

SOVIET BODIES IN CANADIAN DANCESPORT:
CULTURAL IDENTITIES, EMBODIED POLITICS, AND
PERFORMANCES OF RESISTANCE IN THREE
CANADIAN BALLROOM DANCE STUDIOS

DAVID OUTEVSKY

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Abstract

This research examines the effect of Soviet Union era indoctrination on dance pedagogy and performance at DanceSport studios run by Soviet migrants in Canada. I investigate the processes of cultural cross-pollination within this population through an analysis of first and second generation Soviet-Canadian ballroom dancers' experiences with cultural identity within the dance milieu.

My study is guided by questions such as: What are the differences in the relationship between national politics and dance in the Soviet Union and Canada? How have Soviet migrant dancers adapted to the Canadian socio-economic context? And, how did these cultural shifts affect the teaching and performances of these dancers? My positionality as a former Soviet citizen and a ballroom dancer facilitates my understanding of the intricacies of this community and affords me unique entry into their world. To contextualize this study, I conducted an extensive literature review dealing with Soviet physical education, diasporic identities, and embodied politics. I then carried out qualitative interviews and class observation of Soviet-Canadian competitive ballroom dancers at three studios in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal. The research conducted for this dissertation revealed various cultural adaptation strategies applied by these dancers, resulting in the development of dual identities combining characteristics from both Soviet and Canadian cultures.

My analysis of the data contributes original information to the fields of dance studies and pedagogy, migration studies, and cultural studies. The results of this study can act as a guide in the development of arts management, education, and cultural integration policies in Canada, fostering a creative dialogue between dancers, academics, and policy makers.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
1.0 – Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Narrative Vignette.....	1
1.2 Contextual Framework.....	2
1.3 Thesis Statement and Research Questions.....	3
1.4 Research Idea.....	4
1.5 Research Goal and Disciplinary Grounding.....	5
1.6 Terms and Definitions.....	6
1.7 Methodology.....	7
1.8 Positionality.....	8
1.9 Historical Context and Theoretical Framework.....	9
1.10 Ethnographic Framework.....	11
1.11 Discussion Outline.....	12
1.12 Chapter Breakdown.....	16
1.13 Summary.....	18
2.0 – Chapter 2: Methodology.....	20
2.1 – Data Collection.....	20
2.1.1 – Fieldwork Procedures.....	20
2.1.2 – Delimitation.....	23
2.1.3 – Archival Research.....	26
2.2 – Data Analysis.....	27

2.2.1 – Interviews and Observations.....	27
2.2.2 – Movement Analysis.....	28
2.3 – Trustworthiness.....	29
2.3.1 – Ethics.....	30
2.3.2 – Competency.....	31
2.3.3 – Positionality.....	33
2.3.4 – Limitations.....	34
2.4 – Theoretical Framework.....	35
3.0 – Chapter 3: Literature Review.....	42
3.1 – Cultural Appropriation in Dance.....	42
3.2 – Diasporic Identities.....	47
3.3 – Dance, Race, and Politics.....	53
3.4 – Soviet Dance Literature.....	59
3.5 – Dance Literature in North America.....	64
3.6 – Educational Strategies in the Soviet Union.....	69
3.7 – Educational Strategies in North America.....	71
3.8 – Summary.....	74
4.0 – Chapter 4: Historical Context.....	75
4.1 – The Politics of Art in the former Soviet Union.....	77
4.2 – Soviet Physical Education and Dance.....	81
4.3 – Philosophical Approaches to Bolshevik Marxism in Soviet Culture.....	87
4.4 – Nationalism and Dance in Other Countries.....	90
4.5 – Multiculturalist Education in Canada.....	92
4.6 – Physical Education in Canada.....	94
4.7 – Dance in Canadian Curricula and Unions.....	95
4.8 – Major Developments in Canadian Dance History.....	97
4.9 – Concert Dance in Canada.....	100
4.10 – Ballroom Dance in Canada.....	103
5.0 – Chapter 5: Ethnographic Present.....	106
5.1 – Socialist Attitudes in a Social Dance Environment.....	107

5.2 – Dual Identities.....	115
5.3 – Training Organization and Studio Management.....	123
5.4 – Laban Movement Analysis.....	132
5.5 – Cultural Appropriation in Ballroom Dance.....	136
5.6 – Screen Dance and Communication Technology.....	141
5.7 – Dance and Nationalism.....	144
5.8 – Gender Roles.....	155
5.9 – Sponsorship and Funding.....	159
5.10 – DanceSport and Diaspora.....	164
6.0 – Chapter 6: Conclusion.....	173
6.1 – Summary.....	173
6.2 – The Intersection of Social Dance and Soviet DanceSport.....	176
6.3 – Transforming Identities.....	178
6.4 – The Future of DanceSport as a Physical Culture.....	182
6.5 – Beyond Appropriation.....	185
6.6 – New Directions of Gender in DanceSport.....	188
6.7 – The Potential of Communication and Travel Technology.....	191
6.8 – Testing Multiculturalism in Vocational Institutions.....	194
6.9 – The Nationalism of Multiculturalism.....	197
6.10 – Phenomenological Reflections.....	204
6.11 – Disciplinary Contributions and Future Research.....	206
6.12 – Final Thoughts.....	209
7.0 – Works Cited.....	212
Appendix A – Interview Questions.....	232
A1 – Dancers, 1 st Generation, Interview Questions.....	232
A2 – Dancers, 2 nd Generation, Interview Questions.....	233
A3 – Coaches, Interview Questions.....	234
A4 – Parents, Interview Questions.....	235
A5 – Dancers, Under 16, Interview Questions.....	236
Appendix B – Consent and Assent Forms.....	237
B1 – Over 16, Dancers, Consent Form.....	237
B2 – Under 16, Dancers, Assent Form.....	240
B3 – Coaches, Consent Form.....	243

B4 – Parents, Consent Form.....	246
B5 – Participant Parents, Consent Form.....	249
B6 – Information Letter for Participants.....	252

List of Tables

Table 1: DanceSport Categories and Dances.....	3
Table 2: British and North American Levels in DanceSport.....	15
Table 3: Studios and Participants.....	24
Table 4: Fieldwork Trips Schedule and Activities.....	25
Table 5: Timeline of Developments in DanceSport (WDSF version).....	165
Table 6: The Development of Multicultural Policies by CCA and OAC.....	198

List of Figures

Figure 1: Trustworthiness Diagram.....	30
Figure 2: Triangulation Diagram.....	32
Figure 3: Pages 16-17 from the book <i>Tantsy: Usmanskii Pereplias</i> “Dokazyvai” (Dances: Usmanian Dance “Prove”) Sovetskaia Rossia (Soviet Russia), Moscow, 1961.....	62
Figure 4: Kee to Bala hall, Photo by author, August 2016.....	66
Figure 5: Peter Marlow - Soviet Union. Ukraine. Odessa. Learning to disco dance at Red Banner pioneer camp. 1981 (National Observer blog, http://no.ua/blogs , Dec. 20, 2012).....	82
Figure 6: Vaganova’s drawings of Aplomb (Vaganova 31).....	84
Figure 7: A newspaper ad for Boris Volkoff’s first School of Dance, 1930. Courtesy of Dance Collection Dance (Sutcliffe 1930).....	98
Figure 8: Invitations to a ball and an anniversary dance. 1921 and 1920. Courtesy of Dance Collection Danse. (Flea Market Collection – Dance Cards).....	99
Figure 9: 2011 Canadian Closed DanceSport Championship line up. (DanceSport Canada, Dec. 20, 2012).....	105
Figure 10: Group class at Ottawa DanceSport. Photo by author.....	115
Figure 11: Lobby of Montreal DanceSport studio. Photo by author.....	122
Figure 12: Toronto DanceSport group class. Photo by author.....	125
Figure 13: Toronto DanceSport reception area with a dance mom and glass doors visible behind.....	127
Figure 14: LMA of Rumba by Vermey (<i>Latin 134</i>).....	132
Figure 15: LMA of Cha Cha Cha, by author.....	133

Figure 16: Students practicing at Ottawa DanceSport using an enclosing embrace. Photo by author.....	135
Figure 17: Leo and Anna at World Championships in Moscow. Photo credit Pinterest. https://www.pinterest.com/pin/400468591851040168/	140
Figure 18: Alla watching dance competitions on YouTube in between lessons. Photo by author.....	144
Figure 19: Students at DanceSport Ottawa doing crunches between dance rounds. Photo by author.....	147
Figure 20: Students getting ready for class at Ottawa DanceSport. Photo by author.....	150
Figure 21: Communist statue. Image from skyrock.com. http://communiste07.skyrock.com/584689394-La-faucille-et-le-marteau.html	156
Figure 22: A couple dancing at a championship in Moscow in 2016. (WDSF, Gallery).....	161
Figure 23: The author dancing with a pro-am student during a showcase.....	169
Figure 24: Alex teaching a group class at Toronto DanceSport.....	171
Figure 25: All female couple, competing in the American Smooth Division of DanceSport. Image source: https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/420523683929519246	190
Figure 26: Group photo of the dancers at the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games closing ceremony. Photo by author.....	200
Figure 27: Toronto DanceSport at the AthletesCAN forum. Source: author.....	203

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 A Vignette

Having had a long train ride from Toronto, I sit at a sushi restaurant preparing my interview questions, consent forms, and audio-recorder. I am about to go into “Ottawa DanceSport,” a top Canadian DanceSport (competitive ballroom dance) studio in the nation’s capital. The studio is run by the Canadian 10 Dance champions, Michael and Olia¹, both immigrants from the former Soviet Union. As I enter the studio, I see several parents sitting in the reception area while their children are preparing for the class in the changing rooms. The studio walls are filled with photographs of the students and medals they have won in competitions.

When the class begins, I sit down in the studio with my notes, trying not to disturb the lesson. The teacher instructs the dancers to begin by doing basic Cha Cha Cha movements. This is a fast Latin American dance that requires a lot of stamina so the students warm up quickly; they pant and begin to breathe a little heavier. As they are dancing, the instructor walks around and gives some individual corrections to each one. “Use your center!” [maintain the body core] “Step through the inside edge of the ball of foot!” [toward the big toe] “Keep your frame strong!” [maintain upper body position], Michael exclaims. The students obediently listen and comply. Some are definitely more comfortable with the technique than others and show it in their

¹ Pseudonyms are used for participant and studio names in this research, see Chapter 2 for more details.

facial expression, others are struggling and express concentration...I am aware that they are working extra hard today because I am watching; a new audience is always a strong motivator. Since this is my first visit, they haven't yet grown accustomed to my presence. As they continue into Jive, I notice the rigidity in the positions of their bodies in comparison to the more fluid expression of the teacher and remember something a teacher once told me: "the more restriction you can handle in dance the freer you will move", in other words, form produces freedom. Somehow this rings very true at this moment.

(Notes from first fieldwork trip on September 16, 2015)

1.2 Contextual Framework

The above vignette illustrates a typical scene at a Soviet-style DanceSport studio. DanceSport is the competitive branch of ballroom dancing; it has millions of practitioners worldwide and many studios around the world. It comprises two categories consisting of ten partner dances (see table 1). Even though participation in ballroom dancing as a leisure activity has declined in popularity during the last few decades of the 20th century, with the recent advent of programs like "Dancing With the Stars" and "So You Think You Can Dance" in North America, this dance form has re-gained its favour and has acquired a lot of young competitors in this part of the world in recent years. However, in Eastern Europe it has never lost its appeal as a sought after and prestigious activity for children because of its initial designation as an athletic pursuit.

When the 1990's saw a wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union to Canada and the United States, caused by the economic and political decline of the USSR and subsequent

opening of Soviet borders for emigration, part of that diaspora included ballroom dancers who moved to establish new lives across the Atlantic. Upon their arrival, they opened many dance studios and established a strong reputation in the North American DanceSport industry. Despite having adapted to the Canadian cultural context in terms of business organization and language, much of the training methodology has remained similar to that which existed in the former USSR. These studios are often frequented by the children of other Soviet immigrants who are searching to reproduce the education they received as children and young adults.

Table 1. DanceSport Categories and Dances

Standard	Latin
Waltz	Cha Cha Cha
Tango	Samba
Foxtrot	Rumba
Viennese Waltz	Paso Doble
Quickstep	Jive

1.3 Thesis Statement and Research Questions

This research examines the effect of Soviet Union era indoctrination on dance pedagogy and performance at DanceSport studios run by Soviet immigrants in three field sites: Ottawa, Toronto, and Montreal. I investigate the processes of cultural cross-pollination in these sites through an analysis of first- and second-generation Soviet-Canadian ballroom dancers' experiences with cultural identity within the dance milieu. My study is guided by the following

primary research questions: What are the differences in the relationship between national politics and dance in the Soviet Union and Canada? How have Soviet migrant dancers adapted to the Canadian socio-economic context? And, how did these cultural shifts in politics, socio-economic status and country affect the teaching and performances of these dancers? To contextualize this study, I conducted a literature review dealing with the historical development of Soviet and Canadian physical education, diasporic identities, dance ethnography, embodied politics, and globalization. I then carried out qualitative interviews, focus groups, and class observation of these Soviet-Canadian competitive ballroom dancers at their studios in three major Canadian cities.

1.4 Research Idea

The impetus for this study was borne out of reflection on my own multi-cultural identity as a Soviet-Canadian and its relationship to my lifelong practice of ballroom dance. Growing up as an immigrant in Canada, I was always slightly embarrassed by my position as an outsider. Despite Canadian integration policies, I did not feel like I was truly Canadian until much later in life when I moved to Europe to train and perform. Throughout this time, dancing provided a home for me, a place where my origins didn't matter and where as long as I danced everyone understood me. However, in my effort to integrate into Canadian society I shunned Soviet communities, avoided Soviet style dance studios, and stayed away from anything else that could associate me with my ethnic roots. Over time and through my travels in different parts of the world I managed to establish an identity that I felt was not so overtly dependent on culture. Yet when I returned to Canada and coincidentally began training at a Soviet-style dance studio in Toronto, I started to see the Soviet-Canadian community from an insider's perspective and

realize its benefits as well as its negatives. I realized that no matter how much I tried to shed the influence of Soviet culture on my upbringing, it was still an inevitable part of my heritage. I also understood that the conflicts I felt as a child were not unique to me and constitute dual cultural identity, which is experienced by many Soviet-Canadian children as well as other children of immigrants. Through watching, training, and socializing with dancers in the studio I came to comprehend that such dual cultural identity has a strong bearing on many aspects of the students' existence. Their demeanor, speech, and most importantly dance style and mental approach to training were the direct results of these identities. In order to interpret the processes behind these socio-cultural traits I decided to investigate their origins and outcomes.

1.5 Research Goals and Disciplinary Grounding

In this dissertation, I first explore the cultural traditions found in Soviet physical education and dance training that shaped the corporeality of the DanceSport athletes prior to their migration to Canada. I then contrast these traditions with the Canadian history of ballroom dance practice in order to define the context into which these immigrants arrived. Next, I examine how Soviet pedagogical strategies have been transformed and adapted to the Canadian cultural landscape by dancers and coaches from the former USSR. I analyse how these dancers have shaped Canadian DanceSport and how, in return, Canadian culture has shifted their perspectives on art, sport, and culture. The purpose of this dissertation is to understand the relationship between cultural context and bodily training strategies within the discipline of competitive ballroom dance and provide a fresh perspective on how the processes of migration and globalization are changing the face of this dance form. Since it is an under-researched dance style, my analysis provides original insights for the field of dance studies and contributes to

research on diaspora, pedagogy, and the performing arts. Within these disciplinary frameworks, my dissertation discusses issues around transcultural migration of dance training as well as nationalistic approaches to pedagogy and answers sub-questions such as: how does a government controlled arts and sport industry contrast with a privately owned one in terms of training methods and quality? What teaching and management strategies do Soviet migrant coaches apply to satisfy a clientele used to western pedagogy and marketing? And, how do second-generation migrant competitive dancers reconcile the values they learn growing up in Canada with the more traditional Soviet approach to training in their studios?

1.6 Terms and Definitions

Some of the common terms I use in this research have different definitions depending on disciplinary trends and individual meanings. Therefore, here I outline the words that might otherwise be misconstrued by the reader. I use the term ‘embodied politics’ from the perspective of performance and dance studies where the body constitutes a physicality that is one with the mind and is equally affected by socio-political processes around it. This definition allows for a clearer deconstruction of the dancing body within a social context and is supported by scholars such as Jens Giersdorf and Andre Lepecki who discuss the body as a politicized entity. I discuss ‘diasporic identities’ as the cultural identities of the immigrants belonging to a large wave of relocation during a specific period, usually caused by a shift in national government or a similar social change in their country of origin. Cultural identities generally designate the traditional perspectives of a given cultural community on topics such as education, politics, or arts. This position is adopted by Martin Bulmer and John Solomons and Stuart Hall, who discuss cultural identities as the products of social circumstances combined with individual motives. ‘Iron

'Curtain' is a term commonly used to discuss the cultural and political isolation of the USSR from the rest of the world during the reign of the Communist Party between 1918 and 1989. It denotes such issues as Soviet citizens' restricted travel outside the Union and lack of access to western cultural productions, which were all screened by the Soviet government before exposure. This was done to ensure the ideological 'mental purity' of the Soviet citizens (Condee vii; Shneidman, *Literature and Ideology* 52). 'Comrade' was a term used in the USSR meaning fellow citizen and party member. With the rise of the Communist Party it came to replace 'friend' or 'sir/madam' as a more egalitarian term. However, in reality it did not always reflect the actual power dynamics between people of different statuses and became a safe umbrella term for Soviet citizens during this turbulent period. 'Second-generation immigrant' refers to someone who was born to immigrant parents, and 'halfie' is a term sometimes used to denote someone who immigrated at a very young age, usually before sixteen.

1.7 Methodology

Following the methodologies established by dance and anthropology scholars such as Tomie Hahn and Barbara Browning, I conducted this research using ethnographic methods, archival work, and movement analysis. Ethnographic research was carried out by means of interviews, class observations, and participation in selected classes. The interviews were used to elicit the voices of my participants while observation and participation allowed me to experience their training and studio culture. The sensorial feedback I acquired during my fieldwork facilitated my understanding of the environments (T. Hahn 3) and my analysis of the data reflects my understanding of dance as an inherent element of culture (Browning 1-2). I interviewed and observed elite DanceSport competitors at dance studios in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa run by

former Soviet Union immigrant dancers. I participated in the classes run in the Toronto studio, in order to get an embodied experience of their training. Additionally, I conducted archival work focused on Soviet and Canadian sports and dance training materials from 1918 to 1989², in order to encompass the communist era of the USSR and the concurrent time period in Canada. The main sources of archival materials were the Archives of Ontario, Dance Collection Danse archives, and Soviet-era publications and documents donated to me by one of the participants. Movement analysis was conducted using Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) as well as DanceSport specific adjudication criteria and terminology. I use my knowledge of LMA as well as my expertise as a professional ballroom dancer to describe and draw meaning from my participants' dance movement vocabulary.

1.8 Positionality

My experience as a professional practitioner of ballroom dance, as well as my background as a Soviet-Canadian immigrant, position me as a “native” ethnographer. Such positionality had both benefits and complications. On the one hand, it enabled me to approach my research subject from an embodied perspective and allowed me access to resources and information not readily available to the general public. On the other hand, it potentially affected the way some of the participants interacted with me because, besides being a researcher, I might in the near future, be their direct competitor on the dance floor. In view of these potential issues, my ethical considerations included informed consent of participants and anonymity in published work. My research training helped me to see the larger social and cultural forces behind the

² This was the post-revolutionary period during which communist political environment existed in the USSR.

organisation and “habitus”, following Bordieu³, of this diasporic community, while maintaining objectivity through the collection of multiple perspectives and recording detailed observations of interactions.

As a ballroom dance teacher myself, I employ hybrid of Soviet and Canadian teaching methodologies which come from my Soviet cultural background and Canadian education. Like many of my research participants I was raised to believe that no hobby or occupation should be done simply for leisure without result-based expectations. However, having grown up in Canada and received my higher education here and in the United Kingdom, I am trained in holistic education strategies based on principles of individuality and collaboration. This combination of socio-cultural influences on my perspective have shaped my personal pedagogical principles. As a result, while I do expect my students to be seriously invested in their practice with clear outcomes in mind, I find teaching to be a consistent dialogue between the instructor and the pupils, which, if managed correctly, creates a state of flow for both. I expect the learners to be disciplined and consistent in their lessons, practice, and performance schedules but I do not shout at them, nor employ authoritarian teaching methodologies (Smith; Berg). This approach allows me to compromise the dichotomy of my education and cultural background and constitutes my positionality as a dance educator, informing the analysis of my research.

1.9 Historical Context and Theoretical Framework

In my work, I aim to expand on Juliet McMains’ ethno-historical research on the American DanceSport industry, which focuses on aspects such as the glamour and

³ A theory positing that through habitual social enculturation people embody social traits and behaviors constituting their cultural capital. See Literature Review in Chapter 3.

commercialization of ballroom dance in the USA, by examining its Canadian counterpart with a focus on the Soviet Canadian immigrant community. McMains cites the ballroom social dance industry as one of the main factors responsible for the trajectories of glamour and commercialization in American DanceSport. Similarly, the Canadian ballroom dance platform has largely evolved from social dances of the early 20th century. Social ballroom dancing schools such as that of Maurice Morenoff in Montreal (Morenoff, DCD) and Alison Sutcliffe in Toronto (Sutcliffe, DCD) were part of the Canadian cultural landscape from the end of the 19th century and social dance pavilions were popular in the early 1900's (Young, AoO). While the Canadian ballroom dance industry never quite reached the popularity and scope of its southern counterpart, the difference seems to be in size rather than in content. Canada has several Franchised Arthur Murray Dance Studios in every major city, the winner of the Canadian version of "So You Think You Can Dance" program was a ballroom dancer, and many students are taking up Latin dance class in gyms across the country⁴. Contrastingly, the Soviet Union's DanceSport industry only really began developing in the 1960's due to the presence of the Iron Curtain (Popov). However, at its inception it had little to do with social dancing. Because of the competitive basis of ballroom and its foreign origins, it was deemed to be an athletic pursuit rather than a social or artistic activity and subsequently was quickly categorised along with other sports in the USSR (Russian Federation Sports Ministry, Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*). This early designation of Soviet DanceSport has contributed to and determined many of its ensuing developments, both in the USSR and beyond. Schools were state sponsored and students had to audition to get into them, much like the ballet conservatories. The training was rigorous and

⁴ Most of which have little to do with DanceSport but are rather fads that feed of the general confusion about what Latin or ballroom dance really is. For example, Zumba, effectively an aerobic class to Latin music, has little, if anything, to do with either Latin culture or dance whatsoever but is often aligned with both in participants' minds.

athletic, preparing students for international competitions. Competitive teams existed in most universities across the country, and formation teams travelled abroad to represent the Soviet Union at world championships (Alex, Interview). A strict framework for training and education in this dance form was produced by the sports ministry and provided clear guidelines for Soviet DanceSport studios. Such background allowed ballroom dancers from the Soviet Union to become prominent players in the Canadian DanceSport industry once they emigrated from their home country in the 1990's diaspora.

1.10 Ethnographic Framework

In Canada, ballroom dancers from the former USSR have continued the tradition of sports-based approach to training, but have combined it with social dance practices prevalent in the North American ballroom dance industry. As one of my participant coaches, Yan⁵, points out “I also noticed that social dancing has an impact on the competitive dance and vice versa. So that’s the thing that impressed me the most and I am still learning the differences” (Interview: February 17, 2016). Studio owners had to adopt North American business and customer service models in order to appeal to Canadian clients. However, they maintained the Soviet approach when training young students for competition. In the words of Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger, “adaptation took place for old uses in new conditions and by using old models for new purposes. Old institutions with established functions, references to the past and ritual idioms and practices might need to adapt in this way” (5). This hybrid identity was also found to be embodied by the second-generation immigrant dance students examined in this case study. Data reveals that these dancers do not only perform this identity in dance, but also have adopted it in

⁵ Pseudonym, please see table 3 in the Methods chapter for a list of studios and participants.

their daily interactions and behaviour. They speak two languages interchangeably, wear informal clothing during practices of a traditionally formal dance style, and adjust their disciplinary behavior to suit their surroundings. As one of my younger participants explained, he is a clown at school but very quiet in the dance studio (Focus group, Ottawa). Diana Taylor states that “performance and aesthetics of everyday life vary from community to community, reflecting cultural and historical specificity as much in the enactment as in the viewing/reception” (3). Accordingly, during the ethnographic portion of my research I found that the dancers’ parents complained about socio-cultural changes such as the reversal of traditional gender roles and the slow maturity curve for children in North America, yet gave their children American names, drove them around for their hobbies as is customary in Canada, and even spoke English to them.

Taylor and Hobsbawm and Ranger all illuminate certain strategies and processes of cultural performance that infuse both the individual and collective actions and behavior of communities. None of the participants denied the influence of collective forces on their decisions, yet all still claimed individual agency in their actions. It is this blended identity and the ability to adapt their ways to new environments that allowed dancers to integrate into the Canadian dance world and that makes them unique examples of diasporic culture both in everyday life, and on the dance floor.

1.11 Discussion Outline

The particularities of the Soviet DanceSport training methodologies can be traced to two main components: government involvement in the arts and sport industries, and the use of the “club system” as the organising principle for DanceSport training. The strict government control of the arts and sports industries in the USSR produced a highly systematized structure of training

in these cultural fields (Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*). The persistent monitoring of performance content and quality by state officials put enormous pressure on the performers and their trainers to accommodate cultural policies and produce visible results of their work. For example, at the beginning of ballroom competitions in the USSR, national folk dances had to be danced along the Latin and Standard curriculum. Soviet athletes and dancers were expected to represent their country and its ideals to the rest of the world during international competitions and were treated like ambassadors of the Communist Party. During training, an authoritarian system prevailed in order to make sure only the best results would be attained in all physical activity. Coaches were not to be questioned by the students and they did not attempt to please the dancers as clients. Since the government paid the coaches' salaries, they were not dependent on the dancers for financial security. Instead, they treated them as comrades being prepared to represent the Communist Party in their chosen field (Kondrat'eva and Taborko⁶; Zhdanov). In order to instil these nationalist ideals in ballroom dancers and produce world class competitors, a club system based on group work and long-term commitment to one coach and dance club was developed from models provided by sports organisations. The club system involves regular group training, private lessons, practices, and guest coaching (Alex, interview; Russian Federation Sports Ministry). This model relies on consistency, discipline, and loyalty from the practitioners in order to be effective. In the Soviet Union these ideals were further intertwined with communist political ideologies, which were constantly presented to Soviet citizens through mediated propaganda (Condee).

⁶ Throughout this dissertation, I will be using the US Library of Congress form for my transliteration from the Russian language.

Emigrant⁷ dancers from the Soviet Union in Canada have retained this ideal even after their egress, but have adapted it to the Canadian cultural context. The Canadian DanceSport industry is almost entirely privately owned and run by independent as well as franchised dance studios⁸, with the government not directly involved in its functioning (DanceSport Canada). Soviet emigrant dance studio owners have therefore had to learn to run their businesses as private capitalist institutions rather than as state sponsored academies (Alex, interview; Yan, interview). This meant that they had to rely on the social dance industry of non-competitive social dance students to help them financially sustain their studios. In spite of this, many studios have retained the club system for children and adolescents, whereby students are taken at a young age and are expected to adhere to a weekly schedule of classes as well as a yearly routine of competitions. When asked about the professional-amateur category (see Table 2) in which adult students can compete with their teachers, Kostia, a coach at Ottawa DanceSport states, “pro-am⁹, at least for me, happens because there are no kids, if they were all replaced by kids, I wouldn’t take pro-am at all. Others might feel differently but that’s where I stand” (Interview: Nov. 11, 2015). The sharing of studio space and the interaction between social and competitive dancers has produced a diverse studio culture that has affected the traditional Soviet training methods by unsettling the traditional authoritarian approach to training. The coaches have had to adopt a more flexible training methodology for the leisure oriented social dance students. They began to cater to the clients’ demands and shifted their focus to a customer driven rather than government controlled service. These adaptations are further complicated by the children of

⁷ Emigrant is someone who departs from a country to become a citizen of another, immigrant is someone who arrives in a new country. These are often misused in colloquial language and are therefore clarified here to avoid any potential confusion for the reader.

⁸ Save a few programs functioning in public education through small arts subsidies.

⁹ Professional dancing with amateur, usually a teacher with his or her student.

these immigrants who were either born in Canada or grew up here from an early age. These children resist complete immersion into their parents' culture and forge their own multi-cultural identities as Soviet-Canadians both at home and in the dance studio, thereby gradually affecting their parents' approach to training. In general, these changes involve a more flexible, creative, and individual oriented focus in dance education, reflecting the Canadian ethos of equality and inclusion.

My study demonstrates how these changes are facilitated by the disciplinary, ethical, and cultural flexibility of immigrant ballroom dancers in Canada, which are partly the results of their previous training as competitive ballroom dancers in the USSR, and partly the outcome of integration into Canadian society. I argue that because of the specific cultural and political climate in the former Soviet Union, the DanceSport industry there created a very different type of environment for its practitioners, one which emphasised commitment to the activity and competition results rather than financial gain or emotional wellbeing - qualities generally valued in North American studios.

Table 2. British and North American Levels in DanceSport

Levels	Typical time frame	Steps allowed at competitions
Novice	0-3 Months	Basic steps
Beginner	3-6 Months	Basic steps
Pre-Bronze	6-12 Months	Preliminary Bronze syllabus
Bronze	1-2 years	Bronze closed syllabus
Silver	2-4 years	Silver syllabus
Gold	3-5 years	Gold syllabus

Gold Star	4-6 years	Advanced gold syllabus
Pre-Champ	5-7 years	Open choreography
Champ or Amateur¹⁰	Over 7 years	Open choreography
Professional	Over 10 years	Open choreography
Pro-Am	Varies	Dependent on student level

1.12 Chapter Breakdown

In the second chapter I discuss my methodology and outline my positionality and limitations throughout the research. I define my scholarly stance and present the disciplinary and research approaches I adopted in my study. In particular, I qualify my research as a qualitative exploration utilizing ethnographic, archival, and movement analysis methods. First, to substantiate the use of ethnographic methods, I present the authors who inspired my choice of research tools that formed my theoretical framework. I also discuss how my background as a professional ballroom dancer both aided and hindered my ethnographic work, and outline further complications of the research process as well as my solutions to them. Second, for archival research, I describe the main locations of my archival research and discuss the types of materials made available to me at each site. Finally, for movement analysis, I exemplify how Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) was used in my study to allow for an embodied understanding of my participants' creative, and educational endeavours.

In the third chapter I present a literature review contextualizing this study within current scholarly research. The literature review covers the topics of appropriation in performance

¹⁰ Amateur in DanceSport is a vague category which mainly denotes that you compete in that category. However top amateur can often be more qualified than many professionals and often make a living as dancers and teachers.

practices, national and diasporic identity formation, body disciplines and the state, Soviet physical education strategies, the development of Russian classical, folk, and ballroom dance, embodied socialism, and the development of ballroom dancing in North America. My main body of literature includes works and theories such as: Ziff and Rao's "cultural borrowing", Savigliano's "post-colonial decentering", Benedict Anderson's theory of "imagined communities"; Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger's study around "invented traditions"; Michel Foucault's analysis of the body in the carceral system; Kondrat'eva and Taborko's review of the Soviet physical education system; Leonid Zhdanov's work on classical ballet training in the Soviet Union; Jens Giersdorf's review of socialist bodies in performance (*Body of the People*); and Juliet McMains' review of ballroom dance in America.

In the fourth chapter, I discuss the socio-political contexts of the Soviet Union and Canada in the years between 1918 and 1989 when the Communist Party played a major role in the arts and sports sectors of the USSR. I juxtapose this era with concurrent developments in the arts and sports sectors in Canada and draw parallels and oppositions between the two countries in order to explain how the differing approaches to physical education and culture have affected the subsequent integration of Soviet nationals in Canada. I ground this discussion in scholarly research through the use of archival and historical sources.

Chapter five presents my ethnographic data complemented by analysis and discussion. By reviewing the materials gathered during my research I link my participants' experiences to the cultural, social, and economic processes explored in chapters two and three. In comparing and contrasting the interview responses, my observations, and movement analysis to archival and contemporary research, I relate their perspectives with the available literature on the topic. This chapter serves as the crux of my work by relating the past to present, and the written with the

moving. Here, to the clearest extent possible, I make the parallels between the global processes and individual agency. I focus on diaspora and cross-cultural adaptations, investigating the effects of immigration and diasporic movements. I explore the processes of assimilation, and cross-cultural adaptation with particular emphasis on artistic and athletic communities using literature from dance studies, cultural studies, and diaspora studies to support my arguments. In particular, I explore how the shift in socio-cultural environment influenced professional ballroom dancers from the former USSR in Canada and produced the bodies I am investigating in my ethnographic research.

Chapter six consists of conclusions and future directions. First, I summarize the previous chapters and the main points of my research. Then, weaving all of my research together I review my participants' current situation and their future prospects in terms of their artistic, career, and business aspirations. I outline the problems they face as a cross-cultural population and propose potential solutions to these issues. For example, I look at how, due to the differences between socialist and capitalist economic systems, Soviet immigrant coaches who are not trained in western marketing strategies are forced to adapt to their new environment without any formal training in business administration or marketing. As one potential solution, I propose business education incentives for new arrivals targeted to business owners in the arts sector. In doing so, I aim to make my research emancipatory and relevant beyond academic merit for my participants.

1.13 Summary

My research demonstrates that the discipline and communal mentality in Soviet emigrant ballroom dancers stems from the political and cultural policies of the Soviet Union that were

passed on to them through their families and coaches' training systems. The customs and methods particular to Soviet dance training continue to provide the basis for teaching in Canadian dance studios, which are run by immigrants and mostly frequented by Soviet Canadians and their children. However, with many of the dancers growing up in Canada from early childhood, these processes of cultural transmission are disrupted and transformed to adapt to the new socio-political context in Canada. The pedagogical strategies developed in this cross-cultural context are unique in their juxtaposition of Soviet training regimen and the Canadian DanceSport industry. This situation is created by the differences in education, social policy, and cultural background in both countries. For example, meritocratic-nationalist education initiatives in the former USSR (Shneidman, *Literature and Ideology*; Kondrat'eva and Taborko) lie in contrast to the inclusive-multicultural education policies in Canada (Duncan; Williams). The findings of this study provide several contributions to the fields of dance studies, pedagogy, diaspora studies, and performance studies, cultural anthropology, and Soviet-Canadian studies. For example, my archival review of Soviet dance training strategies will shed light on the relationship between socio-political systems and dance education, and my ethnographic work with Soviet-Canadian immigrant dancers will facilitate a better understanding of how DanceSport is used by this diasporic community as a tool for socio-economic development and assimilation into Canadian society.

Chapter 2

Methodology

2.1 Data Collection

2.1.1 Fieldwork Procedures

The geographical scope of the research spanned three major Canadian cities: Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal during several fieldwork trips between August 2015 and April 2016 (**Table 3**). These locations were chosen due to the large presence of DanceSport studios in their areas, their statuses as metropolitan centres of Canada, as well as their accessibility for this research project. In each chosen city, the participating studios were selected based on their Soviet-based training methodology and the high competitive ranking of the teachers and students. These inclusion criteria were established by my research topic, focusing on the integration of former Soviet DanceSport practitioners into the Canadian cultural context. In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, each studio was given a pseudonym. They are referred to as Toronto DanceSport, Ottawa DanceSport, and Montreal DanceSport.

This study was largely ethnographic in nature and called for a qualitative approach where one can build “hypotheses and theories in an inductive manner” (Thomas et al. 348). Ethnography allowed the study to present a picture of the current state of practical and theoretical understandings of the topic as it is seen and understood by dance practitioners. In each studio the coaches, students, and parents of the younger students were interviewed, observed, and in some cases video recorded. The format of the interviews was semi-formal and

attempted to assist the interviewees to express more about their lives and opinions “without at the same time offering interpretations, judgments or otherwise imposing the interviewer’s own relevancies” (Hollway and Jefferson 36). The questions were constructed with the aim of eliciting honest and thorough responses by the participants. Open-ended questions were chosen because they allow for the ‘meaning-frames’, the subjective views and interpretations, of the participants to be uncovered (Hollway and Jefferson 35). The interviews lasted between 15 minutes to an hour each, depending on the number of interviewees and their engagement with the subject matter. The coaches were chosen based on their professional status and position in the studio. In Toronto DanceSport and Ottawa DanceSport more than one pair of coaches was permanently teaching, hence both pairs were interviewed at those locations. The coaches were not chosen based on their age but an attempt was made to include both males and females where possible. Overall, five males and three females were interviewed.

The student interviewees were chosen based on their dance level as well as their regular attendance at the studio. They had to be dancing at least in the Gold category for the younger couples and in Amateur Open (**Table 2**) for the senior couples. They also had to be attending the studio regularly for lessons and practices, at least four times a week. This preliminary selection information was provided to me by the coaches and then confirmed by the students during the interviews. The younger couples were generally between 12 and 16 years and the older couples between 17 and 21 years. This demographic was chosen in order to capture the children of immigrants to Canada during the 1990’s Soviet diaspora. One exception was a competitive couple in the 35-50 age category at the Ottawa studio. They were chosen due to their unique multi-national experience of having danced in the USSR as a young couple and now returning to their passion as adults. The same number of males and females were chosen to get the

perspectives of both sexes. The senior couples were interviewed in pairs as they were generally older than the other participants and fewer in number within each studio. In Ottawa and Montreal, the younger participants were interviewed in groups to facilitate communication and increase the social comfort level for their age. In Toronto, two younger couples were interviewed separately in order to adhere to these participants' training schedules. Altogether, 12 couples were interviewed. The interviews were conducted in either English or Russian according to the preference of the interviewee/s.

The selection criteria for the parents of the participants were more flexible due to their supporting role for their children, and the lack of dance related criteria in their case. They were selected by their availability and desire to participate in the research. The parents in Montreal and Ottawa were interviewed as a group to incite discussion and two parents in Toronto were interviewed separately for location and time convenience reasons. In Montreal DanceSport, the main coach's parents are part owners of the studio and therefore also took part in the interviews. The parents were not screened for their age but an attempt was made to include both males and females, where possible. Eight females and five males were interviewed. Please see **Table 3** for a full list of participants. As with the studios, each participant was given a pseudonym to protect their anonymity.

Besides the interviews, several group and private classes were observed and video recorded. This ethnographic strategy is supported as one of the main data gathering methods by Thomas et al. (352), and promoted by Radcliffe-Brown (4) as a method that allows for sense-data to be gathered from which non-observable relationships can be conceived. I formally observed two group classes in each studio, and was informally present at other practices and private lessons. Each class lasted between 1 and 1.5 hours, and the participants were informed of

my arrival beforehand by their coaches. During my first observation, I only took written notes in order to allow myself to familiarize with the environment and let the dancers get comfortable with my presence. For the second observation, I video recorded portions of the class in order to be able to conduct comparative movement analysis later on. In Toronto DanceSport I also conducted participant observation. This approach is suggested by Higgins (33) as a tool for a heuristic perspective on the research to emerge where introspection lets the researcher examine his or her own reactions and biases to the situation. This portion of the research was facilitated by my positionality as a regular attendee of this studio and was not done in the other studios due to ethical concerns. Further discussions of my positionality and ethics can be found in relevant sections of this chapter.

The fieldwork trips to Ottawa DanceSport and Montreal DanceSport took place during four two-day, two-stop trips between September 2015 and April 2016. The trips to Toronto DanceSport were more sporadic and spread out because of my affiliation with that studio and its proximal location in my city. See **Table 4** for a detailed schedule of the fieldwork trips and activities.

2.1.2 Delimitations

The scope of this research was highly dependent on funding and time constraints. Geographically, within Canada, other locations such as Vancouver and Calgary were considered but turned out to be not viable options due to the distance involved and budget constraints. Abroad, a research trip to Moscow and St Petersburg in order to visit major Russian archives and DanceSport studios was proposed to the Faculty of Graduate studies but was not granted funding and had to be abandoned. As a result, this study is based primarily on ethnographic research

conducted in competitive ballroom dance studios run by Soviet-Canadian immigrants, with archival research informing the discussion of Soviet Union. Some of the interviewees discuss the conditions in the former Soviet Union, however, most of them haven't lived there for at least a decade. Considering these factors, this study can serve as a stepping stone for further research into the area of ballroom dance studies in the Canadian context, with a specific focus on immigrant populations contributing to Canadian DanceSport.

Table 3. Studios and participants

	Toronto DanceSport	Ottawa DanceSport	Montreal DanceSport
Studio Owners / Coaches	Alex	Yan	Olia & Misha
Coaches	Leo & Anna	Kostia & Alla	
Students – Over 16 Couple interviews	George & Maya	Vova & Laura	Eva & Erin
			Stan & Alesia
Youth focus groups and interviews	Rick Vikka Ron Lili	<u>Youth group:</u> Maxine Ernest John Harry Sania Janna	<u>Youth group:</u> Paul Jack Kasia Mara Daria Luke
Parent Interviews	Jim		Irina and Vlad
	Larissa		
Parent focus groups		<u>Parents group:</u> Dina Rita & Tom Sergei Paulina & Ryan	<u>Parents group:</u> Asha Louisa Keira

Table 4. Fieldwork trips schedule and activities

	Interviews	Observations
Ottawa DanceSport		
September 16, 2015	Children – focus group Senior couple - interview	Class observation Note taking
November 11, 2015	Coaches (a) – interview	Class observation Video recording
February 17, 2016	Coaches (b) – interview	Informal observation
April 20, 2016	Parents – focus group	Informal observation
Montreal DanceSport		
September 17, 2015	Parents – interview Senior couple (a) – interview	Class/ practice observation Note taking
November 12, 2015	Senior couple (b) – interview Parents - focus group	Class observation Video recording
February 18, 2016	Children - focus group	Informal observation
April 21, 2016	Coaches - interview	
Toronto DanceSport		
August 25, 2015	Parents – interview Children - interview	
September 1, 2015	Children – interview	Participant observation
September 2, 2015	Senior couple – interview	Informal observation
November 4, 2015	Parents - interview	Informal observation
December 9, 2015	Children – interview	
March 7, 2016	Coaches – interview 1	
March 8, 2016		Participant observation Video recording
April 18, 2016	Coaches – interview 2	

2.1.3 Archival Research

Archival research was carried out at the Dance Collection Danse (DCD) archives and the Ontario Archives (OA) in Toronto, Ontario to help contextualize the ballroom dance industry development in Canada. Additionally, one of my participants, who did his PhD in the USSR, studying national folk dances in the republic, donated primary source materials about ballroom, ballet, and folk dance in the Soviet Union. They include biographical works of major ballet soloists of the USSR, folk dance manuals from various Soviet republics, and other works on topics of choreography, dance history, and theatrical costume. All the translation of Russian language materials was done by me.

DCD has provided me with primary source materials illustrating the growth of ballroom dance in Canada. Materials such as dance manuals from conventions of Dance Masters of North America in the late 1960s, Moshers' self-teaching manual for modern ballroom dancing from 1946, and newspaper clippings documenting beach dancing competitions in the 1920s, were extremely useful in depicting the history of ballroom dancing in this country. OA has given me access to several other leads that helped enrich my understanding of Canadian dance, such as the works by Peter Young on the history of ballroom dance pavilions in Ontario and the comprehensive manual of Dance Resources in Canadian Libraries, which includes a list of all the dance programs in Canadian educational institutions in the 1980s (Clifford). Finally, primary source materials I received from Alex, the coach at Toronto DanceSport, dealt with Soviet dance history and facilitated my descriptions of the environment my adult participants experienced prior to emigration. These materials included federal policy documents on the implementation of DanceSport in the national sports curriculum of USSR, history books on Soviet ballet, and national folk-dance manuals. A full list of archival materials can be found in the references

section and partial translations of the documents are located in the appendices section. A more detailed discussion of archival materials is provided in the Literature Review chapter.

2.2 Data analysis

2.2.1 Interviews and Observations

The design of the research was flexible and changed during the study to suit its developing needs. Descriptive and interpretive data analysis were used in order to find themes and organize the data gathered by the researcher (Thomas et al. 346). Since in qualitative research data analysis begins during the data collection stage (Thomas et al. 353), preliminary analysis of the interviews in terms of relevance already began after the first few interviews following which themes of interest were isolated and reflected upon. These themes were chosen due to their relation to the research questions and examined topics such as the differences in the relationship between national politics and dance in the Soviet Union and Canada, Soviet migrant dancers' adaptations to the Canadian socio-economic context, and the cultural shifts which affected the teaching and performances of these dancers. These themes allowed the answers of the interviewees to relate to large theoretical, methodological, and substantive issues (Bogdan and Biklin). Selected parts of interviewees' responses relating to particular themes were then presented beside each other in order to compare the various views and opinions on the same topic between professionals.

The observation stage of the research was analysed from an anthropological perspective of either direct or participant observation. Especially in participant observation, when the researcher engages with the subjects in the "search for the meaning of the encounters in which they are

jointly engaged and situations they are jointly confronted with, s/he is engaging with them in negotiating meaning. Through this process, a competence at meaning construction equal to theirs is gradually acquired” (Holy 33). The situations in the classes are analyzed in terms of the themes mentioned in the responses to the questionnaire and interviews and a comparison is made between the responses and the observed situation in the class. If there are discrepancies between the answers and the ‘field’, they are analyzed as potential differences between the ‘meaning making’ of the participant and the actual situation (Hollway and Jefferson 26). Complementing these strategies video analysis was used in some instances to review the students’ and teachers’ behaviour and partnering techniques. The descriptions of the observations are done in the narrative vignette format in order to allow the reader to engage with the researcher’s first-person experience (Thomas et al. 355).

2.2.2 Movement Analysis

Movement analysis was conducted on the videos taken during fieldwork at the studios using the Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) system. This system has been successfully used by several authors to describe choreographies in several dance forms including ballet, modern, and ballroom (Bartenieff et al; Fernandes et al.; Vermey, *Latin*). In this research, I use it to delineate the main characteristics of Soviet style competitive ballroom dance and compare the differences and similarities between the dancers in the three studios discussed.

Generally, the fact of this being a partner dance form determines its affinity to Shape qualities, since this is the category of LMA that deals with relationships to people or objects. The two partners are in a continuous interplay of Advancing, Retreating, Enclosing, Spreading, Rising, and Sinking. These are reminiscent of courtship and sexual interactions between humans and are

their controlled yet exaggerated expressions. In terms of Space, their kinespheres overlap and create a new dynamic where “the forms, angles and rhythms between any two members (...) are then seen as parts of a larger body and a whole new world of perception opens up” (Bartenieff and Lewis 129). The roles of leader and follower can be determined by some of these Space configurations as well as by the Effort qualities used by each partner.

LMA analysis provides me with tools through which to describe the movements I am analysing in deeper terms than are generally known and accepted in the dance world, providing further validity to the analysis. I use it to give a brief picture of this embodied practice to the reader and facilitate their understanding of the intricacies involved.

The following section will deal with the ethical considerations of my research process and the strategical components of my approach. See **Figure 1** for a visual representation.

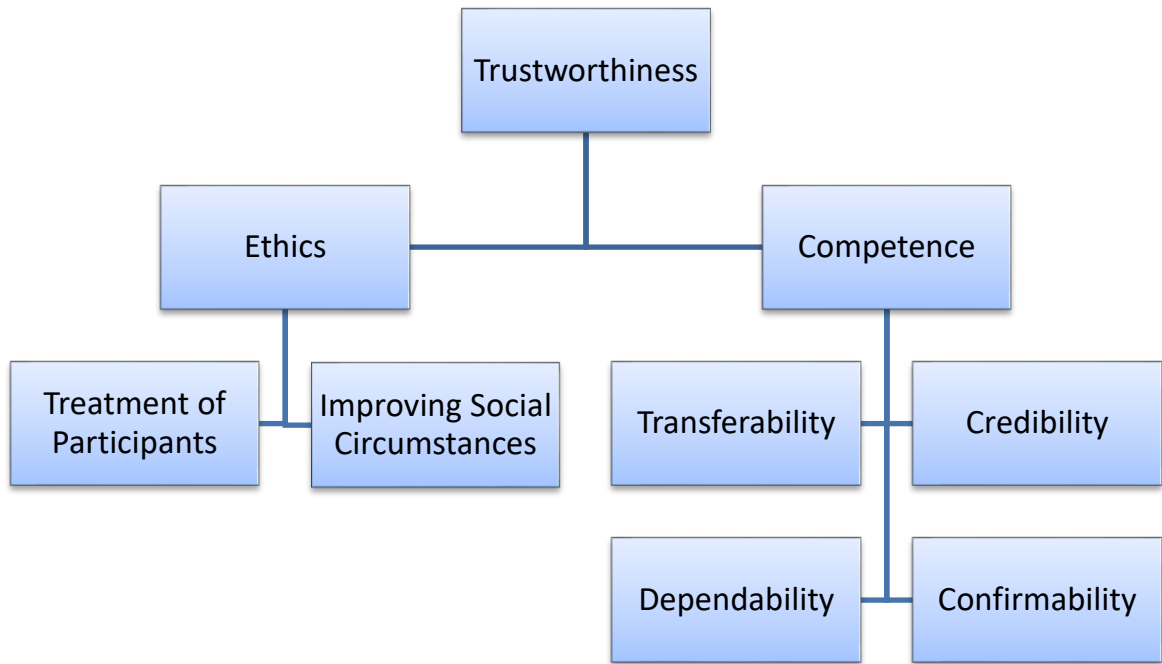
2.3 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, is the term used by Lincoln and Guba to describe the overall quality of the results in a qualitative study. It is further divided into the categories of *ethics* and *competency* by Rossman and Rallis. Ethics relate to the ethical treatment of the participants (Locke et al.) and to the ability of the research to contribute in sole way to understanding and action that can improve social circumstances (Rossman and Rallis).

Competency on the other hand is divided into four categories. For Lincoln and Guba, these are *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability*. In short, credibility deals with defining the context, participants and settings; transferability with the usefulness of the results to future research in similar settings; dependability with the ways in which the researcher

adapts to changes during the research process; and confirmability with researcher bias. These categories will be analysed further in this section. See **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1. Trustworthiness Diagram



2.3.1 Ethics

Prior to the research an ethics protocol was submitted to, and approved by, York University's ethics committee. For the interviews and observation, participation was totally voluntary and the participants' anonymity and information confidentiality was assured. All the participants were informed of the purposes and approximate time frame of the research before the actual interview, either by email or in person. Each participant was given a research information document and was asked to sign an informed consent document or an assent form,

depending on their age. They were free to answer questions in a manner they preferred and were given the option to change their answers at any time before manuscript submission.

The observations were all arranged beforehand with the teachers and/or studio owners. Usually the students were informed as well, except in cases of participant observation where the researcher took part in the class and did not disrupt its flow. Where video recording was made, permission was asked of the teacher and students.

The contribution of the research to the social circumstances, is discussed throughout the paper and will hopefully be achieved by the dissemination of this research. Furthermore, as an ethnographer, I felt a responsibility to advocate for and empower the members of the community I was studying. Since one of the main issues voiced by both the coaches and the parents was the lack of government funding, I decided to try and help them gain such funding through municipal, provincial, and federal arts councils. To begin this process I held a funding information workshop at each studio during my final visit. I discussed the potential funding possibilities from these three levels of funding agencies and explained the typical format of grant writing. In the future, if the participants choose to apply, I will help them format and edit their applications.

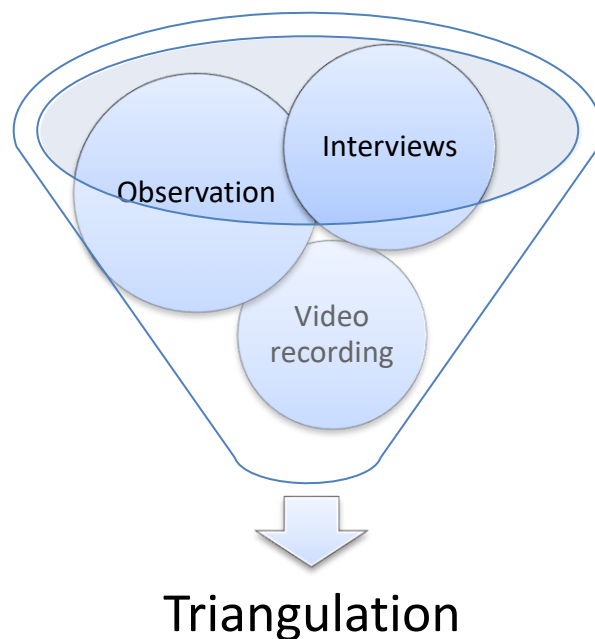
2.3.2 Competency

Prolonged engagement, providing evidence of credibility, was achieved by the personal involvement of the researcher within the studied field. Both practical and theoretical principles in the interviews and observations were reflected on objectively, as a researcher, as well as subjectively, from a dancer's perspective. Further, many dance classes were taken at Toronto DanceSport and other DanceSport studios, before undertaking and during the research, providing an in-depth understanding of their purpose and procedures. Whilst the formal interviews and

class observations were conducted in a specific time frame and occasion, many informal discussions and observations inform the general line of thinking in this study.

Triangulation was achieved by using three different techniques namely, interviews, observations, and video recording to gather data for the research. These strategies allowed for comparison of the data given by some of the respondents to the actual situation in the dance class providing evidence of confirmability to the research. See **Figure 2** below for a visual diagram of this process.

Figure 2. Triangulation Diagram



A rich and thick description is provided throughout the results section and is further elaborated on in the procedures section of the methodology. The setting and context are provided allowing the readers to assess whether the results will transfer to another setting or future research (Thomas et al. 360) showing evidence of transferability in the study.

An audit trail is described in the procedures and limitations sections of the study. The order and design of the research as well as the modifications to its focus are presented and show how they influenced the study, demonstrating evidence of dependability.

Peer debriefing was conducted by sending a draft of the research paper to various colleagues both in academic and dance circles. Their readings of the draft were taken into consideration in the subsequent corrections to the paper. This strategy ensured that the research is built on a logical argument that even non-specialists can understand (Maxwell) and provide useful feedback, eventually helping to improve “the conclusions and how they are presented in the research report” (Thomas et al. 61).

Clarification of research bias was achieved by using open-ended questions in the interviews and questionnaire and letting the answers be in disaccord with the hypotheses of the researcher. Transparency in methodology and results together with peer debriefing allowed for the research to be assessed by outside agents helping to minimize the effects of research bias. The limitations section further demonstrates the issues faced by the researcher and strengthens the confirmability of the study.

2.3.3 Positionality

My professional and personal connections in the Canadian ballroom dance community allowed me initial access to these studios and gained me the trust of the participants. I had met the owners of DanceSport Ottawa and DanceSport Montreal studios around 15 years prior, as an amateur competitor. At that time, we all attended the Arthur Murray franchise dance studio in Montreal. While we all eventually went in separate directions in the DanceSport world, we kept meeting each other at international dance competitions and events. When looking for the

appropriate case study for this research, I immediately thought of these two studios as classic cases of Soviet immigrant integration through the DanceSport industry in Canada. My relationship with the owners of Toronto DanceSport was more recent, I began attending this studio in 2012 as a student. When I started my dissertation research I realized that this too, would be an ideal site for my study. The journeys of all of the studio owners in my study, from competitive careers to that of immigrant businessmen and educators with Soviet background is exemplary of the cultural shifts undergone by many Soviet immigrant dancers of their generation.

2.3.4 Limitations

Despite the generally smooth process of my research, some complications did arise during my fieldwork and analysis. First, my positionality as a former DanceSport competitor was both a curse and a blessing. Even though it allowed me access to these studios and indicated to the participants that I am one of their own, it also put them more on their guard. During the interviews the professionals were initially cautious of my motives and were hesitant to share some politically sensitive opinions. The professional circle of the DanceSport industry is quite small, and a publicly voiced opinion against your future competition judge might cost you a mark in the results. However, once they were assured of anonymity and my neutral intentions they were able to speak more freely. In the lesson observations, I felt the students were more self-conscious than usual because they were afraid that besides writing about their cultural identities, I might judge their technique. This is a common reaction to any outsider by dance students, and after the focus group they realized that my goal was simply to describe them and their environment, not criticize their dancing. Finally, the parents found politics and culture to be

sensitive topics, since as immigrants from the Soviet Union they feel a loyalty to their country of origin but also appreciate the new opportunities given to them in Canada. Because of that, they were hesitant in voicing opinions on topics which compared certain institutions like schools or funding agencies in the two countries. To facilitate the conversation, I once again assured them of anonymity and stressed that there were no wrong answers, only voices expressing personal experiences of the diaspora in regard to dance. As these were all originally predicted in the research proposal and non-major obstacles to be overcome, I was able to handle them without much distraction or pauses in research.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Dance, as a field of serious academic inquiry, is relatively new when compared to other more established disciplines. Furthermore, much of the early written work on dance was limited to aesthetic critique and descriptive analysis (Martin). When Curt Sachs wrote his treatise on world dance in 1937, he advanced dance writing beyond superficial critique, however, his analysis was positivist and ethnocentric. Ranging from tribal (non-western) dance through European folk dance to ‘modern’ and ‘progressive’ western theatrical dance, Sach’s approach regarded non-western dance forms as ‘primitive’ and considered them to represent the developmental stages of human dance culture, followed by the emergence of national folk dances, and ultimately leading to ‘modern’ western dance forms such as ballet. His ideas were generally based on theoretical applications of Darwinian evolution to social sciences (Lewis) but are regarded as outdated and biased today. Following that period, as a result of authors such as Gertrude P. Kurath validating dance in anthropological research (Malm), dance as a subject of

ethnographic research gained some academic legitimacy as an independent and culturally important art form.

Nevertheless, dance was still considered a new discipline and was often perceived as marginal to 'real anthropological research' by many scholars. Franz Boaz's categorization of dance as culture, through collection of data without *a priori* assumptions, later provided a much needed theoretical framework to the discipline of dance ethnography. His view, however, was still universalizing the deeper aspects of dance ethnography due to his examination of dance through a Eurocentric analytical framework. It was not until his students Herskovits and Kealiinohomoku began their research into dance, that dance ethnography acquired the traits of its current state such as cultural relativism of dance practices, the reciprocal relationship between dance and social practices, and emphasis on movement analysis (Kaeppler 31-34).

Kealiinohomoku's 1969 seminal article "An Anthropologist Looks at Ballet as a Form of Ethnic Dance" dismantles the primacy of ballet as a universal measuring device for all other, especially non-western, dance forms and opens the doors for the non-ethnocentric anthropological analysis of dance. Work by authors such as Anya Peterson Royce, provide a continuation of this tradition and further develop dance as an independent subject of study in anthropology and an important aspect of cultural analysis which both affects and is affected by other areas of culture. This progression is evident in the works of authors such as Theresa Jill Buckland, who views dance as the public expression of cultural identity and an ephemeral artifact which is often used by government bodies to solidify nationhood at festivals and important cultural events (Buckland 14).

Similarly, dance scholars Barbara Browning and Marta Savigliano, discuss the social and political meanings of the Brazilian Samba and Argentinian Tango, respectively. Even popular

media seems to have caught up with the socio-cultural importance of dance. For example, Janice Steinberg, a writer for the *San Diego Union Tribune*, discusses the ethnic blending of dance practices on the modern western stage in 2005. Finally, the recent global movements of migration, tourism, and international business ventures have inspired new understandings of dance as a part of the shifting cultural and global landscapes. In 2012, Neveu Kringelbach and Skinner provide an extensive overview of the current state of dance at home and abroad in their edited collection of essays “Dancing Cultures: Globalization, Tourism and Identity in the Anthropology of Dance”. These developments have instigated new directions in dance research which serve as the building blocks of my own research methodology.

In her 2012 ethno-historical work, *Aloha America: Hula Circuits Through the U.S. Empire*, discussing the late 19th and early 20th century hula dancers, Adria L. Imada uses the concept of counter-colonial resistance to define the covert strategies used by these dancers to subvert the domination of the colonial audiences for which they had to perform. For example, while singing and dancing for the largely white American population who supported the overtaking of Hawaii and thought of them as mere exotic entertainment, they performed songs and dances praising the exiled Hawaiian king and his family. Similarly, the young ballroom dancers in my study use a counter-cultural resistance to Soviet ideology when they re-appropriate the cultural traits presented to them by their families and blend them with the traits they have acquired as children growing up within Canada’s cultural and educational systems. Benedict Anderson’s theory of ‘imagined communities’, provides further framework for an investigation of the context in which these children have grown up. With this theory Anderson argues that an imagined community is defined less by what it really is, than by the style in which it is imagined. To validate his point, he uses examples of post-cold war Asian nations where newly promoted government nationalism

creates an illusion of unity between previously disparate peoples. In this manner, the parents of the children at Ottawa DanceSport and their diasporic communities negotiate their own sense of imagined identity and its relationship to the education of their children.

In order to establish and explain the context of the Soviet Union, Michel Foucault's analysis of the observed body and the penal system in *Discipline and Punish*, can be applied to Soviet structures of political and social control. The body as a term, here and in the rest of the dissertation, is used in a post-Cartesian manner common in dance and performance studies. Such usage implies the lack of delineation between minds and bodies, making such processes as thinking and writing to be embodied expressions and movement to be a mental or codified process. In this manner, the bodies are in fact the participants in and agents of social structures (Buckland; Giersdorf, "Border Crossings"; T. Hahn). This perspective forces us to recognize the significant role our physicality plays in a society largely run by our mental processes, which in fact are also embodied. Foucault argues that through constant observation of people's bodies their behavior can be monitored and controlled. He uses the example of the development of the prison system in the west from public to hidden to demonstrate the institutional shifts showing a trend towards such a covert manipulation. In addition, Lemke's discussion of governmentality, where he presents the body to be the medium through which the power relationship between the individual and the state is expressed, complements this analysis. Both these perspectives illustrate how government ideologies can influence public opinion and individual agency – one's ability to control his or her own actions in social power dynamics (Hall; McMains) and supports my argument that authoritarian regimes such as the former Soviet Union have a deep and lasting effect on individuals and communities alike.

Nicolas Spulber's work on east European economies during the Soviet era focuses on the analysis of the economic structures of the Soviet Union and Ase B. Grodeland and Kristen Ghodsee provide specific case studies in post-Soviet economies. Spulber discusses the USSR's economy deficiencies in the face of their grand political ideology and industrial investment. Grodeland investigates the informal economy of that era and region, and Ghodsee writes about employment issues in Soviet Bulgaria. They conclude that informal networks developed to help Soviet citizens survive the economic crisis following the end of the communist era. These three sources set the context from which my participants or their parents have emigrated. In order to narrow the focus, the Soviet physical education system (from which many of the principles regarding health and fitness held by the diasporic communities in question arise) is examined using a text contemporary to the 1970s USSR by Kondrat'eva and Taborko supported by archival materials documenting the Russian DanceSport curriculum (PFSTD). These authors describe the elements of Soviet sport and dance education, demonstrating the USSR's ideological perspective in their writing and the context of my participants' life in the USSR. In contrast, works by Stephen Duncan et al. as well as by Mellisa Naik look at the role of sports and dance in the Canadian education system. Duncan presents an overview of sports in Canadian schools in the past millennium and Naik examines the role of dance in this structure, both showing a stark contrast to the Soviet educational systems in values and application. For example, the values of inclusion and somatic education are generally emphasized in the Canadian physical education curriculum while national pride and discipline are the focus in Soviet physical culture pedagogy, a combination retained in part by the research participants. Tomie Hahn's concept of sensational knowledge, whereby she examines the role of embodied learning strategies in a traditional Japanese dance school, facilitates my review of teaching methods in DanceSport which are

similar to *Nihon Buyo* in terms of sensory based education (Bezikova). The influence of classical ballet based discipline and authoritarian pedagogy, which are fundamental in understanding Soviet DanceSport training, are presented through historical work on the Bolshoi ballet school by Zhdanov and Robert Dornhelm's documentary film *The Children of Theater Street* about the ballet academy associated with the Kirov. Jens Giersdorf's review of the role of politics in performance in two post-socialist dance productions in East Germany unravels how political systems affect and inspire artistic and pedestrian movement practices and facilitates my discussion of Soviet-Canadian DanceSport embodied culture ("Border Crossings"). Juliet McMains' examination of the ballroom dance industry in America and its addiction to glamour serves to outline the contrasting values attached to this specific dance form in North America in comparison to the Soviet Union. In turn, this helps me to define duality of the diasporic dancers' identities through the deconstruction of the social dance industry in the U.S.A. and Canada in relation to the sports based approach to ballroom dancing in the USSR. Finally, information from the Canadian DanceSport Federation's website (Canadian DanceSport Federation) and archival materials on ballroom dance in Canada from Dance Collection Danse and the Archives of Ontario (Morenoff; Sutcliffe; Young) set the Canadian context of this field and place my participants in the historical framework of Canadian dance.

In this chapter, I have outlined my fieldwork procedures and the institutional delimitations of my research. I have presented studios and participants as well as my fieldwork schedule and activities. I discussed my archival research and explained how I analyzed the data I gathered. I defined my methodology for interpreting the interviews, observations, and movement of the dancers. I addressed the trustworthiness of the research through an overview of my ethics procedures, competency of methods, and author positionality. Finally, I explicated the practical

limitations of the study by illustrating the communication issues I faced during my fieldwork and demonstrated my theoretical grounding in the relevant academic disciplines in the theoretical framework. Now I turn to the next chapter whereby I review the relevant literature on appropriation, immigration and diaspora, as well as educational philosophies in the USSR and Canada. This discussion will give further context to my research and ground my work within the current scholarly discourse on these themes. It will facilitate further research initiatives in ballroom dance studies and give the reader a glimpse of the relevant literature.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

I begin this review by exploring how appropriation has been discussed in dance studies scholarship, followed by examining how diasporic identities have been presented in literature on immigration and cultural positionality. Then, I illustrate how dance and politics intertwine in several national contexts, leading into a review of literature on dance from the Soviet Union and Canada, and educational strategies in both countries. Organizing my literature review in this manner allows me to funnel my analysis from a wider anthropological perspective of dance to a more specific study of the population at hand and facilitates my interweaving of the various disciplinary points of view in regard to my research.

3.1 Cultural Appropriation in Dance

Appropriation is defined as the “taking from a culture that is not one’s own - of cultural expression, intellectual property and artefacts, history and ways of knowledge” (Ziff and Rao 1). In the performing arts, this process can include the use of culturally specific song and dance rituals by outsiders, engagement with culturally significant props in performances external to their cultural context, or the ‘borrowing’ of native ways of knowledge through performance. A clear understanding of appropriation in dance is essential to my analysis of diasporic identities in competitive ballroom dance because it grounds these identities in a historical context of transnational performance practices and exposes the multitude of interpretations as well as consequences of these aesthetic movement migrations.

By the turn of the twentieth century, theories of appropriation had been widely discussed by cultural, theater, and dance studies scholars (Browning; Daniel; Foley; Grau; McMains; Savigliano) in relation to different performance practices and artists, encompassing subjects ranging from Samba to Irish step dancing. Scholars writing about dance in post-colonial Latin America (Browning, Daniel, Savigliano) tend to emphasise the qualities of resistance and resilience found in national dances such as Samba in Brazil or Tango in Argentina despite the appropriation they have endured due to colonialism and its aftermath. Scholars examining western dance forms (Grau, Foley, McMains) on the other hand, lean towards a historical authenticity approach, whereby their goal is not empowerment or protection but the discovery of authentic and appropriated elements in their chosen art form in order to revise its history and expose the social forces behind the development of each dance. Catherine Foley, for example, discusses how the commercialization of Irish dancing has been accompanied by the appropriation of theatrical characteristics common in American Broadway shows and the Hollywood film industry.

The national dances of post-colonial Latin America have been widely discussed in the fields of cultural, performance and dance studies. Their global spread over the last century has provided a lot of material for debate about cultural appropriation in performance. Three dances in particular: the Tango, the Samba, and the Rumba, have received much attention in the academy due to the multiple cultural and political meanings they embody at both the national and global levels. The common theme in the analysis of those dances, however, has been the resistance they express to the post-colonial western hegemony in their countries despite the appropriation they have undergone over time. Approaching this theme from various disciplinary

perspectives Marta Savigliano, Barbara Browning, and Yvonne Daniels provide a picture of how these dances were perceived in the mid-1990s by western dance scholars.

Marta E. Savigliano, a dance history scholar who is also a political scientist and a dance ethnographer, uses Jacques Derrida's theory of post-structuralism to describe the Tango. By emphasising how the "splitting inversion, displacement, decentering, juxtaposition, transposition, and silence" (Savigliano, *Tango and the Political Economy of Passion* 223) are present in both writing and Tango, she deconstructs the processes of appropriation hidden within the dance. She argues that in defiance of these processes the Tango embrace provides a protective shield that allows Argentina to resist western colonial structures and functions as a national identity marker in this country. To strengthen her argument, the author refers to alternative sources such as Che Guevara's writing about the Tango (17) and provides a genealogical examination of the Tango history from its roots to present day.

In her analysis of Samba, Browning, a performance studies scholar, echoes Savigliano's stance and discusses appropriation in Samba through the history of colonisation and the rise of new mixed-race identity in Brazil. The author critiques Gilberto Freyre's theory of racial mixing as being a pacifying structure for subsequent racist social policies in Brazil (4-5) and argues that the same pacifying mechanisms were at work in the 'white washing' of the Samba. She delineates the changes Samba has undergone while becoming a national art form and a global phenomenon, and argues that even as the dance was appropriated and modified, the resistance inherent in its step patterns and rhythm remained.

Daniel, an anthropologist, discusses the relationship between political structure in Cuba and Rumba dancing. Using Maurice Bloch's theory of 'illocutionary force' in ritual to describe the importance of dance for national identity (112), she explains the reasons behind the Cuban

government's appropriation of Rumba as a national cultural symbol. By analysing Rumba movement, Daniel describes how in the face of these imposed processes Rumba continues to resist both national and international representations. Resonating with Savigliano's and Browning's analyses, Daniel invokes the involvement of government and political leaders in the arts. In this case, Fidel Castro is a major force in the cultural appropriation of traditional Latin American dances (144).

While still containing elements of appropriation, western dance forms are not affected by colonial and imperialist legacies in the same way as their Latin American counterparts. Because they were generally practiced within the accepted Euro-American hegemonic structure, the appropriation they have undergone stems largely from the forces of globalisation and commercialization rather than from cultural suppression and resistance. In this section I will compare and contrast early twenty-first-century scholarship dealing with appropriation in Irish step dancing, ballroom dancing, and figure skating by Catherine Foley, Juliet McMains, and Andree Grau respectively. These authors represent a variety of academic disciplines, examining diverse Euro-American dance forms, which illustrate the appropriation inherent in western dancing cultures.

An ethnochoreologist, Catherine Foley uses Stuart Hall's theories of national identity formation and Eric Hobsbawm's and Terence Ranger's concept of 'invented traditions' in order to analyse appropriation in Irish step dancing (35). She examines how the processes of nationalization and globalisation have influenced the development of this traditional dance form. The author argues that the commercialization of Irish dancing has caused it to appropriate theatrical characteristics commonly found in American Broadway shows and the Hollywood film industry.

Juliet McMains, a dance scholar, also discusses appropriation through commercialization in American ballroom dancing. She uses the theory of the “magic system” of advertising presented by the cultural studies theorist Raymond Williams, to demonstrate how the social dance industry in America has transformed this dance form by marketing its ‘exotic’ qualities to mass audiences (54). She builds on this analysis by looking at the ballroom industry as a ‘glamour machine’ drawing on Michel Foucault’s conceptualizations of power (201).

Andrée Grau, an anthropologist, relies on dance works in her field by Adrienne Kaeppler and Joan Kealiinohomoku to establish her theoretical grounding for defining dance, authenticity, and appropriation (39) and references McMains in her discussion of the similarities between art and sport (45). For her main argument, however, she uses many primary sources such as critics’ reviews and newspaper articles to establish her case study of a Russian ice skating duo that unashamedly appropriated aboriginal traditional dance motifs. Relating to Foley and McMains, she looks at how globalisation has opened the door for the commercialization and appropriation of cultural artefacts such as dance and ritual, which are sacred in certain cultures.

In contrast to the Latin American dance researchers discussed earlier, these dance scholars were publishing at the start of the new millennium and draw more widely on globalisation theories concerned with migration and innovations in technology that became increasingly popular toward the turn of the century due to the advent of the internet and advanced communication devices. Anthropologist Helena Wulff summarises this trend in her article, stating that “even though the Euro-American dance world has always been transnational (...), global and transnational connections and collaborations have increased dramatically with new technology” (Garsten and Wulff 200). In line with this focus, Foley examines the transformations in Irish step dancing in the context of “cultural homogenization on a global

scale” using Anki Hoogvelt’s and Anthony King’s analyses of international relations and world system theories (34). McMains adds to this trend by analysing the effect of mass media representations of ballroom dancing in movies like *Dance With Me* in 1998, and television programs such as *Dancing with the Stars* starting in 2005 (156); while Grau discusses how the case of Dominina and Shabalin has generated a worldwide debate because of its spread over the internet.

The processes of globalisation and commercialization have facilitated the possibility of travel and migration for dancers to popular destinations, usually Europe or North America, where the economic opportunities for dancers willing to self exoticise and essentialize their cultural forms are plentiful. However, such opportunities are accompanied by challenges of multiple cultural identities, adaptations to new socio-political environments, and racial stereotyping.

3.2 Diasporic Identities

Identity is a complex concept that has received increased attention in recent years. While semantically it is a structuralist¹¹ term, the recent post-structuralist and post-modern debates within the fields of feminism, anthropology, and philosophy have complicated its use and meaning. Feminist scholars battle to deconstruct gender identities (Phelan), anthropology grapples with its lack of concrete academic identity (Geertz), and philosophers try to unravel its shifting position in contemporary society (Foucault). Furthermore, the changing relationships to time and space due to modern travel and communication technologies have created a more mobile and fluid approach to identity in society (Clifford). In this context, the phenomenon of

¹¹ In a sense that it denotes a stable marker of difference.

diaspora is particularly interesting in its production and conception of non-stable and multi-layered identities. Dual identities for immigrant children, differing gender roles between home and host country (Evans and Manur), and racial self-essentialization (Hall, “Who Needs Identity”), are common examples of such destabilised self perceptions. In this section, I discuss the concept of identity as it is presented by authors in race studies, migration studies, and dance studies. These theories serve as the basis for my analysis of dual identities of the participants in my ethnographic study.

Hall argues that the concept of identity in society has two major lines of analysis in academic discourse: that of the social formation and that of individual agency. He discusses the work of Michel Foucault as shifting the former to the latter over time, and the contributions of feminist scholars like Judith Butler attempting to merge the two polarities of identity (“Who Needs Identity” 11-16). While Hall’s discussion is not conclusive, it does propose a useful framework for discussion of identity and its shifting meaning that will be useful for my analysis. His other writings speak more specifically to cultural and diasporic identities. By analysing Caribbean cultural identity over three continents, Hall maps out different approaches to the concept in each. “*Présence Africaine* is the ‘site of the repressed’; *Présence Europeene* is the site of colonialist, hegemonic construction of knowledges; and *Présence Américaine* is the ‘New World’ site of cultural confrontation, possibility for creolization and points of new becomings” (Evans and Manur, 233). Yvonne Daniel further complicates this analysis through her study of Caribbean dance. She argues that identities in Caribbean dance and music are not ingrained by the geographical locations of their unique places of origin, rather, that they continually interact with each other producing new genres and identities through the processes of transculturation (13). Daniel’s definition does not negate Hall’s but simply points out the tangled process of

assimilation, appropriation, and exchange that transform the cultural identities of all of the *présences*.

Such processes of transculturation and multiple identities can be found in the work of various diasporic and migrant performers¹². Roach for example, discusses cultural transmission during the Mardi Gras festival, where bodily memory expresses the cultural identity of diasporic communities. He argues that such spaces can become true ‘vortices of behaviour’ where traces of the past can be seen merging with the present through embodied expression of the participants. In these spaces identities are negotiated and reinstated through the ritual of carnival. Roach also identifies European, African, and American *presences* and *absences* gesturing towards Hall’s approach albeit through a performance studies lens (4). The primary layer of Roach’s analysis speaks to Hall’s discourse of the social formation of identity; the community expresses its cultural heritage and negotiates its identity through ritual. The second layer however, presents a more convoluted picture where neither communal nor individual expressions are stable. This layer touches on the issue of individual agency in cultural identity formation, which is brought up by Hall (“Who Needs Identity”). Personal self-expression and the power it produces and sustains can create and assert individual agency while simultaneously being shaped by the larger forces of social formation. As Roach exemplifies through characters like king Zulu (20) this interaction can create multiple meanings in performance.

Through the functioning of these mechanisms, artists can transform themselves or be transformed by their location while still retaining parts of their original identities. This kind of duality is visible in the work of Loie Fuller, who presented herself as an artist who was ‘born in

¹² Performance here is used in a broad sense where any performative activity presented to an audience constitutes performance.

America but made in Paris; in other words, her identity was tied to European aestheticism as well as to American ingenuity. Specifically, the visual effects of her performances spoke to contemporaneous French painting while the technological innovations she introduced to the stage were inspired by her Yankee spirit (Cooper Albright, 85).

Cultural theorist James Clifford's discussion of the emergence of new trans-national identities attempts to momentarily capture and describe these diverse and often fluctuating identities. Precisely because of their nonconformative characteristics, Clifford searches for them in places of both movement and stasis, such as hotels and museums respectively. He examines situations such as the superimpositions of wealthy Caribbean Americans on holidays in the impoverished lands of their ancestors, the irony of an 'Imperial' boarding house in London run by a middle class south Asian family, and other incongruities that often constitute the complexity of modern cultural identity (96). Since performance practices cannot be as easily preserved as material artefacts, they will mostly fall into the first category of 'movement'¹³ and constitute similar situations where identities take on a more fluid character. Echoing Clifford's observations, one can now witness situations where a teenage girl is dancing Bharatanatyam in her remote northern village of Scotland or an eastern European is performing the Samba in 'brownface' at the Royal Albert Hall in London. Clifford attempts to write more creatively and reflexively in order to describe these situations and retain the phenomenological qualities of lived experience, but he admits defeat at fully completing this task (12). In his review of James Clifford's work, Clifford Geertz, who originally pioneered a more subjective approach to ethnography with his notion of 'thick description', critiques Clifford's writing as desultory and

¹³ I am not implying a complete stasis in places like museums since they can also be read as recordings of past movement. *See* Shea Murphy.

hesitant (118). The ephemerality of ‘movement’ in general, and dance in particular, defies clear categorization and identification in many cases. However, native-insider ethnographies attempt to provide a more in-depth perspective on these issues.

Within dance studies, ‘native’ ethnographies are quite common, perhaps precisely because it is difficult to write about bodily movement without experiencing it firsthand. The cultural identities inherent in dance become clearer through phenomenological experience. Tomie Hahn’s analysis of the Japanese dance form *nihon buyo* provides a good example of such an ethnography. Furthermore, her Japanese-American identity presents a curious case of diasporic identity formation. Tomie Hahn posits that physical bodily practices like dance are transmitted through sensational knowledge. She sees herself as possessing a dual, but not separate, identity through her identification with her Japanese roots and American upbringing. In contrast to Loie Fuller, Tomie Hahn performs a dance form which is based on the aesthetic of her heritage rather than that of her ‘host’ country. She performs a traditional Japanese identity using her half-American body instead of performing American identity as half-Japanese. It is probably futile to speculate on the nature of such choices and events due to their highly mosaic structure so I will simply surmise that both are instances of diasporic performance identities. However, T. Hahn and to some extent Cooper Albright seem to be more successful than Clifford in articulating this identity, perhaps because of their physical involvement with their subject matter. As Phelan insightfully points out, the western obsession with perspective that looks outside of itself in order to see itself, creates a problem of self-identification that could be resolved by looking in and perceiving oneself as a part of the larger whole (24). This is a perspective which embodied and insider research tend to encourage.

Complicating the themes of perspective and identity, Rosenberg in his work on screen dance proposes several strategies for the use of new technological mediums for the recording of such ephemeral practices as dance. He does not propose that technologies such as video and film will accurately capture performances but argues that they should be a part of the performance itself therefore playing the role of the 'native ethnographer' in the process. This way, the medium itself assumes an identity as part of the performance. In contemporary western culture this seems appropriate given the roles technology plays in our lives and in our personal as well as communal identities. This theorization is particularly relevant to diasporic communities because of the spatial gaps separating them from their countries of origin. Cultural performances across the Atlantic can now, not only be remembered through the body as in Roach's analysis, but can also travel through the electronic circuits across the ocean. The carnival can be prepared with cameras in mind and performance can be streamed over the internet, creating a transnational digitized identity for the participants.

These developments have various effects on diasporic community identities, which already are not uniform. For example, Wald (Bulmer and Solomos) points out that for Arab-Americans the magnitude and determinants of politicised (and therefore performed) ethnic identity are often overestimated. Despite the wide media coverage of armed conflict in the Middle East as well as the availability of affordable international communication, the number of politically involved Arab-Americans is usually exaggerated by politicians and the press (4). In another U.S. based context, Diana Taylor presents American cultural identity as a highly politicized and mediated affair. She discusses events like Princess Diana's death and the 9/11 attacks as mediated politically charged spectacles which did not produce a uniform audience reaction across the country, despite the heavy media campaigns. In one example, minority

communities in New York expressed their own take on Princess Diana's death by covering up memorial graffiti for Diana with words like 'Die' (156-159).

This type of resistance is not in direct opposition to the dominant culture and therefore provides an example of a counter-cultural expression by the community or individual by means through which they can express their 'power in difference' without directly threatening the hegemony. Hula dancers and musicians used similar strategies during their tours of the U.S.A. at the turn of the nineteenth century whereby they danced dances and sang songs praising their king, whom the Americans were trying to dethrone (Imada). This scenario brings us back to the questions around diasporic identity in performance: were dancers or the graffiti artists acting with individual or community agency? Were they simply reacting to the ploys of the dominant classes and races? Who did they identify with? There are no clear answers to these difficult queries but that does not mean they should not be asked or brought up in discussions of cultural identity. Very often the cultural, diasporic, and individual identities of performers are tied to underlying national narratives created by governments to fulfil their political goals and counter-narratives of the communities affected by these social scenarios. The next section discusses several such contexts and relates them to the intersection of dance, race, and politics.

3.3 Dance, Race, and Politics

Political structures and notions of nationhood are inextricably linked to most aspects of life in any society, including dance and ritual. Nations often display or 'invent' their cultural heritage by means of performing arts (Hobsbawm). Conversely, performing arts in general, and dance in particular, have the capacity to incite change in the societies they inhabit (Giersdorf, *Body of the People*; Novack). They can provide a means of resistance and subversion for a

marginalized population (Imada) or an expression space for cultural minorities (Kibler). This two-way relationship between the individual artist and the state has been explored by several authors in numerous fields. Their theories and analyses, presented in this section, will serve as the basis for my own theorizations of the political nature of dance performance in DanceSport.

In her seminal work, *Embodying Mexico: Tourism, Nationalism, & Performance*, Ruth Hellier-Tinoco discusses the embodiment of Mexican culture within the fields of tourism, nationalism and performance. She focuses on the Dance of the Old Men from the island of Jaracuaro and the Night of the Dead on Janitzio island as case studies supporting her wider arguments. By this superimposition of the micro on the macro and vice versa the author is able to deconstruct the concept of a set 'Mexicanness' within the popular media and even in the official national discourse in the country. She argues that the concept of the 'folk' in this case is used by the government to support the tourism industry and to maintain national unity in an otherwise culturally mixed country.

Tinoco's discussion of *Mestizos* and *Indigenes* echoes Diana Taylor's conversation about the mixed and inconsistent nature of the Mexican identity. Taylor argues that as a Mexican-American her identity is complicated by the scenarios of colonialism which have persisted to this day in the daily as well as in the political life of this continent. She states that by limiting the scope and framework of both pedestrian and performative movements of its citizens, American social structures tend to repress and control its multi-cultural population. Using examples such as that of police dispersing a Cuban band in Central Park, she points out that despite the liberal proclamations of the American constitution, its legal system mainly supports the ways of life of those in power.

Such hypocritical approaches to cultural expression in America stem from its imperialist legacies and history of suppression and subversion of foreign artistic practices. One such example is the experience of travelling Hula dancers in the 19th century. Dance scholar Adria L. Imada uncovers the history, political position, and living memories of these dancers by examining their place within the shifting political economy of the Hawaiian monarchy, which was being slowly subordinated by the United States before finally being overthrown in 1893. Based on Diana Taylor's concept of 'scenarios' and the use of archive and repertoire as knowledge depositories, she presents the Hula dancers as the embodied carriers of the Hawaiian cultural repertoire who are caught in America's scenario of discovery. However, archives for her represent "intricate technologies of rule" (21), whereby history is collected, selected and preserved by the hegemony. Imada also uses the Foucaultian notion of the "insurrection of subjugated knowledges" (21) to describe how hula performers were able to informally resist colonial culture. Imada discusses American leisure tourism as one of the catalysts for the destruction of Hawaiian cultural values in Hula dance and music for the sake of entertainment. She argues that in order to please the tourists and appease American imperialist paranoia, the artists had to 'feminise' the dances, and hide any religious or patriotic references in their songs.

Contrastingly, in her discussion on tourism and globalisation, Caribbean dance scholar Yvonne Daniel, posits this industry as an important and necessary part of the modern Caribbean economy. She does, however, mention the monopolization of the tourist industry and the overtaking of the business by foreign investors, a point resonating with Imada's analysis of the tourism in her work. Attempting to counteract the homogenization of cultural differences such as discussed for Mexican dances by Tinocco, Daniel introduces several historically significant Caribbean performers, geographically and chronologically delineates different dance styles, and

explains their importance as Caribbean cultural signifiers. The author tries to create a “comparison of diaspora understandings” (Daniel, xvi), in order to dispel the colonial and nationalist scenarios imposed on these dances. Some of her findings in Caribbean and Latin American dances and their root cultures lead directly to the development of ballroom dance in Europe and North America. Her discussion of the emergence of Mambo and consequently Salsa from the Cuban Son is one such example.

Julliet McMains continues this storyline and explains how the Cuban Son was transformed into the ballroom Rumba in Europe by early twentieth century dance masters. She argues that this transformation was partly a misinterpretation of the dance and partly a strategic modification of the movement to suit the aesthetic tastes and movement vocabulary of high European society. To this day, the British post-colonial dance association, aptly titled the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dance (ISTD), controls the development ballroom dance and related styles syllabi, teacher certification, and international representation. This monopoly on the ‘correct’ dance vocabulary and interpretation ensures the cultural dominance of Britain in this field and supports its continued imperialist legacy.

In other parts of the world, similarly controlled by majority rule governments of imperial descent, minority communities find creative ways to separate themselves from nationalistic scenarios and find their own cultural identities in politically charged climates. In Christopher Nelson’s ethnography, he narrates how the Okinawans resisted and came up with strategies to cope with the memories and experiences of hardships they have faced as a cultural community since the Second World War. Producing “performances, struggling to find forms adequate to their concerns, bringing genres associated with the traditional performing arts” (Nelson 17), the Okinawans attempt to gain agency through various methods from the position of the oppressed.

Similar to the Hula girls working through the oppression of American imperialism (Imada), the former *Ryukyuan*s find creative and innovative ways to assert themselves despite continued and simultaneous assimilation and alienation by the Japanese government. Nelson's analysis looks at such forms as Japanese traditional theater, Okinawan storytelling and ritual, as well as scholarly investigation of war memory, in order to place them in the larger socio-political context of Japanese and American oppression in the region. He also discusses *eisa*, the Okinawan dance of the dead as a way to face painful cultural memories and maintain a shared history of the island. The author uses the writing and social knowledge of the Japanese sociologist Ishihara Masaie to develop his theories and facilitate his entry into the Okinawan community, and borrows from Jaques Ranciere's theory of social emancipation and Ernst Bloch's concept of utopian consciousness to support his interpretation of Okinawans' performative and socio-political expression in the face of their reality and history.

Nelson's analysis and observation point to a possibility of observing hidden or unspoken practices such as "prescribed bodily positions, and gestures" (Nelson 12) that can express certain resistances to the outward expression of conformity. For instance, the continued (and often unnecessary) practice of ballroom dancers going to wet or brush their shoes in the middle of training demonstrates as much about their performance anxiety as about the slippery state of the floor. The constant pressure to represent confidence and glamour (McMains) creates a continued state of anxiety that is manifest both in their mind and subconsciously, in the body. This in turn is a result of the control system imposed on them by the ballroom industry and its socio-economic position in the larger capitalist structure of the western world.

Throughout modern history these structures have prioritized certain bodies and neglected others. In *Bodies in Dissent*, Daphne Brooks examines the works of various black artists,

activists, and entertainers who challenged the racial and gender-based structures of western show business politics through direct as well as covert resistance strategies in their performances and writing at the end of nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. This work decreases the gap in historical writing about black performance during that era and gives voice to those silenced by racial segregation, attitudes, and laws. The author situates such practices as minstrelsy and spiritualism within a larger context of Euro- American traditions of phantasmagoria shows and spectacles of transfiguration. She unveils the racialized categorisation of black spiritual mediums as a combination of these traditions with Africanist religious influences, and exposes minstrelsy as a defensive strategy used by white actors to promote their superiority. Using plays from the end of the 19th century such as “The Octoroon” and “The Curious case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” as examples, she exposes the racial attitudes of that time.

Brooks’ analysis resonates with the work of McMains on Ballroom dancing’s ‘brown face’ in terms of her analysis of minstrelsy as a tool for white populations to exclude black or mullato bodies from mainstream theater and prescribe their roles in society as inferior beings. In addition, Brooks’ discussion of the black and mullata female bodies in roles such as that of Zoe in the play “The Octoroon” or Dianthe Lusk in “One Blood” is strikingly similar to Borelli’s interpretation of mullata bodies in Hollywood dance films at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty first-centuries. Both comparisons demonstrate the ongoing cultural trends that continue to marginalize and stereotype black and mullato performing bodies. As Brooks points out in her epilogue: “racial and gender power struggles were and still are very much underway in contemporary theatre culture” (Brooks 345). These stereotypes facilitate the proliferation of underlying, even if latent, imperialist tendencies of western societies in Europe

and North America. These tendencies, supported by political choices of nationalist representations in the arts, utilize racialized, gendered, and otherwise ‘othered’ bodies as symbols of unity while simultaneously maintaining the dominance of the white, male, western, bodies and movement practices as markers of cultural superiority.

3.4 Soviet Dance Literature

Because of its political and ideological isolation from the West during the communist era, Soviet approaches to dance and education focused on different values and priorities. Much of the available Soviet arts-related literature presented here (published primarily from 1960s to 1980s) is entirely utilitarian with an infusion of propaganda and simply promotes Russian artistic practices, describes their methodologies, and glorifies the communist ethic. In this section I will outline several of these works in order to present an account of late-Soviet perspectives on dance¹⁴, which shape many of my first-generation participants’ ideologies.

Liubov D. Blok in her work titled *Klassicheskiĭ Tanets: Istoriia i Sovremenost'* (*Classical Dance: History and Contemporaneity*) discusses dance from mid-400’s BC to mid-1800’s. She relates the classical Greek dances to the early ballet vocabulary and outlines the chronology of the Russian, Italian, and French ballet schools. She also relates Russian artists to choreographic works by world-renowned ballet masters. For example, she states that the famous poet Pushkin contributed to many of Charles Louis Didelot’s pieces. While thoroughly researched and historically based, her work often dogmatically praises and promotes Russian artists as the main innovators in classical and folk-dance traditions.

¹⁴ However, while this was the nature of this period’s Soviet literature on dance, my intent here is not to present this as a static utilitarian state. The voices of the participants in regard to dance in the USSR in chapter 5 should be helpful for a more balanced perspective.

In his book *Balet Narodov SSSR (Ballet of the Peoples of USSR)* Nikolai È'liash presents a short history of the development of ballet throughout the republics of USSR. His account is a linear history of the rise of Soviet dance after the October Revolution. He discusses how republics that formerly had no national theaters have acquired and successfully nurtured this new artistic form to international fame. Praising the communist values in the new ballets, his work is as much an appraisal of the communist party as it is a historical work.

Ella Bocharnikova and Galina Inozemtseva in *Tem Kto Liubit Ballet (For Those Who Love Ballet)* describe the birth of the Russian Ballet in early 1700's, the main productions such as "Sleeping Beauty" and "Swan Lake", and the main choreographers from Mikhail Fokine to Vladimir Vasil'ev. An interesting part of this book is that it has partial Spanish translation of the keywords, as token of the international status of Russian ballet and its popularity among spectators from other countries.

Uri A. Bakhrushin in his work *Istoria Ruskogo Baleta (The History of Russian Ballet)*, provides an extensively researched account of the historical development of ballet in Russia. He begins by outlining the development of folk dances in Eastern Europe around 500 AD and continues through to the early 1900's with the rise in popularity of the Russian ballet school. Describing French choreographers such as Charles Louis Didelot (born in Switzerland but trained in France) and Marius Petipa who influenced and shaped the Russian school, he goes on to give credit to native choreographers such as K.F. Bogdanov and M.S. Karpakov in the Moscow-based school during Petipa's time and A.A. Gorskoï, trained in the St. Petersburg school but appointed choreographer in the Moscow Theater in 1898, where he built his choreographic career. Bakhrushin is very meticulous in his historical references and specific in his chronological timelines; however, like the other authors described above, his work begins

and ends in appraisals of the red party and Russian cultural heritage. This is not surprising considering that this book was sanctioned by the government as the official text for dance history instruction at state universities. These three works, and others not included here, provide an alternative perspective to the Western history of Ballet from an Eastern point of view. This contextualization shows the cultural influences on the development of dance culture in the Soviet Union, tied to the nation's heritage and socio-political values.

In the realm of national folk dancing, the government-sponsored publishing company *Sovetskaia Rossia* (Soviet Russia), published the book *Tantsy: Usmanskii Pereplias "Dokazyvai"* (Dances: Usmanian Dance "Prove"). It is a manual describing folk-dance steps with group and couple patterns. This book has instructions such as:

*The young woman and man are standing with their backs to the audience...The young man stands to the left of the girl. The young man takes the young woman's right hand with his left hand. They lift the connected arms up and put the free arms on the waist while performing weight shift backwards. They are moving downstage, the young woman starting with her left foot, the young man with the right. At the end of the second phrase on the count 'and' they need to hold a pause. (Tantsy: Usmanskii Pereplias "Dokazyvai" 17) See **Figure 3***

This publication also includes musical scores for the dance, the descriptions of the costumes (bright blouse, long skirt, and boots for the girl; colorful shirt, black pants, belt, and boots for the boy), and the storyline which runs along the lines of boys proving their mastery to the girls, the girls returning the favor, and then everyone dancing together. This is the typical format of folk dance manuals published in the USSR, providing detailed descriptions of the national dances of the Soviet Union. A similar format is used by this same publishing company for other books, such as *Siuzhetnye i Narodnye Tantsy* (Subject Based and National Dances) where they present several Russian national dances in a manner similar to the one described above (Alexeeva).

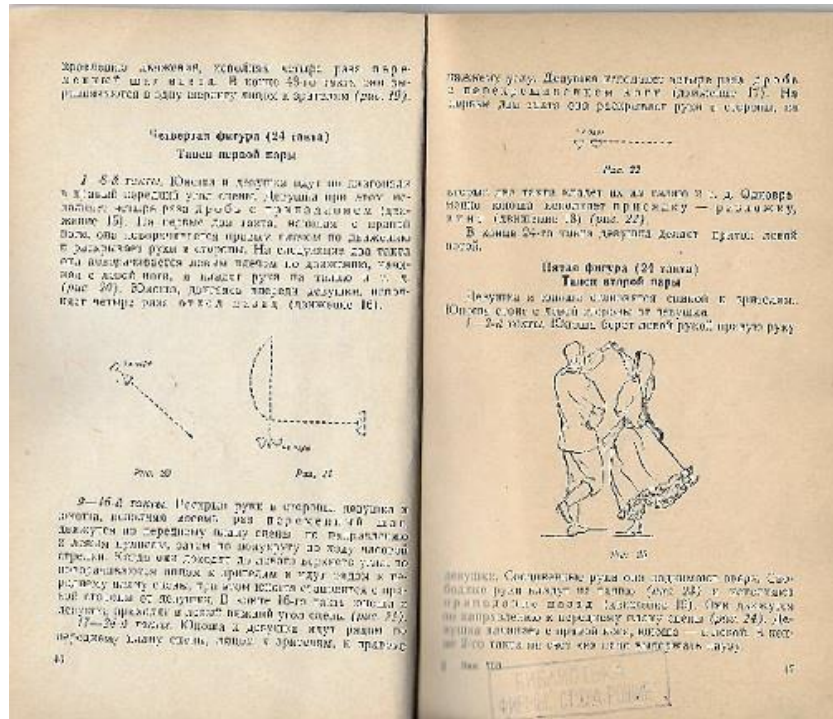


Figure 3. Pages 16-17 from the book *Tantsy: Usmanskii Pereplias "Dokazyvai"* (Dances: Usmanian Dance "Prove") *Sovetskaia Rossia (Soviet Russia)*, Moscow, 1961. Extract from p.17 is translated in the quote above.

A different presentation format is adopted by E.A. Chaïkovskaia, a world-famous ice dance coach who describes her experiences in this particular dance form from a relatively subjective perspective in her book *Uzory Russkogo Tantsa (Patterns of Russian Dance)*. She discusses the development of ice dancing in the USSR and its struggle to catch up with the English ice dancers, who had a head start in this practice. Within her historical narrative, she examines the creation process of the different routines, the borrowing strategies from ballroom dances, and the training process of her students. Interestingly, in a similar fashion to competitive ballroom dance, this dance form in the Soviet Union was also considered 'dance sport'. The author illustrates the challenges of transferring dance figures to an ice surface in terms of space and technical elements. She points out that the space parameters were often larger on ice, and elements such as point or even demi point are impossible in ice skates. However, she also states

that her students often managed to overcome these challenges by means of their technical creativity. For example, one of her students went as high on the toe as possible on her skates by shifting her weight forward and executing a turn on demi pointe.

Following the same trend in her work on rhythmic gymnastics *Iskusstvo Gratsii (The Art of Grace)*, G. Bobrova describes how to train a child in graceful gymnastics-based movement. She outlines preliminary exercises and the work that will have to be done in the gymnastics class. She also gives advice on how *girls* should behave in a ‘Pioneer camp’¹⁵ in order to maintain their athletic shape. The book offers many illustrations and tips on how to keep young gymnasts motivated and focused. Ballet exercises are offered as supplements to the regular program and seasonal variations are presented for each regimen.

A more thorough in-depth analysis is presented by Sheremet’evskaya in her analysis of Soviet variety dance *Tanets na Èstrade (Dance on the Variety Stage)*. She discusses the relationship between the dance form and its social context and focuses on several styles popular on the Soviet variety stage from 1920s to the 1980’s. In particular, she explores acrobatic dance, classical dance, character dance, folk dance, military dance, mass movement dance, and rhythmic dance as forms most commonly seen throughout that time period. She outlines the origins of each and discusses its development on the USSR concert stage.

A review of stage and daily costuming and dress is written by Mertsalova who examines the different trends across Europe in her book *The History of Costume*. She presents a brief history of popular dress from 3000-2400 BC to 1949. Focusing on costume and dress making as an art form, this author claims to be the first to publish a Russian language work on this topic.

¹⁵ Pioneers were, communist party’s children’s camps, similar to American Scouts and Brownies, except with a communist twist.

Her work is a diachronic account of costume design which complements the dance history of former USSR and was used by dance researchers there to delineate this aspect of theatrical dance.

3.5 Dance Literature in North America

The North American dance traditions have had a very different history and growth. The strong division between concert and social dance as well as the capitalist motives for the production of art and knowledge have had strong influences on the literature in this field. The works presented here range in publication dates from 1970s to early 2000s and provide a literary historical context of Canadian dance into which my participants were arriving from the USSR in the early 1990s.

Jan Harold Brunwand, in his work *The Study of American Folklore*, points out that as a new nation, USA is scarce on folk dance traditions. The main two types of dances found in American folklore are square dances and play games. However, he iterates that native and immigrant traditions provide more content for analysis despite not examining them in any significant depth. Brunwand states that the square dances originate from the “old world” and include such patterns as “New England Quadrille” or the “Kentucky Running Set” while play games can still be seen in such forms as the “Virginia Reel”. Both forms mostly died out in the 1930’s but remnants of these traditions still remain in country square and line dances.

Harris et al. demonstrate the continuation of these traditions in their book titled *Social Dance 2nd ed.* They outline such dances as Traditional Country Western Swing, Twelfth Street Rag, and Patty-Cake Polka and continue to describe the social ballroom dances such as the Waltz, Tango, and Samba as important social dances in North America. Giving detailed

instructions on the executions of these dances, these articles resemble the ones used in the Soviet folk dance manuals. They provide short descriptions of the dances' origins and their relationships to the newly developed discipline of DanceSport which has absorbed some of these dances into its curriculum system since its inception.

Providing a Canadian perspective on these topics, Mary Jane Warner in her work *Toronto Dance Teachers 1825-1925* describes the ballroom scene in early twentieth century Toronto. She discusses the popularity of the two step until 1920's, the appearance of the 'animal dances' such as the Turkey trot, the Grisly Bear, and the Foxtrot and the onset of the Ragtime dances which appeared in the early 1900s. Citing the influence of American dance teachers Irene and Vernon Castle, she also acknowledges the work of Canadian dance masters such as Viola Downing who taught in Toronto from 1908 and the Moshers who operated a school in the same city from 1914 to the 1940s.

Peter Young in his book *Let's Dance: A Celebration of Ontario's Dance Halls and Summer Dance Pavilions*, describes the popular dance pavilions in Ontario in the early twentieth century. Used as spaces for social dance, these venues were a main attraction of dance aficionados until early 1940's in Canada. They were particularly popular during the summer months as local entertainment venues and tourist attractions. Giving a live voice to the participants in these dances as well as to the organisers and musicians involved, Young presents an exclusively Canadian landscape of social dance during that era. The author follows a geographical location map to delineate the history and the decline of these cultural spaces in Ontario. **Figure 4**, below shows one of the few surviving ballroom dance pavilions in Bala, Ontario, now used as a concert and event venue.



Figure 4. Kee to Bala, one of the oldest and few still functioning ballroom dance pavilions in Ontario. However, now it is used for concerts and private events. Photo by author, August 2016.

Focusing on the competitive side of ballroom dance in his book *Ballroom Dance: Romance, Rhythm, and Style* John L. Reynolds provides a mixed illustrated review of ballroom dancing in both Canada and the United States. He describes such elements as costume, venue, and atmosphere in the North American ballroom dance industry. Using top couples from both countries as examples, he gives a superficial outline of ballroom dancing as an artistic yet competitive dance form. With many illustrations and flashy phrases this author commodifies the glamour of DanceSport for reproduction in a book format. In a similar manner to the Soviet communist propaganda infused literature, this work uses the stereotypes of ballroom dance as its marketing strategy.

Selma Landen Odom and Mary Jane Warner edited a collection of essays titled *Canadian Dance: Visions and Stories* reflecting the development of concert dance in Canada. Focusing on such artists as Grant Strate, Maud Allan, and Boris Volkoff they begin to build a history of Canadian dance through their research. Mainly focusing on ballet and modern dance, the articles in this book offer a variety of perspectives on their uniquely Canadian characters. The distinctly immigrant-based identity of Canada is reflected in the depiction of the work of such artists as Boris Volkoff, one of the early pioneers of ballet in Canada, and Gwyneth Lloyd, the founder of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Volkoff was a Russian emigrant and Lloyd came from the United Kingdom. Both markers of Canadian dance, these artists' stories are invaluable to the Canadian dance history and demarcate its particularities in relation to other nations.

Continuing the narrative of Canadian concert dance with a focus on the development of Canada's National Ballet School (NBS), Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt discusses how the creation of Canadian Ballet Festivals, the formation of the Canadian Dance Teachers Association, the review of Canadian culture by the Massey Commission, and a tour by the UK-based Sadler's Wells ballet company created the conditions for birth of the NBS after the end of WW2. Fisher-Stitt continues by describing the continued work of British émigrés Celia Franca and Betty Oliphant in the growth of the company and its subsequent international success. The common practice of importing dance teachers and administrators from the United Kingdom demonstrates a colonial trend in Canadian dance, a characteristic that speaks to the political orientation in this country and one that has shaped its cultural identity in artistic practices.

The development of Toronto Dance Theatre in 1968 by Peter Randazzo, David Earle, and Trish Beatty has further contributed to the development of concert dance in Canada. In particular, these pioneers of modern dance created the landscape which paved the way for the

future contemporary choreographers in this country. Nadine Saxton and Katherine Cornell discuss the growth of this revolutionary company from 1968 to 1998 in their work *Toronto Dance Theatre 1968-1998 Stages in a Journey*. As with NBS, TDT was headed by committed professionals who were willing to volunteer their time and effort above and beyond their duty in order to advance their project. Highly influenced by the New York Martha Graham Company, TDT attempted to create a space for local artistic exploration using this technique as a base. While still borrowing from the outside to find its identity TDT was less dependent on post colonial influences than NBS. David Earle and Trish Beatty were Canadian and Peter Randazzo was an immigrant from the USA. They all trained in New York City but found their choreographic identities in Canada. They still tried to find the approval of UK critics by performing at The Place and eventually Sadler's Well's in London but were still committed to a uniquely Canadian vision of modern dance.

In Winnipeg, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet has been producing dance since 1938 when Betty Hey and Gwyneth Lloyd found the company upon their arrival in Manitoba. It is well known for producing new choreographic works inspired by Canadian lifestyle and landscapes as well as its early designation as Royal by the British government. In his book *The Royal Winnipeg Ballet* Max Wyman states that despite these influences, RWB was highly versatile in its approach to choreography, and went on many tours abroad. Out of this creative environment came many great dancers and choreographers. Among these was Rachel Browne, the subsequent founder of Contemporary Dancers, one of the earliest contemporary companies in Canada. In her biographical account, *Rachel Browne Dancing Toward the Light* Carol Anderson explains how since its foundation in 1964, Contemporary Dancers was drawing on Browne's experience as a choreographer and her determination to develop its choreographic repertoire as well as hone her

own skills as a dancer, choreographer, and educator. Aided by dancers such as Stephanie Ballard and the support of her mother, Browne managed to create a world class contemporary dance company based in Winnipeg.

The *Encyclopedia of Theatre Dance in Canada* provides further information on Canadian concert dance practices. Edited by Susan McPherson this comprehensive publication presents short articles on important figures in Canadian Theater dance from 1915 to the late 1990s. This work establishes Canadian dance as an internationally important practice apart from its association with the United Kingdom and the USA. Listing figures such as Alice Murdoch Adams, who was a dance pioneer in Calgary, Alberta, and Andree Millaire, a Montreal-born ballerina who is known as the first French Canadian ballerina to have an international performing career, this resource is complemented by descriptions of major Canadian dance festivals, and company tours.

3.6 Educational Strategies in the Soviet Union

Noah Norman Shneidman, in his work *Literature and Ideology in Soviet Education*, writes that “the main objective of ethical education in Soviet society is the development of socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism; a communist relationship to labor and to public property; socialist humanism and collectivism” (4). The author points out that despite the same statistical proportions of dogmatic material in school curriculums in both the USA and USSR, the latter holds ideological education as a higher priority since it permeates every subject and aspect of school life. The literature works presented in Soviet classes praised communist heroes and the cultural heritage of Russia and other Soviet Republics, albeit as the precursors to

the 'golden age' of post the October Revolution. Such literary stars as Trotsky and Tolstoy are examined and praised as the great minds of the century.

In physical activity, as well, the effects of the political regime are evident in both structure and goals. As evident from that period's contemporary literature such as Kondrat'eva V. and Taborko M.'s *Children and Sport in the USSR*, Soviet children were encouraged to be physically active from a young age, and often took those habits into adulthood. In the USSR, the 'physical culture' popular in early 1990s Europe remained an important regimen maintaining the healthy body of a healthy Soviet citizen well into the 1970s and is still the preferred term for physical education classes in primary as well as secondary schools. The physicality promoted there stemmed from the need to maintain a healthy population, the military, and youth, who would demonstrate the triumph of the Soviet communist lifestyle (Kondrat'eva and Taborko). This work echoes Bobrova's treatise on rhythmic gymnastics *The Art of Grace* in terms of style and content. Aimed primarily at young readers it combines historical content, practical suggestions, and communist ideologies. In his book on Soviet physical culture, *The Soviet Road to Olympus*, Shneidman elaborates on the bureaucratic and political structures that made such ideology a reality and gained USSR an international reputation in sports and athletics. Here he discusses the government-based hierarchy of control over the nation's physical well-being through a complex system of clubs, committees, and funding. Reflecting the same trends in conservatory dance education, Leonid Zhdanov writes about the life in the Bolshoi Ballet including the acceptance criteria, the age-level based training system, and the outcomes of this education for the students. Like the other work of the period, his work is very ideologically infused with communist propaganda and historical appraisal of the events leading up to the revolution. The systematic and pragmatic approach to training in sports and dance has also

contributed to the development of competitive ballroom dance in the Soviet Union. Like the discipline of ice skating presented by E.A. Chaïkovskaia as ‘dance sport’ because of its competitive structure, competitive ballroom dance also fell into this category upon its arrival in the USSR. A government document outlining the structure of the Ballroom DanceSport program for the Russian Federation’s Sports ministry *Programma po Standartirovaniuu Obucheniia v Sportivnykh Tantsakh (Program for Standard Training in DanceSport)* presents a detailed proposal for the introduction of a structured DanceSport Curriculum in post-Soviet Russian Republic based on the Soviet sports system.

3.7 Educational Strategies in North America

In North America, the standards and priorities for education stem from the premise of multiculturalism. In his discussion of this principle in *The 10 Lenses: Your Guide to Living and Working in a Multicultural World*, Mark Williams provides an overview of how the necessity to live with and respect various cultural influences in North American institutions created several ideologies based around acceptance, tolerance, and assimilation. He divides these ideologies into ten lenses encompassing the wide range of possible interpretations of multi-culturalism. In their work, *Education and the Politics of Difference*, Gnosh R. and Abdi A. quote the education researcher Henry Giroux, stating that the intention in North America and other democratic countries is “public schooling that aims for the overall achievement of justice, liberty, and equality that pervade the social and economic as well as the political life of society.” (Gnosh and Abdi 2) This author argues that such an approach welcomes the multiplicity of identities, as well as the shifting cultural landscapes of nationhood. As such, the characteristics of North American schooling include diversity, acknowledgement of native cultures, and welcoming of new immigrants. Johnston et al. in their article “Awareness, Discovery, Becoming, and Debriefing:

Promoting Cross Cultural Pedagogical Understanding in an Undergraduate Education Program” examine the experience of teachers with these principles and conclude that while these are the underlying foundations of the Canadian education, more awareness and education on their application is needed in teacher education programs. Within the physical education curriculum further issues emerge in the Canadian school system. The school curriculum in Canada is devised by provincial governments, a situation which often creates a divided opinion on inclusion and prioritization of subjects. Consequently, lack of funding and shifting priorities make physical education a marginal field in this country’s educational landscape. Furthermore, dance within this curriculum is often neglected or squeezed in with other sports in a tight schedule and budget. Instead, the emphasis is generally on the “3 R’s”, reading, writing, and arithmetic and cognitive abilities in general.

In his review of physical education in Ontario, *The Evolution of Physical Education in Ontario*, Stephen Duncan states that while physical education was a priority for the Canadian government from the 1950s to the early 1980s, in the late 1980s this trend began to decline and continued to do so until the late 1990s when a new school curriculum was introduced in 1999.

The improvements were short-lived however:

While the new millennium sounded promising and a successful move into the future, the responsibilities for sport and fitness were split across multiple ministries and both levels of government¹⁶. The funding by Canadian government overall was still behind that of countries which traditionally compete with Canada. Broadly based physical activity did not receive any new money, and very little support for capital construction. (Duncan et al. 25-26)

¹⁶ i.e. Federal and provincial sports and health ministries.

These findings imply a problem on the governmental and social levels.¹⁷ While several organisations such as CAAWS (Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport and Physical Activity), Join the Dance (Zekas) and ParticipACTION (Duncan) have been promoting sports and dance throughout Canada, there is still evidence of Canada not making these fields a national priority. In her Master's thesis, *I'd Rather Fail Than Play*, Mellisa Naik proposes that the lack of promotion of dance in the curriculum alienates teenage girls from participating in physical activity at school. Adding to this point, Mark Richard in his thesis *Finding the Key to Dance in Elementary Schools: A Study of the Current Status of Dance Education in One Ontario School Board* argues that "the inclusion of dance in a formal capacity is a relatively recent phenomenon (1)". He says that dance was only introduced into the Common Curriculum in the early 1990s and further developed in 1998. Within that curriculum, ballroom dance appears as part of the 'social dances' category lumped together with historical fad dances such as Twist, Pony, and Pump. The early curriculum states that in contrast to ballet, modern, or jazz, where performative qualities are explored, in the study of 'social dance':

The emphasis should be placed on the functions and purposes of social dance in society, that are presented as part of the society, particularly on dance as affirmation of group identity, as a form of celebration and as a recreational activity, and on dance in courtship. (Canada, Ontario Ministry of Education, *part b*)

This is an important distinction for my discussion of the differences in approach to ballroom dancing between Canada and the former USSR because it illustrates the categorisation of this dance form as primarily social or recreational in the former rather than as athletic or

¹⁷ Furthermore, for the last six years the national health average of children has been declining according to the Active Healthy Kids Canada. 46% of Canadian kids get 3 hours or less of activity per week, and 63% of Canadian kids' time after school and on weekends is spent on sedentary activities. Yet 92% of Canadian children said they would choose playing with friends over watching TV in their free time (www.activehealthykids.ca).

performative as in the latter.

While temporally this is a different period than the Soviet-era in Eastern Europe, the 1990s and early 2000s are the decades during which ballroom dancing in Canada was most affected by Soviet immigrants, hence constituting the formative years of Soviet-Canadian DanceSport bodies and their relationship to Canadian society central to this dissertation.

3.8 Summary

The purpose of this review was to ground my research in current literature relevant to my subject and context of study. I examined literature on appropriation and globalization with a particular focus on its presence in ballroom dancing. I also evaluated how authors present the relationship of diasporic movements to performance practices and the role of dance in nationalist discourses. To contextualize my work in its geo-political scope, I reviewed literature on dance and physical education pedagogy in Soviet Union and Canada. Throughout my discussion I explored the roots of Latin ballroom dances, the processes of cultural identity formation, and the politicization of dance in several countries. I presented and critically reviewed Soviet era literature on dance and physical culture, and contrasted it with the available sources on Canadian dance. Within this framework I showed the differences in the political involvement of government in the arts and dissected the relationship between sports, leisure, and dance in both cultural contexts. The next chapter will delve deeper into the roots of these differences and demonstrate how these developments came into existence through a socio-historical analysis of arts education and policy in the USSR and Canada.

Chapter 4

Historical Context:

Nationalizing Dances as Global Phenomena

The interdependence of political systems with dance as a performance practice and physical education creates a continuous dynamic relationship between the arts and social policy. While all governments promote cultural ideologies through art, the USSR, in particular, utilized folk concert dance and mass choirs to glorify village life and proletariat labour. Such dogmatic methodologies of cultural control were facilitated by early indoctrination of Soviet children to socialist body disciplines through dance as a physical culture infused with state propaganda (Shay; Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*; Kondrat'eva and Taborko; Zhdanov). This training was controlled by authoritarian pedagogy and monitored through technologies of surveillance. Not unique to the USSR, this strategy of cultural politics was also used in Mexico and Japan, where dance was utilized to promote nationalism and mask the marginalization of minorities by the government. (Hellier Tinoco; Nelson) These external examples will help me illustrate that the process of nationalization of dance for empowerment or suppression of specific culture or cultural elements is a global phenomenon, which is commonly used as a tool to support political advancement and policy creation.

In Canada, the ethos of inclusion and multi-culturalism has affected much of the education strategies and approaches to art evaluation and aesthetic. The provincial school systems around Canada have undergone several ideological shifts in the last few decades to arrive at a pluralist integrative approach representative of Canadian national values. In physical

education, this approach is particularly evident in the early inclusion of formerly marginalized groups in the curriculum. For example, girls and, later on, differently abled pupils started to be considered in the Ontario physical education curriculum throughout the early part of the twentieth century. Despite this progress, dance was not included in this province's school curriculum until the last decade of the twentieth century. Overall, provincial authorities govern the Canadian system of education and their status varies with time and province. Through the efforts of many dedicated practitioners and supporters, the dance community and artistic scene have grown tremendously since the end of WW2. The colonial past of Canadian history played a major part in the development of Canadian dance education through migration of teachers and school systems from Great Britain. Moreover, the large immigrant-base of the Canadian population has contributed many great artists to this country's portfolio, inevitably creating a multi-cultural atmosphere in the Canadian dance scene that mirrors that of its pluralist integration ethos.

In this chapter, I first consider the literature on Soviet political economy to demonstrate the context in which dance as a national representation took form. I then explain how the training methodologies in the USSR were able to produce the dancing bodies which were used to promote its ideologies. Next, I apply the philosophical theories of Luis Althusser, Michel Foucault, and Jurgen Habermas to the issue of political presence in dance and performance practices. Finally, I will consider the situations in Mexico and Japan as comparative examples of political involvement in dance as a national performance and physical education form.

In the second half of the chapter, I demonstrate how the development of Canadian education theories influenced its multi-cultural identity. I examine the road to inclusive practices of physical education curriculum using Ontario as an example, and look at the place of dance in this

document. In conclusion, I outline several major events and figures in Canadian dance history and the role of ballroom dancing in the development of this country's dance narrative.

4.1 The Politics of Art in the former Soviet Union

Since cultural materialism posits that artistic expression is directly linked to social structures (Manning xviii), nations that have adopted this philosophy as their ideological approach use dance as a part of their political strategy. In socialist¹⁸ states in particular, dance as performance practice and physical education has been used to promote state goals and propagate dominant ideologies (Giersdorf, *The Body of the People*; Shay). Because the movement patterns involved in dance are closely related to the bodily disciplines¹⁹ and societal roles (Cooper-Albright 2013, 4), this approach allows governments to shape the bodies of their citizens to their ideal and to project a favourable image of their countries to the international public (Shay 2). In order to produce these bodies, a highly-developed system of training and performance was put in place in the USSR, based on a complex bureaucratic structure, educational strategies, and government funding (Reynolds and McCormick 91,105; Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*). State dance companies acted as representatives of socialism to the rest of the globe during world tours and the best dancers were treated as stars (Stites 133-134). While a relationship between state politics and dance can also be found in capitalist states (Hellier- Tinoco; Franco; Manning; Nelson), government involvement in the arts is much more visible and explicit in socialist states.

¹⁸ I use the term socialism here rather than communism because technically the USSR (and most other socialist states) never reached communism in the full political sense. A fully communist state would require the communal control of all institutions and establishments by the people involved in a democratic fashion, and while the Soviet government attempted to present such an image to the outside world, in reality the USSR did not achieve such a situation (for an example of such a discrepancy, see Shneidman 1978, 86).

¹⁹ Bodily disciplines in this case delineate pedestrian movement and behaviour in a given society.

In his discussion of the choreographic process, dance scholar Jens Giersdorf points out that movement and social environment are interdependent, and the awareness of this relationship can inform the choices choreographers make as active agents in this social environment (“Border Crossings” 153). However, in the Soviet Union these choices were very limited. For Bolshevik Marxists culture “had a purpose, a role in the world-historical universe, and a shape given to it by the classes who produced, controlled, and consumed it” (Stites 38); thus Bolsheviks found it necessary to control cultural expression in the arts at the governmental level. Lenin believed that the Marxist notion of superstructure, where the “social understanding of man (that is his various views and teachings, philosophical, religious, political etc.) reflects the economic structure of society” (Lenin xxiii), this stance allowed the Red Party in the USSR to censor cultural artistic expression to suit its ideologies. For performance practices this meant the creation of invented traditions (Hobsbawm) such as the revival of folk dancing for stage, popularized through companies like the Moiseyev Dance Ensemble, and the general promotion of folk arts as a national symbol of Soviet culture in contrast to other art forms and performance practices (Gusev; Shay 57). These forms of culture were deemed appropriate for the citizens of USSR because of their appeal to working-class audiences, and the image of the ideal peasant life they represented. Village (*derevenskaia*)²⁰ life was considered by the Red Party to be in line with communist principles and was revered in Soviet cultural mythology (Karpov 195). Performances of national folk culture also served as weapons in the cold war. As antitheses to the bourgeois American cultural decadence, Soviet folk music and dance were placed in opposition to such

²⁰ I put the Russian word here because the Soviet concept of a village was somewhat different than the western one. For example, there often was no drinking water or toilets in the houses, work was done communally, the villagers would exchange food or knitted goods for favors such as rides or house reparations done by neighbours, and fishing and hunting was not (or could not be) regulated by the central government.

western art forms as jazz music and ballroom dancing, at least until the late 1950's (Stites 116-119).

One of the most brutal 'cultural cleanses' of the era occurred after 1946, and is commonly attributed to Andrey Zhdanov, a top deputy of Stalin. His conservative policies aimed to unite political ideologies and artistic practice (W. Hahn, 9). Dance music was rewritten with revolutionary lyrics praising socialist heroes, and excessive self-expression in dance movement was discouraged. In order to promote his goals and reinforce these policies "komsomol²¹ teams [...] raided performances and guards were posted on the dance floor. Dances were even renamed: Foxtrot became the 'quick-step,' the tango the 'slow dance,' and the waltz the 'ballroom dance'" (Stites 119). This surveillance attempted to curtail western influences in social dancing and to promote revolutionary ideals and folk culture in their stead. As dance scholar, Anthony Shay, argues in his discussion of folk dance in the USSR, the state "utilized the technical prowess of dancers and athletes, as well as mass performances of folk dance with thousands of participants²², to suggest the immense power of a state capable of producing world-famous performers of awe-inspiring athleticism and the support of its ethnic rainbow masses" (Shay 4). This description aptly depicts the ways in which the Soviet Union utilized its cultural capital of dance for political gain. Additionally, Shay's mention of the mass performances points to another usage of dance by socialist states. Mass movement choirs were also used in East Germany after WWII and were meant to instil feelings of unity and patriotism among the participants and the millions watching them from their homes (Giersdorf, *Body of the People* 4). In the USSR, people were used to moving in collectives because even in their work and rest

²¹ Komsomol was the All Union Leninist Young Communist League in the USSR.

²² Mass dances were not uniquely Soviet, East Germany and some Latin American countries also staged them for political purposes.

places group physical activity was common. Factory workers would have morning exercise sessions and ‘athletic breaks’ during the workday, and holiday resort organisers would encourage their guests to participate in group physical activities during their stays (Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus* 47). Such activities prepared the Soviet bodies for folk dancing and mass movement drills, which in turn were used by the socialist government to imprint socialist ideals on the bodies of their citizens.

While these were the official cultural policies during the era of Zhdanovshchina (Zhdanov’s cultural pogrom 1946-1949) certain authors argue that, rather than being a period of strict and unyielding cultural policy, it was a period of cultural debate between moderates and extremists. Zhdanov, ironically, was of the moderate camp but promoted extreme cultural policies in order to pursue his personal career goals in a political battle against his rival Malenkov (W. Hahn 20-21). As Khrushchev, the first secretary of the communist party from 1953 to 1964, states in an interview: “I think that if Zhdanov himself had set his own attitude and his own policy in these questions it would not have been so rigid, because you really cannot regulate the development of literature, the development of art, the development of culture with a stick, with shouting” (qtd in W. Hahn, 58). Even Stalin, the leader of the communist party, which was highly atheist, is said to have had a liking for religious song during his personal festivities (Lobanov 563). During the last years of Stalin’s life most of the arts were used to obscure the harsh economic reality of the country. Socialist musical comedy was popularized and folk ensembles with Cossack sword dances and peasant women singing *chastushki* (short rhyming traditional folk songs) prevailed. The only known opposition to this popular culture came from the Gulag, a series of labour camps where political and criminal dissidents were sent during the Stalin era. They re-appropriated jazz, pre-communist song, and slang (Stites 121-122).

Those counter cultural strategies were mainly possible in such isolated environments during the Soviet era, and records of them have only recently started to come into the public eye. It is likely that they also had dances that countered the popular government propaganda, however, this discussion is beyond the bounds of my current research.

4.2 Soviet Physical Education and Dance

The coordination between political ideologies and embodied cultural practices required early indoctrination of the population. In the Soviet Union, children were trained in many physical activities from a very young age. The parents usually enrolled them in various extracurricular activity clubs such as hockey or football for boys or dance and gymnastics for girls. Each of these activities was heavily filled with ideological propaganda (see **Figure 5**). The photo below illustrates an ‘American’ way of dancing being taught at a pioneer camp. Such flexibility of cultural content became more prominent in the 1980’s and is also visible in the development of ballroom dance in the USSR, which became increasingly accepted as a dance form in its own right around the same time. Children gathered each morning for assemblies, forming geometric lines, wearing red scarves and stars with Lenin’s portrait while singing political hymns at each festive function. If the children were then successful in their chosen activity at the extracurricular level, they would have most likely been put on a national or regional team where they could potentially pursue a professional career as proud representatives of the USSR and examples to the rest of the youth (Kondrat’eva and Taborko). In his work on Soviet physical education and the professional sports industry, Shneidman illustrates how these processes of enculturation continued to form the basis of professional athletes’ lives within the USSR. He points out that since many of the Soviet athletic coaches have post-graduate degrees,

most have passed through the country's education system and its ideological indoctrination processes into the Marxist-Leninist philosophies, which they were expected to pass on to their students along with the athletic skills (*Soviet Road to Olympus*, 81). In a related work on ideology in Russian literature, Shneidman states that in Soviet ideology the citizen must not only accept the system of the state but also agree with it and base their conformity on conviction (*Literature and Ideology*, 1).



Figure 5. Peter Marlow - Soviet Union. Ukraine. Odessa. Learning to disco dance, Travolta style, at Red Banner pioneer camp. 1981 (National Observer blog, <http://no.ua/blogs>, Dec. 20, 2012).

Ballet dancing in Russia followed similar methods; conservatories accepted children aged eight to ten by selecting them through auditions encompassing basic dance skills as well as physical and medical tests. Only a few would usually make it through the process, and it was considered a privilege to be admitted. This art form became a desirable destination for the children of many balletomanes during the Soviet era. Besides learning classical ballet, the students would be taught academic subjects such as the history of USSR and mathematics. They lived in communal housing and were expected to adhere to the communist ideology in speech and behaviour (Zhdanov; *Children of Theater Street*). These conservatories, the two main ones being the Bolshoi in Moscow and the Kirov in St Petersburg, have produced some of the iconic

dancers of Russian Ballet such as Konstantin Sergeev and Alla Osipenko²³ from the Kirov Academy (Berëzkina, Zazulina).

This approach to education also reflected the Soviet perspective on the choreographic process. As Zakharov states in his 1980's work on choreography in the USSR:

Why did Duncan fall apart? Well, because, Duncan, after creating her own unique style of expression, didn't create any system, which would allow for a foundation on which to train new generations of dancers. The terms *school* and *system* (emphasis added) are inseparable. (65)

Isadora Duncan was very popular in the USSR and even founded a school in Moscow in 1921 which existed until 1948. Zakharov's critique of her pedagogical strategies speaks volumes about the Soviet approach to bodily disciplines because it underlines the fundamental philosophy behind their construction. In the same manner as the state aimed to construct a systematic ideology as a basis for all industry and labor, dance too had to have a system in order to be productive and reproducible. This approach is visible in most Soviet dance manuals and histories. Chistiakova in her foreword to Vaganova's Ballet technique manual states that the "enormous expertise accumulated by the Russian ballet, *critically scrutinized and systematized during the Soviet period* (italics mine), became the base of innovation activity for Soviet dance pedagogues" (Vaganova, 3). Vaganova's work is indeed very detailed and systematic (see **Figure 6**), and as Chistiakova points out, is closely related to the disciplinary formation of Soviet Union ideology.

²³ The North American reader might be more familiar with names such as Rudolf Nureyev, Mikhail Baryshnikov, or Natalia Makarova. However, from a Soviet perspective they are no longer part of that heritage and are not honored as graduates from these schools due to their desertions. Moreover, their fame is largely based on North American exposure while in the Eastern Bloc many other great dancers, such as the ones named here, are known and respected.



Figure 6. Vaganova’s drawings of Aplomb, the middle two are correct (Vaganova 31)

For both classical and folk dance, most Soviet dance manuals follow such a format. There are very precise descriptions of steps, rhythms, and group formations enriched by brief historical descriptions and appraisals of the Soviet culture (for examples see: Bazarova; Serebrenikov; Smirnov). Many folk-dance manuals were produced by state commissioned publishers and follow a consistent formula of presentation in line with the state’s demand (eg. Alekseeva; Vasilenko).

The same regimen and structure were applied to DanceSport once it got accepted as an athletic discipline in the USSR. A document standardizing the procedures for the teaching of DanceSport was developed as a guideline for coaches and for its implementation in their respective institutions under the umbrella of the Russian DanceSport Federation. A more recent (late 1990’s) Russian Federation version of this document outlines such elements as:

- The continuity of the stages of the sport training, minimal age and number of participants in each category and stage of the training in dancesport.
- The coordination of the scope of the training process at the various stages of training in dancesport.
- Planned indicators of competitive activities in dancesport.

- Training regimens.
- Medical, age specific and psychophysical demands on the participants.
- Maximal training intensities.
- Minimal and maximal scope of competitive activities.
- Necessary equipment, inventory, and props.
- The conditions for correct group organisation in terms of numbers and quality.
- The scope of individual sport training
- The structure of the yearly training cycle (names and length of periods, stages, mesocycles)

(Russian Federation, Sport Ministry 1)

This document legitimizes and organizes the training methodologies utilized by every DanceSport studio in the country with the Ministry of Sport overseeing the adherence to these regulations by the many dance clubs around the nation. Such organization allowed for consistency and order in the former Soviet Union and continued to do so in the Russian DanceSport Industry. Broadly speaking, as in sports, this hierarchy is organized around a ‘Club System’ where every region and area has their own DanceSport club and a local team representing it at national competitions. At local competitions, there are team matches, where each regional team presents a formation dance and competes for the national championship. The first two teams are invited to represent the USSR at international events for performances and competitions. Concurrently, individual couples compete for their own ranking both nationally and, for the top few, internationally at world championships. The club members are expected to attend a minimum number of sessions of group classes and practices, as well as private lessons for those in the top couples of the team. If they are unable to commit to this arrangement, the couple can be asked to leave the club or move to another club. At the same time, active members of the club are not allowed to move to another club without the permission of the coach, which

for the top couples is an unlikely scenario. During the group sessions technique²⁴ is emphasised and the teacher usually repeats the foundational steps of one or two dances while pointing out the common errors committed by the dancers. The practices are usually more physiologically intense and involve 'run throughs' of all the dances. Effectively, this becomes a competition simulation, usually overseen by the teachers. The private sessions, usually reserved for the best couples, allow for styling, correction of individual errors, and questions from the students.

This type of disciplinary formation, experienced by Soviet youth, involved a highly authoritarian approach to pedagogy that some western scholars might find disturbing. For example, cultural studies scholar Clyde Smith's description of a dance class in America, posits that "teachers hold absolute power over students and through abusive means disempower students, breaking them down and then building them back up in the teacher's own image" (Smith 130). However, I would argue that from a Soviet perspective the same class might have been considered normal and even casual in approach. Since children in the USSR were accustomed to authoritarian behaviour and viewed it as the basis for the structure of their society, they did not consider it a negative teaching methodology. In principle, social hierarchies in Soviet government and education did not conflict with communist ideals because they were seen as serving the common good of the people. In order to maintain this ideology, Soviet authorities used various multi-sensory propaganda techniques aimed to instil communist values in their citizens. From visual culture of communist imagery (Condee) to aural and kinaesthetic experience through music and dance, Soviet people were constantly surrounded by the phenomenological expressions of communism. Since dance and physical education are embodied

²⁴ While technique itself can in theory be separated from the pedagogical structure of the training, it is based on that structure in terms of organisation and ideology. See Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*.

experiences encompassing all of these sensory fields (Hockey and Collinson) the participants in these activities were meant to (and often did) associate their phenomenological experience of dance and sport with communist ideologies imbedded in the structure of these activities within the USSR.

4.3 Philosophical Approaches to Bolshevik Marxism in Soviet Culture

Soviet communist ideologies were based on Leninist Marxist philosophies. Even though Lenin himself deplored academic philosophy as ‘the falsest of all false paths’ (Althusser 31), because of the discrepancy between theoretical reflection and practical application, much of his communist thought and policy can be viewed and analysed from a philosophical perspective. Lenin viewed philosophy as an extension of politics and therefore attempted to find practical application for it in all aspects of Soviet life (33). In the arts, this application meant the birth of socialist realism, a form of expression that represented the idealized life of the proletariat. This genre was supported by the Red Party and had to represent labour, glorifying the working class and communist ideals (Condee; Stites), a strategy which eventually degenerated into propaganda.

The dialectical materialism inherent in Marxist thought served to limit the types of expression possible in Soviet culture because the ideological interdependence of macro and micro elements in society, which is the basis of this philosophy, assumed a dogmatic character in the USSR. In this section, I will deconstruct and exemplify some of these processes using Michel Foucault’s writing about bodily disciplines and surveillance, Jurgen Habermas’ reflections on the development of the bourgeois public sphere, and Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of ‘habitus’. Foucault’s analysis will serve to illustrate the disciplinarian structures of Soviet political control of the arts and sciences, Habermas’ theories will demonstrate how the development of the public

sphere in pre-revolutionary Russia contributed to the subsequent Bolshevik revolution, and Bourdieu's writing will clarify how Bolshevik Marxist ideologies were adapted and embodied by Soviet citizens²⁵.

In his seminal work, *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault discusses how the state can control human behaviour through constant observation by means of surveillance technologies. I argue that this line of reasoning can be applied to the general system of observation and censorship in the USSR, which affected every aspect of Soviet life including dance education and performance. The constant fear of censorship and potential punishment monitored any dissidents who strayed from the idealist norms propagated by the Communist party. The possibility of extradition to the Gulag or even execution affected the party officials as much as it did common citizens. For example, Zhdanov himself was removed from office in part because of accusations of sympathising with western science, despite his hard line on cultural policy (W. Hahn, 69). In the dance world, the well-known cases of Michail Baryshnikov and Rudolf Nureyev, Soviet dancers who defected to the West, demonstrated that the surveillance and censorship by the Soviet state were also present in Russian ballet training and performance. These dissident dancers repeatedly claimed artistic censorship and restrictions as two of the main reasons for their defections (Reynolds and McCormick 264). Those who remained, even if they praised the Soviet regime, continued to be monitored by Soviet technologies of surveillance, including Komsomol teams monitoring concert and dance halls to reinforce Soviet cultural censorship and state authoritarianism.

Jurgen Habermas' discussion of the public sphere generally is viewed as the specific analysis of class relations and public spaces in bourgeois society. He argues that the shifting

²⁵ While some of these theories deal with pre-soviet state social conditions, their formulations nevertheless help clarify the inherent power structures in socialist states.

roles of nobility and royalty in relation to the bourgeoisie, as well as the development of capitalism have created a possibility for the bourgeois class to claim public spaces as havens where they can reason on public affairs and express their views on social life (27-30). However, I argue that while the bourgeois might have reclaimed the public sphere from the nobility, in pre-revolutionary Russia, it was the Bolsheviks who really took advantage of this shift, gaining access to press, and government committees during political unrest in pre-revolutionary Russia. Habermas discusses Marx's formulation of this idea, stating that he viewed the bourgeois public sphere as a "mirror with social conditions for the possibility of its utterly unbourgeois realization" (Habermas 124). The bourgeois public sphere constituted a contradiction for Marx, a public opinion formed by private persons, which would potentially result in the formation of a 'public state'. Because dance as a cultural art form constituted a part of the public sphere, both as spectacle and social interaction, it became an important factor in the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks. Individualistic partner dances like the foxtrot and tango were systematically replaced by the communal group expressions of the 'national' folk dances. For Bolshevik Marxists, this was a way the public sphere, as a dance platform, could truly become public and henceforth socialist.

Following this concept, we can use Bourdieu's notion of habitus to explain Soviet citizens' acceptance of the ideologies and artistic censorship imposed on them by government authorities. Habitus can be defined as a form of behaviour that is learned through acculturation, accepted as 'normal' by common public opinion, and reinforced through auto-repetition. While the generations who experienced a different form of life might have resisted the newly formed government and its philosophy, their children born into a communist regime and going to school run by the Red Party were highly assimilated into the working-class ideology of the dominant,

and only, political party. As outlined earlier, each aspect of their education involved an ideological component and the physical practices associated with education were building the ‘habitus’ necessary to create a successful and productive communist society. The compulsory uniforms, composed of blue dark blue trousers for boys and skirts for girls, as well as the white shirts and red scarves for both sexes represented the Red Party symbolism and reinforced the children’s commitment to the communist ethic (see Illustration 1). The morning gatherings always featured a proclamation of great new feats of the USSR in various fields, and often included the singing of the national hymn followed by morning physical exercise routines (Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*; Kondratieva and Taborko). In sports and dance clubs such representations were not always prioritized by the coaches, but had to be adhered to in overall set up and performance to keep receiving government patronage. This meant that while the technique remained the same, it was used for state approved choreographies only (Alex Interview). However, I argue that any technique is influenced by the context and culture in which it exists and therefore changes accordingly as part of this group’s ‘habitus’. To support this claim, I will provide a detailed comparative analysis of Soviet based ballroom dance technique and western ballroom dance technique using LMA in the next chapter.

4.4 Nationalism and Dance in Other Countries

Every society indoctrinates, and the question on how this is done is usually predicated on method and scope rather than on existence. Dance as an embodied cultural artifact carries meaning that is a valuable commodity to the fabric of any society attempting to create a unified state based on a specific ideology. While the use of dance as a political tool in the USSR was particularly remarkable, it was not the only nation to apply such strategies to control cultural

developments in their territory. For example, Shay points out that in the 1990s Ballet Folklórico de México was presenting a light and joyful Chiapas dance choreography ‘masking’ the violent raids that were taking place in the villages of that region (1). The author invokes Calhoun’s notion of ‘aestheticized politics’ to explain the functioning of nationalist imagery in folk dance ensembles such as the Ballet Folklórico (6-7). He argues that such strategies are particularly powerful because they are presented as apolitical and historical while actually serving the state’s ideological agenda. Dance scholar, Ruth Hellier-Tinoco, also brings up the dance of the three old men and the festival of the night of the dead as constructing an image of Mexicanness favourable to the government and obscuring the hardships the country has undergone, such as the 1968 massacre or the continuous marginalization of minority indigenous groups (5). In both cases, the joyful presentation and character of these folk dances and performances are hiding the grim realities of the daily lives for Mexican minorities. Unfortunately, the cause of these problems can often be traced to the same government bodies that sponsor these dances.

In another example, anthropologist Christopher Nelson discusses how the Japanese have promoted their own culture as a way of suppressing Okinawan identity in Japan. Nelson argues that since “the beginning of the modern era in Japan, a central narrative of national history [was] substituted for the content of divergent local or individual remembrance. A powerful ideological complex that suggests a unified subjectivity, a shared origin, and a common destination” (12). The majority culture in this country is promoted as the only valid one, and regional differences are ignored despite the violent history between the centre and peripheries of Japanese territories. Okinawan dances and other performance practices are denied funding and political support while Japanese culture is heavily promoted. This approach is reminiscent of the Soviet Union’s unifying ideologies, where regional dances were used to promote multiculturalism while the

actual states of origin of these dances were being marginalized and oppressed by the central government (Shay 2).

4.5 Multiculturalist Education in Canada

While Canadian dance and education can also be seen as nationalistic and government controlled, the type of nationalism and authority they exhibit are of a different nature. The North American ethos of multi-culturalism and Canadian tolerance for other cultures within its own territory foster a system that places inclusion and acceptance above nationalistic pride or individual achievement. On Canada's Immigration and Citizenship website, the main slogan states that "Canada recognizes the cultural heritage and potential of all Canadians. We encourage everyone to be part of Canada's social, cultural, economic and political affairs." (CIC) The mandate emphasises diversity and inclusion in all fields of social life. As Gnosh and Abdi (14) point out, in multicultural societies education helps develop the social perspective needed to follow a democratic vision of the common good. However, this understanding of education was created over time by several critical theorists. At the start of the 20th century, thinkers like Emile Durkheim and John Dewey promoted Consensus theories which considered education to be a transmission system of cultural capital and viewed school as the great equalizer of classes. Their theories persisted into the 1950s in Western Europe and North America. However, by the mid-1900s their stand was disrupted by Conflict theorists such as Paolo Freire and Bowles and Gintis who argued that such an approach masked the differences inherent in the population of students and perpetuated inequality through the support of existing racial and social hierarchies. Structural Functionalists like Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton, writing in the 1950s and 1960s, expanded on the (Functionalist) Consent theory and viewed education as an assimilation tool

providing opportunities of social mobility if the learners would be shaped in the image of the majority. And finally, cultural pluralists like Steeler, and Appleton began considering the adaptation of the dominant group as a priority in diversity promotion by 1980s. This gradual conceptual development of educational philosophy illustrates the challenges of multicultural pedagogy in North America (Gnosh and Abdi 17-18), added to the Canada's history of colonisation and large numbers of immigrants.

Despite the progress in the educational approaches in this country, several issues with diversity remain intact. Even though Canadian schools have increasingly housed minority, native, and immigrant populations since the mid twentieth century, their teacher population remained largely white and of European descent. This situation created difficulties for the adaptation by a pluralist pupil environment to a largely homogenous body of authority figures. Johnston et al. argue that many teachers come into the profession with personal and cultural background-based expectations. As a result, they experience identity crises during their initiation into the field because of the varied and conflicted demands placed on them in a multi-cultural classroom. Cultural theorist, Mark Williams, states in his discussion of North American multiculturalism, that there are several attitudes that can come out of such crises, including assimilationist, culturecentrist, or color blind, each with its own set of problems and benefits. However, despite the multifaceted cultural identity of Canadian education, it is clear that certain values tend be emphasised by the governing bodies. Acceptance, tolerance, and inclusion are generally the main values at the root of multicultural education in Canada. The government promotes and supports these values by means of grants and professional development programs in diversity. Canada's government website lists ten different programs and funds that promote its mandate, including the Council for the Arts and Aboriginal Arts, two organisations supporting

the arts in general and aboriginal art in particular (Performing and Visual Arts). The Diversity Institute also provides a training program for teacher trainees in multi-cultural classroom education. Their aim is to educate future teachers in the strategies of teaching a diverse population (Johnston et al.). These initiatives, and the conceptual history of the Canadian education system, influenced the priorities given to the subjects of dance and physical education in the curriculum and affected the way these activities are presented in schools across the country.

4.6 Physical Education in Canada

Education theorist Stephen Duncan et al. show the waves of development of Canadian physical education from the 1950s to the early 2000s. He discusses how WW1 and WW2 gave a strong impetus to physical education in Canadian schools due to the need for an able bodied and fit military. In most provinces, physical education was being taught from grades 1-9 by 1945. Expressing the objectivist and positivist ideas of post-war society, 1950s physical education in Ontario “revolved around analyzing, constructing, and developing tests, in which students needed to master in order to pass and achieve success” (9-10). The 1960s saw a more in- depth theoretical understanding of physical education and its influence on psychological well-being of the individual. Inclusion started to become a priority and segments of society previously deemed unfit for physical activity, such as those differently abled either physically or mentally, began to be targeted as part of physical education initiatives. The 1970s continued the trend of inclusion by encouraging girls’ participation in sport and physical activity. By 1975, several initiatives such as the National Conference on Women in Sport and the national debates surrounding co-ed physical education were promoting this cause. The 1980s saw an increase in emphasis on health

initiatives but a decrease in funding for physical education. The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion was created in 1986 and government sponsored or private AIDS prevention programs ran in many Ontario schools. Meanwhile, however, the minimum physical education requirements were withdrawn from the curriculum and demand for physical educators in schools decreased. The 1990s saw further cutbacks to all aspects of physical education and health. Even though contemporary research was emphasising the importance of physical activity to overall well-being, in practice funds were being taken away from most health and physical education initiatives, including Sport Canada and ParticipACTION. Finally, the early 2000s witnessed the fruition of the research done thus far into the importance of physical education in the curriculum. New legislation produced the Canadian Sport Policy, promoting enhanced participation, excellence, capacity, and interaction. This movement aimed to improve those aspects of Canadian health by 2012 and was supported by the collaboration of several government organisations.

4.7 Dance in Canadian Curricula and Unions

Dance as a physical activity in Canada had a popularity surge in the early 1970s through the work of Joyce Boorman, who used Laban movement systems to prepare dance lessons for the school curriculums (Richard, 9). However, dance has been marginal in most provincial curricula for most 1980s (Hoad). For example, while dance was included in the physical education curriculum in Prince Edward Island, Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (CAHPERD) reports that dance was not a priority and commonly taught by non-specialist teachers. In Manitoba, dance was included in the provincial physical education curriculum in 1981 with the goal being to “to express ideas, thoughts and feelings with

confidence through physical activity” (Hoad 46). However, there is no stated obligation for Manitoba schools to achieve that goal. In Ontario, dance was only officially included in the Ontario Common Curriculum in 1993 and in the subsequent Ontario Curriculum in 1998 (Canada, Ontario Ministry of Education, *part a*; Canada, Ontario Ministry of Education, *part b*; Richard). Much of this early inclusion was less than ideal; dance was taught alongside drama by generalist teachers. No art education was available in teacher programs and most future educators simply had no significant experience in dance. The result was a less than mediocre dance education often intertwined with drama to a point of symbiosis of the two separate subjects (Richard 8-10; Hoad). Similarly, within the professional domain, Canadian dancers were historically represented by Canadian Actors Equity Association and its sister organisation in Quebec, Union des Artistes. While this might have been beneficial to a specific group of dancers whose work fit Equity’s framework, such as ballet and musical theater dancers, many other independent dance artists found themselves excluded from this organization. The Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists - Ontario Chapter (CADA-ON), an organisation informally representing the rights of dancers who felt excluded from Equity’s support was formalized in the early 1990’s and gained corporate status in 1995 (Lohead 3) with a British Columbia chapter CADA-West officially joining in 1999. They attempted to gain bargaining rights for their members to the federal government but were refused. They continued to advocate for dancers’ rights and eventually published a document “outlining acceptable standards for use by the community” (5), titled Professional Standards for Dance (PSD), which includes recommendations on rights and responsibilities of dancers, fees, working conditions, and discrimination. This document serves as an unofficial guideline for Canadian dancers working as independent artists.

These brief outlines of dance in the Canadian provincial school curriculums and in the union system available to professional dancers illustrate a general lack of government support for dance in the Ontario school system and point out flaws in the institutions supporting dance as an independent discipline in Canada. Such circumstances, however, created a vibrant community of active dancers who were motivated to put dance on the agenda in this country and who volunteered their time and effort to build Canadian dance institutions and a performance base. Taking advantage of the programs available from the Canadian Arts Councils on federal, provincial, and municipal levels, some of these artists were able to gain access to continued funding in the form of grants and subsidies. As a result, they were able to found Canada's major dance institutions which are now recognised as Canadian dance representatives world-wide.

4.8 Major Developments in Canadian Dance History

In contrast to dance as a physical activity or a political entity, dance as a performing art and social activity has had a long history in Canada. Stretching from early twentieth century social dance schools to the formation of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1938, to the creation of university dance programs such as that at York University in 1970 (Department of Dance York University), and the spread of many independent contemporary and multi-cultural choreographers in major cities like Toronto and Montreal in the 1980s (Fraser; Tembeck "Walking the Tightrope"), dance culture in Canada was spearheaded by several important figures and events, a few of which are presented here. From the beginning, Canada's role as a country of immigrants has played a large part in the development of its artistic traditions. All three of its largest ballet companies were founded by immigrant dancers, French and English interactions

continuously enriched its culture, and new dance styles from the middle east and south Asia were introduced into the Canadian dance repertoire by immigrants from these areas of the world.



Figure 7. A newspaper ad for Boris Volkoff's first School of Dance, 1930. Courtesy of Dance Collection Dance (Sutcliffe 1930)

Dance Collection Dance archives in Toronto provide a good number of records of dance activity in Canada dating as far back as the late 1800s. The archive reveals that schools like that of Laccasse Morenoff provided classes in various popular dances such as the English Waltz, the Quickstep, and the Tango at least since the 1890s. The school also offered classes in classical ballet in the styles of Cecchetti and the Russian school (Morenoff, DCD). In the early 1900s popular dance masters such as Allison Sutcliffe were also advertising Spanish dance, Modern dance, improvisation, and composition, taught at various dance schools across the country (Sutcliffe, DCD; Warner). By the 1930's Boris Volkoff was offering ballet classes at the School of the Dance in Toronto, while the DaCosta school of Dance was inviting children to tap dancing intensives.

Ballroom dance events were common social occasions where social elites could mingle and show off their dancing skills. These events ranged from university convocation balls to simple social gatherings. Ballroom dance pavilions were also popular around Canadian shorefronts in the first part of the 20th century. They were more accessible than the fancy balls

advertised above and provided an opportunity for middle class youth to socialise and dance the popular dances of the era, including the ballroom dances and various swing variations (Young, AoO).

Most of these schools and events were private enterprises run by the social elite or highly invested professionals. Continuing the European ‘dance master’ and ‘dance ball’ traditions, these were institutions interwoven into the fabric of Canadian society either as part of popular social life or as entertainment. There was little if any government support and funds for their subsistence had to be gathered either through private donors or bank loans (Collier; Young, AoO). Despite the increase in government involvement in the arts since that time, this capitalist based outlook is still a major part of the dance industry in Canada, especially within the ballroom dance industry.

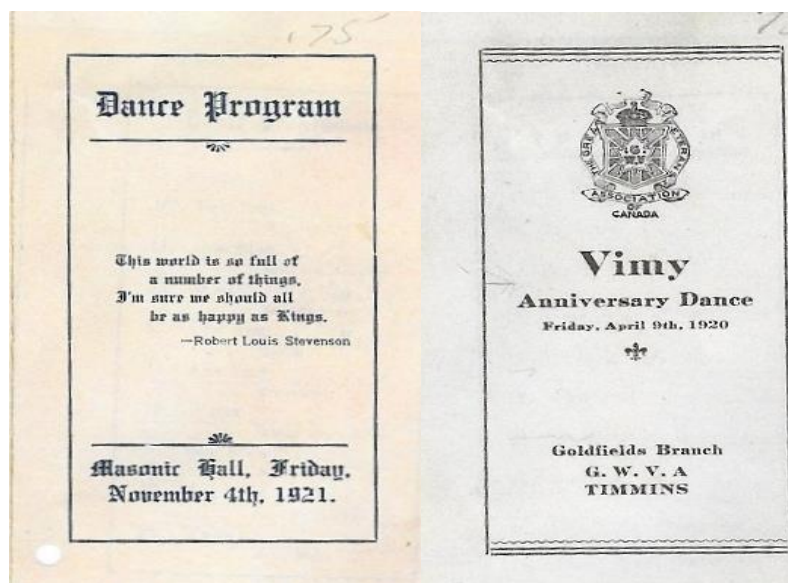


Figure 8. Invitations to a ball and an anniversary dance. 1921 & 1920. Courtesy of Dance Collection Danse. (Flea Market Collection – Dance Cards)

4.9 Concert Dance in Canada

At the same time, Canadian concert dance was developing its identity, starting with ballet pioneers such as Gwyneth Lloyd in Winnipeg and Boris Volkoff in Toronto. Lloyd arrived in Canada in 1938 and began building the Winnipeg Royal ballet in the early 1940's. She created one of the most iconic Canadian ballet companies and played a major part in developing the identity of Canadian ballet. For Lloyd, this identity needed to separate itself from British roots and be based around Canadian landscapes and life style (Blewchamp). Boris Volkoff, an immigrant from Russia, considered by many to be the father of Canadian Ballet, arrived in Toronto in 1929 and opened his first school in 1930. He continued to develop ballet in Canada into the early 1970s, staging classical productions such as *Prince Igor* and *Swan Lake* as well as several abstract pieces in his later years. As a choreographer, Volkoff is credited with exposing the Canadian dance scene to the rest of the world (Collier). Celia Franca, the founder of the National Ballet of Canada (NBoC), worked for decades to develop this company and bring it national funding and international recognition starting from 1951 (Fisher-Stitt). Grant Strate, a dancer at the NBoC, went on to develop the first Canadian post-secondary dance program at York University in Toronto, a model for many others to come across the country (Strate). In 1957, Liudmilla Chiriaeff, another Russian émigré had founded Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Quebec's largest and most known ballet company (Tembeck, "Politics and Dance").

Since Canada didn't directly censor any dance productions or strictly regulate dance education, these artists were able to develop their own visions of dance performance and pedagogy. Gwyneth Lloyd and Celia Franca, coming from the British school, based much of their pedagogical methodology on that foundation despite altering their performance practices to suit Canadian audiences. Volkoff and Chiriaeff taught Russian style but adjusted their approach

for Canadian pupils. His performances began with classical productions but evolved into more abstract and creative pieces as he became comfortable with the creative freedom available in his new homeland. Strate was able to bring dance into the academic world, therefore opening the doors for critical analysis of dance and choreography as social constructs.

While expressing some of the multicultural identity and the inclusive politics of the Canadian ethos, these pioneers of Canadian dance, worked primarily in classical western dance. This situation was soon changed by a new generation of dancers who had visions of their own and attempted to break away from the ballet traditions.

The *15 Dance Collective* formed in 1972 in Toronto. Having been trained in the ballet environment, its founders and former NBoC members Lawrence and Miriam Adams together with the rest of the group ended up rejecting many of its conventions to form and perform their own post-modern ideas of dance. They experimented with choreographic methods, vocabulary conventions, and performance staging. As a whole they were the Canadian post-modern, post-ballet explorers and opened doors for many contemporary choreographers to come from Toronto's dance scene (Fisher). In the province of Quebec, where the strict Catholic doctrine prevented dance development until the mid-1950s, such developments were late coming but significant. Dance programs began appearing in Quebec's educational institutions in the 1960s, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal were formed in 1972, and new French Canadian experimental dance groups were appearing in Montreal by 1980s. Quebec's history of the repression of dance encouraged the newly founded dance collectives to be especially revolutionary in their approach and created the unique characteristics of French Canadian dance we still witness today (Tembeck, "Politics and Dance" 277-80). Beside pure artistic exploration, the development of experimental choreography in 1960's and 1970's Canada demonstrates the liberal artistic values

prominent in the north American art scene during that period and the wave of political liberalism inspired by the hippie and anti-war movements of the era. However, these practices were not widely recognized by either the public or government bodies until the late twentieth century, much later than such innovations in other art forms (Reynolds and McCormick 393).

Other, non-western, dance forms co-existed with the main streams of ballet and modern dance in Canada but occupied a more marginal role in the performing arts industry. Belly dancing for example, was taught in small classes in the 1980's and the amateur troupes attending them would perform at cultural festivals, community centres, and weddings. This highly exoticised dance form was still desired mainly for its presumed erotic connotations and mystic roots. The actual reality of various geographical, stylistic, and cultural meanings was often ignored by the Canadian public and dance industry's governing bodies (Fraser). Even though certain grants were available to cultural dance groups, such as the touring grant to Menaka Thakkar's Indian Dance company performing around the country in the 1980's, the larger operating grants were still reserved for the big ballet and modern companies. Similarly, to belly dancing, much non-western dance was viewed as 'other' by both the arts councils and the public (Cornell). Many of the multiculturalist proclamations of the Canadian government within its cultural and educational sectors, in practice, still excluded most non-western cultural arts and minority communities.

Despite its roots in western colonialism, ballroom dancing was also largely ignored as a serious dance practice by the Canadian government and public because it was viewed as leisurely pursuit rather than an artistic or athletic practice. In order to sustain themselves, competitive ballroom dancers had to create their own niche and utilize the cultural capital of ballroom dance as a popular hobby. They would commonly teach recreational classes and organize pro-am

competitions to generate income, a move which eventually determined the direction of the development of this dance form within the Canadian cultural landscape.

4.10 Ballroom Dance in Canada

As mentioned above, ballroom dance as a social activity was enjoyed by many Canadians during the first part of the twentieth century (Young, AoO; Sutcliffe, DCD; Warner). However, its development as a competitive form was slower in the making. According to the Canadian dancesport website (DanceSport Canada) Canada was a member of FIDA (Federation Internationale de Danse pour Amateurs) before 1938, although there is no printed documentation in this respect. By the 1950s, Canada's Amateur Association had formed in Ontario, representing amateur ballroom dancers in the country and organising the structure of training and competitions. By 1969, Canada had four ballroom dancing associations, two of which included professionals. These associations continued to grow and develop their curriculum, eventually uniting as a national organisation in the 1970s. Through these developments and the loosening of the clergy's influence in Quebec, French Canadians began to appear at DanceSport competitions and eventually came to dominate the field as competitive dancers and later as teachers and adjudicators (DanceSport Canada). Soviet emigrant dancers began to arrive in the 1990's but were not prominently visible as a political unit in the DanceSport community until the new millennium, by which time they were able to build significant cultural capital and establish a community base for themselves. As they settled in major cities in Canada, they imported their training methods and discipline ethics into the Canadian dance world. These methods were very effective and resulted in the Soviet immigrants eventually dominating the Canadian dance scene and its international representation.

As with concert dance, the Canadian DanceSport industry is built on the principles of multiculturalism, inclusion, and pluralist integration. The waves of influence in this form reflect the historical shifts in the role of dance, contemporary educational philosophies, and diasporic migration waves. The early twentieth century was characterized by the gradual development of the competitive side of ballroom dance around Ontario inspired by similar process in the United Kingdom. The 1960's and 1970's saw a secularization of education in Quebec and a consequent increase of dance activity coming out of that province, including ballroom. The 1990's and early 2000's were marked by the influx of eastern European immigrants with long standing traditions of dance practice which they imported into Canada. As with other dance forms, ballroom dance was not officially included in school until the late 1990's and still doesn't have a teaching syllabus for the educational system in this country. It has never been unionized and its practitioners rarely apply for grants or other types of government sponsorship. More than any other dance form, ballroom reflects the capitalist economy of this country. Franchised dance studios, such as Arthur Murray sell dance lessons as a part of a 'luxury lifestyle' (arthurmurray.ca) and independent studios rely heavily on pro-am students for subsistence. As Juliet McMains explains in her description of the ballroom dance industry in the USA, the 'glamour machine' of ballroom dance survives on and perpetuates the capitalist economy while increasingly becoming commercialized through television shows and advertising of competitive ballroom dance to the general audience as a popular pass time.

The next chapter will look at three DanceSport studios run by Soviet immigrants in Canada to illustrate these developments and their effects on the immigrant dancers' values and practices. To illustrate these processes, I will examine how Soviet ideology and training methods intermesh with Canadian cultural principles and socio-economic realities of the DanceSport industry in North America.



Figure 9. 2011 Canadian Closed DanceSport Championship line up. The 1st couple are Soviet immigrants, the 2nd couple are French Canadian, and the 3rd is Chinese Canadian and Ukrainian Canadian duo. (DanceSport Canada, Dec. 20, 2012)

Chapter 5

Ethnographic Present:

Case Studies in Three Canadian Studios

The sociological, economic, and political realities of a nation are necessarily intertwined with the cultural identities of its citizens. Whether it is through education, work ethics, or cultural policy, these macro processes inevitably affect the micro processes of individual agency and identity. In the interview excerpts that follow, I show the reader a mirror of larger social processes in the personal perspectives of the participants on their training, performance, and cultural integration. Within this framework, dance, as a medium of expression, is important at all socio-cultural levels and reflects the embodiment of national structures through the filter of individual character and identity. These reflections are further complicated by diasporic movements which confuse and distort the linearity of traditional citizen formation processes of a nation, represented by the performing arts. The lack of a unifying national identity creates conflicting approaches to both training and performance in dance. Many of the participants live, train, and even represent Canada at international competitions while still claiming to maintain their Soviet identity. Moreover, second generation immigrants who are brought up in Canada, do not perceive their Soviet-Canadian identity in the same manner as their parents. Instead, they cultivate a selected mix of characteristics from the two cultures that suit their individual agendas and aspirations.

I organise this chapter by overarching themes, which are reflected upon through the voices of the coaches, dancers, and their parents. These voices are contextualized in their

historical context and discussed through the theoretical lenses shown in the Literature Review and Historical Context chapters. My main aim here is to demonstrate the links between historical events, relevant literature, and people's experiences. I begin by discussing the relationship and contrast between the political system of socialism and the concept of social or leisure activity, and continue with a review of studio organization and training methodology in Soviet style DanceSport institutions. Following, I deconstruct dual cultural identities of immigrant dancers, show how appropriation affects competitive ballroom dance, and discuss the role of global communication and travel technology in this industry. Finally, I look at gender roles in this diasporic context, examine sponsorship and funding in this industry, and make parallels between Soviet diaspora and the development of DanceSport from ballroom dance.

5.1 Socialist Attitudes in a Social Dance Environment

Coach Interview – Yan, Ottawa DanceSport

D – And in terms of the general approach to teaching and learning do you find there are differences [in DanceSport between former Soviet Union and Canada]?

Y – I find there are differences in coaching, I feel the way people who come from Eastern Europe, tend to have a specific approach to coaching. They tend to supervise and manage their dancers, in a good sense, so that the dancers can concentrate only on the dancing and win...another thing which I feel it's more social dancing here than in Russia or Ukraine. It might have changed since but in my experience, I was shocked when I came here to see that people dance for fun because I was convinced that everybody is doing it for competition. I never thought that social dancing exists before I came to Canada.

As outlined in the previous chapter, there were significant historical differences in Soviet and North American approaches to DanceSport. What Yan points to here is the Soviet ‘club system’ for sport activities, where the hierarchical division with the coach on top, followed by senior students, and then the younger students, dominates. It is true that in that system the student is freed of the responsibility to organize his/her training; however, it is important to note that such an approach was facilitated by financial support from government bodies and consequently released the coaches from the responsibility of having to sustain the studio economically. This system was also logistically supported by the bureaucratic hierarchical structure of sport institutions in the USSR which encouraged communal values as well as a clear division of authority and responsibility (Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*; RSFM). Moreover, Soviet dance training was generally systematic and government controlled in both pedagogy and choreography as we can witness from the many government commissioned dance manuals of the period (Alexeeva; Chaïkovskaia; *Tantsy: Usmanskii Pereplias “Dokazyvai”*). In conjunction with ideological doctrine embedded in the educational institutions, such an approach allowed for the hierarchical control necessary to maintain the synchrony between the political ideology of the state and its cultural institutions (Giersdorf, *Body of the People*; Shay; Shneidman, *Literature and Ideology*).

Yan also confirms the lack of social dancing in the former Soviet Union, a fact which also contributed to the development of ballroom dancing as a sport discipline in that country. As is evidenced by the shunning of ballroom dancing in the early communist years (W. Hahn; Vova and Laura interview); as leisure pursuit, it was viewed as a bourgeois activity and therefore an activity which was anti-communist. However, with its later designation as a sport, and the inclusion of national dances in its early curriculum, ballroom dancing has gained the legitimacy

that allowed it to gain public popularity and government support (Russian Federation Sports Ministry; Vova and Laura interview). As a result, this dance form was included in national physical education curricula and was a prestigious activity and a potential future profession for selected children. In contrast, the existence of social dance alongside the competitive one has guided the development of the ballroom industry in Canada toward the opposite direction (Morenoff; Sutcliffe; Warner; Young). The commodification of dance through the proliferation of social dance studios, and rise of the Pro-Am industry (see **Table 2**) selling dance lessons as a key to etiquette in elite social classes has created a perception of ballroom dance as a luxury social activity in this country rather than a sport (McMains; Morenoff; Warner). Furthermore, the general popularity of ballroom dancing as a social dance form in the 1950's has left lasting mark on the public identity of DanceSport in Canada. Even with the rise of competitive dancing post WW2, labels such as 'luxury' or 'social' still remain the main markers of ballroom dancing for the general population in Canada and affect how these forms are taught and are perceived by government bodies. Ballroom dancing in Canada is neither viewed as a serious professional pursuit nor a legitimate sport²⁶ (Ottawa Parents interview; Sports Canada). This positionality results in a clear lack of legislative or financial support for this dance form as a physical activity in Canada.²⁷ Furthermore, multicultural education policies predominant in Canadian education encourage learner-focused training rather than a result-based selective approach used in the USSR (Duncan; Gnosh and Abdi). This reality limits the potential of this competition-based dance form and ostracizes Soviet style teaching methodologies. The following interview excerpt

²⁶ This is a fact which can be seen through the gaps rather than presences. There is a lack of literature about this form; as well there is at the lack of recognition of it as a sport activity by the government bodies despite its recognition by the Olympic committee.

²⁷ In my own attempts to secure funding for these studios, I failed several times. Neither the sports or arts funding bodies seem to be welcoming to the structure of DanceSport, which lies between the two and has been traditionally privately funded.

from the focus group of Parents in Ottawa explains these differences further from an immigrant's perspective:

Parents Focus Group – Ottawa DanceSport

D – Why do you think there are such differing views between the USSR and Canada? [In regard to dance training organization]

4²⁸ – Everything was free back then, they would just choose the best candidates for various sports from schools and take them in...here they take everyone, there, there was always a selection...and if you got chosen that meant you were good at that activity.

3 – The schedule was very strict if you were chosen and were following that activity...There was no talk of money, we didn't have to pay anything...Now probably you have to pay... now everything is at a price...If you were chosen there for a certain sport, you didn't do anything else...when I was chosen to swim, I could forget about dance or other sports...I had to train a few hours every day then do tournaments on the weekends and go away to camps in other towns during holidays...

5 – It was a different system; all the sports schools there were result oriented. Here it is simply for excitement...you come and enjoy it...there were no private schools...all the schools were based on results, every trainer trained you to get results, to make you a champion...that is not the case here, I didn't observe this here...

4 – Here overall there is no such a professional sport industry...here beyond talent, the parents need to provide financial support...

²⁸ I numbered the parents in this interview because I had a hard time distinguishing who was talking on this interview recording. Their pseudonyms can be found in Table 3.

This interview demonstrates that the presence of free education and training did not guarantee free access, rather it was an ability-based selection, similar to that used for team sports in Canada except on a larger scale and for a bigger number of activities. Talent scouts would visit the schools yearly and would choose the best candidates in any given sport or other physical activities such as dance or figure skating (Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*; Kondrat'eva and Taborko; Bobrova; Chaïkovskaia). There was also an expected and exclusive commitment, whereby you had to specialize in the activity chosen for you and focus your energy on it. Ballet conservatories even boarded students, providing them with regular schooling in addition to ballet training (The Children of Theatre Street; Zhdanov). Because the training was free and the supply of students consistent from the schooling institutions, the rewards for the coaches were not dependent on the number of fee paying students but on their performance at competitions or demonstrations. Better results, especially at the international level, could lead to more opportunities and prestige. Some potential for increase in monetary rewards was possible in higher positions but was not significant enough to be the main motivation for the coaches (Alex interview; Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*).

In Canada, the multicultural education policies combined with capitalist economy have developed a different industry in both arts and sports. While educational theories developed since the start of the century have provided Canada with an education policy which attempts to cope with the cultural diversity present in this country, they have had to let go of their early result-oriented philosophies in favour of more inclusive approaches, which prioritize participation and personal development (CIC; Gnosh and Abdi; Johnston et al.), a strategy which also fits the social dancing model in Ballroom dance (McMains). This change has been a gradual one and has shaped the educational strategies in Canadian arts and sports industries. However, to an

immigrant from Eastern Europe unfamiliar with this system, the contrast might appear drastic and the methodology ineffective, as we can witness from the comments in the above interview. Nevertheless, there is some evidence of the lack of prioritization of physical education and dance in Canada due to budget cuts and competing provincial interests (Duncan; Howe; Naik). The largely capitalist system of economic governance has maintained national and individual profit-making as the main focus of funding initiatives and only the fields which are popular and profitable receive government support, which is maintained as long as the demand remains steady in a given activity. This approach is still evident today in the sports that receive the most funding and are considered the most 'Canadian' such as hockey, curling, or skiing (AthletesCAN; Sport Canada). Many other sport and dance schools function as private institutions, run for profit, and must depend on the fees of their clients to make ends meet financially. This dependency often precludes a result-oriented approach in favour of client satisfaction initiatives aimed to maintain a steady income for the schools (McMains; Alex interview). On the surface, a client-oriented model appears to be in line with Canadian multiculturalist and inclusive education policies, especially if the profit motive is muted by both practitioners and policy makers; however, there is a big difference between publicly funded institutions and private ones in terms of both motivation and practical approach.

In the Canadian cultural context, due to the historical development and predominance of multicultural education methodology, the result-oriented methods of the Soviet schools are often deemed authoritarian (Smith) and viewed as negative or at least overtly abrasive. From a psychological perspective these differences arise from differing motivational climates. The Canadian system is based on autonomous motives which encourage enjoyment, value identification, and greater internalization of skill. This environment tends to build enduring

personal interest and self-sustainable effort. The Soviet methodology favors controlled motives based on introjected goal striving, regulated by goal pursuit, and managed through a punishment-reward system. Such an environment can create anxiety as well as feeling of guilt in the student and requires constant feedback from the coaches (Miulli and Bates; Smith et al.). However, the students in those schools do not always agree with this perception. These comments by the young dancers from Ottawa DanceSport demonstrate how they see their own education in a Canadian public high school and dance training in a private ballroom dance studio based on the Soviet system.

Children Focus Group – Ottawa DanceSport

D - Do you find the teaching similar or different between school / dance? If yes, how do you feel about each?

H – The teachers at my academic school are more easy going and honest, I feel like they're more guidance councillors than really teachers at this point because they're really trying to make you feel at home whereas they really should just teach you. Here they're just teachers and they're teaching you but at the same time they're really teaching you everything you need to know.

S – It's a really different compared to our teachers, because academically they're always like marks don't count it's all about effort and support...and here it's like oh you didn't die, you have to work hard and practice more!

J – Teachers here they strive you for success, they want you to do well, while the teachers at school they're like...the teachers here they also gather that information so that you feel like number 1 while at school they're just like 'yeah, here is what you need do, just do well, have a

good day' the teachers at school they don't really strive you for success while here they do everything they can.

We can gather from these young people's responses that they are not satisfied with the inclusive approach in the Canadian public education and prefer the more rigid and result-based training they receive at the dance studio. Many of them also mentioned receiving similar training in mathematics, music, martial arts, and Russian language. Certainly, their parents' and coaches' attitudes play a role in these responses; but nevertheless, their voices are clearly consensual. They are unlikely to know all of the theoretical background behind the style of academic education in Canada and its potential consequences for their future lives (Gnosh and Abdi; Miulli and Bates; Smith: Smith et al.), however, they are comfortable in the system they are in at the studio and are certainly not doing ballroom dancing 'socially' or as a simple form of leisure activity. Their perspectives demonstrate how the socialist ethic of merit-based activity has migrated through their coaches and parents from the Soviet Union to their 2nd generation immigrant children in Canada. As more and more Soviet schools opened up around Canada, and dancers from these institutions achieved high results at competitions, the Canadian ballroom dance industry also began to change. Despite the continuing trend of social dance studios, a more definitive trend towards a sport-based approach can be seen in Canadian DanceSport industry since the 1990's (DanceSport Canada; World DanceSport Federation [WDSF]). In this environment, the contrasting educational approaches in school and training create a possibility for a mixed cultural identity in the younger participants. As Hobsbawm and Ranger point out, cultural traditions are adjusted in a new context to make room for the new ways of life while retaining some of the original home values (5).



Figure 10. Group class at Ottawa DanceSport. Photo by author.

5.2 Dual Identities

Dancers Interview – Alesia and Stan, Montreal DanceSport

D – So do you feel that something is different between you and them? (Soviet Immigrant parents and their children)

S – Yes, there certainly is a difference, it's hard to say, the way we are different is subtle...

D – I mean we are generalizing, but if you had to generalize how would you describe it?

A – I am a lot more open minded than they are.

S – Essentially it is same; I'd say I am very similar to my parents. My dad was into high-level sports when he was young and my mom was into school so I feel very similar. I mean from each I am trying to do school as well as well as I can, and dance as well as I can. To perform as well as I can. The main difference is that I try to combine both.

A – My dad was an athlete when he was in university, so like he would wake up at 5 and work out until 11 so he always pushed me to do a lot of sports. Karate, boxing, dance, not just sports also arts, so piano, activities a lot of them. So, since I was young, I learned to combine a lot of activities so I don't really stress with the time.

D – And do you find there are cultural differences?

S – A bit more but...it is the same thing because I grew up there till I was eleven but I adapted to here as a kid more to this environment, and society. I am more open to things and ideas than them. They might be a bit more closed to other cultures I find.

A – Well, I was basically born here and I grew up in this society and generation, so for me it's kinda different. Like for my sister and brother it's the same but it's different for me, they're more similar to my parents but I feel different.

D – In what ways?

A – Well, generally but I don't know...I came here when I was eleven months so while I feel similarities to them I also feel very different.

This couple attempts to define the cultural differences and similarities between their generation's and their parents' immigrant identities. We can gather from their response that they have inherited the discipline, the ability for time management, and the drive to succeed like their parents, who akin to many of the Soviet nationals grew up with 'physical culture' (Kondrat'eva and Taborko) and an authoritarian education which aimed at to instilling discipline and patriotism in the children (Bobrova; Shneidman, *Literature and Ideology*; Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*). In terms of diasporic integration, these participants express their openness to other cultures as the difference between them and their parents, which is likely a result of Canadian multicultural population and education (Gnosh and Abdi; Johnston et al.) which values

an integrationist approach to cultural difference, where different cultures are encouraged to retain their identities, customs, and religious beliefs all the while adopting a Canadian nationality (CIC; Williams). While encompassing many cultural varieties, the Soviet approach was more assimilationist in its approach to its members (W. Hahn). A lifestyle based on Bolshevik ethic was promoted and indirectly enforced by means of a panoptic-type government observation (Foucault; Lemke). Cultural differences, such as traditional customs and social etiquette between the Soviet republics were praised if they suited the Union's political communist narrative and suppressed or ignored if they didn't. This politically motivated approach to the arts was also visible in the Soviet dance industry (Shay; W. Hahn). National folk dances of the republics were 'cleaned up' and displayed as a rainbow of Soviet Unity (Shay). In contrast, in daily life, a working-class ethic dominated and citizens were expected to conform to it regardless of their culture or background. Such an ethic, that is based on labour, also explains the immigrant parents' adaptation to 'Canadian culture' and their simultaneous lack of comfort with some aspects of cultural and class diversity in Canada.

Stuart Hall, in his work on identity politics, states that 'identity is always in the process of becoming' (*Cultural Identity* 4). While Hall's argument was largely addressing race politics in late 20th century UK, his conceptualisation of identity as a shifting entity can also be useful in understanding how these second-generation immigrants come to construct their cultural self-representations by combining both Soviet and Canadian characteristics. Because their identities are tied to dance at this moment of their lives they relate their experiences to those of their parents in terms of activities, mental and physical discipline, and perfectionism. However, their subtle yet consistent insistence that there are differences speaks to their, at least partial, self-identification as Canadians. If these teenagers are having trouble articulating where exactly these

differences can be found, it is perhaps because they are still negotiating them in their socio-cultural context and within the activities they involve themselves in. When performance studies scholar Diana Taylor discusses immigrant identities through the lens of post-colonial attitudes in the USA, she points to the fact that the cultural identities of immigrants and their offspring are always divided between their old and new homes (xv). She argues that in order to resolve these dualities immigrants tend to negotiate their hybrid identities through their actions and attitudes. Taylor recounts her encounter with a Cuban band playing illegally in Central park, ultimately forced to leave by black and Latin American police officers, as an example of such a negotiation (266-78). Similarly, the dancers in my research are already negotiating their dual identities by participating in a marginal dance form in Canada and doing it in a Soviet style dance studio. Since much of the rest of their daily lives exist in a scenario of a Canadian lifestyle, this is one of the ways they express their immigrant roots. Even if they were first introduced to this dance form by their parents, they chose to continue practicing it themselves. As first-generation immigrants, their parents also negotiate their identities in a similar manner, albeit with more Soviet characteristics still ingrained in them. As Ziff and Rao point out, they often act as partial gatekeepers of old values while their children test their boundaries.

Parents Focus Group – Montreal DanceSport

D – And how do you think your children are different from how you were growing up in the Soviet Union?

M – They have more choice here, for us over there we had to do it a certain way and that's it...

L – I remember trainers came from the stadium and chose the sportiest kids, and I was very sportive so I went to train also...

M - Yes, we lived in such circumstances where we had to do it whether we want to or not, here, we as parents give them an idea and they choose themselves.

L – Yes, I just gave him (son) the idea and then he went for it himself...

M – Yes, it is a free choice here...

G – I feel that we were independent there...completely independent whereas here they are completely dependent on the parents, and it is our own fault!

L – Yes, I went to the stadium myself...nobody brought me...

G – Because there we had family, uncles and aunts, grandfathers and mothers, and here it's only mother and father...and that's why hover over this child...

L – It's true, we can't leave the child to go alone on the roads here...

G – Well, because it is illegal to leave a child under 12 alone...that's why everyone drives them.

L – It's also a big city...besides the law I am a little afraid to leave them.

G – But we did it ourselves, we went to school ourselves we would come home and cook, we were independent, but it was a different life, different lifestyle...

L – Yes, Yes, Yes

M – I am not so finicky with mine, in my house every child, even if they are 5 has a couple of chores per day...the oldest one the same...she comes home and does her own homework, and cleans her room...I can't say that it's really completely dependent on me...it is true that we can't leave them to walk around the city alone, in that sense they are not independent.

Besides the differing cultural and legal expectations of child supervision these parents are pointing out the element of 'choice' in these children's lives. Following Hall's analysis these migrants have shifted from the *Presence Europeene* to *Presence Americaine* ("Who Needs Identity"), therefore shifting from the place of hegemonic construction of knowledge to the place

of cultural confrontation, creolization, and points of new becoming (Evans and Mannur 230). Naturally, their freedom of choice has become more prominent. Even their Soviet-raised parents cannot dictate to them the choices of their activities and attitudes. Ironically their independence has decreased. This apparent incongruence can be explained through Edward Roach's discussion of diasporic identities, where he states that the diasporic community negotiates and reinforces its identity through ritual (Roach). In this case the rituals of daily commutes, chores, and the parent-child relationship dynamics were negotiated and adapted to Canadian standards and laws. Following Roach's analysis, we can examine the diasporic dance studios and even competitions as spaces which can become true 'vortices of behaviour' where traces of the past can be seen merging with the present through embodied expression of the participants. In these spaces identities are negotiated and reinstated through the ritual of DanceSport. This author's formulation of identity also gives space for personal self-expression to interact with social processes in a dynamic relationship. That is the space where the degrees of difference can be seen between the dancers' and their parents' interpretations of their diasporic identities.

Coaches Interview – Olia and Misha, Montreal DanceSport

D – And do you have a lot of kids from the Soviet Union?

A – I would say 90% of the studio

D – Do you find there is a reason why there are so many of them here?

A – I think just because of the culture...

M – Do you mean those who were born there?

D – No, also those whose parents are from the former USSR...

M – Ah, yeah...and these kids are more disciplined...

D – Do you find that compared with others they are more disciplined?

A – We can see a big difference with the kids raised in the Soviet Union and the ones who were born here, it already makes a difference...

M – We have some newcomers now coming from Ukraine and Moldova and they are really disciplined...but the parents from Ukraine who raise their kids here it is already different, they are more free and it is harder to teach them actually...

D – Is it just the discipline that you notice?

M – It is also the concentration and everything...

A – I feel that if the child has been through the kindergarten school in Europe it already makes a difference compared to somebody who was born and raised here...

M – Maybe somebody will find pluses in this but we don't find pluses in this yet...

A – Yeah for those who were born here in Canada, they are more lazy, not as into self-improvement, everything is more easy going as opposed to somebody who was raised there (former USSR), there's more...maturity I find.

These coaches are discussing the differences in disciplinary formation between the first-generation immigrant children, and those who are raised by immigrant parents in Canada. Borrowing from dance scholar Tomie Hahn's auto-ethnography, we can see the former as performing their Soviet identities in Canada while the latter are performing their Canadian identity through their Soviet bodies. Both performances are conducted in the context of the Soviet-Canadian DanceSport studio, a space where the dancers are immersed in the Soviet-style school environment and are constantly fed by sensational knowledge aimed at indoctrinating them into the discipline of DanceSport.

The coaches at Montreal DanceSport aim to transmit the aspects of Soviet-based training to their students by means of just such an immersion through sensory experiences. The visual stimulation through observation of the teachers, other couples, and themselves in mirror; the auditory stimulation through music, partner's comments and teachers' directions; tactile stimulation through the touch of your dance partner and teacher's physical corrections; olfactory stimulation through the smell of sweat and deodorant; even the stimulation of the sense of taste through the well-deserved water after a practice or coffee in the morning before class. The manner in which these stimulations are used serves to create the dancers they would like their students to become. However, as Max points out not all of the students are equally receptive to their way of organizing training. Because of their relatively strong adherence to the Soviet- style

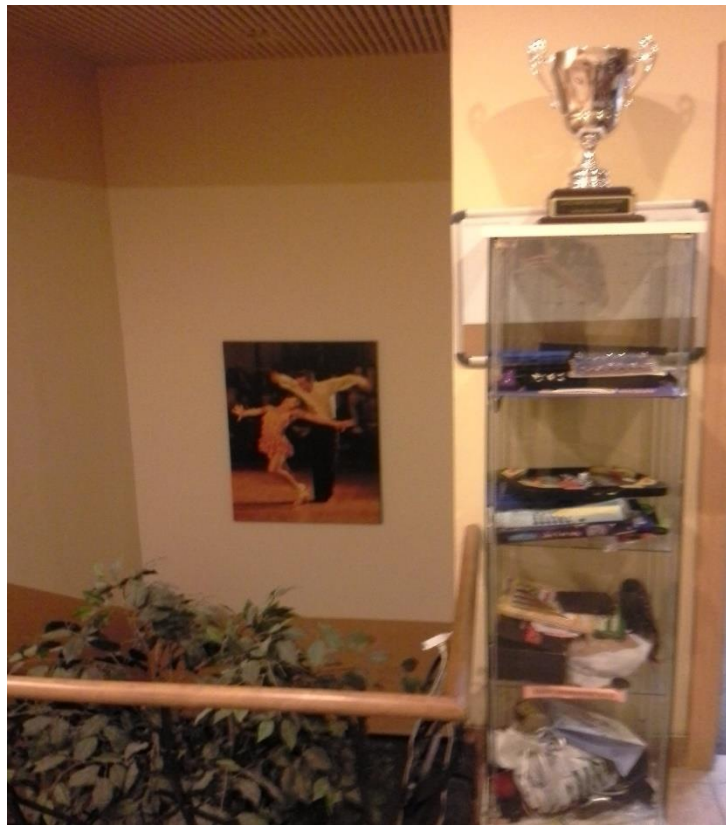


Figure 11. Lobby of Montreal DanceSport studio with the inspirational materials such as trophies and competition photos of the coaches serving to inspire students to persevere in their training. Photo by author.

methodology, first-generation immigrants from there seem to ‘be easier to teach’ for them. The second-generation children of immigrants, in turn, tend to resist such an enculturation because they have not grown up within such a system. Dance scholar Adria Imada defines such resistances as ‘counter-cultural’ when she discusses the experiences of travelling Hula performers around the early twentieth century USA. In my case studies, such resistances were often multidirectional for the second-generation dancers whereby the dancers would neither fully accept typical Canadian values nor the Soviet-style upbringing of their parents or coaches. A fluid approach to their identities where they could adjust their behaviour according to their context allowed them to negotiate their own unique cultural positionality based on selected characteristics of both of their worlds.

5.3 Training Organization and Studio Management

Coach Interview – Alex, Toronto DanceSport

D – And how would you describe your studio characteristics in terms of aspects of training, education and general organization....?

A- Well, I think it begins in the fact that I had a high pedagogical education in Moldova in the former USSR...I was teaching in the conservatory there for 6 years. From that I developed my own methodology. I got an education from very renowned educators which was based not only on ballroom dancing but also on ballet, character dance, costume, etc...and with time in each country everything was different...in the Soviet Union it was serious, the opinions of the educator were never questioned. In Israel, it was generally the same thing, everyone followed the system I used. In Canada, everything is different, most of principles I used before didn't work

and I had to relearn and adjust things for the worse, in my opinion...Which system? Well of course, a serious learning of the fundamentals...of choreography, not only ballroom...it's dancesport...and very serious training...I have this 2-2-2 principle, 2 private classes, two groups, two practices a week minimally for a couple dancing only one program Ballroom or Latin. This is based on scientific research, has a basis and works really well. That's it.

Here Alex outlines his DanceSport training system and its main characteristics. A more detailed description can be seen in the Russian Sport Federation's working document (Russian Federation Sports Ministry), providing a detailed account of every aspect of DanceSport training in Russia. Most of the other works on ballet, figure skating, folk dance, and gymnastics presented in the literature review discuss and present a similar approach where an analytical study of each art form is provided and broken down into base element for education and training. Bourdieu's concept of habitus, discussed in the historical context, will be useful here for analysis. By building a consistent practice schedule and a systematic division of training into technique groups, private lessons, and practices one can facilitate the power of the 'habitus' and increase our willing adherence to the patterns involved. In his work Bourdieu focuses on the everyday performative behaviours of certain classes in society and posits that these behaviours are learned and transmitted in society through their institutionalization in public settings such as schools, restaurants, courts, and other places where movements and expressions of the citizens are regulated by specific norms until it is embodied and naturalized by those attending them. In the Soviet club system, such regulation is apparent in such aspects as the dress of the participants, the hierarchical power structures between teachers and students as well as between students of different levels, and the behaviour ethics of the studio. The dress usually includes black pants and top for the males, and a black skirt and loose blouse for the females, with both

wearing dance specific shoes. For Latin American category, the males usually wear a V neck t-shirt and bell bottom trousers with flexible black leather shoes of 1.5-inch heel, and the females an over-the-shoulder top with a skirt or black leggings with skin coloured flexible open sole shoes of 3-3.5-inch heel. For the Standard (Modern Ballroom) category, the males commonly wear a turtle neck or a tight dress shirt and tie and straight black trousers with a black leather dense shoe of 1-inch heel. The females wear a black closed top and a long skirt with skin coloured closed shoes of 2-2.5-inch heel. While there are variations to this attire such as leopard skirts for Latin category females or grey tops for Standard males, the outfits described above are the benchmark.



Figure 12 Toronto DanceSport students during a group class with the typical practice wear.
Photo by author.

Despite the apparent equality of all the students, a clear hierarchy of the dancers prevails in the studio and can be seen in the arrangement of the couples during a group class. More advanced dancers are standing at the front and newer arrivals are standing in the back with the exception of the younger couples who are put in the front because of their height. Usually there is a division of students by age group but often, in Canada, the groups are mixed due to low numbers of students overall and the need to generate income. The spacial organisation of the

studio generally creates a specific type of human circulation and boundaries. In the Toronto studio, the reception area is open to anyone but entry to the office or the two dance spaces is restricted by closed doors. Alex in his interview pointed out that in the USSR these doors never had windows but he was told to make them glass in Canada to avoid any suspicions of child abuse. Similarly, in the Soviet Union the parents were not allowed to observe the classes but normally a few usually do in the Canadian studios serving to exacerbate the already panoptical atmosphere in the studio. Foucault's formulations of the panopticon and the power of observation on behaviour control can be insightful here in understanding the context of the dance studio. Foucault argues that through constant observation people tend to conform and monitor their behaviour to adhere to social norms. Dance education scholar Tanya Berg relates this relationship to the dance studios in Canada and the USA and states that even indirect observation by the dancers' parents of their children through cameras in the waiting room modifies the embodied student-teacher relationship. In Toronto DanceSport when the students enter the dance studio they already step into a panopticon type atmosphere when are on the dance floor. They are being observed by their coach, by their peers, by their parents, by the surveillance cameras, and by themselves in the mirror. The uniform type dress code, hierarchy-based formation during the class, marked boundaries in the studio space, and constant surveillance from several angles contribute to a consistent militaristically performative habitus in the studio. The students walk with erect posture around the studio, attempt to remain quiet on the dance floor, and attend to the coach's instructions as commands. As prescribed by gender roles in Ballroom and Latin dancing, the males enact machismo and the females' overt sexuality. However, such observation does not necessarily have a negative effect; the coaches' presence creates a discipline, the presence of

peers creates friendly competition, their parents are a pseudo- audience, the cameras are often forgotten, and self-observation is used as a tool for improvement.



Figure 13. Toronto DanceSport reception area with a dance mom and glass doors visible behind. Despite the transparent curtains they provide a visibility for the parents who want to observe their children during class. Photo by author.

Interview Dancers – Vikka, Toronto DanceSport

D – So how many lessons you had a week each?

V – So, 4 private lessons, 2 Latin, 2 standard, I would practice sometimes, come some days. And then we had 1 hour Latin 1 hour standard practice and 45 minutes Latin, and 45 minutes standard technique classes.

D – And was it imposed? Did you have to be there? Did everybody do that?

V – You needed to do that, my old studio was strict about things; if you're not there you're not part of it. I mean they kind of imposed, I mean you should be there at every single practice and technique class.

D – And if you weren't?

V – Well, it wasn't horrible but you know...you know...you kinda wanna look good in front of the trainers and everything. But it's the same in our studio; you wanna be there in the groups and practices.

D – So is it the same now for you here?

V – It's a little bit different here. Also like the people are a little bit different, like, in my old studio we used to have a lot of older people but at some point, they all left, and mainly I think I was one of the oldest at some point. And what I like about this studio...here as you know I am definitely not one of the oldest ...! So, I can like look at how people are dancing, get ideas, get inspiration. Cause when you're at the very top you don't know what to look at. I am not saying I am an amazing dancer but you know what I'm saying, even age wise...

Vikka confirms here the need to please and necessity to adhere to the studio demands in order to be accepted as one of the group in most Soviet-style studios. However, during my ethnographic research at this studio, I noticed that such demands were often not met and the prescribed behaviours subverted. A regular complaint from the coach was that students were not following the 2-2-2 system, and that their attitude was not serious enough. In fact, his favourite phrase was “Shut down you mouths, and be a little bit more serious!”. The children would often begin chatting in between instructions or stop dancing before the end of the music. Their resistance to the behavioural norms during surveillance gaps signalled to Alex their lack of

commitment and to me their uniquely multicultural identities. As pointed out by the children in Ottawa DanceSport earlier, the Canadian school system is not as strict as the teaching system used by their coaches in the dance studio. This difference stems from the inclusive, student-centered pedagogical approaches adapted by Canadian educational institutions rooted in Western educational theory (Bowles and Gintis; Durkheim; Dewey; Parsons; Merton; Appleton; Steeler) which often stand in opposition to the authoritarian strategies used in Soviet-style schools. One of the few arenas where the coaches are able to remedy this discrepancy in perspective and reclaim their power dynamic and validate their status is the competition. We can analyse competitions using Habermas' theorization of the public sphere. He argues that public spaces are one of the agentive areas reclaimed by the bourgeois at the start of the twentieth century to assert their private needs and reclaim their rights as emancipated citizens with a legitimate voice in the ruling of their country. For Soviet emigrant coaches, the competition allows for the negotiation of their agentive potential through the display of their methods to their peers and the governing bodies of the industry (WDSF; WDC). In the public space of the competition and under the gaze of the judging panels they are able to prove to their colleagues, their students, and themselves that their 'way' is a legitimate path to success and gain a voice for their private concerns in the public arena where the future of DanceSport is essentially directed. Because of the globalized nature of contemporary DanceSport, successful results at an important competition mean international recognition and respect which, in turn, translate to further acknowledgement from the students as well as a voice on the direction of developments in the DanceSport industry. Very often, even the less eager starter students become addicted to DanceSport after their first competition and the less disciplined start listening to their coach after seeing him or her as a prestigious judge on the competition floor. In her work on the American ballroom industry,

McMains describes this as glamour addiction and I have also personally observed these phenomena during my fieldwork in the Canadian studios.

Parent Interview – Jim, Toronto DanceSport

D – And you find that the approach to this pedagogy is different here and in Russia?

J – Here? Here is a business pedagogy, they just have to like it and nobody waits for any result.

In Russia, there was a sport pedagogy, they expected results. Here they do it for fun, you can't do it like that! You need both...If there are no results what kind of fun can the kids have?

D – And why do you think that was the approach in Russia?

Because in Russia the training was based on results, if you didn't get results, no sport school would keep you.

D – Why, in your opinion?

J – Because of medals, that is money and prestige. For the school, the trainers, for where you live. It was work for the people there. It's only hockey and basketball here but there if you're a weight lifter you get an apartment, car. It's not a champion, it's the prestige of the country.

Here, Ian continues the line of thought presented by Alex focused on the result-oriented approach. As former Soviet athlete and trainer, he believes that it is pointless to partake in an activity simply for enjoyment. However, despite that, he doesn't plan for his children to pursue this as their career either. Even though most former Soviet nationals will be hard pressed to admit it, they are a minority in Canada and face the same challenges as other cultural and ethnic groups in this country. Many immigrants lose their academic and professional qualifications because of the transfer regulations, lack the language skills to communicate effectively with

locals, and are often subject post cold war stereotypes. Performance scholar Daphne Brooks discusses the work of African American performers at the end of the nineteenth and the start of the twentieth century in Western show business. Throughout her work, she argues that they challenged the existing show business politics and broke gender and race barriers through direct and covert resistance. The participants in my study have also had to assert their methodologies, cultural attitudes, and ethics within the Canadian DanceSport industry as well as their daily lives. The result-based value system outlined by Ian is just one of these elements, stemming from Soviet recognition of Ballroom dancing as a sport. Their commitment to this dance form as coaches rather than just art education providers or social dance instructors has placed them at the margins of the traditional ballroom dance industry in Canada, which is historically based on social dancing and utilizes teaching, more than coaching methodologies. Moreover, ballroom dance as an occupation in general, has lost value as cultural capital during their transition from USSR to Canada due to its lack of popularity here. They had to learn about capitalist business models and, in their quotidian living, accept their lowered social status as first-generation immigrants; their more 'traditional' views on gender roles were scrutinized as less progressive (Evans and Mannur), and some even experienced racism because of their accents or appearance (Alex interview). Interestingly, albeit in a less dramatic parallel, just as minstrelsy shows appropriated black performance practices despite dismissal of African-American culture (Brooks), notwithstanding the diasporic integration issues, the Soviet style of performance was widely imitated and is now commonly practiced around Europe and North America. In the following section, I use LMA to briefly demonstrate the changes brought about by Soviet diaspora into the dancing itself.

5.4 Laban Movement Analysis

As an established notation and analysis system used by many dance companies to record choreography and movement patterns, Laban Movement Analysis provides an appropriate framework for the analysis of DanceSport movement in this study. While this is only a brief glimpse of the intricate developments in this form, it demonstrates the potential of LMA in the study of competitive ballroom dance. Interestingly, there is already an existing work in ballroom Latin dancing that applies LMA to this dance form. In this section, I will compare my observations with the descriptions given in this work as a comparative analysis of the shifts produced by Soviet-style training in DanceSport.

In his book ‘Latin: Thinking, sensing, and doing, in Latin American dancing’ Ruud Vermey (*Latin* 134) states that the main dynamic qualities of the Rumba are: free, heavy, sustained, and flexible²⁹. Using LMA, he symbolises it as (see figure 14):

In the Rumba sequence observed at Ottawa DanceSport, I noticed the changes in the effort qualities of time and flow from periods of sustained time and bound weight to short bursts of quick time and free flow during various movements.

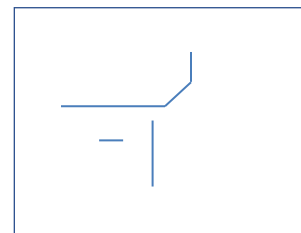


Figure 14 (Vermey, *Latin* 134)

I also recognized moments of strong weight in several poses but did not, however, find any clear indirect qualities that Vermey suggests should be characteristic of this dance. I would argue that

²⁹ Some authors prefer the words ‘strong’ instead of ‘heavy’ and ‘indirect’ instead of ‘flexible’.

this is a result of the change in aesthetic and prompted by the Soviet approach to dance training and performance which emphasises direct qualities and quick variations of time qualities.³⁰

For the Cha Cha Cha Vermeij (*Latin 133*) outlines the dynamic qualities of: Sudden, Direct, Bound, and Strong.³¹ These can be seen symbolised in figure 15.³² In my observation I found that as in Rumba

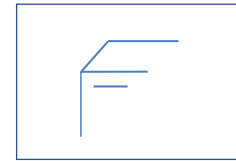


Figure 15 by author

there were quick to sustained time effort interchanges throughout, albeit with more emphasis on quick time in this dance. When watching my participants, I also observed several instances of strong weight, and some direct space. I did not, however, see much bound flow in the dancer's movements during the Cha Cha Cha. As with the direct qualities in the Rumba, this discrepancy is potentially a result of the increase in emphasis on speed, dynamic variations, and directness in my participants' dancing brought about by its designation as an athletic rather than artistic or social activity in the former Soviet Union. This approach aims to utilize the maximum physical effort available to the dancers to produce the most effective and spectacular performance, often at the expense of subtler artistic and expressive qualities. This 'style' has become so popular and widespread through information technology, that in recent years some top coaches began to question its legitimacy and call for more somatic training methodologies and performances (Bezikova).

Ballroom dancing is organised around traditional forms of courtship, European for Standard³³ or hybridized Latin American for Latin. Because of these conventions this form is

³⁰ He is the only one who has written on this subject in this field after all, and therefore is difficult to question since there are no critiques or comparisons available.

³¹ Here Vermeij uses 'sudden' instead of 'quick' and 'strong' as opposed to 'heavy' he used in Rumba.

³² Vermeij uses different symbols, I am not sure if it is a mistake or a format unfamiliar to me, see Vermeij p.133.

³³ In ballroom dancing, the 'European' section of the dances is often called 'standard' or 'modern'.

highly gendered in its gestural expression. Vermey (*Latin 98*) outlines some of these gestures in his work, for instance the male using a: wide stance, large sweeping gestures, and direct gaze; and the female using: a narrow stance, smaller gestures, and indirect gaze. In the sequences I observed, many of these gendered differences can be seen, in middle section of the Rumba for example, the male is Advancing toward the female, then Enclosing her while in high place position. Contrastingly, the female partner is waiting for her male partner before succumbing to his embrace and Enclosing him from a Deep Place position. His gaze is Direct toward her during the Enclosing while her turns are Indirect after the initial contact. Finally, the male partner uses a large and sweeping arms movement tracing a circle in space, while the female partner only complements him with Breath Flow and Near to Mid reach of torso and elbow movements. These are of course not universal categories and partners do both at various times. The female partner, for instance, goes on to make a large-sweeping-arm movement as soon as her partner retreats, but there are general gendered tendencies in this dance form which are exemplified in this sequence (see section 4 below).

The fact of this being a partner dance form determines its affinity to Shape since this is the category of LMA that deals with relationships to people or objects. The two partners are in a continuous interplay of Advancing, Retreating, Enclosing, Spreading, Rising, and Sinking. These are reminiscent of courtship and sexual interactions between humans and are their controlled yet exaggerated expressions. In terms of Space, their kinespheres overlap and create a new dynamic where “the forms, angles and rhythms between any two members (...) are then seen as parts of a larger body and a whole new world of perception opens up” (Bartenieff, 129). The roles of leader and follower can also be determined by some of these Space configurations as well as by the Effort qualities used by each partner.

The Soviet aesthetic seems to have added more directness in slower dances such as the Rumba and taken away from flow qualities of faster ones such as the Cha Cha Cha. I argue that these qualities have to do with an athletic rather than social approach to this dance form and Soviet style structured training and choreographic process. Because these qualities are effective on the competition floor they have now been adopted by many dancers around the world, who copy the top competitors' performances and style from YouTube videos, hence spreading the Soviet-style performance organisation.



Figure 16. Students practicing at Ottawa DanceSport using an enclosing embrace. Photo by author.

5.5 Cultural Appropriation in Ballroom Dance

Ballroom dancing is an inherently appropriated dance form, with the exception of Slow Waltz and Viennese Waltz³⁴, every other dance in its curriculum has been appropriated and transformed to suit Euro-American tastes and culture. Unfortunately, in most instances the original dance forms were deemed less progressive, over sexualized, and less technical. This perspective contributed to a Eurocentric approach of its practitioners and to a racial and cultural stereotyping of Latin America and its dances (Daniel; McMains; Savigliano). In the Soviet Union, despite its large ‘ethnic’ population, the concept of appropriation has not been recognized as a legitimate problem but instead is regarded as a form of assimilation. To this day folk dance companies claiming to be authentic represent former Soviet republics through highly theatrical and balletized versions of national dances such as the Cosak dances, Russian dances, or Georgian dances (Shay).

Parents Interview – Larissa, Toronto DanceSport

David – So do you think that the perception of ballroom dancing is different in the way it’s viewed here as compared to there?

Inna – (...) there everything related to dance was... not prestigious but very important I think. That’s how we were growing up, when I was growing up at least 3-4 times a year I was in ballet or opera, yes I was in Kiev, a big city but still... I think every winter vacation I would go at least 3 times... how often do the children go here? Maybe once a year for the Nutcracker? That’s why

³⁴ Which are also appropriated, although from within the European continent.

*all the folk-dance groups like Moiseev or Virski in Ukraine, it was considered something wow!
Here people don't even think about it...*

Both companies Inna mentions are highly appropriated and reformed 'folk' dance companies from Russia and Ukraine respectively. For example, Moiseev is a company formed by a former ballet character dancer and is known for presenting a 'rainbow' of cultural dances from around the Soviet Union. The original dances are usually adopted for stage, lines are extended, toes get pointed, and many acrobatic figures irrelevant to the actual dance appear in the choreography (Shay). Folk dances from around the Soviet Union were collected and systematized by the government within many dance instruction manuals (Alexeeva; Serebrenikov; *Tantsy: Usmanskii Pereplias "Dokazyvaï"*; Vasilenko) in a manner common to cultural archives in early European ethnology. In order to be presented to international public they were sensationalized and dramatized by, usually non-ethnic and ballet-trained, company directors who also had to adhere to the government's choreographic demands.

Dancers Interview - Elena and Vova and Laura, Ottawa DanceSport

V – After the death of Brezhnev, the new government in Ukraine didn't like dancing so the competition had to be run 'underground', someone would call you the day before and let you know that there would be a dance competition the next day. You couldn't invite anyone. Dancing was thought to be a bourgeois activity which didn't have any 'Soviet smell' so the political parties didn't like it.

D – But they did build the Moiseev dance company and anything national, right?

V – Well that was later...what I am talking about was around 1982 after that it was Antropov and it all began to rise, so whoever is in power at the time really makes a difference even if it's only one person, actually like in Canada.

D – Yes of course, and that was about ballroom dancing in particular?

V – Yes, Ballroom dancing wasn't valued very much because they weren't Soviet.

E – We actually had to dance the Russian dance program at competitions.

V – Yes that was necessary otherwise they would close it...

(...)

V – That's why we danced dances like 'Sudarushka', 'Rilleux', 'Mazurka', 'Polka'. In other words, all the national dances.

E – Yes, all the competitions began with the national program. I liked it actually.

Ballroom dancing was not immune to the Soviet cultural unification efforts. At first it was a prohibited activity due to its lack of Soviet content and later, when finally accepted, had to include national dances in its syllabus. Similar to the way Samba was treated in Brazil (Browning) or Rumba in Cuba (Daniel), Soviet national dances were used to unite a potentially divisive population by reinforcing a national identity through art. Appropriation of the Soviet ethnic dances in this case was just a tool that helped the Red Party get to that goal. Within this climate the actual roots of the Latin American dances and potential issues with their appropriation were never even raised. Moreover, by relegating this practice to the realm of sports they managed to avoid addressing that topic altogether in terms of ethical concerns. A similar attitude continues to exist in the former Soviet Union figure skating industry, where Grau has recently described a case of appropriation of Australian aboriginal cultural artefacts in a competition routine by a famous skating duo Maxim Shabalin and Oksana Domnina. Not

surprisingly, the ice dancing couple was quite confused as to what they were being accused of and claimed it was simply a choreographic tool.

Since ballroom dancing arrived late in the USSR due to the presence of the Iron Curtain, it was received by Soviet nationals in an already existing form which they re-appropriated and developed according to their own standards and methods. As had been done with the folk dances earlier, the ballroom dances were re-developed to be further suited for commercial presentation and stage craft using much of the same methods which were previously used for folk material. Due to lack of access to technical information from the West, emphasis was made on intense rehearsal schedules for training, and emotional expression and presentation in performance (Interview Vova and Laura). Just like in the case of commercialization of Irish dancing, which has taken on elements of Jazz and Broadway through its globalization (Foley), ballroom dancing in the USSR has taken on elements of ballet and theatricalized folk dancing as it developed its character in this country. Many of these elements we can still see today in the extreme lines and acrobatic feats of many former Soviet dancers.



Figure 17. Leo and Anna at World Championships in Moscow. Photo credit Pinterest.
<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/400468591851040168/>

Dance scholar, Barbara Browning, posits that even after being appropriated by the West, the Samba still retains its character of resistance in its rhythms and syncopations. However, I would argue that in ballroom Samba, these rhythms and syncopations have been tamed to take more on a character of controlled celebration and conformity rather than resistance. Furthermore, after being deconstructed and systematised by the Soviet system, these elements lose their organic improvisational qualities and take on a more mechanical expression with a meaning that has less with self-expression and more with a physical feat and spectacle. Similarly, when Savigliano discusses the Tango embrace as a shield (*Tango and the Political Economy of Passion*), she ignores the openness of the ballroom Tango embrace which does not seem to present the same metaphorical meaning. The ballroom Tango symbolizes aggressiveness, decisive action, and attack rather than defense. In addition, Soviet dancers have incorporated into it the stoicism and

drive it now possesses in its ballroom form, adding their own flavour to the continued re-appropriation of this dance.

5.6 Screen Dance and Communication Technology

Adding another layer of complexity to this analysis is the development of technology and travel in recent decades. The availability of digital information through internet channels such as YouTube or Vimeo allows dancers to watch and copy each other's choreographies and styles from both within and outside ballroom world while the possibility of cheap and speedy travel has facilitated the opportunities for dancers to attend workshops, performances, and competitions abroad, further globalizing the already transnational practice of DanceSport (Marion; McMains). This section provides a brief analysis of these aspects within this DanceSport industry.

Dancers Interview – Vova and Laura, Ottawa DanceSport

E – When we began to learn there were no video recordings, there was no information spread at all. One of us in the studio had a really old video (film) camera and a projector. We used the projector to get glimpses of dancing in the west at competition. People from other studios would come and watch. Information was very valuable. Now everything is on the internet.

V – Then we acquired our first video camera.

E – We couldn't even film or photograph ourselves properly; it all went into the past. We have no visual memories of that time. That's one of the reasons we decided to get back into it here after 25 years.

V – Now everything has developed, everything is more simple. Information is not closed, before you could only receive information from your teacher and try to make it work, if it didn't work

there was nowhere you could go. Only once I remember a foreign coach came to do some workshops and training. Also, one time our friends recorded for us a videotape of Donnie Burns the world champion at the time. We watched it and were in awe...some of the people in the studio even cried...there was so much explained that we never knew...it's only now that you go to YouTube and can see anything; before you didn't have access to such information so easily so whoever had the information could dance better using it. Now everyone has access to it, so it is more a question of will and ability, whereas before it was determined by information.

The lack of information and possibilities for travel was one of the reasons for the late blooming of the Soviet DanceSport industry. Besides early government censorship, the difficulty of access to information has created a unique approach to this dance form in the former USSR. The dancers and coaches relied more on the embodied knowledge produced through regular and intense practice rather than on specific technical instructions. Nevertheless, when such instructions were available they were positively received and thoroughly analysed. By the time global information technology became widely accessible, their bodies were in great shape to receive it. In the late 1990s and early 2000s West European and American dancers still dominated the world DanceSport scene, but progressing further into the new millennium the names on the podiums around the world began to sound increasingly eastern European (WDSF). As anthropologist Helena Wulff points out, new technology has further increased global communications and collaborations in the dance world. Such a transparent climate produced a lot of questions of authenticity and reconstruction of material available on social media channels. New copyright initiatives such as Creative Commons (Creative Commons) have emerged as potential solutions to them but they seem to be better suited for the music industry than an ephemeral art such as dance. Steps and choreographies are not yet copyrightable although

teaching syllabi (Imperial Society of Teachers of Dance; Dance Vision International Dance Association) and specific productions for stage already are (Burn the Floor; Strictly Ballroom). This means that in cases of cultural appropriation it is very difficult to argue ownership unless the dance steps or choreography are codified and protected by a written contract. This situation precludes many of the cultural dances such as Flamenco or Argentine Tango from being protected from appropriation in DanceSport, an unproductive cultural process continues the colonial legacy of Ballroom dance³⁵. These dances are now gaining their own foothold on the global-market economy through the large media exposure and their exotic appeal in the West. However, many have had to join World DanceSport Federation in order to grow their market and in doing so had to adhere to a restrictive syllabus created by this ballroom-based organization (WDSF; McMains). Salsa for example, made such a transition and, not surprisingly, is looking increasingly like competitive-ballroom with many acrobatic tricks, fancy costumes, and international competitions (WDSF). In the Soviet Union, ballet character dance has had a long tradition of appropriating Soviet Republics' and has facilitated the acceptance of ballroom as a legitimate practice with a similar history of appropriation.

When Rosenberg discusses the development of dance on screen, he argues that dance had to adapt to the new media as a part of its production rather than just a means of recording. For DanceSport, that meant theatrical production of the competitions, complete with stage lighting, television coverage, and set designs. The Eurosport Television channel has covered dance competitions for at least a couple of decades already (WDSF) but in the USA, bigger competitions such as the Ohio Star Ball for example, have taken it further by using Hollywood style camerawork, broadcasters, and slick event venues (Ohio Star Ball Championships). The

³⁵ WDSF now includes dance styles such as country western, acrobatic rock n' roll, and salsa. This year it has also added breaking to its curriculum causing a stir regarding appropriation in the hip hop world.

depictions of Competitive ballroom dancing on screen even made it to Hollywood films such as *Take the Lead* and *Shall We Dance*, featuring famous actors including Richard Gere, Jennifer Lopez, and Antonio Banderas (McMains). Furthermore, the growing popularity of YouTube and Facebook has given easy worldwide access to lectures, competitions, and shows. Because of these developments in communication technology and accessible travel possibilities Great Britain and Western Europe have lost their traditional oligopoly on ballroom dance. Main competitions are now held in various locations around the world, dancers travel to training camps in Eastern Europe and Asia, and alternative associations have emerged destabilising the long reign of the UK-based World Dance Council (WDC). In fact, many of the best coaches from Western Europe and the UK have now migrated to the United States in search of larger profits, competition scale, and student base.



Figure 18. Alla watching dance competitions on YouTube in between lessons. Photo by author.

5.7 Dance and Nationalism

Parents Interview – Larissa, Toronto DanceSport

D – And do you think this is coming from the Russian culture?

L – I think this is coming from the Soviet style, for sure...because it was everywhere... not being politically correct, not being sensitive and stuff like that...there are different people but overall, it's a little bit of army. You know...I imagine you sitting and thinking what do you know about army? Have you been in the army? But it should be a little bit softer I think, a I little more considerate...

D – But the children are able to handle it right?

L – Some do some don't, because as you see many left also...actually I think the parents are able to handle it less than the children...

D – Do you mean parents from the Soviet Union?

L – Yes, they didn't like it, because they were thinking that why do we have to suffer again the things we suffered there already? But every family is different of course...

The militaristic qualities described by Larissa are traits that permeate post-communist societies and are also presented by Giersdorf in his descriptions East-German culture and dance practices. In his on work East-German Modern dance, he demonstrates the psychological tensions caused by consistent government monitoring of the people's movement and ideologies and outlines how they are expressed in East German dance productions (*Body of the People*). As I explain in the historical context chapter, this need to monitor human behaviour and attitude in socialist countries in general, and USSR in particular, stems out of stern ideological policies that

were necessary to maintain the communist ethic after the October Revolution in 1918. Adherence to Leninist- Marxism required that soviet citizens not only follow the principles of communist manifesto but also that they believe in its core truth (Shneidman, *Literature and Ideology*). Since this was a radical and relatively abrupt change in socio-political structure, the social acclimatization process needed to be overseen by Red Party officials. As a result, a Panoptic-like environment was created which sprouted the militaristic tensions outlined by Inna and analysed by Giersdorf in his work (*The Body of the People*). Since the government subsidized all of the dance clubs, the same attitude prevailed in the dance schools. Dancers were expected to follow the discipline and schedule of the schools and devote their undivided attention to their practice. When the dancers immigrated to the Canada they transported many of their traditions with them, at least for the younger competitive students. However, Inna points out that not all of the children nor all of the parents are able to withstand such pedagogical methods in this new environment. The children, growing up in a holistic learning environment in their vocational schools (Duncan; Gnosh and Abdi; Hoad; Johnston et al.) had a harder time adjusting to the military-style training methodologies of their Soviet coaches. The parents, who themselves went through such education back in the USSR also sometimes hesitate about putting their children through the same experiences despite the potential results. Since their feelings are not taken into account, the students in Soviet schools can be shouted at, bluntly criticized, and even (gently) poked with a needle as I experienced during my participant-observation;³⁶ a practice justified to me as the activation of ‘fear memory neurons’ by the coach. Such practices can be effective by producing results and eliminating the less enduring students but can be questionable

³⁶ I must emphasise here that none of this is done with ill intent, or against the wishes of the participants and many warm and supportive moments generally complement the strictness of this work ethic. It is also the competitive structure of the dance form itself, and not only Soviet Union, which encourage such methodologies.

in terms of psychological trauma and personal agency. As I mention earlier, the controlled motivational climate can be quite difficult to sustain and can produce anxiety and guilt in the more sensitive pupils as well as discourage creativity and personal autonomy (Miulli and Bates; Smith et al.). Miulli and Bates also categorise the autonomous and controlled motivational climates as task-involving and ego-involving and argue that the former encourages self improvement, supports all students, helps students learn through mistakes, incites collaboration with peers, and rewards effort; while the latter encourages being the best, supports star students, discourages mistakes, incites competition, and rewards success (5). My research does not fully negate these findings but shows that students with a Soviet Union background tend to cope much better with controlled and ego-involving motivational climates than those from other backgrounds and that the reality in Soviet-style DanceSport studios is much more nuanced than the dichotomy of learning environments these authors present in their research. For example, despite having high performance expectations, these studios offer a warm and collective environment that allows the students to develop a sense of belonging and purpose, characteristics which are essential in the production of motivation in physical activity (Smith et al. 126).



Figure 19. Students at DanceSport Ottawa doing crunches in between dance rounds. Photo by author.

Dancers Focus Group, Ottawa DanceSport

D - How do you find this identity affects your dancing?

S – Because in this type of dance it’s mostly Russians that dance, Canadians don’t really do this type of dance. So, you have a better communication with them [Russians] even if you weren’t born there you know the vocabulary and had a similar situation with them, and bond more with them. Unlike Canadian, because Canadian style is like ‘what’s up! How are you?’ and like you’re done communicating with them because you don’t have anything to talk about.

H – I find that when the people in studio, if they’re Canadian and they start dancing, a lot of them tend to not have the same like motive of trying to do your hardest and doing it cause if you don’t do you’re going to be yelled at so they end up being more easy going and they’re not trying as hard so they end up doing worse and also I feel like if I wasn’t Russian I would probably not have danced at all...it really influenced my life.

E – Well, being Russian, our instructor actually teaches in Russian³⁷ because he came from Russia recently so sometimes people show up who don’t speak Russian and it’s harder for them but if they kind of overcome that, it helps them a lot. And being Russian in dancing and living in Canada...like I said before you tell people you dance and they just say, ‘why don’t you play hockey?’ Just like any other normal kid, so it kind of plays a big role but in the end it helps because we speak Russian here, and it’s kind of in order to preserve the culture as I said, because we live in Canada and we should respect that but we kind of like to keep our own culture and not lose where we come from.

³⁷ This is not always the case but it does occur frequently when a coach can’t find the right vocabulary.

J – I don't know if they mentioned that but I noticed that in this studio, those who are not Russian they don't last here for long because they're not accustomed to the standard and the way the teaching system works, and the disciplinary standards here, so because of that there are significantly less Canadians who train here.

These children are clearly of the percentage that are comfortable with the Soviet pedagogical approach and even embrace it. They also state that they feel marginalized by their peers due to their choice of ballroom dancing over hockey or other sports as a hobby. Canadian acceptance of differing cultural identities under one national banner creates unique opportunities but with them unique challenges. The integrationist lens (Williams) adopted by Canadian government allows for multiple cultures to co-exist but some still dominate because of their seniority of presence in this country, Western-European in the case of Canada.

When Hellier-Tinoko discusses the dance of the Three Old Men in Mexico, she argues that this dance form is often ignored by the main national narrative in Mexico yet is a cultural artefact for the citizens of Jaracuaro Island. It is therefore telling of a similar scenario, that these young dancers at Ottawa DanceSport already have a concept of such pride in their cultural roots despite it not being their most popular option in their vocational schools. Even the use of Russian language in the studio makes an invisible shield against total assimilation and acts as a selective barrier for non-Russian speakers who are unwilling to be accepting of this environment and methodology (Isurin and Reihl). A similar strategy is described by Imada in her work on travelling Hula dancers in the United States at the start of the twentieth century when she writes about how the performers sang anti-imperialist songs in Hawaiian to Americans who thought the songs were meaningless entertainment. Additionally, as Sanya points out there are also issues of communication where Eastern European tendency to be very direct and blunt in conversation

conflicts with the Canadian tradition of small talk and politeness. The culture of acceptance and tolerance reinforced by the values and rights within Canadian education (Gnosh and Abdi; Johnston et al.) stands in contrast to Soviet teaching methodologies for many non-Soviet newcomers at the studio. If they manage to overcome such initial reactions, they usually become members of the studio ‘family’ and are treated as ‘honorary Soviets’ who are accepted as part of the ‘imagined’ Soviet-Canadian community (Hobsbawm). Such a closed circle at the studios helps maintain a community-based philosophy and protects the dancers and studio owners from unnecessary outside scrutiny. As Nelson demonstrates with relation to the RyuRican culture and dances of Okinawa, they must maintain a close community to survive as a minority and conserve their heritage.



Figure 20. A student from Moldovan-Canadian family and a student from Chinese-Canadian family at Ottawa DanceSport. Photo by author.

Despite these arguments, however, many immigrants still refuse to acknowledge the reciprocal relationship between the individual and the state. After many informal conversations between myself and the coach at Toronto DanceSport, he still maintains that his work and ethical conduct in Soviet Union had little to do with the overall political climate in the country. I would argue that such positionality grows from the desire to possess a strong personal agency independent from the government (which aims to suppress it) and the defensive stance towards critical approaches to Soviet culture, which has already been highly misrepresented in the West.

Coach Interview – Alex, Toronto DanceSport

D- Do you find there is a relationship between the political-social structures and the training, for instance in the differences between Soviet Union and Canadian political structures?

A – You know David, I never tied...I never made such connections as you do in your work...and as we discussed it with you many times and I tried to prove it to you...whether I proved it or not, I understand that there is an own ideology in all and everything...but and I told you that several times, despite all, in former Soviet Union there was more democracy in dance than in the democratic Canada, a lot more democracy...a lot more openness, a lot more attention to people's opinions than here...because in no country in the world and I was on the presidium of the professional association of the USSR, I was the president of the amateur association of Israel and built everything there...this you know also...I never heard of a non-profit organization with four lifetime directors, this was very new to me...but I guess you learn everything...that's why I don't want to tie politics with dance...there are dance politics but it's a different aspect of which we aren't speaking...but if we make another parallel to the Soviet Union as the empire of evil with the Iron Curtain and so on and so on, with everything else that has been said about it...so in that Empire of Evil there was more democracy and more attention to people's voices, and more

possibility to affect something than in the democratic Canada... and I will give you an example why....the elections [in USSR] were the elections [as they should be] ...[In contrast,] Just now there were the elections of the Professional organization here, there were no [true] elections, there were 5 people nominated, normally you would ask members, send letters, inform, [saying:] 'here we have 5 nominations, we need to make a choice...' you know how it works...No,[instead] there were 5 nominations, 5 nominations went through to the presidium and 5 nominations are being decided upon...why didn't the people go to vote? When do people not vote? When they are not sure [not aware of what is happening] ...! There you go... and that's how it is going now...

What Alex points to here is the general perspective of professionalism in dance in the Soviet Union. The dance coaches were not merely a part of a service industry as many are in North America but qualified sports professionals. The meritocratic model promoted and subsidised by the USSR government provided a dance instructor with a status of a professional artist and athletic trainer. The children brought to such trainers were usually chosen beforehand for talent and ability, and were expected to behave and maintain performance levels because they were getting the training for free and were potentially groomed to be on national teams. The coaches, in turn, had the responsibility to make them successful and the authority to do so by any appropriate means they saw fit as professional trainers³⁸ (Kondrat'eva and Taboriko; Shnediman 1978). Their opinions and feedback were acknowledged and usually implemented by their superiors, their students, and the parents of the students (Alex Interview). The governing bodies

³⁸ This kind of expectation is within reason of course. When making such statements to a Western audience I feel that I need to clarify the extent of these statements and continue to debunk the myth of 'the Soviet' propagated in the West during the cold war and still persisting today. While the training was intense, as a rule, there was no breach of conduct by coaches and the authoritarian training was based on established pedagogical protocol, even if it was more strict and disciplinarian than commonly accepted in North America.

were divided into rotating committees, subcommittees, and local representatives which oversaw the specific fields in each area. A lifetime board membership, such as present in the Canadian DanceSport mentioned by Alex, would not be able to function in this system. The pressure to produce results, abundance of talented students, and the support of the parents both allowed and necessitated dance coaches in the former USSR to drill skills into their students in a militaristic fashion in order to be successful. The government supported and rewarded them as long as they continued to produce champions. The students knew they were selected and given a unique opportunity and were generally compliant and determined in their training. The parents, honoured if their child was chosen, encouraged and disciplined their children as per the coaches' demands (Alex Interview; Bobrova; Kondrat'eva and Taborko; Kostia Interview; Yan Interview; Shneidman, *Soviet Road to Olympus*).

Within the communist environment, cultural and social materialism prevailed as the dominant ideology underlying much of the social fabric and interactions (Althusser; Shneidman, *Literature and Ideology*; Stites). This philosophy also implied the rationalization and categorization of emotional responses and behaviour. Personal feelings and moods were considered a bourgeois frivolity inappropriate for professional public display and were to be left out of work and training in order to focus the mind on the tasks at hand. In pedagogy, this meant a strict and structured uniform approach to education, rather than an individualistic and explorative approach common in Western education paradigms (See Historical Context). In his rhetoric, Alex does not want communism and its institutions to be conflated with dictator-type government nor lack of choice and freedom for people. In essence, he is theoretically accurate in his interpretation because Marx's Communist Manifesto (Marx), in fact, presents a very clear

picture of *democratic* processes at work in his idea of a utopian communist society³⁹. It is also true that many processes in a Western democratic society are faulty and imperfect. However, as we can see from the interview presented here and the various archival materials from the USSR (eg. Bakhrushin; Blok; Smirnov), the Soviet approach to indoctrination of their citizens was a lot more direct and explicit than Western democracy. The Canadian counterparts to these documents are far more varied and diverse in content (*see* Fisher; Saxton and Cornell; Tembeck). As my brief discussion in the Historical Context section outlines, many of the developments in philosophies and approaches to education were neither uniform, nor consistent and are often the slowly unfolding results of major historical events or innovations such as revolutions, post-colonialism, war, and globalization, which are just some of the factors affecting the direction of social consciousness and structure. In the example provided by Alex, the elections in the Soviet Union DanceSport organisation may have been more transparent but the overall structure of the institution of DanceSport remained a product of post-Soviet art policies. In the case of Canadian DanceSport organization's alleged lack of proper elections process, the motives and the governing committee's ability to do so, are dependent on its status as an institution not closely governed by larger government body and potentially exclusive in membership⁴⁰. Additionally, the democratic process in the USSR described by Alex does not extend to pedagogy or holistic education. The children do not get a voice in their education and are not given choices in the creative process until they have gained significant amounts of expertise and cultural capital, even if it might ultimately benefit them. Larissa, who is a homeopath by profession, is aware of the strength of holistic strategies through her work but dance instructors bred in the Eastern-

³⁹ The incompatibility and contrast between democracy and communism in current popular perspective stems more from cold war American propaganda, the convergence of democracy and capitalism in the west and a generally superficial understanding of the two political philosophies.

⁴⁰ A factor that would be reinforced by lack of transparent elections process.

European tradition simply do not recognize their value. The children of Soviet immigrants absorb many of their parents' values and are therefore comfortable with their coaches' style of instruction, but those not experiencing such an approach at home often do not. In fact, judging from their answers above, sometimes young Soviet-Canadian dancers feel ostracized by their Canadian peers for expressing some of these values. At least in this case, post-Soviet mentality continues to work on these young minds, even within a different cultural context.

5.8 Gender Roles

Coaches Interview - Kostia and Alla

D – So how about the male female perception/role comparatively in Russia and here? And whether, and how, it is expressed in dance?

K – Let me think about it...I don't want to attach myself to one opinion because it might just be my preference and not the reality...I want to try and be objective even though I really feel a certain way subjectively...I don't want to just say things I feel subconsciously...

I really subjectively want to say that in Russia the boys are more boyish (masculine).

A- They are more sportive...

K – Yeah more boyish...here I am missing that a bit...

A – That desire to make something happen, really want to make something work for tomorrow...to work out that jive...so he goes and does it...from his own initiative...

K – I am missing boys that fight with each other, there the boys always fight amongst each other...dance is like boxing there...you want to say go out to the floor and fight...so I don't see those here even though they exist here...

A – Maybe they were [simply] not brought here...

K – There is a sort of infantility here...

A – A soft bodiness?

K – Infantility...

D – and women?

A – I wouldn't want to split it by gender but I think females are better everywhere! (everyone laughs) they listen better, they perform better, they put into it more, girls everywhere! Even grown women...those who work with you will work better than the males...

K– That's true, I remember now that the little girls were more determined than boys...

D – And do you see your own role [as a female] here in a particular way?

A – Yes, I think I am great! (laughs)



Figure 21. Communist statue. Image from skyrock.com.
<http://communiste07.skyrock.com/584689394-La-faucille-et-le-marteau.html>

In the Soviet Union gender equality was one of the key principles of the communist ethic. The Red Party decried traditional gender roles as bourgeois and called on women to work, vote, and participate in political debate. Girls were encouraged to consider their career plans and be leaders in the community. However, gender still dictated the type of work a woman was supposed to do and how high she went in her chosen career (Ghodsee; Sacks). Women did get out into the public sphere and worked alongside men in many formerly male-dominated industrial occupations but were not fully freed from house and family duties (Adler; Choi). In school, little girls were

expected to possess grace, remain slim, and be creative and beautiful and boys to be strong, brave, and decisive. These qualities were honed by both physical and mental preparation through appropriate physical and mental activities such as rhythmic gymnastics for girls or team sports for boys (Bobrova; Kondrat'eva and Taborko). Ballroom dancing was originally considered bourgeois and inappropriate for Soviet citizens, therefore unfitting into these norms but once it was eventually accepted and adjusted to fit the existing cultural policies, it further promoted the gender roles in this regime and was probably more accepted because of it. The boys had to lead and be 'masculine', whereas the girls had to follow and be 'feminine'. This was done in the framework of a sports activity, which was another element well suited for the USSR youth, who were constantly encouraged to stay in good physical shape. Kostia and Alla, point at better learning and skill acquisition abilities of their young female students. This is a common perception of girls, especially in dance, but it also stems from the way children are raised and their expected roles in society.

In her work, feminist scholar Peggy Phelan argues that gender roles are prescribed and reinforced through male domination entrenched in structures and institutions from the Western world. While Soviet communism toppled some of the upper-class, male-female stereotypes and attempted to redefine gender roles, it only succeeded in slightly shifting some of working-class gender divisions in that country. For the immigrants from former USSR, boys are still meant to be work-oriented, independent and competitive while the girls are expected to be obedient, compromising, and family-oriented. Kostia and Alla notice that when growing up in Canada, however, these typical roles are partially disturbed, especially for boys. The presence of Western-style feminism might be responsible for this observation, as gender roles are also culturally determined and growing up in a western feminist environment might have shifted the

children's attitudes towards gender roles to a perspective different than their parents' and coaches'.

Parents Focus Group – Ottawa DanceSport

A – My husband wanted to put my son in hockey, that is just the mentality of the men here so when I told him I want to put his son into dancing he was like 'dancing!?' but when he came to the competition and saw how serious it was and was for real, he was astonished and now he doesn't say a word, doesn't even mention sport...

A – It's the age, they are shy, for boys it's popular to play football, volleyball etc... but that's boys. Girls are different, they will bring their videos to the school and show their friends...

L – In regard to the shyness of boys...they will not admit it in class (that they are dancing) but when a friend comes over and plays computer, he stands behind and learns the movement and that's normal!

L – For me the teacher tells me that Anthony is very behaved, very polite compared to everyone...compared to boys especially...

We can gather from these parents' comments that the gender roles are intertwined with the types of physical activity their children are expected to be engaged in. While the expectation of boys playing sports seems to be present in both countries, the designation of ballroom dancing as sport in the former USSR allows boys to participate in this activity. Lucyk in her article on homophobia in Canadian sports, demonstrates how "heteronormative Christianity" (250) has dictated the image of the male athlete in North America and reinforced prescribed traditional gender roles to sports. Naik, in her discussion of female participation in vocational physical education classes, also points to the gender divisions present within dance and sports in Ontario

schools. She argues that many girls refuse to participate in sports because of these divisions, and presents dance as a physical activity which could incite them to participate during gym classes.

The positionality of DanceSport on the border between dance and sport, places this activity in a unique space that could cater to both sides and increase participation from both genders.⁴¹ If only Canada would recognize DanceSport as an official sport, much could be done to promote this activity for both girls and boys, as was done in the former USSR⁴². Even though ballroom dancing has been a part of the dance curriculum in Canada since the early 1990s (Canada, Ontario Ministry of Education, *part a*; Canada, Ontario Ministry of Education, *part b*), it was only included recently and as a social dance supplement to the main concert dance styles of modern and ballet. This trend has continued at the university level, where ballroom dance might be offered as a non-major elective course to supplement the core curriculum based on ballet, modern, or contemporary styles. Considering the success of the Soviet adaptation of DanceSport in both secondary and post-secondary institutions (Alex interview; Bezikova; Russian Federation Sports Ministry), there is a lot of potential for this activity to be included in Canadian vocational educational institutions.

5.9 Sponsorship and Funding

Coaches Interview – Leo and Anna, Toronto DanceSport

D: Compared to where you were before and here, was there financial or any other kind of support from the government, if any?

⁴¹ Furthermore, the same-sex categories in many contemporary DanceSport competitions would allow space for students outside of heteronormative conventions.

⁴² In fact, I have attempted to accomplish this feat but had issues with intra-organizational politics within the industry, and the large amount of administrative work required for the bureaucratic procedures.

A: Not really. The sponsors there [Bulgaria] were more sponsoring I guess competitions because they took it as a good commercial [opportunity] for themselves so they would put a lot of money into supporting dancing there. Many big companies, they would actually want to become more popular by representing themselves during the competitions as sponsors because the crowd in Europe is much bigger. We would do everything in arenas, sports arenas, so it's a big crowd. Sometimes, actually most of the time, it's televised so they actually get a lot of exposure that way, while here it's not as popular so there's not so many sponsors here. They don't feel like they want to invest money into that because it doesn't bring them as much.

D: Publicity?

A: Publicity, yes.

D: Okay. Anything you want to add to that? [addressing Leo]

L: I agree to it 100%. When it comes to sponsoring couples and so on and so forth.

A: It's so hard!

L: I didn't compete as much in Ukraine so I only know one side of it, the Canadian side, which is very bad. Which is not, nowhere nearly as much as I know couples, our fellow dancers in Germany, Russia and so on and so forth. So we have to work. Even being amateur dancers, we have to work for every penny that we spend for our dancing. Pretty much almost, and so these are sacrifices that we had to make that were benefiting our dancing.

There are several factors that act as contributors to the differences in the funding model between Eastern Europe and North America. The long-standing traditions of dance, government support for ballroom dancing, and the popularity of DanceSport. The status of dance as a prestigious and culturally important activity in the former USSR (Children of Theatre Street; Zhdanov; Bakhrushin; Blok) incited government recognition of the cultural capital of dance in the larger socio-economic structure. Its presence in schools, public events, and media coverage (Alex interview; Popov; Russian Federation Sports Ministry), in turn, encouraged private investors to sponsor this activity in the post-Soviet era. As a result, competitive ballroom dancers



and event organizers were able to secure further private development funding in return for advertising space during competitions.

Figure 22. A couple dancing at a championship in Moscow in 2016. Corporate ads are visible on the panels in the background and on labels attached to the waists of the competitors' costumes. (WDSF, Gallery)

In Canada, the same system exists but at a much smaller scale. Competitors receive minimum funding for travel from the Canadian DanceSport federation (DanceSport Canada) and the top couples might receive free or discounted costumes or dance shoes from the main companies in those businesses. However, even with these benefits, the dancers are far from making any significant profits from competitions. The prize money at Canadian events is minimal (few hundred dollars on average) compared to the expenses involved. The costumes in Standard can cost from \$1000-\$3000, and from \$500-\$1500 in Latin, dance shoe prices range

between \$80-\$250 depending on the make, and travel costs vary from a few hundred to over a thousand dollars depending on the destination (McMains; Marion). All these are repeat expenses that need to be completed at least every few months.⁴³ While television programs like “Dancing with the Stars” and “So You Think You Can Dance” have popularized the form in recent years, there is generally no media coverage of major professional or amateur events beyond local cable channels (eg. Crystal Leaf). As I mentioned earlier, competitive ballroom dance is also not recognised as sport in Canada and dancers are not eligible for funding available to many athletes in other sports, despite the discipline itself being recognized as a sport by the Olympic committee since 1997. While some of the fault for this situation potentially lies with the lack of initiative from the governing board of dancesport association in Canada (Alex interview), much more could be done by the Canadian culture and sports ministries to promote such a change⁴⁴. Furthermore, Canadian Arts Councils’ system of funds distribution is specifically designed to exclude any dance forms that are competition based (Canada Council for the Arts)⁴⁵, therefore Canadian competitive ballroom dancers are left without funding as both athletes and artists. This situation forces many amateur dancers into the only stable revenue source available to them in this country, which is teaching. Even though officially amateurs are not allowed to teach if they want to continue competing in the open amateur category (see **Table 2**), many have no choice but to do so anyway in order to survive and continue their training. In recent years, a new Student-Teacher category and permissions to teach for top national couples were instituted by

⁴³ On average shoes and costumes are replaced every 6 months to a year and competition travel occurs at least every month for internationally ranking couples.

⁴⁴ Dancers from Toronto DanceSport participated as exhibitors during the 2015 Pan American games in Toronto, Canada, and as competitors during World games in Panama representing Canada, however, despite the high profile of these events no funding or recognition was offered by the Canadian Sports ministries and organizations.

⁴⁵ A fact supported by multiple refusals of the councils to fund international events run by Alex and educational development projects proposed by myself. I believe that some of the reasons for their decisions lie in the different format of DanceSport both in education and performance that is still foreign to most council board members who are largely unfamiliar with this industry.

many associations (eg. ISTD) to remedy this situation but they have not resolved the main issue of lack of public recognition and government support for this dance form in Canada.

Parents Interview – Irina and Vlad, Montreal DanceSport

D – And how much government involvement did you see here and in Russia?

V – In Russia we didn't do this, and here there is zero involvement. Zero! (laughs)

I – Same in figure skating, everyone pays from their pockets.

V – It's not a national sport...perhaps if it was a national sport it might have been different.

The situation described above also contributes to the lack of final acceptance of DanceSport into the Olympic Games. The lack of clear enough delineation between amateurs and professionals, as well as between judges and coaches creates too much ambiguity for the Olympic committee to include this discipline in the program despite their recognition of it as an Olympic sport. The main reason for this is the constant need for private funding, which forces amateurs to teach and judges to coach in order to make a decent living. The costs of travel and living expenses on the road often override the amounts the coaches or judges receive during their international engagements (McMains; Marion). To avoid paying these costs, event organizers hire more local, and hence less impartial, judges and coaches, creating a clique-based atmosphere in many smaller competitions and congresses. Even internationally, such economic pressures and intra-organizational political connections create many complications for the industry as a whole. More recently the inter-organisational strife between the World Dance Council (WDC) and World DanceSport Federation (WDSF), formerly partner organisations, has divided the world of DanceSport into two main factions with dancers as casualties on either side.

Interestingly, such informal networks built on cultural capital and community politics were noted by Grodeland as economic strategy of many post-socialist countries in Eastern

Europe as a result of distrust in their governing bodies. It is also evident from the various interviews conducted during this research that there is such a lack of trust in the governing bodies by many of the participants. Could there be a link between the fall of the Iron Curtain and resulting East European diaspora to the structural and cultural shifts in DanceSport industry? In the case of Canadian DanceSport, it is not always clear whether it is the habitus (Bourdieu) of the diasporic dancers inherited from the former USSR lifestyle or a reaction based on their experience in Canada that guides their cynicism and reliance on community networks rather than on the government. Some, like Alex as well as Misha and Olia, have in fact attempted several official avenues to obtain funding in Canada through the Sports ministry, Arts councils, and private corporations, unsuccessfully, despite good applications and strong credentials. Others, like many of the parents, simply speak from their experience in comparison to the USSR.

5.10 DanceSport and Diaspora

Most of the above-mentioned developments occurred during the two decades after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1989 and the main period of its diaspora into Western Europe and North America. If we consider the structure and priorities of Ballroom dance in the Soviet Union and the number of dancers coming out of that region during the 1990's diaspora, the reforms in the world of DanceSport over the last few decades no longer seem like a simple coincidence.

Table 5. Timeline of Developments in DanceSport (WDSF version)⁴⁶

1935	Fédération Internationale de Danse pour Amateurs (FIDA) is founded in Prague, CZE.
1956	FIDA is dissolved.
1957	IDSF is founded under the name of International Council of Amateur Dancers (ICAD) in Wiesbaden, GER.
1960	First TV broadcast of a DanceSport competition airs in Germany.
1990	ICAD changes its name to International DanceSport Federation.
1992	IDSF becomes a member of the General Association of International Sports Federations (SportAccord).
1995	IDSF and DanceSport are provisionally recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). World Rock 'n' Roll Council (WRRC) joins IDSF. IDSF becomes a member of the International World Games Association (IWGA).
1997	IDSF and DanceSport are granted full recognition by the 106th Session of the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne, Switzerland. IDSF becomes a member of the Association of IOC Recognised International Sports Federations (ARISF). IDSF enters into a representation agreement with the International Management Group IMG for the production and worldwide distribution of DanceSport television coverage. DanceSport premieres in The World Games held under the auspices of IWGA and the patronage of the IOC.
2001	IDSF establishes an Anti-Doping Commission and subscribes to the World Anti-Doping Code.
2003	IDSF creates the Grand Slam Series for Latin and Standard.
2004	International Dance Organisation (IDO) joins IDSF.
2006	IDSF establishes an Athletes' Commission and a Disciplinary Council.

After 40 years of unchanging structure, the 1990s saw many course-changing developments in the world of competitive ballroom dance with many of the innovations in-line with the structure and philosophy of DanceSport in the Soviet Union. With the start of *Perestroika* – the restructuring of the Soviet Union and its constituencies into democratic states initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev - the opening of the borders in the former USSR, Soviet diaspora has made its presence felt in the international ballroom world to an unprecedented extent. While some of the bureaucratic mechanisms for the formation of such a system were already present in Western Europe, they did not come to fruition until the late 1990s, the primetime of Soviet diaspora. I argue, that these changes were in fact propelled and initiated by these immigrants and

⁴⁶ The other major ballroom dance organisation I mentioned previously, World Dance Council (formerly known as International Council of Ballroom Dancing, and originally only responsible for professionals) went through a re-structuring process in 1996 to create the WD&DSC Ltd, which was re-named World Dance Council (WDC) in 2006. This restructuring was part of an on-going disagreement with the WDSF over the direction of DanceSport.

spread by the increasingly accessible information technology around the world. The impact of this diasporic ripple effect has also reached North America but got somewhat diluted by the social dance and pro-am industries in both Canada and USA (*see McMains*).

Coaches Interview – Misha and Olia, Montreal DanceSport

D – How would you describe Canadian Dancesport industry?

O – I find it's really poor, I find that even though there were some good dancers here back in the day, they didn't really do anything for the future...about dancing. I feel that they went about it in a selfish manner, like they took their titles and their medals but they didn't actually bring much to the dance community, they didn't really open any dance studios, and if they did they were often home based, which I don't feel is very good...so I don't feel like anybody was trying to raise a new generation of dancers, it was kind of like going with the flow, whatever flows, ...and that's why the quality of Canadian dancing wasn't very good until...I don't want to brag about it but until we started it, until we opened a school that was for kids...and the point was not to make it just for kids but we feel that everything starts with kids, you raise them and they become good youth dancers and then good adult dancers that's kind of that should go. And nobody really did it like that in Canada, only in Toronto I feel that some studios did it because again they went about it the Soviet way, but in Montreal nobody really did it.

M – Yeah everyone who danced well was just thinking about their own titles and after that they had no goal, they just became people, and if a student came to them from someone they were happy but to really raise someone from zero, they were not interested...

O – Yeah, they are not interested...they don't want to train kids...to do the 'dirty work'...

Several competitive-ballroom studios existed in Canada in the late 1990s, run by world class coaches. In Montreal, some examples would be Le Studio Ginette Cornoyer, Simply Ballroom, and Le Studio 2720 (a studio still running to this day). However, they were generally based at the outskirts of town and have lost a lot of business momentum over the last two decades with Ginette Cornoyer and Simply Ballroom finally closing down a few years ago. Notwithstanding Olia and Misha's comments, I would not blame the owners for such developments. Despite their world-class status in the ballroom world, these were still marginal institutions in the Canadian art and sports scene, incomparable to the status and recognition given to ballet institutions in the same city such as Les Grands Ballet Canadiens (Tembeck, "Politics and Dance") or to sports teams, such as Montreal Canadiens. Without any significant support from the government and no public recognition many of these dancers had to hold jobs outside of dance to make ends meet (Personal communication, Remo Di Marco⁴⁷, Manon Hurteau⁴⁸) and eventually had to give up their careers as studio owners or teach recreational dancers due to lack of stable income. This situation hasn't necessarily changed very much today as we can gather from the coaches' interviews, however, the influx of Soviet immigrants in the late-1990s and early-2000s to major Canadian cities has provided a sufficient number of ballroom coaches and students to the Canadian DanceSport industry to revive it even without any legislative and promotional support from government bodies. This is one of the reasons these schools are mainly attended by children of immigrants and despite excellent international competition results remain obscure to the majority of the population. Furthermore, as discussed in the first section of this chapter, the Soviet attitudes and habits were not necessarily compatible

⁴⁷ Former owner of Simply Ballroom and 2 other competitive and social dance studios in Montreal.

⁴⁸ Former teacher at Ginette Cornoyer studio and Canadian Latin DanceSport champion.

with the social and pro-am industries in North America until some cultural adaptation took place over the last two decades.

Dancers focus group – Luke, Montreal DanceSport

D – And what is the difference between there (Moldova) and here (Canada)?

L – Timing, competitive clothing, habits, not sure how to explain. For example, if I dance standard and I am coming towards another couple, if I stop and let them pass it's a sign of politeness here but a sign of fear in Europe.

Luke's words express the differences in attitude and training between the two continents. With time, however, social dancing and pro-am of ballroom dancing have come to be the main funding sources for most competitive studios in both Canada and the USA (*see* Marion; McMains; Reynolds). Teachers have realized that without government support they had to rely on recreational classes to survive. The sport-based system promoted by Soviet coaches and still prevalent in most of Europe got absorbed by the American social-dance industry and capitalist economy. As Luke points out, there is also a cultural difference in social interactions which translates onto the dance floor. The exciting phenomenon here is that the socio-economic transformations undergone by the industry as a whole are visible in the diasporic identities of the individual participants. As I have demonstrated with LMA analysis, the changes in the physical performance of these dancers clearly indicates a shift in style from an art- and social-based aesthetic to a more dynamic sports-based one, a development prompted by the dissolution of the Soviet State in the 1990s which caused a spread of the Soviet dance pedagogy into Western Europe and eventually North America. In Canada, the values of the 'old-world' are still cherished by the older coaches and parents of the dancers even though superficially they have

adapted to the capitalist business models and social conduct. The tensions inherent in the differing political and economic systems of socialism and western capitalist democracy are constantly manifested in the way they teach, interact, and deal with their cultural environment. In the pro-am category, we can see this contrast embodied when professional dancers partner recreational students who are often older, more physically restricted, and full-bodied. Here, embodied cultural-capital is exchanged for financial-capital of well-off North American clients, who are looking to fill their lives with non-material gain, an exchange which is always uneven and incomplete.



Figure 23. The author dancing with a pro-am student during a showcase. Photo by author.

In my research I have witnessed the liminal space of DanceSport in America in the way some younger dancers hide their passion from their friends, the way others defend their choice of hobby in opposition to popular sports, and in their hesitancy to see their future in it. I can also feel it in the

defensiveness of the coaches when speaking about DanceSport in Canada, their constant proclamations of their accomplishments, and their latent bitterness towards the lack of public and government support. The complex and slightly confused identity of DanceSport in Canada is also evident in the young generation's split identities whereby they must adjust their disciplinary behaviour, levels of training intensity, and interpersonal communication between the contexts in or outside the studios. Like these children, DanceSport, at least the way it is understood and presented by Soviet-Canadians, is still the new arrival in this country. Despite the long history of ballroom dancing in Canada, it has still not gained its footing the way other dance forms did. Having to

constantly adjust its identity between a social entertainment and an athletic activity makes it a complicated and frustrating process. However, as this research demonstrates, for many it is not a choice but a necessity. Like many of my participants, DanceSport needs to adapt in order to survive in this socio-economic climate, despite the cultural differences.

In the USA, such acclimatization progressed much more smoothly, even if not always ethically by Soviet standards. Most dancers from the USSR were either recruited by franchised dance studios such as Fred Astaire or Arthur Murray or have opened their own independent schools. Either way, most make a very good living through pro-am students, and professional competitions. The capitalist system in the U.S. and its small competitive dance studio business have provided an effective model for the commodification of ballroom dance, and has successfully absorbed even the Soviet sports-based dancers by allowing them to compete for high cash-prizes but also encouraging them to do pro-am through even higher top-teacher awards for those with most student entries. This way, everyone cashes in and the dancers also get to perform and compete as they are used to do⁴⁹ (Marion; McMains; Ohio Star Ball). Canada follows the same model but at a much lower scale, therefore providing less incentive for shifting of identities of the immigrants, as seen in the United States of America. In part, this difference might be due to the Canadian integration ethos (CIC) whereby each immigrant community is given the opportunity to maintain its identity, however, in this case it might be not be providing sufficient solutions for this community to thrive. It is my hope that this work will give some perspective on the potential of this dance form and its practitioners for the development of the Canadian arts and culture as well as sports and entertainment sectors, and a voice to the

⁴⁹ Although arguably in much less prepared physical and mental state due to the physical demands of dancing in the Pro- Am category with their students at the same event.

participants in this research who dedicate their lives to developing this beautiful dance form despite all the challenges involved.

Finally, it is with sadness that I must say that Toronto DanceSport has closed down this year after over 20 years of building Canadian champions and its international representatives and continuing a cultural legacy of DanceSport in Canada. After 5 years of being a student, teacher, and researcher there I will miss it greatly. Unfortunately, some of the reasons for this closure are outlined above and it is my hope that in the future such occurrences could be avoided and the great benefits of knowledge, talent, and inspiration from these institutions and individuals can be passed on to the next generation of Canadian dancers.



Figure 24. Alex teaching a group class at Toronto DanceSport. Photo by author.

This chapter has addressed the themes of socialist attitudes in a social dance environment, dual identities in immigrant populations, training organization and studio management in DanceSport, Laban Movement Analysis, cultural appropriation, screen dance and communication technology, the relationship between dance and nationalism, gender roles in competitive

ballroom dance, as well as interconnectedness of DanceSport and diaspora. There are certainly more topics that could be pulled out from this research such as parental involvement, differences in vocational schooling, and further analysis of inter-generational differences in identity.

However, due to restraints in both time and space these lines of research will have to await the next publication. In the least, I hope this chapter has given voice to my participants and linked

their concerns and perspectives to historical developments of which they were part, at best I wish for this to be a first step in the changes they (and I) would like to see in Canadian DanceSport.

The following chapter will summarize my research from both historical and ethnographic perspectives linking synchronic with diachronic delineations of the narrative of DanceSport in Canada and the influence of Soviet immigrants on its development. To conclude, I will propose several future directions in both theoretical research and practical development that could benefit this dance form and its practitioners in the Canadian cultural context.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Summary

In this dissertation I have outlined several themes which have emerged from my ethnographic research at Soviet-style DanceSport studios in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa relating the reality of diasporic ballroom dancers in Canadian DanceSport. My research was guided by primary research questions which explored: What are the differences in the relationship between national politics and dance in the Soviet Union and Canada? How have Soviet emigrant dancers adapted to the Canadian socio-economic context? And, how did these cultural shifts affect the teaching and performances of these dancers? More specifically, I examined how government-controlled arts and sport industries contrast with privately owned ones in terms of training methods and quality. Which teaching and management strategies do Soviet emigrant coaches apply to satisfy a clientele used to western pedagogy and marketing? And finally, how do second generation immigrant competitive dancers reconcile the values they have learnt growing up in Canada with the traditional Soviet approach to training in their studios? In order to ground my work in current scholarly discourse I conducted a literature review spanning appropriation in dance and performance studies scholarship, diasporic identities from the literature on immigration and cultural positionality, and the political role of dance in several national contexts, the structures of dance industries in the Soviet Union and Canada, and vocational educational strategies in both countries. Within these narratives I examined national and diasporic identity formation, body disciplines and the state, Soviet and Canadian sports and dance educational philosophies, embodied socialism, and the development of ballroom dancing

as analyzed within problems surrounding cultural appropriation. My work is primarily situated in the academic discipline of dance studies but also borrows methodologies and theories from anthropology, performance studies, historiography, and cultural studies. In my analysis, I am indebted to authors such as Juliet McMains, Anthony Shay, and Tomie Hahn, who have laid the ground work for anthropological analysis of dance. I have also borrowed insights from performance scholars including Diana Taylor and Joseph Roach. In my ethnographic research I followed anthropological methods by pioneers like Clifford Geertz and Paul Rabinow. I conducted qualitative interviews, observed and participated in dance classes, and generally immersed myself in the culture of each studio. My entry into these tight-knit communities was facilitated by my positionality as an insider anthropologist by virtue of my own Soviet background and professional status in the competitive ballroom world.

In order to contextualize my research in a historical framework, I also examined the political situation in the USSR and the role arts have played in the communism-based climate as well as in the development of arts and education in Canada's multicultural society. In particular, I focused on the cultural policies of the USSR during Zhdanov's *pogrom* and the resulting realist formalism in arts, the prominence of communist propaganda in Soviet education, and the role of physical education in the formation of an ideal Soviet citizen. In the Canadian setting, I investigated into the role of inclusion and multicultural policies on the development of educational strategies and dance training. I used archival works from the communist era in USSR, and Canadian dance archives to uncover these contexts and paint a picture of the historical settings from which my participants and their Canadian contemporaries have emerged. In chapter five, I outlined the results of my interviews and my observations and combined them with my theorizations from the literature review and historical context sections in order to give

voice to the community I studied and placed their perspective in a historical and scholarly context. Here I analysed the political system of socialism and its incompatibility with the concept of social or leisure activity in a capitalist society, reviewed studio organization and training methodology in Soviet-style DanceSport institutions, deconstructed dual cultural identities of immigrant dancers, showed how appropriation affects competitive ballroom dance, and discussed the role of global communication and travel technology in this industry. Additionally, I looked at gender roles in the diasporic context of Soviet-Canadian DanceSport, examined sponsorship and funding initiatives in competitive ballroom dancing, and made parallels between the Soviet diaspora and the development of DanceSport from social ballroom dancing.

To conclude, I will speculate on the future developments in some of these areas and propose potential solutions to several issues arising from the research. I will examine how DanceSport and social dance can co-exist and even complement each in the Canadian ballroom industry; look at how the Soviet-Canadian dancers are transforming the cultural, structural, and physical identity of DanceSport in this country; suggest how this transformation is related to current trends in global DanceSport industry and illustrate the effects of inter-organizational conflicts on the lives of the dancers in this research; propose several educational initiatives which will address the issues of cultural appropriation in DanceSport and outline my actions thus far in this respect. I argue for policy changes in the governance of physical education in Canada based on historical failures of the provincially-based systems; examine the role new technologies might play in the future of this industry, and look at possibilities of expanding multi-culturalism in the Canadian dance curricula. I also examine similarities between nationalism in the USSR and multi-culturalism in Canada, as reflected in the performing arts, and propose steps to use

multiculturalism to the advantage of Canadian dancers. Finally, I reflect on the disciplinary formation and scholarly contributions of this research.

6.2 The Intersection of Social Dance and Soviet DanceSport

Through this study I argue that ideological and expressive qualities found in the bodies of Soviet-Canadian second-generation immigrant ballroom dancers and their teachers stem from the input of the Soviet socialist body ideologies on ballroom dancing over the last three decades. The qualities of that body, which emphasize discipline, stoicism, and attention to group dynamics, are expressed through movement characteristics such as vertical dimension in posture, strong lines in space, and an emotional expression underlying each movement, all come from the physical culture of Soviet Union, instilled in Soviet children by the government and the long traditions of folk and ballet dance forms in that country. I proceed by demonstrating how in the diasporic context of Soviet-Canadian DanceSport, Canadian bodies and culture have, in turn, modified the original socialist dancing body by encouraging it to relax and release some of the tensions acquired under the panoptical gaze of the Red Party, thereby producing a phenomenological manifestation of a multi-cultural identity, which I have witnessed during my research. The competitive success of these bodies in North America and much of Europe has allowed them to guide the contemporary direction of competitive ballroom dance. The developments produced by these bodies stand in stark contrast to the traditional perspective of ballroom dance based on social dancing in North America. In contrast to DanceSport, traditional social dances such as Salsa and Swing, for example, do not see spatial lines as a priority and emphasize improvisation instead of form and social interactions instead of competition. Beyond that, as McMains points out, the original emphasis on improvisation in social dances has been practically erased by the

DanceSport industry (71-74). The sports-based approach encouraged by Soviet training methods develops dance athletes rather than social or concert dancers. This situation begs the question of whether it was the right direction for ballroom dancing to take; do we really want to imitate these tense and regulated bodies? In the last ten years, as the Russian political economy has been transformed, new research by ballroom dancers of the generation that lived through this transformation has come to ask this very question. Anna Bezikova, a former Russian Latin DanceSport champion, writes in her dissertation on pedagogy in DanceSport that while Russian ballroom dancing has been very successful on the world stage over the last twenty years, it is characterized by a sports-oriented mechanical approach to its training style. While musicality and theatrical expression are present, the pedagogical methodology overall lacks the somatic approach necessary for a practice with strong psychological components, which are created by the consistent presence of a partner and persistent competition. The self-reflective stance taken by Bezikova characterizes the physical and psychological changes undergone by many former Soviet dancers, and reflects their questioning attitudes toward their bodies and training. Similarly, at the studios I visited during my research, there was a feeling of comfort not always present in original Soviet studios described by the coaches. Both the socialist and the capitalist ideologies have faults when it comes to producing a genuinely free and expressive ballroom dancing body, and while these systems can probably not co-exist as political ideologies, perhaps the dancers in my research can embody the intersection of their cumulative positive values in their dancing.

6.3 Transforming Identities

In my studio observations and participant interviews, I was able to record various characteristics of second-generation Soviet immigrant dancers in Canada. The multiple identities embodied by these young performers reflect influences from the diasporic communities they come from, as well as their personal collages of traits and behaviours gathered throughout their life in Canada. The principles that are at the root of these identities, in turn, affect the way they prioritise and utilize their time and bodily capital. Some, like Harry or John, choose to remain loyal to the Soviet ideals of utilitarian approach to life and training, while others, like Vikka, prefer to expand their interests or decrease the pressure such regimentation requires. The repertoire that “enacts embodied memory: performance, gestures, orality, movement, dance” (Taylor 20) serves as a toolbox from which these diasporic children draw the specific tools they deem appropriate for themselves and the situation around them. While their parents still have strong ties to their native culture, they do not impose it on their descendants the way it was imposed on them by the Soviet state (Ottawa parents focus group). The acculturation in the Canadian society allows both generations to mediate a compromising stand towards each other and their new cultural environment. In the bodies and movement of the junior dancers these cultural mediations are often reflected in the conflicting dynamics of tension-relaxation, the latter expressed only occasionally and spontaneously during dance class, the former visible in most situations where observation takes place and discipline is required. As Sanya expressed in the focus group, she can be quite relaxed in her high school but is very disciplined in the dance studio because “here it’s like oh you didn’t die, you have to work hard and practice more!” (Ottawa dancers focus group). If the children manage to successfully negotiate these dynamics, they are usually successful in the field of DanceSport and are rewarded on both fronts, as

individual winners and as representatives of their family and community. Such validation, in turn, often provides ample motivation for the children to continue practicing this activity for sufficient amounts of time to eventually become leaders in the Canadian DanceSport industry themselves and play a role in its development. In this manner, cultural dynamics shape the identities of these young diasporic dancers who eventually come to shape the identity of Canadian Dancesport as a whole.

In her discussion of the Japanese dance form *Nihon Buyo*, dance scholar Tomie Hahn reflects on code-switching and multiple identities in dance performance. She states, as I do above, that both contribute to a more complete performance and provide a metaphor to social constructions of identity. In the case of DanceSport, the identities are dictated by the character of the dance; you are a part of a Brazilian carnival in the Samba, a matador and a flamenco dancer in the Paso Doble, or a graceful 19th century couple at an Austrian ball in Viennese Waltz, among others. However, even within these parameters self-actualization is possible for the skilled dancers. The dancers in my study embodied their cultural and personal ideals in their dancing and were learning the skills for social code-switching through their practice. Just as for the Japanese (158) the code switching for former Soviets is situational, people adjust to where they are and with whom they are interacting. However, their manner of expressing themselves is very different to either the Japanese dancers described by Tomie Hahn, the British teachers who built the ballroom industry, or the Latin American social dancers whom the Latin DanceSport attempts to imitate. In this manner “dance serves as a valuable model of embodied metaphors that inform how techniques of the body in motion are historically and culturally situated” (159). The transformation of the social dancing body into the athletic dancing body through the influx of Eastern European dancers into Western Europe and America as described in previous chapters

is reflective of the historical and cultural development of ballroom dancing in the USSR. This transformation is visible in the actual physical ideal body of DanceSport which is now closer than ever to the typical Eastern European build of tall, lean, and long-limbed dancer; the facial expressions, which are increasingly reminiscent of the Eastern shifts between complete stoicism and overt self expression; and most importantly in movement qualities which value explosive movements, classical lines, and maximal control of timing. Inversely, through their dancing they practice physicalizing the reserve of the European elite courts, the celebratory moods of Brazilian carnivals, and the intense drama of the bullfight in Spain. As Juliet McMains states in regard to the character Standard dances “Dancesport standard portrays [...] his chivalry, her extolled beauty, their unison movement—all these ‘old- fashioned’ markers that appear to transcend specific, perhaps even racial, individual identity. But upon even cursory examination it becomes clear that this notion of romance, along with the costumes and the graceful restraint of movement, is derived from a European, aristocratic model of social dance” (133). This transformation on the dance floor and the dancers’ abilities to adapt such identities in their daily lives facilitates their interactions with many of their wealthy and aristocratic clients, and allows them further options for potential class mobility. Moreover, the increasing practice of running competitions in sports arenas, the loud shouts from the audience, and the sheer numbers of Russian speaking public at any large international event stand in contrast to the traditional ballrooms, the strict etiquette, and the predominantly English speech, which formerly characterised competitive ballroom dance. Despite that, British syllabus books are still used for examinations (ISTD), and contemporary Latin American social dances like salsa and bachata are still taught at most ballroom studios. Like the code switching in which my participants engage on a daily basis, the industry of DanceSport constantly re-adjusts its own identity to the developing

world around it. At the time of this writing the competitive ballroom dance industry is, in fact, facing an identity crisis caused by the processes of globalization, immigration, and increase in information technology. The ballroom dance world is now unofficially divided into three ideological camps loosely based on their geographic location. Britain and much of Western Europe adhere to the traditional philosophy of Ballroom dancing as a social and artistic pursuit as it has been practiced in the UK for several decades. The USA has glamorized the industry and focuses on showmanship and entertainment. Finally, Eastern Europe still sees it as an aesthetic sport, much like it was in the former USSR. These divisions are part of the philosophical reasoning for the current rifts in the ballroom dance community, which have divided it into several associations and network tribes. The result of these developments is that dancers are unable to compete at events outside of their association and judges are not allowed to judge at competitions of the opposing 'tribe'. It is difficult to predict where this separation will lead the industry as whole, but dancers have already began voicing their concerns and looking for potential solutions. For example, a social media group called 'freedom to dance' (Richard Gleave) has been campaigning for competitors' rights to dance anywhere, and the judges' rights to judge at any event. The official incorporation of the DanceSport industry into a government Sports or Arts ministry which would collaborate with an international body such as UNESCO or the Olympic Committee could alleviate some of the problems caused by intra-organizational politics. The World DanceSport Federation (WDSF) is currently attempting to create such a structure but its rival World Dance Council is not keen on collaborating with them on this project. Since most Canadian professionals are affiliated with the WDC, very few attempts have been made to include DanceSport as part of Sport Canada or similar organizations (Alex interview).

6.4 The Future of DanceSport as a Physical Culture

Shneidman, in his treatise on sports and physical education in the USSR contrasts it with the North American system in stating that:

The Soviets have developed and accepted one uniform theory of physical education and the motivation for the development of physical culture and sport is inspired by political and ideological considerations. In North America physical education is the individual's private concern. The few guidelines and programs provided by the public and social institutions suggest and invite rather than induce and encourage the individual to join a certain athletic group or a sport club. (*Soviet Road to Olympus* 127)

Shneidman further argues that the lack of a unified sports structure in North America and the disproportionate emphasis on professional sports by the media create a situation where the majority of athletes do not receive the support they need to succeed in the international arena. He urges the Canadian government to support them rather than expecting them to succeed without teaching them how to do so. As I discussed in the Historical Context chapter, such a situation was produced by the province-based separation of responsibility for physical education, the shifting governmental priorities in regard to fitness, and predominance of the capitalist political economy in Canada. In view of this situation and the increasing levels of obesity and sedentary living among Canadian youth (Active Healthy Kids Canada), it is perhaps not unreasonable to consider making physical education a federal responsibility and creating a unified policy on physical education for all Canadians. I am not suggesting a Soviet-style propaganda-based approach but a stronger emphasis on physical culture as a necessity rather than as a possibility could perhaps shift the tide of sedentary habits in this society. DanceSport, as an activity which lies at the interstice between sports and arts, could be a bridge into physical education for those

individuals who are interested in arts but are less inclined to sport participation. As a dance form it can potentially incite more participation in physical activity from teenage girls (Naik) and through programs such as the ones instituted in the USA by Pierre Dullaine (Dancing Classrooms) can help disadvantaged urban youth find a safe space for creative self expression in their lives. Additionally, the wheelchair DanceSport category (Wheel Dance) can provide an avenue for differently abled athletes to participate and compete in this physical activity on a world-class scale. For these developments to occur, however, DanceSport has to be recognized as a serious dance form and sporting activity rather than as a ‘social dance’ component complementing other dance forms in the school curriculum (Canada, Ontario Ministry of Education, *part a*; Canada, Ontario Ministry of Education, *part b*). In my article on conditioning strategies for DanceSport (Outevsky and Martin) I have already outlined the physiological demands of this dance form which in some parameters are equivalent to those of swimming and gymnastics. Hence, with the science supporting its physical benefits, if DanceSport is to be beneficial to Canadians as a physical activity, it needs to transcend the stigma of ‘social dance’ and become simply ‘dance’ or ‘sport’. Social ballroom dance can still be an important part of community dance programs or even some introductory vocational courses, but I argue that at this point in time it is important to recognize the other aspects of this dance form. Similarly, at the university level, full programs of ballroom dance and inter university competitions can be instituted such as the ones that exist in the USA (Ballroom Dance Program Utah Valley University; Ballroom Dance Program Brigham Young University). Such initiatives will not only promote participation in physical activity by the student body, but might also be profitable for the Canadian higher education institutions through competition audience ticket sales and performance returns. Some of the future steps I intend to undertake in this direction include

joining the peer-review committees of the Canada Council for the Arts, discussing the benefits of DanceSport becoming an official sport in Canada with the Canadian DanceSport association members, and attempt to encourage the creation of a DanceSport-based program at an undergraduate level in Canada.

6.5 Beyond Cultural Appropriation

At the end of her book *Modern Moves: Dancing Race During Ragtime and Jazz Eras* Danielle Robinson asks the future researcher to engage with questions including: “As dancers are our models of race still obsolete? Are we still turning to ‘otherness’ as an escape? And do we succeed at the exploitation of others?” (154). Here, I would like to address these questions from the perspective of the Soviet-Canadian dancers I have worked with and the literature I have encountered in my research. The simple answer would be yes, they are still obsolete and in some sense, we are still succeeding at the exploitation of others, even if not as much for escapism as for sensationalism. However, in many ways we cannot examine Soviet ballroom dancers through the same lens as their American counterparts.

Soviet ideology was based in Marxist-Leninism (Marx; Althusser) which prioritized class struggle over any other philosophical ideologies, including those based on race. Therefore, in terms of political ideology race had no more place in Soviet discussions of cultural policy than did religion or gender. If the person was true to the communist cause his race did not matter in that context, at least theoretically⁵⁰. Additionally, despite the cultural and political monopoly of Russian culture, there existed no comparable history of slavery in the USSR as that which taints

⁵⁰ There were of course prejudices, such as those against Jews during Stalinism, against Americans during the cold war, and against Germans in the aftermath of WWII (Kenez).

American history. Russian universities accepted students from African countries, and strong political partnerships were forged with Latin American countries which embraced the communist ethos, including Cuba and Venezuela. Even though racism existed throughout the population, it hardly ever reached the extent it did in the USA. Within the Union, however, Russian language dominated, and most other cultures were assimilated into the 'rainbow masses' (Shay). Because of this political stance, Soviet cultural policy was incompatible with serious considerations of race or appropriation. As Williams explains, such a perspective is 'color blind' and considers attempts at distinguishing between races as harmful to the harmony of the social order. It is therefore not surprising that ballroom dancing in the Soviet Union was not received with the scrutiny it might have merited but was simply assimilated into the 'rainbow masses' of the cultural dances already existing there, albeit with an athletic competitive emphasis. Furthermore, the late arrival of ballroom dancing in the USSR masked much of the appropriation ballroom and Latin dances have undergone through the already developed British-based syllabi and vocabulary. As Vova and Laura point out in their interview, the Iron Curtain prevented much of the information flow between the East and the West and delayed critical analysis of the cultural products that made it through, including dancing.

As the dancers, and the dancing, migrated to Canada these perspectives remained current for most first-generation immigrants. Their children, however, being educated in the West, are much more mindful in their outlook on multi-culturalism. It was, in fact, the most quoted intergenerational difference in my interviews (e.g. *see* Alesia and Stan Interview). The second generation is much more conscious of the roots of the dances in which they participate through exposure to Latin American peers at school, prevalence of Latin dance clubs in Canadian metropolitan cities, and the abundant depictions of Latin and Caribbean cultural festivals in the

media. This awareness, however, is tamed by the sports-oriented culture of Soviet style DanceSport, which tends to once again erase any racial and cultural roots of their practice, rendering it simply into an aesthetically-based athletic movement. Because of the super-imposed separation of colonial history and the actual movement practice, Canadian DanceSport athletes proceed in the same manner as the dancers represented in McMains' USA-based analysis, essentially capitalizing on their movement skills as the refined representation of 'whiteness' and its exotic 'other'. They don't dance for escapism however. The amount of effort necessary to maintain a competitive and performing career is too demanding for any professional to do it without a real passion for movement and dance, which have little in common with escapism in exoticism. Their pro-am students, on the other hand, might have such fantasies, but these are quickly eradicated by the Soviet-style competition preparation, which encourages the student to win rather than seek an alternate reality. Unlike the franchised studios such as Arthur Murray or Fred Astaire, most Soviet-style independent studios still emphasise competition as the end goal of their training (e.g. *see* Yan Interview). Even if the students are not interested in such a pursuit, the presence of competitive dancers in the studio constantly reminds them that this dancing is not about escapism but the pursuit of excellence. As I explain above, the main motivations for the professionals to train are competitive pursuits and the exoticism present in the form is, generally, simply a part of the winner's arsenal or a selling point for the engagement of new clients, who ensure the financial survival of the studio. From a historical perspective, contemporary DanceSport is not any more 'exotic' than contemporary, modern, or ballet character forms. All these western dance forms have roots in other cultures' folk dances, eastern martial arts, and fitness practices such as Yoga or Tai Chi. Conversely, contemporary eastern forms such as Butoh, Bollywood, and many 'national' folk dances incorporate western concert dance

techniques in their repertoire (Reynolds and McCormick). Therefore, I would argue that while the ballroom dancers in my study ultimately do succeed at the exploitation of others, they do so because they are hardly given any other options. During my research, I wrote a brief article for the education website of World Dance Council discussing the roots and misconceptions about the names of the Latin dances in DanceSport. The article was received enthusiastically and was praised by the education committee chair. This experience, along with discussions with dancers during my research have demonstrated to me that the DanceSport community is not opposed to new perspectives of their art but the members are just too consumed with business goals and training to consider them. I believe that with more initiatives allowing DanceSport to become a more informed community we can easily shed the colonial masks covering this beautiful dance form. Some of the first steps for this transformation can follow the footsteps of modern-contemporary dance which, through its associations with the universities and colleges (Reynolds and McCormick) has developed a strong intellectual and self-critical tradition alongside its movement progression. As mentioned earlier, some US universities already include ballroom dance as a dance major program, in which dancers also learn about history, aesthetics, and other aspects of dance practice. Such education would facilitate a shift in the consciousness of DanceSport culture which Robinson calls for in her work. Before such major changes take place, however, small contributions can go a long way. Workshops on dance history, dance studies, and anthropology can begin a conversation between dancers, coaches, and academics in regard to the issues of appropriation in DanceSport and potential solutions. For example, in the article I published on the WDC website (Outevsky), I suggest officially changing the names of the Latin ballroom dances to DanceSport Cha Cha Cha, DanceSport Samba, and DanceSport Rumba as way to provide some distance from the authentic dances with the same name and acknowledge

the roots of our form as well as its development. Unfortunately, these changes have not yet been implemented, but I will continue trying to shift DanceSport culture towards a more humane and less exploitative approach to its history. More recently, in response to these issues some coaches have attempted ‘a return to the roots’ approach where they organize camps in Cuba, inviting competitors to come and study there as a way of gaining some ‘cultural capital’ for their dancing (Back to the Roots). Unfortunately, due to the economical, racial, and class-based differences between the North American or European dancers coming to those camps and the Cubans teaching them, this solution still falls short of empowering Latin American dancers and reinforces the historical tropes of Euro-American appropriation of Latin American cultural forms.

6.6 New Directions of Gender in DanceSport

The highly prescribed and traditional gender roles in DanceSport have incited criticism from dance scholars (Malnig; McMains) yet in their contemporary existence they are quite complex processes that as mimicry might be better compared to two colleagues working on separate tasks of the same project than simply a representation of gender roles in a given society. In many of my observations, especially with the younger students, I noticed a clear disconnect between the gender and sexuality-based gestures and actual intent of the dancers. For example, a suggestive hip motion by a teenage girl followed by a spreading sharp motion by a boy of similar age prompted me to write the following passage in my notes:

Their gestures seem overtly gendered for such a young couple; he attempts to be macho despite his comedic character; she tries to be seductive at such a young age. I am

wondering what kind of psychological skills they are acquiring right now besides the actual dancing... (Author's fieldnotes)

In writing this I wondered whether the children, through embodying these gender roles are actually getting desensitized to them at such an early age. Within Soviet-style teaching conventions in particular, sexuality and gender are simply tools for success, and the embodiment of them is only necessary for a more convincing performance. These dancers do not 'live through their dance expressing their soul' as Duncan did (Daly); they move to express that illusion regardless of whether they feel it or not. Fraternization among partners is in fact discouraged, and punished by heavy sarcasm if found out (Laura and Vova, Interview).

In the Soviet climate, women's rights were an important part of the communist agenda (Adler; Choi; Saks) and during and after WWII in which millions of Russian men died, women have taken on many leadership and trade-based professions in the country. Even though women were still relegated to specific fields such as education, light industry, and farming, the change in their social positionality was significant in comparison to the pre-communist period. This development is reflected in the gender roles within Soviet DanceSport training, where a similar 'equal but different' division exists. Despite the patriarchal organisation of the couple where, simplistically put, the man leads, and the woman follows, an effective combined performance necessitates an equal participation by both in the preparation and performance. Because of all the acrobatic feats required to be performed by the follower, she is, in fact, required to do more of the mobility type of work while the leader maintains the stability of the couple. When either one becomes compromised the performance suffers. This structure was a perfect fit for the communist perspective of gender roles, where each had a role to play in the quest for a larger goal only achievable through teamwork, a motto fitting any Soviet era banner. Girls could be

encouraged to be slim, fit, and beautiful and boys could be told to be manly, strong, and decisive. This view is evident in the interview of Kostia and Alla, in which they both lament the lack of Canadian boys ‘boyishness’ and praise the work ethic of the girls worldwide. Choi and Adler both confirm that gender roles in the USSR were far from equal despite the ideological stance the government promoted but admit that the revolution certainly gave a boost to feminism. I would argue that, similarly, at least in the Soviet-style studios, the woman’s role remains far more valued than in many other professions, despite the glamour-based superficial representations of supposed submissiveness. As in other dance forms which utilize the sexuality of the body, ‘the technologies of the body’ (Wesely 643) afford agency to the women involved in this practice which cannot be ignored. Nevertheless, a further discussion of women’s representation in DanceSport is necessary to allow a true emancipation of gender-roles in this dance form.

In his analysis of gender roles in Latin DanceSport Vermeij states that the “portrayal of women in Latin dance continues to ignore the woman’s sociopolitical reality today” (*Latin* 99). As a resolution, he proposes a re-examination of the stereotypical roles portrayed in DanceSport



Figure 25.
All female couple, competing in the American Smooth Division of DanceSport. Image source: <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/420523683929519246>

and their continued appraisal by the ballroom industry. In his lectures, Vermeij often uses same gender couples and improvisation as tools to break down the gender based gestural dichotomy (Vermeij, “Mind Over Matter”). The emergence of same-sex competitions around North America has helped to promote alternative conceptions of gender roles in competitive

ballroom dance but the marginal and somewhat segregated position of this category within the larger DanceSport structure illustrates the deeply entrenched patriarchal structures imbedded in the history of this dance form. As one of my future projects, I plan to work with same-sex competition organisers to promote and develop their events.

Because of the traditional philosophies in Soviet-Canadian DanceSport studios, such changes will likely take longer to accept and implement despite Canada's general liberalism on such issues. While the new generation is likely to be more receptive to shifting gender roles, sexual orientations, and the resulting changes in the competition structure, most of the first-generation immigrants will probably retain their original perspectives on these matters even if they won't voice them publicly. That is a normal cultural reaction in diasporic communities, whereby the older generation assumes the cultural heritage gatekeeper role whilst the new generation pushes its boundaries in the new world (Ziff and Rao). However, as the society around them redefines its gender identities, even the staunchest defenders of binary gender formations will be prompted to adapt their institutions to the new identities of their clientele, even if only for economic reasons at first. Since these immigrants have already integrated themselves in Canadian society in so many ways, I envision that they will do so again regarding gender.

6.7 The Potential of Communication and Travel Technology

The availability of easy access to information in the last two decades has transformed DanceSport. As Vova and Laura point out in the previous chapter, the best dancers today are those who can do most with the information rather than those who have access to it. Several developments in particular are important to note as the catalysts for future developments in this

dance form through the enhanced access to information. Firstly, the availability of free technique and syllabus videos online, partially destabilizes the monopoly on technique formerly held by organizations such as the ISTD. While it does not erase the role of dance teachers and official examiners in the education of dancers and the formation of instructors, it does, however, facilitate access for underprivileged or geographically isolated populations. Secondly, the possibility of observing high level competitions is now available to wider audiences of both practitioners and fans. While the former may gain better understanding of the skills necessary for them to reach the highest levels of DanceSport, the latter benefit from a better understanding of the nuances necessary to achieve such a status, becoming a more informed audience who knows the difference between a world championship and ‘Dancing with the Stars’. Such developments generally increase the recognition of the complexities of any dance form, gaining it more respect and potentially government support in the long run. Finally, the emergence of sites such as dancearchives.net allows for a previously non-existent information flow from dance and education experts to the ballroom dance community. Topics such as the history of the form, appropriation, and injury prevention are starting to be addressed by experts in each field. While this is by no means a comprehensive resource and often swayed by anecdotal information, it is still progress for a dance form which generally has no vocational training or educational resources beyond the classical ballroom technique books. Through this dissertation and other research on DanceSport I aim to enrich such sites through producing trade articles that will be accessible beyond academia.

In addition to these developments, the availability of cheap travel and migration possibilities facilitate the global flow of dancers. As Marion outlines in his recent article, this situation destabilizes the concept of the ‘local’ in both the global economy and the lives of

individual dancers. The already nomadic lifestyle of many dancers is now exacerbated by the possibilities of migration and across the border partnerships. Searching for dance partners of high skill level and similar mentality, Soviet immigrants in North America often 'import' partners from former USSR nations, where the dancing level is high, attitude is strict, and numbers of dancers abundant. Once in America, these dancers usually begin to teach at franchised studios which can get them a working Visa in return for a 2-3-year commitment or get married to their dance partners who already possess citizenship. Alternatively, in Europe, where the distances are closer and air travel is cheaper, partners often commute for as long as a year from one country to another before settling in one. The opening of borders since the formation of the European Union has facilitated such mobility and transformed the lifestyle of DanceSport competitors. Several of the participants in my research arrived in Canada in a similar manner, first arriving as visitors to try out the partnership and, if it worked out, eventually gaining residency or citizenship through the various avenues available to them. At an earlier point in my career, I also moved from UK to Austria for a year to attempt a partnership, and I have recently commuted from Toronto to New York bi-weekly during a dance partnership tryout period.

Considering the contributions these dancers are providing to the Canadian artscape and its international reputation (Toronto 2015 Pan Am; WDSF; WDC), I believe that it would benefit both the dancers and the Canadian policy makers to create DanceSport-specific visitor Visas and immigration regulations. Due to its unique structure this dance form does not really fit the current regulatory framework, a situation that creates more work and challenges for both the dancers and the border authorities and immigration officers. In the US, the regulation has currently been changed from arts-based to athletics-based, whereby instead of providing evidence of performance sport dancers are required to demonstrate international results (How to

Prove You're an Alien of Extraordinary Ability). However, considering the precarity of ballroom partnerships, and the resulting gaps in competition periods, I am not convinced that is the best course of action for DanceSport practitioners. A special sub-category within either or both the arts and athletics category for sport dancers would be ideal. This could allow for a three-month try out visas without having to prove prior knowledge of the person as a 'friend'. It could be seen as a probationary period for a potential colleague. In addition, immigration procedures should take into consideration the mobile and unstable lifestyle of competitive dancers, where studio work consistently intertwines with travel for competition and performance. Such clarification would allow for faster processing and bypass the common confused reactions of the border and immigration authorities as to the nature of this particular activity and its structure.

6.8 Testing Multiculturalism in Vocational Institutions

As outlined in the historical context chapter, many of the contrasts between Soviet and Canadian approaches to education stem from differing ideologies of pedagogy. Through my investigation I came to question the possibility for the co-existence of Soviet-based competitive methodologies within an inclusive educational environment in Canada. The former values results, elitism, and rivalry while the latter encourages appreciation of the process, collaboration, and support. The evolution of the Canadian educational system within a multicultural environment necessitated the development of inclusive policies in order to accommodate various cultural inputs. However, are these values really compatible with the high-level competitive sport approaches used in Soviet-style DanceSport studios? According to my ethnographic research and literature review, the simple answer would be no. However, as I noticed in my observations and reading 'between the lines' of my interviewees' answers, there is a grey area between the two

which allows for the successful adaptation of at least some Soviet methods within the Canadian inclusive and multicultural environment. Firstly, many immigrants from the former Soviet Union actually seek out studios with Soviet inspired environment, which provides a solid clientele base for the Soviet emigrant teachers. Secondly, even though second-generation dancers do not completely adhere to their teacher's strict methodologies, forging their own identities through covert counter-cultural resistances, they still manage to achieve world rankings in DanceSport. And thirdly, the parents of these children provide a mediating presence between the students and the teachers by attempting to adapt to Canadian norms in their parenting, such as driving their children around for their hobbies and speaking English to them, while still instilling discipline and giving their children a solid training base in this form.

When at school, however, these second-generation immigrants often feel isolated from their peers due to their unique value systems and unusual extracurricular interests (Ottawa focus group). While some of the younger female dancers take pride in their accomplishments in DanceSport and gladly showcase their successes to their peers, many teenage male dancers feel uncomfortable even mentioning it to their friends. Many of my interviewees who grew up in the USSR stated that this was not the case there. In contrast, boys were encouraged by their peers and teachers to compete as representatives of their school. Both boys and girls felt that their positionality, as Soviet-Canadians who spend their free time practicing this unusual activity, makes them somewhat 'weird' in their vocational environment where dance, already a marginal activity, is usually equated with ballet or contemporary forms due to the traditional curriculum orientation.

Given these experiences, a true multicultural approach to dance education is still lacking in the Canadian system. In terms of creating equity and empowerment in the studio, I suggest

that syllabus content in vocational dance studio settings must be more diverse. Dance forms that are to be taught may be chosen based on the various dance experiences and forms each student brings into class. This will create a cultural space where minority (visible or non-visible) students share their knowledge and ways of moving, which will enable other students to see the value and importance of each dance form that is different from theirs. I suggest that giving space for difference will allow immigrant students' dance forms to gain cultural capital and acceptance in an otherwise hegemonic space, dominated by ballet, modern, and other contemporary dance forms. Apart from learning about them, a dance studio setting will also allow dance students to embody cultural differences through movement. This would develop not only theoretical knowledge of, but also an embodied empathy and understanding toward a vast range of cultural practices, necessary in a multicultural society.

In order to begin such a transformation, each dance teacher needs to recognize the politics and hegemony of his/her dance form in relation to other dance forms existing in the educational setting. This will preclude dance teachers from forcing their own aesthetic ideologies of dance and unilateral dance knowledge on students who do not practice their dance forms. Moreover, with an awareness of difference and the unilateral view point his/her dance form operates on, he/she should gain an attitude of openness and equality where other dance forms are concerned.

While it seems that dance education in university settings accepts multiculturalism and diversity of forms, this permission is only accorded in specific circumstances such as optional courses for non-dance majors. As I suggested earlier, an ideal scenario for DanceSport would be the creation of a ballroom-based undergraduate degree but prior to that we can begin by giving more attention to educating university dance students about the values and aesthetics of different

dance forms. In the last few decades, dance scholars have already dismantled the theoretical hegemony of ballet and modern dance forms (*e.g.* Kealiinohomoku; Sweet)⁵¹, however, that stance is yet to be fully incorporated in practice. Once teachers and students openly discuss the politics of difference, various forms of knowledge embodied in different dance forms can give students a pluralistic and complex understanding of life and society. While many dance programs have already begun incorporating ‘Dance Studies’ and ‘Dance Aesthetics’ (Department of Dance York University; Department of Dance University of Calgary) courses into their curricula, most subjects still only focus on western concert dance history, techniques, and development. Additionally, if practical ballroom courses are present in the program, the Soviet approach can also help students learn the discipline, structure, and cultural philosophy behind this athletic dance form. Such transformation in both secondary and undergraduate levels of Canadian education can create a real integration (Williams) of Eastern European immigrants into the Canadian arts and sports education system making full use of its multiculturalist ethos.

6.9 The Nationalism of Multiculturalism

The term multiculturalism has been utilized by the Canadian government since the 1970s to describe its diverse culture. However, the term has fallen out of favour with many artists by the 1990s due to the labels it put on minority art forms. As a result, the definition of ‘Canadian Dance’ had to broaden to include various cultural practices and dance forms reflecting the Canadian population. In chapter four, I discuss how some of these changes affected the development of the Canadian dance landscape. Here, I would like to link these historical

⁵¹ Even though historically ballroom dancing is also a Western dance form and might be seen as hegemonic (see my discussion of cultural appropriation above), in the context of higher education it is still a marginal minority.

moments to the contemporary perspectives on dance in Canada, their relationship to the national motto of ‘multiculturalism’, and the role DanceSport plays in these processes. The timeline below reflects the shifts of positionality within the Canada Arts Council for the Arts (Cornell):

Table 6. The development of multicultural policies by CCA and OAC⁵²

1957 – Canada Council begins funding artists (with an endowment)
1963 – Bill 162 is passed in Ontario creating OAC
1974 – Susan Cohen reviews the OAC policies on dance grants and finds lack of multiculturalism and recognition of smaller companies/ individual artists. Judy Jarvis becomes the first modern dancer to receive the Jean A. Chalmers award for choreography from OAC (Jarvis Judy).
1981 – Susan Cohen becomes OAC dance officer and initiates her proposals; funds to umbrella organizations, Native specific grants, project grants for established companies, support for multi disciplinary and multicultural projects.
1986 – Multicultural / Folk Arts grant is created in OAC
1990 – Culture specific grant is created in OAC
1990 – Lina Fattah becomes multicultural coordinator of OAC and implements further changes in the application process, diversification of jury composition, and the definition of ‘Canadian’ art. During her tenure, the Culture Specific Dance grant was created.
1991 - Canada Council adopts a more open policy on multiculturalism and form, hires Susan McPherson and Danny Grossman to develop it.
1993 – The Canada Council definition of dance is broadened to include non-Western forms
1997 – An advisory committee for ‘other’ forms is formed at CCA including Zab Maboungou (Congolese dance) and Marla O’Dole (Vinoc Folk group).
1997 – A Racial Equity Advisory Committee is developed by the CCA including William Lau (Chinese Dance) and a First Nations dancer

The Canadian Council for the Arts is a clear example of a major Canadian institution which, while claiming and gaining cultural capital from its advertised diversity, has actually pursued hegemonic practices with the Euro-American traditions ‘on top’ and ‘other’ forms below. While the Council has recognized its faults, and changed its definitions as well as its policies, it serves as a useful reminder of the precarity of the term ‘multicultural’. In chapter four, I refer to the theories of Anthony Shay, a dance scholar who discusses the ‘invented traditions’ of Soviet Union folk ensembles which used balletized and theatricalized versions of the folk dances from several USSR republics in order to promote the communist government agenda of unification.

⁵² This table was mainly compiled from information in Katherine Cornell’s article, see citation in References.

Here I argue that Canada is different more in the details than in principle, and multiculturalism is simply a veil of inclusion covering the government's agenda of unification and community within diversity, similar to the former USSR. To this point I will use a case study of a performance by dancers from Toronto DanceSport to exemplify my point.

In 2015, the dancers in Toronto DanceSport studio were called to participate in the closing ceremonies of the Pan American games (Toronto 2015 Pan Am) and the opening ceremonies of the Para-Pan American games representing Argentina and its Tango tradition. None of the dancers in the studio were from Argentina, nor did they know very much about Argentinian Tango; but everyone, including myself, was happy to comply in order to take part in this prestigious event. In preparation for this performance, the coach invited a choreographer known for his theatrical skills, who choreographed a mixed bill performance consisting of elements from ballroom Tango, Paso Doble, Samba, and cabaret. The whole closing ceremony dance piece also included Filipino dancers, Bhangra Dancers, Capoeira dancers, Tai Chi practitioners, and Brazilian Samba dancers. The Filipino dancers performed a contemporized version of Singkil, a Filipino folk dance about a Muslim princess being rescued by a warrior. The Tai Chi practitioners began with several traditional movements and then continued with a theatricalized version of Wu Shu type demonstration. The Capoeiristas jumped on stage from trampolines and did a choreographed version of their signature movements as a group. All of this spectacle, was framed by a group of contemporary dancers doing either commercial style contemporary/hip hop movements or attempting to make weak supporting copies of the dances being performed by the 'cultural groups'. At the end everyone joined in a happy celebration of

diversity to pop beat music on stage⁵³. As is evident from my account, the dances were clearly not authentic but were theatricalized and commercialized versions of each style catering simply to the popular consumer of cultural ‘bits’. As Gina Mallet prophetically stated in her 1997 article for the *Globe and Mail* “Multiculturalism is the masochistic celebration of Canadian nothingness”. In quoting her, I do not dismiss the value of the Canadian multicultural ideal per se, but I do question its idealistic proclamations.



Figure 26. Group photo of the dancers at the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games. Source: the author.

Like any other nation Canada is nationalistic. However, because of its large immigrant population it attempts to create a multiculturalist ideology as its founding trope. In this process, the dominant narrative tends to emphasise such qualities as tolerance towards religion, race, and cultural background while erasing or downplaying Canadian history of cultural genocide in indigenous populations and continued latent racism towards ‘ethnic’ minorities. While the USSR

⁵³ The contemporary group was the only one which got paid for the performance.

attempted to create a unified ideology of disparate nations based on the class revolution and maintained it through mediated propaganda, cultural censorship, and ideological education; Canada perpetuates a myth of complicity to the principles of its ‘imagined unity’ through the selected memory of its tragic history, assimilation policies, and cultural propaganda.

My work throughout this dissertation has brought my attention to issues of recognition, economic reality, and everyday life for these dancers. I realized that the latent bias within the funding structures and misunderstandings on the part of government agencies set up to support arts in Canada combined with the lack of grant writing abilities and bureaucratic knowledge on the part of the participants is preventing real progress of the ballroom dance industry in this country. Because the funding programs were established based on concert dance structures, many of intricacies of the ballroom world elude the jury panels and do not fit the established criteria of evaluation. Terms like ‘residency’, ‘site-specific’, or ‘creative workshop’ are seldom used in DanceSport and yet the applications are designed with these parameters in mind despite claiming to be non-style specific. For example, ballroom competitions, which are at the essence of DanceSport, are not supported by most Canadian arts funding agencies even though these events also include workshops, performances, and lectures. Ironically, the Sports agencies in Canada do not view competitive ballroom dance as a sport and therefore are unable to provide any material support to the dancers from their side until DanceSport becomes an official sport in this country⁵⁴. This disconnect between the reality of DanceSport and the expectations of the government agencies creates a gap between that industry and the rest of artistic practices in Canada. Part of the impetus for this dissertation is my desire to fill this gap. In the near future, I

⁵⁴ As I outline in the previous chapter, this issue is further exacerbated by the political battles between WDSF and WDC as well as the fairly subjective judging system in DanceSport competitions.

plan on contacting the board of the Canadian DanceSport association to discuss strategies for helping Canadian ballroom dancers get government funding. After all, they have been a part of the foundation of Canadian cultural landscape for over a century and cannot be simply set aside by government initiatives.

To begin rectifying some of these issues, we can look at models provided by other countries and truly embrace our ‘strength in diversity’ motto. For example, the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts successfully incorporates competitive ballroom into its curriculum and performance structures. DanceSport has been recognized as an official sport there since the mid-1990s and was part of the Asian Games in 2010 (ADSF). Another model can be provided by the work of Conseil International de Dance based in Paris, France. This organization works under the auspices of UNESCO and promotes all types of dance practices including competitive forms such as ballroom as well as many cultural and folk forms. They help find funding for dance groups, organize conferences, and create educational initiatives for dancers around Europe and the world (CID). If Canadian arts-based initiatives recognized the value and potential of some cultural groups and dance communities such as the Soviet-Canadian dancers⁵⁵ described in this dissertation and encouraged their work through promotional, institutional, and financial support they could truly capitalize on the skills of its diverse population rather than having them exist as isolated cultural communities (Cornell). To begin this process, I propose reviewing the programs offered by the arts councils to suit the various dance forms currently practiced in Canada, especially those which are already representing Canada on the world stage. In particular, regarding DanceSport, I feel that a better understanding of the structure of this dance form is needed by the council board members. Similar to the shifts in policy and terminology which the

⁵⁵ Or any other groups such as cultural folk-dance groups for example.

council underwent in the 1970s and 1990s, the time is now ripe to review its current definitions to reflect the contemporary world of dance in its various forms. Regarding the recognition of competitive ballroom dance as a sport in Canada, it is now only a matter of initiative and a will to restructure the organization of DanceSport in this country.

In 2013, I communicated with AthletesCAN organization regarding the inclusion of DanceSport in their programs. This initiative resulted in the invitation of Toronto DanceSport dancers to perform at the AthletesCAN forum that year. After the performance, the chairwoman of this organization at the time, Ashley Labrie, offered the dancers access to most of the programs and sponsorships run by AthletesCAN, as well as assistance in securing DanceSport as an official sport in this country. Unfortunately, I had to postpone this project due to other commitments and time constraints. However, the experience has given me hope that in the future DanceSport has a place as an official sport in Canada and I aim to resume this project in the future.



Figure 27. Toronto DanceSport at the AthletesCAN forum with the interim executive director Ashley Labrie. Source: author

6.10 Phenomenological Reflections

In his discussion of the Waltz in a 2012 article, Karoblis describes ballroom dance as:

An overwhelming and a surrounding phenomenon. When one is about to enter a ballroom, one first hears the sounds of the surrounding music and the audible and visible traces of surrounding mobility. Whatever happens at the ball, dancing remains present as a surrounding activity that occurs simultaneously with other activities. Whatever the focus of our attention, bodily surroundings are always given in our marginal consciousness which remains present and constantly keeps other conscious activity 'wrapped' (6).

This phenomenological perspective places dance as the action element framing its context rather than vice versa. If we apply this lens to the performances of dancers in my research, a clearer picture emerges of their experience and their context, which becomes 'wrapped' in their dancing. If we return to the narrative vignette which begins this dissertation we may notice how my consciousness of my surroundings in the studio was enveloped by the concentrated, rigid, and eventually fatigued movements of the dancers. I saw and reflected on their practice as they moved through it. The medals hanging on the wall, the bright lights, and the noises at the reception were all defined by the moving bodies exuding focus and discipline. Inevitably when these same bodies perform at events or competitions, they have a similar effect on their surroundings. However, these bodies were constructed by other authoritative bodies who, in turn, were the products of the Soviet 'discipline machine'⁵⁶. The resulting effects transform the ballroom from a social gathering to a sporting event and the spectators from audience to fans.

⁵⁶ I borrow this term from McMains as she utilizes it in relation to glamour.

Slowly, the screams get louder and more multilingual, placards with numbers on them appear, and music becomes more dynamic. In subtle ways, the legacies of communist ideology have been partially preserved in those bodies and are now affecting North America. Similar to the way hip hop has transformed the American pop scene (Henderson; Gilroy), these diasporic ballroom dancers are embodying and projecting many of their principles onto their surroundings. ‘The body of the people’ (Giersdorf, *The Body of the People*) has now acquired its own agency and affect through their performances and presence. By claiming more and more public spaces as platforms for expression and power acquisition (Habermas), these phenomenological and ideological affects become increasingly powerful. As many Soviet-Canadian, as well as Soviet-American, dancers become minor celebrities through shows like *Dancing With the Stars*, *So You Think You Can Dance*, and Hollywood movies, they bring with them all the background of their training, ideology, and embodied principles. Such visibility can afford them more opportunities for expression and self-determination. Without the panoptical observation of the government (W. Hahn; Foucault), they can utilize their creative capacities in tandem with their disciplinary formation. This combination has already produced interesting and exciting results such as the recent performance at the 2017 Crystal Leaf championships in Toronto (Crystal Leaf) where Argentine Tango, American Smooth Tango, and Standard Tango were performed side by side by top couples in each style. This performance gave homage to the roots of Tango and acknowledged its derived forms. In another example, one of Toronto DanceSport participants is currently working on a show combining figure skating with ballroom dance to be premiered in 2018 at the Glen Gould hall in Toronto (Shiver Show). My own experimental performance at the choreographic event in Saskatoon in 2016 has brought academic perspectives on gender, appropriation, and glamour onto the stage through ballroom dance (FreeFlowDance); a direction

I aim to explore further in my artistic practice. These performances illustrate the potential of the Soviet-Canadian dancers to broaden the scope of DanceSport and to produce positive developments through their involvement in this dance form. Just as their dancing ‘wraps’ the competition halls, their creative mobility ‘wraps’ the Canadian DanceSport industry and creates an atmosphere that keeps it progressive and exciting. Roach’s *presence Americaine* is reflected here in the innovations and new possibilities for their performing identities, while the competitive spaces and performance halls become the vortices of expression for these new ideas. I believe that many more original performances are yet to emerge from this unique population in the coming years, providing the basis for further research and producing original artistic visions.

6.11 Disciplinary Contributions and Future Research

Like many Dance Studies works, this dissertation swims between the interstices of several disciplines and their major epistemological pillars. In my work I stand on the shoulders of my compatriots such as Juliet McMains, Tomie Hahn, and Jens Giersdorf, but I also borrow heavily from the disciplines of anthropology, philosophy, performance studies, and history among others. These branches of academia enabled me to reflect on dance through the various critical lenses of each discipline and broadened my understanding of its place in culture, society, and history. I hope my analysis added a piece to the puzzle displaying the place of dance in social history, which Dance Studies has been attempting to complete since its inception as an academic discipline and helps solidify its place within the humanities.

As a student of anthropology, I was inspired by Geertz’s account of the Balinese cockfight; I understood the practice of self-reflexivity through the work of Paul Rabinow in Morocco, and brought it back to dance after reading Browning’s analysis of Brazilian Samba. I

learned about historiographic analysis in dance through the work of Cooper-Albright on Loïe Fuller and Daly's research on Isadora Duncan. I reframed my understanding of social structures through Bourdieu's concept of habitus, Foucault's discussions of disciplinary formation, and Habermas' reflections on the public sphere. I was pushed to think about the relationships of global macro and micro structures through the work of Appadurai and Robertson and their intersections with dance through the research of Foley, and Savigliano among others. These musings were always framed by the poignant advice of my supervisors Patrick Alcedo, Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt, and Jens Giersdorf who provided me insights on immigrant identities, Canadian dance history, and the political roots of dance. Additionally, the input of Danielle Robinson on the historical roots of ballroom dance helped me to synthesize my ideas on this topic.

My aim in this dissertation has had several historic, educational, and anthropological components from the start. First, to identify and trace the socio-political roots of Soviet dance training and de-mystify its history and effect on competitive ballroom dance. Second, to understand the pedagogical components of this training and contextualize them in the diasporic communities of Soviet Canadian ballroom dancers. Thirdly, and finally, I wanted to understand the processes of cultural identity formation in the children of these immigrants who were 'trapped' between the two socio-cultural perspectives.

Through the discussion on the development of Soviet and Canadian arts industries in the Historical Context chapter I addressed my first topic of inquiry. In my research, I discovered the significant effects of Communist-era cultural policies and the adoption of ballroom dance as a sport rather than an art in the USSR to be the main impetuses behind its consequent evolution into Soviet-style DanceSport. This understanding of historical context will hopefully redress some of the stereotyping of former Soviet dancers in the West as 'training machines' and explain

the roots of their methodologies and ideologies. Due to the scarcity of historical research on competitive ballroom dance in the 20th and 21st century, and on Soviet ballroom dance in particular, this study should add to the body of knowledge in dance history and aid scholars interested in studying the links between Eastern bloc and Western dance history.

The analysis of Soviet and Canadian education systems with a focus on physical education and dance has allowed me to illustrate the differences in the development of educational philosophies in both countries. By illustrating the contrasts and similarities between the USSR unionist ideology based on meritocracy and national representation, and the Canadian multi-cultural integration and holistic education approach, I wish to dispel any judgmental ideas for the observers or proponents from each side and instead to highlight the potential that both can bring to the pedagogy in competitive ballroom dance. In my literature review I delineated the socio-historical roots of both systems and shedded light on the reasoning behind each. This historical review of educational strategies and their effects can be beneficial to future scholars wishing to better understand the differences in pedagogical approaches between the former USSR and Canada.

The ethnographic portion of this research has dealt with my third scholarly pursuit, the understanding of Soviet-Canadian cultural identity within the competitive ballroom dance studio context. In providing a voice to the participants and writing about their experiences, I add to the tradition of urban anthropology and dance ethnography. In my observations and descriptions of their lives, I would like to give a more in-depth perspective of competitive ballroom dance in a Canadian immigrant community. The lack of anthropological research in DanceSport, and in former Soviet DanceSport in particular, qualifies this study as an original and highly necessary investigation, considering the rising public profile of this global industry dominated by Eastern

European immigrants. Future research can extend this study by incorporating the contemporary state of DanceSport in former Soviet Union as well as the particularities of diasporic dance practices in Western Europe and North America. Given available funding, this is also a potential goal for my own future research in this field.

In addition to these main goals, I have also addressed other issues of importance to my topic including gender roles, technological innovations, and funding procedures which surround my main subjects of interest. In doing so, I wish to contribute to other disciplines such as gender studies, information technology, and economics which inevitably frame my research. In defining the nuances of such aspects as gender in DanceSport partnerships, the role of communication technology in the power dynamics of major ballroom dance organizations, and the misalignments of government funding and DanceSport structure, I hope to clarify the reality of competitive ballroom dance to the academic world beyond the veil of glamour and artifice it often portrays. Each of these aspects presents opportunities for subsequent in-depth studies around ballroom dancing in general, and DanceSport in particular.

6.12 Final Thoughts

I would like to end this dissertation with some reflection on its beginnings and inspirations by looking at some of the factors that led to its inception. We all write about ourselves, most dissertations deal with an aspect of life that was a part of or at least an interest in the author's life. For me, this research began when my family first left Russia for Israel in 1992 as part of the post-1989 diaspora. We lived in an immigrant populated neighborhood in Nazareth where my neighbor, who was a ballroom dance professional from the former USSR, taught Russian speaking youth in the bomb shelter of the building. Already then, faced with the Soviet

cultural identity at home as well as during the dance lessons, and the Israeli mentality at school and in the playground, I began to wonder why people around me behaved so differently from each other. This journey, both literal and mental, continued when I moved to Canada, arriving in Montreal in 1998. Here there was even more contrast, as besides former Soviet citizens there were many other immigrants in my school. As a young teen, I was rather puzzled at the multiplicity of cultural perspectives and wasn't really sure where I fit in that mosaic. I continued dancing, but at a franchised dance studio at first, where the approach was much 'softer' than I was used to. That was comforting considering the fact that I was still adjusting to the new environment, while my parents were simply happy that I was not 'out on the streets'. I slowly came to terms with my new identity as Russian-Canadian, and began to appreciate the freedoms it afforded me. Despite retaining the Russian accent, and some of the characteristics passed down from my parents, I felt comfortable with my dual identity. Similar to the parents in this research study, my parents lamented some of the changes they had to undergo to adjust to this new environment; they felt that they had lost something in the displacement even though their life standards improved. As I pursued my dancing career and traveled to Europe, I encountered other immigrants whose lives had been deeply shaped by such displacements. They would be made fun⁵⁷ of by their Western colleagues for being strict, blunt, and disciplined – precisely the characteristics which they were praised for and successful through in the former USSR. Their attempts to blend in were always imperfect, as is the case with colonial mimicry (Bhaba; Fanon), they would always be an imitation of the dominant side, always an 'other'. Such a positionality necessarily creates trauma, a displacement of the body which leaves the soul behind and places one's identity in a constant state of flux. Such a state can never be fully understood by those who

⁵⁷ Even if in good humor.

haven't experienced it, and so the immigrants flock together into cultural communities (Cornell) while 'the hosts' often fail to grasp the complete reasons for the apparent self-segregation that occurs. Besides the material difficulties of relocation and re-establishment of social status⁵⁸ this incomplete presence always remains a part of an immigrant identity. Since the first-generation dancers could never fully become 'Canadian' a dissection occurred, that led to the formation of a practice-based cultural community, and a situation where ninety percent of the studios in my research are attended by Soviet-Canadians.

This situation was one of the original observations which led me to conduct this research. Soviet education methods were simply incompatible with Canadian values, yet they produced results and could not be ignored. However, as the fissure of displacement narrows with the second-generation dancers who are becoming professionals themselves and opening their own establishments, the cultural gap begins to close, and the trauma subside. I now know this as a personal fact and an ethnographic observation, as a lifelong anthropologist/observer, whose views have become more malleable to various cultural perspectives, who finally found the answers to some of his questions of self-identity and belonging.

⁵⁸ This was a necessity for former Soviet citizens due to the post cold war sentiments and lack of bureaucratic trust in their academic and professional qualifications in North America.

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Appendix A1: Interview Questions* - Dancers 1st Generation

- 1) Please talk about yourself: How old are you? How long have you been dancing? Where and at what level?
- 2) What are your aspirations for your dancing?
- 3) Please describe your current experience with dance training, in terms of the teaching and studio or club organisation.
- 4) What are the key features of your training, overall?
- 5) How does your training affect your school/ work and vice versa?
- 6) Do you find your upbringing/ parents have contributed to your approach to dancing/training?
- 7) If applicable, how does your training here differ from the training you received in former U.S.S.R.?
- 8) If applicable, did you have to adapt your learning/training strategies to Canadian dance environment?
- 9) How do you feel you were received here in the Canadian dance community, as an immigrant dancer?
- 10) How do you feel dancing has affected your general integration into Canadian society?
- 11) How would you describe the Canadian dance culture?
- 12) Do you find government involvement in arts and sports differs between here and the former Soviet Union?
- 13) Have you ever received any government support for your dancing in the U.S.S.R. or Canada?
- 14) How do you sponsor your dancing? E.g. Work, grants, parents?

*These questions were only intended as a guide and were adjusted according to the respondents' answers and themes of interest.

Appendix A2: Interview Questions* – Dancers 2nd Generation

- 15) Please talk about yourself: How old are you? How long have you been dancing? Where and at what level?
- 16) What are your aspirations for dancing?
- 17) Please describe your current experience with dance training, in terms of the teaching and studio or club organisation.
- 18) What are the key features of your training, overall?
- 19) How does your training affect your school/ work and vice versa?
- 20) How do you sponsor your dancing? E.g. work, grants, parents?
- 21) Do you find your upbringing/ parents have contributed to your approach to dancing/training?
- 22) If applicable, how does your training here differ from the training you received in other studios?
- 23) If applicable, did you have to adapt your learning/training strategies to this studio environment?
- 24) How would you define Canadian dance culture?
- 25) Do you find much government involvement in Dancesport in Canada?

*These questions were only intended as a guide and were adjusted according to the respondents' answers and themes of interest.

Appendix A3: Interview Questions* – Coaches

- 26) How long have you been dancing/ coaching? Where?
- 27) What are your aspirations for your studio and students?
- 28) Please describe your current experience with dance coaching, in terms of the teaching and studio or club organisation.
- 29) What are the key features of your coaching strategy?
- 30) Do you find your training methods affect your students' school or work and vice versa?
- 31) Do you find your students' upbringing/ parents contribute to their approach to dancing/training?
- 32) If applicable, how does your coaching here differ from the coaching you were doing in former U.S.S.R.?
- 33) If applicable, did you have to adapt your teaching strategies to Canadian dance environment?
- 34) How do you feel you were received here in the Canadian dance community, as an immigrant dancer?
- 35) How do you feel dancing has affected your general integration into Canadian society?
- 36) Do you find there is a relationship between the political/ social structures and dance or sports training?
- 37) To your knowledge, what is the government involvement in your Dancesport, if any, here compared to the former U.S.S.R.?
- 38) If you had such an option, what would you change in Canadian Dancesport industry?

* These questions were only intended as a guide and were adjusted according to the respondents' answers and themes of interest.

Appendix A4: Interview Questions* – Parents

- 39) How long have you been in Canada?
- 40) How old are your child/ren?
- 41) How long have they been dancing and at what level?
- 42) How did they start dancing? What are your aspirations for your children in Dancesport?
- 43) Please talk to me about your children's dance training, like the types of classes, teachers, and studio organisation.
- 44) What are the most important aspects of your children's training?
- 45) How does your children's training affect their school? Does their school affect their training?
- 46) Do you find you have influenced your children's dancing/training?
- 47) Do they do any other extra-curricular activities during the week? If yes, which ones?
- 48) Do you find the teaching similar or different between their school/ other hobbies / dance? If yes, how do you feel about each?
- 49) Do you find their education is different to the one you received in the U.S.S.R.?
- 50) To your knowledge, is the dance training here similar to the one common in the former Soviet Union?
- 51) Have you seen any government involvement in Dancesport in U.S.S.R. or Canada?
- 52) Do you sponsor their dancing completely?

*These questions were only intended as a guide and were adjusted according to the respondents' answers and themes of interest.

Appendix A5: Interview Questions* – Dancers Under 16

53) How old are you?

54) How long have you been dancing and at what level?

55) How did you start dancing?

56) Please talk to me about your dance training, like the types of classes, times, and studio organisation.

57) What are the most important parts of your training?

58) How does your training affect your school? Does your school affect your training?

59) Do you find your parents have influenced your dancing/training?

60) Do you do any other extra-curricular activities during the week? If yes, which ones?

61) Do you find the teaching similar or different between school/ other hobbies / dance? If yes, how do you feel about each?

*These questions were only intended as a guide and were adjusted according to the respondents' answers and themes of interest.

Appendix B1: Informed Consent Form (Dancers over 16)

Date:

Study Name: Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios

Researchers: David Outevsky, PhD candidate, Dance studies, York University. Contact: xxxxxx@yorku.ca.

Purpose and Design of the Research: In this research project I will examine how social and political systems affect training in Dancesport, a competitive branch of ballroom dancing. In particular, I will look at how immigrant dancers from the former U.S.S.R. have adapted their training strategies to the Canadian cultural context. I will conduct this research using archival work, interviews with dancers, coaches, and parents, participant observation, and movement analysis. This study will take place at dance studios in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa run by former Soviet Union immigrant dancers. I will present this research in my PhD dissertation and during my oral defense.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: You will be asked to take part in a 30-45 min. interview. In addition, you will be given the option to have me observe your classes and practices several times during a period of 3 months. If you agree, you will also be recorded by means of audio and/or video equipment in order to allow me to transcribe the interviews and conduct movement analysis. You can refuse to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable answering and ask me to stop the recording at any time during the research

Risks and Discomforts: We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You: Contributing to a better understanding cross cultural training methodologies in Dancesport. Helping increase the visibility of Dancesport in academic research and improving its potential for government support (i.e. grants, scholarships).

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your relationship with York University, the researcher, or your dance studio either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher, York University, your dance studio or any other group associated with this project. In the event that you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your physical data such as interview notes or photographs will be safely stored in a locked facility. Your electronic data such as interview audio and class video recordings will be stored on a password encoded USB in a locked facility. Only the researcher will have access to this information and it will be shredded or deleted after 7 years unless you request me to do so earlier. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact the primary researcher David Outevsky by e-mail: xxxxxxx@yorku.ca or the project supervisor Dr. X, at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or email: xxxxx@yorku.ca. Alternatively, you can contact the Dance Graduate Programme office at (416) 736-5137 or email: dance@yorku.ca. Address: Department of Dance, York University, 4700 Keele St., Toronto ON Canada M3J 1P3

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca.

Please indicate your preference in regards to anonymity:

_____ I wish to remain anonymous.

_____ I consent to my name being used in the research.

Please indicate your preference in regards to audio recording of the interview:

_____ I consent to my interview being audio recorded.

_____ I do not wish to be audio recorded during my interview.

Please indicate if your preference in regards to class/practice observation:

_____ I consent to be observed during class/practice.

_____ I do not wish to be observed during class/practice.

Please indicate your preference in regards to class/practice video recording:

_____ I consent to be video recorded during the class/practice.

_____ I do not wish to video recorded during class/practice.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in “Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios” study conducted by David Outevsky. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____

Date _____

Participant

Signature _____

Date _____

Principal Investigator

Appendix B2: Informed Assent Form (Dancers under 16)

Date:

Study Name: Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios

Researchers: David Outevsky, PhD candidate, Dance studies, York University. Contact: xxxxxxx@yorku.ca.

Purpose and Design of the Research: In this research project I would like to find out how where we live and where we come from affects training in Dancesport. I will look at how immigrant dancers from the former U.S.S.R. have changed the way they teach, train, and perform in Canada and compare it to the way they did it back in the Soviet Union. To do this I will look through archival records on Soviet education in dance and sports, interview the dancers, their coaches, and their parents, observe and participate in some dance classes at the studios I will visit. I plan to study three dance studios in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa run by former Soviet Union immigrant dancers to get several views and opinions on my questions. I will present the results of my research in my Doctoral dissertation.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: You will be asked to take part in a 30-45 min. interview. Also, you have the option to have me observe your classes and practices several times during a period of 3 months. If you agree, please note that some of those classes and interviews will be audio/video recorded, in order to allow me to write out the interviews and analyse the practices later on. Saying that, you can refuse to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable answering and ask me to stop the recording at any time during the research.

Risks and Discomforts: We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You: Helping me to better understand the cultural differences of training in Dancesport. Helping increase the visibility of Dancesport in university research and therefore improving its potential for government support (for example: grants, scholarships).

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence your relationship with York University, the researcher, or your dance studio either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher, York University, your dance studio or any other group associated with this project. In the event that you decide to leave the study, all the information collected from you will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

Confidentiality: All information you give me during the research will be confidential and unless you specifically ask me to do so, your name will not be in any report or publication of the research. Your physical data, like interview notes or photographs will be safely stored in a locked facility for a period of 7 years and shredded afterwards or earlier if you ask me to do so. Your electronic data such as interview audio and class video recordings will be stored on a password protected USB in a locked space and will be deleted after 7 years or earlier if you ask me to do so. Only the researcher will have access to this information and confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact the primary researcher David Outevsky by e-mail: xxxxxxx@yorku.ca or the project supervisor Dr. X, at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or email: xxxxx@yorku.ca. Alternatively, you can contact the Dance Graduate Programme office at Alternatively, you can contact the Dance Graduate Programme office at (416) 736-5137 or email: dance@yorku.ca. Address: Department of Dance, York University, 4700Keele St., Toronto ON Canada M3J 1P3

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Please indicate your preference in regards to anonymity:

_____ I wish to remain anonymous.

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Please indicate your preference in regards to audio recording of the interview:

_____ I consent to my interview being audio recorded.

_____ I do not wish to be audio recorded during my interview.

Please indicate if your preference in regards to class/practice observation:

_____ I consent to be observed during class/practice.

_____ I do not wish to be observed during class/practice.

Please indicate your preference in regards to class/practice video recording:

_____ I consent to be video recorded during the class/practice.

_____ I do not wish to video recorded during class/practice.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in “Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios” study conducted by David Outevsky. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____

Date _____

Participant

Signature _____

Date _____

Principal Investigator

Appendix B3: Informed Consent Form (Coaches)

Date:

Study Name: Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios

Researchers: David Outevsky, PhD candidate, Dance studies, York University. Contact: xxxxxxx@yorku.ca.

Purpose and Design of the Research: In this research project I will examine how social and political systems affect training in Dancesport, a competitive branch of ballroom dancing. In particular, I will look at how immigrant dancers from the former U.S.S.R. have adapted their training strategies to the Canadian cultural context. I will conduct this research using archival work, interviews with dancers, coaches, and parents, participant observation, and movement analysis. This study will take place at dance studios in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa run by former Soviet Union immigrant dancers. I will present this research in my PhD dissertation and during my oral defense.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: You will be asked to take part in a 30-45 min. interview. In addition, you will be given the option to have me observe the classes and practices at your studio several times during a period of 3 months. If you agree, the interview and classes/practices will also be recorded by means of audio and/or video equipment in order to allow me to transcribe the interview and conduct movement analysis of the classes and practices. You can refuse to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable answering and ask me to stop the recording at any time during the research process.

Risks and Discomforts: We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You: Contributing to a better understanding of cross cultural training methodologies in Dancesport. Helping increase the visibility of Dancesport in academic research and improving its potential for government support (i.e. grants, scholarships).

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your relationship with York University, the researcher, or any other group associated with this research either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event that you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your physical data such as interview notes or photographs will be safely stored in a locked facility. Your electronic data such as interview audio and class video recordings will be stored on a password encoded USB in a locked facility. Only the researcher will have access to this information and it will be shredded or deleted after 7 years unless you request me to do earlier. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

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Please indicate your preference in regards to audio recording of the interview:

_____ I consent to my interview being audio recorded.

_____ I do not wish to be audio recorded during my interview.

Please indicate if your preference in regards to class/practice observation:

_____ I consent to have my classes observed.

_____ I do not wish to have my classes observed.

Please indicate your preference in regards to class/practice video recording:

_____ I consent to have my classes recorded.

_____ I do not wish to have my classes recorded.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in “Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios” study conducted by David Outevsky. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____

Date _____

Participant

Signature _____

Date _____

Principal Investigator

Appendix B4: Informed Consent Form (Parents)

Date:

Study Name: Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios

Researchers: David Outevsky, PhD candidate, Dance studies, York University. Contact: xxxxxxx@yorku.ca.

Purpose and Design of the Research: In this research project I will examine how social and political systems affect training in Dancesport, a competitive branch of ballroom dancing. In particular, I will look at how immigrant dancers from the former U.S.S.R. have adapted their training strategies to the Canadian cultural context. I will conduct this research using archival work, interviews with dancers, coaches, and parents, participant observation, and movement analysis. This study will take place at dance studios in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa run by former Soviet Union immigrant dancers. I will present this research in my PhD dissertation and during my oral defense.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: Your child will be asked to take part in a 30-45 min. interview. In addition, he/she will be given the option to have me observe their classes and practices several time during a period of 3 months. If you and they agree, the interview and classes/practices will also be recorded by means of audio and/or video equipment in order to allow me to transcribe the interview and conduct movement analysis of the classes and practices. They can refuse to answer any questions they don't feel comfortable answering and ask me to stop the recording at any time during the research.

Risks and Discomforts: We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your child's participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You: Contributing to a better understanding of cross cultural training methodologies in Dancesport. Helping increase the visibility of Dancesport in academic research and improving its potential for government support (i.e. grants, scholarships).

Voluntary Participation: Your child's participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop them from participating at any time. A decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your or their relationship with York University, the researcher, their dance studio or any other group associated with this research either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop your child from participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop them from participating, or answering particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event that you withdraw you child from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your child's name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your child's physical data such as interview notes or photographs will be safely stored in a locked facility. Your child's electronic data such as interview audio and class video recordings will be stored on a password encoded USB in a locked facility. Only the researcher will have access to this information and it will be shredded or deleted after 7 years unless you request me to do so earlier. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact the primary researcher David Outevsky by e-mail: xxxxxxx@yorku.ca or the project supervisor Dr. X, at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or email: xxxxx@yorku.ca. Alternatively, you can contact the Dance Graduate Programme office at Alternatively, you can contact the Dance Graduate Programme office at (416) 736-5137 or email: dance@yorku.ca. Address: Department of Dance, York University, 4700Keele St., Toronto ON Canada M3J 1P3

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca.

Please indicate your preference in regards to anonymity:

_____ I wish for my child to remain anonymous.

_____ I consent to my child's name being used in the research.

Please indicate your preference in regards to audio recording of the interview:

_____ I consent to my child's interview being audio recorded.

_____ I do not wish my child to be audio recorded during the interview.

Please indicate if your preference in regards to class/practice observation:

_____ I consent to have my child's classes/practice to be observed.

_____ I do not wish to have my child's classes to be observed.

Please indicate your preference in regards to class/practice video recording:

_____ I consent to have my child's classes and practices to recorded.

_____ I do not wish to have my child's classes recorded.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to allow my child

_____ to participate in "Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios" study conducted by David Outevsky. I have understood the nature of this project and wish him/her to participate. I am not waiving any of my or my child's legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Relationship to minor _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Parent or legal guardian of participant

Signature _____

Date _____

Principal Investigator

Appendix B5: Informed Consent Form (Participant parents)

Date:

Study Name: Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios

Researchers: David Outevsky, PhD candidate, Dance studies, York University. Contact: xxxxxxx@yorku.ca.

Purpose and Design of the Research: In this research project I will examine how social and political systems affect training in Dancesport, a competitive branch of ballroom dancing. In particular, I will look at how immigrant dancers from the former U.S.S.R. have adapted their training strategies to the Canadian cultural context. I will conduct this research using archival work, interviews with dancers, coaches, and parents, participant observation, and movement analysis. This study will take place at dance studios in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa run by former Soviet Union immigrant dancers. I will present this research in my PhD dissertation and during my oral defense.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: You will be asked to take part in a 30-45 min. interview. You will be given the option to also be observed during your child's classes and practices. If you agree, the interview and classes/practices will also be recorded by means of audio and/or video equipment in order to allow me to transcribe the interview and conduct movement analysis of the classes and practices. You can refuse to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable answering and ask me to stop the recording at any time during the research.

Risks and Discomforts: We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You: Contributing to a better understanding cross cultural training methodologies in Dancesport. Helping increase the visibility of Dancesport in academic research and improving its potential for government support (i.e. grants, scholarships).

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your relationship with York University, the researcher, or your child's dance studio either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher, York University, your child's dance studio or any other group associated with this project. In the event that you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your physical data such as interview notes or photographs will be safely stored in a locked facility. Your electronic data such as interview audio recording will be stored on a password encoded USB in a locked facility. Only the researcher will have access to this information and it will be shredded or deleted after 7 years unless you request for me to do so earlier. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact the primary researcher David Outevsky by e-mail: xxxxxxx@yorku.ca or the project supervisor Dr. X, at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or email: xxxxx@yorku.ca. Alternatively, you can contact the Dance Graduate Programme office at (416) 736-5137 or email: dance@yorku.ca. Address: Department of Dance, York University, 4700 Keele St., Toronto ON Canada M3J 1P3

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca.

Please indicate your preference in regards to anonymity:

_____ I wish to remain anonymous.

_____ I consent to my name being used in the research.

Please indicate your preference in regards to audio recording of the interview:

_____ I consent to my interview being audio recorded.

_____ I do not wish to be audio recorded during my interview.

Please indicate if your preference in regards to class/practice observation:

_____ I consent to be observed during my child's class/practice.

_____ I do not wish to be observed during my child's class/practice.

Please indicate your preference in regards to class/practice video recording:

_____ I consent to be video recorded during my child's class/practice.

_____ I do not wish to video recorded during my child's class/practice.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in "Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios" study conducted by David Outevsky. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____

Date _____

Participant

Signature _____

Date _____

Principal Investigator

Appendix B6: Information Letter for Participants

Soviet Bodies in Canadian DanceSport: Cultural Identities, Embodied Politics, and Performances of Resistance in Three Canadian Ballroom Dance Studios

In this research project I will examine how social and political systems affect training in DanceSport, a competitive branch of ballroom dancing. In particular, I will look at how immigrant dancers from the former U.S.S.R. have adapted their training strategies to the Canadian cultural context.

By means of archival research, I will investigate the differences between Soviet and Canadian approaches to DanceSport training and organisation in terms of government involvement in the arts and sports, as well as the cultural differences in their outlook on dance. I will then conduct ethnographic research at three DanceSport studios in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa run by Soviet immigrants. Through interviews, observation, and movement analysis I will elicit information about what strategies these dancers have used to adapt their training and studio management methods to their new environment in Canada. I will explore how their general integration into Canadian society has affected their studio culture and how their presence has shaped the Canadian DanceSport industry over the last 20 years.

Based on my findings I will make recommendations for better integration strategies for immigrant communities with specialized skillsets such as dance and show how their knowledge and expertise can be used to benefit the Canadian arts and sport industries. Furthermore, by looking at the specific and unresearched community of DanceSport, this project will contribute new information to the fields of dance studies, diaspora studies, cultural studies, and sports studies.