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Dance, Dancers' Physicalities and Representations of the Nation in the case of National Dance Platforms

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National Dance Platforms. A comparative study of the

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the hitherto hardly investigated phenomenon of the national dance platform (NaDaP). NaDaPs are dance festivals in which three elements converge: they raise the claim of representing the nation, they present contemporary dance and their targeted audience is mainly (foreign) dance programmers. Despite the phenomenon being a global(ised) one, it only exists through local iterations. The thesis argues that both local and global dimensions interact and influence each other in the phenomenon. The questions leading the investigation are whether NaDaPs mediate or represent a nation, how they claim national-ness and to what extent this reflects back on the structure and content of each iteration.

Using the system of cultural flows proposed by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai and called *scapes* (Appadurai 1990, 1996), this thesis explores the streams of ideas, people and finances that interact at NaDaPs in their local and global dimensions and problematises the contradictory ways in which dance interplays with global(ised) systems of power. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study produces close readings of platforms in Israel, Britain, Germany and Sri Lanka; specifically, *International Exposure 2015*, *British Dance Edition 2016*, *Dance Platform Germany 2016* and *Shakti. A Space for the Single Body*, and explores the ideologies that governed the events.

NaDaPs emerged in the 1990s, in the context of a globalised neo-liberal economy that favoured the constitution of dance pieces as marketable goods. While the phenomenon of the NaDaP had the positive effect of increasing the visibility and growth of contemporary dance, this thesis investigates the ideologies governing the notion of contemporaneity and questions whether contemporary dance might at times act as the folk dance of hegemonic nations, while NaDaPs act as agents of a neo-colonial system engaged in expanding its markets.

Further, under the lens of the *financescape* the thesis investigates the situationality of dancers with bodies that are described as 'non-normate' for not conforming to presumptions of the 'non-disabled' dancer. I argue that they subsume both the resistance to and the endorsement of a system that constructs dance as a commodity and propose 'non-normatisable' as a denomination that reflects this complexity.

The thesis concludes by discussing the existence of *Danceland* as a non-territorial imagined community (Anderson 1983) that presents many characteristics of a real-existing nation and paves the way for further explorations of the phenomenon of the NaDaP. The concept of *Danceland* leads to ask what its own NaDaP would reflect and how it would contrast occurrences in other lands. But more importantly, it emphasises the shared responsibility of all actors in the transnational dance community, to co-create their own environments asserting their positionalities with strong political voices.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Setting Up

This thesis revolves around the phenomenon of the national dance platform (NaDaP). NaDaPs are a specific form of dance festivals that emerged in the 1990s. What differentiates NaDaPs from other festivals is the confluence of three elements: firstly, that they raise the claim of representing the nation; secondly, that they present contemporary dance and thirdly, that their targeted audience is mainly programmers, and mostly foreign ones. However, none of these elements is set in stone and they can be understood and interpreted differently in each iteration. As several interviews in this thesis have confirmed, NaDaPs grew out of the necessity to create visibility and eventually a market for the contemporary dance produced in the countries in which they occurred (Interviews Ashford and Beattie [2017], Heun [2017], Ketels [2017]). From their beginning in Britain, more specifically in London in 1992[1], followed up by Germany in 1994, NaDaPs have spread out to become a global(ised) feature present in most of the international contemporary dance world. Primarily thus, NaDaPs appeared to be solely a marketing tool to promote contemporary dance, and this happened within a national framework (the *Na* of the NaDaP). But contemporary dance seems to evoke a "certain *global* contemporaneity" (Osborne 2013:26, my emphasis), and thus in essence of being non-national. On the other

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[1] The first NaDaP was the Spring Collection presented in 1992 at the Southbank in London. More information about the history of the development of NaDaPs in Chapter 2.

hand, several NaDaPs do carry an allusion to a national element in their name, such as the *Czech* Dance Platform or *American* Dance Abroad[2]. This seems to suggest that they represent the nations in which they take place, or that they claim to represent them. Hence, NaDaPs appear to conflate notions of contemporaneity and national-ness. This has led me to take a closer look at what is (re)presented at NaDaPs, who is embodying the nation at each platform and doing what, within the context of a phenomenon that has spread globally.

As mentioned before, NaDaPs emerged slowly in the 1990s, but they have mushroomed in the 2000s and currently many countries have established one. However, no two platforms are alike[3]. Although they are all NaDaPs and even target the same audiences, often sharing many invitees, they differ in many ways. Each one provides unique experiences for its guests. This thesis thus investigates whether each iteration, from a group of four cases, offers unique insights into the ideologies underpinning its existence, its ideas about dance, contemporaneity and national-ness, and whether these implicit sets of values reflect back onto the structure and content of each NaDaP,

To better explore the relationship between the phenomenon of the NaDaP and the sets of values that constructs and upholds it, it seems important to compare NaDaP-iterations in different parts of the world. It seemed relevant to investigate the influence of hegemonic and non-hegemonic positions on the development and recognition of a dance form such as contemporary dance. I assumed that processes of national formation as well as each country's own dance history would be deeply influenced by having been a

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[2] Others do it less explicitly, such as the Icelandic *Ice Hot* or the South Korean *Hot Pot.*

[3] This claim reflects my experience as a guest at NaDaPs for more than 10 years.

colonialist or a colonialized country[4]. I also considered that even within Europe, given the discrepancy of experiences throughout and after WW1 and WW2 the development of the different countries would differ from each other and that this would play out differently onto the constitution of the contemporary dance scenes in each environment. I also wanted to explore whether and to what extent the iterations of the phenomenon of the NaDaP reflect back onto the phenomenon itself. Hence, I had questions about NaDaPs both in their global and local dimensions.

To gain a further critical perspective, I decided to extend my research to countries within and outside of the so-constructed West. To make informed insight though, I picked countries about whose culture, history and politics I was well informed[5]. Only then I would be able to understand and assess the interplay between a NaDaP and its context, and of the national context with the bigger global picture. I would thus need to choose examples of which I did not only knew the dance scene well, but also had a well-informed insight in their constitutive historical and political circumstances. I thus decided to compare the NaDaPs of Germany, Israel, the UK and Sri Lanka[6]. My choice to focus on these NADaPs was based on several reasons that I outline next.

Looking specifically at the history of NaDaPs, the first festival that took the shape of one - and was central enough within the European (cultural) economy to set

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[4] I am aware that this is a generalisation and I am not suggesting that there are not differences in these processes within the West. Detailed relevant information to each of my case studies will be provided in chapter 2.

[5] The limitation of the PhD programme to a maximum of four years was also brought into consideration when elucidating which NaDaPs would constitute my case studies.

[6] Chapter 2 will provide a detailed description of each NaDaP and their context.

precedence[7] - was *Spring Collection* (London 1992). Without being called a NaDaP (the category became evident only retrospectively), the platform offered what would roughly become the defining characteristics of NaDaPs: a showcase of dance loosely defined as contemporary[8], the aspiration to (re)present what was judged to be best in the country's dance creation, compacted into a short period of time and targeting mainly (but not only) foreign programmers as audience. *Spring Collection* was also the platform out of which *British Dance Edition*, Britain's NaDaP grew, making it the first festival of its kind. I hoped that the fact that I was going to live in the UK for over three years would provide me with the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the country, its dance scene, its implicit and outspoken self-perception, and to work out how these factors play out in the UK's everyday life. Thus, my first decision was taken, but I needed further case studies for comparative purposes.

Germany is the country I know best. I am aware of a lot of the country's past and present, of its fractured identity, and of modern-day Germany's struggles to come to grips with its legacy. Also, I have been active in the German dance scene for decades in many roles: as a dancer, as a producer and as a curator, and I have collaborated for ten years with its national cultural institute, the Goethe-Institut contributing with my dance work to the country's representation abroad. Moreover, Germany and the UK share common histories of collaboration and war, and also some pivotal figures in their

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[7] There had similar festivals in Valencia (Spain) and Switzerland throughout the 1980s and 1990s, but for different reasons they did not find the resonance that Spring Collection, the UK's first NaDaP did.

[8] Genealogically, all NaDaPs can be traced back to a choreographic competition held in Bagnolet (France) from 1968 onwards, The Ballet for Tomorrow. This implied all sorts of academic dance that were not strictly Western classical ballet, and this is how 'contemporary' is used in this context.

respective dance histories. Especially their antagonistic positions in the two big wars of the

20th century, the same as their unique geographic locations in Europe (an island on the

continent's fringe and a land mass in the continent's centre) and the self-perceptions that

seem to be entangled with the above seemed to provide enough differences as to make

their exploration and comparison interesting and revealing. Furthermore, their

understanding of the state, the arts and their role seemed to differ from one another as

much as their funding systems. I thought these two countries offered an interesting plane

for looking at how historical events have influenced the development of contemporary

dance and their respective NaDaPs' role in this evolvement. The German NaDaP, *Dance

Platform Germany* is therefore my second case study, but I still had not moved my focus

out of Europe.

Israel is a core country to the world of contemporary dance. A myriad of

Israeli dancers and choreographers work in various European countries, making of Israel

an internationally recognised producer and exporter of contemporary dance. The speed of

its dance production (and probably the professional audience's interest in it) is such that its

NaDaP is the only one taking place yearly (as opposed to biennially, as all others do). I

have worked in Israel several times[9]. I have family and friends in the country and have

visited it regularly for the last twenty years. A mixture of lengthy and short stays in the

country paired with daily reading of its newspapers have enabled me to gain insight into

many of its complexities. Despite the country's centrality to the world of contemporary

dance, it would be difficult to understand Israel as a full Western country though. Its

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[9] My M.A. thesis in International Arts Management was about the cultural work of the Goethe-Institut Tel Aviv. Its research-phase took me to live in Tel Aviv for roughly four months. Further, the creative production of a mixed-abled project had me live in the country for another four months.

cultural, geographic, ethnic and religious fabric make it sometimes part of Europe[10] (or of the West) – and others make of it a country in the Middle East. All this promised valuable material for my research and I chose Israel as my third case study. However, I decided it would be enriching to focus also on a country that was more clearly away from the hegemonic West.

Some years before starting this PhD project I had worked in Sri Lanka. As the creative producer of a mixed-abled dance collaborative production, I lived in the country for almost four months and read extensively about its history and politics. After my project, I kept on returning to the island. Whilst there, I got to know the country's strong dance tradition as well as its burgeoning contemporary dance scene that was starting to flourish together with the wider contemporary arts after the end of the thirty-odd years' civil war. Surprisingly, Sri Lanka's own NaDaP, named in the beginning *Colombo Dance Platform* was triggered and funded by the Goethe-Institut, which brought a further thread to my transnational interweaving. Over the course of this research, I learned that Niloufer Pieris, a Sri Lankan former ballerina at the Ballet of Düsseldorf and one of the main personalities in establishing Western dance forms in Sri Lanka had worked and lived in Israel for ten years. Even by turning the focus for a brief moment to folk dances, a Sri Lankan ensemble of Kandyan dance[11] performed for three days at the1989 *Israel Festival* in Jerusalem (Reed 2010: 194-196). Thus, Sri Lanka seemed to be at many levels entwined with my other case studies and constituted thus a very valuable fourth case study.

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[10] Israel is for instance part of the European Broadcasting Corporation since 1957 the country and competes often in European sports tournaments.

[11] Dance form from the former Kingdom of Kandy, currently in central Sri Lanka. Its dance form has been constructed as Sri Lanka's national folk dance form (Reed 2010).

My case studies proved to be interlinked by far more connections than apparent at first glance, as the process of digging into the research has brought to light. Sri Lanka became independent from its former colonial power roughly at the same time as Israel[12]. The fact that the former colonial master was in both cases Great Britain added to the historical, contextual connections between the two. Focusing on Israel, the establishment of the State and that of the Federal Republic of Germany are deeply connected to each other. Turning the focus specifically to dance, it was the immigration of German dance makers (and of non-Germans fleeing the Nazi conquest of their countries) that widely enabled the establishment of what was then called 'artistic' dance in Israel. Also in the UK, at least one of the country's significant personalities in the development of dance was German: Rudolf von Laban. Thus, the histories and especially the dance histories of Germany the UK, Israel and Sri Lanka were intertwined way beyond what seemed evident at first glance. This research made clear that it was almost not possible to understand the development and spread of contemporary dance without looking at the historical circumstances and migrations that triggered the formation and transformation of the art form and facilitated its spreading. The constitution of NaDaPs, a unique phenomenon that raises the claim of national representation through a globally-spreading dance form might be a result of specific political, economic, and cultural circumstances, while contributing at the same time to the enlargement of the dance form itself[13], and this

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[12] Sri Lanka (at the time, Ceylon) was granted independence on February 4th, 1948, Israel declared its independence on May 14th, 1948.

[13] At this stage, I am using contemporary dance and modern dance interchangeably. As inaccurate as this might seem today, at the moment of the establishment of *Le Ballet pour Demain* and thereafter NaDaPs there was barely any discussion or consensus in this regard – for the phenomenon was only emerging. Important was only that whatever the dance was, it was diverting from the aesthetic criteria of the established classical ballet. I will be more explicit in this regard when discussing concepts of contemporaneity in Chapter 5.

makes a thorough research into the phenomenon and some of its iterations even more compelling.

With the help of these four case studies, the UK's *British Dance Edition (BDE) 2016*, the Israeli *International Exposure (IE) 2015*, Germany's *Dance Platform Germany (DPG) 2016* and Sri Lanka's *Sri Lankan Dance Platform (SLDP) 2016*, I have formed the core question of this thesis; to what extent do National Dance Platforms represent or mediate a nation? The research will further explore the mechanisms at play when NaDaPs claim national-ness and ask whether and how they reflect back on the content and structure of the NaDaP in each location. However, due to their great heterogeneity, I will first proceed to examine whether the four chosen case studies can be grouped as part of the same phenomenon.

Chapter 2, *The Stage* will thus ask whether the four chosen case studies are part of the global(ised) phenomenon of the NaDaPs. To argue this case, the chapter will firstly offer a brief history of the phenomenon. After a short introduction, the next section will trace the first NaDaPs' roots to *Le Ballet pour Demain (The Ballet for Tomorrow),* a choreographic competition in Bagnolet (France) and describe how the international irradiation of this event led to the formation of NaDaPs. Following this, the chapter will provide contextual readings of the establishment *BDE, IE* and *DPG*, and will thereafter investigate the process that turned *SLDP* into *Shakti. Space for a Single Body* (*SSSB)*, with the aim to provide the rationale for keeping the case study included in the research. These sections will also offer a description of each case study. The last section in the chapter will yield the conclusions, establishing the four case studies as part of the same phenomenon and opening questions regarding the field in which this research is carried out.

I am mainly asking whether NaDaPs represent or mediate a nation, how they claim national-ness and to what extent this reflects back on the structure and content of each iteration. Conversely, it also seems important to consider whether NaDaPs allow for an unequivocal reading of the nation in which they take place and what are the implications of their understanding of nation and the role dance plays within it. However, the primordial intention of NaDaPs was to promote (the visibility of) contemporary dance. As the phenomenon crystallised within the neo-liberal framework of the 1990s, the question of visibility is in each NaDaP differently interlinked with aspects of profitability or market intentionality. On the other hand, the global aspect of the phenomenon begs for the question whether NaDaPs contribute to the construction of a transnational dance community – or what I will propose as *Danceland*, an 'imagined community' (Anderson [1983] 2006) or land of dancers with rules and borders other than those of geographical countries. Thus, NaDaPs appear to constitute a hybrid phenomenon that raises multi-layered, complex questions that are impossible to answer within the scope of just one scholarly field. Indeed, the quest to embed the research in one scholarly field proved from the start infertile.

Chapter 3 constitutes the *Literature Review.* It serves the important purpose of illustrating the project's status as the first in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of the NaDaP, reason for which there is hardly any prior literature that specifically addresses it. Therefore, it was important to look for answers to my questions where these were to be found, in a variety of scholarly fields. Whereas some answers were to be located in the fields of dance history and dance theory, others were to be detected in the fields of political theory or anthropology. However, it would have been also possible to approach the phenomenon of the NaDaPs calling on economists, politicians, or geographers working in

their fields with a focus on culture. Chapter 3, *Literature Review* will thus delve into these complexities and proceed to locate the different questions in the respective scholarly fields.

Chapter 4, *Methodology and Methods* will firstly situate the ideological underpinning of the research. It will provide an account of the methodological framework in which the work is embedded. It will especially expand on anthropologist and globalisation scholar Arjun Appadurai's system of *scapes* (1990, 1996) and provide a rationale for its use in this context. Already at the start of the research, the phenomenon of the NaDaP seemed to reflect a global picture, manifested through the many iterations in different parts of the world. At the same time, each NaDaP defines itself locally. Thus, understanding the phenomenon required the exploration of both their existence as a global emergence as well as their localisation. The research has shown that all NaDaPs are indeed part of the post-national, global(ised) world of contemporary arts, and more specifically of contemporary dance, as much as an event of the local dance scene in each place where a NaDaP is constituted. The data I collected throughout my field work seemed to be best understood using a system of coordinates, the classification of global cultural flows or *scapes* developed by Appadurai. They would enable me to address both the locality and the globality of each NaDaP at the same time. Appadurai's system of *scapes* has provided thus the primary structure of the work, and looking at the relationship between the local and global as a continuum contained in various scapes has allowed several tensions to become apparent.

The best way to gather data about NaDaPs was to participate in them. As a festival director and curator, I have often been invited to dance festivals internationally, especially NaDaPs for many years. The extensive experience I gained attending these

events have provided the foundation for my research towards this thesis. Following, the chapter will discuss the methods used to research, gather data and evaluate them. To conclude, I will focus on the validities concomitant to the chosen methods and the ethical considerations that arose throughout the work. Further, the steady reflection of my own positionality has been essential while pursuing this research and will be addressed and disclosed and the last section of this chapter, *Seiltanz (Balancing act)*.

As mentioned earlier, NaDaPs have from the onset interlinked sets of ideas relating to the nation-al[14] and contemporaneity. The two elements seem to constitute a set of values that underpin the NaDaPs' rationalities. Chapter 5 foregrounds the complexity of this relationship. Anthropologist Benedict Anderson famously defined the nation as an 'imagined community' (Anderson [1983] 2006), that is to say as a construction that is product of the imagination. Philosopher Peter Osborne has defined 'the contemporary' also as a fiction, even more, as a global fiction (Osborne 2013:26). Thus, both rationales underpinning NaDaPs, the nation-al and the contemporary are but products of human imagination. Two ideas though, that are utterly political and that have acted performatively, drawing onto the constitutive conventions they mobilize (Butler 1997:51). Chapter 5, *That life is but a dream and dreams are (not) only dreams*[15] will thus concentrate on these two ideologies that have been solicited and intertwined to establish NaDaPs. To do so, I will use the lens of the *ideoscape* proposed by Appadurai. He

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[14] I hyphen 'nation-al' to emphasise the double focus, on the nation and on what is considered related to it or national.

[15] The title draws on *La vida es sueño* [*Life is but a dream]* (de la Barca 1636). The original cite is "That life is but a dream, and dreams are only dreams" (my transl.)

described *ideoscapes* as "concatenations of images [that] are often directly political" [16],

while describing "master-narratives" (Appadurai 1990:299-300). This research does not

focus on the Enlightenment (although nation-states, that often will be referred to must be

traced back to it), but national-ness and contemporaneity are two "master-narratives" that

underpin the formation of NaDaPs. This chapter will thus disclose rationales of national-

ness and contemporaneity in all four case studies. It will work towards answering the main

question, whether and to which extent NaDaPs mediate the nations they claim to represent.

At the same time, it will allow me to ask whether contemporary dance acts as a folk dance

of hegemonic nations.

Chapter 6, *Castings* will focus on who is present and who is absent in each

NaDaP. Appadurai describes the *ethnoscape* as the landscape of persons who constitute the

shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers and

other moving groups and persons…" (Appadurai 1990: 297). The chapter will draw on the

ethnoscape to explore each platform's claim of national representation and problematize

what this representation means in each of the cases, focusing on the dancers and creators

peopling each platform. Thus, these questions will be contextualised in the social fabric of

each of the countries. The Chapter will further aim at providing some answers to the

question whether a NaDaP provides a space that reflects its local, national context within

the global presence of the phenomenon.

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[16] In the original, the author writes [but] instead of [that], to differentiate the *ideoscape* from the *mediascape*, which he talks about earlier. In this phrasing and without reference to the *mediascape* before, I have allowed myself to replace the conjunction.

Chapter 7, *Money makes the world go 'round… or capital moves around in the world* will focus on the flows of finances that make NaDaPs possible. It will firstly discuss the economic context in which NaDaPs emerged. To do so, it will draw on Appadurai's definition of the *financescape*, which he relates to "currency markets, national stock exchanges and commodity speculations" (Appadurai 1990: 298). For anyone who has worked in the world of contemporary dance, it is clear that none of the instances mentioned by Appadurai play a serious role – and also not for the constitution of NaDaPs. However, as in any other industry, dance needs money to exist. By means of cultural policy, states regulate the production of dance, shaping thus the nation-al dance production. On the one hand, it will discuss the role of dancers as (carriers of) financial assets and their livelihood within a global dance-scape and within their broader contexts. On the other hand, this chapter will show that several productions showcased at NaDaPs are produced collaboratively, with international funds, and with non-national dancers or choreographers. This chapter will thus go to the core of this research, placing the emergence of the NaDaPs within a neo-liberal rational that has made of dance a commodity. It will especially look at NaDaPs embedded in the global economy and their role in constructing dance as an industry. It will further the question; to what extent do NaDaPs mediate or represent a nation? This will situate the phenomenon in the conflictive position in which a global(ised) ideology undermines the nations that NaDaPs claim to mediate or represent.

Chapter 8, *Hall of Mirrors* will use the lens of Appadurai's *mediascape* to ask who is actually mediating whom in the instance of a NaDaP. The chapter will argue that at a NaDaP all actors mediate their own contexts, thus influencing decisions about what each NaDaP will represent. This will be made explicit by the choice of international

programmers as one of the main targeted audiences for NaDaPs. The chapter aims thus at discussing the mutual influences effected by the local on the global and vice versa at each iteration of the phenomenon.

Finally, chapter 9 will provide the findings of the research. After having examined NaDaPs through the lens of the different scapes, the conclusions will offer an appraisal of the journey. It will offer answers to the main question, whether NaDaPs represent or mediate the nations in which they occur, and how their claims of national-ness reflect back onto the structures in their various locations. The chapter will further highlight contradictions and give way to questions that have crystallised throughout the research but have found no answer within its scope, pre-empting possible future research.

Having thus outlined the structure and contents of the thesis, I will proceed to disclose my situationality. As noted earlier, I have been very privileged to work in various countries and environments. These opportunities have been embedded in self-determined temporary migrations. However, my history of migrations is transgenerational and many of those that happened before me were the result of sheer necessity. Probably that is why I have always felt discomfort in all matters of belonging related to the nation-al. I go further to confess to have a profound distrust of the nation. Depending on the perspective, it might seem intrinsically logical or strange that most of this thesis relates to that idea. The questions leading this research have been generated over time. They are the result of a long process of crystallisation that began before beginning the PhD. The sheer length of this process, and my long exposure to NaDaPs in different capacities have provided me with many insights and have informed my perception and close readings of the events. Thus, my reflections about these events are permeated by my own experiences,

during my PhD research work as well as prior to it. It has been thus practically impossible to single out reflections that were informed *only* by my experiences within the scope of this research. A personal tone is sometimes inevitable, while it also affords room for my personal bias when analysing the events. To mitigate this probability, I will disclose my positionality and describe the way that led me to embrace this subject of research. The following section will thus be a description of the evolution of thoughts that have led to this research.

1.2   Seiltanz (Balancing act)

It was June 20th, 1978. The same as every year, Argentina celebrated the "Day of the Flag"[17]. Custom has it that the 4th class[18] cohorts throughout the country pledge loyalty to the flag on its day. At the *Francisco de Vitoria*, my primary school, pupils would stand together in the school's courtyard and, raising their right arm, they would speak out the oath in unison looking at the flag under the scrutiny of authorities and invited family members. I was part of that group of pupils and distressed. The night before, I had had a row with my parents. I had told them that I could not perform the oath as Argentina, the country which the flag symbolised meant nothing to me. They looked at me with a mixture of bewilderment and discomfort, as they did not understand me. Secretively, I took a decision. I would cowardly-courageously perform an act of resistance against the coerced demand of loyalty.

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[17] Manuel Belgrano, one of the country's heroes and creator of its flag, died on June 20th, 1820. The date of his death is yearly celebrated as "Day of the Flag".

[18] In Argentina, compulsory primary school starts in first grade when children are 6 years old. Thus, in the fourth-grade pupils are around 10 years old.

Cowardly, because in spite of my inner-belief, the next day I stood as expected with everyone else on the school's courtyard. Courageously, because I needed to be truthful to myself and decided not to speak out the oath. Thus, I stood in the courtyard together with the other pupils; when the moment came, rose my arm and did not utter a word. As half-performed as it was, this was my first act of resistance to accepting an imposed identity, one that I could not relate to. To my defence, it must be said that a military Junta ruled the country at the time. A public action of disobedience could have been risky, questioning my personal (and probably my family's) loyalty to the nation. But what had triggered my doubts? How could I, as a 10 years-old, doubt my belonging to the country I had been born in or the latter's legitimacy in the act of requiring a loyalty oath from me?

July 9th, 1979. One year and a few weeks after the (un)performance of the oath, the question whether I belonged to the nation rose again, this time in another disguise. On this day, Argentina commemorates yearly its independence from the former colonial power, Spain. As usual, the primary school I attended put a performance together to celebrate the occasion and I had been selected to take part in the *Media Caña*, a national dance. To present it properly, we rehearsed for months. The music for the choreography was as new to me as any other melody I did not know. It would have made no difference, had I been told that the piece was from Peru, Saudi Arabia or China. The date approaching, we rented gaucho-costumes, for that was integral to making the dance national.

But what was that Nation, a bond with which the dance piece was supposed to represent? How far was I actually from that Nation? I lived in the Ciudad de Buenos Aires, the capital. On the streets, I had not seen someone dressed as a gaucho even once.

They were to me mythical beings depicted by some national poets as the people of the country[19]. In my primary school-days' imagination they merged with the *indios*, former inhabitants of that piece of Earth who some of the former had actually co-operated to massacre[20]. For me, they were one and the same and far away from my reality. That might have been Argentina, but it was a country foreign to me. Not even my joy performing the dance could overshadow this fact.

A popular joke in Buenos Aires says that *porteños*, the people from Buenos Aires descend, unlike other humans, not from monkeys but from ships. Although translating and de-contextualising jokes can lose the point, its content points to a widespread reality in the city's demographics. In my own family, three of my grandparents had immigrated only some decades before. The fourth one, a grandmother, was herself the child of immigrants as well. Hence, I was the second or third generation born in the country, according to which of the grandparents one refers to. All my ancestors had fled Eastern Europe. Poverty, religious persecution, insecurity and alienation, the fact of not being considered real citizens in any of the countries in which they were born had moved the people who would form my family to emigrate to what were in those times welcoming shores of South America and their promise of freedom to thrive [21].

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[19] See for example the epic character Martín Fierro (Hernández, 1872).

[20] In those days, the level of disconnect between the capital and the rest of the country was enormous. Buenos Aires believed itself in Europe, it was even nicknamed 'la petite Paris'. We believed we were Europeans who were just accidentally on the wrong side of the Atlantic and felt no connection at all with the hinterland. I do not know if that has currently changed.

[21] The preamble to the Argentinian Constitution states that the country "assures the benefits of liberty…for all the men of the world who want to inhabit the Argentinian soil…" (Secretaria de Cultura de la Nación, website, my translation)

Time passed, people hitherto unknown to each other formed families and prospered. As first generation born in the country, my parents went to University and managed to offer their children a relatively comfortable childhood. But had this process of financial betterment also been one of 'argentinisation'? Judging by the distress my parents looked at me with in the opening anecdote, yes it had, at least for some. But what made someone Argentinian? As I had not heard the rhythms of the *Media Caña,* whether at home or at my grandparents', nor did we, or our acquaintances, wear gaucho-like clothes, we had probably not become really Argentinian. But was this bad in any way? My parents did not doubt their belonging to the country that had embraced their own parents and enabled them to live fully its promised "benefits of liberty" (Secretaría de Cultura de la Nación, n.d.)[22].

For me, being Argentinian was something as routine as eating or going to school. Nothing I would question in itself on a regular basis. The notion became awkward only when specific acts were demanded, such as the pledge of loyalty to the flag or the necessity to perform the *Media Caña* that, beside the joy I took in performing, felt like an alien dance that required a disguise. The doubts I had started to fathom in the occasion of pledging loyalty to the flag resurged dancing the *Media Caña*. What it meant to belong to a nation, what made a dance national and what it is to embody the nation while performing a dance were questions that triggered my first approach to the thematic explored in this PhD.

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[22] In fact, my grandfather's father was born in Poland, and during his childhood, the city became Russian. His mother tongue however, was neither: it was Yiddish. So, he was a Yiddish-speaking, Polish man who immigrated to Argentina with a Russian passport. He learnt Spanish and became a citizen of his new country. His remarkable Easter-European accent when speaking the new language made his story, his migrations, palpable every time he opened his mouth.

These interrogations were triggered again through another activity I engaged in a few years later, the one that would define my professional future in the dance field.

Indeed, two or three years later I started to engage in different activities at *Hebraica*, one of the biggest Jewish clubs in the country. Two of them are relevant in this account. The first one was the *Grupos*, the groups. This was a structure that offered the club's children and youth the possibility to spend quality leisure time with peers. We were split into groups of 15 – 25 people of similar age (the nickname *Grupos* comes from this). Under the leadership of a female and a male *Madrichim*[23], leisure-time leaders/facilitators we would meet every Friday evening and Saturday afternoon to engage in games and discussions (some with educational, some with purely recreational purpose), play in outdoor and indoor activities or go to the movies. Among many other memorable times, I can recall playing "United Nations". I remember the day we enacted a session to discuss the formation of an Israeli and of a Palestinian State. I remember that I chose to represent the Palestinian side, because it was nearer to my belief and own sense of justice, and that I was very outspoken in stating the necessity of a Palestinian state, and - in my own experience hitherto - not so much of a Jewish one[24]. Not only were we openly questioning whether the State of Israel was legitimate[25], but we were at the same time learning to speak

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[23] Madrichim (pl., singular: Madrich/a, Hebrew: guide or leader). The *shoresh* or root of the word is D-R-CH and it is related to DeReCH (way) and haDRaCHa (guide).

[24] For all accounts of antisemitism during the military dictatorship, and despite the antisemitism of some very conservative sectors of the Argentinian landed aristocracy, I can recall no sentiment of Otherness related to Jewishness while in Argentina. I would only understand the implications of being Jewish upon my arrival in Europe.

[25] After having lived in Europe for over 30 years, I would in hindsight add it was in a main-stream Jewish club. Indeed, Jewish life in Buenos Aires flourished in ways that were unthinkable in Central Europe in the 1960s-1980s. Not having itself been massacred in the Holocaust, the community was much more pluralistic and multi-layered than the Jewish communities I would later encounter in Europe.

out, to listen, and to vote – democracy for children and teenagers in a country that was trying to cope with the heritage of its latest military dictatorship. Thus, within this loosely liberal to atheistic Jewish context, matters of belonging were framed in questions different from the ones posed by wearing gaucho-clothes or pledging loyalty to a flag at the state school I attended. What was at stake was the personal relationship of a Jew with the State of Israel, and the outcome was open.

The second activity worth mentioning was, again, dance. I joined one of the groups of Israeli folk dances and lost my heart to it. Despite me being born in Argentina (country I did not actively identify with), and the dances being from Israel (country I was persuaded not to have any links to), I loved the music and sense of freedom when dancing to it. Although I was a convinced non-Zionist, I danced Israeli folk dances in Argentina for years and saw no contradiction in doing so. I just loved the dance. Little did I know that this was my first acquaintance with what would be the leading thread of my professional life, for questioning the significance of national identity and dance, and the complexities that arise out of interlinking the two would mark my future life.

At the time, the most professionalised company of Israeli folk dance in Argentina was called *Darkeinu*. After years of practicing with smaller ensembles, I joined through an audition in 1986. In the company, we had compulsory classes in classical Ballet and Graham technique and some of the teachers taught also at the Taller del Teatro San Martín, the contemporary dance school of the city's Municipal Theatre. This might have been instrumental in creating some kind of proximity between us and the Taller. Indeed, some of the company's dancers had been admitted to it and even a Taller's student came to join our folk-dance company. I enjoyed the technique classes very much and started to

train privately on daily basis. The following year I was accepted at the Taller and left University.[26]. My future life would be fully dedicated to contemporary dance, an art form that seemed to recognise no national affiliation and presented itself as universal. Belonging to this or the other nation, or to all of them, would not play a role anymore. Or so I thought.

The dance techniques that we studied at the *Taller* were - beyond classical Ballet – mainly Graham, Cunningham, Limon, Muller and Nikolais. However, soon enough I encountered *German* Expressionism. Not only did we have classes with Renate Schottelius, a German dancer who was forced into exile in the 1930s, but in aesthetic and performance classes we analysed the work of Pina Bausch and Susanne Linke. I started to delve into German culture: watched Werner Herzog' and Rainer Fassbinder's films, listened to Johann Sebastian Bach and Nina Hagen, and read Max Weber and Immanuel Kant. When in 1989 I was admitted for a semester to the *Folkwang Hochschule* in Essen, some members of my family and a few of my friends were upset that I wanted to go - of all countries – to Germany. Indeed, back in the 1980s the country was still a no-go area for many Jews. There are tales of acquaintances and family friends driving hundreds of kilometres in excess to go from The Netherlands to the East of Italy through France, in order to avoid driving through or worse, spending a single night in Germany.

But I did go to Germany. The semester became a year and then two and, although with intervals, I kept living in Germany. I embraced the country and the country

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[26] I would only realise that all these dance techniques had been explored and created in the USA decades later. Only then would I question the fact that they were the only ones categorised as 'contemporary dance' in that environment, and that this in itself would be something to challenge.

embraced me, the atheist Latin American Jew of Easter-European origin. For the first time, I felt at home. German language and thought became my home. At the same time, Tanztheater, the child of German expressionism, fell out of fashion in the circles I frequented. I continued my studies of contemporary dance in Rotterdam. Again, next to classical Ballet, it was the techniques of Jennifer Muller and José Limón, Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham that were devoted most of the time. Contemporary dance was non-national, but what made all these dance techniques so pivotal? Why were they so relevant, that they were so widely disseminated both in South America and Europe? Was that in any way related to their common origin in the USA? Questions related to national-ness seemed to be still haunting me. Or could that be possibly related to the USA's centrality in the post-WW2 world order and thus, not related to the nation as such but to its hegemonic position? Could it be that it was about the construction and spread of the nation through culture, as opposed to the hardwired construction of US-American led political block I had experienced through the dictatorship?[27] Probably, the question was not only about the essence of a nation, but as well about how nations relate to one another in a system organising their distribution of power. What emerged as an assumption during my dance education in the 1990s became almost a certainty in later years. Many of these thoughts have flowed into the thesis, especially in relation to the *financescape*. This research has provided me thus with the tools to understand what I had somehow felt but could not name in former years. However, despite my questions about nation-al-ness and power, what had never occurred me to challenge was the essence or perception of beauty, and the possibility that these also reflect constructed hierarchies. Whether dancing folk,

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[27] Through the Plan Condor, the USA co-ordinated the "guerra sucia", the war against the rise of the left in Latin America. The Argentinian Junta was backed by the USA within this framework (See e.g. McSherry (2005)

taking ballet and contemporary dance classes or working as a professional dancer I had

never doubted what beauty was: a strong, muscular body that could jump high, turn, fall

and recover, and that had long 'lines'.

In 2002 or 2003 I had the opportunity to watch a performance of a dance

company from Cologne (Germany) that informed and formed the pivotal step towards this

thesis. *DIN A13 tanzcompany's* ensemble was constituted by dancers with normate and

non-normatisable physicalities[28]. I was struck by the poetics of their work. What I saw

challenged all I had hitherto thought of aesthetics in dance[29]. Their performances made

obvious to me that to be a dancer, it was not necessary to conform to the technical and

physical requirements of a normate dancing body. In hindsight and under this light, my

struggles to re-shape my body as a young dance student in the 1980s, the years of sitting

on the floor next to the piano before the ballet class, tucking my feet under it and slowly

stretching my legs while sliding my buttocks backwards, bitterly trying to improve their

'lines' seemed rather useless.

In 2004, I was growing tired of performing. I started to look out for other

possibilities and became *DIN A 13's* production manager, a position that quickly evolved

to co-developing the company's profile and its work in Germany and abroad. Our vision

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[28] In the Anglo-saxon dance environment, it is often spoken of disabled dancers. I will return to my wording choice of 'dancers with non-normatisable physicalities' in Chapter 6 and Chapter 8 and discuss how this choice is important for my thesis overall in the conclusions.

[29] My professional perception of aesthetics had been shaped by practice and theory classes at the Taller in Buenos Aires, the Folkwang Hochschule in Germany and the Rotterdamse Dansacademie. Mixed-abilities or integrated dance were widely not thought of in main stream dance education in the 1980s and 1990s.

was to spread the field of mixed-abled[30] contemporary dance. We pretty soon specialised

in the realisation of international, mixed-abled dance projects in different parts of the

world, mostly in co-operation with the Goethe-Institut (GI)[31]. This means also that the

company received, among others, generous funding from the local GI's branches in the

countries in which we would work, as well as expert assistance with local knowledge to

support me setting up each project. In my ten-years long collaboration with *DIN A13*, we

carried out projects in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, Senegal, Brazil, Venezuela,

Israel and Sri Lanka. Working together with the GI provided me with a very helpful and

effective environment. But it was also troubling. The all questions about power

distribution became present. Not every country has a national institute of cultural

representation. Of the countries that have one, not all are as widespread and active in as

many countries as the GI[32]. This was about cultural diplomacy, the relationship between

nations but handled through culture[33]. It was clear that undisclosed meta-layers were

solicited, when an institution that re-presents the culture of a nation engages in activities in

another country. Particularly, this raised questions towards the circumstances that had

enabled Germany to become so successful after WW2.

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[30] Mixed-abilities is a term that, loaned from the English language, in the German context means an ensemble of dancers with normate and non-normatisable physicalities.

[31] The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany's cultural institute (Goethe-Institut, n.d.), comparable to the British Council, probably better known to British readers. However, the GI is organised less centrally than the latter and the director of each local institute is widely autarchic to construct their programming, which they decide upon following a broadly designed regional focus.

[32] The Goethe-Institut has 159 branches in 98 countries (Goethe-Institut, n.d.)

[33] This thesis does not focus specifically on cultural diplomacy. However, this field is an important constitutive element of the relationship between nations. Their most prominent actors are national institutes of culture and embassies. Neither Sri Lanka nor Israel have internationally acting national cultural institutes, but the UK and Germany do: the British Council and the Goethe-Institut. And both are very present at the respective NaDaPs, contributing either financially toward or with the organisation of experts-panels towards their realisation.

The international projects that *DIN A13 tanzcompany* carried out in collaboration with the GI took roughly over three to four months each, and they were several and they were expensive. This meant that the company fitted into Germany's public persona as it was being created worldwide by the country's own cultural institute. This made me aware that the company played a part in the country's foreign cultural policy - and judging by our consistent funding throughout ten years, not a small one. The dance pieces created by *DIN A13* were performed locally in their place of creation and thereafter in Germany. However, barely a contemporary dance festival in Germany invited the company to perform[34]. This lack of interested suggested that there was a discrepancy between how Germany wanted to present itself abroad and what it actually accepted within its (cultural) borders. In other words, this circumstance laid the foundation for this research's leading questions, to which extent do NaDaPs represent or mediate a nation, and whether this claim of national-ness reflects back onto the structure of the nation and its dance. These were refinements and re-wordings of earlier questions that still hold some relevance, as they have provided the foundation upon which this study has been built: when and how is someone legitimised to re-present a country? When is it legitimate that a country reclaims a person, as with the pledge of loyalty to the flag?[35] Who is deemed fit to embody a Nation – both inland and abroad, and who is made universal - as in the case of the techniques of US-American origin in my dance schooling – and which mechanisms are at work to provide the rationale underpinning this construction?

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[34] When the company was invited within Germany, it was generally to festivals that focused on disabilities. My – and the company's founder, Gerda König's vision was to enlarge the vocabulary and perception of professional contemporary dance and not to create a fringe sub-species of dance.

[35] These apparent contradictions occur also in the context of other arts, as the controversy between Italy and France regarding the right place for the official celebrations of Leonardo da Vinci's 500th anniversary (e.g. Chrisafis and Giuffrida 2019) show.

The lengthy personal narration is not intended to imply that my own history is the focus for the thesis but rather to provide an important foundation for the study, to draw attention to the many factors that have drawn me to this project. Indeed, this personal account aimed at unveiling the decentred-ness of my position. As an Argentinian, Eastern European. As a Jew, atheistic and non-zionist. As a German, a Latin-American Jew. As a contemporary dancer, a ballet lover with difficult-to-align feet. As a producer, a dancer. As a scholar, a manager. Thus, this thesis presents reflections, challenges and conclusions from a place of multiple marginalities (Denis, 2001), that have shaped my perception throughout. Therefore, it seemed important to turn the focus at first onto the author in a self-reflective manner. In the chapter that follows, I will proceed to set up the stage.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STAGE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will ask whether all four case studies are part of the same global(ised) phenomenon of the NaDaPs. To elucidate this question, I will describe the national dance platforms *British Dance Edition (BDE)* of the United Kingdom, *Dance Platform Germany (DPG)* of Germany, *International Exposure (IE)* of Israel and *Shakti. A Space for a Single Body (SSSB)* that was carried out in place of the *Sri Lankan Dance Platform* in 2016. Each description will be twofold. On the one hand, a quantitative summarization will offer an account of the number of performances and venues, address the size of the productions and targeted audiences, their organisation and their selection processes[36]. On the other hand, the four platforms will be anchored in their contexts. A portrayal[37] of their socio-political and economic environments as well as a brief localised history of each event and an account of the people acting towards their establishment will allow a close reading of each platform and their origins. Much of these descriptions result of my own experience as an observing participant[38] in each of the events. The printed and electronic materials provided by each of the platforms as well as journalistic publications

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[36] Not all platforms provided the same information, and not all data has been equally traceable. Limitations will be mentioned when appropriate.

[37] This portrayal is mediated by me and therefore liable to be biased. See Chapter 4: *Methodology and Methods* for considerations about the own positionality and its limitations.

[38] See Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods for additional explanations regarding the chosen methods.

about them constitute further sources of information for this chapter. Finally, the semi-structured interviews I conducted with various personalities relevant to the four case studies[39] have provided invaluable insights to understand each of them.

However, there is evidence suggesting that *Le Ballet pour Demain* (*The Ballet for Tomorrow*), a choreographic competition established in the 1960s in France is the direct ancestor of the phenomenon NaDaP. Thus, before proceeding to the description of each case study, I will provide a brief history and contextualisation of the competition *Le Ballet pour Demain* and seek to demonstrate that all four case studies are genealogically related to one another sharing this common forebear.

2.2   Le Ballet pour Demain

It is not possible to establish a monocausal ground for the occurrence of NaDaPs: historical, cultural, and economic conditions have come together in specific times and places to enable the phenomenon to flourish. However, the appearance of the NaDaP can be traced to the *Festival de la Danse*, a dance festival established in 1969 by choreographer Jaque Chaurand (1928 – 2017) in Bagnolet, France. His aim was to give young independent choreographers a space to present their work in the best possible technical conditions (Le Ballet pour Demain 2010)[40] and to create an awareness for the

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[39] An overview of the interviews (including dates and media) and their transcriptions is provided in Volume II

[40] Following the name of the initial competition, *Le Ballet pour Demain* is also the name of the blog that makes the remaining archival documents of the Competition accessible to the public (Le Ballet pour Demain n.d.). Most of the information in this preface is harvested out of the openly accessible archive made available by this blog. Beyond the many primary sources it discloses, the blog refers to Mylène Fonitcheff (1998) *Politique Culturelle en Banlieue: Un Concours de Chorégraphie à Bagnolet [Cultural Politics in the Suburbs: A Choreographic Competition in Bagnolet]*. The only printed copy of this thesis is in a Parisian library and I have not been able to

need of structures that support them (Chaurand in *Le Ballet pour Demain* 2010). The initial three-day festival included an evening of classical dance, an evening of contemporary dance, and one reserved for a choreographic competition, antithetically called *Le Ballet pour Demain* (Le Ballet pour Demain 2010:1). Eventually, the competition's name was changed to *Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationals de Seine-St. Denis* (Rencontres Chorégraphiques, n.d.), honouring the municipality that funded it[41]. Prominent directors of the competition[42] were Jaque Chaurand and later on Lorrina Niclas[43].

Whereas in the beginning the competition's focus was on French choreographers, *Le Ballet pour Demain* quickly developed an international reach. Documents such as the competition's booklet of rules in three languages and several newspaper articles of the time, show how consistent its steady process of internationalisation was[44]. Despite initial reservations, even from the politicians funding it (Le Ballet pour Demain 2010:1), the structure continued to grow throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In 1980, the competition accepted, in addition to 17 French participants, 17 further proposals from Belgium, Chile,

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access it. Given that there are no further scholarly publications focused on the Competition of Bagnolet, the quantity of original documents provided by the blog make it a trustable source of information for the objectives of this study.

[41] The new name has nevertheless not been fully adopted internationally, and people talk interchangeably of the competition in Bagnolet or the *Rencontres Chorégraphiques*. Although I aim for consistency, I have decided to respect my informants' choice when naming the event in interviews.

[42] Currently, the Rencontres have the profile of an international dance festival under the direction of Anita Mathieu that curiously – despite having the Rencontres been the trigger for several NaDaPs – has not led to the establishment of a French NaDaP.

[43] Currently Lorrina Barrientos, a free-lance arts consultant.

[44] Already in 1975, the rules for the competition were in three languages: French, English and German (*Concours de Chorégraphie Le Ballet pour Demain*, Le Ballet pour Demain 2012: 20 - 21). Furthermore, The *International Dance Academy of Cologne* (Germany), the *Ballet Studio of Salzburg* (Austria) and the *American Dance Festival* (USA), for instance, offered stipends to some of the winners (Le Ballet pour Demain 2010: 1).

Great Britain, Holland, Mexico, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the USA, and

Venezuela (Cournand 1980, accessed through *Le Ballet pour Demain* 2013: 36)[45]. The fact

that participants from so many different countries had applied to perform in the

competition shows that the latter was a catalyst for conversations way beyond France. At

the same time, a full array of articles in the French and German press bears witness to the

competition's visibility in both countries[46].

These reverberations lead to substantial increase of submissions for the

competition during the 1970s and 1980s, which might be the reason for Chaurand's wish

to create mini-Bagnolets including selection processes in other parts of the world (Le

Ballet pour Demain 2013: 29). However, it was Lorrina Niclas who implemented and

expanded this goal in the 1990s. Partners in different countries were approached for them

to set up pre-selection platforms in their regions[47]. Their role was to select the local

participants who would be eligible to go to the competition in Bagnolet. Under Niclas'

leadership, the number of national pre-selection platforms multiplied. As we will see for

instance in the sections about *BDE 2016* and *DPG 2016*, it is these pre-selection platforms

that in some cases transformed into being or provided the grounds for the future NaDaPs.

A spreadsheet made public in her website, *'Balance of the Globalisation of the*

Rencontres' (Barrientos 2017) shows that there were partners in: South Africa, Germany,

Angola, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, South Korea, Croatia, Spain, Estonia, USA,

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[45] The blog attributes the article to the newspaper *Le Parisien*, but the article does not show its provenance.

[46] The blog *Le Ballet pour Demain* claims that the English press had never followed invitations to the competition, having the *Dance Magazine* only published a few articles by German dance critic Horst Koegler instead.

[47] The relationship between the pre-selection platforms in Germany and Great Britain and the subsequent national dance platforms will be expanded in the sections *Dance Platform Germany* and *British Dance Edition*.

France, Great Britain, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and Tunisia. However, not all countries held their platforms centrally, nor did all participate in every edition of Bagnolet. Customarily, Niclas would visit the pre-selection platforms to invite – or not – local participants to the competition in Bagnolet (Ashford and Beattie 2017). The Competition's international attraction was such that in 2000, 14 companies had been selected out of thirty-two platforms organised in 20 countries (Vernay 2000).

From the start, Chaurand's intention was to focus on the choreographers (understood at the time as the authors or creators of dance[48]), and the *Syndicat National des Auteurs et Compositeurs* (*Union of Authors and Composers*, my translation and underscoring) was made part of the jury (Chaurand 1969, in Le Ballet pour Demain 2011: 11)[49]. Consistently with this focus on authorship or dance creation (as opposed to a choreographer merely representing a country), none of the Competition's programme folders from 1969 through to 1985 mentions the nationality of the participants (all available programmes sighted in the blog Le Ballet pour Demain, 1 – 10). However, as I will discuss in the following sections, what began with the focus on selecting choreographers for the competition in Bagnolet, leading from pre-selection platforms built on a regional or national basis, soon developed a dynamic of its own. Further, as I will expand in the next sections, in the case of Germany, Israel and the UK, it is these pre-

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[48] I am aware that the discourse about authorship in dance is wide and complex and an in-depth discussion of the term escapes the scope of this work. I will thus employ the word authorship at this stage reflecting its use by my informants.

[49] Ashford reinforced the perception that the competition's focus was on dance authorship (Ashford and Beattie 2017).

selection platforms that paved the way for the formation of the respective NaDaPs (*DPG* in Germany*, IE* in Israel and *BDE* in the UK[50]).

2.3   British Dance Edition (BDE) 2016

The main source for this description is my own field trip to the event, held in Wales March 15th – 18th 2016, and in which I was an observing participant. Further information is provided by Welsh creative Dance Producer, CoreoCymru's website. Moreover, I will refer to the event's own programme folder, websites of the institutions involved and other documents, such as guest registration forms, closely linked to the platform. At the same time, I will contextualise the moment in which *BDE* was established. However, *BDE* itself does not have a centralised archive, nor are there hardly any published scholarly accounts about the event. Thus, I rely heavily on semi-structured interviews I conducted. I am aware that there are several people whom it would have been interesting to interview, some of whom were not available to converse with me. However, the centrality of Ashford and Beattie for the actual establishment of *Spring Collection* (forerunner of *BDE*) convinced me to approach mainly them as interviewees. They were very generous sharing their knowledge with me. A further interviewee was arts consultant Rachel Gibson, who has worked since the emergence of the phenomenon in different administrative capacities within the British dance scene.

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[50] For consistency, I will hereafter refer to Britain / British, as opposed to 'UK' or other possible denominations. I acknowledge that this is not precise and will problematize this challenge in 5.2.1. This does not apply, however, when an interviewee is cited or a further author quoted, cases in which I respect their preferred denomination.

BDE 2016 aimed at "presenting the best of British dance to promoters and producers from the UK and across the globe" (CoreoCymru n.d.)[51]. *BDE* is a biennially recurring event. This was the first time for Wales to host the event[52]. Its main hub was the *Wales Millennium Centre (WMC)* in Cardiff. Further venues were multi-artform cultural space *Chapter Arts Centre, The Riverfront* in Newport and a carpark in Cardiff. Altogether the partners provided fourteen performance spaces and sites in Cardiff (ten at the *WMC* plus a carpark, and two at *Chapter)* and Newport (three at *The Riverfront*). The performance spaces included purpose built theatres or studios, the foyers of the *WMC* and *The Riverfront*, and the roof of the carpark.

A group of six dance professionals was entrusted with the responsibility to curate the programme. Five of them were British or based in Britain: Neil Webb (Head of Dance & Drama British Council), Eddie Nixon (The Place Theatre Director, member of the National Dance Network, NDN), Jamie Watton (Director of South East Dance, member of NDN) and consortium members Louise Miles-Crust (Head of Programming at Wales Millennium Centre) and the Project Director Carole Blade (Coreo Cymru / Chapter, member of NDN). The team was completed by international guest promoter Samme Raeymaekers, Director of December Dance International Festival, Bruges / Belgium (*BDE*, programme folder). The selection criteria for *BDE*'s participating artists, however, seemed not to have always been clear-cut and I have not been able to trace any written document stating them. It seems to be important that companies and projects must be ready

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[51] While CoreoCymru states that it presents 'the best of British dance', Rachel Gibson, chair of National Dance Network (NDN) mentioned in an interview that there had been discussions about the nuances of calling the presented works 'best' or 'a selection of British work we believe is interesting for promoters' (Gibson 2017).

[52] It was the second-time *BDE* was held outside of England, having *BDE 2014* taken place in Scotland.

for touring in order to have the possibility to apply to participate in the platform (Gibson 2017). Further, it is relevant that the applying companies or choreographers are based in Britain. However, it is not clear how long they ought to have worked in the country. However, this carries an implicit limitation: in order to be able to work, dance artists must generally apply for subsidies, which only citizens or people with a permanent residency are eligible for. Some grants even specify that applicants must be resident in Britain for tax-relevant purposes (ACE n.d.). This narrows the number of artists that can apply to those who have a longer record of legal work in the country. Further, *BDE* does not, primarily, showcase emerging artists, hence the candidate must have a proven record of work in the UK (Gibson 2017). All these are criteria that seem to structurally limit the group of possible selectees, whilst not touching upon the content or aesthetic choices of the proposed work. However, dance funding in Britain is often bound to further governmental policy aims (Lee and Byrne 2011:281). Whereas chapter 7 will provide a more in-depth discussion about the interlinking of funding and aesthetics, I would like to propose here that criteria of eligibility for funding does influence the dance that is produced – and therefore this becomes a selection criteria for the respective NaDaPs.

Surprisingly, the selection criteria that seemed to be clearer were the ones regulating the attendance of delegates. The platform's declared goal is to get British work distributed abroad and within Britain and these criteria made clear that *BDE 2016* aimed at targeting affluent buyers (as we will see in the next subsection, a consideration that seems not to play a role in the German case). Not only did the event's pricing present a threshold to pass (the cost of registration was £ 216,-). To be accepted as a delegate, it was necessary to fill in a form indicating the kind of venue the delegate-to-be programs for, how much budget they have, and how much would be possibly allocated to British dance. As the

event's explicit goal is to sell British dance (talking about *BDE* in general Beattie explained that "there is no point in having a load of people who can't buy anything" [Ashford and Beattie, 2017]), the challenge for whoever selects is to understand the main markets where delegates are coming from and the scope within which they can programme. Conversely, this means that *BDE* is not thought of as a place to showcase work presenting challenges in terms of contents or aesthetics, to an extent that it would affect the works' sell-ability. It might be assumed that this could have an impact on the variety and quality of the productions presented at *BDE* – also at *BDE 2016*.

According to the *BDE 2016* programme folder, the curated programme included the work[53] of 36 companies and independent artists, sixteen of them participating for the first time. The showcase included mid- to large scale performances, such as *Scottish Dance Theatre*'s *Dreamers* (Anton Latchky 2015) or *Hofesh Shechter Company's tHE bAD* (Hofesh Shechter 2015). Presented middle scale pieces were for instance *Aakash Odedra Company*'s *Echoes* (Aditi Mangaldas 2015) or *Igor and Moreno*'s *A Room For All Our Tomorrows* (Igor Urzelai and Moreno Salinas 2015) and *Project O*'s *O* (Jamila Johnson-Small and Alexandrina Hemsley n.d.). Also small to mid-scale works were included, such as *Of Land & Tongue* (Theo Clinkard n.d.) *Balbir Singh Dance Company*'s *Decreasing Infinity* (Balbir Singh n.d.) and *Far From The Norm*'s *InNoForm* (Botis Seva n.d.), and small scale shows such as *Douglas* (Robbie Synge 2014) or *Second Hand Dance*'s *Grass* (Rosie Heafford n.d.). Furthermore, works ranged from solo pieces such as like *Beast* (Dan Daw 2015) to ensemble pieces such as *Gary Clarke Company*'s *Coal*

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[53] When enumerating dance pieces, I attempt to provide information about its choreographer, the dance company that produces it and the year of creation. However, sources such as the companies' websites do not always state the year of creation of each piece.

(Gary Clark 2015). In addition, eleven companies and artists pitched their work in either ten-minutes' conference style or thirty-minutes' studio sharings. Furthermore, a tradeshow[54] with 73 UK companies, artists, and organisations, insight and discussion sessions, and the streaming of several shows rounded up the event[55] (*BDE 2016*). For the delegates, the event was organised in three different pathways to follow (a red, a green, and a yellow one) each of them varying slightly in the programming and the coordination of around twenty-five performances to be seen in the three-and-a-half days.

       BDE identifies essentially as an industry-focused event, where "delegates who are coming, are coming to choose works that work for their markets, not for works that work here" (Ashford and Beattie 2017). Therefore, attendees are selected ensuring that "the industry dance [sic] and performing arts leaders are offered places" (Chapter n.d.). This edition made provision for 300 delegates from the UK and abroad. Not all delegates attended the full event, and there were day-passes on offer. At the same time, new delegates were 'buddied up' with an "experienced colleague who has attended previous *BDE*s and can introduce them to some of the delegation" (CoreoCymru 2016). A festival party, receptions and a speed dating event, and the time spent in coaches from one venue to the next enabled informal conversations between participants and artists. However, Gibson mentioned that some artists have remarked that *BDE* does not provide the opportunity for them to talk with promoters unless they already know them (Gibson 2017).

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[54] Tradeshow stands for a specific framework in which companies both selected and non-selected to participate showing their work could have a stall and promote themselves. However, the title "tradeshow" for a specific section is interesting in this context, as all of *BDE* has the aim to produce trade.

[55] While I have been informed that the performing companies are paid for their work (Gibson 2017), it is not clear if the companies presenting work at the tradeshow can do this free of charge or if a fee must be paid.

At the same time, as no list of delegates was circulated, it is not possible to confirm how many delegates and guests actually attended. Having provided some specifics about *BDE 2016*, I would like to move now the focus to event's history and genealogy.

Whereas the first *BDE* took place in Newcastle in 1998 following an initiative of the National Dance Network (NDN)[56] (National Dance Network n.d.) its local history reaches back to 1992 and its genealogy extends internationally to France. Section 2.2, *Le Ballet pour Demain* illustrated how Chaurand and especially Niclas promoted internationally the creation of national pre-selection platforms for the competition in Bagnolet. Niclas created a system following which each country would carry out a platform to showcase what they considered to be the best of their dance productions of the last two years. In 1990[57], Niclas had arranged a British selection platform for the competition in France through *Dance Umbrella (DU),* which was the foremost international dance festival in Britain at the time. *DU* was directed at the time by Val Bourne. In the beginning, it was Bourne herself who chose the participants for the event that effected the selection for Bagnolet, and thereafter delegated the position to Ghislaine Boddington. In Ashford's words, Niclas would then descend, "like a Goddess from the epicentre of culture, that was Paris" (Ashford and Beattie 2017) to watch the event and decide if she considered any of the participants worthy to be invited to the Rencontres in Seine-Saint Denis (Ashford and Beattie 2017).

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[56] National Dance Network (NDN) is a meeting point of organizations whose primary role is the development of dance in the context of presenting, programming and commissioning (National Dance Network 2017)

[57] There was no consensus regarding whether there had been a selection platform for the competition in France in 1988.

Although Ashford was one of the judges affiliated to the Bagnolet competition and the Rencontres (Ashford 2017), his comment (paragraph above) shows his growing discontent with its conditions. At the same time, it appeared to him that what had started as the national (in this case British) pre-selection platform for Bagnolet had further potential to develop and thus he decided to create a new platform together with a British friend and colleague, Oonagh Duckworth (who incidentally had just started to work for the *Rencontres Chorégraphiques* in France). In the meantime, Theresa Beattie[58] had started to increasingly programme dance at the *Southbank Centre*, since the art form had proven "to fill the hall's public spaces during the day and to sell really well" (Ashford and Beattie 2017). At the same time, understanding that the environment where dance happened organically (in London) was *The Place*, she had sought to contact John Ashford[59].

Once in touch, Ashford and Beattie thought that "it would be much better to invite large numbers of people from different European countries to witness what was going on in the UK over a weekend, rather than being entirely focused on selecting one young artist to be presented in Paris" (Ashford and Beattie 2017). Following their idea, Beattie and Ashford started to talk to international colleagues in conferences about the possibility to come and watch dance in Britain. Their intention was to put together a programme over a weekend, for international programmers to come and watch what they wouldn't see if it was spread out during the year (Ashford and Beattie 2017). They combined *The Place*'s programme with the *Southbank*'s, and others from London, and created a showcase: *Spring Collection*. Its first edition was in 1992. In Ashford's words,

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[58] Theresa Beattie was at the time in charge of developing 'Special Projects' at *The Southbank*, London, and dance fell often under this denomination.

[59] John Ashford was *The Place*'s programmer in Euston, London.

their objective when establishing *Spring Collection* was to "promote the work of a single country internationally, sullying the pristine artistic purpose of the Bagnolet competition in Paris, to which I was affiliated" (Ashford 2017). Ashford's assertion also shows the different understanding of the arts and their societal anchoring in Britain and in France[60]. Following Ashford thus, the impulse for establishing *Spring Collection* was to concentrate the attention of international programmers on a national environment (Ashford and Beattie 2017; Ashford 2017), thus creating a situation akin to a trade fair of the national dance industry. *Spring Collection* took place in 1992, 1994 and 1996, always in London.

In the meantime, the Arts Council had invested in 10 dance agencies. These were originally known as regional dance agencies and later renamed national dance agencies. The aim of establishing them was to stimulate the development of a national infrastructure for dance. Based in each of the 10 regions of the Arts Council, they offered programmes of work to support artists, provide opportunities for participation and develop audiences in their areas of remit. The agencies came together under the umbrella of ANDA, the Association of National Dance Agencies which was the precursor to the current the National Dance Network (NDN) (Gibson 2017)[61]. Eventually, the sector's wide recognition grew aware that "the international showcasing of British work was beneficial to companies" (Gibson 2017). The Arts Council went on to support further initiatives to anchor this showcasing as a regular event, aimed at international as well as British

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[60] Ashford especially stressed the difference between Niclas' approach to dance (as reflected in Bagnolet) and his idea that a similar platform could be used as a promotional tool. In the same interview, Beattie stresses the difference of discourse between *inviting* someone (an artist or a company) or *buying* their production (Ashford and Beattie 2017).

[61] Beattie described the already existing figure of the *Dance Animateur*, generally a woman, who was not necessarily an excellent dancer but a very good communicator and would work for making regional audiences aware of this new art form (Beattie 2017).

promoters. Ashton and Beattie recall that Janet Archer from the Dance Agency in Newcastle wanted funds to create a dance house, and she knew that a gathering of international experts would be a good argument in a bid (Ashford and Beattie 2017). She won the grant and this is how the first *BDE* took place in Newcastle in 1998. Since then, *BDE* has been held as a biennially recurring event.

The bid to host *BDE 2016* was led by Cardiff-based, multi-artform cultural space *Chapter Arts Centre* and its creative dance producer initiative, CoreoCymru, joined by the partners *Wales Millennium Centre (WMC), National Dance Company Wales (NDCWales)* and *The Riverfront Newport* (Chapter n.d.). However, after *BDE 2016*, there seems to be a sense in the sector that *BDE* has run its course and that there is the need for a new model to present work. As Gibson expanded, a working group in NDN is dealing with the platform's projection into the future (Gibson 2017). Beattie explained that the new festival would take place in 2018 in Bournemouth, it will be called *Surf the Wave* and will focus more on presenters from the UK (Ashford and Beattie 2017)[62]. As it will be discussed later when considering the circumstances of the *Dance Platform Germany (DPG)*, the association of dance houses that has produced the event since its beginning 1998 seems to be facing similar challenges.

Although as described earlier in the chapter technically the first *BDE* took place only in 1998 (in Newcastle), *Spring Collection*, its direct forerunner, paved the way

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[62] Indeed, *Surf the Wave (StW)* is the project that followed *BDE*. Its showcase was in Bournemouth, but the scheme understands itself as a much more complex, nation-wide effort to concentrate efforts towards the creation of dance in the UK. Bournemouth's platform was thus only a mid-way milestone in a project with wider ambitions (to note: I have attended two of the workshops offered by *StW* as an observing participant in the time leading up to the showcase in Bournemouth. Further, I have also attended the showcase itself, which has provided further insights that will be discussed in the conclusions).

for it and was the first NaDaP as we know them today. Therefore, I have placed *BDE* as the first NaDaP in this chapter that is constructed chronologically. This section has thus described *BDE 2016* and the dance works it presented, while giving an overview of the circumstances that led to the emergence of *BDE* and its forerunner, *Spring Collection*. Chapter 5 and chapter 6 will discuss in further depth how specific ideas about the nation might have resulted in presences and absences at the event, while chapter 7 will allow me to discuss the relationship between funding policies and aesthetics productions, and relate this to the very fact that the first trade fair for contemporary dance took shape in Britain. Following, I will proceed to sketch out the next platform to be established chronologically, *Dance Platform Germany (DPG)* – although it was technically established before (1994) *BDE*. However, acting in accordance with already existing *Spring Collection* was important for those who established *DPG*.

2.4   Dance Platform Germany 2016 (DPG 2016)

This section will give an overview of *Dance Platform Germany 2016 (DPG 2016)*. The main source of information for this account is my own field trip to the event in my role as an observing participant[63]. To gain further insights into the event, I managed to secure an interview with the three appointed external jurors, Sandra Noeth, Sven Till and Eike Wittrock. I was lucky to be able to conduct a long telephone interview with dance producer Walter Heun, who organised some of the events that would result in the first DPG and was one of the establishers thereof. Furthermore, an interview with Susanne Traub, Deputy Head of Division Theatre and Dance of the Goethe-Institut (GI),

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[63] See Chapter 4, *Methods and Methodology*

Germany's worldwide cultural institute, provided further insights to both the *DPG* and the GI's links with it. I will also refer to the information published on the *DPG 2016*'s programme folder and the website of its main presenter, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm (KM). Furthermore, I will draw from the *DPG*'s online archive built by the International Theatre Institute (ITI) – German Centre.

Dance Platform Germany is a biennial event. The edition that will serve as the basis for this case study is the edition 2016, which took place 2nd – 6th March in the Rhine-Main region. This is a polycentric area stretching across three different federal states[64], with its epicentre in the city of Frankfurt on the Main. It is the third most populated region in Germany and comprises several cities and towns. The cities of Bad Homburg, Darmstadt, Offenbach and Frankfurt am Main hosted the event, being the platform's hub *Künstlerhaus Mousonturm (KM)* in the latter. Works were presented in nine venues: *KM, Bockenheimer Depot, Schauspielhaus, Frankfurt LAB* and *Gallus Theater* in Frankfurt. *Staatstheater Darmstadt* offered two stages, the *Big House* and the *Small House*. Bad Homburgs's *Kurtheater* and Offenbach's *Schlosserei* completed the list of venues. *DPG* started as a showcase of the independent dance scene in Germany (Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017; Heun 2017), as opposed to the established companies working in state theatres. Therefore, the cooperation of production houses (such as *KM*) and state theatres (such as *Staatstheater Darmstadt* and *Schauspielhaus Frankfurt*) was unusual in the general context of the *DPG*, something that will be discussed in depth in Chapter 3 and chapter 5[65]. *DPG 2016* featured forty-nine performances showcasing twelve different

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[64] Further in-depth information about Germany's political system, the Federal State, and its impact on dance funding and ultimately the *DGP*, is discussed in Chapter 7.

[65] The peculiarity of Germany's cultural landscape, that has been nominated to be part of the Immaterial World Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 2016) will be discussed in the chapter 5.

shows. The event was visited by 10.562 guests, 458 of which were registered industry-guests from 54 countries (Künstlerhaus Mousonturm 2016). Further, and differing greatly from the platform in Britain, the registration for delegates consisted of a simple e-mail expressing the wish to participate and the registration fee consisted merely of a packet of six performances to the nominal value of the tickets. Tickets for further shows could be purchased for a low sum of money, €9.- each if so wished.

Similarly to *BDE*, in order to understand the context in which the *DPG* emerged it is necessary to look at the historico-political environment in which this happened. An important feature that differentiates the German and the British cultural and arts landscapes, and the policies resulting from and shaping them, is that Germany is a federal state, a union of states that enjoy a significant degree of autonomy (Lee and Byrne 2011:283)[66]. The discussion occupying this study does not revolve around the advantages or disadvantages of federalism. However, it is important to understand that a decentralised cultural and political landscape can result both in a myriad of productions, but also in an unawareness of what is culturally happening in another one of the states. In the 1980s, according to dance producer Walter Heun, who would later co-establish *DPG* "the artists (working) in Berlin did not know what happened in Munich and the other way around" (Heun 2017)[67].

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[66] The UK's political system has also gradually evolved towards a more federal-like constitution of the Union, with the devolution of powers to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, the autonomy of the states or Länder is enshrined in the Federal Republic of Germany's foundational law (Grundgesetz).

[67] Walter Heun was based in Munich.

Trying to close this gap in knowledge an information, in the end of the 1980s Heun decided to create a festival with a national scope in Germany. His role model was a festival held at national level in Switzerland, *Dance in November* (Heun 2017). However, another historico-political circumstance played a role: Until November 1989, Germany was a country split in two. After the end of WW2, the country was divided by the Allies in four occupation zones. With the cold war hardening fronts, the zone occupied by the Soviets became the German Democratic Republic (GDR, DDR in German), in the East of the country. The zones in the West became the German Federal Republic (GFR, in German: BDR, Bundesrepublik Deutschland). The Berliner Wall stood, since 1961 and until November 1989, symbolically and practically for a hard border, and there was scarce contact, lest co-operation or even exchange of knowledge between the two countries, which also applied to the dance sphere (Heun 2017). Munich, Heun's home city was in the West, and his festival was planned to be one of the West-German contemporary dance scene. Thus, he travelled the country extensively and managed to create a decentralised festival, that he called *BRDance*, using the acronym BRD (Bundesrepublik Deutschland) as part of the name.

However, while BRDance was being planned, historical events dramatically changed the face of the country. Six months before the festival started, on November 9th, 1989, the Berliner Wall fell. After 1989, the States comprising the GDR joined the BDR, and became the so-called 'new' federal states within the BDR. West Berlin, that had been during the cold war an exclave of the BRD surrounded by the GDR, became a unified city within the country's new geographical and political configuration. In response to the country's unification, the venues in the newly (re)constituted Berlin aimed at including dance from the former East in their programmes. *BRDance* took place between April and

November 1990 in 15 cities across the country and presented the first opportunity for dance from the former Eastern and Western Germanies to be shown jointly. Nevertheless, as Heun explained, the name *BRDance* felt obsolete in this new political framework, but being already in process, he decided to stick to the chosen title (Heun 2017). As Heun has repeatedly emphasized (Heun 2017 and personal conversations disseminated throughout the years) *BRDance* was a one-off, and the rationale behind organising the festival was not that of promoting dance, but that of creating self-awareness within the contemporary dance scene. *BRDance* had a Swiss festival as model, and was also not connected with the selection processes for Bagnolet. However, retrospectively it can be said that it brought the contemporary dance scene of the country closer together.

In the three years following *BRDance*, no festival with a national scope was organised in Germany. Walter Heun and his association *Joint Adventures* (Munich), and colleagues Dieter Buroch (*Theater im Mousonturm*, Frankfurt am Main) and Nele Hertling (*Theater Hebbel am Ufer*, Berlin)[68] were approached by Bagnolet to help organise pre-selections for their choreographic competition (Heun 2017)[69]. They carried out three selection platforms in different parts of the country (Niclas n.d.), that eventually merged and had the task to select the German participants to be sent to France[70]. However, the organisers soon noticed that the competition's rules[71] greatly limited the works they were

[68] Nele Hertling is a beacon figure in Germany's independent dance and theatre scenes. 1969 – 2003 she directed the theatre Hebbel am Ufer (Berlin), where the first DPG took place 1994.

[69] Not only dance presenters in Germany were approached. With more or less interaction with Niclas, in the beginning of the 1990s many countries were setting up selection platforms for the choreographic competition in France.

[70] The competition had been re-named *Rencontres chorégraphiques internationals de Seine-Saint Denis*, honouring the Municipality that funded the event.

[71] Heun referred (as an example) to the maximum length a work was allowed to have as a limiting factor (Heun 2017).

allowed to showcase. Therefore, they created an event around the selection platform for the *Rencontres*, in which works with other formats could be shown (Heun 2017). Thus, this built the seed for the platform that would become *DPG*. Between 1992 and 1994, Walter Heun approached John Ashford[72], in order to publicise *Spring Collection* and *DPG* together. The Germans planned to host their event a week after the British. Their idea was that in this way it would be possible to bring people to Europe for two weeks, making the trip more attractive for those coming from beyond the continent[73] (Ashford and Beattie 2017; Heun 2017). *DPG 2016* in the region Rhine-Main was the 12th consecutive *DPG*, having the first one been 1994 in Berlin and the second one in 1996 in Frankfurt am Main[74] (Tanzplattform Deutschland n.d.).

DPG is carried out by a consortium of production houses spread across the country. This loose association, which in the beginning was not even legally registered, was initiated by Walter Heun, Dieter Buroch and Nele Hertling. Further partners joined in an accumulative process when they hosted the *DPG* in following years (Heun 2017). Currently, two of the partners are in the former East (in one of the so-called 'new' federal states), three in the south (distributed in two federal states), one in the north, three roughly in the centre (all three in different federal states) and one in Berlin (Tanzplattorm Deutschland n.d.).

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[72] Ashford and Beattie, in the UK, had decided to create a showcase of the country's dance productions parallel to the selection for Bagnolet, *Spring Collection* a year ahead of *DPG*. See the section 2.3.

[73] In those times, overseas flights were cheaper if the passenger stayed abroad at least a week (Interview Heun).

[74] In 1996, *DPG* was only in the city of Frankfurt and not in the Region Rhine-Main. Host was also KM.

In 2004, *DPG* gained support from the International Theatre Institute (ITI) and the Goethe-Institut (GI), Germany's national cultural institute as partners in different capacities. ITI has been handed over the task to build the *DPG*'s archive. GI's engagement has evolved throughout the years. In the beginning of the collaboration, the GI focused on activities that can be seen as not radically central to the platform, like supporting its publications or funding the production of the "50 portraits", an account of 50 choreographers selected as the most influential in the country (to be published in print and online). At present, this focus has shifted to enable the presentation of works that are the result of international co-productions. The GI's engagement often consists of funding the mobility of dancers who might not be living in Germany and are to participate in the showcased works (Traub 2017). Furthermore, it invites dancers and choreographers from its worldwide network to Germany, for them to get acquainted with the country's dance landscape. At the same time, as explained by Traub, it holds one of its two big meetings of worldwide GI-directors parallel to the *DPG*. In this way, they get acquainted with artists living in Germany and their work (Traub 2017).

The consortium of production houses chooses the jury that will be responsible for the selection process of works to be included in each platform, and the jury varies for each occurrence. Hence, the jury's task is to select the participants to be showcased at the *DPG*. However, the production houses do not impose on the jurors any selection criteria or rationale to underpin their task. In other words, the jury knows *what* it must do, but not *how*. Some formal parameters are indeed delineated by the consortium though. These are: the number of productions to be chosen (twelve)[75], that these must be in

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[75] Later in the interview, the jurors explained that this parameter would have possibly been negotiable, had this felt necessary (Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017).

condition to tour, and that the choreographers must live - at least partially - in Germany. Traub clarified that someone who is registered in Germany is either German or living in Germany, and therefore eligible. Furthermore, she explains that a production is German "if paid out of German tax money", in other words, a work can be seen as German if it has been funded through German public money (Traub 2017). However, none of this is set in stone, and the jury had to define its role and its own criteria throughout the process (Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017).

The jury of edition 2016 comprised three external jurors, Sandra Noeth, Sven Till and Eike Wittrock, each of them with a voice to vote. A fourth voice was held jointly by the director and the dramaturgs of the house hosting the event, *Künstlerhaus Mousonturm (KM)*. In the words of Matthias Pees, *KM*'s director, *DPG 2016* aimed at "mak(ing) aesthetic tendencies, topical interests, structural developments and innovative approaches visible and legible" (Pees 2015). This was the rationale that led the jurors' choices: they looked for productions that were what they called in German *impulsgebend*: giving a new impulse, showing new directions or making new tendencies apparent (Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017). However, they explained that the concept of *impulsgebend* had to be re-defined and challenged with each and every piece. This resulted in a choice of works with very eclectic aesthetic criteria. Furthermore, they discussed extensively about what they considered to be dance or choreography, and agreed upon focusing on "choreographic works, some of which might be decidedly movement led" (Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017). As the jurors explained, they did not have an audience in mind while programming, for "this is what makes *DPG* different from a regular festival"[76] (Noeth, Till and Wittrock

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[76] The jurors of *DPG* have thus explained that in their eyes it is the fact of not having an audience (to which they must for instance sell tickets) what makes the difference between the *DPG* and a

2017). In order to display transparency, a member of the jury addressed the audiences before each show, explaining the rationale for its inclusion in the programme.

Asked about the selection process for *DPG 2016*, Noeth, Till and Wittrock expanded that throughout the time leading up to *DPG 2016*, companies or artists could contact *KM* and invite the jury to their upcoming premieres. At the same time, the consortium's members provided the jurors with information about the premiers upcoming in their premises. Furthermore, the jurors looked for new developments in the work of the former edition's list of fifty 'most ₁nfluential choreographers' published by the GI. The list of possible candidates to show their work was completed with artists that the jurors were aware of through their personal networks and knowledge of the scene (Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017). Finally, *GDP 2016* presented twelve choreographic works, which is consistent with the number of pieces showcased in previous editions.

The platform comprised large scale pieces, such as *Not Punk, Pololo* (Gintersdorfer / Klaßen 2014), mid-scale work such as *Violent Event* (Verena Billinger & Sebastian Schulz 2015), and small scale pieces such as *in Gesellschaft nimmer* (Antje Pfundtner 2014). Furthermore, there were ensemble works such as *Collective Jumps* (Isabelle Schad 2015) and solo works such as *in Gesellschaft nimmer* (Pfundtner 2014), which was also the only piece for children and spoken in German. Most pieces were for the audience to watch from a traditional proscenium arch theatre. However, *o.T|(gateways*

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regular festival. In my experience as a curator, I would suggest that festivals are often constructed around specific subjects. In the case of the NaDaP, this subject is inherently related to notions of national-ness, as opposed to "regular" festivals that do not have the mandate to re-present the national dance production nor raise the claim of doing so.

to movement) (Ian Kaler 2015) respected the traditional separation of performer and audience, but did not provide the latter with the possibility to sit down: the seats had been removed and the audience's side of the room was divided in rows with metal structures similar to the ones existing at stadiums. Furthermore, *On Trial Together (Episode Offenbach)* (Ana Vujanović & Saša Asentić 2016) was an immersive performance in which the ensemble members were mere facilitators who guided the audience through the tasks the latter had to achieve. Hence, the performance was not something to 'see', but rather a sum of activities to be experienced by the 'audience', which meant that the audience member was then not a passive observer but an active co-shaper of the event.

The vocabularies of the presented works ranged from Ballet-based (as Adam Lindner's new interpretation of *Parade* [Leonide Massine 1896, Russia – 1979, Germany])[77] to techniques relying on improvisation, experience and contact (as opposed to dance works that rely on strongly codified dance techniques), such as for instance *Until Our Hearts Stop* (Meg Stuart / Damage Goods & Münchner Kammerspiele 2015). Further, *Misses and Mysteries* (Antonia Baehr & Valérie Castan n.d.) featured hardly a physical performer, but rather a set depicting a room, and the process of audio-description describing a scene that could be happening in it. At the same time, this was the first time for the *DPG* to showcase historical repertoire: *Das Triadische Ballet*[78] (Oskar Schlemmer [Germany 1888-1943] reconstructed by Gerhard Bohner 1977) All this conforms to the juror's statement not to settle for a specific aesthetic, but rather for presenting a wide range of works that in their opinion show new tendencies in dance.

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[77] *Parade* was premiered by The Ballet Russes in Paris (1917).

[78] *Das Triadische Ballet* was premiered in Stuttgart (1922).

DPG 2016 consisted not only of the mentioned twelve works. The platform also presented a large range of related events for free, such as *Featurings*; moderated discussions for audiences to meet the artists and members of the jury, warm-ups for the audiences led by the artists, and yoga-classes. On a paying basis, guests could also book massage sessions or engage in dance-medical consultations. Furthermore, under the designation *Making Dance Possible*, *DPG* offered a row of panel discussions in German and English, regarding dance, politics, global networks and funding policies. Notably, the discussion panel 'Dance in Global Contexts' was hosted by the GI, for which it invited special guests from Mexico and South-Eastern Asia (personal field observation and Traub 2017)[79]. Moreover, a think-tank established by Frankfurt's independent dance scene welcomed anyone who wanted to engage in discussions. To round up the days, *DPG 2016* invited the guests to the *freitagsküche*, a bohemian bar and bistro established by artists in the backyard of a house in the old prostitution and drugs neighbourhood near the city's main station. Each night of the platform, a member of the jury mixed cocktails at the bar, opening up a further opportunity for discussion with audiences in a less business-related environment.

To summarise, this section has described *DPG 2016*'s structure, contextualising the platform and addressing its historical development. Its jury panel and aspects of their selection criteria and process have been highlighted. Furthermore, the formats of the showcased productions have been briefly discussed. Chapter 5 will discuss in greater depth how specific ideas about the nation and about contemporaneity might have

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[79] The panel focused on the challenges presented by international collaborations between countries situated differently within a continuum hegemonic-periphery. In contrast, at *BDE 2016* the British Council led a panel about the conditions required to apply for money for international collaborations (own observation, field work).

played a role when constructing the platform shaping the jurors' perception of what is

impulsgebend. Further, chapter 6 will highlight absences and presences at *DPG 2016*, and

chapter 7 will provide an analysis of *DPG 2016* regarding Germany's positionality in a

global context. The next section will address *International Exposure*, Israel's NaDaP.

2.5   International Exposure 2015

International Exposure (IE) is the Israeli national dance platform. *IE 2015*

took place between December 2nd – 6th, having its epicentre in at the *Suzanne Dellal*

Centre (SDC) in Tel Aviv. The event also took the participants to performances at the

Vertigo Eco-Art Village and to Jerusalem. The account about *IE 2015* is mostly based on

my field trip to the event as an observing participant[80]. I could gain further insights into the

event thanks to the valuable time of people who have been important to its constitution and

agreed to being interviewed by me. Yair Vardi, founder member of *IE* and director of *SDC*

agreed to meet me twice, in 2015 and 2017. Dalit Haramaty-Bendavid, who has been one

of the jurors of *IE* for the past seven years was also generous with her time. Further, Rafi

Ghamzou, Head of the Division for Cultural and Scientific Affairs, (Israeli) Ministry of

Foreign Affairs allowed me to gain further insights into the event.

Following Yair Vardi's explanation, the Israeli platform evolved out of a

national pre-selection platform or the competition in Bagnolet. Israel was one of the first

countries to establish such a pre-selection platform for the competition in Bagnolet (Niclas

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[80] See Chapter 4, Methodology and Methods

n.d.). It was instituted by Yair Vardi, an Israeli former dancer[81] who, following a knee-injury, decided to venture in the managerial side of the dance field. After having danced in *Rambert Dance Company*, he built *Dance City*, a dance centre in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1983. He managed the venue until 1988, when he returned to Israel. With this experience, he took the direction of the newly created *SDC*[82] in Tel Aviv in January 1989 (Vardi 2015, 2017). Alike Ashford and Heun, Vardi was a juror for the competition in Bagnolet and, inspired by it, he started a competition in Tel Aviv, the *Suzanne Dellal International Dance Competition* "to bring this place [SDC] to the world" (Vardi 2017). The competition was biennial and it took place three times, in 1992, 1994 and 1996[83]. However, in 1995 he decided to increase the size of the event of the pre-selection for Bagnolet. This resulted in the first *IE*.

Unlike the other case studies, *IE* takes place yearly and not biennially. In order to apply, artists and companies must follow rules that are published every year electronically. In the beginning, Vardi made the selection for the festival himself, but following suggestions, he took a jury on board, that is entrusted with the selection (Vardi 2015, 2017). Currently, the group of jurors varies roughly from 18 to 27 each year. The jurors are appointed by the Board of Directors of *SDC* upon suggestion of Yair Vardi. The function of the jurors is honorary. They receive a list of performances they must view and grade. The grading is submitted individually in paper and it must be accompanied with the

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[81] Vardi worked a.o. in companies such as Bat Sheva Dance Company (Israel) and the Rambert Dance Company (England, UK).

[82] The Centre is a donation of the English Dellal family in agreement with the former mayor of Tel Aviv.

[83] Reinforcing the historical parallels, note that these are the same years as *Spring Collection* took place.

rationale underpinning it. The programme is selected according to this received grading. However, controversial submissions are discussed in two plenums. Furthermore, *IE* reserves two slots for the selected participants of *Curtain Up* and *Shades of Dance*, two Israeli platforms or festivals[84] for upcoming, independent choreographers. These are integrated into the programme of already established choreographers and companies. They are not singled out in the showcase, but merely marked as the selection of the platforms for emerging choreographers[85], who have the opportunity to be presented alongside more established artists, in the same venues as the latter.

Whereas the selection process for artists seems to be rather structured, the attendance of delegates seemed not to be restricted. Unlike the case of *BDE*, but similarly to that of *DPG*, a mail to the organisers sufficed to be invited. Furthermore, not only was the festival completely for free for delegates (as opposed to the other depicted cases), but also it provided them with 4-nights' accommodation at a high-end hotel in Tel Aviv.

Whereas *IE 2015*'s hub was *SDC* in Tel Aviv, the edition also incorporated further venues in the city (such as *Theater Tmuna*, the *Israel Opera House* and *Machsan 2*, the newly built house of the Israeli choreographers' association), *Vertigo Eco-Arts Village* in Kibbutz HaLamed Hei, where *Vertigo Dance Company* is based, and *Mahane Yehuda*, a market in Jerusalem. All in all, the platform showcased 46 performances, if the seven short site-specific pieces choreographed for the *Mahane Yehuda* are subsumed as one and the repeated presentations of some works are not counted. The shows took place in 15

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[84] Both Curtain Up and Shades of Dance have been since their establishment in some editions competitions and in others merely platforms or festivals.

different locations, that ranged from big houses like *Israeli Opera House* to rehearsal studios like *Studio A* in *SDC*, from purpose-built locations like the two mentioned before or *Machsan 2* to the studios created out of former chicken stalls in Kibbutz HaLamed Hei, the open-air sculpture in which the performance *The Rise of the Phoenix* was staged and the site-specific performances developed for bars and stalls in the market Mahane Yehuda. As the platform's hub, *SDC* offered three theatre halls, four rehearsal places for studio presentations and several inner piazzas where pieces were shown.

Four of the presented works were big productions and had between 12 and 22 dancers, as for example independent choreographer *12 Postdated Checks* (Ella Rotschild 2015) or *Lullaby ForBach* (Rami Beer 2015) for the *Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company*. Roughly a fifth of the shows had between six and nine dancers and were conceived for big stages, such as *Croissant HaEsh* (Martin Harriague and Eyal Dadon 2015) for the *Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company* and *Climax* (Yasmeen Godder 2015). *Birth of the Phoenix* (Noa Wertheim 2004) for her company *Vertigo* presented five dancers within a monumental sculpture and can be included, the same as the two works mentioned afore, in the upper middle-range category. Approximately another fifth had four or five dancers, as for example *Boys* (Roy Asaf 2015) or *Cowboy* (Niv Sheinfield and Oren Laor 2015) and would fit the category of lower middle-range works. About a third of the pieces were duets or trios, such as *First Body Many* (Iris Erez 2013), *Path* (Sahar Damoni 2015) and ½ (Roni Rotem and Michal Rotman 2015) and five were solos, like *Ani-Ma* (Roni Chadash 2015), *Underneath* (Ravid Abarbanel 2015) or *Please me Please – The Solo* (*Bitter Sweet* / Liat Waysbort n.d.).

Focusing on the scope of the creations, at least seven pieces were international co-productions, such as *Trop* (Andrea Constanzo Martini n.d.), *Last Work* (*Batsheva Dance Company* / Ohad Naharin 2015) and *Man of the Hour* (Itzik Galili 2015). The slots reserved by winners of prizes in the editions 2015 of the competitions *Curtain Up* and *Shades of Dance*, that promote young creators in the country, showcased among others *Underneath* (Ravid Abarbanel 2015), *Experimenting Maas* (Maayan Gur 2015) and *Somewhere in the Now* (Uri Shaffir 2015). The site-specific production *From Jaffa to Agrippas*[86] by the company *c.a.t.a.m.o.n.* under the artistic direction of Elad Shechter presented pieces by seven choreographers, all conceived for and presented in stalls in the market *Mahane Yehuda*.

Regarding the aesthetics and vocabulary of the presented works, the festival showcased a broad range: some pieces had a decided dance-theatre style, such as *Come Jump With Me* (Yossi Berg and Oded Graf, 2015), others were based on abstract movement such as work-in-progress *Yama* (Noa Wertheim, premiered 2016) and others experimented in multidisciplinary cross-overs with architecture, music, sculpture or video, such as *Somewhere in The Now* (Uri Shaffir, 2015) or *12 Postdated Checks* (Ella Rothschild 2015). Furthermore, *Entropy* (Noa Shadur n.d.) was based on choreographic movements created by Noah Eshkol in the 1950s. In terms of content, several pieces (at least nine, a good fifth of the programme) explicitly tackled subjects of national, religious or sexual identity, such as *Neither Soft nor Light* (Clipa Dance Theatre / Dror Lieberman n.d.), *1972* (*Inbal Dance Theatre Company* / Barak Marshall 2015), *Cowboy* (Niv Sheinfeld and Oren Laor 2015) and *Come Jump With Me* (Yossi Berg and Oded Graf,

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[86] *From Jaffa to Agrippas* has currently evolved to be a festival on its own.

2015). All this seems to reflect the jury's effort to display the great variety of dance creation in Israel, beyond their personal aesthetic preference.

This section has shown that the development of *IE* was parallel as well as historically related to that of *DPG* and *BDE*. Not only did the founder members of the three platforms know each other, but they were jurors for the competition in Bagnolet and - in ways that responded to their local environments - implemented Niclas' requirement of a local pre-selection platform for the competition in France. Chapter 5 will provide a more in-depth discussion about the relationship between the content of the presented pieces and the country's political context, whereas Chapter 6 will offer insights into the festival's choice of choreographers and works linked to the country's societal fabric. As discussed in the next section, the fourth case study, *Shakti. A Space for the Single Body* is of much later emergence. However, the politico-economic circumstances that led up to its establishment (which will be briefly discussed) will allow me to situate the event within this account.

2.6   Sri Lankan Dance Platform 2016. Shakti. A Space for the Single Body

Following the overview of the British, German and Israeli dance platforms, attention now turns to describing *Shakti. A Space for the Single Body (SSSB)* and begins with an overview of its history. This section will describe the process that led to the *Sri Lankan Dance Platform 2016* being replaced by *Shakti. A Space for the Single Body (SSSB)* and will give an overview of its history. *SSSB* took place from September 30th – October 9th in Colombo, Sri Lanka. In the Introduction, I gave a rationale for including the Sri Lankan platform within this work. However, between my primary intention of focusing on it and the actual start of the work, the nature of the festival changed. Thus, I firstly

intend to make clear here why I have decided to retain my decision for its inclusion, despite *SSSB* not having complied with many of the criteria that make up a NaDaP, as opposed to *Colombo* (later *Sri Lanka) Dance Platform*, whose place *SSSB* took.

At *SSSB*, several works (almost a third) were neither choreographed, nor performed by Sri Lankan artists, nor did they have any clear relationship with the country. Moreover, the event was mostly not funded by Sri Lankan public money. Moreover, although the event was still published under the umbrella of *Colombo Dance Platform 2016* (*SSSB* programme folder), it appeared to be a "regular festival"[87] and not a NaDaP. Contrarily to the idea of a national dance platform that is made cohesive by its national focus, the event had a further, specific theme, that did not refer to Sri Lanka. The first word of the event's new name, *Shakti* stands in Hinduism for the female original force of the universe (several conversations with informants in Sri Lanka[88]), thus Sh*akti. A Space for the Single Body* focuses on the single[89] *female* body. In this section thus, I will describe the event and point to some of its singularities, while providing the rationale to include it within the context of a study about NaDaPs. An in-depth analysis of the meaning of contemporaneity and national-ness in the context of post-colonial Sri Lanka will be part of Chapter 5, while Chapter 6 will address the absence and presence of different sectors of the population at *SSSB*. Chapter 7 will especially highlight the economic context that has

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[87] See the brief discussion differentiating a NaDaP from a regular festival in 4.1 and 4.4.

[88] Both in Sri Lanka and in India, the word Shakti recalls ideas about female-ness (talks with local informants throughout years of travelling in both countries).

[89] Not to be confused with 'single' as opposed to 'married'. Single refers in this context to the only one body working on her own, as it is the reality of most of the contemporary dance creators in Sri Lanka (Interview Perera 2016).

enabled a foreign cultural institute, the GI both to establish the *Sri Lankan Dance Platform* as well as its 2016 transformation into *SSSB*.

The main source for this description is my own visit to *SSSB* as an observing participant. Furthermore, I carried out interviews with Venuri Perera, *SSSB*'s curator and with a further stakeholder of the Sri Lankan dance scene, Niloufer Pieris, former ballerina and owner of Nelung Arts Centre in Colombo. Valuable insights into the platform's history were offered by an interview with Björn Ketels, *Sri Lanka Dance Platform (SLDP)*'s initiator and former director of the Goethe-Institut Colombo.

SLDP takes place biennially in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka. Edition 2016, thus *SSSB* presented nine works in three days, September 30th and October 8th and 9th 2017, having roughly a week in between without events. The pieces were showcased in three venues: two purpose built theatre rooms at *Western Province Arts Centre (WPAC)* and in the *University of Visual and Performing Arts (UVPA)*, and the main room of the Goethe-Institut. Additionally, one performance took place in the *UVPA*'s courtyard. Only one show was presented at the GI. All the other works took place at *WPAC* and *UVPA*. This was the first time for the platform to be curated by a local artist, Venuri Perera. She decided to showcase solo works under the overarching theme of the female body. For the first time, the event entailed pieces by choreographers who do not work in Sri Lanka or set themselves in relation to the country. These came from India, Korea and Germany. The duration of the presented works ranged from 15 minutes to roughly one hour, and were presented as full-length performances or as double or triple-bills.

Two pieces were presented on September 30th: *Osariya* (Janani Cooray, 2015) a performative work by a Sri Lankan creator and *Le Sacre du Pintemps, a ballet for a single body* (Lea Moro, 2013) by a Berlin resident, Swiss artist. On October 8th, the showcased pieces were: *My Mothers and I*, by South Korean choreographer Chey Chanketya, *Intervention.03.2* (Sara Mikolai, 2016) by a Berlin resident, German/Tamil – Sri Lankan choreographer and performer and the performance *//gender/o/noise//* (Tara Transitory, on-going investigation since 2012) by a nomadic sound and performance artist. On October 9th, the scheduled works were: *Giri Devi Androgynous* (2016) by Sri Lankan Pradeep Gunarathna, *According to official sources*, by Indian choreographer and performer Mirra Arun and *Burning Love*, by Sri Lankan Lakni Prasanjali. The day closed off with the performance *Thoda Dhyaan Se (Be Careful)*[90], by Indian creator and performer Mallika Taneja in process since 2013. The pieces' vocabularies ranged from being rooted in classical dances from Eastern-Asia, as in the case of Chey Chanketya, to interdisciplinary works with little connection to specific dance techniques of any sort, as Tara Transitory's *//gender/o/noise//*. Despite the platform being called *Shakti* - and having thus a focus on femaleness - its understanding was not narrow: whereas most of the performers were cis-females, Pradeep Gunarathna is a cis-male and Tara Transitory is transgender/gender-fluid.

As part of their commitment, the artists invited from abroad offered workshops to the local arts scene. Furthermore, the platform presented a selection of dance-film screenings. The audience was mostly local and it included groups of students from the dance and visual arts departments of *UVPA* as well as dance students from the

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[90] Interestingly, the work was presented 2017 in the Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationales en Seine-Sainte-Denis, the international festival that grew up in France out of the former competition in Bagnolet (Le Magazine Seine-Saint-Denis, 2017, n.a.)

University of Jaffna. After all the performances, there were moderated talks between the artists and the audience. After some of the events there was the possibility to socialise. Furthermore, edition *SSSB* was the first one in the county's platform history to be co-funded by institutions other than the Goethe-Institut Colombo.

Sri Lanka has a long dance tradition and a varied dance scene. On the traditional side, two dance forms have been constructed as inherent to the culture and have been canonised as classical: Kandyan dance in the case of the Sinhalese majority and Bharatanatyam in the case of the Tamil minority. Kandyan dance was initially only danced by men. Following the example of Tamil women, who were educated in Bharatanatyam as part of their upbringing, middle-class Sinhalese women in Colombo, the country's capital, started to reclaim a space in the new country's narrative in the time leading up to independence[91]. Dance was one of the fields that offered this possibility (Reed 2010:114-116). As Perera explains, Kandyan dance was cleaned of its ritualistic origins, included female performers, adapted its costumes to Victorian ideals of modesty and started to codify its vocabulary in a Western manner (Perera 2016). Chitrasena Dias, a Sri Lankan dancer, studied at *Shanti Niketan*[92], Rabindranath Tagore's[93] dance school and danced in its company in Bengal, India. Upon returning to Sri Lanka, he was at the forefront of the movement that cleaned and canonised the newly shaped traditional dance. On the one hand the Chitrasena company toured a lot internationally. On the other, Western choreographers

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[91] The independence movement gained momentum roughly in the turn of the 19th to the 20th century and the country achieved independence from the British on February 4th, 1948 under the name of Dominion of Ceylon.

[92] In the same chapter (Reed 2010 Chapter 3), *Shantiniketan* is written both in two words and one word.

[93] Rabindranath Tagore was a multidisciplinary artist, deeply involved with India's independence movement. His arts school inspired the Sri Lankan elites in their quest to construct a national culture (Reed 2010:110–114)

like Ted Shawn (1891 – 1972), Pina Bausch (Germany, 1940 – 2009) and Martha Graham (USA, 1894 – 1991) toured South-Easter Asia, confronting the local elites with new ways of telling stories. Chitrasena's work was influenced by them. Hence, according to Perera and other dancers I spoke to, he has explored new ways of negotiating traditional dance in Sri Lanka. He is one of the pivotal figures in the construction of the Oriental Ballet, "a genre of dance-dramas that incorporate Indian, European, and Ceylonese techniques" (Reed 2010:121) and a newly canonised way of telling stories utilising vocabulary based on the traditional sources[94]. He is a central stakeholder in the country's dance scene and the "most influential in promoting stage dance in Colombo" (Reed 2010:113). His shows have big audiences and many of the independent dancers and performers that are active in Colombo nowadays have studied in his school, and looked thereafter for new ways of expression at different points in their careers.

Nevertheless, the dance scene in Colombo is not limited to Chitrasena's school and company. To dispel the European reader's possible assumption that the Sri Lankan dance scene might have always been mostly traditional or local, I will mention here only a few current players in the field[95]. By doing so, I hope to provide further insight into the context in which the *SLDP* and thereafter *SSSB* have rooted. Firstly, Venuri Perera, *SSSB*'s curator, is a choreographer and dancer/performer in her own right. Further, Kapila Palihawadana founded and directs the company *nATANDA* and the school attached

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[94] Reed cites Tittapajjala Suramba, considered to be "the finest traditional ritual dancer…of his era" (Reed 2010:92) and discusses that he also "helped to choreograph a ballet or dance drama" (Reed 2010:95). Important is this passage of traditional dances into new performative formats.

[95] I am aware that I have not provided this kind of contextualisation highlighting traditional or folk dance in relationship to contemporary dance the other three case studies. At the risk of sounding paternalistic, I am aware that in Europe the knowledge gap regarding the Sri Lankan dance scene is much wider than the other way around. Given that my thesis is in a European university, I assume that many of my readers will be European. Thus, I have allowed myself to include this paragraph.

to it, and he identifies his work as contemporary dance. Niloufer Pieris, a Sri Lankan

former ballerina at the *State Theatres* of Braunschweig and Düsseldorf (Germany) who

holds a RADA diploma for teaching ballet has opened a private arts centre, *Nelung Arts*

Centre in Colombo, in which children and teenagers can learn, among other styles,

Western classical ballet. Furthermore, a charity led by Sunethra Bandaranaike, the *Sunera*

Foundation is active in the field of dance for people with disabilities. Further in the field of

dance and disabilities, the Sri Lankan Army has a company of disabled soldiers who make

traditional dance and music[96]. At the same time, some performance artists and theatre

makers (e.g. the company *Floating Space*, directed by Ruhanie Perera and Jake Orloff)

work in different levels of proximity to dance. Moreover, there are several dancers,

choreographers and teachers active in the context of traditional and folk dances. This

makes clear that several influences have been at play in the Sri Lankan dance scene,

providing a very rich ground for the *SLDP* and *SSSB* to emerge.

Despite the numerous dancers, choreographers, and dance activities in

general, *SLDP* did not grow out of a local initiative. *SLDP*'s initiator was Björn Ketels,

who arrived in Sri Lanka as the new director of the Goethe-Institut (GI) in 2010. As he

stated, the fundamental task of GI directors is primarily to identify fields, in which fruitful

co-operations between local and German artists can take place (Ketels 2017). Upon his

arrival, he found that the GI already cooperated in the dance field with some local artists:

on the one hand, former director, Richard Lang, had initiated a collaboration with

choreographer Kapila Palihawadana (own observation during a field trip prior to this

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[96] Sri Lanka's civil war extended 1983 – 2009. In both sides of the conflict, the Tamil Tigers of
Tamil Eelam and the Sri Lankan Army there are thousands of people disabled through mine
explosions. At the time in which Ketels arrived in Colombo, the Army was a very strong presence
in the city.

work). At the same time, a Sri Lankan scholar, Dr. Asoka de Soyza, who had studied German literature in Germany, worked as a dramaturge for theatre and dance and was loosely related to the GI (own observation during a field trip prior to this work). On the other hand, Ketels became aware of Sri Lanka's strong dance tradition. Moreover, the GIs are organised regionally and other regional GIs had been engaging in the dance field for some time (Ketels 2017). All this together seemed to encourage him to envision a more decisive investment in the field as rewarding. He reached out to the local dance scene in Colombo with the aim to find out who the stakeholders were (Ketels 2017).

The first *Sri Lankan Dance Platform* was established as a joint project of the Goethe-Institut (GI) Colombo and the local dance scene and was called *Colombo Dance Platform*. However, the event did not reach out to the full country, which was still torn due to the civil war. The area of activity concentrated on Colombo, where the GI is based and the event was hence called *Colombo Dance Platform*. Whilst on the artistic side the project was a collaboration, the funds and logistics were all provided by the GI. Both Venuri Perera, curator of edition 2016, and Björn Ketels reported that in the beginning it wouldn't have been suitable for a local artist to be chosen out of the peer group, to have a decisive role in the selection of works (Perera 2016; Ketels 2017). Therefore, the first platform 2010 was curated by Thai-Singaporean Tang Fu Kueng, who was invited and funded by the GI to take up the task. His focus was directed at finding out who were the active actors, choreographers, and performers and "which treasures could be found" (Ketels 2017). This platform had a very short preparation time and it was more than anything else the task of comprehending the state-of-the arts in the field within the local context. The artists were allocated one-hour slots and they showed already existing works. All the performances took place at Park Street Mews, a former complex of warehouses

situated in the very centre of Colombo, that had been revamped shortly before as a venue

of galleries, restaurants, wellness-related centres and bars targeting an up-market public.

The GI made publicity through all regular channels, including its newsletter, reaching out

to the local dance and theatre scenes, but also to foreign cultural institutes and 'expats'.

However, much of the audience were by-standers, who had decided to spend some time in

the venue and were randomly confronted with the performances (Ketels 2017).

Soon after the first platform, the local artists came together in a space

provided by the GI and created the Dance Forum, a kind of *Stammtisch* (German for a

periodically recurring round table) to discuss the next steps to be taken. Invited were artists

from all sectors of the performing arts. It was decided that there would be a second

platform two years later. The rationale to wait two years was on the side of the GI that,

"given that the scene of experimental dance is very small, the GI did not want to occupy it

completely with thoughts around the dance platform" (Ketels 2017). The following dance

platform grew out of this *Stammtisch*, reinforcing the involvement of the local dance scene

in the event, despite it being solely funded by the GI[97].

Thai theatre maker and festival director Ong Keng Sen[98] was invited to

curate the second event. Together with the local performers and choreographers and the

GI, he decided to commission works. Due to budget constraints, the works were limited to

three performers. Furthermore, it was established that the pieces should be

interdisciplinary and that the overarching theme for the commissions would be the

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[97] Note that the GI does not act as an NGO in the field of aid for development, but it is a national institute of culture.

[98] The fact that the first and second curators were Asian reflects the GI's politics of working in 'regions' (and thus defining and creating them as such), but also its interest in a regional anchoring.

Archive. The event had as subtitle *Dancing with the Archive*. Despite the subtitle suggesting concerns with the past, most of the authors of the presented works were the new generation of dance makers. A third platform was curated by Anna Wagner, a German curator who had some experience in working in Indonesia. It was only for the fourth event that the time seemed ripe for a local, Venuri Perera to curate the event.

The platform's name evolved together with the showcased artists. The two first events were called *Colombo Dance Platform*. Responding to the engagement of artists from other areas of the country already in the second platform, it was the third one that was called *Sri Lankan Dance Platform*. The fourth one had no national focus, but rather a wider one encompassing the region, and it had as subject the female solo performer, therefore its name, *Shakti. A Space for the Single Body* responding to its actual theme. Thus, the event neither carries the national-ness in its name, nor is it a conventional NaDaP. However, its lineage goes back to a NaDaP, *Sri Lanka* (formerly, *Colombo*) *Dance Platform*. The festival in its actual shape is a direct result of the peculiarity of this specific NaDaP, that it has been established by the GI and is still reliant on it as its main funder and patron. Therefore, I have decided to include it in this study, among others, to highlight the different levels of complexity faced by artists from a country which is indeed more peripheral to the global(ised) system of contemporary arts when engaged in the endeavour of pursuing contemporary dance as their profession, and want to be taken seriously and valued while doing so.

2.7 Conclusions

This chapter has shown that three of the platforms that are the focus of this study (Britain's *British Dance Edition*, Germany's *Dance Platform Germany* and Israel's *International Exposure*) evolved directly from *Le Ballet pour Demain*. The conducted interviews revealed much about the circumstances of the platforms' beginnings, which can be traced back to the pre-selection platforms for Bagnolet. They have also made apparent the extent to which extent some of the interviewees were interconnected and have shown that the phenomenon of the NaDaP was from its beginning a transnational one. This The fourth case, Sri Lanka's *Shakti. A Space for the Single Body* evolved out of an initiative of the Goethe-Institut Sri Lanka. This initiative can be partially traced back to the Goethe-Institut's director who had knowledge of the Dance Platform Germany. Hence, although in a more removed way, *Le Ballet pour Demain* is also part of Shakti's genealogy. The chapter has argued that all four case studies share a common genealogy and are thus part of one and the same global(ised) phenomenon.

This chapter has also shown that all four NaDaPs implicitly claim to be (re)presentative for the nation's production of dance. As discussed, *BDE*, *DPG* and *IE* started with the intention to showcase the dance produced in their specific national environments, mainly to international programmers (Ashford and Beattie 2017; Heun 2017; Vardi 2017)[99]. Thus, they were thought of almost akin to a trade fair of any other industry. However, not completely so. For the opportunity to participate did not require purchasing the membership to a trade chamber or a section of the fair venue to show

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[99] As 2.2.6 discussed, *SSSB*'s history (notably the first *CDP*) had similar intentions to *BRDance*, but limited to the city of Colombo.

products[100]. The programme was from the onset curated by commissioned juries, that act in different ways governed by and upon ideologies of national-ness and contemporaneity that will be discussed in Chapter 5. Thus, this chapter has set up the stage to ask whether NaDaPs have developed into constituting strong instances in which the nation is mediated (or at least specific ideas about it) and therefore must be thought of as such, rather than as mere trade fairs. However, as this chapter has also shown, the selection committees are either constituted by both national and international jurors or by nationals who have a record of working internationally. Thus, they act in a continuum between the national and the global. The tension between the postulation of national-ness and the globality of the phenomenon will be problematized in-depth in the following chapters, with specific lenses applied onto the ideas, people and finances that underpin NaDaPs and make them possible. However, before proceeding with the analysis, the next chapter will delimit the field of the research.

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[100] All four NaDaPs differ from one another in their mimicking of and proximity to a trade fair. Chapter 7 will especially offer further insights in these differences.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

As I have expanded in Chapter One, this project focuses on national dance platforms (NaDaPs). Although some research I had conducted before starting to develop this endeavour had led me to fathom that the subject had not been extensively dealt with by scholars, I was surprised when I indeed decided to research in the field. Only one paper, *Intersections between the academic and 'real' worlds of dance at the British Dance Edition 2014: a report* (Whiteside 2014) addressed directly a NaDaP, *British Dance Edition (BDE) 2014*. The author focuses mainly on talks and discussions that took place during the event. However, I would suggest that while these debates frame the NaDaP, they do not constitute its core purpose that is presenting dance.

While Whiteside also admits that showcasing dance is mainly a NaDaP's aim, she neither engages with the showcased programme and its selection process and criteria, nor does she offer a close or contextual reading of, for instance, the politics of *BDE* taking place in Scotland[101]. Further, while the paper does name the curating team and offers some cornerstone-data with scholarly rigour (such as number of companies

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[101] Whiteside does mention that the *BDE* took place for the first time in Scotland in 2014, but does not offer further politico-geographical contextualization of the event. Indeed, this was the first time that *BDE* would take place outside of England, only seconded once by *BDE 2016* in Wales (Whetstone 2014).

applying, of selected shows and guests) it does not raise questions about the phenomenon of the NaDaP in itself. It is not Whiteside's focus to question the constitution of NaDaPs as such, nor to contextualise them as an emerging phenomenon of almost global(ised) reach, and consequently neither does she discuss its genealogy and history nor does she delve into the tensions arising between global and local values and contexts when presenting dance. Thus, although she must be credited for being the first scholar focusing on the subject, her article has left many questions unaddressed. Nevertheless, her approach of attending the event as an observing participant, as someone in this case "interpose(d)… between the academy and the stage" (Whiteside 2014: 92) would be the example I followed in my own research for this project.

My research project with focus on the phenomenon of the NaDaP thus intends to fill a knowledge gap, addressing a phenomenon that has not yet been investigated in depth within the scholarly field of dance studies. However, the phenomenon's intricacy has led me to delve into several fields of research. Especially the scholarly areas of history and post-colonial studies have proven useful to discuss the structural power inequalities that govern the relationships of NaDaP iterations within the globality of the NaDaP system. Furthermore, the fields of anthropology, critical theory and political theory have provided valuable insights into the phenomenon. Accordingly, this literature review will discuss several authors who have informed the grounds that made me aware of the phenomenon's importance and shaped my framework for thinking. However, some of them do not address the specific elements constitutive of NaDaPs and are therefore not solicited throughout the thesis. Thus, this literature review will provide the rationale for the endeavour's interdisciplinarity and circumscribe the scope of my reference space.

The analysis will especially understand the constitution of NaDaPs as an occurrence with both local and global anchoring and implications. Further, it will challenge and seek to re-define ideas of national-ness in each NaDaP, asking to which extent NaDaPs represent or mediate a nation, and how this claim of national-ness reflects on the structure and content of the NaDaP in each location. Therefore, it seemed important to firstly understand what a nation is. Already in 1882, in his seminal conference about nations and nationalism at La Sorbonne, *Qu'est-ce qu'une Nation?* ([*What is a Nation?*] Renan, 1882, my translation) French Historian Ernst Renan made clear that "men are slaves whether of their race, nor their language, nor their religion, nor of the course of rivers or the direction of mountain chains" (Renan 1882, n.n.). Thus, there is nothing unchangeably essential about national-ness. Rather, nationhood or national-ness are constructed and developed. Furthering this assertion, Benedict Anderson explains the nation as an act of imagination, an 'imagined community' (Anderson [1983] 2006). Indeed, Anderson's work has been seminal for contemporary nationalism studies. In his work, Anderson explores the origins of national consciousness and relates them to the appearance of capitalism and especially the printed press. He further points at the census (an instrument), the map (a mode of representation), and the museum (an institution) as tools which have favoured the act of imagination that culminated in the nation's constitution. I would argue that this trio should be enlarged to encompass the archive. This is important, for NaDaPs, claiming national representation, create a future memory of the nation's dance, a future archive of a section of the nation's dance. This is a specific archive though, that has been curated by selection panels that respond to spoken and unspoken criteria, acting in propinquity to both the claim and the function of national representation.

Anderson does not delve into these curatorial processes. Renan does not do it either, despite his assertion that "forgetfulness, and I would even say the historical error, are an essential factor for the creation of a nation" (Renan, 1882, n.n.). Indeed, this affirmation confirms that deciding upon what will be remembered as well as what will be forgotten is constitutive for a nation, thus making this process of selection essential. Historian Yosef Haim Yerushalmi places memory and the commandment to remember (Hebrew: Zakhor) as a central act for the formation of Jewish peoplehood (Yerushalmi 1996). Whereas Yerushalmi is concerned with Jewish history, his work is central to – and universalized by – Jacques Derrida's writings, especially *Archive Fever. A Freudian Impression* (Derrida 1996), where he states that "there is no political power without the control of the archive" (Derrida 1996: 4). Further, Derrida traces the own *archae*ology of the word, *archi*ve to the *arkheion*, the house of the *archons*, who commanded (Derrida 1996: 2). The archon decreed what would find a place in the *arkheion*, initiating a process of constitution of the memorable. Although Derrida does not call the memorable a record, this is in essence the ontology of the archivable: a record of the past. Thus, the discussion becomes even more complicated when, as Blouin and Rosenberg (2011: 85) remark, what is contested is the very nature of what constitutes a record, a discussion carried out within the so-called archival divide. The same in the archive as in the museum, this mechanism provides a people with common memories and situates other ones off-limits – mirroring Renan's assertion. For NaDaPs, the question is translated into what constitutes dance, and what dance is considered valuable enough to be included in the showcases, and thus made a memorable record.

Returning the focus to Anderson's description of the nation as an act of imagination, post-colonialism scholar Homi Bhabha forwards this thought describing the

process of 'a nation's 'coming into being' as a system of cultural signification, as the representation of social *life* rather than the discipline of social *polity*' (Bhabha 1993:1-2, italics in original). Thus, the action of becoming a nation constructs the life of a collective, and hence also governs who belongs to it and who does not. Thus, what happens during the process of selection for a NaDaP, a festival that implicitly claims national representation, is the development of mechanisms in which "identification, identity, notions of selfhood and even of perception and self-perception…endure the same process of transformation established by the archive's operations" (Lepecki, 2010:39). In his article *The Body as Archive*, André Lepecki discusses works of choreographers such as Martin Nachbar and Richard Move in relation to notions of archive and re-enactment and reconstruction. Admittedly, he does not focus on the curatorial act of selection, which I will return to shortly, but rather on (re)creative and performative processes. However, this discourse will also help understand some curatorial decisions in the case studies of this work, especially the *Dance Platform Germany 2016* and the Israeli *International Exposure 2015*, which showcased, for instance, a re-construction of *Das Triadische Ballet* (Schlemmer 1922 – at the former) and *Entropy* (Shadur, 2015 - at the latter) based on dances by Noah Eshkol. Nevertheless, Lepecki's work is also relevant in relation to the queston whether and how NaDaPs might perform the nations in which they take place.

However, it would be impossible to imagine the nation as a collective without an equal effort placed on describing who is defined as not being part of it, the 'Other'. Seldom has this process of Othering been described in more compelling a manner than in Palestinian-US American scholar Edward Said's *Orientalism* (Said, 1978). Said discusses the encounter between Europeans and other peoples living geographically in the liminal space to the East and South of Europe and the mechanism of creation of the Orient

and thus of the Oriental process, which he calls Orientalism. His rationale underpinning this encounter is, as explained by Said, Marx's enunciation that "they (the Orientals) cannot (re)present themselves, they must be (re)presented" (Marx in Said, 1978:21, my translation). This assumption that placed Europe, its peoples and values, in a hierarchical higher position has constituted the governing paradigm - and thus the construction of systems of power – in the construction of the Other, whoever that Other is. In Said's own words,

> there is nothing mysterious or natural about authority. It is *formed*, irradiated, disseminated; it is instrumental, it is *persuasive*; it has *status*, it *establishes canons of taste and value*; it is virtually indistinguishable from certain ideas it dignifies as true, and from traditions, perceptions, and judgments it forms, transmits, reproduces (Said, 1978:19-20, my italics).

In terms of dance, this hierarchically higher or privileged position bestowed upon Western classical ballet by some dance historians, critics and aesthetics philosophers was debunked by Kealiinohomoku's analysis of this dance form as an ethnic dance (Kealiinohomoku [1969] 2001). This insight has been especially helpful when thinking about the selection processes that led up to the constitution of the programme for each NaDaP for, as this study will show, the global(ised) system of contemporary dance is constituted around assumptions of value governed by canons that have their origins in European dance history. Thus, far from endorsing Appadurai's assertion that "the new global cultural economy… cannot be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models" (Appadurai 1990: 296), it qualifies it, at least for the particular case of the NaDaP.

Furthermore, NaDaPs bring together dance and national representation. "Dance has long been used as a powerful symbol of ethnic and national identity" (Reed 2010:5). Often, these two concepts, 'dance' and 'nation' have been understood as a confluence of traditional and folk dances, whereas as Anthony Shay (Shay 1999: 30) suggests, these are often to be better framed in what Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) called 'invented traditions'. The relationships between the constitution of dances related to a national identity have been insightfully described in the case of Sri Lanka for instance by Susan Reed *Dance and the Nation. Performance, Ritual, and Politics in Sri Lanka* (Reed, 2010) and in the case of Israel by Judith Brin Ingber in *Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance* (Brin Ingber [ed.], 2011). Elke Kaschl's *Dance and Authenticity in Israel and Palestine. Performing the Nation* (2003) has provided valuable observations to qualify the constitution of folk dance in Israel. However, it is not only in non-European spaces that dance has been made part and parcel of state representation. Several authors, such as Lilian Kant (*Tanz unter dem Hakenkreuz* 1999) or Partsch-Bergsohn (*Modern Dance in Germany and the United States* 1994) and many others trace the influences of the Third Reich on dance in Germany – influence that irradiated to countries in which German dancers worked when in exile of that regime, while British dance historian Ramsay Burt traces the linkage between dance (both classical ballet and modern) with nationalism throughout modernity (Burt 1998). Moreover, in *The Body of the People. East German Dance since 1945* Jens Giersdorf (2013) discusses the use of dance by the Stat in the German Democratic Republic. While these readings might seem not to be related to NaDaPs at the first glance, they have all sharpened my awareness of the multilayering of the state's and dance's interactions with one another. Thus, they have helped me to understand systemic hierarchies that play an important role when creating a dance platform that claims to represent the nation for in this instance, returning to Said, 'canons of taste and value' are

instituted and enacted (Said 1978: 19-20). Conversely, the nation that contains and is underpinned by these 'taste and values' is created by the NaDaPs' own claim of national-ness, because the "'agency' of language is not only the theme of the formulation, but its very action" (Butler 1997:7). Thus, the Na of the NaDaPs is a speech act that performs and thus *creates* nation.

This creation succeeds in a curatorial act, that is very much rooted not only in assumptions of national-ness, but also in definitions of contemporaneity. One of the most eye-opening discussions about contemporaneity and the mechanisms underpinning its logics I have found in philosopher, Peter Osborne's *Anywhere Or Not at All* (Osborne, 2013). The edited volume *The Global Contemporary and the Rise of New Art Worlds* (Belting, Buddensieg, Weibel [eds.], 2013) offers an insightful in-depth discussion of the complexities presented by the contextualisation of exhibitions in a world globalised after 1989. Furthermore, the volume addresses the rise of the art biennial in the process of valorisation, but also exploitation of 'new' art worlds – a phenomenon akin to the rise of the NaDaP. The essay *How to Show Worlds?* (Gareis and Broszat 2017), discusses the ethics of showing in global contexts, extrapolating notions from the field of museology and visual arts to the performing arts. In the same volume of the magazine *Theatre* (Sellar [ed.] 2017), Lepecki addresses in his essay *Decolonizing the Curatorial* the necessity to stop the logic that provides the act of curating (performing) arts with a rationale for colonialism. He does so explaining that colonialism was in its inception co-dependant of capitalism, a co-determinality that he places now within the furthering logics of neo-liberalism (Lepecki 2017:105). In Chapter 5, I address the influence of notions of contemporaneity in the curation of NaDaPs, showing how the curatorial act at the same

time produces (future) canons of what is legitimised as 'good' or 'impulse-giving' dance or choreographic act.

These canons do not act only from the nation 'as a form of cultural *elaboration*' (Bhabha 1993:3, italics in original) to the outside. They are as powerful in their irradiation towards the viscera of the nation themselves. As Burt argues in *Alien Bodies* (following Arendt and Kristeva), those declared as non-nationals are excluded from the obligations, but also of the benefits of having rights (Burt, R. 1998:17). From its inception, "modernity, 'race' and national identity determined the development of modern dance" (Burt 1998:17), thus intertwining ideas of belonging to a nation to a process of legitimisation and exclusion of dance and dancers. Although Burt calls his book *Alien Bodies* referring firstly to new – and thus alien – forms of movement created by modern choreographers and dancers (such as Martha Graham, Mary Wigman and others), it is evident that a process of creating aliens or non-nationals reaches further. Andrew Schaap's (Schaap 2011) critique of Hannah Arendt's political representation in relation to rights ("the right to have rights") as opposed to Jacques Rancière's inherently political view of human rights has further shaped the rationale underpinning my understanding processes of legitimisation to take part at NaDaPs. They have refined my perception that the right of belonging and the right to be represented are dramatic ones, and beg to challenge the NaDAP's performative act of creating the nation in a more persuasive and urgent manner.

The question of who is alien and who is not, does not stop at the border of a nation-state though. As anthropologist and globalisation scholar Arjun Appadurai asserts, "states throughout the world are under siege" (Appadurai 1990: 305), not least because communications, trade and migrations have given rise to transnational communities that

are closely knit beyond the primacy of the nation state. In his article, *Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy* (1990), he argues that "the new global cultural economy has to be understood as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, that can no longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models" (Appadurai 1990:296), thus enacting a reality in which "the hyphen that links them [the nation and the state] is now less an icon of conjuncture than an index of disjuncture" (Appadurai 1990: 304). In the same article, Appadurai calls up the system of scapes he developed to understand the complexities of contemporary global cultural flows. In his book *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996), Appadurai expands upon the framework he developed. Although his work has been challenged and expanded (for instance by Paul James [2010, 2017], Heyman and Campbell [2009]), the system of scapes described by Appadurai has proved a viable structure to understand the complexity of NaDaPs as a cultural phenomenon that is both locally and globally rooted.

Probably due to my own experience working with mixed-abled dance in the global South, the project had, in its inception, a stronger focus on dancers with non-normat(isable) physicalities. With a spotlight on the intersection between post-colonialism and disabilities, Barker and Murray warn of the usage of disabilities as a prosthetic metaphor to talk about colonialism (Barker and Murray 2010:219) though. They set a welcome signal to revise a too easy a use of metaphors alluding to disabilities when discussing post-colonialism (Barker and Murray 2010:220). Nevertheless, they do concede that "both disability and postcolonialism are, at heart, connected to questions of power" (Barker and Murray 2010:220) and that "the history of colonialism (and its post/neo-colonial aftermath) is indeed a history of mass disablement" (Barker and Murray 2010: 230), thus encouraging an exploration of the interstices and intersections between the two.

Also working from a post-colonial perspective, different texts of the Indo-Bengali scholar Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak, such as *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988), *Acting Bits / Identity Talk* (1992), *Translation as Culture* (2000) address on a myriad of levels the complexities inherent to communication between peoples of former colonised societies and – especially – the powers that formerly colonised them. Whereas Spivak offers a specific feminist spotlight in its intersection with post-colonialism, her persuasive analysis has proven translatable to other constructions of inequality. Despite Barker and Murray's warning of easy extrapolations, Spivak's work has provided me with very valuable insights to understand the power dynamics inherent in a dialogue that is not held on equal terms. Similarly to the dynamics between normatised and non-normat(isable) bodies of dancers in local and globalised contexts, it seemed equally important to take a closer look at the dynamics between hegemonic populations and the minorities co-existing within these contexts.

However, neither Barker and Murray's nor Spivak's focus are laid on dance and dance vocabularies[102] and practical selection processes as an instance of negotiation of values between local and globally expanded networks of contemporary dance. Thus, reading Spivak has indeed enriched my understanding of power dynamics inscribed into a post-colonial framework and the intersection of female-ness and post-coloniality. Barker and Murray have widened my horizon in regard of bodies made disabled in and often by colonial processes or post-colonial constructions of society. All three have further refined my perception of local and global power dynamics and intersections. However, these

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[102] Spivak does bring up the case of an Indian female dance-artist and her performance broken down by an Italian male director, event that is nevertheless thoroughly referred upon (Spivak 1992: 798)

thoughts have not yet been applied to NaDaPs. This is what I will set out to do, especially in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. However, these texts do not cover the full scope of the NaDaPs' multi-layered-ness, such as for instance international flows of finances or the global(ised) fragility of contemporary dancers' lives.

Moreover, while extrapolating Spivak's analysis helps to see through the hierarchisation of dance in canonised-classical and folk and traditional dance forms, her work does not shed light onto the dynamics between classical and contemporary forms of dance in different localities. Thus, it seemed compelling to look for structures that enabled me to look at the systems of power that elevate contemporary dance on a global context while understanding the negotiation of hierarchies both in the local and global scenes.

While it is true that NaDaPs have not been yet been the object of scholarly research, some of the elements that constitute them have been studied in depth. Especially matters of the categorisation of dance in local or folk and assumptions about 'world' dance have been questioned by Susan Foster's edited book, *Worlding Dance* (Foster, S. 2009). Notably, mechanisms of invisibilisation of some dancers or choreographers in processes of nation-state building have been explored in *Worlding Dance* in the case of Michio Ito (Wong 2009). In *Dance and the Body in Western Theatre*, Sabine Sörgel describes the situationality of the body in the so-constructed West starting with the body-mind divide of Western philosophy, while she later analyses the re-inscription of the experiential bodily experience into the cultural discourse in the wake of the 1960s (Sörgel 2015:71-74). Interestingly, both Foster and Sörgel refer in different parts of their work to Bourdieu and Passeron's concept of the *habitus* to elucidate how the body is socially inscribed, thus understanding the (dancing) body and its knowledge as something that is always located in

a specific context. Randy Martin's *Critical Moves* (Martin 1998) has provided an insightful example of readings of dance, remarkably his close reading of *Last Supper at Uncle Tom's Cabin/The promised Land* (Bill T. Jones 1990) has set precedent for both their works and my own contextualised reading of performances at NaDaPs.

The general relationship between economic contexts, gender, dance vocabularies and techniques, culture, dancers their lives, both in amateur and professional practice are explored by Judith Hamera in *Dancing Communities. Performance, Difference and Connection in the Global City* (2007), however her study is limited to the city of Los Angeles, which she defines as a global city. Expanding insights into the linkage between art support and aesthetics are offered for instance by Shannon Jackson, especially when questioning what she calls the "social turn" (Jackson 2011:11) in contemporary art. Notably, her insight that sustaining an art form is also sustaining the lives of the artists engaging with it (Jackson 2011:16) has been very helpful for my analysis. The global(ised) precarity of contemporary dancers' lives and its embedding in the prevailing neo-liberal rationale has been further explored by Dunja Njaradi in *From Employment to Projects. Work and Life in Contemporary Dance World* (Njaradi 2014), enabling me to think further about the anchoring of NaDaPs in the global neo-liberal enterprise. However, the deepest insights into the logic of neo-liberalism I have gained from Wendy Brown's article *Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy* (Brown 2003). However, her article did deploy an unexpected challenge. Brown clearly unmasks neo-liberalism as an ideology, removing it thus from the merely economico-financial realm. This could have compelled me to analyse neo-liberalism in relationship to NaDaPs in Chapter 5 through the lens of Appadurai's ideoscape. This could have been justified. However, neo-liberalism is an ideology that, while it is enacted in contexts much bigger than NaDaP, it has very specific

economico-financial consequences for dance and dancers' lives. Therefore, while understanding neo-liberalism as an ideology has refined my perception of NaDaPs in general, I focus on its economic consequences and therefore address the phenomenon mainly in Chapter 7.

To be able to conduct contextual readings, it is essential to understand the contexts in which both the phenomenon NaDaPs as such as well as each NaDaP have emerged and occur. The interviews I conducted led me to the French dance competition *Le Ballet pour Demain* (*The Ballet for Tomorrow*). Its historical recollection, made available by the digitalised archives of the festival it became part of, *Les Rencontres Chorégraphiques de Seine-Saint-Denis*, have provided wide insights into the event's emergence and have enabled me to understand the historical moment in which modern / contemporary dance started to be made visible. However, there is only one scholarly publication addressing the *Rencontres* and the competition and the only exemplar I have been able to trace is located in a library in Paris, which placed it out of the scope of this research. Furthermore, the already addressed Brown's study on neo-liberalism as well as Appadurai's and James' works on globalisation have enabled me to locate and understand the globality of the phenomenon.

Several scholars have enabled me to gain further insight into the different localities in which the NaDaPs that constitute my case studies have emerged. In the months I lived in Sri Lanka, Professor Neloufer de Mel's *Militarizing Sri Lanka. Popular Culture, Memory and Narrative in the Armed Conflict* (de Mel 2007) was an important text by a local, yet globally acting scholar to make sense of my environment. British journalist and scholar Frances Harrison's *Still Counting the Dead. Survivors of Sri Lanka's*

Hidden War (Harrison 2012) was a potent account of the country's armed conflict that contributed to my understanding of an environment in which the (at the time of Shakti already ended) war was paramount to perceive its ghosted presence still at a showcase in 2017. In the case of Germany, it is also a war that very much shapes its current sense of identity. Indeed, modern Germany was constituted in the aftermath of WW2, and the country could only overcome its east-west political division (a result of WW2) only in 1989. Cultural anthropologist Aleida Assmann's *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Erninnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik* (2006, translated into English as *Shadows of Trauma: Memory and the Politics of Postwar Identity*) focuses on the phenomenon of constructing memory and delves into the construction of individual, cultural and national memories. Further, sociologist Harald Welzer's work on memory and totalitarianism (2002, 2005) has provided my everyday-life experience at home with scholarly insights, while Sörgel (2015) has related cultural memory and identity to occurrences in the theatrical realm. To understand the economic conditions that provided the direct context for Germany's arts funding throughout the cold war I have especially drawn on North-American military historian Gaddis. My choice of an allied *military* Historian is based upon the fact that it was the USA that saw the urgency to provide Germany with financial aid, designed the plan to do so and very much shaped the guiding lines for the expenditure. In the case of Israel, the country has been since its inception trying to define its identity – a process which, especially since 2015, has shifted overtly to a more ethnocratic conception of nationhood. Several scholars and literary authors have widened my horizon to understand the country which I lived in for several months in different phases of my life. Jewish-Israeli historian Tom Segev[103] (1991, 2000, 2007) has described the process of the

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[103] My research is not a historical research, despite its use of historical accounts, mainly written by Historians, to describe the context out of which NaDaPs have grown. A consideration of different

state's creation and different phases in its process of establishing a new polity in the aftermath of the Holocaust, while exposing the mechanisms by which the latter impacted on the country's ideology, identity and politics. As briefly mentioned, the country's politics have indeed shifted to the right, not least due to the gain of political power of the settler movement into the Palestinian Territories. In *The Accidental Empire. Israel and the Birth of the Settlements 1967 – 1977* Gershom Gorenberg (also Jewish-Israeli) explains the process that has led to the current reality of perpetuated occupation of the Palestinian territories. Further, autobiographical accounts such as former Jewish-Israeli soldier Yoram Kaniuk's *1948* (the year of the state's establishment) expose the human tragedy of the conflict between Jews and Palestinians that arose with the state's creation, while Jewish-Israeli scholar Idith Zertal's *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood* (2005) provides and insightful account of the centrality of the use of memory for the political construction of Jewish-Israeli identity. Palestinian-Israeli author and scholar Sayed Kashua provided for several years until 2014 regular accounts that reflected the co-existence of Arabs and Jews in Israel in the form of books, journalistic columns and TV programmes until shortly after his emigration to the USA in 2014. Both Sri Lanka and Israel/Palestine were British-ruled territories that have experienced long armed conflicts on their own territory. The constitution of the United Kingdom was also a bloody one, but many of the armed conflicts are further in the past[104] and the big wars of the European continent in the 20th century left less scars in Britain than in for instance Germany. Thus, the traumatic and

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streams of national historiography would have exceeded the scope of this study. Therefore, the same as in the case of Germany, in the case of Israel I have taken an ideologically grounded decision. I have decided to rely on New Historians, self-identifying post-zionist social scientists that started to question in the 1980s hitherto accepted 'truths' about the creation of the state.

[104] Nevertheless, the Republic of Ireland became independent only in 1921, the troubles in Northern Ireland continued until the Good Friday Agreement (1998) and after a roughly 20 years of peace, the current political developments around Brexit have already awaken the possibility of a re-ignition of terror (O'Connor 2019)

defining moment of current British identity seems to be the loss of the country's colonies. For it is the history of colonisation and empire that have shaped the face of modern British society. British historians, Paul Gilroy's *Postcolonial Melancholia* (Gilroy 2005) and Linda Colley's *Britons. Forging the Nation 1707 – 1837* (Colley 1992) have helped me understand the country I lived in while researching for my PhD, the same as Irish columnist and author Fintan O'Toole's *Heroic Failure. Brexit and the Politics of Pain*. Black British journalist and scholar, Kurt Bartling's pondering about racism and its language in Britain (Bartling 2015) has helped me gain better understanding of the country's current discourses about race. These, together with my reading of newspapers and visits to museums and other sites designated as national have helped me decode the locations of my case studies.

In his system of scapes, Appadurai identified five global cultural flows: the ideoscape, the ethnoscape, the financescape, the mediascape and the technoscape, that coincide with different scholarly fields. Deciding for this system has thus informed the interdisciplinarity of this research and has prompted me to delve into different scholarly fields. This literature review has made this evident and has shown that my work has drawn from dance and performance scholars as well as from historians, anthropologists and cultural and political theorists, in order to cover the complexity of the subject matter; national dance platforms, or NaDaPs. The authors that have determined my choice of methodology and methods will be discussed in the next chapter, *Methodology and Methods*

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 1, Introduction, explained that there exist national dance platforms (NaDaPs) in many countries, while it also made evident that there is a global(ised) phenomenon of the NaDaP. This research focuses thus on a phenomenon that is constituted by local iterations while it also has a global scope. Moreover, NaDaPs seem to encompass in each iteration a multi-layered reality, in which the national and the global intertwine. I will seek to argue that NaDaPs are part of a globalised system that constitutes the macro-context in which they take place - and they are thus subjected to rules conforming to the system - while they at the same time effect changes *on* the system through their micro-contextual local iterations. This relationship highlights the interdependence of the *local* and the *global* in the local manifestations of a global phenomenon. However, this can to a certain extent challenge NaDaPs' explicit claim of national representation. The main question leading this thesis will be to what extent do NaDaPs represent or mediate a nation? How do they claim national-ness and how does this reflect back on the structure and content of the NaDaP in each location? This chapter will

discuss the methodology and methods I have chosen to shed light onto the complexities and challenges presented by the phenomenon of the NaDaPs.

As Chapter 3, *Literature Review* has shown, there is hardly any scholarly literature engaging especially with NaDaPs and the phenomenon is immensely complex. Breaking new ground thus, it was necessary to consider several investigative approaches and methods, for it is paramount to understand each local iteration of a NaDaP, as much as the system of the NaDaP as a whole and the intersections and interactions between the two. Consequently, engaging with theorists of several disciplines has proven indispensable to identify and construe the variety of meanings evoked within and through a NaDaP. On the other hand, field research has been crucial to gather first-hand information about each of the events. Especially when analysing the collected data, it was essential to find the right methodological framework. This chapter will discuss the methodology and various methods chosen and examine their benefits, limitations, and implications in correspondence with the endeavour.

In the following sections I will firstly describe the endeavour's methodology and the overarching methodological approach. Once this is established, I will proceed to describe the conceptual framework that has provided the skeleton for this research; Arjun Appadurai's definition of *scapes* (Appadurai 1990, 1996). Thereafter, I will discuss the project's delimitations. Subsequently, I will present the methods that have enabled me to gather data. The sections thereafter will describe the methods applied for the analysis of data. Finally, I will briefly discuss how the project's analysis and findings are validated and, to conclude, I will briefly discuss ethical considerations related to the applied methods.

4.2   Methodology - Overarching approach

The overarching context of this study is post-positivistic and therefore works with post-positivist research methodologies. However, at first glance, it could seem that a research design with a clear positivistic emphasis would have been more appropriate to grasp the phenomenon of the NaDaP. Such an approach "widely used in the natural sciences, is sometimes applied in the social sciences as well" (Wisker [2001] 2008:65-66). But translated into this project, a positivistic framework would have required the creation of categories that make NaDaPs quantifiable. Indeed, the number of performances, venues, and invited audiences, or the events' budgets are quantifiable and facilitate a first glance into the general structure of each NaDaP. However, these categories only allow to see the framework, a mere scaffolding. To understand what happens within these structures, it would be compelling to expand the research with, for instance, categories regarding the form of dance. In a further stage, the juries, dancers, choreographers and audiences could be grouped in terms of gender, age, and ethnicity, in categories as abled or disabled, and national or foreigner, institutionally-bound or freelance.

Categories could be created *ad-infinitum*, but this proliferation of groups and grades would have most probably fragmented the matter into total obscurity, rather than enabled a contextual reading of the phenomenon as a whole. Moreover, as evident and unmistakable as the creation of these groups might seem, it would prove almost impossible to build such fixed categories since nationality, gender, and ethnicity, or disabilities, are often far from evident. Moreover, the perceptions of what a dancer, dance, and nationhood are, are fluid and vary according to their context, what makes them far from "describable and provable, measurable and deductive" (Wisker [2001] 2008: 65-

66), characteristics needed for a positivistic research design to be feasible and of value. Hence, although the creation and measurement of categories can enable a first rough glimpse at a NaDaP, it is some of the categories themselves, that must be problematized, in order to fully understand the phenomenon's complexity.

At the same time, in the act of observing, describing, and translating, in the moment of attending a NaDaP and thus in the interaction with the observed, my lenses intertwine with the phenomenon itself. Thus, the categories are not fixed, and my ideology and positionality form and inform the research: the assumption underlying this endeavour is that "the world is essentially indefinable, interpreted, shifting in meaning, based on who, when, and why anyone carries (it) out and adds the meaning" (Wisker [2001] 2008:66). Hence, the paradigm governing this study is that of a post-positivistic research, with a mixed-mode approach regarding the collection of data.

4.3   The Scapes

In the core of the work lies my attempt to understand the relationships of interdependence between the local and the global. Appadurai stated that the "genealogy [of cultural forms] is about their circulation across regions, the history of these forms is about their ongoing domestication into local practice" (Appadurai 1996: 17). Thus, a specific NaDaP (say, for instance *BDE*) is the result of the local historical circumstances that have enabled its emergence and shaped its iterations, while it is at the same time genealogically part of a macro-system, that has set the framework for its constitution. Genealogically, the idea of the NaDaP has circulated across regions; historically, it has adapted to different environments acquiring local shapes and foci. At the same time, the NaDaPs have

influenced the local dance scenes through their respective eligibility criteria, therefore domesticating local dance scenes into a globalised understanding of production structures. Each NaDaP contributes to the whole system, and therefore to the genealogical tree of the NaDaPs into the future, while at the same time affecting in turns the phenomenon in its totality.

Appadurai's model of *scapes* (Appadurai 1990:296) has provided me with structural support to locate the arising questions in relevant contexts, enabling me to understand the local and global coordinates that affect each inquiry. The complexity of the current global, interdependent economy presents disjunctures and contradictions. For instance, the positionality of dances, dancers and choreographers of the Indian subcontinent and their culture(s) is not to be grasped in the same way when in India, in Britain or in Sri Lanka. In Appadurai's own words, "one man's imagined community (Anderson, 1983) is another man's political prison" (Appadurai 1990: 295). This insight has proven to be important when examining the presence of dances and dancers or choreographers of South-East Asian descent at *BDE*, for instance, or when looking at the presence of Arab artists at the Israeli *IE*.

Appadurai proposes a framework to address the interlinking of these "dimensions of global cultural flow" (Appadurai 1990: 296), and calls these flows *scapes*. He has identified the *ethnoscape*, the *ideoscape*, the *financescape*, the *technoscape* and the *mediascape*. Of the *scapes*, Appadurai has said that "they are not objectively given relations which look the same from every angle of vision, but rather that they are deeply perspectival constructs" (Appadurai 1990: 296). Thus, this structure does not only enable an encompassing of existing disruptures (in the global cultural economy) but it also

acknowledges that the positionality of actors and observers deeply influence the construction and perception of the determined parameters. Thus, it also frames and (de)constructs my role as an observing participant[105] in the four NaDaPs. Given that my own positon in this role has provided the first source of information to construct the research, and that they are all inter-related in various ways, Appadurai's theory of scapes seemed to provide a very valuable system to analyse and compare NaDaPs and in their global and local dimensions.

The thesis' structure of chapters will draw on Appadurai's system of scapes. Chapter 5, *...that life is but a dream and dreams are (not) only dreams* will be explored with the lens of the *ideoscape*; Chapter 6, *Castings* with that of the *ethnoscape*; Chapter 7, *Money makes the World go 'round and Capital moves around in the World* will delve into the *financescape* and Chapter 8 will draw on the *mediascape*. There will be no specific chapter related to the *technoscape* though. Appadurai described the *technoscape* as "the global configuration, also ever fluid, of technology, and of the fact that technology, both high and low, both mechanical and informational, now moves at high speeds across various kinds of previously impervious boundaries" (Appadurai 1990:297). However, in 1990 and 1996, the publication years of both Appadurai's texts describing the *scapes*, technology - especially in the form of social media - was not as widespread as it is now; it was less available and much more expensive, and therefore financial disparities defined relations of scarcity and thus, of power. Almost thirty years after Appadurai wrote his essay, "high" technology of communications, especially the internet and the world wide web (the name is telling) are omnipresent, at least within the global(ised) contemporary

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[105] Described in 4.5.1

dance industry and throughout this research access to technology has not appeared to be a barrier to break for any stakeholder. The four NaDaPs used internet in the same way to convey information. Moreover, none of them presented a piece in which a specific kind of technology played a significant role for its differentiation, making it thus sufficiently important to devote a full chapter to it. Even though I acknowledge that digitalisation has impacted on all areas of society in recent decades, I have judged this scape to be less relevant for this particular study. I will therefore not dedicate a special chapter to it, but will rather point at technology throughout the thesis when it seems relevant.

4.4 The project's delimitations. Comparative research (case studies)

4.4.1 Time

The first NaDaP, the Spring Collection in London, took place in 1992. The world has changed dramatically between the early 1990s and 2018. The rapid development of digitalisation, its effects on the already existing and ongoing process of globalisation, the apparently all-engulfing triumph of neo-liberalism and the financialisation of the economy, and global terror from state and non-state entities have left marks in every aspect of life. Most likely, this has changed the contexts in which contemporary dance has taken place, and has possibly affected the dance form itself. I could have chosen to restrict my research to one country and study in depth the development of its NaDaP and the sets of values underpinning them from their onset until the present. Had this been the case, an exploration of technology's impact on its NaDaP throughout the years could have provided very interesting insights. However, this would have not enabled me to highlight if, and how, different positionalities in a global system of power affect the country's NaDaPs and

the dance associated with them. I have thus decided for the model of a comparative study, opting to explore platforms that took place in different countries in the period 2015 – 2016. I have chosen this model to examine connections and disconnections between the different platforms and locations, to understand more about how they operate as a phenomenon.

4.4.2   <u>Location</u>

The research has been limited to the study of the compared NaDaPs of Britain, Germany, Israel and Sri Lanka. NaDaPs have emerged in the early 1990s, thus the phenomenon has existed for roughly thirty years. As mentioned in Chapter 1, NaDaPs have proliferated in many parts of the world and, while they have started in Europe, they have spread far beyond the continent's geographical borders and its cultural sphere. Making a historic research of the phenomenon and its expansion seemed to be a seductive idea in the beginning. However, the sheer amount of existing NaDaPs would have prevented me from acquiring in-depth knowledge about each one. Thus, I have decided to limit myself to the four listed case studies, whose interlinking has been established in Chapter 1.

The restrictions set by the time and space parameters have guided me to clearly identify significant cases to study and thus enabled me to embark on a comparative study. I will now proceed to discuss the overarching methodological framework that underpins this research.

4.5   Gathering data. Methods

In this section I will discuss methods which, in accordance with the chosen methodology, will enable the collection of data. I will discuss their advantages and limitations in regard to my endeavour and provide a rationale for my choices. Within a poststructuralist paradigm, I will discuss and question the multiple realities (Saukko 2003: 15) which intersect, form, and inform the four NaDaPs. As it will become apparent, methods that have emerged in the wider context of Cultural Studies[106] have proven to be very useful for my approach, linking the interplay between lived experience, texts or discourses, and their social context, all of them in interaction with empirical research (Saukko 2003:11). The method of doing field work as an observing participant has proven crucial for this work and provided the core of my data. Therefore, this will be the first method I will address.

4.5.1   Fieldwork - observing participant

As mentioned in the literature review, there is hardly any scholarly research into NaDaPs. Therefore, in order to gather information, it was indispensable to attend the chosen NaDaPs and engage in fieldwork, for the most important source of information to understand how NaDaPs function. Watching the dance programme, paying attention to each piece and their dancers or performers, but also experiencing the atmosphere created by the organisers as well as interacting with other guests, have provided most of the material to work with. Some NaDaPs choose their guests though, and as a researcher I am

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[106] Discipline pioneered by the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies in the 1970s (Saukko, 2003:4)

not their targeted audience. I was very lucky that all four platforms nevertheless agreed to me attending. Hence, my role could have been described as that of an observing participant[107]. While it is safe to assume that it made no difference for the performers if a researcher sat among the rest of the audience, a disclosure of my role seemed necessary when interacting with the NaDaPs' invited (and especially targeted) guests. Throughout my fieldwork as an observing participant, self-reflexivity was a crucial tool to augment my own situatedness and thus to be more receptive to the perspective of Others (Saukko 2003:62).

4.5.2   Fieldwork - Semi-structured interviews

To start with, I wanted to find out if the four case studies were genealogically related to each other. The best option to find out this information was to interview the people who had been responsible for establishing them. The personal interview is a method that enables the researcher to cast light onto more in-depth knowledge, and which gives room for unexpected contextual or subtler layers of information to emerge (Wisker [2001] 2008:192–201). But the proximity, indeed intimacy suggested by the personal interview can be at the same time a trap: both, the interviewer and the interviewee have cultural backgrounds which inform their own behaviour and provides constructions of Otherness, even presumptions or prejudices, to perceive the person in front of them. It is therefore important to be aware of cultural differences and historical or socio-economic backgrounds, which lead to inevitable bias, and which may

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[107] However, once it had been established that I would attend Shakti, I was asked to moderate a discussion between the artists and the audience after a performance. I attempted to do this and, as I failed thoroughly, I will give an account of this in Chapter 5.

have an impact on the dialogue, thus self-reflexivity (Saukko 2003:20) was constantly required.

While it was important to establish good criteria, as for choosing who to interview, I have been dependent on the approached people's willingness to give me an interview. For example, I have not been able to secure an interview with judges or producers of *BDE 2016*. Whereas Therese Beattie and John Ashford, the heads behind the first *Spring Collection* were happy to share their knowledge with me and after a lengthy interview, to follow up further questions via e-mail, I did not succeed in talking to people responsible for *BDE 2016*. In the case of *DPG*, I have been able to carry out interviews with the panel of judges, as well as with Walter Heun, one of the producers of the first *DPG* (1994) and with the Head of Culture / Dance Department of the Goethe-Institut (I will discuss more about the connections between national institutes of cultural representation, such as the British Council or the Goethe-Institut and NaDaPs in later Chapters). In the case of Israel, I have been able to interview the initiator of *IE*, Yair Vardi, one of the panel's judges, Dalit Haramaty-Bendavid, and the Head of the Department of Sports and Culture / Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rafi Ghamzou. Turning the focus to Sri Lanka, Venuri Perera, *SSSB*'s curator was very generous with her time, as was Niloufer Pieris, a long-standing figure in the country's development in the field of dance, and also Björn Ketels, former director of the GI-Colombo and initiator of the *CDP*, later *SLDP*.

Structured interviews could have been useful to gather quantifiable data, as for instance, how much time did the planning take or how high the budget was. However, this form of interview would not have given room for signs to appear that actually conveyed much more information than what they seem to reveal initially. Possible

contradictions within the formation process, or matters linked to personal perceptions of the NaDaP would not have had room to emerge and would hence remain unidentified. These subtler layers of information, which are sometimes to be read 'between the lines', can be better conveyed in the framework of an unstructured interview. On the other hand, a completely unstructured interview might have presented the difficulty of producing information that was unlikely to be comparable with other results. I therefore decided on the semi-structured interview as a method. This provided a structure tight enough, to compare answers and at the same time open enough, for unexpected information to appear.

4.6   Interpretation of data. Methods

4.6.1   Quantitative analysis

In order to grasp the general structure of each NaDaP, an *a priori* quantitative analysis was helpful: knowing, for instance, how many performances, in how many venues, and during how many days provided a first structural idea of each NaDaP. The NaDaPs' programme folders; a range of booklets that provided information about the event itself, the performances and (to different extents) about the artists, about the activities that rounded up the event and displayed the logos that gave information about the events' funders, proved to be most helpful for this purpose. Where it was necessary to look further (for instance, especially the Israeli programme folder did not seem to provide accurate information about the funding of the presented pieces), I consulted the artists' websites, when available.

Both the printed information in the programme folders and the electronic information provided by artists' websites have indeed helped me to get a sense of the

magnitude of each NaDaP. Especially Chapter 2, *The Stage* relied on this data to provide a first description of all four NaDaPs and drew on much of this information. Furthermore, Chapter 7 will discuss the significance of international co-productions presented at each NaDaP. These data have also been gathered quantitatively and sourced out of the programme folders and the artists' websites. Hence, a part of this research owes to this method and relies upon it. However, while acknowledging the usefulness of these parameters, they have provided basic information that only when contextualised has enabled me to develop meanings out of each NaDaP.

4.6.2   <u>Descriptive approach, exploratory research and contextual analysis</u>

As it is the case for post-positivistic approaches, a descriptive approach accepts that its findings are only true in a particular context and at a given point in time. A descriptive approach would provide a thorough description of each NaDaP, and would enable me to convey detailed information about each of its iterations. However, this approach does not particularly problematize the position of the observer. Moreover, its governing question is "what is there?", without considering the reasons that have contributed to the emergence of the object of study (Wisker [2001] 2008: 70-72). This would prove insufficient to understand how a NaDaP has been constituted, and how it is contextualised. Nevertheless, parts of Chapter 2, *The Stage* responded to this approach – for instance when I superficially describe the venues in which each NaDaP took place, or of Chapter 7, when I merely enumerate the funders of a presented work.

Turning to exploratory research would help to highlight the reasons behind the studied phenomenon (Wisker [2001] 2008:72-73). In the case of a NaDaP, this would

mean that categories, as for instance the dancers on stage, the technique(s) they use and their apparent ethnicity, would be considered together, in order to draw conclusions. Such an approach could be of use, for instance, to explore possible links between dancers' ethnicities and the technique or dance forms they engage with. This would constitute a straightforward example of how a combination of parameters could be quantified in statistics that could result in corrective policy if judged necessary. Nevertheless, this approach still assumes the object of study to be a stable, describable fact.

NaDaPs, however, are composed of elements that are far from stable. As discussed in Chapter 5, notions about nationhood and contemporaneity can be difficult to grasp, even deceiving. How these notions are perceived and play out in the specific context of a NaDaP might affect the jury's decision when curating the programme. Chapter 6 will demonstrate that dancers' physicalities can play an important role in the perception of these dancers' professionalism, in their possibility to embody the public persona of a dancer and being perceived as one. This can have an impact on the presence and the visibility of dancers with non-normate physicalities at a NaDaP. Chapter 7 will complicate the matter even more, for a piece presented at a NaDaP, say at *SSSB* in Sri Lanka, might have been created with non-Sri Lankan funds. Conversely, for example, the fact of funding a dance piece with German money seems to allow *DPG* to perceive that specific piece as German (Traub 2017), disregarding who choreographed, who is on stage, and where the creation process took place. These are all knowledges that are far from evident and escape a mere descriptive approach and also the exploratory research approach.

The method of contextual analysis has on the one hand allowed me to understand the sites of the NaDaPs within their contexts. Investigating the sites'

historiography, their environmental and societal rooting, their economic relationships and boundaries, and their general programme, will enable diverse layers of concomitant realities to appear. At the same time, when understanding each of Appadurai's proposed *scapes* in themselves as a context – as opposed to a location – contextual analysis has allowed each concept enough fluidity as to understand specific aspects of each NaDaP within their global anchoring. To expand my contextual understanding of each NaDaP, I applied several strategies. Firstly, I reached to literature and secondary sources discussing the history of each of the countries in which my case studies took place. Furthermore, I read several newspapers of the four countries in the time of the each NaDaP (and when appropriate throughout all the research time), to grasp further layers of meaning of the events. This included both journalistic publications about the NaDaPs as articles touching upon subjects that had emerged in the NaDaP as topical for the country. Further, when possible, I visited museums that were explicitly dedicated to the country's history or parts of it. Such is the case for instance with the *British Museum* and the London branch of the *Imperial War Museum* in the case of Britain or the *Israel Museum* in Israel.

4.6.3   Material-semiotic approach. Close reading and interweaving

As briefly revealed, it is not only the 'big' ideas I am exploring (dance, dancers, national-ness and contemporaneity) that are unstable. Sharp distinctions between fields as for instance, culture and economy have become also increasingly blurry (Saukko 2003:6). As Appadurai has stated, "[global cultural flows] occur in and through the growing disjunctures between ethnoscapes, technoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes" (Appadurai 1990:301, italics in original). Hence it is important to find a framework which, on the one hand, recognises that all these categories are not fixed, but at

the same time acknowledges that they are not mere inventions that can be moulded into random realities, and only exist through the action of engaging with them. The material-semiotic approach enables me to understand the complexity of phenomena resulting out of specific historical contexts, while at the same time affect and effect realities, which are both symbolic and concrete, and hence are implicated in shaping the phenomena they challenge (Saukko 2003:27-28). In the case of a NaDaP, it is for instance discourses of and around economy, history, and notions of health, social stratification, languages of hegemonic or peripheral dance forms, that should be seen as material-semiotic forces, which form the NaDaP and at the same time must be challenged. Moreover, each NaDaP can be seen as a sign that has specific rather than general meanings (Bloomaert and Huang 2010:3-12), thus allowing the NaDaP to be read - and only there and then - in relation to the locality in which it takes place, for "social and cultural phenomena are situated, and [that] to understand them means to understand their situatedness" (Bloomaert and Huang, 2010:13).

The material-semiotic approach will thus allow me to effect a close reading of a NaDaP. It will enable me to acknowledge historical, economical, and societal references, geographical and locational notions, but as well poetical and artistic ones, that intersect each other at a NaDaP. Paul Ricoeur, embedded in a phenomenological framework, calls the "structural coreference of fiction and history, narrative and temporality, 'interweaving'" (cited in Martin 1998: 59). When analysing dance as text, this promotes the thought of the various layers of meaning production generatively influencing each other, hence converting the text, in this case the dance, into a multi-layered, seminal fabric. As Martin suggests in his analysis of the dance piece *Last Supper at Uncle Tom's Cabin / The promised Land* (Bill T. Jones 1990), it is the interweaving of narratives about

and around the (North-American) Civil War era and the civil rights era, plus the discourses around gender, homophobia, AIDS, and the politics of scarcity in the arts funding, attached to a moralising discourse of neo-conservative cuts, to name a few, which rendered the piece he studied so powerful (Martin 1998:55-69). This work, however, has a goal wider than the analysis of each dance piece presented at a NaDaP, for it is the framework of presentation, the NaDaP that will be at stake. National history, local dance history, narratives of nationhood, national structures for arts and specifically dance funding, discourses around a possible colonial past and its implications in contemporary life, interaction with foreign bodies of arts funding, perceptions of the body framed by religion and codes of morality, and of high and low culture, are some of the threads that I will need to draw on to be able to produce a significant interweaving, and hence a substantial material-semiotic analysis of the complex phenomenon NaDaP.

Ricoeur's idea of interweaving is resonant with the methodology of studying multiple sites and scapes, proposed by Paula Saukko (2003:176-197). Rooted in the broader context deriving from ethnography that developed within Cultural Studies, Saukko speaks of multi-sited research studies, to understand how "any given phenomenon takes shape in and across multiple locales or sites" (Saukko 2003:176). She furthermore draws on Appadurai (1997), and calls *scapes* "spheres of life…which layer social reality". Rather than understanding *scapes* as rigid coats of reality, these should be understood as streams connecting places and people. Thus, this approach that enabled me to connect multiple sites and scapes has resulted in a mosaic-like interpretation of varied juxtaposed pieces, or aspects of reality, which co-exist, sometimes complementing, sometimes contradicting each other. This has allowed me to study the phenomenon NaDaP as a global one that manifests across different sites. This way to understanding interweaving is more

in accord with a view that grasps "processes of artistic and cultural performances that cannot be traced back to a fixed origin or identity" (Brandstetter et al. 2019:1). Indeed, this approach enables me to problematize each NaDaP's claim of national-ness while understanding it at the same time as part of the global phenomenon of the NaDaP.

4.6.4   Grounded Theory

I have thus observed NaDaPs, allowed a mosaic-like representation to take shape, and enabled theory to emerge out of the analysis of this mosaic. Wisker ([2001] 2008:214), drawing on the theories of Glaser and Strauss calls "a grounded theory one which is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents" (cited in Strauss and Corbin 1990: 23). Thus, grounded theory emerges from the observation of the object of study, in this case a NaDaP. Within the context of grounded theory, Wisker names *Case Study* a method which provides the possibility to consider "a situation, individual, event, group, organisation, or whatever is appropriate as the object of study" (2008:216). Attending to the four case studies as an observing participant has enabled me to be in direct relation with my object of study in the field. Hence, the theory that emerges from a case study is particular to the very circumstance it observes. As I will discuss in the following chapters, each NaDaP is, despite its globality, constructed within the specific context of one nation and responds hence to specific concepts of nationhood, of dance and of dancers that prevail within its frame of reference. These assumptions might vary in each framework, which would result in a distinctive manifestation of the NaDaP in each country. This approach has enabled me to answer the question whether a NaDaP mirrors assumptions of value of the society that constructs it. In order to understand whether this was the case, and if so, then how so, it was compelling to compare different cases.

Therefore, I made a careful choice of cases, bearing in mind concepts of hegemony and periphery, as well as historical, cultural, and economic ties between them. And it is here that the mosaic-like framework advanced by Saukko becomes relevant again, providing the rationale for juxtaposing the various multiple sites and *scapes* against each other.

4.6.5   Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is another method that has been applied within the study. Both the dance itself, meaning the performances presented at the NaDaPs, as well as the written material produced about and around them, produce discourse. The dancers' bodies and the dance pieces embody countless layers of meaning, to which the audience is exposed in the moment of the performance. Discussing experience, the experience of a performing body, is to make sense out of who is performing and what is being performed, negotiated through the eyes of the witness (Albright 1997:31). As Albright (1997: 25) further suggests, in order to disentangle this manifold manifestation, it is necessary "to engage with a variety of discourses: kinaesthetic, visual, somatic and aesthetic, as well as intellectual." It is thus compelling to engage in all these levels of analysis, in order to grasp the complexity of the discourse produced by a dance piece.

At the same time, and as part of the discourse produced by a dance piece, it will be necessary to pay attention to the kind of place given to the audience. Different proposed categories of watching or witnessing, traditional gaze against "response/ability" (Albright 1997:16) and interactive experiencing, will bestow the discourse with diverse layers of meaning. Being impossible to discuss all staged pieces in this extensive and detailed manner, I will refer to a few paradigmatic pieces, in which aspects recurrent

throughout the NaDaPs become evident. At the same time, I will bring on board various

facets emerging across the presented pieces in each NaDaP, and by doing so, I will aim to

put into words the danced text produced by the NaDaP as a whole.

Coexisting with the discourse produced by the dance pieces, there are

several media, which are as well constitutors of discourse and contribute thus to the

polyvocal phenomenon NaDaP. The texts produced about and around the performances,

for instance publications, programme folders and flyers, both in digital and print form, as

well as talks with artists, receptions, critiques, and so forth, create different contents and

engage in different dialogues, according to whom they are aimed at. These texts and

symbols about the danced discourse, the discourse about the discourse, add further layers

of meaning to the complex phenomenon called NaDaP. Interweaving the various layers

that construct a cultural performance object allows to illuminate the "stratified hierarchy of

meaningful structures" (Geertz 1993:7) solicited by an action, in this case the NaDaP.

What I was confronted with as an observing participant was a "multiplicity of complex

conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another"

(Geertz 1993: 10), that I set off to describe. Conversely, Chapter 8 will use this method to

answer the question whether the NaDaP itself mediates the nation, and thus whether it

could be seen as a medium of cultural expression that allows a gaze at the hidden sets of

values that underpin a nation's understanding of self.

Summarising, I have pursued the quest of understanding how concepts of

national-ness and contemporaneity in relation to dance and dancers relate to each other in

four case studies, the NaDaPs of four different countries. I have utilized a mixed-mode

approach, within a post-positivistic research paradigm. I have observed and compared

chosen NDPs as comparative case studies. A material semiotic-approach intersected with

the idea of studying multiple sites and scapes, has enable to shed light on the different

elements that constitute the NDPs, while at the same time allowing me to question them.

Furthermore, the mosaic-like representation of the NaDaPs has enabled me to identify

similarities and divergences across the spectrum of sites and *scapes*, which converge in the

idea of a NaDaP and has allowed new theory to emerge. At the same time, I have

acknowledged my personal situationality when producing the close readings and

interwoven descriptions that seek to convey the nature of each NaDaP and of the

phenomenon as a whole. Having described the methodology framing the study and the

methods used to gather idea and interpreting them, I will proceed to discuss their

validities.

4.7   Validities

Methodologies and methods have concomitant forms of validity, therefore,

I speak of validities in plural. The empirical parts of the research will be valid if they

reflect truthfully some constitutive facts of the NaDaPs, and so far, they analyse

quantifiable categories (for example, the amount of venues one NaDaP encompassed or

how many dance pieces were presented). Thus, in this case the information provided in

programme folders and NaDaPs or artists' websites will validate my assertions. But, as I

have argued, a merely positivistic approach would not do justice to the complexity of the

phenomenon NaDaP.

For complex social or cultural phenomena, analysed within post-positivistic

worldviews, scholars started to suggest the possibility of multiple validities, stressing the

tenet that there are various ways of making sense of the world (Saukko 2003:18).

Considerable elements of this research respond to a post-structuralist paradigm. Its

concomitant deconstructive validity would evaluate the endeavour as for how it "manages

to unravel social tropes and discourses that, over time, have come to pass for 'truth' about

the world" (Saukko 2003: 20). In the case of the NaDaPs, the ability for the research to

unravel the discourses around the concepts of national-ness, contemporaneity, dancer and

dance that are set as inherent truths, and constitute and affect the distribution of legitimacy

in each context, will provide a ground for evaluating the legitimacy of the endeavour.

However, NaDaPs are not only discourses. They are at the same time

phenomena, which materialise specific politics and worldviews, and as such, happen

within wider economic, social, and political contexts. As mentioned in the previous

section, I have applied the method of contextual analysis and a material-semiotic

approach, I have produced contextual descriptions and close readings, and have

illuminated the interweaving of the various layers of meaning that intersect the

phenomenon of the NaDaP and each other. In this way, I have allowed grounded theory

to emerge. They all require concomitant criterions of validity. Discussing contextualist

validity, Saukko calls the research more or less valid in terms of "how well it manages to

locate the phenomena, as well as research itself, in the wider social, political, and global

context" (Saukko 2003:34). These are the criteria that will validate this research.

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4.8 Ethics

At first glance, my project seems to be of low ethical risk. It does not involve
children, neither does it address concealed medical conditions, nor engages with
population segments at risk. While it does engage with people with non-normate
physicalities, they are artists who actively decide to perform in the public domain and thus
it is safe to assume that in their role as artists they do not experience their difference as
disempowering. However, both the fieldwork and some of the further methods engaged do
require ethical considerations, as they could expose informants in unwanted ways or even
have an impact on their credibility or legitimacy in the world of contemporary dance. The
project was assessed and approved by Coventry University as a medium risk project[109].

The ethical approval included the travel to do fieldwork. These travels could at
times present questions of safety. Whilst the general political situation in Sri Lanka is safer
than some years ago (especially in Colombo, where the NaDaP takes place), Israel is still a
country which can at times be or feel dangerous. Nevertheless, recent developments in
Europe show that any event involving a big international audience could be a target of
violence. Hence, it is necessary to consider safety both in Europe and abroad.

In the process, I approached possible informants and explained the scope and
aims of my research. Only when I gained their consent that they were willing to participate
in my research I could proceed to interview them. In each case, it was necessary to agree
upon whether the informant wished to remain anonymous. Some respondents feared to be

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[109] When the project was assessed, it carried the title *Dance, Dancers' physicalities and
Representations of the Nation in the case of National Dance Platforms.*

misquoted, misrepresented or exposed in an unwanted manner to peers or other people who hold positions of power in their work environments. If the respondent had wished to remain anonymous, it would have been necessary to conceal not only their identity, but also their position, as the dance sector is not very large and, as this thesis will also discuss, deeply interconnected. Admittedly, this would have implied the risk of lessening the value of certain assertions, if they could not be related to a specific person. Thus, I have agreed with some informants to offer them sample readings of parts of the thesis for them to grant me their final consent.

4.9   Conclusions

Summarising, on the one hand I have engaged in fieldwork with a role similar to an observing participant. Further, I have carried out semi-structured interviews and attended the performances and talks offered at each NaDaP's iteration. I have also collected empirical data that underpin a first descriptive approach to the NaDaPs and have enabled me to map out their structures. In the following chapters, I will discuss my data within the structure of scapes as recruited from Appadurai and thus place each NaDaP in the cross-axis of the global and the local. A contextual analysis will enable me to describe and understand each NaDaP in both contexts. This will allow me to produce close readings, enabling me to interweave the different layers of meaning juxtaposed in the complex phenomenon NaDaP. Further, discourse analysis with a material-semiotic approach to the performances and to the texts about and around the performances and the phenomenon itself will highlight further aspects at stake. Finally, a re-assessment of the scapes in relation to the above methods, through a process of triangulation, will allow a grounded theory to emerge.

CHAPTER 5

… THAT LIFE IS BUT A DREAM, AND DREAMS ARE (NOT) ONLY DREAMS

"Qué es la vida? Una ilusión,
Una sombra, una ficción,
Y el mayor bien es pequeño:
Que toda la vida es sueño,
y los sueños, sueños son"
(Calderón de la Barca 1636)[110]

"The image, the imagined, the imaginary – these are all terms that direct
us to something critical and new in global cultural processes:
the imagination as a social practice" (Appadurai 1996:31)

5.1 Introduction

NaDaPs are a ground ruled by the image, the imagined and the imaginary

and as such they are the materialisations of their interplay. They are products of ideas and

ideologies, and the concrete manifestations of the fictions they at times contribute to

create. Dreams are also images, but unlike Calderón de La Barca's original quote, the

'dreams' solicited in this chapter do not stay in the realm of dreams, they constitute and

shape realities. Hence my addition of a "not" in brackets to the chapter's title. To start to

approach the phenomenon, I will proceed to draw onto Appadurai's *ideoscape*. The

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[110] What is life? An illusion, a shadow, a fiction, and the greatest good is but little: that all life is but a dream, and dreams are only dreams (my translation).

ideoscape encompasses the flows of ideas and ideologies that shape cultural manifestations within the system called by Appadurai 'global cultural economy' (Appadurai 1996:27). This chapter will thus focus on the ideologies underpinning the phenomenon of the NaDaPs, the images, the imagined and the imaginaries that are produce and invoked by them. NaDaPs claim to represent or mediate nations. It will firstly question what the 'nation' is in relation to the phenomenon of the NaDaP and thus whether and to what extent NaDaPs mediate nations, and how this claim reflects back onto the constitution and content of each iteration.

NaDaPs are events that form part of the 'global cultural economy' while they at the same time raise a national claim, some by means of their name and all by their localisation and selection process towards the showcase. This selection process is underpinned by ideas about quality governed by various rationales. To explore the ideologies at work, I will especially investigate two core concepts that emerged in Chapter 2 and which I have identified as instrumental for carrying out NaDaPs. These are that of *national-ness* and th*at of contemporaneity*. However, as mentioned several times, NaDaPs are a global phenomenon and currently, the global(ised) governing ideology in neo-liberalism. This is an ideology with several effects, many of them in the field of the economy. Therefore, I have decided to pursue a more in-depth investigation of the interplay between NaDaPs and neo-liberalism in Chapter 7, *Money makes the World go 'round, and Capital moves around in the World*. However, pre-empting I will touch upon this concept also in this chapter about images, ideas and ideologies when necessary.

After exploring the NaDaPs' claim of national-ness, I will focus to the other element constitutive to the genealogy of NaDaPs, that of *contemporaneity*. For, as some of

the interviewees conveyed (Ashford and Beattie 2017; Heun 2017; Ketels 2017), and as it becomes apparent from the historical line drawn from Bagnolet's competition to the NaDaPs, a paramount source of motivation to construct NaDaPs was to enable the newly emerging art form, contemporary dance to achieve more visibility. They were indeed a tool to bring visibility to a 'new' dance form that was emerging and was less funded than the then omnipresent classical ballet. Following the history of Bagnolet and the interviews with my different informants, terms like modern, modern ballet or contemporary were used interchangeably to signify "other than ballet". As inaccurate as this might seem from today's perspective, this reflects the dance parlance in much of the 1970s and 1980s. Only after the 1990s (the time of the phenomenon's emergence) a greater clarity seemed to crystallise about dance that had emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as an alternative to Western classical ballet. As I will go on to discuss how, *contemporaneity* as a "critical and therefore a selective concept (that) promotes and excludes" (Osborne 2013:2) became relevant in later years. And what the dance NaDaPs were aiming at promoting was contemporary dance in its various manifestations. Therefore, it is paramount to understand how exclusion and inclusion are governed within the discourse of contemporaneity.

Sometimes disguised in a word of vague definition, 'quality', perceptions of relevance for the present, and thus a sense of contemporaneity, play a role at the point of selecting to participate in a NaDaP. However, what is relevant can be more or less explicit according to the context. While for the jury of *Dance Platform Germany (DPG) 2016* it was paramount that pieces were *impulsgebend* (trendsetting), marketability was important in the case of *British Dance Edition (BDE) 2016* and more undefined 'quality' at *International Exposure (IE) 2015* (Ashford and Beattie 2017; Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017; Vardi 2017). In the case of *Shakti. A Space for a Single Body (SSSB)*, concepts of

contemporaneity were secondary to the main subject of the festival, but it nevertheless

played a role in the selection (Perera 2016). Therefore, the second part of this chapter will

focus on notions of contemporaneity and how they play out in relation to the claims of

national-ness in the four case studies.

The context in which the state and dance meet more overtly is that of the

folk-dance ensemble (Shay 1999:29). Because folk dance (as opposed to traditional dance)

is a form of dance that often operates as a constructed formulation of national identity –

operation similar to those suggested by Hobsbawm in *The invention of Tradition* (1983) -

it goes unchallenged that a politically charged relationship is forged between folk dances

and the contexts in which they are placed as original. Dance historian Anthony Shay

argues that stately sponsored folk dance ensemble proliferated after the 1950s worldwide,

but in the hegemonic powers of the West and Japan (Shay 1999: 29). These dance

companies played a big role in conveying notions about the nations' "essence"[111].

However, I argue that national identities are also formulated in national dance platforms,

despite them presenting mainly contemporary rather than folk dance. Interestingly,

NaDaPs emerged in the so-constructed West that did not sponsor state folk dance

ensembles. This raises the question whether contemporary dance is a language that

conveys national identities and if so, whether it acts as the folk dance of hegemonic

nations, those that formulate contemporaneity and claim it for themselves. Hence, the

argument opens the room to ponder whether contemporary dance, being advanced through

the globalised phenomenon of the NaDaP, might be an instrument of cultural neo-

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[111] Shay goes a long way to describe how directors and choreographers were encouraged to engage
in field research to find the most "authentic" dances.

colonialism. I will thus now proceed to discuss the NaDaPs' claim of national

representation.

5.2   The claim of national-ness or national representation

In their positioning as national events, NaDaPs are iterated in countries as

different as Britain, South Korea, Russia, Germany, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, the Czech

Republic or Sri Lanka, just to name a few. As such, they are a global phenomenon[112] of

which nevertheless, more iterations happen in European countries[113]. However, it might be

misleading to suggest that they are all one and the same. Even at the first glance Sri

Lanka's platform *SSSB* was not similar to Israel's *IE 2015*, despite the common

characteristic of being constituted as a NaDaP or in place of one. By the same token, there

is no manifestation of a dance platform with the pretence of representing the *global*. While

there is a global body focused on dance such as the International Dance Council (CID, as

part of the UNESCO), it does not carry out an International Dance Platform, that would

raise the rather impossible claim of international representation. Nor does the International

Theatre Institute in its dance branch[114] organize dance platforms with the aspiration of any

international representation. The global phenomenon dance platform is always iterated in

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[112] Here it is interesting to note that some regions such as the Arab World, the Nordic Countries
and South Eastern Asia are also establishing dance platforms similar to NaDaPs, but with a
regional focus.

[113] At the time or writing this thesis, Brazil was also envisioning the constitution of a NaDaP,
widening the scope of NaDaPs beyond Europe. At the same time, other parts of the world have
organised in Regions to establish Regional Dance Platforms, for instance South-East Asia's *Hot
Pot* or the *Arab Dance Platform* held in Lebanon.

[114] The ITI has assumed the responsibility for archiving the Dance Platform Germany. This begs
for the question of the grade of legitimisation that dance deemed German can acquire in the future,
or the other way around, for the centrality that Germany might acquire through the archivisation of
its national dance platform by the ITI for the History of Dance.

a concrete national context. Therefore, in the local construction of the global phenomenon, NaDaPs respond to national rationales and thus reflect prevalent ideologies in the specific locations of the iteration.

In none of the case studies has the State itself established the respective NaDaP. However, as made explicit in their name (the 'Na' in NaDaP stands for 'national'), NaDaPs assert the prerogative of having some degree of national representation, presenting selected dance productions that are thus considered *national*. But the question of national representation is one of who has the power to decide upon what, and who, represents, or can represent the nation. In an authoritarian regime, that would be a state functionary, for instance the Minister of Culture, who would call out the event and also have the prerogative to decide upon these questions. On the other end of a scale, in the context of current democracies (representative or not, and some struggling for survival within the neo-liberal world) anybody can carry out an event and claim it is national. For if the state is minimal, and that is the framework outlined by the neo-liberal order, there is no *primo inter pares* and anyone who has the means to do an event can do so and claim it represents something – and that something can also be the nation. All four case studies take place in countries with democracies as system of governance. However, in each case the State is differently involved. This involvement manifests through the structural funding of the NaDaP itself, of its guests, or of specific forms of dance production. At the same time, all four NaDaPs have been established by cultural actors of the dance field and not, for instance, by corporations or representatives from the finance or political sector. However, each NaDaP and each state in which they take place is to different degrees intertwined in the global neo-liberal order. Thus, all NaDaPs raise in some way or another

the claim of national representation, but they are differently related to the nation and the state, and ultimately to the wider global(ised) dance world.

Homi Bhabha, scholar of post-colonialism, proposes "the cultural construction of nationness as a form of social and textual affiliation" (Bhabha 1993:2929. Drawing on his concept of nationness, I talk about national-ness to refer the constructedness of the attributes that constitute the NaDaP. Criteria of national-ness thus play a role at the moment of elaborating a NaDaP because they claim to represent the nation. This thesis' main question is to what extent they do so and how national-ness is claimed. Thus, it is important to scrutinise what 'national' stands for in each case, for this will have effects onto *who* is legitimised to do *what* and *how*, at the moment to embody the representation of the nation. Political scientist Benedict Anderson suggested in *Imagined Communities* ([1983] 2006) that, within the colonial order, colonised subjects of imperial domains started to develop a sense of common-ness in their destinies of being entities subordinated to a far-away ruler. Communities that could imagine or envision themselves as such, developing ideas of identity and sovereignty that would ultimately lead to political movements aiming at their independence from the colonial powers.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Europe was mainly ruled by sizable polities (Austro-Hungarian Empire, Ottoman Empire, the French Republic with its Second Empire, the Russian Empire, the German Empire and British Empire)[115], that were

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[115] The constitution and later dissolution processes of these empires differ greatly from one another. However, it can be broadly asserted that Europe was divided among Empires that superseded the idea of the nation-state. It is interesting though that Historians as e.g. Hobsbawm seem to have perceived the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman Empires as multilingual, but not the British Empire in Europe. This might be due to the more advanced process of nation-building in Britain, where the English / British had already acquired unquestioned supremacy (Hobsbawm 1990:34 – 35; 41 – 42).

to different degrees multi-ethnic and multi-lingual. However, replicating the process of overseas[116], some groups within these Empires strengthened their own perception as distinct communities. This gave way to the idea that a nation was an organic entity that encompassed a unity of all people with a shared language, religion and ethnicity within a territory. In turns, this perception constituted the ideology that led to the emergence for instance of Hungarian, Czech or Turkish nationalisms. Thus, the political figure of the nation-state started to be construed as the rationale underpinning the aspirations leading to a new political order that was to replace most of these homogenising empires. What emerged were Western European modern states that, imbued with the idea of the nation, undertook it to interlink and ultimately subsume a 'national peoplehood' with shared ethnicity, language, religion and territory under one flag. This national people inhabited the nation-state, the seminal unit of the new political order that was thereafter understood as the new rationale to underpin societal and political organisation on a global scale (despite some of the Empires surviving as such and retaining their conquered colonies overseas).

However, this new order (nations instead of empires) is not unchallengeable, for nation-states are not *per se* more legitimate a form of political order (or coercion) than other ones. Moreover, as Appadurai notes, in many cases "the nation and the state have become one another's projects" (Appadurai 1990:303). This interplay raises questions about the dance works bestowed with the legitimacy to be representative for the nation in the field of dance, and whether the nation's rationale might still be haunting the state in this process of legitimisation. Who created the works, what their

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[116] Anderson conducted his research about the emergence of national movements in South-East Asia

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content is about, who dances and which vocabulary they employ might give information about how the nation understands itself. For this is thus inherently connected to the claim of *national* representation raised by the NaDaP, and therefore some dancers (and not others) will be legitimised to dance in some specific ways about specific things embodying the nation at the event. I will make my case alongside anthropologist Robert Foster, who suggested that both a nation and its national culture are discretional matters. In his words "the problem of making a national culture is a specific instance of a more general phenomenon, namely, the naturalization of arbitrariness" (Foster, R. 1991:237). In his argument, expanded in the article *Making national cultures in the global ecumene* (1991), Foster presents the case that nations (and therefore concomitantly, I would suggest, whatever is deemed national) are a quintessentially arbitrary idea, and not a concept standing beyond all challenges. And I would suggest that this arbitrariness has been hence forth often used to distribute power, granting to some peoples and their ideas legitimacies that are denied to others by the same mechanisms.

As described above, the nation-state is the political unit that sustained a new world order and governed the distribution of power after the breakdown of many of the big empires, but they are by no means organic units. Nations are imagined and constructed, and states provide their legal and political framework. Therefore, it is important to question how the nation and the state relate to and do for each other. Nation-states structure society with laws applying to all inhabitants of their territories, and bestow all *citizens* with rights and "distribute entitlements…in accordance with classifications and policies regarding group identity" (Appadurai 1996:15). However, due to the interlinking of migratory, trade, co-operation and conquest flows, the hyphen between the nation and the state has widened (Appadurai 1996:17), and they are at times "at each other's throats"

(Appadurai 1990:304). In any case, it is safe to say that the relationship between the nation and the state is challenged on many fronts[117]. Yet, "making national cultures always entails creation of the "*national* citizen", a particular kind of subject with a definite sort of historical consciousness, view of authority and sense of self" (Foster, R. 1991:238, my italics). With its monopoly on educational affairs and policies of cultural public funding, states enable the creation of specific forms of work to be bestowed with the legitimisation of being *nationally* important, while others are not. The fact that this is the political organisational system in which we live does not make of the construct 'nation' a less capricious one, and indeed, the nation might still be haunting the state at the moment of implementing systems and policy. In the NaDaP, this results in *who* is finally legitimised to dance *what* and *how* at the moment of representing the nation.

Further, we can see the work of the *ideoscape* in how processes by which the Nation imagines itself are condensed in the instance of its active self-re-presentation: a chain spanning from the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations[118] held 1851 in London, England to the International Hygiene Exhibition (held 1911 in Dresden, Germany), to National Dance Platforms. Beyond the competition to show discoveries and (indeed pillaged) goods and peoples from the colonies at the former (de Cauter 1993:5-9), there is further, more alarming, aspect of this national self-making in the development of the Hygiene Exhibitions, with their underpinning ideologies of optimization of the nation's body and racial purity. For the purification of the 'national body' led, for instance, to the deprivation of citizenship of parts of the German population. Twenty-two years after the

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[117] But also receives much attention and a rebirth due to political parties affiliated with identitarian and alt-right movements that try to restore this link.

[118] More discussion on the World Exhibitions is provided, for example, by De Cauter (1993).

first Hygiene Exhibition in Dresden, Adolf Hitler took over government power in Germany and only two years later, in 1935, the Nuremberg Race Laws were announced, which excluded German Jews from the German national body (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung BPB, n.d.). Three years later, the Reichskristallnacht-called pogrom promoted the physical destruction of non-aryanised Jewish property and as of 1941, systematic deportations and extermination of Jews (and of Sinti, Roma, Jehova's Witnesses and homosexuals among others) begun[119], normalising the perception that "the killing of Jews, Disabled, Sinti and Roma, etc. was until 1945 a moral and necessary deed for the sake of the [German-Aryan] Peoplehood" (Wenzel 2009:31, my translation). This draws our attention again to the dangers of a nation understood as an entity resulting from the conflation of ethnicity, religion, language and territory amalgamated into Foster's description of the construction of a national citizen, in which "sameness overrides difference" (Foster, R. 1991:237), in a quest for "internal purity…[in that t]he nation-state formation [thus] entails a (hegemonic) struggle for homogenization" (Foster, R. 1991: 245). The same as the Great Exhibitions, NaDaPs are a case of active claiming of national self-representation. The development from the former to the Hygiene Exhibitions and their subsequent effect, provide the ground for asking how my case studies represent and mediate the locations in which they take place and how this reflects back onto the selection of different sectors of the population in their respective contexts.

However, the relationship between the nation and the NaDaP – and the effects on who is legitimised to participate - plays out differently in the four case studies.

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[119] The history of the Third Reich, its racial laws and obsession with racial purity has been manifold researched. Just a note to add that people with disabilities were forced to undergo sterilisation in the beginning of Hitler's rule (Law of July 14th,1933). Tens thousands of people with disabilities were furthermore assassinated in the Nazi dictatorship's euthanasia programmes.

Turning to the Israeli example, since the placement of right-wing politicians Miri Regev and Naftali Bennett as culture and education ministers by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the country has been discussing a bill that aims at defining the country as a Jewish Home State[120]. Thus, when a Palestinian-Israeli choreographer and performer, such as Sahar Damoni was selected to take part at the Israeli *IE 2015*, this appeared to be clearly at odds with the broader *zeitgeist* of current Israel's politics and hence ultimately reaffirming the legitimacy of a Palestinian as a citizen of Israel, thus being showcased at Israel's NaDaP, *IE*. At the same time, in a solo within the piece *Cowboy* (Niv Sheinfeld and Oren Laor 2015) Christian non-Israeli dancer, Joel Bray also denounced Jewishness as a rational for citizenship (that goes as far as the not-prolongation of his residence permit on grounds of not being eligible for further residence in the country, among other on grounds of not being Jewish)[121]. This seems to bear witness to the possibility of freedom of expression in a country that appears to be turning ever more radical. At the same time, it raises the question of the NaDaP as a possible agent of change. One, that paves the way for a more inclusive narrative to be forged.

Turning the focus to the UK, when Beattie and Ashford were asked to define what makes dance British, they defined British dance as `diverse` (Ashford and Beattie 2017). Moreover, the Arts Council England's website[122] claims to make a Creative Case for Diversity (Arts Council Website). However, diversity seems to be a foregrounded

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[120] See for instance Kemnitzer 2018, Haaretz Editorial 2017, Lis 2017, among many others.

[121] In a world governed by the principle of nationality, the right of residency and work permits of non-nationals are subjected to national laws. Israel is no exception. However, non-national Jews can acquire these rights on the grounds of being Jewish. It is therefore more difficult for a non-Jewish non-national to acquire these rights.

[122] The Arts Council is the biggest body funding arts with public money in England. Other parts of the UK have similar bodies, such as the Arts Council of Wales, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Scottish Arts Councl.

politic, but discretionally distributed. While there were dance and dancers with non-normatisable physicalities, and several productions with and by dance and dancers of non-Western descent, including for example artists of South-East Asian descent, dance and dancers of African or Caribbean descent seemed to be some less represented at *BDE 2016*[123]. This circumstance seems to be born on a much larger scale in the Windrush scandal (Gentleman 2018 and others), unveiled two years later by the newspaper *The Guardian*. As it transpired, many people from British colonies and Dominions in the Caribbean, who had been invited as British subjects to reconstruct Britain after WW2 have been stripped of their citizenship, resulting in some cases of being deprived of services available to other citizens of the country and for others to deportation[124]. In this case, the selection for the NaDaP *BDE 2016* seems to have replicated a rationale underlying assumptions of nationhood in Britain that sidelines people of African or Caribbean descent. Thus, *BDE 2016* has actually mediated the nation, to the extent that while it on the one hand tried to make a diverse selection, artists of Afro-Caribbean descent were not widely represented.

Turning the focus to the *DPG 2016*, *Not Punk, Pololo* (Gintersdorfer & Klaßen), the piece that opened the event was developed by international performers and co-creators under the direction of Germans, Monika Gintersdorfer and Knut Klaßen. Several of the people on stage, the piece's content, much of its dance vocabulary and

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[123] There were two creations by choreographers of African or Afro-Caribbean descent and three by choreographers of SE-Asian descent. Thus, this argument could be dismissed on grounds of a small difference. However, the qualitative data I gathered in interviews (as for instance with Beattie) and e-mail correspondence (Johnson-Small 2016) allows me to suggest that dance created and performed by artists of African or Afro-Caribbean descent is far less established and accepted within the community of British professional contemporary dance.

[124] Several articles, for instance in *The Guardian* (Gentleman 2018) or in *The Independent* (Davey, 2019)

music were Ivorian. But this prominently *Ivorian*/German co-production was presented at the *DPG 2016*, legitimised by the rationale "if there is German public funding, the product is German" (Traub 2017). This raises questions about nationality and nationhood as commodifiable goods, for dancers live where the conditions are more favourable for making a living out of their profession. This raises the question; to what extent German money enables new forms of colonialism, that emerge out of the disparity of the economic situation of a European country, in this case Germany, and an African nation, in the case the Ivory Coast?

Turning the focus to *SSSB*, it is important to recall that the country suffered a long civil war that finished 2009. The war was between the separatist Tamil Tigers and the central government, most of whose Army was of Sinhalese descent. Whereas not all Tamils supported the Tamil Tigers, they were scapegoated as a group, and many left the country to save their lives. What was at stake was the perception of being Sinhalese as a core value of Sri Lankan identity. Hence, in the case of Shakti, the fact that the Tamil creators and performers showcased are living in exile can be seen as a mirror of a society still affected by the ended civil war and its not yet fully-addressed consequences. However, *SSSB* has succeeded in presenting them, hence bringing their voices from the exile into the national discourse.

The four examples suggest that NaDaPS react to the ideologies governing the localities in which they are iterated. Sometimes, they reproduce exclusionary policies of their environment. However, in other case, NaDaPs have offered a space for forging narratives of the nation alternative to official ideologies. In the examples brought up above, the ideas of *national-nes*s that governed participation in or exclusion from the

respective NaDaPs, had direct effects on who was selected to be on stage. The seemingly abstract level of ideology materialised in who was legitimised to be representative for the nation at the NaDaP. The *ethnoscape* is the scape that focuses on transnational flows of people. Thus, it is in the very bodies that are finally legitimised to be on stage that the *ideoscape* and the *ethnoscape* converge. However, the discussion focusing on the *ethnoscape* will be developed Chapter 6 and now I will continue to discuss national-ness in relation to the NaDaPs' naming.

5.2.1   National-ness in the NaDaPs' names

Here I would like to focus on another emergence of the idea of national-ness that takes place purely in the *ideoscape*. This manifests in how NaDaPs are named and calls once more to the fore the complex intertwining of legitimacy, identity and nation. The relationship between name and nation translates differently in each of the four case studies, as some use the national adjective in the name as the "*British* Dance Edition", others use the country's denomination as a noun, such as the "Dance Platform *Germany*", *SSSB* used *Shakti*, a word in a local, non-international language as the only locational reference, and the Israeli *International Exposure* avoids every reference to its location. In what follows, I will argue that the different constructions of national-ness and nationhood in the four case studies derive from and interplay with the differing ways in that each nation constructs its present and thus its past.

Whereas all presents are products of their pasts, contemporary Germany is a very good example of how the country's history irradiates into everyday life. The horrors

of national-socialism have a direct effect in the country's self-perception and representation. This has an interesting impact on the naming of Germany's NaDaP. Whereas the official translation into English has erroneously been *German Dance Platform*[125], the actual name in German is *Tanzplattform Deutschland*, *Dance Platform Germany*. The adjective 'German' is avoided, and 'Germany' indicates only a location[126]. For, as Aleida Assmann asserts in her book significantly titled *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit* (The long Shadow of the Past [2006] 2014), "we are part of the world for which its (the Holocaust's) memory is centrally pressed" (Assmann [2006] 2014: 273). It is indeed very difficult in Germany to name something German, for this recalls the exclusionary rationales of national-socialistic times, circumstance also invoked by Heun when discussing the process of choosing the platform's name (Heun 2017). Thus, Germany's NaDaP bears witness to this discomfort and, despite the English translation, the original name for German-speakers actively avoids the possibility of this past resonating into the NaDaP. As Assmann asserts, Germany's past has long shadows.

In the case of Israel, the platform does not even feature the country's name, for it is called *International Exposure*. Asked about the lack of reference to the country in the event's title, director Yair Vardi gives two answers. Firstly, he says it is not necessary, for how would you be doing it if not 'in our name'? (Vardi 2015). Secondly, he suggests that a more explicit association with Israel has potentially harming effects, probably hinting at the (political) situation (Vardi 2017). Recalling my visit to the *IE 2015*, I

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[125] A personal telephone call with the German Dance Archive confirmed that the office seemed to never have noticed the incongruence between the translations. It hasn't been possible to find out if the mistranslation was intended or a mistake.

[126] This was even clearer in the platform 2018, which was for the first time called *Tanzplattform in Deutschland*, *Dance Platform in Germany*.

remember being only one of the two persons from Britain that attended the event. A conversation with the other 'British' person at the event revealed that they were aware that some colleagues would not visit Israel out of political principles. This might give credit to Vardi's assumption that making the country's name more apparent could be potentially harmful for the event.

On the other hand, naming something *British* does not seem to trouble the organisers of the BDE. Appadurai asserted that, while Britain's role as a hegemonic power is, comparatively to its own past, diminished (Appadurai 1996:146), the heritage industry has constructed in England an 'English historical space'[127] that suggests an untroubled, past splendour. This invoked image reinforces the perception of a placid and enjoyable history, that translates in what Gilroy called 'postcolonial melancholia' (Gilroy 2005)[128].

This construction of a placid and grand past is consistent with the wider context of how history is largely dealt with in the country. My visit to the *Imperial War Museum* in London gave an example of this[129]. The *Imperial* War Museum's main exhibition suggested that the only wars the country fought for the Empire are the two World Wars, in which Great Britain was on the side of the besiegers. It is unambiguous that Nazi Germany was a tyrannical and totalitarian regime that had to be defeated, and that Great Britain played a big role in this endeavour, which indeed cost the country

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[127] England is only one of the countries of Great Britain. However, it is striking how often English and British as adjectives are used indistinctively, even by enlightened cultural workers (my own experience in several talks and conferences). This might root in what Hechter (Hechter 1975 in Appadurai 1996:146) called English 'internal colonialism'.

[128] This state of post-colonial melancholia was ultimately manipulated in the Brexit debate, when the yellow press triggered debates about Imperial versus European measures or blue instead of red passports (References articles in The Sun and the Daily Mirror).

[129] I visited the museum on May 12th, 2017

thousands of lives. The exhibition was also very careful in grounding the Nazi's evilness

with a substantial section about the Holocaust. However, in all fairness to Britain's

sacrifice in WWII, the *Imperial* War Museums's exhibition failed to display any material

about the wars that Britain fought to acquire and retain its Empire, the pillage of its

colonies and their peoples' subjection. In other words, the exhibition showed the great

deeds of Great Britain's history, but failed to problematize or even mention more

questionable events of the country's past. This less troubling perception of the country's

own history (compared for instance to Germany's ubiquitous awareness of its traumatic

past) seems to provide a framework that enables a cultural event to be called *British*, for

the adjective 'British' seems not to recall any uncomfortable past events.

        Still focusing on the adjective 'British', the exploration for this thesis

presented challenges when referring to the UK, Britain or Great Britain and when calling

something 'British', as *BDE* does. Whereas the event is indeed called *British Dance*

Edition, technically the British Isles include the Isle of Ireland[130], which is divided

between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, that is part of the UK. If 'British'

refers to Great Britain only (the biggest of the British Isles), it would not include Northern

Ireland, and thus not include the whole of the UK. If it invokes all the British Isles, it

would include also the Republic of Ireland, which fought hard for its independence from

Great Britain. Moreover, there is no adjective that reflects the whole of the UK, as Welsh,

English, Northern Irish or Scottish do for the nations comprising it. Thus, British seems to

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[130] And also the Isle of Man, which is a British Crown dependency and other smaller islands that are possession of the different polities that constitute the UK. The Channel Islands are geographically not part of the archipelago of the British Isles, but are sometimes considered to be part of them on political grounds, due to the UK being responsible for their defence. However, following this line of reasoning, it would be important to trace the origins of the name 'British Isles'.

be an inaccurate denomination that, chosen for its NaDaP's name[131], reflects the UK's

generally unproblematized relationship with possibly troubling events of its own history.

In Sri Lanka, the event started with the name *Colombo Dance Platform*, for

it responded to the location of the festival's initiator, the Goethe-Institut (GI) in Colombo.

Björn Ketels, GI's director at the time, recalls that the third or fourth edition might have

been called *Sri Lankan Dance Platform*. However, the curator of edition 2016 decided for

the title *Shakti*, a word that in Sanskrit, Tamil and Sinhala stands for the female creative

forces in the Universe. After the long years in which all Tamil was singled out as non-

national and amidst a process of pacification and reconciliation that is far from finished, it

is unsurprising that the name *Shakti* does not raise a claim for national representation in

any way. However, the choice of the title does hint at the curator's effort to be inclusive.

The choice of *Shakti*, a word used both in Tamil and in Sinhala, in Hindu and Buddhist

contexts[132], hints at the platform proposing an inclusive environment, which goes much

further than any governmental initiative to include Tamil voices in the bigger Sri Lankan

narrative[133].

Concluding, it can be said that each country creates different frameworks to

legitimise the claim of *national* representation of their respective NaDaPs. The ideologies

underpinning these frameworks respond to the countries' local histories and their current

positionality in the global cultural economy. However, the relationship of a country to its

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[131] Whereas this was addressed with some doubts, the name seems to have been chosen by a member of the British Council, the UK's institute of national culture. (Ashford and Beattie 2017).

[132] The country's Sinhalese majority is mainly Buddhist, and the Tamil population is in its majority Hindu.

[133] Venuri Perera, the curator, is of Sinhalese Buddhist descent.

past and its prevailing narratives is multifaceted, and has different expressions in each case study. And, borrowing Assmann's (2013) book's title, '*the long shadow of the past*' finds a way to echo in the name of each NaDaP. Furthermore, it can be said that rationales related to ideas of nationhood underpin processes of selection to participate in NaDaPs, and that these seemingly abstract ideologies have concrete effects onto who is legitimised to participate. However, the *national* is not the only ideology active in the *ideoscape*, and I would like now to direct the attention to the *contemporary*.

5.3   Contemporaneity or notions of The Contemporary

Deeply entrenched with the question of national-ness addressed in the section above is the question of the art forms that embody and represent the nation's people. As described in the previous section, many European Empires dissolved into nation-states that aimed at a homogenisation of ethnicity, language, religion and territory. However, this was not the case for every community of peoples. Historian Eric Hobsbawm asserts that in the second half of the nineteenth century (the golden age of the nation-state) it was commonly accepted that some nations would disappear or merge into other, bigger national entities (Hobsbawm 1990:34-35). This was not at odds with the survival or even cultivation of languages or customs re-classed in this process as regional or local, as long as the new hegemonic power was not contested. As Hobsbawm states,

> … where the supremacy of the state-nationality and the state-language were not an issue, the major nation could cherish and foster the dialects and lesser languages within it, the historic and folkloric traditions of the lesser communities it contained, if only as a proof of the range

of colours on its macro-national palette (Hobsbawm 1990: 35)[134].

This is a process of establishment of power relationships by means of constituting a hierarchy. This process of hierarchisation of languages, customs and traditions also translates into dance, the central matter of the NaDaP. But despite their national claim, NaDaPs did not emerge to show traditional or folk dances of any of the countries in which they were instituted. In some cases, they were even established against or in contrast to the prevalence of dances constructed as folk or traditional. For typically, NaDaPs were constituted to render more visible a dance form that in their respective times and contexts did not rank high in the (constructed) hierarchy of dance styles. This art form was in all cases modern or contemporary dance, a dance form that in each case had to establish itself against or alongside different pre-existing dance forms.

Helping the contemporary dance to more visibility was also an aim when establishing the first NaDaPs in the UK and Germany[135] (Ashford and Beattie 2017; Heun, 2017) and this led as well to more financial significance (Heun 2017). For in both countries, the prevalent dance form was the Western classical ballet. In the UK, some Arts Council funded classical Ballet and Ballet-based companies existed and received most of the available dance-funding (Ashton and Beattie 2017). In Germany, due to the country's

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[134] A good example of this is provided in *From a Death to a View: The Hunt for the Welsh Past* (Morgan 1983). when he describes the revival of the Welsh Eisteddfodau. Further, for a beautifully poetic account of this time in the fringes of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, see Elias Canetti's autobiography, *Die Gerettete Zunge* (Zürich, 1977)

[135] Looking further in history, it is worth recalling here that the competition in Bagnolet, ultimately the trigger for the NaDaPs, also grew out of Jacque Chaurand's urgency to gain visibility and funds for the new art form, which had difficulties to establish itself against a backdrop of a ballet-dominated understanding of dance.

pre-war history of separate Kingdoms and Counties that unified as a country quite late in European terms, tens of cities from small to big have their own Municipal or State-funded theatres housing ballet or ballet-leaning companies[136]. Sri Lanka's platform, established much later in history, emerged also out of the will to make the new art form visible (Ketels 2017, Perera 2016). The prevalent dance form in Sri Lanka was Kandyan Dance, grounded in traditional dances of the Kingdom of Kandy, elevated to classical Sri Lankan dance[137]. In Israel, folk dance and modern dance were created alongside each other, mostly by European immigrants in the times leading up to the establishment of the state. Western Ballet was (and still is) relatively irrelevant in the country's dance landscape[138]. Hence, it can be asserted that contemporary dance emerged and was established in three of the case studies, Britain, Germany and Sri Lanka in contrast to a pre-existing dance form, that was more widely recognised and mostly better funded. Israel constitutes the exception in this case. Thus, within the framework of the NaDaP there is a clear intention to bolster contemporary dance, which translates in a prioritisation of this art form by the NaDaP – at least when the phenomenon began. However, contemporary means in each context something different. In *DPG 2016* it gave room to include some Ballet-based productions, in the context of *SSSB* it encompassed works focusing on the tension between traditional

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[136] Despite the country having a strong tradition of German Expressionistic Dance, many of its actors were either forced into the exile by the Nazi Regime or were complicit with it. At the same time, after the war all that was 'German' was looked upon with suspicion. Therefore, when public funding for dance was established again after the war, most of the companies decided for the less controversial form of the classical Ballet.

[137] Given the civil war between extremists of two ethnicities that ravaged the country for over 30 years, Kandyan Dance was also part of the affirmation of the majority Sinhalese culture, and as such widely funded by the State. Whereas the first *Colombo Dance Platform* aimed at bringing all actors (in dance) together (Perera 2016, Ketels 2017), it quickly developed a selection framework that removed the performances to be selected from the traditional understanding of dance within the Kandyan context.

[138] The *Israel Ballet* (established 1967) is the only company in the country that performs classical works.

and Western-based dance forms and *BDE 2016* showcased several works rooted in different South-Eastern Asian dance vocabularies. Hence, mirroring the former question, what makes dance *national* this section will address what makes dance *contemporary*.

The second half of the nineteenth century was not only the time of crystallisation of nation-states but also the time that paved the way for the emergence of modernity. Modernity was understood as a rupture (Appadurai 1996:3) with the past, and the emergence of a new understanding of the human being's place in the world. But, as Appadurai continues to point at, there is at least one complication to this perception of modernity: the idea that there is only one possible rupture, which divides the before and after, and therefore places some societies in pre- and others in post-modern times. I would suggest that in consequence of this perception of the rupture-divide, and because European countries were the colonial powers, it is Western societies that placed themselves at the forefront of modernity. As seen above, the art forms produced in hegemonic contexts in Europe were prioritised over others that were deemed the expressions of less civilised peoples[139]. This was even more so in the relationship between European (mostly colonial) nations and their colonised counterparts. Due to the chronological perception of a 'one possible rupture', and following the self-positioning of European nations as crossing the rupture with the past earlier than others, the art originated in them was considered the only possible modern art, in an imagined chain that spanned from traditional to classical to modern to post-modern or contemporary. This idea of a one rupture that divides the world in pre-modern and post-modern nations seems to be still pervasive, at least on a subliminal

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[139] The flipside of this hierarchisation is the projection of, for instance, purity and spontaneity onto these expressions, which sustain their child-like perception in the West.

level[140], and I would argue that it is reproduced in discourses about contemporaneity, albeit in new disguises.

As described in Chapter 1.2, for instance in Argentina of the 1980s, "contemporary dance" was associated with specific techniques and dance vocabularies, such as Cunningham, Nikolais, Limon, Muller and Graham[141]. These were the techniques taught at the only public contemporary dance school existing in the country's capital at that time. These techniques had been explored and created in the USA, the Western hegemon and were taught in a country in the Global South as 'being' contemporary dance. Thus, this suggests that at that specific time and location, the idea prevailed that the contemporary was a rupture that had happened elsewhere, and that the only way to participate in the 'new global and transnational times' was to act within these dance vocabularies. This raises the question whether notions of contemporaneity, or more specifically, dance vocabularies exclusively associated with contemporaneity were thus acting hybridly as agents of cultural colonialism. The NaDaPs that constitute this study took place roughly 30 years later both in hegemonic and non-hegemonic countries. Meanwhile, discourses about contemporaneity and especially about (post)colonialism have evolved, and such a blatant conflation of specific dance vocabularies with contemporaneity might be more difficult to sustain, thus this invites to ask what is the contemporary.

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[140] For example, as an informant in Great Britain told me, in their perception, South-East Asian dancers in the UK could engage in work that would not be possible in South-East Asia itself. However, as it will become clear in short, Shakti showcased work that would have been perceived as challenging both in the UK and in Sri Lanka.

[141] Although Martha Graham is a figure of the US-American modernism in dance, here I group Graham technique as contemporary because that was its perception in that context at that time.

Peter Osborne asserts that 'Contemporaneity is a condition, not a period' (Osborne 2013: 17). Thus, opposing a periodisation of art forms and styles, he declares contemporaneity as a state of being, and not one particular way of expression (despite the fact that 'contemporary' as an adjective is sometimes used referring to specific styles of art or dance techniques, that are then conflated with perceptions of contemporaneity). Thus, unlike the time-related rupture of modernity, the contemporary rupture is an ontological one that challenges ways of perceiving the self in times and defining consequently approaches to art. Osborne asserts that there is:

> a distinctive conceptual grammar of con-temporaneity, a coming together not simply 'in' time but of times: we do not just live or exist together 'in time' with our contemporaries – as if time itself is indifferent to this existing together – but rather the present is increasingly characterized by a coming together of different but equally 'present' temporalities or 'times', a temporal unity in disjunction, or a disjunctive unity of present times (Osborne 2013: 17, italics in original)

Here I am focusing on the praxis of creating contemporary dance and the discourses that originate alongside this development under the lens of the *ideoscape*. On the level of dance styles, techniques and vocabularies, both in Germany and Britain there is a growing acknowledgment of movement sources others than those originated within the Western hemisphere, as made explicit for instance by the works *Echoes* (Aakash Odedra Company) or *Decreasing Infinity* (Balbir Singh Dance Company) showcased at *BDE 2016* or *Not Punk, Pololo* (Gintersdorfer / Klaßen) at *DPG 2016*. At *IE 2015*, the work presented by Sahar Damoni was also rooted on traditions of the Arab environment of her upbringing. However, these works could be showcased as contemporary because of their

alluded significance in the discussion of the actuality of the(ir) present. Hence, contemporaneity seems to be the tool that legitimises the entry of dance forms previously degraded to being *traditional* or *local* into the big stage of the global. For, in Osborne's words, "The contemporary appears… as *idea, problem, fiction and task*… and… in its most recent guise as *the time of the globally transnational*" (Osborne 2013:15, italics in original).

Turning the focus to Sri Lanka, *SSSB* provided evidence of art works that, produced outside of the West, respond to issues of global interest, and are therefore very much aware of the *globally transnational* (for instance gender issues that have been prevalent in the international focus)[142]. At the same time, they respond to local attributions by using re-contextualised dance vocabulary grounded in movements rooted in traditional dances. An example for this was the work of Sri Lankan-Sinhalese choreographer and dancer Pradeep Gunarathna showcased at Shakti. Placing movement based on traditional dance styles within a contemporary framework he showed his work *Giri Devi Androgynous* (2016). In it, Gunarathna used the tension between traditional low-country dance style and contemporary movements to depict the tension in the oscillation of Giri Devi as Devi (Goddess) and Yakshni (Demoness), making also explicit his discussion of gender issues in the work's title. Challenging gender stereotypes is often perceived as a characteristic of liberal, contemporary societies. This is a confusion of liberalism and contemporaneity, that evokes a (mis)understanding of the latter akin to that of modernity (something that happened eventually in time). Approaches to nudity are often also associated to different degrees of liberalism. Shakti presented Indian creator and performer

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[142] However, it is important to question what construes some subjects or discourses as *globally transnational.*

Mallika Taneja with her piece *Thoda Dhyaan (Be Careful),* in which she is naked for most of the performance, presenting nudity as part of a wider discourse of gender, fragility and strength. Whereas it is true that the piece was presented at the Goethe-Institut Colombo (an international venue, for which existing censorship laws do not apply), and it was marked 'more suitable for 18+', there was no empty chair in the theatre. Unlike in Germany, in Britain there would have been similar signs warning the spectator of the possibly 'offensive' content hinting at the performer's nudity. This is another instance thus that demonstrates that a discretional distribution of ideas of contemporaneity by Western hegemonic countries can lead to false conclusions.

Thus, what is contemporary and how it manifests, varies according to the locality in which it emerges, for according to Osborne "to claim something is contemporary is to claim its significance in participating in the actuality of the present…" (Osborne 2013:2). And the actuality of the present, its urgencies, differ from site to site. Hence it is a way of *approaching the present* which makes work contemporary. This formulation seems to be mirrored most clearly by the jury of the *DPG* when they enunciate their leading criteria as looking for productions that are *impulsgebend* (Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017), that give new impulses for the art form in its context. However, in this specific case, the jury's understanding of the contemporary led to the platform showcasing some productions rooted in the tradition of the neo-classical Ballet (such as Adam Lindner's *Parade*), or Liska's und Scott's re-staging of Gerhard Bohner's reconstruction (1977) of Oskar Schlemmer's *Triadisches Ballet (1922)* performed by the Bavarian State Ballet Company II. This seems to be very much in line with Osborne's tenet that '[T]his concept (the contemporary) must be *constructed* rather than merely discovered' (Osborne 2013: 3). Thus, within the context of a hegemonic nation, Germany, it was possible to

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construct performances based on classical dance technique as contemporary, as the presentation of the *Triadisches Ballet* and *Parade* have proved.

Constructing folk dance or ballet as contemporary might have proven more difficult in a non-hegemonic country. As stated earlier in this chapter, 'lesser or smaller' nations could participate in cultivating folklore and traditions, as much as these did not contest the position of hegemonic powers (Hobsbawm 1990:34-35). Conversely, this means that dance originated in non-hegemonic nations inside and outside the West can be easily categorised as traditional or folklore[143]. Be it in their countries of origin or practiced by migrant communities, these dance vocabularies are often reduced to the expression of (national) identities, being then prone to an essentialist gaze. Contemporary dance has been constructed free of these essentialisations of national identity. However, as argued earlier, some styles and forms of dance have been associated with contemporaneity and called 'contemporary dance'. When framed in such a way that makes of contemporaneity the successor of modernity, and places it only in Western nations, these dance forms seem to act as the folk dance of hegemonic nations and when distributed worldwide by NaDaPs contribute to a neo-colonial endeavour.

However, I have also argued that folk dance or ballet have also been in certain cases legitimized through the contemporary gaze and through the organising structure of the NaDaP made available to the world. Thus, contemporaneity seems to be the *laissez-passer* (free waver) or requirement for the local ("local" equalling being less important and worthy, if we accept together with Hobsbawm that local customs were only

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[143] However, at the same time, this triggered processes that led to constituting classical dance canons in former colonies, as is the case, for example, in India and Sri Lanka (Reed 2010:7).

cherished when they did not contest the hegemonic powers of 'bigger' nations') to be admitted into the global stage[144]. If we exchange the word Contemporaneity for Christianity, this seems to be the same process of 'salvation' of goods and peoples practiced by missionaries in times the of Conquistadores. For this process resonates with the Christian teleology that claims to provide the only way to salvation. However, this was a salvation that implied at the same time cultural and material appropriation, commodification and marketization of goods and peoples.

5.4   Conclusions

National-ness and contemporaneity, the ideologies underpinning the phenomenon of the NaDaP have been in focus in this chapter under the lens of the *ideoscape*. On the one hand, notions of contemporaneity have been critical for establishing NaDaPs. This was often linked to a sense of disadvantage of the new art form, contemporary dance, in relation to more established forms such as classical ballet or folk dance, and that this new dance form had to be helped to visibility. However, grounded on Osborne's tenet that contemporaneity is a state of being while the contemporary must be constructed, these very dance forms, Western classical ballet, folk dance, and dance styles that had been canonised as 'classical' against which contemporary dance sought to affirm itself in its beginnings, have found a way into the four NaDaPs that constitute this study through contemporary approaches.

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[144] A process alike that of conversion to Christianity for Jews in the Germany of the 19th century, that was called by Heinrich Heine *billet d'entré* (entrance ticket) (Heine 1993)

Discourses of national-ness, albeit entrenched with modernity in the inception of the nation-state, were also seminal to the establishment of the NaDaPs. However, concepts of nationhood and the administration of national-ness vary according to the locality of each NaDAP. At first glance, some of the works showcased by the case studies seemed not to be consistent with presumed dance vocabularies and styles of the country in which the NaDaP was held, as for instance South-East Asian dance forms at *BDE 2016* or a discussion about Arab-ness at *IE 2015*. But NaDaPs provide a space in which alternative criteria and narratives of nationhood can find a place, and in which contemporary understandings of the nation can be proposed. At the same time, while NaDaPs were established to make contemporary dance more visible, the contemporary state of being can be the arbiter that paves the way for dance styles often not associated with contemporary dance to find a way into NaDaPs.

At the same time, on a global scale, this chapter has argued that forms of contemporary dance can act as the folk dance of hegemonic nations and be part of a neo-colonial endeavour. In any case, it is the imagined community of the nation and its values that re-imagines and re-presents itself in a NaDaP and conversely, NaDaPs mediate the nations they represent. But while NaDaPs solicit dance vocabularies that can resist the homogenising force of the nation-state, they only exist embodied by people. Going back to the epigraph opening the chapter, it is the social praxis of imagination (Appadurai 1996:31) that, governed by rationales provided by the *ideoscape*, shapes an event that has real effects on the dance field and thus on the legitimisation of dancers to mediate or represent the nation at them. The ways in which the NaDaPs' claim of national-ness reflect back onto the dancers and choreographers acting in them will be the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

CASTINGS

> "dance and migration share common ground
> because the dance world is a nomadic one constituted
> by a mobile set of subjects in search
> of economic prosperity and/or political and artistic freedoms"
> (Scolieri in Njaradi, 2014:39)

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 2, *The Stage*, described the four NaDaPs that are case studies of

this thesis. Its title revealed my intention to treat NaDaP as performances – as performative

acts. Before setting a work on stage, almost every creation is preceded by a *casting* (or in

contemporary dance parlance, an audition), a process in which the future dancers, actors

and performers are chosen and designated. Only the accepted ones will be able to be part

of the new piece. The same as theatre plays or dance pieces do, NaDaPs also choose the

people that will be allowed to participate in them. Thus, although "people are neither the

beginning nor the end of the national narrative" (Bhabha 1993:297), when NaDaPs claim

national representation and the question leading this research is whether and to which

extent do NaDaPs represent or mediate nations, it is necessary to explore how the claim of

national-ness reflects back on the legitimisation of people to constitute the structure and

contents of the NaDaP in each location. For at NaDaPs, people are neither the beginning

not the end, but the medium to convey narratives of the nationness. In this chapter,

Castings, I will focus thus on the human structure of the events. In order to do so, I will use the lens of Appadurai's global *ethnoscape* and explore whether and how criteria of national-ness or contemporaneity, as described in the previous chapter, are intertwined with the selection processes for NaDaPs, affecting their claims of national representation and shaping thus the human collective that will be inscribed into the nation-al platform or NaDaP, and thus the showcased nation. Conversely, this chapter will also inquire whether the human side of NaDaPs (that is to say *who* is participating) allows for an unequivocal reading of the social fabric of the place in which they occur.

Appadurai defines the *ethnoscape* as "the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers and other moving groups and persons …" (Appadurai 1990:297). Thus, Appadurai counts into the *ethnoscape* all people on the move, those that are not in their place of birth, who have migrated or are migrating – temporarily, for longer periods or for life. Following this definition, if we turn the focus to NaDaPs, on the global scale *ethnoscape* refers to the people who globally populate and move within and in-between them, whether as artists or as programmers-buyers, as jurors or administrators. But every NaDaP is also a local occurrence, and as stated above, each event claims whether implicitly or explicitly national representation. And not everyone finds their place at a NaDaP. As the chapter's title suggests, there are castings, mechanisms that determine who will be allowed to take part[145].

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[145] The 'casting' of performances for a NaDaP is more akin a curatorial process than a traditional 'casting' situation.

Thus, the global "landscape of persons" that Appadurai refers to is qualified in each national occurrence. The fact that the character of the four NaDaPs, *BDE 2016*, *DPG 2016*, *IE 2015* and *SSSB* differed greatly from one another suggests that criteria of national-ness were in each case different. But does the *Na*, that explicit claim of national representation offer the easy answer, that those who are nationals can take part? This is not the case. As I have shown in Chapter 5, a dancer's or choreographer's nationality (as stated in their passport)[146] does not define their legitimisation to be showcased at a NaDaP, and thus to embody or represent the nation in those events. Indeed, as the epigraph reminds us, "dance and migration share common ground" (Scolieri 2008 in Njaradi, 2014) and migrations are indeed at the core of NaDaPs. On the one hand, a big part of the targeted audiences are *international* programmers (Ashford and Beattie 2017, Heun 2017). They constitute a different category from all those cited by Appadurai though, since they are not tourists, not guestworkers, not immigrants and not exiles, but indeed professionals "on the move" to perform their task. Also, in some cases the artists live permanently abroad, as it was the case for instance with several of the dancers at *DPG 2016* or *IE 2015*, or are part of ethnic minorities – often a result of former migrations – as it was the case of Black British or Asian artists at *BDE 2016* or they do so temporarily (for instance to be part of a residency or a project) and are, for instance, supported by the Goethe-Institut in the case of the *DPG* to travel and take part in the event (Traub 2017).

As Appadurai indicates, NaDaPs are part of a shifting world, in which people and populations move and have always done so. People have travelled in the quest of adventure, and to conquer and colonise. Others have escaped to save their lives. Some

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[146] This differs from the case of national soccer teams, for instance, or for the Olympics, in which athletes and players must have the national passport to be able to compete.

have settled down and started families in new shores, in places other than where they were

born, for limited times or for life. They might have families, children might be born and

new generations raised in the territory of the place of immigration. People might carry

cultural or identity markers that sometimes differentiate them from the formerly

autochthonous population. And nation-states regulate notions of sameness and difference.

"Typically, contemporary nation-states do this by exercising taxonomic control over

difference", says Appadurai (Appadurai 1990:304). This leads to questioning whether

markers other than legal documentation and ethnicity interact with and qualify the capacity

to be perceived as part of the national whole. However, I would like to start by reviewing

and revising the name of the scape as proposed by Appadurai, ethnocape. What does *ethno*

stand for?

If we look for the definition of the word *ethno*, we find that it refers to

'race; people; cultural group' (Merriam Webster, online). Although as discussed above,

cultural groups can be constituted by many a characteristic beyond those associated with

their place of birth, the particle *ethno* can be misleading, as it might suggest a conflation,

or even a reduction of the scape to its component 'ethnicity'. Expanding Anderson's

concept of the imagined community (2006), I will propose that beyond ethnicity, also

physicality and gender or sexual orientation can have a binding effect, enabling people to

imagine themselves as belonging to a community or cultural group[147]. I will therefore

propose to expand the understanding of the *ethnoscape* beyond migrations, nationality and

ethnicity. For where migrations do connect different places of the world with each other –

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[147] My over ten years' long involvement in the mixed-abled dance scene in Germany and several
other countries have proved to me that in various so-called disabled communities the sense of
communality or shared destiny is quite strong. I have often experienced on a personal level the
same mechanism both in gay and Jewish communities around the world.

not least reinforcing the global(ised) character of the phenomenon of the NaDaP - the state's mechanism to "exercising taxonomic control over difference" (Appadurai 1990:304) defines markers of identity and creates categories, which are not limited to ethnicity or migration status, and which at times interplay with ideas about how the nation must be (con)formed. As a result, migration and ethnicity are not the only rationales governing inclusion and exclusion of a NaDaP. Other personal identity markers other than ethnicity might also play a role at the moment to construe the collective of the NaDaP in each locality. To be able to include other categories without risk of being misunderstood, I will draw on Appadurai's *ethnoscape* and propose its reformulation for the purposes of this thesis. I will suggest the name of *anthropo*scape, Merriam Webster relates the prefix *anthrop-* to indicate "something related to the human being" (Merriam Webster online). I therefore suggest that the name containing the prefix *anthrop-* rather than *ethno-* defines reveals more clearly the focus of this chapter.

In the sections that follow I will address some markers of identity: ethnicity, physicality and gender. However, before proceeding to do that, I would like to discuss an important point: the interlinking of the *ideo-* and the *anthroposcapes*.

I have singled out three identity markers. Nevertheless, it is exactly the creation of these categories that seems to challenge the location of this discussion within the *anthroposcape*. Indeed, as Simone de Beauvoir famously stated, "one is not born, but rather *becomes* a woman" (de Beauvoir 1976:13, my emphasis). Women and Men thus become; they are made, constructed categories. The same logic underpins the creation of the Disabled and the Abled, and that of the 'racial' divisions in Black, Brown, Yellow or White. Thus, it could be argued that this discussion should take place under the aegis of

the *ideoscape*. However, although the segmentation and its resulting categories are constructed ones – and thus could place these categories within the reach of the *ideoscape* - they also act as performative speech[148] and have thus concrete effects on the creation, description and perception of the bodies of the people interacting at NaDaPs. Therefore, I have decided to look at these markers of identity through the lens of the *anthroposcape.* These will raise the following questions: are dancers whose very instrument of their art, their physicality, is somewhat perceived as 'different' legitimised to represent the nation? What about dancers whose gender is not binary? What about dancers and choreographers born into a country's ethnic minorities, or who are migrants themselves? I will proceed now to address migrations and ethnicity, as one of the prevalent categories that impact the perception of dancers through the lens of the *anthroposcape*.

6.2   Migrations and ethnicities

At first glance there seem to be simple answers to the question of who is British, German, Israeli, or Sri Lankan: Those who have documentation legitimising them as nationals of those countries are. But criteria about the requirements to be considered national differ from country to country, and these might change with time following political ideas[149] (which would situate us again in the *ideoscape*). In any case, the *ideoscape* has shown that being a citizen of any of these countries is not a condition to participate in their NaDaP (Ashford and Beattie 2017; Noeth, Till and Wittrok 2017; Vardi 2017). Dancers and choreographers who have settled down in the country to perform their

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[148] For an in-depth discussion about performative speech, see Butler (1997: 16 – 20, 49 - 52)

[149] For instance, the British Nationality Acts of 1948, 1973 and 1981 define different conditions to be considered a British national and the German *Staatsangehörigkeitsrecht* (Law of Citizenship) has been reformed in 1999/2000 and 2014/2015, implementing reforms as well.

profession are considered 'national' in terms of the NaDaP if they work in those countries, and also if they work elsewhere but are supported by the country's public money (in the German case). But under the lens of the *anthroposcape*, the perception of a body as non-national can have an impact towards enabling or not their participation at the event. In this section, I will proceed to discuss the absences and presences as I perceived in each of the cases. In all cases, this perception is informed by my experience observing each NaDaP and close readings enabled by further knowledge of each context his will result in differing considerations in each case.

As Scolieri's epigraph reminds us, "dance and migration share common ground because the dance world is a nomadic one" (Scolieri 2008 in Njaradi, 2014:39). Whereas this might not be true for all people and all forms of dance, it is indeed a reflection of the lived reality of many contemporary dancers, the ones who mainly populate NaDaPs, as well as for many others. This is the case of Venuri Perera, *SSSB*'s curator, who after her initial study of contemporary dance in India finished her dance education in the UK, at the school primarily founded by German émigré Rudolf von Laban, currently named Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance (Perera 2017). This is also the case for Niloufer Pieris[150] (Pieris 2016), another *grande dame* of dance in Sri Lanka, who studied and developed her career mainly in Germany and also for Deshamanya Chitrasena[151], founder of the Colombo-based dance company carrying his

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[150] Niloufer Pieris was a dancer of Western classical ballet and is the founder and director of the *Nelung Arts Centre in Colombo*, Sri Lanka (Interview). In other stages of her career she was for ten years a ballet teacher at the company *Bat Dor* in Israel. Further, the interview highlights how her skin colour, thus her ethnicity, presented different obstacles in different places at different moments of her professional career.

[151] Chitrasena studied with Tagore in India and returned to Sri Lanka to play a main role in the constitution of a Sri Lanka classical dance.

name, who studied in India. Yair Vardi, director of the *Suzanne Dellal Centre*, worked as a

dancer and director of a dance centre in the UK for more than ten years before returning to

Israel (Vardi 2015). In my case, I moved to Germany, The Netherlands, and then the UK

to return to Germany, always pursuing matters related to dance. Ashford and Beattie,

though always having lived in the UK, have recruited the first audiences to the Spring

Collection in their previous visits to international festivals abroad (Beattie and Ashford

2017)[152]. All these examples show how deeply intertwined dance and migration are.

Indeed, the quest for "economic prosperity and/or political and artistic

freedoms" (Scolieri 2008, in Njaradi 2014) was the trigger for much of Gertrud

Bodenwieser's, Hilde Holger's, Margalit and Shoshana Ornstein's and also Rudolf von

Laban's journeys[153]; in the case of Venuri Perera, Deshamanya Chitrasena and Niloufer

Pieris presumably[154] it was the quest for inspiration and personal development. Much of

dance can be said to be therefore transnational at core. Nevertheless, NaDaPs claim

national-ness, and even in some cases to be representative for 'the best' (website

ChoreoCymru 2016) of the nation's dance production.

I will start turning the focus to *DPG 2016*. The platform showcased *On

Trial Together (Episode Offenbach)* (Vujanović, born in Serbia and Asentić born in Bosnia

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[152] These are just a few examples naming the people I have interviewed for this study. It might be almost impossible to make a comprehensive list of the number of dancers travelling abroad to pursue their career, especially given that their professional travels vary enormously in duration, from under a day to re-settling in another country.

[153] This is not taking into account professional tours, as for instance Ted Shawn's performing in Ceylon (Sri Lankan's former, colonial name) during his Far East tour, which would add another layer to the already accounted for. Shawn's interest was, beyond showing his creations, to study established traditions of male dance (Reed 2010: 108)

[154] In Perera's and Pieris cases, this assertion grounds on the interview we conducted. In Chitrasena's, on several references to his career and company in Susan Reed 2010.

Herzegovina), *Aerobics! Ein Ballet in 3 Acts* (Rosolen, born in Argentina), *o.T. |*

(gateways to movement) (Kaler, born in Austria), *Parade* (Linder, born in Australia),

(b)reaching stillness (Moro, born in Switzerland) and *Until our Hearts Stop* (Stuart, born

in the USA) and *Misses & Mysteries* (Baehr & Castan, latter born in France) indeed

reinforces this reading. It is impossible to know each dancer's nationality or where they

were born. However, it is clear that out of 12 choreographies, seven choreographers were

not born in Germany, but either work in Germany or have been funded with German

money. This does reflect the NaDaP's rejection of Germany's *ius sanguinis*[155]

understanding of nationality and a clear movement away from blood and ethnicity as

factors to understand German-ness. However, all the above could be perceived as

ethnically White[156].This was not the case with the platform's opening show, *Not Punk,*

Pololo (Gintersdorfer & Klaßen).

　　　Not Punk, Pololo was a German/Ivorian co-production with several Black

Ivorian performers. Its plot accounted for the story of an urban mythical figure of the Ivory

Coast and much of the show's dance vocabulary and music were clearly Ivorian. It could

be argued that this represents a neo-colonialistic move of cultural appropriation (which

would make this case matter of discussion within the scope of the *ideoscape*)[157], in that

those hierarchically higher placed, in this case the choreographers, are Germans, who serve

themselves of urban myths and artistic vocabularies of a more peripheral country. To fully

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[155] Ius sanguinis: in Citizenship Laws, *ius sanguinis* refers to a person's citizenship inherited from their parents, irrespective of their place of birth, the latter rationale being called *ius soli*

[156] Of course, it is to question if people from the Balkans are in the same way White as Germans or White-Australians, but this broader discussion is beyond the scope of this thesis.

[157] This example shows again how interrelated and sometimes interdependent all *scapes* are from one another.

elucidate this would require an analysis of the creation process in its multilayerity, which I did not witness. However, a close reading of an international collaboration as the opening piece of *DPG 2016* suggests that the rationale behind it mirrored a German politico-societal position which, especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, stresses the country's effort to pursue a transnational identity (Sörgel 2015:122). In any case, professional migration (even if it is for short periods) seems to be acknowledged as part of the dancing nation and the Ivorian origin of some of the performers did not disqualify them to embody the nation. But what about dancers and choreographers born into the country's ethnic minorities? The stage at *DPG 2016* did not feature an otherwise very diverse societal fabric, thus it is possible to think that Germany's impossibility to accept that it is a country of immigration still presents obstacles for ethnic-minority Germans to represent the country at its NaDaP. Furthermore, in 2016 for instance Sara Mikolai, a Berlin-born Tamil choreographer and performer, found her herself at *SSSB*, the Sri Lankan dance platform and not at *DPG* (more about Mikolai in the discussion about *SSSB*).

Turning the focus to Britain, British dance historian Ramsay Burt argues that the canonised modern dance until 1998 (the publishing year of his book *Alien Bodies*), excluded European modern dance (Burt 1998: 3)[158]. He continues by stating that canonised modern dance only dealt with the work of white dancers, while Black dancers were relegated to discussions focusing on their condition of being Black and thus othering them as were they any different from other dancers (Burt 1998:3). As discussed in Chapter 5 under the lens of the *ideoscape*, only two works by and with Black choreographers and dancers were selected for *BDE*: *O* (*Project O*) and *InNoForm* (Botis Seva / *Far From The*

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[158] In his account, canonized modern dance until that moment was only US-American.

Norm). *O*, choreographed and performed by Jamila Johnson-Small and Alexandra Hemsley explicitly tackle the exotisization and sexualisation of the female Black body. Plastic palm trees and plush tigers frame the at times almost naked performers, while audience members are invited to black-paint the dancers' bodies with their hands, hence confronted with the challenge to blacken – or not – Johnson-Small's and Hemsley's exposed breasts. Indeed, the very subject and visual language of Project O's seems to indicate that Burt's point, made in 1998 is still valid today, twenty years later, and that ethnicity does play a role to pass the threshold to be showcased at *BDE*.

Continuing looking at *BDE 2016* under the light of the *anthroposcape*, it must be asked whether other non-White British dancers are legitimised to be curated into the event and therefore possibly become part of a future canon of British dance. For instance, some choreographers of South-East Asian descent were selected for the event. Works by and with South-East Asian artists were showcased: *Echoes* (Aakash Odedra Company), *Chotto Desh* (Akram Khan Company), *Decreasing Infinity* (Balbir Singh Dance Company). In hindsight, it is surprising that only three works by choreographers of SE-Asian descent were showcased, for dance forms from SE-Asia are more present in the British dancescape. Indeed, British-Asian dance is perceived by Ashford and Beattie as a very prominent feature of British dance today. Conversely, this seems to provide them with the rationale to describe the British dance scene as especially diverse, in contrast with continental European dance (Ashford and Beattie 2017). However, returning to Burt and looking through the lens of the *anthroposcape*, the relative small presence of works by choreographers of non-White descent at *BDE 2016* might ask whether there is a reluctance

to select them to embody Britain at *BDE* – thus creating a barrier for them to become part of a future constitution of a new canon of British dance[159].

As mentioned in the previous chapter, dance vocabularies originally from non-Western contexts have been able to find their way into Western contemporary performance provided they acquiesce to hold the critical distance (Osborne 2013) required by the contemporary condition, revealed in not just being, but rather constructing the self. In different degrees, the showcased works of SE-Asian artists did this, at least in layers that reflected the relationship of the self with the environment, expressed sometimes in the hybridisation of dance vocabularies. At the same time, they engaged with subjects of the present or adapted the choreographic devices beyond traditional forms of re-presentation. Hence, it could be assumed that south-east Asian dance has become one of the visible and accepted dance forms in Britain. But all dancers and choreographers that worked with vocabulary originally from south-east Asia were in my perception ethnically south-east Asian. This raises the question whether there are dancers and choreographers of non-south-east Asian descent that engage with dance originally from south-east Asia at all, or whether these dance forms must be exclusive to the sector of the population that is ethnically south-east Asian. Conversely, this compels to ask whether dancers of this community are generally relegated to act within this context and legacy (even if re-visited or hybridised with Western contemporary dance techniques), or if there are British contemporary dancers who are ethnically of south-east Asian descent and 'allowed' not to

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[159] In September 2016, I was invited to talk at a conference organised by the Society for Dance Research, whose subject was "Dance Diaspora and the Role of the Archive". Throughout the conference, a much discussed subject was the creation of an archive of Black British dance. This suggests that Black British dancers are not 'in the Archive', they are not part of the canon.

engage with Kathak, Bharatanatyam or other south-east Asian dance forms in order to succeed.

Turning the focus to *SSSB*, a contextual reading of the festival Colombo recalls the civil war and its effects. During the long years of bloody conflict, many Tamils had to flee the country and go into exile. The army won the war. Hence the contextually reformulated question would be to which extent Tamil people are included in the representation of Sri Lanka as a nation[160]. It is telling that the only Tamil performer and choreographer whose work was showcased in *SSSB*, Sara Mikolai, was born in Berlin as daughter of a first-generation exiled Tamil parent. There are two possible readings of Mikolai's presence at *SSSB* through the lens of the *anthroposcape*. On the one hand, it can be seen as a reflection of the process of demonization of the Tamil people propagated by the Sri Lankan Sinhalese central government during the civil war, which led many to be exiled. At the same time, Mikolai's presence could be understood as *SSSB*'s gesture of reaching out of the country to look for exiled Tamil voices and include them. Both readings are possible, for while the Othering, even vilification of everything Tamil during the civil war is still generally perceptible, *SSSB*'s curator's commitment to a more inclusive society was visible many times during the festival. For instance, *SSSB* reached out a hand to the University of Jaffna[161] and students of the Arts Department were invited to attend. Thus, the festival did not conform to the current Sri Lankan status quo and its

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[160] There are other minorities in Sri Lanka, like the Burghers (of European descent) and Moors (Muslims, generally descendent of Arab traders of old), but there has not been an open conflict between them and the Sinhalese majority.

[161] Jaffna is the capital of Sri Lanka's North Province and the main city inhabited by a Tamil majority.

official history, but sought to redress this narrative through the inclusion both of a Tamil performer and by actively reaching out to Tamil students.

In the case of Israel, the country has no definite borders. This is partly due to the Arab rejection of the partition in 1947[162], but also to Israel's conquest and colonisation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem following the war 1967. Israeli nationality is only partially linked to territoriality. Most of its Jewish population is migrant (first, second, or third generation). In this case, religion is constructed as and deeply intertwined with ethnicity and linked to notions of nationhood. Israel defines itself as a Jewish (and democratic) state[163], and the biggest minority group is constituted by the Arab population, both Christian and Muslim[164]. The Jewish narrative of return to the land of the forefathers, that culminates with the establishment of an independent political entity, the Jewish State, Israel is in direct competition with the Palestinian narrative of conquest and dispossession by alien Jews, culminating in the day marking the Nakba (Arabic for 'catastrophe'). Both the Nakba and Israel's Independence Day, Iom Ha'atzmaut, are sometimes commemorated the same day[165], in the same territory, by different segments of the population. Thus, with the lens of the *anthroposcape*, the appropriate question in the

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[162] UN resolution 181 of November 29th, 1947

[163] The debate about the so-called Jewish State bill extended throughout all 2017 and 2018, year in which the law was passed (newspaper *Haaretz*, several articles)

[164] The official demographic statistic of the State of Israel, published by the Government reflect a total population of 8.463.400, out of which 6.334.500 are catalogued as Jewish, 1.757.800 as Arab and 371.100 as Others in 2015, year of the *IE* that is part of this work. However, there are as well many discussions that question the construction of Jews that immigrated from Arab countries as non-Arabs.

[165] Nakba Day is commemorated according to the Gregorian calendar generally on May 15th (that is the Gregorian calendar date of Israel's independence in 1948). However, Iom Ha'atzmaut (Israel's independence) is celebrated according to the Hebrew calendar. This results on the two commemorations sometimes coinciding and sometimes not. However, sometimes the Arab population of Israel commemorates Nakba Day parallel to Iom Ha'atzmaut, disregarding the date in the Gregorian calendar.

case of *IE 2015* is whether Arabs are present and thus legitimised to re-present the Jewish state.

The festival indeed showcased *Path* by Sahar Damoni, performed with Lamma Namnah. Both are Arab Christian and both are Israeli citizens. The work, that used traditional clay jugs as props and included two female dancers, one dressed in a bright red dress and the other in a night gown, tackled the conflicts arising from a traditional society, that limits the agent female voice as a professional dancer within traditional Arab communities in Israel[166]. Thus, as member of a minority, Damoni's work revolved around the conflicts that this posits. In a different way, this mirrors how only SE-Asians seem to work with SE-Asian vocabulary in the UK. This discloses the prevalence of deeply rooted Othering mechanisms, that either force the Other[167] (Arabs in the case of Israel, SE-Asians in that of the UK) to engage with matters of identity, or punishes them with invisibility if they do not do so. At the same time, however, dealing with matters of identity does seem to provide them with a secure path of participation. However, translating the relationship of hegemonic and non-hegemonic groups raised in relation to *BDE*, in the case of Israel the question of participation cannot be reduced to the interaction between the Arab minority[168] and the Jewish majority.

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[166] In her work *Pirg'in*, presented at *IE 2017*, Damoni goes further problematizing the conflict between the traditionalism of her Arab environment and her professional choice.

[167] 'Other' with a capital C to indicate the construction of the Other as a social category.

[168] However, it is important to note that, whilst there are in the country several Arab and Bedouin actors, there are only two Arab or Bedouin choreographers active in the Israeli professional contemporary dance scene: Sahar Damoni and Adi Boutrous. Without dismissing the pervasive racism of Israeli society, I would suggest that their absence in the field of dance is also related to the perception of the body in these two non-hegemonic communities.

Israel is a country of immigration and it was established in the assumption that the country was to provide shelter to Jews from all over the world, who allegedly[169] live in exile. Hence, the immigration of Jewish people is viewed as a 'coming home', and there are mechanisms in place to govern their absorption and integration into the hegemonic majority. Conversely, there is no provision for non-Jews who want to immigrate, and the thresholds for non-Jewish immigration are as high as anywhere else in the Western world when people want to do so. Thus, when a migrant wants to live in Israel, their Jewishness governs whether they will be granted almost unconditional State-help or will set out to go through a very difficult immigration process. Thus, in the Israeli context, constructions of Otherness are not limited to being projected onto the Arab[170] (citizens of the state or not), but also to further non-Jews.

Disregarding the existing thresholds for the immigration of non-Jews, the Israeli dance scene has become more international in the last years and all the bigger companies, such as Kibbutz Dance Company, Bat Sheva or L-E-V | Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar employ regularly non-Israeli dancers (many non-Jewish dancers among them)[171], whose residence and working permits in the country expire when their contracts finish. Thus, a working contract can bestow someone with the right to live in the country for a limited period disregarding their religion. Otherwise, Jewishness is in traditional terms inherited maternally. Thus, if the mother is Jewish, the child is as well. One of the first

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[169] I say allegedly here because the perception that Jews who do not live in Israel are in exile responds to a specific version of Zionism. Thus, the question "exile or not" is an ideological one.

[170] To complicate the matter even more, a high percentage of the Israeli population can be considered to be both Jewish and Arab, but this discussion is beyond the scope of this thesis.

[171] These are the few companies that can provide all the required paperwork to receive a working permit. This situation reproduces the situation for non-national dancers all over the Western world.

deeds to include (male) babies into the community is their circumcision. In *Cowboy* (Niv Sheinfeld & Oren Lor 2015), a piece selected for *IE 2015*, Australian performer Joel Bray pulls out his foreskin while claiming that this is the reason why he must leave the country and probably break up with his Israeli partner, openly decrying the State's discriminatory policies against non-Jews. His non-Jewishness – and thus his non-belonging -, symbolically and concretely revealed by his foreskin, is revealed on stage at the Israeli dance platform. Thus, a close reading of *IE 2015* through the lens of the *anthroposcape* shows that – for instance presenting *Cowboy* - the platform denounces a rationale that privileges Jews over others. This makes apparent the contradictions of a democratic state that gives Judaism (as an ethnic construction) prevalence above others, thus showing clearly an instance in which, drawing on Appadurai "the state and the nation *should be* at each's throat" (Appadurai 1990:304, italics are my inclusion). At the same time, this shows the potential of a NaDaP, in this case *IE 2015*, as a political actor.

The different examples presented in this section have reinforced Scolieri's epigraph that dance and migration share common ground. However, not all discussion revolving around ethnicity hails from immigration, for as the section has showed, some countries have an ethnically diverse social fabric independently from migratory movements that have influenced them. As stated in the beginning though, ethnicity is not the only marker of identity that has an impact of the perception and thus visibility of a dancer or choreographer within the *anthroposcape*. In the following section I will address physicalities as an important constitutive part of a dancer's presence in it.

6.3 Physicalities

As mentioned above, not all relevant markers of identity are related to ethnicity, for there are further characteristics that might act similarly towards the construction of cultural groups. Understanding that dance happens mostly through (moving) bodies, the constitution and appearance of these bodies seem central to a NaDaP. And the Nation seems to have a long history of regulating appearance and constitution of its bodies. Historian Heinrich Hartmann demonstrates (Hartmann 2011: 64-70) that a Europe-wide movement interlinked hygiene, medicine, statistics and military in the end of the 19th century, the golden age of the nation-state. This trend served the idea of assessing and improving the military capacities of the nation, which becomes evident when Hartmann calls the military "an agent of modernisation" (towards the idea of the nation-state) (Hartmann, 2011:8). An agent that, by implementing measures to assessing and improving the recruits' physicalities created at the same time the concept of a normate physicality.

Hartmann begins his book, *The People's Body at the Medical Examination. Military Statistic and Demographics in Europe before the First World War*[172] with the anecdote of a physically weaker recruit who makes too strong an effort to win a race and dies. Similarly, all the efforts of the military were to create the strongest possible army, constituted by the most resistant bodies. In the military, the nation was to be re-presented by the fittest. Those with a so-called disability had no place. It is the interlink between constitution of the nation-state and of its body that I argue is paramount in understanding

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[172] My own translation of the book's title. See references for original.

the presence (or absence) of dancers with non-normate physicalities[173] when looking at

NaDaPs through the lens of the *anthroposcape*. In this regard, old ideas of ethnic,

linguistic and religious homogeneity of the constitution of the nation still haunt the modern

state and, as Hartmann has shown, they are extended to pervasively widespread ideas of

what the national body should look like.

Deepening the question, in a similar vein I want to ask whether the

ideologies underpinning Western classical ballet, revealed in the bodies allowed to learn it

and dance it, still haunt the world of contemporary dance. For its (assumed) requirements

only gave access to specific peoples and physicalities: skin colour and distinctive bodily

features determine someone's aptitude to be allowed into training and thereafter

professional work or not. Whereas this might seem to a certain extent understandable for

classical ballet (at least in regard to the physical conditions required to incorporate the

technique), similar criteria seem to have pervaded the history of modern and contemporary

dance for a long time as well[174]. To argue this point, I will go back to dance historian

Ramsey Burt.

Burt demonstrates in *Alien Bodies* (1998: 54-56) that much of the

uneasiness produced by the threatening modernity was projected onto Others, which in the

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[173] I refer here to physicalities that are due to their constitution not normatisable, instead of talking about disabilities. Firstly, I consider calling differences 'disabilities' a specific politico-ideological position, which makes me choose other wordings. Secondly, I am not focusing on other differences but the physically obvious, for the same reason that I could ethically not assign degrees of abilities to dancers, without asking for self-estimation – which would have made the endeavour impossible. Therefore, I only consider 'different' those bodies that seem at first glance non-normatisable, disregarding other possible challenges that dancers might or not have.

[174] Dance work with non-normatisable physicalities began in the 1970s, in what was then called integrated, inclusive or disabled dance.

dance field he suggests translated into a process of othering on grounds of race and gender. I would argue that a similar process has taken place regarding physicalities that differ from those required for classical ballet, and that this still pervades the common understanding of what a dancer is and should look like. This ableism, partly grounded on the national quest for a healthier and more enduring body (Hartmann 2011) and reflected into the Hygiene Exhibitions (as in Dresden 1911, 1930) have contributed to adding dancers with non-normate physicalities to further othering markers such as ethnicity and culture.

Certainly, there is a long history of only dancers with normate bodies finding their way into dance at all. As artist and researcher working in the sector of dance and disabilities, Kate Marsh asserts in the context of the project InVisible Difference: Dance, Disability and Law[175], there is a discrepancy between those initiatives (to tackle the invisibility of dancers with disabilities) and the number of (disabled) dance artists working with leadership roles in the dance sector. Seldom are people with non-normate physicalities encouraged to study and produce dance, and even less often have their works been included in national displays.

Indeed, works by artists with non-normate physicalities were absent at *DPG 2016*. The jury had looked for works that were *impulsgebend*[176]. Whereas the jury did not look for works within a segmentarised vision of the dance field (Noeth, Till & Wittrock, 2017), *impulsgebend(e)* works were found in the field of the reconstruction of modernist

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[175] The project, initiated by Sarah Whatley, Director of C-DaRE, aimed at "extend(ing) current thinking that surrounds the making, status, ownership and value of work by contemporary dance choreographers" with a "primary focus is on dance made and performed by disabled dance artists because we still have a long way to go before dancers with impairments are fully integrated within mainstream dance performance." (InVisible Difference n.d.)

[176] For an explanation of *impulsgebend*, see Chapter 2.4

Ballets but not in the work of dancers with non-normate physicalities. In my perception, the only work that presented a dancer with a non-normate physicality was Paula Rosolen's *Aerobics! Ein Ballet in 3 Akten.* In the piece, 7 dancers explored the co-relations and differences of classical ballet and aerobics. While all dancers were equally fit and technically strong, one of them had some kilos more than the others. His body was the only one that, aesthetically, did not respond to the norm. This difference was pointed out as something to ridicule though. He was the only dancer that talked, and this he did only to point at his body and say "sexy", producing an exhilarating moment in the audience. Thus, the only relatively different physicality was exposed as being there, but being out of place.

It seems that no dancers or choreographers with intrinsically non-normatisable physicalities did make a production that gave new impulses for the dance discourse. However, given that in the country there is hardly a dance training programme open to dancers with non-normate physicalities, the fact that some artists with these conditions work at all seems to me rather *impulsgebend* to expand the discourse of aesthetics within contemporary dance. In this context, it might be interesting to point at another conflation between the *anthroposcape* and the *ideoscape*. Whereas Hartmann's argument that the construction of a homogenous (male) body of the nation might be applicable to all four examples in their constitution of the respective nation-states, Germany is a particular case. Not only did the Nazi regime persecute and assassinate racially Others, but it also ran euthanasia programmes to murder people with so-called disabilities. Thus, in its specific case, a close reading must also give way to the question whether this past is still reverberating into the present at the moment to select dancers to represent the nation[177].

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[177] Germany has a record of dance by disabled for disabled, all located within the welfare sector. The resistance becomes strong in the process of re-locating dance by people with non-normatisable

At first glance, dancers and choreographers with non-normate physicalities seemed also absent from *IE 2015*. This was not completely true, but a thorough look was required to discover that dancers with non-normate physicalities were indeed present at the event. The Israeli company Vertigo works at Kibbutz HaLamed Hei, outside of Tel Aviv. *IE 2015* organised a day-trip the company's headquarters. The programme announced an excerpt of the work in progress *YAMA* (by Noah Wertheim, the company's director) and repertory piece *Birth of the Phoenix* (by Noah Wertheim). One of Noah's sisters, Tali Wertheim, directs together with Hai Cohen the company HaKoach HaIzun, that works with mixed-abilities[178] and has toured internationally. In the context of *IE 2015*, they were offered the possibility to present a workshop and a short piece, but were not presented in the programme folder. Non-normate bodies seem to touch on a core problem when (re)presenting the nation. On the one hand, there are several dancers with disabilities resulting from the countless wars that the country has faced. Most move (literally) in the field of folk dances or *Rikudei-Am* (Hebrew for folk dances). On the other, there are choreographers/performers like Tamar Borer a creator and dancer whose legs are paralysed[179], and whose choreographic language in based in Butoh. However, the physicality required to be legitimised into *IE 2015* seemed to exclude dancers who could not produce movements that are codified and prescribed in a pre-existent technique[180]. At the same time, the very expansive and muscular dance vocabularies utilised by many Israeli choreographers (and that has probably contributed to their international success)

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physicalities into the realm of art. The exception is presented by Raymund Hogue, former dramaturge of Pina Bausch, and to some extent with the work of the *DIN A 13 tanzcompany* (full disclosure: I was creative producer and manager of this company 2004 – 2014).

[178] That is to say with dancers with normatised and non-normatisable physicalities together.

[179] Tamar Borer had a motorbike accident decades ago, which resulted in this condition (personal conversation with the artist)

[180] However, Tamar Borer was selected and showcased at IE 2018

translate in physicalities that co-relate to the creation of the new Hebrew, a strong, physically working Israeli attached to their land (as opposed to the figure of the diasporic, dispossessed Jew that was barred from working the land throughout centuries). In Israel, both men and women are drafted to an obligatory military service for a period of two to three years. These expansive and muscular dance vocabularies, the dancers' highly physically trained bodies recall in this context Hartmann's explorations regarding the construction of the nation-state and its military.

The same as in Israel (and possibly more so), in Sri Lanka there are many people with disabilities as a result of the war. The army has a dance company of disabled dancers, and there are different choreographers who have worked with people with different physicalities or conditions. Furthermore, at the level of civil society, the Sunera Foundation "strives to integrate persons living with disability into communities of their peers and broader Sri Lankan society" (Sunera Foundation) and uses dance workshops and performances as a main instrument to achieve this goal[181]. But, as the self-description of the foundation disclaims, their intent is rather a social than an artistic one. At the same time, there have been collaborations between foreign dance companies and local dancers with different abilities (as in the project *changeABLE cohesion*[182]), funded mainly by foreign cultural institutes (in this case the Goethe-Institut). However, no dancers or dance makers with non-normatisable physicalities found their way to *SSSB*.

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[181] The Sunera Foundation was established in April 2000 by the Sunethra Bandaranaike Trust and Wolfgang Stange, the German founder of the London based dance company AMICI (Sunera Foundation).

[182] The mixed-abled production *changeABLE cohesion* (Sri Lanka/ Germany 2012) was part of the transnational multidisciplinary project *UPHEAVAL*, which I co-conceived with choreographer Gerda König and whose creative producer I was throughout (Germany, Sri Lanka, Israel, Venezuela 2012 – 2014)

At the same time, this bears witness to the invisibility to which most Sri Lankan people who have a disability are relegated to, while the State (or its Army) does provide for soldiers who received disabling wounds in service and are often thereafter referred to as heroes. Many of these 'heroes' come from rural, non-affluent families and several of them are often functionally illiterate or have undergone only a very basic education[183]. The Army continues to provide employment for its heroes, but at the same time, it keeps them secluded in barracks, out of the sight of the general public in the city. Furthermore, given that they mostly come from rural areas and from deprived social backgrounds, they do not speak English, the language preferred by the country's urban elites[184] and generally the language foreigners use when working in the country. The Army provides educational workshops for soldiers after service, but following the account of some soldiers I talked to, English courses, for instance were at the time only available for officers and not for lower-ranked soldiers. So, soldiers might have multiple marginalities, for example, coming from a deprived social background and having a disability.

However, the Army does have a disabled dance company and a disabled orchestra, constituted by these soldiers. Hence, it is not possible to say that soldiers who have acquired a disability on the battle field are completely secluded – both the dance company and the orchestra take part in some public acts. Indeed, these orchestras might

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[183] Part of my work as a creative producer of the project changeABLE cohesion was to find local dancers with non-normatisable physicalities. I was put in touch with the Colonel in charge of a military barrack that gave accommodation and employment to soldiers who had acquired a disability in the front. Many of these soldiers participated in the audition for the project. This account is the result of my personal conversations with them whilst directing the project, and of my interaction with the Army (to be able to employ the dancers) throughout the project in Sri Lanka and the follow-up tours in India and Germany.

[184] See for instance Reed's account on the constitution of the Sri Lankan elites and their educational system (Reed 2010:97-99)

provide a soldier with a disability with an opportunity that a person who has not acquired

their disability in the Army does not have. At the same time however, their visibility and

engagement with society at large are heavily regimented through the regulation of military

life itself, the regulations on educational options and the secluded life in isolated barracks.

Thus, beyond the fact that most Sri Lankan soldiers are male (and they would thus not fit

into a platform having the female body as theme), their artistic work seemed not to be

eligible or desirable, or deemed worth paying attention to for the NaDaP. The talk is here

of intersectionalities, of how different markers of identity interact to reinforce each other

or mitigate possible disadvantages resulting of them.

Finally, looking at NaDaPs with the lens of the *anthroposcape* and

physicalities, it was *BDE 2016* that presented two exceptions: two companies presented

works performed by dancers with non-normate physicalities (*Beast* by Dan Daw and

Beheld by Candoco Dance Company) and one of them was also created by a

choreographer with a non-normate physicality (Dan Daw). In *BDE 2016's* programme

folder, *Candoco Dance Company* is described as "the company of disabled and non-

disabled dancers", while Dan Daw is described as "an established UK-based disabled

performer" (BDE Cymru 2016) While the construction of categories in itself might be

questionable, it seems that at least in regard to dancers and choreographers with non-

normate physicalities, in this case called 'disabled' the strategy has provided them – in the

name of the strategic diversity voiced by the Arts Council[185]- with a pathway to

participation and visibility. In the following section, I will turn the focus onto gender as the

next category to be considered within this scape.

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[185] See for instance the *Creative Case for Diversity* (ACE n.d.).

6.4   <u>Gender</u>

Starting with a focus on Israel, the country's dance scene is still widely dominated by a very athletic physicality and subsequent approach to movement. This could be generally described as a very male-gendered approach to dance: spacious, strong movements generally effected with great muscular precision or physical ability. Works of the already mentioned companies Bat Sheva (mostly choreographed by Ohad Naarin) or of L-E-V | Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar are paradigmatic for this trend (both showcased at *IE 2015*). The strong and heroic pioneering New Jew seems to constitute the preferred constructed ethnicity of the Nation, and this is reflected in the country's most conspicuous styles of contemporary dance.

However, this explosive and at times very masculine physicality was deconstructed in some works. Uri Shafir presented in *Somewhere in the Now* a much more fragile male body, his performance nor relying on physical strength or muscularity. His lank physicality, working a lot with breath, weight and energy lines, performed often movements that did not present clearly-finished shapes and that offered an alternative to the strong, muscular dancer otherwise ubiquitous in the country. Further, Roy Assaf's *Boys* directly confronted images of masculinity. A group of 5 male dancers, wearing only a loose black pair of shorts, that exposed the rest of the dancers' not overly athletic or muscular bodies, came onto the stage from the back, talking to each other. They arrived at the proscenium, sat down or lied relaxed on the floor, singing along a tune as were they camping. With a new piece of music that mimicked a military call to service played by a horn, they started to take up poses depicting strength and assertiveness – positions that quickly dissolved, with the dancers losening completely their energy up to falling on the

floor. With many group sequences, small gestures and often minimal, repetitive movements, the piece explored how men bond, and what makes of the performers men. Ido Batash's *The Free Builders*, performed by two dancers, Dor Frank and Ido Batash, "create[d] a space which is as natural as possible, where the dancers are required… to shed their identity, fragment it, and explore the human substance of which we are made of" (*IE 2015,* programme folder). Two male dancers, one of them with very long hair, worked caring for and carefully with one another to classical music. When they attempted to move bigger, their movements often lacked contours, they followed impulses that did not crystallise into definable shapes, while they shouted and uttered sounds as if with a speech-affecting condition. Among other works that did not specifically focus on gender, or whose investigation engaged with queer identities (such as in Sheinfeld and Laor's *Cowboy*) these pieces directly attempted at contesting the purported masculinity of Israeli dance, exploring other possibilities for the men to move and thus to construct masculinity in different ways.

Turning the focus at *SSSB*, a contextual and close reading of the event looking at gender under the aegis of the *anthroposcape* requires specific references that will help understand the relationship between dance and gender in the country. This will at the same time highlight the effects of having made of the national dance platform a festival centred on the female body. To do this, I will draw mainly on the work of anthropologist Susan Reed, Although Reed has focused on Kandyan, and therefore traditional dance, she has also looked at contemporary dance in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, as in Israel, the development of both traditional and contemporary dance in the two countries are contemporary to, and often intertwined with, their respective independence struggles. The same as in the constructed West, historically, the female dancer in Sri Lanka has evoked

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associations of prostitution (Reed 2010:114), and was also practiced only by people from specific, lower castes. It is significant thus that the first aristocrat to dance on stage publicly was a woman (Reed 2010:114-115). Probably it was her condition of aristocrat that partly made Miriam Pieris' performance of Kandyan dance for an audience in the early 1930s possible at all.

Sri Lanka is often perceived as a patriarchal country, in which women are more likely to be subjugated than men. It is true that ideologies underpinning the importance of female chastity are prevalent, that it is more difficult for a daughter than for a son to move out of the family home without marrying, and Sinhala women are expected to be moral examples of "piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (Silva 2002 in Reed 2010: 200). However, these attitudes have been of late under siege and more and more women take up the struggle for a less traditional and more self-determined way of life[186]. Thus, focusing on gender under the light of the *anthroposcape*, it could be assumed that Sri Lankan women are more subjugated than their peers in other countries. However, this must be qualified, for another marker of identity plays a big role: many restrictions imposed on females seem to be class-related. For instance, since the country's independence on February 4th, 1948 a woman, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, served as Prime Minister for three terms (1960-65 [which made her internationally the first woman invested as a head of state], 1970-77 and 1994 – 2000) and her daughter Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga was the State's President 1994 – 2005[187]. As mentioned

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[186] This was my perception whilst living in the country, following conversations with female film makers, university lecturers and journalists.

[187] Comparatively, Margaret Thatcher, was the UK's first and only Prime Minister (1979 – 1990) until Theresa May (who assumed the position when David Cameron stepped down in 2016), Angela Merkel has served as the first female Chancellor in Germany since 2005 and Gold Meir was hitherto the only female Israeli Prime Minister (1969 – 1974).

earlier, in the field of dance, both Niloufer Pieris and Venuri Perera come from rather privileged backgrounds. Thus, on the one hand it is true that Sri Lanka is still a patriarchal society, but this assertion must be qualified regarding class. Sri Lankan society is changing in this regard. On the other hand, gender inequality seemed to be relevant enough for the curator to create a festival with the aim of making the female body more visible. Thus, in the case of Sri Lanka, focusing on gender under the light of the *anthroposcape*, *SSSB* exposed the complex intertwining of gender, class, visibility and agency that prevail in the country.

While the female body was made explicitly visible in *SSSB*, the previous section showed that the differently abled, non-normatisable body was not. I would argue that the invisibility of dancers with non-normatisable physicalities at *SSSB* might be based on a gender rationale though: many of the visibly disabled dancers are male, for it is mostly males that were drawn into the army and sent to the frontline of the battle field. As *SSSB* was focused on the female body, this could provide the rationale for the absence of female dance makers with non-normatisable physicalities. This this can lead to ask whether the affirmative action on behalf of one group has in some way come at the expenses of another.

However, the perception that Sri Lanka is the only context in which women must fight for their rights would be misleading. Therefore, it seems important to widen again the gaze to the global aspect of the *anthroposcape*. Although in the UK and Germany women acquired the right to vote in 1918, it was only after 1928 that their age

was levelled with that of men in the former[188]. Disregarding the relatively long timeframe in which women can vote, current discussions regarding for instance a salary gender gap or the representation of women in parliament show that the battle for gender equality has not finished yet in the UK either. Turning the focus to dance, the scandal around Akram Khan's statement "don't have more female choreographers for the sake of it" (Khan 2016) has shown how contentious the subject still is. What I am intending here thus, is to acknowledge the global dimension of the disadvantaging of women, and I am pre-emptively cautioning against constructing Sri Lanka (a non-hegemonic state) as essentially more challenged in terms of patriarchality than a Western/hegemonic one. Also, it is important to recall again that *SSSB*, a festival focused on the female body, showcased *//gender/o/noise//* by gender-fluid performer Tara Transitory and *Giri Devi Androgynous* (2016) by cis-male performer Pradeep Gunarathna. Thus, a close reading of the four platforms shows that the resistance to binary, traditional gender constructions was the clearest in this particular case study.

6.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, *Castings*, I have used Appadurai's lens of the *ethnoscape* to explore the human component of the phenomenon of the NaDaP. However, to avoid a conflation of its name with ethnicity – and thus a reduction to it – for the purpose of this thesis I have widened the scape's scope and re-named it *anthroposcape*. This has enabled me to reflect histories of migration and ethnicity, and also of physical constitution and construction of gender. The chapter has shown that these categories are sometimes

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[188] Sri Lanka was a British colony at the time and called Ceylon. All its citizens disregarding their gender were colonial subjects.

intertwined, but always significant when thinking the representation of the nation through the lens of the *anthroposcape*. Each NaDaP claims in some way or another to represent a nation. NaDaPs are thus by definition national, and "the production of a national culture requires above all else the demarcation of boundaries" (Foster 1991: 236). Accordingly, this chapter has shown that all NaDaPs presented in their own ways restrictions regarding who was on stage and who had produced the work that was on stage. This chapter has thus argued that identity markers such as ethnicity, physicality and gender also play a role, albeit sometimes unconsciously, when selecting artists. This seems to point at the possibility that the ghost of the Nation haunts selection procedures for NaDaPs. However, an unequivocal reading was not possible, and contextual and close readings were essential to understand the meaning of presences and absences in each particular case. Looking at NaDaPs with the particular focus of the *anthroposcape* has also shown that the social fabric of each NaDaP did offer a framework that enabled local sets of values to surface and by doing so, they enabled me to analyse the social fabric of the contexts in which each of them took place. However, it was never possible to make an unequivocal close reading and the interaction of the scape with each NaDaP gave room for various contextual interpretations.

Before closing I would like to point at further complexities presented by the *anthroposcape*. To begin the discussion, I have described some markers of identity. Although referring only to ethnicity, Appadurai describes this process of assertion of distinctive "identitarian criteria" and calls it culturalism, of which he says: "culturalism, put simply, is identity politics mobilized at the level of the nation-state" (Appadurai, 1998:15). Conversely, the state makes use of many of these markers of identity as well. Regardless of which country, statistics are often built on identity markers such as ethnicity

or religion to assess the fabric of a country's population. This bears some dangers though, for it can create an essentialising perception of the different communities and not give room for intersectionalities.

It was when describing the situation of Sri Lanka's soldiers that I briefly introduced the concept of intersectionality. I have also discussed the subject of migration, which is often linked to ethnicity. However, physicality can also be related to ethnicity, for instance when a disability is related to an ethnic conflict, as it is often the case in Sri Lanka. I would therefore like to consider intersectionality once more, for the method of segmentation deploys huge blind spots. How could and should a performer choose a category, if they belong to two? Can a migrant also be LGBTQ+? In reality, they can. But when discussing this segmented form of representation, they are either reduced to one of their markers of identity – or on the other end of the scale to be singled out as an individual who belongs nowhere.

Politically, the creation of these categories might be a well-intended response to systemic discrimination and it has indeed reached some results, especially when it has managed to be translated into anti-discrimination laws. As explained earlier, the ability of some groups to understand and construct themselves as such has advanced their pursuit of rights. The assertion of a specific (cultural) identity can be a minority's important step towards gaining recognition from the surrounding, majoritarian population. This applies for migrant communities. Similarly, this has also been an important tool for communities of disabled people to understand and construct themselves as such, and fight for their rights. This is the case as well for other minorities, such as the so-constructed LGBTQ+ communit(ies). The blind spot here is that the exemplary LGBTQ+ migrant

named above could be singled out in their other Otherness when choosing one of the groups to belong. Furthermore, at state level, whereas such an approach can be useful for the state to recognise and redress systemic disadvantaging, it can also propel a race of communities against each other in the quest for visibility and self-determination.

Finally, a close reading of the four case studies through the lens of the *anthroposcape* allowed for various accounts. On the one hand, as shown above, *IE 2015* concretely took curatorial decisions that challenged the official narrative of the state, and that made the conflicts between notions of statehood and nationhood apparent. The platform did this, despite being fully funded by the state, thus being at the same time complicit (when using the state's money) and rebellious against, or at least disruptive to the state's very policies (when denouncing its contradictions). It could be argued that this was also the case at *BDE 2016* when presenting works by South-East Asian artists. It is true that the latter is the platform that showcased for instance more dance by artists with non-normate physicalities – a sector in which *IE 2015* failed. However, a charter for diversity in the arts is core to one of *BDE*'s main donor, the Arts Council England (ACE n.d.). While dancers with non-normate physicalities were present at the event, there was scarce presence of choreographers and dancers of African or Afro-Caribbean descent, replicating the already mentioned structural discrimination that became apparent with the Windrush scandal. Thus, a close reading of *BDE 2016* suggests that the platform only mirrored conditions produced by established policy and societal structures. Turning the focus to *DPG 2016*, a close reading of the platform's opening with an international collaboration mirrored a German politico-societal position which, especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, stresses the country's effort to pursue a transnational identity (Sörgel 2015:122). With exception of the opening piece, my perception was that the

platform was very 'white'. This might hint at a dangerous side of the transnational project: While international professional artists who were funded with German public money could take part, disregarding their origin or where they live, the path to visibility and inclusion of ethnic minorities within the country's own depiction is still not smooth. Finally, *SSSB* provided a space for Tamil dance artists and audiences to be present, while making evident that these voices had been pushed aside and event into exile during the civil war.

This chapter has argued that NaDaPs do represent or mediate the nations in which they take place. However, they do not do so in an unequivocal way. Thus, the *anthroposcape* must be understood really as a landscape, in which according to the chosen focus, different features become apparent. At first glance there is a prevalent perception in the West that it provides the best context for challenging structural discriminations resulting of gender, ethnicity and physicality. However, a close reading of the four case studies under the light of the *anthroposcape* made apparent that the latter is a dynamic plane that tilts towards one side or the other according to specific foci. This was demonstrated by the fact that on the one hand, with a focus on physicalities, *BDE 2016*, the British and thus a 'Western' platform, provided the best circumstances for dancers with non-normate physicalities to be seen. On the other hand, it was the non-Western platforms that most clearly defied prevalent official narratives in their respective contexts, while both *BDE 2016* and *DPG 2016* seemed to comply with contextually prevailing policies. This challenged at core the construction of essentialising antagonisms between perceived more-or-less developed contexts, and thus in this case confirmed Appadurai's tenet that the world today cannot be perceived "in terms of center-periphery models" (Appadurai 1990: 296). However, to challenge Appadurai's assertion, the next chapter will use the lens of the *financescape* and look at the flows of capital that enable NaDaPs to exist.

CHAPTER SEVEN

**MONEY MAKES THE WORLD GO 'ROUND – OR
CAPITAL MOVES AROUND IN THE WORLD**

7.1 Introduction

In previous chapters, I have discussed how each iteration of the global

phenomenon of the NaDaP is both underpinned and intersected by cultural flows of global

dimensions, defined by Appadurai as *scapes*. Chapter 5 used the *ideoscape* to interrogate

two main ideologies that underpin NaDaPs: that of the *contemporary* and that of the

national-ness. I argued that both these ideologies are globalised. However, it also

demonstrated that some of their constitutive elements have enabled the establishment of a

system of power relations that favours the so-called West, and facilitating its endurance.

Chapter 6 used the lens of the *anthroposcape* (drawing on Appadurai's definition of the

ethnoscape) to focus on the international streams of people active at NaDaPs (especially

the dance artists and their audiences) in relationship to the latter's claim of national

representation. This Chapter will use the framework of Appadurai's *financescape* to

examine the flows of capital that enable the phenomenon of the NaDaP as well as each of

its iterations to exist. I will investigate the financial aspects of the phenomenon and argue

that the prevailing funding policies in each country are intimately related to the

constitution of their NaDaPs and thus reflect back onto the structure, content and national

claim of each iteration. At the same time, this chapter will explore to which extent finances

reflect the global(ised) aspect of the phenomenon, challenging each iteration's claim of

national-ness.

Appadurai theorises the *financescape* by talking of a "mysterious, rapid and difficult landscape" (Appadurai 1990:298), a juxtaposition of flows in which "currency markets, national stock exchanges, and commodity speculations move megamonies through national turnstiles at a blinding speed" (Appadurai 1990:298). Contrarily, anyone involved in the world of contemporary dance in the so-called West as in other regions, can bear witness that its reality is one of fighting for funds, sometimes for the dancers' and choreographers' own very survival[189]. Indeed, as dance scholar and cultural anthropologist Njaradi (2014:256-8) notes, precarity is a normalised dimension in the life of contemporary dancers. National stock exchanges, commodity speculations or international real estate investment are far from the everyday pre-occupations of dancers and choreographers worldwide. Nevertheless, there is a financial dimension to the phenomenon of the NaDaP.

The exploration will thus draw on the framework described by Appadurai's definition of the *financescape*, but will be contextualised. It will take place on various levels. The chapter will dedicate a section to each layer of the discussion. The next section will focus on the effects that historical and geo-political positions have had on the case studies in Britain, Germany, Sri Lanka and Israel. It will begin by discussing the implications of the European colonial enterprise for the formation of an artistic[190] dance

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[189] This observation is based on my own field experience as a practitioner 1992 – 2014, ranging from being a dancer and performer, then a company director, a production director, creative producer and curator, a festival director and a judge for dance festivals and prizes internationally. Collaborations and conversations with colleagues throughout these twenty-odd years from Saint Petersburg to São Paulo, from Cape Town to Cologne, from Caracas to Nairobi underpin the sense of precariousness widespread in the field.

[190] 'Artistic' dance was the terminology used in Israel at the time of independence to differentiate modern dance from folk dances. I employ the term now, for it covers as much modern dance as other dance forms that carry its genealogy.

industry in the cases of Sri Lanka and Israel. Thereafter, I will explore the effects of the conflicting East/West spheres in the aftermath of WW2 and investigate their effects on the cultural policy that frames the development of dance, focusing on the UK and Germany.

Section 7.3 will investigate the sources of funding of each iteration of the phenomenon of the NaDaP and of the productions showcased in them. With a quantitative approach, I will demonstrate that NaDaPs are mostly funded with resources originating within the national scope. However, I will also reveal that a significant number of productions showcased at NaDaPs are funded through the joint efforts of institutions from different countries. I will argue that this circumstance challenges claims of national-ness and rather exposes NaDaPs as events that are part of a transnational industry. A further contextual reading will enable me to argue that the phenomenon of the NaDaP and its iterations are interlinked to an extent that cements and magnifies the interdependency of the economic micro and macro systems in which the platforms take place. 1 will focus on the funding of each case study, and will discuss the funding of the productions showcased at each iteration. I will then examine the extent to which the phenomenon of the NaDaP might be a neo-colonial tool that profits from the economic imbalance between European nations and those in the Global South, and I will offer the conclusions of the chapter in the form of contextualised descriptions that allow for an interweaving of the various layers of meaning solicited by the phenomenon.

7.2 <u>Changing world orders and their effects on the relationship between culture, nation and cultural funding.</u>

As I have detailed earlier, this subsection will focus on the historical and geo-political position of the case studies in the UK, Germany, Sri Lanka and Israel. It will

follow two main lines of analysis that will highlight broader, global political contexts and have had direct implications for their respective economies. The next subsection will thus offer an overview of the interplay between global and local circumstances that prepared the grounds for NaDaPs to emerge where and how they did.

7.2.1 Systems of Power. Dance and nation-building in formerly colonised countries

In the first two decades of the 20th century, the world was geo-politically dominated by Europe, especially by some European nations. Great Britain was the biggest empire on earth, and also France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Portugal and The Netherlands had possessions, colonies and dominions beyond the borders of the European continent. Within this politico-economic framework, stage dance forms alternative to Ballet started to emerge in Europe and the USA. The European imperial quest and its related conquests resulted in a hierarchical system with political and economic consequences. While Germany[191] or Great Britain were sovereign states and organised as such, neither Sri Lanka nor Israel were independent countries. Sri Lanka, known at the time as Ceylon was a British colony and the territory part of which would become Israel was also under British rule under the name British Mandate Palestine[192]. This world order had economic

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[191] Even though after being besieged in WW1 Germany lost its colonies and was met with harsh reparation claims in the Treaty of Versailles (which also ruled that some parts of the country were to be under the victors' administration), the country did not cease to be perceived as a sovereign nation.

[192] In the end of WW1, colonial powers France and Great Britain, that had been agents in producing the fall of the Ottoman Empire, divided the latter's eastern provinces among each other creating the new Middle East with the so-called Sykes-Picot agreement (these are the names of the respective foreign ministers responsible for negotiating and signing the agreement in the name of their governments).

consequences, but as Chapter 5 argued, it also had direct effects on hierarchical systems that facilitate the devaluation of the cultural productions of non-European nations.

Both in Ceylon and the British Mandate Palestine the arts were cultivated. As chapter 2 discussed, both countries became independent in 1948[193] and, in both cases, dance was a constitutive element towards the construction of a national narrative (Reed 2010, Ingber 2011). This circumstance produced a strong focus on folk dances, for "[t]he idea of folklore provided (the) emerging nation-states, and their devoted intelligentsia in particular, with ample opportunities to mobilize their subject populations toward the construction of a national identity" (Öztürkmen 1994:83 in Shay 1999:34). This co-option of dance by nation-building projects might have been at the time an obstacle for it to develop freely, both aesthetically and in terms of content.

I argue that this afore mentioned circumstance played a big role for the development of Sri Lanka's dance platform. Dance has always been significant in the country, also when it was colonised and called the British Crown Colony Ceylon. However, the economy of dance manifested mainly in religious functions of traditional dance or in State-funded folk dance shows (Susan Reed 2010) and in traditional dance and oriental ballet education in the school system (Susan Reed 2010, Perera 2016), thus dance was, demonstrating the veracity of Öztürkmen's assertion, solicited for nation-building projects. Contemporary dance had until a few years ago played a very marginal role (Perera 2016, Pieris 2016). It might even be that dance vocabularies primarily related with

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[193] The colony Ceylon became first the independent Dominion of Ceylon that was re-named in 1972 in the Republic of Sri Lanka. The British Mandate Palestine was to be split between a Jewish and a Palestinian state. Only the State of Israel exists at the moment, but a discussion about the development of the polities Israel and Palestine would by far exceed the scope of this thesis.

contemporary dance have even been associated with an internationalism that has been enmeshed with former colonial powers. Thus, unlike in Germany or the UK, the government has not made a provision for public funding of contemporary dance until now[194]. Unlike Israel, Sri Lanka does not have an impactful tradition of private charities for the arts[195]. This has given way for a foreign institution, the Goethe-Institut Sri Lanka, to establish and fund the country's first NaDaP, the *Colombo Dance Platform*, as well as most of the showcased productions.

Whereas in pre-independence Israel and in the early years of the statehood dance (and thus especially folk dance) also played a big role in the nation-building project (Ingber 2011), its case differs very much from the Sri Lankan. The short-lived British Mandate Palestine (1920-1948) was much shorter than the over a century-long British colonisation of Sri Lanka. Probably, the fact that many immigrants from various countries brought their own dance experience of European modern dance enabled to a certain extent the early development of the art form[196] alongside the development of folk dance that served the purpose of creating a national identity[197]. Unlike the case in Sri Lanka, several

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[194] This is currently changing, for an Arts Council with a section for contemporary dance (following unsurprisingly the UK example) has been created of late. Perera has been appointed to its commission (Perera 2016, also personal conversations with her).

[195] There are charities like the Sunera Foundation that work with dance in a therapeutic context for people with disabilities. The Sunethra Bandaranaike Trust does support contemporary art in Sri Lanka, but in a more modest way than the counterparts in Israel do. It is to my knowledge the only trust funding contemporary arts.

[196] A full discussion of the interplay of Orientalism, Zionism, European Jewry and dance in relationship to Israel and its dance would by far exceed the scope of this work.

[197] As an example among many others, Yehudit Arnon, a Czech immigrant was one of the early personalities in the country's dance life who worked both with folk and what was called in that context "artistic" dance in kibbutz Ga'aton. One of the country's best established contemporary dance companies, *Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company* (KCDC) and its education programme grew out of this effort (KCDC, n.d.). This example shows the extent to which the financescape is intersected by the anthroposcape and the ideoscape.

government bodies support the national dance platform, *IE*. The Israeli Ministry of Culture supports the production of contemporary dance throughout the year, with a differentiated programme of festivals support and project support. Many of the pieces showcased at *IE* had been funded by these programmes. Official support for dance is not limited to the engagement of the Ministry of Culture: also the Division for Cultural and Scientific Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has traditionally played a big role supporting the platform. Beyond the state's support for the arts, there is another important point to be named when focusing on dance and *IE* in Israel under the lens of the *financescape*: the engagement of private philantropists, which I will discuss in section 7.4 for it is not directly related to the *Systems of Power* that this section has addressed.

Having discussed the situationality of Sri Lanka' and Israel's NaDaPs under the lens of the *financescape*, in the next section I will turn the focus to Germany and the UK, neither country having been colonised. On the contrary, they are European countries that have engaged in the colonising enterprise. However, they have also been at war with each other and especially the confrontation during WW2 brought about consequences that affected the development of dance in both countries.

7.2.2   <u>New World Order – competing economic frameworks</u>

WW2 ended in 1945. Nazi Germany was defeated and the country posed no more danger while the allies spearheaded by the USA, the USSR and the UK had won the war. However, the members of this coalition were "already at war - ideologically and geopolitically if not militarily" (Gaddis 2005:6). The relationship of two of the former allies, the USSR and the USA, deteriorated rapidly, and "the diplomatic negotiations of

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1945-7 towards a peace settlement were the bridge from the wartime alliance to the Cold War" (Deighton 1989:17). Factually, this implied the division of Europe in two spheres of influence (Gaddis 2005:20), and their border split Germany in two[198].

At the time, the world came largely under the hegemony of the USA and the USSR, and both "embraced ideologies with global aspirations" (Gaddis 2005:7), thus attempting at widening their spheres of influence. The USSR understood itself as the defender and propagator of communist ideology, while the USA constructed itself as the spearhead of a market-oriented capitalist order. Roughly, within a capitalistic context, the State sets the framework for private enterprise to evolve, and encourages individuals to engage in producing goods and providing services, in Winston Churchill's words, it encourages self-determination (Gaddis 2005:20), while in a communist context the state itself regulates production and services, what kind of product and how much of it will be produced (Block 2018:79). This translated as well into dance.

Germany had lost the war and was in ashes, while winning the war had proven to be a very costly enterprise for Great Britain, unlike for the USA (Gaddis 2005: 8). In both countries, the population suffered in the austere environment dictated by the historical post-war circumstances. The Western allies were anxious that (Western) Germany "would (it) succumb to extremism of the right or left" (Turner 1989:13). Therefore, strategies of politic containment were implemented (BPB, n.d.). These consisted primarily in what is called social welfare: the state provided services such as health care and funding for culture and the arts, while producing some sort of prosperity

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[198] Despite Germany being occupied by more powers, the Cold War hardened the actual border between the Western and the Soviet Zones.

for the masses. This should avert possible revolutions with communist-backed ideology

and thus an intentional shift of the country (both Germany as well as the UK, where leftist

voices were also raised[199]) to the influential sphere of the USSR. Thus, the intention to

keep the masses away from the influence of communism played into a rationale to

constitute the European *social* market economies, both in the UK (following the Keynesian

model[200]) or in Germany (following the Rheinische Model, the model of the Rhein).

These social market economies created a context that improved common

people's lives, which in turns translated into keeping social cohesion within the context of

post –WW2 constraints. Hence, finances were allocated for social purposes, such as health

care and the possibility to engage in the arts for broad sectors of the population. It is true

that already during the war the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts

(CEMA) had been established to 'nurture British culture' (British Council, n.d.), thus to

boost the nation-al spirit, and this provided a ground onto which further developments

could take root. The Arts Council of Great Britain /ACGB)'s charter was drafted in 194

and in 1948 the government authorised spending on the arts[201] (Arts Council England,

n.d.). In the same year, the National Health Service (NHS) was created in the UK, that

would make for the first time health care accessible for all[202]. Thus, while it is true that the

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[199] Philippa Burt's article (2014) points to the collaboration between politics, the Arts Council (withholding) of funding and even the M15 to survey and ultimately prevent the theatre group Theatre Workshop, that was perceived by the State as dangerous due to its ideological 'left' leaning. This mirrors McCarthy's witch-hunt methods to persecute people suspected of sympathising with communism in the USA, but an extension to this contextualisation is beyond the scope of this argument.

[200] Wendy Brown goes as far as to describe the Keynesian model as socialism (Brown 2007:3).

[201] Lee and Byrne state that "dance in the UK began to receive public funding only after the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) was set up in 1946 (Lee and Byrne 2010:284).

[202] Created by Prime Minister Clement Attlee in 1948. Atlee was prime minister but it is Aneurin Bevan who is considered architect of the NHS.

intention to trigger a national moral boosting to serve as home propaganda was already envisioned during the war, the institutionalisation of these two bodies shows how much emphasis was put on creating an economically more inclusive society after the war.

Turning to Germany, the country was in a state of almost total destruction after WW2. The level of wreckage in many of its big cities was over 70%. Moreover, as a result of the war, the country was divided in two, the Federal Republic of Germany in the West (under USA hegemony) and the Democratic German Republic in the East (under USSR hegemony). The country constituted thus geographically the actual border between the Soviet dominated Eastern Block and the "West". It was therefore paramount for the USA to stabilise Western Germany and avert the rise not only of old right-wing ideologies, but also of left ideologies sympathetic to the USSR. The tool created was the European Recovery Program announced by US-American Secretary of State George Marshall (Gaddis 2005:30-31) – colloquially known as the Marshall Plan - which would ultimately enable the country to re-engine its structures and industry, thanks to the influx of currency it produced. As a result, the Western German economy steadily recovered, while the border to the "East" had if anything hardened with the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. The Western allies feared that "hunger, poverty, and despair might cause Europeans to vote their own communists into office" (Gaddis 2005:32). The credo was to enable the masses to exercise consumption in order to align them with the capitalistic West, while stabilising societal cohesion through a narrow-meshed welfare system.

Hence, both in the UK and in Germany, a model of social market economy was constituted that provided a framework in which, among others, the arts would be supported by the state. However, the 1970s marked the moment in which the economic

framework in both countries started to divert, and this had an effect on their arts funding. In the UK, the economy stagnated. Margaret Thatcher, who was convinced of the effectiveness of the theories developed by economist Friedrich Hayek, ascended to power as Prime Minister in 1979. Hayek, Friedman (et al.) from the Chicago School of Political Economy, the main theorists of neo-liberal economy, defended a

> radically free market: maximised competition and free trade achieved through economic de-regulation, elimination of tariffs, and a range of monetary and social policies favourable to business and indifferent toward poverty, social deracination, cultural decimation, long term resource depletion and environmental destruction
>
> (Brown, 2003:1)

Although Brown states the mentioned characteristics as the umbrella under which neo-liberalism is described in ordinary parlance, I find this is the clearest description of the policies and context that neo-liberalism creates. The slight antagonism in the article arises from Brown's focus on unveiling neo-liberalism as a political rationality, an ideology, rather than (only) a collection of economic policies. Brown rightly argues that the rationale behind "neo-liberalism is not simply a set of economic policies; it is not only about facilitating free trade, maximizing corporate profits and challenging welfarism" (Brown 2003: 3). Nevertheless, she leaves no doubt that neo-liberalism does challenge welfarism and that the liberalism in neo-liberalism is *economic* liberalism[203]. This

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[203] As opposed to what is identified as liberal or progressive values in realtion to culture and society

reinforces my argument that the *financescape* and the *ideoscape* are intimately related to one another.

Consistent with this ideology, challenging welfarism - and state support for the arts with it - was in Britain at the core of Thatcher's government (1979 – 1990) and this translated in the development of policy during her government. For instance, the Arts Council England (ACE) publicized in 1986 a recommendation called *A Great British Success Story,* that made an economic case for the arts putting emphasis on 'multiplier' effects rather than on the arts themselves. This is not to say that dance was not seen as a creative art form, but also 1996 ACE's policy for dance placed the stress on "the commercial returns that [had] to be 'earned' by the arts" (Lee and Byrne 2010: 285). This shows the extent to which the state influences the creation of arts through policy.

In a way, needing to generate income might have contributed to making the dance sector apparently less dependent from the state. However, this clearly means that dance companies are more dependent on the earned revenues. This is also currently the case, and if a dance company does receive state support, it still must earn a significant part of its budget through touring and ticketing (Ashford and Beattie 2017). This has several implications: on the one hand, subsidised dance companies must comply with targets such as "increasing audience participation or promoting social benefits through the medium of dance" re-constructing thus the art form as the "means to[wards] an end" (Lee and Byrne 2010: 282). This reification of dance as a means to a healthier life or social inclusion diverts from its constitutive element of being an art form, and I argue that it possibly limits choreographers' capacity to take risks in their artistic processes. In turns, this affects also the form and content of NaDaPs, as for instance a significant challenge "has been to match

each BDE's strength to the particular priorities of the available AC funding at the time"
(Gibson 2017). Thus, in the context of NaDaPs, this process of instrumentalisation of
dance (towards other ends) lays the base for dance pieces to be defined as a commodity
like any other and, the more a NaDaP is constituted as a trade fair, the more revenues it
must produce. Following this rationale, it seems logical that the phenomenon of the
NaDaP, the event constituted as an – albeit national - trade fair of the commodity *dance
production* emerged in Britain. Unsurprisingly, *BDE 2016* offered a large number of
productions in a diverse programme that could cater to a variety of buyers or programmers.
Conversely, not only is *BDE* generally governed by the rationale that only those who can
buy are to be targeted as audiences (Ashford and Beattie 2017), but *BDE 2016* also made a
big effort to target affluent programmers, including several questions regarding their
availability of budgets for *British* dance in the guests' application forms[204].

In Germany, dance companies and projects funded with public money are
also required to show their work, but they rely less on the revenues generated by the
shows[205]. Even when eventually a NaDaP, *DPG* was constituted Walter Heun, one of the
persons responsible for the enterprise is reluctant to define the event as a marketing one
(Heun 2017), and as I discussed in Chapter 2, the jurors can claim "not to think of the
audience" when they effect their programme selection (Noeth, Till and Wittrock, 2017)[206].

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[204] The questions were part of the application form for guests who wanted to attend *BDE 2016*.

[205] My own experience of over ten years as a production manager in Germany has proved that
funding applications to carry out dance projects required more emphasis on the project's artistic
content and not so much on how audiences will be targeted (with nuances between the various
funding bodies and also between the different States). Moreover, in the budgeting, the expected
income through the shows is negligible compared to the full amount of the application.

[206] Contrast this tenet with the assertion that "there is no point in having a load of people who can't
buy anything" (Ashford and Beattie 2017, also referred to in Chapter 2) and further that "the big
challenge… whoever is doing the selection therefore needs to understand what the main markets
from which the delegates are coming, are looking for" (Ashford and Beattie 2017).

Whereas from the beginning the targeted audience was that of the international programmers, Heun distances himself from a stated economic aim. For him, it is important to "make visible the artistic work that is made in Germany" (Heun 2017). In his words, "an American (sic) programmer would say: We are presenting our best companies to market them and to conquer new markets abroad… but our interest is less a marketing one, but to mediate or act as an agent for artistic work (in German: künstlerische Arbeit *vermitteln*) and to insert artistic work produced in Germany into the international discourse" (Heun 2017). Thus, whilst Heun does not deny the market-dimension of the platform, he can allow himself to place his focus on the artistic production rather than on its financial aspect.

Further on in the same interview, Heun explains his perception that the characteristics of the artistic productions in Germany and in Britain reflect the frameworks effected by the different funding systems. This has translated into a NaDaP in Germany, *DPG 2016* that featured only twelve productions and seemed to underpin Heun's assertion that the event aimed at influencing the international artistic discourse rather than at selling productions to the highest possible number of venues. *DPG 2016's* jurors seemed to share this point of view, asserting that they programmed productions that were *impulsgebend* (roughly: 'showing new directions'[207]) and they did not have their audiences, the programmers, in mind at the moment of effecting the selection, feature that for them made the difference between a platform and a regular festival in their eyes differentiated a platform from a regular festival (Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017).

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[207] For more on this see chapter 2.4

Consequently, despite all differences, directly after WW2 there were similarities in the rationales to fund the arts in the cases of Britain and Germany. However, this started to change in the 1970s and 1980s. It would be beyond the scope of this study to fully explore which rationales favoured these developments. However, I would argue that both the facts of Germany's geographical location during the Cold War (with the border of the two spheres of influence dividing the country) and the aftermaths of the Marshall plan with its emphasis on containment, have interplayed to result in distinctive economic frameworks in the two countries. And in turns, this impacted their policies towards funding the arts and dance in particular, and produced different conditions for the value ascribed to the art form. I argue that this produced the conditions that favoured the establishment of the first NaDaP in Britain. However, forwarding the same logic, I suggest that the politico-economical frameworks that developed divergently in Germany and Britain provide the rationale for their NaDaPs to be so different from each other: while *BDE 2016* showcased 37 very varied pieces (but comparatively few politically or aesthetically challenging) and thus provided invited programmers with a great choice, *DPG 2016* presented only 12 pieces claiming that it aimed at influencing the international discourse, while its jurors did not need to adjust their decisions to considerations regarding marketability.

The aim of is section has been to examine the scope of the financial implications around the development of frameworks for the development of contemporary dance and the establishment of NaDaPs. One was the axis stretching between non-colonised countries and formerly colonised ones. This axis discussed the conditions is Sri Lanka and Israel, as opposed to Germany and Britain. It argued that in both cases folk dances found a fertile ground to thrive. However, contextual specificities resulted in this

situation being detrimental for the development of contemporary dance in Sri Lanka but not in Israel. This influenced as well the frameworks for the respective NaDaPs to be established. The other axis described the opposition between the capitalist and the communist spheres of influence and I have argued that the emergence of the welfare state in Germany and in Britain, positioning culture and the arts as a means of social stabilisation, was entrenched with the larger political context. However, I have also discussed that that the politico-ideological conditions changed in the 1970s. This produced a different approach to funding for dance in the two countries thereafter. In the case of Britain, funding policy required dance companies to produce more revenue, circumstance that resulted in a clear 'marketisation' of the dance scene, and ultimately into the emergence of the first NaDaP in the country. However, while this section focused on the financial environment in which each NaDaP emerged, it did not explain *how* the phenomenon of the NaDaP was constituted as a market place. This will be the focus of the next section.

7.3   The funding of the NaDaPs and the showcased productions

Contemporary dance and also contemporary ballet are, due to the fact that "the experimental and unconventional character of the genre limits its commercial attractiveness" (Lee and Byrne, 2010: 282) predominantly a subsidised industry, with nuances in each case study. Much of this public funding, the monetised financial flows that

frame dance as an industry, is tax money and granted on national levels[208]. This could

underpin a NaDaPs legitimacy when claiming to represent the dance industry of a country.

However, this claim could lead to infer that the money funding the

showcased productions is money generated from within that country. Indeed, three of the

four NaDaPs, *BDE 2016*, *DPG 2016* and *IE 2015* were mostly funded by national public

money. But NaDaPs are, as I have argued before, a phenomenon of the globalised world.

As explored in the ideoscape, the ideas and ideologies that underpin NaDaPs travel beyond

national boundaries. Examining NaDaPs through the lens of the *anthroposcape* in Chapter

6 has shown that those who people the events are also international. Unsurprisingly, the

funds used to produce dance are often international as well. Thus, in contrast to the

NaDaPs themselves (that were mostly funded with national monies), many of the dance

pieces showcased at *BDE 2016* and at *DPG 2016*, but also at *IE 2015* and at *SSSB* had

been produced with funds hailing from different countries as 'international co-productions'

(Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017)[209].

NaDaPs are big events and hence costly. Venues, front and backstage

workers, dance pieces, publicity and social media presence and administration all demand

flows of finance. As I have argued in section 7.2.2, culture was very early sustained with

public funding, and Lee and Byrne show that contemporary dance is especially dependent

on it (Lee and Byrne 2010:282). Indeed, all four NaDaPs have been carried out mostly

with public funding. This is made visible by the funders' logos placed prominently in the

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[208] I am not denying the existence of funds for international co-operation which are relevant in many cases. However, seldom if ever do funds for NaDaPs come from these sources.

[209] During the interview, the jury of *DPG 2016* argued that the financial volume currently required by many productions can only be reached through co-producing.

programme folders. Thus, NaDaPs seem to be significant enough for the government, or

agencies funded by public monies, to fund the event. This was the case of *IE 2015*, *BDE

2016* and *DPG 2016*. *SSSB* was also funded by institutions that administrate public funds

– albeit mostly foreign ones. I will discuss this anomaly and the consequences hereof when

addressing this iteration. In the next sections, based *a priori* on a quantitative exploration, I

will proceed to discuss the funding of each iteration of the phenomenon. However, the

mere enumeration of data is not sufficient to understand the implications of the funding's

origins. I will therefore engage in contextual readings that will lead to producing a

contextualised description of each iteration, all under the lens of the *financescape*.

Thereafter, I will turn the focus to of the productions showcased in each case study.

7.3.1 The funding of the four NaDaPs

        The institution carrying out the *International Exposure (IE)* was the

Suzanne Dellal Centre for Dance and Theatre. The event's funders were the Municipality

of Tel Aviv-Yafo, the Dance Department of the Culture Administration of the Ministry of

Culture and Sports and the Division of Cultural and Scientific Affairs of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs. It is noteworthy that despite the proliferation of private donors in the

country, none was directly engaged in the event[210]. Thus, only three substantial funders

enabled the biggest of all four case studies. Two aspects are remarkable: one is the obvious

presence of funding bodies directly linked to the government.

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[210] This assertion is qualified by the fact that the *Suzanne Dellal Centre* was built with funds
donated by family Dellal, in a joint political effort with the Mayor of Tel Aviv. Indirectly thus,
through the Dellal family's engagement, it could be argued that private donors were invested in the
event. More about the history of the Suzanne Dellal Centre is in chapter 2.5

As briefly mentioned in Chapter 2.5, the Division for Cultural and

Scientific Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the governmental body that has

from the inception provided the guests to *IE* with 4-nights free accommodation at a high-

end hotel in Tel Aviv. This might suggest that the event is awarded great importance. This

point of view could be reinforced by the fact that the opening speech was delivered by Rafi

Ghamzou, Head of the Division of Cultural and Scientific Affairs in the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs. At the same time, this does not go uncontested, for it can awaken the

impression of the festival being part of the State's propaganda. The question must be

raised, whether the direct governmental funding serves the government's political agenda,

and if the funding enables the Government to exercise any influence on the programming.

However, as Yair Vardi, initiator and director of *IE* asserted several times, "they (the

Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) are just observers. They have no

say… They have no rights (to veto or constitute programming" (Vardi 2017). He even

recalls a former Minister of Culture stating explicitly that they did not want to be involved

or to make any comments. Whereas in my case study, *IE 2015*, there were not discussion

panels, some were constituted for later editions. Many cultural attachés of Israeli

Embassies worldwide attend *IE*, and they are a perceptible presence in it (this makes the

Foreign Ministry ubiquitous as well). However, all prominent representatives of the

Ministry withdrew when there were political panels, so as not to disturb free speech (as

accounted by an organiser of *IE* in a private conversation). Moreover, as of 2019, *IE* might

take place without the support of the Division for Cultural and Scientific Affairs of the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which seems to have withdrawn its support. Furthermore, as I

have demonstrated in chapters 4 and 5, *IE*'s programme often clearly contradicts the

official narratives of nationhood as propagated by the state, making of *IE* a platform for

actively political counter-narratives. This seems to reinforce my perception that, whereas

government funding is indeed heavily involved in *IE*, this fact does not limit the programmers' nor the artists' freedom of expression in any way[211] and that the platform is not merely a tool of state propaganda.

Turning focus to Britain, *BDE 2016* took place (for the first time) in Wales. Following the presence of logos on the programme folder, the event was funded in a joint effort by Welsh, English, and Britain-wide acting entities. The Welsh funding bodies were: CoreoCymru, the Welsh implementer of the project; National Dance Company Wales and the three local venues Chapter, Wales Millennium Centre and Riverfront; the Arts Council of Wales; the National Lottery Wales and the Welsh Government. Further, Arts Council England (that is lottery-funded), the Lottery and the International Dance Festival Birmingham 2016 engaged in the project, as did National Dance Network (NDN) a Britain-wide extending network. In this case, there was only one direct governmental funder: Welsh Government. However, besides the Lottery, the rest of the funders such as the venues and the International Birmingham Dance Festival are quangos (quasi autonomous non-governmental organisations that receive public funding), and as such also indirectly funded by public funds.

DPG 2016 was funded by federal, regional and municipal funds, as well as by private donors and charities. Federal funds were provided by the Commission of the Federal Government for Culture and Media. The Cultural Fund Frankfurt RheinMain

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[211] Further evidence for this is the fact that *Archive* (Arkadi Zaides 2015) was a very successful piece in 2015 that clearly decried the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. The piece was not included in *IE 2015's* programme and I was told that this was due to technical problems. While it is true that the piece relies heavily on technology, which makes it more difficult to programme in a festival (due to the time-consuming set up), there could have been room to ask whether this was the full story. However, the piece was included in the programme of *IE 2016,* time in which the political context had, if anything, further deteriorated.

engaged with regional funding. The City of Frankfurt am Main supported the event, the same as the Hessian Ministry for Sciences and Art. Further, the charities Circle of Friends and Supporters of the Theatre Mousonturm e.V. contributed to the event, the same as the Allianz Cultural Fund… for Europe. The private registered association, but mostly publicly funded Goethe-Institut, the National Performance Network NPN, the Hessian Theatre Academy, the regional banks Taunus Sparkasse and Frankfurter Sparkasse, and the City of Offenbach am Main. This shows that the event was a joint effort of the Federal Government, together with the State of Hessen and the region Rhein-Main and the cities in which the platform took place, joined by private donors. The engagement of the Federal Government shows that it has the tools to engage in this effort, and that it decided to do so.

Sri Lanka presents the exception in this section. Of the four funders listed in the programme folder, three are foreign: the Swiss Cultural Fund ProHelvetia, the Embassy of Switzerland in Sri Lanka and the Goethe-Institut. Only one funder is inconspicuously local, the University of the Visual and Performing Arts Sri Lanka[212]. Thus, Sri Lanka poses the case in which the State is furthest away from the platform, for *SSSB* was funded almost entirely by foreign institutions. In the same spirit, it could be argued that the state produces a context that does not encourage local institutions to fund contemporary dance. Chapter 2 described how the *Colombo Dance Platform* (later *SLDP*), *SSSB*'s predecessor, was even established by the Goethe-Institut[213]. This seems to suggest that, unlike in Israel or Germany, the national government seems either not to ascribe

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[212] The University provided in-kind support with all the performance venues, but for one performance that took place at the GI.

[213] Just at the time in which Shakti took place, an Arts Council following the British model was established, and Perera was invited to form part of it (interview Perera). It is both unsurprising and remarkable in the context of this work that a British institution is taken as role model in a former colony.

much importance to contemporary dance, or not to have the means to engage in the field, or to value dance only within the framework of a nation-building programme[214] as described in the section. The absence of local funding resulted thus in foreign cultural institutes such as ProHelvetia or the Goethe-Institut (or as the British Council did in the past) having the possibility to introduce their own ideas of what contemporary dance is. This is a moment of disturbance, in which ideas of national-ness elucidated in the *ideoscape* are disrupted by (foreign) cultural policy with means originated in the *financescape*.

As mentioned briefly above, it was the Goethe-Institut that initiated the *Colombo Dance Platform*, *SSSB*'s oldest ancestor. Due to the nature of the GI's work, directors rotate every four or five years. Between the third and the fourth platform, there was hence a change in the direction of the Institute. The new director had to work with the former's heritage, but at the same time wanted to set a personal stamp on the platform. She therefore decided that the project's new stage would have to be a collaboration between a local and a German choreographer, and that a German production should be shown in the platform (Perera 2017). If these conditions were not met, the platform might have not been funded. This led to Lea Moro's *Le Sacre du Printemps, A Ballet for a Single Body* being showcased as *SSSB*'s opening. Lea Moro is a Swiss choreographer working in Switzerland and Berlin, which made her eligible as a German dance maker according to the Institute's criteria of German-ness (Traub 2017).

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[214] This does not deny the possibility that investing in contemporary dance could also be investing in nation-building, but until now this has been not within the focus of the Lankan government.

But Moro's participation at Shakti had even further impacts. Due to constraints in the artist's agenda, she presented her work a week ahead of the other artists, disengaging her presentation from the rest of the event[215]. Indeed, her creation *Le Sacre du Printemps. A Ballet for a Single Body* was showcased on September 30th, with a workshop by the artist and her musician the day after, while the rest of Shakti took place on October 8th and 9th 2016. *Le Sacre du Printemps, A Ballet for a Single Body* had been very well received by the German dance critique. Thee work also was performed by only one dancer, a woman, which made it eligible according to *SSSB*'s selection criteria. However, the deconstruction of *Le Sacre du Printemps* in a context in which only selected segments of the audience had even few historical references of the work, both in musical and dance terms, made the work illegible[216] to the audience unfamiliar with its Western significance. In contrast, it seems very unlikely that in Germany, Britain or Israel the dates of a NaDaP are accommodated to a dancer's availability. But in Sri Lanka, the fact that the Goethe-Institut provided much of the funds and logistics for *SSSB* not only had changed the character of the event throughout (turning the platform into a festival), but it also enabled the inclusion of a German artist a week ahead of the actual festival. This highlights the influence of a foreign cultural institute on local artistic decisions[217] and provides a clear

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[215] It is important to note that the idea in the other platforms is to present the artist in the tightest possible schedule, to cater for the time scarcity of mostly foreign programmers.

[216] I was invited to moderate a talk between the artist and the audience after the performance, and I failed thoroughly. I was very concerned with not coming cross as an educator (and therefore reproduce colonial patterns of patronisation), but I found it nearly impossible, within the available thirty minutes, to convey the significance of the work within the Western context averting this danger.

[217] It is important to note that, while Björn Ketels enabled the establishment of the *Colombo Dance Platform*, his term finished in 2015. Given that each local Goethe-Institut is considerably autarchic from the Headquarters in Munich, a new director can develop parameters that respond to a new agenda.

example for my argument that NaDaPs mediate prevailing conditions in the countries in which they take place.

To conclude, this section has discussed the funding of the four NaDaPs and has provided evidence for the effect that the form and extent of their funding have on each iteration. I will now turn the focus to the funding of the showcased dance productions and demonstrate that it is often multinational, challenging the national claim of each NaDaP.

7.3.2   The financing of the productions showcased at the four NaDaPs

This section is a quantitative account of the financial sources for the productions showcased by the four case studies. It relies mostly on the programme folders of each iteration. However, when information was not provided by the folders, I explored the companies' websites (when available) and their digital presence. All data are displayed in the table "Table to chapter 7", Appendix II.

BDE 2016 presented thirty-six shows. Most of them were funded, produced or co-produced by several partners. Only five of them were supported by two or fewer organisations[218]. Eighteen shows were funded by British organisations, charities, and

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[218] They are: Balbir Singh Dance Company's *Decreasing Infinity*, Candoco Dance Company's *Beheld*, the National Dance Company Wales' *Tuplet*, Phoenix Dance Theatre's *Bloom* and Robbie Synge's *Douglas*. (Programme folder BDE 2016 and companies' websites).

funding institutions that distribute public and private funds[219]. Thirteen performances were

created as co-operations or co-productions with international funding[220].

Hence, the finances that flowed through *BDE 2016* did so throughout much

of the Western Hemisphere. More than a third of the works, thirteen pieces of the

showcased pieces at the event, relied on international funding from other European

countries and North-America and were thus international co-productions. Moreover, while

in seven cases the productions were bi-national, the rest were supported by multinational

co-operations. This leads me to challenge *BDE 2016*'s claims of national-ness, if looked

from a financial point of view.

DPG 2016 showcased twelve productions, roughly a third of the amount

staged by *BDE 2016*[221]. Disregarding this fact, the shows were not all produced solely with

German money. Of the twelve shows, less than half were produced only with German

funding[222]. Of these productions, three were productions of Municipal or State theatres,

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[219] They are: Darren Ellis Dance's *Meeting Mr. Boom!,* Far from the Norm's *InNoForm*, Gary Clark Company's *Coal*, Gecko's *Institute*, Gwyn Emberton Dance's *Of the Earh, from where I came*, James Cousins Company's *There we have been*, Joan Clevillé Dance's *Plan B for Utopia*, Liz Aggiss' *Slap and Tickle*, Lost Dog's *Paradise lost (lies unopened beside me)*, Luca Silvestrini's Protein's *May contain food,* Motionhouse's *Broken*, Ockham's Razor's *Tipping Point*, Rosemary Lee's *Without*, Scottish Dance Theatre's *Dreamers*, Grass' *Second Hand Dance*, Still House's *Of Riders and Running Horses*, Up & Over It's *Into the Water* and Vertical Dance Kate Lawrence's *Seaweed* (Programme folder BDE 2016 and companies' websites).

[220] They are: Aakash Odedra Company's *Echoes,* Akram Khan Company's *Chotto Desh,* Dan Daw's *Beast,* Hofesh Shechter Company's *tHE bAD,* Igor and Moreno's *A Room for all our tomorrows,* Jo Fong's *An Invitation…,* Poniedance's *Ponies don't play football,* Project O's *O,* Reckless Sleepers' *A String section,* Russell Maliphant Company's *Piece No. 43,* Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru's *Dawns Ysbrydion,* Theo Clinkard's *Of Land & Tongue and* Wendy Houstoun's *Pact with Pointlessness* (Programme folder BDE 2016 and companies' websites).

[221] The rationale underpinning the amount of productions showcased at DPG, is discussed in chapter 2.4

[222] These were: Gintersdorfer & Klaßen's *Not Punk, Pololo* (Gintersdorfer & Klaßen n.d.), Verena Billinger & Sebastian Schulz's *Violent Event* (Billinger & Schulz n.d.), Antje Pfundtner in Gesellschaft's *nimmer* (Antje Pfundtner n.d.*),* Meg Stuart / Damage Goods & Münchener

which are traditionally fully funded by the Government with public funds and therefore do not rely on external funding[223]. The other seven pieces were created in collaboration with foreign theatres, funding institutions and charities. Whereas the link of national-ness and finance flows in the German case goes as far as to claim that if there is German funding the productions are considered German (Traub), the claim seems not to be applied the other way around. If it was, some of the presented pieces, made possible by international co-productions, could be claimed to be also Belgian, French, Swiss, US-American or Austrian. Moreover, the *financescape* sheds light onto the fact that a German / Ivorian co-production can be claimed as German, whereas there is no national dance platform in the Ivory Coast to reclaim the piece – which adds a layer to the discussion of former colonising and colonised countries in section 7.2.1 of this chapter.

IE 2015 was by far the biggest of all four examples of NaDaPs: it featured 43 shows. Despite the size, Yair Vardi, claims that in Israel so much dance is produced every year, that the platform must be held annually. This seems to be an exceptional case, for as Walter Heun assessed, according to his experience, "one cannot make a yearly festival out of the dance production of only one country" (Heun 2017)[224]. The success of the biennial format in other NaDaPs seems to underline this and indeed, *IE* is the only one of the four platforms that takes place every year. As discussed in *Setting Up the Stage*, its

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Kammerspiele's *Until our hearts stop* (Meg Stuart / Damaged Gods n.d.) and Bayerisches Staatsballet II's *Oskar Schlemmer Gerhard Bohner Das Triadische Ballet* (Bayerisches Staatsballet n.d.).

[223] Germany has over 160 Municipal, State and Federal theatres (most of them with fully employed dance companies), that are fully funded by the Government. For more on the peculiarity of German arts funding see 2.4

[224] In the Interview, he explained that, the Swiss platform *Tanznovember*, one of the earliest dance platforms, did not succeed due to its attempt to be held yearly.

international success seems to indicate that it is the case that a lot of good dance is produced in the country.

A search into the sources of funding of the productions featured at *IE* reveals meagre results. Contrarily to the cases in Germany and the UK, seldom do companies acknowledge their funders in the platform's programme folder. A further search on the companies' websites has not helped either. *In lieu* of funders, twelve shows acknowledge that they were created in the framework of Israeli festivals for upcoming choreographers and live arts artists, *Curtain Up* and *Shades of Dance*[225]. This might indicate that pieces produced within these frameworks are funded by them – which means ultimately funded by the state. Further two works acknowledge to having been created in collaboration with Israeli festivals[226]. Only three productions acknowledge specifically funding by the Israel Ministry of Culture, the Lottery Council for Culture & The Arts and the Israel Ministry of Culture and Sport[227]. Surprisingly, merely seven to eight pieces out of the 43 were created with foreign funding[228]. All this seems to indicate a rather self-

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[225] These were: Uri Shafir's *Somewhere in the Now,* Ido Batash's *The Free Builders*, Ido Feder's *Wig It*, Sivan Peled's *Susim,* Ma'ayan Gur's *Experimenting Mass*, Sofia Krantz's *Untitled*, Oz Mulay's *Collective Sub*, Ravid Abarbanel's *Underneath*, Sahar Damoni's *Path*, Noa Zuk & Ohad Fishof's *Garden of Minutes,* Roni Chadash's *Ani-Ma* and Roni Rotem & Michal Rotman's ½

[226] *The Birth of the Phoenix* (Vertigo Dance Company) was produced in collaboration with *Karmiel Dance Festival* and *Boys* (Roy Assaf) in co-operation with *Intimadance Festival.*

[227] They were: *Come Jump with me* (Yossi Berg & Oded Graf Dance Theatre), *Entropy* (Noa Shadur) and *Cowboy* (Nir Sheinfeld & Oren Laor).

[228] They were: *Man of the Hour* (Itzik Galili), *CLIMAX* (Yasmeen Godder)*, Trop* (Andrea Constanzo Martini)*, Please me Please – The Solo (*Liat Waysbort / *Bitter Sweet Dance*), *Last Work* (Ohad Naharin / *Bat Sheva Dance Company*) *and* the's *A Lullaby for Bach (*Rami Be'er / Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company). *Somewhere in the Now* (Uri Shafir) was supported by Supported by Störung/Hafraa, a collaborative project between Yasmeen Godder Studio and Theater Freiburg, and thus ultimately co-funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation. The company *c.a.t.a.m.o.n, From Jaffa to Agripas'* artistic alma matter and producer receives international funding (as from the Leichtag Foundation), but it is not clear whether this was already the case in this specific intervention.

sustaining system. This is surprising though, for as discussed Chapter 6, Israeli

choreographers and dancers work very often internationally and it therefore could be

assumed that they are very well connected abroad. However, under the lens of the

financescape, *IE* is the only NaDaP that could with some legitimacy claim to represent the

national production of dance.

Unsurprisingly, Shakti was the smallest of the platforms. It showcased only

nine productions and most of them did not acknowledge any specific funders. Only three

of the productions did so, and all the funders were international[229]. Not only the production

of the opening piece, Lea Moro's *Le Sacre du Printemps. A Ballet for a Single Body* was

an international co-production, but her presentation at *SSSB* was funded by the Swiss

Embassy in Sri Lanka. As she is a Swiss citizen who works in Berlin, probably both

Switzerland and Germany could raise a claim of including her work within the respective

national platforms[230]. However, this specific work was not shown either at the German or

the Swiss national dance platforms. It was showcased as the opening of *Shakti,* the heir of

Sri Lanka Dance Platform, which had been programmatically turned into a festival

celebrating the female solo work. Moreover, while the platform acknowledged in its

programme folder two Swiss and one Sri Lankan funder, it is the fourth funder, the

Goethe-Institut, that as initiator carried a big part of the event's cost (Perera 2016). This is

coherent with the fact that *SSSB* had to drop the aspiration to provide a room for the Sri

Lankan production of dance, as it had been the case in former editions, due to being

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[229] These were: Sara Mikolai's *Intervention.03.2* was supported by the HZT Berlin, Mallika
Taneja's *Thoda Dhyaan Se (Be Careful)* by Shared Spaces and Lea Moro's *Le Sacre du Printemps.
A Ballet for a Single Body*, that was funded internationally by several German and Swiss cultural
foundations.

[230] For this piece, she received official public funding from both the German Kulturstiftung des
Bundes / Federal Cultural Foundation and the Swiss Embassy.

dependent on a donor with a different agenda. Even more dramatically, this brings to the fore the question of to what extent the system of contemporary dance is still governed by a centre-periphery model, contrarily to Appadurai's claims[231].

As demonstrated in this section, between a third and half of the works showcased at NaDaPs are produced with collaborative, international funding. This funding has included direct governmental funding, and private funding distributed by quangos and private charities. It was very difficult though to follow all funds to their origins, for funding models differ greatly from country to country. However, it can be assumed that wherever there is a co-production with theatres or institutions, public funding is implicated if not at first, then at second glance.

If one was to follow the assertion that if there is German (public) money the production is German (Interview Traub, 2017), many productions – also some presented at *BDE 2016*, IE 2015 and *SSSB* - could be called German. Inverting the tenet[232], it could be said that more than half the productions showcased at *DPG 2016* were not German if the same logic was to be followed. For most of the productions used funds originated in other countries. All four platforms could be challenged in this way, and the claims of national-ness would therefore fail in all. Thus, the national and the global dimensions of the finance flows that enable NaDaPs are deeply entangled, defining each iteration of the NaDaP clearly as a global(ised) event and thus interlinking and cementing the interdependency of

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[231] Throughout the study, I have repeatedly alluded to Appadurai's claim that "new global cultural economy has to be understood as a complex, overlapping disjunctive order which cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models" (Appadurai 1990: 296).

[232] Thus: "where there is foreign money, it is a foreign production"

the economic micro and macro systems in which the platforms take place. However, this interdependency is far from non-hierarchical, as the following section will discuss.

7.3.3   NaDaPs and neo-colonialism

The phenomenon of the NaDaP is a global(ised) occurrence that is deeply interlinked with the dissemination of contemporary dance. This invites to question what is made global and by force of which mechanisms. Chapter 5.2 argued that dance vocabularies associated with contemporary dance acted as agents of cultural colonialism, thus perpetuating a system of hegemonic and peripheral nations. On the other hand, as discussed with the lens of the *anthroposcape* in Chapter 6, dance artists move through borders and thus defy the claim of national-ness of NaDaPs. These movements of migration entail several financial dimensions. Notably, the migrating artists take with them the knowledge inscribed in their bodies, that is their cultural capital, the raw material of the dance industry. This raw material will thus be transformed in countries that provide the economic structures for dancers to gain their livelihood. When cultural capital disappears from a country, that country experiences a loss. On the other side, this is a gain for the economy of the dancer's new home, for their knowledge will contribute to the local dance scene. This is the case for instance with the development of South-East Asian dance in Britain[233]. Assuming, as discussed in relation to different examples throughout this thesis, that the movement generally shows a tendency for dancers to move from economically

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[233] This was arguably also the case in early Israel, as the account on the development of dance in Israel has discussed (2.5)

weaker to economically stronger countries, this raises the question whether in some cases a neo-colonial project is at work, carried out using with dance as a tool.

Colonialism pursued both the extraction of resources and raw materials from the colonies as well as creating markets for the products processed in the metropolis. If the cultural capital of dancers, their knowledge of dance, constitutes the raw material of the dance industry, there is not much difference between extracting ivory or dance knowledge from the Ivory Coast [234]. Nations like Germany and Great Britain hold cultural artifacts from former colonies and other nations of the Global South in their museums. When showcasing *Not Punk, Pololo*, a dance piece created with cultural capital from the Ivory Coast at the *DPG 2016* - and Germany raising the claim to be represented by it - it must be considered whether Germany might be repeating cultural appropriation actions similar to a neo-colonial endeavour. Turning the focus to Sri Lanka allows me to emphasise this reading, for, as noted earlier, *SSSB* was even extended for a week to suit the schedule of a European artist. This raises questions regarding the role of NaDaPs within a system that seems to favour a financially cemented unbalance of power between Europe and the Global South.

7.4 Convergences

Sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 have investigated the funding both of each NaDaP iteration and of the dance pieces showcased by them. The exploration showed that most of

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[234] D*PG 2016* was opened by *Not Punk, Pololo*, a production by German choreographers Gintersdorfer & Klaßen based on Ivorian tales, danced by a cast featuring many Ivorian dancers dance forms and music, thus cultural knowledge from the Ivory Coast. Chapter 8.2.2 discusses the piece and its role opening the event.

the financial engagement was originated in public funding bodies or quangos, with

nuances according to each context. However, especially in Israel, there is another

important source of funding for dance that must be brought to the fore: philanthropists

(some of them non-Israeli) engage to a high extent with the development of the arts in the

country[235]. Such is the case for instance of Tel Aviv's concert hall, the *Charles Bronfman*

Auditorium[236] as well as of the *Suzanne Dellal Centre* (SDC website) that was built by

family Dellal and is home to the *IE*. Also, the already mentioned *KCDC* is mainly

supported by a private philanthropist, Raya Strauss Ben-Dror (KCDC n.d.). This shows

again the intimate interlinking of *scapes,* in this case the *anthroposcape* and the

financescape with one another, as the three mentioned philanthropists are Canadian and

British Jews who with their support contribute to the development of the arts in Israel.

Thus, the contribution of non-Israeli Jews to the production of arts in Israel is significant,

and has a direct impact on the country's NaDaP.

The interlinking of the *financescape* and the *anthroposcape* is not limited to

funding institutions though. Chapter 6 showed that *BDE 2016* was the platform in which

dancers with different physicalities were the most visible, and argued that the

differentiation of the category disabled dancers might have played a role towards this

visibility. At the same time, Chapter 7 has argued that, due to the framework created by

Britain's arts-funding policies, *BDE* is the platform that is more focused on a financial

success. Under the lens of the finanscape, dancers who have bodies that could be described

as 'non-normate' for not conforming to presumptions of the 'non-disabled' dancer seemed

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[235] Also in Britain and in Germany do big companies, such as *British Petroleum* or the *Deutsche Bank* have foundations that fund the arts. However, in both cases they are national companies and they do not engage with the rather marginal art form of contemporary dance.

[236] Until 2013 the hall was called Fredric R. Mann Auditorium, after the venue's former funder.

especially interesting, and also became the most visible at *BDE*: on the one hand, their bodies resist the logic inherent to the market, as for instance to lowering production costs. Working with dancers whose bodies are non-normate can be more risky, as they are more difficult to replace (and they defy thus the market's diktat of interchangeability at low cost). Some might also need to work in ways that differ from the standard routine of a regular dance company or dance project. Thus, dancers with non-normate physicalities often resist the velocities of production systems that some dance schools prepare dancers for and some dance companies have[237], and indeed, there were very few dancers with non-normate physicalities in the four NaDaPs. However, because they are different, they are inherently non-normatis*able*, they provide the dance market, the trade fair, with a new category. Thus, under the lens of the financescape, a non-normatisable body embodies the inherent contradiction of both resistance and enrichment to the phenomenon of the NaDaP, and thus to the trade fair and dance constructed as an industry.

7.5   Conclusions

This chapter firstly discussed historical and contextual circumstances that framed the emergence of the phenomenon of the NaDaP. Further, it used the framework of the *financescape* to examine the flows of capital that enabled the four case studies to be carried out. With a mixed-methodology, providing a quantitative account interpreted through a contextual reading, I explored how and to what extent the financial aspects of the phenomenon reflected back onto the structure, content and national claim of each iteration. I also argued that the prevailing funding policies in each country are intimately

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[237] An in-depth exploration of the visibility and inclusion of dancers with non-standard physicalities both in dance educations and in the professional field is out of the scope of this thesis.

related to the constitution of their NaDaPs and that they reflect back onto their contents and structure, which I argued interweaving the various layers of meaning solicited by descriptions of the events. Concluding, the lens of the *financescape* enabled me to understand dance knowledges inscribed in bodies as cultural capital. Indeed, this recalls the Chapter's title, for here I have argued that, while money makes the world go 'round (enabling thus the creation of dance in different parts of the world) the dancers' cultural capital has often contributed to enrich the dance scene of their countries of immigration. Conversely, this prompted me to question the rationales at work when a dance production relying mostly on Ivorian dance vocabulary and contents was selected as the opening piece of *DPG 2016*. This was reinforced with a second example, the opening of *SSSB* with a European piece and the platform's re-shaping that this entailed, which enabled me to demonstrate (in two examples in two different NaDaP- iterations) the extent to which the imbalance of economic weight between European countries and those in the Global South has impacted their NaDaPs and prompted me to ask whether the globalised phenomenon of the NaDaP favours the enactment of a neo- colonial endeavour. Before closing, the chapter has further focused on convergences of the *financescape* and the *anthroposcape*, and has argued that especially in the case of dancers with *non-normatisable* physicalities this confluence results in contradictory situations.

However, the force of finances does not only become evident under the lens of the *financescape*. Chapter 8, although mostly drawing on Appadurai's *mediascape*, will investigate among others the powerful position of programmers as brokers between NaDaPs and their home markets, and thus elaborate on their influence on both.

CHAPTER 8

HALL OF MIRRORS – OR WHO IS REFLECTING WHOM?

8.1 Introduction

In his texts addressing the *scapes* (1990, 1996), Appadurai placed the *ideoscape* at the end, in a way that complicates its differentiation from the *mediascape*. While he acknowledged that both *scapes* work at the level of the production of ideas, in Appadurai's description the *ideoscape* has a more political veneer (Appadurai 1990: 299-301). This seems to be contestable today, especially under the light of the role that media, notably social media, have played in the creation and spreading of information, and their influence on political developments since their invention. However, it is true that in 1990 and 1996 social media were not as widespread as they are now, and their influence on the political landscape was as yet unknown.

When Appadurai theorised the *mediascape*, he pointed at several elements that constitute it: capability to produce and disseminate information, public and private interests that can be implemented by gaining control of these capabilities, images of the world (that is the mediated information) and audiences (Appadurai 1990: 299). Following this, various media somehow create images that are directed at a receiver. At first glance it could be induced that NaDaPs are events that are mediated through electronic and print media to an audience of programmers that are the recipients, and that those who control these sources of information will be in a position of power. However, the *mediascape* will

provide a framework to argue that the matter is more complicated. I will argue that the *mediascape* provides a lens that makes of programmers (only receptors at first glance) active mediators between their places of work and the NaDaPs, and that NaDaPs are to be understood as media in two ways. In one direction, each iteration conveys information about a set of cultural values governing their location, and in the other direction they mediate the values that the programmers effect through buying onto the local dance sector. First, I will engage in a close reading of the four works that constituted the opening of each iteration. These close readings will provide the ground to ask whether NaDaPs are themselves to be understood as media. Thereafter, I will discuss the role of the programmer as a targeted audience of the NaDaPs and consider their role as a two-sided one that has both effects on NaDaPs as well as onto the global(ised) system of the NaDaPs as a whole. To close, I will sum up the close readings and examine them in connection with the role of the programmer, to argue that, the same as in a Hall of Mirrors, all actors implicated in NaDaPs mediate their worlds to each other, influencing and (de)constructing each other's perceptions, and thus reflecting onto of the phenomenon of the NaDaP as a whole.

8.2   The opening pieces

To reiterate, the phenomenon of the NaDaP is a global one. However, whilst previous chapters have explored the phenomenon as a whole through different lenses, I have also discussed how each iteration in each location differs from all others. Chapter 5.2.1 argued that each country creates different frameworks to legitimise the claim of *national* representation of their respective NaDaPs, and that this reflect onto each iteration's name. In my experience, the opening piece of a festival sets the tone for what is

about to come, like the musical key in which a piece will be played. If the name or title of each NaDaP announces it – under the lens of the *mediascape*, mediates it – I argue that the opening piece is the subtitle, that qualifies the title and tightly connects it to the event, thus bringing to the fore and mediating a concentrated version of the NaDaP to come.

In what follows, I will engage in a close reading of the opening pieces of the four NaDaPs because it is important that the readings will address the dance pieces in the context of each NaDaP. The reading of each piece is directly affected by the environment in which it was presented, an event claiming national representation. Neither *Of Riders & Running Horses* (*BDE 2016*'s opening piece), nor *Not Punk, Pololo* (*DPG 2016*'s opening work) and clearly neither *Le Sacre du Printemps. A Ballet for a Single Body* (*SSSB*'s opening work) were created to reflect or represent a nation. Contrarily, *Man of the Hour* (*IE 2015*'s opening piece) was a commissioned piece, and the choreographer Itzik Galili aimed at showing "Israel as he sees it today" (Israel Opera, n.d.). However, I argue that because the pieces were placed as the opening of a NaDaP, a context that claims national representation, the four do say something about the imaginary of the nation that they are to represent. Thus, in what follows, the descriptions of the works are affected by the context in which they were showcased for, as Geertz sustains "the important thing of the anthropologist's findings are their complex specificness, their circumstantiality" (Geertz, 1993: 23). Probably, seen under another light and in another context, the same works could have provoked different readings. The close readings were written down after my fieldwork as a participant-observer at each of the festivals and are thus a description of the moment, enriched with an exploration of my own contextual construction of the experience of the event.

The opera house was full. *Man of the Hour,* choreographed by Itzik Galili, had generated high expectations about the piece to come (Brafman, 2015). Itzik Galili, Israeli born choreographer, returned to work in Israel after over twenty years of gaining success (mainly, but not only, based in the Dutch city of Groningen) in the European dance landscape for many years. In *Man of the Hour* "individuals who are part of our [the Israeli] society search for the glory of the moment and for a piece of memory that will create a personal and national identity" (Israel Opera, website). Seven male dancers and two female singers were on stage. The elegiac light was designed by Israeli Yaron Abulafia. The general atmosphere was dimmed, the dancers' movements slow and smooth, the music all-embracing. Together with Henry Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas'* aria *When I am laid in Earth*, both warmly and painfully performed by mezzo-soprano Anat Czarny, they set the audience in a receptive and (self)reflective mood.

However, all poetry was soon disrupted. The sweet and almost melancholic mood was exposed as being only superficial. The dancers' movements became soon angular and seemed to cut the air around them. Gesturing in elegant black costumes, they resembled politicians as depicted in expressionist films and paintings of the time between the two world wars, sometimes clapping on their own chests, as if wanting to stress the veracity of their discourse. In doing so, they moved in space, may be looking for their individual moment, allowing their voice to underscore some movements, but they remained always part of the group from which there was no escape. Eventually, the costumes turned into garbs resembling the attire of orthodox Jews, and the dancers started voicing mostly unintelligible utterances. Their hands turned sometimes into fists, they beat the dancers'

own chests, so as religious Jews do in some prayers. They stamped on the floor as a group, individual dancers threw themselves on the floor and stood up again re-joining the group, their energy was high and chaotic. During the group work, the dancers often engaged in duos or trios, but they seemed to remain strangers to each other, there was no sense of intimacy.

The dancers uttered a variety of unintelligible sounds, among which only every now and then the word 'kultura' (culture) could be grasped. The vocal cacophony was at moments exasperating, as everyday life in Israel can be. Very intelligently designed, multi-function costumes designed by Sergei Berezin, allowed the dancers to resemble elegant party guests, politicians or orthodox Jews, and, when the jackets were tight around the waists and worn like skirts, left the dancers' legs and chests bare, which exposed the strong physicality of dancers, always ready to convey meanings. The sense of rush and restlessness was accentuated by a choreography that did not allow the dancers to stop for a moment. They started to gravitate toward exhaustion, breathed heavily, and their movements began to lose definition, thy started to 'crack'; a crack, that laid bare their difficulty to cope, with the choreography, with life, with reality. And that ultimately made apparent the individual's fragility against the volatile reality that Israel presents. Finally, a sublimely poetic duet of two dancers offered some comfort. Giving their weight onto each other, there was for the first time a personal encounter. Slow movements, fluid, that finished with one dancer in the other's arms. That the two dancers were male only added to Tel Avivian audience's self-recognition, as the city has stylised itself as the gay hotspot of the Middle-East. However, acceptance of LGBTQ+ life is contested in Israel, as everywhere else in the world. The city of Tel Aviv-Yafo is utmost liberal and gay-friendly, which makes of it one of the favourite holidays destinations within the Western (male) gay

community. But at the same time, teenager Shira Banki was stabbed to death by Ultra-Orthodox Yishai Schlissel at the Jerusalem Pride March in July 2015, among other crimes perpetuated against the community (Gross, 2015)[238].

The audience, that in this case was not limited to *IE*'s guests but included regular public, rewarded the work with a standing ovation. The piece resonated with the opera house's 'enlightened' audience: the generally middle-class, professional and left-liberal crowd, that populates Tel Aviv. *Man of the Hour* started with the foresight to be a smooth journey, one that embraced, one that encouraged the audience to slowly step in, and to identify with the dancers. The sweet beginning of the piece, recalled by the final love scene, was all along disrupted by religious zealots and self-staging politicians. However, the last scene did not only recall love, it also evoked mourning.

The end of the piece could not be more discouraging for Tel Aviv's audience. Its majoritarian left-leaning population's grief for the democratic and secular State that seems ever further out of reach since Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination by fanatic Orthodox Jew Yigal Amir on November 4th, 1995[239]. The last scene reminded me of a discussion I had with an Israeli friend in late 2012 or the beginning of 2013, just after the second war between the State of Israel and the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip. My friend, who lives in wealthy Tel Aviv's old North, Tsafon Tel Aviv, who is of Ashkenazi extraction, gay, interested in the arts, and votes left, told me in that moment, that Israel would soon

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[238] In 2019, purported 'family values' are still held up by haredi (religious) nationalists against the LGBT community in the run up to the upcoming elections (Kadari-Ovadia 2019).

[239] I do not intend to stylize the Israeli left in its entirety as anti-settlement, secular and democratic. There are several studies that reveal the old Israeli left's implication in the settlement enterprise. However, in 2019, 'left' and 'right' are mostly defined by the stance towards the Palestinians, and an in-depth exploration of Israel's political actuality is beyond the scope of this thesis.

finish to exist, not because of external threats, but because of internal strife and the State's own politics and policies.

During the piece, among all other unintelligible utterances, only the word 'kultura' could be singled out every now and then. And indeed, *Man of the Hour* drew the audience's attention onto the polarisation of cultures that define Israel's contemporary reality. However, away from the international focus set onto the Jewish and Arab, Palestinian and Israeli diverting narratives, the piece built upon the cultural conflict between the religious and the secular, the liberal utopia against the earthly display of power by the religious, and ultimately the challenges of constructing a functioning democracy in a state that was funded by seculars on religious grounds. My friend's sentiment of doom was expressed at the time by many Israelis I met. All this came to mind, while watching *Man of the Hour*. Dido, embodied by Anat Czarny utters in her last hour: *Remember me, remember me but ah! Forget my fate* (Tate / Purcell, ca. 1688). Carthage fell. And a standing ovation was granted to the man professing the end of the Zionistic, secular, democratic State, by the very people who dream it.

Galili's *Man of the Hour* exposed many of the country's contradictions and some of its ugliness. It also urged the audience to cope with an exhausting tempo and to confront many unintelligible situations. However, while Israel is indeed all of that and the piece transported much of it, it is my own personal experience and positionality that have enabled me to read the piece in this way. The country, allowing itself to be exposed and laid bare in one of its main cultural institutions (Israel Opera), in front of the international programmers invited for *IE*, presented itself also as a robust democracy, that allows dissent

and can cope with criticism while it at the same time shows a very ugly face – ugliness that exists much to the chagrin of the Jewish, secular observer that is me.

DPG 2016 opened with the show *Not Punk, Pololo* (Gintersorfer/Klaßen 2013). Whereas the platform's hub was at *Theater im Mousonturm*, the opening show was at *Schauspielhaus Frankfurt.* This was significant, for the former has been since the 1980s an important venue for the contemporary performing arts. The latter though is, as a Stadttheater, a Municipal Theatre, part of the established - and often more conservative – league of theatres that constitute the German landscape of theatres whose roots reach back to the 19th century. Already the fact this theatre hosted the opening of *DPG*, an event mostly focused on contemporary dance, can point at the art form having reached a situation of being considered "established".

Huge wooden structures were on stage. A big ensemble, 17 Ivorian and European performers, dancers and musicians were in the cast. Both music and dance featured Ivorian, European and hybrid roots music and dance forms were present at different times of the performance, supporting each other and competing against each other. *Pololo* is a music and movement style that John Pololo, himself not a musician, stood Godfather for in the Ivory Coast in the 1980s (Gintersdorfer 2014), a music that, in Gintersdorfer's own words unites the same as punk does "feistiness and glamour" (Schnell, 2014). Very athletic vocabulary forms spanning from street dance styles *Pololo,*

Zighuel, Logobi and *Couper Décaler*[240], queer voguing, and twerking, as well as contact

and movements identifiable as related to Western contemporary dance techniques came

together, as did live music from Germany and the Ivory Coast played by the performers,

who were all-round talented. On stage, the spirit of competition, the 'battle' of street dance

was pervasive.

Barely six months before *DPG 2016*, German chancellor Merkel had

famously opened the borders for refugees (Blume et al., 2015), allowing around 1,5

million refugees to enter the country. This posed a challenge that different political parties

tried to use to their advantage, and provided key words for the inflammable rhetoric of the

extreme right party, *Alternative für Deutschland*. Thus, in Germany there was at that

moment real concern with the interaction with over one million foreigners that had

immigrated into the country in a relatively short time. At the same time, the country was in

the middle of the NSU-Trial, a process against a right-wing terrorist organisation that had

murdered several foreigners (Ramelsberger 2019 and many others). Moreover, Germany

has since the 1960s, a population of originally foreign, mostly Turkish immigrants who

came to the country as Gastarbeiter; guest workers. Whereas there has been much

improvement in the last decades regarding the interaction between natives of German and

of other descents, the situation of their children and grandchildren is far from being settled

throughout.

Under the light of all these challenges, the jury decided to start the platform

with a piece that revolves around cultural translation. The company's website praises each

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[240] The four are Ivorian street dance styles

performer for their individuality, and at the same time provides a context for the work invoking Slavoj Zizek, referring to gender as a cultural construction, and to the challenges posed by cultural translation (Gintersdorfer/Klaßen n.d.). The website's language shows that the directors are very well acquainted with the current academic discourse. In the piece, there were performers from Germany, the Ivory Coast and probably some holding other nationalities. But all differences and problems of systemic hierarchisations of culture were dissolved with street dance battles. Whereas both music styles, *punk* and *pololo*, can convey aggression, the performance was loud and cacophonic, but not aggressive. There did not seem to be any urgent, existence-threatening problems to be dealt with. This seemed to reflect an attitude of cultivating the arts for their own sake, completely disengaged from the pressing matters regarding the interaction between Germans and others at that very moment outside the theatre. Thus, in this context, opening the platform with *Not Punk, Pololo* not only shows a country that prefers to see itself reflected in international co-operations than in anything that could be suspected of being called 'German' (fearing the ghosts this could recall). This can also be read as a mediation of a country that provides relatively good conditions for the arts to flourish - and sometimes for the artists to earn a livelihood - but on the other it does not require an engagement with urgent problems of reality.

8.2.3 The opening piece of *BDE 2016, Of Riders & Running Horses (*Company Still House – Director Dan Canham)

Of Riders & Running Horses (Company Still House – Director Dan Canham) was not presented in a traditional theatre location. The audience was solicited to circumscribe the performance space and in the end, was invited to join the performers. It

was thus an immersive performance in which the audience experienced rather than watched the show. Therefore, this description will account to the show's experiential aim and it will describe my own experience of the show.

It was in Cardiff, March 15th, early evening. It was windy and it could rain. However, we – the guests of BDE 2016 – climbed the stairs to the carpark's unroofed deck, where the opening performance, Still House's *Of Riders& Running Horses* took take place. A fragile white tent was place in front of the carpark's back wall. Some chairs and benches surrounded the space in which the performance took place, limiting it. It was cold. Luckily, the production had thought of providing blankets and despite the weather, the atmosphere was light-hearted and the guests engaged in some kind of small-talk. *Still House*, the company behind the piece, "makes work across a variety of forms that include theatre, dance, events, film and audio-visual installation" (Still House n.d.). Dan Canham, *Still House*'s funder and the work's director, is a former performer with *Kneehigh, Fabulous Beast Dance Theatre* and the internationally acclaimed *DV8 Physical Theatre* (*BDE 2016*:54), thus he is someone with strong performing credentials.

Suddenly, someone who was apparently part of the audience started a tune. It was singer, Sam Halmarack. He was costumed as anyone else in the audience would be, thus suggesting a sense of being no different from anyone else. His voice was soft and fragile, sometimes so fragile that it was even painful. Suddenly, a beat underlying the singing, played by Typesun (real name Luke Harney) was added. It was compelling. The audience sat and froze around the space, delimiting it. Being in the cold, hoping it would not rain under the spell of Halmarack's voice, suggested a sense of communion between the performers and the audience. Nevertheless, everyone knew how to behave: no one

invaded the so-constructed performance space. When amongst the audience someone did stand up and began to dance, it was clear that it was one of the performers. This first dancer, female, Black, moved powerfully, but seemingly effortlessly. Her movements were a mixture of contemporary, folk, and urban dance techniques and organised in short sets, that never pushed her to exhaustion. She clearly had the lead on the music, which followed her. After some time, she was joined by the next dancer, female, White, who engaged in fluid movement sequences, also seemingly effortlessly. Her movements were also a mixture of contemporary, folk, and urban dance techniques. The two dancers acknowledged and communicated with each other, dancing sometimes for each other, other times just sharing the space. All in all, the music, the background of the parking lot and its surrounding buildings and the choreography transmitted images of urbanity and convivial, unpreoccupied togetherness. Three dancers stepped from among the audience into the space. And then another group. Solos, duos and group parts followed.

The syncopated rhythms were engaging. Funky, fluid, joyful and sexy. Despite the demanding vocabulary consisting of elements of several techniques and dance styles, the dancers managed to keep their muscles at a low-tension level, which gave the dance an air of easiness, of coolness. The compelling rhythms and the dancers joining others in their movements in changing formations suggested an atmosphere of community, of a tribe. The varied forms and space formations, solo, duo, ensemble, circle, lines, lose couples, provided changes that kept the audience's attention alive. However, the piece did not evolve. The changes were of form, not of content. What I saw was a multi-ethnic community that danced with great skills to compelling rhythms. This combination of fascinating rhythms and skilful performers bewitched me.

The world of *BDE 2016*'s opening piece was inclusive and joyful, almost hedonistic and self-indulging. After the applause, the audience was invited to the floor[241]. Almost everyone joined, happy to be part of that self-contained world – and to shake the cold off. The performers seemed to have had a great time, and the audience was eventually allowed to join as well – if it followed the rules set by performers. A utopian world was briefly constructed, in which performers of different ethnicities danced together to compelling rhythms, in a safe space contained by the music and the audience's seats. Even the audience was invited to join in and experience the constructed joy. Real engagement with racial inequality[242], the economic gap, Britishness or gender challenges was not the focus. However, the composition of the group raises questions, as the director and the musicians were male, and the dancers were female. Thus, the people to whom the gaze was directed were female, while the structure was provided by men. Curated into a national framework, the dance work seemed to be mirroring the country in which the NaDaP took place while being the harbinger of the times to come: a country indulging in self-righteousness, longing for its grand past, ignoring its present problems, running the party by the own rules and 'having fun'. Presented in that context, *Of Riders & Running Horses*, seemed to be a depiction of Britain's fantasy of being a diverse country that can "have its cake and eat it", as it was often called out in newspapers in the months and years to come (among several others, Roberts, 2017 and 2018, Walker, 2017).

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[241] Talks with several dance artists during my years in the UK informed me that audience participation was often one of the "boxes to tick" in funding applications.

[242] For instance, Clive Nwonka, Fellow in Film Studies at London School of Economics, discussed in an article for The Guardian that the "Arts Council England's annual report on diversity reveals a sector, despite the rhetoric, still steeped in inequality" (Nwonka 2019)

8.2.4   The opening piece of SSSB, *Le Sacre du Printemps. A Ballet for a Single Body*

(Lea Moro)

As I discussed in chapter 2.6, *Shakti. A Space for the Single Body*

developed out of the *Colombo Dance Platform*, later called *Sri Lanka Dance* Platform

(SLDP). The platform had been initiated by former *Goethe-Institut (GI) Colombo*'s

director, Björn Ketels[243]. The arrival of a new director for *GI Colombo* effected changes

onto the *SLDP*. For the first time, it was a requirement that the event should showcase a

dance piece from Germany. Curator, Venuri Perera was invited by the *GI* to *Dance*

Platform Germany 2016 in Frankfurt to choose a work for the event in Sri Lanka that

would take place later in the year. Coherent with the theme she had chosen for the festival,

she selected Lea Moro's *Le Sacre du Printemps. A Ballet for the Single Body*. The piece is

an abstract new interpretation of *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913 for Diaghilev's Ballets

Russes); the work by Vaslav Nijinsky (1889-1950) with music by Igor Stravinsky (1882 –

1971).

Le Sacre du Printemps was a pivotal work for the history of Western dance.

Within the piece, powerful ensemble sections of men and women alternate with solos.

Characters such as a witch, an old wise man and a bear, but principally a maiden, the

chosen victim to be sacrificed for the cycle of life to be renewed, are part of the narrative.

Le Sacre du Printemps is, possibly, one of the most re-visited pieces in the history of

Western dance and several choreographers have engaged with the subject and re-created

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[243] Chapter 2.6 expanded on the co-relation between the Goethe-Institut and the platform, and eventually the influence that a change in the former's direction can have on the latter.

and re-contextualised the story for their time and audiences[244]. Berlin-based, Swiss choreographer Lea Moro re-visited with the work in 2013/14. In her adaption, she played all the roles. Thus, while in the original story a woman is sacrificed, in Moro's version it is a woman (played by herself) the only one to survive the re-working of the piece, while all other characters have fallen into the annals of history. In Moro's work, Stravinsky's original score was paired with music by heavy-metal band Black Sabbath. The reception of the piece in Germany and abroad was very encouraging[245]. However, presenting the piece without any previous framing seems to mirror an assumption that Western knowledge and references are universal. But transported to Sri Lanka, the piece lacked context. The audience was generally not aware of the work's genealogy, whether in terms of music nor in terms of dance vocabulary. The fact that one female performer played all the roles meant nothing to the audience in that environment. Nor did the fact that Moro mixed Stravinky's original composition with scores by heavy metal band Black Sabbath. However, Black Sabbath was recognised by at least one member of the audience and it became thus the only component of the performance addressed by it in the post-show discussion, which did not manage to make the work intelligible in this new context[246].

Chapter 2.6 expanded on the reasons that led to *The Rite of Spring. A Ballet for a Single Body* to be presented a full week ahead of the rest of the platform, creating a

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[244] It is impossible to give a full and comprehensive list here. See among others, versions by Maurice Béjart (Bruxelles, 1959), Pina Bausch (Wuppertal, 1975), Mats Ek (Stockholm, 1984), Laurent Chétouane (Germany, 2013) Yossi Berg & Oded Graf (Tel Aviv, 2017).

[245] Although noticed later by the press, see for example Elisabeth Nehring's critique (Deutschlandfunk, 13.01.2015), Huffingtonpost (23.01.2015), Pascal Thalmann (Der Bund Bern, 12.03.2015).

[246] Full disclosure: I was invited to chair the discussion between the choreographer and the audience and failed in the endeavour.

disjointed showcase. Thus, *SSSB*'s opening mediated Sri Lanka's reality of not making money available for contemporary dance and dancers (or scarcely doing so), which gives way to foreign institutions to fill this role. Moreover, as this account has discussed, the opening of *SSSB* with this piece prompted questions regarding the relationship Europe – Global South, reflected in the interplay of economic strengths and a quest for universalising sets of values globalised and mediated by the phenomenon of the NaDaP.

This section has discussed how each of the works opening each of the four platforms gained meanings because of the context in which they had been placed. The close readings of the pieces have demonstrated that what was shown on stage was always relatable to the wider contexts in which they were performed, and this allows me to argue that NaDaPs mediate the nations in which they take place. However, it is not only the showcased productions that act as mediators. The targeted audiences, mostly international programmers, find connections between their work locations and the NaDaPs they attend. Thus, in the next section I will argue that programmers are also active mediators of values within the phenomenon of the NaDaP.

8.3   Programmers

Appadurai situated audiences within the mediascape, albeit as an indiscriminate mass at the receiver end. However, audiences are in the case of the NaDaPs, not indiscriminate receivers of the mediated images. At NaDaPs, programmers are the strategically targeted audiences. They are an identified group within the system of dance's economy. The dance sector is a system constituted by several actors who operate on different levels. Their roles might be viewed as a continuum spanning from the most to the

least artistic of these roles. On the most artistic end are dancers and costume, stage and light designers, and choreographers. These are the people who amalgamate their creative efforts towards the creation of a dance production, that is made possible by funds that are provided by the decisions of policy makers and the funding bodies, in other words politicians and administrators, who are at the other end of the continuum of the dance-making process.

Dance pieces are often created in more or less secluded rehearsal studios and must thus be *shown or programmed* for audiences to become aware of their existence. Venues and festivals present works to their audiences. Programmers are targeted because of their financial resources[247], and the fact that they are NaDaPs' targeted audiences provides the rationale for recognising that the events are constituted as trade fairs. Programmers are the 'connectors' because they look for artists and their work, and consider the conditions that will make works available, understandable and appealing in their contexts. This explains the paramount importance of the programmer in this system, for they are the people in charge of deciding what will be showcased. Their knowledge, their ideologies and their aesthetic sensibilities, moderated by the financial means at their disposal, will inform their decisions about what audiences will have the chance to see[248]. Whereas on the policy-making end of the continuum it is politicians who create the structures that enable the artists to create the dance (or not), the practical, daily judgment

[247] The most extreme example hereof is *BDE 2016*'s application form for guests (Chapter 2.3).

[248] In some contexts, programmers are called curators and names and contents of the roles vary according to the contexts in which they are exercised. This description of the programmer's or curator's role is based on my professional capacity as curator of the *Crossings Dance Festival* (Tanzhaus NRW, Düsseldorf / Germany 2006-2011) and of *Kultur*differenz*Tanz* (Kunsthaus Rhenania, Cologne / Germany 2006), and as an assistant to the curation of PlayOff'06 (Gelsenkirchen / Germany 2006).

on what will be shown is done by programmers. They decide which shows to commission and to spend their budget on. Therefore, when NaDaPs from the outset targeted programmers as the audience, not only did they build their capacity of constituting a market place for contemporary dance (interviews Ashford & Beattie, Vardi), but they also confirmed the importance of the programmers in the system. This is perhaps no surprise, for Ashford was the programmer at The Place, Beattie at the Southbank Centre, Vardi at the Suzanne Dellal Centre and Heun in Tanztendenzen (Interviews Ashford and Beattie, Vardi, Heun, 2017). Thus, by establishing a new context in which dance would be traded, the NaDaPs and the central place of the programmers in the system of NaDaPs, ensured that programmers assumed primary responsibility for taking decisions about what would be bought and thus shown elsewhere.

In taking these decisions, in preferring some local pieces and not others, they exercise the implementation of value systems prevalent in their own localities onto the NaDaP's location. Value systems that are inevitably, as I have argued in Chapter 5 under the light of the *ideoscape*, intimately interlinked with global(ised) systems of value ascription. Thus, under the light of the *mediascape*, I would suggest that this mass of international producers mediate the interest(s) and values of the international dance market onto the NaDaPs' localities, possibly effecting future change in upcoming selection processes (which will engage the *ideoscape* and the *anthroposcape*) while at the same time influencing the perception of the NaDaP itself within the global system of NaDaPs[249]. Thus, in the case of the NaDaPs scrutinised under the light of the *mediascape*, rather than

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[249] My experience of attending NaDaPs both within and outside the scope of this research has allowed me to hear many conversations considering if it is worth it or not to return the next year to a specific NaDaP, alluding to the perceived quality of the presented works.

being on the receiving end as mere audiences, programmers mediate values that directly affect the system. Their decisions not only build bridges between their locations of origin and the NaDaPs they attend, but through their decisions, programmers also exercise a post-facto[250] selection process. I argue that this post-facto choice affects over time the ante-facto selection processes – at least in the cases that recognise more openly their role of being a market place[251].

8.4   Conclusions

Returning to Appadurai's definition of the *mediascape*, he speaks of "the distribution of electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information". The main question leading this research was to ask to what extent do NaDaPs claim to represent or mediate the nation and how this claim reflects back on the contents and structure of each iteration. In all four case studies, the respective iterations used the same type of media to create and distribute information: electronic websites, social media, printed programme folders and partnerships with print and electronic media. In contrast, throughout the chapter I have argued that that in the case of the NaDaPs, the selected dance pieces produced and disseminated knowledge about the NaDaPs and their respective contexts that was more revealing than the information distributed by the media mentioned afore. Not only because conveying information is, in the performing arts a constitutive characteristic

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[250] The ante-facto selection process is effected by juries and results in what will be showcased at a NaDaP.

[251] A quantitative study of one NaDaP's programming over a longer period could provide evidence for this. For reasons explained in Chapters 1 and 4, I have decided to engage in a comparative study of different NaDaPs within the short period 2015 – 2016. An exhaustive study of the evolution of one NaDaP over the years would probably provide several insights that are beyond this thesis.

to the art form itself but more particularly, because when the works were placed into a framework that called itself 'national', they prompted readings that were related to the nation. Thus, they mediated the nation. In producing descriptions of all four opening pieces that interweave various layers of meaning solicited by them, I have explored the extent to which they were related to ideologies that governed discourses of national-ness at that moment and in the broader historical and societal context of each NaDaP. In what follows, I will briefly widen the key findings revealed by these descriptions of the opening pieces to the whole NaDaPs.

At *BDE 2016*, existential identity issues, such as the exoticisation of the Black female body or the revelation of and confrontation with the nude, non-standard body were *only* addressed by artists belonging to minorities (as for instance by Project O`s *O* or by Daw's *Beast*). This suggests that minorities have issues to deal with, whereas the majority seems not to recognise these issues as its own, and also not to question its own identities. This reflects the whitewashed and monolithic official history, as it was also conveyed by the Imperial War Museum[252]. White, Male, Straight, Christian, visibly body-abled were not identities that had to be problematized or dealt with. This mediated the state of the nation: a state, in which an important segment of the population felt not attended to by the political discourse, and that translated into the political events that followed later in that year. Thus, it could be argued that *BDE 2016* foreshadowed, and thus mediated rationales that underpin Britain's perception of itself.

Turning the focus to Germany, the exclusiveness of an event that featured only 12 productions reflected the country's rationale when relating to the arts, that they should

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[252] My visit to IWM was discussed in chapter 5.2.1

not be tarnished by commercial interests. Indeed, the event did not try to offer a product for every possible buyer. The interviews with the external jury to the platform and with Walter Heun, one of its establishers, were clear that their focus was on placing dance made in Germany in the international arena but that they did not have direct commercial returns in their minds when carrying out the event (Heun 2017; Noeth, Till and Wittrock 2017). *DPG 2016* thus reflected a country with a very large economy and in which "a clearer commitment to dance as an arts form is visible" (Lee and Byrne 2010:282). Furthermore, under the lens of the *mediascape*, it would be interesting to reflect what was intended that two out of the 12 showcased productions were based on ballet vocabulary (*Parade* and *Das Triadische Ballet*). As conservative as ballet might be perceived by many, there is a point in suggesting that the old vocabulary is being re-visited in contemporary ways, and thus in bridging the old constructed gap of Western classical ballet[253] versus contemporary dance. This rehabilitation of a language of old might also indicate that Germany is starting to be comfortable with its past. Nevertheless, another important message conveyed by *DPG 2016*'s opening with an international co-production (that directly engaged with partly non-German dance and music vocabularies and performers) was that Germany is a country that is open to the world, that co-operates and shows it, and that it even feels more comfortable when in association with others. Thus, the decision to open *DPG* with *Not Punk, Pololo* shows the extent to which the country is still plagued by the shadows of its past ambitions of supremacy.

IE 2015 created and mediated a country more inclusive than its political actors and the laws that have been approved of late. Not only did Sahar Damoni presented

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[253] As expressionistic dance had been co-opted by nationalsocialism, after the war almost all dance companies in German state theatres were ballet companies.

her own work, but also several pieces created and performed by artists of the country's Jewish majority addressed and challenged the country's political and societal status quo. Indeed, *IE 2015* was both a complicit and a disruptive platform. Complicit, because it did work with public money awarded by the state (the same as *DPG 2016* and *BDE 2016* did), but at the same time disruptive, because it chose to showcase pieces that contested the State's official narratives[254]. The fact that it could do so also mediated a country in which political arts and dissent can be voiced in the public sphere, despite the country's very worrying political developments.

Turning to Sri Lanka, *SSSB*'s opening mediated the image of a country that does not want to officially engage with contemporary dance. However, the rest of the platform conveyed the image of Sri Lanka as a country engaged in contemporary, transnational discourses, while acknowledging its distinctive characteristics in terms of dance vocabularies and aesthetic paradigms that are partly rooted in traditions other than the Western ones. The choice of focus for *SSSB* itself, the female body and the themes of many of the showcased works (such as gender and national identity in Gunarathna's *Giri Devi Androgynous* or Taneja's *Thoda Dhyaan Se (Be Careful)*) conveyed a country negotiating issues of sexuality, gender and identity that accompany a post-colonial period of negotiations of values when confronted with an omnipresent West.

This chapter has thus demonstrated that NaDaPs act as media that construct and transmit or mediate images of the Nation that are underpinned by rationales discussed under the light of the *ideoscape* in chapter 5. These nations or "imagined worlds", as

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[254] I have attended *IE* every year but 2018 since 2014, and every single edition was strongly outspoken in its political disruptiveness of the country's official discourse.

Appadurai calls them borrowing from Benedict Anderson (Appadurai 1990:299), are indeed conveyed by the NaDaP, that are in turns influenced by the decisions taken by the international programmers. In doing so, however, mediated by the programmers, each NaDaP influences the phenomenon of the NaDaP as a whole. Thus, worlds are imagined, constructed and mediated through the NaDaP, which becomes itself a mediator in two ways: of the nation in which it takes place, as well as of the international system of contemporary dance, as enacted by their audiences. Thus, like in a hall of mirrors, all the projected images (de)construct and influence each other, changing with each reflection the perceived reality and underpinning the fact that the own positionality governs the perception of what is seen at all times. Having focused on answering in this chapter the main question leading the research, the final chapter turns to the conclusions of the thesis.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has provided the first in-depth scholarly study of the phenomenon of the National Dance Platform (NaDaP). It is a global occurrence that only materialises through local iterations in different countries, hence the investigation of four specific NaDaPs has been at the core of this work. My exploration has highlighted the interdependencies of both these dimensions (the global and the local) and was led by the main questions; to what extent do NaDaPs mediate or represent a nation, and how do they claim national-ness and how does this reflect back on the structure and content of the NaDaPs in each location, that is in the various local iterations that give life to the phenomenon?

It was clear from the beginning that this would be a timely research enquiry. Not only because NaDaPs had hitherto hardly been addressed by scholars, but also because the global political climate has pushed nationalisms - and thus questions that revolve around what the nation-*al* is or can be beyond the *ism* – to the public fore. This research has thus shed light on how dance becomes a political actor when solicited into a context, such as a NaDaP, that claims to represent or mediate a nation. At the same time, the research has shown that the global dimension of the NaDaP also reflects back on each local iteration, interlinking both layers in an intimate way.

Chapter 1.1, *Setting Up* presented the project. It provided a rationale for the thesis, discussed the process that underpinned the choices I made and foregrounded the

questions that led the investigation. Furthermore, it offered a description of my own direct

engagement in NDaPs and presented the four case studies on which this thesis focuses:

Britain's *British Dance Edition (BDE),* Germany's *Dance Platform Germany (DPG)*,

Israel's *International Exposure (IE)* and the *Sri Lankan Dance Platform (SLDP).* The

following section, *Seiltanz (Balancing Act)* discussed my own positionality as a

constitutive element of my observation of the phenomenon, grounding the self-reflective

lens that would sustain the endeavour. Thus, importantly, the section disclosed the

possible biases that accompanied the investigation.

Chapter 2, *The Stage began* discussing the process by which the phenomenon

of the NaDaP came into being. It explored its global genealogy and gave insights into *Le

Ballet pour Demain*, the choreographic competition that triggered the process that

ultimately led to the emergence of the phenomenon of the NaDaP. The chapter continued

investigating the local histories of the iterations in all four case studies. After engaging in

contextual readings of the NaDaPs in Britain, Germany and Israel, the chapter turned to Sri

Lanka and discussed the process by which the nature and name of *SLDP* had been

transformed for the iteration 2016 into *Shakti. A Space for the Single Body (SSSB).* This

alteration was surprising, and the event's new title signalled that this iteration was actually

not going to be carried out as a NaDaP[255]. Given the change, it was important to make a

strong case to legitimise its presence within the thesis. A close reading of its genesis

provided a convincing rationale for its inclusion. More importantly, *SSSB*'s transformation

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[255] The name had dropped any reference to the nation-al as well as it announced a thematic focus
on the female single body instead of serving the goal to showcase dance of a nation-al scope, while
it also presented national and foreign dancers and productions whose work aligned to the festival's
subject.

into a festival allowed me to investigate NaDaPs in relationship to their situationality in former hegemonic or non-hegemonic countries through contrasting examples.

In Chapter 2, I thus argued that despite their diversity, all four case studies were part of the same global(ised) phenomenon of the NaDaP. Although *IE 2015*, *BDE 2016*, *DPG 2016* and *SSSB* differed in so many ways from one another, although the first one had a more political character, the second one was more trade-oriented, the third one aspired to influence the discourse about dance and the fourth one was a thematic festival, the chapter established that they were all part of the same global occurrence. At the same time, the sheer geographical distribution of the chosen iterations sustained the endeavour's international scope, enabling me to discuss the tensions arising out of the case studies' double positionality: the local and the global. The chapter therefore set up the stage to examine the global cultural flows that interact within NaDaPs.

This variety of cultural flows meant that locating the investigation in only one scholarly discipline would be insufficient for a full analysis. Consequently, Chapter 3, *Literature Review* discussed the broad, interdisciplinary approach that was needed for situating the research. The chapter considered different theoretical fields and provided the rationale for the endeavour's interdisciplinarity. The case studies are dance platforms, thus it seemed natural to anchor the thesis in the field of dance and performance studies. However, the cultural flows that traverse NaDaPs touch upon various disciplines. Especially the scholarly areas of history and post-colonial studies have proven useful to discuss the structural power inequalities that govern the relationships of NaDaPs within the globality of the system. Furthermore, the fields of anthropology, cultural critique and political theory have provided valuable insights into the phenomenon.

Chapter 4 discussed the methodology and methods employed for the research. Global cultural flows are streams of elements that can be located within the broader field of culture, and that occur globally. These elements are among others, ideas (and their related ideologies and images), people and finances; and they are at the same time mediated by and are constitutive of the NaDaPs. The system of *scapes* as defined by Appadurai (*ideoscape, ethnoscape, financescape, mediascape* and *technoscape*) offered a framework that enabled me to understand how these elements interact in the phenomenon of the NaDaP. Further, this structure provided a frame of reference that allowed me to consider at the same time the locality and the globality of the phenomenon, acknowledging the tensions, but also the reciprocal effects and interdependency of each local iteration and the global phenomenon. However, whilst the system of *scapes* was valuable it also posed challenges, as shown for instance by the discussion about the confusions arising from the name '*ethnoscape'* (which for the purpose of this investigation I have called *anthroposcape*, Chapter 6.1, p. 150-151), its overlapping with the *ideoscape* (Chapter 6.1, p. 151-152) or the convergences of the *anthroposcape* and the *financescape.* (Chapter 7.4, p. 211). This had as consequence that the system as described by Appadurai could not be adopted in its entirety and that it needed to be questioned throughout the work. Moreover, in his first text outlining the system of scapes, Appadurai ventured that "the world cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models" (Appadurai 1990:296). My analysis of the platforms required me to closely examine if this was a tenable claim. Whilst this did prove plausible in some contexts, I set out to challenge a perception that seemed to neglect concretely existing power imbalances between hegemonic, often ex-colonist powers, and formerly colonised nations. And indeed, the following chapters to which I had applied the lenses of Appadurai's *scapes*, demonstrated

that while the model centre-periphery is outdated in some cases, it is still pervasive and resilient in others.

At the same time, while the different lenses of the *scapes* allowed me to build a framework to explore the global(ised) phenomenon of the NaDaP, they proved not sufficient to answer the core question leading the research, whether NaDaPs mediate nations and how this reflects back on their constitution. Understanding the phenomenon of the NaDaP was made possible by engaging with different local iterations of NaDaPs. Attending as an observing participant enabled me to collect the data that constituted the core of the exploration, as did conducting semi-structured interviews with chosen informants. It was therefore the negotiation between the lenses of the *scapes*, the consideration of quantitative and qualitative data, the insights provided by my informants and a constant reflection of my own positionality while producing descriptions of the events that have enabled me to find answers to my research questions.

Chapter 5, ...*That Life is but a dream, and dreams are (not) only dreams* focused on the ideas governing NaDaPs and their sets of values. It singled out two concepts, *national-ness* and *contemporaneity* as the two main narratives underpinning the phenomenon. I examined and discussed both ideas through the lens of the *ideoscape*, a *scape* that Appadurai himself described as constituted by images that are "directly political" (Appadurai 1990: 299). As mentioned earlier, few concepts are currently more politicised than those relating to the nation-al. I have used throughout the terms 'nation-al' and 'national-ness'. I have done so to make clear that the first describes what is attributed to the nation, followed by its substantiation 'national-ness' that indicates the result of this attribution; thus, I have focused on the constructedness of national-ness rather than

employing the more common substantive 'nationhood', which seemed to evoke a more emotionally charged sense of belonging or nationness, the term proposed by Bhabha (1993:291-322). Discussing national-ness, the chapter explored how ideas about the Nation, about its history and therefore its construction as such are revealed in the different NaDaPs, not least in their names (Chapter 5.2.1, p. 131). On the other hand, the chapter argued that the legitimacy to bestow discretionally the etiquette of contemporaneity underpins a system of distribution of power that governs the global(ised) contemporary dance system. This allowed me to ask whether contemporary dance can at times act as the folk dances of hegemonic nations, risking to be instrumentalised through a neo-colonial endeavour. Nonetheless, the chapter also discussed the opportunities offered by the contemporary 'state of being' as an arbiter that enables the participation of a variety of dance vocabularies at NaDaPs, also of dance forms that are primarily associated with peoples of non-Western origin.

While with the lens of the *ideoscape* Chapter 5 set out to discuss notions that are "directly political" (Appadurai 1990: 299), all chapters foregrounded political dimensions of the phenomenon of the NaDaP. Especially Chapter 6, *Castings,* made evident how politically charged is the administration of presences and absences at a NaDaP. The chapter began by arguing that events that took place in the realm of the *ideoscape* have affected the *ethnoscape*, mostly causing or influencing migrations. Accordingly, following migration routes of several dancers and choreographers (both historical as well as active in the case studies) the chapter demonstrated that migrations have been at the core of contemporary dance since its inception. Thus, the chapter discussed how problematic NaDaPs' claims of national-ness become. *Castings* did not only investigate migrating dancers and their ethnicities, it also widened the scope of this

scape to gender and physicalities. This led me to reconsider the scape's name for the purpose of this exploration. Appadurai linked the *ethnoscape* to migrations (see 6.1, p. 149), and the prefix *ethno-* both in the words *ethno*scape and *ethn*icity proved to be misleading for my research. Indeed, it seemed easy to understand the *ethnoscape* as composed mainly by the migrating dancers, choreographers and programmers that travel in the pursuit of a better job, recognition, freedom of expression, or the new piece by a hitherto unknown, upcoming choreographer. But it would be disingenuous to reduce the *ethnoscape* to matters that only focus on ethnicity, and the name *ethnoscape* seemed to provide too narrow a framework to include the diversity of dancers' experiences in their totality. Power unbalances resulting of gender-related inequalities and differences arising for instance from the dancers' physicalities, were in danger of going unseen under this label. I especially focused on the dancers' physicalities, as the body is the main tool of performance in the art of dance, being fundamental for example for the creation and re-production of dance vocabularies. For these reasons, within the scope of this thesis, the chapter argued for rethinking the scape as *anthroposcape*, the scape encompassing all humans.

Chapter 6, *Castings* thus applied the lens of the *anthroposcape* to argue its case. It demonstrated that while in some cases (as at *BDE 2016*) dancers whose bodies could be described as 'non-normate' for not conforming to presumptions of the 'non-disabled' dancer were included and visible in the programme, in others (as at *IE 2015*) they were included, but invisibilised (their participation not being listed in the programme) and again in others (as at *DPG 2016* and *SSSB*) no piece with dancers with 'non-normate physicalities' was selected into the programme. The chapter explored ideas about the construction of national bodies that were prevalent when nation-states were consolidating

(against the backdrop of building their military capacities, conspicuously in the same period as Western classical ballet flourished), and suggested that they might provide the rationale for the absence or invisibilisation of dancers with 'non-normate physicalities' in all four cases but at *BDE 2016*. In contrast, while *IE 2015* did not provide visibility to dancers with 'non-normate physicalities', returning the focus to construction of ethnicity the platform did present strong voices. Not only did it showcase a programme that included an Arab choreographer and Christian performers (against the increasing ethnocentric radicalisation of Israel's policies), but it also gave room for dance pieces created by Israeli Jews to denounce very outspokenly discriminatory and militarising mechanisms in place. In short, *IE 2015* risked to present pieces that were in clear defiance of the State's political programme. Turning the focus again to other case studies, the chapter discussed the scarce presence of dancers or choreographers of Afro-Caribbean descent at *BDE 2016*[256] (against the backdrop of the shortly after unveiled Windrush scandal), argued that this could not be understood in the same way as the presence of Tamil artists at *SSSB* or the transnational identity suggested by *DPG 2016*[257]. This made evident that rationales governing presences and absences, diversity and inclusion, are categories that can only be understood contextually, while at the same time made evident how much room dance and NaDaPs have when they want to act as political agents, as *homo politicus*.

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[256] And, when present, as in the case of the piece *O* denouncing the exotisation of the Black, female body

[257] Remember the case of Sara Mikolai, Berlin-born choreographer and dancer of Sri Lankan-Tamil descent, who performed at *SSSB* but not at *DPG 2016*. This highlights questions towards selection processes that legitimised the artist to be part of one NaDaP and not the other one.

Chapter 7, *Money makes the World go 'round and Capital moves around in the World* assisted me in arguing that NaDaPs do not only mediate the nations in which they take place, but that they also mediate the global landscape in which they are embedded, as well as its underpinning ideologies. How NaDaPs do this, and to what extent, varied though from case study to case study. The chapter focused on the flows of monies and capital for the constitution of NaDaPs. Firstly, the chapter discussed the impact of economic frameworks   that resulted of colonialism and of the Cold War onto the formation of the four NaDaPs. I argued that Sri Lanka's former status as a colony influenced the development of (contemporary) dance in the country. Thereafter I discussed the diverting economic frameworks that prevailed in Britain and in Germany after WW2, and how they affected the development of cultural funding policies. Further, the chapter considered how Britain's turn towards neo-liberalism prompted the understanding of dance as a commodity, circumstance that prompted not only the emergence of the first NaDaP, but probably still a reason for *BDE 2016*'s ubiquitous focus in producing financial revenue. Contrastingly, the chapter further argued that the economic framework prevailing in Germany allows for a discourse about dance in which the production of financial revenues is less foregrounded, which translated into the shape and character of *DPG 2016*. Notably, while *IE 2015*, *BDE 2016* and *DPG 2016* were funded by national monies, *SLDP'*s funding by foreign capital made this NaDaP especially fragile, ultimately turning it into the festival *SSSB* and also affecting both its temporal cohesiveness and programmatic decisions.

Chapter 7 continued demonstrating that, contrarily to the (mostly) national funding of the NaDaPs, at least a third of the pieces they showcased were the supported with international funds. I argued that this finding problematizes the NaDaPs' national

claim. Moreover, the chapter explored the locatedness of inherently transient cultural capital in the bodies of the dancers that perform at NaDaPs and in some of the dance vocabularies solicited by the presented works and discussed the role of international donors, especially in the case of the Israeli dance context. Thus, the chapter investigated how difficult it becomes to sustain the claim of national representation when more than a third of the showcased dance pieces was produced as international co-operations with local and foreign funds and the actors are artists constitute capital that is fundamentally in transit. Furthermore, the chapter discussed the visibility of dancers with 'non-normate physicalities' in the different NaDaPs. Especially the presence of dancers with 'non-normate physicalities' at *BDE 2016* (the most clearly trade-oriented case study) allowed me to think further about the terminology used to describe these physicalities. What could be perceived as a shortcoming under the light of the *anthroposcape* (shortcoming because their physicality constituted an obstacle for some dancers to be present and visible at most NaDaPs) was turned into an asset when illuminated by the *financescape*. I have thus made a case for the term 'non-normatisable' for dancers' bodies that do not conform to presumptions of the 'non-disabled' dancer, as this seems to transform the impossibility of conforming to a norm into a resource. For it is the suffix '-able' that embodies both the resistance and the uniqueness of the link between dancers with non-normatisable physicalities and the market, as it embodies both the resistance to it (in that they cannot be like any other dancer in the line) and the creation of a new category for it.

The readings enabled by the different *scapes* often diverted from one another and that all provided particular rationales for the inclusion or exclusion of works and dancers, and thus challenged in different ways the constitution of the four case studies. Collectively, the *ideoscape*, the *anthroposcape* and the *financescape* are theoretical lenses

through which I have been able to analyse the NaDaPs' claim of national-ness. In all cases I problematized this claim. The different approaches have shown that international actors are on stage, international audiences are in front of the stage, international monies are behind the stages and an art form (often encapsulated in specific techniques and aesthetics) with an international aspiration is solicited, even if it is at times creolised. This led me to question whether there is a valid rationale for NaDaPs to call themselves national, as the gradually evolving exploration unveiled the challenges and contradictions that arise out of the 'national' claim of the platforms. However, by looking more deeply into the complex and intersecting factors involved, I have argued that under the lens of the *ideoscape*, NaDaPs do reflect the hegemonic set of cultural norms that rule the contexts in which they take place. Interestingly therefore, at times systems seem to be more pervasive or resilient than the people, the dance and the funds involved. This was made for instance evident in the case of *DPG 2016*. Much of the funding for presenting dance works at the event originated in international collaboration, the majority of the choreographers came from other countries, and some dance languages and subjects of the showcased pieces were at least in one case clearly related to another country. Notwithstanding all the above, a certain sense of 'national-ness' was retained. Thus, within this thesis, NaDaPs have allowed to add complexity to the notions of 'nation' and 'national-ness', showing how convoluted and at times contradictory ideas about them can be.

Finally, Chapter 8, focused on the question that formed the core of this research, whether NaDaPs mediate the nations in which they take place and to what extent. I expanded Appadurai's definition of the mediascape beyond the known media (print and electronic) and have tentatively defined NaDaPs as a medium as well. The exploration has assisted me to respond affirmatively: *IE 2015*, *BDE 2016*, *DPG 2016* and *SSSB* all

mediated the contexts and thus sets of values of the nations in which they took place. The chapter investigated how the claim of national-ness was constructed in all cases. Appadurai stated that the mediascape is a "landscape of images" (Appadurai 1990: 298). To produce these images, the four case studies selected and solicited all their actors: dancers, choreographers, dance, dance vocabularies, programmers, money, and more. In their specific roles, all of them played a part in the big staging that are the *Na*DaPs themselves. Stagings, that by being called 'national', mediated the nations in which they took place. Thus, I confidently say that NaDaPs do mediate nations and that this reflects back onto the constitution of the events, to extents that differ in each iteration.

This thesis has thus explored the phenomenon of the NaDaP in its multi-layered-ness. It has investigated and unveiled interactions between the global and the local dimensions of the phenomenon. However, the thesis' scope has not allowed me to delve into several important aspects of the phenomenon, that would now require to be investigated. While this exploration has provided the grounds to study the phenomenon comparing four iterations in different parts of the world, a follow-up with focus on the evolution of one specific NaDaP in relation to its locality should form the basis of further research. A thorough investigation of the constitution of juries throughout all iterations in one locality, the programmes selected by them, as well as the event's outreach and audience constitution, contrasted with the dynamic changes of the environment could potentially unveil further sets of values underpinning the interactions of dance, politics and economy in that specific location, and of the transformation of a countries' understanding of dance and culture. Conversely, several NaDaPs have emerged in later years and signs exist to assume that others will continue to be instituted. Thus, a comprehensive study that engages all existing iterations within a two-years period (most NaDaPs are biennial) would

allow an appraisal of the phenomenon's pervasiveness and its possible implications for constitutions of hierarchies within the global ecumene. The data collected in this thesis could be valuable for providing the grounds for such a study. At the same time, a comparison of the phenomenon of the NaDaP with that of other arts biennials (such as those of visual arts) would possibly shed further light on the positionality of dance within the world of contemporary arts. Finally, an in-depth study of NaDaPs' interactions with national institutes of culture, cultural divisions of embassies and ministries could unveil further co-relations and offer the tools for the dance sector to act more self-secure when it is solicited by contexts that attempt to frame and define the societal and cultural engagement with its core occupation, dance.

But what is the situation now? The nation, nation-al-ness and national-ism are currently in the forefront of public life. This bestows a huge responsibility upon any event calling itself 'national'. What are the possible ways forward for NaDaPs in this environment? It could be suggested that NaDaPs concentrate on presenting dance and drop the *Na*, their relation to the nation. This would allow them to move away from the origins that wove the trade fair and the aspiration of national representation closely together. In such a case, they would probably become another iteration of any other festival and ultimately finish to exist. But this thesis has demonstrated that NaDaPs mediate the locations in which they take place as much as the global(ised) framework into which they are constructed. Thus, while the neo-liberal global context has led to the constitution of NaDaPs, it also bestows them with agency to co-create the contexts in which they act and thus to purposefully reflect back on the localities of their iterations and on the system as a whole, for as Chapter Eight argued, NaDaPs do not only mirror and reflect, but they co-create their frames of reference. In 2019, the year in which this thesis is completed,

essentialist ideas about nations are - ironically also worldwide - on the rise. NaDaPs claim to represent nations. If so, should they rather take a political stance and contribute to the wider political discourse? For they are mostly funded with public monies and we, as dance artists and scholars, need to be aware of the responsibility that this bestows upon us. Otherwise, we risk constituting the silent majority that has looked away while the very structures that enable our work are being dismantled. Thus, how have *BDE*, *DPG*, *IE* and *SLDP* responded to these challenges so far, after the iterations that constituted my case studies? Evidently, they have answered in different ways and I will briefly describe them in what follows.

2016 was apparently the last iteration of *BDE*. New funding policy has decided to support a different kind of project, called *Surf the Wave* (*StW*). *StW* was envisioned as a project in three phases "created to provoke a change in how dance is toured *in the UK*" (Surf the Wave, n.d., my emphasis), as opposed to the former intention of NaDaPs to attract (mainly) foreign programmers. This description makes evident that the focus has been radically turned inwards. Interestingly, this inward-commitment of *StW* (for which it was awarded its funding) had been decided upon before the country's vote for Brexit – and thus also pre-empted it. *StW* included a showcase mid-way of its three-years course, that took place in Bournemouth and Poole in May 2019. Unsurprisingly, there were only two international guests (I was one of them). Indeed, this new iteration of Britain's NaDaP was mediating its context, one that had moved its focus away from the 'Others' (European or not) and that seemed to seek to 'take back control', albeit without the xeno-, homo- and further phobias unleashed by the process related to the Brexit referendum.

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DPG was called in 2018 *Dance Platform* in *Germany*[258] (Tanzplattform 2018 n.d.) The name included a further word that made the distance from the NaDaP to the country even larger, 'in'. Concomitantly with this thought, it showcased an even more international programme than *DPG 2016*, expanding the borders of Germany further away from its geographical borders. Although the platform's artistic quality was high, it left me with an uneasiness regarding cultural appropriation and what can be called 'German', only on the grounds that the country has enough money to invest (see Traub's assertion that a production is German "if paid out of German tax money" in Chapter 2.4). Casual conversations with other members of the audience after the shows, most of them foreign programmers, made me perceive a certain discontent among them, as several did not feel that they had been offered anything 'German'. This might be the rationale for the team responsible for *DPG 2020* sending an e-mail to their potential guests shortly after *DPG 2018* asking what they wanted to see at the platform. This is a big change from the jury of *DPG 2016*'s assertion that they did not think of the audience when they programmed and that this is what differentiated the NaDaP from curating any other kind of festival (Noeth, Till, Wittrock, 2017).

IE 2018 became even more outspokenly politically than it used to be. It included discussion panels about subjects that were relevant for the Israeli political reality. However, 2019 might be the first year in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Cultural Department (that used to fund the accommodation for the international guests during the platform, see Chapter 2.5) seems to withdraw its funds[259]. This would result in the event

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[258] I was commissioned to write an essay about NaDaPs for its programme folder.

[259] The Ministry decided to fund Israeli artists travelling abroad rather than facilitate foreign programmers coming to the country (Chaiut, 9.07.2019). However, this has been partially reversed or compensated by other funds. This withdrawal of funds is not limited to *IE* though. The same

not being able to cover the guests' accommodation. The future will thus show whether *IE*

can keep up with its international success under the new conditions. On the other hand, a

wider view through the lens of the *financescape* shows that these 'new conditions' are the

prevalent ones in all other platforms, in which guests have not only always paid for their

own costs, but also to watch the performances.

SLDP has all but disappeared. Indeed, not only was 2016 the platform

converted into the festival, *SSSB* but this change also marked the last event of that sort in

the country. The Goethe-Institut has not provided further funding for a platform or festival

since 2016, no other national or international institution has filled in the void and there has

not been a similar event in the country since. This example builds a further argument for

the call to attention (and action) delivered above.

My argument that the four NaDaPs mediated the nations in which they took

place focused very much on the localities of the four case studies. The *Na*, their national-

ness provided the rationales for the emergence of differences among their iterations.

Nevertheless, I have also discussed that the phenomenon of the NaDaP is global(ised).

Thus, NaDaPs are also embedded in a structure that supersedes the merely national. In all

case studies, dancers and choreographers who engage in their professional praxis with

languages and vocabularies contextualised as contemporary interact with national and

international audiences and share understandings about the product which is traded at

NaDaPs; that is, dance pieces. They form a community that seems to exude a sense of

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policy would be applied to several other similar events in the country At this moment, September
2019, it is not yet clear how and to which extent the event will be funded.

belonging together and thus, all seem to constitute – drawing on Anderson (1986) an 'imagined community', in this case the nation of dance or *Danceland*.

In closing and as a way of summing up I want to briefly contemplate *Danceland* and its effects. This leads me to ask what *Danceland* is and which rules govern it. I have drawn from the method of 'synectics' to provide the grounds to produce "creative metaphors that enable the opening up of creative and imaginative comparisons" (Wisker 2008: 222 -225) and thus offer the tools to build this theoretical construct. However, it seems that *Danceland* as it was insinuated by the four NaDaPs indeed exists and it is not only a theoretical construct. It is a non-territorial land, but rather one that is criss-crossed by ideologies, that are contextually differently expressed. At the same time, it is a land of mobile citizens, that are interconnected by these ideologies as well as by the (to a certain extent globalised) financial forces that regulate their livelihoods. *Danceland* could provide the context to imagine a new form of NaDaP (in this case, the *Na* in the NaDaP would refer to *Danceland*). It would be interesting to contrast this NaDaP with the other iterations that have been core to this study. But would the rationale governing the selection of actors for *Danceland*'s NaDaP be at core different from others? This would depend on the sets of values governing *Danceland*'s citizens; the selection panels, the artists and their audiences. This thesis has shown that NaDaPs do have the possibility to be political agents. At *Danceland*'s NaDaP, this agency should be effected by *Danceland*'s citizens. At times in which the interaction of nations and their citizens are being questioned, in which nation-alisms are on the rise, *Danceland*'s citizens would be solicited to act. Engaged reflections about *Danceland*'s relationships with the *scapes* that constitute and traverse it could probably shed light on the questions it would face and allow answers to arise.

To conclude, I have provided the first in-depth analysis of the NaDaP as a global(ised) phenomenon that materialises in its locally situated iterations. Furthermore, I have opened up questions about how dance and dancers can act as products and agents of national contexts, and I have furthered the understanding of the multiplicity of layers solicited by the complex relationship between artists and nations. Further, I have problematized the idea of 'nation' in relation to NaDaPs and have proposed *Danceland* as a new conceptual space for the dance community to negotiate its relationships with funders, programmers, and further 'nations' with which it interacts. *Danceland* operates by providing a paradigm that transcends nation states and reflects ways in which the (transnational) dance community organises itself, not merely bound by national boundaries and structures but negotiating with and challenging them, and thus opening new possibilities for action for a dance community that is formed by its situationality while at the same time co-constructs its 'lands' and environments.

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