In the In-between
Embodying the Intercultural in Performance

Justine Shih Pearson

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Performance Studies
University of Sydney
2012
This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. This thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other institution.
Caught in a space between a body's habitual moves and something new, we perform strange and sometimes unexpected manoeuvres. Asked to walk in the shoes of another, to embody a new form of cultural performance, or to occupy the transit spaces of global mobility, the normally second nature way in which we perform our bodies gives way to more fluid, multiple, and confusing performances of self. These in-between moves—moments of being "out of place" or even "out of body"—are examined in this thesis as performances of interculturality.

Tracing developments in intercultural performance scholarship within the broader performance studies field, I argue for greater accounting of what it is, in embodied terms, to perform in the in-between. Patrice Pavis (1996) suggests that intercultural performance is most meaningful when it is conceived as intercorporeal work; but what kinds of intercorporealities (and intracorporealities) do performers experience in moments where they encounter their own possibility for cultural variation or change? I argue that scholarship in the field tends to implicitly conceive of the theatrical stage as the zone of cultural interaction, a construction which situates the corporealities of performers as representations of reified cultures. Rather than a recognisable genre of theatrical performance, I propose that "intercultural" and "performance" are discourses, or proposed frameworks for thinking about the world, which can usefully challenge assumptions contained within each other.

Organised in three parts, the thesis explores performance examples from locative art (Janet Cardiff) and tourism (Soundwalk), contemporary dance (Akram Khan, Ade Suharto), and everyday life (travel in the airport). The project draws on theory from a wide range of disciplines (including performance and dance studies, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, human geography, and cultural and postcolonial studies) to argue for a rethinking of the embodiment of in-betweenness as a kind of intercultural performing, and for this to be thought via fundamental relations to being a body in space and time.
Acknowledgements

My first thanks go to my supervisors, Amanda Card and Ian Maxwell, for their guidance and support on matters theoretical and practical. Also to the staff and postgraduates in the Department of Performance, particularly Paul Dwyer, Kath Bicknell, Miranda Heckenberg, Jodie McNeilly, Nicholas Hope, Robin Dixon, and Liza-Mare Syron, who have given me timely feedback and encouragement when needed. I thank too my teachers at New York University where parts of this inquiry began: Karen Shimakawa, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Mark Sussman, André Lepecki, Deborah Kapchan, and José Muñoz.

I must acknowledge my indebtedness to colleagues, friends, and family: namely, Ade Suharto for her collaborative spirit and generosity in opening our rehearsals to academic interrogation; Ingrid Voorendt for her last-minute “outside eye;” and Tim Sinclair for his steadfast care, equal love of words, and hot dinners when I came home from work late at night.

This research was funded by an Australian Postgraduate Award provided by the Commonwealth Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, with additional travel funds awarded by the James Kentley Memorial Scholarship and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences through the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme.
## Contents

**Openings**

### Part I  Learning to walk

- Ch 1  Body meets place in time  28
- Ch 2  Synchronicity, synchronisation, and synaesthesia  47
- Ch 3  Embodying an/other  72

### Part II  In-between moves

- Ch 4  Hybridity in motion  97
- Ch 5  Theories of movement: confusion  122
- Ch 6  Theories of movement: multiple body  149

### Part III  Mass transit, micro transition

- Ch 7  Towards a practical cosmopolitanism  184
- Ch 8  The airport as thirdspace  204
- Ch 9  Performing an othered-self  233

**Conclusions**  259

**Works cited**  272
As a child I suffered terrible motion sickness. The memory of being perhaps seven years old and curled up in the cargo area of a small amphibious plane leaving Fiji, or the many times I wrapped myself in a scratchy nylon aeroplane blanket as we flew across the Pacific, are burned into my soma. My nose wrinkles at the mere suggestion of powdered ginger (my mother’s all-natural solution). I don’t even want to mention boats.

My motion sickness would not have been such a memorable part of childhood if not for the fact that we travelled quite a lot. Growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area we would regularly fly to Australia to visit family. In the early years of this period non-stop trans-Pacific commercial flight did not yet exist, and it was a significantly long journey which involved stopping in Hawaii in either direction. We never actually visited Hawaii, but I remember the plastic seats in the gate lounge, the strong scent of flowers and above-standard fresh fruit plates we would get once we re-boarded. It must have been night time or early morning every time we stopped there on the way to Australia because the terminal
had a slightly hushed and insulated feel as people waited at the gate, as if there was no other world going on beyond its linked chairs.

I could of course be totally wrong in this memory of Hawaii; I viewed it through a haze of being forcibly woken to deplane for refuelling. On these flights I would make a bed on the floor between middle rows of seats and try to sleep all the way to Australia. It was loud and cold but any kind of sleeping was better than the stomach-churning, head-aching feelings of motion sickness. Actual turbulence was a relief; it was the going nowhere calm of cruising flight that did me in.

But I loved visiting Australia. We stayed with my grandparents and ate big meals of jiaoze, Chinese dumplings. It was usually winter (my summer school holidays) and the heater in the living room made an exotic clicking sound as the gas lit up (I was used to the electricity-consuming Silicon Valley). During the day I would have Chinese lessons with an aunt, or sit by my grandmother and wind wool as she knitted over Days of Our Lives. In this way Australia was both the place of soap opera families, the Hortons and the Bradys, and the place of bonzer Meadow Lea ads and Schweppes in glass bottles. The journey was in one movement both leaving and coming home: we carried Australian passports in which were clipped our green cards for the United States. Australia was (and is) the place I felt most American, even when I began to carry passports for both. Australia was also the place of my immediate Chinese family; it was where I went to be American and also, in a way, to be Chinese.

That is to say, in my experience Australia is a highly ambiguous kind of terrain. Its placial quality is a layering or coexistence of several seemingly distant places. That going home to Australia is in some way also folded into some sense of China or Chineseness is a product
of my diasporic relations and the serial migration that has occurred in the family over several generations. That I feel American in Australia is compounded and confounded by my feeling that while I could be Asian Australian, I am somehow not Asian American (or is it the other way around?). But further, I want to suggest that this confused set of associations made the space of “Australia,” for me, a kind of in-between space not unlike my “Hawaii.” They were both travel spaces, constructed out of my journeying through them. They were both of a kind of real-imagined order. Amidst the structures of national belonging they existed somewhere out of bounds or out of borders or out of place, in altogether more contingent and mobile domains.

FOR IN-BETWEENS

This is a thesis about intercultural performance, but it approaches its subjects—its “intercultural” and “performance”—in oblique ways. By doing so, I am attempting to think between what these two terms offer one another in their close proximity, what they might challenge in the other, or what difficulties or assumptions fall into their coupling. Rather than an assumed genre of performance, this project engages with what these areas of discourse, areas of practice, and frameworks for understanding the world could mean to one another, and how together they might shed light on the kinds of in-between spaces and experiences similar to those described above.

Given the profusion of cross-, inter-, and transcultural practices on which so much late twentieth century Western avant-garde performance was built, the academic discipline of performance studies, coeval in its development, has likewise involved intercultural performance as one of its key areas of scholarship. The study of cultural practice in relation to performance becomes only more important into the twenty-first century, as the pace
and reach of globalisation increases and as subjectivities are enacted in increasingly more complex ways.

The in-betweens encountered in this project are themselves multiple: "intercultural" and "performance" are not taken as cohesive categories. Rather, the study is structured to dwell in a space between theatrical “art” performance and performances of everyday life, between individual and social performances of cultural belonging, and between several areas of disciplinary thought. The project is designed to be fleet-footed in this respect (and walking is one of its central modalities). I believe this is one of the provocations put forward by the discipline of performance studies: Richard Schechner assertively states that the field, “does not value ‘purity’” (Schechner 2002, 19), even though, as Ian Maxwell points out, this very invocation of plurality contains an assumption of disciplinary orthodoxy (Maxwell 2006, 34). Writing this dissertation from the Department of Performance Studies at the University of Sydney, having also studied in the Department of Performance Studies at New York University, my disciplinary understanding is yet another negotiated in-between.

Common to both approaches is their interdisciplinarity and the unapologetic placing of theatrical and non-theatrical kinds of performance side by side. The notion that performance theory allows us to productively read between everyday and aesthetic practices—that we can, in fact, analyse these modes together—while drawing on contextualisations from a wide range of other disciplinary fields, is something this project maintains. Over its three main parts the dissertation explores touristic and fine arts productions of audio walks, hybrid forms of contemporary dance practice, and the mass choreographies of global airports. All three could be described as site-specific performance, but they are also mobile performances in which bodily, spatial and
kinaesthetic experience are key. These three case studies demonstrate a broad spectrum approach to performance; but also, within each case I examine modes of “performing” which fall between everyday and *extra-daily* bodly practices. Doing so is also a relation to the influence of performativity discourse on many disciplines in the humanities and social sciences over the last few decades.

In her development of the notion of gender performativity from John L. Austin's “performative utterance” and also John Searle’s work within a theory of speech acts, Judith Butler’s work in particular has been instrumental to thinking about the way in which social constructions such as gender, and by extension other forms of cultural identity, are produced through the reiterative power of discourse and through a “stylized repetition of acts” (Butler 1988, 519).

Performativity points to the cultural constructivism involved in bodily performance—how history and indeed ideology become constituted in bodily practices—and in this vein, whether in relation to theatrical or everyday performance, this dissertation is concerned with understanding performances of interculturality or interstitchiality, more than with staged performance-events that are intercultural (performance verbs rather than performance nouns, performance processes rather than performance products). In this sense, I come close to Judith Butler’s famous assessment of bodily performativity as

---

1 I use the term *extra-daily* here in line with Phillip Zarrilli (2004), who in turn has borrowed it from Eugenio Barba (see Watson 1995), to refer to non-ordinary, voluntary modes of experience such as theatrical practice and performance.

2 Austin defined a performative as a sentence or utterance which in “the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action” (Austin [1962] 2003, 6). In other words, a performative is a speech act which in saying something does something, as in “I bet” (a contractual performative) or “I declare war” (a declaratory performative).
“doing” one’s body (Butler 1988). “Performing” in this thesis is a nexus of practising/doing/being one's body.

This distinction is an important one: one of the problematics prompting this project is my feeling that intercultural performance tends to implicitly conceive of the stage as the zone of cultural interaction. This is in a sense the notion of Peter Brook’s “empty space” (1968) or “reference zero” (Brook in Schechner et al. 1986); and has been critiqued by scholars arguing that intercultural performance has been largely a Western construct, the domain of the Western director and audience. On this stage “other” performance traditions are employed to demonstrate the radical revisioning of Western theatre by the Western director, and/or are displayed for “specular consumption” by the Western audience (Lo and Gilbert 2002, 48; see also Carlson 1996; Barucha 2000; Pavis 1996). We need only look to the international performing arts festival circuit to see contemporary examples of this kind of intercultural performance: often big stage spectacles which position a universalist agenda amidst the marketable excitement of unexpected cultural bricolage.

The politics of such cultural practice has been the topic of much intercultural performance criticism over the last twenty years. The changing tenor of scholarship in this area follows the broader postcolonial critique in addressing power imbalances between East and West (or the West and “the rest”), and the politics and ethics of representation and cultural appropriation. Where directors such as Brook or Ariane Mnouchkine pursued formal and narrative borrowing in their theatre, scholarship concerned itself with the aesthetics of

---

3 Richard Schechner calls interculturalism, by way of illustration, the “predictable” and “inevitable” outcome of the avant-garde (1989, 157).
4 See Latrell (2000) for a counter-critique to this argument in terms of non-Western modes of interculturalism. He argues, “interculturalism is portrayed as something that can only be ‘explained’ by inequities of power between East and West, and the ultimate effect of such criticism is to keep the spotlight firmly focused on the West—‘their’ attempts at interculturalism must be motivated by ‘our’ former colonization. The idea that artists in other societies might be using elements of Western culture for their own reasons is rarely entertained” (45).
intercultural performance. That such practice and criticism so often ended up pursuing a transcultural or universalist project is in line with the celebratory rhetoric of interculturalism. The reactionary counter-discourse rooted in postcolonial politics, however, sees this view as non-theoretical and naively celebratory (Bharucha 2000). Together these two discourses fall into opposing camps, what Craig Latrell points to as the aesthetics and politics camps. However important the political contextualisation of intercultural practice might be, he argues, at its worst the politics camp reduces the work of the aesthetics camp to “only an exercise in neo-colonialism” (2000, 53), rendering the tension between utopic and dystopic views of interculturalism.

The relationship between the celebratory and cautionary camps is typified by the several years’ worth of published exchange between Richard Schechner and Rustom Bharucha. In an interview with Patrice Pavis, Schechner recounts that he began using the term interculturalism in the mid-1970s as a contrast to internationalism and in order to promote the exchange of cultures above the project of the state (Pavis 1996, 42). For Schechner, mutual borrowings and influences have always characterised cultures. His declaration about the impurity of performance studies mirrors his view of culture: “no culture is ‘pure’—that is, no culture is ‘itself’” (Schechner 1989, 151). The more contact and mixture there is, in his opinion, the better: “there is alive in the world an inquisitive, urgent, strong, and hopeful interculturalism” (160). While Bharucha largely agrees with Schechner’s conceptual separation of the intercultural from the boundaries of nation, he also argues, “there should be no false euphoria about the celebration of autonomy [...]” (Bharucha 2000, 4).

---

5 A relationship which Bharucha himself admits could be described in its early years as “daddy-bashing” (Barucha 2000, 4; see also Bharucha 1993).
6 Ellipses are shown within brackets throughout this thesis to indicate the omission of text from a quotation.
Interculturalism itself as a cultural phenomenon should not be reduced to a pre-existing beneficent state of being. [...]. While nationalism is clearly the villain of this breezy utopian universalism, there are other contexts in which interculturalism has been nurtured through the fall-out of global trade, war, and colonial history. (31)

Voluntarism is the critical principle of interculturalism defined by both Schechner and Bharucha, but while Schechner advocates “cultures of choice” (1989, 155), Bharucha argues that despite connections with neo-liberal individualism and philosophies of “freedom of choice,” voluntarism is yet a useful way of distinguishing interculturalism from the state-controlled project of multiculturalism (2000, 31).

This distinction follows postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha’s separate thinking about cultural diversity, a homogenising force which acts to mask and contain actual cultural difference. Bhabha’s notion of Third Space7 allows for an alternate space in which difference (even incommensurate difference) can be negotiated and contested, a space which is the precondition for the articulation of difference (Bhabha 1994, 56). Difference, Arjun Appadurai argues too, is the most valuable feature of culture, as “a useful heuristic that can highlight points of similarity and contrast between all sorts of categories” (Appadurai 1996, 12). The influence of postcolonial theorists from within the disciplines of cultural studies and literary criticism is writ large across the more recent scholarship in intercultural performance.8 The more politicised and contested understandings of intercultural processes which this discourse sets forth makes it necessary for us to critically assess cultural practices in performance, and is evident in Bharucha’s challenge for any intercultural worker, practitioner and critic, “to disimbricate his/her intervention

7 Bhabha uses a capitalised Third Space; in this thesis, unless a direct reference, I use an un-capitalised compound thirdspace to indicate a more general conceptualisation of the in-between and/or strategy of thirding.

from existing hegemonies by working consciously, if not subversively, against the grain of assumed norms” (2000, 32-33).

However, an overwhelming taxonomy of defining “culturalisms” has emerged to accompany overviews of cultural performance: inter-, intra-, multi-, cross-, trans-, extra-, ultra-, pre-, post-, meta-; along with a subset of different theatres: migrant, postcolonial, ghetto, syncretic, non-syncretic, “fourth world”... (Pavis 1996; Lo and Gilbert 2002; see also Carlson 1996). These categories attempt to differentiate the multiple contexts and conditions for practice which otherwise remain in their terminology a bit too “woolly” (Lo and Gilbert 2002, 32). This classification project seems to me to be in part a territory-marking exercise, both to try to shore up a delineated scholastic field of intercultural performance, and also to establish orthodox meanings and types of practice within it. Rather, I like the way that Bharucha poses some of these terms as useful “working propositions,” while remaining wary of their prescriptiveness (2000, 1). Along similar lines, Appadurai argues culture as a noun conceals more than it reveals (1996, 12), but that culture in its adjectival sense can be usefully regarded “as a dimension of phenomena” (13).

The full classification system seems to be at base level a theoretical diversion in terms of my project; suffice to say I use intercultural in this thesis like Bharucha, in reference to inter, in-between or hybrid processes (2000, 10 and 25), and as distinct from the homogenising and authoritarian associations of multiculturalism. I also find Bharucha’s use of intraculturalism to describe intercultural relations at work within the borders of the nation-state or to shift emphasis to differences that exist within boundaries in what is assumed to be homogenised culture (8), an additional prefix worth holding on to. Understandably of value for Bharucha, working in the context of pluralist India, the
inter/intra relationship is also useful in terms of my project's focus on interculturalism as it is embodied, as it operates within bodies, or put another way, performances of interculturality. Here, Bharucha's inter/intraculturalism is layered onto analysis of the inter/intracorporeal.

Whether we theorise the stage as a neutral meeting ground or an already historically and politically inscribed space (and I subscribe to the latter) I believe there remains something missing—an area undertheorised—in relation to intercultural performance. Under a formula which posits or "sites" The Performance (staged or rehearsed performance-event, performance-text) as intercultural, where can the corporealities of performers be located? That is to say, this view positions the bodies of practitioners as sites of embedded culture, representations of culture/cultural traditions. Intercultural processes are relegated to the space between performers (which the director occupies) or between performers' representations and audiences' interpretations. What if we were to pose instead intercultural bodies, embodying an inter, as the site of intercultural performing?

The out of place, in-between bodies and spatialities that are the subject of this dissertation prompt a different methodological apparatus than the analysis of plays and productions on which the theatrical tradition relies. Dance scholar Phillipa Rothfield notes, "the performer, the director and the audience all make their own interpretive acts; they have their own experiences of the work" (1994, 60). In this dissertation I am concerned with the embodied practices and lived experiences of performers. I am not asking in this thesis, what kind of intercultural performance or practice is that? (Where or how does it sit within the taxonomic scheme?) But rather, what is it like in affective and somatic terms to perform in the in-between space? In asking this question I am returning to bodies and spaces in all their experiential lived-ness. I am posing hybridity as an embodied practice.
FOR SPACE

The subtitles under which I have organised this introduction borrow from geographer Doreen Massey's book *For Space* (2005), her argument for rethinking spatiality as a relational sphere of "coexisting heterogeneity" always under construction (9). My project is likewise "for space", and more explicitly, for thinking about in-between spaces and the human experiences which constitute them. That it to say, is it possible to think through a notion of thirdspace, a space of hybridity, as lived space?

In each of the three parts of this dissertation a targeted literature review chapter is followed by two case study chapters. In Chapter 1 I look at the binary relationship of space and place through the work of Massey, Edward Casey, Yi-Fu Tuan, and Michel de Certeau. Place, Casey proposes, is a relation to the lived body, "an arena of action that is at once physical and historical, social and cultural" (2001a, 683), in opposition to space as an abstract void. But this view of local place (and the dichotomising of place and space) has a political relation to the need to claim "home" against the processes of change wrought by globalisation. Anthropologist and performance studies scholar Lowell Lewis asserts:

In Casey’s view, which I share, there can be no embodiment without emplacement: an embodied being must be in some place, it cannot exist in "no place." Furthermore, places and bodies co-construct each other: humans create places to accommodate their bodies, and bodies are modeled on, experience in terms of, the places they dwell in. (Lewis 2010, 71)

Place becomes synonymous with dwelling and space with mobility; dwelling with a sense of being “rooted” and having an identity, and mobility the inverse of this. Being able to differentiate “homes” is so easily overlaid onto the differentiation of groups of people, and these groups geographically mapped onto specific places. Bounded thinking of place becomes aligned with bounded thinking about identity and culture (nation, region or home). The alignment of place and culture might speak to an attempt to understand place (like culture) as an evolving process constituted through many acts of attachment and
belonging; but this can easily slide back the other way, making culture not an adjective, as Appadurai urges, but a noun, synonymous with “a” place.

But Massey reminds us that “thinking the spatial in a particular way can shake up the manner in which certain political questions are formulated” (2005, 9). Using Brian Massumi’s critique of what he calls a “positionality” model of cultural identity, Chapter 1 begins to muddy the dichotomous relationship between space and place. In Parables for the Virtual (2002) Massumi argues:

Signifying subject formation according to the dominant structure was often thought of in terms of “coding.” Coding in turn came to be thought of in terms of positioning on a grid. The grid was conceived as an oppositional framework of culturally constructed significations: male versus female, black versus white, gay versus straight, and so on. A body corresponded to a “site” on the grid defined by an overlapping of one term from each pair. The body came to be defined by its pinning to the grid. (2)

The problem with the culture grid, Massumi argues, is that positionality robs the body of its possibility for movement and change. A body linked to a particular subject position is no more than “a local embodiment of ideology” that is “boxed into its site on the culture map” (3), and the gaps between positions fall into a “theoretical no-body’s land” (4). I explore his concept of the biogram in relation to performances of audio walking in Chapter 2 and 3, looking in particular at Canadian artist Janet Cardiff’s Her Long Black Hair (2004) and tourist company Soundwalk’s tour of Chinatown in New York City (2005). Together the chapters in Part I argue that it is possible to be out of place, and that space and place are far from discrete orders of experience. In the mobile practice of audio walking, where participants are asked not only to walk “with” but also “as” another, the normally habitual, second nature of cultural performance is cracked open and we must walk in a gap between self and other.
In thinking about in-between embodiments through notions of thirspace, I am returning to *thirding* as a way of critically thinking beyond (or between) established binaries of all kinds: space-place, self-other, first-second, pure-hybrid, culture-nature, subject-object, target-source. Amidst the taxonomy of prefixed culturalisms in intercultural performance theory I noted above, there are also attempts to model intercultural processes as heuristic spatialities. These models invariably respond to the mechanistic and linear ways cultural change or exchange is depicted. Patrice Pavis’s hourglass model, for example, positions a source culture in the upper section and target culture below. On the journey down between source and target, “grains of culture” are rearranged according to eleven filters (Pavis 1992, 4).

Helen Gilbert and Jacqueline Lo rightly point out that Pavis’s model is too dependent on translation theory, and cannot account for processes of political negotiation (Lo and Gilbert 2002, 41-43). Their own proposal is redesigned to reflect the postcolonial politics of hybridity, in which intercultural exchange is represented as a two-way flow with the target culture positioned in a fluid position between two cultural sources, each with their own set of filters and all existing within a broader sociopolitical context. In this way the authors argue the model “foregrounds the dialogic nature of intercultural exchange but also takes into account the possibility of power disparity in the partnership” (44). But while this reviewed model depicts an actual “third” space as the target culture, they both rely on parent source cultures that are “more or less codified and solidified in diverse anthropological, sociocultural or artistic modelizations” (Pavis in Lo and Gilbert 2002, 41).

This first/second, original/derived relationship reinforces temporal and spatial binaries,

---

9 The filters are: cultural modelling, artistic modelling, perspective of the adapters, word of adaptation, preparatory work by actors, choice of a theatrical form, theatrical representation of the culture, reception-adapters, readability, artistic, sociological, anthropological and cultural modelling, given and anticipated consequences (Pavis 1992).
and is hardly a rendering of Bhabha’s notion (unfixed and ambiguous itself) of Third Space, resistant as it is to being represented in a two-dimensional schematic drawing.

**FOR BODIES**

Just as this project is for space, it is for bodies. In Chapter 4 I examine further the utility of postcolonial theories of hybridity as they have been inherited from linguistic and literary studies, in relation to intercultural performance. I also engage with Gilbert and Lo’s more recent work on hybridity and embodiment within intercultural performance ([2007] 2009), identifying what I call a “theatrical” model of analysis which I argue privileges an analytical mode of spectatorship. Examining the experiences of two practitioners producing hybrid contemporary dance practices in Chapters 5 and 6, I propose a different understanding of embodiment to Gilbert and Lo’s in order to study the ways in which these practitioners experience performing hybrid movement. In dance’s foregrounding of the production of kinaesthetic experience, these examples highlight the limitations of a spectatorship model of analysis. In so doing I concur with Andrew Hewitt when he argues:

> While cultural studies has taught us to locate aesthetic phenomena within their respective historical and cultural milieus rather than assume their transhistorical validity, it has also tended at times to dedifferentiate different types of ideological performance (aesthetic, political, etc.) by “reading” all as documents. Rather than taking text as a model for reading performance I propose instead to take performance as a challenge to our model of “reading texts.” (Hewitt 2005, 9)

Reading intercultural movement in terms of antecedent source cultures has an unfortunate tendency to segment bodies into cultural parts, or to read choreographies in terms of an ethnic genealogy of the choreographer. In Chapter 5 I turn to British Asian choreographer Akram Khan’s descriptions of his “confused body,” posing him as an expert practitioner-theorist on hybrid moving. In Chapter 6 I take this methodological shift towards
practitioner experience further, examining the developing practice of a colleague, Indonesian Australian choreographer Ade Suharto.

Throughout the dissertation, one of this project’s tasks is to think about the role of embodiment and embodied practice in intercultural performance in terms of how we experience our bodies and how as bodies we meet the world. As Patrice Pavis has said, intercultural work is only effective when in it is understood as intercorporeal work (1996, 15), but this requires further engagement with what we take human corporeality to mean. The phenomenological tradition provides one way of thinking through embodiment as “lived body” *(leib)*, as “the lived fact of experiencing the world from and in and with just *this* body, *my* body” (Casey 1996a, 23). This approach, as anthropologist Michael Jackson has said, slightly tongue in cheek, calls into question “the longstanding division in Western discourse between the knowledge of philosophers or scientists and the opinions of ordinary mortals” (Jackson 1996, 7), and the reinstating of subjectivity through practitioner accounts of lived experience is a through-line in this project.

As the aesthetic camp of intercultural performance scholarship has made way for the politics camp, fleshy, sensing bodies seem to have become discursively untouchable. Reducing the lived body to an object or product of discourse, as Edward Casey argues has happened in poststructuralist thought, reduces it to “a paper-thin textual entity” (1996a, 37). Brian Massumi’s project to rethink bodies in terms of movement, affect and sensation in *Parables for the Virtual* is influential to my thinking, but it is important to note that his argument against the positioning of identities on a cultural grid is a pointed critique of the

---

10 I note here that schematising of the body is also culturally variable—I am not suggesting “a” meaning of human corporeality. Phillip Zarrilli’s work is significant in this regard for his cross-cultural examination of actor embodiments which draws heavily upon Western frameworks of embodiment from phenomenology (largely Merleau-Ponty through the work of Drew Leder) and also non-Western paradigms, for example through his experience of Kathakali and Kalarippayattu, yoga, and other bodily practices (see Zarrilli 2004).
postcolonial discourse which also underlies this study. In the coming chapters I find value in Massumi’s contribution to thinking about bodies in action, but remain wary of discourses which posit embodiment as “pure” becoming. As such, I also turn to Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s concern with the question of embodiment and the concept of habitus, first used by Marcel Mauss in his lecture “Techniques of the Body” in 1934 to describe “physio-psycho-sociological assemblages of series of actions” ([1936] 1973, 85) and later taken up and developed by Pierre Bourdieu. In this regard my own reading of embodiment is indebted to Edward Casey’s work in bringing together Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu, and arguing for an understanding of embodiment as a conjoining or “coimplication” of natural and cultural bodies (Casey 1996a). Casey suggests that the cultural “arises around the natural, the social around the somatic instead of upon or over it […]” (1996a, 36, original emphasis). For Casey, embodiment is also a coimplication of bodies and places, and Bourdieu’s conception of habitus is a foundation of Casey’s thinking about place in that it makes more specific Merleau-Ponty’s notion of a “habitual” or “customary” body (Casey 2001b, 716). Habitus is the “mediatrix” Casey asserts, between self and place (718).

Bourdieu’s notion of habitus allows for a way of thinking about the body as simultaneously social and physical; it is a mediating link between several seemingly dichotomous dualisms (structure and agency, social and individual, objective and subjective). As the process by which social structure and individual agency can be reconciled it is, as Bourdieu famously called it, “the feel for the game” (1990, 66). Along with field and capital, habitus is a key term for Bourdieu in defining his philosophy of practice. Practice is a result of an unconscious relationship between habitus, capital, and field whereby habitus is that set of durable dispositions that determine or generate practice in relation to current circumstances and one’s position within those circumstances (the social game). This relationship is what Bourdieu emphasises in calling habitus a “structured and structuring
structure” (1994, 170). It is the structure by which we carry history and also bring that history into the present in an ongoing, generative process: “embodied history, internalized as second nature and so forgotten as history—[habitus] is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product” (Bourdieu 1990, 56). The second nature quality of habitus is an intrinsic part of its structure; it is what points to, as Bourdieu has stressed, the underlying principles governing behaviours, tastes and beliefs. That bodies are socially constructed is a message iterated in performativity discourse. Habitus then, is a way of conceiving of social constructivism as “durably inscribed belief” (1990, 57) physicalised within the body, and of thinking of bodily practice as a process of bringing the past to bear on the future in the present.

Originally a philosopher, Bourdieu’s move into sociology was precipitated by ethnographic research he undertook during his military service in Algeria in the late 1950s (Grenfell 2008). Working in the Sorbonne in the 1960s amidst the turbulence of student protests and institutional reform, his research in this period was directed at understanding the phenomenon of social mobility. His theory of practice, including the key concept of habitus, is therefore based on issues of class but has been widely applied to other forms of cultural performance. Patrice Pavis’s idea of performers’ embodied training as a cultural “script” (Pavis 1996, 3) is one such elaboration, and I discuss this idea in terms of a performatively or extra-daily habitus in Part II. Here Phillip Zarrilli’s work is also notable for his use of what he calls “post-Merleau-Ponty phenomenology” of embodiment to extend phenomenology’s project from exclusive concern with the everyday to non-everyday activities such as acting (Zarrilli 2004).11

---

11 Suzi Adams poses Merleau-Ponty as a bridge between phenomenology and postphenomenology, whereby this shift is from a philosophy of consciousness to approaches which “emphasize the anthropic confrontation with the world—and its cultural articulation […]” (Adams 2007, 3). Emerging in the early 1990s via Johann P Arnason and separately Don Ihde, the term postphenomenology is understood heterogeneously in the wake of
Bourdieu’s project, however, was also a critique of the subjectivism of phenomenology—his guiding principle was a critical analysis of both the subjectivist and objectivist traditions in philosophy and the social sciences. He argued that Husserlian methods of *reduction* or bracketing of previously held assumptions about the world in order to return to “the things themselves” overlooks the extent to which experience is constrained by internalised social structures and fails to account for the non-intentional somatic dispositions explained by his concept of habitus (Throop and Murphy 2002, 190). Indeed, notions of bracketing and getting back to primary perception within phenomenology are difficult to reconcile with a project engaged in cultural work, and especially cross/intercultural work. But Jackson argues that habitus is directly comparable to the phenomenological notion of lifeworld (Jackson 1996, 20), that domain of “everyday, immediate social existence and practical activity, with all its habituality, its crises, its vernacular and idiomatic character, its biographical particularities, its decisive events and indecisive strategies [...]” (7-8). This correlation is not so much in terms of the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) defined by Husserl as the world of immediate experience, or “a realm of original self-evidences experienced as 'the thing itself’” (Husserl in Jackson 1996, 16); or in terms of Heidegger’s “Being-in-the-world”¹⁴ as a mode of indwelling, being-in- in the sense

---

¹² This is the argument Throop and Murphy put forward as Bourdieu’s critique of Husserl, which they in turn critique as a misreading. It is worth noting that in a response Bourdieu rebuts this claim, remarking he has often “declared my indebtedness to phenomenology, which I practiced for some time in my youth” (Bourdieu 2002, 209).

¹³ As such, Bourdieu’s rejection of phenomenology on the grounds of its subjectivism is more a rejection of Husserl’s *epoche* [Jackson 1996, 18], but as Derek Robbins claims in an overview of Bourdieu’s influences, “Bourdieu’s interest in the work of Husserl led him to want to ground scientific interest in social action in the ‘life-world’ [...]” (2008, 33).

¹⁴ In this thesis I use the hyphenated being-in-the-world in direct reference to Heidegger’s concept; the phrase without hyphens refers more generally to bodily being.
of “to reside alongside” or “to be familiar with” or as “the formal existential expression for the Being of Dasein, which has Being-in-the-world as its essential state” (Heidegger in Jackson 1996, 16, original emphasis). As Jackson notes following Adorno’s critique of the essentialising nature of Husserl and Heidegger’s work:

There cannot be such a thing as pure intuition, or a transcendental, monadic ego, because all acts of so-called intuition are informed by social interests, cultural bias, and the claims of our particular lifeworld upon us. A universalizing, externalizing theory of Being, grounded in the being of European bourgeois intellectuals, has little value for anthropology. (Jackson 1996, 18)

Rather, Jackson suggests the antinomy of subjectivity and objectivity can be done away with if we acknowledge such terms as simply indicative of the way in which humans experience themselves as both subjects and objects, “making us feel sometimes that we are world-makers, sometimes that we are merely made by the world” (ibid. 21).

Merleau-Ponty’s writing on embodiment as an “I can” posits an interrelated setting between body, space and action. For Merleau-Ponty, being in the world is bodily being, or a “being-towards-the-thing through the intermediary of the body” ([1962] 2002, 160).

Perception is not a cognitive function, but rather,

it is by abandoning the body as object, partes extra partes, and by going back to the body which I experience at this moment in the manner, for example, in which my hand moves round the object it touches, anticipating the stimuli and itself tracing out the form which I am about to perceive. I cannot understand the function of the living body except by enacting it myself, and except in so far as I am a body which rises towards the world. (87)

In emphasising embodiment, my project’s argument is not for phenomenological analysis of intercultural performance, but rather for a study which can account for bodily experiences. I am not interested in revealing the structures of consciousness or getting at “pure” or precultural experience. Such a project would indeed sit uneasily with the hybridity and thirsdspace discourses at its heart. I do not practice phenomenology (or postphenomenology); rather, I am interested in understanding experiences of in-between
spaces and in-between bodies, and these objects/subjects of study are construed as lived spaces and lived bodies.

Across all the case studies in the dissertation, bodies confront their habitual movement and potential for something else, something new. They negotiate multiple embodiments and perform in unexpected ways. They orient themselves in relation to others as well as themselves, and get lost and occasionally misplaced. As such, many of the types of experience which fall into phenomenology’s domain of study also find their way into this thesis—perception, sensation, imagination, memory, embodied action, and bodily, spatial, and temporal awareness—and terms such as lifeworld and habitus, Merleau-Ponty’s “I can,” and Drew Leder's “dysappearing body” are put into dialogue with theoretical ideas from a range of other disciplines, including cultural studies, performance and dance studies, geography and anthropology. Above all, the incorporation of subjective description of experience is a way for this project to challenge the objective gaze that I feel perversely contributes to the overlooking of intercultural bodies in intercultural performance scholarship.

**FOR TRAVEL**

The theoretical touchstones I have been outlining here are also this project’s methodological frameworks. The need I feel for analysis of moving, breathing bodies and spaces is in part a need I feel for a methodological shift. My focus on practitioner experience is often writing about my own experience, as well as analysis of other practitioners’ comments through interviews already published in the public domain or conducted by me.
In Part III I turn to the spaces of global mobility and use my own travels across national borders and through international airport terminals to explore bodily experiences of being in what Marc Augé termed the transit spaces of non-place (Augé 1995). In Chapter 7 I return to the place-space question recast as the stasis-movement binary of the “new mobilities paradigm” identified by Mimi Sheller and John Urry (2006); a paradigm critical of the old discourse that “treats as normal stability, meaning, and place, and treats as abnormal distance, change, and placelessness” (208). While I earlier quoted Lowell Lewis (after Casey) arguing that “an embodied being must be in some place, it cannot exist in ‘no place’” (2010, 71), in this section being in no place—or more accurately, being in non-place—is examined as another performance of in-betweenness. Using the work of geographer Edward Soja and Michel Foucault’s writings on space, Chapter 8 explores how terminal spaces and their mass choreographies of people might be creating negotiated thirdspace orientations (neither/nor, and/also) in non-place, despite the heavily regimented organisations of international airspace. Chapter 9 focuses on the micro-choreographies of border crossing, jet lag and turbulence, where our performances of self reveal an intracorporeal relation to an othered-self not unlike that which I described in Part I. Here, the work of phenomenologist and medical doctor Drew Leder and notions of performativity and “theatrical appearance” (Nield 2006) help to further articulate interstitial embodiment.

The travelling methods employed in Part III are an important strategy overall in this project. Movement experience is subject and object of the study: from the locative art works in Part I, to the dance practices in Part II, and the international transiting in Part III. The assumption of movement is in part a project of reinstating movement to the “freeze-framed” bodies pinned to the culture grid. It is also, as James Clifford has said, acknowledging travel encounters as crucial sites of meaning-making.
Dwelling was understood to be the local ground of collective life, travel a supplement; roots always precede routes. But what would happen, I began to ask, if travel were untethered, seen as a complex and pervasive spectrum of human experiences? Practices of displacement might emerge as constitutive of cultural meanings rather than as their simple transfer or extension. (Clifford 1997, 30, original emphasis)

The idea of “fieldwork” conjures a need for a delineated “field”, but in this study where fieldwork needed to be mobile it is a term I still found value in adopting. As Kate Rossmanith points out in her own work on rehearsal documentation, “fieldwork” as a framework borrowed from anthropology was useful in structuring the hours she spent in rehearsal rooms taking notes in a “fieldwork diary,” but I concur with her assessment that this usage is analogous rather than homologous (2003, 6). While my “field” was even less delineated than a four-walled rehearsal room, I too used ethnographic methods of note taking (jottings in the field) which were later turned into more organised, fleshed-out “thick description” (Geertz [1973] 2000). But whereas the rehearsal studies methodology practiced by Rossmanith explicitly distinguishes itself from a performance–as–research approach, advocating instead an observational “outsider” role for the researcher (Rossmanith 2003, 5), my methods were framed within a participant-observation model.

My observations in the field were guided by Mike Pearson’s “objects of retrieval” (in Pearson and Thomas 1994) as an approach to focussing my attention on site and event:

- space: genesis/delineation/codification of performance space; the “effect of spatial restriction/configuration upon the quality and type of activity[…] and intensities and stratifications of meaning” (1994, 150).
- time: event, set and symbolic time; effects on the nature of the activity (energy expenditure, application, effort); relative chronologies (sequence), absolute time (against soundtrack), perceptual time (time as passing).
- pattern: structure of performance as sequence, route, map, montage, set of rules; or “as overlapping, conflicting graphs of speed, rhythm, intensity” (ibid.).
- detail: attention paid to “kinesics (communicative body movements), proxemics (interpersonal distance), haptics (touch of self and others during interpersonal contact), and techniques of reproduction, modification and transformation” (ibid.).
But as I have noted in this introduction, my project is also to mediate observational, objective analysis of intercultural performances with experiential analysis of performances of interculturality. This precipitates a shift from observational to practitioner modes, and also a shift in "field" from the rehearsal room or stage to lived bodies and spaces.

On many occasions my "observations" were reflections on my own bodily experience as walker, traveller, practitioner. In line with the approach to embodiment I outlined above, my analysis began not, as Henri Lefebvre instructs, with the body as object, but with my own body as a first point of analysis, as both observer and performer; listening, as Lefebvre instructs, to its "murmurs" (2004, 27). *Rhythmanalysis* (2004), published posthumously from various works in progress, some in collaboration with his wife Catherine Régulier, is generally regarded as the fourth and final volume of Lefebvre's critique of the everyday and is the culmination of Lefebvre’s extensive work on the social production of space. My use of *lived space* in this dissertation owes a debt to Lefebvre's notion of space as produced rather than a passive stage of objects,15 and his trialectic of *perceived space* (spatial practice, which presupposes the use of the body, “the practical basis of the perception of the outside world”), *conceived space* (representations of space, deriving from accumulated scientific knowledge “disseminated with an admixture of ideology”), and *lived space* (representational space or spaces of representation, which are “both highly complex and quite peculiar, because 'culture' intervenes here”) (Lefebvre 1991, 40).16

---

15 Lefebvre writes at the end of *The Production of Space*: "space is becoming the principal stake of goal-directed actions and struggles. It has of course always been the reservoir of resources, and the medium in which strategies are applied, but it has now become something more than the theatre, the disinterested stage or setting of action" (1991, 410).

16 This debt is particularly towards Edward Soja’s alignment of Lefebvre’s lived space with his own notion of *Thirdspace* (1996), as that which brings together all spaces, and which I discuss in Part III. While Nicholson-Smith’s 1991 English translation of Lefebvre uses “representational space,” Soja suggests a better translation is “spaces of representation” (1996, 61). As such, Edward Casey notes that Lefebvre’s lived space as well as Soja’s use of “spatiality” and Thirdspace are close in meaning to his use of place (Casey 2001b), but Soja argues Lefebvre rarely used “place” in his writing and that his work demonstrates the place/space distinction “is an unnecessary and misleading separation/distinction that reduces the meaningfulness of both space and place” (Soja 40).
Lefebvre's emphasis on the importance of spatio-temporal rhythms of the body was another background framework for my analysis of and understanding (in practical terms) of bodies in movement, including my own. Lefebvre writes, "everywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy, there is rhythm" (2004, 15), and these four rubrics are very close to Pearson's space, time, detail, and pattern described above. Rhythmanalysis is useful, geographer Tim Edensor feels, because it reminds us that spaces and places are fluid and heterogeneous: "rhythmanalysis can help explore notions that places are always in a process of becoming, seething with emergent properties, but usually stabilised by regular patterns of flow that possess particular rhythmic qualities whether steady, intermittent, volatile or surging" (2010, 3). In this study rhythm proved a useful analytic to train my attention to the spaces, timings, patterns and corporeal details of those around me and to "stand back" from myself in reflection; but it also encouraged a perspective from within the flows (and stumbles) of everyday life. To study intercultural performance in its minutiae rather than systemic overview, and in its viscera rather than abstract theory, is to return again and again to the body and bodily experience.

As much as this project argues for greater accounting of moving, lived bodies in its methodology, its analytical format is, after all, the written dissertation, a text. Here I return to critical ethnography as process of interpretive writing, a form of story-telling which presents, as James Clifford has said, partial truths: "fictions in the sense of ‘something made or fashioned’" (1986, 6). In addition to writing, Clifford argues that collage is a concept important to ethnography, as a way of "making space for heterogeneity, for historical and political, not simply aesthetic, juxtapositions" (1997, 3). In the following chapters selected field notes developed from fieldwork experiences sit amongst more theoretical writing, in
an attempt to capture the particularity of micro-gestures and feelings, while maintaining a gap between these two voices through separate italicised typesetting. Michael Jackson argues, “narrative redescription is a crucial and constitutive part of the ongoing activity of the lifeworld” (1996, 39). It is a link between practice and discourse, the journey between what ethnographer Edward Bruner called (in connection to tourism) the trip as lived or experienced and the trip as told (2005, 19). This multi-vocality is also, to return to Pearson and Shanks's theatre/archaeology, in recognition that the “discovery of new insight depends on a nervous novelty which avoids the settling of montages into accepted equations and identities” (2001, 52, original emphasis). These authors argue that the tactics of collage and juxtaposition are “a simple questioning of the notion of representation as finding some correspondence with an exterior reality” (ibid.).

The research questions that have arisen so far—how do bodies perform interculturality? how do we experience in-betweens? what are the kinaesthetic dimensions of in-betweenness and how might this bear on our understandings of cultural process and our thinking about what it is to be bodies in space/place?—come down to one key question. How do we encounter our own possibility for cultural change? In the epilogue to Bharucha’s *The Politics of Cultural Practice* he recounts a story about falling ill while at a conference in Slovenia.

How does one reflect on interculturalism in the state of malaria? Any illness involves an alienation from one’s “normal” self, producing an uncomfortable sense of being entrapped in someone else’s body. One has no other choice but to work through this alien body in order to reconnect to one’s own. [...] At the best of times, interculturalism is an enormously taxing practice in the demands that it makes on the body. It is not only a matter of learning other disciplines and techniques—martial arts, Yoga, Kathakali—where one is compelled to “break” one’s existing reflexes and rhythms, balance and co-ordination; the demands on the body in intercultural work are so infinitesimal that they are invisible in their subtle pressures, as one takes in different physical and sensory stimuli from an alien space. (Bharucha 2002, 152-153)
It is this alien space, this break with habitual rhythm, and the invisibility of bodily pressures that this dissertation explores. It is about how this moment and space manifests in the world—the interstice between the “normal” and the new.

This project is not about delineating a politics of cultural practice, but understanding a kinaesthetics of cultural practice (in which the political, and the social, will always be implicated). I began this introduction with my story of childhood motion sickness because it was a story that spoke to the four major themes I outlined here: in-betweens, space, bodies, and travel. In the case studies that follow, I similarly look to such “travel stories” to find bodies in moments of being out of place or out of time, out of body or even in someone else’s (as Bharucha’s malaria story described). My motion sickness was not the delirium of a tropical fever, but its almost imperceptible rearrangements of my body in relation to itself and the world were part of what constituted my being in the world. Edward Bruner suggests there are two ethnographies of travel, “one of performances in the destination culture, and a second of the traveling unit, which may be conceptualized as its own site of cultural production, a performance in itself” (2005, 17). In this dual configuration, it is this second performance I am mostly interested in: performances in travel and of interculturality. But the performances I look at are also between these two categories: this is yet another in-between I will put forward in this introduction. This project argues, after all, for dwelling in and studying the in-between itself, not just as a second order passageway between first order things, but as the lived spaces of embodied in-betweenness that exist in cultural practice.
Part I

Learning to walk
MP3 technology and the advent of podcasting has led to a proliferation of portable players in many people’s daily lives, and an accompanying development of on-the-go listening practices. The sounds of the real world around us and the recorded sounds from our headphones mix together as we move through a given locale. There is greater possibility here to augment or conversely untie what we hear and where we are, in time and space. The affective experience of pounding the pavement to just the right soundtrack can make you the star of your own Hollywood moment: autumn leaves flutter to the ground as you twirl in slow motion; looking up, you see the afternoon sun glint off a building’s window and at your feet, the poetry of dropped ice cream dribbling into the gutter. This kind of heightened everyday experience of being in the world may be encouraged by the number of people carrying their own movie soundtrack with them, but the availability and capability of sound technology embedded within everyday life has also led to a large amount of recent performative experimentation aimed at exploiting and exposing the connections between place, time, and body at the core of lived experience. In the fine arts as well as in tourist productions, and in the newly coined region of “locative art,” a range of
audio tours and walks are creating opportunities for personal experiences of place in the spaces of the very public, through mobile auditory participatory performance.

In some sense, these productions contribute to one of the major concerns in contemporary performance on either side of the turn of the twenty-first century, that of place. In performance scholarship the nature of our connection to place and the role of place in performance has been a persistent and valuable arena of research.¹ In this section of my thesis I examine the audio walk genre of performance to show that while mobile, these performances are also place (and space) driven.² In the next two chapters, I explore several art works, tourist productions, and everyday locomotions that together try to articulate a temporal-spatial-corporeal nexus made evident through the practice of audio walking. My analysis draws on a five-year history of engaging with audio walks of some kind or another and remaps selective experiments and analyses I have undertaken over that period. More than this however, I argue over the next three chapters that some productions also have the potential to elucidate experiences of being in the world that are about being out of place, time, or even body.

Beijing, Forbidden City, April 2005

"Isn’t it faabulous?" Roger Moore croons in my ear, as I admire the painted ceilings of the Gate of Supreme Harmony. Previously I had always shunned the audio tour desk when visiting museums and galleries, content to find my own way through the space and its objects. But I had heard that Roger had been contracted to do the English version of the Forbidden City’s tour, and that it was itself pretty fabulous (in a kitschy kind of a way). I jostle with the crowds peering through narrow doors into dark, faded, and dusty rooms. I marvel at the piles of new golden roof tiles everywhere, part of the Olympic makeover happening everywhere in Beijing.

² Toby Butler suggests that audio walks (or sound walks as he refers to them) exceed the analytic realms of music, oral history, fine arts, drama, recorded sound production, or museum curation, arguing that they are a practice of cultural geography. Geographers, he asserts, are uniquely prepared to appreciate sounds walks, especially because of their interpretation of space and place (Butler 2006).
Every once in a while I stop, have a moment with Roger as he directs my attention to a detail of the architecture, tells me stories and gives me dates. (This is after all, a simple extension of traditional museum practice where looking is primary, a slight elaboration on the informative label.)

I am standing at the top of a terrace behind the Hall of Protective Harmony, surveying the kingdom below me. The characters of the audio narrative—ghosts of construction workers who pulled great slabs of stone across icy roads in 1406—and the imposing scale of the Imperial Palace combine to collapse time and history. It is easy to imagine that my body in this place is that of the Emperor, Pu Yi maybe, and that it is my kingdom. It is a small hint at the possibilities for transportation and transformation contained within the narrated soundscape in my ears.

The Forbidden City English audio tour is a materially different production than those I discuss in this dissertation: my experience with Roger Moore wasn’t so much an audio walk as a stop-and-listen audio guide, however, it was my incidental introduction to thinking about the sort of time-travelling, shape-shifting virtual world that audio guides can tap into. Moreover, in retrospect I began to wonder how I could understand everyday corporeal experiences of being out of place and time, such as these. I was “pretending” to be the Emperor to be sure, but I was also experiencing the world around me other than I normally would. My visit to Beijing in 2005 came at the end of three months in China, travelling in an unfamiliar country, speaking poor and basic Mandarin. I had time and again—as many travellers will attest to—felt lost, distanced from my normal life, unlike myself, and/or like someone else. The unfamiliarity of my surroundings challenged me to look at the world differently and also to perform myself differently. For all the concern that

3 The museum audio guide—though traditionally stop-and-listen in form—is also changing due to changing smartphone and podcasting technologies, and the adoption of “experience design” methods into museum display. For an interesting take on the traditional museum guide see, for example, Lee Siegel’s tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s modern art gallery in which he calls attention to some of what he thinks are the most overrated paintings in the collection. For more information see Slate’s Unauthorised Audio Tours, “the commentary museums don’t want you to hear” (Bowers 2005).
modern cultural tourism reproduces imperial modes of consumption and exploitation, it also lays a ground for what is fundamentally an intercultural experience, challenging our own cultural norms through exposure to others. But as travelling demonstrates, being out of place or time or body are key parts to intercultural experience; and I argue such beingness has a feeling and moving significance that is more than simply not being in or of a place.

One way in which the separate sections of this dissertation are organised is through corporeal experiences of travel: global mobility at the airport including placial disruptions like jet lag are explored in the last three chapters, and travelling between places and the acquisition of new cultural embodiments is taken up in the middle three. In this first section I use a more locally mobile movement experience—walking in a specified neighbourhood—to question how corporeal experiences of being out of place are constituted and might be understood. I suggest that certain audio walk performances involve a complex mapping of bodies and places onto one another which allows for potential slippages in the way we perform ourselves and navigate the world around us; and in the following two chapters I explore how this interstitial slipway might form a key part of being out of place as a feature of intercultural embodiment.

THEEMPLACED, ENCULTURED SUBJECT

In a chapter titled "Strange Horizon" in Parables for the Virtual, Brian Massumi confesses that for the first two months of his employment at the Canadian Centre for Architecture he sat looking out his window at the wrong street.

---

4 Edward Bruner writes, “cultural tourism recreates in performance idealized colonial images,” which “throughout the world frequently enact imperialist nostalgia [...]” (2005, 76). But the likening of tourism to imperialism is also due to its attendant economic and political expansion from Western countries to less developed ones (see e.g. Holden 2006, 149).
I was looking east onto rue St. Marc. But I was seeing north onto rue Baille. I am sad to report that there is no resemblance between the two scenes. Something that was seriously disorienting me was happening in the time it took me to get from the side entry of the building to the door of my office. But that’s just the half of it. The something seriously disorienting that was happening as I snaked my way through the corridors overpowered the evidence of my eyes. It was completely overriding the clear-as-day visual cues available to me out the window of my office. The sudden realization that my north was everyone else’s east was jarring. True, I hadn’t paid much attention to the scene. But I wasn’t just not paying attention. When it hit me, I had the strangest sensation of my misplaced image of the building morphing, not entirely smoothly, into the corrected scene. (Massumi 2002, 178)

Massumi uses this anecdote of being out of place or misplaced as an example of navigational mismatch between what he calls his proprioceptive self-referential system of orientation, and the exoreferential system of visually-based cognition. He could orient himself in the building (i.e. find his office) with no problem, even if his visual cues for that orientation were out of whack, because he had a bodily memory of the rhythm of twists and turns it took to get there. Further, Massumi suggests that this experience is not unusual: we rely on proprioceptive auto-pilot to perform habitual orientations all the time.

Massumi argues that such self-referencing of movement to its own variation (proprioception) is more fundamental to our spatial experience than visual cueing. Although in practice the two systems might work together, “it remains that cognitive mapping is secondarily applied to the experience of space, or the space of experience” (181). This last point is key because it prioritises the experience of moving in how we navigate the world around us: cognitive mapping only begins when proprioceptive orientation stops (180). But as the example of being misplaced demonstrates, one sense can serve as a corrective for another. The first thing people do when they are lost, Massumi describes, is interrupt visual awareness by looking away from what is in front of them—roll their eyes skyward even—for “the alarmingly physical sense we feel when we realize we are lost is a bodily registering of the disjunction between the visual and the
In the In-between

proprioceptive. Place arises from a dynamic of interference and accord between sense-dimensions” (182). The sickening feeling of the world moving is what we often call vertigo. Massumi’s description of the building “morphing, not entirely smoothly, into the corrected scene” (178) is a visual, but also proprioceptive manoeuvre involving visceral as well as environmental realignment. That is to say that the places that we know and see are made known to us through a system of sense cross-referencing, what Massumi calls synaesthetic cooperation. “Where we go to find ourselves when we are lost is where the senses fold into and out of each other” (ibid.). This fold is above all a space of experience folding back on itself, one in which we move between sense-dimensions—one in which we move—and where spatiality or the processes of spatialisation cannot be separated from their duration. Movement, after all, is the kinaesthetic experience of space in time.

In order to talk about being out of place I need to qualify what I mean by place, beyond that offered in my introduction. When Massumi says that place arises from a process of interference and accord between sense-dimensions he is suggesting that place is the space-time of experience, but what does this really mean? The 1977 text Space and Place is a seminal work by Yi-Fu Tuan which launched the discipline of human geography. In it Tuan attempts to outline how human beings relate to and understand their surrounding environment by exploring the ways in which they attach meaning to and organize space and place. Space and place are distinguishable terms in his view, a division which he conceptualises through the metaphor of movement: “if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place” (Tuan [1977] 2005, 6). Tuan argues that we need both space and place, that “human lives are a dialectical movement between shelter and venture, attachment and freedom” (54). The notion that space is associated with openness, action and the future while place is associated with the particularities of locality, a type of
object that defines space, “giving it a geometric personality” (17), is one that has been put forward by theorists within human geography as well as cultural anthropology and philosophy. It concurs with classical anthropology’s notion of places as centres of felt value and cultural meaning made through longitudinal dwelling, and by way of expansion phenomenologist Edward Casey argues:

Minimally, places gather things in their midst—where “things” connote various animate and inanimate entities. Places also gather experiences and histories, even languages and thoughts. Think only of what it means to go back to a place you know, finding it full of memories and expectation, old things and new things, the familiar and the strange, and much more besides. (Casey 1996b, 24)

As I argue in more detail later in Chapter 7, the space-place binary, read within an oppositional framework of mobility-pause, emphasises dwelling practices and being in place to know place. In this formulation, experiences of mobility, of being out of or between places (as the tourist, traveller, or in everyday occasions of being lost like those Massumi describes), become the inverse of meaningful attachment to place. This is, I argue, problematic.

For Casey, space is abstract in contrast to place which is humanly construed and connected to the self. His notion of the “geographical self” describes a subject who is emplaced, who is oriented and situated in place, and who realizes that commitment to place through habitation (Casey 2001a, 683 and 687). By habitation he connects place to Bourdieu’s notion of habitus which I discussed in my introduction, arguing that “a given habitus is always enacted in a particular place and incorporates the feature inherent in previous such places, all of which are linked by a habitudinal bond” (686). Casey wants his idea of habitation to be able to include nomadic as well as settled modes of dwelling (687), but here he runs into a problem: he wants to acknowledge (after Tuan’s Cosmos and Hearth) “a possible virtue in the postmodern nomadism of constantly changing place, whether in actual or virtual space. The ease with which this now happens compared to former times
does not mean the simple degradation, much less the loss, of the self that travels” (685). Yet he always returns to a fundamental distinction between space and place, betraying an uneasy reconciliation between mobile practices and the deep attachment of belonging to place. To be encultured is to embody Casey's place: places and bodies are co-constituting things, or “interanimating” in his terminology.

The very word culture meant “place tilled” in Middle English, and the same word goes back to Latin colere, “to inhabit, care for, till, worship.” To be cultural, to have a culture, is to inhabit a place sufficiently intensely to cultivate it—to be responsible for it, to respond to it, to attend to it caringly. (1996b, 33-34, original emphasis)

What Casey calls the “scattered self” of postmodern society is matched with a “disarray of place” and exists as opposite to an encultured subject tilling her patch of earth. As places fall into disarray “they verge on an indifferent state that is reminiscent of nothing so much as space” (Casey 2001a, 684). Doreen Massey summarizes this view when she says that in the increasingly globalised, interconnected world, place understood as “local place” has come to be imbued with “totemic resonance” and symbolic political value (Massey 2005, 5). In this thesis where in-between spaces, spaces of transit and travel, and the possibilities of being out of place are posed as meaningful cultural experiences of being in the world, how can the space-place binary help us to understand such experiences?

This discussion of place is unavoidable in terms of such a question, however, as it directly addresses the issue of how we perceive and experience ourselves in relation to the world: socially, culturally, and politically. Place’s role, claims Massey, is ambiguous.

Horror at local exclusivities sits uneasily against support for the vulnerable struggling to defend their patch. While place is claimed, or rejected, in these arguments in a startling variety of ways, there are often shared undergirding assumptions: of place as closed, coherent, integrated as authentic, as “home”, a secure retreat; of space as somehow originally regionalised, as always-already divided up. And more than that again, they institute, implicitly but held within the very discourses that they mobilise, a counterposition, sometimes even a hostility, certainly an implicit imagination of different theoretical “levels” (of
the abstract versus the everyday, and so forth), between space on the one hand and place on the other. (Massey 2005, 6)

What would happen, Massey enquires, if we were to do away with the distinction, “all too appealing as it seems, between place (as meaningful, lived and everyday) and space (as what? the outside? the abstract? the meaningless)?” (ibid., original emphasis). To return to Massumi’s fold of synaesthetic cooperation, he uses this experiential example to challenge the basis of our understanding of spatiality. Developing an idea of the superfigure from Deleuze and Guattari, for Massumi the two identified sense-dimensions (vision and proprioception) represent two different kinds of spatial geometry: Euclidean and non-Euclidean. A Euclidean conception of space is positional, exoreferential, quantitative and static: “space as a triple-axis, coordinate box that contains things” (Massumi 2002, 185). In Euclidean terms time is a fourth dimension to space’s three, whereas in non-Euclidean terms time and space are inseparable. Non-Euclidean space is qualitative and dynamic, self-referential, and moving: “a topological hyperspace of transformation” (184).

Experience, Massumi argues, is a topological superfigure, as it has to be folded back on itself by twisting one sense-dimension into another and cross-referencing them both to that operation (ibid.). He explains further:

The overall topological figure is continuous and multiple. As transformation, it is defined by vectors rather than coordinate points. A vector is transpositional: a moving-through points. Because of its vectorial nature, the geometry of the topological superfigure cannot be separated from its duration. The figure is what runs through an infinity of static figures. It is not itself determinate, but determinable. Each static figure exceeds any of its discrete stations and even all of them taken together as an infinite set. This is because between any two points in Euclidean space, no matter how close, lies another definable point. The transformation joining the points in the same superfigure always fall between Euclidean points. It recedes, continuously, into the between. (184-185, original emphasis)

Space and place in Massumi’s terms are not directly opposed as Casey understands it, where space is “the volumetric void in which things (including human beings) are
positioned” and place is “the immediate environment of my lived body—an arena of action that is at once physical and historical, social and cultural” (Casey 2001a, 683). A portion of Massumi’s argument is against, as I discussed in the introduction to this dissertation and take up further in Part II, a positionality model within cultural theory. The observation that proprioception is more fundamental to spatial experience than cognitive mapping, Massumi argues, demonstrates that position emerges as a relation to movement, rather than movement being indexed to position (2002, 180).

Massumi also argues, however, that in terms of our spatial orientation, the line between perception and hallucination (as he calls his misplacing of rue St. Marc), or between real and abstract is far from clear. Developing his idea of synaesthetic cooperation further through the example of medical synaesthesia, he coins the term biogram to refer to the way synaesthetic forms are summoned into present perception to be recombined with a current movement-experience (186). Biograms exist in a liminal nonplace, “at the border of what we think of as internal, personal space and external public space. The appearance of the biogram is borderline in time as well” (Massumi 2002, 187). I discuss biograms more explicitly in relation to performing in audio walks in the following chapters, however in relation to the present discussion, biogrammatic space/place which is at once natural and cultural, internal and external, real and abstract cannot function within the oppositional framework Casey employs. Perhaps Casey gets closer to an accommodation of out of place experiences when he notes the possibility of conceiving of habitus as “a middle term” between lived place and the geographical self, as not merely routine but “improvisational and open to innovation,” and a "becoming of place” (Casey 2001a, 686-687). Casey argues that the re-enacting of habitus is lived out in relation to the changing spatiality we encounter; and as a thirdspace is “neither simply material nor sheerly mental in character”
In the In-between

Body meets place in time

(687). These two terms—habitus and biogram—will become key theoretical concepts in the following chapters.

WALKING IN THE CITY

Yi-Fu Tuan’s writing on space and place form an important precursor to and influence on Casey’s work, but in a passage discussing human spatial ability Tuan makes an observation similar to Massumi’s about navigation of the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

How do human beings acquire the ability to thread their way through a strange environment, such as unfamiliar city streets? Visual cues are of primary importance, but people are less dependent on imagery and on consciously held mental maps than they perhaps realize. (Tuan [1977] 2005, 70)

Citing experimental psychologist Warner Brown’s 1932 study of human subjects and their ability to navigate mazes, Tuan notes the results suggested subjects “can learn to negotiate a maze by integrating a succession of movements rather than a spatial configuration or map” (ibid.).

When the person who has learned a maze is asked to walk the same pattern on the open floor, the track he leaves bears only a slight resemblance to the original maze pattern. Elements of the track clearly resemble the correct course, but departures are conspicuous. Most blindfolded subjects, after having learned to tread the maze correctly, fail to apprehend that the plan is rectangular. Few subjects can recount the turns in order as “right” or “left.” A subject will attempt to recall the turns and then give up, saying, “I don’t know what comes next. I have to be there before I can tell you.” Drawings of the maze like the tracks made on the open floor, generally show correct representations of parts of the course, but they are badly executed as to angle and length. The drawn pattern departs so far from the actual course that it cannot be used as a map. (72, original emphasis)

Like Massumi, the subjects in Brown’s experiment stress that visual-cognitive mapping of space is a second order navigational strategy to the proprioceptive embodiment of doing it.

---

5 As stated earlier, Casey borrows the term Thirdspace from geographer Edward Soja, a space that is real-and-imagined, comparing it to his own preferred term place-world (2001a, 687). In another essay Casey admits that his earlier work could have given the term space “a broader berth, as do Lefebvre and Soja,” but this was largely an issue of semantics (Casey 2001b, 720). The distinction, he argues, is a heuristic rather than a metaphysical absolute (ibid.). I discuss Soja’s Thirdspace in more depth in Chapter 8.
Walking in the city and how we might know and map that walking is a central proposition in my analysis of audio walking performances. Walking is the methodology, we could say, of enacting place in these performances; but as I will argue, the embodied action of walking also becomes a way in which to interrogate what it means to be a particular body in or out of place, a questioning of habitus or the seemingly natural way in which I am a body. Place. Body. Time. All three are required for engagement with an audio walking tour of the kind I discuss in the next two chapters. They are the raw materials that prove flexible and malleable, a messy interrelatedness and occasional congruence occurring between them. "I am not in space and time, nor do I conceive space and time; I belong to them, my body combines with them and includes them.[...] The synthesis of both time and space is a task that always has to be performed afresh" (Merleau-Ponty [1962] 2002, 162). The practice of audio walking reveals the workings of this synthesis—both cracking open and performing the relationship between space, place and embodied action—and thereby tapping into the processes of lived experience in thoughtful ways.

My discussion of the place-space binary has so far been posed as a relation of local and lived to the abstract void. Throughout this dissertation such binary frameworks are put under stress and complicated with notions of being out of or between spaces and in non-place, no more so than in terms of walking in the city. Michel de Certeau’s chapter “Walking in the City” in The Practice of Everyday Life ([1984] 1988) memorably begins atop New York’s World Trade Centre, from the vantage point of “a solar Eye, looking down like a god” (92). Such a totalising gaze puts the viewer at a distance, he argues, transforming the world beneath into a text to be read and the viewer into a voyeur (ibid.). This panorama-city, however, is merely a theoretical simulacrum, a picture “whose condition of possibility is an oblivion and a misunderstanding of practice” (93). Ordinary practitioners of the city occupy the streets, where de Certeau claims they are below the threshold of visibility; and
their mode of occupying the city—of experiencing it—is through walking. These two opposing positions, the voyeur and the walker, relate to social structures of power and the possibilities for individual agency: on ground level a “chorus of idle footsteps” makes up an “innumerable collection of singularities. Their intertwined paths give their shape to spaces. They weave places together. In that respect, pedestrian movements form one of these ‘real systems whose existence in fact makes up the city.’ They are not localized; it is rather they that spatialize” (97). The city is constituted by the activity and actions of passers-by, “the act itself of passing-by” (ibid.).

De Certeau’s use of space (espace) in his text is similarly distinct from how he conceives of place (lieu); the relation, however, is quite reversed from that made by Casey.6 For de Certeau, place is in the order of a configuration of points, and indicates stability ([1984] 1988, 117). On the other hand,

a space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. (ibid., original emphasis)

In short de Certeau claims, “space is a practiced place” (ibid.), more commensurate with Casey’s place, as the arena of action immediately surrounding a lived body, or what Henri Lefebvre called lived space within his trialectic of perceived, conceived, and lived spatiality (1991). These comparisons are not identical, however; de Certeau’s place is a determination “ultimately reducible to the being there of something dead,” while space is a “determination through operations which, when they are attributed to a stone, tree, or human being, specify ‘spaces’ by the actions of historical subjects” (de Certeau [1984] 1988, 118, original emphasis). The distinction here is an order of mobility. Space which allows for

---

6 De Certeau likens his use of place to Merleau-Ponty “geographical” space, and his space to Merleau-Ponty’s “anthropological” space. Despite differences in terminology, Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of spatial perception is also a key influence to Casey’s work (see de Certeau [1984] 1988, 117-118).
movement in Tuan’s definition is *actuated* by movement in de Certeau’s meaning. That is, space and time exist in a relation of mutual inclusion, as Massumi’s definition of the fold of experience states (2002, 185).

The mutual inclusion of site-specific and time-based practices is one way of defining the development of performance art and live art over the last half-century. Critic Harold Rosenberg has said of Jackson Pollock’s drip paintings (a precursor to the performance art movement of the 1960s) that “what was to go onto the canvas was not a picture but an event” (Rosenberg in Kaye 2000, 107); the performative event of Pollack’s movement or gesture over the canvas became his mapped pathway of which the painting is the reminder.7 In this light, the drip paintings can be likened to the work of British sculptor Richard Long for whom walking and the idea of pathway are key organising metaphors. Tim Edensor writes that several of Long’s works “bring together the notion that walking is a way of being in the world that combines an experience of the sensual, the serendipitous and the irruptive body during a passage among a material nature” (Edensor 2000, 104). In *One Hour: A Sixty-Minute Circle Walk on Dartmoor* (1984), Long recreates a circular walk during which he collected “the sensations felt and experienced by the body, its movements, the noises and other impacts it makes on nature, the texture and shape of the terrain, the serendipity of things stumbled upon, heard and sighted” (105). There are many foundational artists of Western twentieth century performance who have adopted walking in particular as a critical and creative activity, as both a medium and trope of their work. In the 1980s performance artist Tehching Hsieh engaged in a series of “One Year Performances” (1978-1986), and while Hsieh’s series is generally thematised as durational (as the title suggests), the pieces often utilised everyday practices such as walking as well

---

7 Rebecca Solnit notes that Allan Kaprow saw Pollack’s influence as a shift in emphasis “from painting as an aesthetic object to a 'diaristic gesture’” (Solnit 2000, 268).
as time as their medium. For example, during *The Outdoor Piece* from 1981-82, the third in the series, Hsieh spent the entire year out of doors, much of it walking the streets of New York City (his vow was to not enter any building or roofed structure).\(^8\)

The use of pedestrian movement was a democratising ideal of the 1960s choreographers and dancers associated with Judson Church. Sally Banes notes that Steve Paxton directly adopted unstylised pedestrian actions in order to critique the elitism of classical ballet and modern dance: “for everyone walks, and anyone's way of walking is valid for that person” (Banes paraphrasing Paxton in Banes 1993, 91). This strategy of pedestrian movement from postmodern dance continues to be influential in contemporary dance and dance-theatre. Recently in Australia, for example, dancer Martin del Amo spent twenty-four hours walking the streets of greater Sydney gathering experiential material he would later develop into a solo performance work titled *It’s a Jungle Out There* (2009).

The audio walks I discuss in the next two chapters similarly draw upon the mobile spatiality of walking in the city, the residual traces of movement made and space created as an outcome of the human body orienting, situating, and temporizing it (in de Certeau’s words). Unlike the works above, however, where the action of walking is done by the artist and represented to the viewer after the fact, through documentary photographs and ephemera or through staged and painted reinterpretations, the audio walks I discuss are participatory, mobile experiences: we experience the role of the walker, and we come to understand the role of walking in the work through the action of walking. Long’s representation of his one hour walk on Dartmoor is just that, a two-dimensional

---

\(^8\) See Heathfield and Hsieh (2009) for more on the work of Tehching Hsieh. See also Solnit (2000, 267-276) for other foundational artworks from the 1960s to 1980s which posed walking as art, including Robert Smithson’s *Spiral Jetty* (1970), Stanley Brouwn’s performative experiments with maps (1960) and counting his daily steps (1972), Mona Hatoum’s stencilled footprints (1985-1986), and Marina Abramović and Ulay’s *Great Wall Walk* (1988) among others.
representation of his walk distilled into signifiers: written words representing experiences arranged to inscribe a perfect circle. While many witnesses to Hsieh's one year outdoors might have encountered him on the streets between September 1981 and September 1982, most will know the piece through its residual documentation, photographs and maps Hsieh made over the course of the year. Audio walks are about being dropped down into the world, about de Certeau's "passing-by."

AUDIOWALKING IN THE CITY

Overall, this dissertation seeks to describe the corporeal experience of being out of place, or between places, or in non-place. This in-between experience is posed as kinaesthetically and spatially construed; but I also ask whether such a "lost" dimension, as Massumi calls it, might form a key phenomenal experience of performing interculturality. The next two chapters focus on performances of in-betweenness within audiowalking, a genre of performance which I suggest provides potentially useful new ways for thinking about in-between embodiments. What I am calling the audio walk genre of performance is variously called audio walks, soundwalks, sound walks, and more generally locative art. The productions I refer to here have a specific set of commonalities within a broader category of works which utilise recorded sound, played back in a specific location or route. The walking is fundamental. What I am calling audio walks use the recorded soundtrack as a guide to walking a designated path; these are not the stop-and-listen guides that abound in museums or major tourist attractions such as The Forbidden City. In particular, I focus on audio walks in which the participant is asked to walk "with" and walk "as" a narrator on the soundtrack, a subset of the genre. As I mentioned earlier, the next two chapters draw

9There are many locative works where the intimacy of walking/moving with someone else is paramount, but which do not invite walking as the narrator: e.g. Blast Theory's Rider Spoke (2009) an interactive cycling tour of the northern end of Sydney's CBD. In his review of the work David Williams notes that the level of intimacy revealed in the stories you listen to encourages similar sharing, building a close relationship: "at the request of
upon five years of research engaging with these performances as a participant. My methodology, as in the rest of the dissertation, is participatory. I use my own experiences of the walks, as well as experiments with making my own walk and re-placing walks in locations they were not designed for, in order to crack open how space and bodies function in these performances, and to examine them in relation to embodied experiences of out-of-place-ness and in-betweenness.

As mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, my use of the terms place and space does not subscribe to any one of the particular frameworks discussed so far. Rather, like Doreen Massey, I am interested in testing what would happen if we were to do away with maintaining the distinction, or at least muddy the notion that they are separate orders of spatiality. I put the existing discourse to work in service of explicating what is happening in the examples discussed; my aim is unabashedly to exploit the heterogeneity of opinion available rather than enforce one view over another. Having said this, my unqualified use of “place” generally refers to a local, located place; however my use of “space” attempts to be mobile and flexible more in keeping with de Certeau’s espace. I also pose the open term “space” to be useful in exploring experiences between internal, external, and peri-personal spatiality.

In Chapter 2 I develop the discussion of place and space in connection to the audio walk performance genre to explore a relationship between body and space meeting in motion. I focus on the audio walks of Canadian artist Janet Cardiff, in particular her walk of New York’s Central Park titled Her Long Black Hair. Incorporating retellings of Cardiff’s

the recorded voice, I stop and record a description of myself, feeling for some reason the need to be entirely honest” (Williams 2009, 32). This performance shows that altered experiences of time and space might be a feature of locative art in general—“as I ride ever onward, time begins to feel out of sync, and my travels somehow out of space” (Williams 2009, 32)—but here I am focussing explicitly on works in which an interpersonal and/or intercultural inhabitation is implied.
nightmares and memories, observations of people you pass by, instructions of where to go or what to do, and general philosophical musings, this artwork utilises the idea of place as saturated with events and perceptions, emotions and associations. Stories are coloured by background music and other atmospheric sounds, recorded binaurally. Binaural recording is a technique which uses two small microphones positioned on either side of a head (either worn in the ears or attached to headphones to approximate the position of ears, or attached to a hand-held “dummy” head) to capture, in a specific location, the intricate manoeuvres of sound waves wrapping around the head before reaching the ears. When played back in the same configuration (i.e. through headphones), the result is hearing the way that ears in the three-dimensional world normally hear: spatially located (and place-invoking) sound. All this, though, is fused to being in and listening to the live sounds of the real-world environment you are guided through, suggesting place as a layered, historically-soaked thing constituting and constituted by our memories and imaginings, and our passage through them. In connection with the ideas of space and place offered by de Certeau, Mirjam Schaub writes that a “space familiar to us from our everyday excursions and walks ‘shapes itself’ around us. It acquires a personal and emotional geography that functions as an affective framework for memories and expectations to take on quasi-spatial qualities” (in Cardiff and Schaub 2005, 94). In walks like Cardiff’s, the affective and multi-temporal inner spaces of the walker laminate to the external spaces of the environment around them, showing that experience lives on in memory and place to be reactivated and refashioned endlessly, “performed afresh” in Merleau-Ponty’s terminology ([1962] 2002, 162), and that time can be stretched and flattened, expanded and contracted through the diachronic layers of place.

As I will show, however, Cardiff’s audio walk also instigates an intercorporeal spatiality between the narrator and the participant, which requires the walker to embody a space
between two walks and between two bodies. Chapter 3 focuses more explicitly on this interstitial embodiment—a kind of being out of place and out of time—developing an argument for how such being might be indicative of an intercultural spatiality and movement. Referencing the work of New York-based tourist company Soundwalk, and their audio walk of New York’s Chinatown in particular, I examine how their culturally-placed literalisation of “walk in my shoes” attempts to create a situation in which the walker embodies a culturally-placed “other.” The Chinatown walk is narrated by Jami Gong, a native resident of the area, and the walk guides us through his local streets. More than a tourist production which purports to give tourists an insider’s tour, however, Jami Gong instructs us “to be Chinese” (Soundwalk 2005). I argue that whether or not such embodiment could be achieved (and in my experience it is not), the audio walk succeeds in putting pressure on the second-nature character of our habitual movements through the city, denaturalising our own cultural performance. This intercultural encounter occupies a space between Jami and the walker, but also between the walker’s own habitual and no-longer-habitual corporealities. This space is one that works at the peri-personal level of the body, and, I suggest, is actuated (to use de Certeau’s words) through a particular ensemble of movements.
Central Park, New York, August 2005

We are sitting on a bench. A motley crew of workday lunchers, people watchers, readers, and phone talkers brought together by a casual commonality. There are a few among us from our performance class, sitting in a row, mirroring the line of pedicab drivers opposite—a jovial group.

We line up at the Public Art Fund’s lime green cart. I trade my never-used driver’s license (always the pedestrian these days) for headset, map and a packet of photographs. I return to my seat on the bench. Try to resist the urge to peek at my photographs, and look anyway. I fit the headphones around my ears. Press play. Discover that sitting here on this bench at Sixth Avenue and Central Park South is where this walking tour begins.

An assault of sounds from all directions augment those of the city beyond my headphones. Sirens wail, heading west along 59th Street. Applause from an unseen audience. A lively marching band strikes up behind me, somewhere down by the pond, and then fades away. I know that the audio walk utilises binaural recording. I laugh at Cardiff’s cleverness, aware of the technology, but still can’t help turning around to check what is (not) really there. A taste of what is to come: events from the near and far past combine with those made in the
moment. Sounds from all directions—spatially, temporally—dis/orientate us to the rules of our new environment. We are going places. (Even here on the bench.)

Janet tells me to stand, to begin walking. “Walk to the sound of my footsteps,” she says. I do. Her stride is comfortable.¹

The Canadian artist Janet Cardiff is well-known for her audio walks. She has made twenty-four since 1991, commissioned by museums and galleries for locations across North and South America, Europe and the United Kingdom. Always site-specific, Cardiff’s walks are deceptively minimal: given headphones, a portable player, and set on your way, the walks are highly mediated tours measured in auditory footsteps, set invisibly amongst the everyday goings on of her chosen environment.

Cardiff is a sculptor of sound. Both her catalogue of audio walks and the installations she produces in partnership with George Bures Miller use spatially deployed sound as their common medium. In this chapter, however, I focus on the experiential and moving aspect of the audio walks to examine how place and mobility are working together to construct corporeal and environmental (internal and external) spatialities. I focus in particular on Cardiff’s forty-five-minute audio walking tour of New York’s Central Park, Her Long Black Hair. Commissioned by the Public Art Fund it was originally presented in 2004, and offered again in 2005 from 16 June to 11 September. This audio walk incorporates experiments with movement and bodily senses, and like much of Cardiff’s other work, is suggestive of memory and dream worlds, creating alternate scapes where chases, searches, deaths and narrow escapes are common, and the line between dreamt and real events is deliberately

¹ Throughout this chapter all unattributed quotations within these separately typeset recollections (or regenerations) of my walking of Her Long Black Hair are from Cardiff’s script (Cardiff 2004).
unclear. More than just the narrator of the soundtrack participants are given, Cardiff fills the role of archaeologist, excavator, landscaper, time traveller, cartographer, storyteller, guide, and walker. History, place, and travel are all themes implicated in the work.

While the participant’s interface with Cardiff is auditory and what the artist "makes" is ostensibly an edited soundtrack, I argue that the event and experience of her audio walks is a production of participation. In other words, the multi-sensory, immersive, and personalised nature of the tour works because of what you bring to it: you are an integral player. I mean this quite literally in the sense that your participation includes your physicality, your materiality, and your time: your forty-five minutes of body walking the walk makes the tour happen. But I also mean this more expansively: in its walking you are encouraged to become aware of your own orientation and spatialisation of the world around (and within) you. The walk is constituted by your willingness to follow along, the things you notice, associations you make, and memories you recall: your own, enacted "spatial trajectory" (de Certeau [1984] 1988, 115) mapped onto Cardiff’s. It is, in a very real sense, a co-production.

**FALLING IN AND OUT OF STEP**

Walking, Rebecca Solnit suggests, “is a state in which the mind, the body, and the world are aligned, as though they were three characters finally in conversation together, three notes suddenly making a chord” (Solnit 2000, 5). Walking is the performative mode of *Her Long Black Hair*, a perambulatory mechanism through which you engage with the tour as well as

---

2 The recurring themes of loss and absence in *Her Long Black Hair* have been commented on by Marla Carlson in her article on walking in New York post 11 September 2001 (Carlson 2006).

3 David Pinder also notes in connection with Cardiff’s walk *The missing voice (case study B)* (1999) that the work is a combination of the artwork and the consciousness of the participant, meaning everyone’s experience is highly specific: the walk “will clearly not be experienced by people in the same way” (Pinder in Butler 2006, 896).
one of Cardiff’s major narrative threads: “walking is very calming, one step after another one—one foot moving into the future and one in the past, our bodies caught in the middle” (Cardiff 2004).

Central Park, New York, August 2005

With Cardiff’s calm, seductive voice in my ear and her feet stepping along with my feet, I am invited to see and experience the city of New York, specifically its Central Park, differently. I feel a sense of secret and guilty delight—I am doing things outside of expected normal urban behaviour: I lick my finger and touch it to my cheek; I stop in the middle of this busy footpath, turn, and begin to walk backwards; I walk with eyes closed (something I would not normally do alone in the city but which seems okay since Janet is with me). There is a heightened sense of myself both as part of, and apart from, the world around me; I wonder if I look odd, or if perhaps I am invisible to others. I vacillate, undecided, between the two.

I am coming to the end of this path. “Turn left,” Janet guides me, just in time. She points out the ice cream seller up ahead—yes, I see him—and then conjures peanut sellers, tightrope walkers. I hear the shooting of scavengers, pigs who were supposed to eat the rubbish in the streets but who preferred the fertile grounds of the park. “This very moment there is an organ-grinder down in the street playing and singing—it is wonderful, it is the accidental and insignificant things in life which are significant,” Kierkegaard’s words from 1841.

Scale comes into play as I walk along a path with trees as old as the Civil War—suddenly I am very small along this timeline that Cardiff makes elastic; stretching it to encompass the long ago and the more recent past when she walked this walk, the now of me. My feet are awash in the creek that this path used to be, and I am reminded of the giant earth art project that is Olmstead’s Central Park. I walk in step with others: with Baudelaire on the streets of Paris and the slave Harry Thomas in the frantic rustle of a dead-of-night escape.

Nineteenth century Danish philosopher and theologian Søren Kierkegaard was an avid walker. In a letter to his niece Kierkegaard advised, “above all, do not lose your desire to walk: every day I walk myself into a state of well-being and walk away from every illness; I
have walked myself into my best thoughts, and I know of no thought so burdensome that one can not walk away from it." (Kierkegaard in Hong and Hong 1978, 412). The notion that walking and thinking are connected goes back to Ancient Greece; Athens was purportedly a great pedestrian's city, in which the Sophists practised a pedestrian philosophising. Later schools of philosophy, both the Peripatetics and the Stoics, were so named for the colonnades they walked while thinking (Solnit 2000, 15).

The figure of Kierkegaard walking the streets of Copenhagen also reverberates in those of Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin, *flâneurs* on the streets and in the arcades of Paris. Baudelaire's *flâneur* described a stroller, a participant in modern street life, but also a detached observer for whom, “the crowd is his domain, just as the air is the bird’s, and water that of the fish. His passion and his profession is to merge with the crowd” (Baudelaire 1972, 399). Baudelaire is a recurring character in *Her Long Black Hair*, the title of which refers to an unknown woman in a series of photographs participants are given at the beginning of the walk. Cardiff guides the walker to locations in Central Park where these snapshots have been taken, and the search for these locations forms a backdrop—a ruse—for the particular route. The walk's title tangentially refers to Baudelaire's mistress who had long black hair, but this association with Baudelaire also invokes *flâneurie* as a spatial practice and cultural action relational to the audio walk.

The *flâneur* walks with no other direction than to go where the streets take him. Male, urban, and bourgeois, he is a product, like the tourist, of modernity. Embodying the characteristics of the metropolitan type famously described by Georg Simmel in his essay “The Metropolis and Mental Life”, he has a certain reserve and “blasé outlook” which

---

4 See Fischer (2008) for a discussion of the walk’s use of photography.

5 Lena Hammergren, for example, notes the figure of the *flâneur* essentially accounts for male experience, “since they had the freedom to drift alone in the cities, whereas women were confined to private spaces,” with the notable exception of prostitutes (1996, 54).
allows him to retain some feeling of individuality amongst the new crowds of society (Simmel [1903] 2002). Interpretations of flâneurie inevitably centre on Walter Benjamin’s *The Arcades Project* (1999), but as Rebecca Solnit notes, this large and final project of Benjamin’s does not so much define what a flâneur is, as associate him with certain contexts and features in the collection of notes Benjamin left on his death: associations with “leisure, with crowds, with alienation or detachment, with observation, with walking [...]” (Solnit 2000, 199). But the blasé outlook Simmel describes as an indifference to the distinctions between things which instead appear “as homongeneous, flat and grey [in] colour with no one of them worthy of being preferred to another” (Simmel [1903] 2002, 14), is posed differently in Benjamin’s note about boredom and the flâneur.

Boredom is a warm gray fabric lined on the inside with the most lustrous and colorful of silks. In this fabric we wrap ourselves when we dream. We are at home then in the arabesques of its lining. Existence in these spaces flows then without accent, like the events in dreams. Flânerie is the rhythmics of this slumber. (Benjamin 1999, 399)

The flâneur’s walking falls between introspection and observation, and between solitary and social activity; a practice of kaleidoscopic colour, a reverie or poetics of walking that generates solitary and social spaces.

The pedestrian of Michel de Certeau’s city is a much more politicised figure. In the previous chapter I introduced de Certeau’s concept of the city as actualised through ground level footsteps, the trajectories and crossing vectors of passers-by. This idea is fundamental to de Certeau’s distinction between place as the “being there of something dead” and space as determinable through “the actions of *historical subjects*” ([1984] 1988, 118, original

---

<sup>6</sup> The tension between new forms of cultural life emerging in the metropolis and nostalgia for a simpler, rural way of life is evident in this essay. Writing as Simmel is on the heels of the great urban expansion brought by nineteenth century industrialisation in the Western world, anxiety over the loss of the individual against an increasing social mass, a theme also apparent in Kierkegaard’s writings, is encapsulated in Simmel’s opening sentence: “the deepest problems of modern life flow from the attempt of the individual to maintain the independence and individuality of his existence against the sovereign powers of society, against the weight of the historical heritage and the external culture and the technique of life” (Simmel [1903] 2002, 11).
emphasis). Place is the dominion of an all-seeing, totalising gaze which disappears the everyday practices and operations which constitute space. Comparing the act of walking within the urban system to a speech act within language, de Certeau claims walking as “a space of enunciation,” arguing that it is a process in which the pedestrian appropriates the topographical system, and a spatial acting out of place which implies relations among differentiated positions (97-98). Walking thus “writes” the city; it is the performative text of the city.

Walking affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects, etc., the trajectories it “speaks.” All the modalities sing a part in this chorus, changing from step to step, stepping in through proportions, sequences, and intensities which vary according to the time, the path taken and the walker. These enunciatory operations are of an unlimited diversity. They therefore cannot be reduced to their graphic trail. (99)

The strict geometry of streets made by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers (117); and this walking forms “spatial trajectories,” stories which traverse, organise and link places and “make sentences and itineraries out of them” (115). The world is viewed differently (but also constructed and conceived differently) at the scale of the pedestrian, when compared with de Certeau’s totalising, panoptic eye. Pedestrians have access to people, sights, smells, spaces—a whole range of bodily experiences—that come about through being dropped in the world, of experiencing the world through de Certeau’s “passing-by” (97).

In New York, as with many cities, being the pedestrian is most often an experience of being small in comparison to the surrounding architecture, to the size of the city itself, to its mass
of commerce, production, and crowds. A walking tour is an authored map but on a pedestrian scale, where the geometric network of the grid gives way to an impression of the streets by way of one’s passage through them. This is the distinction de Certeau means between “map” and “itinerary”, a focus on structures rather than actions. These are, he argues, two symbolic and anthropological languages of space, and two poles of experience ([1984] 1988, 119). In walking, details of history, gossip, and daily drama are of import; the itinerary is peopled with stories. The cast of characters Luc Sante brings to life in Low Life (1991), his cultural history of nineteenth century New York’s underbelly—the drifters, the homeless, the underclass, the thieves, the orphans and more—must rely on the city’s extreme disparity of scale for their very existence. You need dark alleys and corners shadowed by the towers of the city in order to be ignored or forgotten, or to hide, to skulk, to be up to no good.

New York, August 2005

Eurydice died from the bite of a snake, Janet reminds me. And with a jolt I remember the teenaged boy standing opposite me on the subway just an hour or so earlier: his pet snake coiling its thick body around his hand, wrist, and forearm; the biting end nestled adoringly in the boy’s curved palm. One of those uncanny coincidences again, I suppose. I circle back to Kierkegaard: “it is the accidental and insignificant things...”

A bite of Eurydice. A bite of an apple. Snakes everywhere it seems, and so too, great falls: Eurydice falls to the underworld and Eve falls from grace, and I too in my act of walking fall again and again, the predicament of the biped, balanced so precariously in this upward stance.

“The animal kingdom has nothing else like this column of flesh and bone always in danger of toppling, this proud unsteady tower,” Rebecca Solnit writes. “Children begin to walk to chase desires no one will fulfil for them: the desire for that which is out of reach, for freedom, for independence from the secure confines of the maternal Eden. And so walking begins as
delayed falling, and the fall meets with the Fall” (2000, 32-33). Was Eurydice walking in a garden when the snake sent her falling towards Hades?

Why is it that this walk, with only one foot in the real and one in the virtual, reminds me so really, bodily of me? The answer is in the wet saliva on my cheek, in the bead of sweat forming high on my forehead where the day’s hot sun meets my hairline. It is in the actual walk, the muscles of my legs that flex and contract, the speed of my moving bringing a slight breeze to my wet skin. Walking is that thing that links the body to space, through time. It is choreography at three miles per hour.

Walking in Cardiff’s world is a particular mode of spatialisation, a way to access the dream-like flow of Benjamin’s flâneurie or the “deep layers we only see in our dreams” (Cardiff 2004). As such, audio walks have also been often associated with Guy Debord’s theory of dérive, literally to “drift”, and the Situationists’ attempts to draw psychogeographies of the city. Guy Debord writes in *Theory of the Dérive* (1956):

> From the dérive point of view cities have a psychogeographical relief, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes which strongly discourage entry or exit from certain zones. (Debord in Butler 2006, 893)

Drifting through the city was a coming to awareness of this relief, and of a more embodied relation to experiencing the city. Cardiff’s walk asks us to confront our own memories and the memories of place that history holds for us, imagined memories perhaps, of death and dismemberment, homelessness and disappearance and regret—dark memories. *Her Long Black Hair* is a meditation on time, remembrance, and presence as well as on walking, reminding us of the body’s place within the layers of the city.

When I first walked Cardiff’s *Her Long Black Hair* in Central Park I was overwhelmed by my
feeling of heightened sensory experience, of the external world made technicolour. However, the walk also highlighted my participation in the construction of the experience; it highlighted my body in its biological or anatomical, as well as culturally and socially scripted incarnations. The circumstance of walking in a place that was familiar to me (I lived nearby for several years and had walked the area many times) and also unfamiliar (Janet drew my attention to things I had never noticed before, including things deep below ground and only “see”-able in the mind’s eye or ear), gave me an intensely heightened sensation of being my body in the world. Tim Edensor argues that Romantic origins of modern walking are evident in the feeling that the activity is “designed to achieve a reflexive awareness of the self, and particularly the body and the senses” (Edensor 2000, 82). The senses both experience and structure space, he continues, “the body is the means then by which we experience and feel the world [...]” (100). My heightened sense awareness could be attributed to the act of my walking, but the contextual setting for this walk has, I argue, a peculiar spatiality: something strange happens in the world of the audio walk. My feeling of intensity in my perception of the real world around me was produced by the sense input of another virtual world; the sounds of Janet’s virtual body increased the solid bulk of mine. I was in a doubled space.

This trick is partly one of technology; Cardiff’s use of a binaural recording on location has the effect, as I outlined in the last chapter, of spatialising the recorded sound when played back through headphones. This technique serves to confuse your perceptual abilities and you must rely on more than just your hearing in order to orient yourself: a whole body of senses must be employed. You are constantly falling into Massumi’s cross-referencing fold of experience, moving between sense-dimensions. But in this situation, the cross-

---

9 George Bures Miller, Cardiff’s partner and producer of the walks, describes them as “MSG for the senses” (Miller in Cardiff and Schaub 2005, 24).
referencing fails to confirm what we hear in what we see, what we feel with what we hear, and where we are with... where we are.

*Her Long Black Hair* compels you to see through what you hear, and to feel what you see. There is no clear hierarchy, rather, sense-dimensions work through a cooperative sensorium, a “complex manifold of simultaneous impressions” (Pearson and Shanks 2001, 54). The tricks Cardiff plays on your hearing, while disrupting your assurance that what you hear is really there, cause you to realign your sense of balance. Her phantom footsteps, once aligned to mine, actually assure me of my physical presence. The sound of snipping shears dangerously close to my collar cause me to touch the back of my neck. I see and smell things with double the potency as Janet describes them to me. I am hyper-attuned to the temperature of the air surrounding me, as well as the moments when I fall out of step. I experience visceral, intersubjective déjá vu when Janet says, “there’s a man on the bench reading the paper” (Cardiff 2004), and there really is a man on the bench reading the paper. There are two rubrics we can explore in order to understand this doubled, folded, synchronising but not quite synchronised spatialisation or orientation: Massumi’s work indicates one already alluded to, synaesthesia; the other is synchronicity.

**MAPPING SPACE AND TIME**

The audio walk plots a specific route through a specific place; the listener negotiates the geographical, architectural and temporal spaces of the real and remembered worlds. In an effort to further understand the role that location and route plays in an audio walk I took research to practice, making an audio walk of my own called *A Place Called Lost* (2006) by utilising what I had learned from Cardiff.
721 Broadway, New York, May 2006

This is an audio walk. These walks always tend to be tied to place, a rumination on or exposition of place. But I started wondering what if they weren’t? What if it was about placelessness, an any place or no place.

A narrow gap left between two buildings just wide enough for a small child.
A crack, an interstice, a place lost between two others.
A waiting room.

I wanted to question the role of place in the audio walk, setting out to make a walk based on placelessness. I took walkers to passageways and basement stairs: anywhere, nowhere, in-between spaces. We stop on a mid-flight step (neither top nor bottom); I talk of being overseas and missing the death of my grandmother, of not being able to find my way home; I tell stories of being lost at sea. Thematically, I posed placelessness as an in-between (not detached from place but between places), creating its own character, its own sense of being in the world. Practically, I found that places’ measurements and their spatialised features and dimensions are inextricably bound to the walk and its accompanying soundtrack.

The audio walk is most definitely a site-specific art. Mapping the route is in itself a complicated task. Timing and safety are important. (Will you slip on the stairs? Is there too much traffic? Not enough? Will you get lost?) I walked the spaces of New York University’s Tisch building (where A Place Called Lost takes place) over and over, observing the interesting and banal features of its interior. Measuring its dimensions: five steps from the bench to the door; four then turn then three then turn then eighteen then stop. The stories

---

10 For example, renovation to the sixth floor of the Tisch School of Arts Building at 721 Broadway in 2007 has permanently "outdated" A Place Called Lost; but also, when I walked Her Long Black Hair in 2005 I had to hurriedly find an alternate route over the stairs at Bethesda Terrace rather than walk through the passage underneath as directed on the 2004 recording, as it was closed for renovation.
I told needed to unfold in place, against the metronome of footsteps; and often I ran out of steps mid-sentence, prompting re-writing and re-routing.

In preparation, I pored over the transcript of *Her Long Black Hair*, attempting to dissect it into a basic "score": a steady march of time across the X-axis and an ever-increasing stave of themes and storylines along the Y. The list of narrative threads alone remained unfinished at:

- finding photos
- Harry Thomas
- Baudelaire and his mistress
- Janet's memories of NY
- Janet's dream fragments
- man and his mother
- Orpheo and Eurydice
- Iraqi father and murdered daughters
- death, loss
- landscape of the park
- history, history of the park
- time (coincidences, inventions, ephemeralities)
- walking

I wanted to unhinge the tracks Cardiff layered together, but montage, as Mike Pearson and Micheal Shanks remind us, is an unstable set of links in a state of constant assembly and disassembly (Pearson and Shanks 2001, 52). Both in the making and in the walking, the journey seemed to rely on a good dose of coincidence, chance, and serendipitous construction.

I learned that the text—whether simple navigational instructions, descriptions of the surroundings, historical information, personal reflection, or semi-fictional stories—more often than not satisfied more than one thematic category. That is, timing (pace) and location (place) in the walk performed the narrative just as much as the stories I included.

Walking is a spatial acting out, a kind of narrative, and the paths and places direct our choreography. This regular moving from one point to another is a
kind of mapping, a kind of narrative understanding. (Pearson in Pearson and Shanks 2001, 138)

I learned that I had to maintain a balance between identifying/navigational information and expository/thematic stories. Some stories needed specific kinds of spaces in which to happen, and some stories came about as a result of spaces in which I found myself. And how to get from here to there was as much emotional as temporal or physical.

Midway through *A Place Called Lost*, I take the walker on a long descent down a rather featureless stairwell while retelling a dream I had about travelling underground to the planet's core. Having scouted possible routes, I already knew that I wanted to use the stairwell: it had great big echoing sound, and its grey banality had thematic resonance. It was also practical: I needed to get from one floor to another and didn’t want the unpredictability of waiting for an elevator to upset the timing of the walk. I had written a draft of the text and knew I needed a relatively lengthy number of footsteps unbroken by navigational instruction. The repetitive banality of the stairwell worked in counterpoint to the rich fantasy of the dream, and the regular sound of my footsteps (nine steps, two steps, landing, four steps…) recorded binaurally onsite, let walkers place themselves without the need for me to interject with “keep going,” “turn here,” or similar instructions used at other junctures.11

I had identified from Cardiff how important the soundtrack of actual footsteps recorded onsite along the walking route is to the audio walk; and through my own experimentation realised how her pre-recorded steps became the soundtrack to the participant's. That is, the spatially accurate binaural recording not only maps the walk's route, but also maps the

---

11 Many outdoor walking tours, for example the Soundwalk neighbourhood tours or Sounds for Sights tours, unavoidably cross roads and negotiate other traffic hazards. It is common in such recordings to be instructed to wait at the light, cross the street, and advance to the next track when you get to location X. The feeling of synchronisation and environmental immersion is not the same in these cases, however, leading to a more stop-and-listen-type guide.
In the previous chapter I outlined Brian Massumi’s argument for the cooperative way in which self-referential proprioception and exoreferential visual mapping work together in our orientations (see p. 32). Discord between sense-dimensions during cross-referencing is what happens when we are lost; at these times one sense-dimension can act as a corrective for another. In the doubled space of the audio walk moments of synchronisation make the effort of navigation and the doubled space I occupy recede from my perception as if I was performing habitual moves, but moments of what seem like uncanny synchronicity spin me into a kind of time-space vertigo not unlike the physically alarming response Massumi describes when we realise we are lost. The paradox is that at the same time as I become aware of falling into the doubled space, my sensory perception either side of the fold is amped up. My skin prickles and I feel my heart applying pressure on the internal surfaces of my chest cavity. The grass smells grassier. The visible is more visible. The invisible is more visible. My practices of making and walking audio walks led me to realise this happens precisely when timing or placement is a little out of alignment. There is a special
kind of mapping going on here. Returning to de Certeau's distinction between the map and itinerary, he argues:

It is true that the operations of walking on can be traced on city maps in such a way as to transcribe their paths (here well-trodden, there very faint) and their trajectories (going this way and not that). But these thick or thin curves only refer, like words, to the absence of what has passed by. Surveys of routes miss what was: the act itself of passing by. (de Certeau [1984] 1988, 97)

While the audio walk "object" (the recording) is a kind of map, a survey of a route, it is also a performative re-enacting of the very "operations" of walking a given route.

In the book *Site-Specific Art*, Nick Kaye talks of two different kinds of maps, related to the separate artistic practices of installation artist Robert Smithson and choreographer Meredith Monk. Smithson referred to his gallery installations as Non-Sites, defined by the artist as the inverse to and a limited mapping of the original, unfenced and unbounded landscape or environment (the Site) (Kaye 2000, 93). Viewers walk the Non-Site map in the gallery, echoing Smithson as he walked through quarries, deserts, and other landscapes. In terms of the relationship between these two different but related walks, Nick Kaye asserts, "the Non-Site foregrounds its indexical function as a map, its mechanisms of referral, and deferral, over and above any claim to present the properties of place" (94).

Similarly, in Monk’s 1969 piece *Juice*, which was performed in three sections, in three locations, and over three months, Kaye comments, "one space and site acts as the map and memory of another" (122).

I started thinking about the idea of residue. Something left behind or coming after a process has ended... The past and present in one piece. A map. A map is always used as a guide, a reference before (sometimes during) travel. In this piece, the map would be a continuous process (during the piece) and a residue of the process of the entire piece. (Monk in Kaye 2000, 120, emphasis in original)
Monk’s map, a guide for what is to come as well as residue or trace of what has previously happened, is a good explanation for the uncanny way in which time and space often intersect with one another in Cardiff’s audio walks. Moments of felt synchronicity—“aha” moments—where instructions or observations amazingly come true, remind the walker of Janet’s previous, aurally mapped walk in this same place, synchronising past and future (the place of the past and the place of the future) in one vertiginous move.

The idea of a durational or continuous map bears on the flexibility of synchronisation present in *Her Long Black Hair*, a flexibility that still leads to moments of felt synchronicity. If the recording is a map of the walk in Monk’s terms, it can both act as a guide for what is to come and as residue or trace of what has just happened. For example, when you are told, “there’s a man on the bench reading the paper,” or “watch out for the skaters,” whether these things occur at that very moment or did a moment ago or do some time after, the map is fulfilled and you know you are on track. Though they feel like prophecies, they are, rather, referrals. Synchronicity then, is a system of referred or deferred residue revived which accommodates time lag: which runs, in other words, on what we would commonly call memory or remembering.

De Certeau’s map is a technology of forgetting: the activity of passers-by are transcribed into points “that draw a totalising and reversible line on the map,” and as such, “allow us to grasp only a relic set in the no-when of a surface of projection. Itself visible, it has the effect of making invisible the operation that made it possible” (de Certeau [1984] 1988, 97). The trace, he argues, substitutes for the practice, causing a way of being in the world to be forgotten (ibid.). However, trace in Cardiff’s audio walk is not inscribed onto a different
spatial plane (operation into representation, non-Euclidean into Euclidean\textsuperscript{12}) as with de Certeau’s map. My performing of the audio walk re-enacts and re-spatialises Cardiff’s walking, unwinding her trace and allowing for her way of being in the world to be remembered. This kind of map is what could be called biogrammatic, extending Massumi’s term.

As I outlined in the previous chapter, the biogram comes out of Massumi’s rethinking of spatial experience as a cross-referencing of sense-dimensions. De Certeau’s map and itinerary sit in Massumi’s Euclidean and non-Euclidean (visual and proprioceptive) space, respectively. What Massumi calls the “synaesthetic interfusion” of proprioception and vision in the movement of orientation is just one example of sense conjunctions—in fact, he points out, both vision and proprioception fuse with the tactile in experience. In clinical cases synaesthetic forms present as maps, although not maps in de Certeau’s meaning. Massumi suggests they are less cartographic than diagrammatic, “lived diagrams based on already lived experience, revived to orient further experience” (2002, 186-187). Both formed through and recombined with embodied experiences of movement, he further qualifies, “lived and relived: biograms might be a better word for them than ‘diagrams’” (187, original emphasis). Synaesthetes use biograms as mnemonic devices, storing important dates and names woven into colours for example, and placing them in an abstract spatial realm which the synaesthete can re-access (re-live) in a really perceived event-perception (187). The renowned synaesthete S., stored his biograms “as ‘objects’ deposited at a particular turn along a meandering walk” (193).\textsuperscript{13} Not unlike the Roman orator’s memory palace or “method of loci,” by re-walking his route S. would encounter an object, re-experiencing the word and number memories he had woven into it. Cardiff is

\textsuperscript{12} See my discussion of Euclidean versus non-Euclidean conceptions of space, via Massumi, in the previous chapter (p. 36).

\textsuperscript{13} S. was a patient of Soviet neuropsychologist A.R. Luria who’s intense synaesthesia featured in Luria’s The Mind of the Mnemonist: A Little Book About a Vast Memory (1968), cited in Massumi (2002, 193).
herself aware of the connection between her audio walks and the notion of a memory palace (Christov-Bakargiev et al. 2001, 18). The biogrammatic map is one re-enacted through synaesthetic memory; and in synaesthesia, “remembering is a perceptual event” (Massumi 2002 193).

DESIGNING EXPERIENCE

Pause, Sydney, March 2007

The everyday city is a cacophony of sounds and sights, an excess of indistinguishable noise, a myriad of possible pathways.

I am newly back in Australia, living on the side of a hill on the edge of Sydney’s Chinatown. The harsh Australian sun assaults my eyes and gives me headaches, glittering off the water in the harbour, off cars in high-speed parade along Parramatta Road. I take refuge in local cafés, sipping good Italian coffee, feeling thirsty in this drought-stricken land.

I am unhinging sound from place, listening to audio walks of Singapore and Münster as I walk the streets of Sydney. If sound has the power to place us, it also allows us to travel (over oceans as well as through time). This is sound’s power to tap into public imagination. A technology of time and space. The sound of raucous galahs always tells me I’ve woken up in Australia. The bustling marketplace with a call to prayer evokes Morocco. Louis Armstrong’s gravelly singing voice and the hiss of a scratchy record sends me back more than half a century. A specifically-accented voice gives me locale, and an urgent whisper fills me with

---

14 Cardiff’s early installation An Inability to Make a Sound (1992) at the Eye Level Gallery, Halifax, Canada involved a circuit of wooden planks upon which the headphoned gallery visitor walked, listening to Cardiff’s recording played on a Walkman. In the space were placed chairs, a table with two cups, and a projected film loop set off by infrared sensor. Like the journey of the orator through her mnemonically activated palace, here, “memories are associated with places and images in an architectural structure” (Christov-Bakargiev et al. 2001, 18).

15 Namely, Desire Paths, theatre company spell#7’s audio tour of Singapore’s Little India (for more details see http://www.spell7.net/desirepaths/), and several of Cardiff’s other walks as collected in Cardiff Schaub (2005). As I watched the 2008 Olympic Games on television, I listened to Soundwalk/Louis Vuitton soundwalks of Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong (http://www.louisvuittonsoundwalk.com/go/en/home/).
apprehension. "As they course through the cosmos and the body, sounds maintain a tactile relationship with their source, an 'umbilical continuity.'" (Erlmann 2004, 9)

My various experiments with detaching the "sited" playback from its location were instrumental in uncovering how the participation or performance of the walker functions in the audio walks. Like Cardiff’s walks, her installation A Murder of Crows in collaboration with George Bures Miller is also site-specific. Commissioned by Thyssen-Bornemisza Art for the 2008 Sydney Biennale and housed at Hickson Wharf, the installation is described by the artists as a "sound play." It is the artists’ biggest installation to date and uses a range of techniques developed in previous works for distributing and shaping sound playback through a space. The pier’s high windows and heavy wooden structure, the waves lapping at its pylons below and the rain pouring off its eaves above, the working city and harbour just outside are visually and sonically part of the work. They enter it, combining with the elements imported by Cardiff and Miller. Both the audio walk and installation use cleverly spatialised sound to create sensorially immersive environments, which delineate the breadth and shape of the real space around me, and also somehow reach into an internal, imaginary, and affective space. It differs greatly from Cardiff’s walks, however, and my interest lies in what its differences might reveal about the audio walks.

Arriving at the installation I am immediately missing the walk, and read in descriptions from my notes my eager desire to inject personal observations and coincidences from the outside world into the piece. An abandoned lifebuoy and pink spray painted numbers on

---

16 Erlmann is citing Steven Conner’s notion of “umbilical continuity” (2004, 158), a notion given visual and tactile form through Conner’s example of a voice travelling along a telephone wire.

17 For example, Cardiff’s installation The Forty Part Motet (2001) which transplants a choir into the gallery by placing forty speakers on stands in a large circle, each speaker a different channel, playing a different singer’s voice. For further examples, see (Thyssen-Bornemisza Art 2008) and Christov-Bakargiev et al (2001).

In making *A Place Called Lost*, I was acutely conscious of crafting this relationship between myself as narrator and the walker. It is an intimate relationship requiring great trust (I am

---

19 As Marla Carlson writes of *Her Long Black Hair*, “one follows what seem to be clues, but they lead to no solution—in fact, the nature of the mystery never becomes clear” (2006, 415).  
20 The cinematic correlation has been made before: Cardiff's walks have been called “physical cinema” (see Atom Egoyan in Cardiff and Schaub 2005, 24).
taking you somewhere that, at the outset, remains unknown to you). I needed to lead at
times, and at times be followed (a complex question of pacing, mood, and instruction). But I
also needed to toy with this position to keep the walker engaged, striking a balance
between directions that would confuse or comfort the walker. The end of my walk takes
participants through a rabbit warren of corridors in 721 Broadway’s basement. I
increasingly quickened my pace of walking, giving many instructions to stop, go, or turn
corners, deliberating eliciting the walker’s fear of getting left behind before surfacing into
the familiar space of the building’s lobby. I took walkers to borderline out-of-bounds
spaces; for example, through doors marked “no entry” but which observation told me were
always left open and posed no real danger.

Conversely, earlier in the walk I invite participants to rest midway down a long flight of
stairs, moving from observations of the location to recollections of previous memories and
deeply personal anecdotes. While I deliberately tried to elicit emotional responses and
make room for injections of personal memory and thought for the walker, I found these
were elements I just couldn’t predict. Rather, I tried to create an environment in which the
implicit rules were not just *go where I go*, but also, indirectly, *think/feel/dream as I do*. I
received responses in a feedback book which varied from the technical—“I was pleasantly
surprised at how well our walking speeds matched, especially going down the long stairs”
(Anon. A. 2006)—to the surprisingly intimate and coincidental, for example:

The places you take me—staircases, cityscapes, but also the death and the cold
face of your grandmother (I think of the touch of my father’s face in his coffin
last year—so cold, so smooth, so hard) are yours but become mine. (Anon. B.
2006)

When the chorus came in it sounded so familiar, I fell into it. I opened my eyes
at some point and then it was obviously Mozart. I realised I had sung the solo,
seven years ago now. How could I forget that long note? That’s when the tears
burst forward, talk about a lost part of my existence. (Anon. C. 2006)
I realised that by organising the walker’s attention—directing when and what you taste, which way to walk and look, when to stop and when to go, at what pace to walk—I was actually making a space for the walker to inject what is particular to them into their version of the tour. As I stated at the beginning of this chapter, the tour is, in fact, a co-production: we are making it together; I map my body onto yours, carving out a space around us both, away from potential sensory overload of the unmediated world.

What separates Her Long Black Hair from traditional guided walking tours is that its goal is about being close to the narrator, merging with the persona of Janet. In this respect at least, the recording (or more aptly, the narrator) was not forcing mediation between me and the location, views, or objects of a tour. These objects are not what the walker really wants to get at, but Janet is. In the end Her Long Black Hair is not really a tour of Central Park but a tour in which the goal is to see the world, experience the world, to get a feeling of being like Janet: to merge your body with hers in an oddly intimate embrace.

When I started working with audio, I really liked the way it included your whole body. It really created this physical connection. Also if you are walking with someone’s voice and the sound of their body, even if they’re saying silly things they become human. And if you’re walking for 15 or 20 minutes, it creates a relationship, it creates a one-on-one relationship—that’s one major aspect that has interested me a lot about the walks. (Cardiff in Cardiff and Schaub 2005, 189)

This one-on-one relationship is at times a partnership: the character Janet is a friend who guides me, and she is also at times Cardiff the artist leading me on a tour through her art-making practice. Importantly, however, at other times it is not a partnership between two individuals walking together but a kind of co-presencing: I bring Janet into being by aligning my footfalls into hers, her event-perceptions into mine, through a double-act of becoming.
This double-act extends backwards and forwards in time. Lived movement experiences, revived and relived to orient further experience, is precisely what Massumi termed the biogram, “the event of experience folding back on itself for its own furtherance, its continuing becoming” (2002, 206). Past and future, he asserts (after Bergson and Deleuze), are not just a series of boxed presents strung out in a line, but rather, “the present smudges the past and the future. It is more like a doppler effect than a point: a movement that registers its arrival as an echo of its having a past” (200). Walking with and as Cardiff in Her Long Black Hair, the past and future, here and there (hear and then?) become smudged in the folded, synaesthetic space of experience. In the audio walk, however, this fold is also a doubly doubled *intercorporeal* operation performed between you and me.

**REWIND**

**Central Park, New York, August 2005**

My toes are close to the edge of the lake, my feet heavy on the spongy ground of fallen leaves and branches. I am breathing slowly, deeply, in time with Janet. Suddenly her breath fades and she is gone; she has brought me to where the path ends. I am alone with only the sound of my breathing and the rustle of the present around me. I have replaced her, become the guide and the guided.

I turn away from the water’s edge, walk back up to the main path and begin my return journey. The headset that has become almost forgotten around my head needs to be returned to the southern edge of the park. Heel rolls to toe, much as it always does, but differently too. I must choose my own way, mine the secrets and peculiarities of my own body and memory, unearth associations with the park, the city and my place in it. As I walk, the layers of time and history peel back—I see the age of the trees in their height, the formal intervention of the road beneath my feet; I see myself, just ten minutes before, walking over there with Cardiff in my ears, and longer, maybe eight years ago when I walked this way, when I too, like
Baudelaire’s mistress, had long black hair. The past bubbles around me,\textsuperscript{21} inscribed like a map in body, written in a spatial acting act. One layer under another, only just glimpsed at, momentarily cresting, before submerging under the wave of something new.

"My words here, now, like she was here, disappear even though I try to keep them, record them, play them over in attempts to hang on to time."

\textsuperscript{21}This phrase is adapted from Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks: “so conspicuously in old places layered in archaeological traces, an artefact, building or ruin from the past does not hold comfortably some point in a linear flow of time from past through to present. It is not just a dated event in the past. \textit{Instead the past bubbles around us}. This is the life of things in the present, the life-cycle of artefacts and buildings, enfolded in a multitemporal mix which is the fundamental texture of our human social experience.” (2001, xvii, my emphasis)
In the opening chapter I recounted a story from several years ago, in Beijing, standing amidst the faded splendour of the Forbidden City. I recalled a moment in which I imagined myself as, or I played at being, Pu Yi (the ill-fated last emperor of China, who I had always thought looked a little like one of my favourite uncles). Where I was standing high on the upper terrace at the rear of the Hall of Protective Harmony there was a slight breeze, on what was otherwise a pretty muggy day, lifting my hair up off my scalp. Strangely I was alone for a moment, looking down on teeming bands of tourists in the yard below. The air was dusty, smoggy, tinged that special acid yellow that is industrial China’s signature colour. I placed my left palm on the smooth stone railing in front of me, and raised my right to perform what I had long ago learned was the “Miss America wave.” Elbow, elbow, wrist, wrist, wrist; hand cupped a bit, small motions left and right, rotating my upper body just a little like a sideshow alley clown; I waved at my subjects below, poised and magnanimous in a conceited kind of way.
I doubt that any emperor really does the Miss America wave. This “being” Pu Yi was, I admit, pretending to be, like in childish play, rather than a real life being, akin to Richard Schechner’s differentiation between *make believe* and *make belief*, respectively (Schechner 2002, 35). But while I was mostly aware that I wasn’t really and materially Pu Yi, I was also really and materially participating in a perceptual event that was not quite my normal me-being either. This bodily experience occurred in an abstract, make believe space, but it also occurred in and because of real world sensory stimuli. My feet pressed the stone terrace where Pu Yi must have stood, I looked across the yard as he may have, joss sticks burned somewhere not far away, and the gongs and stories on the audio tour’s soundtrack still rang in my ears. As such, there is a relationship between this abstract-real experience and what I called in the previous chapter *Her Long Black Hair*’s “double-act of becoming” (see p. 70).

I previously asserted that the goal of Janet Cardiff’s audio walk is to be like Janet, to see and experience the world like her through reliving her walked route, doing what she did. Falling into step with her I enact her walk while also enacting my own; I make her materialise through my materiality. The narrator is another, constant body that you must interact with on the walk. But the narrator is made present through the sensual, sonic power of recorded sound: the grain of the voice and the sounds of the body reverberating in place, bring the spectre of the narrator into being. And this form of being is generated *through my body*. There is an unsteady and uneven inhabitation at play. In this chapter I explore this aspect of the audio walk genre further in terms of what such intercorporeal movement might mean in an explicitly intercultural context. That is to say, where an operation of “walk in my shoes” is explicitly to walk in the shoes of a culturally and racially located body: located in the sense of “identified as” and also in the sense of being placed within a specific locale (as the audio walk’s pre-walked route does). This staging of the
In the In-between

Embodiment works at the level of embodiment, intercorporeally.\(^1\) Far from suggesting that an hour walking in someone else’s shoes allows you to become like them, following performance scholar Karen Shimakawa’s work on New York company Soundwalk, I argue that the failure to embody an “other” nonetheless causes participants to become unnaturally aware of their habitual ways of moving. Shimakawa suggests that this failure succeeds in putting the body of the walker “somewhere else” (Shimakawa 2007, 33), but she stops short of determining what it is to embody that somewhere else space. In this chapter I propose that the audio walk opens up a potential interstitial mode of being, an intercultural embodiment and spatiality that is inscribed in motion.

**WALKING WITH, WALKING AS**

New York based company Soundwalk was founded in 2000 by Stephen Crasneanscki and Michel Sitruk, later working closely with sound engineer Dug Winningham. In the last five years Soundwalk has greatly expanded their catalogue to include commissioned art works and installations, as well as commercial partnerships with the likes of Adidas and Chanel, however, their original core business was producing audio walks of New York City neighbourhoods. With the original tagline “audio tours for people who don’t normally take audio tours” (Soundwalk 2007), or “audio guide for insiders” (Soundwalk 2005), the walks

---

\(^1\)There are other recent locative art examples which similarly pose intercultural themes, but do not involve the intercorporeal embodiment aspect I discuss. As Meg Mumford (2010) notes, German-based theatre company Rimini Protokoll have a particular interest in migratory subjects and staging stranger encounters. Of note is their transcontinental project *Call Cutta: Mobile Phone Theatre* (2005) in which participants in Berlin were given a mobile phone and guided on a walk by a “performer” from a call centre in Kolkata. Susan Leigh Foster suggests the work mounts “a strong critique concerning the viability of empathic engagement with the cyborgian social” (Foster 2011, 196); my own experience with a subsequent production, *Call Cutta in a Box: An Intercontinental Phone Play* (2008) which stages a similar situation inside a room set up as an office (in my case, at the Goethe-Institut in Manhattan, 2009), was a curious feeling of chatty closeness to my “Callcentre Service Representative” at Descon Limited in Kolkata and also a lingering reappraisal of my own relationship to the transnational system of outsourced labour, but there was no suggestion that I should be/move/feel like her. To a lesser degree Duncan Speakman’s *Boundary Songs* (2008), a series of walks in Redfern, Sydney, and Annette Shun-Wah’s *China Heart* (2011) a walking tour iPhone app of Chinatown, Sydney, *seek to give participants a closer experience or understanding of culturally-specific communities of the city, but there is also no suggestion in these walks of walking as someone else.*
are tourist productions which capture the cool factor of walking the streets of a city like New York, appealing to the tourist desire to fall below the level of visibility as tourists.

Soundwalk appeals to the individual rather than the group. Soundwalk is a cinematic experience, a way to explore and understand a new culture and others, feeding you historical and trivial facts all the while. You become the narrator as you are lulled by their voice, and you discover a neighborhood enchanted by a flawless mix of fitting music, sound effects, interviews, and sound clips. An experience like no other which surpasses your expectations and an insider guide for the non-tourist. For fifty minutes, one is immersed in a subreality [sic] of sounds, smells, and sights. The slick packaged CD’s [sic] feature a user-friendly map of the neighborhood pointing to the hot spots of the area and the beginning of tracks. (Soundwalk 2007)

Working on the cusp of the MP3 explosion, Soundwalk has been highly successful with their neighborhood guides, winning numerous awards and profiles in Time Out New York and Wired Magazine. Originally sold as CDs, in 2011 fourteen different tours of NYC are now downloadable from the company’s website including a memorial walk of Ground Zero, along with three tours of cities in China (produced in partnership with Louis Vuitton), four of Paris, one of Ibiza, one of Varanasi, four running guides in various cities (in partnership with Puma), and museum tours of Chanel’s Contemporary Art Container and the Louvre (the Da Vinci Code Soundwalk).

As the above description from their 2007 website indicates, Soundwalk’s guides tread an unclear line between encouraging participants to “understand a new culture and others” and instructing them to “become the narrator.” The second of these two agendas is in line with the goal I identified in Cardiff’s work, to merge with the corporeality of the narrator. But the more explicit touristic aspect of Soundwalk’s productions amplifies the imperative embedded within tourist productions both to exoticise or make foreign the environment you visit and also to offer a privileged insider experience; thereby constructing an ambiguous line between distancing and holding close the relationship between participant
and narrator.² Soundwalk’s founder reiterates this seemingly paradoxical dual agenda, saying that his walks are about getting an inside look at a neighbourhood with a character “you would want to spend an hour with,” but saying at other times that they are about being “in the skin” of someone else (Stephan Crasneanscki, pers. comm.). The latter indicates that the project is in part to be an insider for the duration of the walk, to inhabit a specific, other, cultural body.

In the previous chapters I outlined Brian Massumi’s concept of the biogram, and placed it in dialogue with Michel de Certeau’s map and itinerary in an effort to understand how the space of the narrator’s walk and the space of the participant’s walk become folded together in these types of audio walks. As I indicated, this doubled space is a product of relived experience, of re-spatialisation (in de Certeau’s understanding of space as a series of operations), arguing the foot-stepped recording of the walk’s route, which serves as the walker’s proprioceptive map, is intrinsic to the process of “becoming” the narrator and of walking in their shoes as they do. Karen Shimakawa also uses Massumi’s concept of the biogram to explore Soundwalk’s neighborhood walks, concentrating specifically on their tours of Hasidic Williamsburg in Brooklyn and Chinatown in Manhattan. These tours make explicit a dual agenda of “ethnic ventriloquism and/or voyeurism” as Shimakawa calls it (2007, 27), performing the tension between walking “with” and “as” the culturally placed narrator in ways that can be grossly uncomfortable.

Like the clinical synaesthete S.’s biograms stored at designated turns along a meandering walk (see p. 64), the audio walks I am discussing are a technology for reaccessing biograms stored along a particular route; however, unlike in Massumi’s examples, here they work

² Tourism, notes Keith Hollinshead, is “the quintessential business of ‘difference projection’ and the interpretive vehicle of ‘othering’ par excellence” (Hollinshead 1998, 121).
intercorporeally. The suggestion is that biograms—“lived diagrams based on already lived experiences, revived to orient further experience” (Massumi 2002, 186)—can be accessed by someone else, not just because that someone walks the same route but because they can reaccess the event-perception that stores it (they walk the route in the same way). Massumi further defines biograms as “event-perceptions combining senses, tenses, and dimensions on a single surface” (187). When S. came upon an object along his path, Massumi explains, a multi-dimensional sense-fold of vision and proprioception and time would allow him to access a range of word and number memories that had been woven into the object.

Each object-form had a background, for example a wall or corner or other feature. These figure-ground landmarks combined into whole itinerant geographies. To find a memory, S. would have to enter the right geography and then move ahead proprioceptively, cross-checking against his mnemonic progress against visual landmarks until he reached the one he needed to unthread. The eventfulness of the biograms is illustrated by the fact that he could make mistakes. Significantly, the mistakes were not cognitive errors. They were tricks of perception. For example, he might accidentally store a bright biogrammatic object against a white wall, and when he passed that way again he might overlook the memory because it blended in. The involuntary had failed to be elicited.

To simplify matters, he would sometimes use a familiar scene as a template for a new biogrammatic geography. For example, he might take his bedroom and store synesthetic objects under the bed, in the closet, and in all the drawers and corners. Whether based on a found geography like his bedroom or entirely constructed, a biogram is a previously experienced vector-space. When S. faced one of his biograms, he was facing his own previous presence. (Massumi 2002, 193-194)

Although not all synaesthetes generate exactly the same forms, S.’s walks are so close in form to the audio walks as to make a particularly useful comparison. What are object-forms in S.’s walks are, under comparison, sound cues in the audio walks. A coinciding footfall placed against a corresponding sound-event at a corresponding moment along the walk allows access to an unfolding experiential memory of senses, tenses, and dimensions. Accessing the biograms’ lived experiences ostensibly accesses a reliving of what it is to be the person who deposited it along the walk. Relating the biogram to Massumi’s critique of
positionality within identity politics which I discussed in the introduction, Shimakawa suggests biograms describe “one of the ways we carry or move through our pasts in/with our bodies, how ‘identity’ is experienced and reproduced temporally and spatially” (2007, 25). As Massumi concludes in the above passage, when S. faced one of his biograms he faced his own previous presence. Importantly, the biograms placed by the maker of an audio walk are to be accessed by another: the walker. Walking “as” the narrator in audio walks requires the walker to assume the narrator’s present presence in order to face his or her past. How complex this relationship becomes.

While I previously claimed that the success of Her Long Black Hair lies in your ability to merge with the persona of Janet, she never says we are one or be like me. In Cardiff’s walks, the merging of your body with hers is handled subtly: she begins with stories and recollections, gradually planting the interior dimensions of her imagination in yours; she revives dreams and histories from near and far pasts, mapping her particular way of seeing the world onto the path you now walk. On the other hand, the Chinatown Soundwalk begins with this project made very clear.

Welcome to the Chinatown Soundwalk. I am going to take you around my neighbourhood. I’m waiting for you at the Luncheonette coffee shop, 89 Canal Street, at the corner of Canal and Eldridge Streets. Come inside and make yourself comfortable. If you would like, have some coffee or some tea, but have it now because we will be walking for about 50 minutes.

[gong crash, coffee shop noises in background]

Hi—is this seat taken?

They told me about you, the one with the headphones. So, you want to discover Tong yan gai?3 Well, I’m your man. My name is Jami Gong. I was born and raised in Chinatown. These are my blocks, these are my streets, these are my people. So listen to me carefully and I will take care of you. Before we go on our

---

3 Literally translated as “Tong people’s streets” this is a Cantonese name used for Chinatowns in the diaspora, so named for the Tang (Cantonese: Tong, Mandarin: Tang) Dynasty (618-907 CE). Manhattan’s Chinatown, like many in the United States and Australia, was originally populated by waves of Cantonese migrants (although not exclusively). In New York, the population is shifting due to more recent Fujianese arrivals—Jami’s use of the Cantonese name signals (intentionally or not) that he is from the old guard.
adventure together, in the land of the unknown, there are a few rules that you will need to follow. The most important one is to follow the rhythm of my footsteps. Be one with me. Also, never cross any streets or turn any corners that I did not mention. Let me take control of your body and mind. I will allow you to observe without being observed. During our time together, I will bring you into places where you are not supposed to go, so please behave and be very discrete. If you get caught, leave immediately. Remember, I am not even existing. I'm just a voice in your head.

[music fades in]

I thought it would be a good idea to meet you in this luncheonette, before we immerse ourselves into the mysterious world of Tong yan gai.

The journey that you are about to take is the same journey that the Chinese have taken for over 150 years. This is the first step to Chinatown, the first steps to America. You're now at the edge of Chinatown. The moment you open the doors, you will be in Chinatown. So get ready to see, to smell, to touch, and to be Chinese.

[gong crash] (Soundwalk 2005)

The question of whether it is possible through the walking tour to gain embodied or emplaced knowledge of being a culturally or racially situated “other” body—that is, whether we can successfully “be Chinese” as we are commanded to—is moot. Even if I am already Chinese, I am not Jami Gong.⁴ In my experience of the Chinatown Soundwalk, as with Cardiff, I fell in and out of sync. My moments of falling out were dizzying and frequent (you want me to do/be what!?) and I often felt profoundly uncomfortable with the gap between Jami’s instruction to do things he would ostensibly do and my felt inability or even unwillingness to follow. Most of Soundwalk's neighbourhood walks involve going into shops and restaurants where the listener is instructed to buy something. In the Chinatown Soundwalk the walker is also guided into normally “out of bounds” areas: for example, a senior citizens' day centre or a private apartment building (to peer into a crack in a former gang boss’s door). I found many of these almost impossible to do in part because I worried

⁴ Shimakawa similarly argues that the promise of enabling us to be Chinese is rather “to be a Chinese-American man as Jami is” (2007, 32).
that I wasn’t really allowed to go there; but also because standing against a wall, the only person under sixty-five, listening to my iPod in a room full of people playing mah-jong so obviously marked me as not an insider—a pill I found hard to swallow in an area I felt I was quite familiar with. For me, both a suggestion of “natives on display” in certain moments and the inevitable economic consumerism of the tourist trade encouraged by the walk’s repeated instruction to buy things reminded me that I was very much the outsider.

Shimakawa argues that Soundwalk’s promise lies between needing and being (what I have been calling walking “with” versus walking “as”) the other, epitomised by the contradictions between “these are my streets” and get ready “to be Chinese” in Jami’s extended introduction. The underworld narrative in parts of the Chinatown walk—the general illicitness—plays into our need to be guided by Jami: “the voice of the narrator in your ears is in some sense with you in the space your body occupies—you actually need that voice to move you through that space safely, and to tell you how to occupy and apprehend that space” (Shimakawa 2007, 32, original emphasis). Shimakawa also argues that the dynamic between these two positions contributes to our failure to inhabit the other’s body/identity (30). As such, Soundwalk’s promise touches on the limits of what Deidre Sklar calls “kinaesthetic empathy,” a methodology which claims that “moving with” people, a body-centred approach to cultural knowledge which Sklar describes as a kind of corporeal imitation, opens up a “feeling with” kind of cultural understanding not accessible

---

5 The route is unmarked; but also the voyeurism/danger aspect is important in its characterisation of Chinatown. As Shimakawa argues, the tour’s opium dens, crime bosses, aggressive hawkers, and gunshots (either as locations or as special effects on the soundtrack) are a “textbook stereotype of Chinatown: at turns threatening and alluring in its otherness, (over-)sexed and gendered as, if not overtly female, then penetrable (albeit at some risk)” (2007, 31, original emphasis).

6 On the other hand, see Toby Butler (2006) for a description of these moments as meaningful and unplannable opportunities to interact with local people.
through words or visual observation alone (Sklar 1994, 11). Susan Leigh Foster notes that historically the terms *kinaesthetic* and *empathy* are in fact related.7

> When empathy was neologized in the 1880s, it functioned quite differently [from its more recent psychological sense], as a process in which *one's entire physicality comes to inhabit the other* [...]. Seen from this perspective, the term “empathy” was invented not to express a new capacity for fellow-feeling, but to register a changing sense of physicality that, in turn, influenced how *one felt another’s feelings*. (Foster 2011, 10-11, my emphasis)

At its simplest, the audio walk requires you to adjust your socially and culturally inflected way of walking to walk in time with another; but you are not just told where to go and what to look at, you are supposedly inculcated into a certain way of moving, seeing and perceiving.

I most definitely failed to walk as Jami Gong; as I recounted previously, I also failed at times to walk *with* him, skipping some locations. Shimakawa suggests that “by trying to promise *both simultaneously*, the soundwalk succeeds at doing neither [...]” (2007, 33, original emphasis). This is an experience that bears further discussion, because while I stated earlier that the question of whether the participant is really able to "be Chinese" is a moot one, how that failure is performed remains. Just what are the kinaesthetics of this particular failure?

**MIS-STEPS AND STUMBLES: FAILURES IN WALKING**

I have said that I found walking "as” Janet in *Her Long Black Hair* a subtle process. In the midst of the walk I think I fell into step with her with little awareness of what was happening. But this could be because the distance separating “Janet’s” gendered and cultural embodiment from my own was in some ways not great. As I noted previously her stride was physically comfortable (i.e. similar to my habitual one). In my experience her

---

7 See Foster (2011) for further discussion of these terms (along with *choreography*) in relation to their genealogy.
Navigational instructions were almost uncanny in their timing. I never needed to consult the map of the walk route given with the portable player, and I very easily slipped into (but sometimes out of) the poetic, dreamlike rules of the piece. This poeticism appealed to my existing, cultivated sensibility; and my dancer training prepared me to be perfectly happy to turn around and walk backwards along a crowded path or do any of the other physical performances she asked me to do. However I talked to other people who got lost because they couldn’t keep up or found the intimacy of the relationship forced; who felt coerced and therefore rebelled, stopping, fast-forwarding, or rewinding the recording, or not doing the things they were told to. The insinuation of closeness (a closeness approaching superimposition) caused some people to recoil in protest.

The dizzyingly fast, expanding distance I felt at Jami Gong’s interpellating command to “be Chinese” was similarly like falling backwards, rather than the falling forwards one does in the act of walking. Despite being (half) Chinese and familiar with several streets along the Chinatown Soundwalk, I failed to walk “as” Jami. But more interestingly, at times I failed to walk at all, caught in the tottering pull of backwards-forwards movement; a stumbling, stuttering non-walk.

**Chinatown, New York, 19 November 2007**

*Navigation is pretty good; no need to reference the map inside the CD jacket, but then, I’m pretty familiar with the area. By bird’s eye (or Google map) and by foot: around the corner and two blocks over is where I get my hair cut, head right, around the corner, cut across the street and left into man tou shop…*

*I also know the genre—get to the corner a little early, wait for instructions—I didn’t notice how long it took to learn to do this. I stop and listen.*
But I’m uncomfortable. I feel huge—an enormous blinking beacon screaming Voyeur! Voyeur! There’s no flow, I can’t fall into step with the streets and crowds because Jami keeps instructing me to stop and look at something, or worse, someone. I keep backing up against a wall, hanging in a corner, hoping to become invisible. I’m listening to Jami but I am acutely aware of my composition of arms and legs, assuming some semblance of casualness.

I’m just listening to an iPod—that’s normal. MOVE NORMALLY. Walk like you normally do—no, don’t stand like a stupid giant foreigner on the corner—move under the awning—don’t stare up at the building—keep your hands in your pockets—am I moving normally?

I concur with Shimakawa in her assessment that our failed attempt to embody the narrator “puts us more firmly in our own bodies [...]” (2007, 32). As my description from my walk in Chinatown shows I could no longer orient my body in a way that was below my perceptual radar.

The normal/normative ways in which we typically move through the world as unselfconscious agents of our embodiments is temporarily disrupted; that we fail to assume (what we imagine to be) Jami’s biogram seamlessly or comfortably only heightens our awareness that we are no longer seamlessly or comfortably located in our own biograms. (Shimakawa 2007, 33, original emphasis)

It is here, in the failed crosscultural identification, that Shimakawa sees the potential for political work: “the work of social identity-formation laid bare as differential, relational and as work” (34, original emphasis). Shimakawa comes to her conclusion through theorising failure in three ways; firstly, through Judith Halberstram’s suggestion that failure exploits the unpredictability and indeterminancy of ideology, recognising the multiple alternatives already embedded in the dominant (in Shimakawa 2007, 33). Using Derrida’s reading of Austin’s performative utterances, in which he suggests that the successful performative requires an awareness of its proximity to failure—a mutually dependent relationship in the “order of subordination” (Derrida in Shimakawa 2008, 306) rather than one of opposition—Shimakawa argues failure in terms of Soundwalk’s tours “make visible the countless occasions on which ‘success’ is manufactured through a
levelling or covering of difference” (Shimakawa 2008, 306). But it is her third argument that I find most interesting.

Returning to Massumi, Shimakawa notes that “biograms are, on the one hand, one of the ways our bodies becomes sites of embedded identities and histories; and, on the other, there is some play in the joints between bodies, their emplacements, history and identity” (2007, 33). This is perhaps where Massumi’s biogram diverges from Bourdieu’s habitus as a theory of cultural performance, although this is not a line of thinking taken up by Shimakawa. Habitus in Bourdieu’s formulation is how we embody history and bring that history into present circumstances; it is history turned into second nature, “and so forgotten as history” (Bourdieu 1990, 56). As I outlined in my introduction, any given practice is an unconscious relation between habitus, capital and field, where habitus is the “structured and structuring structure” (1994, 170) of durable dispositions determining action or belief in the current circumstances. In Bourdieu’s thinking this system also allows for play through each meeting of habitus and field; these concepts are generative and his keyword is relational. But habitus itself is an invisible, underlying structure that “ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the ‘correctness’ of practices [...]” (1990, 54).

A mismatch between field and habitus may occur; their relationality ensures continuing, if slow change. But the time lag of self-regulating habitus in response to abruptly changing field conditions Bourdieu called hysteresis, a breakdown in correspondence “between opportunities and the dispositions to grasp them” (Bourdieu in Grenfell 2008, 134), evident in crisis events such as migration. The hysteresis effect demonstrates the basic inertia of habitus; the tendency of habitus is always toward “correctness” as in the
quotations above, replaying a history that is “both original and inevitable” (1990, 57). The
habitut works to maintain previous, “inevitable” performance in the face of change—it
must do so in order to retain its second-nature status, its (masquerading) natural-ness. The
biogram, Massumi argues, while personal, also always retains a certain autonomy; they
“remain their own creatures even for proficient synesthetes” (Massumi 2002, 189). In the
repeating of a practice or sense-event the biogram maintains (or perhaps contains is the
more correct word) the possibility of the new and different. Rather than the time lag of
hysteresis, out-of-place-ness might just be folded in as part of experience.

Massumi’s observation comes back to his central project to rethink bodily experience at a
junction of scientific and cultural theory. The dimension, sense, and tense cross-
referencing that occurs in cases of synaesthesia, actually muddle the distinctions made
within cognitive models between “higher” learned forms (e.g. numbers or words) and
“lower” perceptual ones (e.g. sounds or propioceptions). Massumi argues that this makes
it impossible to talk about “raw” experience in terms of higher and lower, cognitive and
perceptual, or even cultural and natural oppositions (Massumi 2002, 189). Rather, the
distinction (or connection) he applies to biograms is between the involuntary and elicited.

Experience, normal or clinical, is never fully intentional. No matter how
practiced the act, the result remains at least as involuntary as it is elicited.
Under the biogrammatic heading, the personal is not intentionally prefigured.
It is rhythmically re-fused, in a way that always brings something new and
unexpected into the loop. (Massumi 2002, 191)

Biograms maintain a “peri-personal autonomy” (189), and as such potential failure, or
more aptly, potential variation is built in; something new and unexpected is always brought
into the loop. This is different from the original and inevitable quality of habitus. Massumi
argues that the involuntary and elicited status of synaesthetic experience also
distinguishes it from phenomenological approaches, where perception and cognition is a
reflection of what is already embedded in the world: “it repeats the same structures,
expressing where you already were. Every phenomenological event is like returning home. This is like the déja vu without the potent of the new” (Massumi 2002, 191). For Shimakawa the unexpected effect in terms of Soundwalk’s Chinatown tour is “a potentially profound (if subtle) exercise in re-subjectification” (2007, 34), in which our own cultural/racialised/gendered soma is denaturalised and laid bare as work. This is not to follow the line Elspeth Probyn critiques as the limited way in which habitus (or the biogram in this context) is repeatedly invoked by scholars to “make sure that we know that it is the social that rules [the body]” (2004, 236). Rather, I want to emphasise the somewhat difficult to grasp re-spatialisation that the biogram offers.

Massumi points out that, “reaccessing the biogram and pulling a determinate strand of organized experience from it is to reapproach the point where the materiality of the body minds itself” (2002, 190, my emphasis). In this way the audio walks I have discussed could be described as pedagogical. They teach you to cultivate a certain relationship to and with your body, a certain attentiveness to it. That is, in the audio walks, you become hyper-attuned to the ways you fit or don’t fit, with yourself as well as with the other, and have to actively negotiate an in-between physicality. The fit is neither easy nor absolute. The process is one of ongoing negotiation: your steps may coincide for just a moment, but no sooner than this happens, you fall out of step again. It is in the repeated failure that we are made to understand and become attentive to our own ways of moving and being. Further than this, however, I argue that the “body mind[ing] itself” in the audio walks is also an awareness of the small gap between what was habitual and what is no longer so (another, different me, if not an “other”), where our potential variation as individuals as well as

---

8 This recalls Thomas Csordas’ somatic modes of attention, “culturally elaborated ways of attending to and with one’s body in surroundings that include the embodied presence of others” (1993, 138, original emphasis). Perception, via Merleau-Ponty, along with Bourdieu’s theory of habitus and an emphasis on the body as the locus of social practices, are important antecedents to Csordas’ work; however intersubjectivity is also a vital ingredient. What occurs at the level of the peri-personal for Massumi, become real through intersubjectivity in Csordas’ theorisation.
encultured subjects is exposed. Our residence in this gap or interstice may be fleeting, as the soundtrack ends and we fall back into everyday life to perform ourselves in habitual ways, but it also suggests that a particular spatiality and kineasthetics occurs in our embodiment of the in-between. How do we perform the audio walk’s intercultural stumble?

INTERSTITIAL EMBODIMENTS

What I am suggesting here is that this is a question that we can approach spatially, and as a space to be embodied. As with the rest of this dissertation, I am interested in developing a spatial analysis of in-betweenness as it is experienced in bodily ways. In the previous chapters in this section I have outlined thinking on the act(ion) of walking that posits it as a way of enacting space. The walking tours walk... and they stumble.

The stumbling, stuttering non-walk I performed in the Chinatown Soundwalk was, for someone who might have been watching me on the street, a failure to walk or a picture of me standing still. But my experience of that moment was full of motion, overloaded and overflowing with movement. It was my encounter with my multiple movement variations occurring in the transit space between footfalls.

The ongoing quality of walking is that trans-step momentum. Each next step is momentous, in its own little way: it is the event of a caught fall. The catch renews the walking’s fundamental context. The rhythm of falling and catching organizes an indefinite series of varying contexts for the walking-event’s continuation. (Massumi 2002, 218)

Massumi means by this observation to demonstrate that continuity and discontinuity exist together in a close embrace, but my point is less metaphorical. My habitual walking rhythm was, I admit, altered; a change was perceptible to me and to the hypothetical observer on the street. I described it earlier as falling forwards and backwards simultaneously—so
what was it that I could no longer habitually perform? It wasn’t walking, per se, but the catch. I was caught in the fall.

Put another way, I was in a space of movement, of transit—one I was moving in, not just through.

Andrew Hewitt suggests that walking (and stumbling) is one of the ways in which society choreographs the body politic and individual bodies into a codified gestural language. He argues, "stumbling is less an instance of singular socialization than of a certain social order finding its footing. It marks not just the moment of nature's transition into culture [...] but any moment at which one cultural order, perceived—or no longer perceived, in fact—as natural, makes place for another" (Hewitt 2005, 87). This in effect returns to the previous argument that the audio walks denaturalise normative cultural performance, or in Hewitt’s words, make us abnormally aware “of the constructedness of the social order” (95). He draws on Balzac’s 1833 essay “Théorie de la démarche” and its introductory anecdote about a stranger in the street exiting his carriage to hail a friend only to stumble, hand outstretched in salutation, missing his friend’s notice entirely. Hewitt notes that this stumble marks the moment when the other moves out of reach and as such “is the inaugural moment in which social tact becomes necessary” (86); the gesture “which inaugurates a language of gesture” (87) is an instance “of a failure to connect” (86). In terms of the audio walks, our failure to connect is a failure to connect with the other. Thought of in Hewitt’s terms, the failure to walk as Jami Gong is a gestural stumble which marks the implicit social contract contained within social performance. But it is also a failure to fall and catch ourselves: I feel hugely distanced from Jami Gong and from Chinese belonging, as I am distanced from my habitual self.
Shimakawa describes her experience of Soundwalk's tours as a drawing in of her senses, a numbness (2007, 32), but my experience is quite different. Suddenly I have much more space as and with myself. I am under a spotlight on an empty, thrust stage. Caught in an extended mid-fall, the possible variations for recovery are unhinged from a groove of habit.

But what is it to be a body performing this stumble? Stumbling is often thought of as a losing of one’s footing, or in its recuperation, a finding of one’s feet. But if we were to focus not on recuperation of the social order but dwell in the stumble, I suggest its movement says something about what it is to be a body in connection to its surrounds that is, twisting back on itself, intrinsically an issue of moving. Is it possible that such a move, such a stumble over oneself, could be as much an issue of space as of body; that is, a misplacing of one’s place? By this I mean to question the fixity of places: the very ground where I am poised to place my foot is no longer there, or at least, no longer the same place or just one place.

This is similarly what André Lepecki suggests in an essay on the choreo-politics of performance artist William Pope .L’s series of crawls and pianist Thelonious Monk’s shuffle dance.

What moves a body could very well be just an accident. For instance, the surprising stumble. A movement initiated by the ground taking over our path, the ground surprising us with its unexpected desire to act, as when we say that the ground has shifted under our feet—the ground opening itself up in unforeseen mobility, opening yet unseen grooves, unannounced cracks, unsuspected causation. (Lepecki 2004, 51)

Lepecki argues via Heidegger’s An Introduction to Metaphysics (1953) that, “the imbrication of movement into ontology is choreographically specific” (48): it is a wavering or oscillating movement which is a condition for coming into presence. Putting this assertion alongside Frantz Fanon’s critique of ontology in Black Skin, White Masks ([1967] 1986), Lepecki argues for a critical reading of Pope .L and Monk’s separate mobilisations (crawl
and shuffle, respectively) that mediates dance and politics, and as emerging from a shifting racialised terrain. In particular he refers to Fanon’s description of his arrival in France in the essay “The Fact of Blackness” in which Fanon famously recounts his violent stumble, his bursting apart and falling to the ground upon a young boy’s call, “Look, a Negro!” (Fanon in Lepecki 2004, 53). As Lepecki points out, Fanon describes this becoming of a new racialised subjectivity in vivid, bodily, and choreographic terms:

I stumbled.  
I burst apart. (ibid., 54)

I progress by crawling.  
I am fixed. (ibid.)

The interpellating call Fanon narrates is his tripping for the first time over the fact of his blackness, a response to the shifting ground beneath his feet, his stumble into being other. This otherness is of the order of alienation, marginalisation, fixity: The Other within a racist-colonialist terrain. But I want to suggest it is also of a more intimate order, related yet worth underlining: a coming into awareness of an/other body/space/self/being.

We could call this an awareness of an other within, but this spatialisation is simplistic. Massumi’s phrasing, a “body [which] minds itself,” is as I have discussed an awareness of habitual somatic performance as habitual, but the experience of minding one’s own body also suggests a particular kind of spatiality and relation to being a material body in this event or space. Massumi’s broader project (and the subtitle of his book), posits the body as an equation of movement, affect, and sensation and it is worth thinking through how a sensing, moving and affective body performs in the space of caught falling I have described. What Shimakawa calls an “interval of discomfort” (2006, 9) I have referred to in regards to the audio walks as an intercultural stumble, giving the space she places “somewhere else” (2007, 33) an affective, if not a sensing or moving quality. But if “it” is somewhere else, I too am there in bodily terms. I have been using words such as vertiginous to describe
movement and sensation in this space: a sort of a wobble and gut-pulling realignment in expanding space. Foot poised mid-step, an infinite number of possible vectors spread out; not visually, like standing at a fork in the road, rather proprioceptively, like potentially standing in multiple places simultaneously. This is a space that contains time, the possibility of past and future steps coinciding.9

This stumble is not unlike my occasional stutter over the word tomato. I can with concerted planning compose my vocal chords, lips and tongue to say either “tomahto” or “tomayto,” depending on a number of calculations I conduct on the approach to the physical performance of its enunciation (location, audience etc.). But this isn’t done in the regular rhythmic course of speaking. It’s more like forecasting a potential pothole and slightly adjusting my steps leading up to it in order to emphatically stamp my RIGHT foot over the obstacle. More often than not, tomato comes up on me by surprise, a tongue-twisting set of coordinates which may elicit something else entirely: an embarrassing gurgle, or an exaggerated, play-acting quotation from the Gershwin song. I can actually feel it clunking around in my mouth and must either spit it out or swallow it. Sometimes the word drops out in rhythmic step, but in hearing it I am caught off guard, as though someone else said it (I think in this event the enunciation is even followed by a slight lean to my left, in order to make a little room on my right side for her). What is this spatial and kinaesthetic experience if not lived, multiple, abstract-real, time-space surfacing in the interstice between fall and catch?

That this interstitial or in-between embodiment performs the event of our becoming in felt (sensing, moving, affective) ways also renews our thinking about space, and the place-

9 It is, as Massumi suggests, akin to déjá vu, “an already-past pregnant with futurity, in present perception” (2002, 187), or as the synaesthete M.P. described, like “seeing time in space” (from Cytowic 1989, cited in Massumi ibid.).
space binary, with which I began this section. To return to Doreen Massey’s lucid overview of the place-space discourse, she argues that this distinction within philosophy serviced a renewal of thinking about time and being. Recounting Bergson’s engagement with space and time, she says:

> The instantaneous slice through time was assumed to be static, as it is in the form in which it is invoked in Zeno’s paradox. It was then awarded the label “spatial”. And finally it was argued: anyway, if there is to be real becoming (the genuine continuous production of the new), then such supposedly static slices through time must be impossible. Static time-slices, even multiplied to infinity, cannot produce becoming. (Massey 2005, 23)

This thinking is fundamental, she argues, to the association of representation as spatialisation, “as fixing things, taking the time out of them” (ibid.). While I earlier argued that space for de Certeau is a set of operations, a reinstating of mobility to space, he maintains a dual opposition exemplified by the distinction he makes between map and itinerary; a dualism of representation versus action which is in his broader project aligned with a dichotomy between structure and agency. In her critique of de Certeau, Massey argues that his conception of societal power lies too strongly in the monolithic, while reducing the implications of “the weak” within the production of power: a dichotomy of power versus resistance (Massey 2005, 46-47). The issue of space and time in terms of representation, however, is taken further:

> This historically significant way of imagining space/spatialisation not only derives from an assumption that space is to be defined as a lack of temporality (holding time still) but also has contributed substantially to its continuing to be thought of in that way. It has reinforced the imagination of the spatial as petrification and as a safe haven from the temporal, and—in the images which it almost inevitably invokes of the flat horizontality of the page—it further makes “self-evident” the notion of space as a surface. All these imaginaries not only diminish our understanding of spatiality but, through that, they even make more difficult the project which was central to all of these authors: that of opening up temporality itself. (28)

In “Drift Lanes,” the final chapter to his book *The Lie of the Land* (1996), Paul Carter begins with an aside, a quotation from Paul Valéry’s essay “Poetry and Abstract Thought”:
The state of mind of a man dancing is not that of a man advancing through difficult country of which he is making a topographical survey or a geological prospectus. (Valéry in Carter 1996, 291)

The Lie of the Land’s project is a critique of representation within Western art, and of Western art’s relationship to a colonisation of the ground. Carter’s argument is not directed toward dance or choreography specifically (although dance is deeply implicated along with other forms of Western theatrical representation), yet he begins with this quotation from Valéry in which the dancer and the walker are placed opposite one another, noting, “a society engaged with clearing the ground, in danger of tripping over the unthinkable and the unnameable, is hardly able to internalise movement and transform it into a self-sustaining dance” (Carter 1996, 291).

Is dance in the colonial context then unthinkable? Or is a coloniser, a “colonising explorer” required to proceed and prepare the ground for the dancer? Carter suggests that the “metaphysical ground that Western art assumes—planar, linear, firm—presupposes the mobile, asymmetrical, variably-resistant ground of ‘difficult country’” (292). That is, a “difficult country” to be cleared in an act of suppression or neutralisation, an enclosure act both conceptual and architectural. At once, we understand that the binary opposition articulated here by Carter is not between dancer and walker, but between an understanding of the folded, historically inscribed and “variably-resistant” ground versus the colonising, flat stage of Western art. What is being proposed is “a politics of the ground” (302), whereby we can imagine “an in-between state where, by attending to the lie of the land, the walker’s steps are metricalised, the dancer’s steps rendered exploratory” (297). Carter suggests that only in imagining this in-between state or in-between movement can we understand the spatial history of colonisation.
It is the acoustic echo, the vibrating air, the flight of a spear, the storm, the folded and grooved land, that posits a reinsertion of seeing into its “naturally mobile setting” (303). Do we see best or truest while surveying a flattened area before us, free from obstacle? Or as the echo travels, hugging a folded geography as it rises and falls, ricocheting off many points before arriving at our ear? How about the visual distortions of air and temperature, anticipation and foreseeing, or the lack of objects with which to gauge distance and perspective? How to get away from emphasis on the straight lines of advancing progress, the shortest route from start to finish, and transfer attention to the “surfaceless vector whose trajectory constitutes its own ground” (ibid.)?

Representation is an act of mimesis, “a mode of seeing that freezes what the eye strikes” (315), which ignores the very fact of movement. What if we were to observe the arrow’s flight, or if it was us that threw the arrow—that is, what if we participated in its movement, or participated in its movement by also moving? Here we get close to Carter’s “methektic enactment,” an action containing both memory and immanence, a movement not predicated on absences, but “genuine because it is grounded, because it carries embedded within it the history of its coming into being [...]” (333).

As Lepecki argues in the previously noted essay, “willingly or not performance studies articulates the question of presence in performance under the ghost of Heidegger’s general ontology” (Lepecki 2004, 55). Albeit across several distinct critical models, “the problem of presence in performance has been approached as a politics of temporality” (ibid.). The shifting, grooved, and mobile ground that Lepecki suggests acts on or moves a body in choreo-political terms (that might cause us to stumble, or even, keeps us stumbling) works

---

10 Lepecki cites, for example, models of disappearance (Peggy Phelan), melancholia (José Muñoz), reiteration (Richard Schechner), archiving and repetition (Diana Taylor), and trace (Mark Franko).
in opposition to the planar surface of representation. This is not to say that we should do away with space, but rather be wary of the kind of spaces and spatialisation that are possible within a politics of such ground. Lepecki asks, what kind of dance or what kind of moving is possible after the stumble? I would answer that we first need to understand what moving—what kinds of temporal, spatial and somatic moves—occur in the stumble.

I have argued, in consort with Shimakawa, that the failure to fill another's shoes in the audio walks serves to denaturalise normative somatic performance. In this moment we apprehend the constructedness of customary habitus. But I further argue that as well as this failure to perform my normal self, I become aware of embodying my multiplicitous potential: the possibility, in a sense, to be more than one body. The embodiment of this space is understood in terms of movement; it has a moving both affective and kinaesthetic. Massey suggests, “what is at issue is almost like a shift of physical position, from an imagination of a textuality at which one looks, towards recognising one's place within continuous and multiple processes of emergence” (Massey 2005, 54, original emphasis). In the audio walks, an interstitial sensibility enacted through emplacement within two acoustic spaces elicits an ongoing negotiation of your awareness of your body in place, an exposition of interpersonal space and the fluid boundary between self/other that lasts beyond the performance of the walk, even if only for a moment. Is it possible that we come to critically assess this space, and its event as an intercultural performance? As an intercultural space, it suggests that the in-between is not no place, nor an abstract process, but some place capable of being embodied—lived—but in a complex, abstract-real kind of way. What does it mean for what we think about bodies and cultural processes if the in-between—if thirdspace—is more than a zone we move through, but a spatiality we move in?
Part II

In-between moves
One of the key developments within the discourse on cultural practices and processes over the last twenty-five years is the notion of hybridity. A postcolonial iteration of hybridity theory has altered the landscape for disciplines across the humanities and social sciences (anthropology and sociology, for example), and has been fundamental to the emergence of others such as gender, cultural, and performance studies. In terms of the exploration of in-between movement undertaken in this dissertation, a discourse of hybridity is highly relevant. In the next three chapters, which deal with dancing as its form of movement, and specifically embodied experiences of performing between culturally located forms of dance, hybridity becomes a tool for dwelling in and interrogating what it is to embody the in-between.

Anthropologist Ghassan Hage cautions, however, that academics who emphasise hybridity within disciplinary as well as cultural modes of knowledge “fail to perceive that [hybridity] has itself an identity, a space where it is lived” (Hage 1998, 289). Hage means by this to critique the protectionist ways in which disciplines, like nations, fear encroaching
interdisciplinarity. His poetic turn of phrase, however, is interesting for this study in that it promotes an idea of hybridity having a spatiality, and particularly, a lived spatiality. Space and movement are dual concerns for this dissertation: the previous section demonstrated that our relationship to space and place is negotiated through a moving body. This is what constitutes lived experience of the world. Following this line of thinking, I suggest that understanding in-betweenness requires us to think more deeply about what it means to be and do a body: to perform a body in Judith Butler’s sense of performativity. The development of hybridity discourse in the humanities and social sciences is mirrored by a similar discourse of performativity, both pointing to the social constructedness of cultural identities. But as Erika Fischer-Lichte asserts, performance also takes on a paradigmatic role for society that is particularly prominent in terms of cultural processes: “in [theatrical] performance, new forms of social co-existence are tried and tested” (Fischer-Lichte 2009, 400); an experimentation with new realities in anticipation of what might become social reality in the future. Performance actually inhabits both imaginary and real worlds—in this sense it is itself an in-between—enacting and modelling cultural practice.

Twentieth and twenty-first century notions of cultural hybridity have their foundation in what American scholar May Joseph refers to as anthropological and biological discourses of conquest (Joseph 1999, 1). In the history of botany and zoology the word refers to the crossing of different plant or animal species; usage which provided pseudoscientific weight to biological ideas about human race which were so much a part of the colonial project of

---

1 This particular article is Hage’s response to debate within the discipline of anthropology regarding the adoption of ethnography by other disciplines, namely cultural studies. He refers to particular aspects of this debate as “a quasi-Hansonite tendency” (1998, 286), after the far right, anti-immigration One Nation political party’s then leader Pauline Hanson, saying, “Cultural studies academics are clearly [the anthropologists’] ‘Asians.’ [...] They] are both bludgers and having too much fun, like the Asian migrants who both steal all the jobs while also managing to be always unemployed” (ibid.).

2 See Boyd (2006) and Salih (2002) for more detailed comparison on Butler’s performativity of gender and Homi Bhabha’s theories of hybridity and colonial mimicry.
the nineteenth century. An idea of human races as different species, as biologically and therefore hierarchically different, and as somehow not “naturally” belonging together, has proved to be pervasive—we need only look to Hitler’s Germany in the mid-twentieth century, or Rwanda and Darfur within the last couple of decades. Ongoing violence and exclusion in the form of genocide, as well as less dramatically but equally exclusionary in the form of immigration policy for example, is connected to this history of racial (and by extension, cultural) dominance that is a legacy of the colonial imagination. Robert Young makes this point clearly in *Colonial Desire* (1995):

> The need for organic metaphors of identity or society implies a counter-sense of fragmentation and dispersion. There is a story behind the way in which the organic paradigm so beloved of the nineteenth century quickly developed alongside one of hybridity, grafting, of forcing incompatible entities to grow together (or not): to that extent we still operate within its legacy of violence and corruption. The characteristic cultural movement produced by capitalist development in the nineteenth century was one of simultaneous processes of unification and differentiation. (4)

It is worth remembering that a discourse of hybridity arises as counterbalance to, or at least hand-in-hand with, a discourse of purity. The global redistribution of people under colonial expansion served to solidify racial and cultural identities at the same time as it led to hybridised forms and modes of belonging.

Postcolonial theories of hybridity are necessarily reworked under the shadow of this inheritance. With the decolonisation of the world through the twentieth century, a shift from anti-colonial nationalisms to more post- or extra-nationalist conceptions of identity and society (Gandhi 1998) has seen the notion of hybridity redressed as a more politicised anti-authoritarian strategy. The dangers of entrenched cultural essentialism have been stressed by theorists from Frantz Fanon ([1967] 1986) to Edward Said (1978) and Stuart Hall (Hall and du Gay 1996; Hall et al. 1996) for their role in legitimising ongoing inequalities between East and West, black and white, centre and periphery, or colonised
and coloniser. Against a discourse of essentialism which collects people under reified solidarities of nation or ethnicity, the postcolonial conception of hybridity seeks to acknowledge the more ambivalent and mutually transformative effects of the colonial encounter for both coloniser and colonised. Intervening into the purity-hybridity binary enforced through colonial power structures as well as anti-colonial identity politics, hybridity in its postcolonial iteration destabilises established cultural power relations, “not through a mere inversion of these hierarchical dualisms, but by throwing into question these very binaries through a process of boundary-blurring transculturation” (Ang 2001, 198). As such, postcolonial hybridity is expressive of the range of unfixed and ambivalent cultural affiliations across nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and class that have come to characterise contemporary globalised culture.

An understanding of hybridity as a legacy of the nineteenth century colonial project, as well as through the ubiquity of its usage in postmodernist language to describe anything and everything from cultural identity to dance music, imbues the word with connotations of both sinister assimilation and heraldic fusion. Such broadness questions the notion’s possible remaining utility within theory. The postcolonial discourse of hybridity has brought about new ways to understand subject and identity formations, and indeed cultural production; but in its critique also points to the historically and politically empty potential of its deployment—a critique aimed likewise at the politics of colonial and contemporary globalisation. While many scholars have engaged with this critique, Jacqueline Lo identifies a particular brand of what she calls happy hybridity, which is “emptied of all its specific histories and politics to denote instead a concept of unbounded culture” (Lo 2000, 153), and therefore masks and perpetuates structural inequities. The capacity for the term hybridity to become a normative, a catch-all (Chan 2000, 53) or whitewash for the status quo (Lo 2000, 153) is one good reason for critical scepticism.
Within this version of the term there is also a possibility of viewing everything as culturally hybrid, which breeds yet another kind of homogeneity, and reiterates another binary opposition to discourses of purity rather than exposing and calling into question such discourses of purity.

The postcolonial turn has resulted in these two major opposing views of hybridity: serving on the one hand as a stabilising or even homogenising function, and on the other hand as a tool to disrupt and dismantle hegemonic relations through explicitly politicised and historicised intervention which focuses on processes of transculturation. As Leela Gandhi points out, the turn to a post-nationalist rhetoric such as hybridity, over antagonistic narratives of “us” and “them,” humanises the postcolonial world we have inherited; but she cautions, “as always, we need to ensure that the euphoric utopianism of this discourse does not degenerate into a premature political amnesia” (Gandhi 1998, 140).

Homi Bhabha’s influential theory of cultural hybridity as a contradictory and ambivalent space, a Third Space which enables non-binary positions to emerge, draws upon an important distinction between what Bhabha terms cultural diversity and cultural difference to critique the homogenising potential of a rhetoric of hybridity. He notes, “the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity masks ethnocentric norms, values and interests” (1990b, 208). Multiculturalism, for example, as state-sanctioned creation of diversity, is put forward by Bhabha as an attempt to contain and control the dynamic articulation of cultural difference, and as such cannot allow for conflictual, paradoxical or ambiguous identities. For Bhabha, cultural difference is non-homogenising and non-assimilationist, a liminal and productive arena where the construction of culture is located. This concept of difference is inherently critical of primordial unity or fixity, and of totalising narratives of originary culture.
What this really means is that cultures are only constituted in relation to that otherness internal to their own symbol-forming activity which makes them decentered structures—through that displacement or liminality opens up the possibility of articulating different, even incommensurable cultural practices and priorities. (Bhabha 1990b, 210-11, original emphasis)

The hybrid Third Space is a place of complex, ongoing negotiation that can accommodate a politics of difference, and which gives rise to new possibilities, meanings, and articulations: a cutting edge that holds the meaning of culture itself (Bhabha 1994, 56).

Bhabha's conception of negotiated cultural hybridity and Mikhail Bakhtin's work on hybrid linguistic constructions together form a genealogical backbone for the ways in which hybridity discourse has developed within the study of cultural production.\(^3\) Bakhtin’s hybrid construction is “an utterance that belongs, by its grammatical and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two 'languages', two semantic and axiological belief systems” (Bakhtin from *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981), cited in Young 1995, 20). As Robert Young suggests, Bakhtin’s hybridity demonstrates the fundamental potential of language to be simultaneously the same and also different, “an undecidable oscillation in which it becomes impossible to tell which is the primary meaning” (Young 1995, 20). Bakhtin notes that often the same word can belong to two languages—intersecting in one utterance, the word can have contradictory meanings, or one voice can ironise and unmask the other. Termed *intentional hybridity*, this type of utterance is “an artistically organised system for bringing different languages in contact with one another, a system having as its goal the illumination of one language by means of another” (Bakhtin in Young 1995, 22, emphasis removed), and is distinguished from an unconscious or *organic hybridity*, which references a situation in which “the mixture remains mute and opaque, never making use of the conscious contrasts and oppositions” (ibid., 21).

---

\(^3\) In addressing the newly emerging field of Asian Australian Studies Dean Chan cooly lamented, “Must every narrative on Australian hybridity begin with Bakhtin or Bhabha?” (Chan 2000a, 56).
Translating this into social terms, Jacqueline Lo reflects that organic hybridity describes the historical evolution of culture in general: self-reflexivity of the mixture does not go into its production, and it tends toward a fusion that always encodes histories of power, dominance, and appropriation, but which obscures that history through syncretic mix (2000, 154). Intentional hybridity, on the other hand, enables contestation, requires conscious engagement, and is “inevitably internally dialogic” (Bakhtin in Young 1995, 21). Young notes that the two categories of hybridity can often be at work at the same time, offering a dialectical model of cultural interaction which results in “an antithetical movement of coalescence and antagonism;” in this sense, “hybridity is itself an example of hybridity, of a doubleness that both brings together, fuses, but also maintains separation” (Young 1995, 22). The key point in Bakhtin’s intentional hybrid construction is that its ability to unmask serves to dismantle authoritative discourse. This is a feature adopted and shared by Bhabha’s hybridity, shifted towards a context of colonialism.

**COMPOUND IDENTITIES IN A POSTCOLONIAL WORLD**

Hybridity theory has been particularly useful to thinking about formations of cultural identity and the multitude of partial and overlapping cultural belongings felt by many people. In presenting his point about the space of hybridity’s identity with which I opened this chapter, Ghassan Hage foregrounds his own history of Lebanese Australian and cultural studies/anthropology migration.

If the fact that we are drawn by contradictory ambitions and desires defines our identity as a hybrid one, the fact that we decide to live these contradictions in a specific place gives this hybridity a stable space with an identity of its own. Theorists of hybridity forget such a simple truth: even hybridity has an identity. (Hage 1998, 285)

Hage argues that even hybrid identities are placed; and it is a reminder that the various diasporic identities that are assumed under a banner of hybridity are not necessarily the
same. As Hage suggests, there is a particularly Australian way of doing Lebanese Australian in-betweenness, and a particularly Lebanese way. Everything hybrid is not necessarily hybrid in the same way.

Such “placing” of identities has problematic repercussions for how we might conceive of material bodies being and doing hybridity. Brian Massumi points out that ideological accounts of subject formation insist on systemic structures (2002, 2). Within a cultural system, bodies are therefore coded or positioned within a grid, “conceived as an oppositional framework of culturally constructed significations: male versus female, black versus white, gay versus straight, and so on” (ibid.). Bodies occupy sites on the grid and are pinned to them—“stable spaces” in Hage’s phrase. While the system might concede multiple sites to a body, any such combinations are simply precoded into the ideological master structure. Within the positionality model, a body’s emplacement(s) are achieved by subtracting movement, catching “the body in cultural freeze-frame” (Massumi 2002, 3).

Of course, a body occupying one position on the grid might succeed in making a move to occupy another position. In fact, certain normative progressions, such as that from child to adult, are coded in. But this doesn’t change the fact that what defines the body is not the movement itself, only its beginning and endpoints. Movement is entirely subordinated to the positions it connects. (ibid.)

Put another way, how can we perceive a hybrid body as a moving and sensing one within a compound identity category which is fixed to the grid just as it fixes and reifies cultural positions on either side? The “strategic essentialism” conceptualised by Gayatri Spivak ([1988] 2006, 1990) acknowledges positive occasions of positioned belonging which can provide a mobilising force for those oppressed by the legacies of colonisation.4 Stuart Hall,

---

4 This is part of Spivak’s reworking of the grid: “In a certain sense, I think, there is nothing that is central. The centre is always constituted in terms of its own marginality. However, having said that, in terms of the hegemonic historical narrative, certain peoples have always been asked to cather the margins so others can be defined as central. Negotiating between these two structures, sometimes I have to see myself as the marginal in the eyes of others. In that kind of situation the only strategic thing to do is to absolutely present oneself at the centre” (Spivak 1990, 40-41).
working within a British context, suggests that culturalisms such as “Black” reference shared experiences of marginalisation in Britain for groups that in fact have very different histories and traditions; but while this homogenising category enables a counter-hegemonic resistance, Hall sees such an identity category as one phase, to be followed by another which carries “an awareness of the black experience as a diaspora experience, and the consequences which this carries for the process of unsettling, recombination, hybridization and ‘cut and mix’ [...]” (Hall in Young 1995, 24, original emphasis). As Robert Young argues, Hall’s example demonstrates a doubled model of organic and intentional hybridity working together towards a new politics of representation.

The following two chapters examine the work of artists who identify and are identified by others through compound adjectival collectives: well-known British Bengali dancer/choreographer Akram Khan, and emerging Indonesian Australian dancer/choreographer Ade Suharto. The lives and work of these two different artists will be explored in this section towards different ends. In Chapter 5, I propose Khan’s record of commentary on his “confused body” as expert testimony on the lived experience of hybridised moving. Confusion, as the referencing of his contemporary dance style but also his bodily practice, I argue, becomes the basis for a theory of embodied hybridity. In Chapter 6, I use my collaborative relationship with Suharto over the last ten years to observe at close quarters her development of a hybrid dance practice within the context of the Australian contemporary performance field.

In both cases, however, the artists’ diasporic identities have the potential to be collapsed into binary genealogies which correspond to the culturally placed dance traditions informing their individual hybrid practices: for Khan, his British Bengali identity perfectly aligns with Western dance and Kathak training, and for Suharto, her Indonesian Australian
identity is represented by training in classical Javanese and Western dance. Under such a construction, each hybrid practice problematically becomes read as a new but fixed form or aesthetic style, which is a product of, and reinforcement of, its parent traditions (also fixed). Such neat mechanistic models hardly reflect the contestative, unstable notions of hybridity proposed by postcolonial theory. The fact that Khan and Suharto are dancers, however, insists on analysis that focuses on, rather than subtracts, movement from the picture. In other words, I suggest the neat hyphenated categories allow, “the space of the crossing, the gaps between positions on the grid, [to fall] into a theoretical no-body’s land” (Massumi 2002, 4). Foregrounding moving bodily experiences unpins bodies from the cultural grid, making us account for living not just discursive bodies within cultural theory.

In conversation with Tariq Ali shortly before his death in 2003, Edward Said reflected on his own exilic identity:

> I frankly find the question of identity, above all my own identity, colossally boring. It doesn't really interest me. And I think I would say that in the time that I have left to live, the one thing I want to try and do is to get away from my own identity rather than consolidate it in some way. I like the idea, which [living in] New York encourages, of changing my identity, or being different things. Without regard for number or cost[...] The idea of travel is what New York affords people. Because in a certain sense, when you're here, you're really not here. You feel kind of in a state of intermittence, and the reality of travelling is very pleasurable. (Said in Said and Ali 2006, 119-120)

Acknowledging the undertone of privilege that pervades this statement, it remains that an ambiguous “state of intermittence” achieved through experiences of travel alludes to a shift away from the stable spaces of identity that positionality provides towards an expression of what the lived experience is of being in-between. A decade ago, hyphenated identity collectives were embraced in academia as the hyphen itself was made to represent a situation of hybridity.

The focus on hyphenated subjectivities—of being both Asian and Australian—emphasises identity formation as a provisional and fluid process. Hybridity and hyphenation offer an alternative organising category for a new politics of
representation which is informed by an awareness of diaspora and its contradictory, ambivalent and generative potential. (Lo 2000, 156)

What was the emerging discipline of Asian-Australian Studies in 2000 has become for the same author “Asian Australian Studies”, sans hyphen, in more recent publications (see, for example, Khoo and Lo 2008; Gilbert and Lo [2007] 2009). As Ien Ang notes, “the politics of diaspora is exclusionary as much as it is inclusionary, just like that of the nation” (Ang 2003, 144): language that presumes “internal ethnic sameness and external ethnic distinctiveness” (145) might have become outmoded. I should stress that I am not arguing for or against the hyphen’s use—I reflect the current vogue throughout this dissertation—however, I suggest this shift in fashion coincides with a needed shift in discourse from signifying or representing the in-between to embodying it. This follows on from a critique of the planar stage of representation which I discussed at the end of Chapter 3, and is also the proposition I see in Massumi’s argument for abolishing bodies freeze-framed on the cultural grid.

**EMBODIED HYBRIDITY, PERFORMING HYBRIDITY**

Essentialised cultural positions are arguably required by and/or enforced by cultural performance “traditions” as they operate in globalised spheres such as on world music labels, or at international arts festivals and multicultural events of all kinds. Within the positionality model intercultural performance has the tendency to be conceived as collaboration between several (or at least two) people, each embodying different cultures, forms or traditions, in terms of what is produced as well as how such productions are analysed within art criticism and scholarship. This tendency privileges those performers

---

5 See Palumbo-Liu’s (1999) argument for a solidus rather than hyphen in his construction “Asian/American.” Similar to “and/or,” he argues “the solidus at once instantiates a choice between two terms, their simultaneous and equal status, and an element of indecidability, that is, as it at once implies both exclusion and inclusion [...]” (1). The “persistent deferral” of American status to “hyphenated Americans,” he further argues, presumes a white totality to the signifier “American” (ibid.). See also Lo, Chan, and Khoo (2010) for connections between the fields of Asian American and Asian Australian Studies.
In the In-between

Hybridity in motion

who embody discrete, bounded, stable, and readable forms—essentialised bodies—or at least sees them as such, and any hybrid, intercultural negotiation is an effect of the syncretic or disjunctive combination of cultures which happens on stage. Under this formula, the show is intercultural and the bodies of the performers involved are material representations of reified cultures, either through the “authentic” performance of a culturally positioned form or (but most likely and) the embodiment of “authentic” visual markers of ethnicity, race, and costume. This perfectly expresses Peter Brook’s notion of the empty stage, “the reality of zero” where “geography and history cease to exist” (Brook in Schechner et al. 1986, 60). Brook’s performers bring cultural “baggage” which he projects into the “pregnant void” of the stage (ibid.). Brook the director occupies a space of modernity: he is the globalising force above culture, bringing together disparate positions on the culture grid. This is the one of the major critiques of intercultural performance brought to light most vocally by Bharucha in the wake of Brook’s Mahabharata (1985).

In the empty space of the intercultural meeting ground, which assumes the “point zero” of an authentic “first contact” between “essential human beings”, there is a total erasure of the participants’ ethnicities in favour of their universal human identities, creativities, and potentialities. The interculturalist is above ethnicity; he/she is always already human. And therefore, he/she can afford to propose universality for all, cast in an invariably white, patriarchal, heterosexist image. (Bharucha 2000, 35)

In their article “Toward a Topography of Cross-Cultural Theatre Praxis” Helen Gilbert and Jacqueline Lo acknowledge the precedence of intercultural performance as a Western tradition, which typically “positions the performance traditions and/or actual bodies of ‘other’ cultures as focal points of the Western viewer’s specular consumption” (Lo and Gilbert 2002, 48). Brook’s model of theatre like Mnouchkine’s Théâtre du Soleil, has, as Marvin Carlson argues, a clear transculturalist agenda and strategy: to construct a “celebration of human brotherhood, either metaphysical or political” (1996, 90) in the Western liberal humanist tradition, but also to articulate a radical new artistic voice for the director within the Western performance tradition.
Such a universalist agenda, producing a system of cultural diversity in Bhabha’s terminology, is common to many of the high profile intercultural performance makers working within the twentieth century European avant-garde; but such representations are not an exclusively Western phenomenon, as Singaporean director Ong Keng Sen’s “pan-Asian” LEAR (1997) and Desdemona (1999) attests. Fischer-Lichte contends that one of the problematic assumptions of intercultural performance is that it presupposes the feasibility of recognising the cultural origins of every element, “distinguishing between what is ‘ours’ and what is ‘theirs’. This implies the notion that a culture is essentially monadic and self-contained” (2009, 399). This leads me to one of the main questions of this dissertation: is it possible that we might arrive at different understandings of cultural processes and hybridity if we take the body, not just the stage, as a site of intercultural performance, as the interface of cultural multiplicity and negotiation?

In Gilbert and Lo’s recent work on crosscultural performance in Australia, the authors argue it is the process of embodiment which reveals cracks in philosophies of cultural practice such as cosmopolitanism, as “enactments of universal communitas” ([2007] 2009, 4). Interested in promoting the “mundane and embodied aspects of cultural and ethnic diversity in ways that are glossed over by the rhetoric of official multiculturalism in Australia” (3), they argue that the materiality of theatre allows for not just a discourse of crosscultural engagement, but also a crosscultural praxis (13). Their chapters “Asianizing Australian Theatre” and “Asian Australian Hybrid Practice” in particular address issues relevant to the study of hybrid dance forms presented in this section. In the first of these chapters, Gilbert and Lo discuss Australian practitioners’ adoption of Asian performance

---

6 See for instance, notes about Jerzy Grotowski’s vertical transculturalism, Eugenio Barba’s horizontal interculturalism in Schechner (2002, 244-247); also Marvin Carlson’s chapter “Brook and Mnouchkine: Passages to India” (1996).

7 Gilbert and Lo cite Ong as a prominent example demonstrating how, “even when intercultural exchanges take place within the ‘non-West,’ they are often mediated through Western culture and/or economics” (2002, 36-37). See also Grehan (2000).
traditions, detailing examples of what they see as two modes of operation: staging and embodiment. The former is defined as an “application of specific Asian technologies of representation,” however, I am interested in focusing on the latter, embodiment, a “bodily incorporation of Asian expressive techniques through training” (91).

Using as an example the proliferation of Suzuki Method training amongst Australian performers, Gilbert and Lo attempt to show how complex the process of “Asianisation” becomes when techniques are incorporated into a performer’s “bodily expressive praxis” (97). But embodiment for Gilbert and Lo is approached through the reading of bodies, not through subjective experiences of the processes of embodiment—the “how” of it or the “doing” of a body as Judith Butler called it (see pp. 5-6). This is not to fault the authors’ focus on how their performance examples circulate and form representations of crosscultural subjects within political and social fields; this is after all their central project. Yet, I argue this key text demonstrates a gap in the way that embodied experience or praxis, and embodiment is theorised, a gap likewise evident within the wider field of intercultural performance analysis.

In a passage dedicated to discussing Mémé Thorne 1996 solo work Burying Mother for the Belvoir Street Sydney Asian Theatre Festival, the authors critique an article by performance practitioner and scholar Yana Taylor, writing that while “Taylor offers an insightful analysis of the aesthetic effects of Thorne’s art form, she does not consider the impact that cross-cultural and mixed-race identity politics play in the performance text” (Gilbert and Lo [2007] 2009, 103). In particular, Gilbert and Lo highlight Taylor’s observations that Thorne’s Suzuki training gave her “altered dimension of time use,” and

---

8 I note that “Australian” in this paragraph is racialised, standing in for either White Australian, or at least not Asian or Aboriginal Australian, and is used in accordance with its presentation by Gilbert and Lo.
an "extremely high degree of segmentation and fragmentation of action" (Taylor in Gilbert and Lo [2007] 2009, 103). It is true that Taylor’s interest in her article “About Time in Performance and Analysis: Streams of Time in *Burying Mother*” (Taylor 1998), is toward analysing relations between the Suzuki method and time use, and she does not approach how hybridity may be working in either the aesthetic, textual, or embodied aspects of the performance. However, I would also argue that Gilbert and Lo mistake performers’ engagement with perceptual experiences of movement including that of time as simply “aesthetic effects.” Gilbert and Lo’s reading of *Burying Mother*, on the other hand, is framed within a narrative of Eurasian Australian diasporic experience, in which the performer is caught between home and host culture and in the end “exorcize[s] the authority of the mother/home culture [...] in favour of a more negotiated and hybridized identity” (Gilbert and Lo [2007] 2009, 103). The authors observe that Thorne’s incorporation of Suzuki (and also tai chi, yoga and Western contemporary dance) technique is not therefore just for exotic display, but rather produces “a highly localized exploration of contemporary Australian identity politics” that is “motivated by an analytical and critical reassessment of the historical and sociocultural synergy between the foreign/Asian and the target/Australian cultures” (ibid.). The authors are highly critical of theatrical works which incorporate Asian training techniques in “highly formalistic” ways (154), seeing this type of work as open to a charge of “thin cosmopolitanism” (9). In fact they stay far away from formal description of the works they examine. Observations such as Mémé Thorne’s “deconstruction of the Suzukian vocabulary” (103), is a banner under which we are to assume “successful” hybridisation; however, we are never treated to a description of how this is experienced or achieved in somatic terms.⁹

---

Postcolonial theories of hybridity also inform Gilbert and Lo’s discussion of racially marked Asian Australian bodies within contemporary Australian performance. The authors argue that such subjects are “already textualized by particular social, political and theatrical discourses that have marked their bodies, first and foremost, in race and gender terms” (173), and seek to critique stereotyped readings of Asian bodies on stage. As such, they are drawn to performances that construct contestative, ambivalent notions of Asian Australian identity, such as Anna Yen’s Chinese Take Away (1997):

The fluidity and transformative powers of [Yen’s] performing body militate against the spectator’s impulse to fetishize the material (Asian and female) body presented on stage. By stretching the borders of corporeality to embody multiple identities, Yen’s performance not only claims a theatrical, and by implication, cultural, space for the Asian Australian subject but also enables the racialized corpus to take on new iconic possibilities beyond those imposed by the dominant culture. (177-178)

Intentional hybridity, they argue, is employed here both by the performance maker as a textual effect, “a form of aesthetic praxis that works by internal dialogization” (178), and by the spectator as a reading strategy, “informed by doubleness of perspective” (ibid.). Gilbert and Lo’s project is clear: they wish to reinstate a politics of representation to the reading of crosscultural bodies in performance, and locate them within “an identified field of contesting power relations” (184). Their work seeks to develop a local field of discourse in response to the historical and political particularities of indigenous, settler, and migrant relations in the region. Once again, however, what it is to perform a body is pre-given; or more accurately, embodiment for Gilbert and Lo is a matter of what bodies signify within a given social field. Hybridity is created in the space between a body’s representations and our reading of it.

The linguistic/literary inheritance of hybridity discourse by way of Bakhtin and Bhabha is effectively mapped onto representational and especially narrative examples of theatre, but
I suggest Gilbert and Lo’s model is predominantly a theatrical one.\textsuperscript{10} I see two important limitations here: first, it confines its study of intercultural negotiation—hybridity even—to what occurs through the body’s representations, in their reception by others; and second, within a model of textual analysis, bodies become performance scripts to be read, “freeze-framed” representations of various positions on the culture grid. Phillip Zarrilli’s work on understanding the embodied work of actors (2004, 2007) is notable for its challenge to research of what might be called this “semiotic body,” and goes some way toward helping us to deal with this first limitation. Zarrilli positions his project in line with Stanton Garner, quoting his observation that, 

phenomenology offers to supplement the semiotic (or materialist) body with the phenomenal (and phenomenalizing) body—to counter the signifying body in its dephysicalized readability with what we might call the “embodied” body in its material resistance. By addressing issues of embodiment, phenomenology opens up the dimension of "livedness," of which objectifying theory can give no account and which it must bracket in order to maintain its analytic stance. The phenomenal body resists the epistemological model of a corporeal object yielding its meanings to a decorporealized observer. (Garner in Zarrilli 2004, 654)

I highlighted some of the possible utility and limitations of phenomenology in my introduction, and I will return to this in a moment.

In regard to the second limitation, the body as script, while there may be strategic value (to follow Spivak) in at times locating bodies on the grid, I want to argue here that Gilbert and Lo’s mode of analysis remains incomplete for some kinds of performance: namely, those for whom being a body is a question not of representative acts but the doing of action, of the experience (and conditions) of moving. Dance scholar Randy Martin asserts, “dance presents special problems of how to move between representation and object” (1998, 34). 

\textsuperscript{10} For an in-depth discussion on the discourses of “theatricality” versus “performance,” see McGillivray (2007). I acknowledge my use of “theatrical” here is potentially controversial, aligning it with observational or specular modes of analysis; however, I refer to McGillivray’s genealogy of the theatrical metaphor in which he outlines a foundation for theatre as “a place for looking,” long before coming into its more modern association as a building for the performance of plays, and the relationship of theatricality to spectating and to an epistemology of seeing-knowing within European Renaissance subjectivity (203 ff.).
As an example, he points out that forms of dance documentation, whether written or filmed, tend to focus more on recreating the performance event rather than on capturing the social processes that went into its making. In this way, Martin claims, dance shows its particular resistance to representation: “dancing features as its artistic object the motional dynamics of gathering together physical presence (mobilization), the incessant change of bodies moving in space” (35). Even within Zarrilli’s actor-focused research, he maintains “acting should not be viewed as embodying a representation of a role or character, but rather as a dynamic, lived experience [...]” (2007, 638). Zarrilli’s view on acting is no doubt influenced by his involvement with non-Western performance forms such as Kathakali that are not the “representational and/or mimetic meta-theories of acting” (ibid.) coming from the Western narrative theatre tradition. As such, his approach might be thought of as more “performance” than “theatre” studies.

My critique of the theatrical model—a shorthand I am using to distinguish the dominant observational, representational readings of performing bodies—is in part a methodological one to be sure; in the next two chapters I argue explicitly for a shift in method from the purely observational to a version of participation.11 But my critique is also an issue of research object (the dance versus dancing, the performance versus performing), and of theory (what are the limits of hybridity theory for performance). This is as Richard Schechner suggests, one of the foundational principles of the discipline of performance studies: “performance studies does not ‘read’ an action or ask what ‘text’ is being enacted” (2002, 2). Providing politicised intervention into representations and readings of race and culture on our stages goes hand in hand with applying postcolonial politics of cultural practice to performance analysis. But this dissertation puts forward bodies themselves as

11 I should note that this use of “theatrical” is not necessarily a drama/dance distinction: as Diedre Sklar points out, even in traditional dance scholarship “aesthetic and historical studies tend to display a visualist bias, even though the primary media of dancing is movement” (2008, 88).
sites of intercultural performance, a move which proposes that embodiment of aesthetic forms, corporeal technique and training, bodily affect and kinaesthetic experience are important questions capable of being tackled in ways that avoid the apolitical and ahistorical charges of thin cosmopolitanism. Part II of this thesis focuses on abstract, movement-based contemporary dance examples in order to highlight limitations within a narrative mode of performance analysis, but as my previous chapters suggest other forms of contemporary performance such as the participatory audio walks discussed also make imperative a shift towards accounts of bodily experience. Making the space of hybridity not between watcher and performer, but rather a spatiality embodied and enacted by performers on stage, in rehearsal, or on the street, has the potential to provide nuanced and perhaps different understandings of how cultural in-betweenness is experienced and performed. This requires, however, a fundamentally different understanding of embodiment and embodied hybridity than that which informs Gilbert and Lo’s work.

**CRITICAL MOVEMENT STUDIES**

Performance at its most basic is an embodied event in that it is enacted by bodies. But how I am a body—how I move to meet the world and thereby construct meaning in and of it—is a question that goes to the heart of human corporeality and subjectivity.

Dance scholar André Lepecki claims that “rethinking the subject in terms of the body is precisely the task of choreography” (2006, 5). Andrew Hewitt’s “social choreography” is aimed directly at thinking about the relationship of aesthetics to politics in a way that poses dance or choreography as a structuring and affecting of the social order. In so doing Hewitt critiques undialectical assumptions of “the body” as materiality—a text to be read—asking, “can I still experience something? Can I produce an artifact? In other words, are we
to think of the ‘work’ of art as noun or verb, as artifact or activity?” (Hewitt 2005, 25). Susan Leigh Foster argues that “choreography” can be theorised as a conceptualisation of corporeal, individual, and social identity, able to “contest the reception of dance as the presentation of a kind of spectacle without a history or methodology for engaging with the physical [...]” (Foster 2011, 4). Foster’s recent book *Choreographing Empathy* (2011) undertakes a comprehensive genealogy of the term (along with kinaesthesia and empathy), and such a project points to the wide deployment but also critical possibility the term choreography holds to recognise “the specific and intensive physical commitment that any body must invest in order to ground itself in the world” (72).

The development within dance studies towards critically assessing movement and moving bodies is characterised by approaches such as Randy Martin’s shift in emphasis to “dance as bodily mobilisation, rather than as any determinant movement form” (Martin 1998, 183). His notion of mobilisation, which I mentioned above, is the way “through which bodies gather and are assembled and the materialisation of identity that is accomplished in the process” (208). Participation, an internal perspective of the event, is key to Martin’s formulation as is a focus on practice as located in the movement between dance and dancing (206). For Martin too, the reawakening of dance's potential within critical theory is therefore a methodological shift; but it is also, as André Lepecki claims, a critical rethinking of dance’s political ontology (2006, 16). Lepecki’s ontological project is in part a response to the stilled and even anti-movement choreographies of Western experimental dance at the turn of the twenty-first century, which he argues sever dance’s alignment to flow and unceasing, smooth movement.

In the previous section I referred to habitual bodily movement through an idea of embodiment deriving from Bourdieuan habitus, “embodied history, internalised as a
second nature and so forgotten as history” (Bourdieu 1990, 56). It is through this conceptualisation that we have come to understand how the social (whether it be ideologies of class, nation, or age) is produced through bodies. This process informs Patrice Pavis’s notion of a cultural “script” evident in a performer’s bodily technique acquired through formalised training (for example, Peking Opera, or Western naturalistic acting): “theatrical performance and dance visualize this inscription of culture on and through the body” (Pavis 1996, 3). Just how new corporeal techniques become embodied, however, and become habitus, “spontaneity without consciousness or will” (Bourdieu 1990, 56), is a question that will be taken up in the following two chapters. Here Zarrilli’s extension of phenomenology (largely Drew Leder’s ecstatic and recessive bodies) to account for specialised, non-everyday or extra daily embodiments of performers is useful in probing the possibilities of multiple bodies in performance or a non-unitary habitual body. Pavis stresses that at its best intercultural performance is intercorporeal work, “in which an actor confronts his/her technique and professional identity with those of the others” (1996, 15); but in the examples I will discuss, multiple bodily techniques are confronted in an ongoing way, within the body of one performer, in order to produce a hybrid practice.

The ongoing disruption of habitual movement may be a characteristic of contemporary dance practice in general, where new forms of expression are sought through experimentation with corporeal technique; and the examples I explore are contemporary dance ones involving doubled cultural/formal hybridity. The understanding of embodiment that I outlined in my introduction and expand further in this section helps to focus analysis on dance’s engagement with corporeal technique as experiential, not just

---

12 This notion of cultural inscription of the body through training reveals the social constructedness of cultural performance, similar to the ways already discussed in relation to hybridity and performativity discourses. See Ness (2008) for her study of how the “bones, ligaments, and other tissues of [Balinese, ballet, and Bharatanatyam] dancers are the host material” for an inwardly migrating inscription of cultural symbolism (15).
13 I discuss this in further detail in Chapter 5; see pp. 137-138.
In the In-between

Hybridity in motion

aesthetic or formal: “the experiential aspect of dance, which we might call its perception, is an embodied corporeal act, one which is embedded in the conditions of its articulation” (Rothfield 2005, 47). This perceptual and experiential notion of embodiment is derived from (if not perfectly aligned to) a phenomenological approach, which begins “from the methodological postulate that the body is not object to be studied in relation to culture, but is to be considered as the subject of culture, or in other words as the existential ground of culture” (Csordas 1990, 5, original emphasis). In distinction to Bourdieu’s theory of embodiment as social practice, Merleau-Ponty’s embodiment is a problematic of perception, within which the body is a “certain setting in relation to the world” (Merleau-Ponty [1962] 2002, 353), or “a body which rises towards the world” (87).

Dance scholar Phillipa Rothfield notes that movement experience is at the core of phenomenological analysis: “it is the corporeal means by which phenomenological insight can be gained” (2005, 47), and phenomenology has been one key aspect to the development of movement theory as critical discourse amongst dance scholars.14 Rothfield goes on to argue, however, that “contrary to phenomenological belief, this experience is partial, depending upon its specific context of movement practice and corporeal engagement” (ibid.).15 Like Rothfield, Sally Ann Ness argues that phenomenology’s universalism is difficult to apply to culturally focussed research on dance: the everyman’s body utilised by philosophy exists uncomfortably with what we know about cultural (and indeed gender) specificity. But that also, the cultural significance of human movement is what can be understood within phenomenology as an imposed framework on primary perception—exactly what must be bracketed off (in the sense of a Husserlian epoche) in order to get at the immediacy of the lived body (2004, 125).

14 See the “mutual interrogation” of philosophy and dance which ran as a series in TDR: The Drama Review (2006-2007, T192-195), and Topoi’s special issue on philosophy and dance (2005, 24(1)).
15 This is part of Rothfield’s critique of Maxine Sheets-Johnstone’s seminal work The Phenomenology of Dance (1966).
While Ness identifies a paradigm shift away from objective, observational methods of dance analysis towards embodied participation as characterising leading work on cultural and crosscultural dance, she finds it is not necessarily a neat shift towards phenomenology. Zarrilli calls his methodology an "enactive" approach which focuses on the perspective of performer as enactor/doer from inside the process (2007, 638), and this is very much what I have been advocating here and in my introduction. Ness argues that there is a shift towards embodied practice as a methodology of analysis, however: “the cultural interests motivating the research are leading in directions not approached by phenomenology” (2004, 140); and this is very much echoed by Rothfield: “the descent of phenomenological discourse into the terrain of social and historical articulations is also its entrance into the ethical and political complications which characterize social life” (2005, 45).

**EMBODIED HYBRIDITY IN MOTION**

In the next chapter (Chapter 5) I confront this methodological shift towards participation or embodied practice by examining Akram Khan’s record of commentary on his hybrid performance practice. By sifting through what Khan says about his corporeal experiences of performing, I aim to approach a theory of embodied hybridity from the perspective of lived experience. Critiquing spectatorship as the dominant mode of knowledge production within performance scholarship, I argue that Khan’s expertise as an intercultural performance practitioner affords him finely attuned perceptions of what hybridity is as a kineasthetic practice: that is, in moving, embodied terms. My focus in this chapter is on uncovering ways to discuss the experience of such movement, rather than on adding to

---

16 Zarrilli calls his use of "post-Merleau-Ponty phenomenology" just one among a set of complimentary methodologies which also includes philosophical linguistics, cognitive science, anthropological ecology, discussions of actor training and performance, and non-Western paradigms of performance experience (for more see Zarrilli 2007, 638; 2004, 653).
existing writing about Khan’s performance works. Khan has been highly vocal in discussing his practice in large numbers of interviews and comments he has put on public record, and I propose his actual term for his hybrid dance practice—confusion—and his descriptions of his confused embodiment could be the basis for a theory of embodied hybridity which attends to the moving body.

In Chapter 6, I employ a participatory methodology that is more ethnographic in nature. Utilising participant-observation and interview methods adapted by performance studies scholars for the study of rehearsal, I examine the development of a culturally hybrid dance practice in its early stages through my performance-making relationship with Ade Suharto. My relationship to Ade’s experimentation as a collaborator and colleague gives me privileged access to the challenges she is encountering in the process of becoming confused. Whether Khan’s theory of embodied hybridity can inform either the practice or analysis of Ade’s work is one of the key questions explored in this chapter. Methodologically my own reflections on our shared creative process augment my research; once again, however, the emphasis in this chapter is on Ade’s accounts of embodying a hybrid practice, whereby embodiment assumes phenomenological overtones of experiential, perceptual aspects of the lived body.

The critical study of movement coming from dance studies reflects the so-called “corporeal turn” within academia by reinstating the prominence of bodies as loci of knowledge and meaning; but through reinstating moving, lived experience to those bodies, this work also locates dance not in “the tautologically contained definition of art (art is what artists do)” (Martin 1998, 187), but in the field of cultural production more generally. This is, Martin insists, a political project. I am not arguing for a dismantling of the political analysis of cultural practice, nor am I attempting to evade the politics of representation or the
symbolic significance of performers’ bodies in terms of visual markers of race, gender or age. As Philipa Rothfield argues, “experience is not a pure zone whose analysis can reveal a set of structures whose totality expresses the phenomenological essence of dance;” but as she goes on to say, experience "is an important aspect of the practice of dancing and its perception" (Rothfield 2005, 47).

My argument here is that representation as well as practitioner experience are partial models of analysis, capable of only incomplete understandings. Rothfield also points out that poststructuralist work on the body has been more likely to focus on “social, cultural and historical processes which shape bodily experience, than dwell upon their felt results” (2005, 51, original emphasis). The following chapters do not aim at being phenomenologies of intercultural dance, but shift analytic focus to performer experiences of movement because I feel this is an area that has been overlooked by intercultural performance scholarship. In order to understand “being a body in a cultural way” (Ness 2004), phenomenological notions of embodiment which seriously encounter the lived body’s fact of movement are useful to this project, but these ideas must also be stretched to provide methods of analysis that take into account the full history and inheritance of colonial power upon in-between subjects and their corporeal manifestations of being in the world.
On the spur of the moment one evening in May of 2006, I found myself sitting at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theatre, in the Time Warner Building at Columbus Circle, listening to a post-show discussion with Akram Khan during the New York season of his dance work ma. I am taking notes in a small notebook—I carry one everywhere, a tool for focussing my attention. I don’t know where that notebook is now; what emerges most crystalline from the memory is Khan dressed in black and sitting neatly composed at the edge of the stage, and my stilled pen as he tells a story about becoming confused. It went something like this:

My dual studies as a dancer led to a confusion in my body of two or three very different languages, for I studied classical ballet too, and after I presented a short solo, Loose in Flight in London, I was told I’d invented a new language. So I went off to do some exploring, but got myself so confused I couldn’t tell where one style began and another ended. (Khan in Boccadoro 2005)

I have since realised that Bengali British choreographer Akram Khan often talks about his “confused body,” a result of his extensive Kathak1 training encountering a variety of Western dance training styles when he entered university. It is an often quoted narrative

---

1 Kathak, originating in Northern India, is one of the acknowledged eight forms of classical Indian dance. Its origins are as a story-telling form and it incorporates both Hindu and Islamic theology and philosophy. Characteristic features include fast spins and percussive footwork, built around complex rhythmic structures. For more information on Kathak see Kothari (1989), Shah (1998), and Mitra (2009).
on the genesis of his unique way of moving, however, I have also come to think that Khan's description of how his body performed—it became "confused"—is an intriguing expression of his own experience of moving, of his being and doing of his body, not just his choreographic work or style.

Born in London in 1974, Akram Khan began learning Bengali folk dance from a young age, with encouragement from his mother. At the age of seven, he became a student of British-based Kathak teacher Sri Pratap Pawar. While still a child he began performing, most notably touring internationally as “the Boy” in Peter Brook’s production of the Mahabharata (1985) for the Royal Shakespeare Company as a teenager, and featuring as “Ekalavya” in the production’s film adaptation in 1989. As he recounts in an early television documentary for ITV’s The South Bank Show ("Akram Khan" 2002) Khan officially became Pawar’s disciple on graduating from school, giving his debut solo recital in 1992 and gaining his senior diploma in Kathak from the Dance Board of India in 1994.

To appease his family’s desire for him to obtain a university degree, in the same year Khan enrolled to study dance at De Montfort University in Leicester, encountering for the first time training in contemporary dance and ballet. He later transferred to the Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds where he also trained in Graham, Cunningham, Alexander and release-based techniques, contact improvisation and physical theatre (Sanders 2009).

---

2 Susan Leigh Foster writes on the movement of Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham in Reading Dancing (1986); for more on Graham see also Horosko (1991) and on Cunningham see Copeland (2004). On Alexander Technique see (Alexander 1995); and for a brief description of how dancers learn release techniques see Parviainen (2002, 21). On contact improvisation see Novack (1990). For an understanding of the creation of different embodiments within various training systems see Foster (1997). See also Bales and Nettl-Fiol (2008) in regards to the multifaceted training taught within university dance programs, and Card (2006) for how dance graduates in Australia are trained to be what Foster (1997) calls “bodies for hire.”
As Khan states in the passage above, the precursor to his development of a hybrid or confused (to use his terminology) dance style which utilised both his Kathak and Western contemporary dance training was *Loose in Flight* (1995) while he was still at university. A filmed version of this early piece is included in the South Bank Show documentary:

*Khan faces camera, tension flexing his wrists and elbows bent tightly. Storing energy as tight as a spring, the tension dissolves groundwards, resurrected and decomposed over and again. Elbows held aloft, they make a strong line across his shoulder joints in perfect mathematical alignment; the string of a bow pulled taut: “four fingers between the chin and the chest, eight fingers between the two large toes.”* A small slip sideways and the composition disintegrates: a tumbling downhill run as elbows fall, catch briefly at his waist then fall further, hip hinges and gives way.

This solo piece was quite literally the unhinging of Kathak’s ingrained postural alignment into the catch and release of Western contemporary dance, played out as a difficult contestative relationship within Khan’s body.

The public and critical success of *Loose in Flight* led to further choreographic opportunities: he created work for the Umbrella Festival in 1996, Dance Xchange and Sampad’s Choreolab in 1999, and participated in the X-Group at Anna Teresa de Keersmaeker’s Performing Arts Research and Training Studio (PARTS) in Brussels in 2000. In this period, Khan made six works, including collaborations with Mavin Khoo and Jonathan Burrows, and a preliminary version of *Rush* (2000) which was to become the founding work of his own company. Since that time, the Akram Khan Company has gone on to regularly produce large full-length ensemble pieces: *Kaash* (2002), developed from an earlier piece called *Related Rocks, ma* (2004), *Bahok* (2008), and *Vertical Road* (2010). At

---

3 This quotation is from Khan, describing in an interview the mathematical precision of Kathak alignment and posture (Khan in Machon 2009, 115).
the same time Khan himself has continued to perform solo Kathak recitals: *Half and Nine* (2000), *Polaroid Feet* (2001), *Ronin* (2003), *third catalogue* (2005), and most recently *Gnosis* (2009) and *Desh* (2011). He has also developed and performed in a series of high-profile crosscultural duets (as they are called on his company website) with artists outside his company: *zero degrees* (2005) with Flemish-Moroccan dancer/choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, *sacred monsters* (2006) with French ballet dancer Sylvie Guillem, and *in-I* (2008) with French actor Juliette Binoche. The assumed simple duality of his practice (as a product of Kathak and Western contemporary dance) has been increasingly challenged through all this work; as the duets attest to, they are as much collaborations across genre and art form, as culture.

Khan’s trope of confusion has been used variously by critics, the media, and academics to address Khan’s performance, his particular brand of movement, and his approach to making work. Numerous interviews and articles preceding every performance season recount his narrative of becoming confused or cite his work as a confusion (e.g. Boccadoro 2004, Wilson 2009). Scholars too have used the word to refer to his particular hybrid dance practice (e.g. Machon 2009). No doubt this “branding” is also forwarded by the Akram Khan Company and Akram Khan himself as a useful moniker to distinguish his work and its context within the competitive international performing arts market, promoting his work as a unique product while also helping both the general public, the media, and scholars engage with the process of his hybrid form. Such reportage especially in the popular media cleverly makes way for a dialogue on what fusion or hybridity may be, instead of assuming its meaning; but at the same time, recounting his confusion narrative also serves to entrench a binary genealogy to Khan’s performing body.
In this chapter I want to test what Khan’s proposition of confusion offers as an expression of interstitial being or embodying of interculturality, as well as a challenge to fixed and oppositional representations of hybrid performance. Putting aside the veracity of Khan’s claims to a spontaneous new movement style emerging out of his body’s grappling with the effect of his varied training, confusion yet proposes, I suggest, a useful theory of movement, specifically intercultural movement. Comments from Khan suggesting that the combination of Kathak and Western contemporary dance was “generating new information in his muscles” (Sanders 2009) are impossible to scientifically verify, but this is not the point I want to examine here; rather, I pose that despite the social (and indeed economic) contexts that make Khan’s tale of becoming confused valuable to perpetuate, his comments also indicate an awareness of and relation to his intercultural embodiment that could be analytically useful.

**THE EXPERT PRACTITIONER-THEORIST**

My intention in this chapter is to explicitly look away from the stage, not to invalidate what happens there but to focus attention elsewhere: I do not engage in analysis of Khan’s repertoire of works in their entirety or individually, instead focussing on the ways in which his comments might be utilised as expressions of kinaesthetic experience. In proposing Khan’s confusion as a theory of hybrid movement, I am also proposing that Khan himself (as an expert of movement and moving) be considered as a practitioner-theorist. Working expressly against performance analysis that focuses on the spectator process and so privileges the visual end point—the show or the staged performance—I am instead arguing for the importance of studying being and doing hybridity in a bodily sense. This is part of a methodological shift away from pure observation—what I called Helen Gilbert and Jacqueline Lo’s “theatrical” model in the previous chapter—towards an accounting for
embodied practice as a source of useful theoretical knowledge. As I have argued previously, the focus on analysis through spectatorship in intercultural performance scholarship goes hand in hand with intercultural performance’s predilection for stage spectacle, where the zone of intercultural interaction exists outside performers’ own experiences in the empty meeting ground of the stage.

As Cynthia Novack argues culture is embodied through movement: “movement constitutes an ever-present reality in which we constantly participate. We perform movement, invent it, interpret it, and reinterpret it, on conscious and unconscious levels. In these actions we participate in and reinforce culture, and we also create it” (1990, 8). That our embodied perception of the world is a kinaesthetic one—moving toward and away from objects, sensing proprioceptively our body move in relation to itself, feeling the passage of time—is a core tenet of phenomenological understandings of human beingness:

> It is clearly in action that the spatiality of our body is brought into being, and an analysis of one’s own movement should enable us to arrive at a better understanding of it. By considering the body in movement, we can see better how it inhabits space (and, moreover, time) because movement is not limited to submitting passively to space and time, it actively assumes them, it takes them up in their basic significance which is obscured in the commonplaces of established situations. (Merleau-Ponty [1962] 2002, 117)

Heidegger’s notion of being-in-the-world is a key influence on Merleau-Ponty’s thinking about perception and the lived body as actively assuming space and time through movement; it bespeaks a relationship between self and the world, subject and object that is embedded, physical, tangible and above all, composite; we perceive ourselves in, as part of, and through the world. As I discussed in the previous chapter, phenomenological

---

4 A shift towards analysis of embodied experience could be applied to phenomenal experiences of spectating, As Anna Pakes argues, “When I watch a dancer on stage, for example, I am interested in her contribution to the work as a whole and to the ideas and meanings the work conveys. But my enjoyment of the dance, and my interest in it, also lies in the phenomenal of my experience in the theatre” (Pakes 2006, 95). But my project here is both for an understanding of embodiment as experiences of the lived (rather than semiotic) body, and for the study of practitioner (rather than spectator) experiences. See the work of Reason (2010) or Grant (2007) for phenomenological analysis of spectating. It could well be the case that further research is needed in terms of phenomenologies of spectating in explicitly crosscultural contexts, but this would be a different project from the one I am engaged in here.
understandings of embodiment and the lived body have had resonance (and limitation) for scholars writing about cultural work including dancing (see pp. 118-119). Akram Khan, an expert mover, has been prolific over the last decade and a half as a performance maker. As has already been suggested, he has also been prolific in articulating his embodied perceptions of what developing an intercultural dance language has been in an experiential, bodily sense. The large amount of published first-person accounts he has generated provides a useful set of descriptions for examining intercultural performance by way of lived experience rather than observation.

Performance scholar Susan Melrose suggests that much performance scholarship actually falls under what she is tempted to call “spectator studies” (2007, 6). Knowledge systems are markedly different, she suggests, between scholar-as-spectator and performance maker groups; a difference which leads to vastly separate modes of practice and models of intelligibility, as well as subjects and objects of interest. Moreover, she convincingly claims that there exists a power inequity in the way these systems of knowledge are treated in the academy. Melrose argues that the performance scholar/academic is often an expert-spectator (and expert-writer) operating in an epistemic sub-culture which privileges the study of performance events because of this particular expertise. Such a bias, however, is naturalised under the general header of “performance;” that is, the university misrecognises this difference to the degree that research into performance in general terms is more often than not subsumed under research into the performance-event, when in fact “expert performance making-processes differ so significantly from what is available to spectators under the same title” (9, original emphasis). Perhaps not surprisingly, in her view the academic discipline fails to recognise the epistemically differentiated work of making, instead relying on retrograded moves from event back to practice: “it remains the case, nonetheless, that in many university courses some of us teach students to mistake
performance effects for performance-making causes, and/or to try to guess at the latter” (5). Mike Pearson concurs: “the analysis of devised performance often adopts positions of spectatorship, concentrating on the authoritative documentation of dramaturgy and its exposition, causing scholarship to be rational and reasonable about work that was none of these things” (2006, 221).

These observations potentially address one of the continuing questions within the discipline of performance studies: that of the relationship between performance research and practice. There has been a proliferation of practice-led research degrees being offered by institutions in recent years; and a related, ongoing debate about how such projects might constitute theoretically rigorous research.5 As Melrose and Pearson point out, however, there remains an underlying gap in our understanding of performance-making, based on a methodological assumption of observation. As I discussed in the previous chapter, within intercultural performance the privileging of spectatorship and the performance event as the object of study has further consequences, perpetuating a view of the stage as intercultural zone and performers within it as visually readable representatives (through markers of race, through costume, or through traditional performance styles) of discrete cultures. The intercultural body then, becomes a text on which to read traces of originary culture. My use of what Akram Khan senses or feels, through what he says he feels and does in terms of his hybrid performance making, is one

---

5 Allegue et al. (2009) are strong advocates for the new practice-as-research paradigm. In the first chapter of this book Simon Jones notes that while practice-as-research is well integrated at an undergraduate level in the UK, the “hegemonic authority of the textual” asserts itself in terms of postgraduate research (21). His further claims that ”practice-as-research is that which flees textual practices,” and is therefore, “outside of judgement” (30), however, are the kinds of statements that fuel critique. In the same volume Alison Richards gives an overview of developments in the Australian context, noting that practice-based projects at the postgraduate level are more common at technology network universities than “traditional” ones. She quotes Ian Maxwell, then Head of the Department of Performance Studies at the University of Sydney: “I have yet to see a convincing argument made... about how these kinds of explorations constitute new knowledge, and how what is often produced by way of documentation is commensurate with the rigorous enquiry demanded of a PhD candidate” (175). In the English-speaking world this debate is largely represented in British and Australian university systems; in the United States postgraduate creative and academic study has long been divided into Master of Fine Arts and Doctor of Philosophy streams.
possible way of redressing the relationship between performance practice and research—of using them as mutually interrogative fields of knowledge. In much the same way Dwight Conquergood asked,

what are the conceptual consequences of thinking about culture as a *verb* instead of a *noun*, a process instead of product? Culture as an unfolding performative invention instead of reified system, structure, or variable? What happens to our thinking about performance when we move it outside of aesthetics and situate it at the center of lived experience? (1991, 190, original emphasis)

It follows that shifting methodological focus towards embodied practice, and focussing attention towards articulated processes of embodiment, will allow for different knowledges of intercultural process in performance. Khan’s comments on confusion form his analysis of an embodied, intercultural relation to being in the world, borne out of his finely attuned, expert knowledge of movement in its broadest spatio-temporo-corporeal terms.

### CONFUSION VERSUS FUSION

People use the word fusion, and I think you can do that with food, but I don’t know how you do that with dance. I think confusion is more about the struggle. For me, my personal experience is very much the struggle between contemporary dance and Indian dance, and that struggle brought out something in an organic way. If it was fusion then I don’t think my body would have spoken in an interesting way or brought out something interesting. It was very much the fact it was struggling, and that struggle (was) to change the language. (Khan in Wilson 2009)

Confusion, linguistically speaking, is a kind of confusing doubling: the con- prefix was originally com-, and indicates “together, together with, in combination or union;” and fusion is commonly defined as a “union or blending.” As we see in the statement above, the con- is significant for Khan as he deliberately seeks to distinguish his work from what he

---

understands to be cultural fusion. In a broadcast via the University of California, Los Angeles' online magazine *Asia Pacific Arts*, podcaster Smitha Radhakrishnan encapsulates the negative associations of fusion in dance:

> The idea behind fusion is fairly simple: some element of "the classical" is "retained"—sometimes movement, sometimes music, sometimes rhythm—plus something "else"—presumably something opposite, be it Western or modern or African, depending on where you look. At least that's the idea, an idea which, in itself is chalk-full [sic] of all sorts of Orientalist metaphors.

> Whatever the idea though, more often than not, it doesn't quite work because it always runs the risk of being not quite convincing enough to even the semi-trained eye. Classical dancers who suddenly start flailing around on stage, trying to present a newly-acquired vocabulary of modern dance look just as silly as pop music stars trying to adopt some random Indian-ish kind of movement. (Radhakrishnan 2007)

As Radhakrishnan indicates, fusion is associated with a fear of inauthenticity at the same time as it relies on oppositional, essentialist combinations. In the early South Bank Show documentary as well as more recent portrayals of Khan's contemporary work in rehearsal, such as the documentary *Letters on the bridge* (Delmos 2008), much is made of his credentials as a Kathak dancer, with scenes in his guru's studio in the first example, and an opening scene of sweaty, private footwork practice in the latter emphasising that he is classically trained. Khan's claim to membership within the European dance context are also made clear in his curriculum vitae, with time spent at PARTS and as an associate artist at Sadler's Wells Theatre just two qualifications.

As I argued previously, however, this oppositional framework belies the more complex cultural negotiation that makes up hybrid being in the world, and in this context I would add that the fusion label also carries a negative connotation of art production emptied of its political history and context, a synthesis akin to Jacqueline Lo's happy hybridity (see p100,) which is unchallenged by such histories and in opposition to any kind of critical, contested hybridity promoted in the postcolonial discourse. Khan's dislike for the fusion
In the In-between

Theories of movement: confusion

descriptor in relation to his work is telling. Fusion suggests “a stable creative formula with which to contemporize tradition” (Mitra 2009, 41), but as Khan demonstrates in the comment above, the trope of struggle and instability is all-important to him. Rather than an easy formula, Khan defines confusion as a state “where boundaries are broken, languages of origin are left behind and instead, individual experiences are pushed forward to create new boundaries” (Khan in Mitra 2009, 44).

**A BODY MAKING DECISIONS FOR ITSELF**

I feel the body is like a museum but an evolving museum so it's constantly mutating. It's a museum because it carries history. It carries generations and generations of information, cultural, educational, religious, political and so on. Then with each generation the body transforms, takes that information and responds to the environment that we live in. (Khan in Machon 2009, 112)

Confusion indicates a process of/within the body, and moving bodies as temporally and culturally inherited and accumulating. In these comments Khan is emphasising that dance training like experiential memory and cultural history is embodied, inscribed and remaining in the body, reflecting a similar understanding of cultural embodiment, or habitus, to Mauss and Bourdieu who emphasises the body as the locus of social practices. As the connector of human body, social practices, and personal identity (Wainright and Turner 2004, 100), habitus delineates a customary body for which cultural patterns have been absorbed into its very basic ways of being and behaving in the world, and for which the socially constructed nature of those patterns cease to be noticed: habitus is “the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product. As such, it is what gives practices their relative autonomy[…]” (Bourdieu 1990, 56). Khan suggests that the culturally inscribed body is both historical and unstable. It is also, as Pavis argues, inscribed by everyday and extra-daily practices: “the body of the actor is also penetrated and moulded
by ‘corporeal techniques’ (Marcel Mauss) proper to his/her culture and by the codifications of his/her tradition of performing” (Pavis 1996, 3). This is an idea I will return to in terms of the possibilities of a performative or extra-daily habitus later in this chapter.

Khan says of his own confused movement that, “it was not a conscious or intellectual development but simply that my body was making decisions for itself,” (in Boccadoro 2004). In stressing the corporeal nature of confusion, he is also stressing that the process of cultural (and/or formal) mixture was not a predetermined, thinking process, but rather his body making decisions “for itself.” His distinction between thinking and doing would appear to perpetuate what has come to be referred to as Cartesian dualism: opposing operations of the mind and body and thereby working against a more gestalt or integrated concept of moving or being, as typified by Merleau-Ponty’s notion of embodiment as an “I can” ([1962] 2002, 159). We could also correlate this particular comment with the idea of fusion being a formulaic construction: that is, a formula (fusion) is “thought up” versus confusion which “just happens;” fusion is constructed outside the body and confusion is a process of the body.

It is important to note that within many Western and non-Western dance fields the hierarchy of mind and body is actually reversed in such a way that body-centred ways of moving, behaving or indeed “thinking” are privileged as more real and/or more skilled: Khan’s comment poses body over mind, rather than Cartesian mind over body. Anna Pakes notes that simple dualistic frameworks actually misrepresent Descartes’ work and that it was, “a genuine attempt to tackle a perennial metaphysical issue: how to explain the existence of consciousness and its relationship to the material world” (2006, 8). But equally, Pakes argues that while physicalism might seem more adaptable to dance activity, it does little to address what she calls dance’s “mind-body problem” (Pakes 2006).
Cynthia Novack perceptively remarks, the mind-body issue contains an “academic predilection for reducing lived experience to theoretical abstraction,” but that the “dancerly impulse [is] to posit movement and bodily knowledge as privileged over all other knowledge” (1995, 180). In a recent interview in which Khan discussed entering the studio to begin making *Bahok*, he says, “the body is best when it’s at its most subconscious” (in Machon 2009, 114). But this rhetoric within dance—the invocation to “just do it, don’t think about it” or the belief that you master a step or phrase of movement when you “get it” in the body—is widespread and institutionalised, not unique to Akram Khan or even to dance. As Loïc Wacquant shows in his work with professional pugilists in Chicago, this is also common amongst other body-centred disciplines and fields: the fighter’s “organism is indeed the template and epicentre of their life, at once the site, the instrument and the object of their daily work, the medium and the outcome of their occupational exertion” (1995, 66).

It is useful to see beyond dance’s rhetoric of body over mind in the case of Khan’s confusion, and instead attribute it to a recasting of emphasis on corporeal decision-making as an analysis of the embodied nature of the moving experience. Confusion as “my body making decisions for itself” is strikingly similar to habitus as “spontaneity without consciousness or will,” and not unlike Massumi’s involuntary yet elicited biogram discussed in the previous section. Despite the divisive subject-object language Khan uses, we can argue, as does Merleau-Ponty, that in terms of all human movement, “we cannot relate certain movements to bodily mechanism and others to consciousness” ([1962] 2002, 142).

As long as the body is defined in terms of existence in-itself, it functions uniformly like a mechanism, and as long as the mind is defined in terms of pure existence for-itself, it knows only objects arrayed before it. (143)
Merleau-Ponty states that the process of learning a new habit or technique is one by which we “incorporate them into the bulk of our own body” (166), whereby our body and consciousness “are not mutually limiting, they can be only in parallel” (142).

Dance scholar Ramsey Burt points out that Khan’s narrative of how his body became confused—it spontaneously began moving this way as a result of its previous training—could be compared to the creative breakthrough moment that Purnimah Shah has identified in her analysis of the Kathak teaching model (Burt 2004). Shah argues that Kathak gurus aim to provoke this moment of breakthrough in students, first teaching the narrative dances through a process of imitation, which once assimilated leads the student to “a heightened integration of the intellectual and intuitive powers of imagination, the inner intent of creation, and mastery in physicalising the imagined intent” (Shah 1998, 6-7). Burt suggests this notion of creative breakthrough in the development of Khan’s contemporary dance is itself a familiar cultural and historical integration from his Kathak training. These similar accounts of the body’s struggle and breakthrough describe an embodied process. New information is absorbed until it becomes embodied as second nature, as Bourdieu would say, or incorporated “into the bulk of our body” in Merleau-Ponty’s words ([1962] 2002, 166). We then perform these actions more authentically, skilfully, creatively, revealing an “inner intent” as Shah describes, through an integration of physicality and imagination.

In Khan’s case, however, his moment of breakthrough into a new dance practice was also his body deciding to break away from habituated corporeal techniques of his Kathak and

---

7 This is not unlike Stuart and Hubert Dreyfus’s accounts of skill acquisition in foreign language learning, chess playing and flight instruction, where novices progress to experts via more intuitive rather than analytic decision-making, absorbed in the flow of mastery (Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1980, 15). This idea is taken up in more detail in the next chapter; see p. 162.
Western dance training. Susan Leigh Foster notes Bourdieu’s theory of habitus presumes a conservative memorising and commemorating: “the body’s movement repertoire retains and holds on to the past. Even when improvising, its actions are limited to a rule-governed range of responses that serve only to rediscover and renew traditions of thought and action” (Foster 2009, 7). In other words, the second nature performance that describes habitus and Khan’s “body making decisions for itself,” his spontaneous, confused performance of “new information [being generated] in his muscles” (Sanders 2009), are two markedly different cultural performances, with the former a confirmation of habitual actions, and the latter a disruption of them. Confusion indicates a version of second nature performance that in fact escapes habitual movement.

Additionally, Khan’s confused performance erupted from between (at least) two habitual bodies. This is in some sense what Phillip Zarrilli argues when he says in relation to bodies conditioned through actor training:

> We organize the world we encounter into significant gestalts, but the body I call mine is not a body, or the body, but rather a process of embodying the several bodies one encounters in everyday experience as well as highly specialized modes of non-everyday or extra-daily bodies of practices such as acting or training in psychophysical disciplines to act. (Zarrilli 2004, 655)

The possibility of possessing everyday and extra-daily bodies or embodiments is an experience familiar to performers through training as well as in performance, and could apply to all sorts of elite physical performers from actors to sprinters. As I have mentioned Zarrilli uses the term extra-daily after Eugenio Barba, to indicate “non-ordinary, voluntary modes of engagement” such as actor training and performance (2004, 661). In connection to the process of training, Patrice Pavis notes, “the master organizes a resistance to ‘natural’ rhythm, substituting for it a new behaviour that is artificial and ‘extra-daily’” (Pavis 1996, 4). The general aim through training, however, is that the artificial or extra-daily behaviour becomes at some point habitual, a corporeal technique capable of auto-
pilot or second-nature status, if still just one of Zarrilli’s several possible bodies and still distinct from what is performed and experienced in everyday life.\(^8\) Jaana Parviainen describes this kind of incorporated, bodily knowing (after Michael Polanyi) as indwelling or tacit integration, which is needed to perform skilfully; but she also notes that “we are switching between tacit knowing and focal knowing every second of our lives. It is a basic human ability to blend the old and well known with the new and unforeseen [...]” (2002, 18). This oscillation between tacit and focal knowledge works to maintain what Merleau-Ponty described as the body’s innate tendency towards equilibrium, transcendence in action, or what is often called being in flow.\(^9\)

Not all dancing, however, aims towards flow, and being in flow does not describe Khan’s break with habitual movement. Anna Pakes describes watching a dancer improvise:

> She begins in silence and stillness, but gradually, in response to murmurings on the sound-score starts to move in a slow, controlled way. She initiates movement in the extremities of the fingers and feet, a series of impulses that pass through the limbs and joints to the body’s core. As her centre engages, she moves more quickly and travels more expansively, her gestures becoming more complex and ambitious—until a moment when she feels herself falling into a familiar pattern in which she merely reiterates a sequence that seems to come automatically. The dancer makes the decision to fracture this sequence, break its apparently organic flow by unexpectedly leading movement from the elbow in a new direction. Realising also that her dynamic has become monotonous in a series of flurries of movement of about the same duration, she makes the effort to sustain certain phrases for longer and, ultimately, calm everything down to return to the virtual stillness from which she began. (Pakes 2006, 91)

---

\(^8\) Having said this, the dualism of everyday and extra-daily does not account for the ways that these modes of experiences or indeed modes of embodiment bleed into one another. Often you can spot a ballet dancer even when they are running across the street to catch the bus. Additionally, Zarrilli notes that non-ordinary modes of experience can be applied to everyday practices, and he gives as an example certain Buddhist ideals of engagement in the everyday world (2004, 661).

\(^9\) Hubert Dreyfus calls this “maximum grip” on the world, quoting Merleau-Ponty: “my body is geared into the world when my perception presents me with a spectacle as varied and as clearly articulated as possible,” and “our body is not an object for an ‘I think,’ it is a grouping of lived-through meanings which moves towards equilibrium” (in Dreyfus 2002, 12). These notions of motor intentionality feed into what Mihály Csikszentmihályi theorised as the optimal state of performance he called flow, the “holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement,” where “action follows upon action according to an internal logic” (1975, 36).
Pakes argues that dancing is a complex combination of mental causation and phenomenal consciousness, but just how her dancer decides to interrupt the flow or direction of any one movement is not clear from this passage.

Australian dancer Rosalind Crisp also says that dancing for her is decision making; but she stresses that this decision making is bodily and motile: “I think about dance whilst dancing, by dancing” (2009, 103, original emphasis).

As soon as I notice that I am about to make an habitual movement, I redirect my attention to another part of my body or employ a different speed, effort or direction,

constantly changing the speed, the level, the effort, the duration, the direction, the size, or the part of the body that is initiating the movements,

delaying or enlarging the beginnings of movement,

changing irregularly between over "cooked" and under "cooked" movements,

alternating unpredictably between “going” and “not going”

... or between “leave that” and "stay with that." (103-104)

Dancing, Parviainen’s argues, “means becoming bodily sensitive in the respect of the kinaesthetic sense of one’s own motility” (2002, 20, original emphasis). What Crisp describes is a trained, corporeal technique of intentional non-habitual moving—a habitual non-habitual moving—which she utilises in an improvisation-based performance practice and which employs her body's trained sensitivity to her own movement. Akram Khan does not use this same practice of improvisation in performance, but we could think of the moment of his body first becoming confused or speaking for itself as an improvisation, rather than an uncontrollable, spontaneous eruption, and one in which he was similarly employing a bodily sensitive technique of non-habitual moving.

Even in types of dancing other than improvisation, Parviainen argues, “bodily knowledge is not about correctly performing a movement skill, such as a pirouette, but the ability to find
proper movements through bodily negotiation, variations of the pirouette” (2002, 20). In becoming confused, Khan was becoming aware of and performing possible variations of his motility beyond those offered by his (perhaps several) habitual everyday, extra-daily Kathak, or extra-daily Western dance bodies. Machon cites Khan as exemplary of what she terms (syn)aesthetic performance, her term for describing performance which makes meaning in an audience through visceral as well as cerebral effects (2009, 30): “the (syn)aesthetic body in performance ‘tells’ an individual’s experience of her or his own body[... It] provides a unique access to the ‘lived’ as an experiential dimension” (65). In confusion Khan moves within a multiplicitous habitus, between Kathak and Western dance in a way that escapes the habits of either; but this move also disturbs the habitual body as a stable category, calling attention to his multiple cultural embodiments and their possibility for variation; of his possibility for variation. Confusion is an enacting of possibility itself.

CONFUSION AS EMBODIED HYBRIDITY

Interestingly, the word confusion in English contains a meaningful set of etymological associations going back to the eleventh century: including overthrow, ruin, confound, and discomfit. Even in modern usage, the connotations of the word hint at things in disarray, at breakdown, unclear, or beyond being worked out.\footnote{Oxford English Dictionary Online, s.v. “confusion, n.,” accessed September 27, 2011, http://www.oed.com/. Interestingly, Japanese Australian butoh performer Yumi Umiumare also refers to her in-between cultural positioning as confusing. Confusion for Umiumare, however, or what she calls her “confused state,” is construed closer to a meaning like “confound,” and more in terms of her sense of alterity, of not belonging in either Japan or Australia. See Boucher (2007) and Hadley (2011) for more on how confusion becomes a source of dramaturgy in her work.} Breakdown or creative breakthrough—Akram Khan’s invocation of confusion describes his body’s struggle to find a new language, and his body “speaking” indicates a complex bodily negotiation. As a technique of ongoing training in habitual non-habitual movement, confusion belies the stable formulations of happy hybridity or fusion. Moving from a discussion of confusion as
the definitive moment in the story of Khan’s choreographic development, the question remains as to how confusion, despite all its negative meanings in everyday usage, might be productive as a continuing description of Khan’s culturally hybrid dance practice, and in broader terms, of moving bodies embodying hybridity.

There have been several publications in recent years which examine Khan’s work in relation to notions of cultural hybridity and diasporic identity, particularly in response to Khan’s 2005 collaboration with Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui zero degrees. Royona Mitra situates zero degrees as both “a formal and narrative exploration of the politics of border spaces” (2009, 40) and uses this example to demonstrate how performance can articulate diasporic (namely, British Asian) identity, pointing to connections between Indian, or more broadly South Asian, dance and European dance-theatre. She traces the development of British Asian dance from the immigrant embrace of classical dance forms—a move theorised as a way of stabilising connections to a cultural homeland as well as contributing to the construction of an Indian national culture in line with the broader Indian Nationalist project of the late twentieth century—to an era of hybridised forms most famously associated with choreographer Shobana Jeyasingh’s “tension between classical and personal styles” (Sunil Kothari in Mitra 2009, 43).

Locating Khan’s work within this field, Mitra sees his “deconstruction of the Indian classical lexis” (2009, 41) as a transition to the next generation, and more emblematic of diasporic identity in twenty-first century Britain. Deconstruction, which in the early solo Loose in Flight could be “read” in the visual disruption and breaking down of the codified Kathak

---

11 Khan has also made Bahok (2008) which continues this narrative interest in border spaces, situating an exploration of home in the transnational space of a generic transit lounge.

12 See Mitra (2009, 42). Also, in the 2002 South Bank Show documentary Khan’s guru Sri Pratap Pawar recalls on seeing Kaash for the first time, that he once told Khan that he could “put anything you like in contemporary, but don’t put contemporary in Kathak,” demonstrating this casting of classical Indian dances as fixed and bounded forms.
posture, is, I would argue, manifest in Khan’s work since, as a more epistemic enquiry. For Mitra, Khan’s work is closer to the concerns characteristic of contemporary European dance-theatre: “removing any sense of permanence from his repertoire, the vulnerability of having to learn anew with each project, the discomfort in revealing one’s imperfections and the conscious prevention of banal configurations [...]” (58). Mitra frames this in opposition to classical dance which values repetitive mastery and virtuosic technique. Within this context Mitra argues Khan's work is both a departure and arrival, moving away from exoticised or bounded perceptions of classical Indian dance while simultaneously entering the mainstream British dance field. While I agree with this analysis, I also think zero degrees provides a useful study for scholars of diasporic theory precisely because its framing narrative, Khan's travel across the Indian-Bangladesh border as a British citizen, provides a textual element to be read within what I have called a theatrical model of hybridity (see p. 114). In the end, Mitra argues the major point of difference of Khan’s work lies not in formalist concerns, but in his “content driven approach which examines the nuances of diasporic life” (45). Here, she argues, Khan's work differs from the “primarily formal experiments” often termed “fusion” which “reinforce the existence of classicism alongside contemporary systems and often lack deliberation and depth,” or fail to pursue “in depth the sociological issues at stake” (47).

In another article on zero degrees, Lorna Sanders also argues against formalist analysis of Khan's work. Invoking Homi Bhabha's notion of the self as multiple rather than fixed or unitary, Sanders employs an intertextual framework to combat stereotypical polarities in her analysis of Khan's hybridity, arguing that it offers ways to read difference as productive, rather than in need of resolution.

Instead a sophisticated complexity has reigned within the hybridity of [Khan's] Contemporary Kathak approach which breaks apart the boundaries between genres typically considered to be polar opposites: they are often referred to as
In the In-between

Western/Eastern; experimental/traditional; modern/classical; eclectic/set, for example. (Sanders 2007, 1)

Indeed, the relationship of tradition (or the classical) to the contemporary is one of the major issues confronting intercultural, as well as postcolonial migrant and indigenous art practices. In employing the Contemporary Kathak moniker, however, Sanders glosses over this not uncomplicated formal compound which as yet implies a polar opposition at play. It suggests that Kathak on its own is not contemporary (of this time), relegating tradition to the pre-modern past. Additionally, within the intercultural context of Khan’s training and field of activity, the hybrid form becomes merely, as Mitra has critiqued, “transmutation of the dual cultures of which he is a product” (2009, 5). In this equation where Kathak represents South Asia, “contemporary” is then associated with Britain, revealing a relationship of the West to the “other” as bound up with an alignment of the West with modernity and all that it implies: newness, nowness, innovation, individualism.

In a 2009 media interview Khan conceded that people use the term Contemporary Kathak but was emphatic that “it’s definitely not” (in Wilson 2009), perhaps seeing the name as too close to fusion’s “stable creative formula with which to contemporise tradition” (Mitra 2009, 41). Superficial artistic fusions, Mitra argues, pose tradition and postmodernity as irreconcilable, staging collisions where different language systems lack the “potential to penetrate each other” (47). In the context of these kinds of simple dualistic framings of

---

13 See, for example, Pavis (1992, 1996), Schechner (2002), Gilbert and Lo ([2007] 2009), and Lo and Gilbert (2002). See also Syron (2008) on the problems of casting contemporary Indigenous theatre practice within a crosscultural framework; and the work of many contemporary Australian performance companies working with traditional forms, e.g. Bangarra Dance Theatre, Marrugeku, Sunameke, and Tony Yap Company to name a few.

14 Mitra makes a similar critique of Sanders’ term (see Mitra 2009, 48). For a variation on this argument, see Anurima Banerji’s writing on radical South Asian choreographer Chandralekha, and especially her critique of “pernicious ideas of cultural difference” perpetuated by many dance critics, such as “that Asia is a bastion of tradition to be contrasted with, and liberated by, the West—which in turn is defined by the values of freedom, unshackled by the burdens of custom and tradition. The notion that freedom could be a value indigenous to Asian philosophies is effectively precluded in [dance critic Deborah] Jowitt’s rhetorical gesture. And although she is influenced by various sources of tradition, Chandralekha rejects the idea that an encounter with the West is necessary to arrange her choreographic project as avant-garde or progressive [...]” (2009, 355).
hybrid forms, it is no great surprise that Mitra is wary of formalist experimentation which is not accompanied by an “understanding of the corporeal and cerebral embodiment of diaspora” (47). Excepting her dualistic framing of embodiment, this call to embodied analysis is similar to the one I am making here: but I would also argue that there are thick and thin ways to engage with form. Mitra’s analysis of Khan’s changes to weight placement, spinal realignment from Kathak’s upright verticality, and varying spatial awareness in zero degrees (47) are in fact points at which kinaesthetic sensation and knowledge press upon his body’s acculturated form—where Khan’s corporeality meets its (hybrid) form. This is where the notion of confusion carries intriguing potential as a nuanced indicator of interstitial being.\(^\text{15}\)

I would argue that, additionally, Contemporary Kathak describes neither the whole range of hybridities nor the complex of intercultural and interdisciplinary relationships evident in his work. That Khan’s work is rooted in an exploration of in-betweenness is undoubtedly true; he has from the beginning of his choreographic career collaborated with artists who likewise embody some kind of interstitial positioning—from Sylvie Guillem’s status as ballet star moving into a sphere of contemporary dance, to visual artist Anish Kapoor, writer Hanif Kureishi, composer Nitin Sahwney and others. In fact, in their continuing collaborations this latter group of Khan’s colleagues reveals a dedication to interdisciplinary theatre practice. Similarly, Khan’s stated influences, from director Peter Brook and choreographer Jonathan Burrows to king of pop Michael Jackson, demonstrate a crossing of high and low cultural forms. In terms of his ensemble choreographic practice, works such as Bahok and Vertical Road utilise some general hallmarks of contemporary

\(^{15}\) As I suggested earlier, and discuss further in my conclusion, I am not arguing in this dissertation for kinaesthetic analysis over the observational, the semiotic, or indeed the political; a comprehensive analysis of one of Khan’s works would ideally encompass all this, however, I am highlighting here the lack of attention given to analysis of kinaesthetic experience. Mitra’s writing on Khan’s work comes closest to this comprehensive model, I suggest, in no small part because her own background as a practitioner (a dancer) has trained her to be more than an “expert-spectator.”
European hybrid genres such as dance-theatre (for example, using performers with varied training and the incorporation of personal stories to form an interdisciplinary theatre which includes movement, text, sculpture, and music). As Khan said in an interview during the making of Bahok, "I wanted to start from neutral... they're not bringing in their technique, they're not coming in as dancers. They're coming in as people" (Delmas 2008). Khan dates this change in choreographic intent to after the making of Kaash; before then, "My body dictated what I wanted so in a way I chose dancers who could replicate me" (in Machon 2009, 114).16

Hybridity within form, genre, discipline, and culture characterises Khan’s performance practice. Prising apart how these categories are working together is one way of approaching an analysis, but I suggest this would be a futile task. To do so would be to ascribe performance effects back to performance-making causes, an exercise Susan Melrose successfully critiques (see p. 127). Alternatively, such attempts would perversely reveal the interrelatedness of elements in performance; and on top of this, disciplinary separation may be culturally specific but is not bounded and exclusive. The inclusion of narrative, music and dance in Kathak demonstrates such interrelation; but in terms of Khan’s work the inclusion of narrative, music and dance in European dance-theatre shows this as well. Australian scholar Dean Chan argues that boundary marking analysis “risk[s] excavating an archaeology of essentialist confirmations to become, in the end, a racialised exercise in 'culture spotting': art criticism becomes reduced to the activity of identifying and celebrating the 'other' ontological part(s) of the aggregate contemporary whole” (2000b, 142). An effort to carve up the performance in such a way erects false boundaries

---

16 Khan follows up this comment with the observation, "Then I saw other companies, the generation of Lin Hwai-Min from Cloud Gate Dance, Pina Bausch, Macsek, Anna Therese de Keersmaeker and I thought, I’m seeing a choreographer’s vision only. These dancers have stories but they’re not telling them because it’s already given, they’re already told what to do, almost like machines; that’s a very crude way of saying it as they’re wonderful choreographies. When I saw Kaash I saw me and I felt down about it so, in a way, I changed the way I look at things" (in Machon 2009, 114).
which inevitably collapse. This is the point of postcolonial notions of hybridity, to challenge the boundedness and perceived stability of all sorts of categories. Hybridity describes a process of mutual interrogation that is fluid and unstable, and confusion demonstrates that such fluidity works at the level of bodily sensation and perception.

I suggest that Khan employs the descriptor confusion in a way that shifts discussion and knowledge of intercultural practice towards the experiential dimension of hybridity, as an in-between beingness that in its embodied actions articulates the fluid and unstable aspects of Bhabha's theoretical Third Space as the space of his body. This is a difficult model to grasp—how can we talk about the cultural/racial body or indeed intercultural body without resorting to essences and/or trying to dissect the body (or body of work) into originary parts? That hand gesture is Kathak, that lunge is Cunningham; his use of story-telling is European dance-theatre, his use of story-telling is Kathak. As Melrose has argued, spectating operates from only one set of epistemological knowledges. This is precisely why, however, confusion is potentially interesting and useful. Rather than privileging watching/reading the production over analysis of the processes of production, Khan’s extensive commentary on his own practice offers a way to augment looking with the experiences of doing, and to challenge our readings of formal expression through spatio-temporal corporealities of moving/making—rather than the other way around.

**CONFUSION IN TRANSMISSION: ENCOURAGING DISCOMFORT**

In this chapter I have focused on Akram Khan’s descriptions of his individual experience of becoming confused; that is, his personal performance of hybrid moving. As a final thought on confusion as a critical model of hybrid embodiment it is worth touching on how Khan works with his company of dancers in further developing contemporary dance work in a
“hybrid” idiom. While I noted that early in his career, particularly with *Kaash*, Khan looked for dancers who could move like him, he has become increasingly interested in working with dancers who each embody a range of different training. Khan states that he trains his dancers not to emulate his particular crosscultural technical training, but pushes them to become confused by pushing them to break with their habitual ways of moving. This rhetorical pushing is repeated over and over: “when they get comfortable, I push them again” (Khan in Khan and Ellis 2004). “Comfort,” as “confusion” in this context, should not be tinted with wholly positive or negative connotation. Rather, like the “intercultural stumble” I discussed in terms of Soundwalk’s Chinatown tour in Chapter 3, it is a push off balance or out of habitual rhythms of regular walking in order to provoke something new and unforeseen. Khan's confusion is not a model of discomfort in the quotidian sense; rather, it suggests a type of movement expressive of hybridity's dialectic between continuity and mixture. It is an oscillation perhaps, as becoming is understood to be, but not an oscillation between fixed or located points.

For Khan, an oversupply of information in his training overrode cognitive decision making; the mixture of multiple possibility erupted in a new way of moving. “Innovation is more than mere chance,” Carrie Noland reminds us, however, “gestures, learned techniques of the body, are the means by which cultural conditioning is simultaneously embodied and put to the test” (2009, 2). Speed is one of the main tools Khan uses in working with his dancers, which he relates to the use of speed in Kathak. Speaking to a studio of dancers in preparation for work on *Bahok*, he explains:

In Kathak, Indian dance, we have a technique of creating speed or showing an illusion of speed, and it’s actually all here [circling one arm around his head, then tapping either side of his neck]. So even just a [Kahn demonstrates a quarter turn or change in direction] chhhh... So the nose follows the hand [hand weaves in and out, head whips around to follow]. (Khan in Delmas 2008)
This deconstruction of Kathak’s embodiment of speed is a performative quality which Khan takes into the studio, but it is also a way to push his dancers beyond their habitual ways of being/performing—pushing them to acquire speed puts them in real situations where they are really, physically beyond control. Mistakes might happen, an oversupply of information occurs, the limit of habitual body is exceeded in the same movement that such a limit is perceived.

Being pushed to an extreme of speed or extreme slowness is also, as Massumi noted in connection with his concept of the biogram, like experiencing time in space (see p. 91). Performing speed and stillness (an extreme slowness) are similar bodily experiences in that they require highly sense-attentive spatial manipulations of the feeling of time. This is a haptic-proprrioceptive-visual cross-referencing of space-time. When asked whether he “impose[s] those (con)fusions on the dance or [if] they emerge out of the dance?” (Machon 2009, 115), Khan responded:

Both, it comes out of the dance sometimes and sometimes it comes externally, where I impose it on the dance. When it comes out of the dance it happens usually by mistake, because somebody forgets to move somewhere or we’re doing something very complex and unison and they make a mistake so I say keep that now. (Khan in Machon 2009, 115)

This is not an unusual strategy amongst choreographers who use, to varying degrees, a group-devised method of making work, and is connected to the European dance-theatre tradition and most notably the choreographic methods of Pina Bausch. Along with speed, some of Khan’s most characteristic ensemble work utilises a cycle of repetition, error or mistake, and recoup; for example, the heavy side lunges that phase in and out of alignment at the beginning of Kaash, or a scene in Bahok in which the dancers, arrayed across the space, perform a sequence of blunt and fast arm swings in increasingly changing pattern and direction. As any dancer knows, performing a repetitive movement over and over requires incredible attention and control. You perform the second, third, tenth and twelfth
movement in the afterglow of the first, quite literally fitting your body into the burned track still hanging in the air; and at the same time each movement must be performed afresh, as though it was the first, alert to the smallest variation in direction, speed, muscles and bones. Error inevitably occurs within the repetitive rhythm and within the beginnings and ends of the movement. You must be in the rhythm and in the track—you cannot stop—but you must also be a bit above (spatially) and ahead (temporally) to plant a hiccup, a stumble, or a blink which alters track just slightly: back into unison or into something new. “If moving bodies perform in innovative ways,” Noland claims, “it is not because they manage to move without acquired gestural routines but because they gain knowledge as a result of performing them” (2009, 7).

Confusion as a model of embodied hybridity reasserts many of the theoretical arguments put forward by a postcolonial discourse: an understanding of fluid and multiplicitous spatiality, the possibility of incommensurate difference. Yet it also provides an altogether more fleshy, muscled, boned and sensing body to the discussion of hybrid embodiment. Such focus on a moving, feeling, performing body challenges the ability of text-based/theatrical models of intercultural performance to address this kind of work, to understand and include meaning as it is made in the process of performing as well as in the watching of a performance. In confusion, we might become attentive to the bodily generation of the new, to our oscillating becoming. In the final moments of Gnosis, Khan’s recent Kathak performance based on the Gandhari story from the Mahabharata, Khan performs the ultimate moment of transformation: becoming old, becoming animal, becoming death, becoming matter, in a juddering break down of soft hands and arms tensing towards his centre, a building power barely contained, flames eating fuel, accelerating into vibrating agony so fast, so ecstatic he begins to disperse into the ether around us.
26 October 2005, New York City

Ade is visiting on her way home to Australia, a brief stop in the last quadrant of her nine-month circle around the globe. We’ve known each other for six years; long enough to allow her overspilling suitcase, an ever-expanding island overtaking my floor, to set up residence for a few weeks. I have been travelling east, from chilly pre-Spring mountains in China to New York; Ade has been travelling west, journeying from Taiwan through Europe to North America. This is our crossing point.

I first met Ade in early 1999 when we were both enrolled in the Honours program in dance at the University of Adelaide in Australia. I had recently arrived from New York where I had been working as a theatre designer, and was writing my thesis on design in dance focussing on early twentieth century modes of collaborative performance making—early work on hybrid performance practice, I realise in retrospect. Ade was writing about the Central Javanese royal court dance bedhaya, having just finished three years of dance training towards a Bachelor of Arts (Dance) where regular technique classes drew almost exclusively from the Western canon of classical, modern, and postmodern dance forms—classical ballet, Graham, Cunningham, release-based techniques, and contact
improvisation—with the addition of Ashtanga Vinyasa yoga practice. Born and raised in a suburb northeast of Adelaide, Ade began dancing in 1982 at the age of four, attending jazz, tap, and ballet classes at a neighbourhood studio and later dancing with the South Australian Children’s Ballet Company. Her parents had come to Australia from the island of Java in Indonesia and moved to Adelaide in 1969 just after they were married. Other than casual, intermittent lessons in dances from Sulawesi and Bali from a friend of her mother’s as a child, Ade’s dance training by the end of university had been predominantly Western-based.

In the final year of her Bachelors degree, Ade composed a graduation piece titled *Dewi Kayangan* (1998) in which she attempted to incorporate a “feeling” of Indonesian dance gleaned from her childhood experiences, as well as research she had done studying a group of Javanese palace dance images collected by Richard Moore, held in the special collections of the State Library of South Australia (*The Javanese palace dance images* 1994-1995). Mentored by Finnish Australian dancer and choreographer Tuula Roppola, previously a dancer with Meryl Tankard’s Australian Dance Theatre, in this early work Ade was interested in developing a hybridised movement vocabulary that incorporated these various sources. Over the summer of 1998-1999, Ade travelled with a group of students to Ubud for a yoga and dance retreat with the Adelaide company Diwali Dance House. The group attended an afternoon’s lesson in Balinese dance as a way to experience the dances they were seeing. I met Ade on her return to Adelaide, at the beginning of 1999.

---

1 Ade’s father is from Central Java (Semarang) and her mother is from East Java (Ngawi).
2 Meryl Tankard was a soloist in Pina Bausch’s Tanztheater Wuppertal for six years, from 1978-1984, and performed as a guest with the company through the 1980s. Returning to Australia she founded her own company in 1989, and was the director of Australian Dance Theatre from 1993-1999.
3 Such dance lessons are a popular tourist activity that Sally Ann Ness memorably writes about in “Dancing in the Field: Notes from Memory” (1996).
In this chapter I utilise my close relationship and working partnership with Ade to study a dancer in the process of becoming what Akram Khan calls "confused." In the time that I have known her, Ade has challenged the dominance of her Western-trained dancer’s habitus through a further period of training and performing in Indonesia, and has begun to develop her own culturally-hybrid choreographic practice. These experiences offer firstly an example of skill acquisition and bodily training in a crosscultural context: amongst a variety of Ade’s experience in Indonesia, I focus explicitly on examining the early somatic and affective challenges involved in her acquiring a different customary body or bodily language as preparatory ground to understanding embodied hybridity in kinaesthetic terms. Secondly, Ade’s example provides a case study of hybrid dance practice in an Australian context, where like Khan, hybridity functions within an individual body.

Ade is very much an artist in the midst of her development as a choreographer, and the critical success or impact of her work on national or international stages is not a contributing issue to her inclusion in this study. Rather, the example of her experience is valuable here by virtue of my privileged access to multiple aspects of her creative process, from funding and development to rehearsal and performance. As colleagues and collaborators over the last ten years, we have engaged in many discussions and communications about her work and thoughts on the work of others, as well as the nitty-gritty of corporeal experiences in the studio. Our work together provides an approach to understanding hybrid dance practice from the perspective of a collaborator: in the studio I straddle an insider/outsider position, being called upon as an informal “outside eye” on issues of design and staging in my capacity as a freelance theatre designer, or in some cases formally as designer and dramaturg on her projects. The intimacy I have with Ade’s practice is double-edged: I am never a detached ethnographer in the field, observing from a distance; rather, the methodology I employ is one in which embodied participation—both
hers and mine—informs the analysis. As in the rest of this thesis, documentation and analysis attempts to get at what is going on in performance through heterogeneous, multivocal assemblage. Mindful of my dual role as scholar/observer as well as collaborator/participant, this chapter incorporates personal comments made by Ade to me via email and online chat or in face-to-face conversation both in the course of creative work and with the awareness that she was being “interviewed.” Throughout the period of research discussed here Ade was also aware of her multi-faceted role as collaborator, research participant, informant, colleague, and friend. As in the previous chapter, with its focus on Akram Khan and his articulation of his confused body, here I examine Ade’s embodied practice through her descriptions of her bodily experience; interwoven with this are my notes of rehearsal or meetings made in recollection, observations made after being in the studio or watching performance, or viewing video documentation of rehearsal and performance.

**LEARNING NEW (DANCE) LANGUAGES**

While her parents have been very active in the Indonesian Australian community in Adelaide since migrating there in the 1960s, Ade, like many children of migrants, grew up wishing for lamb chops rather than gado-gado for dinner and speaking English in the home (although her parents speak to each other in Javanese dialect). When her cousins later moved to Australia, “I just spoke to them in English and assumed that they understood. Not that I would teach them!” (Suharto 2005a). Her experiences at university, however, provided a pivotal opportunity outside the home to feel that, “being Indonesian was something quite celebrated” (Suharto 2005a). In her honours year, Ade chose to write her thesis on the Javanese dance bedhaya, travelling to Solo for two weeks to undertake private lessons. Ade also spent this year bettering her command of Bahasa Indonesia,
feeling constrained by her limited ability to communicate in Indonesian at family and community events, as well as in relation to her research: “year after year after year people would say simple sentences to me in Indonesian, and I’d have to say, ‘I can’t speak’” (ibid.).

While Ade stresses that learning Indonesian was for her simply about the ability to communicate with others, language is also an important way in which to embody identity, to speak "means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (Fanon [1967] 1986, 17). Language also somatically affects the body; the physicality of producing a different set of sounds from a different part of my body choreographs my body in a different way. But the relationship between language (or not having language) and identity is also full of complexities, as Ien Ang shows in her introduction to On Not Speaking Chinese. The subjective position Ang’s title articulates “signals a somewhat awkward, oblique relationship to a socially assigned ‘identity’ in a time when both identity claims and identity impositions of the essentializing kind are the order of the day” (Ang 2001, 11). Language, unlike the visibility of race, may be a voluntary signifier of cultural affiliation, and yet speaking with the “wrong” language, or the inability to speak, reveals the “precarious cultural-political presumptions and implications” (ibid.) of categorical identities.

On finishing her studies at the end of 1999 Ade went overseas, attending the American Dance Festival (ADF) in mid-2000 to dance in a work by Indonesian contemporary choreographer Boi G. Sakti as part of ADF’s International Choreographers Commissioning Program. In that year Ade was also awarded a Darmasiswa scholarship from the Indonesian government to study at Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia (STSI, the Indonesian
College of the Arts) in Solo, and began a two-year period studying and working in Indonesia. During this time she travelled back and forth between Western and Central Java, learning classical Javanese dance at STSI and with a private teacher in Solo, as well as dancing with Boi Sakti’s Jakarta-based contemporary dance company Gumarang Sakti, where she also met the founder of Gumarang Sakti and renowned Indonesian choreographer Gusmiati Suid (Sakti’s mother) shortly before her death in 2001.

Ade’s experiences during this period provide an interesting case study of the acquisition of new and different cultural “languages” or bodily praxes of performance. Not only was she learning and performing two new movement vocabularies—both highly technical but distinct in movement quality, aesthetics, cosmologies and pedagogical ideologies—but she was also challenging the Western dance practices that had become a kind of performative habitus or embodied “second nature” to her. Additionally, the two-year experience of moving between STSI and Gumarang Sakti provides a study of ongoing alternation: her movement between Solo and Jakarta, between multiple potential embodiments, involved an ongoing negotiation of cultural codes and techniques; it was a performance in which the in-between was pronounced and repeated so as to offer the embodied hybridity of the inter itself as a study of intercultural practice.

The dancers at Gumarang Sakti perform a contemporary style of movement based on Minangkabau traditions from West Sumatra. Gusmiati Suid was among an early generation pioneering contemporary Indonesian dance. Trained in Minang pencak-silat (martial arts)

---

4 STSI is now known as ISI Solo, however I retain the acronym STSI in this dissertation as the name associated with the institution at the time of Ade’s study in Indonesia and at the time of our interviews.

5 Ade’s teacher at STSI was Ibu Kurniati and she also studied outside STSI with the former court dancer Ibu Sutjiati Djoko Suhardjo.
from the age of four, she built a dance technique through creative reinvention of traditional
Minang martial arts and dance movement. Sal Murgiyanto observes:

While she employed the movement and postural characteristics of Minang martial arts—changing positions at high speed, strong and sharp movements, as well as keeping the body still, ready to attack or evade—they were no longer performed hastily to the noisy sounds of talempong and deafening big drums.

(2004, 8)

From 1987 Gumarang Sakti was based in Jakarta, and Boi Sakti joined his mother in creative and administrative running of the company as it toured internationally. At the time that Ade was dancing with Gumarang Sakti she was working on new choreography by Sakti, whose work, Helly Minarti notes, is more “free and expressive” (Minarti in Murgiyanto 2004, 10) incorporating a variety of choreographic influences. While Sakti says, “in looking for movement, the early awareness does not always come from tradition,” Minangkabau pencak-silat is still a backbone of the company’s work: “at the end the ‘spirit’ that wraps it is a Minang one” (Sakti in Murgiyanto 2004, 10). While early on Suid recruited dancers from West Sumatra, the majority of dancers currently in the company are from various ethnicities, mainly graduates from the Jakarta Institute of Arts (IKJ) where they receive training in a variety of different performance traditions (Minarti 2010). Ade notes that while in rehearsal there was regular reference to the movement vocabulary devised by Gusmiati Suid, this was not taught through a codified training regime; rather she learned by learning new choreographies.

In distinction to the high speed, dynamic movement of Gumarang Sakti, at STSI Ade was learning dances in the female classical Javanese dance style beksan putri, a highly codified

---

6 See Murgiyanto (1993; 2001; 2004) for a history of Suid’s training and context for the development of her choreography, including the relationship of pencak-silat to dance in Minangkabau culture over the twentieth century, and its relationship to indigenous Adat and Islamic custom, including the matrilineal structure of Minang culture. Murgiyanto explains that traditionally, “silat is self-defense proper, in which the rule is ‘a kick to break, a catch to kill’ Pencak, ‘the flower of silat,’ is performed as a show or recreation; the rule is ‘a kick to be parried and a catch to be disentangled’ and it is pencak that developed into dance” (2004, 3). For a girl, it was unusual for Suid to be trained in silat but as the only child in her family she was rigorously trained by her uncle in order to preserve the tradition (ibid.).
movement style marked by its slowness and restraint. These dances are associated with
the Javanese court: the posture is upright and controlled, steps and hand gestures precise,
and even in practice students wear tightly wound kain (sarong) and sampur (a long scarf
tied around the waist used to accentuate gestures) which physically structure movement.
Ade began by learning a series of basic exercises called rantaya, then progressed to golèk
and gambyong, dances for one or two dancers which are not originally court dances but
have been adapted to the classical style, then srimpi, dances for four dancers, and then
bedhaya, dances longer in duration and more complex in their spatial patterning, involving
up to nine dancers. Rather than the blocks and parries of pencak-silat, the idea that dancing
helps to obtain bodily harmony with the environment is an important part of
understanding the function of Javanese dance (Brakel-Papenhuijzen 1995, 8). Quoting the
1924 manuscript Serat Wédhataya, “a (sacred) treatise on the art of dancing,” Clara Brakel-
Papenhuijzen translates:

The essence of living is to achieve perfect harmony in one's own body, both
externally and internally. As for external harmony, this means that if a person
wants to dance in a refined (alus) way, the body must be straight, the gaze calm
and firm, and the facial expression gracious. (9)

The choreographic conventions of symmetrical movement performed to the right and left
sides of the dancer's body, and to alternating northern and southern or eastern and
western orientations, is shown in the Wédhataya to reflect the Hindu-Buddhist
philosophies permeating Javanese thinking about perfection of the soul through bodily
harmony (10). The structure and flow of the dance corresponds to that of the music, and
specific beats on the gamelan gong have a dynamic role in relation to the dance.

---

7 Students at STSI, whether male or female, usually learn all three types of Javanese dance: beksan putra
dances for men, beksan putri (dances for women), and beksan wayang (narrative dances associated with epic
tales from the Ramayana and Mahabharata). However, in Ade's time in Solo she concentrated on learning the
female dances.
The initial experience of each new context challenged Ade’s assessment of the dancers around her.

_What did you think about the other dancers, whether in performances you might have seen or in class – the Indonesian students?_

I thought they [the Javanese students] were all perfect. I couldn’t tell which ones were worse than which when it came to classical Javanese dancing. But when it came to Gumarang Sakti, they all looked terrible to me, because I just had a different idea of how you should do [contemporary] movement. (Suharto 2005a)

Encapsulated within her initial evaluation are several interesting points relating to Ade’s already existing customary body, including her systems of aesthetic judgement and critical understanding of how movement is produced or performed. At STSI, learning classical Javanese dance, the distance between what she was used to and the new context—the degree of its foreignness to her habitual understanding of dancing and attending dance class—was so great that internal variation amongst the other dancers was imperceptible to her. With Gumarang Sakti, however, she brought with her the ingrained expectations and norms of her experience with contemporary dance as she understood it from an Australian context.

I didn’t think the dancers did it well. I think I was used to a sense of projection and continuity out into space and it took me a while to realise that wasn’t their style—it was me imposing my past training, my aesthetics [...] I used too much energy, but my movement wasn’t as powerful. (Suharto 2005b)

Ade’s dancerly habitus (or extra-daily body) coming into this period in Indonesia influenced how she saw, understood, and judged the movement of others. Ade’s comment, “I used too much energy, but my movement wasn’t as powerful” suggests that a habitual body which allows for accomplished cultural performance in one dance “language” also limits the ability to perform a different style of movement or to embody a different system of energy and dynamics through its very established relations of being a body in the world. This is what Susan Leigh Foster suggests when she questions that implicit within a notion

---

8 See pp. 5 and 136 for my previous discussion of the extra-daily body.
Theories of movement: multiple body

of technique are different attitudes towards the body and its relationship to subjectivity (Foster 2009, 10). This would be true for any body trained in one cultural system, perhaps especially an “expert” body, meeting something new, although the expert practitioner might be better able to recognise the difference in their performance. With Gumarang Sakti, Ade's task was to find a new way to embody “power” (Gumarang Sakti's version of power) which required her to question the bodily organisation and technique that had previously masqueraded as “natural;” a simple raising of her arm which in release-based technique and even ballet starts from a movement in the mid-back and travels along the outside of that arm, needed to begin somewhere completely different within Gumarang Sakti's movement style.

From my own experience I know that lowering the centre of gravity in my body in order to make faster, more abrupt stops or turns might be achieved by bending my knees a little more—physically lowering my body’s mass towards the earth’s surface—but in practice I mobilise all sorts of muscle groups in varying combinations, making a relationship between my triceps and abdominals for example, in a complex process of imagining/sensing/actually moving my “centre” to a different place. Ade’s perceptive observation regarding her own performance of “power” describes to a degree the process of learning something new in general; but in terms of the somatic demands of dance performance, learning something new is also learning to inhabit your body differently, in finely tuned ways. I am not suggesting here that the challenges Ade faced in learning to dance with Gumarang Sakti or at STSI are uncharacteristic of learning any new dance language, but rather, I am focusing on the effort, self-reflexive assessment, and cultural assumptions working at the level of embodiment which are encountered in the process of performing a body in a different way.
As with the “intercultural stumble” described in connection to the audio walks in Part I, the effort to perform a new or different embodiment (whether successfully achieved or a failure) puts us in a place in which our normal embodiment also fails to feel natural. Ade’s comments here demonstrate this unease with her body as both an intercorporeal or external experience, related to how she perceived and felt she was perceived by others, and also intracorporeal—a struggle within her own body’s performance. In classical Javanese dance classes at STSI Ade also articulates this as a dual subjective/objective sense of bodily displacement, feeling her body’s disjuncture between how she looked to others, in terms of ethnicity, and her struggle to successfully perform either in speech or dance movement: “I think because I looked like them, but we were really quite different; I think because I couldn’t speak Javanese [dialect], I didn’t really make sense to them” (Suharto 2005a). But she also felt, “frustrated in myself because I was in first year but I couldn’t pick it up, the music didn’t make sense, I couldn’t count anything... it was foreign, so foreign” (Suharto 2005a). Here Ade articulates how she fell short of her own expectations of her performance, going back to square one when she had been an accomplished dancer in the context of her university training.

This illustrates what Patrice Pavis meant when he said that, at its best, intercultural performance is intercorporeal work, “in which an actor confronts his/her technique and professional identity with those of the others” (1996, 15). Crucially, I suggest, the foreignness Ade describes is also an intracorporeal nexus of sensory and cognitive assessment, and while this foreignness could describe the Javanese dance and music she was learning under a binary model of sameness versus difference, I want to argue that it also describes her relationship to her own body as an experience of her body made to feel “foreign.” That our own body can cease to “make sense” to ourselves is precisely the experience of confusion (as Akram Khan calls it) or stumble (as I called it in Chapter 3)
encountered in a space where we feel unable to perform new ways of being and also feel mismatched to habituated ways previously made invisible in/by our customary body.

Pedagogical cultures are another way in which Ade was brought to confront her embodied expectations. At STSI the teachers “say the most important thing is to keep repeating, repeating until it feels comfortable, and then your body will adjust, fit into it by itself” (Suharto 2005a). In Australia Ade was accustomed to a mirrored studio where repetition may have similarly been a key pedagogical tool, but teachers also gave hands-on corrections and talked about anatomy, and what Ade collectively referred to in our conversations as “the science of the movement.”9 In Solo the teachers gave little physical adjustment but encouraged the dancers’ sense of proprioception: instead of attaining particular steps or making something look a certain way from the outside, the focus was on attaining rasa, understood by Ade as a feeling of having a connection,10 and enak, meaning “nice,” a place where everything fits together and where it flows and feels comfortable (Suharto 2005a). Ade later confessed, “I don’t think I was even trying to achieve this at first—I was thinking about the spatial pathways, where everything is supposed to be” (Suharto 2005b).

The sense of time and energy was also vastly different for Ade in Solo, both in terms of performing the slow classical Javanese movement and in terms of her experiences of daily living. As opposed to her experience of contemporary dance where “you’re always trying to be more dynamic,” Javanese dance “is quite restrained; you don’t need to put so much muscular energy into it” (Suharto 2005b). Reflecting on her attempts to embody the

---

9 While Ade didn’t explain what she meant in detail at the time, having had years of similar training in the Western tradition I instantly recognised what she meant by this phrase: the discussion of what muscles need to be used (or not), the physics of weight transfer and balance, the quality and direction (mass and velocity) of individual parts of a movement.

10 Dance scholar Helly Minarti translates rasa as “sense,” as in “having a sense of” (see Minarti 2010).
In the In-between

In the Javanese movement, Ade notes that she really enjoyed the slowing down of movement, breath, heart rate, and the different sense of time that this involved. The dynamics of everyday movement in Solo also required an adjustment in her corporeal inhabitation of place, one that minimised energy expenditure and dynamics as much in observance of its codes for politeness as in its classical dance style. At first, Ade always felt she was being rude, and needed to adjust her Australian tone of voice, language, and body practices in order to “get out of the way peacefully, without making a big deal” (ibid.). The cultural codes of place are enacted through the body; as Edward Casey suggests, each performance of a given habitus is “a reaching out to place, a being or becoming in place” (Casey 2001a, 687) for the geographical subject. But Ade’s experience of corporeal displacement or a being out of place is not necessarily a direct reversal of Casey’s emplaced subject; rather, it is evidence of an in-between subjectivity brought about by her awareness of the constructedness of both new and previously second-nature performances and enacted through living in the city of Solo just as much as in the rehearsal room, in performances of everyday life and dance.

Dancing with Gumarang Sakti in Jakarta, Ade similarly learned by watching and copying others, and was given little correction. Rehearsing primarily in the open-air space of a pendopo in the grounds of the company’s compound in Depok, south of Jakarta, she could not judge her own performance by comparing her reflection in the mirror to those around her as she was used to doing. Rather, she realised she was doing something “wrong” by chance, by watching a videotaped rehearsal some time after her arrival. The self-reflective analysis she made of her own quality of movement—that she used more energy but wasn’t as powerful as the other dancers, as one example—precipitated a deeper understanding of Gumarang Sakti’s style of movement and also a reassessment of her own approach to learning. Working out her own hybridised pedagogy of Western “science of movement”
and Gumarang Sakti’s rote learning, Ade began to critically examine her approach to and understanding of how to move/dance. Initially finding it odd that the Gumarang Sakti dancers did no technique class or warm-up before rehearsals and performances, Ade began to reassess how this difference might be placial—the heat and humidity of Indonesia leading to supple muscles already ready to move—but how it was also a clue to their different approach to and use of their bodies in physiological and cultural terms. The possibility of producing more power with less energy is the possibility of assuming a different embodiment; and I argue Ade’s experience shows that learning a new bodily language is also a coming to awareness of the body’s facility for multiple embodiments.

MOVING BETWEEN: PERFORMING MULTIPLE FORMS

Ade’s early experiences in Indonesia in the early 2000s demonstrate the bodily aspect of skill acquisition in a crosscultural context. Stuart and Hubert Dreyfus’s five-stage model of skill acquisition outlines five developmental stages—novice-level, competence, proficiency, expertise and mastery—involved in the process of acquiring a skill through a combination of instruction and experience. Comparing three divergent activities—foreign language acquisition, chess playing and flight instruction, but applicable to dance training as well—Dreyfus and Dreyfus argue that the controlled but highly artificial situations of laboratory studies on behaviourism and cognitivism mistakenly conclude that perception and skills are based on a “lawlike [sic] combination of elements” (Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1980, 2). Their central argument is that as a person progresses from novice to expert, they rely more on an accumulation of experience and less on abstract principles, that “skill in its minimal form is produced by following abstract formal rules, but that only experience with concrete cases can account for higher levels of performance” (5). Using a table of skill level versus

---

11 While the heat of Indonesia might have kept the Gumarang Sakti dancers warm and ready to dance, Ade notes that they maintained this routine on tour to Berlin and Copenhagen in the winter of 2002 (Suharto 2005b).
mental function, they show that the learner’s recollection changes from non-situational to situational. Recognition of situations becomes holistic, decision-making becomes intuitive rather than analytical, and awareness levels become absorbed in the flow of mastery (15).

While the Dreyfus model makes a case for the holistic, action-oriented and embodied performance of a skill at the expert end, their focus is on the process of moving from beginner to expert. While in Indonesia Ade was undoubtedly learning to be a more skilled performer, the Dreyfus uni-directional trajectory does little to further our understanding of the interstitial movement Ade was undergoing in travelling back and forth from STSI in Solo to Gumarang Sakti in Jakarta. I suggest the ongoing negotiation Ade enacted between her multiple performing bodies at this time contains useful information for this study of embodiments of in-betweeness. "It was really quite difficult to swap from one to another," states Ade. She would return to STSI after working with Gumarang Sakti, to be told, “you’re too powerful, all your movements are too big now;” only to go back to Jakarta and hear, “your movement is too soft, too much Javanese dancing” (Suharto 2005b).

Encoded within these comments is the privileging of certain energies, actions, and ideologies on each side, but there are more oppositions occurring than just in the realm of aesthetics. Gumarang Sakti is engaged in making new, contemporary work, while in Solo Ade was learning set dances in a codified, classical style. Gumarang Sakti’s movement style is hybrid: Boi Sakti is working to develop a theatrical form that represents both a “spirit” of Minangkabau and also Southeast Asia or Asia more generally, and in so doing draws upon Western as well as Asian forms. On the other hand, classical Javanese dance is linked to the pre-modern and pre-colonial, monarchical past, with some dances related to sacred contexts. Classical Javanese dance is also highly codified in gender terms—in Solo Ade was
learning prescribed female roles;\textsuperscript{12} whereas with Gumarang Sakti in Jakarta men and women performed together often dancing the same movement phrases. Ade’s ongoing movement between the two places and two dance forms involved negotiating multiple gendered, cultural, temporal, and geographically distanced ways of moving, as well as negotiation with her habituated Western dance body.

I have chosen to focus on this example of the difficulty inherent in moving between the two forms because it highlights the affective and kinaesthetic adjustment needed in such a situation. It is in part this corporeal effort that I argue is overlooked by theatrical models of intercultural performance. In the early stages of incorporating these bodily languages which I describe here, Ade might have only been somewhere between competent and proficient on the Dreyfus and Dreyfus scale; but differently from a trajectory of skill acquisition from novice to master, her experiences of learning these two new dance forms presents an interesting example of moving \textit{between}. This is an embodiment of the space between conceptualisations of how to be in the (dancing) world that we could perhaps call “third nature,” as opposed to second nature, performance. As with Akram Khan’s description of his dancing body becoming confused through training at university as discussed in the previous chapter, Ade experienced an overload of information, and her awareness of moments of change, of getting from one bodily system to another, and of how to move within the spaces between multiple forms, became an important aspect of her approach to all movement. Returning to dance in a project with Gumarang Sakti in 2005, Ade said:

\begin{quote}
When I went back to work with Boi this year in May after five months training with Cloud Gate,\textsuperscript{13} I understood my body more [...] I understood where the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{12} While roles are gender-specific, as I noted previously generally all students at STSI are taught both male and female styles.

\textsuperscript{13} Ade spent five months between January and May 2005 attending class and working with Cloud Gate 2, the junior company of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan. Founded by choreographer Lin Hwai Min in 1973 Cloud Gate is renowned internationally for their fusion of Chinese mythology, folklore, traditional performance,
movement was coming from, so with that information it actually helped me understand Boi’s movement, how to achieve that direct movement and stop.

*With that knowledge you can just adjust your body?*

Yes—not so much the steps from the outside, but understanding the flow of energy from the inside, what’s actually working. That helped a lot. (Suharto 2005b)

When commenting on her frustrations on initially arriving in Indonesia, Ade used the phrase “a different dancing body” to describe her embodiment of the different techniques. Toward the end of our interview I asked her what she meant by this phrase. She clarified it in this way: “it’s the same body—the techniques are not isolated, they’re not going against each other. My body is changing form but still a part of the same thing” (ibid.).

In this example of learning distinct, culturally placed dance forms, Ade’s aim was undoubtedly to “master” the classical Javanese female roles she was learning and to perform the repertoire at Gumarang Sakti as accurately or correctly, as “authentically” as possible. As already mentioned, the fact that she looks Javanese/Indonesian both already authenticates and complicates her successful cultural embodiment. However, it is the corporeal experiences of these performances that reveal the challenges and strategies involved in their embodied practice, and by implication houses the most interesting locus for exploring how bodies perform interculturally. The body’s organisation, both quotidian and theatrical, is constructed through socialised ideologies, but engagement with new systems mean that a body needs to learn to attend to itself and the world in a new way: to remap its intersensorial workings so that it can compose itself in relation to the rhythmic and aesthetic, muscular-skeletal and socio-cultural expectations it finds itself in. The “foreignness” of a new practice, and feeling foreign within one’s own body, are revealed through Ade’s experiences as hallmarks of embodied intercultural practice. Interestingly,
In the conversation quoted above, her perceptual description of an interstitial embodiment show how the in-between space is shaded with its own colouring. Ultimately, negotiating multiple cultural techniques creates its own embodied practice. In this in-between space there is an awareness of difference, but in Ade's terms its parts are not isolated or in opposition, and change and sameness occur together. It is an experience of her body as both unitary and also multiple.

MOVING IN-BETWEEN: DEVELOPING A HYBRID LANGUAGE

On returning to Australia in mid 2002 Ade began studying and working in arts management while also developing her own choreographic practice. It is at this stage that we began working closely together. The realities of funding availability and performance opportunities within the current contemporary dance field in Australia mean that since 2003 Ade has combined applying for funding and developing her own work with part-time arts management roles and contract dancing for other companies and choreographers. Dipping in and out of her own choreographic endeavours, Ade has had a slow and unsteady path of experimentation, but she doesn’t see this as necessarily problematic—she counts her dance practice as one of several professional priorities and finds the space between projects useful for reflection. Over the following pages I will discuss two projects Ade has initiated and through these projects examine in more detail the challenges and negotiations involved in her attempts to develop her own hybrid dance practice utilising her background of training in Australia and Indonesia. In particular, I focus on how her experiences of “different dancing bodies” and moving between different forms as discussed above relate to her developing embodiment of a hybrid or in-between dance form.

1. Rumah/Home

In 2003 Ade was commissioned by the Australian Institute of Eastern Music to make a new
work for their annual Festival of Asian Music and Dance. A solo titled *Rumah/Home*, the piece was “a reflection of the experience of being between two homelands,” hence the bilingual title (Suharto 2003b). Made up of three major sections *Rumah/Home* conceptually draws on themes of separation and isolation, and also of moving between places. The figure of walking recurs in different incarnations, and the overall structure of the piece is episodic, with each of the three sections bookended by moments of blackness, heightening a sense of temporal and geographic passage: when the lights fade up again, Ade is somewhere else in time and place, in a different pool of light. Premiering on 23 August 2003 at The Studio at the Sydney Opera House in a mixed program of short dance works, *Rumah/Home* was subsequently performed in the South Australian Choreolab series at the AusDance Leigh Street studio on 9-11 October 2003. Though the sectional quality of the piece remained the same in the two venues, shared programs in both locations limited the lighting design to what was available on a fixed grid, creating some choreographic differences: namely, the white walls of the AusDance studio (as opposed to The Studio’s black box) allowed for a key development in the use of shadows, letting Ade create at times a duet with her other, shadow-self against one wall. This idea fits in strongly with the central theme of the piece, offering a visual manifestation of a body divided between two places.

As I argued in the introductory chapter to this section, hybridity in the dance practices of performers such as Ade are easily but problematically reduced to a process of “culture-spotting” along biographical lines by art criticism which relies on strategies of reading the

---

14 AusDance is a national organisation whose role is the advocacy of professional dance in Australia, and has chapters in all states and territories of the country. AusDance South Australia has several programs geared towards the support of independent choreographers, including subsidised rehearsal space rental in their studio, and it produces showings of new work and work-in-progress through the South Australian Choreolab series.

15 Ade did not employ a lighting designer for either performance run; her broad ideas were interpreted by a lighting technician at each venue according to what was achievable within the pre-existing plot.
body. The "two homelands" theme of the piece was picked up by *Sydney Morning Herald* reviewer Jill Sykes in such a way:

> She is an exceptionally graceful mover, with arms that flow like ribbons in her Indonesian references and strike out boldly for her Australian contemporary dance content.

> Barefoot and smartly dressed in Western style—draped top and long pants—she distinguishes between the two cultural sources for her dance with her way of movement and spotlit breaks in the action. Yet there is no getting away from the fusion of her dance education in Adelaide and in Solo: both influences are indelibly imprinted on her body, adding another dimension of commentary to her "two homelands" theme. (Sykes 2003)

In this review Sykes reiterates stereotypical binaries between graceful Indonesian as opposed to bold Australian movement, and contemporary street dress as Western as opposed to (presumably) traditional temple garb as Indonesian.16 *Rumah/Home* presents a contemporary figure—Ade is dressed in street clothes, hair undone, and unadorned by the elaborate makeup and jewellery of the classical Javanese costume—but this is temporal rather than specifically geographical marking. The space is unadorned unlike the elaborate scenography employed at times by Gumarang Sakti, but this references much neoclassical and postmodern Western dance and the Western studio, and also the open floor space of the Javanese pendopo. Ade’s gaze is often downcast, as in Javanese dance, but she projects out beyond the audience too, acknowledging the fourth wall conventions of a proscenium stage. The bold Australian movement Sykes sees is a section of the choreography that in rehearsal Ade referred to in shorthand as “the Gumarang Sakti section.” The slow-fast-slow tempo of the three-part structure is read by Sykes as Indonesian-Western-Indonesian, but these are hardly bounded cohesive categories, in Ade’s experience or otherwise. I argue that closer attention to the movement is going on in *Rumah/Home*, both in terms of Ade’s body as a figure in stage space as well as movement within her solo body, reveals very different ideas of the hybridity at work than the oppositional bricolage Sykes sees.

---

16 In an article from 1996, “Finding an Australian Identity in Dance,” Sykes contentiously claims a bold and open movement as particularly Australian, stating that, "Australian dancers have a more open way of moving, a breadth of gesture and a directness that distinguishes them from their colleagues overseas" (Sykes 1996, 45).
In this early choreographic statement, Ade has created a mixture marked by the history of learned techniques at play within her body’s hybrid form, and very much informed by her then-recent experience dancing in Indonesia. Working with musicians Margaret Bradley and Ron Reeves, both Anglo Australians who have studied extensively in Indonesia, the bi-cultural, -national, and -lingual nature of the piece seemingly accommodates dualistic interpretations. But the hybridity present in this piece reflects more than a simple or “happy” (in Jacqueline Lo’s terms) fusion from the perspective of embodied practice: multiple cultural, racial, temporal as well as heterogeneous national perspectives inform its composition. Ade’s multiple bodily techniques are working in flux.

A section of floor-work: rolls and spins, sequential movement originating at the body’s centre and moving along the spine to a release beyond the extension of the head. But clearly visible in the midst of a spin of limbs and hair or a skid back along the floor, is the articulation of her foot: toes picked up at a sharp angle to the horizontal floor, a designing of her body that indicates a surfacing of Javanese aesthetics. The tempo increases and a fast pattern of drumming creates a sense of urgency. Moments of catch and release alternate with fast, bound, inward throws of a martial arts body that end in blunt stops.

My first encounter with Rumah/Home was watching sections of video footage Ade recorded of her rehearsal and development phase, before the piece’s premiere at The Studio. My engagement with the work is as a watcher—the description above is from notes I wrote while similarly peering at a small screen, editing together excerpts of the performance documentation. This note demonstrates the way in which, from an observational point of view, Ade’s body becomes a textual representation of her technical

---

17 Both Bradley and Reeves have training in Sundanese music of West Java, and Reeves in particular performs in a large number of ensembles in Indonesia, Australia, and Europe. The music for Rumah/Home involves several songs written by Bradley in which she sings in both Indonesian and English and employs a mixture of Sundanese instruments.
training: we can see syncretic and disjunctive moments of hybridity in the choreography and on her body as distinctly recognisable motifs, shapes, aesthetics, and concepts surface and submerge, such as the arched upturn of her fingers and toes, or actual “steps” such as a modern dance high release. The way in which I “read” Ade’s embodiment of hybridity here was through my recognitions: What do I see? Where have I seen it before? But there is also my questioning of function: what is she doing and how is she doing it? This is perhaps where my observational analysis differs from Sykes’s: the critic in the mainstream press must recognise what they see (they are an expert spectator, knowledgeable of what is good or bad, worth seeing or not for the general public) and ascribe meaning in a few column inches within an easily understood framework. Sykes’s narrative assessment of Indonesian-Western-Indonesian gives her a framework within which to read and assess the success of the two homelands theme.

But is it possible that other meanings can be gathered by paying attention to the body’s movement, functionally or kinaesthetically? Internally or intracorporeally, movement works synchronically, together and in opposition, as well as diachronically, accumulating over time to enact the hybrid experience. Ade’s explanation of the experience of her body moving between forms as, “changing form but still a part of the same thing” reveals her perception of hybridity as embodying both cohesiveness and ambiguity, sameness and difference exposed as each contained within the other. This is a dialectical model of hybridity at work; disparate elements come together in fusion, but elements also contest one another, emerging and submerging without homogenising resolution. The differences between a theatrical or representational mode of analysis, and analysis of movement experiences made by a practitioner, are well illustrated by the following comparison between my observational notes on another section of Rumah/Home and comments made by Ade about the same movement.
Standing in one place Ade’s knees are bent, weight shifting slightly as her arms move. The movement is slow, restrained. What Ade calls the “flow of energy” is aiming to capture something of Javanese dance; the movement quality is elastic, controlled, sustained and indirect, bound in her legs and torso, and light and free in her upper body and arms. This moment returns and is elaborated on at the beginning of the long third section, but I begin to notice differences too though. A sarong tightly binds the legs and torso of the female performer in classical Javanese dance, limiting movement of a dancer’s legs and constraining the central core of her body to move mainly in one plane dipping left and right. But here, Ade also moves forward, bending at the hip, allowing for a slight upper body spiral. Her weight shifts between two feet, turning in and out, she bends to the floor and straightens, arms move in a curve around her body and overhead, brushing her hair in an almost casual, gestural way.

Reflecting on the making of this movement six years later, Ade said the “simple brief” to herself was to “explore the transference of weight between the right leg and left leg,” together with “the idea of being stationary” (Suharto 2009). This central paradox—of inscribing or describing both stillness and movement, “a shifting” as Ade also called it—can easily be understood in relation to her comments on her engagement with a hybrid embodiment (“changing form but still a part of the same thing”) as well as a core conceptual idea of Rumah/Home. In describing her process of making this particular section of movement, Ade explained, “there was no judgement on how it looked, or which part was Javanese or contemporary. It was exploring space,” and, “it just flowed naturally” (ibid.). She elaborated: “it may have looked like I was exploring the space around me, but it came from an internal place first, the weight shifts… that inward rocking” (ibid.). Here Ade describes a process of small internal shifts leading to bigger, outer movement, an alerted proprioceptive sense leading to a relationship with space around her. Importantly, she emphasises that the mixture of different movement styles was not intentional or pre-
planned, but that this moment “worked” because a nexus of meaning and movement originated in an internal space.

_A familiar stepping pattern returns: right, cross left, back right, left. A square or a circle; a revolution reinscribed many times over during the course of the piece, leading back to the original right, cross left, back right, left. Movement delineating a single spot and the four directions of the compass; movement that describes both moving and stillness, travel and going nowhere; a pattern of ongoing circulation and change inscribed within one body._

2. AVFTB

Since creating _Rumah/Home_ in 2003, Ade has returned to Jakarta once to work on a project with Boi Sakti and theatre director Rendra for the production _Sobrat_ (2005), but has based herself in Adelaide pursuing the development of an intercultural practice. In 2005 she was awarded funding from the South Australian Youth Arts Board’s Dame Ruby Litchfield Scholarship to spend five months with Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, attending classes and rehearsals in a research program explicitly aimed at studying the company’s training regime and its relationship to the company’s much heralded East-West style of dance, led by founder and Artistic Director Lin Hwai-Min. On her way back to Australia she visited me in New York, and we began a conversation which developed into the beginnings of a creative idea for a new solo work. Both back in Australia a few years later, we applied for a New Work grant from the Australia Council for the Arts’ Dance Board in 2008 for the research and development of this new solo dance work, titled at that stage _A View From the Bridge_ (AVFTB).18

---

18 The bridge of this title was designed to remind us of the contingent nature of places, what Paul Carter has called the “choreographic basis of place making” (2009, xv), and connect the work to postcolonial notions of ambivalent hybridity. A bridge spans two opposing sides of a gap, but is the gap itself too. Every bridge is engineered for give and bounce, the pressures of the wind and the weight of its traffic; and is an unstable affair, at the mercy of potentially shifting banks or its own collapse. As the piece has developed, however, the title has changed, in part to disassociate it from the Arthur Miller play by the same name, which bears no substantive relation.
In the In-between

In many ways a continuation of Ade’s ideas from *Rumah/Home*, the new project takes locatedness and placelessness, movement and migration as its major concerns both formally and conceptually. Travel and distance, which were part of our original conversation in New York, became a structural framework for this development period: with Ade living in Adelaide and myself in Sydney, in May-July 2008 we conducted a “conversation in letters” by exchanging progress reports, reflections on the process, and conceptual ideas via post and email, twice meeting face-to-face for intensive workshops. As a performative device the letters were where we worked out problems, but also formed possible material for the eventual performance. While a practical solution to our geographical distance, they also related to a potent lifelong memory for Ade of a bag of family letters in a cupboard at her parents’ house dating back to the period of their arrival in Australia.19

One of the most important aims of the first phase of the project was for Ade to further develop a “daily practice” or training model from which she could then generate movement phrases and other material for the piece. As already identified by Ade, she wanted to explore a vocabulary of moving that comes intuitively from the “collection of styles” imprinted within her body. Equally, however, we acknowledged that the ability to work intuitively actually comes from regular training. In a conversation at the end of 2009, she said, “I guess I have to be confident in my own pursuits and acknowledge that my dancing is my dancing,” but she also stressed that her body “works in an intuitive way when a regular practice is established” (Suharto 2009). My role in this early stage of the project was as a design consultant and dramaturg, feeding Ade images and ideas on themes and

---

19 In an email to me Ade wrote, “the rumpus room that my dad built in 1984 was often a play room. The cement floor was covered by large scraps of carpet. The walls were decorated with hangings and pictures of Islamic mosques. They looked like faraway, strange places to me. In a big opaque orange plastic bag were hundreds of letters, letters of correspondence between my parents and loved ones in Indonesia” (Suharto 2007).
content for the project as she developed movement ideas and phrases—"sketching" she called it—as well as discussing the development of her daily practice. A great deal of our focus went to looking at how an intentional construction of this regime might form the basis of an intuitive, improvisational choreographic practice. With a period of five years having elapsed since Ade's study in Indonesia, we had to question what the relationship of Javanese dance and Gumarang Sakti's Minangkabau-based form were to the hybrid practice she was developing.

While Ade had continued to rehearse the Javanese repertoire she learned in Solo since leaving in 2003, and had performed these dances at family weddings in Indonesia, in Adelaide's annual IndoFest community event, and with Flinders University's Gamelan Sekar Laras at WOMADelaide in 2003, the incorporation of Javanese dance into her hybrid practice was (and continues to be) a complex negotiation. The daily practice she undertook as part of the creative development in 2008 involved practicing the fundamentals of classical Javanese dance through a series of combined movements named rantaya and relearning the female-style dance Gambyong Pangkur through watching videos she had made of her lessons with teacher Ibu Kurniati in Solo in 2004. Ade combined this with mat pilates and release-based contemporary dance exercises; her aim was to institute a system which helped her to investigate body mechanics, placement and flow of energy, and which also balanced core strengthening with stretching and flexibility training.

On many occasions, she acknowledged that, "due to [my] constrained time, geographical distance, the little living knowledge that is available in Adelaide, I know I am detached from the heart of classical Javanese dance" (Suharto 2008). While aware of the religious and imperial history of the Javanese dances and having the "muscle memory" of her training in
Solo, Ade rates her knowledge as "surface level" (ibid.). She is aware of the high-quality training she has had exposure to but recognises that coming late to such training (as opposed to from childhood) and pursuing its practice alone in Adelaide means that she must define her own connection to the form, for instance, using the differences between her performance and that of her teacher replayed back to her in the rehearsal room as a source for further investigation. At the same time, Ade admits that "everything we know evolves, from the sacred courts of Central Java, to the smoke filled concrete studio floors of STSI, to the distant, long Atrium studio of Ausdance SA—where I stand" (ibid.).

For years, I have approached [the betterment of] my technique by “just doing” which is my perceived way of approaching classical Javanese dance: know the choreography, know the music. Now I’m very much into “finding a way.”

After an hour of classical Javanese dance my back aches, my feet have been rolling inwards, there must be some great twisting action going on between my pelvis, back, hips, knees and ankles. Instead of walking away and thinking that is the way the body should be, I need to spend time cooling down to realign my body. (ibid.)

Ade’s continuing relationship to Indonesia and Indonesian dance (through her relationship with Gumarang Sakti and study of Javanese dance) is similarly an ongoing “finding a way.” The issues of appropriation and authenticity involved in this relationship are characteristic of the contested and unfixed nature of a diasporic identity. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter regarding her initial time in Solo as a student, Ade’s racial visibility as Indonesian adds further layers of complexity (both in her own and others’ perceptions) to her “authentic” performance of and “right” to possess these culturally located forms.

In acknowledgement of the in-betweenness of her Indonesian Australian identity, Ade is embracing that identity position as a source of inquiry with which to make her own work, “something greater than the sum of its parts, it’s not new necessarily, but it has my own self permeating [it]” (Suharto 2009). At the same time as she is staking out her position on

---

20 The notion of “muscle memory” is an expression used by dancers to indicate the experience of acquired embodied memory of a dance step or choreographic phrase.
the cultural grid, I would suggest she is also utilising an awareness of the unfixed and unstable movement-experiences of performing in-betweenness that resists either/or type categorisations. While she is dedicated to the ongoing practice and betterment of her Javanese dancing and performs classical dances in Australia at Indonesian Australian community events, she also acknowledges her expectation is not mastery or authority. The mis-fit of the classical Javanese dance embodiment that causes her hips and knees to twist and ache—this un-attainment and discomfort—is in itself part of the practice which informs her hybrid choreography.

My movement style is not developed in isolation to the list of things you mentioned (different ways of using energy, different temporalities, use of mirror/ not using the mirror.) The movement style will come from a combination of these factors. Like a jigsaw puzzle, I aim to continue my learning of Javanese dance, to gain better understanding of it. The more I perform the repertoire I know, the more I yearn to know more about the musical connections, etc. To acknowledge my commitment in doing this is highly important—I’m not offering a definitive approach to contemporary Indonesian dance or contemporary Australian dance or contemporary dance in general (or however you would like to describe it). It’s flexible, always aiming to move forward, constantly questioning. (Suharto 2008)

The dialectical model of hybridity that I described as beginning to operate in *Rumah/Home* and which Ade developed further in this project is similar to my previous discussion of Akram Khan’s confusion and what Khan described as “a body making decisions for itself” due to his varied training. In both cases the model is one in which intentional training in multiple forms combines with spontaneous intuitive movement, a bodily enacting of Bakhtin’s intentional and organic hybridity operating together. Unlike in Helen Gilbert and Jacqueline Lo’s theatrical model however, hybridity is an embodied experience of the moving, lived body.

The 2008 development of AVFTB was punctuated by two public events: a half-day workshop in Adelaide midway through, and a showing of the work-in-progress delivered as a lecture-demonstration at the World Dance Alliance conference in Brisbane in July. The
workshop’s basic aim was to share what we had done so far. During the first half of the workshop Ade taught some basic Javanese dance vocabulary and an excerpt of the dance gambyong. The emphasis was not on performing the dance perfectly, but on getting a basic “feel” for it. Indeed, the short amount of time given to learning gambyong in the workshop deliberately excluded any expectations of mastery. In the second half of the workshop, Ade led the participants through a series of guided improvisations where they were encouraged to reflect on aspects of what they had encountered earlier in the day (tempo, spatial pathways, compositional structure) but to draw upon their individual background training. The aim of the workshop was not to teach Javanese dance, nor reproduce Ade’s own hybrid style of moving—her “artistic signature” as Susan Melrose would call it (2006)—or even to achieve an interstitial embodiment in the way that Ade’s regular training in Indonesia had created in her a visceral awareness of multiple “different dancing bodies”.

Rather, like in the Soundwalk example I discussed in Chapter 3, we hoped that participants were able to glimpse another way of moving, to push off balance their habitual ways of performing, if only fleetingly and for a moment.

Thus far Ade has been exploring a solo choreographic practice. Reflecting on her experience training with Cloud Gate and her growing interest in the individual movement of different bodies in late 2009, she noted that corporeally the company’s movement and choreographic style tended toward synthesis:

The Cloud Gate body is perhaps the creation of a system equivalent to ballet—the style takes many years to acquire. It is a beautiful and classic form. But the vocabulary doesn’t consider the individual bodies moving through it. The dancers aspire to the form. (2009)

---

21 The participants came from a variety of backgrounds—and not all were dancers. One had tertiary dance training in Australia, one was familiar with Western contemporary dance through community dance classes, two had varied training in traditional Indonesian dance, and two were musicians.

22 Her most recent work is a full-length solo dance work in collaboration with composer David Kotlowy and visual artist Mawarini titled In Lieu (2011) which premiered at the OzAsia Festival at the Adelaide Festival Centre in September 2011, and which I also worked on as the production’s designer.
The major lesson of the AVFTB project development was that virtuosity and mastery of Javanese dance (or any monadic form) to the exclusion of others is not what Ade’s growing practice is about; rather in producing hybrid movement the journey towards (rather than attainment) of mastery is part of a process which emphasises a variety of training and a continuing disruption to her body’s aspiration towards a codified form. The homogenised corpus of Cloud Gate’s company is a kind of hybrid moving that she is working against. Importantly, she is also working against a homogenised intracorporeal hybridity within her own body; rather, her dance practice deliberately attempts to hold onto and embody a multiplicity of bodily techniques: to perform a “multiple body.”

**LABELLING THE IN-BETWEEN**

In both this and the previous chapter I have emphasised Akram Khan and Ade Suharto’s intuitive, gestalt performing of hybridity. Comparing the Dreyfus’s model of skill acquisition to Khan’s confusion, there are noticeable correlations between the rule-bound novice and fusion’s formulaic deployment of stable elements on the one hand, and the intuitive, experience-based expert and confusion’s instinctive, embodied development of movement on the other. More than an expert in Kathak or Western contemporary dance, Khan’s claim to confusion is a claim to being an expert of in-betweenness. While the moment of Khan’s body first “making decisions for itself” was surprising in its newness—as I noted in the previous chapter, it was a performance that escaped habitual movement—a body that just “knows” what to do is a body working from the position of expert. Dreyfus and Dreyfus write that, “rather than being aware that they are flying an airplane,” expert pilots report “they have the experience that they are flying” (1980, 12).
In a later conference paper Hubert Dreyfus employs Merleau-Ponty’s concept of the intentional arc, which he explains as “the tight connection between the agent and the world” (Dreyfus 2002, 1). He uses this concept in an attempt to further understand how the expert perceives and behaves in the world when engaged in expert practice: “what the learner acquires through experience is not represented in the mind at all but is presented to the learner as more and more finely discriminated situations” (7-8, original emphasis). The feedback loop that affords us the ability to make increasingly refined responses and perceive more refined situations is the intentional arc. This notion of embodied decision making that allows the expert to experience flying or dancing as a gestalt experience is evident with the two experts I have been discussing in Part II. For Dreyfus this idea of “maximum grip” on the world is also related to Merleau-Ponty’s concept of the body’s tendency towards equilibrium, or “the body’s tendency to respond to these solicitations in such a way as to bring the current situation closer to the agent’s sense of an optimal gestalt” (ibid.). This body-based relationship with the world was called “motor intentionality” by Merleau-Ponty, and as Dreyfus confirms, “one does not need to know what that optimum is. One’s body is simply solicited by the situation to get into equilibrium with it” (12). As we have seen with both artists in this study however, disturbing habitual motion and throwing the body off its equilibrium is an important strategy to producing their intracorporeal cultural hybridity. The idea that we all aim toward some optimal body-environment relationship or equilibrium conflicts with the ideas of rupture and ongoing contestation with which hybridity is characterised within postcolonial discourse and by both Akram Khan and Ade Suharto.

I have stressed as one of the central arguments of this thesis the importance of taking seriously the processes of embodiment and embodied experience of intercultural performance beyond reading bodies on stage as cultural representations. The attention I
have paid in this section to the affective and spatio-corporeal descriptions of practice by practitioners themselves is directly related to a closer examination of what we mean by embodiment. When I asked Ade what she thought about Akram Khan’s distinction between confusion and fusion, she hesitated and said, “well yes—I’m bloody confused!” but then questioned, “are there other options? Fusion—no. Confusion—I guess, but I’m not entirely convinced... does it have to be labelled?” (2009). Ade’s practice is deeply connected to her personal experience. In our conversation she repeatedly said that her movement is “about finding me” and comes “from gathering or collecting different pieces and channelling them out in my way” (ibid.). The intimacy of her practice to her own physical body and personal experience and history, the intimacy between her moving and being, her dancing and becoming, makes her understandably resistant to codifying it through language, through academic theorising, or any other means. Her resistance to labelling may also be because she is early in the development of her practice and still in the midst of articulating what it might be for herself. When I pushed her to consider—if not confusion, not fusion, then what?—intriguingly her response after a long pause was, “an embodiment.”

Whilst our conversations during the period of AVFTB’s development often touched on questions of bodily movement and experience, we had not to this point talked explicitly about notions of embodiment. In my capacity as dramaturg I had given Ade passages to read on postcolonial theories of hybridity and we had talked more generally about how cultural performance becomes second nature, without ever mentioning theories of embodiment specifically. This was a deliberate omission on my part to avoid overlaying the weight of academic theory on a process which we had already decided was to be led by her corporeal experiences.23 Surprised at her choice of words and interested to know what

23 This is indicative of the relationship of mutuality between an ethnographer to her subject of study. I was often aware of the fuzzy line of influence I had, and was careful in my attempts to avoid undue influence on my “data” as a researcher, and to try to honour and draw out Ade’s creative impulses as a collaborator.
exact this meant in her terms, Ade elaborated on her use of “an embodiment” to say that it was when “the mind doesn’t judge what the body is doing. When my mind is at rest, it’s neutral and my body just follows as it wants to follow itself” (2009). Ade’s comment follows the rhetorical privileging of body-instigated movement and decisions within dance cultures as already discussed (see p. 133), and we could also say that this expresses Merleau-Ponty’s motor intentionality at work. However I would argue that the latter part of Ade’s comment, that her body follows itself, also indicates a peculiar kind of twinning, an awareness of her body as multiple, as subject/object, as following and leading.24 Contained in her description is something altogether more explicitly expressive of Ade’s in-between, hybridised, interstitial embodiment as an intracorporeal process. While she resists the confusion label, and does not employ the same tactics of speed and repetition that Khan does, her hybrid practice similarly constructs a condition of over supply of information to instigate involuntary yet elicited response (as Massumi’s biogram does). Like Khan, this process is also perceptual, experiential, and spatial:

There’s a huge amount of space inside, but we forget that sometimes, so sometimes we think it has to be, it has to go from the body, which is the centre, or the beginning, to the outside [arms stretched either side]. But actually the body in-between, inside, is a huge amount of world, there’s a whole world. (Khan in rehearsal for Bahok, in Delmos 2008)

This spatial view on embodied practice and embodiment in part echoes Merleau-Ponty’s argument for the spatio-corporeal nature of lived embodiment: “far from my body’s being for me no more than a fragment of space, there would be no space at all for me if I had no body” ([1962] 2002, 117). But the multiplicitous awareness of intracorporeal space described by Ade’s body following itself and Khan’s comment above suggests that embodying Homi Bhabha’s Third Space of hybridity is—in physical as well as theoretical terms—an issue of spatiality. Intercultural practice may be as Patrice Pavis asserted

24 In the previous chapter I similarly pointed out that “con-fusion” is also a linguistically twinned compound, incorporating con-, the prefix meaning together or in union, and fusion meaning a union or blending (see p. 130).
intercorporeal work, a bridging of intercorporeal space, but these artists also demonstrate that it is an issue of intracorporeal space.

Khan’s model of confusion is not an exact fit for Ade—Khan’s authority as a Kathak performer and elite member of the contemporary European dance field make his dance practice a case of “both/also,” whereas what I have called Ade’s “multiple body” utilises experiences of un-attainment and mis-step, a case of “not quite” to create a deeply explored and potentially productive space of in-betweenness. But shared in both case studies is an awareness of intracorporeal processes and spatiality, a space delineated by the potential for difference and sameness to be embodied together as part of the same whole. The space is experienced kinaesthetically and proprioceptively: an “inward rocking,” Ade called it, or “chaos in stillness” as Akram Khan has described. These seemingly contradictory or ambiguous movements are located or placed, in the sense that they are embodied within a body and within a skin, but such movement also suggests that being such a body is a fluid and mobile experience. In this intracorporeal thirdspace, in-betweenness is experienced and understood in action.
Part III

Mass transit, micro transition
Towards a practical cosmopolitanism

Over the last twenty years, we in the humanities and social sciences have undergone major shifts in the way we think about culture and cultural interaction. This is thanks in large part to the postcolonial critique—to our changing understanding of centre-periphery relationships—and to the so-called spatial turn—the renewed interest in the roles of space and place from human geography and many other disciplines. The classical conception of culture honed by traditional anthropology sought to define identity through differentiation from others, and correspondingly, being able to map this differentiated group onto a specific place (Papastergiadis 2000, 49). This view of culture is inherently problematic, however, as unmoving and unchallenged conceptions of place map so neatly on to fixed notions of culture. Anthropologist Marc Augé writes:

For a start, it works well—or rather, it has worked well: land has been cultivated, nature domesticated, reproduction of the generations ensured; in this sense the gods of the soil have looked after it well. [...] It is also a semi-fantasy because, although nobody doubts the reality of the place held in common and the powers that threaten it or protect it, nobody is
unaware—nobody has ever been unaware—of the reality of other groups [...]. (1995, 46-47)

That is, people and cultures have always been in transit (and in transition). As Stuart Hall so critically stresses, we are always in the process of forming our cultural identities—identity is a matter "of becoming rather than being" (Ang 2001, 150). By this Hall, and Ien Ang through Hall, mean to connect the idea of identity as much to the future as the past, resituting a politicised notion of identity as a possible site of agency. For Ang, the trope of "becoming" brings a problematic idealism, a "double bind between necessity and impossibility" (151) to discussions of culture, community and identity that instead serve to entrench the established order in the face of an unsettling globalisation (152). Hence there is an even greater need to remember that delineated places have their margins (and people who live across the margins), and even more, that boundaries and groups have always been characterised by some form of movement rather than pure fixity. Culture itself is necessarily unstable and changing, or in Homi Bhabha's terms, “continually in a process of hybridity” (1990b, 211). For Bhabha, it is in the in-between space that the very meaning of culture resides (1994, 56).

Within this sense of perpetual movement and reforming groups of people, contemporary globalisation poses nothing wholly new, although it proposes accelerated rates and frequencies of cultural transition. The old routes of trade, colonisation and settlement have morphed into criss-crossing jet streams of multinational corporate capital, global leisure tourism, and large-scale relocation of people due to political conflict and environmental devastation. Relatively slow border crossings by boat, train or foot still occur of course; but, for example, the high profile of asylum seeker arrivals by boat in Australia masks the far greater number who arrive by plane. ¹ Ironically space travel has only recently gone

¹ See the Australian federal parliamentary background note "Boat Arrivals in Australia Since 1976" in which the authors note, "the majority of onshore asylum seekers actually arrive in Australia by air with a valid visa and
commercial, with suborbital flights posing a viable money-maker for the new space tourism industry, just as concern over peak oil suggests that the days of jet plane travel are limited. Virtual journeys through the nerve centres of the internet and other telecommunications channels are conducted in their trillions each day as people attend meetings via Skype halfway around the globe, capital is moved from one account to another, and virtual worlds are constructed and traversed by our avatars.

At the crossroads of this frantic mobility, virtual and material, sits the airport: a transit space on the global stage. This thirdspace is one in which many of us encounter some of the key features of inter- or transculturalism. It is an exemplary space in which the nowhere/anywhere modes of cosmopolitanism are performed, but also (paradoxically) where the boundaries of nationhood are most strictly asserted in the form of immigration control. While the airport space retains pretensions to the jetset age of early aviation, more and more it is the scene of a range of journeys: temporary and permanent emigrations and daily commutes of the international labour market to name just a few; and all the while global pandemics and terrorism exert surveillance constrictions on stateless refugee and transnational elite, First and Third World passenger alike.²

² Over the last decade increased security screening procedures have proliferated in airports across the Western world, particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom, in response to twenty-first century terrorist strategies (see for example Salter 2008; also Hall 2011). Additionally, global pandemics such as the 2009 outbreak of N1H1 influenza virus (“swine flu”), H5N1 (“avian flu”) in 2004, and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 have seen airports install temperature scanning devices, treating every traveller as a potential carrier of biological “weaponry” in the form of contagious disease. I should note, however, that as I write in June 2011 the International Air Transport Authority (IATA) has just unveiled mock-up plans for their “Checkpoint of the Future” to delegates attending the Association’s 67th Annual General Meeting (AGM) and World Air Transport Summit in Singapore. The new check-point represents a paradigm shift in airport security whose underlying concept is to scan for “bad” people, not just “bad” objects (Dunlap 2011, 3), and which heralds “the end of the road for ‘one size fits all screening’” (2). The system proposed will use “risk profiling” (a combination of passenger data and behaviour assessment) in order to sort passengers into three lanes: “Known Traveller,” “Normal,” and “Enhanced.” While in early prototyping the new system seems to genuinely attempt to address discontent with the increasingly invasive types of security screening used, it is also unavoidable to notice how these three lanes reproduce the triadic class structure already elaborately adopted by airlines. The euphemistically named “Enhanced” lane is ostensibly for the “bad” people. However those sorted into expedited lanes will inevitably be the frequent flyers of the First World transnational elite. How likely is it that...
This dissertation has so far launched an investigation into in-between spaces, taking the prosaic everyday features of bodily interaction within them as important aspects of intercultural experience. Together, the three sections put under close examination the performance of place/space: through Part I’s walk-in-my-shoes methodology of audio walks, I tested performances of interculturality activated through moments of being out of place; Part II on hybrid contemporary dance travelled between specific places and their culturally placed dance forms; and this final section on global airport culture and aeromobility goes to the heart of cosmopolitan sites of non-place. It is between these examinations and between their bodily enactments through practices of walking, dancing and flying, and between the dynamics of space and movement, that I am attempting to uncover or locate what is seemingly fleeting, unfixed and tenuous: something that has a flavour of, or could possibly be described as, an interstitial embodiment.

The study thus aims to look beyond a bias toward aesthetic spectacle which dominates much intercultural performance production and scholarship, and to counter theorisations of the intercultural as an abstract space in which discrete cultures interact. Neither conception allows us to dwell in the intercultural and describe how it feels to be there. The onstage spectacle of intercultural performance, in opposition to which I position my research, can be observed everywhere in the airport: from the parade of planes on the tarmac—a choreographed ballet of national (or corporate-national) flags comparable to the Olympics or a sitting of the United Nations in terms of its internationalist display—to the melange of nationally and culturally diverse peoples in the arrivals hall or departures concourse, representing in cultural dress, in language, in badged luggage and identity documents a true crossroads of the world.

suspected “good” and “bad” people will reproduce a division according to economic and political privilege, or racial and national affiliation?
This *spectre* of interculturalism—that is, an idea of the intercultural as a zone in which discrete representations of culture interact, and one which therefore comes into being through our visual consumption of it—is precisely what I have argued dominates theorisations of intercultural performance and which misses something important. That something is the embodied experience of interculturality. Instead I am developing an analysis of intercultural performance which exploits a trialectic of space, mobility and embodied practice in order to examine intercultural being, doing and performing.

The figure of three recurs in the thesis for good reason: to follow Homi Bhabha, and in the following chapters also Edward Soja, it is in part a conception of interculturalism as a thirdspace, a non-fixed neither/nor space. Thirdspace is also designed by Bhabha and therefore Soja as a critical apparatus, a way of thinking via "and/also" or "thirling-as-othering" in order to restructure binary oppositions or in Bhabha's words, "elude the politics of polarity" (1994, 56). The concept of a thirdspace has particular relevance to this section on global movement and the international airport. How this critical mode of thinking might live up to or map onto physical space as well as theorisations of cultural practice is one of the things taken up in the following chapters.

This dissertation in part argues that a cartography of borders simply calls attention to the crossings, linkages and border-dwellings that have always constituted unstable and ever-changing worlds. Marc Augé writes:

> One of the major concerns of ethnology has been to delineate signifying space in the world, societies identified with cultures conceived as complete wholes: universes of meaning, of which the individuals and groups inside them are just an expression, defining themselves in terms of the same criteria, the same values and the same interpretation procedures. (1995, 33)
Borders themselves, however, are neither fixed nor natural. Rather, they are socially and politically constructed: the assumed homogeneity and internal sameness of bounded groups, or even bounded bodies, is on unsteady ground. Cultural hybridity then can no longer be seen as a contaminant or adjunct to, or simply a resistance towards, the prevailing social order. And the tendency to cast it in terms that are either pejorative or conversely celebratory (evidence of dystopia or utopia) is yet another polarity evident in abundance in a space such as the airport. In this space of contemporary cultural interaction, the narrative of confinement and freedom appears repeatedly: in the strictures and surveillance of border control, and in the glamour and prowess of modernity's machines and global reach. What is a possible thirdspace amidst this polarity? And more to the point, if culture is continually in process, then why would the intercultural be a product of fixed representations of discrete cultures? Rather, the intercultural must itself be studied on-the-go, in its being and doing, examinable in inter- and intracorporeal performances of the in-between.

THE AIRPORT IN OTHER DISCIPLINES

Where sociologies a few years ago might have invoked a chaotic picture of global travel in which flight paths circle and cross through major nodes in the contemporary migration network—much like maps advertising an airline's routes in the back of in-flight magazines—this dizzying swirl was meant to stand in for the rapidity and quantity of journeys in the era of globalisation. More recently, what political sociologist Mark Salter has called the “twin stars” of globalisation and the war on terror have brought about considerable resurgence of critical scholarship on the subject of airports. Long the domain of aviation law and safety, or terminal logistics and management, there is a growing literature from within humanities and the social sciences concerned with airports as, for
example, political sites of surveillance and control (Salter 2008), as complex global networks and “flow machines” (Fuller and Harley 2004), as modulators of affect (Adey 2007; 2008; 2009), and as settings for a new “aeromobility habitus” or a new widespread “will to fly” (Cwerner 2009). As well, the lingering nostalgia for a lost glamour in plane travel makes appealing cultural histories such as Alastair Gordon’s Naked Airport (2004), with its documentation of the changing characters of air travel and the development of airport buildings from the muddy airfield to today’s “pterodactyl of glass and steel” (28).

Working well beyond the airport as metaphor for empty transnational privilege or as metonym for exotic faraway places, this body of research complements a broader critical scholarship on cosmopolitanism and globalisation.

The “umbilical cord” that exists between air travel and the global, John Urry suggests, is nowhere more evident than through the very scale of the air travel industry and the monumental scale of airports themselves (Urry 2009, 30). The hub airports that lie along major international transit points, on which I focus in this study, are so large that they cease to be buildings and take on city-like proportions. They operate as global cities in “a geography of strategic places at the global scale” (Sassen [1998] 2002, 161), networked to other global city-airports more than to other places within their immediate locality (see also Sassen [1991] 2001). But as much as they participate in the globalising flows circulating quite literally in the vertical airspace above our heads, they betray in their procedures the inescapable relation between the national and the cosmopolitan implicit in contemporary formations of globalisation. As Helen Gilbert and Jacqueline Lo point out, these two theoretical and political projects should be understood as working together dialogically rather than antithetically ([2007] 2009, 8).

---

3 Urry notes together the travel and tourism industries constitute the largest industry in the world at US$6.6 trillion. They account for 8.7% of world employment and 10.3% of world GDP (Urry 2009, 30).
Moving away from an association of cosmopolitanism with elite transnational mobility, authors such as Gilbert and Lo participate in establishing a more critical discourse which does not over-value the possibilities for cultural flows and exchange, and remains wary of "populist postmodern theory" that poses that everyone is on the move and/or that we are all in some way tourists (Bharucha 2000, 7). Here Peng Cheah’s critique of blind faith in global cosmopolitanism is particularly incisive:

If we recall that the nation is a mass-based imagined political community, it is unclear whether in the current interstate system, the so-called international public sphere or global civil society (names for mass-based global political communities) formed by transnational networks can achieve social redistribution on a global scale if it does not go through the institutional agency of the nation-state. (Cheah 1998, 37, original emphasis)

Rather, this discourse points to acknowledgement of a range of different cosmopolitanisms (Gilbert and Lo [2007] 2009, 4-11), calling for the term’s "pluralizing and particularizing" (Robbins 1998, 3), or a new “discrepant” cosmopolitanism (Clifford 1998, 365).

For example, a “‘thin’ cultural cosmopolitanism” (Gilbert and Lo [2007] 2009, 9) is readily apparent in the global airport, where a good amount of sameness amidst displays of worldly cultural difference creates what Paul Theroux calls the “home-plus” factor (in Gilbert and Lo [2007] 2009, 9) for an implicit Western traveller. This is the airport’s nowhere/anywhere modality, what Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge call the “disturbing commercial sameness” of cosmopolitan cultural forms (1988, 5). But in our actual journeys in aeroplanes, through airports—our journey through the terminal, onto the plane, through customs and security checks, in the food hall, long waits in the gate lounge—our movements play a part in constituting more ambiguous and particular bodily experiences of global flow as well. One of the reasons the airport as physical and conceptual space presents as an interesting site of study is that a tangle of relations
between nationalisms and cosmopolitanisms, interculturalisms and transculturalisms is encountered again and again. It is here that we might discover a practical cosmopolitanism, or cosmopolitanism in bodily practice. I might call this practice an “aeromobility habitus,” like Saulo Cwerner, in description of such movement’s everydayness and banal routine. However, I would argue our aeromobile moves, like the in-between embodiments we have encountered so far in this dissertation, operate somewhere between everyday and extra-daily practice, and between habitual and non-habitual moves. Airports are, for passengers if not for those who daily work in them, “everyday plus” performance spaces: like the audio walks discussed in Part I, they utilise everyday corporeal techniques (such as sitting, walking, and queuing) but within a context of marked, special events a little outside or apart from the banality of everyday life.4

NON-PLACE AND THE NEW MOBILITIES PARADIGM

The global airport’s negotiation between expressions of nationalism and cosmopolitanism is aligned to the place-space binary I discussed in Part I. Reflected through the “new mobilities paradigm” identified by Mimi Sheller and John Urry (2006) this binary becomes a polarity between stasis and movement. As I outlined in Chapter 1, place has been associated with dwelling and “home,” in turn given what Doreen Massey calls “totemic resonance” (2005, 5) against the threat of homogenising flows brought by globalisation. Thus place-space, stasis-movement become associated with fears of cultural preservation-absorption. In its broadest terms cultural research deals with the question of the other: “the exotic other defined in relation to a supposedly identical ‘we,’” and “the other of others, the ethnic or cultural other, defined in relation to a supposedly identical ‘they’ usually embodied in the name of an ethnic group [..]” (Augé 1995, 18). Clear demarcation

4 My use of “special events” here is akin to that of Lowell Lewis, to indicate “basically intensifications of some of the tendencies inherent in any ordinary activity” (2008, 43). Lewis denotes special events as the innovative aspects of normative daily life which highlight the creative possibility contained in everyday life (ibid.).
between “us” and “them,” however, dissolves in certain discursive and material spaces, just as a clearly defined “here” and “there” is disturbed by the realisation of unfixed place and culture. What Appadurai and Breckenridge call “public culture” is intended as a revisionist approach to culture, pointing to the limitations of traditional anthropological conceptions of culture “which were designed for small-scale, well-bounded and stable societies” (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988, 7), and also the historian’s notions of culture “which have tended to be predicated on such hierarchies and polarities as high and low, and elite and popular culture” (8). Instead Appadurai claims the new global cultural economy “has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models” (Appadurai 1996, 32); and he thus proposes a system of five dimensions or “scapes” (ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technospaces, financescapes, and ideoscapes) along which cultural material moves in a global sphere (33).

The increased virtual and physical mobility of social life through speed, scale and frequency, while grossly uneven in terms of access, nonetheless poses, as James Clifford points out, a real challenge to the idea of fieldwork as a practice of “intensive dwelling” or the “tent in the village” (1997, 58). Indeed the idea of “field” itself as a bounded site in large part defined by virtue of its distance from an equally delineated “home” is called into question. Instead, Clifford suggests within a new, mobile anthropology that fieldwork could be a “series of travel encounters” (2) or a “travel practice” (8). In a recent article on how terrain and movement might together form a qualitative methodology for studying local places and people, sociologist Tom Hall also questions the field “as a setting for investigation,” posing it rather as (after Erving Goffman), “no more than where the action is” (Hall 2009, 572, emphasis in original), potentially untying the site from a fixed and located ground.
Connected to the broader spatial turn in the social sciences and humanities, this literature is part of Sheller and Urry’s new mobilities paradigm, both a descriptive response to a world “on the move,” and also part of a larger theoretical project to upset what they see as a “sedentarist” social science (2006, 208). These authors point out that, “issues of movement, of too little movement or too much, or of the wrong sort or at the wrong time, are central to many lives and many organisations” (ibid.), but claim that the social sciences had thus far ignored or trivialised the importance of such movement. In other words, the new mobilities paradigm is inherently critical of a discourse which “treats as normal stability, meaning, and place, and treats as abnormal distance, change, and placelessness” (ibid.). The call for greater attention to the study of movement in everyday life is indeed a logical response to the proliferation of mobility in the twenty-first century as described in the beginning of this chapter, however, it also entrenches a particular polarity. That is, a romantic ideal of groundedness, dwelling, and continuous attachment inherited from classical anthropology on one side, and an equal romanticisation of networks, contingencies, and flows on the other.5

In her article “Choreographies of Tourism in Yosemite Valley: Rethinking ‘place’ in terms of motility” Sally Ann Ness uses her own experiences of hiking in Yosemite National Park to challenge the rubric of place and its influence on the ways cultural meaning is constructed. Concerned that cultural identity is understood too narrowly as always place-oriented—“perhaps in a plural, multi-sited sense, but still place/site-defined” (2007, 79)—she instead poses that tourism, like any practice based in motility rather than dwelling, needs to account for contexts of movement. Ness uses the term “motility” against the more neutral,  

5 As Urry and Sheller point out, this celebratory rhetoric is perhaps typified by the nomadic theory of Rosi Braidotti (see critique in Sheller and Urry 2006, 210-211). This is also the critique of “blind faith” in cosmopolitanism I discussed via Bharucha and Cheah (see p. 191).
empirically orientated “mobility” in order to specify movement contexts or understandings in which the experience of moving is regarded as life-affirming. “The quality of noetic acts (acts of knowing, or processes of understanding or thinking) occurring in relation to motile experience are, therefore, positive—acts of enjoying mobility, of desiring it, finding it pleasurable, wellness-inspiring, confidence-building, etc” (79). The distinction is an important one; as Ness points out, a non-motile (i.e. mobile) orientation towards motion has been over-generalised in tourist studies (80). Under this definition, experiences of both mobility and motility are obviously pertinent to this study of the airport, in a space where various movements are endured and enjoyed in equal (or perhaps unequal) measure, and where the more abstract notion of global flows are met by intimate acts of bodily motion.

Ness’s background as a dance scholar interestingly informs her re-evaluation of the place/dwelling discourse; prioritising movement, she argues, allows new insight into cultural practice and performance (80). “Human beings are just as capable of developing a sense of tradition and collective belonging while they are practicing/performing movement as when they are not—when they are motile as opposed to when they are being ‘in-place’” (80). To this end, she insists that both macro and micro approaches to recording movement are necessary, allowing for the more common profiling of migratory patterns within a complex network of routes (what she calls “macro-migratory charting” (81)) as well as recording of the small-scale motion that happens within nodes in the network, at the level of individual experience (a “cultural ‘kinesphere’” after Rudolf von Laban). It is this micro-level analysis that shows how motile practices and experiences, not just places (in the classical, anthropological sense), have meaning-making capability (84).

This more nuanced study of movement in relation to place challenges the negative casting of mobility/motility within the anthropological framework. As Ness reminds us, Augé’s
non-places, as opposed to what Augé calls anthropological place, are characterised by four mobilising phenomena: transport, transit, commerce and leisure. Ness argues, “human movement, in [Augé’s] theory of anthropological knowledge production, becomes associated with the lack of that which is foundational to culture, and is thereby emptied of any positive inherent meaning or motility” (81). Ever since Augé designated the airport as a non-place, airports and aeromobility have been frequent headlining acts within the broader mobilities literature. His influential book examines airports, along with other increasingly common, late-capitalist spaces such as supermarkets, motorways and ATMs. Together, these are delineated by Augé as places formed by the logic of transport, transit and commerce, and through relations of solitary contractuality (Augé 1995, 94).

Augé’s book begins with a short scene in which a fictional character, Pierre Dupont, performs the role of an Everyman in the spaces of Supermodernity. He withdraws money from an ATM before joining light traffic on the A11 autoroute. He is on the way to the airport where he parks (row J, underground level 2), checks in his allotted 20 kilos, passes through passport control before doing some duty-free shopping, and finally boards.

Waiting for take-off, while newspapers were being distributed, he glanced through the company’s in-flight magazine and ran his finger along the imagined route of the journey: Heraklion, Larnaca, Beirut, Dhahran, Dubai, Bombay, Bangkok… more than nine thousand kilometres in the blink of an eye, and a few names which had cropped up in the news over the years. He cast his eye down the duty-free price list, noted that credit cards were accepted on intercontinental flights, and read with a certain smugness the advantages conferred by the “business class” in which he was travelling thanks to the intelligent generosity of his firm. (“At Charles de Gaulle 2 and New York, Club lounges are provided where you can rest, make telephone calls, use a photocopier or Minitel… Apart from a personal welcome and constant attentive service, the new Espace 2000 seat has been designed for extra width and has separately adjustable backrest and headrest…”). He examined briefly the digitally labelled control panel of his Espace 2000 seat and then, drifting back into the advertisements in the magazine, admired the aerodynamic lines of a few late-model roadsters and gazed at the pictures of some large hotels belonging to an international chain […]. (3-4)
High up in the sky, in an anthropology turned in on the here and now, we are treated to a brief but thickly described passage of international air travel. For Augé this episode serves to capture a new type of space and mode of being in contemporary life, the non-places of Supermodernity “where the habitué of supermarkets, slot machines and credit cards communicates wordlessly, through gestures, with an abstract, unmediated commerce; a world thus surrendered to solitary individuality, to the fleeting, the temporary and ephemeral [...]” (78). Hence, we see Pierre Dupont in breezy easiness, floating between consumer opportunities and in a bubble of self-containment.6

While Augé defines non-places against what he calls anthropological place, I would argue that close study of movement in the airport actually disturbs this binary rubric through which cultural practice is understood, thereby challenging both the negative casting of mobility by the proponents of fixed place and also the utopic untethering of place by those extolling the freedoms of mobility. Airports are not simply empty of the ideals of meaning and attachment, but rather place and non-place’s separate logics operate in circumstances that are not mutually exclusive; hence, for example, the formation of subjectivities such as “third culture kids” (TCKs) who might feel resonantly “at home” in the airport.7 As I discussed in Chapter 1, the distinction between place and space is often a valuation between a place of meaningful dwelling and the spatial void, and this binary comparison extends to spaces of mobility or non-places. Augé writes that the “distinction between

---

6 The character of Pierre Dupont is resonant in the frequent-flying Ryan Bingham, protagonist of Walter Kirn’s novel Up in the Air (2001), played by actor George Clooney in the 2009 feature film adaptation. Augé’s project in Non-places is to create an anthropology of the “here and now,” from the point of view of himself, a Frenchman, and his observations therefore speak to a certain Western (European), First World, metropolised, academic social mobility—to which my own Australian university-funded research is likewise aligned.

7 A term originally coined by American sociologist Ruth Hill Useem in the 1960s, “third culture kid” describes a subculture of children who grew up in two or more cultures under highly mobile (generally expatriate rather than migratory) conditions. Online network tkid.com posts a qualifying quiz titled “You know you’re a TCK when...” that although highly US-centric, includes items that suggest a general relationship to aeromobility amongst its members such as, “You go into culture shock upon returning to your ‘home’ country,” “You speak with authority on the subject of airline travel,” and “You know how to pack” (Third Culture Kids Community 2010).
places and non-places derives from the opposition between place and space” (1995, 79). “Place, as defined here,” he argues further, “is not quite the place Certeau [sic] opposes to space (in the same way that the geometrical figure is opposed to movement, the unspoken to the spoken word or the inventory to the route): it is place in the established and symbolized sense, anthropological place” (81). My next two chapters argue, however, that global airports operate in a more negotiated middle ground, requiring a thirddspace rather than binary approach.

PERFORMANCE STUDIES AT THE AIRPORT

The lack of “field” in which to pitch my tent, and the lack of polite distance between me and an exotic other, promotes from the outset a different set of relations to the in-between spaces I am studying. The following two chapters incorporate research, or “travel encounters” to quote James Clifford, carried out from 2007 to 2010 in international airports around the world and augmented by memories of other travel. The research focus is above all on transiting experiences, and I have concentrated my observations on major hub airports, the processes and spaces of international travel, and critical analysis of a cosmopolitan set of embodiments. The theoretical and methodological quandary that mobile subjects and observers presents to anthropology is an important reason to turn to performance studies with its founding convictions in interdisciplinarity and use of performance as a lens through which a range of objects can be studied. Asking not how the airport is like performance (i.e. theatrical performance) but rather using performance as a means to look at the world in new and useful ways allows us to evade what amounts to a disciplinary stoush for the likes of anthropology, before even leaving the ground.8

8 See Clifford (1997), in particular his chapter “Spatial Practices: Fieldwork, Travel, and the Disciplining of Anthropology,” for his view on the challenges that cultural studies’ methods and objects of study pose to anthropology. See also Hage (1998).
Well into my fieldwork, Alain de Botton published *A Week at the Airport* (2009), a slim volume of essays that was the result of a much-publicised period de Botton spent as writer-in-residence at Heathrow Airport’s new Terminal Five in the Northern Hemisphere’s summer of 2009. Organised into four sections—“Approach,” “Departures,” “Airside,” and “Arrivals”—the book records de Botton’s wanderings around the airport, the back stories of people he meets, encounters with the automated production lines of food preparation and baggage sorting, and interactions with airport and airline workers: fellow employees (or his “associates” as he refers to them), from cleaners, to security guards, to pilots and the CEO of British Airways. Ensconced overnight in the nearby airport hotel, he journeys each day into the terminal’s public and “backstage” areas, as Goffman would call them (1959), even onto the tarmac one memorable night, ruminating not just on what makes the airport and air travel an exciting crossroads of the modern world, but also on what touching scenes of human feeling and meaning bleed through. He describes, for example, how an air bridge “rolled forward and closed its rubber mouth in a hesitant kiss over the front left-hand door” of a large Boeing 747 (25). He follows a young couple in distraught embrace at the security check-point, unable to separate. He notes, “aeroplane food stands at a point of maximum tension between the man-made and the natural, the technological and the organic. Even the most anaemic tomato (and the ones at Gate Gourmet were mesmerising in their fibrous pallor) remains a work of nature” (73). Ultimately, however, the post of writer-in-residence is both opportunity and limitation. While de Botton is given free reign over many spaces of the airport’s terminal, he is, nose pressed to the glass, confined to the ground as others go about their journeys across the globe, towards and away from loved ones, crossing the UK Border for real. The “ascent to the heavens” of which de Botton writes remains (for his Heathrow residency at least) only figurative for the author.
In comparison, movement in my project is both the object and method of study. My research aims at critical analysis of embodied performances of cosmopolitan spaces and subjectivities within the airport’s terminals and aircraft, and as such I have drawn on my own corporeal practice of transiting through the airport. The project is not designed as a comparative study aimed at general conclusions about airport architecture or behaviour; rather, my focus is toward bodily experiences of in-betweenness through constructions of social space, of which airports are one such location. In discussing the airport’s flow, airport theorist Peter Adey questions how scholars could better understand how such environments are experienced; suggesting methods of ethnography and participant observation “might mean performing the practice of the airport journey” (2009, 203), and this is very much the project I have adopted. This could be, suggests Adey, a practice of self-reflexive flâneurie, quoting Benjamin: “empathy is the nature of the intoxication to which the flâneur abandons himself in the crowd” (Benjamin in Adey ibid.). “In this way,” Adey goes on to say, “stepping into the flow for the researcher can mean stepping into the shoes of those he/she walks with” (ibid.).

But as we discovered in Part I of this dissertation, walking in the shoes of another is a complicated in-between stumble, not necessarily guaranteeing empathetic insight. While there have been some high profile cases of people becoming stateless in the midst of travel and having to set up camp in the airport (a very particular kind of in-betweenness),9 my emphasis has been on my transiting experience in its more prosaic everyday occasions, even as they occur in the heightened “everyday plus” environment of the airport. The issue of statelessness remains a difficult political and ethical question, one which Judith Butler claims manifests beyond the mid-twentieth century figure of the refugee or exile to include those who might be stateless within the state, the incarcerated, enslaved, or those

9 See for example, Karimi Nasseri, aka Sir Alfred Mehran’s, autobiography with Andrew Donkin, The Terminal Man (2004).
labouring illegally (Spivak and Butler 2007, 16-17). The parameters of this study do not extend in that direction however. Rather, I am focussing on how the airport (transit experience par excellence) might be conditioning spaces, bodies, or subjectivities, not through rupture with the everyday (the migrant narrative, an in-between discourse which situates the refugee at the very crisis spot mid-migration), but through the embodied practice of everyday moves in non-place. My methodology relies on analysing my own bodily experience of movement in the airport space, and as such, it necessarily examines a body operating within a sphere of First World transnational privilege. In the spirit of particularized cosmopolitanism with which I began this chapter, it is important to note that my experience cannot speak for all bodies everywhere. But rather, within this field, is it possible to yet develop more nuanced understandings of how cosmopolitanism is experienced and performed?

The following chapters prioritise description of international airports and terminals, in particular transport hubs that process movement across Pacific and Atlantic rims, across hemispheres, and across continents. This research includes observations of incidental travel to attend academic conferences or to carry out research pertaining to the previous two sections of this dissertation, and also travel booked specifically with airport observation in mind where multi-stop trips with deliberately long lay-overs allowed me hours and days in flight and wandering the terminals, taking down “jottings in the field.”

How performances of interculturality are constructed by and through the social spaces of the airport connects this work to wider discourses on cultural embodiment and subjectivity. A focus on cultural performativity is part of rethinking globalised or

---

10 For more see Butler and Gayatri Spivak’s printed conversation Who Sings the Nation-State?: Language, Politics, Belonging (2007).
cosmopolitan subjectivities, those for whom experiences of mobility might be more remarkable and expressive of lived reality than those of fixity. Without emptying the discussion of a politics of intercultural practice, the following chapters attempt to arrive somewhere different by beginning from the perspective of embodied experiences of movement. While the focus on interculturality as a process of movement might seem to propose a radically alternate model of interculturalism, at the same time, it is a simple extension of the argument against static and fixed notions of culture which has been developing in the humanities and social sciences going on a quarter century.

The main questions informing this dissertation—what can close attention to the embodied practice of intercultural experience do for our current understanding of cultural processes; what are the kinaesthetic dimensions of interculturalism—are in this section reflected via my observations and experiences travelling through airports as a performer/observer.

Chapter 8 elaborates on my opening discussion of the airport as thirdspace, an in-between space performing transnational culture. This is instantly recognisable across large international airports: it is the shopping mall/food court/glass and steel concourse/gate lounge/internet hub/baggage carousel/passport control queue etc. However, within (not against) these features, the airport also exerts particularities of nation, region, and locale; and the ways in which nation and cosmos, local and global, particular and general interact are often odd or even paradoxical. Developing further a critique of place and non-place, this chapter also studies mass people movements and the changing groups of affiliation played out in the airport, positing that these spaces are characterised by an excess of arrivals and departures, and an elongated sense of in-betweenness.
Moving from architectural spaces to somatic ones, Chapter 9 examines experiences of bodies in transit. In previous chapters I have formed descriptions of an interstitial embodiment using words such as continually moving, back-and-forthing, and oscillating in an effort to focus on or promote their moving, felt corporealities. In this chapter, awareness of a doubled self—a self and othered-self—is discussed as a phenomenon of in-between subjectivity produced through border crossings and other experiences of international air travel such as jet lag and turbulence.

Taking James Clifford’s suggestion that practices of displacement, “might emerge as constitutive of cultural meanings rather than as their simple transfer or extension” (3), these two chapters pose the practices of spatio-corporeal displacement in airports and aeroplanes as important if seemingly banal functions of lived experience. As such, they go some way towards understanding how it is possible to feel at home in non-place, to discovering how non-places themselves might be performing in-betweenness, and to drawing out an embodied subjectivity built more on experiences of movement than entrenched groundedness.
In May of 2006 a short article appeared in the Dance section of *The New York Times*. It concerned the soon-to-begin renovation of Terminal 5 at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), site of the iconic 1962 Trans World Airlines (TWA) Flight Centre designed by modernist architect Eero Saarinen. Closed for business soon after TWA’s demise in 1994, Saarinen’s terminal had been heritage listed, but its future uncertain, for close to a decade. Now occupied by budget carrier JetBlue Airways, the terminal was to undergo a revival of sorts, aligning its super-cool retro-futurist styling with the new super-cool kid on the block. Saarinen’s swooping, bird-like concrete structure is symbolic of the glamorous Jet Age of travel, and is well loved by architectural critics. The article caught my eye, however, because it interviewed two performance-makers involved with the project: the theatre designer/architect David Rockwell whose architectural firm Rockwell Group was contracted to work on the interior design, and the choreographer Jerry Mitchell whom Rockwell had worked with on several Broadway productions including 2002’s *Hairspray* and a 2000 revival of *The Rocky Horror Show*. 
That a choreographer should be employed on the design of an airport terminal really shouldn't seem incongruous. What it says is that this place, built above all for movement, requires an expert on moving. Put this way it makes sense, and makes the number of street redevelopments and urban squares without choreographers or at least human movement specialists of some kind on their creative teams seem conversely odd. Rockwell Group’s emphasis is on applying a cross-disciplinary approach to creating “immersive environments” (Rockwell Group 2010), and in the Times article Rockwell explains, “we began with the idea of using movement to personalize the experience and deal with the emotions of travel” (in Green 2006). Rockwell and Mitchell’s involvement on the design of the new Terminal 5 highlights that movement in this kind of space is more than a mathematical problem of getting from A to B; rather, the quality and shape, speed and contrapuntal rhythm of movements made by people and objects, individually and en masse, deserve attention.

This observation, so far, goes not much further than that of urbanists such as Jane Jacobs, who famously described the pedestrian movement on her Greenwich Village street as a “sidewalk ballet” ([1961] 1992, 50) or the architect and urban designer Jan Gehl, who in Life Between Buildings argued for a humanized approach to architecture and who has since pioneered a methodology of studying cities by tracking how people move in the spaces between buildings ([1971] 2006). From the Situationists and Walter Benjamin, to Lefebvre and de Certeau, we have developed an understanding of social spaces such as city streets as in dialogue with, constituting and constituted by, our movements through them (see Chapter 1). The airport terminal is another such public space, but it also participates in a global movement or transportation system. The airport has become emblematic of the

---

1 Jacobs uses the ballet metaphor in an extended passage on the use of sidewalks: “this order is all composed of movement and change, and although it is life, not art, we may fancifully call it the art form of the city and liken it to the dance [...]” ([1961] 1992, 50).
extreme mobility—in amount and pace—of twenty-first century life. The network of airports spread across the globe makes it seem like nowhere (given economic and political access) is more than a day away,

and visualisations such as Airtraffic Worldwide, an animated mapping of the planet’s collective commercial flights over a twenty-four-hour period condensed into little over a minute draw a picture of the Earth’s surface as a teeming web of transportations.

As I suggested in the previous chapter, global airports present an exemplary in-between or thirdspace; at once expressive of a nowhere/anywhere cosmopolitanism and at the same time heavily entrenching state borders. It has become almost unremarkable that the airport symbolises contemporary globalisation on cultural and economic levels, and is linked to a related elite cosmopolitanism. Yet its very bounded-ness and/also anywhere in-betweenness points to a more critical assessment of cosmopolitanism (see p. 191). Airport spaces such as Terminal 5 at JFK make much of their connections to the Jet Set glamour of mid-twentieth century aviation, representing a gateway to romantic, far-off destinations and also a gateway through which we may access modernity’s global reach. Alastair Gordon opens his cultural history of the airport with the memory of his first visit to the TWA Terminal in 1964: arriving at the airport just after a visit to General Motors’ Futurama exhibit down the road at the world’s fair at Flushing Meadows, Gordon remembers his response to Saarinen’s terminal, “this wasn’t pretending to be the future; this was the future” (2004, 2, original emphasis).

---

2 This feeling, as Bharucha (2000) is careful to point out, typifies the First World, metropolitan bias of global cosmopolitanism. In reality globalisation is highly uneven; many of the world’s people do not have freedom of movement at such high-speed or in terms of distance travelled, and many of the world’s places remain remote and unreachable even for those with economic and political privilege. The IATA estimates 2.8 billion passengers will fly in 2011 (Dunlap 2011, 4); however impressive, the research institute Worldwatch estimated in 2006 that only 5% of the world’s population had flown in an aeroplane (Worldwatch Institute 2006, 68).

3 A number of similar flight traffic simulations can be found on Youtube. The particular animation I refer to, available from http://radar.zhaw.ch/, was produced by a team at the Institute of Applied Information Technology In IT, Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Winterthur in collaboration with Technorama Swiss Science Center. While the sheer density of a day’s flight traffic is well demonstrated in this video, it is important to note it also shows that distribution of traffic across the world is far from even.
The air was charged with anticipation. Pilots stepped through pools of milky light. Beautiful stewardesses trailed behind them wearing trim red outfits and perfectly straight stocking seams. The ambient lighting, the flirtatious smiles, the lipstick-red carpet and uniforms, the cushioned benches and steel railings curving around the mezzanine—all conspired on the senses. Even the clock that hung from the ceiling had a suggestive globular shape. We sat in an oversize conversation pit, beneath a panoramic screen of glass and watched the service vehicles scoot between the planes. “This is unbelievably cool,” said my cousin in a hushed, almost reverential tone.

When his flight was announced, he walked up the long umbilical departure tube, turned once to wave, like an astronaut, and then disappeared into the satellite at the far end of the tube. There was an otherworldly, *Twilight Zone* quality to this moment—as if my cousin were flying not to London but to Mars. (ibid.)

As Gordon quickly notes, however, something has happened in the short interval between this crystalline memory from 1964 and his many disappointments in later years. More recently he claims our experiences of the airport are attracting and repelling in equal measure, and very often uncomfortable and boring. “The airport is at once a place, a system, a cultural artifact that brings us face-to-face with the advantages as well as the frustrations of modernity” (4-5). Against a patina of today’s shopping-mall worldliness, particularities of place and a range of embodied manoeuvres (by a range of bodies) are made in our airports.

It is the combination of these macro- and micro-moves, our different human encounters with movement on global and pedestrian scales, which stands out as the performance of aeromobility. But these several ideas of the global airport as a machine made for movement, itself sited at the crossroads of the globe’s incessant mobility and perched between all the world’s places and passages, only begins to suggest what kind of space it is and what kinds of corporeal experiences we have within it. Taking the global airport as site, event and practice of cosmopolitanism, this chapter develops a notion of performed cosmopolitanism through the airport’s construction of space, in particular through a discourse of thirdspace. Following David Rockwell’s provocation to consider the airport’s
interior as “public theater” (in Green 2006) and to contemplate its choreography, this chapter focuses on ways in which spatial organisation and experience—movements performed through the minutiae of everyday travel with all its potential excitement and banality—might be choreographing in-betweenness.

By choreography I mean the patterns and directions of people moving through terminal spaces, but like Rockwell and Mitchell I also mean what experiences, affective and embodied, these movements imbue. Even more broadly, I am employing the choreographic lens as bound up in the primacy of movement to the experience of aeromobility, and am stressing bodily gesture and mobilisation, spatial organisation and relation as root approaches to understanding the world around us.4 The latter half of this chapter focuses on three ways in which in-betweenness is constructed and performed through international airport terminals, utilising the participant-observation research I conducted in several major hub airports around the world.

NON-PLACE IN THIRDSpace

In the previous chapter I introduced Marc Augé’s seminal work Non-places, which has been so influential to the theorisation of airports within the social sciences, and I also referred more broadly to the ways we think about globalised, technologically savvy, (primarily) urban and mobile life in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries. I argued, however, for a critique of the binary rubric which puts mobility and place discourses opposite one another. This is made especially apparent through a performative examination of movement at the airport, where I contend place and non-place operate in circumstances

4 As I discussed in Chapter 4, the potential of choreography to be a useful concept for thinking through the structures of subjectivity, social order or identity, and political mobilisation has been the subject of scholarship in dance studies over the last few years (see p. 115; also Foster 2011, 15-72). My use here is close to Andrew Hewitt’s social choreography, “as a space in which social possibilities are both rehearsed and performed” (2005, 4).
that are not mutually exclusive. Global airports operate in a more negotiated middle
ground, requiring a theorisation that takes account of a thirdspace approach.

Homi Bhabha’s notion of a Third Space is tied to his thinking about hybridity, which I
discussed in Chapter 4, and has been a lasting and influential theoretical intervention into
the established understanding of cultural identity and practice. Third Space is where, he
claims, the very meaning of culture—always unfixed and continually changing—is located.
This in-between space can be understood as the “site” where the dynamic processes and
articulations of cultural difference occur, but also in Bhabha’s conceptualisation as the
means (or precondition) for that articulation (1994, 56): a critical apparatus or way of
thinking beyond hierarchical and temporal binaries. Bhabha’s Third Space of hybrid
negotiation is born out of his suspicion of totalising grand narratives and his critique of an
original, or originary culture. “The ‘originary’ is always open to translation so that it can
never be said to have a totalised prior moment of being or meaning—an essence” (Bhabha
1990b, 210). Dislodging hybrid formations from a mechanistic model of cultural flows
which sets out one-way transfer (original to derived), Bhabha intervenes into established
first-second or before-after arrangements. Thirding is therefore a way of negotiating
between polarities, instead posing neither/nor or both/also constructions of cultural
production, identification, politics and practice. This technique of thirding, an in-between
move, is made again and again at the airport where nation-cosmos, local-global, here-there
binaries come under repeated stress.

As I indicated in my introduction, understandings of space and place infuse this project.
But what do Bhabha’s theoretical assertions about Third Space mean for analyses of actual
spaces and bodily experiences of being in space? One of the immediate answers here is that
a discourse of thirdspace promotes the in-between as where the action is.
The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (Bhabha 1994, 5)

The temporality and movement-contingent nature of thirddspace deserves attention here: but despite Bhabha’s metaphorical allusion to the stairwell as thirddspace, what kind of passage or of moving-between inscribes this space is still under question. What does the concept of Third Space offer material, real-world experiences (a term I use loosely in relation to the airport where unreal and hyperreal experiences abound) of performing in-betweenness at the airport?

**(NON-TERMINATING) TERMINAL DESIGN**

**Arriving YVR, Vancouver International Airport, international arrivals hall, time unknown**

*Trudge along concourse in the middle of my flight’s herd, heading toward immigration. Suddenly pop out into a large, long hall, entering (strangely) from above. Glance down to long queues already forming on the floor below. I glide Esther-Williams-style via an escalator, descending past a thundering waterfall to emerge on an elevated platform at one end of the hall. Passing between two tall wooden carvings I join the heavy mass of trans-Pacific passenger traffic entering North America / Canada / British Columbia / Vancouver / Coast Salish country.*

*I have in some sense arrived in Canada—we have “de-planed”—but this is a liminal place, a threshold: by the logic of border control, Canadian soil lies on the other side of this slow-moving queue. Neither here nor there, I have made the most dramatic of entrances onto the stage of nowhere. But it is in this place more than almost anywhere else, that I am on stage, required to perform state-sanctioned subject in a series of passages and pass-points.*

*YVR is understandably proud of its collection of Pacific Northwest Coast indigenous art—one of the largest in the world. The wooden carvings in the arrivals hall are Welcome*
Figures by Susan A. Point of the Musqueam people (Vancouver Airport Authority 2009). In a note about their art collection on the "Things to Do at YVR" section of their website, the airport states:

The interior design of the International Terminal was inspired by British Columbia's great outdoors and the art of the Northwest Coast that depicts British Columbia's native wildlife, mountains, rivers, forests, and aboriginal heritage. Travellers from around the world will form a first and lasting impression of BC. (ibid.)

The way in which particular local (and indigenous) cultural iconography and objects are made to stand in for or represent state-level interests and authority within a transnational environment, such as in YVR's arrivals hall, is not unique or unusual. Such appropriations and representations are repeated at airports the world over, as well as more generally in the ways nations market and export themselves to a global audience through tourism advertising, world expos, Olympic games and similar events. More specifically, the appropriation of traditional cultures to solidify national image within the postcolonial context is one of the important and recurrent discussions within scholarship on intercultural practice, although it is not the subject of my discussion here.5

I am interested in the performative event described in my fieldnote from YVR, particularly what it indicates about the practice of moving through this kind of in-between space. In this example, in-between space is produced through a collision of multiple layers of governmentality and cultural display (nation-state, city municipality, airport authority, first nation), but this occurs in not altogether expected or fixed ways. In Hong Kong's Chek

---

5 Regarding the Welcome Figures at YVR, the airport's website states, “in true Coast Salish tradition, two red cedar Welcome Figures stand tall at the entrance to the Arrivals Hall of the International Terminal.” Their invocation of tradition, and the de- or re-contextualising of these carvings into the immigration hall, reveals a complex set of relationships (both a kind of celebratory inclusion as well as a reflected history of power inequality, for example) between the postcolonial nation and its indigenous people. As the website goes on to say, "figures such as these were originally carved as house posts; however, the Welcome Figures in the International Terminal will remain as free-standing sculptures to silently, yet auspiciously, welcome passengers to Vancouver” (Vancouver Airport Authority 2009). For more on the moral, political, and social implications of appropriation see, for example, Ziff and Rao (1997); see also Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) for the ways in which museums, fairs, and tourist attractions display “heritage.”
Lap Kok (HKG) I encountered a small glass display cabinet of “Hong Kong’s Archaeological Finds from the Antiquities and Monuments Office” presented courtesy of the “Leisure and Cultural Department in association with the Airport Authority of Hong Kong,” and tucked behind a squat pillar in an otherwise anonymous arrivals-level corridor. At San Francisco International Airport (SFO) I wiled away a good twenty minutes visiting a temporary historical exhibition of computer prototypes, an homage to nearby Silicon Valley inventors installed in a space between inbound and outbound travelers. These invocations of historical emplacement (whether big or small, and whether relatively recent as at SFO, from antiquity as at HKG, or through a proposed continuity with a living history of indigenous practice such as at YVR) are too easily brushed off as simply decorative. They are that, but they are also something more, a “placing” of cultural heritage within transcultural space. Non-place and place overlap, and our moving through the airport is a negotiation of the spaces between categories of city, nation, and planet.

Even within the recognisable category of “airport”—what Alastair Gordon calls “Air World” (2004, 251), a shopping mall of high-end travel gear and duty-free perfume, and the soaring glass and steel structures that have become ubiquitous hallmarks of big international airports—place inserts itself. Indeed, the new breed of post 1990s global airports with their self-consciously internationalist or transnationalist flavouring allows the frequent flyer to develop a comforting sense of sameness and also opens up a finer grain of particularity. Signs in Hong Kong’s subway system, the MTR, advertising the new shopping area in T2 at Chek Lap Kok as a great place to shop (i.e. worthy of a special trip to the airport just to shop) seem very “Hong Kong” in their promotion of the island as a shopping mecca, at the same time as shopping spaces being just another signifier of the global airport. A line-up of world flags flanking the AirTrain platform at JFK’s Terminal 4
indicate it is the international terminal, but also echoes on a smaller scale the flagpoles at the United Nations headquarters just a short distance away.

The conflation of Air World and local particularity also occurs through cultural practice. Cries of Shōshō omachi kudasai! Dōmo arigatō gozaimashita! lend a distinctive politeness to the otherwise utilitarian security screening at Narita International (NRT), as opposed to punitive orders shouted by airport workers in a very similar space at Los Angeles (LAX). Arriving at Sydney Kingsford Smith (SYD) crowds trudge slowly towards the inevitable crush of customs. Arriving at Kansai (KIX), I am swept up in a fast moving torrent of Japanese nationals running full tilt from the air bridge to the immigration hall—an otherwise grey, institutional room set out much like any other immigration processing room; and yet the efficient, fast-moving public crowd is stereotypically Japanese, played out many times over during the course of a day in the country’s railway stations and other public spaces.

Places and practices gathered in the course of our passage through the airport (how we came to be there and where we are going) crowd in. Despite the regimented and regulated boundaries of international border control, considered via thirdspace strategies the airport is much more fluid, extending to draw in proximal or even imagined places as well as contracting in a sandwich of multiple registers of place. This fluidity and multiplicity is revealed through practice/performance, through how we move and make others move, spatialising our passage through this material space. The airport is a meeting point sited or located at the crosspoint of different places, but this only begins to cover how in-betweenness is being produced and experienced; it is also not located at some crosspoint (a reference point) on Massumi’s fixed cultural grid (see pp. 12 and 104). Bhabha’s

---

6 Please wait a moment! Thank you! in honorific form or keigo, respectful language.
conception of Third Space, designed as a conceptual space in which the strategies of neither/nor and both/also might apply or, in other words, a space for thinking through alternate relations than resolute opposition, and where irony or even contradiction may be allowed instead, is useful for understanding the airport. But as I questioned earlier, is it possible to think (or indeed move) Bhabha’s conceptual space as a real, material space?

The airport’s expanding/contracting spatiality, its drawing in of places remembered and imagined, makes it a type of space to which geographer Edward Soja applied the compound descriptor “real-and-imagined” in his book Thirdspace (a slight re-alignment of Bhabha’s Third Space). Like Bhabha, Soja’s concept promotes a critical thirding or alternative thinking beyond established binaries. As a geographer, however, Soja’s project is more explicitly spatial—he wants to interject space and social spatiality as a challenge to traditional historo-social understandings of the world (1996, 46-47). He draws on Henri Lefebvre’s trialectic conception of socially produced space (perceived, conceived, and lived), aligning his Thirdspace with Lefebvre’s lived space, “as a strategic location from which to encompass, understand, and potentially transform all spaces simultaneously” (1996, 68, original emphasis). As opposed to his Firstspace perspective which accounts for the material world, or a Secondspace that interprets this reality through imagined representations of spatiality, Thirdspace for Soja is both real-and-imagined (6). That the global hub airport is both a cultural in-between, where cosmopolitan practices and aesthetics might emerge, and also instigative of a spatially in-between way of being in the world, is what Soja’s Thirdspace discourse suggests.

This analysis also recalls Foucault’s heterotopology, a “simultaneously mythic and real contestation of the space in which we live” (Foucault 1986, 24). In the opening pages of “Of Other Spaces,” Foucault traces the history of space from a medieval, pre-Galilean space of
emplacement to a space of extension or infinitely open space that came with knowledge of the Earth’s place in the planetary constellation. Foucault then moves to a present-day conception, where he argues extension has been replaced by a focus on relations between points, what he calls the site. More accurately, Foucault asserts that space today has taken the form of relations among sites (23). One of the core arguments of this thesis is for the importance of a kinaesthetic analysis of interculturalism—one that is spatial but importantly is also moving. The incursion of movement into our changing conception of space is noted by Foucault (and is a move Doreen Massey traced in spatial discourse more broadly; see Massey 2005). In relation to the post-Galilean idea of extension, he writes “a thing’s place was no longer anything but a point in its movement, just as the stability of a thing was only its movement indefinitely slowed down” (Foucault 1986, 23). The shift he then sees toward space as a set of relations likewise builds on this understanding of space as mobile, a gesture towards networks before a nod to network theory was de rigueur.

Space as a relation among sites stresses the meanings made in-between multiple places:

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and knaws [sic] at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void, inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be colored with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another. (ibid.)

Foucault’s major theoretical contribution in these writings was the idea of heterotopias. Unlike utopias which are fundamentally unreal, Foucault’s heterotopias are “a sort of mixed, joint experience,” an “effectively enacted utopia” which is a “simultaneously mythic and real contestation of the space in which we live” (24). The doubled, real and mythic nature of heterotopias is mirrored in Soja’s real-and-imagined Thirdspace. Although he admits Foucault’s “Of Other Spaces” is incomplete, and even incoherent at times, Soja cites

---

7 Soja calls “Of Other Spaces” a “rough and patchy picture” (1996, 154), and goes to some length to qualify his attention to these lecture notes written in 1967, noting that while exhibited in the public domain shortly before
heterotopology as an important cornerstone to his work, likening heterotopias to Lefebvre’s lived space (Soja 1996, 156).

While Foucault's spatial project is directed more at historicity and understanding power, and Lefebvre's towards the meanings of social production, Soja contends the central point of both is that their separate envisioning of spatiality is also a challenge to conventional modes of spatial thinking. Drawing together these philosophic imaginings of space with postcolonial inscriptions of thirdspace (via Bhabha, bell hooks, Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Guillermo Gomez-Peña) as a radical space of alterity and productive reinterpretation for those dwelling in borderzones, Soja returns again to this key deployment of Thirdspace as critical lens which incorporates both material and imagined, built and theoretical dimensions of space, but importantly dismantles existing ways of thinking. Given that the book is speaking to those working in what Soja calls the “spatial disciplines,” namely geography, architecture, and urban studies, his stressing of Thirdspace as a critical apparatus is a point of distinction for those who daily deal in buildings and civic squares, roadways and village greens—those whom Lefebvre referred to as, “people who deal with material things” (Lefebvre 1991, 4). However, for my purposes in studying the airport as an in-between space, and considering what a framework of Thirdspace/Third Space really means when applied to a physical space and the experience of being in that space, Soja’s disciplinary background as a geographer is what distinguishes his approach, and I therefore adopt his version of the term here. He occupies the very gap Lefebvre articulated (in The Production of Space) between space as an abstract mental space and a practical space. Lefebvre claims this mental space alone masquerades as extra-ideological, and "becomes the locus of a ‘theoretical practice’ which is separated from

---

Foucault’s death in 1984 they were never reviewed for publication by Foucault himself and so remain somewhat unofficial to most Foucauldian scholars.
social practice and which sets itself up as the axis, pivot or central reference point of Knowledge” (6). Lefebvre goes further in his critique:

When codes worked up from literary texts are applied to space—to urban spaces, say—we remain, as may easily be shown, on the purely descriptive level. Any attempt to use such codes as a means of deciphering social space must surely reduce that space itself to the status of a message, and the inhabiting of it to the status of a reading. This is to evade both history and practice. (7, original emphasis)8

That Soja so doggedly reiterates the centrality of Thirdspaces as “not just ‘other spaces’ to be added on to the geographical imagination, they are also ‘other than’ the established ways of thinking spatially” (1996, 163), reiterates the potency of Thirdspace/Third Space/thirdspace as a hybrid, hyphenated in-between space; one that is between/both walked and thought, real-and-imagined.

**AN ELONGATED IN-BETWEENNESS**

Of particular utility to our developing notion of thirdspace in relation to the global airport are Foucault’s third, fourth and fifth principles of heterotopology.9 The third, “the heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible” (1986, 25), is explained by Foucault through the example of the theatre. On the theatrical stage—a real, material place—a series of places are brought into being through both real and imagined means. This we have already seen at work in the airport through the layering of set pieces and extensions of memory/imagination bringing together arrivals hall, airport, city, and nation in the above examples. The fifth principle, “heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and

---

8 Lefebvre’s argument here is allied to one I discussed in Part I regarding space and representation (see p. 92), and related too to the problems of “reading” practice I discussed in Chapters 4 and 6 particularly.

9 Foucault’s six principles of heterotopias are: 1) heterotopias are culturally universal, although varied in form; 2) existing heterotopias can change function through time; 3) a heterotopia can juxtapose several incompatible spaces in one real place; 4) heterotopias are usually linked to particular slices of time, or an accumulation of time; 5) heterotopias presuppose a system of opening and closing; and 6) heterotopias have a function in relation to all remaining space. The third and fifth principles will be discussed in the following pages, and the fourth in the following chapter.
closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable” (26), is also in evidence at the airport, where in-betweenness is performed through repeated openings and closings, entrances and exits, arrivals and departures.

**Arriving Narita Express from Tokyo Station, NRT, Narita International Airport, 08042010, approx 11.20 hours**

Exiting JR station Terminal 2: automated fare adjustment machine, pass through turnstile one, pass through turnstile two, exit glass door from station to... wide corridor, turn left, walk 50m to security check, show passport, pass through to... another lobby, squareish, JR on one side, entrance to car park on the other, small convenience store, and escalators and doorway on the far side.

Doorway leads to: 1F arrivals and 2F domestic departures. Escalator leads to: 3F departure lobby. Ascend escalator to... small landing with exit door to curbside drop-off zone 2F, walk to another escalator, ascend to... identical landing area on 3F, small door leads to terminal proper.

Supermodernity is characterised by an excess of events (Augé 1995, 30). In the airport a series of sliding doors and portal openings, pass ports and transfer points create an elongated in-betweenness, an excess of arrivals.

**Departing HKG, Chek Lap Kok Airport, T1 check-in hall, 12042010, approx. 21.00 hours**

Done a lap of the hall. Ringed right around the rows of check-in counters and zig-zagging tape; twin Pacific Coffee outlets at either corner; restaurants, souvenir shops, snack bars and convenience stores lining the rear wall; peeked down offshooting office corridors and unknown backstage places. Pass the entrance to a low-ceilinged noodle shop tucked under an escalator... and look again: an inconspicuous glass wall runs the length of the hall’s back wall. On the other side, and beyond a sizable gap, is the post-immigration zone. Here is where landside and airside meet (not quite), the two terminal zones terminating in a border delineated by absence. Nowhere Canyon: a dry moat or gully three levels deep where we can, through glass, stare at one another.
Watch children playing on some fiberglass animals, a man works on his laptop at a small table. A lone security guard, a young man in a suit, leans on the railing on the other side, quiet and content, watching nothing happen in this nowhere zone.

This area at HKG is quite literally a non-reachable, nowhere zone: a physical in-between emphasizing the transition point between before and after (immigration procedures), land and air, and by extension, Hong Kong and X (another airport/city/place). At the far ends of the gap two white boxes bridge the distance. They are (enclosed and out of view) outgoing immigration control rooms at the north and south ends of the terminal. But does this place or the immigration control event really delineate the ultimate moment of transition? The check-in hall was already “not quite Hong Kong.” So many acts of departure were performed in order to arrive there (checking out of my hotel, turning in my Octopus card at the MTR, sending my checked in luggage on its way), and once on the other side, how different is airside from where I came from? It is yet another indeterminate place between here and my plane, my flight, my destination, my next day, my friends/family, my vacation, my job, my school, my new life... Despite having gone through immigration, and technically (legally) having left Hong Kong, bridging this gap is simply a move from “not quite” to “not yet.” The architectural in-between of Nowhere Canyon is one amongst many. The airport as a whole—its terminal and tarmac, as well as our preparations for travel, and our flight itself—is a series of in-betweens, multiple arrivals and departures elongating the moment and movement of being in-between, that can’t be reduced to, but is symbolized by, the border-crossing event.

To return to Foucault’s fifth principle of heterotopias, he states, “in general, the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public place” (1986, 26), and aeromobility’s checks and cross-checks attest to this.
Either the entry is compulsory, as in the case of entering a barracks or a prison, or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications. To get in one must have a certain permission [sic] and make certain gestures. (ibid.)

The multiple pass points encountered even in traveling from the Japan Rail train station into NRT's terminal in the first example above, involve both "permission" and "gestures" to be fulfilled. Foucault gives as an example places designated for purification (both religious and hygienic), and suggests more generally that while these places might seem to offer simple openings, they actually hide curious exclusions. "Everyone can enter into these heterotopic sites, but in fact that is only an illusion: we think we enter where we are, by the very fact that we enter, excluded" (ibid.). This spatial elongation of entrances and exits is nowhere more evident than at the moment of border crossing—at the national border as shown in the previous section, and at multiple other borders or thresholds of transit(ion).

Moving through or across the airport's many thresholds, I began to realise that these borders stretch out into choreographies of unfolding portals, and such blandly-marked nowhere zones are expressive of a never-quite-arriving or never-quite-departing kind of movement. Nowhere is somewhere, in the sense that we can be there in a material, Firstspace way. At the same time, multiple doorways, passageways, and checkpoints create a not quite/not yet eventfulness which muddies the idea that this is a transportation between fixed fields. Moving between—or more aptly, being in-between—in the airport is a practice of multiple arrivals and departures, extending the border site and event. As Brian Massumi writes, "containment has more to do with the patterning of exits and entries across thresholds, then with the impermeability of boundaries" (2002, 85). We experience a sickening déjà vu as an exit door slides open to reveal another exit and another. A kind of displacement, a temporal and spatial suspension or rearrangement, not unlike the embodied experience of jet lag already induced by long-haul flying. This is a kind of misplaced-ness similar to the proprioceptive-visual misalignment Massumi describes in
his office at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (see p. 31); and similarly entails the gut-pulling space/place morphing needed to realign our orientation, “a recalibration of internal and external sensings of one’s whereabouts” (Foster 2011, 73). Exiting again and again, our bodies are caught in this push-pull, projecting out into the world beyond the exit door but finding ourselves replaced repeatedly into somewhere other than expected.

**Arriving HKG, Chek Lap Kok Airport, Cathay Pacific flight CX521, 08042010, 21.00 hours**

*Go down escalator to... grey waiting area for the Automated People Mover. Announcement advises me to delay my trip if swine flu is suspected. Large banner reads: “Relax: train comes every 2 minutes.” Power down to wait, arms crossed, shoulders slack.*

*Train arrives, step from waiting area, through sliding door into train carriage—another waiting area. Look out windows as underground concrete tube zips by. Doors open, step into identical room (“Relax: train comes every 2 minutes”), escalator up.*

*Weave smoothly between people and shops—electronics, liquor, chocolates, bags—pulling case behind. Ferries to mainland/Macau to the left, Taiwan resident endorsement further on. Shops lead directly on to passport control counters—no line—five officers chat in a group as one scans my passport—quick, brief look my way—stick in label, returns to conversation as he hands back my passport. Exit door, baggage carousel. Exit door, hand in paperwork. Exit door, small passageway and around the corner... another exit door, meet and greet barricade. Exit barricade, into hall. Fight crowd to exit door, bus pickup zone...*

**PEOPLE MOVERS**

The layout of interior passenger areas of airport terminals tends to mimic the streets and squares of cities, complete with sidewalk cafés and corner stores, shopping boulevards and bland back streets, and small neighborhood parks such as is created by the indoor gardens at Singapore’s Changi Airport (SIN). David Rockwell’s plans for the Saarinen terminal at JFK drew as much on observations of urban design at work in New York as it did on the
pedestrian traffic of JFK; hence, his central design feature, a bleacher for pausing and watching others, “recalling the stoops of New York brownstones and the steps of the Met, terraced seating areas provide a comfortable place for passengers to relax and bring a taste of the city into the terminal” (Rockwell Group 2010). 10

Unlike city streets, however, arriving and departing passengers are generally organized between two different levels into separate streams of transfer, hold, and process. The trend in a narrow, long concourse is along it—towards a gate or away from it towards baggage claim and customs. 11 The structure of the human body gives us a directional bias, to be sure, a propensity to move forward to meet the world. We are faced and hinged to walk more comfortably forwards rather than backwards, and as Drew Leder notes (after Merleau-Ponty), “cultural variations are always played out upon the keyboard of possibilities presented by our corporeal structure” (Leder 1990, 3). As I discussed in Chapter 3, human walking is a regular rhythm of falls caught by another step forward, and this forward movement is amplified by the destination-oriented event of travel through the airport. Even in moments of waiting, we are generally journeying towards a defined place, and the macro-structure of the airport terminal echoes this forward processing movement.

Arriving HKG, Chek Lap Kok Airport, Cathay Pacific flight CX521, 08042010, 20.55 hours

Exit aerobridge through downhill tunnel to arrivals gate—small area, no seats—travellator ahead, turn left to immigration/transfer, airport employee struggles to push line of trolleys against the flow of people from our flight. Reach crossroads, three corridors arriving at a sign pointing to escalator down, hang back to look around, crowd sweeps through quickly, filters through narrow entry to escalator, and it is empty. There’s nothing to stay here for.

10 For more on interior terminal design and the affective or emotional experience of passengers, see Adey (2007, 2008, 2009) and Hall (2011).
11 See Fuller and Harley’s schematic diagrams of the airport’s processing streams from landside to airside and airside to landside (2004, 16-18). Fuller calls the airport “distribution architecture” which employs a protocol of “store and forward” (Fuller 2009, 64).
Another flight arrives from other direction: sweep, clump, funnel, pause.

Because of the large amount of waiting that is done in the airport, however, multidirectional pathways always intercede or intercept the intended traffic flow. During my fieldwork in the airport I spent hours observing and mapping the group choreography of people in departures and arrivals halls, at gates and check-in. I observed that while dominant pathways do exist there is always some quantity of people moving at a variation to the dominant speed and direction. Passengers and cleaners, airline staff and airport workers, occupy the same space with their different purposes. As much as the airport is a machine designed for efficient unending flow, clogs, breakdowns, delays, disruptions, changes of plan and direction happen. Perhaps not as much as flow does because, after all, when things work and our bag arrives or our flight leaves on time the machine recedes from view. A lack of flow, a traffic jam, or missed flight, on the other hand, alerts us to the amount of movement going on. Suddenly the network is seeable, graspable in a way not felt when we are moving through it. The grounding of Europe’s air traffic due to the eruption of Iceland’s Eyjafjallajökull volcano in 2010, and the domino effect of disruption to commercial travel across the world, perfectly demonstrates Peter Sloterdijk’s figurative antagonist to modernity’s incessant movement towards increased mobility.

The antagonist had a finger in the pie and made sure that general self-movement turned occasionally into general immobility. In such moments we become aware, although we want to deny it, that we have already been chased out of the paradise of modernity, and that in the future, we will have to learn the postmodern stop-and-go by the sweat of our brow. (2006, 39)

While the cessation of normal movement on a scale such as that caused by Eyjafjallajökull’s ash cloud is highly unusual, its opposite, the ideal smooth-sailing journey, also occurs so rarely as to be remarkable when it does. Go and stop, flow and jam actually operate together constantly, in fluctuating rhythm. Sweep, clump, funnel, pause. Clusters form,
dissolve and reform in constantly changing groups of affiliation (of my flight, my nation, my gender, my destination). Against the flow of people deplaning and proceeding down the concourse, there is always someone crossing to the newsagent or the toilet, having a nap or making a phone call, pacing around in circles to bide the time. There are too many contingencies and possible deviations to guarantee homogeneity.

SYD, Sydney Kingsford Smith International Airport, watching South African Airways SA7700 (codeshare with QF64) arrivals at Exit A/B, 27092010, 14.05 hours

You’re the voice try and understand it... Make a noise and make it clear... oh oh oh oooohhhh... oh oh oh oooohhhhh...

Forty minutes listening to low-level greatest hits. The heavy morning traffic has already passed through; every one or two minutes a person walks by on their way somewhere else (no flights arriving at this exit point).

Over ten or fifteen minutes other waiters have arrived; an almost imperceptibly slow accumulation of twenty or so sitting, standing back from barricade, a few at standing tables... slow trickle of people coming through gate—two, a two and a one, two+two+two... Attendant trolleys, cases and packages making lumpy and careful shapes. Bigger group of flight attendants bustles through.

Some slow and scan as they approach the edge of the barricade, composing themselves at the shoreline, before stepping away from the last shreds of where they came from and out into this new place. Some stream forth with purpose (solo travelers), returning from business maybe, already in the familiar routine—already arrived—going to the taxi rank (they know where it is), or out to long-term parking. A few come out and sit on chairs, check ongoing boarding passes, check the arrivals board, check the local time, get bearings. A young cleaner winds her way through occasional embraces, emptying bins. People phase in and phase out—those waiting or arriving—it is hard to track any one pathway or rhythm.

Excess is the essential character of Augé’s supermodernity: the feeling of an accelerating “history snapping at our heels” (1995, 30) and of time overloaded with events; a spatial
overabundance produced through extreme changes in scale brought by space travel, rapid transportations on earth and satellite broadcasts (34); and finally, a renewed status of the individual amongst increasingly unstable reference points for collective identification or what Augé calls "the individualization of references" (39). These three figures of excess lead Augé to designate a new type of contemporary place in his non-place. While I have argued already that our movements in and embodied experiences of airports involve a complicated entanglement of place and non-place, the overabundance of space and events are very much in evidence in my fieldwork analysis in this chapter. Temporal and spatial elongation, layering, rearrangement (or excess) have emerged as key ways to make meaning from these experiences. But as Peter Adey warns, we need to resist thinking of airports only as "time-spaces of excess, existing and enveloping any time and any place with a one-dimensional mono-version of the airport" (2009, 195). As becomes more evident in this section on people movements, individual and collective identifications and manoeuvres constitute an ever-changing patterning of terminal space. We experience our bodies as socially choreographed and organised both as individual bodies and as a body (cosmo)politic.

Everyday habitual routines shared amongst families, communities, societies, and nations are what form a regular rhythm to everyday life—what geographer Tim Edensor calls an "intuitive sense of synchronicity" (2010, 8). In this way we can conceive of culture as a patterning of pathways arrayed in spatial and temporal coordination and intersection, a rhythmic synchronisation of individual and collective practices. Edensor points out that "this ongoing mapping of space through repetitive, collective choreographies of congregation, interaction, rest and relaxation produce situated rhythms through which time and space are stitched together [...]" (ibid.). It is possible to conceive of the airport as one site of such repeated rhythms, but it is also for most travellers outside of the regular
rhythms of everyday life, in what I have called the "everyday plus." The picture of multiplicitous spatiality given so far in this chapter, of spaces formed by their relations, overlapping but not superimposed, heterogenous (even heterotopic), negotiating but not resolving difference, lived through both thinking and doing, real-and-imagined experience, inflects the means by which we navigate, experience and produce their rhythms. Edensor points out that discomfort generally arises when the rhythms of the day are disrupted, and within the rhythms of aeromobility disruption and discomfort go hand in hand with regular everyday movement.

Aeromobile events, movements, postures and rhythms are between and both the everyday and extra-daily. This is yet another critical thirding (both, and/also), and one which is fundamentally performative. The dancer approaches their performance on stage or in the studio with a certain practiced familiarity, at the same time as the act of performing is beyond the everyday. This is an acquired self-presencing described by Zarrilli as the "aesthetic" inner bodymind of the actor: "aesthetic in that it is non-ordinary, takes place over time, and allows for a shift in one’s experience of the body and mind aspects from their gross separation, marked by the body’s constant disappearance, to a much subtler, dialectical engagement of body-in-mind and mind-in-body" (Zarrilli 2004, 661).\[12\]

The heavily structured rhythms of the airport—passenger traffic processed through repeated open spaces, filtered into queues through narrow bottlenecks (security scanning, passport checking, plane boarding)—confront habitual rhythms of eating and sleeping (very base-level cultural rhythms). But this same rhythm of movements through the

\[12\] This is a third mode of bodily awareness and experience that Zarrilli adds to Drew Leder’s (1990) ecstatic/recessive bodies, in order to account for lived extra-daily experience such as occurs through actor training. His fourth mode is an “aesthetic outer body” which accounts for the actor’s body as “a site through which representation as well as experience are generated” (2004, 664; see also Zarrilli 2007). I discuss Leder’s concept of bodily disappearance more in the next chapter.
airport quickly becomes its own kind of normal. Discomfort, disruption, and deviation become their own kind of background rhythm.

Funnelling is repeated many times over in our travels in the airport—it is a practical, traffic-calming measure designed to slow crowds into manageable speeds and amounts. The fast and slow, spaciousness and squeeze, being with others and being alone repetition organises our bodies into a certain rhythm that is predictable yet assures us of progress through the machine. This is one of the great fears of modernity: that human beings will become imposed upon by the machinal, uniform, rhythmic order of industrial production; that they will become lost in the machine. As communications scholar Richard Rogers says in regards to the assembly line tactics of Taylorism and Fordism, “the means of control is no longer personal but structural, technical. The rhythmic control of production has been reified by its materialization in the machine” (Rogers 1994, 228, original emphasis). But this machinal conditioning also organises bodies into cohesive wholes: “an assembly line ‘gears’ living labor to its own rhythms and those rhythms are uniform. Workers must not only work as fast as the line; restrictions on their workspace and movements means that they must also work as slow as the line—only one pace is allowed” (ibid.).

As easy as it is to cast the airport as a rigid disciplinary space (for it is that too; see Hall 2011, Salter 2009), the pacing and direction of people movements resists complete uniformity. Becoming as one within a crowd happens but in brief, transitory ways; groups

---

13 This unitary rhythm can also occur in more positive, affirming instances of socialisation such as when an orchestra or band performs as one. Rogers gives an example from Mickey Hart, drummer from the Grateful Dead, who in leading a group of twenty-five children at a summer camp noted:
It’s interesting how long it takes people to entrain. These kids locked up after about twenty minutes. They found the groove, and they all knew it. You could see it in their faces as they began playing louder and harder, the groove drawing them in and hardening. It lasted about an hour. These things have life cycles—they begin, build in intensity, maintain, and then dissipate and dissolve. When it was all over everyone started laughing and clapping. They were celebrating themselves and they were also celebrating the groove. Although they had no words for it, they knew that they had created something that was alive, that had a force of its own, out of nothing but their own shared energy. (Hart in Rogers 1994, 225)
of belonging shift. If we are being conditioned to a certain aeromobile rhythm at the airport, it is to the shift itself, to shifting polyrhythmic fluidity.

At the "Meeters and Greeters Hall" at Chek Lap Kok, similar to the arrivals area at Sydney’s Kingsford Smith described above (and countless other airports), the uni-directional flow of people exiting customs is clearly identifiable. "Meeters” array themselves around the barricade, a waiting audience to the stream of travellers emerging, eyes blinking, through gateway upon gateway, not quite sure when they have finally stepped on stage. Meanwhile, airport workers pass discretely through an unmarked doorway, clocking in to work against the deplaning flow, and those neither being met or doing the meeting sleep slumped in plastic chairs or meander along circular, erratic routes. We perform with others constantly at the airport—we are rarely alone—but our bodily “togetherness” in terms of pathway or purpose is highly contingent and fluid. An ensemble forms and disperses just as quickly. Repetition and difference, familiar and foreign construct our collective and individual movements.

In the field of rhythm, certain very broad concepts nonetheless have specificity: let us immediately cite repetition. No rhythm without repetition in time and in space, without reprises, without returns, in short without measure (mesure). But there is no identical absolute repetition, indefinitely. Whence the relation between repetition and difference. When it concerns the everyday, rites, ceremonies, fêtes, rules and laws, there is always something new and unforeseen that introduces itself into the repetitive: difference. (Lefebvre 2004, 6, original emphasis)

This folded relationship between repetition and difference (as the "always something new and unforeseen that introduces itself into the repetitive") is not unlike Akram Khan's eruptive confusion generating new muscular information (pp. 125, 135) or Brian Massumi’s involuntary and elicited biogram, which always brings something new into the loop (p. 85). In all these cases new and old, reprise and deviation are not positioned as
In the In-between

binary opposites; rather, they are folded together in a thirdspace where place and non-place, mobility and dwelling can be thought and experienced together.

Crowd movements at the airport are polyrhythmic, fluctuating, temporary and changing; this may not be the kind of togetherness or sense of belonging that classical anthropology prizes amongst embedded, “grounded” communities, but neither is it necessarily a direct inverse of togetherness or belonging. It has none of the magic solidarity and equality perhaps of Victor Turner’s spontaneous *communitas*, which “breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality,” and involves “the whole of man in his relation to other whole men” (Turner [1969] 2008, 128 and 127). But neither is it the single-paced, human machine of Fordism, nor the total self-containment of Augé’s character Pierre Dupont (p. 196). We maintain aloneness in togetherness, aware of individual movements of self and others, as well as our (shifting) cohesiveness.

*Arriving KIX, Kansai International Airport, Cathay Pacific flight CX502, 28032010, 22.15 hours (approx. 1 hour late)*

Arriving on a late night flight from Hong Kong to Osaka my neighbours of the last few hours and I wake from light naps and together raise seat backs and stow luggage for landing. We emerge from the plane’s forward door coursing en masse down the aerobridge, down a flight of stairs and along a corridor—I am moving with the silent crowd and simultaneously being moved by it, carried along in its fast-moving flow. In its spontaneous formation, “the movement of some of them transmits itself to the others” (Canetti [1960] 2000 16).

We are not absolutely cohesive or evenly paced—someone to my left hurries along the outer edge and I sense a darting movement to my right. The current divides at a steel bollard sending different streams down the escalator and the stairs only to be reunited, but rearranged, faster moving through another corridor and then suddenly slowed, a crush, as we are squeezed through a body temperature scanning point. The crowd presses closer, we list a little left and right, and then I pop through into an enlarged space; others run past me towards the open counters for processing Japanese nationals while I alone, momentarily lost
(or at a loss) look for the foreign nationals’ queue. The crowd’s density has dissipated, its direction dispersed. I walk deliberately forward to join a different group snaking its way along person-by-person, painfully slow and stilted after the exhilarating rush.

The acts of assembly we perform, the groups and crowds we form are both and neither Canetti’s open or closed crowds. Boundaries and membership are limited (by flight number, by nationality), but assembly is impermanent. As in his open crowd, “just as suddenly as it originates, the crowd disintegrates” (Canetti [1960] 2000, 16): the shift we are making is rather between togetherness and aloneness, between mass transit and individual transitions. “The crowd is a body, the body is a crowd (of cells, of liquids, of organs)” (Lefebvre 2004, 42). This differentiation is not between discrete, stable categories however. Richard Rogers asserts, “an epistemology and ethics based on an understanding of the world as a fluid multiplicity, a becoming, would be characterized by the will to power: the affirmation of difference, multiplicity, change” (1994, 231). This is, he argues, fundamentally different than a world which in Aristotelian terms casts objects and truths as singular and stable, that insists something cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time, that poses A cannot be not-A (ibid.). The polyrhythmic, fluid, always-becoming understanding of the world Rogers describes is much like an “and/also,” thirddspace understanding, where the airport can be (in anti-Aristotelian terms) both place and non-place.

*Departing HKG, Chek Lap Kok Airport, Pacific Coffee stand, south end T1 check-in hall, 12042010, 15.15hours*

A great expanse of glass looks out onto a small parking lot of delivery vehicles a level below... sunshine, activity buzzes silently through glass. In the distance, mist cloaks the top of Lantau’s mountains, connecting roadway and bridge arching across water and out of sight.
Verdant mountains rising from the sea, shoreline wavering in and out shaping coves, tiny islands glimpsed periodically through shifting mists—this is quintessential “Hong Kong.” The T2 shopping mecca, the excellent won ton mien in the foodcourt—these are also very “Hong Kong.” Place performed through distinctive geographic and meteorological locatedness, through culinary practices.

But this is also the land of “not quite Hong Kong.” Looking through the glass I am there and not there, here and not here; the act of framing puts me somewhere else as much as it frames the view outside. In my mind’s eye, I pull back and see myself, at the end of a large glass box perched on the edge of an island surrounded by water. Visual hum. People walk and dawdle, occasionally run, stop, pause, join groups of twos and threes or more, break off again, filter along escalators and travelators, sit and slump and sleep. Signs light up, light filters through windows, light bounces off shiny floors. Movement this way and that. Speeds fast and slow. It is low-level white noise. Visual hum.

Moving and pausing are related bodily experiences in the airport system. Randomness and design, acceleration and stasis, here and there, now and then, chaos and order, repetition and difference, speed and stillness, nationalist and internationalist, not yet and not quite, intra and extra, macro and micro are all pairings which we move between. Edward Soja stresses that in thirdspace, “the original binary choice is not dismissed entirely but is subjected to a creative process of restructuring that draws selectively and strategically from the two opposing categories to open new alternatives” (1996, 5, original emphasis). The global airport’s culture of in-betweenness manifests in its position along the world’s mobility network to be sure, but it also arises through its very movement—its choreographies of thirdness. In the final passage of “Of Other Spaces,” Foucault suggests the boat is the heterotopia par excellence: “a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea [...]” (Foucault 1986, 27). The global airport is such a space, a place without a place, a place and a non-place. Increasingly the world’s high-volume hub
airports, situated at the shorelines of the planet’s oceans, are terraformers.\footnote{Many of the airports I visited as part of my fieldwork are terraformers, made from reclaiming land at the shoreline of Sydney’s Botany Bay (SYD), or building new islands or merging smaller ones in Tung Chong Bay (HKG) and Osaka Bay (KIX) as some examples. For more on terraforming see Fuller and Harley (2004, 102-109). The “floating” nature of airports can still be felt in those that are land locked, however, sitting, as terminals do, in the midst of a sea of tarmac, as planes dock at terminal edges.} Planes get bigger and passenger numbers increase, and airports likewise swell in size as they expand into the sea, artificially making islands and reshaping continental edges. Driving over the bridge from Chek Lap Kok (HKG) to the bigger island of Lantau, I glimpse a sign speed past by the side of the road: “Airport Control Area Ends.” But the real-and-imagined boundaries of the airport are watery. National display meets nowhere zone. Transition point dilutes into an expanded border of events. Togetherness forms and disperses.
Performing an othered-self

The previous chapter ended with a discussion of people movements: mass bodies/body masses moving through the internal gears of the airport machine. Despite the heavily regimented choreography of this bodily composition, I argued, disruption and deviation appear as the norm. They are part and parcel of the polyrhythmic choreography of the global airport. Variable rates, distributions, and proximities of bodily assembly play themselves out; we collect and disperse repeatedly just as border spaces, and the events of arriving/departing, repeat themselves in an expanding matrix of place and non-place. While the built environment of the terminal—its architecture and its processes of screening and monitoring—shapes passengers’ bodies in particular ways, conceiving of the airport through a thridspace discourse demonstrates that we in fact have a more fluid relationship to the real-and-imagined airport space.

An idea of the airport as heavily regimented and policed, a social space which disciplines bodies as state-sanctioned subjects has become prevalent in popular and academic imaginations, especially in the United States post-September 2001, as increasingly invasive...
security screenings and crowded checkpoints are regularly reported in the Western popular media. This notion is no doubt evidenced to some degree in every passage through immigration and security, arriving and departing; however, I contend that these bodily encounters with the state, with what might be called the disciplining apparatus of the airport, are at least in part notable because they are visceral bodily encounters. They press upon our habitual corporealities, bringing us in (at times too) close relation to other bodies and bringing our own body to the forefront of perception.

In an article examining performances of transparency in the face of the United States’ new and changing security protocols, Rachel Hall demonstrates how surveillance via behaviour detectives puts pressure on passengers to assert their innocence through performances of “‘genuine’ calm collectedness” (2011, 98). Such “Behaviour Pattern Recognition” strategies are premised on the very idea that, as psychologist Paul Ekman has said, “the body leaks because it is ignored” (Ekman in Hall 2011, 101) rendering its interiority legible through exterior behaviour. Hall argues that the very moment when we are most likely to be anxious (waiting to pass through security screening), is when there is most need to achieve a “collective appearance of a pacified public” (2011, 104) so that deviant behaviour can appear against a background of collective “normal.” But “normal” behaviour is rarely achieved in these aeromobile situations, either in collective terms or in relation to our habitual performances of self, just as our bodies are far from ignored.

One of the by-products of travel, and definitely romantic travel into the unknown, has always been a realignment of our relationship to a habitual body. This is in its simplest terms what could be called an intercultural experience: the familiar becoming foregrounded as the familiar, in relation to something that is different. That is, a visceral, embodied knowledge of difference.
Despite one's exhaustion, one's senses are fully awake, registering everything—the light, the signage, the floor polish, the skin tones, the metallic sounds, the advertisements—as sharply as if one were on drugs, or a newborn baby, or Tolstoy. Home all at once seems the strangest of destinations, its every detail relativised by the other lands one has visited. How peculiar this morning light looks against the memory of dawn in the Obudu hills, how unusual the recorded announcements sound after the wind in the high Atlas and how inexplicably English (in a way they will never know) the chat of the two female ground staff seems when one has the din of a street market in Lusaka still in one's ears.

One wants never to give up this crystalline perspective. One wants to keep counterpoising home with what one knows of alternative realities, as they exist in Tunis or Hyderabad. One wants never to forget that nothing here is normal, that the streets are different in Wiesbaden and Luoyang, that this is just one of many possible worlds. (de Botton 2010, 92-93)

As this passage on travel from de Botton demonstrates, however, casting our experiences of travel through the airport only through a lens of disciplinary practice is limited. It cannot account for the ways in which, for example, experiences of self and other or being in thirldspace may also be conditioning corporealities and subjectivities.

In 2004 Ross Harley and Gillian Fuller completed a multi-year study of airports with the publication of a book titled *Aviolopis*, containing essays on airport operations, biometrics and surveillance, and airports as terraformers. Fuller’s essay on biometrics in particular confronts issues of the aeromobile body, where flesh body is encoded into bio-data populating a digital database.1 Asking what kind of body is produced by this “network-transit space of pure connection” (Fuller and Harley 2004, 82), she notes that passengers walking the airport “are navigating the material embodiment of information architecture” (81) where “life becomes quite literally a pattern match” (83). This reduction of body and identity to code through biometric systems of border control, as well as through alpha-

---

1 Biometric systems of identification have been adopted in many airports over the last decade, with certain countries requiring biometric data to be embedded into passports. Fuller explains, “biometric systems realise visual representations, such as the complex pattern of striations in the iris or the contours of the palm, and render them as numeric representations (statistical variables)” (Fuller and Harley 2004, 83).
numeric identifiers used for credit card purchases and self check-in procedures, is an extension of observations made by Marc Augé on the contractuality of non-place.

Alone, but one of many, the user of a non-place is in contractual relations with it (or with the powers that govern it). He [sic] is reminded, when necessary, that the contract exists. One element in this is the way the non-place is to be used: the ticket he has bought, the card he will have to show at the tollbooth, even the trolley he trundles round the supermarket, are all more or less clear signs of it. The contract always relates to the individual identity of the contracting party. To get into the departure lounge of an airport, a ticket—always inscribed with the passenger’s name—must first be presented at the check-in desk; proof that the contract has been respected comes at the immigration desk, with simultaneous presentation of the boarding pass and an identity documents: different countries have different requirements in this area (identity card, passport, passport and visa), and checks are made at departure time to ensure that these will be properly fulfilled. So the passenger accedes to his anonymity only when he has given proof of his identity; when he has countersigned (so to speak) the contract. (1995, 101-102)

The technological changes of ten years between the publication of Augé and Fuller and Harley’s work has only highlighted the degree to which the body is implicated in a system (or contract) of code abstraction and pattern match.

The irony of biometrics, however, lies in this very abstraction of what is seemingly so intimate as the body itself. As Fuller points out, the binary of self and other is a ruthless feature of code but not necessarily of life, for “although the body (and its ability to move) is what seems most at stake on the threshold when access is either allowed or denied, it is this moment that the body seems most irrelevant to the abstraction of the biometric” (Fuller and Harley 2004, 84). This view of the body reinforces one of the central tenets of Aviopolis, that biometric systems are a version of the airport itself, a networked database in which people are reduced to bits of code. In the book’s accompanying photographs by Harley, people are largely absent; or alternatively, together with architectural space, are rendered as a patterning of line and intersecting surface. These vacant spaces, however, don’t call attention to the absence of human experience. They are not pictures of empty
space pregnant with the trace of a recent departure or the possibility of an imminent entrance. Rather, they point to Aviopolis' central thesis: the airport as data machine.\(^2\)

Comparing Aviopolis's images to another group of photos by Bulgarian-born artist Nedco Solakov from 2008's *Shifting Identities* exhibition at the Kunsthaus Zürich, and at other venues including the Zürich Airport, a very different aspect of affective and corporeal experience becomes apparent. With permission from airport authorities, Solakov spent an evening in the immigration hall at the airport performing what he calls "interventions" into the hall's processes of waiting and passing (Varadinis 2008). The photographic record of this performance documents his acknowledgements of anxiety and messages of reassurance, humorous scribbles which nudge or poke at the poker-faced authority of the nation-state. A blobby-headed figure, a scribble of a man with three heads and three passports, decorates an immigration official's cubicle. Another, a carefree stick figure on a swing sings, "I have no passport, la-la," flying in the face of black-and-white, pass or no pass rules of passport control.\(^3\)

While Solakov's pictures frame the close up in documentary snaps rather than the composed landscapes of Harley's *Aviopolis*, both are compositions of airport steel and glass, without many people in them. However, the body's organs and affects missing from Harley's photographs are evident in this small-scale graffiti—in the hand of the artist, the dialogue with passengers. These photos are the only record of Solakov's performance because, as a note posted to the exhibition's blog on 12 June shows, despite having permission from "the authorities" the inked messages and pictures were cleaned off by airport staff a few short hours later (Annie 2008). While there is no official statement from

\(^2\) Some of Harley’s images are posted on the project’s accompanying website, http://www.aviopolis.com/.

\(^3\) Photographs documenting Solakov’s performance are posted on the image sharing website Flickr at http://www.flickr.com/photos/11602103@N04/set/72157605577405675/.
the airport as to why this occurred so quickly (and unexpectedly according to the artist) and therefore little clue as to what “intervention” Solakov really made, the performance seems to have been more than a little scribble, perhaps discomposing habituated performances on both sides of the safety glass.

More recently Fuller has argued that while the aeromobile body is multiple and fluid, it is yet “on one level at least, also a body” (2009, 69). In relation to Deleuze and Guattari’s “Body without Organs” (1987), she describes the long-haul passenger as,

an economy class cyborg loosening the pull of gravity, seeking connection and moving into new dimensions and arriving] shattered—a laggy mess. The rapture of imminent release always involves capture of some kind. In order to travel, in order to deterritorialize, to move in a way that a human body normally couldn’t, one must first become the most basic of bodies—a body with organs—a body that runs on metabolic time. This body needs sleep, food, air and a modicum of physical activity to keep the blood pumping. The limits of this body form its locus operandi; it can be sniffed, patted down, swiped, looked at and through. It can also be seated, routed and sequenced. With or without organs a body needs a body. (Fuller 2009, 70)

While Fuller’s analysis of the networked body is compelling and suggestive of the complex ways in which bodies are being constituted through experiences of airport technology, body-as-data as well as her sniffed and patted body above are bodies-as-objects, and as such give us a very specific and partial portrait of embodiment at the airport. More than becoming code, people—with bodies—populate the airport’s spaces and undergo fleshy, bodily experiences (boredom, dehydration, sickness, anxiety, fear, physical and emotional discomfort and excitement, love affairs, familial reunion).

As with his distinction between anthropological place and non-place, Augé makes clear a distinction between passenger and traveller, one who is defined by destination versus route respectively (1995, 107); however, as in the previous chapter’s discussion of in-between space, the practice of moving through the airport calls into question that these are
wholly bounded and isolated subject positions. This chapter muddies the passenger/traveller binary further, using four specific experiences from my fieldnotes to question whether embodiment and disembodiment might be related experiences, examining inter- and intracorporeal experiences of travel and transit. The notion that some kind of in-between subjectivity arises out of our experiences of the airport and air travel is the main issue at stake, an interstitial embodiment occurring at the moment when/where self and other meet.

**WAITING**

A lot of being at the airport is waiting. Indeed the modern commercial plane, big and small, is simply another variation on the waiting room: through the night or under cloud cover, a simulated flight progress graphic on Channel One is the only indication that distance and time are progressing when midflight. When and where fold together into cross-referenced navigational devices, circadian rhythms attuned to one place-time, digestion to another. While in the cockpit of every plane it is always Greenwich, London, for the passenger in the plane’s cabin as well as the airport’s terminal an inter-time exists.\(^4\) Time zones are markers of geography really, and become abstracted associations of location in transit. The everyday bodily patterns of eating, sleeping, and working are suspended or slide out of alignment, becoming ways to pass time rather than markers of time. We make arbitrary choices to set our watches to a departure or destination time zone, but the place of waiting actually accumulates multiple times: departure time and destination time, as well as a countdown time of the waiting itself.

\(^4\) The aviation industry uses Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), similar within sub-seconds to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), a fact I learned from a tour guide from Sydney Kingsford Smith’s (SYD) Tarmac Tours as we sat at the far end of the North-South runway, tuned in on the bus radio to chatter between air traffic control and landing aircraft.
**NRT, Narita International Airport, departures hall, 08042010, time unknown**

Usual habit = aim for as little waiting time as possible/comfortable. That is, regular aeroporting is a practice of fine-tuning, fine-timing.

Even during long layovers and unexpected delays I check watches and clocks, and for news of departure time and gate changes. I make intricate calculations of distance and speed: if we make the next light I’ll still get there with half an hour to spare. If I get in this security check queue, I’ll bypass that family with all the bags and get through in half the time. Buy water here, read mags, 20 minutes. Walk down concourse, find toilet, choose place for snack, 25 minutes. Eat snack, look at shops, 40 minutes. Walk to gate, check expected departure time, re-order carry-on bag, 15 minutes. Brisk walk, 20 minutes. Check departures board, 3 minutes. The ethnographic-observer-me is far removed from the stresses of spending time, and being on time.

There are two very different kinds of passenger waiting here at the airport. The process of idle waiting is one of projection toward what you see, a spectating behaviour. Airports and aeroplanes are well organised to accommodate this kind of waiting through signs and screens displaying coded information and entertainment, as well as banked seating strategically placed for people watching, and shops where browsing far outnumbers buying. This spectating invokes a kind of disembodied drifting practice in which you are continually pulled back to scanning the departures information board.

But in anxiety, waiting is of the body. An acute awareness of your physical body. An uncomfortable, sweaty awareness of time passing too slow or too fast.

**In transit, HKG, Chek Lap Kok Airport, departure gate 33, 28032010, 16.20 hours**

Flight delayed due to mechanical problem with plane. All seats at the gate are full; I perch on the edge of a planter box. Nearby I hear,

“How many more minutes? I’m going to dieee!”—a six or seven-year-old boy waits with his mum, dad and baby sister. He shakes and jiggles uncontrollably with the pain of this slow death.
One of the key principles of Foucault’s heterotopia, as I pointed out in the previous chapter, is that it juxtaposes in one place, several sites that are themselves incompatible (Foucault 1986, 25). Here we see the same can be said for time. Heterotopology’s fourth principle, of what Foucault calls heterochrony, states that the heterotopia reaches its fullest function “when men [sic] arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time” (26). He gives the example of the cemetery, where the end of life and quasi-eternity of death are co-sited, as well as the library which indefinitely accumulates time, and conversely the festival which is fleeting and transitory, “absolutely temporal” (ibid.). In terms of passenger experiences of time at the airport (including during flight), a “break” with habitual, usual, or traditional time is well illustrated. Multiple times—in the senses of time zones, timekeeping, as well as of time passing—are tenuously held together. More than the heterochronic break with the traditional, however, I suggest that the above fieldnotes highlight two additional aspects of time experience at the airport.

The first concerns the degree to which the body, not just place, is implicated in heterochrony. Secondly, when we begin to be attuned to the complex of bodily rhythms/patterns occurring, we come to realize the “break” is not necessarily absolute. That is to say, the unusual, the extra-daily, becomes familiar, another kind of bodily pattern at the same time as it is different, both set apart from the everyday and also everyday-like in its mundanity or familiarity. The small boy at HKG for whom the affective torture of a delayed flight became evidenced in a corporeal convulsion was perhaps new to this pattern of waiting; but as an adult used to travel, my response was an experienced, grooved-into-habit bodily awareness of being-in-waiting that was both a return to and break with habitual *embodiments*. This is similar to the idea of a habitual non-habitual moving I discussed in Chapter 4, in regards to dance practice and Akram Khan specifically. While not entirely comfortable and therefore exceptional from the many times in everyday life that
my body goes about its tasks unnoticed by me, this aeromobile time-passing is a practiced, habitual non-habitual way of being. Lefebvre notes, “it is only in suffering that a particular rhythm breaks apart, modified by illness” (2004, 27), and it is common within embodiment theory (phenomenology particularly) to consider bodies in illness or suffering in order to arrive at conclusions about “normal” embodiment. Through rhythmanalysis, Lefebvre suggests that we can attend to the body as we do in illness—through technique—and it is in this vein that we can think of the aeromobile body, or the dancing and audio-walking bodies. That is to say these embodiments are not pathological or abnormal, and yet they are occasions in which bodies call attention to themselves, techniques for setting the everyday in relief. They are bodies that hover between everyday and extra-daily in thirddspace ways of neither/nor and both/also.

SPEED AND OTHER SPATIO-TEMPORAL DISTURBANCES

Departing NRT, Narita International Airport, Cathay Pacific flight CX521, Gate 77, 08042010, 17.00 hours

Hard to take notes. Cramped, stuffy, sore back. Nauseating smell of jet fuel, sit still, waiting. Hot, my seat pushed from behind; other people are too close. Bump as the plane pulls away from the gate, baby crying, flight attendants are rushing to cross-check doors, paper rustling, people reading, talking.

The tremble of our taxi across the tarmac sputters to a barely moving crawl, an anti-climactic beginning to our ascent into the atmosphere. We have joined the take-off queue at the far end of the runway. We wait.

Without warning the gentle rumble of taxi-ing becomes a huge accelerating roar: pressed back in seat, eardrums expand painfully, stomach and diaphragm drop and rebound. Oddly I think about how yogis move their abdominal organs around at will in order to achieve certain asanas; and how it must mean there is extra space in there not normally occupied.
At what point, where and when, does this take-off become the flight? What is the transition point? It is imperceptible really when this becomes that; change is only registered in retrospect. Oh, we've been doing this for a while; I guess we stopped doing that.

The seat belt light blinks off.

As historian Joyce Chaplin shows in her research on early modern circumnavigators, traveling around the globe used to be a risky and painful exercise. Long periods at sea killed 60-80% of circumnavigators on all voyages from 1519-1707, before it was discovered that a little Vitamin C could keep scurvy at bay (Chaplin 2010). In the age of jet travel, flying around the world is accomplished comparatively painlessly, however bodily effects of globe-traversing speed are still major factors contributing to an aeromobile embodiment. Sitting on an uneventful flight our bodies are cramped and made aware of their finiteness—this is the body foregrounded not through sickness but mild discomfort, through the painful slowness of such high speed.

The trope of ongoing corporeal rearrangement is present in the mass choreographies of people moving through the Air World network described at the end of the previous chapter, but it is also a feature of the intracorporeal moves we perform; our experiences of our bodies in space and in relationship to themselves, our sensations of our movements, proprioception and kinaesthetics. In some sense an opposite corporeal experience to waiting, extreme speed is another experience which upsets our habitual relationship to body. Jet travel is quite literally a global experience: we experience the globe visually, the cusp of the earth's surface partially glimpsed through tiny plane windows; but we also experience the globe somatically, through bodily rearrangements in space-time. Two

---

5 Chaplin does point out that jet lag and Space Adaptation Syndrome are uncomfortable, even painful bodily inflictions affecting air and space travelers respectively (Chaplin 2010), however, comparative mortality rates in these more recent occurrences of circumnavigation make them relatively easier.
particular bodily experiences, jet lag and turbulence, are good examples of how air travel recomposes relations between bodies and spaces both big and small, planetary and cellular, extra- and intra-corporeally.

Somewhere over the Pacific Ocean, Cathay Pacific flight CX521, 08042010, time at destination approx 1830 hours

“Please return to your seats and observe the fasten seatbelt sign. We are passing through an area of turbulence.”

Turbulence is:
Rearrangement of insides
Appearance of internal organs and structures
Stomach up, body down
Pressure on diaphragm, pressure on oesophagus
Inside and outside edges of the body meeting
Loss of control of body parts in space, in relation to each other, and in relation to other people
Rearrangement of outsides

Nikos Papastergiadis notes in connection to his socio-cultural work on migration that the “flows of migration across the globe are not explicable by any general theory,” but that, “in the absence of structured patterns of global migration with direct causes and effects, turbulence is the best formulation for the mobile processes of complex self-organisation that are now occurring” (2000, 4). Papastergiadis employs the trope of turbulence in order to reconfigure previous mechanistic models of migration, but more than this, because it emphasises the complex “interrelationships between the energy for movement and the effects on its surroundings” (5). His central argument is systemic in scope; he is arguing for a view of migration and cultural difference as constituting forces of modernity, rather than a burden on or addition to the existing social system. However it is interesting to reflect on how a system of air flows, seemingly chaotic but in fact a “hierarchy of eddies and vortices
inside more eddies and vortices” (Manuel de Landa in Papastergiadis 2000, 5), might be composing a relation of body, space, and time through events of air travel. For my purposes, Papastergiadis’s claim for a turbulent view of migration prioritises two key issues: how the experience of movement itself is producing modes of belonging (5), and that displacement is not a transitory moment but an ongoing process (13). In terms of an aeromobile embodiment, I suggest that turbulence is more than a geographically locatable weather pattern that we pass through, but a kinaesthetic relation of and to body and space that reconfigures and challenges the stability of categories such as inside and outside (of the body), me and my (body), (body as) subject and object.

*KIX, Kansai International Airport, Nikko KIX Hotel, Aeroplaza, 29032010, 07.15 hours*

Roll over and feel the edge of the pillow, wake with a start, vertigo, I’m falling. Open eyes, room is dark, murmur of talking in the hallway. Run bath.

Read catalogue of presents from around the world available for purchase in the terminal: chocolates from Belgium, chocolates from France, chocolates from America, sausages from Germany, Swiss army knife, smoked ham from Spain, stuffed panda bear from China, maple syrup from Canada, chocolates from Malaysia... browse every page while soaking.

Open block-out curtain to expanse of empty concrete, weeds, gravel, occasional truck passing on ring road, drilling rig?, water, Honshu far off across the bay.

The out-of-body-ness or displacement of international air travel is both macro-corporeal (we’ve travelled inconceivable distances at great speeds) and micro-corporeal (jetlag, dehydration and sleep deprivation changing body chemistry and the workings of our organs, to name a few). Where are we mid-air? Destination and the place just left pull at us through a thick temporal fog, causing what the science fiction writer William Gibson described as a kind of soul delay: “her mortal soul is leagues behind her, being reeled in on
some ghostly umbilical down the vanished wake of the plane that brought her here [...].
Souls can’t move that quickly, and are left behind, and must be awaited, upon arrival, like lost luggage” (2003, 1).

Drew Leder’s work on human bodily experience as absent, forgotten or obscured is a useful theoretical touchstone here. His phenomenological approach, focussing on the body in health and in illness, helps us to develop fleshy, visceral analysis of an embodiment based on small experiences of discomfort or disorientation. Leder’s project in *The Absent Body* is an original challenge to Cartesian dualistic thinking, examining ways in which scientific, and even empirical and phenomenological understandings of the body actually contribute to the persistent ongoing influence of Cartesian ontology, by examining what he calls “corporeal absence” (1990, 1). Among Leder’s central claims is that the ubiquitous nature of bodily presence is in fact paradoxical: “while in one sense the body is the most abiding and inescapable presence in our lives, it is also essentially characterized by absence” (ibid.). While the lived body is the ground of experience, Leder argues that it tends toward self-concealment, disappearing when functioning unproblematically, or going unnoticed in its internal depths through its sensorimotor focus out toward the world.

Leder’s concept of presence-absence in what he terms the *dys-appearing body* describes those moments when our bodies most strongly come to our attention “as the very absence of a desired or ordinary state, and as a force that stands opposed to the self” (1990, 4). The dys- prefix is used by Leder to distinguish a particular mode of disappearance in which the body actually appears as thematic focus through its dys- state—through pain or illness (84). While Leder notes that dys-appearance is not confined to pathological states and can be evidenced through situations of, for example, strong hunger or thirst where normal physiology reaches its functional limits (ibid.), the emphasis on a dysfunctional body or
body at breakdown is not unproblematic for travel experiences like turbulence and jetlag that seem quite banal, or part and parcel of flying for the frequent flyer at least.

Nevertheless, the dys-appearing body gives us ways to think through the relation of self-other, or more to the point I suggest, the self “othered” or an “othered-self.” This experience of one’s othered-self is key to my theorisation of interstitial embodiments like those evident in the audio walks and hybridised dance movement discussed in earlier chapters, and also in the dys-tanced, dys-placed (to follow Leder) corporealities of air travel and the airport. Leder argues disappearance is a central feature of embodiment in general, that the body’s absence is possible because of its intersubjective and inter-spatial nature: “it is perpetually outside itself, caught up in a multitude of involvements with other people, with nature, with a sacred domain” (4-5). In accordance with Merleau-Ponty, Leder stresses that being both subject and an object available to the gaze of others is intrinsic to lived embodiment, that the self and other are intertwined (6). My own body made to feel foreign (away from me) is, Leder argues, an expression of an already existing relation of self and other, contained within lived embodiment.

**SELF-SELF DISTANCE**

The globe-spanning, high-speed distances made attainable through jet travel incite experiences of the air (sickness, turbulence, jetlag) and call attention to our body’s movements with itself. But it is the move *between* body as subject and object that characterises this aeromobile choreography, rearranging the body’s borders in relation to itself and the world around it.
departing HKG, Chek Lap Kok Airport, Cathay Pacific flight CX101, 12042010, 23.55 hours

Boarding pass in hand, line up tight, quiet, scan, pass, walk down bridge, 54H again, settle in to sleep. Have been in the airport for eight hours.

Strange snack/dinner is served (it is past midnight, not hungry). Watch movie: can’t quite hear due to plane noise; can’t quite see on little screen. Eyes droopy. Disturbed sleep—turn this way, adjust the other. Get up to stretch on floor; stand hunched under overhead lockers, not quite able to stand.

Cold... Keep trying to piece together scarf and thin blanket to cover the cold bits, freezing night air penetrating the cracks around the emergency exit door. I place the back of my hand flat against the plastic shell of the plane’s interior. In seeping coldness I see the far-reaching darkness of outer space.

At some point I realise rattling breakfast is coming. Drag awake, heavy beyond heavy, surrounding objects an incredible distance away. Where is my arm—my hand?—to reach for tray table, adjust seatbelt. I rub dry eyes too vigorously, a misjudgment of where they are. Compose limbs and torso into sitting, but it is difficult. I concentrate and make deliberate movements, my physical body seemingly out of alignment, just out of reach, a distance filled by the loud hum of the plane. Unnatural time to be awake. Just bear it, get through it.

As I stated previously, Leder’s dys-appearing body provides a useful theorisation of self and other, body as subject and object, as a feature of lived embodiment. But the core notion of dys-appearance as an absence of normal function reaches a limit in direct applicability to the experiences of an othered-self I am describing as a part of aeromobile embodiment. Dys-appearance presupposes a universal, “normal” embodiment in which bodily appearance is a sign of dysfunction. But we can easily think of numerous bodies for which bodily attendance is the norm. Jaana Parviainen notes that in the case of cerebral palsy, for example, “the range and the fluidity and predictability of muscle movement is severely restricted, so that in the course of reaching for a coffee cup, a muscle spasm might cause
one to reach through, instead of to, thus knocking the cup over” (2002, 17). Parviainen argues that such an action should hardly be understood as the person not knowing where the cup is or not knowing what actions are required to reach it.

I would add that in this example, we could also imagine that the subjective-objective awareness and effort of hand and arm reaching for the cup, as well as the muscle spasm that causes it to be knocked over, is not a relation of break down or dysfunction but of “normal” embodiment for this person’s body. The assumption of normative human embodiment is a failing writ large in the history of phenomenological discourse on embodiment (and I discussed the existing critique of the universalism of Husserl and Heidegger in particular in my introduction). Merleau-Ponty writes, in connection with acquiring a habit, that to “understand is to experience the harmony between what we aim at and what is given, between the intention and the performance—and the body is our anchorage in the world” ([1962] 2002, 167). In this formulation, any discord between intention and performance is made to be dyscord and dysharmony, a problematic that I have highlighted repeatedly in this dissertation. Akram Khan’s unintentional eruption of “confusion” might have been a performance that escaped his habitual ways of moving, but the in-between moves also escape either “normal” or “abnormal” classification.

In addition to the Greek root meaning of dys- (bad, hard, or ill) as preserved in contemporary English words such as dysfunction or dyskinesia, Leder argues that his notion of dys-appearance also draws upon associations with the Latin root dys- (in its archaic spelling), meaning away, apart or asunder (1990, 87). It is through this association that he conceives of times of dys-appearance as a more neutral “awayness of the body from its ideal or normal state,” or “away, apart, asunder, from itself” (ibid., original emphasis). The spatio-functional and temporal changes of sickness or malfunction exemplify this
separation from a habitual body, but Leder concedes that such heightened body awareness can also occur through normal phases of life such as pregnancy, puberty and ageing (89). Acknowledging that it is potentially dangerous to align such situations to dys-appearance in the Greek sense (ibid.), it is in the Latin meaning that a less negatively cast notion of the term can be utilised, incorporating instances of neutral or even pleasurable coenesthesias (91). Normal here could be anyone’s normal, habitual body. However, Leder’s dys-appearance still poses—problematically I suggest—that habitual bodies and bodily awareness are mutually exclusive.

Air travel is for some people a highly dysfunctional bodily experience. The discomfort of commercial aeroplane travel—especially for those in the back of the plane (and those nearing two meters in height as I am)—makes our bodies appear to us (as away from us) through the dehydrating lack of humidity in the cabin’s recycled air, through joint aches and pins and needles brought about by prolonged sitting, through the loud relentless hum of engine noise, through our tiredness due to upset sleep schedules or the duration of our journeys. This epitomises Leder’s mode of presencing as a “loss of normal functional synergy,” a “momentary body” growing apart from a habitual one (90). But while the pocket of turbulence the plane flies through might be transitory, the turbulent reconfiguration of space and body that we experience through flying is an ongoing process. In other words, I suggest, in the airport (or in the plane) we dys-appear again and again—we are othered again and again—and this practiced movement becomes, through repetition, an/other kind of habitual body without erasing the distance between strangeness and familiarity, self and an othered-self.

At the beginning of this chapter, I postulated that intercultural experience was an embodied awareness of the distance between the familiar and the different. Intercultural
practice has been characterised by distance—distance between self and other—and the making of cultural identity as a process of movements towards and away from the other—bridging difference and similitude, the familiar and the foreign (Papastergiadis 2000, 98).

The last twenty years of debate on the complex nature of cultural difference (particularly discourses of hybridity and thardspace) has taught us, however, not to presuppose these two positions are either fixed or oppositional. The distance between us and them formed out of these oppositional locations is traditionally posed as the gulf which intercultural productions seek to bridge. If we marry Leder’s phenomenological observations of a body’s capability to be “away from itself” with the notion of cultural distance, however, it becomes apparent that the notion of self-other contained in lived embodiment has important implications for how we conceive of intercultural practice. That is, we can begin to conceive of an intercultural/interstitial embodiment which is a bodily awareness of distance; distance between self and self, or between self and an othered-self.

Distance between self and an othered-self is not one to be bridged in the same way as between us and them, through a mediating intercultural act. Embodying the gap, rather than locating a meeting point, is what is involved. Self and other are no longer situated on oppositional poles, but are negotiated within the body. This begins to sound like notions of contested thardspace, and Nikos Papastergiadis reminds us that a metaphor of hybridity only functions critically when the dual forces of movement and bridging, displacement and connection operate together, and where there is “a consciousness of this oscillation” (2000, 15). “Consciousness” is a word that Leder would rather postulate as “awareness” in order to avoid reiterating Cartesian dualism. This point bears emphasis: the appearance of our body in what Leder calls dys-appearance is not a matter of mind over body but a feature of having a body. We are all capable of bodily awareness. The airport and associated aeroplane travel present occasions for the body to appear and disappear, becoming object,
subject and object again in oscillation. I suggest that through repeat performance, we
develop an attuned awareness of this in-between move as part of a habitual “transit” body.
What I am calling self-self distance manifests in the airport through experiences of high-
speed travel outlined above, where an ongoing and repeated engagement with body as
subject-object and self-other promotes our very awareness of our movement across this
distance. Self-self distance also manifests more explicitly through social performance,
through minute slippages of normative cultural performance called into awareness at
moments we must with utmost felicity perform/identify ourselves within the airport
system.

SCANNING AND BEING SCANNED

To return to where this chapter began, let us consider border crossing at the airport. For
Fuller and Harley (2004), the process of being identified and pattern matched through
biometric scanning demonstrates our corporeal involvement in a networked reality. While
biometric systems are increasingly common in airports today, by and large the event of
passing through immigration still involves an intersubjective experience.

*Departing SYD, Sydney Kingsford Smith Airport, departures hall, 28032010, 06.45
hours*

*Low level muzak*

*Chatter hum*

*Thump th-thump—bags hit conveyor belt in irregular rhythm*

*Around corner to passport control, through sliding door, quickly shuffled into queue snacking
left or right, no dawdling.*
I front up to a man with a big moustache. My "Morning" gets a curt nod, passport placed on scanning machine, I glance down at a small label on the machine: it is called the “iAuthenticate.”

He too is a scanning device: I look at his face and he looks at mine, but what is he looking at? I’m seeing—just a person—searching for—a glimmer of humour—recognition that we are humans together perhaps? But what is he looking at? It is a looking back that I cannot place. His looking evades my look in return. He is scanning me, scanning my photo in my passport, my list of exits and entrances, scanning for a pattern match?

I can’t help worrying that the match will fail—that I am not me after all. Potential presence and absence flickers under the blue-green light of a buzzing florescent tube.

Performance scholar Sophie Nield poses the border as a fundamentally theatrical space. Like Foucault’s heterotopia of the stage, it is a space in which multiple places (real, fictional and imagined) come into being. In so doing, Nield argues for an expanded notion of the “theatrical” which applies to the way in which identity, space and appearance work together to produce encounters at the border; she states that the border space, “being constituted through the moment of performance or event, is reciprocally inhabited by ‘fictional,’ yet clearly present, people, who are only functional as long as the event, or play, or encounter, lasts” (Nield 2006, 64). Invoking the opening lines of Hamlet—“Who’s there?”—as an iconic theatrical moment, Nield poses it as one in which representational and material body are called upon to present themselves, a situation demanding a specific kind of appearance. In this moment, “the presentation of ‘character’ requires a figure to operate simultaneously as both what they are (the material physical body of the performer) and also what they are representing themselves to be (their “role” within the performance). This is theatrical appearance” (ibid.). The issue is not, according to Bernardo’s line in Hamlet, whether a person is there. Nield stresses, “a person is clearly there. The issue is precisely ‘who is there?’” (ibid.). This “double exposure” is the moment
at which the subject is produced, called upon to be its “you;” the subject is required to be both present and represented (65).

This recalls Judith Butler's work on gender as social performance, which I have discussed at several points already. In her work on gender performativity, Butler critiques the way in which gender is understood as reified or natural (aligned with sex), instead arguing that the body is not just factic materiality, but a materiality that bears meaning through the stylised repetition of acts (1988, 519). Following Simone de Beauvoir's assertion that "one is not born, but, rather, becomes a woman" (in ibid., original emphasis), Butler claims, "one is not simply a body, but, in some key sense, one does one's body" (521). Cultural identity, Butler argues, is a performative accomplishment, instituted through the mundane dramatization or reproduction of bodily gestures and movements. Her use of the word “act” in a theatrical sense to describe these bodily movements challenges what she calls the “individualist assumptions underlying the more restricted view of constituting acts within phenomenological discourse” (525). Like a script, an act pre-exists its particular performance, and the performing of identity is a re-enacting or embodying of a "legacy of sedimented acts" (523). However, Butler insists that as a performative act, gender is not merely a passive playing out of pre-given cultural relations already inscribed upon the body, nor is it merely individual choice. As a theatrical script may be enacted in different ways, “so the gendered body acts its part in a culturally restricted corporeal space and enacts interpretations with the confines of already existing directives” (526). In the repetition of acts through time—its very performativity—rests the possibility of a “different sort of repeating” (520), including a range of alternate and changing identities as well as the dissolution of cultural identity as reified.

The being and doing of one's body, as Butler articulates, is closely related to the twinned
representational and material nature of Nield’s theatrical appearance. And the construction of Butler’s sentiment, that “one is not simply a body,” but also, “does one’s body” (1988, 521), is interestingly read in relation to the previous discussion of body as subject-object.⁶

The self-self distance I describe, an attuned awareness and embodiment of the gap between self and an othered-self, is here shown to be a possible feature of cultural performance, or being and doing a cultural body. More specifically however, the performance of self at the border is an event which calls attention to the very performativity of self, and the possible distance between our usual constituting set of bodily gestures and movements and this particular enacting of them. The possibility of an inadequate enacting—or “infelicitous” or “unhappy” to use Austin’s terminology in regards to performative utterances ([1962] 2003, 14)—seems highly possible. As Nield suggests, infelicitous performance can occur when representational documents (travel visas, citizenship paperwork) do not align with the “who” that is presented. This occurs in cases of political asylum where, in Australia for example, there is a history of asylum seekers arriving without proper paperwork who are then “disappeared” from social view into detention centers for processing. We can also imagine cases where infelicitous gender performance—in the sense of a mismatch between what is represented (the male/female passport designation and photo) and who is presented (a non-binary or non-matching identity)—constitute yet another type of failure to appear.

As a dual citizen, I have encountered more mundane occasions of infelicitous appearance when travelling. Not having the correct proof of citizenship, or not satisfactorily explaining

---
⁶ This does not go unremarked by Butler: she is unsettled by the “unfortunate grammar” which suggests, “a disembodied agency preceded and directed an embodied exterior” and instead claims that the “I” of its body should be read as a mode of embodying (1988, 521).
In a multinational residency situation, appearances for which I have had to spend hours in immigration interviews, or waiting for further identity checks. This kind of breakdown in “theatrical appearance” at the border, both mundane and more serious (as in the examples in the paragraph above), has real impact on how we are, as subjects, called upon to perform ourselves within a state-sanctioned system of border control. It is not, however, my primary focus here: rather, as in the rest of this dissertation, I want to call attention to the bodily awareness or corporeal experience involved in this performance, whether felicitous or not. I contend that, whether trying to knowingly subvert the system or follow the rules, the threat of disjuncture between the being and doing of ourselves at the border creates a lived space of dys-placement (in the Latin sense of dys- as away, apart, or asunder) in our performance of self. This space opens up between what is normally “natural” and that which is perceived as constructed, but which in this case is both and not both at the same time: an oscillation between, rather than a departure from, some “normal” null-point. Just as in the subject-object awareness brought about through experiences of jet lag and turbulence, this is another kind of self-self distance, embodied through a heightened awareness of our own body “being/doing” cultural performance.

**Arriving YVR, Vancouver International Airport, international arrivals hall, time unknown**

At some point I’m sorted into a long line for foreign nationals… inching back and forth through the switchback line I compose myself into best-behaviour mode: don’t draw attention, keep up with the line, have paperwork ready, flatten long-haul hair, don’t look like terrorist / visa over-stayer / smuggler etc. As a dual national, I am momentarily confused— which passport to present? Which, in this context, is more acceptable or innocuous, or more convincingly me?

Move incrementally left then right, weighing up the documents in my right hand.
This in-between identity manifests in a feeling of illegitimacy when confronted by the binary of pass or no-pass. I did spend the first twenty years of my life carrying an alien registration card, and its extraterrestrial nomenclature has left a mark.

My mixed race, transnational history has particular repercussions for the creation of an in-between subjectivity and embodiment. However, as Leder reminds us, dys-appearance is a feature of lived embodiment more generally: we are all capable of experiencing our bodies as self and other. In stressing the intersubjective nature of embodiment, Leder notes that physical and cultural difference from others can also bring about bodily dys-appearance: “I most easily forget my body when it looks and acts just like everyone else’s” (Leder 1990, 97). He gives the hypothetical example of coming face-to-face with a New Guinea tribesman (the other of others) and the awareness this brings to his own dress and appearance. In contrast to Leder, coming face-to-face with an immigration official or a scanning machine at a border crossing brings me face-to-face with my own cultural performance. Nield concurs: “as you move from one state to another, you ‘play’ yourself, and hope you are convincing” (Nield 2006, 65). This is a bringing to awareness of my body to me not because it differs from everyone else’s, but because of its possibility of differing from itself; an embodiment of my own potential for difference, or in Butler’s words, a different sort of repeating.

This is an embodiment of in-betweenness that delineates a distance contained within a doubled self, between a material self and performative self, a self and an/other self. Just as Leder is careful to maintain that not every experience of the body can be classified as dys-appearance, he maintains that the essential characteristic is that of heightened bodily awareness (1990, 91). The in-between subjectivity I have been exploring is characterised not just by distance but by an intracorporeal awareness of the distance between self and other, experienced through corporeal performance. Awareness of my body's
performativity, the repeated oscillation between body appearing and disappearing, being and doing, sameness and difference, self and other, becomes an embodiment of that distance, that gap or interstice. In its repetition, a flickering presence-absence, it brings its own kind of familiarity, muddying Leder’s hierarchy between the habitual and momentary body. I cannot think of any word to describe this embodied distance other than *intercultural*. As opposed to reified cultural bodies meeting at the “zero point” of Peter Brook’s intercultural stage, however, intercultural here describes an embodied in-betweenness where self and other resist reification and are revealed as unfixed, intracorporeal potentialities of performance.
Conclusions

I began this dissertation by claiming that its subject is intercultural performance. Rather than in the sense of a recognisable genre of theatrical performance, however, I proposed that these two words, their attendant discourses, and their proposed frameworks for thinking about the world, could usefully challenge assumptions contained within each other. Just as this dissertation has promoted the in-between as its general organizing theme, the construction “intercultural performance” itself creates an in-between in its coming together, and it is this gap that I have argued needs reappraisal.

More explicitly, the gap I have articulated is a blind spot wherein lies the experiential and embodied process of performing—the lived spaces of intercultural bodies. That is to say, I have argued for a rethinking of the embodiment of in-betweenness as a kind of performing, and for this to be thought of via fundamental relations to being a body in space and time. While the late twentieth century corporeal and spatial turns in the humanities and social sciences have cried out for scholarship which reinstates bodies as central epistemological tools and theoretical concerns, the corporeal practices reinforced by the academic
institution (observing, thinking, writing, publishing) ironically engages with human corporeality in such limited ways. I began this research project having spent the better part of ten years as a freelance practitioner: a theatre designer working predominantly in dance-theatre to be more exact. I practiced tai chi and yoga semi-regularly and attended dance classes as a continuation of lifelong training, but also because this had become a core way in which I trained my spatial awareness and thinking in preparation for working with dancers and other performers. Four years later I have developed “mouse shoulder” and a bad back, and spend my day in a cubicle making small taps with my fingers in search of words to describe what it is that bodies do and feel and how they move.

While the irony of my particular academic condition does not escape me, so too I am aware of the irony in my claim to not finding bodies, and what it is to be or perform a body, in so much theorisation of intercultural practice, including from within sectors of intercultural performance scholarship. If, as I have suggested, intercultural and performance are two fields of inquiry which each have something to offer the other, surely what performance offers is knowledge of bodies in space, and knowledge of performing and practiced bodies. This is one of the foundational propositions made by Richard Schechner in defining a disciplinary approach called performance studies: that performance not be read as a text enacted but rather it be studied as “what people do in the activity of their doing it” (2002, 1). The engagement with performance practice from which performance (as distinct from theatre) studies has historically worked is a line this study has reinforced as productive and needed. Additionally, as Dwight Conquergood points out, the rise of performance-inflected vocabulary has above all influenced how we think about cultural process “as unfolding performative invention instead of reified system, structure, or variable” (1991, 191). Indeed performance studies’ early collaborative relationship with anthropology
through scholars such as Conquergood and Victor Turner have resulted in a close alignment of performance and/as the study of culture.

To clarify my claim, the corporeal blind spot I suggest exists in intercultural performance scholarship relates to how and what we study. As has been clear throughout this dissertation, I have argued for the need to attend to the practices of bodies by conducting analysis of what it is that those bodies experience and feel. This is against what I called in Part II a “theatrical” model of intercultural performance scholarship, which I critiqued for its over-reliance on processes of spectatorship for its analysis, and on the performance noun (the performance product) for its object. That is to say, after Susan Melrose, that what passes for performance studies is more often than not, “spectator studies.”

The University of Sydney’s development of rehearsal studies promotes the processes of making performance as key to understanding what performance is, and is a method pioneered by Gay McAuley as a counter to scholarship restricted to reading performance-events and performance-texts (see McAuley 1999, 2006b). The method that is taught is an adapted performance ethnography which draws on fieldwork techniques from within anthropology as well as other disciplines (Rossmanith 2003; Maxwell 2006). But while scholars in this field have extended the rehearsal studies method to ever-broader contexts and projects—for example, to backstage spaces (Filmer 2006) and to scenographic practices (Heckenberg 2011)—the centrality of observation remains. While I have adopted some of those same ethnographic methodologies in my fieldwork, I have also sought through this dissertation to challenge spectatorship as the main mode of performance analysis.1

---

1 Other recent scholarship in the Department of Performance Studies at the University of Sydney has diverged from an observational rehearsal studies: see, for example, Grant (2007), Hope (2011), Manley (2007), and Bicknell (2010).
Experience is a site of knowing. It would follow then, that knowing about doing—understanding the processes and experiences involved in doing—can lead to different possible conclusions about practice than observation alone. Along these lines "insider accounts" such as Rachel Swain’s description of Marrugeku Company’s creative development of *Crying Baby* in Western Arnhem Land (2006), which is included in About Performance no. 6 edited by McAuley and devoted to rehearsal processes, go some way to accounting for the lived experience of performance makers.

My aim here, however, has also been to relocate a notion of performance away from that which takes place between stage and audience in what McAuley describes as a series of significations and communications between performer and spectator (McAuley 1999, 7). I have argued that a methodological and theoretical shift towards embodied experience has important implications for our ability to study intercultural performance; that when intercultural performance is conceived of as the product of collaboration between several discrete cultural performers, the stage space, the performance text and effects, its narrative and/or the director’s vision, might be termed intercultural, but the performers’ bodies are under this paradigm therefore read as material representations of reified cultures. In contrast, this study poses exploring performance as that which occurs within the body and bodily processes of the performer. In this way my usage of “performance” is influenced by the notion of performativity, and “perform” and “practice” are aligned terms in this thesis.

Despite the complex ways in which Marrugeku works with multiple performance idioms, Swain demonstrates the pervasiveness of this view in her article on *Crying Baby*, saying, “intercultural performance is a site where artists from a range of cultural backgrounds and experiences meet and dialogue […]” (2006, 26). In advocating a methodological and
In the In-between

theoretical shift towards embodied experience then, I am like Swain shifting focus towards practice as performance. But more specifically, in relocating performing bodies from sites of signification to sites of experience, my project has been to underline the absence of analysis in the field which speaks to the affective, spatial, and kinaesthetic experiences of being a body, and to make a case for studying what it is to perform an intercultural body, or to perform interculturality. So while this thesis is just one possible rethinking of the relationship between intercultural and performance, I have pursued such a project by attempting to give space to, and give dimension to, in-betweenness as it is experienced in bodily ways. I have argued that thirdspace is a space of experience, and sought to describe what it is to be there.

Intercultural, interstitial, in-between, hybrid, and thirdspace are terms that have appeared repeatedly in this study, in sometimes overlapping ways. The problem I have identified in confining an intercultural zone to performance products is related to tenacious and equally problematic views of bounded subjectivity and originary culture. Following Brian Massumi’s critique of systemic structurings of subjectivity, and the subsequent coding of bodies onto a positionality grid, I have tried to remain faithful to an exploration of the inter which allows for its moving and fluid nature and does not relegate it simply to a “no-body’s land” between two positions. The taxonomy of prefixes, or what Rustom Bharucha refers to as prescriptive “culturalisms” (2000, 1), as well as the mechanistic models of hybrid cultural processes which attempt to constitute a comprehensive theory of intercultural performance have been of limited utility to this study; rather, the boxing and positioning of bodies onto a cultural grid is a problematic the thesis is working against. By grounding the study in the analysis of practice I have sought to test theoretical notions of the ambivalent, multiplicitous and unfixed character of culture and cultural identification against flesh and bone experiences of performing as embodied and encultured subjects.
The practitioner has been a through-line in this study. My definition of performance practice and thereby the practitioner, however, is broad: in the spirit of performance as a lens through which many events and activities can be thought, I have structured my three case studies to incorporate performance in a conventional theatrical sense (Part II), as well as participatory and touristic performance (Part I) and performance of the everyday (Part III). In each of these case studies my focus has been on the processes of doing, on the "doer" as practitioner. As such I have advocated a methodology not of practice-as-research, but practitioner-as-researcher. In terms of the audio walks discussed in Part I, my own experience as participant-walker and also my experiments with making an audio walk informed my discussion of how movement operated in these out of place and out of time experiences. In Part II, I posed the choreographer and dancer Akram Khan as a practitioner-theorist, utilising his descriptions of hybrid moving as "confusion" to develop an analysis of intercultural embodiment. I then further explored the theoretical proposition of confusion through conversation with dancer Ade Suharto. Returning to my own practitioner-body, Part III took flight into the spaces of global mobility, examining corporeal experiences of transiting and travelling in the international airport as a practice of oscillating, in-between subject-/object-hood. Together these three examples are presented not as definitive experiences on interstitial moving, but possible sites in which performing in-betweenness manifests and can be studied.

In my introduction I posed the question: how do we encounter our own possibility for cultural change? Across all three case studies a similar moment was identified, in which a body's customary performance, its habitual movements, actions, and way of being in the world, was disrupted. Caught between the usual ways in which, as Bourdieu describes
through his notion of habitus, cultural performance falls below our perceptual radar, and an unusual awareness of that usual performance, bodies performed in surprising ways.

In Part I I described the way in which walking “with” and walking “as” Janet Cardiff in *Her Long Black Hair* involved what I called a “double-act of becoming” (p. 69). In the doubled acoustic and somatic space of her audio walk I negotiated an unsteady corporealisation of her previous walking through mine. This inhabitation of another was not complete, however: using the example of Soundwalk’s tour of Chinatown in New York I analysed my own experience as an “intercultural stumble” (p. 87), a failure to successfully walk as the narrator Jami Gong and at the same time a failure to walk as myself. I described this stumble as a forwards-backwards movement full of motion despite the outward appearance of going nowhere. Caught in the space between footfalls, a multiplicity of possible steps emerged.

This encounter with our own possibility for multiple embodiments was echoed in Part II, in both Akram Khan’s description of his “confused” body (p. 122), and what I called Ade Suharto’s notion of a “multiple body” (p. 178). These two choreographers each describe a practice in which their training in multiple dance forms is used to produce intuitive performance of new, hybrid movement. Rather than developing a codified fusion form, they each adopt a practice of habitual/non-habitual movement, creating the conditions for repeated “mistakes” or “mis-steps”—movement which escapes their habituated training—in an embodiment rather than mediation of the in-between. This embodied experience of practice, I argued, is different from the ways such performance is often “read” either in terms of a simple representation of the performers’ genealogies, or in terms of an objectified segmenting of their bodies and choreographies into cultural “parts.”
While Khan and Suharto are artists who use the repeated disruption of habitual movement to produce an aesthetic practice, in Part III I explored how an ongoing practice of movement in the “everyday plus” environs of aeromobility might similarly create an interstitial embodiment. Studying my experiences of transiting through global hub airports, I discovered how, against the heavily state-regimented domain of the airport, performances of self enact fluid spatialities and ambiguous relationships to bodily presence. The airport’s mass movements, such as its repeated “sweep, clump, funnel, pause” (p. 223), and the unfolding portals of terminal design, create continually changing groups of affiliation. Here again, as in the audio walks discussed in Part I, the binaries of self-other and sameness-difference are countered in the breakdown of seamless habitual performance, and instead we become aware of what I called a “self-self distance” (p. 252), an in-between space in which we might encounter our body’s possibility of differing from itself. The ways in which bodies encounter their possibility for cultural change is through a coming to awareness of this intracorporeal potential of difference from/within oneself.

The in-between, rather than intercultural per se, is a more comfortable space for this dissertation to occupy. As much as the three case studies have been sited in crossracial, intercultural, and globalised spaces, bodily practice in the three examples has shown such embodiments to be complicated entanglements of individual and social practice, emplaced and out-of-placed experience, sameness and difference, and being self and other. As well as this, I have wanted to resist the assumed hierarchy of the intercultural as a product of bounded or “pure” cultural antecedents, and to question whether self and other, or sameness and difference, are necessarily separate (positioned) orders in experience.

To return to Massumi’s critique of the positionality grid, he argues, “to the extent that the in-between is conceived as a space of interaction of already-constituted individuals and
societies, middle-feeders end up back on the positional map” (Massumi 2002, 69). The provocuation of the in-between is precisely to think other than in terms of positionality, determination, binary opposition. Massumi continues in his critique:

The tendency is to describe the in-between as a blending or parody of the always-already positioned. Social change is spatially relegated to precarious geographical margins, where unauthorized positional permutations bubble up from the fermenting mixture. Even more precariously, in the case of theories of subjectivity as performance, change is confined to sites whose “marginality” is defined less by location than the evanescence of a momentary parodic rupture or “subversion.” How the subversion could react back on the positionalities of departure in a way that might enduringly change them becomes an insoluble problem. Concepts of mixture, margin, and parody retain a necessary reference to the pure, the central, and the straight-laced and straight-faced, without which they vaporize into logical indeterminacy. (ibid.)

So part of my thinking between intercultural and performance in this dissertation has been a renewal of thinking about intercultural processes via an emphasised inter or in-between. This is one of the key offerings that the inter(cultural) provides performance—a model for thinking between things, where “things” are necessarily vague and open to reinterpretation and reimagining rather than a priori boundaries either side of an in-between space. In aligning these two words, however, it is also (as Foucault’s heterotopia of the stage hints at) an offering that performance potentially gives to the intercultural—an awareness of and ability to hold onto a doubled or multiplying, unfixed, real-and-imagined, moving space.

I have argued, in the end, for movement. This is, in this final act, the final “for” with which I organised my introduction (for in-betweens, for space, for bodies, for travel): the in-between as a synaesthetic sense-fold of experience is a space necessarily inscribed in/by movement. Thirdspace is not a space that we enter but one made by our moving. Far from positioning movement in opposition to stasis, or mobility in opposition to dwelling, the different performances of in-betweenness in this dissertation represent thinking about interculturalism as a kinaesthetic paradigm. I acknowledge that the watery ways in which I
have been writing about interculturalism are hard to reconcile with the strategic need that exists in the world to stake a claim on the culture grid. Cultural boundaries do exist in so far as they are socially constructed, and in so far as they shift constantly as we move between social groups, as we age, as technological and environmental change occurs. My hope in proposing that we think about interculturalism as a kinaesthetic paradigm, however, is that it allows for thinking about performances of interculturality that do not rely on artificially fixing those boundaries in order to subvert them; but rather pays attention to the experience of the shifting itself.

Kineasthesia is that bodily perceptual sense which pulls together information about the position of our joints, our muscular engagement and effort, our orientation in space-time and in relation to the planet’s gravity. It brings together what Merleau-Ponty called the “double horizon of external and bodily space” ([1962] 2002, 115). Kineasthesia is the ultimate synaesthetic form, integrating sensory information from all the other senses (Foster 2011, 7). As Massumi notes, synaesthetic experience is actually much more common than we think it is: each sight is a potential touch; the twists and turns of proprioception are potential bumps (2002, 186). Clinical synaesthesia, the condition of sense cross-referencing where, for example, sounds appear as colours or smells, is not that far away, Massumi argues, from “normal” experience. He notes that synaesthesia is thought to be the norm in terms of infant perception, and that it becomes so habitual that it falls below the level of perception as we grow up. Synaesthetes are therefore simply “‘normal’ people who are abnormally aware of their habits of perception” (Massumi 2002, 188).

In saying this, it is possible to misconstrue a suggestion of universalism in my claim to thinking interculturalism as a kinaesthetic paradigm: I am in some sense saying that the possibility for culturally stumbling, for being “othered” from our habitual performances of
self exists for everyone. The examples I explored in this dissertation involved voluntary engagement with interculturalism to be sure (through travel, through aesthetic performance), but the creep of varied globalisations are everywhere around us. We are shifting, even if not everyone experiences that shift within their perceptual awareness. Interculturalists might simply be abnormally aware of their kinaesthetic shifting.

Is this a return to the neo-liberal validations of individualism (Schechner and the “cultures of choice” camp)? In a subheading to his first chapter in _The Politics of Cultural Practice_ Rustom Bharucha writes in bold-faced type: “interculturality is (not) ordinary” (2000, 30). He expands this further by warning that interculturalism as a cultural phenomenon, “should not be reduced to a pre-existing beneficent state of being” (31); that to do so silences the contexts of war and colonial history, and the inequities of global trade under a veil of “ordinariness.” I am not denying Bharucha’s position, indeed I quite agree. The postcolonial critique has brought an important and needed political dimension to the theorisation of intercultural performance practices. We do not operate in an inherited or ongoing world of equal access or power, and benevolent ethics. As Helen Gilbert and Jacqueline Lo point out, amidst a multitude of “new cosmopolitanisms”—including ones which dangerously assume “an implicit teleology of progress whereby postcolonial cosmopolitanism is perceived as the next stage of development from modernist nationalism” ([2007] 2009, 8)—there remains, inevitably, a politics to the practice of interculturalism.

Ultimately, I suggest that kinaesthesia is a way to operate between the aesthetics and political camps in a way that encompasses both, and further, insists on an engagement with lived realities and corporealities of interculturalism: good, bad, and in-between. If I have over-emphasised experiences of moving in this dissertation at the expense of political
argument, it is only because I wish to point to the need for analysis of flesh and bone bodies. Carrie Noland explains, “if proprioception designates sensory stimulation produced by the self, *kinesthesia* designates sensory stimulation produced for the self; as such, it opens up a field of reflexivity in which the subject becomes an object (as body) of her own awareness” (2009, 10, original emphasis). Postcolonial and poststructuralist theory rests so much on “experience-distant” (Geertz 1983, 57) conceptualisation, on the “textualising” of bodies through readings of bodily inscriptions. As Andrew Hewitt reminds us, however, bodies are not writing, not scripts, although they do signify; he articulates the challenge as figuring out how they do so “without locating ‘real’ meaning elsewhere (i.e., in the realm of the social) and then tracing the ways in which bodies reference this external stratum of significance” (Hewitt 2005, 8). Looking to the future I believe we need research of intercultural performance which can critically approach the politics, ethics, aesthetics, and embodiment of cultural practice. Audiences, which I have largely ignored in this dissertation, could also be subject to analysis within a kinaesthetic paradigm, but such a move would pose them as embodied participants in intercultural process rather than positioned as specularly-gated receptors. Bodies’ movements are cultural as much as natural; our habitual moves are at “the matter-hinge between nature and culture” (Massumi 2002, 237). In the kinaesthetic are entwined the corporeal, affective, conceptual and political. Kineasthesia has a politics, but it is a politics which has folded within it the potential for an ethics of engagement on individual as well as social levels. Bharucha argues that the valorisation of an innate state of flow in intercultural exchanges idealises the actual processes of such exchange, “which can be fraught with the deepest tensions, blockages, ruptures, and breakdowns [...]”(2000, 32). But surely this is what the analysis of movement experiences could accommodate: the actual felt, effortful bodily performance of such flows.
Kinaesthetic analysis gives body to cultural discord and synthesis and change of all kinds, reinstating lived and moving dimensions to cultural practice. The very notion of the individual, of bounded individuality, is called into question by this view of embodied subjectivity. That the body's skin is a barrier between self and other, an outermost boundary of self, ignores a whole reality of experiences in which our bodies and selves are constructed and reconstructed through associations with, reachings toward, and realignments to other bodies and objects, and other versions of ourselves. These and many other re-compositions of self, with and in relation to others, occur at the level of our material bodies as well as in our imaginaries, in political, aesthetic and embodied practices. We swell, diminish, and expire, become animal and machine, are assembled, disassembled, and reassembled, and dwell somewhere in-between: inter/intracorporeally and inter/intrasubjectively.
Works cited


Adey, Peter. 2007. "'May I Have Your Attention': Airport Geographies of Spectatorship, Position, and (Im)Mobility." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25: 515-536.


In the In-between


http://www.shifting-identities.ch/category/participants/nedko-solakov/.


Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.


In the In-between

Works cited


In the In-between

Works cited


