

## A Jewish Dancer, Krishnamurti and India

By Jan Poddebsky

Gertrud Bodenwieser, a Jewish Viennese émigré to Australia in 1939, was a pioneer of *Ausdruckstanz*, or Expressionist dance. She choreographed between 1944 and 1957 five works that referenced Indian themes, and used movements, postures and costumes inspired by Indian style. In 1952, she also led a group of Australian dancers to Bombay (now Mumbai), Delhi and Calcutta (now Kolkata). Perhaps the most successful and well known of her Indian dances was a work called *O World*, based on a lengthy poem written by Jiddu Krishnamurti.

Krishnamurti visited Vienna in 1923 for the European Convention of the Theosophical Society. Bodenwieser, then 33, was at the height of her European career, but it is not known if she actually met Krishnamurti or heard him. Her association with Indian dance and concepts, however, forms an interesting strand in the history of modern dance in Europe and Australia, just as the story of Krishnamurti and Theosophy is an important strand in the connection between Australia and India. Bodenwieser's choreography introduces the connection between a Jewish artist and Indian culture into which is woven Theosophy, Krishnamurti and an encounter between West and East.

Born Gertrud Bondi in 1890 in Vienna, still the political capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and one of the cultural capitals of Europe, Bodenwieser (a stage name she later took) was raised in an haute-bourgeois assimilated Jewish family and privately educated by governesses in music, French and German literature. Goethe and Schiller were her favorite authors. During the nearly four decades she was in Vienna, she lived through some of the major catastrophes of the twentieth century: the Great Depression, the collapse and dismemberment of the Empire after World War I, the economic and political turmoils of interwar Vienna, and in 1938 the *Anschluss* (annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany), after which, as a Jew, she was forced to resign her post as the first Professor of Choreography and Stage Department at the Vienna State Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, and flee her homeland.<sup>1</sup> Her home was taken over by the Nazis and Aryanized.<sup>2</sup> After a gruelling tour in South America that enabled her escape, she migrated to Australia where she lived and worked for the next 20 years until her death in 1959.

While the turmoil in Europe altered the political and social fabric in which Bodenwieser lived, her cultural world also experienced profound changes. The creative forces of modernism – including the Avant-garde, Cubist, Futurist, Surrealist and Dadaist movements – challenged traditional expressions in all the arts, including dance. Once an important center for classical ballet, Vienna also became a hub for modern dance, the venue for a stream of pioneers who challenged classical dance, which seemed exhausted and incapable of expressing the realities of the times. The modern dance pioneers were predominantly women. Americans Loie Fuller, Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Rudolf Laban brought Modern Dance to Vienna. They were part of Bodenwieser's dance education. In 1907, St. Denis brought to Vienna an Orientalist repertoire that sprang from the Theosophical influence of her mother who had been



Gertrud Bodenwieser as Wailing Woman in her 1945 choreography of *O World*, based on *The Search*, written by J. Krishnamurti in 1927. Courtesy of Barbara Cuckson.

inspired by Indian dance she saw at international exhibitions and from studying Hindu and Buddhist art and philosophy. St Denis choreographed and performed *Radha*, *The Cobra* and *The Incense*, and brought *The Nautch* and *The Yogi* to Vienna.<sup>3</sup> Afterward, Rabindranath Tagore invited St. Denis to teach at his Visva Bharati University. Pavlova's protégé, Uday Shankar, also performed in Vienna.

Although there is no evidence that Bodenwieser saw the Balinese dancers who so excited Antonin Artaud in August 1931 at the Colonial Exhibition in Paris, she did see Indian dance and music in Vienna. Hanne Exiner, a Bodenwieser company member and émigré to Australia, mentions how greatly Bodenwieser was impressed with "the first presentation of Indian dance in Vienna by Uda Khan [sic] and his group of dancers and instrumentalists."<sup>4</sup> In 1952 when she was about to tour India with a group from Australia, Bodenwieser wrote: "When we knew that our tour of India was a certainty, we felt that one of our dreams had come true. Ever since time immemorial, India was the country that excited every artist's imagination." She consulted with the head of the India League of N.S.W. as part of her preparation. She "read a lot about India, its history, religion, philosophy, customs and manners" and of course, "as dancers, we were most interested in Indian dancing."<sup>5</sup>

Bodenwieser had classical ballet training, but she turned to Expressionism – then, the cultural force in painting, literature, theater and dance – as the means through which she would explore the capacity of movement to address the issues of the times: "I endeavour to bring the art of dancing into the closest connection with the current of great ideas of our epoch, Expressionism, to which I belong." Exiner classified Bodenwieser's body of work into five distinct but connected genres: dance drama, dance poetry, satire, abstractionism and ethnic. Her famous work, *The Demon Machine*, explores the influence of increasing mechanization on human life, and her works *Pilgrimage of Truth* and *The Mask of Lucifer* address the catastrophes of the era and the role of people in those dramas.<sup>6</sup> Her dance dramas are fundamentally about ethics and voyages of the soul. Bodenwieser was internationally known in the interwar period, and one of her two dance groups toured all over Europe. During this period, she won *The Grand Prix* in 1931 at the *Reunione Internazionale Della Danza* in Florence and a bronze medal a year later for her choreography at the *Concours Internationale de la Danse* in Paris. Bodenwieser attracted international students. She had many Jewish students in Vienna who also fled, and in so doing, carried Expressionist dance to other countries, including India.<sup>7</sup> Following the Anschluss, in 1939 dancer-choreographer Hilda Holger found refuge in Mumbai where she lived and taught dance for a decade to students from all backgrounds.

Writings by early modern dancers are saturated with visions of a spiritual mission for dance. These modern dancers turned to various sources of inspiration for their explorations of movement, including classical Greek dance and aesthetics and Oriental or Eastern dance. World-famous Anna Pavlova was inspired by Indian dance after seeing frescoes in the Ajanta caves in the Aurangabad district of India's Maharashtra state. She performed *Hindu Wedding* and danced *Radha* to Uday Shankar's *Krishna* in one of two works he choreographed for a 1923 Covent Garden opening. Pavlova encouraged Shankar to return to his cultural roots in Indian dance instead of pursuing a career in painting. Pavlova also inspired Theosophist Rukmini Devi in 1928 when they shared a boat trip to Australia. Married to Krishnamurti's British Theosophist teacher, Dr. George S. Arundale, Devi commenced classical dance at the time, but under Pavlova's influence, turned to Indian dance.<sup>8</sup> This path was set by her witnessing in 1933 a performance of *sadhir*, a South Indian dance form. In 1936, she and her husband established Kalakshetra, an academy of dance and music in Adyar near Chennai (then Madras) to restore South Indian dance, which was considered debased under British colonial rule. *Bharata Natyam* is now recognized as one of the Indian classical dance forms.

Bodenwieser customarily responded to ethnic dance forms in the multi-cultural empire of her youth and in her extensive travels through the UK, America and Japan. She did not attempt to duplicate choreography but allowed the inspiration from these sources to be expressed in the choice of music, costume, atmosphere and theme engendered by local

movement and gesture. When she choreographed five Indian works in Australia, she had no intention of mimicking Indian dance, which she understood was a protracted discipline.

Some idea of the complexity that has to be mastered by a Kathakali dancer can be understood from a description of initial training. Kathakali is one of 11 forms of Indian classical dance recognized by the Indian Ministry of Culture. Training begins around the age of 10 or 12. The traditionally-male trainee dancer rises at 2 a.m. and spends two hours practicing eye movements in near darkness. He finishes after 9 p.m. The dancer has to master a vocabulary of 24 basic *mudras*, or hand gestures, that can be performed in eight different ways; a further nine *navarasas*, or facial expressions; rhythmic patterns; choreography and movement patterns, including preliminary dances such as *totayam* and *parappatu*; specific focus of the eyes; and *Kalagam* and *iratti*, which are dance patterns punctuating the delivery of the text.<sup>9</sup> He submits to painful massages to make the body supple and responsive. He also learns the vocal accompaniments to more than 100 ballets that are traditionally performed all night. He also studies the scriptures whose stories he is learning to dance. A Kathakali dancer is not considered to be a mature artist until his forties.

In addition to her exposure to Indian dance in Vienna, what brought Bodenwieser closer to Indian culture and philosophy in her newly-adopted Australia was Krishnamurti. This is not without some irony. Shortly after Australia became a federation, the government passed the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, which led to the limitation of non-European migration and became known as the White Australia Policy – a policy that was dismantled in stages only after World War II. While familiar with Indian philosophy through Theosophy, Australia did not accept Indians. When dancer Louise Lightfoot sponsored Shivaram's 1947 tour to Australia, he was refused accommodation in Adelaide on account of his nationality.<sup>10</sup>

Indians were not welcome until after India gained independence from Great Britain in 1947 and Australia joined the Colombo Plan in 1950 when students were sponsored to study at Tertiary institutions in Australia. Despite these overt and normative racial prejudices, Bodenwieser would have found in Australia an excitement surrounding Krishnamurti's many visits.

Although it had been established 20 years earlier, from 1895 Theosophy became a significant force in Australia. Constructed in America by Russian émigré Helena Blavatsky from Buddhist, Hindu and Tibetan religious ideas, the metaphysical cosmology of Theosophy was presented as the new universal religion for the New Age. It promised to bring Eastern religions and Western science together. British Annie Besant, who was a fervent supporter of home rule for India, was introduced to Theosophy at Blavatsky's smoke-filled London home decorated with Indian deities, as was the young Mohandas Gandhi. Notable Australians influenced by Theosophy included Alfred Deakin, leader of Australia's movement for federation and the country's Prime Minister in 1903, 1905-08 and 1909-10, who until 1896 was an active Theosophist. Australian soprano Dorothy Helmrich, who founded the country's Council for the Encouragement of the Arts (CEMA) and was a friend to Bodenwieser, encountered Theosophy in England. World War I historian C.E.W. Bean, creator of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, was a prominent Theosophist.<sup>11</sup> Noted photographer Axel Poignant, in 1928 penniless and faint from hunger at a Theosophy meeting, "was rescued" by followers and groomed by Australian leader Arundale "as a theosophical acolyte."<sup>12</sup> There was actor Peter Finch, whose mother took him as a young man to the Theosophy Society headquarters in Adyar. Opera singer Joan Hammond attended as a girl the Garden School in Mosman run by two women from the Theosophical Society's Order of the Star in the East. Americans Walter Burley Griffin and his wife, Marion, both of whom designed Australia's national capital of Canberra, were Theosophists. And architect Louise Lightfoot, who assisted the Griffins when they designed and lived in the Sydney suburb of Castlecrag, which attracted many Theosophists, was a follower as well.

In 1931, Lightfoot formed the First Australian Ballet with Jewish-Ukraine émigré Mischa Burlikov, her dancing and teaching partner.<sup>13</sup> Lightfoot was so inspired by Indian dance that she moved to Kerala in 1938 to study Kathakali dance, and nine years later, invited Ananda

Shivaram, who was the first Kathakali dancer to perform in Australia. On his second tour to Australia in September 1949, Shivaram's *Indra Vijayan* had its world premiere. Lightfoot's entrepreneurial efforts won her the title of "Australian mother of Kathakali." She knew of Bodenwieser's work and visited her studio to observe her classes and rehearsals, just as she had visited studios in Europe with Burlikov.

While Theosophy was important for many Australians, Australia was also a highly significant center for Theosophy. By 1920, the Theosophy Society had more than 2,000 members, many of whom were well-known and well educated.

Charles Webster Leadbeater, the British Theosophist who "discovered" the young Jiddu Krishnamurti, viewed Australia as an outpost for a new "sub-race" of immigrants who left behind the "Old World" of Europe. Nonetheless, he saw Australia as a springboard for a new, vital spirituality. He left his companion Annie Besant in Adyar, India, and in 1914 moved to Sydney. Leadbeater resided at The Manor – a 55-room mansion purchased in 1925 for £14,000 by the Order of the Star – in Mosman, a desirable Sydney suburb from where he led the Theosophical community until his return in 1929 to Adyar. It was Leadbeater who instituted the Order of the Star and invited Charles Arundale to take up the position of General Secretary of the Theosophical Society. It was on the 1928 boat journey from England to Australia that Rukmini Devi Arundale had that fateful meeting with Anna Pavlova, and ultimately went on to chair the Theosophical radio station 2GB, edit an Australia-India *Bulletin* among other publications, and was to be the vehicle for the proposed World-Mother Project. The Star Amphitheatre, a Grecian-Doric structure with a seating capacity of 2,000 and another 1,000 standing, was built on Sydney's Balmoral Beach in 1923-24 in anticipation of the coming of the World Teacher predicted by the Order of the Star. That anointed Teacher was Krishnamurti. A newspaper article with the headline announcing "Krishnamurti Coming to Australia" commented that he was "exercising a vital and growing influence on modern spiritual and cultural life."<sup>14</sup>

In 1921, Hitler announced that the *Führerprinzip* (leader principle) would be the law of the Nazi Party, which vested total power in the führer whose authority was complete and all-embracing. Two years later, a disaffected Krishnamurti abandoned authority, especially religious authority and its power over people. He disbanded the Order of the Star, which had 40,000 followers, and completely rejected the role of World Teacher for which he had been chosen and groomed by Besant. However, he continued to travel and speak about philosophical matters. He made six visits to Australia between 1922 and 1970, but eschewed public speaking between 1940 and 1944. When visiting Sydney, he lived in Mosman. He wrote his poem, *The Search*, in 1927, the year that marked the beginning of the end of democracy in Austria.

That year in Bodenwieser's Vienna, workers angered by the court's leniency over the murder of a father and son by the Fascist paramilitary group the Heimwehr, marched July 15 on the Palace of Justice. The Palace was razed, and 75 workers were gunned down by police fire. In a few short years the socialist government of Vienna was brought down in a brief but bloody civil war and the Social Democrats were outlawed. After the May 1934 constitution, Austria was run along corporate state lines with Engelbert Dolfuss its dictator. He was assassinated within two months by Austrian Nazis.

Bodenwieser's choreography at this time reflected her concerns with the conflicts of the era. Her ballet *Pilgrimage of Truth* was made in 1930 "under the shadow of Nazism." Based on a 15th-century medieval guild play, *Pilgrimage of Truth* is an allegory in which "Treuthe appereth to wander through the worlde for to finden here a dwelling place" and is everywhere rejected except by little children.<sup>15</sup> In her 1937 *Masks of Lucifer*, her characters are allegorical personifications of Truth, Intrigue, Hate, and Terror, embodying the ominous time. Two year later from her safe haven in Australia, Bodenwieser continued to explore themes that sprang from this era. *Cain and Abel* in 1940 exposed the tragedy of brother fighting against brother and the guilt that follows the crime, and *Errand into the Maze* in which

humanity has lost its way.<sup>16</sup> The motif of being lost and searching form a consistent thread in Bodenwieser's dance dramas.

Krishnamurti's poem *The Search* delves into humanity's search for happiness. He addresses the reader as "O World," making him the universal everyman. Approximately 850 lines in length, the poem is written in the first person, possibly describing Krishnamurti's own spiritual journey. The poem is divided into five sections of varying length. The overall theme is the mistaken and doomed search for happiness in transient things, and the revelation that the way to eternal happiness is truth. Krishnamurti begins with negation: what is not happiness and where it is not. He uses the technique of repetition and lists of roles, statuses and situations that build accumulatively into failure.<sup>17</sup> For example, there are nine lines beginning with "The Happiness that is..." near the end of section 1. Similar to Bodenwieser, his characters are Truth, Happiness, and Spirituality. The narrator speaks from intimate knowledge of what it is to be human. He has tasted all the transient pleasures and worshipped all the disappointing gods of humanity, and has done so over many lifetimes. Having experienced all these things, his search comes to an end when he renounces them and discovers eternal happiness. This discovery comes early in the poem, in line 61, where he defines happiness by describing it. He further reveals the way "out of turmoil and grief." The solution, he writes, is not the way of politics or organized institutions, but rather, within oneself. The way the reader finds happiness is by "leaving his many burdens," by "throwing aside all transient things," renouncing like the *sannyasi*, and by annihilating the self. The obstacles to happiness are narrowness, prejudice, and the quest to be happy. One must free oneself of all these "narrownesses" and the "dark shadow" and "agitated lake" of prejudice. Having found the way, the narrator invites the reader to accompany him to taste the happiness of liberation he has discovered. This eternal happiness is found in spirituality, which is the incorruptibility of the self, the harmony between reason and love.

Bodenwieser recognized the power of Krishnamurti's poem. It spoke directly to her own Nazi-era experience. She knew all too well that honor and respect could turn to intentional and calculated humiliation. She knew a cultured haute bourgeois life as well as a materially impoverished one. She knew stability and forced flight. She knew fame and its loss. She knew hatred, suspicion, and terror – and she knew terrible grief.<sup>18</sup> What held her through these emotional extremes was dance, which she understood, as she told her students, as truth, simplicity and spirituality. Bodenwieser's choreography in her works *Pilgrimage of Truth*, *Masks of Lucifer, Cain and Abel* and *Errand into the Maze* reflected her continued interest in how these issues affected humanity.<sup>19</sup> Thus the choice of *The Search* as inspiration for a major dance drama was entirely consistent with her interests and experience. Bodenwieser choreographed *O World* after the end of World War II in 1945, when the world was satiated with killing – the full horror of which was yet to be revealed. She danced the role of the Wailing Woman in the work. At age 55, it was to be her swan song performance. She chose to present the narrative in an Indian aesthetic. While *The Search* deals with universal themes, its source is recognizably Indian. The Indian character of *O World* was also consistent with Bodenwieser's wide interests. In addition to Krishnamurti's identity as an Indian man, *The Search* employs concepts from Indian religious thought, including the emphasis on renunciation such as the *sannyasi* rather than acquisition, "throwing aside all transient things," annihilating the self, the recognition that all activity is a search for happiness, the reference to birth and rebirth, the use of "wheel of pain and pleasure," and the idea that the source of happiness and spirituality is within the individual. Thus, when Bodenwieser came to choreograph *O World*, it is not surprising that she would use an Indian setting. We know from program notes that the narrative she uses is constructed from the poem's ideas and motifs of disillusionment, understanding and renunciation. The setting is Indian splendour and wealth; the narrative is a warrior prince, "rejoicing in victory, becom[ing] satiated with post-war licentiousness and renounce[ing] his crown to join the struggling masses on whom his splendour depends."<sup>20</sup> The costumes of Indian fabrics, draping and ornamentation were made by Madame Tscinarowa and designed and hand-painted by Eileen Kramer, one of the dancers.

The costumes and postures and gestures used in the choreography were inspired by intense study of books and photographs of Indian temples and sculpture. However even though the appearance of *O World* was Indian, Bodenwieser did not venture to use Indian music. Instead, the music used was by Russian composer Alexander Tcherepnin, with the exception of Scene 5, for which music composed by Kurt Hertweg was used.<sup>21</sup> Bodenwieser also chose for the ballet to have an accompanying narrator, using Krishnamurti's own words from *The Search*.

*O World* was constructed in the following seven scenes. The spoken extracts from *The Search* are included.

"Introduction

Thou art seeking for happiness everywhere  
I have been a wanderer long in this world of transient things  
All things have I tasted in search of truth.  
In the battles of Victory I fought and in the battles of Defeat.

Scene 1: The return of the victorious prince.

Scene 2: Vision of the return of the defeated man.

Scene 3: Bacchantic feast.

Scene 4: Aftermath of the feast.

Such is their love, that destroys,  
This love so strong in its desires,  
So unrestrained in its fulfilment,  
Fades as the leaf.

Scene 5: The prince in his accumulation of wealth.

Scene 6: Hard toil and exhaustion of the slaves.

Scene 7: The great renunciation.

I saw the contentment of wealth be stagnating  
I saw the oppressed and enslaved be suffering  
Throw aside O World, thy vanity and follow me,  
For I know the way up the mountain

And I know the way out of turmoil and grief

That is the destruction of Self

That is the fool of Wisdom

THAT CREATES HAPPINESS IN OTHERS.

SUCH HAPPINESS THOU HAST NEVER TASTED

O WORLD"<sup>22</sup>

Shona Dunlop MacTavish, who performed the role of the Glorious Prince, wrote: "I experienced the whole gamut of human emotions... the glory of victory, the ecstasy of love, the disillusionment to follow, scenes of great wealth, and visions of great poverty. Truly a testing part which always left me emotionally wrung out."<sup>23</sup>

A review of the premiere at the New South Wales Conservatorium of Music in Sydney on June 14, 1945, lauded Bodenwieser for her courage in tackling such a big theme, and lauded modern dance for having the capacity to express it:

"Modern Ballet has a keen exponent in Madame Bodenwieser, who understands its significance and interprets it with forceful effect. In choosing to open the performance with 'O World'...she put her ballet to a severe test. They came through with distinction. The composition of groups and individual dances into a harmoniously orchestrated whole was often clever...  
Bodenwieser has given full play to the dramatic possibilities in her choreography..."

We feel that the Bodenwieser Ballet more than any yet seen in Australia, shows promise of contributing to our cultural heritage by interpreting the great events of the past, our present, and our future."<sup>24</sup>

A different reviewer criticized the use of Krishnamurti's text and launched a strong defense on the independence of dance as a mode of expression. He claimed that the use of text "invades the territory of dancing as an independent form of expression" and that the use of the spoken word in, "*O World* implies that the dancing itself cannot express all that is required."<sup>25</sup> As a pioneer of Expressionist dance, Bodenwieser might have felt vindicated by the reviewer's assertion of dance as an independent medium of expression, as it had been her early mission in Vienna to win that recognition. However, in Vienna she also pioneered the use of dance in plays and wrote convincingly about its possibilities. The reviewer seemed to be unaware of this aspect of her background. He also was ignorant of the unifying conjunction of dance, acting, music and the spoken word in Indian dance forms, which Europeans celebrated in the notion of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, which makes use of many art forms. This concept was co-opted into Modern Dance as a model for healing what was viewed as the psychic split attributed to modernity in Europe.

Despite the differences in their backgrounds, ages, culture and language, Bodenwieser and Krishnamurti shared many views. They recognize that there is work to be done and that it is difficult. This work is the effort of each individual who must be free of authority. Both recognize prejudice as one of the many obstacles in the way. Both place spirituality and freedom as the highest values and recognize renunciation as the way, although the Hindu resonance in Krishnamurti's view of renunciation suggests that his is more radical than that of Bodenwieser. Both associate spirituality with truth. Both use art to express the understandings gained through personal experience.

Krishnamurti repeatedly emphasized that truth emerged from choiceless observation of daily existence and activity. In the era of Freud and the discovery of the unconscious workings of the mind, Bodenwieser tapped into the embodied source of emotions and feelings suppressed by education and societal conditioning and used them in the creation of her powerful dance works. She viewed this as spiritual work. Meditation practitioner and dancer Lalitaraja (Joachim Chandler) draws direct parallels between the body sweeping technique used in Vipassana meditation and the focused attention to the body and its movements required in modern dance practice, which is based less on technique and more on the bodily contemplation.<sup>26</sup> This contemplation enables access to psychologically and socially embodied knowledge and has naturally developed the transition from dance to healing practice. Current scholarship on the experience of the audience while witnessing dance suggests that kinesthetic empathy enables viewers to feel within their own bodies something of the dancer's experience. Thus, the audience too is drawn into attention of the body. This finding is supported by the albeit contested physiology of mirror cells in the brain, associated with the discovered capacity of monkeys to mimic each other's behavior and extrapolated to human behavior.

Bodenwieser hoped that her first tour to India in 1952 would pave the way for a closer connection with Indian dance and culture. A newspaper article written prior to her departure stated that she "hoped that it would be the beginning of a regular interchange of cultural activities between Asia and Australia."<sup>27</sup> The tour lasted three months. Bodenwieser discovered that Indian dancers were experiencing the same struggles with tradition and modernity that she had fought in interwar Vienna.<sup>28</sup> This shared experience could have been the ground for fertile communication. Bodenwieser was honored with a private audience with Prime Minister Nehru. There was an invitation to return, but another tour did not happen. Instead, Bodenwieser got involved in a social experiment at an industrial estate on the semi-rural outskirts of Sydney where she taught immigrant and local children for the next five years until her death. However, her interest in Indian culture inspired two of her dancers to return. Dance troupe members Eileen Kramer returned for an extended stay after the 1952 tour and

Vija Vetra visited India for a study and concert tour, eventually joining the Ram Gopal company in Europe. In June 1967, another Bodenwieser dancer, Anita Ardell, premiered in Sydney her work *Indo-Jazz Suite* that was a fusion of Western jazz and Indian music and movement styles.

Bodenwieser wrote only one book, *The New Dance*, in the last year of her life. A significant archive including photos, programs, musical scores and newspaper reviews has been collected and is held at the National Library of Australia. However, it is mostly in Bodenwieser's choreography that we find her ideas and feelings expressed in embodied movement rather than in textual elucidation. From the letter she wrote prior her 1952 trip to India, we know she was full of anticipation. She chose to choreograph five works based on Indian-themed aesthetics and postures, or movement. These works are *O World*, *Dance to Krishna*, *Temple Dance*, *Wheel of Life* and *Indian Love Song*. This number of choreographies attests to the importance Bodenwieser placed on Indian themes and aesthetics. These works enact and perform ideas or concepts from Indian thought so that viewers may recognize them in a visceral, embodied fashion rather than in an intellectual way. *O World* focuses on renunciation. *Wheel of Life* deals with the theme of impermanence. Through her substantial reputation, Bodenwieser was able to expose Australian audiences to Indian aesthetics, movement and ideas such as reincarnation and renunciation. In this way, she contributed to the developing interest and acceptance in Australia of Indian culture.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Bodenwieser was appointed to this position in 1926.

<sup>2</sup> Immediately after the *Anschluss*, the 1936 Nuremberg Race Laws were applied in Austria. Anyone with three or four Jewish grandparents was classified as a Jew. After 1937 and 1938, Jewish property and businesses were registered and passed out of Jewish into non-Jewish ownership. This process was called Aryanization.

<sup>3</sup> St. Denis first performed *Radha* in 1906 to original music in Delibes' opera, *Lakmé*.

<sup>4</sup> Hanne Exiner in *Kinesis* (9, October 1990), *Papers of Gertrud Bodenwieser(1890-1959)*, National Library of Australia, MS9263. In all probability Exiner was referring to the visit of Uday Shankar rather than Uda Khan whom I have been unable to trace. Uday Shankar is the older brother of Ravi Shankar, world famous sitar player. According to his biographer, Mohan Khokar, Uday Shankar was publicised in the West as Uday Shan-Kar for over 20 years. See Mohan Khokar, *His Dance, His Life A Portrait of* (New Delhi: Himalayan Books, 1983), p. 56. Exiner was also a Jewish Viennese émigré and a student of Bodenwieser for fourteen years. She escaped Vienna by participating in Bodenwieser's South American tour.

<sup>5</sup> Gertrud Bodenwieser, *Papers of...*

<sup>6</sup> Uday Shankar also used the theme of the effect of the machine on human life in his work, *Labour and Machinery* which was choreographed in the 1940s at the music and dance centre he established in Almora. See Mohan Khokar, *His Dance, His Life A Portrait of* (New Delhi: Himalayan Books, 1983), p. 101.

<sup>7</sup> Gertrude Kraus, called the "first lady" of modern Expressionist dance in Israel, and the Ornstein mother and her daughters went to then-mandated Palestine and pioneered Bodenwieser's style there. Dancer-choreographer Yardena Cohen studied with Bodenwieser for two years and taught, performed and choreographed for 70 years in her native Israel.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Arundale succeeded Dr. Annie Besant as President of the Theosophical Society.

<sup>9</sup> Phillip B. Zarrilli. "Performance in the Kerala Context." *Kathakali Where Gods and Demons Come Out to Play* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 73, <http://www.eBookstore.tandof.co.uk>.

<sup>10</sup> The article titled, "Refused Room, Slept in Theatre" (*The Sun*, September 16, 1947) p. 19, avoids the accurate term "race" and uses "nationality."

<sup>11</sup> Dorothy Helmrich befriended Bodenwieser and engaged her group in countless tours around Australia under the auspices of CEMA, which later became the Arts Council.

<sup>12</sup> Roslyn Poignant, "Picture Story: Axel Poignant, Photographer, The Formative Years, 1929-1942," [crossart.com.au/images/stories/.../Poignant/poignant\\_ap\\_formative\\_years\\_2011.pdf](http://crossart.com.au/images/stories/.../Poignant/poignant_ap_formative_years_2011.pdf), June 13, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Phillip B. Zarrilli. "Performance in the Kerala Context," pp. 68, 70, <http://www.eBookstore.tandof.co.uk>.

<sup>14</sup> *Burra Record*, 21 June 1933, p.3,

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/npd/del/printArticleJpg/36051098/3?print=y>, Nov. 5, 2015.

<sup>15</sup> From program notes for performances of *The Pilgrimage of Truth* at the Conservatorium of Sydney on July 15, 16 and 17, 1943.

<sup>16</sup> *Papers of Gertrud Bodenwieser* MS 9263, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

<sup>17</sup> The technique of defining by negation is reminiscent of *Song of the Soul* by Adi Shankaracharya from the mid- to late-8th century C.E.

<sup>18</sup> Bodenwieser's brother-in-law Robert Hecht was imprisoned by the Nazis and died in 1938 at Dachau. An urn with his ashes was delivered to his widow Franciska, Bodenwieser's older sister. Bodenwieser, who had fled to France with her husband, Viennese theatre director Friedrich Rosenthal, left in 1939 to tour South America with members of her dance troupe. She never again saw Rosenthal, who was captured in France by the Gestapo and sent to Auschwitz where he perished in 1942. Bodenwieser's inability to discover the fate of her husband frustrated her efforts to become naturalized in Australia until 1950, when Rosenthal was declared dead by a Viennese court, according to the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 13, 1993.

<sup>19</sup> *Papers of Gertrud Bodenwieser* MS 9263, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

<sup>20</sup> *Papers of Gertrud Bodenwieser* MS 9263, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

<sup>21</sup> German-born and Jewish, after 1933 Hertweg was permitted to conduct and play piano only for the Jüdischer Kulturbund, an institution to exclude and isolate Jews from the rest of the German population. He migrated to Britain in 1936 and in 1938 accompanied the dancer Anny Fligg to Australia. He was subsequently interned in Tatura from 1942 to 1943. See Albrecht Dümmling, *The Vanished Musicians Jewish Refugees in Australi*. <http://opec.library.usyd.edu.au/record=bs291286~s4>, Chapter 5, p. 88. A photocopy of his score for Scene 4 of *O World* is located in the *Papers of Gertrud Bodenwieser*, MS9263, series 4, folio 3.

<sup>22</sup> From notes on the back of a photo of Gertrud Bodenwieser as the Wailing Woman from *O World*. In the Papers of Gertrud Bodenwieser at the National Library of Australia. The notes are written in the hand of Marie Cuckson, who assembled and donated the Bodenwieser Archive.

<sup>23</sup> Shona Dunlop MacTavish. *Ecstasy of Purpose*. (Dunedin: Shona Dunlop MacTavish, Les Humphrey and Assoc, 1987), p. 142. The title is taken from *The Search*.

<sup>24</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* (June 14, 1945), quoted in Shona Dunlop MacTavish. *Ecstasy*, p. 142.

<sup>25</sup> "Eastern Dance Drama Repeated," *Sydney Morning Herald* (October 22, 1945), p.5, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/17957228>, June 17, 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Lalitaraja, "Thinking, Reflecting and Contemplating With the Body" in Sarah Whatley, Natalie Garrett Brown and Kirsty Alexander, eds., (Axminster: Triarchy Press, 2015), p.42-3.

<sup>27</sup> Larry Boys, "Australia will ballet dance into the East," *Sunday Telegraph* (March 2, 1952), p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Uday Shankar himself encountered criticism from Indian traditionalists who thought he had been overly influenced by his time in England and Europe and needed a deeper immersion into his own, Indian traditions. See Mohan Khokar. *His Dance, His Life: A Portrait of Uday Shankar* (New Delhi: Himalayan Books, 1983), p. 78-9.