

## **Pointes, Politics and Meanings: Re-Reading Ballerinas as Embodied Translations of Modernity-Inspired Nationalisms**

**Katherine Mazurok**

**Abstract:** Classical ballet makes meaning with its audience through an aesthetic that is produced through intersections of discourses of race, gender and sexuality. The particular modes of interaction of these discourses lie within modernity-inspired nationalisms. As such, the ballet bodies that produce, sustain and perpetuate such an aesthetic remain inscribed with these discourses. This article argues that ballet bodies are just this: embodied translations of modernity-inspired nationalisms. Using Lefevre's idea of rewriting, I demonstrate how classical ballets manifest as rewritings of external discursive forces onto classical ballet bodies, and that the aesthetics within which these bodies are identified are made possible through discursive understandings of race, gender and sexuality inherent to modernity.

**Key-words:** classical ballet; nationalism; embodied translations; gender, embodiment

**Résumé:** Le ballet classique produit du sens pour son public par le biais d'une esthétique qui surgit à l'intersection des discours sur la race, le genre et la sexualité. Les modes d'interaction particuliers de ces discours sont ancrés dans des nationalismes inspirés par la modernité. Ainsi, les corps des danseurs qui produisent, alimentent et perpétuent cette esthétique s'inscrivent dans ces discours. L'auteure affirme que les corps des danseurs de ballet sont donc des traductions de ces nationalismes modernes. S'inspirant de Lefevre, elle démontre que les œuvres de ballet classique réécrivent les forces discursives externes sur les corps des danseurs, et que l'esthétique qui permet d'identifier ces corps est liée aux représentations discursives de la race, du genre et de la sexualité qui sont propres à la modernité.

**Mots-clés:** ballet classique; nationalisme; traduction incorporée; genre; corporalité

**Resumo:** O balé clássico produz sentido com a plateia através de uma estética que é produzida por meio de interseções de discursos de raça, gênero e sexualidade. Os modos de interação específicos desses discursos encontram-se em nacionalismos inspirados na modernidade. Sendo assim, os corpos de bailarinos que produzem, sustentam e perpetuam essa estética permanecem inscritos nesses discursos. Este artigo argumenta que corpos de bailarinos são exatamente isto: traduções corporificadas de nacionalismos inspirados na modernidade. Baseado na ideia de reescrita de Lefevre, o artigo demonstra como balés clássicos se manifestam como reescritas de forças discursivas externas sobre corpos de bailarinos clássicos e mostra também que as estéticas dentro das quais esses corpos se identificam são viabilizadas por entendimentos discursivos de raça, gênero e sexualidade inerentes à modernidade.

**Palavras-chave:** bale clássico; nacionalismo; traduções corporificadas; gênero; corporeidade

**Resumen:** El ballet clásico construye el sentido con su público a partir de una estética que se produce a través de las intersecciones entre discursos de raza, género y sexualidad. Los modos de interacción específicos de dichos discursos están arraigados en formas de nacionalismo inspiradas por la modernidad y, por lo tanto, los cuerpos de ballet que producen, sustentan y perpetúan esta estética tienen en sí mismos la impronta de dichos discursos. En el presente artículo se plantea que los cuerpos de los bailarines y las bailarinas de ballet son, pues, traducciones encarnadas de formas de nacionalismo inspiradas por la modernidad. A partir de la idea de Lefevre de la traducción como reescritura, la autora demuestra el modo en que las obras de ballet clásico son reescrituras de fuerzas discursivas externas sobre los cuerpos de ballet clásico y, a su vez, que la estética según la cual se identifican estos cuerpos se hace posible a través de manifestaciones discursivas de raza, género y sexualidad inherentes a la modernidad.

**Palabras clave:** ballet clásico; nacionalismo; traducciones encarnadas; género; corporeidad

## Introduction

One of the most iconic elements associated with classical ballet is the pointe shoe. A satin slipper with a rigid piece of material forming a shank for arch support and a box made of tightly packed layers of fabric and glue that encases a dancer's foot and allows her/him to rise onto the tips of her/his toes. This type of shoe was developed solely for the purpose of furthering classical ballet aesthetics. As a result, the pointe shoe remains one of the central signifiers of a classical ballet aesthetic.

Worn usually by female ballet bodies, pointe shoes allow dancers almost to levitate – appear as if they are floating across the stage. The aesthetics of classical ballet presume this female ballet body and its satin shoes. She rises onto the very tips of her toes and skims across the stage, her feet moving madly while her upper body creates the illusion of floating – perhaps as some ethereal creature. Sometimes she turns, sometimes she jumps, sometimes she has a male partner who holds her, spins her, lifts her. He dances on his own as well. And even while the classical ballet aesthetic also assumes male dancing bodies with a whole series of dance steps, they usually<sup>1</sup> do not involve pointework. His movement contains a series of jumps and turns that span the stage and wow the audience with their display of athleticism mixed with artistry. While her and his bodies dance onstage, they retell stories through their movements – through their bodies. These stories appear, at first glance, to be ever-familiar narratives of unrequited love, magical times, places and spells and sometimes the characters even live happily ever after.

All these elements figure into the classical ballet aesthetic, one which contains a code system with specific pre- and pro-scriptions for what bodies may do, how they ought to look and move so as to have their performance recognized as a classical ballet. Current attempts to step outside these codes result in being refused the classification of classical and donning a series of adjectives of which “modern” and “contemporary” are commonly paired with ballet. From this move, we see classical companies such as the Royal Winnipeg Ballet boasting works from the “world's leading contemporary ballet choreographers” (*Mixed Programme* 08/19/2013) or the National Ballet of Canada staging performances by “one of modern ballet's greatest interpreters of literary works” (*2013/2014 Season* 08/19/2013). These modern and contemporary works break from the classical aesthetic not solely for the dates the works were created, but more importantly for the ways that bodies move onstage alongside the stories or interpretations they perform. Therefore, modern and contemporary ballets break from the code-system of the classical past, yet remain fixated on its aesthetic through the dancing bodies. Here, in the dancing bodies, lies the focal point of this article. While the movements and narrative structure of ballets change with their “contemporary” or “modern” adjectives, the very bodies performing this break from the classical past retain an aesthetic hold over them.

These dancing bodies are disciplined bodies, docile bodies<sup>2</sup> that are produced through the training that supports the classical ballet aesthetic. These ballet bodies are produced, recognized and legitimated by the classical ballet aesthetic and then take the stage to perpetuate it through performing another example of ballet in front of yet another

---

<sup>1</sup> There are a handful of classical ballet roles for men to dance en pointe, of which Mother Gigogne in *The Nutcracker*, The Ugly Stepsisters in *Cinderella*, Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Bottom in *The Dream*, and Pigling Bland in *The Tales of Beatrix Potter* are the most well-known.

<sup>2</sup> Foucault writes: “A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved” (136).

audience. When all the elements operate entirely inside the aesthetic, the audience may not notice that highly regulated discourses of gender, sexuality and race make possible the spectacle that delights them.

The ballet aesthetic comes into crisis when men put on pointe shoes. In more modern or contemporary works, this does not disrupt the choreographic code as much as in classical works, for in contemporary or modern ballets, movement and plot already break from the classical form. Companies such as *The Ballet Trockadero de Monte Carlo* and *The State Saint Petersburg Male Ballet*, boast all-male casts and perform parodies of classics, disrupting the aesthetics of classical ballet whilst adhering to them. While the Trockadero and State Saint Petersburg dancers perform their art as drag – they simultaneously present a performance that does not challenge the art of classical ballet’s hold on the aesthetic, but one which subverts the aesthetic and the discourses of race, gender and sexuality that produce and perpetuate it. In other words, through drag performances, these male bodies are dancing en pointe as women, thereby leaving the choreographic codes largely intact. A male ballet body dancing en pointe as a man remains unintelligible to the aesthetics of classical ballet. Even in the handful of classical roles calling for male pointe dancers, these men portray hyperbolic women (such as the Ugly Stepsisters or Mother Gigogne), some ethereal creature (such as Puck), or some form of animal (such as Bottom or Pigling Bland). Nowhere do men dance en pointe as men.

The absence of such a masculine male pointe dancer speaks to the discourses of gender, sexuality and race operating through the classical ballet aesthetic and inscribing itself upon its ballet bodies. Thinking about the classical ballet aesthetic and its absent masculine male pointe body points to questions about what discourses ballet bodies carry etched within their musculature. In what follows, I seek not to create a space for this aporetic figure, although such a project would greatly challenge the ways that discourses operate through the classical ballet aesthetic. Instead, this article aims to examine the implications of an absent masculine male pointe dancer on the ballet bodies who produce, sustain and perpetuate the classical ballet aesthetic. In effect, I view these bodies as translated bodies, in the sense that they simultaneously retell stories through their movements when performing and enacting the classical ballet aesthetic enabled by discourses of race, gender and sexuality. These discourses find their roots in modernities and their interplay with nationalisms. As a result, I will argue that ballet bodies are embodied translations of modernity-inspired nationalisms. For this project, modernity-inspired nationalisms are ways of thinking about the organization of social life replete with the taxonomies and hierarchies achieved through modernities. In other words, the ballet bodies we see dancing onstage (and by extension those bodies we do not see onstage) exemplify bodies disciplined through discourses and practices surrounding, producing and sustaining the modern nation-state. I will make this argument in four sections.

First, I will draw on André Lefevere’s work regarding the “cultural turn” in translation studies. Here, I will suggest that classical ballet functions as a mode for translating texts. This is to say that the classical ballet aesthetic supports and is supported by a whole series of discourses emanating from daily life of modernity-inspired nation states. Second, continuing from the developments in translation studies, I will add Foucault’s analysis of docile bodies to demonstrate how ballet bodies manifest as embodied translations of the classical ballet aesthetic, and by extension, the discursive productions contained within the modernity-inspired nation state. Put differently, the performances of classical ballets or modern/contemporary ballet with recognizable ballet bodies, those

very bodies onstage become translations for modernity-inspired nationalisms underpinning the classical ballet aesthetic. Here, I mean that the ballet bodies through their training and performances actually re-write, in corporeal form, the discourses surrounding race, nation, and sexuality. In effect, these performing docile bodies translate modernity-inspired nationalisms onto bodies. Third, I will interrogate the underpinnings of the classical ballet aesthetic as it relates to modernity-inspired nationalisms. I will use this analysis to proceed to part four, which considers the material implications for ballet bodies as they translate the discourses surrounding the classical ballet aesthetic. At stake in this analysis are the ways in which we – both spectators and ballet bodies alike – participate in systemic discourses of exclusion produced and perpetuated through both the classical ballet aesthetic and modernity-inspired nationalisms.

### **Culture, Turns and Translations**

To begin, I contend that classical ballet works to translate discourses by its aesthetic onto its performing bodies. I situate this argument following the “cultural turn” in translation studies, whereby scholars such as André Lefevere and Susan Bassnett began to examine translations within their cultural contexts, attending to forces of “power, ideology, institution and manipulation” (Lefevere 2) and how those forces influence the productions of texts. Bassnett and Lefevere maintain that the more we interrogate such forces, “the more understanding we have of the processes that shape our lives” (Bassnett and Lefevere 13). These two scholars concern themselves primarily with literary texts and how they are translated and rewritten under different constraining forces, whether it be ideologies surrounding bodies and sexualities in a target culture or a move by patronage to represent certain figures in a particular way. These forces shape the translations of texts, and, as Bassnett and Lefevere argue, provide fertile ground for questions concerning translation studies.

In his work, *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, Lefevere demonstrates how translations of texts remain tethered to poetics, ideologies and patronages to produce rewritings (translations) of original texts in other languages and cultures. In so doing, Lefevere emphasizes that translations are not simply free-floating disembodied texts, but shaped by forces that interact with and produce both the translation and the conditions that make that translator’s existence possible.

Lefevere’s analysis adopts Michel Foucault’s conceptualization of power. Here, Lefevere writes that it is important to understand power as a force that is not limited to repressive force. Instead, citing Foucault, Lefevere states: “what makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasures, forms knowledges, produces discourse” (Foucault qtd. in Lefevere 15). Indeed, for Foucault and also for Lefevere, power is not just a force to be used against someone or something; rather, power permeates social space, and produces and regulates objects, beings, discourses and knowledges. For Lefevere, these modalities of power are important because they shape the translator’s culture, the translator, and, as a result, the rewritten text.

According to Foucault, we should not think of power in its singular all-prohibitive or enabling capacity. Instead, we should think of power in its plural form and try to specify which powers in their historical and geographical locations are acting in productive or regulatory manners upon subjects or objects (Foucault 1006). In Lefevere’s work, he embarks upon such an endeavor, specifying how powers operate in different historical

moments and geographical regions to shape translators and rewritten texts.

Given that texts and translations of texts may take forms other than written words,<sup>3</sup> I will argue, using Lefevre's analysis of translations, that classical ballet is a form of cultural translation. Classical ballets use the gestures and movements of their dancers to make meaning with an audience and thus fall within the scope of Roman Jakobson's intersemiotic translations -- the use of non-verbal signs systems to convey verbal signs.<sup>4</sup> All classical ballets depict a storyline, often emanating from a national folk tale or fairytale. These ballets, however, do not remain fixed or static. As time passes and culture changes, ballets are restaged for audiences in all different types of contexts. These restagings, much like Lefevre's rewritings, find themselves within a system where professional choreographers and dancers are the critics and, as Lefevre identifies with translations, these figures "will much more frequently rewrite works of literature until they are deemed acceptable to the poetics and the ideology of a certain time and place" (Lefevre 14).

Classical ballet functions similarly. The best example of this precise rewriting as restaging to suit a poetics and ideology is found in Jennifer Fisher's text *Nutcracker Nation*. In her analysis of the popularity of *The Nutcracker* as a ballet, Fisher traces its history to an unpopular ballet "often relegated to school performances" (18) instead of the imperial theatres of Russia. However, as Fisher demonstrates, the *Nutcracker's* rewriting for a North American audience -- in keeping with classical ballet's aesthetics (like literary poetics) and ideology of its historical and geographical location -- made it the ever-popular classic that many North Americans flock to each year in December. Fisher writes: "Once the ballet coalesced with the Christmas season in North America and was reinforced by notions about the innocence of childhood, rites of passage and dreams coming true, it [*The Nutcracker* ballet] grew up on its own -- into something that Russians don't recognize" (19). Thus, *The Nutcracker* is a translation whose target culture finds it even more appealing than its source.

The move from thinking of classical ballet texts as translations to analyzing ballet bodies as embodied translations requires a few more steps. First, classical ballets cannot exist without the bodies that dance them. Moving one step further, those dancing bodies cannot exist without a whole series of other embodied individuals who create movement for dancing bodies or work to refine those bodies' own movements. Here, movement and bodies are necessary requirements for the productions of ballets, be they classical, contemporary or modern. However, not any type of bodies will do; the bodies dancing must conform to a classical ballet aesthetic.

## **Ballet and its Bodies**

Classical ballet immediately conjures a certain scene: the house lights dim, the orchestra begins to play; a thick velvet curtain pulls back to reveal several ballet dancers standing in a formation. The ballet begins, unfolding in a way that many ballets previously have and many will to come. The ballet dancers tell stories through their movements and, more importantly, through their bodies. The performance has begun, yet the elements required to make this performance possible long predate the materials composing it. Ballet not only tells its tales through choreographic codes and narrative structure, but also tells

---

<sup>3</sup> On this view, see Maria Tymoczko. In her article, Tymoczko presents an analysis of a translator and translations in an oral culture.

<sup>4</sup> See Roman Jakobson.

stories through its dancing bodies. These bodies, required to convey ballet narratives, contain a multiplicity of stories of their own, which allow them to be intelligible as ballet bodies. Put another way, in order for ballet bodies to be read as ballet bodies, they must conform to a specific aesthetic. This aesthetic, as Jacques Rancière reminds us, comes into being as a result of politics.

Rancière posits inextricable ties between politics and aesthetics in his work *The Politics of Aesthetics*. Here, he asserts that aesthetics “can be understood [...] as the system of *a priori* forms determining what presents itself to sense experience” (13). In other words, an aesthetic comes into being because of underlying assumptions and logics which allow any particular object, performance, or thought to be perceived and classified and accepted as such in any or multiple ways. Rancière terms this process “the distribution of the sensible” and demonstrates how it yields an aesthetic replete with politically charged interactions. In other words, what is intelligible under a particular aesthetic form relies on a series of relations that are shaped by politics. For example, classical ballet, long associated with courts and nobility, retains its relations of class as it tells stories about both peasantry and nobility. These underlying relations of class and patronage sustain in part that aesthetic that we identify as classical ballet.

Rancière explains aesthetics as “a delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise, that simultaneously determines the place and the stakes of politics as a form of experience” (13). In other words, an aesthetic is produced through political interactions that vary across time, space, languages and cultures. Political interactions are made possible only through the distribution of the sensible and aesthetics. These two forces are co-implicating. For example, in my experience as a 21<sup>st</sup> century white, anglophone, North American subject with some knowledge about classical ballet, I would identify certain bodies as “ballet bodies” over others. The aesthetic of what a ballet body *is* in this particular historical socio-political context differs immensely from others. The difference is so great that if I were to encounter a body taken from one of Edgar Degas’s famous paintings such as “Petits Rats”, “The Dance Foyer at the Opera,” or “Prima Ballerina” from the late 1800s placed in modern street clothes alongside a body conforming to a contemporary ballet aesthetic also wearing street clothing, I would likely not recognize the Degas ballet bodies *as ballet bodies*. Degas’s ballet bodies, their shape and composition do not at all resemble the long-limbed, exceedingly slender, athletic bodies that exemplify current representations of ballet dancers in most major ballet companies around the globe. These perceptions and their interpretations are aesthetic. They are also political. What is visible and intelligible as a ballet body in any conjuncture rests upon a series of political relations and implications for bodies and the social, historical, political and material forces that produce those bodies. In turn, bodies formed through such forces take part in an aesthetic that also holds political implications. Put differently, what is perceivable by the senses as a ballet body (based on a classical ballet aesthetic – which is largely homogeneous across a variety of geographical locations and cultures) within the current historical moment rests upon a series of political relations ranging from the effects of modern masculinities and femininities<sup>5</sup> on both male and

---

<sup>5</sup> Ideas of modern masculinities and femininities influence the shape of current classical ballet aesthetics because what is now known as classical ballet was for a brief historical period danced only by men. For more information regarding the gendered roles shaping what we currently identify as classical ballet, see Carol Lee. Current portrayals of female and male dancers align with gender norms in political life, which, in most western communities reflect a masculine-centered world-view.

female ballet bodies to the political tensions of and following the Cold War.<sup>6</sup>

For Rancière, politics revolves “around what is seen and what can be said about it, around who has the ability to see and the talent to speak, around the properties of space and the possibilities of time” (13). Therefore, restrictions on which bodies qualify to be included under a ballet aesthetic necessarily belie a series of discourses surrounding race, class, gender, nation and sexuality. These discourses are political, as numerous theorists demonstrate how racialized or gendered persons are elided from the formation of idealized national subjects or disempowered by the distribution of material resources by the state.<sup>7</sup> Politics and aesthetics, then, are inextricably tied to one another, as the production of an aesthetic is only possible due to political investments and privilege distribution within any given mode of social organization. To carve out an aesthetic is to stake a claim upon a specific set of social relations, which, in order to be intelligible, depends on politics. Bodies within a classical ballet aesthetic are political bodies since they are “subjected, used, transformed and improved” (*Discipline* 136) by the aesthetic producing and containing them. Bodies within a ballet aesthetic are also docile bodies. Such bodies, then, make meaning not through their gestures or behaviors; rather, docile bodies and their gestures, mannerisms and the behaviors they display emblemize the forces producing and regulating them.

While the linkages between classical ballet bodies and a Foucauldian analysis of those bodies as docile bodies are quite strong and have been argued elsewhere,<sup>8</sup> I will use this as a point of departure for my argument regarding ballet bodies as embodied translations. If ballet bodies are docile bodies and ballets are intersemiotic translations, then the bodies that are shaped for the express purpose of portraying those translated texts are translated bodies. Classical ballets cannot exist without conforming to the parameters of a classical ballet aesthetic – otherwise the texts would be unintelligible as classical ballets. Classical ballet aesthetics require certain bodies to be intelligible as classical ballet bodies and, to this effect, classical ballet bodies undergo rigorous training to shape them to conform to the specificity of the aesthetics.

Returning to the contrast between classical ballet bodies from Degas’s paintings and modern classical ballet bodies, we see how Foucault’s analysis of docile bodies applies to ballet. At the historical moment where we find Degas’s ballet dancers (or those who proceeded Degas’s dancers), bodies that practiced the art of ballet also looked like some other non-ballet bodies that might be wandering around the streets. Ballet bodies taking the stage during this time were ballet bodies when they took the stage and performed ballets – or when they were rehearsing for their performing endeavors. However, as technology progressed and scientific knowledge regarding anatomy and physics increased, dancers became capable of performing more athletic and extreme

---

<sup>6</sup> The current ballet aesthetic also takes its influence from the political relations and events of the Cold War involving political defectors such as Rudolf Nuryev, Natalia Makarova, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Leonid and Valentina Kozlov, Mikhail Messerer and Yuri Stepanov, to name just a few. While most of these defectors received instant fame in their roles in their new companies (not to mention their being welcomed by Western countries as political defectors), their defections marked a supposed success of capitalist freedoms over artistic administration in Soviet regimes. Furthermore, many of these defections were made possible by state-sponsored tours, a fact that emphasizes the political relations between ballet and modernity-inspired nationalisms and their political systems. For more information regarding state-sponsored tours in ideologically opposed nation-states, see Clare Croft.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example: Sunera Thobani; Paul Gilroy, “There Ain’t No Black”; Wendy Brown; and Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Habitations of Modernity” and “Provincializing Europe”.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example: Fisher, Jennifer. “Tulle as Tool: Embracing the Conflict of the Ballerina as Powerhouse” *Dance Research Journal* (2007): 39.1. 2-24.; Oliver, Wendy. “Reading the Ballerina’s Body: Susan Bordo Sheds Light on Anastasia Volochkova and Heidi Guenther” *Dance Research Journal*, (2005): 37.2, 38-54.

movements through their art. No longer do the aesthetics of classical ballet (and governing state for that matter) accept the same bodies – ones that are capable of telling balletic stories onstage and governing countries as heads of state offstage, as Louis XIV and many other heads of state once did. Think of the aesthetics of a picture of several contemporary heads of state – prime ministers, presidents and monarchs – and then imagine a series of ballet bodies in place of those heads of state. The ways the bodies look are not the same. Modern classical ballet bodies have a certain aesthetic and carry meanings translated onto them. They are, effectively, embodied translations of the aesthetics producing them. These aesthetics are produced and sustained by modernity-inspired nationalisms.

### **Embodied Translations: Ballet Bodies, Modernities and Nationalisms**

Classical ballet and the companies who identify themselves as classical ballets companies exist in a variety of countries all over the globe. Yet, in spite of the heterogeneous cultural locations of these companies, they reproduce a strikingly similar repertoire. Indeed, although classical ballet asserts itself as a universal form of dance, it can be anything but universal. Its apparent claim to universality marks its privilege.<sup>9</sup> In this section, I consider how Rancière's distribution of the sensible impacts the classical ballet aesthetic. In other words, I delve into what silenced elements sustain the classical ballet aesthetic and its claim to a universalized dance form and, as such, some of the meanings ballet bodies carry as embodied translations. To begin, I consider how the classical ballet aesthetic produces itself as a universal form of dance, made possible through logics of inclusion and exclusion operating to articulate "peoples" through modernity-inspired nationalisms. The conceptual framework behind this articulation dances hand-in-hand with the articulation of bodies as ballet bodies through the classical ballet aesthetic which comes into being through the colonial state.

Nationalism scholar Liah Greenfeld conceptualizes modernity as characterized by the articulation of a form of nationalism that "locates the source of individual identity within a 'people,' which is seen as the bearer of sovereignty, the central object of loyalty, and the basis of collective solidarity" (Greenfeld 3). The state exhibits a juridico-political apparatus that regulates life over a specific geographic terrain to organize the people it represents. Modernity, then, for Greenfeld, *is* nationalism. This modernity-inspired nationalism as Greenfeld understands it relies heavily on the use of language as a mode of articulating a "people" and nation. She uses language as a conduit through which a "people" develops a meaning-making system which then regulates their material life.

Behind the idea of articulating "a people" are ideas of belonging – who can belong and under what conditions. This is a central concern of Benedict Anderson's text *Imagined Communities*. Anderson argues for the definition of the nation as "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6). In imagining the limited and sovereign political community, Anderson also considers the colonial state. In a chapter added in the 2006 edition of his text, Anderson reflects further on his thoughts regarding nationalism and the colonial state. After having previously

---

<sup>9</sup> For a thoughtful reflection on the universalist claims of classical ballet and its implications on students in a university dance education program, see Raquel Monroe, who demonstrates through engagement with her university students how ballet becomes a gatekeeper in dance education as it makes a claim to being able to universally educate dancers in technique – supposedly applicable to all forms of dance. She also demonstrates that ballet, through its claims to universality, becomes associated with whiteness, in spite of the fact that some styles of ballet, such as Balanchine's, distinctively draw from African aesthetics.

argued that imagining colonial political communities occurred in a manner similar to “dynastic states of nineteenth century Europe,” Anderson writes: “subsequent reflection has persuaded me that this view was hasty and superficial, and that the immediate genealogy should be traced to the imaginings of the colonial state” (163). In the imagining of the colonial state, Anderson highlights three institutions: census, map and the museum as playing a central role in the imaginings of colonial nationalism. From this perspective, Anderson writes that the aforementioned three institutions “shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its domination – the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry” (164). Anderson’s arguments thus see nationalism as the articulation of a people through an imagined sense of belonging, one that may, in some cases, be highly staged.

Both Greenfeld and Anderson argue that modernity and the classification of peoples make nationalism and state-building possible. Discourses enabling such classificatory processes also rely on unsaid and excluded bodies. Post colonial scholars remind us that the staging of nations through belonging, be it imagined or material, comes at the price of those excluded from the benefits of the political community. Exclusions can come in many forms. Paul Gilroy reminds us that modernity and the current mode of classifying bodies must be rethought through the metaphor of the middle passage – the journey across the Atlantic on slave ships. Gilroy’s argument that this middle passage be used to think about how the Black Atlantic serves as an integral (yet often disavowed) component of modernity prompts us to think about how that space, that passage influences, underscores and is embedded within the conceptual frameworks deployed in and through the system of meaning making that continually (re)make our world – including our material realities. Therefore, modernity and nationalism dance hand-in-hand with colonialism and racism through the nation-state.

These discourses translate onto ballet bodies through the classical ballet aesthetic. Deploying similar logics, the classical ballet aesthetic proclaims itself a universal form of dance, thereby obscuring the myriad of their dance forms it has borrowed from and excluded. Classical ballet positions itself in opposition to other “ethnic” forms of dance where it proclaims itself a supposed universal that draws on “ethnic” dance steps to communicate village life (such as the Mazurka in *Coppelia*), entertainment in courts (such as the court scene in *Swan Lake*), or that the ballet takes place in a “faraway land” (such as *Don Quixote*, which takes place in the Spain of Cervantes’s novel). Classical ballet, however, is no more “universal” than any other popular form of dance. Indeed, dance anthropologist Joann Kealiinohomoku argues precisely this point. She argues that the aesthetic produced by classical ballet underscores a Western Eurocentric worldview and, as such, privileges whiteness. Examining classical ballet texts, the narratives, flora, fauna, festivals, celebrations and even economic pursuits, Kealiinohomoku emphatically scrutinizes classical ballet’s claim to universality as it portrays only elements for those categories found within a Eurocentric worldview. There are swans instead of giraffes, flowers instead of yams... and the list continues.

Classical ballet achieves its supposed universal status through the marginalizing of Other forms of dance. It refuses to include movements and aesthetics found in those Other forms of dance except when it deploys them for a specific meaning-making purpose. In such moments, steps appropriated from Other dance forms are not included in ballets as ballet steps. Instead, they become known as “character” or “national”

dance.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, classic texts in this supposedly universalizing form of dance contain elements of national dances and yet, in its teaching, it is referred to as ethnicized. Apart from speaking to the ways in which a classical ballet aesthetic appropriates elements from Other forms of dance, it also hints at how a classical ballet aesthetic works to exclude forms of Other dances that it cannot or will not appropriate into its aesthetic.<sup>11</sup>

As colonial states compete for status in a world system, they often highlight their countries' achievements in classical ballet. During the Cold War, this fact was particularly evident as many high profile dancers defected from the Soviet Union to Canada and the United States. Here, classical ballet, its aesthetic and its bodies were a "universal" currency, which allowed passage between opposing political systems. Thus far, I have demonstrated how the classical ballet aesthetic relies upon systematic erasure and effacement of a variety of peoples and movements. As such, classical ballets manifest as translations through power relations between aesthetics, ideology and institutions. Next, I will explain how the ballet bodies realizing the classical ballet aesthetic function as embodied translations of such erasures through pointe shoes and the aporetic masculine male pointe dancer.

### To the Pointe: Embodied Translations

Men dancing *en pointe* are not a novel idea, but men dancing *as men* en pointe are. This lies outside the scope of an aesthetic of classical ballet, even though the pointe shoe is one of its central elements. Excluding men from pointe preserves the gendered discourses surrounding pointe work, that it is mainly for women, so as to make them appear weightless and floating, to allow them to be partnered by their male counterparts in heteronormative narratives of love and courtly chivalry. Women dancing also portray many different roles – ethereal creatures (such as Sylphes in *La Sylphide* or *Les Sylphides*), hyperbolic characters (such as the doll in *Coppelia*) animals (such as Odile/Odette and the Swans in *Swan Lake*) – but female ballet bodies also dance en pointe *as women*. However, men en pointe, dancing *as men*, are absent from the ballet stage. Indeed, one would be hard pressed to imagine what a scene of multiple male dancers dancing en pointe *as men* might look like.

Up to this point, I have argued that ballet bodies may be read as embodied translations, and I have also discussed the logics of exclusion inherent to modernity-inspired nationalisms and how they set the stage for classical ballet's aesthetic iterations.

---

<sup>10</sup> One international training method of classical ballet – The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) based in London, England – still divides its training curriculum into "classical" exercises and "character" exercises where, in each grade, students are introduced to an "ethnic" form of dance in a series of exercises.

<sup>11</sup> For example, post-colonial dance theorists such as Stavros Stavrou Karayanni discuss how choreophobic attitudes by dance forms in colonial states influenced the development of dance in Egypt. Karayanni examines a particular dance figure, the *ghawazee*. He retells the *ghawazee*'s tale, how they were banned in Egypt because the Western gaze looked upon their dance and saw "a choreographic sequence of Oriental dance [that] spelled out a hieroglyphics of uninhibited sexual desire and wantonness" between male dancing bodies (321). Karayanni maintains that this was not the meaning behind the *ghawazee*'s dance aesthetic. Instead, he maintains, the *ghawazee*'s choreography demonstrated a masterful way to "rebuff, refocus, and reorient the gaze in so as to control access to intimacy" and, as such, the *ghawazee* "embody their own tense dynamism and potency as well as that of the East" (323). Put differently, the aesthetics of the *ghawazee*'s dance did not express the excessive sexuality that was understood by the Eurocentric gaze that banned it. Karayanni uses this reading of the *ghawazee* to illustrate why, during a period of Western imperialism, banishment of these dancers and their art form achieved a politicized aesthetic proposing a Eurocentric, colonial, highly regulated mode of dance. The language of dance movement was adapted through the lens of a Eurocentric mode of social organization. Here, the previous aesthetic becomes effaced as Eurocentric processes are established and entrenched. Classical Ballets rely on these historical and contemporary exclusions to proclaim their aesthetic as "universal" and "classic."

Now, I will turn to how those discourses produce, sustain and perpetuate the classical ballet aesthetic and examine how they are intersemiotically translated through ballet bodies. As the scope of such an analysis risks being exceedingly large, I will limit my discussion to those discourses surrounding the pointe shoe.

Dance historian Carol Lee explains how pointe work influenced the development of classical ballet. Lee writes: “*Pointe* work became mandatory for all principal female dancers since it provided the ultimate suggestion of weightlessness proper to the nature of the creatures she portrayed” (141). The creatures Lee writes about are the Sylphs and Willis in the romantic ballets of *La Sylphide* and *Giselle*. Pointe shoes for women became emblematic of the classical ballet aesthetic. Pointe shoes are also the focus for Susan Leigh Foster’s oft-cited text, “The Ballerina’s Phallic Pointe” because of their centrality to classical ballet’s aesthetic. Here, Foster argues that the ballerina and her pointe shoes transform the stage into “a closet for the exercise of male desire” (444) thus interrogating many heterosexist discourses surrounding pointe shoes and the women who wear them.<sup>12</sup> Deploying a psychoanalytic mode of analysis, Foster sees pointe shoes and the women who wear them as the central subjects/objects inherent to the meaning-making function of the classical ballet aesthetic. Foster achieves this move by considering the ballerina-as-phallus and her “phallic pointe.”

Choosing to think about ballet through the figure of the ballerina-as-phallus “provokes an analysis of feminine and masculine desire” (436) and demonstrates how the ballerina-as-phallus, whether an active object of desirous dancing or a passive object of male heterosexual desire, “are subtended by a masculine logic that traffics women to sustain various forms of male hegemony” (436). In other words, the classical ballet aesthetic engenders a series of choreographic codes that remain intact because of male hegemony. This meaning-making system drives the classical ballet aesthetic and accordingly, leaves its “trace in the bodies that had performed” them (439).

Foster has already indicated what I have been arguing thus far, that the classical ballet aesthetic functions through choreographic codes and that these codes are – for Foster’s primary concern of analysis – phallogocentric, much like the logics that produce, maintain and perpetuate logics found within discourses of nationalisms and modernity. Here, bodies are organized according to gendered functions in a way that mirrors discourses on gender relations in the heterosexual nuclear family in spaces shaped by modern nationalisms.<sup>13</sup> Here, the male dancer leaps and bounds across the stage in his solo dances, while the female dancer dances on the tips of her toes – taking up less space than her male counterparts. When they dance together, he places her in prominent view, supports her and moves her around for all to admire in all kinds of positions displaying nearly every part of her anatomy. The female dancing body dances, but she is also paraded around for all to admire by her male counterparts. These discourses sustain the classical ballet aesthetic. Men partner women. Women dance together with women. Men dance together with men. The gender roles are quite clear.

This is where the masculine male pointe dancer does not make his appearance. There is no space for him to dance in classical ballet. The choreography for pointe work is not analogous to the highly gendered choreographic codes for male ballet bodies. So

---

<sup>12</sup> Foster does not account for men who dance en pointe in her analysis.

<sup>13</sup> Many feminists have critiqued how modern nationalisms and the nation-state are organized in a way that is patriarchal. For example, Carole Pateman situates the sight of patriarchy even prior to the formation of modern nationalisms and the nation-state – in the state of the social contract – in the development of language and social relations. In her text *The Sexual Contract*, Pateman argues that the social contract is presupposed by a sexual contract that valorizes the masculine.

how would he dance? Men who do dance en pointe – outside the purview of the roles outlined in the handful of classical variations – are exemplified by the ballet companies: Les Ballet Trockadero de Monte Carlo (Trocks) and The State Saint Petersburg Male Ballet. For this analysis I will focus on the Trocks, as they are more prevalent in the North American context. The Trocks boast an all male cast; they work within the classical ballet aesthetic and stage classical ballet repertoire. The difference from other ballet companies is that the dancers are all men and trained to perform both the male and female roles in classical ballet. In effect, the Trocks drag classical ballet. Their performances of ballets such as *Swan Lake*, as Susan Juhasz points out, queers the ballet aesthetic by placing male bodies in the roles of female bodies and adapting the choreographic codes accordingly.

While many of the changes to the choreography are designed to produce a comedic effect, it is this comedy, this hyperbolic performance – as in drag – that leaves the choreographic codes for pointe work intact within the classical ballet aesthetic. Juhasz cites dance critic Graham Jackson's reflection on the Trocks' performance. Jackson writes: "By putting boys in tutus, the Trockadero manages to break the spectator's hold on sexual conventions or stereotypes and forces [her/]him to re-examine, from a distance, the whole crazy role-structure prevalent in the ballet world today and by extension, in the culture of which ballet forms no insignificant part" (qtd. in Juhasz 62), thus situating the Trocks' performance with theoretical perspectives that consider the art of drag to critique and subvert dominant gender and sexuality paradigms.<sup>14</sup>

However, it is more than the mere appearance of "boys in tutus" as Jackson writes, but the movement that accompanies those tutus. Indeed, the Trocks performing as Russian prima ballerinas<sup>15</sup> execute their roles with great technical prowess. Here, the Trocks, in keeping with the spirit of critique and subversion of dominant paradigms, take up not only gender and sexuality paradigms, but also the political paradigms of contemporary classical ballet, where defecting Soviet dancers received fame and highly paid positions in some of the top companies of the world after embracing the capitalist environment of artistic and personal freedoms. The Trocks, thus, both perform and call into question the meanings translated by dancing bodies.

Moving from the onstage spectacles to the company behind the scenes, we see that ideological forces play out in the very establishment of the Trocks' company. Selby Schwartz writes of the Trocks that the "company's impeccable camp pedigree can thus be traced, through avant-garde gay superstar Charles Ludlam, to the explosion of post-Stonewall activism in the arts and the popularity of camp performance in 1970's New York" (Schwartz). Indeed, the Trocks as a company are an artistic response to a highly politicized moment. Reflecting a "people" who were effaced from the distribution of material and discursive benefits of a particular nation-state, the Trocks, through their

---

<sup>14</sup> See for example, Judith Butler; Judith Halberstam; and José Muñoz

<sup>15</sup> The Trocks do not dance under their own names. Instead, they portray characters of Russian prima ballerinas, taking stage names such as Ida Nevasayneva, Olga Suppozova, Lariska Dumchenko and Yakatarina Verbosavich. The dancers portraying these ballerinas have equally developed male characters as well, with stage names such as Velour Pilleaux, Yuri Smirnov, Pepe Dufka and Roland Daulin. On their cast list, these ballerinas and male dancers have their own political histories, many of which involve fictitious political defections and an arrival in the United States to dance with the Trocks. While the political defections in these character dancers' biographies are as fictitious as their names, it gestures to a whole tradition of artistic defections in search of less-constrained artistic working environments and political freedoms during the period of the Cold War. These political defections influenced the development and reception of ballet both in the West and the countries that painstakingly trained those who defected. In the West – in Canada and the United States in particular – the incorporation of these Russian ballet bodies into Canadian and US companies signaled a political victory for capitalism and the apparent freedoms found in its social mode of organization.

performances, embody the struggles and successes of a civil rights movement for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals. This behind-the-scenes political history of the company helps Schwartz to conceptualize the Trocks as political resisters, embodying traditions of drag and Russian prima ballerinas as well as political defectors – those in search of certain freedoms to be and express themselves as they are. As such, the Trocks’ bodies translate colonial and national discourses achieved through modernities in ways that confront “tenets of gender identity, of classical ballet, of issues of race and class in the performing arts, of enforced theatrical illusion and even of drag itself” (Schwartz).

In addition, the Trocks and their company work hard to visibly perform a certain aspect of “gayness” historically effaced from the storytelling of classical ballet.<sup>16</sup> Schwartz writes: “[w]hen the Trocks tour as a campy, explicitly gay-identified company, then, they are both paying tribute to the self-invented Russian ballerinas and bringing out the shadow history of the Ballets Russes as a company that was created, supported and managed by gay men” (Schwartz).<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the Trocks emphasize previously effaced elements of classical ballet and queer existences within the rewritings of history.

Perhaps even more interesting is that the body of the Trocks as dancers, outside of their Russian ballerina characters, look like the ballet bodies of men. Inside their Russian ballerina characters, they look like hyperbolic ballet bodies of women. Again, while men dancing *en pointe as women* are not completely unknown to the repertoire of classical ballet, the Trocks have rendered visible some of the discourses translated by ballet bodies but previously effaced by its aesthetics. Throughout the Trocks’ political interventions in the discourses translated by ballet bodies, the *pointe shoe* as a central signifier in the classical ballet aesthetic is reinforced. The Trocks’ performances can only take on the meanings they do because of the ways that *pointe shoes* operate within the classical ballet aesthetic. *Pointe shoes*, however, carry discourses of their own – apart from the bodies that wear them – and those discourses belie colonial contacts with classical ballet aesthetics.

Who can wear *pointe shoes* and how they are worn tells tales of modernity-inspired nationalisms. These discourses are translated onto ballet bodies through the bodies that we see and recognize as ballet bodies (and the ones we do not) onstage and off. Here, systemic racism operates to privilege whiteness and exclude or marginalize others in classical ballet companies. These discourses remain etched in ballet bodies as they are produced, maintained and perpetuated by the classical ballet aesthetic. In this context, Carrie Gaiser traces the lineage of the Dance Theatre of Harlem to several unsuccessful all-black ballet companies in the United States. Gaiser explains that these all-black ballet companies had difficulty surviving and posited that the Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH) was recognized as a successful ballet company because of the way its artistic director Arthur Mitchell “invoked the rhetoric of hybridity to legitimate the entry of his company into this [classical ballet’s] white cultural milieu” (Gaiser 272). Indeed, DTH worked hard to negotiate the meanings made in individual ballets;<sup>18</sup> however, although it was the longest-

---

<sup>16</sup> Recent interventions in scholarship such as Peter Stoneley’s *A Queer History of Ballet* discuss “the connection between homosexuality and ballet [which] has for so long been there and not there, both ‘common knowledge’ and ‘hushed up’” (1).

<sup>17</sup> For more information about Les Ballets Russes and its queer histories, see Stoneley, chapter 4, “Queer Modernity.”

<sup>18</sup> Its production of *Creole Giselle* moved the setting of the narrative to Louisiana, with the role of Giselle played by a black slave girl. Gaiser writes of DTH’s production that “[t]o authenticate the historical facticity of the setting, Mitchell and designer Carl Michel crafted biographies for the main characters based on historical accounts of the lives of free black plantation owners (who also owned slaves) and their poorer counterparts, the black farmer and laborer. DTH

lasting<sup>19</sup> all-black ballet company in the United States, DTH survived only until 2004. The classical ballet aesthetic, thus, retains its logics of racialization that continue to regularly exclude bodies while simultaneously privileging others.

Like the Trocks, however, DTH's ballet bodies have done a lot to intervene in the discourses upholding the aesthetics of classical ballet, and these interventions influence how discourses are translated and embodied by ballet bodies; yet in many ways, the overarching aesthetics of classical ballet persist and continue to be inscribed on ballet bodies with every movement.

## Final Act: Reflections Onstage and Off

Classical ballet is an art form that uses intersemiotic translation through specific ballet bodies to tell stories and communicate with an audience. Following the "cultural turn" in translation studies, I have argued that ballet bodies function as embodied translations of modernity-inspired nationalisms. I have demonstrated how ballets conform to a specific aesthetic, which is influenced by the modernist logic operating through nationalisms. To this effect, the docile bodies disciplined to achieve this aesthetic effectively function as embodied translations of the discourses upholding them. Although, as in all discourses, the meanings they contain shift over time, the ballet bodies and their musculature remain. These bodies perform both onstage and off as their very appearance evokes the aesthetics of classical ballet whether they are present onstage or off. Thinking of these bodies as embodied translations does indeed, as Bassnett and Lefevere suggest, help us to better understand processes that shape our lives – and some of our bodies. It also helps us to understand the underpinnings of aesthetics that we may find pleasurable or to which we strive to conform. Engaging with these exclusionary logics and intervening in them allows for the capacity for shifts in meanings to occur. Until then, we can think about how ballet bodies and their presences and absences translate exclusionary logics of modernity-inspired nationalisms and, perhaps, understand a little better the ways in which we and our desires are marked by them.

## Works Cited

- "2012/2013 Season." *The National Ballet of Canada*. n.d.  
<http://national.ballet.ca/performances/season1314/> (August 19, 2013).
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. New York: Verso, 2006. Print.
- Bassnett, Susan and André Lefevere. "Introduction: Proust's Grandmother and the Thousand and One Nights: The 'Cultural Turn' in Translation Studies." *Translation, History and Culture*. Eds. Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere. New York: Cassell, 1995. 1-13. Print.
- Brown, Wendy. *States of Injury Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995. Print.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Habitations of Modernity Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. Print.
- . *Provincializing Europe Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000. Print.
- Croft, Clare. "Ballet Nations: The New York City Ballet's 1962 US State Department-Sponsored Tour of the Soviet Union" *Theatre Journal* 61 (2009): 421-442. Print.

---

released the biographies, along with a 'Brief History of the Free Black People of Louisiana' and a map of Plaquemines Parish [...] to critics at the ballet's premiere" (276).

<sup>19</sup> See Nyama McCarthy-Brown.

- Fisher, Jennifer. "Tulle as Tool: Embracing the Conflict of the Ballerina as Powerhouse" *Dance Research Journal* 39.1 (2007): 2-24. Print.
- Fisher, Jennifer. *Nutcracker Nation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003. Print.
- Foster, Susan. "The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe." *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*. Ed. Amelia Jones. New York: Routledge, 1996. 434-454. Print
- Foucault, Michel. "Les mailles du pouvoir" *Dits et écrits II, 1976-1988*. 1994. Eds. Daniel Defert et al. Paris: Gallimard, 2001. 1001-1020. Print.
- . *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sherman. New York: Vintage Books, 1991. Print.
- . *L'Ordre du discours*. Paris: Gallimard, 1971. Print.
- Gaiser, Carrie. "Caught Dancing: Hybridity, Stability and Subversion in Dance Theatre of Harlem's Creole *Giselle*." *Theatre Journal* 58 (2006): 269-289. Print.
- Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993. Print.
- . *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. Print.
- Greenfeld, Liah. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992. Print.
- Halberstam, Judith. *Female Masculinity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998. Print.
- Jakobson, Roman. "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation." *The Translation Studies Reader, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. London: Routledge, 2004. 138-43. Print.
- Juhasz, Susan. "Queer Swans: Those Fabulous Avians in *Swan Lakes* of Les Ballets Trockadero and Matthew Bourne" *Dance Chronicle* 31 (2008): 54-83. Print.
- Kealiinohomoku, Joann. "An Anthropologist Looks at Ballet as a Form of Ethnic Dance." *What is Dance*. Eds. Roger Copeland and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983. 533-549. Print.
- Lee, Carol. *Ballet in Western Culture: A History of its Origins and Evolution*. New York: Routledge, 2002. Print.
- Lefevere, André. *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*. London: Routledge, 1992. Print.
- Les Ballets Trockadero de Montecarlo*. Les Ballets Trockadero de Montecarlo, n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2013.
- McCarthy-Brown, Nyama. "Dancing in the Margins: Experiences of African American Ballerinas." *Journal of African American Studies* 15 (2011): 385-408. Print.
- "Mixed Programme." *Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet*. n.d. <http://www.rwb.org/mixedprogramme> (August 19, 2013).
- Monroe, Raquel. "'I Don't Want to do African...What About My Technique?': Transforming Dancing Places into Spaces in the Academy." *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 4.6 (2011): 38-55. Print.
- Muñoz, José. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999. Print.
- Oliver, Wendy. "Reading the Ballerina's Body: Susan Bordo Sheds Light on Anastasia Volochkova and Heider Guenther." *Dance Research Journal* 37.2 (2005): 38-54.
- Pateman, Carole. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford, CT: Stanford University Press, 1988. Print.
- Rancière, Jacques. *The Politics of Aesthetics*. New York: Continuum, 2004. Print.
- Schwartz, Selby Wynn. "The Politics of Dancing: Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo" *Forum* 4 (Spring 2007): n.pag. Web. 20 Mar. 2013.
- Stoneley, Peter. *A Queer History of the Ballet*. London: Routledge, 2007. Print.
- Thobani, Sunera. *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007. Print.
- Tymoczko, Maria. "Translation in Oral Traditions as a Touchstone for Translation Theory and Practice." *Translation, History and Culture*. Eds. Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere. New York: Cassell, 1995. 46-55. Print.