of experience with the formal themes of dancing showed that the formal elements of dancing appear to contribute to experience across the intra-, inter- and transpersonal domains of experience. This suggests that rather than having direct links between specific formal elements and specific themes of experience, the relationship between form and experience in dancing is complex and multi-layered, supporting the idea that the formal elements of dancing interact to create an emergent property—the experience of the musical/dancing self seeking expression in the context of a dancing community.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The following sections summarise each chapter.

1.7.1 Chapter 2: Literature Review

In Chapter 2, I describe my journey through the academic literature in search of clues to help me discover how to study the experience of dancing. Based primarily in Dance scholarship, this search led me to explore the literature in other disciplines, both in the
Arts and Sciences, that related either directly or by extension to my area of interest. The literature review includes works from the Disciplines of Phenomenology, Motivational and Phenomenological Psychology, Music, Dance Ethnography, Ethnochoreology and Ethnomusicology, Dance Analysis, Somatics and General System Theory. I provide an overview from each discipline and explain how key concepts relate to my own research before summarising how the literature review helped to narrow the focus of my research and to formulate my primary research questions.

1.7.2 Chapter 3: An exploration of dancers’ verbal accounts of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances

This chapter presents the first of four studies, which explores the question ‘How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?’ I explain in detail the theoretical and disciplinary framework that informs this study, specifically, IPA. The next sections describe my methods of data collection (semi-structured interviews), analysis (including the use of NVivo software to explore and visualise the data) and interpretation, particularly Maslow's concept of ‘being cognition’ (1999) and other concepts from Motivational Psychology. I present the results of the analysis, which resulted in seven high-level themes of experience, each with its own sub-themes. These themes and sub-themes, which reflect both general and psychological concepts that emerged from the data rather than being imposed upon it, represent experiences of dancing across the group of six participants. I provide examples from the interview transcripts to support my choice of labels for each theme and sub-theme. I then group the seven themes into three domains of experience—the intrapersonal, interpersonal and transpersonal—and summarise the data as a table of themes and sub-themes.
1.7.3 Chapter 4: The relationship between form and being: Dancers’ accounts of the ways in which formal aspects of Balkan dances contribute to their experience in dancing

This chapter describes the second IPA study, addressing the second research question, ‘How do dancers describe the formal aspects of participatory linked chain and round dances that contribute to their experience in dancing?’ Concepts from Dance Analysis provide a foundation for describing participants’ experiences. The results section presents a table of formal themes and sub-themes that represent the formal elements of dancing of which the participants were most aware, a collection of five high-level themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interview data. In the Discussion section of this chapter, I highlight the importance to participants of music and rhythm, and explore the concept of ‘expressive movement’.

1.7.4 Chapter 5: Reflecting on the association between form and being: A personal account

Chapter 5 presents a more in-depth exploration of the formal themes identified in Chapter 4, based on an ‘inside’ analysis of and personal reflections on each dance, to answer the question ‘What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?’

In this chapter, I describe the challenges of selecting specific dances for analysis, given the wide variety of participatory linked chain and round dances that might be thought of as ‘Balkan’, as well as which formal elements, out of a plethora of options, to focus on. I explain how I addressed these challenges by focusing on the interview data, relying on the participants’ own descriptions of their experiences to guide my analysis and interpretation.

I explain my methodology for this study, specifically the use of Adshead’s (1988) methods of Dance Analysis along with Effort Theory to describe the inner experience of the movement dynamics of each selected dance. I also include a brief review of the
strengths and weaknesses of using Effort Theory when describing the inner experience of dancing linked chain and round dances.

The resulting dance and movement analyses for each dance include a description of the formal elements, along with an Effort analysis of the qualities of movement as experienced, and the ‘states’ and ‘drives’ derived from the Effort analysis. The analysis in terms of ‘being’—my experience of time, space and sense of self—is described in my reflections on and analysis of how form relates to (contributes to) being for each dance.

I summarise the key findings of this study in a table that describes the overall form of each dance, the movement dynamics, the patterns of inner ‘states’ and ‘drives’ derived from the Effort analyses, and the relationship between form and being for each dance based on my interpretation of how the formal, interactive elements combine to contribute to experience.

1.7.5 Chapter 6: The relationship between form and being: Integrating experience and form using different methodologies

Chapter 6 describes how I generated, analysed and synthesised the different forms of data, addressing the question ‘What can be discovered about the relationship of form and being by integrating data that is collected and analysed using different methodologies?’ This fourth study contains a deeper level of interpretative analysis, synthesising the findings of both IPA analyses and the findings from the Dance and Effort analyses.

Explaining the rationale for my use of a multi-modal approach, I argue that the use of different methodologies results in access to inside information about participants’ experiences (including my own. Integrating the general themes of experience, participants’ experiences of form and being, the Dance and Effort analyses and my own experiences of form and being, I present a summary of how form relates to experience in dancing and then explain this relationship in detail for each general
theme identified in the IPA. The model that I propose shows no simple correlation between formal elements and experience, but rather a web of relations (to use Adshead’s term) in which the formal elements contribute to experience in different ways.

Tying together all of the findings, I present a model that associates form and being in the context of realising participatory linked chain and round dances. In this model, the musical/dancing self both responds to and creates (realises) the form and it is this creative power that changes the dancer’s way of being.

1.7.6 Chapter 7: Discussion of Outcomes

In Chapter 7, I present a summary of each of the four studies, highlighting the links between form and being. Recognising the descriptive/interpretative nature of my key findings, I restate the importance of having identified the concept of a musical/dancing self that seeks expression not through, but as music and dancing, within the context of an aesthetic community. Bringing together all of the findings, I propose a model that associates form and being. In this model, the musical/dancing self both responds to and creates (realises) the form and it is this creative power that changes the dancer’s way of being.

I then suggest how the concepts of General System Theory apply to the findings, looking at the key concepts described earlier, especially the concept of emergence when describing the experience of participatory linked chain and round dancing.

The last two sections deal with validity considerations in qualitative research generally, and in my project in particular, noting that researchers must use caution whenever they attempt to interpret the experience of others.

1.7.7 Chapter 8: Conclusion

In the final chapter of this thesis, I restate the original research questions, informed by the key findings of this study. I suggest ways in which my chosen, interdisciplinary
methodology has advanced knowledge in Dance Studies and propose some possibilities for future studies that would build on and further develop the work completed for this project.
2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I describe my journey through the literature in search of information and examples on which to build a descriptive, interpretative methodology specific to my area of interest, to understand how form relates to experience for individuals who realise participatory linked chain and round dances. My journey, firmly rooted in Dance scholarship, branches rather unexpectedly into an interdisciplinary quest for information that spans both the Arts and Sciences. 4 Because my focus is on individual experience in the context of amateur, recreational dancing, I initially searched for studies that describe the experience of recreational dancing, to find out what researchers have to say about ‘participatory’ rather than ‘presentational’ dance (Nahachewsky, 1995). I have found very little to date that describes recreational participatory linked chain and round dancing in terms of individual experience, and so must combine elements of the existing literature, including studies of presentational, ‘concert’ dance, weaving together strands of discussion and debate into a coherent conceptual whole.

Because my research focuses on the formal elements of dance and on the individual’s experience of dancing, my literature review includes works primarily on Dance Phenomenology and Dance Analysis. To research recreational, participatory linked chain and round dancing in particular, I have also sought out relevant sources that discuss this genre, gleaning information from studies in Dance Ethnography, Ethnochoreology and Ethnomusicology, and Somatic Practices. Studies in Music that focus on experience also provide useful ideas for studying the relationship between

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4 I use the term ‘interdisciplinary’ (rather than ‘multidisciplinary) because multiple disciplines are used to address the research problem so that the disciplines blend to create a new methodology.
form and experience. And for the purposes of interpretation of experience, I look to Motivational and Phenomenological Psychology theory and method for studying experience generally. All of these areas of study contribute to an interpretative approach to understanding the transformative power of dancing as individuals experience dance and as they imbue that experience with meaning. Principles from General System Theory provide an overarching framework within which to fit the various component concepts of my interdisciplinary approach.

Studies of the experience of dancing are varied and diverse, reflecting the myriad of methodologies that comprise ‘postpositivist’ qualitative research (Green & Stinson, 1999). According to Green & Stinson’s definition, postpositivist research rejects the ‘positivist’ goal of researchers in the natural sciences to produce generalizable results based on ‘objective’, unbiased hypothesis testing using a large sample population, an approach that researchers in the social sciences also adopted early in the development of their discipline (p. 91). Since then, many Dance researchers have recognised and acknowledged the limitations of positivism for the study of human experience (p. 92) and have developed instead a multiplicity of modes of enquiry based on the specific aims of their research, including approaches such as ‘phenomenological, hermeneutic, interpretive, feminist, qualitative, naturalistic, autobiographical, narrative, ethnographic, postmodern, and others’ (p. 92). It is not surprising, then, to find a variety of methodological approaches in the scholarly literature about how people in different social, cultural, political and recreational contexts experience dance.

Green (1996) provides an example of postpositivist research in action in her study of somatics and creativity. As Green moved through the research process, using a self-reflexive methodology when writing up the report of her findings, she found new questions to consider about the roles of somatics and creativity as vehicles for socio-political change (p. 74). She recognised that her intention in conducting research went beyond merely interpreting experience to actively changing people’s awareness of
their ‘creative selves’ and to change how ‘educators perceive learning’, referring to her research as ‘qualitative intervention’ (p. 77).

Other authors have explored the experience of dancing from a somatic, sensory perspective (Ravn, 2010; Grau, 2011) and by using phenomenological theory and method (Sheets-Johnstone, 1979; Coros, 1992; Fraleigh, 1987, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2004; Parviainen, 1998, 2002; Huss & Haimovich, 2011; and Bond & Stinson, 2000-2001). Sheets-Johnstone (1979) looked at dance generally, Fraleigh (1987) focused specifically on modern dance in a concert setting as well as Butoh (1999a) and a variety of other dance forms (2004), and Parviainen (1998) explored ballet, modern and contemporary dance performance as dance ‘art’. Huss & Haimovich used a ‘qualitative phenomenological methodology’ (2011, p. 3) to investigate the psychological and social experience of recreational belly dancing. Looking at how young people describe their experience of dancing, Bond & Stinson (2000-2001) used a ‘multimodal’ approach to explore experience, an approach that combined phenomenological ‘essence descriptions’ (p. 54) with categorical data analysis, informed by critical social theory in the context of the researchers’ studies of dance in education.

In the literature specific to the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances, some authors have anecdotally described their experiences of dancing folk dances (Vail, 1993; Ruyter, 1995), examined the relationship between the changing forms of dances and the role these dances play in the lives of communities in diaspora (Nahachewsky, 1995 and 2001), and studied the ‘Balkan craze’ in America from the anthropological perspective of ethnomusicology (Laušević, 2007).

Taking an interdisciplinary approach to a review of the literature, however, does not minimise the challenges of finding the right words to describe experience—especially the experience of dancing.
2.2 A search for descriptions of the ‘indescribable’

Describing the experience of dancing in words has challenged many a researcher. Fraleigh, a professional dancer and researcher, speaks of dance as ‘preverbal expression, playing beneath words and at the same time moving beyond them’ (1987, p. 71). She argues that ‘we can find no direct counterpart for dance in words’ (p. 71), that the movement itself is a kind of ‘preliterate poetry’ (p. 136). Parviainen also recognises dance ‘knowledge’ as having no linguistic equivalent:

The dancer's knowledge is a tacit knowledge; this body of knowledge cannot be clearly articulated and analysed as a whole. Thus dancers know and can do without being able to explain what it is or how they know it.

(Parviainen, 1998, p. 132)

Coros, too, refers to ‘dancers’ linguistic inarticulateness’ (1992, p. 20). In some cases, Coros found that dancers considered their experience in dance not even ‘discussable’ (p. 20). But unlike Parviainen (1998), Coros describes frustration with her inability to articulate her own experience in dance, a frustration that prompted her to attempt a ‘translation’ of dance into language.

Researchers in other disciplines who focus their studies on human experience concede that ‘experience is itself tantalizing and elusive’ (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2011, p. 33). How, then, can anyone begin to explore the experience of dancing and to describe this experience in words?

Despite Fraleigh’s argument that dance, by its very nature, ‘has no word correlates’ (p. 73), she disputes the claim that human experience of art is inexplicable:

For this is to deny art a definitional identity – and to silence attempts to understand what each art in its particular way teaches us about ourselves.

(Fraleigh, 1987, p. xix).
Coros, too, believed it possible to find the words to describe her experience of dancing by first ‘translating’ dance into language and then reflecting on, interpreting, and explaining that initial translation (1992). Like Coros, I began a search for the words to describe the personal (but not just my own) experience of dancing. Unlike Coros, I assumed that the language to describe the dance experience from the ‘inside’ already exists in Dance Analysis and Phenomenology, with concepts from Psychology supplementing theory and method from the other two disciplines. Taking up the challenge of finding the words to describe both the experience of dancing and the formal elements of dancing most relevant to experience (the elements that people experience as the ‘form’ of a dance), my review of the literature begins with an investigation of how Dance phenomenologists and ethnographers have described both the experience of dancing and the formal elements of dancing, and continues with a search for a methodology and epistemology to facilitate exploration of the experience of dancing from the dancer’s perspective.

As Maslow states, inner experience can be discovered through the ‘right kind of “science”’ (1999, p. 213), perhaps better stated as the right kind of questions, along with the right kind of methodology to answer those questions. But how does a Dance researcher know which questions to ask when participatory linked chain and round dancing is not often studied with the intent to illuminate individual experience? Some of the more obvious aspects of dancing can be easily articulated—people might speak about how they can meet friends, exercise, have fun, and learn about other cultures. These important aspects of the dance experience are, perhaps, easy to talk about, especially with non-dancers. But socialising and exercising can apply to many leisure activities and do not, by themselves, explain the experience of form that is specific to dancing, or why people choose to participate in certain types of dancing and not in others. The Dance literature, however, does provide some clues for the types of questions to ask people in order to find out more about the relationship between form and experience in dancing.
For example, many authors of recent ethnographic studies, particularly Farnell (1994), Kaeppler & Dunin (2007), Grau (1991, 1993, 2011), and Sklar (2006) recognise the importance of a person’s agency and experience in dancing, using their informants’ verbal accounts and, in some cases, their own experience of dancing to guide their analysis and to provide an ‘inside’ sense of the experience of dancing. Their work suggests that some of the relevant questions for studying ‘inside’ experience should focus on dancers’ own perceptions of their experiences in dance.

Other researchers who have attempted to describe their own experiences of recreational folk dancing—rather than to describe the experience of others—hint at the extraordinary nature of their experience. Ruyter, for example, a North American folk dancer attending dance workshops in the former Yugoslavia, describes dancing with the local villagers as the physical sensation of a ‘powerful connection to something deep and unknown (1995, p. 278). Vail, another North American recreational folk dancer highlights the relationship between form and experience in Balkan dancing:

Line dancing requires body contact: dancers are bound together by entwining hand-holds, belt-holds, shoulder-holds, or arms around the waist...Physical connection and energy flow was (sic) channelled by disciplined rhythms and complex steps into feelings of excitement, confidence and solidarity.⁵

(Vail, 1993, pp. 242-243)

Vail and Ruyter suggest, but do not elaborate on, a relationship between form and experience. But they only briefly mention their experience, as a ‘musing’ (Ruyter, 1995) or as an incidental observation that is not the main focus of their study

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⁵ Interestingly, Vail changed this wording in a new version of her article, which focuses more on group rather than on personal experience (see Vail in Morris, 1996). She also appears to have renamed the article to avoid the use of the controversial term ‘ethnic’ dance. (See Kealiinohomoku in Copeland & Cohen, 1983, for a discussion of the problems associated with the term ‘ethnic dance’.)
(Vail, 1993). So, to find out more about how researchers have studied the dancing person’s experience of dancing from an ‘inside’ perspective, I looked beyond the folk dance literature to more general discussions about the phenomenology of dance.

2.3 Dance phenomenology

In her discussion of aesthetic intention in dance, Fraleigh refers to phenomenology as ‘a branch of modern philosophy’ that she has used ‘to research intentionality through a specific method that seeks to get to the core of a phenomenon’ (1999b, p. 194). The Dance literature includes a number of phenomenological studies of the experience of dancing, which seems an obvious place to begin my research into the relationship between form and experience in dancing. I have found, however, only limited phenomenological research about the individual experience of recreational dancing, especially participatory linked chain and round dancing. Much of the Dance literature in phenomenology describes presentational, ‘concert’ type dance, as in the work of Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1979, 1984), Sondra H. Fraleigh (1987, 1999a) and Jaana Parviainen (1998). I begin this literature review with works by these well-known authors to establish a foundation for thinking about the experience of dancing as they describe it, and to see what types of questions emerge from a critical analysis of their work. I also examine in detail an unpublished doctoral thesis by Mary Coros (1992), which provides a rare example of an in-depth, first-person phenomenological study of the experience of dancing a participatory linked chain dance. I have included Coros’s work in this chapter because of its particular relevance to my own area of research.6

2.3.1 Sheets-Johnstone

No review of dance phenomenology would be complete without reference to the classic work of Maxine Sheets-Johnstone. In The Phenomenology of Dance, first

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6 Although her thesis has not been published in its entirety, Coros’s related work was accepted for and published in the 1988 and 1989 Congress on Research in Dance (CORD) conference proceedings.
published in 1966 and subsequently released as a 2nd edition in 1979, she provides a phenomenological description of dance, focusing on form-related features as experienced by both dancer and audience. Sheets-Johnstone offers a detailed explication of the lived qualities of dance, relating her work to the classic writings of Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger on the spatial-temporal features of lived experience and the relationship of consciousness and body. In Sheets-Johnstone’s treatment of lived experience as a pre-reflective, immediate experience that is ‘directly apprehended’ (1979, p. 4), the dancer experiences herself as a spatial-temporal unity of consciousness-body.

Sheets-Johnstone seems to base her phenomenological description on concert dance, but she does not define the type of dance under investigation. This reveals an underlying assumption about what scholars thought of as ‘dance’ at the time of her writing, that ‘dance’ involves choreographers, dancers and audiences in a presentational context. Sheets-Johnstone does not specify a particular type of concert dance to investigate (although she makes many references to ballet), nor does she adopt any specific existential themes with which to interpret experience. Instead, Sheets-Johnstone expands on Susanne Langer’s conception of art works, based on the assumption that Langer’s idea of dance as essentially an ‘illusion of force’ provides a sound basis for further phenomenological exploration (1979, p. 33). Although Sheets-Johnstone’s description is based on art dance, composition (choreography), and performance—as opposed to the recreational, group, participatory dances I have placed at the centre of this project—her recognition of the critical importance of form and her discussion of the spatial and temporal features of dance suggest some fascinating and promising avenues of investigation for different types of dance.

2.3.1.1 Sheets-Johnstone’s key discussion points

Key to Sheets-Johnstone’s argument is a complex and rather dense discussion of illusion of force, virtual force, and dynamic line, a discussion that applies primarily to
the experience of dancers composing a dance and performing for an audience, and to the experience of the members of that audience who attend the performance. To summarise, Sheets-Johnstone distinguishes between ‘actual’ force and ‘actual’ movement, used in everyday life to express feelings such as anger or resignation, and ‘virtual’ force, which is the intentional use of movement ‘qualities’ as symbolic expression in dance.

The actual components of force are transformed: they are no longer isolable and distinct factors of actual movement, but interrelated qualities of virtual force.

(Sheets-Johnstone, 1979, p. 49)

It is her description of these spatial-temporal qualities of movement that provides the most thought-provoking suggestions about how to study the experience of participatory linked chain and round dancing.

- Sheets-Johnstone explains how a dancer creates a space-time that differs from observable, everyday space-time. This intriguing idea makes sense from the perspective of motivational psychologists who study ‘optimal’ experiences, which have great intrinsic value and are therefore highly motivating and enjoyable (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). The idea that dancers create space-time might also explain the sense that Coros describes as becoming ‘other than I usually am’ (1992, p. 200) and certainly bears further investigation in the context of participatory dance.

- The importance of time and space as experienced in dance is highlighted. ‘The immediate lived experience of time and space is epistemologically prior to our notions of objective time and objective space’ (Sheets-Johnstone, 1979, p. 15). This distinction between subjective and objective time is critically important to the study of experience, and Sheets-Johnstone consistently differentiates between the phenomenal (immediately experienced) qualities of movement and the observable qualities of movement, such as rhythm.
• Sheets-Johnstone defines four experienced qualities of movement: ‘tensional, linear, areal, and projectional’ (p. 50). The use of these terms is at once innovative and confusing, but does offer one way to describe the form of a dance as experienced by dancer and audience.

• Throughout her work, Sheets-Johnstone repeatedly emphasises that no one quality of virtual force is experienced in isolation.

> It is the inter-relationship of the unique and particular units within the total kinetic experience which gives it its unique meaning.

(Sheets-Johnstone, 1979, p. 47)

This supports the idea of interrelated elements (which Sheets-Johnstone calls ‘qualities’) that result in emergent properties in dance, an idea that I explore in detail later in this chapter.

2.3.1.2 Limitations and questions raised

Terminology is somewhat problematic in Sheets-Johnstone’s discussion, because her phenomenological definition of the qualities of movement rests on one person’s unique use of language rather than on a system of thought developed by a group of researchers. Sheets-Johnstone states that the terms she uses to describe the qualities of movement ‘have never before been used. They emanate from the author’s own experience of movement as a revelation of force’ (p.50). By contrast, the well-established system developed by Effort/Shape theorists offers a more consistent use of language that can be applied to movement generally and to all types of dancing. Engaging and compelling in its own right, Sheets-Johnstone’s language does not offer a way to compare findings across the literature with the same clarity as definitions from Effort Theory of the motion factors time, space, weight, and flow.7

7 See page 93 for a more complete description of Effort Theory.
The problem of terminology highlights another issue related to phenomenological method and the use of first-person experience—the resulting description applies only to a very specific context. Sheets-Johnstone’s choice of looking at both performer and audience in a presentational context bypasses an entire category of experience, namely, participatory recreational dancing. Of course, by limiting the scope of her discussion, Sheets-Johnstone rightly focuses her work so that a detailed analysis is possible. This presents an intriguing opportunity to apply some of her ideas to the topic of participatory, recreational linked chain and round dancing. Her ideas about dance as experienced inspire the following questions:

- What sort of time and space do people create when they dance participatory linked chain and round dances? Are people aware of this type of creativity when they reflect on their experience of dancing?

- How do the tensional, linear, projectional, and areal qualities of movement compare with descriptions of the Efforts? Which terminology is more precise and useful when describing the experience of participatory linked chain and round dancing?

In the next section of this chapter, I review the work of Fraleigh, who used the methods of Phenomenology in the context of presentational Modern and Postmodern dance forms.

2.3.2 Fraleigh

In her book *Dance and the lived body* (1987), Fraleigh develops a ‘descriptive aesthetics’ of Modern, concert dance in terms of inter- and intra-personal experience, based primarily on a synthesis of the existential literature, a few select comments from Modern and Postmodern dancers and choreographers, and her own lived
experience of dance as dancer, choreographer and audience member. Looking at the convergence of Modern and Postmodern dance with positive existentialism, she presents ‘an aesthetic perspective of dance—a view of its basic (irreducible) structure, its experiential values, and its significance as art’ (p. 7).

In addition to this seminal text, Fraleigh has published a number of more recent works, which I include in this section where relevant to the discussion of key issues and the applicability of Fraleigh’s work to my own research. These works include Fraleigh’s summary of how she uses theory and method from existential phenomenology to describe and define dance (1998), a compilation of essays and descriptions of dance works based on Fraleigh’s own experience with and understanding of Butoh in its cross-cultural, global manifestations (1999a), a short article that defines her view of dance aesthetics and traces the history of aesthetic and critical theory (Fraleigh, 1999b), and her compiled essays on self-definition and the metaphysics of dance (2004).

In this later work, *Metaphysics in motion* (2004), Fraleigh expands upon her 1987 analysis to describe her own ‘metaphysical journey’ (p. 1) using material gathered over a fifteen-year period, material that includes conversations with other dancers, choreographic works and her own, self-reflexive writings and poetry. She refers to these materials as the ‘intersubjective artifacts of phenomenological fieldwork’ (p. xii). In these essays, Fraleigh discusses her ‘resistance to metaphysical dualism’ (p. 9)—the divisions of mind/body and culture/nature—from a clearly feminist, political stance, attempting to outline an ‘existential metaphysics’ that heals the oppositional nature of ‘traditional Western metaphysics, with its “mastery” of substantive categories and naming of essences’ (p. 9).

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8 Modern and Postmodern dance are art dance forms that developed in the 20th century, with Modern dance an initial reaction to the strict technical requirements and aesthetic qualities of Ballet, and Postmodern dance a reaction to the equally definitive technique and ideology of Modern dance.
Although Fraleigh focuses on dance genres other than the participatory linked chain and round dances on which I base my research, her methodology and interpretative writings provide examples of phenomenological descriptions of the experience of dancing to compare with those of Sheets-Johnstone (1979), Parviainen (1998) and Coros (1992). Also, her definition of aesthetic properties and intention and her application of these to the experience of dancing, from the dancer’s perspective (1999b), inform my own definition and application of the concept of aesthetic experience in dancing.

Looking at aesthetic experience in the context of the theatrical dance form Butoh, Fraleigh presents a series of essays based on her own experience as ‘an American in a culture not her own, who made aesthetic and spiritual ties’ (1999a, p. 17). Although this work focuses on Fraleigh’s experience of Butoh in the context of Zen spirituality and Japanese culture, it does mirror my aim to describe the movement aesthetics and experience of a dance form that has become ‘globalised’, adopted and realised by people with no prior ethnic or cultural ties to the region in which the dance form originated.

In Fraleigh’s earlier (1987) work, she outlines her phenomenological approach, from which I draw both possibilities and cautions for my own aims in this project, to describe the inside experience of dancing.

**2.3.2.1 Fraleigh’s use of phenomenological methodology**

Fraleigh begins the discussion in her 1987 work *Dance and the lived body* by explaining descriptive phenomenological methodology, which examines the contents of consciousness in an attempt to view personal experience from the ‘inside’ (p. xiv) by means of a first-hand account. This results in a description based on personal (first-person) experience tempered by a ‘universalizing impulse’ (p. xiv). Fraleigh states that the resulting description depends in part on her own experience, ‘but only as this experience is held in common with other dancers’ and for ‘dances of various styles’
She applies to her analysis the principle of phenomenological reduction, which seeks to strip away assumptions in order to discover the simplest and most basic structure of a phenomenon, in this case, the experience of dancing (p. 7).

Fraleigh’s analytical approach is based on a wide-ranging survey of the literature in Aesthetics, classical and modern Philosophy, Mythology and Psychology, including the works of Plato, Heidegger, Ricouer, Merleau-Ponty, Buber, Maslow and Sartre. Fraleigh focuses on the concept of the ‘lived body’ that grew out of existential phenomenology.

### 2.3.2.2 Fraleigh’s primary arguments

Like Sheets-Johnstone (1979), Fraleigh (1987) highlights various issues about studying dance as a ‘lived experience’ of time, space and movement rather than describing these in objective terms (p. xxiii). In her discussion, Fraleigh makes the following key points:

- **The combination of phenomenology with positive existentialism provides a useful model for the study of modern dance in performance.** Fraleigh argues that phenomenology provides the basis for describing ‘the essence of that which appears to consciousness’ (p. 7), while positive existential philosophy—with an emphasis on freedom and choice—adds depth to the analysis by focusing on action and intention, a way of ‘being’ in the world. Fraleigh refers to Maslow as an ‘existential psychologist’ (p. 5), which suggests that Maslow’s work might in some way have influenced Fraleigh’s dance phenomenology.

- **Concepts of the ‘lived body’ and ‘lived experience’ best describe the nature and essence of dance.** Fraleigh suggests that these concepts provide a way to overcome the limitations of the English language, which lacks words that differentiate between the body’s various levels of reality (1987, pp. 10-11).
Through the concept of the ‘lived body’, she rejects the mind-body separation inherent in Cartesian dualism (p. 8). The concept of lived experience can ‘provide a basis for describing the lived wholeness of the self in dance (being the dance) as well as the lived dialectic between self and body, which sometimes arises in the process of dancing’ (p. 12). This lived dialectic takes the form of a body-object/body-subject dichotomy. The term body-subject refers to the body experienced holistically as ‘self’, and the term body-object refers to the body experienced as an object of attention, for example, when a dancer intentionally focuses her awareness on her body and its capabilities to perform certain dance movements (pp. 13-14).

Fraleigh uses concepts from her work in somatic practice and therapy to emphasise the holistic nature of human being, so that mind and body are not disparate entities to be integrated, but rather features that contribute to the totality of the self, and that this wholeness can be experienced in movement (2004, pp. 64-65).

- **The body experienced by the dancer as body-subject is predisposed toward communion with others.** Fraleigh describes the inter-subjective relationship between the dancer and the audience in terms of kinaesthetic empathy achieved through aesthetic expression (1987, p. 61). Through dance, which Fraleigh sees as expression of a universalised self, the dancer extends beyond personal boundaries and connects with others. In the context of concert dance, the dancer makes this connection with an actively receptive audience.

- **Dance involves a ‘lived metaphysics’ based on a non-dualistic embodiment rather than on ideas of the supernatural.** Fraleigh proposes that dance embodies time, space and movement as lived aesthetic experiences, experienced as poetry, rather than as abstractions (p. 182). In her later work (2004), she expands on her ideas of an ‘antidualist’, existential metaphysics,
speaking of ‘a dancing consciousness where dancing is a mode of thought, a special kind of knowledge and being-in-the-world’ (p. 9).

2.3.2.3 **Limitations of Fraleigh’s work**

Fraleigh applies her descriptive aesthetics (1987) to the analysis of several examples of Modern and Postmodern dance choreography. Her analysis works well in this context to provide a meaningful description of specific dance works.

A number of significant issues, however, limit the applicability of Fraleigh’s methodology to my research into the experience of recreational dancing.

1. Although Fraleigh’s theoretical framework and phenomenological methodology could apply, at least in some measure, to any dance form, Fraleigh limits her 1987 discussion to ‘art’ dance (rather than dance as social or cultural practice, for example). Fraleigh states in the Introduction, ‘I view freedom and individuality as the existential context of modern dance…’ (p. xxxii). Because Fraleigh based her analysis on the experience of Modern concert dance, it is unclear whether the same emphasis on freedom and individuality—or even an existential approach—would apply to the experience of other dance forms in other contexts.

2. Other limitations of Fraleigh’s (1987) study include problems related to the nature of phenomenology as an examination of the contents of consciousness. Fraleigh bases her findings on her own experience, comparing her experience with that of only a few dancers and only for dance styles within Modern and Postmodern theatre dance genres. The ‘universal’ nature of the descriptive aesthetics is therefore highly questionable based on this methodology and the existential analytical framework.

In the preface to her 2004 book of essays, Fraleigh mentions that she has used
personal descriptions provided by students, professional dancers and colleagues to inform her ‘intersubjective’ work, stating that ‘intersubjectivity is a concept that links phenomenological research with ethnological research’ (pp. xi-xii). She never states, however, the total number of people she spoke with, how their ‘personal descriptions’ were recorded and analysed (other than in terms of freedom and agency), their ages and ethnicity, type of dance training and involvement, or other characteristics relevant to her investigation. Although the participant quotations she uses for her narrative do work well to support her conclusions, my own research demands a more systematic and rigorous analysis of the information provided by people who share their personal descriptions of the experience of dancing.

3. Williams (1991) cautions against phenomenological approaches, which tend to have ontological difficulties in that they deny dance and dances any ‘duration in time’ (p. 80). Williams also critiques the notion of ‘embodied experience’ and ‘bodily mind’ because this terminology suggests some reality beyond the more traditional notion of mind and, therefore, beyond language (p. 194-195). Indeed, Fraleigh’s attempts to overcome dualistic language have the opposite effect; the repeated use of the terms ‘lived body’ (as though there were any other kind of body) (1987) and ‘body-mind integrity’ (2004, p. 65) only emphasises the dualistic thought that Fraleigh strives to transcend.

Farnell also points out problems with Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological existentialism and concepts of the ‘lived body’, because ‘agency remains a ghost’ (1994, p. 933). She argues instead that

Causal powers thus belong to the embodied person, not to a pre-cultural or a-cultural biological organism, and the Cartesian material/immaterial dichotomy underlying the body/mind duality becomes obsolete.

(Farnell, 1994, p. 933)
Coros (1992) refers to ‘embodied intelligence’—but this might not be the most useful conception of the construct that distinguishes language and thought from other types of lived experience, given that all human existence is ‘embodied’, and that thought and language are necessarily ‘embodied’. More useful, perhaps, is Parviainen’s term ‘bodily knowledge’ (2002)\(^9\) and Fraleigh’s later (2004) statement that ‘thinking and moving are not distinct processes—we think as we move, and we move as we think’ (p. 10).

4. Fraleigh’s (1987) focus on the ‘art’ of dance and the audience’s identification with the ideal, vital body colours the discussion. She accomplishes her goal of developing a descriptive aesthetics of dance, but only in terms of Modern dancers, trained in dance technique and with the intention of performing for others. She compares formal elements of Modern dance with Ballet; it would be informative to compare the lived experience of Ballet with the lived experience of Modern dance. Although Fraleigh uses examples from Ballet, Butoh and other types of dance in her later work (2004), she never refers definitively to dance in participatory, recreational settings, and only provides analyses and descriptions of specific concert dance performances. I question, therefore, to what degree her interpretation of the political, gendered aspects of dance might apply to dancing in other contexts.

5. Fraleigh includes dance amongst ‘the lived arts, those that exist in performance alone, leaving behind no material product’ (1987, p. xviii). In this way, she distinguishes dance from sculpture, for example. She makes this assumption without further explanation, other than to acknowledge that

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\(^9\) For a detailed discussion of the mind-body problem in dance, see Pakes (2006). She offers a fascinating discussion of the issues of mental causation and phenomenal consciousness as seen from the perspective of recent work in materialist and physicalist philosophy. The scope of my project, however, precludes a further investigation of these issues; I must leave this for a future work.
notation and film create a record of the dance, a record which captures only some of the qualities of the dance as performed. But Fraleigh does not adequately engage the question of dance as a ‘material product’: It seems that the tendency to view dance as only temporal and ethereal leads to a less rigorous analysis of form related to experience. In Fraleigh’s case, this tendency leads to overly general statements such as the following.

A summary phenomenological definition of dance art (also its irreducible structure) appears: Dance is human movement created and expressed for an aesthetic purpose.

(Fraleigh, 1987, p. 49)

This needs further investigation in cultures for which art extends to everyday life such that there is no cultural differentiation between life and ‘art’, or at least between life and dance, such as in some parts of Greece, for example (Raftis, 1987).

6. Another limitation of Fraleigh’s work in general is the noticeable absence of Effort/Shape Theory applied to the lived experience of dance. Fraleigh mentions Weight, Space, Time and Flow but does not explicitly mention the idea of states and drives that evolved from the work of Laban—this despite the fact that she studied with Mary Wigman, an associate of Laban. She does, however, rely on notated scores in her analysis of specific dances, which means that documentation and textual analysis are an important part of her methodology.

7. In her analysis of specific dance works, Fraleigh mentions music almost as an aside, yet she acknowledges its aesthetic impact on choreographers, dancers and audience. She does not discuss, however, how the lived experience of music encompasses feeling and thought, creating a visceral and cognitive
response\textsuperscript{10}, and that this response is a key feature of the dance experience whenever music accompanies dance (or dance accompanies music), such as when dancing recreational dances. Fraleigh seems to ignore the effect of music, even when music and dance comprise a unified lived experience for dancer and audience.

\textbf{2.3.2.4 Applicability of Fraleigh’s approach to my own research}

My reading of Fraleigh raises important issues about studying recreational dance as a lived experience from an inside perspective. Overall, Fraleigh’s works are highly readable and they contain beautifully crafted and poetic statements about the experience of dancing that resonate with my own sense of form and being in dancing. As a researcher with experience in both the quantitative and qualitative methods of the Social Sciences, however, I question how she arrived at her conclusions, not in terms of the development of her arguments, but in terms of a systematic method of data collection and analysis.

In her 1998 article, Fraleigh highlights the methodological ‘vulnerability’ of phenomenology, stating that

\begin{quote}
Existential phenomenology is vulnerable because it rests on experiential descriptions of the lived world; more precisely, human experiences arising always in particular contexts of being-in-the-world.
\end{quote}

(Fraleigh, 1998, p. 136)

In her view, existential phenomenology’s vulnerability is exposed by the way that experiential description diverges from the traditional philosophical reliance on logic and reason (p. 136). In my view, this vulnerability has more to do with a reliance on \textit{only} first-person reflections and the ‘universalizing impulse’ that she depends on to

\textsuperscript{10} See, for example, Keil, 1966.
describe shared meanings (p. 136). In my own research, I seek a higher degree of analytical rigour, achieved by combining various sources of data and systematic analysis. My personal experience serves as one source of data within a broader data set that includes the views of participants as well as a detailed analysis of the phenomenological elements of the dance form (such as space and time as experienced in dancing).

Although Fraleigh’s later work (1999a, 2004) includes several quotations from dancers about their personal experiences, the autobiographical format, with philosophical discourse interspersed with poetry and personal history, does not serve as a model for theory-building in my own investigation which, while self-reflexive in part, also depends on systematic analyses of both interview data and dance material.

Nevertheless, some of Fraleigh’s discourse does point the way towards interesting areas of investigation into the experience of participatory linked chain and round dancing in terms of form and being. Key to Fraleigh’s work is a commitment to and expert skill when describing in detail the movement elements of dance works. I share this commitment to movement description and analysis from the dancer’s perspective as a vital source of data for the investigation of form and being.

The following key points from Fraleigh’s work also inform my project.

- The theoretical perspective of a lived body dialectic (body-subject and body-object) that rejects Cartesian dualism might enrich the study of recreational dance by highlighting the sense of self that is experienced by dancers, from the dancer’s perspective. The body-subject/body-object dialectic might also help to describe the very different experiences of teaching or learning dance (during which the body is an object of attention) and the experience of ‘just dancing’.

- Fraleigh’s description of present-centredness and social connection through dance, and the I-Thou relationship of the dancer to the dance (1987, pp. 40-42) offer a
potentially productive way to look at recreational dance from a psychological perspective. Fraleigh acknowledges the importance of selflessness in terms of dissolution of personal boundaries, and she refers to—but does not define—‘feelings of unbounded presence’ (p. 37). This discussion of self is an example of how the experience of dancing evidences some of the characteristics that Maslow describes for ‘being’ cognition during a peak experience: Fraleigh states that the dancer ‘becomes her dance’ (p. 23), and Maslow describes how ‘the creator becomes one with his [or her] work being created’ during a peak experience:

The greatest attainment of identity, autonomy, or selfhood is itself simultaneously a transcending of itself, a going beyond and above selfhood.

(Maslow, 1999, p. 117)

• In her essays on Butoh dance (1999a), Fraleigh offers this poetic statement of how dancing frees a person from the boundaries of self:

Dancing purifies the body, animating it through the breath in the wind and fire of rhythmic motion. It wears down the house of the ego, built for self-protection and advancement. Dance is not of the self, neither self-protection nor self-expression, as it is so often called. Rather, dance serves to move one beyond the boundaries of the self toward freedom in the existential and Zen sense: that freedom which liberates the self from the impermanent psyche, releasing thought and action in tune with nature.

(Fraleigh, 1999a, pp. 183-184)

Is this type of freedom evident when people realise participatory linked chain and round dances? If so, how do the formal elements of these dances—with their physical connection that often limits freedom of movement, specific pathways in space, prescribed step patterns and rhythms—contribute to this type of freedom?

• Offering a personal account of how she experiences herself while dancing, Fraleigh suggests a powerful motivator for those who dance:
When I dance... I experience what I would like to call “pure presence,” a radiant power of feeling completely present to myself and connected to the world.

(Fraleigh, 1998, p. 140)

This description resonates with my own experience of dancing and that of Coros (1992) as well, suggesting that ‘presence’ might be a promising area of investigation in my own research on the relationship of form and experience in dancing.

- Fraleigh highlights how she creates her ‘self’ in dance, and that ‘this creation is a surpassing of self as any creation is’, noting the unique way in which dance ‘brings body to mind through the medium of movement’ (2004, p. 59). This is a fascinating conception of ‘self’ that might well feature in the descriptions people give of their own experience of dancing.

The aesthetic properties of dancing feature prominently in Fraleigh’s analyses. She defines ‘aesthetics’ as rooted in ‘sense perception’ (1999b, p. 188), and ‘aesthetic properties’ as follows:

Aesthetic properties (also called qualities and values) are discerned as qualitative dimensions that inhere in movement: syncopated and overlapping rhythms, space...and efforts.

(Fraleigh, 1999b, p. 193)

Fraleigh emphasises the integral nature of aesthetic properties to dance movement, and she views aesthetic intentions—such as action for the purpose of simply enjoying the action—as ‘human marks, the purposeful marks of invention and creativity’ (p. 194). This raises fascinating questions about how people create and experience aesthetic properties when realising dances and how aesthetic intention relates to their motivation to dance.
In her 1998 article, Fraleigh explains the concepts of immanent and transcendent consciousness. If, as she states, consciousness unifies our perceptions as we experience phenomena (p. 137), this would enable researcher and participants alike to reflect on their experiences of dancing in order to describe both the immanent and transcendent aspects of those experiences, as far as memory and language will allow.

Fraleigh gives an example of a form-focused description of the felt experience of dancing in a circle: ‘Folk dances performed in unison circles embody and symbolize being-with-others in the eternity of the [present] moment’ (1987, p. 194). Because Fraleigh does not explain how she came to this conclusion, however, this statement, which seems intuitively accurate, requires verification by talking with the dancers performing the dances in unison circles to learn how they interpret their own experience.

Another point of discussion that relates to the ‘linking’, or physical connection, in participatory linked chain and round dances is Fraleigh’s description of touch and kinaesthesia: ‘When dancers touch each other in their movement, they explicitly expand proprioceptive awareness in tactile terms’ (2004, p. 127). She mentions this in terms of contact improvisation, modern/postmodern dance and classical ballet—prompting the question of how this proprioceptive awareness might be experienced in recreational chain and round dancing.

Fraleigh’s movement-based perspective, recognition of the aesthetic properties inherent in dance and phenomenological method point the way toward a descriptive approach that could apply to many dance genres. The most important feature of Fraleigh’s descriptive aesthetics is the emphasis on human movement as the starting point for the exploration of dance, from the perspective of the dancing person. This focus on the dancer’s experience differs from descriptions of choreographic intent, audience impact, and technical critique of a performance. A phenomenological
approach, systematically applied, might illuminate aspects of recreational dance not often explored by Dance researchers.

Fraleigh’s most valuable contribution in this work is her emphasis that the key to understanding dance lies within human movement itself, and that this must be where the investigation begins—with the lived experience of the dancing person. The theoretical framework of existentialism provides only one window into the dancer’s experience, a framework that Fraleigh aptly applies to the dance genres that she describes and to her discussion of aesthetic intent (1999b). In Chapter 3, I apply a different phenomenological approach to describing the lived experience of recreational dance, to see what themes become apparent.

In the next section, I compare the work of another Dance Phenomenologist, Parviainen, to that of Fraleigh, to explore other ways of investigating the experience of dancing.

2.3.3 Parviainen

Parviainen’s work (1998) references yet diverges from that of Fraleigh, taking the discussion of concert dance as an art work into the realm of how a dancer constructs the body-self as they progress through their training towards a career in dance performance. Her philosophical discourse differs from Fraleigh’s in that Parviainen does not attempt a Husserlian first-person reduction to capture and describe the dancer’s experience. Instead, she uses the writings of philosophers such as Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty to inform her description and analysis of the experience of and personal choices made when becoming a professional dancer, with a focus on Western European art dance genres such as Ballet, Contemporary and Modern dance.

2.3.3.1 Key discussion points

Parviainen states that her task is ‘to evolve a philosophical dance discourse which concentrates on the Western theatrical dance also in non-aesthetic terms’ (p. 10),
which also involves the development of a phenomenological ‘nondualistic’ theory of the body (p. 13). First, she sets up the context of how ‘the body’ is viewed from a political stance of objectification and socialisation, and then moves on to a discussion of the lived body based on the writings of philosophers such as Merleau-Ponty, with special focus given to his thoughts on the phenomenology of perception. Parviainen argues that Ballet and Modern dance have a tendency, through the ‘written language of dance and in dance practice itself’ (p. 13) to mirror and propagate a culturally-entrenched dualistic separation of mind and body in which a person uses their body (movement), as an instrument towards some other end, for example, symbolic expression of moral statements. She proposes, instead, ‘the human body itself as the standpoint from which moral issues emerge’ (p. 13).

Using the term ‘dancing subject’ to emphasise ‘cognitive aspects of the dancer’s practice’ (p. 14), Parviainen explores issues of identity and intentionality ‘to understand both how dancers and choreographers are made by culture and a dance tradition and how they make themselves’ (p. 15). She does this by means of an interdisciplinary approach, a ‘complex theoretical basis’ that spans the disciplines of Western dance history and aesthetics, performance and theatre studies, and cultural field theory. She cites Bourdieu on art, Foucault on the ethical subject, and Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger on the philosophy of art (p. 15).

Her work is organised around four major topics, each with its own key arguments:

1. First, Parviainen develops a phenomenological theory of the body. This discussion takes in ideas of synaesthetical perception (rather than just vision in the sense of the Cartesian gaze), the ‘body’s memories, skills and knowledge’ (p. 17), and ‘Merleau-Ponty’s concepts of the prepersonal, the precommunicative, the intersubjective, the flesh, and the chiasm’ (p. 17) and the relationship between self and other, in this case, dancer and audience.
Parviainen foregrounds and establishes the value of ‘bodily knowledge’ as real and evident for the ‘body-self’, ‘the lived body which makes us immediately present to others’ (p. 35). She uses the term ‘bodily knowledge’, distinguishing this from a more general form of tacit knowledge, to describe ‘knowing in and through the body which has a direct connection to bodily awareness and perception’ (p. 51).

Having argued that the body-self enables individuals to be present in and to relate to the world and to others, she describes Merleau-Ponty’s view that ‘it is the task of philosophy to account for the embodied self and how it exists in the world among others’ (p. 67). Especially interesting is the notion of a ‘shared corporeality’ and how that contributes to a ‘synthesis of individuals’ in community (p. 69). Parviainen speaks of a ‘transpersonal embodiment’, which could be a useful concept in the study of folk dancing generally and in the study of participatory linked chain and round dancing, specifically:

A body belongs to its ancestors as much as to its contemporaries. This transpersonal embodiment offers a vessel wherein bodily knowledge of the different activities of cultural life is passed from one generation to the next.

(Parviainen, 1998, p. 74)

2. Next, Parviainen explores the role of tradition in the dance ‘field’ that produces a professional dancer. Using Bourdieu’s cultural field theory, Parviainen looks at how the dance establishment perpetuates aesthetic values and body politics in the context of professional dance training and artistic production.

Although this section has little relevance to my study, in that recreational dancers of participatory linked chain and round dances do not undergo the same type of dance training and identity formation as the dancers Parviainen describes, it is worth taking note of her reminder that not only the dance genre,
but also the researcher, are bound to a specific social and cultural context that situates the philosophical argument (p. 86).

Parviainen points out that the study of individual experience, from a dancer’s perspective, calls for an interdisciplinary approach that complements the theoretical framework offered by sociological discourse:

> Using only the concepts and tools of a sociological discourse on art, it is difficult to illuminate the body-self’s point of view regarding the arts.

(Parviainen, 1998, pp. 94-95)

3. Parviainen then moves on to explore the dancer’s own ‘project’ of becoming a dancer, informed by ideas from Foucault’s practice of the self. This discussion of the dancer’s motivation and sense of becoming includes ideas about how, in creating an artistic work, the dancer goes about ‘poetising meaningful movement in dialogue with the world’ (p. 18).

Parviainen explores Heidegger’s notion of ‘poetising’ as relevant to dance art. She suggests that ‘each art form is in its own way a special form of poetising’ (p. 136), stating that ‘in the case of dance art it is movement and the moving body which form the mode of poetising’ (p. 137). The idea of how choreography can bring forth non-linguistic meanings in performance art is intriguing—could this ‘poetising’ be a feature of recreational dancing as well as that of performance?

4. As she describes the concept of ‘practice of the self’ based on the writings of Foucault, Parviainen highlights a motivational component that suggests a type of ‘becoming’, in the sense that ‘individuals need their own exertions and efforts to “become what they are”’ , and that individuals seek to reach their potential ‘in order to find “authentic being of the body-self”’ (p. 119). She states that choosing to be a dancer is not only an artistic choice, but a choice
about a way of life, that ‘the dancer is making her/himself and mode of being to some extent through the chosen movement aesthetics’ (p. 121).

Parviainen emphasises the agency of the dancer in choosing a particular dance practice and thereby directing the practice of the self—‘the dancers are not made solely by the body politics of the dance field’, rather they take ‘an individually chosen path, the path of transformation and the path of knowledge, also led by the body itself’ (p. 117).

5. To conclude, Parviainen turns her attention to the ontology of a dance as a work of art, based primarily on what she refers to as Heidegger’s ‘ambiguous philosophy of art’ (p. 148), which, she notes, excludes the performing arts. In her development of Heidegger’s ideas on art, Parviainen points out a fascinating way to describe the difference between everyday movement and dance, which represents a different way of being-in-the-world, experiencing movement without the burden of utility but for the purpose of revealing truth:

According to Heidegger’s philosophy of art, making a work of art, choreographers do not use movement as movements are used in everyday life; they do not use them up like the body’s movements in everyday routines or physical exercise. In everyday routines the body’s movements disappear into their usefulness.

(Parviainen, 1998, p. 148)

In Parviainen’s interpretation, poetised movement\textsuperscript{11} becomes a way to create a work of art that reveals the ‘truth’ of existence by means of the ‘essence of movement’ (p. 148).

\textsuperscript{11} Parviainen distinguishes between poetised and representational movement. She describes the latter as an ‘artifice’ which only presents to an audience a view of the world as ordinarily perceived. (p. 149).
2.3.3.2 Strengths and limitations of Parviainen’s arguments

Parviainen’s review of the phenomenological literature is comprehensive, her analysis thorough and her philosophical discourse on the subject of dancing as a performance art both logical and intriguing. There are, however, two key points that limit the strength of her arguments, namely, the use of phenomenological language and the lack of discussion of self-transcendence in dance.

In phenomenology generally, philosophers tend to use problematic language in attempts to overcome dualistic conceptions of mind and body. As I argued earlier in this chapter when reviewing Fraleigh’s work, the term ‘lived body’ seems to suggest a disconnection from the totality of the person. ‘Lived body’ and ‘body-self’ imply that intention, linguistic thought and agency are somehow discrete processes that exist independently of kinaesthetic or ‘bodily’ knowledge. Although Parviainen makes it clear that her intention is to develop a nondualistic theory of the body, the phenomenological language that she uses sometimes hinders this goal. For example, she states that

When the body is skilled at a movement pattern, it has an understanding of it, it simultaneously also possesses the art of making new movements in an adaptive way.

(Parviainen, 1998, p. 50)

Is it not the person who is skilled at realising a movement pattern? While Parviainen’s discussion of knowing in and through the body is important because it foregrounds a type of knowledge that dancers rely on and that is often overlooked and undervalued in academic discourse, to suggest that ‘it’ (the body) rather than the person understands and initiates new movements only underscores an artificial binary of bodily versus other kinds of knowledge and thought.

Also, I question the terms ‘prelinguistic’, precommunicative’, ‘prereflexive’ and ‘prepersonal’ on two grounds. First, Parviainen builds her discussion of these
concepts (as proposed by Merleau-Ponty, Polanyi and others) on the basis of child development and the motor learning that precedes language. This does not fully explain, however, how bodily and other types of knowledge and thought processes operate in adults. Second, the term ‘pre’ suggests a developmental progression that negates the value of bodily knowledge as though it is a precursor of some higher form. Perhaps language that positively identifies the type of knowledge or thought would be more nondualistic than language that defines by negation. For example, the term ‘kinaesthetic’ is more precise and descriptive than ‘prelinguistic’, especially in discussions of dance.

Although phenomenological language sometimes thwarts her efforts, Parviainen does mention the connection between different types of thought in dancing, providing a far more useful description of the complexity of experience in dance:

> The moving body is comprehensive only because it has its own understanding which does not function on [a] linguistic plane, although both making dance and receiving it also require linguistic reflection.

(Parviainen, 1998, p. 138)

Another problematic area of Parviainen’s work is her discussion of self and other. While firmly rooted in the writings of phenomenologists such as Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger on how embodiment both enables and limits the relation of self and other, her discussion never goes beyond self-discovery to the level of self-transcendence. By contrast, Fraleigh, speaks of the moment when the dancer becomes the dance (1987, p. 34), speaking of moments of grace, the ‘present-centered moment, the vital moment of both art and religion’ (1987, p. 157), ‘the moment of unification, which Martin Buber calls I-thou’ (p. 158). Parviainen’s discussion would be richer and more compelling had she addressed the idea of self-transcendence in dancing.

Overall, Parviainen expertly extends the phenomenological framework developed by the classic phenomenologists to include aspects of dance training, dance performance and dance art as experienced by professional dancers, and her work informs my
project by providing ideas about aspects of ‘being’ in dance, specifically, the notion of ‘poetising’, the motivation for ‘practice of the self’ and the lifting of the burden of utility that releases movement from its ‘usefulness’ so that movement can reveal to dancer and audience a way of being-in-the-world.

2.3.3.3 Applicability of Parviainen’s work to my own research

Like other dance phenomenologists, Parviainen describes aspects of concert, art dance, which has a different social, cultural and artistic context than the recreational participatory linked chain and round dances that feature in my own research. Therefore, her work has only limited applicability for my project. Some of her arguments, however, could help to illuminate aspects of dancing generally. Other of her arguments are debatable in the context of this project, and, in critiquing some of the ideas that she puts forward, my own theoretical framework becomes more well-defined.

Key points that apply to my investigation of the relationship between form and experience in dancing include:

- The idea of a shared corporeality could inform the way that I interpret how people experience the physical connection of linked chain and round dances.
- The need for an interdisciplinary approach that acknowledges the intentionality, agency and practice of the self in dancing points me towards other literature, such as Motivational and Phenomenological Psychology, to explore what motivates people to dance and the different ways to investigate their experiences.
- The way in which ‘the body-self develops its own ethos’ (p. 114) suggests a motivation for people who choose to realise dances from another culture in their search for ‘authentic being of the body-self’ (p. 119).
The idea of ‘poetising’ through movement suggests another motivation for choosing to dance participatory linked chain and round dances. For these dances, however, poetising might reveal the world in a very different way than the Ballet, Modern or Contemporary dance on which Parviainen concentrates her discourse.

The points on which I differ from Parviainen also help to define the direction of my own research. These include

- When dancing participatory linked chain and round dances, music is a key component of experience. These dances are always realised in relationship with music or with (what Parviainen terms) a ‘soundscape’ (1998, p. 168). In my investigation, music features as an important element of the experience of dancing.
- In her discussion of identity and transformation, Parviainen speaks at length about how dancers acquire personal knowledge of the moving body (pp. 129-132). My research will examine in detail how people interpret their own experience in terms of how they perceive time, space and the self while dancing, going beyond a general knowledge of the moving body to identify other relevant themes of experience.
- Parviainen accepts the inability to articulate dancers’ knowledge in words. By contrast, my research attempts to find the language to achieve a linguistic description and interpretation of the overall experience of dancing.

In the following section, I explore the work of Coros (1992), who attempted a ‘translation’ of dance into language based on her own experience of dancing participatory linked chain dances.
2.3.4 Coros: ‘A Crossing from Dance into Language’

Coros is the only author that I have discovered to have applied first-person phenomenological method to the study of the experience of dancing a linked chain dance. In her doctoral thesis for The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Coros set out to explore, from an ‘inside’ or ‘near’ perspective, the dancer’s experience of dancing the Greek ‘folk’ dance Syrtos. Coros searched for a way to access linguistically the ‘nonlinguistic nature of the dance experience’ (p. 22), not by applying the concepts and language of the socio-cultural disciplines to dance—which she thought might say ‘more about socio-cultural, sociological, and semiotic aspects of dance than about dance itself’ (p. 14)—but rather by moving from dance (experience) into reflection so that

Language expands to receive the inside dance information... conceptualizations are formulated (abstracted) from the inside dance information rather than appropriating that inside in the likeness of the concept.

(Coros, 1992, p. 232)

What Coros objects to in other studies is any pre-conceived notion, based on a particular theoretical model, that in some way limits the description of what a person might experience while dancing. Her findings are summarised in the following statement of her own experience in dancing.

By dancing Syrtos, I can achieve a potentiality which I cannot achieve in any other way—an experience of being-in-the-world, a way of existing for a time, which is unlike any other lived experience I can have. Syrtos allows me to become this way of being and for dwelling in the world for a while in this way of being. It is a way of being in the world as other than I usually am—and that is to be unlike any other...and unlike any thing....

(Coros, 1992, pp. 199-200)

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12 See the Introduction for a detailed discussion of the terminology used in this project.
To say that a dance allows a person to achieve a potentiality and to dwell in the world as ‘other than I usually am’ suggests that participatory linked chain and round dancing is a far more profound and meaningful experience in the life of an individual than might at first be obvious. The process by which Coros came to this statement illustrates an original and fascinating approach to the description and study of an individual’s experience of dancing. Coros began by reflecting on her experience of dancing one of her favourite dances, Syrtos, and then analysed, interpreted and described that experience using language that she believed to be true to her lived experience. She began with dance itself, ‘translating’ dance knowledge into unconventional language, and then (somewhat reluctantly) applying theory from other disciplines in order to comprehend, understand and explain her experience.

2.3.4.1 Aim of the project

I had come to understand that I, myself, would never be able to discover why Cretan dances were special to me by using the prevailing anthropological, ethnological, and ethnographical methods of investigating dance...I felt that by using those methods, I myself would not be able to adequately linguistically articulate my own dancing experience sufficient to the dancing experience itself.

(Coros, 1992, pp. 8-9)

Coros set out to describe her experience of dancing with integrity and authenticity, in the sense that she felt she must acknowledge and describe the dancer’s ‘inside’ experience of dancing as part of any analysis she might present. She speaks with dissatisfaction of an earlier paper on the Greek dance Sousta that she presented in 1981 at the annual conference of the Congress on Research in Dance. In that paper, Coros interpreted the dance from a socio-cultural perspective only, applying the themes of honour and shame. But the absence of the ‘experience of the dancer in the act of dancing’ weighed on her conscience and left her feeling that she had not told the ‘whole truth’ about the dance: ‘tangible connections between dancing and context should not be left to implication; they should be described and explicated’ (pp. 10-
11). She suggests that her inability to articulate her experience of dancing contributed to the lack of a critical component of the work on *Sousta*—the description of the dancer’s ‘inside’ experience.

Coros states that ‘what one knows *in* and *by* dancing is what this reflective project aims to learn’ (p. 76). She contributes to Dance scholarship by pioneering a way to foreground and to make ‘linguistically manifest’ (p. 37) the dancer’s inside experience.

### 2.3.4.2 Context

In relation to the whole context of life, then, is where I find the meaning of *Syrtos*.

(Coros, 1992, p. 200)

Coros bases this statement on her finding, in terms of her own experience of dancing, that what prompts her to dance is the intention and longing to achieve a particular way of being-in-the-world, a way of being in which she senses herself to be fully present as a unique individual with a tangible physicality and internal coherence.

Possibly because of her phenomenological perspective, and perhaps also because of her dissatisfaction with her earlier study of the dance *Sousta*, which applied socio-cultural theory *to* the experience of dancing, Coros relies on her own, ‘inside’ knowledge of dancing as dancer, and the analysis and interpretation she brings to the project as researcher. She does not describe where she dances, with whom, or the music, which makes it difficult to situate her project in any particular geographical, social, cultural, participatory, presentational, or even musical context. Her unique approach to finding a new and systematic method for articulating the experience of dancing is therefore highly idiographic (unique to the individual), but does not adequately account for the many interrelated elements that contribute to the experience of dancing, a concept that is key to my own research.
Coros acknowledges the need to recognise the social and cultural factors as they affect the experience of dancing, but she sees these factors as primarily ‘impinging’ on the experience of dancing (pp. 205-206), based on her own experience of pressure to perform Syrtos ‘authentically’ as any dancer would dance it, versus ‘authentically’ as only she can dance it, a unique individual ‘fully present...in the dance line and before the world’ (p. 207).

So although it is reasonable to limit the scope of her project to phenomenological considerations and to position the work in the context of ‘life’, certain problems arise from Coros’s limited engagement with the issues around context, which I discuss further later in section 2.3.4.6. My own study, by contrast, takes into account the specific contexts in which people realise participatory linked chain and round dances.

### 2.3.4.3 Methodology

Rather than alter the substance of dance, interpretation, conceptualization, and explanation could make dance “become itself” and thus were necessary specifically for that task.

(Coros, 1992, p. 91)

Although Coros had hoped to avoid imposing theory and method on the experience of dancing, she came to realise that conceptualisation and explanation were required to understand and to linguistically articulate the experience of dancing. Her methodology reflects a phenomenological approach in which she grapples with questions of epistemology and hermeneutics based on her own individual experience, guided by the literature in phenomenology. She does not compare her experience to that of other dancers, other than to refer to a general lack of dancers’ ability to articulate their experience. The use of personal experience in the form of first-hand accounts, however, is generally recognised as acceptable in phenomenological studies (Fraleigh, 1987; Ness, 2004).
Recognising and acknowledging her dual role of researcher (Mary Coros, her anglicised name) and subject (Maria Kouromihelakis, her Greek name), she describes her methodology as ‘movement from dance into reflection’ rather than as concept, method, and theory applied to dancing (1992, p. x).\(^{13}\) The project moved from dance into reflection in three phases, which she describes as 1) translation, to linguistically represent the experience of dancing as ‘word pictures’; 2) interpretation, to reflect on the experience of dancing in order to expand the initial understanding; and 3) explanation, to understand and articulate the process of reflecting on the experience of dancing and to summarise the knowledge gained about dancing and about reflection on dancing.

It is the first and second phases that most inform my research, as well as how well her summary of the knowledge gained about the experience of dancing fits with what other researchers have said about that experience. While her exploration of how to find a ‘nearer linguistic equivalence to the dancing moment’ (p. 27) is fascinating in itself, I am more interested in the results of her analysis of that initial ‘linguistic equivalence’.

2.3.4.4 Theory and epistemology in Coros’s work

I insisted on maintaining integrity in the work...This meant that the work of the dissertation could not offend the knowledge I tacitly held as a dancer of Syrtos.


Coros relies heavily on the work of Ricouer, Heidegger and Gadamer, key figures in the tradition of hermeneutic phenomenology (Smith, et al., 2011), which helped Coros to find her way from dance into interpretation. She realised that the experience of

\(^{13}\) This is similar to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), to be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.
dancing and the experience of the research project—reflecting on dance and meta-
reflecting on the process of reflection—were two very different experiences.
Significantly, she came to appreciate that the process of reflecting on the experience
of dancing and the results of that process, a description of the experience that uses
conventional language, could, in fact, remain true to the near perspective of the
dancer’s experience of dancing. This is an important point to consider for my own
study, which looks at the experience of others, and must therefore accurately interpret
and reflect ‘inside’ experience.

Coros also looks to the work of existential phenomenologist William A Luijpen and
social phenomenologists Schutz and Luckmann. Using the work of these authors,
Coros develops and applies her understanding of knowledge processes, such as
abstraction and conception, and develops a strategy for making meaning from the text
of her word pictures (p. 124).

2.3.4.5 Description of Coros’s ‘layout’

Coros begins her investigation by using unconventional language as well as dashes
and spaces to create a ‘linguistic choreography’ (p. 31), an initial linguistic
articulation of the recalled experience of dancing, in the form of a text that she refers
to as ‘word pictures’. At this point, she concedes that she has not yet made tacit dance
knowledge explicit, because the word pictures as a text requires further reflection and
explication before they can be understood and discussed (p. 58). Coros calls the result
of this reflective activity ‘the layout’—‘a formulation of the experience of dancing
Syrtos from the content of the text of the “word pictures”’ (p. 96).

From the layout, Coros identifies five features of what the dancer experiences during
dancing: ‘a) state of my awareness; b) fluid position in space-time; c) manner-in-
dance; d) presence; and e) directed toward a future dancing moment’ (p. 99). She
argues that these features ‘constitute a situation-in-dance’, analogous to the discourse
in existential phenomenology about how people are always in a situation in the world
in a certain way (pp. 99-100). These five features of the experience of dancing provide a starting point for my own analysis of themes of experience, in that I can determine if and to what degree these features are supported by descriptions of experience given by people who dance participatory linked chain and round dances:

1. **State of awareness**: Awareness changes along a continuum from ‘fuzzy’ to ‘clear’ while dancing (p. 113).

2. **Fluid position in space-time**: Coros describes another continuum that relates to the felt experience—not the observed experience—of space-time. She describes this felt experience as a sense of ‘being more or less concrete and tangible’, in other words, sometimes feeling more concrete and tangible (‘solid’), other times feeling quite intangible and non-concrete (p. 100).

3. **Manner-in-dance**: This feature refers to the sense of self while dancing, ‘the sense I have of myself as an existing being at any present moment in the dance’ (p. 101). Coros proposes three specific aspects of manner-in-dance that also change along a continuum, namely ‘thingness’, a sense of substance, of being substantial or not, ‘adherence’, a sense of connection, either connection with others or being internally coherent, and ‘bodyness’, the sense of one’s body, of being like or unlike other bodies, of being like others or of being unique (p. 102).

4. **Presence**: Coros describes presence as a sense of being more or less ‘present in dance...That is, I stand forward as myself; but I do “less so” or “more so”’ along a continuum’ (p. 102).

5. **Directed toward a future dancing moment**: Coros suggests that ‘living force or force of moving’ is driven by the longing for and intention to achieve a particular experience in dance, which she refers to as ‘IT’ (p. 105). When she
achieves ‘IT’, Coros senses herself to be at one end of each continuum, namely,

a. clear state of awareness

b. a subjective sense of being concrete and tangible with a distinctive fluid position in space-time, and

c. a manner-in-dance characterised by ‘thingliness, coherence, and I-body’. That is, she feels herself to be a unique and substantial individual, ‘me as only I can be’ (p. 113), internally coherent rather than seeking external connections.

Connective tissue internally adheres me to me, I to I, I to me. Connective tissue need no longer connect me to a place on [the] dance floor, to an other in the dance line. For I am coherent anywhere.

(Coros, 1992, p. 114)

Coros explains the sense of ‘I-body’ by saying ‘my own body is that body which only I am and which only I can be’, standing ‘fully present in the world’ as a unique individual, as ‘only I myself can be’ (p 114).

To summarise an ‘IT’ experience, Coros states (italics as in the original quote): I [in clarity; distinctly here(now); am thingliness, coherence, my-body, PRESENCE] step and press to dwell for a while (p. 115).
Although she presents a fascinating and unique description of the inside experience of dancing the Greek chain dance Syrtos, and although many aspects of her description correspond to descriptions by other dance phenomenologists—such as the idea of space-time as experienced rather than as observed (Sheets-Johnstone, 1979)—Coros approaches the research problem without acknowledging the work of Dance scholars who published their work prior to the completion of Coros’s thesis. For example, Coros states that ‘so far, conventional language has not yielded the information of the experience of dancing’ (p. 26), but certainly both Sheets-Johnstone (1979) and Fraleigh (1987) had already published works that included phenomenological descriptions using conventional language, in the sense of recognisable syntax and grammatical structure. My own study can expand on the existing research, therefore, by providing a clear description of the experience of dancing, supported by detailed information about how that description was derived and articulated by participants.

Coros could also have referred to the work of well-known 20\textsuperscript{th}-century movement theorist Rudolf von Laban and his colleagues, who focused on movement description from an inside perspective in terms of a person’s intentions and attitudes toward movement (Laban & Lawrence, 1965). Laban described these attitudes in terms of ‘Efforts’, and both his terminology and notation system take the dancer’s perspective when describing motion factors such as time, space, weight, and flow (concepts that I will describe in detail in Chapter 5). Effort/Shape theorists (such as Dell, 1977 and Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002) offer a consistent and clear terminology for using movement analysis to describe some aspects of inside experience. Had Coros reviewed the Dance literature of the time more thoroughly and found it somehow lacking, a critique of existing works would have strengthened her argument that a new type of language is needed to provide more information about the experience of dancing. Noticing this limitation in Coros’s work has prompted me to thoroughly review both classic and recent works to see whether the language to describe the experience of dancing might already exist, and to conclude that, for the purposes of my research, it does.
Coros’s goal to describe the experience of dancing, without applying ‘method, theme or concept’ (p. 37) reflects a classic phenomenological perspective, but I question whether any researcher can completely set aside pre-conceived notions that have formed (consciously or unconsciously) during prior study, reading and thinking about a subject. These pre-conceptions must be acknowledged. In Coros’s case, someone who has studied at the Masters and PhD level in Dance and who is familiar with a variety of theoretical frameworks related to Dance Studies, her initial ‘translation’ of the dancing experience into word pictures reflects the language of phenomenology, as shown in the following excerpt:

. . .moving . . .my body-being . . . moving
. . .my body-being . . .steps and presses and senses . . .
. . . . . . for thingliness . . . . . .

(Coros, 1992, p. 43)

The terms ‘body-being’ and ‘thingliness’, in particular, suggest terms from phenomenology, especially Heidegger, whom Coros cites in her bibliography.

The word pictures do not, and indeed could not and should not try to, represent a ‘pure’ experience that is not interpreted at some level. Geertz (1975b) suggests that modes of representation transform an event, simply by the process of writing down or ‘inscribing’ the event (p. 19). Although Coros characterises the word pictures as translation and does present her biography and the reasons she approached her research in a particular way, she does not adequately address how pre-formed ideas and assumptions, language, and concepts have influenced the form and content of the word pictures that linguistically articulate experience. In Chapter 1, I explored in detail issues of interpretation in describing dance, how researchers must self-reflexively position themselves in relation to the research, and how I position myself in relation to my own research.
While my research focuses on the relationship between form and experience, in Coros’s work, a description of the form of the dance Syrtos is noticeably absent; Coros indicates movement only by words such as ‘step’ and ‘press’. Coros intentionally avoids using any language that suggests the observable features of movement, choosing instead a description from only the movement as experienced. But this leaves the reader wondering about the dance itself, and what makes Syrtos a dance in which Coros can achieve her potential, and Sousta a dance ‘which nips potentiality “in-the-bud”’ (Coros, 1982 cited in Coros, 1992). Certainly, the dancer experiences rhythm in some form, a physical connection with other dancers in the chain, a perception of the musical accompaniment, and many other features of dancing that could provide the reader with a sense of the experience of dancing without resorting to language that objectifies or distances the experience.

In her interpretation of the word pictures, Coros ‘lays out’ her initial understanding by means of a ‘layout’. The ‘continuum’ of the layout, however, implies a linearity that might not actually apply. Perhaps the experience of dancing also transforms the perception of time in such a way that the idea of moving from one moment to the next is less relevant that other sorts of time experiences, such as a sense of rhythmic time or historic time, which may be cyclical rather than linear.

Coros is only one person in the study looking at one specific dance, as both researcher and participant. It would be informative to see how other people experience the same dance and whether the five features that Coros describes are evident when other people describe their experience of dancing, using whatever language they find adequate to describe that experience. The use of one participant versus many participants highlights a key difference between phenomenological and ethnographic approaches. Phenomenologists use first-person accounts; ethnographers interpret the experience of the ‘other’. The rootedness of phenomenology in European thinking does limit its applicability to the study of non-European/non-Western experience, but as long as the scope of a study is limited to those who live within the purview of
European/Western culture, phenomenology should still provide some useful insights. Scholars such as Thomas (2003), Williams (1991), and Geertz (1975b), who argue strongly for the importance of context in interpretation, rightly caution against generalising across situations. To heed this caution means that any first-person phenomenological description can only describe the experience of that one person. Even so, such a description can provide a basis for understanding features of an experience that might be common to many individuals.

2.3.4.7 Coros’s key findings

Despite the limitations of Coros’s study, she identifies a number of key themes and issues as she explores the inside experience of dancing. Some of her findings have significant implications for my own research into the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances. Other findings are less relevant.

1. The experience of dancing and reflection on/interpretation of that experience are two discrete and different experiences that result in two different types of knowledge—knowledge in dancing and knowledge about dancing. This theme runs throughout Coros’s study and forms a major part of her argument. Coros argues that a ‘linguistic choreography’ that speaks from the ‘inside’ or ‘near’ perspective can be developed (p. 31), and that this text (the word pictures) can provide a useful starting point to further develop an understanding of that inside experience. She also highlights the importance of demonstrating understanding through the use of language when she says, ‘To “say it”—is to explain it—is to understand it’ (p. 184).

In my own project, I address issues of epistemology but focus primarily on how people interpret their own experience of dancing in terms of specific features (time, space, and sense of self), and do not delve into how they came to that interpretation nor do I attempt to translate experience into a linguistic
equivalent. Instead, I describe the inside perspective using themes of experience and the terminology of the Effort/Shape theorists.

2. Coros highlights an important distinction between space-time as observed and space-time as experienced (p. 98). This becomes clear in her ‘layout’, as she describes a sense of her own fluid position in space-time. The challenge for me is to identify those formal elements of dancing (such as spatial, temporal, kinetic, and aesthetic features) that are most salient to experience. I expected (and found) some overlap between the observed and experienced features of dancing, such as the physical connection between dancers. For example, an observer might describe this connection as a ‘basket hold’ that creates a visual pattern; a dancer might describe this connection as a sense of moving with others as a whole, a feeling of being impelled to move in one direction or another.

Coros argues against descriptions that might lead to ‘an analysis of movement rather than an analysis of the experience of dancing’ (p. 261). Although form as experienced versus form as observed is critically important to my own study, I seek a more precise description of form as experienced from a near perspective. In Chapter 5, I have used language both to describe the dances mentioned by participants in such a way that readers can imagine the dances and to analyse the form of those dances based on how participants experience them. I believe that Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) provides the necessary terminology to represent form from either an inside or an observational perspective.

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14 In a basket hold, the dancer reaches across the dancer on their right to hold the hand of the next person in the chain, in front of (front basket) or behind (back basket) the dancer immediately next to them. The same hold applies on the left. This creates an interweaving of arms and requires that dancers stand very close together.
perspective (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002). The ability of LMA to describe form from an inside perspective is part of what I investigate in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

3. Coros differentiates ‘the notion of “authentic” dance’ and ‘the experience of authenticity in dancing’ (p. 173). This is an important distinction, especially when speaking of chain and round dances that are danced by people who are geographically distant from and ethnically unrelated to the regions in which the dances evolved. Coros suggests that it is actually the achievement of a sense of self as a substantial, coherent (integrated) and unique physical being that leads to an authentic experience in dance.

The layout describes ‘the transformation a dancer undergoes in becoming what she...is not during a continuum of dancing’ (p. 179). Not many authors attempt a ‘step by step’ explanation, which is unique and of key interest to me in my search for more precise descriptions of the experience of dancing and its transformative power. By ‘laying out’ the features of the experience of dancing in this systematic and precise way, Coros successfully supports her view of dancing as ‘an expression of becoming what I am not, of becoming other than I am now’ (p. 178).

The characteristics of the ‘IT’ experience that Coros describes resonate with Maslow’s descriptions of peak experience in his classic work, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, in which he describes a cognitive state of ‘being’ in which a person ‘tends to become more integrated, more individual...more courageous, more powerful’ (1999, p. 104). The striking parallels between Coros’s description of ‘IT’ and Maslow’s conception of the person who has achieved ‘being’ cognition are significant and will be discussed later in this chapter.
2.3.4.8 Questions raised by Coros’s study

Coros’s work raises a number of questions:

1. How might the notions of bodyness, thingness, adherence, and fluid position in space-time be described by recreational dancers who use conventional language to describe and interpret their experience of dancing? How would a researcher ask those types of questions using conventional language?

2. Are the five features that Coros describes (state of awareness, fluid position, manner, presence and a drive towards ‘IT’) the essential and definitive interrelated elements of the overall dance experience? How do these features relate to form and what quality of experience might result based on how these elements vary? Are there more, as yet undiscovered/unarticulated, elements that are critical to the experience of dancing?

3. How does Coros’s conception of the ‘force of movement’ fit with other dancers’ descriptions of their experience and with other work in Dance scholarship, such as the writings of dance phenomenologists Sheets-Johnstone and Fraleigh?

4. Coros seems to imply that the longing to achieve ‘IT’ motivates an individual to dance. This might be an overstatement, and precludes the possibility that the realisation of steps and movements with accompanying music could suffice as an intrinsic motivation to dance recreationally. Certainly, the longing for a state of being characterised by ‘IT’ would be a compelling reason to dance, but dancing itself might be enjoyable enough to prompt a person to dance even if they do not achieve a particular state of being. Are the dance patterns really ‘the means by which to realize the object’ (p. 172), or are the dance patterns themselves the motivation for and the goal of dancing?
5. Assuming that there is, in fact, a drive toward a state of being that motivates
dancing, at what point does the dancer shift to an end-state of ‘being’
cognition so that fulfilment replaces goal-seeking and striving (Maslow, 1999,
p. 85)?

Coros’s study of her own experience dancing the linked chain dance *Syrtos* provides a
fascinating look at a particular chain dance using an innovative methodology based
primarily on readings in Phenomenology. She offers an insightful description of her
experience of dancing, one that achieves its stated purpose to remain true to the
experience.

Other Dance researchers, including those who study Dance in terms of Somatics, have
conducted more rigorous studies that provide good examples for studying various
aspects of the inside experience of dancing.

2.3.5 **Somatics and Phenomenology**

Ravn provides another, more robust use of phenomenological theory and method
applied to dance in her study of how dancers sense their weight in movement (2010).
Like Coros, Ravn explores *inside* experience, from a dancer’s perspective, but with a
more rigorous and well-defined methodology that fits with my own exploration of
experience in dancing. Although Ravn’s participants are professional dancers who
perform in the presentational contexts of ballet, contemporary dance and Butoh, her
approach could certainly apply to different types of dance in different participatory or
presentational contexts.

The key strengths of Ravn’s methodology are as follows:

- Ravn clearly defines her use of the term ‘weight’ as the interaction of mass
  and gravity, more closely akin to the scientific definition of ‘weight’ than to
  Laban’s conception of the motion factor of ‘weight’, which implies the *use* of
  weight as pressure or force (see section 2.6 for a brief explanation of Effort
theory). Because she so clearly defines the scope of her research question, ‘how the weight of the body can be perceived from within’ (p. 22), Ravn’s findings are all the more convincing in that they clearly link back to the phenomenon under investigation.

- Ravn uses a phenomenological methodology that involves a number of participants rather than relying solely on first-person accounts. This provides greater rigour than the work of Fraleigh (1987) and Coros (1992) and presents an opportunity for comparing experience across individuals and dance genres. She used semi-structured interviews to gather empirical data from participants—a method widely used in qualitative research in a number of disciplines—but also incorporated her own ‘embodied competence as a dancer …as a research tool in the generation of data’ (p. 23). In this way, Ravn successfully incorporated third-person descriptions with first-person kinaesthetic knowledge, thereby ‘generating descriptions that could be validated in an intersubjective arena’ (p. 23).

- Ravn highlights a key aspect of the phenomenological approach, which distinguishes between ‘subjective experience in movement’ (emphasised by a somatic approach) and ‘phenomenological explorations of perception and consciousness’ (p. 28). In other words, she highlights the aim of phenomenological research, which is not to ‘translate’ subjective experience but to identify structures of consciousness: ‘Phenomenology centres round an account of subjective experience, and this focus should be distinguished from subjective accounts of experiences’ (p. 28).

Based on a sound ‘postpositivist’ methodology (to use Green & Stinson’s term), Ravn presents some interesting findings about the experiences of dancers of different presentational dance genres. Having analysed the empirical data by means of a close, ‘line-by-line reading’ (p. 23), she proposes that weight is experienced in terms of two dimensions of consciousness that resonate with Fraleigh’s (1987) use of the terms ‘body-object’ and ‘body-subject’. Ravn describes the first dimension of how dancers
experience their weight in terms of their intentional focus on proprioception (inner sensations of the body) which is a reflective type of thought about manipulation (objectification) of the body’s physicality, it’s physical weight. In the second dimension of experience, ‘physicality is pre-reflectively experienced and connected to sensations of the body as subject’ (p. 32). Ravn also suggests that dancers of different dance genres seek a different experience of weight in the second dimension, the sensation of how their bodies feel, which therefore makes the sensation of weight a situated and social phenomenon.

The qualia of the dancers’ sensation of the weighted mass of their bodies is influenced by ideas and ideals of what the body and movement should be like when dancing.

(Ravn, 2010, p. 31)

Ravn’s work provides a useful model for designing a methodology to explore the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances. Her use of empirical data provided by participants in combination with the researcher’s own embodied knowledge and competence results in a phenomenological description based on sound methodological practices in qualitative research. Ravn’s Somatic approach informs my own postpositivist project in terms of data collection, analysis and interpretation.

Batson et al. (2011) offer additional points of interest in their discussion of ways to integrate theory and practice in Somatics and Dance Science for purposes of enhancing dance training and practice. They make a number of key methodological points that can inform my project. The authors suggest that

When movement and the moving body are central to investigation, both deeply subjective and objective vantage points are needed to analyse movement in its complexity.

(Batson, et al., 2011, p. 184)
This, again, emphasises the value of what Ness calls ‘embodied participation’ (2004, p. 124). Batson et al. suggest that how a person experiences dancing in a sensorial way forms what they call ‘embodied cognition’, how bodily experience develops into consciousness and thought (p. 186). Although their argument is based on ideas about Dance Science applied to dance training, this notion suggests an interesting area of exploration into the relationship between form and being in realising participatory linked chain and round dances.

Overall, the literature in Dance Phenomenology and Somatics offers much to consider in the search for a theoretical framework with which to explore the relationship between form and being in dancing. I turn now to studies in Dance Ethnography to explore what researchers have found by attempting to describe the experience of the ‘other’.

2.4 Experience and Dance in Dance Ethnography/Anthropology

Historically, ethnography has been primarily an anthropological endeavour, although ‘ethnographic’ methods of data collection are used in many disciplines, including Sociology and studies of popular culture (Thomas, 2003b, p. 65). In her review of the field of dance ethnography past and present, Thomas points out that dance anthropologists have used ethnographic methods to ‘examine dance within the context of culture’ (p. 66). Because my research looks at dances realised by people with no ethnic or cultural ties to the region in which the dances originated, the context of culture becomes only one of many aspects of experience. An anthropological approach, therefore, is not indicated.

As Thomas points out, however, some dance ethnographers, such as Ness and Sklar, have developed a ‘movement or choreographic ethnography’ (2003b, p. 88) that includes an element of participation referred to by Ness as ‘embodied practice’ (2004). The following sections describe the work of Ness and Sklar, exploring the ways in which embodied practice influences their representations of the ‘other’ in
ethnographic accounts of dancing, and the epistemological implications of this methodology. I then review an article by Andrée Grau (2011), who suggests a way to look at how the concepts of ‘space’ and ‘place’ are culturally informed, a perspective that highlights the multi-dimensional nature of the experience of dancing.

2.4.1 Ness

Ness describes a ‘new trajectory’ in cultural studies of dance, a trajectory that represents ‘a methodological conversion or paradigm shift, away from an emphasis on “objective” observation and toward one on embodied participation’ (Ness, 2004, p. 124).15 Exploring the epistemological implications of this ‘new’ trajectory, she looks for evidence that it has changed researchers’ understanding of movement as a cultural phenomenon (p. 124). Ness suggests that at first glance, phenomenology is the obvious philosophical orientation with which to evaluate this change, given phenomenology’s recognition of experience as ‘the way of gaining knowledge’ (p. 125). She points out, however, that for cultural understandings of human movement, phenomenology can be seen as problematic. From a phenomenological perspective, ‘culture’ would be a fore-structure to be bracketed (stripped away) in order to discover the essence of the experience of human movement (p. 125).

After comparing the writings of researchers ‘who have studied dance for cultural purposes’ (p. 125), selecting studies at either end of a continuum of ‘observation-driven’ and ‘participation-driven’ descriptions, Ness finds that, in many cases, embodied participation (which she also refers to as ‘embodied practice’) does not change the resulting description from the previous ‘observational orientation’ (p. 131). In other cases, however, embodied practice seems to make a difference. She

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15 The idea of embodied practice as an ethnographic method was suggested by Raftis in 1987 when he outlined a research methodology for an ethnography of Greek dance: ‘The researcher must begin by learning the dance himself, registering it in his own body, before committing it to film or paper’ (p. 88).
presents two cases where participation and ‘a concerted effort to integrate the participatory experience into the ethnographic description’ do show ‘fundamental differences in understanding’ (p. 133).

Particularly interesting is Ness’s description of the work of Browning on samba, which Ness describes as ‘a graphic description of the samba step [that] characterizes movement in detailed terms that integrate bodily and temporal, non-bodily co-presences’ (p. 135). Ness speaks of temporal elements such as rhythm and beat as ‘noncorporeal’, suggesting that these types of elements are more apparent in studies by researchers who adopt a participatory, embodied approach.

Ness concludes that embodied practice can, but does not necessarily, ‘produce different understandings of the cultural aspect of human body movement that is manifest in dance’ (p. 138). She also concludes that the ‘new trajectory’ in some ways supports phenomenology, recognising that embodied practice as a means of researching questions of culture must allow for pre-conceptions, unlike Husserl’s phenomenological method of reduction (used by Fraleigh, 1987, for example). She also suggests that phenomenology could itself be changed by embodied practice in Dance research:

The new trajectory seems to be entailing phenomenology in a larger, more complex epistemological project, the philosophical outlines and foundations of which have not yet come clearly into view.

(Ness, 2004, p. 140)

This larger epistemological project presents an exciting opportunity to advance studies in Dance Phenomenology. Because my own research positions culture as only one aspect of the relationship between form and experience, I find that the notion of embodied practice actually fits well with my phenomenological approach, as does Sklar’s (2006) account of embodied practice combined with Laban Movement Analysis to enrich her description of a specific dance practice.
2.4.2 Sklar

Sklar combined embodied practice with other ethnographic methods in her work on dances of the Tortugas Fiesta, New Mexico. In her essay ‘Qualities of Memory’, Sklar considers the ‘felt, somatic aspects of movement knowledge’, arguing that ‘thinking itself…is as much a matter of somatic understandings as of semiotic ones’, and that a somatic approach can contribute to an understanding of identity (2006, p. 97).

Reviewing the work in Neurolinguistic Programming from the 1970s, Sklar states that thinking occurs in different sensory modalities, including that of kinaesthesia, ‘the proprioceptive sense of movement within our own bodies’ (pp. 97-98). She distinguishes between ‘body memory’, which she associates with remembering, and ‘memory of the body’, which she associates with recollection. Highlighting the importance of body memory to Dance research, in the context of the transmission of culture, she states that

Remembering, or “feeling” movement memory as immanent kinaesthetic sensation, is essential to dancing itself and to its continuation and transmission over time. It is critical to communication via dance and to the cultural knowledge and values negotiated through dance.

(Sklar, 2006, p. 99)

In her discussion of how thinking develops from ‘cross-modal [multisensory] recognitions of pattern, whether of form or of quality, that emerge from and structure perception’ (p. 101), Sklar argues that culture shapes ‘schema-building’, or meaning-making processes. She speaks of ‘affect’, not in terms of emotion, but rather in terms of vitality affects, ‘the complex qualities of kinetic energy inherent in all bodily activity’ (p. 102). She calls for the use of ‘vitality profiles’ in the study of movement as social memory, and she offers Labanalysis (also known as Laban Movement Analysis) as ‘a systematic way of observing such dynamics’ despite its limitations in describing only some aspects of movement relevant to the study of cultural constructions of meaning (p. 103).
Sklar reviews a study of gestural patterns in different cultural communities to show that the construct of ‘aesthetic patterns of thinking’ supports a fascinating and compelling model that explains ‘thinking as a matter not only of symbolic representations but also of kin-aesthetic (sic) orderings’ (p. 105).

Applying these ideas to her own ethnographic research, Sklar used a combination of movement analysis and ‘extensive verbal exchange’ to understand the spiritual experience of the fiesta and ‘the way the meanings of movement comprised a web of sensibility and intelligibility’ (p. 106). She highlights the importance of both her own, somatic experience as a participant and of verifying her understanding with participants, ‘in words’ (p. 115). The use of language in dance ethnography is required to guide interpretations of the experiences of the ‘other’. Although Thomas cautions against the assumption in dance ethnography that ‘the participants/respondents know and/or can say what they are doing’ (2003b, p. 88), she acknowledges the need for the use of both ‘conceptual and kinaesthetic frameworks’—movement analysis alone cannot provide a complete understanding without actually speaking with informants (p. 84).

Sklar’s work differs from my own in the types of questions that she asks. She focuses on the embodied cultural memory of a community, while I focus on the experiences of people who realise dances from cultures other than their own. What my project shares with Sklar’s is the importance of both embodied practice and the participants’ own knowledge as sources of data. My own experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances enables me to explore the ‘inside’ experience of dancing through my own kinaesthetic knowledge and through the interpretations of participants as they reflect on their own experiences. This approach takes into account the multi-dimensional somatic, kinetic and linguistic nature of dance so eloquently described by Grau (2011).
2.4.3 Grau

As an anthropologist interested in ‘the anthropology of the senses’ (2011, p. 8), Grau recognises the sensorial nature of dancing in her investigation of cross-cultural conceptions of ‘space’ and ‘place’. Highlighting cross-cultural differences in the way that ‘sensory experiences are patterned and interpreted’ (p. 9), she first presents a comparison of the use and meanings of ‘verticality’ in Ballet and in the musical theatre performances of dancers such as Josephine Baker. Using detailed examples from Balinese and Tiwi dance, Grau then moves on to discuss how people in different cultures have developed different spatial frames of reference, and how this spatiality reflects their particular world views.

Grau speaks of three types of orientation in space: ‘intrinsic, relative and absolute’ (2011, p. 14), which prompts the question of whether one of the appealing aspects of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances might be the ‘relative’ orientation required to keep the chain or circle moving smoothly and whether this ‘relative’ sense of space might contribute to a sense of community. Norris, for example, speaks of a shared somatic experience in dance that leads to a sense of community (2001). Perhaps a relative orientation in space is a key element of such a shared somatic experience.

Most importantly, Grau highlights the multi-dimensional nature of the dancing experience:

My starting point, as an anthropologist specializing in dance, is that dance is a somatic, kinetic and linguistic phenomenon; that these three domains are inextricably intertwined; and that all are culturally and socially rooted.

(Grau, 2011, p. 5)

Grau’s statement is highly significant for the study of the experience of dancing. Recognising that dance is at once a somatic, kinetic and linguistic experience calls for the study of that experience by means of an investigative approach that speaks to all
three of these domains using language, reflection on sensory experience and kinetic (movement) analysis.

Although my project investigates form and experience in a context where cultural transmission and meaning are not the main focus and an anthropological approach is not indicated, the following key points emerge from the Dance Ethnography literature and help to guide my research:

- Thomas (2003b) and Sklar (2006) recognise the importance of obtaining information from participants about their own experiences of dancing, acknowledging that participants might not always be able to articulate their experience without additional, skilled questioning and encouragement by the interviewer.
- Grau (2011) highlights the complex, multi-dimensional nature of the experience of dancing and provides examples of how looking at a dancer’s spatial frame of reference can enrich a description of that experience in a cross-cultural context.

Moving from the area of Dance Ethnography in general to studies of the dances of South-eastern Europe specifically, I now explore the relevant research within the fields of Ethnochoreology and Ethnomusicology to discover what researchers have said about the experience and form of participatory linked chain and round dances.

2.5 Ethnochoreology/Ethnomusicology

Because this project looks at participatory linked chain and round dances from the Balkan region, I looked to studies in Ethnochoreology and Ethnomusicology to provide important information about folk dancing, generally, and about linked chain
and round dances specifically. Offering a clear definition of the term ‘folk dance’, Hoerburger recognised that traditional dance often changes in terms of both context and form and proposed a system of classification to describe these transformations. Hoerburger’s category of ‘first existence’ folk dance identifies the context in which the dance is ‘chiefly an integral part of the life of a community’ and does not require intentional teaching (1968, p. 30). Recreational folk dance around the world, by contrast, exemplifies Hoerburger’s definition of second existence folk dance, no longer an integral part of the community but rather the ‘property’ of individuals who participate in dance as a leisure pursuit, and who learn dances from special teachers or leaders (1968, p. 31).16

Nahachewsky adds the factor of ‘reflectiveness’ to Hoerburger’s original categories (Nahachewsky, 2001). He states that ‘the crucial characteristic of Hoerburger’s contrasting “existences” is the participants’ greater self-consciousness about a previous stage of the dance tradition’s history’ and argues that ‘second existence dance necessarily involves more reflectiveness than first existence dance’ (p. 19). Hoerburger insists that his proposed categories of first and second existence folk dance carry with them no implicit value judgements (Hoerburger, 1968, p. 30). He emphasises that

It is obvious that the International Folk Music Council will be engaged in both the categories of folk dance defined in this paper. But I think it is essential to know and to stress that we are concerned with two completely different phenomena, and that we have to deal with them in different ways.

(Hoerburger, 1968, p. 32).

The Balkan region has produced many different chain and round folk dances that have enjoyed great popularity in the world of participatory, recreational folk dancing.

16 Hoerburger refers to the fact that he actually proposed twelve categories to best describe folk dance in its differing forms and contexts (1968, p. 30).
Ruyter recognises critically important changes in context and meaning for dances included in a recreational folk dance repertoire. She cites ‘aesthetic appeal’ and ‘the kind of energy embodied in the dance’ (1995, p. 271) as two of the motivations of American folk dancers who prefer the dances of a particular region such as the Balkans. The aesthetic that Ruyter emphasises has more to do with the dance itself than with any cultural meanings. She points out that in her experience of educational and recreational folk dance, culture and authenticity were of little importance to many folk dancers: ‘If it felt good to do an Israeli dance (because of its beauty, dynamics, energy, and flow), who cared whether it had been handed down or recently choreographed?’ (p. 273). This suggests that the aesthetics of the dance itself, rather than its cultural or historical context, can draw dancers to various dance forms.

Vail (1993) links the form of dances with identity in terms of cultural and social groups, exploring the social aspects and group dynamics of a Balkan dance group in Maine that danced between 1977 and 1982. She suggests that Balkan dance in its second existence in a North American context can help to create a cultural identity rather than simply express an identity based on prior group membership (1993, p. 236). In Vail’s analysis, she states that the dances of Eastern Europe created a new community, a sort of village community that called itself “Borovčani,” the “people of the pines” (1993, p. 237). She argues that the Balkan dance forms—lines, serpentines and open circles—de-emphasised individuals in favour of the group formation.

In a rare example of Effort/Shape theory applied to recreational Balkan dancing, Vail presents a type of Dance Analysis, known as Laban Movement Analysis, as a description of the qualities of Balkan dances. Unfortunately, her summary remains extremely high level and over-generalised:
Balkan dances embody direct focus and sudden, forceful, “bound” energy. These movement characteristics can be interpreted as indicating assertiveness, clear thinking, pride, and vitality. The vigorous dances often accelerate from a slow, controlled beginning, growing in speed, complexity, and excitement.

(Vail, 1996, p. 309)

It is misleading, however, to characterise all Balkan dances as embodying these movement qualities. Vail also focuses on unison movement, but this ignores improvisation, less often used in recreational dancing but very much a part of Balkan dances and certainly a feature available to recreational dancers.

Vail (1996) and Laušević (2007) both tend to focus on the cultural and social contexts of recreational folk dancing. While the importance of social and cultural context cannot be underestimated (Farnell, 1994; Geertz, 1975; and Williams, 1991, for example), in my project, context becomes one of a number of interactive elements that comprise the experience of dancing. In this way, a methodology focused on movement, music and individual experience results.

Music and dance are closely linked, not just practically because music often accompanies and even inspires dance, but also conceptually in terms of the structure of elements and the use of dynamics, rhythm and movement. Yet it seems that few, if any, researchers have applied theory and methods developed for studying the experience of music to studying the experience of dancing. Surprisingly the *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* (Hallam et al., 2009), does not mention dance, and I have not yet found any similar handbook of ‘Dance Psychology’.

Giurchescu highlights the importance of the link between movement and music in the experience of dancing, stating that in the Romanian culture, they form an ‘indivisible entity’ (2003, p. 167). In fact, she found that in order for villagers to judge a performance as a good one, the dancers must demonstrate a unity with the music. The relationship between dancing and music includes both ‘coincidence’ and ‘non-
coincidence’ with the music structure, that is, dancing ‘against’ the music can increase the aesthetic valuation of the performance (p. 167).

The close relationship between dancing and music is also noted by Hoerburger, who states:

In the dance, movement and music are closely interwoven. They are the visible and audible expressions of temporal art, which combine to form the two-fold art of the dance.

(Hoerburger, 1960, p. 70)

Hoerburger also refers to the experience of ‘a particular kind of dance rapture’ which results from the interactions of movement and music (p. 70).

Keil also discusses the interrelationship of music, movement and feeling (1966). He points out that in many non-Western cultures, music is a performance tradition closely tied to dancing: ‘In many cultures, music and dance are so tightly intertwined that a clean separation of the two seems not only impossible but fruitless if it were possible’ (p. 339). In traditional Greek village dancing, for example, ‘the words of a song, its tune and the dance performed with it all comprise a single entity’ (Raftis, 1987, p. 23). The importance of music to experience, therefore, must be recognised and acknowledged in my interpretation of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances.

In order to find out how to adequately describe the interrelations of the formal elements of dancing most important to experience, using dance-based theory and method, I turn next to the literature in Dance Analysis, especially the classic works by dance and movement researchers.

2.6 Dance Analysis

Dance analysis systematises the study of the movement elements of the dance experience. My use of the term ‘Dance Analysis’ refers to dance-based theory and
methods such as Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) and Effort/Shape theory, which provide detailed, technical descriptions of dance steps, patterns and qualities of movement, and the dancer’s approach to the use of space and time in dance.

Dance Analysis, as described by Adshead (1988), covers a range of analytical techniques, including LMA. While Adshead emphasises the importance of ‘discerning and describing the separate, individual features of the dance and of naming them’, she also describes a level of analysis beyond individual movement, aural and visual elements—an analysis focused on ‘the nature of relationships between components of the dance’ (1988d, p. 41). She states, ‘Specifically, the relationships are created by movement in time and space in association with visual and aural materials’ (p. 41), which suggests the importance of movement, time and space as key elemental features within dance.

Effort/Shape theory, based on the work of Rudolf von Laban, provides an established method for not only identifying the interactive elements of dance, but also for exploring the interactions of movement and exertion/attention through combinations of ‘effort qualities’ (Dell 1977, p. 31) or ‘effort elements’ (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 51). The Effort elements describe the how rather than the what of movement, based on the use of the motion factors space, time, weight and flow (p. 51). In Effort/Shape theory, the term ‘flow’ refers to the quality of continuity or control of movement (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 55). Effort/Shape theory also looks at the combination of two or three Effort qualities and how those combinations might reflect inner states and ‘drives’ (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, pp. 59-61).17

Koutsouba (1997) describes the Effort elements of dances included in her detailed, comparative analysis of the dances performed on the Greek island of Lefkadia. In addition, she outlines her methods of applying a structure-form and style-form

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17 In Chapter 5, I explore in more detail Bartenieff’s explication of Efforts and Effort combinations.
analysis to these dances (pp. 87-101). Interestingly, she includes an analysis of the relationship between dance and music. Koutsouba points out that her use of Laban’s Effort system is a first in the literature on Greek folk dance:

It is the first time, at least to my knowledge, that the system is completely applied on this sort of dance.

(Koutsouba, 1997, p. 87)

Koutsouba’s research informs my own in its focus on the dance and movement material, but differs in that her work synthesises social and dance analyses, whereas my project attempts to synthesise psychological, phenomenological and dance analyses.

Most importantly, the use of Dance Analysis methods results in systematic terminology for describing dance, enabling scholars to engage in more meaningful discourse, especially for comparative dance studies. Having determined a way to describe the form of a dance as experienced, I turn now to the Psychology literature to explore the motivational aspects of realising participatory linked chain and round dances.

2.7 Psychology

Dance scholars seem to have relied primarily on phenomenology to describe a person’s experience of dancing as that experience appears to consciousness. Where the limitations of theory and method in existential and descriptive phenomenology have resulted in fascinating but genre-specific descriptions of the dance experience, the humanistic, motivational psychologies of Maslow (1999) and Csikszentmihalyi (1988a) provide a promising area of exploration. Maslow’s conception of peak experience suggests a model of the dancing self as a person who actively seeks opportunities for ‘healthy growth’ and ‘self-actualization’ (1999, p. 218).
Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi explain the term ‘flow’ as a psychological concept that refers to optimal experience (enjoyment) while performing some activity, which often includes a transformation of the subjective experience of time and a temporary loss of self-awareness (1988). Authors Bond & Stinson, in their discussion of young people’s ‘superordinary’ experience in dance (2000-2001) mention both peak experience and optimal experience, as well as other models of experience, as relevant to their study (pp. 73-74). But the Dance literature contains little mention of the concept of peak or optimal experience, and I have not yet seen a study that specifically focuses on the experience of dancing using theory or methods from Psychology to examine peak and optimal experience in dancing. This offers an opportunity to explore more fully the psychological concepts that might inform my own research.

For example, Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi and Delle Fave add another dimension to Csikszentmihalyi’s basic concept of optimal experience—the idea of ‘complexification of the self’ (1988, p. 60), a ‘process by which states of consciousness seek increasingly greater opportunities for action’ (p. 63). Their study involved 636 people representing sample populations from around the globe—students from a Teachers’ College in Turin, Navajo students from a community college in Arizona, students from a university in Bangkok, cave explorers, former drug addicts living in rehabilitation centres in the Piedmont province, Italy, members of a Valse community from a town in north-western Italy, a small group (n=10) of blind religious (nuns and laypersons), and dancers (n=60). Participants included 381 females and 255 males, ranging in age from 14 to 86 years. The researchers developed

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18 This is a different concept than Laban’s Effort element ‘Flow’; see Chapter 5 for a detailed explanation of the Efforts.

19 Bond & Stinson provide a good summary of various theories about different ways of describing ‘superordinary’ experience in dance.
a ‘Flow Questionnaire’ which asked participants open-ended questions about their experience. Possibly because of the qualitative nature of their investigation, or because few studies were previously conducted using the instrument, the researchers do not discuss the reliability of this instrument. It does seem to have validity in exploring the concept of ‘flow’ as defined in their report. One limitation mentioned by the researchers is the use of a questionnaire to collect phenomenological data, because of the challenges of articulating experience and the challenge of ‘putting the contents of … consciousness into words…the answers tend to be short and stereotyped’ (1988, p. 71).

The results of their study must be used cautiously at best—for purposes of my research, the discussion simply informs ways of thinking about ‘flow’ as a concept to describe and identify the possible elements of the experience of dancing.

The researchers coded responses to the Flow Questionnaire according to key characteristics of experience, including complexification of the self. In the general sample, this characterised 7% of the responses. Interestingly, the researchers identified complexification of the self over twice as often (15%) in the responses of dancers (p. 73). Because the respondents did not necessarily mention this aspect of experience using the exact wording ‘complexification of self’, I maintain a sceptical stance towards these particular statistics. But the numbers do point to a potentially productive area of investigation.

‘Complexification of the self’ is a fascinating idea to apply to the activity of dancing. Researchers of optimal experience talk about complexification of the self in terms of activities for which a person’s level of skill equals the challenges of the activity. Perhaps then, as a dancer improves her technical dance skills, she finds greater enjoyment in more complicated steps and rhythms which require that she realise a dance to her best ability. Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi and Delle Fave state that

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20 It is for this reason that I chose not to use Likert scale questions, but rather to collect data by means of semi-structured interviews.
complexification of the self ‘refers to a person’s awareness that by confronting higher challenges, his or her skills are also increasing, and thus a more complex order is developing in consciousness’ (p. 70).

While research into optimal experience provides one way of studying experience, Music Psychologists offer another view. Researchers have explored Maslow’s idea of peak experience empirically, providing valuable examples of theory and method for studying inner experience. Whaley, Sloboda and Gabrielsson review key studies of musical experience that have significant implications for this project in dance (2009, p. 452). In their review, they question whether there are formal elements, such as structural or sonic features, in musical works that consistently produce a peak experience in listeners, and they note that little research has been done to answer this question. (p. 455). This type of question also applies to Dance research, in terms of analysis of structural, rhythmic and movement features that could initiate or sustain a peak experience while dancing. For example, the authors describe a ‘chill’, or shivers down the spine (Sloboda, 1991), as ‘one physical component of some peak experiences’, and certain musical devices—appoggiaturas and syncopations—were ‘statistically associated with the precise temporal location of a chill’ (Whaley et al., 2009, p. 455). Could certain movements and rhythms in dance also have associations with the characteristics of peak experience? Coros’s description of an ‘IT’ moment, in which she feels herself to be a unique individual with a clear state of awareness and a strong sense of presence, certainly suggests that dancing could contribute to peak experience or to at least some characteristics of what Maslow calls being cognition (1999).

Whaley et al. state that cognitive elements of the peak experience include ‘a changed experience of situation, body and mind, time and space’ (Whaley, et al., 2009, p. 457). Csikszentmihalyi mentions the ‘loss of a sense of time’ (1988c, p. 365) as a characteristic of optimal experience. My research, too, focuses on questions of how people experience time and space while dancing.
The concepts of peak and optimal experience rely on a philosophical stance that experience can, in fact, be described by a conscious ‘self’, although that premise has been debated in some philosophical circles (Myers, 1969). Both Myers (p. 24) and Csikszentmihalyi (1988b, p. 17) describe the self in terms of the human organism, with both ‘mental’ and ‘physical’ aspects. I, too, assume the presence of a conscious, ‘dancing self’ who can reflect on experience, as do many studies in Dance Phenomenology.

Having explored studies of experience generally and studies of experience in dancing in particular, I then discovered that concepts from General System Theory could provide an overarching theoretical framework that brings together findings obtained using different methodologies into a coherent model of the relations between form and being in the realisation of participatory linked chain and round dances.

2.8 General System Theory

As I considered the various concepts from the theoretical frameworks of Phenomenology, Dance Ethnography, Dance Analysis, Somatics and Psychology, I began to focus on how to relate form with experience based on the idea of the various structures of movement, consciousness and self. I then discovered the concept of emergence and began to explore how that concept might inform this project.

‘Emergence’ refers to how unforeseen properties of a complex system emerge from the interactions and forces between the elements of that system. If I were to view dance as a system of interrelated, in this case, formal, elements, perhaps I could develop a theoretical framework that supports both an analytical and post-structuralist view of dance forms and patterns as they interact with music, sense perception and thought.

Rosenboom applies the idea of emergent properties to the field of music, stating that ‘art making may be moving to a new paradigm of holarchic-interactive descriptions
with emergent phenomena’ (1997, p. 295). Dance researcher Preston-Dunlop often refers to rhythms and other characteristics of dance that ‘emerge’ from movement (1998). Preston-Dunlop has suggested that these emergent characteristics include movement vocabularies, sensing/feeling and intending, types of rhythm, choreutics (Laban’s term for movement harmonics), the nexus of movement and sound, the nexus of movement and space and the structure and meaning of a dance. I believe, however, that these require further clarification and simplification. For example, a movement vocabulary might be considered a system in its own right, a system that functions as a sub-system within the overall dancing experience. In any case, Dance scholars such as Preston-Dunlop and Adshead (1988) have written in terms of the interrelations of elements, a key concept of General System Theory.

2.8.1 Overview of General System Theory

According to its early proponent, Von Bertalanffy, General System Theory recognises the problem of ‘organized complexity’ (Von Bertalanffy, 1971, p. 33). As a biologist, Von Bertalanffy argued that ‘if you take any realm of biological phenomena,...you will always find that the behaviour of an element is different within the system from what it is in isolation’ (p. 68).

2.8.2 Key concepts of General System Theory

- Emergence—In essence, the idea of emergence is that the ‘summative’ elements within a system add up to more than the total of those elements. For example, with a series of four dots, the relationships of those dots determine whether they form a line or a square; the geometrical pattern ‘emerges’ from the four dots standing in relationship. This certainly sounds like a model that could apply to dancing, with its many interrelated elements such as steps, patterns, rhythms, music and its temporal and spatial aspects.

- Teleology—General System Theory suggests that teleology, or purposiveness, characterises systems. Teleology, in a systems context, refers to movement
towards an end state or ‘finality’. Von Bertalanffy suggests that 'life is not comfortable settling down in pre-ordained grooves of being; at its best, it is *elan vital*, inexorably driven towards higher form of existence' (p. 203).

- Negentropy—Negentropy refers to a decrease in disorder and a corresponding increase in order. Does dancing somehow increase order through the intentional organization of movement and other dance elements?

- Complexification/differentiation—Systems tend towards an ‘increase in differentiation and complexity’ (p. 103).

- Wholeness—Von Bertalanffy emphasises the importance of adopting a holistic approach, acknowledging the importance of analysis but including the relationships and interactions of the elements in explanations of the system as a whole. In terms of dancing, this suggests that, for example, kinetic elements in combination with Effort elements and musical elements (and other elements) result in the emergent properties of dancing, which are made up of but are more than the formal elements standing in interaction.

### 2.8.3 How General System Theory informs this project

The concept of emergent properties and the other key concepts from General System Theory offer a way to investigate, describe, and compare experiences of dancing. How do the forms of different music and dances change the experienced emergent properties of music and dancing? Are there elements of music and dancing that, if changed, materially change the overall experience, as Sheets-Johnstone (1979) suggests? For example, if a person dances the same steps to a different piece of music, what affect does that change have on the overall experience? How does the experience of dancing differ when a person dances with the phrasing of the music or against the phrasing of the music?
Systems theory provides a ‘scientific’ paradigm (Von Bertalanffy 1971, p. xv) that Dance researchers have yet to apply to Dance Studies, although some researchers have suggested similar lines of thought about dance elements and their interrelationships (Adshead, 1988) and rhythms and other characteristics that ‘emerge’ from movement (Preston-Dunlop, 1998). It is the concept of ‘emergent properties’ that might offer Dance Studies a new direction in methodology. By identifying and naming some of these emergent properties, Dance researchers might find a coherent and consistent vocabulary for describing the experience of dancing. For purposes of comparative choreology, the concept of emergent properties might offer a conceptualisation of dances and dance genres that bridges the gap between specific and highly technical classifications based on structural analysis and high-level interpretations of cultural meaning and social significance, highlighting individual experience and personhood.

For example, I might discover that a particular linked chain or round dance has as its most salient emergent property the transformation of directional space into social space, in which cardinal directions and ideas of left and right might have less meaning to the dancer than concepts of ‘next to’, ‘in front of’ and ‘line of dance’. The emergent property ‘sense of self connected with others in the social space’ could then be compared with the emergent property ‘sense of self contained within the kinesphere’ for a different dance. This example is entirely speculative, as the emergent properties of dances will themselves become evident from the data analysis and interpretation.

The challenges of applying systems theory to Dance research include the following, based on Von Bertalanffy’s (1971) discussion of the three areas of systems philosophy.

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21 This is the imaginary line along which the chain or circle travels, the general direction in which each dancer follows another.
1. Systems ontology (p. xix)—circumscribing the system called ‘dance’ and identifying the elements and interrelations that comprise the system.

2. Systems epistemology (p. xx-xxi)—recognising the cultural, theoretical and motivational factors that influence my perspective as a researcher, and articulating the strengths and limitations of an empirical, systems approach to describing the dance experience.

3. Values and ‘humanistic concern’ (p. xxi)—emphasising the person as an ‘active personality system’ in an effort to ‘bring the psychophysiological organism as a whole into the focus of the scientific endeavour’ (p. 204).

2.8.4 Perception and experience

I was surprised to read Von Bertalanffy’s explanation of perceived experience, as I hadn’t thought before about how a systems view of organisms related to time and space as they are experienced rather than measured. But in terms of organised complexity and perception, Von Bertalanffy states that ‘the biologist finds that there is no absolute space or time but that they depend on the organization of the perceiving organism’ (p. 242). This conception of experienced space, especially, challenges some of Laban’s choreutic notions, as Laban based his description of movement harmonics on classical Greek conceptions of geometry and form (Laban, 1966).

Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) does describe the temporal and spatial elements of dance along a continuum of values rather than in terms of absolute clock time or geometric space. To some degree, these descriptions account for the relations between these elements in description and interpretation. Perhaps a dancing person might experience time in terms of action and rhythm, or history, if dancing a traditional dance, rather than as the passing of seconds or minutes. Similarly, space might take on aspects other than absolute position, such as personal space, social space or line of direction, which describes the direction of a circle or chain of dancers.
Is this transformation of the experience of time and space intentional? General System Theory suggests that teleology, or purposiveness, characterises systems. Furthermore, Von Bertalanffy proposes a ‘model of man as “active personality system”’ (p. 204) who ‘in a very concrete sense “creates” his universe (p. 205).

Von Bertalanffy then points to psychologists such as Maslow ‘who are committed to an organismic theory of personality’ (p. 112). Again, I was surprised to find this convergence with Maslow’s ideas on peak experience and being cognition, which I had already identified as useful to my study of the experience of dancing. In expanding on Maslow’s work, Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi (1988) outline a theory of optimal experience in which complexification of the self and a drive towards increased order in states of consciousness converges with the system theory concepts of negentropy, complexification and teleology.

2.8.5 Vocabulary

Because the vocabulary of General System Theory ties in so closely with ideas from Dance Analysis and Psychology, it seems that the terms wholeness, teleology, negentropy, complexification and, especially, emergence might provide the precision and consistency that I am looking for when describing the experience of dancing. Can this vocabulary, combined with the medium-specific terminology of Dance Analysis, adequately describe the organised complexity of dancing?

It might well be that technical language can describe the framework within which to study the experience of dancing, but that only poetic language can capture the essence of the experience. In any case, General System Theory points the way toward finding the language needed to describe the experience.
2.9 Points of convergence amongst the different disciplines

My review of the literature suggests the following points of convergence between the principles of General System Theory and theory and method from the other disciplines that inform this project:

- The complexity of organised wholes and ideas about the complexification of the self complement phenomenological studies of the experience of dancing.

Fraleigh states that ‘a basic concept of somatics in both psychology and integrative movement studies is the holistic idea of human beings’ (2004, p. 64). This holistic view demands recognition of the multi-faceted nature of the experience of dancing, the ‘somatic, kinetic and linguistic phenomenon’ (Grau, 2011, p. 5) of dance as experienced by participants of this study and by me, the researcher, as I gain both conceptual and bodily knowledge through ‘embodied practice’ (Ness, 2004). Recognising dance as a complex, organised system prompts questions about the subtle ways in which form might influence experience, and how experience reflects a way of being-in-the-world.

‘Complexification’ appears in General System Theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1971); ‘complexification of the self’ appears in studies of optimal experience (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). If, as Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi and Delle Fave (1988) suggest, the seeking of greater order in consciousness by means of taking on ever greater challenges reflects one possibly significant aspect of Foucault’s practice of the self (Parviainen, 1998). That is, the dancer’s motivation for and path towards ‘becoming’ might include taking on greater challenges to reach their potential and find authenticity in being (p. 119).

- The teleology of systems, in terms of goal-seeking and achieving an end state, resonates with phenomenological philosophies that focus on how human beings seek to transform existence.

Sheets-Johnstone (1979) speaks of the lived qualities of dance, informed by classic works in phenomenology by Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger. In particular, she highlights a dancer’s sense of being a spatial-temporal unity of consciousness-body (p. 4), at once creating and experiencing an extra-ordinary sense of space-time. Could this experience of space-time be a primary factor in the teleology of dance? That is, is the goal of dancing (for the dancer) to ‘be’ in this
type of created time? Coros speaks of becoming ‘other than I usually am’ (1992, p. 200), suggesting that dancing somehow produces this desired effect.

Fraleigh describes a desirable sense of self-transcendence that might also factor into the teleology of dance, the moment that she can ‘become my dance’ (1987, p. 40). The extent to which the transformation of space-time as experienced, a sense of self-transcendence or another of Maslow’s features of being cognition (1999) serve as motivators to dance may well differ amongst different individuals and dance forms. But for people who seek out recreational, participatory linked chain and round dancing, I propose that there is a goal achieved, and that it is achieved by means of the formal elements of dances that contribute to an intrinsically motivating experience.

- Elements ‘standing in interaction’, which result in emergent properties, also describes how Dance Analysis looks at the formal elements of music and dancing that result in the emergent experience of dancing.

In Adshead’s description of Dance Analysis, for example, she highlights not only the need to discern and describe individual features of a dance, but also the importance of taking the analysis beyond the level of identifying these features in isolation to a more complex view of the ‘relationships between components of the dance’ (1988d, p. 41). Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) and Effort theory provide a systematic way to describe the experience of movement from the dancer’s perspective. But it is the combination of LMA with other methods of analysis—such as Dance Form Analysis (Giurchescu & Kröschlová, 2007) and the identification of visual and aural elements of the dance experience—that can, when seen from the perspective of elements standing in interaction, form a fruitful discussion of the emergent properties of dancing as experienced.

In this chapter, I have presented a focused yet interdisciplinary view of the literature relevant to the study of the inside experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances. Dance Phenomenology provides ideas about lived experience in dance, with some studies overlapping with Somatics to provide promising avenues of investigation into the experience of ‘others’ from an ‘inside’ perspective of sensorial, bodily experience. Dance Ethnographers offer additional approaches that include methods of qualitative data collection and analysis involving information from multiple sources, including data obtained from the ‘embodied practice’ of the researcher. Studies in Ethnochoreology/Ethnomusicology provide information specific to participatory linked chain and round dances and accompanying music.
while Dance Analysis provides a systematic method to describe the important components of a dance and the relations between those components. Motivational Psychology offers a detailed and complementary view of peak and optimal experience that resonates with the descriptive writings of the Dance Phenomenologists. Finally, General System Theory provides a conceptual framework with which to investigate emergence, goal-seeking, complexity, order and wholeness in the experience of dancing.

Bringing together these various strands in the spirit of interpretative postpositivist research (Green & Stinson, 1999), tempered by the recognition of the limitations of generalizability and theory-building beyond the research context, this thesis is situated at the point of intersection between Dance Studies and Psychology. It is an interdisciplinary exploration of experience with a firm grounding in both the Arts and the Social Sciences.

The next section describes how this review of the literature in both Dance and Psychology has shaped the research questions that guide this project.

2.10 Focusing the research questions

A review of the literature in Dance and other disciplines has led me to narrow my focus and to craft the following research questions:

1. How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?

2. How do dancers describe the formal aspects of participatory linked chain and round dances that contribute to their experience in dancing?

3. What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?

4. What can be discovered about the relationship of form and being by integrating data that is collected and analysed using different methodologies?

These are the broader questions that call for different types of data collection and analysis, presented in the following chapters as four separate studies. Each study addresses each question in turn, with findings later to be synthesised into a discussion.
of how form relates to experience in dancing, and how this relationship might lead to a different way of ‘being’ in the world in terms of the experience of time, space and a sense of self.

These questions necessitate an interdisciplinary approach that blends theory and method from Dance Studies with theory and method from Psychology, specifically, from the Phenomenological, Motivational and Humanistic branches of Psychology, and with concepts from General System Theory. This approach offers a way to not only study the experience of dancing as described by participants in phenomenological and psychological terms, but also to use dance-based concepts to explore the relationship between form and experience. It is the interdisciplinary nature of my research questions that necessitates the use of my proposed methodology. The following chapters present different ways of collecting and analysing data and then integrating the results to form a coherent model that describes the overall relationship of form and being as experienced when dancing participatory linked chain and round dances.
3 An exploration of dancers’ verbal accounts of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the first of four empirical studies, each designed to focus on one of the research questions that guide this project. In this chapter, I ask the question ‘How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?’ This question requires a very specific definition of terms in order to clarify the specific aims and context of this study.

First, it is important to define what I mean by ‘dancing’, because, as Dance scholars generally acknowledge, the term ‘dance’ has very different meanings depending on the cultural context in which the term ‘dance’ is used (see, for example, Kealiinohomoku, 1983). Secondly, the Dance literature tends to focus on two main areas of Dance research: 1) concert dance, choreography and performance, and; 2) dance as cultural and social practice, often using a theoretical framework derived from the disciplines of Cultural Studies, Sociology, and Dance Ethnography (as described in the literature review presented in Chapter 2).

This study is different in terms of both focus and form: 1) the focus is on the individual’s phenomenological/psychological experience, and; 2) the dance form is linked round and chain dances, danced recreationally in a participatory (rather than presentational) context. This form of dancing does not represent the cultural practice of an existing regional or ethnic group, but rather an experience that people of different ethnicities and nationalities intentionally seek out. Therefore, in this study, I define ‘dancing’ as the intentional action of an individual ‘realising’, in conjunction

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22 Hoerburger (1968) would call this type of dancing folk dance in its second existence.
with two or more other individuals, the (mostly) prescribed movements of a linked chain or round dance in a recreational, participatory context.

The main question that guides this study refers to how dancers ‘describe’ their experience of dancing. I use the term ‘describe’ to refer to people talking about their own experience of dancing in conversation with me, the researcher, during a semi-structured interview. As Green & Stinson point out, when conducting postpositivist interpretative research that seeks to understand experience from the perspective of those who have the experience (1999, p. 94), ‘interviewing is very common…and sometimes it is the only source for collecting material’ (p. 101). In the ‘Methods’ section of this chapter, I explain in detail the participant selection criteria, the reasons for conducting semi-structured interviews to collect data and the questions from the interview schedule that elicited general responses about the experience of dancing.

The interpretative framework for analysing the data is a categorisation of the data by ‘theme’, based on the guidelines of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). ‘Themes’ are the concepts and abstractions that emerge from a detailed analysis of transcribed interviews. In this study, the interview data consists of the verbal descriptions of dancing provided by project participants. The themes represent aspects of experience that appear throughout the interview data and that correspond with the researcher’s initial analysis and interpretation of the data collected (Smith & Eatough, 2007, p. 46). For example, the themes that emerge from this study of the experience of dancing reflect relevant concepts from Psychology and Phenomenology, such as Maslow’s notion of ‘identity’ during peak experience (1999, pp. 113-125), Sartre’s view that ‘the self is not a pre-existing unity to be discovered, but rather an ongoing project to be unfurled’ (Smith et al., 2011, p. 19), and Fraleigh’s conceptualisation of aesthetic intention and the ‘lived’ aesthetic experience of dancing (1999b).
In this chapter, I:

- Provide a rationale for my methods of data collection and analysis, explaining the analytical methods as I actually applied them. In particular, I describe how I used NVivo Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) software to analyse and represent the interview data.
- Present the findings of the IPA analysis, describing each theme in detail with supporting evidence from the transcripts.
- Discuss the key findings from this study and propose a motivational model that offers a new way to conceptualise dancing as an experience that spans the intrapersonal, interpersonal and transpersonal domains.

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Theoretical and disciplinary frameworks

This section provides a general overview of the theoretical frameworks that inform the methods of data collection and analysis selected for this study, namely, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), Motivational Psychology (especially Maslow), and General System Theory. Sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 of this chapter describe in detail how I have applied theory and method from these disciplines to the processes of data collection and analysis.

3.2.1.1 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

Phenomenological Psychology provides an ideal theoretical framework for the study of the experience of dancing as individuals perceive and interpret that experience. A number of authors who have conducted IPA studies suggest guidelines that represent a rigorous and systematic approach to the collection and analysis of data (Smith et al., 2011, and Langdridge, 2007, for example). Although IPA overlaps to some degree with Grounded Theory, IPA tends to focus on a smaller sample size, with more detailed analysis and less intention towards generalisation. This focus on detailed
analysis of data collected from a smaller sample reflects the aims of interpretative postpositivist research in Dance to construct and convey interpretations that allow participants to put their ‘own frame around the experience’ rather than to collect data for purposes of generalisation (Green & Stinson, 1999, p. 94).

IPA, as a qualitative approach to research within the larger discipline of Phenomenological Psychology, is philosophically grounded in ‘three key areas of the philosophy of knowledge: phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography’ (Smith et al., 2011, p. 11). Smith et al. highlight IPA’s theoretical foundations as follows (2011, pp. 11-39).

In describing the phenomenological foundations of IPA, Smith et al. point to phenomenological philosophy, particularly as developed by Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre, all of whom suggest possibilities for how to understand lived experience (2011, p. 11).

- From Husserl, phenomenological psychologists adopt the view that ‘experience should be examined in the way that it occurs, and in its own terms’, such that the researcher must make a ‘reflexive move’ toward a \textit{phenomenological attitude}, as opposed to a \textit{natural attitude}, in order to examine the ‘experiential content of consciousness’ with a focus not on the ‘taken-for-granted world’, but rather on perception of experience (pp. 11-12). Husserl proposes a method that relies heavily on first-person experience and reflection on that experience; the researcher conducts research on their own experience, much like Fraleigh (1987, 1999a), Coros (1992) and Parviainen (1998) have done. But as Smith et al. point out, studies in Psychology typically analyse the experiences of others (2011, p. 15).
While Husserl was concerned to find the essence of experience, IPA has the more modest ambition of attempting to capture particular experiences as experienced for particular people.

(Smith, et al., 2011, p. 16)

This is a key difference between my project and the work of Fraleigh, Coros and Parviainen—my goal is to describe and compare the experiences of a number of individuals, which, I argue, provides a more substantial basis from which to draw conclusions about how form relates to experience in dancing, but only for the individuals who participate in this study, and only for the experience of dancing linked participatory chain and round dances.

- Heidegger’s focus on hermeneutics (processes of interpretation) and existential philosophy highlights the individual’s ‘uniquely situated quality of “human being”’ (p. 16) and our intersubjectivity, our relatedness to the world and ‘our ability to communicate with, and make sense of, each other’ (p. 17).

The key idea for IPA researchers to take from Heidegger at this stage are, firstly, that human beings can be conceived of as “thrown into” a world of objects, relationships, and language; secondly, that our being-in-the-world is always perspectival, always temporal, and always ‘in-relation-to’ something—and consequently, that the interpretation of people’s meaning-making activities is central to phenomenological inquiry in psychology.

(Smith et al., 2011, p. 18).

- Merleau-Ponty emphasises the subjective and embodied nature of our relationship to the world, which gives us a sense of being unique in the world as body-subjects, looking out at the world, with our bodies as a means of engagement and communication with the world (p. 18).

For qualitative researchers in general, and IPA researchers in particular, Merleau-Ponty’s view, that the body shapes the fundamental character of our knowing about the world, is critical.

(Smith, et al., 2011, p. 19)
The authors acknowledge that while different researchers place more or less emphasis on physiological process, such as sensation, ‘the place of the body as a central element in experience must be considered’ (p. 19).

Although this idea of the body as central to experience might seem obvious within the context of a Dance Studies project, it is important to emphasise that this project explores in depth the relationship between form—the structural, rhythmic, sensory and movement patterns of a dance and the intentional physical actions a person uses to create movement material while realising a dance—and the experience that the person both creates and perceives while dancing. Within Psychology, the phenomenological foundation of IPA is well suited to an exploration of the embodied nature of the experience of dancing.

- ‘Sartre stresses the developmental, processual aspect of human being’, that ‘the self is not a pre-existing unity to be discovered, but rather an ongoing project to be unfurled’ (p. 19). According to Smith et al., Sartre extends Heidegger’s ideas about the importance of the ‘worldliness’ of experience in terms of relationships with others providing a model for the type of portraiture possible in IPA studies:

  His portraits show a penetrating analysis of people engaged in projects in the world and the embodied, interpersonal, affective and moral nature of those encounters.

  (Smith, et al., 2011, p. 21)

Hermeneutics theory deals with issues of interpretation and is a critically important philosophy for any IPA study. Smith et al. highlight the work of Schleiermacher, Heidegger, and Gadamer in their exploration of how hermeneutics can inform IPA studies, arguing that hermeneutic theories support the idea that an IPA researcher, by the very act of analysing another’s experience, can ‘offer meaningful insights’ (2011, p. 23) that go beyond the ‘text’ (statements and other data) provided by research participants.
In the context of IPA research, some of this ‘added value’ is likely to be a product of systematic and detailed analysis of the text itself; some of it will come from connections which emerge through having oversight of a larger data set, and some of it may come from dialogue with psychological theory.

(Smith et al., 2011, p. 23)

This idea of ‘adding value’ by means of a systematic and detailed analysis of the texts provided by participants (interviews) also addresses a key issue raised by Thomas, who problematizes the responses obtained when researchers ask participants to describe their experiences of dancing. Thomas states that asking people to describe their experience ‘this implies that the participants/respondents know and/or can say what they are doing’ (2003, p. 88). She suggests how Ness used two strategies to address this problem—the first was to ‘not necessarily take their responses without question or further probing’ (p. 88), the second was to conduct a ‘choreographic analysis’ (p. 88) to supplement and compare with the information provided by participants. IPA offers a third way to go beyond the text to find deeper meanings—a detailed and systematic analysis of participant texts as they stand on their own and as they form part of a ‘whole’ data set.

Looking at hermeneutic theory in more detail, Smith et al. highlight two key aspects of Heidegger’s work as key to IPA studies: 1) Heidegger clearly identifies the interpretative nature of phenomenological endeavours, and; 2) Heidegger’s notion of fore-structures—essentially, preconceptions and assumptions—calls for researchers to openly recognise the effects of prior experience when encountering something new, whether the ‘thing’ is an object, an experience, or a text. IPA researchers must not only acknowledge that fore-structures affect interpretation, but must also connect the idea of ‘bracketing’ (acknowledging and then setting aside pre-conceptions) with reflexive practices generally in qualitative research. Smith et al. suggest that it might be only after engaging with a text that the researcher can recognise and address the preconceptions that the researcher brought to the initial interpretation (p. 23). They
also point to Gadamer’s caution about the potential for preconceptions and bias to hinder the process whereby meaning emerges from the text itself (Smith et al., 2011, pp. 26-27).

The concept of the *hermeneutic circle*, drawn from various hermeneutic theorists, informs IPA method in the sense that ‘the process of analysis is iterative’ and requires a ‘dynamic, non-linear style of thinking’ (p. 28). Smith et al. describe the hermeneutic circle as a way of looking at ‘dynamic relationships between the part and the whole, at a series of levels’ (p. 28). They suggest that the hermeneutic circle applies not only to the part-whole relationships within the data, but also to the interpretative process of engaging with the data:

> The idea is that our entry into the meaning of a text can be made at a number of different levels, all of which relate to one another, and many of which will offer different perspectives on the part-whole coherence of the text.

(Smith et al., 2011, p. 28)

In describing a third key area of the philosophy of knowledge that applies to IPA, Smith et al. contrast *idiography*, the study of the particular, with *nomothetic* research, which is ‘concerned with making claims at the group or population level, and with establishing general laws of human behaviour’ (2011, p. 29). An idiographic approach implies a commitment to the particular in terms of detail, depth of analysis, and description of ‘particular experiential phenomena’ from the perspective of particular people in a particular context (p. 29). Because of this commitment to the particular, ‘IPA utilizes small, purposively-selected and carefully-situated samples’ (p. 29).

The following phenomenological, hermeneutic, and idiographic theoretical foundations of IPA resonate with the aims of this study in the following ways.

- Phenomenology's commitment to study and express experience in its own terms, ‘rather than according to predefined category systems’ (Smith et al.,
enables the exploration of a specific dance form in such a way that the language for describing this experience can emerge from the data, from what people who experience the dancing actually say about it. In IPA studies, this means that researchers apply psychological (or other) theory as appropriate, based on what the data calls for, rather than choosing a theory to apply in advance. Practically speaking, this means that the theories I thought might be relevant, such as the characteristics of peak experience, for example, were not always supported by what people said, which called for a re-think of how to best interpret and describe the data as participants presented it.

Although my own disciplinary biases, interests, and other ‘fore-structures’ inevitably affect my analysis and interpretation, my goal is that insights emerge from the participant ‘texts’ in the same way that the form of a dance emerges from the dancers’ movements.

- Recognising and clearly stating the hermeneutic (interpretative) nature of this study is both limiting and freeing—a smaller sample size limits the ability to generalise the findings to a larger population but frees the researcher to spend more time developing an in-depth and creative understanding of the texts, which consist primarily of interview data. This endeavour results in the identification of themes of experience that are rooted in the data and conceptualised by the researcher. I argue that this approach provides more rigour than first-person phenomenological studies of the experience of dancing.

- The idiographic approach begins with the particular and moves ‘cautiously’ to compare and contrast experience across a small sample of participants who share a particular experience (Smith et al., 2011, p. 38). Smith et al. position IPA studies as an ‘early stage’ of Husserl’s aim to identify the ‘essential’ (eidetic) structures of experience, with the possibility of considering such essential structures only after establishing a larger body of work that includes a detailed analysis of many individual cases (p. 38). Because my project is one
of very few studies to investigate the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances from the dancer’s perspective, as an experience of form rather than as an experience of culture, an idiographic approach is ideal as a first step towards establishing a larger body of work in this area. Until such time as more data about the experience of dancing becomes available, a nomothetic approach would be both premature and of limited value: ‘The nomothetic domain can only be actuarial and probabilistic, dealing with group averages rather than particular cases’ (Smith et al., 2011, p. 30).

The method that follows from IPA’s theoretical framework reflects elements of the philosophical discourse in Phenomenology and Hermeneutics and acknowledges a commitment to idiographic research, with its characteristically small sample size and in-depth analysis of individual experience. Smith & Eatough suggest that the number of participants included in a credible IPA study varies between one and eight (2007, pp. 39-40). An article published in the British Psychological Society’s online journal, The Psychologist, states that ‘sample size is contextual and must be considered on a study-by-study basis’, suggesting that ‘less is more in IPA: fewer participants examined at a greater depth is always preferable to a broader, shallow and simply descriptive analysis of many individuals’. The authors mention a rough guideline of ‘four to ten data points for professional doctorates’ (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011). Although ‘less is more’ in an IPA study, the sample size should nevertheless reflect and support the aims of the research. In section 3.2.2, I provide a rationale for my choice of six participants in the application of IPA methodology to an exploration of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances.

IPA’s commitment to idiographic research means that studies are focussed on a detailed analysis of the lived experience of the individual (Smith & Eatough, 2007, pp. 37-38), and each case is analysed individually before the researcher moves on to the next case. Eventually, multiple cases can be described, analysed and compared.
IPA method is ‘inductive, grounded in the data rather than pre-existing theory’ (Langdridge, 2007, p. 108). The researcher must therefore put aside any preconceived hypotheses and let the data guide the interpretation, which typically takes the form of identifying related themes (p. 110), organised into a coherent order and presented in the form of a table. The iterative process of identifying themes involves the following stages, which Smith & Eatough (2007, pp. 45-49) and Langdridge (2007, p. 111) describe in general terms, given that IPA provides analytical guidelines rather than a prescriptive approach to data analysis. Here, I have described these guidelines more specifically, in terms of the parameters of this project.

1. The researcher conducts interviews with participants, asking them about their experiences of a particular life event or phenomenon.

2. The researcher reads and re-reads the text of the transcript thoroughly and notes points of particular interest. Notes include summaries of what the participant said, possible associations with various theoretical frameworks, and ideas about different meanings that the participant’s statements might have.

3. The researcher identifies emerging themes that relate to relevant theory, in this case, to psychological and dance theory. Throughout this stage of analysis, the researcher checks and double-checks the text to ensure that the data supports the proposed themes and that the participants’ statements drive the association with theory, rather than the theory driving the analysis. The researcher must be prepared to identify themes that might emerge unexpectedly from the data, with an open and reflexive attitude that facilitates the expression of features of experience that emerge from the experience itself.

4. The researcher lists the identified themes, again checking them against the data and re-wording them to keep them as close as possible to the participants’ views of their own experience. The goal in this stage is to group similar
themes and to establish connections between them. Once the themes are organised into logical groupings, the researcher labels each group with a title that represents a ‘superordinate’ theme (Storey, 2007, p. 58).

5. In the final stage of the analysis, the researcher creates a table for each participant, which presents the themes and superordinate themes that emerged from an interpretative reading of the interview transcripts.

3.2.1.2 Motivational Psychology

As a methodological framework for investigating and interpreting the experience of dancing, the work of Maslow provides a fascinating perspective on the cognitive processes of people who have achieved moments of ‘peak experience’ and self-actualisation (1999). His description of ‘being’ or ‘B’ cognition parallels some of the features of dancing characterised by dance phenomenologists.

Maslow, sometimes criticised for a lack of methodological rigour, acknowledges that his conclusions are based on a less than systematic approach to the data that he collected:

> The conclusions in this and in the following chapter are an impressionistic, ideal, ‘composite photograph’ or organization of personal interviews with about eighty individuals, and of written responses by 190 college students...I have added together all the partial responses to make a “perfect” composite syndrome.

(Maslow, 1999, p. 83)

Even so, Maslow’s characterisation of ‘peak experiences as acute identity-experiences’ closely parallels descriptions of the experience of dancing by dance phenomenologists Sheets-Johnstone and Fraleigh. Since Maslow published his classic work in 1962, research in Psychology has moved on to a greater acceptance of qualitative, interpretative methodologies. Maslow’s work resonates with IPA studies in terms of the use of interviews, the application of a hermeneutic approach to
analysis and the way that Maslow cautiously moves from the specific to the general when drawing conclusions about experience.

Maslow’s work, especially where it corresponds to themes expressed in the dance phenomenology literature, suggested lines of enquiry which informed both the construction of interview questions and the analysis of the resulting data:

- ‘As he gets to be more purely and singly himself he is more able to fuse with the world, with what was formerly not-self...’ (Maslow, 1999, p. 117). This echoes Fraleigh’s notion of the moment when the dancer becomes the dance: ‘In a well-done dance, the self is lived beyond personal finitude and limitations’ (1987, p. 34).
- ‘The person in peak-experiences feels himself, more than at other times, to be the responsible, active, creating center of his activities and of his perceptions’ (Maslow, 1999, p. 118). Sheets-Johnstone (1979) speaks of how the dancer creates a space-time that is different from everyday experience, highlighting this important aspect of Maslow’s conception of being cognition.

It is important to note that Maslow’s theories influence my ‘speaking position’ as a researcher (Coyle, 2007, p. 18)—they are both a fore-structure which must be acknowledged, as well as a useful conceptual model for studying the experience of dancing. My own demographics and philosophical stance also influence my speaking position. As a white, female, North American amateur dancer with training and experience in a variety of dance styles, and as a researcher with post-graduate degrees in both Psychology and Dance, I have a particular interest in the complex movement and music of Balkan dances as well as in questions of motivation and the inside experience of dancing. In identifying themes of experience, therefore, I remained
aware of the need to ‘bracket’ such fore-structures and to remain open to themes that emerged from the data itself. In cases where I did use Maslow’s and other concepts from Psychology as themes to categorise experience, I provided evidence from the interview transcripts to demonstrate that these themes did *emerge* from the data rather than being imposed upon it.

Maslow’s description of identity during a peak experience certainly offers an interesting conceptual framework to consider when identifying themes that emerge from the interview data, and when considering the higher-level meanings of the perceptions of self in the experience of dancing.

### 3.2.1.3 General System Theory

Adshead’s notion of ‘clusters’ of dance components and their relations (1988) fits well with Von Bertalanffy’s conception of elements in interaction (1971), and with the iterative interpretative process of IPA that deals with the researcher’s growing understanding and insight based on the part-whole relationships within and between the participant texts (Smith et al., 2011). The overarching framework of General System Theory offers a way to synthesise similar concepts from Dance and Psychology into a coherent model that can be used to theorise more generally about the experience of dancing.

Von Bertalanffy’s argument is that the study of elements of a system and the interactions of those elements is required for understanding the whole (Von Bertalanffy, 1971). He also describes the characteristics of all systems in terms of emergence, teleology, negentropy, complexification/differentiation, and wholeness. As with Maslow’s work, concepts from Von Bertalanffy’s theory informed my identification of themes, but only when these concepts clearly emerged from and were supported by the interview data.
3.2.2 Data collection

3.2.2.1 Participant recruitment

In idiographic research, participant recruitment involves identifying people who can ‘grant us access to a particular perspective on the phenomena under study’ (Smith et al., p. 49). Aware of the popularity of ‘Balkan’ dance groups in the UK, I decided that dancers of Balkan dances, those without any ethnic ties to the Balkan region, could provide a fairly homogeneous sample of people who seek out the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances. Torp points out that most ‘European chain and round dances in living tradition are found in East and SouthEast Europe’ (1990, p. 28), making ‘Balkan’ recreational folk dance groups a good potential source of participants who regularly experience the form of linked chain and round dances.

In the United Kingdom, the Society for International Folk Dancing (SIFD) publishes a monthly newsletter that is distributed to members across the UK. The SIFD also offers classes and events that include Balkan dancing (Society for International Folk Dancing, 2014). Some members of the SIFD also regularly attend ‘Balkanplus’ events, which feature mostly dances from the Balkan region. Because of my ongoing association with the SIFD and its extensive connections with Balkan dance groups across the UK, I chose to look for participants amongst its members.

All of the participants in this study responded to a ‘call for volunteers’ that I submitted to the SIFD, which they published in their newsletter dated December 2010. (See Appendix A-1 for the text of the newsletter item.) Participants responded to my request for volunteers by email.

From the pool of participants who expressed an interest in participating in my research, I selected an initial sample of six people, three men and three women, which is an appropriate number for an in-depth, interpretative study of experience. Green, for example, in describing her use of five participants for her doctoral thesis on somatics and creative processes, states that
As is often the case in qualitative research, a small sample was appropriate since I was not interested in generalizing findings or providing a random sampling. In order to make meanings of a particular context, it was necessary to work with a smaller sample.

(1996, p. 76)

The richness, detail and depth of the data that resulted from the first interview alone confirmed my approach of using no more than six participants. During the additional interviews and subsequent analysis, this number worked well in support of the aims of my research, which describes and interprets the complex relationship between form and experience in dancing. A careful, close analysis of the accounts provided by the participants demonstrated that the six different transcripts did indeed reflect significant complexity and variety in the experience of dancing, facilitating the identification of ‘meaningful points of similarity and difference between participants’ (Smith, et al., 2011, p. 51).

The sample size also allowed for an analysis that resulted in an appropriate number of themes and sub-themes, all well-supported by data extracts from the transcripts. One of the indications of a good quality IPA study is that it presents a ‘thorough and synthesised analysis’ evidenced by a reasonable number of themes (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011). Most importantly, the analysis presents a detailed view that remains close to the experiences described by the six participants, recognising each of their unique perspectives. A larger sample size would have been unwieldy for in-depth analysis, and would have required more consolidation and abstraction of the data presented, weakening the idiographic nature of my IPA study as I looked into individual experience in dancing. In section 7.7, I discuss issues of validity in qualitative, postpositivist research generally and in IPA studies specifically, assessing my findings against the criteria suggested by a number of researchers in both Dance and Psychology.

Because this study examined the experience of independent adults (a non-vulnerable population), it did not require a review by the University’s Faculty of Arts and Human
Sciences Ethics Committee. Nevertheless, standard practice for conducting any type of research using human subjects includes providing participants with an information sheet that describes the study and its associated risks, and obtaining their informed consent to the study. See Appendices A-2 and A-3 for examples of the forms used for this study.

Obtaining informed consent by email is recognised by the British Psychological Society in their document *Code of Human Research Ethics* (2010, p. 19). Following their guidelines, I sent participants both the Information Sheet and the Consent Forms by email, to which they replied with the message ‘I have read and understood the information sent to me by email, and I consent to all of the items listed in the document ConsentFormCannReasearch.pdf’ (Appendix A-3). At that point, I emailed each participant the form ‘DemographicsForm.doc’ (see Appendix A-4) which they filled in and returned to me by email prior to their interview.

In IPA studies, purposive sampling is used to gather information about a relatively homogeneous group in order to study a specific type of experience in detail (Langdridge, 2007, p. 110). Based on the answers to questionnaires that I sent to the participants to complete prior to our telephone interviews (see Appendix A-4), the participants shared characteristics that are relevant to this study: they were quite similar in terms of age, the number of years of dance experience, and skill level. Most importantly, all participants regularly danced linked chain and round dances from the Balkan region. Table 1 summarises these characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Summary of participant characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of participants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of males</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of females</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age range (in years):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age (in years):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest educational qualification:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time dancing ‘folk’ dances:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average length of time folk dancing:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the participants had at the time of their interviews or in the past participated in other types of dance, including Ballet, Modern, Ballroom and Latin, and in other types of folk dancing. Two of the Balkan dancers had done Ballet dancing, two others had done Ballroom dancing, and two others had done both Ballet and Ballroom dancing.

### 3.2.2.2 Interviews

The most common data collection method for IPA studies is a semi-structured interview, based on an interview schedule\(^{24}\) that guides, but does not prescribe, the conversation between the researcher and the participant (Smith & Eatough, 2007, p. 42). Gillham suggests that a semi-structured interview might be ‘the most important way of conducting a research interview because of its flexibility balanced by

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\(^{23}\) Despite their interest in dances from different cultures, none of the participants identified their ancestry or ethnic origins, but seemed to use the standard categories presented on official forms in the UK.

\(^{24}\) (See Appendix A-5 for the complete interview schedule used.)
structure, and the quality of data so obtained’ (2005, p. 70). He describes semi-structured interviews as using a schedule of open-ended questions to encourage participants to define the ‘direction or character’ of their answers, along with probes (p. 70) by the researcher to explore in greater depth areas of interest discussed by participants. When participants had difficulty answering a question, Gillham suggests the use of ‘prompts’ to explain the questions and to ensure ‘roughly equivalent coverage’ of topics among the interviews (p. 79).

While the demographics form provided information about each participant’s age, education and dance experience, the interview schedule was designed to elicit responses related to the phenomenological, psychological and dance-based ideas identified during the literature review. For example, by asking about the elements of time and space, which feature prominently in the Phenomenology literature, I aimed to elicit descriptions of the experience of time and space while dancing. Perhaps a dancing person might experience time in terms of action and rhythm, or history (if dancing a folk dance) rather than as the passing of seconds or minutes. Similarly, space might take on aspects other than absolute position, such as personal space, social space or line of direction, which describes the direction of a circle or chain of dancers.

Other questions addressed the reasons for participating in a particular type of recreational dancing and the sense or awareness of self while dancing.

The following questions are a subset of the questions from the interview schedule, and were designed to elicit information about dancers’ general experience of dancing while allowing participants the freedom to frame their experience in their own terms. The questions are purposely open-ended and open to interpretation to allow for discussion of themes of experience generally—as well as discussion of form and being specifically—to arise naturally from the conversation between participant and researcher.
• There are lots of recreational activities to choose from, and even lots of different types of dancing. What is it about folk dancing that led you to take it up as an activity?
  o (Prompt: compared to a sport or music or other hobby)
• What are you aware of when you are dancing?
  o (Prompt: music, steps, other people, a feeling inside)
• How is the time you spend dancing different than the time you spend doing other things?
  o (Prompt: thinking about music, fun, socialising, movement for its own sake)
• How do you experience time while you are dancing?
  o (Prompt: are you more or less aware of time passing? Do you use time differently while dancing?)
• Is that different from when you are doing other things?
• What is your experience of yourself while you are dancing?
  o (Prompt: Are you more or less self-conscious or focused on things like your body more than usual?)
• How do you experience space while you are dancing?
  o (Prompt: Are you more or less aware of where you are in the room? In relation to other people? In relation to your body/self?)
• Is that different from when you are doing other things?

From the semi-structured interviews, I obtained rich and interesting descriptions of the experience of dancing. See Appendices C-1 through C-6 for the transcripts of each interview, which focus on ‘semantic meaning (that is, simply what the people said) and so will not include detail of pauses, false starts, latched responses, etc. as one might find with transcript [sic] used in discourse analysis’ (Langdridge, 2007, p. 110). The transcripts do include the interviewer’s statements, questions and responses.
Because of the distances involved in speaking with participants across the UK, I conducted the interviews by telephone at a pre-arranged, mutually convenient time. The use of telephone interviews enabled me to speak with participants across the UK without the need for anyone to travel. Also, participants could be interviewed within the privacy and comfort of their own homes.

Telephone interviews require that the researcher follow certain guidelines, as presented by Gillham (2005). Specifically:

- I prepared respondents for the interviews by informing them of what would be expected of them, arranging a convenient time for the interview, and communicating and keeping to a time limit (p. 104).
- Although the informed consent forms that participants had already agreed to in writing clearly stated that the interviews would be digitally recorded (see Appendix A-2), at the beginning of each interview, I reminded participants that the interviews would be recorded and I obtained their verbal consent to proceed (p. 105).
- ‘The challenge for the interviewer is to maintain the level of sensitive attention necessary for a productive interview’ (p. 105). During the interviews, I used the interviewing skills that I have developed over the years in both educational and research contexts. Gillham refers to these as the ‘core skills of interviewing’, namely, probing, clarification, showing appreciation and understanding, justification (challenging people’s negative judgements of themselves), giving an example, clarifying the relevance of a remark, extending the narrative by encouraging a participant to continue, checking the accuracy of my understanding of what a participant said, and reflecting back to the participant the essence of what they said (pp. 29-36).

One obvious limitation of telephone interviews is that they do not allow for the exchange of non-verbal information (Gillham, 2005, p. 103), although non-verbal
communication can sometimes be misinterpreted and therefore misleading. Because the aim of this study was to explore dancers’ verbal accounts of their experience of dancing—including the difficulties of describing the experience in words—the lack of non-verbal communication inherent in a telephone interview actually contributed to the rigour of the subsequent analysis in that participants had to try to find the words to tell me about their experiences. Occasionally, participants told me they could not find the right words—this was also instructive and useful in the analysis.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity throughout this study, I refer to each participant as DancerNumber, for example, ‘Dancer1’.

3.2.3 Data analysis

3.2.3.1 Tools to support the thematic analysis

A number of software applications known as Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) provide a toolkit for researchers conducting any type of thematic analysis. The University of Surrey, Department of Sociology, have published a series of online resources that critique the various features and benefits of a variety of CAQDAS packages (CAQDAS Networking Project, 2013). Having attended a CAQDAS training session during which the facilitators presented various CAQDAS software applications, I decided that NVivo 9 could provide the features and functionality to support an IPA analysis and identification of themes. A number of researchers have used NVivo, but Gibbs, for example, specifically supports the use of NVivo for IPA and other types of qualitative data analysis because of the way the software makes the original interview data easily accessible and the analyses well-grounded in the data (2003). Another key benefit of using NVivo was that I could minimise at least some researcher bias by visualising the texts as thoroughly coded and linked to themes. In this way, I could see quite plainly what I addressed or did not address in the data.
NVivo is an analytical tool that is based on the researcher ‘coding’ data at different types of ‘nodes’. This means that the researcher selects text (or images) within a ‘source’ and then labels (codes) the text by linking it with a node, as shown in Figure 1.

A ‘source’ in NVivo is the material that the researcher codes. In this project, the sources are the six interview transcripts and the items coded are pieces of text within each transcript. A ‘node’ is simply a container for storing different pieces of text. In this project, a node represents either a theme or a sub-theme. A node that contains other nodes within it is a ‘parent’ node (theme), and the nodes within the parent node
are ‘child’ nodes (sub-themes). Figure 2 shows an example of how the NVivo node structure presents a theme (parent node) and sub-themes (child nodes).

![Figure 2: Example of the NVivo node structure](image)

For each node, NVivo displays the number of ‘references’. A reference is a piece of text coded at the node. In Figure 3, the number ‘6’ means that I coded six pieces of text at this node within one source.

![Figure 3: Example of sources and references](image)

3.2.3.2 Analytical process

The idiographic nature of IPA requires that the researcher evaluate each case thoroughly before moving on to the next case. Using NVivo software to annotate,
organise, visualise and explore the data, I studied each transcript in depth and according to the following process:

1. I transcribed each interview as an electronic text document and then imported each transcript into NVivo.

2. I read through each transcript and added annotations.

   For example, Dancer4 said:

   Dancer4: But, um, I suppose I’m quite a shy person although people might not think I was shy, but I am, I know I am. And maybe I don’t feel shy when I’m dancing.

   (C-4/161-163)

   Using NVivo, I selected this text and added the annotation ‘Think about Coros’s idea of “standing fully present as myself”’. This annotation captured an idea that I could use later when developing themes for both Dancer4 and for the group overall. Because NVivo supports the use of text queries to search annotations for specific text, I knew that I could later search across all of my annotations for common ideas. For example, I could search for ‘Coros’ in all of my annotations to discover to what degree her ideas might apply across the group. I could also search for ‘presence’ to see how often and where I used that term to describe what people said in their interviews. Annotation represents the first level of abstraction/interpretation in an IPA study in that annotations remain closely linked to the actual data.

3. Beginning with only ‘General’ and ‘Formal’ nodes to distinguish between dancing as experienced (general) and the formal elements of dancing (such as dances that participants referred to by name and formal concepts such as ‘local space’), I coded the significant text of the transcript at nodes that I created as needed, as they ‘emerged’ from the actual data. For example, when Dancer1
said, ‘I was not a natural dancer’ (C-3/114-115), I created the node ‘Self-image’ and coded the text at that node.

4. Putting the idea of the hermeneutic circle into practice, I re-named and re-organised the sub-themes and re-coded the text as required to reflect my growing understanding of the material. My experience of engaging with the data supports the proposition that the hermeneutic circle applies not only to the data itself, but also to the process of iterative interpretation (Smith et al., 2011, p. 28). As I engaged with different parts of the transcript, moving from a narrow view of particular text snippets to a broader view of the interview as a whole, my sense of each transcript as a coherent whole increased. This sometimes resulted in my coding a single piece of text at multiple nodes. For example, I coded the following statement by Dancer4 at the nodes ‘Expression’ and ‘Physical Being’:

Dancer4: I suppose if I’m, if I’m using every part of me, and my arms, [ ] you’re using every part of your body to express yourself.

(C-4/152-156)

By coding this single piece of text at different nodes, I was better able to account for the multiple facets, richness and depth of this seemingly simple quote.

5. During the process of coding, I looked for similarities between sub-themes and opportunities to combine them when they seemed to capture the same type of statement. For example, I combined the sub-themes ‘Historic time’, ‘Extraordinary time’ and ‘Awareness of time passing’ into a single sub-theme labelled ‘Time’.

25 For a discussion of the concept of the hermeneutic circle, see this chapter, page 115.
6. Once I had coded all of the significant text within the transcript, I organised the sub-themes into logical groups and gave each group (node) a name. This name is the ‘superordinate theme’ or simply ‘theme’. I created new nodes and labelled them with the theme names, and then moved the sub-theme nodes to become child nodes under the parent themes.

Having experienced the hermeneutic circle in practice, and knowing that the themes could easily change as I moved through the interpretative process of analysing one transcript at a time, and then all of the transcripts as a group, I decided to code directly at the sub-theme level only, and not to link the higher-level themes directly to the text. This gave me the consistency and flexibility I needed to re-work the structure of the themes as my understanding developed.

For example, when coding Dancer1’s transcript, I coded the following statement at the sub-theme ‘Being different than usual’.

Dancer1: My dancing self is different from my self in other activities.

(C-1/100-101)

For this participant, the sub-theme ‘Being different than usual’ fit within the theme ‘Identity’, but was not coded directly at that theme. Later, when combining the individual sub-themes into a theme that made sense for the whole group of participants, ‘Self’ emerged as a better conceptual category for grouping this and other statements related to ideas of the self. At the group level, I kept the text coded at the sub-theme ‘Being different than usual’ but grouped that sub-theme within the theme ‘Self’.

7. I reviewed, annotated, coded and organised each transcript to create a hierarchy of themes for each participant before moving on to the next participant. Rather than create a table for each participant, as is usual for an IPA study, I used the NVivo node hierarchy to represent the organisation of
themes and sub-themes, with links to all of the interview data coded at each sub-theme.

8. The final stage of an IPA study (prior to writing a narrative version of the analysis) is to consolidate the information across the group of participants into a coherent and logical structure. Having created a hierarchy of themes and sub-themes for each participant, I then brought all of these themes together. Specifically, I copied and pasted all of the nodes for all participants into a single view. In that way, I could easily compare all of the themes and sub-themes for the group, and move them around to create a new thematic structure.

I also used NVivo’s feature of ‘aggregating’ data at the level of a theme. This links each theme to all of the text coded at its sub-themes, which makes it easier to see all of the interview data that supports the theme, even though the data is actually coded at the level of the sub-theme. Aggregating at the theme level also combines the number of sources (participant transcripts) and references (how many times I coded text at a sub-theme within the theme). Because none of the text from the interview transcripts is coded at the theme itself—the theme merely groups the sub-themes into a higher-level conceptual category—aggregating the sources and references helped me to see whether the themes actually represented statements from all or only from some of the participants. For example, for the theme ‘Connection’, Table 2 shows the sources and references for each sub-theme, and the aggregated numbers for the theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>Being part of a whole</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connection across time and place</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social aspects</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this example, the theme ‘Connection’ has six sources and 88 references. This means that all six participants said something related to the concept of connection, for a total of 88 pieces of text coded at one (or more) of the sub-themes. The table shows that four participants mentioned something that I coded as ‘Being part of a whole’, five participants talked about ‘Community’, and so on.

In the diagrammatic models, provided in this chapter as another way of visualising the data, the numbers next to each connector (arrow) show the sources (number of participant interviews) and references (coding instances within all of the transcripts) for that sub-theme. For example, in Figure 4, for the sub-theme ‘Community’, the number ‘5/30’ shows that five of the six participants mentioned something that I coded as Community, and that these five participants mentioned something about Community 30 times within their five transcripts.

Figure 4: Diagram of themes and sub-themes

I must emphasise that because this is a qualitative study, and because of the interpretative nature of the data analysis, the number of sources and references
serve only as a guide to assessing the degree to which themes and sub-themes represent experience across the group.

9. When naming the overall group themes, I applied a unifying organising principle so that the themes would have an internal, underlying coherence. Specifically, I named the themes from the perspective of what the dancer might be seeking through their experience of music and dancing. Concepts from the disciplines of developmental, motivational, humanistic and transpersonal psychology are reflected in my choice of placing the dancer at the centre of experience as a person who intentionally seeks positive, life-affirming growth experiences. I acknowledge these concepts as fore-structures that I as the researcher bring with me in my phenomenological, interpretative endeavour. It is important to note, however, that in accordance with the principles of IPA, which emphasise that themes must ‘emerge’ from the data, these concepts reflect an organising principle that is strongly supported by the interview data, which guided my interpretation at all levels, from annotation to the construction of themes.

In choosing names for the different themes, I also considered the issue of ‘face validity’—the themes must semantically relate to the sub-themes and the underlying data. In other words, readers of this thesis should see a reasonable (but not necessarily obvious) correlation between the themes and the underlying data, such as the theme ‘Connection’ and the statement by Dancer5:

26 ‘Face validity’ is a concept I have borrowed from testing methodology—a test that has face validity appears to measure what it sets out to measure. For example, a hearing test has face validity if it asks people about what they hear, not about what they see. Similarly, for the theme of ‘Connection’ to have face validity, the sub-themes and data must clearly support the idea of ‘connection’.
Dancer5: There’s something about being in touch, in puts you in touch, doing these dances, puts you in touch with people, I mean, not literally, but um with the spirit, maybe, of a different place and of a different time.

(C-5/43-46)

3.3 Results

In this section, I explain the results of the thematic analysis, focusing on the first research question, ‘How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?’ The emergent themes, derived from a close reading of the interview data, reflect the person’s agency and intentionality in seeking particular types of experience through dancing.\(^{27}\) My analysis results in seven ‘superordinate’ themes (categories), each with a number of inter-related sub-themes. The following illustration shows the superordinate themes.

\(^{27}\) I use the term ‘agency’ in Farnell’s sense of the embodied person as a moving agent, a causal power for social action (Farnell, 1994).
Figure 5: Superordinate themes

The themes discussed in this section reflect concepts from the Social Sciences—they do not specifically represent ‘dance-based’ themes. Although participants used mostly general, non-medium specific (non-dance) language, they did provide clues about the ways in which the formal, interactive elements of dancing contribute to the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances. Chapter 4 presents a detailed investigation into these formal aspects of the experience of dancing.

In Figure 6, I have ordered the themes according to a motivational model that I derived from this analysis and which is specific to the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances. In the model that I propose, the emergent themes cluster in three domains of experience—the intrapersonal, the interpersonal and the transpersonal, as shown in the following diagram.
‘Intrapersonal’ themes relate to what the individual experiences within the private, inner world, which includes personal, rather than shared, experience.

The ‘Interpersonal’ domain, by contrast, includes themes that encompass shared experience, in which the individual is aware of themselves in relation to others, and in relation to a dance tradition that spans time and place.

The ‘Transpersonal’ domain includes themes that suggest a level of experience in which the individual transcends the everyday boundaries of self to engage with and apprehend the world in such a way as to transform sense, feeling and cognition.

The following sections present the themes and sub-themes as though they are discrete constructs. In fact, the themes overlap—it is the web of interrelations amongst the
themes that best describes the unique, emergent experience of linked chain and round
dances.

3.3.1 Intrapersonal themes

3.3.1.1 Autotelic experience

‘Autotelic experience’—described in Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi (1988), as
‘optimal experience’ or ‘flow’—refers to experience that is intrinsically rewarding.
This theme reflects that aspect of dancing for which the dancer has no other goal that
the activity itself—the dancing is not a means to an end, but is itself the end. This
theme resonates with some of the characteristics of optimal experience described by
Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi and Delle Fave (1988). For example, these authors
highlight a changed perception of time passing, a person’s level of skill in the context
of a challenging situation that tests their skill, and the person’s need to continually
increase both skills and challenges in order to achieve complexification of the self and
a greater order in consciousness.

Figure 7 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of autotelic experience.

Figure 7: Autotelic experience and its sub-themes
3.3.1.1 Awareness of time

When questioned about how they experience time, participants spoke about their differing perceptions of time while dancing.

Dancer1 spoke about time as an extra-ordinary, delimited ‘dance’ time that many people anticipate with pleasure.

Dancer1: It’s a time everybody looks forward to each week. It’s the highlight of their week to dance. Um, it’s a special time for them, um, something they look forward to.

(C-1/89-91)

Dancer2 mentioned an awareness of the relationship between space, time and movement, all in relation to music.

Dancer2: I can get people back having ambled around for about half an hour exactly on time as this music hits its final notes, you know.

(C-2/116-118)

Other dancers spoke about time in a way that supports Csikszentmihalyi’s description of optimal experience, in which people have a changed sense or even no sense of time passing (1988c).

Dancer4: Just enjoying and you’re focusing on what you’re doing and therefore you’re not you know conscious of the minutes ticking by, you know. [ ] nothing special though about the dancing. I don’t think, anyway.

(C-4/184-187)

Dancer3: It did surprise us when we danced in Bulgaria and the dance went on for 50 minutes, we hadn’t realised it had. We would have been surprised to, we would have imagined it would be about half that time. But you do get lost in it.

(C-3/281-284)
Dancer3’s use of the word ‘lost’ raises some interesting questions, and suggests that when ‘you’ get lost in a dance, the perception of chronological time changes. This changed experience of chronological time is also associated with the theme ‘Being cognition’, which I discuss in section 3.3.3.2.

3.3.1.2 Challenge

Another aspect of autotelic experience is the need for a match between a person’s skills and the level of skill demanded by an activity, and that both skill and challenge must be above average (Massimini, et al., 1988, p. 63).

Dancer4: Well I was led towards the international folk dancing because I saw an advertisement in the local paper, I was dissatisfied, um, with the English dancing I was doing because I could only find a basic beginners class. I was looking for more of a challenge and I saw an advertisement in the paper for international folk dancing.

(C-4/16-21)

Dancer3: There’s a Bulgarian dance, I mean, in particular, there’s, I suppose, there’s a challenge of the, of the time signatures, you know the beats, and that’s, as a mathematician, I suppose, that’s the challenge there, and you find a lot of mathematicians etc do find Balkan dancing in particular fun, because of the technical challenge and I suppose of the rhythms that you get there, yeah.

(C-3/179-184)

These dancers used the word ‘challenge’ in relation to dance skills and intellectual challenge and complexity. Dancer3 suggested that meeting the technical challenge was ‘fun’, which supports the idea of dancing as an intrinsically motivating experience.
3.3.1.3 Complexity

The idea of ‘complexity’ is related to challenge when dancing linked chain and round dances.

Dancer4: It might be a sort of intellectual satisfaction in, in dancing to this because, I mean you say for instance melody versus strong rhythm but in fact, um a melody might be masking the underlying rhythm so, you know, you’re not dancing to the melody, you’re hearing the melody but the underlying rhythm, which might not be very strong, you might have to be listening out for it, um, is underneath. So I would say it’s a sort of, for me, a sort of intellectual satisfaction.

(C-4/89-96)

Dancer6: [Balkan music is] highly ornamented and it’s based on mostly, well on accordion, it’s based on the timing, which takes a lot more finger work.

(C-6/54-55)

Complexity is a key concept from General System Theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1971), which I have discussed in Chapter 2. I mention complexity only briefly as part of autotelic experience, and in more detail as part of the theme aesthetic experience, where participants spoke specifically about rhythm and timing, offering a clue to some of the formal elements of music and dancing of which they were most aware.

3.3.1.4 Engagement

When looking at dancing as an intrinsically motivating activity that people want to repeat, the term ‘engagement’ describes the nature of a person’s involvement with music and dancing.

Dancer1: For me dance is fundamental to my life, so um, that is my main hobby, dance, I do love it.

(C-1/44-45)
Dancer2: I just loved it, I mean, I danced a couple of Greek things and I danced Arap, in particular, I remember being particularly hooked, as it were, after dancing Arap.

(C-2/22-24)

Like other participants, Dancer2 said that he was ‘inspired’ and ‘hooked’, as others have said.

Dancer4: Once I started, I just got hooked.

(C-4/25)

Dancer2 and Dancer4 said that they ‘love’ it, which certainly suggests an intrinsically motivating experience. They (and others) chose this form over or in addition to other dance forms, for example, ballroom dancing. Dancer2 provided a clue for formal analysis when he mentioned the specific dance ‘Arap’, which I describe in detail in Chapter 5.

For Dancer6, engagement with the music sparked an interest in linked chain and round dances.

Dancer6: The music was the interest to me cause it initiated me to learn to play accordion, so I could learn to play this type of music. And the dance aspect really came alongside.

(C-6/13-15)

3.3.1.1.5 Enjoyment

Massimini et al. distinguish between pleasure and enjoyment in optimal experience, and I have coded the following statements as ‘enjoyment’, in keeping with their view of enjoyment, ‘which requires the use of skills to meet increasing levels of challenge’ (1988, p. 64).

Dancer1: We look forward to dancing the steps.

(C-1/31-32)
Dancer3: In other dance forms I’ve never really got a lot of excitement or enjoyment.

(C-3/107-108)

3.3.1.2 Growth and development

The theme ‘Growth and development’ refers to what participants said about achievement and mastery in both intellectual and physical terms, seeking out new and different opportunities in dance (novelty), and the physical benefits of dancing.

Figure 8 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of growth and development.

![Figure 8: Growth and development and its sub-themes](image)

3.3.1.2.1 Physical development

Dancers mentioned the physical aspects of dancing.

Dancer5: It’s the most pleasant form of exercise I’ve ever found.

(C-5/31)

Dancer2: It gives me a very strong sense of being physically competent, shall we say. And which I didn’t have as a child, really. The idea that I could do some athletic dance with
jumps and leaps or does one get them all in the right order and so on and so forth, um, is a good feeling in itself, to think that I can do that properly.

(C-2/237-241)

3.3.1.2.2 Mastery

In the previous statement, Dancer2 spoke of a sense of physical mastery that he didn’t experience as a child. Perhaps, for him, dance provides the opportunity to revisit and to achieve a developmental milestone, in the sense of both motor development and mastery.

Other dancers also referred to a sense of mastery.

Dancer5: I sometimes feel, a pride, um, in the skill. But if I’ve, if I have mastered something, then yeah, I’m really quite, I’m pleased with myself and I’m proud of it.

(C-5/265-268)

Dancer4: If the steps are really, really complicated, well then um again it’s the, you know the sort of the satisfaction um of mastering um the steps.

(C-4/127-128)

3.3.1.2.3 Novelty

Dancers also mentioned novelty as an appealing element of dancing linked chain and round dances.

Dancer5: I think it’s because [Balkan music is] not regular, I mean I think we’re very used to, I mean, music in sort of ‘DA da da da, DA da da da’, it’s very kind of banal and it’s used in, you know, I mean, the sort of pop, pop songs, pop music that you get is really kind of simple music. Really simple, much of it. Um, and it’s just child stuff, really.

(C-5/132-136)
Dancer5 pointed out that a key feature of the music is its rhythmic ‘irregularity’, very different to music in pop culture, which she described as having a regular 4/4 beat with emphasis on the first beat. This provides another clue for the formal analysis in Chapter 5.

Dancer6: And for somebody with training in sort of classical, sort of classical music and folk music, hearing Bulgarian music was something very different. The whole construction is different in every way you can think of.

(C-6/9-12)

This sense of novelty might help to explain why people with no ethnic ties to the regions from which the dances originate seek out these dances. Perhaps these dances offer an opportunity to increase challenge and the opportunity for learning new skills, which would suggest a relationship between the themes ‘growth and development’ and ‘autotelic experience’.

3.3.1.3 Self

‘Self’ includes those aspects of experience that are perceived by the individual as personally meaningful, the individual’s inner experience of ‘being-in-the-world’.

Figure 9 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of self.
During the interviews, I posed questions about dancers’ sense of themselves while dancing. Dancers responded with a variety of answers, ranging from statements about self-image and self-worth to ideas of expressing the ‘self’.

3.3.1.3.1 Being different than usual

Dancer4 eloquently described how her sense of herself changed when she was dancing, how she was different than usual:

Dancer4: I guess I feel this freedom that perhaps I don’t feel in the rest of my life, a freedom to be me.

(C-4/39-40)

It’s a kind of ‘this is me’, um, when I’m dancing. [ ] In a way that I’m not me in, you know, doing other things.

(C-4/43-45)
I suppose I’m quite a shy person although people might not think I was shy, but I am, I know I am. And maybe I don’t feel shy when I’m dancing.

(C-4/161-163)

Dancer4 felt herself to be a different self when she danced, which resonates with Coros’s ideas about ‘presence’: ‘I stand forward as myself’ (1992, p. 102). Bond & Stinson also found that some students discovered, ‘an “inner self” or a “transformed self,” one not always shown to others and often not previously known to themselves’ (2000-2001, p. 61).

3.3.1.3.2 Describing lived experience

Despite the sometimes eloquent statements from participants, they often found it difficult to describe their inner, lived experience.

Dancer1: It has to be experienced; it’s hard to describe how to experience, when you’re trying to describe it to somebody who hasn’t danced. It’s a difficult thing to describe, it’s something that you need to experience.

(C-1/92-94)

Dancer2: Other than that, it’s more of a personal sort of thing that I can’t really describe.

(C-2/56-57)

One feels certain things but one’s not quite really sure, explicitly, what one’s feeling.

(C-2/103-104)

Dancer5: It’s just something, you know it’s very hard to put into words, because it’s not a word thing. Um, so I’m trying to, trying to change the, the, the medium and trying to express it in a different way. Yeah, it’s really hard, and I’m not, I don’t usually struggle to find words!

(C-5/197-200)
These statements suggest that the lived experienced is sensed and felt, but not attended to ‘explicitly’, or perhaps, in terms of linguistic thought. Nevertheless, participants described some very intriguing aspects of expression.

3.3.1.3.3 Expression

Dancer6: You can afford to project yourself better than you can in normal life. [ ] Yes, in our normal world in England, you can’t express yourself to music very well, you tend not to project yourself in daily life.

(C-6/301-304)

Dancer6 linked the idea of ‘expressing yourself’ to music with the idea of also projecting himself, again tying in with Coros’s idea of presence. In this case, the dancer seems to be talking about standing forward as his musical self. Other dancers also suggested a different type of self-expression than the usual expression of ideas through language.

Dancer4: You’re expressing yourself through, through movement with your body.

(C-4/34-35)

Dancer5: Because you’re using steps to express yourself, not words, and it’s very hard to translate from, I mean it is like a language, you’re translating from one language to the other.

(C-5/201-203)

How is the self expressed using the language of steps? Is there a musical/dancing self made manifest? How does the musical/dancing self differ from the self expressed through conventional language? How important is it for someone to receive and interpret this different type of expression?

Dancer4: It’s coming from within me, I don’t know how others would be perceiving it at all.

(C-4/159-160)
I’m talking about expressing myself a lot so I guess that for me is something that’s really quite important about the dancing.

(C-4/157-158)

Dancer4 recognised the importance of expression in dancing, but not in the sense of another person receiving some meaning from the expressive actions. Rather, the goal is simply to engage in the expressive behaviour.

Dancer3 provided a clue as to how the musical/dancing self engages with the formal elements of dancing:

Dancer3: But these basic dances and it is the sure, the music and the fact, more importantly, is that you can express yourself, more within the basic framework of a dance without being, it being strictly, as strict number of steps here, well a strict style that you’ve been taught.

(C-3/219-222)

It all goes back to the fact that some dances you can, um, ex-perhaps express yourself more, in a way.

(C-3/336-337)

Dancer3’s preferred type of dance, the ‘town square’ dances of Bulgaria, has to do with folk dance in its first existence, learned ‘naturally’ without intentional teaching or in a teaching setting (Hoerburger, 1968). These dances offer a framework within which the dancer has some leeway to vary the steps and timing. (I examine the formal elements of these dances in more detail in Chapter 5.)

From what participants have said, it would seem that the musical/dancing self is made present within a complex system of music, movement, rhythm, timing and what Coros describes as fluid position in space-time (1992, p. 100). In Chapter 7, Discussion of Outcomes, I explore these ideas in greater depth.
3.3.1.3.4 Imagination

Participants spoke of being different than usual in ways that suggest the involvement of imagination when dancing.

Dancer2: If the music sounds good, it helps you to imagine that you are with the musicians dancing in the village festival or whatever. As opposed to in some grotty church or with a scratchy tape recorder.

(C-2/155-157)

Dancer2 imagined himself transported to the ‘village’ in the traditional context of a festival and in this way transcended the context of the actual dancing context, often in a hall of some sort with a recording of the music. By using his imagination, along with good-sounding music, he improved the quality of his experience.

Dancer4 imagined herself into the original context of the dance as she knew it:

Dancer4: And in that particular dance, it brings out the young girl in me. Even though I’m 63! Um because it’s a girls’ dance from Kosovo [ ] and it’s meant to be danced by young girls and I can just see, in my mind’s eye, I see, it makes me see young girls dancing and that’s what I become.

(C-4/138-142)

Dancer6 used imagination when performing to guide the style of his movements:

Dancer6: My mind wasn’t really on the dance at all, you just had to keep in mind the concept of being a Romanian.

(C-6/210-212)

3.3.1.3.5 Presence as a physical being

Dancers also valued the experience of dancing as it encouraged a sense of presence as a physical being.
Dancer4: I do like dances that use your whole body, you know, your arms your head as well as your feet, so, it’s involving my whole physical being.

(C-4/148-151)

Dancer6: In the correct environment, I’m less self-conscious and I’m more relaxed. And I suppose it makes one feel happier inside and more proud of one’s, the way one holds oneself.

(C-6/297-299)

Being proud of ‘the way one holds oneself’ suggests Coros's idea of manner-in-dance and presence (1992), and this seems to be achieved physically, through postural use of the body.

3.3.1.3.6 Self-image and self-worth

For some dancers, self-image and self-worth were enhanced by dancing.

Dancer2 reported a heightened sense of self in terms of his gender and masculinity.

Dancer2: So, it’s significant to me to try and dance something that was a man’s thing and have some sort of positive feeling about masculinity and stuff.

(C-2/244-246)

So I could do something that was traditionally a warrior’s dance or something like that, and feel good about that and even feel some connection to those folks without having to be a warrior myself, in fact, I’m a pacifist so I wouldn’t particularly want to feel very warrior-ish. But I could still try and get some sort of sense of what it meant for them to dance this.

(C-2/252-258)

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28 Postural movement is associated with or supported by the trunk (Dell, 1977, pp. 79-80).
Dancer3 also mentioned the importance of appropriate movement for his gender when describing the style of Dobrudža region of Bulgaria:

Dancer3: It’s an earth, it is an earthy style that you can express, publicly, men, I would imagine, too, so, being a male I suppose it’s important that I, it’s more important, I suppose, to mention a dance like that.

(C-3/227-230)

In Chapter 5, I examine the specific dance he mentioned from this region to see what type of movement might be classified as ‘earthy’.

In terms of self-worth, some dancers spoke of taking time for themselves by dancing; they valued the self enough to spend time on an activity that had primarily personal value.

Dancer4: So it’s very much something for me.

(C-4/46)

Dancer5: Well, it’s um, creative and it’s uh, beautiful, um, and it’s personal. [long pause] um, yeah, I mean really I do it for me, and a lot of the things that I spend my time on I don’t do for me, I do for other people.

(C-5/114-116)

3.3.2 Interpersonal themes

3.3.2.1 Connection

The theme ‘Connection’ encompasses not only the social and community aspects of linked chain and round dancing, but also a sense of connection with people who have danced the same dances in other places and in other times. ‘Connection’ also includes statements about the self in relation to a larger whole.

Figure 10 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of connection.
3.3.2.1.1 Being part of a whole and community

Dancers spoke of the self as part of a larger whole, in terms of group formation and movement, and in terms of a sense of community.

Dancer1: When the music starts and it’s quite bold and strong rhythm and here we are all in a strong, basket hold and all doing a simple step together, it feels like a real moving in unison kind of feeling.

(C-1/123-126)

Dancer1 specifically mentioned this feeling when dancing a Bulgarian sporenka, thereby identifying some of the more salient interactive elements of dancing. She also noted the importance of the circle formation in creating a sense of equality in the dancing community:

Dancer1: It’s focusing that we’re all equal in the circle, I think that’s a fundamental thing.

(C-1/36-37)

Dancer2 sensed himself as part of a larger whole, an individual within a community, as did Dancer4.
Dancer2: Right, the sense of community and the sense of dancing together, um, I think affects one’s sense of self by the fact that oneself can be part of that.

(C-2/268-269)

Dancer4: There’s something about holding on to other people that you know enhances your sense of the other people and that you’re all doing something together.

(C-4/257-259)

Dancer3 pointed to the importance of the leader of the dance at the front of the chain or open circle. The energy of the leader impacted the group as a whole.

Dancer3: The leader certainly can um whip up a certain feeling doing the dances.

(C-3/330-331)

He also emphasised the importance of community and shared experience:

Dancer3: You can bond with the rest of the dancers, which is a, is what the dancing was intended to be in the first place, I guess, as gathering together of the community.

(C-3/139-141)

Dancer3 most enjoyed dancing with local people in the actual regions where the dances originate, in the ‘town square’ dances—this is perhaps participatory form versus presentational form (Nahachewsky, 1995), as he did not mention going to organised festivals or performing as something he valued or did as an activity.

Dancer3: I’ve always put on top the communal enjoyment, you know, the feeling of bonding.

(C-3/339-340)

Dancer2 compared different types of dancing and explained that the sense of dancing in community was not the same in other dance forms as it was with linked chain and round dances.
Dancer2: I mean you do also get a sense from it of, um, dancing in community. Which you don’t get, I think from, well, you don’t really get it from things like ballroom dancing, because you’re normally just dancing with one partner, and I don’t get it very well from British folk dancing, although there is a bit of a sense of it, and you certainly don’t get it from disco type dancing if you’re on your own, or whatever.

(C-2/58-63)

For Dancer5, the dancing community promoted political and religious tolerance.

Dancer5: It’s a kind of reaching across political and religious divides, and so it’s, um, I just find, you know, it’s a force for the good!

(C-5/62-64)

In the context of dancing Romanian dances in Romania, Dancer6 pointed out that the established community dances together, rather than people coming together to form a community specifically for dancing.

Dancer6: In the Romanian context, when you’re dancing in a chain, you’re dancing in a community, it’s the community dancing together.

(C-6/268-269)

Speaking in terms of movement, Dancer6 said that

Dancer6: It’s the, um, community’s in your close contact so you have to move very well together and change how you move together.

(C-6/285-286)

The experience of moving as a group does not suggest expression of the self so much as unity.
3.3.2.1.2 Connection across time and place

The concept of connection also encompasses the dancing community across time and place.

Dancer1: We’re dancing dances that would have been done for hundreds of years, [ ] by people feeling the same things that we’re experiencing.

(C-1/24-26)

Dancer2: I do very much and more or less always, from these sorts of dances, get a sense of dancing in community. And that community seems, in that sort of vague, not easy to define sense, to stretch back to everybody who’s shared in these dances, it’s not something that is isolated, but something that is felt in community in the folks that are dancing and with everybody else who’s danced it.

(C-2/64-70)

The community spans distance and time to include everyone who has ever danced a particular dance, not just the dancers in the immediate experience of dancing at a particular moment.

Dancer5: Doing these dances, puts you in touch with people, I mean, not literally, but um with the spirit, maybe, of a different place and of a different time.

(C-5/44-46)

I feel that it helps sort of find a connection, um, it’s a kind of window into another culture, another time.

(C-5/89-90)

3.3.2.1.3 Social aspects

In the here and now, some dancers stressed the importance of the social aspects of dancing, although these might be different sorts of social connections than with non-dancing friends.
Dancer4: I class them [other dancers] as friends, yes. Although I’m not necessarily meeting them outside of the dancing experience. I mean, we have a break half-way through, both the groups I go to, we have maybe a quarter of an hour drinks break halfway through, so, you know, we talk to each other, and um, yeah! I mean, if I had a party I might well invite some of the people, one, in fact, I have invited um people, if I have a party it tends to be a dancing party. And you know, you invite your dancing friends. But they’re not necessarily people that I would be inviting round to dinner, maybe.

(C-4/275-285)

When comparing the challenge of mastering Balkan dances with other reasons that motivated him to continue dancing, Dancer3 stated that the social aspects of dancing were of great importance.

Dancer3: It’s the friendships and it’s a part of a social, we feel a, and through a family feeling within the scene. So, I would these days more often stress that side.

(C-3/203-205)

Dancer5 presented something of a paradoxical view of the social aspects of dancing, speaking of a feeling of togetherness and a sense of annoyance.

Dancer5: I feel connected to the people on either side of me, or to the people who are dancing. I mean it’s lovely when we’re doing, especially when we have our parties and you’re going round, there’s a huge number of you, and you just see all these faces and they’re all smiling and they’re all enjoying what they’re, what they’re doing and, uh, I feel a sense of togetherness with them, with the dancers.

(C-5/206-211)

I’m aware of the other dancers, but, not that much unless they’re talking, it annoys me when people talk when we’re dancing.

(C-5/92-93)
This is a bit surprising, given that in linked chain and round dances, dancers are physically connected by a hand hold of some kind. Also, this seems counter to the type of interaction encouraged by the form of these dances, in which serpentine lines and circles facilitate social exchange, especially in their original participatory contexts.

3.3.2.2 Context

The theme of ‘context’ summarises the importance of environmental factors on the participants’ experience of dancing. Such factors include the identity and skill levels of other dancers as well as the participants’ sense of the historic and cultural features of particular dances or types of dances.

Figure 11 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of context.

3.3.2.2.1 First or second existence

Some participants felt it important to distinguish between dancing that is part of ‘normal’ life (first existence) and dancing that must be sought out as a recreational dancing event (second existence).
Dancer2 said that the context of dancing significantly changed his experience of it.

Dancer2: Very much so, yes, just that, the awareness that people are dancing this for, you know, um, shall we say as part of their ‘normal lives’. As opposed to a recreational activity.

(C-2/158-160)

Dancer3 also preferred dancing that occurs ‘naturally’ in a Bulgarian village:

Dancer3: It can be the social event for the local band to be there and the, and on a certain night perhaps of the week, people just, um, you might, and there would be the leader would take hold or there’d be some dancing, that, music and people would naturally get up and dance and um, it is the important, is still an important part of some of the villages and even in towns too, it seems to be a part of their makeup still.

(C-3/144-150)

3.3.2.2.2 Historic and cultural

Participants were also often aware of the historic and cultural background of a dance, which affects their experience of a dance either positively or negatively.

Dancer2: For example, if I dance ‘Pentazalis’ [ ], I’m aware that people danced that as a celebration of their rebellion on Crete against the Turks, and so on. Now I don’t have to particularly endorse everything they did or wanted, but I can still be aware that this was important to them when they danced it.

(C-2/71-75)

Dancer2 gave an example of a dance and its (supposed) history, and he felt connected to the people who danced it, even if he disagreed with their political agenda. He also recognised, however, that the history of some dances might be sketchy and sometimes inaccurate:
Dancer2: We tend not to know very much history of the dances, I find. Often the history that does come through is less than accurate.

(C-2/207-209)

For Dancer5, knowing the story of the dance was ‘nice’ but not critically important.

Dancer5: If there is a dance, and I can’t think of any examples, where my interpretation of it, the way I experience it differs from the story that I’m given, then I’ll go with my own interpretation.

(C-5/261-263)

3.3.2.2.3 Other dancers

Dancer4 pointed out the importance of the other dancers.

Dancer4: It’s different if you know the people you’re dancing with too, if you went to a dance and maybe there were some people there that you knew but there were a lot of people you didn’t really know. For me, that is a different experience.

(C-4/269-273)

3.3.2.2.4 Participatory or presentational

Nahachewsky has pointed out the differences in movements and qualities of movement when dancers perform for an audience and when they participate in dance for their own enjoyment (1995). Participants seemed to be aware that the presentational or participatory context also affected their experience of dancing.

Dancer2: I’m more often these days in a teaching context than not, it’s possible that if was in a larger, a larger group, and wasn’t having to be responsible, that I could drift off a bit more, I mean that has happened in odd occasions in the past.

(C-2/120-123)
Dancer2 distinguished between teaching (presentational) and non-teaching (participatory) contexts and the type of experience that she had in each. Dancer4 reported a similar distinction:

Dancer4: It’s something that I do quite frequently contemplate, how, how, I ask myself whether leading a group has diminished my enjoyment of dancing or not. Um, it’s brought me compensatory pleasure, I suppose, in that I get to choose up to a point um which, which dances we do, um but it’s something that I hadn’t really thought about before I took over running the group…when I go to the Israeli group, I do have an input but I feel the balance is that I take from the experience. Um, when I go to the international Balkan group, that I lead, um I am very much a giver.

(C-4/292-301)

Dancer5 distinguished between performance (presentational) and recreational (participatory) contexts.

Dancer5: That’s a different kind of experience if you’re doing a performance, rather than just doing it for yourself.

(C-5/96-98)

3.3.3 Transpersonal themes

3.3.3.1 Aesthetic experience

The theme ‘Aesthetic experience’ includes sub-themes related to the sense and feeling of dancing described by participants, as well as their response to and engagement with music. I use the term ‘aesthetic’ as it relates to the original Greek definition of aesthetics as the ‘study of emotional/sensorial experiences’ (Giurchescu, 2003, p. 163). Aesthetic experience involves the dancer’s creative and expressive response to music and rhythm. Aesthetic experience is transpersonal in that the self as subject—the non-reflexive self caught up in an activity (Logan, 1988)—is engaged with something beyond the self, with others, transforming the experience of space and time.

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Figure 12 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of aesthetic experience.

![Figure 12: Aesthetic experience and its sub-themes](image)

3.3.3.1.1 Emotions

For some participants, dancing linked chain and round dances evoked an emotional response.

Dancer1 described dancing as ‘emotionally rewarding and uplifting’ (C-1/103). Dancer5 also reported feeling an emotional response.

Dancer5: A lot of these dances pack quite an emotional punch.  
(C-5/39-40)

Then there’s other dances where [ ] I do get an emotional feeling, um, like, ’Limonya’ where you have this sort of closeness because you have, you know, the arms are very close together in that dance, um, and uh, there’s a sort of joy, there’s quite often a joy in these, in these dances.  
(C-5/75-79)
The emotion is in or carried by or elicited by the dances themselves. Joy was the prevailing emotion for Dancer5, although she also experienced other emotions.

Dancer5: I think with the emotional aspect, it can, it’s, it’s funny how these different dances can elicit different emotions, depending on what sort of dance they are. So they can be really fun ones, um, really lively which make you happy and smiley and then there’s these really, really sad ones. And in fact I almost, I mean, I can almost be on the verge of tears after some of them.

(C-5/239-244)

3.3.3.1.2 Musical response

The music established an emotional tone, which ranges from joy and pride to a kind of beautiful sadness.

Dancer1: The music it sets the mood, it can be very melancholy but beautiful. It can be very exciting, can be very soothing.

(C-1/55-57)

Like a sense of pride, some of the music makes you feel a proud feel.

(C-1/33)

Dancer5: Especially where the music is kind of mournful.

(C-5/69)

The music makes you want to leap up and dance for joy.

(C-5/80-81)

Dancer6 also emphasised the relationship between the music and dancing.

Dancer6: For me, the music and the dancer absolutely tie together.

(C-6/56)
For Dancer6, the musical response was essential. He saw Romanian dance in the Banat region, in particular, as based on the timing of the dance movement matching exactly the timing of the music—the dancer must be keenly aware of and responding to the music.

When asked about live music, participants reported different effects on their experience.

Dancer1: You’ve got live musicians who are obviously passionate about the music and you can watch them play and see what instruments they’re using and uh, respond to their enthusiasm with your dancing.

(C-1/61-63)

For Dancer1, live music enhanced her emotional response to the music and her overall aesthetic experience. For Dancer3, however, live music had a strong impact on his experience of time passing.

Dancer3: In an open-ended dance where you have live music, say, and so you know it’s, there’s no set finish, then, there is a possibility to lose the sense of time, that is true.

(C-3/285-287)

3.3.3.1.3 Listening

Listening to the music was of primary importance to most of the participants.

Dancer5: So, I mean, I actually have a number of the tunes, a lot of the music on my iPod and I will listen to it just for the music, so, you know, without considering the dancing.

(C-5/27-30)
I’m aware of, I’m aware of the music, of course, and I often, concentrate quite intently on the music, so, I like to try and make, I like to try and dance the dance as perfectly as I can, so I’ll try and put my foot down at the exact moment that the beat, you know, so that it’s on the beat.

(C-5/98-101)

Dancer4: It actually gives me great personal satisfaction to be thinking, you know, listening, um, acutely to the music.

(C-4/70-71)

Dancer6: So there’s an exactness in the listening to the music in Banat [Romania], here’s, the average English person doesn’t have. And Romanians actually use the, the term, um, ‘Got to have a musical ear to dance’.

(C-6/68-70)

3.3.3.1.4 Rhythm

Dancer6 referred to a style of linked chain and round dancing in which the dancer must absolutely focus attention on the music, especially on the timing of the music. Perhaps this transforms the experience of time to a focused awareness on the musical timing. Descriptions of optimal experience include the feature of intense concentration or a limited field of awareness (Logan, 1988).

Participants mentioned what might be termed a ‘musical response’, which is an awareness and a desire to engage with the music.

Dancer1: It’s quite nice to stamp and reinforce the rhythm.

(C-1/80-81)

Dancer1 described a direct relationship between music and movement, and she was very much aware of this relationship.
Dancer1: If I hear a rhythm anywhere, any music, any drumming, any tapping, I want to respond to it with my body in some way.

(C-1/49-51)

Dancer2 saw music and rhythm as definitive features of dancing, with movement as a response to music.

Dancer2: Well, in the case of the running around, they literally did do that, without music and without rhythm. So, you couldn’t really call it dance. I sort of say to my dancers sometimes, and they think I’m joking, ‘The idea is that you put on the music and you move your bits in time with the music.’ So, you know, but lots of people haven’t quite thought this out! So I suppose the thing that makes it a proper dance to start with is a real sense of rhythm.

(C-2/33-38)

Every participant mentioned ‘rhythm’ as something they were aware of when dancing. Participants used the term ‘rhythm’ in different ways, however. Sometimes they referred to rhythm as ‘everything to do with both time and motion—with the organisation of musical events in time, however flexible in metre and tempo’ (Whitall, 2007-2012). Others, especially those with musical training, tended to distinguish between rhythm, metre and timing.

Dancer6: Balkan music, which is very rhythmically orientated, because it’s based, to my mind this is, the rhythm is based around-I’m trying to make this up on the fly, at the moment-it’s based around a lot of notes that you play but you don’t actually necessarily [ ] accent those notes. There’s much more ornamentation, a lot of quick succession, and the rhythm, the exactness of the rhythm is extremely important.

(C-6/28-34)

3.3.3.1.5 Timing

Closely related to rhythm is the notion of ‘timing’. Based on the interview data, it appears that ‘time’ and ‘timing’ have different phenomenological meanings. As
described in previous sections, participants perceived time passing, made note of the historical time in which a dance originated, or looked forward to the time they spent dancing. ‘Timing’, by contrast, is a person’s active, creative response to the temporal features of music, an expression of the musical/dancing self in relationship with the temporal features of music.

Dancer4: I think I put Pristinka as my top favourite dance, that is actually a 5/4 rhythm but the um, there is actually some ambiguity and, and you know, freedom for you to fit the steps to the rhythm actually because of the nature of it.

(C-4/129-132)

Dancer3: This [Gorbetšiiska] was again an 11/16 but with a stretched beat on the first count in sort of a third, and a typical Pirin song, but this one, as the song, the sung verse the first part of it, um, it does, it doesn’t keep to a regular rhythm, it slows, and there’s a pause in the song, so you come to a halt and you can be expressive in the way you halt that and prepare for the next step really.

(C-3/264-269)

For Dancer3, a complex rhythm, changing tempo, and a ‘halt’ offered an opportunity to be ‘expressive’. People have choice in the way that they physically stop moving and then prepare to start again—people can move in their own particular way, although at a certain point in the music, they have all stopped moving.

Dancer6, in particular, spoke eloquently and analytically about timing, highlighting the importance of musicality and the possible link between timing and expression in linked chain and round dances.

Dancer6: But the very good [Romanian] dancers are also able to determine between the leading edge and the trailing edge of the notes. So they are able to syncopate slightly around, so they [] steal a bit of time, while you’re dancing.

(C-6/79-82)
The best traditional dancers in Banat attended so closely to the music that they distinguished time within a note, and they made movement decisions based on their perception. The dancers controlled, within the musical framework, the timing of their movements, which is what Dancer6 also strove to achieve. As a musician, he was aware of the ‘groove’ within the music.

Dancer6: The musicians and Romanians listen to the music and they stamp on the offbeat, and as you probably know, you can move the offbeat as you're playing it, or after, or put it exact time. If you put it slightly after the time, it feels more lazy, if slightly forward it, it feels, um, a bit more pushed.

(C-6/190-194)

Changing the timing of the offbeat creates ‘groove’, which was experienced as an acceleration or deceleration of timing that Dancer6 tries to match in his movements.

In the next chapter, I will explore rhythm and timing in greater detail, as formal elements of movement and music that are central to the experience of dancing.

3.3.3.1.6 Space

When questioned about how they experience space, participants indicated that the group formations changed their perception of space and focused their awareness more closely on their near surroundings.

Dancer2: I mean, I suppose occasionally some people might have hundreds of people dancing together, usually mine are smaller groups, and the space sort of comes down to the space of your dancing group and not many yards outside it. And then even if you’re dancing in all sorts of other, more complicated British festivals or things you’re still dancing in a very close space and most of it, the rest of the world outside disappears, it’s not relevant to you at all. Which isn’t my experience of space generally at all.

(C-2/310-316)
For Dancer2, the size of the group defined the sense of space, and the larger space of the ‘world’ became irrelevant to the moment, to awareness. Near space took on more importance.

Dancer1: One would have to be aware of the people either side of you and uh, make allowances perhaps being much taller than you or shorter than you.

(C-1/127-128)

Dancer4 recognised that awareness of space changes, but that this was less important to her than other elements of the music and dancing.

Dancer4: By necessity you have to be more aware of where you are with relation to other people.

(C-4/242-243)

I’m tempted to think for me, that the space business um, not so important.

(C-4/259-260)

Dancer3 was aware of both near space and the group formation.

Dancer3: If you’re attending to the dance you make sure, and there’s a nat-, if you’re holding [on to other people] of course, there’s a natural discipline of keeping a space between yourself and other people. But the whole, trying to keep the line neat or circles and no kinks and things like that.

(C-3/291-295)

Dancer6 clearly defined the space in which dancing happens.

Dancer6: For me there’s two sides to your space when you’re dancing, there’s local space and there is the wider space.

(C-6/141-142)

You have a limited amount of local space for you, which is the space that you can do things in, to the dance. And if
you’re dancing a Romanian dance in a chain, or in a shoulder hold, there’s very little scope for your own space, and that’s where the variational devices, if you’re a Western-minded person, comes into it. The rest of it is community space because you’ve got to be as, as one with the rest of the line.

(C-6/261-267)

The hold (physical connection with other dancers) extends or limits the personal space within the group formation. Within the personal space, dancers have some flexibility in varying their movements. The ‘line’ transforms space into ‘community’ space in which dancers physically become ‘one’ with the community.

3.3.3.2 Being cognition

‘Being cognition’ refers to Maslow’s description of how perception can change when a person has a ‘peak experience’, when a person ‘gets to be more purely and singly himself...is more able to fuse with the world, with what was formerly not-self’ (Maslow, 1999, p. 117). This theme has fewer references within the transcripts (less coding applied) than other themes, which might be expected given that, for most people, being cognition, as Maslow describes it, is rarely achieved.

Figure 13 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of being cognition.
3.3.3.2.1 Becoming part of the dance

In his description of peak experience, Maslow says:

The creator becomes one with his work being created, the mother feels one with her child, the appreciator becomes the music (and it becomes him) or the painting, or the dance.

(Maslow, 1999, p. 117)

Dancer2 spoke of a similar sort of perception, of becoming part of the dance.

Dancer2: There are certain sort of shifts that happens in dancers I see, that dance with me, from being folks that are trying to learn, to folks that are trying to remember the steps, to when they don’t need to remember them anymore. And only really at that point are they really dancing, shall we say.

(C-2/292-296)

There is a point at which ‘dancing’ happens. Dancer2 clarified:

Dancer2: Well one could say the sort of feeling is that you’re just part of that dance. As opposed to ‘doing it’, so to speak.

(C-2/298-299)
Some participants mentioned a different quality of cognition or mental processing that they experienced while dancing.

Dancer2: I think it does induce, to some extent, an altered state of consciousness. In the ways in which meditation and other sorts of things can achieve, partly I can understand that it achieves this by moving in rhythm, um, I can also understand that it does, that in doing so, it stills a lot of what you might call mental chatter. And other sorts of things, so that one’s mental processing is happening in a different sort of way.

(C-2/49-55)

Dancer5: They’re very, kind of, meditative dances, um, so, to me, they do feel like a sort of moving meditation.

(C-5/73-75)

Dancer5 later commented that she was not ‘rapt’ or in a ‘trance’, so this ‘moving meditation’ had a unique feel to her. The perception of time changed:

Dancer5: I mean it’s like you’re in a different world.

(C-5/112)

3.3.3.2.2 Effortlessness

Participants enjoyed the sense of grace or effortlessness, another feature of being cognition mentioned by Maslow (1999, p. 117).

Dancer5: I do, I prefer the, I like Pirin, I like dances from Pirin where you have those very graceful, wide cat-like steps, we call them the ‘cat dances’. And they’re almost balletic, um, and they make you feel graceful.

(C-5/148-151)

In this case, Dancer5 related larger, slower movements to a feeling of being ‘graceful’.
Dancer6 also found that he experienced a particular ‘ease of functioning’ (Maslow, 1999, p. 117) that grows out of practice and imagination.

Dancer6: A very rhythmic thing with certain ways of moving, and with some practice that becomes totally habitual for a particular dance style, so you don’t need to think about it at all. So, if you get some Serbian music, you can, you’ve got your idea in your mind about how you’ve learned to dance to Serbian music with Serbians, when you dance to Serbian music, and you, that just happens because the music’s Serbian and it happens.

(C-6/219-224)

### 3.3.3.2.3 Sense of the sacred or spiritual

Some participants reported a sense of the sacred or spiritual when they danced.

Dancer2: Because it [the Greek and Macedonian dancing] did have that effect on me, it felt like a sacred thing to be doing.

(C-2/31-32)

Dancer5: My experience of myself while I’m dancing. Um, well I feel, I feel good, I feel pure, um, wholesome, and I feel connected and spiritual, as well.

(C-5/204-205)

It’s just, just the feeling that it is a way of being in touch with, uh, well, I don’t know, with something universal, perhaps?

(C-5/226-227)

This statement from Dancer5 suggests a connection with Maslow’s description of how people value a peak experience, ‘with awe, wonder, amazement, humility and even reverence, exaltation and piety. The word sacred is occasionally used’ (1999, p. 92).
Dancer4 hesitated to use such terminology because of its associations with ‘circle’ or ‘sacred’ dancing.

Dancer4: I was going to say spiritual but I don’t like using the word ‘spiritual’ in connection with dancing.

(C-4/216-217)

When asked what she would mean if she did use the word spiritual, she replied:

That you are at one with everybody and you’re all, it’s a harmonious sharing at-oneness. And a very pleasant, a very pleasant harmonious sharing at-oneness.

(C-4/238-240)

Dancer4’s poetic expression of her experience supports Maslow’s statement that

Expression and communication in the peak-experiences tend often to become poetic, mythical and rhapsodic, as if this were the natural kind of language to express such states of being.


3.3.4 Table of themes and sub-themes

The following themes, presented here in alphabetical order, represent the data for all of the participants in the study.

Table 3: Group themes in alphabetical order

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<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>References</th>
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<td>Musical response</td>
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<td>Rhythm</td>
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<td>Space</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Timing</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>Sub-themes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autotelic experience</td>
<td>Awareness of time</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Challenge</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Complexity</td>
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<td>Engagement</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Becoming part of the dance</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Different quality of cognition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Effortlessness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sense of the sacred or spiritual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>Being part of a whole</td>
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<td>Community</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Social aspects</td>
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<td>Context</td>
<td>First or second existence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Historic and cultural</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other dancers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Participatory or presentational</td>
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<td>Mastery</td>
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<td>Self</td>
<td>Being different than usual</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Describing lived experience</td>
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<td>Expression</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Imagination</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Presence as a physical being</td>
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<td>Self-image</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self-worth</td>
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3.4 Discussion

Perhaps the most striking feature of this IPA study is the richness, variety and depth with which participants described their experience of dancing linked chain and round dances. In keeping with the idiographic nature of IPA, I have attempted to represent these different experiences fully and in keeping with the data that the participants provided during their interviews. The following sections provide a response to the first research question, ‘How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?’

I begin by presenting my key findings and discussing in more detail themes that resulted from the thematic analysis. Then, I continue with a presentation of a new, motivational model for conceptualising the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances.

3.4.1 Key findings

By using IPA methodology, which shifts the point of view from the observer’s perspective to the dancer’s, this study moves dance phenomenology beyond first person accounts to look at the largely unexplored area of the experience of dancing recreational participatory linked chain and round dances. Using this methodology led to the creation of a motivational model that highlights the importance of dancing at multiple levels—the intrapersonal, the interpersonal and the transpersonal. This idiographic approach also highlights how different people experience dancing differently, not just as a social activity or even as an artistic activity, but as a multifaceted and creative aesthetic experience in which dancers interact with music and rhythm to express by means of movement/physicality a musical/dancing self that feels like a ‘real’ self—‘the freedom to be me’ (C-4/40)—or a projection of the self in the social world (C-6/301-304). The key differences between these findings and those of other authors who study dance and experience are as follows:
1) This study is a third-person, interpretative study rather than a first-person reduction in Husserl’s sense of identifying ‘essences’, thereby providing a slightly broader view of the experience in question, with the opportunity to compare and contrast the experiences of six people.

2) The dances studied are participatory, recreational dances that are realised by people with no ethnic ties to the region in which the dances evolved, as opposed to the presentational, concert dance styles analysed by Fraleigh (1987, 1999a), Parviainen (1998) and Sheets-Johnstone (1979).

Notably, these authors did not mention music, or mentioned it only tangentially. Given the interview data collected in this project, however, it is important to recognise the relationship of dancers with music, a relationship which recreational dancers of linked chain and round dances valued as vitally important to their experience of dancing. Having explored the nature of the music-dancing relationship as part of the IPA, I argue that the concept of ‘musicality’—which Blacking (1973) suggests is present in all people, if sometimes undeveloped—provides a relevant and useful conceptual framework for describing the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances. Furthermore, I suggest that when participants spoke about ‘expression’, they referred to the expression of a musical/dancing self that is expressed not through, but as music and dancing.

In the following sections, I describe in more detail the themes of ‘Self’, ‘Aesthetic experience’ and ‘Being cognition’, on which I base my argument about the music/dancing self. I have chosen to elaborate on these themes here because they are the most intriguing and under-studied in the area of recreational linked chain and round dancing, and because they have great significance in terms of human experience and, therefore, potentially profound implications for personal well-being.
3.4.1.1 Self

The notion of being one’s ‘real’ self appears both in the interview data—especially in the sub-themes of ‘Being different than usual’ and ‘Expression’—and in some of the Dance literature. Bond & Stinson, for example, identified six categories in which to classify young people’s experience of dancing, describing one of those categories as ‘Self (including issues of freedom and choice as well as creativity, self-expression, and aesthetic values)’ (2000-2001, p. 55). The authors go on to state that

We found considerable indication that both young and older students often experienced what they referred to as a real self—as though the person they usually were was not the authentic self. This was an ‘inner self’ or a ‘transformed self,’ one not always shown to others and often not previously known to themselves. Sometimes, they reported, dance was where they actually discovered a real self or selves.

(Bond & Stinson, 2000-2001, p. 61)

Dancer4 echoed this sense of a real self when she said

Dancer4: I guess I feel this freedom that perhaps I don’t feel in the rest of my life, a freedom to be me.

(C-4/39-40)

It’s a kind of ‘this is me’, um, when I’m dancing…In a way that I’m not me in, you know, doing other things.

(C-4/43-45)

This sense of self is also reflected in the experience of Dancer1:

Dancer1: My dancing self is different from my self in other activities.

(C-1/100-101)

How is it possible that people can feel a ‘freedom to be me’ when realising dances from a region to which they have no cultural or ethnic ties? The answer, I believe, lies
in the concept of a ‘musical/dancing self’ that seeks expression within a complex system of music, movement, rhythm, timing and community.

Because the concept of a musical/dancing self emerges from this study of recreational, participatory linked chain and round dancing, and not from a type of dance that presents symbolic/artistic/theatrical content to an audience, I argue that this musical/dancing self expresses no more or less than music and dancing, an essential ‘musicality’ that could be, as Blacking described, ‘species-specific’, a musicality that ‘is there in the body, waiting to be brought out and developed (1973, p. 100). This would mean that a person does not express themselves through dance, but that the person expresses themselves as dance.

Dancer4: I suppose I feel I’m expressing myself in different ways...so you’re expressing yourself through, through movement with your body.

(C-4/33-35)

Dancer5: You’re using steps to express yourself.

(C-5/201-202)

Fraleigh states that

Expression is qualitatively intrinsic in the nature of the body, in movement, and (it follows) in the nature of dance itself. In this sense, we may say that dance is expressive by nature.

(Fraleigh, 1987, p. 125)

Expression in dance is accompanied by a sense of presence as a physical being, both in the interview data and in the literature. Coros, for example, speaks of ‘bodyness’, the sense of one’s body, of being like or unlike other bodies, of being like others or of being unique, in the context of dancing a linked chain dance, Syrtos (1992, p. 102).

The type of musical/dancing self-expression described so far is closely tied to and realised within the context of aesthetic experience. This implies that aesthetic
experience, as described in the next section, is not a means to something else, but is itself an important component of human experience, because it is only within aesthetic experience that the musical/dancing self finds expression, primarily through rhythm, musical response and timing.

3.4.1.2 Aesthetic experience

The IPA results suggest the idea of a musical response/relationship in which a person both responds to and creates rhythm and timing. Timing, which refers to a person’s movement expression within the framework of musical time, is different than the perception of time passing, and includes a person’s response to the perception of the musical time, often ‘beats’ or ‘counts’.

Evidence in the interview transcripts of this interactive relationship between the dancer and the dance music, described in detail by Dancer6 and mentioned briefly by Dancer3 and Dancer4, calls for a more thorough investigation of the concept of ‘musicality’ in the context of recreational, participatory dancing. Surprisingly, Grove Music Online did not have a subject entry (definition) for the term ‘musicality’ (Oxford University Press, 2007-2013), which suggests that the term may be problematic. Honing defines the term as ‘an apparently innate aptitude for music’ (2011, p. 8) that involves the ‘human ability to discern, interpret and appreciate musical nuances’ (p. 7). Blacking uses the term musicality without actually defining it, but he emphasises the listener’s role as critical to musical production, with the listener having ‘the basic capacity without which no musical tradition can exist—the capacity to listen to and distinguish patterns of sound’ (1973, p. 8).

The participants in this study have stated a strong connection with and keen listening to the accompanying dance music. Dancer6, for example, stated this succinctly:

Dancer6: For me, the music and the dancer absolutely tie together.

(C-6/56)
Music is, therefore, a vital component of aesthetic experience in dancing linked chain and round dances. Dancer6 observed that Romanian dance (in Banat) in particular is based on the timing of the dance movement matching exactly the timing of the music. Giureşcu also describes the aesthetics of coincidence and non-coincidence of movement and music (Giureşcu, 2003), but regardless of the particular way in which the dancer interacts with the music, the dancer is undeniably aware of, responding to, and therefore in relationship with the music.

The dancer, in relationship with music, can create an experience of time and space that differs from the experience of chronological time. Blacking states that ‘the essential quality of music is its power to create another world of virtual time’ (1973, p. 27), and Sheets-Johnstone proposes that ‘[The time and space of dance] are different from either the objective or lived experience of time and space in everyday life…a dance cuts into everyday time and space’ (1979, p. 43). The dancer, in relationship with the dance music, can create a different experience of time and space, even within the musical framework of metre and rhythm. The dancer perceives and responds to the musical time with movement, and in that response, creates timing.

But it is not only the timing of movement in relation to music that participants find so engaging. Dancer5 said that she listens to the dance music on her iPod even when she is not dancing (C-5/28-30).

This creative, interactive relationship between movement and music can have profound effects on a person’s sense of ‘being’, as described in the next section.

### 3.4.1.3 Being cognition

From the thematic analysis, it appears that participants experienced some elements of peak experience as described by Maslow (1999), although not always to the level of ‘peak’ experience. Interestingly, Maslow mentions aesthetic experience frequently throughout his description of ‘being cognition’ (pp. 83-111). It appears that, in the
context of aesthetic experience, the dancer’s creative interaction with music can contribute to a state of ‘being’ differentiated from ‘becoming’. Blacking echoes Maslow’s description of ‘being cognition’ when he says

The Balinese speak of ‘the other mind’ as a state of being that can be reached through dancing and music. They refer to states in which people become keenly aware of the true nature of their being, of the ‘other self’ within themselves and other human beings, and of their relationship with the world around them. [ ] There is freedom from the restrictions of actual time and complete absorption in the ‘Timeless Now of the Divine Spirit,’ the loss of self in being. [ ] The virtual time of music may help to generate such experiences. 

(Blacking, 1973, p. 52)

Blacking’s statement highlights three key areas that tie aesthetic experience to ‘being cognition’: 1) the sense of virtual time that music creates; 2) the sense of a ‘loss of self in being’, and; 3) the sense of the real, or ‘other’ self experienced through dancing and music. Participants mentioned all three of these areas in descriptions of their experiences. In the previous two sections, I discussed the concepts of timing and the notion of being one’s ‘real’ self while dancing. Maslow mentions a characteristic of peak experience that he calls ‘disorientation in time and space’ (1999, p. 91). I would argue, based on the interview data as well as statements by Sheets-Johnstone (1979) and Blacking (1973), that ‘creation of musical/dancing time and space’ better describes the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances. Maslow states that ‘It would be accurate to say that in these moments the person is outside of time and space subjectively’ (1999, p. 91). For purposes of this study, at least, I suggest instead that it would be accurate to say that the person is creating a different subjective time and space within which they can experience features of being cognition.

The idea of getting ‘lost’ in dancing appears in the interview transcripts and in the literature, and participants seem to indicate that it is desirable to get ‘lost’ in a dance.
Dancer3: It did surprise us when we danced in Bulgaria and the dance went on for 50 minutes, we hadn’t realised it had. We would have been surprised to, we would have imagined it would be about half that time. But you do get lost in it. Yeah, so there is that possibility and certainly in an open-ended dance where you have live music, say, and so you know it’s, there’s no set finish, then, there is a possibility to lose the sense of time.

(C-3/281-287)

Dancer2: It’s possible, I mean, I’m more often these days in a teaching context than not, it’s possible that if was in a larger, a larger group, and wasn’t having to be responsible, that I could drift off a bit more, I mean that has happened in odd occasions in the past.

(C-2/120-123)

Maslow describes losing the self in aesthetic experience, and at the same time feeling more like one’s real self (1999, p. 90): ‘It is possible in the aesthetic experience…to become so absorbed and “poured into” the object that the self, in a very real sense, disappears’. Fraleigh also discusses self-transcendence in Modern dance, saying ‘When I become my dance, it becomes consonant with my consciousness. The difference between the dance and myself disappears’ (1987, p. 40).

The similarity between what Maslow (1999) describes as peak experience and the descriptions that Blacking provides (1973) suggests that that aesthetic experience has great potential to transform not only cognition, but also people’s sense of themselves. In what is commonly known as ‘Maslow’s hierarchy’, the level of ‘self-actualization’ typically appears as the highest motivational level. Kolkto-Rivera argues, however, that Maslow re-thought the hierarchy and placed ‘Self-transcendence’ at the top, suggesting that this is the level at which being cognition occurs, and mentioning aesthetic experience as one type of experience that can sometimes lead to being cognition (2006, p. 303).
But is aesthetic experience really just a means to self-actualisation or to self-transcendence? Or is it possible that music and dancing as an aesthetic experience merits its own place within Maslow’s hierarchy? Is expression of the musical/dancing self worthy of recognition as a motivational construct within the hierarchy? Blacking asks the question ‘How Musical is Man?’ and proposes that it might one day be possible to establish that ‘musicality is a universal, species-specific characteristic’ (1973, p. 116). The concept of ‘universal’ musicality, which, I argue, must include dancing as a response to and interaction with music, would require a great deal more research by scholars who marry music and dancing as two features of a single phenomenon.

For the purposes of this study, participants reported only some of the features of peak experience, and I do not suggest that dancing always leads to peak experience or to being cognition. What I do suggest is that people who realise participatory linked chain and round dances experience some aspects of being cognition, especially in the sense of a creative relationship with time and space, which can transform the sense of self in profound ways.

3.4.2 A motivational model

As described previously in this chapter, I present the IPA results in the context of my first research question, ‘How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?’ Based on a close reading of the interview data, seven themes emerge, along with a number of inter-related sub-themes. The motivational model that I propose describes these themes of experience within three domains—the intrapersonal, interpersonal and transpersonal. Table 4 categorises the themes and sub-themes within each of these domains and shows the number of sources (participant interview transcripts) related to each theme and sub-theme.
Table 4: Motivational model of themes of experience

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<th>Domains of experience</th>
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This model, which focuses on the dancer as the ‘the responsible, active, creating center of his activities and of his perceptions’ (Maslow, 1999, p. 118), is a new way of conceptualising the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances, and is a view that I have not seen presented quite in this way in the extant Dance literature. Of course, many Dance researchers have recognised and described the various facets of dancing as the dancer experiences them in both presentational and participatory dancing (for example, Giurchescu, 2003; Hoerburger, 1960; Mills, 2004; Ruyter, 1995; Sklar, 2006; Fraleigh, 1987; and Sheets-Johnstone, 1979, to name but a few). But this particular motivational model differs in that it clearly places the dancing person at the centre of a motivational schema that spans the intrapersonal, interpersonal and transpersonal domains. The motivational model that I propose thus advances knowledge in Dance Studies, not by offering a ‘better’ way to describe, analyse and interpret experience, but ‘another’ way to research the experience of dancing which, when combined with phenomenological, anthropological and cultural
approaches, provides a more complete description that incorporates additional (psychological) features of experience.

Any model presents a simplified view of reality. The motivational model of dancing presented here simply classifies and groups themes of experience, it does not claim to represent the actual experience of dancing. Based on the results of the IPA study, the model does not represent lived experience in the sense of translating from dancing to language, as Coros (1992) attempted, but rather describes experience in such a way that the various aspects of experience can be investigated, interpreted and understood within the theoretical frameworks of Phenomenological and Motivational Psychology.

The model also simplifies the relationship of themes and sub-themes, which are not discrete experiences, as they might appear from the model, but rather form a ‘web of relations’, to use Adshead’s term (Adshead, 1988d, p. 52). For example, sub-themes of ‘aesthetic experience’, such as ‘listening’, also fit with the theme ‘being cognition’ where ‘the percept is exclusively and fully attended to’ (Maslow, 1999, p. 86). The value of the model lies not in the visualisation of a complex human experience as it actually appears to consciousness, but as a tool to clearly identify each theme and sub-theme for analysis, discussion, and additional investigation in future studies.
4 The relationship between form and being: Dancers’ accounts of the ways in which formal aspects of Balkan dances contribute to their experience in dancing

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the second of four empirical studies that comprise this project, exploring the links between form and being in the experience of realising participatory linked chain and round dances. These links between form and being in recreational, participatory dancing have not yet been clearly or directly described in the literature, although Ravn’s (2010) study of the experience of weight provides an example of how this might be accomplished. In order to describe the relationship between formal elements of dancing and the themes of general experience identified in Chapter 3, I ask the question ‘How do dancers describe the formal aspects of participatory linked chain and round dances that contribute to their experience in dancing?’

I emphasise here that the answer to this question must be descriptive, not prescriptive, in keeping with ‘IPA’s commitment to the particular’ (Smith et al., 2011, p. 29) 29. In other words, I propose that particular formal elements of dancing might contribute to experience in particular ways for particular participants, based on their own descriptions and interpretations of their own particular experience, not that prescribed movements can create predictable experiences in a general way.

One major challenge was to identify those formal elements that, as experienced rather than as observed, contribute to the experience of the dancing person and of which

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29 See Chapter 3, section 3.2.1.1 for a detailed description of IPA’s commitment to idiographic research.
they are most aware. Studies by a number of Dance scholars such as Sheets-Johnstone (1979), Fraleigh (1987), Coros (1992), Sklar (2006) and Ravn (2010)—reviewed in detail in Chapter 2—suggest a starting point for investigating how form relates to the experience of dancing. These authors highlight the unique spatial-temporal qualities of dancing and discuss how the self is experienced in dance. From a phenomenological perspective, time, space, and sense of self are relevant to lived experience and can also be analysed in terms of more basic, formal elements of dancing, such as the movement, visual, and aural components of dancing (Adshead, 1988c) and the motion factors of time, space, weight, and flow (Dell, 1977).

The overall research design of this project and the careful construction of the interview schedule provides for a ‘formal’ thematic analysis that features dance-based themes as they emerge from the data. Other Dance scholars—Bond & Stinson, 2000-2001; Ravn, 2010; and Huss & Haimovich, 2011, for example—have used thematic and categorical analyses to study experience in dancing. This study extends this type of analysis to focus specifically on formal elements of dancing, as experienced by the project participants.

4.2 Methods

In this study, as in the study described in Chapter 3, theory and method from Phenomenological Psychology inform both data collection and analysis. And because this study focuses on the formal aspects of dancing as experienced, concepts from Dance Phenomenology, Dance Ethnography and Dance Analysis provide a foundation for describing participants’ experiences within the hermeneutic circle of iterative analysis and interpretation.\(^{30}\)

\(^{30}\) See page 115 for a definition of the hermeneutic circle.
Although participants could not be expected to articulate their awareness of formal elements in technical, dance-based terminology, it is important to this project to attempt to gain access to their perspective (Thomas, 2003b, p. 84).

### 4.2.1 Data collection

The interview data that formed the basis of the IPA study in the previous chapter also provides information relevant to the question of how dancers describe the formal elements of music and dancing of which they are reflectively aware, and which might be central to their experiences of dancing. As in the previous study, a manageable sample size of six participants allows for a close and detailed reading of the interview transcripts and a reasonable number of themes to emerge from the data. Again, the goal of this study is not to generalise amongst the population at large, but to provide a descriptive/interpretative analysis of the experience of form in realising participatory linked chain and round dances.\(^{31}\)

The interview schedule\(^ {32}\) contains the following questions designed to elicit information about the formal elements of dancing and music that appear to conscious awareness and that might contribute to dancers’ experiences of ‘being’. Because I could not assume that participants would know the technical terminology used in movement analysis and Effort theory, the following interview questions are intentionally presented in non-technical terms, and are open-ended to encourage a variety of responses.

- How does the dance music affect your experience of dancing?
  - (Prompt: strong melody versus a strong beat, live versus recorded)

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\(^{31}\) For a detailed description of how the participants were recruited, selected and interviewed, see Chapter 3, section 3.2.2.

\(^{32}\) See Appendix A-5 for the complete interview schedule.
In the literature review presented in Chapter 2, I highlighted the difficulties that people have when speaking about dancing generally. This difficulty seems to increase when describing the formal aspects of dancing and how they contribute to experience. It is here, at the point of collecting information about the relationship between form and experience, that the researcher’s skills in probing participant responses are essential. To obtain deeper and more thoughtful responses from participants, I used techniques of probing, clarification, reflection, and other core skills of interviewing (Gillham, 2005, pp. 29-36), especially showing empathy and understanding. In particular, my expressing an understanding of the difficulty of articulating experience encouraged people to say more about their experience. For an example of this, see Appendix C-4, lines 241-260.

4.2.2 Data analysis

The interview transcripts provide information about participants’ awareness of specific formal elements of dancing and those that are of greatest importance (most relevant to the experiences of participants). Using a process identical to that described

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33 The last two questions are also presented in the previous study. Depending on the participant, the answers could relate to either general experience, formal elements of dancing, or to the relationship between the two.
in the previous chapter for the IPA study of general experience, I coded the interview transcripts and grouped the content into themes that reflect the formal elements of music and dancing mentioned by participants. For a detailed description of this process, see section 3.2.3.2.

4.3 Results

Once I identified the formal themes and sub-themes for each participant, I organised them into group themes using the same iterative process that I described in the previous chapter. As with the general sub-themes, the numbers for a formal sub-theme represent the number of sources (participants whose transcripts I coded at this node) and references (the total pieces of text coded at this node). The following sections describe the formal themes and sub-themes for the group.

4.3.1 Emergence

‘Emergence’ refers to how the interrelated and interactive formal elements of dancing combine to create a ‘whole’ that comprises a complex layering of experience.

Figure 14 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of emergence.

Figure 14: Emergence and its sub-themes
Some dancers spoke specifically about the way that different elements combine to create a particular experience, with music mentioned most often as an important element.

Dancer3: I always say that when we dance the music or perhaps the singing, the whole can be more than the elements, when they, when there’s the combination of these things, so um. I would say the music is an important factor.

(C-3/320-323)

Dancer4: I suppose if it’s a very simple dance then it’s really got to have some lofty music, um, to be um, appealing.

(C-4/113-114)

Dancer5: Obviously music is very important because if we just did the steps, which we do when we’re learning a piece, it’s not the same, it’s not nearly the same. Um, so the music is like part and parcel of the, the whole experience.

(C-5/121-124)

These dancers seemed to have an awareness of the interrelatedness of the various formal elements of dancing. This confirms my choice of the approach suggested by Adshead, in which the various components of dancing must be clearly described, along with ‘the nature of relationships between components of the dance’ (1988d, p. 41).

4.3.2 Group formation

The theme ‘group formation’ refers to the Dance Form Analysis category of ‘Geometrical formation’ (Giurchescu & Kröschlová, 2007), which describes how dancers position themselves in relation to each other and in relation to the general space of the dancing venue.

Figure 15 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of group formation.
Figure 15: Group formation and its sub-themes

Dancers spoke of an awareness of the different group formations, the type of physical connection with other dancers— referred to in the vocabulary of folk dance as the ‘hold’—and how both the formation and hold can affect experience, even changing the perception of space.

Dancer6, for example, distinguished between the local and the community space:

Dancer6: You have a limited amount of local space for you, which is the space that you can do things in to the dance. And if you’re dancing a Romanian dance in a chain, or in a shoulder hold\(^{34}\), there’s very little scope for your own space, and that’s where the variational devices, if you’re a Western-minded person, comes into it. The rest of it is community space because you’ve got to be as, as one with the rest of the line.

(C-6/261-267)

Dancer6 described the local (personal) space as limited by the chain formation, with the shoulder hold further limiting that space. The line (chain) transforms the physical

\(^{34}\) The dancer’s right hand rests on or grasps the shoulder of the dancer immediately to their right, and the dancer’s left hand rests on or grasps the shoulder of the dancer immediately to their left.
space into community space in which a dancer becomes ‘one’ with the community. This also suggests an emergent property of the interactive elements ‘group formation’ and ‘hold’, because the two formal elements in interaction create the property of ‘community space’.

Dancer2 also referred to the way that the group formation creates a different type of space:

Dancer2: The space sort of comes down to the space of your dancing group and not many yards outside it... the rest of the world outside disappears, it’s not relevant to you at all...dancing is very much, um, not an enclosed space, because there isn’t an enclosure, necessarily, but it makes its own enclosure.

(C-2/312-322)

For Dancer2, the group defined the sense of space. The larger space of the ‘world’ becomes irrelevant to the moment, to awareness. This is very different from Dancer2’s usual experience of distant space, which he said that he also enjoyed (C-2/322-325). His statements support Sheets-Johnstone’s description of the ways in which a dancer creates a space-time that differs from observable, everyday space-time (1966, 1979) and Coros’s description of being ‘other than I usually am’ (Coros, 1992, p. 200). For both Dancer2 and Dancer6, the group formation and hold interacted to create a focus on personal and interpersonal space, with less of a focus on general space. The space within which the dancer as an individual and the dancer as part of a community realise the dance seem to be most present to awareness.

In terms of the physical connection, or ‘hold’, Dancer4 associated a sense of unification and shared experience with a front or back basket hold.

Dancer4: The fact that you’re in a closely knit, literally closely knit circle...that formation, um, tightens your experience and then you’re scooting round at mad speed you know towards the end. Um, that’s kind of a shared experience, um, altogether.

(C-4/122-126)
4.3.3 Motion factors and Efforts

The theme of ‘Motion factors and Efforts’ identifies participants’ awareness of some of the dynamics involved in realising dances.

Figure 16 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of motion factors and Efforts.

For example, Dancer2 used the words ‘vigorous’, ‘balance and poise’, ‘well-balanced’, ‘moving precisely’, ‘strength’ and ‘togetherness’:

Dancer2: I mean I do certainly have a real sense of slow dances as something that, very different from things are vigorous. I tell my people mostly that they’re actually much harder to do because of the need for balance and poise.

(C-2/16-219)

In terms of Effort elements, Dancer2’s use of the words ‘slow’ and ‘vigorous’ indicate his awareness of sustained Time versus quick Time, and, perhaps light versus strong Weight. He also spoke of
Dancer2: What that means to people’s general consciousness, the idea of being well-balanced, well-poised, in how you’re moving and moving precisely.

(C-2/220-222)

Here, Dancer2 clearly identified conscious awareness of control and precision, which, in Effort terms, relates to the concepts of bound Flow and direct Space.

Dancer5 mentioned ‘little fast steps’, ‘graceful, wide, cat-like steps’, ‘bolder in your moves’, ‘higher’ and ‘dainty’:

Dancer5: The Serbian dances tend to be full of lots of little fast steps, and those I’m not, not so keen on. They, they’re quite kind of hurried.

(C-5/147-148)

This statement clearly reflects the Effort element of quick Time. The word ‘little’ describes an awareness of the relationship between Space and Time, because the smaller the steps (the less distance they cover in any direction, up, down, side, front, or back), the faster they can be realised. Dancer5 also said:

Dancer5: I like dances from Pirin where you have those very graceful, wide cat-like steps, we call them the ‘cat dances’. And they’re almost balletic, um, and they make you feel graceful. And if you’re doing one of these little fast dances where your feet have to go really quickly but in little, really little movements, they never make me feel graceful, they make me feel like an elephant.

(C-5/149-154)

This statement suggests an awareness of how differences in the Time and Space Efforts, and possibly flow, interact to give a different ‘feel’ to different types of dances. According to the Eliznik Web Pages, the dances from the Pirin region of Bulgaria
have closer links with Yugoslav and Greek Macedonian dances than with dances from the rest of Bulgaria…often the dances begin slowly and increase in speed. The style is either sustained with a catlike feel, weight being taken onto the balls of the feet slightly behind the beat (hesitation), or is characterised by fast low movements skimming across the ground. Men's dances include balancing movements with high knee lifts, often in shoulder hold. Women's style is graceful and light.

(Eliznik, 2006)

Dancer5 also mentioned her enjoyment of the ‘men’s dances’ (dances traditionally realised by men only):

Dancer5: I also quite like the men’s dances, and we do do these quite often, I mean, even though we don’t really have any men in our, in our group. Um, where you can be a bit sort of bolder in your moves and you can lift your leg a bit higher, you don’t have to be so, you know, like little dainty all the time.

(C-5/157-161)

Describing the men's dances as ‘bolder’ suggests a greater use of strong Weight along with a greater range of movement and perhaps free Flow (less precision, less ‘dainty’) or direct Space.

Other dancers mentioned other Effort elements, especially light Weight and sustained Time.

Dancer4: There’s just something about the choreography of the steps, um, they, there’s a, there’s a slight skip to them although you wouldn’t describe the dance as a skipping dance. There’s a lightness to it, um, I suppose.

(C-4/145-147)

Dancer1: I find it also important to do slow beautiful gentle dances.

(C-1/81-82)
By describing the dances as ‘slow’ and ‘gentle’, Dancer1 associated sustained Time with light Weight, and she values this combination of Effort elements as ‘beautiful’. 35

In the interviews, participants often mentioned the concepts of rhythm and timing as foremost in awareness and a key feature of their experiences of dancing. The sub-theme ‘Timing’, which I distinguish from the Effort element of Time, captures the dancer’s complex, active and creative relationship with time. Movement analysts (Moore & Yamamoto, 2012; Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002) describe Time in terms of a continuum from sudden/quick/acceleration to sustained/slow/deceleration. Timing, by contrast, describes how the dancer responds creatively to musical time (metre and rhythm within the music), establishing and experiencing a dancerly time that allows for freedom and expression within a framework provided by the musical time and general structure (steps, phrasing, and dynamics) of the dance.

As a musician, Dancer6 expressed an understanding of the complexity of the musical time and explained this idea in terms of ‘groove’.36:

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35 This is Laban’s ‘near’ state; see section 5.2.3 for a description of the two-effort combinations known as ‘states’ (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 59).

36 Kernfeld states that ‘Connections to dance are important, and the statement that a performance has, or achieves, a groove, usually means that it somehow compels the body to move’ (Kernfeld, n.d.).
Dancer6: I think in terms of moving in the same way as playing music...When you're playing in a group or something, mostly you make the noise by the moving aspect of something in your body to make the noise. And you have to get that timed very exactly with the groove of the music for it to work. So it's all about the sensation of a muscular, a muscular, uh, contraction fitting with a certain part of the groove. So my concept of dance is more about the certain muscular contractions...Whereas I've discovered that a lot of people are more trained into the positional aspect versus the count.

(C-6/160-170)

This resonates with the writing of John Blacking, who talks about playing music 'with feeling' as a way of moving rather than some inexplicable, innate talent (1976, pp. 109-110).

Dancer6 explained a bit more about the idea of 'groove' when he said:

Dancer6: You can move the offbeat as you're playing it, or after, or put it exact time. If you put it slightly after the time, it feels more lazy, if slightly forward it, it feels, um, a bit more pushed.

(C-6/191-194)

The very good dancers are also able to determine between the leading edge and the trailing edge of the notes.

(C-6/79-80)

This means that changing the timing of the offbeat creates 'groove', which is experienced as acceleration or deceleration to which the dancers respond by adjusting their movements.

Dancer6 highlighted a difference between a spatial (positional, or 'body' aspect) versus a timing aspect of dancing, and pointed out that people approach dancing differently. Dancer6 focused his awareness on how to match his movements to the
music (a process), while other dancers, perhaps, focus more on body positions in space (a product).

He went on to say that:

Dancer6: It’s completely the opposite to somebody, somebody, say, who’s trained in ballet. Because their aim is to get a 3-D spatial movement, positions, visual scene. Whereas in musicians or folk world, you’re more interested in the, the moving to the music.

(C-6/177-180)

For Dancer6, the dancing was part and parcel of experiencing the music, and the strong connection between the two appealed to him. Other dancers also mentioned the importance of timing in terms of rhythm, although their definitions of ‘rhythm’ varied:

Dancer2: Bit difficult to make a separation of how you move in terms of speed of movement, shall we say, with um, the nature of rhythms when you’re doing some fast movements and some slow movements as a part of that.

(C-2/175-177)

In this statement, Dancer2 seems to have referred to the rhythm that guides the speed of different movements within a dance, which could be the music, the step patterns or both. Interestingly, the timing of the movements creates what I referred to previously as the ‘dancerly time’. Dancer4 described a type of ‘freedom’ within the creative, dancerly time:

Dancer4: My top favourite dance, that is actually a 5/4 rhythm but the um, there is actually some ambiguity and, and you know, freedom for you to fit the steps to the rhythm actually because of the nature of it.

(C-4/129-132)
The ‘5/4 rhythm’ referred to by Dancer4 actually refers to the musical metre, counted as 5 beats per bar. But this ‘rhythm’, as experienced, is in terms of time divisions in relation to each other, so that some time units are thought of as ‘Quick’ (Q) and others as ‘Slow’ (S), or as ‘short’ and ‘long’, regardless of the actual speed (tempo) with which the dancer makes those movements. Recreational Balkan dancers as well as Dance scholars (see, for example, Giurchescu & Bloland, 1995) tend to think of rhythm in terms of these S and Q or short-long rhythms.

For example, within a 5 beat bar, the dancer commonly divides the musical time into relative units of Q that last for 2 beats, and S that last for 3 beats, for a total of five beats (2+3, or QS; or 3+2, or SQ). This might be counted as an accented first and third beat, or first and fourth beat:

1 2 1 2 3

1 2 3 1 2

It would be difficult to constantly count out this beat while dancing. Generally, the accented downbeats—the strong, noticeable beats within a bar, indicated as ‘1’ in the previous examples—provide enough musical guidance to orient the dancer to the musical timing. I have heard dance teachers helping dancers to learn a dance by vocalising the dynamic (rhythmic) line (Sheets-Johnstone, 1979) using words like ‘RAM-pah YAH-da-da’ to indicate a 2+3 rhythm, or simply ‘RAM PA’ to indicate the accented beats.

These rhythms of ‘slow’ and ‘quick’ are related to, but not the same as, the Effort elements quick or sustained Time, because the movement within a ‘quick’ rhythm could still be approached with a sustained attitude towards Time.
What Dancer4 referred to as ‘freedom for you to fit the steps to the rhythm’ demonstrates an awareness that the dancer perceives the slow-quick rhythms and responds creatively by varying slightly the timing of the movements.

To summarise, the interview data strongly suggests that dancers were keenly aware of and responding to the music, made possible by perception of musical time and rhythm, making movements that interpreted the music by creating dancerly time.

4.3.4 Movement

The theme ‘Movement’ reflects dancers’ awareness of the way in which they use their bodies to realise a dance.

Figure 17 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of Movement.

![Figure 17: Movement and its sub-themes](image)
Step patterns are perhaps the most obvious formal element of a recreational Balkan dance. Dancers spoke of steps in terms a ‘grapevine’ ((C-1/123), ‘stamp’ (C-1/81), and ‘strong steps’ (C-3/325). Participants did not elaborate on the ‘steps’ other than to express an awareness of different types.

Some participants were also aware of what they called dance style. The term ‘style’ is difficult to define—Kaeppler says that ‘Style is one of the most slippery terms and some have advocated that we should not use the term at all’ (Kaeppler 2001, p. 50). She takes on the challenge of explaining ‘style’ by defining it as the way in which dancers’ movements realise the structure of a dance (p. 52) and concludes that

Style seems to refer to persistent patterning in ways of performing structure—from subtle qualities of energy to the use of body parts as recognised by people of a specific dance tradition. 

(Kaeppler 2001, p. 62)

This appears to fit with participants’ sense of dance style:

Dancer3: You keep as much as possible to the, as you were taught by a group teacher and you can try and teach it in a similar fashion but you appreciate that, or tell people really that there’s a spectrum of acceptable style there that as much, but it is a folk dance and there’s different, there’s, it can be as varied as any people can be varied.

(C-3/247-251)

Dancer3 was also aware of regional styles:

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38 A ‘grapevine’ is a common step in Balkan dancing. To do a grapevine to the left, cross right in front of left, step to the left side with the left foot, cross the right foot behind the left, and then step to the left side with the left foot.
Dancer3: I’d be swayed if there’s a particularly challenging rhythm, I suppose, or if it’s from a region, a favourite region like Dobrudza that’s got a, that is a favourite stylistic region, too.

(C-3/207-209)

When prompted to describe the style of this region, Dancer3 described it as

Dancer3: An earthy style that you can express, publicly, men, I would imagine, too, so, being a male I suppose it’s important that I, it’s more important, I suppose, to mention a dance like that.

(C-3/227-230)

Dancer6 spoke of his approach to realising different types of dances by imitating the style:

Dancer6: Try and work out which aspects were important in that style of dance, compared to our perception. So in different parts of the Balkans and different parts of the folk world, sometimes things are more important than they are in others.

(C-6/119-122)

For example, he noticed that posture, the ‘total body alignment along the vertical axis’ (Bartenieff with Lewis 2002) is less important when dancing Romanian-style dances:

Dancer6: The way you hold yourself in Romanian, they don’t tend to notice quite so much.

(C-6/125-126)

In some dances, dancers vocalise sounds or words:

Dancer1: Sometimes there are shoutings and calls that, um, add to the vibrancy of the dance.

(C-1/79-80)
For Dancer1, these vocalisations were another interactive formal element of the dancing experience, an element that added to the ‘vibrancy’ of the dancing experience.

Perhaps the most intriguing sub-theme within the theme of ‘Movement’ is the notion of ‘Expressive movement’. Some participants mentioned the arms and hands as particularly ‘expressive’. For example, Dancer1 spoke of the

Dancer1: Expressive arm movements that are included in Armenian.

(C-1/74-75)

Perhaps we are dancing without holding hands and you have more freedom for expression.

(C-1/111-112)

Dancer3 also characterised dances that use the arms as expressive:

Dancer3: I mentioned Dobrudza first because like many Bulgarian enthusiasts, it’s a favourite region, because of the expressiveness of the arms more than just feet.

(C-3/225-227)

These two dancers perceived arm and hand movements as more expressive than just foot movements, but the term ‘expressive’ requires further clarification. Dancer1 mentioned Armenian dances specifically—when dancers release the hand hold to free the arms and hands, they tend to use movements that showcase the flexibility and articulation of the arms. For example, in the dance Dagh Gorani mentioned by Dancer1, arm movements are sinuous and flowing, with upward and sideways movement initiated at the wrist and continuing through the elbow until the arm is just slightly, naturally curved at the end of the movement and the hand carefully placed into a specific position in space and with the palm facing in a specific direction.
What is it that these arm movements ‘express’? In the discussion presented in section 4.4.2, I address questions about the concept of ‘expression’ in more detail. Suffice it to say here that Dancer1 and Dancer3 had an awareness and a sense of the expressiveness of their movements.

4.3.5 Music

Music is a vitally important formal element of dancing for the participants in this study. For example, Dancer5 said that

Dancer5: I like the music, very much, the music is, you know, fantastic...I mean, I actually have a number of the tunes, a lot of the music on my iPod and I will listen to it just for the music, so, you know, without considering the dancing.

(C-5/24-30)

Figure 18 presents the sub-themes that support the theme of Music as a formal element that contributes to the experience of dancing.

![Figure 18: Music and its sub-themes](image)

Participants mentioned some of the sonic features and quality of the music as important to their experience of dancing to that music. Dancer3, for example, stated an awareness of the clarity and completeness of recorded music:
Dancer3: Yeah, it [music] can be important. I’ve been to recreational dances, even Balkan dances where the recorded music seems every year, they have it, seems to get worse, it’s clipped off or perhaps the quality is bad.

(C-3/306-308)

Dancer5 spoke of her awareness of the traditional instruments used to create the dance music, thereby demonstrating her musical knowledge as it relates to recreational Balkan dancing.

Dancer5: Those wonderful instruments, you know, the sound of them, the gaida\(^{39}\) and those kind of instruments.

(C-5/26-27)

Dancer6 mentioned harmony as a sonic feature that he finds noticeable and engaging:

Dancer6: The harmonising is not really quite what you expect sometimes.

(C-6/23-24)

In addition to sonic features, some dancers also focus on and enjoy what they referred to as the structure of the music. Dancer6, a musician with knowledge of the technical aspects of music and dance, characterised the difference between Bulgarian and English folk music in terms of the ‘construction’.

Dancer6: The whole construction is different in every way you can think of.

(C-6/11-12)

Dancer3 identified some of the components that comprise the musical structure when he spoke about the appeal of a simple step pattern interacting with the accompanying music to create the experience of a ‘strong’ dance.

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\(^{39}\) The gaida is a type of bagpipe found throughout Southeast Europe.
Dancer3: I know there’s a ‘Paidushko’ that we do just to a jew’s harp, jaws harp, jews harp, whichever way you want to say it, but, it’s a strong enough rhythm there and it gets a little lift when the hand drum come in and gives another level, and it’s a very strong dance with just the simplest of music.

(C-3/315-319)

Dancer5 highlighted the metrical structure as an engaging aspect of the music.

Dancer5: I play in an orchestra and we play classical music, and our conductor stands in front and he will beat a 4 or, you know, a 4 in a bar or a 3 in a bar or a 2 in a bar. But he never beats sort of 11/8ths!

(C-5/143-145)

By far, the most common musical feature that participants mentioned is rhythm. I discussed rhythm in the previous chapter as a sub-theme of ‘Aesthetic experience’, and I revisit this sub-theme in the next chapter as well. Because dancers mentioned rhythm as such an important part of their dancing experience, I examine the rhythms of each dance as part of the formal analysis in Chapter 5. As Dancer5 pointed out:

Dancer5: Some of these tunes are very intricate in their, in, in their rhythms. And they’re not regular, of course, so that you can’t actually, you can’t clap in, well you can clap but you have to do it irregularly. Um, so you can’t do a sort of regular beat.

(C-5/136-139)

4.3.6 Table of themes and sub-themes

The ‘formal’ analysis of experience identifies the formal elements of music and dancing most relevant to participants’ experiences. This process resulted in the formal themes and sub-themes, which reflect concepts from dance phenomenology and movement analysis that emerge from—rather than being imposed on—the interview data.
Table 5: Formal themes and sub-themes in alphabetical order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emegence</td>
<td>Interactive elements</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response to music</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group formation</td>
<td>Chain formation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Round formation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical connection with other dancers (hold)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effect on perception of space</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Efforts as experienced</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slow</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Expressive movement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steps</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dance style</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocalisations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sonic features</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structure of the music</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 Reflections on the analysis

In this initial, exploratory investigation into the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances, and in the spirit of IPA in which theory emerges from the data rather than being imposed on it, I purposely asked rather general and open-ended questions in order to elicit responses that reflected each participant’s particular thoughts about their experience. Some participants struggled to find the language to express their experience. When I probed participants for more details about formal
elements during the interviews, they sometimes responded with confusion and frustration. Dancer5 echoes Coros’s (1992) comments about the difficulties of trying to describe the experience of dancing:

Dancer5: It’s just something, you know it’s very hard to put into words, because it’s not a word thing. Um, so I’m trying to, trying to change the, the, the medium and trying to express it in a different way. Yeah, it’s really hard, and I’m not, I don’t usually struggle to find words! [laughs].

(C-5/197-200)

This is an issue that I address in Chapter 5, when I use my own ‘embodied competence as a dancer…as a research tool in the generation of data’ (Ravn, 2010, p. 23). Nevertheless, the use of interview data was successful in identifying formal themes, while exemplifying the challenges people face when trying to describe the link between form and experience in words.

When compiling the data presented in Table 5, I attempted to map the formal themes to the domains of experience that I used in the previous study (Chapter 3). That is, I tried to associate each theme with an intrapersonal, interpersonal, or transpersonal domain. Interestingly, the formal themes do not fit easily into that model. Instead, the formal themes seem to span the domains of experience. For example, the sub-theme ‘Dance style’ includes statements about

- personal style (intrapersonal):

  Dancer3: You keep as much as possible to the, as you were taught by a group teacher and you can try and teach it in a similar fashion but you appreciate that, or tell people really that there’s a spectrum of acceptable style there that as much, but it is a folk dance and there’s different, there’s, it can be as varied as any people can be varied.

  (C-3/247-251)
• gender style (interpersonal)

Dancer5: When we’re doing these women’s dances, that are, some of them, very old, um, in a way we’re, you know, we’re doing something that’s just for women, and I find that quite, well, empowering almost, in a way.

(C-5/20-23)

• cultural/regional style (transpersonal):

Dancer6: Which aspects were important in that style of dance, compared to our perception. So in different parts of the Balkans and different parts of the folk world, sometimes things are more important than they are in others.

(C-6/119-122)

Fraleigh (1987), for example, has already identified the intra-, inter- and trans-personal aspects of Modern, concert dance. In this study, simply recognising that the formal themes can span all three domains is a new way to describe and to understand participatory linked chain and round dancing.

4.4.2 Expressiveness and expression

In the previous chapter, I proposed the idea of a musical/dancing self that a person expresses not through, but as music and dancing. By making this important distinction, I propose an alternative, complementary view to that of dance as primarily a symbolic art or cultural artefact. When researchers approach dance only in its theatrical, presentational form, or as a cultural artefact, then dance becomes a means to some other end, be it audience engagement or the propagation or subversion of hegemonic cultural values. In such a context, a dancer might ‘express’ ideas or even the ‘universal self’ proposed by Fraleigh (1987) for consumption by an appreciative audience. But when viewed as the expression of a musical/dancing self, the word ‘expression’ changes to an indication of some profound aspect of human experience, a
link between form and being, the need to express oneself through movement in the context of a relationship with music.

In the formal analysis of experience, the sub-theme ‘Expressive movement’ supports the idea that participants express a musical/dancing self, with no intention to convey or communicate symbolic meaning, and that they feel quite strongly about expressing themselves in this way.

Dancer4: I suppose if I’m, if I’m using every part of me, and my arms, this incidentally is what’s so fantastic about Israeli dancing, I don’t know if you’ve come across, I mean, modern Israeli dancing… is that you’re using every part of your body to express yourself.

(C-4/152-156)

I’m talking about expressing myself a lot so I guess that for me is something that’s really quite important about the dancing.

(C-4/157-158)

It’s coming from within me, I don’t know how others would be perceiving it at all.

(C-4/159-160)

Dancer3 spoke of expressing himself within the musical/rhythmic framework of a dance. Dancer1 and Dancer3 also linked the idea of ‘expression’ to arm movements If what these arm movements express is the musical/dancing self (which the data suggests), then I would argue that the more a person uses their body to establish a creative relationship with musical time, the more the person expresses the musical/dancing self within the framework of a linked chain or round dance.

Looking closely at the following statement by Hoerburger in light of the findings of this study, the concept of ‘temporal art’ takes on greater significance:
In the dance, movement and music are closely interwoven. They are the visible and audible expressions of temporal art, which combine to form the two-fold art of the dance.

(Hoerburger, 1960, p. 70).

Here, movement and music are expressive of a ‘temporal art’, a creative engagement with time in which the musical/dancing self can be expressed. But the participants in this study have made it clear that expression of the musical/dancing self happens within the context of a musical/dancing community.

The relevance of the formal theme ‘Group formation’ becomes evident when considering the context of community in which the musical/dancing self finds expression, suggesting another link between form and being. Participants spoke of their experience of space, for example, in terms of the group space in which the dancing is realised and in terms of spatial relationships amongst the dancers.

Dancer2: Dancing in a close space, a close figure, a circle, a line, a spiral or whatever. Um, the space itself is restricted to that space.

(C-2/308-309)

Dancer3: If you’re attending to the dance you make sure, and there’s a nat-, if you’re holding of course, there’s a natural discipline of keeping a space between yourself and other people. But the whole, trying to keep the line neat or circles and no kinks and things like that.

(C-3/291-295)

Dancer6: You have a limited amount of local space for you, which is the space that you can do things in to the dance…The rest of it is community space because you’ve got to be as, as one with the rest of the line.

(C-6/261-267)
In his book *Improvisation in the Greek Folk Dances*\(^{40}\), Drandakis speaks of the ‘kinetic choreographic expression of a community’ (1993, p. 67). The communities that Drandakis refers to are traditional Greek communities within Greece, within which the dances follow strict and conservative social rules of kinetic expression, unlike the context of this study, in which people with no ethnic ties to a region gather together to dance. But Drandakis’s recognition of the expressive aspects of movement within a community can inform the findings presented here, in that the personal style of the dancer can at once express the self and the community through movement:

> Each member of a community can have his own personal style which characterizes him as an individual-dancer. The members of the community as a whole develop a common mean in expression, which the observer of folk dancing can recognize….I would add to this that the style of the dance is the mean kinetic dance expression of the individuals who constitute a social or ethnological group.

(Drandakis, 1993, p. 67)

Bond also describes the concept of ‘aesthetic community’ in her discussion of child engagement in dance. She describes the evidence for this aesthetic community as ‘shared sensory and aesthetic values’ that included ‘accommodation of individual differences’, ‘heightened group relatedness’, ‘celebration’ and ‘the emergence of synchronous and congruent patterns of nonverbal communication, that is, a collective style of movement’ (1994, p. 22). Bond sees some resonance with the concept of ‘communitas’ in which ‘people experience unmediated absorption in a freely chosen event’ in which personal authenticity is highly valued (p. 23).

The findings of my own thematic analysis in this study clearly situate expression of the musical/dancing self as an aesthetic experience within the context of communitas (community spirit).

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\(^{40}\) Although Drandakis’s book is self-published, I have cited it here because Drandakis is a well-known director-choreographer and an expert source on traditional Greek dance (Karras, 2000).
4.4.3 Music and rhythm

Music and rhythm are essential to participants’ experiences of dancing linked chain and round dances, providing the foundation on which the dancers realise a dance. Blacking refers to music as ‘humanly organized sound’ and highlights the importance of creative listening and ‘perception of order in sound’ to the processes involved in musical ability and musical performance:

A perception of sonic order, whether it be innate or learned, or both, must be in the mind before it emerges as music.

(Blacking, 1973, pp. 10-11)

In Blacking’s work, which includes some references to dancing, the view of ‘musicality’ as a ‘species-specific’ trait (p. 100) could—and indeed should—expand slightly to encompass a dancing/movement response to music as part of creative listening. This would also expand the study of musical processes to include the study of dancing processes, which could prove extremely fruitful in terms of advancing knowledge in both Music and in Dance Studies.

Stephanie Jordan is a dance scholar who focuses on ‘musical/choreographic relationships’ (Jordan, 1996, p. 15). Her formalist approach to analysing presentational dance—in this article, ballet works and the work of Doris Humphrey—applies methodology from musicology to deciphering and describing the formal structures and relationship of music and dancing. Jordan argues that this type of formalist analysis provides a basis for dialogue with studies of the social and cultural aspects of dance. She believes that by adapting the analytical methods used in musicology to the unique requirements of dance analysis, Dance scholars can tap into a well-established analytical tradition to supplement the less well-established tradition of dance analysis. Specifically, she points to the ‘much more thorough detailing of rhythmic theory concepts and of their interrelation’ to be found in music theory (1996, pp. 17-18).
In a later article, Jordan explores some of the psychological processes of dance and music, arguing that

The conceptual framework that has to be most compelling nowadays for analysing cross-modally or ‘choreomusically’ is an interactive one: music and dance change each other, they work on each other as much as they work on us.

(Jordan, 2011, p. 1)

Participants did not describe rhythm in detail, but simply indicated their awareness of metre and rhythm. It would be informative, in a future project, to apply Jordan’s choreomusical method to the study of the rhythms of each dance, and to attempt to associate specific rhythms with themes of experience for participatory linked chain and round dancing.

4.4.4 Summary

The analysis presented in this chapter begins to establish possible links between form and being, especially in terms of expression, musicality, and communitas. The findings reflect the experiences of participants, as reported during semi-structured interviews. But in order to investigate the relationship between form and being more fully, using dance-based terminology, theory and method, additional data about the inside experience of dancing is called for. In the next chapter, I present a personal account of my own experience, an analysis of the personal knowledge gained from embodied practice. This personal account provides additional data to complement the information obtained through interviews and interpreted by means of IPA methodology, providing an opportunity for a richer description and interpretation of the relationship between form and being in participatory linked chain and round dancing.
5 Reflecting on the association between form and being: A personal account

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, I identified five formal themes that begin to suggest links between form and being in the context of realising participatory linked chain and round dances. These themes are all based on data provided by the participants in this project. So far, the data and the resulting analyses have provided valuable insights. But to explore the formal themes and the possible links between form and being in greater depth, I needed more technical, dance-based descriptions of the formal elements of dancing identified in Chapter 4.

This required an additional source of data to provide information about *inside* experience, collected and analysed using a systematic approach that allowed for comparisons among specific dances. To obtain the data required to access this inside experience, I placed myself in the role of a project participant, using the personal knowledge and lived experience of the dances that I have gained from many years of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances from the Balkan region. This method of personal reflection on the formal elements of dancing *as experienced* enabled me to produce detailed and technical dance descriptions of specific dances which I could then analyse in more depth to identify the associations between form and being, following a hermeneutic process of description at multiple levels of understanding, resulting in an understanding of how the experience of realising each dance might reflect a way of being-in-the-world.

In this study of the relationship between form and being, based on the personal account presented in this chapter, I ask the question, ‘What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?’
An ‘inside analysis’ that complements data gathered through ethnographic methods has been used by a number of Dance scholars. For example, Thomas (2003), Ness (2004), Sklar (2006), Ravn (2010) and Batson et al. (2011) all support the inclusion of qualitative movement analysis and the importance of the knowledge gained from embodied practice in studies that describe different aspects of the experience of dancing. Thomas speaks of research in Dance as a ‘situated reflexive bodily practice’ and she commends the work of dance ethnographers—including Sklar and Ness—who have provided richer accounts of dance practices ‘by incorporating into the research arena their reflexive self-awareness as experiencing, moving and dancing culture bearers’ (2003b, pp. 77-78).

Ness suggests that a shift from observation to participation can facilitate an epistemological shift from descriptions that focus solely on ‘bodily’ features of a dance to descriptions that ‘integrate bodily and temporal, non-bodily co-presences’ (2004, p. 135). In other words, descriptions change from a focus on what a dance looks like in its ideal form to the dancer’s perspective on ‘how to’ realise the dance in all its aspects (p. 137), including the interaction of bodily movement with musical rhythm, a formal element that participants in my own project mentioned as a key feature of their experience. For the purposes of my project, such an epistemological shift from observed movement to participation is vital to identifying the links between form and being.

In this chapter, I present detailed descriptions of six dances mentioned by participants, coded and analysed using well-established descriptive/analytical methods to obtain information about dance as experienced, rather than as observed. Adapting Adshead’s (1988) guidelines for describing the components of a dance and the interrelations among those components to an inside perspective, I describe and analyse each dance in terms of movement, aural and visual components, noting the relevant structural components of a dance suggested by Giurchescu & Kröschlová (2007) and using Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), especially Effort theory, to investigate the formal
elements of specific participatory linked chain and round dances in the medium-specific language of movement, based on my own, inside experience of realising these dances.

In terms of movement analysis and Effort theory, dance as experienced can be very different from dance as observed. For example, as an observer of the dance Berati (see section 5.3.7), I might notice an overall slow progression of travel in the line of dance. As a dancer within the chain, however, I am most keenly aware of subtleties in how I progress along the line of dance, contributing to the sense of indulging in time, even controlling time, as I step and then pause, constantly moving in relation to the complex musical and dance rhythms, but sometimes progressing in space and sometimes holding my place. It is only from this inside perspective that a deep analysis of the links between form and being can be carried out.

The following sections describe in more detail how I chose specific dances for analysis, the tools I used to analyse the dances, the results of the analysis of each dance, and the key findings from this study.

5.2 Methods

To answer the question ‘What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?’ I faced three major challenges:

1. Which dances should be analysed?

2. Which of the many, interrelated formal elements of the dances should be analysed?

3. How could I use Dance Analysis and Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), with a focus on Effort theory, to explore ‘inside’ experience?

The interview transcripts provided clues to answering these questions. As I coded the transcripts in NVivo for purposes of identifying the general and formal themes of
experience described in Chapters 3 and 4, I also created nodes to capture specific dances mentioned by participants as illustrative of particular aspects of experience. I created other nodes to identify the formal elements of dancing of which the participants were most aware. It is this information—which emerges from the interview data—that informs the analysis presented in this chapter and offers the opportunity to explore the dance-based concepts and terminology that might reasonably be applied when interpreting the participants’ experiences through the lens of my own embodied practice.

The process of conducting an inside analysis involved the following stages:

1. Identify the specific dances to analyse.

2. Decide on the source for the movement material to use in the analysis of each dance. In order to analyse the selected dances from an inside perspective, I sought out opportunities to realise the dances myself, so that I could use my own kinetic and kinaesthetic knowledge to reflect on the experience.

3. Conduct a dance and movement analysis for each dance that includes a detailed description of the important formal elements, along with an Effort analysis of the qualities of movement as experienced.

4. See how the Effort elements combine to describe the dancing in terms of states and drives.

5. Reflect on my own experience of the interrelations between form and being for each dance, and for the dances generally, using the technical descriptions that resulted from the dance and movement analysis and the descriptions of experience that resulted from the Effort analysis, informed by the general and formal themes of experience identified in the first two studies of this project.
The following sections describe the details of each stage in the process of collecting and analysing data from an inside perspective.

5.2.1 Identification of the dances to analyse

Selecting dances for analysis posed a major challenge because the linked chain and round dances that recreational dancers know as ‘Balkan’ dancing comprise many different styles from many different geographical regions, making it difficult to select ‘representative’ dances that reflect the dancers’ experiences. But the participants themselves, by mentioning specific dances and dance styles in the interviews, provided a way to select the dances most relevant to their own experience, and even offered information about the dances’ formal elements—emergence, group formation, motion factors and Efforts, movement, and music—of which they were most aware (see Chapter 4 for a detailed description of the formal themes of experience that emerged from the interview data).

In keeping with the idiographic nature of IPA and its commitment to the detailed descriptions of particular experiences (as opposed to Grounded Theory, which aims for the development of more widely applicable generalisations [Smith et al., 2009, 2011]), I selected six dances, one for each participant, and analysed those dances in detail rather than attempting to synthesise a comprehensive or ‘representative’ analysis of what International Folk Dancers refer to as ‘Balkan’ dances. Interestingly, each participant mentioned dances from different regions, resulting in quite a range of dances to analyse, specifically, Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian and Romanian dances. Even within each of these categories, dances can have very different steps, rhythms and music, so the dances that I have selected are only ‘representative’ of the participants’ experiences, not of the many regions that make up the range of what recreational folk dancers consider to be ‘Balkan’ dances.

Although this study presents an analysis based on my own, inside experience of realising the selected dances, the results are informed by what participants said about
each dance and the general and formal themes that emerged from the interview data. This approach offers the possibility of linking my inside analysis to the data collected through the use of participant interviews\(^{41}\). For example, Dancer6 spoke at length about timing and musicality (Appendix C-6) and mentioned dances from the Banat region of Romania in the context of matching steps with the music. He also spoke about the general themes of Aesthetic Experience (particularly the sub-theme Listening) and Being Cognition (particularly the sub-theme Engagement). So, for Dancer6, I have analysed a dance from the Banat region of Romania in terms of the general and formal themes most relevant to his experience, which therefore informed, but did not limit, my inside analysis of this dance. This strategy keeps the inside analysis closely linked to the interview data and enables me to form a solid argument for any conclusions about the relationship between form and being, based on the experience of a specific dance for each dancer.

This approach helps to avoid over-generalising about the link between form and being. As the interview data clearly indicates, different dancers experience dancing in very different ways, some with a focus on intellectual satisfaction and complexity (Dancer4, Appendix C-4) others with a focus on emotion and energies (Dancer1, Appendix C-1), and still others focusing on communal enjoyment and bonding (Dancer3, Appendix C-3). As the seventh participant in this project, my own focus tends to be on the experience of movement and of time, and how dancing changes my sense of self within the musical/dancerly time created in the realisation of participatory linked chain and round dances.

Table 6 describes the dances selected for analysis. The table includes a column titled ‘Identified by participant as…’, which indicates the dancer’s understanding of the regional origin of the dance. This may or may not correspond to the actual physical

\(^{41}\) See Chapter 6 for a detailed discussion about integrating form and experience using different methodologies.
location of where the dance originated, but reflects the dancer’s understanding of the
cultural and regional association of a dance. For example, I have heard the dance *Arap*
described by different folk dance groups as either Macedonian or Turkish, but
Dancer2 knew this dance as Macedonian (Dancer2, (email), 2013) while recognising that

Dancer2: We tend not to know very much history of the dances, I find. Often the history that does come through is less than accurate.

(C-2/207-209)

Table 6: Dances selected for analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Dance selected for analysis</th>
<th>Identified by participant as…</th>
<th>Rationale for selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dancer1</td>
<td><em>Dagh Gorani</em> (also known as <em>Dar Gorani</em>)</td>
<td>Armenian</td>
<td>Dancer1 listed <em>Dagh Gorani</em> as a favourite dance. During the interview, she mentioned the expressive arm movements of Armenian dances generally and how they touch her deeply as she connects with the people from that region through the dancing (C-1/71-75).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancer2</td>
<td><em>Arap</em></td>
<td>Macedonian</td>
<td>Dancer2 mentioned that he remembers ‘being particularly hooked, as it were, after dancing <em>Arap</em>’ (C-2/23-24).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancer3</td>
<td><em>Gankino Horo</em></td>
<td>Bulgarian</td>
<td>Dancer3 listed this dance as a favourite and mentioned it during the interview in relation to the idea of complex musical rhythm and the way ‘you can express yourself’ (C-3/231-234) within the context of a simple dance that enables bonding and communal enjoyment within the dancing community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Dance selected for analysis</td>
<td>Identified by participant as...</td>
<td>Rationale for selection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dancer4</td>
<td><em>Jiana</em></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>Dancer4 listed <em>Jiana</em> as a favourite dance and spoke of it in terms of how the physical connection between dancers, a ‘closely knit, literally closely knit circle’ (C-4/122-123) contributes to a ‘kind of a shared experience’ (C-4/125-126).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancer5</td>
<td><em>Berati</em> (also known as <em>Beratis</em>)</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>Dancer5 described <em>Berati</em> as a dance that ‘feels like a very meaningful dance’ (C-5/256-257) and as representative of slow dances generally ‘where you have to be quite controlled in your movements’ (C-5/67-68).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancer6</td>
<td><em>Brâul bătrăn</em> <em>(Banat)</em></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>Dancer6 spoke of being very aware of the timing and of fitting dance steps to the accompanying music, especially in dances from the Banat region of Romania. During our interview, he emphasised that ‘the exactness of the rhythm is extremely important’ (C-6/33-34).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.2.2 Source of the movement material

There is no central repository of recreational Balkan dance information to provide the researcher with a standardised, notated collection of these dances. Such a collection would be invaluable as a source of data for interpretation and analysis, and for dance pedagogy. One example of this type of archive is the web site ‘Eliznik Web Pages’ (Eliznik, 2006), published by two post-graduate students who are also skilled and experienced recreational dancers. Their web site includes comprehensive descriptions of many of the dances of Southeast Europe, including some dances notated using what the authors refer to as ‘Romanotation’, which is officially known as the ‘Dance
Graphical Notation System’ developed by Theodor Vasilescu (Vasilescu & Vasilescu, n.d.).

Torp (1990) provides a comprehensive cataloguing of many European round (circular group formation) and chain (linear, semi-circular or serpentine group formation) dances based on the travelling versus non-travelling (hesitation) step patterns of each dance. Her work, which follows the recommendations of the International Council for Traditional Music, Study Group on Ethnochoreology guidelines for structural analysis, includes a number of dances recorded using Labanotation. The notations show the steps, timing and group formation, but no information about arm and head movements or subtle styling. Torp provides important, empirically-derived and systematic documentation, classification and categorisation, and she suggests that researchers might test the applicability of her method to dance structure based on patterned movement at other levels, such as arm or facial and head movements (p. 149). For purposes of this project, which focuses on the interactive elements of music and dancing, including, but not limited to, step patterns, I suggest that Torp’s categorisation and notation of dances by step pattern only offers one way to analyse movement data, within a more comprehensive analytical framework.

The use of notation is rare in my experience of recreational ‘International Folk Dancing’ (IFD), which is largely an unwritten tradition. Dances are often taught by ‘folk dancing masters’ who typically offer video and sound recordings that groups can use to remind themselves of the dances they learned during a workshop. In over twenty years’ time as a recreational folk dancer, I have yet to see a dance presented by a teacher in the form of a Laban or Benesh notation score. Instead, teachers usually provide instructions written in word form, some that explain the meaning and context of the dance, others that just describe the steps. And, unlike Torp’s (1990) work,

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42 I did not use notation as part of my analysis, because notation captures primarily the observable movement manifestations of inner experience, the ‘form’, but not as experienced.
which is based on fieldwork in the regions in which the dances originated, folk dances within the IFD community might be more directly traceable to a teacher or choreographer rather than to the traditional community in which the dances evolved.

This raises a difficult issue about ‘authenticity’ and ‘ownership’ of these dances, which requires acknowledgement. As a researcher and a folk dancer, I cannot help but feel some discomfort in the recognition that recreational dancers around the world have appropriated Balkan dances by lifting them from their traditional contexts and transplanting them into new contexts, often changing their form or simplifying them for teaching purposes, as one dance leader has done for the dance Bučimis (Participant2, personal communication, 23 May 2011).

But this ‘appropriation’ also inspires this project: Why do dances from another part of the world so captivate people with no ethnic ties to the dances and music? Does the form have some power to provide a highly-valued, but notably different, experience than the same or similar form danced in its original context? It is easy to understand why a PhD student from the Balkan region stated that she felt ‘confused’ by the fact that a white British woman felt more authentically herself while dancing a Balkan dance than when doing other activities (see Appendix C-4, lines 43-45).

In my own experience, recreational folk dancers have great respect for the cultures from which they borrow dance material. Issues of authenticity and ownership, for the purposes of this project, are now set aside. It is essential, however, to recognise the importance of clearly distinguishing the context, or ‘existences’ of the dances (and dance-music) presented for analysis. For example, Hoerburger describes the differences between how people learn dances in their first and second existences (1968, p. 31), outlining a process of second existence learning that begins with formal elements and then moves on to matters of style and a sense of the overall movement.

43 See Rice (1994) for a discussion of the appropriation of Bulgarian music and dancing.
His description supports this project’s focus on form by contrasting the learning of dance in its second existence as beginning with form, while the learning of dance in its first existence begins with the ‘general idea of the dance’ (p. 31).

Given that participatory linked chain and round dances in their second existence are often taught by ‘special dance teachers or dance leaders’ (Hoerburger, 1968, p. 68), some dance notes are available for dances currently in the repertoire of many recreational groups.44 Even so, versions of dances can vary widely amongst different groups. Over time, the overall form of a dance can ‘drift’ from the version originally taught to a group, so that a single dance might take on slight variations in content and style when danced by different recreational groups.

Recognising that the selected dances are examples of folk dance in their ‘second existence’ (Hoerburger 1968, p. 31), taught by a variety of teachers in different venues and at different times, combined with the tendency for each recreational group to tailor dances to its own participatory and presentational requirements, I verified that my kinetic knowledge and realisation45 of the dances matched as closely as possible the kinetic knowledge and realisation of the participants. To be sure I was comparing form with experience using the movement material that participants recognised as the dances they knew, I based the dance, movement and Effort analyses on the UK versions of the dances that I have danced myself here in the UK with various recreational groups. It is important to note, however, that no matter how similar my realisation of the dances might have been to that of the participants, I can

44 A search for these notes highlights the need for two future projects: 1) to comprehensively document the activities of the folk ‘dancing masters’ from the mid-20th century to the present, and 2) to create and publish an online repository of folk dances, possibly as animations, for purposes of preservation and pedagogy.

45 Once again, I use the term ‘realise’ in Kaeppler’s sense of ‘doing’ the dance (Kaeppler, 2001), to highlight the participatory nature of the dancing.
only claim to describe my own experience, informed by but not identical to theirs, and this is a limitation of using my own kinetic knowledge as the source for the movement material.46

To ensure that my kinetic knowledge was as similar as possible to that of the participants, I participated in dance events that the participants also attended, namely:

- Society for International Folk Dancing (SIFD) Summer Schools, 2002 (Durham, England) and 2010 (Swansea, Wales)

  During these summer school sessions, I danced the UK versions of the dances *Arap* and *Jiana*. Because I am aware of different versions of *Arap*, I confirmed with the participant that the version he referred to is actually the version taught at the 2010 SIFD summer school (Dancer2, (email), 2013).


  The MC for the evening was kind enough to schedule in and dance the dances *Berati* and *Gankino Horo*.

- Oxford Balkansko Oro Balkan Dance Group evenings at St Margaret’s Institute, Oxford, England on various occasions. I danced *Berati* there most recently on Thursday, 3 April 2014.

For dances that I already knew but did not have a recent opportunity to dance here in the UK, I asked the participants to confirm that I was dancing the version they knew. For *Dagh Gorani*, Dancer1 confirmed (Dancer1, (email), 2013) that the version she dances is accurately captured on her dance group’s YouTube video

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46 In section 5.4.2, I suggest a way around this limitation for future studies.
(BognorRegisIDE, 2011). Dancer6 (Dancer6 (email), 2013) also provided me with a YouTube link for a video that was compiled to show the basic form with variations of the dance type Brâul bătrân (eliznik, 2012). By attending the dance events and verifying the dances that I knew prior to this study, I ensured that the formal, movement analysis presented in this chapter is as closely tied to the dance experiences of the participants as possible.

Video recordings—either of the SIFD summer school sessions that I attended or online examples of dances provided by the participants— informs my descriptions of the ‘inner’ experience of dancing by allowing me to see more of the kinesiology involved in producing different movements. For example, in section 5.3.4, when I describe the movement of Arap as generally ‘up’, I can see on the video that this is achieved not only by a bending and straightening of the knee, but also by lifting the heel. While ‘up’ is sufficient for the description of inner experience in dancing, a fuller description of how the dance achieves ‘up’ will give readers of this thesis a better understanding of the movement.

In summary, to further explore the association between form and being, I closely analysed the formal elements of the six selected dances from an inside perspective. Having been a recreational folk dancer for almost 25 years, I used my own dance knowledge and skills as a source of movement material, dancing the selected dances and then reflecting on my experience from the near perspective, as Coros has suggested (1992). In the dance and movement analysis, therefore, I have used my own kinetic and kinaesthetic knowledge and fluency in the movement vocabulary of the selected dances, guided, in part, by what the participants said they were aware of when dancing. This strategy exemplifies the double hermeneutic in practice—as a researcher, I interpreted others’ interpretations of their experiences, informed by my own embodied participation.
5.2.3 Dance, movement and Effort analysis for each dance

Having identified the six dances for analysis and the source of movement material, the next step in the analytical process was to conduct a dance, movement and Effort analysis for each dance. Because my overall thesis project is a dance-based study in which I investigate the formal elements of dancing as they relate to experience, the dance, movement and Effort analyses are an essential part of my investigation into the possible links between form and being. It was important to use a recognised and established method of describing and interpreting the dance- and music-based data for the dances analysed, informed by the formal elements of which participants said they were most aware.

To explore this inside experience, I adapted Adshead’s (1988) guidelines to the study of my own experience. For the movement analysis, I used elements of Dance Form Analysis (Giurchescu & Kröschlová, 2007), Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) and Effort theory to systematically analyse and interpret my experience of the formal elements of dancing, both those mentioned by participants and those of which I, myself, am aware, as a dancer of participatory linked chain and round dances and as a Dance researcher.

Dance Analysis—including LMA—offers a theoretical perspective with which to interpret experience, a perspective that looks at the experience of form at many levels. For example, both Fraleigh (1987, p. 37) and Coros (1992, p. 102) describe the feature of ‘presence’ in the experience of dancing; presence, therefore, could be identified as an important aspect or emergent property of the experience of form. The experience of ‘presence’ might result from some combination of motion factors, such as the way a person intentionally uses weight and space to create movement in a dance.

In a classic work written early in the development of Dance Analysis, Adshead (now Lansdale) describes the purpose and need for this area of research within the larger
field of Dance Studies (1988b). She explains that while Dance research at the time showed depth and rigour in some ways, it lacked ‘a sound basis for making statements that reflect a deep and informed response to the dance itself so that its place in life could be more accurately judged’ (p. 6).

Adshead argues for an analytical approach to the study of dance works that includes a ‘rigorous description of the movement’ (p. 13) as well as a considered examination of the contextual factors of a particular dance. In her view, the researcher must appreciate and acknowledge that many different elements of the dance interact to create the whole, and that interpretation must begin with ‘direct engagement with the dance’ (p. 13). To this end, Adshead proposes a method of analysis for the systematic and detailed descriptions of dance as observed (Adshead, 1988c), a method that essentially consists of three levels of analysis: 1) to discern and describe the components of a dance; 2) to analyse the relationships of the components, and; 3) to interpret the meaning or significance of the dance. I outline her method here, because I believe it is applicable to the analysis of dance as experienced.

Beginning with guidelines for discerning and describing the observable components of a dance, Adshead proposes four major categories within which to group the components (pp. 22-37):

- **Movement**—‘Hence a movement is…a cluster of spatial and dynamic elements combined with a particular use of the body in action’ (p. 24).
  - Selection of particular types of movements
  - Spatial dimensions, body shape and size
  - Movement through space
  - Dynamics (tension and force)

- **Dancers**—The characteristics of the people who participate in a dance—such as their physical attributes or age or cultural/ethnic background—may be more
or less significant, depending on the context in which they realise the dance (p. 30).

- **Visual setting**—Dancing occurs in an environment with observable visual features, such as a stage versus an open-air park (p. 31).
  - Type of setting
  - Space, type of building, dance surface
  - Lighting
  - Costumes/clothing

- **Aural elements**—The sound that accompanies dancing, not necessarily music (p. 31).
  - Instrumental or vocal music
  - Singing
  - Sounds that the dancers create with their bodies (such as clapping or stamping with their feet)
  - Vocalisations that the dancers make

Although Adshead describes the *observable* components of a dance, her categories of components still provide a very useful framework within which to begin to identify some of the formal elements of dancing that contribute to experience—dancers would certainly be conscious of movement elements, other dancers, and what they see and hear while dancing. These elements might be thought of as the high-level formal elements that comprise the form of a dance as experienced.

But in Adshead’s view, it is not only the individual components that are significant in understanding a dance, but also the *interaction* of those components. She refers to the notion of ‘clusters’ as ‘the simultaneous occurrence of a number of elements’ and she points out that Preston-Dunlop (a prominent Dance scholar who has developed theory based on the work of Laban) also uses the notion of clusters (p. 32).
In her description of the second stage of dance analysis, Adshead expands on the idea of how to describe the components of a dance in relation to each other (1988d). Central to my own study is her conception of the ‘form’ of a dance as the structure and relationship of the components:

> It is relationships between components that bring about structure, hence the movement and other elements of a visual and aural nature are manipulated and put together in particular ways to create a form.

(Adshead, 1988d, p. 41)

Acknowledging that there are many ways to conceptualise structure and form in dance, she proposes a very clear model for exploring the relationships of components from several different perspectives (pp. 45-59):

- Relations according to components—This type of analysis looks at the relationships of the movements, dancers, visual and aural elements. For example, the way the dancers move in relation to the music might be important in a dance, or moving to a particular point in space might take precedence over the actual movements used to travel to that point. Adshead highlights here the importance of repetition and change to the understanding of form (p. 45).

- Relations at a point in time—Adshead suggests that ‘by freezing’ the dance at a particular moment it is possible to analyse the visual impact of sets of complexes or components as they occur’ (p. 46). This idea could be adapted to the analysis of dance as experienced, because dancers might experience a ‘dance moment’ rather than a moment frozen in time. For example, from the dancer’s perspective, a certain section of a dance might hold a particular significance based on the relations of movement, music, and physical connection to other dancers.

- Relations through time—As the dance progresses through time, ‘sets of relationships among the components produce units which develop into phrases
Torp (1990), for example, looks at phrasing in terms of the patterns of travelling and non-travelling (hesitation) steps.

- **Relations between the moment and the linear development**—A particular moment within a dance might have impact when seen as part of the overall development of the dance.

  In many traditional forms the gradual build up to a climax at the end of a piece is evidence of the importance of a single moment within the total framework.

  (Adshead, 1988d, p. 52)

  For example, in a linked chain or round dance, the final moment of a dance might be a sudden change in direction with a foot stamp accompanied by a shout.

- **Major/minor/subsidiary relations**—Adshead sees additional relationships at the level of the sets of relations themselves in terms of their relative importance and interactions within the dance: ‘At this level of analysis the complexities and permutations of possibilities produce the total web of relations’ (p. 52).

The third stage of analysis, interpreting a dance, as described by Hodgens (in Adshead, 1988), seems less relevant to my project, as it deals more with dance as observed than as experienced, and with ‘a dance’ rather than with the experience of dancing. For example, Hodgens refers to the ‘concepts through which interpretations are made’, namely, socio-cultural background, context, genre and style, and subject matter (Hodgens, 1988, p. 60). These concepts may be more or less important to the participants of this study, and more or less present in the data.

Overall, Adshead’s description of the first two stages of dance analysis provides a useful model for analysing and describing—in clear and precise language that still
reflects dance-based concepts and theory—the form of a dance as experienced by the people dancing.

Adshead describes a variety of ways to analyse the movement component of dance, including various types of movement analysis (1988). Movement analysis based on the theories of Rudolf Laban uses a specific, dance-based terminology to describe the temporal and spatial elements of dance along a continuum of values rather than in terms of absolute clock time or geometric space. This terminology is richer and more systematic than non-technical language, because description focuses on both action and intention from the dancer’s perspective, describing both the what and the how of movement (Dell, 1977, pp. 3-4). The terms ‘Effort’, ‘state’ and ‘drive’ have familiar psychological meanings, but movement analysts define these terms in a different way for the purpose of describing intentions and attitudes towards movement.

From the broader spectrum of movement analysis and the many formal elements that contribute to experience, I have chosen to focus on Laban’s conception of ‘Effort’ as developed by a number of authors (Bartenieff, I. with Lewis, D., 2002; Moore & Yamamoto, 2012; Maletic, 1987), because Effort theory reflects the intentions and experiences of the moving person. This theoretical framework not only links form with experience, but also provides an established vocabulary for describing observable ‘motion factors’ and how these relate to the person’s inner experience of movement. Bartenieff with Lewis trace the development of the word ‘Effort’ back to Laban’s use of the German word ‘antrieb’:

The attitudes toward the motion factors he called in German *antrieb*, a combination of *an* (on) and *trieb* (drive), representing the organism’s urge to make itself known. In English translation, *antrieb* has become Effort.

(Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 51)

The word ‘Effort’ implies a sense of work or of forced activity—perhaps a better way to understand the Effort elements is in terms of the ‘urge’ or ‘drive’ or ‘inclination’ (“Antrieb”, 2010, p. 335) to move, which indicates a person’s inner motivation
towards the motion factors that results in the manifestation of that motivation as movement.

Specifically, the Effort elements represent the dancer’s inner attitudes towards the ‘motion factors’ of time, space, weight and flow, in terms of how a dancer executes particular movements (the dynamics). The Effort elements, which can be thought of in terms of motivation or inclination, imply intentionality and agency of the moving person (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 51). The movement makes manifest the dancer’s intention or inner attitude towards the motion factors. For example, each person has their own characteristic attitude towards the motion factors: I can identify my friend at a distance simply by watching him walk towards me, observing his use of space, weight and time.

When dancing, a person consciously turns their attention to the motion factors, intentionally producing specific types of movements required by the dance. Perhaps someone characteristically moves in a leisurely way, strolling along in no particular hurry, thus manifesting a sustained/yielding attitude towards the time factor. (I use the term ‘manifest’ rather than ‘express’ in order not to imply some sort of purposive communication of intent.) If this person attempts to dance a very fast linked chain dance, they must change their characteristic attitude towards time and adopt a quick/resisting attitude in order to complete the steps within the timing of the music and in unison with the other dancers. In this way, dancing requires a very different and more intentional attitude towards the motion factors than the person typically demonstrates during non-dance activities. This intentional focus on the motion factors and the corresponding intentions described in terms of Effort elements is why I have chosen to use concepts from Effort theory in my analysis of form as experienced.

Bartenieff with Lewis describe the continuum of the Effort elements in terms of how a person yields to (indulges in) or resists (fights) the motion factors (2002, p. 51). They also describe the ‘characteristic qualities’ of the Effort elements in terms of attention,
intention, decision and progression (2002, p. 51), offering yet another means of interpreting Effort elements and their various combinations within a given dance.

The following table provides a synthesis of their presentation of this continuum (2002, p. 51), along with a summary of their explanations of each Effort element (pp. 53-56). I have also included here some of the Jungian language used by Laban (Maletic, 1987) which associates the Effort elements with thinking, sensing, intuiting and feeling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effort element</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Indulging /Passive</th>
<th>Fighting/ Active</th>
<th>Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>How the person interacts with the space around them.</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Attention/ Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>Also thought of as the ‘Force’ Effort, the attitude towards the impact of weight/force.</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Intention/ Sensing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>How the person uses time, not in terms of actual duration but in terms of a sense of urgency or lingering.</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
<td>Sudden</td>
<td>Decision/ Intuiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>The quality of continuity or control of movement. ‘Flow is the initiator of action’ (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 55).</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Bound</td>
<td>Progression/ Feeling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maletic’s (1987) description of Laban’s association of the Jungian model of the divisions of consciousness with the Efforts is problematic, however, and of limited applicability when interpreting inner experience. These associations between movement and consciousness seem to me somewhat arbitrary, over-simplified and in need of further investigation based on how people actually describe their experience. For example, in the study described in Chapter 4, participants spoke of keen listening
and attending to the formal features of the music, which indicates attention and thinking related to timing and sound rather than to space.

Dancer4: It actually gives me great personal satisfaction to be thinking, you know, listening, um, acutely to the music.

(C-4/70-71)

The correlation of Jung’s divisions of consciousness with the different Effort elements is, nevertheless, intriguing. Perhaps dancers apply the thinking/sensing/intuiting/feeling aspects of consciousness to the realisation and experience of dancing in a more complex way, so that a dancer might sometimes think and attend to the experience of Weight, or intuit and sense the type of Flow required for a particular movement. Because this aspect of Effort theory requires further development, for the purposes of this study, I use Effort theory for its descriptive value, rather than as a basis for making direct links between movement and modes of consciousness.

In Effort theory, combinations of Space, Time, and Weight (but not Flow) are described as ‘basic effort actions’ and are identified as follows (Newlove & Dalby, 2004, pp. 130-139):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8: Basic Effort actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[47\] Coros uses this term in her ‘word pictures’ as one of very few references to the form of Syrtos, (1992).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Effort combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flicking</td>
<td>Indirect Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sudden Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wringing</td>
<td>Indirect Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustained Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dabbing</td>
<td>Direct Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sudden Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slashing</td>
<td>Indirect Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sudden Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gliding</td>
<td>Direct Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustained Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punching</td>
<td>Direct space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sudden time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floating</td>
<td>Indirect space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustained time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light Weight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As an example, the combination of quick (sudden) Time, direct Space, and strong Weight together form the basic effort action of ‘punching’ (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 59) or ‘stamping’ (Newlove & Dalby, 2004, pp. 138). The term ‘stamp’ would be more appropriate in the context of linked chain and round dances, as the word ‘stamp’ forms part of the commonly-used movement vocabulary for teaching, learning, and describing this type of dancing.
‘States’ refer to two-effort combinations, also known as ‘incomplete efforts’ (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 59). Laban suggested that ‘Bodily actions manifesting incomplete effort participation are expressive of a variety of inner attitudes’ (Laban & Ullmann, 1971, p. 85). Laban categorised these different inner states as follows (Maletic, 1987, p. 102): 

Table 9: Description of inner states based on two-effort combinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effort elements</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Opposite State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight and Time</td>
<td>NEAR</td>
<td>Rhythmical, earthy</td>
<td>REMOTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space and Flow</td>
<td>REMOTE</td>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>NEAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space and Time</td>
<td>AWAKE</td>
<td>Alert</td>
<td>DREAMLIKE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight and Flow</td>
<td>DREAMLIKE</td>
<td>Unaware</td>
<td>AWAKE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow and Time</td>
<td>MOBILE</td>
<td>Adaptable</td>
<td>STABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space and Weight</td>
<td>STABLE</td>
<td>Steadfast</td>
<td>MOBILE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within each ‘state’, four variations are possible. For example, within the ‘Near’ state, a person might experience the following:

1. Strong Weight and quick Time
2. Strong Weight and sustained Time
3. Light Weight and quick Time
4. Light Weight and sustained Time
One difficulty in applying the concept of inner states to an Effort analysis is that Laban does not name these variations, which leaves the theory rather vague and of questionable utility:

> It is difficult to attach names to these variations of incomplete effort as they are concerned with pure movement experience and expression.  

(Laban & Ullmann, 1971, p. 86)

Effort theory also accounts for three-effort combinations known as ‘drives’. There are four named drives—one action drive and three ‘transformation’ drives—each based on a different combination of the Effort elements Weight, Space, Time and Flow. Combinations of Efforts without Flow create an ‘Action drive’. When Flow replaces Space, Weight, or Time within a combination of three effort elements, Effort theorists refer to the combination as one of three other ‘transformation drives’ (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 61):

1. **Action drive**—the Effort elements Weight, Space and Time combine to form the Basic Effort Actions described in Table 8.
2. **Transformation drives** (where Flow replaces either Weight, Space or Time)
   a. Spaceless—Passion drive
   b. Timeless—Spell drive
   c. Weightless—Vision drive

Bartenieff with Lewis state that

> By exchanging the Flow Effort for one of the Effort components of a Basic Effort Action drive, a transformation occurs that produces a profoundly different experience.


As with the concept of ‘states’, ‘each of the four drives has a potential for eight variations, which provide for thirty-two more qualities’ (Maletic, 1987, p. 103), which Laban apparently did not name. Bartenieff with Lewis explain that the Flow element intensifies the remaining two Efforts (or inner states), which vary along the usual
continuum. For example, the ‘Spaceless’ or ‘Passion’ drive, with strong Weight and quick Time, can be intensified by Flow into ‘passionate’ feelings such as occur in a heated discussion (2002, p. 61).

In the context of realising participatory linked chain and round dances, the combination of quick (sudden) Time, direct Space and bound Flow in the travelling steps of a linked chain or round dance creates less of an action quality and more a quality of mood, categorised as a ‘Vision’ or ‘Weightless’ drive, which suggests ‘mental alertness, a consciousness of precision in time and place, apart from the physical sensation of one’s weight or impact’ (p. 62).

Although Effort theory may be problematic in that it does not describe all aspects of the experience of qualities of movement, or what Sklar calls ‘vitality’ dynamics (Sklar, 2007, p. 103), the idea that these states and drives have been used to describe inner experience is intriguing in the context of this project. Because Effort theorists have developed this model of associating intention and attitude (internal factors) with movement manifestations (observable motion factors) to such a high level of sophistication, it has proved useful in describing the inside experience of movement and dancing.

The value of Effort theory in this study is its descriptive terminology rather than its explanatory precision, offering a consistent—if slightly imprecise—language for describing experience: ‘The identifying words are only approximations of the experience’ (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 61). For the purposes of this study, therefore, I used the concepts of states and drives for their descriptive power rather than for their explanatory rigour, as a starting point for interpreting my own experience of form.

Supplementing LMA and Effort theory in this study is Dance Form Analysis (as presented by members of the International Council for Traditional Music Study Group on Ethnochoreology), which was developed to support the study of traditional dance.
Dance Form Analysis offers theory and method designed to “verbalize” dance in proper choreographic terms’ (Giurcescu & Kröschlová, 2007, p. 22) using ‘structure relevant factors’ (pp. 24-25). Some of these factors—such as grouping of participants, physical connection between dancers, types of movements, dance rhythms, and congruence between the dance rhythms and the musical structure—are certainly relevant to the study of form as experienced. But the overall number and variety of features to be described by Dance Form Analysis, combined with the challenge of obtaining adequate documentation about a specific linked chain or round dance, make the task of using all aspects of Dance Form Analysis in this project not only daunting but also probably unproductive. In this study, therefore, I have included descriptions of those elements of Dance Form Analysis most relevant to experience, such as physical connection, direction of movement and musical/rhythmical characteristics of the music and movement.

Each dance description, based on my own experience of realising each dance, focuses on the most important formal elements of that dance identified by participants (as described in Chapter Four), and also makes mention of elements that stand out in my own awareness, based on my own experience while dancing and my knowledge of the tenets of dance, movement and Effort analysis. For example, in some dances, the timing most strongly affects experience. In others dances, the physical connection between dancers (the ‘hold’) creates physical forces that are uppermost in awareness. This approach provided a way to analyse the formal elements most relevant to investigating my area of enquiry (Moore & Yamamoto, 2012, p. 160), namely, the interrelations of form and being.

### 5.2.4 Reflections on the formal analysis

Having produced detailed and technical dance descriptions based on dance, movement and Effort analyses, I then reflected from a personal vantage point on the ways in which the form of each dance contributes to inside experience, and how the experience of realising each dance reflects a way of being-in-the-world.
Because the analyses and reflections are based on my own kinetic knowledge and experience of the dances described by the participants, I cannot claim that the analysis results would be the same as the results obtained if the participants were to analyse their own experiences using the same strategy and analytical techniques that I have employed. But this is true for any interpretative, reflexive study—the researcher adds a layer of interpretation as part of the ‘double hermeneutic’:

In one sense the researcher is like the participant, drawing on mental faculties they share. At the same time, the researcher is different to the participant, always engaging in second order sense-making of someone else’s experience…

(Smith & Eatough 2007, p. 36)

Relating form with being poses a particular challenge in that it is critical to recognise differences in the way that individuals might experience form, and in no way to suggest or even to hint that there might be a ‘recipe’ for creating a particular experience through some sort of ‘movement prescription’. It is the complex interrelations of formal elements as experienced by each individual (rather than specific movements) that contribute to a sense of being.

5.3 Results

5.3.1 Overview

The results section of this chapter presents the dance, movement and Effort analyses, along with my reflections on the relationship of form and being for each dance.

The main challenge in analysing each dance was to keep in mind that the analysis must focus on the dancing as experienced, not as observed. It is surprisingly easy to slip into an ‘outward in’ perspective, because the tools of movement analysis are often used for movement observation of others. In describing Coros’s inner-focused approach in Chapter 2, I pointed out as a limitation that she did not describe the formal elements of the dances Syrtos and Sousta other than to use the words ‘step’
and ‘press’ (1992). I believe that a researcher can use movement analysis techniques and language to study inner experience, as long as the researcher remembers to stay with the near perspective when reflecting on the experience of dancing, describing each dance as experienced.

The analysis of each dance begins with the detailed data that I collected for each dance as experienced, including the ‘structure relevant factors’ from Dance Form Analysis (Giurchescu & Kröschlová, 2007, pp. 24-25). This level of data collection adds precision and specificity to the general descriptions. I summarise the information in a table for each dance that includes an analysis of the formal elements, along with an Effort analysis of the qualities of movement as experienced, and the ‘states’ and ‘drives’ derived from the Effort analysis. My reflections on the interrelations of form and being—my experience of time, space and sense of self—follow each table in a separate section.

In structuring the analyses, I divided each dance into ‘phrases’ based on my inner experience and awareness of a change in the overall movement. These phrases sometimes, but not always, coincided with the musical phrasing. I looked at the dance structure as experienced rather than in terms of observable structures of step patterns, in order to identify the Effort elements for each phrase.

It would be interesting in a future study to ask participants specifically about how they experience the structure of a dance and compare their answers to a technical structural analysis of each dance using the methodology described by Torp (1990), who documented step patterns based on travelling and hesitation steps. For the purposes of this study, however, I simply acknowledge that participants have their own understanding and awareness of the structure of a dance, and that this awareness might differ for each participant.
5.3.2 Terminology

I use the following terms from movement analysis in the detailed descriptions of each dance:

- **Congruence**—the musical and dance phrasing coincide.
- **Gestural**—movement associated with or supported by part of the body (Dell, 1977, p. 79), such as a subtle foot lift.
- **Kinesphere**—the three-dimensional space around a person as far as they can reach—a person takes their kinesphere with them when they move to another location in general space (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 25).
- **Line of dance (LOD)**—the imaginary line along which the chain or circle travels, the general direction in which each dancer follows another.
- **Planes of movement**—a model of two-dimensional movement around an axis (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 31).
  - In the ‘door’ plane, movement is primarily vertical.
  - In the ‘table’ plane, movement is primarily horizontal.
  - In the ‘wheel’ plane, movement is primarily forward and backward (sagittal).

![Figure 19: Planes of movement](image)
• Postural—movement associated with or supported by the trunk (Dell, 1977, pp. 79-80)

The aural component as experienced, in all cases, is music and, in some cases, vocalisations. Musical terminology provides a good starting point for describing music as experienced, and some researchers have used terms such as 5/8 metre, asymmetric or aksak rhythm, allegro tempo and forte dynamics or volume (for example Giurchescu & Bloland, 1995 and Giurchescu & Kröschlová, 2007). While these terms might present an overall sense of the music to readers of this thesis, not all of these terms describe the music as experienced. For example, if I list the metre of the dance Berati as 8/8, that does not convey the complexity and intricacy of the sonic qualities that I experience when dancing to the music, nor does it adequately convey the keen listening and sense of timing required to dance to this piece, which has no obvious downbeat or, indeed, much of a sonic indication that there are beats at all. My experience of the music has much more to do with the phrasing of the dance steps than with the metre of the music, so 3+5+3+5 represents my experience of the music much better than 8/8, because I am aware of the different time divisions and that the total dance sequence uses 16 counts.

I therefore describe the music as experienced, the way a dancer understands it for the purpose of timing the dance steps. Sometimes, this involves a strong sense of the metre or ‘beat’ of the dance. Sometimes, this involves more of a sense of negotiation with the music to establish a dance rhythm that is sometimes congruent and sometimes non-congruent with the musical phrasing.

5.3.3 Dancer1: Dagh Gorani

The dance Dagh Gorani is one of the ‘slow beautiful gentle dances’ (Appendix C-1/82-83) with ‘expressive arm movements that are included in Armenian’ (C-1/75-76). This dance involves a number of coordinated, simultaneous movements of feet,
arms and head, with the eyes often following the path of the dancer’s moving hand or hands.

5.3.3.1 Analysis of the formal elements and Efforts

Table 10 presents a detailed analysis of this dance.
Table 10: Analysis of the data collected for the dance *Dagh Gorani*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
<th>Phrase 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group formation</td>
<td>Round</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical connection</td>
<td>The dancers are linked by their proximity to each other (arm’s length apart) and in the way they form a circle by standing in a set, relative location throughout the dance, and never straying from their position in the circle, even when the group as a whole moves forward and backward in the LOD.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(linking)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement vocabulary</td>
<td>Step (forward, backward, in and out), run, bounce, grapevine, twist, reach, gather, and bend.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction (dancer)</td>
<td>LOD while facing centre, then inward and outward from the circle’s centre</td>
<td>Inward and outward from the circle’s centre</td>
<td>Forward and backward along the circle circumference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

48 See section 5.3.2 for a definition of the term ‘line of dance (LOD)’.
### Direction (pathway)

The circle as a whole does not move location, but it does rotate in one direction and then another. The dancers who form the circle move with it very gradually, maintaining their positions relative to each other.

### Movement

Steps and arms and body all move simultaneously, eyes and head follow the path of the moving hand or hands.

- Arm movements are sinuous, successive movement along the arm with upward and downward movement initiated at the wrist and continuing through the elbow until the arm is just slightly, naturally curved at the end of the movement, either up or down.
- The arms continue to move throughout the musical phrase, very sustained time, there is no sense of urgency whatsoever.
- Very slight acceleration and deceleration of Step R and close left (touch, no weight change) gradually lift R arm, look to outstretched hand with palm facing outward, bounce, bounce (by bending and straightening the knees only, no lifting of the heel).
- Step L and close R (no weight change) bringing the arm down and then bending the elbow so that the hand crosses the body and ends with the hand pointing to the left shoulder but with palm facing inward, bounce, (Accelerated compared to the first phrase)
- Fast running steps into the centre (each dancer in their own time, but all ending in the centre by the end of count 2 of 4) - hands rise to about shoulder height by the end of count 2.
- Then, feet together, bounce twice (counts 3, 4), elbows initiate a downward movement but the hands stay with palms into the centre at about shoulder height, wrists bent so that hands

Turning to face in the LOD of the circle, clockwise, step forward R touch L to close (1, 2) and raise right arm, leading with the wrist as in previous, then left close right (3, 4) left arm rises right arm lowers, then walk backwards (RLRL) alternating right and left arms to the same count.

Step R and turn body to the right in the table plane, hands are extended straight to either side about 30 degrees and remain in place while the body turns.
steps throughout the dance.

Very little movement in the torso except for phase three which shows rotation in the table plane. The footwork (steps) add to the sense of a smooth, swaying motion which characterises the feel of the dance.

bounce. Step R bring arm up (2 counts), step L bring arm down (2 counts).

Step R into centre bringing both arms up to about shoulder level with palms both facing into the centre, L just on ball of foot to change direction on the next step, Step out on the R bringing both arms down, close L (total of four counts, RLRL).

Repeat this phrase 6 times.

are flat. Next count 1 and 2 and, downward bounces, right hand moves up towards left side of face and then sweeps downward counts 1 and 2, same but for left side counts 3, 4.

Back out of centre taking two counts per step, R hand into centre with wrist bounce and turn (1-2) to palm down then left hand (3-4), the opposite arm is extended behind the body.

Then arms crossed over chest and walk out 1-2-3-4 (RLRL).

Repeat this phrase once.

creating a twisting motion. The count is twist right (1, 2) twist left (3, 4) twist right (1, 2) twist left (3, 4).

Repeat this phrase once, then first sequence repeats until the music slows and stops

| Dancers | Women only |

49 See section 5.3.2 for a definition of the term ‘table plane’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Visual</strong></th>
<th>Depends on the number of women in the circle, I can most often see the people across from me. Because the eyes tend to follow the hand, visual contact with other dancers is not really a component of the dance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aural</strong></td>
<td>Music starts with a short introduction of a couple of notes played on one string instrument, and then the dance begins when the main melody starts. The dance music is entirely instrumental, I am mostly aware of the melody and the underlying rhythm. Sounds like a violin playing a slow melody, also sustained and controlled, with simple harmonies, then taken over by wind instruments. Then, all instruments play together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight</strong></td>
<td>Light - intention is light impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>Sustained/decelerating - decision is non-urgent, relaxed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Space</strong></td>
<td>Direct - attention is focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Efforts</td>
<td>Glide - direct, sustained, light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Near = Weight and Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Dance)</td>
<td>Adagio - slowly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Music)</td>
<td>Adagio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metre (Music)</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Dance)</td>
<td>S QQ S QQ SS QQQQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Music)</td>
<td>Even four counts (QQQQ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congruence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.3.2 Reflections on the interrelations of form and being

Movement: Dancer1 spoke of expressive arm movements that give a sense of longing for the homeland (Appendix C-1/72). She did not explain how she made the connection between arm movements and a particular emotion/context/meaning, but the arm movements in Dagh Gorani are certainly an important element of the dance. These movements are sinuous—the wrist initiates an upward movement with successive involvement of the elbow and shoulder until the hand reaches its end-point at about eye level, at which point the arm forms a relaxed curve. The dancer then reverses the movement to bring the arm back down. This type of lithe arm movement characterises the dance throughout.

The steps move the dancer sideways around the line of direction (around the circumference of the circle) and into and out of the circle’s centre. This accentuates and supports the arm movements by moving the dancer through space in the same direction as the arms move through space.

Dancers: Although this dance does not use a physical connection (hold), the dancer senses a connection with the other dancers because of the formation of the virtual circle created by the positions of the dancers in relation to each other.

Visual elements: The visual elements as experienced are primarily the dancer’s own hand and a view of the other dancers in the circle, both next to and across from the dancer. Following the hand movements with the eyes leads to a focus within the kinesphere\(^{50}\) and therefore a sense of direct space. This visual focus contributes to a sense of self-awareness, almost to the level of self-absorption.

Aural elements: The dance music is entirely instrumental, slow, repetitive and mesmerizing, increasing in volume at the beginning and decreasing at the end of the

\(^{50}\) See section 5.3.2 for a definition of ‘kinesphere’.
second dance phrase. The musical and dance phrases are congruent, contributing to an overall experience of continuity and connection in which dance and music feel part of a unified aesthetic experience.

**Effort elements:** In terms of movement dynamics, the Effort elements Time and Space are primary in my awareness when I dance *Dagh Gorani*, but this varies with each dance phrase.

- **Phrase 1:** Light Weight in the arm movements (neutral in the steps), sustained Time and direct Space create a basic effort action of gliding. Even the quicker steps feel unhurried.

  In terms of ‘being’, Time, Space and Flow contribute to an experience of self that changes as the dance progresses through time. In this first phrase, the basic Effort of gliding and the focus on direct space within the kinesphere create a sense of limitation and increased self-awareness—I am conscious of my arm position in relation to my body, and less aware of the general space around me. As a way of being-in-the-world, I am self-aware, almost self-absorbed. My interaction with others is limited to the congruence of my movements with the tempo and rhythm of the music and a general awareness of being part of a circle of dancers, although this awareness does not impinge upon my reverie.

- **Phrase 2:** Sustained Time, direct Space and bound Flow suggest the weightless, or ‘vision’ transformation drive. The involvement of Flow gives a sense of fluidity and progression\(^{51}\) alternating with a sense of precision and control in the experience of Time and Space. In this dance phrase, I *feel* that I

\(^{51}\) The terms ‘fluency’ and ‘fluid’ are Laban’s (Laban & Ullmann, 1971, p. 85), ‘progression’ is Bartenieff’s (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 61).
am binding flow in order to place my hands at a certain position in space, although an observer might notice instead the larger movements realised with free Flow, giving the observer a sense of free Flow overall. In this case, the experience of the Effort elements differs slightly from the manifestation of Efforts as observed.

In this phrase, as the drive changes from action to vision, my sense of ‘presence’ in the world lessens as the intensity of feeling increases. Formal elements create a stronger sense of self-awareness and limitation, as I consciously bind Flow to realise movement within the kinesphere. Because the movement is still limited primarily to my arms, I am aware that my being-in-the-world is confined to a limited space.

- Phrase 3: Light Weight, indirect Space and free Flow suggest another transformation drive, the timeless or ‘spell’ drive. During this dance phrase, I am aware of a fluidity of movement that does not require precise endpoints in space, but rather a general orientation based on the circle and a sense of moving to the right or to the left in relation to my kinesphere.

In the third phrase, Flow becomes free, and I move through space along the line of dance and rotate my body in the table plane. I become more self-transcendent and expressive, time loses its importance and I become aware of the presence of others in the circle and using more of my body to realise the dance.

When I dance Dagh Gorani, I am engaged primarily in the Effort elements sustained Time, direct Space, and the alternation between bound and free Flow. Slow and precise movements within the kinesphere—enabled by a group formation that emerges from a virtual connection rather than a physical one—focus my attention on my own fluid position in space-time (as described by Coros, 1992) and on a sense of progression through space-time. As a way of being-in-the-world, I move from self-
awareness in the first two phrases to expression and self-transcendence in the third phrase, moving beyond the limits of the kinesphere to experience myself as present in the world and yet free to express movement and space as part of something more than myself, as part of the virtual circle responding to sombre, measured and sedate musical rhythms and melodies.

5.3.4 Dancer2: Arap

Dancer2 spoke of Arap when he described how he first became involved in recreational Balkan dancing:

Dancer2: In particular, I remember being particularly hooked, as it were, after dancing Arap.

(Appendix C-2/23-24)

5.3.4.1 Analysis of the formal elements and Efforts

Table 11 presents a detailed analysis of this dance.
Table 11: Analysis of the data collected for the dance *Arap*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group formation</td>
<td>Open circle (chain)</td>
<td>LOD, then facing the centre (as if the circle were closed)</td>
<td>Facing the centre of the (imaginary) circle, then turn to LOD just before repeating phrase 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical connection</td>
<td>W hand hold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(linking)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement vocabulary</td>
<td>Lift, step, toe (or touch), heel, step in, step out, hop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction (dancer)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction (pathway)</td>
<td>The open circle, as a whole, progresses through the available space, in the LOD.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Balls of the feet, ‘bouncy’, the bounce is upward, in that it is achieved by lifting the heel as well as by bending and straightening the knee, there is only a feel of ‘down and forward’ on the steps that face into the centre during the second phrase. Also, the W hand hold fosters a sense of ‘up’, as do the optional hops when starting to the right: Lift R foot, step, lift L, step, lift R, step/turn to face centre, touch L toe then heel.</td>
<td>Starting to the right: Lift R foot, step, lift L, step, lift R, step/turn to face centre, touch L toe then heel.</td>
<td>Starting on left: Step in L (1), step out R (2), step L next to R (3), step R in place (and), step L in place (4), step in on R (1), out on L (2), turn to face LOD and step R (3) step L (4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal element</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Phrase 1</td>
<td>Phrase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lifts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Torso and head are ‘held’, arms relaxed but do not swing, the only significant movement is in the feet and legs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Movement is in the LOD (forward), then in towards the centre and outwards from the centre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed line of men and women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td></td>
<td>Depends on the length and curve of the chain, mostly you can see the person ahead when moving in the LOD, or people across the room when facing centre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural</td>
<td></td>
<td>The dance begins with an introduction by a gajda (Macedonian spelling of a bagpipe used throughout the Balkan region), a highly ornamented melody with no particular metre or rhythm, sounds improvised. Gradually, the melody becomes more rhythmic and other instruments join in. When the drum joins in, the music has a specific and noticeable rhythm. A male vocalist starts to sing after the introduction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td></td>
<td>Light - intention is light impact</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

264
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Sustained/decelerating - decision is non-urgent, relaxed</td>
<td>Quick/sudden/accelerating - decision is urgent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Indirect - attention is unfocused</td>
<td>Direct - attention is focused</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Bound - precision is important, controlled and careful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Efforts</td>
<td>Float - indirect, sustained, light</td>
<td>N/A (transformation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Vision (Weight is latent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Near = Weight and Time</td>
<td>Awake = Time and Space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Dance)</td>
<td>Moderato - moderately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Music)</td>
<td>Moderato - moderately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metre (Music)</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Dance)</td>
<td>SSSS SSSS (same as the four-beat count of the music) for two measures</td>
<td>SSQQS SSSS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Music)</td>
<td>Strong accent on the first beat of each measure by the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal element</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Phrase 1</td>
<td>Phrase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>drum, which generally beats QQQQQQQQ with some embellishments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congruence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.4.2 Reflections on the interrelations of form and being

Movement: *Arap* features two phrases comprised of simple steps, lifts and, optionally, hops that the dancer realises with a bouncy feel and an overall vertical bodily sense and spatial orientation of ‘up’. The sense of ‘up’ is achieved by lifting the heel to keep the weight on the balls of the feet, as well as by bending and straightening the knee and by lifting the arms to shoulder height. The only significant movement is created by actions of the feet and legs, the torso is ‘held’ still and the arms remain relaxed but do not swing.

Movement is in the line of direction (anti-clockwise), then into and out of the centre of the open circle. The dance begins with lift-steps that move the dancer along the circle. The lift happens on count 1 of the music, so the movement is ‘lift-step’ which begins the dance with the feeling of ‘up’. After three lift-steps, the dancer turns to the centre of the circle and the movements become ‘smaller’ and closer to the ground, as well as more intricately timed. There is no sense in this dance of trying to move through space to cover distance, and the movement extends only as far as the kinesphere. This dance is comfortable; it never causes me to ‘reach’ beyond my ability to remain balanced.

Dancers: In *Arap*, dancers link hands in a type of W-hold, with the arms bent slightly at the elbows, which are held just below shoulder height, and hands held slightly higher, about chin level. Both men and women typically form the single chain of dancers to create an open circle. This hold firmly connects me with the other dancers and enables me to directly sense the movement of the chain as a whole. The physical connection—with hands joined and pointing upward in relation to the elbows—contributes to a sense of being part of a whole, literally supported by others as I balance on one foot to lift the other foot, literally a shared, ‘uplifting’ aesthetic experience.
**Visual elements:** Dancers can see other dancers across from them and those to either side, although a dancer’s gaze tends to be focused in the direction of movement, first in the line of direction (forward along the circumference of the circle) and then into the centre of the open circle during phrase two. When I turn to face the centre, I become more aware of the other dancers, and my sense of verticality changes to ‘down’ as we step forward with bent knees. This is literally ‘grounding’—a change in both spatial and social relations.

**Aural elements:** After a highly ornamented introduction, more instruments gradually join in and the drum begins to beat the repetitive rhythm that sets the pace of the dance. The first dance phrase begins when the vocalist starts to sing, after 6 bars of discernible beats from the time the drum joins in the introduction (but this would only be the case with recorded music). But rather than counting the number of bars, I begin to step when I hear that the melody changes (which it does every four bars), and when I hear the singer and sense that the group begins to move. This is possible because the first movement is actually a lift, which does not require the same mental or physical preparation as a step because I can lift my foot from a standing position, but I can only step on my foot if it is already lifted.

Throughout the dance, the drum features prominently and organises the movements according to its timing. The vocals and the gajda (bagpipe) provide ornamentation and complexity, which might explain why Dancer1 and I both find this dance particularly engaging. As with many recreational Balkan dances that have vocals sung in different languages, dancers do not always know the meaning of the lyrics and do not often mention the lyrics as an important element of experience. For me, the sound of singing is pleasing and interesting, although I do not understand the words.

In *Arap*, I find myself listening to and enjoying the music while easily coordinating my movements with the musical timing. The complexity of the musical arrangement
and the simplicity of the dance steps lead to a sense of engagement with the musical
time and an overall sense of being-in-the-world in an effortless and interesting way,
without strain or intensity of thought or action.

**Effort elements:** My awareness of different combinations of Effort elements depend
on which of the two phrases I am realising when I dance *Arap*.

- **Phrase 1:** Light Weight, sustained Time and indirect Space create a basic
effort action of floating. The relaxed feel of this phrase could be due to the
Effort elements all tending toward the ‘indulging’ or ‘passive’ end of each
continuum, so that the dancer embraces rather than fights against the motion
factors. Space is indirect in the sense of generally ‘up’ and generally in the
line of direction, but there is no particular precision required in the placement
of the feet or in the height of the lift.

- **Phrase 2:** Quick/accelerating Time, Direct Space and Bound Flow suggest the
weightless, or ‘vision’ transformation drive. The involvement of Flow gives a
sense of precision and control in the experience of Time and Space—the
dancer must place the feet precisely and keep the quick movements ‘small’ in
order to fit them into the timing of the music, but the overall sense of the
musical/dancerly time is unhurried.

Alternation of dance phrases one and two represents a change from an action drive to
a transformation drive and back again. *Arap* gives me an opportunity to have the
sense of ‘floating’ along and then pausing to literally ‘ground’ myself by stepping
down towards the centre of the circle with precision and immediacy.

Dancer2 mentioned the interrelations between components that he found significant in
his experience:
Dancer2: It’s just the combination of the whole thing, the metre of the music and the rhythm, felt more transformative than other sort of things I had been used to.

(C-2/39-41)

Perhaps the combination of elements in Arap—a clear drum beat overlaid with intricate and complex melodies, both instrumental and vocal, alternating dance phrases which create a rhythm based on movement dynamics, and changes in spatial direction and focus—offers Dancer2 the type of ‘transformative’ experience that he found so compelling:

Dancer2: I was inspired by it, I loved it when I first encountered it. And I didn’t look back, really.

(C-2/9-11)

In my own experience, the formal elements of Arap contribute to a sense of ‘being cognition’, to use Maslow’s term (1999). I have no striving towards a goal, just complete satisfaction, self-acceptance and a focus on musical/dancerly time (rather than chronological time) as an aesthetic percept, with an awareness of the other dancers in relation to myself as a community that both supports and grounds each member as we share an experience of effortless enjoyment.
5.3.5 Dancer3: *Gankino Horo*

*Gankino Horo* is classified by Dancer3 as a ‘town square’ dance with an ‘easy’ step:

Dancer3: It’s a favourite on the 11/16 rhythm is a very peculiar to Bulgaria, that’s Macedonia too, to it’s uh, and the basic Gankino step is quite easy, it’s a, only three bars of music and you’re there, but you can express yourself, you can do it in a low key way or with a high energy too, so you have scope there to enjoy doing your own way and doing the mood that you are at the time.

(Appendix C-3/231-236)

The step may be ‘easy’ but the experience of dancing *Gankino Horo* is rather more complex due to the interrelations of the formal elements, especially the way that travelling steps and preparatory movements combine to create a sense of the Quick Quick Slow Quick Quick (11/16) rhythm that is congruent with the beat, but not the melody, of the music.

5.3.5.1 Analysis of the formal elements and Efforts

Table 12 presents a detailed analysis of this dance.
Table 12: Analysis of the data collected for the dance *Gankino Horo*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group formation</strong></td>
<td>Line (chain)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical connection (linking)</strong></td>
<td>Hand hold, lower ‘V’ (hands held down and slightly out to the side to form a ‘V’ with the person to either side)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Step, hop, close, bounce, lift</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direction (dancer)</strong></td>
<td>Line of dance (LOD)</td>
<td>Step (right), behind, side, close, bounce/lift</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direction (pathway)</strong></td>
<td>The group generally moves around the room in the LOD.</td>
<td>Step, step, step, hop, step</td>
<td>Step (right), behind, side, close, bounce/lift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement</strong></td>
<td>Balls of the feet, precision, verticality (my feet are always ‘under’ me, except for the travelling steps and hop), ‘bouncy’.</td>
<td>Step, step, step, hop, step</td>
<td>Step (right), behind, side, close, bounce/lift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movements are small and precise.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Torso and head are held, arms relaxed but do not swing, the only significant movement is in the feet and legs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal element</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Phrase 1</td>
<td>Phrase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement is forward and to either side, no backward movement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancers</td>
<td>Mixed line of men and women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>Depends on the length and curve of the chain, mostly I can see the person ahead when moving in the LOD, or people across the room when facing centre.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural</td>
<td>At the beginning of the dance, in the first section of the music, the dance starts on the first beat of the music, with no introduction. The melody indicates the beginning of a bar with a lower, accented note. This occurs on the first and fifth bars, and the first sequence lasts for eight bars (experienced as two repetitions of a four-bar musical phrase). The total sequence of three dance phrases, however, lasts for only three bars, and is therefore slightly incongruent with the musical phrasing. The start of each bar is rather difficult to discern, but with careful listening, I can pick out the first count of each bar. The second section starts after 8 bars. In the second</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the third section, every other musical bar starts with a high note, which makes it easier to hear where the bar begins. The other bars start with an accented low note.

The fourth section is highly ornamented but a distinctively different melody than the previous section. This section is also experienced as four bars of a two-bar musical phrase.

I can tell the difference in the different sections because of changes in melody and rhythmic accent.

The music plays through once and then repeats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Light - intention is light impact</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Time         | Quick/sudden/accelerating - decision is urgent | Quick/sudden/accelerating - decision is urgent |                                               |

<p>| Space        | Direct - attention is focused                  | Direct - attention is focused                |                                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Bound - precision is important, controlled and careful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Efforts</td>
<td>DAB - direct, sudden, light</td>
<td>N/A (transformation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note: Most significant are Weight and Time – I am more aware that Weight is light, because I need to travel some distance in the LOD on the ‘hop’ step.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Vision (Weight is latent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Near = Weight and Time</td>
<td>Mobile = Time and Flow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Dance)</td>
<td>Allegro - cheerful and quick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Music)</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metre (Music)</td>
<td>11/16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Dance)</td>
<td>QQSQQ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Music)</td>
<td>Difficult to hear! Tends to have a stronger accent on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal element</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Phrase 1</td>
<td>Phrase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the first beat of each bar</td>
<td>Yes, both tempo and rhythm, but different phrasing of the music and dancing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.5.2 Reflections on the interrelations of form and being

**Movement:** A dancer of *Gankino Horo* uses primarily their legs and feet to create a bouncy movement, with head held in place, and the torso and arms moving naturally in conjunction with the bouncing movement created by the action of the steps. The movement is characterised by lifting the heels to position the weight on the balls of the feet and a sense of verticality in the ‘up’ direction. Small, precise movements are required to fit the steps into the allotted timing of the allegro music. The arms are held down and are relaxed, swinging naturally as the dancer travels anti-clockwise in the line of direction, and then clockwise for one half of the second phrase.

During the ‘slow’ part of the QQSQQ dance rhythm, either a hop or bounces (depending on the dance phrase) divide the rhythm into smaller segments. In this way, the dancer ‘uses’ the available musical timing to alternate between postural (involving the whole body) and gestural (using only part of the body) movements, giving the dancer a sense of continuous movement and vitality even during non-travelling (hesitation) steps.

**Dancers:** Both men and women link hands in a down V-hold (hands held down and about shoulder width to either side) to form an open circle. The momentum of the dancers in hold creates a sense of being carried along with the movement of the group, making it difficult to move in the wrong direction even if a dancer forgets a step. The downward position of the hands in hold emphasises the movement of my feet and legs in my awareness, in a way, balancing the upward feel of the hops and bounces.

**Visual elements:** In the open circle, dancers can see other dancers across from them and those to either side, although a dancer’s gaze tends to be focused in the direction

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52 I use the terms ‘postural’ and ‘gestural’ as described by Dell, 1977, pp. 79-80.
of movement, first in the line of direction (forward along the circumference of the circle) and then into the centre of the open circle during the second phrase. It is through the physical connection of the hand hold and the quick, directionally focused movement that makes me most aware of the other dancers, seeing them is not as important.

**Aural elements**: The music is allegro throughout and entirely instrumental. The dance phrasing is in congruence with the 11/16 metre of the music, but the dancer must listen carefully for the start of each bar, because the melody is highly ornamented and not in congruence with the dance phrasing (the total dance sequence takes three bars, the total melodic sequence takes four bars). This incongruence contributes to a more complex and creative relationship with the musical time than in other dances. I must listen keenly to the musical tempo even while my movements are, in a sense, independent of the musical phrasing. The music makes me move quickly, but it doesn’t prescribe when each sequence of steps must start or finish. In a way, the incongruence between the musical and dance phrasing increases my self-confidence in my ability to take action within and beyond the musical framework.

**Effort elements**: When dancing *Gankino Horo*, I am most aware of quick Time and small, precise movements interspersed with light Weight during hops that carry me further along the line of direction than in the other travelling steps.

- Phrase 1: Light Weight, quick Time and direct Space create a basic effort action of dabbing. For a moment during the hop step, free Flow intensifies the feeling of light Weight. In this phrase, I have a sense of covering distance as opposed to the next sequence, which feels to be more in place. Because I am most aware in this phrase of light Weight and quick Time, the ‘Near’ state best describes my experience. Laban & Ullman equate this state with ‘presence’ (1971, p. 87), and I certainly sense my own physicality fully as I realise the vitality of this dance phrase, with its quick, bouncy and hopping movements.
that travel some distance around the line of dance, covering both vertical and horizontal space.

- Phrase 2: Quick Time, direct Space and bound Flow suggest the weightless, or ‘vision’ transformation drive. As with the dance Arap, the involvement of Flow gives a sense of precision and control as the dancer covers less distance but places the feet more precisely in position. The change from the action drive in phrase one to the transformation drive in phrase two is significant—my movement through space to cover distance in phrase one becomes a controlled, precise placement of my feet, with a noticeable shift in attention to the other dancers, whom I can both see across the open circle and sense (through the hand hold) in the change of the movement dynamics. My sense of space changes from moving myself beyond the kinesphere, present and progressing, to ‘hesitation’ (non-travelling), self-control and reserve, in preparation to once again ‘step out’ into the larger space when phrase one repeats.

Time is very slightly accelerated throughout this dance, almost imperceptibly. But time as experienced is definitely quick throughout. Again, as with the dance Arap, the alternation of dance phrases one and two represents a change from an action drive to a transformation drive and back again. But with Gankino Horo, the dancer feels a sense of continuous, fast movement and the momentum of the group driving the direction and speed. It's striking that what seems like a 'simple' dance in terms of steps is actually very complex in terms of style and timing, listening and responding creatively to the music. In this dance, I experience myself as physically present and progressing, vitally alive, with moments of self-restraint—a way of being-in-the-world in which I sense myself as constantly in motion, propelled by the speed of the music and the movements of those with whom I am connected, balanced by my own ability to act with consideration and restraint.
5.3.6 Dancer4: Jiana

Dancer4 spoke of the dance Jiana as ‘quite a simple dance’ in which dancers form a ‘closely knit circle’ in which ‘you’re scooting round at mad speed’ (Appendix C-4/122-125).

5.3.6.1 Analysis of the formal elements and Efforts

Table 13 presents a detailed analysis of this dance.
### Table 13: Analysis of the data collected for the dance *Jiana*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
<th>Phrase 3</th>
<th>Phrase 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group formation</strong></td>
<td>Small closed circle (all dancers are linked on both sides).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical connection (linking)</strong></td>
<td>Back basket hold(^{53})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Step, swivel, grapevine, stamp (whole foot), step on ball of the foot, side, close, cross, behind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direction (dancer)</strong></td>
<td>Torso faces centre, feet and hips face line of direction and swivel to face centre.</td>
<td>Facing centre, move to the right.</td>
<td>Facing centre, move to the left.</td>
<td>Facing centre, move to the left.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{53}\) For a definition of the term ‘basket hold’, see the footnote on page 76.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
<th>Phrase 3</th>
<th>Phrase 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direction (pathway)</td>
<td>Clockwise around the circumference of the circle.</td>
<td>Anti-clockwise around the circumference of the circle.</td>
<td>Clockwise around the circumference of the circle.</td>
<td>Clockwise around the circumference of the circle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Step forward on ball of foot (1) swivel on ball of right foot and step side on left foot (2), repeat 8 times (for four measures).</td>
<td>To the right: side, close, side, close (no weight, to prepare for the next step to the left); To the left: side, close, side, close (no weight); To the right: side close side close (with change of weight/support), stamp with the right foot four times (keep weight on the left foot).</td>
<td>Two grapevines to the left: R crosses over L, step side L, step R behind, step side left; then 4 step/swivel/side.</td>
<td>R cross in front on the ball of the R foot just past the left foot, step left to the side to cover more distance. The right foot pushes off so that the left foot can swing to the side as fast (distance/time) as the group can handle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancers</td>
<td>Mixed circle of men and women, typically 4 to 8.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>Visual field is generally filled with people, to the side in peripheral vision, in front</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formal element | Overall | Phrase 1 | Phrase 2 | Phrase 3 | Phrase 4
---|---|---|---|---|---
across the circle, distance away depends on the number of dancers in the circle.

**Aural**
- Section 1: 8 measures of 4/4 instrumental intro.
- Repeat sections 2 - 5 two more times for a total of three times through the dance.
- Dancers sometimes vocalise 'Ee-yip!' in time with the musical beat during phrase 4 of the dance.

**Weight**
- Neutral
- Strong - intention is assertive, I sense myself (weight)
- Neutral
- Light - intention is light impact

**Time**
- Sustained/decelerating - decision is non-urgent, relaxed
- Sustained/decelerating - decision is non-urgent, relaxed
- Sustained/decelerating - decision is non-urgent, relaxed
- Quick/sudden/accelerating - decision is urgent
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
<th>Phrase 2</th>
<th>Phrase 3</th>
<th>Phrase 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Direct - attention is focused</td>
<td>Direct - attention is focused</td>
<td>Direct - attention is focused</td>
<td>Direct - attention is focused</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>Bound - precision is important, controlled and careful</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Free - precision is unimportant</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Efforts</td>
<td>N/A (transformation)</td>
<td>PRESS - direct, sustained, strong</td>
<td>N/A (transformation)</td>
<td>DAB - direct, sudden, light</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>Vision (Weight is latent)</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Vision (Weight is latent)</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Mobile = Time and Flow</td>
<td>Stable = Space and Weight</td>
<td>Mobile = Time and Flow</td>
<td>Near = Weight and Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Dance)</td>
<td>Moderato - moderately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Music)</td>
<td>Moderato - moderately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metre (Music)</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal element</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Phrase 1</td>
<td>Phrase 2</td>
<td>Phrase 3</td>
<td>Phrase 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Dance)</td>
<td>Changes by phrase, but all very regular and</td>
<td>SSSS</td>
<td>QQ QQ QQ QQ</td>
<td>SSSS</td>
<td>QQ QQ QQ QQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evenly divided</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1-bounce-2-bounce 3-bounce 4-bounce)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>QQ QQ QQ QQ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>QQ QQ QQ QQ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SSSS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Music)</td>
<td>Even, SSSS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congruence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.6.2 Reflections on the interrelations of form and being

Movement: Jiana comprises four dance phrases, each with slightly different steps that move the dancers clockwise and anti-clockwise along the line of dance in the closed circle, while the dancers face into the centre of the circle throughout the dance. Movements are small and precise, changing in the fourth phrase to less controlled and moving each dancer a greater distance around the circumference of the circle. Because the back basket hold\textsuperscript{54} ‘locks’ the arms into position, only the feet, legs and hips move, stepping, swivelling and stamping.

Dancers: The dancers (men and women) stand very close together so that they can link hands in a back basket hold. This physical connection determines how each dancer moves through space, creating a strong sense of the circle as the source and focus of movement—I feel myself to be very much a part of a larger whole. The combined steps of the dancers create the movement of the circle, and the movement of the circle creates forces that act upon each dancer to control direction and speed.

In the fourth dance phrase, the group must come to consensus non-verbally about how fast to spin the circle, not changing the timing of when to step, but deciding how ‘big’ to step, that is, how much distance to cover when pushing off with the right foot and stepping sideways onto the left. The group can only move as fast as the slowest person in the group, which makes this dance a unifying community experience.

Because of the close physical connection between dancers, the sense of movement is at the level of the circle as a whole, as it turns in one direction and then the other, finally picking up speed in the fourth phrase and then repeating the sequence of all four phrases. This close connection with the other dancers is both limiting and freeing. In the first three dance phrases, my movements must be fairly precise and in

\textsuperscript{54} For a definition of the term ‘basket hold’, see the footnote on page 76.
the right direction in order not to disrupt the dancing of those on either side of me. I am extremely self-aware, but in the sense of my contribution to the group. In the fourth phrase, the supporting basket hold helps the group as a whole to move quickly and cover distance, as the movement creates centrifugal forces outward that I could not experience while dancing on my own. This feels like ‘flying’ round the circle. In essence, I contribute to and benefit from my (literally) close ties with the other dancers. As Dancer4 pointed out:

Dancer4: I mean obviously if you’re in some sort of basket hold, a front basket or a back basket, you are, that is a very, very unifying sort of hold.

(C-4/246-247)

**Visual elements:** In the closed circle, dancers can see other dancers across from them at a closer distance than with other types of holds. The distance between dancers across the circle depends, of course, on the number of dancers in the circle—the distance increases as the number of dancers increases. Because I always face the centre of the circle, I am always looking at other members of the group, which contributes to the sense of being part of a whole, of being in community.

**Aural elements:** The music for *Jiana* includes both instrumental and vocal sections, although Dancer4 did not mention the lyrics of this dance. I do not know what the lyrics mean, but as with *Arap*, I enjoy listening to the vocals as another melodic aspect of the music.

The music has a steady, moderato tempo and a 4/4 metre, which is very much central in my awareness because the movement rhythms of SSSS (1-2-3-4) and QQ QQ QQ QQ (1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and) are congruent with the music throughout the four dance phrases. The overall sense of the music is one of a steady and regular beat. Changes in the melody from a minor to major key and changes from vocals to instrumentals indicate the start of the next dance phrase.
In the fourth dance phrase, dancers spontaneously vocalise a high-pitched 'Eeee-yip!' in time with the music, overlaying the step rhythm with a vocal rhythm:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counts</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step rhythm</td>
<td>1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal rhythm</td>
<td>Eeee… Yip! (silent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Effort elements**: The Effort combinations in *Jiana* change slightly with each dance phrase, leading to a dynamic climax in the fourth phrase, when the movement of the circle creates a centrifugal force and speed that features in awareness as the inner state of ‘Near’—I am keenly aware of ‘flying’ with light Weight and quick Time, an enjoyable way of being-in-the-world in which I defy gravity, supported by the strength of the group as a whole.

- **Phrase 1**: Sustained Time, direct Space and bound Flow suggest the weightless, or ‘vision’ transformation drive. Bound Flow intensifies the feeling of moving through space but in a ‘small’ and controlled manner. My sense of self in this phrase is that of self-restraint and cooperation with others in the group. The swivelling movement and the fact that my torso and hips face in slightly different directions creates a felt complexity that, in combination with the music, makes this phrase interesting and enjoyable despite the limitations of how far I can travel along the line of dance.

- **Phrase 2**: Strong weight, sustained Time, and direct Space create the basic effort action of pressing. I experience Weight as ‘firm’ rather than ‘strong’, because of the sense I have of stepping firmly rather than lightly, and an overall sense of ‘down’ during this dance phrase. In this phrase, I sense myself as rooted, I am self-aware and moving under my own power rather than that of
the group, possibly because my torso and hips face centre as I step sideways, so I am balanced without needing support from the basket hold.

- Phrase 3: Sustained time, direct Space and free Flow again suggest the weightless, or ‘vision’ transformation drive as in phrase one, but in this phrase, free Flow gives a sense of movement without the strict control over placement of the steps. I need to focus my attention on moving and stepping in the right direction, but the steps that cross in front require that I swing my right leg across the front of my left foot and immediately lift and swing my left foot to the side. Nevertheless, within this phrase, I express the movement of the circle, sensing myself as a tightly connected part of the whole.

- Phrase 4: Light Weight, quick Time and direct Space create the basic effort action of dabbing, which captures the sense of my feet just touching the ground for a moment as the group moves the circle at what I perceive as ‘double-time’ in a clockwise direction. This circular movement creates a centrifugal force that pushes outwards and creates an awareness of strong Weight, or inertia, which contrasts with the sense of light Weight in the footwork.

The inner state of ‘Near’ best describes my awareness and my sense of self as physically present, an integral part of the group of dancers.

Overall, the dance Jiana fosters my sense of unity with the group and offers the experience of energies and forces that are made possible by the physical connection of a back basket hold. Alternating between the vision and action drives, the movement and dynamics of the dance give me a sense of physical presence and aesthetic enjoyment that can only happen when form encourages community. I am at once aware of my individuality and the need to support the group norms of movement—I perceive a balance between freedom and responsibility.
5.3.7 Dancer5: Berati

Dancer5 pointed out that the rhythmic 'irregularity' of recreational Balkan dance music appeals to her. The slow, strong dance Berati weaves complexity into the relationship of the dance phrases with the musical timing.

5.3.7.1 Analysis of the formal elements and Efforts

Table 14 presents a detailed analysis of this dance.
Table 14: Analysis of the data collected for the dance Berati

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group formation</td>
<td>Open circle or chain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical connection (linking)</td>
<td>W hand hold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement vocabulary</td>
<td>Step, swing, rock, hold, cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction (dancer)</td>
<td>LOD, then changes to face the centre (as though it were a circle)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction (pathway)</td>
<td>Curved, around the circumference of the open circle</td>
<td>Anti-clockwise in the LOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>This is actually a total of 16 counts, so thinking of it like a 16 count Tsamikos helps me to understand the structure of it. The movement is slow and subtle, almost like a stylised walking that stops and starts, and swings round to change direction. Overall, there is a feeling of bound flow and restraint, with a release to free flow when turning to point the toe to the centre of the circle.</td>
<td>Walking in the LOD, step right onto the R (1,2). Step forward in the LOD L (3). Touch forward R (4,5) but without weight, just placing the right foot on the floor, keeping the weight on the supporting left leg. Gradually transfer weight onto the right foot (6-and-7) with a slight rock forwards and backwards in the LOD, with bent knee, to create the 6 and 7 rhythm. Step forward in the LOD L (8). Step forward in the LOD R (9, 10). Step L (11), starting to swivel slightly on the L to turn towards the centre of the circle. Swivel on L to face the centre of what would be the circle, and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formal element | Overall | Phrase 1
---|---|---
point R toe into centre (12 13). Step backwards, still facing centre on R (14). Gradually swing left foot to the side and slowly transfer weight to the left foot (step on it) (15 16) while turning to face the LOD.
Repeat until the music ends.

**Dancers**
Mixed line of men and women

**Visual**
Depends on the length and curve of the chain, mostly you can see the person ahead when moving in the LOD, or people across the room when facing centre.

**Aural**
Instrumental only. Ornamented melody played either on clarinet or a flute or pipe, but typically clarinet on recorded music. Cymbals and drum guide the dancer to the downbeats, which happen on counts 1, 4, 9, and 12 (total of 16 counts for a music and dance sequence/phrase). To dance to the time of the music requires keen listening; both the music and movement seem to stop and start time at unexpected intervals.

**Weight**
Neutral

**Time**
Sustained/decelerating - decision is non-urgent, relaxed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Phrase 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Direct – attention is focused</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>Bound - precision is important, controlled and careful, but alternates with free flow on the swivel to face centre, then bound again to point the toe.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Efforts</td>
<td>N/A (transformation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>Vision – Weight is latent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Mobile – Time and Flow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Dance)</td>
<td>Adagio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo (Music)</td>
<td>Adagio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metre (Music)</td>
<td>3/4 5/4 3/4 5/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm (Dance)</td>
<td>SSS SS QQSS SSS SSS SS</td>
<td>Note that this rhythm is created by both steps and pauses, or what might be called travelling steps and hesitations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal element</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Phrase 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhythm (Music)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accents on 1, 4, 9 and 12, for the main accented beats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Congruence</strong></td>
<td>Yes – with the cymbals and drum, but the melody is ornamented and irregular in rhythm.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.7.2 Reflections on the interrelations of form and being

Movement: I understand the structure of this slow and fluid dance when I think of it in terms of 16-counts—the dance movements of Berati are experienced within a rhythmic framework of additive $3/4+2/4+3/4+3/4+3/4+3/4+2/4$ counts for a total of 16 counts $(3+2+3+3+3+2)$. This division of time is specific to how I experience the dance and to my own musical/dancerly expression through timing. But this dance as experienced has a felt sense of the rhythm rather than a strict sense of counting beats, because each movement flows into the next without a distinct demarcation of the beat. Dancer3, who led this dance when I danced it here in the UK, told me that he doesn’t count this rhythm at all; he just feels it (personal communication, 3 April 2014).

Within the rhythmic framework, the movement is slow and lyrical, with noticeable pauses and hesitation (in-place) movements used throughout, giving a sense of stylised walking. Standing on one or the other supporting leg for much of the dance, I also have a keen awareness of balance and verticality.

Dancers move primarily anti-clockwise in the line of dance, turning to face into the centre, and then turning back to face the line of dance again. Movement happens primarily within the kinesphere, and I do not feel prompted to cover distance in the travelling steps. The movement is inward-focused—observers might not even notice some of the subtler rocking motions that create the rhythm that I experience through movement.

Dancers: Berati is known as a men’s dance, but in the context of recreational Balkan dancing, men and women dance together in an open circle, linking hands in a W-hold (with elbows down, hands up at shoulder height). Because a W-hold does not provide much support, I must support my own weight, which also means that I can move

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55 See section 3.3.3.1.5 for a discussion of timing as a theme of general experience.
freely within my kinesphere. In contrast to the previous dance, Jiana, with its close physical links between dancers, I am much less aware of and focused on the other dancers when I realise Berati. Instead, I experience a self-actualisation in which I feel myself to be in an easy-going, unhurried relationship with the music, the other dancers and the world at large.

**Visual elements:** The dancer’s view depends on the length and curve of the open circle, but the dancer mainly sees the people ahead when moving in the line of direction, or people across the room when facing centre.

**Aural elements:** Berati gives me an intriguing sense of dancing not to the music, but rather with the music, which is instrumental only with no vocals. The clarinet plays a highly ornamented melody, with cymbals and drum cueing the downbeats, which happen on counts 1, 4, 9, and 12. The overall sense of the music is adagio.

Dancing with the timing of the music requires keen listening, because both the music and movement flow continuously from one movement and count into another. Indeed, the melody is almost free-form, anchored by the cymbals and drum, creating an extraordinary sense of time in which it is easy to get ‘lost’—I feel myself to be in a world transformed such that time has no urgency, no perceivable regularity and, therefore, no predictable end.

**Effort elements:** The primary Effort elements experienced in Berati are Time, Weight and alternating Flow. Bound Flow intensifies the feeling of moving with control and balance, while moments of free Flow during the leg swing to change direction give a sense of fluidity and ease of motion. There is definitely a sense of indulging in time, and the alternations with the quicker steps are relaxed and unhurried.

Rhythm and timing in this dance contribute to my sense of time. As I dance, I seem to control time, stopping the forward movement (travelling in the line of dance) to hold
in place, before stepping on the alternate foot to take a walking step, which I then hold again in place before rocking gently from one foot to another in place. This creates the dance rhythm, which is congruent with the rhythm of the music.

There is only one phrase in this dance, which is best described in terms of the ‘vision’ transformation drive. Unlike all of the other dances analysed in this study, *Berati* has no action drive. In terms of Adshead’s web of relations through time, the Effort elements in *Berati* interact to create what Dancer5 refers to as ‘very meaningful dance’ (Appendix C-5/257). Perhaps the complex combinations of Effort elements in *Berati* prompt Dancer5 to say that

Dancer5: Some of the slower dances um, where you are having to be quite controlled in your movements, um, and especially where the music is kind of mournful…they’re very, kind of, meditative dances, um, so, to me, they do feel like a sort of moving meditation.

(C-5/67-75)

Like Dancer5, I also experience the ‘meditative’ sense of this dance. Because Weight is latent—my sense of the impact of my physical presence is neither light nor strong—I experience myself traversing a fundamentally different time and space than that of everyday life.

5.3.8  **Dancer6: Brâul bătrân (Banat)**

According to Dancer6, who has studied the dances of Romania extensively, dances from the Banat region require an exact listening in order to match the timing of the steps with the timing of the music (Appendix C-6/126-127).

5.3.8.1  **Analysis of the formal elements and Efforts**

Table 15 presents a detailed analysis of this dance.
Table 15: Analysis of the data collected for the dance type Brăul bătrân (Banat)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal element</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group formation</td>
<td>Chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical connection</td>
<td>Shoulder hold&lt;sup&gt;56&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(linking)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement vocabulary</td>
<td>Step, leap, hop, lift, bounce, point, touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction (dancer)</td>
<td>Clockwise and anti-clockwise in the LOD, into the centre and out of the centre (as if the chain were a circle).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction (pathway)</td>
<td>The leader (at the far right end) can move the chain around the general space in any direction, and can create serpentine and curved pathways. Overall, the chain moves steadily to the right with some changes in direction to the left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>The step can vary, but my own basic step is L(1) R (2) L(and), R LR, L R, L RL, then repeat on the right foot—but there are variations that the leader can initiate. Timing depends on the variations, sometimes three steps within a 2-beat measure (1and 2), also, time is sub-divided further with foot twists or lifts or other styling applied to the footwork, bounces, etc. Very fast, small steps throughout, with acceleration from fast to faster, with changes in direction, you must be paying attention to realise this dance! There are travelling steps and hesitation steps used, but none of the steps really cover much distance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancers</td>
<td>Mixed line of men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>Depends on the length and curve of the chain, mostly you can see the person ahead when moving in the LOD, or people across the room when facing centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>56</sup> The dancer’s right hand rests on or grasps the shoulder of the dancer immediately to their right, and the dancer’s left hand rests on or grasps the shoulder of the dancer immediately to their left.
### Formal element | Overall
--- | ---
**Aural** | The music varies in melody and somewhat in tempo. Regardless of which song is used, there is a strong accent on the first beat of each measure.

**Weight** | Neutral

**Time** | Quick/sudden/accelerating - decision is urgent

**Space** | Direct - attention is focused

**Flow** | Bound - precision is important, controlled and careful

**Basic Efforts** | N/A (transformation), perhaps alternates with ‘dab’ when Weight is light

**Drive** | Vision - Weight is latent

**State** | Mobile = Time and Flow

**Tempo (Dance)** | Allegro – cheerful and quickly

**Tempo (Music)** | Allegro

**Metre (Music)** | 2/4

**Rhythm (Dance)** | SQQ SQQ SS SQQ (the variation that I tend to do)

**Rhythm (Music)** | QQ QQ

**Congruence** | Yes
5.3.8.2 Reflections on the interrelations of form and being

Movement: The movements of Brâul bătrân consist of small, precise steps with ankle rotations, lifts and small bounces that provide styling and dynamics. Brâul bătrân is actually more of a category or ‘type’ of linked chain dance than ‘a dance’, per se (Giurchescu & Bloland, 1995, p. 185), so the movements can change depending on which variation the dancers choose to realise at any given point in the dance. Regardless of the variation, movements can be characterised as subtle and understated, although this can vary with different dancers. The small, precise movements convey a constant level of energy through the intricacy of the styling and the changes in the timing—a dancer can divide the musical metre almost infinitely by the use of subtle movements such as bending the ankle to point the toe up or lifting the foot barely off the ground.

Dancers: Brâul bătrân is known as a men’s dance, but in the context of recreational Balkan dancing, men and women dance together in a chain or in an open circle, either using the traditional shoulder hold or linking hands in a W-hold. The shoulder hold encourages all dancers to move in the same direction at the same time, regardless of the step variations.

The shoulder hold fosters a strong sense of cohesion with the other dancers in the chain, while limiting ‘self’ expression to variations in the footwork that comprise the styling of the dance for each dancer. But individual variation is also limited in that I must not adversely affect the overall movement of the group—if the chain is stepping to the left, my footwork variations must not cause me to tread on my neighbour. Also, I must ‘carry my own weight’ so that I do not burden my neighbours by resting on their shoulders. This dance is primarily social in nature, and I sense myself primarily as a member of the linked chain, controlled and steady in my movements, and as a way of being-in-the-world.
Visual elements: The dancer’s view depends on the length and curve of the chain or open circle, but the dancer mainly sees the people ahead when moving in the line of direction, or people across the room when facing centre. The leader can direct the chain into intricate, serpentine patterns that bring me face-to-face with my fellow dancers as we pass each other in close proximity, moving in the line of dance.

Aural elements: As with variations in the movements, the musical accompaniment for Brăul bătrân can differ. Most tunes, however, have a strong 2/4 character, which, as experienced, is more of a 4/8 metre in that the dancer clearly hears the off-beats (‘and’) in the ‘1 and 2 and’ (QQQQ) time divisions. This is critically important, because the step variations (which include movements other than steps, such as lifts) use any and all combinations of the 4 main counts:

- Three movements per bar to a count of S Q Q
- Three movements per bar to a count of Q S Q
- Three movements per bar to a count of Q Q S
- Two movements per bar to a count of S S
- Four movements per bar to a count of Q Q Q Q

Dancer6 talked about his awareness of matching movement with the music at a very meticulous level:

Dancer6: There’s a rhythm you’ve got to adhere to, which doesn’t only include the steps, you have to add in how long you wait before you lift your foot.

(Appendix C-6/143-145)

The musical tempo varies from allegro to presto, with small movements required to fit them into the available timing.

Effort elements: In dancing Brăul bătrân, the movement seems to go from fast to faster, giving a real sense of quick/accelerated Time. The Effort elements are fairly
constant throughout the different variations of movement patterns. Quick Time, direct Space and bound Flow suggest the weightless, or ‘vision’ transformation drive. Bound Flow intensifies the feeling of contained energy that spends itself in very quick movements and in the variety of steps and styling.

In this dance, I am most aware of the Effort combination of quick Time and predominantly bound Flow, because I must fit precise movements into the quick tempo of the dance music. Laban described this incomplete effort as ‘Mobile’, ‘that is adaptability which may be…abruptly changing’ (Laban & Ullmann, 1971, p. 87). In the case of Brăul bătrân as a dance category, this description seems to fit the ever-changing and highly-nuanced dance movements.

My sense of self in this dance is that I must ‘fit in’, both with the quick musical timing and with the movement of the linked chain. By ‘fitting in’, however, I experience a degree of individuality in the choice of my step variations balanced by an overall sense of connection and well-being. There is a shared joy in moving together with the group.

5.4 Discussion

The following sections provide a response to the third research question, ‘What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?’

5.4.1 Key findings

This section presents a summary of how the formal elements of the six specific participatory linked chain and round dances interact to contribute to experience, and how the experience of those formal elements relates to a sense of ‘being’. Table 16 shows a comparison of the main features of form and being for each dance analysed.
Table 16: Summary of the analyses of and reflections on each dance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dance</th>
<th>Formal elements uppermost in awareness</th>
<th>Effort elements uppermost in awareness</th>
<th>Patterns of states and drives</th>
<th>Relationship between form and being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dagh Gorani</td>
<td>Arm movements</td>
<td>Direct Space</td>
<td>Near/Awake/Dreamlike</td>
<td>Self-awareness, limitation, changing to self-expression and self-transcendence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eyes focus on my own hands, my head follows the movement of my hands</td>
<td>Sustained Time</td>
<td>Action/Vision/Spell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sombre and sedate melody and rhythms</td>
<td>Alternation between bound and free Flow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Near/Awake</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Light and neutral</td>
<td>Self as part of a whole, enjoying a shared, ‘uplifting’ aesthetic experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>Being-in-the-world in an easy-going, enjoyable way, through engagement with the musical/dancerly time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Change from neutral to bound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Near/Awake</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Action/Vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arap</td>
<td>Verticality and a feeling of ‘up’ created by lifts, bounces and posture (held torso)</td>
<td>Light and neutral Weight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical connection (W-hold)</td>
<td>Change from neutral to bound Flow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rhythm that I can hear from the drum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gankino Horo</td>
<td>Rhythm of the dance</td>
<td>Quick Time</td>
<td>Near/Mobile</td>
<td>Covering distance, moving through space, a sense of vitality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rhythm of the music</td>
<td>Direct Space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical connection (V-hold)</td>
<td>Change from neutral to Bound Flow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incongruence of the dance and musical phrasing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Formal elements uppermost in awareness</td>
<td>Effort elements uppermost in awareness</td>
<td>Patterns of states and drives</td>
<td>Relationship between form and being</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jiana</td>
<td>Physical connection (back basket hold)</td>
<td>Sustained Time changing to quick</td>
<td>Mobile/ Stable/ Mobile/Near</td>
<td>Self as part of a larger whole, a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speed of the fourth dance phrase</td>
<td>Time in the fourth phrase</td>
<td>Vision/Action/ Vision/Action</td>
<td>unified community, both limited</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Congruence of the music and dance</td>
<td>Direct Space</td>
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<td>by the group and enabled by the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>phrasing</td>
<td>Changes of Flow, from bound</td>
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<td>group to experience ‘flying’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>through neutral to Free and</td>
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<td>Self-restraint and cooperation are</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>back to neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>key features of being-in-the-world</td>
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<td>for this dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berati</td>
<td>Alternation of travelling and</td>
<td>Sustained Time</td>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>The self is inward-focused,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hesitation steps</td>
<td>Bound Flow with momentary changes</td>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>starting and stopping time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Musical rhythms and melodies</td>
<td>to free Flow</td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-actualisation, an easy-going</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dance rhythms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>way of being-in-the-world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brâul bătrân (Banat)</td>
<td>Small and precise footwork</td>
<td>Quick Time</td>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>Sense of cohesion with other</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical connection (shoulder hold)</td>
<td>Direct Space</td>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>dancers, ‘self-expression’ is</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Timing of my steps within the musical</td>
<td>Bound Flow</td>
<td></td>
<td>limited</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>phrasing</td>
<td></td>
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<td>This is a very social way of</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This summary demonstrates a strong connection between form and being in participatory linked chain and round dances. The findings indicate that different dances can contribute to different ways of being-in-the-world, and that a sense of self can arise as an emergent property of the interaction of formal elements in the experience of dancing.
5.4.2 Strengths and limitations of a personal account of experience

A personal account of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances results in detailed descriptions and analyses that suggest a strong relationship between form and being, a relationship that is revealed by exploring experience from an *inside* perspective. Adshead’s approach (1988c and 1988d), adapted for describing the components and structure of a dance as experienced, provided a clear framework for describing the formal components of each dance. Effort theory was useful in describing the experiences of different dances using a consistent terminology to convey the dynamics of movement.

Effort theory was somewhat limited, however, in its explanatory power. One problem in applying Effort theory is that a single state or drive is used to describe experience on both ends of a continuum. For example, the dances *Berati* and *Brâul bâtrân* (*Banat*) both have the same state of ‘Mobile’ and the same drive of ‘Vision’ but are experienced very differently in terms of being (see Table 16).

Another problematic area is the idea that ‘inner states’ are expressed when dancing linked chain and round dances, because all of the dancers are realising the same movements with the same dynamic intentions, albeit with individual variation⁵⁷ in the realisation of those movements and dynamics. Do all dancers experience the same ‘inner states’ by realising the same movements and dynamics? This would be a difficult argument to support. I would argue instead that when realising a particular dance, dancers experience the same combination of Effort elements, but each in a unique way.

Effort theory needs further development. Despite some of its limitations, however, Effort theory was invaluable to this study in providing a consistent language for describing the experience of movement, with the added caveat that, when music is

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⁵⁷ This could also be called ‘interpersonal variation’ (Kaeppler, 1999, p. 21).
part of the dancing experience, researchers must grant due importance to the dancer’s creative interaction with music.

Overall, the dance, movement and Effort analyses result in a rich description that shows how each dance offers different qualities and types of experiences. For example, in the dance *Jiana*, the physical connection between dancers (the back basket hold) creates a sense of unified movement, which Dancer4 described as ‘a very pleasant harmonious sharing at-oneness’ (Appendix C-4/240). By contrast, the dance *Berati*, with its sense of sustained time and rhythmic alternation of free and bound Flow, seems to Dancer5 like a ‘moving meditation’ (Appendix C-5/74-75). The key point is that recreational Balkan dances cannot be easily dismissed as merely ‘social’ dances or analysed only for purposes of categorisation by step pattern and other structural features—these dances offer people a far more important life experience than might be immediately apparent.

The results of this study demonstrate the value of maintaining an ‘inside’ perspective in analysing the formal elements of dancing. Coros, in her phenomenological study of the experience of dancing a Greek linked chain dance (1992), did not describe the formal elements of dancing for fear of losing the sense of the ‘inside’ perspective. By contrast, I specifically analysed these formal elements, describing the dances that participants spoke of in detail based on my own experience of realising those dances. As Ness argues, an epistemological shift from observation to participation can change the resulting description and interpretation of a dance practice (2004, p. 135). In this study, description and interpretation include the experience of the dynamics of movement and the contributions of movement and music to a sense of self and being-in-the-world.

It is important to clearly state that my experience cannot be generalised to the experience of others. This study—a personal account—provides access to ‘inside’ experience by including the researcher as a participant who can provide an additional
source of data to that collected from the six other participants. In Chapter 6, I discuss how the use of different methodologies and sources of data can illuminate experience, but only in the specific, idiographic context within which participants share the experience of realising participatory linked chain and round dances.

In order to describe and analyse the dances as experienced using the terminology of Effort theory, I relied on my own dancing experience to access the ‘inner’ perspective of the dancing person. In a future study, the analysis of the Efforts as experienced could, perhaps, be made more rigorous. I suggest that the following methods of investigation could strengthen the dance analysis in a future study:

1. Conduct ‘live’, in-person interviews, possibly video-recorded, to capture the non-verbal content being expressed as each participant describes their experience.
2. Participate in dance events along with the participants, and speak with them in situ about their experience.
3. Distribute and collect questionnaires that ask specific questions about specific dances, making sure to ‘translate’ the questions from Effort terms so that people know how to answer. For example, one question might be ‘When I dance <dance_name>, I am most aware of 1) the timing of my steps with the music, 2) where my feet/arms are, 3) my body position (for example, upright or leaning forwards or backwards), 4) where in my body there is movement, 5) how much force or energy I am using, 6) how controlled or free my movements are.’
4. Ask more specific questions about the music and movement for specific dances.

The formulation of these additional methods and questions is only possible because of this initial study, now that I have seen how people verbalise their experience, identified the formal elements uppermost in their awareness, and assessed the range of
specific dances that they know and can discuss, and in what terms they can discuss the
dances. Despite having suggested possible improvements to the Effort analysis, I
maintain that the methods employed for this study do indeed help to answer the third
research question: ‘What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal
about the interrelations of form and being?’

Perhaps one of the most important contributions to the advancement of knowledge in
Dance Studies is the description of the movement dynamics of six popular ‘Balkan’
dances, offering not just the step patterns and structure, but a fuller description of the
experience of dancing linked chain and round dances, each dance with its own unique
use of time, timing, space and Efforts. This highlights the range of variation within
the category known to recreational dancers as ‘Balkan’, and also acknowledges and
respects this type of dancing for its more profound effects on how people achieve
different ways of being-in-the-world.
6 The relationship between form and being: Integrating experience and form using different methodologies

6.1 Introduction

To explore the relationship between form and being in the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances, and to analyse, describe and interpret this complex and multi-faceted relationship, I have developed an interdisciplinary methodology that uses different types and sources of data to answer my specific research questions. Dance researchers Bond & Stinson support such a methodology, pointing out that ‘multimodal approaches incorporating different forms of data can provide a range of perspectives on the same phenomenon or event’ (2000-2001, p. 53). By using a multi-modal approach, I have gained access to information about participants’ experiences (including my own) and to detailed descriptions of the formal elements of selected dances.

In Chapters 3, 4, and 5, I presented three studies that explore the relationship between form and being using different sources of data and analytical methods, based on the accounts given by participants (including myself) who realise participatory linked chain and round dances from the Balkan region. The first two studies are IPA studies in which the general and formal themes of experience emerge from data obtained by means of semi-structured interviews. The third study explores the inside experience of the formal elements of specific dances, based on a personal account of my own experience. In this chapter, I synthesise the results of these studies in order to answer my fourth research question, ‘What can be discovered about the relationship of form and being by integrating data that is collected and analysed using different methodologies?’
6.2 Methods

Morris mentions a methodological divide within the field of Dance Studies, a divide that positions formalist and interdisciplinary methodologies (such as cultural theory) in an adversarial stance (1996, pp. 3-4). As a Dance researcher, I stand firmly with those formalist scholars who believe in featuring the dancing itself, and I agree with Jordan (1996) that formalist methods can combine with interdisciplinary approaches to provide a richer description and deeper analysis of dance. This position calls for a dance analysis that accounts for the formal elements that comprise linked chain and round dancing. I have provided this by using Adshead’s (1988) framework for describing the components of a dance and the relations between those components, using the systematic language of Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) and Effort theory to describe, from an inside perspective, the formal elements and dynamics of specific dances. In this way, my approach combines formalist methods that draw on Dance, Movement and Effort analyses with theory and method from Phenomenology and Psychology.

My interdisciplinary, multimodal approach involved generating the following three types of data:

1. Data obtained from participants’ verbal accounts of their general experience when realising Balkan participatory linked chain and round dances: These verbal accounts took the form of semi-structured interviews with participants. I analysed the transcripts using an interpretative framework based on the guidelines of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which resulted in seven overall themes of general experience and a number of related sub-themes.

2. Data obtained from participants’ verbal accounts of how the formal elements of Balkan dances contribute to their experience of time, space and sense of self when dancing: For this data, I performed an analysis on the same interview
transcripts, but focused on the formal themes of experience that emerged from
the interview data. Remaining true to the principles of IPA required that the
themes emerge from the data and remain closely tied to it. The resulting five
themes, therefore, are named in a way that reflects the content of the
interviews rather than a pre-conceived idea about what dance-based themes
might be. But concepts such as ‘presence’ and a sense of being ‘concrete and
tangible’ (Coros, 1992) were still useful in the double hermeneutic of
interpreting the participants’ experiences.

3. Data obtained for specific dances that participants mentioned, analysed from
the inside perspective using a combination of Dance, movement and Effort
analyses: In this investigation, I analysed each dance in terms of Adshead’s
clusters of elements, as relevant to experience, using Laban Movement
Analysis (LMA) to describe movement in detail, especially the dynamics of
movement as outlined by Effort theory and focusing on the intentional
attention to the motion factors that dancing requires. I selected dances that are
representative of the formal themes that emerged from the interview data,
rather than attempting to describe dances that are ‘representative’ of the entire
gene of linked chain and round dances, or even ‘Balkan’ dances, which have
formal elements that vary greatly from one region to another. I then described
the interrelations of form and being for these dances by reflecting on my own
experience of realising these dances.

Synthesising different types of data into a coherent descriptive/interpretative
theoretical model required the following stages of analysis:

1. Identify the relationships between the general and formal themes and sub-
themes from the first two (IPA) studies. When I initially coded the interview
transcripts using NVivo 9, I used a feature that enabled me to code the associations between nodes, which resulted in a complex view of the interrelations between the general and formal themes. To confirm these relationships at the stage of integrating the data, I also did a close re-reading of the interview transcripts to discover how the formal themes of experience related to the general themes of experience, as reported by the participants.

2. Integrate the results of the IPA studies with the detailed dance descriptions and my personal account of the relations between form and being for specific dances. In this stage of the analytical process, the relations between form and being—time, space and sense of self—were based on my own embodied practice of realising participatory linked chain and round dances. To tie my personal experience to that of the other participants, I related my sense of being for each dance to the overarching general and formal themes of experience that emerged from the analyses of participant accounts. In this way, I could provide a more in-depth account of experience, informed not only by third-person description, but also by first-person kinaesthetic knowledge. This approach, like that of Ravn (2010), has more rigour than first-person only phenomenological studies, and results in a description that respects and acknowledges the intersubjectivity of both dancing and research.

These stages of analysis and integration, which exemplify the hermeneutic circle in action, resulted in the development of a model that describes and interprets the different types of data in terms of the overall relations between form and being when realising participatory linked chain and round dances. Each of the three analyses presented in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 informs the overall findings, so that the final model

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58 See section 3.2.3.1 for a description of the NVivo 9 software application and how I used it as a tool for data analysis.

59 For an explanation of the concept of the hermeneutic circle, see page 115.
presented in section 6.3.3 represents a higher-level synthesis of the IPA and formal analyses, based on an iterative process of analysis and interpretation that reflects an evolving understanding of how the data fits together at different levels.

6.3 Results

The results presented in this section reflect the hermeneutic, iterative process used to integrate data from the two IPA studies and from my formal analysis of specific dances and reflections on my sense of being for each dance. First, I bring together the tables of general and formal themes, highlighting the relationships between them. Then, I construct a descriptive/interpretative model that builds on all of the analyses to reflect a more complete understanding of the relationship between form and being in the experience of realising participatory linked chain and round dances.

6.3.1 Relationships between the themes and sub-themes from the first two IPA studies

The first step in identifying relationships between the themes and sub-themes from the two IPA studies was to establish the nature and direction of the links between them. But the themes and sub-themes do not fit neatly into a one-to-one model, and a model that would map the web of relations between each theme and sub-theme would be too dense to disentangle. I present here, instead, a simplified, manageable view of these thematic relationships to show that the data indicates that there is a relationship between form and experience in the data provided by participants. The following table presents this view. The proposed relationships are based on a close reading of the interview transcripts to ensure that any thematic associations have emerged from and are consistent with the data.
Table 17: Relationships between the themes from the two IPA studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains of experience</th>
<th>General Themes</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
<th>Formal Themes</th>
<th>Formal Sub-themes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
<td>Autotelic experience</td>
<td>Awareness of time</td>
<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
<td>Efforts as experienced</td>
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<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
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<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
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<td>Domains of experience</td>
<td>General Themes</td>
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<td>Formal Themes</td>
<td>Formal Sub-themes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growth and development</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
<td>Efforts as experienced</td>
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<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
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<td>Domains of experience</td>
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<td>Movement</td>
<td>Steps</td>
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<td>Being different than usual</td>
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<td>Expressive movement</td>
<td>Dance style</td>
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<td>Expression</td>
<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
<td>Efforts as experienced</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Slow</td>
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<td>Timing</td>
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<td>Movement</td>
<td>Steps</td>
<td>Vocalisations</td>
<td>Expressive movement</td>
<td>Dance style</td>
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<td>Group formation</td>
<td>Physical connection with other dancers (hold)</td>
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<td>Structure of the music</td>
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<td>Music</td>
<td>Sonic features</td>
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<td>Movement</td>
<td>Dance style</td>
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<td>Presence as a physical being</td>
<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
<td>Light Slow (rhythm state, weight and time)</td>
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<td>Expressive movement Dance style</td>
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<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
<td>Efforts as experienced</td>
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<td>Being part of a whole</td>
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<td>Steps</td>
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<td>Community</td>
<td>Group formation</td>
<td>Physical connection with other dancers (hold)</td>
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<td>Effect on perception of space</td>
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<td>Round formation</td>
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<td>Connection across time and place</td>
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<td>Dance style</td>
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<td><strong>Being cognition</strong></td>
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<td>Different quality of cognition</td>
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<td>Sense of the sacred or spiritual</td>
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This model shows no simple relationships between formal elements and general experience, but rather a web of relations (to use Adshead’s term) in which the formal elements contribute to experience in different ways. For example, the formal theme ‘Music’ features in virtually every sub-theme related to the general theme ‘Autotelic experience’, but also features in many of the other general themes in different ways.

6.3.2 Integration of the results of the IPA studies with the detailed dance descriptions and my personal account of the relations between form and being

Using the Dance, Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) and Effort analyses as a basis for personal reflection, I described the relations between form and being in terms of time, space and sense of self, as shown in Table 16 in Chapter 5. The detailed dance descriptions were based on dances mentioned by the participants, in the context of the conversation when the participant mentioned a particular dance or dance style in relation to a theme or sub-theme which was significant for that participant.

In keeping with the double hermeneutic in which the researcher adds layers of analysis and interpretation to the participants’ interpretations of their own experiences, the detailed dance descriptions and my personal account were based on the interview data but also included my own observations, reflections, analysis and interpretation of the formal elements most relevant to experience, and to how those formal elements combine and interact to create a sense of being. The participant data therefore informed my personal account. Integrating data from multiple sources in this way led to preliminary discoveries about a limited number of individuals, including myself, who share a particular type of experience, in this case, dancing linked chain and round dances.

60 By ‘significant’, I refer not to the coding frequency of a theme, necessarily, but rather to a theme that appears to be particularly meaningful to the participant or that provided a productive line of enquiry for the purposes of this study. I do not refer to statistical significance in this project.
Having mapped out the complex web of relationships between the general and formal themes that emerged from the two IPA studies, I could then determine how to depict the relationships between those themes and the detailed analysis of form and being for each dance. Again, there were no obvious one-to-one links. Rather, the general and formal themes of experience that emerged from participant accounts supported an inductive approach (Chatfield, 1999, p. 129) in which the specific data collected and analysed for each dance formed a basis for description and interpretation, with the overall themes providing a higher-level explanatory framework. In the final model presented in the next section, the relations between form and being can be characterised in terms of the general and formal themes from the IPA studies.

6.3.3 A model that describes and interprets the different types of data in terms of form and being

Tying together all of the findings, I propose the following model that associates form and being. In this model, the musical/dancing self both responds to and creates (realises) the form and it is this creative power that changes the dancer’s way of being. This represents a new model for interpreting experience based on the analysis of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances.
This model presents the musical/dancing self as both perceptive and expressive within the intrapersonal domain of experience, seeking out intrinsically motivating (autotelic) experiences that can lead to personal growth and a sense of the self as different than usual, intentionally and purposefully present in the world as a physical being.

In the transpersonal realm of aesthetic experience, the dancer is keenly aware of music and rhythm and their own unique relationship with musical time. The dancer interacts with the music through movement and timing, and through their emotional response to the combined effects of the music, movement and physical connection between dancers.

In the context of a dancing community, a new or different way of being in the world emerges. In realising different dances, different ways of being are foregrounded. For example, the dancer sometimes experiences greater self-awareness, self-confidence and self-absorption, or, by contrast, a greater sense of being part of a whole, finding a paradoxical freedom in focusing on cooperation and unity with the group. At best, realising a dance can lead to rare instances of being cognition, experienced as self-
actualisation and self-transcendence, an effortless and joyful way of being in the world with others.

6.4 Discussion

Having looked at the themes of experience that result from verbal descriptions of the experience of dancing, having explored and described the formal elements most relevant to that experience, and having personally reflected on the experience of dancing using the theoretical frameworks of Dance Analysis, Laban Movement Analysis and Effort Theory, I am prepared to answer the fourth research question:

- What can be discovered about the relationship of form and being by integrating data that is collected and analysed using different methodologies?

The findings of this study, in which different types of data and analysis are synthesised, suggest that the combination of third- and first-person accounts, along with a systematic approach to the formal analysis of specific dances, results in a rich and in-depth interpretation of experience, illuminating the powerful and transformative aspects of participatory linked chain and round dancing that might otherwise go unnoticed or unspoken.

It is important to note, however, the limitations of combining third- and first-person accounts. The researcher must always recognise and acknowledge that experience can differ for each individual—my findings are indicative but not definitive, suggesting possible relations between form and being in the context of a particular type of dancing for the particular people who participated in this project, paving the way for additional research using this interdisciplinary methodology.
7 Discussion of Outcomes

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I summarise the results of the four studies presented in previous chapters, highlighting those findings that include both expected and (intriguingly) unexpected aspects of the experience of dancing. Contextualising the findings within the Dance literature and within the broader literature of Music and Psychology demonstrates the importance of studies of this type, which focus on the ‘inner’ experience of dancing from the dancer’s perspective.

As part of this general discussion of outcomes, I identify the insights gained by combining IPA and formal analyses within the overarching theoretical framework of General Systems Theory. I also evaluate the interdisciplinary methodology used in this project—a methodology that represents a convergence of theory and method in the arts and sciences—assessing the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and limitations of this approach.

7.2 Outcomes of the first study

In the first study, presented in Chapter 3, I explored the question ‘How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?’ The findings provided a starting point for investigating the relationship between form and being, establishing a set of general themes of experience that describe aspects of being, with clues to some of the ways in which form might contribute to this experience. The focus of this study was the participants’ phenomenological/psychological experience when realising participatory linked chain and round dances from the Balkan region.

The use of IPA methodology for data collection and analysis—semi-structured interviews, close reading of the interview transcripts, and the identification of themes and sub-themes—resulted in seven overall themes that characterise the experiences of the six participants in this study. These themes, which emerged from and were closely
tied to the interview data, also reflect my theoretical stance, my ‘speaking position’ as a researcher (Coyle, 2007, p. 18), based on the disciplines of Motivational Psychology, General System Theory, and Dance Phenomenology. With a commitment to idiography—describing experience as particular to the individuals who report it, for the particular context in which they have the experience (Smith, et al., 2011)—and acknowledging the interpretative nature of this IPA study, I discuss in the following sections what each theme and the overall outcomes of the first study suggest in terms of the relationship between form and being.

7.2.1 Summary of general themes of experience

7.2.1.1 Intrapersonal themes

**Autotelic experience**—Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi (1988) describe autotelic experience—what they call ‘optimal experience’ or ‘flow’—as intrinsically rewarding, an experience in which an individual has the opportunity to develop by taking on enjoyable challenges that match their current level of skill. Interview data that supports this theme highlights the challenge and complexity of some linked chain and round dances, and the ways in which participants find dancing enjoyable for its own sake rather than for the purposes of achieving some other goal.

But the interview data also reveals that while dancing might be intrinsically motivating, participants do not often experience what might be characterised as peak or optimal experience (flow). It appears, rather, that the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances sometimes has characteristics of the flow experience. Flow, or peak experience, can happen occasionally, as with Coros's 'IT' moment (1992, p. 105) or DancerI’s experience of time passing without her noticing (C-1/84). Some participants mentioned a sense of getting ‘lost’ in a dance as a positive feature of experience. This sense relates to a change in the experience of time, which both Csikszentmihalyi (1988c) and Maslow (1999) highlight as a feature of optimal and peak experience, respectively.

What seems to be specific about autotelic experience in dancing, and what suggests a link between form and being, is participants’ focused attention to the active,
intentional use of movement in a creative and expressive interaction with time. Csikszentmihalyi refers to a ‘distorted’ sense of time in the flow experience (1988b), but his term does not convey the sense of musical/dancing time that participants in this study find so enjoyable and engaging.

**Growth and development**—Participants spoke of physical achievement and the enjoyment of mastering new challenges in dance. The theme ‘Growth and development’ captures both the intellectual and physical development that participants took pride in, as well as their keen interest in dance and musical forms that originated in regions to which they have no cultural or ethnic ties.

Perhaps the formal elements in combination, within the context of aesthetic experience, offer an opportunity for people to develop physical skills that were previously lacking in their lives. Dancer2 stated this most clearly:

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Dancer2: Somebody like myself who never really did that, it gives me a very strong sense of being physically competent, shall we say. And which I didn’t have as a child, really. The idea that I could do some athletic dance with jumps and leaps or does one get them all in the right order and so on and so forth, um, is a good feeling in itself, to think that I can do that properly.
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(C-2/236-241)

In terms of form and being for the participants in this study, it appears that the combination of movement and music in the context of realising participatory linked chain and round dances offers an opportunity for intellectual and physical development that is accessible for people who do not consider themselves ‘athletic’ or ‘sporty’ (C-2/233-236).

**Self**—During the interviews, I asked each participant to describe how they experience themselves while dancing. Some participants responded with profound and intriguing statements about being different than usual, about finding freedom and about self-expression. In Chapter 3, I described in detail how such statements point to a construct of a ‘musical/dancing self’ that seeks expression not *through*, but as music and dancing.
Bond & Stinson have highlighted how students sometimes find their ‘real’ self through dancing (2000-2001, p. 61), and Coros describes her sense of standing ‘fully present in the world’ as a unique individual, as ‘only I myself can be’ (1992, p 114). Although it is not clear from the interviews and the literature exactly how the formal elements of music and dancing help people to find this sense of a real or transformed self, the first study establishes this effect as something to investigate further in the other three studies in this project.

7.2.1.2 Interpersonal themes

Connection—It is not surprising that the theme ‘Connection’ emerged from the interview data, given the physical linking between dancers in participatory linked chain and round dances. The sub-theme of ‘Community’ is also not surprising, with people often moving in unison as they realise a chain or round dance. The sub-theme of ‘connection across time and place’, however, was an unexpected finding, but is supported by the data in that this sub-theme is coded for three of the six participants. To understand the theme ‘Connection’ and its sub-themes in greater depth, it is important to recognise and acknowledge the role of music in creating a sense of connection, both in present time and across time and place, and that this sense of connection affects participants’ intersubjective experience, their way of being in the world among others.

Music contributes to this sense of connection by ordering experience for the group of dancers as a whole. As Blacking points out, the importance of sonic order, the way that sound is organised, should not be underestimated, stating that ‘Musical performance, as distinct from the production of noise, is inconceivable without the perception of order in sound’ (1973, p. 10). Beginning, therefore, with sonic order and musical rhythms, dancers engage with the music, with movement and with each other within the context of what Bond calls an ‘aesthetic community’ (1994, p. 22).

Context—The interview data shows some inconsistencies in the importance of context to participants’ experiences, and the associations between form and being in terms of context do not hold any surprises. For example, the physical connection
between dancers contributes to the experience of context in terms of who the dancer is
dancing with, the other dancers in the group, and their physical characteristics and
level of skill. The quality of music and whether the music is live or recorded also
affects experience, as does the movement, with some participants having stated a
preference for dancing with people in the regions where the dances originated, rather
than here in Britain.

Dancer6: It’s that, it’s not, you’re not actually doing Bulgarian dances
in England, you’re doing a dance culture based on Bulgarian
dancing in England, something that’s related to the English
idea of how to dance.

(C-6/233-236)

7.2.1.3 Transpersonal themes

Aesthetic experience—The theme ‘aesthetic experience’ refers to the felt, sensorial
experience of dancing, in terms of ‘aesthetic qualities’ that ‘arise as a matter of
attention and in relation to an object’ (Fraleigh, 1999b, p. 189). These qualities, based
on the interview data, include emotional and musical responses, listening, rhythm,
timing and space.

As described in detail in Chapter 3, keen listening and responding to the music
through the use of timing seemed to hold a primary place in participants’ awareness.
The Dance literature on European forms tends to closely link the experience of
dancing with the accompanying music (for example, Giurchescu & Bloland, 1995;
Hoerburger, 1960; Raftis, 1987), and, based on the literature in combination with the
results of this study, I argue that any investigation into the experience of dancing
linked chain and round dances must include a description of music as a key
component of aesthetic experience.

Specifically, the concept of timing as an interaction with music requires further study.
In my own experience of dancing linked chain and round dances, I have found that
counting beats is not always the best way to approach timing; it is sometimes easier
and more rewarding to ‘feel’ the musical time. At a Greek dance workshop that I
attended, the instructor asked dancers to simply listen to and respond to the music in their own way, before she ever taught the correct 'steps'. Dancer6 mentioned this ability to listen to the music when he compared the timing of ballet-trained dancers with that of musicians:

Dancer6: But it’s completely the opposite to somebody, somebody, say, who’s trained in ballet. Because their aim is to get a 3-D spatial movement, positions, visual scene. Whereas in musicians or folk world, you’re more interested in the, the moving to the music.

(C-6/177-180)

Does the difference in timing between musically-trained and ballet-trained dancers reflect a different sort of ‘musicality’ and listening skills rather than ballet training, *per se*? In other words, does exposure to predominantly Western European music mean that dancers must develop additional listening skills required for Balkan dancing?

In the Romanian music that Dancer6 describes, people responded to the ‘groove’ of the music, and to live musicians who vary the timing each time the dance is realised. Is ‘counting’ versus ‘feeling’ music a different cognitive process, and would the difference between these processes have an effect on felt experience? Is it by giving up counting and just responding to the timing of the music by attending to it carefully how people ‘lose themselves’ in the dance? I suggest that the link between form and being for aesthetic experience is that focused attention to the felt, sensorial experience of listening to music and responding with movement leads to self-transcendence, or ‘loss’ of self-consciousness.

**Being cognition**—The theme of being cognition is the least well-described or evidenced by participants, which fits with Maslow’s expectations that being cognition is a rare and precious experience for most people. But the experience of realising participatory linked chain and round dances does seem to show some of the characteristics of being cognition for the participants in this study.
For example, Dancer5 spoke of a certain quality of cognition based on the movement characteristics of the dance Berati, calling the experience a ‘moving meditation’ (C-5/74-75). She also spoke of a sense of effortlessness related to the movements of the ‘dances from Pirin where you have those very graceful, wide cat-like steps’ that make her feel graceful (C-5/149-151). Her description fits with Maslow’s (1999) portrayal of a person who has achieved being cognition, often through an aesthetic experience.

7.2.2 Form and being: Findings from the first study

This IPA study of participant’s general experiences of dancing is the first step towards an in-depth understanding of the relationship between form and being when realising participatory linked chain and round dances. Participants reflected and reported on their own experiences in their own words, so that the language for describing their experiences emerged from the interview data, from what the people who experienced the dancing actually said about it.

The key findings from this study show that the seven themes of general experience form the building blocks of a motivational model in which dancing spans the intra-, inter-, and trans-personal domains of experience. This model begins to explain the appeal of Balkan dancing for people with no ethnic or cultural ties to the Balkan region.

The links between form and being are tentative suggestions at this point, requiring the additional data collection and analyses that the next three studies in this project provide. What already becomes clear from this study, however, is the importance of music to the experience of dancing, and the need to consider the concept of ‘musicality’ when studying participatory linked chain and round dances. Dancers perceive and respond to musical time with movement that expresses a musical/dancing self, an aesthetic experience that sometimes leads to self-transcendence and a sense of effortless being in the world as a unique individual, an individual with ‘the freedom to be me’ (C-4/40).
In the next section of this chapter, I present the next logical step in establishing the relationship between form and being by exploring the formal themes of experience that emerged from the participant interviews.

7.3 **Outcomes of the second study: Formal themes of experience**

The second study in this project, presented in Chapter 4, represents the next step in the process of determining the relationship between form and being by answering the question ‘How do dancers describe the formal aspects of participatory linked chain and round dances that contribute to their experience in dancing?’ In the second study, a close reading of interview data, with a focus on identifying formal themes of experience, captured a sense of the formal elements of music and dancing of which participants were most aware. These formal themes reflect the language used by participants rather than technical, dance-based terminology.

In the following sections, I summarise each formal theme in terms of the relationship between form and being, and then present the overall findings of this study.

7.3.1 **Summary of formal themes of experience**

**Emergence**—The theme of ‘Emergence’ describes the interactive, interrelated formal elements of participatory linked chain and round dances. The interview data suggested that participants were aware that the combination of formal elements, especially music in combination with different types of movement, affected their experience when dancing. This supports Adshead’s (1988d) argument for clearly describing not only the components of a dance but the interrelations between those components in order to more fully understand the form of a dance. It is the emergent ‘whole’ of the dance form that contributes to participants’ sense of being.

**Group formation**—For participants in this study, group formation highlights a feeling of community, and a change in the perception of general space. Dancer1, for example, spoke of a sense of ‘moving as one’ (C-1/30). This sense of moving as a single unit can be thought of as an emergent property of dancing, namely, ‘community space’, because the interaction between physical connection (hold) and a
round formation changed participants’ perception of physical space to that of community space. In terms of the relationship between form and being, this change in the perception of general space emphasises the dancer’s literal and metaphorical position as part of an aesthetic community in which dancers experience a sense of communitas (community spirit).

**Motion factors and Efforts**—Although participants used non-technical language to describe their experience of movement dynamics, they described their experience in terms that paralleled those of Effort theory. Specifically, participants mentioned aspects of movement dynamics related to all of the Efforts, namely, Time, Weight, Space, and Flow.

Participants also spoke about time in the sense of timing, which differs from the motion factor of time. ‘Timing’ conveys the idea of how the dancer responds to and interacts with the musical time within the movement framework of a dance. Dancer6 used the word ‘groove’ in his description of Romanian dancing and explained in detail how good dancers listen keenly to the music and ‘syncopate slightly around’ and ‘steal a bit of time’ while dancing (C-6/80-82).

Timing, groove and rhythm are encompassed in what I have called ‘dancerly time’, the time created and experienced when a dancer interacts creatively with musical time. Dancerly time represents another link between form and being; a person both creates and dwells within dancerly time.

**Movement**—The theme of ‘Movement’ might seem an obvious formal element of dancing, and it is not surprising the participants expressed an awareness of the steps and dance styles that they use to realise Balkan dances. Not so obvious or straightforward, however, is the notion of expressive movement that participants reported. The sub-theme ‘expressive movement’ categorises statements made by participants about the involvement of the arms and hands, and indeed, the whole body, as ‘expressive’.
For Dancer4, the steps of a dance, the movement qualities of those steps and the expression of the musical/dancing self using the whole body gave her a sense of identity as a youthful dancer, younger than her chronological age:

Dancer4: And in that particular dance, it brings out the young girl in me. Even though I’m 63! Um because it’s a girls’ dance from Kosovo…and it’s meant to be danced by young girls and I can just see, in my mind’s eye, I see, it makes me see young girls dancing and that’s what I become…in my mind…Not to an onlooker I’m sure.

(C-4/138-144)

There’s just something about the choreography of the steps, um, they, there’s a, there’s a slight skip to them although you wouldn’t describe the dance as a skipping dance. There’s a lightness to it, um, I suppose, um, but there’s this…I think because it’s using your whole body, I do like dances that use your whole body.

(C-4/145-149)

Dancer2 also described a link between the movement of a dance and his sense of identity. He described experiencing his gender identity in a positive way by dancing men’s warrior dances. He used the term ‘vigorous’ to describe these dances:

Dancer2: Well, in terms of more vigorous dances, they’re often, traditionally, men’s dances. So, it’s significant to me to try and dance something that was a man’s thing and have some sort of positive feeling about masculinity and stuff.

(C-2/243-246)

Music—The interview data suggested that the sonic features of the dance music—such as harmonies—and the structure of the music—including different instruments as well as metre and rhythm—are formal elements of which participants were keenly aware. Rhythm, in particular, featured prominently in the interview transcripts, especially the rhythmic aspects of music and movement related to accented beats, and how movement can further divide each musical beat in a dancer’s experience of rhythm. The data supports Blacking’s (1973) view of musicality as a fundamentally human trait—the ability to perceive and respond to sonic order enables a creative
movement response. In this way, the interaction of movement and music create a single form, a temporal, ‘two-fold art’ (Hoerburger, 1960, p. 70), in which participants express the musical/dancing self.

7.3.2 Form and being: Findings from the second study

The analysis presented in the second IPA study (Chapter 4) illuminates and strengthens the links between form and being suggested by the first IPA study, especially in terms of expression of the musical/dancing self, musicality, and communitas.

All of the formal elements identified as themes—emergence, movement, music, motion factors and Efforts, and group formation—contribute to a sense of the self as being physically present in the world in a different way than ‘usual’:

Dancer4 It’s a kind of ‘this is me’, um, when I’m dancing.

(C-4/43-44)

When realising a linked chain or round dance, a person must simultaneously attend to the structure and dynamics of the dance, the timing of the music in relation to the timing of the movement, and to the dancer’s relationship in space to the other dancers in the group. Perhaps this intentional focus on movement and movement dynamics contributes to a heightened sense of self as a physical presence, as described in the work of Coros (1992).

Participants spoke of expressing themselves not only through the steps of a dance, but also in their creative relationship with music and musical timing, especially rhythm. This underscores the importance of Blacking’s (1973) notion of musicality but extends his description to include movement as a type of creative listening, a response to music and rhythm that participants characterised as ‘expressive’.

The sense of self experienced by participants was influenced by the group formation, which transformed general space into a community space within which participants expressed the musical/dancing self in the context of the larger musical/dancing
community. As Drandakis (1993) observes, an individual expresses both the self and the community through movement, generating a sense of communitas that participants found enjoyable and motivating.

To explore the relationship between form and being more fully, a more in-depth formal analysis was required, using dance-based theory and method to describe specific dances and the sense of being that emerges from each dance. The following section summarises the formal analysis, complementing the key findings from the second study and offering an inside understanding of how formal elements contribute to experience in realising linked chain and round dances.

7.4 Outcomes of the third study: Formal analysis and personal reflections on form and being

The third study in this project built on the data and findings generated in the first two studies, so that the formal analysis—conducted from an inside perspective of dances as experienced and informed by my personal reflection on my own embodied practice (Ness, 2004)—resulted in a deeper understanding and richer description of the relationship between form and being, answering the question ‘What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?’

Dances selected for analysis were drawn from a pool of possible dances mentioned by participants. The formal analysis was guided by the general and formal themes identified in the first two studies, and extended and enriched by my own knowledge as a Dance researcher with many years of experience realising participatory linked chain and round dances. Using a personal account, I brought not only kinetic and kinaesthetic knowledge of the dances, but also the technical methods of movement analysis and an awareness of concepts of being (especially time, space and a sense of self) from Dance Phenomenology to enrich the discussion of form and being in this project.
7.4.1  Summary of the Dance and Effort analyses

In Chapter 5, I conducted a formal analysis for each of the six selected dances, based on the methods of Dance Analysis (Adshead, 1988a) for describing the components of a dance in terms of movement, dancers, visual and aural elements, Dance Form Analysis (Giurchescu & Kröschlová, 2007) for describing the various formal elements of each dance, and Laban Movement Analysis (LMA)—especially Effort theory—to describe specific movement qualities and dynamics of each dance.

This analysis resulted in a detailed description of each dance, which I sectioned into phrases that reflected changes in the overall movement and Effort patterns, detailing the structure relevant factors from Dance Form Analysis (Giurchescu & Kröschlová, 2007), the Efforts of Time, Weight, Space and Flow most relevant within each dance phrase, and the states and drives derived from the Effort analysis.

Overall, the Dance and Effort analyses showed that different dances categorised by recreational dancers as ‘Balkan’ vary both in form and dynamics, with additional variations within a dance between the different phrases. The dances share this feature of variation in Efforts and states and drives, albeit in different ways for each dance. For example, whereas the dance Dagh Gorani has three phrases that transition from the Action to the Vision to the Spell drive, the dance Jiana, by contrast, has four phrases that transition from the Vision to the Action to the Vision and back to the Action drive. In the next section, I discuss how personal reflection on the formal analysis illuminated how this variation in form as experienced contributes to a sense of being.

7.4.2  Form and being: Findings from the third study

Using the results of the detailed, technical formal analysis to reflect on the structure and relationship of the formal elements of each dance, I identified how the formal elements in interaction contributed to a way of being-in-the-world for each dance. These links between form and being are described in detail in Chapter 5 Table 16, which answers the question ‘What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?’ Clearly, the results suggest a strong
connection between form and being, showing that the experience of realising participatory linked chain and round dances can bring about a sense of self-awareness, self-transcendence, the self as part of a larger whole, the self as physically present, and the self as fully actualised, dwelling within and yet creatively engaged with musical/dancerly time.

As Ness (2004) argues, participation by a researcher in the dance practice under investigation can result in an epistemological shift that highlights the difference between dance as experienced and dance as observed. For example, in the dance *Dagh Gorani*, an observer might notice the free Flow of the overall movement, while I, as a dancer, am more aware of binding Flow to precisely place my hands at a certain point in space within my kinesphere. In this third study of my overall project, the use of self-reflection, combined with a systematic analysis of movement as experienced, was a key factor in establishing meaningful connections between form and being, not by linking specific movements to specific feelings, but by exploring the complexity of different types of formal elements in interaction.

### 7.5 Outcomes of the fourth study: Integrating data obtained by different methodologies

The results of the first three studies are brought together in the fourth study, which addresses the question ‘What can be discovered about the relationship of form and being by integrating data that is collected and analysed using different methodologies?’

Dance researchers such as Ravn (2010), Ness (2004) and Sklar (2006) have used multiple sources of data, including their own embodied practice, to study the dance experience of participants. Ravn (2010), for example, gathered information from participants by means of semi-structured interviews, and then used her own kinaesthetic knowledge to generate additional data (p. 23). Thomas argues for the use of a ‘choreographic ethnography’ to describe experience, recognising that participants do not always verbalise their experience fully, and that a ‘choreographic analysis’ is a
useful method of supplementing the information provided by participants (2003b, p. 88).

By using two IPA studies in addition to a formal analysis informed by personal reflection on my own experience in dancing, I was able to conduct a detailed and systematic analysis of the information provided by participants, resulting in a clear description of participants’ experiences, organised into themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interview data.

Having integrated data from a variety of sources, and by conducting different types of analyses, I was able to develop a model that clearly represents the experiences of the participants in this project, including myself. In keeping with the idiographic nature of IPA studies, the findings apply to a limited number of people who share a particular type of experience, in this case, realising linked chain and round dances from the Balkan region.

7.5.1 Summary of the results of the fourth study

To bring together the findings from the three studies, I began by identifying the relationships between the themes and sub-themes from the first two IPA studies. The following table summarises and simplifies the associations of formal themes from the second IPA study with the general themes from the first IPA study, showing the relationship between form and experience based on the interview data obtained from the participants.

Table 18: Association of general themes with formal themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General themes</th>
<th>Formal themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autotelic experience</td>
<td>Motion factors and Efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(no group formation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are the patterns that this table shows? It actually shows that there is no direct link between specific formal elements and specific general themes, which both supports the idea of emergence (elements in interaction creating an emergent experience that is different than when the elements operate in isolation) and also reminds researchers to avoid overly simplistic descriptions of the relationship between form and experience. Fraleigh, for example, states that ‘Folk dances performed in unison circles embody and symbolize being-with-others in the eternity of the
moment’ (1987, p. 194). But a circular group formation is not the only formal element that contributes to experience, and even the term ‘folk dances’ requires a more precise definition. Interestingly, the formal theme of group formation does not seem particularly relevant to either autotelic experience or to growth and development, as defined in this study. The interview data seems to suggest that only the formal themes of movement and music contribute directly to being cognition.

The simplified model presented in Table 18 highlights the importance of music to the experience of linked chain and round dancing and again suggests the importance of expressing the musical/dancing self. Also, in this model, the formal elements apply across the intra-, inter- and trans-personal domains of experience, which might explain why people describe this type of dancing (and indeed, other types of dancing) as ‘transformative’ (Appendix C-2/40).

Having established the high-level links between themes from the first two IPA studies, I then integrated the additional data and analyses of the third study, in which I used Dance, movement and Effort analysis as the basis for reflecting on my own experience of time, space and sense of self when realising six of the linked chain and round dances mentioned by participants. This resulted in my final model, which associates form with being.

7.5.2 Form and being: Findings from the fourth study

My final model of the relationship between form and being (see Chapter 6, Figure 20) synthesises the data, analyses and key findings from the previous three studies. This synthesis exemplifies the hermeneutic process of interpretation and description, resulting in a clear statement of how the data fits together, resulting in a model that features the musical/dancing self as actively perceiving and expressing music and rhythm, seeking out intrinsically motivating (autotelic) experiences through a creative engagement with musical and dancerly time, achieving a different way of being-in-the-world within the context of a dancing community.
By integrating data obtained using different methodologies, and by making use of both third- and first-person accounts of experience, I was able to develop a model that provides greater depth and insight than if I had used only one type of account. The model is not a prescriptive formula for achieving a particular sense of being, but a framework for describing individual experience. It highlights the ways in which the interactive formal elements of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances contribute to a sense of being-in-the-world, and demonstrates that these links can be discovered and described in detail for different linked chain and round dances.

This is the crux of this project, to demonstrate that there is a way to relate form with experience using conventional language as opposed to the often difficult language of phenomenology. The findings of this study are descriptive/interpretative rather than explanatory or predictive, but the findings illuminate another side of our human nature, the musical/dancing self that seeks expression as music and dancing. There is no need to translate any other construct of self that finds expression through the medium of musicality. The musical/dancing self responds creatively and with a musicality that seeks expression in its own terms.

7.6 Overall findings in terms of General System Theory

In Chapter 2, I proposed that a review of my findings within the framework of General System Theory offered a way to conceptualise the findings in a more general way than in the medium-specific terminology of Dance and Psychology. This section contains that review, stated in terms of each of the key concepts of General System Theory.

7.6.1 Emergence

It might seem out of place for a study that emphasises the primary importance of looking at dancing as an ‘organised whole’ to deconstruct that experience in order to discover its experiential and formal elements. But Von Bertalanffy argues that the study of elements of a system and the interactions of those elements is required for understanding the whole (Von Bertalanffy, 1971).
When I first set out on this investigation, I thought perhaps that the formal elements in interaction would result in the ‘emergent’ general themes of experience. It certainly sounds plausible to say something like ‘group formation + speed of movement around the circle + dance rhythm + music + light Weight, quick Time and direct Space = Connection’ for the dance Jiana. And although that type of association might sound reasonable, it does not account for individual difference in experience and, on further thought, sounds rather contrived.

Instead, I propose that the data suggests that the formal elements of dancing identified by the themes and sub-themes (presented in section 4.3.6) interact in quite a profound way so that the emergent property of dancing linked chain and round dancing is the expression of the musical/dancing self in the context of an aesthetic experience shared within community. This expression can sometimes, but not always, lead to being cognition and the sense of a real or authentic self. Phenomenologically speaking, this emergent property is nothing less than a way of being in which the musical/dancing self finds expression as the realisation of music and dancing. As Coros stated, ‘[Dancing] Syrtos allows me to become this way of being and for dwelling in the world for a while in this way of being’ (1992, p. 199-200).

Rosenboom argues that musical forms should be viewed as ‘emerging properties of interacting components’ (1997, p. 294), and the interview data supports this view for linked chain and round dancing. Most importantly, Rosenboom speaks of the active, creative nature of musical form, which I suggest applies also to the experience of dancing:

> A chord should be thought of as a musical verb, not a noun. It is a channel of action, a temporary marker for movement, a signpost with arrows on a road leading to somewhere on the continuously stretching rubber sheet of musical space-time.

(Rosenboom, 1997, p. 294)

It is significant that participants mentioned music and rhythm most often as the formal elements that interact to create experience in dancing, and I believe that music research, such as Rosenboom’s, can productively inform research in Dance Studies.
7.6.2 Teleology

Teleology is the tendency of systems to reach an end state, or goal. Although Coros described her experience in dancing as ‘directed toward a future dancing moment’ (1992, p. 99), the participants’ did not report dancing for any purpose other than the dancing itself. In terms of teleology, the goal of dancing seems to be simply to express the musical/dancing self. Dancing is autotelic, intrinsically motivating for the participants in this study. Viewing the findings by considering the concept of teleology helps to confirm the idea of a self that is expressed in its own terms and for no other purpose.

7.6.3 Wholeness

Earlier, I mentioned that the Efforts have been naively associated one-to-one with Jung’s constructs of Thinking, Feeling, Sensing and Intuiting, and with qualities of attention, intention, decision and precision. In terms of wholeness, it is possible that a dancer uses and experiences all of these constructs and qualities when realising a dance, and that this creates a sense of wholeness, along with using the whole body. Perhaps realising a dance requires the use of the whole mind and the whole body, not as two separate entities but as one entity for one purpose. As Rosenboom suggests, ‘Music may balance the cerebral and visceral in any conceivable mixture. Music accepts all and is devoid of any assumed mind-body differentiation’ (1997, p. 293).

7.6.4 Complexity

Participants mentioned the complex rhythms of Balkan linked chain and round dances as a source of challenge and enjoyment. Complexity figures largely in the experience of dancing in the dancer’s response to and interaction with music and the response to and creation of rhythm through movement, all within an aesthetic context and as part of an aesthetic community.

7.6.5 Negentropy

Negentropy, or increased order, might be brought about by the sonic order of music and rhythm and enhanced in consciousness through patterned movement. Because
linked chain and round dancing happens within an aesthetic community, in which the formal element of ‘group formation’ brings order to the group, in terms of defining the group space, the interpersonal space and physical connection between dancers, and in the movements that can be realised within the group formation.

7.6.6 Summary

General System Theory provides a useful conceptual framework that organises the discussion of my findings, and it does emphasise the motivational aspects of the experience of dancing. In terms of its key concepts, I propose that the experience of dancing has the emergent property of expressing the musical/dancing self as music and dancing, for no other purpose than that very expression. The dancer uses many of their mental and physical faculties to realise a dance, possibly contributing to the experience of wholeness that Maslow discusses as a part of being cognition (1999). The complexity of musical structure and of both musical and dance rhythms provides dancers with challenge and enjoyment, all within an ordered temporal-spatial and social context.

7.7 Validity considerations in this project

While validity criteria are well-established in quantitative, positivist research, these criteria are still evolving for postpositivist, interpretative, qualitative research. Dance researchers Green & Stinson, for example, point out that postpositivist research requires neither a large sample size nor a random sample, because the aim is not to generalise findings but to investigate specific contexts (1999, p. 97). They suggest instead that validity in postpositivist research is based on theorising, self-reflexivity and pragmatic validity (the usefulness of the research to others) (pp. 97-98).

Researchers in Psychology have also explored possible criteria for assessing the validity of qualitative studies. In his discussion of ‘evaluative criteria for qualitative research’, Coyle reviews a few different models for assessing validity, and concludes that
As yet, there is no consensus about the best criteria for evaluating qualitative research, although there are recurrent themes among the criteria that have been developed relating to the provision of contextualized accounts of the participants, detailed accounts of the analytic process, an account of the researcher’s ‘speaking position’ and how this influenced the analysis and the consistent grounding of interpretations in research data.

(Coyle, 2007, p. 23)

Taking each of these ‘recurrent themes’ in turn, the following sections provide an assessment of the studies presented in Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6.

7.7.1.1 Contextualising the data

Smith et al. (2011, pp. 180-181) speak of contextualising the data in terms of ‘sensitivity to context’ for the overall research process and its various stages:

- Commitment to idiography, with a focus on describing the experiences of a purposive sample who share a lived experience
- Application of good interviewing skills in order to obtain ‘good data’
- The hermeneutic process of analysing the interview data, recognising the ‘double hermeneutic’ in which the researcher makes sense ‘of how the participant is making sense of their experience’
- Recognition of the limitations of the methodology—suggesting possible interpretations that apply to the selected sample, not to a population generally
- Acknowledgement and knowledge of the existing literature, not only about the phenomenon under investigation but also about the philosophical underpinnings of the methodology used

In each chapter, I have described in detail the theoretical and disciplinary frameworks that informed this project, as well as the methods of data collection and analysis. For the IPA analyses, the ‘Results’ sections described and interpreted the experiences of the participants in terms of a motivational model of the experience of dancing, based on a thematic analysis that resulted from an iterative hermeneutic process. I offer my key findings for the IPA studies as applicable only to the six participants who participated in this study, with the seven themes of experience and the concept of a
‘musical/dancing self’ as a possible way of conceptualising the experience of dancing when applied to other contexts.

Where I provided a personal account of my experience of the formal elements of specific dances, I highlighted the links between the information provided by participants and my own, self-reflexive analysis, emphasising the idiographic nature of this descriptive/interpretative study.

### 7.7.1.2 Detailed accounts of the analytic process

The detailed descriptions of the analytical processes provide a clear view of the systematic and rigorous approach applied to the interview data and to the dance material.

### 7.7.1.3 An account of the researcher’s speaking position/self-reflexivity

As I progressed through the various stages of the different analyses, I recognised that the results were not entirely unexpected. I knew that I had checked and re-checked my interpretations against the data in an effort to ensure that the results emerged from and were not imposed upon it.

To resolve this tension between what the researcher brings to the research question and the resulting findings, I recognised that I did, in fact, remain open to new themes and sub-themes that I hadn’t previously thought of, such as ‘Imagination’ and ‘Timing’, and willingly discarded themes that I had expected to emerge during the interviews, but for which there was no evidence in the data (such as the primary importance of the movement vocabulary and a keen awareness of space). I must also consider that I am, in a sense, also a participant in this study in that I have my own ideas about, kinetic and kinaesthetic knowledge and lived experience of the type of dancing described within the scope of this project. It is quite reasonable to expect, therefore, that some of the results would meet my expectations and that others would take the research in new directions. Dancer6, in particular, prompted me to think about the intriguing link between timing and expression. Other dancers spoke of the
fundamental importance of rhythm, the idea of musical response, and, perhaps most importantly, of being and expressing one’s ‘self’.

Throughout this project, I have maintained a self-reflexive stance, and have made clear that this study is descriptive/interpretative based on hermeneutic principles, especially the concept of the hermeneutic circle in developing an iterative interpretation of the interview data and the multi-level approach to developing theoretical models based on the findings. I have also clearly defined the theoretical frameworks within which the data was collected, analysed and interpreted, giving the reader full visibility of my own disciplinary dispositions.

7.7.1.4 Grounding of interpretation in the research data

By means of excerpts from the interview transcripts, this project clearly links the themes of experience to the information provided by participants. A key tenet of IPA is that themes emerge from the interview data rather than being imposed upon it. The motivational model that I proposed, along with the idea of a ‘musical/dancing self’, clearly links back to what participants said about their own experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances. A close reading of the interview data also provided some intriguing clues as to the formal elements of dancing of which participants were most aware.

Based on the general guidelines offered by various authors, including Dance researchers Green & Stinson (1999), I argue that the findings of this project are both valid and of value in advancing knowledge in Dance Studies, providing a new way to describe the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances.

In Chapter 3, I first proposed the construct of a musical/dancing self that seeks expression as music and dancing. There is no need to translate this self-expression from one medium to another, or to associate any ‘other’ motivation or ‘inner state’. I argue instead that the person expresses the musical/dancing self through music and dancing, simply for the sake of music and dancing. As Fraleigh states, ‘dancing is a mode of thought, a special kind of knowledge and being-in-the-world’ (2004, p. 9).
7.8 Cautions about interpreting the experience of others

Several questions arise when collecting and analysing third-person data that potentially links form with experience. Would one person’s experience of form be the same as another person’s experience of form? Does the same musical/dancing activity provide each person with the same or a different inner experience of form?

While Effort theory seemed to offer a systematic way to describe inner states and drives related to movement as experienced, the theoretical basis remains both problematic and promising in the following ways.

1. Researchers must use extreme caution when making assumptions and generalisations about ‘inner states’ and attitudes, especially when investigating movement in the form of traditional dances. People are motivated to participate even though many aspects of their movement are prescribed by the conventions of step patterns and group formations. The strongest claim that can be reasonably asserted about inner experience is best stated by Laban & Ullmann, who suggest that ‘bodily actions performed with imaginative awareness stimulate and enrich inner life’ (1971, pp. 88-89). I therefore suggest that the part of Effort theory that deals with states and drives has a specific, descriptive application in this study, providing a way to compare the experience of qualities of movement within and across dances.

2. With participatory linked chain and round dances, certain movement characteristics belong to the dance itself, regardless of who realises the dance. So for this type of dancing, Effort theory cannot directly link the formal elements of a particular dance with a particular state of mind, but only with a particular experience of movement. I can therefore say with confidence that the experience of the Efforts is just that, but I cannot make assumptions about the experience of the ‘other’ beyond what they report. I can offer an interpretative reading of their reports, however, provided that the interpretation remains close to and emerges from the interview data.
3. Effort theorists who have attached Jung’s description of psychological types one-to-one with the four Efforts have misconstrued and oversimplified his statements about these classifications. Maletic, for example, cites Jung’s chapter in *Man and His Symbols* when she speaks of

Laban’s later association of the space, weight, time, and flow elements of human movement with man’s powers of thinking, sensing, intuiting, and feeling, respectively. The latter are terms which Jung used in his division of consciousness….These four functional types correspond to the means by which consciousness obtains its orientation to experience.

(Maletic, 1987, p. 157)

Because dancing involves combinations of the Efforts, it seems reasonable that combinations of these ‘divisions of consciousness’ lead to a rich inner experience. But reading the cited passage in Jung (1978, pp. 45-50) reveals that his intention in describing the four ‘types’ is to describe the relationship between therapist and patient in coming to a mutual understanding in the context of dream interpretation. Jung cautions against dogmatising the four ‘functional types’:

The reader should understand that these four criteria of types of human behaviour are just four viewpoints among many others, like will power, temperament, imagination, memory, and so on. There is nothing dogmatic about them.

(Jung, 1978, p. 49)

Jung did not mention in these passages anything about linking the four types to movement in any way, so it is unclear from reading Maletic how Laban might have formed this association and on what basis.

Had Maletic not used the word ‘respectively’, there might be something to the idea of associating the Efforts with aspects of consciousness, in that dancing might use all of these constructs and therefore be experienced as an integration of the ‘whole’ self, or what Coros describes as ‘adherence’, a sense of internal coherence (1992, p. 102). So while Maletic’s application of Jung’s theory
provides little of value for use in this study, a more thorough investigation into
the thinking, sensing, feeling, and intuiting capacities that the dancer employs
when realising a dance is a promising area of enquiry for future Dance
research.

4. Another, similar problem with Effort theory is the oversimplification of
linking one-to-one the Efforts with their ‘characteristic qualities’: Space with
attention, Weight with intention, Time with decision, and Flow with
progression (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p.53). Bartenieff with Lewis caution
that these qualities must be seen ‘as indications, not absolutes’ (p. 53).
Certainly, participants mentioned how keenly they listen to the timing and
rhythms of the music so that they can step precisely ‘on the beat’, (Appendix
C-5/101) which suggests a link between attention and Time, for example.
Attention to Weight is also important when linked with other dancers, as each
dancer must ‘carry their own weight’ in order to support the movement of the
group.

The suggested one-to-one correspondence between any Effort and any
characteristic quality is of limited usefulness in describing experience, and is
not upheld by the interview data. For example, Dancer6 speaks of listening, or
what might be called ‘attention to’ the musical timing, whereas ‘attention’ in
Effort theory is associated with Space:

Dancer6:  (Attention) So there’s an exactness in the listening to the
music in Banat, here’s, the average English person doesn’t
have. And Romanians actually use the, the term, um, ‘Got to
have a musical ear to dance’.

(C-6/68-70)

And Dancer2 talks about precision, associated in Effort theory with Flow, in terms of
spatial positions:
Dancer2: The precision of how the various bits of movement happen, the angles of how you move your foot or your hands and all that sort of thing. 

(C-2/226-228)

But the qualities of attention, intention, decision and precision in dancing are supported by the interview data, although participants do not always describe their experience in these terms, and could provide an intriguing area of future study to expand upon the model of the relationship between form and being described in section 6.3.3.

Another interesting area for future exploration is the use of musical terminology to describe the experience of dancing. Some Dance researchers use such musical terminology, rather than the language of Effort theory, to describe movement dynamics. Giurchescu & Bloland, for example, describe intensity as a movement dynamic:

The amount of energy expended to produce a movement is measured in degrees of intensity from weak to strong. These relative measures are expressed by the conventional Italian music terms: pianissimo, piano, mezzo forte, forte, and fortissimo. The intensity of movement within a single dance score may develop by gradually increasing, crescendo; by gradually decreasing, decrescendo; or by remaining the same, sostenuto’.

(Giurchescu & Bloland, 1995, p. 91)

These authors do not associate the various terms with any inner characteristics of the dancer—the language is purely descriptive of the movement dynamics. I wonder, though, how useful the same terms might be in describing experience. The term ‘piano’, for example, means ‘soft playing’ (Fallows, 2007-2013). Dancer1 said

Dancer1: I find it also important to do slow beautiful gentle dances. 

(C-1/81-82)

Could Dancer1’s experience be described as piano? Jordan argues for a closer correlation between musicological and dance methodology in formal analysis (1996). Could the terminology of music also provide insights into the experience of dancing?
Would musical terminology be the best way to describe experience, for example, do the terms piano and legato describe experience more clearly or accurately than light Weight and sustained Time? Would the use of musical terminology facilitate dialogue between the disciplines of Music and Dance, or emphasise the similarity of musical and dancing psychological processes? These questions could be explored in a future study.

Does Coros’s (1992) language work better? As Sheets-Johnstone points out, the language of phenomenology can be ‘ponderous’ and even ‘torturous’ (1984, p. 135). Although I believe that Coros has avoided these pitfalls in describing her experience of dancing, her description lacks any direct correlation with formal elements, making it useful for phenomenological, but not for formal analysis.

Regardless of the language used to describe experience, the inclusion of a first-person account that describes my own experience was essential to this project, to supply the language for describing form and being in detail where participants had difficulty putting their experience into words, especially in describing specific formal elements of dancing. Effort theory shone in this regard, providing me with the linguistic and analytical tools to consider, reflect and report on the inside experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances.
8 Conclusion

In the previous chapters, I proposed a theoretical model that describes the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances. This model offers a new way to look at the multi-dimensional experience of dancing from the ‘inner’ perspective of the dancing person, an experience that engages the dancer at the intrapersonal, interpersonal and transpersonal levels. In this model, the dancer expresses the musical/dancing self as music and dancing by creatively realising each dance as a complex and enjoyable aesthetic experience in relationship with music, and in relationship with the dancing community both past and present. This multi-faceted aesthetic experience evidences some aspects of what Maslow called ‘being cognition’, in which a person feels ‘more purely and singly’ themselves while at the same time transcending the self ‘to fuse with the world, with what was formerly not-self’ (1999, p. 117).

In this chapter, I re-visit the original research problem and the answers to my primary research questions in order to provide a more general statement about the relationship between form and the experience of being in participatory linked chain and round dancing. I also describe the key contributions of this project to the fields of Dance Studies and Psychology and explore some of the many possibilities for future research based on the key findings.

8.1 Re-statement of the research problem

Some folk dance groups have adapted traditional dances for recreational purposes. Amongst these groups, Balkan music and dance remain extremely popular. The fact that Balkan dances have travelled widely throughout the United Kingdom, Europe, Canada, the Americas and even to Japan and Taiwan—removed entirely from their traditional socio-cultural and geographic contexts—is remarkable. This suggests that perhaps these dances have aesthetic and movement characteristics that, once identified, can be further explored in terms of the interplay of movement, music, emotion, cognition and spirit. My own experience of Balkan dancing gave me an
appreciation of the complexity and richness of the dances and music and sparked my interest in learning more about the formal elements of this type of dancing, and how these formal elements might contribute to experience.

What is so compelling in the steps, patterns, rhythms and melodies that even recreational dancers in non-traditional contexts seek out Balkan dance experiences? How could a researcher describe this experience from the dancer’s perspective? Might the research findings suggest ways in which people from many cultures could benefit from dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?

These initial questions form the basis of this project’s more general area of enquiry:

- How do the formal elements of dancing and music contribute to the experience of a dancing person?

From this more general question, a review of the relevant literature led me to narrow my focus and to craft the following specific questions:

- How do dancers describe their general experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances?
- How do dancers describe the formal aspects of participatory linked chain and round dances that contribute to their experience in dancing?
- What does a formal analysis from an ‘inside’ perspective reveal about the interrelations of form and being?
- What can be discovered about the relationship of form and being by integrating data that is collected and analysed using different methodologies?

(See page 107 for a refinement and discussion of these four research questions.)

To begin to answer these questions, it was necessary to describe the nature of the experience of dancing. Using theory and method from Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), I identified the following seven themes of experience based on semi-structured interview data from six participants:
• Aesthetic experience—emotions, energies, listening, musical response, rhythm, space, and timing
• Autotelic (intrinsically motivating) experience—awareness of time, challenge, complexity, engagement, and enjoyment
• Being cognition—becoming part of the dance, different quality of cognition, effortlessness, and sense of the sacred or spiritual
• Connection—being part of a whole, community, connection across time and place, and social aspects
• Context—folk dance in its first or second existence, historic and cultural, other dancers, and participatory or presentational
• Growth and development—mastery, novelty, and physical development
• Self—being different than usual, describing lived experience, expression, imagination, presence as a physical being, self-image, and self-worth

Next, it was important to identify the formal elements of dancing that participants found most relevant to their experience, especially given the many formal elements of dancing that make up a dance. For example, Dancer4’s references to the music identified the musical rhythms in Balkan dance as a key formal element in her experience:

Dancer4: I think the music is something, um, that the English and the Scottish dancing and lots of other dances don’t have because you do get such various rhythms. I mean most dancing is either 2/4, 4/4 or 3/4 or maybe 6/8 and that’s it.

(C-4/74-77)

From the plethora of possibilities—movement dynamics, movement vocabulary, music structure and sonic properties, step patterns, changing positions of the body and of body parts in relation to each other, rhythms of travelling and hesitation steps, physical connection, Sheets-Johnstone’s ‘tensional, linear, areal, and projectional’ qualities of movement (1979, p. 50), group formations, and position in three-dimensional space, for example—participants in this study mentioned certain aspects of dancing which I organised into the following themes:
• Emergence—an awareness that formal elements in interaction combine to create an experience that is different than simply the sum of its parts
• Group formation—chain and round formation, physical connection with other dancers, and the effect of group formation on the perception of space
• Motion factors and Efforts—light Weight, movement dynamics (Efforts) as experienced, time, and timing (the dancer’s interaction with the musical and rhythmic time)
• Movement—‘expressive’ movement, steps, dance style, vocalisations
• Music—rhythm, sonic features, structure of the music

Human movement is highly complex—these themes are only a basic description of the formal elements of music and dancing most relevant to participants’ experiences.

In the same way that the data guides the interpretation of an IPA study, the participants’ own account of their favourite dances, movements and styles determined the dances selected for a more detailed, technical Dance analysis. By analysing some of the specific dances and types of dances mentioned by the participants and reflecting on my own experience of realising these dances, I was able to more closely relate form with the experience of being

Once the formal elements had been analysed and described in detail, they could be related to the identified themes of experience. A one-to-one relationship between any formal element and a particular theme of experience would have been suspect, given the complexity of dancing and how the elements of any complex system interact to form emergent properties (Von Bertalanffy, 1971). In Dance Analysis terms, it is the web of relations between the components of a dance that result in the form and meaning of that dance (Adshead, 1988a). What emerges from an exercise in relating form with experience is the finding that there are no direct links between specific formal elements and specific themes of experience, there is no ‘recipe’ for creating specific experiences in dancing. Rather, and more importantly, this study demonstrates that each formal element of dancing interacts with other elements to contribute to experience across the inter-, intra-, and trans-personal domains. Music
and rhythm in particular make a key contribution to the experience of dancing, in such a way as to facilitate the expression of the musical/dancing self.

Having completed the four studies presented in Chapters 3 through 6, I can state that the findings suggest that form and experience are related by means of the dancer’s active, creative engagement with music, rhythm and movement, generating an aesthetic experience that happens within the context of a musical/dancing community. Form is at once experienced by and created by the dancing person such that even within the framework of the prescribed steps and movements of participatory linked chain and round dancing, each dancer expresses a unique musical/dancing self.

My goal in completing this project was to demonstrate how form relates to experience in dancing, and this goal has been achieved. The findings are descriptive-interpretative and foreground the concept of a musical/dancing self that seeks expression within a dancing community.

### 8.2 Key contributions of this project

This project contributes to the advancement of knowledge in Dance Studies in six significant areas. I list these areas here and provide more detail in the sections that follow.

1. Bringing to light the popularity of recreational participatory linked chain and round dancing and exploring this type of dancing in a new way, giving it greater visibility within Dance Studies and Psychology
2. Applying Effort Theory to participatory linked chain and round dancing and evaluating its applicability to the study of the experience of dancing
3. Describing the experience of dancing in terms of the intra-, inter- and trans-personal domains, which begins a discussion that could be carried forward about how dancing fully engages the dancing person across these domains
4. Highlighting and exploring the somewhat elusive concept of ‘musicality’ and its importance in the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances
5. Finding a way to talk about the experience of dancing that Dance, Psychology and Music researchers would find clear and coherent

6. Creating a new methodology that represents a convergence of theory and method in the Arts and Sciences, built on a platform of Dance Analysis and IPA, within an overarching framework of General System Theory

8.2.1 Giving participatory linked chain and round dancing greater visibility

Data collection and analysis is based on the experiences of six people who have chosen to dance the participatory linked chain and round dances of the Balkan region, a region to which they have no ethnic, cultural or familial connections. By focusing on their experience, this project challenges pre-conceptions about how recreational folk dancing might be studied—researchers can (and should) consider phenomenological/psychological aspects in addition to social and cultural features, looking deeper into how people experience this type of dancing from the perspective of the individual, dancing person. Indeed, the themes of experience resulting from the IPA indicate a greater depth of experience than might be obvious at first glance.

This project also describes in detail the formal elements of several linked chain and round dances and the interrelations of these formal elements, using the methods of Dance Analysis and exploring movement dynamics in terms of Effort Theory. These descriptions foreground the variation and intricacy of the dances, highlighting some of the technical challenges inherent in dancing linked chain and round dances as well as the musicality required to realise them.

8.2.2 Applying Effort Theory to the study of participatory linked chain and round dances

As described in Chapter 7: Discussion of Outcomes, applying Effort Theory to the study of inner experience was both illuminating and disappointing. Analysing dances in terms of Space, Time, Weight and Flow proved helpful in describing and comparing the movement dynamics of different dances. Because participants did not provide much data about their experiences in terms of the Efforts, I used my own experience as a basis for the analysis, which, while limiting the generalisations that
can be made from this study, still shows that using a consistent language such as that provided by Effort Theory enriches the description of the formal elements of dancing as experienced. Interpreting experience in terms of Laban’s ‘states’ and ‘drives’, however, proved problematic in that Effort theory requires further development to be used as a rigorous means of assessing inner experience.

8.2.3 Describing dancing in terms of domains of experience

Looking at the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances as involving all three of the intra-, inter- and trans-personal domains offers a new way to conceptualise this experience. The interview data fully supports this view, based on the themes that emerged during the IPA studies. This means that there is now evidence (in addition to first-person, phenomenological accounts by Dance scholars) to support the idea of dancing as a way of being-in-the-world as a person who is at once self-aware, in relationship with others, and self-transcendent. This project demonstrates that participatory linked chain and round dancing can contribute to this way of being.

8.2.4 Musicality in dancing

The interview data suggests a strong relationship between dancers and music, with dancers commenting on the critical importance of the musical structure and rhythms to their experience of dancing. Participants frequently mentioned how they respond to and interact with time, and it seems that time features prominently in this musical relationship. Because of this, I suggest that the concept of ‘musicality’ provides a relevant and useful conceptual framework for describing the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances.

Jordan speaks of a musical/choreographic discourse in which she proposes that ‘formalist’ aspects of dance research could benefit from a musicological approach (Jordan, 1996, p. 15), and she points out that her method focuses on rhythm, ‘a principle of organization common to music and dance’ (p. 23). The findings of this project support Jordan’s argument for a closer dialogue between the disciplines of Music and Dance.
Talking about dancing in Dance, Psychology and Music

One of the key contributions of this project is that it provides a starting point for talking about dancing in clear and coherent terms, based on what people say about their own experience of dancing and with concepts that emerge from the interview data. Although the creative, idiosyncratic language of phenomenology and the medium-specific language of Dance can offer insights into the experience of dancing, they are not always accessible for interdisciplinary researchers who might want to explore dancing in a broader context. In this study, each theme of experience and each formal theme uses language that is accessible to scholars in different disciplines, offering opportunities for researchers in Dance, Psychology, Music and other disciplines to challenge and explore the findings presented in this project.

Perhaps most significant in terms of talking about dancing is the concept of a musical/dancing self, a concept that emerged from the interview data and from the IPA and Dance Analysis. The term ‘musical/dancing self’ is simple and clear in its construction and can be used in discussions within various disciplines to describe the part of a person that seeks expression through movement in the context of aesthetic experience within a dancing community and by means of interaction with music and rhythm.

In the discipline of Psychology, researchers might question and investigate further the musical/dancing self and the nature of its expression. If people are motivated to express the musical/dancing self, should this be another level/dimension in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs? Or, is music and dancing a means to achieve some other need on Maslow’s hierarchy, such as self-actualisation?

If there is indeed a musical/dancing self within some, most or all human beings, and if the self-expression of that musical/dancing self affects well being, the implications are far-reaching and could impact education, therapy, and participatory dance and music projects across the UK. What are the effects of not expressing the musical/dancing self on well being? Should more funding be made available to projects that encourage
participatory dance and music-making? Further studies based on the concept of a musical/dancing self could begin to address these questions.

8.2.6 A new methodology for Dance Studies

This project combines the vocabulary, theory and methods from Dance Analysis, Phenomenological and Motivational Psychology, and General System Theory to contribute to theoretical model-building in Dance Studies, Psychology and Music. This interdisciplinary approach was necessary to answer questions about the relationship between form and experience in dancing. This new methodology, which I will call ‘Choreo-Musical IPA’, is based on theories of optimal or peak experience, key concepts from General System Theory, and a commitment to idiography and the processes of hermeneutic research.

One result of developing this methodology—which succeeds in describing the experience of dancing and how formal elements contribute to that experience—is the possible addition to Dance Phenomenology of IPA, which goes beyond first-person accounts of experience to include the experience of others while keeping the perspective firmly focused on the experience of the dancing person.

Key concepts from General System Theory have proven useful in this project by framing both the research questions and the findings in terms of interactive elements in combination, resulting in an experience that is both perceived and created by the musical/dancing self as it seeks expression within an ordered temporal-spatial and community context. Perhaps the form of a dance can be thought of as an emergent property of dancing, in which the formal elements in interaction are realised by the dancers as they create a flow of movement and timing, continuously developing the form of the dance. Other Dance scholars have described dancing in terms of interrelated elements, but this project directly acknowledges and applies General System Theory to the study of participatory linked chain and round dancing.
8.3 Topics for future research

The findings of this project provide some initial clues for how best to describe the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances. These findings serve as a starting point for further investigation, prompting more questions about the nature of this experience and of other experiences in dancing. The following questions suggest promising areas of future research.

8.3.1 Applying Choreo-Musical IPA to other types of dancing

How useful is this new, interdisciplinary methodology in describing the experience of other types of dancing? Do the findings lend themselves to comparison across dance genres?

Some participants stated that they also participate in recreational Ballroom and Ballet dancing. Performing a Choreo-Musical IPA for these types of dancing would highlight similarities and differences in experience from the perspective of the dancing person. This would also enable an evaluation of the degree to which a Choreo-Musical IPA methodology results in a consistent and valid description of dancers’ experiences across dance genres, perhaps leading to more general statements about the experience of dancing.

This study focused on dancers with no ethnic ties to the regions in which the dances originated. What themes of experience might emerge when people with ethnic ties to these regions describe their experience of realising participatory linked chain and round dances? How would their experience differ from the participants in this study?

8.3.2 Research into dance and musicality

The findings of this study highlight the importance of music to the experience of dancing linked chain and round dances. How would the collaboration of Dance and Music researchers who look at dancing and music as different facets of one experience enrich the scholarship in both Dance and Music? Robinson & Packman (in
Dodds & Cook, 2013) provide an excellent example of such collaboration, each bringing their individual expertise to the study of Brazilian popular dancing.

Jordan, who has expertise in both Dance and Musicology, offers some insight to the relationship between movement and music as experienced by an audience. She speaks, for example, of the audience member’s kinaesthetic response to music (2011, p. 1). Her recognition of the close relationship between music and dancing as experienced could be extended to include participatory as well as presentational dancing. Could this type of research describe or explain how dancers respond to music with their movements as a type of expressive, creative listening? Based on the findings in this study, I propose that researchers need to take a closer look at music cognition, but involving a dancing response/interaction with music. This would expand research in music cognition to include the study of dance cognitive and its related processes.

When researching cognitive processes in music and dance, would the use of musical terminology help to establish links between the disciplines? In particular, the question of ‘counting’ versus ‘feeling’ music might offer a productive line of enquiry in terms of cognition and experience. How does ‘feeling’ the music while dancing change the nature of experience in dancing? Is this one way that people ‘lose’ themselves in a dance, or is it just the opposite, that counting beats helps a dancer to focus on the dance rather than on the self? Does this work differently for different people?

A future project might also benefit from the application of Jordan’s choreomusicological method of formal analysis (1996). For example, her method of rhythmic analysis could be used to determine how closely certain rhythms correlate with specific themes of experience in participatory linked chain and round dancing, or in other types of dancing.

### 8.3.3 Participants’ areas of interest

Participants provided a great deal of information about their participation in recreational Balkan dancing, some of which remains out of scope for this study.
Dancer3, for example, provided a comprehensive history of the Balkan dance ‘scene’ in London as it took hold in the late 1950’s as part of a folk revival and developed from that point onwards (Appendix C-3). Would researchers find a social/cultural investigation of the international folk dance (IFD) scene in the UK to be a worthwhile endeavour? The IFD ‘Balkan’ scene in the United States has now been described and documented (see, for example, Laušević, 2007 and Shay, 2008), but this type of record does not yet exist for recreational folk dancing in the UK.

The first IPA study resulted in a table of group themes that represent the experiences across the group, but this was derived from six individual analyses, one for each participant. Some participants spoke of the spiritual, emotional and expressive aspects of participatory linked chain and round dancing, and others mentioned how realising dances that have been traditionally categorised as men’s or women’s dances made them feel about themselves and their gender. All of these themes could be investigated more thoroughly, to provide an even richer description of the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances.

### 8.3.4 Psychological aspects of music and dancing

I have proposed the concept of a musical/dancing self. Would this construct be supported by additional research in Psychology? Does such a construct relate in some way to factors of well being or self actualisation? One study suggests that music listening has a positive effect on the well being of ‘older’ adults (Laukka, 2007), but I have found few studies on the effects of dancing on well being, and those often focus on stress-reduction through physical activity as one aspect of well being (for example, West et al., 2004). More research is called for in this area, as the implications of the findings could profoundly improve the quality of life for many people of all ages.

In Chapter 5, I suggested that the analysis of the Efforts as experienced could be made more rigorous by asking participants to explain their experience of the Efforts more precisely. I also argued that one-to-one associations between each Effort and the thinking, sensing, feeling and intuiting capacities proposed by Jung are a naïve use of Jung’s theory. A more sophisticated investigation of the Efforts, however, as they
relate to these capacities, might provide fascinating insights into the relationship between form and being. Within a dancing experience, how does the dancer’s use of Effort relate to the dancer’s use of their thinking, sensing, feeling and intuiting capacities at any given moment and during the dance as a whole? Does this result in an emergent property that feels ‘transformative’ to the dancer or that leads to a sense of wholeness or connection or of being one’s authentic self?

Similarly, theories of how the Efforts relate to the inner, ‘state of mind’ qualities of attention, intention, decision and precision (Bartenieff with Lewis, 2002, p. 53) could be made more convincing by analyses that indicate how individual Efforts and related thought processes interact within a complex system of dancing to result in emergent properties, rather than having a simple one-to-one correlation. Do some dances require use of more of the Efforts and qualities, and other dances fewer of these? What effect does this have on the dancer’s experience of being?

8.4 Summary

Having now summarised what this project has achieved, and having suggested how I and other researchers might continue to develop both theory and method in investigating the experience of dancing, I conclude this chapter by exploring what the findings of this project can add to the more poetic and philosophical statements that others have made about dance and dancing. In fact, my findings support and clarify the beautiful and poetic language often used by dancers and dance writers.

For example, in the Introduction to this thesis, I quoted the following statement from Fraleigh:

Dance points toward our moving and perishable embodied existence, holding it before us, filling and freeing present time that we may dwell whole within it.

(Fraleigh, 1987, p. xvii)

How does dance fill and free present time and what does it mean to ‘dwell whole within it’? In participatory linked chain and round dancing, and possibly in other
types of dancing, music and rhythm create a sense of time that dancers experience differently than everyday, chronological time. Dancers listen keenly with focused perception to the temporal framework provided by the musical and rhythmic time so that they can respond with movement to create timing. It is musicality—the ‘human ability to discern, interpret and appreciate musical nuances’ (Honing, 2011, p. 7)—that enables dancers to express the musical/dancing self in interaction with the musical time. Even within a prescribed movement vocabulary that limits the options for kinetic expression available to the dancers, each dancer responds to musical time in their own way. Through a physical connection with other dancers, each individual becomes part of a larger ‘whole’, made visible by the chain or round group formation and the physical forces amongst and between the dancers, forces which they both create and experience by means of step patterns and the use of Weight, Time, Space and Flow. Feeling a sense of their physical presence, the dancers might feel a sense of connection, seeing themselves as part of a dancing community that, in the present moment, is made manifest by the way in which the group formation defines the dance space within the larger general space of the venue, but which also spans time and place to include others who have danced the dance before. Aware of being different than usual, expressing the musical/dancing self as music and dancing, dancers might, at rare moments, transcend the sense of self during an optimal or peak experience that is intrinsically motivating and quintessentially enjoyable. The dancers are being-in-the-world in a fully present and connected way, ‘whole’.

If this project has clearly described the experience of dancing participatory linked chain and round dances, has highlighted the beauty and richness of the dance traditions of other countries which dance teachers from the Balkan region generously continue to share with those of us in the UK, and has shown that the formal elements of dancing contribute to a transformative, profound and highly enjoyable experience of the expression of a musical/dancing self, then my hope is that others will not only continue with further research on this topic, but that they will also dance more themselves and support any endeavour that results in more people dancing more often!
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FORM AND BEING

An Analysis of the Experience of Dancing Linked Chain and Round Dances

By

Karen Rose Cann

(Appendices)

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Dance, Film & Theatre

School of Arts

University of Surrey

January 2015

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Appendix A-1: Call for volunteers

Call for volunteers

Karen Cann
University of Surrey

Form and Being: A Study of the Experience of Dancing

Traditional Balkan round and chain dances are based on some of the most ancient European dance forms known. There is something so compelling in the steps, patterns, rhythms and melodies that even recreational dancers in non-traditional contexts seek out Balkan dance experiences. As a folk dancer and PhD student at the University of Surrey, my research explores how the formal elements of different dances (the movement vocabulary, rhythm, music and use of space and time) contribute to the experience of the dancing person.

The fact that dances from the Balkan region have travelled throughout the UK, Canada, Australia, Europe and the Americas—removed entirely from their traditional socio-cultural contexts and danced by people with no ethnic ties to the dances—is remarkable. My research will explore how people describe their experience of dancing these dances and how these descriptions reflect the movement and musical qualities of the dances. This research employs a methodology drawn from the disciplines of Psychology, Dance Analysis and Systems Theory.

Volunteers needed

As part of my research, I would like to talk with recreational folk dancers about their experience of Balkan music and dancing. Initially, I plan to conduct one-hour interviews, during which we will discuss various aspects of your experience of dancing, such as why you enjoy particular dances, how these dances make you feel, what you value about your dancing and your sense of self and time and space while dancing. All participants will remain anonymous in my final thesis and in any resulting publications.
Appendix A-1

If you would like to participate in this research, please contact me at my university email address: K.Cann@surrey.ac.uk.

Thank you!

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Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences
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Surrey
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Appendix A-2: Information sheet for participants

Project description:

Traditional Balkan round and chain dances are based on some of the most ancient European dance forms known. There is something so compelling in the steps, patterns, rhythms and melodies that even recreational dancers in non-traditional contexts seek out Balkan dance experiences. As a folk dancer and PhD student at the University of Surrey, my research explores how the formal elements of different dances (the movement vocabulary, rhythm, music and use of space and time) contribute to the experience of the dancing person.

The fact that dances from the Balkan region have travelled throughout the UK, Canada, Australia, Europe and the Americas—removed entirely from their traditional socio-cultural contexts and danced by people with no ethnic ties to the dances—is remarkable. My research will explore how people describe their experience of dancing these dances and how these descriptions reflect the movement and musical qualities of the dances. This research employs a methodology drawn from the disciplines of Psychology, Dance Analysis and Systems Theory.

My primary research question is: How do the formal elements of music and dancing contribute to the experience of a dancing person?

Potential benefits of the study

Writers and philosophers often characterize the personal experience of music and dancing as ephemeral and indescribable. Many people find it difficult to verbalize their experience of listening to music or of dancing. While some studies illuminate some aspects of how people experience music and dancing, these have not provided a coherent or consistent vocabulary that applies across music and dance genres.

Some of those who have attempted to describe their experiences of music and dancing, however, hint at the transformative nature of their experience. This project represents a convergence of theory and method in the Arts and Sciences, designed to describe and thus illuminate individuals’ experience of recreational dancing.
Appendix A-2

Expectations of participants

As part of my research, I will interview recreational folk dancers about their experience of Balkan music and dancing. Initially, I plan to conduct one-hour telephone interviews, during which we will discuss various aspects of your experience of dancing, such as why you enjoy particular dances, how these dances make you feel, what you value about your dancing and your sense of self and time and space while dancing.

IMPORTANT! These interviews will be conducted via speakerphone and digitally recorded. I will then transcribe the interview and erase the digital recordings.

In other interviews, I will gather information about the experience of people who dance Ballet and Ballroom so that I can compare experience across dance genres to see whether the theory and methods that I have chosen are useful in describing different dance forms.

Participants will be expected to attend one one-hour interview, with possible follow-up questions by phone, email or in person as agreed with the investigator. Participants will also be asked to complete a brief questionnaire outlining their age, ethnicity and dance background.

Rights of participants

1. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time with no explanation required. If a participant chooses to withdraw, all data collected from that participant will be destroyed.
2. All information about participants—such as personal identifiable information and any other data—will be treated as confidential. Participants will remain anonymous in the final version of the thesis and in any subsequent publications that may result from this study.
3. Any complaint or concerns about any aspects of the way you have been dealt with during the course of the study will be addressed; please contact Karen R Cann, Principal Investigator on 07826 072 855.

Potential risks to participants

Participating in the interviews might change how you experience dancing. For example, you might begin to attend more to time, space and your sense of self than you did prior to the study, possibly decreasing your enjoyment of dancing as a recreational activity. On the other hand, this might increase your enjoyment and enrich your experience of dancing.

After consulting with the University of Surrey Ethics Committee, it was decided that this study does not require an ethical opinion from the Committee.
Appendix A-3: Consent form used in this study

- I, the undersigned, voluntarily agree to take part in the study ‘Form and Being: A Study of the Experience of Dancing’.
- I have read and understood the Information Sheet provided. I have been given a full explanation by the investigator of the nature, purpose, location and likely duration of the study, and of what I will be expected to do. I have been advised about any discomfort and possible ill-effects on my health and well-being which may result. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions on all aspects of the study and have understood the advice and information given as a result.
- I consent to my personal data, as outlined in the accompanying information sheet, being used for this study and other research. I understand that all personal data relating to volunteers is held and processed in the strictest confidence, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).
- I consent to being interviewed by telephone (speakerphone), which will be digitally recorded, transcribed, and then the digital recording erased.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without needing to justify my decision and without prejudice.
- I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participating in this study. I have been given adequate time to consider my participation and agree to comply with the instructions and restrictions of the study.
Appendix A-3

Name of volunteer (BLOCK CAPITALS) ..........................................................

Signed ........................................................................................................

Date ...........................................................................................................

Name of researcher/person taking consent (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....KAREN R CANN.............

Signed ........................................................................................................

Date ...........................................................................................................

Appendix A-4: Pre-interview questionnaire

1. What is your age? ______ years

2. What is your ethnicity? __________________________________________

3. What is your highest level educational qualification?

4. How long have you been dancing folk dances? ______ years

5. At which of the following levels would you classify your folk dancing skills?

   - Beginner: Know a few dances but still learning

   - Intermediate: Know more than ten dances well

   - Advanced: Know many dances well and can lead some of the group dances

   - Expert: Know dances well enough to teach them, can dance most dances without having to think about the steps

   - Instructor: I teach folk dancing on a regular basis

Comments:
6. Please list three to five *Balkan folk dances* that you most enjoy doing. You can either list them by name or just describe them.

7. Why do you like the dances you listed in question 6?

8. How many years of *other dance training* have you had, if any? (English Country, Scottish Country, Ballet, Ballroom, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Tap or other)

   Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______

   Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______

   Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______

   Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______

   Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______
Appendix A-4

Dance form ___________________________ No. of years ________

Have you ever danced professionally?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, what types of dance and for how many years?

Dance form ___________________________ No. of years ________

Dance form ___________________________ No. of years ________

Dance form ___________________________ No. of years ________

Please list all dance forms in which you currently participate.

Dance form ___________________________

Dance form ___________________________

Dance form ___________________________

Dance form ___________________________

Please list other recreational activities that you enjoy.
Appendix A-5: Interview schedule

1. There are lots of recreational activities to choose from, and even lots of different types of dancing. What is it about folk dancing that led you to take it up as an activity?

   (Prompt: compared to a sport or music or other hobby)

2. What are you aware of when you are dancing?

   (Prompt: music, steps, other people, a feeling inside)

3. How is the time you spend dancing different than the time you spend doing other things?

   (Prompt: thinking about music, fun, socialising, movement for its own sake)

4. How does the dance music affect your experience of dancing?

   (Prompt: strong melody versus a strong beat, live versus recorded)

5. How do different movements, steps and patterns change your experience?

   (Prompt: do the steps and patterns of different dances feel different?)

6. How do you experience time while you are dancing?

   (Prompt: are you more or less aware of time passing? Do you use time differently while dancing?)

7. Is that different from when you are doing other things?

8. What is your experience of yourself while you are dancing?

   (Prompt: Are you more or less self-conscious or focused on things like your body more than usual?)
Appendix A-5

9. How do you experience space while you are dancing?
   
   (Prompt: Are you more or less aware of where you are in the room? In relation to other people? In relation to your body/self?)

10. Is that different from when you are doing other things?
Appendix B-1: Questionnaire for Dancer 1

1. What is your age? _58____ years

2. What is your ethnicity? __white British

3. What is your highest level educational qualification? University Diploma

4. How long have you been dancing folk dances? __20____ years

5. At which of the following levels would you classify your folk dancing skills?

- [ ] Beginner: Know a few dances but still learning

- [ ] Intermediate: Know more than ten dances well

- [ ] Advanced: Know many dances well and can lead some of the group dances

- [ ] Expert: Know dances well enough to teach them, can dance most dances without having to think about the steps

- [✓] Instructor: I teach folk dancing on a regular basis

Comments: I discovered folk dancing through the Circle Dance network and am passionate about both with a leaning towards traditional dance. I teach regular daytime and evening classes, occasional workshops and a long weekend once a year.
6. Please list three to five Balkan folk dances that you most enjoy doing. You can either list them by name or just describe them. How can I pick just 5?


Beyond the Balkans: Dagh Gorani, Armenia, Tulum Havasi, Turkey.

7. Why do you like the dances you listed in question 6? Dragisino Kolo – music is exciting, rhythms change through the dance, calls and shoutings, a challenge. Bukite, pauses, steps play with the rhythm almost dancing behind the beat, beautiful music. Tervelska reka, proud dance, synchronised arm movements, greet across the circle. Takanata, exciting music. Joc la Sinziene, feels like a very ancient piece of music, very unusual slow music and dance, powerful men and women’s voices. Dagh Gorani, my favourite dance (I’ll have this at my funeral), danced unjoined with expressive arm movements, from the heart, yearning for the homeland. Tulum Havasi, powerful piece of music, unusual steps danced by women whose menfolk have gone to war.

8. How many years of other dance training have you had, if any? (English Country, Scottish Country, Ballet, Ballroom, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Tap or other)

Dance form  Ballet   No. of years __13____

Dance form  Ballroom No. of years __3____

Dance form  Historical (court dances of 12th- 18th century)  No. of years __6____
Appendix B-1

Dance form  Scottish country dancing  No. of years _3______

Dance form  Cotswold Morris  No. of years ___6____

Have you ever danced professionally?   X☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, what types of dance and for how many years?

Dance form  Part-time historical dance with The Companie of Dansers

No. of years 5_______

Dance form ___________________________________ No. of years ______

Dance form ___________________________________ No. of years ______

Please list all dance forms in which you currently participate.

Dance form ___ Circle and international folk dancing

Dance form ______________________________________

Dance form ______________________________________

Dance form ______________________________________

Please list other recreational activities that you enjoy. Chichester Conservation Volunteers (tree planting, pond clearance etc), African djembe drumming, Growing my own fruit and vegetables, Walking and natural history.
1. What is your age? __57____ years

2. What is your ethnicity? _____UK

   White ______________________________

3. What is your highest level educational qualification? Postgraduate diploma

4. How long have you been dancing folk dances? _30_____ years

5. At which of the following levels would you classify your folk dancing skills? 

   [ ]

   [ ]

   [x]

   Comments: 
   Re 'most dances' above – there are just so many dances! I do of course know most of what I encounter regularly, but teachers with a different background (or just a different part of the country) can invariably produce a collection of things I've never heard of... And then again, I have taught so many dances, but many of them not for some years, so wouldn't feel guilty about checking notes / video before re-teaching them.

6. Please list three to five Balkan folk dances that you most enjoy doing. You can either list them by name or just describe them.

   Sta Dhio, Kalamatianos, Joc de Leagane, Cocek, Gorarce

7. Why do you like the dances you listed in question 6?
Appendix B-2

In general I prefer the more traditional dances with a smaller number of steps. I find then that I can 'lose myself' in the dance rather than having to think about it, and it's possible to do the dance for a comparatively long time. My current dancing group (elderly) certainly make a much better job of this kind of dance.(eg Sta Dhio, Kalamatianos, Cocck) But I also like more complex (many-step) dances (eg Joc de Leagane) if the music moves me. The last one I've listed (Gorarce) is a 'mens dance' that produces vigour as much as requiring it. All these are of course circle / line dances without partners.

8. How many years of other dance training have you had, if any? (English Country, Scottish Country, Ballet, Ballroom, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Tap or other)

(this is a bit difficult, have danced variously, not really 'trained' much...not sure how to estimate times)

Dance form _English Country_ (just occasionally over many years) _ No. of years 0.5
Dance form _Ballroom _ (taught this a little to absolute beginners) No. of years 1
Dance form _French / Breton Country / Folk (also teach this)_ No. of years 15
Dance form _Baroque (one weekend course!) _ No. of years 0.1
Dance form _Welsh folk ('twmpath') - occasionally_ No. of years 10

Have you ever danced professionally?     ☑ Yes   ☒ No

If yes, what types of dance and for how many years?

Dance form __________________________ No. of years _______
Appendix B-2

Dance form ____________________________ No. of years _______

Dance form ____________________________ No. of years _______

Please list all dance forms in which you currently participate.

Dance form __Balkan folk____________________________
Dance form __French / Breton folk_____________________
Dance form __Circle dance ___________________________

Dance form ____________________________

My wife is increasingly disabled, so has difficulty with most partner-based dances – hence we tend not to do Ballroom or English / Welsh folk these days.

Please list other recreational activities that you enjoy.

Gardening, Walking, Reading, Music (playing / singing) etc
Appendix B-3: Questionnaire for Dancer3

Demographic Information

1. What is your age? 68 years
2. What is your ethnicity? ENGLISH
3. What is your highest level educational qualification? HND: a course Diploma
4. How long have you been dancing folk dances? 50 years
5. At which of the following levels would you classify your folk dancing skills?
   - Beginner: Know a few dances but still learning
   - Intermediate: Know more than ten dances well
   - Advanced: Know many dances well and can lead some of the group dances
   - Expert: Know dances well enough to teach them, can dance most dances without having to think about the steps
   - Instructor: I teach folk dancing on a regular basis

Comments: The classification would be harder if we consider the broadest repertoire of Balkan dances.

6. Please list three to five Balkan folk dances that you most enjoy doing. You can either list them by name or just describe them.
   - Raqka (Dobrudja) from Christo Stojanov
   - Gankino horo
   - Pravo Trakiiska horo
   - Trakiiska Rakitnica
   - Gorbaetsiiska (Pinin) from Ventzi Sotirov

7. Why do you like the dances you listed in question 6?

No excuses for choosing all Bulgarian dances (my specialism). The first few (and I could have added Dneto horo) have a basic "Mezdani" form but can allow personal expression. Gorbaetsiiska is again expressive in a Macedonian way.
Appendix B-3

Form and Being: A Study of the Experience of Dancing
Karen Cann

8. How many years of other dance training have you had, if any? (English Country, Scottish Country, Ballet, Ballroom, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Tap or other)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dance form</th>
<th>No. of years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Country</td>
<td>1 (school)</td>
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</tbody>
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Have you ever danced professionally?  ☐ Yes  ☑ No

If yes, what types of dance and for how many years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dance form</th>
<th>No. of years</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please list all dance forms in which you currently participate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dance form</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balkan &amp; International Folk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Please list other recreational activities that you enjoy.

PLAYING IN A BALKAN MUSIC GROUP

WALKING
Appendix B-4: Questionnaire for Dancer4

1. What is your age? 63 years
2. What is your ethnicity? white British
3. What is your highest level educational qualification? B Soc Sc Hons 2(1)
4. How long have you been dancing folk dances? 31 years total, international 21 years
5. At which of the following levels would you classify your folk dancing skills?
   - Beginner: Know a few dances but still learning
   - Intermediate: Know more than ten dances well
   - Advanced: Know many dances well and can lead some of the group dances
   - Expert: Know dances well enough to teach them, can dance most dances without having to think about the steps
   - Instructor: I teach folk dancing on a regular basis

Comments:
6. Please list three to five *Balkan folk dances* that you most enjoy doing. You can either list them by name or just describe them.

- Pristinka
- Kulska Bačvanka
- Hora Miressii
- Bučimis
- Jiana

7. Why do you like the dances you listed in question 6?

- Pristinka – interesting flowing rhythm with scope for interpretation, use of scarves and arm movements, makes me feel like a young girl!
- Kulska Bačvanka – starts slow, ends very fast, fun as part of a circle
- Hora Miressii – love the music, enjoy the control needed to dance it properly, puts me in another place
- Bučimis – exhilarating fun
- Jiana – ditto, heightened by being in a close-knit basket

8. How many years of other dance training have you had, if any? (English Country, Scottish Country, Ballet, Ballroom, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Tap or other)

- Dance form Ballet No. of years 4
- Dance form English Country No. of years 10
Dance form Scottish Country No. of years 1

Dance form Israeli dancing No. of years 10

Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______

Have you ever danced professionally?  □ Yes  □ No

If yes, what types of dance and for how many years?

Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______

Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______

Dance form ___________________________ No. of years _______

Please list all dance forms in which you currently participate.

Dance form International Folk Dancing

Dance form Israeli dancing

Dance form ___________________________

Dance form ___________________________

Please list other recreational activities that you enjoy.

embroidery, knitting, walking, reading, learning foreign languages, crosswords, sudoku, going to the ballet and opera and going to associated masterclasses and insight evenings, pilates
Appendix B-5: Questionnaire for Dancer5

1. What is your age? ____48__ years
2. What is your ethnicity? ____White British_____________________________
3. What is your highest level educational qualification? D.Phil
4. How long have you been dancing folk dances? ___4___ years
5. At which of the following levels would you classify your folk dancing skills?
   - Beginner: Know a few dances but still learning
   - Intermediate: Know more than ten dances well
   - Advanced: Know many dances well and can lead some of the group dances
   - Expert: Know dances well enough to teach them, can dance most dances without having to think about the steps
   - Instructor: I teach folk dancing on a regular basis

Comments:
Appendix B-5

6. Please list three to five *Balkan folk dances* that you most enjoy doing. You can either list them by name or just describe them.

  Ispaiche
  Vlashko
  Gorbeticjsko
  Jeni Jol
  Ovcepolsko Oro

7. Why do you like the dances you listed in question 6?

Different reasons, but mostly because of the feeling of joy they induce (esp 2 and 4), a feeling of kinship (1), make me feel graceful (1 and 3), feeling of having mastered something difficult (5)

8. How many years of *other dance training* have you had, if any? (English Country, Scottish Country, Ballet, Ballroom, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Tap or other)

Dance form _____ Ballet____________________ No. of years ___3____

Dance form _____Modern___________________ No. of years ___2____

Dance form ________________________________ No. of years _______

Dance form ________________________________ No. of years _______

Dance form ________________________________ No. of years _______

Have you ever danced *professionally*?  
☐ Yes  
☐ No

If yes, what types of dance and for how many years?
Appendix B-5

Dance form ____________________________ No. of years ______

Dance form ____________________________ No. of years ______

Dance form ____________________________ No. of years ______

Please list all dance forms in which you currently participate.

Dance form _occasionally join in a ceilidh___________

Dance form _______________________________________

Dance form _______________________________________

Please list other recreational activities that you enjoy.

Playing violin (I play with an orchestra)

Playing piano (on my own)
Appendix B-6: Questionnaire for Dancer6

1. What is your age? __56____ years

2. What is your ethnicity?
   _________________________________
   English

3. What is your highest level educational qualification? MA (currently part time PhD student)

4. How long have you been dancing folk dances? __32___ years

5. At which of the following levels would you classify your folk dancing skills?
   
   - Beginner: Know a few dances but still learning
   - Intermediate: Know more than ten dances well
   - Advanced: Know many dances well and can lead some of the group dances
   - Expert: Know dances well enough to teach them, can dance most dances without having to think about the steps
   - Instructor: I teach folk dancing on a regular basis

Comments:
6. Please list three to five Balkan folk dances that you most enjoy doing. You can either list them by name or just describe them.

After much thought – I’d say that instead of listing 3-5 dances what I enjoy is dancing with Romanians, Bulgarian, Macedonians etc

If you had asked me this question some years ago I would have listed my favourite dances of the time!

7. Why do you like the dances you listed in question 6?

8. How many years of other dance training have you had, if any? (English Country, Scottish Country, Ballet, Ballroom, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Tap or other)

Dance form ______Ballet_(inc some Modern/Tap)_________ No. of years ______20____

Dance form _____North west English Morris______________No. of years ______8____

Dance form _______Israeli folk dance _________________ No. of years ______10___

Dance form _______Scandinavian_______________________ No. of years _______8____

Dance form _______General European folk dance_________ No. of years ______30____

Dance form _______Ballroom and Latin American_________ No. of years ______5____
Appendix B-6

Have you ever danced *professionally*?  □ Yes    □ No

If yes, what types of dance and for how many years?

Dance form _______________________________ No. of years ______

Dance form _______________________________ No. of years ______

Dance form _______________________________ No. of years ______

Please list all dance forms in which you *currently* participate.

Dance form _____ Romanian _________________________________

Dance form _____ Bulgarian _________________________________

Dance form _____ Ballroom and Latin __________________________

Dance form _____ Zumba _________________________________

Please list *other recreational activities* that you enjoy.
Appendix C-1: Dancer1

Interview date: 08 December 2010

(Discussed that we are talking over speaker phone and that the interview is being recorded.)

¶We’re keeping strictly to Balkan dancing, as in your information sheet.

Um, I’m focusing on Balkan dancing, but I’m interested in your experience, whatever that might be. So if you feel that there’s something relevant that you want to contribute, absolutely feel free...

¶Oh right.

…to mention that. And I have some questions here to kind of guide this discussion but we don’t have to stick to every single one of those questions, so…we’ll just get started, see how we go, but um, really I want to hear what’s important to you. So, okay. So, the first question is, um, there are lots of recreational activities to choose from and even lots of different types of dancing, so what is it about folk dancing that led you to take it up as an activity?

¶I came to folk dancing through circle dancing.

Okay

Are you familiar with circle dancing?

I know a little bit about it, but if you could explain it, that would be great.

¶It’s basically international folk dance from all over the world as well as modern choreographies.

Hmm, okay, so modern choreography of traditional folk dances, then.

¶To all kinds of music creating the same sense and feeling that we have in doing the traditional dances. But it’s, um, encompassing a wider range of styles of music and styles of dance. All within a circle.
Oh, okay, so using the basic form of the circle, and do you use some of the same steps as in traditional folk dancing?

Yes

So, taking the same steps, setting them to different music.

Different steps, yes.

And different steps. Okay. Um, what exactly is it that’s based on the folk dancing then, if it’s modern choreography and different music, what is it that persists from the folk dance?

It’s a combination of the two – it’s the folk dancing but on a more spiritual, deeper level.

Oh, okay. Can you go ahead and describe that in more detail?

Yes! Um, yeah. If you haven’t experienced it, um, we get exactly the same feelings and energies as we do with traditional dances but people tend to express their feelings and their responses to the dances more openly than they do in the traditional folk dance world.

Okay.

I was drawn into this kind of dancing through that, and from there I have a particular passion for traditional dances and particularly Balkan dances.

Oh, okay. So starting from...

But not exclusively.

Not exclusively, no. Um, yes, I guess on the questionnaire it asks about other kinds of dancing, and I myself do many kinds of dancing, so...it’s I think the dancing that we love.

Yes!

Um, I’m interested, I know it can be difficult to describe in words, but you said about, um, feelings and energies from the dances, can you talk about that in more detail at all?

What I feel when we’re dancing in a circle, when we’re joined in a circle and we’re connected we’re dancing as equals and we’re experiencing all
sorts of different energies and we’re dancing dances that would have been
done for hundreds of years, perhaps[ ] by people feeling the same things
that we’re experiencing.

Yes. Okay, and how is that different for you to any other sport or hobby or
just music.

It’s different from a lot of other forms of dance where you’re dancing
individually or as a couple, not connected to the rest of the community that
you’re dancing with.

Yep. Okay. And so what is it that you’re aware of when you’re dancing
individually or as a couple, not connected to the rest of the community that
you’re dancing with.

You mentioned a couple of things – a sense of connection to the other
dancers in the circle...what else?

A feeling of moving as one as we move into the circle and out. A feeling
of excitement as you recognize the music and we look forward to dancing
the steps, um, there are many feelings.

Okay.

Like a sense of pride, some of the music makes you feel a proud feel.

Mm-hmmm. And besides feelings, what else are you aware of when you’re
dancing?

Rhythms and melodies and ...excitement.

Yeah? Great, okay. Um, how is the time that you spend dancing different
than the time that you spend doing other things.

Good question...

It’s a tough question, I mean, in terms of maybe what you’re thinking about
or focusing on, or...

It’s focusing that we’re all equal in the circle, I think that’s a fundamental
thing, and everybody’s welcome, you don’t have to be at a certain level
before you can join the group and dance or you don’t have to, um, have any
previous experience. Don’t have to be an expert, um, you can just join in
and take part with like-minded people.

Mm-hmm. And you find that’s true with the Balkan dancing.
¶Yes!

Yes, okay. Um, how important would you say is the social aspect?

¶Very important.

Yeah? And how is that different from other kinds of socialising?

¶I think it can be experienced in other forms of socializing...a way you’re participating in a shared activity, but for me dance is fundamental to my life, so um, that is my main hobby, dance, I do love it.

Mm-hmm. And what is it that, um, I know I’m asking difficult questions and dancing is one of those things that seems to be very difficult for people to put into words, um...so don’t worry that these are tough questions.

¶That’s okay.

But what is it about dancing that is fundamental?

¶For me, it’s rhythm, I do everything in rhythm, rhythm is um fundamental to everything I do.

Uh-huh.

¶Responding to rhythm, whatever kind of rhythm, if I hear a rhythm anywhere, any music, any drumming, any tapping, I want to respond to it with my body in some way.

Mm-hmm. Okay. Um, how would you say the dance music affects your experience of the dancing? You’ve mentioned rhythms a lot.

¶How does the…?

How does the music affect your experience of the dancing? So, an example of, well, even in Balkan dancing there’s lots of different types of music from various regions and different rhythms, some more complex than maybe we’re used to and some more straightforward...so how would the music affect your experience while you’re dancing?

¶It would certainly affect your mood, um, it um, I love Macedonian dance because the pauses are as important as the actual notes of the music.I like odd rhythms, it’s, um, a challenge, um, and the music it sets the mood, it
can be very melancholy but beautiful. It can be very exciting, can be very soothing.

*Mm-hmm. Okay. Does it matter too much whether the music is live or recorded? Does it make a difference?*

Yes it does make a difference, I don’t have the opportunity for live music but yes, that does add to the experience.

Yes, so you find your experience is enhanced when there’s live music.

*Definitely, yes.*

Why do you think that is? What is it about live music?

*Um, you’ve got live musicians who are obviously passionate about the music and you can watch them play and see what instruments they’re using and uh, respond to their enthusiasm with your dancing.*

*Mm-hmm. So it kind of enriches the experience then. There’s musicians to actually see and, um, you get a sense of them participating, yeah? Okay. Just want to make sure I got that.*

*Now, how would you say different movements and steps and patterns change your experience? So, you mentioned the Macedonian dancing complex rhythms and the pauses. So, when doing different Balkan dances, how would the movements and steps and patterns kind of change your experience?*

*Change my experience from what?*

*Um, yeah…it’s a good question.*

*From another kind of dancing?*

*What I’m trying to get at is some dances are, um, let’s say they’re slower moving and um, perhaps the music is more melodiuous. Other dances are very quick and the rhythms are critically important and when you’re dancing them, you’re executing the steps sometimes in entirely different ways, with different styling. So, how would you compare, say, doing a very fast Macedonian dance to maybe doing a very slow Macedonian dance?*

*Um, it could be as beautiful, um maybe more moving.*
Mm-hmm. So moving more slowly you find emotionally more moving.

Yes.

Mm-hmm. Can you talk any more about that?

Um, yeah, I mean, I kind of shut off from Armenian dances because they’re not strictly Balkan, is that included in your research?

If you’d like to include Armenian because of some similarity you feel...

...dances to me, because of the...the uh, music comes from the heart. Armenia is such a disturbed place where people have been uprooted and the Armenian dances speak of longing for homeland and it touches you deeply, you can feel what they must be feeling.

Mm-hmm. Through the dancing, you think, yeah?

Through the dancing, yes. Expressive arm movements that are included in Armenian.

The arm movements included. I’m repeating a little bit just so I’m sure I get everything on the recorder and to make sure that I’m following correctly. So, um, okay. So comparing, say Armenian to Macedonian, they’re very different in your experience.

They can be [different]. Within each country there are different styles... in the different regions.

Right.

And all of the different locations...

Mm-hmm. So when you’re doing a quick dance, let’s say, how does that, what is your experience of that versus doing maybe a slow dance?

Um, excitement, sometimes there are shoutings and calls that, um, add to the vibrancy of the dance. It can be a challenge, it’s quite nice to stamp and reinforce the rhythm. Um, but I find it also important to do slow beautiful gentle dances. I like the energies.

Mm-hmm. So different energies with different types of dances.

As a response to music.
Great. Okay. I do understand, actually, you’re doing a great job describing all this, I know exactly what you’re talking about from my own experience, thank you.

Um, okay. Now, my research is looking at the experience of time and space and a sense of self while we’re dancing. So how would you say you experience time while you’re dancing?

Time passes without you noticing. Because you’re completely concentrating on the activity that you’re carrying out, and other thoughts are shut out. Other things you might have been thinking of before you started dancing.

Yes. So time passes and you’re not really noticing time. Is there anything about time that you do notice, for example, rhythms, um, just any thoughts you might have about time as you experience it while you’re dancing. Or does it completely go away and you don’t think about time at all?

As a teacher I have to keep an eye on the clock, but that’s a different aspect. Um, it’s a time everybody looks forward to each week. It’s the highlight of their week to dance. Um, it’s a special time for them, um, something they look forward to.

So as a teacher, you’re aware that people who come to the class look forward to the time they spend dancing as a special time, it’s sort of set aside. Okay.

And, um, how is that different from when you’re doing other things? So why is dancing, you know, special in that way? In your experience of time.

It has to be experienced; it’s hard to describe how to experience, when you’re trying to describe it to somebody who hasn’t danced. It’s a difficult thing to describe, it’s something that you need to experience, dancing with other people, in that setting with many different kinds of music.

Yeah, it is very difficult to describe in words. This is one of the things I’m trying to do with this research, so, I know what you mean. Okay.

You, do you have any contact with the circle dance world, because their magazine ‘The Grapevine’ is full of articles of people expressing their
responses to the dances and just all these sort of questions that you’re asking. (Chat about the circle dancing network)

So the other questions, they’re kind of similar. So, how do you experience your self while you’re dancing, and how is that different from when you’re doing other things?

Quite different, my dancing self is different from my self in other activities. Um, it’s the music, I actually get transported by the music. No sense of, no sense of competition or...emotionally rewarding and uplifting. And I’m trying to compare with other things that I’m also passionate about in different ways. It’s fundamental to me because dance is something I’ve always done since very small, so, it’s something that’s been with me for a long time. But dancing in a circle is quite different from other kinds of dance that I’ve done. It’s activity, it’s exercise, it’s relaxation, it’s um, jubilation and relaxation. It brings out all kinds of emotions, might make you sorrowful, might make you happy...

Would you say that you’re more or less self-conscious while you’re dancing. How does it change this idea of your self?

It can make you more self-conscious, of your body and movements, and you’re overlapping with a circle dancer where perhaps we are dancing without holding hands and you have more freedom for expression, but that doesn’t cover your Balkan dancing area, does it.

That’s fine, whatever you think is relevant...

In circle dancing we sometimes have a more contemporary type of dances where you have a little more freedom in your movements to respond to the music in your own special way.

Mm-hmm. So would you say that in Balkan dancing, which is more prescribed, um, let’s see, what am I trying to ask you, it’s hard to formulate the questions sometimes, too. Where is the joy and the freedom even in dances that are more prescribed? Or is it a different kind of a thing, whereas you might feel some freedom of expression in circle dances...

Um, it is different, I mean, it is different, yes. It is different. Um, we greet each other across the circle, you know you, um, lovely dancing in the circle...across the circle, ‘I haven’t seen her for a while’, and you give ‘em a smile and make a connection as you’re, as you’re dancing. Particularly
there’s a nice feeling in some of the Bulgarian sporenkas where you start in a basket hold, um, doing just grapevine steps, and there’s like a feeling of sort of, solidarity that you can experience. Um, when the music starts and it’s quite bold and strong rhythm and here we are all in a strong, basket hold and all doing a simple step together, it feels like a real moving in unison kind of feeling.

*Mm-hmm. Okay. Alright, and what about, so we’ve talked about time and self, what about your experience of space while you’re dancing? Sort of where you are in the room, your relationship to other people, how is that different? What is that like and how is that different than maybe when you’re doing other things?*

¶One would have to be aware of the people either side of you and uh, make allowances perhaps being much taller than you or shorter than you or less experienced or [pause]. If you’re in the more experienced group you definitely get the feeling that you’re moving as one.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶But if I’m doing circle dancing and we do a dance where we’re not joined then you have some freedom to use all the space there is in the hall, which can be a joy sometimes to really move and really step out.

Yeah. Okay, well what else would you like to tell me about your experience of dancing? So, you read the article and thought, ‘Oh, that would be interesting.’ So is there anything we haven’t covered that you would like to just tell me about, about your own experience? Or have I got you completely off track with the wrong questions?

¶Some of the dance, some of the music, as soon as you hear it, you feel that it’s a really ancient, really old piece of music that, um, you get the feeling that it’s something very very timeless that people must have been dancing to for years. There’s a slower piece of music, the Romanian Joc la Sinzien, do you know that one?

¶Women sing and the men sing and there’s a real, it’s a slow rhythm, slow unusual rhythm and you feel like it’s...[ ]..old music and it’s very stirring.

*Mm-hmm. What else about it do you love? Obviously you love the circle dancing and you love the Balkan dancing, are there other kinds of dancing that you also love?*
I have done in the past, but this is my main dance activity at the moment.

*Why do you think people, I don’t know about your ethnic background, I know mine is not Balkan in any way...*

Nor is mine.

*Okay. Why do you think people without ethnic ties to these dances take this up and continue this as a hobby, or as an activity, or as a teaching activity?*

Um, I think the enthusiasm would probably come from the teachers, the wonderful selection of teachers that we have from all these different countries who come to England to pass on their enthusiasm for the dance and their culture. And in England we don’t have really dance culture, unfortunately, or very little English dance culture, not British. The dance, or one(?) for many people, um, I think it’s a need that should be filled, pity we don’t do more English dances and sorts of dances, country dances, um and I think we um, really enjoy the enthusiasm that, um, that people who are proud of their culture are wanting to pass on, and we are keen to draw on that. That’s my experience.

*Okay, great!*

Um, it’s really nice to come across learning new dances or it’s also nice to do the familiar ones, but nice to learn more and learn more interesting and more tunes and hear more music and, I particularly like to hear when the teacher can give me some background to the dance, and where, which region it’s come from or what costumes would be worn or what locations it would be danced or where they danced it, and that all adds to the enjoyment of the experience.

*Mm-hmm. Do you tend to enjoy the dances that are more complex and intricate or the simpler dances or it just depends on the music?*

I like them all equally, I like the balance of all, both. The very simple ones can be very beautiful.

*Mm-hmm. Okay. What else would you like to tell me about your experience of dancing?*

Ummm, particularly to circle dancing, it’s opened up so many doors for me, and opportunities, I never thought I would be teaching the dance but
now I find I am. Um, and I'm [ ]-ing also contemporary dance within the circle folk movements, which gives an opportunity for another form of expression.

*Mm-hmm. So kind of evolving the folk dances into something new.*

¶Yes!

*Mm-hmm.*

¶I’ve started dance therapy as well, which is interesting. I’ve done a course, I just wanted to take the dance to a wider range of people and thought I should have some experience of some training. I’ve not used it to a great degree, although it was interesting to do the course.

(chat)

*Well that’s really all the questions I have, it’s lovely to talk with you.* (chat and thanking the participant)

¶It’s something I enjoy talking about!

(Wrap up and good-bye. Request for future contact to obtain dance notes.)
Appendix C-2: Dancer2

Interview date: 04 January 2011

(Confirmed permission to record the interview)

Okay, I have some questions for you today. This is really meant to be a conversation. So the questions that I’ll ask you are purposely a bit vague, perhaps, um if you have any questions about the questions, I’m happy to clarify. But the idea is that I’d like to kind of just tell me your own experience, whatever that is. So, um, we’ll go ahead and I’ll ask you the first question, unless you have any questions for me.

So the first question is, there are lots of recreational activities to choose from, and there are even lots of different types of dancing, so what is it about folk dancing that led you to take it up as an activity?

¶Well, that’s quite a complicated question, isn’t it?

Okay, well, take your time.

¶(Laughs)

¶I was never much of a person for recreational energetic activities, partly because I was never very slim, when I was younger, so I wasn’t a sport sort of person, and I had been introduced to other types of dance, as a child, by the family, so I can do a bit of ballroom dancing and all that sort of thing…

Mm-hmm.

¶So, I was more inclined to dance, um, but I can’t really say that there’s a good, sensible sort of reason for why I took up folk dance, simply that I was inspired by it, I loved it when I first encountered it. And I didn’t look back, really.

Mm-hmm. Well I can certainly understand that, being a folk dancer myself as well as doing other dance forms also. You said you were ‘inspired by it’, can you describe that in a little more detail?
Well, I first encountered European folk dance, Balkan mostly, at the festival of mind, body and spirit back in, when was it, 1980, one of these big commercial sort of alternative spiritual fair thingies, and there was a chap there, a chap called David Roberts, I believe, I think it was him, though I’m not quite sure, who was doing what he called ‘sacred dance’, which was a version of European folk dance that had been brought to the Findhorn community by a chap called Bernhardt Rosien. And that sort of form of dancing has been quite popular in this country and others as well, in the States, certainly.

Yeah, did you say at Findhorn?

...about half a dozen dances, which were the first ones that they were teaching, and I just loved it, I mean, I danced a couple of Greek things and I danced Arap, in particular, I remember being particularly hooked, as it were, after dancing Arap. And other things, I just loved it. Now, in my personal history at the time, I was involved in various pagan groups, and they did things that they called dancing which were particularly – awful! [laughs] Basically involving running around until they ran out of breath. And I thought, ‘Well, I’m not very impressed with this’. Whereas I was impressed with what the folks were doing with what they called sacred dance.

Mm-hmm.

Because it did have that effect on me, it felt like a sacred thing to be doing.

Mm-hmm. You’re mentioning a lot of very interesting themes. So what to you makes a difference between a feeling of doing something sacred in dance and a feeling of just running around till your out of breath, as you say.

Well, in the case of the running around, they literally did do that, without music and without rhythm. So, you couldn’t really call it dance. I sort of say to my dancers sometimes, and they think I’m joking, ‘The idea is that you put on the music and you move your bits in time with the music.’ So, you know, but lots of people haven’t quite thought this out! So I suppose the thing that makes it a proper dance to start with is a real sense of rhythm.

Okay.
But the difference, the, I suppose it’s just the combination of the whole thing, the meter of the music and the rhythm, felt more transformative than other sort of things I had been used to, and certainly more so than British type folk dance, which is very much, well, has a tendency to be a bit ‘hey nonny-nonny’.

Okay. Yeah.

A bit sort of, twee and not taken seriously. Whereas, I mean I didn’t really know then but I know now, having danced in Greece and in Brittany and in other parts of the world that people there still take their dancing seriously! Their traditional dance. And it’s still very much part of their community life.

Mm-hmm. Okay. So you mentioned the word ‘transformative’, and I’m going to ask you a bit more about that. In what way do you find the dancing transformative?

Well, I think it will be difficult to be precise. In some vague sort of way, I think it does induce, to some extent, an altered state of consciousness. In the ways in which meditation and other sorts of things can achieve, partly I can understand that it achieves this by moving in rhythm, um, I can also understand that it does, that in doing so, it stills a lot of what you might call mental chatter. And other sorts of things, so that one’s mental processing is happening in a different sort of way.

Mm-hmm.

Other than that, it’s more of a personal sort of thing that I can’t really describe.

Yeah, it’s very difficult to describe, hence my whole thesis, which is trying to find the words to describe the experience of dancing, especially folk dancing, which isn’t often described, um, in this way.

Yeah, I mean you do also get a sense from it of, um, dancing in community. Which you don’t get, I think from, well, you don’t really get it from things like ballroom dancing, because you’re normally just dancing with one partner, and I don’t get it very well from British folk dancing, although there is a bit of a sense of it, and you certainly don’t get it from disco type dancing if you’re on your own, or whatever, or if you’re just trying to pull, or whatever, it doesn’t really work in the same way. So I do
very much and more or less always, from these sorts of dances, get a sense of dancing in community. And that community seems, in that sort of vague, not easy to define sense, to stretch back to everybody who’s shared in these dances, it’s not something that is isolated, but something that is felt in community in the folks that are dancing and with everybody else who’s danced it.

So people who have danced it in the past as well?

¶Yes, I think so! I mean I could dance for example, if I dance ‘Pentazalis’ [?], I’m aware that people danced that as a celebration of their rebellion on Crete against the Turks, and so on. Now I don’t have to particularly endorse everything they did or wanted, but I can still be aware that this was important to them when they danced it.

So not only do you have a sense of dancing in community, but you have a sense of dancing with a community that spans time.

¶Yes, definitely.

People you may never have met.

¶Yeah, absolutely! There’s a whole continuity there between the folks that have danced in the past. I mean, I can think of, um, an experience I had, there was a dance that I learned first as a circle dance, and intriguingly, somebody made a dance to it, a dance to the tune, and they hadn’t known what you could call the ‘real’ dance. A bit later on, I encountered a video from the Dora Stratou Theatre with them doing the real thing, and I thought ‘Oh, I know that tune!’ and off these people go doing something completely different! So a bit later on, I’m at a Greek workshop with a Greek chap, and he told me, apart from teaching us the dance properly, he told me that the person, the old chap who led the video had been his teacher in Athens, and that he’d come from Pontos, with the Greeks who’d come from there and so on and so forth, and all this sort of stretched back quite, quite literally, there was a succession of teachers, but I sensed it in other ways as well.

Mm-hmm. So, why do you think that’s important?

¶Well, I think that’s what people need! I think people need that sense of continuity, of community, and connection with the folks that have gone before them. That’s what, I mean, I personally tend to think that’s what’s
missing in our present day culture mostly. That people, if they get the 
chance, they tend to respond to it when it’s there.

Okay. Um, yes, I’m not agreeing or disagreeing with you – what you’re 
talking about is fascinating. You mentioned also a sort of an altered state of 
consciousness. Can you describe that in terms maybe of your sense of time, 
your sense of space, how you perceive your self or not, you know, whether 
the self becomes a little less important at that moment?

¶Well, I’m not sure that I can, it is a bit too vague.

Yeah, it’s difficult to put into words, isn’t it?

¶Yes it is.

¶I mean, you could say all those things to some extent, but it’s not 
something that’s, that I find is very explicitly thought through at the time.

Yeah.

¶I could mystify it and say that one gets a sense of joining in with the 
cosmic dance, or something like that, but that’s really being a bit 
intellectual about it.

Okay.

¶Um, one feels certain things but one’s not quite really sure, explicitly, 
what one’s feeling.

So it’s very much experienced and very difficult to apply language to. Is 
that right?

¶I mean, a sense of time, yes, I mean, I can dance certain dances, especially 
if we’ve got music that goes on properly, for a long time, or if musicians 
are playing for quite a long time, that um, also, I’m quite aware as a teacher 
about the time as well, because I would usually know the music, if it’s 
recorded music, well enough to know exactly when it’s going to stop.

Mm-hmm.

¶One of the things that we do at our place, we have a dance party every 
year in our garden, which is open to the public, and we have a sort of trail 
around as a sort of maze, within the garden, and I actually lead people 
around this maze, dancing. And it takes about half an hour! And what we
tend to do fairly slow, shuffly sort of dances ’cause the ground is uneven, you know, um. But we always sort of, well, I like to end it off with a particular, um, medley of tunes and I know exactly how it finishes, so I can get people back having ambled around for about half an hour exactly on time as this music hits its final notes, you know. So I’m quite aware of time as well, it’s not that, um, one’s completely unaware of everything else.

*Mm-hmm. So that’s in a teaching setting, where you’re leading.*

¶That’s in a teaching context and I suppose it’s possible, I mean, I’m more often these days in a teaching context than not, it’s possible that if was in a larger, a larger group, and wasn’t having to be responsible, that I could drift off a bit more, I mean that has happened in odd occasions in the past.

*Mm-hmm, okay. Did you say you could drift off more?*

¶I think that’s possible, it depends very much on the dance and the music, of course.

Yeah. So, um, again, thinking about the experience of time, how do you use time differently when dancing than normally, or when doing other things?

¶How do I use time? Gosh! Well, I’m probably aware of rhythm, um, that the time is very much split up into the musical phrases and bars, and so on. And the sense of time as I experience it, I’m not quite sure, really, I mean it…. I am fascinated how sometimes a piece of music that I thought was long turns out to be the sort of feel [ ] short, we seem to have danced it and it’s all done already and vice versa occasionally, that something I thought was reasonable seemed to go on and on and on. And it’s, um, not very predictable in that sense. That’s probably true about most people’s experience of almost anything.

Okay. Um, let’s see. You mentioned that you know how long the music is. So let’s talk about the music a little bit. That would be recorded music, yeah?

¶Yes, I mean, obviously, if people are playing, I wouldn’t necessarily know what they’re doing, if they were my band, I’d have to direct them, but.. But recorded music, I would know what it was going to do, normally.

Yeah. So how does the dance music affect your experience of the dancing?
Oh very much! I mean, I’m very picky about the sort of music I use, I’ve spent lots of money on good-quality recordings and so on, and, I find that lots of groups, certainly SIFD groups, have a tendency to use very short pieces of music. Which I don’t like at all, you know, you dance for about a minute and a half and that’s it, on to the next one.

Mm-hmm.

It’s like you’re trying to collect lots of dances. And too, length of it matters but just general musical quality, um, I go for authentic music when I can.

Yeah. When you say ‘authentic’, what do you mean exactly?

If I was dancing a Greek dance, I would try to have something done by Greek musicians, who were used to playing those sort of tunes for dances, if at all possible.

Okay, so more the music as it would be in its traditional context, then.

Yes, I mean, certainly, let’s say, not particularly, um, with extra beats put in or played on a synthesizer or whatever, if I have a choice in it.

Okay.

But then, there’s plenty of bands around playing good stuff these days, it is not difficult. Used to be that we had to, had to try and cope with scratchy old recordings. Um, but there is an enormous amount of good quality material now.

Mm-hmm. Okay. So that improves the quality of your experience?

Oh, I think so, I mean, if the music sounds good, it helps you to imagine that you are with the musicians dancing in the village festival or whatever. As opposed to in some grotty church or with a scratchy tape recorder.

Okay. And do you sometimes dance in a traditional village context? It sounds like you’ve travelled a bit...How does that change your experience of the dancing?

I have a bit, when I’ve had the chance. Very much so, yes, just that, the awareness that people are dancing this for, you know, um, shall we say as part of their ‘normal lives’. As opposed to a recreational activity.
So how is the feeling different when people dance as part of their normal lives?

Well, I’m not quite sure what, I mean, I don’t know how they feel about it, I haven’t really talked to them. For me, it’s the idea that it’s, I suppose just the idea that it’s more integrated into one’s life as opposed to something very separate. We think in the West in British, British-American type cultures of recreation and work as being completely separate things, very compartmentalized and quite fussy about the idea of recreation and so on as opposed to just dancing because we dance at certain times of the year, or whatever and enjoy it.

Mm-hmm. Okay. Um, let me just look through my questions here. Right, so given that different dances have different movements and steps and patterns, how does that change your experience of the dancing? For example, you might have a very slow and sustained type of movement versus a very quick type of movement, does that lead you to a different state of consciousness or a different feeling? How does that all work together?

Well, I think it does, yes although it’s, there’s, um, you know, as so often it’s so difficult to be precise, but I can think of many different dances that I would say that, you know, were favourite types of dances, they don’t all have to be slow or fast or whatever, or small movements or big movements or so on, they do all certainly feel different. Although a big part of the feeling of the difference has to do with different sorts of rhythms as well. Bit difficult to make a separation of how you move in terms of speed of movement, shall we say, with um, the nature of rhythms when you’re doing some fast movements and some slow movements as a part of that. But yes, they do feel different, I find I like to do quite a wide variety of things, I do you know, a whole variety of dances. I often notice that a number of the people that I teach aren’t quite so, so what, so flexible, shall we say. Oh I suppose I shouldn’t say this, but they tend to be sort of old ladies and maybe they like old lady things, you know? I’ve got slightly broader perspectives than they have.

So what sort of dances do you find your students tend to prefer?

Well, I think they tend to prefer slow-ish ones, but then, most of them are elderly at the moment, and although at the same time it’s surprising that they can do things that I thought of as being vigorous that they were happy to do. Things that I think of as really vigorous, well, they basically can’t
really do, but, you know, and I try and encourage them to dance in a way which I suggest is the traditional grandma’s way of doing very small movements and not doing the showy bits, sort of thing. Um, and that I find that I get a response from some of that. Really, I... in terms of what my dancers like, they seem to respond to the things that I’m enthusiastic about. If, if I really don’t like something, then it tends not to have the right effect on them either, although they might be happy enough dancing it with somebody else.

What sort of things do you not like as well?

¶Well, I’ve a particular hatred of most Israeli dances, for example. I’m not quite sure why, I’m not very impressed with the Israeli politics at the moment so that certainly doesn’t help me but certain things about the movement, uh, in fact, that almost all Israeli dances are effectively modern choreographies, modern creations, without much history, doesn’t seem to help. All sorts of things about them, I, well I actually seem to find them rather difficult to do! Even though, you know, the steps aren’t necessarily more easy than something else, or more difficult than something else. I also seem to find Russian dances not very easy to do. And I seem, but I seem to be comparatively good at things like Greek and Macedonian things. So, that’s what gets a response.

Okay. So you mentioned the history of dances, do you typically know the history of the dances that you’re dancing?

¶Well, as much as anybody does, yeah. Um, we tend not to know very much history of the dances, I find. Often the history that does come through is less than accurate.

Right. And how do you think that affects your experience of actually dancing the dances, when you know more or less, maybe the words of the song or the history, how much does that impact your experience?

¶Well, it does a bit, if I think the words of the song are excessively politically incorrect, then I would tend not to dance to it, even though other folks think ‘Oh, it’s a lovely song’ and that they don’t know what the words are, you know, they could be happy with it. I find it, if I’m unhappy with the words, then I can easily decide not to do that dance or not to use that music.
Mm-hmm. So I'm just going to um, ask you a little bit more about how the quality of your experience changes based on different movements and steps and patterns, and by quality, I don't mean good or bad, I mean sort of the descriptive nature of your experience. For example, if you're doing a very slow-moving dance to a very slow rhythm, how is that different for you than maybe doing a very quick dance to a lively rhythm and melody?

I can't say that I can articulate that very easily, I mean I do certainly have a real sense of slow dances as something that, very different from things are vigorous. I tell my people mostly that they're actually much harder to do because of the need for balance and poise, rather than just charging around. Um, I suppose just a sense of what that means to people's general consciousness, the idea of being well-balanced, well-poised, in how you're moving and moving precisely. If it was a [ ] to do a slow dance, I would certainly want to try and do the movements in as close a way to the traditional sort of, you know the, sorry, say the correct movements as possible rather than thinking it's okay to do something that's not right.

So it may be that with a slower dance you may be more focused on things like balance and precision and getting it right.

...Balance very much, and the precision of how the various bits of movement happen, the angles of how you move your foot or your hands and all that sort of thing.

Mm-hmm. Yeah. So a lot to think about.

And it would seem that if I didn't do that, it would feel that I was just messing about. It wouldn't seem any point in doing the dance and not trying to do it right, in that sense.

Mm-hmm. And so what about quicker dances?

Well, with quicker dances, that sense of invigoration that you get from aerobic activity generally, I think, um, the sense of being able to do it! And it depends whether you're an athletic type of person, perhaps, maybe people that are more athletic and sporty think, or feel that they get a great sense of physical well-being from that already. Somebody like myself who never really did that, it gives me a very strong sense of being physically competent, shall we say. And which I didn't have as a child, really. The idea that I could do some athletic dance with jumps and leaps or does one
get them all in the right order and so on and so forth, um, is a good feeling in itself, to think that I can do that properly. Um, and beyond that, it’s all rather more vague.

That’s fine. As I say, the vagueness is something I’ll be looking at in terms of different themes, so I know it’s very difficult to articulate, um, dancing experience.

Well, in terms of more vigorous dances, they’re often, traditionally, men’s dances. So, it’s significant to me to try and dance something that was a man’s thing and have some sort of positive feeling about masculinity and stuff. Um, in a world that’s very um, which that’s often rather devalued nowadays and I’m not suggesting that women are in control, at all, but that the sense in which um certain types of maleness are thought of as threatening and nasty and I find that doing men’s dances helps me to have a sense of myself as a physically active sort of person and so on, without having to take on any of the stuff that suggests that that ought to also involve a violent or otherwise unpleasant nature. So I could do something that was traditionally a warrior’s dance or something like that, and feel good about that and even feel some connection to those folks without having to be a warrior myself, in fact, I’m a pacifist so I wouldn’t particularly want to feel very warrior-ish.

Yeah.

But I could still try and get some sort of sense of what it meant for them to dance this.

Mm-hmm. So what sort of warrior feelings would you value without the violence of being a warrior?

Yeah, well, I mean I think it’s to put it simply something that comes from doing positive energetic things in that sense. I don’t think the dances themselves actually induce any sense of violence.

No, no, but maybe something like a feeling of strength?

Strength, certainly, and togetherness with other men dancing.

Mm-hmm. Okay. So again that sense of connection.

Yeah.
Yeah, okay. Um, another vague question for you is, what is your experience of your self while you’re dancing? I’m talking about the sort of the psychological self.

Well, certainly, I suppose I sense myself as a dancer, maybe not quite as flash as the folks on ‘Come Dancing’ or whatever, but I can feel that I’m comparatively close to some of these folks and have an awareness of what they might be doing.

Mm-hmm. And in terms of again, going back to the altered states of consciousness, and the transformative nature of dancing that you mentioned, how does that affect your sense of your self?

Right, the sense of community and the sense of dancing together, um, I think affects one’s sense of self by the fact that oneself can be part of that. These things aren’t separate.

Would you say you are more or less self-conscious while you are dancing?

Well again, it’s a bit of both really, I mean less in the sense of what here one is and what one’s not thinking about what outside parties might be doing, but again, I’m quite conscious of how I’m trying to move as an individual and so on.

Mm-hmm. Okay.

I don’t know what people really think about folk dancers. I sometimes see videos of folk dancers on the internet and what have you, and I think ‘Good grief! God!’ (laughs) But there we are, I hope people don’t think that about us too much.

I’m sorry, you see folk dancers on the internet and you think what?

I think sometimes that they look quite awful, look quite ungainly or whatever so on and so forth.

Oh right, right. Different groups definitely have different skill levels.

They do yes! [laughs]

Yeah.

But quite what we look like from afar, I’m not too sure.
Hmm. Okay.

I was dancing in Greece once and somebody did, um, it was, it was one of my favourites and somebody said that I looked like as if I was dancing like a Greek. I thought, well, that’s a compliment! You know….

Yes, yes.

I was quite chuffed when somebody said that to me.

Yeah. And why was that, actually?

I don’t know but I think it was just because I, well, I mean I you know, it wasn’t anything complicated, it was just because I particularly loved that sort of thing and I was aware of what we needed to be doing.

Yeah, so it felt good that someone saw you as kind of a natural at that.

I suppose so, I mean, I wouldn’t want to claim to be that expert but it just felt particularly good to do it.

Hmm.

And, I think, well, I mean there are certain sort of shifts that happens in dancers I see, that dance with me, from being folks that are trying to learn, to folks that are trying to remember the steps, to when they don’t need to remember them anymore. And only really at that point are they really dancing, shall we say.

Uh-huh.

And sometimes, hopefully a few times, one gets into that sort of state.

Can you recognise that state when you’re actually no longer learning but actually dancing? What is characteristic of that state?

Well one could say the sort of feeling is that you’re just part of that dance. As opposed to ‘doing it’, so to speak.

Mm-hmm. So you become part of the dance.

I think that’s a reasonable way of putting it, that you’re part of that dance, and that also means part of everybody else who’s doing it and folks who have danced it in the past for all the reasons and times that they’ve danced
Appendix C-2

303    it. As opposed to a situation where you’re explicitly doing some particular,
304    some specific thing here and now for a short period of time, or time to do it.

305    Right. So a shift in focus from ‘I’m going to do this step and put my arm
306    here’ to just becoming part of the dance.

307    ¶Yeah, I mean that’s the neatest sort of phrase for it.

308    ¶Space is very small when you’re dancing, because you’re in a very
309    restricted space.

310    ¶Mm-hmm. Restricted by the physical space, or the other dancers, or all of
311    those things?

312    ¶Oh, I mean partly by those things, but partly by the very idea of dancing in
313    a close space, a close figure, a circle, a line, a spiral or whatever. Um, the
314    space itself is restricted to that space. I mean, I suppose occasionally some
315    people might have hundreds of people dancing together, usually mine are
316    smaller groups, and the space sort of comes down to the space of your
317    dancing group and not many yards outside it. And then even if you’re
318    dancing in all sorts of other, more complicated British festivals or things
319    you’re still dancing in a very close space and most of it, the rest of the
320    world outside disappears, it’s not relevant to you at all. Which, isn’t my
321    experience of space generally at all. I mean I have a large garden that I
322    work on, for example, working on that in a, and I also do, you know,
323    rambling over hills and so on, so I’m aware of quite big spaces and medium
324    spaces as well, is something I would have some consciousness of, but
325    dancing is very much, um, not an enclosed space, because there isn’t an
326    enclosure, necessarily, but it makes it’s own enclosure.

327    ¶Mm-hmm. Okay. That’s all the questions that I have, is there anything else
328    important that you’d like to tell me about?

329    ¶Um, I could tell you just a little bit more about myself…I’ve mentioned
330    that I was involved in pagan groups at the time I started dancing and that’s
331    still something important to me, and I see my dancing as a spiritual thing,
332    as well as being anything else it is for me. And I’m actually ordained, I’m
333    an official reverend in an organisation called ‘The Fellowship of Isis’. And
at that point, when I was ordained, I actually asked for a specific guide or blessing or whatever you wish from Terpsichore, from the muse of the dance. So in that sense, I think of what I do as a vocation. I specifically dedicated myself to that. And indeed, that was quite some years ago now, and I felt that [ ] have guided me on since then.

Mm-hmm. So what, what...sorry I’m formulating a question. You said that you see dance as spiritual. In what way do you see dance as spiritual?

The process of connection with the community and the ancestors is also at the same time a connection with what you might call the cosmic dance.

Mm-hmm. I mean, I can, I have some ideas, but what does the ‘cosmic dance’ mean to you particularly?

Well, um, that’s a very good question, of course and I’m going to be completely vague about it, the sense of the movement of the universe that’s been going on for an awfully long time that everything we do is part of that, and as a pagan we tend to think of those sort of movements as being very cyclic rather than any sort of one-way trip, and the dancing just seems to connect that. That we’re part of that anyway, but dancing, well, we’re even more of it.

Okay. Alright is there anything else you want to tell me? (Thank the participant, wrap-up and goodbye.)
Appendix C-3: Dancer3

Interview date: 06 January 2011

(Confirmation of permission to record the interview.) You said that I’ll probably lead this conversation, but I do want to emphasise that it is a conversation and I do want to hear your thoughts, so the questions that I have are just kind of for guidance. There’s no kind of set order that we have to talk about anything. So anything you want to tell me about your experience of Balkan dancing, as you know maybe from the little blurb in the newsletter, I’m looking especially at a person’s sense of time and space and how they experience themselves, but there may be other things that you feel are very important in the experience of dancing, and that’s what I would like to hear from you.

¶Shall I just go, shall I just talk now about how I first came in

Sure.

¶...how I first learnt about the Balkan folk dancing, Karen?

Yeah.

¶It was by chance or by luck, if you like, if you want to call it that, um, it was in the perhaps, uh when at college in perhaps the late 50’s early 60’s, it was a different sort of time, then, in that there were very few East European people living in London, let alone Britain, I suppose, so uh, the early enthusiasm was really got to me through groups of people, um, in div-, really, if I talk about the fact that at the time it was, uh there was a folk revival going on, so it’s through folk music, first of all, that uh was the link, I think here, and at college, there was the uh, it was a local North London group, the Hendon Folk Club attached to the college there, run by Henry Morris, who eventually was the founder member of the Dunav Balkan group, as I’m a member of the music group. That’s one of the first music, Balkan music groups in, outside the Balkans, really, so um, Henry ran a folk club for students and au pair girls and people like that, for young people, and I went along, as many people did, for the singing part of it, although I was warned that there would be some jigging around, I think I was warned at the time. And uh, eventually the jigging around got a more
quite an important part of my social life and I, and it hooked me then, particularly because of the time, with the connections Henry had with some of the people, the important people in the scene. Mostly at that time in, uh, it was an age of idealism, there were, though mainly on the left-wing sort of side there was the Workers Music Association, there’s uh, Topic Records was, um, a bit on the left side, there was Lloyd, Burt Lloyd (?) who bridged the gap between British folk music and the international. He did some recordings of Bulgarian and other East European sound recordings for Topic Records. And of course there were the friendly (?) societies to the friendly, um, the friendship with Bulgaria (?) that were, to a student, it wasn’t important at the time to us that they were a bit on, uh more than on the left, they were Communist-run, I suppose, but it didn’t really mean a lot and you could, and you can exaggerate that side of it. I was lucky to be into it and by, and to be in this sort of scene that took these people in. So, from the folk song side, it became a sort of broader view of the folk dancing and the world of international folk dancing and I was really struck when the dance group attached to the British Bulgarian Friendship Society as they’re called now, came along to Henry’s college group and the leader there showed some dances. Often we would get, we were happy to know about 20 dances in those days and we learnt, and we saw something a bit more than the recreational folk dancers at the time, so that’s the sort of age we were in then, that there was in one sense, there was a limited amount of Balkan dancing going on, but there were some big characters there, including with the Zivgof Firfov group at the time there was the enigmatic Philip Thornton and people like that were around. But later it became friends, of course a bit later on, and most of them have gone now, of course.

Yeah.

So it was that age and soon the, quite a few within this college group that become, that was the Hendon Folk Music Club joined these other groups and got a deeper feel for the culture and it seemed to, um, sit comfortably with our, well, as a, really as a social group, apart from keeping fit that way, there was the cultural side and we learned quite quickly from these, from these mentors a lot more about the culture. And from then on you, one was hooked, and over the years from student to perhaps teacher of, gradually became, we took over the club more as Henry and others
Appendix C-3

concentrated more on music. And from that, and I’ve been now the leader
of the Barnet folk dance group for some years now too, so...

*Oh, okay.*

Gradually from a learner to a leader, it takes a few years I suppose, but uh,
that’s the start of it.

It’s funny that I, before the Internet came into existence, I remember in an
American magazine, because my wife lived in the States for a while and
that’s where we met, through folk dancing. We used to get some of the
American magazines, whether it’s Viltis or Folk Dance Scene from [?]
there was, uh, Yves [?] was asking people how, he was doing a study too at
the time, that’s back in the 70s I don’t know, about why people learned to
love Balkan folk dancing, and I remember writing, I think, then to him,
cause there was no other medium, and I mentioned one thing that I haven’t
mentioned yet is that back in the 50s I think, there was a popular television
series run by, that was presented by the son of the Scott of the Antarctic
called Peter Scott, who was a naturalist, and he was showing some archive
film on one of his regular programmes by a bird specialist who was filming
in Bulgaria, he was archive filming the 30s, and I noticed a young, I would
say perhaps a teenage boy, and I was struck, and it stuck in my mind, that
there was a village scene there when he wasn’t poking the camera at birds,
of a horo, of a horo being danced, and I was fascinated by the move-, the
subtle movements then. That must have stuck in the mind and all, then
linked up later on.

So I think that gives something of how I got into it, anyway, Karen, are
there other aspects that I should be, that you would like to know about?

*Yeah, um, well first of all, I just wanted to ask you, in these groups that you
started out in, were there people of Balkan ethnicity as well as just British?*

Well, in London, if there’s going to be anywhere, it would have been
around, there were very few, we had links of course, at the same time, the
Oxford group, the Balkansko Oro, was in, was formed, but that was, there
was a Serbian camp there during the war so there’s quite a lot of people, a
lot of Serbs stayed on there and they had a quite a strong link to the Serbian
community. I’d say in London, there were very few! And it was most of the
teaching was done, was from, from British people. Of course the Bulgarian
Friendship Society group, they famously went to Bulgaria and were taught
by the best teachers in the 50s. That was under, when it was led by Dadi Lumley [?], and I joined soon after that in the 60s, I was a member of the group for some years, too. So there were, in relatively in London there were ver-, you could count on your hand the number of Balkan people actually teaching. Of course they were, I mean, later ran into the community, the Serbian, uh well, there is a community still of course in Ladbroke Grove, there is a community hall there attached to Saint Sava’s Church there. So, um, but really, the early experience was from people that had come across it as a, well, that were British, really, yeah. So um, now, I would say now of course the scene has changed so much that you, we, both in the dance and the music, it was a crusading thing by people who loved the music, had learnt about it and wanted to present it and promote it to British people, who were, themselves, British. And a lot of, uh, a lot of the credit should go to people like Burt Lloyd, the folklorist, the late folklorist, and other people in the scene like the people that I’ve mentioned, like Henry Morris and others, who really started these groups, yep.

Yeah, thank you for the historical background on that, that’s great. Um, you mentioned the words that you were ‘hooked’ and that you were ‘struck’ by certain things, and even when you saw as kind of, um, incidentally during the naturalist show, you saw village group dancing, and you mentioned that you were struck by the subtle movements. Can you tell me a bit more about how you were struck and what you felt and what you, how you think that’s connected to the movements that you saw?

¶Yes, um, it’s difficult to say at this stage, it was a long time ago, it over, it was about 50 or 60 years ago, I mean it wasn’t sixty, I’m sixty-eight now so it would be 50 or 55 years ago that I saw it, it was before I was introduced to Balkan folk dancing in [?] here, but it, the fact that it stuck in my mind, there must have been something about the subtlety of the movements, I thought it was nothing that I’d, um, any, um, and I could add, too, that in other dance forms I’ve never really got a lot of excitement or enjoyment, you know as many boys do at a, in our secondary school we had to almost, told that we should learn ballroom dancing and that was like many boys, in particular would say that was not the most enjoyable experience [laughs]. Because it was at a difficult age, I suppose, but, and oh, I did enjoy, I suppose in primary, junior school there was some country dancing then, so.... I was not a typical, I don’t know, British, or any, but I was not a natural dancer. So for something like that film, it was only a few seconds,
but I thought it did stick in the mind and it was stored there, I would imagine, Karen, but I don’t know how much importance to put on that. But I suppose it, when I actually saw the dancing later or took part in it, it did click back to that experience.

_Mm-hmm, okay. And when you’re dancing, what are you aware of?_

¶What I’m aware of. Again, it’s a, I may have a different answer every time you ask that, I don’t know, but the, first of all, I’m aware of the communal spirit, I think, first and foremost. I know these days there are various types of groups that do circle dancing, etc., that some are on the spiritual side and some more like me are more into the folkloric side, but, um, that, but there’s common ground here, you get a buzz from everyone knowing something, and the communal spirit, I think.

¶This came, if I could go back to Yves Moreau, when he was, a couple of years ago, he did celebrate his 60th birthday and I and [another folk dancer] from Britain were amongst 90 people that he organised a tour to Thrace that took in Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece for people from all over the world, friends of his from the US, from Canada, Europe and from Japan and Taiwan, cause it’s very popular in the far, far East too. And we all, it struck me then as we’ve, we had the privilege of dancing in quite small villages in the towns’ centres with people and in our own group activities, as much as we enjoyed the challenge of various parts of Balkan dancing, the most rewarding is to dance with people and, in, and that’s why some of my dance choices are those that are basically the town square dances, you know, that you can feel, that you can express yourself and feel, um, that you can bond with the rest of the dancers, which is a, is what the dancing was intended to be in the first place, I guess, as gathering together of the community. So first and foremost it is the bonding, I think, Karen, yep.

_Mm-hmm. How do you think the form of what you call the ‘town square’ dances affects your experience? I’m assuming you’re doing chains and circles and not couple dances._

¶If you go to any [?], certainly Bulgarian and in [?] in Thrace, in Greece and in Turkey, uh well, in Greece certainly and in a different way in Turkey, just across the [?], um, certainly that it’s the, um, it, it can be the social event for the local band to be there and the, and on a certain night perhaps of the week, people just, um, you might, and there would be the leader would take hold or there’d be some dancing, that, music and people
would naturally get up and dance and um, it is the important, is still an important part of some of the villages and even in towns too, it seems to be a part of their makeup still. May have been lost here, certainly, in towns of the Industrial Revolution, perhaps it’s been lost, but and in rural areas that it would be producing any resemblance here, I think. It might be interesting, at some other time, and if you want to, I do have I think a spare copy of the DVD that was made at the time of this tour that I just mentioned, I could send it to you and you’d get some feel for what we did and their, the sort of people on the tour.

¶There were times when, um, there, it came very strongly when there was a, just a pravo horo which is the straight dance, the, just a simple step. We timed it once, I think, [she] said, that it went on for 50 minutes! There were times the band made as if they were about to stop, but there was a almost sort of protest from the dancers and they carried on and... Of course, in recreational dancing there’s usually three minutes or something like that that would be the average. But here, it was a real experience and the community spirit and it went on and on and we felt after that, one of the main things that we do, the main reasons that we like it is the, it is the community spirit, yep.

Mm-hmm. Okay. So how is dancing these dances different from other kinds of activities that you might choose to do?

¶This is a respite to my working life as a director of an engineering company and it’s a great balance from the, from uh, completely different, if you’re running a manufacturing company, it, I suppose, I kept, tried to keep, keep the regular dancing going during even the most challenging years of that I suppose and I see it as a balance apart from the fact that it was a family thing too. My wife enjoys dancing too, so it was a, it that, the aspect of the balance of work and your, and the pleasure I suppose too, Karen, there's that, that has kept it in folk as an important part of one’s life.

So, um, you mentioned that you’re aware of the communal spirit most importantly...

¶That is, I would put that as very high up, certainly. And if I was to mention one thing, it would be that, yeah. But also the of course in the particular dances that I mentioned, I, there was one word I said wrong in, I said I have no excuses for choosing all Bulgarian, I mean, I really meant no apologies, really, instead of excuses. There’s a Bulgarian dance, I mean, in
particular, there’s, I suppose, there’s a challenge of the, of the time
signatures, you know the beats, and that’s, as a mathematician, I suppose,
that’s the challenge there, and you find a lot of mathematicians et cetera do
find Balkan dancing in particular fun, because of the technical challenge
and I suppose of the rhythms that you get there, yeah.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶That’s, that’s, so the bonding is more, I suppose is the core of things, but
we shouldn’t get away from the fact that this is a multi-faceted, multi-
layered appreciation of it, because there’s, I find it difficult to separate
sometimes the dance and the music, the singing, so there are many aspects
that really get to you when you... Particularly when you first listened, when
you first appreciate it you learn such a lot about the, how, how different it is
to one’s own culture and yet, in some ways, how similar too, I suppose.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶Certainly it’s, a lot of people, I could have mentioned on my favourites
that, oh I could have gone through a list of rather challenging dances but
that wouldn’t have been, I couldn’t have honestly said that, argued why
they were favourites, but it would have been rather shallow to say oh,
because it’s in a combination of 7 and 11 or 15 beats and that. It doesn’t
really get to the core of why I’ve been doing it for 50 years.

Well, I am interested in how the rhythm and the steps and the patterns
affect a person’s experience, so I would say that is a perfectly valid reason
to give a dance as your favourite, because it’s in, you know, 15/8 time, or....

¶Well, it is a reason, but it’s only one reason, I wouldn’t say it’s, it’s not the
one that...At a certain time, I suppose, there’s a perhaps, as you begin to
learn dances then it can come into focus as one of the important reasons
that you want the challenge of really mastering some of these unusual
rhythms, yes. Sure, but as I’ve got older there’s certain deeper reasons, and
it’s the friendships and it’s a part of a social, we feel a, and through a
family feeling within the scene. So, I would these days more often stress
that side, although there’s no getting, when say Yves comes over and asks
me what sort of dances, I always, I’m always, it could be, I’d say ‘oh do the
one’, I’d be swayed if there’s a particularly challenging rhythm, I suppose,
or if it’s from a region, a favourite region like Dobrudza that’s got a, that is
a favourite stylistic region, too, Karen.
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What is the style, how would you describe the style of that favourite of yours? [participant asked me to repeat the question] Well, actually I’ll ask that question in a different way. So you have listed a number of favourites. What are the characteristics of those dances and the music that accompanies them that makes them your favourites?

Yeah, uh, for different reasons, uh well, except as I implied in my writing, why do I like the dances, there are, there’s scope in, certainly in the first four, certainly, and even the fifth one I mentioned, but it’s a basic dance that’d be done in a town centre that, that’s the Megdan is the town centre. But many, most Bulgarians would know the basic step and you would, you feel honoured to be dancing with them as they would dance it. It also goes beyond that in that one could mention one’s little favourite as a little dance that you’ve been taught that is not a national dance or nationally known that is fun, lovely music, but has, is just one of about a hundred that you could have picked out of the list, really. But these basic dances and it is the sure, the music and the fact, more importantly, is that you can express yourself, more within the basic framework of a dance without being, it being strictly, as strict number of steps here, well a strict style that you’ve been taught. It’s a style that you would have picked up by being with people and learning, and knowing the dance deeply in a, well deeper than at a workshop, than that. Raka, the start, I mentioned Dobrudza first because like many Bulgarian enthusiasts, it’s a favourite region, because of the expressiveness of the arms more than just feet, here. It’s an earth, it is an earthy style that you can express, publicly, men, I would imagine, too, so, being a male I suppose it’s important that I, it’s more important, I suppose, to mention a dance like that. The others, being a musician too, Karen, it’s imp-., I know the, I enjoy the rhythms of Gankino Horo, it’s a favourite on the 11/16 rhythm is a very peculiar to Bulgaria, that’s Macedonia too, to it’s uh, and the basic Gankino step is quite easy, it’s a, only three bars of music and you’re there, but you can express yourself, you can do it in a low key way or with a high energy too, so you have scope there to enjoy doing your own way and doing the mood that you are at the time, yeah. And the Račenica that I mentioned, that’s the national dance of Bulgaria so, that can be done in either solo form or couple or there are the hora, the line formations (?), too, many of which are taught to recreational folk dancers and which we like too. Again, it’s a combination of the music and steps, I find. I would bring it back to the combination of to be able to have the music speaks to you and the, yet as well the dance movement too.
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*Mm-hmm. So how would you express yourself through dancing? You said there’s scope for expression within particular dances. How does that happen?*

Express myself...I’ve got to take myself off, away our usual club where I would be teaching more than participating, I suppose. Yeah, you would express yourself...like any, as I’ve mentioned at a workshop I taught the other day between Christmas and the New Year, it’s nice to get off the sofa and dance around. Um, you keep as much as possible to the, as you were taught by a group teacher and you can try and teach it in a similar fashion but you appreciate that, or tell people really that there’s a spectrum of acceptable style there that as much, but it is a folk dance and there’s different, there’s, it can be as varied as any people can be varied, really but, how to express....um, I begin to falter of course if, when I’m looking at myself, I do it as a communal experience I don’t particularly, I’m a bit, maybe, telling that I don’t particularly like myself on film (laughs), dancing, it’s, but it’s a true experience when you are dancing and it’s nice to enjoy the collective enjoyment of dance and be able to do it well and even, some dances, yeah, you can try and, uh...you’re always training to attain, trying to do it better than last time, I don’t know. But I’m, um, I’m not, um, as eloquent as I would like to be on this sort of question really, on how I, so...(laughs).

*That’s fine. Yeah, you mentioned, uh...I just picked up on it because you mentioned that there’s an opportunity for personal expression and I was just wondering, is that through movement, or...?*

Oh yeah, that relates to, I really put that in related to Gorbetsiiska which is a Pirin dance that Ventsi Sotirov taught who lives in Chicago, was over here, has been over here a couple of times and a friend knew him there and gets him over occasionally, this was again an 11/16 but with a stretched beat on the first count in sort of a third, and a typical Pirin song, but this one, as the song, the sung verse the first part of it, um, it does, it doesn’t keep to a regular rhythm, it slows, and there’s a pause in the song, so you come to a halt and you can be expressive in the way you halt that and prepare for the next step really. So there are dances like that, Karen, that allow a bit of theatre as opposed to keeping strictly to the, well, to the rhythm, and it’s uh certainly, that’s why I put that in, cause it’s a typical dance that you can, uh, if not show off at least put a lot of expression in, yeah.
Appendix C-3

Okay. That’s great. So, um, let me see…How do you experience time while you’re dancing, and how is that different from when you’re doing other things?

¶It’s certainly not, unless you’re running an evening and you’re looking at the clock, you don’t really think, you’re not looking at your watch at all when you’re dancing – you’re fully committed to the dance and not to any other, uh, frame, really. Um, so um, time, it’s an area I haven’t really considered and I’d have to think more about it, I haven’t spent time since your note over how it’s, a subject that I may need some prompting on because I’m, time, sure...

Well, um, are you more or less aware of time passing, are you using time differently?

¶Yeah, sure, I think that when I mentioned earlier that it did surprise us when we danced in Bulgaria and the dance went on for 50 minutes, we hadn’t realised it had. We would have been surprised to, we would have imagined it would be about half that time. But you do get lost in it. Yeah, so there is that possibility and certainly in an open-ended dance where you have live music, say, and so you know it’s, there’s no set finish, then, there is a possibility to lose the sense of time, that is true, that is very true, and that became, certainly that was evident in the experience that I explained earlier, yeah.

Okay. And the same question actually applies to space, so meaning, you know, the space around you, the space close to you. How do you experience space when you’re dancing, and is that different than when you’re doing other things?

¶Space, uh, well, in communal dancing, yeah, if it’s recreational, communal, you’ve got to bear, if you do it, if you’re attending to the dance you make sure, and there’s a nat-, if you’re holding of course, there’s a natural discipline of keeping a space between yourself and other people. But the whole, trying to keep the line neat or circles and no kinks and things like that, I suppose that, and also space if you’re leading a, this may be going off of your sort of subject, but if you’re leading a dance, it’s the, it’s an open circle and you’re going inside and coiling in, then you must, as a leader, you must be aware of either to turn out at some stage or to time it such that the space is, that the dance finishes before you’re in an
uncomfortable coil, that sort of thing. So, space, yeah, um I only think of it in terms of perhaps the circle line dance, Karen, yeah.

*Mm-hmm. Okay.*

But be prompted into thinking, getting the brain round different aspects of it, but that’s how, where space would come into it, as a leader, I suppose of a dance line.

*Mm-hmm. So, um, how does the music affect your experience of the dancing?*

How does the music affect the experience?

*Yes, so your own personal experience of the dance, so, for example, if there’s a strong melody, or there’s a strong rhythm, if the music is live or recorded, does that impact your experience?*

Yeah, it can be important. I’ve been to recreational dances, even Balkan dances where the recorded music seems every year, they have it, seems to get worse, it’s clipped off or perhaps the quality is bad. But also, um, yeah, um the melody...In recreational dances certainly I always feel that the most popular dances that will stick will be those with a particular character in the music or in the, a song, or in the distinctive music and the familiar tune, perhaps. Sometimes that goes um for the musicians sometimes would feel that a, there are dances that you should be able to dance to different tunes, but certain folk dancers have favourites, which is fair enough. But the, and the (?), depending on the dance, I know there’s a ‘Paidushko’ that we do just to a Jew’s harp, jaws harp, jews harp, whichever way you want to say it, but, it’s a strong enough rhythm there and it gets a little lift when the hand drum come in and gives another level, and it’s a very strong dance with just the simplest of music. So, um, much depends, of course, as long as the dance is good, too, and there’s uh strength within the steps. I always say that when we dance the music or perhaps the singing, the whole can be more than the elements, when they, when there’s the combination of these things, so um. I would say the music is an important factor.

Okay. That’s interesting, you just said there can be strength in the steps, and I’m really interested in that. So when you’re doing a dance that has strong steps, how does that change you, or your perception of yourself or how you feel?
Strong steps, that can be, there’s a particular dance I mentioned, there’s a strong 1-2, 1-2, 1-2 rhythm. So there’s a chance for, to stress a certain step in it, which is the essence of that dance, I think, I would say. The sequence is not so very long, but um, it’s and uh, it can express, and again it’s experience of seeing perhaps on film or perhaps as a live group in the country itself, but like a, um, and experiences dancing with the Bulgarian dance group too, that there are, the leader certainly can um whip up a certain feeling doing the dances. That Paidushko, you do it, you can do it in a low key way, same step all the time, but the leader then can do a circling step instead of just straight and back and put a lot more feel in, into the uh character of the dance, yeah, and the rhythm really helps there, of course, and it’s a nice sense of carrying people with you there, too, that takes it to another level. It all goes back to the fact that some dances you can, um, ex-

Okay, great. So just to um, finish up, could you just maybe list some of the feelings that you have while you’re dancing?

List them, um.

I mean, you mentioned the word ‘fun’, so, you know...

Well there’s the, um, I’ve always put on top the communal enjoyment, you know, the feeling of bonding, there’s the um, there is uh the energy too, it’s, I feel that movement is good for you, dance, it’s healthy, and it’s relation to other people too, but uh, well, that comes with bonding, doesn’t it, so uh, and enjoyment of the music. And, um, feelings, um.

That’s fine!

Yeah, so, in time I could list others, but those are the main things really.

(Thank participant, wrap up, goodbye.)

(Chat about opportunities to attend Balkan dance events.)
Appendix C-4: Dancer4

Interview date: 20 January 2011

Okay? So, I’ll just start out with um the first question here which is about the fact that there are lots of recreational activities to choose from and even within dance there’s lots of different dance forms to choose from so what it is about folk dancing that led you to take it up as an activity?

¶Well, now, I’m curious about your use of the word ‘folk dancing’ because that was one of the things actually in the form, um, that got me. I mean I take it you mean international folk dancing because you know folk dancing could mean English folk dancing, Scottish folk dancing, which are particular genres ...

Right, right. In the context...

¶Some people follow, uh, and, you know I thought you were specifically talking about, um, Balkan dancing within international folk dancing.

I am, actually, I probably should have clarified that but the, the scope of my research just to keep it um, at sort of a doable level is to focus on the types of dancing I myself am most experienced with, so that would be the Balkan dancing within...

¶When you ask me a question about folk dancing you actually mean the Balkan dancing.

Yes, that’s right.

¶Because that wouldn’t be clear to most people, you know, they.

Mm-hmm. Okay, so excellent comment about the precision of the questions.

¶Well certainly in filling in the form cause you see if you look at the first page of the form it says how long have you been dancing folk dances, well, I’ve put you two different answers because, you know, I started off with English folk dancing actually but I would only have encountered Balkan folk dances ten years later.
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Well that’s actually useful to know that you did start with English folk dancing. Um, so what is it about the Balkan folk dancing that led you towards that eventually?

Well I was led towards the international folk dancing because I saw an advertisement in the local paper, I was dissatisfied, um, with the English dancing I was doing because we’d moved from Manchester down to Solihull and I couldn’t find, I could only find a basic beginners class. I was looking for more of a challenge and I saw an advertisement in the paper for international folk dancing and I’ve always been interested, I mean I’m interested in languages, I’ve got a vast collection of dolls in national costumes.

Oh nice!

It tied in together, I thought this is going to be really interesting and then, um, once I started, I just got hooked.

Yes. What, what was it that hooked you?

What was it that hooked me...well, I had a very charismatic teacher.

Mm-hmm.

Um, and I think it was the music, um, and I felt I suppose it, it transported me to another place in a way.

Mm-hmm. I’m just taking some written notes.

Yes, particularly Israeli dances, I mean they’re not Balkan, but, um, you know there’s a sense of self expression, being a different person, I suppose for a while.

Mm-hmm.

Just being transported.

Yeah. In what way are you a different person when you’re dancing?

I suppose I feel I’m expressing myself in different ways.

Mm-hmm.
¶I mean I’m not talking, so you’re expressing yourself through, through movement with your body and I suppose that leads you to, um...Well and also, you’re thinking about the country, you know, there’s an element of, of you, ahhh, being in another country or part of a different culture.

Mm-hmm.

¶Um, and particularly if you dress up in costume. (Laugh).

Yes! Now, I’m, I’m going to ask you what might be a kind of a challenging question because I think that you’ve thought about this enough that you might be able to answer it. People find it quite difficult to talk about their experience of dancing, um, but you said that you were, you can express yourself in different ways. Can you talk a bit about that self that’s being expressed?

¶(long pause) Oooh! Um, I guess I feel this freedom that perhaps I don’t feel in the rest of my life, a freedom to be me. Um, does that mean anything to you?

It does!

¶[both laugh]

¶I don’t know if I can go any further, um, exactly, but it’s a kind of ‘this is me’, um, when I’m dancing. Um, ...

Yes.

¶In a way that I’m not me in, you know, doing other things.

Mm-hmm.

¶So it’s very much something for me. I do have to say that um, as a, I mean I, I now teach myself and, and lead the group and I would say that my experience is a bit different.

Mm-hmm.

¶Um, in a way sheer enjoyment of the dances is diminished a bit by leading a group because you’ve got to be thinking about all sorts of things.
Mm-hmm.

51 ¶...other than the sheer dances.

Yes, okay. That's a good point. Um, yeah, I mean, I'm looking at different themes and freedom to be yourself is something that certainly comes up in the academic literature. Going beyond that is quite difficult for people to explain what that means, but um...

52 ¶Yes.

But it does kind of ring true, yeah?

53 ¶MMM.

Okay, well, when you *are* dancing, let's say, not teaching or leading a group, but just dancing for, as you say, the 'sheer dancing'...

54 ¶Yes.

...what are you aware of?

55 ¶Well, I mean one thing I would like to say is that I feel the experience is different if you're dancing with a group of people that you know...

Mm-hmm.

57 ¶To if you’re dancing with a group of people that you don’t know.

Mm-hmm.

58 ¶And it’s much better experience if you’re with a group of people that you know because you are also communicating with other people, um, you know, you glance across the circle or whatever, you smile and you know that you’re all sharing, well it might not be the same experience, I would be tempted to say the same experience but it’s probably different for everybody, but you’re, you’re part of a whole, you’re sharing something with your friends.

Mm-hmm.

65 ¶Does that mean anything?

Yes.
Yes, um, shared experience and feeling yourself to be part of a whole, very important. What else are you aware of when you’re dancing? You mentioned the music, earlier as very important.

Oh, well I’m really interested, I mean particularly when you come to the specifically Balkan dances, I’m really interested in the different rhythms.

Urn and I really like to understand how the music is constructed and um and how it’s working and it actually gives me great personal satisfaction to be thinking, you know, listening, um, acutely to the music, and um, you know, making sure that I do whatever it is exactly on the right beat if it’s something that’s a wee bit, um, complicated.

Alright. I think the music is something, um, that the English and the Scottish dancing and lots of other dances don’t have because you do get such various rhythms. I mean most dancing is either 2/4, 4/4 or ¾ or maybe 6/8 and that’s it.

So you, in Balkan dancing, you get more varied rhythms.

Oh yeah!

Yes. And you enjoy the complexity of that.

I do enjoy the complexity of that and also, yeah, yeah, and, you know, working out how it’s working and um, yeah.

So working it out in terms of how the steps fit in with the rhythms and…

Yeah!

Okay, great.

I might be quite, I mean I don’t think most of my group would be thinking like that (laugh) but, um, that’s what I’m thinking, yes.

What do you think your group would be thinking?
Um, they’d just be concentrating on following my feet, I think, yeah.

Right, so watching.

Yeah.

Yeah, okay. Yeah.

Or maybe doing it from feeling, um, you know, we know this dance therefore, you know, this is how it goes.

Mm-hmm. Um, okay, I’m just kind of scanning through my questions here.

You (?) different questions for different people?

No, I have a list of questions that will guide the conversation, but I really would rather you guide the conversation so, you know, based on what you mentioned so far, I’m just kind of thinking about, you know, what to explore next. Um, so staying with the idea of the music, how does the music affect your experience in terms of say, um music that has a strong melody versus that has a strong beat or different complicated rhythms. What is the result of that, for example, if you think of two pieces of music, what is the resulting experience for you?

It might be a sort of intellectual satisfaction…

Mmm.

... in, in dancing to this because, I mean you say for instance melody versus strong rhythm

Mm-hmm.

But in fact, um a melody might be masking the underlying rhythm…

Mm-hmm.

...so, you know, you’re not dancing to the melody, you’re hearing the melody but the underlying rhythm, which might not be very strong, you might have to be listening out for it, um, is underneath. So I would say it’s a sort of, for me, a sort of intellectual satisfaction.

Mm-hmm, at the ability to work out the rhythm in that case.
Well, I don’t know about the ability but just being able, well, yes, I suppose ability, yeah, being able to, to sort it all out and, and see what’s going on and making it into a whole, um…

Mm-hmm.

…it, it just, it’s just something that appeals to me.

Okay. Well me too, actually!

Oh good!

Yeah.

Where do you dance, I’m curious to know, actually?

Oh, I should have said…

Are you in the SIFD?

Well, I am, (chat about my move to the UK and my attendance at the SIFD summer school sessions).

Oh so you’re not going to a regular group?

No, not at the moment, unfortunately.

I was curious.

Yeah.

Yeah.

But I do...I am going to be going to a Greek dance workshop this month and possibly dancing with a Greek friend of mine and some others at a festival.

Right.

But I have been in the whole International Folk Dancing scene, oh gosh, it’s definitely over twenty years now. So, and um, and I also do ballet and ballroom, so I have kind of a range of interests.
So, now thinking about the steps and patterns and the movements of different dances, how do those change your experience? For example, if you’re doing a dance that’s maybe very complex versus a dance that’s very simple, or just generally, how do the movements kind of affect your experience?

Um, ah, that’s a difficult one. Say it all again please.

Okay. I’ll read you my actual question.

Okay.

The actual question is how do different movements, steps and patterns change your experience? So do the steps and patterns of different dances feel different? Are some...

Well yes, because some appeal more than others.

Mm-hmm.

Um, yes. Um I suppose if it’s a very simple dance then it’s really got to have some lofty music, um, to be um, appealing.

Mm-hmm.

Or in a very simple dance I suppose you might be more um communicating um with other people round the circle.

Mm-hmm.

Um, if, I mean, going to the formation you get some dances, like, I think I’ve mentioned Jiana in the list...

Mm-hmm.

which is a, you’re in a small circle with a back basket hold and it’s, it’s quite a simple dance. You probably know it, do you?

Mm-hmm.

Romanian dance.

Yes, it’s familiar, I’d have to look it up but I’m sure I’ve done it.
¶Yes. And so I think the formation there, the fact that you’re in a closely
knit, literally closely knit circle.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶Um, that formation, um, tightens your experience and then you’re scooting
round at mad speed you know towards the end. Um, that’s kind of a shared
experience, um, altogether.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶Um, if the steps are really, really complicated, well then um again it’s the,
you know the sort of the satisfaction um of mastering um the steps. And
then some, I think I put Pristinka as my top favourite dance, that is actually
a 5/4 rhythm but the um, there is actually some ambiguity and, and you
know, freedom for you to fit the steps to the rhythm actually because of the
nature of it. A beautiful dance, with scarves, so you’re waving scarves
around as well.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶Um, and that just adds an extra dimension.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶For me.

*Okay. And that, that extra dimension, and that particular dance, could you
kind of summarise how that makes you feel or what your experience is?*

¶Well I suppose that would epitomise the sense of self, you know,
expressing, being yourself and expressing your self.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶And in that particular dance, it brings out the young girl in me. Even
though I’m 63! Um because it’s a girls’ dance from Kosovo…

*Mm-hmm.*

¶...and it’s meant to be danced by young girls and I can just see, in my
mind’s eye, I see, it makes me see young girls dancing and that’s what I
become.
Mm-hmm.

¶In my mind.

Mm-hmm.

¶Not to an onlooker I’m sure.

Oh, I don’t know! [both laugh]. Is that because of the scarves or some combination of um, the scarves or is it from knowing that it’s a girls’, a young girls’ dance or is there something in the movement that makes you feel younger doing that?

¶There’s just something about the choreography of the steps, um, they, there’s a, there’s a slight skip to them although you wouldn’t describe the dance as a skipping dance. There’s a lightness to it, um, I suppose, um, but there’s this…I think because it’s using your whole body, I do like dances that use your whole body, you know, your arms…

Mm-hmm.

¶…your head as well as your feet, so, it’s involving my whole physical being.

Mm-hmm.

¶Um, but that’s also why I like it. And I suppose if I’m, if I’m using every part of me, and my arms, this incidentally is what’s so fantastic about Israeli dancing, I don’t know if you’ve come across, I mean, modern Israeli dancing...

Mm-hmm, yeah.

¶…is that you’re using every part of your body to express yourself.

Mm-hmm, okay.

¶I’m talking about expressing myself a lot so I guess that for me is something that’s really quite important about the dancing.

Mm-hmm. Is that a kind of an outward expression and how it’s received by others is not important or is it sort of an expression that you want to...
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¶It’s coming from within me, I don’t know how others would be perceiving it at all.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶But, um, I suppose I’m quite a shy person although people might not think I was shy, but I am, I know I am. And maybe I don’t feel shy when I’m dancing.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶There you are this is getting into deep, deep water.

*Well, no, no, only as deep as you are comfortable with. Um, ...*

¶No I’ve just realised that as I’ve said it.

*Yeah.*

¶Yeah.

Yeah, great, thank you. So um, okay! That’s very helpful actually, thank you. So, as you know, I’m also looking at the experience of time while dancing, um, how do you experience time while you are dancing? For example, are you more or less aware of time passing, do you use time differently while you’re dancing than when you’re not dancing?

¶Well, I’m, I’m, because I’m concentrating I think it’s true of anything really, if you’re really concentrating on the matter in hand you are less aware of time passing. As a teacher and running a group I’ve obviously got to manage the time, um, available.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶But I think I do, I think I do that when the dance ends, so I think, um, I think I differentiate the two, but you know it’s another, um, element that comes into the experience of running a group as opposed to you know, just going along and taking what’s on offer.

*Mm-hmm. Okay. Is um, is the way you experience time while you’re dancing different than the way you experience time otherwise?*

¶Um, [long pause] yes, but I mean I would say it’s the same if I’m deeply involved in something.
Mm-hmm.

Mm-hmm.

You know, when you’re not thinking about other things like what you’re gonna cook for supper tomorrow or you know some other problem, some problem that you’re dealing with or…

Mm-hmm. So there’s nothing necessarily unique about the dancing, it’s more...

About the time aspect, no. If I’m understanding how you’re talking about time, no.

No, that’s fine. So, it’s more, you see that as more you’re concentrating and focused and enjoying what you’re doing.

I’m, yes, just enjoying and you’re focusing on what you’re doing and therefore you’re not you know conscious of the minutes ticking by, you know.

Mm-hmm, yep.

No, nothing special though about the dancing. I don’t think, anyway.

Okay.

I might put the phone down and start thinking and think ‘Oh! actually…’ [laugh]

If you do, please feel free to email me with additional thoughts.

Oh okay right!

No, that’s fine. Um, we talked about experiencing one’s self and you’ve talked about that a bit already, freedom and a sense of being transported. And being a different person when you’re dancing. Is there anything else you want to add to that?

Um, (long pause) I can’t really think of anything, um.

Okay.
…to add to that. Um, if a dance is about something specific I think I put, I put Hora Miressii down …

Yes.

…as one of my favourite dances? It was quite difficult, actually, to compile a list of five favourites.

Yes.

Um, and on another day it might be a different list, but that is the dance, it’s a wedding dance…

Mm-hmm.

A Romanian village wedding dance and it’s danced by the bride and her friends. Do you know it?

Not off the top of my head.

Um, and it’s where the bride is saying goodbye to everybody because she’s going to go over the hills and far away to live in her husband’s village and basically be a skivvy to her mother-in-law.

Mm-hmm.

So, everybody is supposed to be crying at the end, and I think, um I mean my daughter thinks this is dreadful in this day and age to be liking such (laughs), such a dance but there’s something, you know, I like to put myself in that situation, so you know, to feel what the dance is about.

Mm-hmm.

So, I’m trying to think if there’re any other dances that would offer a particular, um, and off the top of my head I can’t. But I know that if it’s… Oh yes! There’s an Armenian dance um that’s now sprung to my head, into my head, um, which has meaning, so you know if there’s a meaning to the dance, I would like to imagine that as I’m dancing.

Mm-hmm. Is there, if you know the story of the dance, that’s uh, a sort of a meaning, yeah?

Yeah.
Is there other kind of meaning within the dance itself? I know that’s a difficult question, too.

Well no, I would just turn back to the shared experience really.

Mm-hmm.

I mean if you’ve done an Armenian dance with the lights off and candles, holding candles and little fingers linked, that’s um you know quite a lovely sharing. I was going to say spiritual but I don’t like using the word ‘spiritual’ in connection with dancing.

Mm-hmm. Can you talk about that a bit? Because some people have used it and I’m curious as to your...

Oh have they! Well circle dancers use that a lot.

Yeah.

I have tried circle dancing and I don’t like it because I feel it’s, it’s turning um, it’s turning the dances into something else, which is not what they originally are.

Mm-hmm.

I like to, I like to remain true to what the dances are and, um, I don’t think a lot of these folk dances, um, from Eastern Europe are really spiritual dances.

Mm-hmm.

[not audible on the recording]

Mm-hmm.

So that’s why I don’t like using the word ‘spiritual’.

Mm-hmm.

Because I’ve experienced a candle put in the centre of the um floor. Well that is different to an Armenian dance I’m talking about, which would be used, um, the one I’m thinking of is the host’s signal that the party is now over. So he produces all these sort of sheep all these candles and the guests do this dance. So that is a reason for that.
Mm-hmm.

Um, where you can use that dance at the end of a party, you know, if you’ve had party night at your group, you could do that.

Mm-hmm.

And that is totally different to me from circle dances, putting a candle in the centre of the room and making a perfectly kind of everyday dance into some sort of spiritual experience.

Okay. I appreciate your viewpoint on that.

Have I explained myself? I don’t know if I am explaining myself properly.

Yes! Beautifully, yes, great. Um, so you were tempted to use the word ‘spiritual’, though, to describe, uh, a shared experience. Something from the meaning of the dance other than the story of the dance. So if you were to use a word other than spiritual, what is the sense that you’re trying to convey?

That you are at one with everybody and you’re all, it’s a harmonious sharing at-oneness.

Mm-hmm, okay.

And a very pleasant, a very pleasant harmonious sharing at-oneness.

Mm-hmm. Okay. Alright, I’ll, I’ll move on to, to this idea of the experience of space. Um, the space around us, the space between us, um anything to do with the space. How do you experience space while you’re dancing, and how is that different from while you’re doing other things?

Now I don’t have, this is really difficult. Um, …

Are you, for example, more or less aware of where you are in a room or in relation to other people?

Well, in, yeah, I mean by necessity you have to be more aware of where you are with relation to other people. Um, generally speaking in Balkan dancing you’re holding onto them in some way.

Mm-hmm.
Um, um! I’m a bit stuck.

Well these are not easy questions.

I mean obviously if you’re in some sort of basket hold, a front basket or a back basket, you are, that is a very, very unifying sort of hold.

Mm-hmm.

Um, I mean how, it also depends on the person next to you, whether (laughs), whether um they know what they’re doing or not or whether um they don’t know so well what they’re doing. I ...I would say, I mean, I’m not sure how important the sense of space is to me because I’m thinking, you see, in Israeli dances which I love, we tend, some them we’re holding hands but a lot of the very modern ones because they’ve got so many turns all the time, it’s not practical to hold hands so you’re dancing on your own, and I really, um, enjoy that because of the, you know, the experience of self expression. But then I’m thinking you don’t have to be dancing on your own because I also enjoy the dances you know there’s something about holding on to other people that you know enhances your sense of the other people and that you’re all doing something together. So, I’m tempted to think for me, that the space business um, not so important.

It’s more the physical connection, so, is it fair to say that maybe when you, as you say, dancing on your own, meaning not holding hands or belts or anything, um, it tends to make you experience more a sense of expression, self expression, whereas if you do have a physical connection with the other dancers, maybe that promotes more of a feeling of the oneness and the shared experience.

It probably does, although, even when we’re dancing Israeli dances on our own, we’re all very much aware of each other and that we’re all enjoying ourselves. so...

Mm-hmm.

Um, so it’s not entirely true.

Okay.

No, it’s not entirely true.
So those aspects are important either way. The self-expression and the shared experience.

Are both very important. Both very important regardless of whether you're actually holding on to someone.

Sorry, what about holding on to somebody? Oh, sorry, those are both important even in dances where you are not holding on to someone. They're important to you in both situations where you actually are holding on to someone and when you're not holding on to someone.

Yes, I mean, the other people are important. Yes. Yes. Okay.

But I think that comes to what I said at the beginning, actually, that it’s different if you know the people you’re dancing with to if you went to a dance and maybe there were some people there that you knew but there were a lot of people you didn’t really know. For me, that is a different experience.

When you say ‘people that you know’, um, do you mean you know about them socially or that you’ve danced with them before?

Oh that I’ve danced with them a lot and um, yeah I know bits about them, you know, obviously you get to know, um I class them as friends, yes. Mm-hmm.

Although I’m not necessarily meeting them outside of the dancing experience. Mm-hmm, yeah, I asked that because in my own experience I found I danced with people for years and didn’t really know what they did for a living or you know, but um, so I was just curious if when you said ‘people that you know’, ‘dancing with people that you know’, meant primarily people that you danced with before.

Um, no I do know what everybody does.
Okay!

Um, I mean, we have a break half-way through, both the groups I go to, we have maybe a quarter of an hour drinks break halfway through, so, you know, we talk to each other, and um, yeah! I mean, if I had a party I might well invite some of the people, one, in fact, I have invited um people, if I have a party it tends to be a dancing party. And you know, you invite your dancing friends. But they're not necessarily people that I would be inviting round to dinner, maybe.

Right.

Um, and in any case thinking about it we all um this dancing it's a bit few and far between, necessarily people travel quite a distance. Um, to get to it so um I'm not dancing with, with local people.

Mm-hmm.

Um but I do know quite a lot about them all, yeah.

Mm-hmm. Okay! Well, that's really all the questions I have. Is there anything else that you'd like to tell me just about any of your thoughts about Balkan dancing or your own dancing or anything about the experience of dancing that you would just like to convey.

Um, not off the top of my head.

Mm-hmm.

I don't think so.

Okay.

No, no, I mean I do know that it's something that I do quite frequently contemplate, how, how, I ask myself whether leading a group has diminished my enjoyment of dancing or not. Um, it's brought me compensatory pleasure, I suppose, in that I get to choose up to a point um which, which dances we do, um but it's something that I hadn't really thought about before I took over running the group.

Mm-hmm. The whole question of teaching versus doing.

Yes, yes, yes. So I very much when I go to the Israeli group, I do have an input but I feel the balance is that I take from the experience. Um, when I
go to the international Balkan group, that I lead, um I am very much a giver.

*Mm-hmm. Okay, well I know there were some difficult questions in here; this is why I’m doing the research, it’s kind of difficult to put into words (thank you, wrap up and goodbye).*
Appendix C-5: Dancer5

Interview date: 08 March 2011

(Confirm permission to record.)

I want to thank you very much for participating in my research. What I have planned this evening is, I have a few questions that we can start with, but really I’d like this to be more of a conversation, where you tell me what you think is important about your experience of dancing, particularly Balkan folk dances.

¶So I could just say perhaps that I started folk dancing in, not that long ago, actually, it was in 2006, so, I’ve been doing it for four years. And, sort of, once a week, sometimes twice a week. And I’m very fortunate to have a very good group here, a very active group of dancers. The Oxford Balkansko Oro, we’re called. So I prefer, when I started off I was in an International folk dance group, and I very quickly, when I found out about this Balkan one, I changed, um, just to do the Balkan dancing because I far preferred it, due to the fact that you didn’t need partners. So that was a major thing for me, that it was, circle dances and you didn’t need a partner.

Right. Okay. So given there are lots of different kinds of recreational activities to choose from, and even lots of different kinds of dancing, um, what it is about the Balkan folk dancing that led you to take it up? You mentioned you don’t need partners, what else?

¶Well, to be honest, when I first went along, when I first went to the International folk dance group, I had never thought about it and I was just accompanying my mother, who thought that it might be some easy, accessible exercise. However, it was more demanding physically than she could cope with, so she had to drop out. But I, I loved it, so it was just really a chance encounter, so, um, and then when I moved to the Balkan group, I mean there’s so much I love about it, but I could say firstly, seeing as it’s International Women’s Day today, it’s um, largely a women’s group, I mean, I think we have one man who comes sometimes, but we are mainly a women’s group, and that is, I don’t know, it’s just unusual these days, to be able to do something like that, and I feel that when we’re doing these women’s dances, that are, some of them, very old, um, in a way we’re, you
know, we’re doing something that’s just for women, and I find that quite, well, empowering almost, in a way.

Okay. What else do you love about it?

¶I like the music, very much, the music is, you know, fantastic, all those unusual rhythms and that sort of gypsy kind of style that many of them have and those wonderful instruments, you know, the sound of them, the gaida and those kind of instruments, I just think the music is fantastic. So, I mean, I actually have a number of the tunes, a lot of the music on my iPod and I will listen to it just for the music, so, you know, without considering the dancing. So that’s quite a big element as well. Um, and then it’s exercise and it’s the most pleasant form of exercise I’ve ever found. You know, much more kind of attractive than jogging or squash or anything

[laughs].

Okay. Why do you think it’s different than other kinds of exercise?

¶Well, because it has, because it has a social, which I’ve already mentioned, the sort of women thing, it has a social and it has an emotional and it even has a spiritual aspect, which other, which other sports don’t have. And I have played other sports, I’ve played badminton, and the atmosphere, the sort of ethos is quite different. So, uh, yeah, it’s hard to explain, really, but I mean a lot of these dances pack quite an emotional punch. And also, they, um, there’s something about preserving a tradition, which is, um, you know, endangered, and so that you feel you’re, you feel that you are helping to preserve these traditional dances and music and keeping them alive. And then there’s something about being in touch, in puts you in touch, doing these dances, puts you in touch with people, I mean, not literally, but um with the spirit, maybe, of a different place and of a different time. Um, so I think it’s rather marvellous that we can do these steps and, they will be, they might be quite old, I mean, some of them are choreographed and they’re newer, but some of them are, you know, quite, quite ancient, and some of them have got stories attached. And um, and also they can say something like this is a Macedonian dance, and what do we mean by ‘Macedonia’, well, it’s this general cultural area that crosses Bulgaria and um, Northern Greece and this bit that’s actually now called ‘Macedonia’, so it sort of cuts across political boundaries and, you know, that’s, I just find that charming.

Okay. Sorry, go ahead.
Um, well I’m just wondering what else to say really, I remember we did one, we had one evening, which was actually at somebody’s home, that we had some musicians invited, um, and he was an accordionist, he was a Serb, and then he played some tunes and it was wonderful and then he said ‘And this one’s for, this one’s for the Bosnians’, and you know, that kind of reaching out...

And we have a Turkish woman in our group who does Greek dances without any problem and Bulgarian dances and so on, and it’s a kind of reaching across political and religious divides, and so it’s, um, I just find, you know, it’s a force for the good! [laughs]

That’s what I feel.

Okay. You just mentioned a lot of really interesting things. So, I know it’s sometimes difficult to put the experience of dancing into words, this is why I’m doing this research, actually, is to try to find the words to describe the experience, but you mentioned, um, when we were talking about the difference between dancing and sport, other sport that you’ve done, you said that the dancing has an emotional aspect and a spiritual aspect, and a different ethos, and I wonder if you could just expand on those ideas a bit.

Okay, well, they, they, I mean, different dances do different things for me, but some of the, some of the slow, some of the slower dances um, where you are having to be quite controlled in your movements, um, and especially where the music is kind of mournful, um, and I’m thinking in particular of, um, I mean there’s two that we do like that, I think I mentioned ‘Ispaiche’ on the form that I sent, and there’s another one called, oh god, it begins with ‘b’, the name of a town in Albania, um, gosh it’s gone clean out of my head! But that one, to me is a, they’re very, kind of, meditative dances, um, so, to me, they do feel like a sort of moving meditation. Um, and then there’s other dances where, they kind of, where I don’t get that spiritual feeling but I do get an emotional feeling, um, like, ‘Limonya’ where you have this sort of closeness because you have, you know, the arms are very close together in that dance, um, and uh, there’s a sort of joy, there’s quite often a joy in these, in these dances. Um, and they make you, you know the music makes you want to leap up and dance for joy [laughs]. And uh, and then there’s also some sad ones. And we’ve, we’ve just started doing one dance which I think is called, and I’m not sure I’m pronouncing this correctly, it’s called ‘Oine Doine’ [check this] and it’s
in a , it’s done by women in a chain and the woman in, one woman puts her hand behind her back and the other one, um, holds it and puts her hand behind her back and so on, and it’s supposed to be mimicking these women being taken off as slaves, um, by, probably by the Ottomans, I don’t know. Um, so that’s, you know, quite powerful stuff! Does that answer?

Yes! Yes, that’s great. I’m also very interested in this idea about the spirit of a different place and time.

¶Yes, I feel that it helps sort of find a connection, um, it’s a kind of window into another culture, another time.

Mm-hmm. Through the music and the movement?

¶Yeah, through the music and the dancing, yeah!

Mm-hmm. Okay. Well, thank you. I’ll go back to some of the questions on my list here, now. Um, and ask what are you aware of while you’re dancing?

¶Um, gosh, uh, well, I’m aware of the other dancers, but, not that much unless they’re talking, it annoys me when people talk when we’re dancing. I guess I’m quite internalized in a lot of the dances. Yeah. I mean sometimes if we’re doing a performance, then I’m, I’m aware of the audience. Um, and that obviously isn’t as, I mean that’s a different kind of experience if you’re doing a performance, rather than just doing it for yourself. Um, I’m aware of, I’m aware of the music, of course, and I often, concentrate quite intently on the music, so, I like to try and make, I like to try and dance the dance as perfectly as I can, so I’ll try and put my foot down at the exact moment that the beat , you know, so that it’s on the beat, and also I quite often watch the person who’s the best dancer in our group and try and mimic her as closely as possible so that I can learn, um, and if I’m, if I’m the second one after the leader, then I will try and mirror what that person is doing so that we look like one person doing, doing that dance. But that doesn’t work if I’m further down, down the row because people are doing slightly different things. But if I’m the second one and I can only see the leader, then I’ll try and replicate what, what she’s doing. Does that make sense?

Yes, it does.

¶Yeah.
So how then, is the time that you spend dancing different than the time you spend doing other things? What sets that time apart for you or makes you look forward to that time?

¶Mmm. Well, gosh, I mean that’s so difficult because it’s just, you know, it’s just different, I mean it’s like you’re in a different world. Um, how does it differ from the other times? Um, well it’s time for myself, I suppose.

Mm-hmm. Well actually, the way you said that is very interesting, you said it’s, it’s just a different world. So what’s, if you were to describe that world of dancing, maybe thinking, comparing it to the other world of everyday life or other things, how would you describe that different world of dancing?

¶Well, it’s um, creative and it’s uh, beautiful, um, and it’s personal. [long pause] um, yeah, I mean really I do it for me, and a lot of the things that I spend my time on I don’t do for me, I do for other people. [laughs] So, Yes. Life is like that. [both laugh]

¶I just feel it’s a very wholesome, completely blameless, that there’s, no matter how hard you looked at it, you couldn’t find anything wrong with doing it, you know, that’s um, yeah, I mean, in all aspects, it seems to be a positive thing.

Okay. You mentioned the music quite a bit. So, um, how does the dance music affect your experience of the dancing? For example, strong melody versus a strong beat…

¶Yeah, well obviously music is very important because if we just did the steps, which we do when we’re learning a piece, it’s not the same, it’s not nearly the same. Um, so the music is like part and parcel of the, the whole experience. There’s sometimes it’ so, um, so joyous, and i also feel that it’s so, it’s ancient, that it’s, you know, it’s, it’s quite important that it’s like traditional…I mean it sounds like really ancient sometimes, like from the ancient Greeks or something, that, going that far back. And, I mean, maybe it isn’t, and I mean I know that some of the influences came from, from the, probably, probably from India and through the Middle East. Um, so that those are all, you know, I mean, those are lovely ideas.

The idea of it being ancient.

¶The idea that it’s ancient, yes, yes.
Now, because you’re a musician, I can probably ask you this. Is there something about the form of the music that gives it that ancient feel, or a special feel?

Well, yes, I think it’s because it’s not regular, I mean I think we’re very used to, I mean, music in sort of ‘DA da da da, DA da da da’ it’s very kind of banal and it’s used in, you know, I mean, the sort of pop, pop songs, pop music that you get is really kind of simple music. Really simple, much of it. Um, and it’s just child stuff, really. So, these, some of these tunes are very intricate in their, in, in their rhythms. And they’re not regular, of course, so that you can’t actually, you can’t clap in, well you can clap but you have to do it irregularly. Um, so you can’t do a sort of regular beat. You know what I mean, it’s very hard to explain actually.

I think you mean the, um, the phrasing is such that you might have a couple of sets of three and then a two, and you end up with 11/8 rhythm, or...

Yeah. Yeah, exactly, yeah [the phrasing is such that you might have a couple of sets of three and then a two and you end up with 11/8 rhythm]. I mean I play in a, I play in an orchestra and we play classical music, and out conductor stands in front and he will beat a 4 or, you know, a 4 in a bar or a 3 in a bar or a 2 in a bar. But he never beats sort of 11/8ths! [laughs]

It would sound interesting if he did! Yeah, okay, I know what you mean there. And along a similar line, how do the different movements and the steps and patterns change your experience? So, if you’ve got maybe, a dance with leaps in it, does that feel different than a dance with maybe very small, close to the ground steps?

Yes, yes they do of course, yes, I mean, um, and I have my preferences. So we have, the Serbian dances tend to be full of lots of little fast steps, and those I’m not, not so keen on. They, they’re quite kind of hurried, um, and I do, I prefer the, I like Pirin, I like dances from Pirin where you have those very graceful, wide cat-like steps, we call them the ‘cat dances’. And they’re almost balletic, um, and they make you feel graceful. And if you’re doing one of these little fast dances where your feet have to go really quickly but in little, really little movements, they never make me feel graceful, they make me feel like an elephant. [laughs] An out of control elephant. [laughs]

Oh dear!
§So I like dances that make me feel graceful.

*Mm-hmm, right.*

¶Yeah. Um, and then I also quite like the men’s dances, and we do do these quite often, I mean, even though we don’t really have any men in our, in our group. Um, where you can be a bit sort of bolder in your moves and you can lift your leg a bit higher, you don’t have to be so, you know, like little dainty all the time. And um, and they have a different sort of feel, feel to them as well. Although hard to, hard to say what. But certainly the steps, yeah, do influence, do influence what you’re feeling in the dance.

*Mm-hmm. Okay.*

¶So we do one, we do, we do one called, is it ‘Yeni Yol’? which is a very sort of middle eastern gypsy kind of thing with, and you can sort of wriggle your hips and pretend you’re doing a sort of belly dance and that’s, that’s great, I mean, that’s a whole different kind of, kind of styling it’s that’s very, you know, it lifts your spirits, it’s just fun, we’re always laughing, we laugh when we do that one [laughs].

*Mm-hmm.

¶Puts you in a good humour.

Okay. Alright. So, what is your experience of time while you’re dancing?

¶Um, okay, well, the first thing to say, I suppose, is that we have, our sessions are two hours and I don’t always, I’m always late, so I get there, I probably dance for about an hour and a half, or maybe and hour and three-quarters, and I dance non-stop and I never sit out any, hardly ever, unless I’m feeling ill, um, and it’s time to pack up very quickly. That, the evening goes quite quickly for me. I’m not really aware of it flying, you know, it sort of flies by and I’m not really aware of it. Um, so that’s over the evening as a whole.

¶Um, in the middle of an individual dance, [pause] they, yeah, I’m also not really aware of time passing except if it’s a, quite an exhausting one, and you’re tiring and then you can feel that your legs sort of tiring, and then you’re aware that it’s sort of gone on. But, I mean, I, I quite often know where I am in the dance because I know the music well enough to know,
you know, that we’re halfway through, we’re almost at the end, you change steps here, etc. So, um, I am both aware and not aware of the time. [laughs]

Okay. Great. No, that’s a great answer. Is that experience different from when you’re doing other things?

Um, being absorbed? Um, no I do get absorbed in other things as well. I mean I can be absorbed at work and not notice that time has gone, it does happen in other things, yeah.

Okay.

Yeah, I mean I am aware of, I suppose I am aware of time, it’s not that I’m kind of rapt, I’m not in a trance or anything, um, but it’s just passing very pleasantly.

Mm-hmm. What about your awareness of rhythm, does that affect your sense of time? That’s a bit of a leading question, because I’m interested in how maybe we focus on rhythm while we’re dancing, and maybe that’s different than when we’re doing other things.

Um, well, maybe, you know, but you can do other dances and it’s not nearly as, it’s not as much fun. If you’re doing say, free-form disco dancing with a very dominant beat, um, it hasn’t got the same, it’s not the same at all. Um, I don’t know, I find that quite hard to, [pause] I haven’t analysed it that closely.

No, that’s fine.

It’s just something, you know it’s very hard to put into words, because it’s not a word thing. Um, so I’m trying to, trying to change the, the, the medium and trying to express it in a different way. Yeah, it’s really hard, and I’m not, I don’t usually struggle to find words! [laughs]

Well, there’s um, there’s a thesis that someone wrote in 1992 just talking about that very thing, where experienced dancers could not describe their experience in words. So, we’re in good company when we struggle to find the words for it.

Yeah, well of course you can’t! Because you’re using steps to express yourself, not words, and it’s very hard to translate from, I mean it is like a language, you’re translating from one language to the other.
Appendix C-5

Mm-hmm. Well that actually leads into my next question, which is what is your experience of yourself while you’re dancing, and you just mentioned you’re using the steps to express yourself. So maybe if you could talk about that a little bit more?

¶My experience of myself while I’m dancing. Um, well I feel, I feel good, I feel pure, um, wholesome, and I feel connected and spiritual, as well.

Mm-hmm. So in what way do you feel connected?

¶I feel connected to the people on either side of me, or to the people who are dancing. I mean it’s lovely when we’re doing, especially when we have our parties and you’re going round, there’s a huge number of you, and you just see all these faces and they’re all smiling and they’re all enjoying what they’re, what they’re doing and, uh, I feel a sense of togetherness with them, with the dancers. As well as with other people who may have danced that dance at other times in other places, sort of ghost-like people.

Mm-hmm. Okay. And you mentioned a spiritual aspect, can you talk about that a bit? In what way ‘spiritual’ for you?

¶Well, I don’t know, it’s a bit, perhaps it’s a bit daft to be feeling that, but I, but I do, just...um...

Well I don’t think it’s daft. [both laugh]

¶Well I don’t, I don’t, I’ve never actually spoken, I’ve never said this to anybody at dance, so I don’t know if anybody feels the same way, at all, I mean, I don’t [know?] if it’s a common reaction, um, but, I mean, actually, no, it must be! Because, because there is a sort of, there’s a sacred dance tradition which, I mean a lot of people do that as well. Where, in fact I’ve been to one, one, um, event where they actually had candles and flowers in the middle, in the middle of the circle, and people were dancing round that. Um, so these were sort of circle dances which were trying to tap into some kind of sacred feeling, and they were all, they were actually trying to generate it. So, I think it must be a reaction that is not unique to me.

[laughs]

¶Um, yeah but it’s just, just the feeling that it is a way of being in touch with, uh, well, I don’t know, with something universal, perhaps?
Okay. So for you the spiritual feeling of dancing is some kind of sense of being in touch with some universal.

¶Yes. Yes, although ‘being in touch’ might be a bit strong, but, but uh, it’s an approach, yes, I feel that it’s an approach, um, and that you’re, and that you’re honouring that with the dance.

Mm-hmm.

¶And, and that’s, I mean, that’s why I think one should be respectful, um, of the dances. And I, go back to this again, I’m not keen on people chatting during the dances. It puts me off, um, it puts me off my feelings, I suppose. It’s distracting.

Right. So is it, without putting words in your mouth, this feeling of the universal, has it got to do with that when you experience dancing, there’s something more than just the steps and the movement and the music created, or not? You can tell me I’m completely wrong, I’m just trying to understand your perspective on it.

¶That is possibly so. Yes, although I wouldn’t say not created, because it’s there already, but it’s a way of approaching it, or tapping into it. So, it’s possibly like a prayer, sometimes.

Sorry, I’m just taking a few written notes, too, while we talk, so I can remember some of the things you’ve said.

¶How many people are you interviewing for your research?

{discussion of the research}

So is there anything else you wanted to say about, um, your experience of your self or the spiritual and emotional aspects, or...?

¶No, I don’t think so. I mean, I think with the emotional aspect, it can, it’s, it’s funny how these different dances can elicit different emotions, depending on what sort of dance they are. So they can be really fun ones, um, really lively which make you happy and smiley and then there’s these really, really sad ones. And in fact I almost, I mean, I can almost be on the verge of tears after some of them. Um, and I’m thinking of these wedding dances, you know, where the bride is going to be leaving her home and it’s this farewell, and so they are always terribly sad and, um, and you dance
them with your eyes looking downwards, on the ground, and I can get so
into that [laughs] that at the end of the dance, I’m actually feeling, you
know, almost as though I could begin, begin to cry. Although I never
actually have, cause, you move on to something else.

*Mm-hmm.*

¶Yeah, it’s really interesting to, to see how the dances can, can express that,
how they can express different emotions, like pride. I don’t know any angry
dances, though. [laughs]

Well it sounds like you know a lot about the backgrounds of the different
dances that you do, does that, what do I want to say? When you do a dance
where you don’t know the story of it, is that different, or how is that
different, I should say, than when you do know the story of it?

¶Um, well, yes it is nice to know the story and a bit of the background, but
if I, if I don’t, then I, I can enjoy it, um... Oh, you know what, I’ve just
remembered the name of that one beginning with ‘B’, it’s ‘Berati’. Berati is
the one, that, that rather slow um, that feels like a very meaningful dance.
Yeah. Sorry, that was going back to a bit earlier. So um, where was I again?
Oh, the story, the story of the dances. If I don’t know the story of the dance,
then I, I suppose I’m just free to interpret it as I wish. And I think if I, if I
get, if there is a dance, and I can’t think of any examples, where my
interpretation of it, the way I experience it differs from the story that I’m
given, then I’ll go with my own interpretation. [laughs]

¶And just, you know, enjoy the dance that way, the way that I want to.

*Mm-hmm. Okay. Is there anything else at all that you’d like to tell me about
your experience of dancing?*

¶Um, I suppose there’s one thing I haven’t mentioned which is that I
sometimes feel, a pride, um, in the skill. But if I’ve, if I have mastered
something, then yeah, I’m really quite, I’m pleased with myself and I’m
proud of it and when we do performances, which I’ve done a few of, um, I
feel very proud of myself and of our group and of the way we look and we
have magnificent costumes, I haven’t spoken about that really, but we do
have fantastic costumes, and we just look fantastic!

¶And um, I think we can sort of barely fail to please everybody that sees us,
so I feel very positive about, about that.
Appendix C-5

"[chat about the recent party the researcher attended at the Oxford dance group]

(Thank you, wrap up and goodbye.)
Appendix C-6: Dancer6

Interview date: 25 August 2012

(Confirm permission to record)

So the first question is, um, there are lots of recreational activities to choose from, and even lots of different kinds of dancing to choose from, so what is it about the Balkan folk dancing that led you to take it up?

¶I was brought up in the English folk dance world by my parents, so I was involved in English folk dance from, I think from when I was about two years old. And, when I was 15, in, 1978, there was a Dutch man playing accordion for one of the English folk dance, a Dutch man, actually a very very good accordionist called [?], a special accordionist from Amsterdam. He was playing Bulgarian music. Now, somebody trained in English folk music and I was also doing classical trumpet at the same time.

¶I was studying classical music with the trumpet, so I used to play in brass quintets and brass bands and orchestra...And for somebody with training in sort of classical, sort of [?] classical music and folk music, hearing Bulgarian music was something very different. The whole construction is different in every way you can think of. So that was my initial interest.

Okay, so the music kind of led you in.

¶The music was the interest to me cause it initiated me to learn to play accordion, so I could learn to play this type of music. And the dance aspect really came alongside. I was in a folk camp type environment in England, it was a very participatory dance and participatory music. So you could join in either as and when you wanted to.

Mm-hmm. So you both played music and danced, whichever.

¶That’s the way it worked at folk camps is that you learned to do whatever you want to do and there’s no rules about who’s allowed to join in or not. There’s no paid musicians or anything.

So you mentioned that the construction of the Bulgarian music was so different than what you were used to from your classical training. So what was it that was appealing about that to you?
Just cause it’s different. I tend to be interested by anything that’s different.

_Yep, so something new…_

Yeah, it has...as you know, Balkan music tends to have slightly different rhythms to it, the harmonising is not really quite what you expect sometimes, and that [?]. Manner of playing is quite different compared to English folk styles, technically, on accordion it’s hard to hop from one to the other, quickly.

_Well that’s interesting, so can you put into words the difference in how you approach the music playing?_

I know it takes me a good hour or two to swap from one to the other successfully. When you’re playing Balkan music, which is very rhythmically orientated, because it’s based, to my mind this is, the rhythm is based around—I’m trying to make this up on the fly, at the moment—it’s based around a lot of notes that you play but you don’t actually necessarily accent those notes. There’s much more ornamentation, a lot of quick succession, and the rhythm, the exactness of the rhythm is extremely important. That’s in the base rhythm line. Whereas when you’re playing English, there’s quite a bit of emphasis put as you lead into the notes, to give a lift when dancing. So it’s a different sort of technique, the fingering, the bellows and the [?] time. The timing was [vague?]. So if I go from Balkan music to English, I get English music coming out far too fast without any lift.

_Lift as in the term English folk dancers use that gives them the sort of lightness in dancing. I was always taught you do it by putting a dynamic increase in the notes on the offbeats._

_Okay, a dynamic emphasis on the offbeats, yep._

When I was taught to play English music, you always aimed to put a bit of a, um, an exaggeration when the dancer wanted to go up. So that’s the offbeat. I know they don’t tend to do that in English music anymore.

_Oh, okay. That’s really interesting, actually, thank you._

When I was taught to do Morris dancing, we musicians would tend to emphasis [sic] on when you’re up in the air, as a way to give lightness to it, and I don’t know if that’s how it should be, that’s the way we learnt in the
1960s. But as I saw in Jan Elliot’s paper, 1980s I think she wrote it, um, they talk about making a strong beat on the, on a beat so the musician has time, and then put a strong beat when they land, whereas I was taught completely the opposite way around.

Okay, and in the Balkan, comparatively...

[Balkan, you don’t tend to do this in terms of dynamic generation.

Right, as you said, it’s highly ornamented.

It’s highly ornamented and it’s based on mostly, well on accordion, it’s based on the timing, which takes a lot more finger work.

Yep. So it’s great, I mean you have the perspective of both a musician and a dancer, how would you say the form and the construction of the music affects the experience of the dancer, dancing to that music?

For me, the music and the dancer absolutely tie together. This is where I differ dramatically from L. This is where we tend to fall over each other in quick step...So to me the music is absolutely tied in to the dance, the dancing. And after much thinking about this, in terms of Romanian dance, because we’ve been looking at the dances in southwest Romania in Banat and trying to determine what they see as a good dancer compared to a not-so-good dancer. They’re very concerned about the exact time that the foot touches the floor. But in Banat dancing, as opposed to the rest of Romania, there’s virtually no stamps at all, it’s light-footed. So the teachers will quite often exaggerate the timing by stamping, when they’re teaching. And in the English folk dance, International Folk Dance scenario, most of the people around the group you would also find probably do a stamp but do it out of time. So there’s an exactness in the listening to the music in Banat, here’s, the average English person doesn’t have. And Romanians actually use the, the term, um, ‘Got to have a musical ear to dance’.

Yeah.

And what we’ve determined, after much struggling, is that they dance to the exact notes in the music. So there’s, there is a little bit of a twist when you’re playing music, sort of the difference between a popular musician and a classical musician, or if you want to play swing or, to make the styles change slightly you change the timing of the notes, essentially.
Yeah.

Some people call this the groove, of a tune. So we found in Banat the dancers, well, they’re aware of the groove when they’re dancing. So they’ll put their feet, touch their feet to the floor, where the musicians notes are. But the very good dancers are also able to determine between the leading edge and the trailing edge of the notes. So they are able to syncopate slightly around, so they [itself in there?] determine what’s, steal a bit of time, while you’re dancing.

Yep, so let me just summarise to see if I got it right, and also to make sure I can hear it on the recording later. Um, you’re saying that with the Romanian music that you’re studying, in southwest Romania, the dancers are attending much more closely to the timing of the notes or what we might call the groove, which sort of creates the style difference, it’s sort of the timing, and that the very good dancers hear so precisely the beginning and the end of the notes, that they can play a little bit with the timing of their steps and movements.

That’s what I believe the situation is. They are, of course, unaware of this. Ah. They talk about having a musical ear, but they’re not so worried about the specifics of how that happens, is that right?

I think it’s because they learn how to dance this way from their training, and the way it is. So, you don’t necessarily know what you’re doing, you do it automatically.

You just do it, just because you learn it naturally.

It’s given L and me quite a struggle between us, because in the Banat scenario, somebody with musical training, me, this is relatively easy. But for somebody with ballet training where you to some extent learn to dance through music, it’s incredibly difficult.

Yes. So as a dancer of these dances, that you had to learn, how do you, I mean, do you attend to the music in the same way as, or you try to attend, I guess, to the music in the same way as a Romanian would?

Um, I don’t know exactly how they listen to music, my Romanian isn’t good enough to ask them. It’s only on trying to discover what they see as good and bad, and understanding more closely what they appreciate. For
example, the choreographer from [Bee-dor?] likes me because he says I have a metronome going on in my head. I’ve had discussions with L about this, because of having musical training, I really don’t know what other people are like cause we, our academic studies, we’ve been forced down certain routes because of the theses we’ve got going, and I think neither of our supervisors are particularly interested in this particular field. So it’s something we discuss between us but we haven’t tried discussing with other dancers to any great extent, even our friends. But for me, as a musician, when I listen to music, the exactness of the notes is absolutely there without me concentrating.

Right, yes, so you’re attuned.

So, if there was a piece of music on in the background now, I would instantly be able to tell the count, even if it’s got strong groove on it, without interfering with talking. Whereas I think that’s not the case for people without a musical training.

Right. Whereas there are some pieces that I still haven’t quite worked out where the slows and quicks come in and what the metre actually is. But, um, let me ask you this, then, what is, how is your experience of dancing these dances from Romania different than when you dance English folk dances? What are you aware of when you’re dancing these dances?

That’s an intriguing question to ask an engineer.

And someone who’s doing research, because I imagine you know, that affects how you’ll answer this, compared to someone who’s not researching them, but yeah.

In all the different types, to me, in all the different types of folk dance there are, one has to have some sort idea of the character of that type of music. And uh, what I always used to use in England, in the International Folk Dance, were [ist?] folk dances, to try and gain some...L and I discussed...when we discuss workshops with choreographers from different countries, my aim was always to try and learn quickest, so that the choreographer liked me. That was always my intention and the two tricks for doing that was to grasp the structure of what he’s teaching from the first demonstration so that you didn’t need to go through the learning process because you already grasped the whole structure of it, after watching, and the second thing was try and work out which aspects were important in that
So in different parts of the Balkans and different parts of the folk world, sometimes things are more important than they are in others.

Yes.

So in Banat, a region of Romania, in particular, exact listening to the music is primary. And in most of Romania, syncopation of rhythm is very important. But not the way you hold yourself in Romanian, they don’t tend to notice quite so much, but in order to move the way they do, you’ve got to do most of the work from your knees and your feet, [?] elevation.

Mm-hmm.

So that’s the sort of trick for Romanian. And it can be, similarly you learn different tricks for particular areas. So you concentrate your efforts in the things that matter to the local dancers. That was my strategy in the 80s.

Yeah. So when you say you try to determine the structure of the dance, I have an idea of what you might mean, but I’ll ask you what do you mean by the structure, exactly?

Um, again, I’ve asked a few of our dance friends around how they conceptualise the structure of a folk dance in their mind, and I haven’t found anybody else who sees it the same way as me yet, so. When I started doing all this work, I assumed everybody saw dancing in the same way as everybody else. Which I think was a slightly foolish idea. So, for me, um, in order to, if you’re consciously wanting to learn steps, so when I dance normally, doing these choreographies socially, my mind doesn’t concentrate on anything, normally, concentrates on who is in the audience and what they’re doing. But when I’m trying to learn, the structural things, mainly the rhythm, the steps that go on the rhythm, then there’s the localised… For me there’s two sides to your space when you’re dancing, there’s local space and there is the wider space. So when you learn a dance, there is a certain ways to move in the [?] space, then there’s a rhythm you’ve got to adhere to, which doesn’t only include the steps, you have to add in how long you wait before you lift your foot. So for example, if you’re dancing Pirin to Bulgarian and Macedonian, they tend to hang on with their foot on the ground until the very last, um, you keep your weight on the ground until the very last instant. It’s the same in Albania, to a certain extent, but you’d never do that in Morain [?]. So there’s these things
to do with timing and steps. Once you’ve got the formation of how the
steps work, you can then apply, um, different movements in your local
space. So to me it doesn’t matter if you’re moving sideways, forwards,
backwards, crossing in front, crossing behind – that’s another layer that I
put on top of it. In my mind.

Yes.

And then there’s another layer on top of it, which is how the hold, all this
fits in with the people around you. And these all run slightly independently,
in my mind.

Yes.

Does anybody else think of it that way?

Um, it’s a good question. Um, I think you’ve been more precise in your
description than people I’ve talked with, but, um, it does make sense to me
what you’re saying, if that helps.

I think the other thing that I’ve noticed, I’ve realised in the last six months
or so we’ve been thinking about this, as a musician, I think in terms of
moving in the same way as playing music. I don’t know if you’re a
musician...or not.

I have played a couple of instruments, not lately, but...

When you’re playing in a group or something, mostly you make the noise
by the moving aspect of something in your body to make the noise. And
you have to get that timed very exactly with the groove of the music for it
to work. So it’s all about the sensation of a muscular, a muscular, uh,
contraction fitting with a certain part of the groove. So my concept of dance
is more about the certain muscular contractions versus [?] listening to
music. Whereas I’ve discovered that a lot of people are more trained into
the positional aspect versus the count.

They’re more interested in the positional, spatial aspect...

The spatial, positional aspect.

...versus count. So they’ll think in terms of ‘count 2, I must be in this
position’. Whereas I think in terms of on count 2, I must be contracting
these muscles to get this elevation.
Hmm.

¶Now, I don’t know where that difference appears from, but I’m suspicious that it’s partly, it’s my musical background and partly from my folk background. But it’s completely the opposite to somebody, somebody, say, who’s trained in ballet. Because their aim is to get a 3-D spatial movement, positions, visual scene. Whereas in musicians or folk world, you’re more interested in the, the moving to the music. That’s just my, that’s just my view on how I think I’m viewing it differently to some of our friends.

Yeah, well it’s an interesting point that everybody experiences it differently. I mean that’s an important point in itself, isn’t it?

¶We’ve realised all this only very recently, although if you go back 10 or 15 years ago when we used to be in a Romanian group in London, we used to have such arguments about rhythm and timing and everything. Used to be the musicians and Romanians, on one side couldn’t understand what the problem was. Most of the girls in the group were ballet trained at that time. And they could not, they were trying to define how the counts worked, this was just how to do offbeat stamping in Moldavian dances. And they could not get, figure out how to get it in time, it would sound all clunky and random. But what it turns out now, is the musicians and Romanians listen to the music and they stamp on the offbeat, and as you probably know, you can move the offbeat as you're playing it, or after, or put it exact time. If you put it slightly after the time, it feels more lazy, if slightly forward, it feels, um, a bit more pushed.

Yes, so I’m gonna just repeat that. So if you move the offbeat slightly later, it feels, as you say, more lazy, and if you move it slightly forward, it feels more pushed.

¶That’s the general rule. And musicians and Romanian dancers hear this, and just put the stamp where the note is. Whereas the ballet trained dancers, in [?], would try and put it on an exact count of 1 - and - 1 - and.

Hmm, okay.

¶This led to some extreme arguments.

Okay. Um, that’s really interesting.

¶I first referred to this in my thesis, but it wasn’t on the agenda.
[Discussion of participant's thesis and current work by academics in and around London].

I finished my masters last year. But that was, I have to be very, it’s on dancing Banat mountain dances within a city context, in [city name?]. So the dancing has been displaced from the mountain villages down to the local city. But, and how it’s continued [?] of the environment.

[Conversation about various people’s work in academia and who participant has spoken with, their reactions to his work].

Let me ask you again, just sort of getting back to, maybe not such an analytical, um view, but just your experience, um, of time and of space while you’re dancing, what are you aware of, yourself?

It’s different in different occasions. When we used to do performances, when we used to do performances on stage, I would generally, time would go quite quickly, during a seven-minute performance or something, it would go pretty quickly. Each folk dance folk dance used to be about 5-7 minutes and we’d normally do 3 to 6, something like that, and the time would go very quickly and I used to, say, just look around and see what’s going on in the audience, look around and about. My mind wasn’t really on the dance at all, you just had to keep in mind the concept of being a Romanian.

But that’s in a performance context.

That’s in a performance. When we go to Balkanplus, I have, I tend to completely cut myself off from the rest of the people there, because, um, I don’t know if you’ve ever been to Balkanplus?

No, I’m just thinking I need to make an effort to get there.

Yes, um, there’s a lot of slower-moving people, and [?]. The way I conceptualise dance as being this very rhythmic thing that has certain ways of moving ...

A very rhythmic thing, you said.

A very rhythmic thing with certain ways of moving, and with some practice that becomes totally habitual for a particular dance style, so you don’t need to think about it at all. So, if you get some Serbian music, you
can, you’ve got your idea in your mind about how you’ve learned to dance
to Serbian music with Serbians, when you dance to Serbian music, and you,
that just happens because the music’s Serbian and it happens. But within
the Balkanplus community most people there dance like English people.

Yep.

¶And they’re mostly interested in, in [?] to the dance instruction within
their own concept, which is what repeating pattern it is, what the
choreography is, and like that.

Steps, essentially, yeah?

¶ Basically the choreographic structure and the steps that they’re dancing to
them. They’re not particularly interested in how to dance like a Serbian
person. I don’t know if that’s because [?] their capability, cause they started
dancing later in life, or it’s something that doesn’t matter to them because
in some ways, they’re using the dance to make a, say, ...It’s that, it’s not,
you’re not actually doing Bulgarian dances in England, you’re doing a
dance culture based on Bulgarian dancing in England, something that’s
related to the English idea of how to dance.

That’s a really interesting observation. So you’re saying that some people
who do the Balkan dances or even maybe many of the people who do the
Balkan dances aren’t really interested so much in doing them as someone
of that region would, but it becomes, sort of, another culture based, another
dance style maybe that’s sort of blending between the English and the
Bulgarian or whatever, is that right?

¶I think that’s what it ends up as because everybody’s happy with that
framework. But I don’t know how many people realise what they’re doing
is different from what Bulgarians do. I know the difference, people who
learn a particular genre of dance don’t actually see the difference with
somebody from a different genre. So, for example, when a friend from
northern Bulgaria who’s the director now, choreographer of [?] for
example, we took him along to the Macedonians in London. And the
Macedonians were very impressed because he picked up every dance
straight off. And he thought, ‘Oh, these are easy, I can do them exactly’.
But when we looked at it, we thought ‘Ah, one lot’s dancing in Skopia
Tanis [?] style and the other guy’s dancing in Dobrudzian Bulgarian’.
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Okay.

¶But either side were immune to this.

*So that’s interesting. So the Macedonians didn’t notice that this guy was dancing in Bulgarian style.*

¶They were impressed how quickly he’d learnt, because obviously something that matters to our Macedonian friends. I don’t know if that’s because they came from Tanis [?] where being quick was, what can we say, that was a very important aspect to being a good dancer was to learn quickly.

*Was to learn quickly.*

¶And [Sajian?] would always say that he, that one of the things he was best at was he was very fast. He said there was one person in the ensemble that he was in that was just about as fast, and only he could beat him and be the fastest, and by ‘fastest’ I think Sajian [?] was referring to the fastest to learn, and to be there quickly in performing it.

Okay. So what, hmm, ...

¶I’m sorry, I’m a bit analytical at times.

*No, it’s interesting. I’m just trying to assess um, what I should ask you next, just to kind of get back to the whole idea...*

¶Something about space?

Yeah, how you experience... 

¶The only thing I was gonna say in space is, as far as I’m concerned, you have a limited amount of local space for you, which is the space that you can do things in to the dance. And if you’re dancing a Romanian dance in a chain, or in a shoulder hold, there’s very little scope for your own space, and that’s where the variational devices, if you’re a Western-minded person, comes into it. The rest of it is community space because you’ve got to be as, as one with the rest of the line.

*So how does that contribute to experience, do you think? How do feel when you’re in a limited space, a limited local space and even a bit limited general space?*
Appendix C-6

¶In the Romanian context, when you’re dancing in a chain, you’re dancing in a community, it’s the community dancing together. And we’ve noticed that they tend to prefer this way of dancing in general, still, as opposed to in England where people want their own space to feel the dance in their own way. So in Romania, we’ve noticed that even in the city of [city?], the men will quite often dance Braul and not let ladies join in. Because they want the experience of dancing with their friends.

Okay.

¶And when they dance non-local dances, they tend to automatically in the same formations as they would dance the local ones.

And what about you, what appeals to you about these formations, or not?

¶Hmm, I don’t know. [long pause] I think the in, dancing in a line with local people is very nice because it’s about the experience of how they, how they fit it to the music. And it’s more of a community activity that’s very tied to the music. Whereas unfortunately dancing in Balkanplus you have to close yourself off from the surroundings and put yourself in a different world, or pretend you’re in that world.

It takes more imagination when you do those dances here.

¶Yes, I tend to like going to Balkanplus just so I can hear the music, it’s somewhere you get a bit of exercise to music.

Yeah, but when you’re in the actual context of Romania, and you’re dancing with them, it’s sort of a sense of community through the music, almost, yeah?

¶It’s the, um, community’s in your close contact so you have to move very well together and change how you move together. And because they’ve developed this from the Balkans, they have such a strong contact with the music, that suits my particular interest, because I’m very musically-minded.

Yes, okay.

¶So if you put me in the context of a type of dance that’s not particularly well-related to the music, I’ll probably find it quite enjoyable, unenjoyable.

Yeah. Are there dance genres like that, that you particularly dislike?
I probably haven’t tried them. I found some very tricky to start with, because they were tricky for my mind. I remember when we first started learning some ['?], I went to Norway for the first time. The first day or two I walked about and I thought, ‘I can’t figure this out’. I haven’t really tried anything outside of folk apart from ballroom.

Okay. Well let me ask you one last question then if I may. Um, what is your experience of your self while you’re dancing?

How do you experience yourself, don’t know.

I mean are you more or less self-conscious, that sort of thing?

In the correct environment, I’m less self-conscious and I’m more relaxed. And I suppose it makes one feel happier inside and more proud of one’s, the way one holds oneself.

Sorry, proud of the way one...

Holds oneself.

Holds oneself, okay, that makes sense, yeah.

Because you can afford to project yourself better than you can in normal life.

Something different than normal life.

Yes, in our normal world in England, you can’t express yourself to music very well, you tend not to project yourself in daily life.

Yes, you can’t express yourself in normal life here in England the way you can when you’re dancing, and you can’t um, sort of project yourself, I think you said.

I think that’s about right, yes.

Yeah, okay. Well, before I turn off the recorder, is there anything else you’d like to tell me that you feel is important, um, to state, you know, for the purposes of my study?

Hmm, I haven’t a clue what else.

(Thank you, wrap up and goodbye.)