Conclusion

> *Imagine you would be sick of choreography, know all too well what it is, incarnate it, become choreography – and go totally nuts. […] Imagine choreography is both your guardian spirit and your worst nightmare.*[1]

Stories depend on those who tell them; and histories are, partially, symptoms of the situation in, and from, which they are told. The (hi)stories told here are written from the perspective(s) of expanded choreography: a 17th-century ballet-*poietics* not centred on dance [Chapter 1]; a 1700 choreo(-)graphy residing in signs and on paper [Chapter 2]; a 15th-century dance practice expanding beyond the human, with movements based on non-kinetic principles [Chapter 3]; a 1920s ballet emerging through the relations of body, music, lights, and film [Chapter 7]; a choreographer managing factories and their dances of labourers, tools, machines, and materials in the 1940s and 1950s [Chapter 8]; and post-war choreographies circulating from bodies to letters and then into the realm of imagination [Chapter 9]. The situated, expanded-choreographic perspective from which these stories are told is not a warning to the limited "truth" of the historical narratives, but is a condition for their very existence; recognising the situatedness of these "expanded choreographic" histories does not reduce their validity.[2]

From this expanded-choreographic perspective, pre-18th-century European choreographic sources question the centrality of dance, the essential place of the human/physical body, and the necessity of (loco)motion that characterised

1 Jeroen Peeters quoted in CORPUS: Survey What does "choreography" mean today?, 2007, http://www.corpusweb.net/introduction-to-the-survey.html (Archive copy from October 2015).

2 On the 'constructive character of historiography' and its relation to a notion of truth see also Thurner, Christina : Time Layers, Time Leaps, Time Loss: Methodologies of Dance Historiography, in: Franko, Mark (ed.) : *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Reenactment*, New York : Oxford University Press 2017, p. 526.

later conceptions of choreography. Therefore, if "choreography" – referring to practices and sources from these periods – is defined by dance-making and/or a moving corporeality, this requires awareness of its partiality and bias against certain aspects of the practices and sources in question. Similarly, early- and mid-20th-century dance history may display a choreographic model strongly attached to dance or organic corporeality and its motion, but cannot be reduced to that. Rather, this history reflects the period's diversity through varied, coexisting, sometimes-contradictory choreographic models. Attaching "choreography" to dance-making and/or the moving body should therefore be employed less as a necessary, all-encompassing notion – a canon betrayed by certain works – than as an important aspect of a nevertheless-complex reality.

Looking at choreographic history through the perspective of expanded choreography, however, does more than decentralise dance and/or moving bodies; it also recognises "expanded" aspects in historical practices. Contemporary expanded choreography widens what choreography is and can be; from customers moving in a shopping mall to birds migrating for the winter, and from the structure of a building to the spatial distribution of sounds, the notion of choreography stretches to encompass a wide range of phenomena and actions. In this spread, it also encompasses historical practices and notions – court etiquette and the dance of the planets, the motions of factory workers and a loudspeaker replacing a dance performance – *as* choreography. To put it differently, if Olga Mesa's in-between, floating arrangement is choreography [Chapter 5], the work of a *maître d'ordre* can be choreography too [Chapter 1]; if an installation of trees is choreography [Chapter 6], a factory can be choreographed as well [Chapter 8]. This does not mean that the term "choreography" should be anachronistically projected onto historical practices, but it does mean acknowledging that in the *present* conception of (expanded) choreography, such practices cannot be excluded from choreographic history. An expanded perspective of choreographic history, then, pluralises this history by drawing attention to its multiple facets, and pluralising the very category of "choreography".

The contemporary situation from which these histories have been told is far from an all-encompassing view based on a generic notion of contemporaneity. While writing this book, many – most – of the choreographic works in (both mainstream and not) European venues staged human bodies moving, dancing, jumping, sweating, swirling; human bodies of technical skill and performative brilliance; human bodies expressing, emoting, experiencing. In other words, a large part of choreographic contemporaneity was not "expanded". At the same time, resistance to choreographic expandedness was dwindling. Even within this short timeframe, discussions with students, other professionals in the dance field – dancers, choreographers, theorists, researchers, curators –, and non-specialised audiences indicated that staging the non-human and non-kinetic,

and choreographing non-human and non-moving media, were increasingly accommodated. The present of expanded choreography was, then, simultaneously becoming more-steadily anchored, *and* counter-balanced by alternative choreographic practices. Just as the abstract choreo-graphies possible in the Feuillet system coexisted with a technical discipline of the body by dance masters [Chapter 2], and like expressionist dance coexisted with *Relâche*'s explorations of non-physical motion [Chapter 7], the historical present of expanded choreography coexists with other paradigms, resisting marginalisation without becoming dominant. It is not a failure that expanded choreography remains "a" paradigm, but, rather, a welcome limitation against a colonisation of the present. The fact that expanded choreography does not fully encompass the present is coupled by this book's non-exhaustive treatment of expandedness itself; these are (hi)stories waiting to be complemented and complexified by other manifestations, notably by non-European and non-Western perspectives of choreographic expansion.

As a fragment of a particular historical present, expanded choreography tells equally-particular choreographic histories, which are to be neither marginalised nor generalised. In this sense, the historical readings in this text are not claims against the utility and relative validity of other (corporeal-kinetic) readings of history – but, they are claims that both the latter and an expanded choreographic perspective are equally symptomatic of their visions of choreography. It may be preposterous[3] to consider Domenico da Piacenza [Chapter 3] or even Rudolf Laban [Chapter 8] under the notion of an expanded choreography; however, considering *any* notion of choreography as neutrally applicable in a transhistorical way – rather than insisting on the multiplicity that characterises choreographic history – is preposterous.

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If the stories we tell of the past are symptoms of our present situation, the stories we tell of our present are also, as the notion of the parallax[4] implies, the results of our views of the past. The three histories of the present explored in Part 2 – of choreographed/ic algorithms and videos [Chapter 4], choreographed/ic relations [Chapter 5], and choreographed/ic trees [Chapter 6] – are therefore told from the perspective of a multiple choreographic history. This is a history in which choreography can be diverse and contain paper choreographies, intermedia dramaturgies, and kinetic containments.

3 Cf. Bal, Mieke: *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History*, Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press 1999.

4 Cf. Foster, Hal: *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. Cambridge/London: MIT Press, 1996, p. xii.

The multiplicity and diversity of choreographic history influences this text's reading of contemporary expanded choreography, by indicating that it does not follow a singular evolution – rather, it transforms itself – and that its different beings exist in multiple, overlapping ways. Consequently, this book's contemporary analyses identify expanded choreography's shifts and changes from – and not simple widenings of – pre-existing choreographic models, while discerning *several* different shifts and changes. A multiple choreographic history gives rise to a multiple present; thus, expanded choreography is a plural response to a non-linear history – a multiplicity that cannot be construed as a uni-directional phenomenon.

A choreographic-historical perspective reframes readings of the present by identifying the relevance of the past within the expanded present. As the case studies in this book have shown, it is not only aspects of contemporaneity that can be reflected in historical practices. A court ballet's decentralisation and de-hierarchisation of dance [Chapter 1], a *bassadanza*'s non-moving movement [Chapter 3], a choreo-graphy's conception of choreography in written signs [Chapter 2], Francis Picabia's a-narrative dramaturgy and his collage-like stage constructions [Chapter 7], Laban's vision of a world in flux [Chapter 8], and the lettrists' explorations of a graphic or imaginary choreography [Chapter 9] form echoes or reflections in Mathilde Chénin, Mesa, or William Forsythe's works [Part 2] – and in expanded choreography in general. These links are not markers of proximity or resemblance, but of a possibly-unexpected relevance, appearing in the juxtapositional space between different historical moments. If no direct causal relations exist between the majority of the case studies analysed here, a multiple choreographic history sediments a conceptual and practical diversity within the notion of choreography that becomes manifest in their nevertheless existing relations. This leads to a view of expanded choreography that is neither a deterministic result of the past – uniformly continuous with history, moving in a smooth linear progression – nor can it be construed as a break, or a rupture, from the past. Choreographic/dance history is not effaced – victimised by new "nows" – or something that expanded choreography must liberate itself from; it is wholly relevant to the contemporary context.

Expanded choreography is a particular – rather than an all-encompassing – present, which shapes its historical perspective. Similarly, the choreographic history discussed here is a multiple *and* specific narrative – one that coexists with histories of body and kinaesthesia, movement and gesture, dance steps and phrases – which does not exclude other instances of expandedness, in other works, other artists, other periods not explored here. Consequently, the view of the present that this history informs is an equally-particular one, and it coexists with other contemporary dance histories. Indeed, while the specific historical narrative adopted in this text is largely focussed on decentralising

dance and moving bodies in choreographic conceptions, it does not aim to marginalise them. This decentralisation is an invitation to better understand a dancerly, kinetic, bodily choreographic model as well; to understand the discursive, artistic, intermedia, institutional, socio-political ways in which such a paradigm became dominant; to examine this dominance's effectiveness within its context(s); to nuance how motion, dance, and body are construed and relate to one another in this choreographic model; to understand the entanglements between the notion(s) of modernity and its choreographic model(s). In this way, a partial historical narrative may insist upon its own specificity, but not on its exclusions.

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These chapters do not only highlight (expanded) choreography's departures from – and critical relations and frictions with – dance and moving bodies; they also point to the potential of choreography being something *else*. Correspondingly, this book has considered how (expanded) choreography may itself become more plural, rather than focussing on what a dance-based, kinetic/physical choreography can do when journeying to other fields. This plurality implies that choreography cannot be understood in an "essential", all-encompassing way. Rather, different conceptions of choreography penetrate each other and overlap; these penetrations and overlaps are markers of diverse conceptions of choreography that form a network, rather than pointing to a global commonality. A multiple and capable-of-becoming-other choreography thus appears. This multiplicity and diversity underlines that while expanded choreography may initially seem to imply that choreography can be universally applied to almost anything, it is choreography's capacity to pluralise in nevertheless always-particular ways that is at stake, not choreography's universality as a neutral or stable practice. A plural, non-essentialist view of expanded choreography does not suggest everything could be choreography, in a generic and undifferentiated way – rather, choreography can be ever-more multiple, but always specific. In this pluralist construal, the label "expanded" has a functional role – referring to specific kinds of choreographic practices – but it does not qualitatively distinguish "expanded choreography" from "choreography". If choreography is multiple, expandedness is part of choreography, without being differentiated from it.

Circulating within this network in the present and past, this book has moved along horizontal planes of synchronicity – to reveal the choreographic diversity within a given timeframe – and vertical planes of transhistoricity – to juxtapose chronologically-disconnected choreographic instances and develop (particular) expanded choreographic histories. For example, Saint-Hubert's *La Manière de composer* [Chapter 1], Picabia's *Relâche* [Chapter 7], and Mesa's *Solo*

[Chapter 5] all point to a conception of choreography as assemblage. Their assemblages differ distinctly – from Saint-Hubert's order-based arrangement to Picabia's Dadaist collage-aesthetic and Mesa's emergent, fleeting effect. But, in their distinctive difference, they bear witness to the fact that the contemporary focus on choreographic assemblages needs to be framed by an understanding of historical variations. In other words, rather than the early-21st century ushering in a choreographic aesthetics and praxis of the assemblage, what appears in this context is *a specific kind* of choreographic assemblage. Similarly, Feuillet's choreo-graphy [Chapter 2], Isidore Isou's choreography [Chapter 9], and Chénin's choreographic works [Chapter 4] all illustrate choreography's multiple existence in different (im)material states. The conception of this existence and the choice of materials is different for each – from Feuillet's papers and signs, to Isou's empty stages, and Chénin's videos and algorithms – but their difference implies that choreography's ontological diversity is a chronologically wide-ranging phenomenon. Once again, the early-21st century shifts this multiplication of choreographic media towards data and information, rather than initiating the ontological multiplication itself. Finally, Domenico and Guglielmo [Chapter 3], Laban [Chapter 8], and Forsythe's [Chapter 6] choreographies are inscribed in non-anthropocentric frameworks that render the binarity of (im)mobility obsolete. Their transgression of anthropocentrism and this binary is, once more, variable – from Renaissance's containment to 20th-century modernity's universalist motion, and contemporaneity's virtual potential. But, this variability demands acknowledgement of its transhistoricity, again pointing to the present as a reconfiguration – rather than an initiation – of choreography's questioning of anthropocentrism and the imperative to move. More of these histories can be developed; for example, contemporary expanded choreography's focus on motion in urban space, or the choreography imposed by devices upon bodies, can also shift from the horizontal to the vertical – looking not for their ancestors, but their historical interlocutors.

In the contemporary works explored here – and in contemporary expanded choreography in general – choreography disengages itself from the teleological function of producing a specific kind of object or working with a specific kind of material. Chénin's works posit that choreography can have multiple ontologies, and can exist through different (in)tangible, (in)visible, (im)material substrates [Chapter 4]; Mesa's work proposes that, beyond this plurality of produced forms, choreography can also be associated with an act – be it the creative praxis of the choreographer or the choreography's own emergent happening – that occurs between, rather than within, choreographic media [Chapter 5] ; Forsythe's installation allows consideration of choreography as thought, perspective, and understanding, rather than as (non)physical "stuff" or as an act [Chapter 6]. Contemporary expansions thus demand radical recon-

sideration of ontological expectations about choreography – expectations about what choreography *is*. But, because these expansions happen on transhistorical planes, they also demand recognition that choreographic history counters such expectations, requiring an equal reconsideration of the entities that are historiographically validated as choreography.

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A plural view of choreography shows that (expanded) choreographies are also articulated in complex relationships with notions they at times (appear to) refuse. Choreographic expansions multiply corporeality to non-human, dephysicalised, depersonalised, microscopically-fragmentable or macroscopically-systemic bodies; they multiply motion to virtual, contained, possible, tendential, trace; they multiply dance formats, media, and performance. Past and present (expanded) choreography heterogeneously relates to a multidimensionality of dances, bodies, motions, and their interlinkages. In their very instability, these diverse relations point to the need to historicise and complexify ideas of dance, body, and motion, in order to add to the intersecting, shifting relationships they form with (expanded) choreography.

The non-essentialist diversity of choreography is also important to choreography's political being. From disciplining embodied subjects to structuring movement, from imposing repeatable – and therefore predictable – patterns of motion to inscribing postures and gestures, choreography takes up ethical and political dimensions, which are also prominent in discourse about expanded choreography.[5] However, because choreography is not essentially defined through a singular trait, this implies that its politics are not *a priori*, and do not transcend the multiplicity and diversity of its manifestations; rather, they are found in the specific configurations of different choreographic models. The blending of power with virtue in Domenico and Guglielmo's dances [Chapter 3]; the notion of order in court ballet and its potential association with the socio-political status of its practitioners [Chapter 1]; the ambivalent relationship of Beauchamp-Feuillet notations with monarchic, disciplinary, and nation-bound goals [Chapter 2]; the open-ness of a relational-algorithmic score [Chapter 4]; the fleetingness of an account of war told through fragments imbricating themselves in audience members' lived memory [Chapter 5]; the resistance and initiatives of a group of trees in response to a choreographic proposition [Chapter 6]; the subversion of institutionalised and class-related dance formats in a

5 Cf. for example, Expanded Choreography. Situations, Movements, Objects…, Conference presentation, MACBA 2012, http://www.macba.cat/en/expanded-choreography-situations (August 2020).

1920s ballet [Chapter 7]; the rhythmical, harmonious, centralised management of (non-)human labour forces [Chapter 8]; a social project mediated through choreographic creation [Chapter 9] – these are all instances of choreographic politics that are not uniform, instances of choreography's diverse relations with diverse politics, instances forming a heterogeneous choreographic politics that can only be explored as a function of choreographic multiplicity.

A similar claim can be made about choreographic authorship. To be sure, questions such as who authored a work and what authorship itself implies depend on the institutional, economic, discursive, social, and other factors that structure the choreographic field at any given time. But, in order to consider a figure a choreographic author, compare their work and status to other understandings of the term, and have that figure participate in a heterogeneous history of choreographic authorship, a conception of choreography is needed that is not limited to the makers of bodily motions. This book provides several examples of figures whose choreographic authorship needs to be, at the very least, (re)assessed – not against a homogeneous diachronic standard but as an opportunity to diversify understandings of choreographic authorship. This includes interdisciplinary authors and projects, like Saint-Hubert's *maîtres d'ordre* [Chapter 1], Picabia's work for *Relâche* [Chapter 7], Isou's transfers between choreography and poetry [Chapter 9], Chénin writing motion with her body before coding it [Chapter 4]; multiple authors, as in the doubling of choreographer by a choreo-grapher [Chapter 2], or creating a choreographic task to be completed by trees [Chapter 6]; authors with (in)tangible creative products, from 17th-century *maîtres d'ordre* to Picabia, and from Picabia to Mesa [Chapter 5]; authors sharing their work with non-human models or agents, like Domenico and Guglielmo following the aesthetic precepts of nature [Chapter 3], or Laban observing the dance of materials [Chapter 8]; and authorship distributed across multiple beings, from the communities of spectators of lettrist imaginary dance to the wires, trunks, and branches of Forsythe's installation in Groningen.

The multiple expansions of choreography further underline the need for an interdisciplinary understanding of the term and the practices to which it applies. This means recognising artistic-discipline-boundary-crossing choreographic practices – as illustrated by Saint-Hubert [Chapter 1], *Relâche* [Chapter 7], lettrist choreography [Chapter 9], and Mesa's [Chapter 5] work – or the crossing of the boundaries of art as a posited "discipline" – as illustrated by Laban [Chapter 8] and Chénin [Chapter 4]. It also means posing this recognition as a stepping stone for the development of cross-discipline histories: of the concurrent anti-narrative turn of cinema and dance/choreography; of the con-

current dramaturgical turn of choreography and post-dramatic turn of theatre;[6] of the concurrent development of expanded choreography and notions such as "the architectural", applicable beyond the design of buildings;[7] of the concurrent disciplinary institutionalisation of dance, music, and the visual arts in late-17th-century France, reflected in the form of Feuillet notations [Chapter 2]. It can mean, too, radically questioning medium specificity as a lens that inadvertently colours the reading of choreography, instead focusing on the skills, practices, methods, and reception processes implicated in intermedia choreographic work.

A further implication of this multifaceted view of choreography concerns how Western definitions of choreography project onto, and conceptually colonise, both non-dominant, local Western practices and non-Western ones. Postulating a plural view of choreography open to transformations allows a "provincialisation"[8] of any single choreographic model and its possibly-disproportionate influence. A non-essentialist consideration of choreography may thus help reduce the dominance of a European/Western viewpoint in characterisations of choreography; if choreography in Europe is not singular, it may equally be more attentive to its non-European counterparts.

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By providing a series of case studies, this book develops a progressive argument – not in the sense of a linear succession in which each step builds on the previous one, but in the sense of multiple layers within an argument, where multiple blocks support an idea. What has been developed, here, is a series of particular histor*ies*; and it is in the juxtapositional space between them that their relevance to one another emerges – a space waiting for more such histories that may never complete it, but that may populate and diversify it, until a complexity is formed that might come close to describing reality.

The ideas and analyses developed here have resulted in the writing of a linear text, with a beginning, middle, and end. Connections exist between its parts; terms recur; ideas re-appear, sometimes under different names; similarities arise between the elements; juxtaposition is at work between the different

6 Cf. Lehmann, Hans-Thies: *Postdramatic Theatre*, Oxon/New York: Routledge 2006 [1999, trans. Karen Jürs-Munby].

7 Martin, Reinhold: 'Architectural Infrastructures and Cultural Techniques' seminar syllabus, Columbia University, 2014, http://www.columbia.edu/cu/arch/courses/syllabi/20141/A8906_2014_1_Martin.pdf (August 2020). This text benefited from Giulia Bini's mention of the notion of the architectural, cf. Bini, Giulia: *ZKM Zentrum für Kunst und Medien - HfG Hochschule für Gestaltung. Media Space Display*, PhD thesis, Venice: IUAV 2017.

8 Cf. Chakrabarty, Dipesh: *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press 2000.

chapters. These ideas and analyses could, perhaps more adequately, be drawn out in a mind map, bundles and articulations colour-coded and made visible; or they could – reflecting Christina Thurner's suggestion on a *networked* historiography[9] – be entered into a database, where hyperlinks can form complex connections between different elements. In such a networked view, (expanded) choreography (and all its variants), dance (and its different manifestations), body (and its different beings), motion and immobility (and their diverse conceptions) would be mapped out alongside autonomy, medium specificity, intermediality, virtuality, arrangement, space and time, humanity and the non-human, thing and material, page and subject, immateriality and act, assemblage and narrative, dramaturgy and ecology. If the linearity of a text points to the non-linear articulations of its contents, this text insists upon a historiographic complexity that may indicate the text's own limits.

A networked historiography is a historiography of folds. It looks for multidirectional links and refracted connections in which disparate and different expansions cross one other. Georges Didi-Huberman noted that '[o]ne must not say that there are historical objects belonging to such or such a time: it must be understood that *in each historical object all ages meet*, collide, melt into each other in their forms, branch out, or overlap one another'.[10] A networked historiography folds time, again and again, so that historical objects touch each other's surface without being removed from their woven textile. Finding the fold that makes a link manifest is the preposterous beauty of juxtaposition.

The plurality of choreographic notions that this networked view illustrates, and the historical and contemporary narratives developed in this text, are examples of the very specificity that upsets homogeneous narratives. In this way, choreographic history – as much as the choreographic present – appears in figures of heterogeneity, diversity, and, at times, dissensus: Feuillet *partly* integrated the body in his system [Chapter 2], *Relâche* responded to *diverse* choreographic models simultaneously [Chapter 7], Forsythe engaged with motion in Groningen while not producing much of it [Chapter 6]; expanded choreography is plural. Michel de Certeau notes:

> If, for some time, [historians] hoped for a "totalization" and believed that they could reconcile diverse systems of interpretation in a fashion accounting for all of their information, by priority historians are now concerned with the complex manifestations of […] differences. In this way the area in which they are settling

9 Thurner: Time Layers, Time Leaps, Time Loss, pp. 529–530.

10 Quoted in Lista, Marcella: *Play Dead*: Dance, Museums, and the 'Time-Based Arts', in: *Dance Research Journal* 46/3 (2014), p. 9.

> can still, by analogy, bear the venerable name of the "fact": the fact, such is the difference.[11]

In the approach to historiography – both of the present and past – adopted here, accepting diversity, heterogeneity, and dissensus is not a refusal to take a position, but is the very basis for taking one. In his seminal text *The Landscape of History*, John Lewis Gaddis writes:

> [W]ith the passage of time, our representations *become* reality in the sense that they compete with, insinuate themselves into, and eventually replace altogether the firsthand memories people have of the events through which they've lived. Historical knowledge submerges participants' knowledge of what took place: historians impose themselves upon the past just as effectively – but also as suffocatingly – as states do upon the territories they seek to control. We make the past legible, but in doing so we lock it up in a prison from which there's neither escape nor ransom nor appeal […] To reconstruct the real past is to construct an accessible but deformed past: it is to oppress the past, to constrain its spontaneity, to deny its liberty.[12]

The writing of history as a fixation, stabilisation, and oppression of the past may be – if histories are symptoms of their contexts – a symptom of a fixed, stable, potentially-oppressive present. Telling multiple histories is a way of refraining from this stately control upon the past; accepting a multiplicity within historical "truth" avoids an imposition on the past *and* the colonisation of the present and its potentialities. Telling these expanded choreographic histories has not been an attempt to stabilise the past, but an attempt to make it move along with a shifting, multiple present.

11 Certeau, Michel de : *The Writing of History*, New York : Columbia University Press 1988 [1975, trans. Tom Conley], p. 81.

12 Gaddis, John Lewis: *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past*, New York: Oxford University Press 2002, pp. 136, 138.