

## From Local to Global: Reflections on Dance Dissemination and Migration within Polska and Lindy Hop Communities

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Dances do not travel—but dancers do. Professional individuals, like soldiers, merchants, fishermen, seasonal workers, artisans, students, and diplomats, travelling around the world and meeting colleagues and other persons, results in cultural contacts and exchanges not only connected to their professions but also, for instance, music and dance. In Europe, dancing has been and still is an important activity for socializing. Throughout preindustrial European society, dancing was a good opportunity for young people to meet and find a partner, for example at dances at crossroads as well as festivities, from weddings to midsummer parties where dancing often was a central activity. Moreover, people did not merely participate in dance events close to their home, but travelers entered new places where they had a chance to participate in dance events and join/partake in previously unknown dances as well as in dances they already knew. Such social gatherings have created and still create a flow of dances crossing all kinds of borders throughout the world—and we can see and talk about it as if the dances themselves travelled without the human body (Shay 2008; Nilsson 2008). In this article, I look at the *polska* and Lindy Hop as forms being disseminated throughout the world by means of dancing people. The reflections are based on written sources, video films, and other archive material, including the Internet, and on my own knowledge about dances and experiences of dancing.

Because of this double displacement of both dances and dancers, migration as a concept is tricky. In the book *Migrations of Gestures*, Carrie Noland and Sally Ann Ness (2008) define migration as the “historical displacement of humans, gesturing populations from one geographic location to another” (xvi). Following Noland, I will use the concept of migration for the displacement of people. However, migration also occurs when cultural expressions like dance movements are displaced and merged into new cultural contexts. Undoubtedly, in order to travel, dances require human beings or some sort of media, thus ideas, forms, images, and descriptions of dances are also spread through new and old technologies. In that sense, I argue that *dances* do not travel but *dancing* does. In other words, in order for *dancing* to travel, the *dances* must be transferred, one way or another, into the bodies of new people who are *dancing* and who create innovative ways of using the disseminated dance forms.

In this article, I discuss the difference between the *migration of dancers* and the *dissemination of dances*, using two examples from Sweden. I also want to point out some profound changes that have happened since the nineteenth century in the Western world, which in a way constitute a new dancing reality. Today, local *communities that are dancing* are paralleled by *dancing*

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*communities*, where dancing a specific dance form becomes the focus rather than the gathering of the local community as such. This connects to how Judith Hamera defines dancing communities as “constituted by doing dance: making it, seeing it, talking, writing and fantasizing about it” (2011, 2). By contrast, in a community that dances, the dancing people embed the dancing activity in a broader context of socializing, and any dance event is thus meant to facilitate this kind of coming together. To draw on the British dance scholar Theresa Buckland’s words, we can see that in the beginning of the twentieth century

dancing was fast becoming the primary motivation for the event rather than the adjunct of an existing social institution. This transition from dancer’s earlier epiphenomenal character to a central *raison d’être* marks the dance practices of a modern urban society. Here was a dancing community rather than a community that dances; and this phenomenon was to become further distinguished among some dancing communities in the early twentieth century by an increasing focus upon one specific dance form. (2011, 43)

Buckland writes specifically about England and the upper classes, but she also captures a much greater and wider change during the twentieth century. I suggest that today, in the twenty-first century, dancing communities have replaced communities that dance as the primary context for dancing, at least in the so-called Western world (Hamera 2011, 2–3). The dissemination of the polska and the Lindy Hop, two dance forms that serve as examples in this text, may be useful to illustrate the transition from *communities that dance* to *dancing communities*.

Other researchers have written about dance dissemination and people migrating with slightly different focuses. Mats Melin (2015), for example, discusses the dances, especially solo tap dancing, that followed the emigrants from Scotland to North America and are still danced in Nova Scotia, Canada. Melin focuses on how the dances are transmitted in both informal and formal settings. Peter Manuel (2009) writes about hybrid dance forms, for instance the quadrilles, which were adapted for social dancing among the local people in the West Indies, a heritage they received from Europe via colonial upper classes. Andriy Nahachewsky (2012), for his part, investigates dances that followed the emigrants from rural Ukraine in the early twentieth century, and he focuses on how these are danced on stage in contemporary Canada. Anthony Shay provides numerous examples of how Americans started to dance the “exotic dances,” such as Balkan dances, Oriental belly dances, and dances from Asia and Latin America, during the twentieth century (2008, 5). June Vail (1998) studies dances among Swedes in Sweden in the late twentieth century, also in comparison to other practiced dance genres. Another focus is found in Helena Wulff’s study *Ballet Across Borders* (1998), based on her extensive ethnographic work with touring ballet companies such as London’s Royal Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre in New York, the Royal Swedish Ballet, and the Ballet Frankfurt in the 1990s. Wulff argues that the ballet world constitutes a transnational network of professional performers and performances, with deep social, economic, and emotional dimensions.

As the studies mentioned above focus on the migration of people and the dissemination of dances, in this article I also discuss the polska and Lindy Hop as two cases of popular dancing that moved in and out of Sweden during the twentieth century through migration and dissemination. In slightly different ways they stand as examples of how cultural forms or expressions circulate in time and space in global contexts, creating complex and distinctive local practices (see Appadurai 2010, 9–11). Polska and Lindy Hop are chosen as examples because they show different routes to and from Sweden, and they also have completely different roots. Polska is considered to be a Swedish dance with roots in seventeenth-century Northern Europe: it has been traded for more than four hundred years, and now it has moved to new places—from Sweden to other places in the world (Gustafsson 2016). Lindy Hop, on the other hand, has its African-American roots in the twentieth century and more specifically in the New York City of the 1930s. It was disseminated to Sweden in the 1940s, and today it is strongly connected to a particular place in the world:

Herräng in Sweden. Parallel to this transition to Sweden, Lindy Hop continues to be popular and is danced in the United States (McMains and Robinson 2002). However, I will not consider the Lindy Hop in the United States, since the focus of this article is the Lindy Hop moving in and out of Sweden.

In order to describe the contemporary situation for polska and Lindy Hop, I will use the concept of *post-urban*,<sup>1</sup> referring to processes in which cities amalgamate their surrounding areas in such a way that distances and differences between urban and rural areas are blurred:

With the emergence of the knowledge economy it is clear that a synthesis has arisen: the big cities have incorporated surrounding towns and countryside and transformed them to parts of multifunctional city regions that are connected in global city networks. Today nearly no area or place exists that is not influenced by urban ways of life, which means that there are no non-urban places left. (Westlund and Haas 2018, 5)

Consequently, the urban-rural dichotomy is not valid anymore when it comes to dance and music as cultural expressions. Theoretically, there are no limits to where one can go in order to dance, or watch, one's favorite dances. Even if not all people can travel everywhere, some people in some dancing communities have the possibility and resources to travel almost anywhere. Dancing communities are organized around one dance form in the context of Facebook groups or similar. Geographical distance does not seem to be a significant hindrance for European and other Western world dancers in the post-urban dancing communities. For instance, people from all over the world go to Sweden for polska dancing and to Buenos Aires for Argentine tango dancing. The Internet and digital communications play an important role here. They keep the members in the communities connected, and they allow people to share their ideas and images of the dances (Carroll 2008).

## Historical Background

In medieval times, until around 1500–1600, Swedish popular dancing consisted mainly of Pan-European chain and circle dances (Bakka 1997b; Norlind 1941; Urup 2007). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the minuet and contra dances, also known in continental Europe, were the most popular dances alongside couple dances such as the polska. From around 1850, other dance forms, such as the waltz and the polka, spread over great parts of Europe, including Sweden, not least in the neighboring countries (Bakka 1997a). Nowadays, some of the older European couple dances are still danced in Sweden, sometimes under the heading of *gammaldans* (old time dancing) or *folkdans* (folk dancing) (Bakka et al. 1988). But the general popularity of these dances as social dances declined in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century because of an influx of dances from the Americas: among the new popular dances were the one-step, two-step, tango, and foxtrot (Edström 1989, 157). Other dances from North America were later disseminated during the twentieth century, such as Lindy Hop, twist, line dance, and many more. At the end of the twentieth century, a new wave of dances arrived from other parts of the world, for example, Kathak from India, Brazilian Capoeira, Argentine Tango, Spanish Flamenco, Cuban Salsa, and (from different parts of Africa, especially West Africa) dances simply called “African dances.” All these dance genres or forms, including European derived folk dance and old-time dance, are what I will term *prefix-dances*, and each create their own dancing community, sometimes divided into even smaller subcommunities. While going dancing in nineteenth-century Sweden, for example, mainly meant going to an event at which the most popular dances of the time were danced, today going dancing often refers to concentrating on one specific dance form. In the nineteenth century, dancing the dances, as such, was not the goal but rather the act of socialization that happened through dancing them within the community. However, today people have access to plenty

of communities that concentrate on one specific dance form if they participate in specific *prefix-dance* communities (Hamera 2011; Nilsson 2017; Shay 2008). Thus, in the twenty-first century, anyone who wants to go dancing has more options than ever before in terms of choosing a specific dance form before going out.

Besides people travelling and meeting other people and thereby exchanging dances, there have been profound changes in communication technologies since the twentieth century, and thus in the dissemination of dances, although it is hard to describe how this happens more precisely. Around 1900, the technological revolution provided the possibility to record music, and this was followed by the possibility of recording moving pictures that also became important in the disseminations of dance and music ideas around the globe. Today, in the twenty-first century, Internet technology has totally changed communication, and in our contemporary world, all music, and probably all dance, is, at least theoretically, at hand wherever you are in the world (Fleischer 2009; Carroll 2008).

The flow of popular dances moves not just into but also out of a country like Sweden. The most obvious dance to move out of Sweden is the polska. Today, it can be found and danced in the United States, UK, France, and Japan, among other countries. Today, polska, with its roots in seventeenth-century Northern Europe, has become a Swedish world dance on the globalized dance market. At the same time, Lindy Hop, a way of dancing that originated in New York City around 1930, has become the center of a global dancing community, approximately since the year 2000, yet at the same time also relocated in the small village of Herräng in Sweden (Carroll 2008, 191; Wells 2013). Every summer people from all around the world travel to Herräng to dance the Lindy Hop. Teachers and dancing legends like Frankie Manning (1914–2009), coming there from the United States, have stated that Herräng is the number one Lindy Hop place in the world today (Manning and Millman 2007, 230).

Both polska and Lindy Hop were previously practiced in general communities—or what Buckland refers to as a *community that dances* (2011, 43). Today, however, those dances have become something used by *dancing communities*. The same transition can be recognized in relation to dances such as waltz and foxtrot. Thus, these dance forms have now become specific dances at the center of prefix dancing communities focusing on dance sport or ballroom dancing.

## Lindy Hop—from New York to Herräng and the World

What is the difference between Lindy Hop, jitterbug, and swing? The movements of the dances seem rather similar, whatever they are named, and in Sweden they are close to what is today called *rock'n'Roll* and also to what is called *bugg* (Damsholt 2014, 37, 41). Reading Frankie Manning's biography *Ambassador of Lindy Hop* (Manning and Millman 2007), I get a strong feeling that, according to Manning, the differences have more to do with the music than the movements. The Savoy Ball Room in New York City has an iconic status when it comes to Lindy Hop, and the importance of the Savoy Ballroom is emphasized in all texts about the history of this dance (Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, 128–129; Manning and Millman 2007; Miller and Jensen 1996; Heinilä 2016). The name *Lindy Hop*, as well as the dance form, is said to have been coined by Georg “Shorty” Snowden on June 17, 1928, when he performed the “breakaway,” as the predecessor of the dance was called, at a marathon dance event and called his move “lindy” (Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, 132; Stearns and Stearns 1994, 315–316; Wells 2013). According to Manning, he personally first saw this way of dancing around 1930 at the Renaissance Ballroom, where it was simply called “lindy” (Manning and Millman 2007, 43). Originally, the breakaway dance began in a closed dance hold, but the dancers would occasionally break out into an open position, although the movements were close to, for example, the foxtrot, during which the couple was tight together, embracing each other, while dancing (Breakaway n.d.).

Lindy Hop may be described as an on the spot couple dance. The dancers in the couple move back and forth, change place with each other or rotate together without moving around the room. Sometimes there are also more acrobatic motifs, such as those seen in the iconic movie *Hellzapoppin* (Whiteys Lindy Hoppers. *Hellzapoppin* 1941). The first traces of Lindy Hop in Sweden are found during the Second World War, in 1944, at the dance halls *Nalen*, short for National, in Stockholm (Bäckman et al. 1967), and *Rota*, short for Rotundan, in Gothenburg (Möllerstedt 1982). Stockholm is the capital and biggest city, Gothenburg the second largest and the main seaport, and it was in these two big cities in which the new impulses from America first landed. In 1944, the most common popular dance in Sweden was the foxtrot, danced to jazz music. As a pause in dance evenings, there were demonstrations and showings of a dance to faster music, often referred to as the jitterbug, during which you left the close holding of your partner and broke away just holding hands. This way of dancing became more and more popular, even if the most acrobatic parts were left out by most dancers, and in Sweden today it is often called just *bugg* (Nilsson 1998, 226–227). Even as the new fashion of jitterbug made its entrée, the foxtrot, or similar close dancing, remained the dominant way of dancing into the 1950s and 1960s. For a long time, they supplemented each other at the popular dance halls—one close and slow, the other more open and fast—giving the dancers possibilities to express different feelings (Nilsson 1998, 226–227).

Dancing slow in a foxtrot and fast in *bugg* was the most common popular dancing until the advent of the freestyle dancing like the twist, shake, and similar dances after around 1961, when dancing without tactile contact with a dance partner became the most common way to dance (Damsholt 2011, 155). Slow and quick couple dancing did not disappear from the dance halls, and in Sweden they were danced at events to music labeled *dansband* (dance band music), a style like country music in America. The popularity of this type of music and dancing reached its peak around 1985, and then it decreased, but it is still popular among many Swedes, especially those middle-aged and older (Nilsson 1998). However, in the first half of the 1980s, a group of younger Swedish dancers wanted to investigate the roots of the jitterbug, and thus they invited all interested dancers to a summer dance camp at Herräng, a small village in the countryside north of Stockholm:

When the camp opened its doors for the very first time on August 1, 1982, approximately 25 dancers had signed up to participate in what was to become the future Herräng Dance Camp. The early days of the Herräng Dance Camp was characterized by the philosophy of dancing as a sport rather than a social activity. Participants at the event rarely performed any social dancing, and the camp offered very few if any evening activities. The change came in the early 90s with the full introduction and gradual understanding of the background and context of the vernacular lindy hop. In only a few years the camp changed from some kind of athleticism to some kind of partyism, still however keeping the classes and the historical background as vital elements of the event. (Herräng Dance Camp n.d.)

The Herräng Dance Camp has grown considerably over time, from twenty-five Swedish dancers during a weekend in 1982, to a five-week, all-day and all-week event with thousands of dancers from all over the world in 2020: the largest and only multiweek swing dance event in the world. As Christopher Wells states, in Herräng the globalized Lindy Hop community becomes local, with Lindy Hop as a “dominant cultural force, the core of the mainstream, and the principal source of shared knowledge” (Wells 2013, 391–392). This would not have been possible without a great amount of voluntary work contributed by Lindy Hop enthusiasts, since the local authorities do not have the resources to build the infrastructure that is needed for a gigantic event like this. Over the years, a lot of people have devoted themselves to the dance camp in order to make everything work smoothly, and they feel proud to be a part of such a cosmopolitan and unique community (Herräng Dance Camp n.d.).

Although Frankie Manning, who taught the Lindy Hop technique from his youth as a visiting teacher at Herräng from 1989 until 2008, has obviously become an icon for Swedish Lindy Hoppers, he was actually not the first American to be in contact with the Swedes and Herräng. It was Albert (Al) Mins, another regular Savoy ballroom dancer, who first came to Sweden:

A few Swedes had come to New York in 1984 trying to find some of the dancers they'd read about in Jazz Dance and seen perform in films. They met Al on that trip, studied with him in New York, and invited him to work with them in Sweden later that year, which he told me all about. In early 1987, The Rhythm Hot Shots contacted me about coming to Sweden to teach them, and in late June I flew over for two weeks. (Manning and Millman 2007, 229)

The Rhythm Hot Shots' trip to New York in 1987 led to Frankie Manning's appointment as a dance teacher at the Herräng Dance Camp some years later. His view on the importance of Herräng for the rebirth and survival of Lindy Hop dancing is clear, claiming that it made the dance tradition survive and be disseminated all over the world:

Herräng is a haven of lindy hopping and I think it's really helped the swing dance revival in a lot of ways. First, The Rhythm Hot Shots have done a lot to pass on the dance tradition of the 1930s and 1940s to the next generation. Second, when people take back all that they've learned in Sweden to their country, it's helped keep dance evolving. Finally, Herräng has inspired a lot of other people to start camps and weekends all over the world, many of which I've been privileged to teach at. (Manning and Millman 2007, 230)

Dividing the flow of swing dancing into Sweden in different phases, it could be said that the first phase starts in the 1940s when Lindy Hop and jitterbug were imported into Sweden as a popular dance form. Phase two then starts in the 1980s, when the general popularity of the dance decreased but at which time swing dance became an object of interest for some young Swedish dancers searching for its roots. They went to the "land of origin," New York City, found some dancers from the 1930s and 1940s and invited them to work in Herräng, which has now become the international "capital of lindy hop." In that way, I argue, the dance survived due to some dancing Swedes and is now relocated in Sweden, where it seems to function as a Lindy hub for the entire world today (Damsholt 2014, 42; Wells 2013, 396). The story is, in short, that Lindy Hop was disseminated to Sweden from the United States in the 1940s, and due to the interest of some Swedish dancers, the dance form survived by being reimported into Sweden in the 1980s. Today, in the twenty-first century, Lindy Hop is disseminated from Herräng in Sweden to the rest of the world.

## **Polska—from Europe to Sweden to the United States and the World**

Polska is the Polish name for the country of Poland, indicating that the polska dance has something to do with Poland. As far as we know there have always been contacts between Sweden and Poland across the Baltic Sea, but whether or not polska has its roots in Poland, and if so when this dissemination to Sweden took place, has proven harder to document (Nilsson 2017, 75–78). Nevertheless, polska is the name of dance and music forms known in Sweden and Scandinavia by other names like *polsk dans*, *polsk*, or *polske*, from at least the seventeenth century. It is mentioned that polska, or *pobnische tanze*, was a popular couple dance in many parts of North Europe during the eighteenth to nineteenth century, although we do not know exactly how it was danced or how it sounded (Bakka 1997a, 70–71; Nilsson 2017, 79–81; Urup 2007, 305).

It is important to note that "polska" is not the same as "polka." Polska and polka are both turning, whirling couple dances, but include different turning techniques and connect differently to the

accompanying music. Polka spread in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century and is mostly danced to 2/4 beat music and uses two bars for one full turn. In contemporary Sweden, polka is generally considered a form of *gammaldans* (old time dancing), while polska is thought to be a form of folk dance. Basic polska motifs are couple whirling and promenade, often to music in 3/4 beat. As opposed to polka, many contemporary dancers and researchers highlight that polska was, and is, danced in uneven or even beat, because the dance movements can be adapted to a 2/4, 3/4, and 6/8 beat. There is no given structure as to how many bars of music the couple should use for whirling or for promenade, and no given structure dictating when to start or when to change between these motifs. This flexibility in the simple movement structure of the polska—as well as the flexible adaptability to music—has created many local variations (Nilsson 2017, 64–66). An example of the variety can be seen in some hundreds of versions described in Sweden during nineteenth and twentieth century (Karlholm, Larsson, and Norman 1971). In the first half of the nineteenth century, the waltz and polka became the most popular couple dances in Sweden. Polska dancing did not die out completely but survived as a relict and was danced in some places in the countryside far into the twentieth century, when it was rediscovered and documented (Helmersson 2012). The process of reconstructing dance forms based on documentation is often referred to as a revitalization process and started in the late 1960s (Nilsson 2007, 547–548).

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, millions of people emigrated from Sweden, mainly to North America. But as far as we know, polska dancing did *not* follow the Swedes to the new continent, thus polska was already out of fashion before they left Sweden. Instead, popular dances like the waltz and polka continued to be popular among the Swedish immigrants in the United States, like in many other immigrant groups from different parts of Europe at that time. In other words, the contemporary interest in polska does not stem from the second or third generation of Swedish immigrants in the United States. Rather, the contemporary interest in polska—in Sweden as well as outside of the country—has grown out of the folk music revival of the late 1960s and 1970s. In 1969, the Polska Dance Award was instituted as an event, which is now held every year in the provinces of Dalarna or Jämtland, mostly in the towns of Orsa or Östersund in the middle of Sweden. In the twenty-first century, it functions as an important assembly point for polska dancers from the entire world, not least from the United States and Japan, as well as from France and other European countries (Nilsson 2014). On the Web site of the Polska Dance Award, polska dancers explain the importance of the event:

Why do you dance up? Yes, to prove, primarily to yourself, that you have learned the dance correctly, and do not distort it, based on existing records and descriptions. The reward will be the medal, the diplom[a] and the honor of having passed the test and, not least, getting a share of the community that the dance provides. (“The Polska Medal” n.d.; English original)

Devoted Swedish polska dancers, as well as dancers from many other nationalities, meet at the Polska Dance Award to compete and practice polska dancing for fun for a weekend in Orsa or Östersund. They also go for *spelmansstämmor*, local folk music festivals, and *dansstugor*, small dance events mostly in village settings that go on during the summer at many places in rural Sweden. The Polska Dance Award and social gatherings belong to what I will call *subcommunities of folk dance*. In the polska case, there are at least three subgroups or subcommunities: the award dancers, the professional or semiprofessional presentational dancers, and the social dancers. Outside Sweden, there is both social and presentational polska dancing, but no polska award dancing, to my knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

In the United States, the polska is danced in groups that engage with what is called Swedish folk dances, Scandia dances, or Scandinavian dances. Polska from Sweden is found here among other folk dances—and mixed with Norwegian and Danish, and sometimes also Icelandic and Finnish, dances (e.g., Hingtgen 2020). One of the most well-known Swedish dance forms outside of

Sweden is *hambo*. This dance is linked to nineteenth-century couple dances, such as the waltz, schottische, and polka, and became popular in Sweden around 1900. When I visited Washington, DC, in 2013, and participated in a country dance event, a hambo was danced in the middle of the evening. I was told that it was common practice that the only couple dance featured during a whole dance event was a hambo. The dance can be seen as a modernized variation of polska, with the same basic promenade and whirling pattern, but with a fixed four plus four bar structure (Klein 1978, 49). Hambo music is similar to polska music, both in 3/4 meter, but hambo music has a stronger accent on the first beat in the bar. The dancers are close, even closer than in a waltz, in the rotating whirling motif. While doing the promenade, the dancers are beside each other, often holding hands and turning under their arms, but sometimes just keeping contact by looking at each other (Nilsson 2017, 83).

In in the twenty-first century, it seems clear that polska, not least in the form of hambo, has dispersed again and may be characterized as a Swedish gift to the world dance scene. A last example of this is that the Swedish polska is also danced in the context of *Bal folk* events in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy. Bal folk is remarkably different from the conventional European folk dance culture. Thus, at a Bal folk event, there are usually several music groups that accompany the dance in an important part of the evening, and it is the musicians who decide what the dance repertoire of an event will be. Typically, the repertoire and sometimes even music groups, are not known in advance, and the events are constructed ad hoc (Benjamin 2006).

## Post-Urban Dancing—Dancing Communities and Community Dancing

Lindy Hoppers and polska dancers are two contemporary examples of *dancing communities* as defined by Hamera. People travel far, sometimes really far, across oceans and continents to take part in events and dances. Rather than dancing with their workmates or other persons they meet daily, they seek other devoted dancers with whom to dance. This reality stands in contrast to the historical fact that both Lindy Hop and polska once were practiced as *community dancing*. In other words, they were danced at local dance events visited mainly by local people who wanted to party. This shift from community dancing to dancing communities is a process that went on during the twentieth century, and that accelerated in the second half of the century. Obviously, community dancing still takes place among family and friends at school dances or at parties in connection with different kinds of occasions. Perhaps the best example of a contemporary institution in which community dancing takes place is the nightclub and/or discotheque. This is a globalized concept of a place in which you can dance until dawn—usually to a kind of music which is internationally known as EDM (electronic dance music)—and chill out with a drink. Nightclub goers are usually not seeking other devoted dancers to dance with, but rather they want to go dancing with their friends or meet new people.

Even if the roots of the dances are different, polska and Lindy Hop today represent dancing communities with certain similarities. Both are couple dances from the past that have departed from geographically bounded community dancing to become popular historical dances at the center of large transnational dancing communities. Another similarity between polska and Lindy Hop concerns the temporal dimension, since both dance forms were on their way to disappearing and dying out but were saved by enthusiasts (Helmerson 2012; Manning and Millman 2007). The period 1970–1980 seems to be important in both the polska and Lindy Hop cases. It was during these years that dance enthusiasts researched, learned, and continued to dance polska (from the 1970s) and Lindy Hop (from the 1980s). In both cases it was young educated Swedes from towns and cities who became interested in a rural dance, in the case of the polska, and an African-American urban dance, in the case of the Lindy.

It seems that globalization preserves dance forms that would probably have died out when a community eventually started to dance “new” different dances. Thus, the dissemination of dances from



the local to the global, the formation of dancing communities, and the interest from enthusiasts have prevented old dance forms from dying out. In the cases of polska and Lindy Hop, the interest from a new generation of dancers has provided the dancing communities with an enthusiastic revival energy. In our post-urban times, the dancing communities even encourage some dancers to travel in order to attend dance events abroad, which helps dances travel through time and space. This relates to Arjun Appadurai's (2010) thoughts about circulation of forms and forms of circulation. Forms are, in this case, polska and Lindy Hop, which are moved from one place to another. Lindy Hop has landed in many new locations in the world, with a main hub in Herräng instead of Harlem, while polska circulates in the global world, although its main location is still in Sweden. In the words of Appadurai, localities are not fixed sites, but they "are temporary negotiations between various globally circulating forms. They are not subordinate instances of the global, but in fact the main evidence of its reality" (2010, 9–12).

Maybe Lindy Hop is already a Swedish dance in the sense that it is practiced in Sweden and the international hub for Lindy Hoppers is in Sweden, although the roots of the dance form are elsewhere. But in the mind of the dancers, it will probably continue to be a dance from New York City for a long time. The polska, on the other hand, is strongly rooted in the Swedish soil in the mind of the dancers, although it may or may not have roots in Poland. Dancers from all over the world come to the Polska Dance Award, which is held in the heart of Sweden every year, and compete for a bronze or silver badge. This way of dancing is a kind of "dancing museum," during which the dancers try to avoid changes in the dances instead of using it as a social dance (Nilsson 2016).

In opposition to the concept of a dancing museum, we find polska dancing at *spelmansstämmor* (folk music festivals) in Sweden; at Bal folk events in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands; and similar dancing communities in other countries. I have visited such events in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia, Lithuania, Hungary, and Sweden. At these events the focus is on social dance for fun rather than on dancing in a correct way. Bal folk events are participatory to a high degree, but are not intended for presentations of folk dance in the form of stage shows or other. Here, "participatory" means all people present dancing with maximum movements, or kinetic participation, as opposed to presentational dancing, in which the purpose is to perform dance for an audience (Turino 2008, 90–91). In folk dance presentations, some sort of folk costumes or stage dresses are always used. At Bal folk events, there is no formal dress code and sparse use of folk costumes, even if some standard way of dressing seems to establish itself here. Thus, in many ways, Bal Folk resembles a community that dances, but it is in fact an activity for enthusiasts, for people with a particular interest in special dance forms, and should therefore primarily be regarded as a dancing community. Lindy Hopping can also be both presentational and participatory. Lindy Hop dancers choreograph stage shows, and there are also dance events where you dance just for fun. At Herräng there is presentational dancing as well as dancing the whole night with maximum movements, kinetic participation, and chilling out with a drink.

Lindy Hop and polska are examples of prefix-dance communities in the post-urban world. Unlike polska, Lindy Hop is usually not labeled as folk dance although it was in fact characterized as "a true national folk dance" in the United States in an issue of *Life Magazine* in 1943 ("The Lindy Hop" 1943, 95). On a global scale, there are probably many more Lindy Hop communities than polska communities. There are, however, many dancing communities on a global scale with a prefix such as Scandia dance, Scandinavian dances, or Swedish Folk Dance, in which the polska or the hambo is regularly danced. Folk dance communities in general often have a country or province prefix that tells something about the diasporic background of the dances.

As stated in this article, polska and Lindy Hop have disseminated geographically from place to place, but also in time. Dissemination in time, from the eighteenth century and from the 1940s to the post-urban twenty-first century, is a kind of displacement of dances from one historical context to another. The polska and the Lindy Hop have come into Sweden from Northern Europe and

the United States and out into the global context in the course of four centuries. Both dance forms can be described as old historical dances, and different acts of revival have saved polska and Lindy Hop from disappearing completely. Today the dances are alive in a new historical context and dancers continue to travel and dance while growing older.

## Notes

1. “Post”-urbanity points simultaneously to new spatial projections of specific and recent sociological developments and to the continuing presence of the previous social order, to emergent social orders and their related identities and practices, and to a meaningful continuity of older ones (“Post’-Urbanity” 2012).

2. For an example of social Swedish polska dancing in Switzerland, see Polska från Vänersnäs. Smörgåsklickarna at the Rütli Folk Festival (2011).

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