



Modes of Dance Realisation – Netloristic Analysis of Dance

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Abstract

This article addresses the new wealth of dance films made available through the internet. Clusters of approaches for the study of internet communities are often referred to as netnography. We aim to contribute an approach we call “netloristic” methodologies for dance. While netnography studies online communities, we propose netloristics, in parallel with folkloristics, as a term for studying their expressions, the netlore. Among other things, this article forefronts a need in dance research to work systematically with empirical material and to strive for transparency about how singular events bring us to generalisations. We combine this ambition with the old discussion of classifying the existences of dance genres and their practice into first or second existence – vival or revival. We propose a classification working with video documents that show concrete realisations of dances within dance events. This article presents an argument and strategy for developing dance research and its terminology further toward a precise empirical basis; to study not only communities but also their expressions. As the first step in this direction, we propose a series of what we call “modes of realisation”. The modes, or ways of realising dances are classified with the help of well-known distinctions. We also suggest ways to work diachronically, comparing the use of the different modes through time in order to elucidate changes and continuities.

Development of Disciplines: Netnography and Netloristics

The digital era has created a revolution in the accessibility of films of dance. Before the internet, and even more before the advent of video technology, archives and private collections were among the few places where dance films could be accessed. At present, dance films can be found in abundance on digital media. Dance research needs tools for assessing, classifying, and situating this kind of dance material. The first draft of this article was Bakka's and Kibirige's joint lecture for the international master's programme, *Choreomundus*, on tools for online dance research. Bakka also shared an unpublished draft version of the article with colleagues in the Nordic association of folk dance research and suggested addressing a similar topic there, to which Mats Nilsson responded (Nilsson, 2022, pp. 53–54).

This article proposes viewing the study of films online as a new research field called “netloristics”. The term netloristics is inspired by netnography, “a portmanteau combining ‘Internet’ or ‘network’ with ‘ethnography’” (Netnography, 2022). Netnography was originally developed in 1995 by marketing professor Robert Kozinets as a tool to analyse online fan discussions about the *Star Trek* franchise (Netnography, 2022). Kozinets argues that

[n]etnography has always been the ethnography of online network actors and interactions. But now it is becoming much more: a set of sub-routines, suggested, inflected, and then reflected back through multiple literature bases as a type of crowdsourced scientific method, legitimate, established in multiple fields, yet still growing. (Kozinets, 2017, p. 24)

The company Dcipher Analytics offers a more concrete take on netnography as “a research method useful for studying online consumer culture”, contending that “[n]etnography is fundamentally different from content analysis” (Dcipher Analytics). So, to put it simply; here are netloristics to offer just that. We propose calling the study of internet communities' expressions “netlore”. This term has already been established, but mostly in the very narrow sense of contemporary legend. Gail de vos gives this definition:

Netlore is folklore that is not oral, not communicated face-to-face and not passed from generation to generation. Nor does it exhibit much variation. It is folklore because “as expressive behavior it is a form of subversive play, circulating in an underground communicative universe that runs parallel to and often parodies, mocks, or comments mordantly on “official” channels of communication such as the mass media”. (Frank 2011, 9) (De Vos, 2012, p. 75)

We believe that using the term netlore to connote a minor genre of folklore transmitted on the internet is not that helpful. It radically reduces the potential for folkloristics to inspire and give basis for an important new sister discipline, netloristics. We propose that the term netlore should not be used for a subdivision of folklore. Lore is a particular body of knowledge or tradition. While folklore is orally transmitted lore, netlore is the body of knowledge or tradition transmitted electronically. As folklore, it includes not only verbally based but also practice-based expressions: narratives, customs, music, dancing, games and playing.

Internet and video technology has opened the possibility of sharing audio-visual documentation of practices in fora open to the world. Here we find dancing, musicking, worshipping, practicing sports, fashion show performances, and stand-up comedy. One can perform politics, pranking, tutoring, and innumerable other genres of audio-visual posts on internet, many of which hardly have names but have grown into conventional frameworks. There are also purely textual or pictorial genres which also could be counted as netlore, but that we do not discuss here.

The discipline of folkloristics studies the lore or expressions and customs of the folk; primarily what is orally transmitted. The folklorist of the early twentieth century could document and share lore only in the form of the expressed content, primarily by documenting the content in the form of texts or other kinds of transcripts or recordings. In this way, folklorists could only offer transcripts of narratives, written descriptions of customs, music notation for musicking, etc. They had no tools that could bring the realisation of expressions and the practicing of all kinds of lore into their studies – and to relive it as the practicing society experienced it. Their books and even recordings or films could only transmit a reduced kind of experience

of the “real thing”. The netlore, however, is readily and fully available to everyone. In principle, a web document gives the researcher, the student, and the reader of netloristic studies the same experience as the average consumer of online contents. Everyone has access to the same experience, the real thing¹ is right there and does not need an extra step of mediation to reach us. Of course, the ability to relate to a web document differs depending on the recipient’s background.

Now, any number of different agents, amateurs, professionals, institutions, and commercial companies create an enormous amount of new lore. We propose the term “netlore” to designate documents shared on the internet, and the term “netloristics” to refer to the study of such documents. There is a need to classify the genres of netlore on different levels, to study the performativity specific to many of the genres and to provide terminological tools for navigating this vast corpus. Some tools and methodologies from the field of folklore can be sharpened and theorised more deeply, and new methods must be developed. This article represents a modest attempt to do so, restricted to the field of dance. It picks up, develops, and theorises methods, mainly from the field of ethnochoreology, as well as discussing concepts from the anthropology of dance.

Modes of Realisation in Dance: A Tool for Netloristics

One new principal aim is, as mentioned, to take dance research terminology further towards the analysis of concrete singular events (Bakka & Karoblis, 2010, p. 187). A term proposed by Bakka and Erlie, “events of practice”, is another contribution towards the focus on singular events (Erlie & Bakka, 2018). The first step is to leave behind complex assumptions about the term “dance”. We use this term to mean culturally constructed movement structures realised by humans in connection to music. In this way, we also want to avoid a classification system that is made for certain dance genres only. Our simple and broad delimitations will no doubt have their limitations that may be challenged through testing and application. Our tools are made for the classification of specific dance realisations: someone’s

1. The real thing is then not the dancing or storytelling in its context, but the consumer’s experience of it on the net. The researcher has the same access as the consumer to the lore, even if it is of course not the real thing in a folkloristic sense.

dancing at a particular time and place. This contrasts with more general classifications of dance, such as tango, urban fusion, or dance genres such as theatrical dance or folk dance. How can we classify dances we see in front of us? In some ways, this comes close to the practice of studying performances in theatrical dance (Adshead-Lansdale, 1994). We have many helpful classificatory concepts in ethnochoreology and the anthropology of dance, but they mostly take the general situatedness of a kind of dancing as their point of departure. They mirror the source material that was available in the twentieth century, with concepts such as “vival” and “revival” (Nahachewsky, 2011, p. 24). We suggest adopting classificatory tools that address the concrete dance material available to us on the internet in the twenty-first century.

We situate this work as a tool mainly for classification, but also for description. Classification, at best, springs from descriptions and can be used to organise and systematise descriptions through the use of criteria. Processes of description and classification can function in a way comparable to the hermeneutic circle; when descriptions are tagged with classificatory labels they are opened for deepened interpretations, which in turn can lead to adjusted classificatory definitions. In this way, classification is a basis for stringent empirical research even in humanistic disciplines.

Classificatory Concepts from Folklore and Ethnochoreology

In the early twentieth century, folk-dance revival movements spread across Europe and other parts of the world. The revival idea was to transfer the dances to new contexts in their “original” form, as found in the rural environments. It was mainly enthusiasts and amateurs who took charge of the practical work of collecting dances, writing them down in books and teaching them to amateur groups in rural, and perhaps even more in urban environments. In the early 20th century only a few academics in folklore, ethnology, and musicology were involved. One of them was the Swedish ethnologist, Ernst Klein, who already in 1927 pointed to the difference between revival folk dancing and traditional dance (Klein, 1927). Klein’s Danish colleague, Haakon Grüner Nielsen, had already mentioned similar points of view, somewhat less explicitly (Grüner-Nielsen, 1917). Later

Nordic perspectives on this can be found in the work of Bakka and Biskop (2007). Then Austrian ethnomusicologist Felix Hoerburger returned to the topic after World War II (Hoerburger, 1968). Klein's and Grüner Nielsen's concepts were relatively simple, contrasting the dancing of traditional village people to that of revivalists. Hoerburger introduced a more advanced concept, *Dasein*. This German word means “being there” or “presence” (German: *da* [there]; *sein* [to be]) and is often translated into English as “existence”. I

The basic idea from Hoerburger was that the way folk dance was present and practised before the revival—*Das erste Dasein*—was in many ways very different from how revivalists practised it in the revival—*Das zweite Dasein*. The revivalists seem to have taken this distinction as a criticism. Hoerburger also mentioned more versions of the *Dasein*. With the neo-traditionalist movement of the 1970s, the concept was brought up again, not least in the Nordic countries, mainly as a dichotomy between two typical contrasting stages of folk dancing (Bakka, 1970). Andriy Nahachewsky wrote several seminal articles on the topic of classifying folk dancing (Nahachewsky, 1995, 2006) which he sums up in a detailed discussion in his book on Ukrainian dance (Nahachewsky, 2011). We use many of his concepts in our classification here. However, we have not incorporated the vival-revival distinction, finding it too complex and multifaceted to classify realisations. It is difficult to classify the increasingly complex existences as dichotomies between broad situations for traditional dance, and to tie it to precise empirical material.

In this article, we seek to develop a perspective that is open for applying terms to concrete dance realisations. We propose to take the well-established concept of a dance event as departure, and we define it as a limited period of time within which people in the same location realise dances. We can access dance events by being present or by studying them as documented on film or in descriptions. We consider “web events”, where individuals interact via the internet and are not present in person in one place, as a principally different phenomenon which we do not include in the present discussion.

Netloristics, as we define it here, studies what netlore conveys about the practices shown, in this case the dancing itself. There are many other

perspectives and criteria that could have been applied. We could have included the aims, intentions and templates of the people posting, and even of those who produced material that is posted. This would bring us closer to netnography, as would the study of the recipients. We think that including modes springing from such criteria in the present system would challenge its simplicity and consistency. Surely other taxonomies can be developed, for instance one of genres, built upon the aims, conventions and templates used by uploaders and producers. The issue relates to the text-context relationship. From the 1970s onwards we have had a tendency to stress the context as most relevant for research at the expense of the text, object or concrete practice. This article indirectly argues for, and provides a basis for a certain reversal.

Classificatory Concepts from Anthropology

Every language and community will have concepts that group phenomena they view as connected. It is obvious and well known that different languages categorise phenomena differently. It is easy to find examples of this difference when comparing even closely related languages such as English and Norwegian. Take, for example, the classification of headdress. In Norwegian, the term *hatt* is narrow, including only those kinds of headdress with pull and brim, such as a cowboy hat, a top hat or a bowler hat. A totally different category for Norwegians is *lue*, which is often a soft knitted headdress. English most often also includes this kind of headdress in the concept “hat”; however, Norwegians would never see it as a *hatt*. For our purposes here, we will bring to the fore practitioners’ and stakeholders’ conceptualisations of phenomena as found in their local contexts. Therefore, we try to avoid complex and disputed terms constructed in academia. We aim to use as simple language as possible for our terminological grouping and to focus on the purpose or the target for the stakeholder’s interaction.

One example here is the term “ritual”, which has been appropriated and constantly redefined with new definitions. Many scholars have made critical inquiries into this subject (Bell, 1997; Douglas, 1978; Kertzer, 1988; Mors, 1951; Van Gennep, 1960), some of whom have tried to coin a formal worldview that is perceived to work everywhere. Richard Schechner (2002)

defines ritual as a performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not encoded by the performers. Peter Collins (2005 323) questions the many ways that the term ritual has been defined and used, which “partially do, or do not overlap”. The general understanding of this concept differs sharply between generations, communities, and traditions. At the same time, it is a concept that has been exported through colonising processes. Few, if any, traditional communities had clearly corresponding terms before the introduction of the loanword ritual, and they took up its parallels in other European languages. This loan overshadows the earlier and even still existing conceptualisations of such phenomena in most languages.

Additionally, in many communities, the events usually referred to as ritual events are not *just performances or performative actions* but lived, real-life experiences. The academic world’s widespread belief in universally definable concepts such as ritual tends to constrain local communities from using their alternative conceptualisations. It confines a variety of practices to the universal assumptions of ritual. In the process, such imposed universal concepts suffocate vital communal practices instead of giving them an opportunity for self-regeneration. It is a very challenging task not to fall into universalism even if we avoid the most complex terms and the most academically constructed concepts and their assumptions. For our purposes, and to avoid misconceptions brought about by generalised worldviews, we will employ terminology as used and understood by the local practitioners. The question will be how we transparently and simply define mode categories so that they do not collide too much with local conceptualisations and can be understood and applied to a broad range of dance realisations.

The Seven Modes of Realisation and their Application

The word “mode” has been, and is used in many different ways. Often, it is used to mean a way or manner of doing something. Our use here takes on this open meaning of the word, and we do not see the need for any strict or deeply analytic definition of term. Dancing in a dance event can have

different modes of realisation. Dance is realised in different ways and for different aims, which tend to bring about different organisation, different distribution of roles and different layouts of the activity. We propose using the term mode to designate these differences in realisation arising, to a large extent, from the realisation's aim.

We propose to distinguish between seven modes, most of which are well-known from the discussion of the general function of dance in a community. What is new is that we leave behind the idea of classifying the general function of a dance type or dance genre and adapt the classification to concrete singular realisations available as audio-visual documents on the internet under the term mode. Our seven modes of realisation are:

1. The mode of participatory interaction
2. The mode of educational interaction
3. The mode of competitive interaction
4. The mode of presentational interaction
5. The mode of recording interaction
6. The mode of effect-searching interaction
7. The mode of celebratory interaction

As already stressed before we have attempted to describe the categories in simple, vernacular language. This is to avoid complex academic concepts exploding into ever broader and opposing definitions. Examples of such concepts include dance, ritual, and function. On the one hand, the multitude of definitions given to such terms will bring confusion about how to apply them. On the other hand, such concepts tend to overshadow conceptualisations and terms from other languages, causing the adoption of a so-called common worldview implicitly claiming to represent all world communities. We believe that a phenomenon should first be understood through its label in the language and communities of its practitioners. We believe that our strategy of category descriptions will encourage attention to practitioners' local conceptualisations.

The modes above are broad; they can be divided to give finer distinctions, be defined better, and new modes can be added. By examining the

mode of an individual event, it is, in most cases, possible to classify precisely and concretely. Classifying each dance realisation would also be possible, rather than classifying a whole event. An event can include multiple modes, and a dance evening of mainly participatory interaction can have elements of the educational or presentational. We use the terms for events where people are dancing in real life. It is possible to document the dancing and present it once more in material form, but playing back a film of an event is a re-presentation of the event, not an event in itself.

A group of dancers can realise their dance material in events consisting of different modes of realisation: a children's group led by a teacher may start in the educational mode of teaching/rehearsing but eventually come to perform the dance in a presentational way. They may even come to use it for participatory interaction. A dance evening in a Hungarian dance house starts in teaching mode and then goes into participatory mode.

We may develop a history of modes by studying and classifying how dancers have realised their dances in different modes. We can scrutinise events before or after the one we examine or easily compare different events we can access. The history of events that a group of dancers and their dances have been going through will most likely mark the concrete realisations we experience. Even if we may not have firm documentation of a long history of events, some information may help us to evaluate past events and their modes. The practitioners will also have their opinions and stories about it.

Examples for the Proposed Modes

In the following, we give film examples for the seven modes we propose. We will first expand on the characteristics of each mode and then propose examples that illustrate the mode. We try to situate each example, explaining what characteristics bring us to the specific classification and, and as far as possible, provide metadata for the film document. We have selected some documents that we have created ourselves. They give us the benefit of knowing precisely how they came into being. We have also picked examples that we did not have any prior knowledge about, which enables

us to test what we can do when metadata is weak. Some examples fit easily into one mode, but we also discuss cases that are less obvious and even on the borderline between two modes. We believe that the system, which is presented as a tool for classification, may just as well, or even better serve analysis where classification is not a primary aim.

The Mode of Participatory Interaction

The main criterion for this mode is that the realisation or event is not controlled by a person who organises or records it. Most often, the musicians will give the repertoire of dances and their order and length through the music they play. People can join as they wish; there are no formal onlookers for whom the practitioners intend to dance. There is no specific purpose for dancing except for the people to enjoy themselves.



Film 1 Polka at a dance party for young people at Løkken in Sør-Trøndelag, Norway

https://youtu.be/R6pgDYzq_Ok



This film element was shot in 1976 to tell the history of “Dance in the mining community Løkken Verk” in Trøndelag, Norway. It comes from an edited film made for the Miners’ Days in Røros from the research project “Musical life in a village”. The film was produced by Egil Bakka, Council for folk music and folk dance (now the Norwegian centre for traditional music and dance) and Rolf Diesen, Department of Musicology, the University of Trondheim (now NTNU). Let us review some of the reasons for classifying this as a realisation in the participatory mode: the filmmakers asked a local orchestra to announce a dance evening in the way they usually did at that time, with no other requests. Then a crew of three came to film the event, trying not to interfere in what happened. The orchestra was popular and played for young audiences in the region at that time, and they drew a good audience even though the poster announcing the dance evening mentioned the filming. We find that the recording portrays the informal ambience of a realisation in the participatory mode. The setting rep-

resents a realistic version of dance evenings at that time, even if the orchestra set it up in response to the filmmakers' request. Our presence and filming unavoidably influenced some aspects, but the passing of non-dancing boys in front of the camera shows that little attention was paid to the film crew. The imperfections in the music at the end, and minor incidents on the dance floor point in the same direction. The recording probably had a clapper at the beginning. It was removed as usual. The shot is perhaps shortened a little bit at the end. Otherwise, the clip has not been edited. For these reasons, we consider the mode of performance shown in this recording to be participatory, even if it has a small element of the filmmaking interaction. The analysis is based upon Egil Bakka's knowledge and memories.



Film 2 A Lamokowang Enaction event in the Aler village of Kitgum district, Uganda
<https://youtu.be/F81-UagcYo8>



This film recording was taken in March 2018 at a community *Lamokowang* dancing and dance-musicking event in the *Aler* village of Kitgum district in the Northern region of Uganda by Ronald Kibirige. Kibirige recorded it while doing fieldwork for a study on post-war reconciliation and social-cultural reintegration processes in this region. It was an event Kibirige did not hear about in advance but stumbled onto during the fieldwork trip. Kibirige was allowed to film without interfering, as it played out.

This event is not organised, and, as one can see in the video, all members of the community are welcome to either join the circle or dance from outside it. In this video, we can see even children interacting with dance. The practice is to leave the circle flexible for anyone in the community to join. Although skill is very much appreciated, the community intent is not one of judgement, competition, or performance. It is one of community inclusion, participation, and sharing moments through dancing, musicking, and dance-musicking. As seen in the video, an elder comes to play the main drum (*min bur*) without any prompt, and because of the reverence given to elders, the previous player moves back into the circle to join the others,

giving the elder the space to interact through the musicking. Furthermore, during the pause, a momentous verbal interaction ensues. Some practitioners exchange short comments to each other in a joyful way, having inclusive and interactive fun with each other. This interaction is cut short by a call sounded by the lead calabash player. In response to this, all the practitioners swing right back into musical and dance action. Some members of the event may not join the circle at once, as some may be elderly, and others may want to watch others first before they join. The fact that they can join in at any time makes this dancing fall right into the participatory mode of realisation.

The Mode of Educational Interaction

The main criteria for this mode is that there are practitioners who want to learn, and some measures are implemented to facilitate that. Typically, a teacher will lead the event or the realisation, but a group might rehearse or practice without anyone leading. Dance events in the participatory mode may become border line to the educational because they have a convention of being hosted by a leader. The leader, who may have decided on the dance programme, perhaps announces the dances and may dance in front of the others for them to follow. The leader may explain the dance a bit before starting or call the figures as in American square dance.² In such cases, the mode may be on the borderline between the educational and the participatory.



Film 3 Corfu dancers from the Cultural Association of Sinies rehearse

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHE5cvR5A1E&t=68s&ab_channel=DiscerningWon



The metadata says: “Corfu dancers from the Cultural Association of Sinies rehearse their version of a dance to the theme from Zorba the Greek. Date: June 24th, 2012 Later that day, they set off on a bus to San Sebastian in northern Spain to participate in a dance festival. The dance teacher is the

2. In traditional American square dance calling was part of the participatory mode. In much of European folk dance the calling out of keywords and explanations tends most often to be used in educational mode.

distinguished dancer Vlahos Ioannis. One of Greece's most famous living composers, Mikis Theodorakis, wrote the music. It is also known as the Sirtaki dance and was inspired by traditional Cretan dances."

It is not possible to tell for sure if this realisation is done so that some onlooker, whom we see at the very end of the piece, can have the chance to film it. It is a rehearsal where the dancers repeat the dance they know once more. The leader shouts some keywords here and there and dances in front of the group for them to see him, but neither of these seems needed. Only metadata from the YouTube posting is used.



Film 4 Norbert and Piroska Paluch teach Rimóc dances at a dance house of the Gyenes Folkdance club.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVIRNUXAMyw&ab_channel=GyenesN%C3%A9pt%C3%A1ncEgy%C3%BCttes

This is a typical example of folkdance teaching connected to a Hungarian *táncház* (dance house), an event often starting with a period of instruction, as we see here, and then perhaps free dance afterwards. We see that the dominant teaching method is the teachers dancing at the centre of the dance floor, surrounded by learners. Mainly the teachers show the steps and motives in a moderate tempo, repeating the same for a long period for the learners to imitate. The musicians play continuously, the ambience is informal, and the learners participate depending on talent, experience and motivation. The teachers may give comments and clues now and then, but the concentration is on imitating the teachers, while moving to the music is the dominating activity. The authors thank Anna Szekely for help with the Hungarian language. Only metadata from the YouTube posting is used.

The Mode of Competitive Interaction

A competition is most often clearly announced in advance, and the participants are formally adjudicated or at least evaluated, most often by a jury. There will be features from the presentational mode in most competitions because an audience is usually present. Informal competitions may arise

spontaneously where practitioners challenge each other, for instance, during an event in participatory mode.



Film 5 A three-year-old girl at her first Feis³ in Irish dance dress
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_fNGD5tCCI&ab_channel=eilishm



There are no more metadata to this piece. Still, we can see the paraphernalia of the competition, such as the starting numbers on the row of children waiting for their turn and the dance space delimited with ribbons. There is an audience clapping, giving an aspect of the presentational mode, and the woman helping the competing child with starting and ending, which has a reminder of the educational mode. Only metadata from the YouTube posting is used.



Film 6 Landskappleiken (The National Competition) in Rauland 1994
<https://youtu.be/L1Jag-eP-Bg>



Håkon Tveito and Gunlaug Lien Myhr are dancing a *springar* from Hallingdal and Egil Syversbråten is playing Hardanger fiddle. Recording by the Norwegian Centre for Traditional Music and Dance.

Leading cultural figures in some regions of Norway initiated competitions (*kappeik*) in folk music already by the late 1880s, and in 1898 the competition included dance for the first time. The system established already at that time has continued pretty much the same till the present. Individual musicians and individual dancers or dance couples compete in showing their local versions of any of the dances that belong to the genre *bygdedans* (Bakka, 2007). There is a jury, made up of experienced dancers of the genre, and some of them may have education in the field or courses in adjudication, but that is not required. There are guidelines and conven-

3. A Feis or Fèis is a traditional Gaelic arts and culture festival.

tions that keep the continuity. The aim is to keep the flow of the tradition going within stable but not strictly fixed frames. The model and ideas of invention or “artistic creativity” are not encouraged. The dance and the performers are announced, the jury observes from the side, the music starts and then the dancers begin. We can see the three jury members at a table on the left side of the stage a few times when the dancers come close to them. In a participatory context the music starts when the musicians decide without waiting for signals from others and continues as long as the musician want. In a competition, everyone waits for the announcement and either the dancers or the musicians can stop to end the dance, or they can agree to stop at a certain point in the dance or music structure. Here the male dancer signals the agreed ending – a lifting of the partner, so that the musicians can round up, and then the dancers thank the musician as a usual gesture before leaving the stage. Egil Bakka chaired the recording team, and his knowledge and memories are the basis for the analysis.

The Mode of Presentational Interaction

The most typical versions of the presentational mode have a group of performers and a group that forms the audience, and the primary intention of the performers is to entertain the audience. Often the performers do not know their audience; they may not be members of the same community. It can happen, however, that performers are dancing for their family and neighbours so that their realisation has features of the participatory. It is even more so at a dance party, where some of the people are on the dance floor while there are also onlookers who do not dance but enjoy being present at the party. In these cases, however, their main intention is not to be entertained by those who dance but to be part of community interaction through chatting, drinking coffee and throwing a look at the dancers now and then. This would not fall into the presentational mode.

One may perhaps argue that a dance performance on TV with no audience present where the programme is recorded could also be considered presentational, counting the people watching the show in their homes as the audience. We argue that a realisation in presentational mode requires

the audience for whom the performers dance to be physically present in the same space, watching the performance live. Otherwise, the mode should be classified as a recording interaction.



Film 7 The ballet Yablochko by the Russian choreographer Igor Moiseyev

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K21yj2IEgrA>



We have chosen the ballet Yablochko by the Russian choreographer Igor Moiseyev as the first example of the presentational mode. The Moiseyev Dance Company was founded in Moscow in 1937 by its artistic director and choreographer Igor Alexandrovich Moiseyev (1906–2007). The Serbian dance researcher Bajić-Stojiljković writes, “Because of his invention of a revolutionary synthesis of classical ballet and ethnic dance, Moiseyev was widely acclaimed as the greatest folk dance choreographer of the twentieth century” (2009). The YouTube video shows the typical ingredients of a mid-twentieth-century ballet performance: a large group of performers on a clearly defined proscenium stage dancing in amazing unison. They explicitly address their dance to the audience, who reacts with applause, and an orchestra that we cannot see is playing. Often realisations in presentational mode are shot without showing the audience and the musicians. Then it is difficult to know whether there is an audience present and that the applause is not added afterwards, and to know if the music is live and not just playback. Only reference to Bajić-Stojiljković and the metadata from YouTube posting is used.



Film 8 An Acholi cultural group perform Larakaraka, also named Lamokowang, in Pawidi, Uganda

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1dQ8BcEYRU>

This video was uploaded on YouTube by Gwokto La’Kitgum in December 2017. It gives a re/presentation of the *Lamokowang*, also known as *Larakaraka* dance tradition in the presentational mode. In this video, we see the same

Lamokowang dance as seen in Film 2 rebranded for a given audience. The performers are clad in uniform costumes different from the earlier video where the environment was communal, happening at a person's homestead. One striking observation is that even when the contexts have changed from participatory to presentational, one can still see the subtle nuances such as the interactive pauses, but also the discomfort of having to face one particular side while performing due to the performer-audience set up. This prevents them from placing themselves in a circular formation, and they dance in lines in order for everyone to face the audience. Only metadata from the YouTube posting and Kibirige's knowledge of the *Lamokowang* tradition are used.

The Mode of Recording Interaction

We often find exciting dance scenes taken from feature films posted separately on the net. The dancers are often actors, and their acting may be more important and better done than the dancing. In such pieces, the recording situation is intentionally hidden. The intention is a make-believe of being in a real party, at a court event or on a real theatre stage. It is difficult to know if the dancing is carefully choreographed or just improvised by the actor who knows the dance. It is also challenging to know if the dance presented is in accordance with dance history or a total anachronism. It may also happen that a group of traditional dancers are called upon for a dance scene and allowed to dance more or less in their usual way.

Another totally different kind of recording interaction can be found in most archives for traditional dance. Researchers and collectors would travel through a region, wanting to document dancing there in a short time. They would not be able to wait for a dance event to happen without initiating it. If a dance is forgotten by the young people, they would also need to call a specific dance event where they can invite the elders who still know the dance. During the filming, they would also need to decide when a dance should start, in order to save film, which was very expensive. An unedited archival film recording from before the video era would often begin with a clapper, after which the music and dance start.

A 16 mm film recording Egil Bakka made for the Norwegian Centre for Traditional Music and Dance exemplifies documentation for archives.



*Film 9 The traditional Norwegian dance Springar from Viksdalen
filmed for the archive*

<https://youtu.be/WHRufZEU79I4>



Egil Bakka had invited the dancers and the musician to come just for the purpose of documenting dances on film. Bakka decided the order and the way to film based on the potential of the venue, which could often give serious challenges. The recording shows how the musician has been asked to start playing after the clapper and then the couple to start dancing. There are still some problems in the beginning. If a film is edited even a little bit, clapper and irregularities at the beginning and the end will be cut away, which might remove some important information, and when the beginning and the end are kept, it often tells us that we see everything that was recorded.

The time Bakka could keep the musician and dancers was restricted compared to the wealth of dance we wanted to document, so there was no time to stress technical perfection. The expertise and focus are mostly on dance knowledge rather than filming. These are often characteristics of archival documentation. The analysis is based upon Egil Bakka's knowledge and memories.



*Film 10 Dancing scenes in the fiction film Bolero, 1934 from
American Paramount Production*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZhF6vVnezA&ab_channel=RaftingtheFilmVault



This film gave the actor George Raft a rare chance for a film star; to play a dancer, which had been his profession in New York City, rather than portraying a gangster. In the scene presented here, Raft works as a tea house taxi dancer in Paris, where he makes a living dancing with elderly women in nightclubs (*Bolero* 2023). An interesting question to discuss here is how realistic the portrayal of this environment is, there are probably hints of

parody, but it also seems to reveal the relatively unknown strategies and conventions in such an environment.

When the Nordic Association of Folk Dance Research also took up a project called Netnography or Nordic dancing on film, Mats Nilsson proposed a distinction between documentary and fictional films. We consider this distinction to take its departure from the filmmakers' intentions. We are looking at filmmakers' conventional genres, whereas the modes we propose refer to the intentions of the dancing practitioners. We still list them here and have identified three distinct film genres relevant to dance (Nilsson, 2020, pp. 53–54).

The fictional film, in principle, tells a story that does not claim to be taken from a precise reality. It can still portray existing dancing and environments realistically, even if it will be done only for the filmmaker's camera.

The documentary film claims to portray existing persons, environments or events from reality. Still, the filmmaker, even in this genre can use actors to play historical persons. They can shoot scenes in other environments than they claim to portray, and stories can be adjusted to fit the medium and the topic.

The screen dance film is a new visual language, an expanding hybrid genre often dealing with dance-like elements in the surreal ways available only on film. It combines choreographic intentions with the language of cinema (Ross, 2020). Metadata from the YouTube post and the referenced website on the film are used for the analysis.

The Mode of Effect-Searching Interaction

In the mode of effect-searching interaction, the dance practitioners have a sincere intention of reaching a particular effect. Therefore, it is dancing and dance-musicking done with a particular community-prescribed purpose, often within and beyond prosaic everyday activities. Many community dance traditions in Africa relate to this mode. Such dancing would usually be understood to relate to ritual, a term we would like to avoid here. Realisations, or even events, in this context, may cut across other modes, for example, the celebratory mode marking a particular community custom or norm aimed at reaching a particular effect. Such events may involve dance

realisations relating to community legends, myths or riddles, leading the practitioners into a transcendental understanding of the realities surrounding them in these moments of enaction. By transcendence, in the context of dancing and dance-musicking, we refer to a shift to an existence or experience beyond the normal or physical level. The word is also used to describe a spiritual or religious state.



Film 11 The circumcision Kumusilo (Imbalu/Impalu) of the Bamasaba/Bagisu, Uganda

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjoINCULRPQ>



Film 12 Basinde preparation on circumcision day

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSYK1BSzYxI>



Film 13 Some Processional and Preparatory Dancing and Musicking – Inemba at 3.12 – 3.18

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rgzm3yf-NUc>



Film 14 Inemba in Bugisu

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5L9VRO63ws>



Dancing, musicking, and dance-musicking are central parts of the legendary community custom the circumcision *Kumusilo (Imbalu/Impalu)* of the *Bamasaba/Bagisu* of Eastern Uganda. The intent in *Imbalu Kumusilo*

is believed to be one of transition to manhood. Videos 11, 12, 13, and 14 present parts of the *Imbalul Impalu* process. They are selected from the internet and analysed on the basis of Kibirige's experiences with this tradition and his interaction with community practitioners such as Charles Wopata. Additionally, an article from music scholar and practitioner Makwa (2012) is used. The *Kumusilo* process prepares the candidate (*umusinde*) for circumcision through a series of events that lead an enduring and ready community member to the circumcision day/moment. As Egil Bakka states, "...the ultimate flow of experience, which a dancer is searching for, takes over, when he or she lets go of all preoccupations concerning what the body ought to do, and just lets it happen without reflection" (Bakka & Gore, 2007, p. 4). Within its self-regenerative constructs today, the dance realisations in *Imbalu Kumusilo* are seen to oscillate between different modes. Intentions in *Isonja* and *Inemba* realisations, for example, are sometimes maintained, challenged, reinvigorated, suppressed, as well as extended depending on the modes in which the dancing and dance-musicking are realised.

The dancing in the *Imbalu Kumusilo* has the *building of courage* — courage that a boy needs to endure the circumcision and *marking transcendence to manhood* for the *umusinde* as the major effects of the *Isonja* and *Inemba* dance realisations, respectively. In the *Isonja* dancing and dance-musicking, and with the support of the community through dancing, the *abasinde* gather their manly traits of strength, determination, and resilience, "demonstrating that they are ripe for manhood" (Makwa, 2012, p. 74). *Inemba* realisations are enacted to mark the climax of the *Kumusilo* process, in which particular movement patterns and symbolic stances connote the *umusinde*'s transcendence and absorption into the "enclave of men". While the *Imbalu Kumusilo* process's intent is towards attaining these effects, drawing on its communal purpose and interaction, a part of it includes open community participation in the dancing without any focus on a given audience. This makes it fall into the confines of a participatory mode. Away from its local community today, the two dance traditions are extracted from the *Kumusilo* and transmitted in formal education contexts for educational purposes, thereby cross-cutting into the educational mode

of realisation. Within, and through this context then, today, other communities learn about the *Bamasaaba* community and their social interactions relating to shared communal understanding of the existence of the communal embedment of *Ubuntu*, for example. Other common aspects, such as coexistence, are apparent, imputed, and mythical in the enactment of *Inemba* and *Isonja* realisations.

From crossing communal/tribal borders, as well as developing from the educational mode of realisation, is then the presentational mode, in which the dance movement realisations extracted from the larger *Kumusilo* process are put on stage, appealing to its perceived entertainment (audience-oriented) context.

One can observe that in the existence, unfolding, and development of these modes, the changes that occur in the process are not only “artistic” but conceptual too. For instance, in their more cosmopolitan presentational, instructional modes of realisation, *Isonja and Inemba* are usually presented and interacted with interchangeably. It is striking that their specific names and particular movement patterns, as known and understood among the Bagisu communities, assume generic identities in the different modes of realisation. Instead of *Isonja* or *Inemba*, they are sometimes referred to as *Imbalu* dance, which itself, and as seen earlier, is sometimes taken to be the name of the *Kumusilo*. Other names that have come up due to the different modes of realisation are *Kadodi* and *Mwaga*. The term *Mwaga*, according to Charles Wopata, a *mugisu* from Bunangabo village in Manafa District, who completed the *Imbalu Kumusilo* cycle, relates to the entire process of the *Kumusilo* devoid of reference to a particular style of enactment as well as particular movement patterns that would project a differentiation between *Inemba* and *Isonja*. Wopata also mentioned that *Kadodi* is a hybrid term related to the instruments and musicking used in the tradition. The basis for the analysis is described at the beginning of this section.

The Mode of Celebratory Interaction

The realisation of celebratory mode will often be a marking of an annual event or important events in the life cycle. We have chosen an example for each of these.

The Echternach dancing procession in Luxemburg on Whit Tuesday, the day after Pentecost Monday, represents an annual event. The bride and groom dance represents an event of the life cycle.



Film 15 Dancing Procession Of Echternach (1924) Uploaded by British Pathé

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxbHhzlpdK4&ab_channel=BritishPath%C3%A9



The opening text of the film refers to Saint Villibrord. Sources also say that “the dancing procession to the saint’s tomb is an annual ceremony done as an act of penance on behalf of afflicted relations and especially in order to avert epilepsy, Saint Vitus Dance, or convulsions. Being part of a larger event organised by the Catholic church, it includes a sermon by the parish priest and pilgrims, as well as the participation of monks and nuns” (*Dancing procession of Echternach 2022*.) It should be safe to assume that some of the participants are searching to achieve religious effects through their dancing in the procession even if others experience it more as a celebration of a specific day. Additionally, there are commercial motivations and a vital aspect of Safeguarding Intangible Heritage since the practice was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List in 2010. Commercial motivation can probably be found to some degree in all modes of realisation, even if not in all individual realisations. Perhaps performing heritage could be seen as a submode of the presentational mode. Only the referenced website and the metadata from the YouTube posting is used.



Film 16 Victoria & Daniel of Sweden's Royal Wedding Waltz/ Bröllopsvals

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLk977Ktaus>



After a short opening routine, the crown princess and her fiancé who has just become her consort, are dancing an elementary “folk waltz” without any clear ambitions of adopting a more refined ballroom style. The couple

is not of the level of expert dancers giving a show; it is something they do as a ceremony to get through. They keep their full attention on each other, creating a kind of intimacy between them. A large crowd of wedding guests are standing around them with the family and guests from European royal families in the first line. Then the crown princess makes a vernacular gesture for others to join, and her parents, the king and queen, and then after a couple of measures, the groom's parents join, clearly being routined waltzers in the popular style. Then after some more bars of music, the whole crowd starts to dance. Only the metadata from YouTube posting is used.

Historical Underpinnings of the Modes

We may develop a history of modes by studying and classifying how dancers have realised their dances in different modes. We can scrutinise events before or after the one we look at or easily compare different events we can access. The history of events a group of dancers and their dances have been through will most likely mark the concrete realisations we experience in an event. Even if we do not have firm documentation for a long history of events, some information may help us to evaluate past events and their modes. The practitioners will also have their opinions and stories about it.

We can look at how specific dance practitioners have realised their dancing activity in different modes or follow a particular dance or dance genre through an event history that includes events with different modes. The modes will influence the practitioners, their dancing, and the dance material. We suggest creating a history of events departing from one event and then going backwards or even forwards in time. We suggest that such a history can be constructed based on different kinds of connections between the events. Some can be:

Apparent: We can access documentation that it is clearly the same material realised in other events

Supported: The history can also be constructed on connections that are not

apparent but that can be documented and supported by the help of investigations

Imputed: Practitioners and their communities have stories about connections, but the connections cannot be documented or supported except through vague oral traditions or assumptions

Mythical: Stories about supranormal or canonised events explaining how the dance material came into being.

Mode History of the Norwegian Song Dance

The Faroe Islands have been known for their chain or song dance for centuries, and it was first mentioned in 1616. From the beginning of the twentieth century, it has also had relevance for Norway, and we will look at its history in terms of modes of realisation in the two countries. The Norwegian author Hulda Garborg read a booklet on the traditional ballad dancing on the Faroe Isle by the Danish ethnomusicologist Hjamar Thuren in 1901. Thuren assumed that this kind of dance was also used in Norway in the medieval era. This was hardly more than an imputed connection in the history of events from Faroe Isle back to a “mythical” medieval Norway. Garborg visited the Islands and experienced traditional dancing in participatory interaction mode in the summer of 1902. This was the dominating, if not the only, mode of realisation there. We know there was dancing that might be counted as a celebratory mode in wedding dance (Garborg, 1922, p. 34) and dancing after catching and killing the whales on the shore. There are many YouTube videos showing the catching and slaughtering of the whales, but I could not find any film footage showing dance as part of the context, so it is probably not practiced any more (Olavsstovu, 2007, p. 53). There is also a record for a group of Faroese people visiting Norway in 1885 and again in 1925, seemingly with the purpose of showing Faroese dance, which would count as an event of realisation in presentational mode.

Hulda Garborg took basic patterns, songs and even some concrete dances back to Norway and transmitted them first in the mode of formal teaching. We have documentation of many realisations of the new Norwegian song dance. Hulda Garborg writes about experiments and rehearsal to establish it and these could count as educational realisations. There is a detailed description of the first public presentation, which was presentational. There is even a small piece of film showing Norwegian folk dancers dancing song dance in a street at during the coronation of the Norwegian king Haakon VII in Trondheim in 1906, which might count as celebratory mode, and several filmed realisations in presentational mode from the 1920s and 1930.

Garborg and her followers' main aim was to get this dancing into the mode of participatory interaction. Still, the song dancing would need instances of teaching mode because, in many cases, not all participants knew it well enough. The many events in a Norwegian event history are, to a large extent, well documented and thereby supported. The justifying idea to revive the dance in Norway was an imputed connection back to events in medieval Norway.

Through the long century of the Norwegian song dance, it has moved among the modes of teaching, presentation and participatory interaction, the latter being the most difficult to keep going, and the imputed connection back to medieval events is becoming less important. In the following, we will present a series of film documents which show examples of the dance genre of song-dance belonging to the Faroe Isles but borrowed or appropriated by Norwegian folk dancers and adapted to the Norwegian folk dance environment.



Film 17 Norwegian song dance performed in Oslo during a Nordic folk dance reunion

<https://youtu.be/ECDwIk6QV3k>



Mode history of the Faroese Chain Dance

The regular Faroese dance only has one pattern, which the dancers adapt

to any song in the large repertoire used for dancing. There is a traditional genre separate from the ordinary Faroese dance called *Dansispøl* with a substantial number of choreographic patterns, which we do not discuss here. Therefore we treat it as one dance. To a large extent, the films we can find belong to the mode of presentational interaction, where specialised dance groups perform on different occasions. In this short survey of modes, we can document that we have the presentation mode, and the film making mode that are easy to find, we also have the celebratory mode. There are certainly realisations and events in participatory and education mode, they are only more difficult to identify and more rarely filmed. Realisations in competitive and effect-searching mode may not exist.



Film 18 A touring Faroese dance group performs in Oslo in 1932
 – presentational mode
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=938Z-pCEfjk>



Example one is a Faroese dance group touring in Norway. We have a small piece of film from one of their performances. It happens out of doors, most likely in Oslo. It is evident from the whole setting that this is a realisation in presentational mode. The performance takes place on a small wooden dance floor that seems built for the occasion at a place that looks like a town square. The film is shot from a point close to the dance floor, and we can see onlookers standing on the sidewalk behind a railing. Only the meta-data from YouTube posting is used.



Film 19 A documentation in the filmmaking mode Sumba, Faroe Isles in 1977 <https://youtu.be/elfOXPv65HA>

Different institutions have documented Faroese dance and, in those cases, asked dancers to come and perform for them, resulting in a recording mode of interaction. It is often not so easy to recognise this mode from the filmed document, particularly if it is edited. However, if the full footage is avail-

able, a clapper in the beginning and dancers lined up for a precise start are clear signs. Otherwise, an analyst would need to rely upon metadata. The example offered here is from the documentation project set up by the Norwegian Centre for Traditional Music and Dance and Fróðskaparsetur Føroya, the University of the Faroe Islands, in 1977, where dancers were invited to come and dance for documentation. The analysis is based upon knowledge and memories from Egil Bakka, who chaired the project team.



*Film 20 Chain Dance in celebratory mode, Olavsoka National Festival, 2010*⁵

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cARjYCI-XME&ab_channel=Farerets

The final example shows the mode of participatory informal interaction, which was the dominating mode through most of the twentieth century but is not so well represented on the internet. It shows that a large part of the Faroese population still in the twenty-first century is able to join this kind of dancing on special occasions. We could discuss if this is also a mode of celebratory interaction, marking the National celebration of Saint Olavs day, Ólavsøka. Dancing in the mode of participatory informal interaction is usually done indoors, mainly by fewer people, and in the winter season, so the celebratory occasion in the streets in summer clearly marks this event. Only the metadata from the YouTube posting is used.

When writing a mode history, many kinds of documents can be used to trace realisations in different modes. We add here a drawing of the chain dance used in a celebratory mode as wedding dance.

Mode Continuities and Changes

When dance material is realised in different modes, a change of mode will often lead to apparent changes in many factors and aspects of the event and the dancing. An effect-searching interaction mode will fundamentally change for practitioners if it is made purely presentational. The aim or

5. Recorded in Torshavn centre at 1:00 am on July 30th, 2010, Uploaded by Farerets.



Figure 1: Wedding dance picture used as documentation of celebratory mode (Garborg, 1922, p. 34).

rationale for a mode is at the core of how an event is conceived and shapes the realisations. The teaching mode will usually divide participants into the roles of teacher(s) and learners. The presentational mode will divide them into performers and audience and often have choreographers, instructors in a professional theatre setting and even more. The recording mode may bring in cameramen, directors, and actors. The very different tasks, responsibilities and rights to decision-making will influence the action, reaction, and interaction flow. The way participants place themselves at the dance venue in relation to each other and the surroundings, also tends to be different in different modes. In a history of events where the educational (teaching) mode is most frequent, ways used in this mode may affect the ways in a less frequent participatory mode. Different modes relate differently to norms, conventions, and prescriptions. The changing modes influence how dancing changes (Bakka, 2020).

This kind of events mapping or listing of factors can include the venue's layout, such as the event's surroundings, from trees and houses out of doors, to floor quality indoors, to scenography in a theatre. The physical conditions of an event include light, temperature, time of year and day/night. The categories of people include women, children, men, age, rank, roles and their placement in the layout. The timeline gives information about the order and duration of "big" and "small" things happening. Many of

these aspects are discussed by the theatre dance historian Adshead-Lansdale (1994).

In summary, this article proposes methods to classify concrete dance realisations, if possible, as part of dance events. In the virtual age, an enormous amount of material from all over the world comes to us in the form of filmed realisations, and we argue that it is efficient and necessary to start from there to follow and understand many of the changes that dances and dancing undergo. We propose to classify modes of realisation and follow dances and dancers through an event history with changing modes.

Summarising conclusion

This article aims to draw attention to an enormous and ever-growing corpus of material that is defined by the way it is transmitted: the lore transmitted on the net; the netlore. We want to draw attention to its importance and variability, but also to its cohesiveness, which we believe calls for a disciplinary take. This entails developing tools, methods, and theory to handle it as distinct societal phenomenon that is governed by many forces, but also by its shared transmission channel. Another societal phenomenon also characterised by a specific kind of transmission—folklore and its oral transmission—has lost much of its importance in society. Still, nineteenth and early twentieth century academia made a discipline to study it. We believe that the heritage from the discipline of folkloristics can serve as an important basis for a new discipline, netloristics. The second new take we propose is to move characterisations and classification from tagging genres to tagging realisations, which we consider to be radical, and at the core of the method. We also propose tools for developing histories of events and thereby also of mode changes. The principles for tagging also include questioning the hegemony of English language in the development of research terminology. The article indirectly challenges the stress of context at the expense of text, object and practice, bringing focus to the rationale for the dancing rather than how it is presented. It also proposes an interplay of classification and description with a similarity to the hermeneutic circle. We hope this article can serve as

a start-up example for a broader netloristic discipline, even if our work here is restricted to audio-visual dance documents on the internet.

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