Untangling Intersections of Diverse Indigenous Heritages in Dance Education: Echoes, Whispers and Erosion in the Creases

Linda Ashley

Abstract In *Untangling intersections of diverse indigenous heritages in dance education: Echoes, whispers and erosion in the creases,* Linda Ashley examines the intersections that arise when Western dance education engages with dances from diverse indigenous heritages. Ideologically, this pedagogy embraces a sense of altruism where the individual learner's well-being, creativity, ownership and the 'whispers' of future growth are valued. Highlighting culturally different understandings of key pedagogical concepts, this chapter is also relevant for dance educators who are charged with fostering learning in 21st century diverse classrooms globally. In untangling how the heritage and ideology underpinning dance education creases with Oceanic and other indigenous heritages, the possible effects on and potential for erosion of indigenous dances are explored. The chapter considers how dance education could grow its current praxis in order to accommodate contrasting pedagogical beliefs. Emerging from the untangling, a suggestion for a teaching strategy based on examples of Māori contemporary dance is provided.

Keywords Culturally responsive pedagogy • Cultural difference • Creative dance • Cultural authenticity • Indigenous dance • Super-diversity

In this chapter I attempt to untangle the intersections that arise when dance education engages with dances from diverse indigenous heritages. In untangling how the heritage and ideology underpinning dance education intersects with that of Oceanic and other indigenous heritages, I explore how dance education creases with the cultural richness of the Pacific Island people and other cultures. The notion of intercultural creasing (Schechner 1988) offers ways of discussing the nuances of the intersections and how Oceanic dances and ways of life can become vulnerable to erosion.

Present in echoes from ancient, colonial and post-colonial eras, Oceania is rich in indigenously authentic dances and dancers. In New Zealand, a cultural mosaic of

L. Ashley (✉)
Independent Researcher, 74 Koutunui Rd., RD 1, Auckland 3177, New Zealand
e-mail: d.lines@auckland.ac.nz

dance knowledge is embodied in schools, whilst elsewhere in Oceania more homogenous populations reside. Highlighting the cultural diversity that echoes across Oceania, and the dances that are or have potential to be studied in education, this chapter is also relevant for dance educators who are charged with fostering learning in 21stC diverse or "super-diverse" (Vertovec 2007, p. 1024) classrooms globally.

As part of a Western cultural heritage from countries such as England and the USA, early 20th century dance education is underpinned by a late modern, liberal, progressive ideology in which learning experiences are characterised by individual creativity in making dances. Such learning was and still is valued because it can nurture benefits for the learner such as a sense of ownership of and improving interest in learning. Ideologically, this pedagogy has an underlying sense of altruism on behalf of the teacher wherein authenticity relates directly to demonstration of individual well-being, creativity and whispers of future growth.

Illustrating how dance education could grow its current praxis and accommodate contrasting notions of ownership, authenticity and altruism that arise when studying dances from Oceania, I annotate the chapter with snapshots from my own research (Ashley 2010) and other relevant literature from New Zealand and offshore. United Nations documentation and relevant literature are woven throughout the paper establishing international intersections for consideration. Taking an holistic overview of the complex situation I draw on a range of literature that highlights how intersecting ideologies crumple together historical, theoretical, educational, sociological, political, cultural and economic issues. I feel that to ignore this 'spaghetti junction' of issues, although it could present readers with a density of ideas, could be to underplay the level of complexity that educators face.

The chapter begins at Sect. 1 with a brief personal narrative in which my position on this topic is contextualized. Section 2 follows in which some general background to issues of diversity, authenticity, creasing and cultural erosion in Oceania and overseas is presented. Ideological foundations that echo in current dance education are analysed in Sect. 3. Exploration of different ideological echoes that can occur when culturally diverse dances are taught comprises Sect. 4. Section 5 turns to what can occur in the creases between culturally different echoes in dance education. Emerging from the untangling, I provide a teaching strategy based on examples of Māori contemporary dance that some teachers may find useful.

1 My Journey in the Intersections

This chapter represents a fraction of my ongoing research since 2004 in which I endeavour to explore how to better understand why and how dance educators can build respect for the people whose dances and cultures are studied in dance education, as well as treat the dances ethically and contribute to their conservation rather than their erosion. The resulting multiple layers of considerations make the exploration of connected ideologies, theory and practice in this chapter an essential part of understanding what we, as dance educators, are doing, why we are doing it and how

we may best provide culturally democratic dance education. Consequently, my musings on the culturally complex and diverse experiences that have potential to surface in dance education aim to broaden appreciation of the challenges and ideological mismatches that could arise in the intercultural creases.

As I described in the introduction to this book, my work in dance and dance education involved making meaningful dance as art in which the emphasis lay on the importance of the individual. On arriving in Aotearoa, New Zealand in 1997 and finding well-established dance education practice I felt somewhat at home. Lingering doubts about teaching culturally diverse dances and their place in schools, however, were reinforced as I took on the bi-cultural agenda of the country, encountering Māori kaupapa (knowledge, values and practices (Smith 1999) in the form of kapa haka and also experienced the rich performing arts of Auckland's Pacific Island diaspora. Interrogating the intersections between Western dance education, as I know it, and dances from other cultures became increasingly important to me as I continued to practice, enjoy and see the benefits of dance education but also detected its shortcomings. My curiosity finally found an outlet on commencing doctorate studies (Ashley 2010), setting me on a journey that is still ongoing today.

As an experienced dance educator from a reflexive perspective, I interrogated a journey of 40 years in dance and dance education. I still endeavour to follow reflective theoretical practice in my work, and subsequently have expanded my awareness of how what I see and do, and don't do and see, rests on understanding the values that are operational from moment to moment. In applying reflexive and reflective lenses on this state of affairs the questions which I faced included: How might pedagogical practices in dance education, set within Western modern ideology, embrace values brought by Oceania's culturally diverse population? How did we get to be this way, and what could/should we do about it? These questions remain as critical at this time as they were when dance first became part of New Zealand's national curriculum framework in 2000.

2 Background – Diversity, Authenticity, Creases and Erosion

2.1 Diversity in Oceania – Pluralist People, Echoes of Authenticity

Spread across 3.3 million square miles (8.5 million square kilometres) on the world's largest ocean, Oceania includes over 20 nation states located in Aotearoa, Australia, the USA and the myriad of islands in Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia. Mervyn McLean's, *Weavers of Song* (1999) provides comprehensive coverage of the breadth of Oceanic peoples' cultural worldviews and practices.

As Paul Heelas et al. (1996) observes, however, island people, having been aware of 'others' through interisland trade and war over many centuries, act out pluralistic awareness. The distinct differences and similarities across Pacific Island peoples

and cultures produce a pluralist terrain of a special kind because of migration that occurred between 3000 and 4000 years ago. Leading world authority on human evolution, Bryan Sykes (2001) has produced convincing evidence from extensive studies of mitochondrial DNA that the peoples of Oceania from Papua New Guinea to Hawai'i share an ancestry from either coastal Taiwan or China. Archeological finds of pottery of the South East Asian, Lapita people across the Pacific Islands reinforce Sykes' theory.

From a perspective of dance research:

> The Lapita culture is the cultural heritage of almost all Pacific Islanders today, and thus provides a powerful evidence base for shared values and connections and, I would add, the exchange of ideas, forms, patterns, rhythms and choreographies. (Teaiawa 2014, p. 15)

Katerina Teaiwa describes the inter-island sharing of Lapita cultural heritage and its diverse variations as a process of 'remix'. Echoes can be noticed, for instance, in the authentic dances of the Polynesian people of Sāmoa and Tonga today. Tongan dancer Niulala Helu explained:

> To introduce a new movement into Tongan dance I usually look for a Sāmoan movement and I take that. In Tonga there's only four basic motifs in our dance, and that four have created so many more. And we've borrowed movements from Fiji and I've noticed when I was learning from the masters, how they borrowed it. So for example (demonstrates with hand gesture), this is a Tongan motif, now if you want to borrow something you have to make sure that it is a motif. Rather than it looks borrowed. Don't just use it and make it look contemporary. (Ashley 2012, p. 141)

Helu also described the "cultural motion" in Oceania, "like what we've been touching on is the borrowing of movement. There is this big, big motion within Polynesian society" (Ashley 2012, p. 142). It is within this context of an ocean of motion, the echoing and pluralist creasing of authentic heritages dancing across the waves of the Southern Pacific, that Western dance education pedagogy is located.

2.2   Oceania – Creases and Erosion

In present day Oceania, remixing also includes dances that do not have local roots such as hip hop and Western contemporary dance. In examining the remixing of authentic echoes of Oceanic past commonalities with local and global cultural differences, creases (Schechner 1988) is useful imagery to describe the irregular folds in which the worlds of dominant and other cultures intersect. Creasing is as active in dance education as it is in theatre and community dance.

Past erosion of Oceania's cultures that resulted from creasing with colonial missionary culture is well-documented. In the present day, accelerated and increased erosion of Oceanic indigenous, authentic dance heritages is possible from globalisation, impacting within the creases between environmental change, immigration, jet-travel, media, neo-liberal economics, hyperspace and education. Without some positive intervention to protect dance heritages, the current diversity of Oceanic dance traditions could become fading echoes across the ocean waves.

   Protecting Oceanic indigenous, authentic dance heritages is set against a backdrop of the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) article 31, as adopted by UN General Assembly Resolution 61/295 on 13 September 2007:

> Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts.

Acknowledging the same threat of erosion, UNESCO's Article 2.3 of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage encourages nation states to establish systems of Living Human Treasures[1] in order to safeguard the bearers of traditional heritages and the transmission of knowledge and skills to younger generations.

   A living example of why such safeguards are important can be found in Micronesian, central equatorial Pacific. 33 low lying atoll islands of Kiribati are threatened to be wiped out by rising sea levels before the end of the century, or sooner. Teburoro Tito, President of Kiribati in 2001, described their dances "…as brightening the struggle of life on a tough sun scorched atoll…[drawing people together] to appreciate each other and to share in the joy of what our forefathers referred to as the secret and unique gifts of the spiritual world to the Tungaru people" (as cited in Whincup and Whincup 2001, p. 12). Kiribati dances provide an example of how "dancers embody centuries of history in the minutiae of their movements and the words of the ancient songs" (Whincup and Whincup p. 14). Arm, head and eye movements follow the musical rhythms and illustrate the lyrics, maintaining cultural legacies and histories. Kiribati is a particularly striking example for Oceania if we consider populations who could be forcibly displaced from their homelands not by war, but by the increasing threat of global warming. 103,000 citizens of Kiribati will become refugees and where they may live is currently unknown. Kiribati dances are a part of a rich heritage and sustaining these living treasures via traditional inter-generational transmission may well be threatened if the population is displaced. The Kiribati people are rightfully anxious about maintaining their heritage and their plight could be described as acute in terms of UNDRIP and UNESCO articles. The population of the low lying atolls that make up Tuvalu are similarly threatened. Mindful of UNDRIP's and UNESCO's advice, issues arising from intersections between different indigenous and culturally diverse influences in Oceanic dance education deserve scrutiny.

---

[1] http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/?pg=00061

2.3   Super-Diversity in the Creases

Oceania also contains nation states, such as Aotearoa, New Zealand and Australia, that host more widely diverse populations than can be found on some of the region's islands. This diversity raises additional issues that may resonate with dance educators in many parts of the world. By way of contrast to more homogenous island populations, immigration in present day cosmopolitan New Zealand rose approximately 20 %, from 57,302 in 2008/9 to 295,903 in 2013/14. The 2013/14 figures included 160 different nationalities.[2] From these figures it would seem that migration is increasing cultural diversity in Aoteaora. Aotearoa's earlier migrant profile, being more likely to predominantly feature Pacific Island and British ethnicities, has shifted to include a more diverse cocktail amongst which economic migrants and refugee quotas from all over the globe are incorporated.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) identified the forced displacement of 51.2 million people in 2013 (an increase of 6 million people on 2012) as a global crisis. The UNHCR report also showed that 50 % of the refugee population were under 18 years of age and that this was the highest figure in a decade.[3] Such vicissitudes are global and contribute to the vastly increased pluralist populations that characterise many present day nation states.

In Great Britain, Steven Vertovec (2007) labelled this increased range of diversity and immigration "super-diversity" (p. 1024). He argued that Britain's previous immigration profile, consisting of citizens that mainly orginated from Commonwealth countries or previous colonial territories such as the Carribean and South Asia, contrasts with the current "level and kind of complexity surpassing anything the country has previously experienced" (p. 1024). His explanation of the complexities deserves detailed reading. In outlining the implications of super-diversity he observes that:

> The growing size and complexity of the immigrant population carries with it a range of significant public service implications. Executives in local authorities around Britain have voiced concerns about the ability of transport systems, schools and health services to manage new needs… Such concerns flag up a substantial shift in strategies across a range of service sectors concerning the assessment of needs, planning, budgeting, commissioning of services, identification of partners for collaboration and gaining a broader appreciation of diverse experiences in order generally to inform debate. (p. 1048)

In selecting schools as a site where new strategies are needed in order to respond to a complex interplay of different languages, cultural values, racial tension and religions, Vertovec depicts how this complexity, going beyond ethnicity, requires the re-evaluation of "policies for community cohesion, integration, managed migration and managed settlement" (p. 1047).

Accepting that: "Diversity in Britain is not what it used to be" (Vertovec, p. 2007: 1024), present day dance education in the UK is set within Vertovec's notion of

---

[2] http://www.immigration.govt.nz

[3] http://www.unhcr.org/5399a14f9.html

'super-diversity' in which the dominant culture/s and diverse others crease. Super-diversity, however, is by no means a solely British problem. It is widespread internationally and becoming more prevalent in Oceania. With this in mind it would be helpful to firstly scrutinise a Western dance education legacy, as found in its historical origins, because of its ubiquity in the intercultural creases of some parts of Oceania and overseas.

3 A Late Modern Legacy – Ideological Echoes in Dance Education

In this section I describe the underpinning beliefs, originating from a Western late modern ideology that echo through dance educators' current practice. Ideology, by its nature, comprises cultural histories, socio-political perspectives, values and pedagogy. In the second half of this section I explore the ways in which this ideology echoes within dance education as three embodied teaching strategies, authenticity, altruism and ownership.

3.1 Ideological Late Modern Echoes in Whispers of the 'Future-New'

For some social-theorists modernity is far from over as the postmodern is relegated to a hyper-technological version of late modernity.[4] Late modernity, driven by a global market economy, is differentiated from preceding eras because it "lives in the future, rather than the past" (Giddens 1998, p. 94). Characterised by a dynamic interplay between individual innovation and future growth, ideologically it privileges future-based change over that derived from past traditions.[5] With a preference for listening to whispers of what can be, late modernity is, therefore, informed by its own traditional ideology of the 'future-new'. An icon of late modernity is the "spatial metaphor of the avant-garde…that explores hitherto unknown territory" (Habermas 2001, p. 39). The innovative avant-garde is a driver of dominant political, cultural, economic and educational policies.

However, this is not a binary of 'old world' tradition versus innovative modernity in which a romantic or naïve view of tradition becomes "unarguable truths, symbols of containment, or intellectual weapons…" (Hagood 2006, p. 33). So-called traditional cultures invest in innovation but possibly within more restricted frames of

---

[4] Marshall Berman (1982) and Anthony Giddens (1998).

[5] Zygmunt Bauman's (1996) observation is pertinent. "It is the novelty that conjures up tradition as its other, as something it is not, something that it is up against, or something it lacks and misses" (Heelas et al. 1996, p. 49).

who is innovating, how and why, and they may not be so reliant on late modern's prioritisation of the 'future-new'.

The issue here is that once dominant ideologies become personal experience certain people's interests are privileged. Those with greater proximity to resources could be, directly or indirectly, more empowered to act. In privileging the interests of individual innovation over that of the group, Western pedagogical models and teaching are no exception. Arguably, many people live at this ideological intersection where whispers of a future-new involve tuning into echoes from a relatively recent past. A deeper understanding of these echoes, I feel, could better inform our comprehension of the diverse demands being made on 21st century dance educators in relation to whose values are dominant and the effects of creasing on dance and dancers from diverse cultural heritages.

3.2 Late Modern Echoes in Dance Education

In this section I trace how echoes of a late modern ideology are embodied in the praxis of present day dance education. Many teachers may recognise such echoes in their own teaching, and this section could be informative for those wishing to enhance their understanding by disentangling the cultural values that they practice in their work. Although there is undoubted educational value to be gained from Western late modern dance education, developing critical awareness of ideological foundations could further inform how to implement culturally democratic teaching for diverse and super-diverse settings.

Dance education's ideological foundations are sometimes overlooked. Relatively lesser studied, even though one could easily argue the case for it being relevant to dance studies, dance education is frequently conceptually set apart from its close cousin modern/contemporary dance. This oversight is illustrated by Rebecca Enghauser's (2008) otherwise insightful conceptual approach to developing a broader awareness and deeper understanding of modern theatre dance for dance educators. The five features by which Enghauser characterises modern dance, however, also underpin dance education and I now tease out how a late modern ideology of the 'future-new' drives child-centred pedagogy and individual discovery learning, to result in culturally specific understandings of authenticity, altruism, and ownership, as practiced by dance educators.

3.3 Authenticity

In Enghauser's description of the feature of "invention/revolution" (p. 37) she draws attention to modern dance as an avant-garde rebellion against established models and traditions such as classical ballet. Offering "a timely manifestation of a more individualistic and varied form of expression" (p. 36), this could also be describing

dance education. Enghauser describes the feature of "individuality" (p. 39) in modern dance as characterised by the unique qualities and liberal rights underpinning each individual's personal, authentic dance work. Both modern dance and dance education externalise "personal, authentic experience" (Cohen 1966, p. 4).

Inclusion of individual learners in movement experimentation is deemed to benefit them by facilitating enjoyment of and motivation to learn, alongside improvements in well-being and confidence. Such Western late modern ideology has predominated in dance education texts and teaching crossing many decades (Green Gilbert 1992; Kassing and Jay 2003; Preston 1966; Shapiro 2008; Smith-Autard 2002). Similarly, the characteristic "experimentation/process" (p. 40) also underpins the pedagogical legacy of dance education, as featured in the teaching of individual-centred, creative learning experiences. The title of North American pioneer of dance education Margaret H'Doubler's 1974 book, *Dance: A Creative Art Experience*, captures the modern zeitgeist.

In my investigation, teachers talked about creative dance as offering opportunities to learn in a "free, expressive manner unfettered by a prescriptive dance form, for example, square dance" (2010, p. 107).[6] Dance as featured in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2000, 2007) results from a long history of dance education in schools and at tertiary level. The lineage emphasises fostering innovation and risk-taking, encouraging "students to break free from the 'rules' of learning to really think on their feet and find new methods of expression".[7] New Zealand is not alone in this. As a recent article reveals, creativity is a key factor in the ideologies of dance education in many countries across the globe including, amongst others, the UK, USA, Singapore, Finland and Canada (Snook and Buck 2014).

Authenticity in dance education is also traceable in echoes of terminologies and processes used in creative dance. Emerging from early 20th century pioneer, European Rudolf Laban, these terms bring a sense of technical authenticity, echoing in such remarks as: "It is important for the dance educator to author assessment tools so language remains authentic and relevant to dance education" (Kranicke and Pruitt 2012, p. 117). Although not a codified technique such as Martha Graham's, the terms embody cultural authenticity. In 'Modern Educational Dance', as it was first named in England by early 20th century physical educators (Best 1999; Preston 1966) creative dance could be a highly abstract affair, concerned predominantly with individual movement experimentation exploring themes and improvising with what are commonly now known as the 'Dance Elements', namely: body; space; time; weight/dynamics; and relationships. The Dance Elements, as well as other

---

[6] Arguably however, a teacher's construction of creative process and choice of theme are culturally prescribed and prior authentic experience can advantage some learners over others; equity becomes a malleable concept.

[7] http://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/The-arts/Who-are-the-arts-for/The-arts-disciplines/What-is-dance-about

Western dance terminologies, frequent the dance component of the 2007 *New Zealand Curriculum,* however the legacy is not overtly referenced.

3.4   Altruism

In Enghauser's characteristic of modern dance as "community/collaboration" (p. 40) a modernist understanding of altruism echoes throughout. Prioritising individual satisfaction as a default setting for dance education, a 'learning community of individuals' positions learners as being set to better themselves in a culture of the future-new. Longstanding dance educator Susan Stinson advocates that teachers' liberal sense of caring for individual learners is contingent with the "virtue" of "justice". A pedagogical foundation of altruism echoes as Stinson argues that

> …all educators, including those in dance, have a responsibility to help students discover and develop them[selves] – not because of their intimate connection to our own disciplines, but because they matter to us as humans and to our future as a civilisation. (2005, p. 87)

Similar altruistic intentions also drove the teachers in my study. One teacher valued how: "[The teaching] extended children's movements. Each group member performed their movement sequence in a safe environment, where all children felt included" (Ashley 2010, p. 103). Such altruism is testament to the longstanding evidence in dance education research of the educational values that accrue for learners when learning when learning in, through and about creative dance.

3.5   Ownership

Altruism and authenticity are often correlated with providing the learner with a sense of ownership of both the learning and the dances that the learners make. Revolving around the question of "Who am I?" Enghauser's category "personal/cultural inquiry" (p. 41) emphasises personal values and beliefs and/or identities with an individual's cultural lineage.

When investigating teachers working in New Zealand schools, as they faced a new challenge to teach about culturally diverse dances presented in the 2002 *Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum*, I found that ownership was a key value that underpinned their praxis. Teachers commented about the correlation between successful teaching and ownership of learning by the learners in such remarks as: "The lesson was very successful. Children have ownership of the little actions they made which lead to the final product" (Ashley 2010, p. 103).

Stinson (2005) highlights ownership, discovery and creation as key for success of the learning process. Individual ownership, an echo of early 20th century European and North American modern dance education, has roots in progressive, liberal education ideology as marked by publications such as John Dewey's (1916), *Democracy and Education*. Later key texts by educators such as Lev Vygotsky

(1962) and Jerome Bruner (1986) endorse similar pedagogical roots and favour logically constructed learning experiences that encourage individual creativity and problem-solving.

This category interests me because it has potential to set individual ownership at the centre of pedagogy from within a future driven ideology, rather than an ideology in which ownership is communal and listens to echoes from an indigenously different past.

I locate the wholly laudable ideological underpinnings, as embodied in dance education, of individual ownership and altruistic pedagogy alongside authenticity of individual creativity and technical terms as echoes of a late modern Western European and North American legacy. Educational justice becomes confluent with authentic, individual, creative expression, as provided by an educationally altruistic community. With considerable justification in terms of its proven educational benefits for the learner, the pervasive 'future-new' ideology remains key in dance education. I endorse such educational values but I am concerned about the effect on other indigenous dance heritages as they overlap in the intercultural creases. Importantly, as the ideology of the future-new intersects with indigenously different echoes in dance education, comparing and contrasting them could foster greater understanding of how teachers, facing diverse cultures in their work, could better implement culturally responsive dance education.

4   Different Echoes: Altruism, Authenticity and Ownership

In this section I consider how ownership, altruism and authenticity echo conceptually and differently in cultures other than the Western, late modern, liberal, progressive one from which dance education emerges.

4.1   Altruism

In my study (Ashley 2010) participants Valance Smith, Niulala Helu and Keneti Muaiava, as teachers who teach their own indigenous dances in schools and tertiary institutions, described a need to possess high levels of skill in specific dances and knowledge about the practices of previous generations before embarking on teaching their dances to others. These specialists meet the 2007 UN's profile of Indigenous Peoples (as cited in Iokepa-Guerrero et al. 2011) that includes tendencies to:

- be accepted by the community as one of their members;
- self identify with their community of birth;
- demonstrate strong and historical links with their territories and surrounding natural world;
- know their historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies.

I find that positioning these specialists as indigenous alongside the opinions that they expressed in my research reveals ideological echoes from their heritages.

In relation to altruistic teaching, such pedagogy may hold relevant cultural values integral to studying some dance genres, as described here by Sāmoan dance specialist Muaiava:

> … in Sāmoan culture you SSHH! You're not allowed to … like it's disrespectful. In saying that, they weren't trying to keep the knowledge away, they weren't trying to be mean. It was just the way that you show respect by shutting up. (Ashley 2012, p. 150)

Another Sāmoan source, however, identifies such "cultural silence" as a way of protecting cultural knowledge and property (Tamasese 2005, p. 62). Such indigenous educational ideologies conceptualise altruistic teaching as copying or rote learning of embodied knowledge, encouraging respect for others as experts and emphasising a sense of conformity.

Research has shown that cultural preferences for pedagogy exists. Teaching styles that reproduce knowledge (rote/mimetic learning) are preferred in countries such as Korea and China because the cultural emphasis is on standardising student performance (Cothran et al. 2005). In explaining pedagogy based on Taoist philosophy and its implications for dance training in Taiwan, Wen-Chi Wu (2013) identifies the acquisition of technique as essential to releasing creativity. She highlights that even though this can take a long time to achieve, it "should not be hastened merely by importing European concepts of creativity or American methods of choreography" (p. 221).

Some Western dance educators claim that emphasising technical proficiency would be more in tune with current times, as exemplified by the success of such popular television hits such as *Dancing with the Stars* (LaPointe-Crump 2006, 2007). Envisaged as a means to redress prioritising "personal creativity and expressiveness over dance as a shared cultural form" (LaPointe-Crump, 2006, p. 3), this rationale values the shared community that results from precision ensemble work, and possibly more contentiously that: "One step away from being evaluated in a class is auditioning for a company or show" (LaPointe-Crump, 2007, p. 4). This could surprise many dance educators striving to teach inclusively to classes with diverse interests and physical needs. Juju Masunah (2001), for instance, identified behaviourist learning in traditional Indonesian dance as educationally inappropriate because it required substantial time to reach an acceptable elitist standard, and also that the accompanying religious beliefs were unsuitable for the majority of learners in schools.

In culturally diverse classrooms, religion and spirituality can carry significant hurdles for indigenous dance teachers. An example of the compromises required that lurk in the creases of pedagogical ideologies can be found in the teaching of *Bharatha Natyam* by Madam Jeyanthi in Singapore schools (Lum and Gonda 2014). Responding to cultural diversity, school policies, and time constraints, she was charged with balancing and preserving her own traditions whilst also promoting intercultural understanding and embracing the cultural identities of others such as Muslim and Chinese children. When parents refused to allow their children to participate because it was perceived as bowing to a different god, Madam Jeyanthi

compromised her spiritual beliefs, the *guru–shishya* relationship of teacher and student and the dance vocabulary. Madam Jeyanthi describes how she simplified the Indian dance for these learners but also relates how,

> … we don't mention it as Bharatha Natyam when we teach in schools. So we mention it as Indian dance. So when you mention Indian dance, we introduce … classical steps, folk dance, we bring in hip-hop steps, (and) we bring in fusion steps, contemporary movements… (Lum and Gonda 2014, p. 115)

The compromise here seems to tilt the pedagogical balance towards Western ideology. I wonder how traditional forms can be made relevant and interesting for learners whilst retaining different altruistic values of how dance is taught. By its own liberal standards Western education has some obligation to respect not only the dances of other cultures but also the pedagogical ideals that the dance teachers bring with them. Such a nexus[8] of ideology, praxis and content demonstrates how in education, "social justice is an active and malleable concept that can and should transform depending on circumstance and context" (Johnson et al. 2011, p. 309).

4.2 Authenticity

Pedagogical differences could be especially marked if we remind ourselves that late modern society is distinguished by a tendency to live in the future rather than the past. In my research, the dance specialists often referred to the need to seek advice from community elders when making new dances in order to honour traditional values, movement vocabulary, and also to achieve acceptance as being authentic from their community, as viewers and shared owners. A tertiary dance educator's comment in my research: "Māori dancers like to honour the past of their cultural ancestry before they go forward–research own family heritage of dance over 100 years" (Ashley 2012, p. 207) also reverberates in this echo:

> Elders are the knowledge keepers and knowledge teachers of Indigenous societies. The perspectives, skills, knowledge, stories, and teachings of Elders must have its place in Western academy and higher education. (Iokepa-Guerrero et al. 2011, p. 15)

In discussing how Hawaiian *kupuna* (elders) play important roles at the University of Hawai'i, Noelan Iokepa-Guerrero points out that *kupuna* are envisaged as perpetuating indigenous cultural wisdom and excellence by straddling the traditional and the modern. In the same echo, however, the specialists in my study pointed out that elders were not against new ideas but that innovation needed to be within culturally authenticated traditional parameters. This sense of authenticity is evident in Māori leader Sir Peter Buck's (1987) explanation of how some conventions in kapa haka that guide what is acceptable innovation arise from historical precedent but others are more spontaneous. In recognising kapa haka as an art form that like others combines heritage with innovation, he depicts a certain complexity as to the

---

[8] Nexus is a term that I explore in greater depth in Ashley 2012.

process of creativity being more tied to a living continuous sense of a non-Western past. Through consultation with elders, authenticity tends towards communal consensus, rather than determined by autonomous individuals iconoclastically breaking 'rules' and acquiring sole possession.

In some Oceanic communities, however, the obligation to listen to echoes from the past can go even deeper than respecting living elders as protectors or guardians of a culture. Epeli Hau'ofa (2004) envisages the compression of time and space into precious vessels such dances, songs and visual art works that act as vectors reconnecting lost relatives from the past with the present; a Janus connection through time. Poignantly evoking images of trading culturally formed concepts of time and space, cultural treasures cross the Pacific linking spatial and temporal locations through the trade of artefacts as containers of traditional actions, beliefs and practices. In Melanesian Vanuatu, rather than subscribing to the concept of individual innovation, Tannese people traditionally prefer to attribute creative forces to anonymous spirits and ancestors.

A better understanding of this echo of authenticity can be found in Karen Hubbard's (2008) analysis of traditional jazz dance being "great-grandparents' jazz" (p. 110). Hubbard differentiates authentic jazz dance technically in terms of posture, dynamics, improvisation and cool attitude, from that in which mainstream Eurocentric influences have resulted in such forms as lyrical jazz, Broadway jazz and funk and the associated "pasted-on smile and being propelled by the music while performing manic manouevres and manipulations" (p. 112). Giving Afro-American jazz dance as an example of validating a sense of belonging to African heritage draws attention to the intersections that are current in Oceania being transferable for dance education in other countries. It also reinforces the idea that those who own certain dances may be best employed to teach them in the interests of cultural authenticity and avoidance of erosion by supporting the owners' rights to financial reward for passing on their legacies.

4.3   Ownership

The dance specialists in my study expressed various opinions on ownership including who might best teach certain dances, how the dances should be taught and why, as well as certain conditions surrounding how dances are created. Smith, a Māori, kapa haka specialist, felt that in order to qualify to teach about Māori culture and its dance traditions, individuals would require 5000 h of study. A major topic of conversation amongst the dance specialists was providing appropriate fiscal remuneration for teaching their indigenous dances.

In Oceanic cultures there are differing cultural values towards ownership of dances and songs, some of which involve fiscal transactions or goods exchanged for dances. Mervyn McLean (1999) points out that ownership of dances as property that can be bought and sold is more of a Melanesian rather than Polynesian cultural concept. He draws on the work of Margaret Mead in Melanesian, New Guinea to

document established trade routes of song, dances and fashions from communities living on the coast to more inland villagers who would pay for the latest trends with feathers, pigs, shell rings and tobacco. In turn, when the inland villagers tired of the latest fashion they would trade them to those living even deeper in the interior and use their profits to buy the next 'best thing'. Jun'ichiro Suwa (2001) also describes how, in the coastal district of Madang, Papua New Guinea some dances that were seen as collectively owned were traded between villages as commodities for goods. Despite no actual money being involved, such consumerism may sound familiar to many readers. Kirk Huffman (1996) records a common traditional copyright system used across the islands of Vanuatu dictating that only those who possess the rights can give public renditions of songs, stories, carving designs, rhythms or dances, and if permission has not been granted compensation may be demanded by magic, fines or even death. In Aotearoa, iwi (tribes) own dances and songs and control performance rights. Hence, when haka are borrowed without permission tensions can run high. Importantly, international copyright law does not protect art that is sourced from spiritual forces.

In Polynesia there is documentation of transactions bestowing public recognition on villages or families who own the artefacts via gifts of baskets of flowers. The cultural owners, according to McLean (1999), see trading of art as demeaning and are gratified solely if others adopt their dances. Transactions are more connected with honouring status and fostering inter-island social harmony. In the Cook Islands, touring groups of adults and children, *tere*, were recorded as visiting other islands in the late 1800s (McLean 1999). Gifts could be exchanged but some visits were used to raise funds for community purposes. When I visited the Cook Islands in 2009 I watched a performance that was a feature of the weekly local market. The group was raising funds for a tour of Australia. One immediate conclusion could have been that this was for the tourists but previous longstanding practices indicate connectedness to past economic practices.

A symbiotic consequence of their owners' ability to adapt dances and make money in businesses such as tourism could be that artists, as Living Human Treasures, may be supported to maintain their traditional dance practices, and pass on their cultural knowledge to the next generation. It could well be that adapting some dances for commercial gain also sustains the livelihoods of the owners and could help avoid erosion of the more traditional forms. Education could, some may say should, provide another enclave where threatened dances and dancers might be better protected from erosion. However, indigenous artists would require a substantial presence in the timetable, appropriate reimbursement, some reshaping of infrastructural policy and support to work with Western pedagogical ideology.

Having identified some of the diverse cultural values associated with ownership, authenticity and altruism, next I consider the intercultural creases between different ideologies as they intersect in dance education.

5   Untangling Echoes in the Creases – A New Dynamic

As culturally different echoes intersect in richly diverse educational settings, different understandings of three key ideological concepts ownership, altruism and authenticity become entangled. The possible effects of creasing on transmission of different cultures are captured in this statement from UNESCO[9]:

> Universal education provides important tools for human development. But it may also inadvertently erode cultural diversity and disorient youth by obstructing the transmission of indigenous language and knowledge.

In pondering the erosion of indigenous knowledge as it intersects with what is labelled 'universal' education, UNESCO identifies a need to establish new dynamics between teachers, students and community knowledge-holders. If 'universal' is read as implying a Western educational ideology, the new dynamic would need to balance notions of tradition as echoes of 'past-significant' with a late modern mantra of individual whispers about the 'future-new'. UNESCO indicates a need to identify spaces and processes that allow less-recognised knowledge systems to be represented equitably.

UNESCO provides guidelines for arts education in its Seoul Agenda (2010).[10] Of the Agenda's three goals, Goal 3 focuses on "resolving the social and cultural challenges facing today's world" (p. 8). The four practical strategies for arts education associated with this goal aim broadly at developing:

1. Innovation in society
2. Socio-cultural well-being
3. Social cohesion, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue
4. Responses to major global challenges, from peace to sustainability

These strategies and their corresponding actions reverberate with the tenor of this chapter. Arguably, the ideological positioning of innovation at the top of the list of practical strategies could be read as prioritising the 'future-new'. Nevertheless, the actions that UNESCO associate with Goal 3 include valuing: the traditional and the contemporary; conservation of identity, diversity and heritage; and adaptation to the local relevancy of learners including minorities and migrants. These guidelines are helpful for dance educators when considering creating a new dynamic in their work.

In the following sections, I explore what a new dynamic for dance education might entail. I look beyond extant praxis and the social privileges that it can confer as to how dances are taught, who teaches them, how they are made, and the associated financial rewards. Giving practical examples from Oceania and elsewhere, I attempt to identify some challenges that can impact on balancing an emphasis on mainly the individual with one that considers communal needs and values when a diverse range of cultures intersect in dance education. I consider possibilities and

---

[9] http://www.unesco.org/bpi/pdf/memobpi48_tradknowledge_en.pdf

[10] http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Seoul_Agenda_EN.pdf

hurdles that dance educators may need to negotiate, and strategies that could support implementation of socially just praxis for dance education. I include examples where efforts have been made to establish new dynamics between teachers, learners and the cultural community. A main sticking point, however, could be pedagogical differences and it is to this issue that I now turn.

5.1 Altruistic Creases – Socially Just Pedagogy for Dance Education

As dance educators reach out to increasingly diverse learners, the creasing could involve balancing different pedagogical echoes arising from how altruism is understood culturally. As driven by culturally diverse preferences for passing on cultural taonga (treasures), a challenge faced by dance education is informed by being mindful of how "traditional dance forms are passed from generation to generation without reference to national or international standards" (Adshead-Lansdale and Layson 1999, p. 22). Potential for pedagogical mismatches in how dance is taught raises questions about if or how the knowledge of respected elders and specialists from communities could be represented in dance education that may be driven by inclusive pedagogy, curriculum expectations and national standards. Nyama McCarthy-Brown's (2009) solution is to re-evaluate national standards in order that different indigenous dance traditions and learners may be treated equitably.

If UNESCO's 'universal' pedagogy is underpinned by Western progressive ideology, rote learning and teaching methods that are appropriate in the village may not translate into schools because they could be interpreted, wrongly in my opinion, as a backward step educationally. Finding strategies that could balance what has been labelled a pedagogical model of an "authoritarian father" (Stinson 1998, p. 27) with 'universal' education is a longstanding contention. A hurdle commonly cited is that of guest teachers struggling to teach inclusively. Teachers in my research commented that sometimes "traditional Island teachers, they teach as they have been taught, and that method doesn't go along with the way that we teach anything in NZ" (Ashley 2012, p. 58). A tertiary dance educator explained:

> The only factor with a traditional style of teaching children the same steps, even in contemporary style of dance, is when you've taught them a sequence the children tend to look at each other and compare themselves to others. They can tend to lose a bit of confidence there. (Ashley 2012, p. 27)

Displacing rote learning of steps by emphasising creative dance was one of the founding strategies of dance education. Despite dance educators' suspicion of technical skill, there was some infiltration of North American dance techniques—such as Martha Graham's into the UK in the 1960s and 70s. The resulting acrimony between the two factions is well-documented (Preston-Dunlop and Espana 2005). Dance educators took exception to giving up the recognised sense of inclusion of a wide range of learners that accrued in creative dance, along with the associated

benefits to the learner of increasing confidence and interest to learn. I suggest that vestiges of this battle can linger in current praxis.

The implications of UNDRIP's article 31 give rise to a need to establish a socially just sense of altruism that includes, respects and rewards knowledge holders from a variety of different cultural heritages via institutional change in educational and political settings. Efforts to reinforce socially just treatment of different indigenous heritages could transform dance education according to local contexts.

An Oceanic example of the folds of pedagogical altruism in dance education can be found in Sāmoa's *Performing Arts Curriculum* (Sāmoan Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture 2004). Written for dance and drama in secondary schools with funding from a New Zealand Aid programme, it has similarities with its Aotearoa equivalent. There are also marked differences, such as the compulsory teaching of named Sāmoan dances reflecting Sāmoa's more homogenous population. As an, "integral part of the Sāmoan culture and the society in which we live our everyday lives" (p. 17), the preservation of indigenous Sāmoan traditional dances such as *mā'ulu'ulu* and *fa'ataupati* is noticeable, and, unlike New Zealand's curriculum, pedagogy of rote learning, imitating and performing are emphasised throughout. Similarly the contextual study in the document focuses predominantly on Sāmoan and Pacific Island dances. Ballet, creative dance, hip hop and other genres are included throughout the document but in lesser amounts to locally indigenous dances. Some research into how the implementation of this curriculum is progressing could be most exciting.

In the New Zealand curriculum, a policy designed to meet the challenges of providing culturally equitable education is culturally responsive, pluralist pedagogy. New Zealand's *Educational Review Office* (2012, (ERO)) identified that acknowledging, celebrating and promoting learners' diverse cultural and ethnic identities is key in fostering engagement with learning, particularly for lowest performing students. In my research (Ashley 2012) some teachers associated cultural relevance with the learners' well-being. For example one teacher noted: "This opportunity also gave many students a chance to shine if they were familiar with the culture or indeed from that ethnic group. It made them feel special" (p. 62). Key words such as confidence, self-esteem and motivation were common in teachers' responses. Interestingly, these words are those that are often attached to the altruistic ideology of Western dance education. One could argue, therefore, that inclusion of pedagogy from diverse cultures is altruistic because it benefits the learner via: "Teaching that invites the students' lived experiences links to issues of social justice" (Sansom 2011, p. 49). Such pedagogy focuses on establishing cultural diversity in everyday teaching practice and classroom ethos. A different dynamic of altruism might emerge from within these creases in which the pedagogies of diverse cultures may be, somehow, included.

5.2 *Authenticity – Untangling Ethical Creases*

In this section I explore intersections between different worldviews that are embodied when making dances comes under the spotlight in dance education. In the intercultural creases of teaching dance to diverse groups of learners, echoes of Western key cultural concepts regarding innovation become entangled with values from different indigenous sources. Mindful of various guidelines for respecting the rights of indigenous people to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritages, ethically untangling making dances in dance education could produce a more socially just dynamic awareness of how authentic culturally diverse dances are created.

Teaching how to create dances from a relatively greater range of freedom and choice of movements, dance structures and individual poetic license of a Western palette presents teachers with different challenges from making dance that involves technical levels of skill, knowledge of cultural protocols and a more restricted range of movement choices. For instance, adding creative dance as a default to a learning experience about a non-Western dance, a common strategy used by teachers in my research, is possibly not culturally appropriate from some indigenous dance specialists' worldviews. Such pedagogical appropriation of creative process is, I feel, a keystone in the authentication debate because it calls on the very shortcomings that most concerned the teachers in my investigation, namely their lack of physical skills and contextual knowledge.

Although traditions of cultures generally feature innovation and creativity, there seems to be a delicate balance in which individual authenticity could be valued over a sense of collectively negotiated innovation. In acknowledging change as a constant, everything could be perceived as authentic. However, my concern lies more in how dance education is ethically "dancing out the colliding still unassimilated elements of contemporary life" (Siegel 1998, p. 97), with an emphasis on avoiding further erosion of the authentically visible differences as found in the dominant recognisable movement features, theatrical conventions and creative processes.

As recognised in UNESCO's Seoul Agenda, encouraging arts educators to cooperate with local communities, dance artists, parents and family is key to building sustainable arts education. Elders could be welcomed into schools under a Living Human Treasures national policy, and this strategy could meet the needs of responding to indigenous minorities in super-diverse school populations. Equally in more homogenous isolated populations, it could assist dance artists to sustain their own heritages and foster intergenerational transmission of traditional arts, safeguarding intangible cultural knowledge of dance from erosion. Another solution is to facilitate teachers in schools to teach their own cultural heritages inclusively (Ashley 2014a). Finding ways of providing teachers with means to ethically include a wide variety of cultures is an area that could benefit from greater research.

At this point I pose a question. If, working within a Western, late modern tradition in which individuality and child-centredness are prioritised, what are dance educators if they are not respected elders? I am using elders in a Western sense here

because as teachers their cultural paradigm could well be underpinned by pedagogically valuing and even prioritising the view of the individual learner/creator over their own. As provocateur, I position this question as pivotal to 21st century dance education because of its potential to make a dynamic shift in how dances are made and justifying who is remunerated to teach what.

Thinking in terms of the intersections found within creases is a helpful image when considering how creative dance could promote opportunities for learners to consume, borrow or 'own' the dances of others via the making of what is sometimes known as fusion dance. Intercultural fusion dance, whether in education or theatre, can give the individual ethical license to procure the dances of others under a cloak of creativity in the folds of which respect, ethics, tradition, authenticity, innovation, ownership and social justice jostle (Ashley 2013b, c). 20th century and 21st century Western dance theatre is rife with choreographers borrowing from other people's cultures undercover of a "Western license to thrill" (Ashley 2014b). In discussing the topic of intercultural dance theatre, Sansan Kwan (2014) unravels the inevitability of the continuation of such borrowings, concluding that an "ethics of interculturalism" (p. 197) might be described as simply the obligation to continue pursuing the impossibility of communion in intercultural encounters. I present a counterpoint to Kwan's view by thinking of traditional dances as endangered species, and that standalone innovation of echoes from authenticated indigenous pasts warrants greater attention ethically in present day dance education. When authenticity as defined by Western ideology, predominates in fusion dance, attempts to domesticate the exotic can leave the domestic as the most recognisable characteristic.

Importantly, cultural values can drive culturally different creative processes. Making culturally specific traditional dances the most noticeable feature could foster greater awareness of which authentic cultural memories are informing dance education and theatre. The avoidance of fusion or hybridity is a struggle worth pursuing if dance education is to retain its relevance in a super-diverse world. A world in which fusion dance, as we know it, is not necessarily wrong but it may not be right for everyone. As some indigenous dance traditions are eroded by what is commonly recognised as the modernist 'tradition of the new', intercultural fusion raises the possibility of disintegration of cultural identities through the ways in which innovation is implemented in 'universal' education.

5.3 Ownership: Echoes from Pasts and Whispers of Futures

Mindful of 'universal education' as a site where some indigenous dances and dancers could be set apart from the normative transformative events of the owner's living culture, in this section possibilities surrounding who could teach what and why are untangled in search of a new dynamic in employment.

In my investigation the dance specialists' teaching provided culturally complete learning experiences in which cultural literacy and dancing co-existed; they 'owned it'. Echoes of an indigenous traditional dance past were evident in the way that they

taught. In my work on a university Bachelor of Dance programme I observed them teach with a seamless combination of dancing with contextual background alongside opportunities for creative thinking, albeit with a relatively restricted movement palette. Their teaching strategies included the learners' diverse physical and cultural needs along with indigenously authentic knowledge and dancing, informing what I feel is an oversight that has ramifications for who teaches what and why in diverse dance education.

As echoes from different pasts intersect with whispers of possible futures, dance educators could be depicted as untangling a notion of tradition that could appear to be difficult. In my investigation, a perspective shared by teachers is captured in this teacher's remark: "I'm not qualified to say what is traditional. I mean that's a whole other argument. What is traditional dance?" (Ashley 2012, p. 154) Although some teachers in my study were teaching about some culturally different dances, they pointed out that they lacked the practical skills and cultural literacies, referring to such teaching as being too theoretical, and requiring too much preparation, time, resources and money. Recognising the immediate educational value and success when teaching creative dance, the teachers predominantly did so. For these teachers, their own tradition seemed tuned into the future-new and was not so attuned to echoes from the unfamiliar indigenous traditions of other cultures. One tradition that dance educators could teach about and 'own', however, is that of dance education itself. Not teaching about its contextual significance reinforces a hegemonic position of 'ease' for teachers who can teach creative dance without the need for extra preparation, money, resources and, in its fullest sense, Western dance literacy (Ashley 2013a).

Provision of explicit policy, funding and infrastructure for dance specialists to make their heritages available in ways with which they feel culturally comfortable could develop a new educational dynamic that supports indigenous people's rights to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritages. If a new dynamic between teachers and community is to be established, a system somewhat similar to peripatetic music instrumental specialists could provide helpful guidelines. Such a scheme could provide a number of advantages such as developing: regular school visits rather than one-offs; suitable educational support and advice for dance specialists; a system of payment for guests comparable with other curriculum areas; and closer relationships between teachers, learners and local communities.

The problem of how many different dances schools can realistically include when facing issues of budget and time is unavoidable. Nevertheless, if there was a properly funded pool of indigenous dance teacher/owners then this could be a positive start. This idea could work for both primary and secondary schools although their reasons for working with chosen experts could differ. Different needs, according to age, are clearly outlined in the dance component of *The New Zealand Curriculum.* Mandated by government in 2003, the curriculum framework encompasses a policy whereby younger children benefit from engagement with their cultures of origin whilst older students are better served by widening their cultural dance experiences into the less familiar. It provides a platform from which teachers can invest in cultural difference as a response to their own culturally diverse school populations.

New Zealand's Ministry of Education's online register of dance specialists, Artists in Education,[11] helps to create awareness of dance specialists who are interested in working in schools. However, such schemes are not without their problems such as the responsibility of payment of guest specialists remains with individual schools. Untangling the finance thread is, it seems, key to providing socially just treatment in recognising the ownership and cultural intellectual copyright of culturally diverse dance teachers. Such shifts are by no means straightforward because of cultural differences that can arise in the creases between emphasising communal ownership and culturally different understandings of pedagogy and authenticity in Western dance education.

6   A Practical Strategy for a New Dynamic

In an attempt to at least partially unravel this Gordion Knot of ownership, altruism and authenticity, perhaps some untangling of ethical teaching strategies may be achieved by imagining a spectrum of ownership. Being able to disentangle indigenous dances in the creases of a spectrum, as a teaching strategy, could further inform current dance education by better articulating which cultural terrains are being danced on when watching, interpreting, performing, studying and making dance.

In order to annotate how the spectrum could work I compare and contrast three examples of Māori contemporary dance, and also indicate analogies with creative dance in education. The spectrum can, therefore, be applied by teachers to not only contextual analysis and interpretation of dance but to how they are teaching dance-making in terms of which lineage they may be working within ideologically. At one end of the spectrum the individual is more important than the community, whilst at the other the individual is a representative of the well-being of a collective culture. Importantly, the recognisable movement features of the dances would look noticeably different at each end. I draw attention to how both ends of the spectrum are informed by different traditions, including cultural parameters associated with innovation.

Tracing Māori theology, Stephen Bradshaw's[12] choreography *Mauri* (2003, Atamira Dance Company)[13] fuses traditional Māori haka and waiata-ā-ringa (action song), with Western contemporary dance. I place it near the middle of the spectrum as being authentically Māori but bearing mainly recognisable Western movement imprints. Nourished by Māori spiritual beliefs and its own past, Bradshaw identifies a continuum for 'new' Māori dance. This continuum is similar to my spectrum inso-

---

[11] http://artsonline2.tki.org.nz/artistsined/considerations.php

[12] Readers may wish to read more from Māori contemporary dance practitioner Stephen Bradshaw at: http://contemporarymaoridance.com/2014/02/07/what-is-maori-contemporary-dance/

[13] The Ministry of Education DVD resource for schools, *Contemporary Dance Aotearoa* (2004) features *Mauri*, and learning materials are on the Ministry TKI site giving free access to all teachers www.tki.org.nz/r/arts/dance/contemporary/mauri/curric_links_e.php

far as it acknowledges how gradual the transition between fewer or greater Western influences can be. In my spectrum, however, I distinguish how the dances at each end look noticeably different from each other in terms of more or less, in this instance, recognisably authentic Māori movement. The look of movement vocabulary as well as the themes, costumes, staging, accompaniment and creative process discerns one end from the other. Also, a continuum ideologically prioritises *progress* to a future-new, whereas a spectrum respects approaches to innovation as simply culturally different.

Towards the future-new end of the spectrum, full-length works *Mana Wahine* (Okareka Dance Company 2014)[14] and *Moko*[15] (Atamira Dance Company 2014), albeit underpinned with Māori myth, values, beliefs, practices (such a moko, tattoos), te reo language, visual art, movement from kapa haka and culturally appropriate processes, bear a predominantly authentic Western contemporary dance appearance. I perceive in these works an approach that has some equivalent in dance education, as found in a description of making dance based on Māori kowhaiwhai (visual artwork) given by one of the teachers in my investigation:

> 'Worked on kowhaiwhai patterns and looked at how we can work Māori dance movement in with those…. Kowhaiwhai because I wanted to make sure there was a New Zealand element… So the focus for the kowhaiwhai is of course haka, but what you're trying to teach them is how to use the space and how to make pathways. But you've given them that as a sort of context and allowed them to pull those other things in. (Ashley 2012, p. 147)

The teacher identified this as a contemporary dance unit of learning that borrows Māori movements (learnt from a sheet) and some spiritual symbolic significances in combination with Laban based creative dance from a stimulus of Māori visual art.

Moving towards the past echoes end of the spectrum, Māori *Hawaiki Tu* is described as "Haka Theatre", a term that directors Kura Te Ua and Beez Ngarino Watt explain in their programme notes was used over 100 years ago by Princess Te Puea Herangi. Haka Theatre infuses myth, language, music, dramatic dialogue and a Māori ethic of creative process. The "Māori movement" that Te Ua and Watt describe in their work is one element of Haka Theatre. Sometimes their dancers come from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds and ethnicities, however, the movement, an infusion of distinctly Māori strident kapa haka, lightning speed wero (spear), poi and trademark arm gestures of waiata-ā-ringa (action songs) is not predominantly Western in its appearance. Even the more Eurocentric 'creative dance' featured in *Rongo*,[16] based on harvesting, is redolently Māori in its forceful dynamic, recognisably Māori ringa (arm and hand gestures) and group relationships (Armstrong 1964; Matthews 2004; Shennan 1984). Western styled vocabulary and group relationships are less in evidence. The roots of this kind of indigenous contemporary dance run deep with Māori Ora (culture), not to say that other Māori

---

[14] Cultural adviser Tui Matira Ranapiri Ransfield talks about the production on http://www.okareka.com/mana-wahine/follow

[15] http://vimeo.com/99221711

[16] A section of the full-length work *Te Manawa* (the heart), Performed by Kura Te Ua, Karena Koria, Sophie Williams and Beez Ngarino Watt. http://youtu.be/r7jV_S98Igg

contemporary dance does not, but in this work it is somehow more tangibly embodied in the kinaesthetic echoes of a predominantly older world movement palette.[17] Facilitating choreographers such as Te Ua and Watt, as well as local elders and experts who may work in even tighter traditional ways, to become influential players in educational discourse and practices provides a new world vision of old world echoes in dance education.

7   By Way of a Conclusion

Developing socially just senses of ownership, authenticity and altruism with regard to the pedagogical values of others seems to bring Western dance education to the brink of a sea-change in terms of not only which dances are taught and who teaches them but in terms of ethical boundaries, educational priorities and infrastructural policies that support the teaching of the dances of others in ways that are acceptable to and respectful of the owners of the dances. Amongst the intersections of culturally diverse ideologies, dance vocabularies and meanings, the guidelines of UNDRIP and UNESCO carry important implications for how dance educators could act to help minority cultures avoid erosion. Listening through the Oceanic icon of the conch shell each of us chooses what to pay attention to – past echoes carried on Pacific Ocean waves, or whispers from inside the creases of a super diverse future, or both.

   This conclusion marks a springboard rather than a determined endpoint because I feel strongly that this is an under-researched topic. Researching learners as they interact with guest dance specialists and research by indigenous dance specialists themselves are just two examples of the many initiatives that could produce much needed insights into how current dance education could be more culturally responsive, malleable and equitable in assisting the survival of indigenous dance heritages and the dancers who own them.

References

Adshead-Lansdale, J., & Layson, J. (Eds.). (1999). *Dance history: An introduction* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Armstrong, A. (1964). *Maori games and hakas*. Wellington: Reed.

Ashley, L. (2010). *Teaching dance from contextual perspectives in the New Zealand Curriculum: Concerns, dilemmas and opportunities in theory and practice.* Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Ashley, L. (2012). *Dancing with difference: Culturally diverse dances in education*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

---

[17] For further exploration see Ashley (2015a, b).

Ashley, L. (2013a). Dancing with cultural difference: Challenges, transformation and reflexivity in culturally pluralist dance education. *Dance Research Aotearoa, 1*(1), 5–23. http://www.dra.ac.nz/index.php/DRA/article/view/12.

Ashley, L. (2013b). Culturally different dances in the New Zealand arts curriculum: Understanding about fusion, tradition and making dances in context. In T. Gray, M. Gray, J. Stevenson, L. Ashley, P. Moon, & P. Cleave (Eds.), *Kowhiti dance: Special collection* (pp. 101–143). Palmerston North: Go Press.

Ashley, L. (2013c). Diversity is celebrated here. *DANZ Quarterly, 32*, 16–17.

Ashley, L. (2014a). Encountering challenges in teacher education: Developing culturally pluralist pedagogy when teaching dance from contextual perspectives in New Zealand. *Research in Dance Education, 15*(3), 254–270. http://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2014.910186.

Ashley, L. (2014b). Fusion dance. *DANZ Quarterly, 35*, 6–8.

Ashley, L. (2015a). Dancing in different tongues: A surplus of meaning in indigenous terrains of contemporary dance. *Dance Research Aotearoa, 3*(1), 58–75. http://www.dra.ac.nz.

Ashley, L. (2015b). Illuminating cultural terrains in dance: A symbiotic approach to analysis and interpretation. *Te Kaharoa, 8*(1), 128–157. http://www.tekaharoa.com/index.php/tekaharoa/article/view/199.

Berman, M. (1982). All that is solid melts into the air: The experience of modernity. In M. Drolet (Ed.), *The postmodernism reader: Foundational texts* (pp. 53–66). New York: Routledge.

Best, D. (1999). Dance before you think. In G. McFee (Ed.), *Dance education and philosophy* (pp. 101–121). Oxford: Meyer and Meyer Sport.

Bruner, J. S. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Buck, P. S. (1987). *The coming of the Māori*. Wellington: Māori Purposes Fund Board.

Cohen, S. J. (1966). *The modern dance: Seven statements of belief*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.

Cothran, D. J., Kulinna, P. H., Banville, D., Choi, E., Amade-Escot, C., MacPhail, A., Macdonald, D., Richard, J.-F., Sarmento, P., & Kirk, D. (2005). A cross-cultural investigation of the use of teaching styles. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 76*(2), 193–201.

Education Review Office; Te Tari Arotake Matauranga. (2012). *Evaluation at a glance: Priority learners in New Zealand Schools.* Wellington: Ministry of Education. http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Evaluation-at-a-Glance-Priority-Learners-in-New-Zealand-Schools-June-2012/Findings/Issue-Two-Knowledgeably-implementing-a-responsive-and-rich-curriculum

Enghauser, R. E. (2008). Teaching modern dance: A conceptual approach. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 79*(8), 36–42.

Giddens, A. (1998). *Conversations with Anthony Giddens: Making sense of modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Green Gilbert, A. (1992). *Creative dance for all ages: A conceptual approach*. Reston: The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

H'Doubler, M. N. (1974). *Dance: A creative art experience*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Habermas, J. (2001). Modernity: An unfinished project. In S. Malpas (Ed.), *Postmodern debates* (pp. 37–520). New York: Palgrave.

Hagood, T. K. (2006). Values and voice in dance education: The merit of fostering tradition, experiment, diversity, and change in our pedagogy. *Arts Education Policy Review, 108*(2), 33–37.

Hau'ofa, E. (2004). Opening keynote Foluga (The journey through time), at the *Culture moves conference.* Wellington, NZ.

Heelas, P., Lash, S., & Morris, P. (Eds.). (1996). *Detraditionalization: Critical reflections on authority and identity*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Hubbard, K. W. (2008). Valuing cultural context and style: Strategies for teaching traditional jazz dance from the inside out. *Journal of Dance Education, 8*(4), 110–116.

Huffman, K. (1996). Trading, cultural exchange and copyright: Important aspects of Vanuatu arts. In J. Bonnemaison, K. Huffman, C. Kaufman, & D. Tyron (Eds.), *The arts of Vanuatu* (pp. 182–190). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Iokepa-Guerrero, N., Carlson, B., Railton, L., Pettigrew, D., Locust, E., & Mia, T. (2011). The need for elders in education: Five indigenous perspectives from around the world. In V. Arbon (Ed.), *WINHEC journal: Indigenous research: Elders and knowledgeable others in higher education* (pp. 15–26). Geelong: Deakin University.

Johnson, E., Oppenheim, R., & Younjung, S. (2011). "Would that be social justice?" A conceptual constellation of social justice curriculum in action. *The New Educator, 5*(4), 293–310. org/10.1080/1547688X.2009.10399581.

Kassing, G., & Jay, D. M. (2003). *Dance teaching methods and curriculum design*. Champaign: Human Kinetics.

Kranicke, M., & Pruitt, L. (2012). Are they getting it? Creating dance assessments that honour the creative process. *Journal of Dance Education, 12*(3), 113–117. org/10.1080/15290824.2012.701171.

Kwan, S. (2014). Even as we keep trying: An ethics of interculturalism in Jérôme Bel's *Pichet Klunchun and Myself. Theatre Survey, 55*(2), 185–201. doi:10.1017/S0040557414000064.

LaPointe-Crump, J. (2006). Dance movement and spirit: Issues in the dance education curriculum. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 77*(5), 3–12.

LaPointe-Crump, J. (2007). Competition and dance education. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 78*(2), 4–5, 9.

Lum, C. H., & Gonda, D. E. (2014). Considerations of dance transmission processes: Adapting Bharata Natyam in a Singapore primary school. *Research in Dance Education, 15*(2), 107–119. doi:10.1080/14647893.2014.890583.

Masunah, J. (2001). Traditional dance in formal school education. In S. Burridge (Ed.), *Asia pacific dance bridge, Singapore papers* (pp. 102–114). Singapore: World Dance Alliance.

Matthews, N. (2004). The physicality of Māori message transmission – Ko te tinana, he waka tuku Korero. *Junctures. Journal of Thematic Dialogue, 3*, 9–18.

McCarthy-Brown, N. (2009). The need for culturally relevant dance education. *Journal of Dance Education, 9*(4), 120–125. doi:10.1080/14647893.2014.890583.

McLean, M. (1999). *Weavers of song: Polynesian music and dance*. Auckland: University of Auckland Press.

New Zealand Ministry of Education. (2000). *The arts in the New Zealand curriculum (12711)*. Wellington: Learning Media.

New Zealand Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand curriculum (32646)*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Preston, V. (1966). *A handbook for modern educational dance*. London: Macdonald and Evans.

Preston-Dunlop, V., & Espana, L. (2005). *The American invasion 1962–1972*. London: Laban Centre.

Sāmoan Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture. (2004). *Performing arts: Sāmoa secondary school curriculum*. Auckland: Auckland Uni Services.

Sansom, A. (2011). *Movement and dance in young children's lives: Crossing the divide*. New York: Peter Lang.

Schechner, R. (1988). *Performance theory*. New York: Routledge.

Shapiro, S. B. (Ed.). (2008). *Dance in a world of change*. Champaign: Human Kinetics.

Shennan, J. (1984). *The Maori action song*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Siegel, M. B. (1998). Bridging the critical distance. In A. Carter (Ed.), *The Routledge dance studies reader* (pp. 91–97). London: Routledge.

Smith, T. L. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books.

Smith-Autard, J. (2002). *The art of dance in education*. London: A & C Black.

Snook, B. H., & Buck, R. (2014). Policy and practice within arts education: Rhetoric and reality. *Research in Dance Education, 15*(3), 219–238.

Stinson, S. (1998). Seeking a feminist pedagogy for children's dance. In S. B. Shapiro (Ed.), *Dance, power and difference* (pp. 23–48). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Stinson, S. (2005). Why are we doing this? *Journal of Dance Education, 5*(3), 82–89.

Suwa, J. (2001). Ownership and authenticity of indigenous and modern music in Papua New Guinea. In H. Reeves (Ed.), *Traditionalism and modernity in the music and dance of Oceania: Essays in honour of Barbara B. Smith* (pp. 91–102). Sydney: University of Sydney.

Sykes, B. (2001). *The seven daughters of Eve: The science that reveals our genetic ancestry*. London: Bantam Press.

Tamasese, T. E. (2005). Clutter in indigenous knowledge, research and history: A Sāmoan perspective. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand, 25*, 61–69.

Teaiawa, K. M. (2014). Culture moves? The festival of pacific arts and dance remix in Oceania. *Dance Research Aotearoa, 2*, 2–19. http://www.dra.ac.nz/index.php/DRA/article/view/27.

Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethic & Racial Studies, 30*(6), 1024–1054.

Vygotsky, L. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Whincup, T., & Whincup, J. (2001). *Akekeia! Traditional dance in Kiribati*. Wellington: Massey University Press.

Wu, W.-C. (2013). Cultivation from within: An exploration of the attainment of creativity. *Taiwan Dance Research Journal, 8*, 166–225.

Linda Ashley   (PhD University of Auckland; MA University of London; B.Ed. (Hons), University of Liverpool) is an independent dance researcher/educator with extensive academic, choreographic and performing experience, retired as Senior Dance Lecturer and Research Leader at AUT University, Auckland, New Zealand in 2011. She is an Honorary Research Fellow at the National Institute of Creative Arts Industries, University of Auckland, 2015. As well as numerous journal articles, publications include: *Dancing with Difference: Culturally Diverse Dances in Education* (Sense Publishers, 2012), *Essential Guide to Dance* (3rd ed., Hodder & Stoughton, 2008); *Dance Theory & Practice for Teachers: Physical and Performing skills*, (Essential Resources, 2005). Linda is a member of Dance Aotearoa New Zealand (DANZ); Independent Dance Writers and Researchers Aotearoa; and Tertiary Dance Educators Network New Zealand Aotearoa.